**Judging the Proud**

**Summary**

Felicity had known about Oliver Queen ever since she was a teenager. He was the Rich playboy that everyone wanted to date. Then he had died on a boat accident and come back alive five years later. Now that he was back she was shocked to meet him, only to realize that he is not what she thought he was. No, he is proud, he is cold and pretentious, and she hates him.

AU, retell of Pride and Prejudice, Arrow Style. Olicity!
Hello! So here I come with a new story. I know I have not been updating the Oracle as I should, but I am going through some serious writing block this time.

This is a retelling of Pride and Prejudice, Arrow style. The story won’t be the same, because even though Pride and Prejudice is one of my favorite stories I want more passion in this one, plus I need to change a few things to make it work better for the characters.

This is an Alternate Universe, the story will be a long but not extremely so. I think I will try to do longer chapters instead.

I hope you enjoy!

Chapter 1. Past & present

It was rainy and late at night, his blue eyes traveled towards the cars clock it marked two in the morning with bright blue numbers. He was driving fast not minding the fact that it was raining. At that moment he felt on top of the world, forgetting the fact that he had just fought with his parents about dropping off Collage, forgetting the disappointed look on their faces.

Alcohol was buzzing through his veins, feeling the wind and rain hitting the side of his face and hand, which hanged outside of the window, the feeling of adrenaline drowning him.

The car’s tires screeched in the wet pavement and him and his companions laughed and cheered out loud as the car slid on the road.
He normally didn’t drive in the countryside of Starling City, but he had heard earlier in the party that there were empty fields that were surrounded by thick dense trees and that the cops rarely drove around the area. It was perfect for drifting around carelessly, to be completely reckless without repercussions. Not that he would have had any if he had been caught by a Police Officer at that moment, he thought with a smug smile.

“Ollie be careful!” he heard the soft young voice of Sara from the back seat of his sports car, she hadn’t buckled her seatbelt on and her small frame had been sliding on the leather seat, he looked at her through the review mirror and thought she was beautiful. His eyes flashed towards the girl next to him in the passenger seat, she was pale and her face seemed preoccupied, Laurel.

He felt suddenly guilty at his previous thoughts over Sara her sister, he had been dating Laurel on and off for the last three years. He cared for her, loved her even, but for some reason his mind wasn’t faithful, his body either. For a flash of a second he thought maybe there was something wrong with him, but that train of thought abandon him when Tommy’s laugh was audible over Sara’s complaints.

“Oh chill Sara, Ollie knows what he is doing…”

“Of course I do…” he could hear that his voice was slightly slurred but confident, and his hand came towards the radio, turning the music up as he accelerated in the empty streets, going towards a corner, wanting to slide it smoothly like he had been doing all night long.

He would have seen it coming if it had been raining less, if he hadn’t been drunk and careless. The two bright spotlights shone his car and blinded him, as they took the corner and a second later the loud crashing sound of metal against metal, and the screams of his friends deafened him.

He could feel the sudden pain around his neck when the seat belt tighten across his body as the
vehicle spun in motion. Glass broke around him, in a shower of shimmering shards that cut his skin. His car hit a nearby tree with and the airbags knocked him out before he hit his head against the steering wheel and then everything went dark.

His eyes opened as he sat up gasping for air, feeling his lungs compress with the heaviness of sad memories, still tasting the flavor of blood in his tongue and the absolute silence in his car when he had woken up later that night with the sound of sirens approaching.

A thin layer of sweat covered his body and it took him a little while to realize that he was sitting on his bed, five years after the accident that took his best friend’s life.

He didn’t realize he was crying until his hand came to his face and noticed wet cheeks. Even though time had passed, Oliver realized he never stopped feeling the pain or the guilt, not even after all he went through in the Island.

He blinked tiredly and turned to look at the clock on his nightstand, it marked 5 am; it was usual for nightmares to wake him up at this time either way, but he felt more affected now, he hadn’t dreamed about that accident in months.

He got out of bed and headed towards his bathroom to get his day started.

He was happy to see Diggle later that morning at the Foundry. Diggle and him had become close friends these past few months, after he found out who the Arrow was, what he was doing to help the City. Diggle had been previously a soldier (and Oliver’s current bodyguard), and he was happy to become part of the team after a slight freak-out.

“He, Oliver, what are you doing here so early?” Diggle asked as he approached him, he was holding two cups of coffee on both hands as he watched Oliver hit the dummy.
“I’m here early every morning” he answered without missing a beat, sounding breathless and his focus unwavering from his target.

“Yea, but today is your birthday man… don’t you sleep in at least today?”

Oliver looked confused for a moment stopping on his track, mentally counting back to realize that in fact it was his birthday. Diggle pressed his lips to hide the bemused smirk on his face.

“You forgot it was your birthday, didn’t you?”

“I haven’t celebrate a proper birthday in many years” he answered with a shrug, going back to hit the dummy with more strength now. Understanding as of why he was remembering the night Tommy died, now it all made more sense. His best friend had been a part of every birthday Oliver had ever had, ever since they had been 6 years old.

But not anymore… not thanks to him.

“Does your sister or Sara know that?”

“Know what?”

“That you don’t celebrate your birthdays…”
Oliver turned to look at him and pressed him lips “They know I’m not the same person I was before the Island, which is good for me and for the rest of the humanity.”

“If you say so, here have some coffee… you look like you haven’t slept much” Diggle came closer to Oliver and extended him his cup, which Oliver took after a moment with a heavy sigh. His morning training was over, he knew he needed to get ready for QC and a boring day filled with meetings.

It took all day to convince Sara that he didn’t want to go out clubbing that day. It took all day to convince Thea and his mother, they both had it in their mind it was a birthday to celebrate, after six months of returning from the dead, a changed man without his father but a legacy to fulfill.

After a lot of convincing the three of them had gone to watch a movie after a nice dinner Table Salt (per Moira’s insistence). Even though he was far from normal, just a fragment of the boy he had been when his father took him on that boat, he felt alright that night, laughing at Thea’s sass, feeling something new spread inside his chest at the smile his mother gave him.

Made him think… this could be alright, he could be better, make the City better, to make up all the horrible things he had caused to his family, he could make their Company better, he would do it for them.

Blue eyes stared out of the window, drops of water stuck to the glass as it drizzled outside. It was dark out, and the city lights twinkled in the night. He shouldn’t be there, wasting time in a party when he was supposed to be saving the city. Loud music played in the background; and he turned around glazing at the people that surrounded him, chatting casually, laughing, and drinking, without a worry on the world that fell apart outside of their windows.
In his hand he was holding an untouched bottle of beer and he took a sharp breath to regain patience turning on his heels back to gaze outside instead.

“You know you could try to look like you are having fun, it’s a party after all.” Her voice was soft and amused, Oliver turned towards her and raised an eyebrow fixing his own blue eyes on hers, letting a soft grumble escape his lips.

“When you dragged me in here, I agreed to come… didn’t agree to enjoy it.” Her small hands came to wrap around his bicep, blue eyes fixing upon his drink.

“Ollie, you haven’t even touched the drink I gave you thirty minutes ago.” She looked at him with a slight pout and he smirked, bringing the bottle up to wet his lips lightly.

“For all you know Sara, this is my second or third bottle.” She snorted and pulled him out of the corner he had been hiding for the past fifteen minutes, they both walked around the room in silence.

“We’d agreed that you will come out today and enjoy it, it’s your birthday after all,” he was quiet for a moment, blue eyes scanning the room.

“My birthday was last week.” he mused low and she turned up to him giving him an exasperated look.

“Last week I let you be Oliver Queen the hermit, but I also told you that this weekend we are celebrating it… not everyday you turn 28,” her smile broaden, illuminating her stunning features
“plus you came back from the dead a few months ago, and I feel obligated as your friend to get you out, introduce you to a few new friends,” He gazed down at her and grinned to his side.

“Sara you barely know anyone at this party, actually I’m pretty sure the person who owns the house… what was her name?”

“Charlotte”

“Right, I am pretty sure she doesn’t know half of these people” Sara’s grin appear to grow wider, like a cat that ate the canary.

“She didn’t seem to mind me bringing you along, her eyes could barely blink at the sight of you.” he gave her unimpressed look.

“Please don’t tell me you brought me in here to play matchmaker. I’m not interested” She winced and brought her small hand towards her chest, faking shock.

“I would never do such thing.” Oliver shook his head and they strolled their way towards the snack table, where she proceeded to pick a few carrots and dip them down in ranch.

Oliver was relieved that at least this party was more informal than the events he was going to be dragged to, being the new CEO of Queen Consolidated. He was happy to have convinced his friend that in fact he didn’t care to go out to a fancy nightclub. He brought the bottle of beer up once again and this time gave it a hearty gulp, frowning at the warm taste of it as he put it down on the table.

“You shouldn’t have left it go warm” she said before popping a cherry tomato in her mouth, her eyes
fixed suddenly in a spot of the room, going wide for a moment.

Oliver’s brows met in the middle in confusion at Sara’s expression, following her gaze he saw two women among the crowd. They popped out in their bright outfits he noticed; both of them were greeting Charlotte at the entrance of the house.

One was tall; and absolutely stunning, she was wearing a wine color dress that contrasted with her dark skin and black hair, eyes slanted and a small button nose, her smile was radiant, he noticed and his blue eyes travelled back to Sara and a smirk appeared on his face.

“Well, well… if I didn’t know any better, I would believe you have been smitten” he murmured lowering himself to speak close to Sara’s ear. She jumped slightly on her spot, cheeks going bright red and she gave him a side murderous look.

“This is not about me Ollie, and I thought we made it clear you don’t know any better. I’m just glad you actually seemed to notice something, someone… I was beginning to get concerned that you had been replaced by a robot.” his smile didn’t disappear from his face as he turned back towards the new comers, his eyes now travelling towards the brunette’s smaller companion.

She was shorter even with the tall heels she was wearing; she had fair skin and blonde hair that flowed down her shoulders in big messy waves. He could see from where he stood that her lips were bright red, same color than her dress, and his heart stopped when her gaze came up to meet his.

It was something that hadn’t happened to him in years, his heart beating at such accelerated rate like it was now, just because of the brightness in her eyes and the beauty of the soft smile that had appeared on her face the moment she caught him looking.

He averted his gaze immediately, a heavy feeling sinking on his stomach. He was suddenly craving
the forsaking beer he had put down just a minute before. He fumbled around, eyes going towards the table, catching the clear bottle that held warm fizzy liquid, without another thought he picked it back up and gave another drink.

Trying to calm his feelings, his weird reaction to a stranger and the feeling that he had of knowing her from somewhere else, perhaps another life.

“Ollie you are smoldering again” Sara mused from his side.

“I’m not”

“They are coming our way” he heard Sara say in a gasp, and Oliver’s eyes came down to meet them. Forcing himself to look towards Charlotte who he already knew and who was coming at them with a bright smile on her face.

“Sara, Oliver,” Charlotte said in an excited tone, too excited perhaps Oliver thought, “This is my best friend Lissy and Nyssa, her roommate” she finished and her hand wrapped around the blonde’s arm, pulling her forward.

“Pleasure to finally meet you Sara, Charlotte has told me so much about you” Sara shook her hand with a smile, and Oliver found himself unable to not gaze upon her and her happy tone.

Lissy, what kind of name was that either way?

“I can say the same thing Lissy” Sara said in a friendly tone.
“Oh please don’t call me that,” she muttered and then winced loudly, closing her eyes for a brief moment while shaking her head “I mean, you can call me that if you want. I’m always telling Charlotte and Nyssa to not call me that… it reminds me of my mother,” she flinched again “which it’s not a bad thing, not at all… my mom is great, just a little crazy” she shook nervously, her eyes flashing towards Oliver in complete mortification.

He was looking at her with an amused look and something that perhaps resembled a smile. He caught it before it flourished to a full-blown smile, and Felicity blinked and her cheeks turned a bright shade of red.

“I’m sorry, my nerves get the best of me when I meet gorgeous people… oh god Nyssa, make it stop” she pleaded to her friend and Nyssa laughed out loud, and Sara followed closely after. Charlotte was shaking her head slightly with a look of slight shock and embarrassment, and it took everything he had on him to not smile at this stranger’s babble.

“You are cute” Sara said with a smirk “so what should I call you then?”

“Felicity, Lis… take your pick” she answered returning the smile.

Sara nodded and raised her hand towards Nyssa “So I take it you are Nyssa then…?” the tall woman gave Sara her most stunning smile.

“Yes,” Nyssa gave a quick side look towards Oliver and her smile dimmed slightly “and I am guessing this is your boyfriend?”

“Oh no,” Sara said with a snort and Oliver turned towards her rising a brow, almost looking
offended “Ollie and I are just old friends.”

Oliver smiled his most polite rehearsed smile “Oliver Queen, pleasure to meet you” he said softly, shaking Nyssa’s hand to then turn towards Felicity.

She stretched her hand out quickly and when his wrapped around hers he noticed many things, the fact that her hand was cold and slightly sweaty, that she seemed to be trembling slightly, and that a jolt of energy ran through him, shocking him at the contact. The spark was such that he saw her pull her hand away quickly, a puzzled look appearing on her face as her bright blue eyes never stopped starring at him.

They both had felt it. He quickly told himself it had been static. The fact that this stranger was affecting him so made him weary. He didn’t like not being in control on his feeling, of his reactions.

He didn’t like that a babbling blonde with insecurity issues was getting the best of him, so he scolded his features and turned his eyes away from her, determined to not show anything but his well rehearsed cold front.

If Sara was smitten by Nyssa, this blonde… Felicity was most definitely taken by him, just like any other blonde girl her age who couldn’t see a broken man for what it was.

The girls that surrounded him fell onto an easy conversation, that started with Nyssa’s dojo and Sara promising to come and take some classes the week after, then they moved to other topics, good movies playing around and the music that the DJ was playing.

“Eric, the DJ is my cousin… he is pretty great” Charlotte said with a proud smile.
“He even got people dancing in the living room, I never see that happening” Felicity said with a grin, she seemed more relaxed now he noticed, and he fought the urgency to ask her if she wanted a drink.

A loud noise interrupted their talk and Oliver turned in complete alert towards his right and then felt himself relaxed when a few drunken voices started to speak alarmed. Charlotte breathed loudly and her smile disappeared from her face.

“I better go and check what they broke this time” she said slightly exasperated and Felicity shook her head with an apologetic smile.

“You should stop inviting Oswald and Rick to your parties Char… they are like teenagers, and surprisingly light weight for how much they drink on a weekly basis” Felicity said.

He found himself taking another sip of his warm beer and eyes traveled towards his friend, who for a moment gave him a concerned look, both of them probably remembering the same thing, the same night and the person he used to be.

For a moment all he wanted to do was claw himself out of that situation, of the memories, and that hellish party that reminded him of someone he had tried to forget for over five years.

“Talking about drinks… we should get ourselves some, what do you say?” Nyssa turned towards Felicity with a raised perfectly manicured brow and the blonde nodded, before giving Sara and Oliver a smile.

“Drinks are over there” Sara pointed behind her over by the bar, Nyssa was already walking away, hips swaying with each step being followed closely behind by a small blonde with waves that
bounced freely behind her back, leaving them staring behind them in silence.

“I’m surprised you didn’t offer to make her a drink… you know to wow her” Oliver mused low and Sara snorted loudly.

“Oliver, I mix drink for your club as my job. I don’t want to do it while I’m trying to have fun. Plus… I don’t want to be pushy” and the light frown on her brow told him that the last part was mostly it.

“Sara you are gorgeous, and that girl didn’t even spare a glance at me… you have got this”

“Yea… well what if she doesn’t like blondes?” she said quickly, blue eyes fixing on him and he gave her his best teasing smile.

“You mean you or me?” and Sara smiled back, more radiant.

“Well I meant you, I know you know you are hot, but Ollie you can get down your high horse for a moment” Sara said quickly, shaking her head “what if she is into a more exotic type of man…? or who knows, maybe she is not into buff dudes that are so tall, you know that is a thing, some girls like the lanky type”

“Okay” he said amused and laughed breathily “but I think she is just not into dudes, call it a feeling”
“You seem to have cheered up, anything to do with that blonde we just met?” Felicity said in a gush tone while Nyssa poured both of them a healthy glass of red wine.

“Which blonde?” Nyssa asked and extended the glass towards Felicity who took it and gave her an unwavering look.

“If you liked men, this comment of yours will work… but since you don’t you know exactly which blonde I’m talking about.” Nyssa laughed softly and turned slightly to look back at the pair who still stood by the snack’s table.

“She seems fun,” she said casually with a shrug.

“Just fun?”

“Well… I’m not even sure she is in the same page,” Nyssa looked slightly guarded and Felicity nodded looking back at them, her eyes fixing on Oliver for a moment, looking down the width of his back, his brown leather jacket and dark washed jeans.

“Yes, well I’m no expert, but she seemed to be looking at you quite a lot… on the other hand, so did he—everyone always looks at you, because you are freaking gorgeous” Felicity commented looking back at her friend. Nyssa gave her a smile, she didn’t grin often but when she did her face lit up from within.

“I think you don’t have anything to worry about, he was looking at me for two seconds, and the rest
of the time he seemed to be looking at you” Felicity stood quiet for a second before she blurted out a laugh.

“Was that before or after I stuffed my foot in my mouth?”

“Oh it wasn’t that bad, I have heard you say worst”

“Not helping… plus I don’t really care who he was looking at, not really. He is Oliver Queen” Felicity muted taking a sip of her wine.

“What does that have to do with anything?” Nyssa asked, raising a brow.

“Oh Nyssa, you are not from here so you don’t know that before his accident Oliver Queen was all over the news, always partying, always drunk… every weekend with a new girl”

“His accident…? You mean when he and his dad got lost in the Chinese sea?” Nyssa shook her head “that was over five years ago Lis, everyone grows in five years… god knows I did, and you did too if I remember correctly, you don’t have black hair and are not wearing lot’s of eyeliner anymore”

Felicity winced and shook her head looking at her friend reproachfully “Don’t judge me for judging, you are supposed to be on my side” Nyssa laughed out loud.

“I’m on your side, I am kind of hoping you will climb that like a tree” the brunette mused, and Felicity felt her cheeks burning.
“Shhhh, someone could hear you Nyssa!” and Nyssa laughed again.

“What do you say if we go and dance a little?” Nyssa asked suddenly and Felicity started to open her mouth to complain when Nyssa continued “since you got me out of the gym to come here to the party”

“You know, unlike you and your perfection… some of us are very white, with two left feet, while you will look sexy and great in the dance floor (like we have established all the times we have gone out) I will make a fool of myself” Felicity said quickly and Nyssa looked unwavering, her free hand coming to grasp her friend’s wrist and starting to pull her towards the Living room, where people where dancing.

“You are much better than you give yourself credit for, specially after a few drinks, so I recommend you start doing a better job at drinking”

Felicity pressed her lips together and after a moment nodded, eyes flicking towards Oliver Queen one last time, feeling her stomach move inside of her, hoping he wouldn’t look at her dance like an idiot.

She had heard about Oliver Queen before, he had been plastered over every newspaper and magazine ever since she was 16 years old, he was not only the eldest son of one of the most powerful families in America, he also turned out to be extremely handsome and reckless.

She normally didn’t feel attracted to the likes of him, guys with too much money that felt entitled to get away with shit most people couldn’t. She in fact felt annoyance at him, people who could buy happiness when in return she had to work so hard for hers.
When she was young and bullied at school, for reasons she never understood back then. Being ahead on her classes and wanting to spend more time picking apart computers and reading, rather than on parting and playing seven minutes in heaven on a dark grungy generators closet.

She had found herself reading about Oliver Queen in the magazines. Craving acceptance from her peers she had imagined more than once, what it would be like if a handsome senior (or freshman at College) that looked like Oliver Queen, came on a fancy car and picked her up for the Winter Dance?

That would have showed all the mean popular girls, how cool she really was. Only remembering this ridiculous thought made her blush. So many years ago she had nurtured her crush for Oliver Queen, an image of a man, a boy, who she had created inside her head.

In her head he had been sweet, fun and even though not as book smart as she was he had courage, and wit. She knew back then that was not the man Oliver Queen was, he was a drunken mess in all the tabloids, and always had a different girl on his arm.

She lived in Las Vegas then, far away enough from him to make him an unreachable star. She had been annoyed she thought he was cute back then… her annoyance with herself had skyrocketed now, after meeting him in person. Standing just a few feet from him and not being able to stop fiddling around like a nervous lamb in front of a majestic tiger.

The man wasn’t only too handsome for his own good, but he also had this powerful air and cold demeanor to his stance. He didn’t look like the party animal she had thought he was; in fact he looked like he was miserable at that moment. With such bright blue guarded eyes, it made her want to crack the mystery that surrounded him.

Her body was moving, legs pacing, hips waving around as she took the last drop of wine on her cup,
dancing close to her friend who had both eyes closed. It was a fun song, she had to admit, and it made her full brain relaxed. After placing both empty cups of wine in a near by flat surface, she imitated Nyssa and closed her eyes and let herself enjoy the music.

They danced a couple songs; a few guys that they didn’t know came by and danced around them a few minutes before giving up any attempt to catch their attention.

“You guys seem to know how to have fun” she heard to the side and when she turned she couldn’t help but to smile at Sara, who was as petite as her.

“I give all the credit to Nyssa” Felicity half yelled and Sara nodded, smiling to the side, blue eyes flashing towards the brunette.

“Mind if I join in?” she asked, and Felicity noticed she didn’t seem embarrassed, but her eyes looked a bit guarded.

“I thought you were not going to come, was beginning to worry you didn’t know how to have fun” Nyssa pondered; her voice full of flirtation and Felicity felt all of the sudden like an outsider. Sara’s cheeks turned bright red

“Well, I guess I just have to prove you wrong then” Sara said back without missing a beat, and Felicity cleared her throat.

“I think that’s my queue,” she said hastily and both pairs of eyes fixed on her “As Nyssa pointed out earlier I might be a decent dancer… with two cups of wine in me, and since I have only had one, I will spare myself the ridicule and go and get me a new drink”
Felicity’s eyes fixed on her friend who nodded briefly, and feeling a bit more relaxed she left the dance floor. It didn’t take her long to get her new refilled cup of wine, and after dogging a few drunken guys she found herself looking for something, someone in between the crowd.

It didn’t take long to find him brooding on a corner of the room, eyes fixed on the window. She felt herself getting nervous with every step she took, but she had found some courage in her drink and couldn’t help but to be curious about this man.

“The city is beautiful at night… specially when it’s raining, I like that all the lights reflect on the wet pavement” she said when she was close enough for him to hear her; his face turned slightly, his expression unreadable. He didn’t answer her, his eyes moving back towards the window.

“So… did you know Charlotte, before the party I mean?” Felicity pressed on, ignoring the way her stomach seemed to be flipping at his apparent disinterest in her company.

“No, Sara just introduced us, I really don’t know anyone in here” he said, she nodded quickly taking a quick short breath, gathering strength from within, trying to ignore the fact that her subconscious was yelling at her that he sounded annoyed, and her company was obviously not welcomed.

“Oh, it’s nice of you to come with her without knowing many people here… or anyone at all, same goes for Nyssa” Felicity said and that caught his attention, his eyes went to the dance floor where the brunette and Sara danced, and then his blue eyes came down to meet hers.

“Sometimes we have to do things for our friends” he said in a quiet tone.

“So… do you dance..?” Felicity asked, she almost couldn’t recognize her voice and hated the fact
that it sounded so high pitch and squeaky. His eyes didn’t wavered from her and uncomfortable silence hanged over them. She felt herself flush under his gaze.

“Not if I can help it” he said simply and she felt a wave of disappointment and annoyance run through her, quickly being replaced by embarrassment of rejection. She shifted the weight around and took another sip of her wine.

“Right… Well I guess I better go, Nyssa is probably wondering why I haven’t come back” she said quickly, finding herself getting more and more irritated at his cold expression.

Felicity hadn’t been rejected like this in many years, in fact she hardly ever felt attracted to someone hard enough to put herself out there so blatantly, it made his rejecting her feel that more bitter in her tongue.

Her heart contracted inside her chest like a raisin when she finally made her way through the crowd towards the dance floor, being pulled from her path by Charlotte, who was very good at distracting her from her thoughts, dancing and Oliver Queen.

&

He didn’t know how much time it had passed; his thoughts were lost somewhere far away from that hellhole he was at. His phone buzzed and he was relieved to see that it was Diggle, letting him know that everything was fine and he was going home for the night.

‘Ok, see you tomorrow Diggle’ he wrote back quickly and sighed, turning his head to the side; a soft crack came from his neck. He was tensed all over; his neck felt stiff and sore.
“Well that doesn’t sound good, maybe you should go to get a massage, you are rich after all” a voice came from his side and he smiled though his eyes didn’t come apart from the window.

“What are you doing here?” his voice was soft.

“Came to check up on you, to make sure you hadn’t ditch me in here” she sing songed and Oliver laughed softly.

“Wouldn’t dare, would never hear the end of it”

“You bet your ass you wouldn’t” Sara said and gave a drink to her beer “but really what are you still doing here? You look miserable Ollie”

“I’m miserable” he said with a grin and Sara pouted “really, I know I am not what you are used to from me, I know you want me to let lose, but believe me… this is as far as I can take it right now”

“Can you at least talk to some people? It makes me feel terrible you are here because of me and I’m there having fun while you are here brooding”

“I don’t brood, and I’m happy that you are happy” he said and his eyes fixed on hers, trying to convey how truthful that statement was for him Sara was a part of his old life, of someone that no longer existed. But she was his friend, she had been there through all the hardship that came from losing Tommy, she had been there when he had returned.
He was happy to share this time with her, to see her have fun like he wouldn’t be able to do with Tommy.

“Ollie you brood a lot, loosen up… why don’t you just dance one song?” Sara added, her face was red and glowy from exercise.

“I don’t dance… ever,” he said with absolute resolution and Sara pouted dropping her hand from his arm “plus you are dancing with the only girl I might make an exception for,” a soft smile appeared on his face, softening his hard features.

“She is something special…” Sara mused “What about her friend, Felicity? She is pretty, quite cute with her ramblings… and smart”

“She is tolerable, perhaps. I’m not into the whole blonde party girl any more… if I was my old self and was drunk out of my mind I might ask Felicity for a dance, but you and I both know I’m not that guy anymore. I’m pretty content in here… now go and dance with Nyssa, stop wasting your time with me, I will be leaving soon either way”

Sara smiled and nodded; they both talked for a little time before she turned on her heels and disappeared in the crowd, lost in between drunken bodies towards the dance floor where he guessed Nyssa awaited. Oliver’s smile dropped as soon as his friend was out of sight, and after adjusting his jacket and checking his wristwatch he made his way out of the party.
When he opened the door that led him to the hallway of the apartment building he was shocked to see Felicity in there. Her watery eyes came to meet his and she was shocked to see him there.

“Felicity…” he wanted to ask if she was okay, she straighten up, her jaw coming up high and she stared him down, looking at him coldly.

“Oliver” she said, and her bottom lip trembled ever so slightly. He raised one brow, confused as of why the change of her demeanor, when just half an hour before she had ask him for a dance.

“Are you alright?” he couldn’t help himself from asking; his eyes fixing up on her redden ones. She smiled to the side, but the gesture didn’t reach her eyes.

“Yes, people are smoking inside and it gives me allergies so I came outside to get some fresh air, tried the balcony first but there was a couple in there getting busy” she tightened her lips “so I take you are leaving? I wish I could leave too, I have to work tomorrow” and closed her eyes as if scolding herself for speaking, and she opened her eyes the cold expression was back on.

“You work tomorrow, on a Saturday?” he was suddenly curious as of what she did for work.

“Well, yes… I have to run to company wide update during the weekend since most computers will be unoccupied. No one comes to work to Merlyn Global on the weekends except for us IT people… and occasionally some of the research folk. But not tomorrow, tomorrow is down day for everyone, except for me… and Paul”

Oliver’s head cocked to the side and a peak of interest appeared on his face.
“You are an IT specialist at Merlyn Global?”

“You sound surprised” and she sounded defiant.

“No, I just… you look young that’s all” he said after a moment, knowing well that Malcom Merlyn had stiff rules about not hiring but the best for his company.

“And a blonde party girl” she completed and her voice sounded cold, his previous conversation with Sara flashed inside his head and he felt ashamed, though this didn’t show in his expression.

“I…” he started but she put her hand up.

“Please, you wouldn’t be the first person to assume that because I’m blonde and talk a lot” she shrugged and he swallowed hard, remembering all the other things he had said too.

There was a small moment of silence in between both of them and he found himself missing the way she had smiled at him before.

“Well I will let you be on your way, goodbye Mr. Queen” she said distantly and without another word she push the door open and went inside.

He found himself unable to shake Felicity Smoak from his thoughts for the rest of the night, and the fact that she wasn’t the party girl he had assumed she was.
So, what did you think? I know it’s all about first impressions, and our two lovelies didn’t have the best first meeting in here.

I hope you enjoyed it, please leave comments, likes and kudos!

I will be creating an image for this story later this week!
Hello! Thank you so much for all the comments and the kudos I got last chapter. It made me super happy and got me into writing faster. I have the story all planned out and I’m counting on getting a chapter per week.

Now how great was this week’s Arrow? I wish every episode this season were that good. Like I said before this is a story that will focus more on longer chapters, so prepare yourself for a long ride.

Characters aren’t mine, I’m just writing this for fun!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It had been a week and a half since she met Oliver Queen, she thought while starring at the glossy cover of a business magazine. The issue lay on her dinning room table. It had an extreme high res picture of him on it, showing his intense eyes even through a piece of paper. Bright blue and breath taking, sharp cheek bones, and a mouth that… her trail of thoughts came to a stop as she was frowning.

“You are cute…” she said under her breath, her eyes traveling around the cover “too bad you are… you know, a jerk” she said and she was aware of two things, one that she sounded extremely bitter, and two that she should stop talking to herself.

“The heir it’s finally taking his Throne” title of the issue, and she was bitter that she had subscribed to this magazine that brought him into her house.
Yes, it had been a week ever since she had overheard him speaking with Sara about her. He had called her a blonde party girl, but what really got into the deep crevices of her heart was that he had called her tolerable.

If anything will make someone who had a healthy confidence level to feel insecure would be to hear that. Especially because she was well aware of the effect he had on her, it made his rejection of her that much bitter.

Felicity knew she was not the super model type by any means; which was probably what Oliver Queen went after. But she knew she was pretty, even beautiful if she put some effort into it. She was an educated woman, who also happened to take her ass into the gym three to four times a week.

Sure, she had issues keeping some stuff from spilling from her mouth. Some people called it social awkwardness but she liked to call it her curse.

She placed the magazine back on the table feeling her chest contract in self-doubt, but shaking her head one last time she walked towards the kitchen her mind ready to abandon the current train of thought, aware of the lack of caffeine in her system.

By the time coffee was ready and she was putting some toast in her toaster maker Nyssa was coming out of her room. She was wearing dark washed jeans, a dark gray tshirt and high heels. Her makeup was done and so was her hair.

Felicity raised a brow and handed her friend a steaming cup of coffee.
“You look fancy… what’s the occasion?” she said with a smile and Nyssa grinned.

“Um… not much, only that Sara said she is coming to train this morning. I thought I might as well go in looking semi decent” and Felicity’s face was being pulled by a big smile.

“I told you she would call!”

“Yes, you did”

“So are you going to be training on heels and with makeup?” Felicity asked, holding her warm cup of coffee near her face, enjoying the scent.

“Well no, we are meeting at a coffee shop first” she shrugged non committedly “I’m going to bring my gym bag with me of course”

“Oooh a coffee date” Felicity singsong and Nyssa laughed out loud.

“What are you, twelve?”

“Well I’m glad you are getting some sort of action… one of us needs it. I’m just going to have to live my romance life precariously through you” The toaster went off and Felicity rushed to get the bread out, she was running late. Spreading some butter in it as she took another sip to her drink.
“Felicity, do you have any idea how sad that sounds? You should get yourself out there… you know I have heard great things about online dating”

“Oh no, don’t start… you sounds like my mother” Nyssa pressed her lips into a fine line and Felicity noted that she was holding the cup of coffee but wasn’t drinking it.

“You know what Oliver Queen said it’s not true” Felicity grimaced, regretting having told Nyssa about what she overheard. She didn’t want to hear his name or remember his words.

“No, I know”

“He was being an ass… and who cares what he thinks? You have a lot of admirers that will love to dance with you, even if you step on their feet” Felicity laughed softly and nodded.

“I don’t have admirers, but thank you for saying that”

“Yes you do, how about Paul… the guy pretty much gets a panic attack every time he sees you” Nyssa pointed and Felicity shook her head laughing again. Taking a hearty bite of her toast on the process.

“That’s because he’s always screwing up and without me he wont have a job” Felicity shrugged.

“At 24 years old you have more accomplishments than most of us do in a lifetime… lets remember
what Oliver Queen was doing when he was your age? Probably drunk out of his mind, having accomplished nothing in life other than the amount of women he’d slept with”

Felicity took a sharp breath “Well he was actually stuck on a smallish Island in the Chinese sea… but those are just details” she grinned softly feeling slightly better about the whole thing already.

She was happy that she had found Nyssa in her life, someone who was so strong but with such a large caring heart. Nyssa had pretty much adopted Felicity, like she was her youngest sister three years ago when they met in a bus stop.

A guy had tried to take Felicity’s purse in front of Nyssa Dojo, the tall brunette had come out of nowhere and had quite literally kicked his ass. Later that day, over a ‘thank you’ coffee, she had convinced Felicity to come and take a few classes of self-defense with her. Who could say no to a girl who could kick ass like that?

Being friends had been easy. At first Felicity was an open book, cheerful, talkative, while Nyssa was reserved and moody. With time they had become open books to each other, except when it came to family business.

Felicity had once shared her dad’s story with her, and Nyssa had told her a very brief memory of her dad and her desire to run away from the family business. It was clear that her friend had come from a hard life, they didn’t talk much about their fathers, and they preferred it that way.

“You should add as one of her accomplishments being the first woman to discover who the vigilante is.” it was a small voice full of attitude and sass; leaning on the entryway to the kitchen was Sin, the third roommate and part of the three musketeers, as Felicity liked to call them.

“Oh god Sin you scared me” Felicity jumped on her spot; thankful she had already finished her
coffee so there wasn’t much to spill.

“You did?” Nyssa raised a brow and looked at Felicity curious.

“You did… she is obsessed with him” the younger woman said with a smirk.

“I did not.” Felicity gave Sin a murderous look “and I’m most definitely not obsessed with him!”

“Whatever you say Barbie, are you doing to drink that?” she came into the kitchen, pointing at Nyssa’s full cup of coffee. The brunette shook her head and extended it to Sin who took it with a smile.

Sin was years younger than both Nyssa and Felicity, and was still going through school, studying Computer Science in S.C.U (Starling City University). When Felicity had complained to Nyssa two years ago about her needs to save some money to buy her own place, Nyssa had immediately offered her the third bedroom in her apartment. Sin was already living with Nyssa then.

The way Sin looked it reminded her a lot of who she had been back when she went to school. The young woman was all dark clothes, leather, piercings, and dark makeup. She had loved Sin almost immediately, and had pure joy in tutoring her in her computer science and hacking skills.

Hacking was a hobby they both engaged in, mostly for fun and not doing anything that will really get them into trouble. They enjoyed finding corrupt cops; corrupt politicians and sending anonymous donations with their accounts to charities of their choice. It made Felicity feel like she was doing something to help a City that was drowning in corruption.
“You are a little obsessed with the Vigilante though” Nyssa agreed and Felicity grunted, before finishing the last few bites of her toast, knowing well she was running late.

“I admire The Arrow, because he is helping people out there,” her hand was pointing to the window and she could feel her lips tugging into a smile.

“She has been helping him out.” Sin pondered and Felicity heard herself shriek as Nyssa gasped in horror.

“Sin! What have I told you about the code? You can’t hack your fellow hackers… unless they are horrible people, but I’m not one of those” Felicity said, face feeling hot, avoiding at all costs to look at Nyssa who was walking towards her.

“You can’t be serious Lissy, this is really not something you should be playing with… that man could be dangerous” her blue eyes met her dark brown ones.

“He isn’t dangerous to me… he has been helping people, last week there was a robbery at Pender st, and he saved 20 people from the bank, no injuries, nothing was taken, and 3 armed men were taken into custody. “ Felicity said with so much passion that Nyssa stepped back, though the worried look was still on her face.

“And you helped him there I assume” 

“She somehow managed to get a hold of a IP address and sent a message to his computer.” Sin commented and Felicity gave her another deadly look.
“That’s it, I’m not teaching you anything else you ungrateful child”

“Lissy, can’t you find his location by using the IP address? You should turn this information to the authorities” Felicity turned to Nyssa and gave her a more serious look now.

“I know you don’t mean that… you know how much the City has improved since he has been around, helping the Glades, stealing from the corrupt what they have taken from the people,” Felicity paused, fidgeting with her hands while taking a deeper breath “he is not killing, he is doing the job our cops should be doing”

“I know…” Nyssa said after a moment and her hand came to Felicity’s shoulder squeezing it lightly “I know he has been doing great things, exposing corrupt people and giving back like some sort of Robin Hood, but it makes me nervous you are getting involved.”

“It pains my sole the current state of his machines… he needs help.” Felicity mused and Sin made a little surprised sound.

“You have full access to his machines?”

“I do, and will never teach you… ungrateful dark thing” Felicity said with a small smile and Sin blinked still shocked.

“So… do you know where his Arrow Cave is located then?” Nyssa enquired now more curious, Felicity shook her head with a laugh.
“Arrow cave?” Nyssa shrugged.

“He has been kind of smart for someone who is not an expert at this. The IP address shows as if it was located in Russia, not the US.” Sin said as a response but her eyes were fixed on Felicity “Do you know where the cave is?”

“No, but if I did I wouldn’t tell you or anyone” Felicity said and Nyssa and Sin exchanged a quiet look and Felicity walked out of the kitchen escaping their glances.

The truth was that she could find out a perimeter of where he was located, perhaps by the sightseeing and backtracking wherever he was doing to hide his Internet tracks. But it felt wrong to her to go so far into someone secret identity, something that she felt she ought to stay away.

She had been helping him at first by only installing more robust firewalls on his computer. Then it had evolved to providing small pieces of information she thought he had been looking for.

From his web research history, from pictures he had taken that where placed on folders on his computer.

The robbers she helped him put away had been one of those instances. They had been robbing banks for weeks now with a few casualties in each location they had hit, she found a folder in his computer that had info about it. She had started hacking on the FBI database before she even gave it a second thought.

Later she had run her face recognition software, the one she had been developing for years. She had served the Arrow with the three bastards info on a silver platter.
It concerned her that Sin was also doing her own research on The Arrow, so Felicity made a mental note while she walked towards her car that morning to make it extra hard for her younger friend to get anywhere near him. She didn’t have an issue getting herself involved with the Arrow, but she loved Sin too much, and wanted to protect her in case she was wrong and the Vigilante was now a good guy after all.

At the end of that day she did just that, The Arrow would be surprised the next time he turn on his computer, to realize all the improvements she had made.

And even though she knew she shouldn’t, she couldn’t resist leaving a note waiting for him.

“Your setup was hurting my poor hacker’s soul. It was straight from the 80’s, and NOT the good part… like leg warmers and Madonna. Thank you for helping the City~ F”

“He has done it again Diggle,” Oliver’s voice sounded exasperated hitting with his flat palms the surface of the table, his eyes going over every letter on the note once again “how is he even doing this!?"

Diggle was standing besides Oliver, dark eyes fixed on the two screens in front of him, and their computer setup looked cleaner and seemed to be working much faster. He read the note that was still open in one of the screens, while in the other there was windows with information they had been trying to gather about a dangerous drug dealer that was lose on the streets.

Apparently the FBI was on his tracks as well. Now they knew how he look like, and the name of one of his contacts in the streets (the one that had ratted him out to the feds).
“I don’t think it’s a he” Diggle muttered low, feeling Oliver’s eyes fix upon him.

“A he? Who the person who keeps getting into our systems?” Diggle nodded and his eyes traveled to meet Oliver’s who raised a brow in confusion.

“Madonna and legwarmers… I would say it’s most definitely a girl” Oliver nodded, his jaw coming forwards and his brow frowning for a moment.

“I think you’re right” his voice was deep and concerned “I don’t like to be blindsided like this… she knows too much”

“I agree, I don’t like it one bit... specially because she has been very good at pointing out how bad we are at this sort of thing.” Diggle gestured towards the computers and Oliver sighed loudly, letting his body weight sink onto the chair.

“She has to be some sort of genius to be able to pull this up…” Diggle said again breaking the sudden silence that surrounded them, his hand coming up to scratch his jaw, while lost in thought “we know very little about this mysterious helper. First hat it might be a girl, second that she might be a genius… and third that in her name there is an F somewhere.”

Diggle had three of his fingers up, and Oliver found himself smiling. The stress he was feeling just a moment ago vanishing as the hunter inside of him kicked in.

“We also know that if we want to track this ‘genius’, we need to be careful since she knows how to
check our computers and all the information we gather there” he whispered and Diggle nodded.

“I’d say we keep doing what we have been doing, she will be diverted ‘helping’ us, and won’t expect us to be trying to find her at the same time” and with a silent look they both nodded. Oliver got up slowly from the chair, and they both headed to the training mats to spar for a little bit that morning before heading to QC.

The next morning Oliver stopped by Queen Consolidated IT department, it was early enough that only the It supervisor was in, and.

“Mr. Queen!” he yelped while he stood up shocked to see the new CEO in the 15th floor at 7 am. Oliver noticed that there was some home packed food on the man’s table, and paperwork scattered all over the place.

“Morning Mr. Nils, I hope I’m not interrupting” he said, his voice was polite and business like. The man shook his head and grinned.

“No, not at all… I normally have breakfast here while I organize all the tickets we receive during the night… that’s all,” Oliver nodded and placed both hands on his dark gray suit pockets “is there something wrong with the network?” the man’s brow frowned concerned.

“No, no… it’s nothing to do with Queen Consolidated, it’s more of a personal favor” Oliver grin softly, but his eyes seemed still cold and calculating “It’s my computer at home… I have been noticing that there might be someone trying to get into my home network, it’s becoming a problem since we keep our personal information there, but also I take some of my work home” his hand was moving as he spoke and the man in front of him was nodding with wide eyes.

“This hackers are becoming a real problem now days,” the older man said with a disapproving tone, and Oliver nodded in agreement “I could come over to your place and take a look if you want, but we do have a great software that should prevent this from happening”
“The software will be great” Oliver said without a pause and the man nodded, he came back to sit on his chair and unceremoniously started rummaging through his drawers. He took a called box out, a brand new copy of said software, and handed it to Oliver.

“Install that on all your devices at home, set up a complex password, I recommend a mixture of numbers and letters, lower and upper case. This should keep this dam kids out of your home machines” Oliver grinned softly and with a thank you he left the IT department that morning, feeling hopeful to block F out of his systems.

That hope lasted a full 24 hours. Next morning he came in to the Foundry and his heart sink when he found a note on the computer.

“Good try. ~F” Oliver grunted loudly and that morning he had an extra hard workout. Maybe he should use all his energy tracking F down, and offer her a job in his company.

…

A few days went by, and with those came weeks. This mysterious person that had been helping them was intriguing him more and more. Even though he most definitely didn’t appreciate the invasion of privacy and the potential danger that came from someone unknown learning his identity, he could value how much they benefited from the help she was providing them.

The mysterious F.

That morning he came upstairs and Verdant was already illuminated, which meant Sara was already in checking the inventory for the night. Her hair was wet and she look fresh and energized. Oliver walked towards her with a smile and leaned into the bar area.
“So… how many times a week are you going to that dojo?” he asked casually and Sara didn’t turn from her place, her foot was tapping the concrete floor while she counted the bottles on the shelves in front of her.

“Four times a week,” she answered after a moment and her eyes came to meet his “she is really, really good… you should come and see her teach to the more advanced class, it’s something out of a Jackie Chan movie I swear of god”

“I’m glad you are doing this, you seem happy” he commented, having a hard time imagining Nyssa with her wine color dress moving like Jackie Chan.

“I’m happy…”

“How long have you been seeing each other then?” he asked then and pushed his body weight off the bar, walking a few steps backwards knowing well that he couldn’t stay there talking to Sara for long, Diggle was waiting for him outside.

“Two weeks… and a half” she said with a happy smile and a different spark on her eyes.

“I guess I can say it now. The ‘I told you so’” he said and he sounded happy even to his own ears, the sound was slightly off putting.

“What do you mean?” she looked confused for a moment.
“When I told you she was into you the night of the party… I was right” and with that Sara smiled widely again.

“I guess you were,” she laughed softly “but from what I heard it might be the only thing you were right about that night” she said and Oliver felt his smile disappear almost immediately, his thoughts going to a small blonde and her reddened eyes.

Felicity, he had not thought about her for days now.

“Yeah well… I didn’t say I was perfect” he said after a moment, and walked a few steps backwards “See you tonight then, and you should have her come over this Friday… add her to the VIP list. Drinks on me”

“Okay” Sara said and Oliver thought how different it was to see her like this, with a smile so bright, so far from the woman he hired six months ago.

It had been difficult for Sara to come out to her Family as a Bisexual woman, and they hadn’t taken it very well, calling it ‘a call for attention’, a diversion of her real problems. Which according to them was not having a successful career, a history of drug and alcohol use, and the ability to hang out with the wrong crowds.

Sara had been broken when he found her, but he had offer her understanding, support and a well paying job as his club manager. He trusted Sara, and in his life he didn’t have many people he trusted. Friday came quicker than a blink of an eye.
Felicity liked when it rained, she always found that it relaxed and helped her think with more clarity. She didn’t consider herself a thinker per say, but solving mysteries and problems was part of her job, and she found the soft tapping of the drops falling down, hitting pavement, concrete and glass helped her.

But she didn’t like when it poured down like it was doing at that particular moment, when her car had decided it was a good idea to stop working, and it was time to go home for the day. To top it off, she had forgotten to bring her heavy-duty umbrella and was just making due with the wobbly retractable one that she kept on her purse for emergencies.

She didn’t think she needed to bring her rain boots, umbrella and extra layers to keep warm that morning when she left her house. Little did she know her car was going to quit on her like it had.

She winced loudly when she came out of Merlyn Inc. a loud thunder breaking the sound of the falling rain. She sighed loudly and pulled her purse open to look for her phone, ready to call a cab to take her home.

Then she winced again, this time for another reason.

“Oh no, sh—it!” she closed her eyes as her hands went through the contents on her purse, and a memory flashed inside her brain. She had changed pursed today, and had forgotten her wallet on top of her bed. It’s what happened when you carried your driver’s license and work badge in another pouch on your purse.

At the time she hadn’t thought about it, she kept emergency cash on her driver’s license pouch, but then Marie had come around with her girl scout cookies and she had not been able to stop herself from buying 3 boxes, and loan Paul some cash so he could get some as well.
“Ugh” she muted, ready for her day to be over as she glanced at the two boxes of untouched Girl Scout cookies with resentment. Well that was that, no taxi for her that night.

She pulled her phone quickly and called Sin first.

“Yo Barbie” Sin’s cheery voice from the other side made her smile.

“Hey Sin, I have a favor to ask you… my car is not turning on and it’s raining so much right now. I was wondering if you could pick me up on your way home?” there was a moment of silence on the other end of the line, then some movement and she could tell Sin was leaving the noisy room to talk to her better.

“Your battery finally pooped out on you, didn’t?” Sin’s voice sounded louder now that there wasn’t music blasting in the background.

“Yea… you can tell me the I told you so later.”

“Why later when I can right now? I told you so” Felicity rolled her eyes and chewed the inside of her cheek.

“So… about the ride?”
“Right, did you call Nyssa? She is closer to you than I am at the moment. I came to finish some homework in Andy’s house and I got some drinks on me… was thinking about staying over the night” Felicity puckered her lips out and grumbled.

“Oh-- I didn’t call Nyssa, she was going out with Sara tonight” Felicity paused looking at the darkening sky; it was what she got for being a workaholic on a Friday night.

“Sorry blondie, but really I couldn’t drive there to get you even if I wanted to… it will be highly irresponsible” now that she paid a little more attention Sin did sounded a bit off, too happy perhaps and not sarcastic enough.

“Right, no. We don’t want that… I will call Nyssa. Enjoy your drunken paper writing.”

“I will. See ya tomorrow” Sin mused happily and then there was silence and Felicity took a longer deeper breath, dialing Nyssa’s phone.

“I was not expecting you calling me.” Nyssa said as a greeting and Felicity could tell that there was music playing in the background already.

“I’m sorry I’m calling you like this Nys, I know you were going out with Sara tonight but… well my car is not turning on, I left my wallet in the house and spent my emergency money on girl scout cookies” she rambled and took a moment off to breath in deeply.

“Lissy I’m at Verdant already… and I actually didn’t drive here either since I knew I would be drinking. Is there a way you can get here? You aren’t too far from the Glades, just a few bus stops” Felicity was quiet for a moment, dreading the thought of going to that particular nightclub, his club, that night.
“Oh I don’t know, I’m not in a clubbing kind of mood and I’m not dressed up for it either way.” She said and it was partially truth. She had worn one of her favorite blue dresses that night, and black high heels, which could be club appropriate if she had done her hair and makeup differently. But as if was she had a full 9 hour makeup, and her hair on a ponytail.

“Common Lissy, if you make it here I could lend you some money and you can take a cab home… but this club is very nice, you will like it and we have gotten a table in the VIP section” she could tell Nyssa was excited and the happiness in her voice was enough to make Felicity smile.

“You know I hate that nickname, only my mother calls me that and that is not a good thing Nyssa.” Felicity muted and her frustration had nothing to do with her friend, but the fact that she was beginning to realize she had very few options.

“Don’t change the subject… are you coming then?”

“Yeah…” Felicity jumped on her spot as another thunder resonated around her and rain started falling down faster than before. She put the phone on her purse and walked out to the rain, immediately feeling her feet get wet and cold in the sidewalks. She was just two blocks away from the bus stop.

She stopped at a red light, looking straight at the hand signal that indicated she couldn’t cross yet. Both hands holding her umbrella for dear life, hoping that it will hold until she got in the bus.

And then she saw it, a car that cut the corner quickly and the wave of brown water that followed after it, drenching her.
“What the Frack!” she exclaimed in utter shock, she turned glaring behind the offender. Driving away there was an extremely fancy and shiny silver BMW, which was slowing down to a stop in the next red light. Felicity squinted eying the car, noticing at last the plate. SOQ-307.

Of course whoever drove that BMW was an asshole with too much money, that didn’t care about drenching people on the sidewalks. I mean did he/she need to drive so close to the corner that fast? She didn’t think so.

By the time Felicity arrived to Verdant she was a trembling soaked mess. She doubted that they would even let her inside the fancy nightclub, that even though it was raining like it was had a long line in front of it. Sara and Nyssa were waiting for her at the entrance of the club, and she was glad she didn’t have to wait in line to come in.

Nyssa wrapped her long arm around her shoulders and the three of them talked about the asshole that had drenched Felicity. Sara offered to take Felicity’s coat and Nyssa and her walked quickly to the restroom, so she could dry up some and retouch a little her makeup.

Felicity looked with Horror her appearance once they were inside the bathroom. And while Nyssa rested herself in the closest wall Felicity did her best to get cleaned up. Drying herself with paper towels, redoing her ponytail, cleaning her glasses and reapplying her bright pink lipstick. She also managed to get her dress semi dry by standing under the hand dryer a few minutes.

“I’m so glad you came and decided to stay for a little” Nyssa pretty much yelled near her ear as they left the bathroom, the music was loud and pouncing around the walls. They walked around the bodies that danced towards the stairs that led them towards the mezzanine.

The bouncer took one good look at Nyssa and with a stoic face let them go up to the second floor. Felicity had never been into the VIP area of any clubs, normally one had to buy an extremely
expensive bottle of alcohol to get that privilege, and she was never one to drop a lot of money when it came to booze… unless it was wine, her weak spot.

The area was large and well illuminated for a club; she could see that at the end of the room there was a table with three people sitting on it. As they got closer she recognized two. Sara and Oliver Queen.

When they were close enough Oliver eyes shot up to meet hers, and Felicity’s only thought was how little that magazine had caught they real brightness in them. He shot up from his seat, and even though it had been quick, he still managed to make it look swift and elegant.

“Ms. Smoak, good to see you again” he said as a form of greeting, and she noticed that he was wearing a black suit and a white button down shirt, which was tieless and had the first three, buttons open, revealing his neck and part of his clavicle.

“Likewise” she said but she didn’t smile and her tone was almost cold. She turned to look at the other woman on the table. She was also getting up from her spot, and was wearing a long gray pencil skirt and a beige flowy top. She had bright green eyes and brown waves that fell on top on her shoulders.

She was absolutely gorgeous.

“Felicity, this is my sister Laurel… Laurel this is Felicity, Nyssa’s roommate” Sara introduced and Felicity shook the other woman’s hand. She had a firm shake.

“Pleasure to meet you” Laurel said with a small smirk and Felicity smile and repeated her words, sitting down with a clumsy move as she felt completely out of place in that table. Wet, cold and tired surrounded by beautiful people.
They talked about everything and nothing in particular; Felicity shared a few funny stories about her workday and the Girl Scout cookies. She found that she really liked Sara.

Oliver asked her a few question to her surprise, he had being so utterly uninterested in her last time she saw him, and she didn’t expect that to change. But there it was, he was asking about her job, what she did and even seemed interested when she talked about college.

He was quiet most of the time, but he seemed to be paying attention to everything that was going on around him. Felicity also noticed that Laurel Lance seemed to be quite aware of Oliver, asking him constantly about his day, his sister, Queen Consolidates and the club.

She also noticed that even though Oliver seemed to be warm and friendly with her, he acted distant. Every time Laurel drew her body closer to him, he seemed to pull away. Every time she asked if he wanted another drink, he said he was fine, and he didn’t seem to talk to her unless she initiated the talk.

It was a contrast from the way his eyes and face lit up when Sara spoke with him, than with his sister, even though they all seemed to be close friends.

And then the topic of conversation changed, they had been talking about raining and public transportation, then the City, when The Arrow came out. Laurel had been saying that the vigilante seemed to be causing issues with the police, and her words seemed to get harsher and harsher by the second.

Felicity moved uncomfortably on her chair, feeling her chest get heavy as she battled with wanting to say something. She felt Nyssas’s hand land on her leg and squeeze lightly. She turned towards her friend she could only see pleading in her eyes.
“More and more of this vigilante’s seem to be appearing in cities across America, I find it almost like a joke… I mean this people are criminals” Laurel said shaking her head.

“What other Vigilante?” Oliver asked and his voice sounded interested.

“Oh, you know that Batguy from Gotham… he is pretty popular over there” she said with a dismissive wave of her hand “but Gotham is a mess, and the Batguy is just as dangerous… just like our vigilante, the hood”

“I thought they were calling him the Arrow now,” Sara mused lightly “and it’s not the Batguy Laurel-- it’s Batman, get it right.” Laurel snorted.

“For what it’s worth, I think he is a hero” Felicity’s voice was strong and unwavering. The entire group fell in silence at once and she could feel every single eye in the booth they were sitting at starring at her. She took the glass of wine towards her lips as a hot of nerves ran through her.

Her cheeks were turning bright red and even though there wasn’t really a silence around them, with the music playing so loud and the talking of strangers around them, she didn’t take back what she had just said. Her eyes went around the group, silently studying their faces, stopping when her gaze met his.

He was looking at her so intently she felt her stomach lurching inside of her, but his expression confused her since even though he was frowning slightly, there was a mixture of curiosity, and shock in there as well.

“You are saying that even though this guy finds himself above the law, the fact that he is stealing from innocent people—you still find him innocent?” it was Laurel’s cold shocked voice. Felicity diverted her gaze to meet her.
“He doesn’t steal from honest, innocent people” she defended without missing a beat. She could see how Laurel’s eyebrows met in the middle in an upset look.

“He is not a hero, he is a criminal” Laurel said matter of factly “no one should hold so much power, no one person should take justice in their hands, no one is above the law… that’s why we live in democracy” Felicity felt her stomach turn and her face grow warmer by the second. She moved carefully, placing her drink on the table in front of her with a swift move.

“It’s no secret that Starling City is overrun by criminals, and not only that but many cops are even more dangerous and corrupt than the people outside destroying our city. I’m happy someone seems to be doing something about it” Felicity said and Laurel took a sharp breath, her eyes squinting at Felicity as if calculating what to say next.

Felicity could see that the other woman’s cheeks were turning bright red, and she was moving away from Oliver as if preparing herself for an attack.

“I assure you Ms. Smoak, the cops are doing all they can to put criminals where they are supposed to be… and when they catch this vigilante of yours, I will be glad to prosecute him for what he is, another criminal in the city.” Laurel said slowly and deliberately.

“Well, at the pace that cops do their job it will take many years for that to happen… I’m just hoping that The Arrow will make a difference to our city by the time that happens.” Felicity turned to Nyssa who was leaning against the chair with wide eyes and a defeated look.

“You are saying that a guy in a mask is making a difference? You sound like a teenage fan girl” Laurel huffed.
“Hey guys, we are supposed to be having fun in here” Sara muted low, her hand playing with the stick that held olives on her dirty martini.

“No, Sara… I mean, your girlfriends friend just called our dad a corrupt cop” Laurel said as if she expected Sara to side with her, and Sara raised a hand to stop her.

“She said some cops where corrupt, and you and I, and probably everyone in this table knows that… it’s not hard to see how bad the Glades are Laurel, and you are working your ass off to make it better, so what if Felicity thinks that the Vigilante is making things better?” Felicity’s eyes went to Oliver, who had been quiet most of the night and was still looking at her, but now his eyes were bright as if he had just discovered something, and that confused her.

“Whatever” Laurel said and sat backwards, turning to look at Oliver as her went softer for a moment “what do you think about it Ollie?”

Oliver took a sharp breath while his hand went towards the back of his neck and he turned to look at Laurel with a small smile on his face.

“I think this guy is getting way too much publicity, at this point we see more of him than we see of the Kardashians,” he smirked softly but the gesture didn’t reach his eyes, the ones that were once again fixed upon Felicity “I’m afraid that now very pshyco in Starling City will feel entitle to run their own kind of justice in the streets…”

“Bingo…” Laurel said with a triumphant smile, and Sara was grinning widely while looking at Oliver amused.

“So, you think he is a pshyco then?” Sara asked and Felicity though she wasn’t understanding whatever the blonde was finding so amusing in this whole thing.
“The worst kind” Oliver said and he grinned back. And just like that Felicity saw the first time Oliver’s smile reached his eyes as he joked with his friend the tension that had previously occupied their area vanished.

And without another word of the Vigilante or the cops they started talking about the Kardashians and Kanye West.

***

Chapter End Notes

Well this one got away from me. I have been working on this one for a few days and had a lot of fun writing it. Please let me know any thoughts you might have down in the comment section.

I know there wasn’t much interaction in between Olicity, but I wanted to set up the story, the links in between the friendships because it’s important down the line.

Also, guess who got to meet and take a photo with Stephen Amell yesterday, Me! And I can now say that the man is freaking gorgeous.
Hate is a strong word

Chapter Summary

The arrow pays a visit to Felicity and she reconnects with an old friend who tells her a horrible secret.

So I know I had mention I would post this during the weekend, but the muse hit me and I wrote and wrote.

Characters aren’t mine, I’m just writing this for fun!

Enjoy the reading.

3. Hate is a strong word

“It’s her” he breathed the words out so softly, he wasn’t sure if he said it out loud or just thought about it.

“What?” Diggle asked from the desk next to where he was siting, his brows meeting in the middle in confusion.

“It’s her, I think I know who F is, Diggle”
“Who is F Oliver? I can’t read your mind—even though sometimes I wish I could” Oliver had the other man’s full attention. They had been looking for F for weeks now; she was too smart and careful to make it easy on them. They didn’t have enough of a lead to know where to even start.

“Felicity Smoak” Oliver said and his voice sounded a bit more committed now and Diggle raised a brow.

“Who is Felicity Smoak?”

“She is a computer genius that apparently admires The Arrow. I met her at the party… where Sara met Nyssa.” He said simply, his eyes going back momentarily to the computer screen where he had reading the last message F had sent them.

It was information about the time and location where a dirty undercover cop had bought some vertigo from a punk kid. She thought the kid was being framed.

“And why do you think this Felicity girl is the genius behind this…? Just because she is a girl, whose name happens to start with an F doesn’t mean anything Oliver.” Diggle said rationally and Oliver nodded, but he moved his chair around to meet his friend’s eyes with absolute purpose.

“Two weeks ago I asked Sara to invite Nyssa over, there is something about her… I can’t find much on her past, here in the US or else. I wanted to-- talk to her, get to know what is that she does, other than apparently being a ninja.” Oliver started, knowing well that he was sidetracking his own conversation. He took a short breath trying to refocus himself.
“Nyssa or Felicity?” Diggle sounded puzzled and impatient.

“Nyssa, I want to protect Sara and there is something off, she evades telling me her last name, Sara told me she doesn’t know much about her past either. I wanted to get to know this woman a little better” Oliver paused, his fingers coming to hold the bridge of his nose, lost in his own thoughts as he proceeded.

“She showed up with her blond friend, who I met at a party over a month ago… she had told me in the party that she’d worked for Merlyn Global, as an IT specialist. Now while we were upstairs talking, The Arrow came up in the conversation… and well she and Laurel got into a discussion about him.”

“It’s weird that you are talking about yourself in third person man.” Diggle said and Oliver looked at him severely. If he would let him just finish his train of thought before interrupting him, he might be able to get his thought across without getting sidetracked again.

“Felicity talked too highly of The Arrow, of how she thought he… I was a hero” Oliver paused and pressed his lips together for a moment “it got me thinking that maybe it was too much of a coincidence that her name happened to start with an F, and that she was a computer person. So I did my own research on her, she graduated early from MIT in computer science.”

“Okay…” Diggle started, but Oliver interrupted him.

“Early as if in early 20’s with a master’s degree Diggle. I also discovered that even thought Felicity’s records are clean… I did find that when she was 15 years old she got into trouble with the law in Las Vegas (where she is from), guess what for?” he paused, but after Diggle made no attept to answer he proceeded.
“Hacking the city’s power company, making the electricity in her high school to pretty much blow up in middle of the winter’s dance.” Oliver pressed both hands against his legs while his brows went up as if all this information was the most obvious answer to their problems.

“Really?” Diggle sounded skeptical at best.

“The charges where later dropped because of lack of evidence, but there were several witnesses that said they saw herself had threatened about doing so…”

“And that makes her F?”

“It’s the best lead we’ve got Diggle” Oliver said exasperated “and no, that doesn’t make her F, but I will find that out tonight.” Diggle raised a brow, eyes following Oliver shape as he got up from his seat and started walking towards the case that held his Arrow Suit.

“What is that you think you are doing Oliver?” Diggle asked also getting up from his own seat, following his friend closely behind.

“The Arrow is going to pay Ms. Smoak a visit today, maybe she will give me the answer we are both looking for.”

“When did we started scaring poor innocent girls in order to get information?” he said sarcastically. Oliver could hear disapproval in his friend’s tone and he gave him a hard look back.

“I’m not going to scare her Dig, I’m going to ask her for help.” Diggle seemed shocked for a moment and then he nodded, a smirk growing on his face.
“Well if that’s the case-- I sure hope your gut is right, it will make me sleep better at night if we know who this hacker is.”

“Me too.” Oliver’s voice was soft, his mind going to Felicity, her soft features, blond wavy hair and those eyes that were so bright and… beautiful.

“And how did you find out all this information by the way?” Oliver gave Diggle a sharp look and a cocky side grin appeared on his face.

“Give me some credit Dig, I have been doing this for a long time now” Diggle exhaled a low chuckle “I had someone who owed me a favor at Merlyn Global, who gave me Felicity’s old records.”

…

Oliver hadn’t been in Merlyn Global ever since the accident that took Tommy’s life. Merlyn himself hadn’t been to happy with Oliver while in the funeral, in which Sara was still in the hospital, and Laurel was sporting a caff on her arm and a bloody lip. Oliver had been in bad shape, but there was no broken ribs and leg that could stop him from going, to say his goodbye to one of the best things he had in his life.

As he walked the dark floors quietly he could feel his throat tightening with each step he took. He had been in this building so many times at this point he knew the layout very well. But tonight he wasn’t coming as Oliver Queen; he was in as The Arrow who was even less welcomed than his other persona.
Diggle and him had made a plan and studied the blue prints earlier that night, and he had entered the building through the roof door just less than thirty minutes ago. He had to knock out a few guards on the top floor, and had placed their unconscious bodies in an empty conference room as he made his way downstairs.

“I’m in the security room, you have 15 minutes to make it to the IT department on the 13th floor, remember to use your voice modulator” he heard Diggle’s voice from his earpiece and nodded, even though his friend couldn’t see him.

He knew Felicity was still in the building, since Diggle had gone to the parking lot and found her car still parked in there. He made his way quickly down the stairs, knowing he didn’t have much time, in between Felicity leaving for the night and the guards realizing something was off.

He opened the door that led him from the emergency stairway to the 13th floor, and checked his surroundings, before quickly walking towards the office he knew was at the far end of the west side of the floor plan.

He was happy their floors where carpeted, it muted his steps which was a plus. He paused when he encountered the stained wooden doors that would lead him to one Felicity Smoak. He didn’t know why his heart was beating so fast, the way it had done it that night at the club… or the night at the party, when he met her.

A side of his brain wished that she wasn’t F, because he knew that the help she had offered was needed for his mission. The Arrow needed her on his side, her skills and brain. If she were the woman that had been helping them, he would be forced to face the growing attraction he had for her.

He opened the door quickly when Diggle’s voice snapped him back to reality. She was facing her monitor with such intensity she didn’t even noticed someone had entered the room. She was wearing a pink top, and he noticed that she was wearing a high ponytail and glasses, just like she had the day at the club.
“Felicity Smoak” he said, and his voice shook her entire body as she jumped in her place with a yelp. She turned around on her spot and her face immediately lost all the color it had previously being on her cheeks.

“You found me” she gasped, eyes wide in shock. Her words took the air out of his lungs and he was quiet and still for a moment. He expected her to call for help, to do anything other than to stay immobile in her spot.

He expected to have to work harder for her to admit she had been the one helping him, not to just throw the answer at him like she had done. She surprised him; her honesty and innocence shook him from the very core of his soul.

Then the reality of his suspicion hit him, this woman wouldn’t call for help when she had talked the way she had in the club. She looked a mixture of terrified and almost pleased, as if she was hoping that he would find her eventually.

He took a step forward and she inhaled leaning her body weight against the back of her chair. He knew he shouldn’t get too close to her, afraid she will see too much of his features and recognize him, so he kept his distance.

“It’s nice to finally meet you, F” he announced the last letter; his voice sounding mechanical and distorted.

“Please don’t hurt me” she said in a low voice that sounded scared and he tilted his head to the side, studying her. Her face contradicted her tone of voice, and he could tell her mind was going at war against herself.
“I’m not going to hurt you Felicity” he said quickly, wanting to see that scared look on her face disappear. She stared at him in silence and after what seemed like an eternity she nodded sharply.

“I’m guessing that if I asked you how’d you did it, you wouldn’t tell me” she said with a louder voice, as if she had regained her confidence. Her features were filled with bright curiosity, and his eyes traveled to the red pen that she was nervously hitting against her leg.

“Your guessing will be correct’ he said and his face turned towards the door, quietly checking if someone was coming “I’m here because I need your help.” He said finally, and could tell that she was surprised at his words.

“My help?” and he nodded, his hand going to his pocket, retrieving a phone as he walked two extra steps in her direction, standing right in front of her desk. He lowered his face, trying to hide most of his features as he placed the small phone of the table and slid it forwards with a gloved hand.

“I need you to get into this phone, I must know the owner’s name, the last calls that he made, last text messages… any information that you can salvage from it.” She took a small breath and turned her head to the side as she picked the device in her hands, examining it with full concentration.

“It’s broken.” She said after a moment, raising her eyes to him.

“Do you think there is anything you can do?” his voice sounded hopeful, even behind the voice modulator. She was quiet for a moment deep in thought and he was sure she was deciding at that second if she should get any deeper into his crusade. Then her hand closed in around the device and nodded, brow furrowing in determination.
He walked a few steps back, knowing his time was up as he heard Diggle’s voice from the other side.

“If I get in bed with you, would you promise me no one will get hurt?” she asked and then her eyes widened and her cheeks turned bright red “and I don’t mean I’m going to get in bed with you, it’s a saying… I meant partner with you” she said quickly and then she stopped and he could see her throat moving as she swallowed heavily.

This time he couldn’t help the smile that tugged on his lips, and he lowered his face again trying to hide it from her.

“I understand what you meant,” he said after a moment, when he was sure he would sound normal and his heart was beating at a normal rate once again “but I can’t guarantied no one will get hurt… I don’t kill, not anymore.” He said and his voice sounded strong and sure, her eyes had not blinked as he spoke.

“And I can also tell you that anyone that I go after is someone who is doing something terrible… someone who needs to be brought to justice.” And after a moment of silence she nodded.

He was dreading having to leave though, to be near her and ask her questions that she might answer. They way she was looking at him was so different to the way she looked at Oliver Queen, and it made his heart ache out of… jealousy for The Arrow.

“How do I find you?” she paused and her cheeks turned a slightly color red “when I crack into the phone I mean.”

“You have never had an issue sending me a message,” he said and sounded amused, he turned slightly to leave “or I will find you.”
The sound of her voice broke through the sound of computers fans and the heater, which had come on a moment before in the room.

“Since you found my secret identity… does that mean you will tell me who you are?” she asked and he turned around towards her through half obstructed view from his hood, revealing a side of the stubble on chiseled jaw.

“No.” and he smirked before exiting the room without another word. He was delighted to see how her slightly pink cheeks had become a bright shade of red.

... 

When Diggle and Oliver returned to the Foundry a few hours later that night, he was surprised to see a message from Felicity.

“The cellphone belonged to Gustav Gottlief. Last message received says ‘520 Grandville port’ not sure what it means. ~ F”

Oliver’s brow was frowning as he was quickly opening the city map on the computer, he could feel Diggle hovering behind him.

“That is the port of the container storage” Diggle said and his face was turning with concern.
“I guess we have a long night ahead of us.” Oliver said and he straightened up, backtracking his steps back to his bow. The metal steps of the Foundry were ringing under their rushed feet, and even though it was past eleven pm they were both high on adrenaline of a job needed to be completed, and lives needing saving.

Diggle shrugged his leather jacket on in silence as they reached the top door.

“She is fast.” Diggle mused next to Oliver, and he found himself grinning now, and his heart was beating with pleasure and pride.

When Felicity entered the living room the next morning, she felt exhausted and defeated. She had stayed up late trying to piece together any information she found on that forsaken phone that was still in her purse. To her utter annoyance, she had not being able to recover much more than what she gave the Arrow.

Feeling overwhelmed she had slept less than her mandatory eight hours, her body was complaining loudly. She rubbed her eyes absently holding her glasses on the other hand as she yawned.

The sound of soft voices coming from the dinning table made her stop on her tracks, a smile spread on her face when she saw that both of her roommates are drinking their coffees and eating breakfast with Sara Lance. The three of them turned around to gaze upon her and smiled back broadly.
“And she’s alive!” Sin exclaimed with a dramatic tone from her spot on the table.

“Good morning.” She said walking towards the kitchen, hunting for a cup of coffee.

“I didn’t hear you come in last night… did you stayed up working late, or is there a mystery man I should know about?” Nyssa asked with a side grin, looking a Felicity over her own cup of warm tea. If she only knew whom her mystery man was, she wouldn’t be grinning so much and would have a heart attack.

The memory of the night before made her smile like a teenager, it made goose pumps rise on her skin after a chill ran through her body. The archer who had seemed so unreal and unreachable to her, had paid her a visit the night before. She would be lying to herself if she didn’t admit she had day dreamed about him finding her, of course her day dreaming represented a lot more kissing and less working.

She felt herself blush at the stupidity of her thoughts. For all she knew the man was married, crazy, gay… or who knew, she didn’t. She only remembered the way those leather pants fit his muscular legs, and the only part of his face she had seen. A jawline so sharp she thought she could cut paper with it.

She wished she wasn’t so blind, perhaps if her vision were 20/20 she would have seen the color of his eyes in the shadow of his hood and mask.

“I wish.” She opted to reply “a pervert at work downloaded a virus by clicking one of those porn adds… it was a mess to clean up because it contaminated part of our server, and Paul was out sick yesterday.”
“Why is that every time you talk about Paul he sounds like such a slacker?” Sin asked with half full mouth and a raised brow.

“He is not bad…” Felicity said biting the inside of her cheek, feeling slightly bad for bad mouthing her coworker.

She ate breakfast in silence as she heard them speak about everything and nothing in particular, her eyes scanning her tablet as she absently read the morning news. Suddenly her heart stopped in her chest. The main title for one of her favorite newspapers read.

‘The Arrow saves two girls’ her breath caught in her chest as she clicked to read the full story.

The article was long and detailed; Marla Dean 15 and Tiffany Lunn 17 had been kidnapped when they were returning home from school a couple days ago. The police didn’t have a solid lead. The teens were in the hospital and had not being interviewed ever since they walked into the Police department early in the morning, claiming that The Arrow had saved them from their captors.

Four men had been tided up and left in the back door for the cops to find, attached to their rope there was video, the article said that the police hadn’t revealed what the video contained, but that it was enough to prove that the men there were guilty.

Her heart was hammering in her chest as she read the names of the four perverts that were looking to sell the girls for sex trafficking. David Muller, Carlos Fuentes, Laurent Flint and Gustav Gottlief. She knew she needed to start breathing, but her heart was beating so fast inside her chest she wasn’t sure she could breathe even if she wanted to. Her cheeks were turning red.

“Lissy, are you all right?” and she breathed as a smile grew on her face.
“Yes,” she mused with a small voice “never been better actually.”

…

Felicity’s day had only gotten better. Her work had been easy and pleasant in the morning, being inside her office gave her another feeling, knowing that just a few hours before The Arrow himself had stood in front of the door and asked her for help--- help to save two innocent girls from being sold and drugged for the rest of their lives.

When noon hit she got up happily, even though she had brought her food she was ready for a walk and a celebratory coffee from her favorite coffee shop just a few blocks away.

The coffee shop was small and quaint, a family business with warm walls and comfortable tables and chairs. They made the best coffee and blueberry scones in town. So she ordered and waited patiently by the bar as Marcos made her coffee.

As she waited leaning against the wall, she scanned the faces of the people who sat there drinking and eating. She always envied those who could come on a weekday and just write on their computers, she wondered if they were writers, bloggers, and journalists?

Then her eyes froze in a familiar face, he was hunching in front of his computer, and even though he was far away from where she stood, she recognized him. Someone from her past, from her days in MIT and a flood of memories came rushing through her brain.

“Medium latte for Felicity.” Marcos said grinning at her as she turned to take her coffee and with a quick thank you she grabbed her order. She was smiling as she walked towards the coffee table
where a man sat.

“Cooper Seldon,” Felicity mused. He had brown hair that fell down his forehead, straight nose and big blue eyes that came up to meet her, a small smirk pulled on his face.

“Felicity Smoak,” he said imitating her tone “it’s a surprise to see you here.”

“I could say the same thing…” she said with a smile, she took a small sip of her coffee, watching as Cooper got up of his chair to greet her.

“Why don’t you sit down and enjoy your coffee with me? We can catch up… it has been what… six years?” he said with a charming tone and Felicity smiled broadly, she nodded and took a seat in front of him.

“I thought you would be back in Vegas, maybe running your own Company.” He said and she shook her head, her nose scrunching slightly.

“Oh god no, I hate Las Vegas. Couldn’t wait to leave when I left for MIT” she said with a shrug.

“So you came here and let me guess you opened your own company? I mean… you are a genius after all” Felicity felt herself blush, having completely forgotten how smooth of a talker Cooper was.

“Oh, no… I’m working on Merlyn Global, IT department” she said, and didn’t know why she felt so ashamed at admitting this in front of him after his high expectations. Merlyn Global was after all once of the best companies to work for, besides Queen Consolidated, Wayne Enterprise and Google.
Cooper’s eyebrows shot up and he brought his own cup of coffee towards his lips.

“I see, well how do you like it there?” he asked after a moment.

“I like it a lot, I have been giving a lot of responsibilities… and have had a chance to change and redesign a lot of their software, make their systems a lot more robust.” She said and she sounded proud “how about you?”

She watched as he opened his mouth to speak, but then closed his lips quickly, eyebrows shooting up as he stared at someone behind her. Felicity couldn’t help it when she turned around to look at whoever was making Cooper so uncomfortable.

She felt her heart stop for a moment, warm flooding to her face as she breathed loudly in annoyance. Why couldn’t she be rid of him?

Oliver Queen was standing in front of the door, he hadn’t seen them yet, or was acting like he hadn’t which wouldn’t surprise her. He held the door open for a moment for the large man that stepped in behind him. He took a moment to fix his sharp gray suit jacket as he turned to speak to who she guessed was his bodyguard. His face was more relaxed than she had ever seen him, and then his eyes fixed on her and he stopped mid sentence.

And damm he was ten kind of gorgeous and she hated herself for even thinking it.

She was not sure if she should wave or just turn around and ignore him. Then she watched him take
a step forward, as if he was coming to greet her, but then he stopped dead in his tracks. His expression darkened when his eyes travelled behind her and looked upon Cooper.

His jaw came up tight and his eyes were blazing with something that made her skin crawl. She felt herself swallow and she turned to look at the other man, whose expression matched ever so slightly Oliver’s. Only that something was off… Cooper looked upset, yes… but also afraid?

When she turned to look at Oliver once again he had walked towards the coffee bar, she guessed opting to not saying hello to her after all.

She felt herself shrug even though something felt weird inside of her, curiosity sparkling inside of her brain. Her blue eyes came to meet Cooper’s.

“Well that was intense,” she said and he leaned against the back of his chair, his pose tense and uncomfortable “if you don’t mind me asking, do you have any problems with Oli—Mr. Queen?”

“You know Oliver?” he asked and his eyes seemed surprised. Felicity nodded, and didn’t escape her how Cooper had called him by his first name.

“We have met… a few times, one of his best friends it’s dating my best friend” Felicity shrugged, trying to diminish the importance that man and his ego might have on her.

“The short answer to your question is yes, I do know Oliver Queen… it might shock you, after watching our exchange just now, but we grew up together” Cooper said and his eyes travelled away from her, and she guessed he was looking at the other man.
“Really?” She sounded surprised and Cooper nodded.

“Unlike him I come from a family with low resources… my aunt Raisa has work for the Queen family ever since we were little. She used to bring me over when my parent’s had to work during the weekends. Oliver and I became quick friends.” Cooper’s eyes were down on his computer, and he was moving a small teaspoon around his coffee cup absently.

She felt intrigued, something prickling in the back of her neck as she brought up the cup that held her drink and gave another sip. Staying quiet so he knew she was listening to him.

“I grew up close to him and his younger sister, Thea… who was much sweeter then than she is now” Cooper exhaled out a heavy bitter laugh “she is a spoiled brat now, which saddens me to no end” he paused briefly “either way, Robert Queen loved the fact that I was so into math and later in life computers. He was disappointed that Oliver was growing to be this immature jackass he is… while I was aiming to study in an Ivy League college”

“So when time came Robert offered me a scholarship, I could pick any College I wanted in the world, and The Queen’s will pay for it. It was great, and as you know I went to MIT and graduated with merits while Oliver drop out of 4 colleges.” Felicity felt herself on the edge of her seat, after knowing Cooper for the years in MIT she never guessed he was so close to the Queens, he seemed so… normal, charming and down to earth.

“Then Robert and Oliver went missing in that forsaking boat, and I was devastated. Sure Oliver and I had grown apart after high school… he was a jock and I was the nerdy student” Cooper shrugged “but I was devastated about Robert…”

“Oh god, I’m so sorry Cooper that must have been horrible” she said feeling her heart clench inside her chest.
“You might remember this, we might have talked about it in one of those parties in MIT… but I didn’t grow up with a father, so Robert was that fatherly figure for me—he always promised that I would be a part of his Company, that I would help him make it better” Cooper’s voice was shaky.

“So… you are working in Queen Consolidated then?” he grimaced and shook his head.

“When they went missing, I graduated MIT and Moira gave me a job at the company. Of course I felt like I belonged there, I grew up with the family, but Oliver came back from the dead and proceeded to fire me” Felicity gasped, her hand coming up to cover her lips. She turned around to gaze upon Oliver who was smiling at the barista while taking his to-go cup of coffee. She felt her stomach lurch and anger flood her system.

“But… why?” she heard herself ask, her voice shaky and shocked.

“Well isn’t it obvious? He was jealous… his father, he was disappointed in Oliver, that’s why he was taking him on this trip… it was a call for help. Then Robert dies and Oliver knows that I became everything his father wanted in him, I was always the one Robert was proud of.” Cooper said in a harsh tone and shook his head.

“Cooper, I’m so sorry this happened to you, this is completely unfair” she said with passion and Cooper nodded “what did Moira do?”

“What could she do? She was stocked to her son back, tired of running this company, she was just happy he was willing to take the responsibility after a year of trying to convince him to do so… even if it meant letting me go” Cooper shrugged but there was sadness in his eyes. Felicity pressed her lips together and they were in silence for a moment.
“Well that’s horrible, you deserve that job… you are a great addition to any company” she felt her throat was becoming tighter and even though her impulse was to turn around and give Oliver Queen her deadliest glare, she thought better, she wouldn’t even acknowledge him.

She knew he was an egotistical, proud, asshole before, but this… this was beyond anything she could have ever imagined.

“Yes… but now I’m just a poor, unemployed dude, nearing his 30’s with rent due in a few weeks, and having to beg for a job in companies around Starling City” he said softly “I refuse to work in a place like Tech Village… I didn’t graduate from MIT with honors for that”

“Well maybe I can talk to my supervisor, there might be a position opening in Merlyn Global. I can put in a good word for you.” she offered and he was giving her the most stunning smile she had seen in a while, the ones that she had always liked in MIT.

They hadn’t been close friends back then, but they did hang out with the same crowd, and even though Cooper was a few years ahead of her they used to talk technology, hacking and other things they both enjoyed.

She looked in her purse for one of her business cards, pushing the rectangular piece of paper across the table towards him.

“Here, it has my cellphone and email… let’s keep in touch” she said and he reached towards it with a look she could only describe as intense.

“Thank you Felicity, for listening to me… and for this” he looked down at the card and his smile
grew once again on his face. She looked then at her watch and winced. She was running late, her lunch hour had turned more into an hour and a half lunch.

“I better go, running late… it was nice seeing you again Coop” she said and he laughed softly.

“No one has called me that in years” he mused.

“Well I hope I can make it a regular occurrence then” and she was flirting. With a last wave she turned around to leave, the happiness of their last exchange leaving her as she looked around to see if Oliver was still there, relieved that he wasn’t.

She was sure of one thing, she never wanted to see him again; she had never met anyone in her life that was so evil, so selfish… there was no excuse for what he had done to Cooper.

…

“I don’t know Felicity… that doesn’t sound like something Oliver would do” Nyssa said her eyebrows going up as the words left her lips with that accented voice. She had finished retelling her everything Cooper had told her earlier that day.

“Why? Because you know Oliver so well” Felicity snorted while shaking her head in disbelief “the guy is a tool Nyssa.”

“You don’t know this Cooper guy so well either, you can’t just blindly believe everything someone tells you Lissy” Nyssa insisted, turning her whole body to face the blonde woman who sat next to her. Whatever was playing in the tv in front of them long forgotten in the background.
“But I do know Cooper, I mean we are not like best buds or anything… but he hanged out with my group of friends while in MIT, enough for me to know he has no reason to lie about this” Felicity was quiet for a moment taking in a deep breath “I know that he is pretty fantastic with computers, so his skills are not in question here.”

“It was years ago, and you barely knew him then what makes you believe he is not a changed man six years later? Plus you are only getting one side of the story in here.” Nyssa tried to reason and Felicity shook her head once again.

“I can’t believe you are siding with him, I mean the guy stole Cooper’s future in Queen Consolidated just out of despite and jealousy. He dismissed me for being a stupid blonde that was barely tolerable to tempt him to dance… he is a jerk.” Felicity said with resolution and Nyssa was quiet, squeezing her lips for a moment as she considered her friends words.

“Look, if Oliver did this it’s really awful, and I’m sorry for Cooper—I just’ can’t believe everything that he said so blindly. Sara wouldn’t be friends with someone so horrible, I have to believe that he is better” Nyssa paused and Felicity opened her lips to complain, but the brunette cut in once again.

“I’m not saying he is the most pleasant man in the world, and he was a jerk for saying all those things he said about you. But what Cooper is blaming him for, it’s a whole different kind of messed up”

“You are too good Nys.” Nyssa’s hand came to rest on Felicity’s shoulder, squeezing it lightly.

“Don’t get too blinded by hate, sometimes it’s better to hear both sides—take it from me Lis, I have been angry and said and done things I’m not proud of.” She said and Felicity shook her head, the smile that was previously on her face disappearing.
“I don’t need to hear Oliver Queen’s side… I have got the full picture, and what I want is to never have to see him again.” She said with resolution, and Nyssa pressed her lips together.

“Right… well Sara’s birthday is in two weeks, she is throwing a small get together in her house, friends and family. She asked me to bring you and Sin.” Felicity opened her mouth a few times to speak but no sound came out. She felt her heart becoming smaller.

“And he will be there.” It’s all she could manage to say, Nyssa nodded.

“I mean… I would imagine.” Nyssa took a smaller deeper breath “you can think about it, and if you don’t want to come I will let you tell Sara… she is coming by tomorrow for dinner.”

“You’re really going make me do that Nyssa, not fair.” The brunette shrugged.

“I grew up with a family that harvest hate, seeks revenge… I’m not about to let you go down that rabbit hole and if you do, I won’t be a tool you use for it. If you really can’t stand Oliver, not even for a night for Sara and me, then you can tell her that.” Nyssa said and with that she turned again towards the tv. Felicity took a deeper breath, guessing she better started coming up with excuses.

“Hate… I don’t like that word, it’s so strong and ugly.” She mused and turned towards the trashcan on her kitchen, where not 15 min before she had dumped the business magazine that had Oliver’s face on its front page. It felt as if it was ages ago that she was nursing a teenage crush on him, to later be mending the wounds of hurt a pride. Now she knew one thing, she truly and utterly disliked him.

And that would never change.
Thoughts? Things are getting there; please leave any questions, thoughts, love and constructive critics in the comments below!

I had fun having Felicity disliking Oliver Queen so much but developing this crush/love for the arrow, not knowing that it’s the same person.

Thoughts on Cooper?
Unspoken Words

Chapter Summary

Oliver talks to Sara about Nyssa, and Felicity meet's Mr. Collins.

Thank you so, so much for all the comments, I’m so thrilled people are reading this story and liking it. I have spent a long time coming up with a plot, and everything happens for a reason (even the car that splashed Felicity a few chapters ago)

Just a few things before I let you into the reading. I’m using this symbol ‘&’ to split the sections that are Felicity narrated from Oliver’s. *Cursive* can mean, memories, dreams or to accentuate a word.

PS. In this story Walter Steele works as the Applied Science Director for Merlyn Global.

Enjoy!

-  

4. Unspoken words

When Felicity came out of her room that morning she wasn’t shocked to hear the voices coming from the dinning table. It had become a thing ever since she started working with the Arrow that she was the last person to exit her room in the mornings.

Too tired to wake up early like she had been doing for years. She was surprised however to see Sara sitting at the table, she knew the blonde had been staying over a couple nights a week, but was always gone by the time Felicity woke up. Both Sara and Nyssa had a cup of steaming tea in front of them, and Sin was just sitting at the table, wearing her regular dark jeans, leather jacket and spunky hair.
“You seem pretty perfect to me.” Sin said and her voice was guarded, Sara laughed softly, but it didn’t contain humor Felicity noted. Her eyes were dark as if she was remembering something bad about her past.

“Far from it, actually that would be my sister, Laurel… she is the perfect one.” Even though the words could have sounded bitter in context, Felicity observed that when the name of her sister came out of Sara’s lips the tone was full of love and respect.

“Hard to believe.” Sin said, but the tenseness around her shoulders was starting to disappear. Felicity walked towards them with a smile, and even thought all of them acknowledge she was in there the conversation she had walked in on didn’t stop.

“It’s true, I was a lot like you from what I hear from Nyssa. I got in with the wrong crowd, started playing with dangerous things and didn’t even realized the trouble I was in until it hit me all at once. I can actually say I’m in a good place right now thanks to Ollie and my family, but it wasn’t always easy.” Her voice sounded sad and her blue eyes came to meet Nyssa’s for a moment.

“Well then I guess we are both lucky to have good friends, because I have no family to speak of.” Sin said and Sara nodded with a smile and a spark hidden behind her eyelashes.

“Who says friends aren’t family?”

Sin looked at Sara with smirk spreading on her youthful face. Felicity was lost in her thoughts for a moment, thinking about how happy her friends where at that moment and how right it felt to have Sara in there. Then reality hit her when her eyes glanced at the clock above the oven. She was running too late to even make herself some coffee, which meant she would have to stop by the coffee shop on her way to work and get a quick bite to eat and caffeine to keep her awake.
Sin was giving her a ride to the Mini dealership where they had been looking at her car for a few
days now. They had called her the night before letting her know her car was ready for pick up, so
she cleared her throat loudly causing all three pairs of eyes to fix on her.

“Sin, we should get going… you will be late for class if we don’t leave now.” Felicity said with a
smile and the girl just nodded getting up from the table with a small wave.

“I was hoping you will wake up late again, so we could grab some coffee on our way there. You are
buying by the way.” She said as they both walked across the dinning room towards the main
entrance.

“Felicity,” Sara called when both of them had reached the door. The blonde turned quickly meeting
Sara’s bright eyes “I do hope to see you at my party this Friday.”

Felicity pursed her lips together feeling her heart started beating quicker, dreading the idea of seeing
Oliver Queen, even if it wasn’t completely sure he would be coming. She nodded after a moment
either way, knowing well that she couldn’t say no to Sara, not when her eyes looked at her the way
they did now.

When Sin and her walked into the coffee shop, they where both engrossed in a heavy computer’s
graphics card talk, as they both waited for their coffee she was surprised when a familiar voice broke
their light conversation.

“If I had any money, I will be all over the GeForce GTX 970.” Both Sin and Felicity turned towards
the new comer and Felicity’s face brightened with a smile.
“Coop! I shouldn’t be surprised to see you in here.” She said as a hello and he smiled broadly, his blue eyes going from hers to Sin’s who was quietly observing them with curiosity.

“And this is?” he said with a gallant voice that Felicity thought for a moment sounded flirty, but then she pushed the thought aside focusing in the barista who was asking her about her order.

“I’m Sin, pleasure to meet you… Coop?” she sounded a little mocking and Cooper laughed softly.

“Cooper Seldon… Only Felicity calls me Coop. Pleasure to meet you Sin, what a cool name by the way.” he said, and Felicity turned to both of them with a smile that matched his.

“Her name is Cynthia… but she hates it.” Sin turned towards Felicity with a glare and a hiss.

“Watch it Barbie, or I will leave you here stranded.” Felicity laughed loudly and they both stood aside for Cooper to make his order as they waited for theirs.

It didn’t take long for him to approach them, commenting that he liked the name Sin much better than Cynthia, and with that they dove back onto the Graphics Card talk. When they left the coffee shop, waving goodbye to Cooper who was sitting himself in his regular table, Felicity explained to Sin from where and how she met Cooper. She also briefly mentioned what Cooper had told her about Oliver and his relationship with the Queen Family.

By the time Sin dropped her off at work, Felicity was pleased her younger friend didn’t seem to defend Oliver as Nyssa had done, but was willing to be upset about it. She could tell Sin liked Cooper, and who wouldn’t. He was charming, smart, and handsome.
Oliver entered Verdant early that morning, closing the silver door of his car lazily, feeling exhausted from his lack of sleep the night before. He had spent the early hours of the previous night in the confines of the foundry hunting for information about the League. Happy that Felicity seemed to be absent that night from his servers.

Then later he had gone out to watch Nyssa at her gym, he was surprised to see her train, her fluid movements as she sparred with her more advanced students. It didn’t take long for him to come into the conclusion he had feared. Nyssa Raatko, the name she had used to lease her gym was no other than Nyssa Al Ghul, daughter of Ra’s Al Ghul and from the information he gathered-- heir to the Demon.

The information had chilled his bones as he thought of Sara and the joy that filled her face when she talked about the brunette. The danger she was in just by being in love with her made him lose sleep. Not in a million years Oliver would have guessed that the woman he had met at that party two months before was a member of the League of Assassins, much less the heir and no doubt one of the best fighters he had ever seen.

When he had finally decided to go home for the night, he had not been able to sleep, debating if he should tell Sara or just keep an eye on things from afar. He didn’t like the later option, but Diggle had been insistent it might be the best one.

Then his thoughts came to Felicity, who he was willing to bet his entire fortune to the fact that she was clueless of who her roommate and best friend really was, and the danger that it represented to her life.

Felicity was a mystery that completely bugged his mind to the point of exhaustion. She had claimed to the Arrow a few nights before that mysteries bugged her, that they needed to be solved, but she was adamant about not pursuing Nyssa’s past, or his own identity.
It was as if she was afraid of reality and what might represent once she found out about them. Maybe she was afraid of losing Nyssa, or being disappointed on who he was behind the mask.

He was aware his thoughts had been too preoccupied with Felicity for the past month. She had found a way inside both of his personas, and he was hungry to find out more about her, to see her more, to hear her speak and ramble like she had done the nights that she had met both Oliver Queen and The Arrow for the first time.

It had been a couple weeks since his first visit to her office, but it had not been the last time they had spoken. She kept their communications via messages, and he had found ways to meet her in during the night, outside her apartment when she got home from work, or right outside her work in the parking lot.

Their interactions had all being Arrow related, he had asked her for help in a specific case and their conversations didn’t last more than necessary, but he was constantly craving for more.

‘We should get one of those untraceable phones, so she can call us or we can call her using it… it will make sense instead of you stalking her.” Diggle had said a few days ago, when Oliver had come back to the Foundry half an hour late.

The idea was appealing to the more sensible part of himself, but not so much to the other part where he wanted, craved, seeing her. Deep inside of him, Oliver knew he had to put a stop to whatever feelings he had started to harvest for the blonde.

He rushed his steps towards the club; the rain was falling down cold and heavy. Verdant was completely in the dark when the heavy thud of the door closing behind him resounded in the empty space, echoing around the concrete walls. He took a short breath knowing that today would be a long day.
So he made his way to the Foundry, ready to work himself senseless in the salmon ladder, to quiet all his thoughts and worries and get ready to go to work for the day.

It was eight in the morning when Oliver dropped from the salmon ladder, his body rippling with the motion of landing, his redden skin was covered in a layer sweat, and his chest heaved with exertion. He was content with the result of his workout, finally rid of his previous thoughts he was currently more concern in not passing out when his phone rang. He reached it in a few strides, his brow furrowing when seeing who was calling.

“Laurel, is everything ok?” he said as a way of answering, concern tainting his voice.

“Yes, sorry for calling so early, I needed to talk to you-- about Sara,” her voice sounded rushed.

“What about Sara?” he asked after a moment of silence, she took a long breath before speaking.

“It’s her girlfriend, I know she looks very sweet and smart but there was something about her that seemed off to me. For example, she refuses to say her last name or talk about her family—I mean Sara is very open about us, we have had dinner with them a few times, and she refuses to speak about it.” Laurel ranted and Oliver felt himself stiffen on his spot, pressing his lips together as his jaw tighten.

“Your point being?” he asked, trying to sound causal but knowing well his voice sounded strained.

“My point being that it’s weird Ollie. I mean this is the first woman… the first anyone that she has
brought home.” Laurel said and he was quiet because he couldn’t disagree with Laurel in this, he had also noticed something off when it came to Nyssa and her past, which was what prompted him to investigate in the first place.

But League where not a job for a lawyer, and where definitely not to be messed around with. He wanted Laurel as far away from it all as he could possibly make her be.

“Laurel, they have only been going out for two months… if it doesn’t bother Sara it shouldn’t bother us.” He reasoned. Using the words Diggle had used on him just days ago, and he wished he believed his words.

“The problem Ollie is that something is off… I checked the records. Nyssa Raatko, which is the name she is using legally here, has very little history in the US, and how can someone with zero credit get such a huge loan from a bank to get that Gym and apartment? Plus there is no mention of any Nyssa Raatko from where she says she is from.” Laurel continued.

It seemed like Laurel had been doing her own research, which made a chill ran through his body.

“Laurel…” his voice was restrained.

“I’m telling you because she listens to you Ollie, I think you should talk to her… we don’t want her to get hurt again” he pressed his lips together, feeling Laurel’s words and concern brake down his resolve to stay out of it.

The image of Sara just half a year ago flashed through his head, memories of how broken she had been. Bruised, beaten and scarred for her life and the ones she loved.
He had not saved her from a drug dealer to let her fall down into the claws of The League of Assassins, not in his lifetime.

“Okay.” He heard Laurel’s relieved outtake of breath.

“Thank you Ollie.” She said, and after they exchanged a few more words he hanged up. His shoulders were stiff with the stress that had seeped into his body once again.

He heard noise coming from upstairs and knew she had arrived to Verdant, to do inventory and to receive a shipment. He walked towards the bathroom to take a quick shower before he spoke with her.

... 

Her eyes came up to meet him and a side smile appeared on her face as she tapped the pen she was holding onto the papers that laid on the bar. He approached her in silence, coming by to drop a soft kiss on the top of her head and she turned to his face with a look of confusion flashing through her features.

“You are wearing my favorite tie... and you just kissed my head, are you in trouble with me?” she asked turning her body towards him and he could feel the corners of his lips twitch.

“Not yet.” He said, she raised a brow and dropped the pen down her face turning more serious.
“What’s going on Ollie?” she asked.

“It’s about Nyssa” he said and felt his heart drop when her arms crossed in front of her chest, her chin going up.

“What about her?” and she looked and sounded defensive, he took a deep breath, readying himself for what was to come. Her image gave him strength, to protect her.

“She is no good for you Sara… there is things I know about her, who she is” he paused and shook his head “she is keeping stuff from you, important things.””

“And I assume you know this because…?” Sara’s voice sounded shaky and upset “you have been checking on her haven’t you?”

“Sara, she is dangerous.”

“And you… you are not dangerous? You are here judging that Nyssa keeps secrets when you aren’t able to talk about what happened to you those years you were gone. We both know you weren’t on a desert island all those years, you don’t speak about how you got all the scars, the Bratva tattoo in your chest and the fact that you are fluent in Chinese and Russian” Sara yelled and Oliver felt his skin burn hot at her words.

Not knowing when it had become about him and his secrets, and not about Nyssa’s.

“You know more about me than most people,” he said in a controlled low voice and she laughed
loudly, irony seeping through every single sound that it escaped from her lips.

“So what if I know you are the Arrow? That doesn’t make me know who you are deep inside, you
don’t let anyone inside that wall you have put in between yourself and the rest of us.” She said and
for a moment they were silent, she lowered her gaze to the floor chewing the inside of her cheek as
she gathered her thoughts.

“It’s not easy for me to speak about what happened to me… and it’s also to protect you Sara, the
least that you know about what happened the safer you are.” He took a step closer towards her, his
hand coming to the bar holding his weight up as he tried to search for her eyes that were still fixed on
the floor.

“I don’t need your protection,” she said and her eyes came up to meet his, shinning with unshed tears
“if you know something about Nyssa that I should know, then speak up.”

He pressed his lips together.

“I said all I can tell you.” He said after a moment and she nodded curtly.

“But you know more,” She said and it wasn’t a question so he didn’t answer “and you won’t tell me
this information you claim to have about her because… let me guess you are protecting me?”

“Sara…” she held her hand up, stopping his words before they spilled out of his mouth, her other
hand went to grab her purse, which was resting on top of the bar where she had placed it just minutes
before.
“Save it, I’m tired of all this secrets and the fact that you think lying by omission is the way to save the people that you care about.” Sara took a step backwards shaking her head, her blond curls hitting her cheeks by the force of her movement.

“I love Nyssa Ollie, maybe you haven’t felt this way about anyone before, so it’s hard for you to grasp the magnitude of it. I can’t stand here and hear you talk about her like you know what’s best for me when you can’t even tell me what you really know.”

Her words crushed his soul as she backed away from him quickly.

“Sara” he called after her, his words sounded broken to his own ears but she didn’t turn around to meet his eyes.

“I don’t feel good, I’m taking one of my sick days. I’ll see you tomorrow.” She said dismissively from the door, just before her small frame left the building.

He waited in silence in the same spot, frozen with her last words. His eyes were fixed on the spot where she had disappeared just minutes ago. He didn’t know how much time it had passed when Diggle entered Verdant. He seemed surprised to see him there; his body slumped against the metal bar, his eyes lost in between the alcohol bottles.
She rarely went out to lunch with Paul, which was why when he had approached her that day inviting her to lunch she hadn’t been able to come up with a good enough excuse to pass.

Paul was nearing his forties, and was a short pudgy man, with brown curly hair and a huge bald spot at his crown that he covered with his long curls to the side. He wore the same kind of clothes everyday since she had met him four years ago. Beige color pants, a stripped polo shirt and sandals. During the colder months he wore socks under his sandals, which made Felicity cringe.

Even though he had a poor sense of fashion, he was a nice enough guy. Smart, good with computers and with a kind heart. She liked him, most of the time.

They walked in the street and Paul was commenting that his cousin who was visiting from out of town was coming to meet them at the restaurant.

“He works as the head recruiter for Palmer Technologies, as I’m sure he will tell you multiple times. He can be a bit redundant about how great his company is.” Paul said with a sigh.

“Why do I have the feeling I got invited just so you don’t have to be alone with him?” Felicity asked and Paul blushed intensely.

“Oh, I couldn’t come up with an excuse good enough to pass. Sorry Lis, I will buy you coffee for the rest of the week.” Felicity raised an eyebrow skeptically.

“That bad huh?” she asked and Paul nodded curtly. They came inside of the restaurant and he told the hostess the rest of the party was already seated, so they walked in without any problems.
Felicity scanned the restaurant with interest, it was a nicer place that she normally went for a lunch with a coworker, and it was nice enough that she was wondering how many extra hours of work she needed to do in order to pay for lunch.

She found herself smiling at the short man that got up from the table quickly they were walking towards, approaching them with a polite smile on, his eyes curiously scanning her.

“So good to see you cousin. Thank you for joining me for lunch,” he gave Paul a short hug with a few pats on his back and turned his attention back to her “and this is the lovely coworker you speak so much of. I’m William Collins, at your service.”

“Felicity Smoak.” She said as a form of introduction, shaking his hand briefly. He didn’t seem so bad, she found herself thinking with a smile.

Paul looked a bit puzzled at his cousin’s words for a moment, as if tracking in his memory when was the last time he talked about Felicity. The vision made her smile broadened, realizing that this had been probably a pleasantry from Collin’s part.

They sat down and a moment later the waiter came by with a few menus, and asking if they wanted anything to drink.

“Yep…$30 meal.” She muttered softly, her eyes rising to meet Paul’s who was blushing again. After their food was brought over, she let her mind wander hearing at the distance Mr. Collins talking about how great his job was, how wonderful Ray Palmer was. She let the tedious sound of his voice fall to the background as she studied the people seated across from her, a few men and women in suits, probably lawyers.
A chill ran through her at the idea of crossing paths with Oliver Queen, knowing well this was probably the type of restaurant he went out for lunch everyday. Her heart sped up inside her chest and for a moment she thought she was having a panic attack.

She did not want to see him, here or anywhere for that matter. Her eyes scanned the place with caution and almost missed that the topic of conversation had changed to her.

“Felicity has been trying to get transferred to the Advance Science Division in Merlyn Global for months now.” Paul said with a half full mouth, and Collin’s snorted softly shaking his head as if the idea was the most ridiculous thing he had ever heard.

“That it’s a very difficult job to fulfill Ms. Smoak, specially for someone so young. In Palmer Technologies our Advance Science division consists of people that are considered the geniuses from our company and that’s saying a lot.” Felicity didn’t know how to react, at first she found herself frowning and wanting to snap something mean to the short man in front of her.

Paul was slightly taken aback as well by his cousin’s words and was flushing by the passing of the seconds, his brown eyes going towards Felicity in a pleading look.

“Well my IQ level is considered by many to be the one of a genius so...” She said and her tone was light, but her face showed only irony. Collin’s eyebrows shot up, as if he was clearly surprised by her admission, his dark brown eyes going towards his cousin, who nodded quickly.

“But of course, I never had a doubt you were capable.” Collins said politely cutting a piece of his food and taking it to his lips. Eyes going around the room, then she noticed that he was following someone around, and that someone seemed to be approaching their table. Felicity found herself turning around to see whom this person was before her brain could tell not to.
“Mr. Steele, what a pleasure to see you.” She said, he slowed his steps signaling his posy that he will be joining them in a little.

“Miss Smoak, I had never seen you in here before.” He said.

“Oh yes I have never been, I mean the cheapest plate I found on the menu is $30… the food is delicious.” She said taking a deep breath after the words got away from her, feeling her cheeks get warm, but Walter was still smiling.

This was not the first time Walter Steele had heard one of her rambles, in fact they both had talked and worked together several times which meant many occasions for her to get nervous and speak more than she should.

Walter was the head of the Applied Science Division in Merlyn Global, and had been trying to get Malcolm Merlyn to approve her transfer for months now. It seemed that like Mr. Collins, Mr. Merlyn also thought she was too young to deserve the position.

“Mr. Steel, this is Mr. Collins, he is currently the head recruiter in Palmer Technologies, and I’m sure you know Paul Collins.” She said quickly when a moment of silence had gone by and she remembered she hadn’t made any proper introductions. Walter did a soft head nod.

“Pleasure Mr. Collins, and of course how are you doing Paul.” Paul seemed nearing a heart attack, barely muttering a ’great, thank you for asking Mr. Steele.’

“What a true honor to meet the highly renowned Walter Steele in person, we have been trying to get you in our company for years.” Collins said getting up from his chair with an audible screech that
made Felicity wince.

“That’s true, but Central City is too far away.” Walter said with a light to his tone, his dark eyes going to Felicity quickly and then back to Mr. Collins “I hope you are not trying to steal Miss Smoak from us.” And even though his tone was playful Felicity could see absolute coldness and finality to his words. It was warning.

Mr. Collins shook his head fervently and his brown eyes went towards Felicity, and there was light behind them, as if he was looking at her for the first time.

“No, of course not.” He said.

“I better get going, you all have a great lunch.” And with that he departed leaving them all in silence.

Lunch went by quickly after that, both Felicity and Paul excusing themselves saying that there was too much work and couldn’t stay for a long lunch, especially not with Walter so close by. Collins seemed to understand, and asked Felicity for a business card, which surprised her at first as she explain that she actually didn’t have any.

“You owe me coffee for two full weeks Paul.” She said as they walked back to work and his head just slumped down in resignation.

“Yea… I guess I do.”
The week went by quickly, and in a blink of an eye it was Friday night and Felicity, Nyssa and Sin were at Sara’s flat for her birthday party. The place was packed with strangers, some family members (Felicity saw Laurel in the kitchen pulling out some cheese and wine for people to have).

Nyssa stayed by Sara’s side talking casually to her friends, while Sin and Felicity were by the far end near the dinning room, leaning against one of the walls listening to the music and talking absently about work and class.

“Calvin Klein asshole just arrived,” Sin said in a snarky tone and Felicity’s face snapped towards the front door where indeed the tall muscular man she had been dreading to see had just come in.

Sara was in there greeting him with a large smile while hugged her tightly. A grin spreading on his face as he held her close, and Felicity could see he was talking close to the blonde’s ear, his lips forming the words ‘I’m sorry’, and a spark of curiosity lit inside her.

They pulled apart and he handed Sara a crystal clear bottle of alcohol, and from Sara’s reaction a moment later Felicity guessed it was a very good bottle. He was wearing a dark pair of jeans and a grey t-shirt, on top a brown canvas coat with a high collar. His hair was slightly wet from the rain outside and just when she was thinking she ought to stop starring his eyes met hers.

She felt her stomach lurch as she moved her eyes away, a flash of Cooper’s face flooding her thoughts and anger flooding her veins as she pursed her lips together into a fine line frowning.

“I’m so glad he doesn’t like me because that way I don’t have to talk to him.” Felicity said with slight annoyance and Sin just nodded, her interest already moving to something else in the room, her head bobbing to the rhythm of the music.
“So any news of our mutual friend, the archer?” Felicity’s head came back to meet Sin’s eyes, squinting at her words.

“He is not our mutual friend Sin, I thought we talked about you leaving this alone, why don’t you use you free time doing something better… like studying?” Sin shrugged annoyance painted on her youthful features.

“I haven’t been able to get anywhere near his setup for days… or yours for that matter, I’m guessing is your doing.”

“You’re guessing right, I don’t want you getting involved into something dangerous just because—“

“You mean I shouldn’t, but you most definitely would.” Her smaller friend challenged, a spark behind her eyes and Felicity could tell she wasn’t happy.

“I don’t think he is a bad guy, in fact I think he is a hero… you know that, but since I don’t know him I rather you be safe,” Felicity paused and her hand landed on Sin’s leather covered shoulder “I have been doing this for many more years than you…”

“Hacking or helping outlaws?” Sin challenged and Felicity felt her cheeks go warm and her lips go slack for a moment.

“Don’t be a smart ass Sin, please understand I’m doing this for your own good. Look I know you are frustrated and by all means if you want to keep doing it just go ahead, but I don’t want to know about it.” Sin’s eyes looked sad for a moment before her defiance mask was back on.
“We used to do this together, we were a team.” Sin said and Felicity felt her heart contour for a moment.

“We are a team.” She said quickly, and her friend just shrugged Felicity’s hand from her shoulder stepping away from her slowly.

“We were, right until the point your decided to cut me out.” And with those last words Sin turned on her heels and walked away from her, winding around a few of Sara’s friends who were talking vividly by the kitchen.

Felicity exhaled loudly feeling she wanted a drink or two after the argument, it was rare that the three of them ever fought, and for what was worth she could see Sin’s side on all this.

“Well I don’t see you brooding often, but it looks like you need a drink.” Felicity jumped on her place when the voice caught her of guard, turning she smiled softly taking the glass Nyssa was offering her with a cautious grin.

“Sin and I got into a small fight.” She said taking a drink from her cup, her friend nodded.

“About The Arrow?” Nyssa asked after a moment and Felicity made a small whimper sound signaling defeat.

“She is upset I blocked her attempts of hacking into his computers, says I’m being an hypocrite—which in hindsight I am.” Nyssa wrapped her empty arm around Felicity’s body and squeezed her
“She is like our little sister, we want to protect her from the world—and she can get into a lot of trouble with that hot head and smart mouth.” The brunette laughed softly “but you are not only protecting her.”

Felicity felt a prickling sensation behind her neck, as if her heart and head were being opened for everyone to see. Her heart started beating quicker, and her cheeks flushed all of the sudden.

It was something she had been thinking off when she was watching Sin disappear in between the strangers towards the kitchen, that she didn’t only felt protective of her friend, but of him as well.

Felicity didn’t know what Sin wanted to accomplish by getting into the Arrow’s network, she didn’t fully comprehend if she wanted to expose him to the law or help him.

So with this she wasn’t only protecting her spunky friend, she was protecting him, the man who was helping the city.

“I’m taking your silence as my answer.” Nyssa said after a moment.

“I really want to know how you do that,” Felicity said with a side grin “read my mind like I’m an open book or something… it’s kind of scary.”

“Well, I take my best friend job very seriously.” Nyssa joked and her brown eyes appear to worry for a moment, Felicity followed her gaze and saw that she was staring at Sara, who was talking to
Laurel and Oliver.

“Is there something wrong Nys?” Felicity asked suddenly and Nyssa smiled but the gesture didn’t seem to reach her eyes.

“Now who is reading who?” she joked, and Felicity could tell that her friend was putting the walls up. It was common knowledge around their house that Nyssa though open about many things, she was closed off when talking about feelings, her past and her family.

“Hey, what’s going on?” she asked now concerned, her hand reaching towards her arm, squeezing softly.

“It’s nothing…”

“Nyssa.” Felicity interrupted her, meeting her eyes with worry behind them.

“I actually don’t know what’s wrong, I think Sara and Oliver fought a couple days ago, which is why she wasn’t sure he was coming,” Nyssa paused and her eyes came back to Felicity.

“I’m unsure what was about but… ever since the fight Sara has been a bit on edge.” Felicity knew Nyssa was guarding her heart, keeping her emotions in check behind that mask she wore so well “it’s nothing I’m sure…”

“I agree.” Felicity said with a reassuring smile “even a blind person could see that Sara adores you, she was probably upset that she has such poor taste in picking her best friends.”
Nyssa laughed softly and crooked her head to the side looking at Felicity with a raised brow. She normally didn’t approve of her talking so poorly of Oliver, but tonight Felicity could tell the joke had lighten her mood a little.

Her motions where almost robotic, one sip of her wine, talk and look around to make sure she wasn’t getting close to Oliver. Then the motions went in a loop and she lost track of time, her mind going to the reasons why her friend’s face looked sad, and Sara seemed lost in thought even though she was smiling to her guest.

At some point Felicity felt the crowded place was making it hard for her to breath, her skin prickling, as her mind was flooded with things she couldn’t control. Cooper, Oliver, Queen Consolidated, the fact that Merlyn refused to give her the transfer she deserved, and lastly that she hadn’t heard about The Arrow for days now.

She turned around looking for an exit towards the balcony finding the door in a minute flat she made her way there. The cold wet air hit her face as she exited towards the balcony and she took a deep breath letting herself relaxed as she stepped outside.

Then as her eyes scanned the small area and she tensed all over again when her eyes met with Oliver Queen. He was leaning on the iron rail, his profile facing the city. He turned towards her and his lips parted slightly in surprise, now she wasn’t the only one running away from thick crowds.

“It’s a little cold and wet to be out here.” She said after a moment of silence, not knowing why she had decided to speak, she just let her eyes wonder around the dark streets bellow like he was doing before he glanced at her.

He didn’t answer her with words, but he nodded rigidly and they were quietly taking in the night. She glance at him for a moment and all the things Cooper had told her flashed in her mind and the
words where coming out of her mouth before she could make them stop.

“Just the other day when I saw you in the coffee shop I met an old friend of mine, he said he used to work for your company.” She said and she couldn’t help but to look at him as his face turned from puzzlement to recognition to utter disdain.

She took his expressions and silence as to an admission that he knew whom she was talking about and preceded.

“I guess you know who I’m talking about then.” She said and studied how his face shook ever so slightly as he took in a deep breath, his eyes fixed on her as his cheeks turned bright red.

“Cooper is so good at talking, but I’m not so sure he is capable of speaking the truth anymore.” He said slowly and his voice sounded low and deep. She straightened her body, turning to face him completely. Alcohol burned through her veins, making her wobble. She cursed softly, hating to appear out of balance in front of him.

“I gather you two aren’t friends anymore.” She said and they both knew she was taunting him. Oliver’s jaw tightened and his expression turned into a defensive one.

“Why don’t you ask what you want to know.” He said and his voice sounded on edge.

“Would you tell me the truth if I did?” she tested and his lips turned up into a dry smile.

“Probably not,” he said, his eyes shinning behind his dark lashes, his body turning towards her,
meeting her challenge.

“Then why do you tell me to ask something you are unwilling to answer?” she sounded irritated.

“Because I don’t see how it’s any of your business.” He said and she felt her lips shut closed.

Well there it went her attempt to get his side of his story; Nyssa couldn’t blame her for not trying anymore. She didn’t need to know Oliver Queen, she already knew enough. He was an asshole, self-entitled, absolute jerk that had stolen Cooper’s future away from him.

“You are right, it’s not any of my business… and I really don’t want to know anything about you, your company or else.” She said bitterly turning in her heels to exit the balcony.

His eyes followed her every drunken move as she struggled to open the door for a moment, feeling his body closely behind her as if he was debating if he should help her or not.

“I’ve got it.” She hissed when she saw his hand reach up from the corner of her eye. He pulled his hand away quickly and she finally got the door to open, her heart racing inside her chest.

She didn’t say anything else to him, didn’t look back but just walked away with a determined pace towards the kitchen. She met Charlotte there; she had arrived a few minutes ago and was happy to see Felicity. They both proceeded to do a couple shots of tequila, which in hindsight hadn’t been her smartest idea.
So this one was a long one, and it kept getting longer and longer as I wrote to the point it was getting away from me. I had to cut the last piece for next chapter instead so I can meet my deadline and publish something by the end of the week.

Please let me some comments they make me super happy!

Next chapter is already started and on it’s way to you shortly.

On another note… that sexy scene on the preview! Holy moly!
Hello!! Thank you for all your wonderful comments; it surely makes my writing that much more fun. This time around I made a little image to go with the chapter. Might do that from now on, it was fun!

5. Nightly Encounters
Oliver didn’t know why he had snapped at Felicity that way, no, that was a lie, he knew why he had done it, but the realization that came to him once he figured out was hunting his thoughts as he walked out of the party just 20 minutes after their fight in the balcony.

He had been jealous, of Cooper and the way she seemed so hell bent into defending him, into taunting Oliver to give information he was not ready to give her. He wanted to defend himself, of whatever Cooper had told her about him but didn’t feel he had to.

The accusatory way her eyes shone behind her glasses, he dammed the way his heart clenched at the memories of her face turning angrily away from him. He was not used to this happening to him, not with her, not when she smiled to The Arrow so widely every time he appeared in front of her.

His lips were drawn into a grimace as he came down the stairs with a light jog, a black duffle bag that held his arrow suit slung on his shoulder. He needed to put on as much distance as he could away from her and this hell of a party, go out patrolling to distract his thoughts about her and Cooper.

He had known ever since he met her that he had been attracted to her physically, but also to her lightness and the happiness that filled his chest every time she babbled. Of course all this had multiplied when he realized she was not only beautiful, with a sharp tongue that told him off when he deserved it, but she was also perfect for his mission, she was the puzzle piece he had been missing on his mission.

He came outside taking a deep breath feeling already lighter as his eyes scanned the dark streets in front of Sara’s apartment. He had told her several times the Glades was not a safe place for her to live, but she had been adamant that the apartment was too close to work to pass.
But in the dark night he could see it through different eyes, wary eyes. The streets were nearly deserted, a few random people (mostly men) walking under the shadows of the poorly lit street. He would have to talk to Sara the next day, about her living choices.

He made his way to the back alley and proceeded to change in the shadows that the alley provided him. He placed the mask on and after placing the hood over his head and reached down to pick up the duffle bag that was on the floor. Knowing he had to drop it in Verdant before truly going out for the night.

As he was fastening the case with his quivers over the duffle bag, he heard her.

“Yes, I need a taxi to pick me up in the corner of…” she came into his line of vision, she was standing on her tippy toes as she looked around for the street signs, her blonde hair falling down her back. She was holding a red and white polkadot umbrella over her head.

He found himself starring at her intently from the shadows, knowing well this was not the right place for her to be out and about waiting for a taxi. Not that she would notice that the shadows moved around them, not with her being as intoxicated as she was.

He found that it upset him that she was so drunk, that her body swayed slightly while she stood in the dark. He wanted to storm right into her space and yell how irresponsible and reckless she was being.

“5th and Cambie st.” she said and waited, he saw her nodding even though no one other than himself could see her. She moved to place her phone on her red purse, and her hand came out of the umbrella cupping the rain on her fingers.

He waited immobile on his spot, determined to see her get into a safe cab before he left, and she waited there quietly looking around. Then he saw it, a yellow vehicle approaching, it was slowing down as it approached her; he squinted at the bright lights that had blinded him momentarily.
A minute everything seemed fine, her hand was extending to reach for the door and the next three men were running towards her out of the shadows, his head turned immediately to where they were coming, yelling out her. She shrieked trying to open the door of a cab that was speeding off quickly.

He was out of the shadows that had been hiding him in a matter of seconds, yelling at the men how where grabbing at her screaming body. The three of them seemed shocked to see The Arrow standing in front of them with an arrow pointed at them.

“Let her go!” he growled as he came a step closer. One of the men had a knife out pointing at him, and the other thinking better of it raised his towards Felicity’s neck, which winced loudly when the blade hit her skin.

Oliver saw the red trail of a blood drop running down her pale skin, her blue eyes were wide and fixed on him, tears starting to form.

“Don’t move or we will cut her throat!” one of them yelled, his voice trying to sound brave but shaking at the end of his sentence.

“Let her go now and I will consider not killing you.” He said, his voice was cold and distant, but his heart was hammering inside his ribcage, his eyes darting around the three men that held her against the wall.

“Fuck this shit, kill her.” One of them breathed, and before Oliver could think about it, consider anything other than the way she cried loudly, scare tattering his nerves, he let the arrow fly out of his hand, burying itself in the flesh of the man who had the knife held on her throat.
The man gasped in horror and pain when seeing the arrow that had impaled his arm to the wall. Felicity shrieked when the other man grabbed her by the arm and pulled her forcefully to the right, while the third one came charging at Oliver.

He had fought against a gang like this many times before, but it made it different that they had Felicity, who he heard whimpering near him, yelling for the guy to let her go. Yelling she didn’t have money, telling him The Arrow will make him pay.

With those words coming out of her mouth he felt himself punching the guy he had been fighting with more strength that he knew he could master. The guy fell to the ground unconscious and Oliver turned to the guy who had Felicity on his hands, rage burning deep inside his core.

“Let her go, now!” he commanded and the guy tighten her grip on Felicity’s arm.

“You want her Arrow? Well you can have her.” The guy snarled and Oliver watched with horror how the man’s fits met the side of her head with such strength she was falling to the ground sideways, her eyes rolling to the back of her head after a small’s scream filled with pain.

Oliver didn’t breath, his face contorting in anger and he bounced on the balls of his heals forwards to the man that had started running the other direction. Trying to escape which was futile, Oliver was faster stronger, and angrier. He caught up with him and grabbing the end of his hoodie with one hand he pulled the younger man backwards, the back of his head meeting Oliver’s closed fist.

His hand let go of the man who fell unconscious to the ground, just a few meters from where Felicity’s body laid.

He ran to her, feeling his heart beat so fast on his chest he felt it would come out, in seconds he was kneeling in front of her, his hands moving her body so her face was facing him. She had lost her
glasses at some point, he noticed, and the side of her was already bruising where she had been hit.

He shook her softly at first, her name spilling out of his lips one of twice before her eyes fluttered open.

“Mmmm.” She croaked.

.“&.

“Felicity, are you all right?” his voice was distorted and his silhouette was blurry in front of her eyes, she felt one of his large hands rise her head slowly from the ground. She winced loudly when he touched the sensitive part where she had just hit the pavement and could have sworn him muttering a low apology as he lowered his hand down to the base of her neck.

His presence was imposing and she felt herself relax in his arms, feeling secured in there. His gloved hand touched her face softly, pushing a hair strand out of her face as he examined her for any other visible injuries.

“Did they hurt you anywhere else?” her eyes closed and she felt her body slumping under his arms, to then open them quickly as he shook her softly and she winced again as her vision started to swim around.

“Oh god, they were going to… I didn’t even see them coming,” she felt her lips tremble as she remembered the last five minutes, the men who had held her tightly against the wall. Her skin burned
where they had touched her “of course I didn’t see them coming, I’m drunk, why did I think drinking this much was a good idea. I never drink.” she sobbed down, feeling broken and the shock of what had almost just happened to her hit her like a brick wall.

“Hey, shhh. It’s fine.” he was quiet for a moment, the hand that had previously being holding her neck left her and she could feel him reaching out to pick her up.

“You have to know I don’t ever drink this much.” She said and her eyes were full of worry, so concerned that his opinion of her might be tainted by tonight. Her chest was coming up and down quickly as her headache became more of a migraine “I’m not a drunk or anything, I actually haven’t gotten like this since College…”

He didn’t answer and for a moment she felt like entering a full-blown panic attack, her limbs were trembling, the voices of the men that laid on the ground still loud in her ears.

“You… are you spinning?” she asked in a bewildered tone, her eyes going wide as she searched for his face. She couldn’t see anything behind the dark hard shadows of his mask, only the sharpness of his jaw, his straight nose and the lips that were now pursing down in a worried scowl.

He moved her up slightly, his hand going to her chin, raising her up so he could examine her eyes better. Her pupils were dilated as she starred up at him, eyelashes wet with tears and rain.

“Felicity, you where hit on your head pretty hard, you might have a concussion.” he said.

“I’m fine.” She assured him, but her eyes were closing slowly and she felt weaker and dizzier with every passing second.
“Hey… stay with me.” He said and his voice was soft and intimate, she thought she could feel his breath hitting the skin of her face. She could have sworn he had not used the voice modulator that time, his voice was sweet and warm like honey, and sounded far away and familiar.

“I’m tired Mr. Arrow…” she mused and felt herself smiling at her own words “Mr. Arrow? Maybe I should find out who you are after all, that way I don’t have to call you something so ridiculous.” His head turned to the side as if considering her words and she felt him raise her body from the cold wet street; he was quiet for a moment as he walked towards the building.

“Why haven’t you?” he asked and she leaned her head against the hard planes of his chest, wondering for a few moments if she was dreaming. The leather was slightly wet, but she liked the scent… it was masculine, him.

It was weird, for her to feel so familiar with someone she didn’t know hardly at all. They had been working together for months now, her talking to him, and him finding her at random. Their talks had always been quick and to the point, but she had felt he was reaching out to her more and more with each passing day.

Except the last week, when he stopped showing up at her work, or at her parking lot. To her surprise she had missed him.

“What if I find that you are some sort of weirdo?” she asked and he took a deep breath, his breath shaking. She wondered if she had been able to see his face, if he hadn’t been so blurry.

His steps were slow and determined, and she could barely feel herself move above his arms… it was as if he was a fancy car, the ones you don’t feel anything you ride them.
She could hear his amused take of breath and figured that she had spoken her last thoughts out loud. Go figure, her brain to mouth filter will failed her even now, when her thoughts where so fuzzy.

The orange lights of the streets were becoming stronger and she realized they were getting closer to Sara’s building. She closed her eyes quickly, the bright lights bothering her.

“I mean you wear green leather, shoot arrows at people and save random babbling blondes from tugs in the middle of the night.” She mused feeling a wave of panic at the realization that he was dropping her off in a safer place, knowing he would be gone soon. She could see him looking down at her and even through blurry features that were half hidden in dark shadows, she could tell he had bright blue eyes.

“So what should I call you then?” she asked, and he was quiet for a moment and just when she thought he was not going to answer her, he did.

“When I didn’t know who you were, I used to call you F… Why don’t you call me J?” she felt a wave of exhilaration run through her, but this was mixed with the dizziness that was becoming more and more prominent. She thought he was trying to distract her from what had just happened to her, and it was working.

“Does that mean your name starts with a J?” Her stomach fluttered inside her body and she grasped the lapels of his hood, the leather was soft and buttery.

“Perhaps.” He said cryptically, and after a moment of silence that extended for what felt ages he spoke again “and Felicity, you aren’t just a random blonde to me.”

She held her breath for a moment, her eyes looking at his, feeling her heart speed in her chest at his words.
“I’m going to put you down so I can call the cops, it’s dryer and warmer in here.” He said softly, starting to lean forward to place her on the steps of the building. She shook her head, to wince later in pain at her movement and grabbed onto him harder.

“Please, don’t leave me in here.” She said, and didn’t care she sounded so desperate.

“I won’t, I’d be right there. I just need you to stay awake, do you think you can do that for me?” she nodded and winced as the pain in her head shot through her again, reaching parts of her brain she didn’t even know where there.

He placed her down on the dry concrete steps and she saw his body walk away to the shadows of the night and to the rain. He was taking out a small black phone from his coat, and a moment later his voice was breaking the silence of the night again, but this time his voice modulator was back on.

“Detective.” He was quiet for a moment and then he was talking, explaining the situation he had found her in.

“Three guys, they were trying to…” he paused for a moment and his voice was a growl “they were assaulting her, they are unconscious and tided over in the alleyway, over by 5th and Cambie st. Send an ambulance.”

She heard herself complain as he hanged up the phone and her body weight molded against the railing of the steps, her body feeling heavy like it was made of wood, and aching all over.

She could see him as he dragged the bodies closer together and proceeded to tide them together, he worked quickly, his head coming up from time to time to examine his surroundings and to see if she was ok.
“I’m fine, I don’t need an ambulance J--” she trailed off, and her voice was slurring as her vision became darker and she was falling down in slow motion, hearing him calling her name in panic as she lost consciousness.

When she woke up she was lying on a hospital bed, her head was pulsing and even though she didn’t feel much pain she felt off. The thoughts and memories of what had happened didn’t come so easily to her.

“Sin, she is awake!” she heard a familiar voice, she moved her eyes to meet Nyssa’s form moving towards her. Her face looked concerned and relieved at the same time, her hand came to hold hers.

“Hi,” she croaked, and her mouth was so dry it felt as if it was sand paper.

“Hey you,” Nyssa said with a soft tone, squeezing her hand softly “you gave us a good scare.”

“Sorry,” she said, and she was trying to remember what had happened, she could pull in the images of rain pooling in her hand, a car speeding off, and bright blue eyes that made her feel at peace.

“The cops said three guys jumped you,” Nyssa was silent for a moment “you where lucky The Arrow happened to be around.” and just like that the images of the night before flashed through her mind, making her dizzy.

“Oh, right” she said and swallowed, but her throat ached, Sin was silently watching and Felicity’s eyes met hers for a moment “I didn’t know where you guys went, I was trying to haul a taxi to go home.”
“Sara’s perfect sister said you had a few drinks.” Felicity felt her skin flush and sighed.

“Yea well, it’s not everyday you fight with your baby sister.” She said and her tone was filled with love, her eyes fixed in Sin who moved uncomfortably on her spot “plus I also fought with Mr. Asshole, so my night wasn’t the best.”

“You fought with Oliver?” Nyssa asked and her brow was furrowing.

“I guess I asked him about Connor and he told me to mind my own business.” Felicity shrugged and winced at the pain that extended on her arm.

They were all quiet for a moment and when Nyssa opened her mouth to speak there was a light knock on the door of her hospital room.

“Knock, Knock..” and a moment later Sara was entering, holding a small bouquet with three white lily’s. She was wearing black jeans and a soft great top, with a leather jacket, and her face was pulled into a smile, but her eyes looked apologetic.

Felicity’s eyes trailed to the back, to the large shaped that entered the room after Sara. She had not been expecting much, with just having woken up, but seeing him there was definitely not on her mind. He was wearing a black Henley and jeans, one of his hands was holding what looked to be a light brown canvas jacket, and the other one was in one of his jean pockets.

His eyes fixed on hers and his brows where meeting on the middle, if she didn’t know better she
would have thought he looked concerned, but she *did* know better. She forced her eyes away from his handsome face, feeling her stomach move and her heart speed.

She took a sharp breath, not knowing if the feelings that were entirely too sudden, where anger or desire. She hated that he had to be so damm sexy, that her body couldn’t resist but to rejoice at the sight of him. Her brain knew better forcing her eyes to move away to meet Sara.

For a moment she felt self-conscious about her appearance, she didn’t know how long she had been out, but knew she probably was not looking her best in that bed.

*Who cares if you don't look your best, it's not like it will matter to him.*

“Hey,” she said finally, bringing her thoughts away from Oliver Asshole Queen, to the smiling blonde who was walking towards the bed.

“We have been waiting for you to wake up, I’m sorry this happened to you. Maybe you should be taking classes in Nyssa’s dojo.” Sara said with a smile, and sparkling eyes and Felicity felt herself smiling.

“Yes, I guess I should. Maybe she would give me a discount since we are roommates and all. Because I’m broke.” Nyssa snorted a soft laugh, shaking her head.

“It’s incredible that you are even finding excuses while laying in bed with a severe concussion. You know well that it’s free for you.” Felicity laughed and her traitorous eyes went to Oliver, his Jaw was set tightly and his eyes were fixed on Nyssa.

Felicity found herself frowning.
“So, are you feeling ok?” Sara asked after a moment.

“Yes, peachy.” She said and Sara laughed again at the irony on her tone.

“The doctor said they will release you later today, you have to keep it easy for a few weeks. Might need to take time off from work.” Nyssa said.

“Uh oh, not sure Paul can handle that IT department without Felicity.” Sin said shaking her head. Felicity felt a pang of guilt at her Sin’s words, and the fact that they were coming out of her mouth due to all the talking Felicity did about Paul behind her back, the biggest problem was that they were probably right.

She watched as Oliver walked towards the windows of her room, her eyes followed his shape as he looked outside, the light rimming his profile, his nose, his lips and chin. She squinted at the familiarity of those shapes, annoyed at the fact that they fit so perfectly with each other.

“Ollie is always telling me I need to move… I guess it’s time for me to go apartment hunting.” Sara said and Felicity turned her attention back to a conversation she had so obviously lost track of.

“Well, not all of us can afford to live with the high society like Mr. Queen.” The words left her mouth, tinted with fake civility. She turned her attention back to him, to encounter his eyes starring back at her, a hurt look flashing through them as his lips parted.

Sin made a huffed noise that was a contained laughed and Felicity knew deep inside that she was being unnecessarily uncivil, knew she should care about the hurt look on his face.
“Felicity…” Nyssa started, but Sara laughed softly trying to break the sudden tension that had filled the room.

“True, not all of us can live like Ollie, but it doesn’t mean he is not right. It’s dangerous, not only for a girl, but for anyone at night…” Sara shrugged and her hand reached out to hold the end of Felicity’s bed.

“What happened to you could have happen to my sister, to Nyssa… to me.” Sara took a little deep breath and shook her head “the money I’m saving it’s not really worth it, maybe next time it happens The Arrow wont be around to save us… he can’t be everywhere in the Glades.”

Sara’s eyes flashed to Oliver who turned around and his brows going up in shocked at his friend’s admission about him being right at this, his Adam’s apple bowed as he swallowed.

They had been fighting about it on their way to the hospital thirty minutes before.

“I’m happy to hear.” He said and his lips were pulled into a sincere grin.

.&.

As it was Felicity realized she had been in the hospital for the entire weekend, coming in and out of consciousness for two days and nights. She had lost her glasses the night of the attack, which meant she was partially blind until they got home.
She was happy to be home, even though the lights bothered her and she seemed to be dizzy and nauseous 80% of the time. Sin and Nyssa had been with her most of the day, making sure she had enough water, food and company.

Sin had been sitting around by her asking her questions about some specific kind of coding for some homework when she finally gathered enough strength to check on her missed calls and messages. She was surprised to find one voicemail from William Collins, she called in her voicemails and put it in speaker, his loud voice filling her living room immediately.

‘Miss Eliza, I’m sorry that I didn’t get to speak to you any sooner, I have been extremely busy in this trip finding some great new hires for our great company. I did want to call you to speak about a special work opportunity in Palmer Tech. After our talk last week it didn’t escape me how brilliant you are, and will love to have you come by for an interview for our Applied Science division.

Please contact me back if this interests you, as I’m sure it will since this opportunities seldom present themselves, as you might know we at Palmer Technologies are the best at what we do, and this position won’t be opened for long. I can’t wait to speak with you. I hope you are having a lovely day.’

Felicity was quiet for a moment, her eyes going towards Sin blue eyes; one of her brows was raised in confusion.

“Eliza?” she asked and her lips were starting to pull into a smirk.

“I don’t even know where he got that name from…” she said truthfully shaking her head softly with a sigh.

“So Central City?” Sin asked putting the computer away, turning to face Felicity, who had a cold compress on her head, she opened her eyes to meet Sin’s.

“I’m not going there Sin…” she mused casually, closing her eyes once again.
“He sounds a bit snobby… but Palmer Technologies it’s pretty great at what they do Lizzie, and you have been looking to get into the Science Division program in Merlyn Global for a while now.”

“Yes, but I don’t want to leave Starling City.” She said matter of factly.

“Why not?” her question made Felicity open her eyes once again, meeting her younger friends eyes.

“Because of you and Nyssa, because I love working with Walter, because I like the rain and…”

“Because you like the Arrow.” Sin finished and Felicity felt herself blush immediately.

“No, that’s not what I was going to say, I was going to say I like my life here.” Felicity said quickly, but her heart was beating so fast Sin could probably hear it.

“You don’t have to say it, I know it.” Sin said and sighed “you help him every day, put yourself in danger for him, and he is obviously there to save you when you need him.”

She didn’t think she could get any redder, but she was wrong.

“It’s not like that Sin, I don’t even know who he is.”
“Because you don’t want to, you know you could probably find out who he is if you set your mind to it, you are a genius after all.” Sin was quiet for a moment, her hand coming to the back of her neck, her teeth catching the bottom of her lips “I was angry at you on Friday night, I didn’t understand why you had left me out… but then I was so scared of what happened to you, with the ambulance outside of Sara’s house… I just, I was grateful to him, for saving you.”

Felicity pressed her lips, feeling her eyes prickling as tears started to form.

“I don’t think you have fully grasped why you don’t want to know his identity, maybe you are afraid you will be disappointed, or are afraid that once you do find who he is it will be real… and are afraid about him leaving you.”

“Sin…”

“I just hope you are careful, I think he is a good guy… I do, especially after Friday. But be careful.” Felicity felt her cheeks wet with tears, and she was raising her arms up, to signal Sin that it was a moment for a hug. Sin hated hugging, but after a moment of complaining she obliged.

“I know you are in there.” She yelled, turning around from her now closed door, both hands closing in fists next to her body. He came out from the shadows he had been hiding. He could tell she sounded cold and in complete alert, so different to what he had seen her acting like just a few days ago in the hospital, next to Felicity’s bed.
“Nyssa Raatko,” his voice was distorted by his voice modulator, his eyes calculating her every move “or should I call you Nyssa Al Ghul?”

There was a silence in between both of them, only broken by the sound of the night.

“Arrow… or should I call you Oliver Queen?” She threw his words back at him, his lips opened in shock and he pulled his bow down slowly as his heart sped up inside his chest.

“It’s only fair that I know who you are, you have been checking up on me… I did the same for the Arrow.” she said and he pressed his lips together, stepping closer to her. Nyssa’s shoulders were tense as she came forward to meet him.

“What is the League doing in Starling City?” he asked dropping his voice modulator, opting for his deep Arrow voice instead. His eyes fixed on her dark ones as her jaw tightened for a moment.

“I didn’t come with the League.” she said after a moment.

“You’re lying.”

“I left the league three years ago, if you had done your research properly you would have known that. I have built my business from the ground up.” She hissed, and the sweet woman was gone and replaced by a force to be reckoned with. Her words vibrated through his bones.
“No one leaves the League, much less The Demon’s Daughter.” Oliver said, his voice skeptical.

“Don’t speak like you know what you are talking about, you know nothing about the league or my father and if you value your life you will keep it that way.”

“Is that a threat?” he hissed and Nyssa raised her chin up to challenge him.

“I don’t do that anymore, I have left the League and my father respected my wishes…”

“For now.” He huffed out, his head shaking slightly as frustrations flooded him “what about Sara, once your Father decides your adventure is over?” Nyssa took a step closer to Oliver and cold air surrounded them.

“That is our problem Arrow.”

“It’s not when it’s about her, when she is making her decisions based on lies and deceit”

“I haven’t lied to her.”

“You are lying by omission, she doesn’t know who you are and you are putting her in danger.” Oliver spoke and his voice carried frustration and concern, Nyssa was quiet for a moment.
“You’re speaking about truths when you are withholding it from the woman who has been helping you solve so many or your latest crimes.” Oliver’s jaw tightened as he met her challenging eyes.

“It’s not the same, I’m not putting her in danger because no one knows who the Arrow is.” He said but his voice sounded weaker and unconvinced even to his ears.

“Her talking with you is dangerous” she said and it was clear to him then, that the main reason she knew his identity was not because he had been following her, but to protect Felicity.

“Does…?” the question didn’t need to be finished, she had no playfulness behind her eyes, or her words.

“Does Felicity know? Of course not… she doesn’t want to know, which it’s good for you, since she hates Oliver Queen.”

.&.

Well this one was fun to write, so much going on! Please leave me comments they really make my day!
Talking over Coffee

Chapter Summary

Sara leaves town after finding some heart breaking secrets, and Oliver and Thea meet for coffee.

Chapter Notes

Hello! I’m so sorry I’m a few weeks late into this chapter. I had a major writer's block and honestly the show has been so angsty I’m having difficulties thinking on any other plot than the Canon one.

With that being said, thank you, thank you for all the reviews and kudos in both AO3 and FF, it brings my spirits up and pushes me to write faster.

I hope you like this chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

6. Talking over coffee

Oliver leaped out of his bike as soon as it was parked on the underground parking of Verdant. He half draped the cover he normally placed over it and took of the matte black helmet that covered his face. It was still daylight outside, and Diggle and him had been gathering information of a group of bank robbers all day.

Frustration ran through his veins as he walked inside his club, his face pulled into a heavy frown, his
steps echoing in the empty concrete walls of the place as he headed to the entrance of the Foundry. He punched in the code and made his way downstairs, a bit puzzled by the fact that the lights were on.

“Diggle?” he asked as he made his way down the stairs, knowing well enough that there wasn’t a way his bodyguard would have made it there before him. His heart was beating faster when he saw the figure of a blonde woman sitting by his computer, for a moment Felicity’s face flashed in his head and his heart accelerated even more.

But then she turned slightly and his heart started to come down, she looked apologetic towards him.

“Sara—what are you doing here by yourself?” the blonde’s lips moved as she breathed out loudly obviously shocked to see him there.

Oliver could immediately tell something was off, her shoulders where slumped forward and her face was almost as red as her eyes. He took a step forward, raising his bow to place it on the stand but his eyes never wavered from her.

“The League of Assassins?” she asked in a whisper. Oliver stopped on his tracks, his eyes widening as they traveled towards the screen that was now visible to him, in there it was the research he had been gathering on Nyssa. His eyes softened and met his friend’s in a silent agreement.

“Sara.” He hadn’t meant for her to find out this way, not after his talk with Nyssa outside her dojo. Sara pushed herself off the computer table, her arms crossing in front of her chest.

“Is this a joke?”
“No.”

Sara stood quietly in front of him, her eyes travelling down to the concrete floor, and she nodded more to herself than to him. When she raised her eyes again he saw the fire burning behind her bright blue irises.

“It makes sense now… the crazy scars, the way she trains, the fact that she gets so guarded when I ask her about her past or her family.” Oliver took a deep breath and came a step closer to his best friend.

“I didn’t want you to find out this way, not from a screen in my computer.” He said and she nodded, her lips turning to the side in a sad smile.

“I guess this is where I said you were right?” he looked at her in puzzlement and she took a deep breath, her closed fist hitting the side of her leg in a nervous move “when you told me she wasn’t good for me…”

“I don’t know if I was right or not, but when I promised you I wouldn’t let anything bad happen to you again, I meant it.” Oliver’s hand reached to her shoulder and squeezed softly.

“I think I… I think I need some time off, away from Starling City—from all the lies.” He dropped his hand and nodded.

“Where would you go?”
“Oh I don’t know, maybe I will go to visit my mom Coastal City.” She shrugged and reached out to grab her black leather jacket, which was resting in the back of the chair.

“Oh.” He said softly, and she walked a few steps forward, stopping suddenly.

“Am I going to have my job when I come back?” she asked and his face fell slightly at her guarded stance.

“The job will always be yours, you know that.”

“Well… who is going to be managing your club while I’m gone?” Oliver turned fully to face her and shrugged.

“Thea has been bugging me to give her some sort of work, she is bored out of her mind while she waits for the next semester.”

“I’m scared now, I will have to bring on my A game when I’m back.” Sara said in a warm tone and Oliver laughed softly.

“Take all the time you need Sara, but…” his words were cut by the sound of his cellphone ringing, not Oliver Queen’s phone, but the Arrow’s. He felt his heart beat accelerate as his hand dipped into his coat’s pocket, his finger pressing the green button in front of him. There was no photo, but clear white letters that spelled her name.

“Felicity.” He said as a greeting, his eyes flashing to Sara’s face that appeared confused and
“Arrow-- J. I’m sorry I missed your call earlier; I was on a very tedious meeting.” She paused for a moment and he could hear her accelerated breathing from the other end of the phone, she was nervous “I have been thinking about your name by the way-- is it Joe, Jay, Justin, John?” Oliver’s eyes flashed towards Diggle who happened to be coming down the stairs.

“Felicity…” he wanted her to stop, mostly because her guessing game made him uneasy, he turned away from Sara and John and walked a few steps towards the computer, moving the mouse a little so the screens came back up, the research about the League still open.

“No wait, maybe something more rare… Jonas?” he heard himself hold his breath and his heart skip a beat “No way, I guessed? I guessed!?”

“Can we focus on the robberies?” he asked, his voice sounded impatient. She was quiet for a moment and he saw a screen popping in front of him, it was some sort of blueprints for what looked like a very fancy generator. Oliver felt both Diggle and Sara hover behind him.

“I don’t think I’m in the market for a generator.” He said and he knew he sounded snarkier than he should, after all it wasn’t her fault he was having an extra difficult time catching this guys.

“It’s not a generator, it’s actually not meant to generate energy… it’s meant to take it away, and it’s a weapon.” She said and her voice was a mixture of excitement and restraint, “do you remember the day the robberies happened there was a major power outage all over Starling City?” she said and other screens started appearing in front of him, there were articles from all the robberies and a map from the City.

“I was cleaning out a computer at work, that was heavily infected with viruses this morning and
came upon this little fella here, it was a prototype being developed for the military, it was stolen from Merlyn Global three weeks ago. The company and the Police have been keeping it quiet. It’s called GQ-1310.”

“And you think they used this machine to shut down the power in the City, so they could rob the banks without any issues? I thought banks had generators in case of a power outage.”

“They do,” she made a small pause, as if she had been waiting for him to ask that exact question “maybe you noticed that when the lights went off everything turned off… our cellphones, laptops, emergency lights… it was a complete and utter blackout.” His frown was more prominent now as he paced away from his computer, feeling his skin prickle as adrenaline shot thought his veins.

“And how do we know where they have this? Now it’s not about 3 bank robberies and a few dead people, it’s about a military weapon on the lose.” He said and there was urgency to his tone, Felicity was quiet for a moment feeling the gravity of his words deep to her bones.

“I’m not sure if you want to hear this, but I also have the feeling this was a test. I think our evil bank robbers were testing what the GQ-1310 could do before they did a bigger heist.” She took a deep breath and for a moment they were all quiet.

“Can you look into Merlyn Global’s security tapes? Anything that might give us who could have taken it… if this is a top secret weapon, the only way they knew about it…”

“Is if it was an inside job, I know… I’m on it.” She completed his sentence and he could hear her typing away. He stopped on his steps and pressed his fingers against his forehead.

“The FBI was here, they took it all…” she said with a soft voice and he grunted an exasperated sound that vibrated through his bones.
“Our answer it’s inside Merlyn Global, someone that was working in the project is on this, we need to find them and stop this before anyone else gets hurt.” He said, and he was talking to everyone that was listening to him.

“I will keep looking.” She said after a moment and her breath was accelerated “the good news is that this was a prototype, I will find something.”

“Felicity-- you are remarkable.” he said and his voice was low all of the sudden.

“Thank you for remarking it.” She said and they were both quiet for a moment, before she said her goodbyes and the line went dead.

He turned around to find that Diggle was reading all the information Felicity had gathered for them. Sara was back seating on the chair she had abandoned moments ago, they both turned to him as he put the phone back in his pocket with a heavy sigh.

At first no one spoke and then Oliver started explaining all Felicity had found, and the danger of the situation. It had only been a few minutes and Diggle and him were already coming up with a plan, Sara listening quietly to their words, knowing well enough she was not a participant on this mission.

“I will talk to Lyla, she might know something about this weapon.” Diggle said already half way to the stairs.

“I will keep looking for the black vans the reports say the robbers got into.” Oliver said half running
not too far behind Diggle.

Felicity hadn’t been having the best week of her life, ever since her mild concussion at Sara’s birthday party. She had to take some time off from work, which in return meant she had more work than ever now that’s she was back.

Her scattered thoughts had been going from one job to the next; too busy with trying to figure out who had stolen the GQ-1310 to be concerned about the third virus Marcus in the third floor had managed to sneak past her firewall.

She thought about the man in Green, the intensity of his voice still very vivid in her head from their last phone call. They had been talking a lot more via phone calls than with face-to-face encounters, which she had found disappointing.

She still remembered how surprised she had been when she had received a call from him just a few days after her attack.

He had wanted to know if she was recovering well, and to let her know he had gotten a burner phone where she could reach him if needed. A voice modulator had distorted his voice, and she found herself missing the real tone of his voice. She didn’t remember his voice well, but knew she had liked it, a lot.
She also remembered that he had a sharp jaw and that his eyes had pierced her soul. Who he was, his identity was a mystery she wanted to break… but didn’t at the same time. After he saved her from the muggers that one night, Nyssa had stopped warning her off against him. Sin had stopped trying to hack into his network; it was as if both of them had silently agreed he had protected her, from her own stupid behavior.

She had also sworn never to drink again… anything but wine, and only in the confinements of her own home.

There was a soft knock on her door, and she was surprised to find Charlotte there, leaning against the doorframe. She hadn’t seen her friend in what felt like weeks, not after Sara’s birthday.

“Hey Lizzy, I hope I’m not interrupting much…” Her friend said stepping into the office, she turned around and closed the door behind her. Felicity shook her head and smiled softly, even though a warm wave of irritation rushed through her veins.

“I was not expecting you, how are you?” Felicity found herself asking, but finding that she was actually too upset at her friend to make it sound friendly. Charlotte who was one of her closest friends since College, who called herself Felicity’s best friend, hadn’t called or visited her at the hospital.

Charlotte look uncomfortable for a moment, she made her way to sit in one of the chairs in front of Felicity’s desk, and her eyes met the blonde ones with a silent look that Felicity couldn’t decipher.

“I’m sorry I didn’t came to see you any sooner.” Charlotte said after an uncomfortable moment of silence “I was not sure you’d want to see me after what happened.” It was Felicity’s turn to look puzzled.
“What do you mean?” Charlotte took a deep breath and her cheeks turned red.

“What…?” her brunette friend must have mistaken utter shock for anger, because she shook her head fervently.

“I know you have wanted the Applied Science Division job, and that you had been talking with Mr. Collins in Palmer Tech about one.” Charlotte rushed out and Felicity blinked slowly her brain catching up finally.

She had talked to pretentious Mr. Collins about his job offer a few days after his voicemail, to politely decline it. She wasn’t ready to leave Starling City, and in her heart she had known that the reasoning behind it was the Arrow, and all the good they were doing to the city.

She had not said this to anyone; she had forgotten to mention it to Charlotte, being too busy being angry with her for not even calling her after her attack.

“Charlotte I think you got this wrong, I’m not angry at you because you took the job-- which I didn’t know you had taken, congratulations by the way—I didn’t want that job, which is why I told Mr. Collins I’ll pass.” Felicity said, Charlotte’s eyes squinted at her as a flare of annoyance clearly travelled through her body. Felicity wondered if she had said the wrong thing, and realized she didn’t care.

“You got offered the job?” she sounded disbelieving, and it was Felicity’s turn to look at her friend harshly.
“I did, why would I make this up?”

“I don’t know, maybe because ever since College you have always been the star of the show, and for
once a company picks me over you and you hate it.” Felicity gasped in horror and anger, pushing her
body against the back of her chair.

“I would never—“

“So what now, Palmer Tech, one of the biggest and more cutting edge companies in the world is not
good enough for you…? I guess its perfectly understandable that you rather clean up viruses instead
of developing great projects for science?” Charlotte sounded bitter and Felicity could tell this was
something that had been obviously brewing there for a while. She felt the skin of her face flush.

“You know I want to work in Applied Science as much as you. But I’m not ready to move to
another city for a job a pompous prick offered me like he was doing me a favor.” Felicity said.

“He was doing you a favor, he was giving you the opportunity of a lifetime. Plus he is just a recruiter
Lizzy, you won’t be working for him directly.” Charlotte shook her head pressing her lips together as
if she were disappointed. Anger flared through Felicity’s body and she got up slowly, pressing her
hands flat against her desk.

“Look Charlotte, I love you but you don’t get to come here to my office and talk about
disappointment and wasted opportunities when you have been wasting your own potential for years,
working for a newspaper of a City you clearly hate.” Felicity starred her friend down through her
glasses.
“Starling City is not where I grew up, but I love it... I love that it rains during the nights and it's sunny during the days. I love that there is street art everywhere, and independent coffee shops in every corner. I want to make it better. So no, I don't want to leave to Central City. I might be frustrated that I haven't been promoted yet, when clearly I can do the job, but I am willing to wait.” Felicity made a pause and realized her friend was sitting back in her chair and her face was changing from the previous judging expression one to an apologetic one.

Felicity continued her ramble.

“I was not angry at you for the job you took at Palmer Tech—which by the way I didn’t even know about-- I was angry because I was injured and you didn’t even call for two weeks.”

They were quietly looking at each other for a moment, letting the heaviness of their conversation sink in. They where the kinds of friends that never fought, having too many similarities in interests to disagree in things. Charlotte personality being a bit of a pushover and Felicity’s being light and happy.

This had been a first in years and they both looked exhausted from it.

“I’m sorry.” Charlotte broke the silence first, her head coming down, “I guess there has been feelings brewing inside me that I didn't even realize were there, it’s not an excuse to have accused you of being jealous of me when clearly it was the other way around.”

“Char... don’t.” Felicity swallowed heavily when her friend raised her hand to stop her from speaking.
“Sometimes you are too harsh Lizzie, in the way you speak or judge… and I know you had been judging my work at the newspaper for a while, I guess it felt good to think that maybe for once I was moving forward.”

“You are moving forward.” Felicity rushed to say, and Charlotte’s dark eyes came to meet hers.

“I’m still the second pick.” She mused and Felicity felt a pang of guilt flow through her, when she opened her lips to speak Charlotte spoke over her “I knew you where a genius the second I met you in our first math class… I feel I’m where I’m right now because you inspired me to be better, everyday, it’s unfair to blame you for being extraordinary.” Charlotte smiled and Felicity felt her heartbeat quicken in her chest, feeling her throat ache at the look her friend was giving her.

“Char… you also helped me be who I’m today, thanks to you I got out of my goth phase.” Felicity smirked and Charlotte chuckled shaking her head.

“Yea I guess I did help you there…” her face expression turned lighter “I’m leaving in a few days, I’ll love for you to visit me there, maybe help me settle in. We have been together for so many years, moved all the way here straight from college, it feels weird moving to another City without you.”

“Yes, I know what you mean… and of course I will come to see you, as soon as I get a few days off from work.” Charlotte nodded and took that as her cue to get up, knowing well that Felicity’s computer kept blinking with emails.

“I think your network might be crashing… I’d let you to it.” She said and turned to leave.

“Thank you, and lets meet before you leave, maybe I can help you pack this Saturday?” her friend
nodded, and the previous heavy feeling that had surrounded them had dissipated.

“I will call you to set up a time then… bye Lizzy.”

“Bye Charlotte.”

Oliver was running late to meet Thea at the coffee shop near Queen Consolidated, she had back cornered him to take his lunch there after he had been evading coming home to see her and his mother for dinner for the last few weeks.

He parked his silver BMW in the street and made his way to the meter to put some coins in when his cell phone rang. He knew his heart was beating quicker with anticipation as he pulled it out of his suit jacket and stared at the screen for a moment.

He cleared his throat and looked around to find the street was completely empty, his thumb pressed the green button to pick up her call.

“Jonas.” She said as a greeting and he found himself grunting at that, which in return made her laugh softly on the other end.
“What is it Felicity?” he asked and he knew his voice was coming through distorted on the other end, probably masking his annoyance.

“Did I caught you at a bad time?” she sounded concerned and he looked around to make sure he was still alone and sighed.

“No, right now is fine. Did you find anything about generator?” he asked and his voiced had lowered, he was fumbling with the parking meter.

“I did. Do you want the good news or the bad news first?” he didn’t answer.

“Dealers choice then. Good news is that I found that a controller was developed for it, it’s supposed to turn off the generator. The controller is so advanced that you can be miles away and it will work, it’s operates via satellite.” She said and he paced around his spot, his brow frowning.

“And the bad news? And please don’t tell me they stole the remote with the generator, because that will bring us back to where we where before.”

“No, that’s not it.” She took in a deep breath to calm her own nerves as she delivered the bad news “The controller was developed by another company, the Military didn’t want to give one company all the info. Merlyn Global. worked on the GQ1310, Palmer Tech created the controller that turns it off.”

“So we go to Central City and get the remote.” He said with finality, and it didn’t escape her that he said we.
“I guess I should mention that the remote was never tested, there was a meeting scheduled with both companies next month to make sure everything worked before they delivered the prototype, but the GQ was stolen before that.” She said and Oliver found himself rubbing his fingers together as he paced next to his car.

They were in silence for a moment and he stopped dead in his tracks when he saw her, she was waiting on the streetlight a block away from him. She was wearing a purple dress and a long red trench coat and she was checking her surroundings as she held her phone tightly against her face. Her hair was pulled back into her signature ponytail, and he felt his stomach move instantly and his heart accelerated at the sigh of her.

“Are you outside walking?” he found himself asking her before he could stop himself and she breathed loudly.

“What gave it away?” she asked, he could feel the corner of his lips turn into a smile.

“The way you are breathing…” he said and his voice was softer, it was easier for him to detach his own growing feeling for her when talking to her on the phone, which was why he had gotten the damm thing. Seeing her made him soft, made all those feelings he resented flared up.

“Oh—you know, I’m going to go out there and say that it’s creepy that you can tell that I’m moving by my breathing, over the phone.” She said and her voice sounded light.

“Also the background noise gave it away.” He said and she chuckled “I will call you later, I’ll have to work on a plan for…”
“I’m going to Central City.” She said and she was moving again, the light had turned green and she was getting closer and closer and his heart was beating quicker.

“No, you are not.” He found himself saying.

“Look, I’m going to help a friend move… it will be a perfect cover.” Then her eyes moved to her front and she froze instantly when she met his. He felt a cold wave run through him and he knew that she wasn’t looking at The Arrow, but to Oliver Queen. Her expression changed immediately, turning cold.

“I need to go, I’ll call you later.” She said and the line went dead, he kept the phone next to his ear as she walked towards him, her chin rising up, while her eyes traveled to his car. Her lips tighten immediately.

He acted like he was nodding at his non-existent call for a moment as her slow steps took her near him. His heart was beating so fast he was having a difficult time schooling his expression.

“Okay, we can discuss it later.” He said and moved the phone away from his face to appear as if he was hanging up, putting the small electronic inside his pocket just in time for her to be next to him. She slowed her pace and they both starred at each other for a few seconds that felt like hours.

“Felicity.” He said as a greeting and she nodded, her eyes going to his car again for a moment.

“Do you make it an sport to drench pedestrians when driving in the rain?” she sounded cold and bitter, and he found his bottom lip dropping down in confusion.
“I don’t think I understand.” He said truthfully, and Felicity raised her hand to point towards his car.

“SOQ-307 your plate… which happens to be the same plate of an asshole that drenched me down a few months ago.” She explained, and he found his eyebrows moving up in response.

“And you think I did this on purpose?” he asked in a disbelieving tone.

“Well, it was hard to miss me with my very colorful red umbrella.” She said with small eyes.

“Maybe you shouldn’t step so close to a puddle if you don’t want to get drenched.” He pointed out and could see how her cheeks were flushing.

“Right… I don’t even know why I try to talk to you.” She said and took a step forward, ready to be done with the conversation.

“You weren’t talking, you were attacking, which is what you do… 100% of the time.” He said turning towards her retreating body, feeling his own heart beating desperately inside his chest. She stopped on her tracks and turned towards him, her face was a mixture of defiance and shock.

“Maybe I wouldn’t if you hadn’t been an asshole to me ever since I met you.” She said. Their eyes were starring at each other almost unblinkingly. She could feel her own stomach move at the intensity of his eyes, on how good he looked in that well tailored dark blue suit and light blue shirt.

She found that his stubble looked darker today and she blinked away her daze. She felt like she had to run away from that situation, from the way her body wanted to react in front of him. She turned
again on her heels and walked off, feeling his eyes on her back the entire time.

Oliver stared after Felicity until she had turned around the corner and disappeared from his sigh, her ponytail wagging behind her as her hips swayed with each step. It was ridiculous, that she liked The Arrow so much, but hated Oliver Queen.

He walked to the coffee shop, his eyes stopping on the shape of a thin brunette that was eyeing him with a smirk from one of the tables. Great, he sighed, Thea had been staring, front seat view, his whole exchange with Felicity.

He rushed to her knowing that was 20 mins late, even before Felicity called him, it was now obvious to him as of why he hadn’t received an angry phone call from his sister while she waited. She had been staring at him the entire time.

“Sorry I’m late.” He said sitting in front of her after unbuttoning his suit jacket.

“No, by all means… I wish every time you were late it was this entertaining.” She mused and Oliver raised his eyes to meet hers, shooting a warning look “So—who was the blonde? I thought you were into brunettes.”

“Well I’m not.” He said quickly, grabbing at the black coffee that sat in front of him. Thea’s smirk only grew wider.

“Call me intrigued, tell me about her.” She said leaning forward, her bright green eyes shining with curiosity and mischief.
“There is not much to say, she is friends with Sara’s girlfriend,” Oliver hesitated for a moment, not sure if he should still be calling Nyssa Sara’s girlfriend or ex. He absently sipped on his black coffee and shrugged “I met her at a party and I’m pretty sure she hates me.”

“And I’m going to guess it’s your fault…” it wasn’t a question and Oliver raised a brow looking at his sister who’s smirk had grown into a full blown smile.

“Whose team are you in Speedy?” he asked faking offense and she laughed loudly, the sound made him smile.

“Well if she is going to be my future sister in law I should be on her team,” Oliver felt the blush creeping into his skin like a tidal wave, his heart racing inside his chest “Oh wow, that’s a new one for you… you are actually blushing.”

Oliver’s smile had disappeared the second Thea’s words had registered with him, but what shocked him the most was how much he craved for that to be the reality. He wanted Felicity in his life, in both of them.

“You know I don’t blush,” he said in a playful tone and Thea actually looked more excited, which half scared him “please don’t become a cyber stalker…”

“I would never do such thing.” She said and took a bite of her pastry humming along, her big eyes scanning the coffee shop “so how did you do it?”
“Do what?” he wondered.

“Make her hate your guts, since we already established it was your fault.” Oliver took a small breath and shook his head.

“I didn’t say it was my fault per say…” Thea raised a perfectly manicured brow and Oliver chuckled “alright, I guess it was my fault—can we not talk about my private life in a public place?”

“No one is listening, common give a girl something to tease her big brother with.” Oliver was quiet for a moment, knowing well that the table next to them had stopped talking the moment he sat down. He couldn’t say no to Thea, not after being dodging her so much lately.

“I might-- have been rude to her the night that we met…” He paused and took another short breath while lowering his eyes to the table “She does this things where she rambles out when she is nervous. At the time I was not sure what annoyed me more, the fact that she was acting so bubbly or that I liked it, I liked her from the beginning.”

When he rose his eyes back to his sister Thea’s expression had sobered up a little, but she was still smiling.

“You went all broody on her, didn’t you?”

“I might have said something along the lines of her not being pretty enough to dance with.” Thea gasped in horror “and she might have heard me.”
“Oh god Ollie, you are such a moron. How old are you, 10? Men on their 30’s are supposed to know you don’t insult the girls you like.”

“Thanks? And I have you know I’m not thirty… yet.” He tapped the table with his fingers and looked around, the place was getting louder and busier now.

“So any plans on how to fix it?” she asked after a moment and he shrugged again, ready for the conversation to be over. Knowing well enough he had done his share of damage on whatever chance he had with Felicity.

Sure he had been specially cold when he told her it wasn’t her business what had happened in between Cooper and himself, but he didn’t feel like he needed to defend himself when it came to that man, not after what he had done to Thea.

“So about Verdant,” he started, wanted to deviate the conversation away from his love life… or the lack of it.

“Right, subtle Ollie.” She said and rolled her eyes, but he could tell she was ready to drop it as well, knowing she had probably gotten all she would get today “so she has vacation days, about time… you work her too hard.”

“I do not.” He tried to sound offended but he was smiling again “and yes, she is going to Coastal City for a few weeks, she is not sure how long yet but I wanted you to help me out managing the bar… since you are on School break.”

“I guess managing your bar could be used as labor experience in my Business Career. But I’ll get paid like a manager, not an intern.” She said and her skinny long finger hit the table. He raised an eyebrow.
“Concerned about money Speedy?” he asked in a mocking tone.

“I don’t like to be taken advantage of… plus what kind of a Business woman would I be if I worked for free?” Oliver laughed now shaking his head fully entertained.

“I will pay you what I’m paying Sara, which is a good Salary.” He offered and Thea nodded, her fingers breaking out another piece of her pastry.

“Good, when do I start?”

Chapter End Notes

And this is the end of this chapter, again I’m so sorry for the delay, I’m publishing it on a Friday instead of a Sunday to make up for my lack of updates.

I hoped you liked this chapter, this are coming to a head pretty soon. I would love to know what you think it will happen next and when you think Felicity will find out his identity.
x0
Central City

Chapter Summary

Felicity goes to Central City

Chapter Notes

Thank you to everyone that left me reviews, kudos and likes. It makes me so happy and fuels my writing.

To everyone that requested more of Sara and Nyssa, I’m sorry I haven’t been focusing in them as much, but I promise they will get more featured in the future.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Felicity walked out of the elevator on the 18th floor of Merlyn Global. Her heels echoed in the hallways as she passed wooden doors that led to important executive offices.

She was wearing a blue dress that came just above her knees, and black patented pumps. Her hair was down today, falling softly and straight behind her back. She didn’t straighten her hair often, being that it was naturally wavy, but this morning she had woke up with enough time to experiment around with her look.
Her steps led her to a bigger room, double light wooden doors separated her from the person she had come to see, and she turned around and exchanged a look with Maria the secretary that was already signaling her to go inside with a polite smile.

“Good morning Walter.” She said with a nervous smile as she came inside.

He was sitting on a large wooden table; his eyes were fixed in the small laptop in front of himself.

“Ah Felicity, please come in.” he got up in a fluid elegant move that matched his aristocrat accent. He leaned his body weight into his desk and signaled with his extended hand the chair in front of him. Which told her this wasn’t an IT issue; she walked quickly towards the desk, swallowing loudly as she took a seat.

Her heart was beating fast, mind racing all the possibilities for Walter Steele calling her to his office on a Friday morning. Her mind went to the applied science position she had been working towards for months and she felt her throat go dry feeling her body swell with hope.

“You might be wondering why I’ve called you in here.” He said with a small smile and she nodded “We have worked together for many years now Miss Smoak, I’m the lucky guy who got to recruit you for this company, which wasn’t an easy task since Wayne Enterprise and Queen Consolidates had their eyes on you as well.” Felicity felt herself blush and a smile creep on her face slowly.

Maybe this will be the moment she had been waiting for so long, her promotion. Walter cleared his throat and took a seat down, his smile slowly disappearing from his face. His dark eyes went towards the doors and it seemed as he was debating on what to say next.

What before had been hope it was quickly being replaced by worry. He wasn’t going to fire her, was he?
“Am I getting fired?” the words escaped her lips before she had given it a double thought, “because I’m the most valuable IT person this company has, and not to even consider the fact that I have been developing great projects for the Applied Science division with you for a better part of this year… firing me will be a great mistake.” Her skin was burning with the heat of her blood pooling on her cheeks, and Walter’s eyebrows had shot up in surprise.

There was an uncomfortable moment of silence that surrounded them.

“I didn’t ask you to come in here to fire you Miss Smoak, I was hoping to recruit you once again.” Walter said after a moment.

“Oh?”

“As you might know I have been working for in here for many years now, and the time has come for me to leave for something new.” It was Felicity’s turn to be speechless, which rarely happened.

“You are leaving Merlyn Global?” her voice was weak and all hopes to get that promotion were quickly disappearing. He nodded.

“We are doing a company wide announcement on Monday morning. I wanted to speak with you Felicity because I have a job offer for you.” Walter stopped and waited for Felicity to say anything, when silence surrounded them he kept going “We both know I have been fighting to get you a high position into the Applied Science Division in here, and even though you have the merits, the skills… Malcolm it’s being difficult about your age.” Walter paused and shook his head, his face clearly painting disappointment.

Felicity nodded, lips shut tightly.
“I will be the CFO in Queen Consolidated, I will put in a recommendation to get you in as a…”

“Queen Consolidated? As in Oliver Queen’s company?” she felt her blood going cold immediately; Walker leaned against his chair, a brow going up in curiosity.

“That will be correct.”

“Oh.” Her lips formed an O shape, and she was speechless once again, dread filling her.

“I take that as an unhappy response?” he asked and he looked slightly disappointed. Felicity tried to smile but failed miserably. Sure she didn’t like Malcolm Merlyn, but had rarely saw him in person for that to be a problem.

Oliver Queen on the other hand, he was another kind of problem to her. There was not doubt in her mind she disliked the guy, for he was cocky, pretentious, arrogant and proud. And she hated that her body seemed to react to the fact that he was incredibly attractive.

“Unfortunately Mr. Queen and I don’t get along too well. I don’t think he will want me working for his company.” Felicity rushed to say once she realized Walter had been expecting her to explain.

Walter nodded and seemed to understand that Felicity was highly uncomfortable with the subject. He smiled to her and the gesture reached his eyes, making them sparkle behind his dark short lashes.
“Well if you change your mind, I’m sure I can talk to Oliver.”

“Thank you Walter, really… I’m really sad to see you go. The Applied Science division will suffer greatly.”

Felicity took a deep breath feeling exhausted after her long disappointing day at work, and being on the phone for what felt like hours. It had been a long conversation with Charlotte, planning her impending visit to Central City the next day. Her friend seemed extra eager to have her come over and show her around her new work place and new digs in general, which worked for Felicity’s plan to ‘borrow’ the controller from Palmer Tech.

Her and The Arrow (aka. Jonas) had been having long conversations about why she should and shouldn’t go to Central City. While she was confident she could retrieve the controller without much issue, he seemed extra concerned about it. This made her stomach turn and her heart accelerate in excitement about the possibility of The Arrow feeling protective of her.

Finally he seemed to realize there wasn’t a way to convince her otherwise and had started working with her on a plan, telling her just a few days prior that he would go too.

The timing worked perfectly, there were going to be a series of events at the end of the week. One press conference on Friday night, and one party on Saturday to promote the latest watch Palmer Tech had developed. Felicity was to find out the codes and get access to the company during the week and in the party The Arrow would get in with the keycard and codes she will provide him.
Felicity was beginning to realize that even though she hadn’t thought about it before, there was a high possibility the Vigilante didn’t work alone. He kept saying the word “we” and “us” a lot.

‘You can take care of the security cameras, and get us through.’

‘We will retrieve the controller, I want you away from the labs in case we get caught.’

At first she thought he meant the both of them, which had made her excited and nervous, to quickly realize he wanted her far away from any danger, which annoyed her to no end. Felicity figured she at least had gotten him to let her tag along for the mission, baby steps.

Felicity was beginning to realize that even though she was afraid to find out who was the man under the hood. If she really wanted to be a part of this she needed to know more… more than just the sound of his voice (distorted by a voice modulator), or the fact that when she babbled he spoke her name to stop her, dragging the vocals slightly.

Knowing that he had breathtaking blue eyes was not cutting it anymore.

She was well aware of her developing crush on him, on his mission and the good they were doing on the city. The thought that he had help besides her made her anxious, who was it? Was it a woman…? Was it a girlfriend/boyfriend, wife? Oh shit… was he married?

The thought alone made her stomach turn and she felt a mixture of disappointment and scare of what she had to do. Every time she had mentioned his identity, he had asked her why she hadn’t looked into it… maybe it was time she did.
She got up from her bed where she had been laying while she spoke to Charlotte, eyeing her closet thinking she ought to start packing soon-ish. Her eyes traveled towards her door, hearing the soft steps of heels outside, which meant Nyssa was home.

Felicity walked outside of her bedroom towards her friend’s stopping on her tracks right outside her doorway. Almost immediately she could hear heartbreak on Nyssa’s tone and the sound of it made Felicity’s heart turn into a knot.

“Sara, It’s Nyssa again…” she paused and the silence that came was charged with emotion, it was the tone that Felicity had never heard from her before “I’m not sure if you are getting my messages, please call me back.” She said and silence was immediate in the room. Felicity held her breath and backed away from the room slowly, hoping that Nyssa had not noticed her snooping on her call.

She took a step backwards and saw Nyssa’s shoulders move up and down as she sighed and her face turned to meet Felicity, and even though she was grinning her eyes were reddened and glazy.

“I know you are there, you wouldn’t be able to sneak up on anyone to save your life.” She said softly and Felicity smiled too.

“My mom tells me that I breathe like a pug when I’m trying to be sneaky.” She mumbled and Nyssa actually laughed.

“Your mother will be correct.” Her friend said with a nod, turning fully to face her. She was wearing dark washed jeans and a light gray t-shirt, her dark hair was pulled back into a low ponytail and Felicity noted she wasn’t wearing any makeup.

“So… I know you are trying to not talk about it but how are you feeling?” Nyssa shrugged, and Felicity knew it was bad if her friend wasn’t trying to play it down.
“I could be doing better.” She admitted walking towards the blonde, her cellphone still clutched in her hand.

“Maybe I shouldn’t be going to Central City this week, I feel like you need me here.” Nyssa smiled at her friend and both of her hands came to rest on her shoulders.

“Something tells me there is a more important, bigger reason you are going to Central City.” Felicity felt her face flush.

“How did you—?”

“Know?” Nyssa turned her head to the side and raised a brow “maybe due to the fact that you have been talking to The Arrow non stop over the phone about it.”

“Oh god, do you think Sin has heard me?” concern was painted on her face and Nyssa shook her head.

“Sin has been occupied, been going to that café to work on her class assignments a lot lately. She says Cooper has been helping her out.” Nyssa frowned slightly “he seems old for her.”

Felicity felt her lips opening in surprise and for a moment no one spoke a word.
“Cooper and Sin?” Felicity huffed and shook her head in disbelief “na, I mean he is older than her, he wouldn’t… do you think?”

“Well… I don’t know the guy, but I know it makes no sense for him to be spending so much time to help her otherwise.” Nyssa pressed her lips together into a fine line “are you sure this guy is a good guy?”

“Well I haven’t really spent much time with him in years, but yea…”

“You seemed to be pretty confident on all the things he said about Oliver.” Felicity felt her face heat up and nodded.

“I don’t see why he will make that up, and Oliver seems like the kind of guy that would do something like that.”

“Mhmmm.”

“Maybe you can come with me to Central City? I’m sure Charlotte wouldn’t mind.” Felicity said, trying to deviate the subject away from Oliver Queen and whatever the reason of her heart started beating so fast.

“I’ll be fine… I’m preparing a booth for the Fit Expo that’s coming to town in a few weeks, I even convinced Sin to help me with a few t-shirt designs.”

“Okay…”
“Really, I’ll be ok… don’t worry about me, seems like you need to focus in other things.”

Oliver came down the stairs of the mansion in a light jog as his fingers worked on his light blue tie with ease. It was still dark out and he could hear that it was raining outside. It was early enough that he doubted that either his mom or sister would be up. He was sad he wasn’t going to see this for breakfast, but was grateful because he could do with a morning without bickering.

So when his shoes hit the bottom floor he was actually shocked to see the shape of his mother come from the living area of the Mansion, wrapped in a long silk robe, she wasn’t wearing any makeup but she still managed to look put together and elegant.

“I didn’t think you would be awake this early.” He commented as he walked towards her to give her a morning hug.

“I thought the days of you running away at 6 in the morning where over as well.” She said and even though she was smiling Oliver could see her eyes where squinting down in a calculating motion.

“I’m not running away, I have a meeting at 8 am and need to prepare some paperwork before then…” he said quickly, and Moira cocked her head to the side with a smile growing on her face.
“I never thought I’d see the day where my boy will be running out to be on time for a meeting.” Oliver straightened up in his position, readying himself for an attack that didn’t arrive, and he was surprised to see that Moira was actually looking at him with pride.

“I guess being the CEO of our company has had an effect on my tardiness.” He said lightly and she wrapped one of her arms around his and started to pull him over towards the kitchen.

“That it has… I know you are in a rush, but I thought maybe we can have some coffee?” he turned towards his mother and knew that she was asking, but it wasn’t really a question. He nodded because it was too early to argue.

“Coffee is good.”

“Thea and I have missed you during dinner, which you have promised to make it to several times.” She was looking to the front of the room as they walk and he walked quietly next to her.

He had wanted to see them, talked about work and what they had been up to… specially now that Thea was back from College during school break. But the hunt for the bank robbers was too hot to abandon when the whole city was in danger.

“I’m sorry I haven’t been able to make it for dinner.”

They walked in silence for a moment, past the double doors that led them towards a large kitchen with vaulted ceilings, and cream colored painted walls. In the kitchen island there was a newspaper and a coffee cup. Moira’s hand dropped from his arm as she padded across the room towards to coffee pot to get him some coffee.
“You still take yours black?” he nodded and his eyes studied the kitchen, which had been one of his favorite rooms in the mansion since he was little. He hadn’t been there in what felt like months.

A moment later Moira Queen was walking to Oliver with a steaming cup on coffee in hand and a soft smile on her face. She reached for her own cup and they both stood there in silence while sipping their hot beverages, then she broke the silence.

“I went by Queen Consolidates yesterday, had lunch with Margaret.” She said casually and Oliver felt the coffee burn his tongue as he took a sip too quickly at the sound of his mother’s voice.

“Oh yeah…?”

“Yes.” She corrected him with a hard look “either way, I was walking around and saw Walter there. Imagine my surprise when he told me he had come to sign his contract, that he was starting in a few weeks.”

Of course Moira Queen had a hidden agenda in this whole coffee thing, Oliver pushed the cup to the table and looked at this mother in silence for a moment.

“I have been wanting to expand or Applied Science division branch for months, it was in the 10 year plan dad had in mind for the company… but I don’t feel comfortable with anyone overseeing this other than Walter.” He said confidently and Moira imitated him, placing her cup of coffee in the table, crossing her arms over her shoulders.
“He said you have been asking him to be the CFO of the company for weeks.”

“It’s more like months…” Oliver said and shrugged “he was not on board until I mentioned he will also be in charge of putting the Applied Science division together.”

“Oliver…”

“If you are going to say that poaching employees from Merlyn Global is not right, please save it. I have over one thousand employees to be concern about, without having to worry about Merlyn’s company as well.”

“That was not what I was about to say, you seem to forget I’m always on you team, I’ll always be. I just wish you had told me you thought you needed Walter in our Company. I could have talked to him.” She said, her hand coming to Oliver’s arm and squeezing it softly.

“Thanks mom. I wanted to do this on my own… and I wanted to give Walter the chance to think it over, to make the decision based purely on how the company is doing, and all he can do, not based on your friendship with him, or dad’s.”

“I can respect that.” Moira said with a nod. And then they talked; about Thea working on Verdant, and the social events Moira had been planning.

Half an hour later Oliver was rushing out of the mansion towards the garage, pulling his car keys out of his pant’s pockets, thinking how he was going to have to cut his morning workout with Dig shorter that morning, but not finding it in himself to feel sorry about it.
“So what, you are going to go out there and tell her that you are the Arrow?” Diggle mused, both arms crossing in front of his chest “how do you think she is going to react?”

“She doesn’t have to know Diggle.” He said and his jaw was clenched, he punched his dummy harder, feeling the sweat dripping down his forehead, his skin felt warm and wet.

His friend/bodyguard just stared at him as he trained, wiping his own forehead with his hand towel before taking a big swig of his water.

“She has a friend that is working on the applied science division in Palmer Tech…” Oliver hit the dummy with a few hooks and a jab “she says she will get us access through, while they are at a party that night, she will looped the camera footage so no one knows I’m in there.”

Oliver gasped breathlessly and held the dummy that shook in the aftermath of his last punch, taking a deep breath he turned towards Diggle who looked a little calmer at the explanation the other man was giving him.

“Oliver Queen will be invited to the event, my assistant will get in touch with Palmer’s assistant. We can get you in as a security guard that night, I’m sure Palmer will bring security up for the event.”

“I keep finding it weird that you refer to yourself as a third person” Diggle said, dropping his arms down in resignation, his brain mulling over Oliver’s plan.
“You think no one will notice Oliver Queen casually disappears in the middle of the party?” Oliver’s eyes hardened and then after a moment of silence he shrugged.

“I will find a way… the only good thing about my old self is that I managed to build a pretty big reputation for myself.”

“Right… so which one are we going to see that night, the drunken Oliver Queen? The playboy one? I’m sure Felicity will love them both.” Oliver tensed immediately, his previous undisturbed look gone.

“What do you want me to do Diggle? I can’t let her do this on her own, she is determined to go there and getting that remote. And we don’t have a better plan to stop this people.” Oliver took a deep breath and pressed his lips together into a frown, Diggle’s expression softened.

“I know you care about the girl, I don’t even know her and I care about her… but have you thought about the consequences of what you are planning on doing to your image at that party?”

Oliver didn’t answer so Diggle continued “You can’t just go around hurting the image of Oliver Queen the CEO of Queen Consolidated so easily, you clearly have feelings for this girl… and from what I have gathered she doesn’t care for Oliver Queen much. Maybe you going out there and making a fool of yourself is not the right call.”

“Well is not like I have many options, do I? All I know is that Felicity will get us access and we will have a few minutes to get in and out of the labs with a controller that might or might not turn that weapon off.” Oliver’s hand travelled through his dampened hair as he stepped outside of the training mats, Diggle walking right behind him.
“Maybe you should tell her.” Diggle said and Oliver froze down, his shoulders tensing as if a stone had dropped in his stomach.

“What?”

“You know what I mean… we are putting this girl in danger, she is part of the team, she should know who she is working with.” Oliver turned slowly towards his friend, his face pulled into a mixture of emotions Diggle had never seen in there. Resignation, defiance, anger and apprehension.

“She doesn’t want to know the Arrow’s identity.” He said in a contained breath and Diggle shook his head.

“You know that’s bullshit. You don’t want to tell her and are hiding behind that excuse.” Silence surrounded them and Oliver sighed heavily.

“She hates me Diggle, like actually hates my guts, she is in attack mode when I’m around, do you think it’s a smart idea to reveal to her my identity right before we have to go and get this thing? For all I know she will run to the cops with the information.”

“She believes in what we do too much to do that, you have to believe that if you have let her help us this long, you even got the burner phone.”

Oliver stared at Diggle in silence, knowing that his friend was right. He didn’t believe Felicity would go out to the cops and out him, even if she hated Oliver Queen. He was afraid of losing her, because what he wasn’t sure of it was if she hated him too much to work with him.
“I will tell her, when we are done with this mission.”

Felicity left to Central City for a whole week. She arrived on a Saturday morning, where Charlotte picked her up at the train station.

Her friend had their whole week planned out, during the weekend they will hang out around the city, and Felicity was going to meet one of Charlotte’s cousins Iris, who was a Central City native.

Felicity knew that Charlotte was an organized person; she had lived with her and her ocd during college, but arriving to her one bedroom apartment in the heart of Central City put things into a different perspective.

She had to bite her tongue to stop herself from commenting about the fact that Charlotte had labeled pretty much everything in the kitchen, and there was a calendar in the fridge that outlined each person’s shores for the day.

She guessed habits died hard, and had to smile at the memories that flooded from back in the day when they where both roommates in College.

Central City was warm, dry and Sunny, which was a complete opposite to how Starling City had been last week.
She was happy when the weekend was coming to an end, since her feet hurt from walking around town. When Monday rolled off, Felicity felt like she could finally start working in cracking Palmer Tech security codes and get into their main frame. She had 5 days to get everything figured out before The Arrow showed up at the Party to ‘borrow’ the controller.

There were very few things that she enjoyed less than her failed attempts into cracking the codes. On Tuesday she met Iris, who had dark skin like Charlotte and was slim in figure with a bright big smile and long dark hair.

She was a thing of beauty, her second highlight of the week turned out to be Barry Allen, Iris’s best friend who was smart, witty and a complete dork like Felicity.

They completely hit it off, which she would have been exciting for if it wasn’t because her mind was full of The Arrow related thoughts and breaking into Palmer Tech.

Iris also seemed excited about Barry and Felicity’s instant chemistry, and had invited Felicity over on Wednesday to the café for lunch. The four of them ate over coffee and talked about the party in Palmer Tech, which Felicity was surprised to find out that Barry was going as well.

“One of my best friends is going and invited me to tag along.” Barry had said with a smirk, his eyes going from Felicity to Iris, right before he took a sip of his coke.

“I guess he must be into fancy watches then.” Felicity commented casually.

“It’s not a regular watch, it’s more like a mini computer. But yes... the rich and idle are always in need to find new ways to spend money and he likes to spend his on toys.” Barry said and went into
talking about his own research on the watches Palmer Tech had been developing. At this point she didn’t know who was more in love with the company, Barry or Charlotte.

Then Thursday rolled by and Felicity was fist pumping in the air in success as she finally had cracked into Palmer’s security. Her hand was reaching over for her phone as she quickly dialed The Arrow. It rang two times and then she heard his voice, it was deep, husky and familiar.

He wasn’t using the voice modulator.

“Felicity.”

“Well hello to you too, Jonas.” She said in a chipper tone, but she was slightly annoyed he sounded so business like; sometimes she wished he were more excited to hear from her.

She found herself rolling her eyes at her own stupidity. She needed to get this crush in check or it will be the ruin of her, and all the good she was doing for the City.

“Where you able to get in?” he said after a pause and she noticed he was actually anxious.

“I’m happy to say that we are back in business.” She said animatedly as her fingers flew over the keyboard and her heart hammered inside her chest “I’ll be forwarding all the information to the Arrow Cave and you can study it before you head over” she paused “you are still in Starling, right?”

“Yes. We will be heading over tomorrow afternoon.”
And there it was it again, the *we*… he was totally married.

“Good. I have to go to this press conference tomorrow night, I can let you know when Charlotte is showering so we can meet downstairs and I can hand you the badge and Saturday’s security codes, which should be released on Friday night.” She paused for a moment “and there should be plenty concealment for you to not be seen, it will be dark by seven and there is a little park to the side of the apartments. We can meet there.”

“Sounds good.”

“Jonas.” She called before he hanged up.

“Yes?”

“You keep saying we… at first I thought you meant you and me, but then I realized… is there anyone else, besides you and me I mean?” she held her breath and heard silence on the other end for a moment.

“There is one more person in our team, yes.” He said and his voice was lower than it had been before, and for a moment she felt a shiver running through her spine because it sounded so intimate.

“When will I meet her…?” Felicity didn’t know why she had asked, a knot forming tightly around her throat as she waited for his answer.
“You will meet him soon. What made you think it was a she?” He said and his voice sounded… entertained?

“Oh, I… um, well I thought maybe it was your wife or girlfriend? Since I figured it must be someone close to you, I don’t know.” She felt mortified at her lack of smoothness. Her skin was flushing and she was very glad she was alone in Charlotte’s apartment at that moment.

And then she heard his chuckle at the other side of the line and found herself smiling as well.

“Are you laughing at me?”

“I don’t know what you are talking about… I never laugh.” He said, and she felt her heart fluttered at his attempt of a lighthearted joke.

“Be careful and you crack your face from smiling too much, lack of use could do that.” She teased and was rewarded by a louder crackle that was followed by a small fragment of silence.

“So no wife?” she asked after a moment.

“No wife… or any other woman for that matter.” He replied and her heart was fluttering around her chest and her face was still flushed but not from embarrassment.

“Good.” She found herself saying, and was surprised at her own boldness.
“I will see you tomorrow Felicity.”

“Until tomorrow.”

Chapter End Notes

SORRY! I know this is the longest it has taken me to update this story, but sometimes life gets in the way and it’s so hard to find time to sit down and write.

After this chapter things will be getting much more interesting, I assure you that. I hope you enjoyed it and the next chapter it’s already started so fear not, it’s coming soon.

Reviews, kudos and likes fuel my writing and make my day!

Thanks!

xo
Identity

Chapter Summary

They carry out their mission in Palmer Tech.

Chapter Notes

Thank you for all the great reviews, kudos and likes I got last chapter. It fills my heart with so much joy that so many of you like this story.

I hope this chapter is to your liking, a lot happens but it was fun to write and I can’t wait to start writing the next one.

Fair warning, this is a long one.

Enjoy your reading.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Thank you for all the great reviews, kudos and likes I got last chapter. It fills my heart with so much joy that so many of you like this story.

I hope this chapter is to your liking, a lot happens but it was fun to write and I can’t wait to start writing the next one.

Fair warning, this is a long one.

Enjoy your reading.

- 

- 

- 

- 

8. Identity
Felicity walked inside the garden through an arch made of topiaries; she could hear the soft running of water from a fountain near by. She couldn’t see it though; the garden was poorly lit at best, with yellow street lamps and a little help from the moon.

“Arrow?” her voice was merely a whisper, she had chosen to speak his vigilante name instead of the name she knew him by, in case there was someone hidden in the shadows of the garden.

She walked a few more steps turning around, quickly checking her surroundings. She walked towards a near by bench and waited, pressing the manila envelope that contained tomorrow’s security codes, Charlotte’s badge, and a printed photo of the Controller.

It didn’t take long for him to appear, he had walked through the same entrance, and was merely a dark silhouette against the dim lighting of the place. His presence was strong.

“Hey.” She said and her voice was soft as she got up from her spot and walked towards him.

“You have everything?” he asked and the voice modulator distorted his voice once again.

“Yes” she raised the envelope towards him and he picked it from her with gloved hands “Charlotte’s badge should give you access… benefits of working as an IT specialist.”

“Thank you.” They were both in silence for a moment.
“I have to ask… why do you use the modulator with me?” he was quiet and even though she couldn’t see his face she knew he was staring at her. She grew more nervous by the second and cleared her throat “because I wouldn’t know your voice if I have never met you before.”

“Have I met you before?”

“Felicity…” his voice was a warning, he didn’t want to get into this at this second, not when she was looking so breathtakingly beautiful, or in the middle of their mission.

“Have I met you before? Is Jonas even your name?” she didn’t know why her voice sounded so husky.

He was quiet for a moment and she was biting her lip down as her eyes searched for a recognizable feature in between the shadows of his face. He was glad she couldn’t see his face, not with the light coming from behind him.

“You have met me before, so I can’t take the risk of you knowing my identity… not right now that we are in the middle of this.” He paused and took a step forward, his hand coming tentatively to her shoulder. Her breath caught when he touched her and there was a current of energy flowing through them.

“Jonas is part of my name.” he whispered, and just as he had approached, he took a step backwards, his hand dropping from her body and she let a shaky breath out and he knew she had felt the current as well. Just like the day they met.
Saturday arrived and by six pm Felicity was slipping into the new dark green dress she had bought the day before for this occasion. At the time she had been borderline annoyed at Charlotte’s insistence in her buying a nicer longer dress for the party, claiming that her short gold dress that she had brought for the occasion was too revealing for her work.

The party was not quite a gala, but there was a dress code associated with the celebration of such an achievement. When they had been out shopping she had picked the green number almost without trying it out. It had a revealing back with crisscross details, and it was tight in the top but flowed freely down her legs grazing her hips on the way down.

The color reminded her of him, and she was smiling broadly when she slipped into her silver shoes. He hair was down on loose curls and it was long enough that it didn’t appear short even though she had made her curls tighter than normal.

She was finishing the touches of her makeup when she got a text from Iris, she said she tried to call Charlotte a few times and was on her way to pick them up. Puzzled Felicity put down her makeup brush on Charlotte's vanity and walked towards the bathroom. Her friend had been showering just a few minutes before, but she couldn’t hear the water running anymore.

“Char is everything alright?” she asked while gently knocking on the door.
“Ugh No, I think I got food poison.” She heard her lament from inside there was a mixture of concern for her friend and worry; she needed to be there tonight.

“Oh god, Iris is on her way. Should I call her? What should we do?” there was silence and then Charlotte opened the door of the bathroom and Felicity let her out, she looked pale and her skin was shiny with cold sweat.

“Well, I know you want to go… we have been talking about this for days.” She took a deep breath and her hand was on her own shoulder, her eyes where closed and Felicity knew she was trying not to be sick again.

“Char…”

“You go with Iris, I know Barry is going to be there as well… and you two seem to hit it off so well.”

“Uh… You know he is like totally into your cousin right?” Charlotte’s eyes snapped open and for a moment Felicity saw curiosity overtake her own sickness.

“Really, you think?”

“Yip. I feel bad going without you.” Charlotte shook her head and made a signal with her hand shooing her off.
“Don’t worry about me Lizzie, I will feel better in half an hour and will meet you there.” Her face went paler all of the sudden and she was running back to the bathroom, hand covering her lips at the same time that Felicity’s phone vibrated with a message from Iris. She was waiting downstairs.

The drive to the party went by quickly as both girls spoke about Charlotte, Ray Palmer the hot CEO of Palmer Tech and how much fun the party would be. They both had their invitations and flashed them to the Valet guys right before they took off in Iris car and left them in front of the very tall high-rise building.

Felicity was very glad she had chosen to change her dress choice, since everyone else was dressed in elegant gowns and suits, and Felicity wondered if the invitation said ‘no ugly people allowed’ to such event.

Iris had also chose a very pretty white dress that hugged her body and hit right above her knees, her hair was also down and straight and she was wearing smoky eyes and a pretty lipgloss.

They walked pass a few waiters and picked a couple flutes of champagne, walking to the end of the place, watching as it filled with Palmer Tech workers, journalist and the rich and famous.

Felicity swore she saw someone that look a lot like a Tom Hardy a second before and was trying to find him among the crowd when her eyes zeroed in a very handsome man. He hadn’t seen her yet, but her heart was palpitating quickly now as her chest filled with dread.

What was Oliver Queen doing in Central City?

He was wearing a light gray suit, white shirt and a thin dark blue tie. He was talking with a man she
soon recognized as Barry Allen, the later was checking around the room trying to find something, someone. To Felicity’s horror she realized that he was looking for them.

His rich friend was Oliver Queen.

“Dammit.” She cursed loudly when Barry caught her eyes and his smile grew wider, his hand shot up in the air and waved energetically around. Just as quickly Oliver’s eyes zeroed on her and his brows shot up in surprise.

“What happened? Oh look is Barry!” Iris sounded thrilled “Oh my god is that Oliver Queen?” Iris didn’t need Felicity to make her own conversation, her voice growing more excited by the minute.

“It is, Barry never said that he was friends with the Oliver Queen. He is like in my top three ‘hottest man’… I think I might be blushing. Am I blushing?” she spoke so quickly Felicity felt her head was spinning. Her mouth shut close in a snap when they where in front of them in less than a minute. Oliver’s hands were in his pockets, and she couldn’t focus on anything other than him.

A mixture of confusing feelings ran through her when she saw his eyes flash down her body, so quickly if she had not been starring at him so intently she would have missed it.

“Hey, isn’t this great?” Barry spoke excitedly looking around after giving both girls a quick hug.

“It is.” Felicity said nodding, not really sharing Barry’s excitement.

Iris nudge Barry’s side and he flinched muttering a low and snippy ‘what’,
Iris raised a brow and looked pointedly at Oliver, who to Felicity’s surprise was smiling at the interaction.

“Aren’t you going to introduce us?” she asked in a happy pointed tone.

“Oh right, Oliver this is Iris, and this is Felicity.” Barry made a hand gesture his face turning slightly pink. Oliver nodded while stepping closer to Iris and shaking her hand.

“Pleasure to meet you Iris, I have heard a lot about you.” his face was relaxed and jovial, and she found herself blinking at the sight of it in confusion.

“Pleasure is all mine. I hope all good things.” She said quickly, a brilliant smile on her face.

“I’m not that good of a liar.” Barry joked and Iris turned around hitting his arm amicably a couple times “ow, kidding!”

Felicity found herself smiling softly, lost in their interaction, forgetting for a moment who was in front of her.

She cleared her throat when his gaze came to meet hers once again.
“Hi.”

“Hello.” She said back and his eyes looked bluer that night she thought, “I didn’t know you will be here tonight.”

“Oh yes, Queen Consolidates is looking to do business with Palmer… we want to see what this watch is about.”

“You two know each other?” Barry asked, his voice curious.

“Oh yes, we met a few months ago in a party. Charlotte’s party actually.” Felicity said and brought the champagne to her lips, barely taking a sip, but feeling too much on edge to keep herself steady.

“Four months ago.” He said with a grave voice.

“Potato/Potato” Felicity said and Oliver looked at her fully amused. So yea, maybe she sounded more grouchy than normal, but tonight was supposed to be her night; the one where she helped save many lives by borrowing a controller that will turn off a weapon.

Why did destiny was so set into ruining the night by throwing Oliver Queen into the mix?

“Oh nice, well this makes things much easier. You already know most of the group then. Where is Charlotte by the way?” Barry asked looking around for the third missing girl.
“She was not feeling well and had to stay home, she might join later if she feels better.” Iris explained.

And then Barry and Iris fell into an easy conversation that Felicity didn’t follow, talking about their weekend plans, someone named Joe being in the premises and other things. Her mind was too preoccupied to really pay attention, and Oliver’s eyes were now fully fixed on her, she guessed he had also given up on their friend’s conversation.

“So… What brings you to Central City?” he asked.

“Oh you know, visiting Charlotte who just moved here.” She shrugged.

“I heard she started working in Palmer Tech not that long ago, how is she liking it?” he was doing the small talk thing, and she was surprised. For having knowing him for four months as he had pointed out, she realized she hadn’t really talked to him, not without one of them snapping to the other one.

She was still nursing her champagne glass fifteen minutes later, trying to keep herself in check for the mission which would start in half an hour or so. She jumped when she got a text and fumbled around to check her phone.

‘Is everything ready?’ she read and her eyes rose from her phone, she noticed that Oliver’s intense gaze was fixed on her. She swallowed and her thumb moved quickly on top of her phone typing.

‘All is set, let me know when it’s a go and I will loop the footage.’
Her hands where shaking with anticipation and adrenaline, she pushed her phone back into her purse and straighten up, trying to catch onto the conversation that was going on in her group.

“Oliver was supposed to be my roommate in college.” Barry said and his eyes sparkled by memories, Iris was smiling brightly too and even Oliver’s face was being pulled by something that she could see being the shadow of a smile.

“Oh you where the frat boy Barry talked about all the time?” Iris gasped, eyes going to Barry in an accusatory look.

“I wish I could say that I wasn’t… not one my best years.” Oliver said and the pull of his smile grew a little wider. Felicity couldn’t look away, too stunned at the image too realize she was starring.

“Wait you were staying at the dorms with Barry? Isn’t that… don’t you have a never ending trust fund or something?” Felicity found herself asking and regretted it immediately after the words left her mouth; she had been enjoying listening to the conversation from afar. Learning about Oliver Queen was more interesting that it should be, and now his gorgeous eyes were fixed on her again.

“I wasn’t on good terms with my parents that year, they pretty much forced me into School. I could keep using my trust fund… as long as I stayed in the dorms, with a A+ student as my roommate.” Oliver’s eyes travelled to Barry and what Felicity thought had been annoyance before, she now could tell it was a different sort of look. Like what she imagined an older brother will give to his younger more eager one.

“It was a great year-- before Oliver dropped out.” Oliver turned slightly and gave Barry an exasperated look, his friend’s face sobered and moved slightly on his spot, his pale cheeks reddening “we kept in touch after that.”
“That we did.” Oliver said and his voice was serious but there was lightness behind his eyes, and Felicity found that she was staring at the blue orbs that now starred back at her. Unable to look away she felt her stomach move and her heartbeat quicken inside her chest, and the force that crackled around them didn’t go unnoticed by Barry, whose eyebrows had shot up in surprise.

“Felicity answered, she is ready. You need to find your diversion and get the plan in motion” it was Diggle’s voice coming from the discrete earpiece that was currently in his ear.

Oliver’s attention deviated from the current light conversation that was being held in between Barry, Iris and Felicity. His eyes scanning the area, trying to find someone he could sneak out of the party without being noticed.

He had a meeting during lunch with Ray Palmer earlier that day, and knew that Ray was expecting to speak with him during the party. He didn’t have very long, since Ray Palmer had not arrived yet.

In fact there was very little time, and he knew that Diggle had set his plan in motion. The security guard that was in the room with him had probably already eaten the burger that would put him completely out for the next thirty minutes or so.

He swallowed, dreading what he needed to do. Diggle’s voice came through again.
“You know it will be much easier if you just ask Felicity to walk with you, tell her who you are. Keep it on the team.” Oliver’s eyes found the girl within minutes; her blue eyes had been starring at him during the duration of the party.

She was a pretty red headed girl, tall, skinny with long wavy hair and pale skin. She was wearing a dark blue long dress and she smiled flirtatiously to him from the other end of the room.

He took a resigned breath and turned his head back toward his group clearing his throat lightly.

“If you guys excuse me a moment, I will be right back…” he said and his eyes went to Felicity’s for a brief moment, and he looked almost haunted.

Then he made his way across the party, talking to a few acquaintances along the way, answering a few questions about his mother. When he got to her she was beaming, and he found himself thinking that he missed Felicity’s soft and radiant smile instead.

“Hey.”

“Well hello there, I wondered if you were going to make it over here eventually. I’m glad you did.” She purred and he had to force his face into a relaxed smile.

“I aim to please.” He said and could hear Diggle cough a laugh from his earpiece.

“Is that so?” He leaned himself closer and flashed her a smile.
“I wouldn’t mind to show you what I mean.” Her eyes sparkled and he could see her flushing slightly.

“You sound like one of those boys from Jersey Shore.” Diggle said.

Jersey what?

Oliver pressed his lips close shut and wondered if it would be too obvious for him to turn off his earpiece in front of her.

“I’m Taryn Wood.” She said and raised her hand which he shook quickly after.

“Oliver Queen.”

“I know.” She said and looked way too excited about his name for him to like it.

“You need to speed things up, the guard is down... you don’t have much time.”

“Do you want to get out of here? Maybe somewhere a little bit more private?” her voice was sweet and flirty and he found his eyes travelling pass her shoulder towards Felicity, who was still speaking with Barry and Iris across the room from him. He caught her eyes and she deviated her face down, her cheeks turning red immediately.
He found that he dreaded this part, faking being interested in this woman in front of him when in reality the only woman he wanted to be with was only a few feet away judging him.

He smiled his rehearsed smile and nodded, offering Taryn his arm, which she took eagerly. Her fingers wrapped around his bicep as he walked them around the floor, leaving his untouched glass of champagne in a nearby table.

They walked quickly through the double doors that led to a large hallway with white marble floors and tall white walls and modern abstract artwork. There were doors on either side of them and his companion was more interested in touching his chest than to figure out where they were headed.

She breathed down his neck and he was sure his collar was probably now stained with lipstick. He turned slightly towards her, his hands gently grabbing her arm as he pulled her to the side, his eyes discreetly studying his surroundings.

Oliver knew where they were; Diggle and him had studied the plans of this floor for hours, trying to find the best place to hide his suit. His eyes went to the nearby camera and he gave it a short nod before turning his straight serious face into the flirtatious one he had been sporting previously that night.

“Why don’t we go in here?” He said in almost a whisper, turning towards her. The door had a clear sign that read ‘Janitor’s Closet’, he heard her giggle and nod as they made it into the room, it was dark and musky inside and she was pressing herself against him eagerly.

He took a deep breath and moved away from her grasp, his hand going inside his pocket pulling out a small little dart.
“Hold on, I think someone is coming…” he said in a playful worried tone and she turned around towards the door, and then gasped as her hand came to her neck where a small dart rested.

“Wha—“ she fell down and he was catching her mid fall, leading her body to the ground slowly.

“I’m so sorry about this.” He whispered close to her as he removed the dart from her neck and examined her relaxed breathing. She was sound asleep, and he had exactly 30 minutes before she woke up wondering where he had gone.

He got up quickly and started removing his clothes, picking up a black duffle bag that Diggle had placed in the corner of the small closet earlier that night. It only took him a couple minutes to get ready.

“I’m ready to go in.” he said, eyes going towards the woman that now laid on the floor unconscious. Oliver placed his suit jacket on top of her knowing well enough that the room felt colder than it had been at the party.

“It’s all clear, Felicity said the cameras are looping the old footage she recorded last night. The other security guard on this floor is down. You have 20 minutes.” Diggle talked through his earpiece and the plan was in motion.

He walked out of the closet fully geared in his Arrow suit. His walk was determined as he stepped through the doors that he knew would take him to the Applied Science division of Palmer Tech. He waved Charlotte’s badge in front of the door and it beeped, turning green as it let him in.

Oliver had memorized the plans of the floor, knowing well there was no guard waiting for him he
ran through the hallways. There was a sense of feeling watched, knowing that Felicity and John were probably looking at him as he ran through the doors and hallways.

“Second door to your right.” He heard John’s voice in his ear and he followed his guide, feeling his heartbeat quicken as he beeped in the security code that let him into the room. He never doubted that the code would work, knowing that if he could trust someone to do his or her job right, that someone was Felicity Smoak.

&

Felicity let out an irritated loud groan as she shifted her weight around her heels. Her fingers pressing the power on button of her tablet, knowing well enough there was no point on doing so. She mussed a low curse and put it aside on the table, looking for her phone inside her purse.

There were no missed calls from him, which was expected since he was in the middle of their mission and she was the one who was completely blind. She hoped that, whoever was helping him beside herself in this mission had his back.

She felt her palms were starting to get sweaty and her eyes moved away from her phone, up into the crowd scanning their faces, looking for someone but not finding him. Then she stopped, feeling her stomach turn as she realized she had been looking for Oliver Queen.

“Heck no, you are not looking for him.” she murmured to herself shaking her head fervently. Her hands pushed her offending tablet forcefully back into her purse.

“Looking for who?” Barry’s voice startled her and she found herself putting a fake smile on to hide
“No one.” Barry gave her an amused look and shook his head lightly.

“You aren’t a very good liar.” He commented, placing a cup of wine in front of her with a smile “I thought you might be needing this.”

“Thanks. What gave it away?” she asked feeling a bit less tense now, her mind abandoning her annoyance with herself and focusing in the man in front of her.

“That scowl you have been rocking for the past ten minutes. Is everything alright?”

“Oh yes” she nodded, waving a hand to dismiss the subject “I’m perfectly fine… it’s just, I had this important work video call, and my tablet died.” She shrugged.

“Can’t you use your phone?”

“Yea… well I had all the info in the tablet, that is the main issue.” Barry nodded and looked apologetic.

“If it’s an ipad I have a charger in my car.” He offered, pointing with his thumb over his shoulder.
“It’s a Windows tablet…”

“Ouch. You should change, apple is way better.” He teased and Felicity’s eyebrows shot up.

“My baby it’s the best tablet in the market I have you know.” she said in an offended tone, and Barry shook his head energetically.

“No freaking way, those things are super slow, get viruses all the time, are very hard to keep running smoothly…”

“That is if you don’t know what you are doing.” Felicity said and Barry laughed. She gave it to him; Barry Allen had the gift of distracting her when her own mind was betraying her. She felt more relaxed immediately; feeling deep inside that everything was going to be fine.

He will be fine, their plan was solid and she made sure that all the cameras where looping the video before her tablet died. Him and his other partner had all the info they needed to get in and out of there.

She looked down towards her phone, and held her breath. He only had ten more minutes.

“Where did Iris go?” she asked after sending Jonas a quick text asking him if everything was all right, and telling him her tablet was dead. Barry had come closer to her and was leaning against the table, his body facing the party.

“Dancing.” Barry sounded discouraged. Felicity’s eyes travelled across the dance floor and didn’t
take her long to find Iris dancing with a very attractive blonde man, who was making her laugh as they moved on the floor.

“A friend of hers?”

“Something like that, he works with Joe (Iris dad). I guess there are a few undercover cops in the party, in case someone tries to steal the new tech.” Felicity felt herself tense all over, and was glad that Barry seemed to be preoccupied with Iris to notice.

She was typing on her phone before she knew it.

“There is undercover cops all over this party, you need to get the controller and get out of here.”

She hoped he was reading his messages and was already on his way out with a controller in his hands.

Barry and her were silently starring at the dance floor for a few minutes before Felicity decided to speak; she was feeling nervous, about not knowing about how the mission was going.

Determined to distract herself from her own stupidity of not charging the tablet the night before, Felicity shifted her disdain to the only person she knew deserved it more than herself at that moment. Oliver Queen.

“So your friend… he seems to have disappeared all of the sudden.” Barry turned to look at her, his face showing puzzlement for a moment before it clicked in his head who she was talking about.
“Oliver?” she nodded, and searched for him or the skinny red headed she had seen him with last time. Barry swallowed a big gulp of his drink and his face was flushing.

“Yea… I’m sure he will be back soon.” He checked his wristwatch for a second and looked around the dance floor before turning to Felicity again.

“It has been more than ten minutes, I guess stamina is not one of his downfalls after all.” She disliked the fact that she sounded so bitter, that her pride was hurting all the more because he had taken that woman to do unspeakable things to, when he had been so appalled at her the day they met.

Sure Felicity wasn’t as tall as said woman, with thick and long natural red hair, or wearing a thousand dollars dress, shoes, and jewelry. Hell probably the woman’s perfume was more expensive than her whole outfit.

And she liked couture, a lot. She liked fashion and loved to spoil herself with nice things, when she found them in Nordstroms Rack or a flash sale. It made her anger and disdain for him grow the more and for a moment she forgot the mission.

“You don’t seem to like him much huh?” Barry observed after a moment of silence as he intently studied Felicity’s red face. She forced a smile and shook her head.

“I barely know him.” She shrugged and even though Barry opened his mouth to speak she cut him off and finished her trail of thought. “I mean, when I met him he was rude and unpleasant, then later on he was rude and unpleasant again… shocking he seems to have so many friends.”
“Oliver has this outer shell, he wasn’t always like this but I think his personality has changed for the better.” Barry said and Felicity huffed.

“Well I’m not really sure that’s a good thing at all, he must have been horrible before.” Barry’s cheeks were red and he was frowning all of the sudden. She became aware now that she was badmouthing a good friend of his “Sorry, I don’t mean to talk shit about your friend.”

“No, it’s okay. I know Oliver and I know how he can come across sometimes, but believe me, he is a great person and a much better friend.”

“Really? Do tell.” she couldn’t keep the skepticism to show in her tone but she managed to smile.

“It’s true, he paid for our room in college for the entire four years I attended. Mind you he left after the first year.” Felicity didn’t know why her heart squeezed but felt annoyed that she was hearing something good about him when she wanted to hate on him so much.

“Well he did agree to pay it and then dropped off.”

“Well the lease was for one year, but he said he will help me out for me having to put out with his partying the year before.”

“Hah, I knew it.” Barry shook his head.

“It wasn’t bad at all, I got to have fun and meet some pretty interesting people. Plus my nerdy self as a junior in College, sharing dorms with the very popular Oliver Queen, it was a dream come true see
all those girls in my apartment.” Felicity laughed out loud now and Barry followed her shrugging unapologetic.

“I was eighteen at the time.”

“Still that really proves nothing.”

“Well, not that long ago he saved his best friend from a really bad relationship.” Now that sparked Felicity’s attention, he continued “it’s actually not something he told me about, she came around a few weeks ago and told me how Oliver had saved her from making a big mistake again.”

Felicity was holding her breath now, feeling her body drumming with adrenaline as Barry spoke, completely unaware of her reaction.

“What friend?” her voice was almost a whisper.

“Sara Lance, she is so great, it always saddens me when bad things happen to really good people.” He sounded disappointed but his eyes where lost in the crowd and Felicity’s lips where pressed together into a fine line.

“So he separated them…”

“Well, it’s not like he forced her or anything, he just did a little research on Sara’s girlfriend’s past or something.” Barry now looked at Felicity and his face contoured when he took on her expression.
“Felicity, are you okay?” his voice was marked with concern, then his face was turning pale as well and he was realizing something.

“Oh god you know her.” She nodded. “You are the friend… the cute blonde that babbles.” Felicity was not sure who had spoken about her with Barry; she was inclined to think it was Sara.

“Best friend.” She corrected and Barry paled even more.

“Shit.”

“You are running out of time Oliver.” Diggle said as Oliver was rummaging through a very large space. He had already opened most of the cabinet and drawers in the room.

“I know. This it’s not easy.” He said and his voice was snippy. Diggle didn’t answer him, the less distraction the better. He moved quickly to the next cabinet and opened the big doors.

“Found it.” He said, looking from said controller to a piece of paper he had in his hand with a picture of the controller.
“Good, because Felicity just wrote you. The place is crawling with undercover cops. You need to get out of there, you have eight minutes to make it to the janitor’s closet.”

“Got it, you know the plan.” And as he pocketed the controller he was running out of that room.

“See you in ten.”

It took him nine minutes to get back to the closet and barely had time to change out of his Arrow suit and back to his formal attire before Taryn’s breathing became more restless. He didn’t have long now, he picked up his suit jacket, which had been covering her moments before and shrugged it on. Then he was leaning down to pick her up in his arms.

The door of the closet opened and he jumped slightly, ready to pounce on whoever was there, his heart beating quickly inside his chest as his vision adjusted to the brightness of the corridor.

Oliver was relieved to see Diggle standing there, holding the door open for him.

“I thought we were going to meet by the infirmary.” He said in a breathy voice and Diggle’s eyes came down to Taryn’s sleeping form.

“Our cover story will play out better if we were together. Is she ok?” Oliver nodded and they both got out of the closet, Diggle picked the duffle bag from the floor and swung it over his shoulder.
“She is fine, will probably wake up in five minutes or so…”

“We will be going to a special part of hell for doing this to this girl.” Diggle said but he didn’t sound upset, there was a small smirk curving his lips “I still think it would have been better if the girl you took to that closet had been Felicity.”

Oliver’s heartbeat quickened and he took a short deep breath. They were closer to the infirmary now, he could see the sign in the wooden door.

“You would have enjoy it more… actually now that I think about it, maybe it was a better idea not to put you two in such a small space together, maybe you wouldn’t have left the place to fetch the Controller.” Diggle continued after Oliver didn’t answer.

“We have use this darts on security guards, cops, and many other people before to help the city, to save hundreds. These are harmless.” Oliver said and chose to ignore his friend’s comment on his feelings for certain blonde “let’s get this over with and go back home.”

When they arrived at the infirmary they noticed a few things, there was another person in it besides the nurse, a guy lying on a bed groaning at the pain in his head. They also noticed the place was large and could probably hold a dozen people in there comfortably.

A nurse approached them while signaling to place the woman in the near bed. Taryn moved peaceful in her sleep as Oliver started to tell the nurse the story they had come up with earlier that week. He was smiling his most charming, fake, Oliver Queen smile as he explained to the nurse that Taryn and him where getting to know the building and she had fainted.
“More like getting to know the genitor’s closet, Mr. Queen.” Diggle mussed in a disapproving tone, with both arms wrapped across his chest. The nurse flushed.

“Right.” Oliver scratched his head and his smile only grew wider “how is she doing?”

He didn’t tone down his flirty voice with the young nurse that was clearly flustered. She moved quickly and took Taryn’s wrist in her hand, her eyes travelling down to her watch as she counted.

“Her pulse is stable, is almost like she is sleeping.” The nurse looked up at Oliver and grinned, “she is fine. Many people faint when they have low blood sugar, in these sort of parties we get a lot of fainters.”

Taryn stirred a little as if she could hear they where speaking about her, but went completely still after a few seconds, breathing deeply still asleep. Oliver shifted his weight around and flashed an anxious look to Diggle who was also looking at him.

“Now Miss Natalie” Diggle said reading the badge that hanged from the nurse’s scrubs “if it’s ok, I need to escort Mr. Queen back to the party. Guest aren’t allowed in here unless sick, and since Mr. Queen is not this lady’s family member…” Oliver’s eyes met the nurses and she was nodding energetically.

“Of course, I will let her know you waited for a while. She will be waking up soon. I will give her a spoon of honey and she will be back outside in a few minutes.”

“She is in capable hands then. Thank you.” Oliver nodded and turned towards the door, ready to be out of there and back to Starling City.
She was feeling jumpy and stressed out as the minutes went by, completely in the dark via security cameras, but only with her phone to keep tabs on what was going on with the Arrow and the mission.

She really hoped everything was all right, it had been past 20 minutes already and she hadn’t heard back from him yet. Then her phone buzzed and she was fumbling around her purse to try to get to it, gathering confused curious looks from both Iris and Barry.

“I’m out, have the controller. Thank you.”

She let out a relieved sigh as her eyes came up, then she saw him. Oliver Queen was walking towards them, sans red headed by his side. She felt her stomach move and her jaw set.

“Well there you are, you disappeared on us.” Iris said in a friendly tone that Felicity wasn’t feeling. For all she cared he could have stayed wherever he had been with that red headed for the rest of the night.

She hated the way her chest was knotting at the idea.

“Yes, sorry about that… I got caught up. What did I miss?” Oliver said and she could tell his tie was loser that before.

Of course Oliver Queen would sneak out in the middle of a party to have sex with some random girl. This was the Oliver Queen she had been expecting at Charlotte’s party, the one she had been oh so
disappointed to not find.

Then why was she feeling disappointed her own predictions turned out to be right? Why was she feeling like she had been let down when she hated the guy he had turned out to be?

“You missed some really good music and dancing.” Iris said quickly and Barry blew out a breath shaking his head.

“Oh don’t worry Iris, he doesn’t dance… ever. That is what he told me, though that might change if it’s with beautiful red heads.” Felicity gasped as soon as the last word had left her lips, the horror of the realization that she had spoken all her thoughts out loud hitting her like a freight train. Three pairs of eyes fixed on her, all with mixed expressions.

And why had she sounded so bitter?

“I don’t dance, but I do wish I had made certain exceptions.” Oliver’s voice broke the uncomfortable silence that had surrounded them. Was he speaking about her?

When Felicity opened her lips to ask just that another voice broke the silence, it was a male voice, happy and energetic.

“Oliver Jonas Queen, I have been looking for you.” She was looking at the new comer with curiosity, tall white with jet-black hair and brown eyes. He was handsome and she had seen him before, Ray Palmer.
But then her heart flipped as her mind reeled back to his words, Jonas.

Oliver’s gaze snapped to her and his face lost all the color that previously was in there, looking pale as his expression went from cold and uninterested, to quickly become surprised and then panicked. She imagined her face went through a similar change, as her lips parted in shock and her blood chilled.

But her eyes where still fixed on his, bright blue like the ones behind his mask. And then everything became clear as a flash of memories came to her, she could see his face behind the shadows, his sharp jaw as he asked her over and over if she was okay the night he saved her.

“Oh God.” She gasped feeling as her throat was closing in on her and it was harder for her to breathe. Then the half filled glass of wine was falling from her grip, chattering a second later in front of her heels.

Oh god indeed.

I have to cut it here, I know it’s a little bit of a cliffhanger but this might be the longest chapter yet. Had to go through a lot to get to this point, next chapter is going to be intense!

I hope you liked it!

Please leave reviews, comments, kudos, likes. It makes my day!
Oh god indeed.

I have to cut it here, I know it’s a little bit of a cliffhanger but this might be the longest chapter yet. Had to go through a lot to get to this point, next chapter is going to be intense!

I hope you liked it!

Please leave reviews, comments, kudos, likes. It makes my day!
Prejudice

Chapter Notes

New chapter! Woot, So sorry for the wait, thank you for your patience, and for all the great comments, reviews, likes and kudos you left me on my last chapter! It really puts a little Felicity into my very stressful day-to-day real life.

AU: I edited the chapter slightly. Note at the end of the story.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

9. Prejudice

*But her eyes where still fixed on his, bright blue like the ones behind his mask. And then everything became clear as a flash of memories came to her, she could see his face behind the shadows, his sharp jaw as he asked her over and over if she was okay the night he saved her.*

*“Oh God.”* She gasped feeling as her throat was closing in on her and it was harder for her to breathe. *Then the half filled glass of wine was falling from her grip, chattering a second later in front of her heels.*

Felicity didn’t remember when was the last time that she had a panic attack, but it hit her hard and instantly. One moment she had been wondering if Oliver Queen was referring to her when he had said he wished he made exceptions when it came to dancing, and the other moment her feet where getting wet by spilled wine and the realization that in front of her was the Arrow.

A man who was not only someone she admired and helped on a daily basis, but also a man she had grown to care about beyond his mission. She had hated Oliver Queen for so long her brain was short-circuiting about her new found knowledge, because Oliver Queen was a selfish prick, not a man who jumped through rooftops to help innocent people across the city.
“Miss Smoak, are you alright?” Ray Palmer asked with a concerned tone.

“I… I need some air.” She said breathlessly, her eyes refusing to meet his as she turned around in her heels and walked out of there, like a haunted soul parting from this world.

She made her way through the party without much trouble and towards a large balcony that was empty. No one wanted to be out there in the middle of the night when it was below 50 degrees. She walked towards the rails and took a deep breath while closing her eyes.

Her mind flashing all the memories of both of them together, the night they met, the night at his nightclub where she had defended the arrow so ardently she had obviously tipped him as of whom F was. She remembered the night of Sara’s birthday party, the way they had fought about Cooper in the balcony, when she had saved her life later that night, and had waited in the hospital until she woke up.

She remembered the day he came to her office with a broken phone and a mission that saved two innocent women from being sold as sex slaves. She remembered and her cheeks were wet by tears.

Then she heard the footsteps and she didn’t have to turn around to know that he was there.

“I said I needed some air.” She mused low and angrily, she heard his footsteps stop, but knew he wasn’t too far away from her. Her hands came to her face and wiped away the tears that were coming down her face.

“Felicity…”
“Please, I don’t want to talk right now.” Because she didn’t trust her heart to do what was right.

“I’m sorry you had to find about it this way.” She turned around in her heels, a harsh expression on her face.

“Where you ever going to tell me? No don’t answer that.” He frowned and took a step forward.

“I was going to tell you, when we made it back to Starling City.” He said, she shook her head and took a step backwards, trying to keep the distance in between them. Her body hit the balcony rail and she winced slightly at the coldness of the iron against her naked back, cold that seeped through her skin and made her shiver.

“I’m a genius, and I mean that… I have a genius IQ, but you made me feel like an idiot.” She said in a tone so bitter she heard him gasp in surprise, he stopped just a few feet away from her, but he was close enough for her to be surrounded by his scent.

“You lied to me, to my face.”

“I never lied to you Felicity.” He said quickly, his voice was low and pleading.

“You lied by omission, you knew me and you made me believe I didn’t know who you where, I felt we were a team…”
“We are a team Felicity.” He said and she shook her head, a harsh laugh escaping her lips.

“We are not a team, not anymore.” Hurt flashed across his features and he was quiet for a moment.

“And you blame me for not wanting to tell you who I was under the hood.” He said and his tone matched hers all of the sudden. She frowned but didn’t feel like answering him so he continued.

“I didn’t ask you to help me, but when you started I realized how much the Arrow needed you, how much I…” he stopped and looked down briefly, as if gathering his thoughts “at first I didn’t know who you were, but when I found out you identity I was relieved it was you. I don’t trust easily.”

“Yay me.” She said sarcastically and a moment of silence surrounded them.

Felicity pressed her lips tightly shut when her eyes came up to meet his and her stomach turned at his expression.

“How could you do that?” he asked and she knew he was angry.

“Do what?” she asked in defiance and he shook his head furiously.

“Act like this, like I’m the only one at fault here.”
“You are the only one at fault in our—whatever this is.” she waved her hand in the space that separated them; her blood boiling under her skin as anger ran through her veins.

“How so?” he asked in between teeth “because I didn’t want to dance the night we met? Yes, I judged you by your age and the way you looked at the party Felicity, and I’m sorry I was an asshole that night, but maybe it’s time for you to realize I’m not the only one here judging by appearances.”

“I don’t know what you mean.” Liar. He pressed his lips together and took a sharp breath she had come to know as his exasperated one, she raised her chin up defiantly, unwilling to go back on her words.

“You have been judging me, and snapping at everything I say or do ever since that night.” He said after a moment “and don’t say that’s not true.”

“That’s not true” she said at the same time and felt her cheeks go warm as she flushed.

“It doesn’t matter either way Oliver, it’s not who I thought Oliver Queen was, it’s who you are, and what you did to Nyssa.” He shook his head and his eyes became more calculating.

“What did I do to Nyssa?” he asked and his brow frowned deeply.

“You hurt her, through Sara. You separated them.”
“How did I separate them?” he asked and his voice was back to angry, he took a step closer and he was now so close she could feel the heat that irradiated from his body.

“You investigated Nyssa, you made Sara believe she was bad for her. You probably told her that she was dangerous or something.” Felicity responded and her voice came up louder than normal.

Oliver was quiet for a moment and Felicity starred at him unblinkingly “are you going to deny it?”

“No, I’m not.” He said and she shook her head.

“Why would you do that?”

“Because I love Sara, she is my best friend and I would do anything to protect her.” Oliver said and his voice was unapologetic, Felicity felt her lips parting in shock.

“You are talking like Nyssa is some sort of horrible person, like she is some sort of killer.” Felicity said and Oliver’s harsh eyes softened for a brief moment and he took half of a step backwards, putting a much-needed distance in between them.

“Felicity, you have no idea.”

“I have an idea, I know Nyssa better than anyone.” Felicity said and her voice was resolute, because she knew this to be true.
“Maybe you know the person she is today, and you might even have an idea of who she was… though I doubt it, but her family is the definition of danger.”

“She doesn’t talk to her family anymore.” Felicity said crossing her arms across her chest, trying to find the courage she seemed to have lost somewhere inside of her “plus it’s not any of your business, their relationship is theirs to deal with.”

“Is that so?”

“Yes.”

“Well you seem to be pretty invested in it, since you are throwing it in my face like it’s yours to deal with.” Felicity scowled.

“It’s my business because Nyssa is my best friend.”

“Sara is mine, how is it any different? You are angry with me because I hurt your friend, you are looking out for her, and I’m looking out for Sara. How am any different than you?”

Felicity felt her resolution waver, because she could see his point and to her annoyance she trusted him. She knew enough of Nyssa’s past to know her family was dangerous, and she couldn’t blame him for trying to protect his friend. Barry had been right too; ultimately it had been Sara’s choice, not Oliver’s.
“What about Cooper?” his expression changed immediately, like a switch had been flipped; she looked as his shoulders and arms tensed at his sides and his hands turned into fists. His expression went cold and detached all of the sudden, and she felt like she was starring into different eyes.

“What about him?”

“You hurt his chances Oliver, you took away his future in your company out of jealousy?” Oliver took another step backwards looking hurt. She felt her heart contorting inside her chest, because she hated that expression, and she hated even more that she had been the one to put it there.

But she wasn’t ready to back down now, she had been committed to her hate for him for too long to give it up in a few minutes, even though she knew that her love for his other persona was probably too strong for that to be the case.

“Jealousy? You don’t know what you are talking about Felicity.” He said coldly.

“I know what he told me. He said that you fired him from his job at Queen Consolidated when you came back from the Island. I know that you have taken all his opportunities because your father was proud of him when he wasn’t proud of you.” And the words had left her lips, Oliver’s lips parted in shock.

She swallowed the knot in her throat, but it wouldn’t go away.

“Well I guess you know everything then.” He said after a moment of silence and his body turned slightly as he was preparing to leave “I better let you alone, it’s obvious this conversation it’s over.”
She saw him exit the balcony with a quick pace, without looking back to her and she starred at the spot where he had disappeared for what felt like hours, her heart drumming inside her chest she felt her eyes prickle with unshed tears.

She opened her lips and took a shaky breath and looked up to the night sky to keep from crying. She blinked forcefully and tried to not re-live the conversation she had with Oliver.

She didn’t know when she had started walking, her brain taking her in an overdrive. She was in the balcony once second and out in the street at the other. She pulled her phone out of her bag with shaky hands and sent Iris a text, telling her she wasn’t feeling well and was going to take a cab back to Charlotte’s.

She flashed a cab and a moment later she was pulled away from that building by a smelly cab in the middle of the night. She tried not to think of him; of their mission and all the horrible words they had exchanged that night.

... 

Felicity was glad that Charlotte had guest room so she could wallow in her troubles alone, she guessed it was safe to say she had also gotten sick with food poisoning and Charlotte left her on her own for the most part.

She was feeling much better in the morning and had pretty much spent half of the day cleaning up her fridge for whatever had made them sick. Felicity on the other hand had spent most of her morning in bed; her hair pulled up into a messy bun, and fully geared into her warm cozy pajamas.
She had both her phone and tablet completely off, too scared to turn them on and see any reminder of Oliver and the Arrow. She had called Nyssa at some point during the day, and even though her heartache she was glad her friend seemed to be in higher spirits that day. Felicity didn’t fully believe her though, it was in Nyssa’s nature to tone down whatever she was feeling, she didn’t like to look or appear weak, and being sad meant a weakness in her friends eyes.

Hell in Felicity’s eyes as well, she hadn’t have a relationship like Nyssa’s and Sara for many years now, but for some reason she felt like she was going through heartbreak.

After a light lunch with Charlotte, Felicity excused herself and went back to the room, she was returning back home that night and had to pack her things up while Charlotte finished cleaning the kitchen.

After her bags where packed Felicity pulled her laptop out and decided she would check her email, it had been almost 24 hours since the last time she checked, and she wanted to make sure no red flags where going off about the missing controller, and the Arrow.

As soon as her computer was on she heard different kinds of bells that announced several unread emails. She readied herself in bed with laptop in her lap and took a deep breath, feeling the prickle of anxiety beam on her, and crawled against her skin like ants.

She ignored her email for a good ten minutes while she checked the latest news, in fact there was a story about a possible breaking into Palmer Tech, a few guards had been down but they where still running inventory.

Felicity did a quick hack into Palmer Tech and checked a few of the latest exchanged emails; they where definitely running an inventory and will probably know what was missing by the end of the day.
She swallowed and proceeded to read a few more, to her relief the looping footage had worked and they had no video of the breaking, or any idea of who could have done it.

She sighed and pressed open her email, her heart hammering in her chest as she read the few emails that rested unread in her inbox. Her heart stop when she read the subject line in one of them, it read “For your eyes only” and the sender was Oliver J. Queen.

She pressed her lips together and closed the laptop quickly. Her throat prickled and she got up quickly deciding it was time for a quick shower before her train ride. She didn’t really have time to read whatever Oliver had sent her, if it was something urgent; the subject line would have said so.

So she showered and came out to help Charlotte with the house, later on they watched an Episode of Doctor Who before her friend took her over to the train station.

“Thank you for coming Lizzie, I’m sorry we both got sick with whatever we ate… but I hope this doesn’t deter you from coming again.” Charlotte said as they both hugged tightly. Felicity shook her head as they pulled away and smiled.

“I will be back for sure, plus how else will I get to see Iris and Barry get together if I don’t?” Charlotte smile widen with a hidden spark behind her brow eyes.

“I will have to keep my eyes open on that and keep you updated.”

“Please do.” The speaker was announcing the prompt departure of her train so Felicity came close to her friend for another quick and last hug “I’m so proud of you Charlotte, Palmer Tech it’s really a great company to work for.”
“It means a lot coming from you Lizzie.” Felicity scrunched her nose.

“I really hate that name, call me Lis, it’s much better.” Charlotte shook her head fervently fully entertained.

“Na, I like Lizzie.”

Felicity was distracted by her own thoughts on Charlotte’s work, Iris and Barry for about ten minutes as she walked to her chair. Then her thoughts naturally came back to Oliver Queen, The Arrow, and their mission. She had successfully talked herself out of reading his email for the entire afternoon, but the prospect of her resisting it for much longer was low, and she knew it.

Sighing she pulled her fully charged tablet out of her bag and opened her email, she took a deep breath as she opened it and was shocked to see how long it was.

Felicity,

I have spent most of the night debating if I should come to see you at your friend’s house, but ended up deciding it was probably not a good idea, not with all that we said to each other last night.

I know you and I didn’t start on the best footing, with me being who I’m the day we met. I’m not writing you this letter to excuse my behavior that day, but will like to address one point you made last night.

I have known Cooper most of my life, he came to our home when I was very young, his Aunt Raisa,
whom I love like she was my own Aunt, brought him from Russia when he was five years old. Him and I got along well enough when we were growing up, and grew apart when we got into our teen years.

Tommy my best friend and Cooper didn’t get along well and maybe that was one of the reasons why we stopped hanging out. As we grew older we grew farther apart, it might have been because he was pursuing his career at MIT when I was busy with Tommy, partying.

Cooper told you one truth out of all the lies he also managed in, and that was that my father loved him. But he forgot to mention that it wasn’t only my father, my mother and my sister loved him as well. When my father and I went missing they looked for him to fill a little of the void, and he wasn’t really there for them, too busy with school to even call.

When Cooper graduated from MIT he came to Queen Consolidated looking for a job, which my mother gladly gave him. He worked in the company for two years before I came back. It took me a while to realize that something was wrong, money was disappearing. I started investigating Cooper before I took the CEO position in QC. I discovered that he had been stealing money from the company and gambling it all out.

I confronted him about the stealing and he denied it and brought out the fact that I was jealous in front of my mother, who perhaps didn’t fully believe me but was skeptical to believe him as well.

When I took the CEO position from Walter I had to let Cooper go. Not only was he stealing money from the company, but also he had been collecting classified information from QC from his house, which I discovered one night after I dropped by his apartment when he was out gambling.

A few months after he started to come by the house a lot, and I was too busy elsewhere to realize what was going on. I caught them in Las Vegas; Cooper had been trying to convince my sister Thea to elope with him. When I explained to him that he would not see a penny of her money if they got married he left her there. She had just turned eighteen.

All of this is not easy for me to write, much else to voice it out loud, and other than my immediate family and my bodyguard Diggle, there is no one else that knows this, not even Sara. Cooper claims that he has photos, things that he can leak out to the press if we don’t pay him certain amount of money at the beginning of each month.

This whole situation with Thea and Cooper it’s very delicate, as you know the paparazzi go crazy with any scandal in our lives.
If anything I’m not writing you this because I expect your opinion of me to change, but because I want you to be safe. Cooper is not someone to trust.

Oliver

Chapter End Notes

A lovely reader pointed to me that Thea’s age would have been a problem for Cooper not to get in trouble, so I made her eighteen instead of seventeen.

Again, I’m so sorry for the long wait for this chapter, my life got super crazy this last few weeks and my writing muse pretty much left me.

I hope you liked this chapter; it’s shorter than I normally write, but I wanted to publish something for you guys today and hopefully be back into regular postings after this.
Chapter Notes

First off, SORRY, Soooorry for the very delayed update, I hate giving excuses but I swear I have valid ones this time. To not go on too much detail, I had a nice vacation trip to Italy in August and happened to conceive a baby during that time. That’s right I’m pregnant and feeling like SHIT 98% of the time.

I can’t read, write, watch tv…. Nothing!

Needless to say, I have been thinking about this story 24/7 but unable to feel good enough to actual sit and write (I do work a full time job, and I’m also moving this week)

Crazy I know, but don’t worry this story it’s getting written and finished, just might take me a little longer to update than I would like.

I hope you enjoy this chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

-  

10. Verdant

Felicity made herself small in her seat, hoping that it would actually swallow her whole, because that was exactly what she wanted. She wanted to fade away and disappear.

She had been so keen in judging and hating Oliver for so many months; she had become the person she hated so much. Because in her head he had been doing what in reality she was guilty of. Sure he had been rude towards her several times, but the night of Sara’s birthday party he had every right to snap at her, with her very tactless questions about Cooper.
Then he had put everything aside; her questioning of his character and her snarky remarks towards him and saved her life instead. Because of course he had, he was a freaking hero after all.

Felicity felt the knot tighten in her throat and her vision was blurry all of the sudden with unshed tears, and she was taking deeper breaths to try to calm herself down.

She brought the tablet back up and did a quick search on the latest news, trying to find anything that would link the Arrow to the robbery in Palmer Tech, as of now there wasn’t anything in the news and she felt herself relax slightly on her seat.

Taking advantage of her need for distraction, she dove herself into work. Now that she knew that Cooper was not someone to be trusted she wanted to make sure her network at home was protected, she didn’t want Cooper realizing she had been helping the Arrow in her downtime.

Plus if Cooper came anywhere close to finding the Arrow that meant he could easily find out whom the Arrow was, and if she didn’t want Cooper near her again, she wanted him even farther away from Oliver and Thea.

She worked and worked for the two hours of the train ride, and by the time she was in Starling City it was nighttime already. She stared out of her window at the people waiting patiently for the train to arrive; the glass covered with raindrops.

It was a cold, wet and dark welcoming home. Nyssa was inside the station wearing dark wash skinny jeans, a grey top and a leather jacket. Her hair was down and wavy, and she waved smoothly at Felicity when their eyes met across the room.

Felicity ran into Nyssa arms for a tight hug and felt herself relax ever so slightly against her body as the soft notes of spices and roses of her perfume surrounded her, a scent that was very Nyssa and it
reminded her of home.

“Well hello to you too.” Nyssa said, and Felicity could hear a slight surprise behind her friend’s words.

“I missed you.” She muttered softly and broke away from the hug, shoulders slumping forward slightly.

“What happened?” Nyssa’s expression transformed into a mixture of concern and wariness.

“Nothing.”

“Nothing…” she pondered and they stared at each other quietly in the busy station “let’s go home, we can talk better about your ‘nothing’ there.”

And truth to her words Nyssa didn’t bring Felicity’s unusual quiet behavior again until they crossed the threshold of their apartment, but as soon as the door clicked shut behind her, her voice broke the silence.

“You know the truth.” Nyssa said and Felicity felt her shoulders tensing, dreading to turn around because her friend’s words could only mean two things, the acknowledgement that she had something to hide, about her past. Or that Nyssa had known whom the Arrow was all along.

Maybe it was a little bit of both; it would explain why she had been so disapproving on Felicity’s judgment against Oliver from the beginning. The only thought of him, Nyssa and all the secrets and
lies made her blood boil under her skin, and she turned to her friend her back straightening.

“Which truth Nyssa?” she asked, because she wasn’t about to out Oliver’s secret in case her friend actually didn’t know.

Nyssa observed her quietly for a moment and her tense posture deflated slightly.

“His… mine, I’m guessing he told you?” Nyssa nodded and took a step forward and her face looked apologetic “I’m sorry I didn’t tell you everything about my past, the League is not something I talk about very easily, and the less you know the safer you are. I have done all that is in my power to protect you from them, they are not any danger to you, or Sin. I will turn myself over to my father before…”

“Nyssa.”

“…I wouldn’t let them hurt you.”

“Nyssa, he didn’t tell me anything about your past… merely that you had a dangerous one. Which I kind of knew of… a little, I mean he made it pretty clear I didn’t know half of it.” She took a deep breath and felt her skin grow hotter by the memories of their fight; ones she had been replaying non stop in her head all day.

“Well I guess I’m happy he didn’t tell you, if you where to find from someone it should be me.”

“Yes, it should be you.” Felicity nodded and her voice sounded weak and tired. She hated that sound
“why didn’t you tell me?”

“At first I didn’t trust you enough, then I didn’t know how to begin, and as time went by I wanted to protect you from it all.” She pressed her lips together but her pose was straight, she wasn’t apologizing, merely giving her the reasons why.

“I’m not mad.” Felicity said after a moment of silence and Nyssa’s lips turned into a small smile.

“Good. I will tell you all about it now, and you will tell me what happened.”

“Where is Sin by the way?” Felicity asked checking her surroundings for their younger friend, and Nyssa pressed her lips and a small frown appeared on her face.

“She has been staying out a lot lately, she hasn’t really told me what she is up to… I’m trying really hard to give her some space and not snoop too much. I think she is with your friend, Cooper.” Nyssa said.

Felicity felt her back go straighter by the mention of his name, and her stomach tighten suddenly.

“Oh no.” It was all Felicity could say. Nyssa looked confused.

“What?”
“I just… I don’t want Sin spending time with him, that’s all.” Her dark eyes squinted as she studied Felicity’s face.

“What happened? Last time we spoke about him you were hell bent on how great he was, and how horrible Oliver was to him.” Felicity winced slightly at the memories and shook her head.

“Please don’t remind me of that… I was being ridiculous.” She said, pulling her phone out of her bag, opening her tracking app.

“Are you going to track her down? I thought that was only for emergencies.”

“Well this is an emergency, if Sin is anywhere near that sleaze ball it’s a big 911.” And she typed away on her phone and grunted as she realized Sin’s phone was turned off. She must have run out of battery… or Cooper had gotten into her phone and blocked Felicity’s app from working.

She was aware on how paranoid her thoughts where as she held her phone tightly in her hand, eyes lost in a spot in the wall in front of her. She jumped slightly when Nyssa’s hand landed on her shoulder.

“Get us some takeout, I’ll get the wine… you need to tell me what’s going on, you are freaking me out.”

And they stayed up all night talking, briefly about Cooper since she couldn’t really tell Nyssa the things Oliver had confided on her. They also talked about the League of Assassins, Ra’s Al Ghul
and Nyssa’s sister Thalia. They talked about Sara and why she left, about Oliver and the Arrow, and by the end of the night there were three empty Chinese takeout containers in the floor and two empty bottles of red wine.

She quit her job on a Wednesday morning. It hadn’t been an elegant exit either, but more of a angry spat of words to her new supervisor. She quickly packed her belongings onto a box after sending a quick mail to HR asking for them to send the check with her unpaid vacation time to her apartment.

Her new supervisor had not been expecting her to be this explosive, but after she was put on the spot for an error that wasn’t hers in morning’s meeting, realizing quickly after that her new supervisor didn’t know half of what he should to have the job that should be hers, she decided she had enough of Merlyn Inc.

She felt empowered as she walked the parking lot with a smile on her face and her blood still boiling through her veins, and the adrenaline of the moment carried her all the way home, where the realization that she was now jobless hit her hard.

She spent the rest of the day trying to talk herself out of hacking into Queen Consolidates and see what he was up to. It had been five days since she last heard of him, and so far she had done very little peaking into The Arrow business. Knowing that he needed time, she probably take time off as well, to think about her life and why she was making so many rash decisions lately.

Her fingers itched as she lay on her bed with a bowl of ice cream in the nightstand and a warm computer on top of her legs. She decided she was not going to go completely pshyco just yet and just looked for the latest articles that involved the Arrow and Oliver Queen. To her surprise she found out that Oliver had left Starling City that morning, on a business trip to Gotham City.
She found out the location of what she had started to call ‘the lair’ that afternoon. By the end of the day she was getting ready with one of her shorter dresses, a gold number she only got to wear when going out clubbing. She put her hair up in a straight tall ponytail and wore tall black heels.

Nyssa and Sin were still out when she left the house that evening in a cab towards Verdant. It was a slower night so she thought she wouldn’t have much of a hard time getting in the club. There was a reason why she didn’t go out often, and if she did she didn’t frequent the most popular club of the city.

She was stuck in a line with multiple girls that where dressed in far smaller dresses than her and where wearing a lot more makeup, hairspray and perfume.

Felicity regretted not hacking onto the club’s VIP list earlier that day and adding her name in. She had to admit that Verdant had it going, the music was loud and catchy, the DJ was on point, and the most attractive and richest people in town where having fun in the middle of the week.

She walked towards the bar as her eyes studied the place, wondering where the entrance for the lair would be. Wondering if it was in the basement or hidden in some attic in the large old factory that the club was in.

She sat in a stool by the bar after pushing herself in between three girls that had just gotten their drinks, and placed her small clutch on top of the metal table waving her hand slightly to call the attention of the bartender, who was younger man in his early twenties. Handsome, with a square jaw and striking blue eyes.

He glanced at her quickly and made a small signal silently letting her know she would be next. She tapped her fingers softly on the cold table and hummed to the music, her head bobbing slightly.
She couldn’t believe she was here, on top (or bellow) the Arrow’s cave. A small smile tugged in her lips and she found herself looking around once again, wondering if she might be able to sneak in somehow.

The younger man had come to her raising a brow, she wondered if he had a voice at all.

“Well make me anything that will take the edge of the night… preferably something tasty.” He smirked and nodded and was shaking her drink in front of her within second.

Her drink ended up being a sweet and sour grapefruit drink that hardly tasted like alcohol but she could tell by the second sip that had a fair amount of it in it. She might have had two or three of those during the time she sat in that stool.

“Wellicity.” A male voice startled her and she jumped slightly on her bar stool and turned towards the offender, he was tall and strong, with dark skin and short hair. He was imposing and for a moment she thought he might be the bouncer. Probably Oliver had seen her there after all and had decided to kick her out.  

She wouldn’t blame him if he had but she found herself checking the cameras around.

“Well, that would be me.” She said with an unease tone, her eyes squinted taking on his face once again. He looked familiar, she had definitely seen him somewhere before “are you the bouncer that has come to kick me out?”
The words left her lips fluidly and she found herself blushing in front of a very large stranger, that didn’t look like a stranger at all.

“Na, I’m no bouncer.” He said fully amused as he took the seat next to her and made a signal to the bartender. She blinked confused, her eyes studying him closely now; he was wearing a dark gray leather jacket and a black t-shirt, and he smelled like he had just showered, which was a weird thing to notice.

He was probably some sort of bodybuilder, or perhaps a…

“Here you go Diggle.” The bartender said a smile, placing a glass filled with amber liquid and big square ice. Whiskey, she concluded as she brought her own pink drink towards her lips and took a small sip.

Then her mind made the connection towards Oliver’s letter, one she had memorized after reading it repeatedly for the past week. “My bodyguard Diggle”, and she remembered that afternoon she had seen Oliver at the café, when she had been speaking with the one “who shall not be named”.

She gasped wide-eyed, turning to meet his dark entertained look.

“It’s nice to finally meet you… F.” He said and a small smirk pulled his lips to the side and her lips where forming an ‘o’ shape.

“Oh wow, you are… you are the other partner.” She said quickly, probably too loudly and diverted her eyes down while shaking her head “Sorry, I didn’t mean to scream that… it’s just, I have been a bit on edge ever since Central City.”
“I didn’t take you as one to frequent clubs.” He said and the smirk didn’t disappear, he gave a hearty swig to his drink and looked around the bar, it was late and the crowd was dissipating.

“I’m definitely not.” she snorted “I could say the same about you.”

“I happen to be the bodyguard of the owner of this club.” he said simply.

“Yea, but he is out of town so…” Diggle raised a brow and shook his head.

“You have been keeping tabs on him, haven’t you?” he asked and Felicity felt her skin burn as she blushed scarlet red.

“No,” she blinked and was feeling hot and guilty “well maybe a little? How else was I supposed to come in here and check the ‘secret lair’” she said in a murmur and Diggle actually laughed.

“I’m sure he will love that you are calling it a secret lair.”

“He would hate it.” She concluded after a moment of silence.

“Absolutely.” He agreed with a nod.
“So I take it your reason to be here tonight of all nights doesn’t have anything to do with the fact that Oliver is out of town?” he said ironically and Felicity dropped her head slightly.

“Can a girl just have a craving for some tasty drinks? I mean there is people that do that… after they have a particularly hard day at work.” She met Diggle’s eyes and got lost in the deep darkness behind his lashes.

“Is that the reason then?”

“Maybe a little bit of both.” she said and shrugged noncommittally. Diggle nodded and turned towards the bar, his eyes getting lost in the bottles in front of them.

He didn’t know Felicity, not really, but could tell that something was bothering her, something beyond the Arrow, Verdant and their mission. He also knew that whatever had gone wrong in between Oliver and her in Central City needed to get fix, it worried him that his friend was going out during the night, to save the city without his head firmly placed in his shoulders.

Plus Diggle also knew the value that she had inside their team, and how much better they worked with her help.

“Since you are here, do you want to see it?” he asked.

“If by it you mean the lair then yes, no offense because you are a very attractive man and any woman in their right mind would love to see your it. But lately I’m definitely not in my right mind, and it would be weird with Oliver because what I fee…” She let her words die down as she met his gaze again quickly blushing and he raised a brow quizzically. She cleared her throat looking mortified
thinking that maybe she had more than three of those Pink drinks after all.

“Please forget I said anything just now. What I meant to say was ‘yes, that’s why I’m here after all’.”

“Okay.” Diggle said amused and got up from his seat after downing his drink. Felicity tried to imitate his move, but gave herself a headache instead, and complained about how unfair it was that her drink was so cold on the hallway that led them to the Lair’s door.

The place was large and impressive, all concrete and metal and manly things she had seen in gyms. She took it all in awed, checking the corner where there were mats and dummies, and a large strange looking metal ladder that she didn’t know what was for but was sure it was impressive nonetheless.

Then her eyes came onto the computer set up and she found her own feet leading her there. Fingers grazing the soft keys of the keyboard as she hummed slightly shaking her head.

“This setup needs so much work…” she mused and felt Diggle coming a few steps behind her his face fully amused.

“We are definitely not computer guys, but we try.” She nodded and kept looking around, found small table in the back with two foldout chairs, a few lockers and something that looked like a mini fridge and a microwave.

“It’s very manly in here.” She found herself saying all of the sudden and Diggle laughed nodding.

“Wouldn’t hurt us having some extra input for sure… computer wise and else.” She felt her stomach
turn slightly because this was what she wanted; she wanted to be a part of this team. To be with them when they went out on missions (form the computer obviously, she wasn’t a physical fighter unless strictly necessary.)

“I for sure could help with that.” She said quietly “this is all very impressive, I’m glad I got to see it.”

”Why don’t you come around, a day after work, you can work with us… talk us through our mission.” He said, his eyes following her moves. Her finger’s grazed over the letters on the keyboard once again.

“I’m pretty sure Oliver wouldn’t like that.” She mused low and turned slightly around, Diggle had both arms crossed over his chest and was looking at her skeptically.

“I’m pretty sure that’s not true.” he said with resolution and Felicity felt her insides move.

“We fight a lot, him and I… it’s a constant thing.” She said and Diggle was quiet for a moment.

“In my first tour in Afghanistan one of my squad team member’s and I used to always argue… at first it made it hard to feel like we were a team when we disagreed with so much in our downtime.”

“So what did you do?”

“I married her.” Diggle said.
“You w-what?” Felicity felt her face go warm as a blush crept up her neck to her face, and a clear image of Oliver’s face came to her. She shouldn’t feel so warm and fuzzy with the thoughts of marrying Oliver; those feelings should never cross her mind again.

“We married in our second tour, when we realized that thought we disagreed in the smaller things, we agreed on so much more. We made a pretty good team.” Diggle said and a small smile was appearing on his face while he walked a few steps closer to Felicity “look I’m not telling you to marry Oliver, I’m just saying that I think you two make a pretty good team. We make a great team, the three of us.”

“You know I thought you where a woman for a while.” She said after a small moment of silence, feeling like she needed to change the subject or else she wouldn’t be able to get over the disappointment of that fact never coming true.

“Is that so?” he asked with a raised brow, Felicity wrapped her arms around herself to give her body some heat, and nodded with a growing smile.

“Oliver kept saying ‘We need to do this’ ‘We will meet you there’ etc. At first I thought he was referring to me, then it occurred to me it was someone else, another partner.”

“And that makes me a girl because…?”

“Well I figured that it had to be someone close to The Arrow, someone who he spent a lot of time with, someone he trusted a lot. So I deduced it had to be a girlfriend or a wife…” Felicity raised her eyes, that where previously diverted checking her surroundings and felt herself move nervous in her spot.
“But it could be a boyfriend too… I guess I shouldn’t have assumed that the Arrow is not into men, though he does look very heterosexual to me. But that wouldn’t be the first time I’m wrong about that subject… I mean there was Anthony in college, and I was VERY wrong about him being heterosexual—” Felicity tightened her lips close and closed her eyes firmly, cursing herself and her big mouth.

Then she heard it, the soft rumble of a deep laugh that kept building up by the minute, until she opened her eyes and saw Diggle bending his body slightly forward gasping for air.

“Sorry… my mouth sometimes works faster than my brain.” she said in a low tone and Diggle was trying to compose himself, his cheeks slightly red.

“I don’t think I have laughed that hard in a while, I’m sure Oliver would love to hear about him being into dudes” he laughed louder and shook his head “you should really come around more often. I think our ‘lair’ could use some of your lightness.” Diggle said with smirk and Felicity paled slightly and shook her head.

“I don’t think Oliver will like that very much, not with all that went on with both of us in Central City.” She said with a sigh and Diggle shook his head and raised both brows.

“He will come around, plus I don’t think he is as angry as you think he is.”

“I doubt that, he should be angry at me… I was not nice, I even used my loud voice.” she murmured.

“You will get to learn pretty soon that Oliver always blames himself for everything that happens around him. Wouldn’t surprise me if he was blaming himself about your guys fight a week ago.”
“Well great, I feel so much better now.” She mused sarcastically and Diggle’s mouth turned up into a smile.

“If you do decide to come by and work with us in person, instead of hidden in a computer somewhere in Starling City, you know where we are.”

Felicity opened her mouth to respond when she heard the large metal door open and close, followed immediately by quick steps.

“Diggle, we need to take Hanes Michael tomo…” his words died in his mouth suddenly and he stopped on his tracks when their eyes met across the room. Felicity felt her insides turning and she shook fiscally as panic began to run through her body.

“Oh no…” she mused lowly while her eyes widened in shock.

“Oh, yes.” Diggle said and he was smirking. Felicity didn’t feel like she could move, but she didn’t have to, to know that John Diggle had known Oliver Queen was returning home that same night.

Oliver blinked and moved his head to the side squinting, as if his eyes were tricking him into seeing her there. He resumed his steps slower this time, his eyes studying her intently.

“Felicity…?” he asked when his feet hit the bottom floor and she felt like she might pass out on the spot. Because she had too many of those grapefruit drinks to have a filter right now, and he looked too good in his black tailored suit and white shirt to make it easy on her.
“I thought you where in Gotham City.” She blurted out and he rose a brow walking a few steps closer towards her “which is why I decided it would be a good day to come to Verdant and check out… ‘The lair’” she motioned around the room with her finders, feeling her face grow hotter by the second.

“I mean you probably don’t call it that… maybe the Arrow Cave, right? Very unlikely.”

Lowering her eyes towards the ground, she remembered how the last time she had seen him they had been yelling at each other. He looked uncomfortable, shocked to see her there even… but not angry.

The silence that followed was uncomfortable and definite. She raised her eyes towards him and found her guts reacted to the intensity she found there and realized she had to get out of there, pronto.

“I… I should go.” She said quickly and without another word she walked (nearly ran) past him, and was up the stairs and out of the lair in a matter of a minute. Her ears where ringing and she was already walking past the hallway that led her to the club. Music was still playing but softer than before and she could tell there were the last few songs of the night.

She felt the cold air of night hit her hard as soon as she stepped out of the club. Feeling numb with the adrenaline that was still rushing through her body from their brief encounter, she moved almost robotically to the line of people waiting for a cab, when the scent of sandalwood and musk came to her and she knew it was him even before she turned around to see him walking towards her.

Both of his hands were inside his pant pockets and his expression looked slightly guarded but there was hope shining through his bright eyes. She got lost in his eyes from the moment that took him to reach her and they stood in silence for a few seconds.
“I thought you were out tonight. I checked… triple checked in fact. But not in a creepy way, I mean there were paparazzi photos online.” She said and sounded apologetic, looking around knowing well they weren’t alone and they couldn’t really talk “I didn’t mean to intrude like that…”

“Felicity… don’t worry about it.” he cut her mid ramble and he also looked around them, feeling clearly uncomfortable by the people that surrounded them in line “Do you want a ride?” his voice was almost a murmur and she found herself shaking her head before the words even formed in her head, her heart racing a million miles per hour.

“NO.” She said and pressed her lips together blushing “I gathered from the little I heard inside, that you have more important things to do right now than driving me home.”

They moved closer to the pick up spot, she could see she was only a couple people away from being in front of a cab and she was half dreading half anticipating the moment she would be out of there.

“Okay.” He said after a moment knowing well that he couldn’t talk her into it but a small smile pulled at one corner of his lips and she was blinking in shock at the sigh “it was good to see you Felicity, I hope to see you soon.”

“Good night Oliver.” She mused and it was her turn to get in the cab in complete and utter shock.
When Felicity woke up the next morning she was back to feeling miserable and lost. Not only was it a Thursday morning and she was jobless and feeling like an overall failure, but the night before she had taken a peek into something much larger than her lack of a job or her feelings for Oliver.

She stared up at her bedroom ceiling from her bed and grunted as she pulled the covers up to hide under the soft sheets. The thought of him and the realization that there might be deeper feelings buried inside her that she cared to admit, at least out loud made the heavy feeling in her stomach only to grow.

It wasn’t only his Arrow persona, but him; it was always about Oliver with her. For months since she met him. It had hurt her that she had felt that strange pull towards him the night they met, like she hadn’t ever before, but he had been so quick to dismiss her.

But now that she knew better, that she knew him better that one night wasn’t a reason enough to judge him by. So what if he didn’t think of her as an attractive woman, sure it hurt her pride… but it was his prerogative. Who was she to judge him so harshly based on his taste on women?

Her taste was obviously being into someone that was way out of her league. He was a man that was a billionaire during the day, and saved the city at night. He also looked like a freaking GQ model on a daily basis (not that she even read that magazine, but it was an expression).

So she was ready to admit it to herself, she had fucked up badly, and now she had lost the one thing she looked forward everyday. Helping the City.

She was in the middle of a very loud yell of frustration when a soft humming of a song rang inside the walls of her room making her go silent almost instantly. She pulled the covers down and focused in the noise, her sleepy brain trying to figure out if she was going crazy or there was actual music inside her bedroom.
It took her a few seconds to put together that it was her cellphone ringing. Sin had changed the ringtone to a Backstreet Boys song to mock her months ago, she normally had her phone in vibrate so it was a rare occurrence that she actually heard the dammed thing.

She grunted getting up her bed quickly, tumbling towards her purse that rested in the chair near her computer desk. The phone nearly tumbled out of her shaky uncoordinated fingers.

“Hello?” she asked, and her voice sounded rough like someone who had just woken up. She looked at the screen on her phone; it was 8:30 am.

“Miss Felicity Smoak?” it was a soft older woman’s voice.

“Yes?”

“One moment please.” She said and a second later she listed to a soft classical music; she had been put on hold. Her brain was going through the possibilities of this call as she cleared her throat lightly, hoping that whoever was calling her wouldn’t have to hear her monster voice.

“Felicity?” a soft well-spoken British accent talked on the other end.

“Walter?”

“Yes, how are you? I hope I didn’t catch you at a wrong time.” He said and Felicity shook her head
vividly, realizing a little belatedly that he obviously couldn’t see her.

“No, not at all. It has been a while, how is the new job treating you?” she asked conversationally.

“It’s going well, great even… which is why I’m calling you.”

“Oh?”

“Last time we spoke I offered you a position here in QC, now before you say anything I must admit I have been informed that you resigned from Merlyn Global yesterday.”

“Wow, news travel fast.”

“Faster than you think, either way I don’t have much time to speak this morning, but as you well know I have seen you grow professionally for years, and I know your value as an employee. I know you said you had issues with my stepson, which might or might not be personal. It’s not any of my business really. The job I’m offering you has nothing to do with that, but everything to do in my trust on your skills, and my belief that this will be highly beneficial for both you and the company.” He paused and Felicity blinked quickly as she processed all that he had just said, her heart hammering inside her chest.

“I… I don’t know what to say.” She said quite literally, specially since her mouth had been hanging open the entire time he spoke. Her eyes teared up, because she had gone from feeling under appreciated at a job she gave her all to just the day before, to have Walter Steele, a man she not only admired, but someone who had helped her get the foot on the door years ago telling her how much she was appreciated.
“How about you come over to Queen Consolidated later today, just for a quick no strings attached tour on our Applied Science Division floor.”

“Does QC’s CFO always call possible future employees to wow them with awesome speeches? Because if that’s a business move… I think it’s working.” Walter chuckled so softly she would have missed it if she hadn’t been pressing the phone so hardly against her ear.

“Four o’ clock works for you?” she felt the smile tugging at her face and her heart beat go impossibly quicker, because she was about to agree to go to his company, to be wowed by a job she would probably have to turn down. She sighed.

“Four sounds good, thank you Walter. See you at four.”

“Goodbye Felicity.” He said and the call was off, and she let out a breath she didn’t know she had been holding.

Chapter End Notes

So… what did you guys think?? This was a hard chapter for me, like I mentioned before these last few months have been hard for me, and I have been having major writer’s block.

I do want to apologize to all the readers out there for taking so incredibly long on updating this, I will definitely be finishing this story (in fact I’m not writing anything else other than this until it’s finished).

I will try to get a new chapter in two weeks if I feel better (which I hope I will).
Comments always encourage me to write even when feeling like total shit.

I hope you are all as excited for Arrow starting in a week, and see you in a few!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!