A Little Less Conversation

by cfcureton

Summary

2018 Olicity Hiatus Fic-athon entry for the prompt Hidden.

(The title is from the Elvis tune by the same name. Also cue up Clare de Lune for the ending if you want to give yourself all the feels.)

“For the last time, Oliver, the answer is no.”

Robert Queen gave his son the evil eye over the edge of his Wall Street Journal and waited for him to acknowledge the decision, but Oliver could only glare at the floor.

This was going to ruin his 21st Birthday.

He and Tommy had been planning it for months, the trip to Vegas: Showgirls, Blackjack, a suite at the Bellagio. Even Max Fuller had been invited, just so they could watch him shit a brick at the extravagance and debauchery.

But at the eleventh hour some nutjob scientist at QC had gotten himself fired over an ethics issue and was now sending death threats to the Queen family; private security had been hired for all of them and Oliver’s Birthday trip was postponed indefinitely.

The heir to the Queen Consolidated empire ran a hand through his hair and bit back an expletive; Robert had returned to his paper, which meant the discussion was over. Oliver turned on his heel and stomped to the stairs, a little ashamed of himself for the petulant display, but unable to control it; the whole thing was so unfair.

He’d picked up speed as he climbed and was completely absorbed in his anger when Thea bounced
off of him at the top of the stairs with a “Dammit, Ollie!” He reached out and grabbed her sweater before she landed on her backside.

“Thea, darling, don’t swear.”

Moira Queen stood a few feet away, arranging fresh flowers on a hall table. Oliver barely suppressed a smirk of triumph as he shifted his now-forgotten little sister out of his way and sauntered toward his mother.

A kiss on the cheek, that heart-melting peek up from under his lashes (he’d spent years perfecting it in the bathroom mirror), the side-hug with a squeeze at the end; it was criminal, really.

By the time they’d made the rounds of the upstairs vases Oliver had secured a promise from his mother that she would try to persuade Robert to change his mind.

“Your security detail will have to be with you the entire time,” she reminded him gently. Oliver gave her the thousand watt smile.

“Absolutely no problem,” he assured her with a wink.

This was gonna be fun.

It was decidedly NOT fun.

Four hours into his Vegas weekend of birthday shenanigans and they had yet to leave the hotel room. Tommy sat across from him on the edge of the coffee table with his face crinkled up into the squint that always meant he couldn’t believe what a dumbass his best friend was.

“Dude.” His eyes flicked to the two bruisers in black suits and sunglasses who flanked the front door. “This is so incredibly lame.”

Oliver sighed in frustration and shifted forward to rest his arms on his knees, trying to get closer before he spoke. Frick and Frack had super hearing, if their first failed attempt to ditch them coming off the jet was anything to go by.

“I have another plan,” he mumbled. Tommy gave him a skeptical look.

“I hope it’s better than the last one, which was yelling “Look over there” and then running. Because that plan sucked, my friend.”

Max Fuller popped up from behind the bar in Tommy’s line of sight, his arms full of tiny bottles of liquor. Merlyn grimaced.

“I hate that guy,” he muttered, mostly to himself.

Oliver caught Tommy’s eye and gave him a “Here goes nothing” look before rising to his feet and facing his security pals. Tommy followed suit.

“Hey fellas,” he tried with a charming smile, “think we could go downstairs and check out the casino?”

The twin hulks didn’t so much as twitch.

Oliver took a step closer, gauging the distance between them and the door and figuring his chances
of getting past both of them was practically zero.

Unless...

“Max, old buddy,” he called out instead, “let’s see what you found over there.” Oliver felt Tommy step forward until he was practically pressed against his back; he knew something was up, and had no intention of being left behind.

It was obvious Fuller had been sampling the stock; his steps were a little too careful as he navigated the end of the bar and met them near the door. Oliver couldn’t help being impressed by the amount he must’ve already put away, because he’d partied more than once with the guy and knew how much he could handle.

“Whoa, you okay there buddy?” Oliver clapped a hand onto Max’s shoulder which MIGHT have turned into a shove but was DEFINITELY enough to send him careening into Thing One, while all the tiny glass bottles bounced off of Thing Two.

Tommy, still impressively fast from his Wide Receiver days, threw the door open and charged through with Oliver on his heels. Thank goodness housekeeping was still working on the rooms at the turn of the hall; they holed up with a very surprised room attendant until the thundering sounds of their pursuers had disappeared behind the click of the stairway door.

“Should we go back for Max?” Tommy asked conversationally as they waited for the elevator. Oliver shook his head.

“Not a chance.”

They made it through two hands of Blackjack before they were spotted; Tommy saw them first and uttered a very unmanly Eep! sound before scooping his chips into both hands and jumping up from the table. Oliver, taking his best friend’s cue, turned to run, realizing too late that they’d failed to work out an escape plan when they sat down; he went right as Tommy went left, both at a dead run.

The casino was busy and Oliver was lean enough to slip through the crowd faster than his bulky security, but there were only so many places to hide, and he was starting to draw unwanted attention. A beautiful buxom blond cocktail waitress standing idle against the far wall caught his eye, or rather the large skirted drink cart she was tending did. Oliver ducked into a group of tourists wearing matching “Glauberman Family Reunion” shirts and popped out the other side close enough to grab her and press her back against the wall. Time for the Oliver Queen charm.

“I need to hide for a minute,” he murmured huskily against her ear. “Cover for me?”

Her giant blue eyes blinked rapidly in surprise but she nodded; he couldn’t resist giving her a chaste peck on the lips in gratitude before dropping to his knees and burrowing under the skirted cart.

“Hey, watch it, Buster,” a voice hissed in his ear as he plowed into another body in the darkness. Holy shit, he wasn’t alone.

“Um,” he replied stupidly, attempting to pull his legs in behind him and arrange them into some kind of order. The voice was female and the body was small, that much he could tell from under the heavy black linen.

“Get out of here,” she hissed again, shoving at his shoulder; he hardly budged. “Woah there, you’re
solid,” she said then, probably unintentionally if her gulp of surprise immediately after was anything to go by.

Oliver chuckled in surprise. A murmur of voices was rising in volume just outside their hiding place, which told him his detail was close by, and bothering people. He needed out of here and fast, but casinos were notoriously hard to escape. He let out a frustrated sigh.

“Do you live here?” he whispered as he contemplated risking a glance outside.

“Under a drink cart in the Bellagio? Are you stupid?” she whisper shouted in return. Oliver clenched his fists to keep from clapping a hand over her mouth.

“No,” he sassed back through gritted teeth. “Do you live HERE. In Vegas. I need a way out of this building.”

Before she could answer Oliver froze in fear; the goons were talking to his cocktail waitress. Without thinking he reached out and blindly dropped a hand onto his companion’s knee to beg for quiet as he strained to hear what was being said. In the darkness he heard her breath catch, but she didn’t protest.

The constant whirring and singing of the slot machines mixed with the drone of human conversation made it impossible to hear every word, but he did catch the blonde say “No” very clearly, hopefully in answer to a question about his whereabouts.

He let a full minute pass before he risked a look out between the split in the skirting, but the news wasn’t good. One of his goon buddies was standing right in front of the cart, a cell phone held to his ear. Oliver grimaced; he was probably reporting back to the mansion, and he knew from experience Robert Queen was not above calling in the cavalry when it came to locating his errant son. Shit.

“Are you going to be arrested?”

“What?”

“Is that a Pit Boss out there?” she clarified under her breath. Oliver felt her shift around until she was facing him more directly, one of her knees pressing into his thigh. It was weirdly nice. He leaned closer in order to keep his voice low.

“No. He’s my security detail.”

“Oh.” There was a pause. “Oh!”

It came out louder than intended, he could tell by the little gasp she added at the end, but he shushed her anyway, leaning in even further.

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“Are you famous?” she breathed faintly, clearly rethinking her earlier snark. Oliver ran a hand through his hair and huffed a laugh.

“Infamous, more like.” He’d made his share of tabloids and gossip mags as a billionaire playboy, but he sure didn’t feel like one at the moment. “What about you?” he kidded softly. “Hiding out from the paparazzi?”

Her snort was tiny and adorable in the darkness.

“No, I’m banned. For being underage. And for counting cards.” Oliver almost whistled in surprise.

“I was waiting for my mom to get off work and got caught when I snuck in to ask her a question.”
When she shrugged he realized he was close enough for their shoulders to graze in passing. He swallowed hard.

“What’s your name?” he asked, a bit unsteadily.

Her reply was interrupted when the skirting in front of them shifted; somebody had stopped by for a drink. They held their breaths until the murmur of voices above them died away.

“I’m Felicity,” she whispered then.

“Oliver.”

They both reached out to shake hands at the same time, half-blind in the dark and fumbling. Oh God, he thought in alarm when he grazed a breast.

“Sorry,” he gulped, mortified, but she only chuckled.

“Don’t tell me that was your first boob.” Her shoulder bumped his to let him know she was teasing. Oliver was suddenly overly warm.

“Um, no. It was not.”

There was a solid minute of silence that somehow didn’t become awkward. Oliver shifted once to get the circulation back in his feet, and by the time he’d finished moving Felicity’s shoulder was deliberately pressed against his chest. At least he hoped it was deliberate. He knew if he turned his head toward her they’d be nose to nose. His heart rate kicked up.

“When, um, when we get out of this mess, do you...would you want to meet up? Somewhere?”

Silence hung between them long enough for him to wish he could take it back, but then she puffed out a tiny breath.

“Sure. Yes. That would be...nice.”

Oliver did turn his head then, and with his eyes adjusted to the dark he could just make out small, dark-rimmed glasses on a perfect nose.

“Maybe we could meet out in front of the fountain,” Felicity offered. “The show is pretty neat. Have you seen it?”

“Hmm?”

“The fountain show. Have you seen it?” Her breath skating over his face as she leaned closer was suddenly threatening to cause a rather embarrassing problem for Oliver Queen. He’d always hated baseball, so he clenched his fists and thought about Max Fuller instead.

“How long do you have before your mom gets off work?” he managed finally, still mesmerized by her proximity. Felicity shook her head slightly.

“I don’t know what time it is. But you could ask her.” A small hand lifted beside his head and pointed out the way he’d entered. “She’s right out there.”

All of Oliver’s thoughts ground to a halt; he momentarily forgot English.

“The blonde...was your...mom.”
The glasses bobbed up and down in acknowledgement, close enough for him to tap with his nose if he leaned in.

“Yep.”

“Oh.”

“Wait. Why? Did you meet?”

“Kind of.” That strangled sound hadn’t come out of HIS mouth, had it? He cleared his throat. “I’m...uh...gonna make a run for it in a minute, but...I would very much like to meet up with you later.”

Oliver’s addled brain finally reminded him that he was carrying a phone in his back pocket. He swore under his breath as he shifted to extract it. The screen lighting up blinded them both and Felicity recoiled in shock; he reached out instinctively to steady her as he checked the time through watery eyes. “10:30.” The screen mercifully went dark and he glanced her direction, temporarily blind again. “Meet at eleven?”

“Sure,” she agreed.

It occurred to him that he should get her number to make sure they didn’t miss each other out there. “Don’t you have a phone?”

Her shrug once again grazed him. “The battery died a couple of hours ago.”

Oliver’s eyes went wide in the gloom. “Felicity, how long have you been under here?!”

He heard her sigh as her hand fell onto his knee dramatically; it felt like they’d known each other forever. For one wild moment he thought he might just kiss her here, scrunched up under a drink cart in the Bellagio, but something told him once he started he’d never want to stop. “See you soon,” he promised instead, memorizing the feel of her as he shifted away from her hand to crawl out from under the skirting.

“Good luck,” Felicity hissed after him. The corners of Oliver’s mouth turned up in a smile.

The goons were gone. The coast was clear.

Tommy was waiting for him as instructed, loitering near a medium sized potted plant in the lobby; Oliver had texted him as soon as he got clear of the casino floor.

“What the hell? Where have you been? I called the police.”

Oliver scowled, not fooled for a second. “No you didn’t.”

“Of course I didn’t.” His best friend grinned wickedly. “But I guarantee your father did.”

Oliver shrugged, unconcerned, and steered his friend through the lobby and outside.
“Whatever. That’s tomorrow’s problem.”

“That’s the spirit! Where we headed?” Tommy slapped Oliver’s chest and bounced on his toes once as they walked along the front drive. “Strip club!”

“Nope.”

“Whadda you mean ‘nope’? Don’t tell me you got a better offer while you were hiding out.”

They reached the sidewalk in front of the hotel just as the music began, and instead of answering Oliver scanned the crowd, holding his breath unconsciously. The fountains burst to life amidst a rainbow of colors as his searching eyes finally found her: A small pair of dark-rimmed glasses on a perfect nose.

She was already smiling.

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