Making the grade (working title, may change)
by agnewrl

Summary

Clarke is a college student exiled from her home and family because of her life choices. She meets a guy who challenges her in more ways than one. Bellarke, because where else are we going to get that?? Raven and Roan, because they're my second favorite ship, Linctavia, Kabby and more to come. The story may change as I write it....

Notes

This is a departure from the stories I usually write, but so far I like it. Feedback is always appreciated!
Who's that girl?

The girl danced down the hallway, bopping to whatever music was obviously blaring from the earbuds stuffed into her ears. Bellamy Blake had not so quietly walked down the hall behind the blonde, who was oblivious to his presence. He grinned when the song changed and she began to sing loudly, and slightly off-key. He leaned against the door of his sister’s apartment, grinning, he really should say something, but he was having too much fun watching her. She was wearing tight jean shorts and a tank top and clearly had no rhythm, not that it stopped her from dancing her way down the hall. He wondered if she was as cute from the front as she was from the back, but before he could think of how to approach her, she disappeared around the corner.

“what are you doing?” Octavia came up behind him, hands on her hips. He jumped, then sighed. His sister laughed at him “what if I had been someone trying to rob you?” she shook her head. He grinned and picked up the bag of groceries he’d put down earlier and followed her into the apartment she just unlocked. “Who was that girl?” he ignored her last comment. Octavia shrugged “I don’t know” she admitted “she moved in about three months ago, but pretty much keeps to herself.”

“Well, you should be more neighborly” he leveled his gaze at her “reach out, meet new people” he told her as he handed her bags and cans from the grocery bag. “Thanks” she looked at him “I was running low on food” she said as she put the last can in the cupboard. He snorted “Well if you bothered to buy food more often” he shot back. She laughed “I don’t need to buy food” she answered “I usually eat at Lincoln’s or with Jasper and Monty” she retorted. “and if you want to meet my neighbor, maybe you should do just that” she tossed back at him.

Bellamy rolled his eyes “I thought about it, but she seemed oblivious to anyone else, so maybe next time” he replied. “And by Lincoln, I take it you mean the new boyfriend I have yet to meet?” he cocked his head at her. Octavia shook her head “Yes” she answered “and why don’t you let him get to know me better before you get a chance to run him away.” Bellamy sighed “by better, you mean…” he glanced anxiously at her. He wasn’t comfortable with Octavia dating a guy who was four years older than her, particularly if she was doing more than “getting to know him” but she seemed to like him. “Fine” he sighed “but one day, you’re going to have to let me meet him” he stared at her. “Maybe, but not today” she drawled.

“Did you want anything else?” she asked looking at him. “No, I guess not” he smiled at her “just be careful please?” he said drawing her into a hug. “Yes, big brother” she sighed “now don’t you have some poor students to torture or something?” she asked. As a matter of fact, he did, a fat stack of term papers sat on his desk at school, waiting for him to read and grade. He’d hoped to put that off as long as possible, but the dean wanted to grades submitted before the end of the week, so he supposed he should get that done.

“Okay” he looked at her “please be careful with this Lincoln guy” he kissed he forehead “and try to find something out about your neighbor” he grinned walking toward the door. “I’ll be at school if you need anything” he told her. “Yes, big brother” she sighed “now, I’m going to take a shower, so unless you want to see more of your little sister than you should…” she drawled. He rolled his eyes “fine, I’m going” he said “I love you O” he said hugging her quickly before walking out the door. He waited until he heard the chain slide into place before walking away, his mind still on the blonde in the hall.

Bellamy didn’t know how much time had passed, but judging from the lamp lit path on the campus below, it had been several hours. The foot traffic had long since stopped. Bellamy looked down at the stack of papers on the desk in front of him, he’d barely made a dent in them. He stood up,
stretching his arms, doing his best to stifle a yawn. What had Professor Wallace been thinking
assigning a ten-page essay on the civil war from sixty students?

Of course, he wasn’t the one up at, Bellamy looked at his watch 1:00 a.m.? No wonder he was tired,
he’d been grading papers for six hours. If his TA position didn’t come with perks like free tuition,
plus a small salary that enabled him to support him and his sister he’d throw the towel in now.
Unfortunately, since he had become Octavia’s legal guardian a few years ago, his life and hers
depended on his ability to do this job.

Bellamy sighed looking at the stack of papers he had yet to grade. There was no way he was going
to get them all done tonight, not and get any decent studying done himself. He made some notations
on the last paper he graded, wrote a big red B- and circled it, then capped the pen and laid it on the
desk. The paper, written by Clarke Griffin was good, but some of the punctuation could be a little
better. Apparently, Ms. Griffin was the comma queen, plus she cited her sources incorrectly. Bellamy
eyed the lumpy sofa in the office, it would have to do for the few hours of sleep he seriously needed
to get before his class in a few hours; but first, he needed to study his calculus homework.

“Blake” Professor Wallace greeting him stonily early the next morning. Bellamy opened his eyes
“professor” he shook his head, trying to wake himself quickly “late night?” the professor eyed him.
“Grading papers, sir” Bellamy answered, the Cage Wallace wasn’t what one would consider nice or
even polite if he was being completely honest, but being tenured, he was not expected to be.
Fortunately, despite his lack of personality, the man had a broad knowledge of history, so many
students still made it a priority to take his class. “I see” his gaze drifted to the stacks on the desk
across the room “are you done?” he asked. “Not yet, sir” he said, but they will be before class starts”
he assured the professor. “see that they are” Wallace ordered and bring them to class when they are”
then he walked out of the office without saying another word.

Bellamy knew the professor was going to his favorite spot in the library, where he was doing his
“research”, although he knew for a fact, it was merely a place to sleep and avoid doing more work
than was absolutely necessary. Bellamy checked his watch, it was just after 8 a.m., meaning he had
just enough time to go to his calculus class, then get back and grade the remaining papers before
Wallace’s class started at 1:00. The upside was that the professor would not return to the office until
after class was dismissed, so he had the place to himself. The downside was that he still had about
thirty ten-page papers to grade.

Clarke woke up the next morning refreshed and ready to face the day. She hoped Professor Wallace,
or more likely his TA, had their papers graded by the time class started today. The TA, who Clarke
knew by site, but failed to remember his name was good looking in a rugged sort of way, but she
hadn’t come to college to find a husband. She wanted to learn and then use that knowledge in a
career, much to her mother’s dismay. Abby Griffin-Kane made he feelings on Clarke’s choice of
college over finding a nice, stable, rich man to marry and becoming a trophy wife. Thank goodness,
her father had left her a sizeable inheritance that her mother couldn’t touch or college would have
been just another broken dream in her life.

Clarke would trade every dollar of her inheritance for one more moment with her father, but that too
was a broken dream, ripped away in moment, by someone who felt it was more important to text
their friend, then watch the road. Her mother had mourned her father for a few months, but then
suddenly announced that it was time she got on with her life. Getting on with her life also meant
moving on to a new man. Marcus Kane, her mother’s new husband, wasn’t too bad as stepfather’s
go. He didn’t try to replace Clarke’s father or push his wishes on her, something that Clarke truly
appreciated.

Unfortunately, her mother did try to force Clarke into doing things the way she wanted. When it
became clear that Clarke was not going to do so, she suggested that maybe it was time for Clarke to find a place of her own. The thought had already crossed Clarke’s mind anyway, so she had already been looking for a place to live. Luckily, Marcus owned an apartment building not far from the campus and offered her a place rent free, all she had to do was pay the utilities and act as the building manager, reporting potential problems to Marcus. She only visited her mother briefly on Thanksgiving and Christmas, leaving as quickly as she could after they ate dinner.

Clarke sighed, why Professor Wallace had assigned a ten-page paper, in addition to a midterm she would never figure out. Even though she had hurried to get the paper done, she knew it was good, she’s spent hours in the library researching her topic, but Professor Wallace wasn’t really known for his appreciation of art, even Civil War era art. She could only hope the TA had some appreciation of her topic. She looked at the clock on the table by her bed if she hurried, she could eat breakfast, shower and hit the gym at school before her dreaded algebra class, then get to Wallace’s history class.

As she was leaving her apartment, Octavia Blake approached her. The girl was around Clarke’s age, and living on her own as well “You’re the building manager, right?” she stared at Clarke. Clarke nodded “yes, is there a problem?” she asked. Octavia nodded “my garbage disposal is not working properly” she said “do you think you can get a repairman out?” she asked. Clarke nodded and pulled out her phone “what’s your apartment number?” she asked. “3B” Octavia answered. Clarke texted Marcus to let him know what was going on. He texted back immediately saying he would send John Murphy, his repair guy out today.

“Okay, you’re all set” she smiled at Octavia “the repairman will come by today. Will you be home?” she asked. Octavia shook her head “I have to work today” she replied “but I can probably get my brother to come over and wait if you can give me a time” she said. Clarke’s phone vibrated in her hand “Murphy will be here between 3 and 5 pm today” she looked at her. “I’ll make sure my brother is here. Thanks” Octavia smiled at her “I have to get to school now, thanks” Octavia told her, tossing her backpack over her shoulder and walked toward the elevator. “Anytime” Clarke tossed back heading for the stairs. Her car was parked out back, taking the stairs was closer to it than the elevator.

Clarke and Bellamy arrived at Professor Wallace’s class at exactly the same time, both a little late. “Ladies first” he held the door open for her. He couldn’t exactly place where, but he felt as though he’d seen this girl before. The way she walked was familiar, but he didn’t have the time to think about where he might have seen her. Professor Wallace was glaring at him, then looking down at his watch. Bellamy shot him an apologetic look as he approached the table next to the podium and took his seat.

He watched the blonde girl take her seat oblivious to the impatient stare of Professor Wallace as she settled in her seat and took her book and laptop out. It was a Macbook, one of the new thin ones that he knew cost a small fortune. He’d priced them once, but soon discovered he would need to make way more than he was not to even entertain that idea. She was probably some spoiled little rich girl whose parents bought her the newest model of computer, so it wouldn’t matter to her that she was holding up the beginning of class.

Finally, Professor Wallace addressed the class “I have your term papers on the civil war graded and ready for pick-up” he stated “there were some very good one and a few that need a little work” he drawled on. Bellamy withheld the snort that threatened to come out, how would he know what they were like, it wasn’t like he’d actually read any of them. He supposed Wallace’s years as a tenured teacher taught him that his generalized statement was true, which it was, of course. Wallace began going over the details of the midterm, which Bellamy would proctor the next class period, while the good professor slept in his secret room at the library.
Bellamy’s gaze drifted to the blonde, who watched attentively, typing notes on her computer. She had the bluest eyes he’d ever seen. Her shirt clung tightly to her ample chest, just as her jeans did to her legs. She looked down for a moment at the phone in her hand, then shook her head and grinned at a dark-haired girl one row and three seats down from her. The brunette looked down at her phone a few seconds later and laughed softly. “Ms. Reyes, Ms. Griffin?” Professor Wallace looked at them “something you’d like to share with the rest of us, or may I continue?” he stared at them.

“Sorry sir” the brunette answered for them “it’s my mom, I’ll call her after class.” Bellamy knew she was lying, he’d watched the two of them, but Wallace bought her story. “By all means do so, Ms. Reyes” he replied “but please ask her to refrain from interrupting my class” he ordered. “yes sir” the brunette agreed obediently, looking over to grin at her friend. So, the blonde was the comma queen who failed to correctly cite her sources, she was also kind of cute. Not that it mattered, as the class TA, getting involved with her was a violation of his contract, and would cause him to lose his free ride and his job.

Clarke sighed “finally Professor Wallace had finished his test review, she supposed she should have paid more attention to his words, but she already had the study guide, which she and Raven would go over later. That is assuming they didn’t spend the whole time talking about boys while drinking at their favorite bar. “You can pick up your term papers at the front of the the class” he told them before nodding at his TA. He then picked up his briefcase and headed out of the classroom. Clarke walked to the end of her row and waited for Raven, who glared impatiently at a student who had yet to pack up their backpack. Clarke smirked, but waited patiently. There was a line to pick up the term papers anyway.

Finally, with a mumbled apology the student moved allowing Raven to meet Clarke. She stopped in front of Clarke, holding her phone up for Clarke to look at. Clarke laughed and high fived her. “Ms. Reyes, Ms. Griffin” Bellamy glanced at them impatiently “when you two are finished…” he drawled. As much as he would love to sit there all day, his sister had texted him, asking him to be at her apartment by 3:00 for some repairman to come.

“Sorry” Raven replied grabbing Clarke’s hand and walking to the table. Bellamy merely shook his head, clearly the two of them had nothing better to do than annoy him. He handed Raven her paper, then Clarke, who read his comments “comma queen?” she asked glaring at him “and wrong citation?” she asked. He looked at her “you’re supposed to use MLA citation” he replied and “perhaps if you would have reread your paper before turning it in, you’d understand my comments” he told her. Clarke bristled “so those two errors are worth that many points?” she glowered at him. “If you have a problem with your grade, you can talk to Professor Wallace” Bellamy started packing up his papers “now if you’ll excuse me” he said walking past them and walking up the stairs to the door.

“It’s only one B, Clarke” he heard Ms. Reyes tell her “Come on, let’s go to Nylah’s and forget about this piece of trash” she said dropping the paper in Clarke’s backpack. “I suppose” Clarke sighed “but what jerk” she sighed. “At least he’s a cute jerk” Raven chuckled “besides what does it matter now, you know that stuffed shirt isn’t going to do anything about your grade, so…” she cocked her head at Clarke. “Fine” Clarke sighed “fine, but whatever I’m ordering, I’m going to make it a double” she retorted. “The way Nylah makes them, you might want to stick to singles” Raven snorted pushing her friend in the direction of the stairs.

Bellamy paused at the door, listening to their conversation, they were right Professor Wallace would do nothing about the grade, so there was really nothing they could do about it. His phone rang “I’m on the way, O” he spoke into the phone. “yes, I have my key and yes, I will keep an eye on him, now go back to work” he told her. “I love you too, bye” he grinned. The girls were also right about Nylah’s drinks. She definitely did not spare the alcohol in her drinks, he may have to stop there himself after his day was done.
Clarke and Raven passed him on their way out of the classroom, chatting about somebody named Finn, but he didn’t really hear their conversation. From the bits and pieces he did hear, the guy, or at least Bellamy thought he might be a guy, was a real piece of work. Bellamy left the room, stopping by the office long enough to drop the leftover essays on his desk, then walked to his car to get to his sister’s apartment, trying and failing to see the smile and the sashay of Ms. Clarke Griffin. He usually avoided girls like her, but for some reason he couldn’t get her off of his mind.
Bellamy drummed his fingers on the counter in Octavia’s apartment, the repairman said he was going to be there between 3 and 5pm, but it was nearly 5:00 already. Why couldn’t repairmen just be on time? Bellamy sighed impatiently, he had planned on going somewhere this evening, but at this rate. His angry rant was interrupted by a knock at the door “Maintenance” Bellamy heard as he walked to the door. “It’s about tim…” Bellamy stopped “Murphy?” he arched his eyebrows “what are you doing here?” he asked. “Hey Bellamy” Murphy smiled at him “sorry, I meant to be here sooner, but we had a plumbing problem in another building” he explained.

“I thought you were working for a big company?” Bellamy opened the door and stepped back, letting him pass. “I was” Murphy replied “but Marcus Kane made me an offer I couldn’t refuse” he grinned. “Are you still a TA at the University?” he asked. Bellamy nodded “yeah, it doesn’t pay much, but I get free tuition” he shrugged. “Well, you can’t go wrong there” Murphy murmured setting his tools down on the kitchen floor and opening the cupboard under the sink. “So, is this your place?” he asked. Bellamy shook his head “nah, it’s my sisters” he answered. “Octavia?” Murphy cocked his head “How old is she?” he asked. “She just turned 21” Bellamy answered. “Really?” Murphy chortled “that makes me feel old” he scoffed. Bellamy snorted “tell me about it” he agreed.

“Man, I hate these things” Murphy said turning on the water before flipping the switch that activated the garbage disposal. The gadget gurgled, but did nothing else. “They are so darn cheap, and you can’t really put anything big down them” he said. Bellamy was not mechanically inclined, but even he knew that. He would bet Octavia didn’t though. Murphy dropped to his knees to insert the allen wrench on the machine. Bellamy could hear it churning.

“How did you start working for Marcus Kane?” Bellamy asked him. “I did some work for his stepdaughter a while back and he was so impressed by it that he asked me to come work for him.” Murphy looked up. “he offered me more money, plus benefits” Murphy shrugged “it was a good deal, so I took it.”

Murphy got to his feet and flipped the switch again, but the disposal still didn’t come on. “I’m gonna have to replace this one” he looked at Bellamy, let me run to my truck and get a new one. It’ll take about thirty minutes, then it’ll be good as new.” True to his word, Murphy had the old disposal off and the new one on in thirty minutes. “good as new” he declared after flipping the switch. “if you wouldn’t mind” Murphy looked at him “could you tell your sister not to put grease, potato skins or any other big items in there? “ he asked. Bellamy nodded his agreement “Will do, thanks man.”

Bellamy furrowed his brow, thinking back to what Murphy said about doing a job for Marcus Kane’s stepdaughter. “Marcus Kane has a stepdaughter?” he asked. Everyone knew who Marcus Kane was. He was a homegrown businessman who started as a regular guy just like Murphy and himself, who took the lemons life gave him and turned them into success. “Yes, he married a wealthy woman in Polis a year or so ago, and she had a grown daughter.” Bellamy looked at him “and you know this daughter?” he asked. Murphy nodded “so do you” he eyed Bellamy. “I do?” he asked. Murphy nodded “She went to school with Octavia” Murphy said “though I doubt they hung out in the same circles.”

“Hey Murphy, where are you?” a new voice called, one that sounded familiar. “In the kitchen, Griffin” Murphy shouted back. Bellamy’s jaw dropped when the disembodied voice appeared in the doorway. Murphy’s Griffin turned out to be the same griffin that got his attention in Wallace’s classroom. She stopped when she saw him “You’re Octavia’s brother?” she snorted. He shrugged “guilty” he smiled innocently “small world, huh” he quipped. Clarke rolled her eyes, the turned her attention back to Murphy, who snickered at their interaction.
“Just what do you think is so funny” she put her hands on her hips accentuating her ample chest. “How do you not know your tenants?” Murphy snorted “or his sister?” he shook his head “you do realize you all went to the same school at one point?” he drawled. “I don’t recall meeting either of them, but then again I was not really that social in school” she shrugged “and they’re not my tenants, they’re Kane’s.” Murphy scoffed “I suppose both of those things are true enough” he agreed. “Let’s rectify that” he grinned Bellamy Blake this Clarke Griffin” he said, then looked at Clarke “Clarke, Bellamy.”

Clarke grimaced “We already know each other, but thanks” Clarke replied sourly. Murphy looked at her questioningly “you said you didn’t know him.” Clarke rolled her eyes “I said I didn’t know him in high school, or that he was Octavia’s brother” she clarified “I never said I didn’t know him.” Murphy looked at them, clearly confused. “He’s the TA in my history class” Clarke explained “I just didn’t know his name.”

Murphy shook his head “of course you didn’t know his name…” he sighed “do you ever take your head out of whatever book you happen to be reading?” he chuckled. “Books don’t break your heart” Raven shot back. “Old Yeller” Murphy returned. “Was a movie, not a book” she retorted. “Wrong, it was both” Murphy corrected her. “Well, I only saw the movie” she shrugged. Murphy laughed “And in the world of the Clarke Griffin that’s all that matters, I totally forgot” he rolled his eyes. Bellamy watched the interaction between them silently “clearly, they were or had been good friends at some point. “What is taking so long Griffin?” Raven appeared in the kitchen “Hey look it’s the cute TA” she grinned and “the grungy handyman.”

“I should have known you wouldn’t be too far away Reyes” Murphy snorted. “We have to study” she looked at Clarke. Murphy arched his eyebrows “uh-huh” he grunted in disbelief “and this in no way involves a little alcohol?” he asked. Raven shrugged “who says we can’t do both” she grinned, then turned to Bellamy “What are you doing here?” she asked. “You don’t know either?” Murphy asked incredulously. “Know what?” she asked. “Apparently, Bellamy here” Clarke nodded in his direction “is Octavia’s brother” she filled her friend in “and went to the same school as all of you” Murphy added “Geez, did the two of you socialize at all in high school?” Raven shook her head “not if I could help it” she admitted.

Murphy threw his hands up in the air “I give up” he drawled. “How do you know Bellamy?” Raven asked Murphy. “We did one whole semester of college together” he answered. “Aha” she said “well, its nice to finally know your name Bellamy” Raven grinned at him. Murphy sighed “I can’t even…” he declared looking at Clarke “Did you need something other than driving me crazy Griffin?” he asked. Clarke laughed “Actually, that was just a fortunate bonus” she laughed. “Geez Griffin why do I put up with you?” he snorted. “Because you love me” grinned sweetly at him. “Whatever?” he sighed “so, what did you want?”

“Do you have another service call after this?” she asked. “I have a beer with my name on it at Nylah’s, why” he asked. “I don’t suppose you can go to 1A for a minute?” she asked. “Again?” he swore “I was just there last week.” Clarke shrugged “Tell Marcus, maybe he’ll actually do something this time…” she murmured. “Yeah, right” Murphy scoffed, both he and Clarke knew that was never going to happen “the toilet again?” he asked. Clarke nodded. “Yeah, I’m done here anyway” he sighed dropping the tools in his bag and picking it up. “Then I’m going to Nylah’s, you girls care to join us?” he asked, assuming Bellamy would go with him. “We really do have to study” Clarke shrugged “but maybe next time.”

“Thanks Murphy, you’re the best” Clarke grinned kissing his cheek then turning to follow Raven out of the apartment. “You owe me Griffin” he hollered to her retreating figure. “Actually, I think you owe me” she retorted without turning around “best job ever and all..” she laughed. Bellamy liked the sound of her laughter. “what’s with the goofy look?” he asked Bellamy, then it dawned on him “you
“like her…” he grinned. “she’s an entitled pain in the ass” Bellamy vehemently denied. “and yet, you can’t stop looking at her, or for her” he said watching Bellamy look around. “She is cute” Bellamy shrugged, trying to sound nonchalant.

“She may act like an entitled brat” Murphy looked at him “but she’s not really” he said. “She’s had a good life yes, but it hasn’t always been happy and carefree. I mean her mom has a huge house in Polis with servants and maids, yet she chooses to live in this dump…” Murphy looked around. Bellamy supposed he had a point “so, why does she choose to live here?” he asked. “Sorry man, that’s her story to tell. If you want to know that, you have to ask her.” He turned and grinned at Bellamy “of course that means you have to talk to her, and I don’t mean like you hate her…” he trailed off laughing.

Murphy looked at his friend “Come on man” he chuckled “let’s lock up and go take care of 1A, then we can get a drink. If you’re lucky, Raven will convince Clarke to come to Nylah’s later.” Bellamy shrugged “Whatever man” he tried to sound as if it didn’t matter, but he knew he would have an even harder time forgetting Clarke Griffin. “So, what is it about 1A?” he asked, clearly both Clarke and Murphy had strong feelings about it. Murphy patted his back laughing “she is an entitled brat…” he sighed and began telling him about the woman in 1A.

A few hours later Bellamy and Murphy were sitting at Nylah’s nursing a beer and talking about the girl in 1A. “She was kind of into you” Murphy smirked at Bellamy. He snorted “entitled doesn’t begin to describe her” he murmured. “Yeah, Roma is a piece of work” Murphy agreed. He was sure that she clogged the toilet herself, then had the nerve to blame her kid just so somebody would pay attention to her. “So, if you had to choose between Clarke and Roma?” Murphy grinned at him. “Even if I was able to do anything with Clarke” Bellamy answered, reminding his buddy that he was still her TA, “I don’t think she likes me very much.”

Murphy snorted “since when do you have to like someone to have sex with them?” he asked. Bellamy leveled his gaze at Murphy “and this is why, you’ll never find someone” he shook his head. Murphy laughed, unaffected by Bellamy’s statement “women like me” he retorted “and I’m okay with like.” Bellamy was going to say something in response to his comment, but his attention was drawn to familiar dark-haired figure “Well, well, well” he murmured chuckling “this must be my lucky day.” Murphy followed his gaze “isn’t that???” he asked grinning broadly. “Why yes, it is” Bellamy smiled and walked over to the bar “hello little sister” he grinned at her “and you must be Lincoln.”

Octavia hung her head and groaned “I thought you were at my apartment” she sighed. “and I thought you were at work” he countered. “I was, it was slow, so Harper let me off early” she leveled her gaze at him “and my apartment?” she asked. “good as new, and by the way, you can’t put big chunks of food in your garbage disposal” he replied. Then he turned his attention to her new boyfriend “I’ve heard a lot about you” Lincoln held his hand out. Bellamy shook the man’s hand firmly “well, then you have an advantage over me” he admitted. Lincoln nodded “I’ve tried to get her to let us meet, but she says you can be a little over the top” he met Bellamy’s eyes.

Bellamy shrugged “I can be” he admitted “but in my defense, she is my little sister and since I am her only family…” “he trailed off. “I totally understand that” Lincoln agreed “If I had a sister, I would be that way too. Octavia dropped her head onto the bar “I hate you Bell” she groaned. He laughed “too bad for you I am not going anywhere little sister” he said ruffling her hair, but I will leave you alone for now.” He turned to Lincoln “it was nice to meet you” he held his hand out. “Likewise” Lincoln responded taking the offered hand. Bellamy chuckled to himself as he walked back to the booth where Murphy waited for him. “You sir are a terrible person” Murphy laughed. “But nobody will mess with my little sister” he grinned “and that makes me an awesome big brother!”
“Come on Clarke” Raven pleaded “My brain is turning to mush here.” Clarke snorted “what do you mean turning to mush?” she snorted. “Really how much studying can a person do?” Raven pleaded “and besides Nylah’s alcohol just might help our poor little brains to comprehend the ideas we are reading about” she leveled her gaze at Clarke. “Yeah, right” Clarke grunted “or it will make us totally unable to think straight” she pointed out. “The hot TA will be there” Raven sing saged. “The jerk, you mean?” Clarke countered “I mean really twenty points for too many commas and the wrong format???”

“Come on Clarke” Raven pleaded crawling on her knees, placing her head in Clarke’s lap and pouting “please, please, please” she begged “my poor little brain can’t hardly take any more book learning.” Clarke sighed dramatically “okay, okay” she huffed “but only a couple of drinks, then I have to get back and study” she agreed. “Deal!” Raven stood to her feet, now let’s go get nice and slutty, drive the hot TA to the edge, then drop him like a hot potato” she said tugging Clarke to her feet and dragging her to the bedroom.

“Thirty minutes later, Raven and Clarke emerged from Clarke’s room, both of them wearing short, tight dresses, Clarke wearing a red one and Raven a black one. The dresses clung to every curve and had a neckline the plunged just enough cleavage to tease, but assured that no wardrobe malfunctions would happen. Raven had insisted on doing Clarke’s hair and makeup as well. “This is a bit much” Clarke tugged at the short hemline, trying to drag it down some more. “Stop that” Raven slapped her hand “you look great and the hot TA will go nuts when he sees you!” Clarke grimaced and every other guy” she retorted, this was truly not her style, but as usual Raven had been a bad influence on her decisions.

“And if some loser decides that I’m asking for trouble?” Clarke asked “then I will personally kick his ass” she declared “or Roan will.” Clarke groaned “you invited Roan?” she whined. “Well yeah” Raven shrugged “how better to work the hot TA’s nerves than to have the king of sin on our arms?” she grinned. As if on cue, there was a knock at the door, Raven walked over and opened it, letting Roan in.

He whistled when he saw them “you ladies are looking for trouble tonight” he murmured. He wore skin tight jeans and a shirt that clung to his muscled chest. “It was all her doing” Clarke pointed at Raven. Roan laughed “trust me Clarke, that much I already knew” he said “but you still look great!” he told her. “It’s not too short?” she asked. “No, everything is properly covered” he assured her smacking her hands away from her dress, “so quit tugging on your dress.” Clarke took a deep breath and walked toward the door. “If some loser tries to…” she looked up at him “nobody will put a hand on you if you don’t want them to” he assured her “or they won’t have a hand to put on you.” Clarke smiled at him “thanks” she said “now let’s get out of here before I change my mind.” Roan held his hands out for them to take a hold of. “your chariot awaits ladies” he said wrapping an arm around each of them and closing the door behind them.

“They’re not coming” Bellamy looked at his watch. “They’ll be here” Murphy assured him “It may take Raven a while to talk her into it, but they’ll be here.” Bellamy shot him a look of disbelief “and you can bet when they get here, they’ll be dressed to kill” Murphy grinned “because Raven is a bad influence, one that Clarke can’t say no to, no matter how bad she wants to” he laughed. “Why?” Bellamy asked. “Clarke has been trained to act like an upper-class citizen, to make the family look good” Murphy looked sad “even though that wasn’t always who she was. It was ingrained into her from the time she was old enough to walk and talk” he said. “Raven challenges that in her, helps her to come out of her shell, even though it can be very extreme” Murphy shook his head.
Bellamy was going to ask him to elaborate on that statement, but when the doors of the bar opened, he got his answer. First Raven, the Clarke walked in wearing tight, short dresses that exposed almost as much they covered. Bellamy was glad for the table that hid his first reaction to Clarke in her red dress. The two of them were followed by a tall, long-haired Adonis who stood very close to them, his hands protectively placed on their lower backs. A guy at the bar leered at them, making Bellamy want to pummel him. Before he had the chance to act on his feelings, the Adonis shot a dangerous glare at him. The guys visible shriveled back into his seat, making the bartender laugh out loud.

Murphy laughed at the expression on Bellamy’s face “that’s Roan” he said “they’ve been friends for years.” Bellamy glanced at the protective way Roan stayed just far enough away from the girls to give them their space, but close enough to defend their honor if necessary. “with benefits?” Bellamy couldn’t help asking. Murphy stared at him knowingly, “With Raven, yeah, but not Clarke, they’re just friends” he answered. The three of them stopped at the bar and chatted with the bartender for a few minutes, the they ordered drinks, which Roan paid for. Clarke turned in her seat, her gaze landing on the table where Murphy and Bellamy sat.

Raven said something to Clarke, who rolled her eyes in response, but allowed Raven to drag her towards them. Bellamy was beginning to notice what Murphy meant when he’d said Raven was the bad influence of the two. Clarke was clearly uncomfortable in this situation. It showed even more when she reached for Roan’s hand. Roan didn’t laugh or smirk at her gesture, but took her hand into his and walked beside her, his other hand placed protectively on her lower back. He leaned down and whispered something in her ear making her smile softly at him.

“I see you persuaded her to join us tonight” Murphy snorted “but why play dress up?” he asked. Raven shrugged “we had a bad day” she said “some overrated TA gave her a supremely unfair grade, so I figured why the hell not” she looked at Bellamy, who tried to keep his face neutral amid her accusation. “are you complaining?” she leveled her gaze at Murphy, who surveyed her body slowly “not at all” he grinned at her “not at all!” Raven put her hands on her hips “enjoying the view?” she asked. “I always do Reyes” he replied patting the seat next to him. He held out his hand and Raven took it sliding into the seat next to him, but not close enough to allow Clarke room to sit. Clarke shot a glare at Raven, who merely grinned in response. This game Raven was playing was not really her style, but somehow, she always managed to get caught up in one of Raven’s schemes. Clarke put one foot on the step leading into the booth cautiously. She rarely wore heals, let alone six-inch stilettos, but Raven has insisted telling her girls didn’t wear converses with ‘come and get me’ dresses.

“It ruins the whole image” Raven retorted. Clarke grinned at the look of horror on her friend’s face when she pulled the worn tennis shoes out of her closet earlier “see this is why you need me” Raven scoffed motioning for Clarke to sit on the bed. “You would never meet a guy left to your own devices” she shook her head and began rummaging in Clarke’s closet, coming out a few minutes later with matching red heels that looked like weapons to Clarke. She stood and handed them to her “Tonight, you’re wearing these” she declared tossing them to Clarke.

That moment of weakness on Clarke’s part led to this moment when Clarke missed the step and stumbled forward. Bellamy automatically, reached for her, catching her before she face planted on the table “I got you” he said, hoping his voice didn’t betray him. He felt a jolt of electricity when he caught her hand. “thanks” she said quickly dropping it once she was steady again. He nodded silently, also noticing that Roan’s hands remained at her waist until she was safely seated, “graceful Griffin” Murphy snorted from across the table. “It’s her fault” Clarke retorted shaking her head at Raven, who merely shrugged “you just need a little practice” she shot back, laughter dancing in her eyes.
Clarke scooted over in the seat to allow room for Roan, very aware of the fact that every move made her dress riding a little higher, exposing her slender thighs a little more. She was not the only one. Bellamy turned his head, taking a sip of his beer, trying not to look or touch. It had been a long time since a girl had done this to him, and this girl was definitely a devil in a red dress. Bellamy did not miss the looks she exchanged with Raven, their expressions saying more than any words they could have spoken. Roan sat down in the booth pushing her firmly against Bellamy’s thighs, effectively sandwiching her tightly between the two men.

Bellamy instantly felt the heat of her presence deep in his core. He was sure she did too, but neither of them spoke, though he noticed she was very careful were she placed her hands. Raven looked at her friend, then at the guy on either side of her, smiling broadly at Clarke, who shook her head vehemently. Raven merely shrugged, grinning the whole time. Bellamy watched the interaction, amazed by the things the two of them could say without uttering a single word. Murphy broke the moment “So, did you give the overrated TA a piece of your mind” he asked Clarke. She snorted “what’s the point?” she shrugged “it’s not like that stuffed shirt of a professor is going to do anything about it.”

Raven sighed “he is such a waste of space” she spat out “the only reason he’s still there is because his is tenured. He’d rather be hiding in the stacks sleeping his days away, then teaching.” Bellamy took a drink of his beer trying to hide his grin, Raven may be crass about professor Wallace, but she also happened to be right. “He knows his history though” Clarke defended him “that’s why so many people take his class.” Raven shrugged “I suppose you’re right” she agreed. “Get your mom to talk to him” Roan suggested. Clarke snorted “yeah, she’d love that” she drawled “it would give her just the ammunition she needed.”

“She doesn’t approve of your choice of colleges?” Bellamy asked. “She doesn’t approve of my life choices” she answered “my choice of college and current degree are definitely on that list.” Bellamy heard the hardness in her voice “and what would she have you do?” he asked. “If it was up to Abby” Roan answered for her “Clarke would be miles away at John Hopkins, studying medicine. “safely tucked away from me” Raven grinned “and my bad influences.” Murphy laughed “good luck with that” he retorted “you’d probably enroll just to make sure you could be there to be a bad influence.” She grinned, “probably” she agreed.

“Does your mom know where you actually live?” Murphy asked Clarke. “she knows” Clarke nodded “Marcus told her, he’s too good of a guy not to, but it will be a cold day in hell before she ever visits” Clarke stated. Bellamy heard no emotion in her tone, and was saddened by it. His mom had not been a saint, and her life choices may have lead to her demise, but he and Octavia knew she loved them. “When will you see her again?” Roan asked. “I have to go over for thanksgiving” Clarke answered “but just long enough to eat lunch, then I’ll meet you guys at Jasper and Monty’s for dinner.”

“What about your dad?” Bellamy asked “don’t you miss him?” he asked. The whole table went silent and Bellamy knew he’d said the wrong thing. Roan’s hand reached for Clarke’s lacing his fingers through hers. “way to kill the mood man” Murphy was the first to speak. Clarke laughed, but he heard the catch in her voice “yeah, I miss him a lot” she spoke so quietly he almost didn’t hear her “but heaven’s a little too far away to visit, so…” she trailed off. Bellamy closed his eyes “I’m sorry” he looked at her “I didn’t know…” the words sounded so inadequate. She smiled at him, a slow, sad smile that never quite reached her eyes “it’s okay, it was a long time ago” she shrugged. Clearly, it not long enough ago, judging from her reaction. He wanted to ask how and why and when, but the topic seemed to be one that was off-limits, so he let it go.

As if she was there, listening to the conversation, experiencing the solemn mood, Nylah turned on the overhead radio and the words of an AC/DC song came blasting out. Apparently one of Clarke’s favorites as she began to sing and dance in her seat to the song. She clearly wasn’t destined to be a
singer, but she did know the song word for word. Every move pitted her against him, making him very aware of her.

The music changed again and Raven smiled when a Latin beat came on “come on” she grabbed Murphy’s hand and tugged “dance with me.” He shrugged, allowing her to pull him to the dance floor. She motioned for Clarke to come and join them, but she shook her head. Raven rolled her eyes, but said nothing. Roan’s phone vibrated on the table, he answered it, putting one hand over his other ear to block out the music blaring from the speaker above them. He snapped the phone shut with a flick of his finger frowning, then turned to Clarke “hey I have to go, do you need a ride home?” he asked.

Clarke looked around him at Raven, who was gyrating against Murphy, it was clear who she was going home with tonight. “probably” she said “When do you have to leave?” Roan check his watch “five minutes ago” he shook his head “you know, the usual…” he sighed. Clarke nodded Roan was a lot like her, trapped in a life that demanded more than he wanted to give. Fortunately, for Clarke, she had a father and stepfather who encouraged her to live her life, her way. “Everything Okay?” she asked. He nodded “it will be, but I don’t want to leave you stranded” he looked at her. “I’ll get her home if you need to leave” Bellamy said.

Roan looked at Clarke, who nodded her consent “call if you need anything. I always have a spare room if you need it” she told him. He smiled and kissed her cheek “one of these days I’m going to take you up on that offer” he said. “You would feel so much better about life if you did” she smiled at him “but I understand why you don’t.” Roan brushed his thumb across her cheek “if something changes and you need me to come get you, call me” he told her. “I will, I promise” she said “now go.” Roan bobbed his head in agreement, “see you around man” he addressed Bellamy. “yeah, you too” Bellamy returned.

“Is everything alright with him?” Bellamy asked Clarke after Roan left. The man might be a muscled Adonis, but it was clear he was not necessarily in control of his life. She nodded “Roan’s life is…” she searched for the right word “complicated, like mine used to be” her lips twitched. “and yours isn’t anymore?” he asked. She scoffed “it’s still complicated” she replied “but my dad made sure I had and outlet and Marcus looks out for me, so I got lucky” she shrugged. “Roan doesn’t have that support.”

She shifted in her seat, bringing her bare feet under her “I hate those shoes” she declared “there’s a reason they were in the back of the closet. Bellamy laughed softly. “What?” she demanded turning to look at him. He shook his head “nothing” he grinned “I was just thinking about something Murphy said earlier. She snorted “don’t believe everything Murphy tells you” she laughed “he’s half serious and half full of shit; sometimes it’s hard to tell which half you’re listening too.” Bellamy laughed “and yet you’re still friends” he murmured. She shrugged “Murphy, Raven, Roan” she smiled slightly “me, we’re all victims, and survivors of the good life” she used air quotes around the last three words “people either hate us or want to be us, but if they really knew what happened in the good life…” she trailed off then looked up at him, a sadness lurking in her eyes.

Bellamy watched the emotions play across her face, he realized his original judgement of her character and her life had been so far off the reality of it. Something about her made him want to know more, but he wasn’t sure that was a good idea. He gazed into her eyes, fighting the urge to reach out and caress her cheek with his thumb. She met and held his gaze, unblinking. When her tongue darted out to lick her lips, he groaned inwardly. “Geez, you’re boring” Raven returned, breaking the moment. She rolled her eyes “I get you all dolled up, set you between two gorgeous boys and…” she looked around “where’s Roan?” she asked. “He got a call…” Clarke said glancing at Raven with a look she obviously understood “he really needs to just say no once, just once..” she sighed. She looked at Bellamy, then grinned “you, I get” she threw Clarke an exasperated look “and
“I’ll be right back” Clarke said scooting off the seat. Raven laughed “I knew those shoes wouldn’t last long” she laughed. Clarke didn’t look back, but flipped her friend the bird. Raven laughed then turned her attention back to Bellamy boring her eyes into his. He tried to ignore her, but she cocked her head at him “how often do you think she dresses like that?” she asked him. He grinned, but said nothing. “you DO like her, right?” she asked. Bellamy nodded, it was clear that Raven knew she had him there “it’s complicated” he sighed. “uncomplicate it” she demanded coming nose to nose with him when Murphy crawled in behind her while balancing four shots and 2 beers. “Talented” Bellamy chuckled taking one of the beers from him.

Murphy grinnned “I’m very good” he drawled handing Raven a shot. “He is” she agreed, clinking her shot glass against his and downing it. “Uncomplicate what?” he asked looking at Raven. “Why he hasn’t even tried to make a move on Clarke” she looked at Murphy. “He can’t” Murphy simplified “You’re the hot TA, right?” he looked at Bellamy “the jerk who took twenty points for minor errors” he grinned. “they were not minor, and it was formatted incorrectly” he glowered at them. “Moving on” Raven arched her eyebrows at him “I can’t get involved with a student” he said “it’s in the contract, and being a TA gives me free tuition, which I need” he explained.

“So, do it anyway, nobody has to know until after the semester is over, then you’re free and clear” Raven shrugged. Bellamy laughed “I bet the principal had your mother’s number on speed dial” he snorted. “Would that she cared that much he would have” she replied “lucky for me, she didn’t give two shits about what I did, so it wasn’t that bad.” Her nonchalant response baffled Bellamy “Did any of you have normal childhoods?” he asked. Murphy snorted “define normal?” he chortled. Clarke rejoined them a few minutes later, once again curling her feet beneath her.

Murphy push the other two shot glassed toward them “where’s yours?” she looked at them “we drank them after you ran away” Raven grunted motioning for the two of them to drink theirs “bottoms up” Bellamy held his glass in the air. Clarke picked hers up, clinked it against his “the liquid burned going down her throat. “Tequila?” she arched her eyebrows at Murphy “makes her clothes come off” he quipped grinning at her. She threw a napkin at him “why do I put up with you?” she glared at him “because I know your deepest, darkest secrets and keep them to myself” he shot back, grinning at her. Bellamy wouldn’t mind knowing a few of Clarke’s secrets. He shook his head he had to stop thinking like that, he couldn’t afford it. Raven shot him a knowing look, but said nothing.

“Speaking of clothes coming off” Raven leaned into Murphy, who wrapped an arm around her waist and pulled her in for a kiss. “Get a room” Clarke groaned “what a great idea” Raven grinned at her “Since Roan left, I assume you’re going to get her home” she looked at Bellamy. He nodded “don’t do anything I wouldn’t do” Raven smiled at Clarke “I probably won’t do anything you would” she retorted giving Raven a hug. “I wouldn’t expect anything less” Raven chortled “I’ll call you tomorrow” she said taking Murphy’s hand and walking towards the door.

“Do they do that often” he asked. Clarke laughed “Raven doesn’t sleep around” Clarke replied “but when she needs a little stress relief, she usually gets it from Roan and/or Murphy.” Bellamy shook his head “and/or?” he looked at her “Is there anything you guys don’t tell each other?” he asked. “We’ve been through a lot, the five of us” she shrugged. “have you ever…” he looked at her. “God no” she shuddered “first of all, I don’t share my men, even with Raven. And second, my mother would have had a cow” she answered. Her response made him happy, which was something he really didn’t want to explore.

She picked up her beer watching him watch Octavia and Lincoln, who were in their own little world a few tables away. “He really is a good guy” she said after finishing the last bit of beer in her stein.
He sighed “I can see that” he murmured “but that’s my little sister, and I have been responsible for her since she was sixteen years old, so it’s going to take more than a few months for me to be okay with that” he pointed at the two of them. As he did, Lincoln pulled Octavia in for a kiss. Bellamy groaned and looked away.

Clarke laughed at his reaction. “Sixteen?” she looked at him “you were what 18 or 19 at the time?” she asked. “just turned 18” he confirmed. Clarke cocked her head “You had some kind of full-ride scholarship to NYU or something, didn’t you?” she asked. He looked at her “how do you know that?” he asked, he didn’t remember seeing Clarke in high school. “You may not have known me, and you are not alone in that” she looked at him “I was a big nobody, despite my mother’s best efforts to socialize me, but everybody knew who you were.” He pulled back and looked at her “and what did you think?” he asked. “I don’t want to hurt your ego” she chortled “but I didn’t. I just wanted to get to school, get through the day and go home” she shrugged.

Bellamy laughed “well, at least you’re honest” he snorted. He made the mistake of looking over at his sister again, the looked back cringing. Clarke laughed “You want to go?” she asked. “Please, if you don’t mind?” he looked at her. She shook her head “I still have some studying to do anyway” she said. “I promise he’s a really good guy” she patted his hand “she could do worse.” She reached under the table for her shoes, then carried them in her hand “is there anybody you don’t know?” he asked. She shrugged “first of all, he also lives in the building, he’s one of our quietest tenants. Second, I may not have had the best childhood, but it did give me a lot of exposure to the finest things in life” she said. “Lincoln owns an art gallery downtown, he lets me paint there and occasionally exhibits my art” she explained. Bellamy made a mental note to locate Lincoln’s gallery and find Clarke’s art. He covered his eyes as they passed Lincoln and Octavia. Clarke just laughed and waved to the bartender following him out.
Chapter 4

usually I don't write too much smut, preferring to let the reader use his/her imagination, but I tried it for this chapter, maybe more to come. Tell me what you think.

Clarke walked out of the bar and remembered that she and Raven hadn’t thought to grab a jacket on the way out. She wrapped her arms around herself it wasn’t that cold, but it was just cold enough that she felt it. Of course, if she hadn’t let Raven dress her in this ridiculously short dress, she would be a little warmer. Bellamy took off his jacket and draped it around her shoulders “thanks” she smiled at him placing her arms in the sleeves “I shouldn’t have let Raven persuade me to wear this damn dress” she chortled. He was reminded of Murphy’s comment about Raven being a bad influence “I didn’t hear anyone complaining” he grinned. “least of all you” she rolled her eyes. He shrugged, but said nothing more “my truck is over there” he pointed at a late model SUV across the rocky parking lot.

Clarke began to follow him, but the rocks hurt her bare feet. When Bellamy turned to see her gingerly walking across the rocks, he walked back to where she was and wrapped an arm around her waist and one behind her knees then scooped her into his arms. “Bellamy” she shrieked wrapping her arms around his neck and holding on for dear life. He grinned “you should have worn your shoes” he chided softly. “when I was a kid, those rocks would not have phased me” she sighed. “I guess that mean you’re getting old” he snorted, earning a slap on his arm.

They reached his truck and Bellamy let go of her legs, letting them fall against his, but not touch the ground. He kept one arm around her waist, while the other fished his keys out of his pocket. Once the truck was unlocked, he settled her in the seat and closed the door walking around the truck to get in the driver’s side. While he did that Clarke looked around the truck, it was cleaner than her car. His backpack was in the backseat with a calculus book sticking out. Clarke shuddered, she could barely do basic math, calculus would probably kill her. “Sorry, you probably have a better car” he said getting in next to her. “Don’t count on it, and it is way messier” she laughed “I could get lost in the desert for days and survive on what is in my car.” Bellamy grinned at her comment “let’s hope that never happens” he chuckled.

“You’re taking calculus?” she asked “are you some kind of mathematical genius?” she asked. He shook head, “I’m just good with numbers” he shrugged. “What kind of math are you taking?” he asked. “Algebra…for the fourth time…” she drawled. “I’m not dumb” she defended when he looked over at her “I just don’t get algebra, and it’s not like I’ll ever have to use it in my career” she explained. He smiled at her “I don’t think you’re dumb” he reassured her “math is hard for a lot of people and schools don’t do a great job of teaching it well” he said. “So, why are taking such a high course?” she asked. He shrugged “it’s required if you want to be a high school math teacher” he said. She snorted “why would you ever want to teach math?” she chortled “and in a high school?”

He glanced at her “so I can teach it well and people won’t have to take the same course four times in college to get a passing grade” he said. “That would have been nice when I was in high school” she murmured. “O had problems in Math, too” he said “If you want, I can try to help you with your algebra sometime” he offered. “I might take you up on that” she replied “but don’t grade me on, because it damn sure wouldn’t be a B-“ she laughed.
“Are you really that upset about your grade?” he asked. She shook her head “no, I did write it in a hurry. I might have spent too much time researching for the paper.” He shook his head “I could tell that it was written in a hurry, but it was well researched” he agreed. “I mean what lame ass professor requires a ten-page paper and a mid-term?” she complained. “Dr. Wallace can be a bit of an ass” he agreed “just be thankful you didn’t have to grade sixty, ten-page papers.” Clarke laughed “you might have a valid point” she replied. “I do have a valid point” he drawled grinning at her.

They arrived at her building “Do you want to come up?” she asked “I don’t keep a lot of alcohol, but I do have coffee and chocolate cake” she looked at him. Bellamy knew he should say no, but before his brain could force the word out, he heard himself saying yes. A little chocolate cake never hurt anyone, right?

Thankfully the parking lot was paved, so Clarke didn’t have to be worried about him sweeping her off her feet again, at least not literally anyway. When they passed the dumpsters outside the building, she tossed the red shoes in one of them. “Let Raven get them out of there” she snorted. Bellamy laughed and followed her into the building. The elevator ride to her floor was a quiet one, as if neither of them knew quite what to say. When the doors swooshed open, she led him down the hall and around the corner before stopping at a door marked 3G.

She fished her keys out of her small purse and opened the door, Beckoning him to enter, then closed the door behind them. Her living room was small, her couch littered with school books, evidence that she and Raven had indeed been studying before they came to the bar. “Sorry, midterms get a me a little crazy” she blushed slightly cleaning off the couch for him to sit if he wanted to. “I slept on a lumpy couch in Wallace’s office last night” he laughed “besides, have you seen Octavia’s apartment?” Clarke laughed “actually, I have” she grinned.

Rather than sit on the couch, Bellamy followed her into a small kitchen, where a large chocolate cake sat on the counter “this was going to be our study break food” she explained “but then I got talked into a different study break.” Bellamy snorted “I hear Raven has that effect on you” he grinned. Clarke sighed “she does, it drives my mom nuts” she laughed “and it results in me looking like this” she ran her hands down her body. Bellamy’s eyes followed her hands. She turned her back to get a knife out to cut the cake and when she turned back around, she ran smack into Bellamy’s rock-hard chest. His arms wrapped around her to steady her ‘sorry” she said breathlessly, staring into his eyes. They were darkening with lust and desire “my kitchen is a little…” the sentence was cut off when Bellamy did the one thing, he’d been thinking about since he’d seen her in the classroom earlier that day.

Moving one hand from her hip to the back of her neck, Bellamy tilted her head and closed the distance between them, capturing her lips with his. At first, he kissed her softly, barely touching her lips. When she fisted his shirt in her hand and started to kiss him back, he increased the pressure, running his tongue along her lips until she opened her mouth. He backed her up to the counter behind her, their tongues dancing together. When her breathing became ragged, he released her lips so she could catch her breath, lowering his mouth to her neck, nuzzling and sucking gently at first. As she cried out his name and writhed against him, he sucked a little hard. He knew if he didn’t stop, she would have a visible memory of this moment, she he lessened the pressure. “Bellamy” she whispered his name breathlessly. He nipped at her earlobe before claiming her mouth again in a fiery kiss.

Clarke clung to him like a second skin moving against him, trying to pull him closer. He ran the hand holding her neck down her body, caressing every dip and curve in her body as he did so until it rested on her hip, parallel to his other hand. Without breaking the kiss, he picked her up and sat her on the edge of the counter. his mouth moved lower teasing her nipples through the fabric of her dress, until they stood taut with need. One hand slipped beneath her dress moving closer to her
center. Clarke panted and writhed against him, opening her legs just enough for him to touch her there. He moaned when he realized she wasn’t wearing any panties. “Raven is a bad influence on you” he grinned at her before capturing her lips again. Clarke gasped when he ran a finger along her lower lips and began moving against him impatiently “So hot, so wet” he whispered huskily before capturing her nipples between her teeth. At the same time, he slid one finger, then another and another inside of her.

Clarke groaned and panted wrapping her arms around him, pulling him tighter, closer. His thumb worked her most sensitive spot at the same time. “Bellamy” she pleaded, calling his name over and over again, loudly. While that particular sound pleased him, Bellamy knew the walls in apartments were generally thin, so he kissed her hard, swallowing her cries. He continued moving his fingers inside her, still paying careful attention to her most sensitive spot with his thumb. He felt her body tighten around his fingers and with another flick of his thumb she came undone, her juices coating his fingers.

After a few minutes, she collapsed against him, hot sweaty and out of breath “remind me to thank raven the next time I see her” he said peppering her lips with small kisses, while the other hand gently caressed her neck. She laughed “I may not even tell her about this” she drawled “she gets really obnoxious when she is right about something.” He grinned lifting her from the counter and lowering her to her feet, but keeping his hands on her waist “I really did invite you up here for chocolate cake and coffee” she smiled at him. “if that offer is still good” he kissed her softly “I’ll take it.”

Bellamy excused himself to go the bathroom, where he could both take care of himself and wash his hands. While the thought of dragging Clarke to her bedroom appealed to him, he didn’t have any condoms with him. Besides, it seemed a little presumptuous to think that she would even be willing to do that with him. Despite being roped into wearing the short dress and fuck-me heels, he somehow knew that wasn’t who Clarke was.

Clarke leaned against the counter, still trying to get her breath back into a regular rhythm after her tryst with Bellamy. If he could do that with his mouth and his fingers, he must be magic in bed. Clarke felt herself blush at just the thought of what he would be like in bed. When he emerged from the bathroom Clarke had coffee brewing and two slices of chocolate cake sitting on the coffee table in the living room. He sat down beside her “Clarke..” he began, wanting to clear the air about what had just happened. “please don’t say you’re sorry about what just happened” she held her hand up “maybe I should be, but I’m not” her cheeks turned a light shade of pink. He turned her face to look into her eyes “I’m not sorry” he spoke gently “and you shouldn’t be either. I know the girl in the bar tonight, or in your kitchen just now isn’t who you are” he said. “And it’s not like I go around doing what we did tonight all the time either.”

Clarke sigh of relief was audible. “Hey” he tipped her face to look into her eyes “I know I can come off as a complete ass” he spoke gently “but I consider myself a pretty good reader of people, and I think you are not the kind of person that sleeps around.” She smiled at him “I don’t, you know” she said “I am however a student, who really needs to study. I have a math test I am nowhere near ready to take tomorrow at 8am” she murmured. “why don’t we eat this cake” he grinned at her “you know brain food and all, then I will stay for a little while to see if I can help you with your math?” She looked at him “don’t you have your own work to do?” she asked. “Not that much, I can finish later or in the morning” he said “now eat your brain food” he handed her the plated cake. Not one to turn down chocolate, Clarke took the plate.

A few hours later, Clarke was bleary-eyed and fuzzy. “Thank you for your help, but I’m tired of dealing with algebra” she said “and you have your own homework to do.” She stood up, reaching for his hand. He took it and stood up, putting his other hand on her waist drawing her to his chest “I
want to see you again” he said kissing her softly. She looked up at him “I thought TA’s aren’t
allowed to date students” she said. “Then, we’ll just have to be careful” he kissed her again “because
I don’t think I can stay away from you” he spoke huskily. Clarke knew she should refuse his offer,
she didn’t want to be the reason he didn’t finish school, but she didn’t think she could stay away
from him either.

She nodded “okay” she said looking into his eyes “but now you need to study or whatever TA’s do
when they’re not…” he cut her off with a kiss “no dumb jokes” he laughed allowing her to tug him
towards the door. He took her cell phone and called himself from it. “now I have your number and
you have mine” he pulled her into his chest “call me tomorrow after you take your test” he said. She
nodded and he kissed her once more before forcing himself to leave.

She picked up their plates and washed them off then put them in the dishwasher. Clarke leaned
against the door and slid down it. She couldn’t believe what had happened in her kitchen. She’d
never been so hot for a guy that she allowed him to finger her while she was fully dressed, well
almost fully dressed. Speaking of fully dressed, she wanted to get out of her dress and take a shower.
Then she needed to get some sleep for her test tomorrow, though she doubted she’d get any sleep at
all, seeing how she couldn’t get Bellamy, or his mouth and fingers out of her memory.
Clarke barely slept at all resulting in her waking up bleary-eyed and tired the next morning. She was not even close to being ready to take her algebra midterm. “Damn you Bellamy” she cursed. Every time she closed her eyes, she felt his mouth on her and his fingers inside of her. Clarke took a shower, then brushed her teeth. She sat down to put her make-up on, so she at least looked better than she felt. “oh no” she groaned when she noticed a small bruise on her neck. She wasn’t planning on telling Raven anything that happened last night, but unless she managed to hide the evidence she would be forced to.

After 10 minutes, Clarke gave up on trying to hide the mark, she wrapped a scarf around her neck. That probably wouldn’t stop Raven, but if it came to that, she would just have to explain herself to Raven. She arrived in her math class just as the teacher was handing out the tests “that was very close, Ms. Griffin” the teacher murmured. Clarke shrugged “sorry, car problems” she said. She could tell by the teacher’s expression that she didn’t believe her, but the teacher put the test on the desk anyway “good luck” she drawled, moving past her. Ninety minutes later, Clarke put her pencil down scowling at the test. She finished it, but she was positive she wasn’t going to pass. With a sigh, she packed up her backpack, picked up the test and dropped on the teacher’s desk then left the room.

“New fashion trend?” Raven walked up to her as she walked into the quad “Or” she tugged on the scarf tied loosely on Clarke’s neck grinning broadly “trying to hide something from your know-it-all bff?” she arched her eyebrows at Clarke. Clarke shook her head “I should have known I couldn’t keep it from you for long” she sighed. “So, spill” Raven grinned victoriously “it was Bellamy, right?” she grew serious for a minute. Clarke rolled her eyes “yes, it was Bellamy and we didn’t have sex” Clarke looked at her. “Well, you did something” Raven put her hands on her hips waiting for Clarke to explain. Clarke dropped he head “can we at least do this where a million people aren’t around?” she asked “you know seeing as we’re not supposed to be doing that…” she leveled her gaze at Raven.

Raven sighed dramatically and tugged Clarke in the direction of the parking lot where they could talk in private. They reached Raven’s car “Don’t you have a class to get to?” Clarke glanced at her “are you kidding?” Raven snorted “this is way more important than that” she crossed her arms over her chest obstinately “so, get in the car Griffin and start spilling.” Clarke sighed “it was clear, she wasn’t going to get out of telling Raven what had happened, so she climbed into the car and sat opposite her friend.

“Oh. My. God.” Raven stared at Clarke “I can’t believe you and Bellamy actually did that” she grinned at her. “Did he stay and finish the job?” she asked. Clarke shook her head “he helped me study for my algebra test” she answered “which I probably failed miserably” she sighed. “You don’t know that” Raven chided “and then what happened?” she asked. “Then he went home, physically at least” she smiled guiltily. “Spent the night in your dreams, huh?” Raven smirked knowingly. “Don’t be so smug” Clarke grunted. Raven laughed “why because I was right?” she chortled. “You were a bad influence” Clarke rolled her eyes. “So, what else is new?” Raven shot back.

“So, now what happens?” Raven asked. “He took my number and gave me his” Clarke shrugged “he said he wants to see me again” she looked a little sad “but, I don’t know…” she trailed off. Raven studied Clarke “not everybody is like that idiot, Finn” she said “you can’t let him ruin every relationship you ever have” her eyes bore into Clarke’s. “like you do?” Clarke gazed at her. Raven had the grace to look away “He did a number on both of us” she took Clarke’s hand in hers “and yes, I may stick to what is familiar” she sighed “but I am okay with the casual sex Murphy and I have” she shrugged. “And Roan?” Clarke arched her eyebrows. “Him too” Raven agreed “and
 occasionally “both of them” she admitted. Clarke shuddered “don’t knock it until you’ve tried it” Raven grinned at her “Roan would do you in a heartbeat.” She grinned wickedly “and Bellamy might enjoy a threesome” she laughed at Clarke’s expression “have you asked him?”

Clarke snorted “no, and I won’t be doing that” Clarke shook her head. Raven laughed “Ok, I’ll ask him” she declared. Clarke dropped her head in her hands “some days I really hate you” she groaned. Raven ignored her comment “what would you do if he would say yes?” she asked. Clarke didn’t even know how to answer that question “I get a little action, and I do mean little” Clarke looked at her “I mean we didn’t even have sex…” she drawled. “and?” Raven prompted “I…” Clarke paused, her cheeks turning pink “can we please talk about something else?” she begged. Raven grinned “fine, but this topic will come up again” she promised.

Mercifully, Raven turned the subject to one that Clarke found more comfortable and they talked until Raven really did have to go to class. As they parted smiled and shook her head, of course her best friend, knew her schedule, why did she ever think she would get away with keeping what had happened with her and Bellamy from Raven. She was so lost in her thoughts, that she didn’t watch where she was going and bumped into something very solid. “A strong pair of arms wrapped around her and for a brief moment she panicked, but when she looked up that disappeared “what if I had been a rapist or a knife wielding serial killer?”

She rolled her eyes “Gee mom” she drawled looking up at Roan “I guess I would be in trouble then, huh?” she grinned stepping back when removed his hands from her waist. He laughed “what are you so distracted about, or should I say who?” he arched his eyebrows staring the at the purple spot on her neck. Her hand flew to her neck, quickly trying to cover the evidence of Bellamy’s attraction to her “I have no idea what you’re talking about” she denied. Roan snorted “uh-huh” he grunted “and if you expect me to believe that…” he gazed at her, his arms crossed over his chest. “Did he use a condom at least?” Roan drawled when Clarke refused to answer.

Clarke could feel her face growing hot “we didn’t need a condom” Clarke answered knowing there was no way out of this. Roan and Raven had their fair share of sexual encounters, mostly with each other and Murphy. Clarke was by no means a virgin, but after Finn, she shied away from the intimacy of sex, it was just healthier, emotionally speaking. “Well something happened” Roan gently rubbed his thumb over the bruised area on her neck. Clarke sighed “what is it with you and Raven, do you have like a ‘sexdar’ or something?” she chortled. He laughed “sexdar?” he repeated “no, but I do have eyes, and I know something is going on with you and that TA.” He looked down at her “and after Finn…” he trailed off.

Clarke smiled up at him, taking one of his hands in hers “yes” she admitted “something happened with Bellamy, but not like what happened with Finn” or at least she hoped so anyway. He didn’t seem like the type to play the games Finn did, but then again when it came to men, she didn’t have the best judgement or luck it seemed. Roan arched his eyebrow waiting for more “so, do I need to have a chat with Bellamy?” he asked. Clarke laughed, laying her head against his chest “thank you, but no” she looked up at him “we did things, together” she sighed “but we didn’t have sex, and he didn’t hurt me, so you don’t have to go breaking any bones on behalf” she grinned “but thanks for looking out for me.”

Roan’s large hand moved in slow circles on her back “We all have to take care of each other” he said, smiling gently down at her. “Speaking of which” Clarke stepped back “Are you okay?” she asked “after the other night?” He nodded solemnly “I’m fine” he said wearily. Clarke could tell that he wasn’t “You need to come live in my spare room and get away from all that” she looked into his deep blue eyes, a girl could get lost in those eyes. If Roan would let them.

He was a good-looking guy, a hot guy according to some of the girls she and Raven would meet when they were out with Roan and Murphy; but the secrets that he kept weighed so heavily on him
that relationships were totally non-existent, unless you counted Raven and occasionally Murphy. “Not all of us had fathers who left us trust funds or fairy step fathers who give us a free place to crash” Roan reminded her.

Clarke smiled at his analogy, picturing Marcus in a blue dress with a wand, then looked back up at him “I could live two lives and never hit the end of my trust fund” she looked up at him. She wasn’t trying to brag or make him feel bad, it was just the reality of what her dad had done for her. “and he would approve of using it to help and old friend, who really needs a fresh start” she looked into his eyes. “At least think about it” she sighed reaching for his other hand “I know how scary it can be disconnecting from your family like that, but I promise you, you’ll be so much happier” she told him “and, you’ll always have Raven, and Murphy and I.”

He played with a strand of her hair “Even if I am flat broke and bartending at Nylah’s?” he quipped. Clarke grinned “as long as the drinks are flowing and free” she joked “seriously, think about it” she pleaded. “I will” he promised, “but at the moment, I have a mid-term to take” he said dropping his hand from her hair. He bent down to kiss her cheek “and if you ever need me to kick Bellamy’s ass…” he grinned. She laughed “I don’t think he is that kind of guy, but if I ever need it, I will tell you.” He wrapped her up in his arms pulling her into a hug “I’ve got you” he spoke softly “and I’ve got you” she returned “not go to class, mister” she shook her finger at him “yes mom” He retorted jogging away.

Bellamy stood just out of sight, watching Clarke with Roan. She had told him they were just friends, but the two of them looked pretty cozy. He wanted to go to her, wrap her in his arms, kiss her until she couldn’t think of anyone but him; but the quad was too open for PDA’s and he couldn’t afford to lose his position as Wallace’s TA, not if he wanted to finish school. Besides, he wasn’t exactly sure he believed her story about not sharing her men. She and Roan looked pretty friendly to him. He’d already been down that road once with Gina. It was not something he was looking forward to repeating. Clarke picked up her backpack and walked out of the quad. His heart told him to stop being a fool and go after her, but his feet refused to move. Maybe, he’d just call her later.
Ok, this is probably the most smut I have written in my life, and I'm not even sure its that good, but I bet you'll never look at chocolate cake the same way again!

Clarke put down her history notes with a sigh after reading the same line five times. She looked at the clock on the wall, it was really late and she hadn’t heard from Bellamy. Of course, she could call him she supposed. Just as she gathered the courage to reach for her phone she heard her ringtone. Turning the phone over, she smiled as she accepted the call. “I was just thinking about you” Bellamy heard the smile in her voice. “Sorry,” he grinned knowing she’d been thinking about him “Between studying and getting the mid-term ready I’ve been busy all day.” It wasn’t really a lie, he had been busy all day, but he could have and thought about calling her all day.

“How was your test?” he asked. She snorted “probably terrible” she grunted. “I didn’t get much sleep last night, so 8:00 came way to early, especially for math” she murmured. “Sorry, I should have left earlier” he replied. Clarke thought she would have been better off if he had stayed, at least then she might have gotten a little sleep, after…”it’s okay” she shrugged “it’s not you, its math. There is no good time for it. Before noon is too early and after noon is too late.” Bellamy laughed at her “I’m going to change that for the next generation” he declared. “I hope you do” Clarke sighed.

“So, did you manage to avoid Raven?” he asked. Clarke sighed dramatically “I never manage to avoid her” she chuckled “and I also ran into Roan, who wanted to know whose ass he needed to kick.” Bellamy laughed softly “sorry” he drawled “but I can’t say I regret what happened.” Clarke felt her face grow hot at the mere memory of yesterday’s events “me too” Clarke agreed. Bellamy heard her voice become husky and breathless. “As good as that sounds” she hoped her voice didn’t betray her “I actually need to study for tomorrow’s mid-term” she sighed “and I’m pretty sure, that wouldn’t happen if you were here.”

He laughed softly, “you’re probably right” he agreed “but you know I did write the test….?” he murmured. Clarke grinned “isn’t that a little like cheating?” she laughed. “I suppose you’re right” he sighed. Clarke smiled at his tone “I have a question for you?” she asked. “Hit me” he replied. She tossed her book to the coffee table and laid down on the couch “what are you wearing?” she asked, her voice was low and breathless.

Bellamy was already in the classroom the next morning when Raven and Clarke entered, nearly late as usual. Raven glanced at him, smiling and giving him a thumbs-up. He smiled at her, then looked at Clarke, who met his gaze with a smile. His jeans suddenly felt a little tighter. He recalled with vivid imagination at the sudden turn the phone call last night took. At first, she was a little shy, but as the conversation continued, her could hear her voice become husky and breathless. He’d bet she didn’t sleep much better last night, then she had the night before.

The midterm in Wallace’s class went much better, despite the fact that Clarke had to force herself to concentrate on the test and not the TA. She deliberately made sure she and Raven were the last ones in the room at the end of the test. Grinning and nodding at her, Raven walked to the door and went outside. Clarke knew she was standing on the other side stopping anyone who might have tried to
come in, or at least making a bunch of noise to alert them. Bellamy shook his head at her when she came down to the table. He’d noticed that she stopped to pick up Raven’s test and hand them both to him. “Are the two of you always up to something?” he asked. Clarke shrugged “only when we have a common goal” she drawled gazing at him wickedly. Bellamy stood up and walked around that table, then pulled her into his arms “Did you sleep better last night?” he asked, his lips mere inches from hers.

“What do you think?” she answered his question with a question of her own. “I think” he nipped at her lower lip “that I need to come over tonight” he whispered “make sure you get some sleep” he captured her lips with his. She moved against him, deepening the kiss “Dr. Wallace” Raven spoke loudly from the doorway “I was just looking for you.” Bellamy and Clarke broke apart suddenly “nice alarm system” he laughed stealing one more kiss before stepping away and gathering the tests on the table into his arms. Clarke grinned “Have I mentioned what a bad influence Raven tends to be?” she asked. “You might have mentioned that” he laughed “I’ll call you later” he said unable to resist kissing her again.

“I’ll be waiting with baited breath” she whispered, then climbed the stairs and left the room.

“Blake” Professor Wallace entered the classroom. “How did it go today?” he asked, “Good sir” Bellamy answered “I’ll get these graded today before the break starts” he said. Wallace nodded “Are you working during the break?” he asked. He hadn’t planned on it, but if Wallace asked him to, refusing would not be a smart move. “Actually, my sister asked me to help her fix some things in her apartment” Bellamy told him “did you need something?” he asked. “Nothing that can’t wait until after the break” Wallace shrugged, surprising Bellamy. “Thank you, sir” Bellamy nodded grateful that he hadn’t been asked to work. “Did you need anything else, sir?” he asked.

Wallace was quiet in a calm, respectful sort of way, which was a total surprise to Bellamy. When he finally responded, he was quieter than normal “Blake” he sighed sitting on the edge of the table “I know what the students say about me” his lips turned up in a half-smile. “And I suppose they’re right, as you well know” he looked at Bellamy “there is a reason for that” he said. “I don’t really want to talk about it with you or anyone else” he glanced at Bellamy “but I wanted to tell you that I know what you have gone through with your sister, and why you put up with me” he sighed “and I wanted to thank you for your loyalty.” Unsure of what to say, Bellamy quietly listened. “so, grade those tests, then leave them on my desk and enjoy your week off” he patted Bellamy on the shoulder, then left the room without another word. Bellamy blinked, wondering if he just imagined what had happened, but who was he to argue. The bright side of helping Octavia was that her apartment was really close to Clarke’s apartment, and since they were in the same place, at the same time, he may have to find an excuse to go visit.

Clarke nearly fell over laughing after she left the classroom “Bellamy said you were a nice alarm system” she grinned. Raven smiled “and a bad influence, don’t forget that” she added. “Did you at least get to kiss him before Dr. Killjoy came along?” she asked. The goofy grin on Clarke’s face was the only answer she needed. Raven shook her head “when is that boy going to do something besides feel you up?” Raven sighed disgustedly “how am I ever going to propose the idea of a threesome, if the two of you never…” she stopped when Clarke held out her hand. “I forbid you to even mention that word to him” she declared, her cheeks turning a bright shade of pink. Raven put her hands on her hips “and how are you going to stop me?” she arched her eyebrows at Clarke. “besides the third party doesn’t have to be Roan” she grinned wickedly “I would gladly volunteer to be the third in your virgin journey into the wonderful world of…” Clarke hung her head “Stop” she pleaded. Raven laughed “you’re such a stick in the mud” she grumbled.

“What are you doing next week?” Raven asked her. “not a damn thing” Clarke declared. “Except on Thursday, when you make your annual visit home” Raven pointed out. Clarke exhaled, don’t remind
me” she sighed “and tell Jasper they’d better save some pecan pie for me!” Raven grinned wickedly “if we save you a whole one, will you have Bellamy slather it all over your body and…” Clarke groaned “I think you need to find Roan or Murphy, or both of them and get laid, so you can talk about something else” she rolled her eyes. Raven’s smiled at her mischievously “wanna join us? They would be okay with it” Clarke threw her head back “I done” she declared “you, go get laid or something, so you can stop focusing on my love life.”

Raven grinned “that sounds like a fine idea” she pulled Clarke into a hug “I’m sure I’ll see you before, but if not I will see you on Thursday.” Clarke nodded and looked through her bag for her keys “I’ll see you before then” she snorted “you won’t be able to wait until that long to ask about sex” she drewled. “How true that is” Raven grinned in agreement. Luckily, Clarke was spared anymore embarrassing conversations when Raven’s phone rang. She took the opportunity to run away while she could.

Bellamy looked up from the test he was grading thankfully, it was the last one, so he could go home after this, though he wasn’t sure what home he wanted to go to at the moment. He glanced at his watch, he wanted to call Clarke, but it was so late. Bellamy put a big red B on the paper, then added it to the stack. He put the stack on Wallace’s desk, then stretched his arms. Before he could decide if he was going to call Clarke or not, his phone rang.

He looked at the screen and smiled “I was trying to decide if I should call you or not” he greeted her. “Are you still grading papers?” she asked. “Just finished the last one” he said “I was debating on whether it was too late to call you or not” he admitted. “it’s not” she confirmed “I’m usually up late. So are you headed home…”she trailed off. “Unless, I get a better offer” he tried to sound nonchalant “I still have chocolate cake left” she replied. Bellamy smiled “Give me ten minutes” he said hanging up the phone.

It actually took Bellamy fifteen minutes to get to Clarke’s building, he had to make a pit stop at the drug store. Thankfully, Octavia wasn’t around, so he didn’t have to explain himself. When he knocked on Clarke’s door, she opened it. No sooner had he closed the door, he swept her into his arms claiming her mouth as if his life depended on it. “Bellamy” she whined pressing up against him. He gathered her closer, nuzzling her neck. She moaned his name huskily, her fingers clawing at his shirt. Bellamy gave a guttural groan and swept her up into his arms “Bedroom” he whispered against her lips. Clarke pointed to a room at the end of the hall. Bellamy claimed her lips again walking toward her room.

Bellamy lowered Clarke to her feet, keeping her pressed against his chest. He nipped at her lower lip with his while, he hands tugged at her shirt, pulling it out of her waistband. When his hands found her silky skin below, he groaned into her mouth. His hands traveled up her chest to cup her breast, his fingers squeezing her nipples until they formed hard peaks. Clarke panted, whispering his name feverishly. Her hands clenched the back of his shirt. Bellamy’s mouth left hers just long enough for him to pull her shirt over her head, exposing her perfect breasts.

A low moan formed in his throat “beautiful” he sighed dropping his head to take one pebbled nipple in his mouth. Clarke panted breathless, her hands tangled in his dark curls. “Bellamy” she cried out when he switched to her other breast. While his mouth worshipped her breasts, his hands found their way to the band of yoga pants and inside them. When his fingers found her wet heat, she quivered, her breathing becoming increasingly shallow. He looked up at her, eyes blazing with wanton desire “I want to taste you” he whispered huskily. Unable to find her voice, she nodded.

Bellamy was blown away by the look of complete trust I her eyes. He laid he down on the bed behind her, pulling her to the edge of the bed, then got down on his knees. The hand that had been inside her days before joined his other one slowly, tortuously, easing off the boy shorts she wore,
while his mouth moved lower still. When he was eye level with her wet, glistening center, he dipped his tongue in her sweet heat, lapping softly, but not enter her. "Bellamy" she cried out ‘please’ she begged. He grinned lightly nipping at her. She tangled her fingers in his hair ad pulled him closer. Bellamy grinned wickedly, taking in the way she looked, naked and wanton in front of him, writhing and begging.

She moved against him “Tell me what you want baby” he whispered huskily. “taste. Me.” She panted breathlessly “like this?” his tongue shot out tracing a line across her lower lips. “yes” she moaned arching her back "ohgodyes” she cried when he opened his mouth and kissed her there, while fingering her at the same time. She whimpered and whined, moving against him and with a flick of his thumb, for the second time, she came completely undone, this time coating his face with her juices. While Clarke lay back on the bed, breathing raggedly, he kissed his way up her body, pulling her with him until they laid side by side on her bed.

After a few minutes, she caught her breath enough to speak ‘Not fair” she rolled over, pushing him onto his back and climbed onto his chest. Bellamy’s eyes bore into hers “what’s not fair?” he asked his hands reaching for her, but she caught them and placed them over his head. “Don’t move” she commanded huskily. Bellamy watched her with passion filled eyes. Sitting on him as naked as Lady Godiva, looking at him with an intensity that made his blood boil. “it’s not fair that you always seem to be the one wearing too many clothes” she explained, her fingers finding the buttons on his shirt. He moved his arms to reach for her, but she shook her head “Oh no, Mr. Blake” she waved a finger at him “you’ve had your fun, now it’s my turn” she said popping the last button on his shirt and lowering her hands and her mouth to his rock-hard abs. When her mouth found his nipple and her tongue swirled and nipped at first one, then the other. This time it was Bellamy panting and breathless, but he kept his hands over his head, watching as her mouth moved lower. She inserted a finger into the waistband of his jeans, popping the button fly clasp open, the cupped him in her hands. Slowly, every so slowly, she inched the zipper of his jeans down until his engorged head stood at attention.

She looked at him wickedly, licked her lips, then lapped his head, inching down his jeans to taste more. It was pure torture for Bellamy to lay perfectly still, not touching her while she licked him from top to bottom. He hissed, clutching the covers on the bed when she took him into her mouth. “Clarke” he cried tangling his fingers in her hair as she licked and sucked him, her head bobbing up and down. He could tell he was about to explode, and he wasn’t going to do it in her mouth, not without her consent. Reaching down, he dragged her to him, flipped her onto her back and kissed her hard. “Condom” he paused reaching for a foil packet before shucking his jeans off. He rolled the condom into place, then ran his hands down her legs, placing her slim ankles on his shoulders, and pushed into her wet heat, then backing out again.

“Bellamy” she pleaded “please?” He grinned “Please what?” he grinned wickedly. Clarke leaned up so that her mouth was inches from his and placed her hands on is thighs “fuck me” she whispered, closing the distance between them. Bellamy groaned when she moved against him “you wish is my command” he replied huskily letting her legs fall on either side of him as he gathered her to his chest and plunged deep inside her in one smooth motion.

Hours later, with Clarke curled up against him he marveled at how flexible she was “five years of gymnastics will make you that way” she grinned. “Well, sign me up then” he murmured kissing her softly. At the moment, she was sleeping, her head resting on his chest, while he combed his fingers through her hair. Over the course of the night, he’d realized she was as feisty in bed as she was out of bed, matching him stride for stride every time. When her breathing changed, he knew she was waking up. “One day we’ll actually get to eating he chocolate cake, right?” she asked, her hot breath spilling across his chest. He laughed softly “yes” he agreed “one day we will. Of course, Chocolate is good on more than cake” he grinned wickedly running one of his hands down her body
suggestively. “oh really? Maybe you need to prove that theory” she rose up, her lips inches from his. His eyes glittered dangerously. “Challenge accepted Griffin” he said claiming her lips.

“You know we have to sleep at some point” she murmured, “but obviously not now” she climbed on top of him her tongue finding his nipples. He groaned, pulling her up to him and kissed her softly, “maybe you shouldn’t do that, then” he drawled, eyes blazing. “Besides, we have all week to sleep” he drawled, then lifted her off of him and stood up. “where are you going?” she asked when he got out of bed “I believe somebody issued a chocolate cake challenge” he said leaning down to claim her lips before leaving the room. He returned with a large piece of the cake staring at Clarke as if she were dinner. He l swiped a piece of the frosting, coating his lips, then kissed her until neither of the tasted chocolate.

He then straddled her using his fingers to coat her body in chocolate. Clarke gasped when his finger slipped between her lower lips, generously coating her center with the cake. She lost the ability to think when his lips replaced his fingers.
Chapter 7

Clarke woke up the next day wrapped up in Bellamy’s arms. They didn’t get a lot of sleep the night before, because one or the other of them started something the other didn’t want to stop. Despite that, Clarke felt so much better than she had the previous two days when Bellamy was in her dreams rather than her bed. He stirred a little bit, pulling her closer to him. She could tell by his breathing, he was still sleeping. Since neither of them had plans for a few days, Clarke was content to lay in his arms “Hey wake up sleepy…” Raven poked her head in the door of Clarke’s room. She grinned when she saw Bellamy “well, well, well” she drawled surveying the room. “Did we have a little fun last night?” she looked at Clarke, eyebrows arched.

“You know” Clarke sighed “there’s this new invention, called a phone. You dial a num…” Raven laughed at her “I did call” she replied “but you didn’t answer. Now, I know why…” she grinned wickedly at her friend. “Just how much fun did you have?” she asked seeing the remnants of the chocolate cake Bellamy brought in last night. “A lot” Clarke answered simply “but that’s all the details you get” she leveled her gaze at Raven.

“Why are you in my apartment at 8:00am on a non-school day?” Clarke asked. “I wanted to see if you wanted to go shopping with me to get Turkey day dinner stuff” she said. “You are eating dinner with us, right?” she asked. “I’ll be over as quickly as I can escape the nut house” she nodded. Raven started laughing “you should take Bellamy with you” she grinned. “I said I wanted to escape the nut house, not get stuck there” Clarke drawled “Abby would have a field day if I brought Bellamy. Besides, we’re not quite at the meet the parents stage yet” Clarke pointed out.

Bellamy was starting to wake up, he wrapped his arms around Clarke “good morning” he said pulling her closer. She returned his greeting, when he went to kiss her, she smiled at him “before you start something you can’t finish” she nodded in the direction of the door “you should know we have company. He turned his head and saw Raven standing there “Of course it’s you” he shook his head. She grinned innocently “I was coming to see if Clarke wanted to go to the store, but if you want to start something, I’m willing to join the party” she purred, looking at them. Clarke buried her face in Bellamy’s chest. He laughed and wrapped an arm around her. “As enticing as that sounds” he looked at her “I’ll have to pass” he said.

“But you should go shopping with Raven” he turned to Clarke, kissing her softly “otherwise, I might have to sneak out of Octavia’s apartment today and take you back to bed.” Clarke grinned “and that would be bad?” she arched her eyebrows. “Go.” Bellamy shook his head “so, I can show you tonight how much I missed you” he whispered huskily, kissing her softly. Clarke shivered at his tone “Okay” she agreed. Raven stood in the doorway rolling her eyes “I’ll wait outside for you” she looked at Clarke.

Their “long” week seemed incredibly short. Bellamy spent his days helping Octavia redecorate her apartment, and getting to know Lincoln, who also got roped into helping her. It turned out that he was the nice guy everyone said he was. By Wednesday, the two of the had gotten along so well, they were vetoing Octavia’s bad ideas together. Clarke wasn’t sure what they were doing, but Marcus had brought her the permits to post, so apparently, he was okay with whatever they were up to. “Are you coming to brunch Thursday?” he asked when he dropped them off Wednesday Afternoon. She nodded “I’ll be there, but we’re having a friendsgiving at five, so I can’t stay all day.”

Marcus looked at her, his expression a mixture of sadness and gratitude. He knew she had created quite the support group around her, he just hated that there was even a need for it. He also knew
about her new guy, though he knew better than to press her for details. “She misses you, you know” he said. Clarke snorted “she misses controlling me, you mean” she retorted. He shook his head “she knows now she could have handled things differently” he looked into her eyes “but like someone else I know” he kissed her forehead “she’s too stubborn to admit, she might have been wrong” he smiled at her.

When Clarke said nothing, he continued “just do me a favor and listen to her Thursday, to her, not what she says, but what she does” he asked pulling her into a hug. Clarke rested her head on his shoulder “I will do my best to see her and not listen to her” Clarke agreed. She walked him to the door “thank you” she said opening the door “for everything.” He smiled and hugged her again “I know I’m not your dad” he spoke softly “but I love you as if I were, I hope you know that” he sighed, releasing her “I’ll see you tomorrow” he kissed her forehead “and don’t forget…” he began, but Clarke cut him off with a grin “to dress like a lady” she rolled her eyes. He grinned at her “It’s her only other request” he laughed at her expression.

Bellamy heard their voices when he came around the corner. He stopped, not sure if he should interrupt or let them finish. His choice was made for him when Marcus greeted him “you must be Bellamy” he held out his hand. Surprised that he knew who he was, Bellamy could only nod and shake the hand he offered. “How did you know…” Clarke shrugged “you know what, never mind” she shook her head, Marcus often knew things about her life that she couldn’t figure out how he found out, but he didn’t use them as weapons against her.

While she was still trying to figure out what she was going to tell him about Bellamy, Marcus spoke again. She could hear the laughter in his voice “while she tries to figure out how I already know who you are” he grinned “I’ll introduced myself. I’m Marcus Kane, her stepfather, and owner of this building” he said. “I try to give her some space, so she can live her life her way” he looked into Bellamy’s eyes “but make no mistake, I am always on her side” his eyes were like glints of steel, though his voice was softer. Bellamy nodded “I’ll remember that, sir” he replied. This time Marcus did laugh “sir, I like him already” he grinned at Clarke, hugging her one more time “I love you kid” he kissed her cheek. “love you, too” she returned. He stepped back, nodded at Bellamy and left.

“Sorry, I didn’t know he was coming by” she drawled “or how he already knows who you are” she anticipated his next question. “He just knows things about my life somehow” she shook her head. “That’s probably not a bad thing” he murmured pulling her into his chest and kissing her. “It’s good that you have people in your life who care about you, even nosy ones like Raven” he spoke a little louder when he saw her turning the corner. She stuck her tongue out at him. “Pecan pie or Dixie Pie?” she looked at Clarke. “you expect me to choose?” Clarke arched her eyebrows at her friend. Raven snorted “Right, I totally forgot who I was talking to…” she rolled her eyes and dialed a number on the phone “both” she spoke into the phone, maybe two of each in case she decides get creative with one of them” she winked at Bellamy. Clarke buried her head in his chest, blushing furiously “enjoy this thanksgiving” she glowered at her friend “for it may be your last.” Raven laughed “you know you love me” she retorted turning her back “have fun with your mom tomorrow” she said as she walked away.

Bellamy laughed, stroking her hair “you two really do torture each other, don’t you?” he laughed. Clarke nodded “it’s a love/hate thing” chuckled. “Here these are for Octavia” she handed him the permits Marcus brought over “What are you doing anyway?” she asked. Mostly painting and she wanted a walk-in closet” he shrugged. “By the way you were right about Lincoln” he admitted. “He is a nice guy, and he cares a lot about O.” Clarke smiled up at him “he really does” she agreed. “she is all he talks about when we are at the gallery.”
“Speaking of Gallery” Bellamy looked down at her “I would love to see your art sometime.” She shrugged “I’m no Picasso” she shook her head. “Well, you must be pretty good if Lincoln lets you exhibit your work” he countered. “Bellamy, where are you?” Octavia called for him. “I kind of ditched her” he grinned “couldn’t wait until tonight to do this” he bent down and kissed her softly before jogging back down the hall. “Hey O your permits are here” Clarke heard him say before their voices faded.

The next morning, Bellamy woke up to find Clarke’s side of the bed empty. He found her in the bathroom curling her hair and putting make-up on. She wore a knee length dress that hugged her curves, but in a modest sort of way. “Make-up, a dress and doing your hair” he smiled at her wrapping an arm around her waist “is thanksgiving a big day at your mom’s?” he asked. Clarke sighed “her two requests are the I visit on the holidays, and that I dress like a lady, not a tramp” she rolled her eyes. “And what do you get in return?” he asked. “she leaves me alone and doesn’t judge me on my life choices and my friends.”

Bellamy gave her a sad smile “It must be hard having a bad relationship with your mom” he sighed. He couldn’t imagine what that was like. Before his mom died, she was his best friend. “It wasn’t always this way” she shrugged “I mean we always had different ideas about what I should do with my life, but…” she trailed off. Bellamy could tell there was more she wanted to say, something that clearly hurt to even think about. He pulled her back to his chest “it’s okay” he whispered into her hair “we don’t have to talk about it if you don’t want to.” She turned in his arms “it’s just hard to talk about” she sighed laying her head on his chest. “My dad ran interference for us” she gave a half smile “he knew just what to say that would pacify my mom, so that I could follow my dreams.”

“I could come with you” he offered “mom’s like me” he grinned. She shook her head “thank you,” she looked into his eyes, “but she isn’t like Marcus at all, she could give Professor Wallace a run for his money in the bitchiness department.” He searched her face for any evidence that she might be stretching the truth just a little bit, but saw none. “She would ask a million questions I’m not ready to answer and we’d never make it to dinner.” She turned his head so that his gaze met hers “if you really want to meet my mom, I will set something up” she “but a surprise visit on Thanksgiving isn’t a good thing, trust me” she grinned. “Anyway, didn’t I hear something about you cooking the bird tonight? She asked.

He nodded “apparently none of the ‘friends’ at your friendsgiving can even cook a turkey” he drawled. “She nodded “If you stick around long enough you’ll find out that most of us are typical ‘spoiled little rich kids’ who were raised with cooks and nannies, who dared to follow their dreams and not their parent’s” she shrugged. He tilted her head to capture his lips with hers “I know this is new and scary” he spoke softly “for me too, but I am exactly where I want to be.”

Clarke took his hand “I’m sorry” she sighed “I have a lifetime of relationship issues, sometimes they slip out. Today is probably going to be one of those days” she looked at him. “It’s not just about seeing my mom, it’s about going…” she paused and blinked , trying not to cry “about going home, even for the brief time I’m there.” Bellamy pulled her to him and held her “I understand, he spoke softly “that’s why O lives here and not at home with me” he told her. Clarke grunted softly, it occurred to her, that she didn’t even know where Bellamy lived. Their relationship to this point was purely physical. “I have to go” she sighed pulling back as if it was the last thing she wanted to do. “I’ll see you in a few hours?” she looked at him. He nodded and kissed her softly “call me if you need to get away fast” he said. She laughed “I will do that. Don’t make the turkey dry” she returned, grabbing her keys and purse.

The friendsgiving was happening at Jasper and Monty’s house because they the biggest kitchen. Raven showed up not long after Clarke left to show Bellamy where they lived. “That’s a big bird” Bellamy eyed the ginormous turkey in Raven’s lap, “It has to feed a lot of people” she shrugged.
“How many is a lot?” Bellamy asked. She started naming off names, counting on her fingers, some of which he hadn’t heard before. Some he did, “Roan comes to these things?” he asked. Raven nodded “Like Clarke, he has a family thing to attend first, but he’ll be here for dinner.

They arrived at the house where the dinner was going to be held. Bellamy was surprised to see the street lined with cars. “Hey, the bird whispherer is here” a tall, lanky kid wearing goofy looking goggles proclaimed. A raucous cheer went up “Clearly the drinking has started” Raven snorted. Bellamy Blake, this is Jasper Jordan, one of our hosts. Jasper, this is Bellamy” she pointed between the two “you’re Clarke’s new friend” he grinned. “Is she…”he looked at Raven. She nodded “so, we should probably save her a drink, then huh?” he asked. “Probably” Raven said.

Raven let him through the house pointing out different people, there was Jasper’s girlfriend Maya, his roommate Monty, who was making the stuffing with his girlfriend Harper.

Another set of friends were decorating and setting the table. Raven called them Luna, Echo and Emori pointing to them as she did. “This is Nate Miller” Raven tapped another guy and his friend Jackson” Miller reached out his hand “call me Miller everyone else does” he grinned. “Be nice to him” Raven chuckled “he supplies the booze!” Another raucous cheer sounded. “You know Nylah from the bar” Raven pointed to her and of course you know this loser” she grinned at Murphy. “Welcome to the party” Murphy grinned slapping him on the back. “Hey, if he is Clarke’s new guy, where is she?” Miller asked. “doing the mom thing” Raven replied “aha, then she will be needing a good stiff drink when she gets her” he said. “Probably Roan, too” Raven told him.

Bellamy turned the oven on and began preparing the turkey. “Is it really going to be that bad?” he asked Raven. “the bird?” she gave him a strange look. “No, Clarke’s visit home” he clarified. She nodded “It usually is” she murmured. “It’s not so much as being around her mom, as it is being home, where her dad isn’t” she told him. “She seemed to be dreading it this morning, I offered to go with her, but she said no.” Raven grunted “we’ve all offered to go, she always says no” she shrugged “says it’s something she has to do herself.

Bellamy prepped the turkey and put it in the oven. He somehow got talked into a game of win, lose or draw with everybody that was there. Over half of whom had been drinking since dawn. When Emori accused Jasper of cheating, which Bellamy was reasonably sure he did, he challenged her to a water balloon fight. Of course, everyone else had to get involved as well. Except he and Murphy, who said they were going to check on dinner.

Clarke pulled into the circle drive of her childhood home. There were several cars already there, which meant her mother had invited the whole inner circle, as usual. That was good, it meant Clarke could easily slip away after an hour or so. She smiled when she saw a beat-up SUV close to the door. She may be in for a miserable couple of hours, but she would at least have some company. She knocked on the door and waited. When the door opened she was swept into the ample bosom of their long-time maid, Mrs. Morris “Clarke” she exclaimed happily “why did you knock?” she pulled her back far enough to look into Clarke’s eyes. “This is your home, you don’t have to knock” she scolded.

Clarke smiled sadly at the older lady “this isn’t my home anymore” she shook her head, “it hasn’t been home or a very long time.” Mrs. Morris hugged Clarke tightly to her chest “this was the home you were born in, the home your spent your childhood in” she spoke gently “it may not feel like home, but it is and nothing and no one can change that” she declared kissing Clarke’s cheek. “Now give me your coat and go find your friend Roan, he is as unhappy to be here as you are” she commanded.

Roan found her a few minutes later, handing her a drink “Welcome to the nth degree of hell” he muttered “but at least the liquor is good” he chuckled. “I’ll drink to that” Clarke agreed toasting him
“already Clarke? You just got here” Abby Griffin Kane appeared in the room as suddenly as Roan had. “Hi mom, happy Thanksgiving” she kissed her mom chastely on the cheek. “Now that you’re here we can eat” Abby looked between them, assuming the two of you can play nice for that long” she shot them a look. Roan took Clarke’s hand “I think we can do that” he said, speaking for both of them.

They followed Abby to the formal dining room. It comfortable seated twenty people and was only used on special occasions, Thanksgiving and Christmas were two of them. “Hello babe” Marcus walked up to her “you look beautiful.” Clarke smiled “thanks” she replied. Clarke scanned the place cards looking for her name. “you two are on this end of table, next to me” he told her. She shot him a grateful glance and sat in the chair Roan had pulled out for her. He pushed it in, the took his own seat next to her.

Despite the distance and the people chatting Abby up, Clarke could feel her critical gaze on her. She had long ago learned to look and act the part of Abby Griffin’s daughter, but sometimes her everyday habits and values peaked through, many of which irritated Abby. “Clarke” her name being sharply called out drew her out of her thoughts. “Sorry, I was thinking about something else” she murmured “what was the question?” she asked.

“What are you studying dear?” one of her mother’s oldest friends asked. I’m getting a teaching degree, specializing in art” Clark replied knowing what the response was going to be “I thought you might be a surgeon like your mother” the lady replied. “I thought about it” Clarke answered politely “but I like art more than medicine” Clarke shrugged. “But teacher’s get paid so little my dear how will you ever survive on that?” she asked.

Clarke closed her eyes and counted to ten, then ten again. She felt Roan’s hand on hers squeezing gently. “money is definitely something to think about” Roan looked at the older lady “but so is impact. As a teacher, you can influence the future, can you really put a price on that?” he smiled at the woman. The woman looked thoughtful for a second, “that is an excellent point young man” she grinned. Clarke lifted her cup to her lips, hiding her grin behind the drink.

Abby signaled to Marcus, that is was time to end the brunch portion of the day and retire to the parlor for social hour. Clarke sighed finally, she might be able to slip away. Roan looked at her, then pointed to his watch and rubbed his stomach. Clarke laughed “only he could be worried about dinner so soon after eating. She held up a hand, five fingers held up. He gave her a thumbs up and grinned at her.

“enjoying yourself?” Abby appeared again, Clarke jumped “geez mom, wear a bell or something” she exclaimed. “already planning your escape?” Abby ignored Clarke’s response. Clarke sighed “sorry mom, we have plans at five” she answered. “Dinner with your friends, I assume?” she leveled her gaze at her daughter. “Well, yeah if you want the truth” Clarke shrugged “it’s kind of a tradition” she shrugged.

Abby looked sad that Clarke’s heart wasn’t in this visit, but she didn’t know what to do about it. It wasn’t like this was a family thanksgiving around the table Clarke thought looking around. This dinner was about showing those around you how much you had and what you could do with it, something Clarke really didn’t buy into or approve of. “Well, at least say goodbye before you scurry off, please?” Abby requested. Clarke was reminded of Marcus’ words about seeing, rather than hearing her mother. The words were delivered hard and mean, but her mother’s eyes were anything but. “I will” Clarke agreed.

Thirty minutes later, Clarke met Roan’s eyes across the room. He nodded, murmuring something to
the woman he was standing next to. Clarke recognized her from high school. She was pretty, but not Roan’s type. If the looks exchanged between the girl and Roan’s mother meant what Clarke thought they did, her sole purpose for being there was to catch his eye; something that never actually happened.

Roan said something to his mother, and kissed her cheek. The brief glint of anger was immediately replaced by a large, but clearly false smile and a polite peck on his cheek. “Is that your cue to leave as well” Abby appeared again. “Seriously mom” Clarke clutched her chest “make some noise when you walk up on someone” she protested. “and yes, that kind of is my cue” she admitted. She took a deep breath “look mom” she sighed “I don’t go back to school for a few days, if you want we can have lunch” she offered, ignoring the butterflies in her stomach.

A fleeting glint of something, Clarke wasn’t sure what crossed her mother’s eyes “I’d like that” she admitted, I’ll call you to set something up.” Clarke nodded “Thanks for brunch” Clarke hoped her smile wasn’t as fake as her words felt. “I’ll see you in a day or so” she said politely kissing her mother’s cheek before heading to the coat room to get her coat.

Roan was already there “let’s get the hell out of here” he grunted helping her with her coat, then taking her elbow. Clarke nodded eagerly “finally” she sighed. Marcus was at the door waiting for them “thank you” he said hugging Clarke “I know that was hard.” Clarke shrugged “how bad can it be?” she asked. He laughed “Keep that in mind when she calls you” he said “now go have fun with your friends” he told her. “Don’t let her drive if she drinks too much” he looked at Roan. Roan nodded “I won’t” he assured Marcus “thanks for inviting me.” Clarke grinned “yes, thank you” she smiled. Marcus kissed her cheek “If you’re going to be miserable, you might as well have someone to share it with” he grinned.

Clarke and Roan arrived at Jasper’s house twenty minutes later. “How much you want to bet Miller is at the door waiting for us drinks in hand?” he asked grinning at her. “I don’t take sucker bets” Clarke snorted. They barely stepped onto the porch and the door opened. Miller stood in front of them grinning broadly. He had two double shots of something in his hand. Clarke didn’t care what it was, she took one and downed it quickly.

She reached for the other one. Roan held his palm over the glass “keys” he commanded. Clarke dug into her purse and fished out her keys, then dropped them in his hand. His fingers closed around the keys. With his other hand, he picked up the glass and handed it to her. Like the first drink, she downed it quickly. “Really rough dinner?” Miller arched his eyebrows. “She sold her soul to the devil” Roan quipped. “What did mom want?” Miller asked. “It wasn’t mom” Clarke sighed “Marcus asked me to be nice to her, so I told her I would go to lunch with her sometime this weekend.” Miller laughed “so, you got suckered” he snorted. “shut up and bring me another drink” she slapped him. Miller just laughed at her “I only have these” he said bringing his other hand with two more glasses from behind his back “and they are his” he nodded at Roan. Roan merely smiled and nodded his head in her direction “she wins” he said. Miller shook his head and gave Clarke another shot glass, which disappeared as fast at the first two. “no more” Roan held his hand up “go find your new guy, maybe he can kiss and make it better” he ordered taking the other glass and downing it. “Thanks, man today was brutal” he patted Miller on the back and followed Clarke.

He caught up with her just as she reached the kitchen. “How was it?” Raven asked. In answer, Roan dropped Clarke’s keys into her hands, “that bad, huh?” she shook her head “how many has she had?” he asked. “Two glasses at her parent’s house, three shots at the door just now” she replied. “And you?” she asked three glasses at her parent’s house, one shot at the door.” Raven held out her hand. Clarke snickered as Roan took his keys out of his pocket and dropped them into her hand.
Bellamy came in from the backyard just in time to hear the tail end of Raven and Roan’s conversation. He knew from the stories that Roan had family obligations, but he didn’t realize they meant he would be with Clarke at her parent’s house. “how was it?” he asked. She shrugged “I survived” she sighed laying her head on his shoulders. He knew she was lying, but clearly, she didn’t want to talk about it.

He wrapped his arms around her and held her close, kissing the top of her head. “I said I would have lunch with her” she mumbled. “Your mom?” he asked. She nodded “Marcus asked me to be nice to her” she sighed. “I just know I’m going to regret that.” He caressed her back, making small circles “hey” he tipped her head up “I’m going with you” he held his hand up when she started to say something “no arguing” he said firmly. “I need a drink” Clarke sighed. “Not until you eat” Raven vetoed that idea “you too” she looked at Roan. “These are hers” Raven dropped Clarke’s keys in his hands “Do not give them back to her tonight” she ordered. Bellamy nodded and pocketed her keys.
Clarke woke up the next morning with a groan. She buried her head in the blankets, shutting out the light. Why did she let her mom get to her so badly? A low chuckle met her, the blanket was pulled just enough for Bellamy to meet her eyes, if she could open them. Her head was pounding, her mouth dry. “How do you feel?” thankfully Bellamy’s voice was quiet, though she swore it was tinged with amusement. “Like I should have stopped at two of Monty’s moonshines” she groaned snatching the cover back and cowering under it. He chuckled “that is some powerful mojo” he agreed, leaving the cover in place this time.

After a few minutes, Clarke rolled the blanket back. “Where are we?” she asked slowly opening one eye, then the other. He chuckled wondering when she would realize she was not a home and not at Jasper’s. “My house” he told her “it was closer and less likely to be invaded” he grinned. After she sat up, he handed her a cup of water and some Tylenol. “Thanks” she smiled weakly setting the glass down, leaning her head against his shoulder. “I’m sorry” she looked up at him “I more or less abandoned you with my friends” she sighed.

He shrugged and wrapped his arms around her shoulders kissing her forehead. “I like your friends” he grinned “they just accepted me, included me” he said “and they looked out for you all night long.” Clarke laughed, remembering that much “Then we had dinner and I vaguely remember bubble soccer?” she looked at him. “That was fun” he laughed “you suck, by the way.” She hung her head “I always have” she chortled “but it’s fun to play.” That much he had to admit it was fun “then we had wild monkey sex while everyone watched” he grinned at her. “Raven would never allow that to happen” she snorted.

That much he knew was true. After her third moonshine, last night Raven cut her off. From that point on whenever Clarke touched anything other than water or soda it was immediately removed from her hand, by anyone who noticed she had it. Bellamy wasn’t sure how that was communicated, since Raven had her hands full curtailing Roan’s drinking. “It’s like they knew what you would do when you showed up” he looked at her.

She frowned “I come with a lot of baggage and they know that” she shrugged. He gazed at her wordlessly, carefully thinking out his next words. “Clarke” he sighed “I know we are new and that we haven’t even been on a real date” he said “and I don’t know what kind of guys you’ve dated before, but I can handle baggage.” She momentarily met his gaze, then dropped her chin to her chest. Her interlaced his fingers with hers, using his other hand to tip her chin up to meet his gaze. “Please, talk to me” he pleaded. “okay” she sighed “but I need food and something besides water to drink.” He grinned “well, lucky for you, I make a mean omelet and have water, juice and maybe even a beer” Clarke shuddered “no more alcohol, at least until Christmas” she held her hand up.

“So, what do you want to know?” she asked looking at him. “How old were you when your dad died?” he asked. “I was seventeen” her face fell “it was a car accident, he was on his way home from work” she offered in anticipation of his next question. She watched as Bellamy sliced vegetables, then began cracking eggs into a bowl. “Wow, you were just a kid” he replied “the same age as O when mom died” as he talked and cooked, Clarke walked around the kitchen. The doorway has hash marks starting about halfway down extending to almost the top of it. Each mark, had either Bellamy
The other wall had several pictures on it. All of them showed younger versions of Bellamy and Octavia with a dark-haired woman between them. “My mother” Bellamy spoke coming up behind her. “She was beautiful” Clarke smiled “yeah, she was” he agreed. “We don’t have anything like this in our house” she pointed to the hash marks on the wall and the pictures. Bellamy didn’t know how to respond to that. “Tell me about your mom” he said.

“She’s a doctor, neurosurgeon” Clarke clarified. “She’s super smart” Clarke’s lips turned up slightly, he’d never seen that response when Clarke talked about her mom. “Being a doctor means making sacrifices for the good of your career, inside and outside of the operating room” she shrugged “I was that sacrifice.” Her smile faded. Bellamy returned to the stove and began folding the omelet. He flipped it over, then turned back to her. “and your dad?” he asked. “Also a doctor, just not an MD. His career was important, but not more important than…” she trailed off. There was no need for her to finish that sentence.

“So, as the daughter of two brilliant doctors, you were expected to go into the family business” Bellamy correctly interpreted her next thought, setting a plate down in front of her. The eggs looked and smelled delicious. She nodded “and when I didn’t my mom was not very happy with me” she replied. “My dad tried to get her to understand. He would run interference for me. When he died” her voice as quieter. She paused for a moment “After my dad died, things got even worse between my mom and I.” She told him the lengths she would go to avoid her mom after her dad died. Some of her stories were actually quite funny, and went far to explain why Raven was not welcomed in Abby’s house.

“A few years later, she met Marcus” Clarke shook her head and smiled “I don’t deserve a step-father like Marcus” she sighed. “He never tried to replace my dad. He never pushed for more. Never demanded that I respect him, even when he should have” she chortled “I was a brat and I treated him like shit.” Bellamy remembered seeing them together “He loves you” he said. “by some miracle” she snorted “he does. They got married and I lived with them for a couple of years. When I found out my dad left me an inheritance and used it to enroll in school as a teacher, specializing in art, my mom threw a fit. She told me to get drop out or get out” she took a bite of the food. “Oh my God, this is amazing” she sighed. Bellamy grinned “you need to learn how to cook” he grinned. “So obviously, you chose get out” Bellamy drawled. She nodded “One day mom was at work, emergency surgery. Marcus took me out to dinner, then to the apartment building” she shrugged “I said yes, he moved me in, free rent in exchange for managing the building.” Bellamy looked at her “and that, was it?” he asked. “He only had one more stipulation. He would keep mom away if I promised to spend the major holidays with them.” The whole situation was sad to Bellamy, families should support each other. “and now?” he asked. She shrugged “according to Marcus, she misses me. She wished she would have handled things differently.” Bellamy took her empty plate and rinsed it before putting it in the dishwasher “are you going to have lunch with her?” he asked. She nodded “I suppose it would be hard to get out of at this point” she grinned “but I have had second thoughts…”

He walked around to where she stood “you should do it” he said, wrapping his arms around her and pulling her closer “you’ll probably feel better if you do, both of you” he said. She wrapped her arms around his neck “I’m sorry about yesterday” she sighed “I didn’t mean to get drunk and leave you to the wolves.” He laughed, “I had fun” he said “and It sounds like you had a rough day.” Clarke grinned “it would have been a whole lot worse if Roan hadn’t been there” she smiled at the old lady’s face when he came to Clarke’s rescue after her teacher pay comment.

She read the expression on his face “I didn’t know he was going to be there” she said “Marcus
invited him, said if I was miserable, I might as well have company.” She caressed his face with her
thumb “you don’t have to worry about him” she met his gaze, “we’re just friends, and our parents
know each other, so we often attend the same functions.” He took her hands in his, lacing his fingers
through hers. “I don’t want to rush things” he spoke softly “and I know we have a lot of things to
work out, but it’s been a long time since I’ve felt like this about anybody” he looked into her eyes.

She was quiet, too quiet and for a moment Bellamy thought she for a moment he was going to scare
her away. “Bellamy” she whispered “I don’t know what’s going on” she sighed “I feel the same
way, but you should know that I suck at relationships.” He kissed her softly “It’s a risk I’m willing to
take” he said “are you?” he asked. She nodded “but my history and my family…” she was cut off by
Bellamy “don’t scare me” he said kissing her gradually increasing the pressure. “Bellamy” she
moaned and writhed against him. He lifted her onto the kitchen island, inching his hand up her thigh
beneath the t-shirt she wore. She threw her head back, her fingers tangled into his hair. His fingers
found her center, just as he dipped his finger in her, her phone rang.

“Let it go” he whispered against her neck, his fingers not moving, still buried inside of her. “Damn” she exclaimed “it’s her, I have to get this” she sighed. The look on her face broke his heart. “Go
ahead” he grinned wickedly. She narrowed her eyes at him “what are you up to?” she asked, seeing
as he fingers were still inside her. “Hi mom” she answered the call. When she started talking, he
started moving his fingers. His mouth captured her nipples and swirling his tongue around them until
they hardened into stiff peaks. Bellamy laughed softly at her attempts to hold an intelligent
conversation with her mom while his fingers moved inside of her. “Yes, mom” she panted silently,
hers eyes closed “ok, I’ll see you then” she controlled her voice well for someone who was otherwise
engaged. “Bye mom, love you too” as she ended the call, Bellamy flicked his thumb on her sensitive
spot. She came undone, grabbing the counter behind her, her juices coating his fingers. “That was
mean” she was finally able to get out a few minutes later. Meanwhile, I bet it was the best
conversation you’ve have with your mom in a long time” he countered. “In a very long time” she
agreed.

“however, now I have a problem” she purred stripping the t-shirt over her head, leaving her stark
naked on his counter. “I think I can help with that problem” he whispered huskily, Laying her down
on her back. He pulled her to the edge, and lifted her legs onto his shoulders, then lapped the juices
still coating her lower lips before dipping inside her wet heat.
Chapter 9

“You know we should make it to the bed sometime” Bellamy chuckled holding Clarke as they lay on his couch watching a Christmas movie, a thin blanket covering them. She grinned “what fun would that be?” she asked. “I bet it would be more fun than watching this drivel” he murmured quietly. “I heard the Bellamy Blake” Clarke chuckled “you’d rather start the Christmas season off by watching 300 or The Count of Monte Cristo?” she asked. “well, at least it’s somewhat historical” he defended “This is just fluff.” She laughed “fine, as soon as this is over, you can choose the next movie” she said. “Deal” he smiled at her “or we could just…” he trailed off and let his mouth and his fingers do the talking.

“You two better be decent in there or we’ll all get a show” Raven called out. Bellamy shook his head “does she always know where you’re at?” he asked. Clarke flashed him a guilty look and held up her phone “it’s an app” she grinned “we track each other’s phones, so we always know where the other person is in case they get hurt, or worse.” Bellamy sighed “I suppose that makes sense” he shook his head. “I can tell her to back off if you want” she kissed him softly. “No, it’s okay” he said helping her to a sitting position, making sure to cover her lower half up with a blanket. They were mostly decent, but since he didn’t know who ‘we’ was or how many of them there were, he wasn’t taking any chances. “I’m glad you look out for each other.”

A few minutes later, Raven and Roan entered the room. He looked as haggard as Clarke felt. “How come you look so much better than I do?” he grumbled sitting next to Clarke. She laughed “Bellamy has a better hangover cure than Raven” she replied. She was familiar with Raven’s hangover cure and it was not fun. The first thing in her cure was an obnoxious concoction containing raw eggs and alcohol, plus a few other ingredients. Clarke never asked what else, she just closed her eyes, held her nose and chugged the greenish-grey mixture. The second was a five-mile run or crawl depending on how bad the hangover was, “nothing like a good sweaty run to rid your body of those toxins” Raven said grinning at them. “yeah, nothing like it” Roan murmured dryly.

“What’s your cure?” Raven looked at Bellamy. He laughed “Orange juice, two aspirin, a vege omelet and a little TLC” he grinned, wrapping an arm around Clarke. Roan looked at Clarke, who he knew for a fact was more drunk than he was last night, and she looked like she was in much better shape than him. “let’s try that next time” he drawled, grinning at Raven. Clarke laughed “you’re on your own next time. I aint drinking again for a long time…” she declared.

“When say ‘we’ll all get a show’ who are you referring to?” Bellamy asked. “Everybody” Raven smiled at him “yesterday we supped together, today we shop” she declared. “We usually start earlier than this, but these two” she glanced from Clarke to Roan “put a kink in things.” Roan grinned “but you like the kink I put in things” he said, causing Raven to blush a little. Clarke laughed “this I have to hear” she declared “Raven Reyes doesn’t blush…” Raven glanced at him “If you say a word, we’ll never do again, what we did last night…” she threatened. Roan weighed his options “sorry Griffin” he chuckled “you’re on your own to get that information” he shrugged.

“Whatever you did must’ve been quite good” Clarke declared. Raven shrugged “I’d be happy to show you two, if you ever want company” she replied grinning at them. “And on that note” Bellamy stood up, reaching for Clarke’s hand. She situated the sheet around her waist and allowed him to pull her to her feet. “if we’re going shopping, we’re going to have to get dressed. “maybe you can wear some of O’s clothes she left here, unless you want to wear your dress” he looked at her. “Wait” Raven stopped them, reaching for her backpack “I stopped at your place and picked up some clothes” she tossed the backpack to Clarke. Bellamy easily caught it “thanks” Clarke nodded at her. “Don’t soil my couch with whatever you did last night” Bellamy ordered, walking with Clarke put of
the room. “Challenge accepted” they heard Raven retort in response to him.

“Haven’t they already bought out all the stores in the mall?” Jasper mumbled looking at the shopping bags stacked neatly in the seating area. After a few hours, he along with, Roan, Bellamy, Lincoln, Monty and Murphy begged to be released from going into store after store after store. The girls agreed, but only if they would watch the bags in doing so. Every so often, one or two of them would return and drop a couple more bags off. A couple of hours into their agreement, other men began to notice this trend, as well as other women. Someone had even made a hand printed sign that read “Men and bag check”. The sign had caught the attention of mall management, who joked that should be a permanent sign.

“Go find out how much longer they’re going to be” Monty looked at Murphy, who sat in his seat, a hat hung low over his eyes. He snorted “Do I look dumb to you?” he asked. He turned to Bellamy “you’re the new guy, here, you do it” he suggested. “don’t do it, man” Roan laughed checking his watch. “it’s almost lunchtime, they’ll be back soon. “Do they do this all the time?” Bellamy asked. “friendsgiving starts on Thursday and ends sometime Sunday afternoon” Roan informed him. “So, what is next on the list of things to do?” Bellamy asked.

“After this we all go to lunch, then we hit the Christmas tree farm” he said “where we have to chop down our own tree” Monty said. “heaven forbid we get a fake tree or at least buy on that is already chopped down…” Murphy drawled. The others nodded in agreement. “Then we make dinner, tacos or spaghetti, depending on who’s cooking, while we string popcorn and cranberries to decorate the tree with” Monty added. Tomorrow, we decorate the tree, the we all watch whatever corny Christmas movie the girls pick out” Roan said, making them all groan. “and finally, on Sunday, we have brunch to officially end friendsgiving” Jasper finished.

Murphy sat up “I think” he grinned at Bellamy “since you’re the new guy, we should use your house for the rest of friendsgiving” he snickered “which means you’re also hosting Christmas, since the tree will be at your house” Roan pointed out. “You guys realize that Clarke and I have barely started being a thing, right?” Bellamy leveled his gaze at them “is that really a good idea?” he asked. “Notice he didn’t say no” Jasper said.

“We already like you better than that jackass Finn” Monty said. “He was a d-bag” Murphy agreed. “and that’s something coming from you” Roan murmured. Murphy tossed a wadded up ball of paper on the floor at him in response. “Who was Finn?” Bellamy asked. “Clarke’s ex” Jasper answered “and Raven’s” Murphy added. “huh?” Bellamy asked confused. “Finn was dating Raven, pretty seriously when he decided one girl wasn’t enough, so he started dating Clarke too” Murphy answered “only he forgot to tell them that” Roan interjected. “But they found out and kicked him to the curb, now he is alone, and they have each other.” The story explained a lot about the nature of Clarke and Raven’s friendship.

“Hey look, they started a thing” Raven, Octavia, Clarke, Maya, Emori and Harper appeared. “yeah, it’s a regular den of iniquity” Clarke agreed, making the girls all laugh. “Did you guys leave anything for anyone else to buy?” Jasper grunted eyeing the packages they carried. “Well, we can go around again and make sure” Octavia offered looking at the other girls. “No” a general chorus of voices chimed in. “is it lunch time yet?” Jasper asked. “Where are we going for lunch?” Bellamy asked. “The usual place” Roan glanced over at him. “there’s this little diner downtown that has miniature juke boxes on each table” he said. “And good food too” Jasper threw in “so can we please go now?” he asked.

It took all of them to carry and pack up the number of packages the girls had amassed. It was a good thing, they’d brought several cars Bellamy thought. Then again, he was learning that nothing this group did was by accident. They were in the complete sense, a family, one that had certain traditions.
After his mom had died, it was just him and Octavia. He’d always felt alone, especially after she moved out. Being included in this little family was a nice change. Maybe, he would consider hosting what remained of friendsgiving and Christmas.

They arrived at the diner shortly after leaving the mall. A half-moon neon sign hung high over a sign that read Luna’s. They entered the diner and sat at a set of tables pushed together big enough to seat all of them. A reserved sign laid on the tables. “I was beginning to wonder if you guys were coming or not” and older lady appeared with an assortment of drinks setting them in front of each person. “Some of us took longer to pull it together today” Raven replied. “How was dinner with your mom this year?” Luna asked as she set a glass of water in front of Clarke.

“SSDY” Clarke snorted. “but she did agree to have lunch with her mom soon” Raven added. “Good for you, honey” the lady patted her shoulder “good, bad or in between, you only get one mama and one dad, and when they’re gone, you miss even the bad stuff” she said moving on to the next person. When she got to Roan, she asked him the same question she asked Clarke. “ditto, what she said” he pointed to Clarke. Luna smiled “ditto what I told her” she murmured and moved on. “you’re new” she got back around the table to Bellamy, Lincoln and Octavia sat. “I’m Luna, I own this joint, and you are?” she asked. “Bellamy, he answered “I’m with her” he pointed to Clarke. “this is my sister Octavia and her boyfriend Lincoln.”

“With her, huh?” she looked at him “do we like him?” she asked Clarke “or is he another Finn?” she asked. Clarke smiled “so far we like him” she said. “Okay, but I’ve got my eye on you” she warned him. “the usual?” she looked at all of them. Bellamy noticed she didn’t bring any menus. The others nodded in agreement. She glanced at Bellamy, Octavia and Lincoln “I can bring you a menu if you want, but I’m fairly certain you won’t need it” she told them. He looked to Octavia and Lincoln who shook their heads “I think we’ll be okay” he said. She smiled “I like you already” she said. Bellamy made a mental note to ask Clarke about Finn later, when they were alone.

“okay everybody, fork over your quarters” Raven requested. Everyone put one or two quarters in a pile and slid them down to Raven, who fed the jukebox. The first song was one that he hadn’t heard before, a song about friends in low places, but it seemed to fit their situation. When the song ended, all but he, Octavia and Lincoln continued to sing the song “the live version has a hidden verse” Clarke whispered in between lyrics. The next song came from the Musical Rent. Bellamy recognized it from when Octavia was in high school theatre. It too, seemed fitting that a song about friends who formed a family and ate in a little diner was playing for them. The jukebox had every genre of music on it, and at least one song from every genre played on it.

“You know there are other songs on the old thing” Luna shook her head when she returned with several stacks of plates ad silverware, setting them in the middle of the table. Apparently, for this group, brunch would be served family style. “Food will be up in a minute” she told them hurrying to greet a customer who had just entered the diner. The food was good, very good in fact. Luna basically set up a breakfast bar of all the things on the menu and they all had a little of everything. When they were done, they began discussing the size and type of tree they wanted. “How tall are the ceilings in your house?” Murphy asked him after the decisions was made to get a blue spruce. “I’m generally not home a lot during the semester” Bellamy didn’t answer his question. “That’s still not a no” Jasper grinned at him.

“It was suggested that Bellamy host the rest of friendsgiving” Murphy supplied, seeing the look of confusion on Clarke’s face. “you know him being the new guy and all.” Clarke looked at him “you can tell them no, if you want to” she said. He looked at Octavia, who for once seemed excited about Christmas, something she hadn’t been for a number of years. “I can check on the tree to make sure it has enough water” she offered “but we don’t have any tree decorations or anything.” Jasper smirked “Those, we can provide” he said “we have enough to decorate ten houses.” Bellamy looked at
Clarke, who shrugged “whatever you want to do” she said. He turned to see several pairs of eyes looking at him “okay, fine I’ll do it” he said. Jasper let out a whoop of excitement “finally, someone else to host Christmas” he said.

Later that night, Clarke snuggled with Bellamy on his couch watching a documentary on the history channel. The group had picked out and chopped down a seven-foot blue spruce and put it up in his house; followed by a Mexican fiesta and taco bar. After dinner, everyone helped clean up, then cleared out to dig through their Christmas decorations for tomorrow.

When the last people were gone, he and Clarke enjoyed the quiet, admiring the tree in the corner of the room. It was the first time since his mom died that the house looked like anyone with the Christmas spirit lived there. “You could have said no” Clarke saw him looking at the tree. He grinned and wrapped her arms around her “For the first time since our mom died, Christmas is more than just a day” he said “it’s a chance to be around people who like you don’t have to be fake around” he sighed. Clarke chuckled softly “They can be annoying, but they are good people” she said about her friends. “And they like you, and Octavia and Lincoln” she added.

“Did they like Finn?” he asked. She turned her head to look at him “How do you know about Finn?” she asked. “Murphy said something about him being a D-bag this morning.” He answered. She sighed deeply “Finn was cute, in a boyish sort of way” she said “he came along when I needed a friend the most.” Bellamy assumed that meant right after she lost her dad, but he asked for the sake of a timeline. She nodded “He knew just what to say or do to make me feel better, and he always had good explanations of why he couldn’t be with me sometimes” she replied. “Of course, those times he was with Raven, not that he told either of us about the other one.”

Bellamy felt her tense up as she talked about him. “So, how did you find out about him and Raven?” he asked. “Roan never trusted Finn. One day, he saw him out with Raven and told me about it. I didn’t believe him, so he found had them followed and took me out to dinner the same place they were at” she shook her head. “It was so not a pretty thing” she chuckled after telling him how she exposed him to Raven by introducing herself. Raven was pissed at him, I was pissed at him and Roan decked him. The three of us have become pretty close ever since.”

“Do you ever hear from him?” he asked. Clarke shook her head “Roan said if ever saw Finn within a hundred feet of either of us he’d beat him to a bloody pulp and leave his body in a deserted field where they wouldn’t find him for days.” Bellamy grinned “so, you’re telling me I need to be worried about Roan then?” he asked.

Clarke turned in his arms leaning on his chest with her elbows. “that depends, do you have any hidden girlfriends you see on the side?” she asked, hoping he didn’t say yes. “Only one” he whispered “but she has a new boyfriend, who takes pretty good care of her…” he trailed off. Clarke looked at him, trying to determine if he was being serious. “No” he said pulling her closer “before you came along, there was only O” he said. “between taking care of her, working and going to school, I didn’t have the time or money for a girlfriend” he replied.

“And now?” she asked. “And now, I will find the time and the money if that is what it takes” he gazed into her eyes. “What if she already has money?” Clarke asked breathlessly, mesmerized by the look in his eyes. “Then I guess I will have to convince her that I am good at something else” he grinned wickedly. “Like what?” she asked. Bellamy pulled her closer and whispered something in her ear. “So, we’ll need to actually make it to the bedroom for that?” she asked. “It would definitely be more comfortable” he agreed. Clarke stood up and pulled the t-shirt she’d put on after her shower over her head “I think I need to learn more about this” she said. Bellamy was up and off the couch in seconds, “your wish is my command” he whispered huskily capturing her lips with his as he swept her off her feet and carried her to his room.
Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

This chapter starts with a whole lot of smut, reader be warned.

Bellamy woke with Clarke wrapped around him, her blonde hair splayed across his chest. He smiled as he ran his hand through her hair. She stirred slightly, sighing deeply “I don’t want to get up” she murmured, running her hands along his ribcage. “Well, by my calculations” she he said “we have about an hour until we get invaded, so if you want to sleep, you’d better do it now” he said. “Or” she grinned turning onto his chest “we could take a shower…together” she whispered the last word against his lips. “Who needs to sleep?” Bellamy grinned sitting up and scooting to the edge of the bed. Arms firmly around Clarke, he lifted stood up, her legs wound tightly around him and walked to the bathroom.

When they reached the bathroom, he slid her down his body, still holding her against him as he turned the water on. He stepped into the shower with her, then pressed her against the wall. As the shower rained down on her, Bellamy claimed her mouth in a hard-demanding kiss, his hands moving down her body. His mouth moved lower sucking her nipples between his teeth and biting down gently. She panted, grabbing the shower head for support. Bellamy smiled at the way she reacted to his touch and before she had a chance to catch her breath, he slid his fingers inside of her. “Bellamy” she panted moving against his hand. He kissed her swallowing her moans, then got down on his knees replacing his fingers with his tongue. She dropped her hands tangling them in his hair and writhed against him, moaning his name loudly. Her felt her body tighten around his tongue and the fingers moving inside of her again just before she came, her juices flowing onto his face.

Clarke threw her head back “You are so good with your tongue” she sighed. He stepped into the spray of water, cleaning his face before kissing her again “I try” he whispered. Clarke placed her hands on his chest, playing with his nipples until they hardened. She dropped her head to take one than another into her mouth “Clarke” he groaned tangling his fingers in her hair. When she got down on her knees and took him into her mouth, he lost the ability to breathe or talk or even think. “Clarke” he said pulling out “if you don’t stop, I’m going to…” he tipped her head to look at him “Fuck me Bellamy” she whispered huskily. Bellamy looked at her “are you sure?” she asked. She nodded, licking him from top to bottom and back before taking him in her mouth again. Bellamy moaned placing his hands on her head, moving in and out of her mouth.

She wrapped her hands around his thighs, he gave a guttural groan as he came undone coating the back of her mouth with is thick, salty seed.

“I need you” he declared hauling her to her feet and turning her to face the shower wall. One hand teased her nipples, while the other found its way to her hot center. She clawed at the wall “Bellamy” she panted “please” she begged. He grinned “tell me what you want” he whispered huskily “you, I want you” she replied breathlessly, grabbing at him. “You have me baby” he sighed stepping between her legs and thrusting into her slowly at first, in and out until she begged him again “Bell” she pleaded moving against him. When he felt her body tighten around him reached around her waist and pulling out of her and back in again until she spiraled out of control. Another thrust and he spilled his seed inside of her. She laid her head on the tiled wall of the shower, breathing raggedly. He laid his head on her shoulder, turning her head to meet his gaze “I can’t get enough you” he whispered before claiming her lips in a searing kiss. Exhausted from their shower, the two of them
didn’t bother grabbing towels before they climbed back into bed and fell asleep, wrapped in each other’s arms.

Clarke woke up to her phone blaring “what?” she barked into the phone. At the same time, Bellamy’s phone rang “I’ll be right there” Clarke heard him say. “why did I say I would do this?” he groaned rolling away from her “I’m going to let them in and then I’ll be right back” he said kissing her softly. She grinned “I’ll be the one in bed, nice and nak...” he cut her off “don’t even go there or they might still be standing there in an hour” he said pulling the cover up over her chest. “Clarke” she heard her name.

“Oh God” She sighed realizing she hadn’t hung the phone up, “hi mom” she squeaked out cringing. “bad time?” Abby cooed into the phone. “kind of” she admitted. She expected a lecture, but was pleasantly surprised to hear a soft laugh on the other end. “Who is we?” she asked. “the usual people” Clarke answered “and your new guy?” she asked. Clarke sighed “how did you...never mind” she shook her head “yes, my new guy” she said. “Marcus says he seems like a good guy” Abby said. “He is, ah mom, not to be rude or anything, but is there a reason you called?” she asked. “We kind of have plans.”

The silence on the other end was very telling “I need to reschedule our dinner” Abby spoke hesitantly “I have to attend a charity event for the hospital.” To her credit, Abby sounded genuinely apologetic. Clarke sat up, it wasn’t like she hadn’t grown up with last minute cancelations. “it’s okay” she shrugged. “I’m really sorry, honey” Abby sighed “I really wanted to sit down and talk things out with you.” Clarke was surprised to feel tears in her eyes. She shook her head, hoping her voice didn’t betray her “it’s okay, mom, it really is” she said “go to you event and call me when you want to reschedule.” Abby sighed quietly “I will” she spoke softer “I’m really sorry Clarke. I love you honey” she sounded sad. “Love you too” Clarke returned, though her voice lacked conviction.

Bellamy opened the door for Raven and company, then headed back upstairs telling them he and Clarke would be down shortly. He walked into the room she was sitting up in the bed, looking utterly downtrodden. “what’s wrong?” he asked sitting down in front of her. She sniffled, shaking her head. A single tear rolled down her cheek. Bellamy sighed and pulled her to him. He didn’t know her well enough to be absolutely sure, but he had a feeling her mom had something to do with this moment. “hey, talk to me” he spoke gently, tipping her head to look into her eyes. “you’d think I’d be used to this by now” she finally spoke. “your mom?” he murmured. She nodded “she has to cancel dinner, a charity event for the hospital” she said laying her head on his chest. “This isn’t a new thing, my whole life was like this” she sighed, “I just thought for once, I might be more important than her job.” Bellamy wrapped his arms around her and pulled her into his chest “I’m sorry” he whispered, not sure how to handle the situation. “Raven brought you some more clothes” he set some clothes on the bed, “why don’t you get dressed and I’ll send her up” he said kissing her softly. “for what?” he asked “for not saying what you thought might be helpful” she shrugged “for getting Raven” she trailed off. He looked at her “it’s always important to know when to shut up and call in reinforcements” he smiled at her “now unless you want Raven to see your birthday suit...” he grinned. She laughed “It wouldn’t be the first time” she admitted. He laughed “I bet that is a funny story” he said “I hope I get to hear it someday.” Clarke snorted “just ask her, she’ll tell you, it’s her favorite story” she chuckled.

Five minutes later Raven was up in Bellamy’s room “What did she do?” she asked taking one look at Clarke. The emotions that threatened to spill over when Bellamy found her came on full force, and all Clarke could do was cry. Raven sat down on the bed and pulled her best friend into a hug “it’s
Okay” she sighed “let it out, you’ll feel better.”

Bellamy made his way downstairs with a heavy heart, he didn’t know what happened between Clarke and her mom, but it clearly affected her more than she wanted to admit. “Where’s Clarke?” Octavia looked at the stairs “where’s Clarke?” she asked. “upstairs with Raven, they’ll be down in a little bit” he said. “Does she need something?” Octavia looked concerned. “A mother who gives a damn” Murphy murmured “for starters.” Octavia looked confused “I’ll explain later” he told her, then looked around his living room. “Did you guys rob a Christmas store?” he laughed. “I told you we had a lot” Jasper grinned.

They started sorting through the piles of boxes setting like things together. One box was set aside. “what’s in that?” he asked. “That one is a special box, we open it last” Roan answered. Bellamy was curious, but he would wait until the end. Fifteen minutes later, there was knock at his door. He looked around, everybody was already here, who could this be. He opened the door to find Marcus Kane standing there. “Raven called me” he said in explanation. Bellamy opened the door “she’s upstairs, first door on the left” he said. “Thanks” he replied.

By the time Raven, Marcus and Clarke joined them thirty minutes later, it looked like Christmas had threw up in his house. There were only two boxes left to open, one being the ‘special’ box Roan said they opened last. “Are you going to be okay?” Marcus pulled Clarke in for a hug. She nodded “yeah, you can stay if you want” she said. He sighed “I’d love to kid, but I have to be eye candy tonight” he chuckled. “call me if you need anything” he squeezed her shoulders. She nodded “Thank you” he turned to Raven first, then the rest of the group “thank all of you” he nodded at them solemnly.

Raven went to stand by Roan, the glance they shared spoke volumes. Bellamy and Clarke walked Marcus to the door. “Bellamy” he stretched out his hand “nice to see you again.” Bellamy took the extended hand and shook it “you too, sir” he replied. Marcus grinned “I appreciate the effort, but you can call me Marcus or Kane, whichever you want, sir is not necessary” he said. “I love you” Marcus said pulling Clarke into a hug “and I’m sorry. If it helps, she tried to get out of it” he said. Clarke nodded “Thanks” she spoke softly. Marcus gave her another squeeze than walked out of the door Bellamy held open for him.

Bellamy closed the door, then wrapped his arm around Clarke’s waist “I can ask them to leave if it will be better” he told her. She shook her head “I’ll be okay, but thanks for offering.” When they walked back into the living room one by one, each of her friends walked up to her giving her a hug. Roan was the last one to hug her, he whispered something, but Bellamy didn’t hear what he said. Whatever it was, she laughed softly shaking her head. “Wow, you guys work fast” she grinned walking over to Bellamy and wrapping an arm around him. “Many hands make light work” Monty quipped. “the house hasn’t looked this good in years” Octavia was grinning from ear to ear. “It looks nice” Clarke said sitting on the couch.

“Is this all we have left” Clarke nodded at the two boxes in the corner?” she asked. Roan nodded then picked up the boxes and set them on the table in front of Clarke “you show” he drawled. Bellamy watched with curiosity as she carefully opened the bigger of the two boxes. Inside it was several ornaments, they appeared to be personalized. She looked at him and patted the couch next to him. “What are these?” he asked. “Ornaments” she held one out for him “one for each of us.”

She pulled out the first one labeled and handed it to Monty. He hung it on the tree. Harper hung hers next to his. The two bulbs formed one picture. Jasper and Maya were next. One by one each of them hung the ornaments on the tree until it was Clarke’s turn. She pulled out a pink ornament with a glittery tiara on it that read ‘daddy’s little princess’ with her name spelled out in silver glitter. The last ornament in the box was a dark blue one with the name Jake spelled out. Clarke lovingly cradled the ornament “my dad” she explained when Bellamy looked confused. She stood up and hung the
ornaments side by side on the tree, then stepped back smiling.

Raven stepped in front of the tree. “So, we know that this thing you have going on with Clarke is new” she looked at Bellamy “and if you two don’t make it, we’ll just kick her to the curb” she joked “but since you opened your home to this crazy bunch, we thought you, and Octavia and Lincoln should have your own ornaments” she held them out. Bellamy smiled and stood up walking to where Raven stood and took the box with his name on it. He took the box that had his name on it passing Octavia and Lincoln theirs. He opened his box and smiled at Clarke. His ornament was painted with Math symbols and a snarky comment that read ‘come to the nerd side. We have PI’ with a pi symbol painted below that. “thank you” he crossed the room and kissed he softly before putting it on the tree next to hers.

Octavia opened her box and sighed. Her ornament had a small portrait of her, Bellamy and their mom. Bellamy recognized it as the photo on his kitchen wall. “Thank you” she looked at Clarke, “this is you, right?” she asked. Clarke nodded “you’re welcome” she shrugged “I hope you like it.” Bellamy wrapped his arm around her “When did you do these?” he asked. “last week, when I couldn’t sleep” she replied. Lincoln’s ornament was also hand painted. Bellamy didn’t understand it, but clearly, he did. “Thank you, Clarke” he walked over bending down to hug her.

“Ok, enough of the sappy crap” Jasper declared after Octavia and Lincoln had put their ornaments on the tree. “One more” Raven interrupted handing Bellamy the last box. “As the host of this little shindig, you get to put the topper on the tree.” He opened the box and pulled out a metallic angel. He walked over to the tree and set it on the tree. “Now” she turned to Jasper “the sappy crap is over. The pizza will be here anytime and I think in lieu of the day’s events” she looked at Clarke “we will skip the Christmas fluff and watch something else.” Clarke shot her a grateful look.
The decision to watch something other than ‘Christmas fluff’ as Murphy called it was made based on what had taken place that morning between Clarke and her mom, but after everyone had so much fun watching Ernest Saves Christmas and National Lampoon Christmas Vacation. They voted to make it a new tradition. Bellamy, who sat on the couch, holding Clarke in his arms, looked around his living room. People were sitting or lying down in front of the television. Most of them had brought bags with them, in case the party turned into a gigantic sleepover, which it did.

He looked at Clarke, who was nearly asleep in his arms. “You guys are welcome to camp out in here if you want” he told them standing up and pulling Clarke to her feet, “but I have a nice, warm bed upstairs?” he grinned at them. A few boos and hisses followed his announcement, but most of them just bid them good night. “I claim couch” they heard Roan exclaim, followed by a few groans. “It’s a pullout” Octavia announced “in that case, I claim couch too” Raven declared “me too” Murphy chimed in.

Monty groaned “the three of you better not do anything up there” he declared “some of us want to sleep. “There is one extra room upstairs” Octavia spoke again. “It’s not huge, but…” there as an intense scramble, followed by laughter as Jasper and Monty raced upstairs to the bedroom Octavia gave them directions to. “I got here first” Jaspers stood in the doorway. Monty merely grinned “actually, I did” he corrected pointing to Harper, who was already asleep in the bed. Jasper groaned and walked back downstairs “it looks like airbag city for you” Monty grinned and closed the door.

Bellamy lay in his bed, with Clarke in his arms. He was smiling “what are you smiling about?” she asked. “Our house was always home” he looked at her, “but it was never full like it is now. It’s kind of nice” he said. She smiled “yeah, they can be a handful, but there has never been a better support group created” she agreed. “Are you okay?” he asked, “about your mom, I mean?” She nodded “I don’t know why I got so upset this morning, it’s not like that has never happened before” she sighed. “Maybe, deep down, you miss her as much as he misses you” he caressed her cheek. “Maybe” she admitted “but it really doesn’t matter apparently” she replied.

She sat up and straddled him “you know what I am going to miss though” she grinned wickedly at him before lowering her body to capture his lips with hers. Bellamy wrapped his arms around her, “well then, we’ll just have to make sure you have a lot of memories to keep you warm when real life comes crashing back on Monday” he declared flipping her over onto her back as his hands found her center and his lips found her breast.

The next morning, Bellamy rolled out of bed to start getting breakfast ready. He let Clarke sleep seeing as she had gotten very little sleep the night before. He grinned as he quietly crossed the living room, stepping over bodies. Raven slept between Murphy and Roan on the pullout sofa. He was surprised to smell coffee as he neared the kitchen. When he entered, he found Lincoln already mixing up eggs in a casserole pan. “Morning” Bellamy greeting him, helping himself to a cup of coffee. “Good morning” he returned “I hope you don’t mind” he motioned to the area he was working in. “I figured since none of those yahoos can cook more than a scrambled egg, you would need a little help.” Bellamy laughed “not at all, thanks for the help. What can I do?” he asked.

Lincoln asked if he could help make the bacon, pointing to a large box of bacon and several baking racks. “It’s way easier to cook in the oven” he suggested. Bellamy eyed the box skeptically, “They will eat everything in that box” Lincoln laughed reading his thoughts. “That’s why everybody chips in to provide the food.”

Bellamy began laying bacon on the trays “you have a gallery downtown, right?” Bellamy asked him.
Lincoln nodded “and some of Clarke’s art is there?” he asked. If her art was as good as the ornaments she’d painted, she must be pretty good. “Yes, she’s really pretty good” he said “those ornaments she painted are just the beginning of what she can do. You should come by and see it sometime” he said reaching into his pocket for something. He handed Bellamy a business card “thanks, I’ll do that” he tucked the card in his pocket.

“Mmm bacon” Jasper wandered into the kitchen. “not ready yet” Bellamy laughed. Jasper was a goofy kid, but he was likable. Jasper looked at Bellamy “thanks for hosting us man” he said “it’s nice not to be the only one with a house big enough to hold all of us.” Bellamy nodded “It’s actually been nice for Octavia and I too” he said “it’s been a long time since this house has felt like a home.”

“How’s Clarke doing?” Lincoln asked. “She’s not as upset as she was yesterday” Bellamy replied “I think on some level she misses her mom and was hoping to see her.” Jasper took a seat at the island and began pouring Orange juice and alcohol in several jars “they didn’t always fight like they do now” he looked up from his task. Bellamy glanced at him. Jasper explained how Clarke was planning on going to Medical school, “she wanted to be just like her dad, but when he died, a whole lot changed for Clarke, including her dream of being a doctor” he said.

As the smell of breakfast and coffee filled the air, the rest of the group began waking up and joining them in the kitchen. Jasper was handing out mimosas to those who wanted one. Soon, only Clarke and Octavia were still in bed. When Bellamy pulled the bacon out of the oven, he and Lincoln declared it was time to eat. Bellamy fixed a plate for him and Clarke, then left the kitchen, grinning at the happy noise that filled his house. He walked into his room and crawled into bed next to Clarke sitting up beside her. He held a piece of bacon just under her nose.

“Mmm” she cooed opening one eye to look at him “that’s the second best thing to wake up to” she sighed. He grinned “well if you want we can forget this and do the other thing” he teased. “as good as that sounds” she sat up taking the plate he offered her “I think I’ll take this.” He laughed “I would too” he agreed.

“So, what happens today?” Bellamy asked. “Today, we eat, clean up your house and return to our regularly scheduled lives” she sighed. Both of them knew what that meant “Hey” he tipped her head to meet his gaze “the semester ends in a couple more weeks, then we don’t have to be careful about who sees us” he said. “Besides, we technically have two more days since class isn’t until Tuesday” he pointed out.

“Are you two planning on joining us?” Raven popped into his room. “At some point” Clarke grinned at her “but who turns down breakfast in bed?” she shrugged. Raven rolled her eyes “okay, but if you two don’t join us soon, we might join you” she arched her eyebrows. Clarke grinned “fine, we’ll be down in a little bit” she shook her head. “Ah Clarke” Octavia entered the room “Marcus is here, and he’s not alone” she murmured. “By not alone, you mean my…” she didn’t finish, there was no need as Octavia confirmed by bobbing her head. “What are they doing here?”

Clarke sighed, then looked at Raven “I guess we’re coming down now” she said. “you might want to get dressed first” Raven snorted. “And here I thought I would mosey down in Bellamy’s t-shirt” she rolled her eyes. “Here’s an idea, how about you go keep her company, while I get dressed” she laughed. “I’m sure that would go over great” Raven chuckled. Clarke looked at Bellamy “well you wanted to meet my mom…” she said “here’s your chance.” Raven and Octavia left, so they could get dressed.

Ten minutes later, Clarke and Bellamy entered the living room to find Marcus chatting with Clarke’s friends, most of who were also his tenants, while Abby stood by the tree looking at the ornaments. Clarke walked over to her. “Don’t be mad at Marcus” Abby greeted her “I asked him to bring me here.” Clarke shrugged “Nobody else seems to care that much, so I guess it’s not a problem” she
said. “what are you doing here?” she asked. “I…I felt bad about yesterday” she sighed “I know it took a lot for you to agree to have dinner with me and I had to cancel” she said. “I know this is a no-parents event, but I wanted to see you, to explain” she glanced hopefully at Clarke.

Clarke looked around the room at her friends, who either shrugged or nodded in response. “Have you eaten?” she asked them. “There’s breakfast casserole and bacon in the kitchen.” Abby looked relieved “thank you” she looked around the room. “I believe you know most of my friends” Clarke said as they walked to the kitchen. “this is Lincoln, he owns an art gallery downtown.” Lincoln nodded “I’m pleased to meet you” he looked at Abby. “this is Octavia, you met her when she answered the door” Clarke pointed to Octavia, “she is also the co-owner of this house.” Clarke turned to Bellamy, who stood close to her, but without being too intimate “and this is Bellamy, Octavia’s brother, and the owner and host of this event” she finished. “And according to Marcus, the new guy in your life” Abby added. Clarke nodded, but didn’t say anything.

Lincoln handed Abby and Marcus plates and silverware and they began to help themselves to food. “There’s mimosa’s and coffee over there” Bellamy pointed to the kitchen island. “We’ll let you guys talk” Lincoln took Octavia’s elbow and left the kitchen. “I’ll be in the other room if you need me” Bellamy touched her softly. As he turned to leave, Clarke reached for his hand. He laced his fingers through hers and sat down next to her, across from Marcus and Abby. “You have a beautiful home” Abby commented. “Thanks” Bellamy smiled “though it hasn’t been this festive in a very long time.”

Abby took a bite of her food “this is very good” she looked at Clarke, “did you make this?” Bellamy snorted, earning an elbow in his side. “no, I cook just enough to stay alive” she replied. “I’m not sure who made this.” Bellamy shook his head at her “Lincoln made it” he answered. “If you don’t mind me asking” Abby looked at Bellamy “you’re very young, how is it you own a house already?” she asked. Clarke shot her a warning glance. He laughed “it’s a question I get asked a lot” he replied “I inherited the house after my mom died a few years ago” he said. “I’m sorry for your loss” she said “you must’ve been very young.” He nodded “I was 19, Octavia was 16” he said. “wow, so you also had to raise your sister?” she asked. Bellamy nodded, but didn’t have a chance to answer.

“So, did you come to interrogate Bellamy or talk to me?” Clarke asked. Marcus shot her a disapproving look. Abby sighed “I…just wanted to see you” Abby sighed “and I suppose to meet your new friend” she looked and sounded sad “I’ve missed so much of your life these last years.” Clarke closed her eyes and counted to ten, but before Clarke could say anything Abby spoke again. “I know it’s my fault for putting my job ahead of my family” she said touching Clarke’s hand, but not taking it into her own. “After your dad” she sighed “I couldn’t stand to be in the house, so I threw myself into my work even more.”

“Do you think it was easy for me?” Clarke asked. Abby shook her head “I know it wasn’t easy for you, but you had, still have your friends” she motioned in the direction of the noise coming from the living room. “Yes, I have my friends, who support me and my dreams” Clarke agreed “but did it ever occur to you that I needed you too?” she asked. “That I needed you to understand and accept my choice to not go to medical school, but pursue my dreams and not yours or…” she trailed off, blinking back tears. Bellamy wrapped his arm around her, pulling her close.

They lapsed into silence, neither of them knowing quite what to say. Bellamy pulled the business card out of his pocket Lincoln had given him earlier and slid it across the table. “I’m sure you have your reasons for wanting Clarke to be more and do more with her life” he said “but I am told she is very talented. Those ornaments you were looking at earlier” he looked at Abby, “she painted them.” Abby took the card “you have art in a gallery?” she asked. Clarke nodded “not a lot, but some” she answered. “I’d like to see it” Abby looked at her. “It’s closed today, but it will be back open tomorrow.”
After a few more minutes of silence, Marcus looked at Abby, she nodded “I didn’t mean to interrupt your party” she looked at Clarke, “I just wanted to talk to you, to explain. I love you Clarke” she took Clarke’s hand in hers “I’m sorry I haven’t always put you first or let you live your life your way, but I would like a chance to prove that I can, if you’ll let me.” Clarke sighed, Maybe, we can have lunch next week, surely there are no charity events in the middle of the day” she replied. Abby smiled “I will check my schedule and get back to you. If necessary, I will clear my schedule” she smiled gratefully at her.

Abby and Marcus left a few minutes later “well, what do you think?” Clarke turned to Bellamy. “She seemed sincere” he looked at her “I don’t know what your relationship with your mom has been like, but I can tell you, not having your mom around sucks” he said, pulling her into his arms. “I would love to tell my mom a lot of things, but I’ll never get that chance” he looked at her “you have that chance, don’t throw it away.” She laid her head on his chest and nodded “I’ll try” she said.

“Hey, will you two get your asses in here” Raven hollered “we have business to take care of.” Bellamy sighed “stay with me tonight?” he asked. Clarke nodded “I’d love to” she smiled at him. “Hello???” Raven called again. “coming, coming don’t lose your shorts” Clarke grumbled.
“What the hell am I going to make that John Murphy would actually use?” Bellamy asked, lying in bed with Clarke after everybody else had left. As a whole, the group had decided to put everyone’s name in a hat for a Christmas gift exchange. She snickered “Maybe you give him something he likes, rather than uses” she grinned. He looked at her, eyebrows arched “and what might that be?” he asked, sensing a funny story coming. Clarke grinned “Mr. big shot handyman loves snowmen.” Bellamy looked to see if she was joking, but he saw no hint of humor in her eyes “you’re serious” he grinned. She nodded “as a heart attack.” Bellamy smirked “Well in that case…” he laughed “I know just the thing to make.”

“who’d you get?” he asked. “Roan” she lied, well, half lied, she did draw Roan’s name, but Raven got Bellamy and she wanted Roan. When she found out Clarke had Roan she offered a trade. “Hell, you could wrap yourself up naked under the tree and that would be the perfect gift” Raven laughed. “That wouldn’t be awkward at all” Clarke snorted. After drawing names and cleaning up Bellamy’s house, the friends bid each other goodbye to return to their “normal” lives. Unfortunately, for Bellamy and Clarke, that meant they would be limited to long phone conversations and sneaking around for a couple of weeks until classes ended.

Exhausted from the flurry of activities and the conversation with her mother, Clarke and Bellamy crawled into bed and laid in each other’s arms. “Are you going to be in trouble with Wallace for not working this week?” she asked him. He shook his head, telling her about the conversation he’d had with Wallace the last day of classes. “Is he dying?” she snorted. Bellamy laughed “I didn’t ask” he shook his head “I didn’t want to jinx it.”

“I don’t want tomorrow to come” Clarke sighed. He kissed her forehead “It sucks’ he agreed, but it’s only for a couple of weeks, then he can’t stop us.” Clarke thought of the large trust her dad had set aside for her. She had enough money in that to pay for both of to get Doctorate level degrees, but something told her Bellamy would see that as charity and refuse it. “at least now you can have that talk with your mom over dinner” he looked at her.

Clarke heard the sad tone in his voice. “I wish I could’ve met your mom” she sighed. Bellamy smiled “she would have liked you” he said.

Clarke tried to cover a yawn. He chuckled, kissing her softly “I saw that” he said. “Sorry” she sighed “I love friendsgiving, but it wears me out.” He smiled, pulling her closer to him and pulling a blanket over them “trust me, I know what you mean” he said. She sighed “hey” he turned her face to look at him “I know you want this night to last” he said “but we both have classes tomorrow and on top of that, I have to deal with Wallace.” She nodded “I know” she sighed, leaning into him. It wasn’t long before they both were sound asleep.

Monday came way too early for all of them. Raven met Clarke in the quad with a double shot expresso before their first class. “Why do we do this to ourselves every year?” she sighed. “For the eternal love of our friends” Clarke quipped. “What happened with your mom?” she asked. Clarke sighed “she says she misses me and she wants to be a part of your life.” Clarke shrugged “maybe so, but her job will always come first, it always has” she sighed. “Give her a chance” Bellamy looked at her “trust me, when she’s gone, you’ll miss her.” Clarke heard the sad tone in his voice. “I wish I could’ve met your mom” she sighed. Bellamy smiled “she would have liked you” he said.

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after she turned eighteen, and hadn’t been seen or heard from since.

“Do you ever wonder about her?” Clarke asked reading the look on Raven’s face. “It’s not like she was ever that mom” Raven said “but yeah, sometimes I do” she admitted. “Your mom may not have been around” Raven looked at Clarke “but at least she didn’t leave. And she did come to you” she pointed out. Clarke sighed “ok, I will talk to her” she said heaving a huge sigh. “And if nothing happens, you can say you tried” Raven smiled at her.

Clarke looked around, desperate to change the subject. “He’s in Wallace’s office” Raven grinned. Clarke smiled “I hate that you knew who I was thinking about” she laughed. “So, what are you two going to do?” she asked. “Lots of phone sex” Clarke quipped. Raven gave her a goofy grin “you like him” she accused. “Duh” Clarke retorted. “I mean, you like him, like him” she glowered at her. Clarke grinned, chewing on her lower lip, “yeah, I do” she admitted “but it seems like too much too fast” she sighed. “Sometimes it happens like that” Raven shrugged “who’s to say it’s not real?”

She glanced at Clarke “Don’t do that” Raven commanded. “Do what?” Clarke feigned innocence. “Don’t look for problems, because if you look for them, you’ll find them” she said. “Bellamy is not like Finn. Yeah, maybe things got hot and heavy fast, but there is more to your relationship than sex. I’ve seen it” she looked Clarke in the eye. glanced at her watch “Damn, I’m late for class. I’ll call you later” she hugged Clarke and ran across the quad.

By the end of her classes, Clarke was worn out from trying to remember all the stuff her teacher had gone over in class. She had to work harder than usual to understand the content. Between her mom and Bellamy, her heart was not in what the teacher was saying. She needed to blow off a little steam and since spending time with Bellamy was not feasible, she did the next best thing.

“Hey Clarke” Lincoln greeted her warmly “the studio is open for you” he said. “I’m closing up soon, but you can stay as long as you want.” Clarke thanked him and walked to the room at the back of Lincoln’s gallery. It was a public studio, but usually if Clarke wanted to use it, Lincoln closed it. There was couch in there and a bathroom as well, so if she got caught up in her work, she could just stay there. Lincoln could arm the alarm system remotely, making sure she could move around the room freely, without setting off the alarm.

Clarke set up her easel placed a canvas on it, then began pulling out tubes of paint, squeezing swirls of the colors onto a piece of cardboard. She sat down and began moving the brush across the canvas, changing colors and brushes as she went along. This was exactly what she needed, a distraction from the thoughts that threatened to overwhelm her. Like most of her other work, she didn’t start out with an ideal of what she wanted to paint, but when she stopped and looked at it, she smiled at the image in front of her.

That was when she realized how stiff she was. She was also hungry and a little tired. She looked down at her watch, surprised to realize that it was nearly midnight. By now, Lincoln would have already set the alarm in the gallery, so she might as well sleep on the couch in the corner. She grabbed her backpack and dug out her phone. She has six missed calls and several texts. Bellamy had called and texted three times, Raven twice and her mom once. She texted Raven to let her know she was ok, that she had gone to the studio and got caught up painting. Raven texted back of course, you, did lol. Call Bellamy he is freaking out!

Clarke laughed, texting back that she would. It was too late to call her mom, so she called Bellamy instead. “Are you okay?” he greeted her. “Sorry, I needed to clear my head, so I came to paint” she explained. “And when did you realize how late it was?” he asked. She smiled “about ten minutes ago” she admitted sheepishly. “Do you feel better?” he asked. “Yeah, I do” she replied. “Are you safe there?” he asked. Clarke smiled “I’m fine, my guess is Lincoln has already set the alarm out in
the gallery and I have food, water, a bed, and a bathroom in the studio” she assured him.

“I miss you” he spoke quietly. She smiled, looking at the picture she’d just painted “I miss you, too” she returned. “This is going to be the longest two weeks ever” he grumbled. “Tell me about it” she agreed. “So, what did you paint?” he asked. “A portrait” she answered evasively. “Of anyone in particular?” he asked. She could hear the laughter in his voice. “maybe” she shrugged. “Can I see it?” he asked. “it’s not done yet” she replied. “When it’s done can I see it?” he asked. “yes, when it’s done” she agreed. Clarke yawned “Go get some sleep” Bellamy laughed “We’ll try to squeeze some time in tomorrow.” She grinned “I will, and I’d love that” she replied. “Good night babe” he said preparing to hang the phone up. “Bellamy” she called his name. “Yeah?” he answered. “Thanks for worrying about me.” She heard the smile in his voice “anytime babe” he said. Clarke hung the phone up and laid down on the couch, feeling much better than when she arrived at the gallery.

When Clarke woke up the next morning, there was a blanket covering her, a change of clothes folded neatly in a pile, coffee and a hot breakfast on the coffee table next to her. She emerged from the studio twenty minutes later “thanks” she smiled at Lincoln, holding up the sandwich and coffee in her hand. “you’re welcome” He nodded.

“Nice painting” he said. She smiled “thanks, I was inspired.” Lincoln grinned at her “If one was so inclined, he might point out that you never painted Finn” he leveled his gaze at her. “It’s a little scary, ya know” she sighed. She sat down on a bench in the gallery looking at another piece of her art work on the wall. “you hung them all?” she asked. “They’re good Clarke” he told her, “I even have buyer for one of them when you are ready to sell it.” She arched eyebrows at him “No, it is not your mom or Marcus or anyone you know” he shook his head at her reaction “I mean an actual, honest-to-goodness customer, who wants to buy it.” She eyed him doubtfully, “which one?” she asked. “that one” he pointed to a painting on the wall. She dropped her head to her chest “I don’t know I can sell that one” she sighed. “If you decide you can” he told her “let me know, I’ll have Nyko make a nice print of it first, so you can have a copy.” She smiled at him “I’ll think about it” she said. A glance at her watch told her she needed to get moving. “thanks for letting me come last night and for letting me crash.”

He wrapped an arm around her shoulders “There’s always a place for you here” he told her.
Clarke slid into class just as Professor Wallace started teaching them. “thank you for joining us Ms. Griffin” he spoke coldly. A chill ran through Bellamy, he hadn’t seen Wallace yet this week, so he had no idea what mood he might be in. Even so, Clarke wasn’t really late to class. She was barely on time, but that didn’t make her late; so, Wallace’s reaction to her seemed a little excessive. “Sorry professor” she mumbled taking her seat.

meeting Bellamy’s gaze she smiled slightly. Wallace’s cold sneer upon her arrival sent a chill down her spine. When his gaze followed hers, she immediately looked down. Wallace was an ass, always had been, but in couple weeks, she’d be through with him. Bellamy on the other hand, was a different story. His life, his dreams depended on keeping the smug, entitled, tenured professor happy. She had to be careful not to blow it for him.

Professor Wallace kept them right up until the minute class was supposed to let out. “There will be no Class Thursday” he announced “instead a final review will be posted online and you can study it there. We will meet again to take your final” he said in lieu of goodbye, Packing his bag and leaving the room as usual.

Raven grinned and waved at her as Clarke waited for the class to empty mouthing “call me” before leaving the room. When the last student filed out, she stood up and walked down to were Bellamy waited for her. “Hi” he spoke huskily placing his hands on her waist and pulling her into his chest. “God, I missed you last night” he whispered holding her close. She grinned and wrapped her arms around his neck “me too, but I was thinking about you” she sighed. He grinned “lately, you’re all I think about” he admitted, capturing her lips with his. Clarke sighed and leaned into him.

“That’s very sad to hear” they broke apart when the ice, cold tone of Professor Wallace spoke again “because I’m very sure that the terms of your employment forbid having a relationship with a student” he drawled. Clarke froze, staring at Bellamy helplessly. “perhaps the three of us should take this someplace else” Wallace suggested as students began filling in for the next class. Bellamy, reached for her hand as they followed Wallace to his office, but she pulled it back, shaking her head.

Bellamy sighed, he had a feeling this was not going to end well. “Sir, I can explain” Bellamy started after the door had closed behind them. “I don’t think an explanation is necessary, Mr. Blake” Wallace turned on them. “though I would like to hear what you have to say Ms. Griffin” he looked at her. She looked at Bellamy, then back to Wallace and to Bellamy again. Recognizing the look in her eyes, he shook his head, but she ignored his response. “I’m sorry professor” she looked at Bellamy again a sad expression in her eyes “It’s my fault. Please, don’t punish him for my wrongdoing.”

“You know Ms. Griffin” Wallace continued coldly “I could fail you, report you for academic misbehavior” he glanced at her coldly “and I could still terminate Mr. Blake’s employment, which I’m sure you understand the consequences of those actions” he said. She nodded “Please, it was just a kiss” she pleaded “nothing happened and I never asked for any academic favors” she replied. “It won’t happen again, I swear, please don’t terminate him.” Wallace looked between them “As you wish Ms. Griffin” he finally spoke looking at her “but be warned further romantic interaction between the two of you will not result so well” he warned. She nodded “Thank you sir” she nodded “I’ll remember that.”

“Wait” Bellamy spoke “I have something to say” he put a hand on her to stop her from leaving. Wallace arched his eyebrows “tread carefully, Mr. Blake” he spoke quietly, causing a chill to run down Clarke’s back. She looked at Bellamy, shaking her head. He knew that she knew what this job meant to him. He also knew that she knew the price of standing in the way of someone else’s dreams
and would not stand in the way of his, at whatever cost to herself. He couldn’t let that happen. “Something did happen” Bellamy looked at her “but there was no academic cheating as a result” he clarified. “Plus, the terms of my contract say I cannot be involved with a student of your class, which in two weeks, she won’t be anymore” he pointed out.

Wallace eyed them both “that may be true, however I have been considering making a change recently” he glanced coldly at Bellamy “I was going to tell you this after the semester is over, but since you seem to be set on this course of action, I will tell you now” his eyes glittered coldly. Effective the end of this semester, I will no longer require your services Mr. Blake. I wish you well in future endeavors, but you probably shouldn’t ask for references.”

Clarke gasped and dropped her head. She freed herself from Bellamy’s grasp and ran out of the office. Bellamy turned on Wallace “You do whatever it is you feel necessary” he spoke coldly “I will finish my education, even if means being in debt up to my eyeballs” he drawled. “I think, however that you might want to watch your back” Bellamy warned “there are somethings even tenured instructors aren’t allowed to do.” Wallace eyed him coldly “so noted Mr. Blake, now get out of my office and don’t come back” he sneered.

Bellamy collected his things and left the office. He looked around for Clarke but she was nowhere to be found, so he called her. Her phone went to voicemail. He left a message for her to call him back, hoping she would. “Did you see Clarke just a minute ago?” he asked spotting Raven in the quad. She nodded “yeah, she seemed upset, but when I called her, she just kept running. What happened?” she asked. Bellamy told her what had just occurred in Wallace’s office. “Damn, that’s not good” she sighed. Bellamy nodded in agreement “I tried calling, but she didn’t answer her phone” he sighed “where would she go?” he asked. “Normally, I’d say the gallery, but it’s closed right now, so probably home” Raven answered. “Good luck, Clarke can be hard-headed when she thinks she doing the right thing” Raven looked at him “call me if you need anything” she told him as he ran the other direction.

Clarke’s car was not in the parking lot at the apartment and she still wasn’t answering her phone. Bellamy sat there for hours, waiting and calling her. Raven checked with him a few times, but she hadn’t heard from Clarke either. “Bell, what are you doing here?” Octavia walked up to his car, with Lincoln not too far away. He sighed, shaking his head. He wasn’t going to bother his little sister with his problems. “I know that look” she crossed her arms over her chest “what’s wrong?” she asked “are you here to see Clarke?” she asked. “yeah, but she’s not here and she won’t answer her phone” he sighed raggedly. “Come inside Bell” she opened the door, “you can have dinner with us and talk about it.” He reluctantly let his sister guide him to her apartment, where he told them of the day’s events. Octavia grinned at him “you love her” she pointed a finger in his chest. He clasped his hands together “yeah, I think I do” he sighed.

She grinned at him “Well it’s about damn time someone caught your attention” she said. “I can’t say for sure, but I think the feeling is mutual, considering what she painted yesterday” Lincoln said. He looked at Bellamy “Raven said she probably went home?” he asked. At Bellamy’s nod, he looked thoughtful “This place, her apartment” Lincoln murmured “it’s not home” he said. “It’s where she hides, sleeps, eats, but it’s not home” he said. Realization began to dawn on him “she went home” Bellamy spoke quietly “like home home.”

Lincoln nodded “but why, she doesn’t get along with her mom” Bellamy wondered aloud. “no, she doesn’t get along with her mother, but she does get along with Marcus” he added “and even if she doesn’t get along with her mother, she did get along with her father, and it was his home too. Besides, it’s a big house, they could live in that house for days and never see each other” Lincoln replied. Bellamy grabbed his keys “I need to go…” Lincoln put a hand on him “can I offer you a
“Give her time, Clarke doesn’t make good decisions when she is under pressure. She knows what it’s like for someone to put a damper on someone else’s dreams. It damn near ruined her life, she wouldn’t do that to someone else.” Lincoln offered. “If It were Octavia, I might be inclined to run after her too, but in Clarke’s case, give it a week or two.” At Bellamy’s incredulous look, he held his hand up cutting off his next statement “I’m not saying don’t call or text, just don’t give her a little time to process what happened.” Bellamy looked at him. “okay, I won’t go over” he sighed “but I will keep calling and checking on her.”

Octavia hugged him “What are you going to do about school?” she asked. He shrugged “graduate with a mountain of debt like every other college student I guess” he said “I’m not giving up on my dreams of becoming a teacher just because some prick of a tenured professor wants to play God.” Lincoln snorted “Professor Wallace?” he asked. Bellamy nodded. “he was an ass when I was going to school” Lincoln declared “I see he hasn’t gotten any better.” Bellamy bobbed his head “nope, in fact, I think he’s getting worse.” Bellamy stood up “I’m going home” thanks for dinner” he hugged his sister. “Call if you need anything” she sighed kissing his cheek.

Bellamy texted and called Clarke several times over the next week before finally getting a response.

Bellamy:
Come on Clarke, just talk to me, please.

Clarke:
I’m fine Bellamy, don’t worry about me.

Bellamy:
I’m not going away Clarke, you can avoid me all you want, but I will be here when you’re done running.

Clarke did not respond to his last statement, but at least she’d responded to him, which was more than she’d done in days. His phone rang “Have you heard from her” Raven asked. He told her about her text just now. Raven laughed softly “she can be kind of hard-headed when she wants to be, you just have to wait her out” she said. He sighed “I just wish…” his thoughts were interrupted by a knock at his door. “I have to go, there is someone at the door” he said “Give her time Bellamy” Raven said “call me if you need to talk.” He thanked her and hung up the phone. When he opened the door, Abby Griffin was standing there.
“Can I come in?” she asked. Bellamy moved aside allowing her to enter. “So, either you have the patience of Job or you are as stubborn as my daughter” she sat down on the couch looking at him “which is it?” she asked. “How is she doing” he asked sitting across from her in a chair. “better than we think, but worse than she tells anyone” Abby replied, “but if you want specifics, I’m probably not the person to ask.” He chewed his lower lip, not sure what to say. “I know you care about Clarke” she said “and she cares about you, too. So much so that she won’t stand in the way of your dreams”

Abby looked at him. “I don’t know what’s keeping you from going to her, but I would have two requests of you” she said “feel free to say no but I think these will change your mind about waiting.” He nodded “what are they?” he asked. “First, I’d like to show you something, if you would be willing to come with me” she said. “And the other?” he asked. “I want you to consider something, it’s about money, but please just listen before you make a decision” she requested. He nodded and waited for her to continue. “will you come with me?” she asked. Bellamy shrugged, what did he have to lose at this point “sure, now?” he asked. “If you have the time” she bobbed her head in agreement.

Abby directed him to her car, a shiny, black Lexus, with leather interior and a state of the art stereo. Bellamy knew Clarke came from money, but Abby’s car was proof of that. “You’re probably used to Clarke’s car, huh?” she asked. He laughed “it’s a little different than this one” he said. “It was her father’s car. I can’t tell you how much money Marcus has sunk into that car” she chortled. “He says it’s important to give her a piece of her father, no matter the cost. I don’t know what he’s going to do when the damn thing craps out completely. Bellamy laughed “they get along well” he said. She nodded “you’d think he was her father and I was the step-parent” she sighed.

They pulled up to an art gallery downtown “this is Lincoln’s gallery” Bellamy recognized the name. “You gave me this” she handed him Lincoln’s business card “said maybe I should get to know my daughter a little better, maybe you should take your own advice” she looked at him. He nodded his agreement and they entered the gallery. “Bellamy, Abby” Lincoln greeted them. They returned his greeting, telling him they were there to see Clarke’s pieces. He led them to a wing in the museum “these are all hers” he said “they start on this wall. There is a studio at the end of the hall where she paints.” A customer came in that Lincoln needed to handle, so he left them to their business.

Abby stared at the painting in front of her, tears shone in her eyes “I remember the moment” she sighed. Bellamy looked at her “this was a moment?” he asked. She nodded telling him a story when Clarke was eight years old, and wanted to play princess with her parents. “I had just gotten off work after working all day, I was tired and needed a shower. I told her I would play with her the next day, but I ended up being called into emergency surgery.” Bellamy glanced the picture “this is her father?” he asked. Abby smiled “yeah, that’s Jake” she smiled. Bellamy glanced at the fair-haired man wearing a purple towel as a cape. “Clarke said the towel had to be purple because that made him royal” she laughed. “he’d worked all day too. He was just as hot and sweaty as I was, but his little girl wanted to play, so he…” she sniffed. Bellamy patted her shoulder awkwardly. “Thanks” she smiled at him “He had a throne and all” Abby laughed. “She spent all day making those thrones” she grinned. They strolled more paintings, more “moments” from her childhood, all of them featuring Clarke and her father, but her mother only appeared in one or two. Plus a few paintings of a princess surrounded by fairies and forest creatures.

As they turned the corner, the paintings grew darker. Abby stopped in front of one that was particularly dark “I didn’t think she remembered this” Abby spoke softly, almost in a whisper. “What’s this?” Bellamy asked. “This was her dad’s car before Marcus restored it” Abby sighed. “It
was the day he died” she wiped a tear from her eye. “Clarke was there?” Bellamy asked, horrified.
Abby nodded “she told me she didn’t remember anything from that day” a single tear ran down her
cheek. “He restored it from this?” Bellamy asked incredulously. Abby nodded “he rebuilt it nearly
from the ground up. It took him almost a year. He gave it to her on her eighteenth birthday. She just
sat in it and cried.”

The car in the painting was a mangled wreck, a single headlight illuminating the night sky. A yellow
tarp was painted over the driver’s side windshield. “She was in the hospital for two weeks” Abby
shuddered at the memory. “By the time, she was well enough to come home, Jake had already been
buried. She didn’t speak to me for days afterwards. Told me I didn’t give her a chance to say
goodbye.” She wiped her eyes with a Kleenex he’d pulled from a box by the exhibit. Clearly, this
painting ignited a lot of emotions from strangers too. The next few paintings were as dark or darker
than the one of her father’s car. The canvases looked like Clarke had just stood back and thrown
paint on them, but they somehow had deep meaning.

Another turn, showed he coming out of her dark period. Bellamy began to recognize people in the
paintings, her friends, singularly, and together forever captured in paint. “Raven used to drive me
nuts” Abby chortled “I get why she did it now, she must have known everything Clarke did about
the accident, her pain, but at the time…” she sighed. Bellamy nodded “It explains a lot about their
friendship” he laughed. The last two paintings hung by themselves on a different wall. “those are her
newest” Lincoln came up behind them. Bellamy recognized one as a replica of the tree in his living
room. The other was a picture of him. “This is from the other day” he said. Lincoln nodded. “She
said it wasn’t done yet, but it is” he said confidently. “Are these available to buy?” Abby asked.
Lincoln nodded “I already have a buyer for the princess on her throne, but Clarke isn’t ready to sell it
yet.”

Abby walked over to the one he mentioned “it’s beautiful” she sighed “I should have stayed up and
played with her, but as usual, I was too busy.” Lincoln patted her arm “I’m sure there may be a lot of
things that you could’ve, should’ve done” Lincoln spoke softly “but look what all that angst
created.” Bellamy turned to him “you said you had offers on a couple, which is the other one?” he
asked. If it was him, he would buy the mangled car painting, there was something about it that was
hauntingly beautiful. “This one” he pointed to the canvas that looked as though she had just thrown
paint at it in a rage, it too told a story. “I am getting prints made for her of each of these” he
continued “so, if she decides to sell them, she has copies.” They wandered into Clarke’s studio.
Bellamy laughed, clearly she’d been there recently. There was a trash can overflowing with fast food
bags and bottles of soda. A blanket was tossed haphazardly on a couch, next to it was a small chest.
In the middle of the room was an easel that had a cloth covered canvas on it. “that’s one she just
started” Lincoln walked over to him “I have no idea what it is and she hasn’t shown it to me, yet.”

Bellamy glanced at the two pieces that captured his attention the most. He wished he had known the
little girl who wanted to play princess with her parents, who danced with the fairies in the woods and
sat on her tree stump throne. His heart ached for the teenager who lost her father and nearly her life,
apparently in the mangled care wreck, but the two spoke volumes about who she had become and
what mattered to her most. His eyes fell on her last works, the ones of her friends and of their ragtag
tree “I want that one” he looked at the painting of the tree that currently resided in his living room.
“I’ll mark it reserved” Lincoln nodded.

Abby turned to Lincoln “thank you” she said. He shrugged “believe me, it was my pleasure” he said.
“She’s very talented, isn’t she?” Abby asked. “She is” Lincoln replied. Abby sighed “I was so
cought up trying to make her what I wanted her to be” she whispered as they walked back through
her gallery. They stopped at a guest book. It was signed by many people with positive comments.
“She never said anything” Abby was back in front of the picture of the wreckage of her father’s car
“but it explains so much about her after her father died.” She turned to Bellamy “she’s not going to
come to you” Abby looked at him “If you love her, and I think you do, you’ll have to go to her.” He nodded “she’s just a little stubborn” he murmured. “Just like her father” Abby said. “and maybe a little bit like her mother?” he asked. She grinned “maybe a little bit” she agreed. They thanked Lincoln and left the gallery “where to?” Abby asked. “I want to see her” he said. She nodded and started to drive.

When they turned into a circle drive twenty minutes later, Bellamy couldn’t believe his eyes. Abby’s car spoke volumes about her family’s wealth, but the house they lived in drove the point home. It’s towering structure with gleaming, white siding and manicured lawn made him feel out of place. Clarke’s old car was in the circle drive, looking slightly out of place. “Wow” he exclaimed. Abby leaned back in her seat after the car rolled to a stop. “It looks impressive” she glanced at him “but it mostly feels really empty” she said. “Jake wanted to fill the place with children, but we..I” Abby corrected “got so caught up trying to give my daughter a future, I forgot to give her a home and a family to fill it.” she sounded sad. Bellamy grinned “Well, if you really want a family to fill it, you can host Christmas and friendsgiving next year.” Abby grinned “they do pack in there, don’t they” she replied. “Maybe next year instead of hosting my pretentious friends, I’ll invite do that.” He was beginning to understand that things were not all rosy all the time, even for the privileged “maybe all your pretentious friends would enjoy friendsgiving” he said “but it’s a four-day thing, so…” She smiled at that “the house is so quiet most of the time, it would be nice to have a little noise for a change.”

“Are you ready?” she asked. He looked at the large house looming in front of him “it’s just a house” she correctly read his expression “a large house with a lot of rooms for her to hide in.” Bellamy sighed resolutely and got out of the car. Abby smiled at him, “Don’t worry, you’ll be fine” she said “I promise.” The front door opened as soon as they stepped onto the porch. Marcus Kane stood in the doorway. “Bellamy” he greeted, smiling at him “sir, I mean Marcus” he nodded. Abby looked at Marcus and sighed, stepping into the house and his open arms. Bellamy closed the door behind him and looked around. The house was as impressive inside as it was outside. Marcus wrapped his arms around Abby, kissing her hair “It was surreal and at one point haunting” Abby pulled back “you should see her art, it’s amazing” she said. He nodded “yes, it is” he agreed. Abby shook her head “of course, you’ve seen it” she sighed “you’ve always been a better parent to my daughter, then I have.” Kane kissed her softly “It’s not a bad thing to want more for your children then they do for themselves Abby” he smiled at her “besides, I came into her life when she was an adult, you’re the one who spent eighteen years raising her.” She sighed, leaning against him “we don’t deserve you” she said. “That’s very true” he laughed, earning a slap on his arm “but you both have me.”

Bellamy looked around uncomfortably “she’s upstairs” Kane told him “last bedroom on the right. Lunch will be ready shortly, maybe you can convince her to join us this time.” Bellamy thanked him and walked up the huge staircase. As he did, he noticed what Clark meant about her house not looking like his. There were a lot of pictures on the wall, even a portrait or two, but nothing like the ones in his house. The place truly felt like a house and not a home. When he reached the room Marcus had indicated, it stood out in stark opposition to the rest of the house. The closed door was a plain white one like the rest of the house, but was decorated with a sign that read Clarke’s Room: DO NOT ENTER. He took a deep breath and knocked softly “come in” she called from the other side of the door.

It looked as if time had stood still in this room. The four-poster bed had flowing white curtains tied to the post. The pink bed spread was lacy and frilly. There were posters of boy bands hung on the walls. One corner of the room had an easel and some paints on it, though it didn’t look as if it had been used in a very long time. Clarke was lying on her bed, not looking up. She looked okay, beautiful actually, laying in the queen-sized bed, with various magazines and books surrounding her. A tray holding leftover breakfast dishes and the stale air were the only signs that she had clearly not left the room in a few days. “Hiding out?” he asked. Her head shot up “Bellamy” she looked
surprised to see him. She appeared to be watching a show on a large tv mounted to the wall in the corner of her room. “Though, I guess if you wanted a place to hide this would as good a place as any” he mused.

“What are you doing here?” she asked pulling back to look at him. “Your mom came to my house this morning, then we went to Lincoln’s gallery.” He let that sink in, then looked into her eyes “You never told me you were in the car with your dad and that you nearly died, too” he said shooting her a pained expression. “I told Raven” she shrugged. “That doesn’t count, you tell her everything” he countered. “I don’t know, it didn’t seem important” she shrugged. “You almost dying wasn’t important?” he asked incredulous. “But I didn’t die, my best friend did” her voice cracked “I merely survived.” The sadness in her voice broke his heart. He wanted to know everything about the wreck, but didn’t really want to ask her to relive what was obviously the saddest day of her life. “All I remember from the accident is waking up at the scene long enough to the mangled car, and my dad…” she said, as if reading his mind. “Then I remember waking up in the hospital four days later.”

He walked over to the bed where she had moved to the edge, her feet dangling off the side and wrapped his arms around her, burying his face in her neck “are you okay?” he asked her. She nodded

“Are you okay? What did Wallace say after I left?” she asked pulling back to look at him. “He told me to get out and not come back” he said. Clarke sighed, “So, what happens next semester?” she asked. “I don’t know” he said “and to be honest I don’t care about that right now. I’ve been too busy worrying about you” he sighed caressing her cheek with his thumb. “You weren’t home, or at school and nobody had heard from you, including Raven” he said. “How’d you figure out where I was?” she asked. “Lincoln” he replied telling her the dinner he had with Lincoln and Octavia. “This isn’t really home” she sighed “I feel closer to my dad here, but I came here because I didn’t want to do anything or see anybody and here I can do that.” Bellamy grinned “which reminds me, I’m supposed to talk you into joining your parents for lunch” he said.

She patted the bed beside her indicating for him to join her “So, what did you think of the gallery?” she asked. “I’m glad you didn’t give in and become the doctor your mom wanted you to be” he said “you’re an amazing artist.” She shrugged “I’m not that good” she denied. “You are that good” he said “You may not be Pablo Picasso, but your work is amazing.” Clarke still looked unconvinced “what did my mom say?” she asked. “She cried, especially when she saw the painting of the wreck” he told her what Abby had said about Clarke keeping the truth from her. Clarke shrugged “what would saying anything change?” she asked “it wouldn’t bring my dad back or make my mom feel any better?” He shrugged “I don’t know” he admitted “maybe nothing. So, are we joining Abby and Marcus for lunch?” he asked. She sighed “I suppose, but I’d better shower and change clothes first.” Bellamy laughed “yeah, that’s probably a good thing” he waved his hand in front of his nose. “Not nice Bellamy” she scoffed, shaking her head. He shrugged “but true nonetheless” he pointed out. She swatted him with her arm, but got out of bed and headed to the adjoining bathroom after getting some clothes out of a closet.

While she showered, Bellamy wandered around her room. It looked nothing like he apartment, felt nothing like her apartment. Marcus popped his head in the room “I’ve been sent to see if you two are joining us for lunch” he said looking at Bellamy. “Clarke is taking a show, then we’ll be down” he said. “Well, it’s about time” Marcus snorted “I threatened to take her to the backyard and hose her off in a day or so.” Bellamy looked around the room shaking his head “eerie isn’t it?” Marcus asked. Bellamy nodded “it like time stopped in here.” Marcus sighed “It kind of did he said “I didn’t know Clarke before her dad died” Marcus recalled seeing pictures of a happy, smiling Clarke, but the young lady he met was rarely happy or smiling. Bellamy picked up a picture from her nightstand and looked at it. Clarke was very young, riding on the shoulders of her dad, or at least he thought it was her dad. She was laughing, wearing a long, lacy dress and a tiara. There were other pictures in her room, but not many, and none of them were of a teenaged Clarke. Clarke emerged from the bathroom “hey look she can clean up” Marcus teased. She stuck her tongue
out at him. He laughed and pulled her into a hug “stop” she pleaded when he teased her about her strawberry smelling hair clashing with the stale air in the room. She looked at Bellamy “aren’t you going to defend me?” she scoffed. Bellamy smirked “First, there has to be a defense, which you have none” he grinned as she rolled her eyes “and second, far be it for me to correct someone who has to power to stop me from seeing you.” Clarke sighed “I hate you both” she declared and flounced out of the room. Marcus merely laughed as he followed her out. Bellamy jogged after them, catching up to her. When they walked into the dining room, Abby looked at Clarke and pulled her into a hug, tears shining in her eyes. “I’m sorry baby” she sighed “I’m so sorry that I tried to make you into someone you were not meant to be.” Clarke awkwardly returned her mom’s hug, the two of them had been living in the same house as strangers for so long, that this moment felt weird to Clarke. She didn’t know what to say, so she just stayed quiet.

Luckily, Mrs. Morris’ delighted squeal broke the moment “Clarke” she exclaimed excitedly “it’s good to see you out of your room” she said hugging her tightly. Clarke smiled “thanks” she shrugged. It felt somehow disrespectful to feel happier about hugging the housekeeper than her mom. Clarke introduced Bellamy to Mrs. Morris, who fawned over him. Bellamy blushed a little, making Clarke laugh. “Sit, sit” she pointed them all to a table “I prepared your favorite lunch” she smiled at Clarke. Her stomach growled reminding her that she’d been existing on snacks and junk food the last week, not really wanting to eat. But now, the familiar smell of Mrs. Morris, chicken tortilla soup with grilled cheese sandwiches made her mouth water. Bellamy watched as Clarke devoured two bowls of soup and two sandwiches. He made a mental note to get the recipe seeing as Clarke seemed to like it so much.

“So, what did you think?” Clarke looked at Abby. “amazing” she smiled “and sad, and enlightening” she glanced at Clarke. “You told me you didn’t remember the accident.” Clarke sighed “I don’t remember what happened to cause the accident, and I don’t want to know” she held her hand up when Abby opened her mouth to speak. “I remember waking up on the side of the road, there was a fireman with me. I asked him about…” she sighed softly. The memory was as clear as the day it happened, and hurt only slightly less “he kept telling me that I didn’t want to look at the car and that I would be okay. I kept looking over, so he moved to the other side, blocking my view” she sighed deeply “the next thing I knew I was waking up in the hospital four days later.” Bellamy reached for her hand, he didn’t know what to say, so he just held her hand.

Abby had tears in her eyes listening to Clarke’s story “God baby, I am so sorry” she sighed “your world imploded and I was so wrapped up in my own grief” she trailed off, blinking back tears. “It’s okay, I survived” Clarke shrugged. “Lincoln says he has a buyer for a couple of your pieces, are you going to sell them?” Abby asked. Clarke shrugged “I don’t know if I’m ready to let them go yet” she said. “Lincoln is getting prints made, maybe if they’re any good, I’ll consider it.”

“So now that you have emerged from hiding, do you have a plan?” Marcus asked. Clarke shrugged “I guess I’ll take my finals and see what happens after that” she said. “I just wish I didn’t have to deal with that ass…..” she trailed off. Marcus looked at both of them “neither of you need to worry about Cage Wallace” he said grittily “and after I’m done with him, neither will anybody else.” Clarke looked at Bellamy “that doesn’t help Bellamy” she sighed. “Actually, I have a plan for that” Abby interjected looking at Bellamy “This is where I need you to have an open mind” she leveled her gaze at him. He looked at Clarke, then Abby, “okay” he sighed deeply “hit me.”

Marcus was the first to speak “in the spirit of being honest, I have you checked out from the minute, you can Clarke became a thing” he looked at Bellamy. “Clarke shook her head “I wondered how you knew who he was” she sighed, burying he head in her hand. Marcus shrugged “she’s our daughter, our only child and after Finn, we needed to know she was not dating a loser” Marcus looked at Bellamy. “The more I hear about that guy, the more I want to rearrange his face” Bellamy spat out. “Don’t worry about Finn” Marcus shot him an approving glance “he’ll never willingly cross
paths with Clarke again.” The last words were delivered in a tone as cold as the ice on a frozen lake. “I wondered why he stopped calling me so quickly” she laughed, looking up again.” Marcus grinned at her, taking her free hand in his “We promised not to interfere in your life choices” he looked at her “and we did that, but your mother and I will always protect you from creep and losers, even if it means checking up on you.” Bellamy grinned at her “see I’m not a loser or a creep” he arched his eyebrows at her. “No, you’re definitely not” Marcus agreed.

“Cage Wallace is a real piece of work” Marcus went on “but his days as tenured faculty are numbered, so he won’t be causing you two or anyone else any more problems.” Bellamy wanted to say that technically he’d already caused Bellamy a problem, but he got the feeling they already knew that. “Bellamy” this time Abby spoke up “we know that you worked for Wallace, and we know why” she spoke softly. “We also know why you no longer work with Wallace, and what that cost you.” Bellamy tried to sound nonchalant “It’s no big deal. I will figure something out” he said. “you learned to do that at a young age” Kane murmured “without any help from anyone, and that is impressive, it truly is” he met Bellamy’s eyes. “But I have a proposition for you” Abby was speaking again. “As you can see, money is not a problem for us” she turned her head in either direction “and I suppose you know about the inheritance Jake left Clarke” she asked. “I'd heard something about it” he admitted “but it was never an influence in my decision to…” he was cut off when Kane nodded in his direction “We know” Marcus smiled “and we deeply appreciate that “it’s nice to know that she is not always going to have to deal with idiots like Finn.”

Clarke shook her head, clearly embarrassed by the current line of questions. “anyway?” she prompted. “Jake also left me a sizeable inheritance” Abby looked at him “I put it in a savings account, where it is currently collecting interest. The plan was to give it to Clarke someday, to buy a house or use it for something she might need.” Clarke grunted “not to be ungrateful, but I don’t really need another bunch of money I’ll never be able to spend” she replied, hoping she didn’t scare Bellamy off with those words. He laughed and squeezed her hand as if reading her mind “well, it hasn’t worked yet” he murmured. Abby went on to explain that they’d come to the same conclusion themselves and had been looking for a new solution. “I don’t need the money either, and it damn sure isn’t helping anyone sitting in a bank” she continued. “But it could help a lot of people, starting with you possibly, who have to put their lives on hold or work for asshats like Cage Wallace just to have a future of any kind.”

Bellamy looked up “I can’t take your inheritance, Abby” he said “that’s not who I…” Abby smiled at him, “I know, I figured that out at your house, and I’m not asking you to take my inheritance” she clarified “I’m offering you a, scholarship I guess you might call it” she looked at him. “A way to complete your education, without graduating from college drowning in debt.” Bellamy cleared his throat “I’m flattered, I am really” he looked at her “but I can’t in good conscience take your…” Abby grinned “It’s not charity, Bellamy” she said “and you wouldn’t get it all, just enough to finish school, but if that makes you uncomfortable then consider it an interest-free, long-term loan” she said. She went on to explain that if he took the ‘scholarship’ he would be the inaugural student to do so, “I want to put Jake’s money where it will something good” Abby looked at him “and I think you will do something good with your life’s goals.”

Bellamy closed his eyes “I don’t want to sound ungrateful” he looked at Abby and Marcus, “but I really need to think about this” he replied. “I understand” Abby bobbed her head “and you won’t offend me if you say no, but if you think about it and decide to take the offer, it can be applied as early as next semester.” She said. “I will think about it” he nodded his head at her “thank you for the offer.” Abby smiled “just let me know” she said “now, if you two will excuse us, we have to get ready to go a dinner for the hospital tonight” she and Marcus rose out of their seats. “you can come with us If you want” she looked at them. “God no” Clarke snorted “I mean, no thank you” she noted Marcus’ expression. Marcus smile at her correction “smart girl” he grinned at her “on both counts.” Abby swatted him “coming dear” he replied dutifully.
“So, you want the nickel tour?” she asked Bellamy after they’d left. He snorted “the nickel tour?” he arched his eyebrows. She laughed “This house is actually small for this neighborhood” she grinned. “all 26 rooms” he retorted, rolling his eyes. “Thirty, if you count all the secret rooms” she laughed. “secret rooms?” now, he was intrigued. “Come on” she stood up taking his hand. He allowed her to pull him to his feet.

They’d been exploring her house for nearly an hour when she finally finished the tour, or so he thought. “Come on” she grinned “I’ll show you my favorite places” she smiled broadly. “I can’t believe you grew up here” he said. She sighed “I’d have rather grown up in your house” she said. Bellamy half expected her favorite places to be the indoor pool or the tv room with the sixty-inch television. He was surprised to find her leading him through the kitchen to a small apartment behind it. She opened the door without knocking “Mrs. Morris” she called out. “In here dear” they heard. They followed the voice to find the housekeeper sitting in a chair watching television. Bellamy looked around, this looked like his house. Clarke plopped down on a sofa and reached into a bowl of candy on the table in front of her. Bellamy looked around the room. The photos on the wall showed the housekeeper surrounded by several children, Clarke included. Mrs. Morris noticed his gaze “they don’t exactly fit with the décor of the big house, do they?” she asked. Bellamy shook his head, suddenly feeling grateful for his small, often messy house. He eyes landed on the doorframe where the marks on the wall were similar to the ones in his kitchen. Several children’s names and ages were written next to the hash marks, once again Clarke’s name was there. He could see why this was one of her favorite places. “It’s not that her parents didn’t love her” the housekeeper spoke softly “they did, but being a big shot doctor and all, some things were frowned upon” she sighed “everybody knew a child lived there, but no one wanted to see her.”

Bellamy turned to see Clarke curled up on the couch eating a bowl of cashews. He grinned at her “just made yourself right at home, didn’t you?” he asked. She shrugged and patted the couch next to her. He sat down watching her, she looked more at home here than she did in the rest of the house. Mrs. Morris excused herself to clean up the dining room, leaving Bellamy and Clarke to watch tv.

“So, is this your favorite place in the house?” he asked. She shook her head “my favorite place is kind of special, I don’t just show it to anyone” she looked at him. “Do I count as anyone?” he asked looking at her. She chewed her lower lip and smiled at him, then stood up “come on” she said holding out her hand. He took it and walked with her. They walked back through the kitchen and passed the housekeeper who was loading the dishwasher. “I’ll see you at dinner, dear” the older lady greeted them.

They walked to the back of the house to what appeared to be converted garage. Clarke paused at the door, as if steeling herself to enter. After a few minutes, she pushed open the double doors revealing an office. A large oak desk sat about halfway across the floor. The room was dark and dank. It appeared it wasn’t used much. “This is my favorite place” she sighed running her hands along the desk. Bellamy looked confused. “It was my dad’s office” she explained. Bellamy walked around the desk, beginning to notice things. Unlike the rest of the house, there were pictures of Clarke everywhere. “you were a cute kid, what happened?” he laughed. “Be nice or I won’t show you the secret room” she retorted. “He loved you” Bellamy looked at her “he was my knight in shining armor” she sighed. “And you were his little princess” he grinned. “I miss him” she sighed. He walked over to her and wrapped his arms around her. She laid her head on his chest.

She sighed deeply then walked around to the desk and sat down in the chair. “your mom doesn’t use this office?” he asked. She shook her head “she doesn’t use half the house, I don’t know why she keeps it.” He sat down on the edge of the desk “don’t you?” he asked staring at her pointedly. “But, I never come here” she countered. Again, he stared at her pointedly “ok, almost never” she replied sheepishly. “Maybe the two of you should talk about the house” he suggested. “She chewed on her lower lip, “maybe we will” she sighed “but in the meantime” she grinned walking over to the bookshelf. She pulled on a book, or what looked like a book and a slight hiss sounded. Bellamy
grinned at the title The Princess and The Pea “of course” he snorted. “a private joke” she grinned walking a few inches before pulling another book. The wall opened to reveal a hidden room. Bellamy nodded “impressive” he grinned. “my dad was an engineer” she shrugged. The walked into the room where Bellamy saw the scene from her painting. “your thrones” he grinned. “She smiled and nodded “I was so little” she sighed running her hand over them lovingly. The other corner of the room held an easel and paints “my dad encouraged me to paint” she said.

She failed to stifle a yawn “need a nap?” he asked. She nodded “I’ve haven’t been sleeping very good lately” she admitted. He wrapped an arm around her shoulders “come on” he said “you need to get some sleep, but first you’re going to have to show me how to get back to your room” she nodded. She laughed “a person can get easily lost in this house.” She led him through a series of hallways and rooms until he recognized the grand staircase leading to her bedroom. They climbed the stairs and walked into her room, closing the door behind them. Clarke crawled onto her bed, feeling physically and emotionally exhausted. “Are you staying?” she turned on her side to look at him.

He nodded joining her on the bed. He gazed at her lovingly “I missed you” he said caressing her cheek with his thumb. “I missed you too” she smiled at him. “Clarke” he spoke her name softly “you don’t get to do that again” he told her.” She looked at him “do what?” she asked, confused “run away like that” he said “I was so worried about you and it was like you dropped off the face of the earthH” he sighed raggedly. “There were tears in her eyes “I can’t be the reason your dreams go to hell” she looked at him “I know what that does to a person.” He cupped her face, looking deep into her eyes “I love you Clarke” he sighed “and if you are the reason my dreams go to hell, then I’ll happily live in purgatory with you forever” he said.

“Bellamy, I…..” she placed a finger on her lips “I’m not asking you to declare anything” he spoke softly “I’ve seen your life, I know you have some things to work out, but I’m not going anywhere” he delivered the last line with a soft kiss on her lips. She sighed and kissed him back heatedly. “Wait” he broke apart “we can’t” he said “I want to, you have no idea how bad I want to, but not here. Not in a frilly, pink bed in your parent’s house, that’s just weird” he grinned. Turning her in his arms and pulling her back against his chest. He threw his arm over her waist, holding her in place “besides you need some sleep and so do I” he said pulling the covers over them.

Fifteen minutes later, Marcus quietly opened the door to Clarke’s room to let her know they were leaving. He smiled when he saw Clarke, wrapped in Bellamy’s arms, sound asleep “Is she ok...?” Marcus held a finger over his lips. Abby peered into the room and smiled. “she’s looks so much more peaceful” she said. Marcus smiled and wrapped his arms around Abby “you did a good thing” he said “seeing her art, bringing Bellamy here…” he trailed off. “I just want her to be happy” Abby sighed “whatever that looks like for her.” He grinned “I think it looks a lot like that” he said nodding at them. They watched silently for a few more seconds before closing the door with a soft click.

Hours later, Clarke woke up feeling better than she had in days. She looked up to see Bellamy smiling down at her. “You really were tired, huh?” he asked. She sighed “I wasn’t really sleeping well, with all that happened and being here” she replied. “You could have gone home and refused to answer the door” he pointed out. Clarke shook her head “I wasn’t in a good place” she replied “and I didn’t want to see anyone, not even…” She was cut off by a new voice “your best friend, who knows everything about you and keeps your deepest secrets…” Raven stood in the doorway. “what she said” Clarke grinned. “How’d you know I was here?” she asked. Raven grunted “please, I knew you were here, I just figured you wanted to be left alone, so I gave you a week to get over yourself” she said sitting on the edge of the bed between them.

“What are you doing here?” she looked at Bellamy cocking her head. “Abby came to my house yesterday” he told her about their trip to the gallery. “Yeah, it’s quite the show” she agreed “so your mom knows about you remembering the accident then?” she looked at Clarke. She nodded. ”What
did she say?” Raven asked. “nothing really, I’m kind of surprised actually” she said. “Maybe, she really does miss you like Marcus says she does” Raven suggested. “She does” Bellamy answered. The two of them turned to look at him “how do you know?” Raven asked. “we talked at the gallery” he shrugged “she said she wished she would have spent more time with you instead of being a good doctor.” Clarke was silent for a minute “did she say anything else?” she asked. He told them about her reaction to her painting of the mangled car. “that painting gives me chills” Raven shuddered. “It made Abby cry” he said. “It’s a powerful piece” Raven agreed. “Lincoln told her that she shouldn’t feel too bad about choosing her career over you. He said it contributed to your angst, which feeds your artistic ability.”

“Oh, I almost forgot” Raven interjected “Mrs. Morris said to tell you dinner will be ready in fifteen minutes” she said. Bellamy’s stomach grumbled “apparently, just in time” she laughed. “so get up already, I haven’t had Mrs. Morris’ food in forever” she exclaimed. Unlike lunch, their dinner was eaten in Mrs. Morris’ living room. “Will you come live with me and cook for me?” Raven asked the housekeeper licking her lips. “You should marry a chef” the housekeeper replied. “Then she’d have to give up the guys she juggles now” Bellamy snorted. Raven glared at him, but Mrs. Morris didn’t miss a beat “I hear young Roan is quite the cook” she chuckled “but not so sure where Murphy fits in.” At Bellamy’s surprised glance, she turned to him “don’t be so surprised young man” she grinned at him “you’re new, but the rest of us have been around a long time. And these two…” she looked from Raven to Clarke “well they certainly kept Abby busy, especially this one” she laughed pointing to Raven. Bellamy snorted “that hasn’t changed” Raven flicked her napkin at him.

Mrs. Morris laughed “I’ve missed this” she smiled at them “the house has been entirely too quiet since you left” she looked at Clarke. “Well, that might change soon” Bellamy murmured. “What do you mean?” Clarke asked. “I may have suggested that your mom host friendsgiving next year” he explained. “That would definitely shock the usual crowd” Clarke drawled. “They would be an improvement from the holidays we’ve had around her lately” Mrs. Morris declared. “So, what are the three of you up to tonight?” she asked. “We’re going to watch a movie, then hang out for a while” Clarke replied. “There’s popcorn and candy in the kitchen” she told them “I’ll be going to bed soon. Will you be here in the morning?” she looked at Raven. “probably” she nodded “assuming Abby doesn’t kick me out.”
“It would seem Clarke’s friends have found out where she is” Marcus remarked when he and Abby arrived at their home early the next morning. Abby grinned “so, it would seem” she agreed, seeing the number of cars parked in the circle drive. Marcus looked at her “Are you okay with this?” he asked. She nodded “It’s nice having her here again” she smiled. “Don’t get used to it” he cautioned “she’s probably going to be going back to her apartment soon.” Abby nodded “or to Bellamy’s, which means you’re going to need a new manager.” Marcus nodded “already on it” he grinned at her “I have the perfect candidate. Shall we go in?” he asked. Abby nodded “or to Bellamy’s, which means you’re going to need a new manager.” Marcus nodded “already on it” he grinned at her “I have the perfect candidate. Shall we go in?” he asked, opening her door for her, holding out her hand. “Hopefully, she’ll at least come visit more often” she sighed, taking the offered hand. “I think she will” Marcus replied. “Bellamy suggested that I host friendsgiving next year” she looked at Marcus “what do you think?” she asked. “I think that will be far more interesting than our usual affair” he laughed.

They entered the house to hear laughter coming from the kitchen “don’t let her cook” someone groaned “we’ll all die of food poisoning.” Abby heard Clarke laugh “like you have any room to talk Mr. I can’t boil water” she said. “Good grief” they heard Bellamy “what would the lot of you do without cooks, housekeepers and maids?” he asked. “We could ask Mrs. Morris” Raven suggested. “No” Clarke declared “we’re not waking her up at this ungodly hour to cook grown adults food.” Abby laughed, but stood next to Marcus, wondering what they were going to do. “Oh, for heaven’s sake. Someone get me the eggs and potatoes” he groaned “You guys need to invest in cooking lessons, before you starve to death.” They heard Raven chuckle “well thank goodness we have you, huh?” she asked. They heard something hit the floor, followed by a shriek. “Rude!” she exclaimed, then a loud burst of laughter. “Come on” Marcus took her hand “let’s go announce our presence.”

“Mom, Marcus” Clarke exclaimed when they entered the kitchen. Abby glanced around the kitchen that she was sure was cleaned at one point “don’t worry, we’ll clean up when we’re done” Bellamy assured them. To Clarke’s utter amazement, Abby merely shrugged “it’s fine” she smiled “we just wanted to let you know we were home” she said looking around the kitchen. None of them seemed to know how to take her presence. It had been a long time since there was this much laughter in this house. “I just wanted to thank you all for” she closed her eyes and took a deep breath “being there for Clarke, for taking care of her” her gaze landed on and held Raven’s for the last part.

“Given the hour, you’re all more than welcome to stay the night. We have plenty of room for you all” she offered. Clarke was shocked that her mom was saying the things she was. “And don’t worry about keeping us awake, our room is on the other side of the house” she finished. “Thank you” Roan was the first to recover “we’ll try to not to be too noisy” he assured her. “Well than, we’ll say good night now” Marcus took Abby’s hand and tugged her lightly “and maybe we’ll see you in the morning.” They left the kitchen leaving the previously loud group silently wondering. “I thought for sure we were going to be in deep trouble” they heard someone say. “You broke your mom” Murphy snorted. “Shut and make yourself useful” Clarke retorted. They heard a dull thud, followed by more laughter. After a late-night breakfast, they returned to the theatre room to watch another movie. It was nearly four a.m. before it was over, so those that weren’t already asleep decided to accept Abby’s offer to stay over. Raven told Bellamy she and Clarke had things to discuss, so he was going to have bunk with the boys for the night. Harper, Maya and Echo decided to join them leaving the boys to stretch out on the couches in the theatre room.

Abby woke up the next morning to find the kitchen clean. A quick look outside confirmed that Clarke’s friends had taken her up on her offer to spend the night. She started making coffee when she heard a noise behind her. She turned to see Roan and Bellamy come into the kitchen “Morning” she greeted them with a smile. They returned her greeting “Clarke said Mrs. Morris has Sunday off,
so we thought we’d start breakfast, or we can order in if you don’t want to feed this lot…” Roan offered. Abby shook her head “thanks for the offer, but we have a ton of food. Besides, how much can they eat?” she asked. Bellamy snorted “you don’t want to know…” he replied. She sat down, waiting for the coffee to brew.

While she waited, she watched as the two of them made a breakfast casserole. “Do you guys do this often?” she asked “get together, I mean?” she asked. Roan shrugged, “More, so during school breaks and in the summer, but yeah” he replied. We usually go to Jasper and Monty’s house since it is big enough for all of us.” He grinned at Bellamy, “but since Bellamy got talked into hosting Christmas, we’re going there for Christmas.” Bellamy laughed “next time, I’ll ask more questions before saying yes” he snorted. “It’s not that bad, we clean up after ourselves pretty well!” he defended laughingly. That much was true, and the upside of hosting Christmas meant that Clarke would be at his house. “So, is Christmas a four-day thing?” she asked. “No, we all have other things to do besides our own Christmas, so it’s just a one-day thing” he answered.

“Oh crap” Bellamy sighed “I almost forgot about the gift exchange” he sighed. Roan laughed “you’d better get on it” he advised “who did you get?” he asked. “Murphy” Bellamy answered “oh, that’s a tough one” he snorted. Bellamy grinned “Clarke gave me an idea, I just have to do it.” Abby listened to them “gift exchange?” she looked at them. “We exchange name that way we only have to get one gift” Bellamy explained. “But this year, it has to be homemade” Roan added. “Murphy, Jasper and Monty wandered into the kitchen yawning sleepily. They greeted the others and poured themselves a cup of coffee “want one?” Murphy looked at Abby. She nodded, thanking him when he handed it to her. “I guess the girls are still sleeping?” he asked looking around.

In answer to his question Clarke, Raven, Harper, Maya and Echo joined them. “Good morning” Clarke sat down next to her mom “thanks for letting them stay” she said. Abby smiled and kissed her cheek “it makes the house seem more lively” she said “you’re always welcome here, all of you.” Clarke laughed “be careful what you wish for” she replied. “Morning” Bellamy walked over placing a plate of food in front of her, hugging her and dropping a soft kiss on her lips. Clarke blushed slightly “Brave Blake” Raven jeered “right in front of mom even” she teased. He walked back to the stove, ‘accidently’ bumping into Raven as he did. “Brat” she grunted, swatting him. Clarke laughed “Geez, you two” she snorted eating the food Bellamy placed in front of her.

Abby turned to smile at her. “what?” Clarke asked feeling her mother’s gaze on her. “He takes good care of you” she spoke softly. She smiled “yeah, he does” she sighed. “What?” Clarke exclaimed, still feeling her mother’s gaze on her. “Nothing” Abby shrugged. Clearly, there was something she was thinking, but she wasn’t going to say anything. Marcus entered the kitchen “Whoa, full house” he grinned, greeting everybody, kissing Clarke and Abby softly before taking a seat next to Abby. Someone passed him and Abby a plate of food, as well as a coffee for him. After breakfast, they cleaned up the kitchen, the theater room and the rooms they had slept in, then one by one departed, leaving only Clarke, Bellamy and Raven.

“I need to go study” Raven sighed “two more finals and then I’m done” she declared. Clarke nodded. “I have to study too, and I need to go home. I’m running out of clothes to wear.” Marcus stood up “Raven, do you have a moment?” he asked. She nodded “I’ll walk you to your car” he said. “I’m going to go get my things” Clarke looked at Bellamy “are you coming?” she asked. “I’ll wait here” he said.

“Have you given my proposition any thought?” Abby turned to him. He sat down next to her “what happens if Clarke and I don’t work out?” he asked. “The scholarship is yours if you want it, rather you stay with my daughter or not” she told him. He sighed “I’m interested” he said “but I need a little more time to think about it.” She nodded “you know where to find me when you are ready” she said.

Clarke returned to the kitchen with a backpack. She set it down on the floor “Thanks for everything”
she looked at Abby. Abby stood up “this is still your home” she said pulling her into a hug “I’m sorry it didn’t always feel that way, but you are welcome here anytime you want to come.” She had tears in her eyes “Don’t” Clarke held her hand up “If you start crying, then I’ll start” she said. “I will come visit more often, I promise. I might even bring my friends” she grinned “then you’ll wish you hadn’t said anything about us coming anytime” she laughed. “It was nice seeing this place full of happy people again” Abby said. Marcus came into the kitchen “going home?” he asked Clarke. “something like that” she shrugged “thank you for…” she trailed off “you’ve done so much for me, I don’t even know where to start.” He pulled her into a hug “I love you Clarke” Marcus spoke softly “don’t ever forget that.” She smiled “I won’t” she said stepping back. Marcus and Bellamy shook hands “I’ll see you around” Marcus told him.

Clarke and Bellamy reached her car. Seeing the car as it was now, he’d have never imagined it was once the mangled wreck that hung on the wall of Lincoln’s gallery. “Your place or mine?” she turned to him. “Mine” he whispered pulling her into his arms like he’d wanted to all weekend, claiming her mouth in searing kiss. “It’s closer” he grinned. She smiled and started the car “your wish is my command” she replied. “I’m going to hold you to that” he said placing his hand on her thigh, his thumb moving against her jean-clad inner thigh.

They barely made in the door of his house before he had her backed against the wall, gasping for breath as his hands and mouth worked their magic. “You know we had a nice bed all weekend” she panted as he stripped her jeans and panties in one smooth motion. “a pink, frilly bed, in your parent’s house” he pointed out, where I’m pretty sure they would come running if they heard you do this…..” He said entering her with one hard thrust. Clarke wrapped her legs around his waist crying out his name loudly. When her release came and she slacked against him bonelessly, he carried her to the couch, still buried deep inside her and laid her down, unbuttoning her shirt so very slowly, grinning wickedly down at the passion blazing in her eyes. She moved against him, clawing at his shirt, but he took both of her hands in one of his thrusting in and out of her slowly, loving the way she moved with him. “Bellamy” she pleaded breathlessly grabbing at his thighs “please” she begged. He grinned licking and sucking his way down her body, teasing her nipples until they were taut peaks. When she wrapped her legs around his thighs, begging for more, he thrust a little harder, until her body tightened around him, sending her over the edge once more. A few minutes later, he followed, spilling into her body before falling breathlessly into her chest.

“Yeah, we probably couldn’t have done that at my parent’s house” she agreed laying in the crook of his arm, covered up by a light blanket. “Stay here with me?” he asked gazing down at her. She nodded “but I have to go home and get some clothes to change into” she agreed. “later” he said kissing the back of her neck. “Definitely later” she agreed sleepily. He heard her breathing even out as she drifted off in his arms. He gazed down at her, they’d only been together for a short time, but he knew he wanted her here, with him, forever.
“Hey there sleepyhead” Bellamy grinned down at Clarke when she opened her eyes later. “We either need to make it to a bed or you need to get a more comfortable couch” she groaned. He laughed “don’t you have to study for your math final tomorrow?” he asked. She groaned “Math is a four-letter word” she retorted glowering at him. He grinned at her “I’ll help you study” he said “pushing her up to a sitting position “Math is cruel and unusual punishment” she glowered at him “think of the other things we could be doing” she wrapped her arms around his neck. “As enticing as that sounds” he grinned “you have to pass algebra eventually, so how about you put some clothes on, while I make some food.” She sighed “I suppose so” she rolled her eyes. He kissed her softly stepping from around her.

Three hours later, Clarke snapped the textbook shut. “I can’t put anymore numbers in my head” she declared “I’ll either pass or I’ll fail, but I can’t do it anymore.” He pulled her into his arms “you know what to do” he looked into her eyes “you just can’t get it into your head that you don’t, and you’ll be done with this class.” She cocked her head “this is why you need to take the scholarship my mom is offering” she sighed “you like this crap, you care that others like this crap” she trailed off. He sighed “It would be better than getting a loan” he chewed his lip “but that’s a lot of money to…” he shook his head.

“It’s not charity Bellamy, it’s what my dad would have done. But if it bothers you than treat it like a loan” she said “but keep in mind that it’s my fault you need to even consider this option.” He turned her head to meet his gaze “it. Is. Not. Your. Fault.” He declared “I broke the rules because I wanted to get to know you and I would do it again” he said “so, don’t go blaming yourself.” She laid her head on his chest “I’m at least partly to blame” she sighed. He smiled at her “Cage Wallace is to blame” he looked at her “and the stupid clause that TA’s cant date students, either way I do not intend to stop seeing you.” He tilted her head back “I meant what I said” his gaze bore down into hers “I love you Clarke, and I’m not going anywhere.”

She looked down “you shouldn’t love me” she sighed “I have a lifetime of baggage and you deserve better.” He pulled her into his chest “We all have baggage” he spoke softly “and if that’s the best reason you can give me to not love you, it’s not enough, it will never be enough” he pulled back just enough to look into her eyes “so stop trying to convince me otherwise” he commanded. “Okay” she sighed “but I hope you don’t regret that in a few years.” He ran his thumb across her lips “The only thing I would regret is not doing this” he pointed between them. “Or eating cause at the moment I am starving” he grinned. Standing up to take dinner out of the oven. “Well at least, I won’t starve if you’re around” she laughed taking a bite of the lasagna he’d made. “You will definitely not starve” he agreed “and you just might learn to like algebra” he threw in grinning at her. “Don’t count on it” She retorted.

They spent the rest of the night watching a documentary on The Titanic. Clarke actually found it quite interesting “That would have been an amazing trip” she sighed. “At least until it hit the iceberg and sank” he snorted. She rolled her eyes “that’s so not romantic” she sighed. “neither is freezing to death in an icy sea because of one man’s pride” he pointed out. She yawned “you might have a point” she agreed. “I do have a point” he corrected “and you need to sleep for your math final tomorrow” he stood up extending his hand. She took it and walked with her to his bedroom “you know if we made it here for other things…” she drawled. He laughed and pulled her close “you pass your algebra final tomorrow and you can have your wicked way with me” he said “but now, we are going to S L E E P!” he declared throwing her one of his shirts to change into. “You are so on….” Clarke drawled changing into the shirt he gave her and crawled into bed beside him.
“So, Marcus asked me how I felt about managing the apartment building” Raven walked up to Clarke in the quad “Is there something you want to share with the rest of the class?” she asked. She shrugged “I don’t think so” Clarke answered “I mean we haven’t talked about me moving in with Bellamy, but he did tell me he loves me” she grinned. Raven swatted her “and you’re just now telling me this???” she put her hands on her hips. “I didn’t, don’t know what to say about it” she confessed. “Do I tell him I love him back?” she asked. “Do you?” Raven asked her. “I don’t know” she admitted “I love being with him, it’s so easy. I mean last night we studied for my Algebra final and then watched a documentary on The Titanic” she shrugged. Raven snorted “Geez, you two are already act like an old, boring married couple” she shook her head. Clarke looked at her watch “I have to go” she declared “algebra final” she explained dashing away.

Clarke walked out of her algebra final feeling hopeful. For the first time in a long time she was hopeful that she had finally passed algebra. She smiled to herself, thinking of all the things she was going to do to Bellamy when she passed her class. With nothing else to do on campus, she went back to her apartment. It had been almost three weeks since she left, and it wasn’t exactly clean. She was picking up her living room when her phone rang. “Well?” Bellamy asked, she could hear the grin on his face. “I feel good about it” she replied “but then again I had good motivation.” He laughed “we’ll see how good that motivation was” he drawled. “yes, you definitely will” she returned.

“So, what are you doing with your extra studying time?” she asked him. “Funny story” he grunted “I am getting ready to proctor the final for what used to be Cage Wallace’s class.” Clarke blinked “used to be?” she asked curious. “Apparently, Professor Wallace was doing more than just sleeping in the stacks” he lowered his voice. “I’ll tell you more later, when I’m not at school” he said. “I can come over tonight, or you can come to my place.” She laughed softly “are you sure that’s a good idea?” she asked “seeing as you’re proctoring my final tomorrow?” she asked. He sighed, “that’s probably a good idea” he said disappointment seeping into his voice. “I’ll call you when I get home” he said. “I’ll be waiting” she replied.

Clarke was busy cleaning up her apartment when Raven let herself in bearing food from the Chinese restaurant down the street. “Dinner time” she announced pulling out all sorts of packages and boxes. “were you buying for the whole building?” Clarke snorted. “Don’t even start Griffin” she rolled her eyes “I’ve seen you eat, besides it has to last all night, since we’ll be studying that long.” Clarke remembered Bellamy’s news “So, Bellamy called and said he is proctoring Wallace’s test tomorrow” she looked at Raven. Raven cocked her head “didn’t he get fired for sleeping with you?” she asked. “it sounds like someone else may have gotten fired too” Clarke murmured “but Bellamy couldn’t talk because he was still at school.” Raven smirked “What an interesting turn of events” she cooed “so, is he going to call you and tell you about it?” she asked. Clarke nodded “he said he’d call when he got home. “He’s not staying with you or vice-a-versa?” she asked. Clarke shook her head “that seemed a tad inappropriate since he’s giving the test tomorrow” she pointed out. “It’s not like the two of you would talk about the test, or at all” she grinned mischievously at Clarke. “Yeah, we might watch another boring, historical documentary…” Clarke laughed. “You two really need to figure out how to have real fun” she rolled her eyes.

A few hours later, a knock at the door interrupted their studying. Clarke answered it to find Bellamy standing there “I thought you were going to call me from home” she smiled at him. “I was, but I can’t do this on the phone” he said capturing her lips with his. Raven smirked at him “I knew you couldn’t stay away” she laughed. “I could if I had to” he declared “but why stay away if I don’t have to?” he shrugged. “Please don’t tell me you’re going to watch another documentary about a ship at the bottom of the ocean again” Raven shook her head. “you’re welcome to join us” Bellamy retorted grinning. “As enticing as that sounds” Raven snorted “I think I’ll go have some real fun.” She picked up her books and walked to the door.
“How’s Raven?” he asked. Clarke looked at him “she came to check out “her” new apartment” she grinned. “why are you moving?” he asked. “Apparently, Marcus seems to think so” she shrugged “any reason why he would think that?” she cocked her head at him. “I haven’t said anything to him or Abby, but” he pulled her into his arms “I wouldn’t complain if you stayed at my house more often.” He grinned “I bet we’d both get more sleep” he grinned. She snorted “something tells me very little sleeping would get done, and especially not in a bed” she countered. “And the problem with that is” he grinned wickedly at her. Perhaps, we should discuss this elsewhere?” she drawled tracing her lips with her thumb. “We haven’t made it to a bed much lately” he pointed out, desire blazing in his eyes “why change that now?” he picked her up and carried her to the small table in the kitchen.

“hmm, now where should I begin” he asked nibbling on her lower lip, while his hands roamed under her shirt to cup her breast. Clarke gasped for breath when he pinched her nipples until they formed hard peaks. “Bellamy” she pleaded tugging at his shirt. With his free hand, her gathered her hands and placed them behind her back. “Don’t move them” he commanded gazing at her. She nodded still trying to catch her breath. “When he pushed her shirt up, capturing one nipple, then the other between his teeth” Clarke moaned his name over and over again. His hand pushed her shirt up and over her head trapping her hands behind her back even more. He gently pushed her until she lay on her back on the table. His hands moved to her waist, slipping inside the band. He lowered them slowly, kissing the areas he’d bared as he did. He slid the shorts she was wearing down her legs until they slid to the kitchen floor. He got down on his knees running his hands up her legs seductively, followed by his mouth. Clarke’s arms were still bound behind her, making her cry out with desire. “Bellamy” she moaned loudly. When his hands reached her knees, he pulled gently placing both of them over his shoulders until his mouth was at her center. Clarke’s breath came out in short pants, as he tongues her lower lips. He grinned when her cries grew stronger. “Bellamy, Please” she begged. “your wish is my command” he said huskily, his tongue finding its way into her hot center, followed shortly after by three of his fingers. When he thumbed her sensitive spot, she exploded forcefully, coating him with her juices. He pulled her to a sitting positon, freeing her arms, but leaving her naked and sweaty. “You are in such big trouble when you find out I passed my algebra final” she promised when she found her voice again. He kissed her softly “Until then” he grinned “shall we take this to the bedroom?” he asked. “I think we shall” she spoke softly. He helped her to her feet, which still felt as though they would not support her.

“How was your stuffy old documentary” Raven asked her the next morning. Clarke shrugged “it was interesting” she grinned “you should try it some time.” Raven snorted “maybe one day when I become old and boring” she retorted. “Speaking of old and boring, are you ready for today?” Clarke asked her. Raven nodded “and in celebration of the end of another semester, we’re all going to Nylah’s tonight. Do you two want to join us?” she asked. Clarke shrugged “sounds like fun, I’ll check with Bellamy to see if her want to go.” They entered the classroom to see Bellamy at the table. She smiled at him, but he, being in teacher mode merely nodded in return.

Clarke and Raven waited for Bellamy after they finished their tests. He came out of the classroom, packed the tests under his arm and strode toward them. “I just need to drop these off and then I’m done. Want to meet me somewhere after?” he asked Clarke. “Everybody is going to Nylah’s, want to join them?” she asked. “Sure, what time?” he looked at Raven. She shrugged “8ish” she replied “I’m going to go home and get ready. I’ll meet you there” she looked at them. Clarke nodded and looked at Bellamy “Where do you want to meet?” she asked. “If you want to wait ten minutes, we can go to my house and leave from there” he told her.

Clarke yawned when she and Bellamy reached his house. “Tired?” he asked looking at her. “Just a little” she replied gazing at him pointedly “someone kept me up all night.” He grinned, returned her gaze “what a coincidence, someone kept me up all night too” he murmured. She shook her head “it’s
not my fault you have no self-control” she snorted. He laughed “I have plenty of self-control” he disagreed “just not around you.” She yawned again. He opened the front door and led her in. “Come one” he said “you need to get some sleep or you won’t last an hour at the bar.

Clarke slept until just after 8:30, so it was nearly nine before she and Bellamy arrived at the bar. “Well, look who finally joined us” Murphy greeted them “did we interrupt anything?” he leered. “Yeah, sleep” Clarke retorted “I’ve been studying like a fool to pass this stupid math final.” Raven snorted “yeah, right” she grunted. “I have been” Clarke exclaimed “I had a bet to win” she grinned. “A bet, huh?” she laughed, but before she had a chance to say anything else Roan interrupted “what the hell is he doing here?” he swore. Their gazes turned to a dark-haired man sitting at the bar. “That is an excellent question” Murphy said, a deadly glint in his eye. Bellamy’s gaze followed theirs “who is that?” he asked. “Finn” they both answered at once.
Chapter 17

Chapter Notes

A little drama and a lot of smut at the end, enjoy!

Clarke leaned back into the booth, trying to stay hidden from Finn. Bellamy glanced at her “Do you want to go?” he asked. She shook her head “I don’t want to give him the satisfaction.” Raven scowled at Finn, who sat at the bar. She started to rise out of her seat, but Roan put a hand on her thigh “Nylah is handling him” he said. She sighed “Why is he even here?” Murphy asked “he knows this is our bar.” Finn was in a heated debate with Nylah over something, when he turned to look at their table. He got up as to advance towards them when Monty and Jasper with Harper and Maya in tow came into the bar. They pulled a table up to the booth, blocking his way to the booth.

“So, are you guys all done with your classes?” Jasper looked at them. All of them, except Murphy, who wasn’t in school nodded. “I am so ready for a break” Clarke declared. “So, are we all just ignoring the fact that Finn is at the bar looking over here?” Monty asked. “We’re trying” Roan answered. He now sat on the outside of the booth, with Raven between him and Murphy. When they looked again, Finn was striding toward them. Nylah shrugged helplessly mouthing that she had tried to stop him. Roan nodded in her direction, then with a grim smile addressed Finn who had reached their table “Collins?” he glared at him, his voice stone cold “what are you doing here?” he asked.

He shrugged “I was in the neighborhood and needed a drink” he said trying and failing to get past Jasper and Monty. “In the neighborhood?” Murphy snorted “doing what? Slumming?” he asked. Finn ducked his head, clearly aware that he’d been caught in a lie. Bellamy watched silently, Clarke’s hand clasped in his. After several attempts, he stopped trying, craning his neck to see Clarke and Raven, who were pretty well hidden from view behind their friends. “Well, I suggest you either make your way to the bar and stay there or get a drink somewhere else” Roan spoke coldly. He picked up his phone “or I could call Marcus, I’m sure he’d love to know that you were bothering Clarke again.

Clearly, none of them scared him, or even Nylah, but at the mention of Marcus’s name, he blanched. “I’m just wanted to talk to…” he began. “They are not interested in talking to you, so you have five seconds to go back to the bar or to leave before I call Marcus. Finn looked at Bellamy “you’re new” he said, clearly ignoring Roan. “I’m with her” he pointed to Clarke “and I have been filled in on who you are and what you did” he leveled his gaze at Finn. Roan dialed a number on his phone and spoke into it. Finn stared at him trying to decide if he was truly talking to Marcus or playing him. He must’ve decided that on the first option because he gave a half-hearted apology and returned to the bar.

“I wonder what poor sucker he is sleeping around on now?” Murphy grunted. “He probably got dumped again” Raven snorted “why else would he be here at Nylah’s?” she asked. “Can we talk about something else, please?” Clarke shuddered. “Okay” Murphy grinned wickedly “so, are you moving in with Bellamy?” he asked. Clarke rolled her eyes “you do realize we” she pointed between her and Bellamy “haven’t actually talked about this?” she raised her eyebrows. “Or that we’ve only being seeing each other for a couple of months?” Murphy grinned “and yet according to Raven, you already act like an old married couple…” he drawled. Roan furrowed his brow at Murphy “apparently, they spent the night watching documentaries on the Titanic last week” he explained.
“What’s wrong with that?” he asked. “thank you” Clarke arched her eyebrows at Raven and Murphy, who rolled their eyes in response.

Bellamy just sat there, shaking his head. He knew her friends meant well, but she had a point. He thought carefully before speaking. He could deflect by pointing out that the three of them were in a fairly stable relationship, or at least that’s the gist of what he’d heard, and yet they lived separately. Or, he could point out that Clarke had a point about the two of them not discussing the topic yet. “The way I heard it, was that Marcus brought the subject up” he looked at Raven. “that’s true, he did” she confirmed.

“So, maybe it’s just Marcus and Abby, being overly involved in their daughter’s love life” he countered. “Nice deflection” Murphy drawled “but you have to admit the two of you spend most of your time at one place or the other” her leveled his gaze at them. “that’s true too” he admitted “but it doesn’t mean we just jump right into a living together situation” he said. “you guys have had a chance to get your homemade Christmas gifts done, right?” Monty interrupted the current conversation. A mutual groan went up around the table “Oh man, I almost forgot” Raven sighed. “Well, you’ve got about a week to figure something out” he said. Clarke shot him a grateful smile as the topic changed taking her and Bellamy out of the hot seat.

They stayed at the bar for a few hours shooting pool and playing darts before everyone decided to go home. Clarke opted to go home with Bellamy, rather than return to her apartment. “Where was Octavia and Lincoln tonight?” Clarke asked him on the way to his house. “He was taking her to dinner and a movie tonight” he replied. They’ll be here for Christmas though.” They walked into his house, which was very quiet. The lights of the tree lit the darkened living room intimately. “Sorry about Murphy tonight” she sighed. He laughed softly “you do not have to apologize for Murphy” he said wrapping an arm around her waist. “I just hate that…” she shook her head. “I’ve already told you that I would love having you here, but you have to be comfortable with the arrangement, too” he said gazing down at her.

She sat down on the couch while he put their jackets in the closet. “Want a drink?” he asked. She shook her head “I’m good.” He sat down next to her, “you sound tired” he said wrapping his arm around her and pulling her against him. “I am” she agreed “I spent so much time studying that I barely got any sleep. And then somebody” she leveled her gaze at him “kept me awake all night with other activities.” He laughed “are you complaining?” he asked. “no” she grinned “but tonight I need to sleep.” He stood up, taking her hand into his “then sleep we will” he promised leading her to his bedroom.

Clarke woke up the next morning folded neatly into Bellamy’s body. She had to admit she did sleep better next to him than she ever did alone. She tried to roll away from him so that she could get some coffee and check her email, but he tightened his grip on her “go back to sleep” he murmured sleepily. She laughed softly “I need to go pee” she replied. “Liar” he whispered kissing the back of her neck softly. “please, just another hour?” he pleaded, pulling her tight against his chest. She sighed “I really do have things to do today.” Despite her protests, Bellamy felt her relax against him “And you will have time to do them, I promise” he said still holding her firmly against him, but for now, just lay here with me.” She grinned “okay, but If I don’t get my homemade Christmas gift done…” she threatened. “you can blame me if someone complains” he grinned, knowing he’d won.

“You know” he spoke quietly “you could stay with me until after New Year’s” he suggested. “I’d need a place to put some clothes” she pointed out. “that can be arranged” he replied, noting that she hadn’t flat out refused him. She thought about his offer, neither of them had to be back at school until Mid-January. She turned in his arms to look at him “why are you asking me to stay with you?” she asked “is this because of Murphy?” He shook his head “It’s because I like having you here with me. “Because I sleep better when I’m with you, and you sleep better when you’re with me” he pointed
out. When she didn’t answer right away, he propped himself up on his elbow “tell me what you’re thinking” he said.

She sat up “I’m scared” she admitted “I don’t want a repeat of what happened with Finn.” He sat up beside her “Tell me what happened” he said. She sighed “I met Finn right after my dad died. I was not in a good place. He was cute, and funny and I needed that. We dated for a while before things ever got intimate.” she told him how Finn did contract labor that often took him out of town “Then one day I was out with Roan and I saw him with Raven, they seemed close, like he and I were.” He shook his head “you didn’t have any clues at all that he might have been cheating on you?” he asked. “He was very good at covering his tracks” she said “and he was actually cheating with me on Raven, but the two of us were blissfully unaware of the other, until the night at the restaurant.” Bellamy looked at her “What happened then?” he asked “I checked his Facebook page, messaged her, asked for a meeting” she shrugged “we met talked about her and Finn, Finn and I, then we both dumped him and here we are.”

“I’m not Finn” he turned her face to look in her eyes. “I know that” she touched his cheek with her finger. “And you’re not the same teenager, who just lost her father” he continued. “I’m not asking you to give up your apartment and move in with me. I know it’s too soon for that. I’m just saying spend the next two weeks here with me and if after that you want to go home, go home.” She sighed “I don’t want to hurt you Bellamy, and I don’t want to get hurt again.” He looked deep into her eyes “I will never intentionally hurt you Clarke” he declared “and even if you decided you want to go home after new year’s, I will still want to see you and be with you.” She nodded “okay, but I make no promises beyond the new year” she replied. “So noted” he said pulling her in for a soft kiss.

Later that day, when they finally did get out of bed, they drove to Clarke’s apartment so she could pick up some clothes. Then, she had Bellamy drop her off at the gallery, so she could work on her homemade gift “I’ll call you when I am ready to come home” she said leaning over to kiss him. He didn’t point out that she called his house home. “Have fun” he said before driving off. When her phone rang later, she hadn’t realized it was so late “Are you okay?” he asked. She looked at her watch “Oh shoot, sorry I lost track of time” she answered “I’m fine, you can come get me now.” He told her he was on the way, so she covered her painting and washed up, then headed to the doors of the gallery to wait for Bellamy. Right as he pulled up, she got an email containing her grade on her algebra final. She grinned, licking her lips, tonight they would be spending the night somewhere other than his place or hers...

“Sorry” she got in the car “I got caught up and lost track of time.” He grinned “I’ve been told that happens” he said “Ready to go home?” he asked. “Actually” she looked at him wickedly “remember that little deal we had about my algebra final” she said holding up her phone for him to see. “very nice” he grinned at her “ok, a deal’s a deal” he shrugged “where to?” he asked. “My parent’s place” she smiled broadly, her eyes glittering dangerously. “Your parent…” he trailed off “okay” he said, driving toward Abby and Marcus’ place. He looked nervous “your parents…” he repeated when they arrived fifteen minutes later. “are visiting Marcus’ family, they’re gone all week and so is Mrs. Morris, so we have to place to ourselves” she said taking his hand and leading him into the house. The idea of having access to any number or the 26 rooms in the house and the possibilities within them already had him growing hard. She turned and locked the door behind them. “hmmm” she grinned mischievously “where to first?” she eyed the stairs that led to her room, then down the hall that led to the indoor pool.

Grinning wickedly, she led him up the stairs. Bellamy groaned “not the pink lacy bedding” he rolled his eyes. Clarke turned to look into his eyes “I’m more concerned with the four posters, rather than the pink lacy bedding” she spoke low and throaty. Bellamy felt his jeans get a little tighter as she said those words. He was immediately reminded of her promise to return the favor for the way he bound her arms behind her on her kitchen table. The look in her eyes was wicked. He didn’t know what she
had planned, but he knew he would be somehow bound, perhaps more; which to his surprise had
him almost hard already. She led him to her room, instructing him to sit on the four-post bed. “now
then” she rounded on him, placing her hands on his shoulders “I’m going to need you to sit here for a
second, while I get some things” she said kissing him softly. “I’ll be right back” her voice dropped to
a whisper, she let her hand roam slowly down his body as she pulled back, pausing for good
measure on his erection.

She came back a few minutes later with ice cream, chocolate sauce, whipped cream in a can and
maraschino cherries. Bellamy’s thoughts drifted back to the chocolate cake incident in her apartment.
She put those items on the bed, they turned back to lock the bedroom door. She stopped at her
dresser pulling out several long thin pieces of clothing. She brought them back to the bed and stood
in front of him. He could tell she was nervous, but the desire in her eyes nearly made him come
undone right there. “Do you trust me?” she asked him. “yes” he nodded “opening his knees wide
enough for her to walk between them. “good” she whispered huskily “because I’ve been planning
this since your pink frilly comment” she grinned “and when you said something about having my
wicked way” she arched her eyebrows taking his lower lip in between hers. He brought his hands to
her hips deepening the kiss. She kissed him back, then pulled back suddenly. “Ok, there are a few
rules” she looked him in the eyes “first, I get to do all the touching” she said slowly, seductively
moving her hands down his shirt. He was so caught up in the moment, he hadn’t realized she’d
unbutton his shirt until she was sliding it off his shoulders kissing her way down his chest. He
moaned when she took his nipples into her mouth. He reached for her “no touching” she instructed
telling him to scoot on the bed. When he did she sat fully clad on his crotch using first one silk piece
of fabric to bind his hand to the post, then the other. Placing pillows behind him so he was sitting
up a little, just enough to see.

“Are they too tight?” she asked. He shook his head, unable to speak. “second, no matter what I do”
she palmed him through his jeans “you are not allowed to come until I tell you” her hands moved to
the button fly of his jeans, slowly tortuously opening and unzipping them, cupping his hardness as
she did. She slid down his legs, pulling his jeans and boxers as he did. He lifted himself slightly to
aid her efforts. She reached the edge of the bed and tied first one ankle then the other to a post,
leaving him completely naked, spread eagle on her bed. His breath caught in his throat at her hungry
gaze. She grinned ‘that’s more like it” she said remembering the number of times she’d ended up
naked while he was still fully clothed. She crawled on all four back up the bed, stopping briefly
touch and lick him, he was completely hard at this point. “and finally” she sat on his stomach “I want
you to feel everything I feel, but only if you’re okay with it” she held a fifth silk cloth in her hand.
She wanted to blindfold him. He smiled wickedly finding his voice “just remember, if you play
today, you pay tomorrow” he whispered huskily “I can live with that” she smiled demurely “okay”
he consented. She wrapped the dark silk around his eyes, everything went black. Once he’d gotten
used to it, he heard everything, the sound of her breath catching as she kissed her way down her
body. She removed part, but not all of her clothing, though he wasn’t sure how he knew that, he just did.

“Did I ever tell you my favorite ice cream is rocky road?” she asked. “It’s soft” she sighed palming
him. He gasped for air “but nutty” her hand moved lower cupping him “Clarke” he moaned “ and
creamy” he jumped slightly at the sensation of her tongue on his head “Don’t come” she warned “or
this will be over, and trust me, you don’t want it to be over.” Bellamy tried to think of things to
distract him, but he neededn’t have as something cold and wet on his stomach, rocky road ice cream if
he had to guess. Next, he felt a tickle of something being squirted on it, and over his chest. It smelled
like chocolate. Now, with his eyes covered, he heard every move she made. The next thing he heard
was the sound of a can being shaken, then felt a cool spray on his stomach. “and a little cherry on
top” she whispered against his lips, kissing him softly. He also felt as she put something small and
cold on each nipple, letting them sit there for a minute before licking and sucking them off.
“Clarke, please” he groaned. “when she started licking his stomach with her tongue, kissing him as she went lower and lower. She left the bed momentarily, he heard her shed more clothing and when she joined him again, he could smell her. The number of times he used his tongue and his mouth to make her come undone, was more than enough for him to know what position she was in. He panted and shook with delight when she moved lower, licking him up and down before taking him in her mouth. “Oh God Clarke” he gasped for air. “Kiss me Bellamy” she whispered huskily taking him into her mouth again. He didn’t need a second invitation. His tongue darted out finding her hot wet center. He didn’t need his fingers to hold her in place as she was already bobbing up and down on him, forcing her center closer to him. “Clarke Please I’m going to” he breathed “You may come now” she released him long enough to say that before taking him in her mouth again. Almost instantly, they both came, leaving them both shaking, he was coated in her juices, again and she was full of his hot load. He felt her move again, this time sitting on his flat stomach, he reacted almost instantly hardening up again. She moved up his body with hers, he felt he pebbled nipples close to his mouth and opened his lips to capture one, then the other. She moaned in response reaching around to untie his hands and remove the blindfold.

He groaned when he saw her, she was wearing a leather-like one piece that covered her body, while leaving her breast and crotch exposed. “Best ice cream sundae ever” she licked her lips. He groaned reaching for her and claimed her lips in a fiery kiss that left them both breathless. “Bellamy” she pleaded when he took her nipples into his mouth again. He lifted her off his chest and onto his hardness “ride me baby” he pleaded, kneading her ample breast as she sank down onto him a little at a time. Finally, when he was all the way in she bobbed up and down on him grabbing his thigh as she came closer and closer to going over the edge. He watched her as she rode him, eyes closed, panting breathlessly. He knew by her breathing she was close to coming “Wait” he caught his breath “untie me” he commanded. A little disappointed, she did so, wondering what he was up to. A few seconds later, he answered her question wordlessly as he lay her face-down on the pillows she had him leaning against and inserted one finger in her, then another and another. She cried out pushing against his as she rode his fingers until her body tightened around him. Afterward, she dropped her head on the pillow, catching her breath.

A few minutes later, she felt his fingers spread her, so that his hardness could fill her. Placing his hands on either side of her on the bed, easing in and out of her with slow, sensual thrusts, just enough to make her want more. “Bellamy Please” she begged. “tell me what you want” he said. “I want you to fuck me” she turned her head to look at him “hard.” Needing no further encouragement, his hands cupped her breast as he slid in and out of her in quick, hard motions. She screamed his name as he thrust in one more time, coming completely undone in his arms. Another thrust and he too came undone. He had just enough energy to roll off of her and pull her into his chest, covering then both with the filly, pink blanket covering her bed. Completely sated, both of them were asleep in minutes.
Chapter 18

Much later, when Clarke woke up, Bellamy’s side of the bed was empty. She sat up looking around the room, his shirt was there, but he was nowhere to be seen. She picked up his t-shirt and put it on then walked to the adjoining bathroom. When she came out, she was greeted by the smell of bacon. “mmm breakfast” she sighed walking toward him. He grinned, “eat up” he handed her a plate “dropping a kiss on her lips “you’ll need the energy…it’s payday” he whispered. She shivered “already?” she asked. He nodded “oh yeah, and if you think last night was something, you’re going to be blown away by today” he said joining her on the bed. “So, pink and frilly not so bad?” she arched her eyebrows at him. “definitely not so bad” he agreed.

He turned the TV on while they ate to a documentary on whales. Clarke snorted “Don’t tell Raven about this” she smirked. Bellamy laughed “yeah, she would definitely give us shit about this” he murmured. “I still can’t believe you grew here” he looked around. “I would’ve preferred to grow up in a house like yours, with a mom like yours” she said. “She was pretty great” he agreed. “What was she like?” She asked. He smiled “she was a free spirit. I mean she always made sure we had everything we needed, but after that she wanted our lives to be fun.” From the pictures hanging around his house, it looked like they did. “Fun was in short supply here” she sighed. “I mean my dad and I had fun, but he worked just as much as mom did.”

Bellamy recalled the pictures in Mrs. Morris’ area of the house “It seems like Mrs. Morris managed to help out with that. Clarke smiled “yeah, she treated me like one of her own. When mom and dad were at a charity event or working, she’d prepare dinner in the kitchen and I would eat with her family. “She raised her family? In that little area?” he asked. Clarke shook her head “she had three children, they used the rooms around mine” she explained. “mom wanted me to sleep on the other side of the house with her and dad; but they were gone so much of the time, he convinced her that I was better off where Mrs. Morris could keep an eye on me.”

Bellamy shook his head “and they didn’t feel out of place, or you?” he asked. She shook her head “they were my best friends in school. Mrs. Morris told all of us that blood alone didn’t make a family, and that we all needed to take care of each other because nobody else was going to do that for us” she grinned at the memory of that moment. “Besides, they got to live in this house using the same things I used, so they didn’t complain” she shrugged. “Where are her kids now?” she asked. “grown and gone, she goes to visit them this time of year.”

She put her empty plate down and got off the bed “where are you going?” he asked. “We” she threw him a pair of men’s shorts. He didn’t ask, but the look on his face was clear “they were my dad’s they should fit you” she assured him. “okay, but why?” he asked. She walked over to the bed and stood next to it “there is a beautiful indoor pool and hot tub downstairs, that no one ever uses” she arched her eyebrows. Bellamy grinned “but why do we need clothes, when it’s just the two of us?” he pulled her in for a kiss. “just in case we get company, unless you want to show everybody your wares” she looked at him. “My wares belong to only one person” her said, kissing her again before getting out of bed.

As they walked downstairs, they heard voices outside. Clarke looked out the window and shook her head. “I know you’re there, Griffin” Raven called through the door “so open up already.” Bellamy looked over at her “how does she always know where to find you?” he grinned at her. “She probably GPS’d my phone” Clarke laughed “it’s a safety net so we always know where the other is in case they get into trouble.” He walked toward the door, “it’s a pain in the...hello” he greeted Raven and everyone else who stood there, interrupting his response. “Are we interrupting anything?” Raven shot them a knowing glance. “Would it matter if you were?” Bellamy smirked. “not one little
bit” she grinned pushing past him. “Everybody gone?” she stopped in front of Clarke, who nodded in response.

“So, pool party?” Harper came in behind her. “you know there’s this new invention called a telephone?” Clarke eyed Raven sardonically. “Which again you didn’t answer, so I GPS’d your ass” she retorted walking towards the pool. “Sorry, I tried to stop her” Roan said apologetically when he got to her. Clarke shrugged “there’s no stopping that freight train” she smirked. Murphy followed him then came Monty, Jasper and Maya. “I love that you made up with your mom” Jasper hugged her as he walked past. “I bet you do” she snorted.

Bellamy was closing the door when Octavia and Lincoln ran up “wait for us” she exclaimed. He grinned and hugged her “What are you doing here?” he asked. “I missed the last one of these parties, I wasn’t going to miss this one” she drawled. Once inside, she stopped in her tracks, then looked at Clarke “you grew up here and willingly left?” she asked. Clarke laughed “I’d have given anything to grow up in a house like yours” she murmured “don’t let the wrappings fool you. This may have been my house, but it wasn’t really a home. Bellamy closed and locked the door, then walked over to Clarke wrapping one hand around her waist. “your friends are a pain in the ass” he grinned kissing her. She laughed “I hate to tell you this but they’re your friends now too” she retorted. They followed Lincoln and Octavia to the pool. Clarke laughed as she oohed and awed over the massive size of the house.

Despite his protest of the intrusion that was their friends, Bellamy had a good time. They played in the pool and the hot tub for a few hours before ordering pizza and settling in the theater room to watch How the Grinch Stole Christmas, which he discovered was Clarke’s favorite movie. After that, they watched Elf. When the girls wanted to watch a hallmark movie, the guys all groaned declaring it was time they got some sleep. Like the last time they’d all camped out at Clarke’s house, the guys slept on air mattresses and couches in the den, while the girls slept in the theatre room. They may be welcome to spend time at Abby and Marcus’, but they didn’t want to make a mess someone else would have to clean up.

“Looks like we have company” Marcus grinned at Abby when they arrived home a little earlier than usual. “I’m glad she’s coming around again” Abby smiled “I missed her so much.” Marcus chuckled “enough to put up with her crazy friends?” he asked. She nodded “they’re her family” she shrugged “and what good is a 26-room house if you can’t fill it with family?” They walked quietly in the house and found all the kids sleeping, then turned in themselves. “They definitely do clean up after themselves” Abby murmured looking around the tidy house. “Come on” he nudged her “we can let them know we’re home tomorrow.”

Bellamy woke up the next morning to the smell of breakfast, and since it didn’t smell burnt, he realized it wasn’t any of them cooking it. He looked over to where Lincoln had been sleeping, but his blankets were folded nicely in a pile on the couch. Figuring that it was Lincoln who was cooking, he folded his own blankets and made his way to the kitchen. As he got closer, he began to hear laughing coming from the kitchen. He recognized Octavia’s and Lincoln’s voices, but then two more joined in and he realized Clarke’s parents were home. “Morning big brother” Octavia greeted him. “You’re up early” he said hugging her. She shrugged “Lincoln is teaching me to cook” she said. He snorted “when I tried to do that, you just turned your nose up and walked out of the room” he said walking to the coffee pot and helping himself.

“Good morning” he greeted Abby and Marcus as he passed them on his way back to the seat next to Octavia. They returned his greeting “Does Clarke know you’re here?” he asked. Abby shook her head “we decided to come back early, so we could be here for Christmas” Abby explained “I doubt she was expecting us.” Octavia laughed “she wasn’t expecting us either” she said “when Raven couldn’t get a hold of her, she located her using GPS, and brought us with her.” Abby looked confused “GPS” she asked. Bellamy smirked “Raven and Clarke’s phones are linked so that they
always know where the other person is in case of emergency” he explained. “In this case, Clarke had wanted to come use the pool and the hot tub” he shrugged. “So, naturally Raven figured that out and viola…party” Lincoln laughed. “I hope you don’t mind” Bellamy looked at her and Marcus.

Abby shook her head “it’s been a long time since Clarke has willingly come to this house besides holidays” she smiled softly “it’s a nice change.” She commented on how nice it was to have the house full again and how surprised that they pretty much cleaned up after themselves. “anything else would be rude” Octavia chimed in. Abby smiled at Bellamy “we’ve enjoyed talking to your sister this morning” she said. He smirked “I’m glad something I said to her stuck” he grunted “because apparently, teaching her to cook was a waste of time” he looked at Octavia as he spoke the words. “When your big brother becomes your guardian when you’re just barely sixteen, it’s hard not to give him a hard time” she retorted, grinning at him. Abby looked at him “If she was sixteen how old were you?” she asked. “I just turned eighteen” he answered.

“He turned down a full-ride scholarship to raise an ungrateful brat” Octavia bragged. “What happened to your mom, I mean if you don’t mind me asking?” she clarified. “She died” Octavia answered “and there was nobody else to raise me, so my big brother sacrificed his future for me” she grinned laying her head on his shoulder. He grinned lovingly at her “and I would do it again O” he said kissing her cheek. Clarke walked into the kitchen rubbing her eyes sleepily “I thought I heard your voice” she mumbled to her mom, still half asleep. Bellamy got up to offer her his seat and get her some coffee. “thanks” she kissed him softly when he put the steaming mug in front of her and stood behind her. “Is everything okay?” she looked at Abby and Marcus “you’re home early.” Abby nodded “we wanted to be home for Christmas this year” Abby explained “maybe you guys could come over for dinner, all of you” she looked at Clarke. Clarke laughed softly “Bellamy would probably appreciate that” she smirked “but alas where the Christmas tree is, is where Christmas is” she replied “but I don’t think anyone would care if you guys crashed this year” she looked at Bellamy, who shrugged “what difference is two more going to make?” he asked. “Do we need to bring anything, gifts, food?” Abby asked. “We’ve already exchanged names for gifts” she replied “and we really haven’t talked about food yet, but then again none of us really cook that much” she admitted sheepishly “or at all” Bellamy snorted, “so yeah, if you want to help with food, we’ll take it.” Clarke grinned “we can make green bean casserole” she retorted “opening cans and mixing the contents doesn’t count as cooking” he rolled his eyes. Marcus laughed “I think he has you there, kiddo” he said.

Raven stumbled in the kitchen a few minutes later “do you people know how early it is?” she complained before she saw Abby and Marcus. “oops, sorry” she apologized “I didn’t know you were home.” Abby filled a mug with coffee and walked toward her “thank you” she spoke softly. Unsure what to say or do, Raven awkwardly patted her back “ahh okay, but for what?” she asked, accepting the coffee from Abby after she pulled back. “For being a good friend to Clarke” she clarified “for keeping her secrets and having her back.” Raven grinned “oh that,” she shrugged “we do it for each other, it’s no big deal.” Abby shook her head “it’s a big deal. To me, at least. And, I’m sorry I didn’t realize it sooner.” Raven grinned “it’s a dirty job, but someone has to do it” she smirked at Clarke, who picked up a napkin and threw it at her.

Roan came in right behind Raven and wrapped his arms around her “well, look who’s already awake” he chuckled. “it’s their fault” she growled pointing at the rest of them. “poor baby” he cooed “imagine having to get out of bed before the crack of noon” he retorted. “shut up” she elbowed him in the ribs. He laughed, letting her go and greeting everybody else. Abby watched with great interest. She wondered how involved Roan and Raven were, not that it was any of her business. “You are a terrible person, waking your best friend up so early” he tussled Clarke’s hair. “Payback’s a bitch” she retorted, digging into the plate of food Bellamy put in front of her.
“so, how long are you guys staying?” Abby asked after they moved the meal to the formal dining room since it was the only room big enough to hold them all once the others joined them. “So, are you guys ready for your gift exchange?” Abby looked around the table. There was a general silence. “Are any of you ready?” she asked. “Almost” Clarke admitted “I’ve been a little distracted lately” she admitted. “we noticed” Raven laughed at her. “Are you done with yours?” Clarke arched her eyebrows at her “not quite” she admitted. Abby looked around the table and laughed “you do realize that Christmas is a couple of days away, right?” she smirked. “that’s pretty much normal for this group” Roan laughed “It’ll all come together.”
Chapter 19

Chapter Notes

The ending of this chapter took a way different turn than I start out intending to do, literally as I wrote it. Enjoy!

Clarke had Bellamy drop her off after leaving Abby’s house. The last to leave, the two of them reminded Abby and Marcus about Christmas dinner. The rest of the group agreed that the two of them should come to Christmas dinner since they allowed the group to play in the pool or watch movies whenever they wanted. They were even more excited that Abby and Marcus were planning on providing the entire dinner in lieu of bringing a gift.

“Call me when you’re done” he said kissing her softly. She nodded “I will, go finish yours” she instructed. Lincoln greeted her when she got to the door. “I thought you might be back” he grinned at her “by the way, Bellamy wants to buy the painting of the Christmas tree you did, in case you were struggling for a gift for him” he said. “Actually” she motioned for him to follow her “I’m just finishing this up.” She took the cover off the painting she’d been working on. “impressive” Lincoln nodded appreciatively “He’ll love it.” She smiled “you think so?” she asked.

He nodded “I have these for you” he held a stack of large prints. She took the copies of her work “wow” she exclaimed “these are incredible.” He grinned “you seem surprised by that” he shook his head. “I have another set for the exhibit. Clarke” he her to attention “I know you painted these for you and not for money, but people want to buy your work” he said. “And not just your mom and Bellamy, other people…” he looked at her, not quite asking the question they both knew he was holding on to. “Okay” she sighed “but put the money into a separate account. I don’t need it, but I know a good place for it” she said an idea forming in her head.

Bellamy was in his garage working on the heavy metal snowman for Murphy when Roan joined him. “Hey, you got a moment?” he asked. Surprised to see him, Bellamy nodded “what’s up?” he asked. “I got Echo for my secret Santa, and could use your help with something” he looked hopefully at Bellamy. “Sure, what do you need?” he asked. “I was wondering if you would let me use your power tools?” he asked. “sure” Bellamy motioned to the table “whatever you need.”

Roan grabbed a wrench and a sharpening stone. “what are you making?” Bellamy asked. A bow and arrow” he answered “she’s actually pretty good with it.” He glanced at the bow, which had been hand carved with an “E” etched into it. “That’s really nice” he nodded at the arrow. “thanks” Roan grinned “yours is nice too. You got Murphy, huh?” he asked. “He’ll like that” Roan said “nice touch on making it not too feminine.” Bellamy laughed “I figured I would make it a little bit cooler” he said.

Octavia joined them “O, what are you doing here?” he asked. “looking for my old sewing machine, have you seen it?” she asked. He nodded and pointed to a box “what do you need it for?” he asked. “I have to make my gift, I got Clarke, so I figured I would make her a quilt. What size is your bed?” she asked him. Behind him, Roan snorted. “what?” Bellamy turned to him “how is it everyone sees what is going on besides you two?” he asked. “Size, bell?” Octavia reminded him “I have to get this done quickly” she prompted.

“King-sized” he answered “and for the record, I would love it if she was here more often, she is the
one who is on the fence.” Roan smiled sadly, turning to look at him “she’s had a tough life” he agreed “but you’re good for her and she cares about you, I can tell” he said. He told them how everybody assumed that because you grow up wealthy, you have a good life, but that wasn’t always true. Bellamy got the idea that he also spoke of his own life experiences.

Octavia retrieved her sewing machine, kissed Bellamy on the cheek and left. “by the way, she poked her head back in the door, Lincoln agree with Roan.” Roan grinned “see, everybody else sees it” he grinned victoriously returning to her work. The two of them worked in silence for a while before Bellamy’s stomach rumbled. “Hey are you hungry? Bellamy asked him. “I could eat” Roan agreed. He was stringing the bow and making a quiver for the arrows he’d created. “you did that?” Bellamy asked running his fingers on the arrows. At his nod, Bellamy looked at him “nice, very nice” he said. “thanks” he smiled softly “It’s a hobby of mine.”

The two of them entered his kitchen and washed up, Bellamy put bread, slices of meat and cheese and some mayonnaise on the counter. He fished out two plates and two bottles of water out of the fridge. Before he sat down opposite Roan, he placed a bag of chips on the counter between them. “you love her, huh?” Roan asked him. “Yeah, she’s my sister, of course, I love her.” He shot Bellamy a smirk “you know that is not who I meant” he shook his head. “Yeah” Bellamy grinned “I love her” he admitted “and I think she loves me, but she hasn’t said as much.” Roan grunted “yeah, since her dad died, love hasn’t really been in her vocabulary” he said. “He was her whole world and when he died, a part of her died with him, then that idiot Finn came along and made things worse.”

Bellamy shook his head “I’ve heard about him” he sighed. “He really shook her confidence when it comes to relationships. She avoided them before you came along, didn’t trust her own judgement.” Bellamy’s phone rang. He looked at it “speaking of Clarke” he grinned answering the phone. They talked for a minute “Ok, I’ll be right there” he said. “I have to go pick her up, but you’re welcome to stay in the garage and keep working if you want” he told Roan. Roan thanked him and put his plate in the sink “thanks, man I appreciate it” he said.

When Bellamy arrived at the gallery, Clarke and Lincoln were waiting for him, each holding a wrapped painting. The larger of which had Abby’s name on it, the smaller one had his name. “Ooh, Lincoln brought another one out a few minutes later “I’ll bring these over tomorrow” he told her. They had prearranged to have them made into prints before she gave them away. He loaded them into his car and pulled into traffic, waving at them as he passed them.

“finished?” he asked. She nodded “you?” he bobbed his head “Roan and I finished ours together in the garage” he said. “You and Roan, huh?” she grinned “who what he making?” she asked. “a bow and arrow, it’s really quite nice” Bellamy replied. “He can do amazing things with wood” she said “I’ve told him time and again he needs to do that.” Bellamy opened the car door for her, kissing her softly before letting her pass into the seat. He closed her door, then walked around to his side of the car and sat down “home?” he asked. She nodded “I need a shower.”

He put on his seatbelt and turned the car in the direction of his house and pulled into traffic, looking both ways as he did. “Bellamy look out” Clarke shrieked, clutching the dashboard. He didn’t see the speeding car that hit his side of the car, until it was right up on him. By then it was too late to do anything about it. The car spun a couple of times before coming to a stop on the other side of the road. Bellamy tried to think beyond his pounding headache, to make sure Clarke was okay, but before he could look at her, his world went black.

When Bellamy came to, he was laying in a hospital bed, his sister sitting next to him, her head resting on his bed. He lifted a hand to touch her, groaning as he did. “Bellamy” her head snapped up “oh thank God, you’re awake” she sighed, tears in her eyes. “what…” he tried to speak, but the words wouldn’t come. “some drunk ran blew up the road and ran a red light” she explained “where…?” he
tried speaking again “Water” he requested needing to quench his dry throat. “you’re at the hospital” she told him “Abby says you have some cuts and bruises, but you’ve been out for hours. You have to stay here overnight.” He shook his head “can’t afford it” he struggled trying to sit up.

“well, then it’s probably a good thing you’re not paying for it, huh?” Abby walked in the room just as he said that. He looked at her “I’m so sorry Abby, I swear I looked both ways” he said. She smiled “I know, there were witnesses who saw the whole thing, plus Clarke.” He stopped struggling and dropped his head to his chest “Oh. God.” He swore “where is she?” he asked “Is she okay?” She shook her head “physically, yeah, she has a broken wrist along, a bump on the head and a few cuts and bruises, but emotionally she’s a wreck.” Bellamy sighed “I want to see her” he said. Abby grunted “yeah, me too, but so far she’s only letting Raven and Marcus see her” she sighed. “Gotta see her, make her see me” he declared struggling to get up. Lincoln appeared from out of nowhere and pushed him back down “you are in no condition to be up, just yet” he spoke with authority. Octavia shot him a grateful glance. Bellamy sighed and laid back down.

Octavia laced her fingers through Bellamy’s “I’m so glad you’re okay?” she sighed. He ran his fingers through her hair “I’m never going to leave you O” he said “I promise.” Lincoln wrapped his arms around Octavia “now that Bellamy’s awake, let’s go get some food” he urged. “Yes, go” Abby agreed “I’ll stay with Bellamy. Marcus had pizza delivered to the waiting room where everybody else is” she told them on their way out.

“Is Clarke really okay?” he asked. Abby sighed “she’ll be okay” she assured him. “Marcus is with her, and Raven.” Bellamy watched the emotions play across her face. She checked his vital signs and adjusted his bed to a sitting position and sat in the chair Octavia vacated. “Why is she not seeing anyone?” he asked. “Clarke hates Christmas, did you know that?” she asked. He shook his head “why?” he asked. “It was this day, five years ago that she and Jake were in the accident that killed him and injured her so badly.” Bellamy’s looked down “she seemed so happy” he said “I never would’ve guessed.” Abby smiled softly “she doesn’t really talk about it, she just plays along.” He sighed “I feel terrible, I should’ve….“ Abby covered his hand with hers “you didn’t do anything wrong Bellamy” she looked him in the eye. She told him what the police had told her about the whole thing “the guy was drunk and trying to text someone. Nothing you could have done would have stopped this from happening.”

There was a knock on the door, then Marcus appeared “How is she?” Abby asked. “She’s been better” he admitted “but physically she is okay. They just gave her some medicine to help her sleep, Raven is going to stay with her tonight.” He looked at Bellamy “how are you?” he asked concerned. He shrugged “Sore, but otherwise okay” he sighed “I want to see Clarke, talk to her…” he trailed off. “you and everybody else” he sighed raggedly “she’s pretty closed off right now” he said. “Maybe in the morning, she’ll be more willing to see people” Abby sighed. “Come on Abby” Marcus walked over to her “let’s go home, they both need their sleep.” Abby reluctantly rose up “are you going to be ok alone?” she asked. He nodded, though she needn’t have worried. The door opened and Roan appeared “night watchman at your service” he grinned. “Thank you” Bellamy looked at Marcus and Abby. “we’ll check on you in the morning” Abby told him before walking out the door.

“night watch, huh?” he quipped looking at Roan. Roan laughed “Your sister insisted someone stay with you” he explained. Bellamy sighed “I need to see Clarke” he looked at Roan. “I just left her room she is asleep and will be for several hours” he said. “If it was Raven would you leave it at that?” Bellamy asked. Roan grunted “no, I wouldn’t, but you look like you wouldn’t last one round with a kid, so I’ll make you a deal” he cocked his head. Bellamy looked at him “you get some sleep, you look like crap. Tomorrow, before anyone gets here, I’ll take you to Clarke.” Bellamy nodded, he was kind of tired and everything hurt. A nurse came in and gave him some medicine that Dr. Griffin prescribed. He began to immediately feel sleepy, apparently Dr. Griffin had thought the same thing.
Roan had. “deal” he replied sleepily. The last thing he remembered was Roan smirking as his eyelids grew heavier and heavier.
Chapter 20

The next time Bellamy opened his eyes it was morning, Octavia was sitting back in the chair “Good morning sleepyhead” she grinned at him. He looked around the room to see who else was there. His eyes landed on Abby “that was cheating” he mumbled sleepily. She laughed “I had a feeling you were going to try to talk Roan into something and you needed to sleep not hatch plans” she grinned at him. “still cheating” he retorted. “Well, you look better than when they brought you in” Lincoln was standing next to Octavia. “I feel better” he replied “so, you ready to go home?” Abby asked. He nodded “I want to see Clarke first” he said. Abby looked down “they already discharged her” she spoke softly “I didn’t even get to see her before she left.”

Bellamy sighed haggardly “Did she go home or to her apartment?” he asked. Abby grinned at his reference. Knowing he meant his home. “Raven is with her, they are at her apartment” Octavia replied “I saw them come in as I was leaving.” Bellamy’s expression hardened momentarily, he knew she was going to try to run away from this, from him, but he wasn’t going to let her. “So, Doc” he looked at Abby “Are you going to spring me?” he asked. She nodded “yes, but please take it easy for a couple of days” she pleaded. “I will” he promised.

“Marcus and I can host Christmas if you need to rest” she told him. “How about I have Christmas at my house since the tree is there, but you can host?” he offered. “okay” she agreed signing the forms. A nurse came in with a wheelchair and wheeled him to the exit. “take me to Clarke” he instructed once in Lincoln’s car since his own was totaled. Lincoln exchanged looks with Octavia “Bell…” she began. “I already know, she doesn’t want to be disturbed, but I’m going to disturb her” he told them determinedly. “Okay” Lincoln responded buckling up and pulling out of the circle drive.

They arrived at the apartment building soon after leaving the hospital. Bellamy slowly made his way to Clarke’s apartment. Everything still hurt, not as bad as the thought that Clarke would be out of his life. When he knocked on her door, Raven answered “Good, I hoped you would come” she held the door open. “How are you feeling?” she asked him. “Sore and my body hurts, where’s she at?” he asked. “In her room” Raven motioned “want me to wait around?” she asked. He shook his head “I’m staying, but we’ll need a ride to my house tomorrow” he said. She nodded “okay, I’ll come by around seven” she said grabbing her keys. Bellamy walked down the hall to Clarke’s room. He took a deep breath, then opened her door. She looked up expecting to see Raven.

When she saw him, she dropped her head “I told her I didn’t want to see you” she sighed. “Even if she would have tried to keep her word, it wouldn’t have worked” he replied walking over to her. He winced as he sat down on the bed next to her “I’m not going anywhere Clarke, you need to know that” he said wrapping an arm around her waist. She tried to pull back, but he refused to let her go “people die around me” she spoke softly “you should probably just…” he turned her to face him “I’m not. Going. Anywhere.” He repeated. She sighed and dropped her head “I can’t do this” she sighed raggedly. “this what?” he asked “this Christmas, fine, we’ll cancel Christmas” he declared. “This. Us.” She motioned “I can’t lose another person that I…” she trailed off. He tipped her head up to look at him “that you what Clarke?” he asked softly, knowing what she was trying not to say; knowing that she was afraid to say it. “Love, okay” she spoke raggedly “I love you Bellamy, and I don’t want to los…” she didn’t get to finish her statement because he was kissing her. “I love you too, baby” he whispered “and I’m not going to let you walk away from this, from us. Nobody is promised tomorrow, but I will do my best to stay alive, with you for a long, long time” he swore looking into her eyes.

She laid her head on his chest, he could feel her hot tears “I was so scared when that car hit us” she cried “and then I saw you and…” she was crying so hard that she couldn’t finish her sentence. He
held her and stroked her hair until she calmed down “I’m sorry” she sighed “I just panicked and the accident just brought back all the memories from when my dad…” another sob escaped. “I know, you’re mom told me” he spoke softly “and I am so sorry that happened on that day, but I survived, we survived” he gazed at her.

“I’m so tired” she sighed raggedly. “Didn’t they give you a sedative?” he asked. She nodded “But it didn’t help” she sighed “all I did was dream about my dad and you and…” she trailed off, as the tears came again. He sighed, pulling them both down onto the bed and drawing the covers over them. He just held her in his arms, while she cried, stroking her arms softly. He could tell when she was asleep because her breathing slowed down. Eventually, he too fell asleep with her wrapped up in his arms.

Bellamy was still there the next morning when Clarke stirred “you’re here” she spoke softly leaning into him “I told you I wasn’t going anywhere” he said kissing her softly. “Do we have to celebrate Christmas?” she sighed. He laughed softly “yes, we do” he looked into her eyes “because despite being sore and broken” he traced a finger on the hot pink cast on her wrist “we’re both here and that is something to celebrate. Besides, if we don’t go to the party, you know they’re going to bring it to you” he laughed. She sighed, she knew he was right “bright side” he grinned at her “I have specific instructions from your mom to take it easy, so all we have to do today is sit, eat and open presents.” She laughed at him “you’re terrible” she rolled her eyes. “and despite that you love me anyway” he whispered kissing her softly. “yes, I do” she smiled tracing a finger on jaw. “and I love you” he returned, stealing another kiss.

“I still need a shower” she said. “I think you mean a nice, hot bath” he corrected “and so do I. everything hurts” he groaned rolling over and climbing out the other side of the bed. He walked over to her and held out his hand, then lead her to the bathroom where he ran hot water into the tub. As he did that, she got undressed. Bellamy held her hand while she climbed in the tub, then climbed in behind her, careful not to get her casted wrist wet. She sunk down into the hot water, letting it cover her battered body. Bellamy grimaced at the bruises on her body. “Did anybody say anything about the guy that hit us?” he asked. “Lincoln was only a block away when it happened. He said the guy tried to run, but he caught him and held him until the police got there” she answered. “He really is a good, guy, huh?” he asked, kissing the back of her neck.

“yeah, he really is” she agreed. She leaned back against him for a while, just enjoying the silence and being with him. “Are you sure we have to go today?” she asked. “I’m afraid so babe” he sighed “as much as I would love to stay here with you, Raven will be here soon to pick us up.” She sighed “how soon?” she asked. “Thirty minutes, give or take” he answered. “So, we have time for a little fun?” she asked kissing him softly. “not enough time for that” he chuckled “but I think we have time for…” His voice trailed off as his fingers slipped under the water and between her legs. She leaned her back on his shoulder, moaning softly. “You know” Clarke sighed when she caught her breath again “I was planning on giving you a gift to unwrap on Christmas Eve, but we were so rudely interrupted” she grinned innocently. “well damn” Bellamy chuckled.

“You two better be up and ready to go” they heard Raven yell from the living room. “We’re not” Clarke returned “give us a minute.” They heard Raven grumble good naturedly. “Come on babe” Bellamy got out of the tub, then helped her out. Ten minutes later they were dressed and heading to Raven’s car with her. “Your mom and Marcus are already at Bellamy’s and everybody else is on their way” she told them. Clarke yawned “Please tell me you two actually got some sleep” she cocked her head at them. “We were too sore for anything else” Clarke snorted “the accident just stirred things up. I see…” she trailed off sighing. Bellamy took her hand into his caressing her palm with his thumb. “Of course, it did” Raven smiled at her “just take it one minute at a time, it’ll get better” she assured Clarke.
They pulled up to Bellamy’s to hear a chorus of voice’s announcing their arrival. Clarke no sooner had the door opened when she was swept into someone’s arms in a crushing hug. She winced, but didn’t say anything. When the world stopped spinning, she recognized Jasper. He released her and moved on to hug Bellamy, who was just as sore. “Alright, alright” she heard Roan declare “don’t break them, they’ve barely had a chance to heal” he commanded breaking through the line of friends waiting to greet them.

From the front porch, Abby watched the group as they swarmed Bellamy and Clarke in a group hug. “They really are a family aren’t they” she murmured to Marcus, who walked up behind her when he heard the noise. He smiled “they really are” he agreed. The raucous noise ceased when Lincoln whistled loudly. “Okay, these two need to get seated before the rest you bulldoze them” he said, “so if you’ll clear a path, please” he too Clarke’s hand and walked her between the line of friends. Bellamy followed with Raven and Roan right behind. After that, the rest of the group fell into line. When they go to the stairs Lincoln held out and arm, offering Clarke a hand up. She took it, wincing at the slight pain in her back.

“Merry Christmas” she stopped to greet her mom and Marcus as she neared them. Abby hugged her “Merry Christmas to you baby” she sighed “are you okay?” she asked in a lower tone, only Clarke could hear. She nodded “at the moment, I’m okay, but it’s been a little shaky today” she admitted. Abby pulled back “you have good friends to help you through it, you’ll be fine” she smiled at her daughter, kissing her cheek. Abby moved on to Bellamy, also hugging him. “You going be okay kid?” Marcus asked her, pulling her into a soft hug. She nodded “I’ll be okay” she said, “but I think I might learn to ride the bus, cars don’t seem to like me much” she smirked. He laughed softly “I think you’ll be fine” he said, wrapping an arm around her shoulder and walking in the house with her.

Once inside, Bellamy and Clarke were immediately sat on the couch and told not to move a muscle “So, if I have to go pee?” Clarke retorted, grinning. “I’ll bring you a bucket” Raven returned. “That wouldn’t be awkward at all” Clarke laughed accepting a plate of food from Roan. Raven was right behind him with one for Bellamy. He laughed, put his feet up and looked at her “what no salt, no pepper, no drink?” he laughed. “no drinks for you two” Jasper retorted “alcohol and prescription meds don’t mix.” Raven grinned “what he said” she flounced away laughing.

“now that the invalids are here” Octavia grinned at her brother “when do we open presents?” she asked rubbing her hands excitedly. He shook his head “you never could wait” he grinned shaking his head at her. She shrugged “some of us weren’t born old” she retorted. Raven laughed “I agree, let’s open some gifts” she said, sticking her tongue out at Bellamy. Bellamy laughed and held his hands up “Ok, far be it for me to say anything” he leaned back, wrapping an arm around Clarke.

“Ok, so for those new among us” Roan spoke, “we open the gift with our name on it and try to guess who it came from. In some cases” he glowered at Clarke “it’s pretty obvious.” She shrugged “I only know how to do one thing well” she retorted sticking her tongue out at him. He looked at Abby and Kane “sorry guys, but we didn’t know you would be here” he shrugged. Abby smiled at them “the fact that you let us crash is gift enough” she said. “Don’t mom” Clarke sighed “it ain’t that deep.” She laughed “I’ll try, but I make no promises” she said.

“Ok, so invalids” he grinned at Clarke “I mean ladies first” he laughed handing her a large package with her name on it. Clarke squeezed it, it was soft and it didn’t make a sound. She began carefully picking at the tape. A low groan went up “Come on Clarke, you always do this” Raven sighed “just rip the damn paper.” Abby laughed, I’ve been trying to get her to stop that for years” she chortled. Clarke deliberately slowed down “smooth move Raven” Roan groaned. Raven glowered at her and got to her feet “ok calm down, I’m opening” she drawled, shaking her head.

Clarke opened the last piece of tape to reveal a quilt. Each block was a copy of one of her paintings.
Her breath caught in her throat and her hand flew to her mouth. She unfolded it the center block was the picture of her and her dad playing when she was a little girl. She blinked back tears, trying not to cry, but when she looked over at Abby, she couldn’t stop them from falling. “Wow” Bellamy spoke softly. Clarke sniffed and looked at Octavia, “you did this, right?” she asked “because only you had access to these images, and you don’t sew” she looked at Lincoln. Octavia nodded “yeah it was me” she replied. “It’s amazing, thank you” she turned her head into Bellamy’s shoulder, hiding her tears. “Good job O” he smiled at his sister. “Okay, stop looking at me and move on to the next person” Clarke growled folding the quilt. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen Clarke cr…” Jasper began. “Zip it Jasper” Clarke glowered at him.

“Okay” Roan called attention back to himself “next is Raven” he said handing her package. “ooh it’s heavy” she grinned “heavy is good.” She tore opened the wrapping to reveal a plain brown box. “Really?” she snorted, opening the box “wow” she exclaimed pulling out pint glasses from her favorite drink bottle. “Thanks Nylah” she smiled “these are great!” she exclaimed. Nylah grinned “You’re welcome” she shrugged. Roan dug around underneath the tree and pulled out Echo’s package. He handed it to her. She opened it and smiled broadly, tracing the bow and arrow with her fingers. “This is amazing. Thank you” she looked at Roan. He smiled and shrugged “have fun with it” he said reaching for the next package.

He handed it to Bellamy “Gee, I wonder who that’s from” Harper drawled looking at Clarke. Bellamy grinned opening the package. His grin turned to a breathless “wow” when he saw what Clarke had painted. “you did this from memory?” he turned to her. She nodded “thank you” he said kissing her cheek. “Look O” he turned the painting so she could see it. “that’s you, me and mom from the picture hanging in the kitchen” she exclaimed. “that’s amazing” she said. Roan pulled out another package, this one bearing his name, he put it on the floor in front of him and reached for another one. He handed it to Murphy. “Wow, this is heavy” he claimed.

He opened the box and looked at Clarke “I trusted you with one secret” he looked at her. She grinned “I only told one person” she rolled her eyes. “What is it?” Raven asked. Murphy pulled the snowman out of the box. “that is awesome” Raven exclaimed. “Thanks, man” Murphy looked at Bellamy. Bellamy grinned “I tried to man it up for you” he laughed. “it’s great, I love it” he said. The next package belonged to Emori, it was thin and made no sound. “What is it?” she asked. “open it and find out” Murphy shook his head. She pulled out a certificate “This entitles the reader to one free tattoo of his/her own choice” she read. She laughed “I have wanted a new tattoo for ages” she grinned at Lincoln. He shrugged “I don’t make things, but that I can do” he replied. “It’s perfect” she grinned.

“One couldn’t happen but notice that your present is not open” Bellamy cocked his head at Roan. He sighed and reached for his present “The host always goes last” he murmured “but I will go ahead and open it.” He unwrapped the package to reveal several jars of paint. He eyed the bottles strangely “Ahh” he murmured. “It looks like paint” Clarke said. Raven walked over to him and bent down to whisper something in his ear. He laughed “nice, very nice” he said “I know just what to do with these.” He tucked them away and reached for the next package, handing it to Maya. She opened it revealing a wine bottle lamp with wax melted down the side. “this is cool” she grinned “but I have absolutely no idea who would have made this.” She admitted. “I do” Clarke grinned “eyeing Murphy. “I can fix things, but that’s as creative as I get” he shrugged “I hope you like it.” She smiled “are you kidding? It’s great” she smiled “thanks.”

Roan handed the next package to Monty. He shook it “Will you just open it” Harper shook her head. He opened the box to reveal a bunch of tubes, and glass vessels. “What is it?” Harper looked at it. Jasper laughed “that is perfect” he said. Monty smiled “I know exactly where to put this” he grinned. He looked around the room, doing the math in his head, given Jasper’s reaction and Harper’s neither of them gave him the gift, and the of the remaining givers, only one could have made it. “you” he
looked at Emori “only a chemistry major could get all these things.” She smiled and nodded “I expect to get some of this great stuff you brew at some point” she arched her eyebrows at him. “Done” he smiled, looking down at his gift.

Nylah opened her gift to reveal a neon sign advertising her bar. “How did you?” she looked at Monty. He shrugged “just a little chemistry” he shrugged. Roan handed Harper and Jasper their gifts, which they opened at the same time. Jasper’s gift was a set of glasses made out of beer bottles and hers was a lamp made out of the same bottle. “Really?” Monty looked at them “how did the two of you manage that?” he asked. There were four remaining packages, two belonging to Octavia and Lincoln, One for Abby and a second one for Bellamy. Roan handed them out. Octavia opened hers first. It was an assortment of sugar scrubs, bath bombs and lotions, all of them bearing the label from Maya’s shop. “dead giveaway” she grinned at Maya “but thanks, my supplies were running low.” Lincoln opened his package to reveal several paint brushes made of feathers and woods. By process of elimination, he figured out that Echo was the giver. “they attach to a tattoo gun” she showed him. “thanks” he said “I can’t wait to try them out.”

Lincoln reached for the package with Bellamy’s name on it and handed it to him. “This is from Octavia and I” he said. Bellamy opened the package to reveal Clarke’s painting from the gallery, the one of the Christmas tree with the bulbs on it. “I can’t” he looked at them “I mean it’s like cheating the artist” he said looking at Clarke. “they asked me if they could give it to you, it’s okay” she said “take it.” He nodded at her “okay” he said “thank you” he looked at Octavia and Lincoln. “And last, but certainly, not least” Roan handed Abby and Marcus the last gift. Abby opened it and closed her eyes. She took a deep breath, then handed the painting to Marcus. She walked over to Clarke “Thank you” she said hugging her.

“I thought you had a buyer for this?” she looked at Lincoln. “We do” Clarke answered “this one is a duplicate, sort of” she said. “The knight in shining armor isn’t dad” she smiled at Marcus “it’s you” she said “I don’t deserve all that you’ve done for me” she sniffed. He walked over to her “you deserve that and so much more” he said kissing her cheek “I consider myself a lucky man that you let me into your life after your father died.” She sighed then looked at Abby “look at the fairy in the picture.” Abby studied the picture, then grinned “that’s me” she exclaimed “you put me it the picture.” Clarke nodded “I did” she said. Abby squealed “thank you” she kissed her on the cheek. “mooooom” Clarke groaned, pulling away.

“Well now that is done” Roan stood up “let’s eat” he started toward the kitchen. “Wait” Marcus held his hand up “there is one more gift” he said looking at Bellamy and Clarke. “The insurance adjuster totaled out Bellamy’s car and we don’t want to overstep any boundaries or put any pressure on either of you, but we wanted to help out somehow” he said reaching into his pocket. He pulled out a key “It’s not new or fancy, but it looks and runs good, and we’d like you to have it” he said holding the key out to him. Bellamy looked at Clarke, who shook her head indicating that she had no idea what was going on.

Marcus and Bellamy walked outside to see Marcus’ black F150 in the driveway “I…I…don’t know what to say” he looked at Marcus “thanks, I guess” he said “I’ll take care of it.” Marcus patted him on the back “this is just a car…er truck” he smirked “take care of Clarke, she’s worth way more than that” he pointed to the truck. “I can do that” he nodded holding out his hand. Marcus shook his hand “I know you can” he grinned “and I know you will, now let’s go eat, huh?” he asked. Bellamy’s stomach rumbled in response. They walked back into the house and toward the kitchen “actually” Raven stopped them “there is one more gift to open.” Jasper groaned “we’re going to starve to death” he snorted. “hush Jasper” Maya chided. Raven handed Abby a small box, they all recognized what was in it, by the shape and size. “This event is usually parent free” she said “but the two of you managed to crash it and rumor has it you’re hosting it next year, so you might as well truly be a part of it” she nodded at the box. Abby opened it and smiled, then handed the box to Marcus. He laughed
“Thank you” he said removing the ornaments and walking toward the tree “we’re honored” he spoke for both of them. “Can we please eat now?” Jasper begged. They all laughed “yes, Jasper, we can eat now” Marcus grinned.

Later, after dinner and the place had been cleaned up, everybody had cleared out claiming that Clarke and Bellamy needed to get some rest. They’d arranged to meet up in a week for New Year’s Eve, except for Marcus and Abby, who said they would be in bed well before midnight. Clarke and Bellamy laid on the couch, covered up with the quilt Octavia made for her. “This is amazing” she smiled, looking at the quilt. A Christmas movie played quietly in the background. With only the Christmas tree lights to light the room, the atmosphere was intimate. “there is one more gift over there” she looked at him “I wanted you to have it, but I didn’t want to give it to you in front of everyone else” she said.

She got up and walked over to the tree, picking an envelope off of it. She brought it to him and put it in his hands. He opened it and took out the cashier’s check. The number of zeroes on it astounded him. “Clarke, I can’t” he began. She stopped him “it’s not charity” she told him “I sold a painting and I don’t need the money, but you can use it for college. Take it as a loan if you want, but please, just take it.” He looked at her “Are you sure?” he asked. “yes, I’m sure” she said “call it the Jake Griffin Scholarship” she said. “Okay” he said “thank you.”

He laid down beside her again. “you know this quilt was made to fit my bed” he said covering them back up. “oh really?” she leaned into him, turning her head to look into his eyes “so does that mean I have to come here to visit it?” she asked. “Or, you could live here with it” he said. She grinned “I could” she agreed “are we ready for that?” she asked. He kissed her softly “I’m ready for that” he spoke softly “I love you Clarke” he whispered “and I want you to be here with me, all the time” he said. She pulled him closer “I was so scared after the accident” she confessed “you were hurt and I thought you were…” she trailed off. “I love you Bellamy, so much that it scares me. I can’t promise that I won’t get neurotic on you occasionally.” He laughed softly “I can handle anything you throw at me” he said closing the distance between them and capturing her lips with his. “I’ll guess we’ll find out, huh?” she grinned. He grinned victoriously “I guess we will” he agreed.
For most of the next week, Clarke and Bellamy were left pretty much alone. Once a day, one friend or the other would stop by to check up on them. They’d pretty much spent their days watching a documentary or one of her favorite reality shows, which Bellamy mocked endlessly. “Do I talk bad about your documentaries?” she turned on him while they watched the latest episode of Big Brother. “The guy has known this girl for like five minutes and he’s already got her in bed. They do know America is watching them make out, right?” he asked.

She laughed “as I recall we didn’t know each other too well before you…” she was interrupted when he claimed her lips “we knew each other a little longer than five minutes” he pointed out “and we didn’t have sex the first time we together, and he continued “there weren’t 250 cameras watching everything we did.” She laughed “that’s a good thing” she said “because they call that porn…” she snorted. “And that’s bad, why?” he asked, remembering what they had done the night before. “Because porn stars are not allowed to become teachers” she said kissing him softly. He laughed “you may have a point” he grinned. “I do have a point, now quit bashing my show and be quiet” she sighed dramatically.

Bellamy watched her as she lay on the couch, her head resting in his lap, wrapped in the quilt Octavia had given her. They spent more time wrapped in it on the couch than their bed, but it was definitely well loved and well used. He loved having her here, even though their friends teased them about basically turning into an old married couple. Bellamy’s fingers tangled in her hair, he began to think about the future.

When her show ended, he leaned down to kiss her “I didn’t bash your show” he grinned wickedly “Is there a reward for that?” she sat up and straddled him looking deep into his eyes “you sir” she purred “are insatiable.” He laughed pulling her into his chest “I noticed you didn’t say no” his growled huskily, as his hands disappeared under the t-shirt she was wearing. She closed her eyes, trying to remember how to breathe “that’s not fair” she sighed heavily. “Still not a no” he countered. She opened her eyes which were brightly lit with the passion he knew she felt. “ride me princess” his voice was husky. She pulled the t-shirt over her head “I’m all yours cowboy” she sighed claiming his lips in a searing kiss. They actually made it to the bedroom at some point, but sleep was a long time coming. The next morning, Bellamy woke up before Clarke. He kissed her softly without waking her, scribbled a note and left the house.

Marcus opened the door to see Bellamy standing on the porch, he looked around “Hey, Bellamy” he smiled “everything okay? Where’s Clarke?” he asked. “She’s fine” he assured Marcus “she’s sleeping at home. I wanted to talk to you and Abby.” Marcus opened the door, motioning for him to enter. “Help yourself to a drink” he motioned to the fridge “I’ll get Abby.” Bellamy was sitting in the living room when they returned. They sat down, looking at him, waiting for him. He took a deep breath “I came here to discuss a few things” he began looking up at them “first of all, I want to thank you for the offer of a scholarship to college. I think it’s a great idea, but Clarke sold a painting and the money she made on it will pay for the rest of my college” he said. He told them the scholarship was a good idea, one that maybe someone else could make use of.

“Second, I wanted you to know that Clarke is going to move in with me, has moved in with me” he corrected “We’re going to get the rest of her stuff from the apartment tomorrow” he told them. “Raven doesn’t know yet, but I know she is willing to accept your offer. I will let the two of you figure that out.” Marcus grinned “I knew that would happen sooner, rather than later” he said. Abby smiled at him “I’m happy that the two of you have worked that out” she said “I was afraid Clarke would draw it out.” Bellamy smirked “she probably would have if I didn’t insist on finding her after I
got out of the hospital” he said. “Too bad for her I’m a little more persistent than that” he grinned. “Yes, too bad for her” Abby agreed, smiling at him.

Bellamy took a deep breath “Finally” he looked nervously at them “I want your permission to ask Clarke to marry me” he released a breath he didn’t realize he’d been holding “I want both of us to be out of college before we actually get married” he assured them “but I want to marry her and I want her to know that.” Abby smiled at him “I knew that you loved my daughter a long time ago” she said “and clearly she loves you. So, I would be proud to have you in our family.” Marcus grinned “I knew when I saw you in the hall at Clarke’s apartment you were going to be around for a long time” he grinned. “That’s the plan” Bellamy bobbed his head in agreement. “Do you have a ring for her?” Abby asked. He shook his head “but I have plenty of time to get one” he said.

Abby held up her hand and removed chain from around her neck. There were three rings hanging on it, she held it out to him. “I can’t” he shook his head “you’ve already done so much for me with the truck…” he said. Abby held the chain out still “this is not charity, it’s not a gift or me being nice” she said. “These belonged to her father, they were always meant to be hers, or her children’s” she said dropping the chain into his open hand and closing his fingers over it. “Thank you” he said “I’ll make sure they are in the family for a very long time” he said.

Abby smiled at him “have you figured out how and when you’re going to do this?” He shook his head “to be honest, I hadn’t got that far yet” he admitted. “I’m sure you’re going to think of something” Marcus nodded approvingly at him “make sure she calls us when she says yes” he requested. “and if she doesn’t” Bellamy sighed. Abby grinned “she will” she reached for his hand “she is stubborn, but she knows what is best for her, and we think that is you.” Bellamy grinned gratefully “thank you, I’ll try to live up to that” he said. “I need to get back, she was asleep when I left, so I don’t want her to wake up and find me gone” he rose up “I’ll have her call you” he smiled at Abby. Abby leaned against Marcus “I think she found a good one” she sighed. He laughed softly “I think she probably had a little help in that, but I think you’re right” he agreed.

Bellamy arrived back at his house to find Clarke still sleeping, he climbed back into the bed with her. She turned and snuggled into him “where’d you go?” she mumbled sleepily. He laughed “I had something to take care of” he said, wrapping an arm around her. “I’m surprised you woke up” he grinned. She laughed softly “who’s fault is that?” she returned. He closed the distance between them, kissing her softly “it’s not totally my fault” he whispered huskily “I didn’t hear you saying no” he grinned. “Do we have to get up today?” she groaned. “yes, we do” he kissed her again “we have to pack up your apartment.” She smiled up at him “I hope you know what you’re getting into” she said “I can be a handful.” He laughed “That much I already figured out” he said “but I happen to like handful’s” he said moving his hand down to her chest, gently squeezing her breast. “you shouldn’t start something you can’t finish” she moved against him. “I can finish it” he said kissing her again “just not at the moment.” She slapped his arm “no fair with the teasing, Blake” she groaned.

He merely smiled at her then rolled over and got off the bed. He walked around the bed and reached for her hand “come on Griffin” he said “we have things to do today, and they don’t include spending the whole day in bed.” She smiled up at him “are you sure you can’t be convinced” she whispered. He groaned “you are going to be a handful, aren’t you?” he laughed wrapping his arms around her. “Technically, we’re not in bed” she pointed out.

He laughed, and turned her around, then backed her up until she hit the wall. “Now, what are you going to do with me?” she asked, gazing at him. He smiled, the lowered his lips to her neck, sucking gently. She sighed and wrapped her arms around his neck. His hands roamed down her body gently. Placing one hand on either thigh, he lifted her legs and wrapped them around his waist. She moved against him, reaching for him, but he wrapped both of her wrists in one of his hands, holding them
above her head. His free hand moved lower until his fingers found her hot center and disappeared inside her. “She panted and gasped for air “not. Exactly. What. I. had. In. mind” she breathed out. He chuckled “Are you complaining?” he asked. She tried to answer, but when his thumb flicked her sensitive spot, she lost her ability to think, let alone speak.

Bellamy held her afterwards “We really do have to get things done today” he said kissing her softly. She sighed “yes, I know” she said “you go fix breakfast and I will take shower” she pulled away from him reluctantly. He “any special requests?” he asked. “anything you make is always good” she grinned “but?” he looked at her. “Chocolate chip pancakes” she looked at him. “Done” he kissed her “now go take a shower before I forget about breakfast.”

Clarke appeared in the kitchen twenty minutes later, her blonde hair piled loosely on her head. He handed her a plate of pancakes, “thanks” she said taking the plate and walking to the table. He sat down across from her. “You’re going to spoil me if you make breakfast everyday” she smiled at him. “I would love to spoil you” he laughed “but once school starts back it will be cereal and milk during the week” he said. “Still more than I had most days” she laughed. He shook his head “how did you guys manage to stay alive before I came along?” he snorted. “Microwave meals and lunchmeat” she shot back. He sighed “I am seriously going to teach you guys to cook” he laughed.

They arrived at Clarke’s apartment an hour later after stopping to get boxes to pack her things up. When they arrived, Raven was already there. “Like my new apartment?” she asked grinning at them. “how do you know it’s yours?” Clarke eyed her. Raven grinned, winking at Bellamy “please” she drawled “you’re never here, anymore. It was just a matter of time before you gave up the guise of having your own place.” Bellamy breathed a sigh of relief, he wasn’t sure how he was going to respond if Raven revealed the fact that he’d been to Abby’s house earlier. “Let me get my stuff before you lay claim to it too” Clarke laughed takin a stack of boxes to her bedroom. “Really?” Bellamy turned to Raven. She merely grinned “I love seeing you sweat” she retorted cheekily.

“When did Marcus call you?” he asked. “About an hour ago” she replied “I figured the way the two of you go at it like rabbits, it would be a while before you get here.” He shook his head “for your information” he grinned “we were actually eating breakfast, where I was telling her I need to teach the lot of you to cook” he sighed. “We don’t starve” Raven defended. “living on lunchmeat and microwave meals doesn’t count as eating” he drawled.

Clarke came out of her room, beckoning for Raven to join her “I am not taking all those shoes you love, so you better come take the ones you like before I toss them” she turned and walked back. “I want the red ones” Raven declared. “Too late” Bellamy smirked remembering the first time he’d been to Clarke’s apartment. The red stilettos got immediately tossed into the dumpster. He followed them into the room, sitting on the bed watching while Clarke and Raven sorted through the clothes and shoes in her closet.

Clarke was tossing things on the bed she was taking with her, but leaving the rest in the closet. When she passed the red dress, she wore that night at Nylah’s Bellamy interjected “you should keep that one” he grinned wickedly. Raven smiled smugly at him, then turned back to her shooting her an ‘I told you so” look. Clarke rolled her eyes and tossed the dress on the bed.

It didn’t take Clarke long to pack her meager belongings from the apartment and move them into Bellamy’s house, though she had to put her clothes in Octavia’s closet. “You have more clothes than me” she rolled her eyes at Bellamy. He laughed “I happen to like my clothes, why should I get rid of them?” he asked her. “You’re right, you should keep your clothes” she agreed “I was just saying…” he cut her off with a kiss “I know what you were just saying” he grinned wrapping his arms around her “think of it this way, now you have a walk-in closet.” She wrapped her arms around his neck “and if Octavia needs her room back?” she asked sweetly. He snorted “Have you seen her and Lincoln together?” he asked. “they are pretty happy” Clarke agreed.
“I have a confession to make” he looked at her. She returned his gaze curiously. “I paid a visit to your mom and Marcus today” he said. “Why?” she asked quietly. “I wanted to let them know you were moving in with me” he replied. She laughed “that explains Raven’s presence at the apartment” she said. “you’re not mad?” he asked. She traced a finger on his lips “no” she spoke softly “I think it’s sweet that you wanted them to know before we did it.” He pulled her into his chest “I love you” he said kissing her softly “and I don’t want to damage the fragile truce you have with your mom by lying to them.”

She grinned “where did you come from Bellamy Blake?” she asked. He looked at her “I was raised to be a gentleman and to respect adults, especially parental adults” he said. “Apparently, your mom raised you right.” He shrugged “she would have loved you” he spoke softly, gazing into her eyes. “yeah?” she asked. “yeah” he confirmed, holding her close. “So, what do you say we go watch tv today before the house gets invaded tomorrow for New Year’s Eve?” he asked. She smiled “sounds like a good idea to me” she agreed.
Chapter 22

Have you ever tried writing a steamy bedroom scene while watching a war in a zombie apocalypse? LOL, I hope it's a good read!

The next day, Bellamy was awake early making reservations for an early dinner for Clarke and himself. The NYE party was going to be held at their house, so it would be filled with people fairly early to decorate. Everyone, but Nylah was going to be there. She had to work the bar, seeing as NYE was definitely one of her busiest nights. “Whatcha’ doing?” Raven walked in with Roan behind her carrying some bags. “need help” Bellamy asked, hoping to dodge her question. Roan grinned knowingly “sure” he grinned laughing at Raven’s expression. She snorted “Run, but you can’t hide Bellagio” she retorted.

Clarke walked into the kitchen “What’s Bellagio up to?” she asked suspiciously. Clarke laughed “he just wants us to have dinner before everybody gets here” she shrugged. Raven shook her head “he’s up to something” she disagreed. Clarke laughed “Maybe, he is just being romantic” she countered. Raven blew a raspberry “we’ll see” she murmured unloading groceries and drinks onto the island. Clarke helped her put things away. Bellamy and Roan returned with more “did you leave anything for anyone else?” Bellamy grunted. Roan laughed “nope, not even a loaf of bread” she retorted. “Watch it buster” she growled at him “or you won’t have anyone to kiss at midnight.” Roan merely laughed and began unpacking the bags they’d brought in.

Everybody began showing up around noon and started setting up sleeping arrangements, decorations and helping with the food for the evening. The menu was mostly finger foods, so all of them were able to contribute. At 4:00, Bellamy walked over to where Clarke was “we should probably get cleaned up for dinner” he said placing a hand on her lower back. She nodded “Okay” she turned to Raven “we’re going to get ready to go to dinner, do you need anything?” she asked. She shook her head “he is up to something” she grinned “trust me on that.” Clarke shook her head “if you are right” she laughed “you’re never going to know that.” Raven snorted “uh-huh” she grunted, “keep telling yourself that.”

Two hours later, Clarke and Bellamy bid their friends goodbye, promising to be back by midnight. Bellamy drove them towards the gallery.

When they got there, her blindfolded her “Where are we going?” she asked. “you’ll see” he grinned, taking her free hand in his. “What are you up to?” she asked suspiciously. He grinned kissing her softly on the neck, his breath, warm on her ear “you’ll find out” he said softly. Clarke shivered involuntarily. She heard a door open and she knew instinctively they were going to her studio. “So, when does the blindfold come off?” she asked reaching for it.

Bellamy laughed wickedly “in a little bit” he said claiming her lips with a fiery kiss “but first, Ms. Griffin” his voice was low ad husky “it’s payday” he whispered in her ear, before biting down softly on her lobe. Clarke groaned and leaned into him. “I. thought. We. were. having. Dinner.” she asked. “you’ll see” he grinned, taking her free hand in his. “What are you up to?” she asked suspiciously. He grinned kissing her softly on the neck, his breath, warm on her ear “you’ll find out” he said softly. Clarke shivered involuntarily. She heard a door open and she knew instinctively they were going to her studio. “So, when does the blindfold come off?” she asked reaching for it.

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“As I recall” he voice was low and husky “I was right about here” he drew her arms over her head, binding first one, then the other to a post. He kissed her soft at first, then increased the force of his lips on hers until she opened for him. His tongue darted in, dancing with hers. “Bellamy” she moaned. His hands moved down her body slowly unbuttoning her blouse. Know she knew why Bellamy’s instructions had been to wear a button-down shirt and a skirt “something that you won’t miss” he whispered as he kissed her. He opened her shirt, exposing her perfect breasts, her taut nipples peaking through their black lace prison. She writhed beneath him when his lips replaced his hands “Bellamy” she panted breathlessly.

He laughed “sucks, doesn’t it?” he murmured “all you want to do is touch me, especially when I do this” his hands rested on her thighs, reaching inside. His thumb moved in slow, circles on her thigh. She shuddered as one finger traced her hot wet center through what he imagined to be matching black panties. “Trust me” he whispered against her lips, while moving his hands up to her waist unsnapping the closure and running a finger inside of it. Clarke’s breath hitched in her throat. She lifted her hips allowing him to slowly pull both her skirt and her panties off.

Moving off the bed, he wrapped his fingers around her slim ankles and bound them to the posts at the end of the bed. “ah, yes, this position I remember” he drawled kissing his way from her ankles to her hot center. “Bell” Clarke gasped in agony as he took his time finding her hot, wet center with his tongue. When he finally did, she arched off the bed. He laughed softly, wickedly working his magical tongue to take her. Just when she felt her body coiling, he stopped. “Bellamy, please?” she begged.

She heard the clink of ice, then felt it on her hot skin. Had she not been tied down, she might have jumped off the bed. When she felt the ice against her hot center, she cried out loudly. He snickered “just rewards” he whispered against her mouth. The ice melted against her, while he pumped his fingers in and out of her. She moaned and writhed against him “Bellamy, please” she pleaded, panting and breathless. He untied the blindfold “I want to see you when you come undone” he murmured, flicking her sensitive spot. Her body tightened around him as did and she screamed his name. “I want you….inside of me” she looked into his eyes. “as you wish, baby” he whispered, capturing her lips in a fiery kiss. He walked around the bed untying her legs first, then her arms.

Clarke shivered at the tone of his voice. He removed her bra and blouse, then propped her up against the pillows on the bed. “always the one with more clothes on” she laughed softly. “not for long” Bellamy murmured stripping out of his clothes. He walked the side of the bed and climbed over her straddling her waist “but first” he voice was low, husky. Clarke met his gaze, his eyes burning passionately into hers. He picked her hands up then folded them into his, pushing her breasts together, “hold them” he commanded.

Clarke’s breath caught in her throat, she could only nod her consent. Placing his hands on her shoulders, he moved himself between her breasts “open your mouth” he urged easing himself in and out of her. He pulled out suddenly, kissing her hard before sliding down her body and plunging into her in one, hard motion. He lifted her legs onto his shoulder and began moving in and out of her until he felt her body clamp down on him, sucking on her nipples as he did. When her release came, followed by his, he fell onto her “I think this” he patted the bed “needs to come home with us” he murmured. “I think you might be right” she agreed. He laughed and rolled onto his side, gathering her in his arms. “We have about an hour before dinner is ready” he sighed “get some sleep, the night is young.”

Clarke woke up a little later to the smell of something delicious “mmmm” she rolled over to see Bellamy, dressed up and putting food on a plate. He smiled and walked over to her “hello there,
sleepyhead” he greeted her “I was just about to wake you up” he held out his hand. She took it and tried to drag him back into bed. He planted his feet on the floor “as enticing as that offer is” he kissed her softly “we have to get ready” he said pulling her to her feet. “So, why don’t you shower and get dressed, then we can eat.” She looked up at him “you are up to something, aren’t you?” she asked. He grinned, pulling her into him “I might be” he whispered “but you won’t find out what it is until you get cleaned up and dressed.” She laughed softly “that’s dirty pool” she declared. He nodded “trust me it will be worth it” he assured her.

When Clarke went into the bathroom to take a shower, she found a flowing, red gown hanging up with a pair of heels. Now, she knew he was up to something. She took a quick shower and dressed before joining Bellamy for dinner. “Seriously” she looked down at herself, pointedly “what are you up to?” He smiled at her, walking towards her “beautiful” he said kissing her softly. He took her hand and led her to the table, then pulled her chair out for her. Once she was seated, he sat down in his own chair. “I didn’t even know you owned a tie” she looked at him. He laughed “I didn’t” he admitted “but this is a special occasion, so I bought one” he shrugged. “and what is the special occasion?” she asked. He grinned “nice try princess, but you have to wait for the rest of the surprise.”

“fine” she sighed “and may I say you do clean up well, Mr. Blake” she smiled at him. “Why thank you” he pretended to bow “so do you.” They talked while they ate, Bellamy had spared no expense. Their dinner included steak and potatoes, that were perfectly cooked. Just when Clarke thought she could eat no more, Bellamy appeared with two pieces of Dixie pie. “oooh” Clarke cooed, licking her lips at the sight of them “that’s almost better than sex” she said reaching for one of them. Bellamy laughed “I’ll remember that next time we go to bed” he chortled. “almost better than sex” she reiterated.

When they finished eating, Bellamy stood up and walked over to her. “How many more surprises do you have for me tonight?” she asked him, taking the hand he offered and getting to her feet. “only a couple more” he grinned “don’t worry, you’ll love them both. She narrowed her eyes watching him, but said nothing. He laughed “come on princess” he said leading her to the door. Pausing for good measure, Bellamy stopped at the door before opening it. “Close your eyes” he commanded. “why?” she asked. He rolled his eyes “trust me” he whispered in her ear. She sighed deeply, but closed her eyes. He opened the door “okay, you can open them” he told her.

Clarke opened her eyes to find the gallery full of people, most of them viewing her work. “Who are these people?” she asked turning to look at him “and if they are here that means Lincoln is too” she murmured. “how long have they been here?” she asked horrified that they may have heard her and Bellamy earlier. “Relax” he grinned, guessing her thoughts “Lincoln opened the gallery about ten minutes ago.” Clarke released the breath she’d been holding. She looked around at the mix of people “Where did these people come from?” she asked him. He shrugged “some are gallery regulars, some work with your mom and Marcus, and some” he pointed to a smaller crowd. She turned to him “okay, how many people have you conspired with to do this?” she turned on him. He laughed “I only conspired with Lincoln, but he may have conspired with a few more people” he said, laying his hand on the small of her back and urging her into the gallery.

Raven was the first to greet them “sweet dress” she smiled at Clarke, then looked at her friend “I told you Bellagio was up to something” she grinned. “You didn’t have anything to do with this?” Clarke asked. Raven shook her head “not a thing, we’re just getting the party started when Octavia filled us in on Bellagio’s plan” she replied. “And the party?” Clarke asked. “will go on” Raven answered “the opening only goes until 10:00.” Lincoln walked up to them “surprise” he grinned at her. She shook her head “a little warning would have been nice” she murmured. He laughed “that kind of ruins the surprise” he retorted.
An older lady walked up to Lincoln “excuse me sir” she interrupted them “but I was wondering if the artist of this painting” she pointed to the picture of the wrecked car is present tonight?” she asked. Lincoln looked at Clark, who nodded “as a matter of fact” he pointed to Clarke “she is right here.” The woman turned to Clarke and smiled broadly “tell me dear, what is the story behind that magnificent piece” she asked taking Clarke’s hand and leading her to it.

Bellamy turned to Lincoln “thanks, man” he said “I couldn’t have done any of this without you.” Lincoln patted him on the back “anytime” he said “I’ve actually wanted to do this for a long time, but Clarke wouldn’t let me. They watched as Clarke and the older lady talked, pointing at the painting from time to time. They could tell when Clarke told the story of the painting because the lady dabbed at her eyes with a Kleenex, then pulled Clarke into a hug. A few minutes later, Clarke put a reserved sign on the painting, spoke with the woman a few more minutes, then returned to where they stood. “I can’t believe the two of you did this?” she smiled at them. “we had a little help” Lincoln admitted, nodding at Marcus and Abby, who just entered the gallery.

Abby walked over and hugged Clarke, then Bellamy. Marcus hugged Clarke and shook Bellamy’s hand “I think you’re a hit, kiddo” he said wrapping an arm around her waist. “Why would all these people want to see my artwork?” she asked. “look around Clarke” Lincoln said “the things you paint speaks to them. It touches them on a basic level.” He told her he already had offers on many of her paintings or at the very least prints of them. A client beckoned for Lincoln to join them. He looked at Bellamy “let me know when you’re ready to take care of that other thing” he looked at him. Bellamy nodded “will do” he said, wrapping an arm around Clarke “what do you say we go meet your new fans?” he asked. She pulled back “What if they don’t like me?” she spoke softly “or ask questions I can’t answer?” Abby smiled at her “We’ll all go, and if they ask a question you can’t answer, we’ll answer it together. Clarke reluctantly allowed Bellamy to lead her further into the room. If she was nervous, she didn’t show it
An hour later, Bellamy nodded at Lincoln, who silenced the music and called the crowd’s attention. He thanked everyone for their attendance and introduced Clarke. She took the microphone, looking quite nervous. “I’m not sure what to say other than, thank you for all your comments and for coming out on New Year’s Eve no less” she laughed softly. If you wish to purchase a painting or a print, please see Lincoln or Nyko and I hope you all have a safe and happy new year.” She handed the mic to Lincoln and stepped off the stage. When she did, Bellamy was there, looking at her a strange look on his face. “what?” she looked at him. He took her hand and led her a little ways away from the crowd.

“What are you doing?” she asked. He led her to a bench and helped her sit down. When she was sitting, he knelt in front of her “Clarke” he sighed tracing a finger on her cheek. “when I met you, I thought you were a spoiled little rich girl, but the more I got to know you, the more I realized how wrong I was” he said. “I love you. I can’t imagine my life without you” he looked into her eyes “Bellamy” she spoke, her voice, just above a whisper. “Bellamy pulled a ring out of his pocket “Will you marry me?” he asked, holding the ring up. Clarke’s hands flew to her mouth, while tears ran down her cheeks. “yes” she sighed, staring into his eyes “I will marry you.” He slid the ring onto her finger, then pulled her into his chest and kissed her.

She pulled back and looked at the finger “this is…. “ She stared at the ring. “Your mom’s engagement ring” he smiled at her “they go with these” he pulled the matching wedding bands out of his pocket. “She’s been holding onto them, waiting to give them to you.” Clarke shook her head “you’ve been busy, haven’t you?” she asked. He shrugged, sitting down beside her “just a little” he said “I had a lot of help.” She laughed softly, “I can see that” she said. “So, I assume she is waiting to hear from you.” Bellamy nodded “yeah, she and Marcus actually” he answered “should we find them and then join the party currently in progress at the house?” he asked. She nodded “but I am changing when we get home” she declared. Bellamy snorted “me too” he agreed “this monkey suit is killing me.”

Clarke laughed and allowed him to help her to her feet. They walked around for a little while before finding Abby and Marcus talking to Lincoln. Clarke looked at the three of them, shaking her head “really not fair ganging up on me” she chuckled softly. “Thank you” she turned to Lincoln “for everything, and feel free to join us after you close up the gallery” she hugged him, then turned to Abby. “thank you” Clarke spoke softly “I know I didn’t make your life easy before or after dad died” she said. Abby smiled “it’s okay baby” she said hugging her “some day when you have kids of your own, I’ll get to sit back and watch and laugh...” she grinned.

Marcus shook his head “I was also told you wanted to see this” she held out her ringed hand. Abby smiled “congratulations” she said enveloping both Clarke and Bellamy in a hug. When she released them, Marcus hugged Clarke, then looked at Bellamy “you take care of our baby” he ordered. Clarke heard the catch in his voice and swore she saw a tear on his cheek. “that’s a promise I can keep” he smiled wrapping an arm around Clarke. “Are you ready?” he asked, looking at Clarke. She nodded
“are you sure you don’t want to come over?” she asked them. Abby laughed “I’d never make it to midnight” she said hugging Clarke again “but you kids have fun, and be safe” she commanded. “Don’t worry, everybody is spending the night, so nobody will be out and about” Bellamy assured her.

Bellamy and Clarke arrived home about twenty minutes later, “what are the odds, we can slip in and change before Raven notices anything?” Clarke grinned. “Slim to none” Bellamy laughed, taking her hand in his “come on, let’s face the music” he said. They entered the house “hey look the artist and her handsome escort have arrived” Jasper greeted them. Clarke’s cheeks turned a slight shade of pink, “you guys already knew I could paint” she rolled her eyes. “yeah, but this was your first show, that’s a big thing” Harper chimed in on the subject. “Thank you, all of you,” Clarke smiled “but I really want to get out of this dress and into something more comfortable, so if you don’t mind…”

Her sentence was cut off when Raven strode up to her, eyeing a reflection off the Christmas tree ornament. She grabbed Clarke’s hand and grinned mischievously. Clarke groaned and hung her head “When are you ever going to learn?” she drawled “you can’t hide anything from me.” Then with a huge smile on her face, she held up Clarke’s hand “look everybody” She called in a commanding voice “Bellagio did a thing.” Jasper groaned and walked over to Roan, he pulled a fifty out of his pocket “thank you” Roan grinned, pocketing the bill. Raven dropped Clarke’s hand as their friends swarmed them with congratulatory hugs. Roan handed Bellamy and Clarke a drink, then held his cup in the air “A toast to the crazy, I mean, happy couple” he said. His toast was echoed by everyone else. “Thank you” Bellamy spoke for them “we appreciate everything you guys do and are.” After answering a few questions, they slipped away to change clothes.

Lincoln strolled in around 10:30. After greeting Octavia with a kiss, he walked over to Clarke and handed her an envelope. She opened it and gasped when she saw the amount on the check “really?” she asked handing the check to Bellamy. “Wow” he replied, then handed it back to her. “You’re a hit my dear” Lincoln smiled at her. She looked shocked “I have no idea where to even use this much money” she murmured. “For now, why don’t we put it in the safe” Bellamy suggested “and deal with it later.” She nodded her agreement and gave him the check.

“Okay, people” Raven called out later “ten seconds and counting” she declared. “10, 9, 8, 7…” they began to count down, while watching the ball drop on the TV. As the ball landed at the base of the tower, Bellamy cradled Clarke’s face in his hand “you know they say the person you kiss at midnight New Year’s Eve is the love of your life” he grinned at her. “Do they?” she laughed “well, I better go find that person then, huh?” she jokingly pulled away from him. He laughed, tightening his hold on her “I don’t think you have to go too far” he said softly “in fact, I don’t think you have to go anywhere” he said capturing her lips with his.

****************One year later****************

“Are you feeling better?” Raven asked “cause, I’d hate for you to miss Christmas. Clarke clutched her stomach “I’m fine, it’s just a little stomach virus” she assured her. Shouldn’t you be home with your new roommate?” Clarke looked at her. Roan had finally had enough of his family’s drama and moved in with Raven about a month ago. The move was not really unexpected since he spent most of his time there anyway. The two of them had become a defacto couple when Murphy hooked up with Emori. Raven laughed “no deflecting, I’m trying to be a good friend. When does Bellagio get home?” she asked.

Bellamy and Clarke both graduated in May and got jobs teaching at the local high school. They got married in June in a backyard, barefoot wedding, much to Abby’s dismay: but they pacified her by allowing her to throw the wedding reception, which of course was a grand affair. At the moment, Bellamy was in Washington D.C. at a robotics conference with his STEM kids. “He’ll be home
some time tomorrow” Clarke told her. “I’m going to bed and to sleep, I will be fine, I promise” she looked at Raven, “but if something changes “I will call you.” Raven looked unconvinced, but after a little more urging from Clarke, she did leave. Afterwards, Clarke wrapped the gift for her mom and Marcus in a plain white box, with light blue tissue paper. They all decided to do a homemade Christmas again, and this gift was in fact homemade.

Bellamy’s phone rang as he was grabbing his suitcase from the carousel. “Hey Raven, what’s up?” he asked. “have you talked to your wife yet today?” she asked. “No, why is something wrong?” He heard her sigh “she says she thinks she has the flu and just needs to rest, but is not answering her phone” Raven said. “I’m sure she’s probably just sleeping, but I’m at the airport, so I will check on her and let you know for sure” he told her before hanging up. “Clarke” he called when he walked into the house. “in here” she responded in a weak voice. “hey are you okay?” he asked finding her on the bathroom floor leaning against that stool. She nodded “I will be” she replied. “Have you been to a doctor?” he asked. She nodded again “and what did he say?” Bellamy asked. “He says this part lasts about three months and then I have to worry about big breasts and getting bruised from the inside” she murmured.

Bellamy heard three months and bruised from the inside unable to fathom what terrible illness she may have, when it dawned on him what she was trying to tell him. He grinned at her “are you saying what I think you’re saying?” he asked. She shrugged “that depends what do you think I think you’re saying?” she teased. He shook his head “are you…” he asked, not even managing to get the word out. “yes” she smiled up at him “I am.” He whooped with joy, picking her up in his arms and twirling her around. “whoa, that is not a good thing to do right now” she declared, clutching her stomach “unless you want me to throw up on you.” He grinned and set her on her feet “as lovely as that sounds…” he said “I think I’ll pass.”

“you haven’t told Raven yet?” he asked. She shook her head “I figured you should be the first to know” she replied. Bellamy placed a hand on her still flat belly and rubbed it lovingly “when did you find out?” he asked gazing up at her. “two days ago” she said “I figured I would wait until you get home to tell you.” He kissed her softly “thank you” he said. She wrapped her hands around his neck “we should probably tell mom and Marcus soon as well” she suggested. “I think you’re right” he agreed “we can tell them Christmas morning before everybody get there. Abby had hosted all the major holidays since her house was big enough for all of them, plus many little gatherings, both scheduled and impromptu. Bellamy and Clarke planned to spend Christmas Eve with her parents, along with the newly engaged Octavia and Lincoln.

“How did things go in DC?” she asked. His face lit up the way it always did when he talked about his kids. “We won” he smiled “best in show” he said proudly. “Those kids are pretty amazing” she agreed. Bellamy had really done wonders for those kids who struggled with math. “you haven’t done so bad yourself” he grinned wrapping an arm around her waist, walking toward their bedroom. She had an art club at school for budding artists. They had an upcoming show where their work would be displayed. She yawned and leaned against him. “Come on princess” he settled her in their four-post bed “I think you need some TLC and some sleep” he declared. “And some crackers” Clarke added “so, I can stay in bed and not visit the bathroom again.” Bellamy laughed, covering her with a blanket “I’ll be right back” he said kissing her softly.

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“Are you ready to go?” Bellamy checked in on Clarke as they were preparing to leave for Abby’s house for Christmas. He grabbed their bags and her package of crackers and ginger ale. She looked peaked when she came out of the bathroom. He smiled at her “need these?” he asked handing her a package of crackers. She took the package gratefully “are you sure you want to ride in the car?” he asked “we can have them come here.” She nodded “it wouldn’t make a difference, but thank you” she kissed his cheek. “ok, but if we need to stop and come home you tell me” he said. She nodded and reached for his hand “I don’t deserve you” she sighed. He grinned “you’re right, you don’t. I
guess it’s lucky you have me then, huh?” She smacked his arm “be nice to me, I’m pregnant” she grumbled.

They arrived at Abby’s house twenty minutes later “so, how are we going to play this?” Bellamy asked. Clarke grinned pointing to the boxes in her lap. “I’m going to give them these and insist they open them tonight.” Bellamy shook his head “she is going to flip out” he snorted. Clarke nodded “probably” she agreed. Bellamy got their overnight bags and waited for Clarke to join him “feeling better?” he asked. She nodded “for now, but I’ll be happy when this phase passes” she sighed. He wrapped his free arm around her “it will” he assured her.

“Mom, Marcus, we’re here” Clarke called as she entered the house. Abby came around the corner smiling. Her smile disappeared when she saw Clarke’s pale complexion. “Are you sick?” she felt her forehead. “just a little upset stomach” Clarke answered “I have some ginger ale for that.” Abby frowned “if you’re not feeling good, we can do this tomorrow” she said. Clarke shook her head “okay, but you tell me if you need to lay down.” They followed Abby into the dining room where Marcus was waiting with dinner. It was one of Clarke’s favorites, but the smell of the dish turned her stomach. She clutched Bellamy’s hand, then dropped it and made a mad dash for the bathroom.

“Is she really sick?” Abby looked at Bellamy. He shook his head “she wanted to give these to you later, but it looks like you might need them now” he said. Abby took one package and carefully opened it, while Marcus opened the other one. Abby pulled back the blue paper to reveal a small photo album that read ‘Grandma’s Brag Book’. She gasped, covering her mouth with her hands. She passed the Then she reached out and pulled Bellamy into a hug. Marcus smiled when he revealed his gift a brag book of his own.

“Sorry” Clarke came back into the room “I guess someone doesn’t like Lasagna” she joked. Abby walked over to her, tears shining in her eyes. “that’s okay” she laughed shakily “we can go out for dinner and save the lasagna for tomorrow.” Marcus walked over to her and pulled her into a hug “I knew I liked that boy when I saw him the first time” he whispered in her ear. Clarke laughed softly. “Okay, so what does junior want?” he spoke in a louder voice. “Shrimp Fried Rice” Clarke answered. “Chinese, it is” Marcus laughed “let me get my keys and we’ll go out for dinner.”
Bellamy woke up the next morning to find Clarke’s side of the bed empty. He heard her retching in the bathroom. When he walked in, she was on her knees in front of the toilet, her head resting on her hands. “How much do you hate me right now?” he chuckled bending down to hold her hair back. She laughed softly “probably not as much as I will in about seven months” she retorted. “Come one babe” he handed her a warm, wet washcloth, then helped her to her feet. With one arm wrapped around her waist, he helped her into bed “let me go get some water and some crackers” he said pulling the cover up over her.

As he reached for the door, it opened and Mrs. Morris was standing there bearing a tray with crackers, ginger ale and a cup of something hot. “good morning” she greeted him. “morning” he returned opening the door so she could pass by him. She walked over to Clarke, smiling broadly “your momma told me the news this morning” she said “I’m so happy for you” she kissed her cheek. “I will be happy when I stop puking” Clarke groaned. The older lady laughed “I have something for you” she handed Clarke the steaming mug “this worked for you mom when she was pregnant with you, and if that doesn’t work” she nodded at the crackers and ginger ale.

Clarke eyed the concoction, wondering what was in it, it smelled okay, but it looked…” she shook her head and took a sip. It was surprisingly sweet. Mrs. Morris smiled sweetly, “finish that and when you do you’ll feel much better” she patted Clarke’s arm gently.

Clarke and Bellamy stayed in bed while she finished the tea Mrs. Morris had given her. Clarke was surprised at how well the concoction worked. They joined the others downstairs, including their friends just in time for mimosas. Raven handed one to Clarke, who took it and handed it to Bellamy. Abby filled a cup with the same drink, minus the alcohol and handed it to Clarke. Raven eyed her, but said nothing. “Eggs?” Jasper asked putting a plate of food in front of her. Clarke clutched her stomach and pushed the plate away. “I guess we’re adding that to the list, huh?” he laughed. She nodded, taking a deep breath.

“Okay what gives?” she asked “you get a virgin drink, and the smell of eggs makes you…..” She trailed off, then grinned “you’re pregnant” she declared. Clarke smiled and nodded “yes, I am” she smiled. “so, last week when you had the flu” Raven eyed her. “I just found out that day” Clarke admitted “but I figured my husband should be the first to know” she shrugged. “Okay, that’s fair” Raven agreed. “and then my parents, who we told last night” Clarke added. “When she almost tossed her cookies at the lasagna we we’re going to have for dinner” Abby drawled. Clarke laughed “that wasn’t how we planned on telling you” she countered “it’s not my fault the baby doesn’t like lasagna.” Raven snorted “or eggs apparently” she laughed.

“baby?” Octavia peered at Bellamy, “something you want to share with the rest of the class, or at the very least your little sister” she drawled, hands on her hips. “Oooh Bellagio, you are in trouble” Raven cooed. “What baby?” Harper asked coming to stand beside Octavia. “Bellamy was just about to answer that question” she murmured, staring at him. “You didn’t tell your sister?” Clarke laughed. “I was kind of caught up in taking care of my wife” he defended lamely. “What baby?” Harper
repeated, this time catching the attention of the others in the room.
“Why are we talking about babies?” Jasper looked confused. “Because, someone” Octavia leveled her gaze at Bellamy “forgot to inform his little sister that she is going to be an aunt.” There was a moment of quiet, then everybody in the room converged on Clarke and Bellamy, hugging them and congratulating them.

******Seven months later*****

“How much do you hate me now?” Bellamy asked Clarke, sitting beside her in the hospital bed. “would that I had the energy” she laughed sleepily “all I have to do is look into these little eyes” she gazed down at their son, Jacob Marcus, sleeping in her arms and their daughter Aurora Griffin, sleeping in Bellamy’s arms “I don’t think I could hate you.” He kissed her softly “I completely understand” he said, smiling down at his daughter. The door opened and Abby appeared in the room “you have a waiting room full of people who want to meet these two” she told them. Clarke was nearly asleep “I’m so tired” she sighed “I just want to sleep.”

Abby reached for the baby in her arms “get some sleep baby” she spoked quietly “Bellamy and I can introduce these two to the crazy family they were born into.” Bellamy kissed her softly “yes, get some sleep mommy” he said “I’ll go recruit some babysitters.” Clarke was asleep before they left the room “I hope you two are ready for those crazy fools” he grinned, holding his daughter in one arm and his son in the other. Abby laughed and held the door for him “something tells me they’re going to fit right in” she said.

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