Helplessly Wrecked
by cruzrogue

Summary

A very smart, passionate, woman. Worked to get her dual masters from MIT, it may have
taken longer being a mother of triplets but at least she has her mother’s support. Oliver Queen
still has a yacht incident and was marooned for shorter time frame on a real deserted island.
He never flunked out of his Ivy League schooling and is a very sought-after bachelor. His
relationships never last more than half a year and is known to throw himself into his work.
His motto 'work hard play harder'. -That is until he meets Felicity Smoak!

An olicity AU. No Arrow. Olicity kids. Slow burn.

Notes

"Bridget Jones Diary" has me thinking of body type that is: this Felicity is for this story.

Came up with the idea what if Felicity being what is consider the average size of a woman’s
weight in the United States and wondered would Oliver ever give her a shot? So I wrote this
piece.
Introduction Chapter 1

The very beginning…

Felicity Smoak has had a very rough few years since her attendance at Starling Prep for half a semester before she begged her mother to leave Starling City because of a shattered heart. Only to find that her heart would need to grow three times more for the triplets that reminds her of a certain boy who broke her heart, yes triplets because the universe hates her.

The present that was never expected…

Having the rug pulled under her feet as her boss requires her to work with a certain JR CEO that never in her wildest dreams thought they would ever see each other again. So here she is sitting just
three seats from a man she can’t but glance at every so often. A man who has grown to be even more handsome. She on the other hand has gained some weight and wishes her size was in the single digits.

“This is the woman of the hour she’ll show you everything within this project we here at Palmer Tech have planned everything to work fluidly. This is Felicity Smoak…” The presenter moves their hand in her direction and Felicity’s nods. “She’s sparked the department of change to this venture. As you’ve have read from the packets before all of you. The cost analysis, time-frame, and developments are all beneficial and on time.” The presenter goes into more depth and reads the room for questions.

Felicity tries to leave the meeting as fast as she can but gets stopped by her supervisor as he is adding more tidbits to two associates that have joined this group. She can see the person she is trying her hardest to keep from talking to and as he is talking to her big boss, she feels maybe she’ll be able to escape before they head this way too.

As she is done with Larry, her project boss. Her name is uttered by Ray Palmer and she inwardly screams knowing that the subject of her dismay is most likely beside her big boss. Turning her head trying to keep a smile on her face as she looks at the two men who are waiting for her undivided attention.

“Mr. Palmer.”

“Oh Felicity, no need for formalities, not in this seemly close-knit project community.” He gives her his friendly goofy smile before he introduces the son of the C.E.O. of Queen Consolidated. He is following his father’s footsteps to soon become CO-CEO with his dad but now he is still learning the ropes. She looks at the most amazing blue eyes see hasn’t seen up-close in years and she can feel her heartbeat rise wondering if her name sparks any recognition of their tryst from five years ago. Nothing he doesn’t remember and with that it does kind of cut into her soul a bit. “This is Oliver Queen, Mr. Queen here will be following this dual company venture.”

“Mr. Queen.” She pulls her hand forward to shake his hand with professional courtesy. He takes it. His hand firm and shaking hers like it’s a routine like any other. A spark felt. She pulls her hand back trying to nonchalantly show anything. His eyes don’t leave hers before Ray starts to talk business and Oliver has his hands back at his side. Following the man with a nod and at least two responses.

Felicity on the other hand tries to listen as she is internally freaking out. Trying as she might to not show the other deep emotions that are blazing to be let out. He looks at peace. Seemly like no spark is felt at their connection that will only torment her further as she’ll reason away late at night about feelings that she can’t keep buried.

Opening her small apartment, she shares with her mom and three children. At least one blessing is that her mom stands by her and helps be a part of raising her children.

Happily pulling her shoes from her sore tired feet she places them near the rack. Her mother hates it when she just throws them around.

“You are home late today?”
“Sorry mom. Are they all in bed?”

“Yes, bathed, feed, and Lillian required two stories tonight.”

“The boys?”

“Like to say well behaved but those two really love tormenting their sister.”

Felicity sighs at that. Her four-years-olds are really something. “I’ll talk to them tomorrow morning.”

“Dinner in the reheating in the oven. How was work?”

“I’ve only been at Palmer Tech a few months but they already bumped me to JR manager of this project we are working at.”

“Oh, baby that’s wonderful. You thought it was a long shot.”

“Mom, it means more hours.” Felicity goes to the fridge to get a pitcher of water. It also means seeing a man who broke her heart. She meant so little to him. If his words didn’t do the trick his actions of shunning her, did.

“Also, you did mention a slight bump in pay. Every little cent is needed.”

“I know mom. I know.”

“Well sweetie, I am heading off to bed. Do you want to check on Lilly first?” Felicity nods as she walks into the bedroom that her daughter shares with her mom. Looking at the little copy of herself blissfully dreaming. Moving a few strains of her strawberry golden hair she leaves a kiss on her temple and backs out of the room.

“Leave the dirty dishes in the sink I’ll tend to them tomorrow.”

“Night mom. Love you.” Her mom gives her hug. “Thank you.” She is very thankful that her mom is here. She couldn’t have done any of the things without her.

Donna kisses her daughter’s forehead, “You’re very welcome. Love you.” She enters the room and quietly shuts the door.

Felicity enters onto the only other bedroom that houses her boys. They’re both sprawled in weird positions on their twin beds. They sleep soundly like that and she’s learned to leave sleeping cubs lay as the may or endure a night of restlessness.

Trying to get a few hours shut eye is proving to be a losing battle. The raggedy futon is what she calls her bed and usually the ruckus of the fridge’s motor is enough to lull her to sleep. Tonight, she’s looking at the dancing lights created by a moving lighted all-night convenience shop bright sign just a few buildings down from her apartment complex.

Her mind replaying every agonizing moment, his words of pleasantry as he tells her he can’t wait to see what she comes up with. Meaning he will want to talk to her again. Not ready to talk to him. He hasn’t seen her frustrated with work and how she can go off topic and babble her way into a corner.
She knows there are new recruits assigned to this project with her that have no idea of her run off
tangents. They don’t scare her like the boy who became a man she follows on social media. She can
name all the girls he’s been with since his rescue off a very small island in the pacific. Not many
pictures exist of his days following his return to his home. He was said to be severely
undernourished. He disappeared from the lime light.

For almost two years she thought her children were fatherless as Oliver Queen was presumed dead.
Not that she had or has any intent to tell him he is a father. Not when she can still hear the taunts of
their juvenile classmates. He made it clear that he didn’t know her. Which back then was a lie. The
pristine memory of hearing his voice stress the pronunciation of her name still reeling in the back of
her mind.

She unfortunately didn’t have the foresight of being wise and not becoming putty in his hands.
Wanting to belong, being a hormonal teenager, having a good-looking charming boy interested in
her was a recipe for disaster. After he got what he craved he moved on. Pats on the back from the
other no-good for nothing boys. It makes the mistake of being easily subdued into thinking she was
somebody when in reality she really was nobody.

In present time he doesn’t even know her name. Literally Ray introduced her again after the meeting
and yet a few hours’ latter she’s downgraded to Miss with a pause or is it a question mark waiting for
her to supply the name.

Moving the pillow on the makeshift bed she can feel the stray tears make themselves known. The
universe really doesn’t like her.
Understandings

Chapter Summary

Felicity living her day to day with the kids and trying not to be rude and really making sure she tries not to let herself get carried away when a certain man is in her orbit. She needs this job. Oliver understanding that this venture is not going to be just about work as someone is making a splash into his personal life. She may not know him yet but he want to know why he sort of feels attracted to her.

Chapter Notes

An olicity AU. No Arrow. Olicity kids. Slow burn.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Every morning she remembers why she dislikes sleeping on the second largest piece of furniture in living/dining combo room. As she finds herself sticking to something that one of her little angels left behind. Add the little feet jabbing around her frame as the boys use their mom to prop their little bodies as they watch early morning cartoons. She needs coffee but getting little kisses as the boys tell their momma how much they missed her last night has got to be the best feeling in the world as she finds that a tickle fight is up there with java.

When the third little munchkin makes herself known and needs her cuddles and kisses too. Felicity happily grabs her baby girl to join her brothers. The giggles are infectious and it is a wonder that she never plays hooky and keeps her babies in her grasp. Her own mother’s voice reminds her why.

“I need to go food shopping before you head into work.”

They need money for groceries, rent, and all the other little things that adds up.

Oliver has taken residence at one of the prestigious high-rise apartments rented out by Palmer Tech. He’ll be here for a while but will make it to Starling City for any important meeting that is board regulated. He likes to make sure these people that work for his family know that he isn’t a soft controllable businessman.

All the while, meeting all the people he will be dealing with on this joint company venture he sees no futile situations rising. Everything looks good but he will want an in-depth walkthrough for each process. So far, each associate beholds the responsibly fit for the task. He’s going to need to know their names and he’ll ask for a list with faces and job titles and how to reach them in case he has a question or two. He knows that he is one for feedback. The product will be profitable and that in itself makes this a success but he always likes to see if the product can evolve and create new niches and what the market share is or will be down the road. Planning, executing, and making sure marketing makes its splash because the next big thing is always around the corner.

Oliver walks to the high-rise apartment’s window and scrutinizes the city before him. The colors, the movement, the tempo reminds him of home. He’s all the way on the East Coast even with a jet at his disposable it’s a few hours and the distance away hits him that this is the first time he’s actually been this far from home since his return from being stranded on an island little more than two years ago.

He isn’t due to have another relationship to placid his mother since he just recently broke up with Sofie. She was sexy as hell but not all there in making life decisions. She was a safe bet for a while. He knows he’d move on and she didn’t really expect long-term which helped him. A new girlfriend is always too early to talk about forever and nothing is better than that to get his parents off his back about finding the one.

It is easier to play up the hype that surrounds his perchance to be a womanizer. He dates and enjoys the company of beautiful ladies. In the few relationships he has had he can promise he has never cheated. His public personality is totally different from what social media marks him to be.

He can’t make the same promise of his youth. There is a lot of things he can’t remember very clearly under the haze of heavy narcotics and how he could down liquor yet still be able to be the dotting son and college bound student. Easily influenced by peer pressure. Least one bet that he completed
had his best friend walk away from him. Thomas Merlyn was so angry. His words of ‘I know we were raised better.’ He could hear his other buddies tell him that he was the man. He did some stupid shit and screwing a girl was just too much for his best friend. He should remember the girl who he cajoled to be his first but everything around that time just falls flat and that in itself is no excuse. It probably didn’t hit him how hard everything was falling apart in his life not until his father shook him awake that night asking if he knew where Tommy could be.

Turning from the window, Oliver looks at his watch, he has plenty time still after his short run and decides a cup of joe is what he needs. Texting a short message to a friend. He makes short order of his breakfast.

Instead of getting a text back his phone buzzes and he picks it up.

“Hey, didn’t wake you? Did I?”

A deep yet groggy male voice comes through, “Nah, I’ve been tossing and I need to get my ass out of bed anyhow. How’s Providence treating you?”

“Maybe this weekend I’ll see what the nightlife is like.”

“And what exactly are you looking for?” He shakes his head. Just like Tommy Merlyn to be direct. Knows him way to well. There is a few pretty girls’ he eyed at Palmer Tech but they have no part in the project and mixing work and pleasure is a recipe for disaster anyhow.

“I’m not looking for anything man. You sound like John sometimes.”

“Because we both know you well enough. Whoever your looking for isn’t going to materialize if you keep doing the same old thing, you’ll keep getting the same results.”

“So no to going out and meeting, dining and having some wine the old fashion way?”

“You just got there who’s in the roster that you’ve met in less than twenty-four hours?”

“No one yet. But you know me. I have no problem…” He won’t mention a specific instant that mystified him a little.

“Stop right there, dude I haven’t had my first cup of coffee for this shit.” In the back of his mind he recalls what has been said to him. Every city has the class of ladies that will help a man distress and if he is okay with it. It is very much passable to enjoy some short-term relief. “Whatever tidbits of information that is crossing your mind right now. Just stop! It’s probably the worst advise anyone could have.”

“Fine, you make sense but you sound horrible so go get some caffeine in your system.”

“Ollie, I know you’re going to get yourself lost in your work and then when you hit a roadblock go to your usual place and meet and dine and all that but try something different.” Tommy than says his goodbyes before he will start his day as an Emergency On Call Doctor today.

Felicity walks into the little nook that houses coffee. She really needs some java. The water heater
didn’t kick in this morning and the cold shower just had her on pins and needles as to how the day has already begun. She already has so much on her plate why can’t one thing go right? Having to change her shirt for another when her son decided to faceplant her on a clean shirt that matched the skirt she was wearing. The very visible mark where nose bubbles would not clean easily so she had to find another skirt and shirt and make her way to work. Having three little ones cry at her departure isn’t getting any easier. The pity looks her mom gives her has really done a number on her heart.

She has a good view of people coming into the area from her spot and when she sees Oliver her heart races. Never mind that a scolding part of a nagging voice telling her he isn’t worth the air he breathes. The other part telling her to chill nothing will ever come of it and thinking he is so handsome is not a crime. The man wearing a gray suit and wow from her vantage point he looks so amazing. He’s smiling at a brunette that walking with him until where the woman has to head elsewhere to get to her job and he says goodbye and the look she gives him if interpreted correctly is if she could mount him now, she would. He just winks at her and he enters using his key card to arrive and start the day here at Palmer Tech.

She’s surprised he is interested in hanging with the peons today.

The day is long and as Felicity is finishing up with her task, she talking to an associate to reconfigure what she thinks will help the process. Making the final calculation his voice breaks her from the concentration.

“Felicity, right?”

Felicity nods to him restraining from saying anything trying hard to keep herself out of trouble.

“Right, Felicity. I was planning on looking at the subcontractors list and was told that you are the one to see.”

Felicity looks at the project pieces and the machine that needs a redesign calculation she doesn’t want to step away and have this associate have nothing to do. “It’s in a tray behind my desk.” She turns to write the calculation when she hears him let out a cough the kind that says your attention please.

“You’re not heading to the office?”

“No, I am not.”

“Okay, let me just write a sequence down and I’ll get you the list.”

“Great!”

It takes her two minutes and leaves the associate to complete the task as she heads to her small desk that is surrounded by file cabinets. Oliver right on her heals.

He sees the pinned artwork made by a child. Noticing what he is looking at, “My daughter’s handy work.” She filters through some of the new sheets on top to what she needs to give him.

“Cute.”

Knowing he is just being polite. “Thanks.”

“Well I’ll like to go through this list and if I have any questions I’ll be in touch.”
“Okay.” He leaves her alone.

The rest of the day goes without a hitch and she is excited to be leaving for the day. For years she’s tried pushing Oliver Queen out of her mind but when she sees him via three pairs of eyes that are so excited to call her their mamma it’s hard to free herself from him completely.

Just thinking about him conjures the man as Oliver stops by. Staring at him somehow, he looks even hotter as his tie is lose and the two top buttons are unbuttoned.

“I have a question?”

Looking at the time. Its half hour after six. She stayed late finishing some codes so it be ready to enter tomorrow morning. “Can this wait until tomorrow?”

“I just need a reference code on one of these.”

“Mr. Queen.” He’s giving her a stare. “Of course, will you be waiting?”

“Well I do have a few more questions.”

Those questions indeed need some answers and she is digging information for him when her phone lights up.

“Hi mom. No. I’m still at work. What? He didn’t.” Felicity sighs, “Mom, be gentle, Lilly hair is so fine already. What? I’ll stop at the drug store and buy it.” She looks at Oliver, “I have to go.”

“Everything okay?”

“My eldest decided to place gum across his sister’s hair.”

“He was probably just playing around. Kids do that.”

Giving the man an irritable look. He isn’t the one who will need to deal with a crying child who will be sleepy but needs the gum removed. If he only knew his kids are prone to doing stuff like that. “I’ll have to finish this tomorrow.”

“Okay then I’ll see you tomorrow.”

Looking at the time it’s almost nine at night. She leaves in a hurry to get to the store before it closes.

Shrugging off the jacket, he doesn’t know why he feels so bothered. Everything went well today except when he meets with a certain woman. Off the bat he knows she is uncomfortable with him. He’s worked with loads of people that somehow are nervous towards him because of who he is. He finds that if he ignores the matter most of the time people just go with the flow. However, this woman is certainly not his type at all yet gives him pause. He has been careful not to touch her. He doesn’t know if she is aware how unsettling she makes him feel. A rarity but quite alarming. He does not know what to make of it. He is proud of himself at how natural and poised he surely showed
Palmer and the woman he doesn’t fancy but his body didn’t get the memo when he felt a jolt of electricity as their fingers met.

Maybe he just needs to get laid. This woman is most likely married she surely looks taken. She isn’t ugly by any means. He’s just never been with a heavy-set girl. He knows she has two children so that already is another strike against her. He likes easy entanglements. Children are messy. Shoot, they are needy and time consuming. If John ever got wind of him thinking this, he would be thrown down and the conversation wouldn’t be pretty. John Diggle is a family man and his two kids are no joke to the man.

Now he knows why he is upset; he has a woman he really doesn’t want or need somehow land in his bubble. Yet, his mind is conjuring ways to talk to her. If her soccer mom attitude today at work isn’t a turn off because it should be. She practically rolled her eyes at his existence.

“Shit, what is wrong with me?” He lets out a profanity because after enough therapy sessions he is supposed to be one to face his problems.

Since his return from being stuck on an island alone he has craved human companionship. Some of it maybe not so good as he is finding waking up with strangers not very appealing and having two best friends in committed relationships their views currently into seeing him happy with one person.

Everyone assumes he came back severely undernourished but it was the total opposite. The island could be paradise if he had people to share it with. Stuck alone with only his thoughts and his overactive imagination of ways to be found. If it wasn’t for that aircraft having engine problems, he probably would still be alone.

Heading to his room to rid himself of some clothes he glances at his tie that she went on about for almost a solid minute of some bizarre fantasy. He doesn’t know if he should be worried as if her intent was to choke him or if the total opposite and wonder what exactly her judgements were heading.

Anyways even without reading her personal chart that should be on his desk tomorrow. He’ll like to know everyone and be on a first name basis. He doubts this woman; darn he can’t even remember her name it’s weird he is superb at recalling names and faces but hers always just goes to the waste side. He has to admit he’s good at it now, terrible when he was a teenager. Not to bring himself down again but it was about all the partying with illegal substances which he did a lot in those days he was in the sky, high as a kite. So young and foolish.

Felicity is exhausted and she is unable to buy what she needs from the closed pharmacy and passing the 24HR convenience store which she hates at night due to crude remarks of some men who hang around that specific spot. She decides that she’ll go early the next morning.

The morning sun rays already have Felicity wanting to stretch out but Lillian is still sleeping on her. The response of her body is not good as a few aches will present themselves soon. Today she’ll feel like a zombie and with Oliver on her back she’s going to have to suck it up and watch herself. She needs this job. Pissing off a high-ranking businessman is not ideal.

“Baby, wake up.” Rubbing her daughter’s back to rouse the little one to wake. Lillian has had it
rough since her brothers have ganged up on her. No rhyme or reason. They just consider her easy to target and harass. No matter what Felicity does it seems the boys will take their frustration out on the youngest of the three. The bond between Nate and Olly is remarkable. They stick to each other like the gum placed on their sister’s hair. It hurts to see that Lilly is not accepted. Seeing her being a trouper and carry on gives Felicity the added strength to deal with a certain man later.

Lilly’s eyes are on hers. The mess on her daughter’s hair makes her so mad. The boys will be punished this weekend. She may even do what she has mentioned to her mother. Separate them. This weekend already seems it will be a disaster.

Lilly moves to kiss her mother.

“Hi sweetie.” Kissing her daughter back. “Did you sleep well?”

The girl nods slowly and her fingers go to the tied-up mess. Donna passes them saying her good mornings as she goes to make some coffee.

“Want to go with momma to the corner market?” Seeing the little girl’s eyes brighten up. It’s rare that the children ever leave the apartment since moving in. Donna is not a fan of the neighborhood and controlling three children is not as easy. Too many possibilities of catastrophe to happen. Maybe next weekend they can go to the zoo. She’ll have to figure logistics. Her car is small and barely fits the three car seats. “Go put on your comfy clothes.”

The boys are up and already on the futon but today there is no TV to enjoy as both boys are not allowed to enjoy any programming until the gum is out of their sister’s hair.

“Momma, I get scissors.”

Felicity wants to hide the horror of one of her boys running around with scissors. “You will do no such thing.” The boy huffs. “You two will sit and behave.”

“But momma I didn’t do anything.” Oliver Noah Smoak whines to his mother.

“Did you not egg your brother on?” Seeing the guilty look. “No TV.” Her eldest is being quiet and it makes her prod the boy. “Do you have something to say Nate?” he sways his head no. “Do you have something to say to your sister?” he sways is head no again. “When your sister and I return I expect a few words.” She looks at the boys and then to her mother who will prop them to say the correct words of an apology.

He is enjoying his morning run. He’s actually seeing a lot of the city this way and traffic is light so maneuvering around is slightly easier than the jogs he has had near nightfall.

With the bright morning sun, he notices the adventured into a broken-down neighborhood. It reminds him of the Glades. Upping his speed to leave this area quickly. He’ll try that pastry shop’s coffee before heading home to clean up and get ready for work.
It amazes her to see the world through a four-year-old perspective. Lilly is so excited to be walking with her mom outside and the little girl is taking in the sight before. Felicity grimaces that this is the environment her baby is experiencing. They pass a man barely sitting on some steps looking intoxicated in such early hours of the day. Her daughter gives him a smile. Lillian is so high with glee pointing at things and Felicity trying to not bring her daughter down tells her a very special version of what catches their eyes.

Entering the store, she asks the clerk where the product she is seeking is at. Her baby girl's eyes widen when she sees all the candy. Yes, this one is truly a mini copy of her. She may have lighter hair like the boys and a few other little features that are not her own but her baby girl is said by her own mother that Lillian Megan is a little Felicity.

Buying what they need plus a small bag of gummies. They head home. Letting go over her daughter's hand as the reach the building so Lilly can skip and make some happy memories. Felicity stops suddenly at the thought that the little girl needs a pick me up to deal with what is up in their apartment. Abruptly she feels like a totally bad mother. She loves all her children. Though it seems to keep the peace she lets the boys’ actions slide which has had unforeseen consequences. Things really do need to change. How she doesn’t know.

Felicity has had a very productive work day as Oliver had to leave last night to Starling to deal with an investor meeting that was booked late. What she didn’t expect is the man to show up to collect the information requested.

“Good you’re still here.”

She turns from her spot and looks at the man in comfy jeans and a light blue sweater. “Mr. Queen.”

“We are going to be working together a lot you can call me Oliver.”

“Right. Mr. Queen.” She shakes her head, “Oliver, that will take some getting used to.” She gives him a manila folder and a smile graces his face.

“I’m going to take this with me look it over and any notes we can talk about it tomorrow. Goodnight.”

“Good night.”

He looks at her name plaque and stops, “Felicity Smoak, it’s actually a nice name.”

She can’t stop the words that leave, “For those that can remember.”

He bites his lip. She noticed. Yep she must have noticed by the way she is looking at him. “Sorry, I am really trying to place names and faces here. I’m going to check to see if I got the packet, I requested. Learn a few names.” The alarming brief look on her face which she masks quickly. “Sorry to take your time you’re probably ready to go home to your husband and kids.”

Looking at her tidy desk than back at him as she places her chin on her hand that is propped by the desk between them.
“Goodnight Mr. Queen.”

“It’s Oliver.”

“Right. Oliver. I do need to head home. My mother and three children are waiting. I’m hoping to spend some time before they snooze off to dreamland.”

“Oh.”

She is up grabbing her stuff and says goodnight to him one more time as he heads to his own office.

Sighing as he enters his makeshift office. Today’s early meeting back at QC was something he couldn’t avoid and it actually turned out good and it should have had in in good spirits but he had lunch with his mother before taking a flight back out here. Somehow leaving the city with a twinge of guilt that his mother isn’t going to be a grandmother any time soon.

Sitting down with a thud. He is now pondering his place here. Instead of heading home and coming in with a fresh approach in the morning he purposely went to seek out a certain person. Glad she was here but at the same time exasperated that she was here. The woman in just a few days frame it seems has him wondering what the hell is wrong with him.

Moving to find what he wants he pulls the packet and empties it to show the familiar faces of the team. He looks for one in particular and when he finds it. It just seems weird that he has a fixation. Reading that she is single does him no good.

The only thing good about the whole thing is that his time here is limited. No more than another what he estimates is nine to ten weeks. Twelve if he plans on being here with the marketing team.

There isn’t much information on her. So, he thinks of what he knows of her. She’s single, lives with her mother, has three kids. Now he lets his mind wonder to assumptions. She’s probably hard to live with hence why she isn’t married. She has three kids, which may or may not share the same father. She doesn’t care about her figure which for some men would not be a problem but he likes to be physically active. He routinely has been rock climbing, trekking through vigorous paths, and enjoys water activities. So why is he even interested in finding out more about her. He can’t shake the feeling they have met.

He looks at her education and maybe that is why he thinks he’s seen her before. After graduating from Starling Prep, he took his education seriously. Joining a lot of groups and social reforms. He learned a lot about himself and worked for a brighter future. He knew back then he had it made but he decided after the accident he wouldn’t be that guy. Even though it led to him being marooned on a desert island. He still kept his aspirations.

Providence, Rhode Island is a nice little city and he likes it enough. The area beaches are nice but it be a few months till the weather be possible to enjoy. Ray Palmer already extended an invite for him to spend a holiday at his home in Ivy Town, in Connecticut.

How does it happen?
Oliver Queen is puzzled. Never did he want to do homework on a woman. Especially on one he
doesn’t desire. Maybe meeting her family will wake him up and he can go back to being happy-go-
lucky enjoying the company of beautiful women.

Chapter End Notes

Thank for reading!
Work buddies

Chapter Summary

Ray and Oliver make the move to have Ms. Smoak closer on their floor. Bringing their professional lives closer.

Chapter Notes

This chapter sets where the story is heading.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Felicity walks to where her office use to be and is stumped. Her desk is gone. Instead there is a vacant spot. The file cabinets are also missing. She walks to her boss’s office to inquiry why, how,
when and probably why again.

“Good morning, Felicity.”

“Hi Larry. I’ve been a good employee. I don’t deserve to be fired…”

“Fired? No. But, if you’re a wondering where your new workstation is?”

She looking at the man. Hopefully the suspense will be over and he’ll tell her. Why does she need to be in a different workstation, anyhow? “Yes.”

“Mr. Palmer supposedly had a chat with Mr. Queen and I’m really not privy to the conversation but they had some custodians move some stuff around and you will be working closer with the C.E.O. of Queen Consolidated.”

She stutters out, “What?” and another second later, “Why?”

Larry just shrugs. Though throwing his two cents in he says, “You know the project well and basically this joint-venture is due to how you were able to make sense of the data.” He is a sweet older man and gives her a warm smile as he continues, “If you keep going this route, you’ll be my boss too.”

“Ha funny, I have no experience on leading people around.”

“You’re a mother. I know from experience my wife leads me and my once young children around. You’d be fine at it.”

“Thanks, though I don’t think I’m ready for that yet.”

“I say go with the flow. Learn something new and keep an open mind. Satisfy their needs with your uniqueness.”

“Thanks, I guess. So, I should head to Mr. Queen’s office?”

She has never been near the executive’s offices and looking down at her apparel she wonders if she is so underdressed. “Safe bet that is where your desk will be.”

The sliding of the door she walks into a new world. Bubinga wooden panels and just vast amount a space. She surely does not belong here. Two well-dressed ladies who shared the elevator ride with her were talking about some trip to Sicily and the shoes they both had to get. Looking down to her feet at the discounted price she was super excited to get makes her shuffle her feet anxiously she tries not to look at what they are wearing because it probably costs more than the lease of her vehicle and rent combined. Why couldn’t she stay where she felt comfortable and with people of her social standings?

A woman’s voice gets her to turn to her right. The brunette is sitting behind a raised desk. Not a hair out of place. “Are you here for the assistant’s job?”

“Assistant?”
The nod of the woman only confirms what she said.

“I… I don’t know. What does an assistant do?” She has no idea what her job title is anymore. It’s changed so many times in the last eight months working at this company.

Felicity can hear the slight ire of the woman’s voice “Fetch coffee, get whatever is needed for your boss.” She looks Felicity over. “Are you here to work under Mr. Thompson?”

Felicity tilts her head, Kevin Thompson runs the marketing team, she hasn’t had the opportunity to meet him.

“Mr. Thompson? No. I’m here to totally satisfy Oliver Queen’s needs.” The woman stares at her “I mean working needs with Mr. Queen. I’m here for him.”

“Right.” The woman lips pucker as she asks, “Okay, well who are you?” Both women are just glaring at one another they don’t hear the approaching man in a very nice tailored suit.

With that a man’s voice cuts in. “This is Ms. Smoak; she’ll be working closely with Mr. Queen. Thank you, Jeannette. I’ll handle it from here.”

The woman’s voice now like honey, “Of course Mr. Palmer.” Ray starts walking with her through another doorway that leads into a hallway and wow. This floor is exquisite.

“Ray, I didn’t expect to come up all these floors. Maybe I should return…”

“Nonsense. We don’t expect you to travel up every time Oliver has a request for you.”

“I guess he is tired of going down on me.” Her eyes close as what she just said replays in her mind taking a breath counting backwards from 3, 2, 1. Opening them to see a man who might have caught what she said. She can’t tell with his impassive face but his eyes sort of look to be holding amusement. Great! She is now a laughing stock to him. “I mean downstairs…”

Ray being quite oblivious to her innuendos just presses on. Then leaves them to attend to other business.

Oliver cutting into the silence first. “Here, I thought you’d want this.” She sees the box that holds her mementos. A little toy of her kid’s favorite superhero and a photo of her and the triplets that was taken by her mom.

“Thank you, Mr. Queen.”

“Haven’t we established that Mr. Queen is my father. Oliver, please.”

“Sorry, Oliver. What exactly do you need of me?” She looks at the desk where she needs her computer system to be setup. She isn’t part of the I.T. team so dabbling in putting it together would be a no, no.

“I actually have some files already on my computer that I’d like us to look at.” Placing her stuff in the provided closet she moves into his office. “Don’t mind the mess. I had the custodians move some furniture around.”

“This is so much larger than my whole apartment.” She can see how nice the view is from his window. Standing there regarding how small things look from this height. He just observes her quietly and it’s as good of a time as any to ask about her family. He is curious.
“I guess it’ll be mean to express this is the size of my kitchen back home.”

She turns to look at the man who probably thinks this pauper is a dreamer looking from the outside wanting in. She isn’t driven by money even though it would make things easier. Her childhood dreams dashed by reality. She’s now a mom first. Raising three individuals that she hopes will make the world better. She only wants what is best for her kids. It doesn’t include huge rooms. She wants them to know warmth and kindness and not be too big for their own breeches. Yet, her little family is in dire need of some change. “It would only be mean if you are fibbing?”

“You’ve got me. I love to cook and my gourmet kitchen is bigger than this office.” He sees her jaw fall before she regains her composure. Hearing her mumble something that sounds a lot like can’t cook. “Wait, did you just say you can’t cook?”

“I can cook. I just suck at it.”

This is the entrance he needs to talk about her children, “Do the kids like it though?” She huffs. “Does that mean a solid no?”

“It means I don’t think we are here to talk about my lack of cooking skills.”

He laughs and raises his hands in defeat. “Touchy subject.”

He is so carefree she thinks. It is so weird to be near him and not be irritated. It might even be slightly weirder to talk about his children as if they don’t have many of his attributes. This is such a slippery slide of things that can go wrong and fast. Even so, she can feel he is trying to be the good boss. From his perspective she thinks he just wants her comfortable enough to help make this co-venture be as profitable as possible. That makes perfect sense in her mind so she can work with that. Not to mention how Palmer and Queen state she is on the same leveled field and is an equal on this exertion she knows better. In the end she’ll be reassigned as they happily take credit for her part in this.

How did his laugh become a nice melody to her ears? It shouldn’t be but she loves the deepness of his voice it is totally different than what her waking nightmare of him use to be. Funny she has heard his voice on TV several times and she’s never picked up on how appeasing it is to her ears. Oh gosh, if his voice is having some semblance of control over her wondering mind than her mother is probably right that it has been a good while since she’s been lucky. The way his face lights up on teasing her oh she is in trouble. He is actually so charming and sweet and that in itself creates a dilemma. She is going to be stuck with him for hours and hours until he finally leaves. The way his eyes are looking at her with general interest about her cooking skills? Yea, he’d run if he tasted some of it. Thank goodness for prepared foods. She is doomed. Wishing her mind isn’t so overactive. How does he do it? It’s so simple to get lost, this job just got harder.

“Why do you think this job just got harder?”

“Oh. No, I didn’t say that out loud.”

“Yes. Yes, you did.” He moves around to open his laptop. “I’m sorry if I make you feel uncomfortable.” His light humor taking a dip to becoming apprehensive. He really doesn’t want them to be on uneasy footing. It will make working with each other harder.

Oh, he does make her feel anxious but not for the reasons he probably is thinking. They have a history which he is clueless of and well she doesn’t think she’ll ever discuss that with him. “No, I am sorry. Mr.” she stops herself, “Oliver.”

“Maybe we should get back to why you are here. I have some questions on raw materials of a
product spec.” The conversation stays on business and both agonize why working together this close will be increasingly hard. The next few hours they pour through specs and only the small commotion of the IT setup really disturbs them.

Oliver makes sure to not touch her. He doesn’t need or want to know if she does really have some semblance of control with just her touch. Though he is learning her scent is just as troubling. Darn what did he sign himself up for? He’ll need to remind himself constantly that it is only a matter of a few weeks and he’ll be gone. The thought he could go head first onto into this fixation for a woman and not get affected is now beginning to resonate. He’s done some terrible decision making in his personal life but never to the effect in what might be the worst business-related practice that can only end in doom.

Felicity felt the shift immediately. She needs to remind herself to see things like he probably does. He doesn’t carry the baggage of five years from her pregnancy till now of raising their full of wonder four-year-olds. As much as she may hold resentment for his treatment of her. She’s keeping him from one of the best things in life. Three little happy-go-lucky blue-eyed marvels. She hates the fact the being so close to him in this setting and starting to pick up modest things that her children in fact possess from their father. It is beginning to eat away at her and create guilt. She keeps telling herself that this is a limited time only and he’ll be gone before she knows it. She’ll raise her children. Selfish yes but what he doesn’t know won’t hurt him. If he remembered her. Remembered telling her how irrelevant and laughing that she was the easiest fifty dollars he made. He hurt her for a bunch of fifty-dollar bills that really meant nothing coming from a wealthy family. She just knows the looks of those boys seared into her memory as she cried. Feeling a deep shame.

Oliver left for an extended lunch. This break is a relief for both parties. They find working with facts, numbers, and figuring what steps to take within the project comes easy. They are natural at navigating business practices and using their unique knowledge of study to apply into what seems important to make this venture beyond successful.

Even Ray Palmer sitting beside them for a short time totally impressed on how they worked off each other. Putting in his own two cents and seeing how Oliver or Felicity spin the information is fascinating to a man whose IQ rivals the woman chewing her red pen. In fact, he finds her refreshing and with the way she doesn’t hold back her brilliant thoughts. If he wasn’t so in love with Anna this woman would surely be someone he would totally see himself courting. His mind flashes to that for a brief second before shaking the thought from his mind. Felicity Smoak is not only a marvelous STEM field associate but she has shown to be sincere and compassionate in any endeavors she has worked on in his company. He is truly fortunate to have some great people working for him.

“It seems this development between getting the raw materials requested will be no issue. This is great work.” Ray smiles looking at the two who actually helped cut through some red tape and that wasn’t even something that was on the table. He has to give it to Oliver Queen’s tenacity and how Felicity Smoak’s ability to run data and watching these two people throw ideas around each other. He hasn’t seen such compatibility and it leaves him in awe. He doubts these two even see it.

“Felicity ran the numbers twice. I have no idea how she can calculate it that fast.”

“Thanks Oliver, but you’re the one who thought up of a strategy that just works. We can have our
supply here faster.”

Ray can tell each of them is not truly keen on being falted by the other and he holds back his laughter. If he didn’t have a meeting to head to he would stay here longer. It has been an experience he expects will happen again.

He manages to make both Oliver and Felicity blush at mentioning that they are like a team within a team as he watches them effortlessly bounce off ideas on each other.

Returning back from lunch where his dad surprised him. Inviting him to what he calls ‘meeting of the bigwigs’ Nothing like talking corporate while lunching. They’d meet for dinner later before his dad departs back to Starling.

Felicity is on a personal call when Oliver walks back into his office. Her desk is now set up just outside his office and ready for use.

She mouths sorry as he can hear a boy talk a mile a minute about what he has been doing. “You don’t say, and what did Lilly do?” His response gets Felicity to laugh. Oliver just sits down and observes the woman who seems so content on listening to one of her babies recount a story. He never thought of fatherhood. Wouldn’t know heads from tales. He is happy being a bachelor and always thinks when he crosses that bridge, he’ll have to deal. Right now, though not being tied down is really a good thing. Being away from Starling for a good amount of time for business maybe it’s a splendid thing that he doesn’t have to worry about such things. “Okay, sweetie. Momma needs to get back to work. I love you Olly.”

“Is he the oldest?” Oliver asks once she places her personal phone back in her purse. He knows she has three children. This morning the conversation led nowhere and maybe he should keep his trap shut but curiosity got the better of him.

“No middle. That’s only because his brother hates not being first at anything.”

“Huh? Why would that matter?”

“It does if you’re a triplet.” She laughs at Oliver’s face of realization. “He is almost five minutes younger than his brother and seven minutes older than his sister.”

“Triplets?” he makes a whistle sound. “Three kids at once. I remember my kid sister being a handful and she was just one child.”

“Can’t say they aren’t a handful.” She sighs thinking of how her daughter is getting the short end of the stick.

“What? What is that sigh about?”

Looking at him take an interest. Like he really wants to know. She lets out another sigh and admits something she isn’t proud of. Maybe his insight can help the situation. “The boys have it out for Lillian.”

“The gum incident? That was intentional?”
“Nate, he though Lilly would look good with a new haircut.”

“How did she take it?”

“Honestly. She gives her bravest face but she scared to be left alone with either of them.”

“What about their father?”

“He has never been a part of the picture.”

“So, it’s just you raising them? How old are they if you don’t mind me asking?”

“Four. They turned four less than a week ago. I’m fortunate to have my mother. Also, I’m lucky my dad is in contact as he sends me some money every few months. That is the extend of our relationship.”

“This sounds tough. I can tell you love them all but your baby girl shouldn’t live in fear nor should the boys bully each other. Again, I know it’s not my place but how are you handling it?” He can see that he hits a chord with her and goes to mend his words. “I’m sorry it isn’t my business…”

“I don’t know.” He doesn’t know what to say as her tears gather and freely fall. “I am planning to separate the boys this weekend but that could cause an even larger rift. Lillian will suffer with half-ass attempts.”

“Is there anything I can do?”

She realizes what is happening. She can’t take pity from him of all people. “Oh my gosh… This is so embarrassing. You don’t need to hear my sorry sob story. You probably think I’m an awful mother.” Felicity is up from her spot on the deluxe sofa against the bare wall. “I should get to my desk.”

“Felicity! Felicity wait. I know we started off awkward this morning, but I do want to help. We’ve done really well with zipping through the list of what I wanted to accomplish today. It’ll be no bother to see if we can figure something out.” Hoping she’ll cooperate. ‘Come on Felicity meet me halfway here.’ He adds to see if she’ll take his help, “Sometimes the saying two heads are better than one could mean just seeing something in a new fresh approach. The worst we get nowhere. Best case scenario Lilly stops be targeted.” Oliver moves to where she was last seated. “Come on. What do you have to lose?”

Oliver invited his dad over to his place instead of another restaurant he wants to cook and just spend some time with a man he looks up to. Robert Queen is considered to be a well-liked philanthropist and a good family man. Growing up they didn’t always look each other in the eye. His dad is straight laced and well he was into not listening and pushing the envelope. Things have changed and they are as thick as thieves now. Other than Oliver’s love life they are pretty agreeable.

Eating across from his father. He doesn’t need to look but his father is watching him.

“Okay, what is up with the big smile?” Robert Queen finally asks his son as he is cutting into his steak.
“Dad, really? Can’t I just sit here and be happy?”

“You could but it’ll be a rarity. Your usually jumpy and trying to get out of having a conversation with your mother and I.”

“That is only because of where most conversations lead.”

Robert just grins and knows he should let the subject go but adds, “It was nice to see Tommy at your mother’s birthday bash days ago. Moira was so excited to meet his newborn daughter. It just brings the case back that both your two best friends are happily married men.”

“Dad, relax one day I’ll hopeful give you a grandchild but if that fails there is always Thea.” He looks at his dad’s expression thinking of when they lost him. He knows how much having him back alive means to them. He would love to father a child for that case alone but right now it’s not in the cards. “I know a lot of things changed after Tommy’s accident. With him learning to walk again and I basically getting detoxed. Still have huge holes in my memory, there is nothing I can say to repair that damage.”

“You were a mess. You cleaned up and I’m proud of you. Even if your romantic vigor is less then desirable now. At least my son is alive. Your mother and I just want what is best for you.”

Oliver laughs wholeheartedly he knows his parents care but they also add stress to the situation. When he looks at the mirror he still sees the dumb kid. Someone who can’t make good choices. Deciding to put the effort into be a good businessman and forgoing the whole picking someone and sharing his life with is something he can live with now. Until very recently he never gave it much thought. Fast women that came and went is easy. No thinking required and not settling keeps him from making the mistake he is so afraid of. Well that is until the anticipation of seeing someone. How it happened is getting blurry but it is way too soon to even put any hope in. He knows he being a crazy loon. They aren’t even friends and even after brainstorming she still carries a chip against him. Yes, they just met but she’s making him smile again and his dad is noticing.

“Fine, there is this woman.”

“Isn’t that always the case?”

“No… Well yes, but she is different.” Oliver has no idea what he is hammering on about. “Just someone I’m working with. She’s brilliant.” He thinks to himself ‘slow down make it about work’ “Like to see where this leads but maybe she’ll be an asset for us. You have been talking about creating a new R&D in a few years’ time but I still don’t know if she’s qualified.”

Robert takes a moment to look at his son. He’s been in Providence for roughly four days so this woman is from Palmer Tech “Does this woman have a name?”

“Her name is Felicity Smoak. Smoak spelled S-m-o-a-k. She’s the person that got this whole venture going.”

“That name sounds familiar.” Robert thinks about it some more as his son is talking about what he can about the project he is working. After a few minutes of Oliver talking about how she is from MIT Robert remembers. “Walter mentioned her when we did recruiting, she declined.”

“What? Why?”

“Don’t know. Walter and Adam really were more into the hiring of fresh brilliant minds. She declined and we hired someone else I suppose.”
“It could be because she has family here. Kids and all.”

“Oh!”

“What?”

“For a moment I thought I would have to have a background check on this Felicity Smoak. But she isn’t a love interest after all. Pity.”

“Dad!”

“What? I’m always going to look out for you even if I’ll love at least two grandkids.”

“I bet. Anyways keep Ms. Smoak in mind maybe with the right incentive she’d move to Starling.”

“I never say no to great talent. Tell me more in a few weeks when you’ve actually spend enough time with her.”

Oliver nods. He is about to embark in meeting the Smoaks and he can’t wait.

Chapter End Notes

Yes... Moira and the triplets share the same birthday.
The Queens aren't the evil Incorporated like in the show... there is no undertaking... no hood/arrow/specific color arrow a.k.a Green Arrow :) But I hope you enjoy the journey with me.

*By the way, I know I set up how Oliver looks at women in general and his jerky qualities but the man himself is decent hope this chapter helps a little. The boy is still shallow but hey why wouldn't he be? He basically gets what he wants there isn't a shortage of ladies to stroke his ego. He'll just start to figure out things. We'll see if Felicity will give in...someday...just kidding she have him work for it. She's going to get to know him too even when she knows more about their shared past.
Meeting the Smoaks

Chapter Summary

Simple chapter as Oliver meets and mingles with the Smoaks. Phase1 to meet the kids as per their brainstorming.

Chapter Notes

This one and a few coming up is fluff with the Smoaks making their imprint on Mr. Queen.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
He is heading to a neighborhood he took off his list as where to continue his runs in the morning. This is where they live? Ouch! The building’s lot is pretty unkempt. He is now parking his vehicle and looking at the run-down building that houses the Smoaks. Hopefully the indoors won’t be as bad. He isn’t totally wrong about that but other than the smell of cigarette smoke the hallway is clean.

Deciding to meet the three subjects of what turned out to be a whole two hours of brainstorming. Seeing Felicity pour out her soul to him. Somewhere in the short time frame of knowing this interesting woman. He now knows Felicity Smoak is a name he thinks he could never forget. Her words still sharp in his mind and how he reacts to some things had those two hours become a learning lesson into the Smoak world.

“You aren’t serious about separating them this weekend that is surely a recipe for disaster?”

“Really?” She already pondered it is a disaster in the making but she wants to hear Oliver’s take on this.

“Yes, I can still remember when my parents and Tommy’s decided to punish us and keep us from each other when we were kids. Yes, we weren’t four at the time but it was close. Our poor nannies but we made a ruckus. This is just between two little kids now imagine siblings that live with each other?”

“What is your ultimate suggestion?”

“Well I don’t know them personally, which we can remedy that tonight or tomorrow night? What do you think?”

“Oliver, I don’t want you to go out of your way.”

“Serious. I’m the one suggesting this. If you’re not comfortable…”

“No, we’ve been brainstorming for the last two hours. I’ll do anything to help the situation at home. I just don’t want to blur any lines. I’m still just an employee and you have so much more important things to do outside of work for sure.”

“Yes, fixing dinner for one is pretty glamorous. Maybe instead of an hour workout I’ll add another one or maybe even two more to the mix.” He’s staring at her with conviction. “I said I’d help and I get you’re a proud mom. Those tears just an a few hours ago have dried up. Somehow you felt that your little ones would benefit with an outsider with a fresh perspective. We work good together Smoak. Let see if we can make the lives of three four-year-olds benefit from our focus. So yes, I’d like to meet them first before we implement anything."

“Okay, tonight is fine. You’ll meet my mother. She’s… she is my mother!”

“Okay, I kind of figured that.” He gives her a smile. This ends their silly arguments as they plan on the little things and then find themselves transitioning back into the workflow easy.

He has no idea what he is getting into. He probably should head in the other direction but seeing hope in her eyes is enough to go through with this madness. This is what he wants he thinks. Meeting her family so he can then chuck the whole experience and walk away free and clear. Be free! That is what he keeps saying but what he is actually doing is going into the lioness’s den.

He says he isn’t attracted to her and yet talks Palmer into having her closer. Says he doesn’t want anything to do with children yet is going to her home knowing there are three little bodies who will see right through him and that can chew him apart. Says he isn’t ready for any commitment yet is
knowingly going to meet Felicity’s mother. Yet after thinking all this he is at their door. A part of him is concerned about his new choices in life but the biggest part of him is super eager like this is where he wants to be.

Felicity has no idea what possessed her to even go along with any of this. Listening to Oliver’s flow of words just hypnotized her. She finds just being in his circle a few days and already she’s putty in his hands. Not the romantic kind that she isn’t ready for but for including him in her life. A part of her struggling to overcome the fear. Another crazy part of her just wanting to see this all through. She may never have a chance to see Oliver interact with her children again. He’ll be moving on and all she will have are memories but at least these are ones she hopes to cherish.

“When will he get here?”

“Mom, I know the kids are getting hungry. He says he needs to stop and get some ingredients he’ll be here real soon.” She looks at her mom studying her.

“You just met him and he’s already meeting your children. The only men they have been around them is the small visits of your father and the pediatrician. I know for a fact no lovers have ever graced into their lives.”

“Mom, you know the word lovers creeps me out.”

“Honey… hmmm maybe these…” she stresses with her fingers “lovers” before giving her daughter a snarky comeback, “Have never been all that. You’d be singing weird love songs in the bath if any actually could find your magic spot.”

“Mom! Really? Just be on your best behavior. Please! He is my boss.”

“I’ll behave I usually find your type very boring. If I have to hear about another rendition of Star Wars or The Who doctor I may faceplant on the floor from anguish.” Giving her daughter a serious look. She isn’t joking there is only so much science fiction she can handle before wanting to jump off a cliff or something. “Why did he agree to come here anyhow?”

“Fine, mom the reason he is coming is because I broke down at work.”

Donna places her hand to her mouth. “Baby, are you okay?”

“I’m fine but I told him about Lillian and he wants to help.”

“How?” Donna is stomped.

“I told him that I planned on separating the boys this weekend and he thought that was a horrid plan. He’s right. So, we brainstormed.”

“And this man coming here is going to help how?”

“The kids are used to us. Being that they don’t have a father. He thought. Well, I think he might think that an outside authority could help.” She isn’t sure why he wants to help. This is kind of unheard of. The man isn’t known for his caring ways to improve children’s lives. He is still her boss.
Too late now any minute he’ll be here.

“Honey, what if the children become dependent on him?”

“That won’t happen. This is a one-time deal. He’ll meet them tonight and this weekend we use one of the methods we brainstormed.”

Donna doesn’t give a response to that. Shrugging once and lets the subject go.

Dinner is a hit. Oliver is relieved the kids enjoyed his simple kid friendly dish that he incorporated plenty of vegetables. Looking at how relieved Felicity is it makes everything seem better. He enjoys watching one of the boys lick his dessert clean off the plate. The yummy noises telling him how much they liked his food. In his mind already planning another meal. He has no idea why he is so ahead of himself but he mentally shrugs it off. He’ll like to make another classic that incorporates more of a healthy choice. Looking at all the processed foods they have stored in the cabinets makes him want to grab a waste basket and chuck it all out.

He is really enjoying being here. Their hyperactivity not freaking him out. Each one of the kids coming up to him and talking about their favorite toy. He notices a theme and now the toy Felicity has on her desk makes sense.

He knows Felicity’s mom is observing him wondering what he’ll gets out of this deal. If she only knew he is here to break the fascination that he has with her daughter she would not be giving him that warm smile after Lilly climbs onto his lap.

“Hi.”

He can’t help the smile he gives her. “Hello.”

Her head tilts as if she’s trying to find an answer to a question she never asked. Felicity turns from drying a dish and calls out, “Lillian, maybe Mr. Queen would feel better if…”

“I don’t mind and its Oliver.” Donna looks at the exchange.

The little boy playing with his blocks pipes up saying, “That’s my name.”

Donna moves from her spot and picks up the little boy. “Yes, it is.” Giving him a facial kiss.

Oliver winks at the boy. “That’s a cool name.”

Donna laughs at how the boy seems to like that this man has the same name as him. This is where Donna gives Oliver major points, he brings in Nathan into the conversation. “What’s your name?”

The boy shrugs he’s not too sure he wants to give this essential strange man his name. His bubba taught him not to talk to strangers. He looks at his grandmother for advice. He makes the sign he was taught when an adult he doesn’t know wants to talk to him. It’s something they use because there are three of them and when in public there is just so many hands. They need these precious babies to scream or make a sign to show something is up. “I don’t think Oliver is a stranger any longer.” That gives the boy the permission he needs.
Felicity is a little nervous if Nathan does give his whole name thing her mom might catch on. That would not be a good thing. The woman is like a dog who won’t let go of a bone.

Donna is won over by how well he is entertaining the three that keep asking him question after question and his answers satisfactory to the three four-year-olds.

“Nate. N-A-T-E”

“Wow!” Oliver gives him a thumbs up and Nathan goes in for a high five. Lilly finally leaves his lap to get something leaving Oliver to look at the two boys. They have most amazing blue eyes. They are so much like Felicity. Just as quickly Lilly is back with a cloth flower that looks like a lily. “Are you trying to tell me something, Ms. Smoak?”

She bobs her head a few times holding out the flower to him. “This is a lily. Right?” She climbing back on the sofa which Oliver automatically without thinking picks her up and the girl is back happily on his lap.

“Flower.” She says with all the authority in her as she points to the flower in his hand and then to herself indicating she is a lily to.

“I see, well I think you’re even prettier than any flower I have ever seen.”

Donna is beside Felicity looking at the discussion when she says loudly, “Felicity if your guest wouldn’t mind. This is a great opportunity for us to bring those bags to the trash.” Giving her a look as to say I need to talk to you now.

“Now?”

“It can’t wait?”

“Oliver?”

Oliver trying not to listen but he can hear the Smoak women talk as Lilly and Nate are electively telling him a story. “Yes?”

“Would you mind looking at these three for a short bit. We are going to bring some trash out.”

“Oh, are you sure. They might need their…”

“Um… are you sure. You are doing great so far.” Donna gives him a wink.

Felicity and her mom took a few bags from the bedroom. The elder Smoak calling it clutter and they left him to look after three inquisitive kids. Just minutes after they leave, he gets a call. He moans about who it is. Placing his finger to his lips to indicate quietness. He picks up the phone to his ear as he greets his mother.

“Mom, can I call you back? I’m kind of babysitting right now.”

“Oliver, do you take me for a fool? You and children…” His phone is confiscated it serves him right to have it to close to the child in his lap “Hello? Sweetie can you give the phone back to my son? Oh… Really you are four. That’s is nice. You sound like a princess…”
Oliver rolls his eyes at his mother’s side of the conversation. Taking the phone back. “Sorry mom. Lilly can be persistent.”

“Are you seeing someone?”

“What? No! Why would you say that?”

“Only way you’d babysit is if there is a woman involved.”

“Mom, we actually work together. No biggie.”

“Yet, there is no one else to babysit. Oliver, your lies are incorrigible.”

“Mom, can I call you back later?”

“Yes, and make sure to have a really good story for this. Bye my beautiful boy.”

“Bye mom, love you!”

He looks at the little blue-eyed girl he asked to stay quiet but instead took his phone.

“Thanks Lilly.” That gets her to giggle and how can he stay mad with an angelic little face?

She is so happy her whole face is just pink from smiling. “Bestest birtday gif.”

Oliver is amazed he can understand that, “What’s your best birthday gift?” She snuggles against him. Saying nothing more as she’s content being in his arms.

Donna Smoak is no fool. Meeting Oliver has opened up a can of worms.

“Felicity, who is he? A relative of the one who knocked you up?”

“Mom!”

“Please, I may be blonde but I wasn’t born yesterday.”

“Oliver is…”

“Felicity Megan Smoak, do not lie to me. I don’t think he is the father. He truly seems like he is genuinely interested in helping you. The name Queen rings a bell. If I were to open a tabloid would he be on it?”

“Mom, I told you about him. Ray made me a JR…”

“Yes. I know what you’ve said. Now I’d like to know what you aren’t telling me?”

“I love you, mom. I am so happy your helping me out but my children mean the world to me. I’ll do anything for them.”

“I know you would. I never implied anything else.” She isn’t done saying her peace, “It is just uncanny of the similarities I see.”
“Mistah kween”

“Yes buddy?”

“Can u read ‘tory?” Nathan has a small book in his hand as he notices Lilly who is on his lap already looking up at him as Olly has stopped playing with his blocks and is moving to sit by his feet. He doesn’t take the book yet as he brings them all onto the futon with him. Each child quite glued to his side as he moves the book from Nate’s fingers.

Oliver glances at the book. The kids tell him it is a new book. Inspecting it. The author is Richard Scarry. The title is Naughty Bunny. It is from the Little Golden Books series. He gives the summary a quick read. Beloved Richard Scarry has created one of his most endearingly naughty characters ever. Little bunny doesn’t deliberately try to be naughty, but more often than not, that’s exactly what happens. Whether he is startling his mother with a loud TV, drawing on the wall, or making a fuss at nap time, this little bunny proves that even the naughtiest of children can be the most loveable. He has to give the woman credit she bought a book on an idea from their brainstorming.

The kids are all waiting as they see him flip quickly through the pages. Being they aren’t familiar with the book’s text they can’t comment and finally little Oliver makes a whiny sound of frustration.

“Is little Olly impatient? I am about to start a tale about a bunny. Everyone excited?”

He hears three yeses and lets out a laugh. They are sure eager and he will aim to please, hopefully!

“The little bunny didn’t mean to be naughty. But he didn’t try very hard to be good.” He stops to see that they’re all invested in his words. “He bothered his father at breakfast.” He shows the kids seeing the bunny interrupting his daddy while reading the Daily Carrot. “He spilled his cereal.” Stopping ever so often to show them the scenes. He reads until the end.

He feels amazed on how having little ears glued to his every word makes him feel. It’s not like adults don’t listen because they do when he is the speaker in some meeting this is different because he can see by looking at each face how the story takes hold of their imagination. It’s quite enthralling.

He looks at the clock. Felicity and Donna aren’t back and he is now a little concerned. Not that they bailed and left him the kids. Just that the neighborhood is shady and maybe he should have escorted one of them to do this task that would have been the gentlemanly thing to do.

“U live in castle?”

“A castle?” He thinks of the mansion but he doesn’t really live there he has a very nice two floor penthouse that is very generous for his needs. “No. But my home has lots of windows.”

The girl asks what the boys are also wondering, “You kween.”

He shakes his head no. “That is my last name. My name is Oliver Jonas Queen. Just like you…” He points to each child, “Nathan. Oliver. Lillian Smoak.”

Donna enters first, “Sorry we had a little rodent problem.”

Oliver is getting up and easily brings Lilly up with him. She seems to not want to let him go anyhow.
“Oh. Are you ladies okay?”

“We are fine. We may have scared a few neighbors.”

Oliver can hear Felicity’s words as she reaches her apartment, “My mom screamed bloody murder.”

“It was a huge rat.”

When the boys hear the word rat, they both look around. Both excited to see if there is another cute playmate in their home. Even Lilly wants to look and Oliver drops her softly to the carpeted floor.

Oliver watches at how the children are moving things around and peeking behind things. “What are the kids doing?”

Felicity would be happy to shrug off and feign ignorance. Telling him that they have had a rat or two and the kids consider them pets until either Donna or herself catches the critter isn’t something she wants to say.

Donna answers his question, “We may have little rat problem but we handle it.”

Oliver has his tongue against his cheek keeping from saying something. He can feel that Felicity is a little embarrassed for the situation. Not wanting to out welcome his stay he tells them that it is getting late and should head home. They say their goodbyes and will see each other at work tomorrow.

Oliver doesn’t bother totally undressing as his body drops to the firm mattress. Oliver cannot recall a time he spent an evening with a woman and felt so drained. He has a new found respect for the mother of three. Kids are exhausting. Though he will admit he enjoyed himself because he had a really good time tonight. He is also in some serious trouble.

Tonight, was supposed to end different. He is supposed to dread the weekend when the brainstorming between Felicity and himself comes into fruition. Should not be surprised that his plan backfired. Of course, someone like Felicity Smoak would have awesome kids. He is truly excited to see them all again.

Each one special, each one having their own little uniqueness and he thinks that each child should embrace it. He can see Felicity in each one. Not just the physical attributes but the woman he is getting to know. She has a logical way of thinking that makes her so special and that is so pronounced in her second child. Olly’s mind must be busy on overtime dream cycles and it would give him great pleasure to hear about them. The little boy seems so reserved compared to the other two. He is the one who accessed him the most. Hopefully he passed the little boy’s test.

The eldest of the three, Nathan well he is spunky. He can see him trying to conquer the world. He also has this protective nature and the other two follow his lead. He doesn’t know who their father is but he supposes the boy takes on a lot more of his dad’s qualities. Not that Felicity isn’t ambitious he has learned in a day’s time that the reason they work well together is how practical she is. Her mind is spinning ideas while his is strategic for quick outcomes.

Lillian, well she is her mom’s reflection but tends to be more like Nathan in the sense of
determination. She’s actually a powerhouse. He wonders if it’s her brilliance that makes the boys not knowing what that means for their age but the word could be resentful. She might be the perfect balance of her parents. He lets out a laugh. He just formulated the kids to some mixed drinks of what portions of Felicity and the unknown male subject’s attributes fills the alcoholic cocktail. The man that walked out on them is got to be the biggest tool. These kids and their mother are amazing.

He doesn’t know what category he would place Donna Smoak in. She seemed warm but very attuned to what he said and did. She thanked him for not being a nerd. At first, he was super confused by that but by the end of dinner she was totally into what hobbies he was into. Felicity shrugged it off telling him that she dated a few men who could name fake movie generals but had a hard time naming more than one real General of any country. Donna is documentary kind of gal. Which is hard for him to perceive because she acts so bubbly like in all the romantic dramas he knows of. He wants to put her in the friendly mother of the woman he has his fixation on checklist but then again Donna seems like a very, very protective mother and grandmother so she most likely be suited in the better watch yourself checklist.

If tonight was his sample of things to come, he can’t wait for the weekend. He is actually excited about the vigorous physical moments that won’t lead onto a very good time bringing on the exhaustion in a more primal way between two consenting adults. Instead he’ll be chasing the little monsters through the park. That’ll mean a lot more dealing with the Smoaks. More time with Felicity outside of work.

This goes against everything he has said in the past. He is not there yet but the longer he is around her the more insatiable it is getting to not think of her. She might be the image he needs behind closed doors and no other woman could possibly be as satisfying. Fluffing his pillow, he wonders how those curves will feel under his touch. He has no one to blame but himself. He knew from first contact she had him on edge. That electric shiver from one single touch still has him going down some proverbial hole that he will not be able to dig out of.

Letting out a dramatic moan he can’t keep his mom guessing and he has no idea what he is about to say. An easy lie could get him so far. She picks up on the second ring. Their pleasantries cut short once it goes into his love life.

“Mom, mom” he tries to get a word in. “I only met her this week.” He blows air. “I know. You don’t actually think Sofie and I had a chance?” He hears his mother say how glad she truly is that at least that relationship is over but when will he enter a real one? “I’ve had a real…” oh that wasn’t the right words to say. “Okay, sheesh. You and dad know me to well. I just… I just don’t think there is someone out there for me.” His mother brings the conversation back to Felicity. “No. She didn’t dupe me into babysitting. I wanted to be there.” She asks the magic question of why and he sucks in a breath, “I don’t know. I mean I may know a little. It’s just too early to tell.” He hears a word of wisdom, “She’s a mother to triples.” He pulls his phone from his ear. “I get what you’re saying. I need to think hard before dragging children into my mess.” He can’t believe his mom is more argumentative in protecting kids she doesn’t know. “Mom, okay I know you’re on my side. I love you too, bye.”

He survived another inquiry and now he just waits any minute, any minute now. Just like clockwork. His phone rings and his sister’s face is very visible. He connects to a video call.

“Hi Thea.” Her eyes are narrowed. “This is the moment you say hi back.”

“I heard mom’s side of the conversation.”

“Okay.”
“You’re seeing a woman with kids?”
“T’m not really seeing anyone right now. But I had dinner at a woman’s apartment.”
“Do you know what that means?”
“That I’m not hungry.”
“Ollie, you have to take these things seriously.”
“Fine what am I missing?”
She gives him her famous look which gives him no idea what she means. “She won’t want to have any more babies.”
“That’s a bad thing?”
“Ollie, you need to have kids for me to be an aunt.”
“Wait, this whole conversation is about me being thoughtful to your aspiration of becoming an aunt?”
“See… I knew you weren’t the dummy I perceived you to be.”
He laughs. “I love you but my Thea time is coming to an end. I need a shower and my bed.”
“Ollie…”
“Love you!” he ends the call. Shaking his head. He is so glad there isn’t three of her running around.

With the kids all tired out they are in bed without being told twice. Felicity is making her futon bed up when her mom wrapped in a towel heads to sit on the available chair to lather her skin with moisturizer. It’s a comfortable silence for a while.

Donna regards her baby girl who isn’t stretched out yet on the makeshift bed. A heavy expression on Felicity’s face tells her everything she really needs to know. Her daughter is a hopeless romantic who believes she will never find love. After the grandkids were born and the excitement wore off and long days turn to nights with her daughter’s determination to continue her education. Donna is so proud of her baby girl. Fighting depression, the influx of weight gain, trying to be a good mom, and finding a steady job. She thanks Noah, her ex-husband for coming back into their lives to at least financially help his daughter. As a career criminal and always being on the move at least Felicity finds that her dad didn’t totally abandon her.

“Never seen the kids so excited. We should have more guests over.”
Felicity smiles but it doesn’t reach her eyes. “Our food bills would be outrageous and well I prefer we don’t poison our guests.”
“Point taken. Olly actual ate everything on his plate. The boy loves to play with his food and instead licked his plate clean.”
“There was a lot of vegetables served tonight. I don’t think that man eats junk food.”

“Well maybe you haven’t noticed but he fills his clothing well. I wonder how much that suit he wore costs?”

“It’s probably better not to know.”

“Yea you’re right. Too rich for my blood.” A pause, “Felicity?”

Hearing her name said a certain way. She tired enough even if her mind is in overtime. “Mom. I really don’t…”

Donna may have thought beforehand when she told Felicity that Oliver has close genetics to the one who knocked her up but coming back into the apartment, she heard Oliver tell the kids his whole name and that just had her mind reeling. Her grandkids don’t really grasp their middle names yet so to hear it come out as Oliver Jonas Queen pronounces his name to the three very enchanted audience. As Felicity was just coming up the stairs behind her and didn’t hear this admission.

“Is he they’re father? Just a simple yes or no and I’ll let it go.” She is up off the chair and placing the moisturize back in its place.

Felicity knows that bringing Oliver here that the potential of her mom figuring it out was high. She doesn’t regret it. The only thing that is regrettable is Oliver will move on and hopefully so will the kids. She’ll be stuck on how he was amazing with the kids. This whole thing is now of her doing and she’ll need to accept the pain of her consequences. Oliver will find a beautiful wife and he’ll have more kids so he’ll be okay.

Playing with her fingers as she ponders the answer once she says it out loud it will be open to the universe to do as it pleases. She has never lied to her mom, omitted things…yes. Lie? No. The words leave her lips and there is no taking it back, “He is.”

Donna sits down on the futon joining her daughter as hearing the confirmation, thinking it and knowing the truth really has different weights. Oliver Queen is the father of her grandbabies. He was here in this apartment handling his own children and it is unmistakable the added twinkle in each of the kid’s eyes is no accident as a family is brought together.

“He doesn’t know, nor does he remember our very brief moments.” Felicity shrugs, “I wasn’t significant enough to remember. Not like he doesn’t have a mile-long list of conquests so…”

“Don’t you do that.” Donna grabs her daughter’s chin and has her look at her own eyes. “He is a fool to have done that to you or anyone else. You are my baby girl. You mean the world to me.”

“Thanks momma. I’d be lost without you.”

“I know I’m going to break my I won’t ask policy.” She looks at her daughter expectedly “Why did you bring him here tonight?”

Felicity groans, explaining herself when nothing makes sense is hard. Anything she says will sound selfish. She knows keeping the man from his kids is not right but she’s done all this for years and all because the universe has him waltz back into her life even for a brief moment is just unfair. She made peace of being a single mom years ago. She didn’t listen to providers with wild suggestions to give one or two of them up for adoption. The thought of separating her three munchkins is unconceivable. Luckily her parents stepped up and didn’t abandon her. Her dad helps out financially when he can.

It’s hard work. It’s sacrifice. Loving them is a privilege. Seeing the world through their eyes there is
nothing quite like it. Everything she has been through to get to this point as she sits with her mother thinking and talking about moments in time. She shares another moment that affected her as much as when she found she was pregnant.

“Mom, do you remember when I was all panicking after hearing about some boating incident I heard about in the media?”

“I’ve never seen you so quiet. You never shared why some accident affected you so. I had no idea but it took some time and you bounced back.”

“It was Oliver who disappeared.” She thinks back at how much a man who didn’t know she existed meant so much to her. Her children truly lost their father. “Their father was considered lost at sea. Soon later they called off the search and he was presumed dead.”

“Oh!” Donna thinks back and sighs, “It all makes sense now. I just never put it all together. Oh honey! You shouldn’t have gone through that alone.”

“He survived. I thought maybe I should have contacted him.”

“Why didn’t you?”

“I had more pressing things to deal with. Finishing school for one.”

“Baby, I need to ask. All I remember is how miserable you were but I need to know. Did Oliver force himself on you?”

“Oh, no… No! Mom he may be the biggest jerk back then but he never made me do anything.”

“Okay, I needed to ask. So much happened back then especially when we found out you were pregnant. I just needed to know if I could one day welcome Oliver into our lives.”

“Mom, he isn’t staying. He’ll move on. Longest relationship he has had…”

“It’s different. We both know that. You know more about him sweetie, how is he with his family?”

“He loves his sisters so he has said in multiple interviews. He gets along well with his parents. One of his best friends is Thomas Merlyn but he doesn’t live in Starling. He’s a doctor in Illinois. The other is John Diggle, I don’t know the story but they’re close.” She looks at her mom, “I’m not a stalker. If its online, I can find it.”

“Is that why you stopped going on a dates? After Michael you haven’t been interested at all.”

“Mom, I already told you. Once someone knows I’m a mom with three kids they run for the hills.”

“Well their loss.” Felicity has to laugh at that. “Oliver, well this Oliver seems responsible. Maybe there is a chance for you two. A do-over of sorts.”

“Mom, it doesn’t matter, we are from two different universes. Allowing him to be clueless actually is the best thing for him.”

“What about Nathan, Oliver, and Lillian? Their needs? I know the prospect of having to share them is overwhelming but…”

“I don’t know. He’s only doing this to help. He is sincerely just… He’s just… Mom, I can’t believe I am going to say this but he is just so wonderful with them.”
“The truth has a way of coming out. How it comes out is the only control you have.” Listening to her daughter moan. “You should get some sleep.”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading!
Chapter Summary

As Oliver readies himself for a routine of adding the Smoaks into his life. Felicity internally flip-flops from drooling to berating herself of the fact she wants nothing to do with him on that level. Phase 2 commences with the kids as the brainstorming of two days ago will begin to unfold.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is heavy on internal struggles for Olicity. Before Oliver is immersed into the Smoak Clan.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Late February weather in New England is usually harsh but this season is proving to be mild so far.

Things looks different on his morning run as his pace slows down. Taking in more of the area. He notices that his first calculation on the neighborhood may have been a tad snobbish more than he wants to admit. He’s a rich boy and his views on certain things are flawed. Some buildings look run down but there is a certain warmth to them. He sees a lot more color to vicinity than his first two times he has come around. Her building is one of the least appealing on the block.

He actually stops to survey the entry points. A locked side door. A backdoor that isn’t locked which leads to the two large dumpsters. He hums in dissatisfaction but continues on his way. He knows the front door is always open. Knowing the Smoaks aren’t living within a secure building. Not something he is accustomed to. It really isn’t his business nonetheless knowing this particular fact he mindfully will keep the information handy because if how he feels is any indicator their safety could or will become his primary concern.

He sees a property maintenance van with a man moving some cords around. He decides to see if at least the door in the back is locked at night. The man acknowledges his presence as Oliver stops to talk. Asking about the security by the door.

“Yes, the door should automatically close as long as the residence don’t use a door stopper to keep it from fully closing.”

“I was able to open it.”

“Then the lock is broken. When I’ll get around to checking if its busted be placed upon the list.”

“Thanks. Have a good day.” He sees the guy nod and Oliver is back on his run. He knows it won’t be getting fixed for a very long time if ever.

Making sure to plan to pass through the neighborhood daily on all his runs; while vividly recalling spending time which led to the late evening hours’ yesterday. He can hear the contagious laughs of the kids thinking something silly is the funniest thing ever.

Nathan having a strong presence about him. Always leading his siblings into some activity or another. Little Oliver always happy to find time to himself when the movement around him is too much. He finds that Lillian of all three enjoyed his company the most. Her little eyes seeking his throughout the whole evening. Her precise weight comfortably tucked on his lap as she mindlessly loved playing with his hands.

They must have been on their best behavior because as Oliver keeps replaying moments in the Smoak household there is nothing out of a playbook that showed any of the children tormenting each other. They even went to the opposite direction and were all synchronized with one another. Maybe they come together when there is a common goal like them versus the new guy. Being the new fella, he wonders now if they’ve had to deal with their mom’s romantic interests. Eh, he doesn’t even want to go there… thinking about Felicity snuggling with any random guy makes the pit of stomach feel super tense.

His time in the apartment he knows one thing for sure the tiny kitchen is more of a storage area than a place to prepare meals. The kids love to partake in a more involved manner and being he is now seen as the food guy. No matter what happens from here on out they will hold some small memories of these moments. Maybe flashes of him teaching will be cool, they could be all grown up and walk into a kitchen and see a colorful vegetable and remember a small fact. Still if they are way too young he’ll be forgettable but otherwise that be so cool he thinks. Even if he isn’t in their lives in the future because life gets in the way. Maybe their mother remarries or he is so busy being a CEO to interact
with them like he is right now. He hopes that he’ll see them grow but nothing is a guarantee their mother and him are barely friends.

Just as a night ago helping Felicity move the dining room table to fit all of them in that cramped apartment. They seem to find everything fascinating. The little dents on the carpet from where the table legs pressure made the carpet have a little gaping gouge had them on their knees as their tiny hands found the indented carpet a wonder. He stood from the sideline looking at how easily their grandmother gave them a small story about the magic of fairies. It was so out there but he admits the questions the kids asked had him laughing. They seem to love being centers of attention running in circles around the table as the adults would work around them.

In those few moments he would glance at Felicity as no one was watching him. It seems throughout the whole night her attention is everywhere else but on him. Not that he didn’t have enough eyeballs on him. Her mother for one scrutinized him like a hawk. It didn’t make him feel uncomfortable it was something he had grown accustomed to. Various aspects of his life is under some scrutiny.

A night of cooking, storytelling, finding that the kids would like a furry pet. All the amusements of meeting children and all the queries of what it is like to meet a family when in a weeks’ time ago he never thought he’d want to encounter. That night sleep did not evade him. He slept like… probably like one of Felicity’s kids.

This morning Felicity wakes up towards the most intense dream. Pleased that her children aren’t awake yet. Even more ecstatic that her mom isn’t her to notice how flushed she is. Sluggishly sitting up as the last of the thoughts now elude her. Her sleeping body betrays her maybe a cold shower will help.

She tried with all her might not to glance at the man last night. Using her children as focal points she thinks she did good. He is here to help not flame any deep seeded desire. He does enough damage at work where she can’t escape his grasp. One week. It only took one week for him to win her over. If that isn’t irritating, she doesn’t know what is.

The timbre of his voice now calming where it used to irate her nerves. The way he calls her Ms. Smoak in front of company with an airy lightness and behind closed doors he uses different variants of her first name. The man is insufferable.

How his eyes light up when she credits him like it is the most insane thing ever. With those blue orbs dissecting her resolve even when she swears not to make it easy for him. How he can keep his focus on her and yet direct a room. She has to hand it to him. He grew up and really does fill out his suit. Not that she’s actively looking but how can she not notice? The man has an impressive physique which should put her off. She isn’t his type. More importantly he isn’t hers, men like that are only out for themselves and that is so not what she wants. Yes, she’ll keep repeating that line in her head. Oliver Queen is not her type. Their worlds don’t mix. He isn’t the type to settle down anyhow. Yep, he is surely not her type at all.

Then she has outdone herself. How crazy is she? Bringing the man into her private space. Like the work week with him isn’t punishment enough. Seeing how other females flock to him like… like a bug zapper. She’d like to see them zapped. That would amuse her so. Instead, she just sits around as
a witness. Most of the time with an appropriate plastered smile on her face as he is cordial to them. Boy has game with his lines of endearment. Oh if he uses those words on her he may be limping around. Okay, why does she keep thinking of him in that way? Again. Having to repeat her motto.

Maybe it isn’t her fault, the boy of the past buried as the man shows no inkling of being that jerk. It really is on her now because she knows better. Though whatever trials and tribulations he went through has made him who is now. Because visually his body is an art form his intellect encompasses everything she can ever hope for in a man. He knows he is intelligent. Knows he has charm. Works the room like a champion. When all is said and done she will always have those moments drooling of what it be like to kiss those pouty lips.

She lets out a sigh maybe the few romance books she has read has messed with her mind. If her mom takes to him the added stress will be enormous because well her mom isn’t someone to be trifled with. Once she gets something through her thick skull it becomes an infatuation and her love life is her mom’s obsession.

Her body may want him but the deep recesses of her brain wants nothing to do with him. No matter how charming he gets to be… he doesn’t remember her and that hurts. That adds another nail to the hackneyed coffin. Her heart may be weak to him but her resolution to keep him at arm’s length is there. She will not wither in his presence. To date she has been strong. If she doesn’t count her small breakdown about Lillian.

He hasn’t seen her show the sentiments for him like that woman down the hall who pops in every so often to say hi to him. He just gives Leanna that mawkish smile that she wants to slap off his face. Leanna who towers over her even without heals. Her straight brown hair always so neat and well Felicity may say she is a little envious of the after scent that trails after each encounter with the gorgeous executive. To find that the styling product retails over three hundred dollars, it is just not fair to smell that good.

How Oliver hasn’t spent time with her is strange. The girl exudes everything this man is known to enjoy. Not that she sees it, but if she is ever letting go of this ache that she carries. Could never compete with woman of Leanna’s caliber. It is a joke to think she can. It just makes her feel like a wet noodle. With the battle in her raging on she gets ready for work.

Palmer Tech’s upper floors are quasi-essentially quiet. The hum vibrant as one gets off the elevators. To walk onto the magnificent floors that are free from the usually televisions screens blaring on about product infomercials to what the PR dept. has cooking. These top floors are tranquil as its esteem employees are free of constant noise and that is one of the biggest things Felicity noticed about being here. Downstairs she would say good morning to everyone she passed but here she just moves to where the office is. Most of these high-ranking personnel have their own time set. Many make sure to pop in but would work from anywhere of their choosing and be present only for meetings.

The office is quiet. Like it’s been the last few days. It is eerie to her but once Oliver is here and they are in their contained spot. Conversations drummed out by how well the soundproofing is here. Guess corporate secrets are valued.

It is Leanna’s heels that disturbs her thoughts as the woman enters and typically makes her way to her own office but today, she invites herself to pass where Felicity is by carrying an oval basket of
some sort as she contently places it by Oliver’s desk.

“I brought snacks. Made these granolas myself. I love to dabble in the kitchen.” She has a sly smile on her face. “You must understand that completely being a slave to it with three children and all.” Felicity just looks at the woman. Not giving her any ammunition by saying she really can’t cook and her children are lucky that she can buy ready-made meals on sale or whatever else the supermarket has on display. “Noticed Oliver’s been eating those terrible store-bought varieties. Poor man.”

“How kind of you. Thinking of his healthy gumptions needs.”

“Maybe he’ll share some with you but they are tasty and a man’s stomach…” the woman’s eyes shows her intent. “Is a way to his heart.”

Felicity responds, “He’ll probably be glad you thought so kindly of him.”

Leanna says nothing more as she leaves to head to her office down the hall.

With the male subject not here yet it gives Felicity a few moments to look around her desk. She’ll like to have everything ready for today’s end of the week update meeting. She has time to write up a summary report and maybe have him look through it.

They may have just recently been working cooperatively with one another and she has to admit they really do work well together. Once both are in a groove time just speeds up. The day flashes before her eyes thus far producing outcomes, she never thought possible.

She won’t even admit this to her mother but she can’t get enough of his aroma. The scent that has her on edge every working hour. Keeping her reactions in check she would be horrified if someone picked up on her attraction to him. The man is like an Adonis. No need to get busted for the obvious.

She partially jumps to his smooth voice as he wishes her a good morning.

“Morning, Mm… Oliver.”

“I scared you? What were you thinking about?”

“You… I mean us…” Looking mortified “No! I mean our workload.”

He follows along and he can’t help himself, “Hmm… an us? If it’s just me, I’d be interested to know.”

“No, there is no you in us.”

“Really because I’ve always written that word with a u.”

“You know what I mean.”

“Unfortunately, so. Well I thought about you.” He moves his hand from behind his back showing a cup of coffee. He can see the glow as she takes the offered cup telling him thanks.

Turning to his desk he sees a small tray that looks like wrapped plastic foiled granola.

“Ms. Kitness left those for you.”

“I’ll have to thank her later. Want one?”

“No, thank you. It may contain nuts and I’m allergic.”
“You have a nut allergy? Why didn’t you say something last night?”

“Lillian and I have an allergy and I suppose I had a lot on my mind.”

“Okay, but this is good to know. Last thing I want is to hurt Lilly.” He sees her nod. “We have a few things I’d like to look at. Maybe even add it to my report this morning.” He hands her a copy once he opens his briefcase. “I wrote it this morning after my run.”

Taking it, she skims the few pages of his report, “You wrote this?” The questioning glare he gives her would be laughable if she was paying attention. Though she does add, “I mean… Didn’t they tire you out?”

“They did, I fell asleep like the proverbial baby. Though as you may have noticed last night, I do have the capacity to spell words.”

“Huh?”

He shakes his head it seems he has lost her in translation but he heads to moves some papers around to start the day. She follows his movements. “I just want to thank you for last night.”

“Your welcome. It was fun and now I know what chaos looks like.”

“Ha!” She rolls her eyes “I also just want to say there is no obligation for this weekend. They’re a handful…” Oliver is a little disturbed to hear this.

“Stop right there. Before I left, I told the kids I’d see them this weekend. There is no way I am going to break that promise.”

“Okay, I’m just giving you an out. You don’t owe us anything. Really if it was too much, I can see…” She doesn’t finish as she observes his face. “Okay, they’ll be happy to see you.”

“Good. Now that we have that squared away. On page two, two thirds down I’m not exactly sure about those numbers.”

“Okay I’ll look them through.”

“Thanks.” He watches her leave and finally sits down. Another day at Palmer Tech, a week that held some surprises and this is only week one.

Saturday’s weather seems like a thumbs up for the park later. Toting what he needs up to their floor.

He gets there a little early. From what Felicity told him the kids are up by seven in the morning. He knows they planned that he’d make them all dinner after the park interactions but he wants to surprise them with lunch. He places one of the three bags of groceries on the carpeted hallway, knocking on the door he can hear kids screaming. He knocks again and he hears a boom at the door. Seeing the knob rotate but not open Oliver decides to slowly open it from his side. He sees it is either Nate or is it Olly at the door?

“Hi.” The boy is definitely Olly by the way he smiles at him. He scrunches his nose and it’s the
cutest thing ever. Oliver takes notice how the boy starts to eye the hallway and stops the boy before it happens by moving his legs to barracked the boy in his home. “I suppose there be no dessert for you.” The boy’s eyes are wide. Oliver must have guessed the right punishment for this little cherub. “I’ll make you a deal. You carry this to the kitchen…” The boy has his hands out and takes it running off to the kitchen even before Oliver finishes the sentence. “Okay then.”

Stepping inside he is surprised no adults are present. “Hello?” The apartment is small but he finds its cozy to a certain degree even though in a few years this place will be way too small for five people. Placing the bags on the counter he just observes little Oliver eyeing the bags. “Want up?” With little head nod, Oliver has the boy sitting on the counter as he starts to pull the stuff from the bag.

“What’s this?” The boy nods.

“This is an eggplant.”

“Purple?”

“Yes, it is.” He gives the boy the vegetable so he can feel the texture. Yesterday he learned that both Felicity and Lillian have a nut allergy. Which is important to know if he’s going to be cooking anything for them. Hearing the bathroom door open he sees Donna.

“Oliver, I didn’t hear you come in.”

“Donna, hi. I knocked; this one here rotated the door knob so I let myself in. Hope you don’t mind.”

“No. Not at all.” Donna gives Oliver a smile as she holding a wiggling Nathan in her arms. Lillian comes out right after she looks happy but she isn’t running to him like he thought she would. “Surprised he didn’t make a break for it. He’s our little escape artist.”

“Really?” Oliver laughs and looks at the boy in question. “Trying to escape huh?”

“Ah! Lill be crying.” The boy moves his head in a circle motion emphasizing craziness. He places the boy on the floor. Looking at the quiet girl hiding behind her grandmother.

Oliver stands just outside the small kitchen. “Hi Nathan. Hi Lillian.”

“Down, down. down.”

“Nathan, behave. Not going to say it again.” The boy stops wiggling for now.

“I see you have your hands full. Where is Felicity?”

“She’s at the laundromat.” Oliver nods. There isn’t much to say.

“Mistah Ollie cooky.”

“Yes, I brought some food to cook lunch and dinner. Hope you don’t mind.”

Donna laughs, “The alternative is Chef Boyardee.” She laughs at the looks the man gives her.

“Good thing I came and saved everyone.”

“Meez like boydee” The girl says as she finally moves from behind her grandmother. He notices a blue mark on her face. As she gets closer, he sees it’s a small handprint. There is an abandoned art
project on the table. Looking at the wiggling boy whose hands are somewhat blue he can paint a picture of what happened. Donna finally lets the boy down and he runs what looks to be head on to his sister and Oliver steps in and plucks him just in time.

“What do you think you are doing?” Oliver’s tone a with a little more agency. He has the boy up in the air almost at eye level in a firm grip. This is the first time he has witnesses the hostility and it actually doesn’t sit well with him. The little girl is a distance away from him again and that pulls on his heart strings.

“Down!”

“There will be no down for you. Not until you behave.” The boy looks at the man and somehow figured that he isn’t going to get his way. He isn’t able to move at all in the adult’s grasp. Oliver looks to Donna to see if he has overstepped his boundaries but she’s already addressing Lillian. Bringing the girl into her room to dress her in something clean. Leaving him with two boys.

Oliver in his wildest dreams never saw this coming. One little angry boy in his arms and one curious one watching his every move. Deciding that some of the brainstorming with Felicity on outcomes is a lot harder in reality. He doesn’t want Nate to hate him. He doesn’t know why but even through this is supposed be a one-time deal kind of thing he really doesn’t think he wants to end this. Shit. He’s really appended himself to this family. Pointing to a chair. He has what he calls his little namesake sit down. That gives him the ability to give the little boy in his arms his full attention.

“Did you hit your sister?” The boy doesn’t say anything. “Nathan Smoak did you hit your sister?” The boy carefully looks around he doesn’t have his bubba or momma to protect him and tears run down his face. Oliver brings him to sit on the same counter space his brother sat earlier. Before releasing the boy to sit. He moves his hand to wipe a tear with his thumb. “I know it is scary.” Oliver sighs. “It’s scary.” He lets the boy situate himself on the counter.

Being able to move again he looks at Oliver for what the man will do next. Nate is sitting down and being a good boy because he doesn’t want to be stuck again.

“Why does Lilly have blue on her face?” He asks Nathan buts its little Oliver who answers.

“Nate slap. Boom!”

“Why did you slap your sister?” When Nathan doesn’t answer. “It is not nice.” The boy has his eyes on Oliver and he can see he is listening. “You like being stuck?” he waits a few seconds before he repeats the question. When the boy sways his head no. Oliver asks him to say it with words. Nathan says no in a heavy burden voice.

Donna is watching what is unfolding in the living room as she asked Lillian to dress herself. Seeing how Oliver is good with his own children has her hoping that somehow all this will be permanent that her grandchildren will have someone else that will care for their well beings.

Oliver doesn’t let Nathan off the counter yet as he takes things from the bag and explains to the now three children plus their grandmother all the ingredients, he plans to make crispy eggplant sticks. He intends on making tacos for lunch and oven baked chicken with a medley of roasted vegetables for dinner. Explaining the ingredients taking the time needed as he peals and starts washing. Having Nathan hand things over to him as his personal helper. Somehow the child knows this is his punishment and takes it well. Oliver clicks another imaginary check as he internally takes in how smart her kids are.

“Mommy’s home” Lillian’s little voice of excitement as she runs to the door waiting for her momma.
As the door opens Felicity’s eyes meets his instantly. “I almost thought I was at the wrong door; the smell is incredible.”

“Must be the seasoning.”

Donna goes and helps her daughter. Grabbing one of the two hampers.

“I’ll do another two loads tomorrow, mom.” Her eyes widen when she sees Lillian’s handprint bruise. About to say something, Donna beats her to it. “Oliver took care of the situation. Now look at who is a kitchen helper.”

“Meeee!” Nate says as Oliver lets him be free of his punishment. Being stuck in a spot for almost an hour served its purpose. Felicity happily takes him into her arms after she kisses and hugs the other two.

Holding Nathan in her arms she beholds Oliver who looks so at home with a wooden spatula in his hand. “I wasn’t expecting you this early.”

He is taking this laid-back appearance of hers. He needs to remind himself why he doesn’t consider her a potential partner when all he wants right now is to pull a strand of her loose golden locks from her face. He wets his bottom lip before his mind gets back to the game. “Surprise.” Yep that is all his brain could come up with.

Chapter End Notes

I wanted Felicity to show/have her inner struggle before she blows caution to the wind and allows Oliver into her children’s lives. As long as he doesn’t remember the past she thinks she can just play along… too bad the universe hates her, well that is what she’d say.

After the next chapter things ramp up.
Adventures

Chapter Summary

Oliver fully emerges himself into the Smoak Clan. There is food, parks, shopping and this is just the beginning. The line blurred. Felicity knows allowing this man in will have future consequences but how can she say no to Oliver Queen when the kids and her mom are rooting for more of his presence? She can’t.

Chapter Notes

This is the lull before the story starts to vamp up and have some truths start to fly. Thank you for reading!

I have been updating on Wed&Sat but with July 4 this coming week that may not be possible.

See the end of the chapter for more notes
Oliver comes to the conclusion that brainstorming children into cookie cutting boxes just does not work. Each kid is an individual and seeing the Smoak children up close and personal he knows they all yearn to have their own little moments with their momma.

Their adorableness put aside. He enjoys a crisp cool day with the kids at a nice large park observing them from a clinical point. He wants to prove to Felicity that when they work together anything is possible. Then again to him its rather personal. Unlike her, he is entering this whole situation because of an attraction. The more he spends time with her outside of work the more he sees a side he really likes. At Palmer, she tries super hard to be professional and being that they are at work its part of the course. Here she lets go of the stiffness because he realizes the kids can sense it and he believes she doesn’t like to see the little ones worry about such nonsense.

Oliver recognizes he’ll have to figure a way to reason himself to Felicity about him spending more time with them. It is all about the pitch. Going to overboard and she’ll see right through him. If the proposal is weak, she’ll just swat the idea as preposterous and he’ll be out of the running. He has got to think this beyond the short-term strategies and come up with something solid. Knowing his time at Palmer is dwindling. Does he really want this family in his radar further than what he has acknowledged? Gosh he doesn’t know. This is all too new to him. Worst case scenario, he becomes a fixed father figure to these kids until another man kicks him to the curb. If his relationship to Felicity doesn’t materialize then he’ll have another camaraderie under his belt. He can do friendships. Isn’t life about the connections one makes throughout a lifespan? He knows he enjoys the few bonds he has. Even if there are more towards brotherhood. It isn’t like he doesn’t have two sisters.

Though by now he’s got to really see the bigger picture. He likes Felicity, like likes her but she doesn’t feel the same about him and as much as he would love to ask her on a date… a kid-free date, he is scared shitless that a rejection would jeopardize their working relationship. They are about to enter another week of the joint venture and with him partaking a close take on the project. It’ll be foolish to jeopardize everything. Especially that it only took him a week to find himself crazy about the Smoaks.

He’ll have to reign in his feelings because even to his own ears this all sounds outrageous. How can he call up John or Tommy and tell them that he may have found the one when he dabbles in short-term bliss? His longest romantic interest being less than twenty weeks. Maybe if by the end of the venture he still feels the same way he’ll bite the bullet and ask her. The worst that can happen is if she lets him down at least he’ll be heading back to Starling so the sting won’t affect Palmer/Queen capabilities.

He’ll have to keep himself from Donna’s radar too. Maybe he’ll lie and say that all this is just a part of his charisma. That could work. He is known to charm people and being that he is away from his element he finds the Smoaks a good substitute for the Diggles. That sounds reasonable. Right? Donna could buy that. Well at least for partial reasoning why he spends his time with them. He’ll have to mention Serena and Stewie to them. By right if his goals do take effect and he does hook up with Felicity the kids will most definitely meet.

Here he is thinking about spending more time with them as he is packing up his new rental Jaguar Land Rover he got before heading to the Smoaks. Placing the new balls and other fun toys for the park. He is already envisioning kid bikes in the near future. Felicity might have a few chose words
then but hopefully she’ll let him indulge the kids. They deserve fresh air and by gosh he wants to be the one to teach them something that every kid should partake in.

His first shopping extrusion has been a trip. The kids running in all different directions. The three kids needing the three adults to wrangle them under control. Like he thought Nathan and Lillian would be the hardest to have under their thumbs. Those two are way to spunky. Energy level sky-high and little Oliver having to stop and look at everything, he is so inquisitive. That boy has so many questions and each answer he receives only triggers sub questions. His little word vomit is too much for his grandma who needs to default to her daughter for answers.

He finds Nate and Lilly in his custody most of the time. As Donna will hang with her daughter who is preoccupied with her middle son. Nate points to things that interest him as Lilly will do a sing-song to what she likes. The rare time he has the little namesake, Olly shows his interest in things by talking about why he likes it. He knows the blue ball is his favorite because blue is his favorite color in the whole wide world.

“Well I like blue too.”

“You do?”

“Yes. I like all the different blues.”

“Really? Me likey baby blue de moist.” He pouts just a bit. “Lilly say baby color. Sticky me tongue to her.”

“You lick her?”

“Eww. No! Likey dis.” He sticks out his tongue.

“Oh. Oh, I see.” Oliver laughs as he strokes the hair on the boy’s head.

“Mommy say haircut.” He says that with such sadness.

“Buddy, why are you sad?”

“No cut. Lill no. Me no!”

They are in the middle of an aisle in a superstore that happens to be next to a shop where they bought some of the gear already packed neatly to go to the park. He doesn’t mind the detour. When the ladies saw the deals being offered, they needed to buy some supplies. Three kids three carts. Oliver gets Olly since they left the pro shop together.

“Wanna hear a secret?” Seeing Olly nod with interest. “I had really long hair for almost three years.”

“Really? How long?”

“Longer than Lilly’s.”

“Oh!”

“I also had a beard.” Oliver touches his face. “It was long too.” He brings his hand down to give the boy an idea how long.

“Why you cut?”

Oliver smiles at the innocence he isn’t going to tell him he was stranded on a deserted island and that
having his matted hair cut felt freeing because he doesn’t want the boy to think that long hair is bad.

“I missed my mommy and daddy and wanted them to see me like before…” He thinks a little. “My tri

“Mommy work make me sad.”

Oliver glances at the boy sitting upon the store’s cart. It’s been interesting spending time like this with just one kid. An idea pops in his head. He knows how to extend his time with the Smoaks. The kids miss their mother and it occurs to him that she is the commodity. Each one of these amazing kids wants a piece of their mother’s sole attention. Being triplets must be hard. Even if he has been seeing it from Felicity’s point of view of raising triplets as hard as it may be. It must also be hard for each child to share things and be expected to be okay with that.

The argument he witnessed now makes total sense. As Felicity went to wash up and Donna went to dispose of a bag of trash, she won’t allow him to do it as a guest but if he gets his way, he’ll be on trash duty soon enough.

The boys have taken a stance that the time Lillian has with her mother outweighs how much Felicity spends with them. Pure jealousy. Simple things like brushing the girl’s hair. Talking about fashion choices. Lilly sleeping separate from them. Different toys so many added benefits and the women doesn’t see how that effects the dynamic. Reasonably they know they are boys and their sister is a girl they don’t understand why she gets shiny shoes or why she gets special props for her hair. It’s the little separation they notice that the grownups don’t. The boys are left out and they take it out on their sister.

Seeing him being wonderful with each one of the kids is tortures. She didn’t think he would be so down-to-earth and be so domesticated bunched with how easy he makes it all seem. A twinge of jealousy hits her. He must spend time with kids, she’s wracking her brain trying to figure if he has dated anyone who happened to be a single mother. She can’t recall anyone fitting that profile. She doesn’t know much about his best friend John Diggle; he doesn’t have a social media presence other than being the owner of Spartan’s Lantern. Maybe the man has kids and Oliver has interacted with them on a very frequent basis but otherwise Oliver Queen’s apt to handle children just has her off kilter.

Felicity still can’t believe he got rid of his cute little car to have a family size rover. When he commits to something, he really goes all in. She’s just flabbergasted that this is a one-time deal and he went to extremes to make this adventure run so smoothly. The kids have taken turns indulging their newest buddy. They really love his presence. He’s somewhere in the store with one of her kids… she can’t mumble one of their kids because of her knack to speak out loud and that is a conversation she would never see fit to have in a busy store. She just needs to get through this visit and then after it will go back to normal and Oliver will become a friend from work and he’s to busy to visit. The kids hopefully will understand.

“Felicity!”

Felicity shakes her head to clean her mind as she turns to her mother’s irate voice. “What?”
“If you think any louder there will be steam between your ears.”

“Mom!”

“No. Really. You brought this upon yourself now just roll with it. He is amazing with them.” Donna looks at her daughter trying to think of a verbal comeback. “Don’t bother Felicity. I’m your mother I know you too well. Now I need you to chose between these two pajama sets.”

As the adventure in the park comes to an end. Oliver has a sleeping Nathan wrapped around his neck. The boy had a load of fun running back and forth with him. He finds that rubbing circle motions across the boy’s back helps with the boy in just fully letting go and drifting off to sleep while his two siblings got to go to the swing set for a bit. Watching little Oliver and his sister having a blast as their mother and grandmother are pushing them is a sweet bonus.

When the two kids rush up the hill towards him, they both have the biggest smiles. This day has been a good one for them and hearing about it has Oliver glad that he’s gotten to witness all of this.

“Oliver, thank you.”

“It’s no problem Felicity. No reason to cut short their excitement. Lillian and Oliver really were looking forward to the swings.” Felicity gives him a warm smile the already had a discussion of who should have held Nathan but the kids really wanted their mom to swing them and that was a no brainer in his book.

“Okay let’s put them in the awaiting vehicle time to make some dinner. Everyone hungry?’

He hears the two kids being buckled up in their safety seats saying yes. He makes sure the restraints are clicked in place on Nate’s chair before he looks at the two other adults. Donna is finishing placing on her own seatbelt as Felicity opens the passenger door and gets in just as Oliver does too.

“Do you think you’ll be okay if I’m your kitchen helper I think the other two should take a nap before dinner.”

Oliver looks at his rear-view mirror and sees both kids showing signs of fatigue. Lilly’s yawn just confirms it. “No problem Smoak. Maybe I can show you a trick or two.”

Felicity laughs. “Boy, you think to highly of yourself. I’ve had cooking lessons and started a fire in one of them.” They both hear Donna snicker in the back.

“Okay, but there are dishes that doesn’t need to be super simplified. I may have to show you some. If you’re up to it?”

“Is that a challenge?”

“It sure is. Best case the kids get something wholesome other than the goop that comes from a can.”

“Fine, we’ll see if your skills are as good as you think they are.”
Oliver watches as Felicity places the broccoli in the boiling pan. He has her seasoning it with some salt just enough and then asks if she’ll like to add anything else in there. With her saying salt is just fine they move to the next dish and then the next. Before she knows it, she’s participating in cooking a real meal and so far, everything is going well. They don’t see Donna off to the side watching them. A knowing smile planted across her face.

Donna is no fool, Oliver is a catch. If the indicator is on how many longing stares Oliver received at the stores they shopped at earlier. For a single man who has a reputation he may have not even noticed. His eyes focused on the kids and her daughter. He even made several attempts to include her in his conversations. Her daughter may not notice but she thinks the boy may be smitten with her precious baby.

For now, she will let all this play out naturally. Seeing the man slowly immerse himself with the kids will be bittersweet but Donna knows the truth will eventually arise and it may be easier for him to accept the three little miracles are his. The forming bonds are there.

As they wait on the food to full cook. Oliver talks about his observations. Donna quietly witnesses the interactions between them two. Oliver pitches his theory with such jazz that Donna could see this boy as a great salesman in another life. His tactic on point to what brought them together in the first place. To make the kids lives more harmonious. Even Donna nods to his points. She may love this man herself. Love to see him in her daughter’s life in a more permanent way. To be able to call him a son. Yes, this is the second time he has graced his presence in this home and has melted her heart.

“So, you think Lillian should move into her brothers’ room.”

“No, I think Lillian and the boys share a room. We don’t assign a room. Its their room. Not Nathans, Olivers, or Lillians.”

“But…”

“They’re still young. Let them be free of all these gender rules.”

Felicity looks at her mother. Donna only shrugs it makes sense in a way. They do separate Lilly from the other two and so far, it hasn’t helped at all.

“Lilly likes her dolls.”

“Yet Nate brought out one of her dolls to play and she screamed at him.”

“When? I don’t remember this?” Felicity looks horrified that her kids have these kinds of fights and she’s unaware.

“You were washing up earlier and Donna went to take out the trash. He wanted to show me something. Don’t worry I talked her into sharing.”

Donna speaks up, “What I am understanding is when we buy toys, we make sure they are in the same category and can vary by color, little things that don’t take away from their enjoyment.”

Oliver agrees but looks to Felicity for her input.

“Okay, I get that and I agree with having one-on-one time with each of the kids but I can’t leave two
behind with my mother to deal with.”

“You have me, I’m still here.”

“Oliver, I can’t ask that of you. You have better things than to partake in these exercises. I can’t…”

“Well I’m offering my services.”

“That is really nice of you but these are children they are a lot of work…”

“This won’t be my first rodeo.” That gets the women to give him looks. “My best friend has two amazing kids. Believe me I know high energy little ones and how to entertain them.”

Donna asks, “So will start with Nathan? Give Felicity some time alone with him?”

“I was hoping it would be Oliver first. He’s the middle one and gets brushed off. There is no book saying the eldest has to always go first.”

That is when Felicity truly looks at the man, “You just devised all this while we started cooking?”

“No. Since the park. I got to know the little ones. I suppose they are aren’t as tight-lipped with me.”

He gets up to check on the meal and he can feel Felicity is right behind him looking to see how dinner is coming along. “They love their momma.”

They hear Donna tell them that she’ll rouse and get the kids to wash up leaving them alone.

“Oliver, the moment this is too much for you, promise me you’ll tell me and won’t just abandon them. They deserve a proper goodbye when this is all over.”

He peers into her serious eyes. He sees the maternal protective there. “I promise.”

Now that week two going on three is shaping up nicely. Oliver is enjoying his weekends tremendously. He won’t be here the next weekend when he’ll be back in Starling but he promised to video chat with them. Felicity and the little namesake spent quality time together, he won’t say that out loud afraid of Felicity’s wraith. He needs to be careful not to confuse the kids either. Work is coming along even better.

Oliver passes the luxurious dinette area on this floor to reheat some leftovers he made at Felicity’s last night. He urged Felicity to take her lunch at home with the kids and surprise them with some baked goods he made this morning. He has no idea when he became the Smoak chef but feeding them all has been something of a deep guilty pleasure.

Listening to Felicity whine that she has gained another pound would once upon a time be alarming to the man, he has no idea why anymore because she is truly beautiful to him. He stops in his tracks. He just called her beautiful. There is so many facets to her that he has found alluring.

He came to Palmer for her mind. Didn’t know it then when he walked into his father’s office and said that he intended to work closely with the venture of this project. Not knowing that it was Felicity Smoak who took the complex data and broke it down to fit the needs of what the two companies
needed. He has worked with some brainiacs before like Curtis Holt. The man could invent things but nothing was ever user friendly. Queen Consolidated bought his patent and with Palmer Tech’s vigorous labs the two companies have held a very close working bond.

He like to steal Felicity Smoak and whisk her away to Starling but that idea does not stem from what is best for any company joint endeavors because he knows her mind at Palmer Tech will be best served. The reason he wants her in Starling is to personal to just tell anyone because their friendship is private and unknown to anyone at Palmer or basically anyone outside of the Smoak family.

It is a condition set by Felicity herself. Something he needs to adhere to because as she has stated his name brings unwanted attention.

He adores her mother she’s very warm and friendly and their shopping adventure to Bed Bath and Beyond really taught him something about the elder Smoak woman. She also schooled him about Felicity’s particulars even if that was unsolicited information.

Deciding to take Donna shopping with just Nate and Lily is an experience he probably will repeat but this first time will stay in his mind forever. With Felicity and Olly having their one-on-one time. It leaves the two of them to roam and shop. Before entering Bed, Bath, and Beyond, Donna needs to make sure her coupons haven’t expired. She gives him one. Yes, he tries to tell her that the purchase cost is no problem nevertheless the look she gives him tells him to shut up and nod, be thankful, and take the coupon for a twenty percent discount.

Oliver gawks at how the two kids run towards where the store carts are with Donna just behind them telling them to slow down with practiced ease. Both kids trying to climb and he is there already lifting both into the air and they squeal with excitement. Watching Donna pull apart two carts that are jammed together she makes a snarly noise her hand up in the air to tell him she’s got this and as she finally frees one, she taps the cart and Oliver knows it’s his cue to place them in. He wonders if Lillian or Nathan will want to sit on top where it seems the cart is made for a child.

“Should we take two carts?”

“No. One is fine. Remember three have made this journey together plenty of times.”

“How do you place items into the cart?”

She laughs, “You’ll find out soon enough. Now I’ll like to look at some bedding. Come along.”

He finds Nate not liking any of the choices while Lillian could care less as she is too interested with placing her fingers in and out of the cart’s fringes to pay any mind. Oliver takes interest in the teddy bear pillowcase and pulls it from the top shelf.

“Oh, that’s something Olly would like but this one over here likes zig zags and Lilly is a total flower girl.”

“Well, I’ll get this one for him then.”

Lilly looks up finally with some interest as she wants to look at it. “Me see.” Her little hands grabbing what is being placed gently into her grasp. “Oh purrty. Me wanna to.”

“You want one also?”

The girl nods liking how the teddy bear is holding some kind of basket of flowers.

“How about you Nate, do you want one?”
“No!”

Oliver can see the boy wants nothing to do with it. As Oliver grabs another teddy one from the shelf to place in the basket. Quickly scanning he sees a robot and pulls that from the shelf. “How about this one Nate?”

The boy looks at it. He takes his time like it’s a very important decision. Oliver tries not to tease but the concentration on the little one is just too much. “How about another pillowcase look at this one.” He goes and picks up the boy so he can be eye level to the shelf. Nathan sees one he prefers and his hands go to pull.

“Nathan Smoak, no touching.” Donna’s voice stern. Oliver can tell she has instilled that tone to keep the kids in check. Seeing Nate pulls his hands back his grandmother doesn’t need to reprimand and turns to look at another bedsheet. Leaving the boy to point and wait for an adult to hand him what he wants. Oliver inwardly has to beam that they are so well behaved.

“Here you go buddy. Is this what you want?” Seeing Nate nod and happily inspect what will be his new pillowcase. Each kid has a carry around the apartment pillow that they use for anything like plopping down on the futon. Using it to make their time coloring on the floor more comfortable, whatever they need the special pillow is theirs to use as they see fit. As they are not allowed to take the pillows from their beds.

Within their shopping exercise Oliver leaves to look at the kitchen stuff that Donna seems to not even address. Beholding a food processor that could totally be a wonderful accessory at the Smoak’s household. One particular model has his interest when Donna comes around the corner and looks at the gadget. He left her to look at towels. Her oohs and aahhs about softness and patterns were more than enough to adventure to the kitchen area. The woman loves her towels.

“Oh no, if you get this, you’ll need to bring it with you when you leave. Felicity and I will only us it as a paper weight.”

“This is a staple machine in any kitchen. It purees food to make…”

“I know it makes baby food. The kids are old enough now.”

“What? No… where do you think colorful sauces come from?”

She shrugs, “Boiled whatever is on the bottom of the pan goop.”

Oliver looks bewildered, “Huh? You are never allowed to cook for me. Ever.”

Donna puts her hand on his shoulder. “Sweetheart I think I cooked a sweet tender baby girl. Enough to see you froth over.”

He rolls his eyes. “Does everything have to take a torrid twist in that direction? Felicity and I are becoming good friends.”

“How many fellas you know take their soon-to-be close friend’s mother and two of her children out shopping?”

He sighs. This woman is incorrigible. “Fine, but maybe I am bored at staying at my place alone might as well spend some time with a Smoak.”

“You get points with the kids. But with me sugar lips I think to Felicity it negates all possible advantages.”
“What?” He can’t believe she is so her. Donna Smoak has her moments and he’s learning not to blush so much.

“She’s probably biting her fingernails wondering what we are saying about her.”

“We haven’t talked about her. We are just shopping. You with your love of towels and I’m looking at gadgets the place could use.”

“Right, like we are some big happy family playing house.”

“Wait! Does Felicity not like having me around?”

“I stressed the word playing… When are you going to make a move?”

“Donna, Felicity and I aren’t like that. We work well together and…”

“Oh, all the ands or buts conversation is charming.” Donna shakes her head and then entertains herself at looking at other gadgets close by. She did think to let them have the natural course but it doesn’t mean she’ll stop being herself. This way they know she is onto them and maybe she can help in any way to facilitate this relationship.

With another weekend over and he’s basically spending it with Felicity’s family. He’s never gotten around to see what the nightlife here in Providence, Rhode Island is like. Not when he rather be shopping for all these things he has never once cared for in his life. Yea, he is whipped but not by Felicity… well not yet at least but by how much he craves the Smoaks when he isn’t near. How he feels like he is a part of this family that have embraced him. All this is so different, quite foreign to him. His bedding has always been chosen by someone else. Even now in the Palmer rental. His mother sent a designer to spruce up the place.

It isn’t the first time he has hung around children. He has the Diggles to thank for that. Little Serena has him wrapped around her finger. She knows her Uncle Oliver will do whatever her little heart desires within reason. He is such a pushover a times but getting rewarded by hugs and kisses is so worth it. She is almost six-years-old and three years older than her kid brother Stewie… well John Stewart Diggle. He spends time with them on occasion. Whenever there is downtime and both Oliver and John spend time that isn’t work related. John has always been his bodyguard since his return from the island. Becoming really good friends as Oliver pushed his buddy to go into the security business.

The ding of the microwave has him come back to the moment as he moves to take his hot lunch out. Thinking of eating it here and not in his office will save himself from the lingering aroma that will most likely remind him of why he made that dish. His concentration will be broken when all he wants is to finish the task at hand.

Noticing two ladies that he has politely greeted since being at Palmer Tech. One he knows is someone that Felicity has had conversations about television shows and what nots and so when they wave him over to sit with them, he sees no problem enjoying their company.

“Ladies.”

“Mr. Queen, how are you?”

“It’s Oliver and I’m well. Thanks, my usual lunch companion went out for lunch.”

“That looks delicious. Where is it from?”
He isn’t going to tell them it’s from Felicity’s home kitchen. “My kitchen. I love to cook. Sorry I
don’t know your names.”

“You cook?” Both women look surprised. Then the taller of the two brunettes tells him her name is
Stacey and the other is Jackie. “I thought for sure a delivery service would bring you your meals.”

“Why? You aren’t saying because I’m a man that I would obviously not know how to cook.”

The woman who asked that backtracks, “Of course not. It’s just that I usually hear my wife or my
cook made so and so…”

“Well I love to cook. I like knowing what ingredients enters my body.”

Both women just happen to look him over again and Oliver hates the feeling it triggers but keeps
from rolling his eyes.

Jackie asks, “Do you plan your meals or are you more of spontaneous what’s in the fridge kinda
cook?”

“Lately everything is planned. I also always incorporate a lot of vegetables. Whatever is kid
friendly.” He catches what he just says, he’ll cover a lie with a truth. “My best friend, John has two
kids. Getting them to eat healthy is battle.”

“Wow. How are you single?” The one with the wedding band asks. Oliver wants to roll his eyes
again. Stacey continues, “I can only dream of Howard even placing a pot on the stove.”

Both ladies wait for his answer. “Being that you need to eat to survive I don’t see how being single is
relevant.” He leaves it at that. Turning the questions now to them Oliver asks, “What do you ladies
do here at Palmer Tech?” That gets Oliver to relax as he eats. His life is off the table and theirs which
both ladies seem to enjoy talking about fills the moments until they all depart ways and head back to
their positions.

It isn’t until later when he tells Felicity he’ll get them both coffee while she finagles the finishing
touches out on their latest endeavor.

He gets stopped a few times before even getting to the room by some eager to impress executives
about how they have heard how well the project is coming along and just basically giving him
metaphoric pats on the back. His standard line, ‘Thanks to all the teammates of the project for
working well with one another. Couldn’t ask for a better team.’

When he sees Jackie walk into the dinette area, he excuses himself and once again is on the journey
to make Felicity and himself some afternoon java. He doesn’t mean to eavesdrop but when Felicity’s
name is dropped, he slows down and doesn’t immediately enter the room.

“Did you see what she is wearing?”

“Let it go April, she looks fine.”

“Maybe downstairs with the other employees. Even her hair and nails are just abhorred.”
“It’s not her fault they plucked her from her station. She’s actually pretty nice. She also works with Oliver Queen and their brainstorming on cutting costs from a very lucrative co-sponsored project is going to attract a lot of interest.”

“But still poor guy.” April shakes her head. “He so stylish and he stuck with a Kmart brand reject Barbie.”

“April?”

“No really. He must be a real nice guy…”

“To not have you reprimanded.” His voice crisp. His eyes on the woman by Jackie’s side. “There is nothing wrong with what Felicity Smoak is wearing. The woman is a mastermind and there is no price tag that can contend for her value to this company or any other in that matter.”

“Mr. Queen?”

“Hi Jackie and this must be April.” He gives her a small smile. He already surprised her with his appearance and as much as what she said about Felicity irritates him there must be office gossip that patronages her claim.

“Just here to get Felicity and I some coffee.” He walks to the press a few buttons coffee creator and places the cups needs. He always makes hers first she’s a double shot of everything for the afternoon kick. His black made simple. The women are quiet which he prefers in a way. Turning slightly. “She doesn’t need me to defend her but fitting in shouldn’t be about what haute couture one is wearing.” Moving the cup to create his coffee. “We would lose some amazing minds just because they aren’t in certain social standings.” He turns to them as he holds both coffees. “If she were to be the one fetching coffee for me, we wouldn’t be moving on to what we want to tackle next. Good day ladies.”

“Bye Mr. Queen.” He doesn’t correct them to call him Oliver. It gives him the power play as he walks away.

The work day is almost over and somehow Oliver did something to annoy his working partner but she doesn’t tell him what is bothering her. So, her fuse with him is becoming increasingly short.

“Oliver this is super important, how exactly are you going to talk to the vendor without QA getting involved?”

“I was just going to ask a few questions.” He’s looking at her like ‘what you’ve seen me do this how many times already’ but says, “What is your suggestion?”

“Well we can…” she lets out a yawn. “Oh, excuse me.”

“What not enough beauty sleep?” He laughs at her deadpan face. He knows Nathan has been cranky since he almost broke his arm jumping from the table to the futon and missed and Oliver has never thought having fast reflexes would come in handy. He leaped from his spot in the kitchen taking a fall as the boy bounced onto him. His arms wrapping themselves around the boy in a protective hug but his arm still got scratched up from grazing against the furniture. “You want me to get another cup of coffee for you.”
“No. I’m fine.”

“Well you don’t sound fine. What’s up?”

“Nothing its stupid.”

She isn’t about to tell Oliver that Nathan cried even harder when he went home. The boy started asking for his dad. Wondering why he doesn’t have one. The other kids just joined their brother. With Nathan in pain and the other two asking if they can keep Oliver Queen, she knows she is in deep hot water. Where did she just blow caution to the wind. Seeing the kids take to their father as her own resolve not to punish the man because of his past has come into fruition. She is now too deep down the rabbit hole. She won’t bare to see the kids hurt when he goes back to his city.

“Fe-li-ci-ty.”

She wants to smack him across the head when he stretches out her name. It would be cute if the way he says it didn’t hold so much meaning. “It’s Felici-ty!”

“Oh.” He knows she’s in a rare mood. Whatever he did must have really pissed her off. “You sure you don’t want coffee. Java usually helps you mellow out.”

Her eyes narrow. “You are not allowed to hang out with my mom anymore.”

He snorts as he takes her in. That is a good one. “You are so adorable when you’re cranky and Donna is taking me out Thursday night. She says it’s a shame that I haven’t enjoyed a night out in the town.” He smirks, “I think she is going to make it a memorable night.”

“I hate you!”

“You basically hate everything until you’ve been caffeinated and then you’re like a ball of sunshine.”

She throws a piece a paper at him and it just floats to land on his desk. It makes him laugh at her expense. She just storms out of the office to get that coffee he made sound good. With his laughter trailing behind until his office door is fully shut.

Chapter End Notes

End notes* The triplets are newly minted four-year-olds so I’m using how kids talk at three watched a lot more than a dozen videos. One word: adorable! Four-year-olds have wonderful vocab and these 3 will soon join those ranks. A birthday doesn’t turn them to eloquent speakers and so I went looking to see how kids talk at three and half loads of words are jumbled. Not that I didn’t use friends’ kids as inspirations.
Starling City

Chapter Summary

Oliver is back in Starling. Seeing his family, business, and the Gala he needs to attend before he can go back to Providence.

Chapter Notes

This coming next chapter leads into a detour! Wasn’t planning this until ‘someone’ asked about a test to see if Oliver is ready to be a parent. This way when the truth starts to arise the stacks are higher. Then I hopeful get back on track to Oliver finding Felicity is pigtails that will lead to…

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Three weeks with the Smoaks makes his return to Starling City feel so strange. It reminds him when
he sat at the back of a limousine looking at store fronts and all the little things that changed just
within a three-year period from being presumed lost at sea. He may have been on a dessert island
alone but his cognizance is sharp. He could recall Main Street’s storefronts. Even some of the graffiti
art that adorned so many of those stores. Years since he cleaned up childish act and really put stock
in having an astute mind. Finding his future in college as he spent countless hours hanging between
the campus’s libraries of the Green Library and Meyer Library at Stanford.

He had years of partying and being that guy under his belt that doing something that required effort
and creating a new path was his new goals in life. It all steamed out of almost losing his best friend to
wake him up. The old Oliver Queen was a follower and easily manipulated. The emerging man who
learned to accept the past and allow himself to grow as the Oliver Queen he is glad to be.

He’s made many mistakes on his journey. Though he won’t consider the trip after his graduation as
an error. It did take him from his family but the trip itself was great until that quick moving storm
took him under. The ocean so vast he had no idea where he was and took the compromised boat as
far as it could go before, he found land. Miles from any civilization. Now he can look back and
figure how silly it was that he was mere miles from other smaller islands that had some
communication equipment or that New Zealand was just to his left and no more than a two-day
journey, he could have been home sooner he would have laughed.

His time on the island being a blur of the same routine and repetition of the days before. Alone. He
fantasized of having someone to talk to. Someone to make all those lonely nights under the vast sky
be meaningful. His days he worked on creating a visual that probably no one would ever see. It kept
him busy and at least gave him a purpose.

It took a small aircraft with engine problems coming low enough to read. The work on moving
boulders to write the word HELP paid off. Radioing in not only their position but the land
coordinates. Within hours, he found himself no longer alone.

Sometimes he misses the quietness. A city’s volume can be harsh. Loud. Disruptive. Uncalming to a
man who now has voices of concern of people he doesn’t want to worry. A playback of sorts that he
doesn’t need or want. He loves his family; he truly does but sometimes they interfere not knowing
when to step back.

He finds himself many times looking out onto a city he thought he may never see again and feels it.
He feels the vivacity throughout the span of the city he can grasp from his tower. A lifeforce that he
can’t quite describe. Filtering the noises that are made by congestion there is a hum that calls out to
its citizens and those who embrace it find that living amongst all the different facets are what makes
city living worth the admiration. It is what he has found here and knows that this is where he wants
to fully invest his future.

Then he met Felicity Smoak.

He hasn’t given Providence the respect it deserves but it doesn’t vibrate the right sounds that make
him feel connected like his home city. Visually it is a city like any other. People are nice. It holds
beautiful parks. He’ll need to explore it more. Not the adult living section people will assume he’ll
want. He wants to see what there is to do with kids. Like when he heads back, he will like to check
out the museums and any other novelties. Maybe trail north towards Boston. Where he was made
aware it is the triplets’ birthplace. There is a lot of things there worth the visit. He wants to show the
kids the world. At least the world at their door.
As the vehicle comes to a complete stop in front of the large estate he was raised. He thanks the driver as the man opens his door. Being lost in thought is happening a lot lately. Getting out he looks at the stone front of his home. Even though he lives in a Penthouse his parents beckon him home as much as they can get him here. The freshly cut grass brings him to think of a day at the park that began the journey with the Smoaks. He needs to clear his mind and not think of what he is eager to get back to.

Seeing his family is a nice reprieve. He misses them.

He meets with Raisa first and he is no stranger to giving her huge hugs. She has been a rock in his life. He will always have a soft spot for the woman who never made him feel like a failure. Always a cookie and some milk or some anecdote of wise words. Her warm smile always makes him feel like the little boy who would sneak into her room at night to get her to read him a story in her native language.

“It is so good to have you home Mr. Oliver.”

“Raisa, you are always missed. Hoping to spend and evening in the kitchen with you.”

“You are always welcome there my boy.”

“Thank you!” He follows her into the foyer. He sees the fresh flowers vase his mother is frolicking with. “Those look nice mom, they’re not from the garden? Too early in the season.”

“Oliver!” His mom is astounded she didn’t hear him come in. “How was the flight in?”

“The usual, uneventful.” Oliver steps into his mother’s embrace. Being home again. Letting her see him with her own eyes means the world to her. He supposes once a parent it is a lifelong commitment.

“Your sister’s at school and your father got held up by a call. Are you hungry?”

“Actually, I had some fruit and a biscuit of some kind. Mom, how are you?”

“Your father surprised me this morning, he wants to take me on a holiday.”

Oliver laughs. “Really? Where is this romantic trip to?”

“I do not know, maybe you can find that out and give me a clue.”

A deep male voice interrupts, “He will do no such thing. I said it was a surprise.”

“Robert!” She looks at Oliver just pressing his lips together showing mirth at his mother’s uncomfortable moment. “Our son is here.”

“He is a grown man. He knows of such things. Things I’d be happy to discuss with you in private.”

“The older your father gets the brazen he is.”

Robert just shrugs but makes his move to hug his son. “Good to have you home.”
“Thanks dad.”

“Are you up for a round of golf? Henry is unavailable his daughter went to labor last night. Still no word but I remember your mother and I waited fourteen hours for you.”

Moira sounding surprised, “You remembered?”

“Of course, I think you mentioned it off hand throughout the years several hundred times.” Moira whacks her husband’s arm.

“Who else will be in attendance?”

“The usual.”

Moira adds, “Your father persuaded John to join.”

“How did you get Dig to play golf? It isn’t his thing.”

“Malcolm is in Chicago so we are already down a man. So, I guilt tripped him. He’s in a growing business and his clientele play golf.”

“You basically told John to suck it up and play the game where he can talk shop and get more clients. That’s really cool of you, dad. He may not appreciate it while at the course.”

“It’s fresh air. He’ll survive.”

“I’m in.”

“That’s my boy.”

John Diggle just watches as the ball in play makes a zigzag move and goes around the hole its supposed go in. “This is ridiculous. The damn ball won’t go in.”

“Maybe don’t hit it so hard and use some finesse and wiggle those hips.” John’s partner claps back.

“You are enjoying my struggle old man.”

Robert Queen laughs at the two bickering men. “I don’t think any one of us is too drunk to miss the hole.”

“I don’t know, dad. Mr. Bowen seems to have hit the bottle already.”

“Hey now, that is purely H2O in that water bottle.”

Oliver just rolls his eyes as he goes up to his turn. The elder Carter Bowen the grandfather to a past schoolmate of his is looking for the correct iron to play next. His grandson, Carter is off becoming a neurosurgeon if he wasn’t such an arrogant ass Oliver would actually be more chumming with the guy. He prefers hanging with the senior here who has an extravagant attitude.

“Consequently, I hear Oliver is practically engaged.” The old man says finding his preferred
swinging shaft. “I think Janice mentioned it to me this morning.”

Oliver stops from swinging at the ball as he looks at the man. “Engaged? Who am I engaged too?”

“She seems precious, a little top-heavy for my taste. Those girls almost fell out of the meek dress.”

“Oh, my recent ex-girlfriend. We aren’t a thing any longer.” Oliver putts his ball and it goes into the hole.

“Good shot. My niece is available.”

Robert shakes his head, “Carter? Do you need to pawn Gail every time there is an available bachelor around?”

“Well Robert I was pulling for her and Thomas to become an item but it seems someone’s eldest captured his heart.”

“You can say it. She’s my daughter. Emiko and Thomas Merlyn are a married couple living in Chicago with my first newborn grandchild.”

John looks at Oliver and they both can tell that the conversation can get tricky. The subject of Robert’s affair that spawned a child that came to light when Oliver was a teenager and the family almost broke apart. This knowledge isn’t well known. Though a man like Carter who is close family friends knows the whole narrative.

“She’s a lovely girl. Now so is Gail. Your son hasn’t seen her since he went to college. She’s also in town.” The man raises the iron wedge. “You’ll need a date to this Thursday’s event. Or is there already someone simmering in the wings?”

“That was a little intense.” John says polishing off his beer.

“You freaking did great. The shoptalk and seeing Rogers take an interest.”

“Yea that was good. Darn, I’ll need to thank your dad for the opportunity.”

Oliver raises his beer, “To Spartan’s Lantern… huge success.”

“Now how about you scoring a date. Didn’t see that coming.”

Oliver groans which makes his friend laugh. “Come on you didn’t think you’d be single and free of being attached to someone? You’re a very sought-after man.”

“Dig, I’m already kind of seeing someone.”

“What?” John stares at his buddy, “No!” John is stunned. “The actual mother of triplets is really in your line of vision?”

“John, the day I met her. A mere touch. John, a mere touch of her hand. I never felt anything like it. It’s like an electrical pulse but not like getting zapped by electricity.” Oliver sighs he trying to figure the words to explain. He has never felt a connection like this with anyone and he sometimes thinks
he just made it up. He wants to say more but keeps it to himself. Sometimes too much information is really not a good thing. He knows his whole body came alive. In an instance like an aftershock of outer body orgasm experience. He thinks she felt it too but maybe its wishful thinking. “Don’t worry I am taking things very slow with her. Work comes first. Don’t tell Tommy about this yet. I really don’t need the extra guilt trip.”

“She does have three kids. How are they?” He sees the look on the man. A look he knows well from sporting it himself. “Wow, that good. Guess Gail has no chance.”

“John! She never had a chance. She’s a Bowen for crying out loud.”

He finishes up with Raisa. The smells off the kitchen are incredible but he wants to clean up and sport something else for dinner. He passes his father’s den but he sees his mother. Deciding to check on her. Their conversation earlier cut short when his dad arrived and got him to play some golf.

She’s actually reading a book but he sees a bunch of files on the sturdy desk.

“Mom, what is that?”

Looking up from her book after she replaces the bookmark. “It’s a dossier on Ms. Smoak.” He should be baffled but it would mean that he didn’t know his parents well enough.

“Why?” She taps the small pile. It is enough for him to guess his mother’s interest in every woman he has dated. His college roommates didn’t escape background checks so why would any woman he connected with on a seemly longer than a one-night stand not get one? He isn’t naïve.

“These are all files on previous lady loves and possible future ones.”

“Okay, but why? Felicity and I are friends?”

“So, you keep saying. My motherly instinct is telling me she is a lot more.”

“I told you. It’s too early to say.”

“Sweetie, this isn’t an interrogation. I like Ms. Smoak; she has a bright future and it seems a good head on her shoulders.”

“But?” He glares at his mom. “There is always a but?”

“Her father is a criminal. Her choice in men have not panned out. The father of her children busted by the FBI for cyber terrorism.”

“I didn’t know that.” He takes the offered file as he sits down beside his mom. A part of him screams don’t look at it. Don’t look at it. He hesitates. Fingers just hoovering over the clear print of her name. Felicity Megan Smoak. He can’t. It feels wrong to embark on something he can never take back. Learning about Felicity and her family by investing time with them is becoming one of the best awe-inspiring moments that keep him wanting more.

Moira senses his reluctance and inwardly grins. She can already tell this relationship is more than just a flirtation. Her son shows signs of conflict. His need to honor the woman he is seeing with a respect
that Moira wondered if he’d ever have for a companion. His carefree attitude towards the opposite sex well documented in many social circles if not printed in national tabloids. She places her hand over his.

“Oliver, this does not mean your father and I disapprove of your interest in Felicity it just means you should be aware of whom you are falling in love with.”

“Mom, like I said…”

“Oliver! I promised myself that I would not accept another lie. You know what lies have done to this family.” Her gaze bearing the truth of the past. A miserable past. One that the Queens would rather forget but instead keep reminiscing so no one forgets how they grew from learning from the pain and rising together which created stronger bonds. At a time where everything could of sunken and be squandered. A family that could have been ruined. “Thus, are these growing feelings for Felicity real?”

He takes a breath and answers as honestly as he can. “I think so. Like I said its relatively early I need time to sort it all out.” The look he sees his mom giving him. “Mom? What?”

“She’s different, isn’t she? Don’t say it because she has kids. There is something about her. When you figure things out. I would really love to meet her.”

Oliver is flustered he doesn’t know what to say. His parents have always had an interest in his love life since he returned from being isolated on a remote island. He thinks it might have something to do with remerging into society. How it took some time for him to adjust. They don’t like him being alone. Also, they aren’t so subtle in wanting grandkids. The family line and all that.

He is up from his chair. “Mom? Felicity doesn’t feel the same way I do. Our relationship may never flourish.” His about to leave the room when he hears his mother call his name.

“Her primary concern is those three children. If she is the mother, I hope she is. Those three are her most significant motives at keeping any men at bay. Patience and respect go along way my beautiful boy.”

“What if she doesn’t want any more children. Are you okay with that? I know how much grandchildren mean to you?”

Moira gives him a small smile before she responds, “Your father and I had this very same discussion just the other night. After hearing Thea rudely lay into you.”

“She means well.”

“She may but the conversation opened up our eyes. Almost losing you made the fear of losing you again so immense that we tried to interfere in asking the impossible. When you are ready and hopefully someday soon even if it isn’t with Ms. Smoak who has you enchanted. Your father and I will stand in your corner.”

“Wow!” Oliver never expected his mom to even remotely acknowledge this. He thought for sure she would be the consistent hound in him pursuing a respectable woman and settling down. He craves a hug and when he asks for the embrace it actually makes her tear up.

This week won’t be as bad he thinks. He’ll survive the Thursday’s Gala and be heading home Friday. Yes, he said home in his mind. For now, Palmer Tech is his priority the rental he is using doesn’t feel like home but it doesn’t mean five people in his orbit there aren’t already infused in his life.
Until his journey there ends his visit complete and knowing soon it won’t be a visit back here but just in true lament terms it be him coming home to Starling City.

The louder speaker calls the passengers of a certain gate that the plane is now boarding.

Donna hugs her daughter. “You’ll be okay? I know the kids have been a little…”

“Mom. You have fun. We go through this twice a year and seeing your friends back home in Vegas is a reprieve you need.”

“At least Oliver will be back this weekend.”

“Mom, don’t start.”

“Okay, but you are one stubborn child. I can see why the nuggets take that from.”

“Funny mom. I love you!”

“I love you too.” Donna than turns to her three grandkids and gives them all kisses once again before leaving them.

“Okay, who wants ice cream?” Three little I dos answers that. “Okay. Let’s go.” She has them all excited for the treat something that they haven’t had in weeks. Ever since… ever since Oliver entered the fold. His sweet tooth tame and she finds that she goes aboard with his snacking regime because the kids look up to his culinary mastery. She should be jealous. He has a way about him. She is going to try to be Queen free this weekend. Not call him at all. Doesn’t he want to enjoy another weekend free of this family’s craziness? There is a night life to this city and she’ll respect his privacy.

He already took some time this week to talk to the kids. His face plastered on the camera as each child had their turn with him. Felicity sits back just watching as her mother and kids filled him in their activities. She is going to have to listen to her mom. She’s going to have to tell him sooner rather than later. She’ll have to figure on when. Right now, doesn’t seem right. The work load has just gotten more complex and adding hey you’re the baby daddy into the mix is just more problematic. The children deserve better too. She’ll just have to survive week five with Oliver Queen.

Anyways since this morning she’s had a major headache but just chalks it up to the stressful week. Working with Elijah that man wouldn’t stop coughing. Finally she left work early today to bring her mom to the airport saving herself another cough infusing afternoon by that man.

Landing in Providence Friday evening. He decides to visit the Smoak residence. He has some Starling mementos he wants the kids to have. He also knows that Donna left for her yearly weekend
trip to Las Vegas. Week five of needing to be close to Felicity and her family. That is over thirty-one
days. How time has flown bye. Having a driver, he’ll need to call for a cab later but he really doesn’t
concern himself with that he just wants to see the smiles on the three little munchkins he misses
wholeheartedly and their mother.

“Thanks. I’ll take it from here.” He grabs the carry-on case and the large bag and treks to the
apartment complex. He sees that at least her vehicle is here so they’ll be home.

Standing before the door that separates a family, he found himself yearning for. He was only gone
for almost a week and where he once felt like he was home felt strange without the constant
chattering of three little ones seeking amongst themselves any conversation. His family back in
Starling should have no doubts how much he regards this one he is eager to see as he knocks on the
door.

The noise on the other side becomes eerily quiet as he waits for Felicity to open the door. He waits
patiently as he knocks again. When he hears a thud against the door, he knows the kids are at the
door. He finally calls out, “It’s Oliver, is everything alright?”

Just like that an instant reaction. Little voices seemly all happy cheering that he is back. The door
knob moves but the kids have no idea how to open the fancy locks their mother put up to keep them
from actually doing what they are doing. He goes to his wallet to take out a special thin key given to
him by Donna.

“That’s Oliver, it’s everything alright?”

Making sure the door is locked he looks at the ajar door the kids run to now. All of a sudden, he feels
a tight ball in his stomach. He walks steady trying to not make the situation with the kids any more
frightening. He knows from their restlessness that their mom is lying on their bubba’s bed.

“Alright kids back away, I am opening the door.” He doesn’t wait any longer for Felicity to open the
door. Even if she is showering, she’ll be covered up so hopefully she won’t be to mad. He expects
hugs but when they jump and hold him and begin to talk a mile a minute pointing to the door to
where Donna’s bed is. Now that Lillian sleeps with Nathan and Oliver. Donna has had a room to
herself. Felicity won’t spend money on a bed for herself, the futon out in the living room is fine. She
won’t listen to his argument and he lets go of the subject.

Placing a cold wet cloth to her forehead he finally gets a small response. It seems her body loved the
coldness against it burning hot skin. He tells the kids to grab their shoes. He wants to be ready to
leave at a moment’s notice.
He kneels down as the noise of the ambulance is near allowing the three to be embraced by him. The hiccups and wheezing from crying the children are going to be very tired soon.

“Okay, I want all three of you to sit on the sofa and stay there okay?”

“But mommy?”

“I need to talk to the people who going to make mommy okay again.”

He heads to the hallways as hears the commotion. “Upstairs. She’s in the bedroom.”

The two men are looking her over a policeman arrives at the scene. Oliver just tells him what he knows. He came home from a trip and found her like this. His hands are shaky.

What feels like forever before they take her down to the ambulance. He gets all the information he’ll need to find Felicity later as he will have to ready the children for the ride to the hospital. He hates that there is no one he can turn to here in a city that holds no family that can help. How single parents do this he has no clue but it must be one of the hardest things to endure. He makes sure that all their shoelaces are tied and jackets are fully fastened as he begins the trip to their family’s car. Placing each tyke in securely he takes a moment to breathe. The kids so trusting they know he’ll take care of them. Fortunately, they are right he’ll do anything for them.

The ride is semi-quiet as the kids are in shock and allowing a few sobs to escape. He has no idea what awaits them. He is in such a mess. He doesn’t even remember if he shut the door on their way out.

He has the kids hold each other’s hands as he forms a train leading them slowly trekking along even if he wants to rush in and ask about Felicity’s condition.

“Is mommy dead?” “I want my momma!” “Is mommy with daddy now?”

Oliver hushes their worries. “No babies, mommy is just at the doctors. They are going to make her all better.”

Enter the Emergency room. He finds a suitable place to have the kids wait. “I need you to sit here. Don’t talk to no one. No getting out of these seats. Understood?”

He sees Lilly and Nate nod so his focus is on Olly. “Oliver, do you understand?”

“Momma.”

“I know little guy but right now I need to make sure you stay here, safe so I can check on your mother.”

“Don’t leave.” Lilly cries out wrapping her body to his leg. It only creates a reaction from the other two. Their sobs getting louder and the other visitors gawking at the scene. At least a nurse comes by to check on him.

“Are they hurt.”
“No, I want to check on their mother, Felicity was brought in by paramedics. She was unresponsive. The kids…”

She looks at another nurse before she says she’ll look after them while he checks with the attendant up front. He thanks her and moves quickly after the children are back sitting in their chairs.

“Felicity Smoak, she was brought her about half an hour ago. High fever.”

The woman clicks a few buttons. “Are you family?” He knows if he says no the whole journey here will be a waste. He lies. He’ll do anything to know if she is okay. A simple lie it is.

“I’m her… I’m her husband. Smoak. Oliver Smoak.”

“I need to make a call; her chart has a check attending physician note.” As she is on that call whatever nerves he has left is all tangled he can sense that whatever is being said is not good. “The doctor will be out to talk to you. I’ll buzz you through. Small waiting room to the left.”

Each step through the doors is heavier and heavier the thought that these kids can become orphans is a stab through his heart.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter: Oliver gets a taste of what it is like to be a 'single parent'
Chapter Summary

Oliver deals with being a solo guardian to the triplets. There is some highs and lows. With Felicity admitted at the hospital, the kids find themselves with a man who has also wormed himself into their lives.

Continued from chapter 7

Things in his life change so rapidly. From being a carefree man no more than a little more than a month ago to now having is world implode as he enters the small waiting room. He should call Donna. Grabbing his phone, he is about to go to the contact list when he hears, “Mr. Smoak?” For a moment he forgets that he called himself that at the counter. The lady also gave him some forms to sign which he’ll need to do.

“Yes?”

“I’m Dr. O’Leary.” He takes a moment and Oliver holds his breathe. “We did what we could…”

The lag time this doctor has in his responses is making Oliver nervous.

Finally, a little impatient, “Dr. O’Leary please just tell me is she okay?” He stresses the next few words with an urgent tone, “Is she okay?”

“Your wife is now stable.” Right there Oliver can take his first real breath. “She’ll need to stay overnight.”

“Okay. Can I see her?”

“They are prepping her and waiting on an available room.”

“How long?”

“It will take some time to have her moved. We’ll call you. Will you be sitting here?”

“No. I left the children in the outside waiting room.”

“I’m sorry children are not allowed in here.”

“Okay, please call me when she is ready for my visit. I’ll be out there with the kids.” Seeing the man nod in agreement. He practically dashes out to make sure the kids are okay. He left them with virtual strangers and until his eyes lies on them, he’ll be distraught. He can feel the instant his body relaxes. Seeing Lilly lying against Nate as his little fingers are patting her back. Olly’s looking out from the window. The nurse isn’t there but the kids are relatively where he left them.

“Hey, you all must be so very tired.”

Only Nate responds with a nod. Lilly and Olly move from their spots. Oliver scoops up Nathan first and gives him a kiss. Whispering in his ear, “So proud of you, you did good.” The boy just hugs him tighter. Keeping Nathan in his arms as he gives hugs to the other two.
“Is mommy alive?” Oliver could tear up with those words. The kids are so dejected because they think their mother is dead. He holds them in a group hug.

“Your mommy is alive; the doctors are making her better.”

A little voice from the group, “I want to see mommy.” He knows it would make them feel better to see their mother but he knows it isn’t allowed and he needs to make them know their mother is alive but they can’t see her. Glimpsing the hope in their eyes really cuts deep as he really doesn’t want them to be sad.

“Oliver, mommy loves you… loves all of you so very much. They only let adults go in.”

“Why?” and “No mommy?” are their questions.

“No. Not tonight.” Oliver is taking off their jackets they will be here awhile and they should at least be comfortable. Even using the jackets for pillows if needed. “I’m going to talk to your momma and then we are going home.” He glances at each child. “I’m not going anywhere tonight I’m going to take care of you okay?”

He sees the resilience in each child and they all nod of understanding. They are confused and they miss their mother but somehow all have faith in Oliver.
The kids are tired but also hungry. Driving to a drive thru lane at a fast food restaurant has got to be his first. He looks over the menu. He would have been more at ease if he could sit them at a restaurant but even if they weren’t all tired and he doubts that they could sit and not whine for more than ten minutes most restaurants are closed at this hour. Leaving him to read the choices that these three will be engulfing as dinner and he isn’t sure how long ago they have had a decent meal.

He wonders if this is some test. After asking Jean Loring about looking into adoption rules between three states Massachusetts where the kids were born, Rhode Island where they are being raised now and the State he is from. He never spoke to Felicity about any of this and now that she is laid up in a hospital it all just feels so surreal.

He just met them. Why on Earth is he putting himself through all this? Even being smitten doesn’t mean he has to be a total tool to his feelings. He is a grown ass man and he’s allowed two sweet females and three very perfect little beings to win him over and pretty much place caution into the wind. He needs to talk to his therapist about this. Maybe there is an underlining situation he is not aware of. There is no way he could have fallen in head over heels with a whole family that is not what a sane person does.

What he really means is that a sane person would over time come to care for each individual and place themselves into the family after a lengthy time frame. Right? People don’t just fall in love with a whole family and is that even possible?

He just came back from being with his real family. A family he has known all his life. Even with them he has had some eye-opening experiences that have made him who he is. Not all good because his late teen years tell a different story but he grew up. Forgive himself and members of his family. As they also forgave him and themselves.

Yet, here he is listening to three unique little voices talking over each other as they try to tell him what they want to eat. He knows for sure Lilly will not eat the hamburger she wants as Nathan wants just chicken nuggets and Oliver is flipping between nuggets and a sandwich but none have asked for fries but that is what they’ll all want.

He makes the order and he can hear whiny in the back. He decides that he’ll make their choices. That is what parents do? Well that is what he believes parents do. Make the best choices with what is given and there is no way any of them will have any soda pop this late at night.

He is tired himself. If he knew what awaited him in Providence, he would have taken a nap on the jet. As he parks the vehicle, he turns his head to look at the little eyes that mean so much to him. He can stop kidding himself. No matter what a therapist will say he has glued himself to the Smoaks. A family friend, a future parent, no matter what is truly in store for him in the future with these kids. Right now, they need him to make their way home safely, get them to eat, relax, and rest. Tomorrow he’ll have to deal with a lot more Smoak drama but for now he is the guardian to the triplets.

He leaves the bags of food on the passenger seat. He wants to make sure each child is out of the vehicle and able to cross the street safely even if there isn’t much traffic, he will play it as if any moment a truck can roll through at top speed.

Unfastening the last belt of the kids he has each one stand on the sidewalk until all three are out.
“No moving until I say so.” His words crisp and to the point. He opens the passenger side grabbing the few bags and drink cups. Lining them up by having the children hold hands he has them march slowly just slightly by his side. Half way in the street he sees headlights from a distance so he tells them to move quickly to the sidewalk that their home is on. Comfortably leading them onto the building they head up the stairs. The kids make a game of it as the count each stair until the start all over again. He tells them to talk in their low voices because it is late at night.

He is relieved that he actually did lock and shut the door as he turns the knob, he holds the door for them to finally be home. Placing the bags down on the counter he helps the kids take off their jackets. He doesn’t know their routine so he needs to ask, “What does your mom and grandmother do next to get you ready for bed?”

“Bath, teeth, pajamas, story.”

“Okay. Why don’t you three take off your shoes while I set the table. We’ll eat first.”

He watches as they start to do as he says. It’s weird how much power he has. Three essentially little people are under his command. “Nathan don’t just drop your shoes bring them to where they belong.”

“Okay.” As one falls in line so do the other two.

He cuts the food up to make it easier and make everything look like minis. This way the kids can have an array of food choices and not fight and complain that this isn’t what they wanted. It works as they munch on the small spread before them and it seems they are hungry. He takes his own sandwich and eats and it actually feels pleasant to dine because he forgot about his own hunger. Wow it has been a long night. As he begins to clean up around the three still snacking on their fries while talking amongst each other. They saw some wild things at the ER waiting for him as he was buzzing around talking to medical personnel and eventually seeing their mother.

He finally says, “Okay time to brush these pearly whites.’ He smiles as he rephrases, “Brush teeth.”

“No bath?” he hears from each child in a different tone.

“No tonight. Tomorrow morning we’ll get clean but for now just brush your teeth and get your PJs on.”

He places the toothpaste to each toothbrush the kids are assigned. There is some bickering and he nips it in the bud. They should all be asleep but here they are trekking along to his instructions and it is time to get them into their bed clothes give them a little story and make sure to tell them that their mother misses them very, very much even though she didn’t say much. She was barely alert but he said enough for the two of them. His words still ring true, “I’ve got them. You just rest up and don’t worry about a thing. I’ve got this. Good night Felicity, I’ll see you tomorrow.”

Placing each kid onto their bed. Already beginning a story, the moment they began dressing into their pajamas. Oliver grabs all the used clothing to place in the hamper. After switching the light off and making sure the little nightlight stays on, he leaves their room. He now can wash his own face and brush his teeth and do what he needs to do to eventually fall asleep himself. Replacing his carryon bag back to its spot near the closet he looks at the futon. Felicity’s bed. Sighing he switches the overhead light off and makes short work on laying on the now laid out mattress in the living room. His eyes scan the room and lets out a moan as the light of the convenience store makes a wavy light show on the ceiling. Too tired to think of anything he drifts off to sleep.

Somewhere in the middle of night he wakes to little movements around him. The kids are out of bed
and have joined him. As uncomfortable as the futon is his exhaustion keeps him glued and he really
doesn’t mind the company.

Next thing he knows the light coming from the window has him want to cover his face but his arms
feel like lead. Moving his neck to the side he sees one of the boys using his upper arm as a pillow
and then he looks at the other side briefly as the sun’s rays has him wincing. The other boy little
fingers holding him down as if his limb was some sort of a teddy bear. Now he can feel the weight of
a body spread over him. His eyes slowly take in Lilly’s crown of ash blonde hair. Wow the kids
made him into some huge sleeping apparatus.

He’ll like to have his body back. Now that he is awake, he can feel how his body is beginning to
scream from displeasure. Some of body parts numb like the arm pillow that… He looks at the boy
and figures its Nathan. Trying his best not to wake up the kids he slowly disentangles himself from
the boys. Now Lilly, well unfortunately he’ll have to rise and she’ll most likely stir but now that he is
awake, he needs to tend to bodily fluids and his body isn’t going to politely wait for him.

Deciding to shower he looks at his choices. He chooses citrus as his scent and cleans up quick. The
thought that now he’ll need to clean each child. Does he do one by one or have all of them in a bath?
He decides all three at once will be chaotic but in the long run probably easier. Maybe!

Leaving the bathroom, he sees Olly is awake and watching television. Nathan seems to burrow into
the pillows to keep from seeing the sunlight and Lilly is a starfish which has her brother Oliver using
her body as a pillow. He takes a moment to watch. He wonders how often this is the scene?
Knowing that Felicity sleeps on the same exact spot he has slept and her children using her body to
comfortably watch television. He can’t help but smile.

He walks into their bedroom and begins to put together their clothing of the day. He must admit
Felicity has a tagging system which is making this quite easy. All he needs to do is pick their undies
and their socks and yep he has what the triplets will wear after their bath. After tidying up their room
double checking he laid their clothes correctly. The day can get started. Hearing giggles from the
living room that is centered by what is being shown on the television set.

When they are aware of his presence. “Good morning.” Their reaction hilarious as they run to him.
Three little bodies collide to his as their questions range from food to their mother is asked. He
answers each as he picks each one up and gives a peck to their noses.

Checking the temperature one more time he makes sure the three towels are also on standby.
Showtime! “Nathan! Oliver! Lillian!”

He comes out to see Lillian has her shirt stuck over her head and her brother Nathan is trying to help
her but it looks like he is in the process of choking her. He pats Nate’s naked behind to the side so he
can help Lilly. Bringing the shirt back down slowly as her hair is somewhat wrapped around the
sleeping blouse. He then makes sure to slide it off her without any of her locks getting tangled. With
three bare naked kids now around him his instant reaction to pick them up makes him feel weird.
Thus, he has them walk towards the tub and makes them raise their arms so he can place each into
the warm water.

With each playing with their favorite boat as he begins to soapy suds them. Asking how their
mommy cleans them and trying to reciprocate. Enjoying the mindless rambles, the kids are happily
asking. For a moment in time they are free of worries as the simplicity of playing and doing a task
they have done countless times. Oliver feels more at ease as he lets them take the lead. Their system from washing their toes to their little fingers its almost song like within a lesson in each step to cleanliness.

Washing their hair is a little tricky and he tries to do it without making any one of them cry. Using a wash cloth to touch them. This experience is another first and he always thought somehow his first time doing something like this would be with his own child. They seem content playing with their boats until its splash time. That is not Oliver’s favorite time as the kids happily make a mess.

“Okay, let’s bring bath time to an end. Lilly let’s just make sure I got all the soap out of your hair.” He checks one more time and when he is pleased, he gets them to stand. Grabbing their little character hooded towels, he calls out which one belongs to which kid.

“Duck?” Nathan raises his hand. The little boy stands up and Oliver wraps the child in the duck towel placing him on the rug. “You can wait in the living room.” Watching the boy move, “No running Nate.”

He turns to the other two. “Okay, who has the Dog?” Little Oliver says it’s a bear and it makes the man apologize as he makes a growl sound attaching the towel to the boy. A happy laughing child hits the rug running before the words no running slows him down to almost a halt.

“I suppose the Froggie must be Lilly’s.” The girl nods but she already sitting down again and doesn’t get up as quickly as she starts to play with another boat. “Sweetie, bath time is over.”

“Why?”

He has two kids doing whatever they are doing with no supervision and one who wants to hang out in now cold water. Thinking of something. “What if we race the boats and see which one will get to the other side first, but you’ll need to be standing here with me when I pull the drain.” The girl rises and he wraps the green towel around her. He calls the boys back seeing if they want to be joining Lilly and fortunately this event entices the boys back.

He just needs to clean up a bit. Empty the drain. While the kids are cheering their boats on Oliver is drying the area. Placing the bottles back and leaving the boats to dry in the sink once the race is over. Having them head to their room to dress up he just grabs some of the used towels to help contain some water spill and he is off to check on the little munchkins.

They actually can clothe themselves so he moves to the kitchen as he makes a discovery that the ladies haven’t stocked up on any essentials. “You got to be kidding me?”

“Waz uncles Olivah?” He turns to see Nate, being called uncle he guesses is a step up from being Mr. Queen this, Mr. Queen that. Even though it’s cute how they pronounce his last name.

He is not feeding them poptarts, or any of that instant crap. This is breakfast time. They’ll need protein and the right carbs and well at least there is eggs, cheese, and aging spinach that is still decent to use. He makes quick work of it. Little omelets it is.

He leaves them to eat as he goes to use the bathroom only to hear an oopsie and leaving the room to see Nate with ketchup in his hair.

“What? How?” Oliver in disbelief says. He was only gone for two minutes. Grabbing paper towels to grab the goop from the boy’s hair. He’ll need to wash Nathan again. This time he makes sure to watch the kids finish eating before having Lillian and Oliver sit on the futon and watch some TV.

Now he is perplexed. Only one more towel. One clean towel. He looks at the hamper and its filled to
the brim with other towels. No food and no towels at its only seven in the morning. Visiting hours start at nine and he is still waiting on his assistant he texted late last night to get through and have some sort of child care giver take the kids while he visits their mom.

“Okay.” He says that more for himself. He decides to give the boy a shower. Looking at the red splash of tomato sticking to the boy’s hair. He’ll need to get in the shower with the boy. “Is it okay if I go in with you?”

“Mommy does that too.”

“Great!” Oliver starts to undress leaving his boxers on while simultaneously running the water to the temperature the boy will like. “Okay.” He says again as Nathan is sitting on the toilet’s lid waiting to be cleaned up. “Come here.” Nathan moves off the toilet and walks to stand before the man who is in his undies. Take two! Oliver washes the boy and makes it as quick as possible. Leaving the other two unattended is making him nervous.

The place looks like its seen better days but it close to the supermarket so it will do. Five large bags. Two of whites only. Finding the detergents and the bags is only because he was there when Felicity came home from doing laundry. Otherwise he wouldn’t have known where they hid the supplies.

He carries two bags as he brings in one child into the laundromat. Going back out and doing the same thing until he has all three kids and five bags of laundry. Getting instructions from the little lady at the counter who just screamed from the top of her lungs at two little boys that must be family to her. Ten minutes’ later he is filling up some of the machines to the color coding of the clothes.

The kids enjoying taking the clothes from the bags and random throwing it to the big machine in front. He needs to remind them not to go inside. “Lilly don’t even think it.” As her little head disappears into the washing machine. When all the machines are full, he even put some of his clothes from yesterday in the mix. He fills it with the recommended soap and then gives each child the correct change for each. Watching how delighted they are to do that task he can blow air out and relax just a bit. These kids are a handful.

“Okay. Get your jackets we are now going food shopping.”

“I want to see the bubbles!”

“Yes bubbles!

He already handing them their jackets, “When we come back and dry our clothes you can watch the machines wash clothes. Now we need to go shopping so we have food later.”

Lillian doesn’t look pleased so Oliver needs to handle her or she can bring the mood down. Picking her up suddenly and flipping her over his shoulder. He glances at the boys “Who can put their jacket on first gets to have their pick of a lollipop.”

“Oooo.” Olly says. They all saw the lollipops from the adjoining store and all three want one.

“Mez waz one too.” Lillian says from behind him.
“Are you going to be a good girl and put her jacket on?”

“Yes!” He drops her and hands over the jacket.

Finding a parking spot near a cart storage is what he needs as he walks over to grab one and still have eyes on the vehicle. Placing the three in and telling them to behave as he maneuvers them into the store.

Twenty minutes later and a lot more stressed he makes it to the checkout.

“You probably hear this a lot. You know you look like Oliver Queen.”

“Ah hmm.”

She jokes, “Well almost a spitting image. He is so good looking. Bet you wish you had his money.”

“Yea.” He mumbles. The kids happily entertaining themselves not caring what the register lady and their guardian are talking about.

“Do you have our discount card? This be a lot cheaper if you did. Some of this stuff is on sale.”

“No, I don’t.”

“That’ll be one hundred- and fifty-dollars and…”

“Here he can use my card.” An older lady behind him says. She smiles at the little ones being super impressive on behavior.

“Thank you! That is very generous of you.”

“It’s just a card. Feeding three kids must not be cheap. You should get the card it is free.”

“Thanks. I may but I’m not from around here and this store chain isn’t located where I’m from.”

The register lady gives him a new total. “Ninety-four dollars and sixty-eight cents.”

He gives her his card and as she looks at his name Oliver tells the older lady he is from Starling. He can hear the woman behind the counter make a gasping sound as she swipes and soon gives him the card.

“You just need to sign here Mr. Queen.”

“Thank you!” He looks at the name tag, “Betty. Can you also ring up the lady behind me? It’s my treat.”

“Sure.” He moves to the side and as he is talking to the kids. Telling them of their next adventure he hears Betty call his name.

The surprised woman looks at him with such sincerity. “Oh no, you don’t need to pay, I’d let anyone use my card it just a card.”
“It’s my way of saying thank you for your generosity. I’m looking out for my friend’s kids and well she’d want me to do something like this. She has a sweet heart. Anyways, where do I sign?”

He signs the copy and says his goodbyes it’s time to move the wash to the dryers.

In the midst of throwing laundry around machines he shouldn’t be surprised he is now folding women’s panties. By the sizes he can tell which is Felicity’s and which belongs to her mom. He shouldn’t sport a smile but it is too damn funny. Donna spends her time with the kids at home and wears some really alluring undies and he is trying not to be mesmerized but he is doing their laundry.

Felicity wears one tone colors hi-cuts briefs it seems. Fruit of the Looms and he’s trying not to look but it is just unconceivable that he wouldn’t notice. His Felicity. Most boring undies while her rocking momma wears some really obnoxious scantily ones. Seeing the spandex, he already can tell it is so Felicity and he handles them with care. Folding neatly, he will leave them on top of the bureau he doesn’t need her to kill him because he touched her unmentionables.

He is glad he bought the coloring book and crayons at the store. They’re using the seats as a table as they keep themselves busy. The suds on the washing machines only had them interested for ten minutes’ tops.

Also, glad that his personal assistant is coming through for him again. Happily rewarding her, “Thank you! You are a life saver. Four days anywhere in the world on me.” He hears her reply. “Yep, we’ll talk details later. Thank you!”

He’ll be heading to his place to meet the child care giver at two in the afternoon. He is tired but he can see the kids could do with a nap.

“Okay. I’m going to place the bags in the car. Grab your jackets okay?”

He sees them all nod and happily start getting up to do as their guardian has asked. The woman behind the counter is amazed and tells him how well he is with kids. A father who doesn’t need to yell or demand anything she rarely sees that. He keeps from saying he isn’t their dad. It only would cause a story and he just doesn’t want to talk about it. Just wants to get the triplets home.

Taking a call from the hospital is strange enough. He keeps forgetting about how he got in the first place. By being a Smoak.

Realization hits before he says something rash, “Yes, this is him.”

Oh boy Felicity is awake and asking for the kids but adamantly saying she isn’t married or think she is. She’s coming off as confused.

“I understand. Glad she remembers the kids. Because they aren’t going anywhere.” He hears the woman reply on the phone before he answers back. “She just came out of a fever state I can handle her not knowing…” he coughs “um… that she's my wife.”

“I’ll be there as soon as I can. Probably around three. I need a babysitter. Thank You!”

Lilly of course has to ask, “Waz a wife?”
He isn’t going to make it sound simple because their smart and can be like little detectives. “A wife is a female partner in a marriage.” The kids are quiet a few seconds trying to interpret and it seems they lose interest which is all good in Oliver’s book.

After falling on the futon, he decides he’ll rest until quarter to noon and then make lunch. With finally some peace and quiet. He’s out. Somehow perceiving the chattering of the three just over his head as his eyes flutter open. He lets out a little groan. He may have had a longer nap as the kids just amused themselves by observing him sleep.

Lilly is the first to speak, “Hi.”

“What have you three been up to?” He wonders if he should be worried.

It’s Olly that makes him chuckle. “You perdy. Wanna look like you. Grow up.”

Nathan just touches his short bristles of his stubble. The way the boy then touches his own face has him snort with laughter. He feels like he is an awaking sleeping giant and the little people are inspecting their new toy. They’ll probably look like their father which he doesn’t know anything about. Not even his name. He didn’t ask his mother and he never brought the conversation to the Smoak ladies. Maybe the kids will enlighten him. They all look so much like Felicity he wonders what features they take from their father. They all have the most amazing blue eyes. Little button noises. Lips that create the cutest pouts or smiles that always warms his heart.

“What does your daddy look like?”

He sees them all shrug and only Nathan says, “Me no know.”

“What no pictures?” He has noticed the apartment really only has the triplets’ photos everywhere and just one of the five of them. A sweet photo of the kids tucked in the middle of their grandmother and mom.

“Bubba say he died.”

“Oh!” He didn’t know that. He thought he was incarcerated. Wow! There is a lot he doesn’t know. He can already see the line of questioning heading to their mother’s health. “Your mommy is going to be fine. Bet she can’t wait to give you all kisses.” He knows it is overstepping his bounds but he doesn’t want these kids to be sad. “Like this.” He grabs the first child and kisses him just like he has witnessed the ladies of the house adoring them with light kisses around their cheeks. Though he finds the kids reciprocate and their light kisses to his cheek.

It is a small window in time this morning but it seems to make wanting to make this a forever thing more permanent in the back of Oliver’s mind. He can never replace their father but he can be there for them.
From there lunch and having them get ready to go out. He’ll be going back to the hospital but without the children. Hence, they stop off at his rental apartment and brings the kids up the elevator alongside his carryon and bag of goodies he hasn’t given to them yet. There is a child care service that his personal assistant in Starling hooked him up with. The person should arrive by two in the afternoon.

The children have a field day exploring the place. They seem to love how high up they are and the views they are seeing. He finally sits them down and shows them the gifts he has gotten them from when he went away. “I have presents.”

Their oohs and aahs has them happily sitting around a coffee table.

“Uncle Olivah”

“Yes?”

“You de bestest.”

He laughs at how much they are enjoying being spoiled right now. Relishing on how much they love their gifts. It will give them a few hours of play hopefully as he will leave to see about their mother. Just as expected the service has sent a person and Oliver is giving a layout and time-frame. When he feels like everything will run as smoothly as it can he says goodbye to the kids.

Stepping foot into a hospital just always brings an eerie feeling. He doubts that will ever go away. Heading to the nurse’s station he readies himself for what can be waiting for him. Hopefully Felicity be okay to head home. Those kids miss their mother and have been wonderful troopers but he can only hold off their fears for so long. If they don’t see their momma, they’ll automatically be sad and he can’t blame them.

The head nurse shows him in and she mentions that Felicity doesn’t remember him until they enter the room. Felicity says his name in a frustrated fashion.

“Guess this is her way of saying she wants a divorce.”

The nurse shakes her head as she leaves the room.

“Oliver, how? Why? Where are the kids?”

“Good to see you too. They are safe. I have an agency looking after them so I could be here and with any luck you’ll be going home soon.”

“Oh! You shouldn’t be here.”

“What? Why?”

“I’m sick.”
He looks around her sterile room. “You don’t say.” He pulls a chair to sit closer. “You look much better. You had me worried.” He remembers her incoherent babble yesterday about not wanting to disturb him. She could have died and she’s worried about stupid things. “You have my number. I thought we were striding into a comfortable friendship zone?”

His serious tone and fixed eyes on her make her squirm on the bed from how intense he is right this very moment. “We are.” She meekly says before having a slight coughing fit.

“The point of friendship is to have each other’s backs.”

“Seeing me sick is just so…”

“Natural. Normal. I deal with enough fake people in my life. I thought we were real!”

“Oh Oliver, you seeing me all blemished doesn’t make me feel real.”

“What? That makes no sense.”

“Have you seen yourself in the mirror lately?”

“What has the fever done to your amazing brain?”

She gives him a nasty look but continues on her tirade, “Gosh my hair is a mess, my nose red, probably my eyes too. Not a look I’m going for.”

“This is what this is about? That is just baloney. Your sick… The kids? Felicity! The reason I come here is… is because I can be myself with no one wanting anything well other than horsey back rides. The kids really seem to love it. My knees not so much.”

She lets out a laugh that leads to another coughing fit. He gets up to plop her pillows. That is when the nurse comes back. Checking on the numbers and remarks that a reconciliation of their marriage is more likely winking at Oliver because of his earlier comment. He just grins and adds his quip. “Nothing that can’t be fixed with some soup.” The woman leaves them in peace again.

“Are you channeling my mother?”

“Oh, yea before I forget.” He moves his fingers into his inside jacket’s pocket and grabs her cell phone. “Here you are.”

Felicity happily takes the phone an after clicking her code she sees she has missed a few of her mother’s calls. “I should call my mom.”

“Do you want me to leave the room or can I play the supportive husband?” Her facial expression has him snort. He stays put as she dials her mom.

He helps her from the parked car. The have one stop before he can get her into bed. She is humming about missing her babies. “I could have gone with you to pick up the kids.” He already expects her to be on overdrive thinking a mile a minute. The medication running its course. Before she left the hospital, she got a refill of the medication and now is sort of out of it. He hopes to get in and out of the store and then have her in bed to rest.
“Felicity you’re going straight to bed.”

She gives him an incredulous look. “Oliver, I can’t rest. There’s laundry, I need to go grocery shopping, the kids will need a bath.”

“Okay, I hear you but you’re going straight to bed.” He helps her to the pharmacy counter.

“You’re not the boss of me! I’m mean at work you can ride me but…”

“Felicity! Hush. Lower your voice.” He then whispers for only her to hear, “Though this riding part we can so discus later.”

“What? Oliver are you even hearing me?” He hums his lips together. “So, I should start with Laundry.” She stares at the huge clock on the wall and her eyes dilate. “It’s what a little past four, the laundromat is open.”

“Felicity?”

“What Oliver can’t you see I’m trying to think.”

“Is that what you are doing?” He looks at the poor counter person having to witness their bickering.

“My mind is a little jumbled. Why did everyone at the hospital think I’m married?”

“Only family can get in.”

“Oh, the kids?”

“Felicity they are minors.”

“Oh! My mom?”

“In Vegas!”

“Oh right! You?”

“That is right. That is why the doctor thinks that.” He watches her place her hand on her head. He asks the woman which aisle the pain medication is at. They’ll need some aspirin to. Shoot he knows he’ll need some. Witnessing Felicity being so loopy is not fun. Her usual organized thoughts he has come to depend on is one of her incredible traits.

He is so exasperated he mumbles, “I can’t wait to get you into bed.”

“Yea, once was enough buster.” Her finger jamming to his chest twice before falling to her side. “You think you can waltz…” She does a full turn in the middle of an aisle to illustrate her point. “Into my life and get me to drop my panties…” She stops to think. Oliver is already trying to get her to move along as they have already gotten some attention of the other customers. “Not naïve anymore. I know boys like you…” She stops to look at a flashing gizmo by the register before she completes her sentence, “You break girl’s hearts like mine.”

“Okay, come on.” He’s leading her out of the store. Happy to make sure she’s in the passenger seat after a moment’s struggle to get the seatbelt on. Sliding into the driver’s side he hears her subdued words.

“It hurt really bad. Still does.”
“You’re in pain?” Oliver looks at the new prescription and sees the side effects. She shouldn’t be in pain.

“Going to break it again.”

“What’s going to break again? Felicity you’re not making any sense? Let’s get you home okay?”

He just looks at her one more time before he takes the car off of park. She has a few tears streaming and looks to be unfocused. It’s going to be a long night. It is going to make his journey to pick up the kids and bring them home a little more pressing when he doesn’t think he should leave a despondent recent hospital patient alone.
Chapter Summary

A nuclear family, elementary family or conjugal family is a family group consisting of two parents and their children. Oliver and Felicity and the kids spend time together after the triplet's mother is feeling much better.

Chapter Notes

This is basically the conclusion of Oliver finding Felicity sick and being their for the children. Thanks for reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation from chapter 8

The Smoak residence is still missing an occupant as Donna is still in Vegas this Saturday evening. With Felicity tucked, literally tucked in her mother's bed. The household is fairly quiet as most of the kids are watching one of those preselected videos from the movie cabinet.

He has no idea when this became the standard as he shifts one of the kids on his lap as he works from his laptop. Today has been a long day and his afternoon nap did the trick. When did he need afternoon naps? Oh yes, since he found himself leading the charge of three little abled bodies who are so like each other but yet radically different. He doesn't even know if that makes sense but his mind is telling him it's the truth.

This evening he finds Nathan is glued to him. The boy prefers to just be and not talk as much as his siblings. Oliver doesn’t mind it at all as he is reading a work email marked urgent. Marking the box on his email to reply his hand is abruptly bumped as Nate accidently slaps his hand from the keyboard. While the little boy is silently playing on Oliver’s lap the toy almost slips from his little fingers.

“Sowwie.”

“That’s okay, who is Cityman saving today?” He hears the long-winded story of a hero’s journey and Oliver adds some ohs and ahs before he continues concentrating back on the email so he can send a reply.

He is making soup. In-between the entertaining videos, coloring and making diner everything is so calm and it all feels so domestic like he’s been doing this forever. The craziness of this afternoon forgotten or really pushed to the back of his mindset. He got Felicity home even though she was like some weird zombie. Every look she gave him held some deeper meaning that he was oblivious too.

Relieved when he got the kids back and they made him inwardly crack up as they tippy toed to see their mother snoring lightly away on their bubba’s bed. The look of relief that she wasn’t gone could be seen on each of the kid’s faces. They have remained quiet ever since.
Chapter 9 Nuclear Family

He helps each kid to the pot as they all have a turn swishing the handle. Getting a small taste test. Meanwhile having them tell him about the ingredients he is using or any food they like as he has them color. Asking them to make the yummiest looking food to show their mommy later. The kids are cheerful to oblige. Showing him their artwork becomes tremendously important. It’s like having instant feedback to their work and they are all ears. Wanting to please him. He supposes it is human nature to want to get reaction for the work done.

“What’s on your art paper?”

“Kabigsh, karits, paaatatoes.” Nate’s index finger point to each vegetable.

“That’s is what’s in the pot. Yummy.” Nate nods as he looks back at his artwork. He seems he needs some more brown for his potatoes as he grabs the brown crayon.

“And yours Olly?”

“Gummies… and this is shocolat.” The little boy pats the chocolate which on his paper are black squares near little bear looking shapes that represent gummy bears.
“Oliver there are other food groups. I know you like chewing on carrots.”

“Shocolat tasty better.”

Oliver mums his lips together. This boy has his mother’s taste buds. Shaking his head, he turns to Lillian’s almost all green looking paper. He knows she loves green. She doesn’t need to be asked as she answers, “Pinache, kalez, baby trees.”

“I like broccoli too.” He makes his way to the kitchen. Now that the soup is done and the mac and cheese is cooling down dinner is ready. “Okay, I need one of you to go check on your mommy. Tell me if she is awake.” He is moving around the small kitchen placing plates together and all the whatnots. The kids all look at the closed bedroom door and all of them hesitate. He has never seen them so discouraged to do something. “What’s wrong?”

“Bubba say rude to wakey mommy.”

“Hmm, that be true. But if mommy is awake, she’ll be hungry. You want her hungry?”

Lillian shakes her head no. Nathan and Oliver both say no in unison. He sees the little girl is the closest to where her mom is so he asks, “Lilly why don’t you go check. Come back out and tell me.” The girl looks at him once and then at her brothers before she takes off. Oliver turns his back to grab some tumblers for the kids’ drinks. Instead of Lilly coming back out he hears Lilly’s loud voice. “Mommy’s awake!”

The little tornado of the rest of the kids running to see their mom is but a flash.

Oliver walks in saying his apologies and watches as she turns to give him a rare smile, he’s only seen a handful of times. The boys pounce on the twin bed and Oliver can’t believe he needs to say the word careful over and over. A flashback of his own childhood when that term and his name were used frequently in the same sentence. Wow he didn’t see flashbacks to his early childhood being a possibility. Shaking his head but they sure bring happy memories to the new ones he is creating.

“I made soup. You want to eat here or at the dinner table. I still have to clear the table of art supplies but…”

“Here is fine, thank you Oliver.”

Waking up in Felicity’s futon second morning in a row. He doesn’t know how she can be so chipper in the morning. Yes, there is coffee, but she sleeps on a mound of springs and soft spots and it is just so not comfortable. It is doable as a couch but to lay on it horizontally it really is a piece of garbage. He isn’t alone again as the three little cherubs are sleeping around him. Surprising they haven’t woken up to see anything on the television set. He can feel he is under scrutiny and he moves his head and finds the blue eyes that he fell asleep thinking of.

“Morning”

“Good morning Felicity. How are you feeling? How long have you been awake?”
“Much better. Not long.”

He slowly frees himself from the sleeping tots. Felicity can tell as she states, “Last night they slept there didn’t they?”

“Guilty they seem to hijack the futon when they should be in their own little beds. I’m becoming a huge pillow for them.”

“I’m sorry about all this.”

“Felicity. There is nothing to apologize for. You’re okay and that is all that matters.” He can’t stress that enough. The dynamic between them has changed and he can feel her pull away at times. He walks the few steps to be in her space but also have a conversation with her without disturbing the sleeping children.

“Oliver you can head home. There is no reason to stay. I’m okay now.”

“Yea, that isn’t happening until a pass the baton to your mom.”

“I am not a kid. You don’t need to…”

“I promised your mom. I’m not retracting my promise so… Whatever you want to do we will do it together.” He slightly towering over her and her eyes are firmly on his. It’s a little battle of wills playing before them. Neither wanting to back down.

“You’re a very stubborn man.” His fingers move a stray piece of her hair just out of line with her vision. She sucks in air and it has him looking at her lips.

“You’re as equitable as me so it’s a draw.” He leans down so close. This is the closest their faces have ever been and both a little drawn into the moment. He has only recently dreamed of doing this and to find it may be possible is really something else. Going for the kiss a buzz from a device behind her blares. Enough to also wake up the kids. Pulling away. Both taking a few steps back from the other and Oliver knows that he wants this more than anything and maybe he thinks she does to.

“Hi mom. No. Well… you did wake the angels up.” Felicity moves to her room to finish the call.

Oliver has no time to think as the triplets are already asking for their morning hugs. He has no idea what their mother will think as he is more straightforward with showing affection. Morning hugs and kisses before breakfast. He loves them. He thinks he really does.

Setting the last child down softly he lightly reprimands them. “I thought I said last night to stay in your own beds. We will not be having pancakes so cereal it is.”


“Did you sleep in our own bed last night?” He sees the boy nod. “Really? No lying or no park later.” The boy stops nodding and looks at his siblings with a gloomy face. “Now you can have the chocolate cereal we bought yesterday.” That does make the situation better. Oliver points to the dining room table and all three move to their assigned spots as they wait. He observes Felicity go to the bathroom before she’ll probably come over to sit and have her breakfast.

Oliver finishes pouring the milk onto their bowls when he hears a Felicity’s frantic voice “You… you did the laundry!” He doesn’t bother answering because now that she is alert, she is bound to notice. He knows from past girlfriend’s that bras are best air dried. Though the kids pipe up saying they also helped. “Oh my gosh. Oliver!”
Oliver shrugs as he sits at the table with some oatmeal, he made for himself. He has some berries placed out for the kids to graze on as he sprinkles some onto his own bowl. She comes out of the room observing her kids munching and talking about the park later. It’s like she entered a twilight episode. Her kids aren’t roaming between eating and doing their own little things. How does Oliver do it? She can only manage with her mom’s help having them sit for ten minutes’ tops before one or another wants to do something else.

“You did the laundry!” She gives him the oddest look. For a moment he wonders if she thinks she is really married to him. It’s a look that holds a lot of meaning if they were in a relationship.

Not like he is helping the situation by acting like a concerned partner. “Okay, I did the laundry. Can you sit down and have something to eat? I got the yogurt you like and there is granola if…” He doesn’t get it. It’s just laundry, something he’s been doing since his college days. Yes, he comes from money but he really wanted to be independent from his parents at that age. Learning to be self-sufficient had its downers but he managed. Better than being a total spoiled brat and think things materialized from thin air. It also got to be a conversational piece like when he placed a new red shirt with some whites and well, he had pink socks out of that experience.

Oliver and the kids are just watching Felicity go through a series of different facial expressions and how she is gesturing with her arms. It would be quite comical if she didn’t just come from being an admitted patient at the local hospital.

“Oh my God, I’m still sick! I’m in a fevered dream.” Felicity can’t believe that everything she secretly desires is happening right here before her. She finds Oliver to not only be just sexy but very sexy. The word sexy floating around her very active head holds all these meanings of the word sexy like seductive just for being himself, desirable in how he comes across, alluring that she almost got to kiss him and she’d like to follow through, inviting well the man pretty much invited himself into this family, sensual with everything revolving around him it involves gratification of the senses, provocative that’s a good one because his presence creates a strong reaction she even believes he is brazen about it, tempting oh the attraction is there it is like a forbidden fruit just in her reach that she can grasp but the cost could be her undoing.

“Felicity?” Oliver is out of his chair. He wants to check her temperature.

“This is all a dream, right? Everything I stated that needs to be done is already done. Does that make sense?”

“Felicity, if I knew you’d freak out this badly about laundry I wouldn’t have done it. Even with no more towels.”

“Towels?”

“Kids are messy. One of these.” He points to the table. “Had to have a ketchup bath.”

“Dat’s me momma.” Nate proudly states.

“He got a bath?”

“Well, all three did. Nate just wanted to be extra clean.”

“What else did you three do?”

“Uncle Olivah buy cocopuffs.” Lillian says happily as she inserts another mouthful of cereal into her mouth.
“Well that fight wasn’t fair. It was three on one.”

Felicity just looks at the man. He pulled through. The man who once broke her heart is here when she didn’t know she needed him. She tears up.

“Felicity are you okay?” Oliver is baffled he has no idea what to do. The kids are as stumped. Their worries are directed at Oliver.

He has never seen her show an array of different reactions at once. The roller-coaster ride of just being in her attendance. He has seen her happy which he finds like any sane person that is the best time to have any interaction. To her being fully mad and that is usually because something isn’t going according to some plan and it just means tread carefully or take a chance and be snapped at. With their blooming friendship she freely shows any sentiments within those ranges.

“I’m fine. I’m just processing that is all. I can’t believe my kids… Oliver thank you.” Now she is bawling as she thinks that if he didn’t arrive when he did, she could be dead and her babies… Her babies would lose their mom, only parent they ever had. “I’m sorry.”

“Felicity. Like I’ve said. There is nothing to apologize for. You’re okay and that is all that matters.”

“You’re a good friend Oliver, I don’t know how to ever thank you.”

He walks her over to the table. “Eat. I promised the kids some park time. Maybe you’ll be able to have some fresh air with us.”

“That offer sounds good, but how about a quick run to the grocery shop. I know you most likely bought the essentials…”

“Sure, I see no problem with that.”

“Good and if I’m not pushing the envelope, I think I’ll stay here while you guys are at the park. If that is okay?”

Oliver just trails alongside Felicity as she scratches off words from a list. Every once in a while, he gets to be amazed as she calls out one of the kids’ nicknames without eyeing them and tells them to cut it out. The auto comeback is usually ‘Didn’t do nothing.’ Her response is their whole first name in a voice he’ll call ‘mother knows so just stop’ it has him observe each of the kids doing something and their mother even without having direct line of vision on them just knowing that their doing something she doesn’t agree with. He’d like to learn this trick it seems so handy.

Grocery shopping. This is a unique skill he is partaking in. He doubts he’ll be this actively engaged once he is back in his city. Even if he is enjoying this task. He has paid personnel that tend to his daily chores.

Setting the middle child down. He finds himself looking at an array of different chips as he is looking for the brand the Smoaks like. That once he finds it, he feels like a dork by announcing his joy at finding the darn thing. Lillian is excited for him. What a precious cheerleader.
The boys are standing near their mother talking gibberish of things to do at the park later. She’s just humming in agreement. Felicity turns to regard where her baby girl is. Not having three voices trying to get her attention has her seek the missing member.

It seems the only man in the world she could really trust with any of her precious children happens to be the man on one knee retying Lillian’s shoe. Whatever he is saying has her daughter beaming with delight. Her little fingers holding a bag of chips to her chest that Oliver has been entrusted to find as Felicity looks at some snacks that could be free of peanuts so Lilly can eat. Her resolve to keep him in the dark is getting harder and harder. She still firmly believes this is all a novelty to him and after his part at Palmer Tech is done, he will just as easy say his goodbyes and she’ll have to deal with the fallout that the triplets will miss a man who came into their lives just as quick leaves them behind.

She wishes she could truly trust him. Her heart may already have forgiven him but her strong spirit knows that it be foolish to let her guard down. Yes, he has been here for her but she hasn’t had the time to process these new developments. She needs to think. Talk to her mom. The man Oliver Queen may be to perfect. Somehow, he seems like a dream and she will not… she will not let her emotions dictate just because she has the hots for him. He may even be okay with being a father if the truth comes out but her determination to protect these kids is just more pressing than the man’s feelings.

Felicity keeps herself from expressing a comment on how adorable the view is. A sweet comment to the father-daughter duo that would probably have him look at her funny. She has not had a conversation with Oliver about their paternal lineage. If it comes up, she won’t lie. She’ll try to talk around it. Her mom always says the truth always finds its way to shine. The day Oliver finds out she doesn’t want any lies to cause extra friction. There will be enough pain to go around. She barely remembers the ride home from the hospital. Even so, she does recall some of her words that went over his head. If he knew they had a sordid past he’d connect the dots. He is an intelligent man. He just believes that there is no possible way the triplets are his not if he never slept with their mom.

He mentioned to her on their ride here how similar Nate’s pout is to his. He ended the conversation saying there must be universal traits everyone shares and she just nodded like some bobblehead keeping for adding anything to stir the pot. He has made observational comments here and there about the kids. Even her mother betrayed her on a few occasions pointing out similar genetic familiarities. Her quick response is that they must share northern European ancestors. Her mother rolls her eyes but it leads to learning more about Oliver Queen.

It freaks her out how well her mother and Oliver get along. They share inside jokes just of spending one night on the town. They are even planning on doing another night in a week or two. If she didn’t trust her mother especially, she would serious be panic-stricken of their interactions. Her mom is her best friend and she has never seen her drunk like ever, so… So, what if she got tipsy and revealed sensitive information? It would not be cool. Not cool at all.

Felicity looks at the red food box a little longer as her thoughts are getting the best of her. Her two sons are still talking about activities and her glance at what Lillian is now doing as she witnesses the little girl being raised up off the floor to place the bag of chips into the food cart. Oliver is viewing the box in her hands. She can tell by his glance that he’ll want to look at it too. All the times working in close quarters she knows some telltale signs of his.

“It’s a healthy snack.” She hears a hum from him and sometimes his mock approval drives her up the wall. “It’s low on sodium. And…”

“I didn’t say a word.”

“Oh please, you don’t need to. I know your hums.” Once Lilly is back on the floor, he has his arms
raised in a surrender fashion. “Oh, come on what?”

“I really have nothing to say. Truly. It’s a snack food. You obviously know the world of…”

“Oh, so because I’m fat I know crackers?”

“I… I’m going to bow out of this. Like…” He looks at the kids. “Who wants another piggyback ride?”

Lilly raises both hands as if that will beat out the one hand raised by both boys. “Pick me.”

“Oh, you want a piggyback ride?”

The girl nods. Oliver has given the boys one throughout the store. Felicity starts to move the boys along. She doesn’t want to deal with this man right now.

Oliver shakes his head at Felicity already moving away from him. Being he can only give one child a ride per time the boys just head forward with their mother leaving him with Lillian. He hears Felicity tell them to look at some videos near the registers they are done with shopping.

“I thought you were afraid of heights?”

Lillian looks at him and ponders it for a small bit. Her tongue stinking out as her finger slowly tapping her chin. Then she shrugs. A little whimper crosses her lips. She is afraid of falling. Though the excitement her brothers had she wants a part of. Oliver squats down to her level.

“It’s okay to be scared. I get scared too.”

“You do?” her eyes big at his admission.

“Yes, being on a boat sometimes scares me.”

“A boat? Like water?”

He nods. “I had a scary time once. You know what I do?”

Lillian shows interest with how her feet are rocking back and forth taking everything he says in.

“I take a breath and try…”

“Me hold you hands we go boat.”

“Well if you hold my hand, I’m sure I won’t be so scared.” He gives her a smile. “Come here.” He picks her up and holds her against his waist. “Are you scared?”

“No.”

He brings her up further and they’re at his eye level. “Scared yet?” She giggles while saying no. He raises her higher. She’s still happy and then he brings her around where she is sitting behind his neck anchoring her legs around his head. He lets her enjoy the feeling as he takes a few steps and then brings her down swiftly holding her torso close to his chest her face inches from his. “Were you scared?”

“No. Pleaz do again.”

“I will give you a special ride once we leave, I think now we should join your brothers.” He looks
ahead seeing Nathan and Oliver looking through a pile of kid DVDs.

“Kay.” She says happily as she skips towards her brothers. His eyes catch Felicity’s even though she is somehow irked with him she still gives him a smile as he can tell the moments he had with her daughter means a lot to her.

An elder woman passes by as Oliver watches the kids surround their mother, he can hear the distant pleading with her to go the park and play with their new balls.

“Your children are adorable.”

Oliver refrains from automatically correcting the woman and just gives her a warm smile as he turns again to look at the scene unfold as Felicity is surely losing the battle of the wills with her kids.

“Enjoy their time at this age, they grow up so quickly.” And with that the lady moves on.

He slowly walks up to the scene as Felicity looks fatigued. With her mother in Vegas for the weekend she would have had three little monkeys all over her. Luckily, he is here. It’s been one of those weekends. The ones that are pure exhaustion. Felicity needs some bed rest, tending to kids is not easy.

“I’ll reheat the soup before we head to the park. I’ll handle the kids. You’ll get some rest.”

“You’ll need your own rest. They have endless energy.”

“They do. I hope one day when I have kids, I’m as lucky as you.” His sincerity in his voice melts her resolve just a tad more. “Come on the checkout person is beckoning us forward.”

Chapter End Notes

Grammar errors are argh!!! But, they happen no matter how much I reread.
A Past Truth

Chapter Summary

Weeks have come and gone and Palmer Tech and Queen Consolidated's joint venture for this specific product line is coming to an end. Both Oliver and Felicity are both at crossroads.

Chapter Notes

How long can these two talk themselves of what they really want? Well this chapter heats it up just a tad. If they don't want each other the universe has provided them both with alternatives.

(I hope the flow of the story is okay... I actually got tired of rereading it. I mean I fall asleep half way in because I've read it out-loud, quietly, and many other ways and now this chapter has become like a bedtime story because I truly nos off... I hope it doesn't do that for you. LOL!!! Hope you enjoy!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes
The next three and half weeks are a huge whirlwind. With how well the product is actually coming along. Palmer Tech with the contributions of Queen Consolidated have shorten the product’s release date. Estimated seven more weeks to now three. This is great corporate news and Oliver is delighted that this whole experience has been positive. His father’s latest phone call telling him how proud he is of his achievements. Thrilled that he makes his family proud. It’s something that is important to him. Family legacy. Making sure that any Queen would be proud of what the company is doing within the community and on a national level. This company employs thousands of people. It represents a great deal of moral for its workforce so yes making sure Queen Consolidated runs well is of great importance.

He’ll be coming back to Starling sooner than expected and his dad is already eyeing another project for him to tackle. Maybe the Applied Sciences Division will rise sooner than he expected. Thinking long-term he is excited. He loves the thrill of the corporate life. Short-term he is beginning to have some anxiety of things yet not aligned to what his personal goals are. Which means with only two weeks of putting things together Oliver sits in his office chair and knows his time with the Smoaks is
getting cut shorter than expected. He’ll need to step-up or lose what has become dear to him. He adores this instant family and can’t picture moving on without them.

He’s also has been traveling with Ray Palmer to many conferences so his time in Providence has been sporadic. With that alone he doesn’t know what is happening with the kids on a more day-to-day basis and that is something he finds he hates. Little things like face-time with the kids helps with his apprehension of things to come but he can tell by the end of each call how the children wonder if they’ll see him again is heartbreaking. They don’t understand this long-distance thing. They want to see their uncle at a moment’s notice. Play at the park and eat his creations. The best moments are when they show him something new, they’ve learned the excitement level is always so charged and he loves how those cute little faces show expression.

Thinking of the kids he catches himself starting to push Felicity to leave on time. It is creating a little bit of friction between them. He knows it is not his place in suggesting it. She’s a professional and doesn’t want to be seen as incompetent. If their friendship was out in the open yes, there would be some clashes of favoritism. She doesn’t need the hearsay to include sleeping with her boss on top of everything else. The kids shouldn’t suffer and not see their mom because of some deadlines that mean nothing to the four-year-olds. If there is any assignment to be handled, he’ll stay late at the office.

She may be a little miffed with him at times but she still has him participate in her life. He has to hand it to her for embracing making simple dinners. Their moments are when they create meals in the kitchen together. The only time she is truly is herself with him. Her laugh, the sparkle in her eyes, the way she floats around him as a light teasing is happening and only when resting in bed does he remember the little things that are adding up. One thing Felicity will not allow is for him to show his wealth in her home. At first it was not an easy request because he wants to always shower the kids with gifts but as he’s gradually assimilated into the family, he understands her completely.

Learning about her first love who was incarcerated by the FBI is being freed soon does put a damper on his goals but he’ll still have to call Jean and find out what the synapsis is on adopting these kids in the future if Felicity and him work out and the father of the children will allow it to happen.

Unfortunately, in a downturn of events is that he now barely sees Felicity at work. With her inability to travel at a moment’s notice the void has created a need to bring Leanna Kitness onboard to regulate some of the work load. She is also very charismatic and it seems the audiences at conferences adore her. He seems to find her a little self-absorbed with appearances but otherwise she is a tremendous speaker.

Stretching the kinks in his neck as he rises up from his office chair. He grabs his carry-on suitcase and heads to Palmer’s office. Tomorrow they’ll be Atlanta and come back late in the next evening. He can’t wait to actually come back.

“You miss him!”

“Mom, I do not miss the man. He has only been gone two days.”

“Yet you have checked your messages twice since you’ve laid down to sleep.”
“It buzzed; you know I can’t…”

“Poppycock. You’ve always put it on silent every night before a certain man entered your sphere.”

“Maybe. But that is because he would text me stupid ideas… he almost made a call to our Asian subsidiary to check on a material good that wasn’t in production yet. He needs me…”

Donna makes a loud ‘excuse me’ cough “Hmmm.”

“I mean not like that… His working needs. Mom, Oliver and I are becoming friends. I never thought that even possible a year ago.”

“Just friends?”

“Please, even if I were interested, he isn’t interested in me in that way.”

“What would the man need to say differently? Have a neon sign spelling out I like you?”

“Mom, stop being ridiculous, you are interrupting his sweet gestures all wrong. Trust me he is like this with all the women we work with.”

Her mom is right. She misses him not that she’ll tell him. No reason to scare the man. Getting ready to head to her job. Just tending to the finishing touches when her youngster makes an appearance.

“Mommy?”

Felicity turns to see her baby girl look at her with those sparkling orbs that makes her feel like sometimes she’s looking at a mirror and seeing the world from a sweet innocent stand point.

“Yes, baby girl?”

“Natty, Olly, and me made unkie Olivah art, you give him?” She places her mascara back down on the counter as she looks at the art. The kids have incorporated him into their lives. She finds how much by what her daughter says next. “We wanna keep him momma.”

“Lillian, sweetie. That isn’t how things work.”

“Why?”

“He isn’t from here. He lives…” She can see the little thinking wheels in her daughter’s cognizance is heading to say. “That not his home baby, he is living there until his job with momma is done.”

“No be done.”

Felicity gives her daughter a small smile as she scoops her into her arms. “Maybe we can have video chats he’ll be like grandpa.”

The little girl shakes her head. She doesn’t want that. Felicity brings her daughter back to the floor and watches as Lillian walks away a little sad. At least her bros who are watching a show call her over and she happily jumps in-between them to watch too. Needing a tissue to wipe a tear and knowing she’ll need to fix her eyeliner. Oliver helps bring harmony to her children’s lives. As she looks upon the living room and see the three tots now giggling at whatever that weird looking character is doing on screen.

At least she hasn’t heard the words ‘Can Mistah Kaween be our daddy?’ like the night her kids told her mom their wishes. As afraid as she is. She needs to get the strength to have the truth out in the
opening. Just right now with work being so encompassing the time is not right.

Stepping out of his steamy shower. Gazing to the fogged-up mirror to just make out an outline of his upper torso. A lone fingernail scratch he can’t make out that is just below his collarbone. Body still tense from the overstimulated fantasy he had early this morning. Now he is just torturing himself.

Coming in late from his overnight trip, sharing a ride with Leanna, he was not ready for her forwardness. Her short skirt riding up her thighs as the shaded partition in the limo went up, she made herself comfortable in his lap. Her ministrations happened so fast. Her mouth on his neck her fingers against his skin. He should have never unbuttoned the top two buttons but he really wanted to feel comfortable after taking off his tie. They are working closely together now and she has made it quite clear what she wants. Pulling her off him because this isn’t what he needs. Her fingernail indented onto his skin as her body startling drew from his. Still reeling of what could have happened if he followed her up to her place. Could just now be waking up in a strange bed looking for the nearest exit. He doesn’t want that nor does he want what is becoming a normal occurrence in his life. The wanting of something unattainable. Felicity is steadily pushing him out of her life. He feels it. It is what made his captivating dream so intense. A fight that leads to a resolution and the thrill that brings his body to that edge he so desires to appreciate with her.

Maybe it’s a blessing that the venture is coming to an end and he can finally make his move. Finally ask out the woman who is unraveling him piece by piece. He shared so much about himself with her and her family. They know more about his time on the island and he rarely has shared those insane lonely moments with anyone other than his therapist. It seems to flow out of him as he just makes up stories for the kids keeping out any over the top scary survival points like fighting off a huge reptile that almost made him a snack on cloudy morning.

Before the business trip he spent an evening with Donna and lands up spilling what particular lingerie gets him every time. She jokes making light of the fact that he has partaken in at least one household task to know exactly what unmentionables the Smoak women wear. No one needs to remind him of that. He held the panties of a woman he has never touched intimately. It is something he’d like to change. He finally cracks a smile at the face in the mirror looking back at him. A smile knowing he wouldn’t be against doing her laundry the way she showed her surprise the last time may have been all comedy gold.

Coming into his office he didn’t expect to see three specific sheets of paper staring back at him and the smile on his face grows exponentially as he looks for the woman who placed them there. Nowhere to be seen so he just pulls up his chair and looks at each one placing a child to the drawn art made just for him.

He’s made weird excuses to see the kids these past three weeks. Finding that dinner time is becoming a thing more often when he knows late night meetings or work outings or even trips back to his hometown aren’t hindering him with spending time with the Smoaks.

Just a week ago he rescheduled a meeting that would have had him go away for Friday and most likely keep him away for the whole weekend. As much as he misses his family back home, he
knows that the children’s museum would be a hit. He surprised Donna with a spa treatment and if the hugs he received were any indication she loved the surprise gift. He won’t admit it out loud as Felicity and him may not be an item but he is trying hard enough to score points. He will not lie to himself any longer because the look she gave him is something he would like to be on the receiving end again.

Keeping their friendship, a secret is getting harder and harder. They make sure to be very quiet about all the time they spend with each other. No need for rumors to get started. He really thinks that’ll be unfair to Felicity having to deal with such a hassle when they aren’t even a thing. Hence seeing these pictures displayed out on the open on his desk is just not something he expects.

He knows Lillian’s artwork will have loads of the color green she is obsessed with all things green. Kermit the Frog her newest prized possession stuffed amphibian. Oliver always enjoys some sort of order to any chaos. Using rulers and anything to make perfect shapes. Nathan, he loves making spaceships and weird looking aliens. Looking at his art he can tell the tall figure is him holding a bow that he used at the museum. Shooting arrows to a target as Nathan and his siblings counted happily as all the foam projectiles hit the target and man it made him feel like a rock star.

He is in deep and he doesn’t care. Pushing his nagging subconscious to the side. He’ll deal with the fallout when it happens. He may have even put himself in a position of hot water with Felicity but he checked with human resources at QC on upcoming open positions that could fit her needs within his own company. He would feel a little guilty about taking an up and coming executive from Ray’s company but the man’s loss would surely be his gain. Yes, he knows that is an overboard assumption on his part. He isn’t someone to just stay idle when he thinks there is more to gain from all this then the possibilities of crashing and burning and leaving with a heavy heart.

Felicity shoves another sheet of paper into a binder as she sighs. These few weeks have done a number on her. With work production ready to take place soon all the prototypes created are already being displayed in conferences around the country. Her assignment within this project is complete and she’ll be reassigned to another task in a few weeks’ time. No more working close to the man who she once dreaded seeing again. Now, every little glimpse of him has her giddy. She misses a lot of little things. For one, his intensity at work. His hyper focus on tasks has made for some interesting dreams. There is an enjoyment of watching this man exert himself. She hasn’t seen him bare chested but her overstimulated brain has drawn him out like some divine dessert. Watching him chase the kids at the park just last weekend where he just collapsed beside her with a heavy breath as the kids then attacked him. It was a sight that had her squeeze some muscles as she herself was out of air.

Unable to leave on overnight trips as her job basically requires, the lovely Leanna, Ms. Kitness has stepped up to take over many of Felicity’s tasks. The woman has no problem showing interest in Oliver in more blatant manner. Work meetings have those two working closer as Felicity is left to manage the grunt work of making the last finishing touches run smoothly. She’d like to say she doesn’t mind it is a par for the course but noticing Oliver handling it so well is upsetting her. She knows they are just friends and that this is how she envisioned their super-secret friendship would end anyways. Perceiving him to be so comfortable in Leanna’s presence is softly killing her.

She’s in love with him. Coming to the conclusion that she needs to tell him. He deserves the truth. Especially at least to her, he is more than just a friend, that there is nothing platonic in how she views
him. Specifically, he is the father to the triplets. In telling her mother that in a few weeks’ time he will know. Now just trying to figure out how to tell him.

“Ms. Smoak, please make sure to make extra copies.” Leanna is about to walk away but stops and looks at Felicity, “Oh, by the way can you tend to Mr. Queen’s office phone? He’ll be working in my office today.”

“Of course.”

“Thank you!” As Leanna makes her way to her office she turns and says, “Oh, by the way I made some banana nut muffins if you’d like one, I’ll place some in the rec room.” Felicity just thanks the woman before she is out of earshot. No, she will not be having any nut infused muffins. She doesn’t need to land up in the hospital again.

She gets what the universe is doing… playing with her in this manner. At first, this is what she wanted. To be free of Oliver Queen. She doesn’t laugh at some cosmic joke nothing like fate dealing the playing cards in a certain fashion. Now she wonders if she’ll suffer. She allowed herself to fall in love knowing that someone like Oliver Jonas Queen was ultimately out of her league.

Leanna Kitness has a sweetness about her that she can envision Oliver actually falling for. The woman is beautiful, comes from a very influential family and is intelligent. She loves to travel and is free of any baggage. She fits into his world just perfectly.

Felicity makes it across the busy intersection and with the pedestrian crossing signal now solid she can feel the breeze of cars pass less than a foot from her body. She wants to try that new deli. Having enough of sitting alone at the office that she’d like to hear a world of chatter and white noise that isn’t drummed out by soundproof offices.

Not one to adhere to listening to any weather reports she finds herself becoming drenched as somehow the sky has to open up and rain on the one time, she adventures out of Palmer Tech to eat lunch alone in some deli so she doesn’t need to face office gossip. With her friendship private they talk about him like some daily special. She just doesn’t need to be included in any of those talks.

Being soaked just has her mumble out loud, “Of course it’s raining!”

“April showers bring May flowers.” A very attractive man says in a sing-song voice light and airy as his smile doesn’t leave his face even as he’s slyly looking her over acting like a perfect gentleman holding the door for her.

“Thanks.”

“You are very welcome.” The smile hasn’t dropped from his face and it seems it is infectious as she smiles back at him. “Meeting someone here?” He nods his head to several seats with a few people whom look like their waiting on someone he then lets out a deep laugh in a very teasing manner. “Going to chew them out for bringing the rain?”

“No, no one is waiting on me.”

“Tis a shame.” He winks at her and wow does his smile brighten up her mood. The smile stays on her face until she glances at the walled mirror that has her look like some wet sewer rat.
“Sure, a real shame.” She feels ridiculous now with how her shirt is stinking to her. Just being caught in the rain for less than twenty feet to the deli has her drenched. She should have brought her jacket. Nothing like a wet shirt outlining her bra lines he must just be having a good laugh at her expense.

He must have felt the shift as his eyes are fixed on her mirrored ones. “Your rocking the soaked pussy cat look.” Smirking, “Still very pettable.”

“You’re really hitting on me?” She moves a wet stray hair from her face, “I feel more like a rat.”

“Only if it’s working.” They move along to the counter as the line dwindles. “If that is the case, I’ll be the cat to your rat.”

She can’t help herself she laughs. “I don’t think it’ll be fair being the defenseless rat.”

“Well I’m Adrian by the way and I’ll let you in on a secret?” He gets close to her ear and the shiver of a hot body near her cold wet one makes the experience a little more dramatic, “Felines may be enraptured by the thrill of the hunt, it’s really playing with its prey that is their reward.” He backs up from her enclosed space just enough that he’s eyes convey his meaning.

She is mesmerized by him. Luckily the clerk calls out for the next customer and she gets to order her lunch. His voice cajoles what he like to eat and how he can make a double-entendre on purpose when she usually can’t contain herself from spilling word vomits that flabbergast herself and others. The moment she realizes he already paying for both their meals she clamors that it’s not necessary.

“Please Adrian, as nice as the gesture is…”

“Have lunch with me? We’re both hungry isn’t that why you are here? A bonus of a conversation. What isn’t there to enjoy?”

“I… You know what? Sure, why not.” His smile is back as he leads them to a table. “I am hungry.”

“I love a woman who doesn’t eat rabbit food.” He pulls out her chair and laughs at her as she says how chauvinist of him it leads to a bow from the man. He really is something else. “With everything said and done, I’d love to have a name to the beautiful swamp rat I met upon a rainy storefront?”

“It’s Felicity.” She can see he is waiting for more. “Felicity Smoak.”

“Pretty, Felicity means…” He takes a moment as a huge smile crosses his face. This man loves to smile. “It means happiness; it is a fitting name. My name is Adrian Chase and I am very pleased to meet you.” He takes a bite of his sandwich and chews slowly allowing her to eat in peace by his side. “It is rather delightful that my first name references water as to now fully appreciate splendor of being soaked…”

“Adrian a man of many words, but let’s just say it as it is. You’re enjoying the wet t-shirt look and how it sticks to my lacy bra.” She is enjoying the flirting. It’s not something that happens a lot and once he knows she is a mother he’ll fly away but she can’t believe her mom had some push in her getting new bras at least.

“No doubt I am enjoying what I am glimpsing.”

“I’m wet, a mess, my top at least is sticking to my chest and your making my cheeks rosy red.”

“You’re stunning.” She laughs at his words. “Felicity Smoak, I’m famished and I would love to have you for dinner.” His eyes bore into hers he knows exactly what he is suggesting. “This sandwich will hold me over for the time being.”
She just opens her mouth and closes it right way. Did he just? No way. He can see she is baffled by how straightforward he is. “I have kids.” There she said the magic words he should deflate from the subject in mere seconds.

His head tilts as he looks at the woman sitting across from him. He knows what his words evoke but to bring kids into this conversation has him guessing she’s trying to push him away in a kindly manner.

“I wouldn’t advise their participation in any way. Though I am interested in adding to their sibling count.”

“Say what?”

“I want you. You seem to want me.”

“We just met?” He looks at his watch and with an eyebrow raised he mentions they met twenty minutes ago and they seem to getting along great. “Like I said I have kids, three in fact. No, I am not interested in adding more. I live with my mom and well… I just… This whole thing is just crazy.”

“Yet, its enticing. Tell me! Ms. Smoak, how much is this right now turning you on?”

“It’s crazy and oh my gosh it so freaking crazy.”

“Hmm. I make my own hours if you’re game. Let us get to really know each other.”

She is tempted. Though it takes an image of another to have her come back to reality. Her heart belongs to the man who has taken her by surprise in the most wonderful of ways and now any other man would only make her feel like she’s cheating even though she really isn’t but her heart would and for so long she never thought she would ever fall in love with someone.

“I’m sorry. You seem incredible but I’m in love.”

“Okay, so why does your declaration of being in love.” He moves closer to her. “Seem to hold sadness?”

She doesn’t know why she will answer but she does, “Because no matter how much I fight my attraction to him its always there and I know I’m a fool but…” She stops she isn’t going to call herself stupid.

“The heart wants what the heart wants.” He finished for her. She just nods. “Any man that can’t see your beauty is a fool from the start. A beautiful wet unicorn.”

“An upgrade from being a rat. Nice!” she looks around the place she has been enjoying her lunch most patrons have left. Lunch is over. “I need to get back to work. Thank you, Adrian. I hope you find your next meal to be exquisite.” She is up and out of the place never seeing how her words made the smile on the man’s face even brighter.

She hopes no one notices but she heads into Oliver’s personal lavatory in his office. This way no will disturb her. With Oliver hanging out with Leanna talking about the next visual for the next conference that they will be attending. She strips down to her undies. Using the blessed dryer, she brought in when she was running late and did her hair at work. She has the blouse over the counter as her hands stretched the fabric as the wand passes by.
“I’m sorry, Leanna you are a very beautiful woman but I can’t break my work ethic.”

“Oliver, no one needs to know. I won’t say a word.” She tries again but this time she ups the antics as she slides into his lap. Succeeding as he doesn’t anticipate her being so brazen. “I know you want me if this…” She moves her core over his lower body. “Is any indicator.”

He does find her attractive. Gosh his body is very much excited to have her grind against him it’s just not something he wants. He should have been weary to her exploits but here he is with a woman he does not want on his lap laying a finger where she scratched him last night. He can’t say he is seeing someone because it will lead to questions and he has no answers.

He needs to leave. Having lunch with Leanna is a mistake and if the way Felicity brought him their lunches is any suggestion of the woman’s mood, he is already in hot water with her. He didn’t ask so he assumes Leanna used Felicity as some sort of assistant to fetch them their meals.

“This company venture is my first and I want to have it succeed. I’m sorry. This can’t happen.” He slides her off just as the woman seems to grasp her drink. Now a good section of his shirt soaked from the accidental splash he moves to the door, “I’m going to grab an extra shirt. When I come back it would be nice if we forget this ever happened. Okay?”

Leanna pouts she really like to envision them together. He is a very confident establish businessman that comes from a wealthy family. She also is from an influential family and they could do wonders together. It doesn’t hurt that the man looks so good. Her incentive to act like his date at least partially for some of last night’s festivities before they headed back to Providence is paying off if that peck to his lips is any indicator, she just needs to be patient. “Fine, maybe after the venture?”

He shrugs, “Maybe” that is all he is giving her as he walks quickly to his temporary office. He does notice Felicity isn’t back from lunch maybe that is a good thing. He feels guilty and doesn’t want her to pick up any distress from him especially with his shirt all wet there would be questions. Already having taken off his shirt and dropping it on the desk he passes.

As he heads to the closet just off the private executive lavatory, he hears the ruckus from a blow-dryer that Felicity brought in. The door slightly ajar has him stop in his tracks. This is one vision he will never forget. Not that he hasn’t caught himself staring but now he can’t stare at anything else as those hi-cuts contain the most perfect globes. Her backside is in probably one of those undies he washed weeks ago. If his body was excited before now it’s on overtime. She is hunched over until a few seconds ago as she turns to him in total shock.

“Oliver!”

His eyes roam her over. He should look away but his eyes roam her over. His thoughts are all over the place but one of them is why is she wet? The peach colored lacy bra is that a standard one she owns; well of course she owns it she’s standing here looking at him. In all his erotic dreams since the laundry circumstances she’s always just in plain jane undies. His mind is short-circuiting that is not plain. No, not plain at all and he is mind is stuck on the picture before him.

She grabs the blouse on the counter but her eyes have also been roaming over his bare chest. “Why are you shirtless?”

“Accidental water spill. Why are you all wet?”
He immediately grunts as she places the shirt over her head, the picture of how her chest heaves upward as her arms are raised is doing a number on him.

“I’m sorry, I went out to lunch, it poured, I got drenched and now…”

“You’re still wet; I don’t want you to get sick.” He thinks about it but he looks at how wet and wild her hair is. “I still have the bag in the car with your gym purchase, I’ll go get it.” He doesn’t move yet as he takes a moment to look at the woman who has invaded his dreams and create a new image to think of later, much later when this vision can run free.

“Oliver?”

He squeezes his eyes shut before he turns. “I’ll be right back.” He leaves in a hurry grabbing his spare shirt and basically jogs to where he is parked.

He takes a deep breath in the elevator as the most amazing woman he can’t get off his mind. She’s been a lot more distant and even with him still coming around her home she uses the kids to place a wall between them. A part of him wants to give in and forget the whole caution in the wind thing about work and play mixing and finally ask her out. Those lips so plump as she always bites her lower lip when he has her attention. He even did do an internet search of the meaning of such an action. It’s extremely common and occurs not only with anxiety disorders but also with nervous flirting, nervous tension, and just a feeling of something being amiss… She’s nervous around him. If he stops to take away how uncomfortable she was with him in the beginning, he is left with how the tension rose after he took care of her kids and that almost kiss. A kiss he still wants. All this nervousness can be about his intentions maybe he really needs to reevaluate his stance and tell her how he feels. It’s becoming ridiculous at this point.

Maybe today is the day. He’ll go up there and not only hand her the bag because he really doesn’t want her to get sick. He’ll try another go at the kissing thing. Just bite the bullet and find if the buzzing energy around them is the real deal.

Leanna waits a little longer than what she really wants to wait. Especially after seeing how well defined his abs are. See wouldn’t have minded seeing him shirtless at all. Though being that she spilled the water on him even though it was totally accidental she doesn’t want to come across as needy. Even if she is the type to cling to her men. Ready to sweet things over and make some amends like proposing dinner she be more than willing for bypassing it for dessert.

She doesn’t see Felicity at her desk so she walks straight into his office and calls out, “Oliver?” Hearing what seems is a hair dryer Leanna walks to investigate. It probably not the wisest decision to disturb him while he’s busy drying himself he might be a little irked but if so, she’ll have to smooth things over start the approach of catching a new suitable man. She’s feeling the itch to settle down. Starling City seems like a good enough place to raise a family.

Passing his discarded shirt, she knocks on the bathroom door before yanking it open. “Felicity?”

Felicity yelps at the intruder’s voice as she’s readjusting her skirt.

Leanna shocked to find Felicity looking somewhat disrobed “Why… Why are you half naked and wet?”
“Oh, Leanna, I mean Ms. Kitness. It is raining outside.” Saying that as if that answers all questions.

“What exactly does that mean? You decide to go to your boss’s bathroom and undress; don’t you think that is strange?”

“In my defense he is with you and I thought I’d be here alone.” She can see Ms. Kitness lips hum together. The woman doesn’t like this scene at all.

“Where is Mr. Queen?”

“Probably getting a bag of clothes I left…” She stops when she just implicated that… oh no! “We’re just friends.”

“Friends?” The woman gives her a double look and then leaves Felicity in the bathroom. On her way out of the office she sees Oliver. He slows down a bit. “Your friend in there is a little gaudy. Be careful with women like her. They see our kind and see dollar signs.”

And with that… No kiss, no possible date, or any movement forward in his relationship with Felicity as the mood in the room is not favorable for him at all.

Oliver is shaking his head at some lame joke Ray said as they leave the conference. Everyone from the team project is supposed to meet downstairs were the layout is because Ray wants to give some speech.

“No heading down with me?”

“I’ll see you downstairs. Felicity wasn’t at the meeting so I’m going to go grab her.”

“Oh yes, Ms. Smoak should be there she had a heavy hand in making all this a success.” Oliver agrees with a nod and goes to find her.

He sees her looking over the budget report for the last step of their endeavor. “Felicity?”

She looks surprised to see him.

“Hi, sorry did I scare you?”

“I guess I was just so wrapped up in this. What’s up?”

“Ray is going to give a speech and I thought…”

“No, no. I’m not leaving this office looking like this.”

He can’t argue with her she doesn’t look professional but to him she still looks so darn cute. “That is why I brought you a Palmer R&D lab coat.”

“Oh my gosh. You are a life saver.”

They both come in time as they observe the news has Palmer is renting out a fancy restaurant so his employees, investors, and people like contributors can enjoy a night of festivities. There will also be other socialites that get invited to these sorts of parties and Oliver usually would not mind the party crashers that are hot and sexy and ready to be very social at these things.
Tonight, he gets to spend time with Felicity in a different setting. She’s always surprising him. From what Donna has said the dress picked out for tonight is classically stunning and he knows he’ll make sure the photographer will photo them together because after all is said and done, he’ll want a memento.

The music is light but it flows well with how the crowds gather around the large gallery of rooms.

She’s beside Oliver as an old acquaintance steps up to their space and greets Oliver. He’s polite and does a simple introduction but the woman appears to want more and she finagles herself between them as she has him within a classic old sweet memory and she easily captures his interest no matter how briefly this woman has him eating out of her hands.

The woman who is named Kerri calls over two other ladies using her long perfectly manicured fingers and it just looks elegant as if there’s an etiquette school to make such movements look flawless. Their slim hourglass bodies surely have a way to maneuver her out of the picture. She’s been in this situation to many times to count. This is a good time to refill her glass.

She tries to create some small chit chats but it seems that she’s out of the loop and all these conversations fizzle out quickly. She’s been cooped up with Oliver and she doesn’t know Beth is having a baby in a few months even though she doesn’t show. Kameron’s son joined a soccer team. Yet again she didn’t know. Scott purposed to Debbie and she never congratulated him. All these people are a few that are assigned to the project. It’s as if she alienated again. This time from people she worked hard to get connections with since she started Palmer Tech. Now she doesn’t belong with her peers, surely not with the aristocrats who can drop a million on whatever their heart desires. Not even any crashes to this fancy party. They are drop dead gorgeous and mingling is second nature to them.

She turns around slowly taking the scene before her. After the pleasantries of the meet and greet everyone is within their social normal groups. She sees Ray laughing at something one of his business buddies just said. He’s a really nice man she’s lucky he saw her potential and moved her to better ranks within the company. With every new position brought more challenges, esteem, and pay. She sees people she met once or twice enjoying the music as it seems their discussions are enlightening. She looks to where Oliver stands his back to her as now there are other people there beside him as whatever the group is talking about, she wouldn’t understand.

She turns back to the man filling her glass and he doesn’t even really look at her as he’s attention is to red hair beauty walking towards the bar and he is making himself ready to tend to her needs. She doesn’t leave the bar area wondering if another guest comes up if he or she will be ignored like her. She had to call out for service or the red wine wouldn’t have found itself in her cup.

A couple make their way to the bar next and the barkeep says one more flattering thing to the redhead before making a funny joke to the couple as he goes to serve them. Felicity looks at the rest of the liquid and chugs it with one gulp. Placing the empty cup down on the bar. Her time here has come to an end. She could be home eating ice cream and watching a romantic comedy and live off the sugary sweetness of fictional characters.
She makes it to the coat rack attendant area and gives her ticket to the man. Placing a small tip in his glass as she waits. She hears giggles and turning to see a couple in love. It really should make her happy for them but instead it just shatters another fragmented piece in her. She’s got to stop listening to her mom and face facts all this wishful thinking that for once she’ll meet someone and end her nonexistent love life it isn’t going to happen. Her coat is brought out to her and she thanks the attendant as she makes her way out.

“Hey, I think I know you.” She doesn’t turn to the voice thinking that the man is talking to someone else. “Felicity, ummm Felicity Smoak, right?” She turns to look at the man she doesn’t recall.

“Hi, do we know each other?”

“Yea, we did. Are you leaving? I just got here.”

“I’m exhausted, though you have fun.”

“Ah come on one drink with me. Reminisce. I’m Erik by the way, we met at Starling Prep years ago.”

“Oh!” Felicity now doesn’t feel comfortable her time at that place brings back bad memories. He’s up a few steps now still talking to her. “I saw your name on the roster and I remembered that name. Racked my brain trying to remember and then I couldn’t believe you and Queen work together. Small world.”

“Not as small as you’ll think.” Felicity turns and tries to leave when she hears Oliver’s voice from the top of the stairs. Her name falling from his lips just like the way he said it all those years ago. Her heart is racing to get out of here. The past and present are meeting up and she knows nothing good can come from that. She can’t hear the conversation as Erik says his hellos to Oliver. She doesn’t know what is being said between the men. Moving faster than she ever has moved she is out of the building now carrying her shoes in her hands. Her car is parked in the garage across the street. Not looking back she disappears into the night.

Chapter End Notes

Any guesses for the next chapter?

It the beginning of the domino effect...

A domino effect or chain reaction is the cumulative effect produced when one event sets off a chain of similar events. The term is best known as a mechanical effect and is used as an analogy to a falling row of dominoes.
Time to wake up…Dreams of Animals

Chapter Summary

A failed zoo trip. The truth of ‘pigtails’ comes out.

Chapter Notes

I want to shout out my thanks. Thank you for reading and commenting. Very grateful.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation from chapter 10

Erik noticed her right from the get-go. Sending his date up ahead because he wants to talk to the now blonde girl. She waiting for her jacket as he’s observing her from his spot near the coatroom. Waiting on the person to slide him a ticket for retrieval of his date’s coat later. He knows that old classmate hasn’t glanced his way as her eyes keep slipping to the entrance of the ballroom. He wonders if she is waiting for another old classmate to rendezvous here and find their way to a private party of two.

He wonders if she is still as easy with the fellas as he introduces himself to her, she seems to claim of wanting to leave in a more profound manner. Especially when he hears the voice of Oliver Queen, it seems the woman is quick to make her exit and he decides to see how much fun she really is if a womanizer like Queen is still hot on her trail.

“Ollie Queen, your making you're name synonymous to winning. Another well done job I hear.”

“Hey Erik. How are you?” Oliver is looking to see where Felicity went.

“Really well.” Noticing Oliver’s stare. “She left man. You meeting up with Smoochy. I never thought there would be a day you’d crave her again.”

“What?” Oliver is now just looking at the man.

“Come on the drinks are up there let’s reminisce.”

They settle at the bar drinks delivered and pleasantries already partaken, Oliver is dumbfounded in what he learns.
Oliver listens to the pitter patter of the rain hitting against the windows of the high-rise. No amount of the contents of the almost empty scotch he opened hours ago is helping numb the truth. With a few other heavy drinks, the turmoil doesn’t dull. She ran out!

Since a truth came to light, he contemplates what Erik said. His joking around turned everything upside down. Ulysses S. Grant, the face on the bill used as payment on a bet. A wager he won. A wager Erik lost.

[Chorus]
I’m a little drunk
But I don’t need excuses
And I don’t need your love
And I’m a little dumb
And I’m a little stupid for speaking from my heart
And I’m a little numb
 ‘cause I could hear your footsteps
When you left last night
He reasons he may actually be thinking straight which is ridiculous with how much alcohol is in his system. Asking for random heartbreaking songs from a music service and he found a song that has been on auto-repeat for at least an hour. He stopped excessively working out when he jumped on a treadmill and almost back-flipped onto a wall. Dragging himself with an empty alcohol bottle back to his high-rise rental overlooking Moshassuck River.

The night started off so well. Meeting Felicity at the entrance because as much as he hates it, his promise to keep their friendship a secret now makes total sense. Being a fool deserves another shot of whiskey. He is all sweaty yet still wearing his dress clothes. Not in a million years did he see this coming. The unattainable girl he wants just became… he doesn’t know what but now he can understand why she pushes him away when clearly, he has made some effort to get her attention. The world imploded on him.

The song keeps playing and it is just setting up more dread in him. He can’t tell how long it’s been because time right now is nonexistent as he wrecks his brain for as much information that he can get from what little tidbits he remembers of his sorry sordid past. He is dooming himself in so many ways. Most likely for the near foreseeable future the music service will try feeding him moodier music when most of what he hears is high octane beats to his workout routines. Though right now Felicity Smoak is the only person rummaging around in his mind.

_I’m a little drunk_
_But I don’t need excuses_
_And I don’t need your love_
_And I’m a little dumb_
_And I’m a little stupid for speaking from my heart_
_And I’m a little numb_
_‘cause I could hear your footsteps_
_When you left last night_

He doesn’t actually remember as much as he wishes he did. Taking a swig of his drink. Eyes closed as he tries putting little pieces together. The whole event happened when his mind just emphasis to when Tommy got hurt. Their fight. The bridge scene. Those moments highlighted in his mind. How can he screw so much up in a twelve-hour period?

She was his first and he can’t even remember. Felicity Smoak the pigtailed brown-haired geeky girl with blue eyes under those huge enormous colorful glasses. Why her? Because the bet was between him and Max Fuller and it seemed Max shared a few classes with the girl.

Life isn’t fair. If it were everyone would be giants. With long spread wings that would touch the sky. Felicity looks at the building that houses her family. If life were fair, she would be able to afford a better home for her family. She has what everyone keeps mentioning a brilliant mind but how does that place food on the table? Said to have a great work ethic but always looked over for not having the right network connection, reality is… it isn’t what you know but who you know. Throw in some Lady Luck and fairness is thrown out of any opportunity. Being young in her field, a mom, not to mention a female which using the mom term would already define that makes her some sort of gamble. She gets some of it is self-inflicted. Not being able to travel on a moment notice does her no favors. It would have been easier to leave one child in her mother’s care if she decided to grab any
illusive chances. She can’t with three. Unfair for her mother and childcare for three would actually be out of her economic boundaries. So… yes life is unfair.

Tonight, cemented her place. She isn’t someone who belongs to many social constructs. Might as she can try, she’ll always have to work harder. The closest of her peers are those who can be here today gone tomorrow. People like Ray Palmer, Oliver Queen, and others who seem to know what she can bring them… profit. Using her skills which makes perfect sense to her but to them she is disposable.

Calling her mom from the garage she gets the sensation that her mom would love to spend time with this gentleman caller she met when she was out with Oliver. Telling her mom to get herself ready she’d be home soon. At least one of the Smoak women should enjoy a night on the town.

Crossing the street, a pass by car honks. She doesn’t look at the driver. Doesn’t care. Its not the first time some guy has honked at her and unfortunately it won’t be the last. Greeting the normal folks who hang in front of her home as she begins her climb up the steps. She wants to wash her face, undress, and wallow in self-pity tonight. One of the boys of her past easily spoke to her as if their presence isn’t a giant black cloud hanging over her head of a past exploit.

Entering the dim apartment, not hearing any movement she speaks in a low voice, “Mom, I’m home.” The bathroom door opens and Wow her mom looks stunning.

“Hi baby. I’m a little worried you’re home so early but I’m giddy to be seeing Jack tonight.”

“Well this will be your third date. Should I expect you home before breakfast?” Felicity is already undressing in her mom’s room. Grabbing her comfy pjs.

“I…”

“Mom, just have fun. But if anything comes up, call me. No matter what. Be safe.”

“Oh, baby girl. We’ll talk tomorrow and share stories. Love you.”

“Love you too.” She watches her mom finish up and when Donna leaves her daughter locks up after her. Glancing around the quiet small apartment she wonders what that swine is telling Oliver. It took a bit to place the name and the face but she recollects his presence in her youth. That jerk is going to ruin everything.

Groaning at how tragic this all is. Of course, somehow it all comes to his stupid adolescent acts. He truly was a poster boy of all the things… well things that makes someone a dirty rotten scoundrel. He played with this girl’s heart. He doesn’t recall the specifics but he really did a number on her. To busy with Tommy’s incident to even notice until he does. Forgetting anything of relevance as only pigtails remained. Must have been weeks from breaking her heart that he heard she disappeared.

**Bundle o’ nerves**
And I’ll start saying words
But the words won’t come
Struck by your fever
I’ll shiver and shake
But I won’t succumb
I know it hurts you
When I’m not averse to
The way things are
I know you’re not either
But we’re both awake thinking
‘How did we get this far?’

Erik’s words rolling around as how simplistic of the meanings of his words. After he took advantage of her innocence other guys though she was fair play. Getting up from leather recliner he places the empty tumble down near the bottle. He’s had enough. Thinking it too much. His head feels like it might explode. Seeing double of everything in front of him. The long couch is his closest safest bet to sleep this off. He’s not ready to see lions, seals, and bears or is it pandas any time soon. Knocked out as soon as his head hits the decorative pillow.

Grumbling as he shifts his head trying to cover his ear with a pillow to keep from hearing the buzzing sound. Stumbling off the couch his knees taking the full brunt of the fall as he tumbles to the wooden floor. Whoever is at the door needs to go away or stop pressing on the damn doorbell. He’s using the sofa to help him rise because his body is not cooperating and his legs feels like jelly and the person on the other side of that door is going to be murdered. Shuffling his feet to at least make it to the door.

“Shit!” he cries out as his toe hits a corner leg of the cutesy decorative table. Like who puts a table right there anyhow? The interior designers for sure and they are usually just nuts with adding crazy memorabilia that really no one ever needs. As he is opening the door he grunts out, “What?”

“You’re drunk.”

Shocked! “Felic…” He tries again, “Fe-li-ci…” He takes a moment “You” another small pause “Are here.” He lets her in as he pushes the door closed using it for a moment to regain some balance.

Felicity eyes him. He doesn’t look like he is anywhere near ready to go to the zoo. He is still plopped against the door and it seems like that is the only reason he is still upright.

She gazes at the really nice place he is staying. Not that she didn’t notice but he slept in the pants he wore to the get together last night. One suspender off while the other is barely hanging on to his shoulder and the crisp white shirt partially untucked and even in this state he exudes sex.

At least she should be glad there isn’t any other guests here. Wait! She doesn’t know for sure and now she glances around for any clues. Logically he’s too dressed for the company she is thinking he’d have over. Then again this is Oliver Queen.

“Aren’t you going to ask why I am here?”

He wishes to be a lot soberer than he is as his mind is jumbled and no lingering reasons or stray thoughts or any sort of coherent words are sticking and he may well be looking like a fool before her.

“Come on before you fall.” She is already helping him move and like all the other times they are in
each other’s close orbit they keep from touching each other’s skin. It really is fantastic how well they have managed to pull that off. “Where is the bedroom?”

“Couch.”

“Alright, come on. Wow you are heavy. This is all muscle?”

“Workout.”

“I’ve noticed.” She hears him snort. “Not noticed, I mean…”

“Right?”

Nope. She isn’t going there. The trap to babble something crazy about what she has noticed would be to embarrassing. Changing tactic of the conversation, “You’re a one word drunk I see.”

“Funny!” It does nothing to stop her from rolling her eyes at how the man she helping can barely say more than a word or two. He tries to hold his balance but falls on the leather sofa making a very uncool thump sound.

“Must have been one hell of an after party for you to be so wasted.” She leaves his side to go to his kitchen and get him a glass of water. “Do you have any aspirin?”

“Bathroom.”

Filling a cup of water for him she hands him the glass. “Here. You should at least hydrate. Where is this bathroom?” He points to a door. She has never been here while her children have been guests of his weeks prior.

He blinks a few times he is so not ready to be awake. Even with a foggy mind he knows he should ask why she is here. The glass of water helps enough as his mouth isn’t so dry. “Why are you here?”

She hears him from the bathroom but doesn’t answer yet as she rummages through the medicine cabinet taking stock of the cologne he uses. Before she steps out to give him some medicine. Clive Christian No. 1 now she’ll have something to google later.

Watching him swallow the two aspirins all she can think is even when he is all tousled up, he still remains one of the most gorgeous men she has ever laid her eyes on.

“You’re giving me a weird look.” He tries to sit up thinking she might now want to punch him or something.

“I came to check on you. The kids are so disappointed.” In truth it is her mother that insisted she check on him. Never actually visiting his temporary residence or any place he stays at. She had to lie to the attendant and says she is his personal secretary and show her ID card to have access.

“Kids?”

“The zoo, Oliver.”

Oliver’s groans as his alcohol headache is really hammering away. He hasn’t gotten this drunk since before his college days.

“I don’t think I can make it.”

“You don’t say?”
He hears the snippiness in her voice. “I’m sorry. I don’t know what to say.”

“I guess this is fine.” Her voice is of disappointment but this will make it easier when the connection her children seemly are having with this man comes to an end.

“I’ll… I’ll make it up to them.”

“Don’t bother. It’s probably for the best. Wean them from you because as much as they really adore you…”

“They do?” He moves to sit even if his body is protesting. The extreme workout basically punishing his body plus drinking hard liquor when his body is parched for water really wasn’t a good mix. Having Felicity here, he doesn’t know what it means. She’s actually been quite accommodating to a man who totally blew her off years ago. That must say a lot if she can talk to him still it only makes sense that the father of her children must have been a whopping loser.

“It is best this way I suppose why wait a few weeks on saying goodbye they’ll have to say goodbye anyhow.”

His mind be hazy but he can’t disappoint them. It takes it bit of force on his side but he finally adds more words to the conversation, “No, I need to make it up to them, tomorrow the zoo is having … that exhibit showing of the am-am-phibians.” He takes a breather before continuing slowly with his pounding headache plus the slur of his words, “It’s an added feature they wouldn’t have gotten today.”

“Oliver, okay I know you forgot because you’re inebriated but you have that game in Boston, you and Ray and few of the other guys are going up to watch.”

“Felicity I… I don’t want you… them to hate me.” His eyes bore into hers and she can see him, the man she’s come to trust show a vulnerability. “I’m sorry.” A lone tear makes its way down from his eye.

She can’t help it as her thumb wipes it away. She doesn’t know how much he’ll remember of this. He is truly still very drunk. Feeling the same energy of their first… really second touch. Not knowing what to make of it. She pushes the jolt aside and gives him a peck on his forehead and his eyes are fluttered closed as if he is dreaming of her. “You should get some shut eye.”

“Well I see you when I wake?”

“I’ll be at home. I’ll have three kids to now smooth the situation over with. They were really looking forward to the zoo.”

“Oh!” His lone reply. He has nothing to offer to the pain he is causing her. Not many words or clear thoughts are making its way to him at the moment. He might as well be like a fourth child. It makes him groan.

“Hey, they’ll be okay.” She shrugs, “We are having pizza and ice cream later for dinner. You’re welcome to join.”

“I hope to make it.”

He’s back on the larger leather sofa in the room as Felicity takes the newest glass of water from him.

“Will you be alright?”
“Yea, sleep is what I need.”

As she goes to bring the glass back into the kitchen, he stumbles off the couch needing to use the bathroom and slowly moves in that direction. He feels some familiar arms help prop him to his destination. “You really are heavy. Is this really all muscle?”

He doesn’t mean to say it but he does, “Wanna find out?” He hears the telltale sign that she makes when he flusters her. If he could stand straight on his own and speak more than a three worded sentence, he would turn to her just to make another comment to see if he can get her to blush or make one of her famous run-on’s sentences, he has got to love. His control slipping as hearing her voice quiver in the sexiest way. His psyche berates him gosh he should have stuck to just one bottle of hard liquor.

“Here you are.” She lets go quickly after she makes sure to have the light on for him. His coordination is really off.

“Thanks.”

“Just do what you need to do, make sure to wash your hands.”

“Yes, mom.”

“Funny, I’ll wait back near the sofa.” Sitting and waiting she decides to ask a question at least to pass the time keeping from directly talking about Erik, “What possessed you to get drunk? You seemed to be having a good time at the party.”

The door opens and Felicity shifts her body forward to help him back to the sofa. “I got reacquainted with an old friend. Seemed to know you.” She doesn’t say a word. She knows the man in question. “He is surprised we work together but then wondered if I am getting lucky again.”

“He asked if you slept with me?”

“Don’t worry, I told him it would never happen.” He doesn’t tell her that he grabbed the asshole and made a very dark threat and only let him go when Erik whimpered in agreement.

“Because I’m not like the girls you usually bang.”

He has a droopy smile as he tries to make himself comfortable. “Exactly. See… knowing me so well.”

“I do. You’re a pig with the ladies. Use and discard. I could never be with a man who would think so low of me.”

“Good, you deserve better.” He moves to find another better position. “You’re… like a goddess…and if…” He stops talking for a few seconds as he swats a bothersome pillow to the floor. “Had a chance to worship you I doubt I’d ever get enough.” He seems to find the right spot as his face burrows into the pillows she’s gathered there for him.

“What? No… you don’t mean that.” She’s looking at his relaxed face while his focus is wavering. “You are so incredible drunk still.”

“I’m sorry.” He isn’t looking at her as the next words cascade from his lips, “My actions probably resulted in ruining your life. You left one asshole to only met another. Those kids deserve a better father.”
He seems so out of it but she hates to see him so down, “I’m not going to say it is easy but I love my children. You didn’t ruin anything. Life is unfair sometimes.”

She makes a move to walk away. His hand shoots out grasping at nothing but still out reaching for her. She mumbles to herself. She must be insane to put herself through this even if he looks so adorable. Appearing like one of the kids when they try to fight falling asleep.

“Fe-li-ci-ty, your name is so pretty.”

“Get some sleep. You are becoming delusional.”

“Please stay until I fall asleep.”

“Bet you want a bedtime story too?”

“Like your voice…” and just like that he is out cold.

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Oliver is on the other side of the bridge. He is swaying back and forth as he contemplates jumping. He hears his best friend call out his name. “Tommy I’m serious.”

“Oliver, you’re not rational right now. You’re super high.”

“You were right. I’m a failure and what’s the point? Everything I touch…”

“First I said jerk and right now you’re being the biggest asshole so get off that railing now and let’s talk.”

“Even pigtails. I used her. I know you have a crush on her.”

Tommy wants to tell Oliver the girl has a name but right now Oliver not being himself could jump and well that is not what he needs. “Hey, if she didn’t like you, she wouldn’t have done it anyways. Come on you need to sleep it off. Then maybe we’ll talk to her tomorrow and you’ll feel better once you apologize.”

“Yea?”

“Come on. You’re my brother. I’ve got your back.”

Oliver is back on solid ground and Tommy has him in an embrace than pushes hard against him, “Don’t you ever do this shit to me again. Got it?” Seeing a nod, he just gets Oliver into his vehicle.

More than halfway home Oliver says, “Shit my book bag. I left it near the bridge.”

“Don’t worry about it. Let’s get you home and I’ll swing by and grab it. No biggie.”

Oliver’s eyes open wide reliving pieces of a story where he thought a better way was not to live. Scared shitless and then knowing his best friend almost died that night going back for his damn book.
bag. Everything in that bag replaceable. He knows why he doesn’t drink like he did last night some nightmares can shake the very foundation.

His hangover behind him he looks at the clock on the wall. Grabs his phone and calls Tommy. It goes to voicemail. “Hey, it’s Oliver just checking in. Hope little Reba is doing well. I just…” His phone buzzes as Tommy is calling. “Guess you’re calling me back.” He hangs up and takes the call.

“Hey. Hope I’m not disturbing a family moment.”

“Emiko is actually nursing. My baby girl is up another two pounds. Her appetite is insatiable.”

“You two were worried for nothing than. How are you?”

“We are actually great. How is the nightlife in Providence?”

“Don’t really know, I mean I did enjoy a rowdy Thursday a week ago. I’ve actually been more of a homebound kind of guy and with a coming zoo visit…”

“Wait! Did I just hear the word zoo visit? Is John there? He never said he was traveling to Rhode Island.”

“No, it’s actually a funny story.”

“Funny haha or funny you won’t believe this shit?”

“The second, met someone from our past a few weeks back. She’s a mom of triplets.”

“Okay for a moment I thought you were going to say you’re attached again.”

“Seriously Tommy. Are you going to let me continue?”

“Sorry. Go ahead. Who is the mystery woman?”

“Felicity Smoak.” Oliver takes a small pause, “I mean you probably don’t…”

“Oh, I remember her. She actually talked to you? I mean I can’t see… Wait did she summon her husband after you?”

“Oh I deserve that but no. We’ve been working together and no I didn’t know she was pigtails until last night.”

“Does she know you know?” She never confirmed it but he gathers she knows.

“I… I think so. She came to get my drunk ass to go to the zoo.”

“Hold on, I need to sit down for this.” Oliver can hear Tommy moving around before he is back on the phone, “She willing went to grab you in your crib?”

“Oh, I wasn’t in my best shape or form but she got me back to the sofa to sleep it off. I just woke up. I’m going to apologize to her kids but I’m going to call the zoo and make some arrangements.”

“So, you got drunk and missed the original zoo thing but will make it up to them by bribing the zoo to make the visit more special?”

“In not so many words. Yep.”
“Why in hell did you get drunk in the first place?”

“Because… Because I found out Felicity ‘I can’t stop thinking about’ Smoak is pigtails.”

“You know Oliver, when I said try something different, I didn’t mean go overboard and raise the stakes in your love life. The woman has kids. Kids! You do know if you date her those kids are her package deal, right?”

“They’re awesome, even her mom is really great.”

“She just forgave you? No, I doubt that. Have you talked to her about what you did?”

“No, we haven’t yet.”

“Okay, I guess if she hasn’t slammed the door on your face and I can hear that stupid grin on your face.”

“It’s not stupid.”

“Says you, who is in the midst of something that can backfire. You better be thinking with your brain and you know exactly what brain I’m talking about.”

“Relax Tommy, it isn’t like that. We don’t have that kind of relationship. It’s strictly platonic.”

“Do you want to get into her pants?”

“She really doesn’t wear pants.”

“You know very well what I mean. So, do you?” Tommy takes the quietness as an answer. “Hence it’s a yes. Dude, you’re going back home soon. I can’t believe you. There are kids involved man.”

“I know. That is why I’m keeping a distance with her. Dude, I do want her. I won’t lie.”

“Oliver think twice man; you’re playing with fire.”

“Tommy, trust me. I’ve got this.”

“I do trust you. When it comes to logical thinking but when you stray to the matters of the heart…”

“I’m not… okay!” He snickers because he going to admit it, “I’m in love. I really like her a lot. But we aren’t there yet. Her kids are awesome. We work well together. I can see her as the head of R & D so it’s not like…” He stops, “But then again, I may be projecting this love thing. Maybe I want it so bad…”

“Oh shit! You are in deep. Now you’re in denial. Don’t make me leave your sister and my baby girl to go over there and beat your ass. I’m bringing Dig into this.”

Oliver starts to laugh, “You’re being very dramatic now. Listen, I know my ways well but I promise I’m doing things different. Smoak and I get along. Yes, I do have alternative motives but I think the gamble is worth it.”

“It’s your call. Just remember the kids don’t deserve to be played.”

“I agree. I hear you. Before you chew me out, I may be falling in love with them too.”

“At least that is the most reasonable thing you’ve said. Emiko says hi and…” Oliver can hear them
say a few hushed words to each other. “Now send a pic of your outing tomorrow. We want to see your instant family man.”

“Funny. Though tell Thea she’s already is an aunt. She needs to accept Reba. Though she may get her wish for more nephews and nieces if things with me and Smoak become heated.” He hears Tommy chuckle and his sister snort in the background.

“Have fun tomorrow. Just make sure you think twice in all your actions. Kay?”

“Got it. Now go take care of our girls. Talk to you later.” Chucking the phone onto the couch he goes and grabs himself a glass of water. He needs to make some calls make tomorrow special. He notices a plate with a paper towel covering its contents. Pleasantly surprised she made him a sandwich. Picking up the plate he notices a folded note.

Oliver,

Thanks for our small chat it meant a lot. I’m just not ready to talk. -Felicity

“What small chat?” He says out loud to no one in particular. Wait a moment! They talked and he has no recollection of it. What the hell. “I got to keep away from alcohol, this is becoming unbearable.”

Grabbing his phone, he calls his personal assistant for some help. Time to make it up to the kids.

He does make it. Bringing gifts, it helps smooth over his mistake. The children all think he had a tummy ache and each child has their own remedy. Nathan and Oliver’s therapy are food related. It’s Lillian that has him look at Felicity with pique interest. The little girl says it as if it’s a world fact. She accuses him of just not understanding its power.

In humor but being very cautious not to disrespect Lilly’s sound minded therapy that always works. “Oh, and when your momma sings it makes everything better?”

Lilly nods looking at him with amusement as her statement about her mother making him all better with kisses to his tummy just like she does with them is the best remedy for tummy aches. It has Donna silently laughing at her granddaughter’s moxie.

“No, I wasn’t lucky for what seems like the best treatment but your mommy just brought me some medicine.” That is the cue he expects to have little Oliver talk about cookies his mom tried making before he got there. The first batch burnt to a crisp but they cheered for he came to save the rest of the cookies. Nathan is laughing about puke as both brothers make fake gagging sounds. “Rough house. No, your momma didn’t bake me cookies either.” He laughs at their stares. He can only wonder what kind of medicine they think she brought him if it isn’t food or kisses related.

Discarding the pizza boxes. Both Oliver and Felicity handle the trash.

“Can I have a moment of your time? Please!”
“Oliver, I meant it I’m not ready to talk.” She grasps the blank look and moans. “You don’t remember, do you?”

“I recall enough but where exactly did our chat include?”

Trying to think back to create some summary. He was so wasted but he spoke with such honesty. She wanted to know what he remembers… Just before he went to the bathroom. He had a moment he could not stop chatting. It led to a small discussion.

“I’m not a saint either. I went with you. My expectations a lot different but I still went with you.”

“I don’t remember. I just remember being an asshole after the fact. The guys egged me on and I didn’t even know your name. No matter how many times I uttered it during our brief time. I couldn’t recall it when it mattered, I just knew you as the skinny glasses girl.”

“Do you remember anything?”

“Felicity… it’s probably best if…”

“Just tell me.”

“I remember the whole undressing thing. Then just feeling you around me. It was all missionary because I recall crushing into you and then it was over. Then the next day at the end of school when you came to me and well the guys were there and I proved.” He stops he can’t finish knowing his response has her leaving in tears.

“I shouldn’t have gone there. Maybe…”

“Whatever I promised you…”

“I know. It was a lie.”

“Over a damn bet.”

“Yep, their laughs still haunt me.”

“I hated you so much. I hated those boys more. I left because of their taunts. I begged my mom and she listened and I moved to Boston. Made a life there met Cooper and well the rest is history.”

“Where does that leave us?”

“I like the easiness of our friendship. I know you’re leaving soon. My kids will miss you and so will my mother.”

“Like you, they deserve better. I know I may be asking a lot but I want to be a part of their lives.”

“Oliver?”

“Hey, I can be that uncle. I have a beautiful niece and two loveable rug rats that I see regularly.”

“What if?” She shakes her head it is silly.

“What if we become more?” he finishes for her. A headshake meaning yes. “I don’t want to ruin what we have. Our blossoming friendship is fragile. There is a lot to deal with. Adding kids into any equation when we aren’t ready is a recipe for disaster. What if their father comes back onto the picture? Have you thought of reaching out to him?”
She doesn’t answer but he can see it would change everything if her expression right now is something to go by.

He finds that he usually leaves by now because it is such a personal family moment when the children are getting ready for bed. Tonight, he stays because he feels guilty even though they are going to the zoo tomorrow. Lillian is with her mom right now getting her hair braided so he has the boys eager for a bedtime story and because their sister isn’t yet ready for bed, he uses one of her colorful drawings. As he finishes his nighttime story he watches as Olly gets comfortable its Nate who eyes are fixed on him and they seem troubled.

“What wrong little guy?” He can see the boy pondering if he should ask. “You can ask me anything.” Oliver changes where he is sitting on Nathan’s bed so he can put his full attention to what Nathan needs to ask him while still has visual to the other boy.

“Lilly says…” he stops and looks like he is just going to give up and not ask. “Nathan, hey! You trust me?” He sees the boy nod and hears Olly say yes to his question. “Well you can tell me anything. It’s okay. What does Lilly say?”

“Says you de bestest burday giffy.”

“What does that mean?” This isn’t the first time he has heard it from the triplets. Even though it is Lillian that says it outright to him but usually not in the presence of the Smoak women. It is the boy on the other bed who is looking at him and finally states, “Be our daddy.”

If Oliver was an actor, he would win an award on range of emotion going through his face. He is flabbergasted and the boys look on taking everything that is said and it takes a lot from Oliver to say how impossible that is. That their momma and him aren’t a couple. Instead he asks, “You want me to be your daddy?” Without question both boys say yes unanimously. “Wow!” He then is up and tucks Nathan in first. “Go to sleep, big day tomorrow.” He then moves to Oliver’s bed, “Sleep tight.” Making sure his is tucked in also. He leaves them be making sure to slowly shut the door softly. Turning to the small quant living room and he just doesn’t know what to say. Two nights in a row he has had some interesting disclosures and it all centers around this family.

“Tea?”

“No thanks, Donna. Another time, I best be going. Long day tomorrow.”

“Okay honey.” Oliver smiles at that. Somewhere in all these visits she has come to slip words of endearment and it just adds to the comfort he feels being here. He sees a semi-sleeping little girl in Felicity’s arms. “Started nodding off as my daughter placed the last rubber tie in Lillian’s hair.”

“Good night Lilly.” Lilly eyes open up just a fraction and her little words of night makes the adults smile. The girl is exhausted.

Donna already knows Oliver won’t leave as quickly as he’d like. “When Felicity is done giving tinker bell and the lost boys a last story of the night. She’ll join us.”

“They love their stories.”
“And I hope they all have sweet dreams.” Donna places an extra cup on the dining room table. She knows it will help him have something to do while he waits for her daughter. “I know you enjoy your coffee black is that the same way you like your tea?”

“Is this Chamomile? If so, honey will do.” He steeps the bag in the hot water as he glances at the closed door that Felicity is quietly finishing a story. As much as he has so many things on his mind and he’d like to silently ponder the boys’ words. He can’t leave without saying goodnight to their mom. “Thank you, Donna.”

She sips her tea. Observing a man who must have tremendously grown up from the bratty child he once was. She would have never assumed this remarkable man before her had such a colorful backstory. Son of an elite wealthy family, inspiring businessman, survivor of a boating incident, father of her grandchildren, and hopeful her someday son-in-law. She plans to leave them alone once her girl comes out. Felicity needs some adult time. Her focus is always on the little ones and only so much info her daughter shares with her.

Saying goodnight to her mom Felicity tries to not show excitement that Oliver has not left yet. He could have departed like on so many occasions just calling out to her and telling her he is on his way out. She doesn’t know what he recalls of their conversation.

“I need to thank you; I know how much you were looking forward to seeing the Rockets versus the Sox tomorrow.”

He shrugs as he blows it off. “It’s just a game.”

“A game you and Ray have been raging on about.”

“Seen plenty of sporting events in the last year alone but seeing Lilly meeting Kermit tomorrow will be a true camera opportunity.”

She chuckles. She’s already bringing a digital camcorder her dad gave her. “I don’t know how to thank you. I never expected…”

He cuts her off, “Hey, you don’t ever have to thank me for this. I’ve been having too much fun with these kids.” He looks at the cup trying to figure the best words to say what he knows he needs to ask. Chickening out of asking why she’s been so friendly. This moment is too nice for it to end in an awkward conversation that will probably dampen tomorrow’s mood. Instead he asks, “What time is it best to come by? The zoo opens at eight thirty in the morning.”

“Stop by any time after seven and we should be good to go. They are so excited about a sneak peek. I have no idea how you managed that last minute.”

He stands up it is time to leave. “I am not one to brag.” He hears her make a gruff sound. “Okay… you got me. I just threw money at them and before you…”

“It’s fine Oliver.” She takes his discarded cup and heads to place it on the counter to wash. “You did something nice and they’re going to love it.”

“Wow, a compliment on my spending habits. The world must be off its axis.”
“Sure, laugh about it. I can’t afford treating them to all these fun places and if you were to be in their lives for an even longer extent of time, I really don’t want them to expect such extravagances. I wouldn’t be able to compete.”

“I doubt any shiny toy could take away from a mother’s love. They love those kisses. Who else tends to boo-boos like you? All righty Ms. Smoak I got to head out. Need my beauty sleep.” She about to comment but he raises his hand. “No comments please! I know the peanut gallery went to bed so I just wish you sweet dreams until tomorrow.”

“Night Oliver.” And with that he is out the door.

Chapter End Notes

Shiver by Mike Waters  
Song lyrics: https://genius.com/Mike-waters-shiver-lyrics
Chapter Summary

Zoo, family emergency, life is hectic for Oliver Queen and it is just beginning as jealousy comes into play.

Chapter Notes

With how Queen Consolidated venture with Palmer Tech is winding down soon the adventure will move from Providence to Starling City. Relocation for the Smoaks? Perhaps?

Continuation from chapter 11

After the zoo, Oliver had to go back to Starling City when he got notified of an incident involving his youngest sister. Leaving the triplets and their mother with his vehicle as they got him on his flight back west. The kids actually thinking his sister is a baby by how Oliver keeps mentioning the words baby sister. That they all wish his little sister better by kissing his cheeks at the airport. That was a few hours ago and Donna notices how her daughter keeps glancing at her cell phone. She knows her own baby girl needs to hear his voice and see that Thea is alright.

“You should call him honey; he’d really appreciate it. It’ll be the right thing to do.”

“Mom, he’s with family. I don’t think I should be a bother in their time of need.”

“Nonsense, it is the right thing to do. His family is important and you’d know that if you’re being honest with yourself.” Felicity takes her cell with her and walks to her mother’s bedroom glancing once to the children who are singing along with a video purchased at the zoo.

He picks up after the second ring and his voice is gruff probably from nonuse as he asks if everything is alright. She puts his fears to rest and asks, “I just wanted to see how your sister is fairing?”

“She’s okay. Very lucky indeed.” There is a woman calling for Oliver’s attention by calling him Ollie.

“Oh, you’re busy.” A pause “I shouldn’t have called.”

“No. No. I’m happy you called, I’m in the waiting room.” The woman’s voice is closer and she’s sounds distressed that Oliver is on the phone and not paying attention to her. Somehow the
conversation gets away from them and it leaves Oliver looking very serious at his phone at the ended call.

Oh! this happened Chapter 12

Oliver stares at the painted grey door of the apartment he’s been spending loads of time within. His hand is in the air ready to knock but he just doesn’t know what to say. If Felicity is there, she might not want to talk to him after her words on the phone. If she isn’t there, she’s on a date with that guy she just casually name drops. How in the tarnation doesn’t he know her dating history? Of course, she’s dated she has kids. She’s also so… so perfect like how is she even single? His hand finally makes it to the doorframe and he waits. Not wanting to picture that Jeff dude near her in his mind. How did he get himself into this situation? Reality is, he thinks about her constantly and the pull to her is beyond comprehendible. Admitting out loud that he’s jealous. Certifiably jealous.

A surprised Donna opens the door. “Oliver? I thought you were in Starling?”

He was and now he isn’t. That isn’t the reply Donna Smoak would appreciate hearing. “May I come in?”

“If you’re looking for Felicity. She is out.”
"Out with Jeff?"

"Yes, Jeff came by earlier to pick her up."

"Are the kids asleep?"

"Just this old bird is awake." She allows him access to the apartment. Thanking him for his earnest reply that she isn’t old. "Coffee, tea?"

"I’m fine." He looks at her raise an eyebrow. "Whichever your making."

"Tea it is. How is Thea?" He moves to the futon to sit. It’s Felicity’s makeshift bed. His fingers graze the throw blanket she uses when the chilly air is too much. Donna doesn’t miss a beat observing the man who seems to show signs of envy towards another man.

"Lucky, she just got a fracture on her left leg. My dad is super furious so I can tell you she won’t be having a social life for a while."

"Not wearing a seatbelt was careless. I can see why your parents are upset."

"It had its tense moments but everyone in the two vehicles are all alive with minor injuries."

"Was Thea the driver?"

"No, it was a long-time friend of hers and she just got some bruising and minor scrapes. The girls got a good scare and most likely they’ll keep from speeding around corners."

"I’m so glad to hear it." He gives her a tired smile. "Well the kids loved those videos and watched them multiple times." She can see the rare smile he has for the kids as he is glad the kids loved those videos.

Tonight, may be a good night to see what her daughter really means to him. He doesn’t need to know that Felicity is helping Jeff’s daughter with her recital as he is out with his wife celebrating their tenth-year anniversary. Her daughter’s dating life is sparse but there have been a few men that have past the phase of ‘oh shit you’re the mother of triplets.’ While raising Felicity she knows how hard the dating scene is with just one child so she understands her daughter’s frustration.

Moving a cup off the cupboard that is Oliver’s since the Children’s museum where the kids wanted him to have a sloth mug is now placed on the countertop.

"How did she meet Jeff?"

Donna mums her lips pondering the best way to make Jeff sound good but not to perfect she wants Oliver to be jealous but not be valiant in any effort to stay out of the way which would lead to cock-blocking her own daughter which would only bring shame to the situation. She wants them together. "He’s a sales rep for the large sporting center downtown and that is where Felicity and I bought the boys sport themed beds."

He nods he thinks those beds are rather cool.

"Anyways, Felicity was hesitating on buying the discounted beds because between her and I those beds would not have been mounted. Felicity is good at putting things together but I would have been no use. With three kids we know the trouble it would be."

"He offered to help?"
“Yes, he charmed us by saying how many times his actually walked by the guys in the warehouse putting together showrooms. We found out how handy he really is. With how small Felicity’s car is it’s nice to know someone with a pickup truck.”

“How nice of him.” That came out a little snooty but Donna said nothing to alarm him of how he seems to show what she hopes is truly jealousy. Especially cutting all the parts of Jeff’s wife Dorothy signing him up for the task.

There a nice pause in their conversation as both just sip from their drinks and just enjoy each other’s company.

Finally, after a good ten minutes Donna asks, “Now what brings you here my dear?”

“I…” he pauses.

“Yes you?”

“I’ve been away and I suppose I missed…” He takes a moment, “The kids. I missed them very much.”

“I suppose Felicity and I are just chopped liver now?”

He huffs, “No, not at all.” He gives her a wink. “We both know how hot this momma Smoak is. Sizzling and shaking booty at the dancefloors”

“I love my grandchildren but I need those night outs.”

“It’s totally understandable.”

“I also don’t begrudge my daughter having social nights either. She deserves to find someone who will see how amazing she is.” She notices Oliver’s little habits when he is nervous, she doesn’t know if he knows about his thumb rubs against some of his fingers. “We both know whoever he is will be the lucky one.”

He nods in agreement. Placing the now almost empty cup on the nearby small table. “She is amazing. Really sweet, her humor is right up there, you’ll never know what she’ll say next. She is an actual genius so there’s that. She’s a good person. She really is an amazing friend.”

Donna already knows he won’t admit anything by how he’s just fidgeting so she tries another tactic. “We will miss you when you go. Though your next adventure awaits and that lovely lady that has captured your interest. You two make a beautiful pair if I may say so.”

His bafflement is very visible. “I’m not seeing anyone.”

“Really? I got the impression from Entertainment Living that you…”

“What? No. Does Felicity think so to?” One moment he is as comfortable like is at home simply relaxing on the futon but now, he is rigid staring up at Donna waiting for an answer.

“Why does it matter what Felicity thinks? You two are just becoming good friends outside of work. Quite hush-hush from anyone else’s knowledge. She doesn’t expect anything. You are leaving.” His mouth opens to say something but he closes it as he does this a few more times. It’s true his time in Providence is at its end. “Or is there something more I should know about?”

“Donna, taking on this project. I just wanted to see how the specifications could apply to other fields.
It’s your daughter that brought me here. She is truly a remarkable in her field of study. Getting to know her has been a privilege. Just you alone are a doll. This family is just so dear to me. I’m hoping that…” He catches himself.

“You’re hoping what?”

“I’m sorry.” He almost told Donna his plan.

“Oliver, for once stop trying to be perfect. None of us needs you to keep playing a knight we…”

“I’d like Felicity to look at a few job opportunities at Queen Consolidated. She’s really an asset and her skills…”

“No.”

“No?” He is now very confused.

“She won’t move to Starling. QC offered her a job out of college she turned it down.”

“Really? But why?”

“She has her reasons. I respect her decision.” Donna can see the hope in his eye’s dimmer. “She won’t move over a job. Even if Palmer Tech isn’t a place she’ll work indefinitely. She has a set deadline in her mind. I know once these three begin school that is where their roots will be.”

“As long as it isn’t in Starling City?”

“Right. Oliver, I know you care about us but friendships are fleeting. One day you’ll find someone. Make yourself your own family. I know you’ll be a great father.”

“As long as it isn’t with your grandchildren.”

“Not at all, I would welcome you with arms wide open but you don’t love my daughter. Like I just said. She deserves to find someone who will see how amazing she is. Not just for her brain but for who she is. Understand?” Donna pushes, “And no games.”

“And you think I’m just playing with her?”

“Oliver, you were photographed very, very recently with a beautiful woman in your arms. What do you think Felicity or I would think?”

“It was a family sponsored Gala; I see so many people there. Hug, even kiss plenty of individuals I’ve known and…”

“Do you love my daughter?”

“Donna? I…” He feels a little flustered. “That would be a commitment I don’t know…”

“That says all I need to know. She doesn’t mean that much to you.”

“That isn’t fair. I care… I even… I.”

“No Oliver, with the time you have with us. You need to figure it out. She isn’t a second-place trophy and I will not stand to see her get crushed knowing she isn’t good enough. Because my baby girl deserves the moon and stars.”
“I’m sorry.”

“I know you are.” She gives him a sad smile and gives him back the keys to his vehicle. Using the bathroom before he is out the door. She can see her grandbabies moping techniques clear as day on him as she watches the man who looks so dejected. Their goodbyes are heartfelt and she closes the door behind him. Poor fool. Sighing she just goes and sits on the futon and waits for her daughter to come home soon.

A car pulls up not too far from the small crosswalk that leads to the apartment complex entrance. Looking at the property to his right Jeff asks, “You sure you don’t want me to walk you up?”

She chuckles. He always asks the same thing every time he takes in the building’s exterior. “No, go home to your two girls. Goodnight.”

“Again, Thank you. Abbie had a great time at the rehearsal.”

“It was my pleasure. Now go enjoy the rest of your night.” Felicity winks and the man laughs. Getting out of the car she heads for the door. He doesn’t pull out until she pulls the entrance door of her building and waves at him. She has had a fun time. Sometimes it’s just sweet to do something from the ordinary.

Opening the entrance door, she sees Oliver who is by the stairway but has a great viewing of the street where she came from.

“Oliver? What are you doing here? I thought…”

“I was waiting for you. I know it’s silly with you being on a date and all but I needed to see you.”

Felicity just stares at the man. What on Earth is he talking about? Why isn’t he in Starling? Maybe they should go upstairs and talk, “I doubt my mother is asleep why not…”

He’s shuffling his feet. “I just need to know if I’m too late. I know you have history with Jeff and if he can make you happy I can…”

“What are you talking about?” They’re both trying to keep their voices low out of some civil respect for the neighbors but she’s just wondering why he is in a darken entryway waiting for her.

“Your date? Jeff?”

“Jeff? Jeff is a happily married man. Why did you think otherwise?” His shuts his eyes and now ponders what Donna was up to? But he needs to know why she even left with Jeff.

Sensing that maybe telling Oliver why she spent time with the Johnsons will relieve some of this weird tension. “I was with Abigail, their daughter. She had a recital rehearsal and her parents spent a nice dinner celebrating their anniversary.”

“So, you and Jeff never dated?”

“No. Is this because of our phone call? I was just miffed about something and maybe I shouldn’t
have mentioned his name.”

“Maybe but it got me back here realizing something and I don’t want to waste a minute longer.”

“You want to talk here? Maybe go upstairs and…”

Interrupting her because he just doesn’t think an audience will do. “How about where I am staying? At least no disruptions.”

“Okay, I need to go and tell my mom at least.”

“Sure, I’ll bring the car upfront.”

Donna greets Felicity at the door with an overnight bag.

“Mom, what’s this?”

“The boy has been waiting for you for almost an hour. Why don’t you get cleaned up a little I think tonight is a night to remember!” Donna winks at her daughter.

“Mom!”

Donna in a very commanding mom voice, “Come on, I chose something nice and well just get going.”

“You really believe that Oliver came here to what?” Felicity is already undressing from the sweater and jean combo and finding herself in a cutesy dress that Oliver complimented her on weeks ago.

“You can tell me all about it tomorrow. Go find your happiness baby girl.” Felicity isn’t in any mindset to argue as she’s excited to see Oliver who is waiting for her.

Her mind reeling of the fact that man kissed her in a hallway. Both hands holding her face as his lips left her humming with such satisfaction. That when it is over, they barely move from their spots. Finally, both start turning away from each other and she can’t recall why because the intense pulse happening between them really is doing an incredible number until the image of a neighbor brings her back to reality. She can’t wait to feel this powerful magic again as she leaves to see him.

Oliver observes the woman he is sharing his bed with. Last night happened so fast and he doesn’t regret it per se. He wishes for once he treated her like royalty. Giving in to temptation could ruin everything as they had not even really talked about what he did to her. She keeps changing the subject and, in a way, he lets it happen. There is a delicate peace between them.
Before last night where they truly blurred the lines. They were becoming friends… well maybe the word ‘friends’ doesn’t really equate to what they’re becoming but it is an easier word the covers a spectrum of feelings.

Looking back a few weeks’ time he started all this over a jolt of an awaking where his body felt the illusive spark. His mind not responding to it very well. As he tried to talk himself out of an attraction and chalk it as an impossibility. She wasn’t his type he kept rolling on about but in reality, what does that mean? Wasn’t his type? He’s out with models not because he finds himself ogling them. It is just something expected and like when he was younger with the pressure of his peers, he did some dumb shit. Suppose he never grew out of that phase. No, if he is honest. He didn’t. That is why his parents keep badgering him. How his best friends even make light jokes on his per chance to find that hottest chick that he’ll tire from once the merriment is over and there are no common interests.

He might have screwed up this relationship before it even began. Ha! He already did that. What was it? Seven, six, or was it around five years ago? Her light snoring now takes him from his thoughts as he moves his arm ever so gently so she can breathe as her face isn’t so hidden by the fluffy pillow. She relaxes again and probably is back in a sweet dream with any luck of his making. Her body parallel to his with barely any space between them. He loves the contours of her body as he lays here thinking. He used it against her at first and now he can’t imagine her any other way.

What if they aren’t doomed and there is a long-term possibility where he can date her? If there is a chance for them, he’ll like to woo her. She at least deserves that. He knows he loves her laughter and he’ll go out of his way if he must to hear it. He doesn’t need to say it but he will again and again and someday he’ll even say it out loud for her to hear. He doesn’t just find her genius mind irresistible it’s the staple of what brought them together.

She may have been the primary connection at Palmer Tech but if the data she epitomized was lackluster he wouldn’t have gone to her from the get-go and figured out another way. He isn’t known for his business practices for nothing.

His professional life he is a straight shooter gets to the point quickly so he can move along to another relative matter. He tries to do it with charm and using the practiced people skills of excelling in the ability to listen, to communicate and to relate to others on a professional level. Finding Felicity to being well versed in the same skill as him as they navigate problem-solving abilities, empathy for each other and a willingness to work together toward the common good. He can add how her unintentional babbles are an add-on to her quirkiness that never made a day go by become boring.

Here she lies in his bed. He can honestly ponder that this is where he wants to be. No planning of any kind to rid her from this comfort cocoon she is in. Soon enough she’ll wake and worry about the three individuals back at her place. They may be safe with their grandmother but she’ll hate to think that any one of her babies will wonder why she isn’t there for morning kisses. He knows from the kids how much their momma is a cuddlier in the morning.

With the time he has left before she does rise, he lets himself contemplate when he really first met. His mind of that time a little hazy but he does recall some things. He is trying to pinpoint timeframe when it occurs that it happened a day or two before Tommy’s accident. That was about five years ago.

The day his best friend, the one who was super mad at him. While the other boys their age cheered his wrongdoings, Tommy told him what a total ass he was. He didn’t remember her name. Betting Tommy did and knowing he still does is just a wow in his book. He’ll have to call him up and bring up a sore subject but he thinks it’ll be the right thing to do. Find more to the story which he can’t really remember no matter how much he tries. Especially if he wants to make it up to Felicity.
She subtly moves just a tad and his arm wraps her a little tighter. His body relishes the sensation of having her this close. His vivid fantasies not even close to how she actually is in bed. Then again, he has never wanted to please a woman as much as the one snuggled to his side. The words of John Diggle floating across his mind. ‘I don’t think love is about changing or saving a person, I think it’s about finding someone who’s already the right fit.’ His best buddy was half talking about Lyla, the woman John is happily married to and trying to get him to understand that someone out there is his fit. Maybe John’s words aren’t so empty after all.

Last night his apologies sounding so hollow to his own ears. He couldn’t say it enough but Felicity shushed him. Just like him she was as frustrated and too much into the moment. His jealousy and their little argument over the phone bringing him back to Rhode Island as fast as the call was dropped.

Showing up at her apartment and having her mother pull the green-eyed monster out of him did the trick. He didn’t leave not until he saw her. Glad he waited because the thought of Jeff anywhere near her really boiled his blood. A kiss in the works happening in a hallway. That he’ll never want to take back. It was amazing to finally feel her tender lips to his. The short break apart as she headed to talk to her mom leaving him to pull his rental up front. They needed to talk. Landing on doing other things except the talk that is still needed.

She deserves a lot more than a simple sorry to how much of a jerk he was. Seeing that she still has reservations but she still allowed him into her life. It gives him hope. It gives the determination to see this through. He really doesn’t want to mess this up. Like her, he doesn’t want those three little tykes that he is finding are even evading his phone picture gallery. All the pictures of silliness not one he can bare to delete. He sees Felicity in of those angelic faces making each photo even more magical. It’s too early to scream he loves her but he may be head-over-heels in love with all of the Smoaks. Donna included. He can even see her spark in them.

As his mind wonders over to the children again. They are four of age. Four. That means with their birthday weeks ago he recalls Donna mentioning the thirty-four weeks of what she calls the muffins to bake. Wait! The triplets are four-years-old. He looks at the sleeping peacefully and one of the most gorgeous women to grace his life could it be? His mind calculating the thirty-four weeks she was pregnant. Give or take time for conception it’s starting to match up with… Oh! Thinking again to his best friend’s accident and… No! Could there be a chance… he is a father? That the loser he has called the idiotic man who let the best thing in life go in his viewpoint be him?

Realizing that the chances that he is a father is becoming probable. They’d be a good chance she wouldn’t have told him. With how he treated her it is a highly likely possibility. Doesn’t mean he’ll like that as the excuse. If… if his is right and Nathan, Oliver, and Lillian are indeed his. He needs air. Still he is gentle to detach himself from his lover. He needs to deliberate a little more maybe even look at the photos of the kids once more and look for his own special genetic imprint. Till now he never put the chance of being their father on the table. Didn’t dare think Nathan’s stare held the same currency like his father when being serious. Nor Oliver’s laughter when trying to hold his composure reminding him of his mother. Those were stray thoughts and now he has his phone and is out of the bedroom ready to investigate if any and all wandering thoughts of how even Lillian’s temperament reminds him of Thea. Are they a perfect mix of him and Felicity? He needs to know.

His mind picturing each child now, he has only seen Felicity in each child until now… wait Nathan and Oliver… Seeing himself in Lillian’s eyes because that girl holds so much love. Could the hassle of him contacting his family’s lawyer to talk about ‘what ifs’ like possible adoption all be for naught? He really didn’t sit down with Felicity about her children. He just wanted to know about how much paperwork is needed if the father of these children weren’t in the picture.
He isn’t even Felicity’s anything but he already had so many questions about possibilities. When it comes to the Smoak family, he is so ahead of himself it isn’t even funny. The drive to give these kids a father may well be a dream of his. Alas he is overstepping onto so much dangerous territory until this very moment where he can truly be their daddy. If he is wrong. He can’t see Felicity forgive him for this. Not if he isn’t their dad. That could be unforgivable.

Flipping each picture one by one. There is so many of them being goofy for his camera. He is starting to see the resemblance. The boys look like him. He has a small scrap book made by Thea when she had her scrapping phase and he feels for Raisa as the woman most likely helped clip a lot of pictures. He has the one of him and Tommy at the poolside of the Merlyn estate staring back at him.

“Morning, I was a little worried when I found you gone.” Oliver glances up to see her and if the questions in his mind wasn’t so insistent, he’d be pressed up against her maybe even walking her back to his room. “I wanted to call my mom and check in but I forgot to bring a charger and my phone is on red. I am hoping…”

“Of course, you should call your mom.” He hands the phone in his hand towards her not even caring at the picture it’s on as it is handed over.

She sees a picture of Nate and Olly both hanging upside down on the futon. The picture is lopsided but she looks at him wondering why he is looking at a picture of them.

His question breaks her thoughts, “How did you sleep?”


“No, I also slept well. I just been awake thinking. Reflecting on things.”

She can sense an undertone in his voice. Somehow something happened since falling asleep and waking up to a cool bed. She can hear her mother’s nagging voice. Noticing a picture book opened by Oliver’s side thoughts that somehow… No, he can’t have figured it out. Now her own nagging internal voice telling her that he is no dummy. The look on his eyes confirming that the light peaceful morning is going to get a lot more complicated.

“Oliver? I can explain…”

“I haven’t said a word. What explanation can there be?”

As she flips the photos on the cell phone’s gallery of pictures there are so many of the triplets. A few of her with the kids and some solo pictures of just her when she didn’t even notice him taking the photo.

“Some of these are amazing, you’ll need to share.”

He doesn’t get off the lounge and keeps his gaze on her. He wants to say the right thing and not just blurt out if he is their father but the pleasantries are fading fast as all he wants to know is just that, is he the father. “Felicity? Nathan, Oliver, and Lillian. Who is their father?”

She’s is busted. The two options are the truth or to make up some lie which could still lead to the truth and add more stress to this whole outcome. Her mother is right; things have a way of coming out.

“About five years ago a boy impregnated me. I didn’t tell him then because by the time I found out I
was pregnant I never wanted to see him again.”

He’ll go with what she is working with. He deserves that. Though she hasn’t answered anything at all yet. “Okay. Have you had contact with him recently? Does he know he is a father?”

“Oliver, I think he… I think you have figured out that somehow… I never thought I’d see you again. Never thought…” His lips are smacked together he doesn’t say anything. Just listening to her. “Never thought you’d find out.” He’s never been this quiet and after all the moments of becoming comfortable in each other’s orbit a new kind of communication between them has started growing some will call it easy bickering. It can all be over now. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Oh, I think you’ve said enough to one regard. But what I want to hear is the actual words.” His eyes catch hers “Who is the father?”

“They’re yours.” The silence in the room is deafening and neither move from their spot. With Felicity holding his phone she now has no idea what to do.

His voice low she barely hears it. “Mine.” She nods in confirmation afraid to look away as if it will break their connection. He says it again a little louder and again as he adds, “They’re mine.”

“Yes.” She takes a step to give him his phone back. She needs to dress up. Being half naked isn’t ideal right now. “I’m going to get dressed. Maybe call me a cab, please.”

“I’ll take you home, go get dressed.” His tone resembling when he is on a business call and he isn’t taking nonsense from the person on the other end.

“I can take a cab be out of…”

“I’m not letting you go with a stranger let you off in a dangerous neighborhood. So, get dressed.” He catches his tone and apologizes. “Just please get dressed.”

She makes sure to look at a mirror. She isn’t going to cry. Not going to give him the satisfaction. The first-time being heartbroken was five years ago, today she’s going to suck it up and go home. She knows this isn’t going to last. She allowed her attraction to dictate and look what it is has given her once again? Now it’s worse, she knows how much he likes the kids. He’s going to fight her for them. Shit! She stops herself. She can’t think this not until she is home safe and sound. She needs to keep her head clear and not let him see how distraught this is making her. Walking out slowly from his room the smell of eggs is in the air as he is making breakfast.

He can see she is confused but pays no mind. There is no way she isn’t hungry especially when he is famished. Last night still fresh in his mind both worked up an appetite and he is numb but not angry. She is still the most beautiful woman in his eyes and he might have some chose words for her. He can’t say a thing. Right now, he wants to feed her, take her home, make sure she is safe and then take some time to process. Unlike her, he didn’t have months preparing to be a parent. He met three kids that rocked his world only to be the missing rock of theirs. With his birthday coming up he made plans to go to Colorado and do some whitewater river rapids with some buddies now he needs to cancel. Though all this can be done once he brings her home.

“I made you some coffee.” He pushes the mug towards her.
“Thanks.” She can tell as much as they both want some distance; he isn’t going to make this easy. He has her plate with food as he brings it to the island. Grabbing his he sits down. “Oliver, I’m sorry you found out like this.”

He just takes a bite out of his toast and lets those words settle. He doesn’t think there is a good way of telling someone surprise you’re a dad and lets her know it. “What? Hallmark doesn’t make cards for this occasion?”

That makes her inwardly cringe. He made a bad joke and he does that when he is beyond frustrated. She tries to be as honest she can be, “My mom warned me. I should have planned on this.”

“Your mother has always known?”

“No, but the day she met you. She put all the pieces together. You told the kids your full name and she overheard.”

“What are their full names? Curious why you named the middle child Oliver too.”

“Nathan was named after the doctor who made the whole situation easy. I went through two other OB/GYN beforehand and some tried to talk me into giving up at least one of the kids that was before my dad got involved and said he’d help.”

“I’m sorry you went through that alone.”

“I had my mom, once I found out I was pregnant I went through some can’t believe I am so stupid phase. Anyways Nathan’s middle name is Jonas.”

“After me?”

“If I said it was after the Jonas brothers, I’d be a liar.”

He is going to keep the phenomenon of musicians and how obsessed some fans are to himself. “Why Oliver for the second? What is his middle name?”

“Oliver wasn’t going to be called Oliver I almost went with Barry. My mom still listens to Manilow, but I used to play his songs over and over. It changed to Oliver when I heard of the boating accident. With you gone I thought it would be homage. I was young and well… Oliver Noah Smoak is his name.”

“Lillian is a pretty name how did you come up with that?”

“You’ll need to do homework on that, she is named after a flower.”

“The flower lily is a symbol of innocence; purity and beauty. I already did my homework. What is her middle name?”

“Megan. She’s Lillian Megan Smoak.”

“I’m surprised your mother’s name isn’t used. You did use your dad’s name.”

“My mom liked Megan better so it stuck.”

“Felicity, I’m not going to abandon them. I most likely will insist on my name being placed on the birth certificates and maybe even adding my surname along with yours. My family will most likely require a paternity test even if it’s for formality reasons. We aren’t married. We’ve never dated.”
“You also didn’t remember me at all so there is that.”

“You’re right. We will have to talk about it. No matter the circumstances these three officially now have me as their father. But, but for now I am going to need space.”

“You’re going to process this here or back in Starling?” She looks worried, “What about the joint-venture?”

“We are at the finally steps. I’ll let Palmer know I’m stepping away. This isn’t a goodbye Felicity. More like a step back to gather myself because unlike you I didn’t have months to prepare and when I tell Nate, Olly, and Lilly I’m their daddy I want to make sure I’m fully committed.”

“You’ll want me to move to Starling City?”

There is no way around it and he does say yes. He is to be the CO-CEO this coming summer and he needs to be present for that.

“We’ll talk about this in more depth later. We should get you home. The kids are missing their butterfly kisses.”

Chapter End Notes

Hope how he found out wasn’t a disappointment had this scene written almost by chapter two/three. Now the countdown to when the kids find out.

Yes, I have him leave to figure stuff out the man just got told real life changing information. He loves them all but it doesn’t mean he can just act normal so… Thank you for reading!
Family and Truth

Chapter Summary

This is Oliver centric chapter. His family.

Chapter Notes

Notes: Been busy with local festivals. Being vigilante and yet helping coordinate and of course having some summer fun. Hope everyone is having some spectacular summer moments. Thanks for reading.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation From chapter 12

I didn't fall in love with you,
I walked into love with you,
with my eyes wide open,
choosing to take
every step along the way.
I do believe in fate and destiny,
but I also believe
we are only fated
to do the things
that we’d choose anyway.

And I'd choose you;

in a hundred lifetimes,

in a hundred worlds,

in any version of reality,

I'd find you

and I'd choose you.

Felicity looks at the latest text from Oliver. He’s been adding poems to his own little drabbles. He asks about the kids and she answers. He’s been telling her little things about himself. Telling her how he feels. She looks at the poem one last time before she drifts off to sleep. Her heart is his there is no mistaking that. She doesn’t know when she gave it away it happened within the time frame this man took her breathe away from a mere hello at Palmer Tech to happiest moments at the zoo.
The Rockets are ahead by five at eighth inning. The chanting out in the stadium is loud and the local team’s fans are just having a blast.

Taking the offered beer, Tommy looks at Oliver who has been quiet since the game started. “You know, I’m still waiting on those pics you were supposed to send your sister and I.”


“Okay?” Tommy glances over Oliver taking the man in. Since arriving early this morning with his family, Oliver came to the mansion for lunch as Emiko and him are staying at the Queen’s this time around. “You’ve been acting like a zombie since the game started. Is everything okay?”

“Yea, everything is fine. Just a lot on my mind.”

“Anything you want to share?”

Oliver turns his head and Tommy does too as they observe the rowdiness of the small crowd in their private box at the stadium. They see Robert Queen being animated as he’s enjoying spending some time with his lifelong buddies as they cheer on their team. In the corner is a sulking Thea forced to come because her father won’t allow her to be home alone.

“Sometimes I feel for Thea. Your parents have learned their lessons with us it seems.” Oliver finally shows some inkling of a smile. “You think it’s funny she can’t get away with half the shit we’ve done?”

“No, it isn’t that. Look at her. She’s trying not to enjoy the game to prove to my dad she’s totally upset. You know she’s a daddy’s girl.”

“I know. So why does it now amuse you?”

“It just does. Just like Reba has you wrapped around her finger.”

“Oh! How amusing.” Tommy makes a mocking gesture. “Just wait until you have your own. We’ll see how much you’ll love it.”

Oliver looks at his best friend turned brother-in-law and his smile is a lot wider, “I’d like to think I’d welcome it.” Turning back to the game. “A little girl, maybe two little boys all very much the boss of my heart.”

“Well that’s a nice dream. You’ll need to find someone first.” Tommy says breaking Oliver from his gathered out loud thoughts.

“How hard can it be?”

“What?”

Oliver holds his beer to his lips and says before swallowing some of his drink. “Just saying how hard can it be to fall in love? I remember when you did.”

“Are we turning this conversation towards me now?”

“We sure are. How did you know Emiko was the one?”
Tommy just stares at the player with the ball down at the field as his mind goes back to how he just knew. It happened to be a lot of little things that just pointed to a forever with his best friend’s sister. One of the immense moments is how much her smile warms his heart. How her voice calms his nerves. Just so many little things that adds up to knowing he doesn’t like not thinking of a forever with her and so finding that it is no hardship to move the relationship forward everyday being a new step to one day being a couple with a beautiful baby girl.

“There came a point that a day without her wasn’t a day I could fathom. I met her just as I was learning to walk again.”

“Yea, remember that. I had a new sister and as much as Thea really holds onto some invisible grudge, Emiko Queen… I mean Merlyn really is one of the best of us.

“Did you know she was jealous of you?”

“What? No.”

“Yea, it’s true. Guess we take what we have for granted. Especially, our families.”

“Yea, suppose your right. I hope we’re both grown up from those immature times.”

“Yea, I hope so too and now that you are now permanently back, I guess it didn’t work out with Felicity.”

Oliver takes a moment to answer, “We’re on a holding pattern.”

Tommy stares at Oliver as the man shrugs. “What do you mean?”

“I mean; we are working things out.”

“Oh, that serious. Wow! Are you sure about this?” As a few of the guys move closer to where they are and their conversation isn’t as private Oliver tells Tommy they’ll talk about it later and enjoy the rest of the game.

“Oh Oliver, you must hold this precious bundle.”

“Mom, handing over Reba isn’t going to instantly make me think of having one.” Oliver looks at his mother cradling her granddaughter.

“Shh, we don’t want her to wake. Let’s allow Emiko some rest. The poor girl has been up since…”

“How did you talk Emiko and Tommy to hand over Rebecca anyhow?”

“Oliver those two need some sleep. They’ve been doing it without any support in Chicago. While they are here, they have family so come on take your niece and snuggle with her on one of those comfy chairs over there.”

Oliver shakes his head, “You’re pawning her off.”

“No, I… Fine I need you to cradle her while I use the powder room.”
“Why couldn’t you just have said that?”

“Oliver!”

“Okay, sorry mom.” He softly places the child in his arms as his mother looks relieved that she can now use the lavatory. Just as his mom leaves the room from the south doorway Tommy enters from the other entrance into the room.

“That is an interesting sight.”

“I doubt it really is. I know you’ve seen your daughter sleeping before.”

Tommy huffs, “Not what I meant.”

“She’s feather-lite. Must be really an intense feeling holding her to your chest when you’re just resting and taking her in.”

“There are moments I can’t believe I’m a dad. It’s just surreal.” Tommy takes the chair overlooking his brother-in-law holding his offspring.

“Yea, but I bet you’d never give up the experience. Especially when you start to see her personality and little parts of you and her mom start mixing with a whole new person.”

“Sounds like you’ve been thinking about this a lot.” Oliver throws him his cell phone. Tommy looks at the first picture it is of a blonde holding a tortoise stuffed animal.

“That’s Felicity.”

Tommy just looks at the woman and back at Oliver. “She’s grown up. Picture from the zoo?”

“Yep, look at the next picture.” Tommy does and sees some kids. “You can flip through. I have loads of pictures.”

“You’re not joking; you have a lot of pictures. They’re adorable.” Tommy at first just takes the pics at face value until… “Wait, you know its uncanny how they… nah.” Tommy just keeps flipping until he just stops and looks at Oliver. “How old are they?”

“Four.”

“Do you see a resemblance… like… umm….”

“What Tommy?”

“They all look like you even the girl has attributes like its…”

“Congrats… you’re an uncle and yes they’re mine.”

“Wait? Are you for real?” Tommy takes in Oliver’s nod and just contemplates. “How long have you known?”

“A few days. I’ve just been corresponding with Felicity through texts just checking in making sure everyone is fine.”

“Who else knows?”

“John and Lyla. I’ve made some security plans to make sure they are safe. John is heading to meet
Felicity and get them ready for their move here.”

“Just like that. Felicity is okay about the cross-country move?”

“I actually don’t know. We haven’t talked about details.”

“Oliver buddy, that doesn’t sound good. What’s the deal?” Oliver just glances down at the little baby in his arms. He never got this and a part of him is resentful of that fact. “Whatever it is you’ve been quiet and it’s not like you. The broody you yes but not the outgoing you. You get my drift?”

“I love her. I’m also very upset. I understand the circumstances I really do but it doesn’t take away from how I feel.”

Tommy knowing his best friend as well as he does understand Oliver completely. “It’s a lot to take in. You weren’t a… well you hurt her and wow she got pregnant… Wow!” Tommy just so perplexed at the idea. “Wow! You’re a father.”

“What do you mean he’s a father?” Moira standing rigid looking at both of them. She’d appreciate the view of Oliver holding Reba if her ears didn’t just take in what she thinks she just heard.

“Mom! Um…”

Tommy is up taking his sleeping content daughter from Oliver as he can tell that he needs to leave them to talk. “Good luck.” He looks at Oliver and then passes Moira on his way out. “Be gentle, his past caught up to him.”

Moira just has her focus on her son. “What exactly am I missing?”

“Mom, you may want to sit down.” That is all the incentive for her to sit down as she takes in a breath wondering what bombshell her eldest child will give her. “There was this girl.” He tries to think of a way to flow into what he wants to say.

“Isn’t there always. What of this girl? Actually, which girl?”

“Mom? Please let me get this out first. Okay?” Oliver is now pacing getting up when Tommy took his baby girl from his arms now, he doesn’t know what to do with his hands. He has been carrying this secret for a few days. “This happened around Tommy’s incident. You know I wasn’t the best version of me back then. I hurt a girl over a stupid bet.” He stops to gain some scope of where he wants to lead this conversation. He can gather by his mom’s reaction that he has her full attention. “I had unprotected sex. It was actually my first time… our first time and…”

“You got her pregnant?”

“Yes.”

Moira is calculating outcomes. Staring at her son who is now looking back at her nervously. “After all this time, why now? Why did she contact you now?”

“She didn’t. Not like that.” Moira looks confused. If the girl didn’t contact him for his money, why did she go to him now? If it isn’t for a financial goal than what exactly is going on? “We’ve been getting close. I found out we had shared a past which I for the life in me could not remember…” He’s now looking at his hands as he just doesn’t know what to do with them.

Moira is up from her seat the only woman her son has been seeing regularly is Felicity Smoak but isn’t the father of her children that cyber-criminal? “Oliver?” She gets his attention. “Are you?
You’re not talking about Ms. Smoak, are you?” The woman has three kids and if this is all true, she has three grandchildren.

“Yes, I am talking about Felicity.”

Moira needs to sit down again. “Oh!”

“Mom?” He sees her just staring at him. It is weird because usually his mother is quick witted and always ready for some action.

“Give me a moment. This is a lot to take in.” That is an understatement as she reels in that her son is a father. “Are you sure?”

“Mom, I’m pretty sure. The timeline is there, they remind me of our family, and they look like me.” Oliver sighs, “I know we’ll have to have a paternity test but their spitting images of Smoak-Queen bloodlines. I’ve seen pictures of her dad that her mom has shown me. This is probably not how you envisioned becoming a grandmother by me.”

Moira surprises her son as she begins to laugh. “Oh! Your father and I never envisioned this but we have been informed of your inquiry on adopting these three. This is just a more personal step I suppose.”

“Jean told you?”

“Sweetheart, any legal inquiry our children do will always be brought to your father and my attention. That is why we have them on retainer.” Oliver looks surprised even though he shouldn’t be. “Please tell me that little girl I spoke to weeks ago is one of my grandchildren?”

“Lillian, Lilly is the only girl. The other two are boys, Nathan and Oliver.”

“Is Oliver the eldest?”

“No, middle child.”

“I see. Well when will I get to meet them?”

“Mom? I don’t know.”

Moira controls her eagerness. “That good? What happened? You seemed to float on air and now you seem so sullen and don’t tell me it is nothing. I’ve noticed since you’ve been back.”

His sigh speaks volumes. He always found himself being more earnest with his mother than with his dad. He has a wonderful relationship now with his father but he it’s a lot more controlled he just wants to make his dad proud. On the other hand, his mother can pick up on his turmoil quicker. Has always done her best to advise him. He may not have perfect parents but since they came back together from what could have been the end so much change happened. His parents don’t take each other for granted.

“She didn’t tell me, I figured it out and she just confirmed. I’m just upset I guess and I don’t know why? I mean I understand her reasons but still…”

“Sweetie, my sweet boy. If it didn’t hurt than you’d just have apathy and we wouldn’t want that because being in pain means something.”

“How did you do it? When you found out about dad’s affair and that he had another child?”
“Hmm.”

He sees the sadness appear. “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have asked.”

“No, no. It’s alright. A part of me then wanted to just pretend and make believe but luckily it didn’t happen like that. I faced it. Decisions had to be made. I almost left your father.” Oliver knows that his parents almost split up. His dad had left the manor for some time. “Emiko was the deciding factor. She just lost her biological mother and I met her behind your father’s back.”

“You did?”

“This spirited girl just a few years’ younger than you shy and not wanting to change her life just because her mom died. She only has ever known her mother as her rock so I decided to let her continue her education there until that special summer when she came to official live with us, you were already in college but you were a good boy to come home as often as you did to finding some bonding time with her.”

“She’s my sister.” He shrugs indicating that is more than enough reason to be there. “I’m just glad she had you. I know Thea has yet to come around.”

“Thea is thick headed. Sharing affection shouldn’t be a contest. Tell me about the triplets?”

“Mom, I promise you’ll meet them but here…” He has his phone out and lets his mother look through them. Watching several emotions go through her face as she’d stop and mention something of his own childhood.

“Oh, these are my grandbabies. Look at this one…” She has the camera phone out more so Oliver can peek. “Lillian” She sounds out that name out loud. “Lillian is a nice name.” Looking back at the photo, “Look at Lillian sticking out her tongue as she’s thinking that is just so…” Moira is tearing up. “There are three more Queens out there that already have my heart.”

“Mom, I want to keep all this on the down low. They don’t know I’m their father. Felicity and I aren’t ready. I left her to come here and think.”

“Think? Think of what? Are you having second thoughts?”

“No. Like I was telling Tommy and now you I’m just upset.”

“Yes, I know that is understandable. Do you not see yourself with her?”

“Mom, we aren’t even a couple.”

“Do you want to be her plus one?” She sees him deflate as he sits on a chair. “Well?”

“I want to be her everything.”

“So, what is stopping you?”

“She wasn’t going to tell me. What if I didn’t figure it out?”

“I doubt that was her intentions.”

“Mom?”

“I can’t speak for her. I know that. What I can tell you from a woman’s perspective those three are her world. She wouldn’t have allowed you into her world but she did.” Moira takes her son’s hand.
“As much as you’ve mentioned her… Now I mean your kids.” Holding his hand tighter. “It’s the light in your eyes that has informed anyone when you speak about Ms. Smoak that tells any one of us how much she means to you. I know you’ve never made specific plans way into the future with anyone else. You already have your father looking into a position at QC without her even being here.”

“Do I really talk about her that much?”

“Only every conversation we’ve had since you decided to take that venture with Palmer Tech.”

“Well. She’s remarkable.” Moira can tell how much talking about this woman is bringing his spirits up. If she makes her son happy, she truly must be remarkable. Oliver states, “I called for an interior designer to spruce up my place.”

“Remodeling the penthouse?”

He nods. He can see she’ll like to add more but doesn’t say a word. “Now that you know of the triplets maybe you’d like to be in charge of it all.” The smile on his mother’s face speaks volumes. “If remodeling would make you happy, I’m all for it but the triplets share one bedroom and maybe you can get a hold of Donna and help make the transition better.”

“Donna? As in Felicity’s mother?”

“Yep, I don’t need to speak for them but I can tell you they are a package deal.”

“How about we keep the remodel a surprise from Felicity. I’ll contact her mother see what we can work with.”

“You want to keep a remodel secret from Felicity?”

“For as long as you think it’ll be wise. I’ll also like to remodel your bedroom.”

“What? Mom?”

“I don’t know her but I think she’ll like knowing that the bed she’ll share with you hasn’t had another woman there.” Oliver opens his mouth but shuts it as what his mom is saying makes sense.

“Fine but nothing outrageous. I like simplicity in the bedroom.” He can see the gears in his mother’s head work. “Nothing over the top for the kids and make sure Donna’s on board with your plans because as much as I love them, I don’t want to spoil them.” He grasps the look his mother gives him about being spoiled and he knows they’ll be spoiled enough but there is fine balance after all is said and done that he adheres to Felicity’s principles.

“Alright I have work to do. Just send me the contact info.” She kisses her son’s cheeks and is quite giddy as she leaves the room.

Oliver decides to stay at the manor overnight and as he reflects on today’s events. His father will know soon enough he can trust his mother to tell his dad and so does one of his sisters’ because Tommy won’t keep secrets from his own wife and now it would be wrong to keep Thea in the dark
so he goes to her room where she’s sequestered herself since the game.

He knocks. There is no reply so he knocks again harder. He hears a curse so he knows his sister is in the room. “Come on Thea, I need to talk to you.”

“Can’t I sulk in peace?” she says from the other side of the door.

“You can but than when you’ll find out later its on you because I came here tonight to tell you.”

The door opens and he sees Thea with her hands on her hips. “What is so important?”

“Can I come in?”

She looks at him and her eyes wince thinking if whatever he has to say is something she’ll even want to hear. “Fine, whatever.” She walks back into her room. “Close the door behind you.”

“You may hate to hear this. But your cranky pants attitude is only making you miserable. Dad isn’t budging. You could have been killed.”

“Yea, yea. I know. Everyone and their mother have expressed that notion.” She lays on her bed and looks at the ceiling. “You did worse and they let…”

“That’s the problem.” Oliver voice changes to a firm tone, “They learned their lessons. I thought they didn’t care about me. I could jump off a bridge and they’ll just carry on without me. Like I didn’t matter because they never expressed any emotional turmoil. Not until Tommy’s accident. They changed. We all changed.”

“I’m not a baby!”

“You sure about that? How many times has dad talked about your safety when out with friends?”

“Did you come here to grill me too?”

“No, but if I have to I will. That call from dad, he sounded choked up and damn it! My flight back here all I could think of is please I don’t want to bury my baby sister.”

“Please you were busy with another family, I was…”

“Don’t Thea! You may be inertly angry but tread careful you keep saying you’re not a baby so when you attack those that love you. I love you. Losing you would have cut deeply. Your irreplaceable and don’t you dare mention Emiko in this.”

Thea rolls to the side and takes in her big brother. She loves him and with him away she really has missed him. “I’m sorry. I’m really glad you had people to hang with while you were away.”

“You know there is a room a few doors down that has a beautiful little girl that would love to finally met her aunt.”

“Ugh!”

“She’s perfect.” Oliver sits on the bed waiting for his sister to slide and sit beside him he continues, “She’s makes cute gurgling sounds and is perfect size to fit in one’s arms.” Feeling that she’s coming to sit beside him. “Instead of being locked at the game you could have gone shopping with mom and Emiko and bonded with your little niece.”

Thea groans. “She’s the probably the only niece I’ll have for years to come.”
“Why is that? Maybe Tommy and Emiko are planning on expending in a few years’ time.”

“Heard Tommy say that with the company expansion that is in the works Emiko will want to focus on that.”

“Oh, okay.”

“Well I was hoping you’d add but you’ve been playing house on the east coast.”

“Yea, about that. I’d like to bring this ‘house’ that you just call it here to Starling.”

“Are you serious?”

“Very.”

Thea looks at her brother and asks, “What makes this woman different?”

He takes a moment and a smile seeps to his face as he takes the earlier words his best friend told him. ‘There came a point that a day without her isn’t a day he can fathom.’ He is using this time to change his world for her and his family on the other side of the country. Writing to her and telling her how he feels. Trying something different. Yes, he misses her but he wants to just not fall into a pattern he wants a forever with her. The next time he sees her he wants her wrapped in his arms.

“Even though she isn’t here physically she is still here in my heart.” He presses his hand to his heart.

“Do you love her kids?”

He laughs its freeing to laugh at that question because he loved them before and now, he knows that they are his and a whole new grip of reality hits him. He loves his kids so much.

“I have loved them when they were just a dream.”

“What?”

“They are perfect, Thea.” His smile never leaves his face. “Loved them enough to try looking at adopting them. Even…”

“Your adopting them? That would still make me an aunt, right?”

“No. No, I am not adopting them.”

“Okay!” Thea looks thoroughly confused. “What?”

“First of all, Rebecca makes you an aunt. Secondly, here looks at these cute pictures of the three little ones that already have my heart.” He gives her the phone he has shared with Tommy and their mother earlier.

Thea looks at the woman she assumes is the woman. “Is this the lady that has won your affections?”

“Her name is Felicity Smoak. She's amazing. She's super smart and god she is so beautiful.”

Thea looks from the picture and looks at her brother who now seems to show how much he is head-over-heels over this blonde who isn’t unattractive just never pictured a classic woman next door vibe being her brother’s type.

“She’s pretty. So how did she win you over?”
“Thea, she didn’t win me over. I’m not a prize.”

“I… I mean… you know what I mean. How did she become the one?”

“Static electricity.” She sees his serious face before he laughs at her bewilderment. “There was just something about her. The more time in her orbit the more I found myself in her.”

“She sounds remarkable. You use to just nudge off any kind of commitment and just go with beauty queens.”

“That was to keep mom and dad satisfied.”

“Very adult of you.”

“I never said I make good decisions. Actually, Tommy says I suck with the matters of the heart.”

“What does he think of this Felicity.”

“Felicity Smoak, and he can’t believe she would give me any time or day.”

“Really?”

“Felicity and I had a moment in the past.”

“Oh, intriguing! Tell me more?”

“How about you flip through and look at the pictures taken as someone in this room may have forgotten to use a safety device and have her brother leave these smiling faces and fly across the country worried out of his mind.”

“Okay, okay.” She looks at the next photo and keeps going as she looks at a zoo adventure with three cuties. She just stops and looks at them again and finally stops and glances at her brother. “They… They look like…” She stares at him.

“Oh, you think?”

“Oliver, I can see the reason you aren’t going to adopt them because… because please don’t say I’m wrong but they are yours. You and Felicity did the deed years ago. Oh my gosh, I’m right. Right?”

“I guess you should know their names. Nathan, Oliver, are your nephews and Lillian your niece.”

“Nate is the oldest right?”

“Yes, then it is my little namesake. He’s so much alike to his mother. Lillian is my little sweet flower but, in a text, Felicity said that she is a big Harry Potter fan and so I started reading it.”

“Really? I’ve read the books. Lilly is Harry’s mom.”

“Oh, really? It seems Felicity loves using double entendre meaning in things. She babbles it very endearing.”

“You are so lost for her.” She looks at the pics quickly one more time. “When are we going to meet them?”

“Soon. I’m having the penthouse organized before they come out.” Oliver slides off her bed. “Alright it getting late and one last thought before I leave. The reason Emiko and Tommy are here is
because they love you. Your accident shook us all.” He kisses her forehead. “Sleep on it but its time for you to meet us halfway. We are your family and in a moment’s notice everything can change.” He winks at her now thoughtful expression and leaves her be.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter: Felicity driven. From the night they got romantically involved to the days following the truth.
Chapter Summary

Felicity driven. From the night they got romantically involved to the days following the truth.

Chapter Notes

This chapter ties in from the the evening Oliver and Felicity became lovers and follows Felicity journey throughout these days since the truth about the paternity of the kids comes to light.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation of chapter 13…

Passing the setup nursery before heading to his childhood room he notices a dim light casting from a wall where the door isn’t fulling shut. Peeking in he sees Emiko on the rocking chair as she’s quietly talking to her newborn baby girl. He almost leaves not wanting to disturb his sister when she calls out to him. Placing a smile on his face he fully walks in and makes a quick apology for bothering feeding time. His sister already modestly covering up as Rebecca is still nursing.

“I hear congratulations are in order.”

“Tommy said?”

“Of course, he came waltzing into the room with a lopsided grin. He had to spill the beans.”

“I can’t imagine Tommy staying quiet for too long anyhow.”

“Triplets. I have to say that is pretty ambitious even for you.” Her smile now matches his own.

“They’re four and I’ve missed out on so much.”

“Maybe, but you’re not that boy anymore. You know how much I hated your womanizing motto back then.”

“Don’t I know it. My motto of ‘Work hard play harder’ would piss you off if I go by how many times, you’d throw something at my head when I’d say it.”

“Good thing you had them reflexes.” She feels that her daughter is finished with her meal and shifts a bit which makes Oliver stand from his spot he’s already intruded enough and he says his goodnight to his niece and then his sister. “Tommy and I are glad; we can’t wait to meet these three blonde-blue eyed cherubs. Night Oliver.”
Entering his room, he writes a quick text to Felicity. He can’t wait until they are all reunited.

Chapter 14 **His Words**

She doesn’t know how to feel. He won’t speak to her directly but he writes to her daily. Like some love correspondence he attaches heartfelt stories and she doesn’t know what to make of it. Just the description he has written of her eyes has her on edge. He’s noticed every freckle on her cheeks and most of the time she’s worn foundation covering such imperfections. It only clues her in on how much he has noticed her since their first meeting and it is somewhat unnerving.

Reading his text about a piece of his childhood that fits to one of the times the kids did something for the first time with him right there. She’s astonished that he is sharing such a powerful heartfelt moment of time in his youth with her. With it a picture of that little boy he once was. Nothing more staggering than to see a youthful picture of him against their boys. It’s like he is using this time to ascertain everything he missed since their births.

The underlying feeling, she gets is that he is happy… no! He is ecstatic that the triplets are his. Though with his request that their correspondence be non-verbal she places all this as some punishment of hers. She knows it foolish to think so but she does.
He knows how vocal she is and yet he won’t take her calls. She misses his voice. Has not heard it for days on end until she came home and caught the ending of a video call he had with the kids. She had to stop and close her eyes and envision the man to the smooth vocal sound she places him with. A voice that has made her feel safe and cared for.

She flustery decides that he isn’t the one to make the rules. She’s accepted enough distance and now if he doesn’t speak to her, she’s not going to entertain anything else.

Taking her phone out she texts a simple sentence: *Either call me or don’t bother with any other interaction.*

She places the phone back down. Sighing at her ultimatum but if they are to move forward, she needs to have an equal say. She isn’t a child; he has no right to treat her like she is. Sitting down at available seat in the cafeteria and places the food she cooked last night on the table. She can cook. After three failed cooking classes and a few terrible on her own kitchen disasters. All she needed is a someone who knows how she thinks. The broccoli she is eating is not soggy and the braised beef not over salted or burnt. Somehow, someway Oliver has an ability to cut through her mind’s processes and now that she’s thinking of it. It freaks her out. When? How did he do it?

Glancing at her phone she thinks of how well she’s gotten to know him. Even if she is upset that it feels like he is chastising her for not telling him about the kids. Deep down she knows he isn’t because he has his own guilty past and well the truth is, she just misses the man.

Her work life has been miserable as she now reports to Leanna Kitness who seems to now regard her as a personal assistant. Therefore, she can’t wait for this job task to be over and be free of the executives and go back to just being a grunt worker in the lower levels of Palmer Tech.

The phone rings taking her from her agonizing notions. Now that he is calling her back, she isn’t sure what to say. Shit! Pressing the call button, she just says his name.

His voice is neutral as he asks if everything is okay and when she says everything is fine. His voice changes to his deep teasing one. “It took you long enough to lose your cool.”

“What? Were you testing me?”

“Me? I would do no such thing.” He pauses to add a chuckle, “So what’s up?”

“I just needed to hear your voice. It’s been like a week and since your family found out and…”

“I know. I miss you too. I sent you a package. It should arrive today. Call me after okay. I’ve got to get back to a meeting.”

“Okay, alright, I guess I’ll talk to you later. Bye Oliver.”

“Felicity, what’s wrong?”

“Nothing. Nothing really. You better get back to that meeting. Sorry! Bye Oliver.”

She knows that he knows she won’t say anymore to this and he lets out a grunt of frustration. “Call me later, after you opened the package. Okay?” He hears her agree. “Bye Felicity.” The call has ended.

Placing the phone into her bag she exhales a breath of relief. Things don’t feel as hopeless. He misses her too but he is still a jerk for doing this to her but he’s her jerk and finally with that thought it brings a smile to her face.
She glances around the room and wonders how many of her coworkers are in happy relationships. If their own dreams did come true. Everyone deserves to be content. Oliver Queen is her happy story.

Grabbing her workbag and leaving the cafeteria she begins her trek back to the office as her mind wanders to reliving that night, she got to taste a piece of heaven.

Simply a nice comfortable evening as she comes home from spending time with the Johnsons. Finding the unexpected as her heartbeat increases seeing him waiting for her in a barely lit hallway.

Never imagining and being flabbergasted to see him when she honestly thinks he is miles away tending to his family’s needs and with some other mystery woman who doesn’t like him responding to her over the phone.

A piece of her super irate and she vows inwardly to herself she will never give him a nickname. That woman’s voice drawing out his name struck a nerve. Especially at how it sounds so juvenile to her ears. She doesn’t contemplate how openly her emotions are and how she can be so resentful over a pronunciation as right in the moment she hears it. She is truly jealous.

She inwardly grumbles to herself then, “Whatever! That girl could have his attention now.” As she herself mentions a man’s name he has never heard uttered from her lips right before hanging up without a thoughtful care. It is so childish of her and the moment the call ends she scolds herself but the mistake is done. Even with the unknown woman’s presence how she ended the call it was wrong. Not that she’ll call him back because what is done is done and anyways, he has better things to worry about and she needs to get ready to go out and care for Abigail as she promised the Johnsons she would.

Dressing simply to go out she looks at the draw of a few new pieces of underwear her mother pressed her to get. Her penny-pinching self a little annoyed that she uses any money for herself. They aren’t destitute, she is making enough to cover their living expenses. Even so, she is very cautious on her spending habits. With that said and done. Her mind is more active on thinking about a certain male. The man who has washed her unmentionables and hung up her simple bras with ease. Being there and making himself indispensable.

Lately since her brief illness and that moment of clarity. She makes the decision to tell him about the secret she is keeping from him. With his sister’s accident and having him be pulled away it just brings up the issue to be even more pressing. Her children’s aunt was in a serious accident. Another family member her kids deserve to know. It will happen soon. He deserves to know.

Scrutinizing herself in the mirror a part of her yields to the recesses of her mind that holds her back. She has seen the other women, the competition. They are every bit the fashionistas she is not. Women like Leanna Kitness with her slim waist and perfect curves cramming for his attention. He isn’t blind and if it is any indication of how sweet and smooth the words that flow easily from his lips and those eyes that show mirth at some of the opposite sex attraction to his presence it only holds true that she doesn’t hold a candle to any of them.

Oh, she knows she smart. Sometimes too smart for her own good. She has witness misogyny in ways that have left her mouth sour it’s hard enough to be looked down by a male peer but when it’s a female one the sting is deep. She’s keener than Ray Palmer and most of the men and women at Palmer Tech. Ray has mentioned her in Mensa discussions as he would randomly just enjoy a bout of acute conversations and as if he could be impressed even further with her. For one, Ray Palmer isn’t threatened by her, he’s actually enthralled by her. That is the reason she respects him and his company views.

To her at the beginning of the joint-venture and getting to know Oliver, he is the wild card. The man
isn’t a genius like her or Ray but he is intelligent. Quick thinking, problem-solving kind of person. He brings action and skills that binds projects together. The man is a one-person powerhouse and it doesn’t hurt that he is suave and understands the underlining of how people think. He’s shown to be a leader. If he asks for more on her part, she’ll serious consider it. She’s kept from ever looking at anything near Starling City for job prospects because of three little beings that are her life but with how the universe seems to have made her world smaller by bringing the children’s father into their lives it is possible that some day they may move to the west coast especially with how she is planning to tell him the truth.

Enjoying her time with Abigail as the girl is excited to show another person who is happy to participate in her life some moves. Felicity is delighted to make another child happy with her presence. Sometimes stepping away from one’s path that seems to be written in stone gives a clear view of how lucky a person is. She knows without a doubt how blessed her life is by having a wonderful mother and three kids that with every passing day seem to show her the marvels she could never have fathom without them.

The ride home it’s hard to not enjoy as Jeff’s smart aleck of wisdom is refreshing. He really has been a great help and his wife is just super sweet. Entering that store with her mother was one of the best decisions in her time here in Providence. They’ve added much needed company at times. Her thoughts of Oliver pushed aside is what has her feeling uplifted. Letting go of the unabridged jealousy she’s been feeling lately. The phone call earlier didn’t help and the picture of Leanna in her mind also keeps irking her deeply. She’s tired of the forced casual endearments put on display before her even without him near. Her last words to him that she’s happy his sister is okay but with hearing the other woman’s voice so close to where he stands, she tells him that she needs to end the call and ready herself as she drops Jeff’s name as someone she is meeting up with.

Never in her wildest dreams did she think he’d come cross-country just because he thinks she is on a date. Like the man is jealous and knowing he feels real feelings for her allows her to act on her own sentiments. He’s here.

“Oliver? What are you doing here? I thought…”

“I was waiting for you. I know it’s silly with you being on a date and all but I needed to see you.”

Her heads tilts examining the man before her. He thinks she was on a date. Wow, Oliver is standing before her and his eyes are studying her every movement which should make her uncomfortable but instead his gaze is making her stomach flutter. It is insane because he’s seen her at her worst and then she recalls the almost kiss with her wild bed hair and words leave her mouth somehow, she’s not even paying attention to herself as she tells him that Jeff Johnson is a very married man. Beholding the relief in his eyes as she apologizes for adding Jeff’s name into the equation.

It doesn’t take long for his words, “Maybe but it got me back here realizing something and I don’t want to waste a minute longer.” His hands reach out enclosing her face in his palms. Her head is tilted upwards as their eyes are locked. They don’t rush into the kiss right away as the fantastic spark between them is felt. Both lost in the moment standing face-to-face in a hallway as finally their lips touch and it is beyond what she expects as feeling his lips, the lips she has dubbed to be pillow mountains feel so soft against her own. Pulling themselves apart just enough as they marvel how intense this first kiss is, their first kiss as adults because neither will acknowledge the sloppiness of their true first kiss roughly five years ago.

She lingers against his lips. Neither ready to end this. Her hands softly grip onto his forearms because he hasn’t pulled them away from her face. It is the crack of a neighbor’s door that has them fully pull apart as a man shortly walks out of his apartment and gives them a quick peek before leaving the
premises.

She asks, “You want to talk here? Maybe go upstairs and…”

He just came from upstairs about an hour ago. He waited for her here as he thought about what he really wants to do, what he really wants with this woman because he just had the most amazing kiss of his life with. He interrupts her. “How about where I am staying? At least no disruptions.”

She nods. She’ll go anywhere with him. She won’t say it out loud but right now anywhere he is… it is where she wants to be. “Okay, I need to go and tell my mom at least.”

He nods and watches her go up the stairs. He tells her he’ll bring the car upfront.

“How was the recital?” Donna places an overnight bag by the door.

“Abbie had fun. Mom, what’s this?”

“It’s a bag with clothing and some supplies. I noticed his vehicle never moved from its spot. The boy has been waiting for you for almost an hour. Why don’t you get cleaned up a little I think tonight is a night to remember!” Donna winks at her daughter.

“Mom!”

Donna in a very commanding mom voice, “Come on, I chose something nice and well just get going.”

“You really believe that Oliver came here to what?” Felicity is already undressing from the sweater and jean combo and finding herself in a cutesy dress that Oliver complimented her on weeks ago. Her mother just has a smile plastered on her face. “You can tell me all about it tomorrow. Go find your happiness baby girl.” Felicity isn’t in any mindset to argue as she’s excited to see Oliver who is waiting for her.

Her mind reeling of the fact that man kissed her in a hallway. Both hands holding her face as his lips left her humming with such satisfaction. That when it is over, they barely move from their spots. Finally, both start turning away from each other and she can’t recall why because the intense pulse happening between them really is doing an incredible number until the image of a neighbor brings her back to reality. She can’t wait to feel this powerful magic again as she leaves to see him.

Donna hugs her daughter as she whispers, “I love you. I know sometimes I am too much but I know deep in my heart he is a good one.”

Felicity hugs her mom tighter. “I love you too mom.” She takes the small makeup case from her mother’s grasp and practically skips to a mirror to at least reapply some lipstick. The excited orbs of hers glancing back and her fingers slowly outline her own lips. She can sense the right instant the tension of being in the moment considerably leads to that amazing kiss. When his handsome face tilts towards hers she thanks the heavens at whatever her mother did to urge him on. So worth it as his lips are soft just so velvety, she pictures pillow mountains or some cloud formation and yes, she has
an over imaginative mind while being kissed silly.

Those thoughts will transpire before it ceases and like a computer where the central processing unit will overheat which indicates that it is max out on memory, which results in a computer to slow down and often freeze so does her brain. Thankfully her body knows what to do. Regaining some semblance of the quirky mind of hers she recalls a feral thought that she has never seen those glorious lips of his ever chapped because this man has always had delectable lips completely making the dreams of kissing them worth it.

Never in her life did the goosebumps on her smooth skin feel the anticipation of things to come. Her whole body electrified to his whim. She can’t believe in this moment she is living in a romance novel. The basic trope of a naive girl falling for the popular boy to only be hurt and shunned yet to exactly find herself years later with the said boy who is now really a wonderful man.

She finds him at the building’s entrance waiting to escort her to the vehicle. The moment he eyes the overnight bag her mom gave her a spark in his eyes already speaks volumes. Taking it from her as he places it in the back. His laughter fills the vehicle as he expresses that Donna truly had a hand in that. It is so nice to be with a man that knows how her mother thinks and yet adores her with all his heart. She isn’t going to overthink anything as he pulls out of her building’s complex and heads to his place. For once her mind is taking a backseat and she is allowing herself to go with the flow. Maybe that kiss short circuited all her capable reasoning but at the moment she doesn’t care because these minutes under his spell brings every ounce of her to the brink of elation.

She asks about his sister as he drives steadily alongside the few automobiles on the street.

“She’s basically okay. Hit her head hard but no concussion. Fractured femur but doesn’t need surgery. Just so damn lucky.”

“Is my lag time putting on my seatbelt the reason you didn’t drive off?”

“Not amusing.” He hears her murmur an apology but doesn’t look at her as they are merging onto another street and his eyes are on the road. “She may have been lucky but she was at the hospital for over eight hours. When I got there, five hours had passed and my dad was still fuming that she didn’t have her seatbelt on.”

“How about you? How are you really?”

“I’m fine.” He automatically says before actually telling her how he feels because she hates the I’m fine statement. It is crazy how much he’s observed without much ado in their friendship.

“It must be rough to see one’s sibling hurt. Being a single child, I can only assume.”

“Just like with your kids, I’m very much like my own sisters yet very different in many regards.”

“How so?”

“Many same genetic attributes but our personalities and the way we see things vastly change among my sisters and I. For instance, Thea and I found out that we had another sister. I’m calmer and I’ve
accepted her and made an effort to get to know Emiko and include her in my life while Thea a total stubborn mule not so much.”

“Do you think Thea would like me?”

“I honestly hope so. Like I said she’s a hard nut to crack.” Felicity knows that his sister doesn’t like the fact she has kids if the conversation she overheard a few weeks ago while they were out shopping is anything to go by. “I know she sounds uncompromising but she means well.”

Pulling up to his assigned spot he tells her to wait as he gets out of the car to open her door.

“I have hands and feet.”

“I know, sorry I just wanted to scope the area. Being we are in an enclosed garage.”

“Okay but what would you have done if there were baddies waiting?”

He doesn’t answer right away as he grabs her overnighter and hands it to her. “I think it would give you some time to lock the door and hid in the back.” He smiles to her head shake. “Not much I could do. I’m not trained that is why I have people.”

“People? Hmmm…”

“Okay, my parents hired…” He stresses out “The people.” And continues, “But now I have John. Who handles everything for me, he and the kids are eager to meet the Smoaks.”

“You’ve mentioned him a few times and his adorable kids.”

“Yep, the kids are adorable but don’t let their angelic faces fool you. You’ll find they are a handful.” Felicity stops in her tracks as an enormous smile is now featured on her face. He halts, “What? Why did you stop?” He looks at her smile and now wonders why the big smile.

“You’ve revealed me to them? Like mentioned? As if we will meet kind of mention?”

He now can follow her mind as he just spoke about his life in Starling with inclusion of her meeting the kids. He pulls her towards him after he presses the elevator call button. He can’t help but kiss her. The elevator ding happens just as her mind is fluttering by how nice it feels having his lips just nipping at her pulse point. His scruff tender she always thought it be like bristle pads but in her delight to find that his facial hair tickles her neck just so pleasantly as his lips spend countless minutes’ savoring her neckline. As they hold each other in an embrace that neither wants to let go but their ride up is here so he steps aside to let her in and follows behind.

“Felicity, about the past I’m…” Felicity anxiously doesn’t want to hear about the past that will hinder how she feels right now. She knows he is a different person and so is she. They’ll talk. Talking will lead to another discovery for him. She’ll need to apologize for her part in keeping the kids away. There will need to be a lot of forgiving. She left her brain at home and is now just about sensations and she wants him. Really wants him. Her index finger shushes him and rising on her tippy toes her lips reach for his. He wants her as much there is no doubt left as he happily claims her mouth. Pulling apart to breathe heavy he glances at the woman in his arms she looks so content. There were times at
work where he had to stop himself and just bring a hand to her shoulder as her babbles would do a number between them. He admits a more uncontrolled part of him wanted to stop her with a kiss but they weren’t at that stage and now tasting her. He doesn’t want to ever stop.

She’s in the dress that he’s imagined taking off of her once or twice. He was there when she bought it. Her mother urging her to buy it. A sale that just is meant to be and if she were to walk away from it, he would have purchased it. It was a great Sunday afternoon. They opt to watch an animation movie and they kids were so excited to go to the movies for the first time. It is the weekend he just knows this is his family. He doesn’t care for the irrationality of those thoughts. Now he is going to get a chance to do what his imagination has promised to be inconceivable bliss.

“I should show you around.”

“Oh, I get to see more than the visitor’s bathroom?” She smiles as she takes his hand and leads them to the tall windows. “You were so wasted.”

“I was.” He twirls her in his arms bringing her right up to his hard front. “Now I’m so intoxicated by the beauty in my arms.” He captures her lips and what begins slow rapidly changes in speed. His hands slowly moving down the sides of her torso as her raised arms reach up to steady herself to him. There is an urgency yet they fan the fire and allow themselves these seconds to pass by.

It has taken a lot to accept her body’s curves with how bombarded the media is with what perfection looks like. She recognizes how soft her body is compared to models in those fancy magazines that sell beauty products that emphasis happiness is achieved if only one does this or that. Happily, she puts more stock onto her mind’s process of being a woman of STEM. She of course needed to learn of early ladies that have made an impact and broke the sound and gender barriers along the way. Inspiring more young women to pursue careers in science.

Heroes to her like Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hopper who was at the forefront of computer and programming language. One of the crowning achievements was the development of computer languages written in English, rather than mathematical notation most notably, the common business computing language known as COBOL. Another great one, Ada Lovelace is considered to be the founder of scientific computing and the first computer programmer. Her algorithm which history has come to know as the first one designed for a machine to carry out was intended to be used for Charles Babbage’s Analytical Engine, which Lovelace would sadly not see built during her lifetime. Lovelace passed away in 1852, but her previously little-known work and “poetical” approach to science has broken through to inspire present-day young women interested in computer programming. Reading about and admiring as part of a secret World War Two project, six young women programmed the first all-electronic programmable computer. When the project was eventually introduced to the public in 1946, the women were never introduced or credited for their hard work: both because computer science was not well understood as an emerging field, and because the public’s focus was on the machine itself. Since then, the ENIAC Programmers Project has worked hard to preserve and tell the stories of these six women. So many women in so many shapes and sizes through history have made an impact and she doesn’t think allowing her genius to be dictated by how much she weighs would honor her past sisters.

This is who she is. It seems that Oliver appreciates who she’s become and that in itself is a turn on. His hands are so not idol and nor are hers as they seem to be feeling each other up. His breathe against her ear is truly having her come undone. Too much clothes between them still and she can feel how hard is becoming for her. If she could think straight, she’d try to place a size to his growing anatomy but being so frazzled by the mere touch of his lips, hands, and rubbing body against hers nothing but her own need to rub herself on him. Her own body is of its own force to grasp what is hers to take.
The man really does take good care of himself. She’s has seen him prepare foods telling her how vital nutrients are. Oliver really enjoys teaching her and the family about tastes from around the world that he has been to. It’s so radical to think a city boy she remembers is the well-rounded guy she is grinding against.

She flutters her eyelids open as she feels him settle beside her. He leaves a chaste kiss to her raised shoulder as one of his arms wrap around her front. Sleep is slowly overcoming her resistance to recall every moment of this evening. Oliver has been a perfect gentleman. She needs to use these few minutes to ponder his request. He asked why she doesn’t want to move to Starling City. He never asked her personally if she’d move there, which means he’s gotten this information from her mother. What she told her mother years ago, it was to protect her from ever meeting this man that is now cuddled beside her. Weird how things happen, it’s like fate brought him to her. Regardless of the fact that he is here, does she want to move to Starling City? It’s his home, it is where he is destined to go after his time at Palmer Tech.

As much as she enjoys working for Ray Palmer, it’s the prone body beside her who seems to have fallen into a comfortable slumber that she truly has the connection to. There is a truth he doesn’t know yet. It will depend on how he takes the news. Deep in her gut she knows he’ll be over the moon to find out he is a father but she can’t fathom how he’ll feel about her after the reveal. He may not want her in his life. It’s a gamble right now. Falling into temptation may have ruined their chances at being a couple. Still as she closes her eyes these past few hours being his girl are beyond anything she ever expected. Later, much later when she allows her mind to conjure scenarios, she’ll think this all through but for now she lets her body’s exhaustion welcome her to dreamland.

Its days after he has found out about the triplets. These texts are bittersweet. Felicity knows that he doesn’t want direct communication that isn’t e-mail or text related. Her calls have gone unanswered and she is frustrated. He may say he is trying a different way. It just all feels archaic and it seems he is loving writing love letters to her. She’s a tech girl. Doesn’t that mean anything to him?

Coming home her mother gives her that secretive smile. She knows something is up but Donna Smoak just lifts her hand and holds an envelope. “Mail came today. A package for the kids. A little something for me and well a letter and a cutesy box.” Donna nods to the high-end decorative box on the table.

“Mom? Your enjoying my suffering, aren’t you?”

“Sweetie, this is his way of wooing you from afar. He says he wants you to be his only.”

“I would rather hear his voice.”

“Let the man be romantic. He says slowing down since these weeks have been a whirlwind. He just
wants to do right by you.” Felicity groans. Her mother has even had a conversation with Oliver’s mother. How insane is that? She isn’t privy to any of it. She can only hear his voice when she gets glimpses of his calls to the kids through her mother. Donna agreed to be the middle person for now but she has expressed her concern. “We actually need to talk about living arrangements.”

“What?”

“Felicity, Oliver lives across the country and I remember you telling me that Starling City was off limits. I’m assuming it was about Oliver now that I know he is the father.”

Taking the envelop from her mother’s fingers. She looks at her name simple written across it. Maybe her mother is right. She’s looking at this all wrong. He isn’t really punishing her but making a romantic gesture. Though hearing his voice earlier now she wonders a lot more. Has he been testing her resolve? She respected his wishes for distance. How can he be so loveable and infuriating at the same time?

This is something sweet and unlike instant gratification the buildup is sort of different. She knows he cares for her and wants to do something that he has never done for another. No whisking her away to some paradise island or grand gestures that the media can exploit this is just Oliver Jonas Queen wooing his girl Felicity Megan Smoak. She can live with that for a period of time.

“Oliver is becoming a CO-CEO in a few months’ time and he wants us to move to Starling. I like working at Palmer Tech…”

“What does that mean?” Felicity hears her mother’s question but observes where her three kids are spread out napping on the futon. Oliver’s gifts laid around their bodies.

“It means I’ll have to give notice to HR at Palmer and look for places that are in our price range in Starling,” Donna nods. She doesn’t need to say anything to her daughter she’s already expressed that this apartment has always felt like a temporary residence. Before Oliver came into the picture, she expressed about moving back to Las Vegas. As the children become school aged, she could find work there and she knows Felicity can find work anywhere. As much as Palmer Tech holds her daughter’s attention. The children suffer not seeing their mom enough. Two hours a day just didn’t cut it. “Job hunting is going to be fun. Especially if it gets out that Oliver and I had a past.”

“I think you two can work around that. Maybe take a position at Queen Consolidated”

“I think that’ll be nepotism and I want things from my own merit.”

“Baby, didn’t they come knocking for you. They’d be lucky to have you.”

“Thanks mom, you’re the best cheerleader a daughter could have.”

Donna grins, “Well it’s not hard to do, I’m just so proud of you.” Felicity sways her head at how much her mother is so… so incredible. “Just think, if you didn’t go through that life change five years ago, we probably wouldn’t be so close and I’d be nagging for grandkids.”

“I can’t imagine life without them, but I’d most likely be into my career. Maybe even stride to be a CEO of my own business.”

“Oh no baby.”

“What?”

“There is nothing… nothing stopping you from achieving those goals. You have me. If you see an
opportunity you take it. The world will be better for it with someone like you at the helm.”

“You think so?”

“When Ray Palmer knocked on our door over nine months ago and asked you to personally scribe that code and offered you that position and you declined because of how much traveling abroad it would mean I told you we would be fine. Take it. You didn’t. You took the entry level position. The man knows your value he keeps promoting you. If that isn’t a clue, I don’t know what is.”

“I am going to feel bad…”

“Oh no you’re not! You declined the high-salary so you could see your children daily. Starling City is going to be our home because those three deserve to see their parents. We will make due to any position you take.”

“Fine, but Oliver has been away from Starling what about all those moments he needs to go away…”

“It doesn’t stop him from still being their father. You being their mother. I’m still their grandmother but they’ll have more family that will be there for them.”

“You’re right.”

“Well! Mothers usually are.” They both turn to the stirring children. “Why don’t you take a moment in my room to read and see what Oliver sent you. I’ll take care of these three.”

“Okay, thanks mom.”

She makes sure to kiss each one and listen to any dreams that any of the kids had before she goes behind closed doors and stares at the envelope with her scripted name dribbled across its front. Finally unsealing it she pulls the sheets of paper.

Hi Felicity,

I thought about how to start this and I wrote and threw out more than a dozen sheets just with endearments, I thought it be to cheesy to say my dearest love or to the woman that seems to own my every thought. I know I’ve kept us from having a one-on-one conversation. Using an old-fasion kind of way even knowing texts and emails are of a newer technology. When we talk, I need it to be face-to-face and no face-time does not cut it. (Yes, your mother has clued me on your irritation)

Children truly do change everything. I need to confess something, I already considered them my own even inquiring a family attorney on adoption. I love them but then again, they truly are easy to love. Without knowing they were my own I already had formed a connection to them. I wondered what kind of man would throw away a relationship with three souls that beam of their mother’s wit, strength, love, and so many other sweet adjectives that can surely fit? He would be a foolish man.

Then I find the fool of a man is me. Yes, I was not told of their existence. As maddening as that sentence holds up, I understand it. It angers me that I was the childish fool, the reason I wasn’t a part of their world is how much of a screw up in those moments that left you to deal with a
pregnancy alone. I am glad you had your mother but it should have been me.

I missed seeing three heartbeats grow. Holding them against my chest shortly after their first breathes of life. Seeing myself in their eyes. Hearing their first words. Seeing the stumbles of their steps. Then this all would really be about me… Those childish times are over and they deserve a father. Someone to look out for them as they grow, in every breathe they take, knowing that I see them as my precious own, learning from my wisdom, and when they stumble, I will be there to catch their fall.

What I’m trying to say is I don’t want them to see the world without their father. They are my home, my center. In a few short weeks they have encompassed my heart and there is no moving forward without my family.

They have a wonderful mother. Like I’ve mentioned your strength, passion, and smarts are qualities that I admire and I see all that in them and that is why I love them dearly. It’s really an eye-opener now that I start to see myself in them. I dared not until now. Now I see my own passion and personality in each one.

Felicity, we are parents to three amazing kids. I’m just so overwhelmed that I find Nathan Jonas is a little mirror of me. Oliver Noah has so many quirks of mine with my looks but there is no mistaking that he is his mother’s son. Leaving us with our Lillian, Lilly Megan an intricate mix of us.

Yes, I have missed out on a lot but from this day forward when their worlds are expanded and they find that their birthday wish came true I’ll like to do the same honors for my own birthday and use that day to tell them I am their father. I know it may be cheesy but I really don’t care. The day you receive this it be another fourteen days till that special day I can tell them that I got the best birthday gift.

In the box I have enclosed a key card, some other keys for my home here in Starling and a little something showing where my mind is half the time. No, it isn’t lingerie though thoughts of you in some exquisite flimsy fabric only spurs how much I miss your touch. You’ll need to open the box to see. I also sent you some papers to help push along on the few steps needed to officially make them mine. I thank you for tending to the paternity tests recently. I know the kids made their grumbles known.

I do miss your voice. I really do. I just like being able to write how I feel down. It’s given me clarity and its quite therapeutic. Like I’ve mentioned I want to do things differently with you and I’ve figured keeping our relationship out of the public view for as long as possible to give us and our children privacy and knowing you’d agree that it is for the best. I also never want you to think that I’m not ready. I want it all with you. You’ve shared your home with me. I practically started to live there and now I ask for you to come home and live here in Starling City with me.

Love, Oliver

She looks at the square box now in her lap. Placing the letter from Oliver on the bed beside her. Tearing the wrapping paper because of course it would be wrapped in a very elegant manner he really does go overboard. On top off tissue paper there is a small envelop and she picks it up she can tell by the keys clinking to each other that there are for his home. A home he wants to share with her. They haven’t put a title to their relationship and she isn’t going to assume anything. Though moving into his abode is a huge step. He’s right. He was practically living with them before the truth came out.
Moving the tissue paper, she sees the frame. Her hand covers her mouth. She forgot he asked a stranger to take a picture of them all. Inspecting it closely. Their trip to zoo. The kids are all smiles. It truly was a good day. Her mom standing between them happily smiling for the camera.

Her heart flutters at what catches her eye. She’s looking at Oliver and at that brief moment in time she remembers the woman who takes the photo says something that has her look at him and vice versa. ‘Beautiful family’ Her family in one photo. The undeniable magic between them like the stars are hung just for them. Recalling the butterflies in her stomach as she gazes at his own set of eyes before slowly turning to the camera. The moment captured on film.

She places the frame down back into the box. Grabbing her cell phone, she dials the memorized numbers to his phone and it doesn’t take much time for him to answer back. “Hi.” He drawls out and it could bring her to her knees thankfully she is sitting.

“Hi Oliver, I received the package and I love this photo, thank you.”

“It’s really my inspiration for the whole writing gig.”

“Oh.” She briefly glances at the box and she understands him now. She also knows now that tomorrow she’ll be giving her notice that she’ll be leaving Palmer Tech. It’s time to go back to where her heart really never left. “Yes Oliver, yes to everything.”

“Really?”

“I want to be with you. Our children miss you dearly and my mom will be happy to be free of this apartment.”

“I’ll actually miss it, that is where I met the Smoaks.”

She laughs and the continue talking a little bit longer reminiscing about the way the kids took to him. It’s the little things brought up on this call that they’ll need to discuss further in person.

They weren’t childhood friends. Barely even acquaintances. She had a sweet friendship with his best friend at the time and every so often Oliver’s appearance to take the boy she would be in a full-length discussion about science and whatnots, Thomas Merlyn would shrug and wish her a goodnight. Somehow those mere seconds with the captivating boy were enough to have her easily persuaded to give herself to him. She never did nor still does believe she was his first. He was to charming even back then. He had a million-watt smile. She always considered herself to be that girl. The wallflower at any party.

“Felicity, hold on a second. I need to take this call. I’ll call you right back.” And in less than a minute her phone vibrates and she picks up.

“Everything alright.”

“Yes, I umm… John Diggle, my best buddy is almost at your door.”

“Why?”

“He runs a security firm.”

“I know, so…” Her questioning gets disturbed as a knock on their apartment door is heard. She quickly moves all the objects back inside the box as she places it on the little table by the door. They have a visitor and she can hear her mother questioning a man. “He is here now. I’ve got to go.” She says goodnight and really doesn’t wait to hear Oliver’s response as she already moving out of her
mother’s room.

Chapter End Notes

Next update: Changes are occurring some desired some very much not wanted.
Uncle Dig

Chapter Summary

Spartan's Lantern has new clients in Providence, Rhode Island. John Diggle makes his appearance at the Smoak residence. The kids get another uncle.

Chapter Notes

Can't believe August is over and hello September.

John Diggle is entrusted to protect what is precious to Oliver Queen. John meets his nephews and niece and he becomes smitten with them. The beginning of transitioning the Smoaks to the move in Starling.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation from chapter 14…

Donna looks at the man at the door for a moment before telling him, “The kids aren’t jumping around. They’ll be in bed soon. You can hold off on your noise complaint.”

“Who is it mom?”

“Just Larry from downstairs.” Donna says as her daughter comes closer. Larry takes a look at Felicity and winks and is about to say something before Donna cuts him off, “Have a goodnight.” Closing the door.

Felicity behind the door glancing at her mother, “Mom? What does he want?”

Donna’s hand still on the doorknob when Larry’s foot stops it from truly closing. Donna huffs at the rudeness. “He doesn’t want anything like usual.”

“Hey, I came here for a reason.” The man’s voice trails from behind the door.

Felicity moves between her mom and the door. “Mom, just let him say what he has to say. What is it Larry?”

“I see that blond guy isn’t coming around here anymore.”

Felicity gives her mother a ‘don’t say it’ glare. Telling this man that the blond man happens to be the kids’ dad would be a mistake. The residences here have heard of Oliver Queen, the man does show up on society pages and many media outlets. Felicity can hear her mother grumbling which she knows Larry can hear it too. “He is my friend. We worked together and now he is back in his city.”

“Oh, I thought you were better than one of those.”
“Excuse me?”

“Going after rich men.” Donna wants to slam the door on this man’s face. Felicity tries to compose herself as she frowns at the man who is claiming she is now a gold digger. “I thought you were smart, that’s all I’m trying to say. Instead you’re with a guy who uses and disposes chicks like trash.” They can all hear the children in the background calling him out. Felicity’s a little worried that their little taunts won’t be taken well by this gigantic asshole.

“What are those brats saying?”

Chapter 15 Uncle Dig

Felicity holds her stance. “Larry, go home. Their tired and so am I.”

“They’re calling me angry man, what kinda shit is that?” He can’t see them as the partial closed door is in his way. “Well screw them.” He gives her a serious scowl and makes sure to enunciate these words, “Worthless like their mother.”

Donna has her phone in her hand, “My daughter is not interested. Leave or I’ll call the police.”

“You are all trash.” He steps out from the doorway and as soon as he does Felicity slams the door. “No for good…”
The rest of the words never make it out of Larry’s mouth as he is in a choke hold against the wall leading to the stairwell.

“That is no way to speak to a lady.” The well dress man says to Larry who is breathing heavy. “I’d keep away from them if I were you because I won’t be so nice next time.” Larry is sizing him up after the choke-hold release and that makes the man smile. “Try it.”

“Nah man, screw you too.” Larry says as he puts distance between himself and the well-dressed black guy he has never seen around these parts. Going back to his apartment quickly and slamming the door for good measure.

Both Smoak woman hear the door downstairs slam. At least Felicity exhales loudly knowing that he isn’t in the hallway lurking. The kids are asking why angry man doesn’t like kids as their grandmother is consoling them. Donna is not happy as she has stated to her daughter many times over that this particular man of a few others around the complex is a creep. Felicity is ushering the kids to their room when another knock on the door has her stop dead in her tracks.

“Mom, take the kids. I’ll handle the door.”

Donna clutching her phone close. “Don’t open the door until you know who it is.”

“I know mom, just keep the kids from you know…” ‘worrying’ she mouths. Donna only nods of understanding. These are the moments Felicity wishes she had a peep hole as she calls out, “Whose there?”

“My name is John, John Diggle. I’m here…” he stops as the door opens wide. “My name is John Diggle and I am a friend of Mr. Queen. My apology for startling you this late in the evening hours, Ms. Smoak.”

“It’s fine, I am actually expecting you.” He gives her a warm smile as he understands Oliver must have reached out to her. “What brings you here?”

“He asked me to…” He is cut short when he hears a feminine voice asking Felicity who is at the door.

“Mom, this is a good friend of Oliver’s.” She looks at the man in question.

“I’m not only his friend but I operate a security firm Spartan’s Lantern and well as a favor to the man I am here to make sure you’re safe.”

Felicity steps aside, “Come in. The kids don’t know a thing but please come in.”

“Thank you!”

“Why wouldn’t we be safe?” Donna asks. “Other than some buffoons that can’t take no for an answer that live in our complex?”

“Mom! Mr. Diggle really doesn’t…”

“It’s just a formality. With some recent information known to a small group of people. The Queen family aren’t ones to take risks.” He makes sure to look at Felicity as he says this, “Anyone of importance is safely guarded. Oliver trusts me to make sure that you are all okay.”
She has never met or spoken to this man before and she doesn’t know what exactly he knows of her situation and won’t make it easy. “We were safe enough before he came into our lives and we will be okay after.”

John doesn’t move. He may understand her reluctance but he also knows the circumstance. Oliver never held back what this family means to him. If the wrong person is to know there could be media storm plus, he knows how valuable this family is now to the Queens.

“With all due respect, Ms. Smoak. There are three other individuals in this abode that Mr. Queen has made it incredibly clear that need safeguarding. If the media gets wind of certain facts, there be no place to hid from a paparazzi mob and make no mistake it would be a mob.”

Felicity sighs as she sees the kids are taking an interest in this man. She’ll introduce the kids to Mr. Diggle soon enough but for now she’s interested in what he has planned.

“I’ll make us some drinks. Coffee or tea?” Donna just needs to do something as she gets the answer needed to make their beverages. John pulls a chair from the dining room table to sits down and begins to talk to her daughter. Their voices low to not alarm the triplets who are watching from a distance. Their grandmother makes sure to occupy their attention as her daughter and the man who is a friend of their father’s converse.

“How is Oliver?”

“In what particular sense? Presumably Oliver finding out he is a father?”

“I… I mean as a whole. I can assume he doing okay.” A pause “But being you’re here and not him…”

“He’s tending to his situation quite remarkably well. I’d like to move you to a more temporary location and work from there.”

“I have work tomorrow morning and you want me to pack?”

“Ms. Smoak this is urgent.”

“I’m not uprooting my kids late at night especially without them not knowing why?”

“This place is truly unsecure. Three unlocked entrances. The back stairway barely has a functioning light.”

Felicity shrugs. She can hear her mother raise a concern as she comes closer with some mugs.

“Mom, this is what we can afford.”

“Ms. Smoak…” She stops him with raising her hand in a stop motion.

“We can deal with this after I get off work tomorrow but tonight, we stand put.” Felicity looks between her mother and their guest. “My children are not going to be frightened. Its late. They should actually be in their beds.”

“Felicity, maybe the man…” Donna stops mid-sentence as she grasps the look on her daughter’s face. “Let me get the kids situated in their room.”

“Thanks mom.” Felicity turns to the kids. “I like you to meet Mr. Diggle. He’s a friend of your uncle Oliver.”
The kids show excitement by those two words alone. As if two words breaks them from being shy and due diligence of being weary of strangers. They practically surround him and are of awe of his size.

“Youse big.”

The man grins at the children and then flexes for them. Felicity doesn’t show it but she’s happy the kids are taking to this man. He is a main staple in their father’s life.

“I miss unkie Olivah”

“You do?” He then looks at the three bobbing heads as he rephrases, “You all do. He misses you too.”

“He does?”

“Of course.” John looks at the kids’ faces it is quite a spectacle that when one of them asks a question the rest all chime in. “He told me himself.” They seem happy that their supposedly uncle Oliver misses them. Just as quickly they run to show him what their uncle sent them. They seem so happy to share.

Felicity is just contentedly observing her children’s glee. Donna has a deep smile on her face but asks the kids why they are as are buzzing slowly around. They don’t want Mr. Angry-pants to come back upstairs. John looks back at Felicity who still has the ‘I’m not budging’ look on her face.

The adults watch the three grab their life-size pillows with their first names written across. Nathan drops his near the new person and then falls on it in a splat motion.

Donna looks at the other two kids try to wrap their tiny arms around their huge pillows. They love these fluffy animals shaped cushions that they used it to sleep on the futon. Oliver noticed in his daily talks with the kids through Donna that they seemed uncomfortable laying on the floor with their usual pillows talking to him while drawing or playing with their toys. Of course, he would do his best to make them feel his presence without even being here.

John looks at the little girl that just moved closer to him. “Hello, what do you have there?”

Her smile is contagious, “legator” The other boy moves to where his brother is and then lets his pillow fall so he can lay on it. She holds out the huge pillow towards the man. John understanding she’s letting him touch her large green plush body cushion.

“Wow. This is soft.”

The girl nods. “Unkie Olivah zoo. See legators. Dey have biggy teeths.”

“Yes, they do.” He holds her pillow for her to take back. Instead she moves to climb up on his lap. Donna grabs the little girl’s pillow instead. “Thanks.” He tells Lillian’s grandmother.

Lillian now on the man’s lap she takes a good look at him. Felicity pipes up, “Lillian, say please, we do not decide to climb up on people without their permission.”

“Sowwie.” She says automatically but the adults can tell she truly isn’t. She’s a pioneer and the one who takes the big risks as her brothers stay on the floor ands watch her interactions with this huge man.

“It is nice to meet you Ms. Lillian.”
“Are youse gonna be me uncles too?” The boys take an interest in that line.

John makes sure to meet their mother’s eyes for a certain consent before he says wholeheartedly, “I would like that very much.” Seeing the girl pondering something it is nice to see one of her brothers asking what his name is. “Uncle John.” Saying his name slowly just in case.

“Like our friend Johnnie?” One of the boys say and he doesn’t know them apart so he doesn’t say their name but agrees to be called Johnny to.

The girl surprises him as she presses her little body onto his like a semi-hug. “Meez like you.”

“Okay kids. Its time for you to go to bed.” Their little whines don’t stop their mother. “Go with bubba.” Donna is already ushering them. “Your uncle John and I need to finish our talk because mamma is tired to. I’ll be in for night kisses.” Lillian moves to grab her pillow to bring with her to the bedroom. Its amusing to see them trying to walk with those giant things.

“Byes Uncals Johnnie.”

“Good night.” He gives them a satisfactory wave. Leaving the adults to talk about safety.

Telling the triplets this morning of their great adventure that awaits them. They are so excited and asked a million questions. Leaving them to come to work has been overwhelming. Sending a brief text to Oliver that the kids are onboard with the coming trip to his hometown. He hasn’t responded which makes sense with the time zone difference he is probably still asleep.

The excitement in coming into work since Oliver has been gone has totally dropped. Even with Ray Palmer on a European trip his pop ins to check on her and Leanna was one of the only highlights of her days here. Working for Ms. Kitness has been rough. The woman really is something of a force and being that Felicity is on her shit list, work life has been unbearable at times. Though Felicity is a trooper she won’t be unprofessional.

Placing another teaspoon of sugar in her coffee she hears a specific set of heels that is from a woman that is really out to get her. Somehow it has come onto Leanna’s understanding that Oliver left because Felicity said or did something that made him need to distance himself.

“Ms. Kitness, is there something I can do for you?” It is very rare that the woman enters this break area even if its on the executive floor. All the times she has brought those snacks especially aimed at Oliver; it was her assistant that would leave them in this room.

The woman stares at her actually looking at what Felicity is wearing. “No, not at this moment but that report is due on my desk by three.” She looks at the specific treats she made because she had extra ingredients and without Oliver to show her culinary skills, she wanted to clean out her pantry of empty calories. “You seem to not ever take one of my homemade goodies. You don’t look to skip meals so I take offense to this.”

“I… I don’t skip meals?” Felicity is taken back. “Ms. Kitness, I don’t see how this is a problem?”

“I see it as anti-social on your part.”
“No, I’m just weary of any goodies that may contain nuts. I’m severely allergic.”

“I don’t believe in food sensitivity. I think its all in the mind.”

“I wish that is how things worked, I wouldn’t need to carry an epi-pen with me. Nor would one of my kids who is like me.” Felicity is just flabbergasted in what else to say. Her now boss until her next assignment is really becoming intolerable. Leaving the company is becoming a blessing. She’ll need to pass HR before she goes home tonight. “I should get going to get the report done. Excuse me.”

She doesn’t stop when she hears the woman’s muttering on how Oliver was to nice to deal with the likes of her. Felicity says nothing as her time is coming to an end and she looks at the envelope holding her resignation papers.

Heading home from a frustrating day at work all she’ll like is kisses and hugs from her three angels. Maybe some wise words from her mother which will make this chaotic day feel better. She even forgot about John Diggle and his plans until she sees the man. A groan leaves her lips she really doesn’t want to deal with this. He meets her outside near her vehicle and they start to walk towards the apartment complex.

“Ms. Smoak.”

“Hi John, no need for formalities. Call me Felicity.” She can see he is about to call her by her last name again she tells him that he is the kids’ father’s best friend and they will be seeing a lot of each other that it be weird to have him call her anything else but by her first name.

“We can pack light and do some more packing this weekend and then after your employments ends, we can head to Starling.”

“Are you going to be here this whole time?”

“A few nights. I then have a few men trusted to protect you and the kids and a storage company ready to move your stuff next weekend.”

“I see, and all this planning was between you and Oliver?”

As he holds the door open for her, he answers her question. “No, Mr. Queen didn’t place any time restraints. It is my understanding that your employment will be coming to an end.”

“It is, once I give my notice and I was so overwhelmed with work I never passed the HR office before they left for the day.”

“I see. You’ve had one of those endless days.” They pass by Larry’s apartment when he opens his door and eyes them both shutting it firmly without any comment. Felicity can sense the amusement of the man beside her. She wonders if those two have met but doesn’t ask, she really doesn’t care and is more interested in the resolve of what Mr. Diggle is going to suggest on her family’s safety.
“Mommy’s home!”

John Diggle steps aside as the little tornado of three bodies are excitedly wrapping themselves on their mother.

“Mommy, unkie Olivah said we go see him.” Felicity smiles at her daughter’s excitement. Her middle child is just nodding enthusiastic. Its Nathan that continues what his sister started, “Yes, see him in the stars.”

“Starling City.” She sees them all nod. “That is where he lives.” She then glances at John who is taking in the scene. Donna is just cleaning up some of the disarray that the kids created once they dropped what they were doing to run towards their mother. “Uncle John is here to make sure everything is in place for our trip soon.”

That has the little ones now take a lot more interest in the man they met last night. Oliver breaks from his mother’s hold to actually hesitate at first but he looks back at his two siblings who are a lot more outgoing than him until he makes a leap of faith and moves onto the man’s orbit. “Up, please.”

John looks down at the little sandy blond-haired blue-eyed boy and kneels enough to encase the boy in his arms. Lifting the child whom seems to just relax knowing the newcomer is a friend of his favorite uncles. Donna’s mouth is stunned seeing that it is little Oliver whom is the one in the man’s grasp she would never in a million years think he would be the first to welcome anyone. The other two now surround John as their both talking a mile a minute. Just the little boy in his arms seems to be intrigued by his size.

“You must be Oliver, right?” The boy nods. His little fingers feel up the man’s biceps. John then settles the boy on his hip so he can bring them all up. He knows it will amaze all three kids. As he has them all in his grip, he is totally correct in assuming these three would love the raw show of his strength for their amusement.

As John holds these three happy kids to his chest. He is already seeing the impact that these three are without a doubt… not that there is one but these are his best friend’s kids. He is an uncle again. He considers Tommy’s beautiful baby girl his niece even before the tyke graced them all with her presence this year. Now Oliver surprises him.

The responsibility to protect this family is a lot more real now that he is here. The children just giggling in his arms as they say some absurd giant talk as if he is a superhero of some sort. He knows that he should be talking to their mother and be actively making some plans but these are the moments that astonishingly makes a family. Small fragments of time solidified as memories take shape as the kids and him bond in their unique ways. He already sees himself as their protector so having them exaggerate by saying he must be the strongest man ever. It only has him bark out a laugh or two. Uncle John will do anything to keep these smiles on their faces because he can’t wait to see them learn that Oliver Queen is really their dad.

Felicity is moving about the kitchen. She is glad her mother prepped the food as she starts to make short work of things. “John, you’re in for a special treat.”

“Oh, really?” He doesn’t mention that he was told she’s not much of a cooker.

“Yes, you may know of my lack-less talent in the kitchen but… recently I have discovered that I can make unburnt food.”
He’s in the middle of releasing the children when he chuckles. Not only are the kids a handful of sweetness it seems he can see why Oliver is so taken in. Their mother is pure sugar and spice.

“Well my daughter really has made the Smoak women proud. Edible foods and all.”

He looks to the older Smoak and hums in understanding. Whatever will be served he will eat; he just hopes it’s really truly edible.

After dinner and Felicity is glad, she didn’t poison her guest. John has been a delight to watch as he takes his time learning about each kid. It seems that because John knows Oliver the kids ask him so many questions about there connection. Donna looks at her daughter with a smile that means that somehow, she put the kids up to this. The Smoak women don’t know enough about Mr. John Diggle and having the kids being their cute selves in their investigation mode Felicity gives her mom a ‘thank you’ smile.

When the children leave the table to enjoy some television it leaves the adults to talk. Donna is partially listening as she’s cleaning the table.

“As you can see it will be a secure place for the kids and your mother while we start to transition your family to the big move.”

“My mother packed some of the kid’s clothes already and well I know those three can’t go anywhere without a few of their prized possessions plus those huge pillows Oliver sent them.”

“Understandable. I’ve noticed this place has two bedrooms. The kids are in one and you and your mother in the other?”

She looks at the entrance to each room. So much has changed since Oliver came into her life. For one, her daughter sleeps with her brothers and they now really get along. It is something else now that each one of the kids find themselves teased lightly and nothing but a few laughs is had. Oliver brought a sense of stability to the kids’ lives. They adore him and wish to see him more than just through a video lens. With this upcoming move they’ll get their wish.

“No, I sleep out here.” John looks at the futon he’s been avoiding sitting on. It looks like it has seen better days. “Don’t worry, it is not traveling with us. I doubt Oliver wants any of my raggedy furniture anyhow.”

“Don’t sell him short. If there are pieces you love the man will make room for it. Also, there is re-upholstery that can-do wonders.”

“Thank you, John! But let’s be real most of this stuff is junk.”

He isn’t going to argue with her there. He says swaying his head back towards the conversation at hand. “Tomorrow evening, I will be leaving back to Starling. You’ll meet the two men I have assigned to your family tonight. They are actually due to arrive to help bring your valuables to the new temporary residence.”

“This is just all so weird.”

“You’ll get accustomed to it. It will be strange at first no doubt but you’ll see the craziness soon enough and believe me you want your children as far from it as possible.” He sees her understanding
“Okay, let’s do this.” Felicity is up from her dining room chair and ready to get the kids and her mother to the new location.

Nathan is pulling his red dragon like suitcase another little gift from their father. The man is making sure the kids are a part of the whole moving experience. Felicity only knows of this development because her mom sent her pictures of the little suitcases that John brought with him this afternoon. Oliver’s little case looks like the world on wheels and seeing that her son thinks it is the coolest thing ever makes Felicity very happy. Each case holds two sets of clothes with one set of bed wear and some toys they can’t sleep without.

“Mommy.” Lilly’s voice chipper as she uses all her might to move her green turtle suitcase with her.

“I see you three are ready for an adventure.”

“Bubba says we sleep new beds.” He looks around their apartment, “Say byebye.”

“Yes, Nathan. We are moving. We say goodbye to this home.”

“How will uncles Olivah find us?” Of course, Oliver would point that out. Felicity looks to see John already bending down on one knee before the child.

“We call him when we get to the new place. This way he knows where you all are.” Oliver nods to his new favorite uncle. The boy is smitten with John. “Does anyone need me to help carry their super-duper luggage?” He knows he’ll be carrying them down but seeing the kids be super excited and showing they can handle it is amusing. He can’t wait for Serena and John Jr. to meet these three kiddos.

The place the Smoak family are placed is actually nice. All three kids enjoy scoping out the apartment they will reside in for a few days. The apartment next door houses the bodyguards. To her this is all just surreal. This is her life now. It is rapidly changing and she hopes that the kids are going to be truly okay and that somehow, they don’t lose themselves as she fears it will happen to her.

Felicity looks around the room she’ll be sleeping in. She hasn’t had a room for herself in such a long time. In a few days she hopes that she’ll lose this small privilege she has tonight because she really wants to fall asleep beside Oliver.

Finally pulling the covers down on her bed. The apartment is so quiet. She can’t even hear the motor of the fridge and it’s just so weird as she notices there is no fluorescent neon lights dancing shadows on the ceiling. She overheard John on the phone with Oliver telling him to have fun at a meeting he is having in Boston tomorrow. Her contact with Oliver is still very minimum but at least they get to hear each other’s voices. He spoke to the excited kids earlier and it helped that he told them to go to bed and sleep it will bring their journey to see him come around faster. He then wished them all a goodnight and she does think it be awhile until she hears his voice again until her cell phone alerts her to his call. Not expecting this she picks up. “Hi.”
“I had a feeling you’d still be up.”

“It’s weird. No fridge motor…”

“No neon lights flashing overhead.” He finishes for her.

“Exactly.” She can’t contain the smile on her face. “How are you?”

“I’m alright but I’ve been better. I miss you.” He let’s out a small sigh as he is trying to sleep also. Tomorrow he has a long meeting at a Queen Consolidated branch in Boston. He won’t tell Felicity because as much as he misses her. He will be leaving with his dad back to Starling to finish up with some investors. “Have you put in your resignation in yet?”

“No, I’m going to do that tomorrow.”

“You don’t have to continue working you can make it an immediate resignation.”

“Oliver, that would be unprofessional and besides I don’t have a job lined up in Starling. The two-week notice will at least give me a time frame to figure my career choices.”

“I still think…”

“Don’t! I’ll handle it on my end.” She doesn’t hear him answer her as he just changes the subject.

“John mentioned furniture, you can bring whatever you want. We can make it work.”

“I also told him that most is garbage maybe the kids’ beds?”

“I actually took care of that situation. I hope you don’t mind?”

“It’s your home. I…”

His voice deep and it holds an emotion to it that she listens to him tell her that it is their home now and he mentions that their place has been spruced up.

“Oliver, I know my mom has been talking to your mother, why? Is there something brewing I should know about.”

“Nothing bad, Donna is just getting a say in the remodel.”

“Oliver! You’re not wasting money on me and the kids? Slaps some beds down and we’ll be good. There is no reason to remodel.”

“Felicity, I’m not going to listen to your last ramble because you and the kids deserve a lot more than a few beds slapped down in a spare room. You guys are my life.”

“Oh.”

“Come on, this isn’t any new news. All that is left is for us to talk about specifics and from there I just want to live my life with you.”

She moves the pillow on her bed as a feeling of love grips around her heart and a part of her can’t believe it’s true. “It always sounds so foreign to my ears.”

“Believe me I know. I need to remind myself that you exist at times.” He can’t wait to see her. His heart doesn’t believe his head as he tells himself that soon they’ll be reunited. “We should get some
sleep. Goodnight Felicity sweet dreams.”

“Goodnight Oliver, we’ll talk soon.”

“Yes, we will.” They’re still lingering before Oliver says night one more time and hangs up.

Making herself comfortable she allows her mind to drift. Not that she could stop her mind from drifting but with the immediate silence she can hear her thoughts.

The stories she’s heard about the Queens may be embellished but even so they are taken from some truths. She doesn’t know how they’ll actually welcome the triplets, her mother, and of course herself who been keeping the kids from their father and his family.

She thought she had time. Time to be the one to tell him the truth and not have him find out by circumstances out of her control. The moment he found out she was the girl he seemed to never remember she should have come clean. It didn’t just work out that way. Telling him at that point in time it just didn’t sit right with her. Maybe because she fell in love with him that those moments of truth would come off as malice on her part.

She thinks of how the past between them went. There truly was a moment before his boating incident that she had the courage to go and tell him but then the news that he was potentially in a long-lasting relationship it hindered her from ruining his life. Even though her life with the kids were cemented. She had just found out she was carrying multiples. A shock. A shock she decided to burden alone. It doesn’t matter if it makes no sense. At that time, it did to her. She can’t take back her past decisions so it is what it is. She just hopes that the elder Queens won’t use that against her for as long as she is with their son.

Soon they’ll talk. He wants a sit down clean the air conversation. One that has been brewing between them for a long time. Tomorrow she’ll put in her resignation.

Therefore, it’s a curve ball to her in what happens next. Walking into Palmer Tech from waking up to three cheery kids wanting their morning kisses as they are jumping on a firm mattress. Asking for their favorite breakfast cereal. Life of a mom is never done as she’s rolling off the bed and having a good laugh at their happiness. Whatever Ms. Kitness throws at her today it will never overshadow the feeling she has this morning as her family means the world to her.

Scanning her I.D. badge, the light doesn’t turn green to allow her to pass and she looks at her badge in confusion. She sees one of the regular security guards she waves at come and open the door.

“Hi Phil, my badge isn’t working.”

“Hmm. Let me check.” She waiting on the side as she sees her coworkers pass bye and wish her a good morning as she does the same. “It says you’ve been terminated.”

“What?”

“I’m sorry, Ms. Smoak but I need the badge back.”
“They’re letting me go? But no one said anything? Are you sure can you check with Human Resources?”

She takes a seat. She can’t fathom why and being that John Diggle dropped her off himself so she doesn’t even have a vehicle. It takes forty minutes before she is summoned in by a H.R. associate and is told that her dealings with Mr. Queen were inappropriate and he asked for her to be let go.

Leaving the building she is fuming mad and embarrassed how can Oliver do this? He is so going to hear a handful. She takes a bus to the station in Providence and finds a bus to Boston. Her anger rising and as she’s watching the scenery heading to where the man is. The seething rage is growing. He has no right to play with her livelihood this way. No right at all.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading.
A hot-headed Felicity marches to QC-Boston branch to give Oliver a piece of her mind.

Hi there, Hope you like tonight's update, I missed the Saturday deadline again... but it is Wednesday another marked update if all fails.

Thanks for your patience. As always grammar is all mine. Thanks for reading.

Continuation from chapter 15…

Janet sits Felicity down. She can sense the younger woman that is seated is confused. Looking over her records since Phil got a hold of her this morning saying that a badge of a current employee came up with a code that equated to being terminated.

A note stands out. One of the higher ups with counsel of an esteemed colleague… the name Oliver Queen pops on her screen within the notes provided. Felicity Smoak has shown to be rude, condescending, have a lack of respect for authority.

“Ms. Smoak. Do you know why you have been let go?”

“No, that is why I am asking.”

“My notes address that you were articulated this situation yesterday. That Mr. Queen has found that your unreasonable attitude, quick judgement…”

“Say what? Oliver wouldn’t say that. The man and I work well together. This is just crazy.”

“Ms. Smoak I was talking. It seems that you may need some valuable lessons on how to take constructive criticism. For beginners…” The woman keeps talking and each new sentence is a jab to Felicity’s professionalism. The small quotes sound of things Oliver has critiqued about her and the others in a team setting but they were always centered on soundboard ideas that they’d rapidly say to get their creative juices flowing. None of this makes sense but everything points to Oliver just saying that she’s not a right corporate fit. After what seems like a long whiplash meeting, Felicity leaves feeling humiliated.
Chapter 16 QC-Boston Subsidiary

Stepping out of South Station in Boston she begins her walk to Queen Consolidated subsidiary in the city. Oliver Queen is there today and he’s about to get an earful of ‘who does he think he is’ with her loud voice. Each mile propelling her closer should have taken some of the anger away but instead the pain of him choosing once again how her life will go has added a fervent rage.

Her life has taken circles around her dreams. He’s lived his life free of disruptions of his actions while she’s been tending to three little humans. Deep inside she knows that it was her call. She didn’t share the burden so she can’t place any blame on his shoulders. It still doesn’t take the emotions of all the ‘what ifs’ she silently screamed to herself. When it came down to the most important reasons if he should have been a part of their lives, she feared the unknown. She has been a mother for some time placing three angels above any past dreams. If any of the tabloids were right, he wasn’t ready. It doesn’t matter if he’d learn… because a piece of her, a vindictive piece of a girl who felt shamed didn’t want him near newborns that would have been seen as nothing but mistakes.

For years, all the sacrifices she’s had to deal with had meaning and a calming effect on her because all it would take to calm down is the three-little pairs of angelic eyes that always hold so much trust in her.
So, in the long run in all this she can’t fault him for not knowing but she can hold a grudge that his actions had the possibility of this outcome. Those moments when she realized right on that spot in a hallway in a school that he didn’t care about her. That the laughs of his peers of her leaving stunned and in tears places the truth of how much a pregnancy would only be an inconvenience to a dumb arrogant party boy.

What is getting her upset now is how easily he thinks he can add his charm to diffuse a situation. She’s seen it first hand and she knows of a handful of times he’s even used it on her. Damn his dimples, that soft smile that melts her heart. Damn his whole face for brightening up her day when he’d show up and cook for them, damn his sweetness with the kids.

Ah, she’s distressed because she knows that moment of trying to yell at him, he’ll give her that puppy look and she’ll deflate and it angers her so that he can do that and she’ll be putty in his hands. She just wishes that she had something over him. Made him feel weak in the knees for her but the man is just so accustomed to girls swooning over him that she realizes she’ll always be that second fiddle to it all.

The hurt, anger, its all maddening to her. The lack of conversation between them until recently because she put her foot down has been simmering on some talk they need to still have. Losing her job just made it all more real that she’s now truly defenseless and basically not sure what in store for her.

On her way here, she dials his number and it irks her further that it goes straight to voicemail. Yes, she knows he is here on business but the unfiltered anger in her doesn’t appreciate being just a missed call. It just adds another grip to how she’s feeling. Like how meeting John Diggle, she may like the man, he is firm to his beliefs and talks to her as an equal but sending him as his replacement might be fine in his head to her it is an insult. Another checkmark against him. Oliver deciding what she needs without her counsel is unacceptable even if it is really what’s best for the situation. Unilateral doing things is not going to please her when she’s done all the decision making with her mother’s guidance. Oh, she can feel the anger seething just under her skin. The man is about to get schooled.

Her brisk strides stop as she looks upon the building’s entrance. The clear blue sign engraved upon the mirrored glass with a simple QC with the complete name spelled out just underneath. She is here with no solid plan. Not thinking of how to get passed security until this very moment. She follows two businessmen until the building acting as if she is a part of the now trio coming into the open floorplan lobby. The men veer towards the elevators and she follows along. She is almost able to get into the elevator until she hears a stern man’s voice.

“Miss. You didn’t badge in.”

She turns to look at the young security guard and apologizes as she heads to where the badge reader device mocks her knowing quite well, she doesn’t have a badge. Going through a bag and feigning she must have forgotten it. The man doesn’t look so convinced.

“I’ve been working with Mr. Queen at Palmer Tech and am supposed to meet him here.”

“Visitor's log is at the counter.” He points. “You’ll need to see Rachel.”

“Oh, okay. Thank you.” He doesn’t leave her side now that he knows she doesn’t belong here. He speaks to Rachel about seeing if this lady has an appointment with Mr. Queen.

“Hi, I’m here to see Oliver Queen.”
"Name?"

"Felicity Smoak."

The woman types looking at the open schedule of Mr. Queen. "You are not on the roster. I’m sorry you’ll need to make an appointment."

Felicity nods to the woman and asks, "Can you check with him? If he knows I’m here he’d be sure to send me up."

"I’m sorry, that is not protocol. Without an appointment…"

"Listen, I’m sorry Rachel, I know this is most unorthodox but I really need to see Oliver, I mean Mr. Queen."

Rachel at hearing how formal the blonde woman is before her she knows that she could be a stalker. "I’m sorry, Miss…"

"Smoak, Felicity… Smoak."

"You can make an appointment and if approved the next time he’s in town you may see him."

Felicity just looks at the woman who isn’t going to let her in. "No, its fine. I’ll be talking to him soon enough." Felicity turns to leave. The whole trip is a bust. She just doesn’t understand why Oliver had a hand in getting her fired at Palmer. She is upset. That was a jerky thing to do. He doesn’t understand the whole living from paycheck to paycheck but she does.

A few more steps towards the exit she stops and turns around heading back to where Rachel is now seated and reading what looks to be a high fashion magazine. The security guard goes to do his round she supposes as he expects that she won’t be a hassle.

"Excuse me, Rachel?"

The woman looks at her again. "Yes."

"How does one apply here at QC?"

"I thought Jerry said you worked at Palmer?"

"I do. While I am here, I want to know what QC can offer me that Palmer can’t." She pulls out her badge she actually kept as she stormed off angrily with the security guard calling out to her from Palmer Tech that wasn’t confiscated to prove her point.

"A résumé sent to HR for starters I don’t know what available jobs there are."

"How is the atmosphere here?"

Rachael just shrugs, "I guess like any other corporate place."

"How often does someone like Oliver Queen make an appearance here?"

The woman now sizes Felicity. "I’m not at liberty to say." Finally, the woman a little miffed at Felicity’s consistent intrusion, "Though I doubt he’d take time away from his busy schedule to talk to you."

"Actually, I know he is busy. My two calls have gone to voicemail.” Felicity sighs loudly. She’s
about to spill her story because she can’t help herself and this poor woman will get an earful. “He is so frustrating. The man has me move to a better secure place and yes John is nice but he isn’t Oliver and now I left work… actually that’s the thing… Oliver has some explaining to do. I told him I’d handle it but no, no. What does he do? He goes over my head. The man is insufferable.” Felicity ends her long-winded babble by saying, “I just want to talk to him.”

“Felicity? Right?” Felicity should see where this is going but she’s lost in thought. “If you leave now, I won’t call for security.”

“After five years you’d think I would have learned something. What do I do? I welcome him into my life. Isn’t that insane? The man can worm himself back so easily.” Felicity plops herself on the available chair as she is so distraught with herself. “I shack up with him and you know what happens? He leaves me.” Shaking her head. “Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. Argh! I am really that pathetic girl. The biggest fool on the planet!” Felicity having a mini-rant with herself she doesn’t notice a man talking to Rachel and then heading her way.

“Ms. Smoak?” that seems to get her attention.

“Oh, yea, I need to leave.” She stands up. “I’m going.”

“Actually, I’m here to take you upstairs.” He then speaks to Rachel about securing her an I.D. badge after she gets off the phone. Felicity just watches this man calmly wait for her to get her bearings as he is maneuvering the process of getting her access to hopeful see Oliver. “Thanks Rachel.” He hands her a badge. “I’m Trevor by the way, please follow me.”

“Okay, thank you. Where are you taking me?” The man’s eyes are on the arrows watching to see when they’ll board and soon as he does that the elevator is already opening its doors for them to enter.

“Mr. Diggle requested that I take you upstairs to see his client.”

“You mean, Mr. Queen.” The man says nothing and presses the floor button. Then continues to fix his eyes on the floor numbers. “John called for what? I don’t need a babysitter.” She texted John that she was on a bus to chew out Oliver. No other texts were sent. Now this man is her babysitter. Sole reason of being here in Boston is to give Oliver an earful and lets the dice fall as they may. If he can’t respect her than maybe they don’t belong moving in together. The silence in the elevator is getting to her. “Shouldn’t you have stayed at your post protecting the actual client?”

He finally looks at the petite blonde. “My orders are to escort you and make sure you arrive safely.”

“I can manage getting into an elevator all by my lonesome, all I needed is a floor number and presto I let the moving contraption bring me upstairs.”

“Well Ms. Smoak, I am your paid babysitter. John Diggle handpicked me three days ago. Three days ago, your name was put on a safeguard list.”

“What? Why?”

“My job isn’t to question my employer.”

“What? That is insane. You literally put your life at risk. You should have loads of questions. Like do you have good dental insurance? That’s like a no brainer.”

He glares at the woman and his lips are smacked together and finally he answers her as they reach their designated floor. “I had to meet with Mr. Queen and get his final approval before heading down
to Providence.”

“Oh.”

“Well, I suppose you must be a firecracker. At least the job won’t be boring.” He waves his hand in a gesture for her to exit the elevator.

“You’re not Oliver’s bodyguard?”

“No. I am yours.”

“Shit! These idle rich people are insane. I don’t need protection.”

The man chuckles. If this woman heard the concerns of his employers especially the man, she is heading up to see she would be blushing. The concern for her safety spoken of astronomical importance.

He shows her into a comfortable room where there are some comfy chairs. “The meeting should be over soon. He doesn’t know you are here.”

“What? How did you…”

“I received a call to keep an eye out for you. As it happens you were about to be escorted out of the building. What are you doing in Boston? If I may ask?”

“I was fired from my job and I wanted to yell at Oliver.” She sees the disbelief in the man’s face. “Hey, I liked my job. He had no right.”

“I don’t believe he knows of you being terminated at Palmer Tech. He would have mentioned it.”

“No, he had to be the reason. It makes no sense otherwise.”

“Well someone there had a grudge. Hmm… maybe I will need to keep a close eye on you.”

“I have three kids and I don’t overshadow their every move.”

“When you are in public, it will be my job.”

“There is no way around it?”

“You have met my boss? What do you think?”

“I think he may not be a happy camper that I escaped his grasp.”

The man smiles. “You’d be right. He believed you were at Palmer Tech working.”

“I was until HR let me go. Work disturbance… something of those lines.”

“I am assured Mr. Queen does not know of your termination at Palmer.”

She gives him a once over and groans. “Thanks a lot.”

“What?” He’s confused.

“I had this raging fire in me to yell at the man now I’ll have nothing.”

Trevor shaking his head laughs. “I may have saved him.”
“That went well. We can move the final assembly for the new prototype up a few months. We’ll have to see if everything else will fall amongst that route.”

“I don’t so a problem with that dad. Our estimate is rather conservative so any lag time…” He stops when he sees Felicity from the corner of his eye animatedly talking to the man that is assigned as her bodyguard. “Dad, can you give me a moment.”

“Sure.” Robert looks at where his son’s focus has turned too. Seeing the bodyguard his son had a lengthy discussion with. “I’ll be at my office.”

“Okay, thanks dad.” He says as he’s already on the move towards Trevor who sees him but Felicity’s back is to him. He is close enough to hear the last question Felicity rambles on about with interest as she is asking the man if he has taken a bullet and if it hurt.

Trevor nudges Felicity to guise over her shoulder. “Mr. Queen, I’ll leave you two to talk.” The man leaves them and goes stands a few feet from an open conference room. He watches the door shut so those two can have some privacy.

“Oliver. I…”

“What are you doing here?”

“Good to see you too.”

He moans. “I didn’t mean it like that. Why aren’t you…”

“I got fired today.”


“Apparently I was tremendous rude to my superior.”

“Felicity, believe me I had nothing to do with this.”

“Trevor, assured me of that. I had all this anger and I was so going to lay into you but now I just feel stupid.” She looks at her feet. “I know we’re still in that in-between stage.”

“In-between?”

“You call it wooing I call it processing life altering information. You’re still pissed with me. I understand it. I really do. I should go.”

“What?” He has those confused baby blues glancing onto her own and she just wishes they were okay. “I’m not as mad as you think.” He is standing before her and he does something he’s held back on many occasions as he moves a lose strand of her hair to the side. “I’ve just been using the time away to make some adjustments.”

“Should I be worried?” This wooing thing is strange to her. She understands the concept but it being applied towards her is just ludicrous. She never felt special enough that anyone would want to make
her their focal point.

“Oh, Felicity, you’re perfect. So perfect for me. I’m the lucky one in all of this.” Her eyes are shut in embarrassment as she mumbles that she said those words out loud, didn’t she? It’s the ramble that she isn’t perfect that has him take one of his hands and holds her chin up waiting for her to finally look at him with those inquisitive eyes he loves so much. “Hey where is this self-doubt coming from?”

“It’s always been there.”

He doesn’t respond verbally not when seeing her sooner than expected has his heartrate already speeding up and the need to feel her lips is all consuming. His places his other hand on her lovely face that he has dreamed about the last few days. Slowly descending waiting for any sign, she doesn’t want this before his lips connect with hers.

Felicity melts into his touch. The moment his fingers cradle her head she knows she wants his lips to descend towards hers. Feel those amazing lips again after that one night. She moans knowing she can live her whole life content. Feeling those lips that are like little pillow mountains.

“Pillow mountains?” His words soft but there is an edge of humor there.

“I said that out loud?” His response is by a way of letting her description of his lips answer that outspoken question. She can’t help but let go of a hum afterwards.

They stand in each other’s embrace. Not letting the reason of separation haunt them. They’ll have to eventually talk. Just right now both don’t want this spell to be over.

His hands slip fully from her face as he takes her in. She appears tired. He wonders if it’s because of him or the little ones at home. He then surprises her with words about self-doubt. “To me you take my doubts away, I hope to do the same for you one day.”

“You doubt yourself?”

He gives her a small peck to the lips as he chooses his words carefully because if just a fraction of her is in deep like him, he knows they’ll hold weight. “I’ve been rummaging through life until I met you.” He keeps his eyes on hers to give her the depth of his emotions. “Felicity, I’ve seen your strength every single day since I’ve met you and make no mistake, I’ve craved you ever since.”

It’s her turn to initiate a lip lock moment. Her arms wrap around his neck bringing him even closer. She sees a shadow by the door and it brings her back down to earth. “I know we have a lot to talk about but I’m so happy right now. You should probably be glad I met Trevor before I saw you.”

He turns to looks at the large frame silhouette by the frosted glass door. “Why?”

“I doubt we would be kissing when I was still reeling with how unsatisfied I was with the whole H.R. condemning speech I got.”

“That makes no sense. I never criticized anyone from the group. I actually praised everyone telling Ray how I highly regarded the Palmer team.”

“I guess I leave it to mystery. I’ll need to look for a job but I knew that was to happen anyhow. I guess we can move in quicker now huh?”

“Well that is the upside. The penthouse will be complete by week’s end.”

“How much work did you put in?”
“Made it a safe haven for three four-year-olds. Believe me my mother started pointing out disasters in the making and she was right which between us is irritating but she was right.”

“Like?”

“The staircase now has a solid glass banister.” Seeing her expression, “It was free standing with some guardrails before. Totally dangerous for kids.”

“Are you okay with all this?”

“Huh?”

“It seems you’re changing a lot for us and…”

“They’re our children. I doubt protecting them is a big gesture when it something that any sane parent would do.”

“But…”

“Felicity, when I wrote they are my life, it wasn’t empty words. You and your mother included.” He gets to be rewarded by a smile he’s only been close enough to envision in his dreams. Reality is so much better. “I love your smile.”

Oliver’s phone rings and he takes it from his pocket and puts it on speaker. “Hey Dig, Felicity and I are reacquainted.”

“I see.” There is a small pause and a grave voice comes back on the line. “Felicity, you and I will have a much-needed talk.”

“Yea, I think I’m in for a lot of those lately.”

Oliver shakes his head at her. “Sorry, John, I’ll see that Trevor sticks to my girl.”

“You do that. That is why we brought him aboard. Okay I have to get back to the game. Nathan says it’s my turn. Don’t worry about the kids they are doing great so far. Even if I think Oliver is cheating that boy doesn’t count cards, does he?”

Felicity hums her lips together and it makes Oliver answer, “Not that I know of. But he is a lot of his mother’s child.”

“Hey now!”

“Alright. I talk to you two later.” Oliver and Felicity say their goodbyes.

“You might have to fight John for favorite uncle if he keeps entertaining them.”

Oliver has a short moment where he isn’t happy about that until he truly realizes he will mean a lot more to the kids. “Well I guess I’ll have to battle it out until my birthday. Then I’ll get three of the bestest gifts ever. What else could I ever desire?” She winks at him and its cute because her whole face squishes as she tries to blink one eye and it makes him laugh. “Alright I think its time you meet my father.”

“Your dad is here?”
After a door knock and being asked in. Oliver takes a few seconds to inhale and let go as he exhales.

“Dad, can I bother you for a few minutes?”

Robert Queen glances at his son. “Of course.” He watches his son step out onto the hallways to actually invite a woman into his office.

“Dad, this is Felicity Smoak. Felicity, this is my father, Robert Queen.” Robert in hearing the woman’s name is out of his sit and happily to fully be introduced to a woman who will be quite a main staple in his son’s life.

“Mr. Queen, it is nice to finally meet you. I once was due to meet you with Walter Steele and…”

“Carlton Andrews. Yes, I do remember. You let our proposal to hire down.”

“It wasn’t the right time. I still had a year left of school. Any kind of internship with three kids was just not doable.”

“Three beautiful kids I hear about from this one. I cannot wait to be introduced.”

Even though his dad is in the room he slides her into his arms. “Yep.” Pecking her lips. She lets a surprised ‘EEP’ not expecting the man to show such public display of affection in front of one of his parents. “If Felicity here is okay with it. I am planning around my birthday.”

Felicity gives him a knowing look, the kids met him near their birthday and she has heard them whisper that Oliver Queen is the best gift ever. The man is so like his kids if not the reverse that holds true.

“I’m okay with it. It’ll be like they’re the best gift one could ever want. Though how you’ll keep your mother from meeting them the moment they come to Starling?”

Oliver a little hesitate but he needs to tell the truth as he contemplates Felicity for a reaction. “My mom will probably want to meet them the moment they’re in Starling. I don’t know if the kids have said…”

“It’s okay, the kids have met her plenty of times through video chatting through my mom.”

“Oh, really?” Oliver is surprised. Now it makes sense as his mother would finagle something into the kids’ room about how they’ll love it and its on course with their personalities. He thought she was full of… well full of something he rather not say about his mother.

Felicity looks between the two Queen men before she answers Oliver, “I think our moms may have bonded.”

Robert is holding a laugh at his son’s very expressional face. “Well unlike Moira. I can’t wait to meet and boast about my grandchildren. She’s been so ecstatically happy. Telling me about each one’s little characteristic.”

“Sorry dad.”

“It’s okay. I intend to spoil them so both of you are aware to just take a backseat to all the bonding that will be happening.” Robert is enjoying the gasps that these two are showing. They’ll need to
create a united front to create boundaries but he isn’t going to say a word until he has his own
collection with these munchkins, he hears his wife go on and on about. Oliver brings his girl close
to him again as he kisses her cheek.

“I am surprised that you came up and Oliver never said a word.”

Patting Oliver to let her go. She looks at the older man. “Oh, I surprised him too.”

“She came to yell at me over a misunderstanding.”

Robert already making himself comfy back in his chair allowing the two the other seats in the room.
“I see you will keep my son on his toes. You will be joining us for dinner?”

“I…” she really doesn’t want to intrude but more importantly be on any gossip radar. She is hoping
to keep a low profile. Her relationship with Oliver is so new and well she doesn’t want the kids
under any limelight.

Oliver can already put the pieces of the puzzle together. “Felicity and I aren’t going to broadcast our
relationship.”

“I agree you both have too much at stake, I don’t want to see my grandchildren being scrutinized
either. It will be Johnson and his wife and Marilynn and our personal assistants.” The older man
holds his serene smile at the younger woman in the room. “You haven’t met Trish, Oliver’s assistant
in Starling’s offices she follows him everywhere and the one time she doesn’t he finds love.”

“Dad!”

“Oliver has mentioned Trish on occasion. She did such a good job settling up the zoo festivities. I
feel like I need to thank her personally.” Oliver’s is quickly up and holding out a hand to his girl.

“So, it is settled, dinner it is.”

“Fine dad, sounds fine.” One of Oliver’s hand lands on her lower back as he leads her out of his
dad’s office. Just as they are a few feet Felicity freezes in the hallway.

“Oliver, I can’t go. This is all I brought.” She points at her wardrobe.

“I guess you’ll be meeting Trish ahead of schedule.”

“Thank you for doing this. I doubt it is a part of your job description.”

“Mrs. Queen hired me shortly after her son…” She stops she doesn’t know if speaking about
Oliver’s past is appropriate.

“Since he was rescued? He said it was tough time but the man brushes it off like it is nothing.”

“He speaks highly of you, when he said he needed to make it up to you and the kids I would have
never in my wildest imagination think those kids would be his.” Trish has a bright smile on her face
now, “Not that seeing him with kids is irregular he loves Serena and Little John. Just the man never
really went out of the way to have a decent relationship.” Hearing Felicity’s little groan. “Between you and I, the tabloids of his sexual exploits are highly unlikely. Right now, he is supposedly seeing an heiress, a model, and that one actress that is anticipated to sweep the awards this season.”

“Wow, he gets around.” Felicity jokes.

“Oh, if they knew he was hanging out with his own kids and off the market because at this stage you and him are the real deal.”

“It is too early to speculate that.”

“I truly don’t want to embarrass you but if all he says is true. Which I doubt he would lie. He sees all the little pieces of you in each child as the most endearing things ever.”

“Oh!” Felicity is wide-eyed that a lot of information. “He really said all that? He can see me in our children?”

Trish chuckles at how the woman she knows she will be seeing a lot of in her future is bewildered. “My girlfriend has better taste than me in formal wear so when we are shopping for a dress she’ll have to come along. She’ll try to give your man a heartache with how deliciously sinful you’ll be once she is done with you.”

“I don’t think that is possible.”

“Say what? You have beautiful skin, gorgeous eyes, and a figure eight body.” Trish raises her hand, “A little more padding never hurt anyone. You just need the right stylist which I am telling you my girl can make you feel like a Queen.” She winks.

“Thanks Trish. All this is just a lot.”

“Well if Oliver has fallen for you. You my dear must be a peach and I am going to see that Oliver never has to worry about you in this case. I haven’t nor shall I try to ever let that man down. Now let’s see what attire for this dinner shall be.”
Chapter Summary

Through Robert Queen's eyes we see Oliver and Felicity relationship. Leanna Kitness makes her appearance.

Chapter Notes

I know overdue on updating. I can only apology. I want to promise but I try to have the next one done by Saturday because I'll be yet again celebrating someone birthday this weekend. My little brother is a non-Hodgkin's lymphoma survivor for a few years now so every birthday is super special. While my mom is doing well with maintenance therapy for her own cancer multiple myeloma. I just hope everyone is fairing well... we all deserve to celebrate something special. Thank you guys for reading.

Continuation from chapter 16…

“Not that it is my business. You can tell me to shut it. I’d be okay with that.”

“Trish?” Felicity chuckling softly, “Just ask.”

“You weren’t scheduled to come.” She emphasis the last word and holds a chuckle. “Wait maybe that is why you’re here, you miss your man. I can understand that now completely. Right?”

Felicity looks at Trish wide-eyed she didn’t come up here for some loving, it was actually the opposite. It is Trevor’s cough as he is making believe he has been reading the same page for the last ten minutes that has both ladies turn to him.

When he doesn’t say a word Trish continues, “I know I can never get enough of Steph she just does me in every time.” Trish then starts to talk about her girl’s perfect body parts and that makes Trevor cough out loud again. “Okay, what Trevor? Did you need a glass of water?”

“No, just can we go back to the PG-13 moments before you decided how you like to dine please?”

Trish looks frazzled at the man then looks at Felicity who is just looking at the same pair of skirts she’s deciding to get. “Oh shit, sorry Felicity, I may be way to forward at times. Thanks Trevor you could have said something earlier!”

Felicity looks between the two as the familiarity of how both Trevor and Trish seem to really know each other. “You two have worked together before?”

Trevor laughs. “No. She’s… She’s actually my cousin.”

That has Trish just give him unimpressed look but it’s enough to get her back on target. “Right we need to get you dressed to the nines.” Picking the skirt of the night and all the matching accessories they are ready to move it along.
Chapter 17 QC- Chattiness

Robert Queen walking beside his son as they have entered the building to head to the restaurant. Taking an elevator. The tension radiating from Oliver is easily noticeable as Robert decides to make his son not worry so much, “She’ll be here. Doubt your assistant will kidnap her for herself.” Robert jests, “Isn’t that why you hired Trevor?”

“Those two are actually related. I wouldn’t put it past Trish to try though.” Robert wants to laugh but he doesn’t know if his joke is a possibility. By the way his father inhaled, Oliver’s head turns slightly so his dad can now see him fully. “Dad, I’m not worried about Trish. Seeing Felicity a few hours ago and I realize I’m not comfortable not knowing where she is.”

“You haven’t seen her in days.”

“I know that but I know her routine so I always felt connected.”

“Well I understand your concern. It will be a media frenzy.” Robert shrugs his shoulders when his son gives him that concerned look. “You’ve been in the limelight for so long. Even shooting guest spots in movies and those few shows your mother had made me watch.”

“I don’t think Felicity will adore the limelight.” They reach their intended floor and exit still in full conversation before walking to see the hostess.

“I think you’re right. She came across as very down-to-earth.” He finishes before he starts to talk to
the hostess. “I really like her.”

Trevor takes a short leave as the make-up artist is doing her magic on his client in a very secure location. When he returns with the coffee requested his jaw drops. “Wow!”

Felicity turns to look at her bodyguard.

Trish just snaps her fingers in his face, “Of course, wow. She’s holds this graceful beauty. Just some tweaking she becomes the embodiment of beauty.”

Felicity is looking at Trish likes she crazy but the woman isn’t going to take any negativity from her boss’s girl. Straightening Felicity sitting on the beauty chair to face the giant mirror. Taking a look, she is happily surprised. The hairdresser and make-up artist has transformed her into someone else. Standing up to take in the whole effect she hopes Oliver will like.

“Trevor, you can grab your jaw off the floor now.” Trish teases her growling cousin.

“Why can’t you ever behave?”

She makes a pfft sound, “Stop making it easy and I will.” Trish than places her attention solely back on Felicity who finds herself being comfortable in their presence. “Well? What do you think?”

“I… I love how my eyes pop.”

“Hmmm. Turn around slowly and let me tell you how visually pleasing the whole package is.” Felicity chuckles but does as Trish tells her. “You look so good in fitted clothes. Soft curves that are accentuated. Mmm… You’re going to knock Oliver’s socks off.” Seeing Felicity shake her head in disbelief. “Really, clothes off the rack does you no justice.” When the stylists join in agreeing with Trish, Felicity looks at herself again and in that moment she feels radiant.

“Miss. Kitness, how is your father? George and I are due for a round of golf.”

“Mr. Queen! He’s well, he’s been enjoying his time in Buenos Aires.”

“I see, he loves traveling amongst some rough seas waters.” Robert sees his son visibly wince at the subject. “When will he be passing the Sea of Hoces?”

“My father and his crew won’t being doing The Drake Passage for another week or so.”

“That must have your mother on edge. Poor Elizabeth.”

“That is why he didn’t take the sailboat; my mother forbids it.”
“So, he took the lovely Esmeralda, a truly beautiful yacht.”

“What brings you to Boston? I came up for a fashion show of one of the college events I’ve sponsored.”

“Business. My son.” He glances at Oliver looking at the clock. “Oliver, here is not to fond of conversations revolving ships.”

Oliver shrugs he isn’t really inclined to be deep with his answer, “I just don’t like boats.”

“Oh, Oliver. You are so silly. One must let go of the past if one will want to claim the present not to mention being held back of a promising future.”

Oliver just gives her a condescending smile. She can really be something. The group she’s with are urging that they have places to be and that gets Leanna to say her goodbyes.

Felicity is seated on a lounge bench at the front hallway of the grand hotel. They’ll be going up to the exclusive restaurant once Trish finishes up with a business call. It leaves Trevor standing just a foot from her left as he watches patrons enter and leave the building.

“I have no idea how she can multi-task just using her phone and that ancient tablet. It must be exhausting.”

“Not that she’ll admit anything but she’s hummed about being exhausted by day’s end she wishes she knew someone that is actually really good in technology. Make her life easier.”

“Really?”

“Yea, but you didn’t hear it from me.”

“You’re too much.” A smirk forms on her face, “A bodyguard afraid of a whirlwind petite brunette.”

He gives her a sideways glance, “Really? Bet people underestimate you too?”

Felicity bites her lips. This man seems to get her because he sees something of his cousin in her. Standing up to stretch her legs. She’s noticed the lingering stares by some men that seem to appreciate her physique. It is kind of freaking her out somewhat. Even some ladies have given her some notice she doesn’t know if it’s positive but she isn’t going to dwell on it at the moment. She’s nervously excited about seeing Oliver.

What she never expected is the elevator to open up and that her eyes would meet with her former boss. A group of five ladies which includes Leanna Kitness exit and as soon as Leanna sees Felicity the smile on her face drops suddenly replaced with a grim line.

It is that moment that Felicity can tell that this woman had something to do with getting her fired.

Felicity is standing firm now. The excitement to see Oliver put on the backburner. This woman has not only been rude but truly condescending. There was never a need to act the way she did. If Oliver had no interest in Ms. Kitness it wasn’t because Felicity flaunted her attraction towards the man. She
Felicity is the first to speak biting back any ill will towards this woman, “Leanna, how nice to see you.”

Leanna looks at her short-term employee. She is hesitant for a second as she notices that Felicity looks confident and actually breath-taking. “Felicity, what brings you up to Boston?”

Though she can’t help keep the snark off her voice, “Oh, you know… Being that I became jobless a few hours ago.” Wondering if Robert and Oliver Queen are upstairs already. “Being somehow H.R. thinks Oliver is irate with me. It’s not like you didn’t know of a friendship between him and I existed.”

“I saw it more as a one-sided amity.” Leanna looks her up and down, “Did you come here to gravel at his feet? I do say you clean up better than I thought but you’ll always be that outsider.” A small pause, “I just spoke with him and he’s too busy for the likes of you.”

Felicity doesn’t rise to the bait but does calmly state, “You got me fired out of malice.” Felicity just sighs, “I have been nothing but courteous to your snobby ways.” Felicity looks directly at the woman that seemly got her fired knowing full well that this woman fingernails scratched her man’s neck. The bashful moment when Oliver actually told her of the limo ride. His open honesty soothing any lingering doubts of his womanizing past. This woman so full of herself, being the elitist she has shown to be just having to be vindictive and so very petty that Felicity has no problem saying, “Any relationship you zing through that mind of yours that is Oliver related let me tell you that my friendship with him outweighs the simplest of thoughts. You don’t know him.”

That got another one of her friends to voice out, “And what? You do?” Leanna smirks as her friend speak on her behalf.

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“That common knowledge, everyone knows his best friend Tommy had a sweet little girl.”

One of the four girls whisper the correction. “I think she’s talking about his other friend John something.”

“His name is John Diggle and he is a sweet, well-spoken intimating man.” She pauses, “He may be irrelevant to you because us working class folks are beneath your shoes.”

“You make it sound like you know him too. Which is absurd because you’re just…”

“A vastly educated, hardworking proud mother of three. You don’t have anything on me. The only reason I’m on your radar is how you seem to think of Oliver as a possession to claim. He’s not interested.” All the anger she carried for Oliver on the trip here to Boston is now coursing back tenfold. This woman and now her fricking posse of bimbos who seem to look down at the real working class.
“Oh, you think he’d what? Want to be the uncle…” She laughs outright. “Or be the father to your children? Whoever dressed you up today deserves a really good tip they truly had a lot on their plate to work on.”

“That would really irate you if he did see himself as their uncle and by gosh forbid their father. My kids are awesome and he’d be the lucky one. It would also knock you off the glass pedestal of self-righteous bitch that you are.”

“You have some nerve.”

“Keep talking you’ll have my fist in your face.” That is all it took for Trevor to intervene. Placing his body before Felicity so she’ll keep from doing just that. He can hear Felicity huff behind him.

Leanna already took a step back. Somehow, she knows that Felicity wasn’t just saying words and would strike her.

“I suggest you ladies leave.”

John Diggle is laying between two huge pillows in the living room’s floor as three little bodies are trying to subdue him with fits of laughter. They are having a jolly time binding his legs with some rope they found.

“Uncals Johnnie, stops wigglings!” Oliver says between his giggles. “You be a stuck bad guy.”

“If I’m bad? Would I really listen?” John asks the three little kids who are suppose to be superheroes and him the huge monster.

This has the little girl who has been holding one of his arms down by using her whole body pressing his bicep towards the floor. Her forehead near his so she brings it even closer as she peering down onto his eyes. “Mommy says the eyeballs can show the soul.” She’s looking intently trying to see what a soul is and only sees brown eyes staring back at her. His lips curve into a small smile as the little girl is so lost in a complex saying that she has her nose scrunched up as she gathers no real intel. He finally asks if she sees a soul and with her negative nod, he asks maybe he has no soul. That makes her shake her head again and murmur, “Mommy is never wrong.”

“I guess your mommy is a very smart lady.”

“The smartest!” she replies quickly as the boys agree their mother is super smart.

Nathan who has been busy constraining on making weird knots also speaks up, “She chases the bad guys under our beds away.” Oliver and Lillian agree strongly as they also add the monsters in the closet disappear when their mother sternly spooks them away with sciency words.

“Wow, she sounds like a real hero.”

Oliver exclaims, “Superhero!”

“Yes! That is what I meant.” He looks towards the two boys near his feet. “Okay, its time to untie me now.” Both boys smile that smile that means there is something more going on. “I thought you
were the good guys?”

“I’m still a good guy.” The little girl’s words vibrate near his ears as she sliding off his bicep to free him. Though the boys make the telltale sign of laughing and saying aha no, no.

“Yes, you are my little sidekick.” He moves easily to sit up and the boys attack him which exactly looks like hugs but their fingers doing the tickling gesture as they try to take out their enemy with no mercy. Their sister patting his back in a sweet gesture of helping him fight off the tickles.

The noise of the exterior doorknob moving gets John’s attention mentally leaving the playfighting to ready himself for anything when he hears the voice behind the door calling out that she’s back and John’s demeanor relaxes back to be the kids’ toy of the moment.

Felicity can’t visually see Leanna with Trevor’s massive body in front of her but she can hear the viper’s condescending voice, “Maybe she can grab a pitcher of water and get drench like a wet dog that she is just like that time I found her all raggedy in the office bathroom.” That got some laughs from the other women. Felicity is about to lose her cool when Trevor stands up for her.

“My girl here doesn’t have time for the five failed cheerleader squad squawking mean girl adlibs.” He points towards a back exit. “You don’t want to miss the next trash pickup.”

The most talkative friend of Leanna’s barks out, “She’s your girl?”

“Listen Barbie wannabe. I suggest you skedaddle before the tigress behind me goes in for blood.”

Leanna and the girls can’t see Felicity but they just heard her groan in frustration and telling the man before her to move so she can school them. That is enough to warrant the women to move along. As Trevor moves to the side to allow Felicity to have the last say, “When you are dealing with a miffed Ray Palmer, you can tell him your brilliant strategy on that lite alloy metal that is but a dream of Ray’s.”

Leanna makes a huff of annoyance but keeps moving towards the exit with her entourage.

“That woman is such a…” Felicity stops as she sees that she has an audience. “Well she isn’t a very nice person.”

“No doubt.” Trish’s voice cuts in not really noticing Leanna at first because of the other four ladies now near the exit. “Ready to go? Mr. Queen has just asked about your arrival.” They step onto the elevator. “I mean Oliver’s father by the way. That man has never contacted me personally yet always using his own assistant for that but he called saying something about not keeping you to myself…” She makes a riled moan “and something about learning to share.”
Oliver talking about the new initiative with Johnson as Robert pleasantly listens to how his son can command the table and have the few important business people at this table truly digesting his every word. He is so proud of his son. Now knowing that his son may have found the one he will make a life with it brings a peace that his son isn’t so wayward as previously thought. Thinking about the young lady in question he notices Trish coming towards the table just behind the hostess. His eyes catch Ms. Smoak’s briefly as she looks for his son and he can tell the moment Oliver sees her as he stops suddenly and excuses himself.

Robert has never seen the lovesick look coming from his son. It’s a mix of relief and true happiness as his boy slowly walks to her. He can swear at this moment those two are in their own world. As Robert witnesses the slow-moving movie before him it something else to hear about epic love but to see it is happening is something quite enthralling. He just met his son’s girl and everyone even the hostess watches their cutesy hellos and kisses on the cheek and seeing the boy slip with his words on how he thinks the girl is beauty intensified. His son isn’t wrong, Felicity Smoak is truly classic beauty.

Trish saves them and everyone from their sugary sweet demonstration. “Everyone, this is Ms. Felicity Smoak, and we at Queen Consolidated are hoping she’ll come aboard and grace us with her many accomplishments since graduating M.I.T. and recently leaving Palmer Tech.” She blushes when Trish calls her Oliver’s good friend. She moves to sit between two ladies that work for the Queens. Dinner is about to be served.

Oliver’s concern for Felicity at dinner has Robert trying to hide his smirk. Seeing his younger version of himself stressing that their meals be nut-free. Then watching the young lady’s face flush profusely as she is in the spotlight. His son’s candor to the people sharing a meal with them are getting a glimpse on how much she means to him. Even if they won’t come out and say they are an item. Everyone at this table knows that there is a romantic link between them.

Conversations revolve around small talk because as much as they like to talk shop they aren’t in a private area. As dinner comes to an end and dessert menu is brought out Oliver and Felicity excuse themselves as they haven’t had a chance to talk and Oliver’s flight back to Starling City is scheduled.

“Dinner was interesting. Thank you for being so attentive.” That had to be the hottest thing to ever happen to her. Him stressing that their meals be nut-free. She hasn’t ever mentioned her dire allergy to him since that day and knowing that he’s very in tune to her needs just makes her feel special. His frankness to calling her ‘My girl’ didn’t go unnoticed by anyone. “I guess I should go.”

He does a quick assessment of the area before he closes their distance and brings her into his embrace. Now that he has her in his grasp, he can’t fathom her leaving. It was one thing to write to her when she wasn’t there and now, he feels dread. “What if? What if you come to Starling with me instead?”

“Oliver, our children.” He hasn’t forgotten about them. He misses them dearly but he has an end date in mind that they’ll be permanently in his world and that is enough to satisfy him in this moment. Talking to them daily has helped. It will be a good day when all his family is under the same roof.

“I know, I know. But they are safe and with people who’ll be there for them.” A quick kiss while no one is in the area they still need to be alert to keep things under wrap. So far people that know like the dinner guests will keep all this under wraps. “Ask your mom if she’ll be okay with a day maybe even two…”
Felicity is already digging for her phone. “It won’t hurt to ask.” She calls her mom. When the line opens to a cheery woman. “Hi mom.” There is a pleasantry as they talk and she even gives the phone to Oliver for him to say hi at her mother’s beckoning. When she gets the cellphone back, she asks her mother and Donna is more than eager that she goes to Starling then starts to talk about clothing. “Mom, what?”

“Don’t worry, I placed most of your underwear in the trash.”

“Mom! That wasn’t what I meant but okay thanks.”

“You head on up to Starling City with Oliver, get what is broken fixed. How long will you need?”

“Mom, I don’t think it will be more than a day.”

“So, three or four?”

“Mom!”

“Listen. You’ll have the place to yourselves for a small time only you’ll be able to christen any of the rooms without the rag team of misfits and your mother who surely knows what up.”

“You are so incorrigible. I’ll have to talk to Oliver before he sets the time with John.”

“I’m good up to five days. I can handle their moodiness for that long.”

“Maybe Oliver and I will want to see them as soon as possible.”

“Darling, face-talk exists and believe me, I am now a technological bubba.”

“I’m sorry I’ll leave you to do all the packing.”

“Don’t worry about it. John says he has a team coming. Now it’s up to you and Oliver to create that timespan. But baby girl, enjoy that hunk of a man. He’ll be yours before you’ll have to share them. I know it’s different because their your children but believe me have this honeymoon period.”

“Okay, okay I’ll try to sell it to Oliver. Bye mom. Love you.”

“Love you to my Zeeskeit.” Donna hears her daughter mumble; she is the sweetest baby girl and telling her so is her pleasure.

Oliver turns to Felicity, “What are you supposed to sell me on?”

She bites her lips and it makes him raises an eyebrow. “Have you set the timeframe of when the children and my mom are supposed to be picked up?”

“Pushing for two days, it’ll be tough but we can have our family here that soon.”

“My mom wants us to take our time. Give us a small…” She uses her index fingers to highlight ‘honeymoon period’ “Hash things out and basically be very amorous in every room. Except my mom’s cuz that’ll gross me out.”

“But our children’s room be okay?”

She shrugs, “Not while they are there but it took the deed to conceive them so I’m not against the idea.”
He shakes his head but he does like the idea of them having a small window of just them. Show her
the penthouse, the kids’ room that their mothers are having a heavy hand on. Just be Oliver and
Felicity for a few extra days.

“I’ll ask John if he’s okay with staying in Starling for additional few days.” He’s already making the
call and John knowing what up just says they’ll be packed up and on a plane in four days. His team
can wrap up and have the movers in and out. It is not like there is a lot of stuff and most of it will
probably not make the transition. “He’s okay with it. Soon will have everyone under one roof in our
home.”

Felicity just sports a big smile and pecks his cheek excitedly. “You said our home.”

“I did.” He thinks about it. “It is our home. You belong with me and nowhere else I can’t wait for
our family to be under one roof. So… about four days without physically holding our children, are
you okay with that?”

“It’ll be hard but my mom makes a great point. I want to solely be yours for a few days. I can always
check on them throughout the day, right?”

“Of course.”

“I’m just going to start feeling guilty halfway through and I need you to just humor me.” She groans,
“My mom can be rather persuasive but she knows a thing or two and I want us to work. We do have
a lot to talk about.”

He nods. “We do. The sex isn’t a bad selling point either.”

“Mommy no coming home?”

Donna looks at the three little tykes finishing up their meals and having their total focus on their
grandmother. They have no idea their mother went to Boston to confront their father. They think its
just another typical work night and their mommy will be home to give them goodnight kisses at least.

John taking pity on the woman who just has been brought up to speed after his last conversation with
Oliver and Felicity. He answers for her, “Your mom will face-talk with you soon she’ll tell you
everything. Okay?”

“Mommy still at work?”

Donna answering, “No sweetie. She’s with your… your uncle Oliver.” That got some spark of
interest as they all start to ask if Uncle Oliver is visiting.
Arriving at the airport. Robert Queen is about to leave the limo when the chauffeur opens the door. “Dad, Felicity and I are just going to say goodnight to the kids. We’ll be right out.”

“Take your time.” He then steps out to the tarmac.

As Felicity opens the video, she sees her children faces pop up. A soft smile is already on her lips. A part of her is ready to go back home to them. These are her babies.

“Mommy, you look so pretty.” Oliver being the first to speak as their mother comes on screen.

“Why thank you baby. Are you all behaving for your bubba and new uncle?”

They all nod yes and look to the two adults supervising them for confirmation. A feminine voice off screen says, “Yes, sweetheart the children are all being perfect angels.”

“That makes me very happy. I love you all so very much.” The kids say it back and then they ask where she is. “I’m going to get on a plane.” That surprises the kids. “I’m going to check out the new place and make sure our new home is the best ever.”

Nathan wants to know where his uncle is, “Where is uncals Olivah?”

Felicity moves from the frame and Oliver who has been sitting beside her in the limo at the airport so they can make this call comes into view. “Hey there buddies, how my three sports?” He hears all different accounts of what they’ve been up to but what all three kids seem to agree on is they enjoyed being the good guys. Oliver can hear his best friend snicker in the background about them becoming villains in the end. “It seems that you all had fun. I’m going to put your mom back on so she can say goodnight before we go. Sweet dreams. Love you all.” The kids say their goodnights.

Though Nathan makes the loudest noise as he bellows it out, “Love you too uncals Olivah.”

“Awe that is so sweet, you all listen to your bubba. Okay?” When she doesn’t get the response she desires, she tells them. “Best behavior!” Making sure her voice holds that authority, “Understood?” When the three agree she tells her mom to read them a passage of the newest book she’s starting reading to them last week. “I love you all.” She blows them a kiss. “Goodnight Nathan, Oliver and Lillian.” They say their goodnights and the video is cut.

Lillian is the first to turn to the two adults as her mind is reeling with the new information. “We going to go air-o-plane too?”

“Yes, baby girl.” The little girl doesn’t look to happy. “What’s wrong Lillian?”

“Me scared of heights.” There are tears already forming. “Mr. Kaween no here to make sure I no fall.”

Donna looks to John to see if he can remedy this or she will just have a scared child fretting about the airplane ride that is in their future.

“They have never been on a plane?”

“No. The longest ride was from Boston to Providence in a crammed car seats with Felicity and I.”

John sees the little girl stuck in her wild thoughts as the boys just look at her meltdown. They’re not as scared as their sister in this matter. “Hey, hey. I’m not going to let you fall either.” He already in action as he picks up the trembling girl and cradles her to his chest. “Promise.” As he is soothing her back. Donna is moving the boys to allow their sister some privacy as they get ready for bed. John has
had practice soothing little ones with two back at home he misses dearly. “How about you talk to Serena about airplanes because she’s been on many rides.”

“She has?”

“Oh yes, her mommy and I travel a lot. My job is to protect.”

“It is?”

“That is why I am here. I promise you there will be no falling. Plus, you’ll have two other strong friendly men you’ve played with, we are here to make sure you and your brothers are safe.”

“Bubba too?”

“Yes. The whole family.” She nods and hugs him fiercely with all her might. He just soothes her fears away as he pulls out his phone to call his wife.
Coming Home

Chapter Summary

Felicity on her way to her new permanent home. Oliver and Felicity share a few days but its one conversation that Oliver starts with that will be seen by the reader.

Chapter Notes

This chapter's time frame is within the four days of the 'honeymoon period'" It glosses over Queen interactions but you'll see it with little flashbacks in the next few chapters. This one has Oliver telling Felicity how smart she is and that alone makes a half a chapter :)

Thank you all for reading!

Continuation from chapter 17…

They take the flight to Starling and he knows this… He is getting the ravishing woman he’s been thinking of worshipping coming home with him. His father is talking about a report and somewhere in this conversation Felicity starts helping with the mathematics. The woman can just grab information and do her thing. He can see how impressed his father is becoming as his girlfriend just makes sense of a provision that has only been bothering the elder Queen. Just watching the pair talk. Recognizing his father is actually enjoying a full-on vocational talk. Heavily engrossed in what they are passionately chatting about they don’t notice Oliver move to another seat so he can just sit back and look from afar.

His eyes now only on his girl, undressing her slowly. Wondering what surely is behind that mix and match outfit that perfectly accentuates her in the best way possible. The blouse framing her chest just right. He noticed a few men appreciate her curves. Curvatures that he longs to nestle against. He can’t remember why he ever thought meekly of that figure type, her body outline is just so damn succulent. One night with her sealed any questions he held as she encases everything he wants in a partner. Her passionate mind doesn’t rival her enthusiasm in the bedroom.
Chapter 18: Coming Home

Their first night was about a hunger. This time it will be about appreciation. He knows now that their sexual history is complex as they were each other’s firsts. Only some things stand out from that time period. She doesn’t look like pigtails he has envisioned when talking to his therapist. Yes, the time he spent on a couch talking to a specialized man about his past deeds she was mentioned. The gawky girl his best friend liked. Her name irrelevant to him then. Only pigtails existed. Oh, he was such an ass. He hopes to instill to his sons a respect that he seems he never had. If he did, he would have been there to behold each child’s first breathe of life. Hear their first words. Seen the milestones instead of hearing of them.

Even if at that age he wasn’t fully ready just like their mother. There would be no excuses. He would have grown and adapted to becoming a dad. Ready or not he would have participated the best he could. He would have been part of making foolish mistakes and learning just like first time fathers. Realizing how he could have freaked out beside Felicity about finding that not only was he responsible in causing fertilization. But, knowing her ovum split twice for the boys and yet another ovum becoming his baby girl. They may have gotten lucky and come to care for each other. Be raising a family together or the circumstance of having them apart. Either way they would have dealt with the consequences. His family would have stepped up and those kids would be financially supported maybe even loved but his love would have been incomplete. He was a clad back then.

Those years were informative, just like his mother reeling of finding she had a step daughter when
Emiko’s mother came to her in the late stages of a heartbreaking disease. Moira was angry and hurt but she still took the child into their family. Allowing the girl to finish her schooling in Shanghai as the preteen would come to Starling on the holidays. His baby sister not as forgiving and him spiraling out of control. Maybe it truly was for the best he didn’t know of the triplets. They have such an amazing mom who raised three little beings that were free of the Queen drama.

Timing is everything. As he sits looking at the woman who has his heart. He is ready for all this. He should have always been ready but he isn’t going there. The past is just that the past. No dwelling. Even if he missed the pregnancy. He rationally knows that he wasn’t even half the man these kids deserved back then.

His words to her as they board as his fingers slides from her face to her collarbone and he makes sure she sees him lick his lips, “Make yourself comfortable, I just want you to know that I’m going to be thinking of all the ways I am going to show you how much I have missed you.” Keeps Felicity glancing his way while still talking to his dad but his words ring true. The anticipation of revering her behind closed doors where she will know how much their night which feels like ages ago was never meant to be a stand-alone event.

She tries not to look at Oliver while his father is talking about adding her to the company roster. She needs to remind him that as much as that would be kind, she needs to not cause a scene and would be okay to start at an opening that is more in line with entry job level with her education in mind. The man grumbles that it would just be a disservice but being that Oliver and Felicity want to keep their relation on a very down low. They have to work on becoming a couple and with adding a family to the mix. It stays out of a social microscope. Oliver says nothing but nods to her words as his gaze keeps her glued to the seat.

Her body aroused by how his few intended glares make her know that he has plans for them and she too can’t wait to map his body to memory. Everything she remembers from years ago wiped clean. He isn’t that lean boy nor is she that thin gawky girl. The light blue polo shirt fits against his wide torso beckoning her to imagine the smooth muscles he has accumulated by being rigorously active. Working by his side all these weeks grasping even if she feigns impaired vision to her mom at least how well he fills his suits. Never mind when he indignantly rolls his sleeves up at the office indicating some annoyance at a task. To her it brings a hunger. She imagines wrapping her fingers on his firm forearm skin to calm him down but afraid of eliciting a spark. A spark that turned her world upside down. A connection she didn’t have the first time with him.

He may not remember their first time as well as she does. His words to her sustained in her memories as she lived those wonderful moments over and over. She had the biggest crush on him. That is only because he hanged out with the sweet Thomas Merlyn. It wasn’t hard to like Oliver; he had his sweet moments and he’d barely really acknowledged his smarts to others accept to Tommy and her by default by being near his best friend.

From her perspective she remembers more of their moments together. Having the biggest crush on Oliver. It stemmed from how Thomas saw his best friend. Thomas Merlyn had a few classes with her. Even being paired up for a science class. Making her feel comfortable as they’d talk about astronomy and comic books and stuff like that. She knew he liked this mean girl that wasn’t so nice to her by one of the girls in class that directly told her that so she’d always kept her conversation light
with Tommy. Any interaction with Oliver bare minimum but she was a lovesick romantic and easily duped.

*His charm working even if he never says her name directly, “Hey goggles. Have you seen Tommy around?”*

*Looking up from her schoolwork she sees these amazing blue eyes looking down on her as she sat by a tree on school grounds during lunch. Her wave of her head side to side indicated a no.*

“What are you reading?”

“*Of Mice and Men.*”

“*Great Depression in the United States. Sad ending.*”

“Hey, don’t spoil it.”

*He raises his hands. “Fine. Spoiler alert.”*

*She puts her hands over her ears.*

“Steinbeck has been preparing for a tragic end since the beginning of the novel.” He shrugs and walks away. *He’d do things like that. Really not spoiling anything but integrating what would be happening.*

*She’d sigh and watch him then interact with other classmates. She’d find herself a little envious. That is when Oliver made the move on her… yea that is ancient history. Her first kiss that lead to the whole shebang.*

*It is only later she torments herself of how he shrugged her off. A bet between some awful boys. It was those boys that had her beg to leave Starling Prep. Her friend Tommy had been in an accident so at least one sweet face wasn’t there. Oliver also disappeared.*

Sitting on this plane being observed by him… by her boyfriend. She is Oliver Queen’s girlfriend. She is Oliver’s secret girlfriend. That sounds so strange in her head. It takes Robert Queen to stop talking and look at her. He scrutinizes her for a moment until the man looks behind his shoulder to see his son’s smirk.

“Really Oliver? Can’t I just plan to have a nice conversation with your girlfriend? Without you being devious back there?”

“Sorry dad but you were hogging all her time talking about some of the most boring shoptalk ever.”

“Fine.” He looks at Felicity with an amused grin. “The boy is all yours my dear. I’m going to check on the pilot.”

“Thanks dad.”

“Oh, don’t worry this young lady and yourself will be joining your mother and I for dinner tomorrow.” He looks at Felicity, “I wouldn’t make plans for lunch. You may even expect my wife to fill that spot.”

“Dad!”

“I know, a little forward I suppose. Serves you right from taking me from enjoying my companion on this ride home.”
“Bubba, can I play next?”

Finishing braiding Lillian’s hair, she looks to the two boys longer messy hair she wonders if she should have their hair trimmed and decides against it for now. Donna Smoak always loved braiding her daughter’s hair and now a granddaughter to continue such hairdos. Felicity always had little pigtails with ribbons that matched her school’s uniform. Her baby girl a total tomboy always climbing up trees and getting scratches on her knees. She honestly never thought a boy would take interest in her. How wrong she was as these three are more than proof. Silly notion to think that at all. Felicity was and truly still is incredible. She can only hope her Lillian is as sweet, brave, intelligent and maybe a better cook than the women in her ancestry. She hopes the boys will fare well also. Even though she can attest that their father is actually really good in the kitchen. The food marvelous. Like her daughter jealous in how easy he makes it all seem. “Yes, you may. Maybe you can teach me how to play while the boys will watch after their turn is over.”

Nathan smashing his little fingers on the controller trying to beat his brother who seems to have a handle on what he needs to do as he is easily pressing buttons and winning. Oliver being told continuously to place his tongue back in his mouth by his grandmother as the boy seems to enjoy chewing on it while figuring out whatever it is as his mind interacts with the game.

“I win!” Oliver jumps up happy. “Again!” The boy makes a happy dance as Nathan has a scowl on his face.

“Okay, Lilly and Nate can play now. Oliver come here I want to comb your hair.”

“But… I won.”

“Yes, you did. The prize is sitting on my lap as I comb your hair.” Oliver just glares at his grandmother wondering what kind of prize that is. “Oliver Noah, come on. Come cuddle with bubba.”

“No play?”

She shakes her head. “I changed my mind. Nathan can take my spot and play against Lillian.”

Oliver shrugs as he places his controller in his sister’s hand. Lilly excitedly to play hugs him and there is a cute moment that pulls at Donna’s heartstrings. Less than a year ago a visual like this was only a dream.

The boy climbs up to his bubba’s lap and he’s already making a handsome face as he’s being overly kissed. His little exclamation of calling her bubba as her lips makes one more round of kisses to his little cheeks. “Okay, okay… no more kisses for now.” She grabs the comb she has and begins to smooth his shaggy hair that the two boys sport. They are such cute little boys.

Nathan and Lillian are more evenly matched. They both win some or lose some and it seems they are having more fun not knowing who will actually win. With Oliver in the fray both kids know they’ll lose to him always.

With Oliver now playing against his sister. Donna tends to Nathan’s locks as they both watch Lillian actually having a chance of winning against Oliver, Nathan becomes his sister’s cheerleader. “Go Lilly Go!” and she is totally amused as Oliver at the last moment wins the game and Nathan pouts
and knocks his head into her chest as he groans.

“I win! I win!” Oliver is again making his happy dance. Lillian pulls her tongue out at him but she’s a good sport and is congratulating him in their own way of conversing. Her grandchildren are so happy. They miss their mother tonight so Donna allows them to have a different routine. Allowing them to play a video game that their Uncle John setup as she grooms them and then will put them to bed.

After departing the jet and Felicity and Oliver saying their goodnights to his father the ride to his place is quiet. She’s just comfortably sitting by his frame as one of his arms holds her against him. Taking in the sight of the city she will be calling home. There is a lot of lights and movement even this late at night.

Entering a private garage entrance, the vehicle stops at where an elevator shaft is seen. “This is it; we are almost home.” Holding his bags as they enter an elevator after scanning a keycard.

“All my keys and stuff are at home.”

“It’s okay I have spares.”

“Oliver, I don’t even have an extra set of clothes.” He just hums quietly to her words not adding that there are clothes in her size up in their room. He also hasn’t mentioned that Trish got more clothing for her while they were shopping. He left to Boston with one carry-on. He’s bringing two upstairs with him. He’ll surprise her upstairs. “I’ll have to borrow something from you.” As those words come from her lips she freezes as it now suddenly dawns on her that his mother will come by his home and there is construction happening.

The elevator silently opens and she wonders if she missed the ding. “Oliver, you’re being unusually quiet. What is going through your mind?”

He huffs in laughter, “Nothing much is going through my mind other than the obvious.” He winks at her and as she understands his underlining meaning she blushes. “Welcome home.” He proceeds to open the double door to his place. “One of the set of keys if for the front entrance plus it biometric.” He nods to the little scanner “Use your thumb.” She places it and shortly after the light goes green, she hears the locks on the door. “When we did that whole clay shop with the kids I borrowed you and your mom’s prints.”

“Borrowed?”

“Okay, I know creepy in a sense because we weren’t there as a couple.”

“Yea, it kind of is. So, what else should I know?”

“There are probably a few things but we can discuss them latter, it’s more in the realm of job opportunities I have in mind.”

“Jobs?”

“Felicity, you’re not just a genius. Yes, you are really good with math and technology. You know I mentioned I came to Palmer Tech to find the brains of the little endeavor that brought me there. I
didn’t know then what I know now that I would be head over heels for you. Anyways, I like to talk about this latter. Now I want to show you around.”

“I feel like I’m missing something?”

He sighs. He knows her to well. She doesn’t like mysteries. “My dad would be ecstatic if you’ll head the Applied Sciences for the family company.”

“Okay. I’ve asked for an entry level. So, what are you holding back?”

“You seem to be stuck on entry…” He shakes his head. “Back on the subject of Applied Sciences that position would be to stuffy for you. Even if I mentioned it to you and your mom over dinner a few times. As a head of a department you’ll still need to follow guidelines by the board.”

“You’ve actually been thinking about my career?”

“If I said no, I’d be lying. I’ve been thinking of you actually of an us for a while now.”

She just amazed and shocked and a few other things she can’t express because she doesn’t know what to feel.

“You always think lesser of your contributions.”

“I do not.”

“Felicity! You allow others to take credit for your work.”

“I…” He just waits as she’s letting herself realize he is right. “Okay.”

“There is no reason for you to work for anyone except yourself.”

“Oliver, this sounds all wonderful and all but I have no capital. No influence. No written down ideas.”

“You have me for capital. You and I as partners. You have more ideas than you’re letting on. As for influence that will come with time. You’re a natural and I believe you can conquer whatever comes your way.”

She laughs. She can’t believe he is saying all this. Where did this come from?

“Before you even ask. This conversation is something I wanted to have after you settled down here in Starling. Foremost in my mind, I want there to be us. Our family comes first. But I’m not crazy. You have so much to offer and I’ve been strategizing what would work best for us.”

She can see he is serious and they’re standing just outside the foyer. “You have put a lot of thought into this. When was I going to be privy to this?”

“I wasn’t supposed to pretty much blab all this out like I just did. I’m not saying anything I just said is written in stone.” He moves the carry-on cases to the side. “What I am saying is I really like it if you stop putting yourself on the bottom of the list.” Seeing she isn’t understanding. “You’re amazing. I know you know you’re smart but you have a way of talking yourself out of being a top dog.”

“Maybe I like just being comfortable.” He knows that isn’t true. He has seen her the happiest when she overcomes something that no one else can solve. When a puzzle is mastered and she figures out the fine lines of an answer. When she finds herself coding and her fingers are on par with her mind
as she loses herself in creation. She’s the happiest in her professional world when she is toiling within her skill set and honing the task at hand. “Besides I have three kids that always need me.”

“That is true. They will always need you.” He’s gazing at how she’s becoming a little timid as she trying to process all this information. This isn’t what he wanted. He wants her to feel comfortable. “I’m sorry, I sprung all this on you and you must be so tired.”

Felicity bites her lips. She is a little tired but she’s more anxious than anything. She’s alone with him. She can’t use the kids as a barrier and they have so much to talk about. Their past and their future. It seems he’s been thinking of her in more than just his lover and mother of his kids. She should have known that he had an insight of her professional capacity and would eventually talk shop with her. She just didn’t think he would emphasis it. This man is truly an enigma to her.

“You really think I can do anything you’ve just mentioned?”

“Maybe not alone but you have me, your mom is still in your corner and if how my dad took to you, he’ll be honored to be a mentor.”

“What if in the meantime I still prefer an entry type job? Will you be upset…”

He doesn’t let her finish as he brings her into an embrace and as he looks down at her curious face as his lips brush hers and he whispers, “Partners.” Kissing her and then pulling back. “We work well with each other.” He can feel some of her tension leave as she just melting into his embrace. This conversation is going to just be the iceberg of many conversations to be clear up in these few days. “Now let me show you around, finally!”

Waking to a wonderful feeling of being wrapped up with the woman he spent countless moments pleasuring last night. Stretching slightly not to disturb the warm body just slightly under some of his frame. He can envision this lifestyle he has had with her these last three days for as long as he is breathing.

They have hashed out a lot of hurt feeling between them. From their childhood trauma to agreeing on their children’s surname of Smoak-Queen. Meeting with lawyers and judges that have cemented it all for them.

Felicity is still in disbelief in how well everything has fallen into place. She has always thought that Oliver’s family would shun her after keeping their biological blood lineage from them. Instead they had respectful questions and yes, they did point out some disappointment they are human after all. There was no dwelling from Oliver’s parents at least. His little sister had a few digs to give and even though Oliver wasn’t having it. Felicity talked him out of his rebuttals.

He doesn’t need to know why but having Felicity’s hand land just on his forearm when he’s miffed makes a huge difference. He wanted to knock some sense into Thea a few times but held back any angry responses. Those moments didn’t go unnoticed by his mom. She told him later when he was alone how proud she was that he did not to add to the fuel as his sister was testing him.

It only came out just hours’ yesterday that Thea and Felicity did some bonding and he may never
know how but seeing them both laughing and enjoying themselves is a relief all in itself. He wasn’t too sure about introducing his happy-go-lucky children to a crabby future auntie.

Until his birthday they are just Uncle Oliver’s family. Even if the kids bonded with their grandmother, which delights his mother to no end they have come to call her Ms. Moira. He knows his mother can’t wait to be called grandmother, a.k.a. gammy or her preferred nana just like their maternal grandmother’s bubbe.

He gets to be teased by Felicity as the kids tell them about how much they like their uncle John. John has this smirk on his face just because the man knows how much it disturbs Oliver to see the kids place him in second place. He is also forbidden by his girlfriend to even think about finding outlandish things to basically buy off the kids’ affections. It’s funny because he probably would have done something like that even though spoiling for short-term enthusiasm on their part would be so wrong. He’s not their uncle and with his girl’s strong words of parental guidance he needs to act the part.

His mind wonders back to his girlfriend as she begins to stir awake. Her happy sigh as she’s becoming responsive while seeking his body’s warmth.

“Morning.” He hears her morning mumbles against his skin. “How excited are you that the kids will be here by the evening hours?”

He’s learning to understand her morning mumbles of communicating when she’s comfy in his embrace but this time she moves her head and he can see her bright smile. She misses them dearly and he swears if she had to wait any more days, she would have found herself flying back to their kids. “Oliver, their coming home.” Her words emotional. Last night when the kids asked how many more sleeps till they saw her it hit him that she’s always made the effort to be there when they woke up. They are lucky to have a wonderful grandmother but Oliver knows these three are super bright and catch on to seeing other families’ dynamics.

With him entering their lives just shortly after their birthday when they collectively asked for a dad just like how their friend Johnny has or like Abigail’s dad Jeff who always makes time to play with them. It’s weird how the universe puts things together sometimes. He’s decision to go to Palmer Tech started on a whim. Then reading more into the finding of this venture he wanted to meet up with the brains of this operation. It may not have been written in any packet but Ray Palmer basically blurted out a secret ingredient and that piece of information landed up being Felicity Smoak, M.I.T. class 09.

The mother of his three beautiful children. A woman who thinks outside the box. He’s a strategist and finding that working with her they always accomplished beyond the scope they’ve started. He has told his dad how bright she is but kept critical info about what makes her incredibly special. Just in case his father didn’t connect to her like he did. Robert Queen is a businessman who knows the worth of his employees. There was no way he would sell out Felicity like that. He wants everything to be on her terms. He owes her that much. He’s in love with her and that does play a whole role into it. As her man, he’s a lot more chivalrous to keeping her safe and hopefully happy.

“Penny for your thoughts?” Her voice gets him to shake his thoughts away.

“What would you like to do today? I made sure to have a clear schedule and only person on the list is you.” He gets her to laugh, he knows she gets a kick out of his lists.

“Maybe I should scribble a list together.” She can see his eyes narrow as she’s kind of inkling towards talking about is OCD. “First one on it would be that I need to pee.”
“You don’t need to address bodily functions…”

“I do if my next one includes what I want to do with you.” She rolls to the edge escaping his grasp as she saunters off to relieve herself.

They wait excitedly for the elevator door to open. John balked at them refraining them from meeting their family at the airport. Saying that if they want to keep the anatomy of secrecy of the clan that is Smoak-Queen. Being in an open airfield would bring attention to the family.

“I can’t wait to hold them. I feel like they grew an inch without me.” Oliver has heard her fears which started a night ago. Missing anything of relevance and it led to her profusely apologizing of her insensitivity because he’s missed a lot of his children’s lives. “You think they miss us?” At those words the door opens.

“Mommy!” Three screaming children run to their mother’s arms. Felicity is on her knees peppering many kisses across their faces as she’s so happy to have them in her arms again. Oliver is welcoming Donna and then thanking John. As John and Oliver move some of the luggage that is with them onto the foyer. Felicity is then hugging her mom. As the kids now attack their uncle Oliver. “Uncals Olivah!”

Oliver is already picking up the closest one for a hug and a kiss as he does it with each one until the last child is just being held in his arms. “Welcome home.” He lets Nathan back down to join his siblings. As they take in the entrance to their new home Oliver makes sure to take Felicity’s hand and gently applies some pressure. This is a big moment for them.

John stays back allowing the family to interact. Donna is delighted that the kids are moving about their home as each point out something to the others. As she looks at her daughter who has her hand tightly clasped with her boyfriend. She couldn’t be happier. Taking in the penthouse views she is in reverence herself. This place is huge.

“From here the kitchen and dining are to the right. There is a storage closet and a half bath before the media room on the left. The far-left door is an exercise room that also has an entry to the roof and the main stairs leading downstairs is off the family room that leads to the bedrooms and a play area.”

The boys have similar questions like, “Mommy, we live here?” and “Our home?”

Lillian doesn’t need to ask she already stakes the place as her home. “Mine!” As she twirls around taking in all she can before running to join her brothers who are now fascinating themselves with the views from the floor-to-ceiling high-rise windows. Donna comes from behind them and joins in looking out onto Starling City. The hues of colors in the sky shaping it to be a beautiful sunset soon. “Bubba, you likey?”

Donna picks up her granddaughter as the girl still has her eyes on the city of her new home. “Do you like it so far?” The girl nods and the boys turn to their grandmother with big smiles. “Okay, we should explore more. Why don’t you ask your uncle and momma to show you to your room?” That has the kids now focusing back at the two adults. They see their uncle John saying his farewells and join in to say their own goodnights. The children are scattered around the living room.
Felicity can’t stop smiling as the most important people in her life are all so cheerful and under the same roof. Tonight, is a good night and she can see how glad Oliver is to finally have them all here with him on a permanent basis.

There is a lot to still see and Oliver guides his family. It is not lost on him. It happens so quickly and in a short second as this specific moment is occurring that he is still in the midst of being in awe. Taking in the astonishment when the kids look to him. As his girlfriend lets him lead. The intense moment when he realizes after John has left. With the man’s parting words of wisdom. ‘From this moment on… Steering the triplets isn’t just on their mom’s shoulders anymore your impact is massive.’ With their attention on him they gladly oblige and within moments the Smoak-Queens are all heading to the second section of their home.
Chapter Summary

This is an inside look to another new day with the Smoaks and Queens as they interact. The kids are weary of Trevor.

Chapter Notes

Simple chapter leading to the birthday. Little things pop up like how the kids want a dad but they're worried now about who will be their daddy. Oliver is busy tending to his birthday party, being he wants to make it a big deal and be the one to plan he's sort of busy in those regards. Felicity is finding that being an new employee she gets to meet all sorts of people.

Continuation from chapter 18…

“Think momma and uncals kissy?”

Oliver spits out, “Ew. Gross.”

“Dats what Johnnie parents do.” Lillian states with some attitude. Which has Nathan just shrugging at his siblings’ conversation. “If dey do we gets a daddy!” Now that gets both boys to sit up beside her.

Nathan thinking more about it. He hasn’t seen that yet. “Why you think dey kisses?” They just moved in not more than a week ago. Their wish to have a daddy is colossal but they want their uncle Oliver to be the one. Well at least he wants that specific man to be the one.

They all love their room. There is so much activity just in this room alone to do and play with that the kids have no desire to really leave and explore as of yet. That they’re just bunking on the top nook overlooking hideout while glancing at the cool projection art that is filtering through with a press of a button. They love it. This is the best place they have ever been to.

“Well I want a daddy!”

That is what Oliver hears as he is checking on the kids. Post workout after a few days of being all cozy with his girl he decided that a few days ago he’d get back on the bandwagon. Listening to his daughter exclaim what she wants in a no-nonsense tone has him refrain from saying anything because very soon the triplets and his wish will be finalized.

Oliver makes a production opening the door so the three know who is entering. “Good morning.” Walking into their room he sees three little heads up on the rafter built to overlook the large window on top but closed down below as a safety measure. Their grandmother Moira didn’t like the fact that these three four-year-olds could have access to a balcony. “Enjoying being all the way up there?” He sees their heads bobbing but their making their way down. He is super glad his mother and even
Chapter 19 **Home Sweet Home**

“Why mommy go work?”

Donna takes the cue to answer as Oliver bites his lip. Felicity took a position in the IT Dept as a flex associate. Covering for other associates. A person called out and she gladly steps in to help the company. He’ll be heading to QC in an hour or two but seeing that the kids aren’t thrilled that their mom barely has time with them in the morning these last two days and she’s comes home late like the previous evening as her schedule isn’t fixed. “Darling, your mommy has a new job.” Both adults look at Nathan who asked and the boy glances to his brother who has his fingers out while they are all counting using the clock on the wall.

Oliver can see his kids are doing math using the clock as a focal point of when their mother left with him from Boston. He found out that Donna and John taught them about time so they could rationalize when they’d be coming here to Starling. With his own mother now pestering him about their formal education. As she has said, “Their minds are to brilliant to allow for a laid-back schooling that they’ve received.” He gets it but it doesn’t mean he wants to radically change anything.
He sighs that his mother did just that. She’s already in the process of registering them in the next school’s session. He should be furious. She even went through those steps before he found out he was even a dad. His mother is really something. The moment she found out by Jean Loring that he wanted to adopt these three she just went and got the ball rolling. It wasn’t after a sit down with Felicity that got him to decide that the kids are at that point. Holding their education back when they’re like little sponges taking in all sorts of new information.

They truly love learning they’re a lot like their mother in those regards. Donna told him that her baby girl used to play school and use a cutout of the smartest person and act like it was her teacher. Felicity loved learning new facts it made her giddy and excited so who is he to take that from his own kids? Their passion resonates with him and wanting what is best for them is truly important.

Felicity takes a call from Ray Palmer. “Ray, I… I didn’t think you’d actually call.”

He sounds dejected. “I’ve come to learn that in my absence I lost one of my key players.”

After a small pause, “I was actually terminated.”

“That’s crazy. Can’t see how that is possible. Especially with my absence. The top executives know how much I value your employment here at Palmer Tech.”

“Well at least one of them didn’t. Thought I was actually trying to seduce my way to the top.”

“Say what? You’ve been nothing but professional.”

“I do thank you for the opportunities at the company, you are a good man.”

“What exactly happened, and please tell me the truth?”

“I suppose maybe some jealousy came into play. I’d like to say it doesn’t bother me but you know me well enough.”

“I’m sorry. I know we’ve talked about how some people can’t see the brilliance that is wrapped in a beautiful well-spoken woman.”

She laughs, “Ray, you’ve been around some of my doozies of drivels that make grown men blush.”

He chuckles than just as quickly sighs, “I’m sorry this happened. Your job is still available and for your trouble a higher salary awaits. Just say the word…”

“I left Rhode Island with my family. Thank you for the offer though it really means something to me.”

“Is there any way I can sweeten the deal for you to come back?”

“You are… were a great boss. Thank you for having faith in me. We may do business sometime in the future together, who knows.”

“It sounds like you really have a handle on things. Those three tykes are surely lucky to have a
spectacular mom.”

She laughs, “I only allowed you to meet them once because you and Anna spoiled them rotten that one time. They wanted to move in with you both. My poor heart!”

“I have but I’ll apologize again for that, I told Anna that I needed to win you over and so my brilliant idea was to win the kids and I am really very sorry but gladly things worked out in the end."

“Your apology is accepted. Take care, Mr. Palmer.”

“You to Ms. Smoak.” Hanging up she let’s out a relieved sigh. It is nice to know she’s valued for her mind. Since moving to Starling, she can’t see herself anywhere else this is her home now.

Nathan is shadowing his uncle Oliver since breakfast, if he didn’t have a meeting at ten in the morning he would have stayed home and enjoyed a day with the kids. He has one other place to visit after the meeting he considers important as he is meeting with the bakery creator for last minute talks for his birthday cake. He is the one who putting everything together for this intimate birthday party. He doesn’t even want his mother or sister’s magic touches involved. He told his mother that he can handle his own birthday party. He is a Queen after all and has grown up in the world of Galas and spectacular parties, also mentioning to his mother that he is her son and he knows how to be dramatic.

Nathan mentions something and Oliver asks what he already knows but is humoring his son.

“She wit Mistah doofee.”

“Mr. Dumphrey.”

The boy nods and says it again, “Mistah Doof-reeee”

“Well once your mom and I are both home later we can get to watch that movie after dinner.”

“Uncals Olivahs?” Nathan just looking at him with a serious look.

It still gets him how they can butcher some words. Especially the ones they use frequently he wonders if it’s because he’s never corrected them. “Nathan, it’s Uncle Oliver. Uncle… like uhng-kl. Say uncle.”

“Uhng-kal”

“Close. Say it again.”

“Unckle.”

“Perfect.”

“Unckle Olivah. Is Mistah Doofee kissy my mommy?”

Oliver looks at his son with wide eyes. Why would the boy think that? Felicity and him haven’t
shown an amorous relationship while the kids are around trying not to confuse them. It’s been weird having to share a bed with his girl and finding themselves pull apart to let one or all of the kids into their room. “Why do you ask?”

“Cuz, he with mommy all the time. Mommy giggles no funny.”

“Mr. Dumphrey works with your mommy. He is a nice man, right?” Nathan doesn’t nod or sway his head no he just looks at Oliver with those serious eyes his sported since this whole conversation started. “What wrong Nathan?” The boy wiggles to get out of his hold and Oliver is tempted to let the boy go but somehow, he feels this is something that needs to be addressed. Do the kids think their mother’s bodyguard is romantical involved with their mother? “Nathan? You can tell me anything.”

The boy unable to wiggle out just looks at the man he wants to be his daddy. Mr. Dumphrey has been nothing but nice to him and his siblings but he doesn’t want him to become his daddy.

“Johnnie’s daddy no real.” Oliver looks at Nathan knowing the whole story. Johnny has a step-dad because his mother remarried. “Dey kissy and poof daddy now.”

“Okay, do Lillian and Oliver think this too?” Seeing the boy nod. Oh boy, he’ll need to straighten this out this little mess with the kids. It’s time for him to leave for work and he hates that he going to have them think this a little bit longer. Holding his son tighter to his body he tells him, “We will talk about this latter. Okay?”

“K.”

“Nathan, you know I care for you and your siblings, right?” The boy nods his head in agreement. “I also care a lot about your mommy. I’d do anything for her.” Seeing the boy is absorbing every word coming from his lips it’s important that he makes Nathan feel comfortable. “You and Oliver and your sister Lillian are the best kids in the whole wide world and I am so lucky you are living here with me.” He hugs his son. “Now I need to go to work but latter we’ll talk.”

“Okay, Unckles Olivah.” Oliver straightens the boy’s hair before letting him down. “Alright go ahead to the playroom and have some fun.” Watching Nathan leave he makes sure to say in a good-natured way, “No running!” And off the little boy goes on his merry way to find the other two that are busy in the playroom while their grandmother oversees them.

Moira Queen steps out of the vehicle followed by her daughter who hates the fact she has no choice in anything she wants to do. Her parents are sticking by their guns with treating her like a child. Since the accident she hasn’t been able to really hang out with friends that aren’t monitored by her dad while visiting her at the Queen mansion. She feels like a caged bird. Her sigh is audible and it has her mother shake her head as they are heading up on the elevator. “Thea, you will behave.”

“Mom! I’m not a child. There is no reason I couldn’t have gone to the mall.”

“You are still very much grounded.”

“Oh, come on… You’ve never been so hard pressed before why can’t I just…”
“We are at your brothers and you will behave. There are three children that mean the world to him and to our family.”

Thea wants to roll her eyes but being that it will only add more time to her sentence she just makes a grumble.

“You’ll get to interact with them. Donna and I want to finish decorating her room with the pieces that just came in.”

“When did you and Donna become BFFs?”

“She is actually a breath of fresh air.” Moira doesn’t smile as her daughter just gives her that patented Thea look but once her daughter just glances back to the opening elevator door Moira shows a wide smile before adding, “We actually have a lot in common.”

“Yea, right!”

“Well its true. We got to know one another through this remodel.”

“Okay then. Whoopie do.”

“Thea!”

“I know. Behave. I will… at least they’re adorable but I’d rather be out with my friends.”

“Of course, you would. Don’t tell the little ones their second place on your long list agenda.” Thea just rolls her eyes before the door opens and a very happy woman clamors them in.

The kids have witnessed their mother laughing at a corny joke by another man in their lives. He is super nice with them and always secretly gives them candy which they love very much but he isn’t their uncle Oliver that they have come to hope would one day kiss their mom and make them all a family. Their hanging out in their skybox in their room that they love so much. It where the feel comfortable talking about what ails them and right now, they are wondering if they’ll be calling Mr. Trevor Dumphrey’s their dad soon.

Oliver calls out slowly. “Doo-free” He makes a silly face as he says it again, “Mommy dooooooofee”

Lillian laughs at the silly name. Their mother has shared her name with them but they’ve never called her by her given name because to them her name is mommy. Nathan is just quietly taking in all this information but really hasn’t said anything to his own opinions. He likes Mr. Dumphrey enough, the man is very nice to them. He listens and he even has shared some funny stories but he isn’t their uncle Oliver.

They have noticed wherever their mother goes so does the man in question. Soon they’ll be kissy face and the kids aren’t too keen to that idea. Even though it is their wish to get a dad they’ve unanimously already chosen one and they see him daily now.
She texts Trevor that she’s on the move from her cubicle to a task on floor 17. This way he knows where she is and doesn’t creep out any of her colleagues. It would be weird for her to say she has a bodyguard.

Entering a side office, she can grasp this task won’t be enjoyable. This guy has had the IT department clean remotely after some virus attacks. Being he can’t get on to his computer she physically has to come see what the problem is. His demeanor is alarming from the get-go. She keeps from groaning as she makes her way to his desk.

“You must be new?” He checking her out as she sits on his work chair to look at the setup. He called the IT department

“I am. I just started a few days ago. I’m Felicity Smoak.”

“Your kind of pretty, are you seeing anyone? I’m Marc by the way.”

“Thanks, but I’m just here to fix your workstation.”

“Yea, I know but you can take a compliment better and be selfless like saying more than just thanks.”

Felicity stops typing mid-sentence to his jerky statement. She’s not going to let this fly. She turns to where he is standing behind him and quickly leaves his office chair. “Marc.” She glances to where a name plate has his whole name. Even though she knows exactly who he is. “Marc Gullian, I’m going to be frank with you. We just met and if you like your job you’ll learn the company’s protocol on employee interaction and not rely that your dad works as a Senior VP of international affairs.”

“You just started…” he’s puzzled, “How do you know…”

“I’m not just a pretty face in the IT department. Nor am I here for your entertainment. Now let me do my job so I can leave and tend to the next assignment.”

“Well with that attitude you aren’t going to make that many friends here.”

“It is a good thing that isn’t your concern.” She tilts her head enough that he gets the sign that she’s not going to engage any further.

“Okay, Fine. I’m sorry, can you just fix it?”

She gives him a tight smile and nods as she gets back to doing her job and is done in two minutes. She just wishes him a great day after telling him to make sure not to click on all the malware sites he seems to appreciate.

Donna leads Moira and herself onto her bedroom that has boxes and a few scattered items around.
They left this room for last wanting to make an impact on their own kids and grandchildren’s lives.

“The children are in their room; it seems the little up high loft space is a true hit for them. They love it.”

“It is a very spacious room but it had double doors to the balcony. They’re too young to be left unchecked.”

“Do you want to see them first?”

“I do miss them but I will allow my fussy daughter to interact and hopefully really bond.”

“Teenagers are rough. Always so hard to please.”

Moira only bobs her head in agreement. They start to look at the pieces that arrived recently.

A little while later, the women start to enjoy the fruits of their labor as the room’s setup looks more in tune with what they’ve been suggesting. Moira starts to bring Oliver’s birthday that is just a few more days. Talking about cakes and what decorations are.

“Oliver is actually being very specific.”

“It is his birthday party. He wants it to be memorable.”

“It is a first in so long that he just wants to celebrate with family. He had plans to do some outdoor trip with some college friends.”

“Really? He never mentioned.”

“Finding my boy to be a father has actually done him some good.” Moira moves the case over to the right as both women looks at their handy work. “Maybe his reckless adrenaline rush is in his past.”

“I hope so. Living on the edge is fine and dandy but when there are children involved, I think it’s foolish.”

“Exactly how I feel.”

Thea silently walks into her nephews and niece’s room as their looking at the projection upon the ceiling as their little voices carry a whimsical note within the room. It really is a cool bedroom. Its part magical with a sports theme. She’ll have to give her mom kudos on this endeavor.

Thea using a silly voice, “Hello? Anyone home?” She looks up at the enclosed box that the kids seem to love, shoot she’d love it to. It a real nice bonus to the room. “Can I come up?”

“Aunties!”

“Yes, it is I, your aunt Thea.”

Nathan looks at her as he raises his hand. “Password?”
Thea looks at the boy as she holds the railing on the steps as she thinks back to silly words the kids had incited the last, they spoke. “Puppy goats?”

Nathan sways his head a solid no. Oliver smiles big as he gives her a clue which makes his brother grumble.

“Daddy dog tail?”

“Yes!” Lillian screams out the word a few more times in a sing-song voice. Which gets Nathan to mumble out a yes. His siblings always have to outdo him in theatrics.

As Thea reaches the top she crawls into the over pillowed fort. Lillian is the first to hug her aunt. “Hi.”

“Hi Lilly. I like your outfit.”

“It’s green.”

“Yes, yes, it is.” Thea then says hi to the boys. “Hi Nate, hi Olly.” They respond back and then settle back to looking at the ceiling. As cool as the graphics are Thea isn’t one to sit and be amazed by it. “So, what’s the scoop?” The kids are looking at her with no clue what she just said. “I mean what were you three talking about before I showed up?”

“Oh!”

Thea can sense a little apprehension and now she’s piqued on knowing what troubles her nephews and niece.

“Nutting.” Nathan states. This conversation is an in-house kind of talk he has with his siblings only. Trusting adults with such information brings trouble. Like the kind of trouble that makes adults ask lots of questions. Lillian agrees with her brother. She’s knows firsthand what kid stuff not to say to big peoples. Wishes don’t come true if you make the fairies mad. Finding a daddy is to important. Oliver just mums up keeping for saying another thing.

“Oh, come on, please tell me?”

“Nah nah. Youse no kid.”

Thea can’t believe she is going to say this but she does, “I’m uncle Oliver’s baby sister. I’m still a kid and I’m grounded for being bad.” That gets the three kids’ attention. “I made my daddy mad, my daddy punished me.”

“Punish you? Like stand in corner?” She looks at the three little faces taking in her every word. This is kind of cool she thinks.

“No fun.” She makes a sad face, “No play.”

She hears three distinct little voices, “Ahh.” “No plays?” “Yuckkie. Playing is funs.”

“I know, being a kid, we need to stick together.” Well she’s getting their sympathy. “I’m here because I can’t go play with my friends.”

“Sowwie.” Lillian says automatically feeling sorry for her aunt. “You plays with us.”

“Really? I can play here with you all?” She looks at three somber faces and it hits her that she is kind of manipulating them. Her brother would be so disappointed.
Felicity finally gets to sit down at her depressing cubicle. She can’t understand how so many employees are just so illiterate to the basic computing functions. This is supposed to be the information age. Glancing at the modest desk in front of her that only has a QC brochure she pulls at it to read. Seeing an image of Oliver, she can’t help but smile as her index finger touches his face. She wonders when he had this picture taken. Must have been somewhere in his college days. She recalls he loved having floppy hair and his clean-shaven baby face is purely angelic to only his mother.

“He doesn’t frequent the IT department but he sure is a looker.” The only other woman in IT says as she shrugs at the picture Felicity is looking at.

Felicity playing along, “I suppose he is quite busy with his own endeavors, didn’t he just come back from a project at Palmer Tech?”

“I guess. Though I heard he shacked up with an ex while there.”

Felicity is a little shocked. She didn’t think anyone knew about her. “Really?”

“Yea, an old flame. Some lawyer now.”

Okay that answers that, at least her private relationship with Oliver is still private. “Oh. Does this lawyer have a sister?” Felicity closes the brochure and places it back on the empty desk. Her coworker is misinformed of Oliver’s love life but she isn’t going to correct her at all.

“I guess; I don’t really pay any mind. Rich people are notorious for swapping lovers like one moment there with some famous person until the next shiny toy.”

“That does sound like Mr. Queen’s MO.” Felicity chuckles. See sees her coworker give her a startled look as her head points to the door and Felicity turns to see a Mr. Queen staring at her with his eyebrow arched. “Mr. Queen, I wasn’t referring to you but your son. I mean… Not your son.” She can see her coworker scatter away from this mess.

“What exactly would be his or my MO?”

“Not my fault, Oliver’s college picture is in the brochure and he looks like one of those… you know what? I’m going to shut up now.”

Robert Queen guffaws at what he already can tell will be his future-daughter-in-law. “I actually came to talk more in-depth with the conversation that take took place over dinner yesterday.”

Felicity glances around. This area is too opened for privacy.

“Don’t worry I reserved a conference room on this floor.”

Felicity nods but then gets up to walk with Mr. Queen to the assigned room. On the way there they are stopped by at least five people who have an urgency to talk to the man only quietly observing her to his side that is until the head of IT notices Felicity is with his big boss.

“Mr. Queen. If you need IT support, I can get you someone more qualified. She just recently joined
the company.”

“I know Jake, and I am not thrilled she took an entry level when she should be at least a few grades over your own position.” Robert glances to where Felicity is standing. “This one is a tough cookie. Though at least we stole her from right under Palmer.”

“Mr. Queen!”

Her voice a little stern which is exactly what Robert Queen was expecting. “See, she’s tough. Won’t even let me get away with a fib.”

“Ray is a fine C.E.O. I enjoyed working with him.”

“Yes, I know he mentioned you as much as Oliver did.” Robert shrugging as he takes a look at the confused man before him, “Well Jake, I need to run some business with Ms. Smoak if you’ll excuse us.”

“Of course. Mr. Queen.” Jake takes his leave but not before taking a double take at the duo heading to where there are a few open conference rooms.

Oliver actually leaves Queen Consolidated before lunch he has a few things he wants to tend to without anyone privy or standing behind his shoulder for more pressing information. He’ll like to see the design for his birthday cakes. Three cakes that will hold a special filling. He wants to surprise his kids in the most memorable way. It will be the day the kids officially get a father. They are so bent out of shape that their mother could be kissing every unmarried man she comes in contact with. Like some weird fairytale they mentioned about finding her prince. They don’t lack imagination.

It was so hard to keep himself in check and not blurt out that he in fact is their father when they counted off all the reasons they want a father. Funny how it surprised him that it had a lot to do with their mother. He is so happy they truly love their mom and want her to find her prince. It shocking that he wasn’t a blubbering mess before them when they really pull on his heartstrings. He loves his family so much.
Mr. Dumphrey

Chapter Summary

The triplets have now pretty much spoken about Mr. Dumphrey and their mother probably kissing and soon having to go away to a new home to any adult who will listen.

Chapter Notes

Oliver doing all the finishing touches because this weekend his birthday party will be held and he gets to officially be a dad with his children. Though before any celebration can commence he and his girlfriend need to straighten out the kids of their absurd notion that Trevor is kissing their mom.

Thank you for reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation from chapter 19...

Felicity passes the daycare center on this floor as she enters the really nice cafeteria. She finds herself quite hungry and being she didn’t settle on making her lunch last night there was no way those extra minutes reveling in bed with her boyfriend that she’d use to make a sandwich. It wasn’t even on her mind. With her dressing for work and sneaking to her kids’ bedroom to observe their angelic faces before they would join the waking world. She just didn’t think of her stomach in a later time as she’s just eaten the breakfast that magically appeared for her by Oliver.

She beholds Marc sitting with two other males and a really pretty woman. She makes an inward groan as she can tell he’s already gossiping about her. Just great! Guess she’ll grab to go and sit at that depressing cubical that awaits her.

Passing the salad bar because well she isn’t into rabbit food; she’ll like something more substantial. Something that will hold her till dinner or she’ll graze every snack under the sun that she’ll encounter.

Looking at today’s specials she decides maybe that chicken dish with some butternut squash will calm her tummy down. The line is having a few patrons already so she glances at other opinions while she waits.

She hears a deep voice cutting her from her thoughts, “You should definitely look at those options over there.” She follows the man’s line of vision and sees the variety there is worse than the salad bar.
“No thanks, I’ll stick to my preferred choice.”

“You sure? I’m just giving friendly advice.”

“Thank you enough, you can say hi to Marc for me. Otherwise I’d like to get my lunch in peace.”

“Whatever suits your needs chubs.”

Felicity doesn’t respond as she reads an incoming text. Typing where she is and just turns to the man. “You know that was just so darn cute. Like middle school banter. I was actually a stick girl back then. A pregnancy later and I got some nice curves. I’m taken by the way.” She than looks to where the drinks are and takes a moment to glance at her choices finally settling on a tropical flavored water and one other bottled one until see sees Trevor and just waves at him as she grabs his favorite drink too and begins to head to the register.

Chapter 20 Mr. Dumphrey
The bakery also served some hot lunch which was fantastic as he grabbed three hot plates to go with an added bonus pastry for his girl. She may have forgotten to make a light lunchbox last night and unlike her he remembers basically what everyone in the household has eaten. Somehow in their weeks that he can’t believe has led to months of knowing the Smoaks. How time flies. His most impact in their world is their nutrition. So, picking up something for Felicity because she’ll be hungry is no problem at all and it will keep her from grazing on some really bad food choices. He knows his girl’s appetite.

He laughs inwardly as he is glad, he caught her before she bought addition lunch. Seeing her bodyguard observing his woman is strange now that he knows of his kids thinking process.

Walking to the updated cafeteria which he really hasn’t frequented much like he used to before massive meetings and business trips took him to eat wherever. He sees her near the beverage fridge area and so he talks to Trevor first and soon after they grab an open table.

Oliver stops to hear a man he’s known at QC for a few years. “Oliver, good to see you back. How was the East coast?”

“It was cold but bearable. Drew, how’s it going?”

“Good. Went out for lunch?”

“I had a few errands I wanted to tend to myself so I picked up something for me and my two friends.” He finishes saying his hellos when he quickly moves to pay for the drinks Felicity is holding. Having her go to their table. She passes Marc and his buddies and sits opposite where Oliver left his coat jacket but by Trevor’s side.

Oliver isn’t oblivious to some people watching him sit with his girl and her bodyguard. From anyone in the room it may look like Trevor is closer to her relation at how close she sitting near him.

Felicity is just interested in what is in the food bag. She’s already tuned out all these people. She isn’t going to let this moment with her boyfriend be ruined also she likes Trevor’s company and being super close to him keeps speculation that she is anywhere near romantically involved with Oliver.

“There are two choices, you can have the hearty stew which comes with mashed potatoes and extra carrots or the steak tips with a baked potato and green beans?”

“Surprise me.”

“Okay here is the tips, I know you like them better and we’ll trade on the potato choices.” He gives the other one to Trevor that is like his.

“Yum!” She takes the carton from him and gladly gives him the baked potato. “Tell me? How was the bakery?”

“Exactly the design I so envisioned I am super excited.” Oliver takes a swig of his drink. He notices one of the guys at the table behind Felicity turn around and he just gives a friendly nod wondering what he wants.

“I thought you’d be heading to Colorado for that rapid waters adventure for your birthday?”

Felicity moves slightly to look at some new faces. Unlike the table behind Oliver that has a few gossipers.

“Change of plans.” He gives Felicity a warm smile. “I’m spending it with my whole family. This
year it’s a little different and family is where it is at.” He doesn’t want to just blurt out that Felicity is his girlfriend without her prior permission. They are coming out publicly around his birthday.

She takes the initiative. Taking her fork while many eyes are planted on Oliver maneuvering it so that the visual is there as she takes a carrot from his dish and just enjoys eating the vegetable. As she goes to do it a second time while that man responds back to her boyfriend, she has her fork situated for him to lean down and takes the carrot off her utensil. It creates a circumstance of what kind of relationship they really have. So much for having Trevor around.

While Oliver is chewing, she makes eye contact with the man who is waiting on a response and introduces herself, “I’m Felicity Smoak, I may be the reason he staying in Starling.” That gets a few Oh’s. “I’ve been quietly taking in QC and it is impressive.” Just like that she digs back onto her plate and Oliver can’t help but smirk. Giving Trevor a little shrug.

“Smoke? Are you new here?” The same gentleman asks curiously in jest of small talk.

Trevor answers, “It spelt S-M-O-A-K.” He can’t help the snark he’s protective of his boss’s girl.

“Oh. Okay. Well nice to meet you Ms. Smoak.”

Felicity dislikes that she had to swallow fast to look presentable and smile at the men behind her. “Thanks.”

“Well welcome to QC, guess we are lucky to have you here.”

She does now genuinely smile at the man and as she’s about to thank him again, Oliver beats her this time, “Thanks Phil, but there is no guessing we are lucky to have Ms. Smoak join our ranks.” She just thanks them both and goes back to eating. Oliver can take a hint that she isn’t into any more conversations and just wants to eat. He’s also hungry and he finally tells Phil thanks but he’d like to finish his meal before time gets the best of them.

As Felicity finishes a bite, she finally asks in a low tone how his trip to the bakery will coincide with the design.

“I’m meeting with the designer tomorrow. You want to come along?”

“I probably should go. It’ll be helpful when I’m actually helping putting it all together in a few days.”

“Well I’m game also. If she’ll be there so will I.”

Oliver shook his head at that. It probably isn’t the best time to actually say anything but he already has one objective to do tonight and that is set things straight that their mom isn’t dating Trevor.

“About that, the kids’ thing you and Felicity are going to get married.” Probably shouldn’t have said it when both of them were drinking from their bottled waters.

Felicity chokes loudly which gets a lot of unnecessary attention. It’s Trevor’s reaction that makes Felicity choke even further. The man is laughing as he says, “Marrying Felicity wouldn’t be a hardship. She’s actually a special kind of nut.”

Oliver shakes his head but seeing Trevor patting Felicity’s back when it should be him is kind of the point that his kids have been making. “Yea, well she’s my nut. Honey are you okay?”

“No.” She coughs onto her hand and Oliver doesn’t care who see them now. He’s on one knee before her, “Hey baby, breath.” Helping her calm down he grabs her water bottle and has her take a sip. “We’ll handle it later okay?”
“Sure, they think I’m with him.” She uses her thumb to point to Trevor.

‘Hey, you could do worse.” He says it as he’s laughing, he then adds after hearing Oliver’s groan, “Though I’d be the lucky one. They are amazing kids and any man would be lucky to call them his own.”

Oliver keeps quiet he knows Trevor is also telling him how lucky he is without spilling the beans to anyone in this cafeteria.

Felicity looks between both men, “Oliver, get up. You need to head to that meeting so we’ll see you later.” She turns to Trevor, “It seems lover boy here needs to behave.” She can see Oliver’s eyes narrow before he composes himself. He can’t wait to have this section of his life in the open. He’d really like to kiss her before leaving but he just says his goodbye and grudgingly leaves.

Felicity tries not look at the people who had front row seats to this mess as she grabs Oliver and her containers to dispose of. Trevor on her heals as they leave this cafeteria. What ever gossip is spread its going to be a whopper.

Thea laying upon the posh pillow as she has her niece laying beside her as their looking at the fairies cross the ceiling. The boys have already said their peace and are in the hunt of more adventures leaving the girls to talk on.

“Youse so pretty.” Lilly is stroking her aunt’s hair.

Thea just glances at the younger unbeknownst Queen and gives the girl a cute smile. “I think you are the prettiest.” That makes the young girl giggle.

“My bubba says I look like my momma.”

“As cute as a button.” She taps her niece’s nose. Thea has never thought she could hear a story about Fairies from three little kids and land up wondering if they were real. Their animated imaginations are just so charming.

Their fears that they shared with her hits her like wow! How its like not to have a daddy of their own and wishing one to materialize in what they hoped it was her brother to now wondering if another man is what they’ll be calling their dad soon. These three have no idea what’s around the corner.

Thea’s anger of being pushed to come here evaporates as soon as this trio welcomes her into their fold. Gosh, instantly she becomes a protective auntie. She’d do anything for them and she needs to tell her brother that they are really so confused. They love him and want him to be their dad. The thought of not seeing him anymore as they’ll have to move again is something these three are keeping to themselves.
Moira and Donna hear two distinctive laughing boys running down the hall to the playroom. “I guess it’s our cue to check on things.”

Moira asks wondering, “Two of the three?”

“It sure does sound like it.” Donna already on the move. Leaving them in their rooms she knows they’ll be more reserved. In the playroom the horseplay is a lot wilder and needing adult supervision at times. “Time to check on the cherubs.”

Moira trailing behind. She misses them already and being she hasn’t hugged them yet is now resonating with her. She needs her hugs and kisses.

“Bubba!” Nathan says as he brings his toy truck closer to her when he sees Moira he gets up from his knees and runs to the woman. “Morrey!” Oliver is already at the woman’s grasp as he gets picked up first for a hug and many little kisses.

“Nathan, my sweet boy.” She picks the excited boy up next. It seems the boys are playing with the trucks they so desired and she made happen. They are large vehicles one for each child. They came with building blocks and little people.

“I play with the trucks.”

“I see.” He gets another hug before she releases him to continue playing. Spoiling these three has been a pleasure. She knows from this point she has to play it cool and only get extravagant gifts on certain holidays because Oliver specifically said in a no-nonsense voice, she’d only make Oliver look like the bad guy as he’d stop these gifts from becoming a main stay. She believes he means it.

Some of the toys disappeared since Felicity joined him. Donated already to charity. That was harsh but hesitantly she agrees that sometimes too much is not a good thing. He only asks that they know love. Moira is no fool she knows that Felicity is the one to tell him to tell her that her love is all these three angels need. Every moment she spends with them it is her who gets to know what being loved by them means and they have yet to know she is their grandmother. Her heart can’t wait to see their reactions.

Donna can tell her friend is having the feels. It isn’t hard with how expressive these three kids are. They aren’t ones to hold back. The kids are happier now that they’ve connected with Oliver. It the semblance of family that they dream of a family that includes a father.

“Where is your aunt Thea and Lillian?”

“Dey be looking at fairies.” Oliver says as he pushes his truck to collide with his brothers. “Bubba, when is mommy coming home?”

“A few more hours?”

Nathan pulls his tipped over truck upward before asking, “She coming home with Mr. Doofee again?”

“Yes, Mr. Dumphrey will be accompanying her home.” She can see his face fall. Glancing at the other woman in the room with her and she has no idea what just happened.

Moira asks an important question to the boys, “Is Mr. Dumphrey a nice man?”
Oliver answers for his brother. “He gives us candy.’

Moira doesn’t know what to do with that answer so defaults to Donna to clarify. “Why does he give you candy?”

Nathan speaks up this time he’s tired of keeping a secret, “Cuz we like candy. He also talks to us and even lets us play with him. He’s a nice man and he going to be our daddy.”

Both women’s mouths fall.

Felicity is moving some pieces of a network adapter together on her desk and she has lost track of time. She’s taking off earlier than usual so the IT dept is full of her coworkers. It takes a voice to take her from the task she’s engrossed in.

“Felicity?” her eyes whip up to look at Oliver who is somewhat amused.

Her voice stern and confused, “Why are you here?” It gets some of her coworkers to gaze her way because she’s kind of being authoritarian to her boss.

“Check the time.” She looks at the clock finally and her eyes become big.

“Oh! I’m late.”

“Bingo! Come on let’s go.”

Grabbing her purse from under her desk she’s getting up to stand handing her purse to him and he automatically takes it. That is just right after Jake leaves his office and to see another Queen waiting on Felicity Smoak. He observes that the woman who is enigma is really more than what she seems. They way the younger Co-C.E.O. to be in the reigns this summer takes hold of her purse as if that surely is a normal occurrence in his life. He can now confirm that Ms. Smoak is more than just an IT girl.

“Sorry Oliver, Time ran away with me.”

“Nothing that hasn’t happened before. That’s why I came down here to get you.”

Felicity notices her boss. “Mr. Carlson, I’m off I already got your authorization this morning.”

“I know Ms. Smoak. Have a wonderful night. See you tomorrow.”

“Thank you. Good night.” She also says a few goodbyes to a few people and she off exiting with Oliver. Some notice that he waits for her to pass him before he closes the door behind them.

“Can’t believe I call this home.” She says looking awe struck at the entrance to the garage.
“Babe, you live upstairs.”

She rests her head on his shoulder as a small chuckle emanates from her. “I know that silly. Its still a lot to take in.”

He takes the hand in his hand and brings it to his lips. “I love that you’re still in awe because I feel the same way. This place truly feels like a home now and not just a hollow residence.”

They happen to say it seconds apart, “I love you.” And a chaste kiss to just seal this moment.

“You ready?” He asks as their vehicle stops near the elevator so they can get off. The door opens and Trevor holds their door.

“Good luck with the kids.”

“Thanks Trevor.” Felicity gives him a small smile and Oliver just nods. Its time to set some things straight without giving up the endgame to the kids. The surprise this weekend is important to Oliver.

Heading up Oliver wraps her in his arms. “They think you and Trevor are a couple.”

“I have no idea why they would even think that.”

“You wouldn’t believe I got a text from Thea minutes before my mother’s urgent call.”

“Oh no!”

“Yes baby, you are leaving me for the bodyguard. I’m quite hurt.” Being in his arms she isn’t able to whack his arm but the elevator reaches their stop and he has this huge smile. “Come on Mrs. Doofee.”

“I can see where the kids get their humor.” Before he opens the door, he makes sure to surprisingly take her back for a more intimate kiss. Something they won’t be able to do until the kids are in bed. “Wow. While your still young you’ll do that again. Right?”

“Funny, if you start with the old man jokes, I’d get you back in a few months when thee birthday comes around.”

“Ah, sensitive. I’ll keep my teasing to bedroom jokes.” She winks as she ready herself to see her babies as they need to know their momma isn’t kissing every man under the stars.

Oliver gets them in and the environment sounds to quiet. The kids are usually overactive at this time. Oliver goes and checks the security feed on instinct while he has Felicity by his side. If something is amiss, he doesn’t want her caught in it too.

Looking like everything is fine. Felicity now checking the video feeds and both sigh a relief as they see the kids are sleeping on those big pillows in playroom that they still adore. Their daddy did good on that purchase alone.

“I’m going to go look for my mom.”

“Okay.” Oliver impulsively says as he wants to visually check on the kids.
Oliver finds a sleeping Donna near the playroom. She’s sprawled on a sofa with a small blanket. It must have been a very hectic day if his girl’s mother is out like the children. He knows these three are a handful and with the visits of his own mother and sister the insanity must have been high. He hears Felicity heading his way and he points to her mom as she comes into view. Watching his girlfriend fix the blanket around her mom is such a motherly thing to do he can’t help but sport a smile.

Even with the kids sleeping they want to glance at each one and make sure they are okay before they head to their room to change. Making sure not to make any sort of loud noises as they make it to their room. As soon as the tie is off Oliver practically undresses quickly just leaving his boxers on as he takes to watching Felicity do her routine.

Not really noticing her boyfriend as placing a more comfortable house dress over her head she asks, “How urgent was your mom’s call?”

“Not as drastic as Thea’s is the bodyguard doing more than the paid watching.” Oliver adds, “With a few more interesting expletives.”

“That sounds like something she’d say.”

“I have to warn her to keep her potty mouth from slipping when near the kids.”

“Ah good idea. So, what did your mom say?”

“A lot more reasonable. Just warning us that we need to clean out the air. The kids really believe that they’ll be moving away soon to a new home. They aren’t happy about it.”

“Our poor babies.” Felicity moves to their shared couch. “Can’t wait for this weekend. It really will clear up everything for them.” She notices he hasn’t yet gotten his sweats on but conveys nothing simply enjoys the view.

“I was just thinking maybe we should tell them we are together?”

“Oh no. Oliver, the impact of the surprise is much more important.”

He slides onto the chair with her. “I don’t like them thinking that…”

“Oliver, you are their father. Their father! They shouldn’t think they’ll be getting you as a father by being with me. If we speak half truths today it will undermine everything.”

He looks up at the ceiling she’s right and lets out a small groan. “We just tell them that you and Trevor aren’t an item?”

“That is the truth. Closer to the truth we stay better it is.” She places her hand on his cheek. “I already have a kissing partner and your it.”

“How long do you think we have?”

“They don’t know we are home so…”

“Good enough answer.” He’s already up and pushing her to him. After a kiss he doesn’t make a rookie mistake because Felicity is right the surprise he wants to give them this weekend is to important and he locks their bedroom door.
He contently watches Felicity makes patterns across his chest. This afternoon delight wasn’t a scheduled performance and it amazes him that they’ve really kept the kids from catching on that they’re a couple. Leaning down to kiss her they hear the door knob move.

He can tell it’s the kids. Oliver makes the sign to be quiet as they listen. Pulling apart slightly Oliver isn’t letting Felicity scurry off and welcome the brood yet. He also has made it abundantly clear that there is a line and if the kids are okay, they’re not welcomed in their private space. Felicity just smiles to his naïve notion but for now has gone along with it. Their kids aren’t privy to their ‘parents’ sleeping arrangement.

“Doors stucky.” A little girl voice’s out. Oliver and Felicity can tell their two sons are talking to each other but can’t make out what they’ve said.

“Me see.” Nathan tries himself and the door doesn’t open.

“Mommy going to see Roger we be big troubles!” Felicity looks around and sees one of their stuffed animals poking from under the bed. She slowly goes to retrieve it keeping from alarming the kids to her presence.

“Shh! We opens de door and gets Roger.” More moving of the door knob and Oliver shakes his head at the clownery of his kids. His girlfriend gives him the toy. Pointing to the couch he decides to play act and lays down to be asleep holding Roger tightly to his chest. Before Felicity opens her bedroom door, she makes a quick check to herself.

“What is going on?”

“Mommy!” Three surprised voices alarmed that their mom is home.

“Quiet, your uncle Oliver is asleep.” She points to the long couch in the room. The kids needing their mom’s hugs before they investigate because of course they need to check on their uncle too.

Lillian points to their uncle as she whispers very loudly, “Roger!”

“Lilly!”

“Sowwie. Uncals sleeping?”

She hears the man moan. Little Oliver hearing the moan tilts his head knowing the adult is waking up.

“Oh nos. We wakey hims up. Hes be mad.” Nathan indicates it out to his siblings. They’ve never really seen their uncle be upset with them but waking up is a different matter they’ve seen their bubba and mother wake up grumpy. Now they hear their grandmother calling for them. Felicity calls to her as the kids intriguingly watch their uncle. As per usual Lilly is the braver of the three and she goes to recue Roger from an adult’s clutch.

Hearing the growl from the sleeping figure, “Hmm mine.”

Lillian stands back a bit but goes to grasp for the rabbit again and Oliver’s eyes flicker open and the little girl yelps as she taken into his arms. Soon after she is laughing as she’s getting little kisses which have to boys’ flock to the couch to have their uncle’s attention too.
“Mom, Oliver and I would like to talk to the kids about you know…” Donna nods knowing exactly what she is referring to understands as she peeks at the happy moments the triplets are having with their father.

“Okay, I have a playroom that needs tidying up I’ll be there if you need me.”

“Thanks mom.” Turning to her three kids and the man who is truly happy in these moments. Using her as a soundboard he threw out birthday ideas that would include how to tell three of the most important individuals to this man that he is indeed their father, not uncle, not just their momma’s friend but their real-life biological father. In a cute kid-friendly way. After a few thoughts an idea emerges that both Oliver and herself loved.

The man than decided he would also surprise his family with his own style of decorating because after all every moment after the reveal his family would be known to their children as their paternal family. Family the kids never dreamed of but will get as an added bonus.

They had a few locations picked out but instead his parents offered their home which wasn’t really the ideal place but it was private or the beach house which well with young kids the place wasn’t as secure and any place that isn’t kid friendly would be out of the equation. John Diggle’s suggestion worked out the best. He and his wife had kids and lived on a nice set of private land so ordering farm animals for a party wouldn’t create any media buzz. The last few days their friend John has been receiving cases that the design team would use. Oliver and John have gone over a few things with the designer and so this weekend was a big deal.

“Okay little ones, now that you got your uncle up, its chatting time.” The kids are sprawled between the sofa and the floor as they having fun with their uncle. The kids freeze. All eyes are on their mom.

“But first!” Oliver interrupts “Why was Roger in the no-no room?” This is a room like the exercise room/kitchen and any room that could lead to danger like access to a balcony that neither of these three are allowed in. Lillian looking the most bashful in a guilty kind of way. “Lillian?”

“Sowwie uncals Olivah but de fairies Roger dere friends.”

“Under your mother’s bed?” The girl nods innocently as she tries to convey that he is the most prized wish, meant talking to fairies that brought him to them is important. “This room is a no-no.”

Nathan speaking out because he’d do anything to get the same wish his sister has. They found a shirt of his discarded at the end of the bed and wished that he kissed their mommy so he’d share the bed with their mom like most daddies do. They believe in fairies it is what their grandmother centered their birthday around. The cute winged little people brought hope and magic of good things that can be. They want a dad. So logically they have an understanding about getting a father in a magical way. “Dey fairies stay heres because mommy sleeps here.”

Oliver is off the couch and placing each kid on it instead. All three-look frightened as if they scared the magic beings away.

“Oh, my little dumplings, you really do listen to your bubba’s wild stories.” After a sigh she continues, “I actually wanted to talk about Mr. Dumphrey and I.”

“Is he here? “

“Yes, mommy is he here I don’t see him.”

“Yep, where is Mr. Doopfree?” says the young Oliver looking around his surroundings now.
“He is at home with his wife and two dogs.”

“Wife?” “Dogs” Felicity’s favorite is Nathan saying, “Doofee gots dogs.” While raising his hands in a defeated way. They love dogs.

Oliver laughs, “Yes, he has two Labradors but I asked him not to talk about dogs.”

“Why?” Is simultaneously asked.

“Not to make you jealous. He is a nice man who cares about you three.”

“So, mommy no kissing him.” Nathan states as he looks directly at Oliver and not his mother because of their morning chat. That gets Felicity to raise her eyebrow at her boyfriend.

“Nathan asked me this morning because you left and he had a concern.”

Felicity looks at her kids and finally states, “No kissy face with Trevor Dumphrey but I may kiss his cheek on occasion he is my friend.”

“Like you kiss Mistah Kaween cheek?” She just nods at her middle child’s question. That brings a soft quietness in the room and then just as fast the kids are slipping from the couch and already interested in go back to playing. They grab the stuffed animal called Roger and leave the two adults to just shake their heads at all the absurdity.

Chapter End Notes

next update... Someone turns a year older and celebrating his birthday is a certain style.
Birthday Boy

Chapter Summary

Days leading and the actually day of Oliver Queen’s birthday and its shared by family and friends. The children find out that the fairies gave them their greatest wish.

Chapter Notes

Felicity Smoak being the daughter of Noah Kuttler in this story her birthname was changed. It is mentioned why she has no problem after truly thinking about it that her children take their father’s last name. I just wanted to point this out first. Otherwise I would have named them Smoak-Queen like I originally planned. As always thanks for reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation from chapter 20…

Oliver chuckles after the kids leave. “Fairies live under our bed.”

“No, they live under my bed. You sleep on the couch.”

He shakes his head. The kids know that this is his bedroom and now it’s also their mothers and yet focused on Trevor Dumphrey as a culprit that could kiss their mom. “I know their smart maybe it’s because you slept on a futon for years that they haven’t added all the clues together.”

“That and they never really seek me out at night especially if their tummies don’t hurt so their comfy on their beds and not climbing in bed with us.”

“Hmmm. True. They seem to soothe each other.”

“They do. Those three are each other’s sounding boards.”

He realizes that is true. They’ll go to each other before seeking out any adult. “How often do they get ill? I’ve only been around when Nate’s bruised his arm with that stunt that he needed his mommy’s kisses to help make it all better.”

“They are pretty healthy last couple of years, standard running noses, coughs.” She takes a moment to think specifics. “Lilly had an ear infection a year ago, Nate was a fussy baby, Oliver…” She stops there was a time when they were newborns that Oliver had to be hospitalized. He almost didn’t make it.

He can sense a dark pause and he’s worried that their middle son has a chronic ailment. “What about
Oliver?”

“He was hospitalized when he was three months of age but he’s healthy now. That is all that matters.”

He still wants to know “How serious?”

“It was touch and go shortly after his birth. Let’s just say our eldest was a nice size baby.” She hopes that it is enough for him to understand. “I had a monochorionic-diamniotic pregnancy. That’s because Lillian was a part of the mix otherwise it would have been a monochorionic where both boys shared the same placenta.”

Becoming a father of triplets, he got curious and actually looked into it. “I get it. It resulting in less blood flow and nutrition to Oliver.” She shakes her head yes. Oliver brings her into a hug. There is a lot he missed and things like this only incorporates how lucky he is that they’re all home safe with him now. His family means the world to him “Well… Talking about nutrition, it is time I start to make our next meal.” A quick kiss later, “Come on, be my beautiful helper?” Her snort is all he needs to know she is onboard.
With Felicity by his side in the kitchen they can talk specifics about the party and their daily family life. Things are rapidly changing and so many things center around their three kids. They have talked about childcare. Starling is their permanent home. Deciding that placing the kids at the QC’s daycare program for certain days of the week would be best option because they’ll be close to either of them. It is time Donna gets a life outside babysitting duty.

“Do you think the kids will be okay with the name change?”

“Oliver? Are you starting to second guess things?”

“No.” He can tell she doesn’t believe him. “Yes, I just want everything to transition well. It’s a big change.”

“Of course, it is. They’re getting their most prized wish.” She makes sure no one other than them is around. “A daddy, not just any daddy but their best birthday father they could ever wish for.”

“I love them so much.”

“I know honey; it is what made it easy to relinquish my name. When we talked about all this, I told you I love my mother’s maiden name but I was born a Kuttler.”

“Still it’s a big change for you. I know it too late now because the paperwork has been filed and practically stamped. They are Queens.”

“Oliver?” He makes a slight hum. “These are the moments I love you the most. Talking to me. With us being decisive about our children.”

“Do you think it’s still too early to get married?”

She uses her thigh to bump his. “Yes. We basically just met.”

“Yea, the endorphins are just sky high.” He laughs as he repeating what she’s told him. They’ve talked things out and marriage is a likely step for them, it’s more like a when than if. He knows right now it is just too early for them. Doesn’t mean they can’t talk about. He has never been so earnest with another human being and as much as it freaks him out it also is the most enthralling feeling. He’s never felt so comfortable with someone. He may have bared some facets of himself to his therapist because that man knows some deep sated feelings he’d never have the guts to tell a loved one. Except this person. He finds it is easily someone he spills any concerns with and she in turn seems to be doing the same.

“It will be weird not to share my children’s last name.” Being she is slicing some vegetables as he’s prepping the rest of the main meal just by her side. “It was an action I am okay with so don’t be concerned but it’s weird for four-years they were Smoaks and now they’re Queens.”

It was a conversation they had before settling the finality of it all in front of a judge. Felicity even asked her mom if it was a sell out but as her mom told her she didn’t become a Smoak until around her eighth birthday. When her parents split and Donna wanted to keep the people who associated her with the ex-husband’s criminal lifestyle otherwise, they would still be a Kuttler today. It was a drastic change and it wasn’t done on a whim but out of fear. Donna tells her that when one day she’ll get to choose if taking her husband’s name is on the table and with the kids being Queens the choice may
be simple enough.

Oliver adding what he’s already asked, “We can amend it to Smoak-Queen?” he watches as she places the cutting knife down and she shakes her head no many times over. He knows the fragmented story from the eyes of a seven-year old that lost her dad.

“No. It’s a new chapter and I’m not going to unravel everything I’ve committed to. For years I was angry to be a Smoak because I believed my dad really wanted nothing to do with me.” He takes her into a hug. “They love saying Queen anyhow.” Making sure her eyes are dry she goes back to her task.

“Okay. Then it’s settled. Now for tomorrow. I made sure it was cleared but we leave here at nine to meet with the designer. I get to cut a check for the rest of the supplies and we talk last minute formalities.”

“I do love the baby animals’ theme.”

“Good. It was basically your idea. The farm animals will be delivered with their handler about an hour early before the party is set to begin.”

“I guess it all sounds good.”

“We haven’t talked about the kids having a sleepover at my parents. Tomorrow night your mom and the kids are heading there. We won’t see them until the party.”

“That’s because I’m trying not to think about it.” She makes a dramatic sigh. “I will miss them so much. Look we are basically watching them playing with the Lincoln Logs they so love.” She’s pointing to the screen just off to the side.

“At least their sleeping room will have video feed. My mother knows you’d be a mess without it.”

“Oh.” She gives him a weary look. “Sure, use the girlfriend when we both know you’ve checked on them during the night a few times already.”

He gives her a sheepish smile he’s never told her he has done that a few times. Sometimes he wakes up and makes sure they’re not a dream his mind conjured up. He guesses his departure from the bed has her wake up and now that he recalls when he climbs back into bed she seems to be in an amorous mood. He should have known. His mouth opens and quickly closes. He’s not sorry to check up on his kids. He also doesn’t know the rules. Is he supposed to tell her everything he does with or for the kids? He doubts she tells him her every step with them too.

“Sweetie, this isn’t an inquiring. They’re your children I’m just telling you I’ve noticed the empty bed and finding you hoovering over them on the vid feed as you’d fix their blankets while mumbling something soothing to their already sweet dreams.”

“So, this is more about me telling my mom of your worries when I’m as guilty of it?”

She wants to wrap her arms around him but the video feed shows the kids are on the move. “I’d so kiss you now but we’ll have company soon.” As her last words leave her mouth, they can hear the kids calling out to their grandmother to hurry so they can go upstairs. They have really paid attention in the most part to the rules that their parents explicitly laid out for them.

“Before you go meet them half way, after dinner the usual is a movie but tonight is special and I got them some puzzles that as a family we could all enjoy.”
Felicity can’t help it as she just has to kiss him. These small gestures Oliver seems to pull are so perfectly inclusive that she wonders how lucky she has gotten to find the one man she never could imagine in her life to becoming the only man in the universe for her.

Oliver lets out a hum in appreciation but they are on borrowed time for now and she leaves him to makes sure the troops make it up the stairs safely. “Hi babies. Are you all hungry?”

Oliver places the remnants of what Felicity was cutting up into a bowl as he finishes up the salad. The smell of what’s for dinner must have trigged the rascals to come upstairs. It is becoming a common melody and at least no one has to entice them for their supper.

The kids are all talking over each other and once upon a time Oliver couldn’t follow them this way now its like a second language that he can decipher with ease. They are hungry. Slowly the grown-ups have been assimilating little chores and dinner time is where it all begins. They help set the table. Nothing liking observing little bobbing enthusiastic beings working in rhythm. Only ever to stop when it seems they’re trying to outdo the other. Competition may be healthy but to keep the harmonic balance the adults have made sure to nip certain activities that’ll never make it to the menu.

“Is smells yummys.” Their middle child is truly the nose of those three. Oliver moving the first dish to the table as Donna makes sure the kids are all situated onto their seats.

“Yes. I know you can smell the brownies.”

Nathan spotting the brownies cooling down where he has noticed his uncle place any and all desserts. The boy just nods as he hears his brother saying how he can’t wait to eat it. Lillian is more interesting in the green leafy dish that was just placed on the table. Her love of green has no limit. She doesn’t even notice the brownies her brothers have eyed.

Throughout dinner Oliver and Felicity are finding the kids have turned the dinner into asking what he wants for his birthday. It seems they have all created something for him and that tomorrow night they’ll be shopping for his gift. They have so many questions. Oliver be delighted by some of the most absurd gifts he could want.

It Lilly who offers the best one as she thinks of a good gift she’s received and tells him, “Wats about a big pillow youse wraps your arms and sleep like a baby?”

Oliver already seems to have that as he looks to his girlfriend and just winks at her as he answers, “That’d be very sweet Lilly but I already own so many pillows. You know what I would like?” The three kids all ask what in their own way. “I’d like something small like really small that I can share with these fairies that you all seem to love.” They seem quite happy that he is including one of the things they believe in. Their eyes big as their little minds go into overdrive for the best gift.

This leads them to segue onto puzzle night.

His fingers silence the ringing coming from the alarm clock. He can hear his girlfriend snorting at how much his displeasure he has for that thing. Making him grumble another moan. The wretched noise maker disturbed his peaceful sleep and it is very unpleasant how he had to turn over to find the damn box.
“I told you a nice upgrade to voice control you could be growling at the thing instead.”

“What’s the difference? I’d still be growling?” His voice deep from sleep and it has Felicity turn to face him.

Her fingers softly stroking his cheek, “The difference is your growly voice turns me on.” Her fingers slowly follow a certain pulse point on his neck downwards slowly. “The pounding of your fist as you try to locate the box as you let out a grumbling explicit is not as arousing.”

His eyes dilate as he takes in the beauty of her soft blue orbs. “Is that so?” Her soft hum confirms it. “I guess that upgrade is overdue.” He doesn’t wait for a response as he goes in for a kiss. What starts off as an ambitious morning kiss turns into another eager one that has him a little more driven in showing her his scope of growly voices.

Their bodies following the particular dance of lovers he makes sure to make it known by means of his vocal range leaving little kisses just under and around her own jaw line. Her own body moving on its own volition yielding to a primal force that can’t seem to get enough of his essence.

With tomorrow marking another year he has graced this Earth he couldn’t be any more appreciative for what he has now. His passion for this woman is beyond what he ever thought possible. It appears the insatiable desires she brings out is a new norm for him. It’s a yearning that only Felicity Smoak can quench. It dawns on him those frivolous conversations that his two best friends have expressed about being with the one that makes a man feel whole has taken center stage within his own world.

Considering the glimpse of so much love is being mirrored towards him and he articulates with words caroling out in a deep satisfied tone how much he loves her. Her own musings being seen from his own tapered eyes peering back at her. She truly does love this man. The way he brings her out of a shell she never thought could happen. Walls built over years of rejection even before Oliver came into her life all those years ago she felt the harsh sting of the only man she loved walk out on her. Since her father left, no one from the male gender has even made a dent in making her feel good about herself. Some men have been nice enough but if their critique off her body’s image didn’t indicate a pending doom of a blossoming relationship. Their off comment sayings that if she lost a few extra pounds she could be a knockout that is… if her three kids’ existences didn’t freak most away.

She thought for sure Oliver would be one of those men. As much as he could care about the woman she is he wouldn’t be able to overlook some flaws. The man exudes sex appeal he would crave nothing less than a perfect image of what basically every beauty magazine depicts. He’s shown the exact divergence with her from anyone else he has ever been publicly tied to. Oliver even being alarmed at her self-deprecating practice from their recent dubbed honeymoon period. Where her deep rooted shame tried to hijack the romantic setting for their second glorious night together. A night he spent showing her how well their bodies mixed. Never faltering to tell her how attracted he is to her. It’s been mind-altering to know this man appreciates her curves.

“I love you to.” Tumbling to just sprawl by his side as he is turned to just behold her before resting fully on his back making sure to move all her glory to fit heavenly against him.

“You’re spoiling me.” He says moving a few strands of her hair. Felicity just observing him as he deeply relaxes. The night before they had a wonderful family night. Those kids and their exorbitant excitement can tire out their parents after a long day. Felicity’s innuendos between all the puzzles that Oliver brought for his family did not help the situation as the old man jokes could be used last night because he was just so worn-out to fully please her. It doesn’t help that the kids love the horse bit. His knees especially do not. He’s going to have to figure an alternative. Though he couldn’t say no to Felicity wanting her turn to be the cowgirl. No. He couldn’t say no to that at all. “Last night
“Fun!” She gives him a broad smile. The kids really enjoy abusing their father. It seems that with Mr. Dumphrey worries behind them they made their favorite uncle their focal point of jubilation. “I can see why the kids love their horsey so much.” That makes him crack up.

“You can mount me anytime.”

“I…” Her words die off as both Oliver and herself come aware that one of their kids is at their bedroom door. With a small huff Oliver rolls out of bed and moves quickly to the ensuite.

“Mommy?”

Felicity turns her side of the lamp on even with the lamination of the moon it still can be scary for a child. “What’s wrong baby?” The little girl runs onto the room and is on the bed already crawling quickly to be in her mother’s arms. Little arms holding her mother tight as the little girl starts to cry. “Lillian? What’s wrong?”

“Dey be gone?”

“Who is gone?” Felicity’s more than a little bit alert. “Oh…” Felicity can feel her heart rate increase if she wasn’t stark naked she would be off the bed and already moving to her children’s room. Oliver walks out of the bathroom in some sweats and looks at his daughter as he grabs the monitor feed and turns it on giving it to Felicity as he is already on the move to actually get a visual on his supposedly sleeping sons.

Getting there in a flash he sees Nathan and Oliver sleeping comfortably in their beds. He goes even further to check that they are indeed asleep. Listening to their rhythmic breathing Oliver can take a long deep breath. There is nothing amiss in this room other than his little girl isn’t sleeping peaceful by her brothers’ side. Walking back to his room to check on Lillian and find out what has her so riled up.

He can hear Felicity trying to soothe their baby girl. Lillian is crying softly against the beds sheet covering her mother’s chest and he doesn’t like seeing her so upset. The little girl mumbling her rant but he can’t make it out with all the sniffling.

“Lilly? What’s wrong?” Oliver is upon the bed a place the kids have never seen him on before. Lillian moves her face from her mother’s bosom to crawl to him just as easy. “Hey, tell your mommy and me. We’ll make it all better.” He knows Felicity has probably got the gist of their daughter’s problem but he like to know what he can do to make it better.

“Dese be gone, uncals Olivar-h.”

“Who are they?”

“De fairies. Dey left.” Oliver doesn’t need much more to that as he knows how important these fairies are. They’re the connection to make him their father. They so believe in their magic. He’ll be damned if he’ll see her cry if he can really make it better and he guesses Felicity can tell he’s about to spill the beans.

She beats him to the punch, “Oh my sweet Lilly flower, momma sent them away.” The girl looks horrified at her mother. Oliver is also worried to why Felicity is saying she sent them away. “They have been sent to Morrey and Burt’s castle where fairies love to live because you’ll be there tonight with your two brothers.” Felicity holding the beds sheet tightly to her still as she continues, “Do you know what they told me?” Lilly shakes her head no but her tears are subsiding as the little girl is glad
to be tightly held by her uncle. “That they love you and want to be near you and your brothers until your wish is granted.”

“Yes, I think I saw your mother talking to little winged people.” That is all it takes for the girl to finally show a smile. “Let’s get ourselves a glass of water. Okay?” Lillian nods as she allows her uncle to pick her up and carry her away leaving Felicity to at least put some clothes on.

Leaving the planners satisfied with what will be setup tomorrow Oliver and Felicity are both heading to QC.

“Can you believe less than 24 hours the children will know you are their daddy.”

A relieved grunt followed by, “I’ve been counting down those minutes. I can’t wait. This is the most excruciating wait in gratification for a birthday gift ever.” He can see her devilish smirk. “Don’t you even think of planning something in that caliber.” She just can’t hold her laughter to how he just realized of possibilities his girl can partake in making him beg. “Don’t even think it!”

“You can be such a party pooper.” He just shrugs. “Fine. Be like that.”

“Nope, I don’t care. The thought of you holding out just doesn’t do it for me. I’m not glutton for punishment.”

“Even if the reward…”

“Felicity? I was stuck on a deserted island. I also never thought I’d fall in love. You and the kids I don’t want any long-winded waits for. Let there be no mistake the next wait is about seeing you coming towards me.”

Her voice lowers an octave just to make it clear the meaning. “Coming huh?”

“I can deal with teasing but lately you’ve been on a roll. It seems you may be using me to rid yourself of some frustrations. Do you want to talk about it?”

“Oliver? Like all the times you’ve asked these past few days. I can handle my own turmoil.”

“I’d say fine but I will never stand back and let you deal with anything alone. I already wrote off anyone in the IT that is making you grumpy. Now I have a few more thousands of employees that could be…”

She laughs, “Oh my… You’re not seriously creating a list of names?”

“I might. Anyone who upsets my girl would be on my shit list.”

“Protective much?”

“Felicity, seriously though. You’d come to me if someone was harassing you?”
“No. I wouldn’t.” That gets a gnarly look from him. “Not if it is just about my pride. If I felt unsafe, you’d be the first. I promise.”

“I don’t like it.”

“Tough. I’m a grown woman and I can fight my own battles.” She than gives him a huge smile, “Besides you’ve been benefiting from all this.”

He stops and has her stop beside him just as the reach the elevators that will separate them for the rest of the day pulling her to the side. “You’d think that. Once I caught on.” He can see the dawning in her eyes as she realizes he’s just allowing himself to be that support. “I know you love me so its about the comfort I bring.”

“I’m not using you. Just the intensity if…”

“Yea, I can tell by how many bruises I’m sporting.”

“Oliver, can we talk about this later? We are basically in the open talking about our sex life.”

“Fine. Don’t think this conversation is over.”

“I wouldn’t think it.” She wishes it. They finally get onto the elevator and he watches her get off on her floor before he heads up to the executive offices.

The hum of watching their children leave with their grandmother. The triplets excited to get a new adventure. They’ll be hanging out with the Diggle family as they all go shopping for their uncle’s birthday gifts. Every time those kids are all together it’s a bonding experience. Then they will all stay at the Queen Estate so the planners can do their jobs and make an amazing party that will have professional photographers and video crew.

Oliver wants these moments to be immortalized. Years down the road he’ll want to be able to review these precious moments when it became official as there’ll be no more secrets in the Smoak-Queen house. His children’s wishes amongst the fairies will come true. A dream he didn’t know he wanted but is so glad that it was granted.

It takes Felicity to move within her boyfriend’s arms to calm her down. There is so much change since Oliver came into her life. Change is supposedly so hard. With so many small instants that have been leading to a huge moment. The kids taking in everything like little champions.

She’s met the director of the daycare center without Oliver this way Felicity can feel out the place without everyone bending backwards to make everything seem so perfect. She now has forms to fill and she has to sigh.

“We’ll see them again by noon time.”

“Thank goodness but I’m thinking of all the forms I was given this afternoon.” Oliver finally asks how it all went. “It went well the place is rather clean and it was actually nice that my mom met me there because she asked all the right questions.”
“When doesn’t Donna ask the right questions?”

“I am glad she is onboard I thought for a brief moment she’d think we were phasing her out and that’s…”

“Donna is family. She’s not going anywhere. Like we all agreed its time she gets to enjoy herself without the rug rats even though the daycare is secondary to whatever your mom wants.”

“Still need to fill out all the papers.”

“Stay right there.” He moves to where for some reason there is a manila envelop which she didn’t notice until now. Picking it up he hands it over to her. “My mom already had all the steps done. That woman is colluding with your mom behind our backs.”

Felicity looks at the filled-out paperwork that is dated just before her move to Starling. “I…”

“Yep, our moms already have things in motion. It seems they sweetly try to manipulate us. Making us think we are the ones that came up with these brilliant arrangements.”

Felicity just looks to where people that can emergency sign out the kids and sees both their mother’s names. “I guess all there is to do is sign our names.”

“But we can still grumble that their manipulation is just wrong. Right?”

“Yes, babe we can but we both know it will fall on deaf ears.” She takes the pen and signs there is no use complaining because their mothers are actually making it easy for them. Moira sent over three packets of the best schools for young ones. The one she prefers she already made provisions and the woman is right that school would fit these three the best. It saves her having to leave work to meet with all these other school officials that won’t fit the bill. “Your mother is just so enthralled with them. Did I tell you the moment she gusted about Rebecca to our kids?”

“What? No. You didn’t.”

“You went out with your dad and Thea. There was a mix up. Sometimes my mom thinks she’s a wiz with technology but you know she can barely use the remote control on her own.” Oliver just nods but he’d never push those buttons with the elder Smoak. “Moira came by and just as quickly her phone rang your sister was calling and had some issues with Reba not wanting to sleep and I landed talking about teething while your mom talked about their cousin.”

“Wow. Really? You just mentioned you talked to my sister and my mom entertained the kids.”

“She did. The kids can’t wait to meet Rebecca Merlyn but you know that already.” He shakes his head yes. The kids are interested in seeing a baby. They only really seen little bundles of joy from a distance. “Tomorrow is a really big day for them.”

Nathan is amazed by the little goats jumping over each other. He has never seen anything so amazing before. He gets to pet one once what he calls his uncle Burt holding him tight allowing the boy to safely touch one of the goats that he has been watching with glee.
“Des my favorite.”

“Do you know what noise they make?” Nathan looking at the older man makes some strange noises and Robert Queen laughs at his grandson. “It’s called a bleat.”

“Bleat!” Nathan says and then says it again and again as another goat comes close and Robert holds him tight allowing the boy to pet another goat.

Robert can’t say there has been anything quite so enjoyable in the party spectrum in a very long time. Today is his son’s birthday. His eldest has his own family. Oliver and Felicity are due to arrive soon but his son wanted his family to mingle. Make memories that Robert can tell by the photographers and the video crew that Oliver will most likely watch later on when he can.

The farm idea was for the kids to enjoy themselves while really being watched for by other relatives other than the three people the kids have only associated with comfort. This way reminiscences of the animals and extended family connections aren’t tied to their mother and father only.

Serena and Lillian are laughing by the pig pen as chickens come around them when they put out their hands with the feed the nice lady is giving them. The girls got to watch the frogs play because Lillian loves amphibians. Before that they watched the ponies because Serena loves horses. The girl got to ride one as Lillian cheered her on. Little John would run to them in-between the games he plays with little Oliver.

Oliver had a tremendous time getting to know the names of some ducks as they start to follow him around the small man-made pond. He is closely watched by Moira who just wants to keep her grandson safe as he runs amok amongst the birds.

“Look Morrey!” The boy will put out his arms and act like one of the ducks that spread their wings. “Ims a duck.”

“You sure are.” He runs to her and she just brings him up as high as she can as the boy seems to fall into a fit of giggles.

“Noz, Ims a boy. Morrey!” He says as he tells his auntie that he is no bird but he kisses her cheek because he’s just super happy. When he sees his friend John coming back from finding his own sister Oliver wants down to play. The boys than go back to chasing each other.

Tommy Merlyn finds Oliver’s kids to be beyond energetic. He can see exactly what Oliver has been telling him over the long conversations they have had. Each child so very special. Meeting Nathan the boy holding his gaze and only thing that got the boy going is talking about his special relationship with Oliver Queen. Tommy can officially say that he’s a mini-Oliver without question. Meeting Lillian she’s a little cutie. The girl asked him questions about his own daughter. Emiko bending down with their daughter and allowing the inquisitive child to hold Reba and the spark in the girl’s eyes as happiness just radiated. Lillian is super adorable. Oliver’s name sake the boy is an energizer bunny. He had to hold this little munchkin in his arms as Oliver contentedly told him about what animals he is liking so far and why.

Thomas couldn’t help but ask how he felt about all these adults. The answer as the little boy took a moment to look around, “Dis.” He opened his arms as much as he can in Tommy’s grasp as the boy’s whole face lite up. “Makes me happies. No go home.”

“What if all these people are your home?”

The boy gives him a foreign look and just as quick. “Me like.”
“You do?” The boy nods firmly and Tommy got his answer and lets the boy back down so he can go back to enjoying this really nice set up. Oliver Queen can surprise. The man made a party that a section was off limits for him as his children interacted with their unknown family relatives. If this is what the man planned, he can’t wait to how Oliver plans to reveal he is their father.

When Donna arrives from where she helped with the set-up to where lunch will be served. The triplets run to her as the all start to talk at once and tell her of all the animals they got to meet and play with.

“Wow, it seems you three have had a very nice time. You must all be hungry. Come on.” Donna looks at the rest of the guests, “Come on. Time to fill our bellies because cake will be coming.” She can hear all the kids say how much they all love cake.

Shortly after, Oliver Queen walks in with his girlfriend, Felicity Smoak. They’re immediately surrounded by their family as they call out to Oliver as they celebrate his birthday.

“Happy burday Uncles Olivaah!” Lilly says as she is the first to be hugged by him.

“Thank you, baby girl.” He hands her over to Felicity so he can take both boys into his arms. They’re already telling him happy birthday and he wants to thank them both as they settle in his grip.

Today is the revel. Today Oliver gets to tell his little ones that he is their daddy and they are the best gifts he could ever want. The surprise will happen shortly because he doesn’t want to waste time. He really wants them to know that he loves them so very much and he won’t ever not be their dad.

His family surrounding them as he shares these precious moments with them. He winks to Donna as the cue to get the gig started. His mother joins Donna, Oliver watching his family intertwine brings a serene smile to his face. The Smoaks from here on out aren’t alone no matter if the relationship between them ever fizzes out a family has been created.

He doesn’t want to let the kids go but they want to go back to playing with the Diggles but not until he gets his nephew and niece to give him his birthday hugs. Oliver shakes his best friend’s hand and pecks Lyla’s cheek. Thanking him and the Mrs. again for allowing the party to be held here. He looks over to where both his sisters are taking in the scene and he blows a kiss to them only to see Tommy act like he grabbed it. Oliver just raises his hand to his brother-in-law. He is so glad that all his family is here. He even nods to Malcolm Merlyn who has his own granddaughter held against his chest.

He can’t blame the kids. Having fun with other kids is natural while being stuck with adults all day it is nice to see other little beings with the same aspirations. His mother came through with the attire. His kids match him and his girlfriend. The photos of these moments will surely show how much love there is on this special day. The day the kids find that there is a change to their surname. Becoming officially a Queen.

Everyone finds a seat and the food is brought out. As they all enjoy the quiet moments as table conversations are being held.

Robert Queen gets everyone attention taking a moment to look at all the faces that have made up his family now with a few more delightful family members he shares a toast, “A birthday is a chance to remember the day a major event occurred, on this day my son Oliver Jonas Queen was born.” He
looks to Moira who is beaming with joy. “Moira and I were a family of two until a blue-eyed wonder came along and delighted us at first sight. This is a particularly special birthday.” He now glances at his son and then looks around to see where is other two children are in the room before he continues. “To think that I am his dad is the greatest honor in the world. At times the bond is stretched and I lean on him for his aspiring sentiments I like to know what he thinks about things; at times I seek his advice. Years of developing our relationship and I just want you to know I couldn’t be prouder of you. I love you.”

Oliver’s grip on Felicity loosens as he moves from her to his dad for a hug. “I love you too.” Then he gives his mother a kiss as he hugs her too. “I love you, mom.” His words make her eyes water. Today is going to be a tearjerker in the best possible way.

Taking his woman’s hand, they walk to the front where there are tables set up for the amazing cakes that will be coming out. Oliver takes a small breath and then calls for the triplets to come up and join him and their mother off to the side. The theme of barn animals with their young offspring. Many decorations off to the side are of birds nesting or many nests with eggs.

Three elegant oval packages each held by a white handkerchief on a chain tray just under a large cake shaped stork that comes out and it gets everyone’s attention. Lite candles are just outside the perimeter.

Everyone is singing:

*Happy birthday to you*
Happy birthday to you
Happy birthday dear Oliver
Happy birthday to you.

“Below out your candles!” Oliver has the triplets before him and tells them to help. Happy to oblige they do and Oliver makes sure the candles are out before turning to kiss his girl.

“Happy birthday.” Her whisper is against his chin as she leaves another kiss there. He winks at her before turning his full attention back to the crowd.

Each egg holds a surprise and he can’t wait for the three to find that this party is as much for them as it is himself.

“Well I guess I get my presents now!”

Basically, every child in the room agrees. “It’s the best part Uncle Oliver!” Says Serena as she looks upon the three egg shaped boxes near the cutesy stork cake.

“Today is a special birthday because I get to celebrate it with more family than I could ever imagine having. I also prepared a speech”

Tommy grumbles but makes an oomph sound when his wife elbows him. “Hush. I want to hear my brother’s speech.”

“Thanks Emiko. Yes, Tommy, it is a speech that may take more than a minute’s time.” He laughs at Tommy’s over the top antics as his best friend sighs.

Tommy adds with flair, “He is going to be super mushy.” That gets John who is standing by Tommy’s side to pat him in the back as his words of comfort do nothing for the man. They all know the birthday boy is going to be mushy. It’s expected but as Oliver’s best friends they add the quips to make the moments lighter which they know Oliver appreciates.
The three kids are gathered up by Moira and she hands one of the boys to Donna as the other two children are now firmly in each of the elder Queen’s arms.

Oliver looks around to his friends and family. The people who know he is a father and are celebrating this with him. He is truly a blessed man at this moment. He sees Lillian in his father’s arms and her attention is divided.

The kids don’t know what to make of Oliver’s parents in the sense of what they call them. Aunt and Uncle is what they’ve used but they are reminding them of their bubba. There is a connection and the kids can feel it but don’t understand it. This reveal will make it easier. As Burt and Morrey will become grandpa and grandma.

Nathan is in his mother’s arms where he had a sweet moment with his mom as she kissed his nose. He seems to like that a lot. Then Little Oliver nestled in his bubba’s arms just taking the scene in. Probably wondering when the presents will be opened or more importantly when they’ll actually eat cake.

“Family.” He starts. “If one is fortunate and find themselves in a family that is full of love and wonder. That person is truly blessed. As I have been. Special people the universe has chosen for us. There in times of distress, there to help alleviate pressures, there to help with burdens.”

“There’s laughter and tears; there’s history and memories. When I was stranded I could recall the little pieces of why I pushed to survive. Just for that one day I’d see the faces of my loved ones. Family is love, even if love can be a weird thing. Family is acceptance. Especially when one returns from being a hermit and the family that loves him don’t push to make his struggles back into society as if nothing ever happened.”

“Sure, there are disagreements and arguments. Family doesn’t go away, no matter how annoying at times. They are there even if we don’t want them to be. They always have advice even if it is something we don’t want to hear or admit that is right.”

He looks to his two siblings and makes a short sweep to where his brother-in-law stands. “They are there with a helping hand. They are there to help us vent. There to calm us down and to talk some sense. They make us think, and ultimately in the end make us realize. At times they can be right and at times they can be so wrong.” He takes a short pause. “Yes, it is true. Family is always there, no matter their arrival date. If it was since birth or just quite recently. They are surrounded by a cloud of love, comfort, support, and many more things. A family is a group of people who want as well as choose to be together embraced by a bond so powerful and strong that not even the slightest test of trials or troubles can breach.” He looks directly at his two best friends. “Yea, I’m done guys.”

With that they applaud. Tommy makes a snide comment to thank the heavens.

Little John finally yells, “Presents!”

That makes the adults laugh and shake their heads. The kids for sure will want cake soon, very soon. Each egg has a stylish bow on top individually pertaining to a favorite color of each of the triplets. With the video cameras rolling capturing the priceless moment of discovery in different spots.

“Okay Stewie. I’m on it!” Oliver says to the boy he picks up for a hug and then gets situated near the table before the kids. Lyla brings her son to stand by her so the triplets will get all the attention.

Felicity takes each child from their grandparents as she gives them a task to help Oliver unravel those three eggs. Oliver smiles as the kids find the colors of their preference. He’s really gotten to know
“Thank you for helping me.” He’s before the three. They’ve read about these particular birds in their bedtimes stories so he can see how the kids are taking in the stork that is holding not one but three bundles that represent children. Oliver wants to laugh at the confusion in these three faces wondering why their uncle has a bird cake with three babies. Oliver walks behind the table unhooking each precious color-coded package.

Observing each child inspect their own special color-coded egg in their own way. He leaves an egg upon each child’s waiting hands. “Come on pull at the bow let’s see what the stork brought me?”

It’s the middle child that gets it opened first as the bow unwraps the package crumbles and it reveals a teddy bear. As each of them find their unique bear. The children look back at their mother than back to the man they consider the most important male in their lives. Their mother tells them to press the button on the stuffed animal’s foot. As the buttons are pressed different messages but they all lead to the same conclusion.

The kids are trying to hear theirs and the siblings at the same time so Oliver goes around the table and kneels before the eldest triplet. “Press yours.” Looking at the other two. “Wait your turn and we will all hear the message together. Okay?”

“K.” Two little voices say back.

Nathan presses the button again and Oliver’s voice is heard. A recording of his voice, “Nathan Jonas Queen, daddy loves you to the moon and back.” Nathan looks at the man but Oliver is already with his middle child having the button pressed and so on to his daughter and they press it a few times to just hear Oliver’s voice tell them that their daddy loves them so much.

Little Oliver looks at him and his mind is reeling just like how his two siblings are as well. “Me name is Olivah Nuwah Kaweeeen.” That is after hearing it four times.

“It sure is.”

“You’re our daddy?”

“I am.” He looks at his three kids looking at each other and there aren’t many words spoken as the kids are fully realizing it as they throw themselves at him. “You three are the bestest birthday gift ever.”

Lilly so amazed half jumping with excitement in her father’s embrace, “I got a daddy.”

“You do. Want to play the button again?” She nods and instantly she hears her daddy’s voice, “Lillian Megan Queen, daddy loves and wants to be your greenest frog prince always.”

Lilly gives him the look he has told Felicity is all hers. “Froggy daddy mine!”

“Yes, always.” He kisses her as her little hands wrap as far as they can around him. Felicity is watching little Oliver grabbing his bear and squashes it against himself as he holds it like it’s the dearest present he has ever gotten. Felicity kneels to be even with him and she can see her boy already bursting with questions and she knows his father will answer each and every question because Oliver equates it with love. Just as Olly looks at his mom he is lifted into the air by his father.

“I love you.” The boy says careful not to lose his grip on the bear.
“I love you too, very much.” He presses the button on his son’s teddy bear and it says in verbatim the personal message to his son. “Oliver Noah Queen, daddy loves you. My little Rubik’s cube.” Oliver found out his son mastered it on family night faster than what felt like a blink of an eye. Delivering the messaged filled bears to the planner yesterday just felt right.

He’s got three kids calling him daddy and he has never felt so good about anything but he just looks at the rest of his family taking this moment of clarity in glee. Oliver just says what comes to the tip of his mind as he hears the kids praising the fairies that got them a dad, “Who wants cake?”

Chapter End Notes

The next update let’s call it the After-Party!
Golden Coin

Chapter Summary

The party moves over to the Queen Estate. The cost of magic comes into play. The children are fearful.

Chapter Notes

Thank you guys.

This chapter is still on Oliver's birthday.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation from chapter 21…

As the party is unwinding Oliver is talking to his two best friends as he’s holding his sleeping namesake in his arms. The boy had questions and only his father could answer each and every one to the boy’s satisfaction.

“Three kids.” He whistles. “Do you think…” Tommy looks at the sleeping boy, “There will be add-ons?”

“More kids?” Oliver kind of snorting at that. He has thought about it but he is also just grateful for what he has. As much as thinking of adding another child he responds, “I wouldn’t mind another. It’s just the thought of.” He raises his fingers to indicate the number three. “That’d be insane. Even if statistically the chances are about one in eight thousand.”

John shakes his head amused. “Well at least the manor would be able to handle any of those odds.”

“Funny John.”

“I thought it was hilarious. Here you are also holding one of your sleeping kids when you would have been somewhere down on those Colorado rapids that you planned a year ago.”

“Okay, I get it. Papa duties comes first.”

Tommy smirks as he quips, “Welcome to the club.” He brings his drink up and the men toast.

Oliver does ponder if he would have been a few states away. Enjoying the Colorado scenery as he’d appreciate nature with a few college pals even if he didn’t find out about this revelation. He thinks he would have gone but would have been miserable thinking of Felicity and the Smoak kids. They imprinted on him early on. Now that he thinks of it. He can’t imagine any more scenarios without his own family.

“Next wedding bells?” John points out.
“Don’t know how big Felicity wants the wedding to be…”

“Wait?” Tommy stops both men. “You two just met? Don’t you think it is relatively early?”

John laughs and looks at his good friend, “Tommy, you haven’t seen this Oliver in action. He is another man entirely from the bed hoping Ollie.”

“Seriously guys. I don’t sleep with that many women.” Seeing his friends’ stares. “Okay, since my return from the island.” He notices Tommy and John agree by their facial reactions. “I also thank you both for not buying me a year’s supply of condoms like last year.”

John supplies, “Yea, well that wouldn’t have been a family-oriented gift.”

Tommy laughs, “No. Just a way to help control the Queen population growth.”

“Thanks guys. I can buy my own.” Oliver says rolling his eyes.
A few more friends of the family have joined in celebrating Oliver’s birthday as the party is moved from the Diggles so the planner can get things cleaned up. Oliver is enjoying the leisure of sitting down as his family is all sporadically in their own little corners. Little pockets of conversations throughout the large gathering room. His kids coming to him on certain occasions when they break from the games their grandparent’s setup outback. With how nice the weather is the large doors are opened letting in fresh air.

The gifts he has gotten today have been a wild mix from comedic gold that Thea thought would really spruce up his charm to getting a more intimate gift from his girl with a sensual performance involving his birthday suit.

Seeing the one who enticed him this glorious morning coming into this space he moves a tad as his girl comes to join him as he’s watching a game with Tommy. Pecking her lips as one of his arms wraps her closer to him. The kids still haven’t noticed that their parents have kissed a few times.

“Are they tiring themselves out yet?”

“Not quite. They’re still having way too much fun right now.” Felicity is a little apprehensive she hasn’t really been alone with Tommy Merlyn. He’s the only one who knows of her connection with Oliver first-hand. “Hi Tommy.”

“It’s good to see you again Felicity.”

“Likewise.”

Tommy looks at the couple. He isn’t one to be bashful, “When Ollie here told me he met you I joked that you’d knock him on his ass.”

Felicity chuckles. The thought about slapping him did occur when she met him at Palmer Tech. “It did cross my mind once or twice.”

“Hey!” Oliver says pushing her closer, “Instead we got to work with one another I like how we landed up better.”

“True. Though at first I just remembered the jerk you were so no offense I would have enjoyed clobbering you.” Tommy laughs hard. Oliver feigns being annoyed. “I mean. I am glad I didn’t. I like this better too.”

“Oh man, I’m glad you found each other again. Even if this one here.” Tommy looks Oliver directly but there is a teasing tone, “Stole the girl I liked back then.”

“Yea, that was shitty of me.” Oliver sighs. He’s apologized to them both on many separate occasions. He’s about to when Felicity takes his hand.

“It’s okay. Oliver, that speech about family, I get it.”

Tommy has been watching this two and with the conversation just fresh in his mind when John started talking about marriage has him observing them a lot closer since. “I think you two should use a long engagement to date before the actual wedding.”

Both Oliver and Felicity say, “What?”

“Just that, why waste time? Oliver here has mentioned that you’ve both talked about it. Yes, its early right now but you’re it for each other. Why waste enormous amounts of time? This man wants you
to be a Queen like yesterday and that is only because I know him.”

Felicity shaking her head, “Tommy, I do love Oliver but what would people think if we got engaged so quick?”

Tommy gives her a stern look. “Who cares? Just an engagement. Though they’ll think you were having his baby. In your case babies. Past tense even.”

“Our children don’t even know we are dating.”

Tommy nods to that statement and gets up. “I need to stretch my legs. You two should think about it.” He then leaves them alone in the small nook just outside where the rest of the party is.

As Felicity comfortable uses Oliver as cushion she can’t believe his family is already advocating for their marriage. “Can you believe that?”

Oliver can believe. His two best friends already shared their idea on this so has his father and if Thea’s comments to him in the past hour is any indicator. The woman in his arms would soon be his wife-to-be. The only members in his family that haven’t said anything towards this future goals are his mother and his sister Emiko.

“It wouldn’t be a bad idea.”

“Really?” She gives him her famous ‘are you serious’ look. If he could freely shrug his shoulders, he would but with her weight over him he just slightly moves his head so that he can kiss her exposed neck. It leads to them enjoying a passionate kiss.

“Oh!”

Both Oliver and Felicity turn to see Nathan gazing at them voluntarily settled on his Uncle Tommy’s arms with wide blue eyes. The boy turns to his uncle with a surprised face. “My daddy is kissing my mommy.”

“It seems so little man it seems so.”

Nathan’s eyes are back towards his parents as they rise up and soon is deposited in his father’s arms.

“You kissed mommy.”

Felicity shakes her head at Tommy’s smirk. “What was it about them not knowing?”

“Thanks Tommy.” Turning to her son. “Hi baby. Daddy and I love you so very much.”

“You kissed daddy.”

“I think my job here is done. Goodluck!” Tommy slithers away as the little boy seems to be grilling his parents.

“She’s so cute.” Lillian is graciously so content to be beside her grandmother and aunt Emiko as the baby is in her arms. “I want one of these.” Little Oliver sitting on his grandmother’s lap as some of his fingers are being held by the itsy-bitsy baby.
There are still a good number of guests here but everyone has spread out and within smaller conversational groups.

“Mommy and Daddy don’t kiss.”

Lillian glances at her brother. He is always the one with the facts. Moira looks at her daughter and both women have knowing smiles. When Rebecca starts to fuss. Emiko takes the child from her niece and kisses the baby.

Emiko glances at the two small kids who are now directly looking at her, “Your cousin seems to be sleepy. Are you two tired?”

Both kids sway their heads no. Moira bringing Oliver closer to her chest as she gives him a kiss to his temple. She has been thrilled at how easily the kids have taken in everything. Her time with them has had the reaction she hoped. Donna was so right. She is glad that their friendship came into fruition. The woman is a hoot and surely makes her come out of a shell she just didn’t know she wanted out of.

“Gammie?”

“Yes Lilly?”

“I want my mommy and daddy to kiss.”

“Sweetheart.” Moira just says moving the loose strands from the girl’s braid to the side. “Your mommy and daddy love you very much.” Both children are staring at their grandmother. “Did you love daddy’s party?” Both kids say yes. “You three are the best gifts to this family.”

“Mommy not Kaween.” Oliver points out.

“No.” Moira touches her grandson’s chest. “She is still your mommy, right?” She makes sure to look at both children. As they both nod, “No matter if they kiss or not their love for you will always be.”

“But Gammie...” The girl stops talking when her Uncle Tommy swoops her into his arms after kissing his wife and daughter.

“Hello my green princess?” He raises her high in the air and then swiftly down to kiss her nose. She’s giggling until she catches the sight of her other brother.

“Natey!”

“Oh yes, Nathan is with your mommy and daddy.”

“Why?” Asks little Oliver who can’t see what his sister saw.

Tommy keeps the girl in his grasp knowing she’ll go investigate. He needs Oliver to be excited to run over their too. He makes a thinking face before telling the kids they should go find out for themselves. As Oliver is released by his grandmother and Lillian is brought down both run towards their parents.

“Thomas? What have you done?” A stern motherly voice Moira can’t help but display.

“Nothing that hasn’t been in the works. Those kids will be happy delighted after this. It’s like the best topping to their day.”

“Are we at a safe distance or should we get closer to this show?” Emiko prods as she sees the kids
calling out for their parents now.

“Probably closer. They’re about to find out their parents are kissing.”

“Oh!” Emiko already on the move holding her daughter close as she’ll like to see how her nephews and niece will handle this.

“Hey, hey no running.” Oliver already moving towards his two track stars to scoop them up to deposit them next to their mother and sibling. “Why are you two running?” Both Lilly and Olly shrug they really have no idea. Nathan who eyes his two siblings has a huge smile on his face.

Felicity sitting quietly observing her kids. It seems Nate will allow for the surprise and not blurt it out. As Oliver winks at his girlfriend. He takes her hand and pulls her up to join him before their children. Both Felicity and Oliver can tell they have a small audience outside of their children as some important faces are gathered.

Music miraculous starts to play. Emiko turns to her husband who has his cellphone out as romantic song begins to play. Just when she didn’t think she could love him more he proves her wrong.

Facing each other. Oliver brings her into his hold and just like that they begin to sway to a song. The beautiful dress swirling around and the kids just sitting there in wonder.

_I don't say a word_
_But still, you take my breath and steal the things I know_
_There you go, saving me from out of the cold_

“I love you.”

_And look in my eyes_
_You are perfection, my only direction_
_It's fire on fire, oh, oh_
_It's fire on fire_

They stop dancing and before their children. Nathan voices, “Dey kissey” When his siblings semi-turn to their brother for a moment before bring their attention back to their parents and witness their parents kissing.

Breaking off the kiss they turn to their kids and Nathan has kept the same smile he’s held since finding out. Oliver is sitting in-between his siblings. He has this smile and questions are ensure to come but for now they let the boy take in the moment. Lillian is the big surprise she hasn’t moved from her spot. The usual eager girl is just glaring at her parents.

“Is everything okay Lilly?” The girl shakes her head yes but says nothing. “Then what is wrong?”

“Nuttin.” She slides off the cushion and makes a beeline towards her mother. Felicity picking up her daughter. Lilly seems to exam her as little fingers tap her mom’s lips.

“Mommy and daddy kisses, me see first.” Nathan tells his brother.

“Okay, these three have teddy bears tell them Oliver is their father and they’re ecstatic but seeing their parents kiss they question it like some murder mystery. What gives?” Tommy shrugging to this
“Because magic has a cost.” Donna whispers behind them. “They believe the fairies got them their daddy. They believe in happily ever after fairy tales.”

“So?”

“It wasn’t a kiss that brought them a father hence what is the cost of a kiss?”

Moira looking at the three happy but reserved children. She silently leaves the display before heading to the den where she has the key to making this situation play out like a fantasy. Her own children weren’t invested in magic and enchantments no matter how much she would read them inspirational stories.

Oliver seems to like nautical stories his dad would tell him. Thea loved novelties that were in high demand. Both her children weren’t into it. Now her grandchildren show the marvel of imagination that this gift she pulls from a storage bin within a closet will be important.

Placing the Faberge egg upon the desk. Moira pulls the sides apart and a graceful Fairy appears doing a dance and just under her is a large gold coin. Pulling the coin from the egg she places it in her pocket.

The fairy stops dancing and the little golden leaves within the egg retract. It is the coin that makes the fairy happy and allow the magic of the little intricate moving pieces work. Closing the egg up again she walks out of the den with a purpose to delight these three in believing in the wonder of magic and allow them to revel in not losing the delightful sparks in their eyes.

“Moira dear?”

Moira sees her husband with a few of their friends when she turns to head back to her grandchildren.

“Where are you going with the egg?” Robert looks at some of their friends. “One of her prized possessions.”

“Our grandchildren are in need of some fairy magic.” She gives her guests a smile and leaves them. They come to follow their hostess. Robert lagging behind. Whatever his wife is up to he knows how much she loves that decoration. She was so sad actually heartbroken that her children never saw the beauty of it.

He watches as she places the egg securely on a side table once one of their employees moves the table to the middle of the room. Everything including a lamp removed from the table so the decoration is the only thing visible. He doesn’t ask he doesn’t need to. Their grandchildren believe in fairies.

Last night they were curious where these fairytale beings were living. In such a vast home it is easy to make up some logical lies to placid them enough to go to bed that night. His wife so excited to participate with what he now calls the impending sister to his wife. Donna Smoak makes his wife act like the young woman he married so many years ago. The reserved woman she has become from so many compacted lies, heartaches, and living in a harden world. He never thought seeing Moira Dearden Queen laugh so carefree would happen ever again. His son is right. The Smoaks are lifechanging.

He watches as she goes to where his grandchildren are and they look to be asking questions about their parents. Hearing them ask if they were really a family now. What has his ears perk up is when they ask their grandmother Donna about compensating for their wishes. They sound sad and
worried. The thought of losing what they just gained being a lot for them.

“Sweetheart, your daddy and I aren’t going anywhere.”

“How do you know mommy?”

Oliver looking at his sister and brother asking all the question of the fairies he just takes in the scene internally worrying.

Nathan seriously in his stance, “Daddy you can’t leave us.” He throws himself at his father.

“How do you know mother?”

Oliver is trying to comfort his son.

“But the fairies… Dey…”

Tommy by his wife’s side whispers to her, “Wow, I didn’t see this coming.” He feels bad for Oliver and Felicity right now.

Moira’s voice cuts through the small whimpers and everyone turns to her as she speaks, “They need payment.” She turns to Donna, “All magic has a cost. Right?”

“Yes. Magic is best done within a relationship of mutual respect and trading a gift for another.” While Donna is answering Moira walks slowly towards the triplets. Stopping before the family of five.

“I use to tell your daddy about a story of enchanted mother fairy. She is one of a few powerful spirits that live amongst us.” Moira sees the recognition in Oliver’s eyes. When he was a child himself his mother would speak of fairtales. He remembers the egg and the beautiful winged girl.

He is in awe how his mother is captivating his children from their little worries to wondering about this Faberge egg his mother loves. She’s telling a story and the three kids are eating up all her words. Glancing around his mother has everyone enthralled with the tale. Even Thea who would roll her eyes to this story is amongst the crowd taking in the old divine assistance is priceless, but it’s not free. “I have here a gold coin to offer the mother fairy.”

The kids step forward and their grandmother leads the way to a circular table that is holding a beautiful egg. Its funny that this whole day has revolved around eggs but it seems fitting.

Felicity just makes herself comfortable in Oliver’s arms as they watch his mother with her own mother herding the kids together to stand before this display. Cellphones capturing these moments.

“Who wants to be the one to give this coin to the Mother Fairy?”

The kids gaze at each other and with a unanimous non-worded conversation it is Lillian who gets to do it. She is the one who brought them to this point. Her belief got them a dad. They have been following her lead in this event.

“Oh Lillian hold out your hand.” The little girl has her palm out and as the golden coin is placed upon her hand, she lets her brothers see.

“Wow, it big and shiny.”

The girl than listens to the instructions carefully. The egg is opened and the triplets let out a surprised gulp of indescribable awes and ahs. The fairy is beautiful but she looks dim.

Placing the coin slowly into the allotted spot everything changes. Nathan, Oliver, Lillian just watch
in spectacle as the leaves rise up, moving parts start to move in a circular motion and her wings rise up as a light melody is played. They watch it as the egg starts to close and the kids are in a trance.

Tears are first and foremost on their cheeks. Thus, many feelings are being expressed. They’re happy.

The adults are just bemused at the display.

These moments will be filed away in everyone’s memory as a beautiful magical display of love. Moira watches the kids find their parents. Her heart filled with so much love as observing how joyful her own baby boy is right now.

“You did good.” Robert kisses her. “Really good.” Taking her hand and intertwining it with his.

“Thank you.”

They stand there watching as their guests start to linger elsewhere. Standing there viewing what is important to them. Their kids are grown and there is a new generation under this roof that they’d do anything for.

“I’m going to leave you two to enjoy the rest of this day as a little family.”

Felicity and Oliver both respond quickly, “Mom?” “Donna?”

“I have a nice room at the Queen’s and Moira wants me to get to know Emiko and Thea in a more intimate setting.” Looking at Oliver, “I do enjoy your mother’s company. I feel like I’ve known her my whole life.” Donna has this cheerful face. Felicity gets it. Her mom hasn’t really bonded with anyone outside their home raising three kids takes a lot of vigor and time.

Oliver is glad that this wonderful woman has connected to his mother. It’s just wild to think these two elder ladies together are a powerhouse. Thea will so benefit from Donna’s influence. The woman is the opposite of his mom. Donna has no problem getting in your face and spilling truth tea. “I doubt they’ll give you a hard time about sleeping later on. They are on their reserved energy even with the short naps each has seemed to gotten in their father’s arms today.” Donna gives them both huge smiles. Making sure Oliver knows what she’ll want, “I’m going to want those pictures of them being held like the prized gifts they are.”

“I’ll make sure to tell the photographer of this.”

“Good, now go say goodbye to some of your guests.”

Oliver noticing what Donna has observed, “Yes, ma’am.”

Felicity looks to stay behind but Donna tells her that she should also be cordial to them guests. After all these people will grace her presence if they mean enough to be invited to this party. Oliver taking her hand they go mingle with the departing guests before they wrangle up their own children and head home.
“Mr. Queen, allow me to help you.” One of the bodyguards assigned to take Oliver and his family home. The actual driver already prepared to take them home waits for other bodyguard to get in after making sure the passengers are secure.

“Thanks Joshua.”

Joshua just nods as he has the double doors of the Cadillac Escalade ESV’s private jet-like interior opened up which already has the safety car seats for the triplets as the children are ushered in after their mother so she can already prepare to lock them in. Not that she doesn’t trust the bodyguards she just needs to make any other their experiences feel comfortable. Oliver following after their youngest keeping an eye for their safety as it seems sometimes they over estimate depth and he’s there to make sure none of them gets hurt.

“Daddy?”

“Yes, sweetie?”

“Nothing.” The girl says smiling. The little girl has been doing that throughout the day onto the evening hours since she found out her uncle Oliver is indeed her father. Finding out the man she loves in the whole wide world isn’t really dead and her mind has no idea what that really means. Right now, she is just so very happy. Unlike her brother Oliver she doesn’t have as many questions maybe because he asked all the right questions.

“Are you three all tired?” Oliver asks his kids seeing them all make their usual tired expressions. He hears the standard no from each. They don’t like admitting to being tired. He comprehends Felicity’s motherly look. He is probably sporting a similar one. They’ll be heading to the rituals of getting ready for bed.

“No!” Nathan always the most vocal about this particular task.

“No?” The little boy shakes his head vigorously. He wants to play more. Oliver then adds, “That means you can help mommy and me clean up from the party or you can get the rest you deserve after story time.”

“Clean?”

“Yep, both your uncles Tommy and John brought daddy’s gifts home and now we need to make room.”

Once again Lillian calls out, “Daddy?”

“Yes, sweetie?”

“Did you likey our gifs?”

Oliver gives them all a huge smile. Pulling out the three small magical rocks his kids picked out for him. Surprisingly not all of the colors they personally love but what they associate him with. It seems Lilly still chose green because how can he not love the color green? He can’t argue with her logic. She got him what reminds her of his namesake Olivine. A nice shiny green rock.

Olly got him a rough rock of Opal. He loves the multicolor plus it has a little bit of blue in it. He remembers their talk in a store where he got to hang out with his uncle talking about why he loves the color blue and finding his favorite uncle also loves blue.
It’s Nathan that found onyx fascinating with how black it was. He debated between something that radiated brightness like the sun but the boy ultimately chose the darkness that represents the universe to him. Thinking it looks so cool and powerful. Nate thinks the world of his uncle so that was chosen. “I do love them all and I love the reasons the most.”

Nathan just beams as he repeats how black is so cool even though red is his favorite color. Both boys like the opal that kind of looks like an alien space rock. Lillian just quietly listening to her brothers tell their father about aliens which she has no desire for.

“What do you think Lilly?” Felicity asks just to make sure she’s included in this conversation. Lillian just shrugs her shoulders as indifference.

“You know Lilly? Some people have always portrayed these aliens as little green men.”

That gets her to sit up. “Why?”

Felicity adds to the conversation as she explains while Oliver adds two cents on the subject. The way the kids follow them it’s like this has always been. Just hearing their daughter now asking her brothers questions has Oliver just giving his girlfriend a wink. The inclusion of each child responding to their sibling’s likes has their father just beaming with pride that he helped them get even closer. It means a lot to him that they have found some harmony as he had certain inputs unto their well beings.

“What does birthday boy want to do now that we got the gifts out of the way and our angels are tucked and dreaming upon their beds?”

He enjoys pulling her close as his eyes scan hers and he knows exactly what they both want. Unlike their children who used him to have a nice nap at their grandparent’s place and then fought tooth and nail not to head to bed but as soon as their heads hit the pillow, they were all out. He would love to hold the woman he loves and get in some sleep because he has a feeling the kids will be super enthusiastic as they recount today’s events.

“If my lady would follow me.” Using their linked hands to move her with him. “I’d like a few hours of sleep.”

“That sir, sounds like an excellent plan.” They still need to double check that the kids are comfortably sleeping for their own peace of mind. Looking at the three who truly had an amazing day. Felicity takes Oliver outstretched hand knowing it is time to leave their children and head off to their own room.

Knowing it is only sleep on their minds the door stays open. They are expecting guests tomorrow morning.

As an awaking Oliver moves his arms bringing the sleeping woman closer to him. This is about the time he’d pull himself together and get in a morning workout. Reaching for the tablet he’d like to see
if his kids are awake yet, usually at this time they’d still be sound asleep. Well at least two of the
three are asleep. The one who usually wakes up last and loves to snuggle with his pillow is the one
who is holding his teddy bear tight as if it could vanish.

His little namesake who asked question after question until he was totally satisfied. His two siblings
there also adding some follow up questions until they left to go play as he remained in his father’s
arms relaxing enough to take a nap.

Oliver almost gets up to check on his middle child as it seems he is crying but a hold on his arm as
Felicity is also sneaking a peak at the video feed. “He’s processing. Don’t disturb him.” She switches
on the lamp beside her.

“What?”

“You know of the other two and how they process things. Nathan and Lillian are eerily quiet but
then they seek out answers. Oliver asks questions and then he needs time to process.”

“He’s crying.”

“Unlike his two other siblings who we can always tell if they are happy or dejected, Oliver mimics
them.”

“I’ve never noticed. Why haven’t I ever noticed?”

“Oliver is a cheery boy. It takes a lot to get him down.” Felicity doesn’t know how to explain it.
Their son is just replaying how his world changed.

“So, he is crying?” Oliver turns to his girl, “Shouldn’t we check on him?” He would like to hold his
boy and he wonders why Felicity doesn’t feel worried about him.

“Honey, let him come to us.”

“Felicity, don’t you think it be too late? It seems he’ll just fall back in line with the other two moods
that…” She points to the video and both watch as little Oliver placing the teddy bear softly in his bed
and delicately places the covers on it. He looks to his two siblings and then at the door. “He’s
coming here?”

“Close that thing. He’d be alarmed if he knows we’ve been watching.”

Within minutes they hear small soft footsteps heading their way. The little boy by the threshold of his
parents’ room wondering if he should enter. He sees the light but just stands there. He hears his mom
asking whose there and it seems enough for an invite as he rushes in.

“Mommy!” Seeing his dad is awake “Daddy!” He is up between them as his parents are already
kissing him with good morning kisses.

“Were you crying?” Oliver can’t help but ask as his thumb traces the path those tears went. As the
little boy looks to his dad, he seems lost in thought. Feeling his mother’s soft circle motions on his
back he finally nods a yes. “Can you tell daddy why?”

“I don’t want to lose my daddy again.”

“I’m not going anywhere.” Oliver situates himself to being able to fully hold his son in his arms. “I
am forever your father. Always.”
“De fairies found you…” The boy stops as he looks desperate. Truly scared.

Felicity interjects, “Oh sweetie, see Oliver has always been your daddy. I knew your daddy from a long time ago.”

Oliver holding his son tight he asks, “You know those pictures your mommy showed a few nights ago of when she was carrying you and Nate and Lilly?” The boy nods. “I was your daddy then.”

“Really?” He takes in his father’s nod then looks to his mother for confirmation.

Felicity saying yes while nodding she adds, “You know that boat accident that your dad talked about yesterday?” Seeing her son nod. “I thought your daddy was gone.” Felicity can see little Oliver hold his dad tight. With all this information and seeing this little boy process his parents just hold him tight.

This is Oliver Noah Queen’s moment with his parents that he needs. He is taking all the information from yesterday and finding that his parents are here with him making everything he has learned real. Falling silent in his dad’s embrace the boy feels at peace. “It’s okay to cry of happiness too sweetie, daddy and I have got you. You’re safe.” Within minutes the turmoil that Oliver felt is soothed away and he falls asleep.

“Wow, that was a ride.”

“Welcome to parenthood.”

“Do you think the other two will be this emotional?”

“Don’t know. Nathan had his moment yesterday when he caught us kissing.”

His best friend’s remark that ripping off the Band-Aid is best all at once. “Can’t believe Tommy.”

Felicity gives him a bright smile as she kisses her sleeping boy. “Tommy’s childhood revenge. He also added a you’re welcome when we left last night.”

“Well at least the kids now know. No more acting as if I sleep on the sofa.”

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Chapter End Notes

Media and coworkers coming up…
Sick Day

Chapter Summary

One of the kids falls ill at the Daycare Center. Oliver having to deal with the situation solo while his girlfriend is with his father off-site on QC business. He is reacquainted with an old girlfriend's sister.

Chapter Notes

The first few weeks living in Starling, Felicity hasn't met any previous lady loves of Oliver. That may all be changing. Oliver has hoped that his relationship with Felicity would be public by now but with his girl's insisting to keep it under the radar as she's trying to find her professional life within QC.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Continuation from chapter 22…

Oliver moves his sleeping boy to lay between Felicity and himself. So far this morning has been an emotional rollercoaster. He found out a little bit more about his kids. His little namesake is a sponge when it comes to emotions. Not as expressive as his older and younger siblings. Usually the happiest of the three. Nathan is super reserved while Lillian is super outgoing. Little Oliver is a middle ground child. Content in his own way but really needs a push by his siblings to react to things.

Felicity swipes the lose strands from her son’s eyes. It seems maybe a haircut is in order. She can sense her boyfriend’s eyes on her and she glances his way. His eyes are so blue. She sees warmth there. Though his gaze seems to hold questions.

“What?”

He just exhales and just has this content look. As much as he has claimed kids don’t belong on their bed. Here at this moment he is sharing his space with one of his kids and he wouldn’t want it any other way. He won’t say it out loud. As much as he is loving this moment he still means it. This room is a safe haven away from his children’s pure eyes.

“I’m just… well I’m just amazed.”

“Of what? Being a parent?”

“For one. Yes, it has been an amazing few months for me.” Settling to leave the bed. It's time to make breakfast. “I'm a year older and for the first time I realize I have everything I could ever want under one roof.”

“It was a nice party. Centered more for the kids than yourself…”
Oliver cuts her off knowing that the kids part was what made this party so important to him. “That is just it. It is what I liked about the whole ordeal.” His past mistake of being a clad came back to him full force. He lucked out. Instead of backlash of his past sins coming to haunt him he has a family that means everything to him. “You and the kids have changed my world for the best.” Watching Felicity taking his words in. It’s like every time he tells her how much all this means to him she lights up. He loves seeing her so content. “Just one thing I need your permission with before I go make us all breakfast.”

“Permission?”

“I’ll like to make a production out of asking you to marry me. Will that be okay?”

“You need my permission for that?”

“I do. I know you get easily embarrassed so it be rude of me not to ask beforehand.”

Chapter 23 Sick Day

“Mr. Queen, there is a call from the daycare center for you.”

“Thanks Darlene. I’ll take it on line 1.”
Oliver looks across the room and sees Trish’s replacement for the week as his really wonderful assistant is away on a tropical vacation he set up. A thank you for how she helped him out with the kids. Her little birthday gift sitting on his desk. She had a ceramic likeness of the triplets made. Trish was impressed at his own party skills. Telling him if he ever got bored of running a Fortune 500 company he could manage a kid’s themed birthday parties. She is just too much.

“This is Queen.” He listens. “I’ll be right there.”

This is week five of having the kids in the daycare center three times a week. Today Felicity being out of the office with his dad and a few other associates. He placed himself as the contact first when he dropped them off. So far his plan to go public with Felicity has taken a turn. With her eagerness not to be seen as someone who sleeps her way to the top she begged him for more time away from the spotlight. He begrudgingly agreed.

Stepping out of the elevator he is greeted by an old flames’ sister. “Oliver! How are you?”

“Hey Sara, been awhile. I’m fine thanks. You?”

“I’m doing good. You look like you’re in a hurry? What’s her name?”

“What?” He kind of looks offended. As he about to say something he hears the word daddy. A little girl running towards him as a woman from the daycare is calling the little girl’s name.

“Lillian Megan Queen what did I say about escaping?” Oliver looks at the woman rushing towards them and places his hand out signaling that he has got this.

“But I saw you.” She’s pointing back at the window.

“You have a daughter?”

As Lillian reaches her daddy and is picked up and placed securely in his arms Oliver turns to where Sara Lance is looking quite surprised. Especially with the public show of affection. The little girl seems to be very happy to be in her father’s arms.

“I’d like to stay and chat but my son needs me. Take care Sara.”

“Son?” Sara’s question reaches his ears but he pays no mind. Nathan is sick. Right now that is where his attention is focused on.

Sara just watches a man who she never thought would ever settle down never mind have two kids. Her sister tried to win this man’s affection but like all of Oliver’s ten-second attention span her sister got lost in the shuffle even though her tenacity had her back with him a few more times before Oliver finally called it quits.

“Where is Nathan?”

“He’s on a cot in the back holding his tummy.” The woman stops when they reach the young boy and says to nobody in particular, “Where’s Oliver?” Oliver is surprised his son didn’t escape with his daughter. Or did he?

The woman looks confused. “He should be…” The woman doesn’t see him just Nathan. Oliver
looks around the many other little boys and girls in the large room. “Could you check to see if he’s in
the washroom?” Another worker who is just off to the side starts to look behind another corner to see
if the boy is around.

“Of course Mr. Queen.”

“Lillian? I’m going to let you down I want you to go sit by those chairs as I handle Nate okay?”

“Okay.” The little girl goes to the spot indicated and plops down.

Oliver doesn’t waste any more time and makes his presence known to Nathan. “Hey buddy. How’s
my little trooper doing?” He can hear little sniffles from his son and it guts him. “I heard your tummy
hurts.” The little boy moves just enough that Oliver already sweeps the boy into his arms. “I’ve got
you.”

“Me tummy hurts.”

“I know Nate. We are going home. Get you under a nice warm blanket.”

“Mommy?”

“If you want mommy. I can call her too.” The boy nods. “Sounds like a plan. We’ll do that once we
are home. Okay?”

“K.”

“Mr. Queen, I’m sorry I can’t find Oliver anywhere.”

Oliver shuts his eyes. That little escape artist is somewhere in the building. He turns to where he has
told his daughter to sit and at least he can breathe of relief that she listened.

“Nathan, do you know where Olly is?” The boy grumbles something about finding him at work. He
decides it is best if he just takes Nate with him. Telling the daycare workers to look after Lillian.
Even with the little girl whining he is in search of his middle boy. Taking out his phone he’s already
dialing John’s phone. He needs backup.

Oliver peers around the corner. He’s having fun playing a version of spy vs spy. All the big people
are his enemy and his mission is to find his daddy. Riding the elevator was fun but he couldn’t press
the big numbers. He presses every button and waits as the elevator goes up and stops and the door
opens. He peaks outside until the doors start to close and jumps back in. Elevators without his
mommy and daddy are scary. When the door opens again a woman is gawking at him. He just
waves at her.

“Are you lost?”

“No. I’m looking for my daddy.”

“Your daddy works here?” Oliver just nods. “What’s your daddy’s name sweetheart?”

“Daddy Kaweeen.”

“Okay. So he works at Queen Consolidated. Do you know your daddy’s name?” He nods but he’s
little face shows confusion. He already told this lady his dad’s name. “Alright. What’s your name sweetie?”

He happily states his name. “Olivah Nuwah Kaween.”

“You know Oliver Queen?”

Pointing to himself, “Dats me.” The woman laughs but presses the ground floor. It’s up to security to figure out this mess. This poor little boy is lost and who knows who can be his father? She doesn’t think Oliver Queen even has a kid.

As they reach the floor before the intended ground floor and another woman gets on. Sara looks at the woman and her small child and smiles at them both. The lady who has been pleasant to the child asks if he’ll hold her hand and being that she is nice he does so.

“He’s adorable.” Sara says right as the door to the ground floor opens. John Diggle is standing firm. Before the woman holding the boy’s hand can utter a word the little boy is excitedly looking up at the man.

“Uncals Johnnie.”

“Oliver, you have your daddy in a tailspin.” John looks to the woman holding his nephew’s hand. “Thank you. I’ve got it from here.” She nods. She knows who John Diggle is. He is one of the people regarded with the Queen family safety.

“What dat?” The boy says as he doesn’t understand what tailspin is.

John shakes his head at the boy as he already has the phone to his ear. “Oliver, I found him. We can wait in the security office.” He listens. “He’s fine. We located him on the video feed riding the elevator.” Placing the phone back in his pocket bending down to look at the child. “That was not a nice thing to do. You had us all worried.”

“This is Oliver Queen’s son?”

John noticing the blonde staring at the child. She looks familiar but he can’t place where he has seen her.

“Oh my gosh. Oliver really is a father of two kids. Hot darn. My sister won’t believe this.” She whips out her phone to take a pic.

“I’m sorry, no pictures are allowed.”

“But…”

“Oooh. You said butt.” Little Oliver laughs.

“I’m sorry. Ms.?”

“That gets John to realize who this woman is. There is no way he’ll allow a picture to be taken. He can’t believe he forgot her when it was her sister who made such a fuss after Oliver ended the on/off relationship of a half a year with her. Listening to the woman’s curse that she hopes he goes down with the boat will always stay forefront in his mind. He’s known Oliver since his own brother went to school with Oliver. They became friends after his return from being lost at sea.

“I’m sorry. Ms. Lance. You’ll need to put that away or it will be confiscated.”
“Really?”

“Company policy.”

“Or you just don’t want Oliver’s offspring in the news.”

“Either is not up for debate. I think you’d hopefully agree that children safety should be a primary concern.”

“Yea, I agree.” Looking at Oliver’s son. “You have your daddy’s name huh?”

“No.” They share the same name but to this little one his father’s name is daddy just like his mother is mommy. The moment Uncle Oliver became his father the thought of calling him anything else but daddy sounds absurd. Pointing to himself with urgency, “Me Olivah.”

“Okay, sorry. Nice to meet you Oliver.”

“What brings you to QC, Ms. Lance?” John Diggle asks as he brings the boy up onto his chest keeping the boy immobile as he starts to walk towards the security room away from more peering eyes.

“I moved back to Starling and a job listing caught my eye.”

“Who would you work for?”

“Haven’t met her. That will be luckily my next interview but her name is Felicity Smoak. Have you personally met her John?”

“I have. You’re looking to work as her assistant?” Little Oliver is busy observing the interior of where he has never been to really care what the adults are saying.

“My sister makes law work look tedious. Love my parents but they think I should have been a teacher.”

“You dropped out?”

“Yes, went backpacking through Europe and some of Asia and here I am. I’ve got some skills. Though tell me about what could be my future employer?”

As they are now within the security room John tilts his head as he takes in Sara. “She’s detail-oriented with the profession she enjoys it makes sense. She’s also very sweet and easy to love.”

“Wow, it sounds like you know her quite well. How are you and the misses doing?”

“We are thinking of adding to the family.”

“Oh, that well! So glad that you and Lyla worked things out.”

“That rocky time period after our deployment back to States has settled down, Lyla and I worked things out and two kids later here we are.”

“Awe, congratulations.”

“Thanks, how about you? Any significant other?”

“Thus far it varies. Haven’t found the right one yet. Hoping maybe being back in Starling I’ll get
lucky.”

“Good luck.”

Sara looks at the little boy who has pretty much scoped out the place bringing his focus back to her. He has these intense blue eyes. She can tell he is going to be a heartthrob.

“Though finding this one’s father to be a father is quite a tale…” Her words stop as she can see from the security one-way mirror Oliver heading their way. A little one holding his hand as another child is being held against his upper torso. “Three kids?”

“Triplets.”

“Oh shoot. Wow!”

Oliver seems surprised to see Sara. “Sara! What are you doing here?”

Sara gazes over the trio. How Oliver still hasn’t let go of his daughter’s hand. The little boy whimpering in his arms. Now the other boy calling out for his daddy eagerly. This man is a father of three little beings. She only could ever picture him maybe with a dog but a family oh… her mind is short-circuiting this is so unreal.

“You really are a dad.”

Oliver doesn’t have time for this. “Yea, I am. John can you help me get them situated in the car. We need to get home.”

Sara without even thinking offers her help and as notices that Oliver is about to turn her offer down, she just makes herself useful as she already grabbing the little backpacks Oliver dropped when he entered the office. “Oliver, your hands are too full. I can at least help you to your vehicle.”

“Fine.”

The adult trio leave to the underground parking lot elevators with the children.

Oliver inhales and then exhales deeply as he makes the call. It only rings once before her voice of concern shows.

It is nowhere near lunch time so she can already deduce it’s not a ‘hey babe miss you!’ kind of call and waits on baited breath for her boyfriend to tell her something urgent.

His words crisp because he doesn’t want her to read more into anything he says. He figures either of them can be overly dramatic when it comes to their kids wellbeing so direct and to the point makes everything easier. “Felicity, Nathan has a tummy ache. We are home and he’d really like to see his mommy.”

She gathering her stuff up and as Trevor makes his appearance she can tell her boyfriend alerted him first. She doesn’t have time to be annoyed as she makes her way towards the man excusing herself from the meeting. She doesn’t need to tell the elder Mr. Queen more than necessary as he’s already noticed Mr. Humphrey’s arrival to take her away.
“Has he vomited?”

“Twice since we’ve been home. Three times at the daycare.”

“The other two?”

“Seem fine. I have them segregated right now.”

Felicity questioning who is looking after the other two when Donna should still be in Central City. “My mom’s home?”

“No, um sweetie. An old friend is here helping out and John should be getting back with some Pedialyte.”

“Alright. I’m almost out of here I should be home in thirty.”

“He’s being a trooper he’ll be so glad to see you. I’ve got to get back to him. Never seen him so clingy he just wants to be held.”

“Our baby is sick.” She groans not being there is already eating her up. “Give him a kiss for me. I love you.”

“Love you too.” And the call is ended as Oliver goes back to the bedroom and brings Nathan back into his arms to rock him which helps to sooth his little boy. He can hear the other two making a ruckus with their newfound adult friend.

“Warm…warm…oh no cold.”

That has little Oliver looking at the woman before moving his hands in the other direction and he hears her say the word warm again.

Lillian is sitting on a bean chair one moment and up clapping happily for her brother to just plopping back down dejectedly on the panda bear looking bean chair again. She like her brother are enjoying these rounds of game play hot and cold with the newest friendly adult that is tasked to entertain them.

“So close. Very hot.”

That has Oliver move to the correct spot and he yelps that he found the object as he’s jumping up and down. “Founds it.”

“Good job. Now it Lillian’s turn.” Sara turns to Lillian. The girl already knows to turn her back towards her brother as he goes and hides the object. “Are you two having fun?”

Both kids say yes. They miss playing with their brother. Their father gave them explicit instructions to not disturb Nathan. They’ve heard him vomiting earlier and the nice lady has kept them busy in their playroom. Uncle John left to buy some supplies that he knows works on his own kids.

Just as Felicity’s vehicle arrives she sees John stepping out of his car. His already on the move to
open her door and help her out. She already has taken deeply to this man. Needing to hug him as he’s informing her of the little details. He is gives her a pharmacy bag.

“Would you like me to accompany you upstairs?”

“Sure. The children and I are always happy to have you around.” She also turns to Trevor and smiles. These two men are main staples in her kids’ lives.

“I should forewarn you that you have a guest. Her name is Sara Lance…”

“Lance? That name sounds familiar.” Felicity takes a moment as clarity strikes. “I went to school with… oh! A Lance sister.”

“Thus you’ve met?”

“Not directly I think. I think it was her sister. She did not like me. I mean she never said it to me directly but some other girls pointed it out to me.”

“Oh really?”

“Oh yes, several times. I feel bad for the ones in their line of sight at Starling Prep they were the mean girls’ movies are made about.”

Trevor asks just from little tidbits he’s learned, “Isn’t that where you met Oliver.”

“And Tommy. I knew Tommy but as you both can tell with the three angels upstairs. Oliver and I had um… thing.”

John nods. He knows the story well enough. Trevor just listens on with curiosity.

Felicity looks at Trevor’s interested face, “Yes Trev, that is why I left that horrible place. I was lucky to escape. Love my mom even more now that I think of it.”

“I’m sorry that happened to you.” John then continues, “If you like I can escort Ms. Lance off the premises so you don’t need to deal with any of this. Your son is sick. It is the most important priority.”

“I’m fine John. Anyways I can’t fault a sibling. I like to think I’m past that pettiness of the past.”

“If you are sure? There is also something you should be aware of.” As the elevator approaches the top floors. “Sara Lance is one of the seven finalists for that job task created to handle your affairs at work.”

“Oh. Okay. Small world.” Felicity follows John to her door as Trevor is just protectively behind her. “You two always make me feel like I’m precious cargo by the way you two are very protective of me even near my own home.” She hears Trevor contain a slight laugh. John just turns to her with a twinkle in his eyes as he opens the door for her. She’s been told by both men on different occasions that she is really easy to like.

The moment she enters her home she’s on autopilot and moves swiftly down the stairs to her children’s room. She can hear her daughter’s laughter and a part of her can’t wait to hug her and Oliver but she needs to check on her sick baby first. She needs her baby to know she’s here for him. Entering the room, she beholds her boyfriend sitting with his back against the headrest as Nathan is murmuring something to his dad. Her heart melts at the sight. Her boyfriend has a way of making her fall in love with him over and over. When their eyes meet both hold their respective smiles that are
used just for each other.

“Guess who is here buddy?” He says it in a soothing rhyming way that Nathan slowly moves to look with the help of his father.

“Mommy!”

“I’m here baby.” She’s finds herself quickly on the mattress as her boyfriend moves and Nathan arms wrap effortlessly onto his mom’s grasp. “Shh.” She kisses his clammy forehead. Oliver is upright and stretches out his neck and upper torso from being in position for a long time.

The way he still hears the other two down the hallway playing loudly he summarizes that they have no idea their mother is home yet. Taking the bag Felicity placed on the nightstand before being wrapped by their son in his time of need. Oliver is already measuring a dose. The ease between him and Felicity being able to co-parent is quite literally the easiest thing in the world. He still needs pinching at times at how unreal everything is.

“Here.”

Felicity takes the cup and thanks him as she helps Nathan take in the medicine.

“I’m going to go measure the electrolyte fluid. Help him hydrate.”

“Okay. He’s a little warm.”

“Temperature has been normal. We can check again after he drinks.”

“That sounds good.” She hears Oliver leave the room to go across the hall to the bathroom. The kids room does not have its own bathroom.

He grabs a clean Dixie cup and on his way back he stops to see his two other kids now sitting quietly looking at what he assumes is Sara reading something to them. This is the quietest those two have been so far. He makes a note to check up on them after making sure Nathan’s temperature is no concern.

“How’s Nathan doing?” John is looking at some security features that have been sent to him when Oliver goes upstairs to the kitchen.

“Hey John, he’s doing better. Thanks for getting the supplies. It would have been a hassle to go shopping with how Nathan was feeling.”

“Not a problem. You’ve done the same exact thing for me a few times.”

“I remember the first time I think I drove the pharmacist batty with all the questions. Nothing was too good for my goddaughter.”

“Well you always made my two kids your priority and it my pleasure to be that uncle to your own children.”

“Felicity asked me just the other day that we need to create a playdate. The kids are missing their cousins.”
“Oh I believe I get to hear the same from my own two. Lyla is on assignment till next Thursday. You know the kids are with her as long as she’s state bound.”

“I feel for you man. That small time frame of video chatting with the kids when they were in Providence had an impact on how much I craved them safe and close.”

“Lyla is actually going to be taking a permanent assignment that will keep her in closer to home. At least radius of our area code.”

“Really?”

“Yea, we’ve decided that more than two kids would be way too stressful to keep up this long distance traveling.”

“More than two… No…” Oliver gives his best friend a look over. “Are you saying baby three is on its way?”

“Yes. We found out five weeks ago and started prepping.”

“Congratulations man. This is wonderful news.”

“Thanks. Diapers and bottle feedings can’t wait.”

Oliver laughs he may have not handled that with his triplets but he’s been on duty for his niece and nephew. “You better not be wishing your blessing back at me. I am not ready and I’d like to be married before that is even is in discussion.”

“Hmm. So it is something you do want?”

“Today is one of those days I’d be crazy to entertain the idea. One sick, one went AWOL for a bit as the other happens to connect me with a past girlfriend’s sister.”

“Can’t say your life has ever been boring. Just to add to the mix. Sara doesn’t know the position she’s interviewed for that she’s in what could be her future boss’s home.”

“Of course.” Oliver laughs. The world is a small place at times. “Does Felicity know?”

“I gave her heads up before she came home but her interest was in Nathan.”

“I left them to interact.” After Nathan finally fell into a comfortable sleep, he left to make lunch and Felicity couldn’t wait a second longer to see her other two greatest loves. “Are you staying for lunch?”

John just nods as his friend gives him a dubious look. Yes, he is interested on what is happening downstairs. If everything goes well, he won’t be needed but he sent Trevor away for the rest of the day. He doubts Felicity will leave her baby boy’s side. Thus, he isn’t here just as a family friend but as a bodyguard if things go sideways between the ladies.
Chapter End Notes

Continuation media and coworkers coming up…
Inhome Interview

Chapter Summary

Sara Lance unbeknownst to her is already on a live interview in the Queen home. Felicity Smoak is taking in what could be the newest QC employee that will help her maneuver her new job title. Robert Queen wants to make an announcement as soon as his son’s girlfriend is ready.

Chapter Notes

Hi guys, just wanting to pop in and say thank you so much for making this journey with me. It’s been really cool. So, thank you so much!

Continuation from chapter 23...

Felicity hums with gratitude as her boyfriend leaves her and their son to make her favorite lunch. She appreciates his cooking talents. There is something to say in the most erotic of ways how his movements around the gourmet kitchen turns her on. He is so comfortable there and when he accommodates her with a culinary lesson it always leads to some fiery dessert.

The fact that just a week ago, a delivery of a sturdy storage bench was placed just within the enclosed pantry that leads to a small balcony where Oliver has his herb garden. They have sneaked away into that tiny room when things get a little hot between them. Children are none the wiser but her mom can see through their lies about getting a bench for a room that barely gets any traffic. Donna’s sly comments about planting seeds in gardens to her boyfriend has her telling her mother that Oliver and her aren’t thinking of expanding their family any time soon if ever.

Finally moving her thoughts of carnal desire for her man, she heads to where it seems they have a guest that is entertaining her children. Taking a few moments as she’s mentally prepares herself. The woman is a Lance after all and those few school years at Starling Prep has taught her that mean girls exist.

Taking a final soothing breath, she heads to where the voices of two little munchkins are vividly telling their visitor about the inflatable dragon that their uncle Tommy sent them. Felicity shakes her head. That toy survived five hours before the kids basically killed him with their little whacking swords. If she wasn’t there to witness the dragon floating around the room in a high speed manner she wouldn’t believe their excited stories. Oliver placing himself before her as the dragon skydives with precision towards her. The noise of the balloon meeting its end is something she may never get out of her head. Landing with their children cheering on their father’s heroics as the kids hold out their swords like the knights of the round table.

“My children seem to enjoy the middle ages folklore at the present.”
“Mommy!” Both cry out as they run towards their mother. These are the best moments as the children love to cuddle and Felicity takes full advantage of this because soon enough they’ll get older and it be harder to even get this kind of level of excitement.

“Hi babies.” Kissing each one before she addresses the newcomer. “Hope these two weren’t too much to handle.” Felicity knowing this woman is applying for the job wants to seem a little more professional, “Hi. I’m...” She gets interrupted by her daughter but just after that says, “Welcome to my home.”

“Your children are great. Super fun. I’m sorry to hear one of them is ill.”

That is when the two ask about their brother. With their little minds going from one simple point to the other spectrum wondering if Nathan is dying.

Chapter 24 Inhome Interview

John is taking a bite of his sandwich as he observes Sara suddenly bringing the lunch conversation to Oliver’s youth. He can notice the moment Oliver tenses up. Some things are better left in the past but it seems Sara’s delightfulfulness so far may be coming to an end.
Sara finally probing for some answers, “How did you two meet?”

Felicity and Oliver have given their children a little story of how they met and what lead to them having the triplets yet not be in each other’s lives. Hence a story to placid why the kids didn’t have their father until now.

Lillian as outspoken and charming as she is gets to start the story almost word for word that she’s heard from her parents. It’s quite delightful how she says it. The stressing of little words like kissing and dancing in such an innocent way. Sara eyes wandering from the children who are somewhat enthralled with the childlike tale to the grownups who are looking at the children with their nodding heads.

Sara can’t help but say, “Wow. That is so magical.”

Little Oliver quips what his brother would say if he was here, “We pay de fairies to keep daddy.”

“Really?”

The elder Oliver takes the reign of the story as he looks directly at his guest, “My mother has this Fabergé egg and it holds a magical golden coin. With three little ones invested in fairytales there is no dragons that can’t be defeated.”

“I heard of that defeated dragon.” She directs her comment to Oliver. “The kids call you a hero.”

“Daddy is hero.”

“Thanks Lilly.”

“You welcome daddy.”

That has little Oliver looking at his favorite uncle. “Uncals Johnnie would have killed him with ones swippy.” The boy moves his arm as a visual aide.

“Oh I don’t know about that Oliver; your daddy did save your mommy.” That has the boy nod. “I think it was all the good hits you and Nate and Lilly here did. It had no chance.”

“Dat was funs.”

Felicity chimes in, “We are a dragon-free home.” That makes the two kids laugh. They know how their momma got attacked and she says if it wasn’t for daddy she could have been dinner for it. The kids are starting to fidget in their seats. “Are you two done?”

They both say yes and nod at the same time. From looking at their mom to now watching their father as he tells them to go wash their hands. “Olly, Lilly! You may play with the toys brought upstairs but stay in our line of sight.”

Felicity making sure they know to behave. “You heard your daddy.” The kids know very well what is accepted. They’ve pushed the boundary a few times and had play time over. Sitting by the adult’s side and being silent is no fun at all. They consider big people talk to be very boring.

The four adults now sitting and enjoying the rest of their meal. Sara yet again can’t believe Oliver prepared the spread that is on the table. “I still can’t believe you put this meal together.”

“I had some help, John here is no stranger to making meals.”

“I dabble but nowhere near this master chef.”
Felicity has a sly smile, “I have no complaints. If it were up to me… the defrost button on the microwave would still be overused.”

“You can’t cook?”

“I…”

“She can cook. Our children are free from can goods.”

“That is because you are a good teacher.”

“I’m only as good as my pupil.” His eyes sear to hers. Her blush emanating as she remembers her last session in the kitchen with Oliver. That padded bench just a few feet behind the pantry door fills her with a warm heat of reminiscence. An escaped cry of pleasure had her kids losing interest in playtime as they began the hunt to search for their mother. Never in her life being half dressed made her shiver as the pantry door opened with three curious set of eyes wondering what their parents were doing. Yes, gardening was the answer. A very sad answer. Nothing like potted plants to cover up Oliver’s excitement. At least he was dressed. She held her discarded blouse against her chest. Only saved by the intro of a very much liked cartoon got the kids to move out quickly.

Oh gosh! If her mother were to be at home, then she would have never been allowed to hear the end of it. She regains her thoughts and just smiles sweetly at her guests. Afraid to look back at Oliver because the man would hold a smirk. Both know of their attraction for one another. Things heat up quickly between them and it doesn’t take much. Finally taking a chance she glances at her boyfriend across the table and as she thinks those orbs of his are magnificent and she happily loses herself in them.

With Felicity and Oliver sharing looks John just shakes his head. He’s been in many conversations with both and knows when his two friends get lost in each other.

Sara taking in the couple. She wonders if John and her weren’t here if this meal would have been discarded and a different kind of spread would be on this dinner table. Maybe… but there are two young ones playing to their own little tune and there be no way to hide such an activity. Even so she can sense the hunger between her hosts. Shoot a part of her wouldn’t be to off-putting to see this show. Biting her lip, her time abroad has made her a lot more unencumbered by these random thoughts.

She doubts Oliver and his girlfriend are still in their honeymoon phase. They do indeed have triplets that are four-years-old. They must be a mood killer. Her belief that people with kids aren’t as active in the passion department. Kids soak up a lot of energy. So, with her stray thoughts now gone she may just be witnessing two people who just really like each other. It is also strange as she is assessing them that she doesn’t know Oliver’s girlfriend’s name. No one has actually said her given name out loud.

Felicity breaking herself from her boyfriend’s hold she looks to the woman sharing a meal with her family and she decides to ask, “John here mentioned you are looking for a job at QC. Any particular job listing catch your attention?”

“Funny story. I mean Oliver does work there but running into him and finding he is a dad of all things. It is just incredible.”

“He is a good father. Were you coming from the interview when you met up?”

“Oh no. I still had to meet with a liaison for what could be my future job. It was short and sweet; we
have spoken on several occasions through telephone interviews. She wants to know how I handle myself in different medium types.”

“This job sounds complex. What do you make of it so far?”

Oliver and John are in the know-how and can already take it by how Felicity has shifted in her seat that she is all business now. Both men are now within a live interview. Oliver will go with the flow. This position is important. Whoever is trusted to handle all the sensitivity may it be financial to very personal details that goes along with the job title. They’ll be very ingrained into this family and secrecy and professionalism is really important.

“I don’t know how many applicants there are going for this position. So far I have been through a lot of hoops. I think Abigail, that is the name of the woman I saw this morning likes the fact that my dad is a long serving cop with good standing in the city and that my mom has been teaching for a good many years and her employers have only said good things about her.”

John whistles as he then says, “Wow, they’re looking back to your parents’ histories. This job does sound really complex.”

“I know. I have yet to meet the boss lady. Her name is Felicity Smoak. I am so going to google that name.” She then looks to Oliver, “Do you know her? I mean personally? You know face-to-face? Your company has a lot of employees.”

Oliver turns to John before he looks to Felicity then back to Sara. “Yes, I know her. We are very well acquainted. Met her professionally in Providence. We worked together for a while.”

“Really?”

John shakes his head as he adds, “Really? The woman who worked for Palmer tech and QC luckily got her aboard.” He looks deadpan at Sara, “I heard from Oliver’s father that they tried to hire her out of college. Years ago.”

“Okay, she sounds intriguing. So is she nice or you know… a stuck up bitch?”

“Hey, that isn’t nice. A man being bossy is regarded as…”

Sara cutting off Felicity, “Sorry, but some men are plain dicks. Met plenty and I’m assuming to be meeting a lot more in the future. No offense Oliver.” She turns shrugging at John as she says his name too.

Felicity observing that Sara is feisty and that is a quality she is looking for. Oliver has mentioned that if they can’t find a perfect fit that he’d persuade Trish to fill this job. The woman is a lifesaver and he has first hand knowledge how awesome the woman is.

Felicity has to ask before revealing who she is, “Your short time with me, have you sized me up?”

Sara cackles a bit. Of course she has sized this woman sitting near her. The moment they met when Oliver’s girlfriend took the kids into her arms. An impression was made. “You seem warm. You love your children and there is plenty of sizzle between you and Oliver.”

“You think I should hide my relationship with Oliver better?”

“Honestly?” She sees Felicity shake her head yes. “If I met you at QC. I would have never realized you and Oliver were a thing. Well as long as you two aren’t in the room together other than that only blind fools can’t see the passion.”
“Ha, told you two this already.” John says amused.

Oliver rolls his eyes, “You and everyone else John. I can’t help but look at my girl with heart eyes. Thea has a more expletive word and she isn’t allowed to say it with the kids present so I kind of make sure one of the triplets is always nearby when with her.”

“Using the kids, classic!” Sara is delighted by daddy Oliver.

“When Nathan is feeling better you’ll have to meet him also. It just feels so incomplete without my other little boy here. You also might get to meet my mom. If she isn’t with his mother. Those two have become thick as thieves.”

“Wow! Never thought there would be a day that Mrs. Ice Queen would have a bestie.”

“Sara!” Oliver can’t believe she just went there.

“Okay, sorry. That was out of line.”

Felicity can see that Oliver is a little peeved at Sara’s outburst. He glances at Felicity and decides he doesn’t want this to be a reason not to hire Sara. “My mom hasn’t been so keen with many of the ladies in my past. Sara’s sister tried to entrap me.”

“Yea, my sister is no angel.” Sara shrugs but seems to want to say more.

“Sara?”

“Sorry continue.”

“My mom may have gone overboard and told Ms. Lance to keep away from me. That practically meant every Lance. A few years ago I invited Sara to a family party. My mom doesn’t forget faces or names.”

Felicity can see there is a story there.

“Let just say my mom was ready to pay Sara here to buzz off and keep her distance.”

“Ouch! I actually can’t see Moira doing that. How did you handle it?” Felicity wondering what Sara will say. This is actually an important answer because it will cement what Felicity thinks of the woman in regards of the job opportunity.

“Wow, it sounds like Oliver’s mom has mellowed out.”

“Oh! Mrs. Queen is still a very reserved woman when it comes to her family.” John Diggle points out. He knows that is one thing he respects about the matriarch. She is no fool. There are plenty of people who would do anything for a buck and in return sell this family short. “Even more protective of her grandchildren. They all mean the world to her.”

Sara taking in what John just said. She knows the woman is protective of her family. She can assume this instant that Oliver’s girlfriend would move heaven and Earth for her own children. She supposes mothers would do that. “I apologized to Mrs. Queen. I knew there was history because of what my sister did. Sorry Oliver you didn’t deserve that but I told his mother I am not my sister and I came to the party to enjoy his friendship. His mother just sized me up. Told me to behave in her icy way.”

“I gather none of this drama made the tabloids.”

“No!” Oliver quickly added then continued in a somber voice, “My mother is quick and efficient.
Hence why Sara calls my mom… a cold description.”

“Sheesh Oliver, you make it sound like I swore. Your mom can be cool at times and I have nothing else to add. She’s your mom I get it.”

“Yet, you want to work at QC? Knowing that you’ll run into Mrs. Queen.”

“Well true but I’m professional and I’m also not one to gripe about things for a long time. Can’t fault a mother for being protective and she just was quick of the tongue. Kind of admirable.”

Oliver and John watch as Felicity is taking in Sara Lance.

“There are a few applicants bidding for the job. I’ve only met with two and now you’re the third. You seem like a likely candidate I’d like to get to know more about.”

Sara is listening but her mind is unraveling some points. Is this woman also like Abigail someone she needs to get through to meet this Ms. Smoak woman or… or is she the end goal?

Oliver decides to come clean, “Sara Lance meet Felicity Smoak, my girlfriend.”

Sara’s jaw falls as she is just looking at Felicity before she regains a semblance of normality and gets back to looking at the other two men around the table.

“Would you like some coffee?” Felicity moves behind the island to place some water into a pot. Sara already merging to sit on a raised bench. John has taken the kids to a local park so they can enjoy the summer air. Oliver stays behind to look after Nathan allowing Felicity some privacy with what can be a very important hiring position. Their prospects of the getting someone to handle being an integral part of making things work so Felicity can run the Applied Science Division that his father has seemly talked her into creating a new vision for the company.

Oliver made sure that Sara Lance had signed a confidentiality agreement he had Darlene bring downstairs before they left to head to his home. As much as wanting Nathan home under the covers of his little bed. He wasn’t taking no chances when it comes to his family. Leaving his signed section with the HR personnel he deals with constantly.

The women enjoy talking about nonspecific topics. Just getting to know one another and as the conversation lands to be about motherhood. Sara knows that she is in the presence of the woman whom she might land up working for. Taking in the place so far Sara expresses, “This is a very spacious penthouse. I wonder how much a place like this goes for?”

“Oliver actually owns this building. He’s really into investments. Basically trying to be self-sufficient.”

“I could always see him becoming independent. My sister would drone on about how he could be a powerhouse. She nagged him a lot about responsibilities.”

“How is your sister?” Felicity asks being polite as possible to a girl who could make girls like her suffer back in the day as they tried to fit in.

“She’s fine, has a job that fits her personality.” Sara sees Felicity’s blank look. “She’s a lawyer. She
gets paid to argue.”

“Oh! Are you guys close?”

“We are. I mean all is fine in small doses.”

Sara wonders if Felicity knows her sister in a more personal way so she is about to probe when Felicity beats her to it.

“I went to Starling Prep for a semester and a half. My dream scholarship became a reality for M.I.T. and my mom and I moved out East. Been living on the East Coast until reuniting with Oliver.”

“I am so amazed that none of this is splattered across those raggedy papers. Oliver usually is all over them.”

“I have no comment on that.” Grabbing two cups to fill. “Though Oliver mentioned you signed a non-disclosure.”

“He did. It felt weird being that I’ve known him for years but he said anything to do with him and QC is now something that warrants this level of secrecy.”

“He is very protective and yes I met your sister on a few occasions.”

“Oh, I’d say lucky you but she was one of those… well let me tell you. I had a little crush on Oliver back then and let me tell you she had me get grounded to make the move on him.”

“Wow. That’s rough. And umm… Oliver and I. Umm… Well…”

“Did the deed if you both have a set of triplets together.”

“Yea, I can’t believe it at times.”

“Can’t believe what?” His voice is heard as he coming up the stairs with Nathan in his arms. “Nate wants to cuddle with you.”

“Awe baby. Are you feeling better?” The boy nods but is holding his throat.

“His throat is still raw from vomiting earlier.”

“Maybe I should go?” Sara glancing between the couple in this quaint family moment. “I don’t want to intrude.”

“Nonsense. If you’re going to work for me. These are the moments you will see a lot.” Taking Nathan from Oliver’s grasp Felicity kisses her little boy’s temple. “Would you like a popsicle? Uncle John got some for you.” With his little nod Felicity walks them both toward the freezer.

“You are doing great Sara. It seems my girl is taking a liking to you.”

“I guess John was right. She’s sweet and easy to love.”

“Guys, I’m standing right here.”

“Did he tell you she’s very bossy?”

Sara laughs, “Well, being I’m hoping to be her employee it’s probably a requirement of hers.” They watch as Felicity is now having a private conversation with her son about flavors. The boy finally
chooses cherry because its red and that is his favorite color after all. He takes the ice pop from his mother and begins to lick it. As he shifts in his mom’s arms he finally notices the stranger talking to his dad.

“Daddy, who dat?”

Oliver smiles a huge smile as this is the first time since he’s picked up his little boy hours ago that Nathan actually taking in his surroundings. “This is Ms. Sara.” As he watches Nathan gaze their guest with his little two eyes while enjoying the cherry flavored stick. “Are you going to say hi to her?”

The boy glances at his mother for some sort of permission before nodding. Felicity already moving him closer to where his dad and Ms. Lance is seated.

“Ello, me names Nathan.”

“Hello Nathan. How is your tummy?”

He shrugs, he really doesn’t know. Looking back at his mom he moves his free hand around her neck to get closer.

“He’ll need a nap to feel better. After a nice warm bath.” Felicity kisses her little boy as she brings a napkin to clean up the goop that’s not making it into his mouth.

“I think mother and son will both need a clean-up.” Watching the cherry flavored ice melting making its way to her neck and blouse.

“Okay, I am going. It was nice to meet you Ms. Smoak. Always a pleasure Oliver and your children are perfect. You are such a lucky…” She sees the innocent eyes looking back at her safely tucked in his mother’s arms. With a glance back to Oliver. “Lucky duck.”

“I am. Let me help you out.”

“Thanks Sara, it was a pleasure to meet you too.” Felicity now seeing that her son is not interested in suckling any further takes the pop to discard. Its time he takes a nice bath and becomes more comfortable.

“Nathan is a sleep.” Felicity slides onto her boyfriend’s awaiting arms. “Have you spoken to John?”

“He’s keeping the kids to dinner time.” Oliver shifts a bit so he can slide her onto his lap. “Did you have an interesting interview process? How did she do?”

“I actually kind of like her but I have one important question?”

“Okay?”

“Did you ever sleep with her?”

He dry laughs, “No, no absolutely not.” Oliver takes a moment, “I do have to admit a little part of me entertained the idea just to rid myself of Laurel but as quickly as I thought that. It passed. Nothing good ever comes out of cheating.”
“Is that so?” She inquires taking the time to look over his facial features.

“I’ve seen what it can do first hand Felicity, my own parents could have been another divorce statistic. My dad was a creep to do that to my mom. So, no. The thought of doing something to a woman I was dating even though the magic of it fizzled and I wanted out. It would have been low of me to do that with her own sister. I was already growing up from my douche ways.”

“That is an acceptable answer Mr. Queen.”

“Oh really?”

“Yep.” She leans over to kiss him. “You are an amazing man, Oliver. I seem to find myself falling deeper in love with you with each passing day.”

He nuzzles against her and she giggles as his well-kept trimmed scuff beard tickles her skin. “I love you too.” Her long locks still a little damp from her shower. “You know I wouldn’t mind a little nap before the festivities of the kids reuniting happens. Because we will have three over excited high energy kids later.”

“But I’m not tired.” She feels the tips of his finger enticing her skin as he follows a sensual path down her sides and she gets what he is saying. “Oh!” His dilating pupils conveying the message clearly. “Yes, a nap would do us some good.”

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