Nightwatch

by Brackish

Summary

a.k.a. "Brackish's Smut Workshop"

During the United Nations Conference, Republic City plays host to many of the world's high ranking government officials and elites, including the visiting Chieftain of the Southern Water Tribe.

While he and his family stay in one of Sato Security's famous five-star hotels, CEO Hiroshi Sato, as a sign of good-will, attaches his daughter and apprentice security technician Asami Sato, directly to the over-watch detail of Tonraq's daughter, Korra, a fiery and restless renegade.

"Get to know her," Hiroshi said. "It'll be good to be around someone your age, and to build relationships with the South."

Asami couldn't have agreed more.
Hello there!
If you're familiar, you may have read my other work "Goddamn Mermaids", and in one of the chapters I expressed a desire to write more... smutty narratives. In the end, I felt it would have been both out of place for that story, and unjust to turn it into a writing workshop midway through.

Nightwatch will have no such restrictions. I'm looking forward to getting started on a new project, and trying my hand at a new writing style! (It'll still be similar to GDM though.)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

THIS CHAPTER IS NOT CANONICAL!

This chapter was written as a pilot! I wanted to gauge whether or not people would be interested! Chapter 2 is the true beginning!

But, I mean... you can read this one too... if you want... :)

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12:48 AM, PENTHOUSE SECURITY MONITOR ROOM, DAY 2 OF UNITED CONFERENCE SEASON

Alone in the monitor room, illuminated by the neon gleam of the screens before her, Asami sat cross legged, reclining in her chair, sipping coffee as her eyes scanned camera feed to camera feed, occasionally glancing outside to watch the gentle snowfall play out across Republic Bay. Her phone buzzed softly, marking the ten minute mark before her shift ended for the night, and with a quiet sigh she tugged at the collar of her gunmetal grey shirt, loosening the red tie that all high-ranking security detail were required to wear, eventually pulling it free and unbuttoning the top of her shirt. She stood to stretch, yawning, and stepped away from her console momentarily to survey her reflection in the glass windows. Her hair was tied high in a ponytail, her signature curls bundled tight. She patted down her suit pants, smoothing out the creases formed from sitting cross legged for extended periods of time. Asami sighed, resting her forehead on the cold glass, watching snowflakes dance across the cold outside breeze, melting against the lights that lined the walkway outside.

Dull, impossibly, unforgivably dull. Why did they even need me here?

Asami heard a faint beep, signalling new movement on one of the monitors. With great effort, she pulled herself away from the snowy night vista, and returned to her station. A green light blinked above one of the monitors, labelled [CENTRE FOYER CAM3], indicating that her charge had decided for once to step outside of her bedroom. Finally - done sulking in your room, princess? Asami stared at the monitor intently, the low resolution image slowly coming into focus.
When it did, Asami gasped softly.

Woah.

Though Sato Security cameras were top of the line, that line didn't go very far. Technology had come along way, and sure, there were no competitors in the global market, but it left much to be desired. Despite that, Asami stared at the low resolution feed, watching the girl on the screen walk across the foyer, draped in nothing but a silken bath robe, tied at the waist, but chest left brazenly bare. Of what Asami could see, the Chieftain’s daughter was built; A body of the most glorious bronze complexion, the silk sleeves clung tightly to her arms and shoulder, and held itself short enough to tease the definition of her legs, leading to the upper thigh. The neckline draped low, revealing a toned, rippled stomach, and the hint of firm, taut breasts. Her hair was short, but long enough to be tied up into a topknot that bobbed lazily as its owner flopped down onto a couch. Before Asami could catch her breath, the other girl's gaze glanced straight at the camera, and gave a coy smile.

Ah... Asami caught herself, a spot of drool dripping on the back of her hand; she hastily wiped it on the leg of her pants. As she continued to stare, her hand traced her own collarbone, now free of the tie and top buttons. She bit her lip, running a finger along the ridge of her shoulder, cautiously sliding down into her shirt to feel the line of her bra. The figure on the screen reclined, slipping an arm free of the robe, running fingers along her own toned leg. Asami slipped her hand deeper, gently circling a breast, a nipple. She gasped again at the touch.

I love this job.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed that introduction! If you know me, then you know that I'm quite busy at the moment, but I'm thinking of doing shorter chapters with more frequent publications. This chapter may be a bit expressly short, mainly to probe the waters and see how people respond to this fic i.e. whether they're interested or intrigued at least.

In fact, this first chapter may not have any bearing canonically on the story at all - it's more of a trailer I suppose. More tags, more details, more information will be updated as the fic progresses.

Anyway, as always please leave a comment if you've got anything to say - I reply to them all! If you want to contact me on tumblr, I'm at citriic.tumblr.com. Thanks for everything~!
Chapter Summary

Asami sits bored in a meeting with her father, surrounded by their faceless drones. She’d rather be somewhere else; somewhere more intimate.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

10:22 AM, SATO TOWER ONE, MAIN BOARDROOM, PRE-CONFERENCE WEEK

Honestly, who would say anything if I fell asleep? All these people are dad's employees, which kinda makes them my employees. Fuck, I probably would if my thighs weren't melting.

Asami fidgeted in her seat uncomfortably - choosing the leather seat by the window on a hot day, while wearing a skirt, probably wasn't one of her better ideas. She would have switched seats sooner, but the boardroom filled quickly. Hell if i'm going to be standing. She had awkwardly shifted her weight from side to side in an attempt to relieve herself of the scorching sensation, and gingerly leaned back when the chair was no longer a grill. Still, it was far from comfortable.

I wish dad would just hurry through this fucking meeting. Sweet Raava, then I could go for a bath.

Hiroshi stood by the other end of the table, heading the meeting and discussing the plans for all Sato Security hotels for the upcoming event. Apparently, there was to be a summit in Republic City, but Asami had never really been one to care for politics. Just let me chill in my workshop, pleasease. But her father had insisted, and who was she to deny her father that? Her father, who denied her everything else.

In a way, she understood - he was just being protective. Republic city wasn't exactly the safest place in the world, no, that honour still belonged to Zaofu. Still, Hiroshi hadn't exactly locked her away in a tower awaiting a prince either.

No, he just forbids me from leaving the city, from being out after eleven, from drinking when out, from bringing home people, from staying over someone else's place, from visiting bars altogether - apart from all that, I'm free to do as I please. Sure.

Asami sighed. It wasn't that bad, but still, she was almost twenty-two, and the experiences of the city still eluded her. Most days, she put it out of her head - she wasn’t going to start an argument with her father, and her workshop and wealth provided more than ample distraction.

Ample distraction, that would have been Godsend at a moment such as this. Asami dwelled on the thought; I could still be in my PJ's right now, eating a whole loaf of cinnamon toast in bed. She ran a finger along the frilled button-line of her sleeveless blouse, eventually deciding to place her hands on her short black pencil skirt so she would stop distracting herself from what was surely an important meeting her father had in store.

"... for that, we'll have to ensure that all rooms are stocked and ready to go. I've also called in surplus staff, just to make sure all rooms are fully accounted for, should they request services..."
Our company deals in security, and here I am listening to a meeting about hotel maintenance.

"... kitchen staff will be operating twenty-four seven, and, yes I know it will be tiring, but I'm making sure you all will be compensated..."

Fuck it, I'm definitely taking a bath after this, and if I've got time, then definitely -

"... Asami, did you hear that?"

Asami jolted forward. She had almost lost herself to her daydream fantasy. She looked to her father, nodding.

"Good. Then I'll see you at seven."

Shit. Wait.

"Alright father - but what should I call them when speaking to them?" Asami may not care for these things, but she was sharp. History reminded her that if her father wanted her to be anywhere around dinnertime, then it was probably because he wanted to show off his prized daughter to a VIP.

Hiroshi rifled through his notes. "I'm not too sure, to be honest. To be safe, just follow the introduction, and avoid using names or titles - just speaking to him directly should be fine. If you have to refer to him when talking to someone else, just say 'The Chief of the Southern Water Tribe', that'll do fine."

Chief. Wow. Asami nodded again, and as soon as Asami was sure her father had moved on to the next talking point, she leaned back into her seat and continued to daydream, of a world without boardroom meetings.

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"Asami, you were paying attention at today's meeting, weren't you?"

"Of course father."

Hiroshi furrowed his brows, but a look of calm soon washed over his face. "Alright, well I need to sort out a few more things before the dignitaries arrive. I'll see you tonight, sweetheart."

Asami nodded, and gave her father a quick hug, before closing and locking the door to her chambers behind her. Her quarters in Sato Tower One were extravagant; some even said that Asami Sato's quarters were even grander than her fathers - though because her father didn't spend much time in his, due to his busy nature.

Asami sighed, quickly unfastening the buttons of her blouse and undoing the zip of her pencil skirt. She strode across the foyer of her personal lounge tucking her thumbs into the sides of her skirt, shimmying it loose, stopping by the bar to snatch up a short cider and a bottle opener. It is only midday, after all. She looked behind her to see her garments strewn about the room. I'll clean it up later. By the time she entered her bathroom, she was dressed only in her underclothes.

The lights faded softly in, a shine rolling across the marble surfaces. Asami strolled across the great mirror above the basin vanity, eyeing her own curves with a sly grin. I know it's bad, but I sure do look good. She laughed at her own terrible, textbook self-seduction. She fiddled with the light
dimmer, until it was dark enough to satisfy her.

Asami walked over to her sunken ceramic bath, and played with the faucets until the water felt just right; scalding hot coming straight out, but perfect when it filled up. She pulled a handful of lavender bath salts from the vanity, and tossed them lazily into the steaming waters.

The bottle cap popped off, rattling across the bathroom floor, the drink's foam surging wildly forth, only to dribble languidly down Asami's fingers. *Shit, remind me to be more careful when carrying them next time.* She licked the foam off her fingers, the tart taste of apple bringing a smile to her face. She chased it with a small sip, the tart followed by the sweet, the softest burn travelling down her throat. She took another, then placed the bottle on the vanity while she fully disrobed, the sound of surging waters filling the bath, filling the room.

Asami's underwear lay discarded by the door, while Asami herself surveyed her reflection in the vanity mirror. She ran a slender finger across her collar bone, eyeing the slight tan-line that had developed. She raised an arm, tracing her shoulder, to the side of her ribcage, towards her chest and across a supple breast, across a nipple. She cupped her breasts, if only for the sake of feeling them. She grinned sheepishly at her own reflection. "Sorry, couldn't resist."

She turned, cupping a firm cheek, pinching it slightly to glance at the back of her thighs. She *asked:* the hot leather of the seat left them shiny and red, raw to the touch. *Great. Singed. She turned back to face the mirror fully, running a hand over her smooth stomach. I gotta start working out again.* The other traced her mound, feeling soft hairs bristle against her fingers. *Maybe I should shave too.* Asami tensed her legs, standing on her toes, watching her leg muscles tighten, and release. *Eh, maybe I don't have to work out.*

She picked up her drink again, stepping back to the bath to turn off the faucets. She ran a finger through the water, savoring the humidity and the sharp scent of lavender that hung to the steamy air like syrup. Gingerly, she stepped into the bath, lowering herself slowly until she was fully immersed. She sighed, her voice echoing in the empty bathroom. Carefully, she reached out of the bath to grasp her drink, taking a gulp this time. Perhaps her father was right to forbid her drinking out - she was an incredible lightweight, and even a few sips of cider were enough to warm her cheeks and bring the fatigue. The bottle came down with a soft *clink* as Asami replaced it on the side of the bath. She closed her eyes, a nagging urge pecking at her, frustrating her. She thought the bath would have been enough, but evidently not.

*Ah well.* She allowed her mind wander - faceless figures danced across her mind, slender, muscular, broad in chest and well endowed. Others rolled across fields of feathers, alluring eyes and pert, rounded breasts, much like her own, playing with leg and limb, blowing kisses to her mind. With eyes still closed, she took her own in her hand, a nipple between forefinger and thumb. Asami cried out softly as she squeezed, biting her lip gently in sync with her touch.

The figures grew more vivid. Wild ones took each other slowly into their mouths, tongues a frenzy of sensuous taste. Teeth traced nipples not hers, and fingers slipped into wetness, or curled to grasp a member. Silent groans and moans echoed in Asami's mind, a cacophony of pleasure in a theater of flesh. She slipped a hand deep into the waters, to feel about her soft sex. A real groan escaped her lips, which she quickly hushed, as if afraid the world itself were waiting behind the door to her bathroom, listening intently for a hint of sin.

She slipped a finger inside her, a phantom hand in her mind mimicking her every move. She clasped her other upon her mouth, her face furrowed in cries of pleasure, her eyes shut to watch the dancers. She watched a figure thrust deep in another, she watched two suckle upon each other, she watched a woman fuck her lover. To her, she was every and all, and to all they wanted her.
Asami fell into rhythm, and slipped in another. She rode her hand, and let no gasp escape her mouth. She squirmed, she slipped a finger to touch her tongue, and bit down softly, whilst she curled the other hand, reaching deeper. She rocked in the bath, the waters splashed softly above the edge, sending soft waves cascading down to run across the marble floor.

She felt it nearing, the glorious horizon. All at once, the dancers fell in, touching themselves, wild hands in rhythmic fervor, and feeling every sense erupt in ecstasy. Asami grasped the side of the bath, and with the other she found her spot. She rode it hard, and the dancers roared, and all at once they found themselves, bathed in their own juices, sweet sighs of bliss.

Asami groaned slowly, her body throbbing, her chest heaving and slowly she rode it down, her fingers still inside her, feeling her soft sex pulsing with her heart. She ran her free hand through her hair, and over her face, the scent of lavender trickling down over her eyes, and down her cheek. At the bottom of it all, she sighed sleepily, smiling. She freed her hand, and almost immediately her body longed for another touch. *Give me a moment.*

She reached for her bottle with her free hand, and brought the other to her lips to kiss her knuckles. She leaned back into the tub, resting her head on the ceramic ledge. She sipped her cider, a dribble of cold trickling down her chin, leaving a trail of goosebumps across her neck.

She placed the bottle back on the ledge, and ran the tips of her fingers slowly along her thighs, meeting again at her sex, that urged eagerly again for her touch. She looked to the bronze clock that hung by the door.

*Eh, I've got time for more.*

Chapter End Notes

Oh my Goodness! The response to the first chapter was fantastic! Thanks to each and every one of you who commented, read, and gave kudos! Much love to you all :)

As I said, I'm using this fic as a bit of a workshop to write more ... intimate scenes. So apologies if it comes across as awkward or clumsy. Let me know what you think! Please :)

If you didn't read the notes for the last chapter, then let me remind you that the first chapter was just a taste of the story - it's noncanonical (at the moment anyway) to this fic, and the true chapter one is this one!

I'd like to update this more regularly than my previous fic (Goddamn mermaids), so I'm going for a different writing style; shorter, less narrative (less overarching narrative anyway, there'll still be semblance and reason from chapter to chapter, continuity and all that), and more exploratory writing, which means it can vary in length. This means I should be able to update more regularly! Hopefully. C:

Anyway, as always please let me know what you think, leave a comment below, or send me something through tumblr! (citriic.tumblr.com) Thanks for reading!
Two's A Party.

Chapter Summary

A dull night for Asami, until she bumps into a stranger who invites her out into the town.

Chapter Notes

Whoo! I got so caught up in the idea that I wrote the previous chapter in a hurry, and then had trouble coming up with the following chapter! But, here it is, hopefully not too long of a waiting period.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

5:38 PM, SATO TOWER ONE, ASAMI SATO'S PRIVATE QUARTERS, PRE-CONFERENCE WEEK


Asami groaned in the darkness, the gogginess of her nap hanging over her like a storm-cloud. She stretched, splaying out across her bed, not quite sure which way the bedhead was facing, or whether or not she was still on her bed or simply curled up in her sheets lying on the floor. The alarm on her phone screamed through the room.

"...Hnnnnnnnnnurghhhhhhhh..." Asami rubbed her eyes fiercely. Why can't I take naps. Why does everyone else in the fucking world feel good after a nap but I feel like death. Frankly, it's my fault for still taking them.

Asami grumbled her way out of bed, rolling down her top that had hitched up around her neck in her sleep, scratching her stomach as she stumbled into her bathroom. She eyed her reflection wearily, her hair frizzled in almost every direction.

Asami, you look like absolute shit.
"Asami! You look absolutely stunning!"

Asami stood in the centre of the ballroom, decorated in a cocktail dress, her gossamer silks of deep red drifting in a sea of colours from individuals, clad in robes and suits, sashes and long sweeping gowns. Waiters weaved through the crowd, balancing silver platters of champagne and exotic delicacies, feeding and watering the roaring bureaucracy.

Asami made what small-talk she could stand, a well-rehearsed laugh here and there. A modest orchestra stood at the far end of the room, filling the halls with sounds of opulence, just barely audible above the din of conversation.

Hiroshi Sato strode through the crowd, waving Asami over to two strangers dressed in blues and whites, furs and wraps. "Asami! Come, meet the Chieftain of the Southern Water Tribe!"

He was strong, tall and stocky, built. Who Asami presumed was his wife, was slender in face, but matronly. To each, Asami extended a hand, and took each other.

"A warm welcome, to our Republic city, and to yours, as you stay." Asami said.

"Many thanks," The Chieftain spoke. "Ah, it's a shame that our daughter did not feel well enough to attend this, most generous reception. She would have been about your age, I think."

Hiroshi shook his head. "A great shame indeed. It would have made for an excellent opportunity."

Asami smiled apologetically. *Some Southern Water Princess? Sure. Whatever. *"I wish her a quick recovery. Perhaps when she is well, I can show her about the city? It would be my great pleasure."

The Chieftain's wife laughed softly. "It wouldn't surprise me to find she would had already been about the city, before you had a chance to take her. She's... an adventurer, my daughter."

Again, the laugh came from Asami's lips. A few more songs, a few more drinks, a few more minutes, the evening came and passed. Between words, Asami slipped her phone from her clutch, checking the time for when she could surreptitiously make her escape, when it would be late enough that it would not arouse suspicion.

At a quarter to eleven, Asami made her apologies, bode her guests a goodnight, and slipped from the ballroom.

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**10:53 PM, SATO TOWER ONE, EASTERN ELEVATOR COLUMN, PRE-CONFERENCE WEEK**

Asami stood alone, waiting by the elevator, her dress swaying she she shifted her hips from side to side. Asami smiled as she ran a finger along the split in the dress, and relished in the way it accentuated her curves, the way it showed just enough thigh. She gazed into her reflection in the dull bronze shine of the elevator door.

*Not bad Asami, not bad at all.* Asami considered carrying her heels back to her room; no-one would see her at this point. Those who had made their leave, would have left hours ago. By this point, anyone still at the reception would be there till dawn. Asami leaned forward, her hand wandering down the neckline of her dress, tugging slightly on the cleavage, giggling at the way her body reacted.
Finally, the elevator gave a soft *ding*, signalling a ready carriage. Asami stood at the door, but when it opened, she walked headfirst into a stranger.

"Shi-"

"Ow- fu-"

Asami stepped back, an outburst ready, but whatever anger she felt disappeared in wisps at the sight of the stranger.

She was dark, with short cropped black hair peaking out under the fur hood of a puffer jacket. Beneath that, the stranger wore a tank top several sizes too small, revealing a toned midriff that almost brought Asami to her knees. Baggy sweats were tucked into leather strapped snow boots; she looked ready to head into a storm.

But it was her eyes that captivated Asami; Bright, ice-blue, sharp and keen. Before them, Asami felt bare, naked.

Blue.

"Easy, Red." The stranger said, smirking, with a rugged flamboyancy. "Almost got to third base there."

"Excuse me?" Asami said. It was all she could muster.

She laughed. "Relax. I'm just messing with you." Blue flashed a wink, before stepping to the side to head down the hallway, but paused before she rounded the corner.

"Hey." Blue said. "I'm bored. Come explore the city with me."

"I'm sorry?"

"Or," Blue said, leaning against the wall. "Let me buy you a drink. How about that?"

Asami's mind raced. *Who does this girl think she is?* "Uh, no thanks. I have prior engagements."

Blue flashed a grin. "No you don't."

No. I don't. Asami returned the smile. "What are you, a mind-reader?"

The other scoffed. "If you actually had plans, you'd be in the elevator by now."

Asami's heart skipped a beat. *Wow I'm an idiot.* She turned to gaze into the empty elevator, still waiting for a new passenger.

"C'mon." Blue said. "Every adventurer needs a sidekick. I'm in a new city, I'm bored, you're gorgeous and would make excellent arm-candy."

Asami laughed, pondering the offer. What was she going to do anyway? She was going to go to her room, strip off, maybe watch a film, have a drink, and concede another night in her tower. Alone.

Or, she could run off into the night with this stranger. This stranger, so puckish, who looked at Asami with a curious hunger, and who Asami would gladly return the gaze.

*You know what?*
Let's fucking do it.

Asami turned to face the stranger. "What's your name?"

Blue raised an eyebrow. "Korra."

Asami waved her towards the other end of the hallway, away from the elevators, towards a flight of stairs. "Come with me, Korra."

"What's that way, Red?"

Asami threw a smirk over her shoulder.

"Our ride."

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11:06 PM, REPUBLIC CITY STREETS, PLEASURE DISTRICT, PRE-CONFERENCE WEEK

"Really?" Asami said.

"Yeah, I've never been. What 'bout you?"

"Once or twice. Not this place though, went to a place outside of RC."

They stood staring on the opposite side of the street, gazing at the bright neon building looming before them. Save for the giant, glowing, curvaceous woman, the front was entirely featureless, jet black brick, windowless, patterned with air-conditioning units, and a small alcove where a large, surly looking man stood, waiting.

Asami turned to her evening companion. She could see the pink neon reflected in the bright blue eyes, an eagerness beneath them. Korra turned, catching Asami’s eye, and grinned.

"Let's go."

The bouncer grunted to let them past. Asami wondered if they would have had such an easy time getting in if they were men; a thought that didn't last long.

Whatever the establishment was using for soundproofing, they had invested well. Blearing slow jazz, loud from every angle filled the halls. Pristine red carpets ran from entrance to bar, and lead from alcove to alcove, where smooth wooden tables hosted primped cushions and private resting areas. Asami was surprised - her concept of a strip-club was one of sordid filth. Here, the floors were free of debris, and much of the staff looked lively for the hour.

The lights were dimmed, but the dull glow from the spotlights gave the brass poles a glimmering sheen. Each nook had its own pole, but the centre stage was the most well lit, that shot out into a catwalk into the main floor with a silver pole in the centre. Just beneath the catwalk, separating the platform and the customers, was a sunken bar that lined the catwalk, where gorgeous barmaids served every poison with a smile.

Korra seemed lost in her own world, her gaze cast longingly at a waitress behind the counter, softly biting her lip, her hands stuffed deep into her pockets. Asami tapped her lightly on the shoulder,
pulling her from her endless.

"How about that drink?"

They found an empty pair of stools that faced the centre stage, straight on. Asami lipped her cocktail slowly, but Korra necked her beer with vigor, and motioned for another.

"Jeez." Asami said coyly. "Am I that bad of a date?"

Korra snorted, grinning. "One hell of a first date venue, ey?" She blushed as the waitress returned with a fresh drink, fingers trailing a moment longer over the cold glass, smiling at Korra.

The lights dimmed further. A figure emerged from the curtains, met with cheers and applause. Asami's heart fluttered.

Asami whispered. "One hell of a view."

The dancer stepped out, dressed in a smile and a sheer one-piece, barely there to inflame the imagination. Her blonde hair swayed from side to side as she strut down the walkway, throwing a kiss, a wink, a flirtatious wave towards Korra, who slammed her drink down and roared. Asami grinned at the response the dancer evoked from her companion, but blushed heavily when the blonde slid a hand provocatively down her cleavage while studying Asami intently.

"Hah," Korra said, elbowing Asami. "And here I thought I was the charmer."

Asami couldn't take her eyes from the dancer, who had begun to wrap her legs around the silver pole, fingers dancing evocatively along the metal member, moans lost to the music slipping from luscious lips as she pressed herself against it, sliding down, legs spreading wide.

Oh...

Korra snorted, a sense of impatience in her pose. "Hey." She said, placing a hand on Asami's shoulder. A slight shake tore Asami's gaze from the sultry figure, and Korra pointed towards the private rooms.

"What do you think?"

Asami turned back to Korra, a breathless laugh escaping her lips.

Asami teased. "And here I thought we came for the company of others."

Korra flushed. "Honestly?" She leaned in close, to whisper in Asami's ear. "You make me feel something fierce, and," She said, placing a hand delicately on Asami's knee. When she understood Asami's permission, she slid it slowly up her leg, "I want to see more."

Asami rose, heart full of vim and vigor. She took Korra's hand, and led her to the silk folds, turning to throw one last longing glance at the blonde dancer. They stepped under silk curtains, to a deep red hallway, and were met with a podium, behind which stood a woman dressed in all black.

"A ladies night, is it?" The hostess. She gestured to a room by the back, where the two companions followed, too caught up in the haze of alcohol and dim lights, heavy music and deep, dark thrills to realize they were still holding hands. They stepped softly along the hallway, catching glimpses into the private areas beside them, minutes of flesh and moans and gasps of ecstasy slipping from silken quarters. They heard laughter, clinking of bottles, and noises less wholesome, lewd and primal sounds and the orchestra of flesh on flesh, skin on skin. A thrumming found itself in Asami's heart,
and her grip tightened, eager.

The Hostess parted a heavy red curtain, revealing a small circular room with a pole in the centre that reached from floor to ceiling, without a table. A soft-looking couch ran around the circumference of the room, of which was no wider than the hallway. Sitting across from each other, Asami and Korra's shoes could touch.

"Forgive me, ladies," The Hostess said, "But here we discuss terms of payment up front, though it may... spoil your appetite, it is in everyone's best interest."

The companions shared a look, and pulled satchels from pockets and purses. They flashed their green before the hostess, Korra's almost matching Asami's.

*Woah. She's, pretty loaded.*

"So," Korra inquired. "What can we get with this?"

The Hostess smiled at the wealth. "With your benefit, we can accommodate any taste, any pleasure, any discretion."

Korra looked to Asami, a lop-sided smile. "Well... where you do you want to start?"

Asami didn't skip a beat, she spoke the first thought that came to mind.

"The dancer outside. The blonde."

The hostess smiled a knowing smile, and bowed low, slipping out between the curtains. Asami looked to Korra, who had leaned back into her part of the couch, propped up on an elbow.

"Good choice." She said, grinning. Asami smirked, but blushed at her own loose tongue.

As hidden speakers filled the private room with sensual and sensuous melodies, two waitresses stepped in, carrying buckets of ice and an array of drinks to quench any thirst. *Almost any thirst.* Asami thanked her waitress, and turned to see Korra holding the other in her lap.

"What?" Korra said, unapologetic, when she met Asami's surprised gaze. The flustered waitress took the moment to slip off of Korra's lap, giggling her leave. "Pshh. I had a thing going there, she was cute."

"Please, if I had known you would have settled for the waitress, I wouldn't have bothered agreeing to come back here." Asami said, laughing.

"Oh?" Korra said, leaning forward. "And what did you agree to here?" Korra's tongue danced on the tips of her teeth. She ran a free hand along her midriff, playing with the hem at the bottom of her shirt, tracing the cords of her pants. "This?"

Asami leaned back into her own couch, legs parting slightly. She could feel the warmth, the heat of the room, the comfort of her drink. She smiled at Korra, biting her lip, who laughed and rolled over.

The curtains parted, and the dancer stepped inside. Up close, Asami relished in every little detail of the stranger. Platinum blonde curls, flowing carelessly, bobbing as she stepped up to Korra. Her body was carved in exquisite fashion, heels showing off lithe, smooth legs, and firm cheeks, the sheer outfit running tenderly between her legs, up her back. Asami's eyes widened as she turned, firm, supple breasts, perky, a hushed gasp slipping from her lips as the dancer leaned forward, running a hand gentle over them, her hands barely being able to hold them, the slightest hint of a nipple, erect,
wanting.

Her face was all Asami could have wished for. Dark, midnight, bedroom eyes, fluttering, hypnotizing, senselessly alluring. Asami felt lost in them. A pure, round face, with a dainty pointed chin, and thick luscious lips, slightly ajar, kissable.

A primal urge growled within Asami, wanting to tear the sheer one-piece from the dancer's body, to ravage what lied underneath, to hear her moan as she slipped her fingers inside, to hear her calling her name, to feel those lips on every inch of her body. Asami crossed her legs, feeling her sex throbbing, her chest moving in deep breaths, the slightest brush against her nipples made her beast roar. The blonde began to dance, to move so smoothly, every motion a fluid stroke, as if she was gliding through the deepest waters. She raised her arms above her head, turning slowly, her legs moving in tandem, hips swaying. She brought her hands down, running through her hair, to trace lines down her neck. She moaned slightly as she flickered them across her breasts, dancing across her hips to run lucky fingers across her mound.

Korra was leaning forward, elbows on her knees, a drink in one hand and the other on her chin, a crooked grin plastered on her face, a look of eagerness, of lust. Asami's eyes fell past the dancer between them, to land on Korra, and for a moment she felt Korra's gaze on her. She fell into the ice-blue, the broad shoulders, the thin, tight top beneath the jacket, the sight of hard nipples, poking through...

*I'm going to lose my fucking mind.*

The dancer began to work the pole, both hands pressed against the pole, one raised above her head. The dancer slipped her heels off, placing a foothold on the pole, her body a wave, pressing the pole between her breasts, kissing the pole gently, a tongue leaving a slick trail as she licked the silver. She dropped down, pressing herself in full view of Asami, quickly moving back up to turn and spin, the pole between her cheeks, to run a finger down Korra's cheek, to caress her chin. Asami could barely stand it, her hands almost belonging to another. They danced across her lap, and eased her own legs apart, creeping towards the wetness. The dancer stepped aside, running her hands over her shoulder to shrug a sleeve off, then the other, cupping her breasts, barely covering anything of her own voluptuous desire.

Korra roared in glee as the dancer's bodysuit fell to the floor. The dancer smiled in earnest, mock shyness, covering her body from view, one hand across her chest, the other to flutter over her sex. Slowly she raised her hands, moving back on the pole, and in the darkness Asami's eyes widened as her eyes danced over the blonde's perfect nipples, and gasped as she bent down to reveal every inch of her pink, wanting, wet, and keen.

Before Asami realized, Korra was standing, shrugging her puffer jacket to the floor. She spoke with a low growl, a wicked smile across her face.

"Come here, sweet. Let me taste you."

The blonde laughed, stepped away from the pole. Standing, she was slightly taller than Korra, and pushed her back onto the couch, climbing on to her to straddle Korra's lap. Asami moved to watch the two women face to face, Korra's hands gripping the seats of the couch cushions beside her, the blondes hands running through Korra's short cropped hair, her thick lips moving to meet Korra's eager, panting breath.

Asami watched as the two tongues danced, watched eagerly as Korra's hands moved up thick thighs to grasp a cheek. Asami let out a lustful laugh as the blonde turned to her, still straddling Korra, who
was burying her face in the dancer's neck, moving down to her chest, the dancer slapping her own thigh and moaning loudly, leaving it pink. She turned back to face Korra, motioning to lift off her top, which Korra eagerly obliged.

*Oh, spirits.* Asami bit her lip, eyes eagerly taking in the sight of Korra's naked chest, smaller than the dancers, but toned, taut, pierced. As the dancer left a trail of kisses down Korra's neck, Asami slipped her hand under her dress, to peel the thin layer of cloth from her mound, wet, sticky. She gasped, her sex throbbing, pulling it aside to run a finger over her slit, squirming from the tickling sensation. Fingers danced as Asami watched the dancer take a nipple into her mouth, staring up into Korra's eyes as her lips trailed wet lines across Korra's chest, who moaned and heaved her chest in heavy sighs of pleasure. Korra's eyes flitted in ecstasy, one hand running fingers through the dancer's hair, the other tracing circles along her thigh.

"Korra..." Asami moaned softly, one hand slowly stroking her sex, the other running slender fingers through her own hair. Korra looked up, over to where Asami was pleasuring herself.

"J-just..." Asami stammered, her body urging her forward. "Just... let her fuck you already, please?"

A glimmer seemed to pass over Korra's eyes. She laughed, nudging the dancer off her chest. Korra stood, and turned to face the blonde sitting naked on the couch, and tucked her thumbs into her trousers.

"Take them off." Korra whispered to the dancer. Dutifully, the blonde rose to her knees on the couch, and leaned forward to slip a hand down Korra's front, and pulled them to the floor. Korra flexed her legs, Asami gazing at taut cheeks, the muscles in her thighs.

"Good." Korra whispered again. "Now use your beautiful lips."

The dancer placed her hands on Korra's hips, placing delicate kisses on Korra's stomach, moving down to her legs, either side of her thighs. When they finally met with Korra's sex, she heaved a shuddering gasp, a moan, a bite of her tongue, running fingers through the blonde's hair. Asami groaned, her body shaking in waves, yet not quite reaching.

Korra fell back into the couch, the blonde moving forward to accommodate. Louder, Korra moaned, taking a nipple in her own hands as the blonde's tongue danced, darting to taste Korra's intimate body, who writhed in pleasure.

It came quickly, Korra's back arcing high, pressing herself against the couch, her hands running through blonde hair, laughing, panting, groaning. The blonde looked to Korra, smiling in satisfaction, as Korra slumped back into the silk cushions.

Korra spoke, softly. "Go to her, sweetling. Give her all you gave me."

The dancer turned to Asami, still wrapped in the discarded folds of her dress, a leg raised on the couch. She walked slowly, running her hands over her own body, kneeling before the other. Asami wanted it, desperately, longingly. Her beast purred in anticipation of the touch of another, and roared as the blonde placed her lips, caressing Asami's inner thigh, miming the work she had done to Korra.

Asami almost screamed in pleasure, as the blonde's tongue pierced her. She closed her eyes, relishing in the sensation of touch, whole and completely. The dancer's hands reached to stroke Asami's back, tracing delicate circles down her slender back.

Asami shuddered at the touch, of the dancer's tongue, sending waves of pleasure that prickled her
skin with every stroke, every touch, reaching deep inside her to send her wildest thoughts into chaotic ecstasy. She felt a second set of hands, rougher, but gentle in touch. When she opened her eyes, Korra was lying across her lap, holding her chest, her lips placed against Asami's navel.

Korra's eyes begged permission. Asami took a free hand, in between gasps of roaring sensation, stroked the side of Korra's cheek, and drew her to a nipple. Korra took it into her mouth, all the time meeting Asami's gaze, the intense ice blue bringing forth a surging sensation. Korra rose to Asami's neck, and then to her mouth, parting her gasping lips with her tongue, stealing kisses between Asami's moans as the dancer's strokes between her legs.

"K-Korra, I... A-ah!" Asami's arms wrapped around Korra, drawing her tight as the waves reached crescendo, and crashed, sending shaking quakes through her body, moaning vivaciously, as Korra continued to meet her lips, their bodies pressed tight against each other. She rode it down, powerful, legs twitching, she felt the dancer slow, stroking her thighs, caressing her soft, sensitive sex, that pulsated with the collapse, the endless pleasure, each wave matching her slowing breath.

When the time came, all that remained was quiet, the soft music that filled the rooms, filled their ears again, and the women ceased to move, but merely to lay there, the urging feeling of lust sated, for now. After that, the dancer stood, thanking them for their patronage, dressed herself and made her leave, not before calling for drinks for the room. She bowed low and left the room, leaving the two other lovers entangled in each other's arms, silent but for the sound of slow, heaving sighs, and deep complacent breaths.

They stayed curled up, smiling in each other's arms. Naked. Listening. Pure. For that moment, as far as they knew, they were the only two people in the world.

After an eternity, Korra broke the silence. She spoke, slightly out of breath. "You... You're one hell of a gal."

Asami laughed. "Yeah. You too."

Korra snorted, and curled up tighter to Asami's body, her heat radiating. Asami closed her eyes, smiling softly to herself, pushing her face into Korra's hair, listening to the faint sound of her breathing.

In the dark, she could feel their hearts beating in tandem.

Somewhere, at some point, she closed her eyes.

This...

Somewhere, at some point, sleep consumed her.

******************************************************************************************************************

9:43 AM, ???, PRE-CONFERENCE WEEK
She woke, some time later, in a familiar bed. Sun broke her sleep, and she rolled over in her haziness. Faintly, she saw a note, propped on her bedside table. On the center of the note, a kiss, in bright red. Asami turned the note over.

"-K."

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading! There's not much to say, other than I hope you enjoyed reading it, as much as I enjoyed writing it. Again, there's is an overarching plot, but it's not as important as the events of each chapter themselves, as I'm using this fic as a sort of training exercise.

I will be updating this fic over the next few days with minor changes as I see them, and to change the tags and such of the overall fic, so it may come up in the fandom page as updated for the next few days.

As always, let me know what you think, either in the comments section here, or over at my tumblr! http://citriic.tumblr.com/

Any sort of feedback, is very much appreciated!
Gifts Ungiven.

Chapter Summary

Asami meets with the Daughter of the Southern Water Tribe, and plans for an eventful evening.

Chapter Notes

Woah! That took forever. I've been real busy, what with coming home from overseas, to working like crazy and being sick. But you didn't come for excuses did you? No! You came for Nightwatch! So here's some Nightwatch!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

6:56AM, ASAMI'S CHAMBERS, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY ONE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT.

Asami stared aimlessly into her kitchen, groaning slightly from the delirium of an early morning. She had slept like a log, blissful dreams and recollections, but her body clock had never recovered from sleepless nights of studying and tinkering, often waking her up much too early.

Holy shit this seat is cold.

Asami looked down into her cereal, watching it crackle, slowly becoming a soft, lumpy mess. She shifted uncomfortably in her stool.

Maybe I should have worn pants. Or maybe I should have bought cushions instead of metal bar stools.

She sighed. What little appetite she had faded, and she resigned her breakfast, pouring it out into the basin. Asami shuffled into her bedroom, flopping herself back onto the bed.

Maybe I should get dressed.

She flipped onto her back, glancing sideways into the mirror of her bedroom vanity, eyes trailing across her curves.

Maybe.

Her eyes swept over her bedside table, to find the note her companion had left her the night prior. She snatched it up, thumb trailing over the lipstick, faded from touch.


Asami placed the small portion of card to her cheek, as if willing the person who placed the mark
into reality. After a moment, she paused, and snorted in incredulity at her own undying thirst.

*You've got something awful, Asami.*

Her phone lit up, vibrating slightly across her table.

"Asami," The message said. "*We're meeting with the Southern Water Tribe again today, for lunch. I expect you to be there at least half an hour early. Please be presentable, the Chief assures me his daughter will be present today. Love, H.*"

*Great. More glad-handing.*

Asami groaned into her pillow. If she could, she would stay in bed all day.

*Fukken water-tribe princess.*

11:43AM, CENTRAL BALLROOM, DAY ONE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT.

*Fucking water-tribe princess!*

"Asami, I'm sure you recall the delegates from the Southern Water Tribe? Ah, and of course, their radiant daughter - I hope you are well?" Hiroshi said, "Last we heard, you had fallen unwell upon arrival in our city."


Korra strode between her parents, her robes a radiant reflection of her tribe's colours.

The Chief spoke, extending a hand. "Lady Asami, an honor to meet you again."

"Likewise, Chief." Asami said, shaking his hand. *If you had known where this hand had been last night, Chieftain, I think this meeting would go down VERY differently. It was everything that Asami could do, not to erupt in a blushing fit.*

And then Korra stepped forward.

"My apologies, Mr. Sato." Korra said, with a voice that betrayed no hint of sinful knowledge, no tone in the voice that less than a day ago was dripping with command, with vice, with desire, but now was pure and white as the furs on her collar.

Korra passed her gaze to Asami. "And to you too, Miss Sato."

"F-for what?" Asami stammered.

"My absence from your reception, last night." Korra continued, extending a hand, like her father, "I was struck with a sickness, the heat of your city," Though her voice gave no hint, her eyes twinkled knowingly at Asami, who felt her heart rise to her throat. "Hot and heavy, I was in a *terrible* state, unfit to attend. I did not want to get you sick as well."

Hiroshi clapped a hand on Asami's back, laughing. "No need to apologize, no matter! We will hold another, just for you I think, to celebrate your arrival!"

"Thank you, but I must admit, I'm not too fond of being the centre of attention. Of course, I've no doubt of the grandeur of your parties, but I much prefer the," Korra turned to again pass a throwaway glance at Asami, "quieter, more intimate celebrations."

*H-o-o-o-oly shit. Am I the only one who notices this?* Asami quickly looked around to see if anyone else was feeling hot in the face. *Apparently so.*

Again, Hiroshi laughed. "Ah, such is the way. I've heard things about the regal, but collected celebrations of the Southern Water Tribe; your rituals and the subtle beauty, it is absolutely fascinating."

Korra spoke. "If you'd like to know more," She motioned to her parents, flanking either side of her. "I'm sure my mother and father would be more than happy to tell you all about our customs and traditions."

"Indeed!" Hiroshi said.

"Of course, it would be our pleasure." Spoke the Chieftain, his Wife nodding in tow. Hiroshi led them away to the bar, tittering earnestly as the Chief and his Wife regaled him with their stories of the Southern Water Tribe and it's history. Not too far, but far enough to afford Asami and Korra a moment of private conversation amidst a crowded ballroom.

Asami laughed. "Well played."

Korra's eyes twinkled again, a smirk in the corner of her mouth. "It's not the first time I've had to distract my parents."

"You know," Asami spoke softly, "I was wondering if I would seen you again. You didn't leave a number on your note, but I guess you knew."

Korra gave a slight shrug. "Of course I knew. I knew who you were before I got here. I knew who you were the moment I met you in the elevator hall. And now," She brushed her hand gently against Asami's arm. "I'm willing to bet I know you a lot better than most here."

*Unfh.* Asami squirmed, wishing she and Korra were anywhere else but in a crowded ballroom.

"You sure were someting." Asami said quietly.

Korra laughed. "What can I say, I get restless. You were a ball of fun yourself." She winked at Asami, sending her mind into over-drive.

Asami grinned nervously. *This is weird, but I like it.* "I'm sure you'll find plenty here to keep you occupied."

"Oh?" Korra said. "Have something in mind?"

*Well.* Asami thought. Her own intimate joys flashed in memory, her tools and toys and gadgets of pleasure. She laughed internally. *But...*

"Yes, actually I think I do." A ferocity reared, deep within Asami. A spark of idea, and the seed of an excited, commanding curiosity burrowed into Asami's mind.

Korra smirked. "Looks like I'm helpless in your house then, Red."
Asami opened her mouth to speak, but at that moment Hiroshi returned with his guests. Korra's hand slipped away without the slightest hint that it was ever there.

"Asami!" Hiroshi said. "Such culture, you ought to hear this! Simply magnificent. Ah, and it looks like you two are getting along quite well!"

Korra's masquerade reappeared as if it had never left. "Indeed, Asami was telling me all about her work for Future Industries!"

"Indeed," Said the Chief. "So, Asami, what work do you do for your father's company?"

"Ah," Asami said, almost caught off guard. "I often assist with patenting and R&D, though at times I used to do the occasional guard shift to prove I hadn't been shown any favoritism."

Hiroshi smiled warmly. "Humble, my daughter. In fact," He glanced over to Korra, an idea of his own forming. "Asami, dear, you two seem to be getting along so well, why don't we assign you to the Chief's Daughter's security detail?"

What? "Why?" It slipped from Asami's mouth, without a moment's hesitation. "Oh- There are many more qualified than I to safeguard her."

"Though I have my doubts about that, it would give you a marvelous opportunity to spend more time with your new friend! And, under the guise of work no less."

The Chief laughed. "And here we thought you showed no favoritism?" Korra smiled warmly, a raised eyebrow in curiosity.

Hiroshi laughed. Asami could only comply at this point. And... why not? Sure.

"I would be more than happy to."

"Splendid!"

The rest of the event was filled with music and rich foods, richer than usual. Speeches were made, festivities were enjoyed, and by the end in the late afternoon, Asami had begun to feel the weariness set in. It wasn't until much later that Asami found herself alone with Korra again.

As she made to leave to prepare for the evening's security shift, she found Korra in a corner of the ballroom by the exit, swirling a flute of champagne in one hand, lazily tracing her exposed collarbone with the other, dipping in and out beneath the fur lining of her robe.

"Well, Miss Security." She teased, her longing smirk partnering her keen ice-blue eyes. "I'm looking forward to our first night. I hope you have plenty of things planned?"

Korra had expected Asami to flutter, to titter and giggle at the behest of such forward notions. But this is my house.

"Korra," Asami said quietly, barely above a whisper, stepping close to Korra, "It would be my honour to welcome you to our humble city, and of course," She slipped a hand to raise Korra's chin, ever so slightly, checking that every moment that her moves were hidden to the ballroom behind them, to speak beside her ear, her breath almost hot upon Korra's neck.

"It would be awful rude of me to welcome you without a proper gift. Expect it tonight, something of my own creation. I'm sure you'll find it ... entertaining."
Asami stepped away, her heart fluttering an inescapable cadence, as she left the ballroom in eagerness for the coming evening, leaving Korra in a moment of pleasant surprise.

8:56PM, GUEST PENTHOUSE SECURITY ROOM, SATO TOWER ONE, NIGHT ONE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT.

For the fourth time, Asami almost dozed off. Her chin slipped from her hand, but managing to recuperate a split second before her face crash into the console.

The other guard noticed Asami’s fatigue. "Are you alright, Ms. Sato? You seem tired."

"No, it's alright." Asami replied, stifling a yawn. She stood from her wall of monitors, and walked across the security room to gaze out the window. Though it was warm during the day, the proximity to the coast had left the nights with a chill, and the height of Sato Tower One had let a slight frost creep around the edges of the window. Asami pressed her forehead against the cold glass, watching her breath mist against the window.

Just a few more minutes Asami.

Her gaze stretched out across Republic Bay, watching the myriad of lights play out across the landscape, wondering if Korra would prefer to be somewhere out there instead. Asami tugged at the collar of her black-button shirt, sliding the clip off the deep red tie. It had been several hours since her shift had started, and by now the tie was beginning to annoy her. She sighed, stretching her legs, eyeing the black trousers she bloused into her combat boots. At least the pants are comfortable.

Pulling herself from her momentary break, Asami poured herself a steaming cup of tea from a kettle by the window, and returned to her station. On the wall were nine broad monitors, displaying all the rooms of the guest penthouse suite and the hallways and exteriors leading to it. The console in front of her was crowded with bright lights and switches, and a small desktop microphone for broadcasting directly into the penthouse. To her left was a cable phone, should she need to contact anyone, and to her right was the other guard.

Who really should leave. Asami glanced at her own phone to check the time, noticing a new message.

From Korra. "Like the view?"

Asami’s vision panned across the monitors. As Korra had decided to stay in the penthouse again while the Chief and his wife had another meeting, most of the screens were of empty rooms. Lavishly decorated hallways, kitchens, the cameras covered every inch of the penthouse suite save for the bathroom and bedrooms. Asami flitted from one camera feed to another, until she found Korra lazily sprawled on her back across the couch in the lounge room, television blaring.

Asami’s gaze travelled over Korra’s body, taking in every aspect of her. She smirked, and picked up her phone to reply.

"Nice tee. Two sizes too small. Looks perfect on you."

Screen-Korra moved to read the message, and subtly passed a glance over the camera.

"And my shorts?"
"Give me a better angle."

Korra rolled onto her belly, with the slightest curve to pout her butt toward the camera.

Asami bit her lip, heart beating in furious rhythm. "Tasty."

Korra laughed. "Come down and have a bite."

"Can't. Too obvious, you know that. Besides, the other guard is still here." Asami glanced over to the other guard, slowly dozing off in his chair, head nodding in heavy fatigue.

"Though I think it's about time." Asami feigned a cough, loud enough to startle the other guard. He jerked awake, and rushed to busy himself with the console in front of him.

"Late night?" Asami said, making small-talk.

The guard gave a nervous chuckle. "Well, yes. Mr Sato has had us very busy with the Summit preparations."

"Ah, of course. I imagine this hasn't been your first night-shift?"

"No, Ms Sato." The guard replied. "Though I'm used to it by now, I assure you."

Asami gave a rehearsed laugh. "Please." She turned to face the other guard with a look of sympathy. "You have a family, don't you? I'm sure you must miss them with all these late nights."

He sighed. "Yeah."

There we go. "Well," Asami said, rising to her feet. "Why don't you head on home early? I can take it from here. This," She glanced over to Korra on the monitor. "Water tribe princess can't be that much of a handful."

The guard responded with a look of surprise. "Oh, no that's quite alright Ms Sato, I-"

C'mon dude. "No, I insist!" Asami walked over to the door and opened it. Take the bait.

"Um..." The guard looked around nervously, though no-one was there to back him up on the matter. After a moment, he resigned to the offer, standing to gather his things, and joined Asami by the door, coat in hand, but hesitant to step out into the hallway.

"Thank you, I suppose, Ms Sato. I would like to see my family before they're asleep for once."

Spilling half-formed "You're welcome's", and "no problem at all's", Asami almost slammed the door in excitement at her plan coming together. She froze, grimacing and praying that the guard would walk off without rousing suspicion. She stood silent on the other side for a full ten seconds, before she heard the guard's footsteps turn, and fade into the distance. A wave of calm washed over her, and a faint tingle of excitement began to settle.

Maybe I was too aggressive. Asami glanced over to the monitors, to where Korra was still lying on the couch. Who cares. As she walked back to her station, she passed another text to Korra.

"Done. I'm alone."

"Ooh. So what have you got in store for entertainment?"

Let's get started. Asami sat down in her chair, thinking. She watched as Korra stared at her phone for
an answer, grinning and waiting. Asami stared at the woman on the screen, lithe, toned, alluring, provocative.

"I've left you something, outside in the hallway behind the plant. Go get it." Asami said, heart fluttering.

"So commanding, I love it." As Korra hopped off the couch, Asami savored every moment of movement of Korra's body, until she disappeared out into the hallway. Moments later, Korra returned carrying a large box, sporting a bright pink bow. She placed it down carefully on top of the coffee table, and again pulled out her phone.

"Should I open it?"

"It's not booby trapped, Korra. C'mon, I want to see if you like it."

Anxiously, Korra peeled the bow from the box, and slowly removed the lid. Asami smirked as she pulled a large white mound from the box, somewhere between a cushion and a saddle.

"You're cute when you're confused. There's an earpiece in the box as well, so we can talk properly."

Korra fiddled for a moment with the device, hooking it over her ear. In the security room, Asami placed a pair of headphones over her ears.

"...Hello?"

"Hey, you." Asami whispered seductively.

"Ooh." Korra replied, miming a shiver. "I like that. I almost forgot what you sounded like, Red." She smirked, glancing up at the camera.

"I almost missed your butt, you jerk." Asami crossed her legs. "You know, you ought to be more polite to someone whose just given you a gift, and whose technically in charge of you."

Korra laughed. "In charge of me? Do you have what it takes, Red?"

Asami's heart thumped against her chest. Her own spirit was strong, but within Korra was a ferocity that challenged her own, a lust for control and desire. She pulled the microphone on the console close to her lips, and whispered again.

"Korra."

Korra paused, and shuddered. "Ok, that one was real." Asami laughed, but Korra looked sincere. "I liked it, do it again. Say my name again, Red."

Asami tutted. "Kor-ra, Will you behave?" At the words, Korra's eyes found excited obedience, and her mouth slipped open, to see her tongue trace the tips of her teeth.

"Yes, Ms Sato. For now." She smirked.

"Good." Asami said, unbuttoning her own shirt. "Put the gift on the couch, and straddle it."

Korra laughed, but obliged. "Ooh, I wonder what this could be." Korra said, removing the device from the box. As she placed it down, she ran her fingers along the underside and skirt of the saddle in search for buttons or clues.

"So... what is it exactly." Korra said, mounting the device.
"In good time, love." Asami said, removing her shirt. "Like I said, straddle it."

Korra snorted, but obeyed. A breath escaped Asami's lips as she took her own nipple into her fingers, twisting slightly. Her body was excited, vicious memories tingling her senses, eager for what she felt before. She moved towards the microphone, controlling the faint quiver of her voice.

Asami spoke softly. "Let me see your body, Korra." Korra mimed a look of shock, which garnered a sound of impatience from Asami.

Korra laughed. "Relax, Red. I'm being obedient. I just wanted to," She slipped a hand under her shirt, moaning, "tease you a little."

"That's it, she wants to play, I'll play." Asami pulled a small remote from her pocket. On it was a large dial, and several sliders beneath, all set to zero. She flicked a switch, and a small light flickered to life, and turned the dial slightly to 'one'.

A soft thrum came from the monitor, and Korra gave a soft, sharp gasp as she hunched forward, legs tightening around the device, hands gripping the couch either side of her.

"Fu-uck! W-what - ?" Korra panted.

"My toy," Asami said huskily. "Something I made for myself, but I think using it this way is," She pulsed the dial several times, "much more entertaining."

Korra gave a loud groan with each burst of vibration, gripping the couch even tighter. Asami savored the way Korra's shoulders tensed as she reveled in the vibrations coursing through her body, the way her thighs clasped either side of the device.

"Now," Asami whispered, "Didn't I give you a task?"

"Fuck, whatever you... say Red." Korra said, barely above a breath. She unbuttoned the front of her shorts, and leaving the device for only a moment, slipped them and her panties off, discarding them without a second thought. She gingerly replaced herself onto the device, shuddering as the vibrations once again touched her delicate sex. She clased a hand over her mouth to stop herself moaning, only to leave her lips in order to lift her shirt over her head. Asami's eyes widened at the sight of Korra's toned, hard stomach and her pert, round breasts.

"Good," Asami said quietly. Her eyes watched unflinchingly, her free hand straying to her own sex as she watched Korra's back curve as her hips rolled against the device. Asami slipped beneath her trousers, to find herself wet and waiting, eager to the touch.

"A-ah, A-sami," Korra said between gasps. Asami's own chest fluttered at her name. She took the microphone in hand, ready to give her next command, when her phone flickered to life with an incoming call.

"Shit. Who the fuck is calling me at this hour?" Her hands found themselves away from her body, which roared in frustrated retaliation. She slipped one ear off her headphones, and taking a moment to compose herself, she answered the call.

"Hello? Yes, this is Asami Sato." With half her mind on the call, Asami stared at the monitors lustfully, watching laughter escaping Korra's lips between groans of ecstasy. "Oh, good evening Chief Beifong, I trust you are well. How can I help you?"

Asami glanced at the remote, and smirking, pushed one of the sliders. Korra's eyes widened as soft prongs extended from the device, ribbing between Korra's legs. Korra gasped, running a hand
through her hair, taking a breast in the other to grope at her own body, shaking violently in pleasure.

"That's correct. I'm actually in the security room right now. It's been fairly quiet, actually."

Asami pushed another slider, and turned the dial up a notch. The prongs pulsed and the vibrations came stronger, in waves. Asami grinned as sweat began to trickle down Korra's body.

As Asami took the call in one ear, she listened with lustful intent to Korra moaning in the other. "Ah... A-Asami... Fuck me, unf..."

"Indeed Chief, I am taking care of her, though," Asami pushed to three. "I've not taken the chance to get to know her that well yet."

"Fuck! Shit..." Korra threw her head back, her hair a mess across her face, panting heavily, her hips rolling back and forth over the device, pleasuring coursing through every fibre of her being. Sweat beaded across her forehead and chest, her cheeks becoming pink with breathlessness. Asami wanted nothing more than to run her tongue across Korra's entire body. Her own sex roared for attention, but went ignored.

"I'll keep that in mind Chief, but I don't imagine she'll be too difficult. I'll look after her. One second, Chief." Asami muted her phone, and took in a deep breath. She pulled the microphone towards her, and in her most alluring voice whispered to Korra.

"Korra, who's in charge?"

Korra groaned a panting reply. "Y-you are... Ah~"

"And what do you want me to do, more than anything in the world?"

Korra's tongue licked her lips, and found a moment to answer again. "F-for you to... fuck me-e."

Asami grinned, and pushed the dial to maximum. Korra almost screamed in ecstasy, gyrating her hips against the device, one hand on the device itself between her legs to steady it, the other running across her body with a mind of its own.

Asami unmuted her phone. "Sorry Chief, I just had to ask Korra a question. No, everything's fine, she'll be going to bed soon."

Korra hunched over again, panting heavily, and at once she threw her head back, her mouth agape in silent screams of pleasure, her eyes rolling to the back of her head, her hands clasped across her mouth to stifle the silent bursts of orgasm that rolled across her body like crashing waves. Panting heavily, Korra collapsed sideways onto the couch, and slid off the device onto her side, her chest rising and falling in heavy rhythm.

Asami smiled, zooming the camera in to watch Korra lying on her side, the device still vibrating, filling the room with a dull thrum.

"Of course Chief, I'll make sure. All the best to you too. Have a good night." With a beep, she ended the call. Asami leaned forward onto the console, resting her chin in her hand. She flicked the remote, silencing the device, so all she could hear was the steady breathing of Korra.

"You looked like you had a good time."

Korra chuckled, still panting heavily. "That... was something else. I... think I'm numb."
Asami laughed quietly. She watched in quite admiration as Korra closed her eyes, and her breathing became steadily softer. She watched as the beads of sweat traced the shape of her breasts, the teardrop shape of her sex, the roundness of her cheeks. Asami's eyes ran across Korra's toned arms, cushions under her head, her taut firm thighs, red and raw.

Asami's own lust throbbed deep in her mind, but at the front she wanted something else. She felt amiss, a loss of something, a desire to be with Korra, to be held in her arms as she felt the pleasure, as she cried out Asami's name.

She wanted to be with Korra now, naked, pure and whole. She wanted to see her smile before she fell asleep, and she wanted to wake to see her dreaming. Korra's body was a tantalizing and enduring experience, but she wanted more than that. She wanted her everything.

"Asami?" Korra said sleepily. Asami rose from her reverie, surprised at her own loss of concentration. Asami relished in the way Korra said her name. To her, she felt adoration in the way Korra spoke, and to her it was enough.

"Y-yes?" Asami said quietly.

"Will I see you tomorrow?"

Asami smiled. "Sure. But you better get some sleep then."

Korra laughed, and languidly rolled off the couch. Rubbing her eyes, she gathered her clothes up.

"What about the... thing?"

Asami grinned. "You can keep it, for now."

Korra smirked. "I'll see you tomorrow."

"Mmhmm." Asami watched quietly as Korra stepped off into her room. When she disappeared, the lights in the foyer darkened, and the monitors went black. Asami sighed loudly, and leaned back in her chair to stare at the ceiling, her own shirt still unbuttoned, her body aching for attention.

"Maybe I should take a bath." Asami muttered.

Chapter End Notes

Phew. This chapter was surprisingly difficult to write, time constraints and other things. I actually went through two or three drafts of this chapter, so it might be a bit cobbled together, but hopefully you enjoyed it.

If you haven't noticed, each chapter is focusing on a different kind of smut. But I don't want to give away the game just yet!

This is kinda the canon continuation of the first sample chapter that I put up as a teaser too, how about that?

In any case, please leave a comment if you have anything to say, either here or over on my tumblr (citriic). And as always, thanks for reading!
Political Animals.

Chapter Summary

Asami ponders the nature of her relationship with Korra, and plans a night to settle a curiosity about a certain Eastern Kingdoms Military leader.

Chapter Notes

21/07/2015 - note: just updated changing wine to champagne, since it was bothering me all day.

I'm sorry that it took so long to get this out; busy with work, etc, but you didn't come here for excuses! You came here for smut (and maybe some story?)

Oh well. Get reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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5:48AM, KITCHEN, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY TWO OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

The warming scent of freshly brewed coffee wafted through the kitchen. Asami sat at her table, dressed in her security uniform, clutching a warm mug in one hand, a newspaper in the other. The sun had barely begun its long ascent, and had just started to turn the sky a faint golden hue to melt the fingers of frost that had crept between glass lines in the penthouse windows.

Asami's gaze blurred for a moment, and she stifled a yawn, one of the many that had plagued her since she had risen half an hour ago. She turned to gaze out the glass wall of her kitchen, across the cityscape that had just begun to show that some parts of it had found some sleep through the night.

*It's been an interesting couple of nights, that's for sure.*

Asami shifted her focus to return to the paper infront of her. Though she had been neglecting the news as of late, she was diligent enough to find time to catch up on local affairs, especially with the summit in town. *No doubt father will want me to meet many more colourful characters.* Her father had informed her via text, not long after her waking, that today would be spent by the Sato boardwalk warehouse, meeting with military delegates from the Eastern Kingdoms; a thought that Asami found so uninteresting that she almost fell back asleep.

The papers were a more traditional way of receiving the news, but with her connections Asami was able to acquire prints much earlier than the public. The connections also ensured that Asami could keep the tabloids as bias-free as possible. *Except when it came to matters concerning Sato interests, of course.*
The day's affairs did not hold Asami's interest for long. Somewhere in the world, the Republic City National team had won a championship, several new films had hit the cinemas to mediocre reviews, and elsewhere a natural disaster had shaken up several island countries in the southern peninsula. Asami sipped her coffee, and turned to the political sections.

A two-page spread covered all the hype from the first day of the Summit meetings. Conferences, discussions, bill negotiations, all of which Asami had been informed on privately, but cared little for otherwise. While her father was in charge, this was information she needed to know, but would not have to use at any time soon. The following page held more interesting contents.

Taking up the entire following page, was a monochrome photograph of a woman, dressed in what appeared to be military regalia. Great, thick cords ran from shoulder to chest signifying her rank, and badges of varying size and shape were pinned to her uniform.

Hmm...

There was an intrigue to the woman, that nestled within Asami. She took a sip of her coffee, and placed the mug to a side, and traced the face of the uniformed woman. There was a depth to her eyes that was at once enigmatic and grounded, calculating yet powerful. Her jawline was strong, square and sharp, yet undeniably feminine, coming to a pointed chin, and underneath her tigress eyes, was a soft peck of a beauty mark. She was young, with a strong, rigid body, but still older than Asami. Her eyebrows were fierce, and either betrayed a shadow of a scowl, or a look of inquest, Asami couldn't decide.

Beneath the photograph was a short caption. *Grand Marshall Kuvira... Maybe this is who we're meeting today.*

Asami's lips curled into a lazy smile, and stifled another yawn. Once again, she turned to cast her gaze across the city, that painted itself as a new portrait every minute. As she stared, her mind wandered to memories of her and her companion. The mere thought of the other's sleek, toned body flipped a switch in Asami's mind. Unconsciously, she reached into the pocket of her trousers to pull the familiar remote.

Asami flicked the dial lazily, hearing Korra's gasp play out in her mind. The thought warmed her more than the coffee.


Korra laughed, resting her feet on Asami's dashboard. With Asami on security detail, she insisted that she personally drive Korra to the presentation she had been invited to by the wharf. Before any of the other guards of either of the two could say anything, they had hopped into Asami's ride, and sped out of the Sato garage complex.

"So, any idea what this thing's all about?" Korra said, gazing lazily out the window. The city raced by, a blur of steel and concrete. Sato Tower One was located in the center of the central business district; suits shunted from corner to corner, queuing at lights to pass to the next building.

"Sato Security just brokered a partnership with one of the Earth Kingdom military divisions." Asami replied, weaving in and out of traffic. "This is just the public announcement I guess. Publicity, you know?"

"Mmm. And why am I coming along?"

"I... Uhm," Asami mumbled. "I thought you'd like to get out of the tower."

Korra grinned. She leaned over to the driver's side, placing a hand on Asami's thigh, and a peck on her shoulder.

"You're sweet."

They mounted an on-ramp, leading to a raised highway that formed elevated rings that fed the traffic from one side of the city to the other; the veins of Republic City. Asami fell into her pace here, pushing the engine to it's limits, racing by other vehicles and watching as the smaller buildings flashed by. Above the city, they could see the sea, and Republic City bay. Korra gazed longingly from her window out across the crystal waves, the dappled white light of the sun running rampant ripples unto the horizon.

"Let's just go somewhere else, the two of us." Korra whispered quietly.

Asami managed a weak smile. *If only it were that easy.* "I have to be at this event."

Us... The word echoed in Asami's mind. *What are we? Why did I bring her along?* She frowned. It had seemed so clear to her when she awoke, when she dressed herself and had nothing but the woman sitting beside her in her mind. There was an undeniable allure to her - did she feel the same? And she had been receptive, so willing to come along as well.

Korra snorted playfully, throwing Asami that well rehearsed crooked grin. "Well, I guess I'm just here to be your arm candy then, Ms Sato?" She reclined in her seat, yawning and stretching, resting her hands behind the back of her head. Asami couldn't help but sneak a glance to admire Korra's toned arms.

*The undeniable enigma that I'd love nothing more than to unravel.*

Another nagging thought grew, deep in Asami's mind. Incoherent, instinctive, primitive, barely an idea above a whim it thrashed, pulling wayward memories. The dancer, the club, the neon glow. The smell of coffee, the gasps, the groans, the Grand Marshall...

*I suppose that's a reason.*
9:50 AM, MARQUEE ANNOUNCEMENT AREA, SATO PRIVATE WHARF WAREHOUSE, DAY TWO OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Despite the attempts at making the warehouse look homelier than it was, it was still quite evidently a location used first and foremost for tinkering, storage, and anything other than hosting. A small group of representatives stood gathered at the doors of the waterside warehouse, small canvas pavilions providing small measures of shade to the visitors and the press alike. A raised platform stood in the corner next to the wide warehouse doors, and the iron leading to the thin sandbar of the beach, surrounded by photographers ready to make their days wage.

Great broad banners colored and covered in the sigils of Sato Securities and of the Earth Kingdom stood decorating the area. Servers once again wove between the crowds, watering and feeding the bureaucracy. Asami and Korra came and went between the crowds, glad-handing and smiling for photographs, making their rounds to see and be seen. After a while, a few minutes later, a hush fell upon the crowd, and Hiroshi Sato assumed the podium.

He spoke to the people, to rapt attention from representatives and from tabloids and television. "Friends, honored guests, and members of the press! On behalf of myself and the rest of Sato Securities, welcome to this prestigious event! We're gathered here today, to celebrate a mutually beneficial..."

Hiroshi's speech went on, speaking of unity, of agreement, of progress. Asami knew the speech her father gave off by heart, and instead spent her time glancing over at Korra, who had perfected the facade of feigning interest. She stood beside Asami, gazing up at Hiroshi, the smallest false smile spread across her face. The telling sign was in Korra's eyes - her deep ice blue eyes were slowly glassing over.

"Sorry," Asami whispered.

Korra gave the slightest of turns. "You should have left me at the tower." She said playfully.

Asami stifled a laugh. "Don't worry," She pulled Korra aside, leading her away from the main crowd, under a small pavilion by the edge of the boardwalk facing the sea. Asami pulled two flutes of champagne from a silver platter resting on a table, handing one to Korra.

Asami sipped. "I actually wanted to discuss something with you."

Korra raised an eyebrow. "Go on, Sato. A business offer?"

Asami shook her head. She reached out and gently brushed the length of Korra's arm. Korra's eyes flickered to the touch, a knowing look flaring behind her icy-blue. Asami smiled.

"Do you remember the dancer?"

Another flicker, of impulse, flashed over Korra's eyes - it was clear the memories was fresh in her mind as well. She nodded.

"I think," Asami said, moving closer to Korra. She glanced to the side to make sure no-one was watching, either human eyes or camera lens.

I think I want you, to see every facet of you, to be near you, to see you happy, in joy, in ecstasy, in everything.

"I..." Asami cleared her throat, and her mind. "I think I want another taste." Asami whispered, her voice slick with desire.
Korra let slip a shuddering laugh. "Now you have my attention, Sato." She grinned mischievously. "You want to go back to the club?"

"Actually," Asami said, glancing around again. "I was thinking of someone else."

Korra furrowed her brow. "Someone else? You already have someone else in mind?"

"I haven't asked her yet. She's here, actually. I wanted to hear your opinion."

Korra bit her lip softly, failing to trap a soft moan. "Where is she?"

The crowd applauded, and the great symphony of camera flashes began. Hiroshi Sato raised a hand, waving to the crowd, nodding and smiling as they applauded. Then, he stepped to the side of the podium, and with great gusto he passed the podium to the next speaker.

She was as grand in reality as she as in black and white. She wore heavy boots, and tight olive trousers. A heavy coat, less regal than the one in the papers, but decorated with badges nonetheless, and bearing small, but heavy-looking, metal pauldrons. Her jet-black hair was braided tight into a wreath, and though she was smiling, her fierce eyes were piercing, alert and voracious.

And she was young. Youth had not fled her in her service. High cheekbones and a strong jawline, her pointed chin, in reality her flawless skin, tanned but with the most subtle hue of pink, save for the beauty mark, was more greatly admired by Asami in person.

"What do you think?" Asami said, as Grand Marshal Kuvira approached the podium, and spoke to the crowd with a deep, husky voice.

Asami had predicted that Korra would be hesitant, to approach someone of such status. She had expected her to be outraged, confused, conflicted or even simply laugh it off as a joke. Instead, Korra turned to Asami with a devilish look in her eye, her lopsided grin that Asami had come to lavishly cherish spread wide across her face.

"When are you planning to talk to her?"

Asami hadn't thought of that yet. Her mind raced with possibilities, of opportunities. She watched the Grand Marshall speak, and in the middle of her speech, her gaze wandered to Asami, and lingered, for just too long to be a coincidence. She felt the gaze heavy upon her, and though the speaker did not miss a beat in her speech, her eyes that rested heavy, hungry, upon Asami said much else.

*I think that stare said plenty.*

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5:12PM, EARTH KINGDOM LIMOUSINE, SATO PRIVATE WHARF WAREHOUSE, DAY TWO OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Alone, waiting, Asami sat in the lead of the Earth Kingdom motorcade. It had been easy enough to talk the guards down, being a representative and heir of Sato Securities, they merely assumed that she had some business to talk over with the Grand Marshall.

*Which isn't entirely false.*

The sun had begun to set by now, which cast an eerie pink and orange glow across the harbor. The
Earth Kingdom motorcade had been stationed behind the warehouse wharf where the speeches were made. Kuvira's entourage had been modest, compared to other delegates; two sedans, a limousine as a sign of generosity from Sato Securities, and a handful of patrol motorcycles on service from the Republic City Police Department. The tinted windows left the interior of the limousine with a dark, autumnal glow. In the silence of the vehicle, Asami sat cross-legged, pondering her words carefully.

*Careful. This could be dangerous.* Her heart pounded furiously within her ribcage. If Kuvira agreed, then it would be an experience to remember. *If she declined...* Asami hesitated to continue that train of thought. Offending the Earth Kingdom's prestigious Grand Marshall could have cataclysmic knock-on effects.

Asami's ears pricked up at the sound of faint footsteps. Mutterings, low and deep, somewhere one of the guards were talking to someone. Asami couldn't quite see who from her position in the limousine, but if it was who she was expecting, she would soon find out anyway. Moments later, the brief chatter died away, and the footsteps approached the car. The door swung open, and the Grand Marshall stepped into the car.

Kuvira was half-sat down before she froze, realizing the other occupant in the vehicle was not her usual patrol. Fierce eyes met calm, collected, and for a brief second the world stood still and quiet, but for Asami's racing heart. Asami wondered in that moment if Kuvira was going to attack her, as she half-stood, half-sat there poised, ready to strike. Then, as if nothing was out of the ordinary, Kuvira found her seat across from Asami, and made herself comfortable.

Up close, Asami couldn't decide whether Kuvira was more or less intimidating. She sat with legs spread wide, resting on her elbow, one hand firmly clasped on her thigh, the other stroking her pointed chin. She gazed at Asami with unflinching, unwavering attention. Kuvira's eyes were green, but unlike Asami's, they were a lighter colour, slightly greyer.

But Kuvira was indeed the first to break the silence. After a while, she shrugged, eyebrows raised, speaking with a loftiness, almost arrogance in her voice.

"Well, I can't imagine you have anything important to say, otherwise you would have said it by now."

Asami smiled. *Headstrong. Not that I'd expect anything less.* "Do you know who I am, Grand Marshall?" Asami spoke softly, throwing Kuvira a smolder.

"Of course." Kuvira said calmly. "Asami Sato, daughter to the man who I shook hands with just hours earlier."

"Then you'll know that I abhor wasting time."

Kuvira snorted, but grinned. "Out with it then, Sato."

Asami returned the wicked grin. "I wonder, how have you enjoyed our fine city so far?"

Kuvira glanced outside, though beyond the tint was the wharf. "Of what we've seen, it is a fine city."

Asami hummed. "And of it's people?"

"It's people?" Kuvira frowned. "I've not stayed long enough to make *that* judgement."

"Please," Asami said quietly, leaning towards Kuvira. "You must have *urges*, like all others."

Kuvira raised her nose, and for a moment Asami thought she saw a slight shadow of disgust fell
upon her visage, only to realize it was a look of intrigued curiosity.

"I do not know where you are going with this, Sato, but-"


Asami rose, and moved across the vehicle to sit beside Kuvira.

"I understand these... sensations more than others." Asami laid a gentle touch upon Kuvira's thigh, leaning upon her slightly.

Kuvira spoke in a low growl, not angry, but frustrated. "Careful... Sato..." But she did not make to move away from Asami. In fact, Kuvira's gaze did not move away from the empty seat in front of her. Asami took the opportunity to speak directly into Kuvira's ear.

"I saw the way you watched me in the crowd." She spoke, feeling her words slide sensuously from her lips to slither surreptitiously upon Kuvira's neck, to burrow deep into her mind, drawing forth the madness of lust. "I saw your gaze peel back my layers. You would want nothing more than to feast upon my physique, wouldn't you, Grand Marshall?"

At this point, Kuvira did not speak at all. Asami relished in the tiniest beads of sweat forming upon her brow. *The desired effect.*

"I admire your resilience, Grand Marshall... But an associate of mine and I have a desire to witness your other..." Asami slid her hand between Kuvira's thigh softly, caressing, gently, sensuously.

"Other redeeming qualities."

Kuvira closed her eyes, clenched tight, baring her teeth, gritting, breathing heavily, brow furrowed in thought. Asami felt the other's body relax, if only for a moment. Then, Kuvira turned away, and after taking a sharp breath, rose with new resolve. Kuvira clasped a strong grip upon Asami's wrist, and pulled it away like a dog's chew toy. Asami would have thought her plan failed, if not for Kuvira's next words.

"You have a cruel way of persuasion, Sato. But I must admit myself... intrigued, if nothing else."

"Isn't that what we're all looking for, Grand Marshall? To fulfill the curiosity?"

Kuvira snorted. "Where, and when."

Asami's heart skipped a beat. "The tower, after midnight. I can arrange a vehicle to take you from your residence at the embassy, subtle and quiet."

Until now, Kuvira had not turned to face Asami, but at that moment when she did the gaze left such a strong impression, that Asami thought it had burned into her memory. It had all the ferocity of the Grand Marshall, but it had another of the human beneath it. A familiar hunger, a desire, a longing of satisfaction. It brought a smirk to Asami's face.

"I look forward to our further discussions, Grand Marshall." Asami said, as she rose, moving to leave the limousine. A guard saluted as Asami exited the vehicle.

"Likewise." Kuvira said, as Asami stepped onto the pavement. Kuvira gave one last, unwavering glare from the shadowy interior of the vehicle, before the guard closed the door, and the motorcade left the premises.

*And now we wait.*
"I'm going to make myself a drink."

"Sure."

"Do you want one?"

"No, thanks."

"... Are you nervous? You seem nervous."

"No. Maybe. A little."

Korra laughed. "You don't seem the type to get nervous."

Asami glared at Korra, who shrugged apologetically. She had made herself at home in the lounge of Asami's penthouse; A large room connected to the front door, open to the kitchen. An entire wall made of glass, showing grand views of the city below. Inside, two long couches faced each other, with a small black coffee table in between, and a thick, fur rug beside it. Opposite the glass wall, was a small bar that housed a variety of drinks cabinets, and a few bar stools. Beside that was Asami's sound system and music collection, one that she had been gathering for several years.

"Don't drink too much. I want to be hospitable, and you ought to be coherent."

"Of course, but just so you know, I wouldn't be so complacent if you didn't look so adorable right now."

Asami glanced at her reflection in one of the many mirrors decorating her lounge. She wore a simple outfit; a white long-sleeved button shirt, with a perky red bow tie, a black pencil skirt, stockings and heels.

"Please. I'm always adorable." Asami smirked, tensing her legs, admiring the way her body fought against the taut fabric.

Korra laughed. "Fair enough." If Asami had dressed simply, Korra was dressed comfortably; She had kept her low cut singlet from the morning, and thrown her fur lined hoodie over it instead. She wore leggings that hugged the form of her legs perfectly, every cut muscle showing through the thin cloth, and flats. As Asami wandered around her lounge, primping cushions and tidying, Korra sat at the bar, sipping her drink and swiping through her phone.

Between sips, Korra spoke. "Everything's fine. Relax."

"Easy for you to say." Asami sighed. She dropped the cushion she was holding, and walked over to join Korra, leaning against the bar.

"Hey." Korra said, placing a handle on Asami's shoulder. "Do you want to call this off?"

Asami blushed, avoiding Korra's gaze. "No, it's just..."
"Asami." Korra said. Asami prickled at the use of her name. It felt commanding, but comforting. "You can tell me if you want to. We can call this off, just say the word. We should only do this if you're one-hundred percent on-board."

Asami turning to face Korra, smiling. "Yeah. No, I'm... I'm good. Just nervous."

"Yeah?" Korra said, raising an eyebrow. "And you'd say if that changes, right?"

Asami cleared her throat, tapping her heel against the wooden frame of the bar. "Of course."

Korra leaned towards Asami, reaching out and taking her cheek in her palm. Asami closed her eyes, holding Korra's hand against the side of her face, nuzzling in the warmth.

"I want to do this, but only as long as you want to as well."

Asami smiled warmly. "Thank you." She whispered. Why am I so nervous anyway? Asami wracked her mind to rationalize it; logical conclusions calmed her mind. Was it because there was another person? No... This isn't that much different from the night at the club, and I had barely known Korra back then as well... Was it because Kuvira was such a high-profile individual? No, I've never been one to be intimidated by status. So what is it then?

Asami glanced over at Korra, who had returned to casually sipping on her drink, and gazing absent-mindedly out the penthouse windows. She was calm as ever, aloof and carefree. Korra must have felt Asami's gaze upon her back, and as she turned, they locked eyes once again.

Korra smiled, a warming, comforting grin. "What?" Korra said, laughing. Oh. The smile, the laugh, the tone of Korra's voice - there was something there. Whatever it was, a wave of calm washed over Asami.

"I, um... nothing. Just - admiring."

Before Korra could poke further fun at Asami, a soft chime played out across the lounge, heralding the arrival of a guest. Korra nodded, smiling. Asami took a deep breath, and moved to answer. She opened the door to find Kuvira standing in the hallway, holding a bottle of champagne.

Woah. The Kuvira standing infront of Asami was drastically different from the individual who she had met earlier in the day. Out of her military regalia, she had donned a dark-green windbreaker coat that ran to her thighs, faux-leather leggings and heavy looking brown boots. Her wreath braid had been let down, now a loose braided tail, and thick-rimmed glasses decorated her still-fierce eyes, that bore a slightly softer gaze. If Asami didn't know better, she would have never been able to tell the individual standing in front of her was an accomplished and distinguished military leader, and not a university senior. Her accomplishments are only made more amazing considering her youth.

"Hello there." Asami said, smiling. She watched as Kuvira's eyes traveled hungrily down Asami's body, only to be brought back to meet her gaze when Asami tsked loudly. Kuvira cleared her throat, straightening her posture. Standing, she was taller than Korra, and almost as tall as Asami.

"For you, a gift." Kuvira said, holding out the bottle, her deep, familiar voice tingling in Asami's ears. Asami received it with grace; it was no idle gesture. The champagne was a delicacy from the Eastern Kingdoms - Asami wondered if there would be a Republic City bureaucrat that would later go thirsty because of this impromptu gesture. Asami thanked her, and invited her in.

"I didn't know you wore glasses." Asami said, as she closed the door behind Kuvira. "They look good on you, Grand Marshall."
"Kuvira." Said the other. She paused, noticing the presence of the third person in the room. Korra had turned around on her stool, and was leaning against it languidly, resting both arms on the counter behind her.

Kuvira smirked. "And you must be the associate."

Korra returned Kuvira's smirk with a wicked lopsided grin. "Korra. And she's right, the glasses are cute."

"Late nights at the academy do terrible things to vision." Kuvira said, moving into the lounge and finding a spot on the couch. She reclined, crossing her legs.

"Would you like a drink, Gr- Kuvira?" Asami said, moving behind the bar, searching for a corkscrew.

"Please, if you would." Kuvira paused, as if pondering the weight of her words. "Was there a theme?"

Asami gave a confused look. "Sorry?"

Kuvira hesitated, but shrugged. "Your outfit - you look like a waitress."

Korra laughed. "She's not far off."

Asami passed a smolder to Korra. "Careful, I might cut off your service." Asami's words prompted a short chuckle from Kuvira, and a look of mischievous indignation form Korra.

Kuvira spoke. "Let's start with the champagne. It's been aging for a decade, and I don't plan to let it age a second more."

Asami found three glasses along with the corkscrew, and motioned for Korra to join her and Kuvira by the couches. Korra plopped down beside Asami, the two sitting opposite to Kuvira. Asami popped the cork, and filled three flutes with rich, bubbling gold liquid.

"Cheers." They said in unison, toasting their glasses. The liquor was as rich as it's color, sweet sticky notes of fruits and berries, and golden lashes of honey, burning Asami's throat.

"So tell us, Kuvira," Korra said, leaning into the couch. "What is your secret? You must be, what, a couple of years old than us? How have you risen so high in the Eastern Kingdom Army?"

Kuvira smirked. She's a totally different person than the one I met in the afternoon. "Peak physical condition and pragmatism. You need both to lead and command." She said, taking another sip of champagne. Kuvira nodded to Asami. "Something that Ms. Sato must know a thing or two about, being an heiress."

Asami took a moment to consider Kuvira's words. "Pragmatism is useful, but a company is different to a regiment. You don't need to command, so much as lead."

Kuvira's eyes twinkled, as if studying the response carefully. After moment, she turned to Korra. "And you, Korra? What brings you to the summit?"

Korra stretched, resting her arms behind the couch. "Representing the Southern Tribes and all that. International diplomacy would be the next step - someone has to look out for this world."

"A noble cause." Kuvira toasted Korra's response, but a smirk appeared in the corner of her mouth.
"But if you ever want to make a real difference, you're welcome to join my ranks."

Asami turned to Korra, worried, but Korra laughed. "Don't underestimate my passions, Grand Marshall," Korra sneered playfully, "Besides, I don't think I'd ever be cut out for the military; this spirit can't be tamed."

"Oh, I wouldn't be so sure," Kuvira said, pouring herself another glass. She tipped the bottle towards Korra and Asami, who also leaned forward with their glasses, letting Kuvira refill their flutes. "Even the wildest stallion can be broken."

Asami grinned, biting her lip. Interesting. Korra seemed to be thinking the same thing. "Is that a challenge, Kuvira?" She smirked.

Kuvira didn't respond immediately, instead opting to let her words sink in with an open smile that saw her run her tongue over the tips of her teeth. That says plenty. After a heated moment, she spoke again, her words directed at Asami.

"Help us settle this, Ms Sato. When it comes to... diplomacy, is it best solved with discipline," Kuvira said, "Or a passionate, heartfelt exchange?" Kuvira's tone had shifted suddenly, every syllable sultrily spoken, as if the champagne had left her with honeyed words. Both Kuvira and Korra eyed Asami with playful expressions, fierce, hungry eyes, and baited breath.

We're not talking about politics anymore. Asami smiled, playing along. "Both have their place, in my opinion."

The other two shared a look so sharp it could have cut the table between them in two. It's time.

Asami took a sip, the golden elixir emboldening her words. "Kuvira," Asami said, "I hope you understand that tonight is a one-off, and will be kept in confidence between us three."

Kuvira crossed her legs, resting an arm upon the back of the couch, taking a sip with the other. "Of course."

"And," Asami continued. "That the nature of tonight, has no impact on our individual selves outside, from tomorrow onward."

"Of course." Kuvira repeated.

Asami and Korra glanced at each other, a knowing look passing between them. Korra drained her flute in one, and placed it on the table.

"Regardless of what happens? Anything?" Korra asked, her voice barely containing her excited growl.

Kuvira turned to pass her gaze upon Korra, her eyes burning behind her frames. "Of. Course." She said a third time, slowly, almost taunting, smirking. Again, Korra and Asami shared a look. Asami stood, and walked over to her stereo, while Korra rose circled around the coffee table.

Asami pulled a case from her collection, and placed a disc into her player, filling the room with a slow, heavy beat, a low, rhythmic drum line, while a female voice sung in sweet, lustful vocals. Kuvira watched Korra saunter towards her with wary eyes, she leaned forward, resting her elbows on her knees. Korra shrugged her jacket off as she strode towards Kuvira, and lifted her thin top beneath it, receiving another twinkle in Kuvira's eyes as her gaze circled Korra's body, and her firm, toned body.
Korra moved close to Kuvira to stand between her and the table in front of her, her navel less than a foot away from Kuvira. Asami returned to her seat on the couch, swirling the contents of her glass playfully, a wicked grin on her face as she watched Korra lift her hands, slender fingers running over Kuvira's cheek, to toy with her braided tail playfully. Korra gave it a soft tug, jerking Kuvira's head backwards slightly. Kuvira grunted, her eyes closing momentarily, only to open with renewed vigor.

"Your breath tickles, Kuvira." Korra said quietly, gazing down upon the other woman. Kuvira grinned. She placed her empty glass on the table behind Korra, and ran her hands down Korra's lower back, pulling her body towards her, planting soft kisses upon Korra's navel. Korra gasped softly, warm lips sending shivers and goosebumps across her torso.


Korra smirked, placing her own hands on Kuvira's shoulder, and pushed her back into the couch. Korra mounted Kuvira, straddling her lap, fumbling with the neck of Kuvira's windbreaker. As soon as her top button popped free, Korra slipped down to bite softly at Kuvira's neck, earning a stifled groan as Kuvira filled her hands with Korra's body.

Korra gasped, and rose to nibble Kuvira's ear. "Lotus," Korra said, panting softly. "The safeword." Kuvira nodded, sitting up straight to let Korra slip Kuvira's arms free of her coat. Beneath, Kuvira had worn a tight grey singlet, a likely relic of her military wardrobe. Her breasts were not as full as Asami's, or even Korra's, but her body was sculpted, molded by rigorous training, the pure definition sending chills down Asami's spine. Studying her body carefully, Asami bit her lip as she noticed Kuvira's nipples, erect, standing at attention beneath her singlet. Korra moved to taste Kuvira's skin, only to be suddenly pushed off the seat and fall upon the thick faux-fur rug beside the table.

Though Asami gasped, Korra's face was far from shocked. She laughed, half-naked and panting, propping herself on an elbow. Kuvira rose above Korra's lying figure, lifting her singlet and discarding it in a pile with her windbreaker. Asami's eyes feasted on the sight before her. Kuvira's body was cut stone made living, in a few ways. Her arms were lithe beyond belief, smooth, her chest broad and built, her breasts pert, with small, dark, hard nipples. Her torso, ribbed with muscle, quivered at the sensation of the crisp air against her skin, slightly lighter than Korra's, and upon closer inspection, was covered in scars.

Kuvira's eyes set hungrily upon Korra. She knelt down, strong, gentle hands prying her legs apart, to move between them. With a sure grip, Kuvira slipped her hands underneath Korra's waist, to tug at her trousers, hooking her fingers into her underwear, to pull them down to her knees. Kuvira eyed Korra's sex with a lewd grin, pulling Korra's trousers down further with one hand, the other slipping beneath Korra again to pull herself towards Korra's mound, her breath bristling against Korra's fur.

Asami watched hungrily as Kuvira began to slowly lap at Korra's already glistening sex, those grey-green eyes relishing in the way Korra squirmed with each lashing of her tongue. Asami slipped her own hand underneath her skirt, stroking herself through her stockings. She unfastened the lower buttons of her white top, and reached for her breast, taking a nipple, twisting slightly, gasping, as Kuvira slipped out of her own tights, fully naked, her firm, muscular legs now entangled with Korra's own dark limbs as Kuvira moved form Korra's sex to her breasts, the two naked bodies, writhing in pleasure.

One track ended, and Asami's player found another. The melody shifted, to a darker, heavier beat, faster, primal, an acoustic, drum heavy beat that seemed to stoke a fire in the three with each pulse that Asami's sub sent around the room. Kuvira lay atop Korra, her legs either side of her, with one arm placed square across Korra's chest, and the other finding agile fingers stroking Korra's urging bloom. Kuvira watched in lustful, bristling excitement as Korra gasped and writhed at her touch, her
body convulsing and roaring as Kuvira slipped her touch inside Korra, a finger, a second, a knuckle, rhythmic and searching. Korra moaned loudly, tossing beneath Kuvira's weight, until she rolled free to her side, eyes locking with Asami.

Korra slipped from Kuvira's grip, who returned a surprised look. With a fierce glare, Korra turned from Kuvira, and crawled towards Asami slowly, but eagerly. Asami watched with open, eager mouth, as Korra climbed onto the couch beside Asami, and slipped a hand beneath her half-unbuttoned shirt to grasp her chest, to tease a nipple. Asami's eyes met Korra's ice-blue, and almost jumped at the touch of another set of hands upon her knees. She looked down to see Kuvira resting between her legs, lifting Asami's thighs upon her shoulders, burying her insatiable mouth upon Asami's wet, eager sex, through the thin layer of cloth of Asami's stockings. Korra's deft hands unbuttoned Asami's shirt, leaving her perky red bow-tie dangling around her neck, revealing her soft alabaster skin, and a dark, lace brassiere. Willingly, hungrily, almost impatiently, Asami drew Korra to her chest, gasping softly as Korra slipped beneath the dark lace, pulling it away, her teeth trailing a nipple, a sensation deliciously familiar to Asami, and one she'd always know she would have an appetite for.

Asami sensed the impatience of the woman between her legs, as Kuvira's hands found the hem of her stockings, tugging and pulling at them like a beast, slipping down, tearing as she discarded them. Asami's sex was throbbing by now, ashamedly wet and urging, longing for the touch. Kuvira took no hesitation to embrace Asami's body, fulfilling the desire, and upon feeling Kuvira's tongue dart upon Asami's tender sex, relinquished all restraint. Asami gasped loudly, her legs twisting, wrapped around Kuvira's head, who placed firm hands upon Asami's thighs, her mouth busy between her legs. Korra lay upon Asami's chest, tasting with her own mouth, a nipple, her breath pouring across Asami, whose own hand found busy with every inch of Korra it could find.

The room was hot, heavy, bodies glistening with sweat. Asami's head began to swim, the champagne clearing her mind of all but the lust and the scene before her, the sensation of tongues upon her skin, of hands and fingers and touch between her legs, writhing in pleasure, of furious, unrelenting waves of blissful rage that coursed through her body. For what seemed like a second, Asami closed her eyes, only to open them when she felt the touch had left her body. She sat up in her seat, to see the other two had moved away from her, and instead engaged in each other, locked, kneeling bodies pressed against against the other, each with a handful of the other's hair.

Kuvira's glasses had been knocked away, her braid becoming undone. Both Korra and Kuvira glared at each other, barely an inch between their faces, their eyes brimming with pure, unbridled lust. They clenched each other's hair, daring a kiss, clashing in a brutal, furious taste as lips met lips, only for a second before darting away, grinning, smirking, laughing and violently beautiful. They pressed their bodies against each other with every touch of the lips, gasping as their bodies rubbed, tender, sensitive pressed tight against each other. They squirmed and writhed on the rug, tight in each other's embrace, as Asami watched in panting joy, finding her own hands caressing her mound, to slip tenderly inside herself again, moaning at the touch, watching the two wrestle in glistening sweat. Kuvira and Korra wrapped, rolling, daring each other, free hands slipping between the legs of the other to pulse, rapidly and hungrily, as if the victor would be the first to bring the other to climax.

In a moment, Korra hooked her leg between Kuvira's, turning the other woman on her side, finding their legs braced against each others, their sex grinding against the other's. Kuvira gasped as Korra rubbed herself rhythmically against Kuvira, unable to move for the waves of ecstasy shooting through her. Kuvira moaned with every rub, Korra panting heavily herself, as she rode her throbbing clit against Kuvira's eager own. The music thrummed heavily in their ears, their minds clouded yet clear from the drink, with all their focus and intent on the feelings of violent, unbridled pleasure. Kuvira grit her teeth as Korra sped up, rubbing furiously against the other -
Until the moment climaxed, and Korra felt the entirety of Kuvira's body tense in one, shattering moment. She felt Kuvira's strong thighs clench around her body, and in the tense, terse moment she felt the waves of Kuvira's orgasm rippled through her body in undulating waves of pure pleasure. She felt Kuvira's body shake with each wave, and still she was so tightly pressed against Kuvira, she the contractions of her sex against her own. Korra released her, pushing her leg to a side, rolling Kuvira onto her back, only to slip herself between Kuvira's legs to taste her eager, flowing juices, and bury herself in her now sensitive, softly pulsing sex.

Asami slowed her own motions. She panted quietly, her body verging on the edge, but longing for the touch of another. In a moment, it was as if Korra had sensed her mood. She rolled onto her side, eyeing Asami, her eyes eager and willing. She stood, her dark skin glistening in a thin sheen of sweat. She strolled over to Asami, who watched Korra's soft breasts bounce with each step. She slid into her lap in one smooth motion, and buried herself into Asami's neck, who threw her head back at the touch of soft lips once again on her skin.

"You didn't think we'd forgotten about you, did you?" Korra said softly, a wicked glint in her eye. Behind her Kuvira staggered to her feet.

"Fuck...!" Kuvira muttered, stumbling slightly. "My legs are fucking numb..."

Korra rose from Asami lap, and returned to Kuvira, taking her hand in her own, and led Kuvira back over to Asami. She watched as Korra took Kuvira's panting lips to hers, drawing her to kneel with her kiss, until the two were again between Asami's legs. Slowly, Korra drew Kuvira to Asami's thigh, and smiled mischievously as Kuvira began to plant soft kisses upon Asami's inner thigh. Kuvira smirked with each peck, her grey-green eyes now keen upon Asami. As Korra rose to sit beside Asami, she grabbed Asami's hand, and brought it between her own legs.

"Touch me," Korra whispered. "Take me in your hand." Asami moved dutifully, her fingers finding an easy, eager touch against Korra's wet sex. Korra moaned enticingly, leaning over Asami to nuzzle at her neck and chest, who gasped as Kuvira's fingers and tongues once again worked at her.

Her body was bliss, soft, the room filled with music and musk, of scents of liquor and tastes of flesh and tingling waves of ecstasy. As Asami slipped deeper into Korra, she felt Korra's body tense and tighten against her wrist, and a sharp gasp escaped Korra's lips as she crumbled atop of Asami, crushing waves of bliss washing over her. Asami smiled, a soft gasp slipping between her teeth as her own climax came close, as Kuvira's agile tongue darted into her. Korra rested her head upon Asami's chest, watching her pant and gasp with a smile upon her face. In the moment, Korra rose from her rest, to find the half-empty bottle idle upon the table. Asami watched with eager eyes, her body pulsing with pleasure, her own coming closer and closer, with every touch and taste of Kuvira's tongue against her now throbbing, ready clit, as Korra stood over her with the bottle outstretched, looking, waiting for signal. Asami, her face flush with heat and lust, nodded, and gasped, laughing, as Korra slowly poured the bubbling, gold-pearl liquor over Asami's chest, and down her torso, to trickle down between her legs, slick and sticky. The champagne frothed, tingling against her skin, a million bubbles bursting as she reached her climax.

Asami thought her body would destruct as her climax broke her. She reached for Korra, who embraced her, naked, sticky, clutching each other, as Kuvira's tongue brought wave upon wave of immense, crashing pleasure, rocking her body to oblivion. Her beast roared within, and she shook with the coursing tides, groaning, moaning loudly into Korra's hair as she held her close, her body shaking, her legs twisting around Kuvira's head, bringing them close, as she rode the waves down, until she could once again feel her heart rage in her chest, each pulse feeling like an explosion in her ears. She sighed, releasing her grip on Korra, and slumped into the couch, smiling, complacent and content.
Korra gave a tired, panting laugh. "That... was something." Somewhere in the distance, Kuvira gave a soft, complacent chuckle. Asami's hands found Korra's naked body, still sticky, slick with sweat, and dragged herself to curl upon her warmth. Asami closed her eyes, and felt the weight of the liquor take it's toll, and felt fatigue consume her.

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???, LOUNGE, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, ?? OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Somewhere in the dark, Asami heard a running shower, but her brief lapse of consciousness didn't last long.

And it was still dark when consciousness again returned to Asami. Tired, her eyes remained closed, her ears pricking at the sounds around her. She heard people moving around her, the sounds of zips and buttons clasping, of quiet muttering and chatter.

"...Leaving already?"

"Yes. You're not?"

Asami felt her heart skip. Please... Please don't...

After what seemed an eternity, she heard Korra's voice. "I think I'll stay till the morning. I'm here in the building anyway, no-one will notice."

Kuvira gave a soft chuckle. "You're sweet on her, aren't you."

There wasn't a reply.

"Well," Kuvira said, "Give my regards. It was... memorable."

Somewhere, a door closed, and faint footsteps led her guest away. Asami remained, curled in a ball, naked, still sticky from the night before, waiting, not daring to move. She heard soft footfalls move towards her, and then, strong arms reaching under her, to lift her from her seat. Asami smiled to herself as the arms carried her from the lounge, through her hallway, into the sanctity of her bedroom. Gently, they laid her under her sheets.

And you? Asami thought to herself. A moment later, an answer came, as she felt another body slip into the warmth of her bed beside her. She reached out with eyes still closed, to run her hands through short, cropped hair, and with the other, trace a firm, strong body. She held the other close, and whispered a quiet prayer.

"I'm glad you're here." Asami said quietly to her partner.

Korra laughed quietly. "Me too."

They slept, wrapped in each other's warm embrace, until the morning.

Chapter End Notes
Sweet merciful Lucifer, this chapter is almost as long as all the others combined! Now, I know a lot of people might not be cool with korvirasami, but like I said, it's a smut workshop, so you gotta deal with it!

Anyway, as always, thanks for reading, and please leave a comment if you have anything to say here, or catch me on tumblr! (citriic.tumblr.com)

Have a nice day!
Silver Tongue.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

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6:12AM, BEDROOM, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY THREE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

In the dark, Asami’s mind conjured a beautiful phantasm.

...Mmm...

Her mind swirled in her slumber, evoking her thoughts, her imaginations, her memories, the touch of tongues and teeth, of skin and sweat, of salubrious sensation.

...Ahh...

A sweet, familiar scent hung in the air, cloying, hot, and heavy. In the mist of her mind, ice-blue eyes stared, piercing the veil of her mind, and smooth, slick, dark skin crept towards her.

...Hmm...Ahh~!...

She saw a crooked grin, and felt a strong frame press against her. She could feel her heart thumping in her chest. She ran spectral hands through short, cropped hair, drawing the crooked smile downwards. She felt a tongue chart her body, running down, to reach her eagerness, her pulsing, urging, wanting.

"...!"

Asami shuddered awake, the last throbbing vestiges of her blissful dream slipping from her as consciousness flooded her body. Her head throbbed softly, a harsh remnant of the previous night. Her body sore, Asami lay on her bed, her room a dull, dark orange of the earliest morning sun, what little vision she had swimming before her.

Oh... My head...

Asami rolled over, hoping to find a cooler spot beneath the sheets. Instead, she gently rolled into the body of the other beside her.

She stifled a gasp. Between the dark of the room and the dizziness of her head, it took Asami a moment before she realized who the other was. She held her breath, silent but for the echoing of her beating heart, once again rising to race, as she lay on her pillow staring into the mess of dark hair facing her.

Korra...

Asami slowly lifted the sheets, tugging them down to reveal Korra's naked shoulders. She had her back to Asami, but Asami could see her body rising and falling in soft rhythm as she slept.

Sweet dreams, I hope.

Even in the dark, Asami made out the ink that drew patterns down Korra's back. Asami pulled the
sheets further down to Korra's hip, and with a soft touch, placed her palm flat against Korra's back, running her hand smooth between Korra's shoulder blades, against her tattoo, feeling the steady rise and fall of her breath.

She felt the warmth of her skin as she ran her fingers over Korra's back, the roughness of her body, the faded scars that ran across from her past. Asami kept her touch soft, careful not to wake Korra, across the muscle, along her side. Asami's palm curved with Korra's waist, and rose to meet a firm hip, a smooth cheek.

Asami sighed softly with a lazy, complacent smile spreading across her face. She raised her own body slowly, carefully, moving to hold Korra's sleeping body against hers, her hand reaching to touch Korra's toned stomach, holding her tight, close. She leaned into Korra's warmth, feeling it upon her own, Korra's musk upon her skin. Asami buried her face into Korra's hair, relishing in the rugged scent, the faded taint of perfumed wash.

_I want to be like this forever._

Sleep almost took Asami, but a slight shift left Asami with the sensation of stickiness, a quiet, nagging reminder of the previous night's procession. Asami flushed as the events played out again in her mind. She sighed, slipping down to place a kiss at the nape of Korra's neck, nuzzling into her for a moment. Asami felt Korra's skin prickle at the touch of her breath and lips, but after a moment's hesitation, when she was sure she hadn't woken her partner, she broke her embrace, and slipped out from under the sheets.

Outside, the early morning air was cold enough to mist the windows, edges baring frost fangs, but the air inside the penthouse was toasty warm, accommodating enough to keep Asami comfortable for her walk to her bathroom. As she strode in, she turned the light-dial bright, the marble of her bathroom coming to life as Asami strode past the sunken bath towards the shower.

_I wonder if Korra's a bath person._

Asami stepped into her circular shower frame, gently closing the clear door behind her. Her shower was large, almost as wide as her bath, with a brass head that hung directly from the ceiling, and wide enough to douse Asami's entire figure and then some. Opposite the door to her shower, against the wall was a floor to ceiling mirror, two meters across, that reflected Asami's reflection as she eyed her body curiously.

_I hope there's no marks_. She slowly ran her hands over her figure, finding no evidence of the previous night, save for the occasional spot of stickiness from the champagne. She laughed softly, as memories tingled in her mind, as her hands ran over familiar spots. She closed her eyes, and for a simple moment she was transported back, her own hands becoming Korra's.

Two dials stuck outwards from the mirror, hot and cold, with a small box between them that held soaps and shampoos. After a brisk second, and a few more of hopping back and forth out of cold and scalding waves, Asami found herself sighing complacently as gently steaming waters poured over her, cleansing and revitalizing, returning her spirit and washing away the morning torpor.

Her heated mirror rejected the steam, reflecting her image perfectly she gazed at her double, her body awakened but her mind still sleepily recovering. The soft, cascading streams of water hypnotized her, the way they flowed undulating, warping and refracting the bright lights of her marble room. The way the steam flowed from her shower frame, misting the room, yet leaving the mirror untouched, to reveal her twin to herself. Her vision followed the streams, running through her hair to tumble over shoulders, circling her breasts to pour over her hips and down her legs, a pool at her feet. She closed her eyes, sighing again, and lifted her face to embrace the cascade.
"...Mind if I join you?"

Asami started, turning to find Korra holding the shower frame open, naked, as she was, a fatigued smile across her face, waiting for an answer, or an invitation.

Asami laughed. "Sure. You look like you had a rougher night that I did." She extended a hand forward, that Korra took willingly.

"Please," Korra said, stepping into the shower, closing the door to the frame behind her. "Last night was amazing; It's the morning after that slays me."

Asami had never quite comprehended just how spacious her shower was, until she realized she was sharing it quite comfortably with her partner. Korra moved to stand beneath the torrent of hot water, Asami watching as it washed the haziness of the hangover and the torpor of the morning from her. Asami moved behind to join her in the stream, slowly pressing her forehead against the back of Korra's neck. She let her eyes close for a second, to stand beneath the waves, basking in its warmth, her body still beneath the running, lashing warmth and swirling steam.

Thump thump... As she closed her eyes, Asami could feel her heart beat slowly in her ears, and though she may have imagined it, Asami swore she could feel another rhythm not too far away, beat in tandem.

She opened her eyes to see Korra staring into the mirror, her eyes closed as well, basking in the soothing waters. She looked down to watch the water stream trickling droplets down her toned back, as if tracing the tattoo that ran between her shoulder blades, to trace her taut cheeks and thighs. Asami bit her lip, and gently pressed the flat of her hand against a shoulder blade, running circles on Korra's back with her thumb.

Korra smirked, staring at Asami through the mirror. She turned to face Asami, but grimaced, clutching her side.

"Are you okay?"

"Urgh... Yeah. Just... Sore."

"That bad?"

Korra gave a nervous chuckle, eager to avoid making a display. Asami cocked her head to the side, pondering for a moment.

"Here."

Asami reached behind Korra, who watched with raised eyebrows, her mess of wet hair guiding streams of water down her face, as Asami pulled a loofah from the small box to hold it aloft, a playful glint in her eye. When Korra didn't object, Asami raised Korra's hand, and began to lather her strong, lithe arm. Korra watched with soft eyes as Asami moved from her wrist up to her shoulder, gently drawing small circular patterns with the soap against her skin. Asami repeated the process with the other arm, and after began to scrub gently at Korra's back, the lather trickling down to cover Korra's tattoo, if only for a moment. Asami moved to Korra's front, gently brushing against Korra's breasts, circling a nipple, and then the other. She knelt slightly, to run it clean across her firm hips, against her cheek, and down her strong, muscular legs.

Asami felt a hand touch her elbow, and felt Korra draw her upwards. She looked up to meet Korra's eyes, that held a familiar gaze.
"What is it?" Asami said quietly.

A short silence followed, the sound of the shower drowning out the lull. The room was filled with steam, coating their world in mist. In the waters, the two knew only each other. It was a moment before Korra broke the silence. She raised her hands, running them high to brush against Asami's cheek, to sweep her wet hair from her face.

"Kiss me."

Asami's eyes widened. It only took a moment for her to register the words, before she swept down, pressing her lips against Korra's.

Her hands ran along Korra's body, messily ravaging Asami's wet hair. In the steam, neath the torrent of hot water, they didn't care for anything else in the world. Eyes closed, Asami pressed against Korra, their slick, wet bodies almost inseparable, tangled in each other, reveling in the sweet taste of the other. They stood in passionate embrace, unbreaking, unmoving save for the heavy panting as they broke to gasp for air.

When they broke, the pair were sitting, hunched in each other's shadows against the foot of the mirror, cascading waves of steaming water still pouring down their bodies. They sat panting, breathless, resting into each other.

Korra sighed, smiling, water streaming down her face. "We should probably get out of the shower."

Asami sighed quietly. "Yeah, I'm starting to prune." A tired smile spread across her face.

Asami reached up, turning the dials to stem the flow of water. Korra stood, offering a hand to help Asami to her feet.

As they toweled off in front of the vanity-basin, Asami couldn't help but stare at her partner standing beside her, running a towel through her short cropped hair, turning her cheek from side to side to inspect her face. Occasionally Korra would catch her eye, and after the third time, Korra flushed and turned to face Asami.

"What is it?"

Asami grinned sheepishly. "Oh, um... It's nothing, it's just... you're an amazing kisser."

The familiar crooked grin found its way to Korra's lips.

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7:03AM, KITCHEN, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY THREE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

"Are you cooking eggs? Fuck, that smells good. I'm starving."

The sun had begun it's early ascension, it's deep orange blow breaking daylight into the kitchen. Asami stood over the stove with a watchful eye, as Korra strolled past to the breakfast bar, draped in Asami's bathrobe, running a towel through her wet hair.

"I thought you would be. I'm familiar with your appetite." Asami threw a smirk over her shoulder at Korra, who paused in the middle of drying her hair with an incredulous look on her face, before
giving a sharp bout of laughter.

"Wow. Looks, brains, and a sense of humor. I've got the whole package."

Asami's heart skipped. She glanced over at Korra. Her hair was a frizzy mess, spiked in a thousand different directions, but she didn't seem to care. Korra leaned forward on her stool, elbows propped on the breakfast bar, gazing sideways out the glass wall to watch the sun climb towards the heavens.

She's so beautiful. Asami shook herself out before Korra could realize she was staring. Again. "Coffee?"

Korra looked back at Asami, eyes wide, as if waking from a deep thought. "Sure."

Asami busied herself with mugs, occasionally glancing over at Korra to see her picking at her eggs. She looks distracted. When the machine had finished it's whirring, and two steaming mugs of coffee were filled, Asami set one down beside Korra's plate with a soft clink.

"Hey, is everything okay? You look like you have a lot on your mind."

Korra paused, her hand raised halfway to her mouth. "Yeah. I do." She said, replacing the fork onto the plate.

"What is it?" Asami said, a cautious tone in her voice. "Is something wrong?"

“No.” Korra looked up, her eyes meeting Asami’s, an expression of determination on her face. “I want to talk to you about something.”

Asami furrowed her brows. “What is it?"

“It’s about what you—" Korra hesitated, collecting herself. “What we want. I know what I want... but I want to know if it’s the same thing as what you want.”

Asami placed her hands on the counter-top, her mind slowly picking up the pace Korra had set. Truthfully, she had been thinking this as well, but had quickly dismissed it as a distraction, an irrelevance. But now, it was staring her in the face, with two beautiful, ice blue eyes, strangely warm, infinitely comforting.

Happiness? No. It was too cliche. She was happy, at least complacent, with the world she was in.

Money? Eugh. Nothing so trivial. She had money, but she would find joy equally without her wealth.

Asami mentally slapped herself. She knew what she wanted, and it was nothing so abstract, so vague. She could leave those questions to the philosophers.

“I want… you.” Asami said softly. Korra raised an eyebrow, her mouth parting slightly, a look of slight, cheerful surprising appearing on her face. Asami felt herself flush. she ought to make an excuse, a cry for pardon, but before she knew it, her mouth was running away without her.

I... I want...

“You're beautiful, so fucking amazingly so. I want to see you when I close my eyes, and in my dreams, and when I wake, I want to wake up to you, like we did this morning, every morning. I want to hold you, I want to touch you and kiss you and fuck you, and I want you to scream and beg and fuck me too."
Asami paused, collecting her thoughts before an incredulous and surprised Korra.

"I want ... everything. I want to laugh and cry and do it all ... all that, that ... that stupid shit you see in movies, I want to do it all with you, everything, forever."

“Hah.” Korra blushed. It was the first time that Asami had seen her partner bewildered, embarrassed, lost for words.

Asami could feel tears well up in her eyes, her throat tighten, and if she spoke she was sure it would be croaky, but she forced herself to speak the words.

“And what... What do you want?”

Korra rose to join Asami in the kitchen. Her movement was determined, but gentle, as she slipped a hand around Asami waist, a hand to take Asami’s cheek in hers.

“I had something in mind, but now I'm pretty sure I want to kiss you again.”

Oh. Okay. Good.

*****************************************************************************************************************

6:36PM, PRIVATE BOOTH, GRAND HALL, REPUBLIC CITY CONSERVATORY, DAY THREE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

[K: How’s your one going?]

[A: Pretty boring. Yours?]

[K: I have no idea what Raiko is saying. Something about unity, cooperation an]

[A: An?]

[A: ?? Did something happen?]

[A: Please don't bail on me. I'm going to fall asleep at mine if you stop texting me.]

[K: Sorry. Raiko's speech ended and I had to join in the standing ovation.]

[K: Honestly, if I find one person in this crowd who understood a thing he said, I'll give them 100,000 yuans.]

Asami smiled at her screen, her ears perked up attentively should the keynote speaker say anything of importance. She glanced around to see if anyone noticed that she was paying more attention to her phone than the presentation, but the closest private booth was separated by a 3-metre gap and several layers of the soundproof glance that encased Asami's area. On top of that, the general audience were some distance below her, on the lower floors. Privacy.

Hiroshi had made Asami attend the advanced technologies presentation in his absence, as he himself was attending another event simultaneously. The theatre was large, with it's stage over 70 metres across. Row upon row of seats lined the main attendee floor, and a large ringed mezzanine above them for more important guests. Above that were booths that struck outwards from the high walls,
like capsules inset into the pillars that held up the high arched ceiling. The whole thing seemed more of a basilica, than a show-hall.

Asami sat alone in her booth, but for that she was grateful. Though her guard was stationed just outside, in her booth she was contained, a small speaker in the corner echoed in the speech in case the occupant was hard of hearing, or unfamiliar with their language, a translation could be played instead. When Asami walked in, she was amazed by the sheer grandeur that the location held, but as soon as the presentation began, she fell into unmitigated boredom.

It had been half a day since she had seen Korra, since they both had a full day of meetings and events, taking them to separate parts of Republic City. All Asami wanted to do was to speak to her again, to see her. Until then, she had to settle for texting.

[A: I wish you were here. I miss you.]
[K: Hah, already?]  
[K: Don't worry, mine's almost done]
[A: Shut up I'm bored ok]
[A: Mine still has a bit to go. Meet you back at mine?]
[K: Sure. Should we get something to eat?]
[K: Actually, I feel like eating in tonight.]
[A: Is that a euphemism]
[K: Wow.]
[A: There's a nice sushi place around the corner from the tower. There's a good noodle place too. Depending on what you're feeling, you could eat me ;)]
[K: Amazing. That was horrible.]
[A: Please. I'll bet you laughed.]
[K: I'm not taking you laughed.]
[A: Because I won]
[K: Because you won]
[K: Yup. Sushi sounds good. I'll get some for you too.]
[A: Awesome, can't wait]
[K: :) See you soon.]

8:01PM, PRIVATE BOOTH, GRAND HALL, REPUBLIC CITY CONSERVATORY, DAY THREE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT
Asami scowled at the speaker, slumped in her spacious chair, her mind half dead from boredom, half infuriated from the mindless droning of the presentation below her.

*Korra is going to kill me. And I am going to kill whoever this person is.*

Asami rubbed her eyes, trying to regain any semblance of composure. She sat up straight, flattening out her trousers, and tried to resume rapt attention, knowing full well that it was going to fade as soon as the speaker said something innocuous like "venture capital", or "retains productivity".

Asami's phone buzzed along her armrest. She growled, her face etched in worry, her mind furtively wondering what Korra would say. She picked it up, her booth bathed in the neon glow of her screen.

[K: Where are you? I'm, in your penthouse.]

[K: This is good sushi btw.]

[A: Bad news. Seems like my thing's going overtime.]

[K: Fuck you're still in the hall?]

[A: Unfortunately.]

[K: Well that sucks.]

[K: For you. More sushi for me :P]

[K: (IMAGE)]

A selfie. Korra, in the middle of Asami's kitchen, mouth open, her tongue stuck out sharp, balancing a single piece of sushi, a large platter behind her. Asami felt a smirk tip the corner of her mouth. In the background, she heard applause break below, but she didn't join in. From the corner of her eye, she saw one suit walk off the stage, and another stroll back on. Asami rolled her eyes, and returned her focus to her phone.

[A: I'm going to kick your ass when I get home. You're making me hungry.]

[K: It's soooo good.]

[A: It looks good.]

[A: And the sushi's not half bad either.]

On hand balancing her phone, the other drawing mindless shapes with her fingers along her thigh, Asami stared at the graphic that indicated Korra was writing a message. She crossed her legs, reclining to the side, waiting for anything that would take her mind off of the presentation that had long ago lost her interest.

[K: Only good? Please.]

[K: IMAGE]

[K: I look amazing.]

Asami studied the picture intently; Korra stood in Asami's hallway, a full length mirror reflecting her familiar physique. She had shed her day's formal attire, dressed instead in a cropped singlet, and shorts far too short, far too tight, wrapped snugly around Korra's strong thighs. Asami's eyes
widened as they strolled over Korra's smooth, dark skin, her strong arms, the mischievous smile on her partner as she took the picture.

[A: Now I'm starving.]

[K: I hope you're somewhere private.]

[A: Sitting in a private booth, I would sure hope so.]

[K: Uh huh? So if I...]

[K: IMAGE]

Asami let slip a soft moan, biting her lip to silence herself. Sheepishly, she glanced around, even though she knew no-one would be able to see her, no-one would be able to hear her, and no-one would be able to see her phone. Down on the stage, the representative of a logistics company was now pointing to graphs, and the audience had given him their rapt attention.

But Asami was still in her private booth upstairs, and even so she felt a pang of guilt. *This feels so taboo.* For the sake of her own peace of mind, when she knew for certain she was safe in the privacy of her booth, she glanced at her screen again.

Korra stood facing the mirror, both hands on her phone infront of her, her shirt lifted, held up between the tips of her teeth, a grin on her face. Asami felt a heat wash over her as she eyed smooth, round, supple breasts, pert and keen nipples. She felt her breath speed up, deeper, a weight in her chest, an urge, and elsewhere, a familiar thirst, a throbbing.

[A: That's not fair. This is cruel.]

[K: You're late. This is your punishment.]

[A: What happens if I stay even later?]

[K: Well...]

[K: IMAGE]

Asami let out a frustrated growl, furrowing her brow. Her tongue traced the tips of her teeth as she studied Korra's latest message. It was the same as the last, except only one had was on the phone; The other had slipped down the front of Korra's shorts, her face curled into a mocking moment of bliss, captured on camera.

[K: I guess I have to sort myself out.]

[A: Don't you dare.]

[K: Or what, Red? Are you going to punish me?]

Another wave of applause broke out, and Asami's attention shifted to see the presenter bowing out the ceremony.

*He finished early? Of course he did.*

A wave of excitement sparked in her, and hurriedly, she gathered her things, her coat and clutch, and swept out of the booth.
Asami all but flew through the halls, her bodyguard who was standing outside of her booth jumped at her speed, hurriedly power-walking through the crowd to catch up with her. As she entered the foyer, several people passed their attention to her; the wealthy, the well-known, and the connected. Asami nodded to each, giving no more than a slight gesture that indicated she needed to be elsewhere. *I'm the Sato heir - What are they going to do, tackle me?* Fortunately, after the first few, the rest got the hint and let her depart the venue without further interruption. In the parking lot, her bodyguard fell into pace beside her, out of breath, directing Asami to her transport home.

As she settled in the back of the black limousine, her guard became her driver, and she pulled out her phone once again.

"Did you enjoy the presentation, Ms. Sato?" Her guard inquired.

"Oh - yes, it was very informative. Could you roll up the partition please? I'd like to have some privacy."

"Of course, Ms. Sato."

*Sorry, don't mean to be rude.* A heavily tinted pane rose between Asami and her driver, and Asami returned to her phone.

[K: Are you still there?]

Asami began typing out her reply, eagerly telling Korra that she was headed home, to her partner, to ravish her and embrace every sensuous and sensual depraved joy that they could explore - but another idea took her. A subtle, playful, elusive idea.

[A: Yup. Just daydreaming. Wish I was there.]

[K: How much longer did you say you were going to be?]  
[A: Like another hour, maybe? I could be here all night :()]

*A lie.*

[K: I guess I could make it more interesting. Even though you don't deserve it for being late.]  
[A: Be gentle, it's not my fault.]  
[K: We'll see.]  
[K: IMAGE]

Asami's wardrobe. In truth, Asami hadn't kept her private quarters the tidiest - her workshop was the only place where she had shown any effort to keep things neat. Her walk in closet, despite being quite deep, with tall, ornate mirrors from both sides, was littered with heaped coats and shirts, skirts and jumpers and socks of every variety, as well as a variety of pouffes and stools.

However, she had kept her private, intimate collection at least somewhat organized - perhaps that was how Korra found it so easily.

[K: My my my, Ms. Sato you have quite the collection of provocative nightwear.]  
[A: What can I say. It makes me feel confident.]  
[K: I think I know what you mean.]
This girl is going to be the death of me. Korra stood in Asami’s wardrobe, sporting a familiar, lacy, black article that belonged to Asami. Asami filled it out a bit more comfortably, but Asami couldn’t deny how good Korra looked in it. It was thin in places, the soft mesh allowing the tints of Korra’s skin to peek through, teasingly and maddeningly so. The lower garment was tighter around Korra’s hips, stretched, seemingly ready to rip.

[A: You didn't ask if you could borrow that.]

[K: What are you going to do about it?]

A thousand ideas ran through Asami’s mind, each more gripping than the next. Her fingers clenched against the thigh of her trousers, a wicked smile on her face. She glanced out the window, hardly seeing the buildings and lights flash beside her, the night life and neon signs, small coffee clubs and jazz bars, and the subtle, private dance halls...

The back seat of the limousine was private enough, but Asami still had to be careful. She pulled up Korra’s profile, and dialed. It rang for a second, before the call was picked up.

"You lost."

Asami’s grin deepened at the voice. "Did I now?"

"Yup. You called first, so I win."

"Ever the competitor."

"Mm. I'm enjoying your collection here. What should I try on next? The silk nightie? The neoprene bikini? Ooh... A one piece?"

Asami slipped a soft purr through the phone.

Korra laughed. "Good choice. Too bad you're not here to see it though."

Such a tease.

"Probably for the best. I would have ripped it off you." Asami said softly, mischievously, dripping with desire and sweet saccharine tones.

"Oh." Korra's voice betrayed the smallest hint of surprise - evidently she still had a weak spot for Asami’s voice.

"Tell me what you're doing in my wardrobe, Korra." Asami whispered, as her limousine rolled into the garage of Sato Tower One.

"I'm picking out one of your swimsuits... Blue, or black?"

Asami pondered. As she stepped out of her vehicle, she dismissed her bodyguard-cum-driver with a curt nod, who returned the gesture, and went off to stow the limo. Asami made doubly sure that no ambient noises would foil her plan, as she stepped into the elevator.

"I think you'd look good with Red on you."

"Mm... hah. Red might be a bit of a tight fit."
"How dare you."

"It would look good on me though. It's so cute."

Asami covered her phone as the elevator gave a soft *ding*, signaling her arrival on her penthouse floor. Slowly, she stepped towards her door, speaking to cover the sounds of her rummaging for her keys.

"Found something?"

"Silk, lacy, like the one before, but white. Makes my boobs look bigger, but it's so tight on my butt."

"I love your butt."

"Aha. Don't get too turned on at the show, Red. I want your appetite strong by the time you're back."

Asami crept into her penthouse. Fortunately, the door didn't creak too much. In the lounge the lights were off, and the large room was bathed in moonlight and a dull glow from the city streets below. Asami wove her way past her furniture, to pursue the faint light emanating from her bedroom.

"I think I can manage until I'm there."

"Hah. What if I can't? What if I can't help myself?"

"You wouldn't dare start without me."

"I look so good, Asami."

Asami cursed Korra. Korra practically begged Asami's name, pleading for her. It sent a shiver down Asami's spine, and it took every ounce of strength to stop Asami bursting through the door. Instead, Asami pushed her bedroom door ever-so-slightly, and slipped into her bedroom. She could see movement in her wardrobe from across the room, and once again her lips curled into a smile.

"You better keep your hands off yourself until I get there."

"Ah..." Korra moaned. "But... You make me... Ohh..."

"Korra." Asami whispered. "Don't you dare."

"Mph... What are you going to do about it?"

Asami slipped a finger on the door to the wardrobe, hooking it slightly ajar. Within, she saw Korra, her phone lying several feet away from her. *Speaker.* Korra herself was sat on a pouffe, back against a mirror, eyes closed and back arced. Like she had said, she had donned one of Asami's personal items, a sheer white brassiere that generously complimented Korra's chest, and a thin laced set that wrapped around Korra's hips, lovingly contrasting against her dark skin, taut against her strong, toned thighs.

Asami found Korra's hands, one slipping underneath a cup, the other trailing fingers against the silk of her sex. Asami's eyes widened as she watched silently through the gap in the doorway, watched as Korra moaned seductively, eagerly awaiting what she imagined would be frustration from Asami's end. Instead, Asami stepped into the wardrobe, and Korra's eyes snapped open.

Korra gasped, rising to her feet. A look of surprise flashed across her face, before it was immediately replaced by a look of sheepish, mischievous intrigue.
"So you lied about the event running overtime."

Asami said nothing. Instead, she let her phone drop to the floor, cushioned by a pile of what Asami presumed were Korra's dayclothes. She stepped toward Korra, a power in her stride. Korra stood her ground, a flicker of fire waking in her ice blue eyes. A foot away from the other, Korra spoke, barely above a whisper.

"I've waited all day. Are you going to make me wait a few more minutes, or what?"

Asami leaned forward, her hands wrapping around Korra's back. Asami felt the other's hands grasp at the front of her blouse, pressed up between them, holding her close as their lips met in a frenzy. A dance of flesh, chaotic and delicate, barely a breath between the two. Korra's teeth nipped at Asami's lip, earning a gasp, and the two broke but for a second. Asami felt her heart rampaging in her chest, urging her forth. She moved in to seek another taste, but Korra placed a finger on her lips.

A wicked glee danced across Korra's eyes. "How was the presentation?"

Asami groaned. "Don't you fucking dare." Hands placed firmly onto Korra's shoulders, Asami pushed her gently, guiding her until she fell back, sitting squarely on the pouffe Korra had risen from only moments ago.

"For all that teasing, you have a lot to make up for."

Korra looked up at her partner, her own eyes lit in brazen excitement. Asami moved to stand close, her hands still upon Korra's shoulders. She lifted a leg, to place a heeled foot on the pouffe between Korra's bare thighs, her knee brushing against Korra's cheek.

"Unbuckle." Asami whispered playfully. Korra's hands slid along Asami's leg, to unclasp the buckles of her boot, slipping it off. Asami swapped legs, and nodded, and Korra repeated the process. Asami drew herself closer, brushing the side of Korra's cheek with the back of one hand, the other taking Korra's, placing it squarely against the front of her trousers.

"Unbutton, please." Whispered Asami.

Korra's eyes never left Asami's, as she hooked a finger under the button, popping it free, pulling the zipper slowly downwards. She glanced to Asami, who nodded with a twinkle of her eye. Korra hooked her fingers into the hips of Asami's trousers, and drew them down. Asami stepped out of her trousers, her buttoned shirt ruffled where she had tucked it in, and a dark article of satin that held Korra's immediate attention.

"You look good in my things." Whispered Asami. "What do you think of mine?"

Korra's hands reached behind Asami, one palm on the low of her back, the other grasping a cheek, stealing a gasp from Asami as Korra pulled Asami closer between her legs, feeling the soft brush and tickle of Korra's lips as she planted short pecks against Asami's navel, trailing the upper line of her underwear.

"You like it, then."

"I love it."

Korra practically growled her words. Asami's skin prickled at the words, tingling, goosebumps running down her body. Korra slipped her hands under the soft veneer, and with a much gentler notion, tugged them to hang between Asami's knees.
"Kiss me."

Asami could feel Korra's hot breath, intimate and tantalizing. Korra's kisses drew closer, Asami felt her draw breath slower, and slower, deeper, till Korra's lips touched hers, Asami's mouth widened, a silent gasp escaping as her spine arced high, twisting her hips deep against the touch of Korra's lips, her tongue against her sex.

"F-fuck..."

Her breath became shallow, to gasp in tandem with the rhythmic dance of Korra's tongue, sweet pulsating blissful waves of ecstasy shooting through her body, her hands gripping tight against Korra's shoulders, rummaging through her hair, pulling her closer, tighter, urging her forward. She felt Korra's hands flat against her thighs, smooth against her skin, running between, upward, sliding into her.

"Ye-esss... your f-ah, fuck... your fingers ..."

Asami's legs buckled slightly as she felt Korra penetrate her, her expression one of infinite pleasure, contorted to furious, raging desire. She gasped as Korra took another to her sex, and then another, curling and kissing, seeking and finding, pushing, pleasuring, punishing and finding immeasurable divine sensations.

"K-Korr-ah!"

Asami crumpled forward onto her partner as she climaxed, straddling her partner precariously upon the small seat, as she took her lips upon her own, riding Korra's nimble fingers as she felt wave after wave ravage her body, rushing through from her sex to her very extremities, powerful and undulating. For the passing, Asami felt two things, her body writhing in pleasure as Korra's fingers darted through her sex, and the sweet, unforgettable taste of Korra's mouth on hers. As the last vestiges of the moment gave their final pulses, she found her arms wrapped loosely around Korra's shoulders, their heads pressed against each other, their breaths mixed in panting, complacent pleasure.

Korra shuffled to make Asami more comfortable, but Asami slipped a slender hand upon Korra's chest.

"Your turn."

Asami drew Korra up, every fibre of her being calming her shaking, twitching legs. Korra gave a look of surprise, but obliged, as Asami slipped her hand into Korra's own, drawing her from the wardrobe to the bedroom, still half naked, and again, pushing her gently to sit upon the bed.

"You really do look good in that."

Asami crawled upon her partner, a soft peck upon her lips, upon Korra's neck. Korra threw her head back, laughing, moaning, hands gripping the sheets as Asami moved down, hands slipping behind to unclasp, throwing the soft satin brasserie aside. Asami's tongue traced a nipple, like so many times before, a soft bite, a pinch, Korra gasped, groaned, and leant back into the soft of the bed, giving Asami free reign of her body.

It was all Asami wanted to do, to bring pleasure to her partner, to touch and explore and to love and to give every inch of Korra the worship she deserved, to be close and closer and impossibly, intangibly together. A quiet prayer, in between kisses and slender grasps and clutches of sweet, dark upon fair light, Asami felt a roar, a rage, a beast unshackled, maddeningly in love with the other,
furious that for all she could do, it would never be enough for her, or for Korra.

But it didn't give her pause, as Asami left soft pecks against Korra's toned stomach, down to her navel, she traced the seam of the familiar white lace against Korra's sex. She planted a kiss upon the fabric, watching Korra stare down her body at her, ice blue meeting sharp emerald.

"Asami..." Korra teased. The mention of her name sent Asami's mind spinning.

"Yeah?"

"Fuck me, Asami." Korra groaned at the sound of her own words. "Touch me, kiss me, fuck me... Please... You..."

Lust consumed Asami, a fervor sparked in her eyes, a renewed vigor. In a motion, Asami pulled the taut white fabric from Korra, her wet, thrumming eagerness sensitive to the touch. It took little to send Korra's body shaking, writhing against the bed, as Asami found Korra's sweet sensation upon her lips, a lithe finger to mimic her partner's moves moments prior.

Korra arced her back high upon the bed with each pulse of Asami's finger, burying herself deep into her partner, eager to return the favor, of love and lust, of all consuming passion. Asami slipped her arms under Korra's waist, turning her over, Korra obliging only too well. She rolled, as Asami drove motion after motion into Korra, her hips arced high as she rose with her knees, pressing herself against Asami's wrist, biting down into the sheets to muffle her moans, her screams, her roars of euphoria. Asami pulsed, faster, a rhapsody of sensation unimaginable, until Korra shuddered uncontrollably, every toned muscle, every fibre of her athletic body contracting as her sex throbbed against Asami's fingers, clenched and raw, biting and grasping against the sheets, Asami watched in awe as Korra's body revealed every strand of muscle in her trance of exalted sensation, panting, as her body carried her down from her heavenly delirium.

Asami slipped her fingers from her partner, wet, and ran a tongue across them. The taste of her partner was intoxicating, gratifying. Asami slipped to cuddle against her partner, feeling her body rise and fall, fast at first, and slowly calm till they matched heartbeats, gentle, strong, peaceful.

"I don't know what it was." Asami said slowly, softly. "But it must have been something you said. I felt crazy amazing."

Korra rolled to face her partner. There was a look in her eye, a glinting, a knowing glimmer that Asami knew, that made her feel safe. As if, she were home, a sanctuary.

"I love you."

As the words touched her ears, Asami felt her own slip from her lips.

"And I love you."

At first they grinned, and then they smiled, and then they embraced, a softer kiss. They leaned into each other, holding each other, complacent and blissful. They spoke at length of their days, of film and of food and of their worlds together and apart. And then of the following day.

"What do you have planned for tomorrow?"

A quiet thought awoke in Asami.

"Maybe I'll show you my workshop."
Phew. Currently, it's 430AM in Sydney - I just really wanted to finally be able to get this chapter out after being over a month since the last!! My work arrangement has recently changed, so I'll have a lot more time to write (hopefully). That was one of the main reasons I actually managed to finally get this one out.
I'm not quite sure how I feel about this one to be honest... I've explored the themes I wanted to explore, and I haven't missed anything major that I wanted to include... But the final scene... I don't know. You let me know what you think, okay?
As always, thanks so much for reading (and for being so unbelievably, undeniably patient with my bollocks), and as always, if you'd like to, please leave a comment either here, or on my tumblr (citriic.tumblr.com!) (the ask button is in the top left under "menu")
Since it's so early in the morning, I'll probably be making a few edits to this in the coming days, so dont be alarmed if you see it pop up again!
"And what does this do?"

"That's my kit for soldering circuit boards."

"Uh-huh. And this thing?"

"That's part of my set-up for injection molds."

"Right. No idea what that is. What about this thing?"

"Ah. This complex device is for my A.I. I'm building."

"Really?"

"Hah, I'm just pulling your leg, that's just a TV remote."

"You know Red, you're not as funny as you think."

Despite it having been tidied up substantially, Asami's workshop was still a mess. Tools previously packed away seemed to mysteriously spring up here and there. Half-finished projects lay incomplete, abandoned for whatever next whimsical flitter of intrigue stole Asami's interest.

That, for now, was Korra.

She eyed her partner curiously, a sly smile curling the edges of her lips as Korra paced slowly around Asami's workshop, half intrigued, half wary, as though Asami had laid out some sort of elaborate trap to ensnare her.

"Tell me about the event today," Korra said, as she weaved through the clutter. "I hear it's a pretty big thing."

Asami hummed in agreement. "The Earth Kingdoms have some sort of demonstration. I had a look at the guest list - must be important to involve all of the major players."

Korra glanced at Asami. "So Kuvira will be there."

"She'll probably be the one hosting the demonstration. Something wrong?"

"No. I imagine someone with her history, and in her position, she knows how to be subtle."

Korra paused, glancing at a shelf of Asami's work. Or failed projects, more like. The shelf was brimming with discarded attempts, ideas forgotten in the heat of the moment or simply burnt out of inspiration. Any one of them could have been ground-breaking inventions if Asami ever bothered to bring them to completion.
"I gotta say Red," Korra remarked, as she held aloft one of Asami's earlier prototypes, "This is properly impressive."

Asami raised an eyebrow, amused. "You think so?"

"Yeah." Korra said, replacing the prototype, and moving aside to toy with a set of screwdrivers. "I never was one for all this stuff, but I have to be honest with you,"

Korra moved over to where Asami was resting against a workbench, turning the screwdriver in her fingers. She moved close, till her voice was barely above a whisper, husky and demanding.

"This, this is properly sexy."

Asami couldn't help but gulp, her heart beating hard to keep up with her flushing face. She could see the earnest look in Korra's eyes, and growled at the resilience she would have to keep up; there wasn't any time for this, not now at least.

"Really?"

"Yeah." Korra laughed. "Something about the demure intellectual, who has that secret flame - That's got you written all over it, Red."

Korra flipped the screwdriver with a toss, and placed it back upon the workbench, but Asami was not one to be outdone. She sidled up to Korra, shoulders braced against each other.

Asami snorted. "Demure? Please. What about the trope of the visiting princess with the facade of the coy, innocent lady of the court," Asami whispered, taking Korra's chin in her forefinger and thumb. "While the whole time, she's just looking for that one person to rub her royal jewels the right way?"

Mere inches away, Korra's eyes were lost in the fantasy, her hand placed squarely upon Asami's chest, when a sharp rapping against the door to Asami's workshop spilt them apart like magnets. A strong voice came from outside.

"Ms. Sato? Your father's arrived - we're ready to depart."

"We'll be out shortly, thank you."

Asami turned to Korra, who was wearing a smug look upon her face.

"Family jewels? What does that even - Does that even apply in this sense?"

"Shut up, I had you."

"You would have, if your minion hadn't interrupted."

Asami laughed. "We should probably get going. You can look around some more when we come back."

"There's more?" Korra said, moving towards the door.

Asami smirked, a devilish thought crossing her mind. She kept her lips quiet, and winked at her partner.

*Oh yes, there's always more.*
1:16PM, OLD MANSION, EXTERIOR PROVINCE OF GREATER REPUBLIC CITY AREA, DAY FOUR OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

The demonstration was to be held at a remote location by the southern shores of Republic City, far enough from the central city as to prevent disruption of the daily life of anyone uninterested in political affairs. The land south of the City was sparse, verging on barren as the greenery fought a failing battle to reclaim the plains from the harsher landscapes of the Eastern Kingdom.

Though the day had required them to dress more formally, the military nature of their expedition and the environment they were visiting meant that their garb also needed to be sturdy. Asami settled for a rider's outfit; riding trousers, high boots, a waistcoat and short tie accentuated her position and her status as part of Korra's personal retinue, but generously offered her comfort and style as well. In turn, Korra had settled for one of the signature coats of her people, seemingly heavy and thick, but breathable. She too had turned to heavy boots, which would fare well against the dust-storms that ravaged the fringe of the southern barrens.

Their limousine trundled along a rougher road, one part of a chain of the political, military, and media procession. Through the dusty winds, they could just make out the motorcycles flanking either side of their motorcade. Though there wouldn't be much of a crowd this far out anyway, it was more of a formality.

They sat opposite to each other, Korra and Asami flanked by guards. Ironically, the presence of guards made Asami feel more uncomfortable. They took away their privacy, their laughter, their talk. They made her uneasy; no danger would come of her, but in the company of others Asami and Korra had to maintain a facade. Here, besides Korra, the public eye needed to see little more than an act of friendship extended by the Sato family to the visiting Southern Tribe. She was a security chief, part of Korra's retinue, and nothing more. Subtlety was key.

But it didn't stop Korra. Somehow, she found every moment to pass a burning smolder to Asami, a look that set her mind aflame, one that drove her mad with a desire to touch, to be near her. It frustrated her, but Asami made a quiet note to pay Korra back.

Instead, she had to settle for what her position allowed her to say.

"We'll be nearing the locale soon, Miss." Asami said assertively, doing her very best to seem dominant, passing Korra a look. A flicker of a grin washed over Korra's face, before she gracefully nodded.

Oh, she's good.

Asami had spoken the truth. Within minutes, their entourage was circling around a dried up fountain, kicking up dust as their vehicle reached the bottom of marble stairs. The pair waited for the dust to settle, before exiting the vehicle, in awe of their surroundings.

They stood at the base of a great mansion, though it had definitely seen better days. It seemed decrepit, paint peeling, the once rich marble now scuffed with a thousand marks and eroded by years of ravaging dust. This must have been a plantation house once.

Canvas pavilions had been set up to cover what the remains of the mansion could not, and an elegant deep-sea green carpet had been laid out over the centre of the steps, leading into the building. At least
the holes give it plenty of natural light. Asami turned to the rest of Korra's retinue.

"I can take it from here. Scout out the surrounding area, and return to me with a report."

The guards nodded, and set off in pairs to sweep the area. Asami gave a sigh of relief, and passed a soft smile to Korra, who returned it.

"Nice one."

Asami gave a short laugh. "Come on, we should get inside before the dust picks up again."

Asami quickly realized that the mansion, or what remained of it, was little more than a shell. From the foyer, barely any structural details remained from entrance to exit, and someone standing on the front step could see straight through out the back balcony. But strong pillars had remained, which kept the corpse of the building stable, and the Eastern Kingdom delegation had made ample effort to transform the wreck into something hospitable.

Elegant green caged lights hung from the banisters of stairs that led nowhere, and dangled from revealed rafters and supporting struts that crossed the ceiling and what remained of the second floor. Vast vases littered the area, displaying more greenery and shrubbery within the building than the miles outside that Asami had seen. Dapper waiting staff swept through the floor, once again delivering flutes of golden liquor.

I wonder if that's what I think it is.

Dense pockets of attendees filled the building, each easily and conveniently discernible by the colour of their garb. The husk easily fit a hundred individuals, though Asami imagined that there would be more to come.

"Like a drink?"

Korra appeared at Asami's side, a flute in each hand. Asami nodded gracefully, taking the flute and sipping lightly. *Yup.* She flushed at the thought, clearing her throat to dissuade her wandering mind.

They wandered the floor, admiring the work that the Eastern Kingdom delegates had done, and made their conversation with the other parties. They rotated from group to group, speaking to the Honored from the Northern Tribes, making small-talk with a pair of entrepreneurs from the Eastern Kingdoms, and various noblesses from smaller regions as well. Hiroshi and Korra's parents were present, though they seemed engrossed in their own discussion with a representative from the Western Empire.

*I'm almost beginning to enjoy myself.* Asami made a soft note to kick herself later to remain sane. A joke told by a Republic City businesswoman made her laugh, and she turned to share it with Korra, who gave her well-rehearsed chuckle. Instinctively, Asami reached out to touch the arm of her partner, but hesitated, her hand tightening at the last moment.

Their socializing was cut short with a sharp burst from a war-bugle. The crowd turned to face the rear balcony, where the herald stood beside the figure of a strong, broad shouldered woman, with a strong brow and sharper eyes. Kuvira spoke, her powerful, deep voice echoing through the building.

"Welcome, honored guests - You grace us with your presence. You have been watered, you have fed, and you have conversed with your fellows. I would go on, but I'm not a person who puts much effort into flowery speeches, so I hope you understand the effort put into what I am about to say."

Kuvira smirked, giving the audience permission to titter at her remark. Kuvira strode to the centre of
the building, her hand raised, gesturing to the sordid state of the infrastructure.

"Many of you may be wondering why we, the Eastern Kingdom, had chosen this locale for our demonstration. There are far grander residences within the City, more comfortable for the purposes of meetings. Indeed, this is true."

She paused, turning, surveying the crowd. Her piercing, dark green eyes lingered for a moment over Asami and Korra. In that moment, Asami felt her entire being stripped apart and laid bare before the Grand Marshall.

"But this mansion, or what remains of it, is symbolic of something. It symbolizes how we hold onto skeletons of the past, how in our earnest beliefs we hesitate to remove ugly, ravaged scars from our world, because of some misplaced sense of nostalgia or reverence. The man who once lived here, went on to found some of the greatest and grandest cities in the Eastern Kingdoms, and for that we hesitate to destroy the memory of his home. But the cities he built are his legacy, not this."

Kuvira paused once again, gauging the mood of the crowd. When she was satisfied, she waved to two workers dressed in green, standing by the rear exit.

"Come, I invite you to see what we, the Eastern Kingdom, propose for the future of the world."

A murmur rippled through the crowd, and slowly it poured out onto the rear balcony. Asami blinked in the face of the sun as it hung high in the sky, scorching the earth beneath it. The rear balcony was more of a tiered terrace, sloping down two or three steps, but the true marvel was the view. The balcony-terrace sat on the edge of a cliff, beyond which the dusty plains sat for miles and miles, as far as Asami could see. She could see the sea to her right, and to her left she could see mountains and forests in the distance, but before her was dusty plain with no end.

As the crowd filled the tiers to take in the marvelous panorama, Kuvira spoke from the back.

"The world knows of our military prowess. For decades, the Eastern Kingdoms have ensured peace for the Nations, and for decades to come we shall keep this unity. But the world's people is growing, and the world has not done much to keep up, until now."

A soldier appeared at Kuvira's side, handing her a small communications device. Kuvira spoke a word into it, and handed it back, nodding. Asami watched nervously, but before a second thought could settle in, the air filled with a tremendous, cacophonous roaring. From over the husk of the mansion, dozens, seemingly hundreds of great twin-rotor helicopters soared over, to sweep down into the grand expanse of empty dust-plains, each carrying what seemed at first to be shipping containers.

"The World holds many lands, some fertile, some bounteous, but much of it harsh, unforgiving, and uninhabitable. We aim to change this."

A mere few seconds later, the helicopters that emerged over their heads were but specks in the distance, unloading their cargo some dozen miles down in the centre of the plains. With their cargo dropped, most flew away, but others remained and landed, and Asami made out people moving between the great containers.

"The men and women you see down there, are in the process of setting up the seedling buildings of what soon will be a burgeoning encampment. Completely self-sufficient, it will soon be able to generate its own power, water purification stations, and crops."

Asami gazed in marvel as she watched a town seemingly spring to life. She watched, as panels fell to
the side of containers, revealing machinations too complex to discern from a distance, as weatherpoles rose from some, others expanding from within themselves to create makeshift, double-story buildings. She watched excitedly as an SUV rolled out from one, dragging a machine behind it that began to flatten the ground and dispense gravel to make makeshift roads.

Kuvira spoke again. "And that's not all. Each Pocket City will, over time, seed and water the earth itself. Terramorph their surroundings, making them permanently more inhabitable, more sustainable. They will turn the land into fertile sanctuaries, feeding the dry earth with nutrient, softening the soil, enriching the loam, so one day even greater cities may be built upon the foundations we build."

"This, is our vision. Indeed, we have protected the world, but this is not enough. We, the Eastern Kingdom, offer you all this opportunity, to shape the harshness of the world away."

She ended with a flourish, a bow. The applause that followed began as a trickle, that soon rose to a generous bout of celebration. Asami joined, marveling at the technological prowess, and again turned to Korra to share in the excitement.

Korra applauded, a smile upon her face. Asami couldn't help but notice it didn't reach her eyes.

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4:23PM, OLD MANSION, EXTERIOR PROVINCE OF GREATER REPUBLIC CITY AREA, DAY FOUR OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Following the speech, the crowd was awash with a quiet excitement. As it happened, it seemed that Kuvira had planned for the whole event to be an elaborate pitch to many of the attendees invited. She went from group to group, calling upon some of Republic City's, and the world's, most powerful and influential people to her cause.

And they came to her in droves. It was an easy decision; her display was dominant to say the least. Asami herself couldn't help but be quietly in awe of her demonstration.

Asami had found her father with some other members of the Republic City council, sitting in a smaller, private audience with Kuvira, as she laid out her five-year plan and how she had envisioned Republic City would play a part in it. She ended her presentation with a bow, to reserved applause and cheerful optimism, and a subtle, piercing glance that almost made Asami blush. It didn't last, but as Kuvira pulled her gaze from Asami, she could swear there was a moment of longing.

Asami would have giggled with elation, but Hiroshi leaned over to Asami with a broad grin.

"Marvelous, simply marvelous isn't it?"

"Yes, father." Asami returned the smile.

"Simply revolutionary. And we'll be playing a part in it! Shaping history, can you believe it Asami?"

"Amazing." Asami echoed. She was so used to amusing her father, she almost didn't process what he had said. "What will we be doing for Ku- The Eastern Kingdoms?"

Hiroshi laughed, patting Asami on the back. "Our fleets and storage will be key to building Republic City as a central asset to the Eastern Kingdoms. Don't worry, we won't have to do any of the heavy lifting ourselves, though I imagine you'd like to chat with the Grand Marshall every now and then, hmm?"
Asami heart slipped for a moment, before she realized her father was simply making a throw-away comment.

"Of course father."

Close one.

The sun had begun to set by the time the formalities died down. The few who were not personally called upon by the Grand Marshall had left following her speech, and many more had departed when they had finished their more personal meetings with Kuvira.

It was bizarre, how the whole afternoon had played out. It felt like a dream, a distant fantasy that Asami had slipped into. Maybe it was the wine, maybe it was the crowd. Whatever it was, it had kept the weariness from Asami until a moment in the afternoon, when the last guest in a long chain of people she had been talking to made their farewell, that she realized she was standing alone in the foyer.

Where was Korra? She hadn't seen her since the presentation, and following it she had been caught in a landslide of conversation with high-ranking members from all across the Kingdoms.

The sun sat at a perfect angle to pierce straight through the husk of the building from back to front. The few people who remained were either waiting staff from the Eastern Kingdoms, still diligently waltzing from group to group, replacing empty glasses with fresh flutes of champagne, or dedicated attendees who were still chatting politics, or simply enjoying the view.

Asami checked the front of the building, though there was no sign of Korra there. She wouldn't have left without me anyway. The dry fountain square at the front of the building was still circled by motorcades, though the dust-storms had since migrated away from the building with the traffic subsiding. Asami admired the view of Republic City from a distance, before moving back to the terrace.

With a sigh of relief, Korra was leaning against the balcony railing, Kuvira by her side, seemingly in deep conversation. At least, Kuvira was talking.

"... maybe two years. Three. There's a lot to do."

Kuvira glanced over at Asami as she approached, and Asami couldn't help but notice the conversation ended a bit too sharply for it to be natural.

"That was one hell of a show you put on, Marshall."

"Grand Marshall." Kuvira corrected, with a smirk. "If you're going to use my title, use the right one, Sato."

"Apologies, Grand Marshall," Asami said, with her own wicked grin. "I see you've almost bored Korra to death here."

Korra turned, resting her back along the rail. There was a distance to her gaze, one that Asami hadn't seen before. Is she tired? Maybe too much sun.

Kuvira cleared her throat. "I hope you'll forgive me, but I'm needed elsewhere. I look forward to speaking to you soon." She nodded as she left the balcony, but Asami couldn't help but notice her words were directed at Korra, rather than her.

She put it from her mind; she was more than happy to simply be alone with Korra again. Even
though their privacy wasn't guaranteed, Asami dared to reach out and slip a few fingers into Korra's, clutching her hand.

"Is everything okay?"

Asami could swear that as Korra's eyes met her own, she gave a look that almost shattered her. 

*Concern? Sadness? Vulnerability?* But it was gone, in the next instant replaced by the telltale crooked grin, eyes bright blue ice.

"Relax Red, I'm just bored." She said with playful candor. "Hah, it's not like you to worry about me."

"Technically it's my *job* to worry about you."

"In that case you're doing a great job. Ought to get a promotion."

Asami smiled. She passed her gaze over Korra's shoulder, down to the plains. In the distance, Kuvira's demonstration was still unpacking, lights flickering to life as the sun continued its descent.

"Pretty amazing, don't you think? All that about building new cities... If Kuvira gets her way, she's going to change the world."

Korra snorted, turning to face the sunset once again, her hand slipping from Asami's.

Asami furrowed her brow. "What, you don't think so?"

"She's got a lot of fancy toys, that's for sure."

"... Are you sure you're okay? You're acting weird."

Korra sighed, hanging her head. "I don't know. I've... I've been restless all day. A lot on my mind."

Asami grinned, glancing around sheepishly to see if anyone was watching them. When she was sure that nobody was watching, she leaned in close, slipping her arms around Korra from behind to draw her into an embrace.

"Stress of the summit finally getting to you, Princess?"

Korra scoffed, and Asami could feel her biceps instinctively flex. "Pfft. Please, nothing gets to me."

*Please. You're so easy to read.* "If you say so. I'm just saying, I had a really good way to destress."

Asami could almost see Korra's ears perk up. She turned to look Asami in the eye with a dangerous glint.

"Go on, Red."

Asami laughed.

"Let's go back to my workshop. I want to show you that little more we were talking about."
"What's going on back there?"

"Don't you dare come through here, I'm still getting ready."

"Is it lingerie?"

Asami laughed. "No, no this is much better."

Korra scoffed, smirking, leaning against one of Asami's workbenches. "That's going to be a tough sell. You looked tasty in lingerie."

Asami's laugh echoed from behind a makeshift tarp divider she had rigged up in a corner of her workshop. The trip back to the tower had been one of muted excitement, or curiosity to say the least. With their retinue with them, there was little they could express to each other, but Korra seemed happy to be gone from that weary place.

And now I've got something to take her mind of things, at least for a little while.

Asami smiled to herself, as she secure the device in the aperture. Slowly, softly, she rested the harness on a small shelf next to her behind the tarp, and slipped her hands to begin undoing her belt.

"I don't really like suspense or surprises, Red."

"Trust me, I think you'll like this one."

Korra strolled across the workshop, hands plunged deep into the pockets of her woolen coat. They hadn't wasted any time since they returned to the tower, dismissing the guard and slipping into Asami's workshop unnoticed. Asami could feel her heart thumping with every step, the sheer gall of her plan, the ridicule she could face if Korra wasn't as warm to the idea as she was.

Confidence, Sato. Embody it.

She slipped out of her boots and her riding trousers, throwing them over the tarp. She could hear Korra's sharp inhale. It strengthened her resolve.

"I hope your plan is more than to just show up naked."

"Will you stop being such a cynic?"

Korra made a noise of mock indignation, but Asami could tell Korra was also nervously eager to see what she had in store. Hooking a thumb in her underwear, she shrugged the thin layer of silk down her legs, now completely bare from the waist down. Asami returned to her harness, turning her attention to the straps.

"Should I be doing anything Red? I mean, you haven't told me anything so far. Should I be, I don't know - Should I be sitting down or something?"

"I'm not giving you a dance, if that's what you're hinting. Don't worry, just be comfortable. Maybe take off that heavy coat."

Asami could just imagine the look on Korra's face, as she whispered. "How did she know I was still wearing my coat?" Before she heard the sound of fabric rustling, and a heavy coat being tossed onto
an empty workbench.
"Are you ready yet?"
"Hmph. Impatient."
"Look, Red - Maybe we should-"
"Ready."

With a soft tug, the tarp slipped off the pegs securing it to a thin line of wire hanging over the corner. Asami stood, one hand on her hips, the other nervously across her stomach. For a moment, Korra's look was one of confusion as she met Asami's eyes, seeing her still dressed in her waistcoat and tie, before a deep flush filled her cheeks as her eyes rolled down her body to the device strapped to her hips.

"Don't laugh."
"Red, I wouldn't dare with that thing on you."

A black harness rested upon her sex, strapped with jet black straps that circled around Asami's waist and beneath her cheeks. Protruding from the forward aperture was a glass member, glistening and standing at attention.

Asami studied Korra's expressions carefully, gauging her reaction. Her gaze was set firmly on her harness, eyes wide and cheeks flushed, a hand clasped across her mouth, the other set on the workbench she was leaning on.

"Well? What do you think?"

Asami had her answer as soon as Korra's hand slipped from her mouth. A grin, a wicked, excited grin, a soft bite on her own lip, a shuddering, waking breath as Korra leaned forward, undoing her trousers, walking slowly towards Asami.

It didn't take much - the coat made most of the outfit, without which people would've thought Korra was going to the gym. Her shirt came off easily, and her trousers were next. In the few steps it took to reach Asami, she had stripped down to her boots.

Asami laughed. "That was the quickest I've ever seen you undress."

"You've been keeping record of every time? Pervert."
"Please. Something tells me you can't wait."
"You should've told me."
"You wouldn't have been able to control yourself."
"You didn't hesitate to run back into your workshop either."
"Just shut up and kiss me already."

Korra's smirk lasted all but the second it took for her to oblige Asami. Passionate, Korra's hand slipped around her head to pull Asami's lips upon her own. Hot, heavy, sweet, a kiss that they had been holding all day, and no sweeter than the thousands they had had in their minds every second they had been together. One, a second, another, a touch, a caress, a soft bite, a giggle, their kisses
were gentle, ferocious, tender, genuine. Asami could feel her glass sliding between Korra's legs, her partner's body tingling against the cold touch.

They moved from the corner, lips never leaving the other's but for breath, Asami pushing Korra against the workbench that stood central in her shop, cleared of the junk and trash that had littered it prior.

"So this is why you cleaned up" Korra said with a grin. Asami didn't hesitate - she slipped her hands from Korra's naked back, down to clutch at her firm cheeks, and lifted Korra to sit down onto the bench with a soft thud, a look of satisfying surprise etched across her partner's face. With a hand upon Korra's chest, Asami guided her partner to lean back, until her skin laid bare upon the cold steel of the bench. Asami leaned onto her, standing between Korra's legs that dangled over the edge, lips tracing her muscular navel as her hands fondled pert breasts that taunted her wicked fantasies.

Korra moaned, her back arching against the workbench, her skin prickling with goosebumps against Asami's delicate, sensuous touch, and against the cold surface. She ran dark hands through silken locks as Asami's lips kissed Korra's between her legs.

Korra lifted her legs to rest over Asami's shoulders, as Asami tended to Korra's sex, her green eyes fiercely smoldering to glance over Korra's body, meeting the ice blue as her tongue parted Korra's lips. The sweetness of her skin was intoxicating, every fibre of her being calming her nerves to keep her focused on her task at hand. Asami's ears filled with the sounds of Korra's pleasure, of her ecstasy, her hips rolled against her lips, as she upped her tempo, waves of infinite pleasure coursing through Korra's body.

Korra's own wayward hands found her own pleasure, finding a breast, teasing a nipple between her fingers, other slipping down to tease at her sex as Asami's tongue danced around her slender fingers.

Asami's touch was powerful, but controlled. With every sensation, with every pulse and touch of her tongue and fingers, she drew Korra closer and closer to climax, never surrendering the sweet epiphany, carefully teasing it back down, heart aching as Korra would moan her objection, voice her desire, her lust, her primal urge, her deepest darkest desires for Asami.

"R-Red, stop... stop playing. C'mon..."

Asami grinned, never feeling so devilish in her life. Her partner, in all her bravado, in all her confidence, was melting in her hands, her throbbing sex eager for each and every touch she delivered. Korra's moans were music to her ears, playfully sensuous, and deeply, gloriously indulgent.

It was almost too much when Asami's lips left Korra's sex, as she moved upwards to lay atop Korra. Again, her kisses landed upon her breasts, nipples now hard and keen, sensitive, every inch of her skin prickled, covered in a thin sheen of sweat, glistening, every muscle outlined for her pleasure.

"Now?" Korra panted. She could barely speak the words but for her lust.

"Almost." Asami replied, a kiss upon Korra's neck. Her hand slipped down to grasp at the glass member. It slipped in her hand, cold and smooth, spreading the thin layer of lubrication upon in, warming it in her palm. Korra groaned, this time the frustration almost palpable.

"Red..." Korra blurted, almost lost, devoid of control of the touch her body yearned for. She squirmed beneath Asami, her hands seeking her spots that Asami had left moments ago to toy with her.
"Yes?" Asami said, her own heart thumping in furious thunder. The words she wanted Korra to say would drive her own mind crazy, this she knew for sure. "Tell me what you want."

With one hand, Asami stroked her glass member, while the other danced dangerously between Korra's thighs, teasing shivering waves along Korra's body. *This is almost cruel.* Korra's eyes closed tight, her teeth gritting together, only to gasp open.

"Fuck me,... Please... Now, I... I want it so bad"

Asami kissed Korra's hungry lips, wet and heavy with her panting breath. Her hand guided the glass member slowly between Korra's legs - only to rub the tip impossibly, infuriatingly teasingly against Korra's eager, wet sex.

"One more thing," Asami said, barely above a whisper over Korra's moans, her cries of desire. "Say my name, please."

Korra's eyes shot open. Behind the ice was a desire so raw, so powerfully consumed, that Asami couldn't help but obey her next words.

"Asami," Korra whispered, a quivering determination in her voice. "Please... *Please, fuck me.*"

As Asami slid the glass member into her partner, Korra's moans took new life. Asami could feel herself within her partner - every pulse, every thrust, every reaching touch, sending bolts of shuddering, shaking pleasure through Korra's body, turning every muscle to stone as her body tensed to the touch, turning her blood molten as ecstasy shot through her veins. Hands either side of Korra's waist, Asami relished in Korra's legs wrapping around her own, each rhythmic motion sending Korra's body and mind into overdrive, etching fresh canvases of emotion over her face with every touch.

"F-Fuck! Don't you *d-dare fucking stop!*"

And Asami never had the intention of doing so. She sped up, her rhythm matching Korra's moans and groans, screams and cries of blissful, hedonistic joy, pulsing, pushing, touching, her own hair a splendid disarray of silken curls, her own mouth gasping for breath with each thrust, her own sex throbbing, waiting, eagerly, as Korra's body writhed before her. She could feel herself running down her thighs as she indulged every part of Korra's carnal desires.

At first, Asami thought it came quietly. Korra's moans stifled, her mouth open wide in a silent scream, her legs tightening, tensing, pulling Asami deep within her. Moments later, Asami felt her partner's body quiver, then shudder spectacularly, quaking before her. Asami held herself, deep within her partner, leaning down to steal the scream from Korra's lips with a passionate kiss, drawing it out, pulling Korra as high as she could taking a nipple between her fingers, stretching and taking the first wave as far as she could. It seemed to last an infinity, before it collapsed, breaking into a thousand, cacophonous moments of bliss, she Korra's body shuddered with waves as she rode her orgasm down, twisting and writhing and rolling against Asami's workbench, whispers of moans slipping from their entangled kiss.

Korra's chest heaved, deep breaths and a quiet smile on her face, as she ran her own hands over her stomach. Asami sighed complacently, hunched over her partner, hands placed firmly upon either side of her frame. Her waistcoat was torn, buttons scattered across the room, her tie loose and lopsided. Korra gave a soft laugh, gently patting Asami's waist, and slowly, gingerly Asami slid from her partner, her sex pink and still, slowly pulsing.

Asami stepped back, pulling Korra to a sitting position atop the edge of the bench. Her hair was a
mess, her body slick with sweat and dripping with fatigue, her thighs pink. Asami slowly pulled her partner to her feet, but it seemed she had her plans set already. She moved to Asami, a hand slipping underneath her waistcoat to tease Asami's chest, her sultry words sliding between her ears.

"Don't think I've forgotten."

She knelt, lower and lower until she met Asami's glass member before her. Her gaze unbreaking, her softened ice meeting sharp emerald, Korra took the glass in her mouth, earning a shaking, laughing gasp from Asami.


Korra laughed, removing it from her mouth. "But it's not going to do much, is it Red?"

Korra's hands found the straps easily enough, gently discarding the harness on the floor. Asami stood, bare before her partner, leaning against the wall of her workshop as Korra knelt between her legs, her softer skin begging for the touch.

Asami's cry was almost shamefully feeble, as Korra made her first touch. Warm hands ran upon soft, porcelain thighs, rough lips kissing Asami's patient sex, almost embarrassed at how wet she was. Korra wasted no time, her tongue reaching deep within, delicate, slender fingers tracing sensuous lines up her inner thigh to send coursing, crashing waves of pleasure as they penetrated Asami as well.

Asami's teeth dug deep marks into her knuckles as she bit down, desperately muffling a cry of pleasure, and hopelessly failing. Every whimper, every moan, every surrendered buckling of her knees only drove Korra to higher levels, faster, drawing deeper and deeper desires to the surface until -

Asami's hands stretched flat against the wall behind her as Korra's mouth drew her to climax, unrelenting with every wave that shook her core. She didn't stop as Asami buckled, under the pleasure, her lips and tongue still darting against her pulsing, aching sex, not stopping as Asami slid down the wall to sit with Korra, as Asami drew Korra into a deep, pure kiss.

For a while, the only sounds in the room were their quiet and complacent breaths, occasionally breaking through with a soft laugh, and happy sigh. They laid in each other's arms for some time, one-half undressed, the other in nothing but her boots, quiet and warm, infinitely passionate, hopelessly and unashamedly fatigued.

Thank god I keep this floor clean.

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???:??AM, BEDROOM, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Nothing good ever happens this early in the morning.

Until this morning, Asami never had the misfortune of being woken up by someone else's phone going off, but today it seemed a special day. She grunted in the dark, and felt the weight of her partner shift to silence the bleating phone resting on her bedside table.

"Who is it?"
Korra didn't answer. Instead she apologized, and swiftly left the bedroom, and Asami longing for her warmth. Even in her drowsy state, she knew something was wrong.

Even the dark was foreboding that morning. Quietly, Asami slipped on her robe, and followed Korra's steps.

From the hallway, she could see Korra gazing out the window, watching the dull gold of the budding horizon, phone to her ear. Asami stood silently, watching, listening.

"...Yes, yes I've thought about it. Honestly? I would like more time to consider- No, yes I understand the time-frame means- absolutely, but still this is all so sudden, surely- what if." 

Even at a distance, Asami could quietly hear the voice on the other end of the phone. Deep voiced, determined, strong, unwavering.

"... What? ... Of course she has something to do with my decision. No, I... I haven't told her yet."

Asami's heart sank. Please.

Korra sighed. "Yes. I know. I know. I'm not... No. That's not what I'm doing! It's just... It's hard. She... Yeah, but she's... A lot can happen in a few days."

Please, no.

"...Look. Okay, fine, I'll... I'll talk to her when she wakes up."

Stay. Please.

"I... I-I need to go. You'll have your answer soon enough. Goodbye."

A soft beep ended her call. Korra sighed, leaning her head against the cold glass of the window. Asami stepped out, clearing her throat. Korra turned, with an expression that chilled Asami.

"How much did you hear?"

"I don't know, but ... But I think I know. Who is it?"

A distance settled in Korra's eyes. It was as if another person was talking for her.

"Kuvira. She... She wants me to help her on her expedition... communicating and liasing diplomatic networking operations... and to help them facilitate a smoother transition."

No.

"When did she ask you?"

"Yesterday, after the presentation. She... She asked me right before you found us."

Asami's heart sank, a deep, dark pit in her stomach, heavy and sickening.

"So that's what you were talking about."

Asami's voice was calm, but she wanted to scream. A cursed thought seeped into her mind.

"Why didn't you tell me?" Her voice quivered on the end. Korra avoided her gaze, a guilty look upon her face.
I wish we both slept through that call.

Chapter End Notes

WOAH!!! Did you expect to see this today? Neither did I; I wrote half of this at 2AM! I dunno, I guess I found that spark again.

Sorry it's been so, unforgivably long. I got into that Korrasami week thing, and then I wrote a script for a short film, then I got 9000 words into a novel I'm hoping to get published - it's been a busy few months.

Hopefully next chapter won't take so long. I really shouldn't say that. Anyway, once again I wrote this in the delirium of early early morning so i'm sure there's mistakes or something so please dont hesitate to let me know and i'll patch it up right tidy thanks sir

As always, thanks for reading, and goodness bless your soul if you leave a comment because I live for that sort of thing. IF you want you can also trundle over to citriic.tumblr.com and leave me a nice word or two or something i dunno it's a free country right?

i better go to bed. expect this to see some updates over the next few days while i clean this shit up.
4:56 AM, SITTING ROOM, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

“I was going to tell you eventually. I just… wasn’t sure if.”

“Eventually?” A hysterical laugh slipped from Asami’s lips. “Eventually. Of course, eventually. What, just before you boarded the airship? When you were outside the city limits?”

Asami buried her face in her palms, turning away from Korra, towards the windows as the dawn broke over the city. It stung. Korra had never heard her speak like this before, quivering, shaking with emotion, turbulent and roiling. It chilled her to the very marrow, as if each word from Asami’s lips were a dagger that peeled away flesh until it struck bone.

Korra took a hesitant step towards Asami.

“No, I… I just… I didn’t know what you… It’s a big decision. I haven’t - not yet…”

*But it would take me away from you.*

Asami’s hands fell meekly to her side. Korra could see the glimmer in Asami’s eyes, golden in the glow of the morning. The realization had hit her hard, and Korra wanted more than anything to walk up to her, with all confidence and bravado and wipe the sadness from her eyes. But fear and uncertainty held her in her place, unsure of how to proceed.

When Asami spoke it was quiet, barely above a whisper.

“When do you have to reply?” She didn’t sound angry, nor sad, to be exact.

Asami sounded weary. Resigned.

Korra’s heart ached. “Before Kuvira leaves.” She paused. “Probably within the next two days.” She could feel her heart beating furiously in her throat.

Asami said nothing, gave no indication that she had even heard what Korra said, and simply stared out the glass, her eyes glossing over, shoulders slumped and arms crossed over her stomach. Korra said nothing, watching the dust drift between sunbeams as she waited for Asami to speak. Eventually, Asami sighed softly, and walked languidly over to the breakfast bar, resting her elbows
upon the countertop. Korra followed her gaze, listless out the window; she watched as an airplane skidded over the horizon, rising, breaking into the cloud layer.

Korra cleared her throat. “Look, I…” Korra started, trying to find the words. “You know how I feel about us, and it’s - it’s more that, I want to know how you - well…”

But her words trailed off, trickling into silence.

When Asami spoke, she didn’t look up. “I was stupid.”

“What?”

“I was stupid.” She said, louder. “I should never have… We - we knew it was going to end, right?” Asami’s voice felt hollow, shaking. “You were always going to end up returning to the South, or getting picked up on some diplomatic mission or - or, something else, right, because -”

Korra shook her head, struggling to say something, anything that would fix all of this.

“Why don’t - why don’t you… you come with me?”

Korra didn’t realize her hands were balled up, the words blurring from her mouth before she had time to think.

But she already knew that wasn’t going to work.

Asami turned to Korra, eyes wide. “What?”

Korra flushed. The words seemed to sound so childish, as they caught in her throat. “Just - why don’t you come with me?”

Asami stared at Korra in disbelief. “I can’t, Korra.”


A look of exasperation spread over Asami’s face.

“Why not? Because - because I’m Asami Sato! I’ve got an entire company to help run and - and people to impress and to prove that I’m more than just - just an heiress.” Asami spat out the last words. She was standing now; hands running through her own hair, grasping it in bunches. “I can’t just … up and leave. I’m not a diplomat. I have to stay here. There’s nothing for me in the Eastern Kingdoms.”

*I will be.* Korra’s heart sank. It wouldn’t be fair. Asami hiccuped, pausing, calming herself. Korra didn’t dare speak, but when Asami spoke again it was quieter than ever, strained against the pain in her voice.

“Maybe we should have never fallen in love.”

Asami closed her eyes, blinking tears down her cheeks as her own words reached her ears. Korra swallowed, hoping the lump in her throat would disappear alongside the sickening sensation she felt rotting away inside her. Korra shook her head slowly, mouthing silent denial, eyes apologetic. Words melted, and she let loose a quiet, shuddering sigh.

Somewhere in the hallway, a clock chimed the turn of another hour. A car honked in the street below, wisps of smoke and steam rose from the city-tops.
And yet, that moment seemed to hang between them, frozen and sickening, the words never leaving Korra’s mind, a pain slowly suffocating her. Korra wanted to scream, to cry and protest, to tear at the world with fury and frustration, to take back the seconds and make it so that Asami never had said the words. So the words that were burning their way into Korra’s mind would stop, that they would disappear and the pain would be gone and that it could all be as it was before, when they didn’t care and all was good and they simply held each other.

And Korra would wipe the tears that ran down Asami’s cheek to trickle off her chin. In that moment, Asami would turn, and say whatever idea Korra had was a wonderful idea, that it was beautiful and brilliant and that she had her own idea and Korra would reply that it was even better. And they would laugh and hold and enjoy the rest of the morning in each other’s arms.

Maybe that moment existed only in Korra’s mind. Maybe it existed in another world.  
*If only.*

Asami rose suddenly, turning to face her bedroom.  
“I’m sorry, Korra.” She whispered, as she headed back to the darkened corridor.

“Asami, wai-”

Asami froze, hands balled into fists. When she spoke, her words were broken, shaking.  
“I… I think you should go… for now. I need to be alone for a bit.”

“Asami, we can talk about-”

“Please, Korra. Please. Just… go.”

“No, wait – Asami-”

But before Korra could say anything else, Asami rounded the hallway, a door slamming behind her.

*****************************************************************************************************************  

***6:34 AM, BEDROOM, KORRA’S SUITE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT***

*Maybe we should have never fallen in love.*

The room felt foreign to her. Korra had only spent a handful of times in her assigned quarters since arriving in Republic City, and most of the rooms seemed untouched, empty and solemn. The floors were swept clean and kitchen stocked daily, but her parents had been given a separate living area, so even the air remained stagnant and stale.

The bedroom was as standard; an ornate desk, a miniature sitting area with minibar, and a king-sized bed facing the balcony. Fresh towels sat at the foot of her bed, sheets still neatly made with a mountain of pillows at its head, each of which sported the Future Industries logo, beautifully embroidered upon the soft, satin skins. It was all so quaint and professional, pampering, luxurious, and never not the reminder that she wasn’t in Asami’s quarters.
Korra strode over to the minibar, and gave a hollow chuckle as she glanced over the contents. It was fully stocked with choice selections, and with tall bottles instead of the small, sampler sizes. After perusing the liquors, Korra settled on a decorated bottle of aged whiskey from the Eastern Kingdoms, and head out onto the balcony.

The view from Sato Tower was magnificent, but cold. Cold enough to prickle at even Korra’s skin, leaving a trail of goosebumps along her bare arms, enough to send a chill down her back and settle somewhere in her stomach. Korra settled down at a glass table, tucked away in the corner of the balcony, and gazed out over the city.

The sun had begun its ascent into the sky, casting a golden glow across what towers and statues it could reach. Wisps of cloud and mist evaporated in the warmth, but cars weaving down in the streets below still had their headlights bright. There was a chill in the air, a crispness and cold that still smelt like night.

Morning had barely broken.

Korra unscrewed the lid, and brought the bottle to her lips. It burned, bitter and sweet and fiery, she grimaced as the amber liquor clawed its way down her throat, and left her mouth in bitter fury. But even that didn’t settle the uneasy feeling in her stomach.

Korra longed for a smoke, a cigarette. She hadn’t smoked in some time. She had when she was younger, and rolled leaf when she was studying, but she had stopped when it started to impact her stamina. She found herself short of breath at meetings, and sputtering during training. But she wanted something to soothe her, something to quiet her nerves, and she didn’t care if it hurt her, just as long as she’d be free of another ache for a while.

*Maybe we should have never fallen in love.*

Korra turned her head, frowning. She exhaled, watching her breath mist before her in the chill, curling for a moment before a breeze caught it up and swept it away. No, another vice wouldn’t solve anything.

Korra swallowed another gulp of whiskey, resting the cold glass of the bottle against her temple as she felt the burn trickle down her throat again, hoping the flame would cauterize the hole in her chest. She felt numb, whether it was from the lack of sleep or the morning, or both, she couldn’t quite narrow it down.

Above it all, Korra couldn’t shake the suffocating feeling that she was alone. It was odd to her, a strange, unfamiliar sensation. Growing up, she had spent so much time separated from others, being the closest thing to royalty within the Southern Tribes. She had come to appreciate it, even if she did long for exploration and adventure, her heart was complacent in quiet solitude. And when she had grown up and her parents had deemed it important for her to socialize, she made efforts only to reach the bare minimum. She longed for the moment when she could be alone again, where she could be herself, undistracted and unengaged.

But being alone now was something else. Being alone meant she had nothing to keep her from her turbulent thoughts, and the responsibilities that draped over her like a heavy blanket, weighing her down.

*But when the only person you want to be with wants to be alone, then you’re going to be doing the same.*

Korra raised the bottle to her mouth for a third time, but paused. She felt her fingers prickle, fuzzy
and faint, her vision slightly blurring, fading. Korra sighed, lowering the bottle, screwing the cap and placing it on the table beside her with a soft clink. She didn’t want to get drunk, and the last thing she wanted to do was wallow. Korra was always one to address problems head on, not stagnate in her own emotions. The sooner she could tackle a problem, the sooner it became not a problem.

*Options*. She hated the idea, the idea that she presumed she had any control over the situation. She hated that she was seeing it as thought the world revolved around her, and everyone was simply dragged along for the ride. She hated the idea that her cavalier attitude had brought this on, that she had been so irresponsible with another person’s feelings, and that she had never stopped to think and talk and be a real fucking grown-up about the whole thing.

And her mind wandered back into a darker corner.

*Maybe we should have never fallen in love.*

She had to have known that it was going to end sooner or later. It was her fault for getting emotionally attached, and now she was paying the price. She’d hurt someone else in the processes as well, someone that she thought was different, that made her want to be with them, whatever they were doing. Korra closed her eyes as shame washed over her, running her hands over the nape of her neck, feeling the soreness, grimacing as her body responded to a sleepless night.

*No. This is different.* Asami was different. She wasn’t a toy. She wasn’t just an item of her temptation, of her lusts, of Korra’s desires. Korra knew. She had said the words herself. Korra spoke to the wind, as if trying to convince herself.

“I wanted this, didn’t I. I said I love you and everything.”

The one person that meant something else to Korra, and she had managed to push her away, made her second-guess the love that they had between them.

Korra sighed again, reclining in her seat. The sun was making good on its promise to bring the day, breaking above the horizon, casting beams into the city and beyond. The breeze seemed to die down for a moment, only to pick up again moments later.

Korra pulled her phone from her pocket; no new messages. *Of course not.* A moment of impulse sprung to her, to call Asami right now mere moments after she had asked her to leave, for Korra to apologize and say something, anything she needed to say in order to make up. She hovered, wondering if Asami was busy, wondering if she was awake or asleep or crying or maybe she was just doing the same as Korra, staring off into the city, trying to think, trying to put it all together like it was a puzzle of sorts that had a definitive answer.

Of course there wasn’t an answer. Korra had to take the job. This wasn’t the sort of offer someone turns down to wait for a better opportunity. It almost scared her how definite that thought came to her. There wasn’t any question about it.

At that moment, it felt real. It felt like the games they played were over and it was time to grow up. The feeling sat like a rock in Korra’s stomach. Looking down into the city, she felt queasy, suddenly nauseated by the view. In parts, she was glad she hadn’t smoked, and watched the fading embers of her cigarette die, the ash dance into the breeze and flicker away.

Korra turned, stretching. She glanced into the darkness of her room, eyes falling upon the softness of the bed, so clean and tidy and inviting. She felt heavy, sluggish and solemn and quietly wistful. Korra stepped inside and collapsed onto the bed, and almost instantly, sleep consumed her.
Maybe we should have never fallen in love.

1:26 PM, CONFERENCE ROOM C, EIGHTEENTH FLOOR, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Asami glanced at her phone.

No new messages.

It was the fourteenth time that she had checked her phone in the last ten minutes, and the fourteenth time that she felt her heart drop in disappointment. Asami sighed, smoothing out a wrinkle in her trousers in a futile attempt to distract her, but sooner or later she would have to give her attention back to the meeting at hand.

Maybe we should have never fallen in love.

Her own words were still fresh in her mind. She had regretted them almost instantly.

The air in the boardroom around her was stuffy, in every interpretation of the word. This particular meeting venue was directly facing the early afternoon sun, and the air conditioning had been broken across the entire floor for the past few days or so. Atop that, the table was flanked by business suit upon business suit, each with their hands folded upon each other, watching Asami’s father at the other end of the table give a rousing speech.

Hiroshi seemed relaxed, perhaps happy that the week was drawing to a close, and that soon the company would be able to return to regular duties, not having to worry about the world’s gaze upon their city. Managers and executive staff nodded in agreement as Hiroshi made innocuous comments about business as usual.

Asami’s mind was elsewhere.

She felt ill, fatigued and famished from the morning. Sleep eluded her after returning to her room, fitful and fruitless. She managed to succumb once or twice in the fleeting hours of the morning, only to wake in a sweat, reaching for a warmth that wasn’t there.

Eventually, she gave up trying to sleep altogether, swinging her legs off the side of the bed, wondering what she could possibly do to fill the morning, only to have her stomach rumble angrily. Asami busied herself with making breakfast, but two bites into a buttered slice of toast, she felt queasy, her appetite eluding her.

So, she watched the city, head resting against the cool glass window, and when the time came she showered and got dressed, and head off promptly to her father’s meeting.

That was to say, meetings. She had been stuck in them all morning, and now early into the afternoon as well. It wasn’t too bad, Asami tried to convince herself; there wasn’t anything else that she was to be doing anyway, nobody to escort, nobody to show around Republic City. She drifted from room to room, nodding and agreeing and delivering false, saccharine smiles to the others she faced, a dull ache in her chest.
Hiroshi continued, words floating by Asami without so much a register. It was only when a bout of applause sounded around the room, that drew her back to reality that she remembered where she was. She brought her hands together in applause, catching a sideways glance from her father, who looked at her with cautious eyes, full of curiosity.

When the meeting ended, Hiroshi called to Asami as the room emptied of its participants. Asami lingered behind obediently as subordinates funnelled out of the boardroom, moving to stand beside her father as the last made their leave, and stared out the windows and over the city below.

Hiroshi’s voice only gave a slight hint of weariness. “Plenty of meetings this morning, no?”

Asami’s was much less subtle. “Plenty, father.”

“Fortunately, there’s just a few more.” Hiroshi’s eyes narrowed, brow furrowing as he looked over his daughter. “For you, anyway. I don’t think it’ll be necessary for you to attend any of the evening sessions.”

“If you say so, father.”

Hiroshi’s curious eyes never left Asami. She was doing her best to remain composed, to remain prim and proper and to stand upright, despite everything that wanted to weigh her down.

Hiroshi cleared his throat. “So tell me then, what will you do with your free time?”

Asami hadn’t really put any thought into it. The summit was winding down to a close at this point, and parties were beginning to pop up here and there, celebrating the end of the formalities. She had no intention of going to any of them. Not alone, anyway. Hiroshi took Asami’s silence as an answer in itself.

“You should enjoy yourself, Asami.” He looked down into the streets, the winding roads that circled Sato Tower. “You’re young, and you’ve been fortunate to have a fair amount of privilege. I’m sure there are events you can attend.”

“Perhaps, father.”

Hiroshi raised an eyebrow, clapping a hand on Asami’s shoulder.

“Is everything alright?” He said, peering over his glasses. “You look exhausted. You’re not sick, are you?”

Asami hesitated, not meeting her father’s gaze. She was sure that her eyes were still a little bit puffy, that she perhaps looked weary from sobbing quietly when she found a moment’s privacy, that maybe her hair was still slightly askew. She couldn’t bear feeling so feeble, so pathetically ashamed of her behaviour. It was juvenile, to run and slam doors and ignore the problems at hand.

Maybe we should have never fallen in love.

Not that Asami would ever consider Korra a problem. No, she would never be the problem. The problem, if anything, was that Korra wasn’t with her right now, to play with her hair, or to run her fingers over her arms, leaving a trail of goose-bumps in their wake. That she wasn’t here to hold Asami when she needed it, that she wasn’t here so Asami could taste her lips and her skin and bask in the smell of her. That she wanted to surrender herself to Korra’s touch, and she wanted nothing more than to touch Korra in the ways she knew would draw out her own name is the most gratifying ways possible, to watch her melt in her hands and shiver at the touch.
Of course, she couldn’t tell her father that.

“No,” Asami said, shaking her head. She managed a weak smile. “Just a little bit tired. It’s been a long week.” She paused, her father hovering quite uncertain beside her. “Which events did you have in mind?”

Hiroshi sighed, unsure of Asami’s response. “Well, I’m sure you’re aware of the closing Gala we have in the early evening,” Hiroshi glanced down at his own phone. “And I’m sure you’ve been invited to some of the events in the city as well.”

“Hm.” Asami didn’t have any intention of leaving the building. Still, the Gala could distract her for a little bit, and it was still in the building at least.

“I’ll be at the Gala, then.”

“Good.” Hiroshi bought it, turning back to gaze out the window. “And indeed, the week has swept most of us off our feet. Thankfully, it’ll be over soon, and everything can get back to normal.”

Normal. Asami felt a bitter laugh catch in her throat, and swallowed heavily. She glanced down at her phone, and still it lay blank.

They spoke for a little while longer, but Hiroshi left soon after, leaving Asami behind in the empty boardroom, still staring intently at her phone. She pulled up Korra’s profile, her thumb hovering over the green call button.

Minutes must have passed, and at some point Asami must have pressed call, because the next thing she knew, she had her phone pressed against her ear, beads of sweat running across her brow, not only from the stuffy room.

What am I even going to say? Asami swallowed again, praying that nobody would pick up, but when the dial tone ended, and the call connected, the name slipped like it had never left her tongue.

“Korra?” Asami paused, holding her breath. Silence met her, and suddenly-

“- hear the beep? Oh shit, is it on now? Uh - I’m busy or something, so leave a message or call back later. Sorry!”

A tone followed, prompting Asami to leave a message, but instead she lowered he phone, watching the call timer tick up, until her mind ran blank and she ended the call.

Maybe we should have never fallen in love.

“Normal,” Asami gave a hollow chuckle, whispering to the empty room. “Normal’s been gone for a long time.”

“We are almost there, Korra.”
“Good. I’ve been away for too long.”

Wisps of cloud trailed off the airship as it breached the cloud layer, descending into Republic City. Below, Korra could see the streets, familiar but foreign, buses and trucks and bikes and everything in between trundling along their way. She stared out the airship windows, marvelling at the Republic City skyline, an odd sense of nostalgia filling her for a place that felt so new.

The disembodied voice spoke again. “We can drop you off at the door, Korra, if you’d like.”

“Thank you. I would appreciate that.”

The airship continued to descend, lower and lower until skyscrapers flanked either side, and yet there were no warnings of imminent collision. Instead, the airship seemed to snake above the roads, twisting and turning and winding with the traffic below, fluid and eerily animalistic. Yet she hardly felt anything, not swaying to keep balance, nor did her world shift as the airship bent around corners. Korra gazed through the portside glass and into offices, to see people sitting at their desks, moving from meeting to meeting, to apartment blocks, seeing families at home, at the table, enjoying a meal, a couple in love, playing, kissing, touching. They seemed unfazed, and Korra felt a ghost, floating beside them in her airship.

Then, slowly they rose again, higher and higher and higher until Korra realized she could see the city beneath her through the airship’s glass floors. She rose higher still until she saw the familiar outline of a giant skyscraper, a scenic cottage house perched on top. Perfectly nested upon the apex of Sato Tower One was a small, lush square of grass, an idyllic white-picket fence lining the perimeter. The house was thatched and stone, humble and unassuming, with a weathervane that spun wildly with the airship’s approach. A vegetable garden was crammed into the yard, springing to life, and a clothesline hung with towels and sheets and red, silken, lacy underwear, battered against the winds.

Moments later, Korra found herself at the docking bay, the heavy metal doors opening wide, the air whipping around her. Slowly, she could see the gangplank extending forward, until it touched down on the grass beneath them, the ship hanging impossibly still in the air. She straightened her uniform, and stepped out under the sky.

The grass felt soft beneath her boots, and the noise of the airship seemed to disappear behind her. Korra stepped forward, elated, almost floating, and opened the cottage door.

“Asami?”

The inside of the cottage was warm, darkened by thin curtains that muffled the afternoon light. The cottage seemed bare and unadorned, pots and pans lay unused across the kitchen, the furniture in the sitting room facing endless empty rows of bookshelves and a blank mantelpiece. Korra moved from room to room, searching.

“Red? Are you in here? I’m ho-” Korra caught the words in her throat, a lump rising, threatening to choke her. She swallowed, correcting herself. “I’m… I’m back. Asami?”

The bedroom door was shut fast, but seemed to open upon Korra’s gaze. Inside, the bed lay bare, only a frame, not even a mattress. The cobblestones beneath felt uncomfortable, and the air lay stagnant and stuffy, as if unbothered for months, and along the walls were row upon row of empty photo frames.

A folded envelope lay innocently upon the bedside table, next to a broken lamp. But even as Korra reached for it with ghostly hands, she already knew the words that would writ within it.
Korra,

You were gone too long, Korra. I couldn’t wait any longer. I’m sorry. I was supposed to watch over you, but now you’re looking for me. I need to leave. You didn’t come back for me. I thought you had left forever, so I left too. I’ve gone somewhere else now, somewhere far away that even you will not be able to find me, somewhere you’ll never be able to come back to. We won’t see each other again, I’m sure. You hate me, don’t you? I knew, from the beginning that you would never love me, like I loved you, because you knew that you would leave eventually. I loved watching you sleep. It put my heart at ease. I suppose I should have figured it out, but I was stupid. You used me. Well, I don’t hate you for it, but it’s okay if you hate me.

So now I don’t love you.

Don’t wait for me.

Goodbye, Korra.

A weight found itself in Korra’s chest, heavier than anything she had felt before. A heat flooded her, and tears began to well up in her eyes. She felt weak, and fell to her knees, as streams poured from her face. She shook with anguish, overcome by emotions, silent screams pouring from her mouth, the world shaking around her.

She cried out. “Asami!”

“Korra?”

Korra turned, and there she was. Asami stood in the doorway, the open air and sun shining behind her. A glorious red gown, silken and flowing and ethereal. She looked pale, frightened.

Korra scrambled to her feet. “Asami!” She cried, running to her. Arms wide, Korra embraced Asami, nuzzling into her neck. She never held anyone so tight before.

Asami seemed puzzled. “Is everything alright, Korra?”

Eyes still wet with tears, Korra felt her body shaking. She closed her eyes, and held.

“I don’t know.”

“I can make it feel better, Korra. Kiss me.”

Shivers shot down her spine. She felt Asami’s tongue part her willing lips. She felt cold hands running down her back, grasping, touching, wanting. Korra forced herself to speak, but when she spoke, she heard Asami’s voice slip from her lips.

“I thought you were gone.”

“No, I would never… I-I don’t know, it’s just-”

Cold fingers found her lips, pressing them into silence.

“Don’t talk. Let me take it away.”

When Korra opened her eyes, she stood where Asami stood. She held her own body as she kissed, as she touched, and she felt euphoria and anguish and ecstasy shooting through her. She saw her own cheeks slick with tears, as she felt the softness of her lips. And when the other Korra’s eyes
opened, they were blank. Hollow and glass, reflecting her own stare. She could see herself in those eyes, her long, silken hair, her dark green eyes, her lips -

And she could see the airship aflame, a great burning tempest in the sky, crashing towards them. She turned, but the tower was ablaze. All around her was flame and ruin, chaos as the airship came ever closer to swallowing them in destruction.

“Asami?”

But she was gone. Alone, the tower burned around her. The airship tumbled, crashing, and Korra felt herself falling, down and down and down until she -

5:57 PM, BEDROOM, KORRA’S SUITE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

“...!”

Korra woke with a start, her head pounding, her mouth dry and sick, filled with a taste unimaginably nauseating. Her entire body felt numb, prickling and fuzzy with pins and needles, and her joints ached with the sudden movement. Trying to rise, she felt something wrapped around her, constricting, and a hard surface beneath her. Afternoon light broke through a gap in the curtains, and the world swam before Korra. She laid upon the floor, tangled in her sheets, her clothes shrugged off, discarded, or torn beyond recognition around her.

What a fucking nightmare.

It took a few moments for Korra to salvage herself from the wreckage that was the until-now-spotless bedspread. Discarding the remains of her clothes, she collapsed naked into an armchair that sat opposite the bed, weary and forlorn and slick with a cold sweat, unbearably tired for someone just woken.

Cars honked in the streets below. The dusk carried the scent of autumn in through the open balcony, mixing with the smells of fresh laundry and Korra’s musk. In the warm afternoon glow, one light flickered obnoxiously in the darkened room. Beside her, Korra’s phone blinked furiously, desperately seeking her attention.

One missed called, and one new voicemail.

Korra’s heart sank, stomach lurching as her eyes read the name from the glow that filled half the room. I must have slept through it. Korra hammered the screen, bringing up her voicemail without a second thought.

“Good afternoon,” Chirped the automated receiver. “You have, -One- new message. Message received, at one, forty-six, PM -”

Korra held her breath, her heart thumping in her ears as loud as sirens. She braced for Asami’s voice, the sweetness of her words. Korra ached, wanting nothing more than to hear Asami speak to her again.
But she didn’t know what to expect. She paused silent, hesitant, waiting, waiting for Asami to speak, waiting for a chance. She heard ruffling on the other end, the faint sound of someone clearing their throat, a sigh -

And then, nothing. The call ended, and Korra pulled the phone from her cheek to check the screen. She saw the seconds tick up, but all that came was the automated receiver.

“If you would like to hear this message again, press-”

A quiet tone ended the call. Korra felt her shoulders sink and her body slide deeper into the chair, resigned to rest as her bones knit back together from a sore and uneasy sleep, energy muddled and sluggish as her body took the time to revive itself.

Korra gazed languidly past the half-drawn curtains and the dying afternoon sun, her mind sifting through the fading memories of her dream. She saw the house, the fence, the garden, the solemn and suffocating bedroom. She saw the empty frames and the barren bed, and as she did she felt her own eyes begin to mist and her vision blur.

No.

She hated feeling this way, feeling the tears welling up inside of her, it made her feel helpless and weak. She roared inside herself, screaming at herself that it wasn’t her fault. Korra didn’t blame herself. It wasn’t Asami’s fault either. She couldn’t blame her. It was…

It was chaos. Whatever it was, it wasn’t part of their plan.

Did we ever have a plan?

No, plans are made for the future.

And when we were together, we only cared about the then and now.

Korra grit her teeth, frowning, frustrated, furious at herself. She felt her free hand ball into a fist, her jaw clenching in a desperate and failing attempt to stem the tears. She was sick, angry at the helplessness, angry that she felt so weak, angry at the fatigue that consumed her, angry at herself, that she wanted to run when what she really wanted to do was-

Be with Asami. To find her and shout to her that above and beyond anything else, that she loved her and her alone. She wanted to tell Asami that she hated the every moment of the dream, but that she hated even more that she had dreamt of it in the first place. That she hated the idea that some twisted, insignificant, paranoid part of her mind thought that Asami would, after all that was said and done, leave and forget her, that Asami would second-guess their love. That whatever turbulence she felt had crept into her mind like a poison, rotting every memory and ideal she held of Asami, that she had resigned herself to wallow, despite all her courage, despite all her bravado, that now she was sat screaming in her mind, professing her emotions to an empty room, when she had a thousand and one chances before.

Korra leaned forward, resting her elbows on her knees and burying her face into her palms, rubbing the sleep and tears from her eyes. She had said it before, but she wanted to say it again. With her lips, with her heart, with meaning, with the very fibre of her essence and her existence, she wanted to tell Asami again that she loved her.

And that she truly, truly did.

And that despite it all, she would have to go.
But that one day she would be back, and that they should never for a second think that either one would feel any less loved for each day they were apart. That Korra wouldn’t be thinking of Asami every second she was away.

That she was thinking of her right now.

In truth, Korra hadn’t stopped thinking about Asami since the morning.

Korra glanced down to her phone, watching the minutes tick by. She pulled Asami’s profile up, wanting to speak to her but she could feel the fear holding her down. The fear told her that she would say all those words and more, and Asami would speak only a few lines coldly, confirming her nightmares, that what she said in the morning wasn’t a sentence out of place, a flare of emotions that were soiled and dark, but the truth.

*Maybe we should have never fallen in love.*

As Korra held her phone in her hands, Asami’s number ready to be dialled, her phone rang first. It shocked her, her ringtone blearing through her dulled state, startling as her phone vibrated in her palm. It took her a second to realize it was from a number she didn’t recognize.

“What?” Korra felt her voice crack against the sleep.

“Korra.”

Kuvira.

“Hey. What’s up?”

“I wanted to check in.” Kuvira’s voice was professional, every syllable carefully planned, every pause intentional. “You haven’t given me your response yet. I’ll be departing the day after tomorrow, and I’ll require an answer before then.”

Korra felt her body stiffen, like concrete. It wasn’t something she wanted to discuss right now.

“You’ll have your answer. I just need a little more time.”

“Korra,” Kuvira’s voice was strong, commanding, and yet, “I…”


“I understand it is a hard decision to make, considering your relationship with Sato. Have you found the time to speak to her about it yet?”

Korra blinked, words struggling to form in her mouth. She was quiet, guilty.


There were a few seconds more of silence, and then Kuvira gave a sharp sigh.

“Korra, don’t think I don’t know what I’m asking of you. I know what sort of… situation these projects create. I’ve also seen many in my employ who have loved ones back home, who have been away for some time. Some of them return, and they are happy. They long for each other’s company dearly, and find themselves stronger in the face of adversity. Others… Others cannot find the strength and unity to push through the strain.”
Kuvira paused again.

“That is not to say, that I doubt what you two have. I’ve seen it myself.” She gave a short, knowing chuckle, but coming from Kuvira, Korra felt it might as well been a raucous fit of laughter. “But you ought to speak to her. I feel I don’t need to tell you this, but... Still, I leave nothing to chance and hopes alone. I hope you understand, and that Sato understands as well. Nevertheless, I understand if you decide your path does not follow my mission.”

Again, silence followed, as Korra’s gaze found a beam of afternoon sunlight, catching motes of dust hanging in its radiant hold, drifting as her thoughts did. When Korra said nothing, Kuvira cleared her throat.

“In any case”, Kuvira said. “I require a response as soon as possible-“

Korra interjected. “You’ll have it, Kuvira. I promise.”

“I- Good.” Kuvira said. Korra could imagine Kuvira nodding, her strong jaw curled into a satisfied smile. “Good. And Korra?”

“Yes?”

“For what it’s worth, I think you two are more than strong enough.”

Korra felt the hesitancy in Kuvira’s voice, but appreciated nonetheless; it was a moving sentiment.

“Thank you, Kuvira.”

Kuvira gave a grunt of approval. “That’s all. I’ll be hearing from you shortly then, Korra.”

“Of course.”

“Good.”

The call ended with as much of a goodbye as Korra expected from the Grand Marshall. She sat back into the chair, closing her eyes. Nothing Kuvira said had been news to her; she had had those thoughts exactly, and heard similar stories too.

But it felt good to be heard, even if she already knew. It was as if it was validated, justified, and a vivifying thought nestled somewhere solemn and reserved in her bones.

Out of the corner of her eye, she saw her phone blinking again, in the darkening room. She was sure she had ended the call – she had heard the tone and seen the call end.

When she pulled up her screen again, this time her heart raced.

One missed call, from Asami Sato.

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5:39 PM, GRAND BALLROOM, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT
“Good afternoon, Miss Sato.”

“Good evening, Baronness.”

“Ah, Miss Sato, I’ve been meaning to speak to your father about -”

“Apologies, Minister, but we insist that this event be a celebration of summit’s success. We can resume talk of business next week.”

“Miss Sato, I was wondering if-”

“Apologies, Madame, and I will return to you shortly, but I’m afraid I am needed elsewhere.”

“Asami, do you know where-”

Asami raised a hand, cutting the gentleman off immediately.

“Bathrooms are down the hall, Sir. If you need anything else, please don’t hesitate to approach myself, or any other member of Sato Staff.”

“Ah. Yes, well… Thank you, Asami.”

“Of course.”

Asami winced, clenching her jaw as she watched the gentleman stumble away, lightly put off by Asami’s terse response. She felt slightly guilty, but the day had left her stressed and tense, and she couldn’t shake the feeling that it was a mistake, that she should have made an excuse to get her out of the closing event that Sato Industries was holding. It wasn’t that she thought herself above basic inquiries of hospitality; rather it was a combination of emotional weariness and public exposure that drained and taxed her – both physically and mentally. She had barely even a moment to herself, though to be fair, she was in parts grateful for that fact.

When the other guests seemed to finally notice the aura of discontent Asami was emitting, she breathed a sigh of relief, leaning quietly against a marble pillar in a more subtle area of the ballroom, collecting her thoughts. Fortunately, there were many places that one could find some small scrap of privacy - much like the opening ceremony, the room had been elaborately decorated, but this time the furnishings took on a much more solemn feel. All manner of flowers and greenery filled the room, with colourful banners and intricate woven displays hanging from the walls and ceilings. The music was softer, less upbeat and more melodic, with smooth and soft strings and deeper brass notes. It felt solemn, pensive, and remorseful.

Or at least, that’s what Asami felt. There was more quiet conversation tittering in the hall, in parts because of the music, but also due to the smaller size of the groups, as many delegates and persons of interests had left the city once their business was complete. Still, the room was full enough, and the steady hum of conversation made the air thick, steady enough to make a person feel completely alone in a room full of people. Being one of the last events of the summit, each attendee was dressed in their utmost garb and finery, with Sato staff weaving from group to group, once again feeding and
watering them with delicacies. The setting sun hung perfectly across the Republic City skyline, breaking its golden glow across the tinted windows, casting shadow and warm light across the entire ballroom.

And yet, Asami had no desire to be here. She tugged uneasily at her cuffs; she had decided on something more reserved, more business than formal. A simple buttoned shirt and tapered trousers, and a deep-red Sato tie and waistcoat to decorate. She wasn’t in much of a mood for dresses.

Asami collected a flute of champagne from one of the passing waiters, sipping it slowly to simply have something to do. She scrunched her face, bubbles burning a sickly sweet trail down her throat. A nagging thought tugged at the back of her head, that habit and tutoring and upbringing told her that she should socialize, network, all the business buzzwords that her father had instilled in her from a very young age.

Asami glanced aimlessly around the room, toying with the glass in her hand, with no intention of seeking anyone out. Dull, boring, monotonous droning surrounded her, each person less and less interesting to Asami as the next. On a good day, she felt her feigned interest in the corporate and political world was barely passable, and on the worst she made it abundantly clear that had it been up to her, she’d be anywhere else in the world right now other than speaking to a man in a suit about ROI numbers. There wasn’t a single person that she could muster the care or willpower to talk to.

Nobody here, anyway.

“Asami.”

Asami jumped at her name - she had become so lost, sulking in her wretched melancholy that she hadn’t noticed two people walking up to her.

Korra’s mother and father.

Korra’s father laughed. “Apologies, Asami. We didn’t mean to startle you.” He offered his hand and Asami took it, smiling with as much false cheer as she could muster. She did the same to Korra’s mother who stood beside.

“No, that’s quite alright.” Asami cleared her throat, bowing, calling a waiter to fetch some drinks for her guests. “I hope you’re enjoying the celebrations, Sir, Ma’am.”

The two had forgone the traditional attire of their tribes in favour of formalwear iconic of Republic City, no doubt a gift from one of City’s artisans. Still carrying the motifs and colours of their people, they seemed a perfect pair, and Asami couldn’t help but wonder if suits and dresses were more or less difficult to don than their traditional clothes.

Korra’s father snorted. “Please, it’s Tonraq. At this point, I’m done with sirs.”

Asami nodded. “Tonraq,” she repeated. Her eyes fell to Korra’s mother, who laughed, and spoke the same.

“Senna.”

Again, Asami repeated the name. “Senna.” She paused, a lingering thought in her mind. “The Southern Tribes truly do have a beautiful way with words and names.”

Like Korra. Asami did all she could to keep her embarrassment from trickling into her visage.

Tonraq nodded in his agreement. “Our culture is steeped in history. Stick around long enough, and
you work out what sounds good in your native language.”

Asami laughed. A quiet one, but a laugh nonetheless.

“Indeed. It’s my great shame that I took so long to learn your names.”

Tonraq shook his head dismissively. “It’s no worry. It’s no surprise either; with the way this city tries to stay so professional it’s a wonder people even meet outside of work hours. We came for business, we speak of politics, and we’ll be dying of boredom until the summit is *actually* over, at this rate.” He gave a short laugh. “You must be sick and tired of all the *professional* talk by now, no?”

Asami gave a humble half-shrug, an understanding smile curling at her lips.

“We all play our role. Sometimes, whether we want to or not.”

Senna laughed. “Dedicated to the part; at least you keep your façade of interest. Korra lets it known when she’s completely disinterested.”

Asami’s stomach lurched at the name, and felt a flicker of a shadow flash over her face, before she regained her composure. She nodded, passing a telling smile, hoping that her discomfort wouldn’t be picked up by her guests before her.

Tonraq glanced around, searching. “Speaking of which, where is our daughter? Is she not with you today?”

Asami shook her head, trying not to let her eyes betray her heartache.

“No, unfortunately she’s feeling a bit under the weather.” The lie came quickly to Asami’s lips. Had she been formulating excuses all morning? Had she known people would ask that of her? Had she been so tied to Korra?

No. Asami brushed it off as it simply being Korra’s parents inquiring as to the location of her daughter. After all, Asami was designated Korra’s entourage for the summit.

Tonraq and Senna shared a look, one that didn’t slip by Asami. Tonraq turned back to Asami, and shook his head again, this time a more contemplative look upon his face.

It was Senna who spoke, leaning in close. “How is Korra?” Senna asked quietly. She didn’t seem concerned, at least not for Korra. She spoke of her daughter, but it was almost as if Senna was asking about Asami.

“She’s been well.” The words fell from Asami’s mouth, tumbling out without applying any meaning, hollow and empty words. “She’s been fascinated by the summit’s events, and it’s been an absolute pleasure and privilege being assigned to her entourage.”

Again, Tonraq and Senna shared a look.

Tonraq sighed. “Our daughter is… a complicated person.”

Asami didn’t know how to respond. Speaking about Korra, speaking about her to Korra’s parents, the madness of the morning, it was all almost too much. She felt her heart thumping and yet at the same time unbearably weak, like the life was slowly being drained from her, flowing out from her chest and down her arms to drip off her fingertips.

Her mouth opened instinctively, a thousand words of Korra, each dancing on the tip of her tongue.
But “Oh,” Was all that came out. Asami’s mind swirled a tempest of thoughts; did they know? Had they found out? “I hadn’t noticed. She’s been quite well-behaved.”

Asami felt a warmth tingle against her neck. She sounded like a babysitter.

Senna shook her head. “She’s always kept to herself. And impulsive, despite her fondness of being alone. She’ll make friends one day, and drop them all the next. She can laugh and talk and smile at an event, surrounding herself with company and admirers, and then as soon as she leaves, she’ll forget them immediately. Sometimes just …. recedes into herself.”

Tonraq continued the train of thought. “We love her dearly, but she usually wants her space. She does things her way, and usually the best way to do that is alone - always has been. Impulsive is the least of it - If she’s not interested in something, good luck trying to motivate her to do something.”

Asami laughed, this time a little louder. A pang of guilt shot through her, that she should be laughing when Tonraq and Senna were bearing themselves so sincerely. They didn’t seem to mind, rather it seemed like they were clueing Asami into Korra’s personality.

“Yes, I think I’ve seen that side of her.” Asami said, recalling Korra’s hesitancy to attend events, her insistence upon their activities, her charge - both in professionalism and in pleasure. Asami’s skin prickled at the thought.

Senna spoke, and when she did she reached out, touching Asami gently on the arm.

“That’s why we think you’re special to her.”

Asami’s eyes widened, her body doused in a chill. “I’m sorry?”

Tonraq laughed. “It’s only been a week, but that’s longer than Korra’s ever stuck around with someone. Perhaps it’s our fault,” Tonraq sighed. “We travel so much - too much, even. I know you’ve been… Assigned to her entourage, but even so – if Korra didn’t enjoy your company, she would have made it painfully obvious by now.”

Senna smiled warmly at Asami. “She’s spent more time with you in this week, than I remember seeing her with anyone else. She sees a friend in you.” She laughed. “Good luck with that.”

Tonraq nodded. “You’ve proved that you can handle being her security detail, can you handle being a companion?”

Asami swallowed a lump in her throat. She felt warm, not of embarrassment, but the warmth of comfort as she thought of Korra, of their days spent together, lying naked in each other’s arms, impossibly close and almost inseparable. She knew her eyes were glazed over, and when she left her reverie, a dull ache remained in her chest.

Korra wants to be with me.

“Yes,” Asami said quietly. “I think it’ll be easy.”

Tonraq chuckled, the sound of his laughter reminding Asami where she was.

“Easy - it’s never been said that anything about Korra is easy.”

Asami laughed. “Well, at least she’s made the summit more interesting.”

Asami saw Tonraq and Senna’s eyes widened in amusement, and she felt the blush rise to her
cheeks, her eyes darting downwards to stare into the tiles. Senna clapped her hands together, smiling at Tonraq.

“Well, I think that’s enough talking about Korra for now, I think.” Senna said brightly. “We’d best fit some last minute discussion before this all wraps up.”

A handshake, a clap on the shoulder, a smile, and a wave, and Korra’s parents disappeared back into the crowd, becoming one with the hum of laughter and conversation. She didn’t notice it at first, but within Asami, a malaise had been cleared. Despite the pain that clung to her like foul remnants, she felt lighter, brighter, and all the recent memories came to her like childish thoughts, amusing and wretchedly silly.

It was true, though. Korra had made Asami’s week much more interesting, to say the least. She was vibrant, colourful in a corporate, political menagerie. She was chaos and flame and fire in a world of ice and order and stone. And that, forever and always, would be enough. Enough to embrace it, and love every second of it, regardless of how fleeting it would be, whether it was there tomorrow. It was a wisp to be caught and treasured while held, not ignored out of fear it would flit away the next day.

She couldn’t bear it much longer. Asami pulled her phone from her pocket, and as she did she felt the smile on her lips, real and full and reinvigorating. She felt nervous; excited, but nervous. She dialled the number, and pressed the phone to her cheek, counting the dial tones until the ended, and –

“-I’m busy or something, so leave a message or call back later. Sorry!”

Asami bit her lip, a soft, shaky laugh threatening to burst forth, her vision blurring slightly as tears welled in the corner of her eyes. She shook her head.

“Um...”

She paused. Asami willed herself forward, taking a deep breath. She sighed, and spoke.

“Hey, Korra. I think... I think I need to talk to you about something important. I have an event on this evening – Please meet me there? I’ll text you the address.”

Asami paused, and it took her every fibre in her being not to verbalize every single emotion she was feeling then and there, into Korra’s voicemail. She held the rest of her words, and ended the call, hearing the faint beep as the connection ended.

Asami took another breath, and whispered the words that had been on her mind since the morning, to nobody in particular in the ballroom.

“I miss you.”

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7:02 PM, MAKOKIN’S ENTRANCE, PLEASURE DISTRICT, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

The sky had split without warning – the squall had come from nowhere. Clear skies had given way to a roiling of thunder and lightning, tearing the sun asunder and bellowing down into Republic City. The downpour fell upon the delegates and the public alike, but those dressed in suits and dresses and
draped in finery squealed and ducked out of the way faster to escape the torrential rains.

Korra found herself among them, but perhaps not in the same degree of finery. Hands buried deep into the pockets of her sports jacket, she shuffled in her boots uncomfortably, the rain slick against her tight jeans as she stared up at a giant of a man.

“I need to get in.”

The bouncer gazed down at Korra over the top of his shades. “Then you can wait in line, like everyone else.”

Korra turned to glance down the queue; the mass of people stretched further than Korra could see, wrapping around the building, and probably wrapping once more again.

Yeah, that’s not happening. Korra returned her attention to the rotund bouncer, uncomfortably large and bald, two beady little black eyes watching her like rotten spots on a potato.

“My name is Korra.” She said, glaring daggers at the bouncer. “I should be on the list. I’m… I’m here with Miss Sato.”

“Miss Sato?” The bouncer seemed amused. “Oh, well allow me to just let you straight through then.”

Korra perked up, and was about to take a step forward, before the bouncer raised a meaty hand.

“Miss Sato doesn’t own this establishment. Get to the back of the line, or fuck off elsewhere.”

Korra seethed. “I am a delegate.” It was the only time that Korra had willingly identified herself as such, but desperate times called for desperate measures. “Let me in.”

The response was a guttural scoff from the bouncer.

“Everyone here is a delegate of somewhere.” He sneered. “And now you’ve just narrowed your choices down to fuck off – you’re banned.”

Korra could feel herself steaming, the water evaporating off her skin as her blood boiled within her. She could see the club within; the flashing, radiant lights, the distant thumping and roar of the crowds, and the faint neon glow of the hallways that no doubt led deeper to a scene of abundant liquor and hedonistic pleasure.

And Asami.

She turned from the bouncer and set off down the street, unable to stand his presence any longer. The feeling of dejection and helplessness grew with each step, already crowding her fervent thoughts. The rain gave no remorse, pelting upon Korra’s shoulders, soaking her skin.

What am I going to do now? I’ve got to get in there.

She only made it a few steps beyond the entrance before a sharp crash, even louder than the rain and the party-goers, drew Korra’s attention away from her dilemma. She turned sharply, eyes darting down an alleyway alongside the venue, to see two wait staff standing around a keg, clearly fallen off the flatbed of a nearby truck.

“Christ, this isn’t safe at all. That thing’s slippery as hell.”

“Yeah, well, we’ve got to keep the taps flowing. Help me roll this one into the cellar.”
Korra slipped into the alley, ducking into a small alcove to find momentary respite from the rain as she watched the wait-staff cautiously roll the keg down a steep ramp emerging from a trapdoor beside the truck.

As good an entrance as any.

Korra glanced over her shoulder. The street was filled with honking traffic, pedestrians streaming along the footpath, but none cared to gaze down the alleyway; too many were concerned with simply getting out of the rain.

Korra flattened her collar, shoved her hands deeper into her pockets, and quickly made her way deeper down the alleyway towards the opened trapdoor. She slowed her steps as she got closer, ears pricked for any sounds of returning staff through the pelting rain.

Hesitantly, Korra peeked into the basement, heart thumping in her ears as raindrops trickled down her neck. Her hair was slick at this point, clinging to her forehead, the small cover above the trapdoor providing little sanctuary. It took only a moment’s consideration as Korra glanced around her one last time, listening intently for any growing sound of footsteps, and when she hoped the coast was clear, Korra slipped subtly through the trapdoor.

The basement probably smelt of damp on a dry day, but in a storm the odour was sickening. Crates and supplies stacked high, the basement was obviously used for storage. Korra moved quietly between shelves of long-life produce and cases of imported liquors, spare parts for stools and tools and mixing equipment, moving deeper and deeper into the establishment, emboldened by the chaotic weather. Even though the rain and music above drowned out most of the sound, she was careful in her steps, excitedly reminded of times back in the South, when she would sneak from building to building, dashing her way around consulates and embassies when boredom struck her.

And now she was sneaking into a club, to meet with Asami. Korra wasn’t sure which was more exhilarating. She was quietly positive, excitedly hopeful to see another message from Asami. She sounded… better - or at least since the morning. Korra shunned the nagging doubts as best she could; Experience told her not to be too hopeful, that she should prepare herself for the worst.

Korra’s stomach curled at any thought of the worst.

It grew darker and darker as she moved away from the open trapdoor and further into the venue. Dull red neon lights sat in cages hanging from the walls, giving the place an eerie ambience. The sound of music and chatter grew louder, and Korra could feel the thudding base softly shaking the air around her.

Storage shelves and half-opened crates gave way to carpeted hallways, scantly decorated and thinner, unmarked doors flanking her sides. Korra followed her instincts, treading her quiet path, peering into doors left slightly ajar, finding little of interest save for small offices and empty private rooms, until she stumbled upon a flight of stairs. Excited, Korra raced up them, her rain-slick hair a wild scene as she reached the landing, and found herself in a decorated hallway, grinning, standing beside a bronze plaque on the wall that read Ground Floor, Private Lounges.

And beside another security guard.

The guard made a double-take as he noticed Korra. “Who are you?” He grunted, glancing down the flight of stairs. “How did – are you staff?”

Korra froze, eyes darting around for an exit. “No, I-uh… “
He turned to face Korra, broad shoulders making his frame seem twice as wide as Korra’s. He raised a hand to his hip, reaching for a radio device.

“Who are you?” He repeated, eyes narrowing. “Did you sneak in? Are you media?”

“No,” Korra stepped back instinctively, mind racing. “No, I’m – I’m a guest.” Her eyes darted from side to side, seeking an exit, an escape. But that would only make for a bigger scene, and Korra didn’t sneak in here to get kicked out.

“Of who?”

“Uh-“

“Of mine.” The voice came from behind the guard. Korra couldn’t quite see who it was from where she stood, but she heard the voice, one curiously familiar.

Stern, commanding, powerful.

The guard turned. “She’s with you, Marshall?”

“Grand-Marshall.” Kuvira said, drawing out each syllable. Korra couldn’t see the guard’s face, but she imaged he was mentally kicking himself for mistaking Kuvira’s rank.

The guard managed a slight nod. “Of course, Grand-Marshall. I’ll, uh… I’ll leave you be then. With your permission, of course.”

“Leave.” Kuvira said, raising a hand lazily.

The ape of a man grunted in acknowledgement, bowing first towards Kuvira, then to Korra, before he lumbered down the corridor, disappearing around a corner. Kuvira’s eyes were fixed on the guard, only flicking back to Korra when she was sure he was gone.

A smirk curled in the corner of her lips.

“Staying out of trouble?” Kuvira said, eyebrow raised.

Korra snorted. “I was doing just fine without your help.”

“Shall I call him back then?” Kuvira laughed, brow raised. She half-turned towards where the guard had left, taunting Korra.

Korra rolled her eyes. “I’ll be gone before the first word leaves your lips.”

Kuvira’s smirk never faltered, yet somehow she still looked as fierce as ever. She was dressed in a full suit, a dark sash hanging from her shoulder, sharp and cutting like her jawline. Arms folded across her chest, Kuvira had a menacing look to her, accentuated in the dark neon glow of the hallway. Even then, Kuvira’s eyes seemed to pierce every shadow.

Kuvira scratched a spot along her jaw. “So, why all the subterfuge? Couldn’t get in through the front?”

“Didn’t have time to wait in line,” Korra said. “I’m here to see Asami.”

Dance tracks thumped away somewhere in the distance, and a pause was all it took to draw all the levity from the situation. A pause was all it took, for Korra to be hit with the realization then and there that the person standing in front of her had inadvertently been much of the reason behind her
actions as of late

The same thought hadn’t escaped Kuvira.

Kuvira’s smile dropped quickly. “So have you two discussed-“

Korra cut her short. “Sort of. This is…” She sighed, closing her eyes briefly. “She called me here, saying that she wanted to tell me something.”

“Did she say what?”

“No.”

Kuvira snorted, glancing away momentarily. “You still haven’t given me an answer yet, you know.”

Korra opened her mouth to speak, but no words came. It was the same conversation they had had in the morning, and yet something had changed. Something had set since then, since everything was chaos.

Kuvira eyed Korra with careful uncertainty.

“What are you waiting for?”

Korra raised her gaze. “What?”

Kuvira shifted her weight. Korra could see the muscles in Kuvira’s jaw in action, the frustration in her face at having to repeat herself.

“What are you waiting for? You haven’t spoken to Sato. You haven’t given me an answer.” Kuvira shook her head. “You’re a woman of action. That’s why I gave you the offer.”

“I’ve been trying.” Korra retorted. “We keep missing each other with our calls.”

“Calls!” Kuvira spat the words. “You’ve been nigh inseparable with the woman for a week, and you’re reduced to edging around phone-calls?”

“It’s not so simple.” Korra muttered, teeth gritting together.

“Obviously.” Kuvira sighed. “What do you two even need to talk about anymore?”

“What’s it matter to you?”

“It matters, because it’s holding back progress.” Kuvira clicked her tongue impatiently. “And it’s making me doubt you. I’m not one for doubt, Korra – if you have any reservations, then its best you make them clear-“

Korra turned, eyes closed as Kuvira spoke, only to turn back a second later, words armed, cutting across Kuvira’s track.

“I just want to let her know I still love her,” Her defiance burst like a flaring flame. “And that I always will.” But the hesitations took shape as she heard her own words, her voice faltering. “But she… I don’t know if she still feels the same… When I leave, will we still… or if it was just for the week, or - whatever.”

Korra gave a shuddering sigh, the feeling of helplessness and foolishness washing over her. The
words poured forth, like the evening’s cloudburst. “And that I’m scared. Scared that she doesn’t feel… What I feel. And it matters, because after everything, I know I have to go, when for once in my life, I actually want to stay.”

Kuvira’s glare met Korra’s a silent battle of ice blue and dark emerald as the club mix changed track. Korra knew she was flushed red, slightly damp from the rain, but she wasn’t going to falter and turn away out of embarrassment.

Korra’s eyes misted, but Kuvira’s visage softened. Her eyes remained fierce, but there was an air about her that felt empathetic. When Kuvira spoke, she glanced away, unable to meet Korra’s eyes.

“I meant it, what I said this morning. You two are something else. But it doesn’t make you invincible. It’ll be taxing, but you’ll be doing good in the world. And she’ll know. But you have to talk.”

“I know.” Korra repeated. “I… I know.”

“I don’t mean to be a divide between you two.” Kuvira said, a little quieter. “Nor would I wish to hurry you, but I’m afraid that’s exactly what I have to do. This will be big, and I will not delay progress for anything.”

“I know.” Korra said. She shook her head. “You’ll have an answer tomorrow morning, for sure. I just need – just a little more time…”

Kuvira nodded slowly. “I hope so.” A moment’s pause passed, before Kuvira took a deep breath, and gestured behind her. “The elevators are that way. I trust Sato won’t be too hard to find.”

“Thanks.”

With that, Kuvira nodded, and took her leave. She stepped past Korra, making her way down the hallway behind her.

Korra stood in quiet contemplation, the interaction replaying itself as memories in her mind, as Kuvira called back to her, her voice reverberating down the hallway.

“I have no idea what Sato is going to say to you.” Kuvira’s voice was always strong, always clear. “But whatever she says, you better listen carefully.”

“I will.”

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7:58 PM, MAKOKIN’S ROOFTOP CLUB, PLEASURE DISTRICT, DAY FIVE OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Where is she?

Asami stared idly into her glass, delicate fingers toying with a cocktail stick, skewering a lychee. She brought the fruit to her lips, the bittersweet taste buzzing in her mouth as she dabbed at her chin with a napkin.

Makolin’s was one of the higher-end locales that resided in Republic City’s Pleasure District. A
relatively unassuming building from outside, the interior was much more vastly decorated, with several floors of restaurants and dance floors, private bars where visitors could sate any thirst, and indulge in any vice. One or two gambling dens could be found, where smoke and liquor masked the smoke and mirrors, with subtle and less than subtle participants spending exorbitant amounts of yuans to feed the beast.

And above it all was the rooftop venue, poolside and decadent beyond all measure. Gold and silver were always the themes; luxury furniture and exotic plants in ornate vases, gorgeous staff carrying tall drinks to their eager customers. Seemingly endless rows of lanterns hung from the ceiling in gilded cages, glowing bright and flickering with the breeze. The centre was open-air, now sheltered in parts by a large marquee, partygoers seemingly unfazed by the storm that raged above them. The air was cold and crisp, but anyone who took a few steps closer to the pavilion sections felt the warmth that radiated forth.

Smoke and rain and alcohol, the scent of musk and perfume and a thousand dancing bodies, a cacophony of laughter and screaming and thumping, numbing music. Somewhere across the rooftop, DJs mixed the mood of the evening, their stands flanked by twin banners that read, “END OF THE SUMMIT, END OF THE WORLD.”

Asami leaned against the bar, where she said she would meet Korra. The crowd was concentrated on the dance floor, but the rooftop had ample space for smaller groups – though none could escape the music. Asami tugged at her silken shawl, pulling it a bit tighter around her bare shoulders, running her fingers along the hem of her dress.

A dark red. It had to be red.

“Another drink, Miss Sato?”

The words drew her back to the moment. “Yes please, if you’d be so kind.”

Asami smiled at the bartender, who nodded, collecting her empty glass and fashioning another cocktail.

“Not in the mood to dance, Miss Sato?”

“I’m waiting for someone, actually.”

“Ah, a friend is it?”

Asami’s eyes glazed over slightly, smiling. “In a way.”

Asami thanked the bartender as he sat another cocktail in front of her. Her fingers tingled slightly as she reached to hold the delicate glass by its thin neck. It wasn’t her intention to get started without Korra, it was just something to calm her nerves, to settle her stomach.

It wasn’t easy. She felt queasy, and somehow in a single afternoon all of her nervous ticks had come back to her. She coiled loose strands of hair around her fingers, she tapped heels together, she clenched her fists until she couldn’t feel them anymore, only to release them when her knuckles ached.

Korra hadn’t called to confirm. Korra hadn’t sent a message saying she was coming. Asami was simply hoping, hoping that Korra had received the message, hoping that she was on her way. Rational thoughts did their best to outweigh the chaos, but every passing minute, Asami eyed the elevator for a little longer, the urge to leave and never look back growing second by second.
No. She’s just late.

She’s probably caught in traffic.

What if she was in an accident?

Asami gave a soft gasp, visibly holding her breath in. She shook herself of the macabre thought, lingering for a moment too long on the idea, that the last time she had seen Korra was that morning, when she had banished her from her quarters.

A chill seemed to claw into her shoulders, and again she pulled her shawl tighter. Would Korra turn up? Why would she, after what Asami had said this morning? Asami had made it clear that she needed some time alone. Had Korra left? Was she still in the city?

Did she leave?

Maybe she went to Kuvira and left.

Maybe I fucked up.

The words echoed again.

Maybe we should have never fallen in love.

And her mind wandered to darker places

Asami grit her teeth, eyes scrunched up and doing everything she could to stop herself from pinching the bridge of her nose. It hurt, hurt to just remember her saying the words, hurt to see the pain in Korra’s eyes, just for that one, gut-wrenching moment, before she couldn’t take it anymore, and disappeared into her bedroom.

Asami could only imagine the look in Korra’s face when she asked her to leave. The feeling of dread hung heavy, suffocating and nauseating; why on earth would Korra ever come to her after that?

Why would she come at all? She’s not a pet that comes and goes because I tell her to.

Asami felt herself short of breath, opening her eyes only to find her vision blurry, feeling faint. Her gut twisted, aching and torturous.

She’s not coming. She’s not-

“Asami!”

And as sudden as the storm appeared, all the doubt vanished in Asami’s mind.

It had a peculiar effect on her, the way her name sounded on those lips, which drew a smile to her face as nothing else did. Asami turned, finding the voice in the crowd, the one that had called out to her.

There could have been a moment that burst brighter than any bolt of lightning, that seemed louder than the deafening beats that echoed around them, when they saw each other again. Korra stood not ten feet away, still drenched from the rain, her wicked crooked smile etched broad across her face, but there was a softness in her eyes, one that spoke quiet words of empathy.

Asami felt her jaw clench one, twice, only to realize she was holding back a laugh.
“Hey.” Was all Korra managed, when she strode over to Asami. She took a spot beside her, leaning against the bar, waving down the bartender.

Asami wanted to bury herself in Korra’s presence, to drown herself in her smell and her scent and her being. She watched Korra order a drink, the way her words fell so sweetly from her lips, the way her ice-blue eyes flickered towards her every second, distracted.

And Asami couldn’t help but feel something had changed between them, for the better. There was a softness that was there before, that once sat quiet and nestled between them, that reached forth and tugged at her heart. A calm and quiet resonating beat and rhythm between them, that urged for each other’s company in all the peaceful ways it could.

They stood beside each other in silence, surrounded by noise and frivolity, and Asami wanted to say a hundred-million things.

“Why didn’t you call or message me, to let me know you got my invitation?” Asami said, a teasing smile curling at her lips. “I was worried.”

Korra opened her mouth to respond, a look of embarrassment on her face. Asami laughed.

“I… I completely forgot, to be honest.” Korra said quietly. “I was, uh… Pretty surprised by your message. Basically I got dressed and came straight here.”

Asami felt the warmth of complacency flow through her. I shouldn’t have worried.

“Asami, I-“

“Korra-“

They spoke, they stopped, they smiled.

“Hey-“

“Do you-“

And again. Asami smiled, and Korra rolled her eyes.

Asami glanced down at her drink, a lightness in her chest. She reached over to Korra’s hand, hesitating, hovering only slightly, before Korra reached up and took her hold. Asami felt her brow furrow, her cheeks ache from grinning, a warmth spreading through her cheeks that burned out the alcohol. She nodded to Korra, urging her to speak first.

“Red,” Korra said, a lump in her throat. “Asami. I – I’m sorry. I should have told you about Kuvira’s offer.”

Asami felt her shoulders slump, but the smile never faded from her lips.

“No,” Asami said quietly. “You don’t need to apologize. I was… I was silly to react, the way I did. I should be the one to say sorry.”

“Red, you’re never silly.” Korra paused, the look on her face betraying a dark thought. “To be honest, I was worried too.”

Asami glanced over to Korra, head cocked slightly. “About what?”

“I thought,” Korra paused, eyes closed and a pained expression on her face. “I thought… maybe you
had…”

Korra paused. Asami froze, her heart sinking as she watched Korra relived the day. Their drinks stood upon the bar, half-touched and idle, as party-goers revelled around them. A roll of thunder rumbled in the distance, and in the other section of the club, the track changed, eliciting a cheer from the crowd.

Asami’s free hand wandered. She wanted to brush the strands of Korra’s cropped hair from her face, to cup her cheek and feel the warmth of her skin, but something drew her hand back. Korra needed to speak.

And after long last, when Korra spoke, it was quiet, barely audible above the din of the night. Asami had to lean over, so they were close, faces inches apart.

Korra spoke slowly, breaking in parts, pausing. “After you told me to leave, in the morning, I went back to my quarters. I… I had a bit to drink, and I fell asleep. I had… I had a nightmare. In it, I… You…”

Korra stopped. Asami watched on with soft gaze. “You don’t have to tell me about the dream, if you don’t want to.”

Korra nodded, taking a deep breath. “I thought, after what you said, that… that maybe you… you didn’t love me, or - or maybe you didn’t want to love me, or… if I left, you… that we shouldn’t…”

Korra faltered, cursing under her breath. Asami felt Korra’s grip tighten around her hand, not painful, but frustrated. Korra turned to Asami, a strained look on her face.

“Red,” Korra paused, shaking her head. “Asami, I… I love you. I really, really, really fucking love you. I know – I know that I should try to be more… more eloquent than this, but you know what? I don’t care, because that’s all there is. It doesn’t need to be said in any other way. And I just – If there’s a chance that, despite everything that’s going to happen, and whatever is going to come between us, and if I’m halfway across the world, that if there’s a chance… a chance that you feel the same way…”

Korra spoke with frustration, red in the cheeks and tears welling in the corners of her eyes. Somewhere, another group cheered over a round of shots. Elsewhere, a glass shattered and a woman screamed. The crowd cheered, and the revelry continued.

“Just tell me. What… Did you mean it? When you said we… we should never have-“

And Asami spoke, and she could feel the heat of her breath brush against Korra’s cheek.

“Korra,” Her voice quivered. “I’m so sorry, so sorry that… that I put that thought in your mind. I was… was scared. I didn’t want you to go, and so I thought that it would have been better if we hadn’t met, because I know - I know that it’s going to hurt so fucking much, but… but now? Now I know it’ll be worth it. I was wrong.”

Through blurry sight, they saw each other, clear as day.

Korra’s voice was raspy. “So-“

“I love you, Korra.” Asami choked, coughing. She laughed, a shaky, hiccuping laugh. “I really, really do, and I want to.”

And so did Korra. They laughed, like nothing else mattered, and the world that surrounded them
seemed to laugh along with them, the hundreds that danced and drank and celebrated and lived, and the world that was bright and dark and cold and hot at the same time, the endless lights that hung from the ceiling, the smoke and shadow and brilliant chaos that was the dance, the lighting that galloped across the sky seemed to burst into a hundred million colours, just for them.

And then their laughter ended, they felt impossibly close, mere inches apart, simply smiling and adoring each other, basking in their glow.

Asami’s eyes flickered to Korra’s lips, the warmth and tears pulling a weary smile to her own.

“Korra,” Asami said, staring intently at her. “Can… May I-“

Her eyes widened for a second, as Korra answered by leaning forward, pressing her lips against Asami’s to steal the last words of her request. Asami melted into the sensation, after longing for so long, she simply wanted to savour the taste, the soft sensation of Korra’s kiss, each touch that surged lightning through her veins. She felt her hand tighten against Korra’s grip, her free hand rising to cup Korra’s cheek, to run through her cropped hair.

Within her, she could feel the flame burning bright. Asami could feel the warmth, the energy, the thumping rhythm of Korra’s heart with every breath, every stolen gasp and dance of tongue upon tongue as they kissed. It drew the flame, the wild, unshackled and fervent growl from Korra as Asami nipped at her lip, teeth sinking softly to pull gently, teasing.

It’s enough to give them a moment’s respite, and when they break, they realize then that they’re impossibly close, with Asami standing between Korra’s legs, chest upon chest, breathing heavily as if they’ve been submerged, only just having broken above the surface. Asami studies Korra’s face carefully, and sees the familiar want, the lust, the urge that breaks them, the one they’re all too familiar with submitted to and relishing in the primal instinct.

But now, as if noticing it for the first time, she sees Korra’s everything else. The way her eyes soften when she looks at her, the way her lips tug gently, urging on a smile that Asami knows Korra’s trying to hide, the way her eyes dart from meeting her gaze, to her lips, to her heaving chest, to the side as she tries, and fails to stop staring at the woman before her. She sees the way her brow softens, peaceful and content to be so close to Asami, the way Korra’s nose wrinkles just slightly, as she feels the heat of Asami’s panting breath upon her skin, and the thin, emerging beads of sweat of heat and intimacy.

“Dance with me.” Asami pants, quietly, hurriedly, as if the fleeting moment will fade at any second.

“What?”

“Dance with me!”

Even in the brief moment that Asami broke their embrace, her body yearned for the closeness it felt only seconds earlier. Korra’s body followed, drawn magnetic, like crashing waves upon the absence, following Asami, letting Korra be drawn and dragged by the wrist towards the pulsing throng of partygoers, the lights and sounds blearg their senses, an overwhelming burst of colour and noise that shocks them to the core.

In the midst of the cacophony, they were two together in a sea of euphoria, and they felt it surge through every fibre of their being. The vibrations that surged through the crowd, electrifying and vivifying, pulsed a sweet chaos that engulfed them and turned them inside out and through again. The rapture that surrounded them, the rebellious, hedonistic joy that reverberated throughout the room swallowed them whole and pulled them apart. As Asami moved and swayed, Korra felt herself
move in tandem, to follow her moves as she felt was right. She held her, and never wanted to stop holding her, in every fluid motion, every electric beat, every touch of skin on skin that burned and seared like flame and ice.

It might have been the drink, or it might have been the music, the rhythm and the beats and the major key, the chords and the chorus and the thousand voices cheering, seemingly for them. It didn’t matter, nothing did, and for what felt like forever, the world was in that room alive and vibrant, and it felt like it was never going to stop.

There was a moment in it all, when they simply gazed upon each other, watching the stillness of the other’s visage, as the world seemed to spin around them. A hundred million lights filled the room, spinning and twirling as they did, and a kaleidoscope of colours danced across their faces and a galaxy swirled in their eyes, stars and suns and the possibility of infinity. And when they danced, they glowed bright and luminescent in the dark, just the two of them, jumping and gyrating and twisting and dancing, simply dancing. They pressed themselves against each other, two souls impossibly in love, soul-bound to each other.

They felt free, and together they felt everything.

It was as if she had shed a hundred layers, that Asami felt infinitely lighter beside Korra. She as if she could fly simply being near her, holding her in her arms, feeling the warm of her skin, the touch that sent her soaring. And when Asami leaned forward, she felt the softness of the lips she had longed to kiss in every second she was near her, the quivering touch, the delicate shiver that coursed through her, and the sweet taste that awakened the flame entirely. Overwhelmed, she felt her tears of joy press against her cheeks, and her heart burst in brilliant cascade.

Hours passed, maybe days, weeks, years that they stayed there, dancing till they were broken, throat sore in screams. When they left, their ears numb and heads dizzy. Arms around each other’s shoulders, Asami led them down a quiet exit, down winding paths and still the same neon-glow. They found themselves inseparable in a darkened elevator, the dull light of orange numbers clicking down.

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1:21 AM, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, FINAL DAY OF THE REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

When Asami pushed open the door, and the pair stepped into the darkened room, it was the smell that soothed Korra’s soul. The familiar scent, of the furniture, of the floorboards, of Asami’s familiar musk in every inch of the room – to her, it was the sweetest anodyne.

It smelled like home.

Asami slipped off her shoes, gingerly stepped onto the hardwood floor, wincing as sore feet stepped towards a bowl where Asami deposited her keys. Korra watched from the doorway, as Asami let down her hair, running her fingers down tumbling curls.

It was a scene that she wouldn’t soon forget. The glow of the city broke into the darkened room like so many scenes before, but there was a serenity that seemed to fill every quiet corner and space between them. Perhaps it was the way her ears still rang with a dulled numbness after leaving the
club, or perhaps it was the way her clothes still clung to her skin. Or perhaps it was the way Asami lifted her hair to rub the nape of her neck, or perhaps it was the way her bare feet left soft spots of heat with each step. Perhaps it was the way Korra’s jacket hung around Asami’s shoulders, gracefully draped like a cloak when Korra saw Asami’s skin prickle against the cold night air.

Whatever It was happiness to Korra, and she cherished every moment of it. Asami turned, still running hands through her hair, seeing Korra staring from across the room.

Asami flushed. “What are you staring at?”

Korra kicked off her boots, and closed the gap with a few determined strides, drawing Asami close to steal a kiss that sent shivers down Asami’s spine. Asami gave a soft gasp as they broke apart, Korra’s panting breath upon her neck as she whispered into Asami’s ear.

“The love of my life.”

Asami always knew Korra was strong, stronger than most, but even she grinned in astonishment when Korra lifted her into her arms, as if she were nothing. But when Korra laid her down gently upon the leather couch, Asami knew she meant everything.

Asami eyed her partner with wicked intent, as Korra leaned down to bite softly at her lip, tugging it till she drew the shuddering gasp from Asami, moving down to trail kisses down her collar. Gentle hands lifted Asami up, pulling the jacket from her shoulders, and Asami reached up to run lithe fingers through Korra’s hair and under her shirt, feeling the heat, the sweat, the firmness of Korra’s stomach, tighten against Asami’s touch.

Korra’s hands found the straps of Asami’s dress, making short work of them to guide them down her body, until they sat a crumpled heap at the foot of the couch and left Asami lying in little more than her underwear. Korra leaned into the gap between Asami’s legs, her knee rising to edge a space between Asami’s thighs, hard, hot hands running over smooth skin, feeling Asami squirm against her touch.

Korra leaned down further, hot breath pouring over Asami’s stomach, rising to taking a nipple between her lips, plucking playfully at the sensitive skin, urging her partner on as she felt Asami’s grip tighten against her frame, clutching at Korra’s shirt as her tongue toyed with Asami’s breast. Korra’s hands caressed Asami’s body, each touch lovingly gentle, furiously provoking, sending electricity bolting through her nerves.

Korra’s hand slid down between Asami’s thighs, drawing a moan from both mouths as they stroked wet silk, pulling the garment back, sliding against Asami’s urging sex. Korra relished in Asami’s musk, the scent of sweat and perfume as she kissed every inch of Asami’s chest, never stopping, as deft fingers playfully, achingly, frustratingly toyed with Asami’s body, dancing against wet lips and grinding hips.

Asami panted breathless words between each stroke.

“Ah – ah! Aren’t you – oh!” Asami bit her lip, each word struggling to escape. “Korra – Aren’t you… tired? Oh…”

Asami felt Korra’s smile emerge against her skin. “Do you want me to stop?”

“Fuck! Ah – Never….”

It was all Korra needed, the way Asami’s words dripped with ecstasy, each syllable wrought with passion and begging pleasure. She slid into Asami, curling to find her spot, each rhythmic pulse
tugging a moan, a gasp, an aching pant from Asami’s mouth that drove Korra to frenzy.

Korra nipped at Asami’s skin, gaze fixated upon Asami’s face as she worked her hands, tasting the sweetness and saltiness of Asami’s skin as she writhed against every touch, hips buckled, twisting and grinding against Korra’s hand. Asami’s hands for Korra’s hair, white-knuckled and iron-gripped, tugging harder as she drove Asami closer and closer to orgasm.

Korra clenched her teeth, hot breath in sharp gasps as Asami pulled, sweet sharp pain lingering only long enough for the touch of pleasure to feel like a shot of euphoria straight to the senses, a shock to the core that drove Korra wild. Her ice-blue eyes burned with a furious passion as she watched Asami’s face painted a portrait of bliss, mouth gasping, every syllable of Korra’s name escaping in bursts from soft, pink lips like a thousand instances of brilliant chaos driven straight into her brain, hearing Asami’s breath becoming shorter, quicker, aggressive, begging and thrashing and moaning to Korra’s handiwork, as she pulsed in and out of Asami, each tantalizing touch and grasp pushing her closer, and closer –

Korra felt the shiver ricocheting downward as Asami’s body twisted under her, arching her back, mouth agape in silent screams of pleasure, eyes clenched tight as Korra’s ceaseless rhythm drew each twitching, contracting, aching wave of orgasm flowing through Asami, thrusting and toying in bursts. Korra cradled Asami with her free hand, feeling her back slick with sweat, every muscle in her body shake as pleasure coursed through her like a thrashing, roiling tempest. Asami’s grip never loosed in Korra’s hair, a chaotic dictate of pain and pleasure that tore at her, Korra’s mind split asunder as she watched Asami’s climax echo through, lightning and thunder erupting in brilliant cloudburst of hedonistic sensation.

Asami’s silken hair awash and wild, Korra moved up to prise Asami’s soft lips apart, tasting sweet and breathing in each shaky breath as she drew her partner’s pleasure out as long as she could, fingers never resting, but slower and slower and slower they sang, until Asami fell back into the leather couch, her body slick and chest heaving, rising and falling in soft, complacent rest as her sex soothed sore against Korra’s touch, legs releasing their grip around Korra’s thighs. Korra fell in, fatigue seizing its moment, her world collapsing as they did.

Asami’s silken hair awash and wild, Korra moved up to prise Asami’s soft lips apart, tasting sweet and breathing in each shaky breath as she drew her partner’s pleasure out as long as she could, her fingers never resting, but slower and slower and slower they sang, until Asami fell back into the leather couch, her body slick and chest heaving, rising and falling in soft, complacent rest as her sex soothed sore against Korra’s touch, legs releasing their grip around Korra’s thighs. Korra fell in, fatigue seizing its moment, her world collapsing as they did.

Korra didn’t realize she had closed her eyes, until she felt Asami’s hand upon her cheek, brushing her hair aside. In the dark, she saw faint flickers of light reflecting in those familiar green eyes that felt like home.

“Did I hurt you?” Asami whispered, her voice weak and quiet.

Korra gave a soft smile. “Never.”

Asami gave a slight nod. She tugged earnestly at Korra’s shirt.

“What about yours?”

Korra sighed, complacently. “Hmm,” She mused, panting. Her own breath was heavy and short. “I… No, it’s okay… Now, I’m tired.”

Asami laughed, the sound shaking the two of them as they lay together. Korra buried herself in Asami’s hair as she adjusted ever so slightly to allow Korra more space on the couch.

“I just want to be here, right now.” Korra muttered into the perfumed forest of Asami’s hair.

The words buried deep into Asami’s heart, nestled quietly among the embers of complacency that warmed her naked body.
“Korra,” Asami growled, deep and low. “At least take off your jeans. They’re still wet.”

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?? AM, BEDROOM, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, FINAL DAY OF THE REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

At some point, they must have moved to the bed, although neither of them could remember doing so. The curtains in Asami’s bedroom were drawn back, but the dark sky told them it was still early morning. Asami awoke to find Korra playing with her hair, gently pawing at it and stroke strand upon strand, drawing it from scalp to tip, and letting each curl fall upon her naked shoulder. Asami purred, and Korra turned her attention to place a soft kiss upon Asami’s jaw.

“Morning.” Korra’s voice was hoarse, as if just woken as well.

Asami smiled, quickly turning to a grimace. “Not yet.” Asami blinked away the sleepiness, eyes burning from fatigue.

“Sorry,” Korra whispered. “I didn’t mean to wake you.”

Asami shook her head slowly, head resting upon a pillow, content to simply gaze upon Korra. She had shed her clothes, and lay beside her, naked. Asami’s eyes ran over her toned body, and wondered how she could have found someone so special.

A thought popped into her mind.

“I met your parents yesterday, at our closing ball.”

“Oh?” Korra said, unamused. She sat propped upon her elbow on a pillow beside Asami, her free hand flat against Asami’s bare shoulder. “Did they say much?”

Asami replayed the conversation in her mind, a lazy smile on her lips.

“Apparently you’re not good with people.”

Korra scoffed. “I’m great with people. I’m great with you.”

“I’m not a people.” Asami chided teasingly. She paused, contemplative. “But I have faith in you. I think you’re going to do wonderful things.”

Korra’s hand paused, only to slip under the covers to follow the contour of Asami’s body, running down her side, to rise at her hips.

“I hope so.” Korra said. “It’ll be a challenge.”

A silence fell between them, as Asami melted into the slow touch of Korra’s hand exploring her sleepy body, half-asleep and complacent.

“I’ll miss you.” Asami mumbled drowsily. “But we’ll see each other again.”

“Of course we will.”
Asami opened her eyes at the words, and smiled. The icy blue eyes were warm, honest and true. She cocked her head to the side, gazing past Korra to see the darkness of the night that lingered over the city. The rain had long stopped, but the clouds still coated the sky.

“Why are you up so early?” Asami whispered. “Trouble sleeping? Nightmare?”

Korra’s eyes flickered away for a second, only to meet Asami’s even stronger. She leaned over, and kissed her upon the forehead, drawing her into a warm embrace.

“No,” Korra replied. “Actually, I was having the sweetest dream.”

Chapter End Notes

After a few months, several times heading back to the drawing board, and almost double the words, I present to you the rewritten and revised chapter, "A hundred million colours"!

The original version of the chapter was messy, muddled in both plot and delivery, and after a very enlightening conversation with an anon commenter, I decided to rewrite it and do it justice.

I'm not sure if this revised chapter does indeed do it justice, but im much happier with this, and I feel its more than just senseless smut. It might not be able to patch all the holes in my crummy writing, but maybe it'll just be able to give some cohesiveness to the story?

I dunno. i'll maybe do some further edits in the coming days. enjoy!

As always, thank you for reading, and please leave a comment! or don't! I'm not the boss of you!
5:46 AM, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, THE FINAL DAY OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

When Korra woke next, it was dawn.

It could have been the soft glow that shone through Asami’s curtains that roused Korra, or perhaps it was the subtle, wafting scent of perfumes and shampoos and that unique, intoxicating scent that seemed to permeate every corner of her being - at least in that very moment - that drew her soft and slowly from her sleep with all the grace and agony of a needle drawing blood from deep beneath the skin.

In another time, they may have woken her, but Korra knew that it was neither of these things. They had become familiar to her, and therefore almost invisible to her consciousness; She took them willingly, blissfully, for granted, and she had made that world that surrounded her, in a few ways, home.

Quiet, gentle. All things lovely.

No, Korra had awoken to a bristling against her neck. She could feel Asami’s breath against her collarbone, soft, steady, peaceful. She could count the seconds between each glance, smirking in anticipation, scrunching up her face as each quiet sigh tickled her.

Korra’s arm drifted lazily over Asami’s side, her hand resting along her ribcage, tracing the bones beneath her skin, her body rising and falling in gentle rhythm, as Asami dreamed of euphoria in a faraway place. Asami’s skin was hot to the touch - or was Korra’s that was burning up?

Korra pressed her lips to Asami’s forehead, nuzzling into the smell of her hair as Asami sleepily nipped at her neck, a soft, sleepy grumble slipping from her lips as she shifted slightly in Korra’s arms. In many ways, Asami had become familiar to her too. They knew each other intimately, closer than anyone else had ever before, and yet each touch still shocked her, sent her heart in such a rush, that each felt like the first, powerful and electric.

But at other times, they still felt like comfortable strangers, like neighbours who only offer passing smiles and a glimmer in each other’s eyes. So soon they had met, so fast they had grown together, and now, at the eve of the summit’s close, so soon would they have to part. A strange concoction of sorrow and heartfelt jubilation ached deep within her. Softly, Korra lifted a hand to Asami’s face, and brushed wayward strands from her eyes.

At once, Asami’s eyes flickered open, a fleeting moment of fear hidden behind sleep, before meeting Korra’s gaze.
Korra smirked. “Sorry, sweetie.”

Asami looked up at her quizzically, before stifling a small yawn.

“Don’t.”

“Don’t what?”

“Don’t - sweetie? Just don’t.” Asami groaned. She closed her eyes and lazily hooked a leg around Korra’s hips. “I hate that word.”


Asami’s hand snaked up the nape of Korra’s neck menacingly. “Don’t you dare.” She grumbled.

Korra smirked again, catching Asami’s gaze as she glared dangerously.

“Cutie-pie?”

Asami’s hand shot into Korra’s short, cropped hair, catching enough between her fingers to find purchase. Asami tugged sharply, pulling Korra’s hair back and drawing a quick, wanting hiss from Korra’s clenched teeth.

“Don’t.” Asami sneered, teeth nipping at Korra’s jaw. A second later, she eased her grip, Korra’s breath unsteady, her skin slick with beads of sweat.

It took Korra moment to compose herself. “Are you kidding me? If anything I’m going to say it more -”

Her words dissolved into a snicker as Asami’s legs tightened around her.

“Stop talking so much,” Asami mumbled, struggling to hide a grin of her own. “Your breath stinks.”

“I could think of something else I could do with my mouth.”

Asami winced, shifting uncomfortably. “I’m still sore, and gross.”

Korra pressed her lips against Asami’s forehead tenderly. “I was talking about this. For such a high-ranking delegate, you sure do have a really dirty mind.”


“Ooh,” Korra smirked. “I like that. Not the most conventional of pet-names, but the whole role-play thing - it really works for me.”

Korra grinned, satisfied that she had finally coaxed a laugh from Asami, and let them fade into a comfortable silence. In that moment they simply existed, taking in nothing more of the world as they knew it, except for each other.

It was a peace that they knew wouldn’t last.

Asami was the one to speak first. “Kuvira’s probably up by now.”

Korra hummed in acknowledgement.

“Have you - have you called her?” Asami said, a moment’s hesitation in her tone.
Korra shook her head.

“Not yet.”

Asami paused before turning away from Korra, reaching for her bedside table. When she turned back, she pressed her phone into Korra’s palm, and gave her a knowing look. Korra sighed, glancing down at Asami’s phone; Kuvira’s number was already waiting to be dialled.

It took all of five seconds for Kuvira to pick up. Her voice came over sharp and clear, as if she had been awake for hours, and yet her words failed to hide a tinge of uncertainty behind the familiar façade of control and dominance.

“Good morning, Sato.”

Korra cleared her throat. “Actually, it’s me.”

“Ah.” Kuvira paused. There came the sound of chairs scraping, soft, hastened murmuring and boots shuffling around, the sound of a door closing shut - and then, silence.

“Korra.” Kuvira’s voice came once again, this time softer. “Good morning.”

“Good - Yeah, good morning to you too, Kuvira.” Korra waited, expecting Kuvira to continue. She cleared her throat a second time when she didn’t. “I’m calling to let you know that I’ve come to a decision regarding your… regarding your offer.”

Korra’s hand found Asami’s, lacing their fingers together and drawing them to her lips.

“Indeed.” Kuvira said. They could hear the sound of a creaking chair, of stretching leather. “Go on, then.”

Korra sighed softly, away from the phone as not to let Kuvira hear.

“After… After careful consideration,” She began, hesitantly. Her heart felt heavy, weighing deep in her chest, and at once draining the will and the words from her lips and placing the thought that at that moment, she’d want nothing more than to hang up, to cry and draw Asami close, to stay in those arms forever.

Instead, she felt the soft squeeze of Asami’s fingers, and when she caught her gaze it was all the reassurance she needed.

“I have… I’ve decided to accept your offer. My services will be available for your campaign - it’s an honour to be involved in your project, and I will be more than happy to assist by any means necessary, in any capacity that I may provide as both a representative from the Southern Tribes, and as a diplomat of the International Union.”

She was met by silence, as Kuvira mulled over her words. They could hear the shifting of a seat, the rhythmic tapping of what sounded like a pen against a wooden desk. After a moment they heard a sharp breath, and when Kuvira spoke, her voice had softened.

“What did Sato say?”

Korra looked up, and found Asami resting against the pillow, eyes wide and awake, brilliant green glinting softly like emeralds in the dark. She smiled, and nodded again.

“She’s - she’s… good.” Korra said, her smile forlorn. “She knows. She understands.”
“Good.” Kuvira said curtly, yet not unkindly. “I must admit, I am reassured. I didn’t know which way you would lean.” Kuvira cleared her throat, her commanding tone seeping into her voice once again. “There will be an announcement following Raiko’s closing ceremony early this evening. I will need you there for paperwork - and solidarity.”

“Of course, Kuvira.”

“Good.” Kuvira repeated.

Korra opened her mouth, a goodbye hanging off the tip of her tongue, but Kuvira spoke up again, cutting it in half.

“By the way, have you had a chance to read the headlines this morning, Korra?”

“I - what?” Korra said, confused. “No, why?”

Silence. The sound of Kuvira shifting in her chair, as if uneasily.

“I would… advise that you do so, as soon as it is convenient. I pay no attention to tabloids myself, but this may be… pertinent. To you.” Kuvira said sternly, clearing her throat. “I’m sure Sato has her own publicists, but I’ll have someone send over a press kit.”

Korra furrowed her brow, shaking her head and squeezing Asami’s hand reassuringly when she glanced over with concern.

“Kuvira, what’s going on?”

Kuvira paused before responding.

“I don’t… it’s not my place to say, I don’t think. It won’t change our arrangement, but the tabloids may cause… stirrings.”

Korra rolled her eyes. Her words came out somewhat brusque. “Are you going to be this enigmatic when we’re working together?”

Kuvira snorted. “This is the game we play, Korra. Enjoy your morning - I’ll see you this afternoon.”

A quiet tone ended the call, and Korra slid the phone over to her own night stand.

“Red,” Korra said uneasily. “Have you ever been in a, uh - a media storm?”

Asami furrowed her brow. “No. And for obvious reasons.”

Korra scoffed. “Why is everyone being so mysterious this morning?”

Asami clicked her tongue. “We have majority control over three major publications - and that’s just in Republic City alone. Not that we need to, but it helps us keep a finger on the outlets.” She yawned, mussed hair splaying over the pillows. “I’ll have them collect Kuvira’s kit with breakfast.”

Korra hummed, her mind wandering as she watched Asami stretching out across her side of the bed. Her eyes traced Asami’s nakedness, a quiet tempest toying with her emotions, tugging her in different directions. Korra laid the flat of her hand across Asami’s midriff, sending shivers up her partner’s body, pausing her mid stretch.

“What?” Asami said, glancing playfully over at Korra.
Korra could feel the slow, steady beat beneath her fingers. She slid her palm upwards, cupping a breast, barely grasping, simply feeling.


Korra hummed. “Just looking. You’re so beautiful.”

“I don’t believe you.” Asami teased.

“How dare you.”

“Well, you’re right - one of those isn’t true.”

“How dare you.”

Korra smirked, moving close to press her lips against Asami’s side, leaving a gentle mark against her ribcage, moving slowly above her navel.

“Korra,” Asami repeated sharply; a warning.

Korra glanced up Asami’s body, meeting her eyes with mischief. Slowly, she ran her tongue south, only to have Asami’s hand run through her hair once again.

“Stop.” Asami said, her voice adamant.

Korra froze, the slightest tug against her hair sending shivers down her spine.

Part of her wanted to defy her.

Part of her wanted nothing more than to obey.

“Come here.” Asami said softly, tugging once again. Korra rose, sweeping over Asami’s body until they met eye to eye. Asami stole the first taste, her lips tripping over Korra’s, dry and chaste, but wanting.

“Disgusting.” Asami smirked into Korra’s lips. “Your morning breath is so much more gross up close.”

It only took a gentle push to draw Korra away, though her body, her touch, lingered for a second. Asami sat up, swinging her legs to the side, and standing with a flourish.

“I’m going to take a shower.”

Korra grinned as she splayed out over the bed, stretching in the freedom and relishing in the warmth of the recently vacated space.

“Alright then.” Korra said, yawning.

Asami rolled her eyes, picking up a pillow to drop it over Korra’s face.

“You’re coming with me.”
“You’re kidding me.”

“Well, we weren’t exactly discreet.”

“Since when has Makolin’s allowed photographers in!?”

“I’m guessing since they started hosting all the world’s elite,” Korra scoffed. “Look, I don’t think it’s that big of an issue.”

Asami glanced down at the front pages, rapidly scanning each headline. The courier had practically tripped over themselves in trying to leave after dropping off the package, red-faced and fearful.

Asami had never shouted at her staff - in fact, she had a reputation for being one of the few members of the upper echelon who seemed to treat them as people. Still, she had an idea of how she must have looked as soon as she saw the cover. It was a series of images, all neatly arranged in an eye-catching collage. Low resolution, completely messy in terms of focus or quality, but there was no mistaking it.

Sato’s Intrigue Sails South! Sultry: Sato Sex Scandal! Sato Heiress Seen Intimate With Southern Tribe Representative!

Others were even less subtle.

The pictures were of a crowded dance floor - whoever the photographers were, they weren’t discreet, but Korra was right; neither were they. Embraced tight, lips locked, eyes closed, there wasn’t any wonder the two of them hadn’t noticed. They were too busy, focused on each other to care about the world around them.

Rain-slicked and passionate. A distant corner of Asami’s mind chuckled - they actually looked pretty good, despite it all. A much louder part of Asami’s mind was screaming. She felt as if she had been doused in ice, cold with her heart racing fearfully. She had never had a PR issue before - in fact, she had stayed well out of the limelight, but stepped into it enough to add what efficacy she could to the Sato name.

Asami swore underneath her breath. How would her father react?

He hadn’t known.

He didn’t know.

How would he react?

Korra’s phone buzzed loudly not long after, in the middle of their breakfast.

“It’s my parents.” Korra mouthed to Asami.

Asami glanced over at her own phone, lying inconspicuously beside her on the countertop. Apart from the regular company updates, she hadn’t received any messages from her father. If he had known - which she assumed he must have by now - then he hadn’t found it necessary to get in touch with her. Asami wasn’t sure how to feel about that. She felt hesitant, as if balancing delicately upon an edge, not quite sure which way to fall.

Korra took her call across the room, at the other end of the lounge, staring off into the republic city.
skyline. Asami picked at her breakfast gingerly, trying to catch whispered words from Korra’s call, paying her much more attention than she did to the plate of fruits and yoghurt in front of her.

She didn’t feel much like eating anyway.

Korra returned moments later, sliding into her seat opposite Asami.

“What did they say?” Asami said nervously, trying not to let her voice falter.

“Well,” Korra sighed. “They wanted to know whether or not I wanted to do a statement.”

Asami glanced up, wide-eyed. Korra reached over and thread her fingers through Asami’s, giving them a soft squeeze.

“It’s okay.” Korra said, tracing circles with her thumb. “I told them that we wouldn’t be doing that.”

Asami closed her eyes in quiet thanks.

“So your parents,” Asami said. “They know?”

Korra nodded. “Yours?”

Asami fiddled with her breakfast, pushing a blueberry back and forth, eventually nudging her entire plate to the side.

“No.” Asami said shakily. She could feel the warmth rising in her face, hot tears brimming in her eyes, the air in her chest suddenly absent, tight -.

“Hey,” Korra said, moving quickly around the table to draw Asami into a tight embrace. “Hey, hey, hey - it’s okay. It’s okay. Just breathe. Breathe.”

Asami hiccupped, swallowing lungfuls of air at a time. Waves of nausea washed over her, her vision blurred, tears trickling softly down her cheeks.

“I - I d-don’t know -” Asami said, struggling through each word. She felt Korra’s arms tighten their embrace, pushing hair from Asami’s face, and the flat of a palm rubbing softly against her back.

Korra shushed her. “Don’t speak. Not yet. Just… Just breathe. Slowly. Just listen to me, okay? Listen to my voice, and… listen to me speak, until it’s quiet again.”

Outside, the sun made its slow ascent into the sky, breaking above the clouds and warming the kitchen. A series of helicopters buzzed below, conducting drills for the final day of celebrations. Korra never stopped speaking, whispering words of reassurance until Asami’s breathing evened out. Only then did she give a soft nod to Korra.

“I d-don’t know,” Asami managed meekly, her voice breaking. “I don’t know… I don’t know how m-my father’s going to… what he’s going to…”

Korra shook her head. “He’ll understand.”

Asami wasn’t so sure.

It was as if Korra sensed the uncertainty as it precipitated, gently placing a hand on Asami’s naked shoulder.

Asami shuddered against the touch of skin, warmth spreading through her.
“My parents would still like to talk - to both of us.” Korra said hesitantly. “This morning, at tea. They’ll be understanding, but I… I get it, if you’d rather not.”

Asami felt her jaw tighten. She could feel the air in her chest settle, heavy and dense. She sat still, feeling as if they slightest movement would bring the nausea back. She closed her eyes, focusing on nothing more than the warmth of Korra’s hand on her shoulder, and spoke only when she was sure her voice would be steady.

“What do they want to talk about?”

Korra gave a reassuring smile.

“About us. About… about where we’re going with this. If we’re going with this.” Korra settled into the seat beside Asami, her hand running a gentle touch along Asami’s leg. “But don’t feel pressured, or anything. I can tell them that you’re busy, or that we can reschedule, or-”

“No, I’ll meet them.” Asami sighed, resolute. After a moment, she gave a weak, shaky chuckle. “Maybe… maybe my father will be there too.”

Korra nodded. “Maybe.”

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10:12 AM, MAIN EVENT HALL, SATO TOWER ONE, THE FINAL DAY OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

He wasn’t.

Asami glanced around the scarcely populated event hall. In reality, there were still dozens crowding the ornate dining tables, but the hall had been constructed to house hundreds. The event planners had packed even more greenery between the tables and against the walls, dividing groups and creating private booths flanked by ferns and colorful arrangements. In fact, there was so much live decoration in the room that Asami could see one or two of her gardeners present at the event, tending to the plants to ensure that every petal and leaf remained immaculate. The concert band had been reduced to a few strings and brass, but even with their limited numbers they managed to fill the hall with a soothing melody.

The rumble of conversation still floated over the room, now more jovial, more relaxed. Finally, the summit was ending, and diplomat and representative alike sat in meditative limbo, reflecting over their work done in Republic City, eager to enjoy the last moments of peace before they returned to their intimidating workloads back home.

Asami shifted uneasily in her seat, toying with the pearls she wore around her neck. They felt uncomfortably heavy against her collarbone. She glanced to the vacant spot beside her – where her father would normally sit. One of his aides had given the table Hiroshi’s express apologies, stating a sudden meeting had seized his presence. The other board members sitting at their table had nodded their acknowledgement in unison, but Asami had lowered her gaze, her stomach twisting uneasily.

She wished Korra were sitting on her other side, instead of the chief representative of their legal team. The rest of the board members at the table were discussing something uninteresting between themselves, and it took every ounce of Asami’s strength not to search for Korra in the sea of flowers and the elite.
They had arrived separately, with Korra entering with her parents and Asami entering some time later. Apart from the occasional wayward glance, they had seemed to evade unwanted attention or persecuting gazes, but if it meant that Asami could be sitting beside Korra right now, she would have proclaimed it to the whole city.

Which they had practically done already, apparently.

It was only after when the initial formalities had ended, and a speech delivered on behalf of Hiroshi by their hotel manager, that the room seemed to come alive. Guests rose from their tables and began filtering between the aisles to mingle, sharing a drink in conversation by the windows or against the assortments instead of seated around their tables. Board members requested leave from Asami to join the pockets of conversation or to resume their duties, and one by one Asami let them go. It was only when their chief of staff left, and Asami found herself sitting alone, that she felt a hand clasp over her shoulder.

“Hey,” Korra said, sliding into Hiroshi’s empty seat beside her. “Sorry your father couldn’t be here.”

Asami shook her head. “It’s okay.”

_Somehow I knew already._

Korra nodded, glancing around to check if their proximity had gained notice, but nobody seemed to pay them any attention. Perhaps the majority demographic in the room didn't read tabloids, or simply didn't care for them. These were the people that dealt with entire nations, after all.

What were two people in love, compared to the lives of billions?

“Hey, c’mon,” Korra said, pulling Asami to her feet. “Are you ready?”

Asami took a deep breath, smoothing out the creases of her dress. She exhaled, eyes scanning the room for a glimpse of Korra’s table, of her parents.

“Yeah, I think so.”

Korra’s eyes scanned her expression. “Are you sure?” She said, her hand wavering close to Asami’s arm. “If you don’t want to .”

“No,” Asami said firmly. “I want to meet them.”

Korra nodded with a reassuring smile.

As it turned out, Korra had been sat about three tables away from Asami’s, but the decoration and layout of the room had made it seem much further. That, and the fact that each step Asami took felt like steps of weighted lead, each washing a fresh wave of nausea over her that left her light-headed and dizzy.

It wasn’t until she almost walked straight into Korra that she realized they had reached their table.

Korra’s parents sat entertaining other members from the Eastern Kingdoms and the Western Empire. Her father was polishing off a hilarious anecdote, judging from the roaring laughter he received. Beside him, Korra’s mother was shaking her head and rolling her eyes, but afterwards glanced over at her partner with all the adoration in the world, and followed with an addendum that drew a blush from Korra’s father, and an even louder round of laughter from the crowd.

When his eyes fell on Korra and Asami, Korra’s father smiled warmly.
“Forgive me,” Tonraq said, clearing his throat. “We’ll be needing the table to speak with my daughter, and our generous host. There will be another time for, ah - for stories, I’m sure.”

The guests filed out seat by seat, some bowing towards Korra’s parents, others giving a short nod to Korra and Asami, and others simply passing a sideways glance towards the two standing, waiting for the others to leave.

When all was empty, Tonraq gestured to two seats that opposite them.

“Asami,” Senna smiled warmly over an ornate cup of tea. “Each time we meet, you become even more radiant than the last.”


Words hitched in her throat. She didn’t know what to expect, and her composure seemed to be making it painfully obvious.

“Korra has been glowing in her commendations of our hosts during our stay, you know,” Tonraq chortled, picking a few grapes from a vine on his plate. “And - well, I suppose, now we know why.”

Korra grinned into her lap, nodding. Asami glanced over at her, sitting by her side, and for a moment she could hold it no longer.

“I’m sorry,” Asami blurted out. “Sorry - sorry that you had to find out this way.”

“Oh,” Senna laughed, waving her hand dismissively. “We forget sometimes how young you two are, given the weight that you carry. Delegates and representatives, you’re - well, you’re not children -”

“One of them is.” Tonraq pointed out, fishing a teacake from a platter in the centre. “One of them is indeed our child.”

“You know what I mean.” Senna smirked.

“I do,” Tonraq said, resting his elbows on the table. “You’re young, and the world still has a lot to teach you, and you still have a lot to learn from the world.”

Asami furrowed her brow. “I’m sorry, you - I don’t think I quite, erm… I don’t think I follow.”

Senna snorted. “My husband hasn’t quite learned that being old doesn’t make you wise.”

Korra laughed, and Tonraq flushed pink, clearing his throat as a string of excuses and teacake crumbles tumbled from his mouth.

Senna raised her hand to pause him. “Asami, Korra may not seem it, but she has a soft heart -”

Asami glanced over to Korra briefly, her cheeks pink. Korra was smiling to herself, her gaze lowered but her eyes glassy and distant, as if she were reliving a faint but pleasant memory.

“Oh I know. I really do.

“- And we’ve heard all she has to say about you. Now, we want to hear what you have to say.”

Tonraq leaned closer over the table. “What are your plans for our daughter?”

Korra rolled her eyes, drawn from her reverie, a lopsided smirk hanging coy and amused. “Dad -”
“No, no,” Tonraq shook his head. “I want to hear it! Really!”

Asami could feel Korra’s eyes watching her thoroughly. She reached over almost instinctively, her hand finding Korra with ease.

“I-I think… I…”

Asami took a deep breath, holding it tight and painful in effort to quiet her racing heart. Korra’s hand squeezed against hers.

“I love her. Really, I really do.”

Asami wasn’t quite sure what the immediate reaction from Korra’s parents were. Her vision blurred slightly, and she found herself dabbing at her eyes, holding back a sniffle. All she could focus on was the warmth of Korra beside her, and the gentle touch of her skin.

“Well,” Tonraq’s voice came hoarse, as if he himself were choking back a sob. “I’m glad - glad that we got something out of this ridiculous summit.”

And just like that, any tension that may have existed, whether real or imagined, had vanished. They spoke of length in comfort; of Korra and Asami and their visit to the City, of the celebrations and many events that they had enjoyed over the week. Korra’s mother had particularly enjoyed the exhibition matches put on by the international teams, though to Asami’s great confusion, Korra’s father outright denied any of them happening. It was only later that Korra told Asami that her father’s own team had suffered a disastrous loss at the hands of her Uncle's team from the north.

Their conversation finally lulled as cakes and pastries were being circulated for the fourth time. They watched the band play out their finale as the waiting staff made their final rotations; the two groups seemed to almost coordinate their tones and movements. As they finished with a flourish, they bowed low to generous applause, and they themselves seemed relieved that the week was drawing to a close. Asami could only imagine the sort of blisters and sore throats they’d have to deal with after a week of performances.

“Ah, I suppose we best move onto the next finale,” Senna said, pushing aside a half-eaten tart and rising to her feet. Others seemed to have the same idea - it was almost as if the band were playing them out individually.

“Wait,” Tonraq said as they began to head to the door. “I’d like to speak to Asami for a moment,” He turned to Asami, searching for hesitancy. “Privately, if that’s alright?”

“What - dad, wait -” Korra began.

Asami glanced between Korra and Tonraq. “It’s okay,” She said, nodding to Korra. “Of course.”

Senna smiled, taking Korra by the arm. “Come, we’ll wait outside.”

Tonraq led Asami to one of the hall windows - a single giant pane of glass some twenty feet high. He yawned, stretching wide before tucking his thick arms behind his back to gaze down at the street below.

“A vibrant city - but I hope you don’t mind me saying that, personally, I find it all just a bit too chaotic.

Asami sighed, nodding knowingly. “I get that. Believe me, I do.”
Tonraq grimaced. “And I do believe you. You of all people must understand how frantic things must get here. Everyone’s so busy these days, jumping from venue to venue, that they think they don’t even have the time to consider the things that really matter, that are really important to them.”

Asami watched as a parade snaked its way along one of Republic City’s many veins, with colourful floats driving slowly amongst the crowds, as hundreds of balloons bobbed their way down main streets.

“But they do care, even if it might seem otherwise.” Tonraq continued. “It just may be that… at the time, they’re looking at things too closely, and just… perhaps they need to step back and see the bigger picture. To see things - as they are, as others see it. Maybe that is the way towards empathy, don’t you think?”

“I suppose so.” Asami remarked.

Tonraq paused, turning to gauge the expression on Asami’s face. He sighed, crossing his arms across his broad chest.

“Your father must be a very busy man indeed.” He said slowly. “I was expecting to see him here.”

Asami nodded, her mind distant. “He… He had a meeting to attend. Urgent, they said.”

“Urgent. Urgent, of course.” Tonraq took a deep breath. “Asami, I’m not sure - it may be… hard to speak to your father about these things. I’ll not be the first to claim to know what Hiroshi thinks. But regardless… well, I suppose for both of you, you ought to speak to him.”

Asami clenched her jaw, brow furrowing indignantly. She wouldn’t let herself cry now.

“I know. I… I will.”

Tonraq nodded slowly.

“Korra should come with you. I think… I think that would be a good idea.”

Asami nodded quietly. She never took her eyes off the city.

“Well, I’m sure we’ve kept them long enough, don’t you think?” He said, turning to the door.

Asami didn’t feel the words tumbling from her lips, but she was glad that they did.

“Thank you,” She coughed. “For - for…”

Tonraq smiled warmly, nodding. She didn’t need to say anything else.

Asami would save those words.

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2:43 PM, THE HUMMINGBIRD LOUNGE, THE FINAL DAY OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

“Are you sure?” Korra said, her voice unsure and wary. Their driver rounded a corner slowly, cautious of any over-eager celebrators accidentally stepping into the alleyway.
Through tinted windows, Asami watched smiling families as they marched along the street, waving flags and reveling in the celebrations. She fidgeted against the door handle with her free hand.

“I’m sure.” Asami said, gazing up at the building beside them. “I’m not going to hide. I’m not going to be ashamed of this like the media wants me to be, like - like,” She paused, clenching her jaw. “My father will understand, whether he wants to or not.”

Korra watched with worried eyes, her hand in Asami’s resting on the seat between them.

Asami wanted to be strong, to exude the calm and cool and the stalwart confidence that a Sato ought to be known for. But it was almost through a daze that she drifted from the car and into the building, gliding up the stairs, a ghost as she waited in the elevator to rise, and as she was greeted by the door manager.

“Ah, Ms Sato. We are honoured to -”

Asami silenced him with a curt gesture. "My father. Where is he?"

The manager bowed low. “On the balcony, Miss.”

“Thank you.”

The walls were made to be as soundproof as they possibly could, with lights set into the floors rather than the ceiling, giving the establishment an almost otherworldly atmosphere. It was as if time were a foreign concept in these halls, with slabs of marble serving as tables, elaborate and raw in their own ways, and a bar that ran from one long end of the establishment, all the way to the other, flecked with gold and silver. Pockets of elite that even Asami didn’t recognize dotted the open-plan area, but most of the guests were positioned on the balcony as the manager described, watching the festivities play out below.

The lounge was a favourite of Hiroshi’s. He knew the staff well, and would bring all of his guests here at least once. They pampered them here, offering exuberant liquors and priceless views of the city’s many events, as the balcony sat right over one of the main street's broadest sections.

“So,” Korra said, falling in beside Asami. “What’s the plan?”

Asami glanced away from the people standing on the balcony to survey the room.

“Wait in there,” She said, pointing to a darkened private parlour at the end of the lounge. “I’ll bring him over.”

Korra nodded, and Asami took a deep breath, before walking over to the balcony doors and stepping through.

Outside, guests sat in raucous laughter and conversation, bathed by the din of the crowd below. Across the street, residents of the high-rise apartments hung over the balcony railings, craning their necks to spot each and every sight there was to see in the streets below. Confetti and colour drifted above the crowds, past the windows and balconies. Asami watched as a mother plucked a wayward balloon out of the air, handing it to her daughter who clung to her leg for dear life, hesitantly peaking over the ledge to the cacophony below. Atop the balcony where Asami stood, most of the members were eagerly perched against the railings themselves, glasses in hand and enjoying the parade.

To the side, a smaller table sat beside the crowd, where bottles flowed freely. That table was where Asami found Hiroshi, sitting with his back towards the door.
“Father,” The word falls from Asami's mouth as she reaches him. Her voice cracks slightly, and is far too soft for Hiroshi to hear above the noise around them. She pauses, and the hesitation is almost enough for her to second-guess herself, before she urges her voice to return.

Asami repeats herself, but louder. “Father.”

Hiroshi turns from his guests. “Hm? Yes, what - Asami?” His eyes betray no emotion, but the hesitation that follows her name speaks leagues. “What is it?”

Asami doesn’t pull her gaze away from her father’s. She knows that if she turns now, she’ll never come back to this moment. Instead, she leans in closer to speak into his ear.

“May I speak to you in private? I have something important I’d like to discuss.”

As Asami stands back up, Hiroshi gaze follows her silently. His face remains stoic, quiet and contemplative, eyes undisturbed with all the tranquillity of a still lake. A second later, he turns back to his guests, and rises.

"To the summit!” He roars, raising his glass. All around him, the same roars and glasses rise, but no eyes seem to follow Hiroshi as he turns to leave, nor Asami as they step back inside the lounge. Inside, the echo of celebration follows them, as Asami quietly leads her father to the private parlour where Korra awaited them, guided by the soft glow of light breaching from underneath a thin panel door. She waves him inside, sliding it shut behind them.

It was a quiet room, meant for private meals and meetings with smaller groups. Along the wall was a small bar, still brimming with more bottles than Asami could count, and no doubt twice as old as Asami as well. A circular table sat in the centre, furnished and decorated with all the pieces of cutlery that one could ever need, draped in a silken table sheet and a vase of white roses. A ring of six ornate chairs circled the table, two of which were pulled from their spots at the table to face each other.

Korra stood behind one of them.

“Please, Mr Sato.” Korra said respectfully, bowing. “Have a seat.”

Hiroshi tiled his head sightly, his eyes narrowing behind thin, half-moon glasses. His glance flickers to Asami, his jaw tense, uncertainty etched into the many lines that time had carved into his skin. Asami places a reassuring hand on Hiroshi's shoulder, gesturing to a chair, but Hiroshi's body seems no less tense beneath the touch, but he takes his seat, muttering a quiet thanks. He stares straight ahead, even as Asami takes the seat opposite him, with Korra standing behind her, hands resting on the back of her chair.

There was silence, or as much as could be expected in a private room so close to the celebrations. Despite the walls, the hum of revelry rumbled in the background.

Asami's mouth was dry.

“Father,” She spoke quietly, her jaw clenching in nervous habit. She chewed her words, struggling to continue. “I…”

Asami sighed, glancing away from her father to eye the glimmer dancing along the silverware. She raised a hand to tuck her hair behind an ear, as she often did in her workshop, as she often did during meetings.

She felt Korra’s hand brush against her side, slipping seamlessly into her palm from where she stood behind her. She could see the merest suggestion of a flicker across Hiroshi’s face for a second, before
it returned to a stoic façade.

“We wanted to explain something to you, father.” Asami said, pushing away the lump in her throat. “You may have - *must* have seen the headlines by now. Or perhaps you may have been otherwise… informed. It is not how I would have intended for this to be known, had I any say in the matter.”

Asami could see the corners of Hiroshi’s mouth twitching, the edges of his jaw clenching softly, as hers did when hesitant. But otherwise, he remained silent - So Asami pushed on.

“If we had a more… convenient opportunity to speak about this earlier, we would have. Perhaps… Perhaps we were wrestling with the thought ourselves.”

Asami felt Korra’s hand twitch in hers, sliding from her fingers to rest reassuringly upon Asami’s shoulder.

“We…” Asami said slowly. She could feel her heart thumping in her chest, heavy and rapid beats. “Whatever you have heard, or read, or been told, father - it’s true.” She glanced up at Korra standing behind her, and flashed her a meek smile. Korra returned with a warm look that reached all the way to her ice-blue eyes. “It’s all true. We love each other.”

Asami felt the words tumble from her mouth with little grace; Instead, they fell with emotion, with fervent passion, like the purest confession, and at once her heart soared with the echo in her mind.

*We love each other.*

“I hope you can understand,” Korra said, her voice low, but clear. “I do love her. I’ve never doubted it for a second.”

Asami turned, almost afraid to look at her father. Instead, she reached for Korra’s hand once again, drawing it towards her to place a soft kiss against Korra’s knuckles.

When Hiroshi spoke, it was quiet - quieter than both Korra and Asami. It was steady, yet devoid.

“I’ve dismissed this already.”

His voice shook Asami,rumbling like distant thunder.

“Conjecture. You two have spent so much time together - people’s imaginations are simply… running wild.”

“No, father it’s -” Asami wanted to say a thousand more things, but when her eyes met Hiroshi’s, her words died again on her lips.

His gaze didn’t meet Asami’s. It didn’t meet Korras. He stared straight ahead, unflinching and solemn, as if looking through the people who were sitting before him, as if they were glass. His jaw was clenched, and hands balled into fists upon his knees.

“... it’s… it’s true.” Asami said, pleadingly.

Hiroshi said nothing more. Instead, he turned his gaze to the door, an indiscernible look upon his face. The moment seemed to hang in the air; Asami, silent as she waited for her father to say something, *do* something, *anything* in response. Instead he sat quietly, staring a burning glare into the door that led to the outside world.

 Eventually, Hiroshi closed his eyes, and for a moment it was as if he had come to a decision.
Asami leaned forward slightly, hand raised, reaching. She searched for the words to say, to speak, to let her father know that it was true, that it was all true, that it was real and it made her feel *alive* -

Suddenly, Hiroshi stood. He rose quickly, and walked to the door.

He didn’t turn his gaze once to Asami, or to Korra.

“Father!” Asami blurted out. “Father, I-I’m… I... “

Hiroshi paused, hand resting upon the door panel, back towards Asami. Asami saw the small chance she had.

“Please…” She begged. “I… I *need* you to understand.”

She could feel Korra’s grip tighten around her shoulder, her body tense beside her own. She could feel her hands sweating, her eyes misting, her heart beating a terror-filled cacophony as she choked against the words caught in her throat.

Hiroshi said nothing, and as if he had heard nothing, he pushed aside the door, and disappeared back into the crowd.

Inside the private room, Korra knelt down beside Asami to comfort her. Her face spoke not of anger, but of concern.

“It’s okay. It’s - it'll be okay. He’ll understand. He has to.”

Asami said nothing.

*I will not cry.*

*I will not let this break me.*

She closed her eyes, letting slip a shaky sigh, and a shuddering gasp.

************ 4:59PM, REPUBLIC CITY BAY SIDE EVENT PROMENADE, THE FINAL DAY OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT. ************

“We don’t have to be here.”

“We do. You told Kuvira you would be here.”

“You don’t -”

“Well, I am. I know I don’t have to be, but I'm here anyway.”

“... Thank you.”

“It’s okay. It’s not like I -”

“Erm, Miss Sato?”

Asami glanced up from where she leaned against the barricade. “Yes?”
“Apologies for interrupting.” The aide bowed low. “We’d just like to run a few things by you - before the event begins....”

Korra watched as Asami stepped away to discuss the logistics of the event. She was right; Asami didn’t need to be here. Sato Industries was only loaning a handful of staff, and at this stage they knew the protocols through and through.

And yet, most still seemed to seek out Asami for reassurance. To make sure that the security were properly accounted for, to ensure all the equipment and technology were up to scratch, to ensure everyone knew the evacuation routes.

To be reaffirmed, to have that peace of mind. She was their safety net.

Korra grimaced, the uneasy sensation in her stomach dissipating for a brief moment. So many people looked to her for guidance, while Korra only wanted to give her peace.

Peace of mind, peace of heart.

They had arrived together at the bay side promenade at a private entrance. The pavilions hadn’t been necessary as the afternoon sun hung low in the sky, its dappled light dancing over the rippling waters of the bay, and leaving the rest of the day with a breeze that came with the changing seasons, sweeping in from the harbour and over the land, filling the air with a tinge of salt and spray. As it was a much larger organized event, the media had been corralled at the main entrance of the premises instead, affording the guests and staff a modicum of privacy in preparation, as the handful of other speakers organized their assistants and ran the last few sound-checks before unleashing the press.

Korra sighed, resting her elbows against the barricade as she gazed out across the harbour, watching ships drift along the horizon.

The meeting with Hiroshi hadn’t gone as smoothly as she had hoped. In fact, Korra felt a twinge of guilt in asking Asami to meet her own parents. It wasn’t fair on Asami.

Korra felt helpless. She wanted to take her away, to shower Asami in affection, but she knew that wouldn’t give her peace she needed. Korra felt a knot burn a sickening weight in her stomach, twisting and restless. She glanced over again to Asami, staunch and commanding. Though Asami did well to maintain composure despite the tempest within her, Korra’s composure was much less subtle.

“I hope you haven’t had a change of heart, Korra.”

Kuvira’s voice crackled through her clouds, like thunder and lightning breaching the sky. Korra jumped at the voice; Kuvira was dressed in her complete military regalia - an impressive sight for anyone to behold, especially up close.

“Oh - Kuvira.” Korra said, clearing her throat. "No, of course not. Why do you ask?”

Kuvira glanced over to where Asami was standing, then back to Korra.

“You seem bothered. Something weighing on your mind?”

Yes. “No,” Korra sighed. “Just...”

Kuvira furrowed her brow, sharp eyes carrying surprising concern. She removed her cap, carefully as not to disturb the tight bun underneath, and tucked it under her arm as she too leaned against the barricade overlooking the harbour.
“The tabloids?”

Korra let out an exasperated sigh. “The tabloids are nothing. It’s… It’s the family.”

“Ah.” Kuvira muttered, shifting uneasily. “I suppose I shouldn’t be surprised. Hiroshi Sato is… surprisingly traditional for a man leading a company called Future Industries.”

Korra snorted. “Yeah. Ironic.”

Kuvira glanced over to Korra, her fierce brow furrowed in a look of compassion.

“I trust your parents were more receptive?”

Korra raised a brow, still staring out into the harbour. “How do you figure?”

Kuvira shrugged. “The Southern Tribes were travellers. They sought new lands, new opportunities. Your culture is made up of bits of everything they picked up along the way, the same as your faith - and even your law, to some degree. Your ancestors settled in tundra; they probably had more to worry about than who loved whom.”

“You’re stereotyping.”

“Maybe, but tell me I’m wrong.” Kuvira paused for a moment, as if mulling over a heavy thought, before turning towards Korra, speaking quieter. “Take a guess how my family took my news.”

Korra shifted uneasily. "Listen, Kuvira, I appreciate -"

"Go ahead, Korra." Kuvira interjected.

Korra sighed. “Eastern Kingdoms; Traditional, hard-headed, stubborn. Not well, I’m guessing?”

Kuvira snorted. “My mother - my adoptive mother, she shrugged it off. Surprisingly level-headed reaction, considering she caught me in bed with one of her guard. My aunt, on the other hand, she was furious. Caused a real scene. She was staying with us at the time, and people said she tore up the grounds. She never attacked me though; I was just barely an adult. But she did turn away from me, from my training, and from me as a person. It hurt of course. I had looked up to that woman. I wanted to follow in her footsteps, too.”

Korra felt her stomach roll. “What happened?”

Kuvira chuckled, a low and deep rumble. “My aunt and my mother had a huge argument about it. They said that when the two sisters of Zaofu argued, the whole plateau would rock. In the end, they settled it the only way they knew how; they got their mother involved. They asked her what she thought about me, about my… situation.”

Korra turned, a puzzled look on her face.

“And what did she say?”

Kuvira smirked. “I believe her exact words were, ‘Who gives a fuck?’ That’s what my mother told me, anyway. I imagine she must have elaborated, since my aunt came to apologize - well, insofar that she looked ashamed and said she didn’t have a reason to be so upset.”

Kuvira turned to Korra, shaking her head. “Traditional, yes. Hard-headed - absolutely. But stubborn, that’s definitely what we are above all else, and unflinching to boot. That’s what defines my people, but look where I want to go. I want to change the future.
By the way, don’t let that story sully any image of my grandmother that you might hold. She wasn’t being indifferent - in their own ways, they all cared about who I was, and who I wanted to be. But what she meant was that my aunt, she didn’t have a reason to hate who I was just because it wasn’t what she expected.

But Sato,” Kuvira gestured over to where Asami stood by the security booth, debriefing the security chiefs. "Her people are passionate and honorable - some might even say to a fault. But they treasure family above all else. Hiroshi might think that this - this flies in the face of that philosophy, but he’ll sooner or later realize that she is still his family, and nothing can change that.”

Kuvira’s words echoed in Korra’s mind as she stared off into the distance, her words singing a deep resonance within her. The people surrounding Asami dissipated, and hurried to their respective posts. Asami sighed comfortably, and glanced over, meeting Korra’s eyes with a soft smile; one that didn’t quite reach her eyes, that still spoke a subtle pain, of longing behind a confident visage.

Korra felt a quiet shiver as she let go a heavy sigh.

“Kuvira,” Asami smiled in greeting as she returned to the railing. “Good to see you; you look good in your regalia.”

Kuvira nodded a thanks, pressing her gauntlet against her breastplate in formal salute.

“What were you two talking about?” Asami said, glancing between them.

Kuvira turned, placing her cap back upon her head. “Oh, tradition, culture. The world, the provinces, the people - that sort of thing.”

“Sounds taxing.” Asami smirked. “But I guess you’ll have to know all these things for the work you two will be doing.”

“Yeah.” Korra said quietly. She hadn’t taken her eyes off Asami since she had returned. There was an immaculate softness in the way she looked, a fragility that nonetheless spoke unforeseen strength, like stained glass panoramas that held the cathedral walls against the heavens. Kuvira passed a sharp smile between the two of them, and gave them leave as her entourage guided her behind the stage.

“Are we starting soon?” Korra said, drawn from her reverie by the sudden hustle that seemed to surround them.

“Soon,” Asami said, biting her lip softly, a distraction lingering in the corner of her mind. “Hey, what did you two really talk about?”

“You.” Korra said, without hesitation, her eyes darting to meet Asami’s once again. “We talked… about you. About us. About… About your father.”

Asami’s expression slipped for a moment. “Oh.”

Korra sighed. “I’m - I’m sorry, Asami. I’m sorry about everything.”

Asami shook her head solemnly. “It’s not your fault. He’ll come around eventually.”

Korra felt her hand reach for Asami’s slipping her fingers into her palm.

Through gaps in the partition, they could see the figure of assistants and staff racing back and forth, struggling to funnel the tide of press floating into the seats laid out for them and make any finishing touches to the programme to ensure all ran smoothly. From where they stood in the preparation area,
they could already see the camera flashes, and hear the steady drone of noise and chatter floating from the other side.

“I just wish there was something I could do.” Korra said, glancing down at their entwined hands.

Asami sighed quietly, giving Korra’s hands a soft squeeze. “I… I was thinking about that, actually. There’s still someone I’d like you to meet, if that’s alright with you?”

“Yeah,” Korra said, pushing off the barricade. “Yeah, of course. Absolutely. Who is it?”

Asami’s smile was contemplative, almost serene. Her eyes seemed to twinkle as she spoke.

“You’ll see. I’ll take you to see her after this, okay?”

Korra nodded, eyes widening as Asami drew her close to place a brief, chaste kiss upon her lips. She returned the touch without so much as a second thought.

“We’ll be okay, Korra.” Asami whispered, as she drew back.

“I believe you.”

The closing ceremony seemed to go as well as any of the other events had gone. Hiroshi arrived seconds after Raiko’s own speech, and moments before he was to board the stage himself. Neither he nor Asami glanced in each other’s directions as Hiroshi gave his words to the people.

Korra stood beside Kuvira, occasionally turning her gaze to gauge Asami’s expression, but she stood silent and strong beside her father, who seemed to mimic her posture. She knew that at least one of the hundreds of cameras flashing in her direction would catch her staring, but she didn’t care.

She needed to.

When it was Kuvira's turn to speak, a hush fell quickly over the crowd, but the flashes did not cease. Her voice echoed like thunder across the bay, her words heavy and strong. She seemed a born leader, speaking of her campaign and the dozens who had rallied to her cause, pledging their support. Eastern Kingdom aides brought a large ornamental scroll before them, and one by one delegates and representatives stepped forward to sign their names upon the register, to signify their cooperation with Kuvira.

When it came time to announce their partnership, Korra stepped forward, doused in the applause of the hundreds before and beside her. Her parents stood to the other side of the crowded platform, filled now with the many who would be the pioneers of the future, the many who would sign upon the symbolic register that laid before them as she did. In her searching, she saw Kuvira applauding proudly, and Asami with a broad smile upon her face.

And Hiroshi, staring off to the side, hands held squarely behind his back.

As soon as they were able, almost immediately as the first set of feet left the stage, Hiroshi disappeared into the crowd. Following the end of the event, Korra spoke first with her mother and father.

“I’ll be with Asami,” Korra said, after all the papers had been signed. They nodded, and departed with their own people.

“Hey,” Asami said, finding Korra moments later amongst the departures. “Are you ready to go?”
Korra glanced over Asami’s shoulder, seeing Kuvira speaking to a group of elderly delegates. Kuvira’s eyes met Korra’s, as if she had felt her gaze, and offered a curt nod and a shadow of a smile.

*Treasure family above all else.*

“Yeah.” Korra said, taking Asami’s hand. “Where are we going?”
6:20 PM, SATO ESTATE GARDENS, THE FINAL DAY OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

In stark comparison to the rest of Republic City, the gardens sat tranquil and verdant, immaculately kept and quiet. It was obvious that the groundskeepers had been busy all year fostering the thriving plant-life, and a few were even tending to the groves as Asami guided Korra along the white pebbled paths.

To say that the Sato Private Grounds were extravagant would be putting it lightly. Guests to the gardens could seemingly glance in any direction, and at once spot half a dozen different water features. Bushes and hedges burst with vibrant colour, with roses and tulips of every shade from white, to bright sky blue, to deep, dark red. Magnolias and orchids and lavenders and a hundred thousand more that couldn't be possibly named lined their each step, and at least three different gazebos were in a few minutes walking distance between each other, each with their own unique style, shape, and design.

And in the centre of it all was a great lake, rippling against a gentle afternoon breeze. Swans drifted elegantly around the small rocky island in the middle, connected by a single wooden bridge painted red and ornate. Atop the island was a small pagoda, smaller and more private than some of the gazebos that sat on the outer rings but no less distinct, open from all sides so the breeze could sweep through its heavy columns.

The lake glowed golden, swallowing the setting sun in soft waves that lapped against the shoreline. They walked silently but for the haughty creaking of aged wood underfoot, in dire need of a new coat of paint as red flakes peeled in contempt of the heat.

Korra watched Asami’s stride hesitantly. Asami had remained quiet while passing through the garden, saying little more than “We’re here” when they stepped through the entrance. For a while, Korra had been too lost among the roses to even notice, but now her worry had crept up on her. She knew it had to be more than simple peaceful contemplation.

Korra fell in beside Asami, weaving their fingers together. Asami jumped at the touch, a sharp breath pausing her in her step, as if suddenly drawn from a deep, serene thought. She glanced at Korra, smiling warmly and offering a soft squeeze before taking a deep breath as they continued to the centre island, hand in hand.

They paused as they reached the rocky outcropping, stepping off the bridge and into the edge of the pagoda’s shadow. The structure was hollow and didn’t contain any higher levels; Instead, thick red beams formed a lattice that rose up within the pagoda, reaching towards the sky. Directly beneath the apex of the hollow tower, a large chunk of marble sat in the centre of the floor, idle and inconspicuous.

Korra glanced around, searching for another. “I guess they’re not here yet?” Korra said, breaking the silence that had settled since they arrived.

Asami paused for a second, before leading Korra to the centre.
“No, she’s… she’s been waiting for a long time.”

As they stepped closer, Korra could see that a surface had been cut into the rock, polished to a mirror sheen. Flat and smooth, save for the deep lines that had been carefully engraved upon its surface. Korra's eyes widened as she read the words.

Here lies Yasuko Sato.
Paragon of her time.
Taken too soon.
The world grows darker with her passing.
And her light will never be forgotten.

The marble felt cold beneath Korra’s fingers. “Asami,” She croaked. “This… t-this is -”

Asami nodded. “Korra, this is my mother.”

She drew Korra down to kneel on cushioned blocks that sat before the marble, never once letting go of Korra’s hand.

Asami closed her eyes. “Mother,” She whispered. “I’m - I’m sorry I haven’t come to visit you lately. I… we’ve been busy. This is Korra. I think…”

She paused, her voice wavering for a moment. Korra could feel Asami’s hand shaking in hers. There was a moment of silence, when all they could hear was the sound of the wooden beams creaking in the wind and the soft lapping of waves against the stones, before Asami cleared her throat, and continued.

“She and I; we - we love each other, mother. Very much.” Asami said, her voice hitching momentarily. “I used to be... afraid. Afraid of saying it - of what it meant. But now, I… I don’t think I could ever get tired of saying it. Or of hearing it. I try to say it to Korra as often as I can. She’s clever, and kind, and caring - and she’s good to me. I think you would have liked her.”

Korra smiled, feeling a tear run down her cheek. She sniffled, rubbing at her eyes with the back of her free hand.

“Do you want to say something?” Asami whispered.

Korra took a shuddering sigh, and pondered.

“I… was afraid too.” Korra began slowly, softly at first, finding and losing the words that tumbled around in her mind. “At first. Nervous, like I’d never been before. But your daughter - she makes me strong. No - she reminds me that I’m strong. It’s what makes it so easy - easy, to love her - for us to be in love. We make each other better, braver. Maybe because we… we know, it’s going to be hard. That we’re going to face a lot of tough times - some sooner than we’d like. But I think… that we’re going to be just fine, as long as we have each other.

I love her.” Korra whispered, through a breathless chuckle, as if awed by her own words. “If I can promise you anything, it’s that I do, with every part of my being.”

Cicadas buzzed against the ancient columns that stood beside them as their only company, as the
restless waves of the lake rustled against the shrubs and reed along the bank. Ghostly winds whistled through the beams, brushing against them, caressing them in their quiet prayers. Somewhere in the distance, a groundskeeper cut away at weeds, humming a familiar tune in his ear. Swans hungrily snatched up their feed, tossed idly by another of the caretakers sitting upon the lakeside pagoda, catching her breath as she admired the setting sun. The garden walls were far enough from the centre that one could forget they were nestled in the middle of the world’s capital. But every now and then the thrumming sound of traffic would waft over the flowerbeds, faint but distinct.

Korra felt Asami’s hand rise, pulling her up. She blinked away the tears, clearing her throat as she dabbed at the corners of her eyes with the flat of her hand. Her vision swam before her, but before she could say anything more, Asami embraced her, holding her tight, warm and safe.

“Thank you, Korra.”

Korra smiled into Asami’s shoulder, wrapping her arms around Asami’s waist.

“I should thank you, for letting me come here. I can only imagine how important this must be for you.”

Asami smiled at the slab, sniffling slightly.

“It’s what she would have want…”

She paused, glancing over Korra’s shoulder, eyes wide and stricken. Korra could feel the way Asami’s body tensed, and turned sharply, her gaze falling on the figure walking slowly over the ornate bridge, heading towards them.

Hiroshi froze in his step when he saw the two standing beside Yasuko’s memorial. His expression was stoic, jaw clenched and brow furrowed.

But there was something different.

Asami dared not move. Instead, Hiroshi closed the distance, slow and deliberate in his movements, careful as if he were afraid the floor would fall out beneath him at any moment. He paused again when he stepped into the shadow of the pagoda, the light of the setting sun at his back, glancing between them, and then upon the marble slab behind them.

Hiroshi sighed. “Excuse me,” He said quietly. “If I may?”

Korra looked to Asami, who still stood with a look of surprise upon her face, eyes wide and mouth slightly agape. She swallowed heavily, and wordlessly nodded, allowing Korra to pull them to the side.

Hiroshi nodded his thanks, and slowly approached the slab. He sighed again, grunting slightly as he moved to his knees, resting upon the cushions as they had. He took a deep breath, his eyes tracing the etchings in the stone with a forlorn fondness, his aged hands running over smooth stone. After a while, he closed his eyes, and bowed his head.

“My darling Yasuko. Please, I beg of you… Find it within you, to forgive me.”

Asami let go a soft, shuddering breath, her hand clasped over her mouth. Hiroshi continued, his hands balled to fists on his knees, as he bowed forward. “Forgive this old fool, who would consider even for a second turning away from our daughter. Our own child, who we loved - who we still love. Forgive me in my ignorance, that in a moment’s weakness, that such a terrible sin would cross my mind, of a parent disavowing their child.
And if you cannot, then I will spend the rest of my days working for redemption.

I pray - pray that you will give me the strength to never again let my love for Asami falter, so never again shall I cause her to feel fear, or pain, or suffering. I pray for enlightenment, so that I would never again be so intolerant that I could bring my child to tears.

My darling Yasuko, for the love you have gifted me, I have been ungrateful… but I promise to you I will work to be better. As I have loved you, I will love our daughter, and I will continue to do so for as long as I can. Please, forgive me.”

Hiroshi paused in silent prayer, eyes closed for what seemed like an age, before rising to stand. He grunted in his movements, hand resting on the marble for support. Korra never realized Hiroshi’s age, how weary he seemed. She had always thought him to be an icon of power, of strength; now, he seemed almost vulnerable. He seemed fragile, as if deserving of pity. But it wasn’t hers to give.

“Asami?” Hiroshi said quietly, turning to face his daughter. His look was one of guilt, of haunting remorse. “I’m sorry. I beg of you, please forgive me. I… I know I may not deserve it, and if you cannot, then that is my shame to live with, not yours.”

“Father,” Asami said quietly, tears running down her cheeks. “Of course - Of course -”

Asami moved forward, stepping into Hiroshi’s open arms. When they parted, Hiroshi took only a brief moment to dab at his eyes with a handkerchief, before holding out a hand to Korra.

“Korra, I owe you an apology too. You have already shown that you are even more deserving of Asami’s love than I am.”

Korra took the hand, shaking it firmly. Hiroshi offered a warm, welcoming smile.

“Welcome to the family.”

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11:13PM, CROWN PINNACLE BAR, SATO TOWER ONE, THE FINAL DAY OF REPUBLIC CITY SUMMIT

Korra felt restless in her suit, tugging at her cuffs and toying with her tie idly. She glanced around the dimly lit, open-air bar; nobody seemed to be paying her particular attention. They were all wrapped up in their own worlds, basking in each other’s company, gazing out over the city.

It was a stunning view, after all. The city seemed a mosaic of LEDs, each blinking and twinkling in the night, each telling their own private stories. The streets glowed gold, the never-ending traffic trundling sluggishly from corner to corner. Korra sighed, half impatiently, half complacently, and leaned against the railings, feeling the chill of an evening breeze gently cuff her. She snickered to herself, as a gentleman shivered despite his heavy coat at the table beside her. Slowly, she sipped her scotch, and retrieved her phone for the fifth time, scanning the message Asami had sent minutes prior.

“Wait for me at the Crown at 11 when the fireworks are due to start. Wear something nice.”

Korra rolled her eyes and hovered over the call button.

Fuck it.
Asami picked up on the third ring, but Korra was first to speak.

“You’re late.” Korra blurted out, tapping her glass against the side of the railing. She didn’t mean for it to sound accusatory, or anxious. If Asami had picked up on anything in her tone, she kept it to herself.

“How do you figure?” Asami said coyly.

Korra tapped the toe of her leather shoe against the smooth tiles, glancing impatiently around her. Her eyes fell upon a couple; A lady in an ornate dress was sat in the lap of another, sharing a quiet, intimate moment, wrapped up in a single shawl. Korra tore her gaze away from them as they began to feed each other sips of champagne.

“Because I’m here and you’re not.”

“Have the fireworks started?”

“No, but they’re bound to start any moment now -”

“They won’t.”

“What - what do you mean they won’t?”

“Because they won’t start until I tell them to start.”

Korra scoffed. “Right, of course. But you’re still late.”

“No, I’m not, you’re just early.”

“I never come early.”

The sound of Asami’s laugh floated through the phone. “I hope you didn’t call just to make that joke.”

“Of course not -”

“It wasn’t even a good joke.”

“How dare you.”

“Korra -”

“How dare you.”

“Korra, turn around.”

Korra glanced over her shoulder, turning away from the view. Draped in silk and silver, Asami weaved through the crowds, holding her phone aloft.

“About time,” Korra smirked again. “I was beginning to worry.”

“Uh huh,” Asami grinned as she wrapped her arms around Korra’s neck, nuzzling against her nose. "And here I thought I was supposed to be looking out for you?”

“Then you did a terrible job, disappearing on me,” Korra teased. “What sort of entourage ducks out on such short notice?”
Asami hummed. “A bad, horrible, awful one, I guess.” She said, smirking. “But, I was getting something ready.”

Korra glanced up, catching a sinister glint in Asami’s eyes. It was all Asami needed, to catch Korra off guard, to sneak in a soft peck against her lips.

Korra grinned. “Thief. That was your plan all along, huh - stealing kisses.”

“What if I were?” Asami said, her lips curling into a smile. “It’s not like you’d stop me.”

Korra scoffed. “True. And I guess it’s not stealing if I’m giving them away freely.”

They hardly noticed the crowd around them, standing amidst the flock that had descended upon the Sato balcony. Undoubtedly the best location in the city to watch the fireworks, the remaining young elite in the city had swarmed to cash in their favours in order to secure a spot on the much coveted Crown Pinnacle, an open-air bar nestled in the highest lofts of Sato Tower, that sat just a few levels beneath the penthouse suites. Decked in suits and dresses immaculate and displays of jewellery of immeasurable wealth, most were more likely to be focusing their interest on the other attendees of the viewing party, rather than the spectacle of the fireworks themselves.

Korra followed Asami as she wove through the crowds, pulling two flutes of a familiar champagne from a nearby server, making their way along the fringe of the platform, searching for a quieter reprieve. The atmosphere was one of eager anticipation, the air buzzing softly with excitement, no doubt due to equal parts extravagance, opulence, and alcohol; though the slightly diminished oxygen levels possibly played its part as well. Rows of finely trimmed hedges separated the bar and the bundles of party-goers, with incandescent strips running along the floor serving as the only lights, giving the entire platform an eerie glow, as if they were stepping upon the heavens themselves.

They found a smaller, standing table along the edge, with high seats and a perfect view of both the city and the stars. Korra felt herself relax as she leaned against the cold iron railing, chuckling as she surveyed the millions of lights below.

“It’s been one hell of a week, huh?”

A gentle gust shifted the wind, bringing with it once again that same faint chill. Asami stared across the table, resting her chin in one hand, delicately swirling her champagne in the other. It had indeed been a long week, and the moment’s respite that they shared at that moment seemed to let the weight of the world rest and settle upon her shoulders at last, like sediment upon a riverbank.

They could see clearly now. A few days ago, she had thought Korra to be impulsive and impractical, an amusement that didn’t seem to fit into any piece of her life, and yet still something she desperately wanted to be a part of. Days even before that, she hadn’t even been aware of Korra’s existence.

And now she sat opposite her, gazing at this person with all the adoration in the world, slightly breathless and carrying the strangest sensation in her heart. It was an aching, painful love, one that felt so overwhelmingly wholesome that Asami struggled to comprehend it. It frustrated her, that she couldn’t express it as much as she could, emotions bursting at her seam; she wanted to hold Korra tighter than she could possibly imagine, burning like two dying stars that would fuse together and even then that seemed like it would hardly begin to reach any description that would satisfy her. Asami wanted to scream and yell and cry at the thought of her, to split her mind and break her voice because she knew the slightest touch of Korra's skin upon hers would still obliterate her.

Asami was so lost in this thought, she hadn’t even noticed her phone buzzing noisily until Korra pointed it out.
“Unbelievable.” Korra snickered, shaking her head as she sipped her champagne.

Asami flipped her off as she answered her phone. “Yes?”

“We're all set, miss. Ready for your word.”

Asami nodded, glancing up at Korra. “Are you ready?”

“Bring it on.” Korra said, reaching across the table to take Asami’s hand.

Asami smiled warmly, tingling slightly as Korra's thumb stroked the back of her palm. “Go ahead.”

“Understood. Beginning the sequence.”

Korra gazed up, eyes wide with anticipation, her hand unconsciously tight around Asami’s fingers. She jumped when the first flare went up, a sparkler that filled the sky with red and gold, that burst so suddenly that the very air around them seemed to stand still in shock, if only for a moment.

Asami watched the joy wash over Korra’s face, the brilliant cascading colours reflected in her eyes.

“You’re beautiful.” Asami said between explosions and radiant pinwheels. “I feel like I’ve known you forever.”

Korra didn’t turn from the spectacle, but she smiled, her eyes soft and glistening. Asami knew it was enough.

“You know, it was hard - at first?” Korra said softly, as her eyes traced sparklers that soared above them, burning lines across the sky like phoenix fire tearing apart the heavens above. “Republic City takes some… some time, getting used to.”

A crackle ripped across the sky. The air seemed to buzz and prickle as if set alight, and moments later a hundred-thousand glowing embers drifted towards the earth like molten autumn leaves.

Asami cocked her head to the side. “You don’t like it here?”

Korra smiled her crooked smile, brow furrowed, searching for words.

“I love it now - but when I got here? When I arrived at the beginning? I was a million miles from home. I had the weight of - so many lives on my back, and I was expected to put on a smart look and shake some hands, and - represent my people. I felt… rough. Like I was going to crack at any moment.

And then I - I met you.” Korra said tenderly, glancing over at Asami. “You - you made me feel… safe. Like I didn’t have to put up walls just to survive. But at the same time - It was like every moment I spent with you, I could be running at a hundred miles a second and still feel every heartbeat between us.

It was like everything… everything came into focus for me, you know? I’ve found so much purpose since I came here, and I'm thankful - Thankful for all of it. For the city, for all the crazy shit we did, for the stupid summit, for Kuvira’s work and for… for you.

I didn’t realize it at the time, but I know now.” Korra beamed, squeezing Asami’s hand tight. “Being with you… it feels like home.”

Asami could see the lights around them reflected in the glistening tears that welled up in Korra’s eyes. A cacophony of colour and light, of blooming and bursting and brilliant neon spectacles that
Asami drew Korra close, the wetness of her cheeks reaching her before her lips did, as she melted upon the first kiss. Asami could feel Korra smiling into her, her lips parting to utter a shaky, gasping breath that seemed to echo deep within her, and the soft furrowing of Korra’s brow as she hummed a quiet note of satisfaction.

When Asami opened her eyes, she could see the golden fade of the fireworks reflected in a tear running down Korra’s cheek. They held each other, nuzzling into each other’s warmth in a moment of reflection. Asami spoke soft, breaking what silence they had between them.

“There’s still more of the fireworks,” She muttered. “But I really want to show you something.”

Korra smiled, planting a soft peck upon Asami’s cheek.

“Lead the way.”
Korra’s face.

“You seemed to like all the other ones so far.” Asami grinned, letting her lips brush gently against Korra’s. Not quite a kiss, but enough to make Korra’s breath hitch, drawing her forward slightly, only to break apart before she could find a taste.

Korra was still leaning against the elevator wall when they reached their level, and Asami stepped out to open the door.

“Cruel.” Korra snorted, following suit.

Asami laughed, her voice carrying out into the hallway from within the darkened penthouse.

“You have no idea.”

Korra didn’t spend much time idling in the hallway.

Inside, the only lights in the room were hanging in the corners, casting smooth, warm shadows across the décor and high ceilings. The windows were drawn wide, and every now and then blooms of blue and orange, green and red would shimmer and fade, giving the night-veiled room an electric shade. Most of the smaller pieces of furniture had been removed, with the larger articles pushed against the windows and walls, leaving the centre empty save for what looked to be a small installation.

A short, circular mattress sat in the centre that came up to Korra’s knees. Atop it lay a pile of silk sheets, soft and shimmering as the fireworks continued to cascade. In a ring around the mattress stood four photographer’s lamps, and perhaps most intriguingly a standing camera, pointing directly upon the mattress itself.

Korra stepped around the mattress, eyeing it with a grin. “You win,” She said, bending down to examine thick, heavy leather bands attached to the base. “I like this surprise.”

Asami hummed, removing her heels. “I wasn’t sure. Usually it’s something that takes a bit of time to... to work up to.” She paused, arms folded over her stomach, the slightest twitch of uncertainty in her voice. "Of course, if it's not your thing, I completely -"

Korra laughed, tossing her jacket over an idle couch. “I'm not going anywhere.” She said, teasing the buoyancy of the mattress.

“You’re sure?” Asami said, leaning against the bar, hands running over the thighs of her dress anxiously.

Korra chuckled. “Red, I’ll let you know if I change my mind, okay?” She glanced over to where the camera stood innocuously, facing her with a soft, blinking light. “What’s that all about?”

Asami flushed, biting her lip. “An idea I had. Something to… remember us by, you know? You don’t mind, do you?”

“Mind?” Korra grinned, perking up. “I love it. So how does it -”

Flash.

Asami had pressed a button on her phone. The lights flashed briefly, filling the room with soft, bright light, fading quickly.
“Timed,” Asami said, sliding her phone across the bar. “Every few minutes or so, so we can just… enjoy ourselves.”

Korra laughed, dabbing at her eyes as she shuffled off her shoes. “I like the way you think, Red. Alright, so - where do we start?”

“A drink, maybe?”

Korra turned to see Asami standing behind her, carrying a glass of whiskey, and a dangerous smoulder.

Korra grinned. “Thanks, I-“

Asami snatched her hand back as Korra reached for the glass, a wicked grin on her lips.

“What?” Korra said, furrowing her brow.

Asami spoke slowly, her voice oozing with command. “Sit.” She said, the syllable sharp on her tongue.

Korra obeyed with only a moment's hesitation, and a dawning look of excitement dancing in her eyes. Asami pushed Korra slowly back, her free hand grasping onto the neck of Korra’s tie as she sat her down upon the mattress, moving to straddle Korra’s lap. Asami sipped at the whiskey, never once breaking eye-contact, the soft tinkling of ice cubes sending Korra mad.

“Lean back.” Asami said, softly pressing the edge of the glass against Korra’s lips, her other hand still grasping firmly around Korra's tie.  

Flash.

Korra followed with hungry eyes, letting Asami’s steady hand feed her trickling sips of amber liquid, as she gave her more and more slack on her tie. Slowly, with each rocking motion, Asami guided her down further and further, until Korra lay upon the mattress with Asami straddling her hips.

“Unbutton yourself.” Asami said, her lips pursed, breath steady, heart racing.

Korra obeyed, slowly undoing each button with painstaking precision, watching each flicker of emotion dance across Asami’s hungry visage as deft fingers revealed more and more skin, until they reached where Asami’s thighs straddled her waist.

Asami reached down, a hand pressing against the bare skin just beneath Korra’s breasts, pushing aside her shirt to rest the cold glass upon her sternum.

“Better not let that spill, or you’ll be in trouble.” Asami's eyes flickered as she spoke. She reached up behind her neck to tug at the ties of her dress. “Safeword; What should we use?”

Korra’s eyes followed Asami’s hands, tracing the curve of her shoulders, her neck. Korra's own hands, rising to lay long, idle strokes against Asami’s thighs, only to have them swatted away.

Korra smirked as she recoiled slightly. “How about summit?”

Asami clicked her tongue, sliding an arm free from her dress. “Hmm. Needs to be something clearer - And something we won’t say accidentally.”

“You think you’re going to say summit accidentally?”
“I’m not ruling it out.”

“Alright, how about fireworks?” Korra said, hands balling into fists on Asami’s knees as Asami shrugged her dress down to her waist, revealing a delicate lace corset beneath it. The glass rocked dangerously, eager to tip as Korra’s breathing picked up pace, swallowing heavily and lips wet in anticipation. Condensation trickled down the rim, droplets leaving trails against Korra’s dark skin, prickled against the cold.

Asami snorted. “You mean the things exploding all around us outside?” Asami leaned forward, taking Korra’s hands and placing them flat against her own waist. “You really think that’s not going to be said?”

*Flash.*

Korra rolled her eyes. “Alright then, what do you think it should be?”

Asami paused, her hands upon Korra’s, resting just below her chest, Korra’s thumb glancing the edge of her corset, eager to touch. She grinned; one word shining above the rest.

"Nightwatch."

“*Nightwatch,*” Korra repeated. “I like it. Alright, Nightwatch it is. So, now what?”

“I lay out the rules,” Asami said, her voice barely above a growl. She slipped her hands into Korra’s, weaving their fingers together. “Firstly, since I’m in charge of your security, you’ll do everything *I* say. Understood?”

Korra nodded slowly, her breathing hitching in places, eyes wide and attentive. “Of course.”

“Good,” Asami said, guiding Korra’s hands to run over her thighs. “It’s for your safety, after all. Wouldn’t want you to get into trouble, right?”

“No, ma’am.”

Asami slapped Korra around the wrist again, drawing a short hiss from Korra’s lips.

*Flash.*

“You will *only* refer to me as Miss Sato, do you understand?”

“Yes.” Korra said, grinning wickedly.

Asami raised a brow. “Yes what?”

“Yes, Miss Sato.” Korra spoke slowly, savouring each syllable that trickled off her lips. Asami felt a chill slip up her naked back as she saw the hint of a flame in Korra’s eyes.

“Better.” Asami said, rocking her hips against Korra’s waist. “You will not touch me unless instructed to, do you understand?”

“Yes, Miss Sato.”

“And you *certainly* will not touch yourself, unless instructed to. Do you understand?”

“Yes. Yes I do, Miss Sato.” Korra smirked, clicking her tongue. Asami could feel the way Korra’s hips wanted to rise, to grind against the weight sitting upon her. She could see the way that Korra’s
breath had begun to pick up, the way that her fists clenched and unclenched, the way that she licked her lips in anticipation. Above it all, Asami was watching, and waiting. Waiting to see if there were any signs of hesitation, of fear. She knew that if Korra were to give a single sign of discomfort, of pain without pleasure, that in a moment she would disengage. But after a careful search, she only found want. Korra was enjoying this; They both were. Outside, the fireworks rose in fury, in fervor. There were few spots in the sky that were empty, as colour and flame illuminated the clouds hiding the moon.

Asami’s eyes narrowed, her gaze lowering to the quivering glass that sat in a puddle of cold water upon Korra’s chest. Her grip around Korra’s wrists tightened.

“Don’t you dare show me attitude, Korra,” Asami said disapprovingly, head cocked and lips pouting. “I don’t think we can trust you to behave yourself.”

“I - I’m sorry, Miss Sato,” Korra said sheepishly, though her eyes burned with mischief. “I guess you’ll just have to make sure I stay in line.”

“Yes,” Asami said, toying with the edge of the glass. “I guess I will.”

Asami could feel Korra’s strong thighs tense as she lifted her weight off her, hearing the soft whimper that Korra let slip between shaking lips as the glass teetered slightly, mourning the absence of Asami’s touch - if only for a second. Asami slid off of the bed, and drew Korra’s wrist to the edge, where she stooped for a moment to pick up one of the heavy bands attached to the base.

“Troublemakers get bound, you know.”

Korra closed her eyes with a smile on her lips, red-faced from both embarrassment and excitement, carefully managing her panting breath as cold water trickled over her collarbones.

“It’s only what I deserve, Miss Sato.”

Flash.

Asami walked slowly around the bed, carefully binding Korra’s wrists, making sure they weren’t too tight, that she had enough slack to move, but not enough to roam. Then, she moved to her ankles.

Asami clicked her tongue impatiently. “You know, I’ll have to undress you before I can bind your feet.”

Korra squirmed, and the glass threatened to spill. “I’m sorry, Miss Sato. Do what… Do what you have to do.” Korra said, flushing darker still.

Asami held back a snicker, biting the inside of her cheek to stem her giddiness, climbing back between Korra’s legs to undo her belt. Korra lifted her hips for Asami to slide her trousers off, her lithe legs tense, but beneath the skin Asami could feel the shivering excitement coursing through Korra’s body, the tiny beads of sweat of anticipation. It took every ounce of Asami’s willpower to keep her hands steady too, to maintain the facade.

“Now, what about your underwear?” Asami said slowly. “What are we going to do about that?”

Korra squirmed again, her wrists tugging at the bands, the sound of straining leather sending shivers down Asami’s spine and a fluttering in her heart, leaving a tremble in her lips.

“Whatever you need to do, Miss Sato.” Korra said slowly.
Asami laughed softly. “You want me to take them off, don’t you?”

Korra panted in relief. “Yes. Yes, Miss Sato. Please.”

Asami quirked an eyebrow, hitching her thumbs into the elastic of Korra’s briefs, relishing in the way they clung to Korra’s strong, taut body, drawing them away from her hips, painfully slowly. She cherished the look on Korra’s face, teeth bared and jaw clenched as her back curled. Korra lifted her hips once again, holding her body as flat as she could manage as the glass teetered precariously upon her chest. The smaller ice-cubes had long since melted away, but the larger chunks still standing stalwart, and the droplets had left Korra’s skin slick, trickling down her sides, and up over her shoulders.

"Don't be hasty, Korra.” Asami said, as she held Korra's briefs around her thighs. "Behave."

Flash.

Korra’s skin prickled against Asami’s breath as she drew at Korra’s briefs to her knees, relishing in the slow reveal and rhythmic dance that her muscles seemed to play against Asami’s touch, tensing and relaxing. Asami felt her own heart skip as she slipped away from Korra’s sex, her skin slick and hot to the touch. Asami tossed Korra’s briefs to the side, and slipped up slowly between Korra’s legs, a hand resting on each knee, parting her legs, but no further.


“I’m sorry, Miss Sato.” Korra said, her back arcing slowly back towards the silk sheets, clearly wrapped in the fantasy. Asami could see the way that Korra's face flickered between lust and desire, each twitch of the lip a cry for mercy, each blinking eye a beg for release.

“We’ll see if you’re sorry.”

With Korra’s legs bare, Asami cuffed her ankles, careful to make sure the bands wouldn't chafe against her heel. She could feel Korra’s skin shiver as she ran her hands along her calves, dipping deep along her thigh to coax a shaky, squeaky gasp from Korra’s lips, the ice tinkling in anticipation.

When Korra was finally fully bound, Asami shed the remainder of her own clothes, and once again mounted Korra. She could feel Korra’s body yearn for her skin, for her sex pressed against Korra’s lower stomach, for the way Asami drew circles in the trickling water.

“You’ve been good, Korra.” Asami said softly. “Not a single drop spilled.”

“Anything for you, Miss Sato.” Korra said shakily, voice quivering against Asami’s fingers.

“Anything?” Asami laughed. “So obedient. So… well behaved.”

Flash.

"You ought to be rewarded, then." Asami picked up the glass, sweeping the condensation from Korra’s smooth skin as she swallowed the rest of the watered-down whiskey. With long fingers, Asami fished a large chunk of ice from the glass, carefully lowering it towards Korra’s lips.

“Kisses, Korra.”

Korra’s bright blue eyes stared unbroken into Asami’s as she pressed her lips against the chunk, flickering only slightly as the faint taste of whiskey ran over her cheek, and down her jawline.
“Cold, Korra?” Asami whispered.

Korra tugged at her restraints, a hoarse breath caught in her throat.

“Just a little bit.”

“Let me warm you up then.” Asami said, lowering her body unto Korra’s, until she was pressed flush against her.

Asami slid the chunk of ice to the side of Korra’s face, pressing her warm lips against Korra’s cold, wanting mouth, stealing a gasp from Korra. She could feel Korra’s body tense and tighten once again beneath her, her tongue dancing in eagerness, savouring the taste that Asami had been hanging loftily over her for so long. Again the sound of leather straining against Korra’s strong body sent shivers down Asami’s spine, awakening a flame within her. Asami traced the ice cube lower, dragging it slowly over Korra’s jawline, down her neck to ride against her collarbone, and each time she would follow the wet trail against Korra’s hot skin with tender kisses, soft pecks against her jaw and nibbles at her neck. Asami would coax sharp gasps and moans of pleasure from Korra as she moved further south, feeling Korra’s arms flex beneath her as she writhed against her restraints, the meek, strained moans that Korra would give, begging for more.

**Flash.**

Korra’s hands balled to fists, her breathing becoming quicker, shallower, her eyes shut tight and jaw clenched as Asami toyed with her, drawing the ice over her chest, over each breast and nipple to pull gasps as she slipped over each delicate, sweat-slick inch of skin. The taste was immaculate, intoxicating, clouding Asami’s mind with a daze that she so willingly surrendered herself into. She could feel her own body yearn for the struggle, the pain, the ache, the soreness, the release. Asami could see the way Korra writhed against the sensation, gasps of pleasure as her warm hands soothed the burning cold, trailing down her taut, strong body. Wet, slick, Korra’s body was an unblemished landscape, and Asami made sure her touches would be the worthy worship she wanted to give.

But Korra burned hot, and soon left the ice little more than a puddle. Instead, Asami slipped lower, lithe arms slipping beneath firm, strong legs to cradle Korra’s hips, soft lips pressing against her navel, feeling Korra’s body shake and quiver beneath her as her hands roamed between strong thighs and up a toned, arched back.

“Remember,” Asami said menacingly, her eyes peering up over Korra’s sweat-slick body. “You’re not allowed to do anything until I say so.”

Korra nodded hastily, eyes still shut tight, teeth gnashing. She gasped as Asami’s lips slid over her sex, a sharp, almost painful scream into the ceiling, and yet, impatient satisfaction. Korra bit down on her cheek, face flushed and hair mussed as she rode Asami’s tongue, each rhythmic pulse and slightest grind of her hips drawing her closer, and closer, sending flames and bolts and chaos coursing through her veins, threatening to burst from her skin like so many technicolour fireworks tearing the sky outside them, setting each strand of muscle in her body alight in furious ecstasy, purging her mind of any thought but Asami. Asami teased her slowly at first, her arms wrapped around Korra’s hips and thighs like snakes coiled around their prey, holding her down and slowly her movements against her mouth, feeling the desperation in every twitch, in every shaky, uncoordinated movement that Korra betrayed. She would tease it in rhythm, her lips dancing across Korra’s soft, wanting sex, knowing that she wanted more, but holding back. She would wait, wait until Korra would groan, subtle and sweet sounds of pain and agony a glorious music to her ears, waiting until the muscles rippling across Korra’s body would tell her just how badly she needed Asami’s nimble fingers and deft tongue upon her skin, upon her sex, within her, finding her, crushing her, until her taste coated every inch of her mind, until there was nothing but ecstasy -
She came against Asami’s tongue sudden and violent, the powerful, cascading sensation crashing against Korra like a sudden tsunami, every muscle in her body taut as her mouth opened in silent scream, her hips raised and desperately searching for Asami as it sundered her, throwing her head back into the silken sheets and arching her back high above the sheets as Asami felt her sex pulse against her mouth with each rippling wave of the orgasm. Asami carried her down, arms wrapped beneath her thighs, hands caressing Korra’s back and drawing each wave out with her mouth like a poison, each delicate motion pulling her softer, and more gently from the bliss, until it was almost as if she were pulling the very essence of Korra with every whip of her tongue, with every stroke of her fingers against a familiar body. Asami paused when Korra’s body finally relaxed against the sheets, warily eyeing red rings around Korra’s ankles and wrists, only turning her attention away when it was clear she wasn’t hurt.

Asami clicked her tongue.

“I didn’t give you permission to do that.”

Korra coughed, a shaky, gasping laugh. “Not my fault.”

“Excuse me?”

Korra sighed complacently. “Not my fault, Miss Sato.”

Asami snorted, resting her cheek against Korra’s inner thigh. “What on Earth am I going to do with you.”

Korra grinned, her breathing levelling out. “I don’t think much is off the table at this point.”

“True.” Asami said, pressing a kiss against Korra’s thigh, her skin slick with sweat.

Flash.

Korra grunted in surprise as she felt a weight lean upon her. She glanced down, drawn from her reprieve to find Asami crawling over her body.

“What-”

“I haven’t had mine, you know.” Asami said, her voice deep, husky, dangerous.

“Ah,” Korra said, shifting in her bindings. “Untie me, then.”

Asami smirked, sweeping Korra’s wayward hair from her face. “That’s not how this works, and you know it.”

Korra rolled her eyes and gave a sigh of mock-exasperation, but behind the faint tinge of weariness, the look on Korra’s face spoke of eager anticipation. Eager to touch, to taste, to please.

Asami’s own body was a quiet buzz. The alcohol left her sleepy, her muscles drowsy as she shifted her weight up to Korra, but it didn’t stop her jumping as Korra’s tongue brushed up between her legs. She gasped louder than Korra did as Korra tasted her, explored her, broke her apart to find each and every nuance that she kept within her. She ran her fingers through her short, cropped hair, tugging and driving her lashings faster, deeper, until Asami felt her own knees begin to shake and crumble. She hunched over Korra’s body, her hips grinding in rhythmic fashion against Korra’s mouth, one hand gripping tight against the silken bedspread, the other nestled deep into Korra’s hair,
egging her on, driving both of them wild as she pulled Korra closer and closer, blissfully chasing the cacophony of euphoric candour that flitted just out of reach, two ice blue eyes watching her write in pleasure from between her thighs.

*Flash.*

It wasn’t long before Asami buckled against Korra’s jaw, eyes wide and gasping as bliss ricocheted throughout her core. She felt her body lock as it shook against her orgasm, felt Korra smile against her skin as she relished in each wave of pleasure that she had wrought from Asami, the soft wafts of panting, complacent breath against her thigh as Asami half-laughed, half-choked her way from on high, to roll off Korra’s body into a softly shaking, satisfied mess.

“How did I do?” Korra said quietly, her bindings easing off as she gave her body rest. “Did I give a convincing performance?”

Asami propped herself up, looking over to where Korra lay beside her.

“You were amazing.” Asami said quietly, biting her lip. “I didn’t go too far, did I?”

“Did I say the safeword?”

Asami shook her head.

“Don’t worry about it then, Red.”

Asami smiled, sliding over into Korra’s warmth, cupping Korra’s cheek to press a soft peck against her jawline, pressing her body into the crook of Korra's body.

Korra chuckled. “I mean - don’t get comfortable. I would like to get out of these things now.”

Asami laughed sheepishly, but hurried to unbind Korra’s limbs. She felt a twang of guilt as she watched Korra stretch, rubbing at the red marks left upon her wrists and ankles, only smiling in relief when Korra insisted that she was okay.

*Flash. Click.*

Quietly, turning away from the fireworks, Asami led Korra to the bathroom by the hand. She could tell she was sore, so she was there steady and careful to make sure she didn’t fall, that she was okay. Asami pulled a stool beneath the shower, and under a gentle flow of warm water, she bathed Korra, running oils through her hair, dabbing at her skin with soaps and cloth, washing her body of lust and torpor. Korra sat and watched with grateful, sleepy eyes as Asami tended to her. She chuckled as Asami made her stand for a moment to dab at the back of her thighs, letting her sit again as she ran a cloth along her calves and feet.

Asami looked up, a glint of worry in her eye.

“You’re sure you’re okay?” Asami said among the steam and mist.

“Yeah,” Korra said, chuckling against a complacent sigh. “I love you.”
Asami smiled, letting Korra draw her into the warmth, resting her head upon Korra’s navel in a gentle embrace as warm water washed over them.

“I love you too.”

4:23AM, BEDROOM, ASAMI'S PRIVATE PENTHOUSE, SATO TOWER ONE, DAY OF DEPARTURE

In the morning, Korra awoke to find Asami sitting in a chair by the window, wrapped in a spare blanket, and staring out over the grayscale city. Rain slashed against the glass, rolling thunder grumbling its way across the city as lines of lightning framed the sky.

“Up already?” Korra croaked, propping herself up on one arm.

Asami turned, smiling at Korra. “Yeah.” She said quietly, rubbing at her eyes. “It’s still early, you know. You can go back to sleep - I’ll wake you when it’s time to get ready.”

Korra blinked through her torpor, and shrugged. “Only if you’ll join me.”

Asami shook her head, sighing softly.

“Can’t sleep.”

Korra yawned, stretching out over the pillows and sheets.

“Come lie down with me then.”

Asami smiled, pulling herself to her feet. She shuffled the short distance and climbed back into bed, letting Korra throw her arms around her, drawing her once again into the fond, warm embrace.

“What’s wrong, red?” Korra hummed, eyes closed.

Asami took a deep breath, but said nothing. Instead, she sunk further into the embrace, resting against Korra’s collarbone as she felt fingers trace idle, comforting circles upon her shoulder.

When it was time to wake, they showered and ate a light breakfast, but not before Asami pulled Korra back into the cover of their sheets one last time, showering her with kisses and affection. It was a tender, aching love, and one that they wouldn’t soon forget.

Korra’s luggage was already packed and loaded into a private car by the time they reached the garage. They had received word that her parents would be waiting for her at the airstrip. As it wasn’t a public affair, there would be no press, no photographers, and minimal vital staff. It would be a farewell, in the truest sense of the word.

Asami waved off the driver as they approached their ride.

“You’re driving me yourself?” Korra said, brow raised amusedly.

Asami smirked. “Of course. Wouldn’t make much sense for it to be any other way, would it?”

“Definitely not.”
It was a strange sensation, driving out through the streets. It was as if the city had all but forgotten the
summit had ever existed. Gone were the shopfronts plastered with themed deals and great banners of
patriotism. Gone were the streets filled with press and politician alike, filling the sidewalks with
crowds of curious onlookers. Gone were the security restrictions; the streets breathed freely now, or
at least freer than they were a day ago. It left Asami complacent, and she knew that if she closed her
eyes she could almost believe themselves to be part of the backdrop, simply living in a city with no
ties, no advisors, no responsibilities to anyone but themselves. That they could just as easily shrug off
who they were, and just be with each other in peace.

They shared few words between them as they ventured further out through the rain towards the
airstrip, but the silence they shared was far from unpleasant. In a few ways, Korra felt that she too
was drifting into the same fantasy that Asami was dreaming of, reclining in her seat and staring off
into the sky, watching thin wisps of sunlight pierce the storm-wrought sky, only to be snuffed like so
many candles in the tempest.

They were drawn from their fleeting moments of peace by the sight of the Eastern Kingdom
zeppelins looming over the rest of the airport, nestled among the skies like so many dark clouds
behind them. Sweeping past the security gate, Asami drove them as close as they could get to the
shadow beneath Kuvira's flagship, where a long metal panel extended to the ground as a boarding
ramp. In the shade they could see people huddling under the shade of the massive airship, figures that
they imagined could only be Korra's parents, or possibly Kuvira herself.

"They're huge, aren't they?" Korra said, leaning against the door of the car to gaze up the side of the
balloon. Along its flank was the emblem of the Eastern Kingdoms, regal and defiant in face of the
storm, slick with rain but its grandeur was hardly diminished. In the distance, other airships of the
fleet sat upon the airstrip, none so large as Kuvira's but grand all the same.

Asami leaned against the wheel, peering out the front windscreen. It was indeed massive, and she
could see in the distance, workers scurrying around like ants fleeing from the rain, some ferrying
supplies into the gaping loading docks.

The rain didn’t seem to want to stop.

Asami glanced over to Korra, who seemed to be making no attempt to leave. She was resting her
head against the cold glass, watching the rain trickle off the zeppelins. It was almost soothing, but
Asami couldn’t help but feel the weight in her chest that she had been ignoring all morning.

She sighed, and reached into the backseat. "Here," Asami said, handing Korra a large envelope. "I
better give this to you now - don’t want it to get wet."

Korra lifted her gaze, taking the envelopes with a curious glance. "What’s this?"

"Photographs." Asami smirked. "Probably shouldn’t open them until you find somewhere private."

Korra grinned, turning the envelope over in her hands. Thick, brown paper, sealed with the Sato
emblem with “Korra" written cleanly on the front. Korra cleared her throat, her voice wavering
slightly before she found her strength again.

“Sorry, I - I didn’t get you anything in return, I -"

Asami leaned over, pressing a soft kiss against Korra’s cheek. “You were more than enough.”

Asami carried an umbrella around to Korra’s door, waving over staff standing huddled beneath the
shelter of the zeppelins, who begrudgingly began to make their trek into the storm to retrieve Korra’s
belongings from the trunk as they in turn braved the storm towards the boarding ramp. Amidst the rain, halfway between the car and the zeppelin, Korra paused, placing a hand on Asami’s shoulder. Asami turned, brushing a wayward strand from her face, as the tempest continued around them.

“What is it?”

Korra took a deep breath, her gaze dancing from Asami, to the zeppelins, to nothing in particular in the distance. “I never thanked you.” Korra said suddenly, her voice raised against the din.

Asami furrowed her brow. “For what?”

“For everything!” Korra laughed. “For... For everything. For being with me - for going out on the city with me. For being there for me, for - for being you. For us.”

Asami paused, before breaking into a warm smile. She wasn’t sure whether it were tears or raindrops misting her gaze. “You don’t need to thank me for that.”

“I know,” Korra grinned, brushing her eyes with the back of her hand. “It’s just - I don’t know what else to say. I’m... I’m going to miss you, so much.”

Asami found Korra wrapped around her shoulders, holding each other so closely that the rain seemed to fade away around them. At that moment, like so many before it, all they knew were only each other, if only for a little longer.

“I’ll miss you too.”

It felt like forever while they stood there, huddled under an umbrella in the middle of an airstrip, but far too soon they pulled away, and closed the distance to the zeppelin. Korra’s parents greeted them warmly, and shared a proud embrace as they saw to Korra’s cargo. As Asami floated around, she saw Kuvira stepping out from within the zeppelin, dressed in the familiar, albeit more casual, Eastern Kingdoms regalia.

Kuvira nodded at Asami, strolling towards her. “Terrible weather for a long flight.” She scoffed.

Asami laughed. “Might be. It’s not going to stop you though, is it?”

Kuvira shook her head. “Afraid not. We’ve got a schedule to keep.”

Kuvira glanced over to Korra, Korra’s parents waving them all a goodbye as their PA informed them that they’ll need to be heading off to catch their own flight.

“It’s a trying time we live in, Sato.” Kuvira says quietly. “Even more so for us. Hard to find genuine companionship in our fields.”

Asami nodded idly, watching Korra wave goodbye to her parents.

Kuvira clears her throat, and turns to Asami. “Well, this is goodbye for now it seems. Thank you, Sat - Asami. You’ve been generous with your hospitality.”

Asami takes Kuvira’s firm handshake. “All the best, Kuvira.”

Kuvira cracks the briefest of smiles. She nods to Korra as she steps towards them, and gestures to the zeppelin.

“I’ll give you two a moment. When you’re ready, Korra, I’ll see you on the bridge.”
In the shade of the colossals, as Kuvira makes her way up a steep, iron ramp, Asami slips her hands into Korra's.

Korra sighs, offering Asami's fingers a soft squeeze. “This is really it, isn’t it? I guess -”

“Stop.” Asami protests, a half-chuckle slipping from her lips as she closes the distance between them. Korra’s eyes widen, if only for a moment, before she sinks into the gentle sensation of Asami’s lips upon hers.

The touch is soft, at first, and Korra can tell that beneath both of them stirs the want of more. Of passion, of a powerful, unyielding sensation that sleeps between them. It’s both chaste and desperate, and equally unsure - unsure, not of themselves, but of the future. It’s a kiss that resonates with them; both of them. It begs them to stay, but tastes like one that mourns the distance that they know will soon settle between them, knowing, patient, waiting. Asami’s lips are cold, but the soft, shuddering gasps between them are hot, choked and enveloped in the almost blinding task of remembering every single detail about Korra’s lips. Their shape, their taste, the way that her lips curl slightly in the corner with the familiar, unforgettable crooked smile, even as tears fall freely and wet her cheeks.

The kisses speak more than they ever could have, and the moment that they finally pause is enough to destroy them. They stand still, resting against each other, as Asami offers a shaky breath, and smiles.

“If you make me almost-say-goodbye one more time,” Asami says, smiling through tears and rain. “I might just ask you to stay.”

Korra gives her crooked smile. “And I might just take you up on that offer.” She says, though they both know that cannot be. "I’ll call you, okay?"

“You better.” Asami laughs, hiccupping in the process, before sinking into a complacent silence.

It’s then that she realizes that it’s time.

“Goodbye, Korra.” Asami says quietly, just loud enough to break above the winds. “I’ll see you soon.”

Korra nods, her fingers slipping from Asami’s hands, if only for a second. “I’m holding you to that, you know.”

“I should hope so.”

The warmth of Korra’s hands linger against Asami’s hands for all too long.

Asami watches as Korra steps onto the ramp, and watches as she waves her final goodbye.

She stands once again beneath her umbrella, as the staff carry the final pieces of cargo into the zeppelin, and watches as Korra shouts a tearful farewell as the ramp retracts, and the heavy doors close, sealing the zeppelin. Against some of the windows, Asami almost thinks she can see the twinkle of Korra’s ice-blue eyes one last time.

She watches from a distance, as the zeppelins whir to life, their ballasts creaking in the storm, their anchors snapping away.

She watches as they rise above her, as they shuffle shelves of water onto the airstrip beneath them. She can see the figures standing at the bridge, but can’t make them out. She thinks she can see Korra - at least, she hopes it’s her.
She watches, alone in the rain, as the colossal airships drift off into the sky, until they’re no longer giants, and disappear beyond the clouds, nothing more than distant marks upon the horizon.

She watches until there’s nothing left to watch, until the the rain stops, and the sun finally breaks the clouds.

Asami smiles, and wipes the tears from her cheek.

9:46AM, COMMANDER'S QUARTERS, THE EMPEROR'S PRESTIGE, DAY OF DEPARTURE

“Your room is down to hall, third on the left,” Kuvira yells over the din of the engines, stepping to the side to let two workers wheel a flatbed full of cargo around the corner. “If you want I can give you the tour in twenty minutes.”

Korra nods, glancing out a porthole, clouds wisping past the heavy rotors chopping through the sky.

“Yeah,” Korra says, fingers tracing the outline of Asami’s envelope stowed away in her coat pocket. “Give me a few to get my bearings. I’ll meet you on the bridge?”

Kuvira nods, giving a half-salute. “Of course. Welcome aboard, Korra.”

Korra nods, and heads off towards her room.

It’s smaller than what she’s used to, and barely has anything other than the necessities, but it’s enough. The ceiling hangs low enough that Korra keeps a mental note not to stretch, and a network of pipes run from one corner of the ceiling to another. Opposite a small set of furniture for receiving guests, a flatbed sits in the corner, hard and uninviting, but a stack of thick blankets sit at its foot, which Korra hopes might make it more comfortable. In another corner, a small airlock door leads to the bathroom; a cold, solitary room cut of metal panels and thin stone. It’s cold and unpleasant to witness, but a private bathroom bears some modicum of luxury.

A desk sits between two porthole windows looking out onto the horizon, with a small writer’s kit placed atop it bearing the insignia of both the Eastern Kingdoms, and Kuvira’s company. It’s here that Korra dumps her bag, and settles into the small leather seat. She watches the clouds drift past her window for a while, letting the weight in her chest settle, before she pulls the envelope onto the table.

Korra.

She takes a breath, glancing hesitantly around her, even though she knows she won’t find anyone in her room staring over her shoulders - but Korra can’t help but smirk at her own sheepishness. She breaks the seal, and the wax crumbles beneath her fingers.

She takes a shaky breath as her eyes fall on the first photograph. They’re not of the evening before, but rather of the morning they just shared. The first is of Korra, lost and peaceful in sleep, half buried beneath the sheets on Asami’s bed, the shadow of rain and cloud painted over her body.

The second is a closer photograph, of Korra’s face, eyes closed as she drifts in a faraway land.

The third is of Asami, sitting at the desk beside the windows, with Korra sound asleep behind her.
The fourth is of the both of them, Asami smiling into the camera as Korra’s arms wrap around her, warm, comfortable, peaceful.

The last is much the same, but this time, Asami is pressing a soft kiss upon Korra’s forehead. Instinctively, Korra reaches up to touch the same spot on her brow, her eyes misting as her mouth curls into a broad smile, lips pursed to stem the shaky breath she desperately wants to take.

After a while, Korra places the photographs delicately back into their envelope, and opens up the writer’s kit.

On the first page of a small leather-bound book, she writes a title;

_Day one. Today I begin the countdown, until I can see her again._

Chapter End Notes

Now split into two parts for your reading pleasure. Thanks for reading!
Sometime later...

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

10:57PM, COMMAND HQ, KUVIRA’S BASE, SOUTHERN EASTERN KINGDOM’S FLATLANDS, DAY 236 AFTER DEPARTURE

Korra rubs her eyes. The spotlights have a draining effect on her, but they’re welcome and useful for turning the desert night into an artificial day. She clears her throat as she ducks beneath a tent flap, stepping into the command HQ. Inside, Kuvira stands looming over a large strategic outline of the region.

“How did it go?” Kuvira says, offering Korra a quick nod.

“Well,” Korra sighs heavily, bringing her scarf up to her mouth as an APC rumbles past them, kicking up dust. “Could have gone better, but I think they’re on board. As long as we can assist with their re-irrigation strategy, they’ll be happy.”

Kuvira nods, and points to another section of the map sprawled out in front of them. “And your contact for the bridge?”

“Materials are on their way.” Korra says, flicking through her notes. “We needed to set up another contract with the transporters, but I managed to skip most of the bureaucracy with the waybills.”

Kuvira nods again, and manages to break a curt smile. “Good work, Korra. Dismissed.”

Korra waves her thanks, but before she can step back outside, Kuvira speaks up behind her.

“Oh, by the way, Korra -”

“Why?” Korra manages softly, her heart thundering into gear. Kuvira cracks a wry smile, but says nothing more, and waves her hand dismissively once again.

She -

“What?” Korra manages softly, her heart thundering into gear. Kuvira cracks a wry smile, but says nothing more, and waves her hand dismissively once again.
Korra stumbles back to her tent, heartbeat in her ears, hesitantly tempering her expectations. *No, it couldn’t be -*

She can feel her hands shaking as she reaches for the tent flap to her quarters. In her mind, she remembers the hundreds of entries in her notebooks, the thousands of messages they’ve shared since she left - at least, the ones they can share when she has a stable connection.

But this, this is different. The first time, in so long.

Asami doesn’t hear Korra enter the tent. She has her back to the entry, and is instead thumbing through one of Korra’s notebooks, left on a short, makeshift stand by her bed.

“Hey.” Korra doesn’t manage to say much more, and it’s a shaky word, one that almost speaks of disbelief, but it’s enough.

Asami spins around, wide-eyed and mouth slightly agape.

“Sorry,” She says, gesturing to the book. “I-I was curious, and I just - you know, you spoke about them on the phone, and -”

Korra closes the gap between them, and as if it were only yesterday that they were saying goodbye, her lips find Asami’s. At once, all the memory floods back into her, and together they sink into a moment of bliss.

It’s almost painful how sweet she tastes on her lips. It’s almost enough to make Korra cry, the thought that she had almost forgotten the feeling, the sensation, the soft touch of Asami’s skin on hers.

“What are you doing here?” Korra says between breaths, eyes closed and furrowed, as if she’s trying to desperately etch the moment into her memory.

“I took some time off,” Asami pants, as Korra’s hands find their way into her hair. “Thought I’d come visit you.”

“Best idea you’ve had.” Korra feels Asami’s body tense, as her hands find her waist. She can feel Asami’s lips curl into a smile against her lips.

“I thought so.” Asami whispers.

Chapter End Notes

Oh my goodness. It's done. It's finally done. Almost a year since the last update, I've finally come around to finishing this fic. Please forgive me as a do a little bit of exposition and get some thoughts out of my head.

If you've read through this fic from start to end, you'll probably notice that my writing style has changed several times. How I wrote at the start of Nightwatch doesn't even come close to where I am now, and I can see that. I started nightwatch almost two years ago, and in that time I like to think I found my writing style. I started this fic to develop that style, and try my hand at writing sex and romance - both of which I'll be the first to say that I've still got some ways to go, but I definitely think there's been some improvement in that matter. as they say, “Almost every possible depiction of an orgasm...
has probably been done and dusted, and absolutely every single one of them has been
overdone.”
Anyways, that's enough of that. For those of you who soldiered through this final
massive chunk of a chapter, thank you, truly, from the bottom of my heart. It means so
much to mean that you'd stick around through thick and thin, through my terrible
descriptions in the beginning, shoddily shoehorned plot additions, and bizarre, obscure
characterizations. Thank you, thank you, and thank you.
But that's it for nightwatch folks, thanks for joining me on this ride.
Thanks for reading :)