Heaven (For a Sinner Like Me)

by ephemerallove

Summary

“Relax,” he murmurs, tucking his hands into the pockets of his black pants, “I’m not going to hurt you.”

Clarke narrows her eyes. “Stop reading my thoughts.”

“Stop thinking so loud then.”

In a world, where the supernatural terrorizes humans, Clarke Griffin tries to find the creature that murdered her father. On her journey, she meets Bellamy, who is not only the most annoying angel in existence but also one with a pretty awful reputation. But as all stories go, love can be found in the most unexpected places.

Notes

I'm aware this fic won't spark a lot of interest but if you like enemies to friends to lovers with a touch of supernatural elements and angel wings, you'll probably like this one :D

The universe this is based on is purely made up, the angels and demons and other creatures here have characteristics and traits that I saw in tv shows like supernatural, dominion etc.
There will be smut, however, only later on. This one's a major slow burn, so don't expect any kind of fucking before we hit the 90k word count. As the warning says there will also be graphic descriptions of violence, mainly in form of torture but I will use warnings in the specific chapters.

Oh, and the quote at the beginning is from the actual bible! (Song of Solomon 8:6) I'm not really religious (and this fic won't be either despite the... angels) but I adore this verse because it's so beautiful and fits.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter 1

Place me like a seal over your heart,

like a seal on your arm;

for love is as strong as death,
its jealousy as enduring as the grave;

it burns like fire,

the brightest kind of flame

When Clarke is six years old, she has a dream. It’s a dream of endless, blue skies, soothing voices and warm, feathery wings wrapping around her tiny body. The first thing she does in the morning is paint these pretty images and proudly show them to her parents. She cries when her mother snatches away her painting and burns it in front of her eyes. She cries when a scary looking, old lady comes into her room and paints strange symbols on her walls. And she cries when they tell her never to draw anything like it again.

Even though similar dreams plague her at night, she doesn’t dare to mention it to anyone.

Then Clarke gets into school, and the lessons start. Monsters are real, they tell them. And they live among them in cities surrounded by metal walls and iron gates. The monsters have wings like eagles, the strength of a thousand men and light inside them that is lethal. The monsters don’t age. The monster cannot be killed. The monsters came from above to fight in a war against even more horrible monsters, a long time ago.

When she’s fourteen, one of Clarke’s classmates wanders too far out their town and winds up dead the next day. Her eyes are burned out of its sockets.

Clarke's dreams turn into nightmares.

And one night Clarke wakes up because of the noises in the house, goes downstairs to check on, what she assumes to be her parents fighting, but finds the monster in her kitchen. It has enormous, dishwasher brown wings, and is surrounded by light. A light that is being directed at her father kneeling on the ground. She doesn’t even manage to breathe the first letter of dad before heavy darkness envelops her mind and sends her to unconsciousness. And when she finally regains her consciousness, she finds her father on the floor. Lifeless. Eyes wide open, but emptier than anything she’s ever seen.

Even through her sobs of agony and fury, Clarke knows who — no, what kind of creature did this.

They have many names: spirits, seraphims, death from above, monsters. Or the most common one: angels.
There have been rumors going around about murderous angels for quite a while now. It happens everywhere, even in safer towns. Fathers, mothers, sisters, and brothers are found dead in their homes, the only sign that someone murdered them the lack of medical explanation. No one does anything. Police have no clear evidence that it was them, but even if they did. Humans against angels? You don't have to be smart to figure out who would win.

So Clarke takes it upon herself to find out what took her father from her and give it the punishment it deserves.

No human has ever stepped foot into Polis. At least no one that returned sane enough to tell the tale. But there’s a first for everything and Clarke is willing to make that step if it means honoring her father one last time and killing the same thing that killed him. So she packs her bag with only the most necessary things, a gun, some canned food, and leaves her house. Her mother, a workaholic through and through is so busy with fixing the people everywhere around her that she doesn't even notice Clarke taking off.

Maybe that's for the best. Abby doesn't need to know what she's about to do.

The first thing she notices about Polis is the eerie silence surrounding it. No birds are chirping in the skies, no wind rustling in the streets and not a damn animal in sight. So absolutely, maddening quiet. Like all of nature knows what creatures reside in this place and has collectively decided to abandon it and never come back.

Clarke takes a step, and the leaf crunching under her right shoe is the loudest sound in town. It was probably a wise choice of nature to leave.

Vast acres of empty land stretch out in front of her with a forest in the distance, and behind that, she sees… skyscrapers.

Weird. Very, very weird.

As far as she knows there isn’t supposed to be a city in Polis. No sources, reports or sightings ever warned them of a freaking city. They weren't visible behind the gates either.

Her heart is racing a bit faster by the time she reaches the forest, its trees towering into the sky, old and enormous. Maybe a city is a good sign. A sign that they're somehow civilized, that they won't immediately turn her to shreds once they realize a human has crossed the border. It's the most she can hope for as she walks and walks through the lines of trees. She should have prepared herself for a longer journey —

Clarke’s feet come to a halt. In front of her there’s a clearing and tiny waterfall, the water gurgling peacefully and on the water's edge sits a man, his eyes glowing as they land on her. Correction, she doesn’t think it’s a man.

Her pulse picks up its pace, thundering in her ears, while her breathing goes completely still, almost rigid. And then the stranger smiles.

„Hello,“ he says.

Clarke swallows thickly.

„What’s your name?“

Silence, except for the waterfall and her treacherous heartbeat.
He nods like she just told him something funny and tears out a flower from the ground, swirling it in his hand. „I’m Finn.“

Finn? Clarke stifles a snort. This is the most basic name she’s ever heard. The boys in her town are Finns. Target cashiers are Finns. Not angels.

The features on his face shift from curiosity to mild annoyance as he stands up and drops the flower, stomping it with his foot. „So what is a human doing here?“

He knows. Of course, he does. Clarke doesn’t know what angels are made of, but she’s pretty sure they can recognize their own kind.

„Exploring,“ Clarke answers after a few seconds, voice coming out stronger than she feels.

„The woods?“

She nods.

„Don’t you have woods on your side?“

Clarke makes a face. „We do, but it’s not — not like this.“ Not on that side of the border where angels reside. „Do you live in the city?“ she asks then, hoping to steer the conversation away from her and her motivations. Lying to an angel feels harder somehow.

„Yes.“

The angel — Finn takes a step towards her, but she’s already walking backward. „Are you afraid of me?“ he wants to know. She can’t quite place his tone. If it’s curiosity or mockery. When she doesn’t answer, he says, „I’m not certain the city is good for you if you are afraid of us.“

„I’m not afraid.“

„Then tell me your name. Why you’re here. Speak the truth.“

Clarke doesn’t even let herself wonder how he knows she was lying and hiding these things. „I don’t know what it matters to you.“

„I told you my name, didn’t I?“

„And that’s supposed to make me trust you?“

„It’s not about trust,“ he says then, taking another step in her direction. „It’s about being polite.“

She makes a mental note to remember that angels are polite.

„Alright. My name is Clarke.“

„Clarke,“ he breathes like he’s testing out her name on his tongue, swirling the noun until he gives her a wide grin. „It’s a beautiful name. I like it.“

Her answer is a short, clipped, „Thanks.“ She waits for a second and then dares to approach him as well. He doesn’t seem like a murderer or a weapon to her. Except for the glow in his eyes, there’s nothing that suggests he’s any different than her. „Can I… ask you some questions, Finn?“

„Sure. I imagine you have a lot of those.“ He offers her his arm. „Let’s walk a little, Clarke.“
She doesn’t take his arm or even touch him for that matter, but she falls into step next to him, taking a deep breath. „The city. We — nobody, knew about it. We are told it's just land and a few cabins. How?“

„Wards and spells,“ Finn answers easily. „Nobody outside of it can see what’s in here.“

„But I just walked right in…“

„There’s no spell against humans entering.“ When she raises a confused brow, he says, „Because no human ever dares to enter.“

She swallows. Except for her.

They reach the edge of the forest and there — a cozy, brown cabin. It looks nice.

„This is my house.“ His hand waves over it. „You want to come inside?“

Something in her twists at the thought. She has been here for half an hour and is already considering to enter an angel’s house. Maybe that’s not the smartest choice here.

“I think I’m gonna pass up on this offer, thank you.” Clarke really hopes he doesn’t take this as an insult. By the look on his face, he doesn’t. Finn merely gives her a curt nod and smiles, although he doesn’t move to go inside himself.

“I take it you want to do more… exploring instead.”

Clarke looks at him, really looks at him and hopes with every cell in her body that she isn’t deluding herself. This creature, the angel in front of her hasn’t insulted her in any way, nor attacked her, and perhaps that’s enough for her. She sighs. “I’m afraid I wasn’t entirely honest earlier.” His smile only seems to get brighter. “I’m not just here for sightseeing,” she admits, her gaze falling to her feet. “There have been incidents on our side. People die. My father…” Her voice wavers for the tiniest of moments before she shakes her head and wills herself to be strong. “He was murdered just like a lot of other people. Their deaths aren’t human.”

“Are you think we are responsible?” Finn asks.

Clarke doesn’t dare to look him in the eye as she says, “Yes, I suspect one of you is.”

“You’re probably right.”

It takes her a few seconds to register to words, then her head snaps up. “You believe me?”

Finn shrugs. “Lots of my brothers and sisters are shitheads. I wouldn’t be surprised.”

“But you don’t know for sure? You haven’t heard anything?”

“No, not like that,” he says and his eyes narrow, “but now that I think about it. There have been some rumors that one of my brothers has been up to something wicked lately.”

“Could you… ask around?” Clarke doesn’t know how appropriate it is to ask an angel for something, but she has crossed so many lines already today, that another one won’t hurt either.

“He's one of the worst around, so maybe it's time to tell him to behave.” He lets out a disgruntled huff of breath, clearly not fond of that brother he's talking about. “I will keep my ears open.”

“Thank you, Finn,” she hears herself say, something warm and incredulous in her voice. She didn’t
expect a helping hand when she came here. She didn’t expect anything at all. And if she’s honest, she should have worried more about this trip. Feared more. But it was all so… unimportant. It didn’t matter what would happen to her. And now Clarke is here, smiling at an angel who is smiling back.

“It’s my honor to be of assistance to such a beautiful, brave girl.”

Heat blooms on her cheeks, hopefully not too noticeable.

“Can I contact you in any way?” she asks then and clarifies when puzzled eyes stare back at her, “so that you can tell me if you hear anything about the incidents?”

“Oh, that. I don’t have a cell phone if that’s what you mean.” He waves an idle hand. “I prefer face to face conversations, and don’t need it much anyway. You can stop by anytime you want, though.”

“That’s very nice of you. Thank you again.”

Finn looks at her for a moment, his curious, glowing eyes narrowing on her. “Can I ask where you are planning to stay?”

That’s indeed an excellent question. There are probably no motels for humans in Polis, or anything for humans, for that matter. It will be hard to find something to live. However, she has a tent stored in the massive, leather backpack on her shoulders. It’s the middle of July, too, so it looks like it will be camping somewhere nearby.

But she doesn’t reveal any of that. “I’m gonna find something,” she lies with a shy grin. “I’m pretty creative.”

For a drawn-out moment Finn is quiet, waiting, but then he gives her a polite nod and another charming smile. “Then I wish you the best of luck with that. Polis at night is… unique in its very own way.”

“That’s good to know,” she says as a way of goodbye and starts walking backward. “I’ll see you soon.”

“You will. Goodbye, Clarke Griffin.”

Finn’s parting words are still echoing through her mind when she reaches the first streets of Polis that will lead her to the city. He knew her family name. He had said it so casually, even though Clarke never revealed it and it’s freaking her out. A part of her wants to never ever see him again, while another wonders if angels are just all knowing like that. Who knows. Maybe they look at you and suddenly have every information on you laid out, from your family name to your hidden, deepest and darkest secrets.

Ten feet on the road and the sounds start to filter in. A harrowing, careful chill creeps up Clarke’s spine, and she doesn’t know whether it’s due to what she’s about to encounter or due to Finn. Either way, she’s shitting her pants.

The third angel she sees in her life has ginger, messy hair on its head and wears a navy blue suit. He’s leaning against a wall next to a door, looking… miserable. Clarke slows a few feet away. For a
heartfelt moment she thinks he won’t even see her through the brooding, but then his eyes suddenly snap to her, and he snarls.

“What are you looking at, human?”

It takes a lot of effort to ignore the way he utters the word, how disgusted he sounds.

“I’m - I’m sorry,” she stammers and picks up her pace.

His gaze is still on her when he murmurs, “Impolite worm” under his breath before she disappears around the corner.

Really. Clarke should have been more afraid of this trip.

The deeper she goes into the city, the more angels she encounters and even though it sounds impossible, it gets worse each time. Their reactions vary from disgust to hatred to mockery to complete and utter dismissal. She doesn’t know what’s the more humiliating. That’s the price of being the first mortal to cross the border, though. And the cost of revenge that waits ahead.

To distract herself Clarke focuses on taking in their different appearances that are not so different at all. Most of the times they look just like her, like humans. They don’t even have wings on their backs. It would be easy to forget she’s in Polis if not for all the gawking and hating from them.

But then again, not everything is the same. When Clarke crosses a small side corner cafe, a woman sitting in one of the chairs plays around with a ring. A ring that’s swirling and bobbing above her hand. In the air.

It’s also noticeable in the different essence of this city, the power, and the spells. It is different from her hometown and the towns next to it. Not only that, but the architecture itself speaks volumes as well. Back in school, they studied architecture for a semester, and Clarke remembers the Gothic buildings and churches from a time nearly forgotten. The Gothic style was described as heaven on earth, and she supposes that’s what Polis is, too. Heaven on earth. Literally. Here everything is tall, graceful and slender. There's a temple in the center with pictures carved on its wall so beautiful and precise that it only makes it was built by angels. Clarke also sees lots of beautiful and enormous mansions and houses, all of them seemingly built from white marble and gold. It's crazy.

She’s mostly staying in the shadows and the back alleys, curious but hesitant to attract any more attention than necessary. Obviously, Clarke encounters the creatures there, too. Some just pass her. Others give her glowering looks and even wrinkle their noses in distaste like she’s a walking piece of onion. She is still recovering from a particularly disgusted angel when someone appears right in front of her. Out of fucking nowhere.

“You.”

Clarke’s breathing stills entirely as she regards the man in front of her, his brown skin glowing in the sunlight, his eyes harder than steel.

“You human scent is everywhere,” he tells her in a languid voice. “Soon whole of Polis will know that you’re here.”

An entire town of angels and every single one of them aware that mortal is among them. Great. If she had known her scent is so… tangible, she would have taken a longer bath back home. “Is that bad?” she asks, already suspecting the answer.

His expression remains the same. “There are many here who would be delighted to have something
to toy with. For them, it’s not bad.”

“So what can I do?”

“Find someone who can ward you.”

“Can you?”

“No.”

“Why?”

“Because it’s not my place.”

“Why not?”

For the first time, she sees a shadow of annoyance or impatience flicker across his eyes, and she’s proud to have accomplished that in such an icy face. Even if he probably could’ve killed her for it.

“Find someone who can ward you,” he just repeats. “And don’t trust the first charming thing that you meet.”

She can’t help but think of Finn. “How am I supposed to find someone who can… ward me, or whatever, without trusting anyone?”

“You can look in the northern part of the city. They should help you there.”

“What’s your name?”

He looks at her, blinks, and vanishes into thin air.

No, angels are very unlike humans.

The night, that she spends in a tent somewhere between forest and city, is windy and seems to drag on forever. Clarke’s scared to fall asleep in case any of those evil angels smell and find her. Scared of tomorrow. Afraid of what still lies ahead. In the end, she nods off into a fitful sleep that leaves her twitching and jolting every two minutes because of the images in her brain.

When she wakes up the next morning, her back aches, and so does her head. Clarke washes her face in the nearest river she finds, unpacks her sandwiches and thinks about what to do. She can’t live like this forever. Her food will run out eventually which means she’ll have to find something to eat in the city. She has to find someone who can ward her. And Finn. In a few days, she’s going to ask him if he heard something.

Honestly, she should have planned better, but she was so… furious when she set off. So much pain and rage and agony in her after finding her father lifeless in the kitchen that she didn’t care if she stomped into Polis and right into her death. Clarke wanted blood.

Now the emotions have subsided a little, her head clearer. A good amount of fear has replaced the anger.
“Hello, Clarke”

Clarke whirls around to Finn, standing in front of her and giving her that alluring smile. “Finn,” she rasps out. *What is he doing here? How did he find me? Did he track -*

“I was on the way to the city when I saw a tent out here. I figured it has to be the brave little human who’s set up camp.”

“Um yeah, it’s me.” She forces out a smile, not sure what to do with her hands, so she wraps them around herself.

“How was your first day?”

“... interesting. You’re going to the city?”

“Yes, want to accompany me?”

Clarke presses her lips together. She didn’t plan this, but it would probably be of advantage to appear with an angel in town. Maybe the others will be less hostile to her that way. And she does need food and that warding.

“I’d be happy to,” she says. “What do you need in the city?” she asks him as they start walking.

“I need a few supplies.”

“Are you going to a supermarket?” Hopefully, she doesn’t sound too eager.

Finn chuckles at that. “We don’t eat.”

Clarke blinks. “You don’t?”

“No,” he says, “we don’t need the energy like you do, just like we don’t need to drink or sleep.” It makes sense, they’re angels and everything, but she can’t imagine not eating her entire life. “But don’t worry, there are still places where you can find something to eat.”

“How, if you don’t need it?”

“Some of my brothers and sister like to pretend to be human. They eat and drink and sleep even though it does nothing but waste their time. But since they’re already on earth…”

Why would angels — these powerful, mighty creatures want to be even remotely human? It doesn’t make sense.

“You’re probably wondering if I already heard something about your father,” he says then, the change of topic so swift she nearly stumbles over her own feet.

“Yeah, but I wanted to give you more time…”

“That I will need,” Finn nods, and she tries to hide the disappointment that spreads in her chest even though she expected it. “But I have a few suspicions. There are four angels in Polis that I believe are capable of killing people across the border.” In comparison to the number she had in mind, four seems… manageable enough.

“Who?”

“Dax. He’s very, um, resentful and apparently there was something with a mortal and he’s been
hating them ever since. Charles is very similar, but his methods are different. He’s very systematic when it comes to killing. If someday all of the human race disappeared, I would bet it was his doing. Then there’s Christine, who is just a… bitch. She likes killing things for sport. And… Bellamy.” Clarke glances at him. “He’s more careful than the others, but I wouldn’t put it past him. He’s arrogant and bloodthirsty. And I’ve heard he’s housing a demon. Not surprising since he’s probably part demonic himself.”

Her blood turns cold at the mention of it. Demon. The things are responsible for angels coming down to earth in the first place centuries ago. Responsible for wars, for so much blood and death and pain. Clarke shudders.

“How is that even possible? An angel housing a demon?”

“Don’t ask me. I try to stay away from that jerk.”

That’s probably for the best.

“So can you find out if any of them leaves Polis on a regular basis?”

He makes a face. “That’s gonna be hard, especially because Bellamy doesn’t even live here.”

“Where does he live if not here?”

“Nobody really knows,” Finn sighs. “Probably in the pit himself.”

Clarke sees the buildings and skyscrapers from yesterday towering ahead. Her stomach twists. If the reactions are just as lovely as yesterday, she doesn’t want to walk these streets again.

“Don’t be afraid,” Finn murmurs, and she feels like he’s edged closer to her. “Don’t… say anything. Then they’ll have to leave you alone.”

Clarke bites down on her teeth. Right. Don’t say anything just like a worm they already view her as.

“I just want to protect you. Trust me, okay?”

“Okay,” she breathes.

The first few minutes are alright. Clarke’s not hiding in the shadows anymore, but it seems like being in the presence of another angel hides her pathetic mortality. The other angels pass them like she’s one of them. And then someone spits at her. On her feet to be entirely correct.

Clarke stops dead in her tracks and looks at the angel. It’s a she. She’s tall with pale, nearly white skin, and soft, golden curls falling around her shoulders. Basically what people imaged an angel to look like centuries ago. Except for the sneer on her face. A sneer so hateful and mocking that it makes her ugly at the same time.

The woman huffs down at her, „Just because you’ve got him parading you around like his new pet, doesn’t mean you’re anything more than an insignificant, hairless ape. You don’t belong here.”

Clarke’s breathing stills, but not because of fear, no. “I’m sorry. Have I done something to offend you?”

“Clarke,” Finn warns his hand suddenly around her wrist. A silent plea.

“You come here and looks at us like we’re your enemies. You want revenge. You want our blood. Tell me, girl, was it too hard for your small brain to understand that Polis wants to be left alone?”
She doesn’t even let the information sit before shooting back. “I’ll leave you alone when you stop terrorizing and killing us.”

“I could kill you right in this instant,” the woman hisses.

“Then do it.” Clarke raises her chin. “It would certainly prove my point.”

“No one’s going to kill anyone here,” Finn finally jumps in, physically wedging himself between the two of them. Clarke’s fists are still shaking by her side, but she doesn’t say anything further. “Come on, Alisa. She didn’t do anything.”

Alisa’s head snaps to him at that. “You know this isn’t going to end well, right?” The death glare on her face smoothes into something milder, less lethal on her flushed face and she takes a step back. “You shouldn’t have brought her here, Finn.”

“It’s gonna be fine. Relax.”

There are many things Clarke wants to say, but she has already ignored Finn’s advice, so maybe it’s time to listen to him now. Even if it makes her feel small and worthless.

Alisa continues looking at Finn like he disappointed her before she glances to Clarke one more time. “Next time you disrespect me, I’ll snap your neck.” And poof. She’s gone.

Demanding respect, but not providing the slightest bit herself? Clarke wants to laugh and cry at the same time. And the other things that she said —

“Come on,” Finn interrupts her thoughts, his hand around her wrist pulling her, “we should go.”

But she doesn’t budge. “How did she know?”

He sighs and lets go of her hand. “Clarke.”

“No, how did she know? She knew about my father, about my motivations… how? Did you tell someone?”

“No, no, I didn’t.” The question remains then. How. “Angels,” Finn says with a gulp, “we know.”

“Know what?”

“Everything.” He shrugs. “We can hear what you think. What you feel. Everything you do is… obvious to us.”

Clarke feels like throwing up. Her insides churn at the thought of every single angel in here being able to hear what goes on inside the most private, vulnerable part of her. The worst thing is she doesn’t even want to think this because they can hear that, too, but she doesn’t know how to stop, doesn’t know how —

“Clarke,” Finn is now only inches away from her. “Stop overthinking.”

“I - I can’t.” Her breathing quickens, and she smacks a palm against her head. Stop. Stop. Stop. “How do I stop thinking?”

“You can’t.”

Yesterday Clarke walked through this city and evaluated every single angel she saw. She looked at their powers, at their appearance, at their remarks. She asked herself if they looked like a murderer.
And everyone knew.

They all knew what she was thinking. Knew that the image of her father, dead on the floor, appeared in front of her eyes every time she looked at them. Knew how much it hurt.

God, she doesn’t even know where to begin feeling. “I want to go back,” Clarke eventually rasps out.

Finn is looking at her with those bright, glowing eyes. “Come on, it’s not that big of a deal. I promise you.”

“I don’t want to be here right now,” she says and turns around without another word. At least in her tent, she won’t be looking at the people who read her like an open book. She’ll be alone.

So she goes. No, she runs back.

Finn knocks on her tent three days later.

Clarke has been hiding in there, surviving on three sandwiches and a can of ravioli. Too disturbed to go outside again and expose herself, and too stubborn to leave this place entirely. Her father deserves more than a mysterious death, after all. He deserves an answer and revenge, even if it takes everything she has.

So when she sees him standing in front of her, she musters up a faint smile. “Hi.”

“Hey, Clarke.”

“Please tell me you have found something.”

“I actually did.”

For whatever reason, he takes her to a tavern. ”You have to be around us eventually,” he says, which isn’t entirely wrong. When they go inside, a younger woman with red hair in firm braids sits down next to them. Too fast and too coordinated for it to be a coincidence.

“That’s Monroe, Clarke.” He gestures between them. “Monroe, Clarke.”

Clarke offers her a small smile but tries to be less reactive. Tries to think less.

“So you really just waltzed right in?” Monroe asks her, nudging her head.

“You mean Polis?”

A nod.

“Was there, um, another way I was supposed to go?”

Instead of an answer, Monroe chuckles, shaking her head. “You’re brave, I admire that.”

“Monroe,” Finn says, maybe asking her to get to the point.
Clarke freezes when she catches herself thinking something so rude. *Apologies.*

Monroe waves her hand as if she actually heard that. She probably did. “Alright. I got word that Pike has been upstairs for the last year so he couldn’t be involved.”

Upstairs. Does that mean —

“Then Pike’s out. What about the others?” Finn wants to know.

“I was getting to that. I checked out your house, Clarke. To see if I could find any traces.” Her stomach churns at the thought of an angel entering her house again, even if it was Monroe. She hopes her mom was at work. „And your house has some serious angel wardings —“

„Ah,“ she says, „my parents did something like that when I was a child.“

„A lot of houses have those. People started doing it centuries ago when we stayed on earth…“ Monroe shakes her head. „Anyway. Only really powerful angels can break through them. The highest order, which means…“

“That Dax isn’t the one either,” Finn murmurs.

Clarke furrows her brows, not quite following why the two of them have come to this conclusion. „Highest order?“

“There are a few generations of angels,” Monroe explains with a smile and Clarke swears she hears something ruffle behind her. “The highest order consists of the oldest angels.”

“That’s not important,” Finn cuts in. “What is, is that we now know it can only be —”

His voice trails off when strange, muffling darkness falls over the tavern, and the other angels lapse into silence. Finn’s eyes dart to the door.

“Oh boy,” Monroe murmurs and takes a sip of her drink.

Clarke looks from her to Finn. “What is it?”

“Go,” he suddenly tells her with urgency in his voice. “Go hide somewhere.”

“Finn, everybody saw me —“

“Just —” He curses and gets up himself, his hand reaching out towards her arm. When he touches her, the world starts spinning. Clarke’s knees buckle under her as she glances around and finds herself in the middle of the city.

“How —“

“Shit. Hold on tight.”

And again they’re… drifting through darkness and light and wind. She closes her eyes because it makes her head spin, and when she blinks them open, they’re in front of Finn’s cabin. Although he grabs her again. This time she knows what’s coming, ready for the feeling of free fall and flying so that she’s steady on her feet when they land —

“Going somewhere?”

Clarke opens her eyes, and a guy is standing in front of them, a smirk on his lips. He's insanely
beautiful, and she curses this thought since he is probably the one Finn has been trying to run away from. Alas, bad news.


“Long time no see,” Bellamy drawls. “Can’t say that I missed your face.”

Finn’s jaw hardens. “Likewise.”

“I see you wanted to hide your…,” his gaze slides to her and Clarke tries not to hunch under the weight of it, "...friend from me.” For an instant — shorter than a millisecond, something in those hungry eyes flashes. Then he clicks his tongue. “So I’ll get straight to the point.”

Finn crosses his arms, nudging forward a little.

“Don’t speak to her again,” Bellamy tells Finn, his gaze back on him.

“Who I talk to is none of your concern.”

“It is when she told you to stay away from her. Repeatedly.”

“It were just a few questions, okay? I didn’t do anything, and I’m sure she told you that, too.”

Bellamy huffs. “Yeah, and how interesting those questions were.” His eyes flicker to Clarke again, and she holds her breath. “Leave us out of your little scavenger hunt,” he says, looking back to Finn.

Finn doesn’t say anything. It looks like Bellamy might disappear again, a cold smile curling at his mouth, when — god knows what makes her breathe the words, “This isn’t a scavenger hunt.” To her, it’s her whole life. It’s her father. Her friends and neighbors.

It’s so silent all of a sudden, she thinks she hears her own heartbeat. A drop of rain hits the dirt in front of her. Clarke holds his stare.

“Brave girl.” There's both amusement and surprise in his voice. Then, as if catching himself, he shakes his head a little and says, "Whatever this is, I have no part in it. I might have blood on my hands, but it's not your father's.”

Bellamy vanishes.
Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

I was so surprised that you people liked the first chapter that I decided to post the next one right away!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

If the argument with Bellamy was weird, the conversation with Finn afterward is even stranger. She asks him who Bellamy was talking about and he tells her it’s not important. She wants to know how he did it — the teleportation thing, and he just says it’s what they do. Clarke tries to get out something; instead, Finn reminds her to stay quiet in the presence of other angels, or else “something could happen.”

However, he asks her — or practically begs her to stay in his house that night. Clarke understands, somewhere. So many angels have already seen her, smelled her; angels like Bellamy. And with their teleportation skills, they’d probably find her in less than a minute if they wanted. At least with Finn, he can protect her. So she agrees.

His house is bigger than it looks from the outside. A creaky, slim hallway leads to a bigger living room with plush furniture and a TV in front of the window. A decently sized kitchen. His cabinet. His bedroom. Another room with a bed that she figures is for her. A storage room.

Clarke goes to bed with many questions that night. Although the mattress and the sheets in Finn’s house are soft and definitely better than the hard ground in her tent, she turns and turns. Hours of doubts and worries and questions pass before she finally falls asleep.

»»——⋄——««

At breakfast — where she drinks coffee and eats bread with cheese he must have brought here — Clarke gathers enough courage to ask Finn a question she’s been meaning to ask for a while now.

“Can you ward me?”

He starts coughing rather dramatically. “What?”

“You heard the question,” she says dryly. Finn continues looking at her like she asked him to murder a puppy. “It will keep me hidden from angels, right?”

“Yes…”

“Then where’s the problem?”

Finn leans back against his chair, crossing his arms. “It’s a very dangerous and extreme measure of protection.” His voice gains an edge of irritation when he asks, “How do you even know about warding?”
There’s no need to answer because she’s already remembering the man with the face of steel who approached her, and she supposes Finn can see or read that or whatever it is that he’s doing when he knows what goes on in her head.

He huffs out an annoyed puff of breath. “Oh.”

“Do you know him?”

“I’ve seen him once or twice.”

Clarke feels like there’s more to it, but it never comes; she pushes the plate of food away from her and sighs.

“So you don’t want to do it?”

“I’d prefer not to.”

“Just because it’s dangerous? What about the angels that can fly in here anytime they feel like playing with a stupid, weak mortal like me?”

“Clarke,” Finn says softly, and suddenly his palm is covering her hand that has balled into a fist. “No one will fly in here unless I want them to, and as for the others… I can protect you. You don’t need magic carved into your ribs with me.”

Magic carved into your ribs. Clarke never asked what exactly warding is. Maybe he’s right, and she should trust him more. After all, he’s the angel with millennia of experience and not her.

He smiles and squeezes her hand. “I promise to protect you with my life.”

Clarke gulps, holding his gaze. “Why?

“Why what?”

“Why are you helping me? Doing all of this for me? I’m just a girl.”

“I know what it means to be alone.” He looks away, shrugs. “I would have appreciated someone helping me in that time. And,” he adds, grinning, “you’re pretty cute.”

Clarke’s heart flutters a little in her chest.

It seems so unreal. It can’t be. To come into Polis even though it’s a city for angels, unprepared and clueless, and the first angel she meets is sweeter and more helpful than she ever could’ve hoped for.

But maybe that’s her reward for the last twenty years on the other side.

Clarke clears her throat, and they both retreat their hands somewhat awkwardly. “You’re not so bad either,” she manages to get out after a moment and smiles. “Can you, uh, bring me to the city today? I want to take a look at the market you mentioned.”

“Of course, Clarke.”
Finn zaps them to the city. Apparently, now he uses that method of transportation with her as well, though she doesn’t ask why he didn’t before. The market is lovely, even if the angels selling the food are less pleasant. She buys fresh apples, bread that smells amazing and a basket full of blueberry muffins. As they stroll through the city, Finn receives some kind of message in his head, and they arrange a meeting spot where he will meet her in two hours to fly them back.

To be honest, she’s somewhat glad that he got called off since that gives her the opportunity to go deeper into the northern part of the city. Finn’s protection or not, she would at least like to know where to get warded. Just in case.

The only difference on this side of the city is the angels’ appearance. Whereas she usually sees them in suits and formal skirts and jumpsuits, the people here are more casual. They wear loose pants and colorful shirts and tops.

Clarke is peering into a store that looks exactly like the kind of place she needs when she feels an overwhelming but oddly familiar presence surround her. She glances up to see Bellamy come out of the store.

*Shit, shit, shit* —

“Relax,” he murmurs, tucking his hands into the pockets of his black pants, “I’m not going to hurt you.”

Clarke narrows her eyes. “Stop reading my thoughts.”

“Stop thinking so loud then.”

“What are you doing here?” she demands, not moving a damn inch. Thankfully, Bellamy stays where he is, as well.

The corners of his mouth curl up. “I’m taking a walk in the city. Why — am I not allowed to?” Clarke says nothing. His smirk falls and is replaced by a bored, annoyed expression. “You should really get out of here,” he mutters as he brushes past her.

“Why?” she asks, turning after him. “Because I am a human and you’re a mighty, oh so powerful being?”

Bellamy halts and looks back at her. “This isn’t somewhere you wanna be.”

“I think I know better what I want or not,” she says. All she gets in return is a careless shrug, and then he’s gone with a snap of his fingers.

Clarke is stunned to find a piece of paper in her hand. It’s a map, she notices as she unfolds it. A map of Polis. And on it, there are several markings, all in the northern part of the city. Red, scribbled letters say *Warding*.

> ————

Clarke would like to act like her encounter with Bellamy never happened. Unfortunately, her thoughts betray her as soon as Finn looks at her.
He’s furious.

After zapping them back to his cabin, he starts pacing through the rooms, swearing and yelling about the horror that Bellamy is, while Clarke is sitting at the table and watching.

“What exactly did he do?” she dares to ask two temper tantrums later. “Aside from the demon.”

Finn stops in his tracks and worries his lip. “I’m not sure if you want to know that.”

“I have to know.” Her voice is quiet but confident. “It could be important.”

“There’s so much crap he has done, I don’t even know where to begin.” A sigh ripples through him and he sits down across from her. “We used to fight in the same garrison, so we spent quite some time together. He was — is the general, which, I guess, he wasn’t terrible at, but the war… I think it made him mad. He was in hell, worked with demons, got their powers while we were being slaughtered up here. In the end, he came back, but he still stinks with the smell of the pit.”

Clarke gulps, not sure what is more shocking. That the rogue angel was in hell, or that hell exists. Then again, of course, it does. Where else would demons come from?

“Sometimes I think he hasn’t got any regard for other's lives. In the smaller war, he extinguished an entire mountain with innocent people — even kids — in there.

“And after years down here, he kicked me out of the garrison. Not that I miss being an opinionless machine, but,” he shrugs his shoulders, “I know that he did it because he wanted to show me he’s the general. He did it because he could, not because it was necessary. He's an angel but acts like Lucifer himself.”

It takes some time to process all this information. The war Finn talks about was almost four hundred years ago, and yet the horror in his eyes still looks fresh. Clarke can’t even begin to imagine what it must have been like to fight in it.

“I know,” Finn smiles, “A lot to take in.”

Indeed.

“I’m sorry he kicked you out.”

“I'm over it.”

It’s strange. Clarke just heard how Bellamy slaughtered mountains full of children, yet she doesn’t think he’s the one responsible for the deaths outside. And her father. The way she hears it Bellamy makes choices as a general — bloody, terrible choices, but in times of war. This doesn’t sound like someone who kills mortals, slowly, carefully and one by one, not all at once.

Finn’s teeth clack and she looks into his worried eyes. „Careful,“ he says. „Bellamy might’ve said he didn’t kill your father and he might have spared you today, but that doesn’t mean he’s innocent here. Or not dangerous.“

Clarke nods slowly. „I’m not - not thinking he’s innocent of the other things. Maybe just not responsible for the deaths outside Polis.“

„Clarke.“

„Okay, okay. Bellamy’s horrible, I get it. I’m not putting him off my list yet.“
The next few days pass uneventfully.

Monroe is still looking into angels powerful enough to bypass angel proof wardings, so there’s not much she can do about it. Meanwhile, Finn is still worrying about Bellamy and other angels planning something wicked. Clarke often wants to point out the flaw in his logic. If he’s so worried about other angels finding her, why not just ward her? But she doesn’t want to upset him any more than he already is.

Most of the time Clarke goes through every detail of the sparse information Finn could give her on his species. Sometimes she cooks. Finn keeps her company, but disappears off to god knows where from time to time. Like today. He said he had to get something and disappeared. Clarke laid down and took a nap.

But suddenly the door bursts wide open, the blast throwing Clarke off the couch as several people come in. Before she can even get up, a hand grabs her and hauls her up.

„What is this?“ Clarke rasps out.

A young woman, not much older than her comes to stand only five inches away from her. „Hello Clarke,“ she says, her emerald green eyes sparkling with power.

„Do I know you?“ Another pair of hands wrap around her arm, so that she’s surrounded. Her hands are shaking when she tries again, „Who are you?“

„I have a job for you."

„A job?"

A nod. Clarke looks at her, her cool gaze, the sharp jawline and long brown hair falling down her back. She and her people simply barged in here and all of that for a job? That doesn’t sound right.

„You have to trust me. All you have to do is say yes."

She almost snorts. Like hell, she will.

„No."

These green eyes narrow ever so slightly. „I want to take you to heaven where you can work with us, help us prevent an oncoming crisis.”

„What crisis? Why me?"

„Because you’re special,” the woman says, taking another step forward. She’s so deep in her personal space that Clarke can see moles on her cold face.

„I’m just a mortal."

„The first one to enter Polis.”

„And that makes me special?”
“It does.” Clarke’s jaw clenches. It does not. “War is brewing, Clarke. We need you. Your human world needs you.”

The mention of the human world makes her heart clench tightly in her chest. Images of her mother, her father, Wells float through her mind. If she can somehow help them by agreeing, then maybe it’s worth considering. Even if this feels nothing but shady. Clarke doesn’t know any of them.

The angel seems to notice the gradual change of heart, the need to protect her family seeping through her blood. “You can save them all. Just say yes.”

“What —” Her voice is weak, croaky. “What exactly would I have to do?”

“Come with us, and we will explain everything.”

It’s not good enough. Not an answer. What if it’s all a lie and they take her up and torture her instead? What if they don’t like her snooping around and want to make her stop? What if —

“She’s taking too long, let me help,” the voice of the angel on her right hisses and suddenly the world starts blurring and she’s sagging to her knees. Pain. Indescribable, excruciating pain settles in every part of her body and makes her whimper in agony, wheeze for air and peace.

“Say yes,” someone says.

Please, pleasepleaseplease. Make it stop. Make the pain stop —

Clarke lets out a loud gasp as the angels at her side get whisked away with a gust of wind. Her hands are still braced on the floor of Finn’s cabin when she looks up and sees Bellamy smirking at the woman.

If he has joined the party to torture her too, she’s not sure she will get out of this sane.

“Commander,” he drawls and doesn’t even bother to glance in her direction.

“General.” Her voice is stiff, but even from down below she can hear her ice-cold fury.

“Oh, Bellamy’s just fine. We’re beyond formalities already. Don’t you think, Lex?”

She — Lex rolls her eyes. “What do you want.”

“I heard the angel police has come to town, so I wanted to… catch up. Ask for some advice. But I see you’re in the middle of something here.” Finally, his eyes lower to the ground and Clarke huffs out an angry breath and sits up, glaring at him. “Should I come by sometime later?”

For a long, drawn-out moment the two angels just stare at each other. Clarke wonders what the hell is happening.

Then Lex’s chin clenches and unclenches, and she gives him a cold smile. “I was just finishing here.” Her gaze flickers to her. “Have you reconsidered my offer?”

Say no.

The two words rumble through her mind, and Clarke blinks in surprise. These aren’t her own thoughts. No, they belong to someone —

Just say no, and she’ll be forced to leave you alone.
She gulps, looks at Bellamy, but his face remains the bored, smug mask he seems to wear continually as he leans against the wall of the living room. Revealing nothing.

“No,” Clarke finally says.

“Is that your final answer?”

“Ye-” She halts, smiles and tries again, “It is. My answer is no.”

Maybe Lex will kill her. Perhaps she’ll just explode and gut her right here, right now. Clarke virtually waits for the pain to come, her heart beating loudly, but it never happens. The angel and her lackeys just disappear.

“Didn’t even bother to hear my question,” Bellamy mutters and tsktsks as he pushes off the wall. To approach her, she realizes.

He offers her his hand, but she swats it away and gets up on her own. “What do you want?” Clarke snaps once she’s back on her feet.

“I beg you pardon?”

“You made them leave when they were… torturing me, so obviously you want something in return. What is it?”

Bellamy cocks his head. “A thank you, Bellamy is enough.”

“I didn’t ask for your help,” she snaps.

“Actually you did.”

“No, I didn’t.”

“Well, I remember something along the lines of please make it stop, but maybe I’ve gone crazy.”

She freezes in horror at the realization that he heard her silent pleas even if he wasn’t here. How far do her thoughts reach?

“I didn’t — I wasn’t asking for you.”

“Oh, I’m terribly sorry that it was only me who heard you.” For the first time, she hears something other than annoyance or amusement in his voice. “Should I get Lexa back so that she does it all over again and Finn comes to your rescue this time?”

Clarke doesn’t answer, only glowers in return. Then after a beat, she asks, “What did they want from me?”

“Hell if I knew,” Bellamy murmurs.

“Well, obviously you know something.”

“The only thing I know is that you should be fucking careful when it comes to Lexa and her minions.” He narrows her eyes at her like he’s trying to see or feel something. “Why didn’t you get warded?” he asks. “You do know that every angel on this planet and beyond can locate you in no time?”

“I, uh —” she stammers and takes a few steps away, avoiding his gaze. “Finn said it’s safe here. He
said he’d protect me.”

“And how did that turn out, huh?”

Clarke crosses her arms in front of her chest, bites her lip in silence.

“You should get warded or get the hell away from here.”

“Is that a threat?” she asks.

“It’s helpful advice,” he answers.

Clarke meets his gaze and holds it, sighs. “Fine.”

His chest falls as he shoots her his customary, cocky smirk. “You know where to get it done.”

*The map.*

That would take time, though. Hours to reach the city, find the stores. Asking Finn isn’t a solution either.

“Can you do it?”

Bellamy blinks in surprise before his usual expression sets into place. “Sure. C’mere.”

Clarke does, albeit a little slowly. Her heart’s beating wildly when his big, tanned hands land on her arm. “There’s an Enochian spell, I’m gonna carve it into your ribs,” he explains slowly. She shudders. “So it might feel somewhat odd.”

“Will it hurt?”

“Only tickle a little. I’ll be gentle.” He winks at her, and she rolls her eyes. His hand shifts a little, tightens around her arm. „Ready?”

Clarke nods.

She waits for the weird feeling, for some kind of pain, for anything but the weight of his palm on her skin. Nothing. “What are you waiting for?” she snaps.

“It’s done,” Bellamy says and lets go of her arm.

“Oh.”

“No one will be able to find you anymore unless you want them to.”

Clarke’s brows furrow into a puzzled frown. “How do I do that?”

“Um.” Bellamy raises a brow. “Maybe try phones? Or talking to the angel in question?”

“I thought you angels didn’t have phones,” she blurts out.

“I think your boyfriend’s the only one who refuses to use phones and technology. He’s somewhat old fashioned if you ask me.”

Rolling her eyes, she decides to ignore his stupid remark. Bellamy lingers for a moment before saying, “Alright, it was fun, but I have —”
“Did you have anything to do with my father’s death?” Clarke cuts him off, voice so empty she’s surprised herself. “Be honest.” She raises her gaze to him, and he’s already looking at her.

“No,” he tells her. “And I don’t know anything about it.”

Nodding, Clarke looks back at her hands. She believes him. He might be an asshole and many more awful things from Finn’s story, but she doesn’t think he’s her father’s murderer.

“You’re not gonna leave until you find the angel responsible, aren’t you?” Bellamy asks, and she’s surprised he hasn’t vanished already.

“No.”

Silence stretches over the room, but he’s still there when she looks up.

“I can help you find out what happened,” he says eventually. “If you want.”

The snort she lets out is humorless. “Do you want me out of here that bad?” If he heard her question at all, he doesn’t show it. Clarke tries again, feeling something hot and relentless flash through her veins. “Why do you hate humans so much?” Her brows raise in challenge, but he just keeps silent, so she gives up with a frustrated sigh. “I’ll tell you when I need your hel—“

Gone. She couldn’t even ask Bellamy how to reach him. Maybe it was just a joke to him. That’s probably for the best anyway.

Finn comes home when she’s in the bathroom, washing her face. Or rather, he storms in. Clarke only has seconds to wonder about the rattling of doors and his voice desperately calling her name before he appears in front of her.

“Clarke,” he says, his hands landing on her face. “You’re here, you’re not dead, you’re—“

“Breathe Finn.” He stops his rambling and looks at her, strokes her skin.

“I thought you were gone. Suddenly I couldn’t feel you anymore.”

Her jaw twitches and understanding dawns across his face. She can’t look at it, looks away as he retreats his hands and steps back.

“You got warded. By Bellamy.”

It sounds like a question, an accusation and a plea to explain all at once, but she refuses to feel guilty. Not after what happened today.

“I also got ambushed by a bunch of evil angels who wanted to take me to heaven and tortured me when I said no.”

“What?”

“Yeah,” she huffs and brushes past him to exit the bathroom. He could’ve at least knocked, she notes absently. “So now you have to call me to find me.”

“What happened, Clarke? What did Bellamy do?” he asks.

“Oh, Bellamy didn’t do anything except for saving me. The angels were… different. Bellamy called one of them Commander. I think her name was Lexa or Lex.”
His scowl shifts into something like fear. „The Commander,“ he murmurs.

Clarke crosses her arms. „Who is she?“

„She’s the one calling the shots in heaven.“ When she still doesn’t look any smarter, he elaborates, „There’s an entire garrison in heaven. They don’t… agree with us settling here. The commander is their boss.“

Angel politics seem just as messy as human ones, she thinks silently, leaning against her nightstand. Shouldn’t God be their boss? Clarke doesn’t even dare to ask, not with Finn already being so jumpy.

„Do you have any idea what they wanted with me? They said war is coming and that I can help protect the humans.“

„No, I don’t know,“ he says, and her shoulders sag a little in frustration. Finn’s brows tug into a scowl. „And you said Bellamy helped you?“

Clarke sighs and tells him how Bellamy barged in and annoyed Lexa enough into leaving. He didn’t even bother with the other two angels, just wiped them away. She wonders if they’re still alive.

„He must have plans of his own,“ Finn muses afterward.

„I feel like he just wants me gone from here.“

„Well, he can wait. You’re going to stay as long as you like.“

Chapter End Notes

From now on I’ll be updating Thursday and Sunday! But comments and thoughts might motivate me enough to speed up the process <3
Finn wants to renew the wards on his house — that didn’t do jackshit when Lexa came — but Clarke thinks it’s better to leave altogether. They know she’s with Finn and they know where Finn lives. Her own warding won’t help with that either. Understandably he doesn’t want to at first. It’s his home after all. So she says she’s going to go alone and suddenly he doesn’t care about staying anymore.

They go to a hotel. Turns out there is one here in Polis, even if it’s for other angels and not for humans. It’s a lovely room with a beautiful view over the city and two big beds.

On their first evening there she notices Finn glancing at her over and over. “What is it?”

“I… have to go somewhere” Or, another way of saying Clarke’s going to be alone.

“I’m gonna be fine,” she says and gives him, what she hopes to be, a reassuring smile. “Can I ask you something, though?”

“Yeah, of course.”

“Where are you always going when you leave?”

“I, uh — it’s like a job.” He scratches his ear. “I track objects.”

“For who?”

“Whoever needs it. Angels can search an entire town in a matter of seconds, but there are some things that are hard to find, even for us. But I can.”

Clarke nods, smiling. “That’s great. You should offer your services to humans, too. We could really use someone like you.”

“I wouldn’t even know how to start a business like this,” Finn says with a laugh.

“I could help you… you know, when we find the killer and this is over.”

Her stomach jumps at the look he gives her. “I’d like that, Clarke.” And suddenly she feels herself leaning in, into his space, and he grins when he kisses her. Soft, and brief; hopefully a foretaste of what’s to come.

“I really have to go now,” he murmurs, still so close that she can feel his breath on her.

“I’ll be right here.”

Clarke watches him disappear. Once she’s alone in the room, she lets herself grin like she’s back to being sixteen years old and having her first kiss. In some way, it was a first. Her first kiss with an angel. It’s both exciting and terrifying to think about it. She’s not even sure that kind of thing is allowed, but she pushes the thought away.

For the next two hours, she watches TV, eats some of the food Finn bought on the way here, and even texts Wells about her supposedly tight exam schedule in college. It’s easy to forget that she has
a life outside of here, easy to get carried away with all the powers and luxuries and conflicts. However, her mom didn’t call once to check on her, so maybe it’s easy for the outside world to forget her, too.

When she gets tired of the games on her phone, she decides to check something out. Something that has been plaguing her ever since Lexa almost dragged her ass to heaven.

_Bellamy_, she thinks, _it’s Clarke here. Can you, uh, hear me?_

Curiously, she glances around the room, checking if anyone — Bellamy has appeared yet.

_I’m in a hotel._

When Lexa asked her if she had considered her offer to go to heaven with her, there was a voice in her head. Not her voice. The only one in that room beside her and the commander was Bellamy, so it had to be him. Him who, somehow, managed to plant his freaking voice in her head. And he left without giving her any info on how to contact him, so Clarke figured that maybe this was the way.

But the empty room suggests otherwise.

_You said you’d help me. I need your help. Now._

Nothing.

Clarke huffs out a disappointed sigh and turns on her side, cuddling into her sheets. _You’re a stupid jerk. I knew that this is all just a big joke to you._

“Thanks, princess. Always a pleasure to talk to you.”

She freezes in horror. _Dear god. Please tell me that you’re not really here, but it’s me talking to myself._

_Technically, you were talking to yourself._

Clarke whirls around and there he is, leaning against the wall and smiling lazily. “How do you do that?”

“How?”

“You know what,” she snaps and jumps out of bed to point an accusing finger at him. “You’re in my head! I hear your damn voice in there! How?”

Bellamy shrugs. “You talk to me, I answer. Just not… out loud.”

“Can other angels do that as well?” she wants to know. “Can Finn?”

“We communicate like that all the time, between ourselves, but with humans — I don’t think anyone has ever tried.”

“Except you,” Clarke points out.

“Except me,” he agrees and his mouth curls into a smirk. “Guess we have that in common, huh? Being pioneers.”

She doesn’t want to have anything in common, not with him, but she doesn’t tell him that. It might not even matter since angels are excellent mind readers, but she’s past the point of caring now.
“You wanted help, I’m here, princess,” he says eventually. “As fun as it is, I don’t have all day.”

Right.

The reason why she’s here in the first place. The reason she summoned Bellamy here. „This other angel — Monroe told us the thing that did it must have been very powerful because our house is warded.“

„Okay.“

„So, um, do you know anyone who’s that powerful?“

He actually has the nerve to snort. „Is that why you wanted me to come here?“

„Yes;“ she bites out, glowering.

„I do know someone, several someones. Polis and heaven are full of them. You know, something Finn could’ve told you, too."

That’s where he’s wrong. Clarke tried asking, but Finn doesn’t seem to like talking about his kind, evades the subject whenever it comes up. But she just rolls her eyes and pushes on, „I mean someone who is that powerful and also capable of murder? Someone who can break through wards and kill a father in front of his daughter’s eyes and do it over and over again like it’s a chore and not the destruction of lives and family?“ The words come out way more hysterical than she intended them to and she has to take a step back to calm the emotions pumping through her veins.

Bellamy is silent for a moment before sliding his hands into the pockets of his black pants. „There are a few. But Clarke… throwing around accusations based on nothing but speculation will do more harm than good.”

„What else can I do then?!“

„You said it happens a lot lately."

„Yes."

„You’re sure it’s all connected and not some disease going around?“

„I’m…“ There’s never a way to be completely certain, but this has to be connected to her father. She talked to the girl next door who told her about her aunt being found dead even though the pathologist didn’t find anything. The boy at school whose perfectly healthy sister was found dead one morning. Wells’ mother who never woke up after a nap. People don’t just die. Not like that. „I’m sure,“ she says. „It was all the same angel."

„Alright, then find the common thread."

Clarke begins to understand what he means. All the people that died — the monster that killed them must have chosen them for a reason. Unless he's simply a sick bastard, who enjoys killing people. But the deaths were too clean, too quick for them to be murders of affection. And now she has to find the pattern, the connection.

„Thank you,“ she breathes.

„If you’re quick enough, maybe you’ll be able to find them before they strike again.“

„I hope so.“
Bellamy gives her a slight nod but hesitates before taking off. (At least, that’s what she thinks he’ll do since he’s never had the manners to say goodbye.)

“If you need more help, or… information on angels, you know how to reach me,” he says and wiggles his brows to her dismay.

She starts asking if he can’t leave her his phone number instead but finds him gone in the middle of the sentence.

Sighing, she sits down at the small table in the room. It will have to be a mind call then. Clarke wishes there was a way for her to shield her thoughts, some sort of helmet or potion that would protect her most private parts and keep them where they belong. She doesn’t understand how angels do it all the time. Being so open with each other. If there’s a spell that hides her location from every angel, there has to be a spell for this as well, right? Clarke makes a mental note to ask Bellamy next time.

She starts with the new task Bellamy suggested right away. Finn got her a laptop since she didn’t bring one along in this journey, so she uses it to pull up her town’s obituaries and look for any reports and articles that reported about the cause of death.

After an hour of doing that Clarke decides to go to bed early and continue tomorrow morning. There are so many names on that list she started — names of people she had known, has talked to every once in a while, had liked. And now they’re all dead. Perhaps it’s fatigue that makes her fall asleep so quickly, or it’s the weight of those murdered people bearing down on her. Horror at the state of the world they’re in. Anger at the injustice they face day to day. And guilt, for sleeping and living among the creatures that are responsible for their horrible deaths. Whatever it is, darkness pulls her in without any effort.

When she wakes up, Finn is staring down at her. Clarke jolts up at the pair of glowing eyes, pulling the sheets over herself and shooting him a bewildered look. “What are you doing?!”

Silence.

“Finn,” she says, blinking at the hard lines on his face, his jutted chin, his clenched jaw. “Finn, what’s wrong?”

“Bellamy was here.”

Oh. Clarke doesn’t dare to ask how he knows when she wasn’t awake for her thoughts to reveal anything. Maybe, she doesn’t need to be awake for that.

“I wanted to see if he could help us.”

“I know,” he says through his teeth.

“He has an idea.”

Finn puffs out a fiery breath of air and leans back, shaking his head so that his hair flops around. “Why him, Clarke? Why the pit ask Bellamy of all my siblings?”

“Because he offered last time and it’d be stupid to refuse when I can use all the help I can get,” she says, starting to grow irritated, too.
“So my help is not enough. Is that it?”

Clarke narrows her eyes. “Are you serious right now?”

“You called Bellamy here, Clarke. That guy is dangerous. He’s selfish, arrogant, violent and oh, not to mention: hates you humans. Hates you. He’s pretending to help to make fun of you. I bet he’s sitting in a pub with his jerk friends right now and telling them all about the naive, little girl that fell for his prank and believes he’s actually willing to help.”

Her face flushes with anger and shame and humiliation.

“And now he knows where we are. We might as well search another place to stay right now.”

“You don’t know that,” she says, but her voice is quiet, uncertain.

“Now you’re defending him and trusting him over me, too?”

“No, I—”

“Are you sure he didn’t put a brainwashing spell on you when he did the warding?”

“Enough!” she snaps. “I - I’m not defending Bellamy, and I don’t trust him. He was only supposed to tell me if he knows something. And you’re fucking mean right now.”

In a matter of seconds the pressing, hot anger pours out of his eyes and leaves a tired frown. Finn swallows and murmurs, “I’m sorry.”

Clarke doesn’t trust her voice enough not to quiver, so she says nothing.

“I’m sorry,” he repeats and reaches out to grasp her hand — fist. “I was just so worried when I saw he was here. So worried and confused why you let him.”

“I told you —”

“That you only wanted information, yeah, but how can you be so sure he’s not the killer? Or, at least has something to do with it?”

She shrugs, staring at their hands. “I just know.”

“So you will risk everything because you just know?”

It sounds stupid when he puts it like that, yes. But Bellamy is — he looked her straight in the eye and declared his innocence. Twice. He heard and saved her when he had the chance let her be tortured by Lexa. He helped her just now by telling her to look for a pattern. Unless he is playing some brilliantly, twisted mind game, no guilty person would do all that for her.

“And what if he is playing mind games?”

Clarke raises her gaze to meet him and squeezes his hand. “You trust me, right?”

“Of course,” he breathes. “More than that actually.”

Closing her eyes for a moment, she wills herself to focus on the matter and not the meaning of his little confession. “You didn’t know me when you met me for the first time, but you still offered your help. I didn’t know you either, and yet here I am in a room with you, an angel. We can never be sure of someone’s intentions, so trust alone has to be enough.” Finn opens his mouth to retort something,
but she beats him to it, “I trust that Bellamy didn’t murder my father, I simply do. But I’m not gonna tell him anything valuable. He’s a helping hand. That’s it.”

She expects him to argue, bring up Bellamy’s horrible character again, but instead, he leans forward and kisses her. He kisses her surprise away, roams his hands across her skin until she forgets what they were fighting about and apologizes for his cruel, demeaning words with bites and more kisses.

Thirteen.

That’s how many lives were taken in the last two and half months by that same sick, disgusting angel that killed her father. The first murder, Clarke finds out, happened on April the third — seventy-four days ago. Erin Hardock. She had known him, had seen him a couple of times in the streets, visited the supermarket he worked at almost every day. And she still remembers their last conversation.

*She had bought sleeping pills because of daily night terrors, and when he scanned the item, his eyes had twinkled with surprise, maybe worry, or perhaps intrigue.*

“You know there’s a much funnier alternative to this industrial shit, right?”

“And what’s that?”

“A blunt.”

Clarke had snorted and shook her head. He was grinning the whole time she was packing her things into her bag.

“We can smoke one together someday. If you’re up for it.”

*Someday.*

She never saw him in the store again or the streets. This whole time Clarke believed he just got sick of being a cashier and quit. Or that he got himself in trouble with his inclination for drugs. Only now, months later, she finds out his room mate found him dead in the living room; the first in the line of many other deaths.

The murders that followed were similar, if not identical, but that’s about it with similarities. Everything else doesn’t add up. No pattern. No common thread.

Alissa Tywin. Her neighbor, in her thirties, borrowed a cup of sugar from them two days before her death. Tim Bartlett. A guy from chem class in med school. Jill Yomorski. The local hairdresser that always complimented her hair. Louis Warren. He had gone to middle school with her, moved away and moved back two years later. Tara Jaha… This one hits closer than all the others. Well’s mom.

Images from her funeral float up. The bleak, empty faces of the townspeople as they are standing at the tenth funeral in a row. Wells’ dad as he tries not to cry, tries to be strong for his son and strong in his mayor’s role. Wells… She had stood next to him, holding his hand and holding him while silent tears were streaming down his face as they lowered his mother into the ground. Just like he would two months later, at the funeral of Clarke’s own father.

She shudders at the memories and snaps her laptop shut with a loud thud, her heart clenching and unclenching tightly in her chest.
Behind her, Finn comes back from one of his jobs and drops a kiss on her neck as a greeting. She doesn’t react.

“What are you doing?” he asks, flopping down on the bed — he made a big, single bed out of the two smaller ones. “Your mind is blank.”

She’s so used to him knowing everything that goes on in her head that she doesn’t react to this either.

“Clarke?”

“I… I can’t find a pattern,” she murmurs. It feels like she can’t stop staring at the black laptop screen. The same shade of black that curled around her mind after seeing her father fight for his last breaths.

“— need a distraction.” Suddenly Finn’s hands are around her neck, touching, caressing. His lips on her earlobe. “You look lovely tonight,” he whispers in her ear.

“Thanks.”

You look lovely, Erica Anderson once said many, many years ago before kissing her. Now she’s rotting somewhere in the ground.

“Why are you thinking of a girl?” Finn asks in a low voice. “Oh, that’s hot —”

Clarke’s restraint snaps and she pushes herself up and away from Finn, needing space.

“What’s wrong?”

“That girl that you called hot is dead! She was murdered by the same god forsaken thing that took my father, so forgive me if I’m not in the mood!”

Clarke recoils at her own voice. Her hands are shaking at her sides, clenched into tight fists. She didn’t realize how angry she is.

“I’m sorry,” Finn says, frowning. “I didn’t know who she was.” How convenient that he suddenly doesn’t know everything. “I swear, or I wouldn’t have said anything.”

“It’s fine,” she sighs.

“No, it’s not. I’ve upset you.” He comes closer, takes her hands. “I want to help you.”

“You can’t.”

“Let me try.”

She shakes her head. “It’s just so frustrating. I’ve been in Arkadia for weeks now, and I’m nowhere close to solving anything. All I’ve done is,” she waves a hand at him and trails off.

“Have the time of your life with me?” he grins.

The smile on her face doesn’t reach her eyes. “It’s killing me to read about the people that died, to remember my last conversations with them. I want to honor them, at least, but I can’t.”

“There must be something.”

“There isn’t… or I can’t find it.” Her mouth goes dry at the words that want to tumble out of her. By the twist of his mouth, Finn already read it. Felt it. Whatever. Still, she finds herself saying them out
loud, “I want to call Bellamy.”

His hands that have been stroking her hipbones drop.

“I need to call him,” she corrects herself, voice growing more desperate.

“Why.”

“You know why. He might be able to help.”

“I can try to help.”

“You’ve been holed up with me here for a week, and we got nothing.”

“What about Monroe?”

“I don’t know, what about her?” it shoots out of Clarke. Her impatience is hard to miss. “You never mentioned if she found anything new. I doubt she will make sense of this either.”

He raises a brow. “But he will?”

“Maybe. It was his idea.”

“Surely there’s someone else who can help you.”

“Finn.” It sounds close to pleading now which annoys and frustrates her. She shouldn’t have to ask.

She didn’t ask. Clarke merely wanted to inform him because that’s the polite thing to do but perhaps —

“Okay, okay. Call that jerk.”

She doesn’t wonder if he only agreed because of where her thoughts might have led otherwise. She just sits down on the bed and closes her eyes.

*Um, hi, Bellamy. Clarke here again.*

“What are you doing?” Finn asks from where the other side of the room.

“Calling Bellamy,” she replies.

Could you perhaps drop by? Now? Or anytime you’re free. It’s important.

He furrows his brows. “You don’t have his number?”

“No.”

*Please.*

She watches him open his mouth when she hears a sound of fluttering and Bellamy appearing in front of her. The lazy smirk in its usual place.

*You’re welcome,* he drawls into her mind. She ignores him.

“Hi,” she manages to get out after an initial moment of awkwardness as she looks between the two angels. “Thank you for coming.”

Bellamy shrugs.
Right.

“I need your help.”

“Clearly.”

Clarke bites down on her teeth and walks over to the table, pulling up notes and papers she’s gathered over the last seven days. “I, um — I did as you said and looked into the others that were… Anyway, I scrambled through everything, looked for anything valuable, but I can’t — “ Her voice wavers a little, and she swallows thickly. “I can’t find the common thread.”

Bellamy glances at her, at Finn, back at her. It looks like he’s contemplating whether to offer a snide remark or a real answer and she’s silently praying it’s the latter. She needs him cooperating right now.

He sighs and drives a hand through his black curls. “Tell me everything you know.”

She does, without even blinking. All week she’s been craving to share this information she gathered with someone else, dump it on somebody like life dumped it on her. Finn was either off, doing his job, or busy doing other things to her. Don’t get her wrong, Clarke’s glad for the distraction he offers. She needs that just as much as this, and the pleasure… well, it’s nice. But this. Telling Bellamy about the thirteen individual people, about their lives, their faces, how they were found and that none of it makes a pattern is cathartic.

When she’s finished, Bellamy leans back against the wall of their hotel room and looks up. Her blood is tingling with anticipation of... something.

“These people,” he says slowly, “you got that information all from the internet?”

“Not everything. I already heard most of it in the streets.”

He nods, and she knows there is something that she misses that he sees. Clarke can feel it.

“And the information on the people? Not how they died, I mean,” he clarifies. “But you described each and every person precisely. How?” His voice is coaxing, tugging her in the right direction and she follows the thread.

“Because I knew them.”

Bellamy’s brows raise in a silent question. All of them?

Her heart is hammering in her chest, her palms growing clammy. The wheels in her head turn.

“Yes,” she says and oh. Her face goes pale.

Clarke knew all of them.

“I am the connection.”

Chapter End Notes

I’m struggling between wanting to post chapters every second day to move the story
forward and wanting to finish writing it first. Someone help me! Anyway, this was chapter three and I hope you liked it. I love reading your comments and all the questions you have about the story, it seriously makes my day every time! Next chapter you will meet a demon for the first but definitely not the last time ;)}
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

It's not Thursday yet, but I had this ready so I thought why not? There's some violence in this chapter so if you want a warning quickly skip to the notes at the end (there are spoilers, obviously!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The awful silence that falls over the room gets disrupted by Finn’s irritated voice.

“Wait a minute. What?!”

Clarke doesn’t look at him when she repeats the words, more to herself than anyone else, “The common thread is me. All these people — my dad, Wells’ mother, my neighbor, my first kiss… they have nothing in common, except knowing me.” Clarke sucks in a breath. “They’re dead because of me.”

“They’re dead because someone killed him,” Bellamy says at the same time as Finn mutters, “Don’t say that.”

“It’s the only thing that makes sense.” Her voice quivers.

Finn steps into her space, lays a hand on her back, the other one taking her hand. “There can be thousand other reasons connecting them,” he tells her. Didn’t he hear her analyze every fucking detail of these deaths? Did he listen at all? “It’s not you, Clarke. I promise.” She feels him turn to Bellamy who’s still standing at his spot against the wall, his hands in his pockets now. “There can be something else, right? Tell her.”

But Bellamy just frowns a little, the only thing giving away any sort of reaction to this revelation. “She said there’s no other link.”

Finn takes a furious breath. So angry — she doesn’t know why. After all this time, Clarke finally figured out the connection, made progress, even if she hates what she discovered.

“What’s wrong with you?” Finn sputters at Bellamy.

“With me?”

“Yeah, with you, you son of a bitch —“

“Careful, brother.”

“Shut up! She’s here, devastated, and you’re standing there all easy squeezy like you’re just watching a fly roam around.”

“Calm down, Finn,” Clarke manages to say, even if her voice is tired and ragged.

“Calm down?” he hollers. “No. This guy proposes to look into the connection, makes you hell-bent on finding that damn link and then just stands around and watches you cry and blame yourself! I
won’t calm down! Not until he says what he actually wants.”

*This* again. Bellamy doesn’t look surprised by the change of topic either.

“Who’s to say that you’re not the sick bastard that killed these poor mortals?! It would make sense, wouldn’t it? Murder them and when she’s here looking for answers, make her feel all guilty for it so that she ends up blaming herself! That’s the kind of freaky mind game you’re into, isn’t it?”

“Finn —”

“Oh no, Finn, don’t stop on my behalf,” Bellamy says, actually having the nerve to look amused. “Tell me what you really think.”

“Then stop on mine,” Clarke snaps. “You two are giving me a headache.”

Finally, both of them shut up. She looks up with red-rimmed eyes. “Why kill thirteen people because of one person who knows them?”

“You lived in a small town, didn’t you?” Finn starts again, and she stifles the urge to roll her already hurting eyes. “Everyone knows everyone there. It can be pure coincidence.”

Not to this extent. More than five thousand people live in Alpha. She couldn’t have known every inhabitant, even if she tried to. But those dead people, they — it was her. The realization sinks in again, and she squats down, drops her face in her hands for a moment before facing reality again.

Blocking out Finn and his useless attempts to deny the truth, her eyes meet Bellamy’s, and she asks him the same question, but silently.

**Why do all of this because of me?**

*Interesting question. Did you piss off an angel in the past?*

*I’ve never ever seen an angel before coming here. Or before my father… — forget it.*

Bellamy’s mouth curls the tiniest amount upwards. *Trust me, you did. You just didn’t know.*

She starts asking, *So it’s possible I’ve upset someone who was secretly an angel?* When Finn comes to stand right in front of her, blocking Bellamy from her view. Not her mind, though.

*Idiot,* Bellamy mumbles through that connection.

Clarke looks up at Finn, braces herself for his temper tantrum. On any other day, she’d understand. Bellamy, who’s this asshole slash war murderer is in their room silently communicating with her. *On any other day,* but today. Today this is so much more than stupid sibling contests, or pettiness, or rivalries from the past. This about her dad, and the other thirteen people. About real life and death situations.

But instead of anger, there’s hurt in Finn’s eyes. „I want to talk to you. Alone.“

„Guess that’s my cue to go,“ Bellamy says and pushes off the wall, but Clarke can’t let that happen, not yet.

„Wait. “

„Huh?“
„Just… think about it,“ she begs him, not caring how weak she sounds. „You’re an angel. You
know your sisters and brothers better than me. Think who of them would want to hurt me. Who
would be capable. “

A beat, then Bellamy nods. „I will.“ And off he goes, leaving Clarke still on the ground, with Finn
staring at her with sad eyes from above, and one big, haunting question hammering in her head.

She doesn’t register Finn talking to her as she gets up and slumps on her side of the bed, not until his
voice becomes louder.

„Sorry, what?“

„What is up with you today?“ Clarke blinks in confusion. Did he spend the last hour somewhere
else? „You ignored me. I was standing right there, and you and him acted as if I wasn’t even in the
room,“ he goes on.

„Maybe because you weren’t listening to what I said,“ she tells him.

„I did listen, but you just talked to him instead of me. To Bellamy. “

Clarke shakes her head. „Why are we arguing about who I was talking to? Do you realize how
stupid this is?“

„It’s not stupid to me. “

„Well, I’m sorry, Finn. I just found out that I might be the reason my father was killed, but clearly,
this is more important. “

„I - I just don’t want…“

„You don’t want what?“

Finn looks down. „To lose you.“

„Why would you lose me because of… “ She doesn’t even finish the question. „Finn, I’m sorry if this
sounds rude, but this case, these murders are very important to me. They’re my priority. And
Bellamy—“

„He helped you with it, I know. “

„Yeah, he did. “

Finn sits down next to her, bracing his hands on his knees. „It pissed me off that you rather talked to
him than with me. “ He raises his eyes. „But I understand where you’re coming from.“

„Thank you. “

„I hate what we were today. I want us to be a team next time. “

„Okay. “ She nods. „Can we go to sleep before that, though? I’m dying of exhaustion. “

„Of course,“ he says and smiles before kissing her cheek. ”Good night, Clarke. “

On the next day, Finn watches her the entire time. And the one after that.
At first, it’s cute because he tries to help with the guilt that’s gnawing at her bones, tries to distract her with food and magic tricks and his body. But when she gets up to work on the cases, she feels his eyes follow her every movement, her every breath. Feels him poking around in her thoughts. Clarke can’t focus on the work. She’s been trying to go through her entire life to find anyone or anything that she could have possibly angered. Someone who might hate her. An enemy. Which certainly isn’t easy when you’re only twenty years old, and jaywalking’s the most illegal thing you’ve ever done. And even harder when an all-knowing angel is breathing down your neck.

So one night she asks him to get her a pretzel from the ginger-haired angel across town and slips away once he disappears. The fight and the hissy fit he’ll throw — she doesn’t care about it. Clarke just needs thirty minutes of space.

She finds herself leaning against the wall in a dark alley. Probably not the best spot to get some air, not with tall, lean buildings towering all around her, squeezing her in. But this is the city. It’s almost everywhere like this.

Try going north, it’s way more spacious there.

Clarke bristles at the thought piercing through her mind and huffs out an angry breath. Stop reading my mind, you stalking prick.

You were thinking pretty loud.

Then shut your ears.

Bellamy doesn’t answer to that which, as weird as it sounds, disappoints her. Being mad about something other than murder is soothing.

So she swallows her pride and thinks, Can you come to see me? I’m in front of the —

“Does Finn known about this?”

"Finn doesn't need to know."

"So wicked. I like it."

Clarke rolls her eyes and pushes off the wall. “Have you thought of anything?”

“There might be something,” he says.

Suddenly a jarring, consuming sound crashes through her mind, making her stagger back a few steps. With the seconds it only gets louder, more painful, and she sinks to her knees. Clarke clasps her hands over her ears to stop it — to hear less, hear less, but it’s so loud, and she thinks there’s something warm and thick and sticky clinging to her fingers —

One word.

One whisper in her mind as the sound quiets down. Demon.

Clarke lets out a harsh breath on the ground. “Demon,” she whispers and lifts her gaze to find Bellamy staring at her, slack-jawed.

“You understood that?” he asks.

“Yes, I think so. What was that?”
“Angels talking.” Bellamy offers her his hand, and this time, she takes it.

For an instant, she hears the ringing in her ears again, just for a second, and she slides out of his easy grip, frowning. "How did I hear that?"

“I'm not sure. Maybe it's because you're here in Polis, might have caught our wavelength. Either way, we have to go,” he says, eyes scanning their surroundings.

“What does it mean? A demon is here?”

“Yeah.”

Her heart starts racing as Bellamy nudges her forward, his hand on her back. They stride through the alley.

“Sometimes they escape. The gates of hell are not completely solid, unfortunately,” he explains in a quiet, calm voice, but the information does nothing but spook her even more.

“Those things can actually crawl out of hell?!?”

“Yeah, that’s how they’re born.” What the f— “Although some are still roaming the earth after the war. The ones we didn’t kill.”

The war was more than four hundred years ago which means that they’re old.

“And powerful,” he adds with a nod.

The thought of that is already terrifying enough when Clarke starts feeling shadows emerging from the walls, growing around them. She grips Bellamy’s arm. “What is that?”


It’s impossible not to look, though. Not as the shadows race after them, start taking solid forms and liquefying, black ooze spilling from them and leaving a wet trail. Clarke thinks she has already died from a heart attack about thirty times by now. They’re catching up and Bellamy tugs her closer with a firm grip, hastens their pace, all with a strange sort of composure.

“That way,” he says, and they swiftly turn into the narrow lane on their left. So close, so close — the shadows are so close. Claws are spreading behind her and reaching for them. For her.

Clarke whimpers and focuses on matching her pace with Bellamy’s when suddenly the shadows rise from the ground in front of them, a dozen of formless, void faces gaping at them. Blocking their path.

Bellamy doesn’t do as much as blink.

*Hold on to me, I’m gonna fly us away.*

She nods, mentally and physically. Her fingers squeeze Bellamy's arm, and suddenly the shadows all around them are replaced with trees. They’re in a forest.

“What's happening?!!”

Bellamy shoots her a grave look. “The demon is chasing us. I have to try to maneuver him away. You can’t let go of my arm until I say so, okay?”

Her chin is dangerously close to trembling, but she nods anyway.
And he does the zapping thing again. Clarke absently notices that landing with Bellamy feels…
easier than with Finn. Like he’s a better flyer. He zaps them from place to place so fast she can’t
even make out the surroundings. She’s not even sure this is happening in Arkadia.

When she feels solid ground under her for more than two seconds, she dares to open her eyes. Rain
is pouring from the skies, and it’s nighttime. They’re in a desert somewhere, a few dry bushes the
only vegetation she spots.

“Where are we?” Her voice is nothing more than a whisper as they sky around them roars.

“Australian sectors,” Bellamy says nonchalantly. Her throat closes up. “There’s a cottage behind us,
it’s heavily warded. No supernatural thing can enter it. Hide there.”

“What about you?”

“I’m gonna take care of it.”

“I thought you said you’ll maneuver us away?”

“It was gonna catch up one way or another, and we can’t run forever. I had to get you somewhere
safe.” She turns and starts for the cabin, but hesitates. What if the demon kills Bellamy? Or hurts
him? While she’s hiding in there like a coward.

This isn’t your fight. Not this one.

Her hands clench into fists. I need you to survive this. So I won’t be stuck in Australia’s outback for
the rest of my life.

Don’t worry, I’ll get you home by eight.

Time passes. Clarke doesn’t know how much since there’s no clock in the cabin and she doesn’t
have anything on her either. It was supposed to be only five minutes of fresh air, after all. Finn’s
going to be pissed. But she can’t worry about that right now, not with Bellamy fighting a freaking
demon outside.

She sighs, glancing around the cabin. There’s not much to see. Wooden floors. Shabby, yellow
couch. A brown armchair with stains on it. There are two doors which lead to a bathroom and a mini
kitchen, which she discovered earlier.

Clarke wonders what’s happening outside. There’s no sound. Nothing. Maybe this cabin is not only
warded against other beings, but also against sounds. Ever so carefully she reaches out with her
thoughts and whispers, Bellamy?

Nothing.

Bellamy, are you okay?

She swallows when only silence greets her. He’s only five feet away. If he can hear her all across
Arkadia, he should be able to listen to her now. Okay, deep breath. Clarke gets up from the floor and
grips the doorknob.

Bellamy, I’m coming out, she tries one last time. After waiting a minute, she opens it.

Clarke narrows her eyes as she slowly walks down the porch. He isn’t here. No one is here except
for her. A different kind of fear creeps up her spine. What if he doesn’t —

Something hurls itself at her, throwing her to the ground. Clarke blinks and stares at the man pinning her down.

“Help me, please,” he begs. “He’s going to kill me!”

“What — who?”

“The angel.”

Clarke shakes her head. “Let me go,” she breathes. “Let me go, and I can help you.”

The man sends her a wide-eyed look before rolling to the ground, releasing her. She doesn’t even have time to get up or clear her head when an invisible force picks the man off the ground and throws him far away from her.

Bellamy.

He appears out of the dark, a grim expression on his face.

“What are you doing?” she demands as he walks past her like he’s not even seeing her. “Bellamy!”

His name makes him halt for a moment. “Let me do this.”

“He’s just a man!”

“He’s not,” he says and starts walking again, but she hurries after him.

“I’m not gonna let you kill someone!”

Bellamy doesn’t answer, just stares at the withering man on the ground.

His face is twisted into a scared, sobbing mess. “Pl - please, don’t kill me. I didn’t do anything!”

“Enough, Emerson,” Bellamy murmurs, still keeping him pinned on the ground with nothing but a stony expression.

“Bellamy,” she warns.

“It’s the demon. It wants you to believe it's just a helpless man, wants you to feel for him, but it’s just a game. Distraction for his miserable existence.” His words are cold, expressionless. Bellamy isn’t trying to convince her, she realizes. He's merely explaining. She doesn’t know whether that makes it easier or not.

Her eyes flicker to Emerson, and he instantly meets them, shakes his head. “I - I don’t know what he’s talking about! I’m human, not a damn demon! Look at me! Do I look like a demon to you?!?” Clarke swallows. “Please, you have to believe me! He’s mad!”

“If you want to be human so badly, you can die like one,” Bellamy says and takes another step toward him. Tilts his head.

Emerson’s body makes a horrible sound, the sound of bones shattering and splintering, and starts twisting into very unnatural angles like he’s having a seizure, but it's happening in slow motion. “Please, please help me! I don’t want to die!” There is so much fear and pain in his human eyes.
Clarke shakes her head.

“Stop it! What if — what if you’re wrong and he’s human?”

Bellamy halts but doesn’t give up the invisible grip on him. “I’m not wrong.”

“But what if you are?” she yells. “Wouldn’t he defend himself?”

“Show Clarke what you really are, Emerson.”

And he starts doing something. Something that makes Emerson scream in agonizing, brutal pain. Something that makes her yell and tug and throw her fists against his chest. Something that makes her sob in anger and terror. Emerson’s back arches off the ground, and he roars. Clarke watches with shaking hands as he stills and slaps back against the ground, into the dirt like he’s nothing more than an insect to Bellamy.

“What have you done?” Cold, relentless rage boils down into a quiet whisper. She stares up at him. "Do you even care?"

With an animalistic hiss Emerson suddenly shoots up from the ground, inhumanly fast, before flinging himself straight at Bellamy, who, without even blinking, vanishes and appears behind him instead. Clarke takes a step back. Emerson — the demon snarls and finally shows its true colors. Long, black claws replace his fingers, his face twists into a horrific sneer with fangs, and she swears she sees flames blazing behind his eyes for a moment. His hand shoots out and almost reaches Bellamy, but his power slaps it away. To everyone’s surprise, he meets the demon halfway, invisible hands shoving it backward as Bellamy pushes against him with a glare. It doesn’t look as smooth as before — when Emerson was still pretending to be human — it actually seems like it’s fighting back with equal powers.

She’s silently praying for something, for Bellamy perhaps, when all of a sudden she’s yanked forward, right in the middle of that fight. A whimper escapes her as claws wrap around her throat.

“What soft, fragile human skin,” Emerson breathes into her and squeezes ever so slightly, “how beautiful it will be to rip it apart.” It’s enough for his sharp claws to dig into her skin, shredding and choking her. Clarke lets out a soft cry and tries to free herself, get away, but his grip is tight, too tight to do anything but struggle.

“You just extended your death from one hour to a day,” Clarke hears Bellamy say, and even she has to shudder at the tone of his voice. Emerson’s claws tighten. Blood trickles down her neck. Somewhere in the distance, it thunders as Bellamy stalks forward and his power unfolds around him, grows and rallies before shooting out. If Emerson was inhumanly fast, Bellamy is... it’s faster than the speed of light.

The claws release her, and she stumbles forward, her hands coming up to her throat as she struggles to breathe evenly. A few feet away Bellamy has one hand around the demon’s throat as he keeps it pinned down to the ground.

“Hope you enjoy the bed you made for yourself,” Bellamy hisses.

“At least I’ll die knowing I hunted you for years, will haunt you for eternity for what you did to me, even if I didn’t kill you,” it hisses back, “but maybe death is too good for you.” Emerson isn’t even trying to get free. Clarke isn’t sure if he already gave up or if he knows it’s not worth trying with all of Bellamy’s power concentrated on him.
“You got exactly what you deserved, and you know it.”

“And you will get that, too.”

_Shut your eyes._

She jerks back when blinding, white light shoots out of Bellamy’s hand, filling Emerson up and setting him ablaze. Burning him alive. Burning, burning, burning. But Clarke doesn’t look away, nor does she close her eyes. She’s can’t. It’s like she’s entranced by it. Emerson’s screams are a distant sound in her head as she stares and stares and — she sees wings behind Bellamy. Huge, long wings spreading out on his back as he breaks Emerson. They’re not entirely clear. It’s more like she’s looking at a layer between the world without the wings and a world with them. Weak, faded, and yet somehow more majestic and breathtaking than anything else she’s ever seen.

It ends just as fast as it started and Clarke blinks when darkness surrounds her again. In the spot where the demon was lying, now only remains black ash. The wings are gone. Rain trickles down on her skin.

After a minute of nothing, Bellamy gets up and dusts off his black jacket before walking to her. Her breath stills when he touches her neck, blood coating his fingers. “Sorry for that,” he murmurs. An eyeblink later the razor-sharp pain that she felt seconds earlier is gone. Frowning, Clarke touches her own neck and sees that the skin is fixed. He healed her.

“C’mon,” he says, touching her arm, “I promised you to get you home by eight.”

She yanks her arm away.

> > —— ♂ —— ««

Clarke doesn’t speak when he zaps them back to Arkadia and brings her to the door of Finn and her hotel room. Doesn’t ask him the thousands of burning questions on her mind. Like what the hell. Who Emerson was. What Bellamy did to him. Why he let it play with her. His wings.

Only when he opens his mouth to say something, does she cut him off, “Let’s make one thing clear: just because you were right about him being a demon, it doesn’t make it better. You —“

_I know that._

Her hands clench into fists as his voice invades her head. She bites out, “Don’t speak to me like that. Never again.”

Bellamy blinks, steps back. “Okay.”

“Finn was right about you,” she goes on, “you’re dangerous. I don’t know what you did to that demon or what he did to you, and I don’t want to know, but him searching you out says enough about you and what kind of pers — angel you are. I don’t want to have anything to do with that.” She shakes her head. “I came here to find my father’s murderer, and if that’s not you, then I don’t need to see you again. I want to come out alive at the end of all this.”

“You’re right,” Bellamy says. It’s not what she expected, but it doesn’t matter. Just makes this easier.

Clarke gives him one last look and grabs the doorknob. “Don’t… come here again.” She waits a few seconds before turning to look. As expected he’s gone. She just doesn’t know if he left before or after she said it.
Sighing, she knocks and waits for Finn to open the door. He might be angry with her now, but at least he’ll keep her safe, unlike Bellamy who just brings trouble with him.

After a minute, the door opens, and Finn greets her with a flushed face.

“Finn,” she breathes and comes inside, the door falling shut behind her with a loud slam. “I’m —“

“You were with him.” Not a question, but a statement.

“Yes, but you were right. He —“

“I searched the whole city for you,” he cuts her off, his eyes, not meeting hers, “and I couldn’t find you anywhere. It was like you just vanished off the face of the earth. But I knew Bellamy was here, could smell him.” His nose wrinkles in something that looks like disgust. “I thought he took you.”

“Finn,” Clarke says, her heart clenching inside.

“I had warned you time and time again, but you just wouldn’t listen, so I thought he finally did it. Made you trust him and then took you. And when I heard there’s a demon in Polis...” He looks like he’s lost in the memories, talks like it’s a story he’s telling her, instead of talking to her. “I called help.” Clarke’s brows furrow as his eyes land on something behind her, and she turns around.

“Hello, Clarke.”

Lexa.

Clarke spins around, eyes wide. “No, Finn. You didn’t —“

“I — I thought he would hurt you,” he stammers, and finally she understands the shadow in his eyes. Not anger. Guilt. “She was the only one strong enough to find you.”

“What did you do?” she whispers. The room is suddenly filled with twenty other people. All angels. All their focus on her. “What the hell did you do?” she repeats over and over again as two men step forward and grab her arms. Clarke’s surrounded by creatures who are all a dozen times more powerful than her. No way of escaping. She’s trapped.

“I had to get you back,” he repeats, voice a quiet whisper. “I did it for you.”

Chapter End Notes

Warnings:
- in the second half of the chapter Bellamy "tortures" a man/demon and snaps the bones in his body
- the demon scratches Clarke’s neck and it starts bleeding
- there is a fight and in the end, Bellamy burns out the demon and kills him

Alright, this was chapter number four! Please, I’d love to hear what you think so far! What do you think will happen to Clarke now? How much do y'all hate Finn from one to Trump? Tell me <3
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

I apologize for the delay! There was a plot point in this story that I couldn't work out but I think I got it now. Again, there's violence in this chapter so if you want a warning, skip to the note at the end.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Clarke’s mind has reduced to a blurry, quiet echo of Finn’s words. I had to get you back. I did it for you. He’s talking to her, she hears his voice, but the words don’t reach her. Not really. For you. I did it for you.

He’s right. It’s her own damn fault. If she’d just stayed in the room like he always told her to instead of going outside. If she’d just ignored Bellamy in her head, then maybe she wouldn’t be stuck in this mess right now.

“What Finn forget to mention, Clarke, is that we’re not going to hurt you. If you work with us,” Lexa’s voice cuts through her mind. Sharp, like a sword.

The only reaction Clarke gives her is a glare.

“Come to heaven with us.”

Last time they told her to say yes, nearly tortured her for that word. That’s what they're waiting for now, too, why they haven’t dragged her up there yet. She could refuse again. But as she glances around the room and the angels, all of them capable of ripping her apart without so much as a blink, Clarke realizes there’s no point in it. Either they will inflict enough pain on her until she’s begging them to let her say yes, or —

A woman with black short hair steps next to Finn, a thin, shining blade appearing in her hand. Clarke gulps. Or they will use him. Poor Finn who probably doesn’t even realize he’s just trapped himself in the cage of wolves right beside her. They’re both rabbits here.

“Okay.”

“Say the words, Clarke.”

She closes her eyes and says, “I’ll go to heaven with you. Yes, okay?”

Darkness swallows her.

She finds herself in an office. Frowning, her eyes dart from the chair she’s sitting on — unchained — to the table in front of her, to the single folder lying there, to the three candles burning, to a pen — maybe sharp enough to use as a knife?

“It’s not,” Lexa’s voice says from behind her. “And whatever else you find in here won’t be able to harm me either. So best to spare your energy for the important matters.”
"Such as?" Clarke doesn’t even bother turning around. Three seconds later Lexa comes around the table anyway and sits down on the impressive wooden chair. Her clothes are simple. Black tight pants. Black top. The only thing hinting at her rank is a red cape falling over her shoulder and down her back.

“Saving the world.”

“You already said that once, but I still don’t hear how or when —“

“All in due time, Clarke.”

Clarke huffs out an angry breath. “What are you? Allergic to giving me a straight answer?”

“I will show you something, something heaven has been looking for a long time now,” Lexa goes on as if she didn’t even hear her. “And I want you to tell me if you know anything about it.”

She stretches out her hand and opens her palm revealing a key inside it. Clarke raises an unimpressed brow.

“A key?”

Lexa nods.

“Am I supposed to tell you what a key is, or what is it that you want to hear?” Silence. “They fucking open doors. I don’t know!” Her impatience and anger rush out of her in thick, rolling waves, filling the room. Even though Clarke knows she should reign them in if she wants a shot of coming out alive, she can’t be bothered right now.

“Or they close them.”

She sighs at yet another vague answer. “What is it?”

“It’s the key of God. The only thing able to lock up heaven and hell once and for all.”

Jesus, this is the first real information Clarke has gotten so far. And yet it doesn’t make matters any more logical.

“If you lost it, how are you holding it right now?”

“It’s a replica.”

“So you’ve lost the key, and I’m supposed to do what exactly?”

“For now, look at it and tell me what you think.”

Her brows furrow. This is really fucking stupid, she thinks when she notices Lexa’s intense stare and realizes what’s happening. Lexa’s in her head, reading her thoughts, probably looking through every corner of her mind. What Clarke doesn’t know is what exactly she’s looking for.

“I see the key and think what the hell am I doing here.”

For another few moments, Lexa’s stare doesn’t falter. Then she leans back, her mouth pressing into a thin line. Clarke guesses the search wasn’t successful.

“You’re special, Clarke.”
“How so.”

“How so.”

“Haven’t you noticed your effect on Polis since you came here?”

It’s very hard not to roll her eyes.

“One angel falls in love with you up until the point of obsession. Another supposedly evil angel isn’t evil to you. Strangers come to warn you, try to protect you. A demon — the monstrosities that haven’t dared to come to Arkadia for hundreds of years — makes an appearance.” Lexa taps a nail against the surface of the table. “For a human, you certainly attract a lot of attention.”

“Maybe because I’m the first human to come here.”

“And why do you think that is?”

Something about it — the tone of her voice, the minimal arch of her brows, and the knowing glint in Lexa’s green eyes makes the hair on Clarke’s neck stand.

She was the first human to come here because she wanted to find her father’s murderer. The murderer who killed all these people because of her.

The wheels in her mind start turning again, clicking into place.

She was lured here.

The angel killed people in her surroundings. People that she knew and would hear about it. The angel let itself be seen. Not its face, no. Just enough to allow the people to see the powers, that it’s an angel. And it worked, Clarke heard about it, but that wasn’t enough to make her come to Arkadia. No. The person that pushed her here was her father. So they killed him. And she did exactly what they wanted her to do. She stalked to Polis like a good, little mouse following the smell of cheese. But why? It doesn’t make sense. Not entirely. Why not drag her here? Why not simply give her enough bruises and cuts until she comes with them. Why plan all of this instead of —

“The missing piece you’re looking for,” Lexa says, “is a rule.”

Clarke’s breath goes dangerously still.

“No mortal enters Arkadia unless they decide to do so with their mind free of any sort of angelic interference. Unless they do so out of their free will.”

The last piece finally clicks.

“It’s a law Polis and the other angelic cities were built on. We can’t take anyone from the outside, nor bribe them to come here.”

“You,” Clarke hisses.

Not a single muscle flinches in that cold, murderous face.

“You killed my father. You killed twelve other people and for what? Just so that I come here and go to heaven where you ask me to look at a key?!”

“This key can save thousands of lives —“

“You bitch!” The anger that has been coiling up inside her ever since Lexa started talking explodes. Burns her up from the inside. Clarke lunges from her chair over the table to where this murdering
piece of shit is sitting. She grabs at anything her hands touch — the skin on her neck, her chin, her cheeks — and squeezes, claws at her in the hope that it will even remotely hurt as much as Lexa had hurt Clarke.

Hands grab her from behind and when she pushes back, screams and scratches like a wild animal, she feels an invisible, oversized rope tightening around her neck and throwing her against the wall.

She groans at the pain that shoots up her spine, her head, her throat. Still, that pain only overshadows her fury for a moment. Then she sees Lexa touching her neck, looking merely disheveled and starts screaming again, fighting against those boundaries that keep her pinned against the wall.

“I hope you rot in hell! I hope you die a slow, painful death and rot in the place you hate the most —”

“Another word at the Commander and I’ll break your bones. One by one,” the angel keeping her there growls.

“I’LL KILL YOU THE NEXT TIME I —”

Without any warning, she falls to the floor. The angel steps in front of her, then steps on her arm, and Clarke watches, her lungs on fire from all the screaming, as the bone in the same arm snaps into two.

Pain.

So much pain.

Clarke didn’t know this kind of pain even exists. She just screams and screams and screams.

Another crack. Even more pain.

“ — said enough, Indra!”

Finally, finally, she steps off her broken arm. Clarke sobs, whether it's in relief or agony or rage — she doesn’t know. She’s still wailing when they drag her away.

The cell they keep her in is entirely white. It's so white that she can't even see where the floor ends and the wall begins.

Whenever Clarke wondered about what heaven looked like, she imagined it like this. White. Bright. Spacious. Even if the creatures that came from it were said to be dangerous, mighty beasts. Still, Clarke only came up with this image thinking about it. With all the rumors and sightings going around, she never stopped attaching heaven to something positive, something good.

If she talked to her past self, she’d slap that girl.

Heaven — although it is, in fact, white and spacious — is the opposite of good. As far as she knows there’s no actual difference between heaven and hell. Only how people perceive it. In the end, though, the same evil, hateful, murdering creatures with a lack of respect for human lives are born from it.

Her arm throbs dully, and she fixates the bandage she made out of her own jacket for the fifth time today. It’s not healing. Not like a broken arm is supposed to after a week. Maybe the angels are conjuring that process, too.
They — or rather Lexa’s minion that likes to hurt Clarke whenever she doesn’t obey like a personal lapdog — come in here every day to take her to Lexa. And every time she refuses to, mostly by attacking the hands that try to grab her. She’s not sure why they don’t just zap her there. It’s not like they lack power. Perhaps Lexa knows that it would end in nothing but screaming and a murder attempt, and definitely not cooperation. Maybe it has something to do with free will, too.

There’s no food or water here, but Clarke’s body doesn’t seem to need it anyway. She just misses the feeling of it. Biting into a juicy sandwich. Waking up in the middle of the night and downing half a bottle of water as if it was holy juice. She misses these basic human things.

All the free time she has here, Clarke spends coming up with scenarios on how to kill Lexa. And her minion. And every other angel up here. Or plotting her impossible escape. Or, as pathetic as it sounds, crying. Sobbing into her hands and hoping that no angel can hear her so that when they kill her, she’ll die at least with some part of her dignity intact.

In the first few days in this cell, Clarke hoped Finn would come for her. Protect her, just like he had promised all these weeks ago. But then she remembered his face when he told her how hard he’d been trying to find her, how he’d had to get help; remembered Finn had put her here and she realized he wouldn’t come to save her. No, not Finn. If anything, he probably thinks they’re braiding each other’s hair and chasing butterflies here. Or he’s in a cell, just like her.

Then a stupid, naive part of Clarke hoped Bellamy would. He had already saved her from Lexa once, and he hadn’t seemed to work with her then. And she wouldn’t put it past him to pull it off. See, Finn’s an angel, but he barely uses his powers, almost seems clumsy using them. But Bellamy? She had seen him using his skills and well, he’d been competent. Not to mention his guts. She thinks he could outsmart Lexa. Anyway, Bellamy seemed like the more realistic choice until her last words to him echoed through her head and she concluded he wouldn’t come for her either.

Her anger at him and what happened with Emerson had subdued, replaced by something far more vigorous and lethal. But she couldn’t unsay what she’d told him that night, and she didn’t blame him either. So even if he somehow heard that she was here, taken by Lexa, Clarke doubts he’d bother to come.

And yet that stupid, hopeful part of her tried reaching out once or twice, whispering his name into the hollows of her dim mind. Nothing — no one ever replied.

No one’s coming here to save her.

The door to her cell opens, but to her surprise, it’s not the evil minion that appears — Indra, Lexa called her. This angel is a man with equally dark skin, broad shoulders and chest and an intimidating stare. So the male version of Indra.

Clarke sighs, preparing herself to fight him when he’ll grab her broken arm, or try to seize her by the hair.

“Lexa wants to see you. Come.”

“No.”

“Please, Clarke.”

Her brows furrow. He’s the first to call her by her name. Otherwise, it’s always just do this or do that, but never her name. Still, she shakes her head. Name be damned.

The angel’s face remains expressionless, but he approaches her, and she almost smiles. There you go,
a fucked up voice in her head thinks. Her own voice. His hand grabs her arm, and she holds her breath, waiting for the pain to intensify.

It never comes.

The grip on her wound is gentle, soft, and most importantly it’s taking away her pain. Healing her. Not enough to fix the fractured bone, but enough to relieve the pain. So when he ever so slightly tugs her out of the cell, she follows, even if it’s just to keep feeling painless.

He walks through a long corridor with her, past several other doors, until they stop in front of large marble gates. Clarke’s blood starts pulsing at the person she’s about to see in that room. The angel lets go of her arm, and her arm starts throbbing again. Not as strong, as agonizing as before.

She looks at him and mouths, “Thank you.”

There’s barely a reaction, a mere flicker in his eyes before he turns and pushes open the doors.

The room is full of pe — angels watching her walk in and in the center of it, there is a chair, which looks more like a throne. Lexa’s sitting on it, and behind her is another angel with raven black hair that falls over the red dress she’s wearing. In this room, they’re positively glowing. Glowing isn’t really the right word. There’s this light — no, energy pouring out of them which seems to absorb any flicker of darkness or shadow. It’s ironic, considering that these creatures are coldblooded killers.

Clarke keeps her chin high as her eyes slide over the two angels, who are now looking back at her. Lexa’s face is stiff and expressionless as always. The other angel — Clarke can’t place the expression in her eyes. It’s like she’s not looking at Clarke, but looking through her.

“You brought her, Lincoln,” Lexa says, something other than dullness that Clarke places as awe, in her voice. The angel’s eyes flicker to something behind her, probably the man that brought her here. “I’ll have to send you next time as well.”

“Yes, Commander.”

Fool, her own voice in her head hisses. Clarke was so happy to have some of her pain taken away, that she followed the man right out here. Probably exactly what Lexa expected. And Clarke fell right for it. Again. And now here she is. Standing in front of these two angels with a room full of more angels, all gathered to watch her demise. She allows herself to take a quick glance around for the first time and is shocked to find even Finn here. His gaze is pointedly trained at the shiny floor, and she silently wonders if he knows what’s about to happen.

“Our last conversation ended rather… violently,” Lexa starts again, and Clarke tries to reign in the anger that shoots up inside her chest at the memory, “but what’s done is done. You have to think about the present and the future, Clarke. Both of which are endangered.”

Yeah, she already heard the saving the world line. Angels are so terribly uncreative.

“We need you to find the key.”

Clarke doesn’t reply, doesn’t move or flinch. Exploding into fire and rage won’t do her any good, and technically neither will this, but it’ll piss them off, and that’s better than nothing.

“You’re allowed to speak, Clarke.”

Great. The problem is that Clarke doesn’t want to though. She keeps staring back at them, unbothered and uncooperative when she hears that familiar snarl behind her — Indra’s snarl. This
time she does flinch.

“Let me make her talk, Commander.”

Lexa’s mouth presses into a line, and she gives her a look. “Clarke?”

Clarke forces every cell of her body to be silent even though she knows what’s coming. Indra’s hands are already curling at her sides before Lexa gives her the go — a short nod. And then she dares to look away as Indra seizes her up with a hard stare.

There’s no warning, no chance to say something before the power rips through her and into her chest — not that she would’ve taken that chance to give in. Clarke falls to her knees as the pain roars through her body, something breaking in her.

She forces her gaze to the throne, even with her chest cracking open. Lexa’s looking away, so does the other woman. So Clarke looks to the side at Finn. The indifference on his face hurts nearly as much as what’s being done to her.

Indra is actually breaking the ribs inside her chest, Clarke believes. That’s what it feels like. Her face twists in pain, but her eyes remain on Finn. She hopes he feels guilty and gets eaten alive by it. Selling her out to Lexa aside, he has a heart. She knows he does. And she hopes that heart will crush with guilt.

The force leaves her chest abruptly, and she clutches at her chest, trying to breathe again.

“Next time the commander speaks, you speak back,” Indra hisses and steps away. Not completely vanishing, in case Clarke needs another round of motivation, but enough so that she’s the center of attention yet again.


Rising to her feet, Clarke lets out a hot breath. “No.”

God, Indra shifts somewhere behind her, but Lexa shakes her head. “Not yet.” How generous. “You have to work with us eventually, Clarke. Spare us all a lot of time and just drink.”

“I don’t have to do anything. Not as long as my free will doesn’t want to.”

Lexa presses her lips together. For the first time, it looks like she doesn’t want to say whatever comes next. The angel in the red doesn’t have that problem as she steps forward and nods at Indra.

“Very well. Indra will you —”

“What —” she gulps, her throat feeling dry all of a sudden, “— is it?” Clarke is aware of the fear she just exposed, but damn it — she needs a break. At least a few minutes before Indra goes to work again. So she gambles for said time.

“Your human mind won’t grasp it,” Lexa says.

“Try me.”

“It’s something that will help you find the key.”

“What do you want with the key?”

“Drink, Clarke.”
"What do you want with it."

Lexa’s nostrils flare as Clarke — poor mortal, helpless Clarke dares to defy her, an angel of the lord. Dares to talk to her like that. Disrespect her in front of all the others. Maybe Lexa was right, and she is special. Her special gift is an extraordinary ability to piss off angels.

“I told you what they key’s capable of,” Lexa eventually answers. “Hell is reorganizing. Their queen plans to break open the gates again, unleash herself on earth. The key can stop her.”

Clarke blinks. The emotion genuine, not a show for the first time today. “You want to lock up hell?”

“And heaven.”

“Why me?” she asks. “How am I supposed to find the key? I didn’t feel a damn thing looking at that replica.”

“Because you were born for this,” Lexa tells her. “You were born to save and liberate your world from all creatures once and for all. All you have to do is trust us, and drink from the goblet.”

For a minute she’s distracted, surprised. For a minute the anger stills, but now it’s boiling up to the surface again, her hands beginning to shake. “Born for this?” Clarke spits. “I came here because you lured me here. You killed my friends, my neighbors, my father, knowing I’d come here! I’ll never trust you. Or work with you.”

“I don’t fully agree with the methods either, Clarke, but it’s what had to be done. Those people died for a greater cause.”

“Those people died for nothing but your incompetence and lack of social skills!”

There are some audible intakes of breath at Clarke’s insult.

“You could’ve asked me! A simple question!” she yells. “I’d probably happily said yes to finally free mankind of your entitled, murderous species. You didn’t have to kill!”

Lexa snarls. Actually snarls. “I’m asking you now, and you’re refusing. How different do you think it would have been if I asked you then?”

“I’m saying no now because you’re an arrogant bitch that murdered my father!”

Indra growls, her presence coming closer.

“You’re letting emotions stop you when there’s so much more at stake.”

Deep down Clarke knows that she’s being unreasonable, even though she has good reasons to be. If hell really wants to break free again, start another war, it could cost thousands of human lives. Just because of her stubbornness.

“There must be someone else able to do this,” Clarke says and throws a glance at Finn. “Finn’s great at retrieving lost things, not me.”

“Oh, he has already located many essential items. He’s played his part.” Lexa looks at her. “Now it’s time to play yours.”

“If you refuse again, then perhaps we can find something else that could convince you,” the other angel puts in. “Think of your mother, Clarke. Your father’s gone, but Abby Griffin is alive and well. That could change.”
Clarke feels like throwing up.

Lexa’s gives her a look. „This is your choice, Clarke. Drink.“

„If you kill my mom, I sure as hell won’t drink,“ she hisses, ”and you’ll never find the key.“ Her voice is burning with seething fury, and she hopes they all know that she means it. One finger laid on her mom or Wells and she promises she will burn down this entire place and drag them all to hell with her.

Perhaps Clarke’s thoughts are so loud everyone here can hear it. Or maybe it’s just the smartest choice to believe her, because Lexa rises from her throne, descending the few stairs, that elevate her and the other angel from the other, and comes to a halt in front of Clarke.

„You’re just human. You’ll break eventually.“

And yet all of them are gathered here — a bunch of mighty angels who can turn cities into ash with a snap of their finger. All of them dependant on her. Clarke may be only human, but for such a harmless, helpless species she certainly holds a lot of power.

Lexa narrows her eyes. "I'd advise you not to become arrogant. That will only cost you up here."

"Let her," the other angel cuts in and saunters down to join them. When Clarke looks at the woman, her eyes are bright, clear, but also empty like shards of broken glass. She appears more inhuman than anyone else here. "This isn't a matter of yes or no, Clarke. It's a matter of when because you will bend to our will, whether you give in because we kill your remaining family, torture you until you're begging us to have mercy or because we set fire to the world that you love so dearly."

The matter of fact tone in which this angel delivers this speech unsettles Clarke. Then again if she were a thousand-year-old creature, perhaps death and destruction wouldn't bother her either. It also dawns on her how much they are willing to do to find this damned key. They must be really desperate to close heaven or hell.

Lexa nods. "Balance," she says, "between the three planes of existence must be restored."

Clarke glances at the goblet again. So what if she drinks whatever is in there? Say, it works and she actually gets the power to find that damned key, then Lexa would close heaven and hell. That would be good for the people on earth. For her family. For Clarke herself. Even if the thought of working with these angels makes her blood boil.

The doors explode open behind her, and before she can turn around a familiar voice booms through the room. "Except that it's so much more than my dear siblings have let on."

Clarke spins around to see Bellamy stand at the gates, a cold sneer on his face, directed not at her but at Lexa and the other angel.

However, Lexa's just as annoyed by his unexpected visit, the hands at her sides clenching into fists as she stalks forward. "What are you doing here, Bellamy?"

All he does is cock an unimpressed brow. "What? I'm not allowed to take part in this spectacle?"

"What we do here is none of your business," Lexa spits. "How dare you even enter this sacred place with that stained grace of yours?"

"Stained grace or not, I'm still an angel, sister." Shrugging, Bellamy steps around Lexa and saunters up the stairs where he plops down on the arm of the chair. "And I'm here to make my own claim on
“your pet.” His gaze lands on her, eyes glimmering with danger.

Clarke's jaw hardens. Her situation just took an unexpected turn to the worse — if that's even possible.

Chapter End Notes

Warnings for violence:
- In the beginning, Clarke talks to Lexa in the office and after a great discovery she attacks Lexa, clawing at her, whereupon Indra grabs her and breaks her arm for attacking Lexa
- When Clarke refuses to talk to Lexa again and drink the potion Indra uses angel magic to torture her (breaking her ribs)

As always I would love to hear your thoughts on this! There wasn't a lot of Bellamy in this chapter but you got your first answers. There will be more Bellamy and Bellarke in the next chapter <3
Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

I am so. incredibly. sorry. for the super long delay! I didn't expect uni to kick my ass this time of the year but it did and I found no time or motivation to edit until now. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Now that Bellamy's in front of her, in front of them all, perched on Lexa's throne on the dais, Clarke sees that same energy pouring out of him as well. He catches the light. It dances in his eyes, in his sneer, in the fingers tapping against wood. And then she sees wings.

Clarke has to blink to make sure her eyes aren't playing tricks on her. There are huge, elegant wings spreading out behind Bellamy, just like when he was fighting that demon. This time, however, she can see that they're black. She's not sure when they appeared. It feels like they were there the whole time, but that can't be true. However, looking at them she notices that there's not only light. There's darkness, too. It spills from the ink black on his wings and curls around his torso like fine smoke.

Whatever Finn or Lexa said about his corrupted being, the proof is right there. At that, Clarke glances to her side at Finn who is still avoiding her gaze at any cost. For just a moment he looks back, though. A dozen emotions flash in his eyes. Concern. Fear. Anger. But most of all guilt. It both satisfies and confuses her, so she looks away.

"— a matter for heaven," Lexa's voice snarls, bringing her back to the present, "which you clearly don't belong to anymore. You made sure of that."

"That was just as much your doing as it was mine," Bellamy retorts with a keen glower.

"You are not welcome, Bellamy."

"And yet here I am." He nods to Clarke then, and for a moment she sees cold rage flicker in his eyes. "Father would be so proud of you, Lex."

Lexa's whole posture tenses at the mention of the father but before she can move the other angel steps between them.

"Focus on the task."

"I am," Lexa growls through a clenched jaw, her hand gesturing at Bellamy, "but he is sabotaging —"

Bellamy cuts her off, "I have a right to the key as well. What's the matter with that?"

"The planes need to be balanced again. Heaven needs that. But of course, you wouldn't know."

"Oh, you mean your precious plan to close heaven and hell? I bet that was Alie's grand idea."

Clarke watches the whole interaction with a mild frown. None of them look like powerful, strong creatures but more like a bunch of overpowered siblings fighting over the tv remote. The remote in the scenario being Clarke. She would find that funny if her situation wasn't so dire.
"Oh, and look, our mighty key bringer is getting bored," Bellamy says, voice full of mockery.

Clarke narrows her eyes. Asshole.

There's a loud thud behind them, and she spins around to find the gates fall closed, two angels stepping in front and flanking them. Then Lexa waves a hand which lets Bellamy tumble from her chair. He recovers gracefully, straightening and patting an invisible fleck of dust from his jacket.

Lexa says, "Clarke Griffin belongs to heaven. You will not take her."

"We'll see about that," he mutters, striding down the stairs.

"What will you do? Use your rotten power?"

"Oh, you mean that?" Bellamy flicks his wrist and shadows emerge from behind him — no, from him? — growing thick and oozy. "That's just a party trick. What I meant was this."

For a second Clarke frowns because nothing happens. At least, nothing her human brain grasps. But then it feels like the air is being sucked out of her lungs, black spots filling her vision. Her knees buckle under her, giving in. It all happens so fast, she doesn't know which voices ring through her ears. Lexa's. Bellamy's. Alie's? It could be anyone.

All she knows is that eventually, someone says, "Take her away" while Clarke’s still huddling on the floor from the pain. Something warm trickles down her mouth, her chin. It feels like she's both suffocating and bleeding out from the inside.

Two hands grab her, haul her to her feet, and she stumbles after them, her sight blurry.

"Heal her." This one belongs to Lexa, Clarke manages to comprehend.

Behind her, she hears Bellamy’s voice, too, “Well, ladies and gentleman. It’s been a pleasure as always.” There’s a murmur of angry voices before Clarke’s being pushed through the door.

She blinks slowly when she sees the long hallway. Bodies. Dead or unconscious bodies everywhere.

“Okay, we have to be fast,” the angel next to her says in a whisper. It's Lincoln, the same one who healed and brought her here. “We have two minutes before they notice.” He starts tugging her after him, past the angels, past the doors, and past her cell. Clarke wants to ask what he’s doing, who he is working for, but all she can do is match his pace and run with him. Anywhere, as long as it’s a way out of here.

They only stop when they reach some kind of lobby — all white, marble and shiny.

“Where are we going?”

“Somewhere safe,” he replies as he waves a hand over the wall and an elevator appears. Clarke doesn’t even blink anymore. “Bellamy will explain on the way.”

The hair on her arms bristles. “Bellamy?” She thought she is running away from Bellamy, and Lexa, and every other angel that has set their eyes on her.

“It’s not what you think it is. You’ll be safe.” He’s nudging his head towards the elevator. Clarke’s supposed to go in there, but her feet don’t move. Hesitating. If she hasn't gone mad in the last few weeks, it was Bellamy who made her greet the reaper mere minutes ago. Even if, Clarke realizes slowly, that horrible pain has faded the instant she left through the gates. The doubts remain, though.
What if she just switches one evil for another?

Clarke gulps. “That’s what she told me, too.”

And the bruises on her body and soul tell enough what Lexa made of that promise.

“We won’t force you to come with us, Clarke, but then they will keep you here and work on you until you give in and drink from that goblet. Until you break.”

Her eyes dart to him and back over her shoulder to where they had held her. Two minutes are nearly up. Clarke takes a deep breath and joins him in the elevator, eyes trained on the doors that slide closed.

In the matter of a flutter of the lashes they are not in an elevator anymore. It’s become an empty room instead.

“How —” Clarke blinks, glancing around. “How did we get here?”

“You were here the whole time.”

Her whole body tenses at the voice behind her. Bellamy. “Hold on,” he says and touches her arm. Her surroundings change yet again, and Clarke finds herself in the middle of a city now. “I had to get us away from the place they left you in. That’s where they’d look for you first.”

There’s so much she hasn’t grasped yet, so many burning questions and things she has to say, but all she does is glower at Bellamy.

He slides his hands into the pockets of his pants and looks at her. A woman frowning at her phone bumps his shoulders, murmurs a hasty apology and continues walking. “Heaven is not a place,” Bellamy starts again, and her hands shake by her side. “At least not a physical one. When they took you up there, they only took your soul and left your body in that room. That’s why you woke up there.”

Not a real place. Heaven. Her soul was out of her body? Like she’s just remembering now, her hand touches her nose that was bleeding, but there’s nothing there. She’s untouched. But it had felt so real —

“Everything they do to someone in heaven, they do to their soul. It was real.”

She shivers at the memories, closes her eyes and forces them away. For a moment she is silent, doesn’t trust herself to speak without starting to scream or cry or laugh with madness. Then. “Where are we now?”

“Arkadia. A city in the south-eastern zone, formerly known as New Zealand.”

Clarke frowns. “Not an angel city?”

“No,” he replies. “I can bring you home if you want that.”

Home. It feels like she left that place ages ago, even though it’s only been a month or two. And although she craves nothing more than to fall into her bed, or see Wells again and sob into his chest for an hour or two, she knows she can’t do that. Bellamy broke her out of there, but all of this is far from over. Her home will be the first place, they’ll look for her.

“I’d only risk my family’s safety if I went there,” she says.
“We can install wards — actual wards that will work against any kind of supernatural beings. And I can send a few of my men to —”

“No.” Her choice has been made. She’s not letting anyone else die for her. Too many people already did. Too much blood on her hands. “I’m not going home,” Clarke says, just to make sure her own heart hears the words.

“Where are you going then?”

Some of that anger she’s been repressing for weeks now, flares up in her chest. Clarke shoots him a glare. “That’s what you’d like to know, right? You want the key, too?”

Bellamy crosses his arms. “I didn’t break you out so that you’ll find the key for me, Clarke.”

“Then why did you do it? You said you want the key! Tell me. Why would Bellamy — the powerful, angel of darkness save me if not to use me as your own weapon?”

For a moment she sees his forehead crinkle in tight lines in annoyance, but it quickly smoothes into a soft sigh. “I don’t want the damn key. I actually want it as far away from heaven as possible.”

“Oh, so you saved me to kill me so that the key never gets found. Is that it?”

“Do you actually believe I’m that kind of monster?” It’s bad enough he has the nerve to ask this question after everything she’s been through, but the amusement in his voice drives her through the roof.

"I felt like I was about to die when you did that —" Her words falter as she searches for a term to describe his strange, painful powers he used on her. "— thing to me!"

Bellamy's ease fades, a shadow of something that looks like regret but probably isn't flickering in his eyes. "Only special choirs of angels can heal de— that kind of injury. Lincoln is one of them. I did it so he could get you out of the main room."

"Why the dramatic entrance then? You could've done that from the start."

"We needed more time to make sure no one would see once you were out. I was distracting them.”

Clarke shakes her. It makes sense when she thinks about it even if she would rather stab herself than admit it. There must be something he wants from her. Bellamy's mouth curls into a grin.


“You’re so lovely,” he hums.

“And you’re an idiot,” she snaps. “All of you angels are. I hate all of you.”

Not a hint of hesitation when Bellamy says, “Come with me to my home and I’ll show you it’s not always like this. Not all of us are.”

The nerve! The audacity. Clarke lets out an incredulous laugh. “I would rather die.”

“That’s a tad dramatic, don’t you think?”

“It’s exactly the right amount of dramatic for this kind of stupid offer.”

Bellamy lets out a sigh. “Tell me where to bring you and I will. I will leave you alone, but I need to
make sure you’ll be safe. At least until everything’s dealt with.”

She would like to retort something mean and vile to express the all-consuming hatred inside her, but for once she doesn’t know how to answer his question. After everything that’s happened, Clarke doesn’t have anywhere else to go. Not really. Home is out of the question. Polis not an option either. And every other place… she would have to start from scratch. Build an entirely new life. But with what exactly? She has nothing.

“I don’t know,” she finally admits. The words seethe with quiet shame.

Clarke sees Bellamy play with a ring on his finger, twist it from side to side, and she looks up to see him swallow. If she didn’t know any better, she’d say he’s nervous.

“I’ll say this only once and then never again,” he says, “because I don’t want you to think this is your only choice. You have other options, but… I am serious about bringing you home. You can stay a night, see if you like it. I won’t bother you there, and if it’s not what you want, you’re always free to leave.” He shrugs. “Or you can tell me any place in this world, and I’ll make sure you have enough money and supplies to start a new life.”

After being denied choosing for herself in heaven, this many choices overwhelm her. Clarke takes a step back, glances around the city. Now she sees it. These are all people passing them, on and about their days, lost in their phones, appointments, daily horrors and human responsibilities. No sneers on their faces when they see her.

Maybe the cruelest thing heaven did to her, was taking her own self, the very essence of what she used to, because Clarke doesn’t feel like she belongs among these people anymore either.

“Okay,” she whispers.

“Okay, what?” Bellamy asks slowly.

Clarke’s empty chest turns towards him as she lets out a breath and meets his stare. “I will come with you.”

Chapter End Notes

Very short, but I had to end it here because it will, obviously, take a very different turn after this. I think you guys will like what’s coming next. Lots and lots of B&C interaction. Finally! I promise I will try not to fall behind schedule again and update twice a week. (Pray for my uni life to calm the fuck down!)
Chapter Notes

I made a playlist for this fic which contains all the songs I listened to when I was writing and making up the fic. Feel free to check it out <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Perhaps the biggest surprise about this entire day is that Bellamy’s home is already right here in Arkadia. In the hills, at the end of a street.

„You live here, among humans?“ she asks after he’s zapped them right in front of his doorstep.

Bellamy hums nonchalantly before unlocking the door and opening it. Slowly she enters. They’re standing in an open foyer with a big mirror on the wall, a platform that leads down to the dining room and the living room right next to it. A big staircase leads both up- and downstairs. Clarke clasps her hand together, not really sure where to stand, what to do or to say. Bellamy places his keys on the counter and shuffles down to the dining area and the kitchen next to it, that Clarke sees now that she awkwardly follows him.

She decides to follow up on her question from before. „Why aren’t you living in Polis? Or any other angel city?“

„Why would I?“ he asks and takes a sip of water.

„Don’t you angels… despise us? Think that we’re hairless monkeys?“

Bellamy chuckles, crossing his arms. „Clarke, what you saw in Polis and heaven, it’s not… all there is to angels. Many of us don’t hate you, quite the opposite actually.“ Clarke raises a skeptical brow. „And that insult is idiotic,“ he adds. „Monkeys are brilliant animals.“

Maybe all of this is a dream, and she somehow fell asleep in her cell. Or they are playing around in her head to somehow convince her to drink from the stupid goblet. Because all of this doesn’t make any more sense than the dreams, she sometimes has.

„Do you want something to drink? To eat?“

Clarke doesn’t even remember the last time she ate something, and weirdly enough she doesn’t want to. „No, thanks.“

„You should really even if you’re not hungry right now. Your body’s been lying in that room for quite a while and—“

„I don’t want anything,“ she snaps, wrapping her arms around herself and looking at her feet. „Can I just go somewhere to sleep? Am I allowed to do that?“

Bellamy sets down his glass with a thud. „There’s no such thing as allowed in here. You’re a guest, not a prisoner.“ She doesn’t reply. „I’ll show you your room,“ he says with a small sigh and leads the way.
They go up the stairs, and he opens the second door on their right. It’s a decently sized room. Enough space for a king size bed with night tables on each side of it, a door that she guesses leads to a bathroom and a big beige closet.

Clarke doesn’t wait for him to say anything before going in.

„You know where the kitchen is,“ Bellamy says. „If you need anything else you can ask me, my room’s the one up there.“ His head tilts towards the room that another smaller staircase leads to.

„Yeah, thanks,“ Clarke mutters and shuts the door before he can say anything else. Letting out a tired sigh, she turns around and lets herself fall against it. What the hell is she doing here?

She manages to hole up in that room for two and a half days.

At first, Clarke doesn’t plan on it. She just goes straight to sleep and wakes up fourteen hours later. But once she’s awake… — That’s when she realizes yet again where she is, in whose house. Bellamy might live among humans and play nice host but the fact that he said what he said and did what he did in heaven remains. The memories remain. So she doesn’t leave that room.

Water she gets from the sink in her private bathroom. No matter if it contains germs or not. And food — well, her stomach’s already nervous enough right now. Food would probably just provoke it.

Clarke lies in that bed for most of the time. Thinking, or trying not to. Sleeping. Sometimes she sits down in front of the large windows and stares out at the sea in the distance, the waves crashing on the shores like white horses. It soothes the storm in her mind.

Bellamy knocks on her door on the second day. When she doesn’t answer, he leaves and doesn’t try again.

Finally, on the second night, she breaks. After awakening from a dream about white walls swallowing her, she isn’t able to fall asleep again and lies awake for so long that she starts feeling like these walls are closing in around her as well.

So Clarke gets up and tiptoes out of her room.

The house is dark.

When she looked at the clock on her wall it was around two in the morning, maybe she’s lucky and Bellamy’s… asleep. Angels don’t sleep, but they generally live in their own quarters and don’t drink water, too, so who knows.

She’s not sure what exactly she’s hoping to find outside her room, but in the end, her feet take her to the kitchen. Since Clarke left pretty fast the first time she was here, she takes her time to look at everything now.

It’s a kitchen with wooden counters on its left, colorful carding boards splattered on the surface. There are post-it notes and countless magnets on the refrigerator. On the right side, there’s another seating area with a few candles burning in the center of the table.

It’s… cozy. The opposite what she expected an angel kitchen to look like. Finn’s kitchen — if a counter and a shelf count as a kitchen — wasn’t cozy. Not like this.
Carefully she goes to the refrigerator to find something to eat, but the various things hanging on its handle catch her eye. She takes a closer look. The magnets seem to be from all over the world. Some seem old, others like they were hung up here only yesterday.

Munich. Osaka. Sector fifty. Karadsch…

Phone numbers and addresses are scribbled on some of the post-it notes. Others have messages like Don’t forget to call Kelly! or the next fucker that drinks all the milk and doesn’t buy new one will earn a holy ass whooping.

Clarke tears her eyes away at some point, feeling like she’s intruding on lives she isn’t part of. It’s so, so weird, so different from what she imagined. Anyway. She looks inside, grabs some cheese and butter and spots bread on the counter next to it. Then sits down at the table and eats.

She’s on her second slice of bread when she hears the door open.

Her heart plummets into her pants. Clarke barely manages to swallow the piece of bread, her throat suddenly feeling dryer than the Sahara deserts. It’s so incredibly stupid to be so nervous when —

“Hey, Clarke.”

“Uh, hello,” she croaks out, voice muffled by her hand.

Bellamy doesn’t look surprised to see her here, simply brushing past the table and getting himself a glass of water.

Maybe it’s her lucky day, and that’s all he’ll say to her, and then they'll go back to their separate rooms and live like that for the rest of their lives.

“So are you done playing hermit or is this here a one-time-only occurrence?”

She chokes on her apple juice and starts coughing until Bellamy’s hand lands on her back and the need for air instantly disappears. Damned angels. “You’re an ass,” Clarke hisses.

Bellamy comes to stand in front of her, leaning against the door frame with crossed arms. “I’m just wondering. My friends have already accused me of making you up.”

“I find it hard to believe you have friends.”

“Touché,” he says with a chuckle.

For a moment Clarke’s eyes linger on him. His black hair is tousled and his temple sweaty, like he just performed some heavy physical activity. He’s wearing a simple navy blue shirt, that does an excellent job at pointing out his broad chest and arms, and black pants. When Bellamy catches her staring, she immediately looks away.

“Why are you sweating?” she asks, hoping that’ll make him forget whatever stupid comment he had in mind. “I thought angels don’t do that.”

“If I want to sweat, I do. If I don’t, I don’t.”

Their lives must be so easy.

“It’s gross,” Clarke just says and returns her attention to her slice of bread.

“Not hot? I’m disappointed.”
She rolls her eyes.

Bellamy remains standing there, relaxed, for another few minutes before grabbing a bowl and pouring cereal into it. He settles down across from her.

Clarke contemplates asking about him being an angel and eating, too, but figures it’s the same as sweating. They eat in silence.

„So um,“ Bellamy says at some point, clearing his throat, „do you need clothes?“ His eyes fall to her blue Henley and the dark, worn out jeans.

Clarke looks down at herself, self-conscious. „Is there something wrong with these?“

„No, but there are clothes in your closet, and you’re still wearing the ones you came with, so I thought that, uh, maybe you don’t like them. And want new ones.“

Heat spreads in her cheeks as she tries to find a way of saying this is the only thing I have left of my old life without sounding like a fool. There isn’t. So she merely mutters, „I don’t need new clothes.“

Bellamy nods and returns to his cereal.

After a beat of silence, he opens his mouth again though, „Does it bother you when people are around? Is that why you don’t come out of your room?“

„I don’t care if someone’s here,“ she replies, fighting the urge to strangle him for talking so damn much.

„You sure?“

„No, I’m just saying that for fun,“ Clarke deadpans. „What do you think?“

„Well, I never know with you.“

If she’s frank meeting other angels any time soon isn’t on the top of her to do list. The ones she already knows are more than enough for a lifetime. But it’s his house and his life, and she’s not about to forbid him such a basic need as friends — god knows how he even has those.

„It wasn’t because of your company,“ Clarke says. She didn’t even hear his company. „I just — just needed some time.“

„I get it,“ Bellamy replies so softly she blinks in surprise.

„Maybe give me a little warning when someone comes over. And I’ll see whether I’m… up to it.“

„Yeah, the warning you’ll need,“ Bellamy says with a warm huff, before getting up. His bowl and her used plate have disappeared. „Good night, Clarke.“

„Night.“

»»—— ⍟ ——««

The reluctant truce she had with Bellamy for five minutes last night, doesn’t hold for long.

When Clarke goes to breakfast in the morning, he isn’t there, so she starts making herself eggs. Then she turns around to get a tomato, and suddenly he’s standing there, frowning at his phone.
She lets out an incredibly high pitched scream, clutching her hands over her chest. But once her heartbeat has calmed down, she grabs the nearest thing from the counter — a pack of butter — and throws it at Bellamy and the smug smirk on his face.

„Ouch. What was that for?“

„Announce yourself damn it!“ she yells. „Not everyone here has super senses!“

„Relax, princess, that wasn’t even on purpose,“ Bellamy says, brushing past her to sit down.

„I don’t care.“

„But hey, you have a good throwing hand.‘

She cuts the tomato into slices with a sharp slab. „Keep popping in like that, and you’ll get to feel more of it.“

„Aren’t you two lovely,“ a different voice suddenly quips from behind them, and Clarke turns around to see a girl smirking at her.

She’s gorgeous. Long brown hair, half braided, half open falling down her shoulders. High cheekbones just like Bellamy’s. Sharp jawline. Long, skinny legs and a grin made out of fire.

Sometimes Clarke wonders if being an angel simultaneously comes with a face out of a beauty magazine. They’re all so gorgeous.

„O‘,“ Bellamy says, narrowing his eyes. „I didn’t know you were coming over.“

„I didn’t know I have to make an appointment first,“ she shoots back and pushes him until he makes place for her on the seating bench. „Well, aren’t you going to introduce us?“

He sighs. „Clarke, this is Octavia. O’, Clarke.“

„A human,“ Octavia purrs. „Sweet.“

She feels herself panic for a moment, before pressing out a smile and saying, „Nice to meet you.“

Thankfully, the girl’s intense, predatory stare slides away as she launches into a conversation with Bellamy while Clarke keeps her eyes on her eggs, distantly listening to them talk in the background.

„Raven’s coming over later, too.“

„Another unannounced guest.‟

„I just announced her dickhead. Usually, you are out of your mind happy to see us.“

„That is a lie.“

„You replaced us so fast, Bell. I’m disappointed.“

Clarke swallows.

„You know you can stop acting like a bitch.“

„And now you’re even calling me a bitch,“ Octavia says, but there’s no edge to her voice. Clarke hears her snicker a moment later. „I’m just kidding!“
“Seriously, O’. Shut up for a minute,” Bellamy huffs.

How convenient that her eggs are ready. Clarke flops them on a plate and joins the two angels at the table.

She frowns a little at the picture of them next to each other. Ever since she came back from heaven, Bellamy’s had this same glow about him just like up there. And now compared to Octavia, it looks like the sun is shining out of his ass.

„You should let Bell fry your eggs next time,“ Octavia says and pierces through her veil of thoughts.

„Why?“ Clarke asks, unconvinced.

„Because it’s so much better than normal eggs. Has something angelic about them.“

To her, it’s just weird, but she doesn’t say that (and hopes neither of them read or hear it). None of them adds anything further, while she starts eating, and Clarke can’t help but feel awkward, and blatantly out of place. So she hurries up with her food until she excuses herself back to her room.

As soon as she exits the kitchen she meets the other one — Raven, they called her. She’s just thinking about finally going upstairs when instead Clarke nearly runs into another beautiful brunette.

„Easy there."

„Oh, I — I’m sorry."

The angel looks at her, furrowing her brows. „Why are you looking at me like I’m gonna smite you any second now?“

„Um, sorry?“ Clarke says again, swallowing. „I’m Clarke,“ she adds after a moment, figuring she could introduce herself for once.

„Yeah, no shit. I’m Raven.“

There’s something different in her gaze — something calculating, curious. Before she can embarrass herself any more, she gives her a curt nod and disappears up the stairs.

She’s sitting on the bed when Bellamy knocks on her half-opened door. Her eyes lift.

“Is it any good?” he asks, nodding towards the book in her lap that she found in one of the shelves here.

Clarke snaps it shut, not admitting that she couldn’t focus long enough to read the words. “What do you want.”

He smiles. “Sorry if the two, kind of, caught you by surprise. I was actually hoping to introduce you to Monty, Harper, and Miller first. They’re… easier.”

Something about his voice — the warm, soft depth of it makes her blood flare. Why does he keep treating her like she’s made out of glass like she’ll break any second? Is it somehow supposed to hide the real reason he’s here? The real reason he saved her from heaven?

“Stop.”
“Stop what?”

“Being so nice!” she snaps, jumping up. “Whatever number you think you’re pulling here by being all caring and human, it’s not working! I’m not stupid enough to think you brought me here without any ulterior motives!”

“You think giving you a bed, and a roof over your head is me trying to trick you?” Bellamy huffs.

“I certainly don’t believe you’re doing it out of the goodness of your heart.”

“Why? Because Finn told you I’m evil?”

Clarke lets out an angry snort. “Don’t get me started on what Finn told me about you.”

“I’m not your enemy, Clarke.”

“You’re not my friend, either.”

“Well, since you don’t seem to have many other friends, princess, you’re stuck with me,” he spits and slams the door shut behind him as he leaves. She hears a snarl, and then the light in the room flickers out as if there’s a power blackout.

Maybe, just maybe Clarke should try to stop pissing off angels — the beings that the entire world’s afraid of.

»»——sticky——««

That night she dreams again. She is in a white, marble hall just like in heaven — it is heaven because she can’t breathe, she’s choking on air and all around her people are dying. Her father, her neighbor, Wells —

Clarke wakes up with a gasp. Still panting, her hands grip the bed sheets, fisting in them, feeling the fabric. That’s real. The dream was not. Wells is still alive. She can breathe, she isn’t choking, she isn’t in heaven, but in Arkadia.

After a while, her heartbeat calms down again. Clarke doesn’t fall back asleep.

»»——sticky——««

The next morning at breakfast Octavia is in the kitchen, Bellamy isn’t. Clarke almost turns on the spot upon seeing the girl lounging at the table, but it’s too late as Octavia looks up and shoots her a bright grin.

„Morning,“ Clarke murmurs, brushing past her to cut up some fruit even though her appetite is quickly fading.

„What do you want to eat?“ Octavia asks.

Clarke frowns. „Um, I was going to make myself a plate of fruit.“

Her question is answered when not even a second later a plate of fruit appears on the table. Slices of melon, apple, mango. Grapes. Strawberries. Everything her heart desires.

„Thanks,“ she says, sitting down.
„You’re welcome.“

For a few minutes, Octavia lets her eat in silence, face perched on her hands, but eventually, Clarke hears her clear her throat.

„You know, you got Bellamy to cause a power blackout here and in the neighborhood.“ Octavia’s teeth flash at the smirk she shoots her. „Nowadays it’s not easy to make him lose his temper. Good job.“

„I’ve become pretty good at pissing angels off.“

„So I’ve heard.“

Clarke wonders what exactly she has heard and from who, but doesn’t ask her, unlike Octavia who doesn’t seem to mind asking the difficult questions.

„Did you come here to play house with Bellamy or to help us?“

Ignoring the stupid and unjustified comment, Clarke furrows her brows. „Help you with what exactly?“

„Come on,“ Octavia says, looking serious for the first time, „all of heaven and hell are looking for you, and you keep pretending that it’s nothing? That everything that happened was… what? A coincidence? A beginner's mistake?“

Images, words, and thoughts buried deep within her flicker in front of her eyes, and Clarke shoves — tries to shove them away by shaking her head and stabbing her fork into an apple slice.

„I don’t know why heaven thinks I can find the key and I don’t want to, but they’re wrong.“

„Heaven doesn’t make mistakes,“ Octavia says.

„Maybe heaven isn’t as perfect as you think.‘‘

„Oh, believe me, I know it isn’t. Why do you think they’re here instead of up there?“ Octavia’s bright green eyes turn into slits, her hand clenched into a fist.

Maybe that was the wrong thing to say.

Octavia stands up, chair groaning. „Whether you admit it to yourself or not, war is coming. You just have to decide whether you want to help protect the humans you claim to love, or hide like a coward and watch the world turn into ash.“

Clarke watches her disappear, leaving something dark and clouded behind. Her appetite is gone.

She doesn’t want to admit it, but she can’t stop thinking about what Octavia said.

War.

Heaven and hell looking for her. That piece of information was indeed new to her. Clarke had no idea hell — actual literal hell is looking for her. And it’s terrifying because even thinking about Emerson makes her skin shudder.
Deep inside she knew. She knew escaping heaven wasn’t the end of it, but only the beginning. Even if all she had wanted when she’d come to Polis was to find answers and her father’s murderer. But she did find it, and yet here she is. Unable to go home because she’d pose a threat to the people she loves. Unable to start a new life because she… — Clarke doesn’t even know why. She just can’t.

Sighing, she lets herself fall back against the bed, looking at the ceiling.

There’s still so much she doesn’t understand about this world she got herself into. Her role in all of this. Why Bellamy wants her here. Why he’s not working with Lexa and heaven like Finn and the other angels. Who the others are. And she won’t know, not until she starts asking questions, not until she enters the game everyone already seems to be playing.

But the panic that invades her body, every cell and every atom, when she thinks about it is paralyzing.

She is just a human. An ant compared to beasts that are hunting her.

So how is she supposed to play? How can she help stop a war when everyone around her can throttle, beat and break her with a mere raise of their hand? How can she fight back when they can use other humans like her to make her a pawn?

Clarke swallows.

She has to get answers first, get to know what is awaiting her, and then she’ll have to become a player.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 7! Thank you for your comments and thoughts so far dear people, I absolutely adore reading them. It’s super motivating. So if there are any lines/moments you liked, questions or thoughts you have, literally anything, always feel free to share! This part of the story was my favorite to write so updates might come faster <3
Clarke starts her new personal mission by planning to leave her room more than two — sometimes only one — times a day. There’s so much of the house she still hasn’t seen that she decides to take a little tour for starters. Beginning in the vast back— and front yard surrounding it, followed by rooms she hasn’t explored yet: a small library and another bedroom downstairs, a jammed room that looks like a cabinet and more bedrooms upstairs. The tour ends with her flopping down on the couch with tea and a book.

The book is the same one she’s been trying to read for the last three days. However, every time she only manages to get through a few pages before getting distracted by something insignificant. Today’s no different. Especially as Bellamy walks past her sprawled on the couch, and she lets it fall closed in her lap.

Clarke hasn’t seen him once since their last rather vile conversation. And now he's apparently ignoring her, not having even offered a greeting.

Maybe her plan to get answers has to be delayed for another few days. Or weeks. Clarke is not sure how much time it takes for angels to cool off.

No, you have to do this. If not for you, then for your family.

She slides off the couch and walks to the kitchen, peeking inside. Bellamy’s waiting in front of the toaster. Clarke wonders if he couldn’t just… make the toast come out faster.

„I could, but I have to work on my patience,“ he suddenly says.

Clarke doesn’t know whether to scowl because he’s been in her head or to be relieved he’s his usual, annoying self.

„You know that I can’t help but hear the things you scream out loud in your head, right?“

„What am I supposed to do? Stop thinking?“ she asks with a scowl, crossing her arms in front of her chest.

„No, but you can put up protection around your thoughts so that you stop walking around like a megaphone on two legs."

Clarke blinks and shifts on her feet. „I can do that?“

„Sure. Angels have existed for thousands of years, fighting more battles than someone can count, Clarke. We couldn’t afford to let everyone know what goes on in our heads."

„But I’m not an angel,“ she says slowly, stating the obvious.
Bellamy's eyes gleam for a second before his mouth curls at the sides. „It works for humans, too. Perhaps you have to put in a little more effort, but otherwise, you’re capable of it just fine.“ His toast jumps up, and he catches it smoothly before turning around and facing her. „Didn’t Finn tell you?“

Her stomach churns at the thought of Finn. The memory that he’s still being held by Lexa, who is doing god knows what to him, is like a slap to her face. Then again, he got himself into the situation. *Finn sold her out.*

Clarke shakes her head, returning to the question at hand. He didn’t tell her about any protection at all. Not even two minutes ago she was still in the belief that being read by angels like a book is just the way things are, even if she hated it.

Bellamy’s jaw clenches before he sighs softly. „Well, there is.“

„Okay, so how do I do it?“

„First you have to focus, be at peace with yourself,“ he says, taking a bite of his toast.

Clarke frowns. It will take a lot more than focusing to be at peace with herself.

„See, you’re not focused. Your thoughts are all over the place.“

She hopes he knows his running commentary isn’t helping, tries extra hard to send this thought to him. The small twitch in Bellamy’s otherwise calm expression tells her it worked. At least something. Taking a deep breath, she tries to focus, be at peace with herself like he said, but it’s not that easy.

Every time she attempts to sort through it, fixate on one thought, ten others pop up. *I can’t do this. Why didn’t Finn tell me? Oh god, I hope he’s not dead —*

„Try to think of your head like a machine, and you’re the one handling it. If you want to stop the machine, you simply do. If you want to use a function, you do.“ Bellamy’s voice says. „You are in control."

*Control.* That’s the one things she does *not* have around angels, though. *They* control her if they want to.

*But this isn’t about angels, it’s about you,* a voice whispers in her head, and she’s not entirely sure it’s hers. *This is your body, and you have control over it.* Her thoughts flutter through her mind like an endless flock of birds, and it takes everything in her to push them back somehow, push them out.

Clarke opens her eyes, and her head feels clear. *This is my thought. I want to think about this thought.*

„There she goes,“ Bellamy praises her, and Clarke has to snort. „Now that it’s all cleaned up in there, you can work on protecting it because we can just go and stroll right in there —“ Clarke staggers back as an invisible hand reaches through her and grabs the thought. „Most of us do it more subtly, of course, but in the end, it’s like poking around in your head,“ he says.

The sensation is so sickening — so humiliating like she’s being stripped naked right in front of him.

„It sucks, yes, but that’s why you have to learn to shield your thoughts."

„How?“

"There are different ways. What appeals more to you — walls or radio channels?"
Her brows furrow into a puzzled frown, but she still answers, "Walls."

“All right. Build a wall, a fence or a door around it. Something that will keep the things that you
want to protect inside."

A wall in her head? It sounds ridiculous, but if that’s how she can protect herself, then… wall it is.
Clarke shuts her eyes and starts building, brick by brick until there is a massive wall in front of that
one thought she allows.

Suddenly she feels a presence approaching. Fingers touching that wall ever so carefully, almost
ghosting across it, before they slam into it without any warning, pushing and pushing until the bricks
crumble like dust.

Clarke’s eyes snap open, her hands clenching into a fist. “Why did you do that?!"

“Bricks are solid, but not indestructible.” He shrugs. “Make it steel. Titanium. Something no fucking
being can destroy.”

The pulsing in her veins makes the process of building something in her head a little quicker. A wall
of steel appears, and for safety, she adds another layer of titanium and of graphene. And when the
wall feels impervious and daunting, she tops it with a layer of her. Her own self.

That hand appears again, first slowly, then at full speed. It crashes into her. Not the wall, not through
the wall, but right into Clarke as she spreads and protects whatever is behind her. Something hot and
bright flares up and wants to burn through her. She has no idea how, but she becomes something
bright and blazing, too, and pushes back. Back, back, back until —

“Good.”

Clarke opens her eyes, and Bellamy’s mouth is curled into a lewd smile.

“You pushed me out,” he says.

“What was that?” she wants to know. “This weird... light?”

“My grace.” Upon her puzzled look, he cocks his head and clarifies, „Humans — you have a soul.
It’s ultimately the driving force inside you. Your moral compass. What makes you, you. Without it,
you’d be… a walking piece of meat.“ Clarke grimaces. „That’s what grace is for us.“

„So when I pushed you back, it was my soul?“

„Yes.“

„I didn’t know we could do that,“ Clarke murmurs. „Defend ourselves, I mean. Even if it’s just
defending our minds."

„That’s a mistake many make, but humans are stronger than you realize.“

Clarke huffs out a dry laugh. Compared to the power angels and demons possess, it’s probably
nothing, but she appreciates the compliment. And since they’re already on this topic, she decides to
ask something else.

„Before — before heaven caught me, I used to have your voice in my head. From time to time. Why
not anymore?“

Bellamy blinks, then his gaze flickers away, past her. „You told me not to.“
Oh. Right. Before telling him, he should leave her alone, and what a terrible person he was, Clarke told him not to talk to her like that. She almost forgot. That night — Emerson and Bellamy, Finn handing her over — seems like a lifetime ago now.

„You might have pushed me out one time, but you have to make sure your wall is always up,“ Bellamy says rather harshly. „You’re flooding me with your thoughts."

Damn it. Steel, titanium, graphene, her. Steep, titanium, graphene, her. Steel, titanium, graphene, her.

„Sorry. It’s up again."

„Hey, I’m not the one whose thoughts are out in the open."

„Then sorry for inconveniencing you with them,“ she mutters. „Won’t happen again."

„That you’re only allowed to say when you manage to keep the wall up while you sleep,“ he says, „and I don’t have to see your nightmares any more."

Something in Clarke stirs. She sucks in a breath. „You’re a real asshole.”

„An asshole that can’t sleep because he gets bombarded with images from your nightmares every night. Who’s the asshole now?"

„Still you,“ she snaps, stabbing a finger at him. „I’m sorry my nightmares are so inconvenient to you and your sleep. Sleep that you don’t even need because you’re a fucking angel!”

Loud banging on the door makes whatever Bellamy was about to say stay unheard. For a short moment, his eyes glance between her and the kitchen window from where you can see the front porch. Then he pushes away from the counter, muttering, „Yeah, we’ve got company. Feel free to… run away” as he brushes past her.

If she tackled him right now, would anyone hear her screams and save her? Probably not. „Maybe I want to stay,” she bites out instead, opting for the nonviolent solution.

„Then stay.” His voice sounds exasperated, even from the hallway.

„I will.”

„Fine.”

„Fine!”

A few racing heartbeats later voices filter through the house; mostly male, and taunting.

„Thanks, dad above he finally opened the door!” someone says.

„We thought she had killed you,” another voice says and the hair on Clarke’s arms bristles. Do they mean her?

„Shut up, Miller,” Bellamy huffs, and for once she agrees with hi— „or she’ll kill you.”

Her hands ball into fists.

„Oh, I’d pay to see that fight,” the first voice says again, now approaching, „Two hundred bucks on —” The tall, skinny dark-haired guy — angel stops short as he enters the kitchen and sees her.
Clarke forces out a smile, cocking her head. “Feel free to finish the sentence.”

“On you,” he laughs to her surprise before his hand flies out to her. “Definitely on you. I’m Jasper.”

Shaking his hand (and her head internally), she says, “Clarke.”

“Of course.”

Bellamy and two angels trail into the kitchen at that moment. One of them has equally dark hair as Bellamy and Jasper and a friendly smile, and the other — Clarke’s eyes narrow.

“I know you.” A shadow of a smile flickers across his mouth as he glances to Bellamy. “You were the one who told me to get warded,” she goes on, now looking between Bellamy and him.

“About that,” Bellamy coughs into his hand, “I kind of, uh, sent Miller to tell you.”

Now. Tackling him now seems like a perfect idea.

“Trust me, not a good idea,” he gets out with half laughter in his throat. That goddamn jerk —

Clarke grabs the baguette that’s lying around on the counter and sets off, Bellamy already walking backward, hands in the air.

“You were spying on me since day one?!”

“I wasn’t spying —”

“Then explain how you sent that angel to warn me on my first day in Arkadia?!”

“Your thoughts were basically blasting through the whole city!” His legs hit the back of the couch. “You were walking and thinking murder! revenge! angels are dicks! It was so loud I could hear it all the way from here.”

Clarke stops, her face flushed with anger and embarrassment and a thousand other feelings that make bile rise in her throat. “Everyone knew what I was there for?”

“Yeah,” Bellamy says, “and we knew that it was only a matter of time before someone tried to stop you for what you had planned.”

“Why? Why do that?”

His voice softens. “I told you. I’m not your enemy.”

The urge to punch him in the face washes away along with the rest of the anger, but she still slaps his chest with the baguette. “For not telling me,” Clarke says. Bellamy nods, and suddenly she realizes how close she’s standing in front of him. So close, she can see the freckles on his skin. She didn’t notice how many there are before —

“Wall up, Clarke,” he mumbles, voice husky.

For that, she slaps him again with the poor bread before storming back into the kitchen where all three angels are busy staring at the floor and definitely not gawking. Clarke doesn’t let herself feel any more embarrassment than she already has. So she places the baguette back on the counter, straightens her back and says, “I’m Clarke by the way.”

“Miller.”
“I’m Monty,” the third angel provides with a small grin.

After a beat of awkward silence, Jasper clasps his hands together. “Who’s hungry?”

These angels, Clarke realizes as she observes them over lunch, behave more human than some of the actual people in her hometown.

There are talks about parties and appointments and names she doesn’t understand. Jasper eats more than six plates of cheeseburgers he zaps in out of nowhere and drinks eleven glasses of something called moonshine. At three in the afternoon.

Upon her widened eyes, Monty explains, “We have a higher tolerance when it comes to alcohol.”

“Way, way higher,” Jasper agrees, slurping on his straw.

Monty lets another three bottles appear that she politely declines. When she sniffs, it smells like pure gasoline, and she prefers to live for another day or two, thank you very much.

Miller mostly stays quiet during the entire cluster of conversations, only offering a nod here, a few words there. But he seems nice enough.

And Bellamy. Well, Clarke tries to avoid looking at him at the table even if he is sitting directly across from her. Mostly because his words from a week ago ring through her head: Not all of us are. And he was right. Throughout her entire time here she ignored every good and human thing about this place, told herself that it’s a trick, another angel luring her into a trap. But maybe… maybe Bellamy is telling the truth.

She closes her eyes, checking if her wall is up. It is. Because even if he was right, Clarke doesn’t want to give him the satisfaction of being right. Not with that damn smirk that will curl at his lips.

Another knock on the door, and in a matter of seconds Bellamy vanishes and appears again at his seat as Clarke hears footsteps behind her.

Lazy.

Efficient, Bellamy’s voice counters in her mind, and she startles. Clarke didn’t even realize she let the wall down, but when she checks upon it, she finds it stable. Still there.

“You’re late, Murphy,” Bellamy barks as the fourth angel — Murphy plops down at the head of the table, without bothering to greet anyone or being polite.

He shrugs lazily. “Overslept. I was up all night.”

“Doing what?” Monty asks, brows furrowed.

“Emori.”

Most of the angels grimace in something like disgust or annoyance, but Clarke tunes out halfway through them muttering insults. Her eyes are fixed on the new arrival. Something about him is… different. Wrong.

His gaze flickers to her, catching her staring. “The human,” he says, “Yum.”

“Murphy,” Bellamy warns, voice half serious, half annoyed. And there is something strange about
the way he is eyeing her as well as if to check if she's alright.

Clarke blinks. If Bellamy and the others are glowing with their mighty, angelic power, then Murphy seems to absorb everything bright and shiny. He emits darkness. Just like — just like Emerson.

Her chair groans as she pushes it back, hands starting to tremble.

_It’s okay_, Bellamy’s voice says in her head, and she shoots him a wide-eyed look, ignoring that everybody’s staring at them.

_He’s a demon!_

_Yes, but he’s on our side. Harmless. The only bad thing he’ll do to you is perhaps insult you._

“What’s going on?” Jasper asks, and she finally looks around the table, at the puzzled faces. Her hands unclench a teeny tiny bit.

“I think Clarke here just had an epiphany,” Murphy drawls, a smirk growing, “about me.”

Jasper turns to Bellamy, looking scandalized. “Seriously dude, you didn’t tell Clarke?”

“Yeah,” Clarke bites out, “you didn’t? Again?!”

Bellamy sighs, his fingers curling around a glass of wine. She swears there’s something faint rustling behind him. “It’s not that easy,” he says to everyone, but to her, he says, _I tried to, but every time I wanted to talk to you, you… didn’t return that sentiment._

Realizing that he isn’t entirely wrong, Clarke’s smooths out her glare into a scowl. Still not daring to look at Murphy, though, god above. “It’s fine. I was just, um, not expecting that.”

_I know I should’ve warned you, sorry._

_I guess I brought this one on myself._ Clarke takes a sip of her water. _But I want the full story about how that came to be._

_Just ask Murphy, he’ll gladly tell you._

Clarke glances at Bellamy, worrying her lip. _He’s not gonna kill me?_

_Not if I have a say in it._

_That’s not very reassuring._

_All this time and you still think I’m a monster._ There’s humor in Bellamy’s silent voice, maybe even some genuine accusation since what she said to him, what she accused him off wasn’t more than a couple of days ago. However, Clarke rolls her eyes. She’s not ready for this conversation, especially not with others present.

Speaking of which, Jasper and Murphy are already looking suspiciously at her — their silence. So Clarke decides to jump the gun.

„How come you're a demon and sitting at a table with angels?“

For the first time, she lets herself look at Murphy as his gaze slides to her. He isn’t what she imagines demons to look like with his short, brown hair and fox eyes. Then again Emerson didn’t scream demonic at first either.
Clarke’s brows raise. Only Jasper lets out a burst of laughter which he hides with a cough.

“It’s actually not that complicated as you think. I was in hell, it sucked ass, so I got out. Did some shitty things, fucked with a couple of angels here —” His hand waves over the three males.

“And we kicked your ass;” Miller adds, his grin small but powerful.

Murphy doesn’t acknowledge him or his remark. „— and someday I got bored of eating shit, so I stopped."

„You just stopped being... evil?“

„No, I think I still am. Just playing for the other side now."

Monty shakes his head, pointing his fork at him. „In my opinion, you’re a chaotic neutral."

„Whatever chaotic shit I am, I don’t ever want to go back to hell,” Murphy huffs and crooks his index finger so that the bottle of moonshine slides towards him. He drinks straight out of it.

Clarke merely looks away at his lack of manners and takes another bite of her own burger. „When was this?“

„A couple of hundred years ago,” Bellamy replies with a shrug.

„So after the war?“

„Uh-uh."

Centuries. They spent centuries together already, and Clarke’s been here for a week, max. A blink of an eye.

„How old are you exactly if I may ask?“

Bellamy and the others share a look she can’t place, while Murphy, oddly enough, starts counting on his fingers.

„About a hundred millennia, give or take,“ Monty says.

„Old,” Jasper agrees with a wink.

Clarke blinks. So old. Her twenty years of life are nothing, not even a flapping of wings compared to their age. And maybe that’s precisely what she is to them: a brief entertainment, a triviality before they close their eyes for a moment and death will have already whisked her away. Maybe that’s what they see when they look at the mortal sitting at their table.

„I’m nearly six hundred sixty,“ Murphy’s voice shimmies past her sad thoughts. „We’ll have to celebrate when I turn six hundred and sixty-six.” He’s grinning now, clearly amused by his own idea. Clarke stifles the urge to laugh with them — the others.

Jasper slurps on his moonshine and says something about the vacation in the middle east which all three angels seemed to have arrived from, but Clarke stops following the conversation at some point.

It’s not all black and white, not as it used to seem like a year or even two months ago. Angels —not every one of them is as cold and stiff and spineless as Lexa and Indra. And demons, are not
inherently evil. Apparently.

_You doing alright?_ she hears Bellamy’s voice quietly asking in her head.

Clarke has no clue how this had become a thing. Their silent communication. Before heaven, she hated it, didn’t like having the voice of the angel of darkness in here. Now… now she’s glad for an opportunity to say something without everyone else hearing it.

_Fine. Just… a lot of information._

_I know. It can be overwhelming._

_It is._

She hears, feels him grin. _There’s still more, you know._ It’s not just a statement, but more of a precise question with an invisible question mark at the end. He wants to see if she wants to know more, to dive into this world.

And as scary and overwhelming as it might be, Clarke does want to. More importantly, she needs to.

_I have time._

Throughout the rest of the week, the different angels and other beings march in and out of Bellamy’s house like it’s a gas station. Aside from the ones she already met, Clarke is also introduced to Lincoln — the angel that helped her escape in heaven, and Harper. Bellamy explains that they can’t just zap in here because of powerful wardings, so they always have to knock or ring the bell, which they do. Repeatedly. Very loudly. Sometimes in the middle of the night.

Clarke doesn’t have enough fingers to count off how many times she wakes up because someone is ringing the doorbell off the wall. As much as the particular beings like to pretend they’re not that different from humans, it’s evident that sleep isn’t a necessity for them, but merely a hobby or a luxury. Because all day long, they’re buzzing with energy. Like a swarm of bees. And the more time she spends around them, the less Clarke feels the need to sleep herself. And her nightmares are the icing on the cake.

Their energy comes from whatever it is they’re doing as angels (and demons), which Clarke hasn’t asked Bellamy about so far. She’s not ready to hear about wars and heaven and hell, not yet. He doesn’t push either. But sometimes it happens, and she flinches inwardly at names like Lexa or Alie being dropped in conversations. Nobody presses her to join them in whatever it is they’re doing, yes, but they don’t make a secret out of it either. Something is going on, and it sounds urgent.

What’s keeping her otherwise occupied are matters like, for example, Octavia. Or, the questions of _what she is._

Clarke observes her over lunches and dinners, tries to figure out why it feels like there’s something wrong about her, too. Just as Murphy there’s no light around her, nothing angelic that Clarke sees in Bellamy, Jasper, Monty or Miller and not just because of Octavia’s attitude. However, it’s also not the corruption of a demon. It’s something else. Something Clarke can’t entirely pinpoint.

„What is she?“ Clarke finally asks Bellamy after Octavia leaves the house. The entire evening her senses were tingling.

_His eyes slide to her, squinting. „How do you figure it out? You never talk about it.“_
Clarke stifles her snort. There’s never much talking about her, she doesn’t want to do that. But Bellamy’s probably just being polite for once.

„Because she’s not glowing and you are.“

„I’m glowing?“

„Yeah.“ She looks at him, and yes, there’s this warm, bright light cloaking him, pouring out of him. It’s beautiful. What she doesn’t tell him is that she sees his wings sometimes, too. Or at least the silhouettes and shadows. Long, mighty wings on his back which Clarke would like to see in real life someday. Not that she will ever admit it.

The wall in her mind is up, thank god.

Bellamy smiles mysteriously and says, „Interesting.“

„Do you know why that is?“ Clarke asks, curious. „I thought maybe it’s an after effect from heaven since it started afterward.“ At least, the glowing.

„It’s possible. In heaven, it’s just grace and soul, no physical manifestations. Maybe you’re still seeing that now.“

„But… you were all normal up there.“ Clarke swallows. Images from her last day flickering in front of her eyes.

„That’s because our true forms can be too much for humans,“ Bellamy tells her, and she forces herself back to him, grateful for once. „So your brain chooses to see us in this form. Human. Just easier to process.“

So everything she saw might not even be everything. What else can her brain hide or rewrite to protect her from the terrible truth? Clarke doesn’t even want to start on this train of thoughts, so she clicks her tongue and raises a brow at Bellamy. „I answered your question, now answer mine.“

His Adam's apple bobs as he swallows, eyes growing distant. „Octavia is half human, half demon.“

Clarke's lashes flutter. „That’s… possible?“

„Yeah. Her mother was a woman — human woman, and the father a…” His hands ball into fists. „… bastard of a demon that liked to force himself on helpless and defenseless humans.“

Clarke’s throat goes dry at the horrible picture that pops up in her head.

„Crossbreeding is not only blasphemy but gives the children that come out of it a scary amount of power, plus a target on their head,“ Bellamy continues. „You might know the name Antichrist. That’s what they call her. Angels want to kill her, and demons want her as a weapon.“

„How did you meet Octavia then?“

„I knew her mother. I was stationed in this town, the people were mostly poor and willing to do anything for a few coins. Demons knew these areas were easy targets, the inhabitants easy to lure away, kill and one day that bastard came and… got Aurora. I only found out he did what he did when the child was already growing inside her.

„The birth of such a child is very, very hard and rare, but somehow Aurora managed to give life to the baby. I helped her, protected her from any more demons and my own siblings. The labor was so
difficult on a human body that we both knew it wouldn’t be long until it broke, so she pressed that baby into my arms and told me it’s my responsibility. That I should guard it, watch over it and protect it with my life. So I did. Have been doing that since O’ came screaming into this world."

Clarke has to rub her temple at what she just heard. He told her there’s more, but this… she wasn’t expecting this. „But what about the angels and demons?“ she asks eventually, frowning. „You said they all wanted her.“

Bellamy leans back in his chair, clasping his hands together. „Well, it was a few centuries of hiding her from the entire world. But eventually… after the wars and conflicts and heaven breaking apart, she was just another dangerous thing, like everyone else. They still despise her, but if they ever tried to lay a finger on her, “ he shrugs. „she’d tear them apart.”

Clarke doesn’t have a hard time believing that. „Octavia’s lucky to have you,“ she says, surprising herself and Bellamy whose breathing goes awfully still. He snaps out of it after not more than a few heartbeats.

„It’s the least I could do for her and Aurora. “

„What do you mean?“

„I was supposed to protect that town, the people in it, but the demon slipped right past me. It was my fault. “

And the look in Bellamy’s eyes is so familiar that her chest tightens up and threatens to swallow her whole. Guilt. Something she didn’t believe he was capable of with all that cockiness, smugness and bravado. But here he is, trying to blink something away that was probably hundreds and hundreds of centuries ago.

Her fingers itch to touch his hand or his arm like she would do with Wells or her other human friends. Instead, she just says, „I think not even angels can save everyone. “

„Yeah,“ he takes a swig of the wine in his glass. „I had to learn that a long time ago, too. “

A part of her wants to ask him how he learned that. How he dealt with the guilt. Ask him about what he said about heaven breaking apart he mentioned earlier. The wars. And about himself. What exactly made him the angel of darkness Finn warned her about.

But if she starts asking these questions, she might never stop, and Clarke is not ready what would await her at the end of the conversation. So she grabs her empty plate and glass and gets up, announcing, „I should go to bed now. “

„You can leave the things, I’ll wash up,“ he tells her without looking up.

Clarke nods and leaves them on the table. „Good night. “

„Good night, Clarke. “

She’s walking up the stairs to her room when his voice murmurs in her head, soft as a summer breeze, thank you for asking.

She halts on the stairs.

She thinks it was not so much about asking him that question but listening to his story, but she still replies, thank you for answering before continuing to walk.
Two days later something happens.

She’s not entirely sure what, but when she wakes up, she can feel it deep in her bones. Something’s wrong. Not even three seconds later agitated voices come from downstairs.

Clarke throws on a hoodie over her sleeping shorts and hurries down the stairs where the sounds are getting louder by the minute. Bellamy is standing next to the dining table, arms crossed tightly, face grave while Jasper, Monty, and Miller are on the couch and Octavia on her feet, strapping blades and daggers into the holster around her hips.

“What’s going on?” Clarke asks, blinking. This is the first time she has seen any of them dressed up like that, dressed for a fight.

Bellamy’s eyes flicker to her, but it’s Monty who answers. “We just got word that a town nearby got overrun by demons.”

“Raven was there when it happened,” Harper adds with a grim face.

“What? Is she okay?”

“She is,” Bellamy says, “but the people…” He shakes his head and the same guilt-ridden expression from two days ago flashes in his eyes.

“That’s why we should go there right now and end the bastards,” Octavia snarls, her fingers tapping on the sharp steel of a blade.

“No. They’ve never hit that close to home before. This is different than just a normal attack. They know we’re here somewhere.”

“So we show them what happens when they dare to —”

“That’d be walking right into their trap,” Bellamy cuts in.

“Waiting here and doing nothing isn’t gonna help either!” Octavia raises her chin at Bellamy and narrows her eyes. A clear act of defiance. “I’m going.” And then she vanishes.

Bellamy lets out a low growl, “Damn it, O’” before disappearing right after her.

Clarke blinks at the empty spots where the two of them were just standing and then looks at the others. Jasper shrugs.

“Welcome to life with Bellamy and Octavia.”

“I thought they were… close,” she says, sitting down on the empty couch across from them. Clarke isn’t sure whether the term fits, but it’s the best she could find for an angel who helped deliver a half human, half demon which he protected and basically raised and now shares his life with. They have to be close, right?

Jasper and Monty chuckle at that, the former saying, “They are, but they’re like dynamite around each other sometimes.”

“And not in a sexy way,” Monty clarifies.

“Ew, no. Definitely not that. She’s like his little sis.”
“Yeah.”

“Or he’s basically her father. I don’t know. But,” Jasper’s fist spreads, and he mimics the sound of an explosion, “dynamite.”

Clarke watches with both amusement and concern, that’s been gnawing at her ever since she woke up. It’s like that town was somehow connected to her. Or the people. “Will Raven be alright?” she asks.

For once Miller answers. “Yes. She’s with Lincoln.”

Right. She remembers Octavia mentioning Lincoln is specialized in healing. He healed her, too, in heaven.

“Speaking of Raven, I’m gonna check up on her,” Harper says and leans over the couch to stroke a hand through Monty’s hair, smiling.

Monty moves to get up. “I’m gonna go with you —”

“No, stay,” she says, “in case Bellamy comes back.”

“So? You’re the soldier, not me,” Monty retorts and stands up, clearly not accepting no for an answer.

Harper smiles and starts to say something, but they disappear before Clarke can hear what. Not that she wanted to…

The two angels make her think about Finn and about whatever it was that they had for a week before heaven took that away. But Finn had contributed to that. Had given her up to them. It’s not that Clarke believes he didn’t like her. No, the opposite actually. Maybe he liked her too much so that making her heaven’s prisoner was ultimately easier than losing her. Especially when Finn feared it was to someone like Bellamy.

But now… now he’s heaven’s prisoner, while she’s sitting in a warm living room with angels whose biggest character flaws are their lame jokes. She’s safe. It doesn’t seem fair, even if he’s partly responsible for that. It doesn’t feel fair because he did it for her.

Miller disappears half an hour after Monty and Harper, muttering something about a situation which, of course, makes her heart rate climb up immediately. Situations are rarely good.

“Do you know what’s happening?” she asks Jasper, who is still lounging on the couch, feet on the armrest.

“Nothing serious.” He waves her off. “Just a few rowdy demons failing to bargain.”

That sounds rather… peculiar. Bargain for what? And — “How do you even know that?”

Jasper points at his head with a wide grin. “Angel chatter. It’s like a radio in there.”

“Really?”

“Yeah, and we have our own heaven-free-frequency.”

Clarke lets out a surprised huff that Jasper answer with an arched brow. “For a human not interested in heaven and hell politics you’re pretty curious about all this stuff.”
“Bellamy said that? That I’m not interested in all of this?”

“No, Bellamy said, and I quote ‘Clarke is human and needs a safe place to stay, so don’t be too weird or bother her with our war crap.’”

Clarke can’t fight the small smile that curls at her lips.

“I agree with the war crap,” Jasper goes on, his usually bright face shifting into a scowl. “I stay out of it, most of the times. If it were up to me, I’d completely ditch the idea of fighting, killing, hurting and all of that crap and instead drink moonshine, eat good food and love all day.” He lets out a sigh. “Heaven and hell don’t share my vision, sadly. But hey, we’re not too weird, right?”

“No,” she shakes her head, “you’re not.”

They share a somewhat bitter smile at that. Clarke understands. His vision sure sounds nice, but the reality couldn’t be any more different. The world’s inhabitants can’t seem to live without wars and conflicts for long. If it’s not demons attacking helpless humans, then it’s mankind against each other for such trivial things as money, territory, and power. Heaven doesn’t seem to be any better either.

Bellamy comes home a few hours later, looking as worn out as an angel can look. Jasper has left to grab a snack, but Clarke remained on that couch, waiting, so she jumps up when the door falls shut, and he leans against it.

For a moment they just stare at each other. Then Clarke speaks, “Are you okay?”

Bellamy nods.

“Are Octavia and Miller? Where are they?”

His chest rises and falls with a sigh. “Octavia’s probably letting out her steam somewhere. Miller’s with the prisoners.”

“You took the demons prisoner?” Instead of killing them as Octavia clearly pushed him to.

“We need information,” Bellamy says merely.

Of course. It makes sense. However, Clarke doesn’t want to imagine how they’re going to extract that information. Probably similar methods heaven used.

She looks up when Bellamy’s hand suddenly lands on her shoulder, gentle. “Get some rest, you look tired,” he murmurs before walking off to the living room.

Clarke shakes her head as she watches him go, can’t resist telling him, *You’re the one who dealt with demons all day. I was just lying on the couch.*

*But I’m an angel,* he replies a few seconds later, and she can hear the smirk in his words.

Shaking her head, she climbs the stairs to her room where she strips off her clothes and then takes a long, hot shower.

It doesn’t leave her mind. The whole day. What it could mean that a pack of demons is just able to crawl out of hell and attack towns. If her people are already intimidated by angels, then they are terrified of demons. Scared to the point they don’t even want to mention them. Even though the war, which demons had declared on mankind, was four centuries and thus many, many generations ago, a lot of people are still haunted by what had been done to their ancestors.
Hell on earth it was, indeed.

After her shower, Clarke lies in her bed for a bit. She’s tired, but that is literally her constant state of body. And her mind is reeling too much to go to sleep now.

She doesn’t really think about it as she closes her eyes and visits that place in her head where she keeps her thoughts hidden from angels. It’s become a fortress by now. Clarke makes sure the wall is intact before turning in the other direction. Where Bellamy’s voice usually comes from. It’s like a void, endless darkness staring back at her, but — something else is there, like an invisible rope leading her somewhere. She drifts into that direction for a while, when a sense of Bellamy overcomes her. It’s his darkness, now, and she’s standing in front of his enormous walls, towering up like massive skyscrapers.

Also protection.

The void rumbles with his presence, his mind. Clarke snaps her eyes open.

She has no freaking idea how she just did that, seeing into him even if it was only his wall and presence. But she knows he’s still awake and that’s what she wanted to find out, to begin with.

Clarke pulls on a grey sweater from her closet and slips out of her room, heading downstairs. The lights in the kitchen and the living room are out. No Octavia in sight. Or any of the others. Clarke wants to go back to the foyer when she spots Bellamy’s back on the balcony that's linked to the living room.

There he is.

Carefully, she slips outside where he’s leaning on the railing, peering into the distance. It’s the first time Clarke’s out here at night, and she glances at the city in awe, at the stars.

“It’s beautiful.”

“Right?”

If Bellamy noticed her strolling around in the foyer of his mind, he doesn’t say anything. Thank god.

After a few minutes of silence, quietly staring out at the incredible sight in front of them, she casts a glance towards him. “Can I ask you something?”

“Anything,” Bellamy says and meets her gaze.

“Lexa told me that hell — hell’s ruler wants to attack the human world again,” she tells him, the words and memories heavy on her heart, but she pushes on, “and that’s why I needed to find the key. Was she telling the truth?”

“Yes.”

Short, and simple. Clarke’s palms start feeling sweaty. “Okay. Can I ask you something else?”

Bellamy’s mouth curls into a small smirk. She takes that as a yes.

“When you offered me to stay with you, was it because I had nowhere else to go and in need of a roof over my head, or because you needed me in this war, on this side of it?”

He only hesitates for a moment before he says, “Both.”
Clarke isn’t sure what exactly she wanted to hear, what the right answer would have been, but in the end, it doesn’t matter. She already made a choice back in her room.

“I want in,” she says. “Heaven, hell, their politics and the war crap as you like to say. I want to be on the inside, to fight with you.”

Chapter End Notes

I hope you liked that! Let me know what you think. Next chapter we'll be diving more into the world of Bellamy & co. and what they're doing.

(Also, some of you might have already noticed that some elements in this story are similar to the ACOTAR series — which I recommend to all of you because it's great — and I just wanted to say that there are definitely some tropes from the books that I liked and used for this fic as well, but that this story pursues a whole different plot and universe. I was heavily inspired by it when I was writing this fic, though. Ugh. Seriously read it!)
Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

Bad news guys... I think this will be the last chapter :( More information at the end.

The man in front of her doesn’t look much older than the rest of the angels do — maybe in his mid-twenties. Short brown hair. Hard features on his face. He greets Bellamy with a bow of the head. “General.”

“Anderson,” Bellamy says and doesn’t offer him any explanation as to why the two of them are standing here — Clarke tired and hungry from the last few hours. She guesses he doesn’t have to.

This is a small town, so one guard’s usually enough, his voice tells her.

And he just stands here the whole day? Doing nothing?

Nobody said being an angel is fun. There is some genuine humor in his face. I have them change shifts every week. We also have a camp where all soldiers train, leave updates on their areas and mingle. And if they ask, they have the right to build a life outside of this.

It sounds like not many ask for it.

No. We were made to guard humans. It’s what we’ve been doing for millennia before hell broke loose. Many of them still don’t understand the meaning of free will and what it’s like to think for yourself.

Bellamy turns and starts walking away from the soldier. Clarke follows.

It sounds sad. Being an angel sounds sad. She can’t even begin to imagine what it must be like… to just guard for years and years and years. But the more Bellamy shows her of this world, the happier she is to be born the way she was, even with all the flaws, and weaknesses, and losses. At least she lives.

Since this was the last of today’s lessons and training, Bellamy zaps them to his front steps.

When Clarke asked him to join him two days ago, he insisted she had to get to know everything first. His official job. His friends’ jobs. The entire garrison of angels guarding the human territories that Bellamy commanded. Everything perfunctory before she’d join the most important thing: the war that is approaching.

Although the lessons about everyday work are sometimes dull, and long, Clarke doesn’t disagree that it’s for the best.

There’s so much the human world doesn’t understand about angels because of the stigma and fear going around. Now, for example, Clarke knows that there are nine choirs of angels, each with different amount of powers. Messengers, guardians, protectors of countries, healers, fabricators, warriors, generals, rulers of will and justice, and archangels. The lowest rank, the messengers possess the abilities of flight, mind reading, basic defense, and teleportation. Meanwhile, the higher ranks are
able to do much more powerful stuff like telekinesis, manipulation of fabric, time and space as well as the human body. From what she has seen Bellamy seems to belong to the more powerful ones. He did, however, mention that there was a greater divide distinction between the orders before the last demonic wars hundreds of years of ago. Apparently, a lot of angels received promotions to higher ranks in order to defeat the demons, so now they are more powerful.

Clarke also learned that heaven is currently split into several fractions. That's, however, not very surprising. The part lead by Alie and Lexa insists on staying in heaven unless there are any emergencies. Another fraction wants independence but regards angels as the superior creatures to rule over earth. And then there's Bellamy's group. A group that wants to live like humans and simultaneously work to protect them.

When they enter the house, Miller is already there. Miller, Clarke revises in her head, is the second in charge of the army. Together with Bellamy, he surveilles their training, gives them direct orders and leads them in war. She hopes that it’ll never come to this again.

“So what did the bastards have to say today?”

“Nothing new,” Miller replies, following the two of them into the kitchen. “Still want to make a deal for Naia.”

Bellamy huffs as he makes himself a cup of tea. “I don’t know if hell’s really that stupid or smarter than we think.”

“I assume it’s a combination of both.”

“Probably.”

“What do they want?” Clarke asks. She’s supposed to learn the basics at first before dealing with current matters, but it can’t hurt to know, right?

To her surprise, Bellamy doesn’t even blink at the question or show any sign of displeasure with the question. “Territory.”

“Because angels have their own territories, they think they have a right to have that, too,” Miller adds.

“Yeah, because they eat people,” Clarke mutters, wrapping her arms around herself. Demons are just nasty beings. No offense to Murphy, or Octavia.

“Try telling them that,” Bellamy says with the shadow of a smile on his face. “They think they deserve rights, too.”

“I mean you angels aren’t exactly saints either, but at least you have rules.” Not enough rules. Not specific enough. Not logical rules. But rules. “They can just go ham on everything.”

Bellamy nods. “They’re a pain in the ass to deal with politically, so it usually ends up in war.”

“Maybe that’s their strategy,” Clarke says.

“Not a good one when they lose every time.”

He makes a point.

The three of them eat lunch, and while Bellamy and Miller discuss different strategies to get the
demon prisoners talking, Clarke ponders if it's finally time to ask Bellamy the questions she's been meaning to ask for a while now. And she has a lot of them. When Miller leaves to deal with the prisoners, Clarke decides to get it over with.

"Can I ask you a few questions?"

Bellamy looks up from his food and frowns. "Sure."

"Who... who were you referring to when you told Finn to stay away? The first time we met?"

"Oh, I meant Raven."

"What? Why?"

"Well," he scratches the back of his head, "Finn and Raven — you see, they share a lot of history."

Another thing, she's learned in the last few days. Angels sometimes have companions — soulmates one might say, except that this special bond is forced through decades, their own will and the word of God. Monty and Harper are companions, for example. A couple of thousand years ago a heavenly ceremony officially made their love and trust in each other unbreakables.

Clarke stares at Bellamy, heart hammering. "Finn and Raven were companions?!" She wasn't even aware they knew each other. (Stupid, in hindsight. They're angels. Everyone probably knows everyone.)

"No, no, they weren't. Finn's a lying piece of shit. He betrayed her trust before they ever thought of doing the ceremony."

"And that's why he was supposed to stay away from her?"

"Pretty much, yeah. He came snooping, asking her question even though Raven made it clear she didn't want to see him again."

"Okay," she says, disappointed with Finn but not surprised. "Next question: why did you ward me back in Polis?"

"Because Finn wouldn't and you clearly needed the protection."

"But why did you decide to help me at all? I was just someone looking for answers, and there you were, always saving my ass."

"If you haven't noticed by now, you turned out to be much more than just someone, Clarke."

"Did you know that already then?" she asks with a raised brow.

The question slices through the air like a knife. Clarke sees Bellamy twitch ever so slightly.

"I knew that you were... different than most humans," he says slowly, "but if you're asking whether I was aware of Lexa's plan to find the key, then no. I wasn't."

For a few moments, Clarke looks at him. And she believes him. For some reason, she trusts him.

"Okay..."

"Any more questions?" he says with the hint of a grin.
Clarke does have more, but the others are more sensible. Asking what exactly it is that makes him so special from the other angels, so *stained* as Lexa once said, isn’t just a topic to brush upon. Perhaps, a week ago she would have just asked him, but now there’s enough respect for him to know that it wouldn’t be very polite.

So she says, “Not a questions. A request. I want to visit my family.”

Bellamy shrugs and rises to his feet. “Sure. Now?”

“Now?” she repeats somewhat perplexed. Clarke was expecting protest or him saying it’s dangerous, but not this.

“You want to get now or do you want to get ready first? Doll yourself up?”

Rolling her eyes, she says out, “Now.”

He holds out his arm to her even though he could probably just touch her arm or something as simple as that. Clarke still links their arms and closes her eyes. The shift of the world when he zaps around always makes her head spin.

When she opens her eyes, she’s standing in the street where she lives — used to live. Everything looks the same as always. The row of white, neat two-story houses. The trimmed front yards. Someone must be having a barbecue because the smell of sizzling steak and sausages is in the air.

The shadow of what life used to be — nostalgia sickers through her bones and for a moment it feels hard to breathe because of the way her chest contracts.

Then she feels a gentle hand on her elbow, Bellamy’s eyes carefully watching her. You *okay*?

Clarke nods slowly. *I missed home.*

Understandably.

“My house is at the end of the street,” she tells him as a matter of fact as they start walking towards it.

“I know.”

“You do?”

“I have several guards posted here and at Wells’ apartment,” he tells her.

Clarke has the urge to halt in her steps, ask him what the hell he thinks he’s doing again, but all she gets out is, “Why.”

“You know why,” Bellamy easily says, not an ounce of guilt or regret in that voice. “Even if heaven didn’t find you here, they’d most likely leave someone here in case you ever came back. Like today.”

“So are we walking into a trap?”

“Right now we’re invisible.” Clarke frowns, but notices that his hand is still touching her elbow, keeping her hidden from the eyes of the world as well. Bellamy’s lips lean down to her ear. “So, if you keep the body contact, not a single soul will know.”

“As long your hand stays where it is, I’m cool.”
“So much prejudice against someone who pays your rent and your meals.”

“Is that your way of saying you want me to move out?”

“No, princess. Stay as long as you like,” he purrs.

They arrive at the front steps that lead up to her house before she has any time to retort something snarky. Clarke stills. “I don’t even know what I’m going to say,” she admits.

“What did you come here for?” It sounds like a genuine question, not an accusation.

She thinks about heaven and the key and her role in all of this, and the answer feels like sticky glue in her mouth. „I wanted to say goodbye."

Clarke vaguely notices Bellamy going rigid before she goes on quietly, „In case this is the last time I get to do this.”

„You do know we’re going to protect you, right?“ The weight of his palm on her back feels heavier.

„You can’t protect everyone."

„I can try."

She shakes her head, trying to lose the gloom that’s overcome her. „If this war happens, will they be safe here?"

„Polis is only a hundred miles away. The angels will be ready."

That’s all that matters. Clarke nods and knocks, silently wondering what her mother will see when she opens the door. They’re invisible after all. But it never comes to that because nobody opens, even after knocking another three times.

She shoots a glare at Bellamy, hissing, „You couldn’t tell me she’s not even home?"

„It’s warded, Clarke, even against me,” he grumbles. „I can’t see inside."

In the best and most realistic scenario, Abby is at work. In the worst… she can’t think about that. With a sigh, she squats down and looks under the doormat.

„Good thing we have this,” she says and holds up their spare key that they keep here for situations precisely like this.

Bellamy raises his brow. „That’s not a very safe place to hide a key."

„But it works, doesn’t it?"

She only gets a grunt in return.

After a few turns of the key, the door opens, heavy and creaky. Clarke steps inside, Bellamy in tow, and blinks at the hallway that looks just like the last time she was standing before she took off for Arkadia. White wallpapers, a neatly stacked shoe rack and shelf for jackets and coats. Nothing like Bellamy’s house where his friends leave their things on the couch, on the stairs or somewhere on the floor — basically wherever they want to.

The only thing remotely personal here is the painting on the wall. It’s from the time when Clarke still used to paint. Back then she had so many thoughts and dreams in her head that painting them all was
the best way to express herself, and her father insisted on hanging up some of them. This one shows an endless road with only one single oak tree on the side. *The path to nowhere*, she named it.

Bellamy lets out a low whistle and says, “Pretty” that earns him another glare. “I’ll check if your mom’s here before you actually kill me.” And he disappears.

It’s probably not even necessary to check if her mom is here because the shiny white heels she usually wears on the way to the hospitals are gone, and so is her bag. Abby has to be at work, it just makes sense.

Clarke peeks into their living room which looks like it hasn’t been used in a while. Then she goes into the kitchen and halts. She’s staring at the spot where she found her father. Where they had killed him, without an explanation, without any mercy, all just to lure her into Arkadia.

He’s dead because of *her*.

A hole forms in her chest, sucking everything in. Every feeling, every memory, every inch of light she felt here. It takes, and it takes and it —

“The collection of stuffed animals you have,” Bellamy says behind her, and she whirls around, “is pretty cute.” He tops it off with a wink.

Another feeling replaces the hollowness in her chest.

“You’re such an ass, you know that?” Clarke growls, stabbing a finger in his direction. “And a snoop!”

“Hey, I was just checking if your mom’s here, and stumbled on by accident.”

“Yeah, and why would she be in my room?”

“Who knows, maybe she was missing you on this merry day.”

Clarke shakes her head and leaves the kitchen to sit down somewhere. On the couch. Maybe that way someone will actually use it. Of course, Bellamy’s already sitting there — no, lounging with his head propped up on a hand and a relaxed smirk in place.

Un-freaking-bearable.

For a few seconds, she punches a hole through her mental wall, so that Bellamy hears every single insult that goes through her head before fixing it again as she plops down in an armchair. His eyes narrow at her.

“Classy,” he hums.

She sends him a cruel, bright smile. “For you, always.”

“So do you care to share where your mom might be at since you don’t seem particularly worried about her?” Bellamy asks after a while.

“Work,” she merely replies.

“Where does she work?”

“Hospital.”
She can see how hard he’s trying to stay civil with her, but for the love of god, she can’t stop.

Bellamy rubs his eyes before quietly asking, “Do you want to wait alone?”

“No.” The answer shoots out way too fast for her liking, and she pointedly stares at her hands, not interested to see the satisfied smirk on his face. It’s stupid, but being here alone — no, she doesn’t want that.

“My mother is a doctor,” Clarke says after the forced silence starts getting under her skin. “She’s one of the best in the country. I used to want to be just like her.”

“Guess determination runs in the family.”

She finally looks up, and Bellamy’s already looking at her. No smirk. No layers and layers of cockiness and false bravado to hide the broken thing that’s hiding underneath it all like in everyone else.

“If I were as determined as my mom, everyone who had a part in killing my father and the people would be long dead,” she says without a flicker of emotion.

“There’s still time for that,” he replies, and for once Clarke’s grateful that this particular kind of angel is sitting in front of her and not someone self-righteous and lawful.

Her own darkness flares up from that hole in her chest. When she came to Polis Clarke never thought far enough about what she’d do to the murderer. If she had, she probably would’ve come to the conclusion that she couldn’t do much. Not as a human. But now… maybe if she asks Bellamy, he can show her what their weak spots are. Every being has them, even angels. And then… then she could do what she planned to do in the first place.

Curling her hand into a fist, Clarke tries to drop the train of thoughts. This isn’t what matters right now. She unclenches her fist again and looks at Bellamy, hoping he will distract her from whatever kind of evil just possessed her.

Miraculously enough, he does.

“What did you do? Your occupation, I mean.”

“I was studying medicine,” she replies and shrugs. “Told you I wanted to be like my mom.”

“Do you still want that?”

“Become a doctor?”

A nod.

She considers it. “I’m not sure. I can’t — can’t think about something like this when there are more pressing issues like war and demons and stuff like that.”

“I could set you up in a program if you want,” he offers nonchalantly.

“Even in times like this?”

“There’s always going to be another conflict, another asshole that doesn’t play by the rules,” he says. “I don’t drop my job just because Naia wants to turn the earth into a slaughterhouse.”

Clarke scowls. “But your job and hell are intersectional.”
“Smartass,” he huffs, and she smiles without even noticing.

He has a point of course. Nowadays Clarke doesn’t think much about her personal life or future. She just kind of tries to stay afloat from day to day. But continuing her studies... maybe that would give her some sense of purpose which is hard to find these days. It got a little better since Bellamy started working her in into the life of angels, but it couldn’t hurt.

“I will think about it,” she says.

Something other than mischief twinkles in his eyes. Clarke bites her lip and looks at the clock on the wall. It’s four twenty. If she remembers correctly, her mom gets off work around five on weekdays. Of course, there’s always the possibility that they changed her schedule, or that she works a double shift, or perhaps isn’t at work after all. But she hopes that’s not the case.

Her stomach growls which Clarke ignores until she sees the expectant look in Bellamy’s face.

“What.”

“You’re hungry.”

“So?”

“Normal people usually get up at that and make themselves something to eat,” he tells her.

“Well, maybe I’m not normal.”

“Clearly.” After a beat, he drives a hand through his hair and sighs, “Seriously, Clarke. Eat. You can’t fight in a war when you’re half starved.”

God, taking something as eating habits as seriously as Bellamy does should be forbidden. Nonetheless, she stands up and stalks to the kitchen.

There are some products in the fridge, but nothing that she can eat right away without preparing it first. And she’s not in the mood to cook.

“You could at least offer to fix me something,” Clarke yells in the direction of the living room. After all, angels use their shitty magic for themselves all the time, right?

Three seconds later Bellamy’s leaning against the doorframe, brow raised. “What does your heart desire, princess?”

“Chinese.”

“There’s a million Chinese dishes. Be more specific.”

Clarke crosses her arms. “Uh, fried rice and vegetables. You know, like in takeout?”

Bellamy waves a hand, and the dish appears on the table. Exactly as she had in mind. Having nothing left to complain about, she sits down and digs in. For food that’s been created with magic, it’s delicious. Or maybe it’s delicious because of it.

“You know for someone calling me an ass all the time, you’re a brat,” Bellamy says, sitting down in front of her.

The food almost gets stuck in her throat.

Clarke forcefully swallows before mustering up the most hateful look she has and directing it on him,
with all the force there is. “I’m not.”

“Yeah, you are.”

“Take that back.”

“Hit too close to home?”

Without even thinking her hands grab the plate of fried rice. Bellamy immediately notices, his eyes turning into slits.

“I dare you.”

If it wasn’t for the sound of the key turning in the door, Clarke swears she would have thrown that thing at him. Big, scary angel or not. There’s just something satisfying about hurling objects at him. However, her mom comes home at this exact moment, so her hands relax, and they share a quiet look.

*I’ll wait outside.*

She nods.

*Call me when you’re ready.*

There’s no trace of him anymore when her mom steps into the kitchen and halts at the sight of her.

Clarke’s heart beats a little louder, when she gets up with a smile and says, “Hey mom.”

Her mother’s brows tug into a surprised frown. “Clarke. What — what are you doing here?”

“Visiting,” she says and wraps her arms around her. Abby hugs her tightly before pulling back and taking her in.

“You look good, honey.”

“Thank you. You, too.”

They sit down at the table and Clarke starts telling her mom about the past month she didn’t have. That the study camp she’s supposedly staying at is going well, but keeping her busy. That she has friends and friendly colleagues. That all is well, basically. They don’t talk about her dad, because of course, they don’t.

After a while, Clarke swallows and looks at her mom. „Be careful around here. Don’t talk to strangers outside of work. Try not to be alone anywhere in general—“

„Where’s this coming from, Clarke?“ Abby interrupts.

She shrugs. „Nothing. But there are always bad things lurking in the shadows. I don’t want anything to happen to you like to…“ dad. Her voice trails off as she blinks sudden tears away.

„I’m going to be careful, honey.“

„Good.“

„You, too.“
"I will. I'm safe where I am," Clarke says, and her mind instinctively thinks about the angel waiting for her outside. She *is* safe.

The goodbye is hard, especially knowing that this might very well be the last time she ever gets to see her mom again. This is why she left without saying anything last time. "I love you mom," Clarke whispers into her shoulder.

"I love you, too, honey."

When Clarke steps outside again she’s thankful for the fresh air that hits her.

*I’m finished.*

There’s no answer, only the sudden feeling of a hand touching her arm before she’s looking into Bellamy’s brown eyes.

"Everything go well?"

"Yeah."

She tears her gaze away from him as they fall into step.

"Where to now?"

"Wells."

One moment they’re standing in the street in front of her house, the next they’re downtown where Wells owns a two-room apartment his father gifted him for his last birthday.

Clarke looks at the tall building and worries her lip. "Do you have guards posted here as well?"

The lazy smirk on his face is answer enough.

"Let's hope he’s at home," she mutters, going for the building. Her shoelace suddenly opens, and she stops, kneels down to lace them. Bellamy’s waiting a few feet away when Clarke suddenly hears a familiar voice behind her.

"Clarke?!"

She shoots up to her feet, swirling around. "Wells."

How did he see her? Her eyes slide to Bellamy who’s equally visible as her and oh — he let go of her.

"How did you do that?" Wells asks, coming to stand in front of her with wide, surprised eyes.

"Do what?" she squeaks out. Bellamy’s awfully still beside her.

Her best friend waves his hand. "You just — you two came out of thin air." And now Wells is looking at Bellamy, too, frowning as he takes in the angel.

"No, we didn’t," she says sheepishly. To every supernatural being her heart would have long betrayed her, its thunderous beat more revealing than a lie.

Maybe that’s why Bellamy finally decides to add something to the conversation.
„Out of thin air? C’mon, dude, that sounds crazy.“

She has to stifle a snort at his choice of words. He said, dude. Out of Jasper’s mouth, that’s nothing unusual, but hearing Bellamy say that…

„I guess so,“ Wells says, albeit still scowling. He holds out his hand to Bellamy. „I’m Wells.“

„Bellamy,“ he replies, shaking his hand easily.

Wells glances between Clarke and the angel and says, „You and Clarke are…“

„Friends!“ it shoots out of her, and she puts on a big, dopey smiley. „We, um, know each other from college.“

„Oh, yeah. You’re studying medicine as well?“

„Uh-uh,“ Bellamy says, scratching the back of his head. „I’m an aspiring… gynecologist.“

Clarke blinks.

„That’s great… that’s really, uh yeah, great,“ Wells mutters, nodding. Then his gaze falls on Clarke. „So what are you two doing here? I haven’t seen you in months! Is everything okay?“

„I was going to see you.“ Wells’ gaze flickers to Bellamy again, and she hurries to explain, „when I ran into my pal on the way here.“ She pats Bellamy’s shoulder for emphasis.

Bellamy looks at her for a moment, conjuring up an amused smile. „Speaking of which, I should get going. Places to be. People to impress.“ Clarke rolls her eyes when he leans down to her ear. „You know where to find me, princess.“ Then he offers Wells a curt nod. „It was good meeting you, man.“

„You too,“ Wells replies before Bellamy gives her one last glance and walks away into the other direction. She watches him leave for a second before turning to her best friend and grinning widely. „I missed you!“

He lets out a happy laugh and pulls her into a hug. One that she needed for quite a while now.

They chat about the latest developments in their lives as they take the elevator to his apartment — or lies over lies in Clarke’s case. When he lets them inside, he fixes her with a weird look and says, „So what’s the deal between you and that guy?“

She halts mid-untying her shoes and blinks at him. „What?“

„What was his name? Bologna?“ Wells asks, placing his keys on a shelf. „I felt some strange vibes between the two of you.“

Gulping, Clarke lowers her gaze back to the task and shrugs. „Bellamy! And I don’t know what you mean. He’s a friend from college. That’s it.“

„Didn’t look like just that.“

„Wells —“

„Okay, okay,“ he holds up his hands. „I won’t poke around in your love life, or whatever it is. “ She scowls. „You’re always so private, Clarkey.“

They go into his small, but well-equipped kitchen.
She sits down at the table. “I’m not being private when there’s nothing to discuss.”

Which is, of course, an outrageous lie. There’s a hundred thousand tons of trauma weighing down on Clarke’s chest that are probably worth discussing and going through, but she can’t tell him. Not about this.

“Alright,” Wells says and places two cups of steaming hot coffee on the table before sitting down as well. “But I’ve had a feeling something is going on with you in general. I know you said the school is keeping you busy, but… it’s like you disappeared from the face of the earth. I couldn’t reach you for weeks.”

Clarke was in heaven for three weeks although it felt far longer than that without sleeping and no concept of time at all. Nonetheless, it was three weeks of not texting or calling Wells nor her mother. It’s a miracle they didn’t call the police.

She looks down at her mug, not stomaching to look him in the eyes and lie about what was actually going on. “You know how I get in stressful times.”

“Yes,” Wells says with a huff of laughter, “you work for it with your heart and soul. No matter what.”

“I’m sorry for not checking in. There were just so many exams, and I… got lost in it.”

“I know, Clarke.” He pinches his nose before carefully saying, “But with what happened with your dad… I thought that maybe you were grieving. I wanted to help, but I didn’t know how.”

His last words are guilt-ridden and apologetic, and Clarke’s heart clutches tightly inside her chest. Heaven killed Wells’ mother too not even four months ago. He deserves to know for what, or by whom, instead of the pathetic excuse the pathologist offered, that she’d died because of a heart attack. It’s not fair to lie to him about it, even if it’s to protect him. Not fair when he’s feeling bad about Clarke and her father’s death, too.

It’s a long shot, but quietly she reaches out to Bellamy. **How bad would it be if I told Wells the truth? About everything.**

For Wells, she puts up, what she hopes to be, a sincere smile and shakes her head. “I’m still coping with it,” Clarke says. Telling the truth for once feels good. “I miss him every day but dealing with it. Don’t feel bad, Wells. There’s nothing you could’ve done.”

“I could’ve been there for you.”

Clarke opens her mouth to reply when Bellamy’s voice fills her head. **It’s not necessarily bad.**

**Do you think I should tell him?**

If you think that’s a good idea, then why not.

So you believe it’s a bad idea?

Not what I said. You have to decide what’s right for Wells or not.

That doesn’t help at all.

Clarke thinks he’s not going to answer when his response comes seconds later, **It’s not easy making the tough calls, is it?** She almost snorts at the underlying humor in his voice, when Wells’ voice
brings her back to the present.

“What are you so smiley about it?”

“What? Nothing!” She clears her throat awkwardly, putting a frown back in place. Their topic was nothing to smile about, after all. “Sorry, I just remembered something.”

Thankfully, Wells accepts the excuse without questioning it any further, and their conversation steers away from all the things she’s been hiding to them reminiscing old times.

She won’t tell him. Not yet.

There’s too much Clarke doesn’t know herself, she decides. Wells will get the whole truth after. After Lexa, Alie and heaven pay for what they’ve done to this town and their parents. After Bellamy hopefully stabilizes the situation with hell. Or, when the worst case scenario kicks in, then Wells and her mom will be first to be warned about the incoming danger, and she will make sure they will be as far away from the slaughtering as possible. But telling him now would be too risky, would make him vulnerable. For all, she knows he could start looking for answers himself which would put him at too much risk.

So she keeps quiet about it, even though it feels awful. It’s what she has to do, though.

They talk and talk for hours. Hours in which Clarke momentarily forgets that she’s soaked with the blood of so many innocent people, and that Finn is still in heaven, and that there’s still a manhunt out for her, or that the entire world is under threat. She forgets, and it’s like balm for the soul.

It does cross her mind to stay here and leave heaven and hell behind. Although Bellamy half admitted of wanting her on his side for the war, she believes he wouldn’t refuse, would let her make this choice. But staying… it wouldn’t end well. Not for her. Not for anyone. The angels would never stop looking for her, and in the process, she would only endanger even more people.

No, she has to go back and face it. All of it.

When they hug goodbye, Clarke has to bite back her tears. Who knows when she will see her best friend again? Coming here too often is risky, too, so… — Clarke exhales a shaky breath and pulls away, giving Wells a smile.

“Take care of yourself, Wells. Be safe.”

“I should be telling you that,” he replies with a confused smile. “And stop speaking like you’re moving to the other end of the world. You live five blocks away.”

Don’t cry. Don’t cry, OR laugh at the absurdity of the truth.

“I know, I know, it was just so good to see you,” she presses out.

“Then come by more often. Boom. Fixed it.”


“See you around!”

When she’s standing in the elevator, she weeps freely. Maybe that will relieve some of the pressure inside her. It doesn’t. Still feeling like shit when she walks away from Wells building, she quietly summons Bellamy.
He appears on her side a few moments later, giving her a swift once over as he places a hand on her back. “You okay?”

Clarke only grunts.

“Home, or somewhere else?”

“A bar.”

Bellamy’s brows raise.

“I need a drink,” she offers as the only explanation. “I know a place here.”

It looks like he’s going to disagree or tell her that’s a stupid idea for a second, but then he looks at her and says, “Lead the way.”

The bar is a few feet blocks away. A cozy, dark place with reasonable prices that she’s visited a couple of times to either celebrate the end of a hard day at college or to drink away her sorrows. Today is a case of the latter. Maybe Bellamy senses that, too, and that’s why he doesn’t make any of his usual remarks on the way there.

He lets go of her when they arrive so that they’re visible to their surroundings again. The door rings as they go inside and find themselves a table in the back of the pub.

Clarke only pierces the silence after the pretty waitress brings her the glass of gin tonic and Bellamy’s beer. “I was here a couple of days before coming to Arkadia, you know,” she says, her fingers wrapped around the drink.

“Oh?”

“Yeah. After I found my dad… I tried telling my mother and the police what I saw. I described what the angel looked like from behind, told them about the other deaths in the town, and what it could mean. None of them believed me. Or if they did, they said nothing.”

The only reaction Bellamy shows is the way his hand ever so slightly tenses. He waits for her to go on.

“And after days and days of begging anyone to do something about it, I gave up and came here. Got shitfaced. The bartender at that time tried to call my emergency contact in my phone to fetch me because I couldn’t walk anymore.” Her mouth curls into a bitter smile. “My dad was my emergency contact.”

Oh yeah, that hurt. Clarke doesn’t remember much of the night, but she does remember how her heart shattered into a thousand pieces, and how her stomach churned until she threw up the past three days into the toilet of the bar.

“In the end, Wells picked me up.”

For a long, awful moment Bellamy says nothing and a small part of her fears that this will be it. That she will have shared such a vulnerable part of her and he will have just ignored it.

“I’m sorry your people have turned a blind eye to these kinds of deaths,” he says, though, his voice more gentle than usual.

“They’re afraid. They wouldn’t be able to do something against you angels, even if they wanted to.”
“I know, but you still deserved to be heard.”

Which is what gave her the rest on that night months ago. Her father had been murdered, her mother working double shifts instead of speaking to her, the police insisted on a natural death, and all of them acted like she was crazy for saying what she saw. Even though everyone knows what’s lurking behind those walls that lead to Polis. What is generally out there. They all know, and they still chose to look the other way.

It’s weird. Clarke doesn’t know what made her tell Bellamy this, or what she wanted to hear, but for some reason, he managed to say exactly what she had craved to hear without even realizing it. He heard her.

“Thank you,” she tells him, meeting his gaze.

He holds it, is about to say something when his brows furrow. He sniffs the air.

Clarke knows that look. “What? What is it?”

Mere seconds later the doorbell jingles and both of them watch a young woman waltz in.

And now Clarke feels it, too. The shift of air and energy in the bar that makes the hair on her arms stand in dread. More importantly, though, the way that girl eats away the light and brightness people generally radiate.

_Demon._

Chapter End Notes

Dum, dum, dum, is this considered a cliffhanger?

By the way, this is NOT the last chapter, I was just joking. It's April fools day, after all :D In fact, I am pretty sure there will be more than 20 chapters. So far, 16/17 are done and I have yet to write 1/3 half of the story! There's still so much ahead y'all. This chapter was originally longer, but I had to cut it down if I wanted to update today, so at least, the next one shouldn't take too long. In the meantime, I would, as always, love to know what you think.
Demon.

She doesn’t know if it’s Bellamy or herself who thinks it.

Bellamy ever so slightly moves his hand, and the demon vanishes and reappears right in front of them, bracing herself on their table with a sadistic smirk.

“One wrong move and me and my pals will kill every single person in this hole and in this town.” Her flaring eyes sliding over to Clarke, she adds, “Taking extra time for your mommy and sweet Wells, of course, Clarke.”

“You touch any of them, and I’ll personally tear apart you, hell and every rotten thing you keep down there,” Bellamy growls.

The demon grins delighted at that before leaning towards him, so close that her blood-red lips are mere inches away from him. “Don’t make such exciting promises if you don’t intend to keep them,” she whispers. “Besides, we've already had that fun. Remember?”

Clarke wants to throw up.

Bellamy’s jaw clenches as he bites out, “What do you want, Ontari.”

“Her.”

“No.”

Ontari clicks her tongue. “I thought you’ve learned to use your head over the years, but I see you’re still not a strategist.”

“If you don't have anything else to say, we’re done here.”

Ontari leans back, spine straightening, and throws a look at the six or seven people in the pub with them. Clarke’s heart starts racing even faster at the silent but inevitable threat.

“You don’t wanna do this,” Bellamy says. His voice is flat, sounding almost bored, but deep down Clarke knows it’s just an act. The power that allows them to communicate silently makes sure that she does, transmitting the blazing hot fury that’s boiling inside of him.

“But I will,” the demon crosses her arms, “if you keep acting like a child who doesn’t want to share his toy.”

“I said no.”

“We want the same thing,” she snaps, and her voice starts sounding less confident and more desperate.
That’s how powerful Bellamy is, Clarke reminds herself. Three words alone and not even a sparkle of power are enough to cross the demon’s plan and make her threat seem like a joke.

Bellamy snorts. “Like hell we do.”

“Believe it or not, we do. You don’t want the key in the hands of heaven. Well, neither do we.”

Even Clarke has to stifle a laugh at that. Of course, they don’t want that since the key could lock them up for good.

“You can tell Nia that she can take her partnership offer and shove it up her bony ass.”

For a second the demon just stares at them, and then she snarls. Three other people appear next to her, all of them cloaked in death and pain just like her; all of them reeking.

“When we rip out the hearts of these poor, helpless monkeys, it might not mean much to you, but it will mean a lot to her,” she hisses.

Clarke knows, deep down, that Bellamy can take them, probably even more, but her hands still start shaking where she’s hiding them under the table.

Before any of the demons can even move a muscle Bellamy cocks his head and all four of them freeze in place as if an invisible fist has curled around their neck. Clarke supposes it has.

„I’m not in the mood to play games tonight,” Bellamy barks and his chair groans as he pushes it back to stand up. „You either —“

Clarke lets out a gasp when long, sharp talons curl around her own throat. Another demon probably appeared behind them. One who’s now breathing down her neck, it’s disgusting stench surrounding her.

The people must be looking already. She hopes they run for their life.

There’s only a growl of warning before Bellamy flicks a hand and two of four demons turn into mist. Ontari remains where she is. Her teeth bare with the effort to fight against whatever Bellamy is doing to hold her in place.

„I said I’m not in the mood.“

She has just enough time to shudder because of how low his voice has gotten before the thing behind her gets ripped away, slamming against the wall of the pub. There’s distant screaming.

Clarke staggers back when Ontari’s hand shoots out; the demon seemingly slipping from Bellamy’s grip. She doesn’t have to dodge the touch though. Suddenly wings — long, feathery, sleek black wings shield her from anything remotely demonic, at the same time as she hears the demon on the wall pant for breath.

But then another demon appears, and she calls, „Bellamy, look out!“

He spins around, his wings flapping, just in time to duck as the newest male demon takes a swing. With a graceful movement, he grabs the demon’s throat and slams him on the ground, hard. Clarke watches blinding, white light pour into its pitch black eyes. Then it goes still, his head lolling to the side and Bellamy gets off him.

„I told you to listen to me.“One
They both turn around to see Ontari stare at them, her hands around a crying woman’s neck. Clarke freezes. The woman looks so terrified, breath coming out in unsteady whimpers.

„Ontari,“ Bellamy says, warning.

„Don’t give me that look, sweetie. You didn’t listen, and now this poor, little thing is gonna pay the price for it.“ As in cue, the woman lets out a wrecked sob.

„Pl-Please.“

Do something, she begs Bellamy.

Clarke absently notices his wings fluffing up, hunching over his shoulders.

„Let her go, or I will make sure your death will take days.“

„So dirty,“ Ontari purrs, her nails dragging across the woman’s pale skin. „I like it.“

And then Bellamy’s in front of Ontari, his power blasting through her, and the woman falls to the ground. Clarke staggers towards her in a haze of blur.

There’s sounds, sounds everywhere. Someone — most likely Ontari is screaming. Other people are shouting and running. But all she can see and hear is the woman in front of her, not a single sound coming from her. Clarke’s hands fall to her neck, to her pulse point and she scrambles to find anything, but only dead silence greets her.

The woman is dead.

Another body falls to the ground and Clarke raises her frozen face enough to see Ontari’s brown waves on the floor. Bellamy stares down at her.

„She’s dead,“ she whispers.

Slowly Bellamy kneels down and lays a gentle finger to her forehead. His eyes squeeze shut for a moment. Then he lets out a breath and closes the woman’s eyes.

Clarke lets out a sob. Then another. And another. Until she’s shaking with the force of it, barely able to get the breaths in and out, still kneeling over the woman’s corpse. She barely registers Bellamy arms carefully wrapping around her trembling body. Barely registers that his wings cocoon around them, shielding and nestling and protecting as Clarke drinks in the soothing power seeping into her system, making it easier to breathe again. She just cries.

»»——©——««

„Clarke…“

The world isn’t coated in mist and echoes anymore. Clarke can hear him again. Loud and clear.

She exhales, braces her hands on the floor to glance at Bellamy where he’s kneeling beside her. His wings have straightened, now sitting tensed on his back.

„Let me bring you back home;“ he murmurs.

Clarke blinks and leans away from the body. „What about her?“

„I’ll deal with it,“ he says.
„How."

For a moment he hesitates. „I’ll tell her family. Make sure she gets a proper burial."

„And what will you tell them? That a demon snapped her neck because I—“ The words get stuck in her throat. Clarke squeezes her eyes shut. „— that she was killed out of spite?“

Bellamy’s throat bobs as he says, „I will tell them she had an accident."

An accident. And just like that, another person was murdered, and her death will forever remain… an accident.

„And the people that were here?“ she asks.

„I can make them forget about today.“ When a wave of anger rolls over her, he explains, „It will make it easier for them… even if it’s horrible."

It is horrible, to invade someone’s mind like that, erase such a thing from their life without their permission. But she knows he’s right. It’s not only easier, but it will also protect them.

Jaw clenched tightly, Clarke says, „I want to go with you."

Bellamy looks at her. „Clarke, you don’t have to be there for this."

„I do."

A beat, then.

„Okay."

He doesn’t argue about it anymore, doesn’t deny her, and through all that pain and fury and terror in her bones, a small part of her is thankful for that.

Bellamy fixes the mess they made in the bar with a wave of the hand, before looking down at the dead girl and Clarke still sitting next to her.

Slowly she gets up, and he carefully picks up the body. Clarke grips his arm and the world shifts.

They give the body to a hospital, then fly to a house in the town’s suburbs. To the girl’s — Mercy Woodkin’s family. Clarke doesn’t even blink at the different clothes she’s suddenly wearing — a dark police uniform. She doesn’t laugh or complain about it. She just stands there and listens to her heart thudding in her chest as they wait for the door to open, for her family to come out. Her heartbeat continues to throb in her ears, Bellamy’s words fading away into the distance.

Mercy Woodkin was just an eighteen-year-old girl that worked at the bar for some extra money. Today she went there, and during her shift, she accidentally fell from a ladder while trying to get a cleaning agent. She broke her neck. She died instantly. The family will get generous compensation for the pain they suffer.

The father’s painful sobs are still ringing in her ears when they fly to the people’s houses that were at the bar, coming in invisible and silent. Bellamy places a hand on their temples, and Clarke watches the horror of today easing out of their wide eyes and smoothing into a relaxed, happy smile, her own hand involuntarily fisting in the sleeves of Bellamy’s jacket. She doesn’t tear her eyes away.

When they arrive back at his house, Clarke only waits a second before turning right and going up the stairs. She just needs — … she needs a shower and to be unconscious for a while.
Clarke closes her eyes at Bellamy’s voice murmuring in her head and leans her forehead against the wall of the shower, feeling the water rain down at her.

Another day, another dead person because of her. She’s soaked in the blood of innocent lives.

She didn’t mean for that to happen, of course, she didn’t. But that doesn’t change anything about the fact that if she hadn’t — if she hadn’t gone to the bar tonight... if she had just shut up and gone back here instead of wanting a drink, Mercy Woodkins would be still alive right now.

_I want them all to burn_. Heaven, hell, it doesn’t matter. They’re all the same creatures.

Clarke wakes up with blood on her hands that night, and barely makes it to the toilet before hurling out her guts.

Raven is eating muesli in the kitchen when she comes down for breakfast the next morning, her head throbbing and mouth tasting bitter and dry.

The angel hasn’t been around much since the attack on that town. Bellamy said she’s recovering from an injury, and Clarke didn’t have the guts to ask him for details then. But now. Now she sees it.

Her wings. God knows why she can suddenly see them — why she saw them yesterday on Bellamy during the hours that followed after the fight, but she does. Raven has, unlike Bellamy, white, beautiful wings with faint brown tips tucked behind her shoulder. And there, on the left wing runs a long scar, like someone had tried to cut it in half. It looks mostly healed, but there are fewer feathers around the strip, replaced by scar tissue.

Clarke hides her surprise by murmuring a “Good morning” as she goes to the fridge.

“Morning,” Raven replies merely.

She makes herself a toast with avocado and tomatoes before sitting down at the table. There are a few moments of silence in which Clarke doesn’t know what to say, or if to say anything at all since Raven’s expression doesn’t reveal much besides a frown either. Then she hears Bellamy stride in — feels his presence swooping into the kitchen and filling the air with something she can’t quite place yet.

“Raven,” he says, voice surprised and light, nothing like the broken whisper she heard yesterday. “How are you doing back on your feet?”

Raven’s eyes narrow at him. “How do I look like, boss?”

“Beautiful, of course.”

“Always so charming,” Raven snorts, before shooting a look between Clarke and Bellamy where he’s boiling water, stirring eggs and chopping vegetables all at the same time. “How are you two doing after yesterday?”

Her whole body tenses. She didn’t expect anyone to speak about it so freely.
Bellamy’s eyes finally land on her, search her face for anything that would tell him how she is feeling. Clarke holds his gaze only for a moment, before averting her eyes.

“I’m fine,” she says, voice flat.

“Pulling through,” Bellamy says then. “Although I’m feeling a little more out for hell’s blood today.”

“Um, who doesn’t?” Raven replies with a shrug. “We should summon Murphy and beat him up for a while.”

“I think he’s got enough on his plate already without you kicking his ass.”

Raven crosses her arms in front of her chest and pouts dramatically. “Damn party pooper. Fifty years ago you’d have joined me.”

“People actually change, Raven, you know.”

Clarke doesn’t know whether he’s referring to himself or Murphy or both. Probably both.

“Yeah, that’s why none of us are people.” Raven makes a face at Clarke. “No offense.”

“None taken,” she says and swallows.

“We’re just a bunch of monsters hiding in these smoking hot bodies we made for ourselves, enjoying the perks of earth and what it has to offer.”

“And you love it.” Bellamy smirks as he sits down next to Raven, nestling into the corner of the seating area. His food and tea materialize on the table.

Raven lets out a sigh, propping up her chin on her hands. “That I do.”

“Is that why… why you don’t want Lexa to lock up heaven?” Clarke asks carefully, squeezing the butter knife in her hand.

That was always the question, wasn’t it? Why Bellamy was actively working against heaven, the very place he came from, the place a lot of his brothers answer to. At first, she assumed it was so that he could stay here — obviously —at she believed him to be. He protects her people, has an entire army of angels posted around the globe. So the question remains. Why stay here? Is earth really that fun that it’s worth protecting every day, minute, and second and fight against demons and hells?

“Among other reasons,” Bellamy says with a nod and takes a bite of his scrambled eggs.

“Heaven sucks,” Raven provides.

Clarke can’t help but snort. “True.”

Raven’s mouth curls into something like a proud smirk, and she gives her a firm nod of agreement.

“That, and the fact that heaven’s politics are a huge classist, dictatorial mess,” Bellamy adds, making a face. “There’s a reason why they wanna lock up that place. More and more angels are leaving, refusing to execute orders without questioning who it actually came from. And with numbers getting smaller… Alie and Lexa are getting desperate. There’s no power if there’s no one to control anymore, right?”

She blinks. “All of it is… for power?”
“It’s always about power in one way or another.”

“Yeah,” Raven huffs, “that huge stick up their ass prevents them from seeing that there’s actually something to enjoy here.”

Bellamy goes on, not annoyed in the slightest by his companion’s commentary, “Closing heaven’s gates would mean sealing our power within, too. Anyone who’s not there when they close the door…”

“… loses their powers,” Clarke finishes for him with a frown. “What would that mean? Would you die?”

“Some, yeah. Most of us would just turn human.”

“And as much as I like this body,” Raven says, gesturing to her admittedly handsome face and toned, muscular body, “I don’t wanna be stuck in here for the rest of time. Or, for the rest of the fifty years, I’d get in the best case scenario.”

It makes sense. All of it makes so much sense now. Why heaven is split into two sides and why she’s currently on this side of it.

“I assume many angels fear this precise outcome,” Clarke concludes, “so if it comes to it, they will go back to heaven. Where Alie and Lexa will be waiting. It’s brilliant.”

“Uh-uh, they’re smart. I’ll give them that,” Bellamy says.

“I wouldn’t exaggerate,” Raven jumps in, clearly unimpressed. “They need the key for all of that to happen, and the only person who can find it is sitting here and eating avocado toast.” Clarke smiles a little. “And they don’t have me. Or the antichrist. Or a demon with a soft spot for girls who kick his ass. Or,” she finally glances to Bellamy and smiles sweetly, “our rebel king on their side.”

“I’m honored to have it made on your list after all,” Bellamy huffs dryly.

Raven pats his shoulder, and Clarke ignores the small pang of curiosity and sadness inside her. “See, even if it is a good plan, in theory, they don’t have the tools for it. And that’s just as important.”

That makes sense. Stills some of the worry inside her that all of it — heaven and hell — is depending on her.

“But the key… it would also lock up hell, wouldn’t it?” Which, in turn, would be good for humans. For her people.

“About that,” Bellamy says, “the key doesn’t have to be operated both ways. Theoretically, it’s possible to either lock up heaven or hell. That’s why Nia’s pawns are looking for you too now.”

The real reason why Mercy Woodkins had to die. Not because she was clumsy and fell off a ladder. No. She was caught in the crossfire meant for Clarke.

“So we could get rid of demons and let you guys stay here?”

“In theory,” Bellamy repeats, his Adam's apple bobbing as he swallows.

“Obviously that would require you to drink the potion,” Raven points out.

Right. The potion heaven tortured her and others for. She still has no idea what it is, and what it would do to her.
“Maybe I should just do it,” she says with a shrug. “If I can save you guys, and my people, it would be worth it, right?”

“It could kill you.”

Clarke’s brows tug into a frown at the sudden urge in Bellamy’s voice. Raven looks irritated as well, shooting him a quick glare.

“It could, yes, but you could also survive and close hell for good.”

So far she has avoided death pretty good even in situations that couldn’t possibly end well for her. It’s the people around her that seem to be dying instead. Clarke swallows. Even if. If this potion really kills her, so what? If it means saving her people and Bellamy and Raven, the others, then she doesn’t care if it’ll perhaps kill her. She would die a thousand deaths to prevent a thousand other deaths. Her life is just a crack in a castle of glass. Nothing worth saving. It’s that simple.

“It’s not that simple,” Bellamy says.

She wonders if her walls have crumbled. “It is when it means saving all of you.”

Raven holds up a hand, silencing them before he can say anything else. “Not to intervene in one of your weird, silent fights, but Clarke willing to sacrifice herself means nothing if we don’t have the potion.”

Clarke can’t say anything to that because Raven is right. Without the potion she’s useless.

“Maybe there’s another way,” Bellamy finally says after a minute of pressed silence. Clarke and Raven look at him expectantly. “What if you don’t need the potion?”

“What do you mean?” she asks.

He leans forward on the table, squinting ever so slightly. “Maybe we can find the key without it. Just with you, as you are right now.”

“How?”

Bellamy swallows. “Through me. I could try to go into your mind. See if I can find it myself.”

“Lexa tried doing that,” she argues, shaking her head, “and she failed.”

“Well,” he says, determined, ”Lexa’s not me.”
Chapter 11

Clarke isn’t sure what she’s doing in Bellamy’s basement, standing in the small space between three doors that lead to the library, the other guest room, and the washing room. No clue.

But ten minutes ago Bellamy told her to meet him here in comfortable, sporty clothes.

After he had suggested poking around in her brain, Clarke hadn’t taken long to say yes. If she doesn’t mind death, then letting Bellamy inside — completely inside, surely works, too. However, Bellamy, being Bellamy, told her to take more time to think about it even though it wasn’t necessary in her opinion. In the meantime they would continue her training, he said, so here she is.

Half leaning against the white brick wall with crossed arms, she lets out an impatient sigh. And suddenly something — no, someone blows a huff of air in her ear, making her jump.

“What the f— Bellamy!”

Bellamy just laughs and waves a hand. Her glare turns into a slack-jawed expression because a black, metal door materializes on the wall in front of her.

Clarke shouldn’t be surprised anymore, and yet.

“What is this?”

“The last, hardest and most important part of your training,” he says, opening the door and leading them inside. “The fighting part.”

The room — or rather the hall she’s staring at is enormous with a high ceiling and all sort of equipment stacked inside. On the first glance, it looks like a regular gym, but upon looking closer, she notices arrows, rifles and guns, swords and knives and other weapons she can’t even identify. It’s crazy and —

“There’s no way all of this fits into your house!” Clarke exclaims.

A smug smirk is tugging at Bellamy’s lips.

“Idiot.”

“Special spell,” he says and thinks, *That’s not very nice.*

Clarke rolls her eyes, ignoring the urge to reply in her head and start bickering with him. Instead, she asks, “Why is it warded? And why are you showing me this now?”

“Because there are things in here able to hurt us. And if you’re good at it, then even able to kill us.” He saunters over to a shelf with numerous blades of all shapes and sizes and picks up one of the shorter ones, straight and silver. “I’m showing you now because I trust you not to kill me in my sleep anymore.”

She crosses her arms in front of her chest, raising an unamused brow. “So what, up until yesterday you’ve been living with someone who you believed was capable of killing you?”
“Well, you did have quite the attitude.”

“I would never! You’re so —”

Her mouth opens and closes again as she gives up on saying anything coherent. Even if she had an attitude, yes, Clarke wouldn’t have killed Bellamy, not him. That being said she didn’t even have the means to.

“Ready to be a badass, Clarke?”

She huffs.

“Here,” he says, throwing the sword over to her.

Instead of catching it, she nearly yelps in fear of being split in half, and it clatters to the floor. Clarke shoots him a glower before picking it up. Distantly aware that Bellamy’s eyes are tracking her every movement, she wraps her fingers around the cold, steel hilt of the weapon and hopes that’s how one holds a sword.

“You’re clutching it. Relax.”

Clarke takes a deep breath, closes her eyes and lets it out in a whoosh.

“Your hands,” Bellamy says. “I meant to relax your hands.”

Heat flushes across her chest and face. “Oh.” Easing on her firm grip, she looks to Bellamy. “Like that?”

“Uh-uh.” Without any warning whatsoever a sword appears in his own hands and ever so slightly he nudges it against hers, and it’s enough to lose her grip on it.

“Your grasp has to be firm, but relaxed. Mobile, so that when someone tries to attack from a different angle, you can hold them. You have to adapt to every situation you’re faced with.”

Trying to follow his advice, she rearranges her grasp on it and holds his sword when he pretends to attack, mimics the movements he shows her — even if they look stupid — and also gets to strike a few times herself. It’s slow, her arms start aching after twenty minutes of repeating the same motion and Clarke knows she’s not a natural. Which is frustrating.

“Maybe I’m more of a gun type of girl,” she pants out eventually, her gaze sliding to the shelf with all sort of guns.

“Fair enough,” Bellamy says with a shrug, and his own sword disappears. “One last thing, though.” He nudges his head, beckoning her to come closer and holds out his arm. “Cut me.”

“What?”

“Cut me.”

“No,” she says, shaking her head.

Bellamy rolls his eyes. “After all this time I thought you’d be excited about this opportunity.”

“Prick.”

“C’mon, Clarke.” She takes a hesitant step towards him and slowly raises the sword to his arm level,
after which his other hand covers her grasp on the sword, guiding it upwards until the tip of it is pressing against his tanned skin. “Now slash, make it deep.”

Clarke swallows and does as he says, her heart racing as not blood seeps out of his skin, but something else. Something white and shiny and beautiful.

*And that’s why the room is warded.*

Her eyes tear away from his arm and the minimal wound and raise to meet his gaze.

*A well-aimed stab with that thing and every other angel would be dead,* his hoarse voice tells her.

*And what about you?*

Bellamy’s eyes crinkle in amusement. *Thinking about that murder attempt after all?*

*What if I am?*

*Kinky. I like it.*

Refusing to blush and look away even when he’s being an asshole, she holds the stare, only offering a cruel smirk of her own in return. *So what you’re really not gonna tell me? That afraid of being stabbed in your beauty sleep?*

“A little more than a stab is needed to kill me,” he suddenly says out loud and the weird trance she’s just been in breaks.

Clarke is painfully aware of how close they are, so, clearing her throat awkwardly, she shifts a few steps backward. “What makes you more special than other angels?”

“Lots of things,” Bellamy replies, zapping to the rifles and waving a hand over the shelf while he’s half leaning against it. “Take your pick.”

He dodged her question, she realizes as he walks over there. Although this discovery is worth remembering, Clarke focuses on the task at hand and looks at the individual guns. There are a lot of them that make her hands tingle, but in the end, she chooses a brown, black shotgun.

Years ago her father had taken her to a shooting range to show her how to safely use a gun if it ever came down to it. They practiced with a nearly identical shotgun like this.

Clarke takes it into her hands, less clumsy than with the sword because she still remembers the necessary grip. But something — something doesn’t feel quite right. Frowning, she asks, “Wait. So I hold it like this?”

“Uh,” Bellamy says, “here.” And suddenly he’s behind her, his presence and scent filling, surrounding and mixing with her as he places one hand on grip on the gun and the other on her back. “Like this.”

Clarke tries, tries really hard just to focus on the shotgun and fails. As if reading her mind he lets go of her and steps to the side. (*Her wall is up.*)

“What do you want to shoot?”

“What can I shoot?”

“Whatever you want,” she hears him say behind her, and then the snap of his fingers. “There. Shoot
the white target in the air."

And looking through the small binocular, she really sees a white target floating in the air. Clarke inhales, aims, exhales and pulls the trigger.

The target falls to the floor with a loud thud. Bellamy tilts his head, and the aim is in his hands.

"Seriously do you ever use your legs to walk?"

Bellamy ignores the comment and shows her the target. Clarke didn’t hit the center, but it’s not entirely on the brink of it either. And it did fall.

"Not bad," Bellamy says with a grin.

"You can admit that it’s good, you know. Your own ego won’t suffer from it."

"You did most splendid, darling Clarke, treasure of my heart," he drawls, praise in his voice and she blinks, not having expected him to actually say it.

So she changes the topic. "Can I kill angels with these guns, too?"

"Everything in here can kill us, and demons, but the others will show you how and what exactly."

"The others?"

"Oh yeah," he hums nonchalantly and looks down at the watch around his wrist, "you won’t be training with me, but with our friends. I’ve gotta run."

Clarke scowls as he walks to the exit of the room this time. "I won’t be training with you?" she calls after him. "Then what the hell have you showed me these things just now?!"

Bellamy stops in his tracks for a moment and turns around to shoot her a delighted smirk. Oh, ‘cause it was funny to watch you squirm.

"Asshole," Clarke shouts and gives him the middle finger even though he’s already out the door. So she screams it down their communication line, along with a mental image of her middle finger.

A vague sense of amusement fills her senses a few moments later.

The person who fills Bellamy’s place is Lincoln. At first, Clarke is glad because Lincoln is kind and calm, and Clarke always remembers him helping her in heaven. However, that kindness doesn’t extend to his training.

Clarke’s not even sure it can be called training since it’s more like two hours of sweating and gasping for air. And she's not even learning self-defense! Instead, he lets her run on the treadmill, do full body exercises, crunches, sit-ups and worst of all planks.

But Lincoln insists she has to get in shape before doing anything more than that. Clarke does manage to convince him to, at least, show her some self-defense techniques — especially against supernatural beings. After all, she could get attacked any time of the day, and every punch and kick she learned could help.

When they’re done, she’s faceplanting the training mat, feeling like she just got run over by a pack of elephants. Or like she ran twice around the world.
„Right now it’s hard, and it will be for quite some time,“ she hears Lincoln say above her, „but you’re a human. You need to even out the disadvantages.“

„I know. I just — I thought it would be different,” she mumbles into the floor, voice muffled.

„Training, or participating in this war?“
Clarke stills for a moment. „Both.“

„It always comes down to the smallest of details. A war can’t function without a carefully laid out plan, just like a fight can’t function without specific muscles in your body ready.“

„You’re right, Lincoln. I’m just tired right now. That’s all.“

A few seconds later she feels Lincoln clap her shoulder with an amused huff. „Get some rest. You’ll need it for Octavia tomorrow.“

Her entire body freezes. „For Octavia?“ she squeaks out.

„Yeah, your sword and demon training. „Fuck, fuck, fuck you, Bellamy. „I have to go see her now. Will you be alright or should I get you to your room?“

To be honest, she’s not sure if she will be alright getting up, let alone climbing the stairs. Jesus Christ, a shiver runs up her spine. But getting up now, even just for Lincoln to zap her upstairs feels impossible too, so she says, „I’m okay. I will get up soon. Maybe in five minutes.“

„Okay then. See you at our next training session. Same time, same place,“ Lincoln says before silence fills the room. Clarke figures he’s gone.

She curses Bellamy for making Octavia her sword fight instructor. Bellamy seemed competent enough, why can’t he teach her? Meanwhile, Octavia — the literal antichrist — has yet to exchange more than a friendly word with Clarke. And she doubts it will happen tomorrow. Especially not with her being so out of shape. She doesn’t even want to imagine what it’s going to be like when the soreness sets in.

May father above help her somehow.

While Clarke’s imagining all the awful scenarios of everything going wrong tomorrow, she soon forgets that she’s lying on the floor of a gym. The darkness of sleep swoops her up like a newborn and cradles her in its arms.

Loud, annoying knocking on the door wakes her up the next morning. Clarke barely registers where she is, who she is or when she is, as she rasps out a, „What?!“

„Can I come on?“

It’s Bellamy. Of fucking course it’s Bellamy who dares to interrupt her sleep even though it’s what — eight in the morning? Good for him that rest is a mere luxury, but some of them are humans and actually require it.

Just come in, say what you need to and then get out again, she murmurs in her head, still too sleepy to trust her voice to form such long and complex sentences.

Moments later she feels his looming presence towering above her.
"You have training with Octavia in an hour."

He actually has the nerve to say that.

"No, I don't."

"Yes, you do. It's currently one in the afternoon, and I told Octavia to be here around two, and knowing her, she will arrive even—"

"No training when there's no student," she mumbles, refusing to open her eyes.

"Oh, the student is here, she's just being stubborn and grumpy."

"The student wants you to fuck off."

Clarke hears him chuckle. If her eyes were open, she'd roll them.

"Don't make do it, Clarke."

She grunts, unfazed, "Do what."

And suddenly the warm, cozy blankets are gone — just like that. Clarke lets out a high shriek and curls up into a ball. "I hate you!" she screams, "I hate, I hate you, I—"

"Yeah, you hate me. I got that," Bellamy says and nudges the bare skin on her arm with something warm, something that smells delicious.

Coffee.

So finally, finally she opens her eyes and sits up on the bed, the muscles in her body groaning and screeching, as she accepts the steaming mug with a glare. "I still hate you."

"Drink the coffee, take a shower and then meet Octavia in the gym," Bellamy tells her, undazzled by her declarations.

The scowl on her face widens at the implication that she smells, but then she sniffs at herself ever so slightly and okay, so maybe she should take a shower.

Why didn’t she take one yesterday? Which brings her to the realization that she’s in her bedroom, even though the last memory she has is… the gym mat.

"How did I get here?"

Bellamy’s hands slide into the pockets of his grey... sweatpants. An angel of the lord wearing sweatpants. Wow. "— I brought you here."

Clarke grimaces again.

"I found you passed out face first on the floor, Clarke," he says with exasperation in his voice. "Would you have rather slept there? And let Octavia find you?"

"No," she presses out and hides her face in the cup of coffee. "Thanks, I guess."

Bellamy only nods in reply. Then. "You want something to eat?"

"A bagel?" she asks, hopefully. As far Clarke knows they never had any bagels in the fridge, but
maybe —

Bellamy hands her a brown bag that has a beautiful, perfect bagel with cream cheese, salad and tomatoes inside. Precisely what she craved seconds before. She takes it out and mutters, “Show off.” There’s a small grin on her face, though, one she can’t hide for the life of her.

“Obviously,” he huffs, returning the grin. “I have to go now. Hell awaits.”

Clarke almost chokes. “Literal hell?”

“More or less. A few advocates of hell, in a place that is not really hell, but close.”

“That sounds… interesting.”

“It’s not. Not really.”

Upon the look on her face, Bellamy adds, “If you want to be there —”

“No,” Clarke cuts him off. “I mean — I want to be involved, but I know me being there would just risk everyone around me.” Including Bellamy, even if he is far stronger than most of the demons and angels. “When we figure out how to get the key. Then maybe…”

“You sure?” he asks, voice surprisingly gentle.

She blinks at him for a second, before clearing her throat. “Yes. Either way, I have training with Octavia.” There’s a particular emphasis on her name, both a question and accusation on why her sword training is with her of all people.

“She’s the best at sword fighting,” he simply shrugs. “Don’t worry, it’ll be okay.”

Clarke sighs. “Whatever you say.”

He nods, and says, “Alright, I really need to…”

“Go,” she finishes for him, waving him away, but when he turns to leave, she can’t help but say, “Bellamy? Be safe.”

He halts at her door. You too. And vanishes.

Clarke looks at the spot where he was standing moments ago and swallows. Since when does she care about if Bellamy is safe or not? Well, she always cares about the people around her, her friends being safe, but she never realized that Bellamy has become someone like that. A friend.

Shaking the weird thought away, she finishes her bagel and coffee and hops into the shower before throwing on a new pair of tight, black leggings and a matching black and white shirt with stripes.

Clarke still has fifteen minutes, so she decides to see if anyone’s downstairs and finds Jasper and Monty raiding the kitchen. They sit her down and make her taste a weird combination of muffins and cheese. When she tells them about her upcoming training, they give her a look of pity, which isn’t helpful at all.

But she’s in a relatively, good mood when she finally descends the stairs to the lower levels. Much better than an hour ago. And then Octavia flickers into view, a wide, scary smirk on her face, and well. Clarke sends a silent prayer.
“Back straight, feet more apart,” Octavia barks for the hundredth time in two hours.

Clarke restrains from screaming I am trying! Can’t you see that? and complies instead, straightening her spine even more, stepping even wider and clutching the hilt of the sword. Oh, right, no clutching. She tries to relax her grip, be more mobile.

Octavia only gives her that one second before surging at her. Unlike Bellamy, her attacks are nothing but brutal, sharp and all kinds of scary. There’s no mercy in her swings, no consideration for Clarke’s inexperience. Clarke holds off the first strike, manages to spot the second one, and gets surprised by the third one, the tip of the sword pressing dangerously close against her throat.

She wishes Octavia would just finish it and gut her for real.

“Stop whining and try to do better,” Octavia says, retreating her sword.

“I am trying.”

“Well, it’s not good enough.”

Clarke bites down on her teeth, hard.

“I was like you once,” she goes on, swirling the blade in her hand. “Scared. Weak. Inexperienced. I didn’t know what was out there, I just knew I couldn’t let them find me. But that wasn’t a solution. Hiding and running away are never the solution. You have to face them, show them that you’re not afraid, that you’re strong. And this, as hard as it feels, will make you strong.”

“It’s not like I want to hide,” Clarke mutters, “but it’s better for everyone if they don’t find me because of this stupid key. And I’m not strong enough to fight them.”

Octavia rolls her eyes, says, “You are strong enough.”

“I can’t even properly defend myself.”

“It’s in you. It’s all in you, Clarke.”

“What is?” Her voice sounds desperate and high, but she doesn’t give a damn right now. “Everyone keeps telling me that I’m special, that I can find the key and save us all, but how? Why? What is it in me that makes me —”

Octavia doesn’t let her finish the sentence, she just raises her sword and swings at her, for real. Clarke struggles to find the right grip, have the proper stance, make the right movements in time, so she just lifts her sword. Metal clashes against metal. And suddenly Octavia kicks her. Clarke staggers back, aware that she will strike again. Octavia goes for her side, Clarke swerves. Octavia’s teeth fletch as she aims for her again and Clarke feels the power, the darkness, rising in the room.

Clarke fears she might not live to see tomorrow.

She holds off Octavia’s sword with maximum effort, but then that power explodes like a nuclear bomb and Clarke, along with her sword, clatter to the floor. Octavia is towering above her, lifting her weapon, and Clarke gasps when she sees the wings behind her stretch out. Nothing like Bellamy or Raven’s. No feathers, just — dark, smoky, scarred skin.

And in the millisecond before the sword clashes down on Clarke and guts her once and for all, Clarke realizes what Octavia’s weak spot is. Where to strike. Crunching up, she takes a swing at her right wing.
The tip of her sword grazing even the slightest of her wing is enough to make Octavia flinch back, the wings flapping wildly. Enough time for Clarke to get up and hold her ground.

*Ready.*

Octavia’s face is impossible to read for the several seconds they stare at each other. And then her mouth curls into a smirk.

“I told you, you have it in you.”

Clarke’s mouth parts. Her body finally catches up and screams for air and rest.

“You can see them, can’t you?”

Octavia means her wings, Clarke realizes and nods slowly.

“What about the others? Can you see their wings, too?”

“Sometimes,” she rasps out. “Mostly Bellamy’s, but lately I saw a few others too.”

“Good, then that’s what you’ll be focusing on from now on. Always on their wings.” As if on cue her own fold neatly on her back. “You hurt them, you win.”

Sounds like a plan.

That evening Bellamy finds Clarke on the couch.

After the training session, she managed to crawl up the stairs to the living room. That was it, though, since Octavia had refused to zap her to her room.

Now she’s still lying there, her entire body aching, when Bellamy’s steps echo through the room and halt upon seeing her. A few seconds later, she sees him smirk above her.

“Did you have fun?”

“I’m not sure I would call getting my ass kicked by Octavia fun.”

Bellamy smiles. “It’s going to get better, I promise. Your muscles will get used to it.”

Clarke groans at the thought of more training sessions. Tomorrow Lincoln will probably make her do five hundred sit-ups and a handstand. And the day after that he and Octavia will torture her together until she sweats out every drop of water in her body and dies of dehydration.

“Can’t you heal me?” she asks, trying to sit up. He helps her.

Bellamy raises a brow. “You’re not sick.”

“Yes, I am. My entire body hurts, and I can’t move. That’s being sick, isn’t it?”

“Pain is not always an indicator of sickness.”

“God, you’re such a smartass,” she huffs under her breath and clutches the pillow in her lap tighter to her body. “I thought angels are here to protect and helps us, humans. Not watch us suffer in silence.”

“By now you should know better than that,” Bellamy says dryly.
Despite the initial lightness of the conversation, she can’t help but think about all the horrors and suffering these creatures have inflicted upon her kind. And for what? To sort out their own political problems. It’s a joke. And yet not all of them are like that. Not him.

Clarke feels her cheeks heat up at the thought, so she clears her throat and says, “I’m serious, Bellamy. Why can’t you heal me?”

“Because that would undo all the process your body has made so far,” he replies, crossing his arms.

She blows a frustrated breath through her nose. “Thanks for nothing then.”

Bellamy’s expression remains as it always is, relaxed, amused, but Clarke’s gaze shifts behind him, to the wings on his back. She didn’t see them two minutes ago, but now that she's looking for them, it feels like they were here the whole time.

Watching them hunch a little over his shoulders, tense, she realizes that wings aren’t only weak spots in battle, but also in everyday life. Bellamy might smirk and flirt and roll his eyes as much as he wants to. In the end, the smallest shift in his wings betrays his emotions. It’s like a facial expression but on his wings.

Clarke’s eyes slide back to his face where he meets her gaze, narrowing his eyes at her. “What were you looking at?”

“Nothing,” she tries to say as casually as possible.

“You know I can hear your heartbeat. It’s beating a little too loud if that were true.”

Just like him and the other angels, she has her own weak spots. Many more, actually.

Clarke bites her lip, then tells him, “I just, uh, looked at your wings. They’re… big.”

_Very smooth, Clarke, very smooth._

Bellamy probably doesn’t even notice her choice of words, though. He looks too surprised by the revelation itself. “You can see my wings?”

“Yeah?” she replies slowly. “Am I supposed not to see them?”

“Well…” He trails off, still blinking.

Now Clarke’s getting all jittery, too, because he looks so fucking flustered and taken-aback. It’s unnerving.

“You can really see my wings?” he asks eventually.

“Yes.”

“Since when?”

Clarke frowns, not even sure herself when exactly it started. It wasn’t like she saw them from the start. They were shadows and small glimpses of something that could be wings, but she honestly wrote it off as wishful thinking and her going crazy back then. The lines got clearer with time, though. Then the day in her hometown happened…

“A while,” she says, swallowing. “But they weren’t always so.. real.” Her body leans forward on instinct as she takes in the enormous, breathtaking wings behind him. “Now I can see the individual
feathers, the colors…” They're beautiful, elegant, mesmerizing.

Bellamy shifts on his feet. Out of nowhere, he says, “I have to, um, go,” and disappears, leaving Clarke blinking at the spot where he stood a second ago.

After a long, long while she manages to get up from the couch and half crawl into her room, still asking herself what the fuck that was about. Clarke takes a shower and immediately collapses on the bed afterward before drifting off into a heavy sleep.

That night she dreams about wings. Black as the night, exactly as soft as she imagines feathers would be and most importantly spread out as they soar through the sky.

(Clarke can’t say she prefers the nightmares.)

Chapter End Notes

I hope you're all still enjoying the story! I had to cut this chapter in half again because it would have been over 10,000 words long and that takes way too long to edit. So with every edit, it looks like this fic is going to have about 25 chapters, if not more. I hope you guys don't mind :D
For the next few days, she doesn’t see Bellamy.

Clarke wakes up, trains with Lincoln and Octavia, encounters Jasper and Monty doing experiments in the kitchen during the day, and curls up with the book that she’s been trying to read for weeks now, in her bed in the evening.

She tries her hardest not to wonder where Bellamy is. Most of the time she fails. It’s not unusual that he’s gone for days on end since running an entire army of angels all around the globe can’t be done from one place on earth. But the way he vanished without an explanation or a goodbye is what makes Clarke’s thoughts wander back to him over and over again. Not to mention what they were talking about before he left. His wings.

On the third day, she actually considers reaching out to him in her head. At least to ask if he’s alright.

Clarke shakes her head, though. If something was wrong, his friends would have said something a long time ago. And right now she can hear Jasper’s voice carrying through the entire house as he sings along to a song playing over the stereo.

_Day after day, I get angry, and I will say…_

Another voice chimes in. It sounds like Raven’s. And then she hears loud laughter before someone claps loudly and there’s a sound of something falling over.

“That’s why we never have nice things,” Jasper’s voice exclaims.

Listening to these angels — powerful, deadly beings — singing along to songs and having fun, Clarke smiles to herself.

No, Bellamy’s probably fine, she tells herself. And she doesn’t want to distract him from whatever important business he’s attending to at the moment.

For a horrible second, it reminds her of the time in heaven.

Clarke reached out to him back then despite her pride but was met with nothing but awful silence that almost drove her crazy. Of course, he did save her afterward, but she couldn’t know that in her cell.

She decides to join the others downstairs to get her mind off it.

Jasper and Monty are outside in the garden, indulged in a heated discussion and pointing at something in the distance. Clarke frowns but decides to ignore them. In the kitchen she finds Raven and Harper eating lush, ripe strawberries from a basket.

“Oh. Hey, Clarke,” Harper greets her when she walks through the door. “Jasper didn’t wake you up with horrible singing, did he?”

“Hey, I was singing, too,” Raven barks before putting another strawberry into her mouth.

“But your voice didn’t sound horrible.”
“Um no, I wasn’t sleeping,” Clarke replies. Yesterday Harper and Monty found her napping on the couch after her training, but that was because she hadn’t been able to sleep the night before. “And I agree,” she says with a nod to Raven. “You sang better than Jasper.”

“I know,” Raven says, but gives them an overdramatic bow anyway. “We’re going to the city later. Wanna come?”

Clarke’s inclined to decline the offer as the last ten times. This house has been a great hiding place, so far, and leaving it… being among other humans -- the image of Mercy Woodkin’s face flickers before her eyes. She just doesn’t know if she’s ready.

“C’mon, it’ll be fun,” Raven says.

Harper nods and adds, “There’s so much you still have to see.”

“You guys know I’ve been in cities, right?” Clarke deadpans instead of answering the question.

Both of them roll their eyes in unison.

“But Arkadia’s special,” Harper retorts.

“Yep, it’s not like other cities.”

She doubts it can be that much different than any other towns she’s seen herself or on TV, especially after seeing Arkadia which was simultaneously different and nothing special.

However, staying here while everyone’s in the city probably wouldn’t do her any good either. Not with her mind always steering into one direction. So finally she shrugs, smiling slightly, and says, “Fine.”

Harper claps her hand in excitement, whereas Raven simply flicks a hand and her leggings and tank top change into high waisted jeans and a red crop top. Clarke takes that as a cue to change into something less… homeless looking, too.

Twenty minutes later the three girls — well, Clarke and the two angels — along with Jasper and Monty head out to the city. To the dismay of her sore legs, they actually walk. The sun is high up in the sky, no clouds shielding them from it, and the house seems to be on the fucking top of the hills, so by the time they reach downtown, Clarke is sweating and pretty sure that there are blisters on her feet. Meanwhile, the others haven’t shed a single drop of sweat, totally unaffected by the sweltering heat. She silently curses them all of them.

On the way there the angels ask her about the progress of her training. Clarke doesn’t mention that Octavia nearly gutted her with her sword the first time and that she genuinely thought she was about to die. She can’t decide whether they would brush it off as something normal or be just as horrified as her. However, she tells them that progress is slow and steady. Lincoln still forces her to do horrendous body workouts, but they’re also starting to focus on defense techniques. And Octavia… well, they’re currently concentrating on Clarke aiming for the wings. Although she has learned one more thing or two about fighting supernatural beings which, she guesses, will come in handy.

When the skyscrapers and tall buildings edge into sight, she notices Harper glimpse in her direction more times than usual. She doesn’t get why. The city is — yes, pretty. Absolutely stunning actually. The port in the distance gives the entire town a harmonic and relaxing look that makes her think about holidays, sun and nothing but contempt. The people seem to be happy as well. It’s a vast variety of old and young, men or women, all with different faces and skin tones and clothes, but they’re all —
Oh, now she sees it. At least, when she puts her mind to it. Some of those supposed people have wings on their backs, varying from white as snow, to creamy beige, to brown, to even darker shades. (None of them as black as Bellamy’s though.)

„There are other angels besides you here?“ Clarke asks, turning to the others.

Harper nods with a bright smile.

Monty says, „Far more than that, actually.“

Raven just snorts, „Good morning, captain obvious.“

Clarke’s mind reels from the fact that Bellamy’s friends living among humans isn’t a singularity. There are actually angels here, strolling through the city’s like it’s right where they belong. „And it works? There’s no murdering or… slavery?“

„With Bellamy being in charge, no one would dare,“ Raven tells her with a somewhat proud smile that says more than she perhaps lets on.

Clarke blinks and glances back at the streets. „But do the people know?“ she asks, some of the initial excitement fading. If all of them are kept in the dark like some sort of gullible fools, then that’s not fair. They deserve to know who walks among them.

„There was no official announcement if that’s what you mean,“ Jasper provides with a grin. „But most of them do. News spread pretty fast.“

Harper shifts a little closer to her. „We and many other angels have human friends here. They know what we are.“

Clarke has never considered that they had other human friends, kind of assumed she was the only one with her being the first mortal to cross Polis and all. It makes sense though. If they’ve been here longer now, and humans and angels are living side by side then, of course, they’d have friends. She wonders if she’ll ever meet some.

They walk through a full alley with cute, bright shops on the sides. Clothing stores. Cafés. Book shops. And then there are others with strange signs on it, which radiate nonhuman energy. She guesses angels have stores, too.

„Okay, I have another question,“ she says, but thankfully no one looks annoyed. Rather the opposite. They seem happy to answer. „How — how do you guys keep all of this a secret? Because at home I never heard about angels and humans coexisting. It was always, uh….“ She trails off and hopes they know what she doesn’t want to speak out loud again.

„We don’t need to, your politicians take care of that,“ Raven replies with a shrug and a rather cold smile. The expressions on the other faces shift a little, too.

Clarke’s brows tug into a frown. „So they know?“

Monty nods. „Bellamy tried to work with some countries at the beginning. Most of them refused to even hear us out. This sector and a few other areas were the least hateful, so we spread out here and there.“

All this time the news, the radio shows, their government were spreading stories about hate crimes on humans and slaves being held and other horrible things. From her own experience, Clarke is sure that some of those were true. But they knew that places like Arkadia existed. Knew that angels were
willing — no, asking to work with them. Yet they said nothing. They just kept spreading lies, fear, and panic.

All of it: propaganda.

Clarke glances around the city. It’s not even coexistence, it’s true life together. There’s no extra space between the woman carrying her baby and the man with wings walking behind her. Another two girls, one of them an angel, are walking side by side and talking and laughing to each other. Friends. This is what the whole world should look like, and not the separate cities and towns for angels with scary walls surrounding them and presenting them like animals. Not that, but this.

Perhaps when they either avoid or win the war and heaven and hell aren’t hunting them anymore, Clarke will try to continue the talks Bellamy started. So that one day every city and town can be like Arkadia. Someday.

Clarke told herself she wouldn’t reach out to Bellamy, but as she walks through the streets, stands at the port and watches the city and its inhabitants live and thrive, she can’t help but go into that place in her head.

_You did well here in Arkadia. I almost regret ignoring you for the first two weeks._

Because even if it’s a hard pill to swallow Bellamy made all of this come true. All his friends say so. She’s sure they helped along as well, but he built the foundation, and she’s thankful that he gave, at least, a part of her people a peaceful way to leave. Even if it’s all at risk again.

After several minutes of silence in her head, no smug remarks or his amused laughter, Clarke starts regretting sending him the silent message. She’s still super grateful, of course. But she’d like to keep her pride, and Bellamy ignoring her after three days of his absence is pretty embarrassing.

Clarke almost reaches out again, just to say, _Hey, sorry, I sent that to the wrong person oops!_ but decides that would make things only worse. You can’t just send things to the wrong person. She doesn’t even have another person that this works with. It’s always just been Bellamy.

„Hey, you okay?” Harper nudges her shoulder and gives her a questioning glance. „You’ve been quiet for the last few minutes.“

„Oh no, no, I’m okay. All of this is a lot to process.“

Clarke presses out a smile that she hopes is convincing.

Harper smiles back. „Of course. We’re going to grab lunch here. Are you hungry?“

Not really.

„Sure,“ she lies and follows the group of angels as they make their way through the port, straight to a restaurant that has a veranda with a breathtaking view over the sea and the ships.

Clarke’s looking at the menu when a whiff of his presence fills her.

_You do look pretty content here._

Her brows furrow in confusion at his statement, wondering how he knows what she looks like right now. Can he see her through that communication line too?

The question answers itself when Bellamy walks to their table with a relaxed expression on his face.
and a petite brunette trailing after him.

„I see you’re all enjoying yourself,“ he greets his friends and sits down in the empty seat between Raven and the head of the table, that the girl easily occupies. Bellamy looks at everyone, but his eyes flicker briefly to her. The only acknowledgment of her existence.

Clarke's heart nearly stops.

He looks away again.

„Of course,“ Raven snarks. „Some of us have a social life to maintain.“

Bellamy snorts. „Some of us have a war to avoid.“

„Peanuts,“ Raven shrugs.

„How was it?“ Harper asks, now looking at Bellamy, and then briefly to the new girl, that still hasn’t spoken except for a few hushed words with Bellamy.

Clarke finds that unnerving. She could at least say her name.

Bellamy takes a sip of wine that’s suddenly in his hands, then calmly says, „I’ll fill you guys in later. Let’s enjoy this lunch for now.“

That doesn’t sound good.

„You’re enjoying too much again,“ the girl finally says for the first time, stealing his glass of wine. „How many times do I have to tell you not to act like a caveman and order a drink? The people here are trying to run a restaurant for fuck’s sake.“

Even though Clarke doesn’t particularly disagree, the brusque tone in her voices ticks something off in her. She lets out a sharp breath.

„Relax, the owner knows me,“ Bellamy grunts and a second later the wine is back in his hand. „And I tip well.“

„You better.“

„Why don’t you yell at Jasper who is already on his third cup of moonshine since we sat down here?“

Clarke looks at Jasper next to her as he’s suckling on a bottle of moonshine. Although he gulps it down and raises his brows when everyone turns to look at him. „What? I was thirsty.“

„Because you’re more fun to yell at,“ the girl replies with a shrug and a smirk.

Bellamy chuckles at that and Clarke blinks, watching the scene unfold in front of her. Their banter and bickering. The way they arrived together… Are they, perhaps, together?

She has no idea why her stomach churns so dumbly at the thought, but she certainly is grateful when Murphy suddenly pops up behind the girl.

Clarke hasn’t seen him often since she first met him, maybe once or twice. But Bellamy told her he’s pretty much the one helping him whenever it’s got something to do with hell and demons. An inside man.
Murphy kicks at Raven’s chair and says, „Move“ to which she shoots him a glare and points at the other free seat at Clarke’s right.

„Like your home, I’ll move, there’s a perfectly empty spot for you.“

„C’mon, Raven,“ Murphy sighs dramatically.

The girl tugs at his sleeve then, and Clarke doesn’t even realize what is happening until they are suddenly exchanging a heated kiss.

Okay, so maybe she was wrong.

„Now get your ass in that free seat and stop annoying us,“ the girl murmurs against his lips before releasing him with a wicked grin.

Murphy doesn’t mind at all. „Of course, babe.“

Raven watches him sit down with narrowed eyes and then turns to his partner. „Seriously Emori, teach him some manners.“

„I’m trying to.“

Emori. Emori. Oh, that does ring a bell. She’s heard them mentioning her from time to time.

„Emori has even fewer manners than me,“ Murphy huffs next to her.

Before the bickering can start again, a waitress, human and with a glowing smile, comes over to take their orders. Clarke tunes out somewhere after ordering herself a seafood stir fry. There’s a faint feeling of shame growing in her because of the way she internally reacted to Emori, because now that she knows it’s Murphy’s girlfriend, the feeling of annoyance is gone.

*Good god*, Clarke doesn’t even dare to wonder why she felt like that.

Their food is brought not long after and for a few moments, there’s just silence as everyone digs in.

After some time Jasper starts offering all of them moonshine and only few refuse. Even Clarke takes a sip, although she ends up coughing into her hand because it feels like her lungs were set on fire.

„No wonder,“ Jasper mutters, shrugging. „This is like pure gasoline for you humans.“

„Thanks for the warning,“ she gasps out, as another coughing fit overcomes her, even bringing tears to her eyes.

„Jasper would you,“ she hears Bellamy say and glances up to see him throw a pointed look to her.

Jasper looks puzzled for a moment, then. „Oh, you mean —“

Clarke starts protesting that she’s fine, that she doesn’t need him to heal her, especially because Emori seems to be doing just fine with sipping moonshine, but Jasper’s palm is already on her back, slapping it which was not what she expected. It helps a little, though.

„Father above, I meant fix the burning, Jasper,“ Bellamy complains and rubs his temple.

Jasper merely shrugs. „It helped, didn’t it?“

„Yes, I’m fine,“ Clarke repeats. The burning in her throat has smoothed out into a dull rasp. Nothing
she can’t bear.

“See.”

“You’ll get used to it,” Emori suddenly says from the other end of the table. “I couldn’t speak after my first night out with these people.”

“That’s a lie,” Murphy drawls. “She drinks even harder shit in her free time.”

“Oh, I second that,” Raven chimes in.

“I still couldn’t speak the next day! It’s something in the recipe that makes it so damn dis—”

“Hey, no hate against my recipe!” Monty warns, holding up his hand. “I worked on it for centuries.”

A smile grows on her face as the angels and demons and Emori fire out reply after reply, clearly invested about whether moonshine is just that shitty or every strong drink is. More importantly, though, she smiles because there’s someone who understands what’s it like to be human around these creatures. That doesn’t mean that they don’t try, the creatures. No. Harper always tries to include her in whatever it is they’re doing. Monty answers her question when it goes under in the numerous conversations going on. Jasper shares his witty remarks with her now and then. Raven speaks with her just as snarky and bluntly as she does with everyone else, and Murphy quietly tolerates her as well.

And Bellamy — well, he’s the sole reason why she’s sitting here with them instead of rotting somewhere away in heaven in the first place. He came and helped her when no one did, and he never demanded anything in return.

A rush of gratitude overcomes Clarke, and she has to blink as the emotions wrap around her heart like glue and make everything feel heavy and light all at once. Then she looks at her friends, and her eyes find Bellamy. He’s laughing at something Jasper is half yelling through the entire restaurant, his eyes crinkling before his gaze flickers to her like he somehow knew she was watching. For a moment, it feels like there’s nothing but her and Bellamy, everything else melting away, and she presses out a smile to him. A smile that hopefully expresses, at least, an ounce of all the things she’ll never be able to say. Bellamy returns the smile, soft and gentle, and her chest feels like a dandelion. Light. About to be blown away if she doesn’t hold on.

So she holds on. She tunes back into the present moment and laughs as Murphy tells Jasper what an idiot he is.

They stay in that restaurant for hours. So long that when they get up to leave the sun is already setting over the hills. Clarke’s still full from the delicious food and grinning that she’s surprised at the uncomfortable tang of pain shooting through her feet after getting up. She curses silently and makes a face at herself. Blisters.

The others have already started walking, but a feeling tells her that it’s Bellamy who comes up in front of her.

“Uncomfortable shoes?”

“Blisters and soreness,” she tells him and takes the hand he offers to get up. The instant he touches her the pain disappears. “Thank you. Tell me why we are hiking up and down the entire goddamn hill when you angels love to teleport around.”

“Oh, so it’s not lazy anymore?”
Clarke shoots him a warning look that says not to fuck around with her, not when every step feels like muscles inside her legs are tied together, unable to move without causing pain.

“They love the city and the people,” Bellamy explains with a grin. “And sometimes it’s not about the destination, but the journey.”

“You sound like a poster on a fourteen-year-old girl’s bedroom wall,” she snorts.

He turns his head to her. “Did you have such a poster on your wall?”

A blush spreads across her cheeks as images of all the posters throughout the years pop up in her head. She had many cheesy ones, but this wasn’t one of them. “No,” she says before huffing out a breath. “Shouldn’t you know that since you were snooping around in my room?”

“Again I wasn’t snooping, I was checking if your mom was upstairs —”

“Yeah, yeah,” she teases and nods more than necessary. Bellamy rolls his eyes, laughs, and seconds later she joins in, ducking her head to hide the flushed cheeks.

“So why did you heal my feet but refused to heal my sore muscles?”

“Because this time you were actually hurt.” Clarke rolls her eyes. “And because we’d take forever to get back to the house with you limping like that.”

Clarke elbows him in the ribs, shaking her head slightly. “It will still take forever because it’s a long ass road, and my poor mortal body isn’t as unaffected by heat and distance as yours, dickhead.”

In the distance, she hears the echo of cheers and glances up to see some really, really big birds soaring through the sky. She has never seen such big birds in her hometown. Next to her Bellamy looks up too and says, “There’s another reason we don’t teleport.”

Clarke arches a brow.

“We like to fly.”

Looking at him, the way his wings suddenly stretch out like they’re eager to take off, and back to the sky with the gigantic birds, she realizes that those are not, in fact, birds.

“Oh,” she says quietly.

Bellamy smiles at her like he’s not exactly sure himself what to say, but then he holds out his hand, and she looks at it warily.

“Are you asking me to fly up there with you?”

“I can do that,” he replies. “I can teleport you back to the house as well, though.”

“And I’m totally gonna ruin the fun of it, right?”

Bellamy tilts his head, hand still there to take. “I can fly whenever I want to. This isn’t gonna ruin anything.”

"Fine, fly us home."

Swallowing down the strange knot in her throat, she grips his hand and lets him pull her close to him, right into his burning hot, solid chest as his wings spread out even wider around them.
“Put your arms around my neck,” he orders.

Clarke bites down on her teeth and does it, albeit grudgingly. Without any warning, his right arm loops around her knees and he picks her up easily, bridal style.

“Is that really necessary?” she snaps, feeling herself growing agitated being so damn close to him.

“Trust me it is,” Bellamy smirks, adjusting his grip. “Don’t be scared.”

“I’m not scared, but —”

He shoots into the sky like a catapult. Her heart drops into her pants. For a moment it’s just wind, wind, wind. Clarke has her eyes squeezed shut, arms clutched around Bellamy’s neck, and then the unyielding rush of air stops and she feels like she’s floating. She opens her eyes, and they’re high above the spot they were just standing in. There are small figures there, some of them pointing up into the sky.

Clarke lets out a breath in awe, surprise and thousand other emotions of indescribable feelings. „I didn’t know you can actually do that,” she finally breathes, hoping he can hear her despite the wind.

Bellamy hears her. Of course, he does.

“What else do you think the wings were for?”

“I don’t know.” Clarke looks at them now, admiring how this set of sleek black wings is strong enough to carry two bodies through the sky. So freaking strong. „Why didn’t anybody in Polis fly? Or anywhere else? I’ve never seen or heard of you actually flying like a bird.”

“We do fly outside of here, too, it’s just not visible to the human eye,” he tells her. “It all happens on a different set of plane. As for Polis… I’m not sure you saw anything holed up in that hotel room.”

Clarke’s throat tightens at the memory of that hotel room and the days she spent there, doing nothing, waiting for Finn, racking her brain about what happened to those people. She only hums in reply.

They soar past the city into the hills where she can see the others, perhaps a mile away from them. It’s strange to be in the air, but seeing angels fly from this side of it is even more bizarre. It’s also the most beautiful thing she’s ever seen.

“What about Murphy? Can demons fly?” she asks after a while.

“Not like this. Their wings… they’re not able to carry them. But they can travel through the planes and teleport just like us.”

“And Octavia?”

“She can.”

Angels, demons, the antichrist, it’s all so confusing to keep up, but she thinks she understands. When Clarke looks at Murphy’s wings, it’s more of a shadow of a wing like they’ve been destroyed somehow.

_Hell_, she hears Bellamy say. _The wings burn there._

Something in his voice sounds so profoundly affected by it that she doesn’t even care that her wall wasn’t up. Clarke doesn’t know why, but she doesn’t want him to feel that way, so she tries to steer the topic of conversation to something else.
“Can you fly faster?” They’ve been flying in medium speed for a while now, and it’s incredible, but she wants to feel that rush of adrenaline again like when they took off.

Clarke feels him huff and glances at him, seeing the way his lips twist into a challenged smirk. Their eyes meet.

„Not scared anymore, huh?“

„I was never scared,“ she retorts. „So, can you or is that all you’ve got?“

The effect is immediate. Bellamy’s wings flap once, twice, strong and powerful before they shoot higher into the sky until it feels like they reach the first clouds. Clarke’s heart stutters most amazingly.

On top of the world, he halts and brings his mouth to her ear, „Hold tight, princess.“

Clarke doesn’t know if the shiver running across her entire body is because of the impressive height they’re currently in, the colder temperature up here, or if it’s because his warm breath tickles her ear. Either way, she rasps out, “Don’t drop me.”

“Never.”

His hands tighten around her and then she sees a thrilled smirk curl on his lips before they charge forward and dangerously down.

It feels like freefall. Feels like the moment the roller coaster starts hurtling you down from the top. But infinitely better because she’s actually in the sky, actually flying, and her heart is jumping up and down in her chest, and she feels more alive than she has ever felt in her life.

Clarke forces her eyes to stay open even if the wind bites at it, but the rapid change of scenery is just too damn beautiful to miss. The hills are coming closer and closer. Soon she can see the street that leads to the house, and then the house itself.

She hears his wings stretch back out again and they lose their speed as Bellamy aims for the balcony, and lands on his feet moments later.

“Here we are.”

Clarke sighs, almost sadly because it’s over before she remembers that Bellamy is still carrying her and she wiggles a little until he lets her down.

“So?” he asks after she’s back on her feet and straightening out her wrinkled clothes.

“So what?”

“How was it?”

“It was okay,” Clarke says with a smile that she knows will drive him nuts. If not for pissing him off, then she’s probably doing it so that he’ll want to prove her wrong, and fly with her again.

“Just okay?” Bellamy challenges, exactly as she predicted, taking a step closer.

Clarke suppresses her grin, and says, “It was a flight like a flight. What am I supposed to say?” before brushing past him inside the house.

“That it was the greatest flight ever?” he grumbles, following her. “Or the most exciting experience in your entire life.”
There are voices in the kitchen, so she stops abruptly and turns around to finish this conversation on their own. Seizing him up with a look she says, “You really think much of yourself, don’t you?”

Bellamy holds her intrusive look without any difficulties. “In this particular territory, yes.”

“Well, good for you. Ever considered not everyone agrees?”

“So far I’ve only heard the same opinion.”

“Then I guess I’m different.”

“Of course, you are, princess,” he drawls and takes a step closer. They’re way past personal space now. “But you’ll change your mind soon enough.”

God, it’s so easy to rile him up like this. Tick the right buttons, and he’s doing exactly what she thought he would.

Clarke arches her brows. “Is that a threat, Bellamy?”

“Oh no.” He chuckles, shaking his head ever so slightly before his hand comes up, his thumb brushing her jaw. Clarke inhales sharply. “It’s a promise,” he murmurs, and his hand falls away. She hates that she immediately misses the weight of it.

After a moment of pulling herself together, she steps even closer and slightly raises on her toes. “Give it your best shot.” Then she pulls away and walks into the kitchen where the others are all gathered.

“There you are!” Jasper exclaims upon seeing.

“We’ve already been wondering where you were,” Raven says, eyeing her warily. Clarke shrugs slightly. “I had a blister problem.”

Bellamy only comes in a minute later, and she tries not to take too much pride in being responsible for the delay. Or, at least she thinks it was her. Why else would he need so much time?

Either way, he’s pointedly not looking in her direction as he clears his throat, leaning against the doorframe. “We have things to discuss, guys. I suggest a meeting in the study in ten minutes.”

“What about Miller?” Harper asks, perched on the counter, an unusually grave expression on her face.

“He’s on his way,” Bellamy says. “So are Octavia and Lincoln.”

And that’s that. Most of them filter out of their room. Monty and Jasper seem to want to make themselves another sandwich before that.

Clarke’s impressed at Bellamy’s abilities to separate this life with his friends and his job, his army and politics. He didn’t say a single word on the way here. And from the look on his face, the things they’re going to discuss aren’t of the good kind.

She’s still musing when he says, “You too, Clarke” in passing.

Sighing, she nods.
Time to work.

Chapter End Notes

Just a quick thank you to everyone that leaves a comment on every chapter, I see you guys and I love the hell out of you. It means the world to me!
Bellamy has been in contact with two of Hell’s advocates for the last few days, trying to find ways to prevent Nia, the queen of hell, from attacking. What hell wants is territory, own cities like the angels, but since that is nearly impossible without causing a war with the human world, it is out of the question. Apparently, Nia also wants the key not just to stop heaven from locking hell, but also to only lock up heaven. Which they can't let happen either.

When Clarke finally brings up the guts to ask how demons are able to get out of hell in the first place, Bellamy and the others tell her that hell’s gates are an invisible wall that was installed after the first war. And that wall has developed loopholes and cracks over the centuries which demons use as a way out.

There are three ways of handling this situation in Clarke’s opinion.

Give hell their own territories on earth. Terrible solution.

Find the key themselves and close down hell for good. Better, but still not ideal since that would require Clarke to take the potion, that they don’t have, which would also possibly risk her life.

Or fix the holes in the damn wall. The easiest solution and frankly, Clarke is startled that they haven't already done that a long time ago.

However, the others don’t see it that way, because when she suggests doing that she gets a lot of frowns and few glares.

“We can’t do that,” Bellamy finally says after a strained pause. He’s sitting at the head of the table in his study, the room where all the strategizing and plotting happens, and rubbing his temple.

Clarke crosses her arms. “Why not?”

“Because God made that wall.”

Even more, silence fills the room, and she feels like now is not the wisest choice to finally ask the thousands of burning questions about God right. They are there, though. Where is God? Who is he? What is he like? Why did he let his angels oppress humans for so long without doing anything?

Finally, Raven says, “Our dad’s not here at the moment, Clarke, so we can’t fix the wall. Literally.”

“At the moment,” Jasper scoffs. “I think dad left the building a long time ago.”

She sees Miller stiffen slightly at his words, but he remains silent.

„You know what I meant,“ Raven snaps, voice agitated.

„That’s beside the point right now,“, Bellamy cuts in before any else offers their opinion. „Fact is that God made that wall, and only God can fix it."

„So you have tried fixing it?“ Clarke inquires.

Lincoln answers this time, „Heaven has tried, yes. It didn’t work. We don’t — our power is not
enough."

"What if you just built your own wall? Would that work?" she asks.

"No," Bellamy says.

Murphy actually decides to elaborate. "It's hell, Clarke. I don't know if you've ever been there, but there's a massive amount of power coiled down there, too. It would require all of heaven’s forces to make that wall work, all the time."

"Hence the key," Raven concludes.

Clarke lets out a frustrated breath. "If there’s only the key, how did you guys lose it in the first place?"

The room grows so quiet she could hear a pin drop. Nobody says a word.

"Did I say something wrong?"

Eventually, Bellamy shakes his head, not really meeting her eyes though. "We don’t… know for sure. It was a time of war and rebellions, Clarke. Stuff got stolen."

One would think that heaven — literally a place full of powerful, all knowing beings would manage to take better care of their stuff. Apparently not.

She sighs. "So what now then?"

And finally, it feels like everyone finds their voices again. It truly wasn't good idea to bring up the wall.

Miller and Octavia start telling Bellamy something about strategies to overrule demons, while Murphy provides them with numbers. Monty insists on finding another solution before it comes to war. Jasper says nothing. Lincoln cuts into Octavia’s cries for violence and reminds her they’re here to protect, not to fight. And Raven looks down right at Clarke and announces, "Clarke is the solution, and you know it."

"Raven—"

"No. You said you were going to try to find it without the potion. Did you?"

Bellamy lets out a sigh that’s answer enough.

"Did you even try?" Raven demands.

"No, because I wanted her to have time to think about this super invasive technique that might not even work," he snaps back.

"That she was willing to try!"

"Wait a minute, what are you talking about?" Harper asks.

"We could find the key without the potion," Raven says. "Bellamy would have to go into her mind for that."

"I would have to go through everything," Bellamy corrects her. "There’s a difference."
Clarke doesn’t speak up, not when everyone’s opinions are already so split. Instead, she reaches out to Bellamy, silently.

*We have to do this, Bellamy.*

*We don’t even know if it’ll work.*

*But it’s worth the shot,* she argues. *If it means saving the world from another war, don’t you wanna take even the smallest of chances?*

She’s honestly not even sure where exactly the problem lays. Sure, it’s gonna be intrusive, possibly painful, but why would Bellamy care so much? It doesn’t matter what happens to her, as long as they manage to find something useful and stop hell from being unleashed on earth, does it?

*Let me try to help you guys.* After every life Clarke cost this world, she needs this. Needs to retribute for what she’s done.

And finally, she hears, feels him give in. *Fine. Tomorrow.*

Clarke blinks as she jolts back into the present moment — these conversations always take her out. Raven is telling the others what they had discussed a week before.

Bellamy gets up. „I’ll do it.“ His gaze lands on Miller and Octavia. „Keep working on the plans.“ A clear sign he doesn’t believe it will work. Then he brusquely mutters, „I need some air“ and disappears.

Clarke has a guess why he's so angry.

Before she goes to bed, pretty nervous about the next day, Clarke tries to find Bellamy. But he’s nowhere in the house. Nor is he on the balcony, or in the backyard. And she doesn’t think she’d be much more successful if she tried looking for him outside.

So she’s pretty startled when she hears a knock on her door as she’s about to drift off. Clarke gets up to open it and finds Bellamy standing there, looking more distraught than she’s ever seen him.

„Can I come in?“

„Sure.“

Bellamy slowly walks in, glancing around as if he’s not certain where to sit, so she sits down at the edge of the bed and pats the spot beside her.

„What’s going on?“ she asks once they’re side by side.

„I want to tell you, exactly, what I’ll do tomorrow.“

Clarke worries her lip between her teeth and nods. „Okay.“

Bellamy turns his body towards her, looks her in the eye and lets out a breath. „This isn’t gonna be like when you didn’t protect your thoughts and blasted them through the entire neighborhood.“

„Alright,“ she says.

He goes on, „I will go inside your head, and I’ll have to look through *everything.* Every thought you
ever had. Every memory. Every secret. Every dream that you probably don’t even remember anymore. I will see it all."

Her stomach turns into knots at the thought of being stripped naked like that. Clarke has never been good about voicing her feelings. There was always a little more she could’ve told her father, more she wanted to ask from her mother but never did, more she wanted to share with Wells, yet remained silent about most of it. Even now she’s hiding a lot. Not always ready to say what truly goes on inside. Too many walls, too many locks barricading the doors of her feelings. But this… Clarke refuses to be run over by the fear of being seen. Not when it’s about so much more than herself.

“I trust you, Bellamy," she finally says and hopes that this is enough. For both of them.

Bellamy actually looks surprised by this, he blinks and looks away. „You shouldn’t have to."

„But I do," Clarke says. „And I would be lying if I said it didn’t scare me — what’s gonna happen tomorrow — but we have to do this. It’s our only shot at finding the key."

„It’s gonna hurt," Bellamy murmurs.

„What?"

„I’ll dig up memories you have long forgotten, memories you want to have buried deep inside somewhere, and I’ll bring them back up and force you to relive them.”

It does sound awful. But...

„It’s okay, Bellamy." She places her hand on his upper arm. „You can tear me apart if that’s what it takes."

Bellamy lets out a shuddering breath at these words and squeezes his eye shut. After a beat, he quietly tells her, „I swore to myself I’d never do it again."

„You have done it before?“

„More times than I can count." Bellamy drives a hand through his hair, messing up the curls more than they already are. „I used to do it in battle to find out what hell was planning. Those were demons, but— “ his voice breaks and Clarke doesn’t even think before squeezing his arm in reassurance, her thumb stroking back and forth, telling him that he’s not alone. „A lot of them were just innocent souls that got trapped in there by accident, Clarke. They’re taunted and tortured there for so long until they eventually give in to the darkness.” He opens his eyes and says, „Twenty years ago I told myself I’d never do it again, but here I am. About to do it again."

And somehow she realizes that maybe it’s not all about what it will do to her, but what it will do him. Reopening that old wound. Doing something he never wanted to do again.

She never had to torture someone, but Clarke knows the weight of lives on her hands. That it’s so heavy it feels like you’re choking on it. After what happened to her father and all the innocent people, Clarke thought it would kill her eventually. But she’s still here, and so is Bellamy.

“Sometimes we’re forced to do things for the greater good,” she says. “But I want you to know that I’m part of this just as much as you. We’re doing this together.”

For a moment his eyes bleed sorrow and shock, then he nods.

Clarke almost wishes he would do it right here, right now, just to get it over with, because no matter
how much she tries to play it off, she is scared. There are things he could find down there that not even she wanted to see. Memories, she buried so deep, she thought she’ll only see again when she dies.

But he probably came here not only to get it off his chest but also to warn her, maybe secretly hoping she’ll change her mind overnight. Clarke should probably be pissed at him, but she can’t be. Not with him looking at her like that.

“You should get some rest,” he tells her eventually and gets up.

“So should you.”

Bellamy smiles slightly.

“I’m serious. I know you don’t need it, but you look as tired as an angel can look.”

“Thanks,” he says dryly, and she recognizes that expression again. The one he always wears.

Clarke lets out a small laugh, looking at her feet. “You know what I mean.”

For a moment none of them says anything, then Bellamy clears his throat quietly. His hand comes up to rub the back off his neck. “Thank you, princess.”

The softness when he says that nickname surprises her. Usually, there’s annoyance, or sarcasm in his tone, or just the sheer desire to piss her off. Not... fondness.

After a second she recovers and smiles. “Don’t mention it.”

“Well... good night then.”

“Good night, Bellamy.”

———²———

It takes Clarke even longer than usual to fall asleep that night, but when she finally does, she sleeps through the night without any dreams. At least, not any she remembers.

Although her anxiety grows more and more in the morning, Clarke expects to find someone in the kitchen since somebody is always in there, but instead, it’s empty, which can’t be a coincidence. Scowling she looks through the fridge. Nothing in there appeases to her stomach. In fact, she might need to revisit the bathroom with that rollercoaster inside her.

Clarke turns around just as Bellamy walks in, and they both halt at the sight of each other. He’s wearing his usual black pants, a black shirt; his clothes looking like business attire. Well, maybe this is business, what they’re about to do.

“Morning,” he says.

“Hey. Where is everyone?”

“Busy,” he walks over to the fridge, and Clarke’s annoyed enough at everyone’s absence that she wants to leave again, but then he asks, “Don’t you want to eat something?”

“I’m not hungry.”

It looks like he might argue with her, but he merely nods and starts making breakfast for himself.
Clarke watches him longer than necessary.

“Can we do it right now? I mean, when you’re done with eating?” she blurts out eventually. “I just — I don’t want to torture myself for hours. I want it to be done.”

“Clarke, if you changed your —”

“We’re doing this,” she reminds him, voice clear and focused. „But now.“

“Alright. Give me five minutes.”

Clarke nods and goes to her room. They decided to do this in the gym, but she wants to — she doesn’t even know what she wants. After closing the door of her room, she goes to the windows, sits down and meditates.

Well, all she does is close her eyes and focus on her inner self, so maybe it’s not technically meditating. Lincoln suggested she should do it during their last training session. According to him she’s incredibly wound up — so much not even working out, learning hand to hand combat or sparring could help. So meditation. She nodded when he told her, but inwardly she immediately brushed it off as something she’d never do. And here she is.

It, sort of, helps. Her heartbeat calms down a little bit. But in the end, the timer she set on her phone starts blaring through the room, and she’s forced to open her eyes.

Time to save the world.

Bellamy’s not there yet when she enters the large, empty gym. However, there’s a mat in the center of the room, and figuring it’s for her, she sits down. Clarke wonders whether Bellamy’s like her. If he just wants it to be over and done with, or if he thinks the few minutes he shows up late will make her change her mind.

But then she hears him come in, the door falling loudly shut behind him, his heavy footsteps echoing across the entire hall. Clarke lifts her chin when he reaches her.

Maybe if one of them pretends to be brave, it’ll be easier.

Bellamy smiles at her, easily. The doubts, the horrible guilt and the panic from before are nowhere to be seen now.

„You ready?“

„Yeah.“

He sits down across from her and raises his hand before halting in mid-air. „It’s gonna be easier if I touch you. Can I?“

„Do it,“ she says.

A moment passes, and then Bellamy’s hand reaches the ultimate destination. Her cheek. His touch is soft, reassuring, and her eyes fall closed at the intimacy of it; his thumb as gentle as a summer breeze on her skin.

„I’ll go in now,“ the murmur of his voice tells her. „You can lower your wall.“

Just like that Clarke lets her wall vaporize into dust and air. No barriers between them anymore. Just her at Bellamy’s mercy.
She feels it. The dark shadow of his presence crawling into her mind; first slowly, cautiously as if not to disturb her. He reaches her memories of today. Waking up, looking at the sunlight streaming through her window, thinking about th— Bellamy brushes past it, going deeper. They’re in yesterday now. The training. The restaurant. The flight. Again, his presence rumbles and shoots past it. Deeper and deeper, until she doesn’t know where he — they are. She doesn’t recognize it anymore. It’s the echo of words, blaring sounds, and flickering images and then —

Clarke gasps, as Bellamy who used to be a neat line of something penetrating her mind parts into a thousand somethings. A million. All of him spreading out in her at once, like ten thousand lightning strikes jolting through her veins.

He’s everywhere.

Bellamy’s in every single neuron in her head, in every cell of her body, in every particle of her soul; in everything, she’s ever dreamt, thought or spoken of. He is her.

It’s terrifying and soothing all at once to not be alone. To be joined with somebody like that. Clarke feels like crying, but she doesn’t know what for, nor if it’s even possible.

Suddenly they’re three months in the past, tiptoeing down the stairs to see what the noise is all about. They reach the last step and see the back of a black, tailored suit, the dark, unkempt hair of the angel with his hand in the air. They see her father writhe on the ground. They feel that panic all over again, the fear, the feeling of being so incredibly helpless as they want to dart forward, and do something, stop it, but all they can do is sink to their knees and let the growing darkness swallow them.

And they wake up again and experience the horror of finding their father’s body lying next to them, still as death, colder than ice, so terribly, irreversibly dead. They feel the tears start rolling again as they hover above him. The scream swelling in their throat builds and builds and builds, and again dissolves into a mere whimper as their face falls on their father’s chest, soaking the material of his shirt.

Clarke wants to scream all over again. She wants to leave this memory, can’t bear the pain, but moments later she finds herself breathing easier than she has ever had to in her life. It’s like someone took over the pressure in her chest.

It feels easier even as they sink a whole new level of memories and dreams.

The first day of elementary school where classmates, dressed in pink dresses and puffy blue pants, decided to exclude her from their small circles after one look. The words icy and stale chasing her like magnets. Her father cradling her in his arms as she sobbed into his chest after a girl had stolen her favorite color pens. The feelings of joy and happiness when Wells’ parents decided to transfer him into her school. Her mother’s angry face after she found her self-made white, puffy wings for the costume party. Watching the world wither away in front of her on the news. The constant, persistent feeling of not fitting into her surroundings, of being too cold, too different, too curious about the wrong things.

A wave crashes over them, and within the blink of an eye, they’re surrounded by eternal darkness.

The faint outlines of a hand appear, clamping shut and clenching before she starts feeling the air sucked out of her lungs.

Clarke lets out a terrified gasp when she realizes what this is. It’s her daily night terror. At least one of them. She recoils, struggles against the nonexistent walls in this foreign and yet weirdly familiar
Bellamy’s presence surrounds her, fills her, whispers soothing nothings into her until she stops struggling and watches the fist dissolve into a dozen burned particles of ash.

They jump from one dream to another. From lifeless faces of the lives she cost, to the suffocating white walls of heaven, to Finn’s doe-eyed expression as he insisted he did it for her, to her falling into an ocean of blood, and drowning in it as she hears the world around her burn down in the flames of hell, to a voice calling to her and blood infested wings enveloping her and squeezing, squeezing, squeezing until she’s choking on feathers and dirt and blood —

They dive deeper. Clarke never knew there was so much.

She doesn’t know what these abstract folds and wrinkles are supposed to be in the darkness around them, doesn’t find it in her to care, so she just let’s go. Clarke lets herself fall into the ocean of embers in her mind.

Somewhere, eventually — Clarke doesn’t know how long she’s been falling already — he catches her; his touch holy.

All of a sudden his presence fills her up like the sun, like a lightning bulb threatening to explode. The feelings she thought no one would ever understand, he understands. All the thoughts she swore to never utter to a single soul, heard, understood. Bellamy leaves a trail behind everywhere, little specks of gold and warmth, his touch nothing but divine grace and beauty and love.

She gives in to him completely. No more holding back.

Her entire soul, her whole being with all its complexities and mistakes and sorrows and faults is bare, for Bellamy to see, and he takes it all in. There’s no hesitation. Or condemnation. Not a sparkle of disgust. Only warm, never-ending acceptance cradling Clarke and streaming through her.

Clarke bathes in the warmth, never wants to stop feeling like this.

And then he withdraws.

Slowly, cautiously untangling himself from her, Bellamy retreats from one corner of her mind, and she watches him drag himself away, desperately shooting after him, just to get another taste; one last contact. But he is faster. Before she has any time to prepare herself, he leaves.

The hand on her cheeks falls away.

Clarke’s eyes open.

Bellamy’s looking at her, and she swears there’s a flicker of white light in his eye before it goes out.

She feels like she’s dying, but not because of a wound or pain or sickness, nothing like that. It feels like life itself is gushing out of her, just like Bellamy did a few seconds ago. Something wet drips on her leg. Clarke blinks as she realizes she’s crying.

After another moment she hastily wipes the tears away and clears her throat, doing everything to feel normal again. Don’t cry, don’t cry don’t cry —

„Did you find it?“ she rasps out.
Bellamy looks at her like he's not hearing her, so she tries again.

„Bellamy?“

„Uh,“ he says before shaking his head a little and rubbing a hand across his face. „I — I think I did.“

Clarke still doesn’t trust her voice not to wobble, but she manages to say, „You think?“

„There was a place in your head, a — a picture. It was the only thing that didn’t fit into your life. I think it’s your connection with the key.“

Although she remembers a lot, much more than she wishes she would, a strange place doesn’t ring any bells. Then again, she was absent for a while. Maybe that’s when he found it.

„So where was it?“

Bellamy's brows settle into a deep frown as he lets out a breath, and says, „Russia. Or, at least what used to be. “

Clarke watches the angels pace and discuss the discovery in front of her, but all she can think right now is the way it had felt to be wrapped up by Bellamy’s grace. God, she had never felt such a thing before, it was so —

Stupid. It’s ridiculous to think about this when there are much more pressing issues at the moment. Clarke forces herself to tune in again, but in the end, her eyes drift to Bellamy.

He’s sitting in his chair, chin perched on his hand, seemingly just as lost in thoughts. She starts to wonder if he’s thinking about the same thing, when their eyes meet.

Clarke finds herself unable to look away.

Are you okay? he asks her after a moment.

Would it be a lie to say yes? Technically she is better than she expected to be. After everything Bellamy told her about this intrusive method, she imagined being spooked, confused, ashamed of having let him see everything there is to her. She is aware of this particular fact somewhere in her brain; aware that he’s seen the most vulnerable parts of her, memories and thoughts she would have rather taken to the grave instead of showing anyone months ago, least of all him. Bellamy. Who she had despised in the beginning.

Yet the feeling eating away at her right now is not the fact that he’s seen it all, but that he left afterward. Perhaps that was what Bellamy warned her about; maybe the cruelty of it doesn’t lie within the method, but what comes after. Although it does seem rather absurd to imagine Bellamy’s opponents craving his touch, like her right now.

Clarke lets out a loose breath. I’m not really sure.

I’m so sorry, Clarke —

You did everything right. Besides, we have something now.

They have Russia. After the demonic wars left earth and society in shambles years ago, the people struggled to rebuild what was still left. They never really managed, and the old world was left behind. This new, different world didn't have as many borders and titles. Countries that used to be
called New Zealand or Japan lost their names and were now characterized by their location. Only smaller towns and angelic cities like Polis still had names. So when Bellamy says Russia, he means the northern area on the Eurasian continent, which is not exactly specific, but better than nothing.

There’s silence in her for a moment — god, this silence suddenly feels so terrible and lonely, Clarke starts feeling queasy.

Okay. But if you need to talk about it…

Clarke nods, coming back to reality, where Miller is staring at a world map with the euroasian continent in the centre as if it will give him the answers if he does it long enough, while Harper and Monty are writing down the names of the angels stationed over there. After the demonic wars

“Russia’s a big area, dude,” Miller sighs eventually. “I need you to give me a little more information than that.”

Bellamy leans back in his chair, clasps his hand together and glances at the ceiling. “There was snow, the ground was frozen… it was a deserted area, kind of like a path in front of or behind a forest, but not in the forest?”

Clarke blinks. After Bellamy told her about what he’d found, her brain had shut down, still dazzled by what had happened in her head, how it’d felt. She didn’t even hear him call the others for another meeting in his study, or as he told them about it. Now that she is listening, though, what he’s describing sounds oddly familiar.

She can’t pinpoint what, but something itches beneath her skin. It wants out.

“— not a city,” Bellamy says in reply to something Miller asked.


Bellamy closes her eyes like he’s imagining standing there right now, which is weird because whatever it is, it doesn’t belong to him. Clarke mirrors him, attempts to go there, too.

Russia. Frozen ground, snowy meadows —

“My feeling says North. North-east somewhere. It was cold.”

“Your feeling,” Miller mimics with a disgruntled huff. “You’re the fucking general of the angel armies, we need better than your feeling.”

“Fuck off, Miller,” Bellamy grunts.

Clarke almost wants to laugh. Angels of the lords and they’re cussing like sailors.

“Guys,” Monty says from the other side of the room. It sounds like he’s trying to steer their attention towards the real issue aka the key which seems to be lost somewhere in a country the size of ten south-western countries combined.

“It wasn’t a forest so we can cross out a big area, at least,” Bellamy says, scrubbing a hand across his face.

Miller turns his face to Clarke. “Clarke, have you ever been to the northern lands? Maybe it’s just a memory of a trip —”

“It wasn’t her memory, I told you,” Bellamy mutters.
“No, never,” she answers nonetheless, biting her lip.

She’s never been there, but the description triggers something in her; something like a distant dream, or perhaps a déjà vu.

“Think about it then. Do you associate anything with it?”

That’s what she’s trying to do.

Clarke closes her eyes again, and asks Bellamy, “Can you describe it again?”

So he starts from the beginning. Snowy, wintery landscape. Frozen soil and meadow. Daylight. A wide, gravel path. It could be every damn place in Russia.

“And a single oak tree at the side of the path, road, whatever the hell it is,” Bellamy finishes, and her eyes snap open.

He didn’t mention that tree before. Or, Clarke didn’t hear it.

The tree on the path to nowhere. Many, many years ago when she was about eleven or twelve years old Clarke had a reoccurring dream. It started with her going through a door, and walking along a road that ultimately leads nowhere. She walked and walked and walked. Every time she woke up sweaty and exhausted as if she’d actually walked. And in that dream Clarke always, always passed that one tree. Only one.

She always wondered about this single tree, believed it to be sort of sad and pathetic the way it stood there all alone.

After a while, Clarke borrowed a book on dream telling to find out whether it had some special meaning. However, all it told her was some cheesy bullcrap about feeling pressured by her problems that seem neverending. Clarke was eleven. Her only problems were not being allowed to eat pizza for breakfast. So when that didn’t help she decided to paint it. Something her father used to tell her: if you can’t get it out of your head, get it on a canvas. That’s what she did. Clarke painted the view once she goes through that door, the single tree, and the void that never stops.

*The path to nowhere*, she called the work.

And miraculously she knew where it was. Years later in her last year of school, when she even didn't paint anymore, Clarke was assigned to do a presentation on the northern areas, including what used to be Russia. Searching for pictures, she stumbled upon a photography book in the school library, and it actually had that same picture as *the path to nowhere*, just photographed instead of painted. It had been a street in Novosibirsk.

All this time Clarke believed she had dreamt of that place because she saw it in that book and forgot about it. Maybe it was something else entirely.

"I know the coordinates," she says into the room.


So Clarke tells them the story about a young, dream-haunted girl and her love for arts, and in the next moment, Bellamy and Miller are on their feet, ready to take off. It goes without saying that she goes, too. Clarke finds Bellamy's eyes and grasps the ends of his jacket's sleeves before the world tilts and slams them somewhere cold and frosty.
She looks around at the scenery. It looks exactly like it had in her head, even if the weather is different, the sky grayer and angrier. The endless road seems just as lonely and eternal. The oak tree looks just as sad.

They’re really here, on the path to nowhere, but that’s all it is. Clarke’s not sure how they’re supposed to find it here. Are they supposed to dig every inch of the ground? Hollow out that —

„Damnit,“ Bellamy says next to her, his face suspiciously pale.

Next to him Miller lets out a curse under his breath as well.

„What?“ Clarke asks. „What is it?“

„One of the holes is here. To hell.“

Clarke blinks. That doesn’t make any sense. „But — but I thought hell is after the key? That’s why they wanted me?“

Bellamy shakes his head slowly and lowers his head in resignation. „I don’t think hell has the key. I think the key’s hidden in hell. Right under their noses."

„It’s hidden in hell?“ Clarke echoes, not sure if she’s heard right. Surely there must be a mistake. This stupid key cannot be in hell.

Bellamy nods gravely. He looks just as happy about this discovery as she feels, jaw ticking as he stares at the ground in front of them.

„Well, what are we supposed to do now?“

„For now we leave before anyone senses us.” He touches her back, and in the next moment they’re in his study again; Clarke still feels a little cold from the frosty weather in Russia. „We can’t risk anyone knowing it’s there."

„But how on earth are we supposed to get the key from hell?“ Clarke tries again, remaining standing in the corner of the room, while Bellamy and Miller round his desk.

„There are ways to get into hell,” Bellamy says, eyes only briefly flickering up from the pile of documents he’s looking at.

Miller shakes his head. “Stupid, dangerous ways.”

„We can’t let it just sit there,“ Bellamy retorts, letting out a barely noticeable sigh. „One day heaven or hell is gonna find you, Clarke, and next time they will stop at nothing to get the information out of you, and I’m not gonna let that happen.”

Clarke hates that it’s her vulnerability that makes all of this so complicated, but she’s also aware that he is right. If this information gets into the wrong hands… the consequences would be disastrous.

Crossing her arms, she walks over to the table. „So what are these stupid, dangerous ways?“

„I might have to break into it,” Shadows gleam in his eyes for a second, like there’s more to what he’s saying, a story she has yet to hear. By the way Miller’s face grows just as dark, she’s sure it’s not a pleasant story.

„That doesn’t really sound like a plan,” she points out.
“It isn’t,” Miller agrees. “Dude, you don’t even know where exactly in hell the key is. It would be like looking for a needle in a haystack.”

“What if I come with you?” Clarke suggests.

“That’s too dangerous.”

“But you going alone isn’t?”

“That’s —” Bellamy opens and closes his mouth again, driving a hand through his hair. “We need time to think this through,” he starts again, “so that when we act on it, no one figures out what we’re up to.”

With that, the meeting is over.

Chapter End Notes

I have to say, it was super weird to write something as abstract as Bellamy going into Clarke’s head, but just as fun! I love your guys’ reactions and questions and theories! It’s a long story, so it takes a while, but we are getting there. I think that once I finish writing and editing the entire thing, I will be either able to update more frequently or post longer chapters! :)
I was so happy to see that you guys liked the last chapter. I hope you will enjoy this one as well. It was one of my favorites ;) However, major warning for description of violence (in form of torture) in this one. If you want warnings, click to the A/N at the end.

For some reason, the crew decides that the next day is the perfect opportunity to show Clarke their very special outside training. Or, playtime as Bellamy calls it.

The key is in hell. They discovered that yesterday after wrecking their brains, and Bellamy going into her mind. Even the mention of it makes Clarke crave that perfect presence that felt so good. She shifts awkwardly on her feet as she stands on their balcony, waiting for Bellamy to bring his ass over.

After some thinking last night she decided that whatever her soul is yearning for right now, it was Bellamy’s angelicness, and not Bellamy himself. It's the only thing to make sense.

„You ready?“

Clarke turns to see Bellamy saunter towards her, a relaxed expression on his face.

She makes a grunting sound. „I’ve been ready for twenty minutes now.“

„Always so impatient,“ he croons, his hand briefly ghosting over her back.

„Yes, can we go now?“

Bellamy nods and looks like he’s about to offer her hand when a sudden gleam twinkles in his eyes. She doesn’t like it. But before Clarke has even time to utter any kind of protest, he touches her, and they’re suddenly even higher. On a veranda roof, she realizes glancing around their surroundings and then out at the rows of houses and mansions in front of them.

„That’s a better starting point,“ Bellamy murmurs and offers her his hand now.

Looking at the non-existent railing, Clarke has a few ideas on why he zapped them there.

„Do we have to fly?“ she asks, for the sake of complaining.

„Of course,“ Bellamy grins. „Or are you scared?“

„Again, not scared.“ Glaring, she takes his hands, doesn’t even blink as he picks her up again.

„Now let’s see if this flight will be boring again.“

Of course, he’s thinking back to their bickering that day and how she told him she’d been bored, even though that was a lie. Clarke wonders if Bellamy saw that in her head, that it was all a game
just to let him fly her around more, make her heart beat wildly, make her feel something.

Perhaps he ignored it and didn’t see. Or he did see but is playing along for the same reason as her.

Either way he walks over to the edge of the roof, steps up the brick platform and lets them fall forward.

Clarke lets out a high screech, unable to stifle it.

As they’re falling through the air, wind whipping in their faces, and Clarke worries he’ll drop her and let her smack down on the roof of some house like a pancake, Bellamy’s wings pointedly spread out and the free fall turns into a glide, dangerously close above the other houses, but just as exhilarating and toe-curling as she hoped it would be.

*Good enough for you?*

Clarke almost smiles as they race past a supermarket. *You’re improving, I guess.*

They soar down the hills, but instead of going for the city, Bellamy takes a sharp turn left, flying into an area with more trees and nature. They soar, and soar, and soar, and it’s fast and feels great, and Clarke wishes she could do it every day.

Eventually, they reach some sort of forest that Bellamy speeds them through. Although it’s apparently not unusual for him to fly this low, Clarke does start panicking a little when he flies lower and lower until they’re at the level of trees and wigs.

She yelps, „Bellamy, what are you doing — we’re gonna hit the trees—“

They shoot into a sudden clearing, that goes on for a mile before the forest continues. Clarke sees figures there. Their friends. Still, Bellamy doesn’t lose his speed, only more height.

„You wanted adrenaline?“ he murmurs into her ear. „I’m gonna drop you off.“

„Bellamy —“ she starts, but his hands are already lowering Clarke down, still holding her, but ready to let go as he nears the ground.

Seven hells, this is going to be —

Clarke’s feet touch the ground, and she runs along as Bellamy flies above her, still inhumanely fast. She shrieks in excitement when it works, screams and laughs as Bellamy’s hands fall away. She runs and runs, and suddenly there’s something under her feet, and she falls face first into the ground.

Laughter is the first thing she hears when Clarke regains her senses, groaning softly, not quite ready to push herself up yet. She feels a cautious palm on her hand and Bellamy’s worried — but definitely amused — voice asking, „Father above, are you alright?“

„Yes,“ she grunts. „*No thanks to you.*“

„Hey, you wanted adrenaline, you got it.“

Clarke finally decides to push off the dirty ground and sit up. She’s fine, physically. It wasn’t a serious fall, but her friends are cackling maniacally in the distance.

„Have I ever told you that I hate you?“ she mutters, getting up and dusting dirt along with wet leaves off her clothes.
Bellamy looks at her, eyes dancing with delight. „Every day,“ Then he reaches out and swipes across her cheek, his thumb so soft and unexpected that her breath catches and comes out in a shudder. „You, uh, had a scratch,“ he explains with a hoarse voice.

Clarke blinks at him for a moment before looking away, clearing her throat. „We should go to the others. I’ll punch whoever laughs at what happened,“ she mumbles, as they start making their way over there.

Jasper’s mouth indeed curls up into a laugh when they approach them, but Clarke shoots him a warning look, whereupon he coughs into his fist. Good. Bellamy claps Miller on the back, and they walk a few steps away, discussing something in low murmurs.

„Rough landing?“ Raven asks from where she’s squatting down and tying the shoelaces of her black sneakers. There’s a teasing grin dangling from her lips.

„Shut up."

It’s strange if you think about it, to talk like that to an angel, but they take no offense. In fact, Clarke believes they’d be more offended if she didn’t speak with them like with any other human being.

Raven gets up and stretches her hands high into the air. „I was wondering why Bellamy was flying like an overeager baby cherub. I didn’t expect him to drop you off like this, though."

„Me neither,“ Clarke grumbles, crossing her arms. „But he wanted to make a point."

„What point?"

„One time when he flew us home after the dinner in the city, I told him it was… just okay."

„Oh,“ Raven says, making a face. „Oh, okay. He’s definitely making a point. Wings and power of flight are sensitive topics."

Harper joins them in their half circle. „Are you talking about wings? They’re babies about them,“ she says and starts stretching her own wings rhythmically. Tucking them in, out. Spreading them high into the air, or wide apart. Harper's are soft tones of golden brown, the tips containing the darkest feathers, while the colors get lighter and shinier on the inside.

Raven nods with a snort. „It’s their pride and joy, and if you insult that part, they get whiny about it. Or, mean in Bellamy’s case."

„You don’t seem to be that sensitive about it,“ Clarke points out. She was aware of how delicate this subject was to angels when she said what she said to Bellamy, of course. Octavia had mentioned it when they started with the proper wing training.

Harper and Raven share a smug look.

„Because we’re grown up unlike them,“ the former huffs.

„Yeah, it’s actually hilarious how defensive they get."

Clarke feels her cheeks grow hot.

Raven goes on, „But you don’t see me complaining about my busted wing. Meanwhile, they feel insulted just because someone tells them they’re average fliers./
At that, she can’t help but look at the wing Raven mentioned. It works despite the jarring scar in the center, but it doesn’t take supernatural abilities to notice that it’s moving a little less smoothly, requires more patience and strength; the feathers fluttering jittering slightly when the wing stretches.

For the first time since she met Raven, Clarke thinks this might be the best time to ask about it. “What happened?”

“Fucking demons,” Raven mutters. It’s not really anger, or pain in her voice anymore, but something that has ebbed and smoothed out into mere irritation. “There was a conflict, one of them nearly whacked off my entire wing with a sledgehammer.” She kicks at a random pebble on the ground. “And last time when they overran that town? They managed to get my wing again. I swear I hate these dudes,” she sighs with a shake of her head.

Understandably so.

The prospect of chopping off a wing, the pain that it probably causes, and the possibility that she might have to do it someday are so disturbing that Clarke doesn’t even notice Bellamy approaching until she feels his hands land on both of her arms.

She jumps, frowning. “What are you doing?”

“Stretching you,” he says behind her and lifts one of her arms, his mouth so close to her ear that his breath tickles. Clarke shivers. “Since you don’t seem to do it on your own.”

Clarke scowls, but for some peculiar reason doesn’t stop him from whatever he’s doing with her arms.

“Clarke’s a big girl, Bellamy. I think she can stretch her arms herself,” Raven comments, while Harper’s just watches them, amused.

“Well, all you girls do is chit chat, so I thought I’d offer my assistance.”

Finally, snapping out of whatever trance Bellamy put on her, Clarke gently slips out of his grip and turns around to him.

“Warming up is important,” he tells her as if she didn’t get that by now.

He’s right. Everyone was warming up, stretching their limbs, their wings, and Clarke not. So Clarke nods and reaches behind her with clasped hands; the stretch burning deliciously in her muscles.

Bellamy raises a surprised brow in front of her. “What, no shut up, Bellamy? No glare?”

“You want me to yell at you?”

Clarke’s lifting her left arm up now while pushing her elbow down with the other hand, causing her baby blue t-shirt to ride up a few inches and exposing her skin. Bellamy’s eyes track the movement, blink at the strip of naked skin for a second before he glances back up to her.

Are angels affected by this? Skin and nudity? Not that it matters, of course.

“Don’t forget the legs,” he says, ignoring her question before walking away.

With her heart dancing wildly in her chest Clarke watches him go for a brief moment, seeing these beautiful, long, black wings ruffle smoothly on his back.

They are impressive, and so are his flight skills, but she’s not about to tell him that.
After five more minutes of warm-up, someone — Jasper shoots up into the sky, followed by Monty and Harper. They remain approximately six feet above the ground. Then Miller takes off with Raven and Bellamy so that there’s a line of three angels facing another three.

Clarke’s watching them in silent awe when a sudden blinding, white blast of light comes from Jasper’s side. For a moment she thinks Bellamy and Miller must have been hit by it, but the light fades, and she sees both of them not even having moved an inch, completely unscathed. They must have had a shield. Miller reaches back, and suddenly there’s a spear in his hands, which is now flying into the direction of the others. The same protection from before protects Harper and Monty from being hit now. Seconds later, Harper retaliates with several blasts of energy that finally manage to push Miller back a few feet. Not Bellamy, though.

Bellamy hovers in the air, dodging every attack smoothly, but not acting himself.

They continue playing like that, attacking and retaliating. The entire time Clarke can’t tear her eyes away, it’s just so… beautiful; like a dance. A graceful, effortless, dazzling dance with white bursts of light flashing across the sky every now and then.

“It’s fascinating, right?”

Clarke startles to find Emori next to her all of a sudden. Murphy’s there too, eating a chocolate bar a few feet away and looking at the scene with a bored expression. Bellamy mentioned them coming, too.

She nods finally, glancing back to the angels flying around. “It is.”

“These wings, man,” Emori murmurs with a bright, awe-struck grin. Although this is probably nothing new to her, she still looks so amazed by it. Clarke wonders if she’ll be the same.

The girl does a weird motion with her hands and the calm weather from seconds ago starts turning windier, stormier. With a wicked grin on her face Emori waves that same hand and a powerful blast of wind knocks nearly every angel off their position.

“Foul play!” Jasper shouts from above, after recovering. “You’re not even on any team!”

Clarke stares at the girl with wide eyes.

What the hell?

Emori looks back at her, still grinning. “What?”

“I - I thought you were human?!”

“I am,” she replies, shrugging. “A human witch.”

Witch? They exist as well? Of course, they do.

Clarke doesn’t know what to say. It’s embarrassing to admit, but part of her feels disappointed that Emori is not entirely human after all. Not human like her.

“Oh, don’t look so jealous,” Emori says, laughing.

It’s not that she’s jealous, rather slightly disgruntled that she remains the only one without any abilities, except for maybe pissing off powerful beings.

“You’re really not allowed to sulk about this, not with those own abilities of yours.”
“What abilities?” Clarke asks, scoffing.

“Aren’t you the only one who can find the key?! Girl, literally all of heaven and hell are desperate to find you.”

“But — That’s not an ability.” It’s a curse. Clarke shakes her head, training her gaze back on her friends in the air. Bellamy’s currently throwing daggers, spears and other sharp objects at the others, while they’re trying to shield themselves. “I’m not able to find it, that’s the whole problem, or else we wouldn’t be training for war.”

“But thanks to you we know it’s in hell.”

“No, thanks to Bellamy. He found it.”

“In your head. You both found it.”

“I - I couldn’t have ever known that the stupid dream meant something, though,” she argues. “Not without Bellamy.”

“But you do have a connection to it. Or other things, who knows? Maybe you’re a psychic,” Emori suggests.

Clarke frowns. “But I don’t see anything else.” She doesn’t see anything.

“Yet,” Emori corrects, shooting her a grin. “I can try to work on it with you sometime. If you want.”

Clarke highly doubts she’s a psychic. And yet heaven called her special all the time, so there must be something about her, right? It’s worth a shot. “Okay,” she nods, then glances at Emori. “Were you born that way?”

“Devil, no,” Emori snorts. “I taught myself. My life was… probably not as nice as yours. I lived in a rather shitty area. Some bastard angels used our mortality for their advantage.”

Clarke swallows. As different as this bunch of angels turned out to be, she can’t forget that others out there still terrorize humans.

“One day I had enough of these pretentious pricks and eating dirt every day, so I turned to the power of the devil, instead of the lord,” Emori’s gaze slides over to Murphy who’s throwing Jasper around with his hand now and then, “and that’s how I met John.”

“His name is John?” Clarke asks, stifling the urge to laugh. That’s news to her.


“I take that as a compliment,” Murphy shouts. Apparently, demons have ears like bats.

Clarke nods, impressed by this strange, but fascinating story on how the witch met the demon that turned good. Truly amazing.

She wants to ask her about more of her abilities, but suddenly Raven flies by and snatches her up into the air. Just like that. Spinning around, Clarke watches the two of them adjust quickly, and soon Emori has her own spear, ready to join training.

Murphy approaches the middle of the ground they’re training above, spreading his hands like some sort of maniac.
Clarke can’t see what exactly he’s doing or trying to do, and nobody of her flying friends seems to show any type of reaction either. Then Raven and Emori fly by, and one of the girl’s legs kicks him right in the head, before Raven yells, “You’re giving us a headache dumbass!”

Murphy glares — or at least that’s what Clarke assumes she does because her eyesight isn’t the best anymore either — and twists a hand that sends Raven along with Emori hurtling towards the ground. Although Raven does manage to get a hold in last second, fluttering back upwards.

Admittedly, perhaps Clarke is teeny tiny bit jealous now. It looks fun to participate in this training, and apparently, it’s even possible for humans. However, Emori seems already trained in this. Clarke doesn’t know how long she’s already been friends with these angels, or when she met Murphy, but she figures it’s been a while. It makes sense that she’d be used to these training sessions by now. So as fun as it looks, Clarke would probably just embarrass herself if she asked to join them.

As if on cue, she suddenly gets a question in her head.

*You want to play, too?*

Her wall is up, so it has to be a coincidence Bellamy asked in this exact moment.

*I’d just slow you down with my inexperience,* she tells him.

In the air Bellamy doesn’t even seem a single bit distracted, as far she can tell from here. His movements just as precise, fast and smooth as always. It’s something she has yet to learn because every time they do the silent communication thing Clarke gets carried away and totally lost into the intimate world in their heads where it’s just the two of them. She should ask him to teach her someday.

*That’s not a no,* Bellamy answers, easily dodging one of Murphy’s attempts to bring him down with the sheer force of will.

Clarke hesitates before answering, trying to come up with another excuse. But she pauses a moment too long because seconds later Bellamy is flying towards her, his hands ready to snatch her. She lets out a yelp and closes her eyes. When she opens them, she’s in his arm, like the last two times she flew her. There’s not even need for readjusting. He picked her up perfectly. Still, she clutches her arms around his neck, seeking extra protection.

“*You having fun?*” he asks, half of his voice carried away in the wind.

Clarke hums nervously. “*It’s pretty entertaining.*”

They shoot past the others like arrows, flying high into the air, far higher than the others.

“*Where are you going?*” she asks. There’s no fear in her voice — whatever he’s doing she trusts Bellamy knows what it is — only sheer curiosity.

“*Wanna explain the rules to you. Up there no one’ll bother us.*”

Her heart beats as fast as the seconds pass by until they reach the seemingly right height for Bellamy and slow down, just keeping them in the air.

“*So,*” he starts. “*I’ll provide you with a weapon and a shield at all times. What do you want?*”

She assumes he means the weapon. Clarke thinks for a moment then says, “*Are guns allowed?*”
“Sure. Everything here isn’t angel killing, though, just so you know.”

“Don’t worry, Bellamy. I wouldn’t have shot you, anyway.”

“Thanks, princess,” he says dryly.

“So I’m supposed to just shoot at the others?” she asks when Bellamy makes no attempt to fly back to the group.

“Kind of. Aim at everyone who’s not me, try to throw ‘em off, and we’ll be good.”

Clarke frowns. “What about Miller and Raven? They were on your team.”

Bellamy looks her in the eyes, and the intensity of his gaze makes her gulp as he says, “You’re my team now.” He tears his eyes away from her, looks ahead as she feels them fly lower to the others. “Harper and Monty are a team. I guess Miller and Jasper teamed up. You and me. And… Raven, Emori, and Murphy.”

“Weren’t they fighting among each other just minutes ago?”

“Yeah, it’s always complicated between them,” Bellamy tells her, huffing out a laugh. “Just shoot everyone, but me.”

“Aye, aye, Captain,” she calls and mimics a salute that makes Bellamy laugh. The sound of it makes her heart fill with joy. A moment later she has a shotgun in her hand. The same one she first used in practice with him, and the same one her father taught her with. Clarke’s surprised he remembered.

She’s still smiling when they reach the others, and Jasper points a finger at them.

“Look who’s back!”

“Let’s kick their asses,” Raven shouts and shoots up from down below, carrying Emori with her who looks ready just to do that.

Clarke doesn’t think, she just starts firing. At first, it’s no use, because it just keeps bouncing off their protective shield. After a few more attempts and rounds, she notices these brief moments in which angels forget to protect themselves. She uses that and shoots.

Jasper is the first who almost falls back because of her shooting. Then they manage to get Raven in a particular, oblivious state. Then Monty.

It’s probably all just Bellamy, but Clarke can’t help but feel proud for not failing completely.

And then something happens. It pushes back even Bellamy, and suddenly they’re falling. Clarke desperately clutches to Bellamy, torn between screaming of real fear and oblivious joy. They never reach the ground, Bellamy prevents that, but for some reason he gently drops her off, offering no explanation but I’ll be right back, and then shooting forward, right towards Murphy.

Bellamy takes Murphy by the collar before dragging him by it until they slam into a tree in the distance, the crash eliciting a deafening sound. Clarke blinks as she sees their two figures fight each other. It looks real, scarily real.

“Are they serious?” Clarke asks Emori and Raven who are now standing next to her watching as well.

“We’re never sure either,” the former answers, crossing her arms in front of her chest.
Raven nods. “Bellamy usually doesn’t let himself get provoked that easily, but…”

“But what?” Clarke demands.

“But you were with him,” Emori finishes. “That’s different.”

It makes sense. She's human and powerless, everyone else isn't, so if Bellamy was to drop her because of Murphy's attack, Clarke could get actually hurt. Even Emori could probably manage to avoid fewer injuries through her witch abilities than her.

In the distance she sees Bellamy flick his hand before a burst of white light explodes in front of Murphy. However, instead of shielding itself from it, Murphy retaliates, using, what Clarke assumes to be, his own powers. It's a flash of darkness and mist. Even from afar Clarke can feel the wrongness of it all and the way the air grows thick around all of them. She remembers feeling the same with Emerson, and even with Bellamy when displayed his other powers in front of Lexa and Alie.

It's light against darkness for a few terrifying but astonishing seconds. If Clarke had a sketchbook with her, she would paint the picture that's happening in front of her because, despite all its wrongness and inhuman powers, it looks so terribly beautiful.

She's so mesmerized by the display of black and white that she gets taken by surprise when Bellamy's light not fades but gains darkness as well. For a moment Clarke fears he's losing — which, let's be real doesn't make sense. Then she sees that it's not Murphy overpowering him, but Bellamy using his own abilities.

Bellamy and his ability to do the same as demons. Clarke wonders if she will ever bring up the courage to ask for that story.

There's white, blinding light streaming from Bellamy's one side, and swirling darkness from the other, and all of it is directed against Murphy whose own powers seem to crackle with each passing second. There's a loud booming sound like the earth under their very feet is moving, shuddering, before Murphy loses his hold completely and gets blasted back a dozen feet, at least. He lands roughly on his back and remains there, still as a statue.

Clarke's heart stutters in her heart. If this turned out to be a serious fight because of her then —

Her thoughts trail off when Murphy raises a hand, giving Bellamy, who's dusting off his wings, his middle finger.

A laugh of relief escapes Clarke.

"Told you," she hears Raven's voice behind her. "Big babies."

That night nobody seems to be home except for Clarke and Bellamy. Harper and Monty are having a quiet dinner night, just the two of them. Raven said she’ll be amusing herself with Emori and Murphy, whatever that means. And Jasper — who knows what Jasper’s doing tonight. Probably sipping moonshine, and watching the Bachelor on TV.

After a long, proper shower Clarke slips into some comfy leggings and a white sweater and goes to the kitchen to grab something to eat.

Bellamy’s nowhere to be seen.
Maybe he’s out, too. It's not like he has to be here the whole time, just because she is, right? Bellamy has responsibilities, his job… maybe even a social life like their friends. He could be very well enjoying cocktails with a pretty lady, or a handsome man right now.

For some reason, Clarke’s stomach churns at the thought.

It’s definitely time for food, she decides and smiles when she finds a pizza in the freezer. She doesn’t have to cook here because the angels take care of that in general; either Monty fixes up a delicious stir fry or pasta or another dish, or one of the just snaps their finger, and a meal appears on the table. Clarke doesn’t complain. Back at home she never learned to cook anything but basic dishes either. Her father had been the only talented member of the family in the kitchen.

She’s flipping through a magazine that was lying on the table when a sudden blast of power bursts through her mind; overwhelming her. Clarke clasps her hands over her ears to stop the piercing ringing in her ears.

*Pain.* The thing she feels right now is pain, she realizes.

And it’s not her own.

*Bellamy.*

Clarke has no idea whether she gets to that conclusion because they share that silent bond that allows them to communicate, or if it’s a feeling deep in her guts, but she knows it’s his pain. It is still buzzing, but she can think and move properly again, so she jumps up to look for him. Her feet carry her up the stairs, to Bellamy’s room.

In the two months, she has been living here, she’s never been to his room. There wasn’t any occasion. So her heart’s decidedly beating aloud in her ears when she knocks on that white, strange door.

Nobody answers, but the pain intensifies and Clarke decides that she doesn’t care whether he responds or not, she just goes in.

Bellamy’s lying on his stomach, his wings draped around his body like a shield. For a terrifying moment, Clarke thinks he isn’t — isn’t alive. He is so still.

She rushes over and starts shaking him by the shoulders.

“Bellamy.”

He doesn’t move, but his wings flutter slightly, and Clarke lets out a sigh of relief, drops her head to his cheek and thanks no one in particular that he’s okay, that he's alive and still here. However, after another moment she feels his face flinch just in time as another wave of pain pulses through her. At the same time, a strong gust of wind gathers in the room. It quickly gains strength and force, though, and turns into a near hurricane in Bellamy's room. Everything around them shakes and crashes, making it hard to see straight or hear anything aside from the howling of the wind.

Clarke realizes he’s having nightmares. The room around them is a mess, a bookshelf has fallen over, his sheets are half on the floor, and there are cracks on his windows.

Swallowing down her fear for him, she tries to shake him awake again. Nothing. Maybe it's different waking up angels, or their sleep in general, but it's too late to ask about that, so she just tries again and again, saying his name over and over.
Bellamy, wake up! Bellamy!

Pain in her head nearly forces her to her knees. Clarke squeezes her eyes shut and screams down their communication line: Bellamy!

And finally, finally, his eyes fly open, wings flapping wildly.

“You’re okay.” she murmurs, gripping his cheeks; his skin burning like blue flames under her touch, “you’re okay, Bellamy.”

The room stops shuddering. Bellamy blinks, first at Clarke, her hands slowly falling away from his face, then at the state of his room. “Father above,” he mutters, gradually sitting up and scrubbing a hand across his face.

“You had a nightmare,” Clarke tells him and steps away when she takes in his clothes, or rather lack thereof. All he’s wearing are boxer briefs, and Clarke pointedly keeps her gaze on his face, before adding, “I think.”

Because she doesn’t know if that’s what was happening, or if angels are even capable of that. To be honest, she didn’t think they did. But he seemed to be in a deep sleep, and she felt so much pain in him. It sounds like the signs of a nightmare to her.

Bellamy glances to her. “I’m sorry for scaring you.”

“The only thing I was scared about was you being dead,” she blurts out without thinking about it, feeling a flush rise to her cheeks seconds later.

“Oh.”

Clarke scratches a spot in her hair and clears her throat. “I didn’t know you guys could have nightmares.”

“Yeah, it’s not common,” Bellamy tells her and gets up, his heat brushing past her as he goes to pick up a few things from the floor.

Clarke finally allows herself to really look around his room. The walls are painted in golden, warm colors. There’s a desk at the far end with piles of papers and files spread on it. A sweater hangs from his chair. Everything looks kind of cozy. Aside from the mess he just made, it's more or less tidy, too. What she doesn’t expect, though, are the rows and rows of books cluttering the shelves. Who would’ve thought Bellamy’s a bookworm?

Repairing his window with a slight touch, he goes on, “I learned to sleep a few centuries after I came to earth. I wanted to dream so badly.” He huffs out a dry laugh. “Didn’t know dreams come with nightmares back then.”

Such a tiny piece of information, and yet so much to uncover. Clarke almost smiles when she asks, “You learned to sleep?”

“Uh-uh. Not easy when you didn’t have to for millennia.”

She can imagine. As exciting as it is to hear about an angel wanting to do such a primitive thing as sleeping, there’s something more important though.

“Are you okay?”
Bellamy halts on the other side of the room. „I’m fine.“

„It didn’t feel fine when you were asleep,“ Clarke says, crossing her arms. „I felt the pain, you know. Whatever it is that makes us able to speak silently, it made me feel what you were dreaming about and it felt awful."

Bellamy blinks. „You did?“

She nods.

„I — it must’ve shattered my shield," he says, Adam's apple bobbing as he swallows. Oh, right, she remembers the enormous wall in his head. „That usually never happens. I’m sorry, Clarke, I —"

„Don’t apologize," she says with a scowl. She knows all too well how it feels to be the victim of nightmares and uncontrolled sharing of these feelings. And Bellamy, of all people, should know she doesn’t need apologies. „I just… — are you really fine?“

„Yeah," he says, producing up a crooked smile. „I am."

She doesn’t know who walks to whom, but suddenly they’re not even one foot apart. Clarke lets out a breath. „It was so much… pain," she admits. „I mean I know nightmares, Bellamy, but what you felt—“ Unable to form the right words, she shakes her head. It was so awful.

„It’s different for us," Bellamy says quietly. „I have thousands of years of memories, and the majority of it wasn’t pleasant. This life that we’re leading now, it wasn’t always like this, Clarke." She catches his gaze and holds it. „What was it like?" It’s not a demand to tell her, but rather an offer.

„You don’t want to hear this."

Clarke isn’t offended at the rejection, but she doesn’t let go either. „Bellamy. I know what I want or not."

That seems to convince him as Bellamy lets out a sigh and goes to sit down at the edge of his bed. Clarke takes a seat next to him.

„I was stationed on earth to guard humans," Bellamy starts. „A lot of this time was just waiting. Years and years of standing there and keeping watch. It’s what we — I was made for, so I did it, like a good little soldier obeying his father’s wishes. Everything changed when hell first attacked again after millennia of established peace. None of us expected it, we thought hell was locked and secured, but it turns out there were blind spots. So when the garrisons were sent to defend the people, it was a massacre. In theory, we’re stronger than demons, but,” he shakes his head, “there were so many of them. Millions. Our numbers were far smaller. And demons… the more they feed on people, the stronger they get. Some of them became so powerful they could take on twenty of us. Many of us died.”

As much as her people love to talk and spread rumors, these wars between heaven and hell are still treated like events that shall not be mentioned. It was nearly four hundred centuries ago, so there’s no one left alive to tell the tale, but there wasn’t much left of those initial survivors either. A few scripts that most of them like to pretend don’t exist because of the horrors written there. A couple of tellings and legends. Sometimes Clarke thinks these wars not only wiped out a considerable part of the population and life, but also a crucial part of them, the essence of human curiosity.
Bellamy continues, “There was not much we could do except fight back, even if we were greatly outnumbered. Heaven…,” Clarke feels a wave of anger roll over her, and realizes it’s what’s Bellamy feeling right now, “they didn’t do shit to help us foot soldiers down here, but we needed something, something that would finally end it.”

Bellamy halts for a second. Clarke blinks, then sees his fingers trembling ever so slightly, so she lays her own hand over his and squeezes.

“So I went to hell itself,” Bellamy says, staring at nothing, “and I became one of them.” His eyes slide over to her, but she does not even blink. “You have to know, demons are born in many, different ways. They can be born from a human soul rotting in hell. They can be a haunted spirit from the beginning that festers with age and becomes demonic. Or, they’re fallen angels.”

“Fallen angels?” she echoes with a small frown.

“Angels can fall and become either human or hell itself,” he tells her.

“Did you… fall?”

Bellamy looks away again. “Never officially. I didn’t lose my grace, my wings didn’t burn off, I was still me, but… the things that I did down there, it was not what angels do. I was like them. I spent centuries in hell, waiting for them to trust me enough to include me in their plans for earth, until I thought, fought and lived like them. Until I became stronger than any of them. And when they finally trusted me, I went with them to battle, and destroyed every single last rotting demon there.”

And finally, she understands where this pain she felt was coming from, how deep it runs.

Bellamy became the darkness itself to save everyone.

She squeezes his hand even harder.

“Is that what you were dreaming about?” she asks him. “Your time in hell?”

Bellamy looks to her and seems to be hesitating before nodding. “What we’re about to do, it reminded of it.”

“You won’t have to do this ever again,” Clarke decides. “Even if we can’t find the key ourselves, I’ll go to heaven myself and drink the damned potion and find it, and somehow we’ll close hell for good.”

“Clarke—”

“No, I mean it. I won’t let it happen.”

She doesn’t know when exactly she decided to save him at any cost, save the others, but now that Clarke knows, she’s more determined than ever. Maybe it’s because, in a way, they saved her. Not just from heaven and Alie and Lexa, but from her life she was drowning in. Clarke owes them everything, and she will give them everything in return if that’s what it takes.

They’re creatures forged in light and millennia, whereas she’s just a drop in the ocean. A tiny, human life. If she lost hers trying to save them, the ones who can make a real change, then that’s a life well spent.

“Clarke,” Bellamy says again, “it won’t come to that. We’ll figure something out.”
Clarke holds his gaze for a moment, then looks away. He’s still hurting deep inside, she can feel the weight of what he did all these years ago festering and ebbing under the surface, never allowing him to feel freer than he has to.

“When you went inside my head, you did this thing,” Clarke says. “It was like all my pain, and guilt, and fears were split into half. Like we were sharing all that weight. What was that?”

Bellamy blinks in surprise, clearly not having expected this change of topic. Or, he’s surprised she’s talking about what happened when they were in her head.

Bellamy coughs slightly, frowning. “Uh, it’s a technique to relieve what you described, like talking about something, but doing that with your mind.”

“You relieved my pain. Can I relieve yours?”

His eyes widen. “It’s not, um — Clarke —”

“Could you do it?”

“Yes, but I think it would more likely hurt you than help me.”

“Why?”

“Because I’m an ang—....” His words trail off, but she can figure out what he was going to say. Because he’s an angel and she’s a human.

“You think I’m not strong enough?”

“No, I think you are, but it’s too much. I won’t ask that of you.”

It might sound crazy, but she wants to relieve his pain so desperately she considers begging him to let her help. Clarke suppresses that urge, though, instead letting out a sigh, closing her eyes and thinking back to how it felt to be enveloped by his light.

“When you did that with me... I’ve never felt anything like it, Bellamy. It was like I was finally understood, finally seen and heard.” She turns to him. “You heard me. I was not alone anymore. I remind myself of that feeling every time the darkness gets too much, and it always helps.”

It’s funny. Two months ago Clarke would have rather died than telling Bellamy something like this, and here she is.

Bellamy looks at her and says, “I did that because you let go. You were reliving every single bad thing in your things, and it overwhelmed you to the point that you gave up. You just let go.”

She remembers that moment. Clarke lays her hand back over his and holds his gaze. “So let me save you, too. Let me help you, Bellamy.”

Bellamy’s eyes narrow slightly before his other hand comes up and lands on her chin, raising it. For a stupid, delirious moment she thinks he’s going to kiss her. Clarke doesn’t know why. It’s not like this is something like that — or could ever be. The thought vanishes when she feels his presence caressing the steel and plutonium of her walls.

Closing her eyes, she wants to let him in, but instead, he takes her with her. Into his mind.

Her heart races as soothing darkness envelops her, like a shield, warm and safe. And suddenly she finds herself in a cold cave with dirt covered walls and a rusty bed in the middle.
A woman is lying on that bed. Unconscious.

Bellamy regards her for a long moment, then glances to the side where Ontari is standing, a wicked grin on her face.

“Go on, Bell boy,” she drawls. “She’s all yours. Show us how much more you feel at home here. Show us how deeply that hatred for your daddy runs.”

He doesn’t so much as blink at her words. Ontari has always been a talker. And he knew this was coming. He knew what they were going to expect and ask of him to prove his loyalty. He prepared for this. Still, something in him threatens to shatter when he approaches the bed.

The woman is merely sleeping, so when he starts, she’ll awaken. Of course, she will.

Bellamy freezes for a second. Panic rolling over him in waves.

This isn’t right.

Maybe that second is a second too long because Ontari appears next to him, her stench crawling into his nose like the smell of rotten eggs.

„What is it? I thought you’d like our little present.“

„Stop being so impatient,“ he says and pushes past her to the other side of the bed.

This time there’s no hesitation as he raises his hand and the woman’s back arches off the bed. Her eyes snap open. She gasps in fear.

„Why is she here?“ he demands from the demon.

„Does it matter? She’s fun to play with.“

„It does to me,“ he snaps. Then collecting himself, he tries with more restraint, „I like to make the punishment fit the crime. “

„Fine, angel-face. “ If he looked at her right now, she’d probably roll her eyes, or play with her long, sharp nails. „She sold her soul to have a ripe harvest this year.“

„That’s it?“

„Who cares?!“

Yes. Yes, of course. Who cares. Bellamy doesn’t care, not when he’s supposed to become this thing. He can’t care if he wants hell to ever trust him and make him one of them.

So he doesn’t ask any more questions, he just uses his power and tugs the life out of that woman, not too fast or Ontari will know he’s being merciful, and not too painlessly. The woman screams and screams. Bellamy focuses on the information.

Sold her soul for harvest.

When you think about it, it’s no reason to rot in hell now, but she did what she did. She sold her soul. Now she’s here. Her own fault. It was a stupid decision. Now her family’s probably shedding tears over her, and all just because she wanted a fucking good harvest —

The screams stop and the woman’s body slacks down on the bed.
Bellamy would say she's dead, but this is hell, and there's no such thing as death here. Only suffering.

When he glances at Ontari, she’s giving him a disappointed pout. „So fast? I thought you’d be better at this.“ She snaps a finger, and the woman opens her eyes again, scanning the room and starting to babble.

„Please — please, I didn’t — didn’t do anything. Please!“

Ontari has a knife in her hands all of a sudden and she's pressing it into his hands.

„Why don’t you try again?“

Bellamy takes the knife.

You can do this.

You can do this.

You do this.

Bellamy raises the knife and stabs into her stomach. She makes a horrible sound; a mix between screaming and pain. Dark blood pools around that spot.

Again.

Again.

Again.

At this point he’s not sure if that voice in his head is Ontari urging him to go on, or his own voice, trying to push himself to go on.

He brings down the knife again — for the soldiers being slaughtered on the battlefields. The woman lets out an agonizing scream again — for every human that couldn’t do anything, but watch their kind being torn to shreds. He stabs, and stabs, and stabs — for his people relying on him on the outside.

For minutes, or hours that pass, all he hears is the terrible cries and whimpers the woman makes, the sickening sound of the knife cutting through flesh, his own ragged breathing, and somewhere far away Ontari’s evil, satisfied laugh.

When he finally stops, a deafening silence rings through his ears. He doesn’t look at all the blood on his face, his hands, his clothes. He glances at Ontari. A stupid, naive part of him hopes that he’s done for today. Done proving them. But she’s grinning and saying something he doesn’t hear, and suddenly there are twenty other people in the room.

Their faces vary from fear to foul sneers.

Another present. That’s what Ontari probably said. Another challenge. Another twenty or so lives he has to hurt and torture.

Something vital in him breaks as he approaches the people. Maybe it's his heart that angels were never supposed to have. Or, perhaps it's his grace, that he doesn't deserve after this. Father, have mercy, he will not deserve a single moment of luck.
The angry ones are the first one to go. It helps that they actually fight back. Maybe their souls are evil and corrupt. Perhaps they deserve to be torn to shreds. That’s what he tells himself over and over as he guts them. He uses the power that hell provides him with, the darkness coiling inside him like a breath of death before he sends it their way and makes these souls choke on their own blood and intestines.

The souls that are scared and so, so innocent are the last ones. Even in his rage, and fury, and blinding darkness, he tries to be gentle when he cuts them open and watches the light fade from their eyes. Again and again. He doesn’t know how long it goes like this, if it's days or weeks, but he never stops to allow himself to think.

When there’s no more screaming, or begging for mercy, or pathetic whimpering, Bellamy halts, finally taking in the scenery around him.

Red. Every inch of his surroundings is a deep shade of copper red. Something trickles down on him. He glances up. Blood. He looks down, and there's even more of it.

He’s standing knee deep in a cave full of blood. It’s so thick it’s like trying to wade through mud. Even his wings are full of it. He can feel the blood weighing them down. Black, mixed with the deepest shade of red.

Releasing a breath, he finally unclenches his fist.

Ontari’s voice comes from somewhere far away, filled with the delight of pure evil, „Now you're in hell, Bellamy. “

The memory fades to utter darkness, the weight of Bellamy’s guilt Clarke’s only companion in there. Ever so slowly she reaches out to him, his presence and the matter of his emotions. He flinches back at first. Carefully, but persistent she reaches into that cluster of pain, darkness, and light, and she doesn't know how, but she fills him. Just like he did with her days ago.

The first push of everything that he consists of is overwhelming at first, like a fifteen feet high tsunami rolling over her tiny human. Once the water submerges her, though, it’s like floating. Easy. Natural.

Clarke takes the pain, the guilt, and the blood on his hands, and she bears it for him. To her surprise, it feels easier than carrying her own baggage. Easier to do it for him. Even if it’s just this one memory, this one terrible, awful part of his extremely long life.

It ends sort of abruptly when Bellamy pulls away, and opens his eyes, forcing her to do the same. For a moment they simply stare at each other.

Then he clears his throat, and says, “I, um…”

“It's okay. You don’t have to say anything,” she tells him. Clarke was speechless, too, after he had done that, not able to form words in her mouth nor her head. When she wants to stand up, he catches her wrist, though, and looks at her.

“Thank you, princess.”

The words are so soft on his lips, filled with so much unspoken depth that she has to blink away the emotions quelling up inside of her.

“No one’s ever done that for me,” Bellamy adds.

Which is, quite frankly, a shame, because he has done that for the others, for the world, and all they
see him as is the monster that he had to be, not that he really is. The least Clarke can give him is her
communion.

With a small smile, she leans down and kisses his cheek. “You don’t have to be alone in this,” she
murmurs against his warm skin, before wanting to pull away. However, she finds herself stuck there
in front of him, unable to just leave. Something deep inside her wants to remain right here forever
until their bodies are merged together, skin to skin, bone to bone, veins, and blood vessels tangled,
until Bellamy finally knows that she doesn't blame him, that he is not alone in this, that he is not
supposed to bear the weight of the entire world. What Clarke does instead is throw her arms around
his neck and give him a really tight hug.

It takes a few moments, but eventually Bellamy's arms slide around her torso, too, pulling her tight
and close, so that she's basically in his lap. It does not matter. Nothing does with them enveloped in
each other, her chin on his shoulder and eyes squeezes shut, her lips against her neck.

When they do eventually break apart after God knows how much time, neither of them can bring up
much to say, and she silently walks out of the door, feeling light-headed and numb like she just woke
up from another life. Clarke feels his eyes on her all the way down to her own room that she slips
into and leans against the door with a shuddering breath.

Chapter End Notes

Warnings:
- towards the end of the chapter there's description of torture: stabbing a woman
  repeatedly with a knife
- stabbing and killing more people again and again
- a lot of blood

Wow, alright. I'm super excited to see what you guys think about this chapter because it
was one of my favorites, and one that changes a lot of things and finally gives us some
insight and answer to Bellamy's past and character.

Also: I made myself a tumblr (@ephemerallovewrites). Feel free to chat me up, send
questions or tell me your thoughts :)
Chapter 15

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

What Bellamy shared with her on that particular evening, doesn’t really change their relationship all that much. There’s still the usual banter, and bickering, of course. He doesn’t treat her any differently than he did before — pushing her buttons to rile her up ever often, a little bit of teasing, and of course, the warmth and kindness that peeks through when they’re on their own.

However, Clarke feels like she’s become more aware of him ever since he let her see one of his darkest, most terrorizing memories. Bellamy has seen all of her, she has seen part of him, and now it’s like a deep-rooted wall has been torn away — one that she wears within herself with every other person she knows. That awareness brings some, well, let’s say unwanted physical reactions in her, like a fluttery feeling in her stomach now and then, or worse the urge to be near him all the time. Which in turn causes Clarke to act as the complete opposite.

And that’s confusing, especially when there are much more pressing issues at hand.

When everyone gathers in the study for another meeting, Clarke’s still reeling from the incident two hours ago where Bellamy put two arms around her to get a knife and a tomato from the counter while she was frying eggs, and his proximity made her so jumpy that she let a towel fall into the sizzling pan, which almost led to a fire. Luckily, there were enough angels in the house who were able to prevent that.

But still. Clarke Griffin does not get nervous.

So, for now, she pointedly keeps her gaze on the fascinating design of her socks. Jasper is telling Miller something about a boat trip a hundred years ago next to her, only getting a grunt here and a huff there in return. Somebody pokes a finger at her feet, and she glances up into Monty’s friendly face.

“These are cool. Where are they from?”

“From that store down the road,” she replies, appreciating his effort to get her talking even if it’s about something as dull as socks.

“I should check it out sometime,” he says.

Clarke gives him a smile. “You should.” Finally daring a glance to Bellamy who’s in his usual chair, on the phone with someone, she asks, “Do you know what this is about?”

“No. You?”

“Why would I?” After all, Monty’s been in Bellamy’s project from the beginning of time, not her, after all.

“Well, I assumed you’re more interested in politics than me;” he says and waves a hand over her, “since you’re playing, kind of, a central part in all of this, you know.”

He does make a point. Clarke sighs.

“I think he wants to discuss how to get the key from hell.”
“Close,” Bellamy suddenly says, voice loud and clear as he speaks to all of them. “I actually have a
plan.”

Octavia appears by his side, a hand on his chair as she nods grimly.

“Don’t make it so dramatic and spit it out,” Raven tells him with crossed arms.

His customary, amused smile appears on his face, as he leans back in his chair. The position does an
excellent job at highlighting his power, and incredibly irritating smugness that Clarke loves to hate. Or
hates to love.

Clarke tears her eyes away from his body and focuses on his eyes only. For an instant, their gazes
meet. Then he proceeds.

“As you all know the key is in hell, which sucks because it’s close to impossible getting in there
without being noticed. But O’ reminded me of a certain someone that has ties to hell and is easier to
negotiate with.”

“The prince of hell,” Octavia says into the round.

Raven frowns. “Roan?”

“Roan indeed,” Bellamy nods, bracing his arms on the table. “As much as I hate to admit it, he’s our
way in.”

Roan, Bellamy explains then, is the prince of hell, who is no longer residing in hell, but living
somewhere on earth with his own group of followers, which does not solely consist of demons. Hence
why he hasn’t been taken care of yet. He hasn’t caused any trouble. The queen banished him
a long time, so bringing her Clarke would definitely ensure him to get his honor back. In reality,
they’d steal the key, and hopefully, Roan would help them escape out of hell again. In return for his
help, Bellamy would make sure to give him a territory of his own.

However, that’s all theory.

“And what if he doesn’t play along? And actually sells you out to his mother?” Harper asks. A valid
question.

That’s where Clarke puts two and two together. “We’ll never really tell him where exactly they key
is, won’t we?”

“We tell him that we need something in hell,” Bellamy nods, “and if he tries to rat us out, then we’ll
kill him.”

“That’s a pretty big risk,” Monty says. Also understandable.

“If we don’t try to get the key, it ends in war,” Bellamy says with a simple shrug. “And if we do this,
it can lead to war, too, yeah, but at least we’ll die trying.”

This seems to convince most of the angels, and demons and witches, in the room, many nodding, a
few still somewhat doubting.

Then Raven asks, “And do we know where Roan is? Last I heard he disappeared like twenty years
ago.”

“Nuh-uh,” Bellamy says, the smile of a predator spreading on his lips. “The prince lets himself be
seen when he wants to be seen. Luckily for us, he wants to be seen right now since he’s throwing one of his infamous balls.” His hands clasp together, as he looks around the room. “Ladies and gentlemen, we’re going to a party.”

Attending the prince of hell’s party in a few days means dressing accordingly, and since Clarke has not bought a single thing but socks since she started living here, it’s about time to do it now.

After a quick breakfast Clarke slips into a white top and blue jeans shorts, and trails downstairs. She hopes she’ll find someone who can take her to the city. Walking down that long ass hill would take hours, far too much moving, and is generally something Clarke’s not interested in. Besides, she climbs that hill up and down in Lincoln’s training more than enough already.

Luckily she spots three angels outside in their backyard. Raven and Harper are doing some weird looking exercises with their wings, and Bellamy’s standing there, correcting their forms every now and then. When Clarke slips outside to join them all she gets is a nod from the two girls, and Bellamy carefully regarding her for a second, before he says, “Want to join?“

Clarke purses her lips as she watches Raven do a backhand maneuver out of the air. “I think I’ll pass, thanks.“

“Pity. Lincoln said you’re doing good.“

“I am, but I’d still get my ass kicked.“

“So? That’s the only way to learn.“

“Or, “she says, shooting him a narrow-eyed look, “you just want to see me get my ass kicked.“

Bellamy raises a brow and flashes her a smirk. “Why can’t it be both?“

Like the last ten times, Clarke momentarily gets lost in that stupid, smug expression on his face, but as always she tears her eyes away not long after, swallowing.

“I actually want to go to the city.“

“Oh?“

“I need a dress, “she says, shrugging, “for the party, you know. Figured I could do that today.“

“In that case, “Bellamy reaches into his pocket and gets out a wallet that he opens, picking out a black and gold card, “you can use this. It has a good amount of sum on it, so you shouldn’t worry about prices.“

Frowning Clarke takes it. It feels a little wrong to accept this, let him shower her with a house, food, so much kindness, and now apparently even money. But she really needs a dress, so she needs money. She only takes it after making a silent promise to herself to look for a job after today, or after everything’s over.

Before she can thank him for the card, Raven and Harper appear at their sides.

“Did I hear Clarke saying she wants to go to the city? “the former asks.

Clarke gives them quick greeting smiles. “Yeah, I need to find something fancy to wear.“
"Then you’re just in luck, “Raven says. “We’re going, too. I need a dress, too. “

“And I need to stretch my wings. “Harper grins.

Bellamy decided not every one of them would be going since that would raise more attention than they need. Instead, Bellamy and Clarke are going, Octavia and Miller as advisors and bodyguards, Emori and Murphy because they fit into the scene, and Raven because the prince apparently likes her.

“Great, “Clarke says. “When are you guys ready to go? “

Raven snaps a finger, and her training attire changes into loose pants and a shirt that shows off her abs. “Now. “

Harper does the same.

So the three of them go — or rather fly into the city. Clarke in Harper’s arms for a change, Raven next to them.

It feels strange to experience the feeling of soaring through the air with anyone other than Bellamy. Not worse, just... different. When she remembers the flights with him, other memories pop up, though. Bellamy standing over a whimpering boy. Bellamy’s grace shattering. Bellamy glancing around and seeing that everything is covered in blood. Ontari’s awful voice.

A shudder rips through her, and Clarke almost reaches out to Bellamy inside that place in her head, almost tells him how much she wishes it were his arms around her body even if it was just so that she could touch his cheek and tell him he’d never have to feel this alone again as long as she was alive. But she doesn’t.

They arrive in the city, the long narrow streets of Arkadia getting bigger and bigger before Harper gently lands on the ground. Getting on her feet, Clarke notices a few kids staring at them from a few feet away. Instead of fear or terror in their eyes, it’s wonder. Harper and Raven smile back at the kids, even wave a little.

This is what it should look like everywhere, Clarke thinks again and makes a silent promise to work for this kind of future if she gets that chance. If.

“So,” she says looking at her two friends, “where do we find dresses?”

Raven’s face lits up in a grin. “I know just the place.”

They take her to a petite, cozy shop called Joystick in a busy alley. Inside there are all kind of dresses and gowns, looking like they were cut straight out of the adult version of a fairy tale book. Clarke’s mouth is slightly parted as she looks around. She never thought such finery did actually still exist somewhere.

It doesn’t take Raven long to find a beautiful, baby blue gown that clings to her curves and shows off her toned stomach and lean arms. Clarke, however, struggles with the search. Her whole life she has worn nothing but ordinary, mundane clothes. Even though her family wasn’t poor, even considered wealthy in their home town, their lifestyle was nothing compared to this. There were no balls hosted by demon princes or visits to hell. There had just been Clarke, her parents, and Wells, trying to find a place in this strange, new world.

“What about this?” Harper asks, showing her the tenth dress in a row that doesn’t feel right to Clarke.
“It’s pretty, but...”

“But what?” Raven asks, holding a bag that contains her own dress which she found and bought twenty minutes ago.

“I feel like it’s too much.”

“The place will be swarming with supernatural creatures that only do too much,” Raven reminds her. Harper has already moved on though, showing her a rose-colored gown sparkling with glitter.

“That’s too little,” Clarke frowns, “I need — I need something sharp. Something that cuts. But also something that doesn’t look like prince Dracula dressed me up.”

Before Harper or Raven have a chance to roll their eyes, Clarke spots something on the other side of the shop. Velvet colors, silk, and thorns. And without even having tried it on, she knows that this is it. The dress.

After Clarke pays for the dress with the card that Bellamy gave her, the three of them grab something to eat before flying home. The sun is bright and warm today, only a soft breeze of wind now and then ruffling their hair, which presents the perfect opportunity to have lunch outside.

“You will look so amazing, Clarke,” Raven says around her cheeseburger.

Harper nods in agreement. “Oh, yes. I’m almost sorry we won’t be going with you. I’d love to see all the hearts you will break.”

“Me?” Clarke almost chokes on her mozzarella sandwich with nervous laughter. “I’m not the heart-breaking type.”

“I think quite a few people would disagree.”

“Finn would,” Raven adds.

Clarke’s heart swoops into her pants. Bellamy told her the truth about Finn, but she never got to talk about it with Raven until today. It never seemed like the right time to ask.

“About Finn,” she slowly says, “Raven, I’m sorry —”

“Don’t apologize,” Raven cuts in with a genuine smile. “You didn’t know. I mean, how could you?”

“Sure, but... I feel stupid for how fast I started to trust him, how easy. I should have been more careful.”

“That’s Finn. He makes you feel like you’re his entire world and then he turns around and stabs you in the back, but acts like it’s for your own good. It’s what he does.”

That’s precisely what he did to her. Clarke has to close her eyes for a moment at the memories of him standing before her, saying *I did it for you*. She wonders if Alie and Lexa still have him. A part of her feels sorry for him, the other not so much.

“Yes,” Clarke finally says. “What Finn and I had was a foolish idea anyway. Angels and human. That doesn’t work, right?”

Raven and Harper frown at her in puzzlement before Harper asks, “You mean sex between angels and humans?”
“That works just fine,” Raven huffs.

“No. I mean, yeah that, too, but — it could never be something real the way I see it. We are mortal. We die at some point, and you guys don’t.”

“Love is love, Clarke,” Harper says with a soft smile on her face. “Mortality doesn’t stop it from happening.”

“So it does happen?” Clarke has thought about this subject countless times, lately more than ever, and she always wanted to know if there are actual relationships between these two species. It seems impossible. A long time ago Clarke didn’t even think angels could love. Her friends have shown her otherwise, though.

Raven shrugs. “Sure. It happens. Offspring is a different subject, though.”

Clarke bites her lip. “Did you guys ever have human lovers?” Glancing to Harper, she adds, “You and Monty have each other, of course, but before that?”

“I didn’t,” Harper says. “It’s always been Monty for me.”

That must be nice. Clarke looks at Raven.

“Yeah. A long time ago.” There’s a strange sadness in Raven’s voice, very unusual for someone that sounds so bright and sarcastic most of the time. But with a subject so delicate, Clarke can’t blame her. There are only so many explanations as to what happened to that human, whoever they were.


“Jasper and Miller, yeah. It’s quite tragic every time,” Harper murmurs.

The question comes out of her mouth before Clarke can stop herself. “Didn’t Bellamy have anybody?”

For a few seconds, there’s a strained silence, then Raven replies, “He did. She wasn’t human, but he did have someone, like all of us at some point.”

Harper nods, doesn’t touch the rest of her pizza and looks off to the side at the hills in the distance. Her eyes glitter with dust and gold. Next to her, Raven calls for the cheery waitress so that they can pay.

Clarke doesn’t ask any more questions, but inside she can’t help but go over what she learned again and again. Raven, Jasper, and Miller had humans lovers and had to watch them die eventually. That’s how relationships between angels and mortals look. And Bellamy had someone to love, too, probably a fellow angel. Maybe she even was Bellamy’s companion, like Monty and Harper, or Octavia and Lincoln. But the fact that this angel is nowhere to be seen in their present means that she must have died as well, because apparently even such everlasting creatures as angels are not protected from death. All things have to go eventually.

Octavia of all people offers to help her with her makeup and dressing for their mission. Of course, Octavia is earth-shatteringly beautiful, no question there, but she’s also vicious, raw, and extremely dangerous, and Clarke didn’t take her for the type to be acquainted with makeup. But now that she thinks it out, she realizes how stupid that sounds.
Beauty is a tool, too. A very good one actually. Maybe that’s why Octavia comes prepared with three huge duffel bags full of makeup, and jewelry.

“Everyone’s face looks like a work of art there, and we don’t want to appear rude by not abiding by the dress code.“

Clarke’s brows furrow. Usually, dress code means a specific color or kind of clothing, but maybe there’s more to it. “Have you been to a lot of the prince’s parties?“

“Yes. I used to work for him. “

“Really?! “

Octavia nods behind her while she’s curling her hair. “Bell didn’t like it. “

“Well, he is the prince of hell, “Clarke can’t help but retort, cringing when Octavia huffs out a humorless laugh.

“And Murphy is a demon, I’m what they call the Antichrist, Bell’s got his own fucked up moments in life, and you’ve got the power to doom your planet. “She releases her strand of hair, and it falls into a perfectly, loose curl. “We’ve all got stories on us, that are not the definition of what we are. So has Roan.“

She’s right, of course. Just a few months ago Clarke was in the firm belief that Bellamy’s a heartless, human-hating monster. Now she’s living with him and knows it couldn’t be farther from the truth.

So she tries to be more open about it. “What was your job?“

“He had a lot of enemies and people doubting him when he started his own thing, “she replies. “I took care of the voices speaking ill of him. “

Clarke gulps. She doesn’t ask any more questions.

In a matter of one and a half hours, Octavia transforms her from a pale, natural blonde into something entirely else. Her hair, feeling extra smooth, falls in beautiful, wavy curls around her shoulders. A brownish bronzer makes her cheekbones stand out, and along with the dark kajal on her waterlines and the dark eyeshadow that makes her blue eyes look like shattered ice, she just looks so… sultry, and sexy, and dangerous. It’s nothing she would wear every day, but Clarke won’t deny that she likes the look of it.

For her neckline, Octavia gives her a thick, gold necklace that curls into a ball at its end. If you look long enough, it starts looking like a brain. Probably because demons like eating brains.

Her make up looks remarkable but what really tops the whole look is her dress. The velvet silk falling on her chest in a deep plunging v-neckline is feather light against her skin. The fabric along her sides is ripped, exposing patches of her creamy, pale skin. And then there are the three slits that part her dress and reach high above her hips, making her legs look long for once. Clarke’s really not one to brag, or even care much about physical appearances, but even she has to admit that it looks… fierce. Although it does show a lot of skin and a good amount of cleavage, it doesn’t look cheap either, which was essential to her.

“Holy hell,” Octavia says looking her up and down. “You look capable of ripping out men’s hearts and eating them.”

Clarke smiles at the compliment. “Thank you. It’s not too much?”
“No, it’s perfect. You’ll fit right in, you’ll see.”

“Good.”

She wants to fit in. This entire mission obviously doesn’t solely depend on it but has great value. Bellamy told her there will be all kinds of creatures and people -- not only demon and angels. So not attracting any unnecessary attention by arriving under- or overdressed which could lead to guests gossiping or worse: spreading information on their current whereabouts will be the first and probably easier challenges. The prince of hell being the more difficult one. He’s known to be easier to talk to compared with his queen and her lackeys, but tricky nonetheless.

Next in line are Murphy and Miller. Octavia covers up the red spots and pimples on Murphy’s face with concealer, gives him some darker shades on his cheekbones and Clarke helps with the smudged, reddish eyeshadow around his eyes. He’s nowhere near her type, but she has to admit he looks pretty good. Although when Murphy looks at himself in the mirror, he mutters, “I look like a painted whore.”

They shush him and proceed with Miller who, thankfully, doesn’t complain as they give him sharp contouring that makes the hard lines on his face stand out impressively, along with sleek black kohl liner for his eyes.

After two hours Clarke, Octavia, Emori, Raven and Murphy and Miller are all ready and dressed appropriately. Everyone looks, easily put, hot as fuck.

“What about Bellamy?” Clarke asks with a frown as she and Octavia make some last minute adjustments.

Octavia huffs, putting on two round, glittery black earrings. “He won’t let me do his face anymore after a party a century ago. Others do that now. Or he does it himself. I don’t know.”

Clarke nods and wonders what he’ll look like. Then she shoos that thought away because she’s going to find out soon enough anyway. It doesn’t matter.

For some reason descending the stairs feels an awful lot like the moment she entered the ball at the end of her school career, for a second all eyes on her. Which isn’t even right because the others already saw her dress. Raven and Emori said several times how incredible she looked, and she returned the compliments. Murphy just smirked, and Miller said, “You look cool, man.” So perhaps the eyes she’s actually nervous to see her are only Bellamy’s. She chooses not to dwell on the particular reasons why that is.

Either way, it’s entirely fruitless for Clarke to feel nervous because Bellamy isn’t at the end of the stairs waiting for her. The others are scattered around the living room, and he’s nowhere to be seen. Clarke plops down next to Miller and lets out a sigh.

“What? Not excited about the party?”

Clarke blinks in surprise at first, not having expected Miller to start a conversation with her. The most she’s talked to him so far were perhaps two sentences when they tried to find the key in Russia. But she recovers quickly and replies, “Excitement isn’t the term I’d use. Should I be, though?”

“Depends how Roan’s mood is today,” Miller shrugs. “But usually his parties are fun.”

“What exactly is fun for you angels? I only know human parties and —” Her words trail off when a wave of Bellamy’s presence washes over her, and she turns her head to see him trot down the stairs. Clarke tries not to stare, she really does, but...
Clarke has never denied that Bellamy looks good. In fact, the first time she saw him, she, kind of, secretly declared him as the most beautiful guy she’s ever seen, and then quickly ignored that when she found out who he was.

There’s no denying now.

There are many beautiful people, especially here in this house. Take Raven for example. Or Octavia. Emori. Harper. But Bellamy seems to be on a whole different level, and everything about him right now highlights it.

He’s wearing a black suit with a velvet notch lapel, bow tie, and cufflinks whose color looks similar to the one of her dress, if not identical. His dark curls are messy on top of his head as usuals. Just like Miller and Murphy, he’s wearing dark eyeshadow around his eyes, making look mysterious and dark and incredibly attractive.

Clarke feels like this is his staircase moment, and she’s the one staring at him and salivating. Which reminds her to stop that immediately. Swiftly she turns back to Miller who’s explaining something about nonhuman parties and festivities at the moment.

“— so you shouldn’t do that on your own. Safer to ask first,” Miller finishes.

Nodding, Clarke clears her throat and folds her hands in her lap. “Cool. Alright.”

A second later Bellamy comes to stand in the center of the living room. “Is everyone ready?” he asks as his gaze sweeps over everyone, and then lands on her. He doesn’t hide the way it rakes over her body, her curves, and the exposed skin. Maybe it’s his revanche for her own ogling, or perhaps it's just Bellamy.

Clarke raises her chin and puts on a sweet, confident smile.

“We’ve been ready a long time ago,” Raven quips, poking him in the ribs. “It’s you who had to make a dramatic entrance.”

“I saved the best thing ‘till last.”

“So you can compliment yourself but not us?” Raven demands.

Bellamy smirks, touching her arm for a moment. “You look magnificent as always, Raven.”

That satisfies Raven. Clarke tries to stifle to stare at this interaction from the couch and tries even harder not to let anyone see that it bothers her a teeny tiny bit. Seeing the two of them talk so easily like makes her want that, too. She doesn’t know why.

However, as the others get up and shuffle to the hallway, Bellamy remains in the living room, with her, before walking towards her and offering her his hand. “You look… stunning,” he tells her.

For a moment she doesn’t know how to respond, then she accepts his hand and smiles. “You too, Bellamy.”

“I know.”

Huffing out a laugh, she follows him to their friends.

“You know, we have to be a united front in front of Roan,” he tells her on the way outside. “He has to have faith in us one hundred percent.”
“Is this your way of telling me to behave?”

“I trust you to act like you think is right, I just wanted to inform you.”

“Then I guess I’ll do my best not to make you look stupid.”

“You would never,” he says.

Chapter End Notes

Hey, guys, I’m incredibly busy at the moment and this chapter was long + needed some heavy editing so that’s why it took me so long to update. I should have more time again in the second half of the month though. I hope you can understand and enjoyed this chapter nonetheless <3 (Sorry for the abrupt ending, by the way. I had to stop somewhere!!)
The party takes place in a castle in Scotland — glamoured to look abandoned to the mortal eye, but in reality, lights are flickering inside and shadows of people passing the small, arched windows. It’s amazing.

“Have you ever been to Scotland?” Bellamy asks her as they cross the bridge that leads to the massive gates.

Clarke snorts. “God, no. I haven’t even left my own town once.” A group of people is walking a few feet in front of them. They don’t seem to be angels because Clarke can’t spot any wings on their back, but there’s no demonic energy either. “What are they?” she asks Bellamy, nudging her head towards them.

“Two witches,” Bellamy says, squinting, “and a Wendigo as far as I can tell.”

Her head whips towards him. “A what?”

“Wendigo. You know, man-eating monster and all that?”

“They’re real!?”

“Sure,” he shrugs easily. “The world is much bigger than you think, Clarke. Most of them, and us, didn’t show ourselves for a long, long time, but ever since demons crawled out of hell and made you their all you can eat buffet, the other creatures have started showing themselves, too.”

“I thought they were just stupid rumors,” she murmurs, suddenly really, really glad for all the butt-kicking she received from Lincoln and Octavia in the last few weeks. Who knows what these things think like; maybe they see a walking piece of dinner when they look at her. However, Clarke would rather stab in them guts before letting anyone near her.

Perhaps she has momentarily forgotten about her wall, or maybe Bellamy sees the shadow of fear flicker across her face because he lays a gentle hand on her back. “The majority is friendly here, so there shouldn’t be any trouble.”

“And if there is?”

“Then they’ll regret it.” His voice goes grim for a moment, then he casts a glance at her and asks, “Have you really never left your town?”

The change of topic irritates her for a moment, but she recovers quickly. “Uh, no. My parents thought it was safest there, so we never traveled anywhere, which is ironic, because…” She doesn’t finish the sentence, partly because the supposed safety didn’t help her dad, or Wells’ mom, or the other people around her, and partly because they’ve arrived at the gates where a big, hulky man is glowering at them.
There are no words that are exchanged; instead, Bellamy reaches out his hand, and the man takes it roughly. A few seconds pass and then she sees a bright light around their hands before the man nods grimly and his eyes slide to her.

“My plus one,” Bellamy says.

“Human?”

“That’s what she is.”

The doorman keeps staring at her, and then finally grunts out a nod. They pass him and enter the endlessly long corridor which is decorated with a black carpet. When Clarke glances backward to check on their friends, they’re all getting the same treatment. The strange handshake. Waiting. A nod.

“Am I the only human here?” she wants to know as Bellamy steers them along the hallway, then into a passage to their right.

“No, but they’re cautious.”

She doesn’t know whether that’s a good or a bad sign. Either way, they’re already here, so there’s no turning back now. This plan has to work.

They reach another gate and Clarke halts as she sees the vast, crowded hall in front of them. There are people — at least, creatures that look human — everywhere, in circles, in groups, partnered, and alone. Octavia was telling the truth when she said everyone would come just as dressed up as them. Their dresses and suits are bright, colorful. There are feathery hats, gowns with pearls and jumpsuits made of silk. It’s like a big mix of couture and high fashion, and it’s absolutely beautiful. Aside from the people, there are several bars and lots of high tables and other seating opportunities. She spots a chocolate fountain at the end of the room.

“What’s the plan, boss?” Raven’s voice chirps behind her, and Clarke turns around to see that their friends have caught up on them, all of them surrounding her and Bellamy now.

“O’, Miller: check for any hidden traps or danger,” he says with a nod towards them before turning to Emori and Murphy. “You spread out and try to see what the atmosphere is like if there are talks about the keys, the war, that sort of thing.”


“Blending in,” Bellamy corrects and turns to Raven. “You’re with us.”

The others spread out. Clarke, Bellamy, and Raven join the masses.

“I guess you don’t want to ambush Roan right away, and that’s why we’re waiting?” Clarke asks.

Bellamy nods. “We’ll let him enjoy his party for a while longer before we talk business.”

“Roan will probably find us first, anyway,” Raven says.

Bellamy steers them to one of the few free bar tables, and on the way, Clarke notices people staring at them — or her. Not exactly in the same disgusted way, the angels in Polis did, but instead with curiosity and buzz. Clarke’s not scared of any attack, not with two angels by her side, but she still feels like an ant walking among giants.
One of the people gawking at her is a woman with straight hair black as the night, wearing a beautiful, skin-tight gown. When she sees Clarke returning the stare, her dark red lips curl into a wide grin, revealing shiny, sharp fangs in place of teeth.

But all Clarke does is straighten her spine and pass her, chin held high and straight.

Raven apparently notices since she lets out a laugh and says, “Relax, Clarke or they’ll hit on you nonstop.”

“On me?”

“Yeah, on you.” They stop at the table and stay there. “If you haven’t noticed, you look extra gorgeous tonight, and there are always creeps who think bedding a mortal is some sort of exotic experience. Right, Bellamy?”

“Right,” Bellamy says, his voice even huskier than usual.

Pinching her nose, she looks around, at the men, at the women. Could she ever go to bed with any of them? The looks are certainly there, some more unique than others, but none of them are human. There was Finn, which didn’t bother her. But she was so different back then, all of it was so different.

Clarke looks back to her two friends and catches Bellamy’s intent gaze on her before it darts away, and he clears his throat.

“I’m gonna get drinks. Do you want drinks?”

“The usual holy cocktail,” Raven says.

“Do they have wine here? Or something not moonshine-like?” Clarke asks, cringing at the thought of having to swallow even an ounce of that disgusting beverage.

“Probably,” he huffs, and then he’s already headed for the bar.

Clarke turns to Raven with furrowed brows. “Was he being weird, or is that just me?”

“Not any weirder than his usual,” she replies with a shrug. “So, you got this?”

Leave it to Raven to be blunt. “Yeah, I think so.”

“You think?” Raven’s brows raise. “This is probably the first time since heaven that you’re surrounded by unfamiliar angels and other creatures again. It must be terrifying.”

Up until now, she managed to avoid thinking back to that other place. Annoyed that Raven brought it up, Clarke pushes back the golden bracelet on her wrist. “This is different.”

“Oh course, but trauma is trauma, and I know a thing or two about it. We need you to keep a clear head tonight, this is important.”

“I know that is,” she half snaps. “The fate of my mortal world relies on it, too.”

“Easy. I’m just saying.”

“Sorry,” she murmurs, rubbing her temple when a man approaches their table. He’s tall with broad shoulders and a broad chest, brown hair up in a bun, and an icy, lethal smirk on his face.
“Raven,” he greets, voice deep and rough.

For a second Raven looks like a deer in the headlights, surprised, then she tugs on that smooth, charming smile of her and lets the man kiss her hand as she replies, “Roan. It’s good to see you in one piece.”

“Why wouldn’t I be?”

“Rumors had it you vanished,” she quips. “And it’s been almost two decades.”

“I like to lay low nowadays, but figured now is the best time to host another feast, before… things get ugly.”

Clarke muses over the meaning of ‘things turning ugly’ just in time for Roan’s eyes to land on her. A silent order for Raven to introduce her.

“This is Clarke,” Raven says, gesturing to her. “Our friend.”

Clarke reaches out her hand to give him a handshake and says, “It’s nice to meet you,” but he places a kiss there as well. His lips pressing against her skin longer, and firmer than on Raven's, though.

“Human, and beautiful,” Roan tells her, voice supposed to be sounding charming, she assumes.

Clarke refuses to blush under his gaze and gives him an etiquette smile instead. “Thank you.” Her hand waves around them. “Your party is imposing.”

“This is nothing compared to my other festivities. Pity you didn’t come around earlier.” He casts a glance to Raven. “How did you get to know this heavenly bunch of rascals?”

She lets herself ponder for a moment, deciding whether to tell the truth or make something up. However, there’s no need since someone’s heavy palm lands on her back, soft despite its weight, and Clarke instantly knows that it’s Bellamy, without even looking up.

“Oh, you know us, Roan. Making friends everywhere we go.” It’s hard to miss the sarcasm in his voice.

“Bellamy,” Roan says, tipping his head forward in greeting. “I was already wondering when you’d show.”

“Well, here I am,” Bellamy places three sets of drinks on the surface of the table but remains standing between Clarke and Raven. “Nice party. I like the location. The mountain’s gotten a little old the last couple of times.”

“Obviously, coming from you.”

She feels Bellamy stiffen slightly beside her.

“I was surprised to hear you coming tonight,” Roan adds after a moment of stifled silence. “This doesn’t have to anything with my mother, does it?” His eyes narrow as they dart from him to Raven to Clarke, who only lifts her chin even higher in reply, or lack thereof.

To him, she’s probably the weakest link. The easiest to crack. And he’s probably right, although that doesn’t mean she’s going to make it easy for him.

“Not in the way you think,” Bellamy finally says. “But go on. We’ll have time to discuss politics later into the night.”
Roan stares them down a few seconds longer before his face smoothes back into his charming smile. Also, directed at her. “Then, I guess I will see all of you later.” He gives Raven and Bellamy a nod but halts when he passes Clarke's back, murmuring, “Parties are much more enjoyable if you let the host show you around. I’ll be close.”

He leaves, and a shiver runs down her spine.

Raven seems like she's about to burst into laughter, while Bellamy’s expression is nothing but a sour scowl. “I hate this guy,” he mutters, watching the prince disappear in the crowd.

“But it’s good,” Clarke says. “If he’s… interested in me, or whatever, maybe it’ll be easier to convince him to work with us, right?”

“I like your way of thinking,” Raven claps her on the back, “but I’m currently seeing a friend at the bar that I have to say hi to, or else she’ll throttle me. See you guys later.” With that, she leaves them on their own.

Clarke glances up to Bellamy, and says again, “That gives us an advantage, right?”

“The guy wants to fuck you, Clarke, not become your boyfriend and help you lock up his mom.”

For a moment she’s stunned at his bluntness. Then pissed. He’s right, of course, but that’s not the issue. The issue’s the condescending tone in his words like she’s this stupid, little girl.

“I know that,” she crosses her arms, “but it’s still better than doing a passive-aggressive pissing contest like you.”

Bellamy puffs out a breath of air before shrugging and rolling his eyes. “If you want to seduce him into cooperating, then, by all means, go ahead. I’m not gonna stop you.”

It’s like Clarke’s talking to the Bellamy she first met. The Bellamy who was always annoyed, sarcastic, and incredibly arrogant, and who made her blood boil. And she doesn’t really understand why. Because over the last few weeks she’s learned that there’s far more behind that facade, she’s seen with her own eyes. Bellamy let her in to see the real him.

Or, maybe she does understand, but that reason is so ridiculous to even think about that she pushes it far, far away.

“Great. Maybe I’ll do that.”

“Fine.”

“Fine,” she snaps and snatches the glass from the table to down the whole thing one go. Bellamy carefully watches her doing it. Then she places it down with a loud thud and turns to go to the bar, her body brushing past him in the process. “If you excuse me, I’ll get myself another drink.”

“Stay in sight, princess,” he drawls, giving her a cold smirk that doesn’t reach his eyes.

Clarke storms off in a cloud. The bar is crowded, everyone eager to get a drink, especially since it’s free although she’s not sure how much worth money is around here. While she’s waiting for her turn, she tries not to scare off all these people and creatures with the face she pulls.

It’s just so frustrating. Bellamy is so frustrating. Would this happen with anyone else, she wouldn’t bat an eye. She knows her own worth. But he —he just manages to rile her up every damn time.
“Smile a little,” a voice suddenly says next to her, and she glances up to see a man with flaming, red hair grin at her. “I’m sure it’d look splendid on you.”

He probably means well, but Clarke doesn’t have the heart to do anything but curl her mouth a little and sigh inwardly.

“I’m Gensley,” he proceeds then and gives her a hand.

“Clarke.” They shake hands, and then he kisses it.

“You look a bit lost here. Is this party not to your liking?”

“No, no. It’s good.”

“Then, why the poute?”

“I’m not —” She cuts herself off with a sigh, and just shrugs. “I had a stupid fight with a friend.”

“What a shame that friend to fight with such a beautiful lady!” he exclaims dramatically. The bartender nudges her with a glass of wine, and she takes it, chuckling into it. “There, there. I knew there was a beautiful smile hiding behind that frown!”

“That’s sweet, thanks.” She smiles, color rising in her cheeks. This guy is not really what she’d go for usually, and she won’t go for it today, but he’s cute and sweet; definitely friendlier than Bellamy.

“Can I ask you what you are?” Maybe it’s the wine or his kindness that makes her say it, but he doesn’t show any particular adverse reaction besides a grin, so she figures it’s okay.

“If you tell me what you are.”

*Easy.*

“I’m human,” she says. “Isn’t it obvious?”

Gensley puts a hand over his chest and shakes his head. “I could’ve sworn I saw some sparkling in you.”

Whatever the hell that means. Clarke just laughs it off, tilts her head, and says, “No, just a plain, regular human.”

„Plain looks otherwise. You’re here, aren’t you?“

In a way, he’s right. She’s in Scotland at a party thrown by the prince of hell, drinking among creatures she never even dared to imagine, talking to god knows what or who, and all that on a critical, dangerous mission. Her life is a lot of things, but boring isn’t one of them. Not anymore.

"Your turn," she says.

“I’m a vampire.” He raises his own cup of glass to his mouth, and she sees long, sharp fangs curling around the drink.

„That’s — wow. Cool.“

*A freaking vampire.*

Before Gensley can retort anything, another man and woman tackle him from behind, laughter on
their faces. The girl has hair just like him — red, and fierce, and freckles on her pale skin. The man has shoulder length brown hair, and mesmerizing green eyes.

„Who is this lovely human you’re talking to?“ the girl murmurs into his ear, her hands sliding around Gensley’s waist in a slightly inappropriate way.

Clarke feels herself blush.

„Her name’s Clarke, Mischa,“ Gensley manages to say between laughter. His free hand strokes through her long hair. „A sweet human thing that had a fight with her friend.“

„Who is this friend?“ the brown haired guy asks, cheeks pink and eyes glassy. „We’ll beat him up for you.“

Mischa — the girl untangles herself from Gensley and steps into Clarke’s space, her wandering hand landing on her knee, fingers ever so slowly tracing up a strip of skin her dress exposes. „Or better yet, we buy you a drink and make you forget there was ever a fight,“ she purrs.

Clarke’s heart speeds up at the flirtation. „I’m not —“ she starts saying when the brunette guy shouts down an order for a drink she doesn’t know.

They all grin wickedly at her, all so beautiful, and so fucking terrifying at the same time.

„I’m Avon by the way,“ the guy says with a wink.

„Mischa,“ the girl says, her fingers dancing on her skin.

Clarke opens her mouth, when she feels two hands on her waist, a familiar scent surrounding her, a presence mixing with her entire being that she’s learned to love and hate at the same time.

„Sorry, folks. My girl is already busy tonight,“ Bellamy says from behind her, voice superficial friendly, but just as lethal and dangerous as a snake dressed in a rabbit fur.

Gensley’s eyes widen upon seeing who exactly is having his hands on her right now. He scrambles off his chair, and stammers, „Uh — oh, we’re already on our, er, way.“

„It was fancy meeting you here,“ Avon manages to blurt out before both guys disappear in the crowd, leaving Clarke frowning at their backs in confusion.

Only Mischa remains, just slightly stepping out of Clarke’s personal space and giving Bellamy a sultry stare. „I’m still free for tonight,“ she says.

„I think we’ll decline,“ Bellamy says.

„Is vampire not exotic enough for —“

„Piss off.“

Clarke almost chokes on her drink in shock, but it does the trick and Mischa gives both of them a glare before walking off, her hips never losing their sway.

The bartender slides over the drink they ordered for her.

It’s silent between them for a moment except for the music blaring through the speakers. Then Clarke turns around and raises a brow.
„I thought you said I was allowed to flirt tonight?“

Bellamy narrows his eyes at her. „You’re free to do whatever you like, princess, but tonight you have a job. That you have to focus on. So seduce Roan for all I care or fuck a few horny vampires in your free time, but right now, we have the alliance to make.“

Clarke clicks her tongue. Something about him playing the I-don’t-care-about-anything card is rubbing her the wrong way. „Yeah, obviously.“

„Besides,“ Bellamy picks up the drink and sniffs at it, „this is a magical cocktail. It would’ve knocked you into another dimension.“

Nevermind that Clarke wouldn’t have touched that drink anyway, thinking about what would have happened if she drank this stuff is nonetheless scary. But she only gets up and says, „Let’s just go.“

It’s hard to contain her annoyance with him when they’re on a mission, and he’s supposed to be her confidant in here, but she gives it her best shot as he leads them away from the center of the festivities. A few feet away leaning against a stony mast, Clarke spots Murphy, then Emori. They approach them, and now she sees the others, too.

„Everybody’s enjoying the party so far?“ Bellamy asks and slides his hands into his pockets.

„More than her,“ Murphy says, nodding towards Clarke.

She rolls her eyes, not in the mood for any of his jokes right now.

„She’s enjoying herself just fine,“ Bellamy quips.

Clarke wants to kick him in his balls. She wonders if that would hurt Bellamy just as much as it hurts mortal men.

He clears his throat and continues in a low murmur, „Have you found anything?“

„The party’s safe,“ Miller replies. „No traps we found.“

Emori goes on, „We’ve heard talk about Naia and her plans, heaven, but not Clarke’s involvement.“

„And nobody seems to have recognized little princess here so far either,“ Murphy adds.

„Good. Let’s keep it that way.“ Bellamy glances around them and then says, „We will all meet back here at midnight. No sooner, no later. I want your eyes sharp. Dealing with Roan won’t be any use if someone finds out what we know.“

Everyone nods, and then Bellamy is already off to hell knows where. Clarke watches him disappear in the crowd with a sigh before looking back at the others. To her surprise, Octavia says, „I’ll get us all some more wine“ and specifically pats her shoulder before going to the bar.

„So we just wait until midnight?“ she asks into the round, feeling weirdly deflated all of a sudden.

Emori shoots her a grin. „More or less.“ The girl links their elbows and tugs her through the crowd. „I can introduce you to a few… colleagues. Remember wanting to figure out what exactly you are?“

„I mean, yeah, but—“

It’s too late for protests because Emori is already waving people over. Three young women, all with scarlet, black hair and a familiar tattoo on their faces, and a man that has white hair reaching his
shoulders and pale skin come over.

“Emori,” one of the women greets, a sly smirk on her face.

“Darlene,” Emori replies, returning the sneer, and pushes Clarke in front of the people like she’s presenting her newest, little experiment. “Ladies, this is Clarke. Clarke these are Darlene,” her hand motions at the petite woman next to Darlene, “Amber,” she points at the third and tallest woman, her curves fit into a beautiful black dress that melts with her equally dark hair, “Cordelia, and this beautiful bastard is Nikolai.”

“Good to see you, too, Emori,” Nikolai says with a smile.

“I want you people to take a look at Clarke and tell me what you see.”

Clarke feels her cheeks heat up. She expected, perhaps, more small talk before Emori steered to the subject of what she is. It doesn’t help that all of their gazes land on her, just as instructed, and they ogle her like if they squint enough, the magical answer will appear on her forehead.

Then the man — Nikolai reaches out his hand and asks, “May I?”

“Um, sure.”

“He’s a Medium,” Emori whispers next to her.

His pale hand touches her bare arm, and he closes his eyes. For a few beats, nothing happens. Clarke is ready to sigh in resignation when all of a sudden a series of images and sensations penetrate her mind.

_The stench of something rotten. Darkness so thick Clarke feels like she has to cut through it to see something. And then something cold and shiny in front of her. Her vision flickers and blurs at the edges, but she manages to see the object disappear in the darkness. Clarke lifts her hand, reaches for it to —_

Nikolai yanks his hand away, staggering back with wide eyes and his breath coming out in shallow gasps. Clarke finds her own breathing mirroring his.

“What was that?” she asks, staring at him.

“Something I don’t wish to see again,” he says, wiping a strand of hair out his face. “There’s a darkness in you, girl. I — I’ve never seen anything like it.”

Somehow the expressions on the women’s faces all look the same. Something between terrified and offended. Meanwhile, Emori simply shrugs.

“There’s darkness all around us. The host of the party is the prince of hell.”

“The darkness in her is different. I can’t describe it.”

“Very helpful,” Emori mutters.

“Please Emori,” the petite one chirps in and scrunches her nose in distaste, “don’t involve us in your dramas again. Last time was already enough.”

“You only ever bring trouble,” Darlene agrees.

Clarke frowns at the sudden change of mood. These ladies went from nice and sweet to old hags.
She opens her mouth to say something, but Emori beats her to it.

“For Satan’s sake, I only asked you to take a damned look, not give me your bones.” With that, she grabs Clarke’s arm and drags them away as she mutters, “And they call themselves the grand coven.”

“They’re witches?”

“That’s what they call themselves, but apparently a little darkness is already too scary for them.

Emori only stops when they’re at the other side of the room, an étagère with lots of finger food and desserts on it in front of them. Clarke watches her, both amused and somewhat concerned, snatch something that looks like tiramisu.

“Seriously, they are supposed to worship the great, terrible Satan?” she goes on, shoving one spoon after another into her mouth. “I don’t think they could even handle Murphy. Or Bellamy.”

Clarke huffs out a laugh of agreement. “They don’t seem like great witches. Or friends.”

“Oh, they’re not my friends.”

“No?”

“Satan, no.” Emori puts her empty glass away and takes another. “I sought them out back when I started practicing my witchcraft, wanted to join their coven. They laughed in my faces and told me I was too weak to ever enter their little prestige circle. A stray that wasn’t good enough.”

It’s hard to imagine these women laughing at Emori. Emori, who walks and talks with confidence spilling out of her. Her pride forces you to respect her. And Clarke does respect her. Not just because she is intimidated, but because she wants to, and Emori is kind, strong and very unique.

“So what did you do then?” she asks eventually.

Emori glances up from her third glass of tiramisu and smirks. “I became so much worse than them. After that, it didn’t take long for them to reconsider their answer.”

That sounds more believable. Still. “I’m sorry they acted that way because of me.”

“I don’t care what they think. I have my own pack of beasts, and they’re far better than they’ll ever be.”

Murphy. Raven. Bellamy. And the others, Clarke thinks. She didn’t see much of these ladies, but she saw enough to know that the people she’s with are definitely better, and less judgemental. A sudden wave of gratitude washes over her at that moment. Everything would be so much different if Bellamy didn’t rescue her from heaven that day.

“What did you see when Nikolai touched you?” Emori asks then.

“I’m not really sure. It was mostly darkness and only a spark of light, not really clear, but it felt familiar somehow.”

“Mysterious.”

“Like always.” Clarke blows out a frustrated puff of breath. It’s not like she actually expected him to tell her what she is, but she’s tired of all these confusing images that don’t make any sense. She hates being in the dark about something as important as this.
“Hey, we’ll find out what you’re made of, too,” Emori says, pulling her back to the present moment, “and if not, we’ll just have to name a new species after you. The key finder. The girl who attracts heaven and hell. The —”

Clarke’s still smiling slightly when Raven and Murphy come up behind Emori, the latter’s hands sliding around her waist, while the former throws her a concerned look. Octavia trails behind them.

“I felt some annoyance there,” Murphy murmurs into Emori’s neck, loud enough for Clarke to hear.

His girlfriend pats his hands and smiles. “Nothing worth mentioning.”

But Raven asks, “The coven?”

When Emori gives a small nod, Raven places her hands on her arm in a reassuring touch.

The sight of the three of them, all tangled and clasped together, feels too intimate to watch from her positions, so Clarke tears her eyes away, not wanting to feel like an intruder. Octavia comes up next to her, turning them into the other direction before offering her a glass of wine.

Oh right, she mentioned wine earlier.

Taking it, Clarke asks as quietly as she manages, “What exactly is the relationship status of them?”

“Nobody really knows,” Octavia huffs. “It’s more confusing than Bellamy and — and heaven.”

Clarke frowns at the weird analogy but doesn’t comment on it, and neither on Raven, Emori and Murphy. So instead she asks where Miller is since he’s the only missing from their group, aside from Bellamy, of course.

“Standing watch,” Octavia replies. “This is a party, but there are still a bunch of demons here who would be capable of tearing you apart if they feel like it.”

Clarke shudders and glances at her surroundings. They all look like regular people in fancy dresses to her, but when she concentrates, she can see the different types of energy being extorted around here. Two men with dust grey wings are standing at the bar table in front of them — Angels. The elderly woman that’s sipping from her goblet at the bar seems to dim all the lights and sparkles around her. She must be a demon. Next to her, a human. Or a witch, vampire, or something like that. Clarke can’t tell.

Octavia hums as if reading her thoughts. “Uh-uh, a warrior is always aware of their surroundings.”

A warrior. Clarke stifles a snort.

A moment later their three other friends shuffle into view again.

“You two look like you’re looking at a battlefield, not a party,” Murphy jokes.

Octavia seizes him with an unimpressed stare. “I’m just telling Clarke that she should always be cautious in a room with you, demons.”

“You’re the literal antichrist.”

“At least, I don’t smell.”

Murphy rolls his eyes and turns to Emori and Raven. “Your support is always appreciated, you know.”
“Oh, you handle yourself just fine,” Emori grins, stroking his cheek in a teasing manner.

Raven nods, a smirk lighting up her face. "You don't need us."

It goes like that for the next hour or so. Octavia and Murphy throw half-heartless jabs at each other, and Raven and Emori take turns in either defending him or doing the exact opposite. Clarke watches and laughs when everyone does, but every once in a while her eyes scan the room for Bellamy, and when they don't find him, Clarke tries to search with her soul and heart for even the slightest speck of his presence. Only silence greets her on all ends. She tries and fails to ignore it.

Some time before midnight Clarke excuses herself to visit the bathroom, Octavia accompanying her. On the way back to the group, though, a hand wraps around her wrist, making her halt. Clarke turns to see Nikolai, the Medium from earlier, staring at her.

“I remember now,” he says.

Next to her Octavia stiffens but Clarke holds up a reassuring hand before facing Nikolai.

“What?”

“I apologize for my friends, they wouldn’t let me help, but I remember now. Here,” his grip releases and is replaced by his palm on her forehead.

Clarke doesn’t get a chance to ask what the hell he is talking about before she gets yanked back into the world of thick, unnerving darkness. Sickening stench and fear — then a snowed-in road and a tree. A crack in the ground. The distant laughter of kids. And back is the darkness, but this time it isn't black, but red. Clarke’s standing in some sort of passage, and it’s red — ultraviolent red. The passage is like a hole, it’s round walls covered with dirt, bones, severed limbs and fingers, and so much blood.

It goes on and on. Eternal hell.

Clarke is surrounded by blood and extremities one moment, and in the next, she’s standing in a dark room somewhere. The only source of light a torch on the wall. There are rusty chains on the ground. A quiet slurp somewhere nearby.

Then she’s somewhere deeper, but still in the same room. That sound of someone breathing heavily louder now, closer. She’s looking at a pile of bodies. Limp and lifeless, looking like a pack of slaughtered pigs on top of each other. The ground moves underneath them, opens up, lets her fall deep into the abyss before she finally sees what’s inside.

A key.

Clarke jerks away from Nikolai with a gasp, her heart beating so fast it threatens to jump out of her chest and gallop away.

Howl stares at her as she clutches her ribs, willing herself to breathe evenly.

“I didn’t know before, but now I do. You are searching for it, aren’t you?”

The key. Nikolai means the key.

Clarke knows deep down that she should deny it, find some excuse, because he is a stranger and no one should know about what they are looking for, let alone where they will be looking for it. Yet she only blinks at him. “How did you do that?”
“I’m a medium. It’s what I do.” There’s almost something like amusement in those pale blue eyes.

Swallowing, she says, “If you tell anyone about this —”

“I won’t.”

Her breathing finally stabilizes, and Clarke straightens her back, trying to figure out if he’s trustworthy or not. He did help her. But at what cost? “Do you know Bellamy?” she asks then. “The angel —”

“— of darkness. Of course. Who doesn’t?”

“He’ll hunt you down and kill you if you ever tell a soul about what you saw,” she forces herself to say. The words feel thick and wrong in her mouth. Clarke is in no position to threaten another being, not someone who gets to decide who lives or dies, but she also knows what’s at stake.

The effect is immediate. Nikolai’s eyes widen. “I didn’t see anything. I don’t even know who you are.”

Clarke swallows and manages a nod. “Good.”

“I have to go now,” he says and gives her a curt bow. “I hope we will not see each other again, stranger, for my own sake.”

“I hope so too,” she murmurs.

When Nikolai walks away, his steps long and fast, she turns around and looks through the crowd. Bellamy. She needs Bellamy right now. He needs to know what she saw, what it means —

Thinking back to the place she saw in her head, overwhelms her, and she scrunches her eyes shut in pain and panic.

Bellamy, Bellamy, Bellamy, Bellamy, Bellamy.

Two hands — familiar, warm hands take her hands, squeezing. So reassuring, so anchoring.

“Clarke.”

The bodies flicker in front of her eyes again, so dead and cold in contrast to the weight on her hands —

“Clarke, say something. Talk to me, princess.”

Her eyes snap open. The world around her stops whirling and buzzing and burning. All she sees is Bellamy looking at her, one of his hands now touching her cheek; all she hears is his voice.

“Clarke,” he says.

“I think I know where the key is in hell,” she whispers, voice close to wobbling. “I saw it.”

“Show me.”

Clarke doesn’t know how she does it, but she closes her eyes and sends those terrible, awful sequences of images to him, just like she does when they’re talking quietly. It seems to work. She opens her eyes and Bellamy curses under his breath.
“Is it bad?”

“The place is not good,” he says, driving a hand through his hair. She kind of misses the weight of it on her cheek. “But we now know where to look exactly.”

Which, she supposes, is good. They were still trying to figure out that particular problem, but now there’s no need.

“It’s almost midnight. Time to put this information to use.” Bellamy says to her and Octavia who has been watching the entire time.

As they push through the people on the way to the meeting spot, Clarke dares to ask the question in her head. Where is it?

She feels the moment of hesitation before he replies, In the most bottomless pit of hell with the devil himself.

They meet the others, and Bellamy gives everyone a new set of directions. Raven, Emori, and Murphy make sure that the party goes on as usual, while the rest goes talk to Roan.

Roan is at the head of, what looks like a poker table, except that instead of chips there are white, little, long objects. Bones, Clarke realizes with a gulp as the prince of hell glances up and smirks.

“I see the cavalry’s here for me.”

“Party’s over, Roan,” Bellamy says. “We need to talk.”

The tall, slender woman in an all black matt jumpsuit shoots them a glare and leans down. “Sire I can —”

Roan lifts his hand, which makes her shut up. “No need.” Bracing his hands on the table, he stands up and says, “I assume whatever you have to tell me will be good if you bothered to show up here. Am I wrong?”

“All in due time. Can we do this in private?”

The look on the prince’s face isn’t exactly the definition of pleased, but after a moment, in which Clarke fears he’ll send them right back to his queen, he gives a terse nod. “Very well. Follow me.”

The room he leads them to is hidden in the wall of the hallway that leads to the party. Roan flicks a hand, and a metal door appears. It certainly has its perks to be the prince of hell, Clarke thinks, as they enter. A round, polished table is inside with enough seats for everyone, including the three stale faced women that accompany Roan.

Sitting down at Bellamy’s right, she notices him glaring daggers at those women — more specifically the black leather belts around their waists. Clarke frowns, but when she squints enough, she sees what makes him so agitated. They all have invisible knives on them, a great deal of them. And, of course, they are demons.

“You have your protection, I have mine,” Roan says. Then his eyes slide to her, and he huffs, “Although I do wonder why you brought her. As lovely as she is to look at.”

Clarke feels her face flush face with anger, her fist clenching under the table. At this moment she wishes she could be one of them — angel, demon, even the freaking antichrist, Clarke doesn’t give a damn — so that she could magically tear out Roan’s tongue and — a soothing invisible hand touches
her, caresses her and softens the tightness in Clarke. Bellamy. It’s like he’s stroking a finger along her wall.

Next to her, Bellamy doesn’t even blink at Roan’s words. The glare on his face remains though.

Roan gives each of them a look, everyone’s face just as grave, and lets out a dramatic sigh. “Talk.”

Bellamy’s shoulders straighten ever so slightly, his hands clasping together. “When war comes, which side of it will you be on?”

It’s not what she expected him to say, but she figures there will be more.

“I guess I’m about to find out,” Roan replies.

“How does the world without hell sound to you?”

Roan raises a brow, leans back against the chair. “You’re talking about locking hell up.” The silence he gets is enough as an answer. “And why would you assume the prince of hell is the right person to ally with?”

“Because the prince of hell is just a banished son,” Bellamy says with a shrug, bracing his hands on the table, “but if the Queen's gone, and so is hell, you’ll be the king.”

“King of who when your brilliant plan includes imprisoning all of my kind?”

Bellamy snorts. “There would be enough left on this earth, and you know that, Roan. Somehow your kind always manages to keep its claws on this side of the world.”

“Tempting offer, I must say, but I have to assume that you must have the key to make these kinds of promises?”

“Assume away,” Bellamy says easily, not denying or confirming anything. Just like they discussed.

“So I guess the human has a purpose after all,” the prince huffs, looking at Clarke again.

This time she doesn’t falter under his gaze. She does not shrink. There are far more terrible things she saw today than a hungry look and predatory, black demon eyes.

“The human,” Bellamy says, accentuating the word, “has a right to be at this table, just like everyone else here.”

Clarke doesn’t allow herself to smile, but she sends him the feeling of gratitude over their telepathy bond. A mental nod.

“Isn’t that sweet? My mother, Lexa, and Alie are tearing up heaven and hell to look for her, but I see the death bringer has found her master.”

The term he used to call her, or what he called Bellamy — Clarke doesn’t know what she finds more disturbing, what makes her madder, but she swallows her feelings down and musters up a sweet smile. “He had the prettiest leash.”

If they can play the game, so can she.

For a second Roan blinks, seems baffled. Even Bellamy isn’t able to stifle the surprise in his head, although his face remains blank. As always. Then the prince regains his composure and finally asks, “So what are the conditions of this generous offer then?”
Bellamy holds his gaze and says, “Get us into hell and back out.”

Roan’s gaze is hard, contemplative, but even all the composure in the world can’t hide the flutter of his lashes. If she stares hard enough, she thinks she can see the burnt wings behind his back twitch in surprise. Clarke focuses, wants to see if he is starting to puzzle it all together.

“You want to go to hell,” he repeats slowly. “Why?”

“I left something there on my last visit,” Bellamy quips with a sneer on his face.

“For how long?”

“A day.”

“In earth days, or hell days?”

“Earth days.”

“So you want me to bring you—” his hand waves over Bellamy, who cuts in.

“And Clarke.”

Her hand clutches around itself.

Roan’s brown arches and he strokes a finger across his hard set jaw. “I see.”

There. Clarke can see the wheels spinning in his head.

“So you want me to bring you two to hell under the pretense, I assume, to deliver the death-bringer to the queen, and after a day I’m supposed to bring you back,” Roan summarizes correctly.

“No pressure,” Octavia comments from Bellamy’s other side.

Clarke sees Bellamy give her a quick look before he replies, “I’m looking for an ally we can trust, not a parrot who repeats the things I tell him. Can you do it or not.”

“This is fool’s plan. A plan doomed to go wrong.”

She feels herself already losing hope but somehow the presence next to her, Bellamy’s presence still seems to be assured. His confidence is contagious.

“But you’ll come out victorious at the end of it. Think about a new era, without your mother’s shadow looming over you, without the shame of her banishment. You’ll be granted legal territories here on earth. You’ll be a king.”

“A king ruling over what’s left,” Roan snaps. “I don’t believe you will be delivering humans to our feet, no?”

“You’ll have to find something else to eat then,” Bellamy growls back, leaning forward in his seat. “Earth rules apply to everyone. No killing, no feasting, Roan. You will be counting yourself lucky to be on the upside when it’s done unless you want to get locked up with Naia. That can be arranged as well.”

For a long moment, Roan stares at him, icy and hard. Then he says, “I can take the girl. That will be less suspicious.”
Bellamy shakes his head. „We go together.“

„Then you’re a damned fool —“

„Can you get us both in, or not?“

„The entire place will be on high alert once death-bringer is in my mother’s hands, especially with you there,“ Roan says, „I can’t make any promises to get out both of you.“

„Then we’re done here,“ Bellamy announces, moving to get up, but Clarke grabs his wrist, catching his gaze.

I can go alone, she tells him silently even though it scares the ever living shit out of her. If the plan is more manageable that way, then I can go alone.

Bellamy stares back at her, and even without his voice in her head, she knows what the answer is going to be. You can’t go alone. It’s hell, not a trip to Target.

It’s just for a day. I know where the key is.

You know where, but not where to look. I’ve been there, I know hell. We only go together.

Bellamy, it’s our only chance. You can tell me where to look, prepare me, she pleads.

Bellamy looks away, and she sighs in frustration. She appreciates the sentiment, is even glad for it, but she also knows Roan was their only possibility to get the key and close hell. Without him, war is inevitable.

„What if someone less suspicious goes with her?“ Octavia suddenly asks. Everyone’s eyes land on her. „Say, Murphy? Another demon?“

„They know Murphy,“ Bellamy argues. „They’ll kill him on the spot.“

„They know you, too,“ Octavia says. „What about me?“

Roan taps his fingers against the smooth surface of the table. „He is right about this one. Murphy has no worth, he would be killed on sight to avoid further trouble. Bellamy, however…“

„I have a lot of information they would want,“ Bellamy provides. „And payback.“

Clarke swallows. The memory of what she showed her reappears in front of her eyes. That was hell. His personal, little hell.

Roan nods and turns to Octavia for a moment, „And you are the antichrist. They know your involvement with him. Know who hid you all these years. That would be just as suspicious.“ He turns back to Bellamy. „I can’t predict what will happen once I bring you in. It is a fool’s plan to go together."

„I don’t care. You’ll bring Naia Clarke, the person able to solve all of her heaven problems. I think that will be reason enough to lift your banishment. You will talk to her, convince her to wait a day or distract her with three dancing monkeys — whatever the hell you come up with. But you will get us out. If you’re not up to it, then this conversation is over.“

„You do know you’re taking a high risk and providing me with all this golden information, don’t you? For all you know, I could deliver you to my mother and walk away.“
„You'll walk to into your death.“ Bellamy’s voice is low and dangerous, sending a shiver up her arms. „I have an army of angels waiting for my commands. If you even think about betraying us, you and every single person you know will not come out looking pretty. Or alive.“

Roan regards Bellamy for a long moment before finally doing something like nodding. „You have me convinced."

„Then, it’s a deal?“

„It’s a deal,“ he says, „but I will need time. What you’re asking of me is not exactly a walk in the park."

Bellamy stands up, grunts. „Just don’t take too long. Your mother’s not the most patient demon in the world."

„I’m well aware.“ Roan crosses the room, and Clarke watches him, with a beating heart, let a knife appear in his hand. Before she has any time to say something, react, he cuts a long lash across his hand, holds out his hand to Bellamy and says, „We seal the pact with our blood."

However, what’s dripping out from the cut is not blood. At least, not blood Clarke’s used to. It’s black, slimy ooze that is, at the same time, ashy.

When Bellamy cuts his own hand, it’s not blood, nor demon gunk, but instead bright, flashing light. The same one she saw when he first showed her the training room.

And when they shake hands, both of their insides tangle and clasp together, creating a low, hissing sound. From the winces on their faces, it doesn’t precisely look pleasurable.

„I will contact you as soon as we are ready.“

Roan starts pulling away, but Bellamy grips his wrist. „If you betray us —“

„Don’t bother with threats, I—“

„If any of these people here,“ Bellamy’s gaze slides across the room, at Roan’s women, „even mention a word about this, I will send my worst soldiers upon you and make sure your death will take weeks."

Clarke sees Roan roll his eyes as he snatches his hand away, muttering, „You heard the angel“ to his helpers. „Now if you excuse me, I have the rest of my party to enjoy.“ He stops at the door to turn around, though. „We will all meet again very soon."

They get home when the sun starts to rise above the sea that can be seen from their balcony. Bellamy wanted to make sure nobody, really nobody, would see them leave, and especially not where to, so they teleported from spot to spot. All on their own. He also wanted to remove the memories of people that have seen them. That took time, too. Especially because the one person who now knows about the location of the key as well — Nikolai — vanishes without leaving any traces behind.

Clarke hopes it’s because he is smart and doesn’t want the wrath of the angels on him. Either way, Bellamy sent out two of his soldiers to look for him just to be sure.

The balcony. That’s where Bellamy finds her later, leaning against the railing, watching the first ray of sunshine breach the sky.
“Hey,” Bellamy says, placing his hand on her back for a moment as he slides in next to her, “you okay?”

Closing her eyes, Clarke lets out a sound that could mean anything, but she just lets her emotions wash over her and through the wall, to him, hoping he’ll understand.

After a moment, he murmurs, “I get it.”

She just smiles silently into her hands, relishing in the warmth and reassuring weight of his hand on her back. They lapse into a comfortable silence.

“I think I only realize now,” Clarke whispers eventually. “That we’re going to hell, I mean. It was finding anything in my head first, then figuring out what it means, making a plan, convincing the prince... but now. It’s real. We’re going to hell.” She turns to look at Bellamy, but he’s already looking at her. “I’m not — I — Months ago I thought the worst thing I could meet was an angel. Next week I might be seeing the devil.”

Bellamy swallows. His hand slides away from her back and touches her arm briefly, but she grasps it before he can take it away. She takes his hand, squeezing, and looks at him when she whispers, “I’m scared, Bellamy.”

He looks at her for a moment, wide-eyed. “I’m scared, too,” he says then.

Of course, he is. It’s kind of stupid to tell him this after what he showed her — after what he had to do in that very same place.

“I’m sorry, Bellamy. I—“

“Clarke, don’t. Don’t apologize. You’re a human and you will enter a place that’s not meant for —“ He shakes his head and lets out a small sigh that makes her squeeze his hand harder. “You’re doing far more than you should have to.”

“So, do you. Nobody asked you to take on the protection of the entire planet, yet here you are.”

He smiles a little. “I’m an angel. It’s my job.”

“Not everyone seems to think that way. Heaven doesn’t.”

“Well, heaven sucks, so.”

“Second that,” she snorts. “But I mean,” she gulps, glancing at Bellamy, “you must, sometimes, want things for yourself, right? You must have feelings, dreams, and wishes, but you’re still here doing the job.”

Bellamy looks at her. “Of course, there are things I want,” his eyes flick down for a second, “but those things can wait until the world isn’t at risk of being torn apart by a holy war.” He clears his throat, kind of awkwardly, and looks away.

She doesn’t know if she’s disappointed or relieved. Probably both with a tad of exhaustion.

Clarke huffs. “Isn’t there always some kind of war? Some sort of danger?”

“Well, the last twenty years were pretty decent.”

When she looks at him, there’s a grin on his face, almost boyish, which is a strange sight on an angel that is thousands of years old.
“I could use that,” she says, peering back into the distance. It looks so peaceful out there, so serene like if they just stayed here forever, nothing could touch them, like the flames wouldn’t reach this place.

She feels Bellamy straighten next to her. "And I should be the one apologizing. For the way I acted tonight."

Clarke glances at him, not having expected him to bring it up, but relieved he did. "Yeah? What was that about then?"

"I'm not sure myself," Bellamy meets her gaze and even though she would never call him a liar, it feels like it’s not the entire truth either, "sometimes I push people away when they see too much of me."

She raises her brow.

"And you did see a lot, Clarke."

"Well, you don't have to," she finally says, "because I'm not going to turn away no matter how ugly things turn out to be." For a moment it looks like his lips are trembling ever so slightly, so Clarke adds, "And you're forgiven" and they both laugh a little, ducking their heads.

Eventually, Bellamy touches her shoulder and says, „You’ll get your peace, Clarke. We go to hell, we find the key, and I promise, no matter what, I'll get you out of there.“

He leaves her on the balcony, his words echoing through her mind. Clarke believes him. If anyone will manage to get her out of hell, it's Bellamy. Yet somehow the words aren't as comforting as they should be.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you guys for over 300 Kudos and your lovely comments under each chapter! I honestly never thought this story would reach more than half of this, but I'm so happy that there are people that like it as much as I do writing it! I'm still busy at the moment but I'm working on the next chapters and hope it won't take thaat long since very, very exciting things are ahead!
The days after are busy, everyone thrumming with anticipation and dread of what’s to come, everyone on high alert.

When Roan told them he would get in touch with them soon, he didn’t specify when. Clarke doesn't blame him since she can imagine the amount of time it takes time to formulate a plan to get an angel and the most wanted human in all three planes into hell and out of it. However, it means he could pop up at any time. Tomorrow. In a week. Or next month. And that is agonizing.

So Bellamy’s mood isn’t exactly merciful. He chases Clarke from one training with Octavia to another with Lincoln, and tops it off with training with him.

Clarke grunts as she blocks his sword. If she thought Octavia was ruthless before, then she didn’t know what Bellamy was like on edge.

“I have weaknesses. “ Bellamy attacks, backing her into a corner “Find them.”

She holds his sword, but doesn’t see the other one coming and her own clatters to the ground, her back against the wall. ‘That’s easy to say when you’re a perfect angel, “she hisses with the sharp point of his sword pressed against her neck.

“No one’s perfect. “

“You guys are. Especially when it’s you against me. I will never win.“

“The goal’s not to win but to stay alive long enough.” Bellamy shakes his head and releases her. “At the beginning of… time, I wasn’t what I am now. Few of us were. I was a mere foot soldier, Jasper, too, Raven and Monty were only fabricators. Our strength and power were limited but grew with the wars and difficulties we had to face. So will you. “

Clarke nods, remembering what Bellamy told her about angels and their complex ranks and orders. Foot soldiers are the angels guarding over towns, their powers focused on defense and overseeing areas. Whereas fabricators specify on building and creating matter. If she’s correct, it’s the eighth and fifth rank.

“That’s great for you, but I don’t have any of your shiny powers,” Clarke grumbles. “Besides,” she wiggles her sword from side to side, “I don’t think there will be a lot of sword fighting in hell.”

“You’re right.”

Oh, wow. She didn’t expect to hear that.

“Demons use different techniques. Time to focus on that.”
Clarke’s still musing about what he will do that Octavia didn’t already torture her with when she feels darkness rippling through the room. The shadows in the corner, on the floor, behind him start to grow. Slowly, steadily. She looks around, takes a step back. “What is this?” she asks Bellamy.

“You know what it is.”

Demonic powers. She remembers them from the time Emerson chased them through Arkadia with these shadow monsters. Black, slimy figures emerge from behind Bellamy. Clarke tries to gulp down the knot in her throat.

“How can I defend myself?”

With that, the shadows evaporate, leaving behind only particles of dust and darkness as Bellamy nods to her and heads for the shelf with the weapons. “I’m going to show you something.”

Clarke follows and watches him take out a small metal box. When he places a hand on it, she hears a little click, and it flies open.

Inside she sees a silver ring with a round surface that has a … a pentagon carved on it — a symbol that her people often paint on walls and floors for protection from demons.

“This is the seal of Solomon,” Bellamy says and takes out the ring.

“Solomon?”

“The Jewish king?” he tells her like it’s something she should know. Clarke raises her brows. “You know, from the bible?”

“Bellamy, nobody reads the Bible. Most of the books were burned a long time ago, and people were punished for owning exemplars.”

“Right,” Bellamy sighs, “I always forget that it’s not a thing anymore. But, you see, centuries ago many people used to read the Bible, the Koran, the Torah — their religion’s manuscripts, and there were old stories, and a few of them had king Solomon in it, who this ring belonged to.”

“Okay. Does this have something to do with my defense, or are you just in the mood for storytelling?”

“Do you ever let people finish, Clarke dear?”

“So it does lead somewhere?”

“Yes. Patience. As I was saying, it belonged to the king, and it was given to him by God himself as a measure of protection against demons. It can… control them if you will. Because of its power lots of people have tried to get their hands on it, have fought and died for it, but our siblings eventually managed to recover it and keep it safe from unworthy hands.”

And then he holds out his hand with the ring on it to her. Clarke shoots him a skeptical look.

“You want to give it to me?”

“Yes.”

“But I’m… “The words stutter in her throat. Some deeply rooted urge makes her reach out and trace the weapon with her fingers. “There’s a reason why you hid it for so long.”
“People wanted to use it for their own good, for their greed and hate, to be able to control demons. I know that you won’t do that.”

Clarke blinks at him. “How? What if I am evil?” She’s responsible for so much pain and death that she feels like she fits the description.

“I saw your soul, Clarke. I know that you aren’t,” he replies without blinking. Then he looks down where their hands meet and slowly takes the ring to press it against her finger until she nods and slides it on. “Its power is great, the temptation even greater, but I think that you’re strong enough to withstand it.”

Nothing changes once the ring is on. If there’s a distant feeling pressing for more control in her chest, Clarke blames the placebo effect.

She lets out a breath. “So what can it do?”

“You can’t exactly kill demons with it, but you can send them back to hell. Your word—or thought—is their command.”

“But then I could theoretically tell every demon to go back to hell, couldn’t I?”

“It’s not that simple. It only works on demons in your surroundings, in your vision. And once you’re out of reach, they can try to crawl out of hell again.”

“Oh,” Clarke says with a disappointed sigh. For a moment, it seemed so easy, but that’s not how life works. Then she frowns and asks, “So when we’re in hell, will I be able to use it?”

“Yes, but you’ll have to do it very carefully. If Nia suspects you have it, she’ll do everything in her power to get rid of it.”

“It’s so obvious, though,” she points out and shows him her fingers. “They’ll see it.”

However, Bellamy graciously covers her own hand with his own, and once he releases it, the ring is gone. No, it’s not gone, it’s invisible.

“The ring won’t come off,” he adds, “not if you don’t want to. It’s now a part of you.”

Clarke gulps, staring at her bare fingers. Then she glances to Bellamy, raising her brow. “Technically speaking, I can control Murphy now, right?”

Bellamy’s smile is amused, but there’s also a hint of graveness in there that makes her feel a little wrong. “Yeah, but Clarke. It’s a serious invasion of privacy, even if it’s just Murphy. I suggest being careful with it.”

Clarke asks some more detailed question, and Bellamy answers them without any complaints before they call it quits for today.

“So I’ve been thinking,” she announces wiping her sweaty face with a towel when they leave the training room.

Bellamy clutches a hand to his chest in an over-dramatic and totally not funny way. “That can’t be good.”

“Shut up! “She slaps his chest, but the laughter is unmistakable in her voice. “I’m serious.”

“You always are. What is it?”
“Is there any contact with humans at the moment? To politicians, leaders, presidents?”

Bellamy glances at her as they walk up the stairs to the foyer. “Define contact. We do have human contacts for emergency cases, but right now there’s no scheduled meetings or anything of this sort.”

“Then there should be,” she says with a shrug. “We have a plan, but in case it doesn’t work out we — they — the human world needs a Plan B. They deserve to know what might happen.”

Bellamy stops when they reach the kitchen, crossing his arms.

Clarke prepares for the worst. For him to tell her how stupid this idea is. That there’s nothing, they humans can do. But she also hopes that Bellamy will be Bellamy and will surprise her.

“Who exactly are you thinking about? There’s not only one leader in this world.”

Letting out a breath of relief, she starts thinking, a plan already formulating in her head. “Let’s start with the politics in Arcadia, the ones we’re already familiar with. Then I would approach the areas closest to the gates of hell since they will be the first to be overrun. If we don’t… don’t succeed.”

“Alright.”

“Alright?”

“Yeah,” he says, frowning slightly. “Are you ready to go?”

Clarke slips out of his range so that he has no chance of touching her and whisking them away to very important leaders.

“You’re always immediately ready to go! “she complains as she checks the fridge for any possible food. “Don’t you have anything to do first? Leadership responsibilities? Angel armies to run?”

“I’m willing to push them off for a while for important things.”

“Well, push this off for a while! I need something to eat first, and time to figure out what to say exactly, what to tell them. “She grabs a strawberry yogurt and sits down at the table while Bellamy’s leaning against the doorway, regarding her curiously. “I have to think off a sensible way to tell the human race the queen of hell is out to get them all again. Appearing there and saying hey yo y’all might die if this nearly impossible suicide mission of ours doesn’t succeed isn’t gonna cut it. Things like this take time, Bellamy.”

“You always think so much,” Bellamy says with a strange smile on his lips.

She finds herself blushing looking at that curve of perfect lips, so she trains her gaze on her spoon.

“Well, that’s what you do when you use your head.”

“You trying to say I’m not using my head?”

“I don’t know what you’re using,” she mutters and shoves a spoonful of yogurt into her mouth.

“My head and heart cooperation is just fine nowadays. Besides, we could have eaten out there, too. There are these things called restaurants, you know.”

Clarke shoots him a half-hearted glare and says, “I’m aware. I just, um… I don’t know if that’s a good idea after…“ Her voice breaks off, unable to formulate what she means. That it scared the shit out of her to be among humans in case they might get caught in the crossfire again.
Bellamy looks at her for a moment, then understanding dawns on him, and he seems to stiffen as well. Maybe it’s because of their telepathy bond, or maybe just because he’s learned to read her by now, but she’s glad he understands without her having to voice these stupid fears.

“It would be safe restaurants, warded, of course.” He scrubs a hand across his face. “But you’ve already eaten, so it doesn’t matter.”

Clarke just shrugs. “Yeah, whatever.”

“How long do you need?”

“Give me two hours.”

“Alright. Two hours, then I meet you here?”

“Yep. It’s a date.” Realizing what she said, Clarke frowns, shaking her head. “I mean…”

Bellamy arches a brow.

“Forget it,” she says and jumps up from the chair to throw away the empty yogurt and place her spoon in the dishwasher before scurrying out of the kitchen, past a very puzzled looking Bellamy.

In her room, Clarke gets a laptop and curls up on her bed. She debates who exactly they should try to approach for a few moments, then decides on Arkadia’s politicians, and looks up the necessary information. She makes notes on different, sensible ways of coming off as non-threatening and believable. Since Clarke doubts angels will have a particularly good reputation — no matter if a lot of them live among Arkadia’s humans — it won’t be easy. But with a little sensibility and strategy, it might just work.

One hour and forty-eight minutes have passed when Clarke trots back into the kitchen to grab another quick snack before they set off. Bellamy isn’t there yet, but Raven is.

“You look… serious,” Raven says, eyeing the sleek black pants Clarke’s wearing, along with the white blouse, and her hair that’s combed back into a high ponytail.

“Really? Good, that’s what I was aiming for.”

“Why?”

“Bellamy and I are going to talk to some human politicians.” She fishes out a sandwich from the fridge and adds another two slices of tomato to make it juicier. “You know, in case hell doesn’t work.”

Raven crosses her arms. “It will work. I’m working on some special designs that will help you down there.”

“Designs?”

“You’ll see.”

Clarke shrugs. “Still. There has to be a backup plan, and people have a right to know. I would have liked to know if I wasn’t here.”

Raven looks at her for a moment, but before she can say anything else, another voice cuts through the room.
“That’s why we’re going to pay a visit to — “Bellamy’s eyes slide to Clarke.” — who exactly, Clarke, dear?”

Her cheeks burn with the clearly ironic pet name, but she pushes it down and focuses on the matter at hands. “Marcus Kane, head of Arkadia’s council, “she provides.

“Oh, I know him.”

“You do?”

Bellamy shrugs. “We’ve been living here for almost twenty years. Introductions had to be made at some point.”

Twenty years. Another, new information about the seemingly endless life of all these angels around her that Clarke stores in her mind.

“Of course. Yeah. “She nods more often than needed. After another few seconds in which Bellamy and Raven look at her, at each other and then back to her Clarke finally says, “Are we ready?”

Bellamy nods and stretches out his arm, glancing at her. “Shall we?”

Clarke’s not sure what prompts her to grab his hand, but she does. To be fair he never stretched out his arm either before, she usually just touched it, or he touched her shoulder or something simple as that, but here she is, holding his hand and it’s too late to retreat because that would make it weirder than it is. There’s a moment of inner panic swirling up inside her stomach before the world tilts and shifts around them and then they’re standing somewhere outside, lean, white buildings around them.

“Where exactly are we?” Clarke asks, untangling their hands awkwardly.

“Arkadia’s capitol building.”

“Have you been here before?”

“Yeah, a few times.”

“How did that go?”

Bellamy makes a face at her. “They weren’t particularly fond of me.”

“Can’t imagine why,” Clarke says with a teasing smirk as they make their way up the stairs that lead up to the capitol building.

Bellamy lets out a huff of breath next to her and says, “You aren’t fond of me? I’m wounded, princess. Really.”

“I’m just saying it took me a while,” she shrugs, “and I don’t think you spent months on end with Marcus Kane or any other council members until they started liking you.”

“I was perfectly decent and charming,” he retorts. “I don’t get why it took you so long to see that.”

Clarke shakes her head, although there’s a persistent smile creeping up on her face. “You just popped in when you felt like it and treated everything like it was a joke.”

“Yeah, well, Finn was pretty funny.”

Something in her twists at that. The memory of Finn, and what she felt like back then hitting her
harder than expected. She looks at the steps beneath her feet. “Everyone said you were this terrifying, cruel angel. What I was supposed to think?”

“Did I behave like a terrifying, cruel angel?”

Clarke purses her lip. “Well… you did drag me into that demon mess and let him play around with me before revealing he was a demon in a grand showdown finale. Who was he anyway? Why was he so angry?”

Now it’s Bellamy’s turn to look away, his Adam’s apple bobbing as he swallows. “Unfinished business.”

She looks at him and raises a brow. “Unfinished business? That’s it?”

“It was…” They arrive at the top of the stairs. Three guards are standing along the wall, but none of them move upon seeing them, don’t even flinch. Statues. Bellamy turns to Clarke, a sigh escaping him. “There was an incident where a lot of… things got killed. Humans, angels, demons. Emerson never got over it. Look, this —”

“I get it,” Clarke cuts in, placing a hand on his arm. “This isn’t the right time, and you don’t need to tell me.”

“I want to. But yeah, wrong place, wrong time.”

She gives a small smile, which he returns before they both look at the entrance. “Do we just go in? What if we need an appointment?”

Bellamy closes his eyes for a second. “Now we have one.”

Clarke rolls her eyes. “Always cheating.”

“It’s for the greater good. Doesn’t that count for anything?”

“I suppose it does,” she says with a half smile, half sigh before they enter the building.

However, as soon as they step inside a very shrill and incredibly annoying alarm goes off. Clarke frowns but when she glances at Bellamy he actually squeezes his eyes shut like he’s in pain which means it must have a very different effect on him. Or on angels, in general.

Mere moments later a bunch of people dressed in heavy armory appear, all of them looking grim and ready to shoot at first sight. They don’t, though.

This is new, Bellamy privately shares with Clarke as he musters the soldiers and says, “No need for all these guns, boys. We have an appointment.”

“Bellamy, right?” someone’s voice rings out and a man in an elegant suit and eagle eyes pushes through his mean. In comparison to the others, he doesn’t look scared or wishing to kill them on sight. He doesn’t look any less lethal, though, as he reaches out a hand to Bellamy.

Bellamy nods, shaking it. “Yes, we met two years ago.”

“I remember.”

“We have an appointment,” Clarke says.

Kane’s gaze cuts to her, observing. “And what’s your name?”
“Clark Griffin.”

“Unless my secretary forgot to mention it, I don’t think you do,” he replies and gives her a seizing smile, “but I’m sure I can make time for such special guests. Follow me.”

“That’s most generous of you, thanks,” Bellamy drawls, sarcasm dripping in his voice. Clarke pinches his arm. They fall into step beside the governor. Bellamy eyes the men following them at a safe distance. “That’s some heavy guarding you have here.”

Kane nods. “Well, you are powerful beings.”

Bellamy snorts quietly.

*What’s going on?* Clarke asks him.

_They have angel proof wardings all around here. Enough to stop most angels from entering._

_Not you, though,* she notes.

_Yeah, makes one think what exactly I have inside me, huh?*_ She detects more than just amusement in his voice Uneasiness. Confusion. The weight of not knowing what you are. _I was able to enter, but they still knew I was an angel. And my little trick to get an appointment didn’t work._

*Sucks to play by the rules, doesn’t it?*

*Can’t imagine how you deal with it all whole time.*

After a long hallway and two sharp turns, Kane leads them into an office where they sit down at his desk. The men remain outside. Kane folds his hands and offers a polite smile. “What brings you here today?”

He looks at Bellamy, but Bellamy makes no move to speak, instead giving the lead over to Clarke who accepts it with a short breath. “We bring important news,” she says and proceeds to tell Arkadia’s governor about everything. Naia’s plan to reopen hell. The key. Heaven’s plans. All of it, except for her own role in it and the precise information surrounding their plan to recover it.

When she’s done, Kane leans into his opened palm, his face unreadable. “This is disturbing news, yet not surprising.”

Clarke supposes that’s a... good sign. It’s always better to be prepared than to be hit by surprise. With a nod, she says, “It is, but as I mentioned we are doing everything in our power to stop the key from being found.”

“And how exactly are you planning to do that?”

Clarke glances at Bellamy for guidance, momentarily unsure what to reveal. His look says something as go on, you know what to say. Maybe he actually tells her. His voice has become so familiar and integrated into her brain that it’s hard to keep it apart from her own thoughts these days.

“We can’t disclose any information without risking the entire operation,” she replies eventually. “But we are working on it as hard we can.”

Kane looks skeptical. “That’s not very reassuring. We have to take safety precautions.”

“Obviously,” she agrees. “That’s why we are here. In case our plan fails, there has to be a back up one. You deserve the right to know what could happen.”
“I appreciate hearing that.”

Now Bellamy joins the conversation. “We can send you some of our own for some protection and weaponry against the supernatural. “His smile crooks sharply ever so slightly. “Although I have a feeling you already have that under control.”

“The world is changing, Mr. and Mrs. Griffin, “Kane says with an idle shrug. Clarke frowns at the names but doesn’t comment on it. “Your kind has not been fair in the last few centuries. We had to take measures of defense and protection. And now, with a newly brewed war coming along… it only proves we were right in doing so.”

“How did you learn, If I may ask?”

“We, too, can’t disclose any more information than necessary. Just know that we have other beings on our side.”

They discuss some appointments and conditions for another hour. When they leave the capitol building the sun is already setting behind the sea in the distance, creating a breathtaking sight.

“Did he sound sketchy to you? “Bellamy asks as they trot down the stairs.

Clarke frowns. “A little. I didn’t know we people have any kind of defense. But you might just be paranoid because they had wardings against you.”

“It was powerful stuff, Clarke. Not every supernatural being can power something like back there up.”

Looking at him, she asks, “What are you thinking?”

“I’m thinking they are smart, but I’m hoping they weren’t stupid enough to deal with demons to protect themselves from angels.”

“We can only wait and see.”

“Yeah, I’ll have Raven and Miller keep a close eye on it. “Then his eyes fall on her. “And you. I assume you want to be in charge of this entire alliance?”

“Not necessarily in charge, “Clarke mutters, rubbing her arms, “just aware with what’s happening around me. As long as you don’t keep me in the dark, I’m fine with it.”

“Don’t worry, princess. You’ll know everything.”

Back at home, Raven, Monty, Harper, Murphy, and Emori are preparing dinner when they come back. The sight of them crowded in the kitchen is like watching a spectacle. Ingredients are flying through the air, a blazing blue fire is burning above Emori’s opened hand, Monty and Jasper look like they’re about to blow up the stove.

Once upon a time, Clarke would have shuddered at the sight. Now she’s delighted.

Bellamy easily slips into the mess, offering to help Raven with the salad. Clarke joins Harper as she decorates the plates with food.

There’s a moment where a piece of lettuce falls to the floor because of the rustling of wings. Nobody notices except for Murphy who lazily lounges in the seating area, and Clarke who watches him.

And at that moment she feels the sudden urge to test out the ring around her finger. She would just
make him pick it. Surely that wouldn’t be too bad, right?

Holding her breath, Clarke gives the silent command: *pick up the lettuce*. She stares incredulously as Murphy bends down to pick it up. There’s a small frown between his brows like he’s asking himself why he did that and Clarke wonders if he felt the interference from the outside.

A feeling of satisfaction and power floods her, and she has to tear her eyes away at the urge to do more, command more.

Bellamy was right. The temptation is great.

Glancing over to him, Clarke sees that his eyes are already on her. She swallows and looks away.

She can resist. If Bellamy believes she can do it, then she has to believe it, too.

Aside from the seal of Solomon, they come up with another plan to survive the day in hell and find the key. A thing that involves her thoughts and training with Bellamy yet again. Not that she’s complaining.

They all warned Clarke that besides torturing the location of the key out of her, Nia will probably try to get into her head. Just like Bellamy did weeks ago. And since Clarke is now well aware of this information, the queen of hell will most likely succeed, and the world will burn.

So that’s where the plan comes in.

“It’s possible to create a false memory,” Bellamy says, sitting across from her in the training hall, “so that when Nia goes into your head, she will find exactly what we want her to find.”

Clarke scowls. “That’s really possible? She won’t know I made it up?”

“Not if we work on it long enough. That’s why we have to start as soon as possible.”

“Okay,” she says with a firm nod, “so how do we do this?”

“Start by creating something in your head that’s not a memory.”

Clarke tries, *really* tries to imagine something that she never experienced before, but it’s like somebody shut off the part of her brain that’s responsible for imagination. All she comes up with are her dreams, memories, and thoughts, but nothing new or different. She grits her teeth in frustration.

Apparently, Bellamy senses her failure since he asks, “Nothing?”

“No, I… — nothing.”

“Don’t tell me you never daydreamed or fantasized about something?” His brow quirks suggestively. “Or someone?”

Clarke’s frown turns into a glare. Of course, she has. That’s not the problem. The problem is her lack of focus.
She grunts out a nod and watches him close his eyes for several seconds before he motions his hand and says, “Walk towards me.” And by that, he probably means walking towards his end of the line that they somehow seem to share in their heads.

Closing her own eyes, Clarke finds herself in front of her own massive walls before she starts going in the opposite direction, following the long, dark tunnel that leads her to him. Somewhere along the way, she feels his presence approach. They meet in the middle. And then she’s entering the series of images he’s showing her.

Stormy waves. Sand. The feeling of warm wind on the skin.

The vision clears completely, and they’re at the beach. Clarke looks down to sun-kissed, broad arms to her sides — Bellamy’s arms — and they’re wet with sand. She lifts her head to the sea and a feeling of warmth, thick and bruising, spread in her — his — chest. And then she sees herself, coming out of the water, body and hair wet. Clarke’s wearing a very revealing piece of swimwear, that doesn’t do much to cover up her cleavage. Her own face is lit up in a grin as she approaches herself or rather Bellamy. Arriving, she shakes her hair before bending down to pick something up from the bags spread next to their towels. The last piece of the image she sees is the back of her own ass, and the words Bellamy’s biggest fan printed on her swimsuit.

Clarke tears open her eyes, half gasping, half huffing. “That never happened! “

“No, it didn’t, but I made it up, and it felt real, right?”

“Yes,” she whispers, still astounded, “it was like a memory. I was so sure it was all happening.”

“That was the point.”

“Doesn’t mean you’re not a pig.”

“I thought the view was nice.”

She shakes her head.

“Your turn. You can do it, too, I know you can.”

Taking a deep breath, she lets eyes fall shut again.

Bellamy’s voice goes on, “Try picturing something easy, but nothing you saw before. Like me, not looking handsome.”

“Oh, because that’s never happened before, huh?”

“Has it?”

She hates the heat that crawls up her skin. No blushing, Clarke tells herself, no flustering because of his usual, insignificant flirtations, no distractions.

However, what she conjures up in her mind could definitely be considered as beating Bellamy at his own game.
“Come. Look,” she murmurs, stifling an excited grin.

Moments later she feels his never-ending presence softly scrape at her walls, and Clarke allows him in. She is right there with him when he watches what she made. What she dreamed of specifically for Bellamy.

It’s a picture of him in front of Clarke, *on his knees*. His mouth is wound up in the usual smirk he never fails to give her, but there’s also a softness to it, something he rarely ever shows her. And then he kisses her above her feet, across her knees, farther above on her thighs, and —

Clarke ends the vision as fast as she came up with it and prepares a sweet, innocent smile for Bellamy. He returns to her a considerable amount of time later, the same exact grin curling at the corners of his mouth, but even through every defense in his body, Clarke still notices the way his hand clenches.

Her whole mind triumphs at the sight.

“You’re getting better,” he says.

“Thank you.”

“But I thought of something less realistic because this wasn’t —“

“It was unrealistic because it will never happen.”

“Of course,” Bellamy replies and shrugs, “but it was a good start. Pretty detailed. Shows just how important it is to work on the fantasy, long and intensively.”

Biting her lip, Clarke raises her eyes to the ceiling and prays for the father above that vanished a long time ago to return just to smack his son’s insufferable head. After a few seconds of calming her thundering heart, she manages to look him in the eye without feeling like his smooth gaze is going to set her on fire. “Let’s get to work.”

Together, they come up with a bunch of misleading, false information that will help them get the key when they are in hell. They work on it for hours, working out every detail, every emotion and sense that comes with a memory, so that when Nia finds it, it’s believable. It’s simple enough, but the more difficult part is hiding it Clarke’s head. It has to be obvious enough that Nia can find it, but hidden enough that she won’t suspect anything. If Clarke fails to create that golden mean, their plan will be doomed to fail.

When they secure the information somewhere far away in her brain, Clarke agrees to let Bellamy test it. He pierces through her wall and looks for it. Every time it feels like fusioning her soul with Bellamy, letting herself melt with his own mind. It never ceases to be less overwhelming than the first time they did this, but he still manages to be gentle, like a soft brush of his fingertips against her mind.

After what feels like days, Clarke lets herself fall back against her gym mat, her hair spilling behind her. She closes her eyes. If she doesn’t focus hard enough, it almost feels like the memories they created are real. That’s how much time they invested in it. The edges between lies and reality are blurrier than ever.

“You okay?” she hears Bellamy before there is a sound of shifting, and he is lying next to her.

Clarke glances at him.
Bellamy. Somehow, over the course of the past months, this person — this angel and creature of light and darkness, went from being someone Clarke considered a threat, an untrustworthy asshole that likes to play around with humans, to being a friend, an ally, someone she trusts with her life and her entire soul. In fact, she doesn’t think she ever trusted someone as much as she trusts him. Not her father, or mother. Not even Wells. Clarke loves — loved — them with all her heart, but they didn’t know her like that, not like Bellamy.

They went through so much together. Bellamy saw her when she first arrived in Polis, broken from her father’s death, and furious. He was there when Clarke realized all those deaths were linked to her. And she was there when Bellamy fought Emerson — something that was haunting him from his past. He came for her in heaven, even though she had shunned and insulted him a week before. Still, he came. Bellamy always does, somehow. And he never stopped putting all his energy and effort into… supporting Clarke. After her time in heaven, she stopped caring about a lot of things she gave up. Not Bellamy, though. He never did. He dragged her to training, to the city, to balls, and somewhere along the way Clarke stopped trying to resist. Somewhere along the way, she started feeling.

Clarke is probably staring, and Bellamy’s mouth quirks up. “What?” he asks. To her astonishment, he sounds flustered, and Clarke has to look away because of the nervous twitch of something in her guts. A flutter of wings. A loss of breath.

“I —” she starts and swallows, squeezing her eyes, “I’m sorry I was such a bitch.”

“I thought you were quite pleasant today.”

“No, I mean when we first met and the months after that. All you ever did was help me, and I never thanked you for it. I was always so... mean.”

There’s a moment of silence, before he says, “As you said. All I ever did was pop in whenever I felt like it and treated everything like a joke.”

Now, Clarke shoots him a look. “Yeah, but you still saved my ass countless times.”

“It’s not easy being a human in a world full of angels.” He shrugs.

“Just accept the compliment, Bellamy. Is it that hard?”

“I’m just saying —”

“Bellamy.”

“Fine.” He sighs. “You’re welcome, princess.”

Clarke smiles, he returns it, and for a few seconds, that’s all there is in the world. Bellamy and her, lying on the floor of a gym and grinning at each other like children. Just two kindred souls. Maybe if they were normal, if he was just a twenty-something-year-old boy who liked to show off and be grumpy and whose heart was so big it could fit the entire world in there, and maybe if Clarke was just a young girl who loved to draw and help people and who liked him, then perhaps this would lead to something. A kiss, maybe. Sex. A relationship. Perhaps she wouldn’t be scared of her own mind sometimes, or craving to find out what it is that makes her so important to all of heaven, or hateful for herself. Maybe she could love.

But it’s not like that.

Clarke is a person of interest for heaven and hell, responsible for a lot of dead people, and something
she does not even comprehend yet. Bellamy is ancient and probably far too old, wise and busy to feel anything but pity and normal friendship for Clarke.

It’s impossible. Wasting any sort of thoughts on it is redundant. Reaching this conclusion, Clarke turns away from Bellamy and sits up. Whatever it was that was just between them, whatever charge they set off, vanishes in mere seconds. All she’s left with is an empty chest and nothing good to say.

It’s Bellamy who breaks the ice eventually. “You should get some rest. It’s been a long day.”

Clarke overrides her own rule and looks back at him. He’s still lying on the floor, one hand behind his head, his wings resting softly on the ground. They look so fluffy. Some of them a little rough around the edges, and it takes everything to not reach out and slide her hands through them.

Swallowing down that urge, she scrambles to her feet. “Yes. Right. I’m gonna — uh, I’m gonna do just that.”

Before he can say anything else, Clarke hurries out of the gym. Bellamy doesn’t call anything after her, nor does his voice fill her mind. She shouldn’t be so disappointed and yet…she is.
Clarke spends the evening curled up on the couch showing Raven and Harper old movies that defined her childhood. Later Emori and Murphy join them, and at last, Bellamy flops down on the armchair next to Clarke, too. But she doesn’t acknowledge his presence.

It’s funny. All these months spent with Bellamy and his flirtations and Clarke never thought anything of it, but all of a sudden one train of thought in the gym leads to her feeling all… jittery and scared. Clarke doesn’t know what exactly this is because it was different with Finn, but then again Finn was something entirely else. It was not the same with the people from her old life either. She was never so scared to lose any of them. But what she’d felt for anyone else never felt so deep either, never like this.

Looking at Bellamy sitting there, head slightly cocked to the side as he watches the screen and huffs now and then… it feels like her heart will stop beating at any moment from contracting so tightly. Because when Clarke sees him, something in her flutters and twists and blooms. Something in her yearns for the person that saved her so many times, for the person that made her smile secretly in the darkest moments, the person that offered her his hand and gave her something she’d never even dreamt of. Her entire being craves his touch, whether it’s his angelic grace or just the rough feeling of his hand on her arm. Clarke looks at him, and she wants to give Bellamy precisely what he gave her. She wants to see what he’s made of, which memories haunt him the most, what makes him choke on air and what makes him rise and shine. Clarke looks at Bellamy, and it feels like she’s known him for a thousand years already, like their souls were somehow made of the same particles and dust, like he’s a part of her, etched into her blood vessels and carved into her bones.

Bellamy turns his head, and their gazes meet.

Maybe she was stupid enough to let her wall down. Perhaps he and the entire house just witnessed that ridiculous declaration of whatever it is that she’s feeling. And maybe she doesn’t care.

However, Bellamy doesn’t look shocked, nor do the others. He raises his brow minimally, quietly asking Are you alright? and Clarke can’t do anything else but nod.

Again, she wonders if he knows nonetheless. He was in her head. He knows everything. And as much as Clarke would like to pretend otherwise, this — these feelings for him have been there for a while now.

She liked Bellamy already when he took her to see her family and made the sight of the place where her dad died more bearable with his lame jokes and attempts to rile her up. She liked him when he took her flying, when he showed her how to train, when he entered her soul and not once looked away afterward. So perhaps Bellamy knows, has seen and felt it. And there are only so many reasons why he never mentioned it.
When the end credits of *Toy Story 2* start rolling, Clarke excuses herself to her room where she spends half of the night turning and twisting. The end of the days are near, she is about to go to hell with him, and instead, she worries about something as unimportant as romance and love. Life can be ironic sometimes.

Trying to sort out her feelings while preparing for hell at the same time turns out to be challenging because Clarke has to spend most of her days with Bellamy. Whether it’s physical training, exercises with the ring or the false memories. And it’s not exactly helpful to have him go through her head when she’s thinking about him like that.

It gets frustrating fast. One afternoon, after they’ve been trying to work on the memory for an hour without any good results, Bellamy blows out a breath and shakes his head.

„It’s not working. You aren’t focused, Clarke.“

There’s no use in denying it, so instead, she avoids his gaze, playing around with her shoelaces.

„Clarke,“ Bellamy tries again.

„I know, sorry, okay? I'm just not feeling well.“

„Are you ill?“ Before she can stop him, Bellamy reaches out and touches her temple, his skin burning against her forehead. Clarke’s eyes fall shut for a moment. „You’re not. What is it then?“

She swallows, still staring at the ground.

„Clarke, look at me."

Slowly she raises her gaze. It’s a mistake because once their eyes meet, Clarke feels like he can see right through her. As if the wall doesn’t exist. As if she’s an open book.

After a few seconds, she tears her eyes away and gets up, dusting off her leggings. „I — today’s not my day. Let’s move it to tomorrow."

He catches her arm before she can walk away, forcing her to look at him again. How Bellamy got up so inhumanely fast is beyond her.

„Don’t run."

Her brows furrow into a scowl. „I'm not running. I'm trying to clear my head!“

A shadow flickers in Bellamy’s eyes, something dark and more significant than this, as he blinks and lets go of her. „Right. Sorry.“ When she doesn’t say anything, he adds, „Whatever it is, don’t forget that Roan could come at any moment. We have to be ready."

„I know. I just…“ She shrugs helplessly, unable to explain without exposing herself.

„Do you want someone else to train with?“

Clarke stares up at him. „What?“

His shoulders tense. „I noticed you acting strange around me lately."

*Fuck. Oh shit —*
„Maybe it’s a good idea to do it with someone else. We’ve become too, uh, familiar with each other. Makes more room for mistakes.“

The thought of letting someone other than Bellamy in her head is terrifying But deep inside, Clarke knows that it is a good idea, even if his reasoning is different. She has to be one hundred percent confident in her memories. The whole world is depending on it.

„Yeah, okay;“ she finally says, albeit still frowning. „Maybe it will help.“

„Maybe;“ he echoes.

They both seem to look through each other for some time. Even though Bellamy was the one who suggested it, he doesn’t seem to happy about it either. His mouth stretches into a thin line; his wings tucked tightly in on his back.

Finally, she says, “Who should I ask?”

“That’s up to you. Who do you trust most with it?”

You. Only you.

“I don’t know. Raven, maybe? Lincoln?”

“I can talk to them.”

When he takes a step back, Clarke changes her mind, though. “Wait, no. Can Octavia do it as well?”

“Octavia?” he repeats, but nods. “Yeah, she can.”

“Then I’d like to train with her. She’s ruthless. She won’t hesitate to look for it, and that’s what I need.”

Bellamy looks at her for a few moments before nodding again. “Alright.”

“Alright.”

Without any warning whatsoever he disappears into thin air, and Clarke is left staring at the spot he was just standing in. It reminds her of their beginnings when he used to do that. It somehow hurts.

Octavia finds her two hours later in the backyard trying to meditate.

“You know there are more useful ways of spending your time before a near suicide mission to hell.”

Clarke lets out a sigh but keeps her eyes closed. “Your boyfriend actually suggested to me to do this.”

“Lincoln is too nice for his own good sometimes.”

“I think he’s a perfectly good balance between nice and serious. Besides, it helps.”

There’s a moment of silence. It gives Clarke the foolish hope that Octavia perhaps decided otherwise and not help her with false memories. What was she even thinking when she told Bellamy she wanted Octavia? It —
“So what about your boyfriend?” Clarke hears Octavia say eventually. Scowling, she opens her eyes.

“What?”

“Bell. Why did you suddenly decide against training with him?”

“Well, because he said — I mean we became too — didn’t he tell you?”

Octavia raises an unimpressed brow at her laughable attempts to explain the situation. “He just grunted something out about you needing someone strict and flew off.”

“Oh.”

“You’re always so terrible at this.”

Clarke frowns. “What do you mean?”

“Nevermind. So, false memories. Let’s get to work.”

With a discrete sigh, Clarke faces her and mentally prepares herself for the upcoming intrusion. Octavia doesn’t sit down; instead, she walks around, not too far away but so far that the invasion of Clarke’s mind feels surprising when it happens. Clarke resists at first just like Bellamy and her planned all this time, but after a while, she lets her through. Octavia’s presence feels a lot more different from Bellamy’s. Sharper. Harder. More aggressive. Despite her roughness, Clarke manages to show her the false memories, and when she opens her eyes eventually, Octavia lets out a low whistle.

“Good. Now stand up and do it while we’re sparring.”

Clarke accepts the stick Octavia presents her with, and then the match already begins. It’s a lot harder to focus on the mind work while having to fight at the same time. The first few times Clarke either lets the correct memories slip, or gets knocked down. It’s frustrating, disappointing, but Clarke knows it’s what she has to learn before they go to hell. It’s necessary.

After hours and hours of sweating and cursing, Octavia calls it a day. It’s when they walk up the stairs back to the house that she says, “I know why you didn’t want to train with my brother anymore.”

Clarke lets herself think about the term brother only a moment before replying, “Oh, really?”

“I saw the thoughts and feelings you harbor for him when going into your head. You are afraid he will see them, too.”

The thoughts and feelings you harbor for him. Somehow Clarke must have known a long time already, and yet the words out loud feel like a punch in the guts. Clarke stops mid-walking, swallowing hard.

“Is it so wrong?”

“Having these feelings or hiding them from him?”

“Both.”

“No, but don’t you think the truth would be much easier? Especially in times like these?”
“I’m not saying anything, especially because it’s times like these! We’re about to go to hell to avoid an apocalyptic war! There’s much more at stake than how I might feel about him. I don’t want any strain between us when we go there.”

“Clarke, you avoiding him is causing a much bigger strain than you telling him the truth ever would.”

Clarke shakes her head. “It’s not that easy, Octavia. He’s Bellamy. An angel, for god’s sake!”

“Like that would ever stop Bellamy.”

“Then why didn’t he ever say something?”

“Because — “ Octavia rolls her eyes, throws up her hands. “Because you’re both idiots.”

“Bellamy had someone once. An angel, right?”

For a moment, Octavia’s face contorts in surprise and irritation. Then, it smoothes out into a simple raise of her brows.

“He never told me about her,” Clarke continues, “I don’t know if it was his companion or not, if she’s still alive or not, if he even wants someone like that again or not. There’s so much I don’t know.”

“You’re making excuses. And about whoever that someone else was, she’s gone now. That’s all you need to know.” Before Clarke can retort anything else, Octavia shakes her head and walks up the stairs. Inside the house, she’s gone.

Another three days pass, and Clarke continues her merciless training with Octavia, but they don’t talk about Bellamy again. Clarke isn’t sure if she’s happy about it or not. Sharing her feelings with someone has never been her specialty. However, it was a relief to say some of it out loud, even if it was to Octavia. It would have been even better if Clarke had gotten some answers instead of more questions, but what else does she expect when her life is just a big series of question marks.

She doesn’t see Bellamy much around either. He is there at lunch and dinner with the others — although he misses a few as well — and when they talk, it’s tense and awkward and only about stuff that doesn’t matter.

On the fourth night, Clarke decides to do something to distract herself from her growing distance with Bellamy. It’s when everyone else has left the room after dinner and Murphy and Emori are the only ones left at the table, that Clarke says, “Can I ask you guys for a favor?”

The pair shares a look before directing their attention towards Clarke.

“What kind of favor?” Emori asks.

“Sorry, blondes are not my type,” Murphy says at the same time.

Clarke scratches her head, ignoring Murphy’s comment. “I want you guys to take me back to my hometown. I need to speak to my mom. To my best friend. You can take me there, Murphy. Right?”

He shrugs. “Sure.”

However, Emori sends her a puzzled frown. “Why are you asking us?”
“Why wouldn’t I?” Clarke asks, trying to come off as nonchalant as possible.

“Because that’s usually Bellamy-and-Clarke-business.”

“It is always you two,” Murphy agrees from the side.

“Yeah, but I’m friends with all of you, am I not? Besides, Bellamy’s probably busy anyway.” Which isn’t a total lie, Bellamy has been out and about the past two days, but the truth is that Clarke wants to do this on her own. Besides, Emori was the one who gave her the idea in the first place. It makes sense to ask her. Murphy can be their sidekick for today.

This argument finally seems to satisfy the pair. After Murphy stuffs another five croquettes into his mouth, he gets up, takes Emori’s hands and touches Clarke’s arm, and the world as it is twists and spins.

Unlike with Bellamy, this kind of teleporting feels way more unsteady and dangerous like trying to walk a thin wire twenty feet in the air. When she opens her eyes and finds herself in the street she grew up in, she’s still a little clumsy on her feet, head spinning.

Clarke touches her temple. “Is it always like this with you?” she asks Murphy.

“You won’t get Bellamy’s princess treatment with me.”

“Yes, babe, no one gets that from you,” Emori huffs in a dry voice, following Clarke to her house. “Not even me.”

“And you like that.”

The stifled grin on Emori’s face is answer enough. Clarke glances away from them, instead directing her efforts on finding the spare key under the doormat and opening the door.

When they enter, it’s silent. Her mother seems to be at work, just like expected. Clarke smiles slightly at her small victory.

“Should we come back later?” she hears Emori ask behind her.

Clarke turns around with a grin. “I think you will want to join me.”

“Join you in what?”

Her grin widens. “In finding out what I am.”

For a few seconds, Emori stares at her; then her face splits into a smirk. She claps her hands together and walks towards her. “I find this idea very intriguing.”

“Good. That’s what I wanted to hear.”

They go upstairs to her room and get to work. Clarke fishes out every painting she ever made, all of her sketchbooks and other stuff she used to doodle on. She even finds her birth certificate and her old diaries.

When it’s all spread out on the floor of her childhood bedroom Clarke turns to Murphy who has been laying on her bed and been remarkably quiet the entire time. “I need you to tell me about every kind of… supernatural being there is.”

Without a lot of hurrying, he sits up and lets out a sigh as if she just told him to run a marathon.
“That’s a lot of creatures.”

“Just tell me.” Clarke glances to Emori. “Or you. Do you know all the species, I’m not sure?”

“I do know a lot. Back when I studied to become a witch, it was pretty much required to have that knowledge. Not all there is, though. The world is a big place, Clarke.”

“Obviously, but I will take whatever I can get.”

This state of not knowing has been going for far too long. Clarke wants to know why she’s special, why she’s seemingly the only one able to find that damned key. And she’s tired of being clueless.

“Fine. There’s me, of course. Your token demon,” Murphy starts.

Clarke lets out a huff of breath. “Okay, but I’m not a demon.” She looks up to him, brows furrowed. “Am I?”

“When are you asking me?”

“Because you’re one. Shouldn’t you be able to recognize your kind?”

He squints his eyes at her. Clarke’s heart momentarily gallops at the crazy ideas rushing through her head, even if she knows it can’t be. Someone would have told her by now if she was a freaking demon.

It takes him an entire minute to say, “No, I don’t think you’re a demon.”

“How shocking,” Emori mutters beside her, looking through all the pictures around them and then at Clarke. “Let me list some. I’ll be faster than John.” Murphy makes a sound of protest at that. “So there are witches, but you have to practice to become one, and have some of it in your blood. I don’t think you are one.”

Two down, a hundred others to go. Great.

“There are vampires, werewolves, wendigos, … Although all these abilities are acquired in life. With you — we have to look for something you are born with. Psychics. Mediums. Something like that.”

“You forgot angels,” Murphy adds.

“Only useful information, John,” Emori says and waves him off while Clarke rolls her eyes at the same time.

“Don’t you think your… colleagues would’ve noticed if I was anything of that sort? Or you?”

Emori makes a face. “These kind of abilities aren’t like that. You can’t just see them.”

“I guess you’re right. I couldn’t sense Nikolai or those terrible ladies like angels or demons either.”

“Huh?”

Clarke blinks at her.

“Say that again,” Emori says.

“I couldn’t sense Nikolai and those women like angels or demons either?”
“You can sense angels or demons?”

“Yes? Kind of? I can… see their auras.” Clarke nudges her head towards Murphy. “I knew he was a demon when I first saw him. And I can see wings.”

“And you could always do that?”

“No, not really. I think it started after they — after I came back from heaven.”

“Hm.” Emori’s head whips to Murphy. “Do you think she could be a Nephilim?”

“A Nephilim?” Clarke echoes, disbelieving. “You mean the offspring from angel and human?”

“That.”

“No,” she shakes her head, frowning, “my parents are — I mean my dad was human, so was my mom. I can’t imagine that they could have kept something as big from me, and they never seemed fond of angels anyway. No one did.”

Emori waves an idle hand. “There are ways. You could’ve been adopted, or one of your parents might not be your biological —”

“No,” Clarke says again. The thought of her parents lying to her whole life makes her stomach turn violently. “Here,” she grabs her birth certificate, “I’m Clarke Abigail Griffin, daughter of Abby and Jake Griffin. Born on November first, 2599.”

That’s when Murphy chooses to add something to the conversation. “She’s right, babe. As a Nephilim, she’d have special powers.”

“She can see angels and demons and has a mysterious connection to the key. Doesn’t that count as powers?”

“Not really. Either way, Nephilim aren’t common in the community as far I know.”

“That doesn’t stop anyone, though,” Emori says, shaking her head. “You see, Clarke, relationships between angels and humans used to be forbidden, but with the years and the split fractions, rules and laws got abandoned. Nephilims are still rare, however. It’s not easy to bear one.”

“Like offspring between demons and humans,” Clarke says with a nod. “Like Octavia.”

“Yeah.”

“But that only proves I am not of this sort… As Murphy said, I would have powers.”

“That you know of.” Emori grabs a paper and shoves it into her face. “Here. Try to light it up.”

Clarke snorts.

“I mean it,” Emori says, waving it around.

Still looking dubious, Clarke slowly raises her hand, like she’s seen Bellamy do so many times, and focuses on the paper, on trying to let anything happen. It doesn’t. Again and again, she tries, but nothing aside from wind howling outside happens.

Finally, she lowers her hands and looks at her two friends. “See? Not working.”
Sighing, Emori throws the paper on the pile. “It can be different powers.”

“It’s always something different with me,” Clarke mutters, shaking her head. “I want some clear answers for once. What kind of being can see other angels and demons that’s not a demon?”

“Angels,” Emori and Murphy say at the same time.

Clarke snorts. “Yeah, right. I’m an angel. See those fluffy, white wings behind me that don’t exist? Total angel material. Watch me snap my fingers, too, and fly away from all this bullshit.”

Murphy only scoffs whereas Emori looks at Clarke with something like pity which is even worse. She came here to get answers, not to end up with even more. Cursing under her breath, she flops down on the floor and grabs a few of her paintings.

“We’ll find out eventually, Clarke,” Emori is saying as Clarke looks at the bizarre stuff she drew when she was a child. The path to nowhere which turned out to be the place that can lead you to hell. *Hell*. How could she know something like this as an eight-year-old?

The next one is a picture of a mountain, big and lonely, covered in spiky pine trees. It’s just a mountain, but Clarke can’t help but shiver at the sight. It feels wrong somehow. Maybe because it used to be the content of her nightmares — which she had a lot of.

Then there’s a more abstract painting, a mix of angry red and brown strokes. If Clarke squints enough, it looks like figures fighting against each other, but that’s probably just her subconscious stressing about the war that might happen, the war that might wipe out most of the human race yet again.

*Heaven*, Clarke thinks, *there’s so much at stake*. If she could just understand what all of this means. She looks at the last of her paintings. Wings. Not as majestic and glorious as Bellamy’s or the others’, but wings nonetheless. Apparently, she’s always had some connection to angels, but where does it come from?

Did her parents ever say something in the direction? Not really. Now that she thinks about it, Clarke rarely talked about what’s going on in their world with her parents. It was like all of them willingly ignored the big issue happening in front of all their noses.

*Almost a year before you were born, we saw a comet in the sky*, her father used to tell her. *Our neighbors insisted it was just a shooting star because nothing was ever found in the area where it came down, but it was so big, your mother and I were convinced it was a comet of some sort. A few weeks later, she found we were pregnant with you. Maybe it was a shooting star, after all, because our wish came true.*

That’s the only thing she remembers her parents saying about her birth and childhood. The things she remembers afterward are just warnings not ever to go outside alone, angry hisses to stop painting that blasphemous crap and then deep red symbols on her walls. Nothing about being adopted, or one of her parents being anything other than human. So where does that leave her?

She hasn’t seen Bellamy in two days when they nearly run into each other in the hallway. Clarke stops, staring up at him. Bellamy steadies her with his hand on her arm, but once he seems to realize what he’s doing his hand flashes away as fast a thunderbolt and Clarke’s swallows down her confusion.
“Hi,” she finally says.

“Hey.”

“I — I haven’t seen you in a while.”

Bellamy looks at her for a moment, and then all he says is a, “Yeah” before he slowly brushes past her and continues on his way to his room.

He’s ignoring me, she realizes with a jolt and springs into action, following after him. “Bellamy, wait.”

“What is it, Clarke? I don’t have much time.”

Pushing away the feeling of hurt at the coldness in his voice, Clarke forces herself to remain on his heels until they are in his room and she says, “You can’t do this.”

Finally, he turns around, brows knitted together in a frown. “What?”

“You can’t do this,” she shakes her head violently, “not when we are about to go on a suicide mission to hell. Not when we are supposed to be at our best. A team. You can’t give up on me now, Bellamy, because I need you, okay?” Her voice is dangerously close to breaking, and she hates herself for being like this, begging him for something she isn’t even sure of herself.

His eyes widen, and he takes a step towards her. Clarke looks at him.

“You think I’m giving up on you?”

“Aren’t you? You’ve been avoiding me all week. You just ignored me instead of talking to me.”

“Because I thought that’s what you wanted.”

The words come out in a rush, but they hit like a blow to her stomach, and Clarke sucks in a breath. “Why do you say that?”

“You didn’t want to train with me anymore —”

“That was your suggestion!”

“Yeah, because it didn’t work anymore. I thought it was because you didn’t want to do it with me anymore.”

“No, Bell, that was not — It’s me, not —”

“— you?” he finishes for her, puffing out a dry laugh. “Come on, Clarke, we both deserve better than this.”

She doesn’t know what to say to make it better. There is no easy way to explain that she wanted to put some distance between them to clear the feelings inside her that could make everything a thousand times more complicated than it already is. And she can’t say it. Not now. Possibly not ever. Bellamy’s an angel. He’s immortal. Clarke is just a twenty-year-old girl who is trying her best to survive.

“I’m going through a few things, alright,” she finally says quietly, staring at the ground. “I never meant to hurt you.”
Suddenly Bellamy’s hand is back on her arm, his touch sending a flood of electricity and warmth through her system. Clarke realizes how much she has missed him even though it’s been only days. How much she yearns for him never to stop touching, never stop liking her, never stop being there.

“Bellamy,” she starts.

“I’m sorry,” he says at the same time, looking miserable. His other free hand reaches out and strokes a strand of hair behind her air, making Clarke’s breath hitch. “I was a dick. I just — I thought you regret spending so much time with me, and it irritated me. I was hurt. And then I heard you visited your mom with Emori and Murphy and I…” He trails off, glancing away. After a moment, Bellamy retreats his arm as well, sliding it into the pockets of his pants.

Clarke’s heart twists inside her ribcage. “It wasn’t a secret. You weren’t there, so I asked them.”

“I know.”

“I thought I had to do it on my own.”

“Yeah… I know.”

“Are you mad because I didn’t tell you?”

“I’m not mad,” he says, voice gaining strength. “It’s not that. You’re free to do whatever you like, Clarke, I hope you know that, but I… I think I got used to being somebody you told things. I got used to being your friend.”

“You are my friend,” Clarke says, taking a step towards him, but even though her voice is clear and steady, doubts arise in her throat because Bellamy’s more than just a friend. Something different. It’s not what she felt like with Finn. It’s more. More feelings, more time, more pain. It’s more consuming —

A sudden piercing note rings through Clarke’s head, making her sink to her knees. The noise ends as abruptly as it started, but the silence it leaves behind is louder than anything she’s ever felt. For a few confusing moments she thinks they’re gone — no, that Bellamy’s gone, vanished out of existence and it makes her entire body shake violently.

“Hey!” Hands grab her, and her chest falls with the relief of seeing Bellamy crouch in front of her, even though he doesn’t look much better than her. “You’re okay. It’s okay.”

“What was that?”

“I don’t know, I can’t — I can’t hear my siblings anymore.”

Clarke stares at Bellamy and understands. Because he’s right there in front of her, she knows that, but she cannot feel him. He’s not in her mind anymore like he always used to be. The connection is gone. “How could this have happened?”

“Someone majorly fucked up in heaven.” He curses, driving a hand through his hair. “I have to see what’s going on. I’ll bring you to Miller, you stay with him, alright?”

Clarke nods and lets him teleport them straight out of his room to Bellamy’s cabinet room where Miller is frantically going through files and papers. Their friend looks up at their arrival, a sigh leaving him.

“There you are! I’ve been trying to find you for minutes now —”
“Something’s wrong with the ra—”

“Two rips in the wall have been completely torn open,” Miller cuts him off. “Nia is attacking.”

Clarke’s heart comes to an abrupt halt. “What?”

“No,” Bellamy whispers, shaking his head. “Fuck, no — we’re too late? Where? When?”

“Not long before the radio thing happened. We need to gather the armies.”

“Do that. I have to deal with heaven.” Bellamy touches Clarke’s back. “Miller, keep Clarke safe, or else.”

“You can’t just go now —”

“Yes, I do,” Bellamy snaps. “We need to be able to communicate properly to fight back. I’ll deal with that. You deal with our garrison. You can do that, right?”

Miller doesn’t look too happy about it, but his back straightens, and he gives Bellamy a nod. “Yes, chief.”

Bellamy gives Clarke one last parting look before vanishing. Clarke rubs her temple. “What are you going to do?”

“What he said,” Miller answers briskly, already grabbing her arm, “talk to the other angels.”

In a matter of seconds, they find themselves in a camp full of angels. Clarke can see it, their auras, their glowing presence, their wings. A place with hundreds and hundreds of angels, and surprisingly, it feels reassuring to be among them.

Miller barks at Clarke to stay put and walks off to talk to the angels. Minutes pass. Her hands grow more sweaty. At some point, Raven arrives, a grim look on her face. Clarke catches her before she can stalk off to Miller and the others.

“You have to fly me to Kane.”

Raven frowns. “Like hell, I do. Didn’t you hear about the attacks? You’re safer with us.”

“Yeah, I heard, but none of the humans did. They deserve a head start.”

“Clarke —”

“Take me to them, Raven. I’m in charge of communication with the human armies. I need to tell them so they can prepare, I — I can’t just let them get slaughtered!”

Glaring, Raven grabs Clarke's hands and mutters, “Bellamy’s gonna kill me” before teleporting them away.

A second later they’re at another camp, but this time it’s filled with human souls, not angelic ones. It both feels good and weird to be here. Clarke might be human — until proven otherwise — but she feels more at home with Bellamy and the others. Still, it’s her job to give them a warning. Here, she can do something. Here, she isn’t completely useless.

“Thank you,” she tells Raven and squeezes her arms before letting go. “Now go. You’re needed there, and I’m needed here.”
“I hate you,” Raven shakes her head, “but I also love you, so be careful. I’ll be back in a while to get you, okay?”

“Okay.”

When Raven vanishes, Clarke jogs over to the soldiers who have been sending her wary looks ever since she arrived. She demands that they take her to see Kane and after identifying herself as Clarke Griffin, they finally do that. Kane is surprised to see her but immediately jumps into action, radioing all the troops stationed around the continent with the news.

She’s talking strategy with them when a high pitched cry pierces through the air and at once, every single hair on Clarke’s body stands in protest, terror, and sickness. Not because of the sounds, but because of the wave of wrongness approaching from the distance — no, rushing towards them, thundering and blazing and so, so wrong.

“They’re coming,” she whispers.

Kane whirs around, brows furrowed in concern. “Who?”

“Demons.” Clarke swallows and blinks, staring out in the distance where slowly but surely a gigantic, devouring cloud of mist and shadows is forming. “I knew Nia broke them out, but I didn’t know they were heading here.”

Bellamy, Bellamy, Bellamy, her mind screams. Where the hell are you?

But only dead silence greets her and Clarke’s heart sinks.

Is this how she’s going to die? How the world will fall back into a war that will leave nothing but destruction and pain? Clarke, alone? Her friends, Bellamy utterly unaware that they're coming here?

Maybe, her brain sings, but she won’t go down without a fight.

Flexing her hand, she widens her stance, staring straight ahead. She has the seal of Solomon. She can take demons, even if not all of them, even if it will kill her. Clarke can hold them off for a while. She can try to protect the fellow people around her. Her people.

„Arm yourselves,“ she shouts to Kane. „Put on whatever protection you can. “ The soldiers around jump into action, armors, and blades clinking and screaming, „Aim at their wings first. Then wherever you can. Don’t let them touch you. Hurry.“

The darkness grows and grows until she can make out — those are not faces but horrible masks spread in terrible, hungry grins that she sees. The courage she felt moments before evaporates into shards that cut so deeply into her skin, Clarke feels like she’s bleeding fear.

This is terrifying.

She’s only ever seen demons in small numbers, and that was bad enough, but this? They are racing towards them like they’re being chased by madness. They want blood and blood they will get.

Clarke is about to whisper a silent prayer when a blinding white light splits the sky in two, and hundred upon hundred of blazing, winged creatures appear out of nowhere.

Angels.

They form a long wall above her in the ear. Though Clarke has to squint to see anything clear
through the blinding light, she thinks she makes out shields in their hands — shields that are surrounded by white flames.

Seconds later another line of angels lands on the ground in front of her, the earth quivering under their feet.

Clarke’s heart weeps with joy. They must have figured it out in time or heard her somehow. Bellamy must have. He must be here too — she glances around for him but only makes out a very grave-looking Miller right in front of her at the center of the line. Even if she desperately wants the reassurance of Bellamy’s presence, Clarke’s still crazy with relief and happiness to see that the angels came.

She’s not going to die alone if it comes to it.

For an instant, it’s a breathtaking picture. Angels cloaked in heavenly fire forming a wall above in the air and on the ground. They are light and fury and grace, but at the same time, they are soldiers, armed with shields, swords, but most of all, sheer will. And then there’s the darkness facing them, rushing towards them, hungry for them.

One moment the picture is so final her heart might crush and fall apart in two, and the next the demons reach them, and chaos erupts.

When the first wave of demons arrives, it’s nothing like Clarke expected. It’s not like a battle or a fight like she has seen in movies sometimes. It’s a massive amount of energy sweeping her off her feet and nearly trampling her over.

Demons rush around her despite the formed wall. Clarke is on her knees, shielding her head. There are hisses and screams and grunts all around her. Someone lets out a shriek. It sounds so human. Probably because it is. Her people are being torn to shreds.

Clarke finally opens her eyes, and the scene has lost all its beauty. Foul, broken creatures are either attacking people and angels or being cooked inside out with white light. Miller swings his sword, and three five-legged monsters crumble to ashes.

Something yanks at her and with a sudden terror Clarke sees it’s a demon that is opening his spreading his jaw.

*Her ring. She must use your ring.*

Clarke flexes her fingers and starts thinking wild, scattered orders. It’s not the clean, precise thinking she trained with Octavia. It’s chaos.

*Stop. Go. Leave me alone. Die.*

The demon lets out an awful shriek and stumbles back a few feet, staring at her like it’s wondering why he just did that.

*It’s working. It’s really working.*

Finally realizing that she’s still on the ground, Clarke staggers back on her feet and lashes out with her hands while thinking: sleep. The demon’s eyes fall shut, and it collapses in front of her.

Now Clarke looks around. There’s still a line in front of her, but it’s thinner, weaker, and has holes. Miller’s voice is booming somewhere. „Hold the line!“ he’s shouting. „Hold the damn line!“
Another demon spots her and rushes in her direction. But Clarke stares in its eyes and seconds later it falls like the other ones. In the same moment, there’s a booming noise in the sky as something, or someone leaps up and turns a dozen of those demonic creatures into mist. Clarke doesn’t need assurance that it’s Bellamy, she just knows, even if their usual form of communication isn’t working right now.

Bellamy lands somewhere amid the worst fighting and Clarke turns her attention back to what’s in front of her, which is good because she’s about to get attacked from all sides. She can hear Miller somewhere near her shouting commands and trying to protect her, but even he can’t do much. Well, a good thing that she has the ring to help her. Clarke spreads her arms, and every demon surrounding her not only turns away but starts fighting against other demons. Claws and fangs still touch her from time to time when her focus slips, but she manages to recover in time — the other angels fighting alongside her help a great deal, too.

Not much later, Clarke realizes she was way too overconfident because where her ring can protect her from demons, it cannot protect her from her own human body. As the minutes pass, she grows more tired, every muscle inside her straining and burning. Clarke stumbles her way through the masses and wonders how the hell everyone else is still standing. The angels are, not feeling any human fatigue and all, but the soldiers must be — where even are the human soldiers? Her heart bumps unsteadily in her chest at the horrible thought of all of them being already dead. Because of her. Because she couldn’t protect them —

Something grabs her by the throat — long, sharp talons fisting in her skin while another slimy hand reaches for her wrist. Clarke gasps, struggles against the grip and fails to realize to immediately do, wish something as the demon dives for her hand.

The bite never strikes because the demon evaporates in a flash of brilliant, white light.

“Are you okay?” She blinks, still reeling from the shock of almost having her wrist bitten off as Bellamy holds her by the arms. “Clarke, talk to me.”

“Yes. Thank you, you — you just saved my ass.”

“What else is new?” His lips twitch into one of the cocky smiles she adores but quickly slips again when he has to ward them off against another dozen demons. “I'll get you out of here now, okay?”

Clarke shakes her head. “No, no. I can help. I have the ring —”

“You’re exhausted. The ring is no use if you pass out using it.”

He is right, Clarke knows he is but that doesn’t mean she has to like it.

“Most of the human soldiers are gone, too, already. Wounded. Help them, Clarke.”

And that’s all she needs to hear to be convinced. She can’t do much in her condition here, but she can help her fellow humans. Thank god, they are still alive. Most of them, at least. She hopes.

Bellamy must see her accept the situation because he grabs her arm, and off they go. They land someplace not much different from where the battle took place, but instead of a swarm of demons, there’s an infirmary, lots of emergency beds and hundreds of injured soldiers.

Bellamy turns to face her, his hand sliding down Clarke’s arm to squeeze her healthy hand. “We’ve got the situation under control there. If anything, and I mean anything feels off here, call me.” He shoots her a grave look, and she realizes that they must be able to talk again.
Breathless, Clarke nods and throws herself around him before he can disappear again. “Come back to me,” she whispers into his shoulder.

For one perfect moment, his wings envelope both of them and they’re safe. “I will.” His breath ghosts across her skin. “I always will,” Bellamy murmurs.

Somehow they untangle, and then he’s gone. The rest is a blur.

Clarke discovers Lincoln’s here helping with the more severe injuries like torn open chests and ripped out limbs. He forces her to chug several cups of water before sending her off to do basic wound work. It might be selfish, but Clarke’s a little thankful she doesn’t have to do much more than clean and bandage wounds for the moment because her head’s so messed up that she wouldn’t be much help otherwise. Only a burden.

It’s hours and hours of mind-numbing monochromy: cleaning, disinfecting, wrapping up, and going to the next bed. Clarke doesn’t know what time or day it is when a pair of warm hands pull her aside and suddenly she’s standing in a familiar bedroom. Not hers, but similar.

Clarke blinks. “Bellamy?”

“How are you?” He guides her to sit on his bed before getting a few supplies that she recognizes as disinfectant and bandages. “You must be exhausted.”

“Hm.” She tries to shake off her fatigue, wake up somehow. “I — When did you get here? How are the others? Did we — did we win?”

A tired smile stretches across Bellamy’s face as he gets to work on her hand. The blood is all dry now, sticking to her skin like glue. “There’s no real winning in battles like these. But yeah, we managed to save the area mostly. Our friends are alright, just a few scratches, nothing worse than what you and I have.”

“Did we lose anyone?” She tries to swallow at the memories rushing up inside her. “Because we lost quite a few soldiers.” More than fifty people.

“Yes.”

“How many?”

He lifts his head, looks like he’s about to deny her an answer, but then his gaze falls, and he focuses back on fixing her hand. “Eight. Sorry about this, by the way,” Bellamy squeezes her wrist, “my power’s all drained. I need to recharge for a few hours before doing more extensive healing again.”

Ignoring the number of deaths swirling around in her head, she turns her entire attention to Bellamy. “Recharge? Is there an outlet somewhere I can plug you into?”

“Ha ha.” Yet his smile doesn’t slip. “No, all I need is some rest. And so do you, Clarke.”

“Yeah.” Their gazes lock. “I need…”

One of his brows raises when she doesn’t finish the sentence.

“God,” Clarke says with a huff, shaking her head. “I almost lost you today.”

“I had it under control.”

“No, but it could have gone wrong. If you hadn’t come with the others, I could’ve died alone out
there without ever telling you that — that —”

“That what?”

All of her breath seems to leave her in an instant. Clarke looks at Bellamy and lifts her hand to fist in his collar, seeing how he reacts. When all Bellamy seems to do is step even closer, she lets go of every doubt she’s ever had and says, “That I’m in love with you, you asshole.”

Bellamy makes a sound that is half exhaling, half laughing and then he’s right there in her personal space, daring her to close the distance.

Finally, she does.

Everything in her lights up. Clarke’s one hand is still tugging at his collar while the other reaches for his face to touch him. Bellamy walks them backward until they reach the edge of the bed and stumble onto it. She never lets go of him, though. Not now, after so many months of denying herself. Not ever.

“You have no idea,” she gasps between kisses, “how long I’ve wanted to do this.”

“You could have just said something,” the asshole dares to say. However, Clarke loses the urge to hit him when his tongue slips into her mouth, and his hands slide down her ribs. She feels like she’s going to burn up.

“I hate you.” Clarke tugs him lower, enjoys the feeling of his knee between her legs. “You’re horrible.”

“You’re amazing,” Bellamy replies to that, and her heart flutters wildly in her chest. “You’re the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen on this planet, princess.”

“Bellamy, I —”

“Yeah?” His eyes glance up at her from where he’s kissing her neck, and Clarke has to stifle the urge to shout how much she fucking loves him in every language she knows.

So instead, she drives her fingers through his hair, smiling. “There’s nothing more that I want right now than you, naked.”

In an instant, all of his clothes vanish, and Clarke has to blink. “I thought you said you need recharging?”

“I had enough mojo left for this.” He leans down to nibble at her jaw again. “Besides, you’re giving me energy.”

“Well then, get to work and make me naked, too.”

“Nah,” he shoots her a cocky grin that turns more into a weak smile as the seconds pass, “I want to do this the traditional way.”

Clarke half snorts but lets him guide her hands upwards so he can take off her jacket and sweater until she’s left in her plain black bra. Bellamy doesn’t seem to mind as he leans down to press kisses against her collarbones, wandering lower with each one.

“Teasing prick,” she complains, squeezing the hands still holding down her arms. “Please, Bell.”

His hands slide down and behind her back to fumble with her bra, but before he gets it off, Bellamy
gazes at her with wide, brown eyes. “Clarke.”

“Yeah?” she asks, impatient and squirmy.

“I need —” He shakes his head a little. “There’s something you should —”

“Can we talk about this tomorrow? Please?” There’s so much they need to discuss after doing this — what this is. Nia attacked, it might be too late for their plan. Roan still needs to contact them. And for fuck’s sake, Clarke is about to sleep with an immortal angel. She has no idea how this is supposed to ever work, but she’s willing to forget about all of it for this one night and let herself have this.

Bellamy looks unsure, but ultimately he nods and kisses her the exact way she wants to, his hands palm ing her now bare breasts. Clarke arches into his touch, desperate for more, for something to hold on to in these times. He understands what she needs and slips a hand into her black pants, fingers landing on her clit. Clarke lets out a moan as he sucks a nipple into his mouth and rubs her, fast and urgently.

Before she can come, he pulls away. Clarke would curse him, maybe even try to hit him for bringing her so close to the edge and then letting go, if he didn’t use his free hands to pull down her pants entire and spread her legs.

“Seems like that lie you showed me wasn’t made up at all but a future memory.”

Clarke would have laughed if she weren’t so desperate for friction right now, so she opts for swatting the muscles on his back. “Shut up.”

Bellamy says, “If that’s what you want” and licks a stripe of her cunt. Everything in her tightens, clenches, locks into place. Clarke exhales loudly. She has slept with two people in her life before, a man and a woman. And yet this is the first time someone goes down on her like that, licks her in the most intimate places, and it’s fucking magnificent.

Apparently, he intends to keep true to his promise because, for a while, he says nothing at all, though his mouth and tongue make more than up for it. As her despair grows, he pulls her closer with his hands on her ass and swirls his tongue around her clit. Her hips buck, wanting — needing more of that delicate touch.

Words fail her, so she clings to the hair on his head and prays to climb this edge without imploding.

Bellamy’s lips release her for a second so that he can lick along her labia, lap at her juices as his nose bumps against her clit which forces out a high pitched groan out of Clarke. Eventually, his hand comes up to massage her breast and tweak her nipple while his mouth works her clit again. Clarke whimpers and buckles her hips, thrusting against him desperately.

He lets her grind against him for a moment before grabbing her hips, holding her still and burying his entire face in her cunt, eating her like it’s his last meal on earth. It might as well be.

When his lips close around her clit again, sucking her in, Clarke releases a final gasp and comes. Her hips twitch and shake violently as he lets her ride out her orgasm on him.

“Fuck,” she says afterward, entirely out of breath and mind. Her heart hammers like she’s just run a marathon, but she feels happier than she’s felt in a long time, maybe ever. Fuck, is this just Bellamy’s skilled tongue making her think crazy things or is this the truth she’s been trying to avoid all this time?

“If you’re still up to it,” Bellamy emerges from between her thighs and avoids her swatting hand with
a smirk, "cause you look rather tired."

“I don’t care. I want this.” I want you, she adds in her head and swallows when his expression softens. All of you. That includes your wings. Clarke has noticed Bellamy’s wings aren’t visible at the moment, which is a shame because she has always wanted to touch them, drive her hands through them, and feel the softness of the feathers.

Settling on his knees, Bellamy tugs her closer by her thighs, his cock dangerously close to her dripping entrance. All of Clarke’s insides clench as she tries to focus on their conversation. “Showing wings during sex is… significant.”

“Well, this is significant,” she says, hoping he understands that this is it for her even if their future might be uncertain. “Let me see the real you like you saw the real me.”

“You’ve already seen it,” Bellamy murmurs and leans forward to capture her lips again.

This kiss is slower, gentle, and brittle. Clarke has to let out a deep breath when they break apart, hoping her emotions won’t get the best of her. Crying during sex is not on her list of things to do before dying. When she opens her eyes, there they are. Bellamy’s wings. Huge and elegant and dark. Just like his grace.

After giving them an appreciative look, Clarke pulls Bellamy back in and down with her until their bodies are flush against each other, skin against skin, fire on fire. They kiss and touch until they surpass the threshold of their patience, and Bellamy guides his cock into her. His cock is bigger than the average length, and Clarke has only been with one man in her life, so the first push stretches her out in deliciously aching ways before her body grows used to it and they find a mutual rhythm. Clarke holds on to his back, his hair, the beginning of his wings as she rocks her hips against him, their pace speeding up as Bellamy’s thumb finds her clit and cherishes it like the single most wonderful thing in the world.

When she feels close to coming, Clarke tugs at Bellamy’s hair until mere inches separate their faces, their hot breathing tangling. “Can I—” she pants, wiggling her hips a little.

Bellamy understands and nods, easing his thrusts and leaning back on his thighs so Clarke can climb into his lap. She positions her hips above his cock and slowly sinks down. Their foreheads touch. Sighing in pleasure, Clarke holds on to Bellamy’s neck with one hand and lets the other trail along his wing. It shudders under her touch.

“Are you ticklish there?” she asks, laughing and then moaning because she starts moving.

“Just very sensitive,” Bellamy tells her. He leans in and kisses her while his fingers return to her clit, rubbing back and forth and sending sparks of pleasure up her spine. “Just like you are down there.”

Well, that explains a lot of things. Clarke moans, and loses herself in thrusts, sweat, and low groans; loses herself in Bellamy and the way his wings shelter them from the outside world. For now, they’re safe, the safest they can ever be. She comes with that thought on her mind, Bellamy following not much later.

It doesn’t take her long to fall asleep the night, not tucked into Bellamy’s warm chest and one of his wings laying on top of her like an extra fluffy blanket, and not with the day behind them. Clarke finds sleep with a smile on her lips.

When she wakes up the next morning, Bellamy is still asleep next to her side, so Clarke props up on
an elbow and uses the time to memorize every line and freckle on his handsome face just because she can. (Not because it feels like an invisible countdown is telling her they’re running out of time.) She lies there and thinks Holy fuck, how could I pretend not to like him for such a long time and I’m the luckiest person alive, and I can’t ever lose him.

“I can feel you staring,” Bellamy suddenly mumbles with his eyes closed.

For a moment, she feels her cheeks heating up, but then she relaxes and shrugs. “Does that bother you?”

He opens his eyes and shoots her a grin. “No, feel free to do that whenever.”

“Were you sleeping at all?”

“Yeah.”

“Sorry if I woke you then.” She reaches out and trails a finger along his face as an apology. Now that Clarke knows she can touch him, she doesn’t want ever to stop.

“You didn’t, not really.” Stretching, Bellamy gazes at her. “Most of the times, I can feel it when you’re awake, so I wake, too.”

“Oh.” The topic brings up an entire series of issues they still have to address. What they’re going to do — with the world and with them. What the hell her existence means. “Bellamy,” Clarke starts when Bellamy sits up all of a sudden, his face contorting into a deep frown. “What is it?” she asks.

He opens his mouth, but the door bursts open at the same time, Raven barging in. “Roan is here,” she announces, not even blinking at the sight — Bellamy and Clarke, together in bed, naked aside from the sheets covering their bodies. “It’s time.”

Chapter End Notes

I mean, I told you guys there will be no fucking before 90k words lol

Anyway, they finally kissed and slept together, hallelujah. But next chapter you'll get probably what all of you have been waiting for — probably even more than for this — ANSWERS. You will finally get all the answers. I'm not going to pretend to know when that next chapter will drop because I don't wanna keep disappointing you guys. It's just been a couple of hard months for me and it's hard to find the time and energy to write unfortunately. However, I don't like leaving things unfinished so I should find some energy to finish this. Keep me in your thoughts lol

In the meantime, I see your comments and I'm so thankful for it! I'm so sorry for not replying to them the last few times :( Just know that I reread them on a daily basis. Thank you so much for your support again. I hope all this time you have been waiting for the final answers will be worth it. All will be explained :)
They dress quickly and in loaded silence. For once it’s not because of unresolved feelings or actions but instead of what’s looming ahead of them, which is a suicide mission to hell.

Before they leave Bellamy’s room, and whatever temporary happiness and safety they had there, Bellamy stops her with a gentle touch on her shoulder. Clarke looks up at him and gives him a small smile.

“It’s going to be okay,” she says, needing to hear these words whether it’s from her own mouth or his.

He nods. “I’ll get you out of there no matter what.” These are the same words he spoke after the party when they were standing on the balcony together and watched the sun rise above Arkadia.

Her heart flutters uneasily when she stretches on her tiptoes to give him a kiss. Bellamy cups the back of her head, his lips warm and soft. There’s still a lot to discuss, but the promise that this wasn’t just one night or the heat of the moment thing makes Clarke relax a little as they go downstairs.

Roan is there, his gaze just as invading as last time. Clarke doesn’t shrink, though, only sets her spine straighter and crosses her arms when they come to a halt in front of the prince of hell.

“Ready, love birds?”

Clarke sends him a glower before turning to the people that have gathered in the living room. All of their friends. Here. Whether anybody admits it or not, it must be to say their goodbyes.

Raven is the first to approach her, quickly pulling her into a hug. “I’m still mad at you for making me leave you there yesterday,” she murmurs into her shoulders, “but you’ll get your proper ass-kicking when you and Bellamy return, ‘kay?”

“I can work with that,” Clarke says and attempts to give her a confident smile. She’s not sure it works.

The others say their goodbyes and reassurances one after the other after that. Monty assures her they’ve got this. Murphy advises her to be a cockroach just like him. Lincoln tells her to remember her training with him. Octavia slaps her back and gives her a grim nod. Harper squeezes her so tight Clarke thinks she will burst her lungs. And Jasper tells her all about the crazy food experiments they’re going to do when she returns.

The last one is Emori who shoots her a look and says, “I know you can do this. If there’s anyone who can stop that crazy bitch Nia, it’s you two.”

Clarke laughs. “I hope so.”
“We’ll be working from this side, too.”

Bellamy lets their friends know what to do while they’re gone, including the plan they should follow in case Roan betrays them. When all is said and done, Roan shoots them an exasperated look and dryly asks, “Are we done with the tea party?”

Neither Clarke nor Bellamy bothers to respond as they follow him outside. However, once they’re out of the house, it takes Bellamy approximately 0.2 seconds to fling himself across the front yard and pin Roan against a wall.

“Did you know about the attacks your piece of shit of a mother sent out yesterday?”

Roan’s face doesn’t betray anything but amused boredom. “Does it matter?”

“Yes. People died.”

“People always die,” Roan sneers. “It’s what they do. Angels protect, demons stir up shit, and humans die.”

The hold around his throat tightens, Bellamy’s jaw straining with how strong he’s clenching it. “Stop wasting your useless breath and answer the damn question.”

“I didn’t know Nia was going to attack yesterday.”

Clarke crosses her arms. “But you knew it was going to happen?”

“I may have known the wall has bigger holes these days.”

“And you spectacularly failed to mention it to us,” Bellamy barks.

“That was never part of our contract, general.” Roan tries to push Bellamy away, but Bellamy doesn’t bulk, acting like it’s a squirrel he’s holding in a death grip and not the prince of hell. “Besides,” Roan continues, now annoyed, “it helps our case. Nia thinks she weakened you with the ambush. It will be more convincing to believe that I managed to take you two prisoners.”

Clarke huffs out a breath, muttering, “Obviously she knows you never would’ve managed without.”

Roan chooses to ignore her. “Is the interrogation over? Are you two ready to do the thing you actually sought me out for or do you want to stall for another twenty hours?”

Bellamy’s still glaring, but he eventually lets go of Roan and steps back, closer to Clarke. “What is the plan?”

“I use these,” Roan whips out two pairs of handcuffs which look shinier, deadlier and with carvings on it to be normal ones, “and get you into hell. I let you have fun for a day before getting you back out. Sound good? Yes, then let’s go —”

Again, Bellamy stops him with a hand. Clarke asks, “Get us out how?”

“That’s not for you to worry up about, angel princess.”

She scowls. “Don’t you think we deserve to know our exit strategy since you’re the one who’s supposed to get us out of there? How do we know you won’t let us rot?”

“I honor the deals I make, even if it’s with stuck up doves like you.”
“Then talk,” Bellamy snaps. “And that’s not a question.” *It’s an order.*

“I prepared a distraction,” Roan finally relents, sending them a cool smile. “My mother will most likely keep me there, grateful for my cooperation. On the outside, my people will initiate a fight that’s been brewing for far too long. My friendly demons against my mother’s tools. Demonic civil war. Nia’s ego is too big to stay put in a fight like this, she’ll step in, and the insiders I have in hell will help me get you two back out. Are you happy?"

For a long moment, Bellamy doesn’t say anything. Clarke, too, is in thoughts. By creating the hostile conflict with his mother’s people — who make up the majority of demons — that’s been simmering for almost a century according to Bellamy, he’s sacrificing pretty damn much, she has to admit. That means he’s counting on them to win. If they do, Nia will be locked up anyway, and Roan will be free to rule over the rest of his… folk.

“Let’s go,” Bellamy finally says, but this time Roan is the one keeping them here.

Glancing at Clarke, Roan says, “You come conscious. She does not.” He walks over to her and motions for her to put out her hands. Clarke does. The handcuffs slide over her wrists and click into place. Roan turns to Bellamy. “I’ll have to roughen her up a bit.”

That doesn’t sit well with Bellamy. His jaw ticks. “Don’t you dare hurt her.”

“I have to. Or do you think Nia will not be suspicious that princess here is all clean and ready to go into hell with me? It has to be believable.”

Locking eyes with Bellamy Clarke thinks It’s okay. *Let him do his thing.*

*I hate this.*

*The world is depending on us, Bell. Surely, you can stomach me being hurt for the sake of everyone else?*

*I’m not sure I can.*

Clarke laughs a little with the ridiculosity of it. Is he serious? Would he let the world burn just so that she remains safe?

*Yes.*

Roan interrupts their silent argument. “In case you didn’t realize it wasn’t a question. I was just polite enough to inform you that I will have to touch her.”

Bellamy’s glower could crush mountains. Clarke looks at Roan. “Just get it over with.”

But Roan sends one last glance at Bellamy, “You could, of course, do it yourself? Punch your girl?”

The only answer is a glare. No. But Bellamy doesn’t turn away even as his disapproval flares out from his body like heat waves.

She’s still looking at him when Roan’s fist connects with her face. Then a second time. And a third. By the fourth hit, Bellamy looks murderous, but Clarke is already slipping out of consciousness and right into the hollow darkness that is his arms.

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She wakes up again in a pitch-black place.
Clarke’s eyes open, her consciousness and memories return, but her sight doesn’t. It stays dark. Maybe she didn’t wake up at all.

“Bellamy?” she carefully says, trying to keep her voice even. “Bellamy, are you here?” When no one answers, she half-whispers to herself, “Where the hell am I?”

However, Clarke knows where she. In fact, she can even feel it deep in her bones. The wrongness of this place. The way the air seems to stand still here, not allowing her to breathe but not allowing her to slip away either. And it smells, badly like rotten eggs and burnt flesh.

Hell.

Images of a cave flicker in front of her eyes. A blood-soaked ground and shaking hands. Light and darkness. So much pain and grief and hurt, but not death down here. Never death.

Okay, get a grip, Clarke chides herself and takes a deep breath. She can do this. Bellamy and Octavia went over this with her a thousand times. What to do when she finds herself alone in hell without Bellamy and without any help whatsoever.

First, see if she can reach Bellamy anyway.

Bellamy, she calls inside her head, trying to tug at the bond that always allowed them to communicate. Bellamy, I’m here. Can you hear me?

Silence.

Okay, no need to panic yet. They talked about this as well. Others were able to cut their communication line before — actually, just yesterday Clarke was met with the same empty silence. It happens. Bellamy warned her Nia would do everything possible to separate the two of them, including cutting all forms of communication. And according to him, it’s even easier to do it because hell works differently. There are separate laws here, different rules.

Step two, Bellamy’s voice rings through her head, explore your surroundings. Is there a wall? A door? Any weird airholes — ripples in time and space (whatever that means). Can you see anything? Hear, smell, or feel anything?

Clarke reaches out a hand and blindly fumbles around. No wall. At least, not nearby. Next, she leans down, and when she finally feels something solid and firm underneath her, she uses it to push herself up so that she’s standing. She takes a few steps with her hands outstretched and then more, walking around and around trying to find something.

But there’s nothing.

No wall.

No doors.

No ceiling.

Not even airholes.

Infinite space.

Inhaling long and slowly, Clarke reminds herself that it’s another thing she discussed with Bellamy. Hell likes playing tricks on you, irritating, impossible mind games until you slowly start losing your
mind and hope.

Clearly, this room is one of those illusions.

But that’s it.

After all, Nia wants they key and to get that she has to get to Clarke which means one way or another, she’s going to get out of here eventually. If not because of Nia, then because Bellamy and Roan will get her out.

Then the panic starts, though, because how are they going to get her out of something that is infinite? No exit. No entrance. What if they don’t find her? What if Clarke stays here, trapped like a rabbit in a cage, forever while the world and the people in it descend into another mindless, lethal war?

Then her thoughts drift to the subject that matters the most: the key. They have to get the key. How are they going to get it when Clarke is stuck here, Bellamy’s wherever the hell he is, and both of them not even able to communicate?

Now I’m not a hundred percent sure of this, but you’ll have a stronger connection to the key in hell. You already know where it is. It was in your head. You saw where it was hidden, you went there. So once you’re there, take a deep breath, close your eyes and let the key find you. You should be able to feel it.

Right. Clarke shakes her head at the prospect of letting a key find her. It’s so goddamn crazy, but that what’s her entire life has been for the past months. She’s gotten used to crazy. The echo of Bellamy’s voice in her memories doesn’t help either, only causing her heart to twist and contract painfully in her chest. Yet she uses it for the opposite and lets him guide her as she closes her eyes and looks deep inside herself.

It feels like a Millenium passes in her head, a century, twenty years, and a single second before she finally feels something. Nothing epic or life-changing, just a tug on her soul. When her eyes open, it’s no longer black anymore, but red.

Ultraviolet red.

She’s standing in a passage, shaped like a hole, covered with dirt, bones, severed limbs and fingers, and so much blood.

Clarke inhales sharply, closes her eyes, and opens them again. Nothing changes. The memory of this place weighs like a ton of bricks on her chest. Is this another trick? Is she actually here and seeing this path, or is it another trick?

Surely, it can’t be that easy. She can’t just wake up in blackness, do some meditation shit and then boom — find herself exactly where she wants to be. On the path to the key. It’s too easy. It can’t be real.

And yet, here she is even a considerable amount of time later, in the same spot Nikolai showed her a few weeks ago.

Clarke starts walking. The eerie silence surrounding her creeps her out, but she doesn’t let it stop her. There’s this tug again, this new sense leading her somewhere in the right direction even though she couldn’t possibly know where to go.

Bellamy was right about her connection to the key. Clarke snorts shakily.
The passage goes on and on. Eternal hell.

Except that it is not infinite this time. It has an end, an exit that opens up to a larger space, and again, she isn’t unfamiliar with it.

A small, orange light flickers somewhere above. A torch. And then she hears the sounds — the slurping, the chewing, and quiet grunting. Rusty chains lie on the ground, keeping whatever monster is hidden here leashed.

Clarke halts, her heart stuttering in her chest. How is she supposed to go unnoticed by this thing and retrieve the key? In the vision she saw, the key was somewhere deeper in the room, in the ground. How the hell is this supposed to work without her ending up on the pile of bodies that must be here as well.

Okay. Relax. It’s going to be okay. You’re going to be okay.

Clarke clutches to the tug guiding her like to a lifeboat and starts forward again, trying to be as quiet as possible. Her feet lead her deeper into the room and practically right into the arms of whatever gigantic, horrible monster must hide there.

Except that when she steps around a large, stony pillar, she doesn’t see any monster or devil. Instead, Clarke is looking at herself.

A few feet away, her mirror image looks over her shoulder before kneeling down and placing her hand on the ground.

Her mind starts circulating in endless, questioning circles, but Clarke remains rooted to the spot, staring at her mirror doing something to the ground under their feet.

She looks like Clarke. She is Clarke. But something about her other self is fundamentally different. The particles around her move faster, creating different energy. There’s light, and there’s darkness, and even though they are part of the same equation, they are different variables.

A ring materializes in the other Clarke’s hand and disappears just as quick in the ground, vanishing, just like that, and the actual Clarke comes back to her senses. “No,” she yelps out and runs towards them. “I need that key. Don’t —” Before she reaches them, the other Clarke disappears as well.

What?

Clarke looks around frantically, searching for her clone but it’s something else she finds.

Her parents.

Her mom and her dad — alive — standing over a crib, holding each other and a crying baby in their arms.

“She’s going to have so much character,” her dad says, a big, happy smile on his face as he strokes the child’s tiny hands. “I can feel it.”

Abby nods next to him. The smile she’s wearing is both content and concerned. “She has to. She already put so much fight into being born at all.”

“Yeah,” her dad nods, “a fighter through and through.”

Then Clarke’s mom looks up to her father, brows furrowing. “Jake, don’t you think it’s strange?”
“Hm?”

“The doctors told me I wasn’t fertile. They said I couldn’t bear any children. Damn it, I saw it myself, and I’ve studied medicine. It wasn’t possible.”

Clarke watches her father swallow thickly before scooping the baby up in his arms and holding it close to his chest until it stops screaming. “It is strange, but you know what else it is? A miracle, Abby. She’s a miracle. And we don’t have nearly enough of those these days.”

“I know. I just can’t help but wonder —”

“C’mon, baby, tell your mother that you’re okay,” her dad says in a gentle coo as he plays with the baby. “You’re our miracle, and you’re here now. Right, Clarke? Right?”

Clarke’s mouth drops open in a silent, aching gasp. It doesn’t surprise her anymore when the image of her parents flickers away into the darkness, immediately replaced by another.

A five year old Clarke writhing and turning in her bed before jerking awake with wide, terrorized eyes and starting to scream. She screams and screams and screams, holding her small hands over her eyes like the memory of whatever she saw is too painful, too big for her head.

*Clara didn’t just have nightmares. They were night terrors and absolute hysteria. She completely blanked it out, and her parents never mentioned it.*

Clarke watches as her parents appear in front of her, rushing to their daughter and holding her until the screams ebb into sobs and finally into nervous hiccuping.

Her past dissolves again.

Another Clarke pops up, this time grown up, maybe a few months younger than her present self. She travels to Polis, entire one hundred and eighty miles, with fury and grief boiling in her blood, and she enters the city without any issues whatsoever.

Another memory. Clarke standing in a field and seeing Bellamy for the first time. Bellamy’s eyes narrowing down on her like there’s nothing else in the world beside her.

Lexa sitting behind her desk in heaven and saying, “You’re special, Clarke.”

Lexa standing in front of her, offering her a goblet and telling her to drink something that will help her find the key.

Clarke gasping in pain on her knees and looking up to see Bellamy’s wings unfurling behind him.

Octavia walking into the kitchen for the first time and Clarke immediately knowing she’s neither human nor angel.

Bellamy’s voice inside Clarke’s head, helping, guiding, teasing her, like it’s something normal like it’s something humans are able to do as well.

None of the other supernatural descriptions fitting.

No.

Her surroundings seem to tilt around her, making her head spin with all these memories, images and itching realization waiting to be scratched open, right there in hand’s reach. Clarke grips her face, stumbling back. Everything in her turns. The wheels of her mind scream.
This is her past.

Images of her past.

Clarke saw herself hiding the key. And it wasn’t an illusion.

It was her past.

Shaking her head over and over, Clarke staggers forward and bumps into something. Or someone. She jumps back and sees a woman in front of her. Dirty blonde hair, pale skin, and a hideous smirk on her face.

This woman is no fragment of her past because she’s a demon and she’s real.

Worse, she is probably the queen of hell.

“Wow, what a dramatic demonstration, Clarke! Took long enough, no?”

“What —?” Clarke’s fists clench by her sides, trying to hide the tremors raking through them. “What is this?”

The woman makes a face. “Oh, you still haven’t realized? Well, too bad. I’m out of patience and out of time. You already gave us one important piece of information, now you just need to do one more thing.”

What? No.

Nia wants the key. Clarke didn’t tell or betray anything, so what —

Oh.

Oh god, no.

Clarke didn’t say anything, but she showed her.

Nia must have seen her go down the path that led to key and hide it there.

No.

God, no.

No, no, no —

Nia’s voice cuts through her panic. “If it makes you feel any better, we’d have found it with or without you anyway. We just need your hands now.” Clarke shakes her head, trying to break away but the demon’s grip is too firm for her. “Now, wake. up.” It feels like Nia snaps her neck and for an instant lethal pain, numbness and darkness crashes over her and consumes Clarke.

Then she opens her eyes, and she’s okay.

She’s still alive and in one piece, slumped against a wall on the ground. Nia’s towering above her, already yanking her up by her arm. Clarke stumbles to her feet and looks around. There are several people in the room — a poorly lit, cold place with high ceilings and a table in the center — but she only sees three.

Lexa and Alie.
God no — are they working together now?

Nia follows her gaze and smiles coldly, mirroring the expression on Alie’s face. The other two angels remain blank. “I know, a surprising alliance, but what’s more uniting than a common goal?”

Clarke ignores her, her entire being filling with rage. “How could you? Your job is to protect humans from demons, not help demons to ruin them!”

“You could have avoided this outcome if you had worked with us from the very beginning, Clarke,” Alie says mechanically, the smile on her pale skin never faltering. “We gave you a choice. You made the wrong one.”

“There was no choice!” she screams. “It was either join you or suffer! Does that sound like a choice to you?” Clarke’s eyes cut to Lexa who’s unsurprisingly stiff. “You’re going to let the whole world burn, and for what? To have power and control over the other angels?”

“Clarke,” Lexa says.

“Do you think the other angels will even listen to you after what you’ve done? They will rather burn and become mortal than getting locked up with you two psychos just so you can keep them all on a leash!”

Lexa’s eyes flare with emotion, but before she can respond, Nia pushes Clarke ahead of her. “Enough with the dramatics. We finally have what we needed.” Her nails cut into Clarke’s arms. “Get moving.”

But Clarke refuses to budge. If she does, they will dig up the key and lock up heaven, leaving the human population to their own devices with only an already crumbling wall as protection against demons. That wall will shatter eventually, and war will erupt. War isn’t even the right word. It will be a massacre. The world will burn.

She can’t let this happen.

Where is Bellamy? Where is Roan and his inside men? Did Nia already catch them? Are they even still alive?

“I said move, girl,” Nia’s voice rings through her ears.

Clarke shakes her head. She will die before doing anything.

“So brave and so very stupid.” For a moment, Clarke thinks she is about to feel a lot of pain. Instead, their surroundings change, and they find themselves in the very place hiding the key.

Darkness, the stench of human flesh and a cold, hard ground meet her. Nia pushes her to her knees. “It’s here, isn’t it? Get it out.”

Clarke winces from the pain invading her muscles but refuses again. Not that she even could do something. She actually has no idea how to open the freaking ground and make the key appear like her mirror self did it in her memories.

“Why is nothing happening?” Alie’s voice sounds from above.

“As you can see she’s refusing to open it,” Nia snaps.
“Let me have a look.” Clarke sees Alie’s red shoes step in front of her before the stupid, robotic angel kneels down and places a hand on the ground. A few moments pass. “It’s sealed. Only she can open it.”

“Then we’ll make her,” Nia says.

“No,” Alie stands up and looks down at her. “She can’t open it like this.”

“What? Did the bitch seal it with her grace?”

“That seems to be the case. We can work with that, however,” Alie says, and her gaze slides past her. “Lexa, bring him in.”

Clarke understands nothing.

And yet maybe she does.

The wheels are turning, turning, turning.

“You’re special, Clarke. You were born for this.”

“Clarke, there’s something you should… know.”

“What am I, Emori?”

Something sharp and hot flares up in her lower back. Clarke opens her mouth, but words fail her. Blood trickles out instead.

Someone stabbed her. Someone sta—

Clarke slumps forward, all the strength in her body bleeding out of the wound in her back, leaving her with nothing but incoherent thoughts and a realization that flutters just out of her reach.

“Clarke,” a familiar, a pleasant voice comes. She knows that voice. She loves it so dearly. “Clarke, princess, look at me — please —”

“Her cure is right here, Bellamy,” another well-known voice says, growing more and more distant with each passing second. “All you have to do is make her accept it.”

Clarke starts choking, blood clogging up her airways. The pain begins fading like everything else. It feels oddly comforting. Maybe dying isn’t so bad, after all.

There are more noises, voices mixing together into a hazy blur. Clarke is ready to close her eyes and drift off when she feels something cold pressing against her lips, nudging them open. “Please, forgive me for this.” Clarke is tired. So, so tired, but she remembers that voice and she thinks she can still do that one thing for him before she slips away. So she opens her mouth and lets the content trickle down her throat.

The last thing on her mind before the darkness envelops her is understanding finally dawning on her.

Angel.

Angel.

Angel.
The room explodes into blinding white colors.

Clarke’s body and soul shatter into a billion particles, soaring hot light and fire filling up the cracks and ripples, seizing every cell and muscle, and filling up all the places she thought would remain empty forever. Every inch that made her feel different and an outsider fuels with grace. Every spot that was stained in blood soaks in starlight. It burns her down to ashes, making her scream in pain and in memory.

Clarke Griffin dies then and there, but Clarke is reborn again.

*She remembers.*

Wings, heavy and familiar, unfurl behind her and flap once before carrying her up and past this plane of existence. She bursts through the wall like a meteor falling to earth except that instead of crashing, this time she’s soaring. Gravity doesn’t apply to her, not anymore.

Earth becomes smaller and smaller until it’s only a small dot in the distance, an ear of corn in the sand, just another dying star in this galaxy full of collapsing nebulas. Everything becomes tiny and insignificant in this grand scheme of things. Nothing matters but this — infinity flowing through her body, perfection and obedience, and God cursing through her.

Time stops.

History rewinds.

Clarke blinks and sees it all. Years, centuries, millennia fly before her eyes and fill her mind to the brink of her existence with knowledge and history until it feels like it’s about to flow over and spill all over.

She remembers.

“I saw a star once, not long before you were born, and it always reminded me of you. You were that star, Clarke. You shone just as bright, just as furiously,” the man who called himself her father whispered once into her ear when she was just a few months old.

Clarke remembers being in heaven with her brothers and sisters and the four oldest siblings, the first soldiers, teaching them their way of things. Do this. Do that. Never disobey. Never step out of line. Never feel. Never think for yourself. Your only job is to serve and serve you shall. She remembers learning how to fight and how to heal, the incredible art of fixing up damaged tissues with light and determination and watching it regenerate. She remembers a thousand years of being stationed on earth, just guarding and observing. A millennium of standing still and watching humanity flourish through a thick wall of fog. Billion hours of repressing every single emotion inside her and treating it like a disease that has to be cured, an error in her perfect system.

She watches again as more and more of her siblings crumble under the weight of an unforgiving system. Their wings ignite as they fall and their grace burns out of them, crashing down on the earth to grow into mountains and forests later on. She aches for the ones who land even lower, in the planes of hell, and slowly grow into the serpents they were taught to destroy.

Clarke is there again when demons overrun the planet, infesting the place father created with hate, greed, and jealousy. Observing turns into being drafted for the wars, no matter what rank, and soon she finds herself on the battlefield. Days turn into weeks into months into years and into a century filled with blood and agony.

She doesn’t feel. She does her job and kills whatever must be killed, and protects whatever has to be

And then he happens.

He has always been there, and Clarke knew of his existence the same way she knew of every other angel’s existence. They all have each other’s voices in their head. It’s impossible not to know Bellamy. But Bellamy is leading them all of a sudden and the system of no feelings and no mistakes burns. He opens his heart, looks past the thousand of rules imposed on them, and does it differently.

It’s confusing, terrifying even. Thinking for yourself after millennia of mindless obedience is like overriding an entire system. Many angels fail at it, others try to stop and punish him. Clarke watches and lets her feelings in. They flood through her like a dam breaking, but she doesn’t drown, she dives and comes out on top.

Despite her grudging respect for Bellamy, it’s not easy to work with him at first. He has a lot of feelings — most of it anger at the world and the system and the creator that made them into robotic slaves. They often clash as they have different means to the same end. In the end, though, they find a mutual understanding that slowly grows into working together into something as controversial as friendship and ultimately into something that goes beyond any words or labels or definitions. They both agree to find an end to the demonic plague that’s been going on for almost a century. Bellamy goes into the mountain. Clarke leads their siblings in the meantime, keeping them alive and hopeful. He comes back with part of his grace missing, left behind in the mountain in exchange for a power that lets them win the war and push the demons back into hell. Bellamy is not as shiny anymore, not as perfect with the spots of darkness forever printed into his grace, but if possible, Clarke loves him even more for it.

Oh. Father. Bellamy.

Clarke’s emotions yank her out of the past and into the present, letting her crash back into their plane of existence and into his arms.

“She is staring at an empty patch of earth where a mountain used to stand when she realizes Bellamy is talking to her. Or, at least, attempting to.

“Do you really think that?” Clarke asks him.

His eyes are filled with just as much grief as hers, but he isn’t succumbing to it, not the way she is. It fills and drowns her until she’s choking on it. Every breath that she takes hurts. So. Much.

“Yeah,” Bellamy says, nodding. “Maybe not now or tomorrow, but someday we’ll be alright again. We made it out alive. The mountain’s gone. Now we can start building our own life.”

But what he didn’t know back then, was that she couldn’t even think of such a thing as her own life, not after all the ones she destroyed in a matter of seconds. At that moment, she wishes she had never allowed emotions in because that way, she wouldn’t have broken under their weight. But she did.

Angels are massive, celestial beings of light and energy and yet, that day, all her twenty feet of her turned into ice and shattered into a thousand pieces until there was nothing left to build. Nothing left to fix. Just a giant, gaping hole in the thing that was supposed to be Clarke.

Pain soars through her again. Too many memories. Too much energy and power stuffed into a body
that barely even reaches five feet four. Clarke falls, millennia worth of memories threatening to split open her brain.

Something warm and solid wraps around her and pulls her back again.

Images start flickering through her mind. Now, absurdly fast and uncoordinated.

Clarke slitting her own throat and feeling herself crack open into two, into ten, into a million pieces and exploding in the sky as crashes down on earth, going a thousand miles an hour. She remembers falling and how much it hurt. She remembers dying and being born again.

Ground plates crash and grow into mountains and new continents.

Lucifer’s wings burn as their father banishes him from his home.

Bellamy makes her laugh out loud for the first time, the emotion so new and strange that tears immediately follow. The brush of his fingers against her skin afterward.

People building the pyramids and inventing the first phone. Entire civilizations collapsing and dying out in front of their eyes. Lilith finding the first loophole out of hell, and raising whole armies out of the earth. Monty blinking away tears after he helps them wipe out an entire mountain. The moments come and come and come, Clarke sinking with each one like a stone in the ocean.

Something touches her, and it sets her skin on fire. Clarke is burning up from these memories. She is imploding.

The key — she remembers finding and hiding it because she knew how they would want to use it. So she got it out of the way and then made sure no one but her would be able to hide it. She went to the path of nowhere and found a way into hell where she buried the key in the most bottomless pit she could find.

More and more information streams into her.

And then there is the voice again. Bellamy’s voice. It hurts hearing him, hurts because it triggers another billion of forgotten mementos, burnt out of her during the fall, and it hurts because he knew the entire time.

“Long time no see.”

“Nowadays, it’s not easy to make him lose his temper.”

“I knew you were... different than most humans.”

“Hiding and running away is never the solution.”

“It’s in you. It’s all in you, Clarke.”

“— have to focus,” he cuts through the onslaught of her human idiocy.

“I can’t see,” she shouts, trying to outscream the echoes in her head. It’s too loud, too much. Clarke is being swallowed by this thing that was her a little over twenty years ago.

“Clarke. Clarke, listen to me. Follow the sound of my voice and —” Another tidal wave of moments, feelings, and sounds crashes over her consciousness. Bellamy. Her partner. Her companion. Her best friend and —
“What are we going to do?” she asks Bellamy, searching his physical eyes but actually looking at the radiant, humming glow of his real form.

He meets her gaze and gives her a helpless shrug. “What we always do. Whatever the hell we can.”

Her thousand hearts contract painfully, making her feel like she’s being torn apart by a hundred different hands.

“No,” Bellamy’s present voice comes through again. “I know what you’re going through right now, okay? Your memories are overwhelming you. You just have to focus on my voice and come back to me. Latch onto it.” A deep shudder runs through Clarke, her breaths coming out fast and shallow. “You’re here in the year 2619. Your name is Clarke Griffin, and you are alive.”

For the first time in a long time, Clarke feels tethered back to earth, back to her human body and mind. She opens her eyes, her limbs trembling. Bellamy’s in front of her, eyes wide and frantic, but they crinkle when they see her, and he laughs a little.

“You’re okay. It’s okay.”

“What…” Clarke rubs her temple but quickly withdraws her hand, looking at it. It’s all so different. Her entire sight is. Her smell. Her hearing. She can feel power thrumming through her veins. “No,” she finally breathes, “I’m not okay. I’m —” Her breathing stills. (And it changes nothing because she doesn’t need air to live.) Clarke looks up at Bellamy. They knew each other. They were companions. Friends. Soldiers. “It’s you.”

“It’s me,” he says, nodding.

Tears run down her cheeks when she flings herself into his arms, squeezing him so tightly that she might crush his lungs. It’s Bellamy. After twenty years — they’re together again.

But that’s not entirely true, another voice says, and it’s like a wall clamping shut in her head. Clarke steps back, brows furrowing.

“We had a deal,” Alie says, standing up again. “You get to live, and we get the key in return. Give it to us, Clarke.”

“I made no such deal with you,” she says with her hands out, letting them know it won’t end good if they try to force her again. Clarke’s at her strongest right now. Twenty years of bottled up grace. All it would take for her to explode on them is a small match. And she will gladly let them be collateral damage.

At least, Nia and Alie. Lexa, however —

Using the private channel they created centuries ago, Clarke says, I see you’re still a mass-murdering, power-hungry bitch but working with hell? You stepped that low?

Lexa’s glare is both furious and urgent. I have a plan. Trust me.

How can I? You tortured me.

Was it really you, Clarke?
That doesn’t matter.

Get the key.

Oh, she’ll get the key. They just won’t see any of it.

I’m borrowing some of your black magic for a second, she tells Bellamy, and then without any warning, she fires out a combination of heaven and hell. It weakens Nia, Alie, and Lexa, and Clarke uses that moment to kneel down and unlock the seal she made twenty years ago.

That day brings back a lot of bad memories, but she pushes them down and focuses on her work, Bellamy’s steady presence behind her grounding her. A moment later, she’s holding the key in her hands.

The object that started it all.

Now we just have to get out of here, she tells Bellamy.

Roan’s still here. You go, and I’ll get him.

No. I’m the strongest thing here right now. You have to come with me.

We made a deal with him, Clarke. We can’t leave him behind now.

I didn’t do anything, she grinds out and is surprised at the bitterness in her own voice. It was her own doing. She made the choice to fall, and yet she can’t help but feel excluded from the last twenty years. It wasn’t her. It was someone else. A human. A stupid one, nonetheless.

Bellamy’s voice is persistent. Clarke.

There’s a noise behind them, and Clarke swivels around, expecting to find the bitches of heaven and hell on their feet again, but it’s not.

Oh, father above.

Clarke stares at the — the person approaching them and swallows. What the hell did Lexa do? Could she even do something this stupid?

“Hello, sister. Hello, brother.”

“Lucifer,” she breathes. The sight of him is so surreal, Clarke briefly wonders if she’s still reliving her memories. Then again, she never saw him like this. Burnt down wings, flickering grace and the weight of the last hundred millennia bleeding out of him.

“I was told to get you out of here. In exchange for my freedom.” He spreads his arms and flames rock up around them. “So escape, we will.”

Clarke locks eyes with Bellamy and then hell starts burning with the fury of a forgotten child. Lucifer grabs both of them and the laws and physics of this place bend for him as he guides the three out of hell and back into the human world.
And here it is! I hope you guys aren't too disappointed? I saw a lot of theories regarding Clarke and the key and they were all super interesting! But THIS was what made me start writing this fic in the first place. The idea, that Clarke and Bellamy were angels but then Clarke fell, became human and had no memories of her previous life. Also, you guys can finally cry with me over the fact that BELLAMY HAD TO ACT LIKE HE WASN'T TALKING TO THE LOVE OF HIS ANCIENT LIFE FOR THE PAST 18 CHAPTERS. Imagine how hard it was for me to write all that. Clarke HATED him in the beginning! Imagine the pain. Anyway, next chapter: more flashbacks, a lot of talking and a lot of pain and angst over what this revelation means. Oh, and yeah, lucifer :D

Oh, and I made this tellonym so feel free to ask some questions! I'd be happy to chat.

End Notes

Thoughts? Reactions? Opinions? †

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!