The New Normal

by RosieTwiggs

Summary

Oliver and Felicity are exposed to a new drug, compliments of The Count 4.0. It quickly becomes obvious that the effects will change their relationship forever, especially after Caitlin gives them the really bad news: it's self replicating, every 24 hours, and she's not sure how soon she'll be able to find an antidote. In the meantime, they're going to have to find a way to come to terms with their new normal.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
Sometimes in life, something completely insignificant happens that changes everything. And the line between the life you knew and needing to find a new normal can be as fine as not looking both ways before crossing the street, or picking six instead of seven on a lottery number, or skipping a class to meet a friend.

Felicity’s carrying the box when she trips.

It’s been days of cataloguing the oddities confiscated from Count number four’s lab. (She’ll never
understand the fascination villains have with Count Vertigo. At this point she’d think people would stay away from the mantle out of sheer superstition. Counts never last very long…)

Oodles of experimental, unlabeled drugs too dangerous to hand off to SCPD without testing first at STAR Labs, and Felicity volunteered to organize all of it.

Maybe that was her first mistake.

But no.

She’s carrying the box when she trips.

To be fair, she was doing just fine. Maybe struggling a little bit, but she would have been fine.

But she doesn’t hear Oliver come in (one of these days, she’s going to put a bell on him), and out of nowhere he says, “Hey, let me help you with that,” right by her ear, and she jumps.

“No, it’s fine, I’m fine,” she starts to say, turning towards him, but he’s already reaching for the box, queue the tripping, and the box just drops.

It hits the floor, and both Oliver and Felicity flinch, expecting a volatile chemical explosion that never comes.

The foundry is It’s completely silent for five more seconds before Felicity hears Oliver let out a breath and she laughs nervously. “Okay. Okay, we’re alive. Good.”

“Sorry.”

Felicity shakes her head. “No, it’s fine. I’ll just - “ she gestures at the box. “I’ll just make sure there’s nothing broken inside and get this put away.”

If volunteering to organize Count the Fourth’s crazy science experiments was Felicity’s first mistake, her second, and much greater mistake, is opening the box.

The second she gets the lid off, a cloud of blue powder puffs out and covers the both of them.

They freeze, staring at each other in horror and Felicity caught with her mouth wide open. Oliver sucks in a startled gasp.

Felicity sneezes.

In a moment, they’re a frenzy of panicked motion.

Oliver grabs Felicity by the arm and practically hauls her into the bathroom.

“What the hell is this?” he yells, yanking his own shirt over his head as he reaches into the shower and gets the water running.

Steam billows around them moments later. Felicity doesn’t even have time to feel embarrassment - just terror. What did they breathe in? What did they just get covered in?

“Oh God, oh God,” she mutters, pulling her skirt down and stumbling when she tries to kick it off
along with her shoes.

They leave their underwear on, getting under the spray of too-hot water.

Oliver immediately starts cupping water, pouring it over her face, her hair. She reaches around him for the soap and squirts an absurd amount into her palm, frantically working it over his chest and arms.

“Turn around,” Oliver growls, taking the soap to wash her back.

They scrub at each other desperately, trying to get whatever was in that box off of their skin. Halfway through her second go at Oliver’s chest, the edge of fear begins to dull. They’re not dead. If it was really toxic, whatever that blue powder was, they’d probably be feeling it by now, right? There would be some sort of effect… Maybe they’re in the clear? Maybe -

Felicity is suddenly painfully aware of what they’re doing.

Oliver’s skin is wet and slippery, drops of water trailing down perfectly sculpted muscles. She swallows, watching a rivulet of water stream down from his neck to his chest, reaching the peak of his nipple and dripping off, down in-between them.

Oh.

Her motions slow, and she works the soap in her hand over to that little stream, hypnotized by the miniature waterfall. She just wants to - without thinking, she rubs her thumb over the nub.

Oliver’s breath hitches, and her gaze darts up to his face.

Their situation seems to have struck him at the same time it did her. He’s looking down at her with heat in his eyes, blinking drops of water from his lashes and breathing heavily.

She’s not sure who moves first. All she knows is that they’re suddenly clinging to each other. Oliver has her pushed up against the shower wall, his lips moving over hers, teeth biting. She groans and sucks on his tongue, giving as good as she gets, needing more when Oliver bucks helplessly into her hips.

Yes. She needs more. She needs - she needs -

Without warning, the water turns ice cold and they both yelp, breaking apart. Oliver turns off the spray, breathing heavily.

“Felicity, I don’t know what - I - “

Felicity has no idea what just happened either. Her pulse is racing as she watches Oliver back out of the shower, nearly falling over in his haste.

“It’s okay,” she says, only it’s really not, because she feels mortified, but at the same time she feels Oliver’s distance as an ache between her legs and oh God -

“I think we need to analyze whatever was in that box.”

Jaw clenched, Oliver nods, and Felicity can’t help it - she glances down. There’s nothing but Oliver’s boxer-briefs to hide his raging hard-on, and honestly? They’re not doing a great job at hiding anything.

Wow.
She’s not thinking when she steps out of the shower towards him, she just follows the magnetic pull, desperate to reach out - to touch.

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“Felicity,” Oliver whispers, and in that moment she wants him to *devour* her.

She has him pushed back against the sink in seconds, nails digging into his sides. Her mouth hovers just over one of his nipples. She wants so desperately to close the distance, to nip and suck, but there’s a sort of delicious torture in the pause, just breathing and anticipating.

“Felicity, we need to - this is,” Oliver can’t get the words out, murmuring into her neck. His erection is hard against her belly and she wants it - in her hand, in her mouth, fucking her against the wall. She pushes against him and his hand slips on the ceramic. They end up in a pile on the floor. Luckily for the both of them, Felicity knocks her elbow hard against the toilet bowl, and electric pain shoots up to her fingertips.

Oliver curses and Felicity pushes herself as far away from him as she can.

“Okay, this is really bad, Oliver. We need to - just - *stay*. Stay over there. No wait, hand me that towel first.”

Oliver reaches up and grabs a towel from the bottom shelf and Felicity is immediately distracted by the play of muscle. He reaches towards her and she reaches back just far enough to snatch the cloth and lean away again.

“Cover yourself,” she says, “and then - um. Clothes, yeah. Maybe clothes will help.” She stands up, wrapping herself in the towel, and Oliver *licks his lips*. Oh God, how is this happening?

“No! Don’t do that thing. Stop!”

“What thing?”

“The thing with your lips.”

Oliver looks bewildered, but folds his lips between his teeth and bites down.

“Okay. I’m gonna. Yeah, clothes. And then Caitlin. Maybe Caitlin can help.” She stumbles backwards out the door and slams it behind her.

The almost oppressive need lessens as soon as there’s a closed door between them, but even as Felicity grabs her emergency tote from a closet, her stomach is clenching and she presses her thighs together, trying to alleviate her arousal.

However, her head is clearer and she knows, without a doubt, that what she and Oliver are experiencing is a result of whatever drug was in that box. She glares at the blue residue on the floor once she’s dressed, and then kneels, swabbing some of it into a petri dish.

She runs the sample through her equipment, collecting all the data she can before sending it to STAR Labs.

Then she picks up the phone.

“Felicity, what am I looking at here?” Of course Caitlin’s already at the lab, already going through the data, and sounds intrigued in lieu of a hello.

“I’m uh - not sure. But it’s some sort of, well. I think it might be, um -” The bathroom door opens.
She’s over a dozen feet away, but Felicity can suddenly feel Oliver, as though he’s right behind her. “Oh God…”

“Felicity?” Realization colors Caitlin’s voice. “Felicity, did you breathe any of this in?”

She can smell shampoo and body soap and Oliver behind her. She knows he hasn’t moved, but he might as well be pressed to her back, trailing kisses up her neck, sucking on her earlobe—

“Maybe?” she squeaks.

“Felicity.” Caitlin’s tone is stern.

“Yes, okay? And Oliver did too.”

Caitlin’s quiet for a moment and then - “Felicity. This is an aphrodisiac. I’ve never seen anything like it. Are you - are you okay?”

No. She really isn’t. But all she says is, “Can you come up with an antidote?”

She knows it’s a ridiculous request. She knows this sort of thing takes time. To her credit, Caitlin stays calm. “I’d need blood samples before I could even begin to - Felicity…” She takes a breath. “Send me some blood, and I’ll see what I can do.”

“Okay.” Felicity doesn’t even say goodbye, just hangs up and grips the edge of her desk with one hand, knuckles turning white.

“Caitlin?”

She nods, Oliver’s voice washing over her and making her shiver.

Drawing blood from each other would probably be a bad idea.

“Can you take a blood sample on your own?” she asks.

“Huh?” Oliver draws his eyes away from her chest, where Felicity was trailing her fingers and didn’t even notice. She clenches her hands into fists and lowers them to her sides.


Oliver nods.

“Okay.” She pulls out a syringe and needle and tosses them to him. Better not get any closer. “You stay on your side of the lair and I’ll stay on my side and that way maybe, um, yeah. Put your sample on the med table when you’re done and then just - back away. I’ll send it all to Caitlin.”

She’s happy to have something to focus on as she takes her own blood sample, and then sends both to STAR Labs, but all too soon, she and Oliver are left with nothing to do but wait.

Oliver stalks to the back of the basement, and the sound of him violently punching things carries over moments later.

Unfortunately, Oliver’s grunts, and the sound of his fists hitting his punching bag put Felicity in mind of something completely different. For a moment, her mind wanders. The grunting is suddenly in tune with the rhythm of Oliver fucking her, harder, harder. The sound of his skin slapping against the leather is the obscene sound of their bodies meeting with each thrust.
Felicity’s halfway across the room before she realizes what she’s doing. With superhuman strength of will, and really, it is superhuman, she deserves a fucking medal (no, no fucking. No), Felicity sits herself in front of her computers and puts her headphones on, turning the music as high as she can stand it.

She tries to get lost in the music, but nothing can really distract her from the urgency she’s feeling. Also, she’s never noticed how much music is about, well, sex. To her distracted mind, every song boils down to, “Let’s have sex!” or, “We used to have sex and now we don’t…” and then, “Let’s have sex again!”

And every song has a beat. It’s the underlying beats that ultimately drive her crazy.

She needs some sort of release. She’s desperate for it. She’s never been this aroused in her life, and it’s not even a conscious decision when her hand begins to trail over her own stomach under her shirt, up to pinch at a nipple, and then finally down under the waistline of her skirt. She’s just brushed her clit when a door slamming makes her jump and scream. She yanks her hand out and pulls her headphones off, turning and looking for Oliver.

He’s locked himself in the bathroom.

And the way her own need is clawing at her, she’s pretty sure she knows why.

Mortification is completely overshadowed by necessity, and she lets the sounds of Oliver taking his pleasure spur her on. She needs to come. She needs it so badly. She dips her hand beneath her underwear, finding her clit and foregoing teasing. She just needs to come.

But the higher she climbs, the further away orgasm feels. She does everything that she knows usually gets her off quickly, but it isn’t working. Oh God. What if she can’t come? What if she’s stuck like this? The thought is enough to make her want to cry.

Oliver roars something indiscernible in the bathroom, and then there’s a crash. She stands up, turning around just as the bathroom door opens.

He’s shirtless, chest heaving, and dripping sweat. His pants are hanging open. His eyes are wild, focused on her, and Felicity doubts she looks any better.

Within seconds they’re tearing at each other’s clothes. Oliver sweeps the med table clear and lifts her up, pushing between her legs. He’s biting at her collarbone and Felicity scrabbles at his back, raking her nails into his skin. This feels right. This feels good. She needs all of him, everything he has to give her, as hard as he can give it to her.

“How, Oliver,” she’s chanting his name, kissing him, needs him, she needs him-

The phone rings.

The only reason Felicity notices it at all is because it’s in her back pocket and the vibrations against the metal table are loud. It startles her enough that she pulls away from Oliver’s lips gasping.

“How! Oliver, stop!”

He’s so far gone, it takes him a moment to hear her, but when he does, he backs up until he crashes into the desk with the secondary computer station.

They’re both shaking, watching each other. Felicity’s trying to get a hold on her emotions but it isn’t working.
The phone rings again and she twists to pull it out.

“What?” she snaps.

“Um.” The voice on the other end is unsure. Felicity takes a shaky breath and lets it out slowly.

“Caitlin, hi. Sorry. Thanks for getting back to us, what have you got?” She watches Oliver drop his face into unsteady hands.

There’s silence on the other end for as long as it takes Caitlin to realize what she just interrupted and to decide that she’s going to keep talking as though she doesn’t.

“I analyzed the powder, and your blood samples.”

“And?”

“Felicity, it’s not good.”

Felicity’s stomach drops. They’re going to die aren’t they? They’ve been poisoned and now they’re going to die and she still hasn’t fucked Oliver.

Caitlin begins rattling off a lot of scientific jargon about endorphins and oxytocin and pheromone levels and self-destructing blood mutations. It’s enough to give Felicity a headache.

“Caitlin. Just - bottom line. What does this mean?”

“What it means,” Caitlin sighs, taking a deep breath, “Is that this is some really messed up stuff, and whoever cooked it up is a mad genius. I’d be impressed if I wasn’t so concerned…”

“Concerned about what?” she asks. Oliver’s watching her with something akin to dread on his face.

“It’s an incredibly powerful aphrodisiac, one that can harm the host if they don’t reach orgasm.”

Felicity grimaces. “I, uh, already tried that Caitlin. I couldn’t, um - couldn’t arrive.”

Oliver’s eyes widen and Felicity shrugs at him helplessly. He shakes his head.

“That’s because it has to be with someone else… Whoever else took the drug. Felicity, your blood samples were reacting to each other. I’ve never seen anything like it. To counteract the effects of the drug you’d both need to um… well, reach orgasm together, at the same time.” She can’t look at Oliver, not now. But out of the corner of her eye she sees him tense up. Caitlin keeps talking. “Or at least close enough to each other for your pheromones to affect the drug in the other’s bloodstream.”

Felicity’s eyes turn heavenward. How is this her life?

“Okay. Okay fine. What happens if we just - don’t. Have sex with each other, I mean.”

For a moment Caitlin seems to stumble over her words. But professionalism wins out in the end.

“Hallucinations, high fever, heart failure… You’d, um, die.”

Oliver stands up very quickly. “What?” he growls.

“Oh, is Oliver there too? Wonderful,” Caitlin mutters. “This isn’t mortifying at all.”

“Yes, I’m sure this is all very awkward for you,” Felicity deadpans.
The silence reverberates through the foundry, and Felicity sighs. “So what you’re saying is Oliver and I have to have sex with each other or we’ll die.”

“Yes.”

She’d been having such a nice day. Minding her own business, getting some work done. She’d planned on enjoying a nice bottle of red wine tonight.

“Um. There’s something else.” Caitlin’s voice sounds small and very apologetic.

Oliver shakes his head, already dreading whatever she’s about to say. Felicity takes a deep breath and pinches the bridge of her nose beneath her glasses.

“This can’t possibly get worse.”

“Please remember in the future that you’re the one who said that.”

“Caitlin!” Oliver barks.

The words come through the phone speaker in a rush. “It’s self-replicating.”

…

Nope.

“I’m sorry, I think I misheard you.” She did. She misheard. Felicity did not just hear what she thinks she just heard.

“Every 24 hours.”

Oliver looks confused, which Felicity supposes is kinder. He gets an extra three seconds of not realizing how truly fucked they are. She’d laugh at her own pun if she didn’t want to cry.

Forcing herself to look at Oliver, she somehow manages to keep her voice even. “So not only do we have to have sex now, but we have to have sex once every 24 hours or we’ll die anyway.”

Oliver’s eyes widen and he falls back against the table in a slump. Felicity could choose to be offended - could choose to see his horror as him not wanting to sleep with her, but she’s smarter than that. The situation is nothing short of ludicrous, awkward, mortifying. She could probably think of more words, but even her dismay hasn’t managed to cool the constant thrumming of arousal under her skin, and she’s not quite up to her usual abilities.

“Caitlin,” Felicity says, her voice urgent. “Can you come up with some sort of antidote?”

“I’m already working on it, but I have to be honest. With a compound this complex and with so many possible pitfalls, it’s going to take a while.”

Oliver clears his throat. “What’s - what does a while mean?” He fidgets, thumbnail digging into his finger like he’s itching for his bowstring.

“It could take anywhere from one week to several. Maybe even a couple of months.”

The silence in the lair is deafening for a few seconds while that sinks in and then Oliver let’s out a muttered. “Fuck.”

“I’m going to get back to analyzing this.” Caitlin’s trying to be polite but Felicity hears what she’s
really saying. I’m going to let you guys get down to business.

“Cait? Before you go...” Felicity’s not sure why she’s suddenly wary of hanging up the phone, why she suddenly feels even more unsure. Except that she knows once the phone call is over it’ll be her and Oliver alone again, only now - now...

“Can you just - not tell anyone else about this. Please?”

“Of course, Felicity.” She hesitates and adds, “Good luck.” Then the line cuts off, and they really are alone.

Felicity presses her thighs together.

Good luck indeed.
In the silence that follows, Felicity’s discomfort only grows. She can’t even look at Oliver, but she can hear him shifting his weight from foot to foot.
She’s never felt this awkward in her entire life.

Maybe they should really just get it over with and-

The absurdity of the thought snaps her out of it.

“No. We can’t do this. No way.”

Oliver’s mouth is set in a grim line and she makes sure to keep her eyes on his face. Nothing good can come of her looking down at his - down at his…

Nope. “There has to be another option. This is ridiculous.”

“Felicity…” Oliver clenches his fists.

The thing is, Felicity knows if there was any other way, Caitlin would have mentioned it. But before, when neither of them could control themselves and didn’t know what was going on, it was different. They weren’t responsible for their actions. It was bigger than them.

But now… Now having sex would be a choice. A conscious decision on both their parts, and she’s not sure she can handle that.

“Are you - Are you feeling okay? Are you feeling any of the symptoms that she mentioned?”

“You mean besides for all of the wanting to - well, I mean, not that I’m feeling like I want to, you know-”

Oliver clears his throat. “What happened in the shower, that was just -”

“Right, it was dangerous and, uh, wet. Of course we-”

“Of course.”

They both fall silent once more.

Oliver tries again. “No, but I meant the other symptoms.”

Felicity thinks about it. Really pauses and takes stock of herself physically. Besides for the throbbing between her legs and the ache of arousal in her stomach, her nipples tightening with need, she isn’t feeling any of the other symptoms Caitlin mentioned.

“No. No, I’m fine.”

Oliver nods. “Me too.”

The bulge in his pants would state otherwise. Aaand she hadn’t meant to look. Felicity quickly glances towards the stairs.

When Oliver speaks again he sounds unsure. “Maybe we should - would it be so bad if we just -”

“Are you-” Felicity cuts him off. “Are you actually saying we should do this? Just - oh my god, I can’t even say it and you want to do it… My mother always said, growing up, that if you can’t even talk about having sex, how on earth do you think you’re ready to actually have it, and here we are and we can’t even say the word and -”

Oliver makes a strangled noise and turns around. “No, you’re right. It’s crazy. This whole thing is
insane.”

Yes it is. She’s wanted Oliver for years and now this is how it’s going to happen? It can’t be - she doesn’t want it to be. “Maybe we should wait.”

Oliver frowns. “Wait?”

“Yeah. Let’s take a while. Wrap our heads around this. We’re both fine for now, no one’s dying.” Yet, her brain supplies unhelpfully. She falls silent, chewing at her lip.

She is not ready for this. She needs time. “If we have to do this, if we really don’t have a choice, I want it to be on our terms, as much as it can be.”

She can’t look at Oliver. Maybe she’s said too much, given too much away, but she can’t afford to stay silent.

“You go upstairs and I’ll stay down here and we’ll wait. And if we do start experiencing any of the symptoms Caitlin mentioned we won’t be far away from each other. Until then, we can-”

“Get used to the idea of everything changing?”

She finally looks at him. Oliver’s smiling at her sadly, and she feels a moment of intense relief. He understands. Maybe not that she’s been waiting for this moment, has wanted him for so long only to have her perfect dream of it ripped away from her - but at the very least, understands that their relationship won’t ever be the same.

She feels tears prickle the corners of her eyes and shakes her head. The last thing she and Oliver need right now is for her to start crying.

“I’ll text you if I need anything.” Best not to dwell on what those things might be.

“Okay. I’ll be in the club.” He heads upstairs and with clang, the door shuts behind him.

~*~

The arousal is constant, but to be fair, she manages to go a while before the itch really starts up again.

Talking to Caitlin and Oliver managed to dull the edge of it for a while. She finishes updating the profiles for several thieves they’d caught two nights ago, calibrates a few searches that need tweaking and catalogues the contents of the few boxes she’d managed to go through earlier in her system.

But eventually, she’s out of things to do.

And she can try to deny it all she wants, but Felicity’s a smart girl. She knows there’s no escaping the situation she and Oliver have been thrown into.

She told Oliver she needed to come to terms with this and she will. She owes it to him and to herself. To herself especially.

She’s loved Oliver Queen for a long time and has wanted him for longer. She just never imagined it would happen like this.

But regardless of how either of them feel, this is how it’s happening. Forced, awkward, and it might ruin any chance she ever thought they had to be a couple.
And Felicity can be resentful about it - she can. She’s definitely within her right.

Or…

She can make her peace with the situation, give in, let herself feel, and keep it all separate from the rest of her hopes. Saying goodbye to her expectations, but not quite embracing the reality as final.

It’s like giving herself permission to still want him sets her off again, and a sudden wave of need hits her like a ton of bricks.

She gasps, biting down on her lip to try to take the edge off, but the little slice of pain only enhances it.

“Okay, Felicity, you can do this. You’re just a little turned on, it’s not like you haven’t been here before.” She glances towards the salmon ladder, and she can suddenly see Oliver exerting, lifting himself up from rung to run, grunting with his efforts as sweat drips down his abdomen, muscles slick and shining, straining with each pull.

She’s watched him dozens of times. But this time he stops, just hanging for a moment, panting and watching her.

Felicity’s frozen in her chair, mesmerized by the look in his eyes. He drops to the floor with all the grace of a hunting cat and stalks towards her. She can’t move - doesn’t want to move.

Oliver trails one hand on the surface of her desk, taking his time and circling towards her slowly, finally reaching around her and trapping her in between his arms.

He smells musky, the clean smell of his sweat overpowering her senses. They’re both utterly still for a moment, then without warning, Oliver grips her waist and lifts her up onto her desk. Computers crash and fall, but she can’t care. They can be replaced, but oh god, Oliver bites down on her shoulder hard enough to break skin. He presses the flats of his palms to her thighs, pushing up, up, under her skirt, and he doesn’t even pause, pulling her panties aside without preamble and burying two fingers deep inside her wet throbbing heat, pumping them in, out, in and out -

Felicity leans far enough back in her chair that it almost tips over and she straightens up with a startled cry. A hallucination. It was all a hallucination. She’s panting, sweating, and feels so empty - she needs to be filled, needs to be fucked, oh god…

Her heart is beating way too fast to be normal and she blanches when she feels it skip several beats.

“No,” she murmurs, “nonononono.” She shakes her head, feeling the intense heat of her forehead, her chest, with the back of her hand. How did this happen so quickly? How did the symptoms come on so fast?

Another wave of need crashes over her when she stands to try and make her way up the stairs, and she cries out, falling to the floor, wrapping one arm around her stomach even as she snakes the other down under the waistband of her pants, desperate for some sort of relief. But her fingers aren’t enough.

She’s just about to try and reach her phone when the door crashes open at the top of the stairs and she looks up to find Oliver breathing heavily at the top, wild eyed and desperate.

“Oliver,” she moans helplessly.

He’s down the stairs in seconds, and Felicity cries out when his hands grip her upper arms, lifting
her. She feels the touch like an ice-cold burn down to her fingertips, and the painful relief has her scrambling at the hem of his shirt, desperate for more.

She manages to get his shirt off just as her back slams into a pillar, and Oliver presses into her, his hands on her waist, her neck, reaching down to lift one leg to wrap around him.

He pumps his hips into hers, but it isn’t enough. The friction - god the friction is intense, but it isn’t enough.

She reaches in between them and cups Oliver’s erection, squeezing through his cargo pants. The effect is immediate. Oliver growls out her name and reaches for her other knee, lifting her completely and pushing her back into the pillar again. She tightens her legs around his waist angling her hips to try and get more friction, but as long as his pants stay on, it won’t be enough. She digs her nails into his shoulders, scraping them down his arms, and in response, Oliver pulls on her ponytail, exposing her throat, and leans down to leave harsh, biting kisses along the delicate skin.

“Oliver, Oliver!” She scrambles at the button of his pants while Oliver continues to suck at her neck.

“I - can’t - get - the - button!” she bites out through gritted teeth. His hands are on hers a moment later, and he undoes both his button and belt with ease.

“Felicity…”

“Yes.”

“Felicity, I need…”

*Oh*, she does too. “Yes, yes!”

Oliver doesn’t even bother getting his pants off, just pulls down the front of his boxer briefs, releasing his straining erection. Then he slides his hand up under her skirt to grip her panties, yanking them aside and immediately pushes into her.

The relief echoes through the foundry as they both cry out.

The emptiness she’s felt in between her legs since the shower is replaced by the delicious ache of being stretched and filled, trapped firmly between cold rock and the inescapable heat of Oliver’s body. Her skin is vibrating with need and uncontainable desire. It’s enough to drive her out of her mind.

Every instinct is screaming at her to move, and Felicity circles her hips. She needs to feel Oliver moving inside of her, needs more. She won’t be satisfied until she’s taken everything he has to give her, until Oliver has taken *her*.

Oliver groans in response and pulls out almost the entire way. Felicity keens at the emptiness, before Oliver slams back inside of her. She scrabbles for purchase against his back, wild with the frenzy of sensation.

He does it again, and again. Each time, Felicity thinks she might die of sheer want, but then Oliver fills her again and then she thinks she might die of pleasure instead.

Oliver’s breath is hot on her neck, sending chills down to her breasts and stomach. The only sound in the lair is the sound of their gasping breaths, and the sound of skin slapping against skin as Oliver thrusts into her.
Inexplicably, Felicity feels the waves of orgasm coming on. She’s reached her bridge and the relentless feeling of Oliver’s cock pounding into her and his sweat slicked skin under her hands, combines with the obscene sounds they’re making, her inability to catch her breath, her need for more, more, more.

Felicity comes with a scream, thrashing her head back and forth, unable to escape the power of her orgasm. It’s all too much and she’s terrified she’s going to shatter into a thousand pieces.

Through her sobs she hears Oliver grunt and thrust into her once, twice, three more times before he’s pressing her into the pillar so tightly she almost can’t breathe, and he’s shaking with his release. She feels his cock pulsing and spilling everything he has inside of her, prolonging her orgasm even more. Her toes curl and she tightens her legs, pulling Oliver even closer until there’s nothing left. Nothing left of either of them.

She’s barely conscious when Oliver pulls out. She winces at the sudden emptiness, at the slippery and sticky mess leaking out of her, but the ache of arousal is gone, replaced by exhaustion, and -

Felicity bites her lip to hold back tears.

But when she catches Oliver’s eyes, she sees the same emotions she’s feeling mirrored on his face.

He looks like he can barely stay on his feet, but he takes her face in both of his hands and pulls her forward, wrapping his arms around her.

They’re too tired for words. Felicity can’t even bother to clean herself up. Instead, they stumble across the foundry to the cot at the back and climb under the covers.

They have a lot to deal with in the morning, but right now?

They sleep.

Chapter End Notes

As always, a tremendous thank you to Mariah for the artwork. So grateful to have you as a counterpart in this fandom.

And thank you to Ash, Abbie and Chi for the beta work. <3
Warning for awkward sex. Just fyi. ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Artwork by fe-li-ci-ty.
Felicity wakes up first.

It’s the sort of waking up that’s like dragging yourself out of very deep, warm water, finally coming slowly to awareness. The first thing she realizes is how much she aches. Everything hurts like she ran a marathon without stretching the day before.

But it isn’t just her muscles that ache. Her head hurts and her chest aches and - there’s a very familiar soreness in between her legs.

It’s not like in the movies or the books, where what happened the night before hits her all at once. No. She wakes up knowing her life has changed and why. The knowledge sits at the back of her mind, curiously watching to see how she’s going to deal with it.

But Felicity’s surrounded by the comforting scent of Oliver Queen, and that gives her pause. Knowing Oliver is there, smelling him on her pillow, the blankets, even after what happened - it still manages to settle her, make her feel safe.

The relief of knowing that some things will never change, can never change, is so strong that she curls up into herself for a moment, soaking in the warmth of Oliver at her back.

Unfortunately, moving reminds her that she had, in fact, not showered last night before passing out. Felicity winces at the slippery and sticky mess between her legs, shifting only to find that she’s sleeping in a wet spot as well.

“Eugh.”

Holding her breath, she unwraps Oliver’s arm from around her waist, genuinely surprised when he doesn’t even stir. It’s a sign of how completely exhausted they both were that Oliver is sleeping so deeply. She pauses, standing next to the cot and watching him, worrying at her lip, before she finally waddles over to the bathroom.

She turns the water as hot as she can stand it and just let’s the heat soak into her skin for several minutes, loosening her aching muscles. She winces when the spray hits her shoulder blades, reaching around tenderly to feel the scrapes. A quick flash of Oliver pinning her against a stone pillar makes her hum in recognition. The memory makes her stomach tighten, but it’s regular arousal and passes after a moment.

At some point, Felicity realizes they’re going to have to talk about this.

She scrubs down her stomach to her thighs and spots five dark bruises the size of fingerprints. Yeah. They’re definitely going to have to talk about this. Sooner rather than later.

Okay then. She can do this. She stabbed Slade Wilson in the neck with a needle (ugh the memory still squicks her out), she can talk to Oliver about having sex.

When she’s dried off and changed into clean clothes, she briefly entertains slipping out to grab coffee before doing this. Caffeine should always accompany major life-changing discussions. But the minute she steps out of the bathroom, steam billowing out with her, she sees Oliver sitting up in bed. His eyes find hers across the room, and Felicity lets her hope for a good cappuccino die in her chest. Maybe she’s being overdramatic, but if everything else is going to hell, she at least wants coffee.

Okay. Time to do this. There’s a lot to discuss. Years of emotional baggage to sift through, years of attraction on her part, and she’d like to think his as well, but she could be wrong. Is she wrong? They should set up some sort of schedule, probably. And how much she hates that this is going to turn into
some sort of clinical, get-it-over-with type thing. Or does it have to? Maybe - maybe she should just be honest, tell him how she feels?

She stops in front of the double cot. Oliver’s looking up at her, wary, sleep ruffled and oh-so-handsome. She has so much she wants to say and somehow, out of all of the possibilities, the first thing that comes out of her mouth is:

“I’m on the pill.”

Apparently, Oliver wasn’t expecting that. “What?”

“I just thought I’d let you know, before you started to worry…”

Oliver blinks and then inhales sharply, the full extent of just how reckless they had been last night hitting him at once. It hits her at about the same time.

“So you’re not -”

“No. Definitely not.”

“Good, that’s good.”

Yes. It’s incredibly good. They both fall silent.

“Are you -?” Oliver hesitates.

“Hm?”

He clears his throat and pats the blanket down. “Are you okay? I mean - we sort of talked about how this wasn’t what either of us - I mean - how are you? Really.”

Felicity spent her morning shower thinking about exactly that question. And she’s made a decision.

“I think I’m okay? For now.” It’s true. Or at least she really wants it to be true. “What about you?”

Oliver sighs, shaking his head a little on the exhale. The corners of his mouth pull up the slightest bit.

“I need a shower.”

Felicity hums in understanding.

“But other than that, for now, I’m okay too.”

It should be enough. She should just take it and go. Coffee is waiting. This was a good conversation and everything is fine.

“You realize we’re going to have to do this all again later.”

Oliver looks down at his hands, rubbing his thumb over his palm.

“I’m sorry,” Felicity says, shaking her head, lips pursed and eyes closed. She takes a deep breath. “Of course you do, it’s kind of inescapable, right? I don’t know why I brought it up, except I am going to have to go eventually. I have a job, and I need things, like food and, and - um, well, fresh underwear, honestly.”

Oliver snorts.
Felicity’s on a roll now. “And we should probably plan it better this time around so things don’t get quite as - uh, intense, I guess we could call it? Take the day, you know, and then meet up tonight to - yeah.”

Oliver let’s her fall silent before smiling at her. God, how he can still smile at her at all makes her love him just a little bit more than she did yesterday.

“I think that sounds like a good plan. The coffee part especially. After a shower.”

“Had mine, already,” she replies smugly.

“Hmm. Strawberry shampoo.”

And Felicity doesn’t really know what to say to that, so she doesn’t say anything at all. Which gets awkward very quickly, because Oliver seems to be waiting for something.

“Um, Felicity - I need to-” he nods towards the bathroom. And okay, he’s technically dressed, but Felicity understands the need for privacy after -

“Oh! Of course, sorry, yes. I’ll - uh - I’ll just get out of your way then.”

“I’ll come by later?” They both wince at the innuendo before mutually deciding to ignore it.

“Yeah, that’s - my place. That’ll be good.” And really there’s no way to avoid this being completely awkward all the way through, so Felicity just turns and leaves.

Coffee here she comes.

~*~

The Applied Sciences Division at Queen Consolidated is Felicity’s empire. It took her a long time to build it back up from the ashes of her own destruction (a fact no one ever needs to know about). But she likes to look at it as her domain - with her as the gracious and brilliant queen (slash - magnanimous dictator…), and her employees as her loyal techno-serfs and vassals.

And okay, maybe the metaphor is a little medieval, but she likes it.

She can always count on finding some balance in a world of her own construction, where she makes the rules. And when everything else in her life is falling apart, Applied Sciences is terra firma beneath her six inch heels.

She needs the firm ground of the 37th floor this morning. Needs it very badly.

She’s got reports on her desk, as well as the annual budget estimate waiting for her review, but she heads for the development floor instead. She’s on her second cup of coffee, the heat of her latte warming her hands through the cardboard cup. She cradles it, humming to herself as she moves from station to station.

She has several projects currently underway, most of which will turn a hefty profit for the company. A new solar powered smartphone. An alternative for the lithium battery. A satellite that would revolutionize communications across the world, if they could just work out the last kinks…

She’d hand-picked teams to work on each, reviewed the schematics with them, defined the project parameters, helped out with coding, with research, with everything.

Felicity has a hard time letting go.
Xiu-Yan calls her over for some help on a particularly tricky bit of code, and then Vova needs her help with a chemical compound that’s been giving his team some trouble. She’s in and out of both tech labs and chem labs, and before she knows it, she’s managed to immerse herself in work enough for everything else to fall away for a while. It’s just what she needed - time to let her brain restart.

It’s the first answer to every technical problem, after all.

By the time she sits down at her desk, it’s early afternoon. She grabbed a sandwich from a delivery boy at some point, had a third cup of coffee, and is feeling more like herself than she expected to.

Her calendar pings at a quarter to three, and she glances at her meeting reminders.

Oh.

Felicity frowns. She’d forgotten the meeting that Marketing had set with her about the new smartphone.

She hovers over the “Reschedule” button, and purses her lips. She really can’t. She’s rescheduled this meeting three times already, and she knows there’s a deadline. Marketing needs the phone specs for the tech conference in Vegas.

She hates marketing meetings. Lots of fluff put down on paper that doesn’t actually say anything at all, and just hides how incredible some of these tech pieces and applications actually are. Instead of just telling clients that the phone uses solar power to charge the phone and generate personal wifi, they have to write things like: Solar optimization functions as the Q-100’s power source and enables users to produce a Global Connectivity hotspot.

Ugh.

And they need her approval on all of it. She’s a genius, but even she has to buckle down and wade through the jigsaw puzzle of words until she understands what it is they’re trying to say.

If Felicity’s totally honest with herself, though, she also just isn’t sure now is the right time to meet with-

“Knock-knock,” someone says from her doorway, knocking on the glass pane.

“Evan!” Felicity exclaims, biting her lip and glancing back towards her computer. “I was just about to - uh-”

“Cancel our meeting again?”

Dammit.

Evan steps into the spacious office, his charming smile brightening the room. “See, I thought you might, so I figured I’d come a little early. This way, you’ll be able to attend to any pressing matters that mysteriously popped up during our original meeting time…”

She can’t help but feel a little flustered at being caught so completely, and only about 30% of her flurry is connected to how well Evan fills out his pale pink, button down dress shirt.

“Yes, well, uh - Evan. As you know, I’m incredibly busy. I currently have a number of projects that require my full - “

“Felicity, I am fully aware of how valuable your time is. Ten minutes is all I ask.”
Double dammit.

It’s like he knows he’s won. He grins (god, the man is attractive), and sits down across from her, opening his laptop.

“So…” He draws out the word, turning the machine so Felicity can see the screen. “I’ve already put together the presentation for our clients. I just need a few details from you, and your final approval, and then I’ll be out of your hair.”

“Oh, no, Evan - you don’t have to - I don’t need you out of my hair or anything like that. My hair is all yours. I mean - “

Seven months as Queen Consolidated’s head of Applied Sciences and everyone knows about Felicity’s verbal gaffes by now. Evan laughs, showing those perfect teeth. “I know what you mean, Felicity. I also know how much you hate this part, so let’s just get it over with, okay?”

In the end, it takes twenty minutes. She actually does have a few issues with the presentation that she asks Evan to fix, and there are a couple of finer points to the phone that she needs to explain to him in depth. It helps that he’s not too hard to look at, or that he’s got a great sense of humor and an even greater laugh.

Honestly, Felicity had been considering asking him out for a while - with Oliver seemingly determined to play the lonely hero role… Evan is sweet, uncomplicated, and so very good looking. She could imagine having a great time with him. There was only so long a girl could wait, or keep herself happy with battery-powered comforts…

Well, last night had not been battery-powered, that was for sure. She chews at her lip as Evan closes his laptop and stands to leave.

It had been real, but at the same time, it wasn’t real at all. And now she’s stuck all over again - waiting. Asking Evan out when she’s in the midst of - whatever this is going to become, is not an option.

“Good luck at the conference, Evan.”

He turns at the door. “Thanks, Felicity. I’m looking forward to my next chance to get tangled up in your hair.” The wink that goes along with his grin draws a smile from her.

“Me too.”

She sighs and gets back to the budget report.

~*~

She orders take out. Sweet and sour chicken, eggrolls, chow mein, broccoli beef. She probably orders about four times what she and Oliver can eat together, but her sandwich feels like forever ago, and food is comforting in times of stress. Which this definitely is.

She’s not sure what she thinks will happen when Oliver shows up; that he’ll cut straight to the chase and pull his shirt off, or that he’ll just scoff at the food, have sex with her and leave? She knows it’s ridiculous and extremely unlikely, but the whole situation is way weirder than anything else she’s ever had to deal with, and she’s dealt with some weird and crazy shit.

All she knows is she still hasn’t wrapped her head around all of this, so when the doorbell rings, she answers with a firm stance, chin jutting out, despite the nerves twisting her gut.
“I really think we should eat something before any funny business goes on here. We need to keep up our energy levels.”

Oh god, that makes it sound like she thinks they’re going to be having marathon sex. But she stands firm - only minimal wincing - and tilts her head, waiting for his answer.

Oliver looks totally bemused. “Okay?” he says. “Uh - that sounds reasonable. Is there food?”

She steps aside, letting him in, and gesturing to the kitchen.

“Chiang’s?”

Felicity nods. “Is there anywhere better?”

Oliver makes a satisfied hum and sheds his coat.

They sit at the counter, digging through the cartons with their chopsticks. Oliver’s much better with them than she is, which she figures makes sense, all things considered.

“You know, I knew a guy in Hong Kong who made the best dumplings. Street vendor in Kowloon. Never tasted anything like them,” Oliver says around a bite of chow mein. “Nothing since comes close, and I’ve looked.”

Oliver so rarely talks about his years away as anything other than painful. These unexpected little insights are like drops of light.

“Chiang’s dumplings don’t do it for you?” she asks, snatching an eggroll.

He shakes his head, leaning on his elbow and regarding the piece of broccoli suspended between his chopsticks. “No. They’re good, I’ll give him that. But nothing like Zhi’s.” Oliver shrugs, popping the broccoli into his mouth.

They fall silent, enjoying the food. Felicity is very aware of him sitting next to her as they finish up, and she recognizes the effects of the drug, though for now, there’s no urgency to it.

“We’re going to have to get used to this, aren’t we?”

Oliver puts his chopsticks down with a sigh. “I guess so. Until Caitlin’s figured it all out.”

“Is this -” she hesitates, because more than anything else, the thing she’s really been afraid of is that they’ll never be able to come back from this. And she doesn’t know how to bring that up.

She slides off her stool and comes to stand in front of Oliver.

“You’re my best friend.” As the words leave her mouth, she realizes she has never said that to him before. And by the look on his face, it takes him completely by surprise as well.

“You are,” she continues earnestly, “And I’m worried this is going to ruin all of that. But at the same time, I don’t know if I can do this without letting myself do this. Does that make any sense?”

Oliver furrows his brow, the way he does whenever he’s trying to work through something particularly confusing. “I - no.” He shakes his head, looking apologetic.

Felicity blows out a frustrated breath. “Okay - I think what I’m trying to say is that I can’t do this if I’m going to constantly feel like I shouldn’t be enjoying it. It’s a really messed up situation and I think you and I are probably doing mental gymnastics to not let it totally screw us up, because neither
of us really consented to this, but there it is. And since at least we’re in it together, and hopefully Caitlin will have an antidote soon, maybe it would be easier if we just looked at it as a sort of, I don’t know, friends with benefits thing?”

Oliver tucks his chin down, eyeing her. “Friends with benefits.” He rolls the words around his tongue, like he’s tasting them.

“Yeah,” Felicity shrugs. “You know, just two friends, diagnosed with the same - uh - problem, helping each other out.”

“With sex.”

“Well, yeah. That would be the ‘benefit’ part.” She can’t help the heat that rises to her cheeks.

It occurs to her for the first time that she doesn’t really know what Oliver thinks about all of this. She’s done most, if not all of the talking about it. Maybe she’s getting it all wrong? What if Oliver doesn’t want to be okay with it? What if he can’t come to terms with it?

“Okay.”

Felicity blinks. “Okay?”

Oliver nods. “Yes. I think it’s a good idea.”

“Really?” She sounds incredulous, even to her own ears.

“You don’t? Felicity, it’s your idea…” Oliver’s looking confused again, and Felicity decides to just let it go.

They’re adults. And they’re going to handle this like adults.

“Okay. Good, it’s settled then. Any ground rules? Things to avoid, what’s okay and what isn’t, stuff like that?”

Oliver slides off his stool, stepping into her personal space. “Felicity.” Gosh, he’s tall. “If we’re going to agree to enjoy this, how about we just try to go with it?”

He makes a good point, but there was something else important she’d wanted to say. Oliver in such close proximity, and with the drug working again, is distracting. “Condoms!”

“Huh?”

“I know I said I was on the pill, but I figure we should use condoms too, if for nothing else than for the sheer volume of sex we’re going to be having. I mean, the pill is 99.9% effective if taken properly, and I do take it properly, but that still leaves a tenth of a percent chance for a mistake, and if we have sex 1000 times, I’m not sure I’m willing to deal with those odds.”

“Felicity do you really think we’re going to end up having sex every day for the next - “ Oliver pauses. It’s cute that he needs to work the math out in his head, but she’ll never tell him so. “Two and a half years - ish?” He seems to realize what he’s arguing about. “You know what, it’s fine. I agree, condoms are very smart.”

That’s really everything. “Now what?”

Oliver leans down towards her. “Can I - can I kiss you?”
And yeah, that would make sense. They’ve got to start somewhere. “Um, yes. Sure.”

“Okay.” Oliver nods and brings his hands up, hesitating for a second before cupping her face. Felicity sees his adam’s apple bob when he swallows, leaning towards her slowly.

She bursts into giggles seconds before his lips touch hers, and Oliver pulls back like he’s been tazed. “Uh-”

“I’m sorry. I’m sorry - I just. Okay, it’s a little bit weirder doing this without feeling like we’ll die if we don’t.”

Oliver folds his lips over his teeth and nods, like he can’t help but acknowledge the truth of that. “Alright, I’m okay. Let’s try again?”

Oliver sighs out a deep breath and stills her face in his hands again. He runs his thumbs over her cheekbones, and the sensation travels straight down to her shoulder blades, but it’s so - so - She feels the laughter bubbling up again and she tries to hold it back, she really does, but the second Oliver leans close again, it bursts from her in a loud raspberry.

Oliver rolls his eyes towards the ceiling, and Felicity grips his shirt, leaning forward and still laughing. “No! No, I’m sorry! I’m sorry - it’s not you, I promise, I can do this! I can -mmph!”

Oliver doesn’t wait to give her another try, he tilts her face up and catches her off guard, and it’s the surprise that finally soberes her up. Suddenly laughing is the last thing on her mind.

Oliver makes a pleased sound - mission accomplished, and begins walking backwards towards her stairs. Felicity follows, teeth clacking against his when she missteps. The fire and urgency from their last time hasn’t built back up yet, and Felicity is very aware of every movement she makes, trying to not trip and fall on the steps. Oliver tries to pick her up on the landing, but her skirt is too constricting and he gives up. They make-out against the wall for a minute, the silence in her house and the sounds they’re making ringing in Felicity’s ears.

She pulls away from him outside of her bedroom and takes a step back, flushing but determined, as she unzips the back of her dress and lets it slip from her shoulders to pool around her feet. Oliver’s eyes roam down her figure, and before he can catch her eyes again, Felicity takes his hand and leads him into the room.

She shivers a little, the cool air of her room raising goosebumps on her bare skin, but Oliver pulls his own shirt off, unbuttoning his pants, and pushes her back gently onto the mattress. His hands and body are warm, covering her, moving over her, making her sigh in appreciation. She leans up on her elbows to kiss him again, missing his mouth the first time and getting his chin instead. She gets it the second time, and shivers for a totally different reason when Oliver’s hands trail over her side and around to her back.

“Can I -?” He fingers her bra strap and Felicity nods. He makes quick work of it, adding it to the pile of clothes building up on the floor, and leans down to take a nipple in his mouth.

“Oh!” Felicity gasps, arching her back. “Mmmm, that’s nice.”

He sucks and nibles, hands moving down her sides, his thumbs dipping beneath the waistband of her totally boring underwear.

She realizes Oliver’s been doing all the work and runs her fingers through his hair, gripping the sides
of his head. He moves over her breast, leaving a trail of kisses across her chest and bites down gently on her other nipple. Felicity drags her nails over his scalp and Oliver groans, grinding his hips down into hers.

Heat prickles down her spine - the effects of the drug increasing, or the feeling of Oliver’s hardness against her stomach, or a mixture of both. She doesn’t know, but she wants him. She sits up, pushing him back, and slides her hands under his boxer briefs, pushing down. They get stuck around his thighs, along with his pants, and his erection hangs forward, hot and heavy.

And okay. She hadn’t really gotten a chance to see it last night. They’d been too rushed, too frazzled. But now she can’t help herself - she reaches out and grips him, feeling the heat of him through the velvety skin.

Oliver is breathing heavily, watching her with dark eyes that roll and fall shut when she rubs her thumb over the tip. He swallows roughly and pumps into her hand, once, twice, before leaning down sideways on his arm to let Felicity pull his clothes off the rest of the way.

She wonders what he’d taste like.

No. She’s not ready for that yet.

Oliver leans back over her, and she lays back to accommodate him. The feeling of his skin on hers, the rough hairs of his calves and thighs tickling against her own smooth legs, his large, powerful hands roaming everywhere they can reach - by the time Oliver pulls her panties down and dips a finger inside of her, she’s dripping wet and wants something much thicker and larger filling her.

“Felicity,” Oliver’s voice is like gravel, “where are the condoms?”

“The what?” She’s squirming under his hands, his thumb brushing too lightly over her clit to do anything but tease her.

“Condoms. Remember? One in a thousand chance?”

Oh. Right. As much as she wants to say “Fuck it,” she’s too sensible to back down. “Bedside table. Top drawer.”

She whines at the loss of his fingers, listening to the squeaky slide of the drawer and the sounds of Oliver rummaging through it.

“Um - no condoms.”

“No, they’re there. I just bought a pack last week.”

Oliver raises an eyebrow at that, and Felicity narrows her eyes. “It never hurts to be prepared, okay?”

He puts his hands up in defense. “Okay, sorry. But they really aren’t there.”

Felicity sighs and sits up, leaning over to rummage through the drawer herself.

“Dammit. Where are they?” She opens the bottom drawer. Not there either. “Ugh, I must have put them in the bathroom. One sec.”

Disregarding her nudity in her exasperation, she heads into her ensuite, where she finds the box of condoms traitorously settled on the shelf under her sink.

She grabs a string of them, steps back out and stops, the image of Oliver sitting on his knees, on her
bed and completely naked, hitting her all at once. He’s all muscle and barely contained power
straining at everything from his shoulders to his cock, and he’s watching her intently from her
flowery bedspread. Felicity glances down at her own nakedness and swallows. She wants to cover
up under his scrutiny - standing in front of him like this is completely different than being under him,
cought up in the moment.

“Got them,” she says, her voice small. She rips one off the string and takes a few tentative steps to
the edge of the bed, biting her lip.

“Should I - ?” she waves the packet vaguely towards his erection.

“Uh - yeah. yes, that would be good.”

“Okay.” She opens it with shaky fingers and then very carefully reaches for him, rolling it on.
They’re both breathing heavily, tension crackling nervously between them.

Oliver gently pulls her forward, dipping his head to kiss her. “Ready?”

Felicity nods, and Oliver guides her to lie down beneath him, sliding a hand down her thigh to her
knee and pulling it up to his waist. He grips his length with his other hand, rubbing it over her
entrance and finally sliding in until he’s completely buried inside of her.

They both sigh - she can’t speak for Oliver but having him inside her feels right. She knows it’s the
drug in her system reacting to his, but still.

Oliver starts to move, slowly at first - pulling out nearly the whole way and then pushing back in
with firm, controlled strokes. Felicity lifts both of her arms to push back against her headboard,
giving herself leverage and pushing back against him.

It’s unwavering and consistent and - nice. There’s a low flame in her belly, but the pace, the position,
Isn’t doing much more than keeping it steady.

“Lift my leg up higher,” she tells him, grunting at a particularly hard thrust. Oliver lifts her leg from
around his hip, straightening it to rest up on his shoulder.

The next thrust goes much deeper, and Felicity arches up into him. The rhythm doesn’t change, but
Oliver’s hitting a spot deep inside of her that has her raking her nails down his back.

“Yessss,” she hisses out.

Another thrust, and another. Her bed creaks loudly with each one, Oliver grunting from time to time
above her. Once again, she finds the heat in her abdomen waning, and tries to get her hand in-
to between their bodies and down to rub her clit.

Why is she having such a hard time with this? Last night Oliver had barely touched her and she’d
come flying apart at the seams.

“Just - can you - can you wait a second?” she grits her teeth, trying not to yank at the hairs on
Oliver’s stomach, leading down to his groin. He pulls back sharply with a yelp when she fails, and
slips out of her.

“Sorry, sorry.” Grimacing, she beckons him forward again. “Okay, go.”

“You sure?” Oliver is panting, his chest rising and falling with each short breath.
Felicity nods, and Oliver pushes her knee up to her chest, filling her in one quick thrust.
That’s better. She rubs little circles over her clit as Oliver’s thrusts become harder, faster.

“You okay? Getting there?”

“Yeah, just keep on going. Keep this rhythm.”

She’s getting close, her skin tingling along her spine, nipples tightening. If she could just - she needs more, something, anything…

“Faster,” she gasps, working her clit frantically. Oliver picks up the pace, but it isn’t working. She’s right there at her bridge, so close to tipping over, so close -

Oliver shudders above her and comes with a groan.

Oh. Well then.

Silence settles over them like a wool blanket in summer.

Oliver pulls out and sits back on his knees, and Felicity looks up towards the ceiling, folding her lips over her teeth.

“Ohay,” she finally says, still pointedly looking anywhere but at him. But she’s honestly at a loss for what to say.

“You didn’t.”

“No.”

“Fuck,” he mutters, and his weight shifts. She hears him pad to the bathroom, followed by the sound of running water.

What had Caitlin said? They both needed to orgasm, close enough to each other for their pheromones to counteract the drug.

The itch under her skin is starting to feel uncomfortable. She has another hour she thinks, tops, until the fever starts, along with everything else.

For some reason, she’d assumed the drug would just magically make them both more susceptible to orgasming, based on last night. She realizes now with a modicum of horror, that they were lucky - that the danger and desperation had set them off - and that they could have just as likely died last night, instead of -

“I’m sorry,” Oliver says from her bathroom doorway.

Felicity sighs and finally sits up, turning towards him. “Not your fault. You did everything right. I was just - too in my head.” She rubs her hands down her face and then drops them into her lap.

“Why did I think this would be easy?”

“How are you feeling?” He asks, and she knows he’s asking about the drug.

“Off. Like my skin doesn’t fit right,” she says.

Oliver nods. “Me too.”
“Really? But you - I thought that would at least take the edge off for a little while?”

He shakes his head, crossing his arms over his chest, and Felicity realizes for the first time that in addition to looking very uncomfortable, he’s still completely hard.

“So now what?”

Oliver frowns. “We try again. There’s not really much else we can do.”

And Felicity has no idea how she’s ever supposed to orgasm when this feels like the most clinical sex in the history of two people sleeping together. Nothing quite says ‘screaming orgasm’ like ‘we have to keep doing it until we get it right’.

"But you're wrong," Oliver says, pushing off the wall and dropping his arms.

Felicity narrows her eyes at him.

“I didn’t do everything right.” He crosses the room slowly, with measured steps that spark a trail down Felicity’s spine. Something’s changed in Oliver’s demeanor - in the way he’s looking at her. She leans slightly back, tilting her head to look up at him.

“Lie down on your back,” he tells her softly.

“Why?” There’s apprehension in her voice, even though she knows why. But playing innocent is a last ditch attempt at letting her brain catch up.

“Because I can do better.”

This isn’t just following instinct anymore - this is Oliver stating his genuine intent to make her come.

Her breathing hitches, heart thrumming in her chest, and in one moment, she’s more aroused than she’s been all evening.

She pushes herself backwards up the bed, Oliver following in a crawl above her, the muscles of his arms flexing.

“Let me do better?” His eyes are intense. She’d look away if she didn’t feel like a deer caught in the headlights. All she can do is nod, her voice has completely escaped her.

His hand is trailing down her side a moment later, down past her stomach, her hipbone, down to the center of her. He leans down, placing hot kisses on her neck, sucking on her shoulder, and buries two fingers inside of her.

“Ohhh,” she sighs, hips bucking. Oliver thumbs her clit and moves downwards, kissing her collarbone, her breast, biting lightly at one nipple, then the other. His fingers keep up their rhythm as he nips at her stomach, down to the junction of her thighs. His stubble scrapes deliciously against her skin, and when he suddenly sucks on the skin just inside of her hip, she cries out.

His tongue replaces his fingers a second later.

“Oh, oh! Oh my god!”

He doesn’t give her a second to let her brain catch up with her body. He alternates his fingers and his tongue, sucking, licking, moving inside of her, until she’s begging to come. She’s so close - so close - just a little bit more.
Oliver pulls away, wiping his mouth on the inside of her thigh. She almost sobs.

“Please, please,” she says, voice small, eyes screwed shut with need. They fly open when Oliver lifts one of her legs and enters her in one hard thrust.

“Oliver!”

His brow is furrowed in concentration, eyes intense and staring down at her. He gets a hand in between them, circling her clit roughly. His thrusts are hard and deep and inescapable.

“Come on Felicity - come.”

Oh god.

She’s gasping for breath, chanting his name in rhythm with her need and each thrust.

When she comes it’s with a wail, her entire body going taut and arching off the bed. Oliver keeps up the relentless pace of his thrusts and his fingers on her clit, fucking her into a state of complete frenzy - her orgasm going from intense to mind-melting.

When he stiffens above her, the feeling of him pulsing inside of her prolongs her orgasm until she’s a quivering mess.

They end up panting and gasping next to each other.

“Okay, yeah, that was definitely - yeah.” Felicity says, wiping at her brow.

“Told you I could do better.” Oliver’s just as out of breath as she is.

Felicity can’t help it - she bursts out laughing. “Understatement - definite understatement.”

Last night had been too much - too intense, too scary, too life-changing. But now, she’s letting the haze of post-orgasmic bliss wash over her. It hums through her, and she can tell it’s more than just the usual endorphin high.

“How are you feeling now?” she asks.

“Mmmmmm.”

She has to turn to look at Oliver, because she’s never heard him make a sound that content. His eyes are closed, hands resting on his chest.

“It worked.”

Oliver cracks an eye open and nods.

“This is such a weird situation.”

He nods again.

“So now what?”

Oliver sighs. “Felicity, can we just - we agreed we were just going to go with it. Let’s do that.”

She’s over-analyzing again, and he’s right. She falls silent and just focuses on the pleasant buzz in her toes.
They both doze at some point. Felicity wakes up to find Oliver’s draped a blanket over her, and is pulling his shoes on.

“You going?” she asks, her voice muffled and sleepy.

“Yeah, Digg called. There was a robbery on Fifth.”

“You need me to-“

“No, we should be able to manage.”

She wonders if her relief shows on her face. She hasn’t seen John since this started, and even though she knows she’s being unreasonable, Felicity can’t help but feel like he’ll just know the second he sees her.

“Okay.” She sits up, holding the blanket to her chest. “Um, so - tomorrow?”

“My place?” Oliver asks. “Same thing?”

“Okay.”

Then Oliver’s gone, and Felicity sighs. Maybe she’ll ask him to order Italian.

She rolls out of bed and heads for the shower.

Chapter End Notes

I've been very under the weather lately and work has been... not good. Trying to keep on top of updates. I'll let everyone know on my blog if there are any changes. <3 As always - thank you to my darling betas and to Mariah for the artwork.

Next Update: February 8th.
The first few days are still pretty awkward, but also hot and needy and fast. They meet every evening for dinner and - well - sex. One night at her place, one night at his, back and forth. By the end of the week, they’ve almost settled into a routine.

Felicity tells Oliver about her day, they talk shop and tech upgrades for the foundry, and then fuck
against the wall, or on the sofa, or in a bed.

Oliver starts to recognize the sounds Felicity makes when she’s close to orgasm, and Felicity realizes that if she wants to get Oliver to come with her, digging her nails into his ass works wonders.

Felicity calls Caitlin every day for updates.

“Have you tried synthesizing the compound and adding a beta blocker? That might prevent the heart from -” Felicity falls silent, listening to the other end of the line while Oliver takes another bite of his curry.


She hangs up with a sigh.

“No luck?”

Felicity shakes her head. “She’s got a few ideas she’s waiting on. She needs special equipment and it’ll take at least a week to deliver it. She’s doing everything else she can think of in the meanwhile.”

Oliver nods, putting his fork down. “She’ll figure it out.”

They head upstairs two minutes later, already half undressed.

~*~

On day eight Oliver comes by the office.

“Oliver! Hey, I didn’t know you were stopping by.”

He shrugs and steps inside. “I brought you coffee. Figured you could probably use a break. Walter told me you’ve been completely crazy at work.”

“Oh, yes.” Felicity says, drawing out the ‘s’. She takes the large cup in both hands, inhaling deeply. “Ugh, today has been the day from hell.”

“Want to talk about it?” he asks. He genuinely wants to know. He’s been taking more and more of an interest in Queen Consolidated lately. Walter took over after the siege of the city. He was unanimously voted in by the board, who felt that stability was what QC needed now more than ever. Oliver agreed with them.

Walter’s first act as CEO had been to appoint Felicity as head of Applied Sciences.

“It looks like we won’t be meeting our deadline on the communications satellite, and we have delivery dates set for several big security firms in Europe, not to mention a few here as well, and the company’s going to have to rescind and take a big financial hit. I’m still hoping we’ll be able to have it done sooner rather than later, but that’s not good enough.”

Felicity sinks onto her sofa with a groan, toeing off her shoes, and Oliver sits across from her.

“What happened?”

She sighs. “I told them. I drew up the specs, I consulted with my data scientists, and I gave the board a date. It wasn’t good enough. They decided I could do it faster. Well,” Felicity laughs bitterly and takes a sip from her coffee. “Mmm, so good. Thank you.”
“And Walter?”

Felicity waves her hand. “Walter trusted my original time estimate, but you know what the board is like.”

Unfortunately, he does.

“So I’m going to be working quadruple shifts, just to try to cut our losses. I have two tech teams that are incredibly unhappy about their sudden impeded freedom, another three I’ve diverted from their own projects to work on this one, and even though I told the board this would happen, it’s all still somehow my fault.”

Oliver is having unwelcome flashbacks to his time as CEO and dealing with the vultures on the Queen Consolidated board. Only it had never really mattered to him what they thought. That had been one of his main failings as head of the company. But this is ridiculous.

“Isn’t there anything you can do?”

“Mmm,” Felicity hums, mid-sip. “It’s ironic, I usually spend all of my time trying to avoid marketing and PR meetings, but that’s my best bet just now. In fact, I’ve got a meeting with someone who might be able to help -” she glances at her watch, “- oh! Now actually.”

As though speaking it made it so, there’s a knock on the glass wall.

“Felicity?” A blonde man with a wide smile is tilting his head from where he stands in the doorway.

“We have a meeting?”

“Yes, Evan, come on in. I was just having some coffee with a friend.”

Oliver frowns.

“I can come back if you want?” Evan gestures towards the door.

“No, no, it’s fine. This is important.”

“I’ll see myself out,” Oliver says, standing.

Felicity mouths another thank you at him, holding up the coffee cup, and he nods.

As he’s walking out, he hears the Evan guy ask, “Was that Oliver Queen?”

He doesn’t hear Felicity’s response.

~*~

Oliver checks his phone for the fifth time in twenty minutes.

No new messages.

The ticking of the wall clock practically echoes in the silence of his loft, and each second that passes feels like a pin-prick on the back of his neck.

Cartons of food sit open on the counter. They were steaming over an hour ago, but now the food is cold and congealed.
He’s not sure why he hasn’t called Felicity yet. Part of it is because it would feel weird calling to ask where she is when he knows she’s coming over to have sex with him. Like a twisted and really odd booty call. He’s seen her naked, felt her coming around him - fuck, he’s tasted her, but calling her to find out why she’s late would feel like crossing a line…

Then again, he’s not sure why Felicity hasn’t called him. Called, messaged, emailed. It’s bordering on irresponsible. Both of their lives are at stake here, and if Felicity realized she was going to be late, she should have -

Oliver sighs at the uneaten takeaway.

He’s just going to call. What if she’s so busy she forgot? He can be at Queen Consolidated in twenty minutes if he needs to be.

He’s just unlocking his phone when there’s a quick rap on his door and a second later Felicity’s flying in in a whirlwind of color and energy.

“I’m so sorry I’m late,” she says in a rush, dumping her coat and bag on the sofa. “Things got really crazy after you left. The board called an impromptu meeting to let me know even more how displeased they are, and of course, me being me, I might have told them that if they’d wanted the satellite ready so soon, they should have designed it themselves, and that didn’t go over well…” She pulls the tie from her hair, letting it fall loose around her shoulders and mussing it roughly with both hands. It’s a mess when she let’s them drop and immediately steps out of her heels.

“Of course, all of this was made even worse by the fact that I have been itching in my own skin for the last hour, but was stuck promising Walter that I wouldn’t hack the board and alter their birth certificates to give them stupid names.” After her shoes, she shimmies out of her pantyhose as Oliver watches, nonplussed, and follows those with her skirt, never missing a beat in her ongoing work rant.

“Good news is, it looks like Evan’s going to be able to smooth things over with our buyers, so there’s that. Anyway,” she finishes, unabashedly dropping her underwear, “I’m here now, so let’s do this.” She puts her hands on the counter, bending forward and looking at him over her shoulder expectantly.

He’d assumed she had just gotten caught up at work. That everything got busy. But that didn’t change the fact that he’d been sitting for over an hour waiting for her, not knowing whether it would even be okay to call her and ask where she was.

The whole situation was impossible.

But he’d ordered dinner.

Fine.

He’s already hard - a combination of the drug and Felicity bent half naked over his counter. If that’s all she wants, he can give it to her.

He pulls off his shirt and unbuttons his pants, pulling a condom out of his pocket. He rolls it on as she watches at a distance and then steps right up behind her. Something in her eyes flickers as she watches him him, uncertain. But he’s ready.

He grips her hip with one hand, pushes her back down with the other until her breasts are pressed to the counter and enters her in one quick thrust.

“Oh!” Felicity exclaims in surprise.
She’s completely ready for him. After a week of drug-induced sex, he knows how wet she gets without even trying. And she’s been itching to be filled for the last hour, just like he’s been itching to fuck her.

He pulls out the whole way before thrusting again, roughly. Felicity scrabbles against the marble, finally reaching over the counter to grip the other edge.

He sets a pounding, relentless rhythm, while Felicity moans beneath him. He fucks her like he wants to, hard and fast and angry. It’s all she needs him for, just to fuck her and make her come. He can do that.

He pulls out of her completely, fingers tightening on her hips, and Felicity whines at the loss. But he pulls her back from the counter, forcing her to stand straight and whirls her around. She looks dazed, the drug doing its work, and he grips her waist, lifting her onto the counter. She cries out in surprise at the cold marble touching her skin, but he ignores her, spreading her legs wide, and crouching down without warning to thrust his tongue into her cunt.

“Oh my GOD!” Felicity yells, throwing her head back and immediately closing her legs, tightening her thighs around Oliver’s head, knees over his shoulders. He licks into her, savoring the musky flavor, sucking at her lips, stroking her with the flat of his tongue, finally lavishing attention on her clit.

He strokes it, nipping and soothing, and then lightens the pressure to tiny swipes of his tongue. Felicity’s mewling above him, panting, digging her nails into his scalp, and Oliver gets a fierce satisfaction from teasing her to the point where she’s practically crying for him.

Firm, hard strokes once again, Felicity bows her back lifting her ass off the counter, resting her weight completely on his shoulders, and then he goes back to feather light kisses again, hedging her.

“No, no,” she pants, legs shaking, desperate for more. He gives it to her a minute later and Felicity cries out, once again going tensing, so close to an orgasm he’ll decide when to give her.

 Barely there licks and sucks once again, and Felicity is whimpering above him. “Please,” she begs, voice a broken whisper, “please.”

This time, he takes her the whole way. Felicity comes with a scream, pressing down on his shoulders, spasmimg around his tongue when he thrusts it inside of her to taste her orgasm.

She’s barely come down from it when he’s lifting her up and carrying her across the room to prop her up against the refrigerator. He slides right into her, feeling her after-tremors around his dick, and groans in satisfaction. Felicity’s making little, needy noises. She’s still sensitive from her orgasm, he can tell, but he’s giving her no quarter. He sets a punishing tempo, the fridge rattling with each thrust.

“Touch yourself, Felicity,” he growls. They’re the first words he’s said to her all evening, he realizes, and his next thrust rocks the fridge back. Something crashes inside of it.

Felicity gets a hand in-between them. He feels her knuckles moving and shifting as she circles her clit with her fingers. His grunts combine with her moans, which increase in pitch and volume with each of his thrusts He’s going to fuck her straight into another orgasm, he realizes with a thrill.

“Come, Felicity. Come now. I want to feel it.” He gets the words out in bursts, panting and gritting his teeth with the strain of holding her while he fucks her, and she clamps down around his cock, nails digging into his back. She cries out wordlessly, the sound extending into a high-pitched wail. And he keeps on fucking her through it.
He’s so close. His balls are tightening and the feel of Felicity’s wet heat clenching around him vibrates through to his lower back, settling there like pins and needles.

But he can’t keep holding her.

He lifts her up again, pushing her down firmly on his cock and walks across to the sofa. God she’s still coming. Her arms are wrapped around him and she’s buried her face in his neck. Her breath is hot on his skin and she’s shuddering in his arms. He needs to come. Now.

He lays her down on the sofa, unwrapping her legs from around his waist and lifting both up to rest on his shoulders, and with one knee on the cushions and one foot on the floor, hand gripping the back of the couch, he fucks her to his own orgasm.

There’s silence while they both come down, breathing heavy in the silence of Oliver’s loft.

He slowly lowers Felicity legs down from his shoulders and settles down on top of her, still unable to move. She’s still wearing her cardigan.

“What was that?” she finally asks. “Not that I’m complaining, because wow, but-?”

Now, with post-coital relief rippling through him, and Felicity soft and pliant beneath him, Oliver feels distinctly ridiculous.

He shakes his head. “Nothing I - “

Felicity shifts, tilting her head. “What?”

“I wasn’t in the best mood when you got here.”

“Really?”

Oliver laughs wryly. “You wouldn’t have noticed. You were busy.”

Felicity makes a face. “Sorry.”

“No,” he shifts a little further back to look at her. “No, it’s okay. I was -” he frowns, trying to figure out how to explain. When he can’t come up with anything that won’t make him sound silly, he sighs and hangs his head.

“I ordered dinner,” he mutters.

“I saw - oh. Oh.”

He watches an array of emotions cross her face, guilt the one that finally sticks.

“I should have called. I’m sorry.”

He’s suddenly finding it difficult to swallow. “It’s fine,” he says, clearing his throat. “It felt weird to call you, so I didn’t. But we can’t get lazy about this, it’s dangerous.”

“Right.” Felicity nods, a crease forming between her eyebrows. “Let’s make a rule - no weirdness about sex drug booty calls.”

Oliver huffs out a surprised laugh and smiles. He’s softening inside of Felicity, beginning to slip out. “Okay,” he says, “deal.”
“Okay.” Her smile hits him right in his chest. “Now, any chance you’d be willing to get off? You’re really heavy.”

They reheat the take-out and talk all through dinner, before heading to the foundry for the night.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for everyone's patience. I'll have some more information about what I've been going through lately next week. Keep an eye out on my blog. In the meanwhile, I truly appreciate everyone who has been following this story, who has shown support and who has liked and commented. You're all lovely.

Next update: 22nd of February.
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The next time they’re late, it’s because they both forget.

It was bound to happen eventually.
Oliver’s been tracking an escaped meta from Central City for days and is following up a lead. Felicity is close to a breakthrough on her satellite. And neither of them realize how late it’s become until they both start to feel the itch.

And Oliver’s on the complete opposite side of the city.

“Oliver, hey,” Felicity’s voice comes through on his bluetooth. “So, I got distracted at work, and I actually can’t really leave. Any chance you can come over here?”

He’d been about to call her himself. “Uh, actually, I’m in the warehouse district…”

“What?!”

“Yeah, Digg and I thought we found Abra Cadabra’s hideout, but it was a bust.” He still thinks it’s a stupid name, but Cisco insisted, and they don’t have anything else to use. The meta’s identity is still unknown.

“Oliver. You have to take the expressway to get out of the warehouse district.”

“I know. It’s not ideal, but I can be there in forty-five minutes.”

“No, you can’t,” Felicity’s voice sounds mildly panicked. “There was a really bad accident - an eight car pile up. I just saw it on the news. It’s blocking traffic off completely.”

The back of Oliver’s neck prickles with need. There are other ways to cross the city, but they’ll take double the time. Forty-five minutes is already cutting it close - they’d both be ready to rip each other’s clothes off - but an hour and a half?

“Felicity. I’m leaving now. Run traffic for me and call me with any other updates.”

“Okay.”

“And make sure no one’s in your office when I get there.”

He doesn’t need to elaborate. They both know what they’re going to be like at that point. If they make it to that point.

Oliver’s chased down criminals on his bike. He’s run from the cops. He’s committed every possible traffic violation known to man over the years, both before and after the island. But he’s never violated so many of them in such a short span of time as he does in the next hour and a half.

The warehouse district and the area surrounding it is a frustrating maze of one way streets. He somehow manages to hit every possible red light before he finally decides to just start running them. The backup from the expressway has spilled over into the city, and roads leading up to the ramps are backed up for miles. Even on his bike it’s slow going, cars packed in as tightly as sardines. And every minute that passes, he feels the drug taking a stronger hold on him.

His phone rings and he taps his bluetooth. “Go.”

“Continental, 6th, and Washington are all blocked off for construction.”

“Geez.” He rethinks his route.

“It gets worse. There’s a big eco rally at Millennium Square and all the roads surrounding it have been blocked off. And there’s another political event at the Opera house. You can’t take Wabash.”
“I’m going to have a stern word with City Planning,” he says murderously. Of course today would be the day that circumstances converged to make it the worst day in Starling City’s traffic history.

Getting downtown in a car would have taken several hours. As it is, Oliver weaves through bumper to bumper traffic, narrowly avoiding taking off several side-view mirrors, and going up on the sidewalk when the way is barred. He beeps indiscriminately at pedestrians, trying his best to be careful. But it’s difficult when the fever has already started and he’s finding it harder and harder to breathe.

He spots Felicity on the corner of Roosevelt and 22nd and swerves to a stop, tires screeching. In the second it takes him to pull his helmet off in surprise, she’s gone.

“Fuck.” He dials Felicity’s number.

“Oliver,” she sounds breathless, answering on the first ring. The sound of her voice fills him with a sudden wave of need so powerful he puts his second foot down on the ground to steady himself.

“I’m guessing you’re still in the office?” he asks through gritted teeth.

“Where else would I be?” She whimpers and Oliver knows, he knows she’s touching herself.

“I’ll be there in ten minutes.” He barely recognizes the growl that is his voice as he shakes the hallucination from his head and gets his helmet back on.

Oliver’s chest is hurting. He imagines this is what a heart attack feels like.

He blows through every last remaining red light to Queen Consolidated.

“Good evening Mr. Queen, how can I-”

The look on his face stops the man at the front security desk in his tracks, and he rushes past him to the elevator.

“Come on, come on,” he mutters, watching the numbers count down to zero. He’s past caring who might see him, pulling his shirt off the second he gets into the elevator. He’s barely got enough presence of mind to keep from pulling his pants off.

Felicity’s waiting for him when the doors open, dress rumpled and hair a mess. She lets out a desperate cry and is on him in seconds.

It’s painful relief, feeling her nails digging into his skin, raking down his back. Her lips on his neck as they stumble to her office burn even as they soothe him, and when she bites down hard enough on his shoulder to break skin, he cries out both in pleasure and in the intense pain of needing so much more.

He slams her back against her office wall, ripping at the back of her dress and revealing her breasts, her nipples hard and visible through her mesh bra. He leans down and bites one, immediately pulling her underwear aside and burying three fingers inside of her.

Felicity sobs, desperate for more. Oliver lets go of her nipples and bites hard at the underside of her breast, pumping his fingers roughly. He needs her to come. God he needs her to come, but his heart feels like it’s going to beat right out of his chest.

He abandons her pussy to lift her up and carry her over to her desk. She holds on with one hand and uses the other to sweep away everything she can. Her computer monitor tumbles to the floor with a
crash, along with a flutter of papers, and Oliver lays her down, paying no mind to her shout as her bare back touches the cold glass. He rips her panties down her legs and leans over her.

“Felicity,” he growls, “you need to come. Do you hear me?”

He can barely focus, but he knows this much at least. She’s frantic, grabbing at every bit of him she can.

“Felicity!”

“Yes, yes! I understand!”

He spreads her legs wide and sinks his fingers inside of her again, bending down to close his lips over her clit. This time, when Felicity screams, the sound goes straight to his cock. He’s rock hard, but he feels the intensity of her scream like lightning turning sand to glass. She’s soaking wet around his fingers, the taste of her sparking on his tongue.

She has to come. He needs her to come so he can fuck her into the table.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck!” she pants with each thrust of his fingers and Oliver growls impatiently around her clit, adding the lightest scrape of teeth.

The moment he feels her walls clench on his fingers, the second she begins to wail, he’s standing up and pulling his cock out, burying himself inside of her. Felicity’s back is arching off the desk with the strength of her orgasm as Oliver pounds into her, prolonging it, the sounds of her shuddering gasps, his grunts and their bodies slapping together forming the background noise to their abandon.

He comes with a shudder, reaching his arms under Felicity’s back to hold her tightly as he spills inside of her, until they’re both gasping, completely spent.

It takes several minutes before either is capable of saying anything. Oliver just revels in the fact that his heartbeat is returning to normal and that he didn’t die of sex withdrawal.

“Let’s not do that again,” Felicity finally says.

And as good as that orgasm was, Oliver can’t help but agree whole-heartedly.

~*~

Felicity’s covered in bruises the next day.

To be fair, she knows she gave as good as she got. Oliver’s shoulder is bandaged when he shows up at her place. She comments on it when he pulls his shirt off, and vaguely recalls biting him there. She rides him slow and easy, building up to a comfortable orgasm, both of them still shaken from the night before.

The bandage is peeking through the collar of Oliver’s shirt when they arrive at the lair. But she’s sore in places she doesn’t have a name for and it’s a rough thing when you have to wear a scarf in July to cover hickey.

She spends the evening trying to move normally, praying Diggle doesn’t notice anything. He asks Oliver about his shoulder while he changes into his Arrow gear. She’d almost forgotten how awful he is at cover stories.

At some point, there’s a lull in the crime-fighting while Oliver focuses on tying up a gang he finds
looting a jewelry shop. That’s when Diggle corners her.

“Okay. I know you, and you’ve been acting different for a couple of weeks. And you seem even more out of it tonight. Wanna tell me what’s going on Felicity?”

Her brain short circuits for a second. “Uhh…”

Digg’s eyes are earnest and staring at her like he can see right into her soul. It’s an uncanny ability of his. She panics, which is never a good thing.

“What are you talking about?” she asks, her voice higher than usual. “What do you mean, ‘what’s going on?’ Nothing’s going on, everything is normal.” She says it all too quickly to be anywhere near believable.

To Digg’s credit, he doesn’t even dignify her with a reply. Just keeps staring at her, arms folded over his chest.

“Felicity? I’m heading back. Is there anything else on the radar for tonight?” Oliver’s voice comes through the comm.

She glances towards her computers, holding a finger up towards Diggle, using the moment to center herself and check her scanners.

“No, you’re good to go. Come home Oliver.”

“On my way.”

The timing is unfortunate. Digg glances at her screens, where Oliver shows up as a little green blip, and then back at her, recognition lighting his eyes.

“Digg, no, it’s not - no.”

“Felicity, are you -”

“Diggle, can you just-”

“Are you and Oliver sleeping together?”

Dammit. She’s ten times the liar that Oliver is (which isn’t saying much, to be honest), but Diggle can read her like an open book. She doesn’t even need to reply.

“It’s complicated.”

“Complicated how?” He has his ‘calling bullshit’ face on. And really, how do you tell one of your best friends that his two best friends are having sex because of some mysterious sex drug?

“It just is, Digg.”

He doesn’t like that response. She can tell. But to be honest, the only reason she hasn’t fallen apart by now - the only reason she’s managed to keep herself together in an impossible situation, is that no one else knows. As long as it’s her secret - as long as she doesn’t have to deal with pitying glances or scandalous affront, she can keep doing whatever it is she and Oliver have been doing.

She can stay alive.

“Listen,” she adds with a sigh, “I know that’s what everyone says, but this time it’s really true. Can
“You can just trust me on this? And not push?”

“You can’t expect me not to worry about you, Felicity.”

“I know. And I love you for it. But I also know you trust me. Can you do that now - and when I’m ready to tell you about this, I will? I promise?”

It takes a second, but Diggle finally nods. “Just don’t hurt each other, okay?”

In that moment, she feels an overwhelming swell of love for John Diggle.

“I think we can do that.”

“Okay then.”

He still glares at Oliver when he gets back, but he doesn’t say anything as he packs his things up to go.

“What was that about?” Oliver asks her after the door clangs shut.

Felicity smiles towards the top of the stairs. “Nothing. Don’t worry about it. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

~*~

Life goes on.

She’s not sure at what point she stops feeling weird about having sex with Oliver every day, but somewhere after the first few weeks, it just becomes a part of her day. An *enjoyable* part of her day.

Her feelings are still there. The wanting, the longing - but Felicity has locked them up. If she can’t have Oliver that way, at least she has this, for a while.

Sometimes it’s fast and rough, other times, when there’s no pressure to come quickly and they have nowhere to be, they take it slower.

It becomes such a routine part of her day, that sometimes she’ll find herself talking in the middle of sex, in-between gasps and moans, telling Oliver about what’s going on in her life.

“Mmm, yeah, yeah that’s good, keep doing that. So - I told Julie that it was one of the best designs I’d ever seen, and she - oohhhhh, okay, yeah, that was - yeah - so, I told her, and she *burst into tears,*” Felicity shakes her head, biting at her lip a little when Oliver sucks a little harder at her clit. “She said at her last job, her boss had just kept telling her how useless she was, can you imagine?”

Oliver raises his head and smiles at her, his lips wet. “You’re a good boss, Felicity. I’m glad you’re enjoying it.”

She sighs, her heart full for a moment. Then Oliver goes back to eating her out and she forgets about everything for a while.

She really does enjoy her work. Things ease up once the final blueprints for the satellite get approved and go through.

“Honestly,” she says, hands pushing against the headboard to keep herself from getting pounded back into it, “it’s such a relief.”

“The orgasm, or the work thing?” Oliver asks, breathing heavily, thrusting into her.
And she’s still having little aftershocks from what was a truly excellent orgasm, so she grins and says, “Both. But yes, specifically the work thing. Nggh, oh, you just hit my G-spot, that was great. It’s nice not to have the board breathing down my neck anymore.”

“I can imagine. I hated them.” He grunts after a particularly rough thrust. Sweat is breaking out at his hairline, and she moves her hands to his back, digging her fingernails into the muscle there, taking pleasure in how his hips stutter.

“I really have Evan to thank for it, honestly. He handled all the PR with the client and got them to ease up on the late fees.”

Oliver drops his head to her shoulder, easing up on his thrusts. She doesn’t notice.

“He’s really great to work with, you know? Overall I don’t enjoy meeting with the Marketing department, but he-”

“Felicity.” Oliver has completely stopped moving.

“Huh? What? Is something wrong?”

He doesn’t lift his head, speaking into her shoulder, his voice strained.

“Could you maybe not talk about another guy while I’m inside you?”

Oh.

Oh.

Well, that’s awkward. “Um, okay, yeah sure.”

He sighs and starts thrusting again, but it takes him too long after she does to reach orgasm and they both end up having to start over.

She’s a lot more careful when she talks in bed in the future.

~*~

There’s something poking into her side.

Her shirt’s off, and Oliver’s hand is in her bra, cupping her breast. He’s just rolled on top of her and is kissing down her neck, grinding his knee against her groin.

She tries to ignore it, but she finally shifts a little, reaching beneath herself without distracting Oliver, because yes, she likes what he’s doing right now. She pulls out some sort of hardback book. Without sparing it a second glance, she shoves it off the bed and presses at Oliver’s shoulders, pushing him back so that she’s on top again.

Later, when they’re breathing has calmed down and she’s coming back from the bathroom, she catches sight of it on the floor.

“Microeconomics?” she mutters, picking it up.

Oliver’s been basking in the post drug-gasm haze, but he sits up suddenly. “Oh, uh, here. Pass that to me.”

She doesn’t. She opens the book to scan the table of contents and finds Oliver’s name written in the
“Oliver. This is a college grade textbook. Microeconomics is.” She furrows her eyebrows, tilting her head and looking at him with a question in her eyes.

He shifts on the bed, rising up onto his knees and hedging towards her. “I - uh…” His cock hangs soft between his legs, and all of his scars are on display for her to see, but it’s the book she’s holding that’s making him look so unsure.

He swallows roughly and his shoulders slump like he’s lost. “Microeconomics is one of the courses I’m taking this year at Starling U.”

And okay - she’s a genius - 158 IQ to be exact, but it still takes her a second to understand what Oliver’s just told her.

“You’re taking classes?” she asks softly, turning the book over in her hands. “At Starling U? You’re studying Business Management at Starling U?”

“Um. Yes.”

“Oliver, that’s…” she feels the grin spreading across her face, completely unable to contain it. “That’s amazing!”

It hurts her a little bit that he looks so surprised by that, but she remembers a conversation from what now seems like another lifetime, about Oliver and Shakespeare and dropping out of colleges.

“Really? You don’t think it’s stupid?”

“No!” She shakes her head adamantly. “I think it’s incredible!” Holding the book to her chest, she climbs onto the bed next to him, and he sits back on his heels. “When did this happen? I mean, well, obviously it happened at the start of the semester, but when did you decide to go for it? You are going for your MBA right?”

Oliver nods, still looking a bit surprised by her reaction.

“So? What happened?”

“Well, uh - “ Oliver shakes his head a bit, as though to clear it, and mirrors her, sitting cross-legged. “I guess after my mother died, and after everything with Isabelle… I was a terrible CEO. I knew that - it was always more of a cover than anything else. But after that year - I didn’t want it to be.”

Felicity nods, raptly attentive.

“The board reinstated Walter as CEO, and it was the best decision for the company, but I - missed it.”

“You missed your chance?”

Oliver shakes his head. “No, I missed being the CEO. I wasn’t good at it, not by a long shot, but I liked it, and it make me feel connected to.…” He shrugs.

“To your father.”

“To both of my parents, really.” Oliver takes a deep breath and lays back on the pillows, turning to his side. Felicity follows, facing him and putting the book down in-between them.
“I never used to care about failing. I spent most of my time before the island failing at anything that didn’t involve drugs, sex, and partying. I think I had a bet going with myself to see how badly I could fuck up before my parents finally got tired of me.” He swallows, his throat clicking. “But losing QC felt like a failure, like I’d let myself down along with my mother and father. And I cared.”

She feels like if she breathes wrong he might stop talking.

“I started thinking about going back to school last year. I woke up one day, looked around and realized that I’m not -” he hesitates. “I’m not going to be the Arrow forever. There should be something else for me when the dust settles.”

For a moment, her heart stops. Then she pulls in a deep breath, feeling the beginnings of tears sting at the corners of her eyes. This is the first time Oliver has ever - she’s never heard him talk about -

“Hey - hey are you okay?”

She sniffs, laughing. “Yeah. Yes. I just never thought I’d hear you talk about your future like you’d actually have one.” She watches his eyes widen and can’t help letting a little bit of her heart softly roll off her tongue. “It’s all I ever wanted for you.”

“Oh.” He falls silent, at a loss for what to say to that. She takes pity on him.

“Does anyone else know?”

Oliver shifts, looking away from her. “Uh, yeah. Walter, actually. He wrote a recommendation letter to the university, asking them to accept me to the program. My educational background doesn’t really speak well for me… I’m sorry I didn’t tell you.”

“What? No, I get it - I do. I know what it feels like to decide to take the path other people expected you to after years of fighting it. You don’t want their smug, gloating faces smirking at you.”

Oliver laughs at her narrowed eyes.

“I would never expect you to gloat,” he tells her.

“Oh, well then never mind. You had no excuse not to tell me and I’ll be angry at you forever.”

He laughs again, full and easy, and the sound makes her heart soar.

“So. What do you think so far? Are you enjoying it or can we expect Starling U to join the prestigious list of schools that have eaten your dust?” She winks, just to make sure he knows she’s joking.

Oliver smiles, breathing deeply. “I like it. I really do. It’s interesting and - I’m good at it.” He says this as though it’s a revelation. And maybe it is to him. But it isn’t to her.

Grinning right back at him, she asks him about his microeconomics course, his professors, the campus, anything and everything. She wants to hear it all - and he tells her.

They stay up talking into the early hours of the morning, when they finally fall asleep.

~*~

A month and a half into their arrangement, Oliver lets himself into Felicity’s apartment to find the living room and kitchen empty.
“Felicity?”

Something shifts upstairs and he immediately goes on alert. He makes his way slowly up the steps, creeping silently down her hall to her door, ready for almost anything.

But she’s crying.

“Felicity?” His voice is softer this time, questioning. She doesn’t look up, just shakes her head a little, sniffing and wiping beneath her eyes.

“Hey.” He sits next to her on the bed, lowering his head to catch her eye. “Hey, what happened?”

“Nothing - it’s nothing. No big deal I just - Caitlin called.”

Oliver freezes. “What happened? What’s wrong?” Are there additional side-effects? Are they dying? Is there going to be some sort of permanent damage?

“You know she had a lead on an antidote - she’s been working on it for a while. But apparently she ran into some issues, and it looks like it’s going to take a lot longer than she thought to-” Felicity stops speaking, taking a deep breath and letting it out slowly.

She’s trying to hold back her tears, and for a moment, Oliver can’t help feeling slightly hurt that Felicity would be so upset by having to keep up their arrangement for a little longer. But he knows he’s being unreasonable. Felicity has been nothing but upfront since the beginning about how she feels.

“I’m sorry,” Felicity whispers. “I’m so sorry about all of this.”

“No,” he responds, taking her face in his hands. “No, no, don’t be sorry. This isn’t your fault.”

Felicity’s face crumples and she leans forward into his chest, letting out a sob. Oliver wraps his arms around her, feeling her shake, letting her let loose. He knows she’s letting out a month and a half’s worth of uncertainty and fear and pain.

His chest hurts, nothing to do with the drug, and everything to do with the woman in his arms.

When she finally stills, the front of his shirt is wet. He pulls back from her, and her face and nose are red and blotchy, her blue eyes too bright with tears, and Oliver leans down and kisses her for the first time for no reason other than that he wants to.

She gasps against him when he cradles her cheeks, wiping her tears away with his thumbs. He tastes the salt of them, light on his tongue when he brushes it past her lips.

She chases him a little when he pulls away, eyes fluttering open, but he’s only moving away long enough to pull his shirt off and lean in to kiss her again.

Oliver trails his fingers down to her throat, tracing the hollow between her collarbones, feeling the steady beat of her pulse thrumming against his fingertips. This time when he pulls away, he stands and takes her hand, pulling her up with him.

Shallow breaths and wide eyes make him feel like a wall between her and the rest of the world as he reaches behind her and unzips the back of her dress.

Has he ever watched what her skin looks like before, glowing in the moonlight as he peels the fabric from her shoulders? Has he ever noticed the sound the cloth makes, rustling and pooling to the floor?
Has she ever looked at him like she’s looking at him right now?

Felicity’s breasts are small and perfect in his hands, the nipples pebbling in between his fingers.

When he sits back on the bed and pulls her into his lap to take them into his mouth, she curls her fingers into his hair and sighs. He wants her this way - on top of him, surrounding him, holding him.

Lying back, Oliver just lets her touch. Her hands span his shoulders, she traces his tattoos, and thumbs at his nipples. Reaching the waistband of his pants, she looks up, watching him watch her while she undone the button.

She has to stand up to pull them off, but when she comes back, she’s naked too, and guides him to move further up the bed. She rubs her wet heat up the underside of his cock, making Oliver grip tightly at her hips, and he pulls her nipple into his mouth again when she leans over, reaching past him to grab a condom.

He sits up to watch her face when she rolls it on, breathing deeply at her small hands gripping him. He digs his fingers into the bedspread to keep himself from thrusting up when she lowers herself slowly onto him. When he’s finally buried completely inside of her, her eyes widen. She’s told him before how full he makes her feel, how much there is to take, but he’s never told her how being engulfed by her makes him feel like she is all there is to him.

Oliver nods once and Felicity swallows, lifting up slowly on her knees almost the whole way, and then sinking down onto him again. He runs his hands up and down her thighs, feeling the tension and play of the muscles as she strains to lift up and down, using his shoulders for leverage.

Her eyes are still bluer than usual, red-rimmed and beautiful. He can’t look away from her - every movement, every sigh between the two of them, is second to the look in her eyes.

He knows when his cock brushes against her g-spot from the way her eyes widen and her pupils dilate. The exertion makes sweat bead on her forehead, but she doesn’t look away, even when she speeds up, the slow rise and fall becoming a fast buck, her breasts bouncing in time with her movements.

“Shhh, shhh,” her murmurs to her, slowing her down. She’s shaking, both with effort and need, so he slides his hands up her back, gripping her hair and twisting it around one hand, and pulls her tightly into him. Their foreheads press together and her eyes fall shut, but he can’t stop watching her.

Using one arm to lift her slightly and push her back down, he encourages her to circle her hips and grind into him. The movements are shallow, nowhere near enough to get him or her off, but the longer he teases her, the longer he hedges her, the stronger he knows the orgasm will be when she finally comes.

“Oliver,” she whispers, pleading, but he doesn’t let up. The barely-there motions keep her right where he wants her, no closer to coming but right on the edge. He’s getting to the point where he needs to fuck her, hard and fast, but he wants this more.

Every inch of her is pressed up against him. Her breath is tantalizingly warm on his lips, but he doesn’t kiss her, just breathes along with her.

Again, and again - slow. She opens her eyes once more to beg him.

“Please.”

There are tears in her eyes.
“Okay,” he murmurs. “Okay.”

He lays back, giving Felicity full freedom of motion, and she lets out a tiny sob, building up her tempo again until she’s bouncing on top of him. Every part of her is in motion - her hair shifts as she shakes her head, her breasts move in time with her, her muscles ripple and she spasms around his cock, until it’s too much for him to take. He knows she’s close - knows she’ll be screaming any second - and he lets himself go.

Back arching off the bed, he comes with a gasp, feeling Felicity’s walls tighten impossibly around him moments later.

They’re breathing heavily when they come down, staring at each other. Oliver’s not sure what to say - there’s so much, but -

Felicity bites her lip and looks away. “Thank you. That was - thank you.”

He leans up on his elbows.

“That was the perfect way to distract me. I was just a mess after Caitlin called, and obviously you came over for us to have sex anyway, but, yeah - thank you.”

Oliver’s chest constricts because not five minutes ago he couldn’t tell where he stopped and she began. And he thought -

He clears his throat. “Yeah, of course.” What else can he say?

“Right,” she murmurs. “I’m - I’m going to just - take a shower, if that’s okay… I, uh, didn’t get a chance to order food or anything, what with -”

“No, of course. I, uh. I have a test to study for actually, so I’ll just-”

Felicity nods and pulls off of him, both of them wincing.

“I’ll see you tomorrow?”

“Yeah. Yes of course.”

“Okay.”

Oliver begins to roll off the bed, but Felicity’s catches at his arm. He turns to face her again, and her eyes are earnest when she says, “Really. Thank you.”

He wants to take her in his arms and kiss her. Tell her she doesn’t need to thank him. Tell her he wants to give her everything. But she isn’t his to take.

“Always.”

Felicity nods and disappears into the bathroom, and Oliver begins to pick his clothes up off the floor.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for everyone's patience. For those who missed the tumblr announcement, I'm pregnant - that's why I've been feeling so shitty and having such a
hard time getting writing done. I'd appreciate everyone's continued understanding regarding anymore delays in updates, but I hope to finish the story fairly soon - I'm due to start feeling better any day now, as soon as my first trimester is over.

Again - all the love for my readers and reviewers. Thank you so much!

Next Update: March 7th.
They promised they wouldn’t let themselves lose track of time again. But sometimes the world just has other plans.
Friday.

It’s Friday. Her light at the end of the tunnel, final day of the week, just a few more hours until she can change into pyjamas and not wear clothes again until Monday, blessed day.

Felicity loves her job. She really does. But sometimes the appeal of lounging around and doing nothing is just too strong. No matter how happy Applied Sciences makes her - her bed and sleeping late makes her just a little happier, especially considering her night job as a hacker/vigilante.

She hums, settling down in her chair and opening up Outlook to check her email. She takes a sip of coffee, soaking in the morning sunlight. Her office is positioned perfectly to catch the sun up until noon - one of her favorite things about it. It’s calming, peaceful. She gets distracted, watching dust particles float lazily in the glow and for a moment, she feels con-

A violent explosion rocks the floor and Felicity is thrown from her chair, coffee spilling everywhere.

“Shit!” she exclaims, and it’s partly because the hot coffee has scalded both of her legs, but mainly because there are screams coming from outside of her office. The alarms are going off and it’s pandemonium beyond her glass walls.

“What happened?” she yells, rushing out. There aren’t many people in the office this early, but the few that are have run from the R&D floor and are congregating near the elevators.

“I don’t know,” Xiu-Yan tells her, shaking. “I was just getting in when the south corner exploded!”

Felicity’s face goes ashen. The chem labs. “Was there anyone there? Was anyone in the labs?”

Xiu-Yan looks at her helplessly, eyes wide. She shakes her head. “I don’t know.”

Okay. Okay, one thing at a time. There’s smoke billowing out of the floor, and anything might still happen.

“Call 911. We need the fire department, paramedics and the police. Tell them what happened.” Xiu-Yan nods and pulls out her phone.

Felicity pulls out her own phone and dials. Her day just became a nightmare.

“Walter? There’s been an explosion at Applied Sciences.”

9:03 AM

Coffee. Coffee is good.

Oliver’s not as dedicated a fan as Felicity is, but he can definitely appreciate a good cup of coffee after a long night tracking down gang members as the Arrow. Not to mention his pre-Arrowing activities with Felicity.

He orders his soy latte and waits by the counter, inhaling deeply and taking in the smells of French roast. His eyes roam lazily around the shop. He’s got a few things to do today… He wants to review some material for his first class, needs to go over his notes for another, and definitely wants to get in some last-minute cramming before his exam this evening. He’s fairly certain he’s ready, but tests make him nervous.
“Oliver?” His name comes over the speaker and he turns, nodding, to take his order.

“Oh, Oliver, hey!” A young woman from his… Economics class? he’s pretty sure, is smiling shyly at him.

“Ah, Julie… right?”

She blushes profusely. Does it make him a little bit of an asshole that he still likes that women get flustered around him? Maybe.

“Yeah. I was just wondering if you’d like to sit with us?” She gestures behind herself at a table with three other students he knows. “We were just reviewing our papers for class today.”

Oliver freezes, coffee halfway to his mouth.

“What?”


And wow – he hadn’t felt this feeling since sometime in the sixth grade, right before he stopped caring anymore, when Ms. Bradley started handing out exam papers and he realized he’d completely forgotten there was a test.

“That-” Oliver’s voice sounds strained and he clears his throat. “That was due today?”

“Um.” Julie looks intensely worried, like he might shoot the messenger. “Yes?”

No. “Fuck,” he murmurs under his breath, contemplating his coffee cup, mind going a mile a minute.

“I have to go,” he finally says.

“Yeah. Yeah, of course.” Julie nods and backs away, clearing his path to the door.

He’s got to get to the library.

10:16 AM

The fire department didn’t have much of a fire to put out. Felicity had made sure when she stepped in as department head, that everything on the applied Sciences floor that could be fire retardant was.

They’re still everywhere though. Firemen and police officers, making an even bigger mess than the explosion did. Turning everything upside down to try to figure out what happened.

In the end – it’s completely innocuous. Someone made a big mistake and left volatile chemicals near a centrifuge. The movement and vibrations from the machine eventually caused them to fall and react.

It could have been a lot worse. As it is, months of data have been lost and several other projects were damaged.

Basically - someone’s getting fired.

She pushes her way into her office after answering several more police questions. She’s already exhausted, she reeks of smoke, and the giant coffee stain on her skirt might never come out. She has a spare dress in her closet though, and once she gets another cup of coffee, which she’s desperate for at this point, maybe she can start to figure out how on earth she’s going to fix this.
He’s been writing furiously for two hours now.

Amazingly, he has close to three thousand words, and needs a little over three thousand more, but he has his Marketing class to go to and…

Oliver glances at the clock again. It’ll take him ten minutes to run across campus to where his class is, and the professor is incredibly strict with tardy students.

He can do it if he goes now. Then he has another two hour window to finish up the paper.

He shuts his laptop and stands quickly, slinging his messenger bag over his shoulder. He opens the flap to slide the laptop in as he turns towards the door, not looking where he’s going, and ends up crashing into the corner of a table. The jolt of pain to his thigh surprises him, he loses his grip, and it’s like the world suddenly moves in slow-motion, so he can watch every last detail as his laptop crashes violently to the floor.

“No,” he mutters, just staring at it, shocked.

“No, no, nononononono,” he crouches, going to his knees and opening it, praying, hoping against hope - maybe - maybe -

A blue screen stares mockingly back at him.

Okay. Okay, this might not be the end of the world. Fumbling for his cellphone, his hands shake as he dials Felicity’s number.

“Hello?”

“Hi, Felicity? Listen I-”

“Oliver, I’m sorry, I really can’t talk right now. I don’t know if you saw the news, but there was an explosion at Applied Sciences this morning.” Felicity sounds completely frazzled and very tired.


She mutters something to someone else on the other end of the line. “I’m fine,” she says at last, “It was an accident and everyone’s okay, but it’s a really bad time. Is it something important?”

He stares helplessly at his computer screen, despair welling up in his gut. He can’t do this to her. Not right now.

“No, no it’s fine. I’ll figure it out.”

“Okay, then I’ll - hey! Wait, no Jeremy you can’t - stop! Listen, Oliver I’ll talk to you later okay?” Jeremy!” The line cuts off.

Oliver’s left with a useless computer and no paper.

Now what?

11:00 AM

He’s spared from having to figure it out.
When Digg calls he answers with a strangled noise, but John cuts right to the chase.

“You need to get to the lair now.”

He’s already in full-out-stress mode, so the intensity in Digg’s voice doesn’t even phase him.

“What’s going on?”

“Some nut job political activist shot his way into City Hall and took hostages.”

Oliver frowns. “Is the mayor-?”

“No. She’s out. But he’s got five people locked in a room with him, holding them at gunpoint. Cops aren’t managing to get through.”

Well. He’s missing his class after all.

“I’m on my way.”

“I’m picking up Felicity. I’ll meet you there.”

Oliver’s already dressed in his leathers and on his way to City Hall when Digg and Felicity get on the comms.

“Oliver, you’ve got three entrance points you can use. I’d suggest slipping in through the roof. The room the guy’s holding them in was recently remodeled. He really should have looked at some blueprints before he pulled off this crazy scheme.”

“Would we call this a scheme?” Oliver asks over the noise of his bike.

“No, you’re right. Scheme would imply an actual thought process,” he can almost hear Felicity’s eye-roll. “I could plan a better political protest in my sleep. Either way, the wall between the room he’s in and the one next to it is fresh drywall.”

He has to wonder as he pulls up in the back alley. “The police couldn’t figure this out?”

Felicity sounds equally exasperated. “Right? I have things to do. My department got exploded this morning.”

“I dropped my laptop and lost -” he almost mentions his paper, but Digg is on the line and listening. “Well, it blue screened. I had some stuff on it I needed for later today.”

He hears Felicity’s intake of breath and knows she understands.

“Alright guys, can we focus here?” Digg cuts in. “I’m picking up seven heat signatures, not six in that room, which means there’s either another hostage hiding in there somewhere, or there’s a second assailant. Either way, be ready.”

Oliver finishes scaling the side of the building and shoots open the deadbolt on the roof door.

He slips in silently. The halls are empty as he makes his way to the second floor. He knows there’s a S.W.A.T. team biding its time at the far end of the floor, waiting for a call from below and the green light to storm the room. Someone’ll end up dead if they do.

“First door on your left,” Felicity says softly. He turns the handle on the door, freezing when the hinges creak, but there’s no sound from the room next to it other than a small whimper.
“Can you give me a position on our guy?” he murmurs.

“You’ve got five hostages huddling in the right corner against the drywall. The assailant’s standing right across from where you are now, and the seventh heat signature is to his left. It hasn’t moved since I picked up on it.” Digg gives him the rundown.

Okay.

He takes a few steps back and gets his bow ready. With a running leap, he crashes through the drywall, nocks and arrow and lets fly. The guy drops his gun with a cry, gripping his now bleeding hand. In seconds Oliver has another arrow ready and pointing to the man’s left, but there’s no movement.

There are sobs and gasps coming from behind him and he keeps his aim as he says, “All of you, out. Go!” the voice modulator turning his voice dark and deep.

He switches his arrow and looses it, ropes flying and wrapping tightly around the man.

“You fucked up my hand!” the guy yells at him, and Oliver punches him in the face. He goes down like a limp doll.

He then makes his way to the corner, crouching down to check under the table.

A little boy is shivering, eyes wide and cheeks wet with tears. He must be about eight. “It’s a kid,” he says in surprise to the comm, and then turns off the modulator and reaches out a hand.

“Hey. Hey. You’re safe, it’s okay.” He tells him softly. The boy doesn’t move.

“What’s your name?”

After a pause the kid finally answers. “Jack.”

Oliver nods. “Jack, okay. Do you know who I am?”

Jack nods. “Yeah. You’re the Arrow. Did you kill the bad guy?”

“No. I didn’t kill him. Just knocked him out. He’s going to go to jail. Is that okay?”

Again a nod.

“Jack, where’s your mom?”

He shakes his head, eyes wide.

“Okay. Let’s go find her?” Jack hesitates, but finally takes Oliver’s hand. He pulls him out from under the table and picks him up without any preamble.

Oliver carries him out into the sun, cops and cameras and paramedics immediately swarming them. The kid’s clinging to him and doesn’t loosen his grip until they hear a desperate cry of, “Jack? Jack! Oh, baby, oh my God, Jack!”

He hands the boy off to a sobbing woman and slips away before she can say anything and before the cops can grab him and ask any questions.

Within moments he’s on his bike again and heading back to Diggle and Felicity.
John nods at him when he comes down the stairs and Felicity walks right up to him, eyes bright. For a moment he thinks she’s going to hug him but she just smiles.

“There’s something on the med table for you,” she says. “I have to get back. As it is, everyone’s going to kill me for disappearing.”

After she’s gone, and after he’s changed back into his clothes, he finds his laptop in perfect working order on the med table.

1:02 PM

People are indeed furious that Felicity disappeared. She returns to find that the police have been questioning everyone in the Applied Sciences division, and have even gone so far as to call in anyone affiliated with the project that caused the explosion, including marketing and technical writers, graphics designers and, God help her, board members.

HR files have been pulled up on all of them.

“Ms. Smoak! What is the meaning of this?” Trey Warner stands indignantly from her couch when she walks into her office, heels clicking professionally. Cops are sitting across from him and Warner looks absolutely incensed that he has to speak to them at all.

“Mr. Warner, in case you forgot, there was an explosion at Queen Consolidated this morning. It is in all of our best interests to let the police do their job.”

Warner sneers. “I didn’t forget, but it seems you did. Where did you disappear off to for the last two hours? Maybe you could have explained to these people that I’m a very busy man and don’t have time for this.”

Felicity catches a distinct eye-roll from one of the cops behind Warner and she has to work hard not to laugh.

“I’m sure no one understands more than the two gentlemen behind you. They’ve been working on the case diligently since this morning. If you’ll excuse me, I’m going to review the facts with the lead detective and give any insights I can. We’re all doing our best to help settle this matter.”

She doesn’t have time for Warner’s bullshit right now. She’ll come back to her office when he isn’t throwing a petty temper tantrum in it.

An hour and several interviews later, Felicity’s developed a sharp pain at the base of her skull, but she also knows who was responsible for the explosion.

And as much as she hates to do it, she’s going to have to fire him.

There’s a knock at her door and a young man, barely into his twenties, pokes his head nervously inside.

“Gregory, hi. Please, take a seat.”

Gregory Ilyasov came to the US only two years ago. He’s brilliant, creative and steadfast. But anyone can make a mistake. And now she’s going to have to fire him for it. He may never find a job in R&D again.

She loves her job. She does. But today, there’s nothing she hates more.
Oliver ducks into class seven minutes late, shaking from too much caffeine, out of breath after running across campus, but with a completed and fairly decent economics paper.

He hasn’t eaten all day and it’s beginning to wear on him.

And he still has a microeconomics exam in two hours.

He settles near the back of the class after a quick apology to the professor and pulls out his books, settling his micro notes surreptitiously on top. The original plan had been to spend the day reviewing them on and off. 70% of students fail their first microeconomics exam, and he doesn’t have much hope now that he won’t be one of them.

At this point, he just wants to day to be over.

The elevator dings and Felicity steps out onto the fifteenth floor. She checks the seating plan in her hands. There are three available offices on this floor, each with three desks. She can put half of the satellite team here, or the entire applications infrastructure team, with two spots left over. But who would fill those spots?

Not to mention, the satellite team’s need of a lab, all of which are being relocated to the 32nd floor…

The pain at the base of her skull has spread and turned into a full-blown migraine. It’s impossible. What she’s trying to do is impossible. There is no reasonable way to split up the Applied Sciences division that will keep functionality at 100% until the 37th floor is repaired. Her department is getting split between seven different floors. Just the thought of how much she’s going to have to move up and down between them for the next three months makes her dizzy.

She glances helplessly at the seating plan, trying not to cry.

They’ve lost millions in research, everything’s falling apart, and as ridiculous as she knows it is, she feels like she’s failed.

It’s a very different feeling when someone else blows up Applied Sciences and it wasn’t done to stop an evil terrorist.

She has to finish this, she can’t fall apart now. The board’s called an emergency meeting to estimate damages, and no doubt Trey Warner wants to throw another hissy fit about having to speak to lowly policemen. She needs to be able to show them something, give them some good news. Being able to carry on work tomorrow almost as though nothing went wrong today is more than anyone could hope for, and she’s determined to figure it out.

Felicity pencils in the apps infrastructure team and moves two of the Q-100 developers down to sit with them. With a sigh she walks back to the elevator and heads to the 21st floor.

One day, Oliver’s going to walk right into the Business Chair’s office and tell him what he thinks of how spread out classes and exams are across campus.

Probably when he already has his diploma in hand. But then, definitely.
His microeconomics exam is on the complete opposite end of campus, right near the library, actually. It takes him fifteen minutes at a swift walk to get there after class, leaving him another fifteen to continue reviewing his notes, only when he gets to the classroom, a notice has been posted on the door. The exam has been pushed off by half an hour and has been relocated to the Psych building - where he just came from.

Students are grumbling all around him, and he’s annoyed, definitely, but a nagging worry begins to build up in the pit of his stomach. When the exam was set to start at six, it was already cutting it close. He still had to get back to Felicity that evening. Six to seven thirty was pretty much the limit.

Adding another half hour onto that is… not good. Is he even going to be able to concentrate on the test by the time he’s finishing up?

He leans his forehead against the door and takes a deep breath, then hefts his bag onto his shoulder and begins his trek back the way he came.

6:00 PM

Felicity smells like smoke. Her clothes are rumpled and soot-stained. Her feet are killing her, she hasn’t eaten all day, and her hair is a frazzled wreck.

She cannot imagine feeling less prepared to meet with the board than she does right now.

But there they are, filing in and looking for blood.

Fine.

She pulls herself up to her full height, all 5 feet, 5 inches of it (10 inches if you include the heels), and stands firm at the head of the table.

Glancing around, the only friendly face is that of Walter, and even he looks distinctly pinched around the eyes... It’s been quite a day for both of them.

She’s wearing a fresh coat of lipstick though, and it’s all the armor she needs. She’s got this.

6:30 PM

His test is face down in front of him and he’s as prepared as he could hope for. When the woman at the front of the room tells them they can begin, Oliver flips the paper and gets to work.

~*~

It’s a little after 8:30 when Oliver finally drags himself into his apartment, completely miserable.

He dumps his bag on the sofa, sinking down onto the cushions next to it and dropping his face into his hands.

He can’t remember the last time he felt this tired. The exhaustion goes deep into his bones, and morning feels like years ago.

And yet, despite the exhaustion, underneath it all is a relentless thrum of need that hasn’t left him alone for the last hour. The itch under his skin is a desperation of necessity. He needs Felicity, needs to feel her hot and wet around him, even as he recognizes how badly he needs to sleep.

He pulls his phone out to call her, fully aware that her day has been as bad as, if not worse than his
own. But he hears the sound of her heels in the hallway, followed by the turn of a key in his lock.

He’s off the couch and at the door the moment she opens it, already hard, pulling her into his arms and kissing her, as she let’s her briefcase drop from her hands with a clatter.

He smells smoke, tastes coffee on her mouth, licks into her and grips her hips, as much to feel the give of them beneath his fingers, as to hold himself steady and upright.

Felicity sighs into him and he gets even harder, loving the sound, knowing she wants him, knowing she needs him as badly as he needs her.

Oliver walks them towards his bedroom, untucking her shirt and pulling the front open, buttons scattering. She pulls away from him just long enough to lift his shirt up and pull it over his head. When they meet again, they both sigh at the warmth of each other’s skin.

Her small hands push down inside the front of his pants, gripping his length and making him groan. He wants nothing more than for her to tighten her grip, let him fuck her hand and just come in his pants right there, but they’re both so tired…

He undoes his pants when they reach his bed, falling back onto the mattress as he pulls them off, and Felicity slips out of her skirt and heels, climbing into his lap. Her panties are reasonable cotton, too sturdy to rip off without hurting her, so he flips them both over instead, pulling them slowly down her body, biting the inside of one of her thighs as he does. She arches off the bed and reaches for him.

Neither of them can wait. They’ve gotten to this point before, needing each other hard and fast, needing to come. Oliver pulls a condom off the bedside table and slips it on, burying himself inside of her without preamble.

They both cry out, shaking, but as much as Oliver’s body is screaming at him to move, thrust, push, pull, fuck, fuck, fuck - he’s also just so tired. He pulls the blanket over them, surrounding them in a cocoon of warmth, and begins to move.

He barely pulls out at all before circling his hips and pushing back in, and Felicity hums at him. Her eyes are hooded, he can see the exhaustion in every line of her body - she’s as tired as he is.

He barely pulls out again, just focusing on slow circular motions - feeling the heat of Felicity’s sex clenched around him, the flutters of her muscles against his cock. They move together lethargically, deep, deep penetration and circled hips, and sighs, shared breaths, and light brushes against each other’s lips.

They’re both exhausted and so, so turned on, and they fuck like that - slow and languid, like they could go on forever if they didn’t need so desperately to rest and find release.

The orgasm begins to build up at the base of Oliver’s spine, and god, he’s barely moving, just rutting against her and basking in the heat of her, but it’s inescapable nonetheless, and she feels it too. Felicity’s eyes are shut, but her cheeks are flushed, lips bitten red, and her nails dig into his sides. She’s close, he hears it her breathing, and when she finally comes with a whimper, he’s not far behind, gasping at the release of a day that he thought would never end.

If possible, he feels himself sink even deeper into her, into all of her. She sighs out once more beneath him and he can tell, she’s already fallen asleep. He has enough presence of mind to shift them slightly to their sides so he won’t crush her in their sleep, but it’s almost too much for him. He falls asleep seconds later, still buried inside of her.
Thank you all for the well-wishes! I have been feeling better, though stress at work has kept me very busy. I'm a little behind on the story as a result, so it'll be a little longer until the next update. <3

Next update: TBA.
Oliver wakes up somewhat disoriented, and it’s only partly because there’s a warm, soft body pressed to his side.

He feels fuzzy with - *rest*.

Squinting one eye open against the sun, he catches a glimpse of blonde hair resting in a tangled mess on his arm. He shuts his eyes again, breathing deeply and shaking his head a little to try and clear it, and checks his watch for the time.

It’s after ten.

Staring up at his ceiling Oliver tries to remember the last time he slept this late but can’t. His body feels heavy, sinking deep into the mattress, surrounded by the warmth of his blankets and Felicity at his side.

Bits and pieces of yesterday and last night replay in his head. No wonder he slept.

Next to him Felicity shifts slightly and snuffles in her sleep.

This… this is new.

Aside from that first morning after they - well, they’ve never spent the night.

And there’s a thousand things he could do right now, a hundred ways to pull away, but he doesn’t want to. Felicity is asleep in his arms and for a minute or two, he can just - hold her.

He settles down, listening to her breathing, and letting himself have this, for at least a little while.

Fifteen minutes later, when she begins to stir, he trails his fingers down her arm, eliciting a satisfied hum.

“What time ‘s’it?” she asks, the words rounded at the edges.

“After ten.”

She blinks. “We fell asleep.” She doesn’t sound surprised, just stating a fact.

“Hmm.”

Felicity props herself up on her elbows. Her eyes are squinted - the sun streaming in from outside really is strong. Her hair is in complete disarray, tangled and bunched to the left, she has mascara smudges at the corners of her eyes and her cheeks are blotchy, and Oliver’s chest constricts because he wants this.

He wants to wake up like this with her every morning.

“Stay,” he says. He doesn’t mean to say it - it just comes out. Only years of hardship tempering him into steel keeps his panic from showing on his face. “For breakfast,” he amends, then winces and tilts his head. “Or brunch, at this point?”
Felicity must still be half asleep because she takes it all in stride.

“Mmmm. Only if you make pancakes.”

Relief washes over him, but he can’t help smiling. “With blueberries, even.”

The sound she makes is not dissimilar to the one he’s had the privilege to hear every night for the last couple of months.

“Do you want to shower?” he asks, then hesitantly adds, “You still smell like smoke.”

Felicity falls back onto the pillow, covering her eyes and groaning. But she nods anyway.

“Do you mind if I-?”

She waves him off. “Go ahead. I’ll take the second round.”

Felicity’s eyes are closed, and Oliver takes the opportunity to waddle awkwardly to the bathroom. It’s never a good idea to fall asleep with a condom after sex - the sticky and slightly painful mess between his legs a testament to just how exhausted they were last night.

He grabs a pair of boxer briefs and heads into the bathroom, glancing back. Felicity’s asleep again, snoring softly, mouth hanging open a bit.

This time, he ignores the pangs in his chest. He just needs a good, hot shower.

~*~

The smell of coffee is what finally wakes her.

There are sounds coming from Oliver’s kitchen, and she vaguely remembers demanding pancakes. She’s pretty sure she was promised blueberries.

Oliver’s bed has got to be one of the most comfortable things she has ever had the pleasure to sleep in. It’s no small feat dragging herself from the down blankets to stumble her way to the bathroom, but once she’s standing beneath the hot spray, she feels any lingering tension from yesterday just melt away.

She snorts, lathering herself up with the loofa. Stressed out? All you need is a gorgeous man to give you a mind-blowing orgasm, a full night’s sleep on heaven’s own mattress, and a scalding shower, the smell of arabic roast teasing you in the background, and you’ll feel right as rain again!

Felicity pauses, frowning at the suds washing down the drain. She’s never spent the night before, and she’s a little concerned about how right it feels.

The lines are blurring. She can’t pretend it isn’t true. She’s been doing that up until now and all of the pretending hasn’t made it untrue.

And that means that when this is all over it’s going to hurt. It was always going to, but now…

Felicity sighs, breathing in the strong scent of Oliver’s body wash. Maybe it’s better this way.

When she was little, her mother wouldn’t tell her when they were going to the doctor to get a vaccine. She never knew until the nurse came in with the syringe and the little bottle of medication. She hated that - hated not knowing about pain until it was almost happening. She’s always been fine with ripping off a band aid as long as she knows it’s coming - preferring to watch and prepare for the
inevitable, brace herself, instead of looking away and the pain catching her by surprise.

She needs to stop closing her eyes and waiting for the blow to fall. If it’s going to hurt no matter what, then maybe…

Felicity shuts the water off and nods.

She spent the night. She smells like Oliver’s soap and can distinctly remember the feeling of him moving inside of her, bringing her to orgasm with strong, slow strokes. And there are pancakes waiting in the kitchen.

The smile spreads through her, starting at her lips and ending down in her toes.

Her clothing is completely ruined, so she grabs one of Oliver’s t-shirts and a pair of his sweats, rolling up the cuffs and the waist several times, and pads barefoot to the kitchen.

He hadn’t even bothered with a shirt, though looking down at herself and then at him, she wonders how many of the same pairs of pants he owns.

She sidles up next to him, filching a pancake from the plate next to the stove, and bumps his hip with hers.

“You know, I can tell you from experience, that frying anything without a shirt on is a very bad idea.”

He glances sideways at her, eyebrow raised. “Experience, huh?” His smirk speaks volumes.

“Oh yeah,” she confirms, taking a bite and pausing to moan at the blueberry goodness. Oliver huffs out a small laugh. “Mm, naked cooking. Never good.”

Oliver slides his current batch of pancakes onto the plate and Felicity takes the opportunity to grab a piping hot one.

“I don’t know. I’m picturing it now and I can’t see a downside…”

“Dangerous. Oil. Ow,” she mouths around a bite of food. Then tugs her shirt up to show her belly. “Look - scar even. Right there.”

“Oh, is that what that one’s from?” he asks, running a thumb over it. “I wondered…”

He could have asked earlier, but considering how very guarded he is about his own scars, Felicity can imagine him not wanting to pry.

They sit across from each other at the kitchen island, and in addition to the pancakes there’s creme fraiche, strawberries, orange juice and as much coffee as she can drink.

It’s heaven.

And neither of them have anywhere to be.

Oh, Felicity’s on call if she’s needed, but she handled all the floor reorganization yesterday, and it’s Saturday, no one’s going to be coming in, especially not after the explosion. SCFD is still finishing up the investigation, so unless they need her for something specific, she’s off the hook.

“So yesterday was… interesting.” She shakes her head and sips at her coffee. She’s on cup number three, she can savor it now that she’s been adequately caffeinated.
Oliver grimaces. “I spent five years going through hell, and I have never had a day like yesterday.” He steals one of the last strawberries off of her plate, and Felicity tries to smack his hand, but he’s too quick.

“Damn superhero reflexes,” she mutters. He shoots her a smug grin.

“I still can’t believe I almost lost that paper.”

“Ugh, that’s the worst,” she says. “It’s happened to me before.”

“Yeah, well, I’d only found out about it that morning.”

“You’re kidding!”

He shakes his head. “Nope. I think the girl who accidentally broke the news was worried I might have an aneurysm for a second.”

Felicity chuckles. “Well, that’s happened to me too.”

“Forgetting you had a paper due or the aneurysm?”

Felicity pours her fourth cup of coffee and laughs.

They go on like that for a while. When breakfast is done, they clear the plates, Felicity washing while Oliver dries. The living room is flooded with midday light, and they talk and laugh and just let themselves be.

Felicity can’t remember the last time she felt so relaxed and happy.

At some point, there’s a lull in the conversation. It’s comfortable, easy. She’s sitting back against the armrest of his sofa, legs stretch out in front of her. Oliver’s on the floor, and she’s been poking at his shoulder with her toe for the last two minutes. He keeps trying to catch her foot, but she’s managed to avoid capture up until now. She thinks he might be letting her get away.

“Hey, I was thinking…”

Felicity hums in response, trying to reach her toes down to his ribs. Her legs aren’t quite long enough.

“You’re here. I’m here.”

“Yes?” she drawls the word out, still concentrating.

“Neither of us need to be anywhere. What if we - I mean. You don’t have to agree, but it might be nice for a change, without the pressure of maybe dying, we could –” he exhales loudly. “I thought we could get today out of the way now - not have it looming over our heads.”

Felicity stares at him, then bursts out laughing. “Wow, Oliver, you sure know how to woo a lady and make her feel wanted.” She pokes him again with her toe.

Oliver snorts, but then grabs her ankle, lightning fast, before she has a chance to pull away again. She falls silent very quickly, his eyes piercing into hers, while his hand moves from her ankle, and slowly begins to trail up her calf.

She’s not laughing now. Her breathing turns shallow, the feeling of his rough hand on her skin sending jolts of electricity up her leg and inner thigh to her core.
He’s still watching her, and it’s almost too intense, but she can’t make herself look away.

His fingers brush lightly behind her knee, and Felicity lets out a soft whimper.

Oliver grips her leg, turning and climbing up onto the sofa, settling himself in between her knees. He pulls her leg up and around his waist, and slowly leans down to kiss her.

It’s different. Felicity doesn’t know what it’s like to kiss Oliver when her body isn’t edging her on, desperate for him. She isn’t frantic for more, needy with arousal.

But oh, she still wants him.

She sighs against his lips, against the feeling of his weight settling on her, pushing her into the sofa. She sighs when his lips move to her neck, down to her collarbone. She sighs when his hands skim up under her shirt, his shirt, thumbs brushing under her breasts, around her nipples, and when he finally pulls the shirt up and replaces his thumbs with his mouth, those sighs turn to moans.

He trails kisses down her abdomen, moving down the sofa and taking the sweatpants with him. He pulls her up onto his lap - the afternoon sun warm on her back. There’s a moment after Oliver pulls a condom out of the table drawer behind the sofa where Felicity can’t keep herself from judging him just the tiniest bit.

“In the living room? Really?” She laughs.

He barely tugs his pants down around his waist, just far enough down to loose himself and roll the condom on, then push up into her.

“If you’d rather have waited - you could have gone to the bedroom to grab one. But as things stand,” he grips her waist, lifting her off of him like she weighs nothing and pulling her back down, making her see stars, “I don’t see you complaining.”

“No, you’re right,” she gasps, when he does it again. “No complaints - excellent foresight, yes good, condoms, living room.”

She stops talking then, giving herself over to the moment completely. Oliver’s in control, even with her on top - he sets the pace, keeping his grip on her hips tight, and his thrusts slow and maddening. Felicity digs her nails into Oliver’s shoulders, trying to get some leverage, but Oliver just grunts and drops his forehead to her chest, kissing the tops of her breasts.

It’s so quiet, even their gasps sound soft in the heat and glow coming through the windows.

Later, as the sweat is cooling on their bodies and Oliver plays with Felicity’s hair, something occurs to her.

“Oliver.” She shifts back, her mouth twisted in a moue.

“Hm?”

“This won’t work.”

He’s using the tips of her hair like a paintbrush, drawing pretend shapes on her shoulder. “What won’t work?”

“Getting it out of the way.”

Oliver frowns, tilting his head.
She’s feeling pretty stupid, and she probably should have thought of this earlier. “Well, the drug works on a 24 hour loop, and unless I’m mistaken, neither of us will likely be available every day at this hour for a death defying nooner.”

He laughs. “I don’t know, it would be better than my usual death defying noon-time experiences. They’re not generally of the afternoon delight variety.”

Felicity rolls her eyes. “I’m serious, we’re going to have to do this again in like—” she cranes her neck to get a look at the clock in the kitchen—“five hours.”

“Tragic.”

She swats at his shoulder, but can’t help laughing. “Fine. If you’re okay with boundless promiscuity, then I guess I’ll just have to put up with it.”

Oliver grins and grabs her hand. “Hey, let’s go out. There’s a street fair going on a few blocks away. It could be fun.”

Once again, a pang stabs at Felicity’s chest. Go out… This is starting to feel like a lot more than a relationship built of necessity.

Oliver’s eyes are hopeful, his smile easy and relaxed. And Felicity can’t say no. She won’t - she’s determined to enjoy this while it lasts.

“Okay.”

An hour later, dressed in an old skirt of Thea’s and a t-shirt (“You’re sure she won’t mind?” “Felicity, I doubt she remembers stashing this stuff here at all.”) they walk down 15th street, enjoying the colorful stalls and wares, Oliver’s hand warm and strong around her own.

There’s plenty to see. Starling artisans of every variety are out in droves, along with a few trendy pop-up bars and restaurants. They stroll along stalls displaying pottery, hand-woven scarves, jewelry… There’s a stall with little animal figurines, where Felicity spends five minutes wondering whether to buy a tabby cat on a computer, until Oliver finally puts his foot down and buys it himself.

“It’s wearing glasses, Felicity. You have to have it.”

Oliver spends almost twenty minutes trying to pick out a pair of earrings for Thea, and Felicity is completely swept up by the sheer amount of adorable that is Oliver Queen, superhero extraordinaire, agonizing over whether the pair he likes are too dangly or not.

After a quick discussion at a brownie stand over whether or not the special ingredient brownies are “special” ingredient brownies, they settle for muffins instead.

They end the day sitting at a pop-up cafe, laughing and talking over lattes and sweet potato ravioli. The sun’s gone down, and the newly lit fairy lights of the street fair are twinkling in the darkening twilight.

It’s one of the best days she’s had in a long time. If Felicity’s being completely honest with herself - it’ the happiest she’s felt since coming to Starling City.

A jazz band strikes up a tune somewhere nearby, weaving into the murmur of the crowd, and Felicity takes a deep breath, breathing in the smells of the fair, of good coffee, and the promise of summer to come riding the tail end of the breeze.
Oliver’s fallen quiet, watching her soak it all in, and it doesn’t feel awkward - she stares right back. He smiles - a relaxed, content twist of his mouth that she doesn’t see often, and she thinks - I put that there. I put that there. And as soon as she thinks it, she knows she should ignore it, but there’s a rebellion to her calm. This moment is hers and always will be.

They take their time heading back towards Oliver’s place. There are still a couple of hours before they’re going to have to - well…

The thought plants itself in Felicity’s mind and she can’t get rid of it. It settles there, in the back of her mind, making her aware of Oliver’s every move, every touch. When he reaches down to take her hand, smiling serenely at the fading twilight, it sends shocks of electricity up her arm, and down to her stomach. It isn’t like the usual chemical desire she feels when it’s been too long. It’s completely Oliver, walking next to her, being with her… It’s his smell, the calluses of his fingers, the sweep of his neck as he looks up at the sky.

It’s the smile he gives her when she squeezes his hand.

Something in her eyes makes him stop. They stand there like that, the dwindling crowd parting around them to pass, and for a moment, time stands with them.

“Do you want to order take-out?” he asks, his voice low.

Let’s go back to my place. Let’s have dinner alone. I want you.

The words go unspoken, but Felicity hears them nonetheless.

She almost can’t bear to touch him once they’re in his apartment. She knows they have to wait. If they want to have any semblance of order in their lives, they have to manage to keep their hands off of each other for at least an hour and a half.

Oliver calls in the order from a Greek place they both enjoy, and opens a bottle of wine. They stand at opposite ends of the kitchen. Maybe the expanse of space will keep them from tearing each other’s clothes off.

She moves into the living room and starts going through Oliver’s music collection. She is very aware that he’s completely focused on what she’s doing.

She puts on something jazzy and innocuous, some piano player she hasn’t heard of, and moves to the window.

Felicity doesn’t know what to do with herself. Her eyes meet his over the rim of her wine glass. Even from across the room, she feels herself flush at the look in his eyes. The silence deepens, and the moments tick by, neither of them able to look away.

God, she wants him.

They’ve never had to wait before. It’s always been immediate, necessary gratification. But now, Felicity is frozen in place, reveling in a desire that she can’t fulfill, must not fulfill.

Oliver puts his glass down and takes a step towards her.

“Felicity…”

“Don’t,” she says, but she doesn’t sound at all convincing. Oliver takes another step.
She feels an invisible tug, something like a magnet pulling her towards him, and she has to force herself to ignore it, every cell in her body wanting him. She stands with her back against the window, hoping the cool glass will help calm her down.

“We should wait,” she whispers. He’s halfway across the room. She can see it in his eyes - he knows he shouldn’t be doing this, but he’s flirting with the danger of the idea…

She wants him so badly.

She can see him trying to convince himself to stop with every step he takes, but then he’s next to her. When he gently takes her wine glass and sets it on the sidebar, she knows neither of them are going to be able to stop.

He presses his palms flat against the glass on either side of her, framing her against the window, closing her in. Her breathing is coming in short, quick gasps now, and Oliver is no better.

He leans down, stopping centimeters from her lips. Her eyes roll and fall shut. She swallows, heart beating almost out of her chest, tilting her head back, exposing her neck. She’s breathing him in, the taste of him just out of her reach. She clenches her hands into fists at her sides. She can’t touch him… if she touches him…

Her skin is practically vibrating as they hold their positions, both separately wanting, but neither quite able to close the gap.

“Fuck,” Oliver whispers, and she feels the surge of air on her lips. She crumbles in on herself right as Oliver pushes up against her, his lips brushing hers, his hips pressing aga-

The doorbell rings.

“Oh God,” Felicity whimpers, and Oliver pulls back as if burned.

They both stare at each other, panting, and she sees his Adam’s apple bob as he swallows. His eyes are wild and she imagines hers must look the same.

The doorbell rings once more. “Fuck,” he mutters again, the sentiment completely different this time. He pulls his wallet out from his back pocket and heads for the door. Felicity slides down the glass wall, her legs completely useless.

By the time she manages to stand again, Oliver has paid and tipped the delivery guy, and is setting out the food on the kitchen table.

Felicity tries to sit down at the table with some semblance of dignity, but she approaches too much like a prey animal, wary of being devoured, to pull it off.

Oliver isn’t doing much better. His shoulders are stiff and she can see his jaw clenching, and it’s the mirrored tension in both of them that finally breaks her. She burst out laughing, unable to contain herself, giving in to how utterly ridiculous their situation is.

“We’re never going to be able to eat dinner like this, so let’s address the sexy elephant in the room,” she says breathily, between laughs. Then she grimaces. “Ugh. Sexy elephant… That sounds really bad.”

Oliver snorts.

“Can we both just admit we totally want to rip each other’s clothes off and that’s okay, and we’ll get
to it as soon as we’ve eaten?”

Oliver gives her that grin of his - the one he uses when he’s charmed by something she’s said, and she feels a flush of pleasure.

“Okay. The sexy elephant has been addressed. We want to bang.”

Felicity wrinkles her nose and Oliver laughs again.

“I mean, we’re not teenagers, but sure okay.”

Oliver passes her a plate of moussaka. There’s tzatziki and filo pastries filled with salty cheese and olives, and baklava for dessert. They laugh and talk over their dinner, enjoying their wine and each other’s company, and Felicity is once again struck by how comfortable she is with him, how natural this is.

The music is still playing when they finish eating, and Oliver gets up, coming around the kitchen island to stand in front of Felicity. “Dance with me?” he asks her, and Felicity bites her lip, feeling suddenly shy, but she nods and lets Oliver pull her into the middle of the living room, and into his arms, swaying with her in time to the soft notes of the piano.

“Thank you, for today,” Felicity tells him, resting her cheek on his chest, feeling his heartbeat and reveling in the warmth of him.

“Hm.”

Felicity feels the rumble of his response in his chest and holds him tighter. Oliver’s fingers are trailing up and down her back, sending little sparks of electricity throughout her body. The music has stopped, but they’re still swaying. The quiet settles over them like a soft blanket, the only sound the shuffle of their feet and their soft breathing.

Felicity pulls away just far enough to look up at Oliver and takes a leap.

“Make love to me. Please?”

The question hangs between them. She isn’t asking him for just sex, for something they both have to have. She’s putting everything on the line, and asking him for what she so desperately wants.

She can see his Adam’s apple bob when he swallows, and then he nods.

He pulls away from her, but takes her hands, and begins to walk backwards towards his bedroom, leading her.

She’s so nervous. How can she be so nervous? They’ve done this so many times.

But she’s smart enough to know that this time it’s different. This time, it isn’t about the sex.

It’s about them.

When they reach Oliver’s bed, he turns her around and sits her down gently, then kneels at her feet. He’s looking up at her like she’s daylight, and he’s been trapped in the darkness for weeks, months. No one’s ever looked at her like that before, and it’s almost too much for her to bear.

It’s a relief when he looks down, but her breath catches in her throat when he slowly pulls her shoe off, rubbing his thumb over her ankle reverently, before leaning down to kiss her knee.
He repeats the same motions with her other foot, cradling her ankle in his hands and looking up at her, as though waiting for her approval. There’s something deeply moving about seeing a man as powerful as Oliver on his knees at her feet, waiting for her to acknowledge him, and with a shaky breath, Felicity nods at him.

He slides his hands up either leg, trailing his fingers over her knees, between her thighs, and parts them gently, holding her legs open. His mouth is hot on her skin, kissing gently up one thigh, then the other, breathing her in.

He sits back, watching her, taking in her shallow breathing, her flushed cheeks, her glazed eyes, and pulls his shirt up over his head, discarding it. Her eyes roam over the now familiar planes of his chest and abdomen, the scars, the tattoos, and then she lifts her own shirt up and over her head, reaching behind herself to unclasp her bra, and let it fall away.

He rises up, leaning over her, and she pushes herself back on the bed, Oliver following her closely. He undoes the front button of her skirt, helping her shimmy out of it, taking her underwear with it. She’s completely naked beneath him, and he lets his hand rove over her skin, his eyes following. He trails his fingers up her waist, around one of her breasts, then back down again. His thumb massages her knee, and he kneads the skin of her thigh on the way up to her center. He barely traces her clit, not quite touching, but the sensation overwhelming nonetheless.

Felicity’s breathing is ragged. She wants nothing more than for Oliver to touch her, to love her, to make her come screaming his name, but she’s also revelling in the gentle ardor he’s devoting to her now.

He kisses her delicately, then moves away from her lips, trailing kisses down her neck, to her collarbone, kissing her breasts, one after the other. He kneels between her legs and spreads them open, dipping down to kiss gently along her outer lips, before finally flattening his tongue against her clit.

She arches up with a yell, but he grips her hips in an iron tight hold, pulling her down, not letting her get away as he pushes her hard into inescapable pleasure. He pulls away for a second, leaving her panting, trying to close her legs, to create some friction, but he lets go of her hips and pushes her knees open, leaving her wide and at his mercy.

She barely has a second to rest before he’s pushing his tongue inside of her, and she gasps, choking on a breath. He returns to her clit, alternating light, flutter like movements with the tip of his tongue, with deep long strokes. It’s going to drive her crazy - she never knows when he’s going to switch it up. At one point, she can barely feel him there at all, there’s barely any contact between his mouth and where she wants - no needs - his mouth to be.

She whimpers then, on the verge of begging him to let her orgasm. But he seems to know she’s reached her limit, and suddenly there’s no escaping his mouth. He’s kissing and sucking and licking, holding her to him so tightly she has no choice but to give in to her own desperation and come with a scream.

By the time her post-orgasm shivers have stopped and she can breathe again, Oliver has stripped completely down and is lying next to her, trailing fingers along her abdomen and waiting patiently for her to be able to speak again.

“Good?” he asks her, voice rough and low.

“Mmmmm.”
He smiles at her, leaning down to kiss her. She can taste herself on his lips and she groans, turning and arching into him.

They lie on their sides like that for a while, kissing slowly. There’s something lovely about being able to enjoy just kissing him like this, without needing to move on to the next step yet.

Every inch of her is pressed up against him, and his warmth envelopes her, the heat of his skin comforting and familiar, the slow, languorous movement of his lips against hers a reminder of just how well they’ve come to know each other physically.

She never wants this to end. Wants to stay in his arms forever.

The hard length of his erection is pressed between them, and she reaches down, gripping it firmly in her hand. Oliver groans, pulling away and resting his forehead against hers. He shifts his hips, pumping slightly into her hand, his breathing ragged.

Pushing against him, she gets him to lie back, and she straddles his legs, moving her hand gently up and down his length. They both watch her small hand sliding along his cock, the bright flash of her hot pink nail polish a lovely contrast to his arousal.

She uses her other hand to fondle him, and Oliver sighs deeply, closing his eyes with a contented smile. He’s not feeling the urgency yet, Felicity knows, for now just reveling in the sparks of pleasure she’s giving him. There’s no urgency in him, he’s just given himself over to her completely, and Felicity’s heart aches with the fondness she’s feeling. More than fondness, though she’s not sure if she’s ready to share that with Oliver yet.

She releases his balls to touch herself. Oh, she’s wet and ready for him again, wants to feel him filling her, gripping her, pulling her into him. She rubs her thumb over the tip of his erection and he hisses, opening his eyes to watch her take the drop of precum she’d wiped away, and bring it to her mouth, tasting him.

“Felicity…” Oliver’s voice is rough with desire, his tone pleading. She can barely see the blue of his eyes anymore, his pupils are blown with his arousal.

She leans over, reaching for the condoms she knows she’ll find in his bedside cabinet. He pinches lightly at her nipples, her breasts hanging over his face, and she grinds her hips down, unable to stop herself.

“Fuck,” Oliver murmurs, as the slickness of her slides against his cock.

They’re both breathing hard, but they’re never going to get there if she can’t get the fucking condoms, so she swats his hands away from her breasts with a little laugh, leaning and reaching for a second time.

Oliver behaves himself, and Felicity locks eyes with him as she slowly tears the condom open, and scooches back, before rolling it on.

When she finally lowers herself onto his erection, Oliver sits up, wrapping an arm around her lower back and pulling her even more into him. He rests his forehead against her shoulder, and she can feel his arm shaking, his fingers twitching at her side while he waits for her to move.

She lifts almost completely off of him, and sinks back down, Oliver groaning in pleasure. He takes her face in his hands, fingers tangling in her hair, and kisses her, gasping when she lifts up and sinks back down a second time.
They settle into a rhythm, foreheads touching, breathing into each other. Felicity focuses on the delicious feeling of his cock sliding in and out of her, not quite enough to bring her to completion on its own, but so fucking good, nonetheless. She revels in the sounds Oliver makes, the lust burning in his eyes, and his continued worship of her body, his hands and fingers trailing reverently over her skin, his kisses burning and needy.

She circles her hips on the next push down, and Oliver grunts. Within seconds, she’s flat on her back, her knee pushed up between them, Oliver pumping into her at a relentless pace, each stroke deep and hard enough to leave her scrambling for purchase on the bedspread, anything to help her cling to her sanity.

But he won’t let her. His thumb finds her clit between their bodies, and the wetness of their joining lets him rub her clit fast and hard, and within seconds she’s coming with a scream, his name ripped from her seconds before he follows her over the edge.

The orgasm is one of the strongest she’s ever had, and she gives a little sob when she can finally breathe again, aftershocks shuddering through her, her toes curling as she clutches around him.

Oliver’s breathing hard into her neck, and it’s several minutes before either of them can speak.

“Has it been that good before?” Felicity asks, her post-coital haze loosening her tongue. “Not that it hasn’t just been consistently good, because it has. But, um. This was literally toe-curling good and I don’t think I’ve ever come that hard in my life.”

Oliver chuckles, lifting his head up at last to smile at her. His eyes are sparkling. He looks as carefree as she’s ever seen him. He looks happy.

“Felicity, I think it’s probably safe to say that was the best sex either of us has ever had.”

Her grin is slow, almost shy. “Yeah?” she asks, smiling. “Best you ever had, huh?”

Oliver laughs, dropping his head back down to nuzzle into her neck again.

Maybe she should tell Oliver what she’s been feeling… Maybe this joy is something she could have all the time?

Maybe it’s time to stop pretending she and Oliver haven’t turned into more than what circumstance originally dictated to them...

“Oliver,” Felicity begins, but of course, her phone chooses that moment to ring.

“Leave it,” he murmurs into her skin, his voice muffled. “I’m basking in afterglow.”

Felicity laughs. “It might be work, though. Don’t forget, I lost a whole floor of my building yesterday.”

Oliver mutters something under his breath. She thinks she catches the words, “just one floor” and “my building actually”, but he pulls out a second later, making them both gasp. Felicity kisses his cheek and rolls out from under him, grabbing his discarded shirt and throwing it on, before rushing into the living room to grab her phone.

~*~

He’s cleaned up and pulled on a pair of pants, and is standing there feeling very pleased with himself and incredibly well-fucked, when Felicity comes back into the bedroom, looking pale and shaken.
He frowns.

“Felicity?”

“Uh. That - that was Caitlin.”

His heart stops for a moment, and his stomach feels like it’s dropped down to his feet.

“She - uh. She said she found the cure.”

It’s ridiculously sudden, even though it isn’t sudden at all. Caitlin’s been working on it for months.

Oliver sits down one the edge of the bed, his knees giving out on him.

“That’s-” he fights past the unreasonable panic building in his chest. “That’s a good thing, right?” He sounds unconvincingly cheerful, but Felicity seems to be in too much shock to notice.

“She’ll have the antidote here day after tomorrow.”

She’s saving their lives. Oliver knows that Caitlin is saving their lives, and yet, he can’t help the feeling that she’s ruined everything.

Oliver ought to feel happier that he and Felicity won’t be in terrible danger anymore, and yet...

The silence stretches between them.

Only minutes before Oliver had been happy. He’d had Felicity in his arms, and had never wanted to let her go. Now, the quiet settles like a dead weight in the pit of his stomach.

He needs to say something. Before Felicity realizes that he’s nowhere near as relieved as he should be. Before she understands that he’d gladly stay in danger if it would mean more time spent with her.

“So,” he finally manages to get out. “That’s, uh - that’s it, huh?”

Felicity nods, chewing at her lip. “Yeah.”

“Well, I mean…” He stands up again, and folds his arms in front of his chest. “It’s a good thing, isn’t it? We’ve been waiting for this.”

He wishes he knew what was going on inside her head.

“Yeah. Yes, obviously.” She shrugs and nods. “No more death defying sex, right? It’ll be nice to finally get an evening’s rest.”

He winces. Has it been that bad, having to spend every night with him? It had gotten inconvenient several times, dangerous as well, but in the end, had it been so bad?

He clears his throat. If that’s how she feels, then he’s going to have to be okay with it. He’d thought, for a moment or two tonight, that maybe Felicity felt the same way he - but no. He needs damage control.

“You can finally get on with your life, in that case. I know I’ve been tying you down, so that’s… good…”

Felicity frowns. “What are you talking about?”
Oliver shrugs. “Now that you won’t have to meet me every day, you can actually go back to having a social life. Dating... You know.” There’s a bitterness in the back of his throat as he forces himself to say the next words.

“Isn’t there some guy at work you’re interested in? Evan or something?”

Felicity’s eyes flash.

“Oh, so, you just assumed that as soon as I had the antidote, I’d ignore months of whatever the hell this has been,” she gestures between them, “and just pick up with another guy straight off the bat.”

He can’t help it, he reacts automatically to Felicity’s accusations, immediately feeling defensive. And in his mind, the best defense is always offense. “Am I wrong? Weren’t you?” Evan’s smug, pretty face flashes through his mind. “You’ve talked about him enough when it was just the two of us. I figured.”

“You figured what? That I was picturing fucking Evan while you were balls deep inside of me, every single time?”

The silence this time is vicious, the harshness of her words hanging over the massive bed between them.

In the emptiness that follows, he realizes he’s being unfair, but he doesn’t know how to tell her that, and she’s moving before he gets a chance to figure it out.

“You know what?” she says. “I can’t do this right now. I shouldn’t have to do this right now.” She grabs her discarded skirt, pulling it on, and stuffs her bra into the pocket. She’s still wearing his shirt. Grabbing her shoes in one hand, and gripping her phone in the other, she heads out of the bedroom.

Despair settles in his gut as he rushes after her.

“You’re just going to leave?”

“Looks like it, doesn’t it?”

“Felicity, don’t. Come on-”

She whirls on him. “I can’t believe you would make me defend myself to you. That you would assume that after months of sleeping with you, for whatever the reason, that I would— That you could just-”

He can see tears beginning to shine in her eyes, but she blinks them away.

“Fuck you, Oliver,” she says softly.

The words hit him hard, striking as though she’d slapped him.

In moments she’s out the door and he can’t bring himself to follow her.

He’s been so stupid. So utterly stupid.

He hits the wall with his fist, turning and sliding down to sit on the floor.

Oliver can still feel her hands on his back, smell her on his skin. Her laughter and her smile, and the way she said his name...
He missed his chance to tell her he’d fallen in love with her, and now he’s lost the best thing he’s ever had.

Chapter End Notes

Honestly guys, I don't know what to say... Thank you for your patience, thank you for your continued support. I promised I'd continue, and I meant it... it just took a while.

I love all of you.

End Notes

This fic has been a wild ride so far. I’m not sure I’ve ever had this much fun writing a fic, or been this prolific in such a short amount of time.
Thank you to absentlyabbie - who came up with the original idea for this story and let me run with it.
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This one’s for you guys.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!