### The One Who's Fallen

**Summary**

After Abby realizes that Jaha may use his executive powers to float Clarke before her 18th birthday, she and Raven scrape together a pod and send Clarke down to earth a bit before the 100 is sent down.

This will mainly be in Clarke's point of view, but there might be some chapters later on from Lexa's POV.
"Clarke. Clarke, honey wake up."

Someone's shaking my shoulder. I groan sleepily and press my face further into my bed. It's hard and uncomfortable and doesn't at all feel like my one at home. I jolt awake when I remember where I am. I flinch away from the hands, pressing myself against the wall. It's dark and I can't see enough to make out anything other than the shape of the person waking me up. Is it time for me to be floated? It can't be. My birthdays not for a few months.

"Clarke?"

I exhale, releasing most of the tension in my body. It's my mother. But for her to risk coming here in the middle of the night... Something must have gone horribly wrong.

"Mom?" I whisper, my voice hoarse from disuse. This past year in solitary hasn't given me much need to talk.

"Yeah, honey it's me. Come with me please." There's urgency in her voice that strikes terror into my heart.

"Ok."

She takes my hand, surprising me with its suddenness. Mom pulls me up, and I wrap my arms around her. I let out a shaky breath. I've missed her.

"We're headed to the Mecha station. Put this on and stay close to me." She murmurs, pulling away slightly.

I take what she hands me. It's a baseball cap. I put it on and follow as she leads me. She taps twice on the door and Jackson opens it. I blink, surprised to see him.

"Thank you, Jackson. Now get out of here so you don't get caught." Mom says.

"Yes ma'am, though I could say the same to you. Stay safe, Abby. And it's nice to see you again, Clarke." He gives me a nod and smiles. "Goodbye."

His words ring of finality and I feel a familiar panic rising in my throat. Why are we going to Mecha station?

I follow her silently out of the Sky Box, taking my first breath of free air in a year. I keep my head down, trying to act normal around the patrolling guards.

When we're in an empty corridor, I ask the question that's been in my mind since I knew it was Abby in my cell. "What's going on?"

"I'll explain everything when we get to Mecha, I promise." Mom responds quietly.

Walking there feels like it takes hours but in reality it might be twenty minutes. Mom flashes her Council card to the card reader and the door to Mecha opens with a hiss.

To my surprise, there's already someone else here. This pretty girl that can't be much older than me with black hair and grease on her clothes.
"Hey, Abby. Is this her?" She wipes her hands on her pants.

"Yes. Clarke, this is Raven." Mom gestures to her but I'm not sure why she's here.

"Nice to meet you, Clarke. I'm Raven Reyes, the youngest Zero-G Mechanic in 52 years." She gives me a cocky grin. We shake hands and Raven looks to mom. "Have you told her yet?"

Mom looks almost sheepish. "No."

"Come on, Abby. You broke your daughter out of prison and dragged her here and didn't even explain what's going on?" Raven sighs.

"I was going to tell her when we got here." Mom defends, crossing her arms.

"Really." Raven doesn't look impressed in the least. "Fine, just tell her now before Kane finds out she's gone and storms the Ark looking for her."

"Jaha has been adamant for this past year, blocking all of my attempts to get you pardoned. Now, he's gone further. He's going to float you."

"Mom, that's the entire reason I was in the Sky Box, they were waiting for me to turn 18 so they could float me." I say, confused.

"No honey, he has decided to use his power as chancellor to float you before you turn 18."

"Can he even do that?" I question.

"Apparently." Mom sighs. "That's why I've been working with Raven. She's been refurbishing an escape pod."

"An escape pod?" My eyes widen. "You want to send me to earth?"

"Yes. We're going to be sending 100 delinquents down later."

"If we survive that long." Raven mutters.

"Raven." Mom scolds. "Clarke, I'm sorry but you don't really have a good choice here. Please say you'll go."

I swallow. "Will you be coming down?"

"If it's safe, honey. I love you." She wraps me in her arms and I let a few tears fall, grieving for everything and everyone I'm leaving behind.

I step back after a couple minutes and take a deep breath. "I love you too, mom."

Raven ushers me into the escape pod and tells me what to press when. "Stay safe, Clarke." She says.

She leaves the pod and closes the door behind her. Mom and Raven both get back behind a sealed door so they won't get pulled into space when I'm ready to be launched. I mentally go over everything I have to do in my head and press the button. I'm immediately sucked back towards earth.
While drifting towards the earth, which seems much bigger than from my view in the Sky Box, I marvel at the beauty. It's amazing from up here, and I feel excitement making me smile for the first time since my dad was floated. I'm going to earth. It might not be survivable with its radiation, but if that's the case, I'll die on the ground.

The pod begins moving faster towards the earth and I feel panic rising in my chest as I mentally go over what Raven told me to do again. I press the buttons she told me to and the pod gives a violent jolt, which I'm guessing is reentry.

The pod moves faster and faster until all I can see out of the windows is fire. I clench my jaw, knowing I might die in this metal coffin. I press buttons again, ignoring the whine of the straining metal around me.

Sparks fly from some gadget and I curse, hoping it wasn't anything important. I think some of the sparks hit my right arm, but I'm too busy focusing on not dying on impact to feel it.

The flames are less intense and I can make out ground coming toward me at an alarming speed. I barely have time to brace myself as the pod crashes into the ground.

I groan, rubbing my head gingerly. I feel the bump and determine it's most likely not a concussion, so that's a bonus. My eyes widen as I realize I'm on the ground. This 100 year old piece of space junk made it to the ground in one piece. Not even the windows are shattered, they're just slightly cracked. Next time I see Raven, I'll have to thank her.

I check the machine that sparked and groan when I recognize the label as a communication device. I have no way of telling Mom that I'm alive. I have no way of contacting anyone. I hit the machine, hoping it'll whir to life but it just sparks again, hitting my hand. I curse, definitely feeling that. It just burns a little and I check it, making sure it isn't a deep burn. I should be fine. I lean back in the chair, looking out the window. I can't see anything but dirt.

Float me, I'm on the ground. I push the handle on the door, glad when it opens, air hissing as I shove it open. I crawl out, squinting against the sunlight. Once my eyes adjust, my mouth drops open and I grin, allowing myself to feel happiness. I spin, taking everything in.

The trees are so tall they seem to scrape the sky and there's so much green. It's so different than the Ark, which was always sterile and white. I let out an audible sigh as I look at the ground, loving the feeling of the earth beneath my feet. It's not hard and unyielding like metal.

I look back at the escape pod and look it over, noting that it might be a good place to have camp and sleep until I get up a good shelter. I give one last wistful look around me, taking in my surroundings because I know I'm going to be busy setting up camp and focusing on not starving to really revel in it for awhile.

I'm in a clearing and there isn't much movement around me, which worries me. If there were movement, it would mean there are animals here, which would mean I have a lesser chance of dying of radiation poisoning. But I don't see anything, and I can't hear even the scurrying of a mouse. Though I'm not sure if my ears are that good.
I rummage through the escape pod, grinning when I find a sack (thankfully it's not destroyed, it's barely even burned). I open it and let out a relieved sigh. There's a knife, a flask, a few notebooks, and a couple bits of rations. It's not much, but it'll definitely help.

I take one notebook and smile when I realize that it's an unlined one. Mom must have remembered how much I love to draw. I rip out a paper and begin drawing my surroundings, knowing that making a map will be useful. I'll definitely get lost if I don't make it.

Once I'm finished and satisfied with my work, I grab the knife and the flask, heading out in search of water. I don't see or hear anything on the way but don't let myself panic. Soon, I hear the sound of a flowing river. My mouth drops open slightly and I run towards it.

The river's twice as wide as I am tall. I've never seen so much water. I let out an joyful laugh and run my fingers through the glistening water. I quickly full my flask, noting a dark spot in the water to keep my eye on. I think I see it moving a little, but I've had quite the eventful day and I might be seeing things.

I take out my knife, just in case. I wade into the river until it covers my shoes (that was really stupid of me I should have taken them off before I decided to walk in water). I eye the water warily and almost drop my knife in shock when a muddy brown fish swims past me.

An animal. Earth's survivable. I let out a deep breathe and practically beam.

The moment is interrupted when my stomach grumbles. They don't feed us much in the Sky Box, just above what'll keep us alive and not complaining too much. There's two meals a day, but if there's a shortage of food, we're the first to go hungry. It's been a rough week and I've only had meals once a day, and yesterday I didn't have anything.

I watch the fish, licking my lips. The food on the Ark is so dry and tasteless, it's the worst kind if bland and there's no animals in space, so I've never had meat. I've dreamt if what it tastes like, but now I have a chance to find out.

I slowly move, grasping the knife, and lunge.

Chapter End Notes

I think that might be a good place to stop for today. We're going to get to see some bad ass Clarke surviving for a bit, which is more fun to write than I thought it'd be. Lexa might not show up for a bit, but she's going to come!

For those of you that don't know, I update my stories every three days so the next update will be Friday. Thank you all so much for your support on this story! You guys are incredible! Thank you for reading and your amazing comments, and stay awesome!
The fish darts away and I groan in disappointment when my knife hits a mossy rock instead. I frown, mentally going over it again. It must have seen my shadow. I'll have to be more careful next time.

Out of the corner of my eye, I see movement that isn't from the river. The dark shape is definitely moving. I stand up, water rippling from where my hands were in the river, and stumble back. The shape unfurls and I watch in horror as a snake like thing swims with frightening speed toward me. The water I'm in is shallow, so I should be safe, but I get my ass out of the water as fast as I can anyway.

I didn't make it to the ground just so I could die by being eaten by a giant water snake.

After a moment, it moves back to its cove and I feel like I can breathe again. Once my mind catches up, I let out a confused huff. I haven't heard of any creature like this in my Earth Studies class. No matter how much I disagree with Pike and his morals (or lack of them), he was a good teacher and taught us every bit of information we might need on earth. Luckily, I excelled in that class so hopefully I won't die of starvation or exposure or something survival related.

I let go of my curiosity about the demon snake and crouch down, watching the dark spot. I slowly fill the canteen, careful not to make too many ripples. If my theory is correct, the snake's skin (or scales, I was too busy surviving to look intently at it) are sensitive and it can feel when something moves in the water.

Knowing it'll bug me for the rest of the day at least, I decide to confirm my theory. I pick up a small rock from the shallow part of the river and throw it into the deeper part. In a flash, the snake goes over. Theory confirmed.

Satisfied, I cap the canteen and begin walking back to my camp. I try to keep my steps light and quiet, keeping and ear out for anything edible. Something rustles in a tree above me and I turn, holding my knife. That sounded too big to be an animal. Could it be a human? No, of course not. They all died when the bombs went off. Right?

I eye the tree suspiciously before turning back towards the direction of the camp. Then, there's a noise in the bushes below the tree. I crouch again, quietly making my way around it to see what I'm dealing with. To my surprise, it's a rabbit. But it isn't small like the books said. It's up to my knees in height with long, thin legs.

I'm behind it and out of its sight, but I know it's sense of smell and hearing will be the greatest difficulty if it's anything like the Old Earth rabbits.

Once I'm in a good stance, I pounce. I grab it's body as it squeals angrily beneath me, gnashing its teeth together. I plunge my knife into its neck, knowing I hit it's carotid artery. Blood seeps from it's wound and soaks brown fur as I pull my knife out. It lets out a soft growl before it drops, dead.

I ignore the guilt rolling in my stomach and pick it up. I head back to my make shift camp. I set the rabbit on the seat in the pod and close the door to keep predators out.

I hike the surrounding area, picking up herbs and plants I recognize as edible and not poisonous as
well as sticks. My arms fill quickly and I have to make frequent trips back to put the herbs with the rabbit and the sticks on the ground outside the pod. I make a mental note to make baskets out of the reeds I saw near the river.

Once I've gathered enough sticks, I make a circle of rocks a few meters away from the pod. I set up the sticks and put in a few dead leaves, grabbing the two rocks I picked up earlier. I lean over the tent of sticks and strike them against each other like we were shown on class. Because oxygen in the Ark is always an issue, Pike showed us using two stones that would not ignite.

To my surprise, after half a dozen tries sparks begin to fly and smoke comes from my fire pit. After another two, there's a small fire and I let out a victorious whoop.

I set up a rig to hold up the rabbit. I get it from the pod and make sure to close the door behind me. I grab some rope like things I saw hanging from trees and use them to tie it's feet to the rig. It dangles over the fire and the smell of cooking meat makes my mouth water. If it smells that amazing, it must taste fantastic.

Once it seems cooked, I slice at it to make sure and feel pride in my chest when it looks good. I set it on a nearby stump that I cleaned earlier, grimacing at the thought of the germs and bugs and making a mental note to make plates and bowls too.

I use my knife to cut into it, taking what I know I'll be able to eat and put the rest back in the pod. I'll definitely need to make a storage unit so it's not in my sleeping space later. I eat as the sun sets, marveling at the sight as the reds and yellows turn to purple before everything goes dark.

I yawn, exhausted after such an eventful day and get back into the pod. I move everything away from the seat and settle into it. I close my eyes and fall asleep almost instantly.

Chapter End Notes

There will probably be a time jump next chapter... I love Clarke being bad ass and smart. There'll definitely be more of that! Thank you all for your lovely comments (I swear one of them nearly had me in tears, you guys are incredibly sweet)! Thanks for reading and stay awesome!
The next 17 days pass quickly. I made great progress, in my opinion. The pelts from the skinned animals make great blankets, and weaving the baskets were surprisingly soothing to do, if a bit tedious.

After spending the first night sleeping in the pod, I had the worst neck ache and I was so exhausted after sleeping so poorly. That morning, I vowed to not sleep in it again, even if it meant that I'd sleep outside with the cold and the bears (or whatever predators there are here). Luckily, I made a shelter, but it's proved unnecessary except for the wind and keeping out unwanted critters. I'm in a forest, so you'd think it would rain. Unless it's rained while I'm asleep, it hasn't so far. I've built storage into the pod that pretty much maximizes the use of its space, which is an accomplishment I'm pretty proud of.

The hardest thing I've made these past days is a bow. As in a bow and arrow. I did not think it would be as difficult as it was. It took a day of work just to build the wooden part (opposed to the string part). I'm not the greatest at shooting it, but it has helped me bag a deer, which was enough to feed me for a week.

The entire time I've been down here, I've felt like there's someone or something else here. Like it's watching me from the trees. I thought the feeling would fade at first, but it still hasn't.

I'm out hunting (and gathering what I can into a purse-like basket that took hours to make) when I hear something rustle. I immediately grab my bow from my back and load an arrow as I turn and point it at whatever's in the trees.

A head peeks out and I nearly drop my bow in shock. A person. Holy crap, it's a person. People survived. The person's eyes aren't on me, but on another tree. I lower my bow, but keep it loaded just in case. Something lands behind me and I'm turning again, aiming at... A woman? There's more?

It's a tall woman with long braided blonde hair and a stern expression that's impossible to read. She's intimidating to say the least and I lower my bow from being aimed at her face, but keep it pointed towards her.

The person I saw first darts to the tree the woman was in and drops down. It's a boy, younger than me but probably a teenager. He has long black braided hair (perhaps it's part of their culture? Surely they've formed some sort of culture after 100 years).

The woman turns to him and speaks in some language but I can't tell what they're saying. I just watch them converse for a minute, both fascinated by this new language (that sounds like a new twisted version of English) and still in shock that there's people down here.

The boy nods to her respectfully and runs off. The woman begins speaking to me in their language.

I frown, "Sorry. I don't understand what you're saying."

"You speak Gonasleng (warrior language, or English)." The woman seems surprised, though it certainly doesn't show on her face (I can only tell by the way her voice pitch raises slightly and her mouth twitches). "Perhaps it is a sign. Come with me." She begins walking away from my pod.
"That's the wrong way to get to my camp." I point out.

"I know. Come with me." She repeats, looking unamused.

"Everything I have is back at the pod." I cross my arms and don't either under her scathing glare. I'm not going anywhere without everything I've built.

"Very well." She relents. "Be quick. I will be accompanying you."

Of course she will. I immediately turn around and walk back to my camp, not caring if she's following me. On the way back, I mull over the possibilities. I could stay at my pod, or I could go with this... Grounder. Maybe there's more of them. Perhaps there's even an entire village, or an entire city.

I silently curse my curiosity, knowing I'm going to go with her. Hopefully she won't kill me on the way.

The footsteps behind me stop when we reach my little camp.

"You have built all of this in the time you have been here?" If I didn't know better, I'd think that she's impressed.

"Yes. Haven't you been watching me?" I ask as I begin gathering what I can carry.

The woman snorts. "Yes and no. My scouts inform me about you and your movements, but this is the first day I have come to see you for myself."

I pick up the pelts, brushing the dust from my prized possession, the fur of a panther. It came close to my camp, too close for comfort. I didn't like killing such a magnificent beast, but its proved to be quite tasty and the pelt has kept me warm better than any other.

I process what she told me. "Does that mean you're a leader?"

The woman practically puffs out her chest and it would be funny if it weren't intimidating. "I am a General under the Heda. I was sent here by the Heda herself when a scout informed her of your presence. We have not had anyone fall from the Sky since the first Heda."

I frown. That's a lot of information to take in at once. "What's a Heda?"

The woman bristles. "She is the highest leader of the clans. She is called Commander in your tongue. Speak ill of her and I will have your head mounted on a pike."

That's intense. Wait. There are clans? How many people are down here?

I must've voiced my questions aloud because the woman gives me that unimpressed glare again and turns. "Come. Everything will be explained to you at the village."

"Wait, I don't even know your name." I protest when I realize it.

"I am Anya."
Hopefully this isn't too bad, I wrote half of this on less than four and a half hours of sleep... I normally get a minimum of seven on school days, to give you perspective. Anyway, thanks for reading and stay awesome!
I follow her, finding myself fascinated at how easily she moves silently through the forest.

After years of learning how to move quietly on metal (the squeaking noise gets old really fast), it was difficult to transition to walking on ground. I've only managed to move quietly enough that animals won't startle. Unless they're a rabbit or have great hearing.

"I sent a messenger to Heda and informed her I was going to reveal myself." Anya says, breaking the silence. "She is curious about you. However, she is busy now and will come before the next full moon." At my confused look, she sighs. "In two weeks. Certainly you understand the simple concept of time?"

"Of course." I say, trying not to be offended. I have a feeling that this is just her personality.

"The leader of my clan is coming, as well. While we await their arrival, I will train you and teach you our ways." Anya continues like she didn't hear me. "We are close the the village. It is called TonDC."

"Like Washington DC?" I ask.

"No. TonDC." She repeats it slowly like she thinks I'm stupid. Which she probably does.

The woods open up into a clearing and my mouth drops open. There are houses built from wood and metal that look like they were haphazardly put together. When I look closer, I realize they're stronger than they appear and could probably survive a missile. Though I doubt there are any of those anymore.

There are so many people with smiles on their faces it makes me automatically begin to grin. On the Ark, everything was so serious. We had to survive so the future of the human race could be preserved. Here, there are only a few with stoic faces, and I'm pretty sure they're guards. Even the guards look happier than the children on the Ark. There's lines on their faces, scars showing, and a darkness in their eyes I know will never truly fade. But they seem... Freer.

"Come with me." Anya says again, but I swear I can hear amusement in her voice as I gawk at everything. "You can look around later."

I follow her, trying to take everything in. Anya stops suddenly and turns to me.

"Why did we stop?"

"This is to be your tent. Heda may want to take you to the capital. If that is so, you will be given more permanent housing there. If not, a house will be prepared for you here or wherever you wish to settle."

I study the tent for a moment. It's larger than some of the houses I've seen in this village, but it's not excessively huge. "Thank you."

Anya doesn't respond and gestures for someone behind me to approach us. The boy I saw first comes into view. "Artigas will be your guard. Heda would not be pleased if I allowed you to die without her permission."

I balk at that. "Your commander can order you to kill people?"
Anya gives me a glare and I make a mental note to try not to question this Heda again. "Yes, she can."

I decide to change the subject and turn to my new guard. "Your name is Artigas, right? You look young to be a guard, you must be good."

"That is correct." He responds with a kind smile. "I am a warrior, like my father before me." Artigas purses his lips and looks at Anya. She nods. "He is missing. We believe the Maunon have him."

"Maunon?"

"The Mountain Men, in Gonasleng. They live in the mountain and come out in odd suits to watch us. They use their Reapers to capture more of us." Artigas explains, pain in his eyes.

"What are Reapers?"

"They appear to be some of the captured. They are soulless beasts and have a taste for flesh."

"I'm sorry about your father." I say quietly.

He gives me a sad smile, one I know well. My father wore it whenever he was around me after he found out the Ark is dying. "Mochof. Thank you."

"I trust you will keep her safe?" Anya asks him.

"I will guard her with my life." Artigas promises.

I wince at that. I don't want him, or anyone, to die for me. My dad was killed because of me, I don't want any more innocent blood on my hands. If only I hadn't told Wells...

"Sky girl." Anya says, making me snap out of my thoughts and look at her. "You can have the rest of the day and night to explore and get situated in your tent." She steps closer to me. I almost take a step back, but ignore my automatic reaction and stare into her intense eyes. She smiles, only a small one, but still smiles. She seems impressed almost. I bet not many have been able to look her in the eyes for long. "I will wake you up at first light."

Anya's small smile turns into an unnerving grin. She spins on her heel and walks away, practically oozing confidence.

I hope I wake up when she comes in. Otherwise, I have a feeling she has no problem waking me up in the worst ways. Getting up in the morning so early is punishment enough. But I have a feeling I'll get an extra one. I sigh and nearly groan. She's going to train me. Here, that probably means fighting. I'm not weak, but after a year in the Sky Box, my muscles aren't as strong as they used to be. I might as well enjoy today because tomorrow is going to be... Interesting.
I slip into my tent, noting that Artigas stands at the entrance with his back to me. Guards must stay outside the houses when they're on duty or something.

I look around the tent and am immediately impressed by the craftsmanship of the wooden furniture. The bed looks so much comfier than the metal cots I've had in the Sky Box. I move my hand through the pelts, marveling at the softness and touch the bottom that I'll lay on tonight. I'm shocked to find it soft as well.

The ones we had on the Ark were metal for most, and only the highest up had actual beds. Because dad was an important engineer and my mother is on the council, my parents had an actual bed. When I was younger, more often than not I crawled into their bed to sleep. I stopped when I was older because when I woke up I'd find my dad sleeping on the floor because there wasn't room for the three of us anymore.

My eyes fill with tears from just thinking of him, so I turn my eyes toward the sky and blink them away. I set my woven basket thing on my bed and begin to unpack. I guess I'll be here for a while. I can always head back if I need anything there.

Perhaps now I can finally get new clothes. I've been wearing the same ones for the entire time I've been down here. Maybe I can trade for some, if I go hunting or gathering again. It's also possible that there could be old hidden storage places that could have things.

Once I finish putting everything away, I sling my bow back on my shoulder. When I was looking around earlier, almost everyone was armed. The children even had daggers strapped to their hips, and the elderly had swords held in place by holsters on their backs. There were some that walked around with bows, as well so I know I should be able to carry it around. Hopefully I won't be seen as hostile and killed.

I put my knife in a holster I'd fashioned from a rabbit pelt. My homemade quiver and arrows are strapped to my back, as well. Making things from pelts was a pain, but once they're finished, they turned out to be really handy to have.

Satisfied, I walk out of my tent, looking around and trying to memorize where it is. I'd hate to get lost and forget where I live now.

It's only a few hours past midday, so the town is still full of people in the streets.

I turn to Artigas. "I'm going to explore."

He nods, "I will be right behind you. Not all speak your language."

"Who does?" I ask.

"It is the warrior's language. It is taught to few others."

I don't have anything to say to that, so I take the time to store that information in my head before I begin walking. True to his word, Artigas stays only a few steps behind me.
I can feel people's eyes on me but no one approaches.

There are vendors on the streets, shouting in their language about what they're selling.

I'm about an hour into exploring when I feel a tug on my shirt. I look down to see three kids, looking up at me and smiling. I smile back, and they giggle.

"Skai Prisa, yu es meizen." The youngest one, a girl, blushes as she says it.

The two other kids nod. "Sha." Another says.

Artigas stands beside me, "They just said 'Sky Princess, you are beautiful. And the others agreed.'"

"Can you tell them I say thank you? I don't know your language."

He nods. "Of course." Artigas turns to the kids, "Skai Prisa biyo mochof."

The children giggle again and run off.

"I guess I'll have to learn your language." I muse aloud.

"It would be wise to learn it, yes. I am certain you will learn from listening, but Anya and I can teach you."

"Thank you. What do you call your language?"

"It is Trigedasleng. What you speak is called Gonasleng."

"So gona would mean warrior, right? Since it's the warriors' language?"

Artigas looks surprised. "Yes. You learn quickly."

I shrug, a faint blush creeping onto my face. "My mother doesn't like to repeat herself."

"What did she teach you?"

I smile, liking him better. He seems honestly curious, not just making small talk. "Medicine. She was our head doctor."

Artigas lights up. "You are a healer? Perhaps you can assist Nyko. He is the town's healer. He could use the assistance, and in the sky you must have had different training."

"I'll help in any way I can." I promise.

"Excuse me." A voice says. I turn to see a tall blonde woman with a kind face (so definitely not Anya). "I could not help noticing your bow. I do not recognize the craftsmanship. May I ask where you got it from?"

"I made it."

"Truly? How long have you been carving?"

"About since I came down here." Damn it, she's cute. Stop blushing, face there's nothing to be shy about. "So twenty days."

Realization dawns on her face. "You are the one who fell from the sky. It is a honor to meet you. I am Niylah, let me know if you need anything." She smiles kindly at me.
"Thank you."

An older man calls her name and her head turns to him before she looks back at me. "That was my father. He owns a trading post and I help him run it. I must go."

"Bye." I say as she turns to walk away.

She flashes me a smile and then continues on her way. I notice a metal band on her arm and frown. That doesn't look like anything these people could make. It has a manufactured look.

"Clarke, it is late and you will be awakened early tomorrow. Perhaps you should get some sleep." Artigas suggests.

"That's a good idea. Thank you."

I walk back to my tent and feel accomplished when I get there without getting lost once. I practically fall face first onto the bed and fall asleep almost instantly. It's been a long, interesting day but tomorrow... I'm going to start training.

Chapter End Notes

There doesn't seem to be a translation for "you are" on trigedasleng.info so yu es is made up by me.

Yes, Niylah is here but this will be a Clexa story! She actually wasn't going to come up (as far as I've planned, which isn't much), but I thought why not so here she is! I think she is going to serve a purpose in this story and no, she won't be another wlw with a gun pointed at her.

Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
I jolt up in my bed, gasping and sputtering. I'm not certain what woke me up until I see a smiling Anya standing by my bed with and empty bucket. I shiver, realizing she not only poured water on me to wake me up, she poured cold water on me.

My clothes stick to my body as I glare up at Anya, who's still smiling and seems almost happy... It's making me nervous. Anya walks away to the table in my tent and turns back to me, gesturing to the things on it. I blink the water from my eyes and notice there's food and new clothes.

"Get dressed and eat. I will be waiting outside." With that, she leaves.

I groan, remembering that I'll be trained today. That's going to be interesting, to say the least. I shiver again and look down at my clothes, sighing. They're completely soaked. Good thing Anya brought me new ones, these are the only clothes I have. If she didn't, the Grounders might be seeing more of me than they ever wanted to.

I pull off my clothes and drape them over the nearest surface, hoping they'll dry in here. I do the same for the furs, which also got wet. After that, I pull on the new ones that don't fit right. The shirt's too right around my chest and the jacket's sleeves are too short. The pants are too big for my hips, so I tie a rope around my waist to keep it up.

I walk out a minute later after squeezing most of the water from my hair. I eat the food Anya brought, meeting her right outside my tent.

Once she sees me, she turns and strides away. I follow her and she only stops when we're outside a circular area. The circle itself is just dirt surrounded by wooden fencing.

Anya faces me as I swallow down the last of the food. She glances behind me and the scowl is back.

"Artigas, go rest. I will watch her. Do not exhaust yourself."

I look over my shoulder to see Artigas nod and practically stumble away. He probably hasn't gotten much (or any) rest since before I saw him in the woods.

"Watch them." Anya says, making me turn back to her.

She nods toward the two people fighting in the ring. They're about my age, fighting with sticks instead of swords.

"What am I looking for?" I ask.

"Watch how they move and how they use their weapons. It should not be a separate thing but an extension of yourself."

I study the women fighting in the ring, watching their movements. Their sticks come together again and again, making cracking sounds, which seem deafeningly loud because it is otherwise silent. Somehow, they seem to anticipate each other's moves and react accordingly, shifting their stances and blocking every thrust.
After a while of watching, Anya speaks again. "Come with me. We have another ring I will train you in."

I follow her again, wondering if I'll be using sticks as well. It isn't far to the other ring, which has no one around or in it. She stops in the center of the ring, her expression serious (more so than usual).

"Hit me."

I'm taken aback from that. Why would I hit her? "Why?"

Anya is annoyed at my reluctance to do what she told me to. "I need to know what you can do so I can teach you better. So do not hold back."

I nod at that, it makes sense. I don't really want to hit her, but she's okay with it... She holds up her hands as targets. I punch her outstretched arms as hard as I can.

Anya sighs at that, grumbling. "Branwada. Get into that stance again."

I comply and her hands are on me, moving my legs farther apart and raising one of my hands to the side of my head.

"This is the correct stance in hand to hand combat. Your legs should be shoulder's width apart and one hand should be up to protect your head. You should be at an angle, one foot on front, one in the back. You punch wrong." She moves so she's beside me, facing the same way as me. "Use the force of rolling your shoulder and-no, don't punch down. When you punch, lean forward on your rear foot."

I try to do what she says. "Did I do it right?"

"No. Rotate your hips and upper body forward with the punch and keep your feet straight and on the ground. At no point in punching should your feet completely leave the ground." I try again. "Better. But your hands are wrong. Your thumb should be on the outside of your fist. If it is inside and you hit something, you could break your thumb." Anya warns, demonstrating what my hand should look like. I move my thumb and she nods in approval. "Good. Try again."

It continues like this until Anya finally relents and gives me time to eat. I sit down for the first time in hours, groaning at my muscles. I'm already sore and I know Anya's going to keep training me today. I eat as slowly as my growling stomach will let me, reveling in the time to rest.

It's over too soon and Anya drags me back to the ring, which now has a semi-rested looking Artigas leaning on the fence.

"You should be asleep." Anya scolds. "You know you should not stay awake all night. This village is safe enough for her."

"I will be with her during the day." Artigas concedes, "and rest during the night."

"Very well. Did you want to see the Skai Prisa try to fight?"

He smiles, "Sha."

Anya and I move into the middle of the ring and we resume my training. Artigas makes a few comments on how to fix my form and I train until my arms feel like limp leaves.
Anya sends me back to my tent and Artigas picks me up some food along the way. I thank him and struggle not to fall asleep as I trudge to my tent. He bids me goodnight and leaves once we arrive. I sit on the chair next to my bed and eat, noticing how my arms are shaking. I'm just glad I'm not eating soup, it'd end up on my clothes instead of me.

Once I'm done, I don't bother stripping to my undergarments and flop face first onto bed, falling asleep almost instantly.

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact: the fighting techniques Anya is teaching Clarke are the same ones I was taught when I took karate! It's been a year or so since I've gone back and this is from memory, so there may be some inaccuracies but hopefully not. Thank you for reading and stay awesome!
I gasp and sit up straight in my bed, shivering at the cold. My clothes are soaked again.

I glare at Anya, not caring she could kill me if she barely tried. "Seriously?"

Anya smirks, "We will not be training today to give your weak muscles time to rest. We will resume tomorrow."

I start squeezing the water from my hair again, "Then why did you wake me up like that again?"

"It is fun. Now get up, today I will be teaching you Trigedaslang and getting you new clothes."

I get up, sighing when my clothes stick to my skin. You know, because of the water Anya poured on me. I undress, not caring Anya's still here (I have a feeling she doesn't care either) and put on my clothes that I left to dry yesterday. They're kind of stiff and uncomfortable so I am really looking forward to getting new clothes.

Anya wordlessly hands me a basket of food before leaving the tent. I put some in my pockets for easy storage and begin eating as I follow her. She takes me to one of the houses made of metal and scraps. She knocks on the door and waits almost patiently for the person inside to answer.

When the door swings open, an old(er, as in maybe forty five) woman answers the door with a scowl on her face that reminds me of Anya's.

The scowl goes away and a gap toothed smile lights up her face when she sees Anya. "I heard you had come back. Welcome home, ai yongon (my child)." She embraces Anya.

Anya sighs in her arms but she seems happier. "Nomon (mother), I am not a goufa (child) anymore."

"You are to me." The woman says, pulling back from her and looking at me with a scrutinizing gaze. "This is her?"

Anya nods. "This is the Skai Prisa (Sky Princess)."

I find it a bit weird that they're speaking in English when their normal language is definitely not this. I guess it must be for my benefit. But I don't know their language, so I have no clue who this woman is that Anya hugged (and she didn't kill her for hugging her, weird).

"You never told me she is meizen (beautiful)." The woman says in a scolding tone.

Anya scowls again. "Nomon."

"Okay, okay. Come in Prisa, I am to take your measurements."

The woman walks back into the house, gesturing for me to follow her. I step in after her, hearing Anya behind me.

There's a room she leads me to is full of mirrors and tools similar to those we had on the Ark, though none of them are powered.
The woman rifles through a drawer, looking for something.

"After all these years you are still not organized?" Anya remarks.

"Shof op (shut up)." The woman huffs, apparently finding what she was looking for and hitting Anya in the arm with it.

Anya doesn't flinch, just looks faintly amused. This is a weird dynamic.

"Once you take her measurements, make a copy to give to Artigas. He will deliver it to the armor maker."

"Armor maker?" I ask.

Anya turns to look at me, her eyes serious (more so than usual). "Yes. You need armor or you will die in battle. In battle? What? "What will be done with you is up to Heda but for now you are training to be a warrior. You will need armor."

Out of everything I thought I'd die of on the Ark or on the ground, dying in battle was never something I even considered.

"Do not scare the poor girl, Anya." The woman scolds. "She might not have had battles in the sky."

Anya raises her eyebrows, but somehow manages to still look disinterested. "Did you not?"

I shake my head. "No. There is only one government, with a head of everyone called a chancellor and a council to advise the chancellor. Any opposition is crushed by floating them."

"I did not think they had rivers in the sky. How would that be a punishment?" The woman questions.

"There are no rivers, and limited water. Floating is when you are sucked out into space. You suffocate and die there, in space there is no oxygen to breathe."

Anya looks kind of... Impressed while the woman looks horrified.

"If there is no air to breathe, how have you survived?"

"There is a giant metal ship, over a thousand times bigger than the pod I came down in that has people living in it. They regulate the air constantly to make sure we get enough oxygen, but there's a flaw in the system. They'll be out of oxygen in a few months."

"Is that why you are down here? To make sure the ground is survivable?" Anya's voice sounds vaguely threatening, but it's understandable. I wouldn't want a bunch of space people coming in and invading my land, either.

The woman begins measuring me, but I know she's still listening to what I'm saying.

"No, that's coming later. I was sent down because my mother didn't want me to get floated. It's illegal to float anyone until they are 18, so there's a prison to keep the under 18s. Because I know about the oxygen running out, the chancellor ordered me to be floated sooner. My mom got a mechanic to fix up the pod and sent me down in it."

"You mentioned more will come down to see if this is survivable?" Anya says.

"Yeah, I don't know when they'll come down. Because the under 18s in prison are disposable," I
scowl at that, "that will be who they are sending down. There'll be about a hundred of them, and their vitals will probably be monitored by the Ark."

"When Heda comes, you must relay this information to her." Anya orders.

I nod, knowing their Heda will have more questions than Anya does.

"I am finished with my measurements." The woman announces, stepping back from me. "It was good to see you again, Anya. Come back soon to visit your old Nomon."

"You are not old," Anya says. "Goodbye, mother." Mother? "Come, Clarke." She nods to her mom in respect before leaving, not bothering to look to see if I'm following her (I am).

Chapter End Notes

Wow, I thought I was going to get to the Trigedasleng teaching in this chapter. But at least Anya knows more about what's happening in the sky! That kind of came out of nowhere, though. And hopefully this chapter's okay, I'm kind of sick (just a constantly running nose, nothing serious). Thank you for reading and stay awesome!
"One set of clothing should be ready tomorrow morning." Anya remarks as she leads me through the town. "So you do not have to wear your smelly old clothes." I can practically hear the smirk in her voice, "Perhaps you should bathe or I will continue waking you up with cold water."

That's good motivation. I haven't been able to find the time to bathe since I lived in my camp. If I have time later, I'll do that.

Anya leads me into a large tent, which I hesitantly follow her into. This tent is larger and more luxurious than mine, so it must belong to someone high up.

"Will the person that owns this tent be okay with us in here?"

"Yes, I am."

I realize what she means, "You could've just told me you're taking me to your tent."

Anya's smirk is back, but she doesn't comment on that. "It is time for you to learn Trigedasleng. It is the main language of the clans and everyone speaks it. The Heda may decide to teach you herself, or she may let me and Artigas continue teaching you."

I glance behind me to see Artigas standing at the entrance of the tent, having forgotten he's behind me.

"We will start teaching you the basics, Prisa." Artigas says in a reassuring tone. "Some is similar to Gonasleng, but pronounced and spelled differently. For example, I is just ai. You is yu. But most is different than Gonasleng. The word for we that excludes the person you are speaking to is osir, while the word for we that includes the person you are speaking to is oso."

I try to commit that to memory, knowing I'll probably have to write all of this down later.

"To make a pronoun possessive, it usually adds -on or -n." Anya says. "Mine is ain and yours is yun. To use it in context, it goes in front of the noun. Ain java, or my spear. Yun swis, or your knife. There are times you will need to speak your name, so you would say ai laik Clarke, or I am Clarke. If you decide to be considered one of this clan, you would be Clarke kom Trigeda. If you want others to know you are the one who fell from the sky, tell them you are Clarke kom SkaiKru."

I think on that for a moment before shrugging. "I don't know which one I want to identify as yet."

Anya nods understandingly. "That is fine. You can just be Clarke until you figure it out."

"We did not start out simple as I thought we would. Apologies, Prisa." Artigas gives me a hesitant smile. "No is the same in our language, but yes is different. In Trigedasleng it is aha. Thank you is mochof and you're welcome is pro. Please is beja, and a typical greeting of hello is heya or hei, while goodbye is leidon or leida."

They continue instructing me in Trigedasleng until I can speak in simple sentences, with comments from Anya that are somehow always helpful yet insulting ("no, you fool. Do not pronounce it I like..."
Clarke, pronounce it ai laik Clarke. I know you like yourself but that is not how you introduce yourself”.

When Anya releases me for lunch, she tells me I have the rest of the day off to do whatever I'd like. Artigas is once again following me everywhere, which I don't mind, but I guess he really does take his job of staying near me to protect me very seriously.

I head back to my tent after I eat. I rummage through my makeshift basket thing I used to carry everything here. I let out an "ah-ha!" when I find one of my notebooks. I feel along the bottom of the bag and notice a glaringly obvious lack of pencils or any writing utensils. I groan, knowing I forgot them at my pod. I tuck the notebook into my back pocket and head back outside of my tent. It seems like I'll be making a trip to my pod today.

I grab a nearby stick on the ground and take out my knife, carving one end into a point. I head to the nearest fire, which happens to be a torch on the side of a building. I burn the pointed tip of the stick in the fire and pull it out before it catches on fire.

Knowing I'll remember even less of what Artigas and Anya taught me when I actually get my pencils, I start writing down everything I can remember from the lesson in my notebook. Artigas looks over my shoulder and corrects my spelling of their words, as well as reminding me of words that I'd forgotten to write down.

Once I'm finished, I look up at the sky to gauge if I have enough time to get to the pod and back before it gets dark. It's not far from the center of the sky, so I should be able to.

I put my notebook back in my pocket and begin walking to where I know the exit to the village is.

Artigas stops me with a hand on my arm. "Where are you going?"

"I forgot something in my pod. I'll be back."

"I will come with you."

"Alright."

If it were almost anyone else, I'd think they were going just to keep track of me and make sure I come back. But Artigas' silent presence has become a comfort and I know he's both concerned for my safety and his (if Anya found out he let me leave alone, he might not live to see another day. Okay, it might not be that drastic but it's still Anya. She'd kick his ass).

We head out of the village, the guards of the gate nodding to us as we pass.

Chapter End Notes

I know that's kind of a sudden ending to the chapter, sorry. But the next chapter will be Artigas and Clarke at the pod! Not too eventful, but they're kind of like siblings now (just more loving than my experience with siblings, is course. Plus they haven't known each other long). In a bit there (a few chapters maybe?) will be a time jump so we can finally get to Indra and Lexa! Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
Before Artigas and I get too far, I take my map out of my pocket and mark where TonDC is.

"That is a good map. Did you make it?"

"Yeah," I respond as we continue walking. "My dad taught me how. I didn't really understand why he did because there's no reason to make maps in the Ark. Now that I'm down here, I wonder if he knew it would come to this."

"What is an ark?"

"It's the name of the ship we were on. It's a combination of a bunch of ships that survived the bombs all put together. I'm not sure how they came up with the name. Maybe something to do with some Old Earth religion."

Artigas nods and we fall back into a comfortable silence as we walk through the forest.

It still amazes me how beautiful it is down here. The thousands of shades of green is such a nice change from the bland gray of the Ark and my cell.

We reach my pod quickly, and I pop open the door. It hisses, making Artigas tense beside me. My pencils are still on the seat from when I set them aside so I wouldn't forget them. I put them in a smaller basket I left behind and sling it over my shoulder. I take one last look, searching everywhere in the tiny interior of the pod. Once I'm satisfied, I climb back out and shut the door. I lock the door as best I can to make sure it won't be easy to get in for anyone other than me.

Artigas is not watching me, but the trees surrounding us. "What are you looking at?"

"I am watching for enemies."

"Enemies? Why would they come after us?"

We begin walking back as he speaks. "I do not know, but I have been taught to never let my guard down."

"Don't you have any time to relax?"

"If I relax, I might get us killed. There are many out there who do not like us or our clan. It could be Azgeda, a Pauna, Maunon. There are always enemies. Until the newest Heda, the concept of peace seemed impossible."

"Really? What did she do to change that?"

"She united the 12 clans. Most thought she was mad and many leaders did not want peace or the Coalition. She convinced them all."

"How did she convince them?"

Artigas is silent for a moment, and there's sadness etched on his face. "She put her people first. It took true strength to do what she did." He must notice my curiosity. "It is not my place to tell you
what happened or what she did. She will be here by the full moon."

"Alright, that's fair." We're close to TonDC again. Time is passing quicker than I thought it would. "Is that Anya?" I question, squinting at the figure in the distance standing at the gate.

As we get closer, I realize it is Anya and she looks a lot angrier than usual. She scowling at us, her arms crossed in front of her.

"Now is not the time for a leisurely walk, branwoda (fool/idiot). The enemy has been seen moving in the forest."

Anya grabs our arms practically drags Artigas and I inside the gate. The guards shut it behind us with amused expressions.

"What happened?" Artigas questions.

"The fog came again. You both were not here."

"Did we lose anyone?" Artigas asks.

"Cius' fight is over." Anya replies somberly. Is this their way of saying someone died?

"He was a good man. When is the pyre going to be lit?"

"Tonight."

"I'm lost." I murmur.

"You are in TonDC." Anya says disbelievingly.

"Are you always literal?" I wonder aloud. "I meant I don't understand what you're talking about."

"Cius has been killed by the fog. His... What is the Ginasleng word for it? His soul is to be sent to its next host." Anya frowns.

They believe in reincarnation? "Do you mean a funeral?" I ask.

"That sounds correct." Anya remarks, nodding. "It is our tradition to burn the bodies of the dead. The fire that will consume his body and free his soul will be set tonight."

I run over the conversation again, committing it to memory. I want to learn their customs and traditions. "Hang on, you said fog killed him? How does fog kill someone?"

"It is a fog that burns the skin and if you are exposed to it too long, you will die." Anya says.

I blanch. Acid fog? I guess it makes sense that the Earth has become a lot more dangerous than it used to be, but this seems a bit odd, even for Earth.

"I did not hear the horns. We were only at the pod, we should have been able to hear it." Artigas says worriedly.

"It was not where it usually forms. It has formed where it did only five times, as far as the hunters remember. That is why Cius was killed, he and the other hunters did not realize it was there until it was too late for him. The others are all back with minimal wounds from it, but Nyko is overwhelmed. There were nearly ten people on that hunting party and they all need treatment."
"Maybe I could help." I suggest.

Anya focuses on me. "How?"

"I think I told you my mom is a doctor and she taught me. She wanted me to follow in her footsteps. I remember most of it, and I'm sure my knowledge of medicine is different than what you have, so maybe I can help." I stop before I ramble more.

Anya glances away from me at Artigas. "Take her to Nyko. If nothing else, she has knowledge of medicine and he will appreciate the extra hands."

Artigas leads me to a large hut that seems larger and sturdier than most. "I will accompany you, as long as you do not mind. I have basic knowledge of our medicine so I may be of some use."

"Thank you."

I use a rubber band I found in the pod to tie my hair up, mentally preparing myself. I take a deep breath and walk into the tent, the agonized groans audible from the moment I step inside.

Chapter End Notes

Holy crap you guys! We're only at chapter 10 and there's already more than 5,000 views and 200 kudos! :D You guys are amazing, thank you so much!
It's not as bad as I worried it would be. There are boils on the hunters' skin, and some small cuts from branches whipping at them as they ran. Other than that, they're mainly okay. There's one hunter that had the misfortune to have a panther claw his leg as it fled. From what they tell me in broken English, that's what alerted them to the fog.

A large man with a braided beard fixes them up as well, and I assume he is Nyko. We work in relative silence, bandaging up the wounds until the hunters are all ready to go. I warn them to clean it and to come back to get their wounds redressed.

Nyko nods at my words and repeats them in Trigedasleng. I'm pretty proud of myself for recognizing a few words. The hunters thank us and leave.

"Thank you, Sky Girl." Nyko says.

"You're welcome." I automatically respond, kind of surprised he's talking to me at all.

"You are good with medicine." Nyko compliments, smiling at me. "Perhaps I can convince Anya to allow you to assist me on days she is not training you."

"I would love to, but good luck convincing her."

Nyko laughs heartily, "I do not know how it was up in the sky, but here the healers are respected. I understand she is teaching you Trigedasleng on the days you do not train?" He waits for me to nod before he continues. "Anya and I can teach you while you train, from her while you are taught how to fight, and from me when we work in here. I am certain she will agree to this agreement as long as you will."

"It sounds good, I'm in."

Nyko looks confused. "You are in what?"

"Sorry, it's a saying. I forget most of you are literal. It means I'd be happy to do that."

He claps his hands together excitedly, making a loud sound that makes me jump. "Wonderful. I will speak to Anya soon to confirm. It is getting late now, get some food in you and rest. I have seen Anya train people." He chuckles, "You will need the rest."

Anya's trained other people? Okay, even in my head that makes it sound like I'm jealous, but I'm not. I'm curious as to who survived her training.

"Mochof, Nyko. Good night." I say.

"You are learning well already." He grins, "it will be a pleasure to work with you. The Trigedasleng word for good night is reshop."

"Reshop, Nyko." I call back as I walk away. Artigas appears beside me, walking only a few paces behind me. "You know you don't have to follow me everywhere. I'm in TonDC, I should be safe."

"You should be, but it is my duty to protect you and that includes walking to your tent."
I sigh at that. "At least go to bed soon after, okay? I don't want you to be sleep deprived because of me."

"Of course. How did it go with Nyko and the hunters?"

"Pretty well. Nyko was impressed enough to want me to come back every other day."

Artigas frowns, "What about your Trigedasleng training?"

"According to Nyko, they'll both be teaching me that while they train and teach me. I'm not sure exactly how that'll work."

"I am not sure, either. Anya may not be happy with it."

Anya's not really happy with much except when she wakes me up with a bucket of cold water. I dread the thought of waking up tomorrow if she's mad.

Artigas picks up two plates of food and hands me one. I thank him and we go our separate ways once he walks me to my tent. I set my plate down on the table and pull the rubber band from my hair, letting it fall free. It feels odd after an hour or two with it up. I actually like it up more than I thought I would. Perhaps I'll teach myself how to braid my hair.

I tuck the rubber band into my pocket and pull out the pencils, setting them on the table too. I take out my notebook and write 'reshop' and its meaning in it. If they're really going to be teaching me while we work, I'll need to carry it and a pencil or two around everywhere.

I sit and eat in silence. I nearly fall asleep while eating and give up trying to stay awake, stumbling over to my bed and flopping down onto it. I manage to get under the furs before I pass out.

I wake up to a weird pressure on my back. I shift, trying to dislodge whatever it is, but it digs into my spine. I hiss at the sudden pain and turn my head to see what it is. Of course it's Anya. She's sitting on my back and looking at me with her usual stern eyes, but I can see a hint of amusement in them.

"Why are you on my back?" I ask, my voice rough with sleep.

"The water did not wake you up. Now move. You have a lot to learn."

Anya gets up, turning to watch me sit up on the bed. I wince at the twinge in my back. "How long were you sitting on me?"

"A couple minutes. There is food on the table for you to eat. Meet me at the training ring we were at before as soon as possible."

I sigh as Anya leaves. She didn't mention anything about Nyko. I wonder if I am going to be working with him.

Artigas' shadow is outside the door of my tent. I put my hair up in the rubber band again, making a mental note to practice braiding it when I'm not exhausted. My dad taught me how to braid my hair, but I haven't done it since he died.

I devour the food quickly, grabbing the rest so I can eat as Artigas and I walk to the ring.

We don't speak as we walk and when we reach it, Anya is waiting for us. She's cleaning the weapons, though she hasn't taught me how to use them yet.
"Clarke. I am sure he has told you what he planned to ask me, but from now on you will spend one day training with me and one day working with Nyko."

With that, she tossed me a polished stick about the size of a sword. "What's this?"

"I will be training you how to fight with swords now. I do not want to kill you, so we are using these training sticks."

Anya picks up a stick and wields it expertly, spinning it easily between her fingers. She has never been more intimidating. Anya gets into a stance, which I try to copy. She thrusts it at me and I lean back automatically the way she taught me the other day and block it as best I can. The impact makes my teeth chatter loudly in my skull and my arm ache.

"Good. Again."

Chapter End Notes

Thank you to the person who pointed out I wrote "Gustus" instead of "Nyko" in the last chapter! It should be fixed now! Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
Days fly by and the day the Commander is coming gets closer and closer. Knowing that the head of the clan I'm with (which I've learned is called the Trikru), and the head of the twelve clans is coming here to meet me is making me nervous. There's a constant uncomfortable heat in my abdomen I've come to recognize as anxiety.

In the week or so (I've lost count of the days because sometimes I'm a zombie after Anya's training) I've been here, the people of TonDC have surprisingly grown to like me. The kids love to find me during meals and beg me to tell them stories of the sky. The other people in the town now respect me, but I still get the rare suspicious glance. I guess Nyko was right; they do like their healers and treat them well. The fact that I've been doing well fighting wise as well makes the warriors respect me more.

Of course, no one would really ever say anything bad to my face, even when I was generally disliked. I am the girl who fell from the sky, and since that's what happened to their first commander, saying something bad about me might accidentally be saying something bad about their beloved first Heda. But that's another thing entirely.

Now, when I go anywhere in the town, I'm greeted warmly by most, and can name almost all of the people in the town. My healing abilities have saved more people in a week than I thought I ever would in space. Up there, there were few problems other than the occasional undernourishment and oxygen deprivation. I mean, the engineers and the mechanics sometimes cut themselves on loose metal or burned their arm or something, but nothing like down here. Here, there are people and beasts alike to fight, and they don't go down easy. One big difference I've noticed is that despite everyone seeming genuinely happier than people on the Ark, people down here are more hardened. Basically everyone has impressively large muscles and most can swing a sword or some other weapon.

Anya and Nyko have been working me tirelessly, and though I love it, I also love sleep. Which I don't ever seem to get enough of. Anya makes me train from sunrise to sunset unless there's an emergency and I'm needed at the healers' building. I've been making Artigas go to bed before me. Just because I'm deprived of sleep doesn't mean he has to be, too.

There have only been a few medical emergencies, like when this young boy went swimming in the river and got bit by the giant river snake and when a hunter ran into a group of panthers and nearly got ripped to pieces. She's mainly okay now, but she'll never be able to walk normally again. But nothing compares to the day Anya decided to take me outside the walls to practice in a larger clearing. On the way, we found a badly beaten man who I was honestly surprised was not dead. He gasped out "Pauna" and died soon after, despite me trying to save him. His wounds were too great. Anya hurried me back to the village, the both of us carrying the dead man back as quickly as we could. We covered him with my spare jacket so if he had friends or family in TonDC they wouldn't have to see him in this state.

I've come to learn since then that Pauna means a giant bloodthirsty gorilla, which is weird, even for radiation soaked earth. The man's houmon claimed him soon after, and his loving accounts of the man he loved before he was burned and his spirit set free had everyone in tears. Even Anya, but I made the mistake of mentioning it once. If I mention it again, she'll apparently behead me or cut out my tongue. Maybe both.
Anya's actually been a really good teacher, despite her constant sarcasm and helpful yet insulting comments (I'll never admit this out loud, but she's actually pretty hilarious. But she doesn't need to know that). She's taught me how to dual-wield swords with real swords not the sticks. It was pretty terrifying to see her in her element, twisting and turning and making her swords effortlessly slice through the air. Anya even have me a compliment yesterday. Well, she said "not bad" but in Anya speak, it basically means "I'm impressed. Good job".

Between Nyko and Anya, they've managed to get me to be able to hold a conversation in Trigedasleng. Which has definitely come in handy because only the warriors speak English, or Gonasleng.

"Are you ready for today?" Artigas asks as he walks into my tent.

I sigh, "I'm really nervous. From what I've heard, the Heda is basically a warrior goddess. I'm not sure I'll ever be ready to meet her."

"You will have to today." Artigas states, grinning when I groan. "It will not be now, first you will be meeting Indra."

"She's the leader of Trikru, right?"

"Sha. I must warn you, she is somewhat like Anya. She is honest and intelligent, as well as a good leader and gona (warrior), but she does not trust people easily."

"Clarke, Artigas, come." Anya walks into the tent with a scowl. "Indra laik hir (Indra is here)."

Anya leads us out of my tent and towards one of two larger tents that have been put up in preparation for Indra and the Heda.

Artigas holds the flap open for Anya and me. I thank him and walk in after her.

Anya's face breaks out into a small grin and she walks toward a dark skinned middle aged woman. There are tattoos on her face and looks like she could be more intimidating than Anya. She smiles at Anya and they grasp wrists, which I've learned is basically their version of a hug, or a warm greeting or something.

"Anya. It has been too long, old friend." Indra says in a slightly scolding tone as they pull away.

"We're both busy people, Indra. And the last time you were Polis, you did not bother coming by."

Indra huffs, but I can tell she's more amused and happy to see Anya than really annoyed. "It was an emergency meeting called because some girl fell out of the sky. Speaking of which, I am supposed to meet her. Is that her?" She studies me, looking me up and down.

"Sha. This is Clarke. Nyko and I have been training her since I brought her to TonDC."

"Nyko?" Indra raises an eyebrow, which I did not think people could do in real life. "She is a healer?"

"And a warrior. She has been learning how to use two swords."

"If this girl is anything like the last you trained, she is no doubt a great warrior."

The last person Anya trained? "I am sure she will want to find out for herself." Anya replies.

The tent's flaps open and Artigas pokes his head in. "Apologies, but Heda has arrived. She would
like Anya and Clarke to go to her tent."

Chapter End Notes

Lexa and Clarke finally meet next chapter... I was going to draw it out more, but I love Lexa too much to not have her in the story soon! Thank you for reading and stay awesome!
Chapter 13

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

After Artigas comes in and tells Anya and I that Heda is wanting to see us, Anya leads the way from the tent. Nerves settle in my stomach again. I have no idea what this Heda's like. I've heard amazing things about her and her accomplishments, but I have no idea what she looks like. Or who she is outside of the part where she's Heda. Float me, I'm so nervous.

I try to hide my nerves by steeling my expression, but I know it won't fully work. My eyes always betray what I feel, even if I don't want them to.

Anya stops in front of a tent almost twice the size of mine. There are large, heavily armed and muscly guards at the entrance. Anya nods to one of them, and he nods back.

"Heda!" The man calls loudly, making me jump. "Anya and the sky girl have arrived."

"Enter." A surprisingly feminine voice commands.

Hang on, she sounds young. Sort of. She sounds young but with the wisdom of someone twenty times her age. If that makes sense.

Artigas holds the flaps of the tent open for us to walk through.

"You may not enter." The guard tells him in a normal tone of voice.

Artigas nods to him and gives me a slightly reassuring smile as I pass him. The inside of the tent is fancier than anything I've ever seen. There's a table with three chairs in the corner, an area hidden by a cleverly placed fur which I'm guessing is the bedroom, and at the opposite end from the entrance, an intricate throne made of sticks or wood. With a woman on it. A woman that looks like she's only a few years older than me. I thought she'd be in her mid-thirties at least with all she's accomplished.

My steps falter for a moment, but I continue to follow Anya until we're a yard or so away from the throne. The woman (Heda, I'll have to remember to call her that, calling her just a woman would probably be an insult and I don't want my head on a spike) is relaxed on the throne, her arms resting on the arms of it like she's been doing so her entire life. Her legs are crossed, revealing a sheathed dagger against her thigh. She practically radiates power.

Anya and the Heda give each other a respectful nod as I continue to stare. She's wearing black armor that looks really cool, and there's a glove on one of her hands that I'm dying to draw (it has a metal hand skeleton type thing over it). There's a shoulder pad on one of her shoulders that looks bulky, but fits together surprisingly well with the rest of her outfit. It has a red cape coming from it.

Finally, I let my gaze drift to her face and clench my jaw to keep it from dropping open. Holy crap she's gorgeous. Why does the Commander of the Twelve clans have to be beautiful? Her green eyes are piercing into mine, as I fight the urge to look away. It takes me a moment to realize she's wearing a metal gear or something on her forehead. On anyone else, I'd think it looks weird, but it fits, too.

I don't know how long we stare for, but I do notice Anya's amused look out of the corner of my eye.
Heda breaks the silence, making my eyes go back to her. "So you are the one who has fallen from the sky."

My nervousness comes to the surface and I blurt out, "And you're the one who leads the twelve clans."

I'm pretty sure I hear Anya snort ok amusement, but I'm too mortified to focus on it. I try to hide my embarrassment and shyness as she studies me for a moment longer.

Heda rises slowly from her throne, taking a step towards us. "Anya never mentioned your name in her reports."

Oh, she wants an introduction. Right, I can do this without messing it up. Hopefully. I stick out my hand. "I'm Clarke Griffin."

Heda grasps my forearm, surprising me. It's a sign of respect to do this. "Ai laik Lexa kom Trikru. You may call me Lexa."

I'm given permission by the Heda to call her by her first name? Can this day get any weirder?

Heda... Lexa doesn't let go of my arm for a moment, but I don't mind. I'm still kind of in shock that she's young and pretty and wants me to call her by her first name.

Anya says something in Trigeadaslang that I can't translate, which may be for the best because Lexa gives Anya a death glare that sends shivers down my spine.

"Come." Lexa says in a calm tone. "We have much to discuss." She gestures for Anya and I to sit at the table I saw earlier. The three of us sit before she continues. "Anya."

Anya nods, apparently knowing what Lexa means. Then she begins to fill Lexa in on what's been happening, both in general around here as well as what's been going on with me. Lexa courteously makes sure I'm included in the conversation, occasionally asking me to confirm what Anya's said or asking my opinion on a matter.

When the discussion turns to training, Anya says something that makes me enter the conversation. "Clarke is much more studious than you ever were." She jokes (which is another weird thing happening today, Anya making a joke without sarcasm).

"Wait, you're the other person Anya's trained?" I question.

Lexa turns to Anya and raises an unimpressed eyebrow. "You never mentioned this?" She looks back at me (she's been watching me almost the entire conversation, it's both unnerving and cute). "Sha. I was young when she took me as her Seken."

Anya laughs, an odd sound coming from her (just odd because I have never heard it before). "You were very young when I started training you. At first, you could barely lift a sword."

"I had not even seen my third summer, what would you expect?" Lexa says back, a slight twitch of her lips giving away her amusement. Wait. She wasn't even three when she started training?

Chapter End Notes
Any and Lexa's dynamic is so fun to write, as is Clarke drooling over Lexa (I find myself doing that too)! This chapter comes to you from me and the small dog sitting in my lap for almost the entire chapter. For those of you that are curious, Anya basically told Lexa "your gay is showing". Thank you for the wonderful comments last chapter, they really do make my day! Thank you all for reading, and stay awesome!
"Perhaps sometime you can train with Clarke and I." Anya offers to Lexa.

"Sha. That way I can show you how much I have improved. We have not fought in years."

"Not physically." Anya remarks, smirking.

"You argue with Titus more than you argue with me." Lexa points out.

At this point, I'm kind of lost and don't really understand exactly what they're talking about.

Anya snorts, "Titus thinks he is so great because he has served five commanders. I merely tell him the truth."

"You once asked if him being bald is a result of the stress I cause him."

I fight the urge to laugh at that. I don't know who this Titus is, but it's still funny. Though from what I've seen, I don't know how much stress Lexa could possibly cause him.

"It is probably true, Heda. When you took power he had a few hairs left, now he has none. Your recklessness has caused stress to many."

"I am not reckless." Lexa protests.

She's wise for her age, but I can believe she's only a few years older than me when she bickers with Anya like this. They're both acting like children, and it's interesting to see. Their dynamic is odd, kind of like Anya is an older sister to Lexa.

"You have no regard for your life." Anya says matter of factly.

"My soul will be reincarnated, Anya. My life does not matter."

"You know as well as I do your spirit does not always choose as wisely as it should. The clans need you, not another Heda." Anya says honestly, staring into Lexa's eyes.

"Do not worry, Anya, I do not plan for my fight to be over until the Coalition is more stable and the threats to our people are removed."

"That is not reassuring." Anya grumbles, "You better not die until years after I do."

"You know I cannot make promises about that."

Now I feel like I'm intruding on a heartfelt conversation. I'd try to leave to give them time to talk, but I know they'll notice.

Anya nods and lets out a breath, her eyes flickering to me. "Would you like to train with us today, Heda? It may bring your spirits up for tonight." At my confused expression, she elaborates. "There will be a feast to celebrate Heda coming to TonDC."

I frown, trying to figure out exactly what she meant. I turn to look at Lexa. "Do you not like celebrations?"

"I do, Anya just knows that traveling is something I find draining. Despite my guards, I like to stay
alert to keep an eye out for enemies and assassins. Training is relaxing for me."

"Assassins?" I blanch.

I'm used to talk of enemies (though I'm not really certain exactly who or what they're referring to ninety percent of the time), but assassins? Who would want to kill her?

"Sha. I have had only twenty three attempts on my life."

"Only?"

"My predecessor had over one hundred by the time she was Heda as long as me. With the Maunon and Reapers more active than ever, there are worse enemies for them to focus on." Lexa explains.

"Someday you'll have to explain exactly what those are to me. Anya's given me a vague idea, but nothing concrete."

Lexa glares at Anya, who shrugs. "I thought you would like to explain them to her. Out of anyone in the twelve clans, you are the most knowledgable about them."

"That may be so, but keeping her uninformed could kill her. She needs to know what our enemies are."

"Then explain them to her. But would you rather train or explain that?"

I can see the conflicting expression on Lexa's face (in her eyes really, I've noticed she doesn't really show much expression with her face). "You can tell me another day. I don't want you to be going to a feast in your honor stressed."

"Thank you. I will tell you tomorrow. I will send Artigas when you are to come to my tent."

Anya's grinning (it's still weird to see her smile) at Lexa, looking between her and me, as she glares back. I think I'm missing something here.

"I hope you will have an... Informative time tomorrow in Heda's tent." Anya drawls, her grin turning to a smirk as Lexa sighs exasperatedly.

"Anya, the training ring is free, and there is already a crowd gathered." Artigas says, opening the flap but not stepping in.


Lexa and I fall in step behind Anya, Lexa on her left, and me on her right. People greet us warmly, some stopping to thank Lexa for something. These stops give me time to look at her again. She gives the people that stop us small genuine smiles and humbly accepts their gratitude, often thanking them in turn for whatever they do. I have to admit, I'm a bit in awe of how good she is with people.

When we finally reach the ring, there's a crowd of people there.

"They are here to watch the Heda fight." Anya tells me. "It is a sight rarely seen out of Polis unless she is visiting another town." She turns to Lexa, "Are you ready?"

"Sha."

Lexa pulls her swords from the sheathe on her back. The gathered crowd lets out quiet words of
excitement.

"I will train with her first so you can see how she fights, then it is your turn."

Anya unsheathes her swords and I step back to the edge of the ring. Lexa and Anya circle each other. Anya's patient, but Lexa apparently is, too. They continue circling until Anya gives up waiting and attacks. Lexa effortlessly blocks her and pushes, making Anya stumble back.

"You have improved." Anya remarks.

I've spent enough time training with her to know that she's impressed by Lexa's abilities. I am too.

Lexa grins and twirls both her swords simultaneously. "You are better as well."

A moment later their swords come together with a clang.
Lexa and Anya separate quickly after their swords clash together, eyeing each other. Lexa twirls her swords in her hands, a move I'll have to get her to teach me.

Their bodies move fluidly, swords just glints in the light of the low sun as they try to gain the upper hand. The rapid clinking of metal hitting metal fills the air.

Lexa and Anya part for a moment, breathing heavily. I try not to watch the drop of sweat slide down Lexa's neck (I've found it surprisingly difficult to keep my eyes off of her). Anya's grinning cockily at her, making her let out an annoyed huff.

Anya resumes their deadly dance, barely missing grazing Lexa's cheek before she deflects her effortlessly. I let out a quiet gasp when Lexa retaliates by swinging her leg through the air, almost getting flayed by Anya's swinging swords and kicking her straight in the chest. It's a bold move, and it works. Anya stumbles back, her grip on her swords faltering. Lexa, her leg still midair, twists and kicks one of her swords from her grasp. Lexa lands back on her feet as one of Anya's swords hits the ground, smirking at Anya (it's an annoyingly attractive expression on her face, she's so gorgeous it's almost unfair).

Anya grins, twirling the sword still in her hands, making no move to get her other one back. They come together again, Anya holding her own surprisingly well, though Lexa has hit her armor a few times.

They stop only when a large man I recognize from when he was guarding Lexa's tent comes into the ring. He murmurs something to them quietly an they nod to him, breaking apart. Lexa resheathes her swords and Anya gets her other one from the dusty ground.

Lexa makes her way toward me and I try to subtly straighten my stance. A barely visible smile tugs at her lips and I know I wasn't completely successful (I'm not the best at subtle).

She pauses in front of me. "Apologies, Clarke. Time got away from me. It is time for us to prepare ourselves for the feast. I will see you there. I am certain Artigas knows when it will start and ensure you come on time."

With that, she gives me a small smile and strides away back toward her tent with the alarmingly large guard by her side.

Anya nods to me before heading in the direction of her own tent.

"Clarke?" Artigas asks. I jump, not realizing until now that he's behind me. "You should get ready, as well." I begin walking with him back to my tent. "There is nothing to do for your clothes, your armor is fine. I would suggest wearing your hair in a braid if you would like me to do that for you."

"Sha, mochof." I respond, sitting in a chair once we reach my tent.

Artigas silently begins braiding and I try to move as little as possible, so I don't mess up his work. I check the various straps and buckles on my armor, making sure it's on correctly and won't fall off. Once I'm satisfied, I sit back and relax, closing my eyes and letting the rhythmic feeling of Artigas braiding my hair calm me after such a hectic day.
"Heda likes you." He murmurs.

My eyes flash open. I did notice that she was looking openly at me while I practically drooled over her when I first saw her, but could she really...? No, no. She's the Heda, the Commander, the Great Uniter, the leader of the twelve clans. There's no way someone like that could like me that way. Maybe he means platonically or something.

"She does not smile often. I have not been around her often, but I know that after everything she has gone through, everything she has done, she does not smile as often as she used to."

I want to know what exactly she went through, what's been weighing on her heart but I know Artigas won't tell me and I'd rather hear it from Lexa.

"I'm sure she's just interested to hear about what it was like in the Ark." I say quietly.

"Maybe so, but I can tell it is not just that. Heda is curious about you, just like you are curious about her."

Of course he just knows I wanted to ask him about her. It's amazing how well he knows me, considering the fact we haven't really known each other for that long.

I can feel him putting the finishing touches on the braid. He steps back after a moment. "It is finished. The feast will start soon. And a warning: there will be drinking and most likely people will be rather rowdy."

I sigh, "It looks like Nyko and I will have a few injuries and many hangovers to help with tomorrow."

"Hangover?" Artigas questions as he holds the flaps of the tent open for me.

"You know how after a night of drinking, especially if they heavily drink, people wake up with headaches and stomach aches, among other things? That's a hangover."

Artigas nods understandingly. "I have seen that with some of the other warriors."

"Not with you?" I ask as I follow Artigas (I'm not really sure where the feast is).

"I do not drink often, it impairs my ability to fight. When I do, I only drink a small amount. Our alcohol is quite strong if it is not watered down. Do you drink often?"

I shake my head, "There's an age limit for drinking on the Ark. We aren't supposed to drink until we turn twenty, but some people break that rule. I wasn't much of a rule breaker, and I was locked up for a year before I was sent down here."

"This will be your first time drinking?" Artigas asks.

"Sha."

We're at the center of the town, a long table running down the middle of the street. As we near it, I notice that it's made of a bunch of different tables all shoved together.

"This will be your first time drinking alcohol?" A familiar voice rasps.

I look to see Lexa standing next to me. "Sha, Heda, it is."

"I will make sure you do not have too much." Lexa promises, her face as stoic as ever but there's a
gentleness in her eyes that fascinate me.

I manage to choke out a "mochof" as she leads to the head of the table. She gestures for me to sit to her right. Anya is sitting across from me, staring at me, intimidating as ever. Indra is seated next to me, I realize with a jolt. I don't know much about this kind of thing, but if I'm closer to the head of the table, Lexa, than her does that mean I outrank her? Or that Lexa wants me close to her?

Chapter End Notes

Holy crap! Over 9,000 hits, more than 400 kudos, and nearly 60 bookmarks already?? You guys are absolutely incredible! Thank you so much for reading this and stay awesome!!
Chapter 16

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

We sit at the table for another few minutes, waiting for everyone to sit down. It's silent where I am, and I'm pretty sure their eyes are all on me. I try not to shift nervously in my seat as Indra stares at me distrustfully and Lexa watches me from the corner of her eye, while Anya watches this happen, an amused smirk on her face.

Lexa looks away from me and glances at the table, which is pretty much full now. She stands, her posture making her exude calm and wisdom, while also giving off an aura of power and strength. It's a fascinating mixture.

"Kru gon TonDC (people of TomDC)." Lexa says in a slightly louder tone than normal, but it's clear everyone can hear her. They go silent, waiting respectfully for her to speak again. "Mochof gon mounin ai (thank you for welcoming me). Teik osir choj op (let's eat)!

The people cheer at her words and begin to eat the food set out in front of them. Lexa gives them a small smile and sits again.

I'm proud when I notice that I understood every word Lexa said. I look down at the plate of food in front of me, my mouth watering at the sight of fresh cooked meat and vegetables. I'm pleasantly surprised to see a knife and fork on either side of the plate. Usually my meals down here have consisted of me stuffing food down my throat before passing out or running off to train with Anya or Nyko, so I haven't really eaten with utensils since... Well, pretty much before I was locked up. The kids in lockup are at the bottom of the food chain and I can count on one hand the number of times I got a fork or knife to eat the slop they fed us (though it was old, broken, and rusty).

I dig in, barely resisting the urge to moan at the taste. The cooks have stepped up their game since Lexa's here, and my taste buds could not be happier about it.

"Clarke kom Skaikru, why are you here?" Indra asks, sounding both curious and threatening simultaneously. I know she isn't asking why I'm at this table.

I turn to her, "I was going to be executed so my mother got a mechanic to fix an old escape pod and sent me down here."

The only sign Indra listened is the eyebrow that twitches up in surprise. "You are a criminal?"

"To them, yes. The oxygen supply and really, the whole system is failing and my father and I thought we should tell everyone. The Council disagreed, and when they found out they floated my dad and locked me up."

"Floated means they let him into the sky with no oxygen and left him to die." Anya provides.

"Why were you not killed?" Lexa questions, her voice making me jump slightly. For a moment, I forgot that she's here.

"I was too young to be floated, so they sent me into the skybox, which is solitary confinement in their jail. They were just waiting for me to turn eighteen so they could float me."

"But you only wanted to inform your people." Lexa frowns.
"Yes, but they thought it would start an uprising or something. They didn't want to take that risk, and instead floated the head engineer and locked up his daughter." I explain wearily. I've accepted what has happened, but that doesn't mean that I like it or think it was a good idea. "On the Ark, every crime is punishable by death, from stealing extra rations to murder."

"That is harsh." Anya murmurs.

"It was. But that's what they thought they had to do to survive and preserve the human race. We didn't know there are people on the ground."

"How did your people not know?" Indra asks, eyeing me skeptically. "Did you not have the technology up there?"

"We probably do, but there wasn't much use in looking. After the bombs, it seemed like everything on earth had died."

There's a pause in the conversation as those around me take in what I've said. I take this time to eat more of the meat, once again barely resisting a moan. I make a mental note to ask what plants the chefs cooked it in. That way next time Nyko sends me out to gather herbs, I can get some of them as well and maybe teach myself to cook it.

"Clarke, Nyko has informed me that the people of TonDC are in your debt. He mentioned how impressed he is with your healing skills and how you have helped." Lexa states, her beautiful green eyes locked on mine.

I blush at the praise, lowering my eyes in an attempt to not get lost in hers. "Mochof."

"There is no need to thank me, Clarke."

I look back up at Lexa and into the fire in her gaze. We just look until Indra huffs, which nearly snaps me out of my daze. It's only when Anya coughs to hide her laughter that make our eyes look away from each other. Lexa glowers at Anya (who's smirking, but unimpressed with Lexa's glaring skills) and I take a quiet, shaky breath. Her eyes are so intense, but they reveal so much about her. I guess whoever said the eyes are the window to the soul is right. At least in Lexa's case. There's a wall, stoic and unwavering in them, sort of like I've noticed her personality is. She is fearless, but hides herself behind those walls. I know there's a beautiful woman hidden behind the mask of the Heda, and I hope someday she'll let her guard down enough so I can see her. I can see little bits and pieces in her eyes, the love and passion behind it all. I bet Lexa would sacrifice her own life willingly in exchange for the safety and happiness of her people. I hope I never find out if I'm right about that, but it's amazing to see someone that cares so much.

Chapter End Notes

I know some of you beautiful humans are worried when I mention Lexa's willingness to sacrifice herself/her death in any capacity, but rest assured! It's me, so there's going to be angst, but I can never resist giving my stories a happy ending! Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
I almost wish the rest of the night was uneventful.

Once dinner is over, some people clean up the dirty dishes and take them somewhere. I'd help, but I have no idea where they're going. Instead, I sit with Anya, Lexa, and Indra on a log near a fire. Lexa's on my left, Anya's on my right, and Indra decided sitting on another log would be better than squishing together on one. Though I suspect it's because she wants to be able to watch me.

Occasionally, people come over to say hello to Indra (who surprisingly doesn't growl at them until they go away, instead seeming genuinely happy to see them and greeting them warmly) or to thank Lexa for something. Lexa always responds like I noticed she did earlier, thanking them for her support of her decisions and for doing whatever their job is.

Once people stop coming over, I glance around the clearing and notice almost everyone is stumbling. I guess Artigas is right, and I'll have to deal with some drunk oversized people. I just hope no one does anything stupid and injured themselves.

I watch a young warrior bump into a larger warrior (seriously, what do they feed them? They're huge!), starting a small scuffle. I look to where Lexa was sitting next to me and sigh, wishing she didn't go to find us (Anya, Indra, me, and her) some alcohol to drink. Now I'll have to break up the fight because Anya and Indra are too busy bickering about something to even notice it's happening.

I get up, really hoping this won't go the way I'm dreading. I don't want to clean any fresh wounds tonight.

"Hod op (stop)!” I call out.

I march toward them, my hand by my hip and ready to grab my dagger if necessary (and I thought Anya was bring paranoid when she told me to always wear a weapon. The only reason I don't have my sword is because I didn't want it pressed against my back while we ate).

The guys continue shoving each other, cursing in Trigedasleng.

By now, others have noticed they're fighting, and one person yells. "Gonplei (fight)!"

"Not helping!” I grumble, shooting a glare in the direction of whoever spoke.

The damage is already done and the gathered crowd that's slowly growing larger starts to chant "gonplei".

The smaller guy's hand curls into a fist and I know what's going to happen. I stand between them, ready to knock some sense into them if necessary.

"Hod op.” I repeat, giving them both glares.

They avoid my eyes, and instead glower at each other. The larger one gets impatient and throws a punch, apparently ignoring the fact I'm still between them. Using a technique from Anya, I use a well placed block to stop him from punching anyone (well, except me. My arm is going to be sore for days).
"Hod op." That didn't come from me.

The crowd parts nervously, allowing Lexa to stride through, murder in her eyes as she glares at the two warriors. She only stops for a moment to look at me, giving me a once over. I can see the masked worry in her expression and nod, hoping she'll get that I'm okay. Lexa's stance relaxes slightly, and she turns her attention back to the warriors, her mouth twisted in a scowl. The warriors look ashamed and drop their eyes to the ground like the ratio of dirt to pebbles is fascinating to them.

"You will not do this again. Stop acting like goufas (children) and go back to what you were doing." Lexa says. The coldness in her voice feels like it should be enough to snuff out the bonfires around us.

"Moba (sorry) Heda. Moba Clarke." They apologize before the slink away.

The gathered crowd, probably sensing the action is over or perhaps fearing for their life (despite how Anya's immune to her glares, they work on everyone else), disperse to go back to the fires and their drinks.

"Clarke, you are hurt."

It's not a question, and I wonder how she can tell. "It's nothing, Anya's done worse while we train." Her scowl deepens and I find myself hoping she doesn't kill Anya because I told her that. "I'm fine, I promise. It's just a bruise."

Lexa nods, still seeming skeptical but she accepts my words. "I did get drinks if you would like to have them. It will numb the pain."

"That would be great, thank you. And thanks for breaking up the fight. I didn't want to break their noses to do that."

In the dark, it's hard to see the slight flush creeping up Lexa's neck. "I'm certain you could have easily handled them." She gives me a smile (is that shyness I see in her eyes?). "It was dangerous to get between them. They are well trained warriors and have drank too much." It doesn't sound like she's reprimanding me, she almost sounds impressed. "You are brave, Clarke kom Skaikru."

I blush, ducking my head. "You would have done the same thing if you were in my position."

"That does not make you any less brave. There were many people there watching, yet only you tried to stop them."

We're close to where Anya and Indra are, still arguing about something.

"No, Indra, they are fools, they will not realize-"

"Heda." Indra says respectfully, cutting off Anya. "I kept your old mentor from drinking all of the alcohol you brought us."

"Mochof, Indra. Anya." Lexa states, the look she gives Anya saying all she needs to know.

"Moba, Heda, but Indra is being frustrating."

"They are fools but there is no way-" Indra begins before Anya clearing her throat cuts her off. They have an intense stare-down until they both look away, gulping down white liquid from their cups.
I sit next to Anya again, and Lexa sits beside me, silently handing me a drink. I thank her and try a sip. My nose scrunched up immediately and Lexa notices, a smile lighting up her face. Her smile is so beautiful I forget to breath for a moment. It sims quickly as if she doesn't want to be seen smiling, but even in its absence the world seems a little brighter. Even though it's night.

Float me, I'm in deep already.

Chapter End Notes

That was an incredibly fun chapter to write! They're so smitten and won't admit it. And for those of you wondering, yes Anya and Indra were arguing about how Clarke and Lexa already like each other but won't admit it. Thank you for your lovely comments and say awesome!
Chapter 18

When I wake up, the pounding is inside my head instead of outside. I groan, drawing in on myself. I clutch my aching head, burrowing into the furs. There are footsteps coming toward my bed and I know if I try to make any sudden movements, my stomach might rebel. I can tell who it is by the sound and lift up a hand to show I'm alive, just dead inside.

"Artigas, why did you let me drink so much?" I grumble, but I know he heard me.

"I did not let you, and I was not by your side. Heda was. I am certain she did not mean to allow you to have so much. Your body reacts to it more than I expected."

"Are you calling me a lightweight?" I peek out of the furs to give him a glare.

"I am not certain what that means. However, I am guessing that is exactly what I am calling you."

There's amusement in his expression, and I'm just glad it isn't Anya that woke me up. Now that I think about it... She never misses a chance to make my day even slightly worse, whether it be an extra hour training, making me run in place for a floating hour, or literally sitting on me to wake me up. Should I be worried?

"Where's Anya? Why didn't she wake me up?"

"She is... recovering, same as you but slightly worse. She drank a lot more than you did. After you and Heda left to go to bed, she and Indra got into a drinking contest. When Anya lost because she could not see straight enough to even pick up another mug, she challenged Indra to a fight. It did not go well for either of them and Nyko had to bandage them both up. Anya and Indra are fine, Indra just has a concussion and a broken clavicle, which Nyko said you would know what that means, and Anya has a broken wrist and a broken nose."

"Idiots." I sigh. I'll have to check on them today before I head off to see Lexa. "Clavicle means Indra has a broken collar bone."

"Very well. You may have to figure out who will train you, for Anya cannot easily do so with a broken wrist."

That's not going to be fun. I don't know who else would have the time to or even want to train me. I move from my bed slowly, trying not to jostle my stomach or my head too much. I nearly moan when I see Artigas brought me breakfast.

"Mochof." I say, moving slightly faster to get to the food faster.

Surprisingly, I don't collapse or throw up the boiling acid in my stomach as I stumble to the table. I slump on the chair and Artigas informs me he'll be waiting for me outside. I devour the food quickly, letting it calm my stomach. I walk outside a moment later, once I'm sure there's not a relatively large chance of me puking or getting a migraine in the middle of TonDC.

To my surprise, he's talking to Lexa, who has her usual giant bodyguard by her side. Her expression gentles when she sees me.

"Clarke." Lexa says. "I was on my way to see Anya and Indra in medical to make sure they haven't killed each other or Nyko for not allowing them to leave yet. Artigas tells me that is where you are headed, as well. Would you like to accompany me? I am certain Artigas will not object to having
the day off."

"Sure." I say, but Artigas seems hesitant. "I'll be with the Heda, Artigas. I'll be safe."

He nods and bids us farewell (are their formal way of speaking rubbing off on me?).

Lexa touches my arm gently, and begins walking. I'm so surprised by the sudden contact that I fall in step with her almost immediately. She strides through the village like she knows all the streets, which I haven't managed to do and I've been here for about a month. Lexa's bodyguard (I'll really have to learn his name someday) follows us like a shadow, his footsteps surprisingly quiet for such a large person.

Lexa's lip curls up in amusement as we near Nyko's medical house or whatever you want to call it. I look where she is and try to keep from laughing. There's a clear ring around the house where people avoiding being near it.

When we come in, Nyko looks up from where he is sitting near Anya and Indra, and neither of them seem happy about how they're in bed. They try to get up when they see us, but a look from Nyko makes them recline again, scowls firmly in place. I can't see how exactly Nyko looked at them, but his glaring skills must be off the charts if he managed to get Indra and Anya to lie down again with just one. I mean, Anya's not even intimidated by Lexa's glare.

"Heda, Clarke, it is nice to see you. Perhaps you can talk sense into them. They want to get up, even though I tell them this is only temporary."

"Clarke, you are a healer. Talk sense into this fool." Anya growls, glowering at Nyko, who doesn't even flinch. "We have broken bones, we are not dying. We should not be stuck in these cots."

"If your bones don't set right, we'll have to break them again. Plus, Nyko knows more about medicine than me. Trust what he says."

"He says I cannot fight for months, Clarke. Months." Anya gives her broken and wrapped wrist an accusing look like that'll fix it.

"Then you can't fight for months. I can have someone else train me, and I'm sure the 12 nations can survive with having a general unable to fight for a short time." At Anya's grumbling, which I take as basically a confession she'll try to fight, despite what I've said. "Anya, if you fight and hurt your wrist again, you may never be able to fight again. It's better to be out of commission for a few months than forever."

"Fine." Anya grumbles, crossing her arms like a scolded child. She flinches, so I guess she hit her wrist again.

"Now that is over with, who will train the Skai prisa? I would offer, but my concussion and broken clavicle would prevent me from doing so to the best of my abilities." Indra states.

"I can train you." Lexa offers
Alright, I must be dreaming still, or hearing things. Because Lexa, the Commander of the 12 clans, wouldn't really want to train me in fighting. Right? Though I admit it would be incredible and awesome, plus I would get to spend more time with her.

"Heda, are you sure that is wise?" Indra questions. "I mean to offense to Clarke kom Skaikru, but Heda you have the 12 clans to rule over. Certainly there are things more important than training her that demand your attention."

"I can spare the time. I assume you divide your time between training with Anya and Nyko?" Lexa waits for me to nod to continue. "I will have plenty of time to work, and I can cancel if there is something extremely urgent. I did train under Anya as well and know her techniques. I will be able to continue her training from where Anya left off. I also have a feeling that if there is a meeting or something pressing, Clarke's opinion may prove useful."

I blink at that, moving my jaw to make sure it hasn't dropped open at Lexa's kind words. I've suspected she approves of me, and maybe even respects me, but to basically admit she wants me as an advisor... She must really trust me, which is something I can tell she doesn't do easily. Either that, or she's going with that Old Earth quote, "keep your friends close and your enemies closer". But I don't think she thinks of me as an enemy. At least I hope she doesn't.

"Sha, Heda." Indra says, dipping her head and accepting Lexa's words.

Lexa nods to her before turning her attention to me. "Clarke. Is today your day to train with Anya or Nyko?"

With all that's going on in my head, my mind isn't clear. "I'm not sure."

"If Heda would like to, she can train you today. I will keep these goufas (children) in line." Nyko assures us.

Ignoring Indra and Anya's protests at being called children, Lexa responds. "Sha, mochof. You may have Clarke assist you tomorrow, or any time you need her help, so long as she is willing." I don't miss how Lexa gives me free will instead of dictating what I'm going to do. "If you will excuse us."

Nyko bows his head and we slip out, the sounds of Anya and Indra complaining (they're so loud and noisy I'm sure I'll be able to hear them from the training ring. It's a miracle it didn't wake me up in my tent this morning) fading as we get further and further away.

"Are you sure you want to train me?" I ask nervously, wanting her to know she has a way out of that commitment. "Or have the time to? If you don't, for whatever reason, you can quit right how. I won't be hurt. I can find someone else."

That's a lie, I probably will be hurt. I mean, I would love to be able to fight with her. Just watching her with Anya was incredible, I can hardly imagine what it would be like to actually face her. It's not just that though. Maybe it would be for the best, I'm sure an up close sweaty Lexa is even more distracting than she was when she was fighting Anya... And that's saying something. I managed to focus and watch her moves, too, but float me she's gorgeous. I'm surprised there wasn't a puddle of
drool at my feet.

"Of course I would like to train you." Lexa says, her voice a lot quieter than when she was in the company of others. She almost seems... shy. But that's insane, she's Commander of the Twelve Clans. "Unless you do not want me to."

"I do, I just don't want you to take time away from more important things just to train me."

"You are worth it." Lexa states, as if she's telling me the sky is blue or that water is wet.

My mind blanks, and I can barely choke out a "mochof". She's being so nice. I don't know her well enough to say for certain this is unusual.

"Pro. What did Anya last teach you?"

I get out of my head enough to realize that we're nearing the ring, and that Gustus is following behind us.

"We've started using actual swords to fight." I murmur. Though we only did that once before Lexa came here.

"Already?" Lexa asks, surprise coloring her tone.

"It's been a month. Well, a bit less with Nyko taking up half of my days. But it's still been a month."

"It was three months before I even touched a wooden one." My shock must register on my face, because she gives this cute, almost abashed looking little smile and continues. "I was young and arrogant. I knew I had a good chance of becoming Heda, and did not take directions well. My first month with her consisted only of me being forced to do demeaning errands such as cleaning up the horse pens, or helping mend the armor of the others that were training and had the possibility to become Heda. My attitude was already changing at the end of that month, but..." Lexa hesitates.

We're at the ring, sitting on the sturdy outer fence as we talk. "You don't have to tell me anything if you're not ready." I reassure, hoping she'll hear the honest in my voice.

"It is okay, it has been a while. It is just not an easy thing to talk about." She swallows, casting her beautiful eyes skyward for a moment before settling them down on the dirt our feet are grazing. "After a month, Anya introduced me to Costia, thinking she may be a good influence. She was the daughter of the blacksmith, and she was beautiful." I don't miss her use of past tense or the sad at the loss but happy at the memory kind of smile. I silently wait for Lexa to be ready to continue. "She was the light of my life. With her, I felt free of the burdens on my shoulders and for once, happy. I began working hard, and excelled in my training. I was young, as I told you. I was not even three. Costia and I's love started the moment we met, and ended in the only storm large enough to extinguish the flames of our love. We grew up together. She was by my side when we received the news the previous Heda was killed in battle. She watched the Conclave, watched me ascend to become Heda. Costia was terrified for my well-being, but she was also incredibly proud. I began uniting the clans until all were on my side and only Azgeda had not joined and dared to rise against me. They took Costia." I reach out and grab Lexa's hand on instinct, hoping it'll ease the pain she's reliving. "They tortured her for information against me. Costia was mine, and I was hers, so they figure she would know secrets to help them defeat me. She did, but she never revealed anything at all. She was always stronger than me. They killed her and cut off her head, and sent it to my bed. The pain of losing her... I thought I would never get over it. I thought I would always have a hole in my chest the Ice Queen, Nia, left in me. I have never gotten over it, not truly. I have
accepted her death, and all death as inevitable, but I will try until my dying breath to make sure Costia and I's people, everything we worked hard for and what she died for, are safe and free to live their lives. The hole is still there, and the words Titus told me constantly as a child have become my truth."

"What are the words?" I ask quietly.

There's so much to take in... My heart aches because I know hers still does over Costia. That kind of pain never goes away, just fades until it's a constant numb throb.

"Hodness laik kwelnes (love is weakness)."

Chapter End Notes

Wow this chapter really got away from me, I didn't think it'd get so heavy and angsty... Or so long (well, longer than my usual chapters). I was really tempted to add "but that all changed when the fire nation attacked" or some joke like that, but it'd take away from Lexa opening up to Clarke... Which I love that she trusts her so much already. Thank you all for your support and your lovely comments, and stay awesome!
"Hodness laik kwelnes (love is weakness)." Lexa states confidently.

I stare at her, mouth slightly open. "Do you really believe that?" Lexa stays quiet, but the look in her eyes speak volume. "Well, you're wrong."

"What?" Lexa blinks, surprise on her face.

I know she's Heda, the big Commander, but this is something I will speak up on. I'm guessing she's not used to being argued with or having many question her and her decisions.

"Hodness nou laik kwelnes (love is not weakness). Love gives us something worth fighting for, something worth dying for. Even more, something or someone worth living for. Without it, everyone would only fight for themselves, for their own gain and greed. With love, you fight for your friends, your family, your clan, or your clans. Lexa, you want peace for all the clans. Not because it benefits you personally, but because you love your people. You can claim love is weakness, but if that's true then everyone is weak."

"You are very good at arguing, Clarke." Lexa admits, a small smile lifting up the corners of her lips. "You will make a good advisor, and I bet you would make a good general as well."

"Huh?" How did we get to this subject? She wants me to be her advisor?

"If Anya has not cast you out and made a lesser warrior train you, you must be good. I look forward to seeing you prove me right."

"How did you get 'she would be a good advisor' from us arguing about love?" I wonder aloud.

"You make it sound as if we were having a lovers' quarrel." I feel my cheeks flush at her words. "You are not scared of me, Clarke. Well, perhaps you are, but it does not show. You fight me, argue with what I say. There are not many who have the guts to do so. You would be a good advisor because of that, Clarke. We have not known each other for very long at all, but you already know me almost as well as Anya and Indra do, and they have been by my side since I was a child. If I have a decision to make and you are by my side, I know you will make sure I make a decision based on what is best for my people."

"Is this flattery your way of asking me to be your advisor?"

Lexa's smile grows, and I try to focus on her words as she speaks instead of how beautiful she looks when her face is lit up in a smile. "That was not flattery, Clarke, merely the truth. And yes, I would like you to become my advisor. I will have to tell you many things Anya neglected to mention. Perhaps after tomorrow, which I assume you will spend working with Nyko. She waits until I nod and confirm. "Then the day after that, in other words in two days, we can go hunting. I can both see your skill and tell you about our enemies and what is going on. If you would like to go, of course. We can simply have the discussion in my tent, or while we train another time. It is up to you."

"Hunting sounds good. I haven't gone in a while."
"Very well. Would you like to start your training today or has everything today been tiring?"

I can't help grinning at her evident concern. "It's fine, we can start today. Just nothing too difficult, I'm going to need my muscles to be not sore when we go hunting."

Lexus slides down off the fence, her feet hitting the ground with a little "pap".

It's odd what a contradiction she is. She's so strong, brave, highly intelligent, and from what I've heard, ruthless. But she's also this girl who has been hurt, who's lost people she loves, who works for her people to be as safe and happy as possible. She's quite frankly adorable, and undeniably extremely beautiful. Lexa may not advertise these parts of herself, but she's kind and-

"Clarke? Are you sure you are alright? We do not have to start now."

Float me, I've been staring at her while I thought. "I'm okay, I promise. Just got lost in thought."

"Was it about becoming my advisor?" She asks curiously. "You did not give me an answer on that. Just know that whatever you choose, I will not be offended. We will still go on the hunting trip, and I will, of course, still tell you what is happening here."

"I'll become your advisor." I say, making a snap decision. It can't be too horrible, being around a pretty girl all the time and getting to tell the most powerful person on the ground whether her decisions are good or bad.

"You think I am pretty?" Lexa sounds amused.

Oh crap. Float me, I spoke out loud? I hope I don't do that often, or she'll realize I have a crush on her.

"Uh. You heard that?" I question, my voice slightly higher in pitch than normal.

"Sha. Mochof." I notice with satisfaction that she's blushing. "It is not just telling me what to do, or what to decide, Clarke." I love the way she says my name. I shake my head as subtly as possible. Dammit Clarke focus. "You will become a highly respected figure in our culture. You will be recognized as someone I trust enough to get advice from. And there will be dangers as well. This is not an easy job, helping make decisions. Sometimes, there are no good decisions and we can merely speculate on which might be the least bad one. My enemies will become your enemies. You will know valuable information, sometimes things that maybe no one besides you and I know. We may have to travel on perilous roads, and any assassin after me may come after you too."

"You're doing a really bad job convincing me to become your advisor considering I already said yes." I deadpan.

Lexus chuckles, a unique and beautiful sound I want to hear again and again. "I want you to know what you are getting into. Do you still want to be my advisor, Clarke?"

"Yes."

Lexus's smile turns into the biggest I've ever seen on her, and it takes my breath away. We grasp forearms, Lexus's smile never dimming even as we part.

She heads into the ring, looking at me with a warm gaze. "Ready to start training?"
I had no idea where this chapter would go, but I'm loving what's happened. Thank you all for your amazing comments and support (13,000 views holy shit)! Stay awesome!
"Go slow Clarke, I would like to see how you move." Lexa says.

She circles me slowly, her eyes running up and down my body as I hit the wooden training dummy. It's something that's always been here, but Anya and I haven't used it with swords.

"Good." Lexa murmurs, "May I move you to correct your form?"

"Yes." I say immediately, pausing my movements.

She studies me for a moment more before gently moving my position slightly. "Either Anya is a better teacher than she was, or you are a better student than I was. It took me a year to perfect this stance. Even then, I was never allowed to touch a real sword."

After such an emotionally draining day, it's relaxing to go through the motions of swordplay, which has become almost automatic. Lexa and I train for maybe an hour more before we head back to our tents.

I'm tempted to invite her in, but I know we're both tired and might end up just falling asleep (which I definitely wouldn't mind sleeping near her... or with her, but now isn't the time for that. Plus, I doubt she sees me in that way).

"Goodnight, Clarke." Lexa says softly, giving me a small smile.

"Reshop, Heda." I respond, proud that I remember the right words.

Her smile grows and she leaves me, my heart a gooey mess in my chest. She's just... so cute.

It isn't too late, but get into my bed and fall asleep almost instantly to thoughts of Lexa.

"Clarke." A familiar voice says, snapping me from my sleep. I groan and burrow into the furs more. "Clarke, beja. Wake up."

When the person says beja, my eyes jolt open. That couldn't be Anya, and the voice is definitely not Artigas'. I turn in my bed to face the person instead of the cloth of the tent.

"Lexa?" I blink, thinking my eyes are deceiving me.

What kind of horrible thing must have happened for her to come in here unannounced? She's a respectful person, always aware of boundaries. Though I don't mind her being in my tent in the least, I know she wouldn't want the first time of her coming in here to be without my explicit consent.

"Clarke, get up. Nyko needs you."

I sit up, knowing he wouldn't call for me or ask Lexa to get me if it weren't extremely serious. Lexa turns her back to me, blushing as I stand, grabbing clean clothes. I strip off the clothes I fell asleep in and put on my clean ones. I move past her to head for the door, touching her wrist and hoping she'll understand that I'm letting her know I'm done and to follow me.
Lexa gets the message and walks beside me as we hurry to Nyko's hut. He looks up when we rush in, relaxing when he sees I'm here.

"Clarke, mochof for coming. This is out of my hands now, perhaps you can do something."

He glances down at a young boy that looks like he's about the age of ten on the bed Indra was on yesterday. He's badly beaten and barely breathing. I grab my gloves from the bag I brought from my tent and put them on. I go through the motions, checking on him to see the extent of his wounds. My jaw tightens when I finish, immediately preparing to help his lack of breath first.

"What did this to him?" I ask as I work.

"A Pauna." Nyko says.

I take a deep breath and steep my resolve. I know what I'm hunting tomorrow. I'll tell Lexa my plan to kill it after I save this kid.

It takes a long time before he's stable. The sun has set again by then and I have barely rested, not even eating or drinking until Lexa practically forces me to. She stayed by my side the entire time, helping whenever I asked her to, and even got me to take short five minutes that I always ended early when he started seeming better. Nyko helped when he could, but he was mainly busy tending to other small injuries in the village.

I take off my bloody, soiled gloves and know I'll have to have someone make me new ones I can clean easily.

"Come, Clarke." Lexa says quietly, directing my exhausted self back to my tent and making sure I don't trip over any pebbles my tired eyes don't notice.

"Mochof." I yawn.

A nearby guard approaches us and Lexa speaks to him for a moment before continuing to lead me the rest of the way back to my tent. I sit on my chair near the bed while Lexa takes something a warrior hands her from outside the tent. As she nears, I realize she's brought food. My stomach rumbles angrily, protesting against my lack of eating today.

A small smile lights up her features at the sound and she sits across from me, taking some food.

"Lexa." I murmur, wanting to tell her this. Hopefully her inevitably bad reaction to my words will keep me from passing out just yet. "We're not hunting ordinary beasts tomorrow. We're hunting Pauna."

Lexa's eyes widen, and she pauses mid-chew to stare at me incredulously before swallowing her food and speaking. "Clarke, no. That would be suicide. No one has ever succeeded in killing a Pauna. It will kill you." She pleads.

"No it won't." I deny. "Look, it just nearly killed this boy who's about ten, and he would've died if I weren't there. It's killed before, it's going to do it again."

"Clarke, this is the most vicious Pauna in the twelve clans. More than twelve strong warriors went against it together, and yet it still breaths while the warriors do not. It has torn a man in half, Clarke. Beja, reconsider. I do not want to lose you."

"I'm not going to do anything stupid, I promise."
"You are going to try to kill a giant bloodthirsty Pauna." Lexa points out gently.

"Well, yes, but I'm not going to charge at it or anything."

"You will not leave without me." Lexa says, and I know it's an order.

"I won't, Lexa. Plus, I don't know where it is and I have a feeling you've been having some people track it."

Lexa just sighs and slumps in the chair and I know I'm right. "You are going to be the death of me, Clarke."

"I hope not, I like your company."

Chapter End Notes

I was going to have the boy be Artigas, but then again... I'm an asshole, but I'm not that evil and I like him. So no worries, Artigas is okay. Thank you for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa hesitantly leaves a little bit after I tell her we're hunting the Pauna. She isn't convinced I won't leave without her and do something even more stupid than as she put it, "facing a bloodthirsty Pauna." From what I can tell before I pass out in my bed, the patrols going past my tent have increased. I don't blame her for not trusting my word for it, I know I wouldn't if I were in her position.

When I wake up and wipe the sleep from my eyes, the first thing I notice is that the village is eerily quiet. I get up and blink when I notice there's armor on the table. I move forward and run my fingers across it.

"It is good, is it not?" A voice says. I spin around toward the entrance, my hands clenched into fists, ready to fight. It's just Anya. "It came last night after you had fallen asleep. I am sure it may be useful today if you are really hunting what Heda says you are hunting."

"What would that be?"

"The Pauna that lives near here. Lexa is not the joking type, but I am not certain you are really that much of a branwada (idiot/fool) to do such a thing."

"Well I guess I am." I say.

Anya just sighs and grumbles something about "foolish girls" and "death wish".

She points to the armor. "Then put this on. It will not protect you from its blows, but it might stop it from instantly killing you."

I put on the armor as best I can (there are so many straps) until Anya sighs again and takes over, making sure I see how to do it correctly. It's amazing she can do this without hurting her broken wrist too much. Though judging by the quiet hisses and grunts she lets out, it does hurt.

"Mochof, Anya. I'll try not to die."

She grasps my forearm with her good arm and I do the same automatically, surprised by the show of respect. "You had better not. You will be with Heda, and if anything happens to you, something might happen to her. Watch out for each other."

I nod, not knowing what to say. Anya's worried about us. We walk out of my tent and Anya leads me to Lexa's tent. The giant guard opens the tent flaps for us and we're greeted by the sight of Lexa pacing.

Relief spreads across her face when she sees me. "Clarke. You did not leave."

I smile comfortingly, hoping she understands I'm okay with the fact she wasn't sure whether she could trust my word or not. "I told you I wouldn't leave without you."

"You two can look lovingly into each other's eyes another time." Anya huffs, making both Lexa and I blush and look away from each other. "You have a Pauna to kill. Your horses are prepared and supplies have been tied onto them."
"Let me just get some things from my tent and I'll be ready." I say, realizing they probably didn't think to grab my sketchbook.

"I will accompany you, if you do not mind."

"Of course not, Lexa. Let's go."

Anya follows behind us as we walk side by side back to my tent. I grab a few things including my sketchbook, pencil, map, and some food that should stay good throughout the trip. It's a small enough amount of things that I can use the bag I made to store it in (I've added to it since then and made it a backpack, so it should be okay on the horse).

We continue to the gate and there's a lot of people gathered there, what looks like almost the entire village.

"Once people got word of what you two are planning to hunt, they wanted to say bye." Anya murmurs.

A woman comes up to us, and I recognize her as the mother of the boy I saved yesterday. "Mochof (thank you), Heda and Clarke. Beja (please), be careful."

"Oso gonplei nou ste odon (our fight is not over)." Lexa replies confidently. "This Pauna is the most vicious, the most violent in the twelve clans. It has killed too many, and so we will kill it."

The gathered people seem to take her words to heart and the mood noticeably lightens.

Guards lead two horses to us, one a jet black stallion (definitely Lexa's) and a strong looking dark brown horse. The black horse whinnies when it sees Lexa and tries to get away from the already struggling guard. Amusement shines in Lexa's eyes and she clicks her tongue once and it immediately stops fighting to get to her.

Lexa thanks the guards and holds out her hand to her horse. It immediately presses its nose to her outstretched hand. There's a warm smile on her face and it's clear she loves this horse. She runs her fingers along him, moving around him to get to his side. She expertly gets up on him.

Oh crap. Right, horses. I just realized I don't know how to ride one. We haven't gotten that far in my training yet, plus now with Anya's broken wrist I'd guess it's hard to teach that. Lexa sees my struggle and quietly gives me instructions. I get up on the other horse on my first try and manage to not fall off as soon as I get on, so I'd call that a success.

Lexa's horse moves in front of mine, leading us out of the town as the people wave and say different variations goodbye," good luck," and "don't die."

The movement of the horse underneath me feels weird, it makes my hips shift in the saddle from side to side. As soon as we are far enough from the village, Lexa stops and looks back.

"Are you doing alright? I am guessing you have never ridden a horse before."

"I'm doing fine. Is it that obvious?"

"No, you have been doing good for your first time." Lexa smiles reassuringly.

She moves us forward slowly, her horse beside me as she gives me tips on how to not fall off.
That was a fun chapter to write... Anya being worried about Clarke and Lexa while simultaneously making a jab about their relationship (or lack thereof). Lexa being worried about Clarke doing something even more foolish than trying to kill a giant murderous gorilla. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I travel until the sun gets low in the sky. By then, I'm exhausted from riding for so long with few breaks, though Lexa has stopped every time I asked her to and even some times I didn't.

"How do people ride horses all the time?" I groan as I get down onto shaky legs, meeting Lexa's amused eyes. "My butt's killing me."

"Most have ridden horses since their youth. I apologize, I did not think it would be so bad for you."

"It's okay. I'll recover all feeling in the lower half of my body eventually." I joke, making Lexa give me a small smile.

But seriously, I feel like what I imagine a newborn horse is like. My legs are still shaking from traveling and I'm surprised I haven't fallen on my face at least once yet.

Lexa clicks her tongue and leads the horses through a ton of plants against the side of a rocky hill. I blink, wondering if I'm imagining things (maybe all that motion on the back of the horse rattled my brain or something).

Lexa's head comes out of the plants. "Are you coming, Clarke? We should be safe and dry in here tonight."

She pulls aside some vines hanging down and of course there's a giant cave behind all that green. I walk in, pausing pretty much the second I get inside. It's... incredibly beautiful. There's a light source at the top that seems to be moving and glowing and- Wait it is glowing. Float me, those are blue butterflies and they're glowing. Other than that, there's a good sized pool of water in the middle being fed by a slow-moving stream trickling through the cave. The pond looks almost deep enough to take a bath in. I can't remember the last time I took a bath (I must've been a little kid, small enough to fit in the sink or something. Water was in short supply on the Ark). The horses are drinking from it, and Lexa's letting them so I'm guessing the water's safe to drink.

Lexa moves slowly over to the horses, touching their sides carefully so they know where she is. She unloads our things and I move over and take them, making sure to follow her lead and letting my hands brush against the horses. I set our stuff against the nearest wall.

I look around, taking in the beauty the cave again. I'm glad I brought my sketchbook, I have a feeling I'll be busy drawing this for a while. Lexa begins setting up, so I drag my eyes away from the cave and instead focus on Lexa. She waves her hand, silently letting me know that she doesn't need my help right now. Instead of drawing like my hands are itching to do, I watch her pull furs from the packs and set them on the ground, making two separate piles.

Once she finishes one, she gestures to it. "This one is yours."

"Mochof (thank you)." I say, deciding not to mess up her carefully crafted bed for me. Instead of taking it apart I sit on it, pulling my sketchbook from my backpack.

"Pro (you're welcome)." Lexa murmurs back, her voice echoing.

I glance up at her from where I'm flipping to a fresh page to draw on and almost regret it. Lexa
looks stunning in this light, more so than usual and she has this gentle expression... I grab my pencil and begin to draw what I see, even after she goes to focus on another task.

I glance up a few times curiously, noting that she's making a small fire. Which is smart, and this cave is big enough where we won't suffocate in smoke as long as it isn't too large, and the entrance is hidden behind the plants, so unless we have a giant bonfire in here, it won't be visible from outside. The smell of cooking meat hits me and my stomach grumbles, reminding me I haven't eaten much today. The horses have moved off and are chewing on some grass that managed to grow in here.

Deciding to wait until Lexa finishes cooking, I put the finishing touches on my drawing of her. I flush, realizing she might want to see what I've been drawing for so long. I don't really want her to see that I drew her. I don't know what her reaction would be.

I quickly turn to the next page and draw a group of the butterflies until Lexa calls me over.

The warmth from the fire is a nice change from my back being pressed against a cold, rocky wall. I stretch my muscles as I walk over, not noticing I've brought my sketchbook and pencil over until I sit down. Oh well. I'm not getting up again just for that.

"Pauna is not far from here, so this can become our temporary shelter until we catch and kill it." Lexa says, handing me a plate with cooked meat and berries on it.

"Was all of this in the packs that were on the horses?"

"Not all of it, no. I did bring some herbs that don't grow in this area and some fresh meat, but everything else I gathered during our stops. We will have to actually catch something tomorrow if we want to eat meat." Lexa shifts and clears her throat. "Would you like to know about our enemies now? We can wait until later, if you would like."

"No, I'm fine with talking about it now. As long as you don't mind having to talk between bites."

"I do not mind." Lexa's mouth twitches up and we begin eating until she stops and continues. "Though all twelve clans are supposedly loyal to me and my Coalition, there are many who would rather have war than peace. There is one prominent risk in the Coalition itself, the Azgeda (Ice Nation). It is not the entire clan, mainly just their Queen, Nia and those loyal to her. She will not do anything until the Maunon, the Mountain Men, are taken care of. They are our main enemies. They watch us and when they are around, our people disappear. We are not certain what happens to them, but we know that some are kept while others are turned into abominations we call Reapers. They are mindless, bloodthirsty killers. They are worse than Pauna because they used to be some of us."

Lexa's jaw clenches, pain in her eyes. She cares so much about her people.

"I'll help you take down the mountain."

Chapter End Notes

Ooh... Cliffhanger. Kind of. Thank you amazing humans for your kind words and for reading this! Stay awesome!
"I'll help you take down the mountain," I offer.

"It will not be a simple task, Clarke. It will be extremely dangerous."

"I know, but I still want to help. With your knowledge of them and the ground in general, and my knowledge about technology, we might just be able to defeat them."

Lexa purses her lips and I sit in silence, letting her think. "Very well. When we get back, I will show you everything I have on the Maunon. Just promise me you will be careful and not take any unnecessary risks, beja (please)."

"I won't." I promise, but we both know that I might anyway.

Lexa lets out a breath, slowly eating the meat she cooked (which is incredibly delicious, by the way. She could be a chef). "What were you writing earlier?"

"Oh, I was drawing." Please don't want to see what I drew.

"May I see what you have drawn?"

I know I can refuse and she wouldn't be offended or anything but... "Sure."

I hand her my note book, and it falls open to the page with the butterflies I hastily drew after drawing Lexa for so long.

"This is remarkable, Clarke. They look exactly like them." Lexa's voice is full of awe, like I drew the Mona Lisa instead of a couple butterflies. "You are an incredible artist."

"Mochof (thank you)." I say, blushing.

"There is no need to thank me, I am merely stating facts. May I look through the rest of it?" Lexa asks hesitantly.

She's going to find my drawing of her if she does. If I say no, it'll seem like I'm hiding something. I mean, at least I didn't draw her naked or anything. I tense my jaw to keep from groaning at myself. That's not something I want to think about when she's right there. Float me, can I just sink into the ground and disappear?

"Um, there isn't much in there yet and some of it isn't done, but feel free to look."

She goes to the front, the sound of pages flipping filling the quiet. "You can draw maps?"

She must've found my back up map I drew at the front, so in case I ever get lost without my good one I'm not completely screwed. "Sha. My dad taught me how. It's really come in handy down here."

"You are good."

She turns the pages again. There are a few drawing I did when I first got here of the trees and some
animals. There are some I drew after coming to TonDC of Anya, Nyko, and Artigas. Then there's a
drawing of Indra (I thought if I drew her she wouldn't seem so intimidating but I was wrong) and
then there's three, well there's four now, of her. One of when we first met, one when she was
training with Anya, and one of her after a day of helping me after I saved that boy with her help. It's
one of my favorites, though I haven't been able to spend much time on it an it's just a bunch if
sketched lines. She looked absolutely gorgeous, so tired she could barely stay awake and had to
prop her head up with her hands. The most difficult part of that drawing (and every drawing of her)
is going to be getting her face right. This time, I'll have to draw the sleepy yet pleased smile she
wore the entire time.

"Are these of me?" There's no animosity or anything in her voice, just surprise. I nod in response. "I
look... is this how you see me?" Lexa's voice is quiet and she's staring at my notebook like it holds
the answer to the universe.

"Sha."

Lexa looks up at me, the emotions in her eyes making me want to stare into them forever but also
look away. "These are incredible, Clarke."

Her eyes flick down (did she look at my lips?) before flitting back up to meet my eyes almost
immediately. Does she want to kiss me? What is happening?

The moment is broken by a thunderous roar from outside the cave. I jump up, my hand on my
sheathed sword (I haven't unstrapped it from my hip yet).

"That was the Pauna. Which could mean one of two things. One, it knows we are here and that we
are here to kill it, or it is very aggravated."

I groan, "Neither of those are good. Though if it's angry, maybe it got injured or something."

"Perhaps." Lexa gives me a small smile and hands me back my sketchbook. She takes a deep
breath, grabbing a nearby stick to stoke the fire. "You should rest."

"So should you. If you're exhausted, you might get hurt or worse."

Lexa's hesitant, but follows me to where she made our beds. They're close enough to the fire so
we'll be able to feel the warmth, but it's far enough away that we won't have to worry about
accidentally catching on fire in our sleep.

"One of us should stay up and keep watch." Lexa protests, but keeps following me to our furs
anyway.

"We have the horses. I bet you're a really light sleeper, so if anything spooks them, you'll know."

Lexa sighs and I grin victoriously, knowing I've won. "Very well. If we are killed during the night,
I will blame you." I love how she's simultaneously joking and not joking. Lexa rambles through
the bags, pulling out what look to be pajamas for both of us. "I was not certain about your size, but
Anya's nomen (mother) was more than helpful. This should fit you."

Lexa hands me a simple black dress while she holds one that looks very similar, but hers has an
opening for her leg to peek through when she walks.

She turns her back to me and begins taking off her armor. My cheeks flush (holy crap, is that a
tattoo on her back?) and I manage to avoid staring at her muscles. Once I'm facing away from her,
of course. Float me, it should be illegal for her to be that attractive.
I take a deep breath before changing, hoping I'll be able to fall asleep tonight. I change quickly, but apparently not fast enough if the sharp intake of breath behind me is any indication. I ignore the blush coloring my skin and finish.

"Reshop (good night), Lexa."

"Good night, Clarke."

Chapter End Notes

Well, that chapter got... interesting. Thank you for reading and stay awesome!
"Clarke."

I groan and snuggle further into the furs, pulling one over my head. It's too early to be awake. I hear a chuckle and squirm, just wanting to fall back asleep.

"Clarke. Come on, it is time to get up."

That voice sounds familiar, but it's not Anya. "Five more minutes." I plead, hoping they're not as cruel as Anya is when I don't wake up when she wants me to.

"Clarke." The voice is stern, but I can hear the amusement. A hand starts lightly shaking my shoulder and I sigh, knowing I won't be able to fall asleep again.

The person stops when my head emerges from the furs. The sudden rush of cold air makes me shiver, but the fresh air is a welcome change. It takes me a few tries to successfully open my eyes, and even then everything's blurry. I yawn and move a hand from under the furs to rub my eyes.

My eyesight focuses in on Lexa, who's crouched in front of me. Judging by the amused smile on her face and her closeness to me that's kind of short circuiting my brain, she's the one that woke me up.

"I'm awake." I let out, wincing when I hear the raspiness.

"Barely." Lexa says jokingly. "I went out briefly and caught us breakfast." The thought of food makes my stomach rumble and motivates me to get out from underneath the furs. "I will go cook it while you get dressed."

I stand and stretch out my limbs, ridding my muscles of most of the rigidness from sleep. I glance at Lexa and note that her back is to me, probably to give me privacy as I change. Well, as much privacy as one could get in a giant open cave.

I take off the pajamas and quickly put on my armor, not wanting to expose my skin to the cold morning air for longer than necessary. It's not freezing, I'm just used to there only being one temperature on the Ark, and it was warmer than this. Even after more than a month, I'm still adjusting to the differences of Earth. I walk over to Lexa and sit next to her, yawning.

"After breakfast, we can try to track Pauna." Lexa says, glancing at me when I sit. "From the sound of it, it must have been close to us last night. All we need to do is figure out where it was and follow its tracks."

"You make it sound so simple." I say teasingly, knowing it will be anything but.

There's a small smile on her face as she leans closer to the fire, checking the meat from whatever animal she killed to see if it's cooked enough. Apparently satisfied with it, she pulls the stick with the meat on it out. Lexa reaches into a sheathe I haven't noticed until now attached to her hips and pulls out a dagger. Lexa cuts the meat from the bone and puts the pieces on the plates she brought. She divides them relatively evenly between the two of us, though I'm pretty sure she's giving me a little bit more. Once the bones are cleaned of meat, she tosses them to the wall away from our
I thank her when she passes me my plate. We eat in near silence, the only sound being the horses eating the grass and the sound of the forest coming from the entrance.

"We should be going if we are going to track it today." Lexa states when we're both finished.

"Alright."

I go through my mental checklist twice, making sure I have everything I might need while fighting a giant mutant gorilla. Yeah, this might not have been the brightest idea. Lexa and I leave soon after that, both of us on our guard.

Lexa has one of her swords drawn and my hands are ready to grab either my bow or my sword, depending on what I need. There's not much noise and the further we move from the cave, the fewer the sounds there are. It's eerie. Usually the forest is an absolutely stunning mixture of beautiful scenery and the sounds of animals. We must be pretty close to it, which isn't comforting in the least.

I follow Lexa, keeping an eye on the trees and our surroundings as she follows the trail the Pauna left us. Usually it's snapped trees and alarmingly huge footsteps (I dread to think what it might actually look like), but a few times there've been a small animal in the footprint (yes, in. As in completely squished) and even a skeleton from a deer. There's still little a bit of meat on it, from which Lexa determines it wasn't killed too long ago, a day at most.

When Lexa stops, I'm still making sure there's nothing and no one following us and such, so I don't notice until I bump into her back. At the contact, she unintentionally lets out a quiet grunt and steps forward.

I'm about to ask what's wrong, but Lexa shushes me and whispers. "I believe we have discovered it's camp. It does not appear to be here right now, so let's look around."

"That sounds like a really bad idea." I murmur, eyeing the clearing in front of us that's mostly hidden by trees.

"It probably is. Come on." With that, Lexa begins silently moving through the trees and toward the clearing.

"And she told me not to do stupid things." I grumble before following her.

Oh crap. The clearing is definitely our Pauna's. The dusty ground is red, which I'd guess means it's soaked with blood. There are bones lining the clearing (and some are human) so I have to climb over them to follow her, nearly tripping over a foot. An actual foot from a person, unattached. With the skin still- ugh. I'm a healer, I've seen bad things. But this makes me sick to my stomach.

Lexa gestures for me to come to her, so I rush over.

"Clarke, look."

I glance down into the hole in the ground she's pointing at and float me, that's a person. It's keeping a living person here. Why?

There's an extremely loud roar (it sounds really pissed off about something) and without turning around I know it's too close for Lexa and I to make it to safety. We exchange a look. Lexa draws her other sword and I pull out my bow, hoping I can get in a few shots before it gets too close.
Chapter End Notes

Cliffhanger... Mwahahaha.

RIP to the fifty killed in Orlando, and I hope the families affected are doing as okay as they can.

Thank you for your support and for reading! Stay awesome (and safe)!!
Chapter 26

We turn around, and I really hope I'm wrong and it's not really close to us. The Pauna is at the edge of the clearing, stepping on some of the bones that line the clearing. It makes a sickening crunching noise as it steps forward. It stares directly at us, its nostrils flaring. Of course one of the few things I'm right about is this.

With a yell that's so intense it actually shakes the ground, it charges at us. My eyes widen because holy crap, it's bigger than I thought. And that's saying something. Lexa gets into a fighting stance and I aim at it, firing as rapidly as I can while being accurate.

Despite the arrows sticking out of it, it doesn't slow down, it just looks even more pissed. It gets too close and leaps into the air aimed straight at me. I dive out of the way so I don't get flattened. I spit the red dust from my mouth. It crashes to the ground and I notice with relief that Lexa's okay, just doing another stupid thing.

She's swinging her swords wildly, hitting every bit of Pauna's flesh she can. Like my arrows, it only annoys it further. But she's good, it does seem to be slower as it lets out a ferocious roar and gets back up. My eyes widen as it swings it's arm, letting out an anguished cry when it hits Lexa. Her back hits a tree at the edge of the clearing, and one sword flies from her hands. She groans lowly, a sound that alarms me because I can hear it even though I'm not that close to her.

I watch in horror as the Pauna charges toward Lexa. I don't know what to do, so I just start firing arrows at the Pauna until it turns around to glower at me. By that point, I only have one arrow left. I silently curse myself for not bringing enough. It runs at me and I aim, my arms shaking in fear. If this doesn't work, we're both dead. I let out a breath and let the arrow fly, watching as it hits it's mark: Pauna's eye.

I let out a whoop as it crashes to the ground, it's eyes open and unseeing. Well, eye. The other one has an arrow sticking out of it. It's a pretty nasty sight, to be honest. I'm glad I'm not squeamish. If I were, I would've puked.

Just to be sure that it's dead and won't reanimate (which I don't think is scientifically possible, but on Earth you never know), I take out my sword and slit its throat.

Once I've done that, I rush over to Lexa, frantically checking her out. She's sitting and resting against the tree so I kneel before her.

"Are you alright? How's your back?"

"Hurts." Lexa says, a stoic look on her face. It's the one I rarely see when she's with me, and I never see it whenever we're alone. I give her an unimpressed look and Lexa grins, which makes me automatically smile too. "I will be okay, Clarke. Ai gonplei nou ste odon (my fight is not over)."

"You bet it isn't. Remember if you die on me, I'll kill you." I warn, both teasing and serious.

"I am uncertain how that would work." Lexa teases back.

"You die and then I'll bring you back so I can kill you for dying."
Whatever response Lexa might have is cut off by a load groan. Oh right, there's someone in that hole. Dang, I forgot all about that.

"You stay here." I urge Lexa.

She raises her eyebrows and I sigh, knowing this will be something she won't budge on. She's as stubborn as I am sometimes. I help Lexa up and she wraps an arm around my shoulder to hold herself up, grunting in pain. Ignore how right her touching you feels, she's injured and hurting. I take a deep breath and begin moving toward the hole with her slowly.

I keep my eyes on her, unable to keep my worry at bay. It takes awhile for us to get there, and I keep making us stop for a moment or two because her face will screw up in pain and she'll let out little whimpers but she won't ask to stop. I help her sit a safe distance from the edge of the hole, making sure she's semi-comfortable before turning my attention to the person in the hole.

"Hey," I call. "Can you climb out?" I hope they speak English. Er... Gonasleng (literally translates to warrior language, but it means English).

"No," a raspy voice says. "My ankle is twisted from when that beast threw me in here. I cannot hear it anymore. Is it dead or gone?"

"It's dead."

"You did good, Clarke." Lexa murmurs.

"Mochof (thank you)." I give her a smile before turning my attention back to the person (who from their voice, is most likely a woman). "Do you see another way out?"

"There is an old door, but it's locked. I think it locks from the other side, so if you could find where it locks..." She trails off, coughing. "Moba (sorry), I have spent three nights down here. It is cold and I fear I may have caught an illness."


Lexa lets out a soft sigh that makes me want to wrap her in my arms and never let go and nods. "Go save another person." She gives me a lopsided grin.

I glance around, trying to see if there's a visible entrance somewhere. There's a flat, rusty sheet of metal sitting on the ground. It almost looks like it's coming out of the ground. I move closer to get a better look, dusting it off. It's a covering, so I pull it off. It's heavy, which makes me glad Anya pushes me so hard. Otherwise, I wouldn't be able to make it budge at all.

I peer down, squinting against the darkness. The fact it's getting closer and closer to night isn't helping. It's an old metal ladder, leading way down until I can't see anything. At least I'm not afraid of the dark. I take one last breath of fresh air and begin climbing down.

Chapter End Notes

Aww, Lexa's hurt... No worries, other than some bruises she's okay. And bye, Pauna.
So who's this random girl? And why did the Pauna throw her in a hole? Hmm... :)
Thank you all for reading, and stay awesome!
Chapter 27

I climb slowly down the ladder, listening to the groans of the metal and testing the sturdiness of each ring before putting my weight on it. It's not exactly a fast process, but I would rather be slow than fall to some unknown depth.

I breath out a sigh of relief when my feet hit the ground, looking up to the top. I can see the light up there, but it's pitch black down here. I'll have to rely on the walls to get to the woman. I move my feet forward, letting them scrape on the ground to make sure I don't trip over anything. My hands go out to the walls, the passage being just small enough for me to touch both sides without stretching. I wince as I touch what I assume is a beetle, wrinkling my nose in disgust.

My foot hits something and I listen as it rolls away. I move carefully, trying to find it again. I curse as I stub my toe on it again, and bend down to pick it up. It's long and cylinder shaped. Did I find a...? There's a button on the side so I press it, nearly yelping in surprise as light comes out of it. Oh. Flashlight, right. That's exactly what I thought it was. How is it even working now? It's been a century at least since it's battery was last changed. Good workmanship, I guess.

With my new light source, I can move quicker without fear of tripping. In no time I come across the door she told me about. It doesn't just have one lock, it has a truly excessive number of eight. I knock on it to let the woman know I'm here before beginning to unlock everything. I curse at the chained ones and the last one that takes me five minutes to figure out. Whatever used to be behind this door must've been pretty important.

I try to push the door open but it won't budge. I glance at the side of it, groaning when I realize there's another lock. But it's not on this side, so it must be on the woman's. This door is too thick for the sound of my voice to go through, and I really don't feel like climbing out and climbing in again. Knocking might get through, but I don't exactly know Morse Code. If I could find a small stick or something... I mean it does have a thing on this side, but I don't have the key to it.

I shine the flashlight on the ground, but the only thing that might work is a couple small bones that look like it came from a rat or something. I pick up the two that look the most sturdy and least disgusting. I slide them into the lock, silently berating myself for never learning this. I mean, on the Ark I'm considered a criminal. If I weren't always in solitary then I might've learned how to do this. It takes me longer than I care to admit until I hear that satisfying ca-chunk.

Resisting the urge to let out a victorious cheer, I push the door open. Of course it's a heavy one and by the time I have it open I'm panting.

The woman is sitting in the middle of the hole (really, it's more in the shape of a crater with really steep slopes), and she looks at me in surprise.

"I did not think you would be able to open the door. It has been over an hour and your friend up there is very concerned, to say the least."

Huh, I didn't think I took that long. "Don't worry, I'm okay!" I shout up to Lexa. I can practically hear her sigh of relief.

"I could hear her trying to get up to follow you and then groaning in pain." The woman elaborates.
"After her fourth attempt in less than ten minutes, I yelled at her until she stopped. What happened to her, by the way?"

"She got hit by Pauna and then hit a tree. She'll have some nasty bruises and be sore for a while, but other than that she'll be okay."

"That must hurt. And how do we get out of here? I am not sure how mobile I am with a twisted ankle."

I crouch down beside her, examining her ankle. "It doesn't look too bad, it's just twisted in a painful way. It'll take about another week before you fully recover, and after that you'll have your full range of motion."

"Mochof (thank you)."

"Pro (you're welcome). I can help you get up. Just try to keep your weight off of your bad ankle."

I hold out my hand and she takes it, using me to pull herself up. I make her wrap an arm around me to keep her sturdy while she walks with one foot. In other words, she hops with me for support toward the door. She stops just inside of it, the shape of our bodies blocking out most of the natural light. I'm mainly relieved we fit side by side in the tunnel.

"It is dark. How are we supposed to see where we are going?" With my free hand, I turn on the flashlight. "What kind of torch is that?"

"It's not a torch, there's no fire. It's... I don't know the word in Trigedasleng for this, but it's technology."

The woman nods understandingly, and we begin moving forward again. I'll have to ask for her name after we get out of this. We reach the ladder quicker than I thought we would.

"Can you climb with one leg?" I ask worriedly.

"Sha. I have good arms, I can pull myself up. Are there any of them that are not strong?"

She must be referring to the ladder rungs. "No, they all were sturdy enough for my weight."

The trip back takes less time than I ever would've expected. She climbs faster than I thought she would, even quicker than me. It's almost comical to see her hop up the ladder, using her arms to stay on. Though I'm really glad she didn't fall because she went first, so she'd fall on me.

It's nice to be back out in the sunlight, and I'm glad to see that Lexa's right where I left her. Her face brightens when she sees me, and she gets up despite the obvious pain the movements cause her.

"Clarke." Lexa breaths out my name, only focused on me.

After making sure the woman can stand on her own, I go over to Lexa and give her a hug, knowing she needs it after being worried about me for so long. Only after I pull away, staying right by her side, does Lexa look at the woman. Her mouth drops open slightly, her eyes going wide in shock.

The woman looks at her too, seeming just as surprised. "Strisis (little sister)."

"Luna."
Ooh, bet you didn't see that coming. Seriously, I love all your theories and how some of you were convinced that it was going to be Costia coming back from the dead to win over Lexa again. I wouldn't do that, Lexa and Clarke's awkward shy pining is going to keep them from admitting and acting on their feelings for long enough.

And this, Lexa and Luna being sisters, is something I randomly came up with but now I absolutely love the idea! I mean, even their names sound like they're siblings "Lexa and Luna". Plus, they both want peace and the best for their people, and now that I think about it they actually look pretty similar. They both even have the wild curly mess of hair, though Lexa tames it with braids. And I'm not going to do what Jason Rottenegg did and make Luna be "stronger than Lexa and the true Heda" or whatever because no.

Thank you all for your amazing comments and for reading! Stay awesome!
"Strisis (little sister)."

"Luna."

Hang on. Sisters? Knowing Lexa wouldn't like facing her sister after what seems like a long time sitting on the ground. I help Lexa up and she stays close to me (which I don't mind in the least, it's just surprising). They stare at each other, looking equally surprised.

Unable to hear the silence for any longer, I break it. "So you two are sisters?"

"Sha." Lexa confirms quietly. "Luna, I have not seen you since the Conclave. You have always sent another when I have called a meeting with the clan leaders."

"I did not think you would want to see me again." Luna admits.

I'm kind of lost. Maybe they'll give me clues or something as they talk. Or not. Maybe I'll just have to ask Lexa later.

"Of course I do. You may have run, but you are my sister," Lexa says.

Luna takes a deep breath and gives her a sad smile. "I was right, you know. You are a great Heda, better than I ever could have been. Forgive me?"

"You are already forgiven." Lexa smiles at her and they grasp each other's forearms.

There's a loud boom in the distance that makes us all jump and draw our swords (I didn't even notice Luna has one). I notice the dark clouds in the distance heading our way.

"It was just thunder," I tell them, watching the sky get darker with every minute that passes. "We need to head back to the cave if we don't want to get soaked."

"Sha." Lexa agrees, but then glances at the dead Pauna. "We should bring it back to the village. Its meat could feed everyone for an entire day."

I frown at that. "How are we supposed to-"

I'm cut off by Lexa whistling. I hear something trampling the undergrowth and turn to face it, my sword still drawn. I let out a sigh of relief when I see the horses running towards us.

Lexa's gallops until it hits the edge of the bones surrounding the Pauna's camp. It rears up as it stops, its ears flicking backward as it huffs.

Lexa clicks her tongue, "It's safe."

The horses seem reassured by her words (do horses understand English or are they just responding to the tone of her voice?) and walk towards us. I'm glad Lexa made us put the saddles and everything we need to ride on them earlier today. Lexa's horse has a bunch of rope stored in its saddle's pouch.
Lexa takes it out and hands part of it to Luna. Apparently understanding exactly what she has in mind, Luna begins hopping and together they wrap up the Pauna. They attach the other end to the horses' special harnesses that I didn't know the purpose of until now. There's another loud boom and Lexa calms the horses after it with the soothing sound of her voice.

"Luna, Clarke, get on the horses. We need to get going." Lexa orders.

"No." Lexa raises her eyebrows at me, so I elaborate. "The two of you are both injured, so you get on the horses. I can walk alongside you." She still doesn't seem completely convinced. "The horses will be going slow since they'll be dragging such a large thing."

"Very well. Stay close to us, but be careful not to get your feet stepped on by the horses." Lexa says and then her voice quiets and softens. "Luna and I can explain our history when we get to the cave."

Going back feels longer than it probably is because halfway through, it starts sprinkling. Which I don't mind, but I'll have to wring out my hair when we get back (it's truly amazing how much water my hair can store). Then, seemingly out of nowhere, it starts pouring.

I groan and hope that Lexa will let us build a bigger fire this time because I don't feel like freezing to death. I hear something behind me and turn to look. There's one of those creepy giant rabbits on top of the Pauna for some reason. I fall back and try to surprise it, wrapping my arms around it. It squirms and I curse as it bites my arm before I kill it.

The horses don't need to pull any more weight, so I pick it up off the Pauna and begin carrying it. Which I regret immediately because the little floater is a lot heavier than I expected. Oh well, we should be close to getting back by now.

I keep trudging on, noticing that every once in a while Lexa will turn around and make sure I'm still here, despite the fact I can see her wince in pain every time she does. Other than that, the rest of the way goes uneventful and relatively fast.

I let out a loud sigh of relief that I think makes Luna chuckle when we get to the cave. I set down the rabbit next to the campfire and stretch my tired arms. Luna and Lexa take everything off the horses and lead them to graze. To be honest, it's really impressive what Luna can do despite the fact that she's hopping everywhere and standing on one leg. She has really good balance.

I take out my braids and run my hands through my hair to get rid of any tangles, watching some of the water stuck in my hair drop to the ground. I wring out most of the rest, knowing from experience that it's impossible to get all of it.

Lexa brings over the extra firewood and gets to working on starting a fire. Luna compliments me on the rabbit I caught and takes it over to a corner of the cave and begins skinning it.

We work in silence (well, they work. I'm kind of worn out after the hectic mess that was today) until Luna's find prepping the rabbit and brings it over. The smell of cooking meat fills the cave.

"You want to hear what happened with Luna and I?" Lexa asks me.

"As long as you're both okay with it."

Luna and Lexa look at each other for a moment and nod.
I can't wait to figure out their history! It'll probably be similar to the canon one, but not quite. Thank you for reading and stay awesome!
"Luna and I are true sisters, we share the same parents." Lexa begins. "Having more than one Nightblood in one family is rare, and having more than one in a generation is unheard of. Our parents were supportive, but it crushed them. They had me when they found out Luna is a Nightblood and was taken to Polis."

"I was only able to see her for her first week before I had to leave." Luna murmurs.

"When I came of age and was tested for the Nightblood, everyone present thought it was a trick. So they checked and cut me in multiple other places to make sure I was not somehow faking it."

"Wait. Sorry, coming of age?" I ask.

"Sha. At the age of six every child is tested for the Nightblood. It is a huge ceremony." Luna provides.

They don't seem to think anything of it but six? At the age of six they are bled to see if their blood's black? And with Lexa they didn't just cut her once?

"It may seem harsh but it is our way." Lexa says softly, apparently seeing the shock and horror in my expression. "The next day I was sent to Polis. Usually Nightbloods have a longer period of time to pack and say their goodbyes, but my case was so unusual they wanted to get me to the safety of the capital as soon as they could. It was only my parents begging that let me spend one last night with them."

"Safety? Why wouldn't you be safe outside Polis?" I question.

"Our people believe that when you kill someone, you gain their power." Luna answers. "Killing a Nightblood is forbidden and punishable by death. But some believe that if you are not caught and killed, you are imbued with the partial strength of the Commander."

"Has anyone gotten away with it?" I wonder aloud.

"Not since I became Heda. I have set up a group of elite trackers to solve any murder of a Natblida (Nightblood). They have sometimes investigated disappearances and such. There has not been a murder of a Natblida since it is well known that one of my friends as a child was killed for this. I take any death personally."

I have a feeling she's talking about more than just the Natblidas.

"The rest of our story?" Luna nudges Lexa when she stares off at a cave wall for too long.

She gives me an apologetic smile before she continues. "Now you know that Anya had been teaching me for years by the time I was taken to Polis. Anya finally accepted a position as General that she had been denying for years to stay close to me. She was allowed to continue training me and a few other Natblidas. She chose to train Luna and I. I was still her main focus, her Seken (Second) but spent some extra time training Luna as well. By then Luna was twelve and twice as good as I was, so she soon found another teacher who could focus all of their time training her. Everything went well for almost five years. Luna and I had established ourselves as the best of the
Natblidas, excelling at every task given to us. That year, the Heda died. She was killed in battle, defending her home clan against an invading force. A new one has to be chosen, so the Conclave was set for a week after the news of her death."

"What's a Conclave?"

"It is how the next Heda is chosen. Basically, all of the Natblidas are put in an arena to fight to the death. The last one alive is the next Heda." Luna explains, chuckling at my horrified expression.

"Hang on, then how did you both survive?"

"Luna forfeited." Lexa says as Luna begins passing out cooked pieces of rabbit for us to eat. "Well, it is impossible to forfeit the Conclave, so she did the next best thing and vanished. Many tried to find her, but she always was good at hiding. I became Heda, and she did not resurface until many years later. She was in Floukru (Boat People) the whole time, rising through the ranks and only revealing who she really is when she was being considered to become the next clan leader. The people were more than happy to have her as a leader, a Nightblood and sister to the Heda. Once Titus found out Luna was alive, he ordered me to send assassins after her, but I refused."

Luna scoffs, "Titus always did have a pole up his ass."

Lexa purses her lips, but it's the way she does when she's trying not to smile or laugh. "Though Luna is the leader of Floukru, she has never been to a meeting with all the clans. She always sent another in her place, like I mentioned earlier. I have not seen her since the Conclave." Lexa turns her attention to Luna. "You never did explain why you disappeared."

"You were the best choice." Luna says like that's supposed to explain everything. "I love our people, but I fear death too much to be a good Heda. Even back then, I knew that if I were put in a situation where I had to choose between my life and the lives of some of our people, I would choose to live. Lexa, you have no fear of death. You never have truly feared your own death. We both have visions of peace, but you were and are strong enough to put that before your life. And that is exactly the kind of Heda our people need. Even if I stayed, I would not have been Heda. You were and continue to be a better fighter than I could ever dream of being."

"So why are you here now? You could spend the rest of your life staying in Floukru and avoiding seeing me." Lexa asks softly, setting down her empty plate.

Chapter End Notes

Next, we'll find out why exactly Luna's here! Wow, that was a lot of dialogue. Also, I just noticed we hit 20,000 views on here, which is insane and incredible! Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
"So why are you here now? You could spend the rest of your life staying in Floukru and avoiding seeing me."

"I saw something come down from the sky and heard you were interested in it. Then I heard that you were going personally to check it out." Luna gives Lexa a light hearted smack to the back of the head. "Branwoda (fool). That, and one other thing. Something is changing, and will continue to change. The balance of the world is shifting."

"How do you know?" Lexa asks.

"Since going to Floukru, I have become... I do not know the proper Gonaslang word for this. In tune, perhaps? With the world. The elders of the clan have confirmed it."

Something's changing? Big enough to shift the balance of the world? Could it be that the people of the Ark will come down here? I already know they'll be sending down a bunch of delinquents... It wouldn't be so hard to imagine them sending everyone down.

"Do you know what'll happen?" I ask, hoping she'll deny my fear. It's not that I'm hoping the people of the Ark will die in space, I just don't want them to screw up Earth like they screwed up the Ark.

"No. We will just have to wait and see, and fight to survive." Luna says, her voice quiet but strong and determined. We're all silent for a moment before she breaks it. "What did come down from space? Is that why the two of you are out here?"

"No, we came here to hunt the Pauna." Lexa says, giving me a look that tells me she wants me to tell Luna about me falling from space.

"Uh, and I'm the thing that fell from the sky."

Luna looks at me in confusion. "You? A fall from that height would turn anyone into a red puddle on the ground."

"If it were just me, yeah. I fell in a special pod made of metal that was made so I could survive the fall."

"What did you fall from?" Luna asks, leaning forward.

"There's a giant ship up there called the Ark." I begin and am cut off by Luna's next question. If it were anyone else I might be annoyed, but her enthusiasm and curiosity reminds me of Lexa when we first met. I guess they really are related, as if I had any doubt.

"A ship? As in boat?"

"No, it's like a giant metal city that's self dependent." I respond. With an idea, I get up and go over to my furs. I pull out my sketchbook and bring it over. "When I say metal, I mean everything's made of metal."
I begin a quick rough sketch of the exterior of the Ark. I didn't see it when I was in the pod (Earth was too beautiful for me to look away), but I saw drawings of it a lot before I was locked up. Dad was an engineer, so he kept a bunch of pictures of the exterior. The home screen on the television and his tablet was a rotating 3D image of it. It's not the best, and I know it'll bug me enough that I'll finish it later, but I do have a rough sketch. I show it to Luna and Lexa.

"That's what the outside looks like. It's huge and has a little over a thousand people. I think. I'm not sure about the population, but I know there's a bunch of people. The Ark is made up of twelve smaller stations all put together into one. There used to be thirteen, but it was blown out of the sky."

"And all of these people are up there now? That is up in the sky?" Luna questions, sounding awed.

"Yeah, it is. But it might not be for much longer. This might be the shift you were talking about. " That gets both of their attention. Lexa's heard this, but a refresher might be good. "The Ark is dying. The oxygen supply system is failing catastrophically and there's nothing anyone can do to stop it. Soon, they're going to be sending down a hundred delinquents, all of them kids under 18 who've committed a crime, to see if Earth is survivable. After that, they might send everyone down."

Luna jumps up, pulling out a dagger (where the heck was she even hiding that?) and points it at me. I stay down, not wanting to be accidentally (or purposefully) cut by it. "So you were sent ahead? As a spy?"

Lexa gets in front of me, "Put it down."

"Lexa-" Luna begins.

"Put. It. Down."

I'm glad I'm behind her, because Luna's slightly paler face is telling me that Lexa's glaring at her. Luna sighs and sheaths her dagger.

"Why are you defending her?"

"Hear her out. Then you will know." Lexa says before sitting back down next to me. Luna sits again, eyeing me warily.

"The problem with the oxygen was something my dad discovered. He wanted to tell everyone. He had faith that they wouldn't riot, but do everything they could to help. I agreed with him. But the Council, including my mother, did not. Oh, the Council is a group of people all representing a larger group of people. It has a representative from Farming, Medicine, the Guard, and others. My mom is the best surgeon on the Ark, and representative for the Healers. The Council decided against informing everyone, but Dad kept working on his plan. They found out, and they killed him. Tossed him into space like he was nothing. They learned I was helping him, and put me in jail. I was too young to be sentenced to death. I was locked up in the Sky Box alone for a year when my mother came and broke me out. The Council was going to vote on me being executed earlier. She'd been working with a mechanic to fix up an old escape pod and told me about the hundred before sending me off. And then I landed here."

"Your people are harsh." Luna comments.

I give them a sad smile. "I haven't really considered them to be my people for a while. But yeah, they are. They always told us that was how we'd all survive and how the human race would go on,"
but little did they know you all were down here surviving too."

Chapter End Notes

Another chapter with a lot of dialogue... Next chapter will probably have a bit more action! Thank you all for reading and your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"Will you come with us back to TonDC?" Lexa asks Luna.

"Sha."

Lexa nods, a hint of a smile playing on her lips. "We will leave tomorrow morning."

"Can we stay here for another day?" I say.

"We can," Lexa confirms. "But why?"

"For one, it'll be easier on both of your injuries. And we can spend tomorrow building something to transport the Pauna on to minimize it's contact with the ground."

"That is a good idea." Luna concedes. "The meat will be less likely to be tainted that way."

"Very well. We will all work on building it tomorrow." Lexa says.

"But you two are injured so you're limited as to what you can do. Luna's limited to doing what she can on one leg. Lexa, you're limited to doing anything that won't hurt your back, so you're going to be tying everything together."

"But-" Lexa starts.

"No buts." I cut her off, giving her a stern look. "It's an important job."

Lexa sighs defeatedly and nods. "Very well. We should get some rest. Luna, you can take some furs from Clarke and I to keep you warm."

Luna takes some furs from both of us, but is sure to leave us enough. She thanks us and then goes right to sleep, starting snoring almost instantly after curling up under them.

"Good night, Clarke." Lexa says softly, though I doubt anything would wake Luna up if her loud snores don't.

"Reshop (good night), Lexa." I murmur back, getting into my bed.

Once underneath the furs, I take off my armor and lay it out beside me along with my weapons. Down to my undergarments, I stifle a yawn and fall asleep.

———

I wake up to the smell of cooking meat. Letting out a pleased hum, I stretch out my body (though I am careful to keep myself under the furs because I am nearly naked).

Luna and Lexa have their backs to me, and it seems like they're cooking together. They're talking quietly, probably so they won't wake me up and laughing. It's nice to see them happy and working together. It's obvious that they've both missed each other.

Deciding to test my luck, I get out from underneath the furs and dress quickly, putting on my bra
and my armor. Of course Lexa hears me moving around and turns to look. I do have pants and a bra on, but I'm in the middle of putting on my shirt when she looks. Lexa's face flushes and she turns back around quickly. The little squeak she lets out when she realizes that I'm putting on my clothes is the most adorable thing I've ever heard.

Chuckling quietly to myself, I put on the rest of my armor and attach my weapons with ease. When I'm done, I make my way over to them. Lexa's still blushing, but Luna's so focused on whatever delicious thing she's cooking that she hasn't even noticed.

When I reach them, Lexa turns to me. "Moba (sorry), Clarke. I did not know you were putting on clothes."

"It's fine." I reassure, giving her a smile that makes her automatically smile, too. Though she still seems apologetic. "I promise, I'm not mad or anything."

Lexa nods and Luna looks up at us. "Strisis (little sister), the food is ready."

"Mochof (thank you)." Lexa responds.

We eat and then get to work. Luna and I both find logs that are big enough for Lexa to tie together. I have allowed Lexa to have one extra job, which is to find more rope or rope-like things because we don't have enough. I do urge her not to overexert herself, and I hope she listens to that. I don't want the ride back to be more painful for her.

After Luna and I exhaust the nearby forest of all fallen logs, we decide to start cutting down a few smaller trees. I don't want to do it with a sword, so Luna builds an ax. From scratch. While being able to only put pressure on one foot. To say the least, it was yet another impressive feat.

I make Luna and Lexa stop working a few times for lunch or a snack or just for a break.

When everyone's satisfied with the amount of wood we have, Luna and I help Lexa tie everything together. After we finish it Lexa, being her commanding and perfectionist self, goes over and checks every single inch of rope to make sure it's done right. Luna and I watch her the entire time, until the sun sets. Then Luna heads into the cave, saying something about cooking us all dinner. I stay with Lexa, glad that she's on the last section. Satisfied, she nods to herself and stands up.

"How do we get Pauna on there?" I ask.

"We're going to need to lift the Pauna onto it." Lexa murmurs. "And do not worry, Clarke, I already know you will not allow me to do that. You and Luna should be enough to lift it."

"Do we want to do that now or tomorrow morning?" I ask.

"Tonight. We should bring the Pauna as close to it as we can so you will not have to carry it far." Lexa muses. "We can do it before or after food."

"I would prefer to do it before." Luna says from behind Lexa, making us both jump. Damn, she's sneaky.

"Very well. The horses can pull the Pauna over here and then you two can do the rest." Lexa states, moving back into the cave.

Luna and Lexa get the horses to pull the Pauna over to the raft thing we've built. Luna and I lift the Pauna and pull it. It's slow and extremely difficult.
"It would be easier if I put down my other foot." Luna huffs as we stop after five measly minutes for a break. We moved it maybe a foot.

I kneel down and check her ankle again. "It should be okay to walk and stand on, but putting it down while we lift an extremely heavy thing is out of the question."

"Fine." Luna grumbles, but seems happy to put her foot down.

"I could help." Lexa offers. Seeing my expression, she hurriedly continues. "Check me over, I should be okay."

I do, and sigh. "Okay, you can do this but you need to be careful. And I have one condition. You and Luna ride the horses tomorrow."

They both open their mouths to complain, but seem to think the better of it and nod.

"You chose a stubborn one, strisis (little sister)."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, they're finishing putting the Pauna on their raft thingy and heading back to TonDC. And even Luna picks up on Lexa and Clarke's chemistry... Thank you all for reading and your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
With Lexa's help, it doesn't take long until we get the Pauna up on it. The three of us are starving by that point after exerting so much energy, so Luna walks back to the cave before Lexa and I to get a head start on cooking.

We're getting the horses back to the Pauna to pull it back into the cave so the other hungry animals won't get to it.

"What do you think Luna meant earlier by saying 'you chose a stubborn one'?" I ask Lexa as we lead the horses.

Not taking her eyes off of them, she responds. "Perhaps she thinks our relationship is romantic."

I nearly trip over a pebble after hearing that. I stare wide-eyed at Lexa for a moment before remembering what we're doing and turning my attention back to the horses, encouraging them with a click of my tongue.

Once Lexa and I are satisfied that the Pauna is in far enough, we unhook the raft thing from the horses. They whinny happily, barely managing to stay still as we take everything off of them. As soon as we're done, they trot over to the grass near the entrance and start grazing.

"Come on, you two. The food is nearly done." Luna calls.

Lexa and I head over and sit on the ground near where she's cooking.

"Mochof (thank you)." I say as she hands me a plate of berries and steaming meat.

We eat in silence for a while, the only sounds coming from the horses, outside, and the water. After we finish, stay there, all of us tired but not motivated enough to get up and go to our pelts.

"Why Clarke?" Luna asks after a while, breaking the quiet. Lexa and I turn to her. "Out of everyone, why did you bring Clarke with you to kill the Pauna?"

"I trust her. She has proven herself to be a good warrior." Lexa states.

"That may be true, but that cannot be the only reason. Surely there were more experienced and skilled warriors you trust to go with you."

"Clarke wanted to come. She had just saved a young boy from dying. If she were not there to heal him, he would have died from the wounds Pauna inflicted."

Luna's eyebrow raises. "Not even Nyko could have saved him? Was he not there?"

"He was there, but to save the boy with our technology and knowledge was impossible. Clarke and I were going to go on a hunting trip the next day, and after saving the boy she told me that we were going to hunt the Pauna."

"And you agreed?" Luna sounds both exasperated and shocked.

"No, not at first. But Clarke is very good at arguing. That is one of the reasons she is going to be
my advisor." Lexa gives me a smile and she's so cute I can't help returning it.

Luna chokes on a piece of meat, coughing and waving off our concern. "She is going to become your advisor? You trust her that much already?"

Lexa frowns as if she's irritated by Luna's words. "Sha, I do. She has already proven herself multiple times and has saved my life from the Pauna."

"Yes, but you have known her for how long?"

"Long enough." Lexa practically growls, making Luna calm down immediately and making me shiver. "Do not question this decision."

"Apologies, Lexa, I did not mean to offend you." Lexa nods at Luna's words, and she continues. "I wanted to make sure you are certain. If she is your advisor, she will have access to everything. Not that I do not trust you, Clarke, I do not trust just anyone with the safety of my strisis (little sister)."

"That's understandable. I'm sure that with enough time around Lexa, I'll be as paranoid as you." I say the last sentence teasingly, relieved when I notice subtle tells that they both noticed I wasn't being serious.

"Rude." Luna scoffs, pushing my shoulder. "I guess she has to be if she is going to have to argue with you."

"She will not always argue with me as my advisor. I am certain I will make some decisions she agrees with." Lexa protests and I purse my lips to stop my smile from getting too big. They're acting like sisters and it's simultaneously adorable and hilarious.

"I am not so sure about that, strisis." Luna says, smirking. "But I know you will definitely need Clarke to tell you when you are wrong. She is not like Titus, she is not afraid of you. He blindly agrees to everything you say unless it contradicts his beliefs. Like what I have heard he tells you about Costia, and love. Which he is wrong about anyways. Essentially, he is useless. If we go to Polis, can I kill him?" Luna asks excitedly. Man, everyone hates this Titus guy. I would feel sorry for him if he didn't sound like such an asshole.

"No. His insight is useful, he knows the twelve clans better than anyone." Lexa responds.

"Except you. Strisis, when we were younger, if you were not training with Anya you were studying books. And when you ran out of books, you started asking travelers about different places and kept record of everything you had learned. You have been to the twelve clans. He has not." Luna argues.

"He is still the Fleimkepa and has served many Hedas before me. I respect his service."

"I do not respect him." Luna mutters before speaking louder. "Clarke would make a better Fleimkepa than Titus."

Lexa frowns and I can see the worry in her expression. "She would have to go through many perilous trials."

"Hey, I'm right here." I say, waving my hand at them. "You'll have to tell me more about this later, Lexa. For now, let's just go to bed. We have a long ride ahead of us."

Luna and Lexa nod. We head to our furs and I find myself falling asleep fast, tired after such an eventful day.
Sorry this is posted later than usual! I was forced into doing lawn work and it took two and a half hours of my time, and I only was half done when I had to start working. Luckily, this shouldn't happen often. The lawn work, preferably never again. Happy Fourth of July, to my fellow Americans who celebrate it! Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
This morning, for whatever reason, I wake up before Luna and Lexa so I cook breakfast for them. When I use some herbs I gathered yesterday along with the logs, the meat I'm cooking smells even better than usual.

Lexa begins moving around more in her furs, so she must be close to waking up. She stretches and her eyes flutter open, yawning. Sleepy Lexa is an adorable sight, but I don't want her to catch me looking at her, so I look away and refocus on preparing us all breakfast.

"What is that smell?" Luna asks quietly.

I jump, not realizing until now that she's not only awake, but right in front of me. I pride myself in the fact that I managed to not let out an undignified scared noise. Float me, she moves so quietly.

"Don't do that!" I gasp out, placing my hand over my racing heart to calm it.

Luna's smirking as she looks from where she was focused on the food to me. "You were busy drooling over my sister, it is not my fault you were not focused on where I am."

"I wasn't drooling," I protest.

"Not literally, no. Yet." She mumbles that last word and I pretend I didn't hear it. "Now what are you making?"

"Breakfast. It'll be done soon."

I hear feet padding over here but focus on making sure the meat isn't overdone.

"That smells amazing." Fuck, that's Lexa's voice. That's Lexa's sleepy 'I just woke up so my voice is husky and incredibly sexy' voice.

"Lexa." Luna says, and it sounds like a warning.

"Hmm?" Lexa hums and I can practically feel where she is, right next to me. It's taking all my willpower not to look.

"Lexa, you forgot something."

I glance over at Lexa to see exactly what she forgot and look away immediately, my face burning. Float me. Just... Float me. She forgot clothes. The universe is being so cruel. She has on underwear and nothing else. Not even a bra or a binding thing that Anya's been trying to get me to use. And if that's not bad enough, her body is perfect. Seriously. She has abs that look like they're tougher than steel. And I get to see her muscular arms and legs in all their glory. Torture, I tell you. Torture. I'm not even going to get started on her boobs that she unwittingly put on display because I don't want to spontaneously combust. I might just need to stand under the cold waterfall for a few hours.

By the time I come back to myself, Luna's watching me with an amused expression and Lexa's out of my eyesight, probably putting on clothes. That was simultaneously the best and worst surprise I've ever gotten.
"Clarke, I think the meat is done." Luna says, unable to keep from laughing. At least she has the decency to laugh quietly.

I sigh and take the meat, putting it on one plate and cutting it into three semi-even pieces. I make sure to give the smallest one to Luna. Little revenges can be so satisfying.

Lexa comes back over, blushing as hard as I'm sure I was when I caught a glimpse of her body. Her beautiful, magnificent... I'm cutting myself off there so I don't drool all over my breakfast.

"Moba (sorry), Clarke. I did not realize I did not have clothes on." Lexa apologizes.

"Don't worry about it, I know you didn't do it on purpose." I give her a smile that I hope is reassuring and then hand her breakfast.

She thanks me and we eat in relative silence. Luna keeps looking between Lexa and then me, looking like she knows something we don't.

Trying to ignore the awkwardness, we get ready to head back to TonDC. Despite Luna and Lexa's continued protesting, they both get onto the horses after the raft thing with the Pauna on it is attached to the horses. Making the journey back is longer and more boring than it was coming until we start getting close to TonDC.

A scout drops down from the trees and begins walking next to me. I'd be afraid if I didn't know the person, but I've met her before. Her dad needed surgery after getting a spear to the abdomen. Aside from getting shish-kabobed, he was actually pretty lucky so he's still alive today.

"Hey, Kira." I greet her. "How's your dad doing?"

"He is doing better, thank you for asking." She responds, grinning at me. "Excuse me, I have to go ahead and let everyone know you and the Heda are back. As well as a guest."

Kira eyes Luna wearily before going up into the trees again and rushing towards TonDC.

"We're getting close." I tell Lexa and Luna.

They both nod, and I make a mental note of how Lexa looks uncomfortable. I'll have to check on her later, it could be her bruises or something bothering her.

I let out a sigh of relief when the gate of TonDC comes into view. My legs are tired after so much walking. The gates open and Anya walks up, waiting at the entrance. Artigas is there too, but he hangs back. Luna and Lexa dismount, letting the guards lead the horses and the Pauna in. I smile at the impressed looks on their faces.

Luna, Lexa, and I walk toward Anya, I suppress the urge to shudder or gulp at the scowl on Anya's face. She strides confidently toward us and punches Lexa and I in the arm. I frown, rubbing my hand over where the bruise is definitely going to form.

"Fools. You were supposed to be back yesterday." Oh, she was worried. Her eyes fix on Luna, widening slightly. "Luna? Why are you here?"

"I will explain it later. I will meet you at your tent after dinner?" Luna asks, sounding hesitant.

Anya nods and then her stern expression softens slightly. "Welcome back, Heda and Clarke. It is good to see you did not die."
That was a fun but unexpected chapter to write... Thank you all for reading and your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
"Welcome back, Heda and Clarke. It is good to see you did not die."

What an amazing way to greet someone. "It's good to see you too, Anya."

Artigas, probably sensing the danger's over, walks up. He's grinning widely and pulls me into a hug. He lets go after a moment, looking nervously over my shoulder toward where Lexa is.

"Congratulations on killing the Pauna. It is good to see that it did not harm you." Artigas says, his smile slightly smaller than it was but still as bright. He's glancing over at Lexa every once in a while. I wonder if she's glaring at him.

"Thanks, Artigas. Lexa and Luna were both slightly hurt, which is why I made them ride the horses."

His smile grows and he lets out a quiet chuckle. "I wondered about that. They are both okay?"

"Yeah, they're going to be fine. I'll be checking on them soon anyways, to make sure."

A hunter I recognize, Shala (she once was teaching kids how to use bows and arrows and was shot in the foot accidentally) comes up to us, smiling wider than I have ever seen her.

"Clarke, Heda. Mochof (thank you) for bringing the Pauna here. It should feed the entire village for a week." Shala says, holding out her arm.

"Pro (you're welcome)." I respond, grasping her forearm. "We tried to minimize its contact with the ground, so hopefully all of the meat is good."

"I will check later, but my first look tells me that almost all of it should be edible. Pardon me, I have a lot of meat to prepare." She nods to me and releases my arm, heading back toward where they took the Pauna.

I turn back to where Lexa and the others are standing. "Luna, Lexa, come with me to my tent. I need to check your injuries."

"I am fine." Luna protests.

"Then I'll check Lexa and then drag you into the Healer's hut. Unless you want to come with us."

Anyas's smirking as Luna grumbles under her breath for a moment before speaking clearly. "Alright."

I begin walking back to my tent, listening to the footsteps behind me to make sure they're coming. And apparently Artigas is heading there with us. I hold the flaps open for Lexa and Luna. Artigas gives me a smile and then stands outside my tent to guard us. I close the flaps behind us and face Luna and Lexa.

"Luna, I'm going to check you first. Take off your shoe and roll up your pants."

Luna follows my instructions, sighing heavily like it pains her to do so. She sits on one of the
chairs. I kneel before her, picking up her foot and touching it in various places, testing her reactions. When I'm satisfied, I stand back up.

"Is it painful to walk?" I ask.

"No."

"Then you're good to go. Don't lift anything heavy for another few days, but other then that you're fine. You can go if you want."

"You are checking on Lexa next. In order to do so, you have to look at her back. Right?"

"Yes." Where's she going with this.

"So you will need her to take her shirt off?"

Oh. I ignore the blush rising to my cheeks. "Yes."

Luna leans back in the chair, grinning smugly. "Then I will stay here."

I let out a quiet sigh. Float me, I have to see Lexa shirtless again. And now I have an excuse to touch her skin. I am going to die mentally many times over before tomorrow morning.

Lexa's turned away from me and takes off her shirt. I clench my jaw to keep it from dropping. Seriously, she's an unreal level of gorgeous. I mean, I'm not even staring at her front side, so I can't even see her abs and boobs and I'm practically drooling.

"Clarke?" Lexa asks, sounding almost nervous.

The familiar way she says my name snaps me out of my trance. Shoot, I was staring at her for a while, wasn't I?

"Yeah." My voice sounds huskier than normal, so I clear my throat, hoping she didn't notice. Judging by Luna's snickers coming from behind me, she noticed. "Sorry, I got distracted."

I move closer, not letting myself trace the outlines of her back muscles. Or her large, really cool looking tattoo that goes down her spine. There are a few bruises that I gently prod, noting how she flinches. Though when I poke an unbruised part of her back, she still flinches. Maybe it's my touch. Or maybe it's just her back muscles twitching, not flinching.

"Does it hurt when you move?" I ask quietly. She takes in a sharp breath, evidently not expecting me to talk while I'm so close to her.

"No." Oh float me, her voice is raspy again. "Though it does hurt when I move too much."

I nod to myself. "Alright, that's normal. Just try not to do anything that'll irritate your bruises. Like lay off training, except for maybe with Anya since she's experienced enough to not hit your back accidentally."

"I will do that," Lexa says. "On one condition. I can train with you, as well."

I frown. "I'm still new to all of this, I could accidentally hurt you."

"You will not." Lexa says confidently.

"I might."
"You will not." Lexa turns around. Oh float me... "I trust you."

"Lexa." Luna says, clearing her throat but I can hear her amusement. I try to keep my eyes on Lexa's, not letting them wander down. "You forgot something. Again."

Lexa glances down and flushes. She turns around again quickly. "Moba (sorry), Clarke." She picks up her shirt and pulls it on.

"It's alright. And fine, I'll train with you as long as we only use the training sticks."

"Very well. I will go talk to Anya and Indra to see if there is anything they need me to do."

With that Lexa gives me one last apologetic smile and leaves. Luna's still sitting on my chair, grinning at me.

"That was more interesting than I thought it would be."

Chapter End Notes

Just a warning: I know next to nothing about medicine or being a doctor, so this is probably very inaccurate. Ahh, thirsty Clarke. :) Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
"That was more interesting than I thought it would be." Luna remarks.

I scowl at her. "Don't you have Anya to go make out with?"

"Make out with?" Luna asks, leaning back in her chair.

"Yeah, as in kiss, smooch. That kind of thing."

Luna doesn't even blush, she just smirks. "I will have you know that portion of our relationship is over. For now. And she told me to go to her tent after dinner. So I can stay here and talk to you."

"Talk to me? Why?"

"You seem like a smart girl, you will figure it out." She pauses for a moment, searching my eyes for something. I sit down, thinking that I might need to for this conversation. "What are your intentions with Lexa?"

What? She's giving me the parent talk/interrogation? "My intentions? Lexa and I aren't dating."

"Yet." Luna says, sounding so confident that it's a fact that it throws me off. "She likes you. I haven't seen her like this ever. Not even with Costia." I'm glad I'm sitting because I can feel my knees go weak at her words. "Costia was her first love, full of youthful ignorance and firsts. It is different with you. I can already see that. Unlike Costia, she does not feel the need to protect you from the world, but instead wants you to stand by her side as you help her bring about the peace she has always dreamed of."

"She could bring peace all on her own." I say quietly. "I'm not sure why she wants me of all people to be by her side."

"You are smart, and you know technology and medicine better than anyone I have met. She trusts you already, which seems reckless to me. But perhaps she is right to trust you. You are not afraid of her, which is a trait that very few have. You are not afraid to defy her or call her out when you think she is wrong. That is an even rarer trait. Not to mention you are a good fighter and hunter. And you are as fond of you as she is fond of you."

She's fond of me? I've noticed she's around me pretty often... "I don't think she likes me quite that much."

Luna snorts. "Of course she does. Now, tell me. What are your intentions with Lexa?"

Dang, I was hoping she forgot about that because I really don't know what to say. Plus, this is kind of weird to me. I mean, usually it's a parent that gives this talk, and Luna is Lexa's sister.

"She has a good vision for the future, from what I've seen. She wants peace for all her people, which is an admirable goal. I want to help her achieve that in any way I can."

"That is good, but not what I meant." Luna says, leaning forward and placing her arms on the table.

"What did you mean?"
"It is obvious that you are attracted to her. Whether it is just physical or more, you should let her know. She is patient. She will wait forever for you to give her some signal that maybe you are interested in her. What I meant is what kind of relationship do you want with her?"

"Oh. Uh, I don't know. I'd like to date her, you know, be her girlfriend but if she doesn't want that then I'll settle for less."

Artigas opens the flaps to the tent, giving me a sheepish smile. "Sorry to interrupt, but it is almost dinner time. There is a small table set up for the both of you to sit at with the others. Everything will be ready in about five minutes." With that, he closes the flaps behind him, leaving Luna and I alone again.

"You are a fool." Luna huffs.

"What?" I ask, frowning. Where did that come from? Or is she like Anya with her insults?

"Talk to Lexa." Luna says, and it sounds like an order. She gives me a stern look (that almost completely disguised the amusement in her eyes) before walking out of my tent.

I sigh and rest my head on my hand. She wants me to tell Lexa that I like her, right? I'm not misunderstanding our conversation, hopefully. It's almost odd how Luna wants Lexa and I to get together. It's almost like she... What's that Old Earth word? Ah. It's almost like she ships us.

And I will tell her. Eventually. I'm just not ready yet.

I've never dated anyone before. Heck, I've never wanted to date someone. Not until Lexa. It's an entirely new feeling that's simultaneously exciting and terrifying.

I take a deep breath to steady my nerves and then walk outside. Artigas falls in step behind me, quietly telling me where to go to get to the table. It's right next to Lexa's tent. Anya and Luna are already there and are staring at each other. It's kind of intense to look at them, so I sit down where Artigas points me, next to the head of the table.

Luna and Anya don't even seem to notice that I'm here, they're too focused on each other. It's now that I remember that Luna said they used to be together. Well, that's what I got out of her saying that they used to make out. Because it certainly looks like they want to devour each other. And to be honest, it's kind of scary to see anything other than disinterest or anger or amusement on Anya's face, so I look away.

There's footsteps and Lexa walks out of her tent. She's back in her full armor looking as intimidating and beautiful as ever. Her face is carefully composed, but there's still a softness to her expression as she nods to me in greeting. She sits at the head of the table, right next to me. Indra comes a moment later, bowing her head in respect to Lexa. Instead of looking at me with wary eyes or thinly veiled mistrust, I think there's a glimmer of respect as Indra looks at me.

She turns to Lexa. "Heda, there is a meeting in Polis in one week."

Lexa nods, "I just remembered that earlier. Clarke, would you accompany me to Polis?"

Chapter End Notes

Another kind of cliff hanger! And I'm proud to announce that I have a vague plan for
the next few chapters! Thanks for reading and for leaving your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"Clarke, would you accompany me to Polis?" Lexa asks.

I'm proud of myself for not completely blanching at the suddenness of it, but I can't keep the surprise off my face.

"Polis? As in the capital?"

"Sha (yes)." Lexa confirms, and I can tell by the look in her eyes that if I say no then she won't force me to go.

It's not easy to deny her anything, and it doesn't sound too bad if I go. Plus, I don't know how long this meeting will take, or how long she'd have to be away. I mean, I know I haven't known Lexa that long, but I'd definitely miss her.

"Yeah, I'll go. But why do you want me to come?"

"It is the largest city in the twelve clans and the only place where people from all different clans are guaranteed to live in peace. It is beautiful, and I think you would like it. But that is not the only reason, of course. You are my advisor now, and this would be a great opportunity to learn more about the different clans and their leaders. And I am certain that eventually the others will want to know about the girl who fell from the sky. It is completely up to you if and when you want to reveal that you are her. It is in one week, so we will need to leave in two days. Tomorrow, I will tell you some basic things you should know at the meeting."

"Alright." I nod, taking all of that in.

"We can talk about this more after we have slept. If it is okay with you, I will come get you an hour after sunrise." Lexa offers.

"That's fine, but if I'm still asleep don't wake me up like Anya does." I joke, wondering if she gets it.

Lexa chuckles, a smile lighting up her face. Float me, I can never get over just how incredibly gorgeous she is. "Does she still pour water?"

"Yeah, and I've had her sit on me too."

"You would not get up with the water." Anya points out.

I turn toward her, barely stop myself from jumping at the sound of her voice. I completely forgot that other people are here besides Lexa and I.

"That doesn't mean you have to sit on me." I retort, loving how I can hear Lexa's stifled laughter.

"I did not have to, it was just a bonus. And it worked." Anya points out smugly.

I huff and roll my eyes playfully, pretending not to hear Luna snickering and telling Anya "good job". I don't really care about the sitting anymore. It was a while ago, and it's Anya. She could kick my butt without breaking a sweat.
Indra seems almost amused by what's going on, but eats without commenting on anything else. Her eating reminds me that there's food in front of me to fill my grumbling stomach.

I start chewing on the meat, noting immediately that the portions are slightly larger than normal. And the meat's tougher than anything I've ever had. Despite that, it's surprisingly good.

Once I swallow my bite, I ask Lexa. "Is this the Pauna we caught?"

"Sha. It is better tasting than I expected." Lexa responds.

"Heda, how did you kill the Pauna?" Indra asks, setting down her fork and knife. She leans slightly forward.

"It was actually Clarke who killed it." Lexa says.

"Really?" Luna asks.

"You were there." Anya points out.

"I was in a hole." Luna grumbles, making Anya raise an eyebrow, but she doesn't ask any further questions.

Seeing that the disruption is over, Lexa continues. "We found its lair, but it was not there at first. Then, it came out of the forest surrounding the clearing and ran at us. Clarke fired arrow after arrow, but it did not even flinch. We had to leap out of the way to avoid being crushed and then while it was down, I started trying to cut through its thick skin with my swords with minimal results. Angered and only slightly weakened, it hit me with its arm. I go flying with the force of it and hit a tree. Then, I was dazed with only one sword and too dizzy to get up when it charges it at me. To save my life, Clarke fired arrows at it until she had only one left so it turns its attention to her. It started coming towards her and she aimed. I thought she was going to get killed, but she shot it right in the eye, killing it."

I had no idea that Lexa's story telling skills are so amazing. Even I'm on the edge of my seat while she's telling it, and I was there.

"You did good, Skai girl." Indra says gruffly and my eyes widen. I've never had her give me anything resembling a compliment before.

"Mochof (thank you)." I say. Indra nods and then continues eating.

"Why were you in the hole?" Anya asks Luna.

I start eating again, but listen because I don't remember her explaining that to Lexa and me.

"I was traveling at night and was trying to get to where I saw Clarke crash down. I had nothing for light, and only a stick to help me feel what was in front of me. I thought the hole was a hill or a valley, so I started climbing down it and fell. My ankle gave out when I tried standing up so I decided to stay there until morning so I could figure out where to go from there."

"Is your ankle okay?" Anya asks, frowning and glancing down.

"Yes, it is. Clarke has looked over it a few times. As long as I do not lift anything heavy, I should recover fully in a week." Anya nods at Luna's words, relaxing slightly.

Do they still like each other? I mean, they don't seem that different in age but it must've been a few
years since they've seen each other after Luna ran away to the Floukru.

"The next morning, I woke up to see a Pauna staring down at me. I panicked and tried to get away, but that did not end well with my twisted ankle. It just looked at me for a bit and then left. Then, I realized I was in a hole with a door, but it was locked and too far for me to move on uneven ground. I resigned myself to die there, but Clarke got me out."

"Lexa did not help?" Anya asks, surprised.

"She tried but was in a lot of pain. At that time, we did not know who the other person was. Lexa was trying to go after Clarke, but whenever she tried she would groan in pain so I had to yell at her to stop."

We stay there for a little while longer after Luna finishes her story, but I'm exhausted so I turn in first. Lexa bids everyone else goodnight too, and walks me to my tent.

"Goodnight, Lexa." I murmur shyly.

"Goodnight, Clarke. I will see you in the morning." Lexa responds, giving me a small smile.

Ignoring how fast my heart is beating, I lean in and kiss her cheek before going inside my tent.

Chapter End Notes

Some of you last chapter weren't a fan of Clarke using the word "ship", which is understandable. I just find it hilarious because how would Clarke know that? Did she read Fanfiction too? Was there a class on Old Earth culture and slang?

Anyways... What to you think about Luna and Anya? Do you like them as a possible future couple, or do you think their romance is over forever? And go Clarke, kissing Lexa on the cheek! Thank you all for reading and for your incredibly amazing comments! Stay awesome!
I wake up slowly, taking in a deep breath. I can hear movement coming from outside my tent. There's the sound of a familiar voice talking to Artigas, who has insisted on guarding me every morning as soon as he wakes up. That's Lexa's voice.

Wait, there's something I'm supposed to remember about yesterday having to do with her. It's not just the fact that we're going to be leaving for Polis tomorrow. It's not that she's waking me up this morning. Oh. Oh float me. I kissed her. I mean, not on the lips but still. I didn't even give her time to properly respond before I fled.

The sound of my tent's flaps opening snaps me out of my panic but I keep my eyes closed. I'm both curious to how she'll wake me up and how she'll respond to yesterday, or if she'll even mention it.

Lexa's footsteps move closer to me until she's right next to my bed. "Clarke." She says softly. I don't respond and she lets out a breath. "You are so different than anyone I have ever met." She murmurs, thinking I'm asleep. "You have brought emotions to the surface that I thought were buried. You are not just unique because you fell from the sky. Though you have only been down here a relatively short time, you have learned so much. You already know how to fight better than some of my most experienced warriors. You have learned much about the clans and how to speak our language. It is beyond impressive how much you have learned, as well as how much you have done for my people. Every day since I have arrived in TonDC, a person has come up to me and told me what you have done for them and their family. You have helped so many and saved so many others. You are a wonder to watch. You are so strong, so brave, so willing to help others. You hold to your opinions and are not afraid to contradict me. Titus will not like you." She chuckles. "He does not like anyone who 'distracts' me or will argue with me. Or him. And I know I should probably tell you this when you are awake. But it is so much easier to speak to you when I am not entranced by your beautiful blue eyes."

I shift in the bed, making her pause. Her kind words have brought years to my eyes, but I can't help but to focus on that last sentence. She thinks I'm beautiful. Well, at least my eyes. But that's something I never thought I'd hear, not from Lexa.

"Clarke?" She asks softly. "Are you awake? Clarke?"

I slowly open my eyes, using the sleep crust around them as an excuse to wipe away my tears. I yawn, and start stretching out my limbs. Lexa flushes for some reason, and keeps her eyes on my face. Is it because I groaned a couple times when I stretched? At the cold air on some of my body, I realize that I'm in nothing more than my underwear and the furs aren't covering everything. I blush an even deeper red than Lexa, pulling the furs back into place.

"Good morning, Clarke." Lexa murmurs, making me look up at her face. The gentle expression on her face makes my breath catch.

"Good morning." I say, trying not to smirk when I notice her mouth open slightly. I've been up for a bit, but I haven't used my voice so it's still huskier than normal. I love her subtle tells that's she might just be attracted to me. I just hope it's not all in my head.

I'm about to start sitting up so I can get up and get dressed, but I'm not about to show Lexa my
body. Yet. Maybe someday soon I'll be brave enough to make a move on her, but today is not that day.

Lexa understands pretty quickly and gives me a shy smile. "I will wait in my tent. Come when you are ready. I will have breakfast sent there for us."

"Mochof (thank you)." I say, watching as Lexa nods and leaves, pausing at the exit to give me one last smile before she slips out of my tent.

I hear her say goodbye to Artigas and then hear her footsteps swiftly getting quieter and farther away. I get up after that, letting the furs fall away from me and on to my bed. I get dressed fast, trying to ignore the anxiety bubbling up inside of me. Lexa didn't mention that I kissed her cheek. Maybe it's not a big deal to her, but maybe it is. I have to talk to her about it either way to make sure we're both on the same page.

I sigh and run a hand through my hair, grimacing when my hand hits a tangle. I'll definitely have to go wash soon. I don't want to go to Polis looking like I was dragged behind Lexa's horse the entire time.

I braid my hair and then make my way out of my tent. Artigas gives me a smile when he sees me and walks a few steps behind me. We don't talk while we're heading to Lexa's tent, but when we arrive he puts his hand on my shoulder. The sudden contact makes me turn to look at Artigas and he gives me a reassuring smile, probably sensing that I'm nervous. I thank him and head into Lexa's tent. She's leaning over a map, focusing intently on it. I don't think she even heard me come in.

"Hey." I say to let her know I'm here. "What are you doing?"

She visibly jumps and looks up at me, her eyes wide. Lexa relaxes when she sees it's me and nods to her map. "I am being productive while waiting for our food. I am trying to figure out the best route to Polis."

"Can't we just go the way you came?"

Lexa purses her lips and gestures for me to come closer. She traces a line on the map. "This is the route I took. It is the most direct, but also the second most dangerous. The safest way takes two days longer to do, so we would not be able to make it to the meeting on time."

"What about this one?" I point to one that seems fairly direct to Polis.

"That goes through Azgeda, so it is the most dangerous. This," she traces another, more squiggly line. "This is the best route. There are few bandits and assassins. However, that is because it goes along a mountain very near the Maunon." Lexa sighs. "I am sorry that the main road has gotten more dangerous so we cannot use it. There has been more and more reports of assassins waiting on that road, presumably for me."

Chapter End Notes

Sorry this is later than usual! Until August 4th on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays I have driver's training! It's 10-12 but I have to walk (and that's forty minutes each time), and it's right when I usually write! It'll be back to normal after
that! Thank you all for your support and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"Okay." I say, taking in what Lexa's told me. "So what you're telling me is that we have four options. One we can't use because it'll take too long. Another we can't take because we'll be overrun with Azgeda warriors. And another one we can't use because we'll be surrounded by assassins that want to kill you. Which leaves us only one option to get to this meeting, where we will need to go really close to the base of our biggest enemy."

"Yes," Lexa confirms.

I frown. "Well it almost seems like you're being herded onto that route."

That makes Lexa pause, her face twisting slightly as she thinks. "I think you may be right."

"Then who could be behind this?" I wonder aloud. Lexa sits on a chair by the table, gesturing for me to do the same. I take a seat and run over the possibilities in my head. "Let's look at the assassins on that one road first. How recently has their numbers been going up?"

"Very recently. Since about a week ago, only a day after when the time and place for the meeting was confirmed. Someone must have hired them or tipped them off." Lexa says, her eyes widening. "I cannot believe I did not see that earlier. Mochof (thank you), Clarke."

"Pro (you're welcome). Have your scouts noticed anything about the assassins? Are a lot of them Maunon or Azgeda?"

Lexa's mouth drops open slightly in understanding. "There has been a increased number in reports of Maunon in that area, yes. This is not good, Clarke."

"Can you tell me what you know about the Mountain Men?" I ask.

"Anya has told me what she has told you. You know almost everything we know about them. Their people take ours and they rarely return alive. If they are ever seen again, they have become a Reaper. Their people also do not leave their compound often. When they do, they are covered in a flexible material."

"What does it look like?" I question.

Lexa takes a pencil and a blank sheet of paper, starting to draw on it. "I do not know how to describe it."

She finishes and sets down the pencil. I study it closely. It almost looks like a flimsier version of the suits the Zero G Mechanics wear on the Ark. But why would people need it down here?

"Anything else?" I ask, glancing back up at Lexa.

She thinks for a moment. "Yes, one last thing. We caught one of their people once. When we tried to get his suit off, he started screaming that it would kill him. Not believing him, we sliced a hole in it. Bumps started forming on his face and he kept screaming. He died within two minutes."

That extreme of a reaction had to have been caused by something. He had to have reacted to
something in the air, if just a small hole in his suit resulted in his death.

It almost sounds like he was killed by radiation, but I don't know that'd be possible. Lexa and her people are fine, and so am I. It's possible Lexa and her people may have adapted to the radiation in the atmosphere, but that still doesn't explain why I'm fine. There wasn't any radiation as far as I know, because we were in space. Hang on. Solar radiation. There isn't anything protecting the Ark from it, so we must be used to high levels of radiation. But if there's a bunch of radiation on the ground, there would be signs. Some defects in the population. Though I really hate using that word.

Lexa lets me think, waiting silently for me to speak. When I do, she shifts, giving me her full attention. "Are there any people born with abnormalities?"

"Yes. I assume you mean physical abnormalities?" She waits for me to nod and confirm. "I once saw a baby with a hand like foot. They are considered taints in the bloodline and banished. It is harsh, but it keeps our people as strong as possible."

I understand her point of view, but I feel bad for all the people who were just born different and were punished because of it.

What Lexa's told me furthers my theory. I explain what I think to her, only pausing to quickly eat breakfast when it comes. Lexa takes it in easily, seeming to understand everything I'm saying and when she doesn't, she asks questions until she does. She's so much smarter than I thought, actually. And that's saying something.

"...I'll need to see a Maunon for myself to confirm my theory." I say as I finish explaining.

"We will be so close to them it is almost guaranteed that you will see one very soon. There is a scout that will be returning soon. I sent her out yesterday to check out the road ahead of us."

Right on cue, the flaps to the tent open, and Gustus comes into view, holding it open for a small, muscled girl to walk in. I recognize her. She's an incredibly good scout, but once she was caught and shot out of a tree. Luckily, she was just hit by the arrow in the shoulder but I did have to stitch her up.

"Mara." Lexa says, standing up straight and facing her. She's in Commander mode again. "What is your report?"

"There are many Maunon on the road, all of them with devices. Some have guns but none seem like they are going to try to kill you. It almost seems like they are set up to observe you."

Lexa nods. "Mochof, Mara. Good work."

Mara bows her head and leaves, nodding to me before she goes.

"Why do you think they want to just watch you?" I ask.

"They know much about me already, Clarke. I am the leader of their enemy so they observe me often. But this is different. I am a known, something they have studied since I became Heda. But you are an unknown. You are a new person in this war. An unexpected enemy. They want to observe your interactions with me, since they cannot get close enough to the village to do it here. We will need to be careful, Clarke. You are a threat to them, just as I am. And like any frightened beast, if we prove ourselves to be a danger to them, they will take us out."

Chapter End Notes
The Mountain Men are stepping up their game! And I know some of you might be worried after this chapter, but I want to remind you that my stories always have happy endings without killing off any major good characters! And they still have to have the talk about the cheek kiss... Holy crap you guys, there's over 100 bookmarks and 1,000 kudos on here!! Thank you guys so much! :) Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
"But we are a danger to the Maunon." I point out. "Are you saying they will inevitably kill us?"

"No. I am saying we will have to be smart and make sure their attempts to kill us fail." Lexa says, giving me a soft smile. "I had Mara mark a map of the road where she saw Maunon."

She picks up a rolled piece of paper and spreads it out on the table, using small rocks to make sure it stays open. There are a lot of red dots, more than I expected. I take it all in, trying to find patterns.

"Clarke, look." Lexa murmurs. "They are on the inside of every curve. That gives them a good vantage point. They can see exactly where we are."

Vantage point... "Do you mind if I draw on this?" I ask.

"Yes." Lexa responds, then watches me work silently.

I start drawing lines from every dot. Most of them match up almost perfectly. "You were right, they are watching us. They have the entire road covered. It's useless if they're just on their own, so some of the technology Mara saw must have been radios to tell the Maunon our position" I pause, realizing something. "Like you said earlier, they could observe us the entire way. Watch our interactions."

"Do you think we should change the way we act around each other, then?" Lexa asks.

I purse my lips and think for a moment. "No. If they've been observing you since you became Heda, they might notice some inconsistencies."

"Alright." She nods. I'm glad she sees my point. "Clarke, look here. There's overlap." Lexa says, pointing out a few dots that don't make sense if they want to know where we are.

I look at the four dots and see another pattern. "Yes, but they're not random. They're at the spots with the longest view point facing towards where we're coming from. I think they want pictures of us."

"Pictures? Why?" Lexa wonders aloud.

"Then they can pick us out in a crowd."

"So for a future assassination?"

"It's possible, but not necessarily. They'll be able to confirm that we are at a place and that it's not just someone that looks like us."

Lexa lets out a breath. "That is a good strategy. Do we let them do this?" She says the last sentence quietly.

"Is there another way?" I ask.

She shakes her head. "No."
"Then we let them watch us. They're scared, Lexa. They're scared of you, of us together. They fear you because you have the power and the strength to take them down, and now you have me. As you said earlier, I'm an unknown variable. They can't predict what I'll do or what you'll do when you're with me. And you know what, they're right to fear us. Maybe instead of lashing out when they're frightened, they'll be paralyzed in fear." I muse.

"I did not know that you are so motivational." Lexa says.

I'm about to respond when I see the teasing glint in her eyes. She was joking with me. When Lexa notices that I can tell she's joking, her face breaks out into a large smile.

"I think you could be right." Lexa admits. "I never underestimate my enemies, but perhaps I have been overestimating them. They are scared, and have been for so long I am not sure they know how to live without it. With you by my side, we can free our people from the Maunon. And I think they know that."

"Our people?" I ask, smiling.

"Uh, yes." Lexa says, blushing and hesitant sounding. It's absolutely adorable. "It is perfectly fine if you still see the Ark people as yours, I just-"

"Lexa." I cut her off, waiting until she meets my eyes. Dang, I've got the Commander of the Twelve Clans blushing because I've flustered her. I'm definitely going to have to do a happy dance or something when I think about this later. "The people on the Ark haven't been my people for a long time. I'm glad you think of me as one of your people."

We stand there for a few moments, just shyly looking at each other. I'm going to take this as a sign that Lexa might possibly like me. Then, of course, the moment is broken by Anya strutting in. She looks from me to Lexa a few times and then smirks.

"Heda, you told us that you wanted a meeting today at this time. Should I reschedule for later?" Anya sounds so smug, like she walked in on us making out or something. I bet Lexa's lips would be... No Clarke, not now. Stop drooling.

"No." Lexa straightens her back, going into Commander Mode again. "Clarke and I have been discussing plans."

Anya's eyes brighten, and she almost looks excited. "Oh, finally!" She drawls. "Who asked who out? When's the date?"

Lexa and I both blush, and she clears her throat before responding to Anya. "That is not what I meant. We have been discussing where we will travel. When everyone has arrived, we will tell you what we decided and what we expect will happen."

Anya just rolls her eyes and mutters. "Branwodas (idiots/fools)."

Then, Indra comes in (looking more annoyed than usual) followed by Luna.

"What had gotten you in a bad mood?" Luna asks Anya when she sees her.

"I thought that these two branwodas finally did something about their mutual attraction. Maybe I need to knock their heads together so their combined brains can realize they are being fools." Anya grumbles.

"Let them figure it out, it will work out eventually." Luna advises.
"Can we get to the plans?" Indra asks.

"Of course." Lexa responds.

It doesn't take us (Lexa sometimes had me explain things) long to tell them what route we're taking and why. To say the least, they aren't really happy about it but understood why. They did get Lexa to agree to having more guards than just Gustus. It takes much longer to talk to them about the Maunon and what they're doing alongside the road. We'll have to brief the guards tomorrow to make sure they know not to attack unless they feel we are in immediate danger.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for being patient! This is being posted a lot later than I hoped, but hopefully Lexa and Clarke being gay nerds makes up for it :) Thank you all for reading and your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 40

Time goes by so quickly, and suddenly it's the next morning Lexa's coming into my tent to remind me that we're leaving soon.

Despite the fact that I've told her many times that she can come into my tent whenever she wants, Lexa is stubborn and says that she doesn't want to intrude when I'm not prepared for anyone to be in the tent. It's really cute and sweet, and I do appreciate it. She tells me when she'll be coming to my tent at least a day in advance. When she comes in without telling me beforehand, she always announces her presence and then makes sure she can come in.

"Clarke, have you packed everything?" Lexa asks.

"Yeah, I'm done." I yawn.

I dragged my exhausted self out of bed early (like really early; the sun wasn't even up) this morning and packed up. I have everything in a bag, except my weapons of course.

"Should we act like we do not notice the Maunon?" Lexa asks as she watches me double checking I have everything.

"No. You're the Commander of the Twelve Clans, Lexa. You didn't get there on accident. Even if there's fog practically blinding you, you'd be able to tell that they're there. So we can shoot some of them down or something."

Lexa smiles, amused at my word choice. "Fatal or non-fatal?"

I shrug. "It doesn't matter. We could also do warning shots if someone's annoying you and hit something right next to their head."

"Heda, Clarke." Anya says after she strides in. "Luna and I have briefed the guards for you, and we should be ready to leave soon. I suggest you both make your final preparations." With that said, she bows her head to Lexa and then leaves.

"Are you ready to get on your horse?" Lexa asks me.

"Float me, we're going to be riding for so long. My butt is going to be so sore." I groan.

Lexa laughs, a beautiful sound that makes all of my dread and worry for this trip slip away. "Do not worry, Clarke. I made sure that you have the comfiest saddle. It should help with the discomfort."

I stand for a moment, surprised. Though I probably shouldn't be. Lexa's really considerate.

"The other guards are ready to go." Artigas warns us from outside of my tent.

Yeah, he's coming with as my guard. I insisted once he expressed interest in seeing Polis.

"Clarke?" Lexa asks.

I turn my attention back to her. She shifts slightly, her eyes giving away her nerves. Oh, I haven't...
responded to her incredibly thoughtful action yet.

"Mochof (thank you), Lexa." I smile at her.

Swallowing down my nerves, I show my appreciation by hugging her. I keep my arms loose at first so she can escape if it's making her uncomfortable. But Lexa relaxes quickly in my arms and wraps her arms around my waist. I try not to think about the position I'm in too much, which is easier than I feared. Just the fact that I'm in her arms is wiping every other thought from my mind.

There's a loud noise coming from outside that snaps us out of that lovely daze when you're close to someone you lo- like. Someone you like. I haven't known her that long, I can't love her yet. I shut down that line of thought for now, knowing it's no use panicking now and that there will be a much better time to panic when I'm alone in a small tent later tonight.

While I'm calming myself down from just having a mental crisis, Lexa pulls back but keeps her hands on my waist. Our faces are close, so close, and I could lean in and kiss her. I look away from her lips and look into Lexa's eyes. They flick back up from my lips, her lips slight opening as she looks into my eyes. There's a pink flush to her cheeks and a look in her eyes that makes all of this so much sweeter. She's nervous. Lexa's nervous. About kissing me.

I can feel her warm breath and something inside me breaks when she looks back down at my lips. I lean in and kiss her, lightly at first so she can pull away. I'm the one that stops the kiss soon after she starts kissing me back. I move back only enough to see her expression. Her eyes are closed and her lower lip trembles as she lets out a breath. When Lexa's eyes open, I nearly gasp at the emotions I see there. I lean in again and she lets out a happy sigh into my mouth. I move my arms away from wrapping around her so I can gently cradle her face.

It feels like I've been kissing her forever, but it feels like it hasn't been enough time when there's a throat clearing from outside.

"Clarke?" Artigas questions, sounding worried.

"I'm okay." I reassure him, ignoring how my voice is raspier than normal and that my hands are still on Lexa (one cupping her jaw-which float me is amazing and the other is in her hair, at the base of her neck). "We'll be out soon."

"Clarke." Lexa murmurs. Her face is still really close to mine and it's difficult to keep from kissing her again. "After we stop for the night and have dinner, come to my tent." Oh. I don't know if I'm ready for that quite yet... Lexa seems to see my thoughts in my expression and she smiles softly. "To talk, Clarke. Nothing more unless we both want to."

Right. Talk. Great, now I'm going to be distracted on the ride by what we're going to be talking about. What if it's bad? What if she could tell how I feel about her in the kisses and doesn't feel the same way?

"Clarke." Lexa repeats, sounding amused. My hand falls away from her face and she takes it and holds it in hers. Okay. That's a good sign.

Instead of saying anything else, she leans in and kisses me softly. It's short and she pulls away after, holding onto my hand the longest. Lexa leaves my tent. with a gentle, genuinely happy smile on her face.

I take a moment to sit down, resting my head on the table. So. That just happened.
I did not plan for the first kiss to be this chapter, but hey! It works! And it was super cute and fun to write. Lexa being all nervous and shaky and Clarke being all nervous and panicky. What adorable nerds. Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 41

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

I don't have much (or really any) time to think about what just happened, so I don't sit long before I pick up my back and walk out of my tent. Artigas stays behind me, silently following me as I head toward TonDC’s exit. The others, including Lexa, are already there and getting ready to get on their horses.

"Clarke." Lexa greets me warmly. "There are two wagons of supplies where you can put your bag."

"Mochof (thank you)." I say, giving her a shy smile before heading to one of the wagons and placing my bag in it.

Artigas guides me to my horse, which is right next to Lexa's. There's a few guards on horses in front of us, but I'm going to be right next to Lexa. It's probably what we'd do if we didn't know about the Maunon, but still a risky move. It shows how close we are, how much she trusts me already. I have little doubt that it will scare the Maunon and make them more reckless.

"Are you sure about this?" I ask when I hear footsteps coming toward me. I don't have to turn around to know that it's Lexa.

"No," she admits, coming up and standing right next to me. "It will make them nervous and scared. That makes them even less predictable. We will have to be on our guard."

"Heda." Indra says from behind us. I turn around too, curious. She eyes the setup warily and lets out a sigh so soft I almost miss it. "This is dangerous."

"I am aware, Indra. Are we ready to go?" Lexa asks. I note that when she talks to pretty much anyone else, she adjusts her posture to seem larger.

"Sha (yes)." Indra bows her head.

"Get on your horse. We leave soon."

Indra nods and heads back to a strong gray horse with white spots. She gets on easily and waits. I sigh, eyeing my horse. It's a beautiful creature, black with some areas that are a really dark brown. Lexa's, of course, is pure black except the white diamond on its nose.

"Would you like me to help you get on your horse?" Lexa asks.

"No thanks, I think I've got it."

Lexa stays on the ground instead of getting on her horse, watching me. It's both nerve-wracking and soothing at the same time. I take a deep breath and put my hand on the horse's flank. I'm already on the correct side to get on... I think. I get my left foot in the stirrup (which I'm proud to say took me one try even though it was pretty high up) and push down on it, maneuvering my body so I sit on the saddle. At my success, I resist the urge to whoop victoriously and instead quietly clench my fist, grinning.

Lexa gets on her horse beside me, smiling proudly at me. I look around us and see that basically everyone else is on their horses and ready as well.
"Heda." A guard says as she comes up from behind us on Lexa's side. "We are ready to go once I get on my horse."

Lexa nods and the guard continues walking, getting on the horse at the very front. She clicks her tongue and we start to move. The horses are well trained and follow automatically, mine going without me having to tell it to.

The pace is slow, but we make our way into the forest.

"This road continues for a few miles." Lexa says. "Then there will be a four way intersection where we go right. That is the road we talked about."

"How long until we reach it?" I ask.

"Five hours, unless we pick up the pace. Either way, we'll at least get to it today."

We're going to be riding for at least five more hours? Float me (maybe I should be using more Trigedasleng words instead of float me, like jok ai. Though that's more explicit because it means f*ck me). This saddle is comfy, but my butt's already kind of sore. This is going to be a long couple of days.

Lexa occupies my time by talking to me about different things, but one thing we both avoid talking about is this morning (I like to tell myself that it's because we're around so many people, not that she regrets it). She asks me things about the Ark, how it works, how I grew up, and I eventually even tell her a bit more about my dad.

Afterwards, I get to ask her about Earth. The animals and how they've mutated, the Maunon, the problems she's been having with Azgeda. Lexa tells me a few facts about Polis that make me even more eager to get there. It's not necessarily the facts, but the wistfulness in Lexa's voice. She loves that city.

I'm so focused on talking to her that I barely notice when we turn onto the Maunon infested road. The road here is smoother, like not many people have used this road.

"Do you see that mountain?" Lexa asks, pointing to the left of us. "That is the home of the Maunon."

The left side of the road has a few trees before the land drops suddenly. The mountain is visible through them. It's huge. It has to be able to hold hundreds of people, if not a thousand.

"We'll be coming up on the first one soon." I warn Lexa, remembering where all the dots are on the map. The first person is right around the first turn, which we're coming up to.

Though it's less comfortable, I'm glad that I brought my swords and my bow. My swords are strapped to my sides while my bow and arrows are on my back.

I watch the trees more carefully, noting every rustle of leaves. I hear a crackle that's not from a dead leaf. It sounds electronic, like the walkie talkie my dad used to carry around in case of emergency.

I draw my bow and notch an arrow, listening. Lexa stays silent, though I can feel her curiosity. The crackle sounds again and I aim for where it came from, letting the arrow fly. It hits something that definitely isn't a tree. A black piece of technology falls from a nearby tree with my arrow in it as someone in that tree yelps.
I ignore the person, not really caring about that. I look to Lexa and she nods, immediately understanding. She whistles and points to the dropped technology. A guard gets off their horse and gets it, getting back on their horse and continues moving.

Now I'll be able to see exactly how technologically advanced they are.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry guys, no talk yet... It'll come up soon, though! Thank you for reading this and for your kind comments! Stay awesome!
The guard brings me the walkie talkie, eyeing it warily as they hand it over. They go back to their spot as I study the piece of technology.

It seems pretty sophisticated, like the kind of thing we had on the Ark. I'll check the inside when I'm not riding a horse. The walkie talkie crackles again, making Lexa and I both tense up for a moment. My arrow's still sticking out of it, so I'm surprised it even works that much.

"Sir." A voice comes from it, making Lexa put her hand on her sword. "We have a problem."

"It works!" I say to Lexa excitedly. "We can listen to what they're saying!"

Lexa seems surprised and impressed.

"What now?" An annoyed, crackling voice asks.

"The Commander and her guards now have a walkie talkie of ours." This guy sounds nervous. The annoyed one must be the boss or something.

"What? How could you let that happen?"

"Uh, the new one, the one who fell from the sky... She shot it out of my hand."

The boss grumbles out a few curses while a couple others chime in, saying stuff like "way to go" or "look what you've done now you idiot". I actually feel kind of bad for the guy. Only kind of because he's spying on us.

"Does it still work?" The boss asks.

"I don't think so, it still has an arrow sticking out of it. Plus, the savages are too primitive to be able to figure out how to fix it." The guy says, chuckling. Okay. Now I hate him.

Lexa's eyes flash in anger but she says nothing.

"That's what they think of you?" I question.

"Sha (yes)." Lexa replies, letting out a breath.

"Hey, they're coming up on my position now." Another voice says. "And you were right, the sky girl does have your walkie talkie. Nice job. And damn, those girls." The guy whistles quietly (I wish he did it loudly so I could find where he is) into the walkie talkie. He starts mumbling about the things he'd do to us, making both Lexa and I really uncomfortable.

"Focus, man." Someone else says. "What are your observations besides how hot they are?"

"The new one's blonde."

"We know that already." The boss says, sounding even more annoyed. "I knew I shouldn't have let you do this mission."
"Okay, okay." The sexist guy grumbles. "Uh, they're riding right next to each other. The Commander trusts her a lot already. And they keep looking at each other when they think the other isn't looking. Do you guys think they have a thing going on?" He groans. "That's so-"

"If you say that's so hot one more time I will shoot you in the leg." A female voice says. I fully support that.

The voices continue talking, mainly arguing and I exchange an amused glance with Lexa. "This is our greatest enemy?"

Lexa chuckles. "Yes. Though this is my first time listening in on a conversation of theirs."

"Stop moving around so much, you're going to give away your position!" Someone says, making me perk up. Oh, I really hope it's the sexist guy. Give away your position, you jok (f*ck).

"I'm not used to staying still, especially with hot girls so close to me."

It is him! This is making my day. I look at Lexa and touch two fingers to my ear. Though we haven't ever talked about silently communicating, she understands what I mean. We both still, listening. I pull out my bow again and notch an arrow.

"Watch out guys, she's got her bow out." Someone warns over the walkie talkie. "Stop moving."

"Don't tell me what to do." The sexist guy grumbles.

There's a movement in a tree near us on the same side the other guy was. I aim over there, keeping it pointed away from where I heard the noise to throw them off.

"How'd she even hit your walkie talkie? She can't aim for crap." The guy laughs.

I can hear it, not just from the walkie talkie. It's faint, but... I aim an let my arrow fly.

"That's what happens when you do that!" The guy who's walkie talkie I shot says frantically. "You nearly got shot in the head."

They must be close to each other, then. Lexa directs some guards to go grab the people in the direction I shot. Like most of her guards, they're freaking huge and carry the two people over their shoulders. At first, I couldn't tell they're people because of the rubber suits.

"We've got another problem." Someone says on the walkie talkie. "They've got Franklin and Johnson."

The boss guy curses. "You're all useless. Alright. Abort the mission, come back to the base. Let the savages do what they to them."

About ten voice mumble out, confirming that they're retreating. But none seem happy about leaving their comrades behind.

Our line of people slows down enough so the guards can thoroughly tie them both up and hold them steady on their horses as they walk alongside them.

We continue for half an hour, ignoring the sound of the other Maunon running back to their headquarters.

"It's getting dark, we should stop." I suggest.
Lexa nods and yells out the order. The guards start immediately, leading the horses to a spot where they can graze and setting up tents and fire pits.

Lexa and I take over watching our prisoners so the guards can go help. Anya, Indra, and Luna join us. We sit in silence.

"This does not change anything for me." Lexa says to me. "I would still like to talk to you after dinner, if you would like to."

I just nod, not trusting my voice. It'll give away how nervous I am, though she can probably tell that from my expression. On one hand, I can't wait for that talk. We'll finally tell each other how we feel. But on the other hand, I'm terrified. What if she doesn't feel the same? The kisses we shared feel like they were so long ago, or from a dream when in reality they happened just this morning. They were so passionate, so caring that while they were happening I had no doubts in my mind. But now, my head's full of them.

Chapter End Notes

Well this turned into an odd chapter... With idiotic mountain men. And nervous Clarke. The talk should be next chapter ;) Thank you all for reading and for your kind comments! Stay awesome!
As Lexa and I wait for the guards to make dinner, I study our captives. I was right, their suits are to protect them from radiation, which I confirmed by asking them. They seemed taken aback and fearful that I figured it out. We're not so stupid now, are we?

"How can you eat?" I ask curiously.

"We can store some food in here in pouches, but we don't have much left. We didn't think we'd be out here this long." The guy who's radio I took says.

"And I'm guessing that giving you any food wouldn't be good."

"Only if you want us to die." The sexist guy says, looking bored. "So what's up with you and the Commander anyway?"

"You think I would tell you?" I cross my arms.

"Yeah why not? You're-"

"You're probably about to say something extremely insulting and sexist. If you do, just know that I will not hesitate to cut a hole in that flimsy suit of yours."

I'm proud to say that my words make him pale.

"Clarke," Lexa says, sitting next to me. "I think they are nearly done cooking. A few guards have volunteered to watch over them."

"Alright. We'll talk to them tomorrow. How much oxygen do you have left?"

"Only twenty hours." The radio guy sighs.

"Luckily for you, your base is just over there." I say.

"It's a three hour walk. Two if I run."

I exchange a look with Lexa and she nods to me. I turn back to our hostages. "We'll give you plenty of time to get there. Your friend might even be able to go too if he stops being an asshat."

"He's not my friend." The guy murmurs but looks up at Lexa and I. "Thank you both."

Sexist guy snorts. "They kidnapped us and you're thanking them?"

"Yes, because if they're letting us go, or at least me, that means they're not going to kill us."

Lexa and I leave them to their arguing and grab our dinner. We sit with Anya, Luna, and Indra. Anya and Luna are sitting close and pretty obviously flirting while Indra scowls but I can see a softness in her expression that she tries to hide. I think she's happy that Anya and Luna found each other again.

"Those were some good shots earlier, Clarke." Luna says, turning her attention away from Anya
for a moment.

"Mochof (thank you)."

"Pro (you're welcome). Lexa, did I hear that one of the Maunon thinks there is something going on between you and Clarke?" Luna leans forward, smirking.

"Sha (yes). He was about to comment on our warmth when a female Maunon threatened to shoot him."

"That is odd." Luna says, frowning.

Warmth? Oh. "Lexa, that's not what he meant." I begin hesitantly. "He was going to say 'that's so hot' which means that he finds the thought of us together attractive."

Luna begins laughing and Anya smirks. "Oh, that is incredible. Even our enemies can pick up on your suppressed romantic feelings."

They're not suppressed anymore. At least, I hope they won't be after we talk tonight.

"Luna, tell Clarke the story with Lexa and the candles." Anya suggests, her smirk turning into an evil smile.

"Luna, no." Lexa pleads. Now I definitely want to hear this.

Luna grins, "Luna yes. Alright Clarke, there is one thing you must know about Lexa. She is obsessed with candles," I have noticed that she always seems to have two or three lit in her tent, even during the day. "When she is in a bad mood, she lights a lot of candles. Once she was in this terrible mood and lit so many candles. I did not even know there were that many in all of Polis! They covered nearly every inch of the ground. All of them were lit. I had come to our small home to check on Lexa, and came home to that sight. I was standing there, dumbfounded by what I was seeing."

"Luna." Lexa groans, sounding like a kid.

"Lexa." Luna teases. "She was sulking on the bed, pretty much surrounded by fire. Then, one of her furs that was hanging lower than the others off of her bed caught on fire. Lexa was stuck in the middle with no clear path out of the room. Me, being my heroic self, ran through the burning candles and carried her out to safety. Our house burned down and we had to live in the Heda's tower for months until our new one was ready. We lost almost everything. I still have the burn scars on my legs." Luna pulls up her pants slight to reveal them. She wasn't kidding. Those are some nasty burns. "After that, Lexa did not light more than ten candles in one room. At least that I know of."

"I keep them away from flammable things now." Lexa protests.

"So you are telling me that you still light a ton of candles?"

"... Yes."

"Lexa." Luna groans.

"I will be going back to my tent. Clarke, come with me." Lexa says, walking quickly away to escape Luna's exasperation. I shake my head fondly and follow her.
"Be safe!" Luna yells after us.

Since I'm behind Lexa, I can't see her face. But even in this dim light, I can see that her ears are turning red from blushing.

We walk to her tent side by side after I catch up with her (luckily she slows down a bit. I'm stronger than I used to be, but when she wants to she can walk really fast).

Lexa holds the flaps open for me and I feel my heart beating faster as my nervousness rise to the surface. Lexa comes in and closes the flaps behind her. When she turns to face me, it's obvious that she's just as scared as me.

Lexa steps forward until we're face to face, chest to chest. We're so close I can feel her warm breath on my face. We search each other's eyes to see if there's even a hint of either of us not wanting to do this. All of my fears and worries melt away when we both lean in. Our lips meet halfway and everything negative is gone from my mind. We should probably talk, but this is so much better.

Chapter End Notes

Man, I really thought we'd get to the talk this chapter... Next chapter, definitely! And bonus, we got a random story about Lexa and candles! And holy crap, I just looked at the hits and saw that this has over 31,000 views! That's insane! Thank you guys so much! Thank you all for reading and for your wonderful comments! Stay awesome!
I don't know how long we kiss but when I pull away, we both stand there panting for a few moments. We look into each other's eyes and a beautiful smile spreads across Lexa's face. It makes my breath catch and I can only stare at her in awe.

"Let us talk before we do much more of that." She murmurs.

I nod and we both sit on the ground facing each other since there are no chairs. We are still for a moment, silent. It's not awkward, but it feels like neither of us know what to say.

I sigh, "I'm not sure how to start this."

"Me neither." Lexa says quietly. "Perhaps we should begin by discussing us."

"That works. Uh, do want there to be an us? Romantically?" I ask. Well that was eloquent.

"Very much so, yes. Do you?" Lexa questions, cocking her head to the side slightly.

"Yeah. Hang on. Before anything else, I have to ask. Will this affect your position as Heda? Or put you in danger?"

"The other clans may be more or less accepting of you if you are my... What is the Gonasleng word for it? Female pal?"

I grin, realizing what she's saying. "Girlfriend?"

"Yes, that is the one. It will not affect me much or put me in more danger. If anything, it will make your life more dangerous. People may try to use you to get to me." Lexa's jaw clenches and she avoids my gaze.

"Like Costia." I murmur.

"Yes. But I know it will not be the same as with her. The only war we are fighting is not against another clan, but against the Maunon. And you, Clarke, you are strong. Costia was a blacksmith and only knew basic fighting techniques. You are a truly incredible fighter, and you have only been training for a short time. I have no doubt that someday you may be able to best Indra and Anya, and perhaps me. Unlike with Costia, with you I would not have to worry about your safety. If anything, I would fear for your enemies." Lexa chuckles softly. "And most of all, I do not need to protect you. I will, of course, regardless. You can defend yourself."

We sit quietly for another few minutes, just gazing into each other's eyes. "Lexas... Do you want to do this? Become girlfriends?"

Lexa smiles. "I do, yes. I plan on taking you out for a... Date, I believe the word is, while we are in Polis."

"That sounds wonderful." With that, we both lean in for a short but sweet kiss. "Would you want us to hide our relationship from your people?" I hope not, I hate the thought of having her but not being able to show that I love her.
"No, never. And it will scare the Maunon more than ever. That is a bonus." Lexa laughs. "Just a few months ago you fell from the sky. Now you are the advisor and girlfriend of the Heda."

"When you put it like that it sounds really impressive." I say.

"It is impressive." Lexa

Lexa moves a nearby backpack behind her back and leans on it. She gestures for me to come over and it takes me a second to get what she means. I move over to her, cuddling against her side. Lexa wraps an arm around my shoulder and I let out a content sigh.

"The only thing I'm worried about is if your people will accept me, especially now that we're dating."

"Clarke, our people will love you." Lexa promises, tilting her head so she can kiss my forehead.

"Our people? I like the sound of that." I say, resting my head on her shoulder.

The flaps to the tent rustle like there's someone right outside. I wait for a moment to see if Lexa tenses or gives any indication that she wants to move. She doesn't, so I let out a happy hum and stay where I am.

"Clarke? Lexa? Do you two have clothes on or should I wait to come in?" That's Luna's voice.

"Branwoda (idiot)." Anya says affectionately. It's good to know that she insults everyone, even the girl she likes. "If they were doing something in there the entire camp would be able to hear them."

"That is a good point. Lexa is not quiet."

I can see that Lexa's blushing adorably and kiss her cheek, trying to hide my chuckle.

"Are you okay with them seeing us like this?" I ask Lexa quietly. She nods. "Don't worry, we're decent!" I say loud enough for them to hear. "Come in."

Luna walks in and sees us, smirking. "Ha! Told you, Anya! You owe me a new weapon."

Anya opens the flaps and comes in, scowling at Luna. "How did you know?"

"They sat closer than normal at dinner and this morning they both had these gigantic dopey smiles on their faces that did not go away for hours."

Anya grumbles out a few curse words in Trigedasleng. "You are too observant."

"I just know when my sister likes someone. You were there when she was with Costia." Luna points out.

"Luna, Anya." Lexa says in a more commanding tone. "Why are you here?"

"Oh right." Luna says. "There are not enough tents, so we were hoping you two could share."

"How are there not enough tents?" Lexa asks.

Anya raises an eyebrow. "We have prisoners now. Luna and I are sharing a tent as well, but we are still short one."

Lexa and I turn to look into each other's eyes, silently making sure we're both okay with this. Lexa
turns back to them after a moment. "Alright. We can share."

"Whoever needs a tent can just take mine." I offer. "All of my stuff is in here, anyway."

"Alright. I will let them know." Luna says.

"Luna, Anya, be safe in your tent!" Lexa smirks.

Luna gives her the middle finger, which is something I've been trying to teach her and Lexa. It just seems so odd coming from her that I can't hold back my laughter, so Anya gives me a death glare before leaving. I'm proud for not flinching, though it might have something to do with having Lexa beside me.

"Are you ready to go to bed?" I ask her.

"Yes. Do you mind if I take off my armor? I will just put on some more comfortable clothes."

I swallow but nod. "Yeah, you can do that. I will too."

Lexa gets up and goes over to the other side of the tent, picking out some pieces of clothing and setting them on the furs on the floor. I reach behind me to grab my backpack, pulling out my sleep clothes. Usually, I just sleep in my undergarments but I figured I might as well bring them. And I'm glad I did. I doubt Lexa would mind seeing me practically naked, but we're not at that stage in our relationship quite yet. I mean, it's still hitting me that we actually have a relationship.

I carefully take off my armor, hearing Lexa do the same behind me. I'm incredibly tempted to turn around and take in her incredible body, but I don't want to do anything we're not ready for.

"I am done, Clarke." Lexa says as I'm pulling up my shorts.

I turn and my breath catches in my throat. Again. My mouth literally drops open. She's gorgeous. Lexa's wearing a dress. Not just a dress, but a long, flowing, beautiful dress that's black with a leg slit. Lexa seems just as in awe of me as I am in awe of her.

She notices me looking at her and blushes lightly, giving me a shy smile that makes me melt inside. Lexa gestures for me to come over and gets beneath the furs, blowing out all of the nearby candles but one. Her face in the candle light... It makes me want to sketch her. Over and over again. I'll definitely have to do that later.

I get under the furs on the opposite side. Lexa's in the middle and reaches out her arm. Grinning, I cuddle up against her, resting my head on her shoulder. We kiss one last time before Lexa blows out the candle so we can go to sleep. I fall asleep faster than ever, feeling happy and safe in her arms.

Chapter End Notes

Dang, okay. This chapter is way longer than usual. Obviously, I have no self control when it comes to Lexa and Clarke and fluff. But really, this chapter is 2/5 longer than usual. No regrets though, it was super cute and fun to write! Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
I take in a breath as I wake up. I feel more content and relaxed than I can ever remember being. I'm still with Lexa, but we've switched positions in the night. We're spooning, and I'm the big spoon.

I hold back the urge to chuckle. The idea of the great Commander of the Twelve Clans being the little spoon is both hilarious and adorable. I rest my head against the back of her neck, not minding her hair in my face. Our legs are entwined beneath the covers.

Her right bicep is up and I look closely at her tattoo, something I've been dying to do. It's beautiful, and my fingers itch with the want to sketch it. To curb that urge (I really don't want to get out of bed), I run my fingers along the tattoo's lines, trying to memorize the designs.

Lexa starts moving slightly, so she's probably starting to wake up. I almost feel bad for causing her to wake up, but her face is too cute. Her nose scrunches slightly and she murmurs something in Trigedaslang too quietly for me to hear what she's saying. Lexa sighs quietly and squirms like she's trying to get closer to me. I hide my smile in her bare shoulder and move my hand from her tattoo to wrap around her.

"Clarke?" Lexa asks sleepily. I hum in response. "What time is it?"

"I don't know. I think I can hear breakfast being made."

Lexa grumbles quietly, turning around so her front is pressed against me. She blinks, looking into my eyes and smiling. "We should probably get up."

I groan unhappily, making Lexa chuckle. She kisses me gently, but pulls away way to quickly. She yawns and starts getting out of bed, grinning at me when I whine.

"We can kiss when we are both dressed." Lexa promises.

With that in mind, I get up and take off my pajamas and start putting on my armor. I can hear Lexa do the same. I finish faster than normal, waiting for Lexa to say she's done before I turn around. She's as beautiful as ever in her armor and I walk to her. I get so close that our noses are almost touching as I rest my hand on her hip.

Lexa has this loving look in her eyes that makes me want to just ignore the fact we literally just started dating yesterday and tell her I love her. I cup her jaw, lean in and kiss her. I still can't get over how right kissing her feels. It's gentle, a soft push and pull of our lips until we hear a throat clearing.

We pull away and turn to see an almost happy looking Indra in our tent. "Heda, breakfast is ready and the prisoners are getting restless."

"We will be out in a moment, Indra." Lexa says. Indra nods and bows her head to Lexa before leaving. "Clarke?"

I kiss Lexa's nose, delighting in how she blushes. "Alright, let's go."

Lexa takes my hand in hers. "Is this okay? Can we hold hands out there?"
She sounds both hopeful and nervous, so I kiss her again softly. "Of course we can."

Lexa smiles so brightly at my response it's almost blindingly beautiful. I marvel at the fact that our hands are perfect for each other. She's right handed and I'm left handed, so we can hold hands while we do things with our dominant hands. And my mind just went to the gutter... Bad Clarke. I mean, we could write side by side easily.

Lexa squeezes my hand happily and holds the tent flaps open for me. We sit on fallen logs that surround the campfire, ignoring Luna and Anya's smug looks when they notice our hands. The prisoners are seated on the opposite side, both looking miserably at our food as the guards hand breakfast to us. We have to release each other's hands in order to eat, sadly.

When we're finished, Lexa and I head over to the prisoners. We try to interrogate them, but either they're idiots, good at lying, or don't know anything. After two hours of questions and responses mainly consisting of "I don't know", Lexa and I release them.

The sexist one managed not to piss us off, mainly because when he was about to say something ignorant or insulting, he would get elbowed in the gut by the other one. Normally, I might've moved them apart to have an excuse to punch the sexist guy, but seeing him get elbowed so many times is extremely satisfying. We're talking dozens of times. I hope the Maunon have advanced medical care, because he might have internal bleeding after that much abuse.

They scurry off like rodents running away from a cat.

The scouts that went ahead this morning to see if there are any more Maunon along the road come back soon after they leave. Luna and Anya sent out three of them (we were still asleep when they left).

They come up to Lexa and I, bowing their heads. "Heda, we found no sign of them along the road."

Lexa frowns. "None?" That's odd. Especially since we captured two of their people. I mean, we let them go but still.

"None."

Lexa purses her lips and nods. "Mochof (thank you) for looking. Report this to Indra as well as Anya and Luna."

The three scouts bow again before moving towards where Luna and Anya are flirting, sitting on a fallen tree.

"I have a bad feeling about this." I admit.

"Me too." Lexa murmurs. "They are planning something, and it must be big if they do not bother watching us. We will be leaving their range too soon, so they must be planning on something on our way back or at TonDC."

I nod grimly. "What do you think they'll do?"

Lexa shakes her head and lets out a breath. "I have no idea. I dread the thought of finding out."

Chapter End Notes
I had a great idea (at least I think so) while writing this chapter. I looked over my plans for some future chapters again and changed them... It'll be interesting, I can promise that! No worries, though! They'll be okay :) Thank you all for reading and for your wonderful comments! Stay awesome!
The next few days pass quickly, and despite us constantly keeping an eye out for them, we see no more signs of any Maunon.

Lexa and I continue using the same tent, and I have to admit its really great waking up to see her every morning. It's like a dream I never knew I had that comes true every day. The best part is that Lexa and I both agree that we're comfortable showing affection out in the open, so I get to hold her hand basically whenever I want. We haven't kissed anywhere but the tent yet, but I'm ninety percent sure that even the horses know we're dating. Lexa's horse and mine have been walking closer than that first day.

We're nearing the end of the ride, which is great because I'm not sure my butt will ever recover from this abuse. I can't wait to see Polis, both because it's the capital, and therefore will be the largest city I've been to, and the fact that Lexa loves the city. And it's not just because she's the Commander and this city is home to the Heda. I can tell by the way she brightens, even when it's subtly, when Polis is mentioned. It's in how she's been excited all day, since we're going to be arriving today. She's more relaxed, and her smile comes easier. Lexa being happy like this is a beautiful sight that makes me fall for her just a little more.

Lexa lets out a gasp suddenly, but it sounds like it's not from terror or a bad emotion. She points to something in the trees.

"Do you see that light, Clarke?" Lexa waits for me to nod before she continues. "That is from the Heda's Tower. We are getting close."

Lexa start telling me random facts about Polis and how it was created. Apparently, their first Commander founded it not long after the bombs fell, back when this place was nothing but a wasteland. She tells me that the city was named after the letters on the metal container their first Heda fell from the sky in. Lexa says she'll show me it, which will be interesting. Maybe she fell from the Ark or some space station I've heard of.

By now, Lexa's sitting up even straighter on her horse as gates come into our view. They're high enough that I can't see in the city. The guards see Lexa and grin, obviously happy to see her back here. There's some shouting and the gate is pulled to the sides, creaking open.

The cobbled streets come into view first, and then some houses lining it. They're built expertly, not at all like the thrown-together ones in TonDC. The streets are full of people and I've never seen such a lively place. There are yelling vendors selling their wares and people going about their daily lives, as well as children giggling and playing in the streets. I can see why Lexa likes it here so much.

People see us on our horses and bow slightly, welcoming Lexa back. She smiles and greets almost every one by name. With the streets so full of people, we're forced to move slowly through the crowd. Lexa leads the way, with my horse beside hers.

I look up and my mouth drops open slightly. Okay, when Lexa said Heda's Tower, she really meant a tower. That thing is huge. Though it does resemble a giant candle, which I'm sure Lexa likes.
We make our way toward it, the crowd never really thinning out. Near the base of the tower, guards come and lead our horses to the Commander's stable. There's a smaller market near the tower, but there's one spot that everyone avoids. It seems like it's almost automatic for everyone to avoid that one place.

Lexa notices where I'm looking and chuckles. "Many floors above that spot is my throne room. Throughout my being Heda, I have kicked fourteen people from the balcony. They all land right about there. The people of Polis have learned to avoid that place."

"Why did you kick them?" I ask as we make our way toward the entrance to the tower.

"For many different reasons. Some just would continue to disrespect me, some were assassins, and one bragged about Nia killing Costia."

"Dang. Well, that person definitely deserved it." I remark as we make our way in, the guards and the others following behind us.

"Yes. It was quite satisfying to hear him scream the whole way down." Lexa smiles before pointing out these odd looking doors. "And now we have to get into the elevator, only three more can fit in with us."

The doors are pulled open by the guards on either side of it and we walk in. Luna, Anya, and Indra come in with us.

The elevator starts moving up. "I thought that you don't have electricity." I say to Lexa.

"We do not. This is powered by strong people pushing a wheel." Lexa explains. The door opens and Lexa leads us out. "We are heading to my throne room to meet Titus."

Judging by Anya rolling her eyes, Luna's sigh, and Indra's grumbling, Titus isn't their favorite person. From what I've heard, their dislike isn't without reason.

The doors are pulled open for her and she strides in, her back straight. A bald guy with tattoos is looking out of the tower.

"Heda, it is good to know you came back on time." He says, not turning around. "I assume you brought that girl?"

"Yes, Titus. She is one of my advisors now."

She doesn't mention our relationship, but it's fine because I remember how she told me he would instantly hate me if he knew.

He turns, a frown on his face that seems like it's a permanent fixture on his face. Lexa's hands are behind her back, but to me it seems like she's trying to seem confident.

"Are sure that is wise, Heda?"

Chapter End Notes

Dun dun dun! Titus is here. So there have been a few people asking me when the 100 is coming down. It's coming up, and it'll be after the meeting. I actually have a plan
for it now! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 47

Chapter Notes

I'm so sorry, guys! Just realized I didn't post this chapter on here!! The next one is going to be posted tomorrow. Sorry again and thank you for reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Are you sure that is wise, Heda?" Titus asks.

Lexa's jaw goes from side to side in the way I've noticed she does when she's stressed or holding back.

"I trust her." She states.

Titus' frowns gets deeper and he looks at me. "This is her?"

I can see Lexa tense, so I put my hand comfortingly on the small of her back as I step forward. I extend my hand, hoping my smile doesn't seem too fake. "Yes, hi. I'm Clarke Griffin."

He stares disdainfully down at my hand. Right, down here they don't shake hands, they grasp forearms. Since that's a sign of respect, he's not even trying to hide his dislike for me. Trying not to seem fazed, I put down my hand.

"Titus." Lexa says warningly. "She is under my protection. Do not try anything."

He seems even more displeased but bows his head to Lexa. "Yes, Heda." He clears his throat. "The other clan leaders will arrive later today and tomorrow morning. I see Luna has finally graced us with her presence."

"Yes, I have. I was curious about the girl who fell from the sky and ran into Clarke and Lexa when I was kidnapped by a Pauna." Luna deadpans. Well when she puts it like that, it sounds fake.

Titus looks unimpressed still. "You saved Luna from a Pauna? That is reckless, Heda, even for you."

"Enough." Lexa says, her voice deeper. If it were aimed at me, it's be more terrifying but right now it's just kind of hot. "Titus, I am no child. I am the Heda of the Twelve Clans and I make my own decisions."

"Of course." Titus' head is still bowed, but he manages to glare up at me like this is all my fault. "I only have your best interests at heart."

"No, you keep only your interests in mind. You will treat me with the respect that I deserve, Titus." With that, Lexa turns and marches out. "Come with me and I will show you to your rooms."

Indra, Anya, Luna, and I follow her. The doors close behind us as Lexa opens another door and walks up the stairs. I fell behind when I didn't expecting her to storm out. She seems to get calmer with every step, slowing down enough for me to catch up with her.
I reach out and let her initiate the hand holding. "Are you alright?" I ask, noticing that her hand is trembling slightly.

"Yes." She murmurs back. "I have just never talked to Titus like that. I feel like it is not the end of this."

"We'll get through it." I say, almost stumbling when Lexa gives me a thankful smile.

She leads us to a room and opens the door. "This is Luna and Anya's room."

"There is only one bed." Luna points out as she looks in. "Are you assuming that we'll sleep together? Let alone in the same room?"

"Am I wrong?" Lexa asks, her grin telling that she knows she's right.

"No, you are not." Anya winks at Lexa. "I am sleeping with your sister."

Lexa wrinkles her nose as I fail to hold back laughter. "In the literal sense or the sky person sense?"

Yeah, after I laughed at something that wasn't meant as a joke a few days ago I had to explain that "sleeping" with someone is euphemism for sex.

Anya smirks. "Both."

She drags a smug looking Luna in their room and shuts the door as Lexa lets out a disgusted groan.

"You asked!" Luna yells through the door and then there's a noise like someone being pushed up against something. And then the kissing noises with exaggerated moans start. At least, I think it's kissing.

Lexa, Indra, and I walk away quickly, and I try not to giggle at Lexa's expression. We follow Lexa to an opened door.

"This is your room, Indra." Lexa says, smiling at her.

Indra smiles back, and it isn't even a scary smile, it's a genuine one. She grasps Lexa's forearm. "I am proud of you, Lexa. Standing up to Titus is not easy."

"Mochof. Reshop, Indra (Thank you. Goodnight, Indra)." Lexa nods to her and Indra closes the door.

"Why did you say goodnight?" I ask when Lexa starts leading us somewhere else. "Isn't it the afternoon?"

"Yes, it is. But Indra likes to stay in her room the night before the meeting. We will not be seeing her at dinner tonight."

I pale. "There's going to be a dinner with everyone there tonight?"

"No, no. Just us, Anya and Luna. Assuming they manage to get out of their room." Lexa says, leading me up a few flights of stairs. "They will meet us up here in our bedroom."

"Our bedroom?" I question. I'm liking the sound of that.

"Yes, as long as you are okay sleeping next to me in an actual bed. It is up to you. The room we are going to is reserved for the Heda, so it is my personal bedroom when I am here."
"And you're letting me sleep in the Heda's room? Your room?" I ask incredulously.

"Yes."

We walk in silence for a few seconds before I remember she's still waiting for a response. "Oh, right. Yeah, I'd love to sleep with you."

"In the literal sense it the sky people sense?" Lexa questions.

Oh man, she sounds serious. How do I answer that? I mean, I love her but it's too early to say that let alone make love... Especially since it'll be my first time. I'm not sure how far she's gone with Costia, but I know she wants to make this special. I refocus on Lexa and see the corner of her mouth twitch.

I gasp, batting her arm. "That was a joke! Lexa!"

With that, she breaks out into a beautiful smile that makes my heart melt. I lean in and kiss her, not caring if anyone's around to see us.

Chapter End Notes

(This note is the original from when this chapter was written!)

Hopefully this chapter was good, I'm running on four hours of sleep here... I'll explain that fantastic story but first, Titus. So a lot of you (and I mean a lot) hate him like I do. In the stories I've read, he's either a homophobic asshat or this gentle soul. With my stories, I try to keep the characters at least sort of like they are in the show. So he's going to be a complete dick! Not sure if I'll kill him, but you guys will be first to know!

Now, onto the reasoning for my lack of sleep. This morning I woke up at three thirty AM. Yeah, that was my four hours of actual sleep. And it was so early and I was so confused as to why I was up until I heard flapping. And it wasn't a figment of my imagination because sometimes it got close and I could literally feel the air from the wing movement on my face. So I just kind of laid there for a couple minutes, hoping it'd go away or something. But it didn't so I fled the room to sleep on a nearby tiny couch. By that time, I was pretty sure it was a bat. When I was about to finally sleep, I heard flapping again. That time, I heard it screech so I knew it was a bat. I tried to go to bed for a while then gave up and went upstairs. It was about five thirty then and I started petting my grandparents (who I'm staying with) dog named Gizzy. She's old and sweet. And then ANOTHER BAT. And this time, I could see it because it was starting to get light outside. It kept hitting the window trying to get outside so I opened the door and let it out. That all happened before seven AM. And then at around nine, my brother casually mentioned that there was a bat in the basement where I slept hanging from a vent. So we got a net and took him outside. He ended up being this little cute brown bat. Anyway, that was my morning.

Thank you for reading and stay awesome!
Lexa and I make our way to her room after making out on the stairs. She keeps holding my hand and giving me these sweet smiles that make my heart beat faster. The guards open the double doors for us, and I notice how Lexa doesn't even try to act like the Heda, not even straightening her stance.

The doors close behind us and I stop, in awe of what I’m seeing. It’s a large room with a beautifully carved bed in one corner. There are comfy looking chairs and even a couch, as well as a doorway that leads somewhere. The light comes into this room in such an incredible way that it feels like I just walked into a fairy tale.

"This is beautiful." I remark, looking over at Lexa.

It's only now that I notice that she's been watching me and my reactions the entire time. Her eyes are so soft and there's a gorgeous smile spreading across her face as we look at each other.

We go over and sit on the couch, immediately moving over and cuddling with each other. I rest my head on Lexa's shoulder and she kisses my forehead. She murmurs reminders about the other clans, which might sound like an odd thing to do but it's actually comforting.

After that, I lean up and kiss her. It starts getting heavier and I end up straddling her on the couch. I try to control my wandering hands, but I end up pushing up her shirt and running my hands over her abs. She pulls away and rests her forehead against mine, both of us breathing heavily. Lexa kisses my nose and lets out a shaky breath.

"I think it is too early in our relationship to go any further." Lexa says. "And I would not like our first time to be on a couch."

"Alright. Should we talk about this, though? Get everything out in the open?" I ask. Lexa cocks her head, confused. I can't resist kissing her again quickly because she's so cute when she doesn't understand what I mean. "That just means that I'm wondering if we should tell each other everything now or wait for a bit."

"Now would be best. So what exactly should we talk about?" Lexa questions, resting her hands on my hips.

Oh right I'm still on top of her. But unless she asks or seems uncomfortable, I'm not moving. She's too comfortable for me to want to move. Plus I'm loving the fact that it seems like I'm the top in this relationship.

"How far we've gone. You know, our previous experience. Other than that, I don't know. It's hard to think when I'm on top of you." I admit. "But I don't want to move."

Lexa grins and kisses me. "Alright. Well, I had sex with Costia a few times, but I have not since she died. What about you?"

"The farthest I've ever gone is touching your abs. Which, by the way, are fantastic."

"I can tell." Lexa says, smirking and glancing pointedly down. Float me, I've been feeling up her
abs this entire time. "You have never had sex?"

I frown. "Is that so hard to believe? In the culture I was raised in, sex was kind of looked down on. Plus, I was in solitary confinement for a year."

Lexa nods understandingly. "That is true, I forgot about that for a moment. It is just..." She trails off for a moment, blushing lightly. "Clarke, you are a beautiful woman. It just seems like someone would have come before me."

"One guy tried." I snorted, remembering that idiot. "His name was Finn and he was in the Ark's jail as well. Because of who my mom is, she was able to convince them to let me out once a week to walk around in the jail so long as I didn't say a word. He always approached me and offered to take me to a private corner of the jail to have some fun." I shake my head at the memory. "Even the time his girlfriend was there visiting him and was right there while he flirted with me. That time, I kicked him right in the crotch. And his girlfriend punched him in the face, broke up with him, and then apologized to me. Hang on." I say, remembering the girl's face. My eyes widen. "Holy crap that was Raven."

"The girl who build the metal box you came down in?" Lexa asks.

"Yeah. Wow, I can't believe she dated that asshat. But anyway, assuming we do more you'll be my first everything."

Lexa kisses me softly. "Then I will make sure everything is perfect when the time comes. You deserve the world, Clarke."

"Thank you." I barely resist telling her I love her. Float me, it might be too soon but it's going to come out eventually. And probably sooner rather than later. "Well, you don't have to get any more candles for the romantic part, you have more than enough in here." I tease.

Lexa gasps dramatically. "Clarke, I could never have too many candles."

I laugh at her reaction, making her beam at me. "Babe, this entire tower is a giant candle. You have enough."

Lexa just shakes her head fondly and kisses me. "What is a babe?"

"It's a term of endearment. Like ai hodnes (my love) or something." I explain.

Lexa nods. "Alright. On that subject, could I call you 'terms of endearment' like that? In private at first if it is okay with you so we know what we are comfortable with."

"Yeah, that's fine. Hodnes (love)." I say, winking at her.

Lexa chuckles and I lean in, capturing her lips with mine. Neither of us deepen the kiss, so it stays gentle and sweet. We're so focused on each other that we don't hear the door open.

"See, I told you that is what they would be doing." Anya's voice snaps us out of our lovely haze.

I blush and get up, reaching out a hand to help Lexa up as well.

"You were right." Luna says, smirking at us. "Come on you two, dinner is waiting."

Chapter End Notes
Well they had the sex talk... And Finn and Raven aren't dating! Go Raven, dump his raggedy ass! Thank you all for reading and your wonderful comments! Stay awesome!
Luna and Anya lead Lexa and I to where we will be eating dinner. They keep looking back like they're checking to make sure we're not making out against a wall or something. Lexa and I just hold hands, which they of course notice and smirk at.

"Do not stay up too late tonight, lovebirds." Anya warns. "Tomorrow is going to be a busy day."

"We should probably be saying that to you." I retort, making Lexa smile and Luna look smug.

"We will try not to be loud enough where you two can hear us." Luna responds.

"Biga sis (big sister), you are two floors below us." Lexa points out.

"I know." Luna says, and then she and Anya high five.

We sit at a smaller table (there's also a very long one that can probably easily seat twenty) with Lexa and I on one side and Anya and Luna on the other.

"So what is the plan?" Anya asks, leaning back in her chair. Her lips twitch up into a small but genuine smile when she realizes that Luna has her arm around her. "When are we going to tell the others that Clarke is the sky girl?"

"That is up to Clarke." Lexa says, taking my hand in hers again. "If it is okay with you I will introduce you as my new advisor."

"That's fine."

"After that, we will hear what the clan leaders have to say. Then, Nia will most likely cast doubt on my ability to lead as well as ask about my interest in you, the girl who fell from the sky." Lexa predicts.


"And Luna, she will ask about you too. She will probably ask where you have been, and possibly ask me to kill you like tradition dictates."

"That is fine. I know you will not do it." Luna says.

Food is set out in front of us, stopping the conversation as we all eat. Luna and Anya eat more quickly than normal, as well as more food in general. It's probably because they wore each other out with their fun in bed earlier.

Luna and Anya throw around some half-joking and half-serious ideas on how to kill Nia. Some are ridiculous, but some might actually work. The ridiculous ones are like "we could throw her to Titus and say she wants to bed Lexa. That will definitely kill her." Which also terrifies me because I would like to go to bed with Lexa and I don't want to be killed by a grumpy bald guy. Though I'm sure that either Lexa or I would kill him first.

We leave after dinner and they say goodnight to us. When we turn around to go back to Lexa's bedroom, I can already hear them kissing right behind us.
Apparently, breakfast is going to be served in our rooms in the morning, so we won't see them until the clan meeting.

Lexa, still holding my hand, leads me back upstairs. This time, neither of us get pinned against a wall. The guards open the doors to her room and she nods to them as we walk in.

Lexa lets go of my hand when we're inside and the doors close behind us. I fight the urge to pout and watch as Lexa gracefully moves around the room, finding a few pieces of clothing seemingly at random. She hands me a top and shorts while she holds onto a black dress.

"These are your sleep clothes. I had them brought here. Go down that hallway and on your right there will be a bathroom you can change in and get ready for bed in. I will change out here."

I kiss her cheek and thank her before following her directions. The bathroom is just as beautiful and extravagant as Lexa's bedroom, with a woodsy theme that just works somehow. There's only a small window in here so there are a bunch of candles lighting up the room.

There's a set of double doors in here and I can't figure out why they'd be in a bathroom. It's not the door I came in from the hallway. Cautiously, I let curiosity get the best of me and open them. I cover my mouth with my hand to muffle my laughter. It's a small walk in closet filled to the brim with candles of all shapes and sizes.

Once I manage to calm down enough to close the doors again. I keep snickering as I change into my pajamas. I grab my dirty clothes and walk back into the bedroom.

Lexa's in front of a small mirror, running her fingers through her hair. I set my clothes down on a nearby table and quietly make my way over to her. She sees me in the mirror and lights up, giving me a gorgeous smile. I wrap my arms around her from behind and rest my chin on her shoulder. She's wearing that beautiful nightdress that has a leg slit. I'll try not to drool this time, but no promises. She looks even more incredible than normal in this.

"Hey beautiful." I murmur, looking into her eyes using the mirror.

Lexa blushes and relaxes further into my arms when I kiss her exposed neck.

"Are you certain you are alright sleeping next to me?" Lexa asks, worry in her voice. "I will not be offended if you say no. Your comfort is my first priority."

"I am. Are you?"

Lexa turns around in my arms and rests her hands on my hips. "Yes."

We grin at each other and kiss softly before parting slightly to get into the bed. We cuddle up in the middle, with Lexa resting her head on my shoulder and I wrap my arm around her. She drapes her arm over my stomach and moves so that we can kiss one last time before we go to sleep. She snuggles up against me, smiling as she closes her eyes. I fall asleep quickly, like I always do when I'm with Lexa.

Chapter End Notes

Awww that was so cute! Next chapter probably will have the start of the meeting unless I end up writing a long breakfast... We'll see! Thank you all for reading and for
your wonderful comments! Stay awesome!
I wake up in the same position that I fell asleep in, with Lexa resting her head on my shoulder. She's still asleep, which means that for some reason I woke up before her. I look up from the bed to see that our breakfast has been set out. My sight focuses when I use my free arm (the one that's not wrapped around Lexa) to rub my eyes. I squint at the breakfast, noticing that there's steam coming from it.

Lexa shifts against me, stretching out her limbs and yawning. I watch her wake up, loving how she automatically cuddles up to me further. Her eyes open slowly and she blinks a few times as if to clear the tiredness from her eyes.

"Good morning." I murmur, my voice still a bit more raspy than usual with sleep.

"Morning, hodnes (love)." Lexa says before yawning widely, her head still on my shoulder.

My eyes widen. By now, I'm pretty much fluent in Trigedasleng, and I definitely know what that word means. I bet that was a slip up. It doesn't mean she loves me, just that she called me 'love'. Oh man, I can't overthink this now. We have a huge meeting to go to.

"Lexa, breakfast is here." I murmur. She grumbles quietly, pressing her face into my neck. Her breath tickles and I giggle at both the feeling and how Lexa's acting. "Honey, come on. We have to get up." Now I'm calling her cute pet names. I have no regrets, though.

Lexa sighs and sits up, groaning dramatically like it was some great inconvenience to her. I sit up too and stretch before massaging my arm that was underneath her, trying to get some feeling back in it.

I feel her eyes on me and look up, pursing my lips to hold back a chuckle. She's staring intently at my chest. This sleeveless shirt isn't really the greatest at holding in my boobs, so I glance down and sure enough my left boob is completely free on confinement. I clear my throat, making Lexa's eyes snap back up and she blushes. I just smirk and rearrange my shirt so I'm covered.

"Your armor should be where you left it. You can change in the bathroom again." Lexa says, looking at the ground.

I gently tilt her chin upward so she looks me in the eyes. I kiss her, grab my armor and head to the bathroom. I change quickly and head back out, practically drooling over the thought of breakfast. Then my mouth drops open because float me, Lexa's still changing into her armor. She has her pants on and her bindings (like a bra, but it looks painful because it's cloth being wrapped around the chest to keep the person's boobs in place) but not her chest piece.

Float me, her abs are beautiful. Her curves, her toned arms... She is way more drool worthy than breakfast. Lexa glances up and blushes when she sees me staring at her, but doesn't make any indication she wants me to look away or leave. I walk over to her as she begins to pull on her chest piece. I help her get it on and then strap her shoulder guard to her.

Lexa kisses me swiftly before taking one of the plates full of food. It reassures me that she's okay with me seeing what I did. We eat in silence, the worry about the meeting seeping in to both of us.
I take Lexa's hand as we head to the throne room. The meeting starts soon, but Titus wanted Lexa to come early. He purposefully left out inviting me, but Lexa's bringing me along anyway.

"Heda."

Titus bows his head to her as soon as he sees Lexa, completely ignoring my presence. The only sign that he noticed that I'm here is his scowl. He looks down and sees us still holding hands and his scowl deepens.

"Titus. What did you want to talk to me about?"

"Your new advisor hardly seems trustworthy enough to be at this meeting." He crosses his arms but refuses to look at me. I run my thumb across the back of Lexa's hand, trying to keep her from getting too angry. "She is hardly of age and she is an advisor to the Heda herself? Not to mention that she is attending one of the most selective meetings with all of the clan leaders. She could turn on you in an instant."

"EM PLENI (enough)!" Lexa yells, taking a deep breath to calm herself. "Watch yourself, Titus. You have been Fleimkepa to many Hedas but that does not give you the right to question me. I trust Clarke. I can listen to your far fetched theories about who might want to kill me. I can listen to you tell me lies like love is weakness. I can listen to you complain about the Natblidas and how in your day they showed more respect, no matter that it is false. But if you harm Clarke in any way or continue to voice your doubt of her I will kick you off of this building." Lexa practically growls.

Titus glares at me like this is all my fault. "Yes, Heda."

"Now go and make sure the clan leaders are all ready for this meeting." Lexa orders.

"But that is a task you ask of servants!" Titus protests.

"That is a task I just assigned to you. Now go."

Titus scurries out, grumbling under his breath.

"You didn't tell him that Luna and Anya are probably naked." I observe. "And possibly having sex again."

Lexa smirks at the closed door. "Perhaps seeing that will help him learn his lesson." We laugh at that and I fall for her a little more with how she lights up when she laughs. "The throne up there is mine, and the ones along the opposite wall are for the clan leaders. There is not a chair for you yet. I will contact the woodcarver tomorrow and tell him to make one. But for now, you will stand on my right. Which right now is the left side."

"Heda." Titus is back already? Dang, he's fast. "The leaders are all on their way."

"Mochof (thank you). Keep the door open."

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact... What I described Clarke sleeping in is what I sleep in. It has the word kiss on it (like the band) and I'm pretty sure I flashed my conservative aunt on accident once. Luckily, I was wearing a sweater over it so I don't think she noticed. Also, holy
crap! We're on chapter 50 already. Thanks for sticking with this story! Next chapter is the meeting. We get to meet Nia. Thank you all for reading and your wonderful comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 51

Lexa walks up the steps to her throne and sits, crossing her legs. She looks even more like a goddess than usual up there. Apparently, I said that out loud because Lexa flushes and murmurs out a "thank you".

She gestures for me to come up and stand beside her. I walk up the steps, trying not to let Lexa's beauty cause me to stumble. I stand to her right, watching as Anya strides in, closely followed by Luna. They're both smirking and a blushing Titus comes in after them. He can't look at either of them.

Anya stands near the door while Titus comes up the steps and stands on the other side of Lexa. Luna comes to the start of the steps but instead of coming up them, she kneels before Lexa. Her head is down and she does not move until Lexa speaks.

"Welcome, Luna." These seem to be the magic words.

Luna stands before heading to a chair on the opposite side of the room and sitting down. This repeats with little variation until the last leader, Nia of Azgeda. Unlike the others who kneeled with respect to Lexa, Nia looks her in the eyes before kneeling and keeps her eyes higher than I've seen anyone else do.

Lexa's voice only comes out slightly different then the calm, disaffected way it did the other times. "Welcome, Nia."

I know Lexa probably doesn't want to out our relationship just yet, so I resist the urge to hold her hand to reassure her. And the growing urge to punch that woman in the face. Nia stands and smirks at Lexa, and I glance at Titus, who seems to like Nia even less than he likes me. She takes a seat, sitting like she's the one on a throne.

"Welcome, leaders of the clans." Lexa says, her voice back to the seemingly unshakable tone she uses when she's acting as the Heda instead of just Lexa. "We will start with reports of what has happened since we last met. Luna, you may start.

This part of the meeting is interesting, but a bit drawn out. In Floukru, the sea is higher than usual, causing them to have need to build a higher seawall. Lexa says that she will provide builders to assist with that. There aren't many other problems big enough for Lexa to offer help, but there's one leader that I can tell Lexa likes. He starts out by talking about the things his clan has been dealing with, then talking about the fact that his daughter was just born and just continues talking about his five kids. Surprisingly, no one even tries to interrupt him and not even Titus seems to dislike him.

After everyone finishes, Lexa speaks again. "Now, are there any other concerns or problems I might be able to assist with?"

"I have a concern." Nia says, leaning forward. Everyone else shifts uncomfortably in their chairs. "What ever happened to that Skai girl you were obsessed with? I am still not sure why you were so interested in her. We should have just killed her."

"Nia, the first Heda came down from the sky. Are you saying we should have just killed her, too?" Lexa asks.
Nia sputters for a moment. "That is completely different."

"Is it? They are both women who fell from the sky in metal boxes. Are you saying that is a mere coincidence?"

"It is unlikely but yes, it is possible. But that is not what I am trying to say. We do not know this girl, she could be a danger to us all."

"I can assure you, she is not a threat to us." Lexa says, glancing at me quickly.

"How can you be so certain?" By Nia's small smirk, she thinks she's got Lexa cornered.

"Because I'm the Sky Girl." I respond, speaking for the first time in front of them. There are gasps and Nia looks shocked.

"You let her become your advisor?" Nia asks. "She has not been down here long yet you trust her that much?"

"Yes. She has saved my life when we were fighting the Pauna." Lexa responds.

"She saved me from the Pauna too." Luna says. "It threw me in a hole and left me to die, but Clarke got me out."

"I could bring any person from TonDC here and they would have nothing but wonderful things to say about her." Indra chimes in, surprising me. "She is a gifted healer, and a good warrior. I trust her."

Wow. I did not expect that. Apparently, neither did anyone else because there's a few moments of stunned silence after that.

"If they trust you, I trust you." Said the guy with the five kids. The other leaders nod except Nia, who just scowls.

"Anything else we need to discuss?" Lexa asks, glancing around the room. No one speaks up. "Very well. This meeting is adjourned. I will see you all again at dinner."

With that, everyone files out except Lexa and I. I get a few curious glances, but the only hostility I see is from Titus and Nia.

"We have to do dinner, too?" I ask her as she stands and walks over to me.

"Yes, but you do not have to come if you do not want to." Lexa assures me, taking my hands in hers.

"I'll go. I'm sure they have a bunch of questions. Plus, the food here is really good but like everything, it's better when I'm with you."

Lexa's face softens and her smile lights up her face. "That was really cute."

"Thanks, I try." I say, kissing her cheek. "But you're pretty cute too."

Instead of responding verbally, Lexa leans in and kisses me. I sigh happily against her lips and we let go of each other's hands. I rest my hands on her waist while Lexa's go to my hair and to cup my face. She pulls away to change the angle and brushes our noses together. I grin at that because jok (fuck), she's so adorable.
Aww that ended up being cute! Especially that end part. Jok Nia though. And Titus. Next chapter, probably more making out and then dinner! Thank you all for reading and your beautiful comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I end up making out in her throne room for a while until it gets close enough to dinner time that we have to go back to her room and freshen up. We stand side by side in the bathroom, fixing our hair and trying to make sure there aren't any visible hickies (it was a pretty intense make out session. I may have straddled her while she sat on her throne at one point) and then we help each other make sure our armor is on right. No clothing was removed during the making out, but I know we were both tempted.

Lexa makes us stop before we leave her room and kisses me gently before kissing my nose. I practically swoon and she smiles brightly, taking my hand. She holds the door open for me and then leads me to a dining room. It's big enough to fit all of the clan leaders and then some.

"Artigas is coming to this dinner. I know you probably miss him." Lexa states, giving me a soft smile.

"Mochof (thank you)." I say. "I haven't seen him since we got to the Heda's Tower."

"I am sure he will tell you what he has been doing with his time when he arrives. Dinner starts soon. I will be there, at the head of the table. You will be next to me and Artigas will be next to you. Anya will be on the other side of you, next to Luna and then Indra will be next to Artigas. People will start arriving in a few minutes. Would you like to sit down or continue to stand?"

"I've had enough standing for one day. I was standing through the whole meeting, and then you kept me on my feet while also sweeping me off of my feet."

"I am not sure what that means." Lexa cocks her head like a confused puppy.

"It means you kept me standing while we were kissing, but you were also being very charming and... Man, it's hard to explain." I grumble that last sentence.

"I think I understand what you are saying," Lexa says. She pulls out my chair and gestures for me to sit.

I do and thank her. "You're such a gentlewoman."

Then I have to explain that to her too. By the time I'm done, clan leaders start coming in and taking their seats. Artigas comes in with Anya and Luna, looking awed as he takes in the room. He sees me and grins. I get up and meet him halfway with a hug.

"It's good to see you again." I say as I pull back. I gesture to the seat beside me and he looks surprised but sits anyway. "What have you been up to?"

"The first day I explored Polis. It is a beautiful city. Since then I have been training with the other guards. They have taught me some interesting fighting techniques."

Lexa holds up a hand and all conversations stop immediately. "Welcome to dinner. I have had the best chef in all the clans prepare a meal for us. Let us eat, drink, and be merry."

Some clan leaders cheer at that, raising their glasses to that. Anya and Luna take a sip of the liquid
that's in their glasses and Anya grimaces.

"You got the strong stuff." Anya observes. She then notices that Luna is still casually sipping it without even flinching. "How are you not fazed by this?"

"What we have in Floukru is stronger." Luna states.

I look warily at my glass until Lexa talks. "Clarke, I made sure that your drink is much less strong. I remember you saying you did not drink much on the Ark."

I practically sigh in relief. "Thank you. And yeah, alcohol was hard to come by and mainly available on our version of the black market. Before coming down here, I never had any."

"What is this Ark?" The man with the five kids asks.

I glance at Lexa, and can tell she doesn't mind me talking about this and the hundred. I find myself repeating my story again, what the Ark is and how it's failing. What happened for me to be locked up and why I was sent down here. By the end of it, I see no more mistrust in anyone but Nia and Titus, who came in with the clan leaders and is sitting on the opposite end of the table, across from Lexa. I think I even see respect in some of the clan leaders' eyes. I finish by telling them about the hundred and how they will be falling soon, so hopefully they won't be too alarmed when it happens. As long as everyone on the Ark isn't dead already, at least. But I keep that thought to myself. By the time I'm done, the food has arrived.

"Clarke also has some insights into the Maunon." Lexa says. "But that is talk for after we eat."

Dinner itself is pretty great, with some leaders questioning me about various things on the Ark or how I view them. Luckily, I don't get too many questions so I'm able to eat. The food is incredible and I actually have to bite back a few moans. I love the food down here.

When everyone's finished, some people come in and clear the plates, refilling some drained glasses.

"So what have you discovered about the Maunon in a few months that we have not discovered in the years they have been our enemies?" Nia asks, clearly hoping I fail at this.

I start explaining everything Lexa and I have found, and don't leave out how they tried to watch us on our way here and how we think they're planning something. I warn everyone to keep an eye out for them and then have to explain to them what that phrase means.

Soon after I finish talking, everyone heads back to their rooms for the night. Lexa and I are the last to leave, and she holds my hand as we walk back to her room.

Chapter End Notes

My dog stole my donut :/ it was absolutely covered in sprinkles and looked delicious and he licked off some frosting before I found it, so I had to toss it... I may have called him an asshole. Anyway! It took me five minutes to look through previous chapters to make sure I brought Artigas to Polis and remembered that clexa has a date to have in Polis... So that'll be coming up. And where I am, it's finally getting cold! Though school starts Tuesday... So on school days updates will be coming later in the day!
Thank you for reading and stay awesome!!
Lexa and I get ready for bed, changing in different rooms. This time, I don't get to accidentally see her with less clothes on than normal. I don't know whether to be saddened by that or relieved (because I might jump her if I see her like that again, and I know we both want our first time together to be special). We slip into bed and I cuddle up against Lexa, resting my head on her chest. Lexa wraps an arm around me and kisses my forehead.

"Clarke?" She asks quietly.

"Yeah?" I tilt my head up so I can look into her eyes.

"I promised you a date here. Would you mind if we do that tomorrow? I would like to show you the city."

"That sounds great." I say, unable to keep from yawning, making Lexa chuckle and kiss the top of my head.

"Sleep, hodnes (love)."

I smile at the pet name and move around a bit to get comfortable. Though it does makes me wonder... Is she scared to say it? Is the whole "love is weakness" thing holding her back? Is she afraid that I don't feel the same? Or (this is the most likely one) is she worried that I'm not ready to hear it?

I've never loved anyone like this. It's terrifying, giving her the means to shatter me. But I trust her. With everything. Every good part about me that she receives willingly and adores. Every bad part that she helps me fight off. Every burden she helps me carry. And I hope I do the same for her. Because Lexa gives me everything, lays all she is bare to me and expects nothing in return. And who she is... She's beautiful. I love her.

My eyes open wide at the realization, though it really shouldn't be news to me. Lexa's sleeping peacefully and I watch her for a moment, taking in how calm and happy she looks. I wonder if she always looks like that when she's sleeping or if it's because I'm in her arms. My fingers twitch and the urge to draw her is stronger than usual. I'll do it in the morning. I lay my head back down on her and it doesn't seem so scary anymore, loving her. I know she won't take it for granted, and that she would never purposely hurt me.

I sigh contently and fall asleep, feeling safe from everything in her arms.

I wake up when a guard brings in breakfast. Confused as to why I haven't woken up until now, I glance up at Lexa to see that she's still sleeping peacefully. I guess she was really tired after yesterday.

I carefully make my way out of bed, grinning when Lexa unconsciously grumbles as I do. I rummage through my backpack as quietly as I can and pull out my notebook and pencil. I pick up a chair and move it until I'm satisfied with my view of Lexa.

I draw until she starts to stir. I get up and set my notebook and pencil on the chair. Lexa moves again, seeming like she's grimacing and trying to get away from something. Is she having a
nightmare? I walk around the bed, heading to the side of it that's closest to Lexa. Lexa shifts and then gasps, sitting up. She's breathing heavily and doesn't seem like she's focusing on reality right now.

"Hey, hey. Lexa." I say gently.

I reach forward slowly so that it won't startle her when I touch her arm. She blinks and then turns and looks at me. Her mouth drops open slightly and her jaw shudders as she exhales.

"Clarke?" Lexa's voice sounds raspier than normal. She squints at me like she can't quite believe I'm here.

I sit on the bed next to her. "Yeah, I'm here. It was just a bad dream, Lexa. You're safe."

Lexa blinks rapidly and then cuddles up against me. I wrap an arm around her and kiss the top of her head. I keep murmuring reassurances until she calms down.

"Thank you, Clarke." Lexa says, her head resting on my shoulder. I automatically start running my fingers through her hair. It's something that my mom used to do to calm me down. "I... Dreamt that Nia took you away and gave you to the Maunon. They turned you into a Reaper, Clarke. What terrifies me the most is that most of my dreams are prophecies."

"That one isn't. There's no way I would let anyone take me away from you. You're stuck with me now." I say the last sentence jokingly and Lexa chuckles.

"Good. I love having you by my side." Lexa sounds almost shy. She clears her throat and then notices breakfast, which is not as warm as it was when it was brought in. "Shall we eat? I have an eventful day planned."

"Alright." Lexa doesn't move and I laugh. "Babe, you've got to get up first."

Lexa kisses me and then gets up. We eat breakfast quickly, not wanting it to get any colder than it is.

"I will change in the bathroom." Lexa offers when we finish.

I put on my clothes, excited for our date. I wear a button up shirt that I know makes my boobs look great. After yesterday's make out session, I'm pretty sure that Lexa's a boob person. She only grabbed my butt a few times, but sometimes it was because I was almost falling off of her lap.

Lexa walks out when I'm finishing putting on a belt, stopping in her tracks and taking me in. We check each other out. Lexa's in normal clothes that are deliciously tight around her arm muscles.

"You look beautiful." Lexa says, snapping out of it and walking up to me. She rests her hands on my hips, checking my eyes to make sure I'm okay with the contact.

"You look gorgeous." I respond, making Lexa break out into a big smile.

We both lean in and meet each other halfway in a gentle kiss that makes me melt against her.

When we pull away, Lexa entwines our hands. "Shall we?"
So Clarke loves Lexa... When will they say the words? Next chapter is exploring Polis on their date! Thank you all for reading and stay awesome!
Lexa and I head to the elevators hand in hand. She doesn't seem to notice or mind that some guards are staring at our entwined hands in shock.

We wait as the elevator descends, slowly making its way to the ground floor. I can practically feel Lexa's excitement radiating off of her. When the doors finally open, we continue out of the Heda's Tower and into the street. It's as busy as it was when we first came here, if not busier.

There are a lot of vendors nearby, shouting about their wares and selling a wide variety of things. Lexa leads me over to a clear spot where it's not too loud so we can hear each other without raising our voices.

"Polis has always been a great, prosperous city. There are many different places for different people. There are places where mainly people from Azgeda live, a place where mainly Trikru live, a place for all of the clans so the ones that live here do not get as home sick. There are also areas for different crafts, like a row of stores that sell and make any kind of clothing. There are rows of blacksmiths, ones that specialize in weapons-making, ones who specialize in armor, and ones who specialize in making different everyday things."

"That's incredible!" I say when she pauses.

She smiles at me happily. "Most of it happened before I was Heda. Polis mainly used to be a refuge for those fleeing war or their home clans. Since I became Heda, I worked on something the previous Heda told me was a good idea, but impossible. I helped turn this city into the center of the clans' trading. You can buy and sell nearly anything here. I consider it among some of my greatest accomplishments."

I can see the spark of pride in her eyes as she watches the market. "You did a great job."

"Mochof (thank you). Now come, I want to show you some of the things that you can buy here." Lexa takes me to a nearby stall, greeting the seller by name. "Mars, it is good to see you again."

Mars, a tall dark tan woman with braided hair, grins widely at Lexa and the clasp forearm. "Heda! Welcome back. I just got restocked, if you and your friend are interested."

We just got "gal pal"ed. I didn't think that was a thing anymore, let alone something that existed out of old books that Wells made me read.

"Yes, thank you." Lexa responds.

Mars opens a container and an odd smell filters into the air. I glance inside and see a few dead fish and some other sea creatures that I don't recognize (they could've mutated).

"I will take the usual." Lexa states.

"Good choice. I will have Juno bring them to your kitchen."

With that, Mars bows and accepts a few coins from Lexa. The form of money they use is mainly coins, but they trade goods as well. Lexa seems to prefer coins. Mars turns around and yells for
Juno to come here. Lexa and I walk away when she starts ordering him around in Trigedasleng.

"What did you get?" I ask.

Lexa raises my hand to her lips, playfully kissing the back of my hand. "You will find out tonight, hodnes (love)."

I want to tell her that I know what hodnes means but I don't want to get into a conversation that's bound to be incredibly emotional when we're in public. Especially since it seems like some of her people think love is weakness. And... I'll have to get used to calling them our people because they're more welcoming and accepting of me than the Ark ever was. We'll talk the love thing soon. As long as I don't chicken out.

Lexa shows me around to some seemingly random shops with different wares. There's one that has seashells, including ones that you can hear the ocean in. Though as someone who knows a bit about the human body, I know that it's just the blood thumping in my ears. I love it regardless and Lexa buys one for me, despite my insisting that I don't need it. I kiss her cheek as a thank you (I'm not sure if she would be okay with me kissing her on the lips where anyone can see just yet). Lexa blushes so hard the vendor has to cover his mouth to (badly) hide his laughter.

Lexa luckily doesn't mind, she's too busy looking at me with these soft eyes that make me want to lie down with her and kiss her for hours.

I laugh when Lexa lights up at the candle store, which is larger than I thought it would be. I chuckle at the thought that maybe Lexa's giving them enough business to afford this.

"Heda!" A woman says happily. I'm guessing she's the owner or something. "It is good to see you back! And you are in luck, I just finished a few candles with a new scent a few days ago."

After an hour of debate, Lexa ends up buying two candles with the new scent and three others. Lexa puts them with my shell in a bag she brought. She seems happy and content while she leads me around the city, showing me the area where blacksmiths are and the barracks where most warriors stay when they come here or are stationed here.

There's a gleam in her eye as she leads me somewhere in Polis, not telling me where.

"Lex, come on." I say, exaggerating my whine. "Where are we going?"

"You will love it, Clarke." Is all she says and then Lexa gives me such a beautiful smile my brain stops working for a moment.

I gasp, realizing where Lexa has taken me. It's the art area, with paintings and sculptures and sketches hanging up to display the artist that lives there's talent.

I look at Lexa and see that she's smiling softly at me. I open my mouth but find myself unable to find the right words to thank her for today, for this beautiful sight. Giving up, I lean in and kiss her, hoping she doesn't mind showing off our love to the people of Polis. She grins against my lips and then pulls me closer.

Chapter End Notes

Well, that was cute! Hopefully it was good :) I just love Lexa the candle slut so much
that I have to add her to almost every story I write! Soon, things will happen and there will be action... Next chapter is probably going to either continue with this or have them traveling back to TonDC. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 55

Chapter Notes

(This chapter will have Lexa and Clarke being awkward nerds talking about love)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

After Lexa and I kiss for a few minutes in the art district, she takes me to some of the houses/stores and introduces me to the artist. I am completely in awe the entire time, loving how art and making art has survived. Before now I wasn't sure that there were any artists down here, let alone ones that can paint or sculpt or draw for a living. It feels like we spend hours there until it gets late and Lexa gently reminds me that we should head back.

Still hand in hand, we walk back to the Heda's Tower. We go straight to Lexa's room (I can't resist saying... Nothing about us or our relationship is straight). Lexa leads me to a really comfy looking couch. I sit next to her and cuddle against her side. She begins running her fingers through my hair, making me relax further.

"The food will be here soon." Lexa murmurs, breaking the silence.

I just hum in response. We sit there for a while until there's a knock at the door. I grumble when Lexa gets up and answers the door.

"Mochof (thank you). Tell Ris that the food looks delicious." Lexa says and then closes the door. She turns back around to me, carrying a tray with two plates and two glasses on it. "Where would you like to eat?"

"Can we eat here?" I ask.

I don't really want to move from the couch unless it's to go to bed. I'm comfortable here, and my legs are tired after walking around all day.

"Sure, hodnes (love)." Lexa smiles and sits next to me again, as close as she was last time.

Dang, the love talk. We have to talk about that. Later, though. I don't want her choking on shrimp or whatever she bought. That's a lie, she's too good at everything to choke on anything. I just want to enjoy a meal before we have a talk that's either going to make our relationship stronger or... I don't even want to think about the alternative.

To my surprise, the fish and seafood is actually really good. I was expecting it to taste like slime and regret. In the glasses, there's wine but it's not strong, luckily. I would like to have this conversation tonight (mainly because I know if I don't then I'll chicken out later) and I don't want to have it when either of us are anything more than slightly buzzed. We chat about what we saw today, and I tease Lexa about her candle obsession. She blushes at that, so I assure her that I find it cute. At least she's not obsessed with collecting something creepy.

Someone from the kitchen comes up and takes our empty plates and glasses away.

"Are you ready for bed, Clarke?" Lexa asks about twenty minutes after the tray is taken away.
"Yup." I get up, groaning as I stretch.

We get dressed and I nervously play with my fingers as I return to the bedroom.

Lexa's wearing that beautiful black night gown again. She kisses my forehead when I reach her. "Come to bed, hodnes."

We get into bed together and I squirm nervously, sitting back against the headboard. Lexa notices and sits up, gently touching my arm.

"What is wrong?" She asks worriedly.

"Um. Nothing's wrong, we just should talk." I respond, trying to relax but failing miserably.

"Are you alright, Clarke?" I nod and it doesn't comfort her. I can't find the words yet. If anything, Lexa seems even more distressed. She speaks her next words quietly. "Clarke... Are we alright? Have I done something wrong?"

"No, we're okay. And you're perfect, Lexa. You haven't done anything wrong." I let out a breath. "It's just... I know what hodnes means."

Lexa freezes beside me, looking like a kid who got caught stealing cookies. "I-I apologize. Have I made you uncomfortable? Because I can stop calling you hodnes."

"No, it's fine Lexa. I don't mind. I just want to know what it means."

Lexa's brows furrow in confusion. "You said that you know-"

She trails off then and I speak. "I do, I meant I want to know what it means to you. Are you using the word love because it's a cute nickname? Or is it something else?"

There's a pause and I let Lexa gather her thoughts, though I'm worried about what she's going to say. She takes a deep breath and lets it out. "I am not sure if you are ready to hear it."

"You won't scare me away." I promise. "You don't have to say it, especially if you're not ready to."

"I am. I say hodnes because." She trails off for a moment, looking down at the furs before looking right into my eyes. "Ai hod yu in (I love you), Clarke."

My mouth drops open slightly and I look at her for a moment in awe. She loves me? That's what I had hoped, but I never dreamed that someone as incredible and beautiful as Lexa would give me the time of day, let alone love me! I don't realize how long I am staring until she shifts nervously, avoiding my eyes. I gently touch her jaw and guide her face upward until she looks into my eyes again.

"Ai hod yu in seintaim (I love you too)." I murmur.

Lexa's eyes fill with tears and she smiles. She's so beautiful in this moment that I can feel myself falling for her harder. Lexa brings me forward and kisses me deeply. We both ignore our tears (I may be crying too) in favor of savoring this now salty tasting kiss.

We lie down and trade sweet kisses, repeating our declarations over and over again both in Trigedasleng and in in English. We fall asleep in each other's arms, probably looking like hot messes (emphasis on the hot) because neither of us bothered to wipe away our tears.
That was awkward to even write! But hey, now these gay nerds have declared their love! We're getting pretty close to the hundred coming down, by the way. Next chapter might be a bunch of fluff, or maybe I'll skip to traveling. I'll figure it out eventually (in other words, while I write it). Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
The next day passes quickly, with Lexa and I staying in bed practically all morning (it's mostly innocent, though Lexa is very happy when I let her touch my boobs during a particularly hot make out session).

After that, I'm subjected to Titus' scowling face when Lexa announces we will be heading back to TonDC tomorrow. I know she would rather have us stay in Polis, but most of my stuff is there and I feel like we should get on the road soon. I can feel it in the air; something is going to happen.

I tell Lexa about my feeling, and she nods solemnly. "Sha, hodnes (yes, love) I feel it too."

I relax a bit, glad I'm not being paranoid or anything. Plus I melt, unable to resist kissing her because I love how she calls me that. It's definitely worth the Titus death glares.

We say goodbye to the other leaders since all of them other than Indra and Luna are leaving today. I know I'll sleep better tonight knowing that Lexa and I aren't in the same building as Nia.

Luna, Anya, and Indra are coming with us back to TonDC tomorrow. I'm kind of dreading sleeping anywhere near Luna and Anya because I walked up the stairs once past their floor and could hear them from the stairwell. I'm hoping they'll at least try to stay quiet.

Before I know it, it's the next day and I'm finishing packing. Lexa and I didn't do anything last night, just making out and light touching until we both were tired enough to fall asleep in each other's arms. Our horses are happy to see us, stamping at the ground excitedly as we approach.

Lexa and I stop to greet them with soft whispered words before we get on them. The others get on their own horses as we wait for a few more, with Artigas and some extra guards arriving a bit later than the rest of us. After Lexa and I told Anya, Luna, and Indra about how we both have a bad feeling, they insisted on more guards to make sure we're safe.

A few guards lead, guiding us toward Polis' exit. Lexa and I ride near the front, side by side. Being by her side almost feels natural now, but I can't help fearing that that's all about to change.

I only let myself relax after an hour's past on the road and nothing's happened. We have another day's worth of riding before we get close enough to the Maunon (Mountain Men) to be worried.

Lexa and I occupy our time by trading stories of our youth and teaching each other about our cultures. It's a long day, and that night Lexa and I are so exhausted we just give each other a goodnight kiss before falling asleep.

I stir at the sound of people moving around outside, groaning quietly and snuggling against Lexa further. I feel her laugh and poke her side in retaliation. Lexa flinches but giggles at the touch. She's ticklish? Made further awake by that revaluation, I open my eyes and tickle her until she covers her mouth to muffle her laughter and begs me to stop.
I relent, stopping my attack and kissing her. "Good morning."

"You are cruel, ai hodnes (my love)." Lexa pants, smiling up at me. Her hair is messy, both from sleep and from trying to squirm away from me. I just hum in response, lying down on top of her. "Clarke," she laughs at my antics. "You are being childish."

"Well, where I come from I'm still technically a kid." I murmur.

"Only for another month." I can hear the amusement in her voice. "But you are no longer up in the sky with them, you are here with me. And to me, you are a beautiful woman."

Float me, she's so smooth and sweet. That earns her quite a few more kisses before we get up and her dressed. We turn our back to each other as we change, though I can't help wishing that I did see more of her. I really do want Lexa, and I'm ninety seven percent sure that I'm ready, but I want our first time to be perfect. So not in a tent surrounded by more than ten people. Though I know that it's Lexa, so it'll be perfect no matter what.

We eat breakfast, enduring Anya an Luna's teasing about how cute we are together. Once I start pointing out adorable things that they do together (which for them is training together, staying together basically always, etc), they stop making fun of us.

We get on the road soon after that, and though no one says it I know they were all waiting for Lexa and I to be ready.

Today's the day where we'll be getting close to the Maunon. I can tell that it's not just me that's on edge, everyone's tense and it only gets worse as the sun creeps across the sky. There are no stories being told, no jokes to be laughed at today. I can't help getting caught up in the fear, my eyes going to every movement from an animal. It's like all of us are collectively taking a breath and just waiting for the worst, for something terrible to happen. So when something happens, no one's surprised. What happens, however, is something that nobody saw coming.

I rub at my nose, annoyed with how it's randomly choosing to be runny now. I sniff, feeling gross. There's something in the air that isn't natural. Looking around, I notice that the others have noticed too and are glancing around, searching for the source of the smell. It almost smells like... Sulfur? I can tell the direction it's coming from, so I look at the mountain and my eyes widen in horror. There's a horribly ugly yellow mist, slowly but surely making its way toward us.

Chapter End Notes

Oh man. Cliff hanger. Just a reminder that while I may be an asshole, I don't kill off my characters so don't worry! They'll be fine! Kinda. *cue villainous laughter*

Anyway... What could happen? Will they get away? (Of course) Will they survive? (Yup) Will something bad happen??? (Ha, definitely) So... Thank you all for reading and for your amazing and encouraging comments! Stay awesome!
There's a horribly ugly yellow mist, slowly but surely making it's way toward us. It's in the valley between the Mountain and the mountain we're on, but it's coming towards us like possessed fog. Could the Maunon be able to control it?

Snapping out of my haze, I start yelling. "The fog is coming from the valley!"

The others look and one of them pulls out a great big horn and blows it. A loud sound comes out.

"That is a warning for all nearby people that it is coming." Lexa explains to me before shouting. "There is a cave we can stay in half a mile ahead to the left! Go!"

People click their tongues and all of the horses begin galloping.

"Lexa!" I call over the wind, trying to be heard. She's right next to me, but brings her horse slightly closer. "Is this what the Maunon have been planning?"

"Perhaps. If so this is not an attack, it is a diversion. When we get to the cave, there is a nearby tree we could climb to get a better look at the fog." Lexa suggests, the horses slowing slightly as we get close to the cave.

"Alright. We'll get down before the fog gets too close."

The cave comes into view seconds later, a large one that I can't believe I didn't see on the way to Polis. We all dismount our horses and lead them into the cave. When Lexa and I walk back out of the cave, no one tries to stop us but we do get some concerned looks.

The tree she mentioned seems so tall that it almost looks like its top branches are scraping the sky. Luckily, Lexa taught me how to climb trees back when we were in TonDC. I've never climbed one this big, though. I take a deep breath and a moment to be grateful I'm not scared of heights before I begin climbing after Lexa.

If it were a smaller tree that I weren't scared of falling off of (or of what could be happening with the Maunon) I would definitely be looking up and checking out her butt. I'm breathing a little heavily by the time we get to a high enough height to satisfy Lexa. We rest on a nook on a particularly large branch, sitting close together.

"It's not coming any closer than the road." I murmur, confused by that. "Why?"

"I do not-"

A loud sounds interrupts us, coming from above. It sounds like a huge explosion and we both look up. My eyes widen when I realize what's happening. The hundred's coming down. That sound was the drop ship hitting the atmosphere.

"It's the hundred." I blurt out, watching the metal box falling a few miles passed TonDC. It hits the ground with a thunk, only just loud enough to hear it from here.

"Now?" Lexa murmurs. "Why would the Maunon try to hide that?"
"I don't think they could know when they're coming down. That isn't what they're trying to distract us from. Come on, we should tell the others about this."

"Sha. That is a good idea." Lexa says.

We begin slowly making our way down the tree, looking up every once in a while to make sure the fog isn't creeping closer. It isn't, it's staying at the road, but when we get down, it starts edging closer to us. We run into the cave. It started moving as soon as our feet hit the ground... Assuming the Maunon do control it, they must have pressure pads or cameras or spies somewhere.

"Clarke, Heda. Why did you run off?" Indra asks, crossing her arms. I don't know what's worse, the concern I can see hidden in her eyes or the disapproval coming off of her in waves.

"We thought the Maunon may be distracting us from something with the fog so we climbed a tree to get a better look at everything." I explain. "We don't know exactly what they're doing it for yet, but we did see the source of that loud noise. The hundred is coming down. Well, they just came down. That sounds was them hitting the atmosphere." Judging by the blank stares I get, only Lexa gets what I'm saying.

"They are here?" Indra asks.

"Sha, a few miles passed TonDC. We should keep an eye on them, send scouts until Clarke and I can go talk to them. Do not let the scouts contact them."

A guard nods and begins writing something on a piece of paper. "I will ride to TonDC faster and give the orders after the fog clears."

"Mochof (thank you)." Lexa says.

We wait for a while, eventually growing impatient enough that Anya risks poking her head out of the entrance to see if it's gone.

"It is still there." Anya sighs, sitting down next to Luna. "Usually it is gone by now."

The horses are growing restless as well, probably liking being trapped in here even less than we do. I have to say, I'm impressed that they didn't trample anyone when the drop ship made that noise. They had to have been pretty spooked, but they're incredibly well trained.

When one of them starts panicking, I go over to it and calm it down by speaking softly and stroking it, knowing it won't understand the words but will understand my gentle tone. It calms pretty fast and after I'm sure it's okay, I head to back to where Lexa's standing. She's looking at me with a loving gaze that makes my heart beat faster.

Before either of us can say anything, there's a rustling sound coming from outside. It can't be an animal, they've all fled from the acid fog. It's incredibly unlikely that it's a person because acid fog kills people, unless they have those Maunon suits...

A white ball is tossed in the cave, bouncing a few times before stopping near Lexa and I. We both have our hands on our swords, tense. I realize what it is, too late to do much.

"Cover your nose! Don't breathe it in!" I yell as white mist comes out of the ball.

It's too potent for that apparently, because even though I follow my own device, I only stay awake long enough to see the others passing out and the horses beginning to seem tired. I feel my back sliding down the wall as I start to lose consciousness, grabbing Lexa's hand being my final
movement before I pass out.

Chapter End Notes

Ooh, cliff hanger!! Man, a lot of stuff happened this chapter! The hundred, the Maunon... What will happen next? Thank you all for reading and for your incredible and encouraging comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 58

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

I wake with a start, inhaling deeply but keeping my eyes closed. The light is so bright that it's piercing and there's a continuous beeping noise coming from the right. My nose itches and I try to reach up and scratch it. When I feel nothing happening, I try again. My limbs won't follow my orders and I start to panic. The beeping speeds up and I try to wiggle my fingers, despairing when my body doesn't respond. I can't even open my eyes.

The sound of soft feminine murmuring fills the air and I know it's not my voice. Someone is here with me? Oh my god, Lexa! Where's Lexa? Is she okay?

With the thought of her in my mind, I open my eyes, blinking away the blurriness and sit up. There's a girl with cropped black hair in a Maunon suit next to the bed I'm in, staring at me with shock.

"Impossible. You- you can't be awake." The girl stammers, taking a step back. I notice the needle she's holding and flinch back, only then noticing that they've stuck an IV drip into my arm.

My mouth is dry and it hurts to breathe, but I open my mouth. "Where's Lexa?" Float me, it feels like my throat is burning when I talk.

When she doesn't answer, I clench my fists. I'll fight her if I have to. I have to find Lexa. When I reach for her, she squeaks and sticks the needle into the bag. I feel the effect almost immediately, knowing it's probably a sedative she put in there. And it's an extremely strong one, judging by how there's three of her now. My vision swims and I groan, wincing at the pain that grips my throat. I lay back, clutching my head and trying not to pass out. I fail and fall into a deep, dreamless sleep.

When I wake up, I jolt upwards, rapidly looking around the room. I'm alone. Everything is white. The walls, the bed, the sheets, the door, everything. There's one picture on the wall, an Old Earth one that depicts the outside world.

Where am I?

I get up, noting that my shaky legs may mean that I've been asleep for a while. I walk toward the door, using the bed and then the wall to help hold myself up. I glance out the window in the door to see another door that looks exactly like this one. The window is empty and so is the hallway.

I try the door handle but it's locked. I glance around the room again, looking for something to help me escape. That's when I notice a camera on the ceiling, a red blinking light telling me that someone's watching me. I reach for my swords and wait, I don't have them. Alarmed, I look down to see that I'm in plain clothes, like the ones we had on the Ark. My swords and armor are gone.

My jaw twitches with anger that I barely contain. Not only have they stolen me away from the only people who gave me a sense of belonging, but they took my clothes and weapons and most importantly, they took me away from Lexa. Though I doubt they would pass up the chance to grab her. So if they have me, they must have her. I have to save her.

I begin searching the room, looking behind the painting and under the bed for something, anything. I find nothing and take a deep breath. I can't exactly break off a part of the bed without seriously injuring myself, so that leaves me with one choice. Well, two. I'll try the less painful one first.
I walk back to the door and try to force the door handle and get out. It doesn't work. Sighing, I raise my fist in the air and smash the window, hissing at the pain. Getting up on my toes, I reach through the window, wincing as some broken glass cuts my arm. I unlock it and then pull my arm back in, examining my wounds. I'll live, there's nothing too deep or anything that requires immediate attention, though I'll definitely want to patch myself up soon. I pluck out some larger pieces of glass that's embedded in my arm and leave the rest for later.

I open the door, peeking out. I don't see anyone in the hallways. Crouching down, I pick up the biggest and sharpest shard of glass I can find, ignoring the pain. I slowly make my way down the hallway, holding up the shard.

After what feels like a few minutes of walking, a girl appears comes into view, the same one I saw the last time I was awake.

She's looking down at a clipboard, not even noticing that I'm here. I push her against the wall and place the shard against her neck. The girl drops her clipboard, looking absolutely terrified. Up close, I can tell that she's only about my age.

"Where's Lexa?" I ask.

She's trembling. "I-I don't know who that is."

"She's the commander, the Heda." I growl. The girl pales further.

"I think she's in the..." She hesitates. "There isn't a good way to put this. Please don't kill me." She whimpers.

"I won't if you take me to her. Now where is she?"

"With the others. Um, she's probably in a cage. I heard Cage laughing about how he would make sure he'd get the legendary Commander's blood."

"Her blood?" I hear footsteps behind us. "You're going to start leading me to her right now. Scream for help and I'll kill you. Okay?" She nods rapidly. "Now move, and answer my question."

"We're only down here because we can't stand the radiation, just a small leak could kill us all. We found that the savages' blood, when put through our veins, heals the radiation burns."

"Don't call us savage. You're the ones that kidnap people and drain them of their blood."

"Not all of us agree with it, like me. But it's the only way." She pleads, trying to get me to see her point.

"You know that it's not. Now take me to where you're keeping my people."

Chapter End Notes

Man, I'm loving writing this right now! I wrote so many notes down about what could happen! You all will just have to wait and see... Next chapter might be where she sees Lexa again! Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
The girl continues trembling as she leads me through the compound. Hopefully, she's not leading me into a trap. I don't really want to kill her.

"What's your name?" I ask, curious.

"Maya." She answers, her voice shaky.

"I'm Clarke. Now I want one more thing from you other than Lexa. Either make me or find me a map of this place."

"There should be a map or something near the cages. I can get it for you when we get there." Maya stammers out, trying to sound strong.

"Mochof (thank you). How much farther is it?"

"Just past that turn. We have to go left."

We go left when we reach it and my jaw tenses when I see an old man with a guard on either side of him. The guards have guns. I keep Maya in front of me and she whimpers in fear. The old man looks calm and is holding himself like he's in charge. He doesn't seem too concerned about how Maya has a shard of glass to her throat.

"Did you know about this? Did you lead me into a trap?" I growl in her ear.

"No, no I swear! I had no idea they'd be here!" She gasps out pleadingly.

"Why don't you set down your weapon?" The old man suggests.

Okay, it seems like he wants to talk but I'm really not in the mood. Lexa's in there somewhere in a fucking cage like she's some wild animal and I'm not letting anything or anyone stop me from getting her the heck out of there.

"Why don't you set down yours?" I retort.

The guards have their weapons pointed at me, and with a wave of the old man's hand, they stop pointing it at me. They're still holding them and are giving me death glares, but at least I don't have to worry about a stray bullet.

"I have a proposition to you..." He trails off for a moment, frowning. "What is your name?"

He doesn't deserve to know, but I don't want to start an argument about that. Lexa could be injured or scared (though she would never admit either one except to me) and right now I can't do crap about it.

"Clarke." I say.

"Clarke." He nods. "I have a proposition for you. Stay."

"What?" I ask incredulously. Surely I heard him wrong.
"Stay with us. You will be safe here, away from the savages. Away from war, and hunger. You won't have to fight to survive. I've heard about your prowess in art. Here you could hone that ability. What do you say?" He has a kind, large smile on his face.

"Why yes, I would love to stay with the people who kidnapped me and my girlfriend." I say sarcastically. "Now let us through or I'll cut her throat."

He frowns, seeming to understand that he won't be able to sway me. There's something in his eyes that tells me that somehow I messed up. Wait. Crap, I told him that Lexa and I are dating. Hopefully she won't mind.

"Very well. Just know that the door to your girlfriend is just beyond this one. That door will lock behind you and there is no exit. You will be stuck, Clarke."

"Then I'll leave Maya outside that door. I'll figure it out." I say, sounding more confident than I feel.

He purses his lips but step back, away from the door. "This is not wise."

I ignore him and gently push Maya to get her moving again. She squeaks and complies. I glare at the old guy as we walk past, one of his guards holding the door open for us. Once that door closes behind us, I take the shard from where it's been resting against her neck (ice made sure to stay away from her carotid artery so I don't accidentally nick her). She gasps, surprise in her expression.

"So that door will lock behind me?" I ask, pointing to the door on the other end of the hall.

"Yes."

"Alright. Is that where the map is, too?" She nods. "Tell me where." Maya hesitates. "I won't bring you in there and leave you. Just tell me where to find a map. After I go in, you can head back out."

"You're not going to kill me?" She asks in a small, scared voice.

"Your people are the killers, not mine."

Maya purses her lips but doesn't deny it. "There's one pinned up on the wall. It's pretty big, but it's detailed and shouldn't be too hard to pull off. It's above a workstation in there that hasn't been used in years."

"Thank you." I say and begin walking. When I reach the end of the hallway and pull open the door, Maya calls out.

"Wait!" I turn to look at her. "There's doors that look like they lead to an elevator, but it leads to where they dump the bodies and clothes. The chute will lead to the tunnels with Reapers in them." She takes a breath. "For what it's worth, I hope you find her."

Huh. I guess not all Maunon are evil. I give her a thankful smile and go inside, the door shutting behind me and I can hear the lock automatically click.

My mouth drops open slightly in horror when I see what's here. I thought they had a few dozen of us maximum, but there's easily a thousand. There are cages everywhere, stacked two high and they're barely big enough for someone to sit up straight. My eyes fill with tears but I blink them away.

I approach the first row of cages closest to the door, alarmed at how quiet everyone is. They eye
me warily.

"Where's Lexa?" I ask.

"I will not tell you, Maunon scum." A woman spits at my feet.

"I'm not a Maunon, beja (please)." I beg. "I have to find her."

"Roya," another voice calls from a few rows away. "Does she have golden hair and blue eyes?"

"Sha!" She yells back.

"Come here, sky girl. Third row."

I rush over, falling to my knees before the cage where Lexa is. She's on the bottom row. I wondered why she didn't call for me herself, but now I have my answer. She's passed out and leaning back against the bars, her face to me. She's pale and dressed in white clothes that only just cover her chest and pelvis.

"Lexa." I choke out.

Chapter End Notes

Hey! So I know some of you are going to be worried about this ending of the chapter, so I just want to remind you that I won't kill them! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"Lexa." I choke out. I turn to the girl in the cage next to her, the one that called me over here. "Is she okay?"

She purses her lips. "Yes and no." She lowers her voice. "Before I give you more information, you must hide. There is a guard scheduled to come any second now."

I nod to show that I understand and move from my knees up into a crouching position. I hear slow footsteps coming toward me. The guard hums, the sound of them running their fingers along the metal bars of the cages making me flinch. Their walkie talkie crackles and they pause.

"Do you see her, Jefferson?" The person on the other end of the radio asks.

"No. You should chill, Cage. Get that stick out of your butt. If she's as smart as you think she is, there's no way she's here." The guards drawls.

"You need to learn some respect." Cage growls. "Keep patrolling."

I can practically hear the guard's eyes roll. "Yes, sir."

The radio crackles again and I hear the guard reattach it to their uniform. They start walking again, humming a tune I don't recognize. They walk right past the row I'm in, not noticing me. I get up from my crouch and sneak up behind them. I wrap my arm around their neck and their arms go up to try to pry me off of them, choking. They continue struggling, but it gets fainter. When they stop I let go and let them crumple to the ground.

I move their unconscious body to an area where they won't be found easily and take their clothing, leaving mine draped over them so they won't be too cold. I grab the handgun they have and all the ammo I can find. I leave the jacket they were wearing off to give to Lexa. I rush back to her cage and sit on the floor, looking at the girl who talked to me earlier. She looks impressed.

"Smart, sky girl." She nods to the clothes.

"Can you explain now?" I ask worriedly.

"Yes, of course. Heda was taken to there." She points and I fight my gag reflex when I see two people hanging upside down, their blood being drained through clear tubes. "I believe they did that just for fun, to make us angry. A group of guards gathered around her and laughed as they watched her life blood drain from her." She shudders at the memory. "They mocked how she did not fight, though we all know that she wouldn't allow them up have an excuse to kill her or harm us."

"Gods, Lexa." I breathe, wiping away a few tears. "When will she wake up?"

"She should wake up soon. I warn you, she will be tired and weaker than normal." We sit in silence for a moment. "Heda talked about you a lot. Between her plans to help everyone escape, of course." She chuckles softly. "That is how I knew it was you. She described you very well. It kept her sane. Many of us expected her to lose hope that you would com, but she never did."

"Wait. How long has she been here?" I ask, internally panicking.
"It is hard to tell in here." She squints and cocks her head, thinking. "But I would guess about a
week."

"A week? I was unconscious for a week?" I start swearing, probably louder than I should. I left her
here while a took a nap for a week! Float the Maunon. I should have killed that leader guy when I
had the chance. A fricking week!

"Clarke?" A soft voice asks and my head snaps to Lexa, recognizing it immediately.

"Hey." I say quietly. "Hang in there, I'll get you out."

She blinks rapidly, like her eyes are adjusting to being open and nods. I rush over to the lab station
I saw earlier. It has the map Maya told me about pinned above it and I quickly take it down,
stuffing it into one of the front pocket in the pants. I search all over for keys and groan, annoyed
when I can't find one. That just means it'll take a bit longer to get her out but I want to hold her in
my arms. I see a paper clip and take a hair clip from my hair (they seriously did my hair while I
was asleep? Creepy).

I head back to Lexa, crouching in front of the cage and bending the pieces of metal into shape. I
stick out my tongue slightly in concentration, putting them in the lock and wiggling it around. I
grin victoriously when it clicks and I pull open the cage door.

I crawl halfway in so I can help Lexa out. She sits on the floor in front of it and lets out a breath. I
pull her into a hug and she relaxes in my arms. I pull away slightly so I can look into her eyes.

"How are you feeling, Lexa? Are you alright?"

"I am tired, but I am okay."

I nod, trying to let her words reassure and soothe me. It only works slightly. "You lost a lot of
blood. That's a common cause of fatigue like that."

Lexa takes my hands in hers and squeezes gently, giving me a soft smile that always makes me
melt. She's still alarmingly pale and it'll take her a while to recover.

Remembering the jacket, I (reluctantly) remove my hands from the comfort of hers and drape it
over her shoulders.

"We need to leave soon." I say.

"Clarke, our people are locked up here." Lexa protests.

"I know, but this is one of those times where the only good option is to retreat. We'll be safe here
for a little longer, but we don't have weapons or armor except for this handgun. But I barely know
how to use it and I bet you've never touched a gun." I hold her hands again. "Hey. We have people
out there, too. I bet they'll be happy to know that we unintentionally infiltrated our biggest enemy. I
have a detailed map, and we can regroup and rescue then another time."

"We can take down their guards." I can hear in Lexa's voice that she doesn't even believe that.

"Babe, they have more guns and more ammunition." I remind her gently. She sighs, running a hand
through her hair.

"Go, Heda." The woman who's been helping me urges. "Take your houmon (partner) and go. When
you have a good plan, come back. We will be okay."
Something beeps long and loud and I turn around, recognizing that the boy who was being drained is dead. I blink back tears and the quietness in the room turns to silence as everyone mourns his death. They must've picked up what that means after it happened a bunch of times.

"We will be back as soon as we can. May we meet again, Haice." Lexa says, nodding to the woman who helped us. At least now I know her name.

Chapter End Notes

Well. That was depressing. And longer than my usual chapters by almost 200 words! Next chapter is when they escape. Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 61

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"I do not want to leave them." Lexa murmurs, glancing back every few seconds at the cages behind us.

She's leaning on me more than she probably realizes, but I'm not complaining. Frankly, I'm surprised she can stand, let alone walk. I mean, she was locked up in a cage for a week and had her blood drained.

"I know, Lexa. But we have to get out of here and regroup." I remind her gently.

"Do you know where we are going?" Lexa asks.

"Kind of. A girl told me about how we can escape."

"A Maunon? How do you know she is not lying to you and leading you into a trap?" Lexa questions. If that came from anyone else, I'd be offended.

"I trust her. Ah, there's the double doors she told me about!" I say, gesturing toward metal doors.

We make our way over and Lexa gradually regains strength, relying on me less and less. I stay close and she still holds onto me. I frown at the door. It doesn't even have handles to open it. It'll be a pain in the butt to open.

"Lean against the wall, babe." I say. "I'll open the doors."

Lexa hums in response and flops against the wall, yawning cutely. Man, I just realized I haven't kissed her in a week. I'll have to fix that soon. I put my fingers in the crack separating the doors and I pull hard. The metal groans and slowly opens, but it stops after the gap is two feet wide. The room beyond the door is small and has a straight crack along the bottom.

I walk into the room, gesturing for Lexa to wait. I walk inside and look around for cameras or traps. There's nothing but rusty metal walls and the weird floor that's almost all red. I move my foot back and forth, alarmed when the "paint" flakes away. Float me, that's not paint. The floor is red with blood.

"Lexa, the floor is covered in blood. Some of it looks fresh." I say.

Lexa walks into the room and crouches down, studying the floor. "There are a lot of smudges, like something covered in blood slid down the floor."

There's a thump that makes us flinch and I watch in horror as the doors close behind us. The floor creaks unnaturally and then falls open. We fall down a metal tube that's obviously not built for comfort. We fall silently, the only sound coming from us hitting the sides of the tube. Quickly we're spit out into a bin of things that are both hard and soft.

I groan and sit up, seeing Lexa with a murderous, pained expression on her face. I look down and nearly yelp. We landed in people! I check for pulses on a few and find none. There's some armor and clothes and weapons in a cart attached to this one. Maybe that's where our stuff ended up.
"They're dead." I state.

"I will kill the Maunon." Lexa spits out, getting out of the cart and roughly running a hand through her hair. "They not only butchered my people but they put them down here as though they are garbage to get rid of."

Lexa trails off after that, looking like she's too angry to speak. I get out of the cart and wrap my arms around her. She stiffens at the touch at first then slowly starts relaxing. She rests her head on my shoulder, trembling and letting out a shuddering breath. I don't murmur reassurances because there's nothing I could say that could make this less painful for her. Lexa loves her people with all of her heart. I mean, she devoted her life to them. Seeing this... It breaks my heart because I know hers is breaking too. We stay like that as long as it's safe, Lexa in my arms trying to hold back tears.

"Come on, hodnes (love). Let's look through the other cart and see if our clothes are there." I suggest softly.

Lexa nods against my shoulder and pulls back. I immediately want to hug her again when I see the redness around her eyes. This week has undoubtably taken a toll on her. She's been through hell.

I begin looking through the clothes and weapons. By some incredible luck, I find our armor and weapons. I hand the clothes to Lexa and get dressed myself, feeling incredibly uncomfortable in the Maunon guard's clothing.

Lexa relaxes a bit when she's rearmed and has her armor on but that relief doesn't last long. The sound of metal hitting something comes from somewhere down the tunnel and I freeze, remembering what Maya said is down here.

"Maya said there are Reapers in these tunnels." I whisper. "And I think the Maunon probably have access to them too. We'll have to be careful."

As if on cue, an alarm starts ringing and an intercom comes on through hidden speakers. A familiar voice filters through and I recognize it as Cage's, the guy who the guard said was stuck up (in less polite words, though). "Warning, there are two extremely dangerous savages in the Reaper tunnels. Teams, be prepared to move out. They can't escape from here."

"There's got to be some way out." I say, only now noticing the faint sound of rushing water. Wait. Rushing water? We're underground. "Do you hear that?"

"The water is coming from the right and the sound of running in boots is coming from the left." Lexa observes. "We should go right."

We start running, and I dread the thought that the Maunon may catch up to us. There's shouting coming from behind us and we push ourselves harder. We turns a few corners, I just follow Lexa, who seems to be following the sound of water. Lexa's a few feet in front of me when she suddenly stops. I nearly crash into her, stumbling.

Crap. We're at a dead end. There's a waterfall and a small lake below us. But sadly, it's like a hundred feet below us. And judging by how loud the sound of running boots are, we're trapped.

Chapter End Notes
Ooo... What will happen next? You might've noticed that I'm taking some of this from the show. I like this part, right up until Anya was killed :( No worries, here Anya and Luna will stay alive! And holy crap guys, I just looked at the hits and we're almost at 45,000! That's incredible :O And over 1,500 kudos! You guys are so great! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
"Stop!" A male voice yells from behind us, the sound of boots hitting the ground getting louder.

I turn around and automatically take Lexa's hand. The Maunon are right behind us and they have guns. They have machine guns pointed at us and half a dozen guards. They stop a few feet away, just far enough so we would have to move forward a bit in order to reach them with our swords. One man strolls behind them casually, and I immediately hate him. He has a cocky smirk on his face, so I know he has to be the leader of the guards. This must be Cage.

He stops in front of his guards, within our range of being able to hit him with a sword. "Hello, ladies." The way he says it, like it's an insult makes me want to punch his smug face even more. "I have to say, I'm impressed you got this far. But your play time is over." His voice hardens, making Lexa and I tense, our unoccupied hands resting on our sheathed swords. "Give up and come with us. You don't need to be hurt. I know you two are smart." He says that like he doesn't believe it.

I glance at Lexa and see the hatred burning in her eyes. She spits at his feet, making his mouth turn up into a sneer of disgust. "Never. I would rather die than surrender to you ripas (murderers)."

The guards automatically turn the safety off of their guns. After being held at gunpoint by guards like this on the Ark, I can't forget that sound. I turn my head towards Lexa's ear under the guise of a gesture of submission.

"Jump. Our armor is good and should help break the fall. Don't stick out your arms." Lexa nods subtly and I take a deep breath. "Three, two, one. Go!"

We both leap backwards, and I take delight in seeing the surprised expression on Cage's face. We fall through the air, letting go of each other's hands. I brace myself for the impact. I hit the water with a loud and painful smack and I submerge quickly.

The shock of hitting it, even though I was expecting it, makes it feel like my limbs are frozen and I can't move. Air bubbles come out of my nose and mouth as I use some of my strength to stop myself from breathing in the water. My lungs scream for oxygen and I start moving my arms and legs, trying to get back to the surface. There's a dark blur the size of a person to my left. I turn my head and my eyes widen. Lexa!

After everything she's been through, she's weaker than usual. When she hit the water it must've sapped a lot of her strength or something. With renewed determination, I swim over to her and drag her to the surface. I gulp in air and hear Lexa weakly sputter in my arms. I swim towards the shore, dragging her until just her feet are in the water.

Lexa's breathing heavily and I turn her on her side. She spits out water and coughs, shivering. I flop down next to her, exhausted. There are trees over us. Hopefully we'll have enough time to take a nap...

I wake up to the distant sound of shouting voices. I sit up and start shaking Lexa's shoulder. She sits up and I notice with fear that she's even paler than when I first saw her. This whole must've really drained her (no pun intended). I help her stand up and she blinks tiredly.

"Lexa, we need to move. The Maunon are getting close." I whisper.
Her eyes focus more at my words and she leans on me less. "Alright, we have to go."

We head into the forest, in the general direction of the other mountain, the one we were kidnapped off of. We run/stumble for what feels like hours but the voices behind us aren't getting much quieter. Every time we think we lost them, they're back too soon for us to even sit down.

We're stopped at the top of a steep hill, both of us panting and exhausted.

"They have to be tracking us somehow." I gasp out. "There's no way they're this good." I try to think what they may have done. "Search your skin. If there's an odd bump, they may have put a tracker inside of you."

I run my hands over my body, finding an irregular lump on my left leg. They're smart, it's alarmingly close to my femoral artery and will be a pain to dig out. But I'm smarter. I'm a healer, I know my way around bodies. Even my own.

"I found one." Lexa remarks quietly, not wanting to alert the nearby Maunon to our location.

"Me too. They're thorough. Once I take out mine I can take out yours." I offer.

I pull out my dagger and carefully dig mine out. I manage to not hit my artery, so I don't bleed out. I look up at Lexa just in time to see her rip out her tracker with her teeth.

"Lexa!" I gasp. "That's so dangerous!"

I pull out a piece of cloth from my pocket and wrap her arm. It darkens with her black blood. I hear the shouts getting closer and more irritated. They're climbing up the hill.

"Come on, hold onto your tracker. I've got an idea!" I say and we start running again. We keep going until the shouts are fainter. We pause and I start explaining. "First we need to capture an animal."

The sound of snuffling makes me grin. I let adrenaline flood my veins, hoping I won't get impaled by this boar. It's a large one, about three feet tall. We creep toward it and when I get close enough, I leap on its back.

It squeals in surprise and collapses, my weight too much for it to stand. I open it's mouth. "Lexa, put your tracker in here!"

She does and I put mine in its mouth too. I close it and it grunts angrily. I tilt it's head back and it automatically swallows when the trackers go down its throat enough. I gesture for Lexa to her out of the way and she does, getting behind the boar. I stand up and slap its back. It runs away from us, squealing.

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Chapter End Notes

Wow Clarke's pretty smart, huh? I hope I named the right artery... I'm not sure about that. Next chapter, more running! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
We're too exhausted to run away so the Maunon won't see us. I help Lexa climb a nearby tree. We freeze when we hear the sound of running, silently watching and listening.

"They're so fast!" One person complains, gasping.

"They must've gotten spooked or something." Another said.

"Stupid Cage making us run after them. If he would have let us use a car, we could've caught them by now." Person one says. "He complains that it wastes resources but this is a waste of our time. It was his fault they got away anyways. I don't know why he's so mad at us. Stupid savages, escaping." They continue grumbling and if I were in a better mood, I would laugh.

Their running footsteps fade away and we wait until after we can't hear them anymore. I help Lexa down and we both breathe easier knowing that at least for now, we're relatively safe.

"We need to find a place to rest." Lexa murmurs.

I look around. This hill doesn't look like it has any caves for us to hide in.

"That's a good idea. I don't see anything around here, though. Let's keep moving. We can look along the way." I suggest.

Lexa nods and takes my hand in hers. It makes us both relax further and I silently promise myself that as soon as we find a safe place, I'm going to hug her and not let go for a while.

We start moving again toward the mountain ahead of us. It's the one we were on when we were kidnapped. Luckily, the boar went the other way so we don't have to worry about running into the Maunon. It'll give us time to hopefully find safety before they figure out we've sent them on a wild pig chase. I almost wish I could see Cage's face when he finds out that a couple of "savages" outsmarted him.

The mountain ahead is relatively steep, so we'll definitely need our strength to climb it. TonDC is just around the mountain and a few miles straight, so we could walk around it instead but that just takes up so much time. I'll have to talk to Lexa about it, see what she thinks is the best way to go forward.

We continue hiking for a while and it only gets more and more difficult. We are having the worst luck. We haven't found a good cave to rest in. We've taken short breaks but it's not enough. We're exhausted. The caves we've found are too exposed, too small, or is the home to some creature that doesn't take too kindly to unexpected guests. We actually got chased out of a perfect cave by an angry bear.

I mentally curse at our luck and we stumble onwards. We don't have the strength to care that we're not walking straight (there's a good bi joke I could make here but I'm too tired to think of one).

I suddenly trip on something and fall flat on my face. I groan and sit up. I'm glad I automatically let go of Lexa's hand when I fell.
I wave my hand at Lexa, who looks at me with concern. "I'm okay. The only thing that's bruised is my pride."

Lexa gives me a small amused smile. "What did you trip over?"

"I don't even know. It just looks normal, like there's a bunch of leaves on the ground."

I scoot over to where I tripped over something (yes, I scoot because I don't have the energy to get up and walk over). I begin clearing the leaves away and the metal I see makes me throw my hands up in the air.

"Yes! Take that, bad luck! You can suck it!" I say, probably too loudly for someone who's fleeing a bunch of creepy James Bond wanna-be's.

"Suck what?" Lexa murmurs, then asks. "Clarke, what is that?"

"That is a handle to a trap door. It's probably a bunker and hasn't been opened in a century." I crow victoriously. "Help me clear away the leaves and soil."

Though I'm not sure that Lexa really gets what we stumbled upon here (literally), she helps me unearth the door. It takes more digging than what I would like, and we're both even more tired after all that work. This better be worth it; I don't think we can make it much farther without passing out or eating.

It's a weird door and I turn the handle and then pull. The metal groans and opens an inch.

"Lexa, can you help me with this?" I ask.

Lexa grabs the handle as well and we pull together. The door opens a foot further and we grab the sides, pulling it open enough for us to be able to slip inside. I help Lexa down the ladder. She's more exhausted than I am so I go first. If she falls, I can be her cushion.

It's dark and I can't see anything when we reach the bottom. I fumble around on the wall and hope that the electricity still works. I find a light switch and flip it on. At first, nothing happens but then the overhead lights begin to flicker and then come on fully.

I resist the urge to cheer and gasp. This bunker is incredible. It's bigger than I thought, with old dusty furniture and a few bookshelves with yellowing books. This is obviously the main area but there are some doors that lead to other spaces.

"Go sit on the couch. I'll close the door." I tell Lexa.

She nods and practically flops onto the couch, sighing happily after coughing from the dust that flies up. I smile at the sight before climbing back up the ladder. I pull the door closed and climb back down, jumping so I don't have to go down the lay few rungs.

"I'm going to explore the place, see if there's anything to eat or a bed." I tell Lexa.

She nods and I kiss her forehead before starting to look around.

Chapter End Notes
Next chapter, Clarke explores the bunker! Poor Lexa, she's so tired after everything. She'll have a chance to rest soon and even cuddle with Clarke! Thank you for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
I begin exploring the bunker by opening a door. It's a pretty big closet with a bunch of old clothes. That could come in handy for the hundred.

That thought stops me dead in my tracks. Shit, the hundred. Float me, they're down here. I can't ignore the panic rising up in me and walk back to Lexa, who's resting on the couch. She opens her eyes and sits up when she sees my face.

"What is wrong, Clarke? Is it something in this bunker?"

"No." I say, anxiety swirling in my stomach as my brain goes over everything that could be going wrong over there. "It's the hundred. Lexa, they're here."

"We know that. What has made you so worried?"

"Our people may have contacted them. I need to talk to them first. I was one of them, I can-"

Lexa takes my hand and I let out a shuddering breath. "Our people will follow my orders. The hundred will be observed, but not talked to. They wouldn't dare defy an order from me."

I nod and some of the worry and anxiety bubbling up in my chest fades. "Yeah. I know. I just worry. I know what they're going through. They were sent down here by people they thought they could trust to a place where no one knew if it was habitable or if it would kill them. When I first was contacted by our people, I was terrified. I thought you were out to kill me, like the Ark people were. They won't see us as other people that live on earth. They'll see us as inferior. They're used to technology like what the Maunon have. To them, we may seem like savages."

"Then we will change their minds." Lexa murmurs gently, squeezing my hand. We're silent for a moment and then she speaks again. "When you go to them, I would prefer for you not to be alone. I can settle for some hidden warriors in the trees, or Anya and Luna by your side..."

"I want you to come with me." I say, answering the question she was too hesitant to ask. "Not only are you the head honcho of our people, but you're also my girlfriend. As long as you want to, I'd like you to come with me."

"Of course." A smile breaks out on her face. "What made you think of the hundred?"

"There's a closet full of old clothes like the kind we had on the Ark. We should mark where this place is so we can find it again. It probably has other useful supplies."

Lexa nods. "Did you finish looking around?"

"Uh, no. I just went in the closet and then came out in a panic." Man, there are so many good jokes I could make here.

Lexa gets up slowly from the couch, pulling on my hand for support. I wrap an arm around her shoulder and let her lean against me to stay upright.

"I would like to explore this place with you. What did you call it?"
"A bunker."

I show her the closet and she wrinkles her nose in distaste at the clothes. I guess they're not really her style, especially after being kidnapped by the Maunon. We move to the next door and open it. There's a dining room with a kitchen.

"I'll check out the kitchen, maybe there's actual food. That hopefully didn't expire a century ago," I suggest. "You can sit down, you look really pale."

Lexa doesn't protest so I lead her to a chair at the large table. I press down on the seat with my boot. It doesn't crumble into dust or break. I help Lexa sit down and she props her head up with her hand. She looks absolutely exhausted. Alright, then. We'll eat, find the bathroom, then go to bed.

I ignore the fridge. Everything in it is probably rotting. I can only imagine the amount of dead flies that are in there. I go to the pantry instead and grimace. It looks like rats got into the crackers and stuff. But the cans look untouched. I brush the dust off of one, holding my breath but I still end up sneezing.

It's somehow still good and I resist the urge to victoriously throw my fist in the air. I set it down on a nearby counter and look through a few more cans. Most of then expired before my grandparents were born but a few are still good. I go to the cabinets next, shuddering when I see some tiny rat bones and cobwebs so old they're gathering dust. This is so nasty. I almost wish I had gloves that aren't fingerless so I wouldn't have to touch anything. I pull out two plates and rub the dust off with my sleeve.

I turn on the sink and let the water run. It's a disgusting rusty color right now, but hopefully that's just the old piping and it'll get clear soon. I pull out two cups and set them aside to rinse out once the water's better. I bring the plates to the table, setting one in front of Lexa and one at the spot next to her.

I going over the cans that aren't expired next and pull out my knife. I open them, wrinkling my nose at the smell of the food. It's definitely not as good as what I've gotten used to. I dump slightly more than half on Lexa's plate and the rest on mine. I do that with three cans. I set them aside and we eat in silence. It's not completely terrible, it just tastes like it was in a can for a century.

We finish quickly because we were both so hungry. I put the plates by the sink and am pleased to see that the water is mainly clear. I rinse off the plates and cups. I fill the cups after they look less grimy and chug one as I bring the other to Lexa. She drinks it quickly as well and we both let out a satisfied breath.

I help her up again, though she does seem a bit stronger now after eating and drinking. Next order of business, finding a bed. At this point, I'd be fine sleeping on the dusty floor.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter will be the clexa cuteness probably! And they'll finally sleep. Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
"Let's find a bed." I suggest.

I don't know where the bedroom is but we've finished exploring this area. I lead us back to the main room and hold open another door for Lexa. She sighs in relief and I walk in after her. There's a large (dusty looking) bed in the middle of a room with two doors.

We shake out the sheets, which was a good idea because there were more tiny animal bones in the bed (from rats or something, luckily not a dog or something like that). They clatter to the floor as a plume of dust practically suffocates us. We cough and sneeze.

Lexa starts putting the sheets back on the bed, throwing the ruined old quilt on the floor. It's useless and riddled with holes, but looks like it was once beautiful. It's a comfortable temperature, so we don't need it. Plus, we have each other.

I open a door and find another closet filled with more clothes. Most of them look salvageable. I open the other door and grin. Finally, a bathroom. The inside of the toilet is nasty, so I flush it a few times. Lexa comes in and cocks her head in confusion.

"This must be one of those toilets you spoke of." Lexa murmurs, standing next to me and examining it with interest.

I've told her about some of the things we had on the Ark. Sadly, I'm not an engineer like my dad so I don't know exactly how everything works but Lexa's brilliant and figures things out without me.

"Fascinating." Lexa says. "You press that lever and water takes everything away?"

"Yeah. You can go first, I'll find us some comfy clothes to sleep in." I offer.

Lexa gives me a drowsy smile. I walk out of the bathroom and close the door behind me to give her some privacy.

I go to the bigger closet off of the main room and head inside. It doesn't take long for me to find something roughly my size that I can sleep in. It will be tight around my chest, but I don't care and I'm pretty sure Lexa won't mind. It's not quite as easy to find clothes Lexa would like. I settle for comfy looking black yoga pants and a faded camouflage shirt.

I head back to the room just as Lexa's walking out of the bathroom. I hand Lexa her clothes. "You can change into these out here. I'll be right back."

Lexa yawns cutely and nods. She starts taking off her armor (well, just her shoulder guard) before I even close the door to the bathroom behind me. I pee before changing and then head back out, carefully carrying my armor.

Lexa has put her armor on the sturdiest looking table in the room so I set mine next to them. She's already under the covers and is blinking tiredly at me. I get in bed next to her as she courteously holds the blanket up for me.

I take a second to admire how she looks in these old clothes. They're kind of baggy on her, but Lexa
makes anything she's wearing look incredible. I lie down next to her and kiss the top of her head. She sighs happily as I drape an arm over her waist. Lexa leans over and kisses me.

"I am glad you are safe." She whispers to me as I rest my head against her shoulder. "I was so worried; you were gone for so long."

I hold her slightly tighter, fighting off anger when I feel how she's skinnier than normal. She'll get better and we'll kick some Maunon ass.

"I didn't mean to worry you." I murmur back, kissing the closest but of skin I can reach (which happens to be her neck). "I'm okay."

Lexa wraps an arm around me and we fall asleep quickly.

When I wake up, my stomach is aching. Float me, we shouldn't have eaten century old crap from a can. I glance up at Lexa. Her sleeping face is tensed up from discomfort and her arm that isn't wrapped around me is on her stomach. At least it's just discomfort. We should be fine as long as we get food that isn't a hundred years past its "best by" date.

I maneuver my way out of Lexa's grasp and stand up. I guess I'll go out and get us some actual food. I change back into my armor, not bothering to go into the bathroom. Lexa's much more exhausted than I am; she will be sleeping for a while. I take my weapons, groaning quietly when I realize I don't have my bow.

I tiptoe out of the room and head to the closet again. I thought I saw... There it is! A backpack that's only falling apart a little bit. It should work. I'll use it to carry berries and stuff. I dump out the old pens and dust and moldy stuff from it. I put it on my back and head to the kitchen. There's a pad of paper and a magnet attached to a pencil on the floor in front of the refrigerator.

I pick them up and write out a quick note to Lexa in case she wakes up and I'm gone. I rip out the piece of paper and take the pad and pencil, tossing it into my backpack. I might want it later to make a map. I make my way back to the bedroom. I put the paper in her hand. She automatically holds onto it.

I grab a flashlight that magically still works, head to the exit, and climb up the ladder. I stop at the top, pushing the door open only a little bit. After I hear nothing but normal animal noises for a few minutes I open it further and slip out. It's night and I stand still, waiting for my eyes to adjust. I pull out my dagger and begin my hunt for food.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter Lexa and Clarke will have to figure out how to get back to TonDC and the hundred... Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
I'm still too tired to hunt long, but I do end up getting a pretty good amount of food. I gathered some berries that I know both of us like and managed to catch a squirrel and a rabbit. The squirrel was harder to get; I had to throw my dagger and I hit it's neck.

I go back after that, finding my way in the darkness. I didn't go very far so it isn't difficult. I pull up the hatch after standing there for a moment, waiting and listening to make sure there are no Maunon watching me. I don't want to give away where Lexa is, but thankfully I don't hear anything out of the ordinary.

I climb back down and turn to see a tired looking Lexa sitting on the couch with a different blanket wrapped around her shoulders like a cape.

"You were gone when I woke up." She murmurs.

"I gave you a note." I say as I approach her.

She hums. "Sha (yes), you did." Lexa doesn't say anything else, so I'm going to guess that she was worried about me.

I help her up and lead her to the bedroom. "Come on, hodnes (love), let's go back to bed."

Lexa crawls back into bed, not even noticing that she still has the blanket around her shoulders. I quickly change back into the comfy clothes, grinning when Lexa whines unhappily when I've been gone too long. Her eyes are closed and her hand is reaching out of the covers at me.

I don't bother trying to put my armor back on the table nicely. I set my backpack on the floor gently so I don't squish anything and rush back into bed. I should probably put some of this in the fridge or store it somewhere better but I'm still exhausted, and sleeping in Lexa's arms again sounds incredible. Lexa opens her arms and I cuddle up against her. I fall asleep quickly.

I wake up when I feel Lexa stir. I can tell without opening my eyes that it's much later than when we fell asleep.

"Morning." I murmur from where I'm laying my head against her chest.

"Good morning, Clarke. Were you successful last night in getting food?" Lexa asks, her voice raspy from sleep.

"Yeah. If I can get the oven or something to work, I can cook the squirrel and rabbit I killed. If that doesn't work, I have berries too."

"Good."

She sounds relieved and I don't blame her, the canned food tasted as good as it looked. And it looked disgusting and barely edible.

We get out of bed and I let Lexa get the bathroom first again. She takes her armor with her. I grab my armor from the table, examining them for any scrapes. I bumped into a tree or two last night...
because I could barely see. I had the flashlight, but that wasn't useful when I was trying to catch animals.

Right after I finish changing, Lexa opens the door. "The food is in the backpack. You can take it to the kitchen." I say.

Lexa nods and gives me a small smile.

I quickly go to the bathroom and wash my hands before walking out of the bedroom. I stop at the entrance of the kitchen and lean against the door frame. Lexa has filled a (clean) bowl with the berries I found and is humming some song I don't recognize as she pulls out the rabbit and squirrel. I can't help noticing how domestic and right this feels.

Lexa looks up and sees me. Her face lights up in a wide smile. "You remembered my favorite berries."

I walk inside and get close so I can gently rest my hands on her hips. "Of course I did." I lean in and kiss her gently.

This isn't the fast peck I expected; this has the potential to turn into a full blown make out session. I'm definitely not complaining though. I reach up and cup her jaw as she rests her hands on my biceps. She tries to deepen the kiss but we're interrupted by our grumbling stomachs. We pull apart and rest out foreheads together, chuckling.

"I guess we should have breakfast." I murmur, reluctant to part from her.

"We can eat it on the couch so we can sit closer together." Lexa suggests.

"Good idea." I kiss her nose and gather the strength to pull away and survey the food. "I'm kind of in the mood for rabbit. Are you okay with that?" Lexa nods. "Alright. First, I'll have to see if these old rust buckets work."

I examine the oven. The inside, despite the door being closed, is covered in dust. I clean the interior fast, just enough so it shouldn't catch anything on fire. I turn the dials after studying the faded labels. There's a click and I brace myself for something, but nothing happens. It keeps clicking like it's trying to light itself but doesn't have the gas or whatever that it needs.

"Shoot. No oven, then." I sigh.

I try the stove next, which had the same problem and can't do anything. Then I try the microwave, which doesn't turn on.

"I guess we get to eat berries until we're in a place where we feel safe enough to light a fire. Oh, Lexa. After or during breakfast we should figure out what we're doing next."

Lexa cocks her head. "We are going back to TonDC."

I grin at her response. She's so cute when she's confused. "I know, but that's not what I meant. Like are we going around the mountain? Or are we hiking to the trail? Do you feel up for it? When should we leave?"

"We can leave today if you would like. I feel much stronger. I would like to hike up to the road." Lexa replies.

"And you're sure you're up to that?" I ask worriedly. She raises and eyebrow at me. "I just don't
want you to overwork yourself or get hurt again."

"I will be fine." Lexa assures me.

"Then I guess we'll leave a little after we eat."

Chapter End Notes

Alright, next chapter they're going back out into the world! Also, did anyone else watch the Carmilla finale last night?? I don't know how I functioned in school today after such an emotional roller coaster! Anyway, thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"I already regret this." I groan.

Lexa gives me an amused look. After we finished breakfast, we packed everything into the backpack, which I insisted on carrying. I made sure to draw a map and marked where the bunker is. Now we're hiking toward the road.

We're only going slightly uphill and I'm already getting tired. I guess I'm weaker than I thought after being unconscious for a week.

"We can rest anytime, Clarke." Lexa says.

I let out a breath. "I'm fine. I'm just looking forward to getting to TonDC and sleeping."

Lexa chuckles at that and slows slightly so that she's walking next to me. She takes my hand and squeezes it, but doesn't let go. So we walk, hand in hand, toward the road.

The land gets much steeper and we have to let go of each other's hands so we can climb. We grasp onto slim trees and roots springing from the ground to haul ourselves up. By now, we're both sweating heavily and panting with exertion.

"Do you know how much farther it is?" I ask, making Lexa pause. Grateful for the time to catch my breath, I stop moving too.

"The road should be coming up soon." Lexa promises. "It is right at the top of this hill."

I glance up and fight the urge to groan. It looks so far away. The undergrowth and trees stays pretty heavy, so we can use that to pull our exhausted selves up.

"What then? Do we just start walking down the road?" I ask as we start moving again.

"Yes." Lexa says in an apologetic tone. "There will most likely be patrols going up and down that road searching for us, if I know Anya. They will be on horses, and in groups of two or more. Then we can ride back to TonDC."

"I hope they're okay." I murmur.

"They are." Lexa says confidently, but I can tell she's worried too. "I did not see anyone who was with us in the cages. As far as the others could tell me, only you and I came in that day."

I can see how her expression darkens and how her muscles go slack for a moment. "Hey. We'll get them back."

Lexa takes a deep breath and slips back into her calm facade. "Yes, we will."

We continue climbing, stopping occasionally when there's a good spot to rest. We packed some old bottles (after we cleaned them) full of water. This is sucking up almost all the energy I have, and it feels like we're not getting any closer to the top. I can't even see the top anymore, a dense fog that thankfully isn't the acid fog, has rolled in and I can barely see ten feet in front of me.
Lexa looks just as tired as I feel but she soldiers on. I know she's determined to get back to TonDC and to help get our people from the Maunon. I think she hopes the hundred can help her do that.

I nearly cheer when the ground starts getting flatter. We're not quite at the road, but it's proof that we're getting there. It gets to the point where we can actually stand and walk without having to hold onto something. We weave through the trees and reach the edge of the dirt road.

"We can rest here for a moment." Lexa says, sitting on the grass next to the road.

I take off the backpack and set it down. I sit next to her, leaning against the backpack.

We wait there for a while, catching our breath and drinking water. The road is silent until we're getting ready to start moving again. Of course that's when we hear the sound of hooves hitting the dirt. Lexa takes out her dagger and I put my hand on my sword. It's probably just some guards, but it's better to be safe than dead.

The noise gets louder and two guards on horses appear, trotting through a curve that obscured our view. They slow when they see us standing here, shock and relief on their faces.

They slow their horses to a stop and get off. They immediately bow to Lexa.

"Heda," one of them says. "It is good to see you. Everyone has been worried."

Lexa gives the woman a quick smile in acknowledgement. "How far are we from TonDC?"

"Not very far, Heda. We are just passed where you and Clarke were captured."

Lexa nods in understanding and then studies the horses. "Can they carry us back to TonDC?"

"Sha (yes). Anya made sure the guards searching would have the largest, best steeds. You and Clarke can share mine." The other responds, gesturing to their gray horse with white spots. It whinnies at us.

"Mochof (thank you)." Lexa says. "Clarke, you can get on first."

I nod and give her a reassuring smile. "Alright, but you'll have to wear the backpack."

She's no doubt even more exhausted than I am, so it's no wonder she doesn't want to be the one guiding the horse. Knowing her, Lexa will use the time during the ride to gather herself. She can't show our people how weak she feels.

Lexa takes the backpack from me and puts it on. She looks so ridiculous and cute in it that I have to purse my lips to keep from laughing.

The guards are back on the other horse and are waiting patiently for us. I get up on the horse easily. It huffs and shakes its mane. I hold out my hand and help pull Lexa up. The guards will probably see it as a courteous offer instead of what it really is, assistance.

Lexa sighs quietly in my ear and rests her chin on my shoulder. I wait for her to wrap her arms around my waste before I click my tongue to get the horse to move. It moves more slowly than earlier, seeming like it's being careful as though it knows how precious the person on her back is.

I steer the horse in the direction of TonDC, the guards in front of us and leading the way.
Well, we got farther than I expected this chapter... Next chapter, they're heading back to TonDC! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 68

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

It doesn't take long before I can see TonDC in the distance. Lexa lets out a breath behind me, tightening her arms around my waist.

"Are you alright?" I ask worriedly.

"Yes. I was just thinking about everything we have to do." Lexa murmurs in response.

"We'll cross that bridge when we get to it. For now, let's just revel in the fact that we not only survived the Maunon, but made it back to TonDC in one piece." I say.

"Sha. You are right. There are just so many unknowns right now, and I do not like it."

"Is this about the hundred?" I ask.

"Yes. I know my people have not contacted them, but I worry about what will happen when we approach them. You have said they might have guns, like what the Maunon use. I do not want to fight a war on two fronts, Clarke."

"That's why I'm going to be there. If nothing else, they'll recognize me. They won't shoot us. We'll be fine." Even though I am less confident about that than I'm acting, that's the most likely scenario.

"Alright." Lexa concedes.

I take my right hand from the reigns and squeeze Lexa's hand gently. I feel her relax a little at that and decide to keep my hand there instead of taking the reigns again. We're almost to TonDC, anyway.

When we get close enough to see the guards at the entrance, I find it kind of funny how they're staring at us. They look like they've seen a ghost.

They kneel after they open the gates, respectfully saying "Heda" as we pass.

We ride to the stables, where we get off the horse. I help Lexa down, again making it look like I'm being courteous so our people don't see how she can barely get off. The horse, I mean. Bad brain, I mentally scold myself.

Luna and Anya are the first to approach us.

"Lexa!"Luna rushes to Lexa and envelops her in a bear hug. My hand on the small of Lexa's back helps her keep her balance. "Oh, it is so good to see you! People began to lose hope after you were gone for five days." Once Luna releases Lexa, she surprisingly hugs me too. "Mochof (thank you) for keeping her safe, Clarke."

Luna steps back and smiles as Anya grasps Lexa's forearm. "I am glad you are okay, Lexa." This is the warmest I've ever seen her with anyone except Luna.
I'm pleasantly surprised once again when Anya grasps my forearm, too. Huh. She respects me. She doesn't say anything to me, but she doesn't need to. She nods to me after a moment and releases me.

Lexa takes my hand once again, squeezing slightly harder than normal (not painfully) like she's trying to draw strength from me.

Lexa draws herself up into her dominant, Heda posture and addresses our people, who have remained silent. Her voice rings strongly in the quiet. "Clarke and I have escaped from the Maunon. We have seen what they do to our people, and it is worse than I imagined. They hang us upside down from the ceiling and drain us of blood. They keep our people in cages and toss away the bodies as though we are garbage to get rid of." An angered murmur starts in the crowd, stopping when Lexa holds up her hand. "Soon, Clarke and I will go to the hundred, the sky people who came down before we were taken. They have technology like the Maunon, and will either be helpful allies or dangerous enemies. With their assistance, we can take down the Maunon once and for all!" Lexa says.

Her words are powerful and I can't help feeling riled up too. Cheers rise up and once again Lexa holds up her hand. The noise stops almost instantly.

"We will remember all who have been taken and avenge the dead. Jus drein jus daun (blood must have blood)!" Lexa cries.

The crowd begins chanting and Lexa stands, watching them with a pleased but fiery look in her eyes.

Anya steps forward and the crowd goes quiet again. "We will celebrate Lexa and Clarke's return tonight. Remember to keep up your strength and keep your heads sharp. We have a war to win."

With that, everyone starts moving around. It looks like they're starting to get ready to set up a feast, which sounds incredible right now.

Indra walks over and greets Lexa by grasping her forearm with a smile. "It is good to have you back, Heda. Your tent as well as Clarke's have been maintained in your absence."

"Mochof (thank you), Indra. Let us go to my tent. There is much to discuss." Lexa says.

Luna and Anya follow us as we walk to Lexa's tent. I hear running from behind me and let go of Lexa's hand to look. Suddenly, I'm nearly falling over because someone's hugging me so hard.

"I am so glad that you are safe!" Artigas says, pulling back so I can see his beaming face. "I knew that even the Maunon could not keep you from us!"

I grin and ruffle his hair. He weakly protests but I can tell he doesn't really mind. "Hey, Artigas. How have you been?"

"Looking for you." He responds. He lets go of me and starts walking with us as well. "I went on every patrol Anya would let me go on."

Anya gives him a fond smile. "He was very persistent. He didn't lose hope, like some of our warriors did."

Indra holds open the flaps to Lexa's tent for us. Surprisingly, she lets Artigas in.

Lexa sits on her makeshift throne and tells the rest of us to bring over chairs. When I try to sit back
with the others, Lexa gestures for me to sit next to her.

I comply and it’s silent for a moment.

"So what happened?" Anya asks.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter will be full of talking and discussions... And then a nap and a feast, Lexa and Clarke certainly deserve that! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"So what happened?" Anya asks.

Lexa and I exchange a look and she nods to silently tell me that I can answer. I tell them everything. How I woke up disoriented and tried to escape but was knocked back out. How I woke up again and escaped the room. How I kidnapped Maya by holding a piece of broken glass to her neck (by the time I get to that point, even Indra looks impressed). Then I talk about how I met that weird guy who offered me a place to stay there "away from the savages". Lexa purses her lips angrily at that. I've told her the basics of what happened, but now I'm going into detail so much of this she hasn't heard explained.

I tell them how Maya ended up helping me by telling me where there was a map and how to escape. I go over how I left her outside the door to the cages and went inside without her. I talk about how I found Lexa, and that girl in a cage who thought I was Maunon because of my clothes. How I rushed to Lexa's cage and found her there unconscious (I leave out some details like how thin and frail she looked; Lexa probably doesn't want them to know that). How I hid and knocked out that patrolling guard and took their clothing. How I got Lexa out of her cage.

Artigas gets this heartbroken expression on his face when I tell them about the chute and how we landed in bodies. Anya, Luna, and Indra look pissed about that. I tell them about how we found our armor and weapons. I talk about how we were chased down the tunnel by guards and that one leader guy that I'm pretty sure isn't sane. I get to the part where we leap down into the water below, which makes Anya murmur "reckless" and give Lexa a look that tells me that if she weren't so happy to see her, Lexa would be getting a smack to the back of her head.

I explain how we ran, but they kept finding us even when some of the best Trikru trackers wouldn't be able to. How we figured out that we both had a tracker embedded in our skin and how we took them out. At that, Artigas silently gets up. I'm worried at first, but he gives me a smile and gestures for me to continue. He walks out of the tent just as I resume.

I talk about how we put the trackers in a wild pig and sent it on its way. I talk about how we kept going, unable to find anywhere good to stop and rest until I literally tripped over the bunker. Anya smirks at that and Artigas rejoins us with my medical bag. I take it and thank him. I talk about how we stayed in the bunker as I make Lexa roll up her sleeve. I unwrap the bandages to expose where the tracker used to be. I explain how we got here as Lexa hisses from the disinfectant.

When I finish talking, I focus on cleaning her wound. Bonus, it gives them time to process everything I've told them. I use a rag to wipe off the dried blood and gently dab around the wound that's slowly leaking blood. Lexa subtly flinches a few times when I get to a sensitive part.

When I'm satisfied, I pull out my needle and thread. Lexa gives me a look that silently asks if that's really necessary. I give her a look in response and she nods, relenting. I put a numbing gel around her wound so she won't be able to feel it as much and start gently stitching her up. It's not as effective as I would like, not like the one my mother used on the Ark. It depends on the person, how much it works. But luckily it seems to help Lexa, because she doesn't even wince.

When I'm done, I wrap up her wound and then put my supplies back in my bag. Lexa pulls back down her sleeve. I look back at the others, who are still watching us. I lean back in my chair after
setting down my medical bag.

"What is our next move, Heda?" Indra asks.

"We enjoy the feast. In the morning, Clarke and I will head to the hundred to talk to them." Lexa responds.

"Lexa." Luna says, frowning. "You should have a few guards with you."

"There will be guards in the trees." Lexa says dismissively. Luna doesn't back down and she sighs. "Very well. If you would like, you and Anya could come with us as well as Artigas. Only if you will keep level heads." Lexa gazes at her sternly, leaving no room for discussion. "We do not know what we are walking into. Trust that Clarke and I know what we are doing. Let us handle the discussions. And do not lose your temper."

Luna and Anya don't look too happy, but agree to her terms.

"Artigas?" I ask. "Would you like to come with us?"

He brightens. I know Lexa mentioned that he can go, but I'm not sure that he's used to being asked what he wants. I know Anya prefers to order people around.

"Sha (yes), thank you. I promise I will be on my best behavior." He bows his head slightly, practically vibrating with youthful excitement.

"Now that is settled." Lexa says authoritatively. "Go and get ready for the feast."

The others all bow their heads to her and leave. Artigas gives me a wide smile as he goes. It's kind of funny how much he's looking forward to tomorrow, especially since Lexa and I are dreading it and can't shake our worry.

Lexa slumps slightly in her throne, letting out a breath. I take her hand and we stand together. She leads me to a larger chair and sits. Lexa gestures for me to sit as well and I comply. I end up about half on her lap and snuggles against her side.

"At least that's over with." I say, kissing her cheek.

Lexa hums in response and kisses me softly, making any thoughts in my head not involving her melt away.

Chapter End Notes

Awww... Next chapter will be the feast! Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 70

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Lexa and I stay in her tent for as long as we can. This past week or so has been insane, and it was nice to be in her arms while it lasted. We check each other, making sure our armor isn't out of place. Even though we've only been cuddling, the people of TonDC don't know that for certain.

We walk hand in hand out the flaps of the tent. Artigas, who was standing guard right outside, follows a few steps behind us. We head towards the center of town, where the previous feasts I've been to have been set up.

When we get there, it feels like the whole town pauses for a moment to look at us. I loosen my grip on Lexa's hand in case she doesn't want them to know that we're dating. She tightens her hold instead and walks forward. People's heads dip in respect as we near them, but when I look around at some familiar faces, they wink at me. I guess they have noticed our entwined hands.

I take a seat next to the head of the table after Lexa sits. Everyone follows suit and begins eating once Lexa takes her first bite.

I remember when Anya was first telling me about eating etiquette when in the presence of a Heda or clan leader. It's not too different from what my mom taught me on the Ark and made sure I remembered it before any of her "highly esteemed friends" (political allies) came to our home.

The food is even more delicious than I remember, which is saying something. I eat until I feel like I'm going to burst.

Lexa stands once she notices most people have finished. All conversation stops immediately and all eyes turn to her. Her hand rests on the table and I place mine on top of hers so she remembers I'm here.

Lexa takes a breath and starts telling everyone what happened in the Mountain. She tells them what happened to me, how Maya helped us, leaving out almost nothing except for how weak she was when I found her. Lexa is an incredible storyteller, and even though I was there, I find myself leaning forward to listen intently.

She pauses for a moment when she finishes our story. "This is why we fight. Our people are trapped in cages and treated as though they are nothing. The Maunon think they will win this war but they are wrong. Hopefully, after tomorrow we will be allied with the hundred. Clarke and I are going there to speak with them. I know many of you are hesitant to trust people with technology like the Maunon, but hear me now." Lexa leans forward and I can hear the call of a far away wolf because it is so quiet. "Remember your fallen siblings, parents, friends, and loved ones. They have fought and died at the hands of the Maunon. This is our chance to take them down. Jus drein, jus daun (blood must have blood)."

Just like before, the chant picks up quickly and I join in too, making Lexa look at me with pride in her eyes. I squeeze her hand, still under mine and hope it will all go as smoothly as we hope. But I know it won't. It never does.

The chanting takes a long time to die down, longer than I would expect. Though Lexa is really good at riling people up. I mean, I'm tired but feel like I could fight a bear right now because I'm
so pumped up.

Lexa and I retire for the night, leaving not long after the chanting stops. I'm pretty sure Lexa stayed during all of that to make sure nothing got out of hand.

We go to her tent with Artigas once again following us. Before we go in, I stop and turn around so I'm facing him.

"Artigas, go home and go to sleep." I say gently. He opens his mouth to protest, but a look from me stops him from saying anything. "We'll be fine; we have other guards. We have a big day tomorrow. I don't want you heading into an unknown situation like that while running on fumes." Artigas and Lexa look confused at my wording. "That means while you're exhausted. Get some sleep, please."

"Alright. Good night Clarke, Heda." He bows his head to us and leaves.

I can't hold back my yawn anymore. Lexa chuckles next to me. "Come on, hodnes (love). Lets get inside."

She leads me into the tent while I use my free hand to try to rub the exhaustion that's making my eyelids heavy. It doesn't work and I nearly fall asleep while standing up. I jolt awake and hear Lexa's soft laughter, which makes me grin sleepily at her.

She silently leads me to a carved wooden wardrobe and opens the doors. She takes out some clothes and hands half of the pile to me. I just blink at her until Lexa raises an eyebrow at me. Oh, right. Pajamas. I murmur out a thank you and head to the other side of the room to change. I hear a sharp intake of breath behind me. I wonder if she accidentally poked herself with her dagger while she was changing again or if she saw me changing.

I turn around and holy crap, she's wearing that black nightdress again. Lexa's back is to me and she's taking her hair out of her braids. She looks so stunningly beautiful I forget to breathe for a moment.

When Lexa turns to look at me, I'm already at her side. It's not the night to do anything, not when we're so exhausted and with tomorrow looming over our heads. But I can't resist leaning in and kissing her. I feels her smile against my lips and pull back so I can look at her.

Silently, we get into bed. I wrap an arm around her as she's in her side, resting her head on my shoulder and looking at me with those gorgeous eyes. I kiss her quickly one last time and then try to go to sleep. I fall asleep easily when I focus on Lexa's warmth instead of worrying about what could happen tomorrow.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, they head out to meet the hundred!! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 71

The next morning Lexa and I quietly get dressed and ready for our journey. We eat the food a guard brings us quickly, as though we want to get everything over with as fast as possible.

Lexa and I meet up with Anya, Luna, and Artigas at the stables and get onto our horses after half-hearted greetings. We get onto our horses and leave. As far as I understand, where the hundred landed isn't too far from TonDC but it's still best to go by horse unless you want to walk for awhile.

Anya and Luna lead the way with Lexa and I behind them, side by side. Artigas is a few paces behind us and the other guards are moving silently through the trees around us.

"When we get close to them, we should leave the horses and have Lexa and I go first." I say. Planning ahead keeps me from fretting about what could happen.

"That is dangerous!" Luna protests. "If they are hostile they will attack you first!"

"I'm the daughter of the best doctor they have up there, some people will undoubtedly recognize me. That's why I'm going first. And I know Lexa won't want to leave my side." I explain. Luna and Anya don't look impressed by my logic. "Look, it's going to happen whether you like it or not. Us being in the front gives us a better chance of not starting another war."

Luna and Anya frown back at me but nod. They turn back around to focus on the road. Well, it's not really a road. We're weaving through trees heading towards the hundred. It's smart; we haven't wanted them to know we're here so we haven't built a road.

Soon, the sound of birds and animals practically stop. It's eerily silent in the woods.

"Why is it so quiet?" I ask in a whisper. If I speak louder it feels like any enemy for a mile around us would be able to hear us.

"These children hunt like bumbling fools. How they manage to catch anything is a mystery." Anya mutters. "They step on every dry leaf and twig as they move through the forest. They have scared most of the animals away with their noise."

I nod in understanding. Suddenly, Anya and Luna make their horses stop and they get off. Lexa, Artigas, and I follow suit. Anya makes a gesture and one guard comes down from the trees.

"You stay here and guard the horses." She orders. "I would suggest you tie them to trees with a long rope so they do not run away. The ropes will be on the back of Luna and I's horses." The guard nods and gets to work. Anya turns to us. "Lexa, Clarke. Their camp's entrance is that way." She points to the direction we were heading. "Once we get close enough, you will be able to hear where they are."

Lexa takes my hand, making me smile softly at her through the anxiety swirling around in my head. We head toward the camp, with Anya, Luna, and Artigas walk silently behind us and the other guards (minus the horse guard) move through the trees.

Sure enough, the sound of shouting kids and teenagers fill the air. There's crackling by us that makes us all tense up and I just hope it's not one of their guards that's going to shoot us on sight.
Luckily, it ends up being a spooked deer that sees us and then runs away.

"Where's the entrance?" I ask as I see a wall ahead of us. They must've built it out of spare parts and wood.

"It is a little to the left of where we are." Anya says. "You will be able to see it soon."

Lexa and I change our direction slightly so we are heading the right way. I squeeze her hand as we get closer and closer. I worry about how they'll receive us, especially since Lexa, Anya, and Luna are wearing their kohl (warpaint). I understand why they're wearing it, I'm just hoping it doesn't get us shot.

We walk slower as we walk on the path that their feet has created by their coming and going through the entrance. The two guards at either side of it see us and are practically paralyzed with fear.

"Bellamy!" One of them yells.

"What?" A man yells back and walks out of their drop ship toward us.

He sees us and his eyes darken. He gestures for some more guards to walk with him.

"Hands off of your swords. We are not trying to start a war." I order quietly, knowing what they're doing without looking.

I glance back and make sure Anya and Luna obey. They do, though they're not happy about it. Lexa squeezes my hand and then we both let go.

"Who the hell are you?" The man who must be Bellamy spits out. He looks like he's too old to be on the drop ship. His guards are now shakily pointing their guns at us. But I've noticed that they have failed to turn off the safety so I'm not worried.

"I'm Clarke Griffin. Who are you?" I ask, taking the lead.

"Clarke Griffin." He snorts. "Yeah right. She's dead. The Council killed her months before they sent us down."

"Wow, that's what they told everyone? I guess the truth was too embarrassing." I shake my head.

"The truth? Why don't you start with that before I blow your brains out?" Bellamy threatens.

"I did. I am Clarke Griffin. My mom, as you might know, is Doctor Abby Griffin. Mom and Raven helped me escape and come down here in and escape pod."

"Reyes?" He asks, squinting then shouts for Raven.

My mouth drops open slightly. She's here? But she's older than eighteen, they would've just floated her if they caught her. So the only explanation is that she snuck onto the drop ship for some reason.

The woman who helped save my life walks out if one of their biggest tents, limping.

"What the heck are you yelling for, Blake? My leg is busted, not my ears!" She shouts back. Raven pauses when she sees me. "Griffin?"

"Hey Raven." I wave and grin as she starts coming towards us faster. Raven wraps me up in a hug and I fight the urge to laugh at the shock on Bellamy's face. "It's good to see you."
Next chapter, more talking with Bellamy and Raven! And I love Raven so much, so she's going to be a main character type person! Someone commented recently asking how old Artigas is. In my mind, he's 15 or 16. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Raven pulls back. "You're so going to have to tell me what's been going on!" Then she notices the people standing by me. "Oh man. I was right! There are people down here! Suck it, Jaha!" She does a little dance, keeping her weight off of her right leg.

"Suck it?" Lexa murmurs quietly as we watch Raven.

"I'll tell you later." I promise.

"Oh dang, I didn't count on how hot the people down here are." Raven says, looking at the women with me appraisingly. Artigas stands in the back, looking awkward and shy. "Hello, I'm Raven Reyes. Mechanical engineer and certified genius." She smiles cockily and shakes Luna and Anya's hands, who look so surprised by her action they don't protest. Raven looks at Lexa and gives her a smile as well. "I'd shake your hand, but I have a feeling you would kill me." She looks back at Anya and Luna, who just look amused now. "So who are you two?"

"I am Luna kom Floukru and I am the leader of Floukru, one of the twelve clans under the Heda. This is Anya, who is a general in the Heda's army."

Raven grins at them, "I have no idea what half of that means, but it sounds impressive."

Bellamy clears his throat from behind her. "Raven."

"What?" She turns around, staying close to us instead of weakling back to him. "You can't say they're not attractive. Look at their faces! You're not blind, Bell."

He coughs, "That's not what I was going to say. Is that really Clarke Griffin?"

"Yes, you idiot. Didn't you ever go to Medical and see her with her mom? And stop pointing your guns at them. If they wanted us dead, we would be." The guards comply without hesitation, pointing their guns at the ground. She turns back to us, specifically Lexa and I, somehow being able to tell that we're the leaders. "Sorry about him, he's got the temper of a four year old."

"Hey!" Bellamy protests.

"It's true." A girl says as she walks over. "Oh float me. Are those Grounders? I told you that we were being watched, you nincompoop but you didn't believe me." The girl and Bellamy start bickering.

"That's Octavia, Bellamy's sister." Raven explains.

My eyes widen. "There are no siblings on the Ark."

"Yeah, I thought that too until they caught her. She was living in their room for years."

I grimace. Those rooms are tiny, barely bigger than my cell was. I can't imagine living in one and staying in it for years.

"So they introduced themselves. Who are you two?" Bellamy asks.
"That's Artigas; he's my guard." I say. "And this is Lexa, the Heda."

"Still don't know what that means." Raven points out.

"Right. We should go somewhere we can sit or something. If we're going to be explaining things, it'll take a while." I say.

"We can go in the drop ship." Octavia says.

I look at Artigas, Anya, Luna, and Lexa. They don't look too comfortable with that. To be honest, neither am I. After being here and seeing some of the wonder this world has to offer, I don't really want to get into a steel coffin any time soon.

"How about we sit on the ramp up to the entrance to it?" I suggest. "I'd like to be outside, it's a beautiful day."

Raven shrugs. "Okay."

We walk into their camp, staying close together. I can feel everyone's eyes on us, and I see a few familiar faces. We sit on the ramp and Lexa and I begin explaining things, giving them the basics of what's going on. If we go too much in depth, we'll be here for weeks. Plus, it's a lot of information.

As it is, it's a few hours later by the time we finish. Bellamy seems like he's the leader from what I've observed while talking to them. He kept giving orders to some groups of kids when they came up to him.

"So what are you here for?" Bellamy asks. He's been pretty quiet through our explanation, but I noticed how he looks skeptical about some of the things we told him.

"We want you to become our allies." Lexa says.

"Your allies?" Bellamy asks incredulously. "You come here and expect us to bow at your feet?"

Both Anya and Lexa look like they're ready to pounce on him. I place a hand on Lexa's arm to calm her down and leave it there. For what I'm going to say next, I need the strength her touch gives me.

"Listen to me carefully." I say, keeping my voice hard. He seems surprised at my tone. "Look at this from their point of view. You crashed on their land and set up camp. You are scaring away game and are possibly threats." Bellamy seems to get what I'm saying since he won't look at me.

"Make no mistake, we do want peace and to become allied with you. I have made sure that people have seen how good of allies you could be. But just know that while we can be forgiving, to an extent. There are about a hundred of you and thousands of us."

"So you're threatening us into becoming allies?" Bellamy growls.

"No. I'm telling you the truth and hoping you and your people will come to the right decision." I say.

"Let us talk this over before we make any decisions." Octavia responds. "I'll knock some sense into Bell."

"Very well." Lexa says. "Do you know the bridge?"

"It looks so explodable." Raven sighs, then focuses. "Yeah. We haven't crossed it, there were weird
noises coming from the other side."

"I still cannot believe that worked." Luna says to a smug Anya. "Your stupid idea to make unnerving noises kept them from venturing farther."

"We will meet there in two days time at midday." Lexa cuts off Anya and Luna's bickering.

"Bye, beautifuls." Raven winks at Anya and Luna. She gives me a hug goodbye. "Congratulations on your Grounder girlfriend." She whispers to me. "We're still going to have a good talk sometime, Griff." She says louder.

Right, I forgot that I'm holding hands with Lexa. My hand was on her arm, but her hand and mine must have opposite polarities or something.

"Bye Raven." I say before we start to leave. I know Raven won't tell anyone. I haven't known her long, but she's trustworthy.

I let out a breath when we're outside their walls. At least it went better than I expected.

Chapter End Notes

I know some of you have been commenting about how you like the idea of Luna, Anya, and Raven getting together and I have to admit, I love it too! So that'll most likely end up happening. Next chapter, they head back to TonDC and can do nothing but wait for the meeting on the bridge. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
We get back to TonDC safely, and it's nerve wracking to know I can't do anything to convince the hundred to say yes. Currently, I'm pacing in Lexa's tent and we still have more than a day until our meeting at the bridge. Lexa is sitting on her throne but watching me with concern.

"Clarke, pacing will do no good." Lexa says gently.

"I know." I grumble back but continue walking back and forth.

"You can use this nervous energy and assist Nyko," Lexa suggests.

I stop and sigh. "That's a good idea. I think I'll do that." Lexa stands and walks over to me. "Thanks. We can talk about everything when I get back." I kiss her and then head out.

I work tirelessly for the rest of the day with Nyko, bandaging up scrapes and cuts. Nothing serious comes in luckily, so I end up spending more time reassuring more worried parents than actually being a healer. It's kind of ironic to be calming people down right now. Artigas stays with me the whole time, looking barely worried at all about tomorrow.

A few hours after midday, I can resist anymore and ask him. "Why aren't you freaking out like me?"

"I have faith that they will make the right decision. Plus, there is no use worrying." He gives me a surprisingly comforting smile.

I let out a breath of relief when I see that the sun is setting. The beautiful colors of the sunset relaxes me slightly. Tomorrow, we find out what the hundred decided.

I say goodbye to Nyko and head back to Lexa's tent. She's talking to Indra, Luna, and Anya but she pauses and smiles when she sees me.

"Welcome back, Clarke." She says and taps the empty chair next to her. I sit on it and take in the others' expressions. None of them seem to mind. "We were just going over what we are going to do tomorrow. They seem to think that we should have archers in the trees."

"But we agreed to no hidden warriors on both sides." I frown.

Lexa nods, "That is what I said. With us, Anya, Luna, and Artigas there we have more than enough warriors to defend ourselves if necessary."

"Do we really expect the hundred to do what we agreed to?" Indra asks incredulously.

"They don't have long range weapons." I point out.

"They are looking for some." Anya remarks grimly. "Our scouts have heard them talking about how they need 'guns' now that they know we are here. They are calling us Grounders for some reason."

I sigh. Why must they make things worse for themselves? Yeah, they'll need guns eventually but not for us. Idiots. I hope Raven and Octavia can talk some sense into them. And we even told them
about the Maunon and what they do to our people.

"Should we be prepared for war?" Luna asks somberly.

"We should always be prepared for war." Lexa responds, then lets out a breath. "We go prepared for anything. But I do not want any of us starting it. If they attack, we defend ourselves. I do not want us to be fighting a war on two sides."

Anya, Indra, and Luna all say "Sha Heda" and bow their heads. I invited Artigas in earlier as soon as I heard Luna's voice. He's going to be with us so I told him to stay close and listen.

"Any other concerns?" Lexa asks. When no one speaks up, she talks again. "Artigas? Do you have any questions?"

The others turn to look at him, evidently having not realized that he's there.

"No," he shakes his head and gives her a polite smile.

"Very well. Go back to your tents and rest. We have a big day ahead of us." Lexa says.

They all leave hesitantly except for Artigas, who just bids me goodnight and goes. Anya and Luna look like they want to continue arguing for more warriors but realize it's a lost cause. Indra fixes Lexa with a look, half disapproving and half impressed.

Lexa relaxes when they leave and stands. "Hello, hodnes (love)."

I get up as well and rest my hands gently on her waist. "Hey."

"How was your day?" She asks.

Her softness is such a contrast to the commanding aura that filled the room just moments ago. Now it's her warmth that fills the air and I can't help thinking about how I love both sides of this woman.

"Stressful and mainly uneventful." I shrug.

"Same here." Lexa says and then sighs. "I am worried Clarke. I do not want to go to war with your people."

"Lex, you're my people." I murmur. Her eyes widen in surprise but it seems like she doesn't mind the nickname. "Of course I don't want us to go to war with the hundred either, but I'm with you."

"I don't want you to go against your people for me." Lexa nearly whispers, not meeting my eyes.

I cup her face, hoping it'll help me get my point across. "Lexa. Again. You are my people. These people, the Grounders as the hundred has been calling them, they are my people. Okay?"

"Okay." Lexa nods, but searches my eyes like she's not entirely certain I'm telling her the truth. I keep eye contact and she nods again after a moment, satisfied.

"Lets not worry about that tonight."

"What do you want to worry about instead?" Lexa asks.

It takes me a moment, then I gasp, delighted. "You! You made a joke!"
Lexa grins and leans in slightly closer. "I did."

"I'm so proud of you!"

"Somehow I have a feeling you are not just talking about the joke."

"I'm not." I don't let her respond, leaning in to kiss her instead.

We both know this won't lead to anything other than maybe a heavy make out session. We're both hesitant to give each other everything we are, like this relationship will change afterwards. Even though we know it won't. Plus neither of us want our first time to be when we're so stressed. It'll undoubtedly be perfect, because with us it couldn't be anything less. But I want to have it be super cheesy and romantic or something. We'll know when it's time.

We lie down together, worked up but simultaneously relaxed and fall asleep easily in each other's arms.

Chapter End Notes

Aww... Hopefully this is good! I have a four day weekend to look forward to, and I'm really tired from everything since it's the end of the quarter. Next chapter, they'll head to the bridge for their (hopefully) peace talk! And holy crap, I just noticed we're at over 50,000 views!!! That's insane, thank you beautiful humans! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 74

The next day is the foggiest I've ever seen, but it's luckily just natural fog not Maunon fog. It's like the earth knows how important today is and has set the mood as ominous.

The morning goes by quick with us trying to wake up and eat, as well as grab everything we need for the bridge meeting. We leave probably sooner than we need to, but I guess it's better to be early than late.

We ride to the edge of the bridge before dismounting. With this dense fog, we couldn't see if there was anyone on the bridge until we walk forward. We agreed to the center of the bridge, and it looks like we're the first to arrive. I take Lexa's hand and run my thumb over the back of it in an attempt to calm both myself and her.

"It's a good thing we didn't bring any archers, I can't even see the edges of the bridge from here." I say just loudly enough for the others to hear me.

"Why would the fog come today?" Anya grumbles.

We stand in silence for a moment, the tension as thick as the fog surrounding us. If we keep this up, we're going to stab the first person that comes across this bridge out of paranoia or something. How can I defuse this? What would Raven do? Wait, Raven! That's it!

"So are you two excited to see Raven again?" I ask Luna and Anya, nudging Anya since she's closest to me to the left.

Anya's scowling while Luna looks intently across the bridge, but they're both blushing. Lexa chuckles from beside me, squeezing my hand and whispering a thank you. She insisted on being on my right so we can hold hands while keeping our dominant hands free.

The moment is broken by the sound of snapping twigs and the crackling of fallen leaves being stepped on.

"What is that?" I ask quietly. "It sounds like a baby Pauna."

No one answers, so I'm guessing they don't know either. We all put our hands on our weapons, ready to attack if we must. The sound of feet against the bridge come next and in a moment, people become visible. I relax and so do the others.

"No wonder they scared away the animals." I murmur, making Anya smirk and Luna chuckle. Lexa's got her game face on, but I can see the amusement dancing in her eyes.

I loosen my grip on Lexa's hand so she can let go if she doesn't want them to see us holding hands, but she tightens her grip slightly instead. I smile softly but quickly make my expression blank because the hundred are approaching.

"Hey, Griffin." Raven says, giving me a quick hug before going back and standing with the hundred. They all look nervous and I notice that they have a few pistols.

"Hey Raven." I respond.
Other than Octavia, Raven, and Bellamy there are a few other faces. There's two nervous looking girls who are staying close to each other, and one of them has a gun. There's Finn, with floppier hair than I remember and he's looking wistfully at the back of Raven's head. Then there's two more boys, one anxious looking one with goggles on his head and the other with a calm expression. They also stay close together and the one that doesn't look like he's about to crap his pants has another one of the guns.

"I don't know if you know everyone, so I'm just going to introduce everyone. Shaggy right there is my ex boyfriend, Finn. Or as I like to call him, Finnboy. Get it? Like fuckboy. The girls are Harper and Monroe but don't ask me which is which because I don't know. Goggles there is Jasper and the other guy is Monty. He's the only one on the drop ship that knows anything about mechanics."

"Jeez Bellamy, stop glaring like a sorry excuse for a guard dog and talk!" Octavia chides him after a moment of quiet.

"We've decided to accept your offer to become allies." Bellamy says, sounding like he's not exactly thrilled about it.

I look at him closer and try not to look pleased when I see that he has a black eye and a few cuts and bruises on his face. He doesn't have any visible bruises on his fists, so he didn't fight back. Out of curiosity, I look at Octavia's knuckles and sure enough, they're bruised. I guess she literally knocked some sense into him.

"Good." Lexa says, pleased. "You can keep the land you have for hunting and to grow food."

"We barely have enough food as it is!" Bellamy cries.

"Then perhaps you should learn to move quieter so you don't frighten all the prey away." Luna suggests, making Bellamy glare at her.

"We can teach you how to move quieter, and we will provide you with food." Lexa says.

Bellamy looks surprised, but skeptical. "What do you want in return?"

"Your allegiance." At Bellamy's outraged noise, she draws herself up to seem more intimidating. "This is not an option, but an inevitability. My people will not want to assist you in any way if you do not submit to my rule."

Bellamy doesn't look convinced in the least so I start talking. "Would you prefer to starve? I don't know what winters are like, but I'm pretty sure hiding out in little cloth tents and a cold metal drop ship won't help you any. If you do this, you not only will be provided with food and shelter, but you will also be under Lexa's protection. An attack on you would be an attack on her."

Bellamy's quiet for a moment, thinking. He sighs, then nods. "Alright. But this doesn't mean we're another clan or something, right?"

"No it means you would be an ally." Lexa explains. "To become a clan, you must bear the mark of the Commander through branding and bow to me in Polis during a ceremony. Perhaps eventually, but not so soon. My people must warm up to you first."

"This also means you can move freely through the clans." I say. "But I would suggest sticking to going to towns in Trikru and Floukru until the other clans, as Lexa said, warm up to you."

"Awesome. Can I come to your town with you guys?" Octavia asks excitedly.
"Octavia!" Bellamy says.

"What? Chill. Fine, I'll stay here with you. But I'm going to go see how the Grounders live eventually."

Chapter End Notes

I had to force myself to stop writing, this chapter was so much fun! I love Raven, can you tell? Next chapter, more talking! Just so you know, Bellamy isn't going to be an idiot forever. And tomorrow is voting day in the US so this is your reminder to help take down that hateful soggy cheeto! Vote for Hillary, third parties never work! Sorry for the political crap, but I would rather gouge out my own eyes than have that assface be president. Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"You can all come to TonDC soon. First we should focus on helping your people." Lexa says.

"Alright." Octavia sounds disappointed but I think she understands. "So when do we start all of this?"

"Tonight I will announce to TonDC that you are officially allies and should be treated as such." Lexa says. It always amazes me how she can speak in a normal tone and everyone stops to listen. "Then tomorrow, I will have builders and supplies sent over. We will come over as well. Clarke is our best healer and has learned much in her time here. She can act as a mediator since she understands both my people and yours. Anya and Luna can begin teaching survival skills."

I raise an eyebrow at that. I glance at Anya and Luna, who aren't protesting. I guess this was one of the things they discussed yesterday.

"Good. Thank you." Raven nods to Lexa. "We'll make sure that you won't run into any trouble tomorrow. There are a few kids that aren't exactly happy about our alliance. Bellamy, make sure they're all fishing or hunting or something so they don't screw us over."

"Alright. They won't be happy about doing it, but I'll make sure they listen." Bellamy cracks his knuckles.

"Gross. Stop doing that." Octavia wrinkles her nose in distaste as Bellamy starts cracking them louder and closer to her ears.

"Children." Raven says in a semi-harsh tone laced with amusement.

"You're only a year older than me!" Bellamy complains.

"True, but that still means I'm older. Plus, who is the literal genius here?" Raven retorts.

"You're so modest." Octavia says.

"Always." Raven winks at her before turning her attention back to us. "So, we'll see you tomorrow? Or is there more to discuss?"

"We are done for today." Lexa says. "Would you prefer us to meet here or at your camp?"

"What time would we have to meet?" Raven asks.

"Sunrise." Lexa responds.

Raven groans, grimacing. "Just come to our camp. There's no way in getting up at the asscrack of dawn, even if I get to see your pretty faces. Good luck waking up, Griffin."

"Hey, you have to wake up when we get there." I point out, laughing when she sticks out her tongue at me.

"Ugh. Don't remind me. Oh wait." Raven lights up with excitement as her hand touches her pocket. "Man, how did I forget about this? I made you guys a walkie talkie so we can talk while you're in
your town." She hands me a black device I immediately recognize. In awe, I press the button on the side and hear the one in my hand crackle, as well as the one attached to Raven's belt. "It has pretty long range, courtesy of me. Radio us when you get back safe."

With that, she gives us a smirk and two fingered salute. They turn and head back towards the drop ship. They disappear quickly into the fog.

Once they're gone from view, Lexa starts leading us towards our horses. We get on and we're halfway back to TonDC when a thought occurs to me.

"So where's Artigas going to be?" I ask.

"He will stay with you, as long as he does not mind of course." Lexa responds.

Artigas speaks up from the back of our group. "It is fine, Heda. I will be proud to protect Clarke."

"Mochof (thank you)." Lexa says, relaxing. "I will not be able to stay by your side all day tomorrow. We do not know what we are walking into. We have been there, but now we are allied. It is dangerous for all of us, but especially for you. I will not try to fool anyone into thinking this will be easy. It is guaranteed that a fight or two will break out and if I am not there, people will look to you to stop it. Though that may be with a few rational words or with a sword."

"I'll be fine, Lexa." I say, hoping I'm reassuring her a little bit. "You know I can handle myself."

Lexa smiles at me, looking slightly more calm and less worried. "I know. I just worry."

We look at each other in silence, trusting that our horses won't go off track. Artigas speak up, making us squint through the fog and look back at him. "Heda, Clarke, sorry to interrupt but I am curious. Who is their leader? I thought it was Bellamy last time but now it almost seems as though Raven is leading."

I frown and think about it. Lexa and I both seem a bit perplexed by the question. After a bit, I shrug. "I don't know. I can ask tomorrow."

Before anything else happens, TonDC comes into view. Since the fog is still so dense, our horses almost hit the gate before we see it. With a "whoa". I pull back on the reins. We stop close enough that my horse has to turn it's head to the side to avoid hitting the wood. It huffs and takes a few steps back.

I murmur in a soothing tone while gently rubbing my horse's neck. It whinnies but relaxes it's muscles beneath me.

The guards, having noticed us, can barely see our faces but as soon as one of them notices Lexa's red sash the gate opens.

"Moba (sorry). The fog is thicker than we have seen in a long time." A guard apologizes as some other guards come.

"Do you think the fog is a new one from the Maunon?" Another guards asks nervously. "We can hardly see a thing."
"No. This is natural fog." Lexa says confidently. "I have been in worse in the Podakru (Lake People)."

After reassuring the frightened guard for another few minutes, Lexa and I head towards our tents. We don't have long before we have to announce our alliance with the hundred.

Chapter End Notes

Whoa, we're already at chapter 75! Thanks again for every comment, favorite, and time you spent reading this little story of mine! And I changed Raven's age. I looked it up on the wiki and it said she's 19 but I decided to have her a bit older on here, so she's 24!

On a less happy note, the angry Oompa Loompa won... You know, Tr*mp. :( Stay safe! I'm here if you want to talk! If you prefer tumblr or want to be anonymous, my tumblr is wolf3223 and anonymous messages are on! And just to make sure you guys remember, this story will have a happy ending! I don't have too much angst in mind... But I'm not good at planning too far ahead. Thank you all for reading and for your wonderful comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I stay in her tent for as long as we can before heading back out. We're both significantly more calm after having a few minutes to ourselves to kiss.

Our hands are entwined as we head to the center of the village. The fog has mostly cleared, so hopefully tomorrow will be a nice day. Most of TonDC has gathered there, watching us approach with curious eyes.

We stop in front of them and I watch as Lexa quickly gathers herself, straightening her posture.

"As you may know," Lexa begins, "we have been going to the hundred these past few days. We have come to an agreement. We are now allied with them." That causes some stirring in the crowd. Luckily, people mostly sound surprised, though I do hear some angry times. Lexa holds up her hand and the talking stops immediately. "Tomorrow, we will go to their camp to start assisting them in building a more permanent residence."

"What are they going to do for us?" Someone yells. Murmurs of agreement fill the evening air.

"They are going to share their technology with us. They will teach us ways to simplify our lives, ways to communicate better. Earlier today, Clarke was given a device by their head tek (technology) maker that allows us to talk to them from here."

A man steps forward, a scowl on his face. That's Quint. I've never liked or trusted him. "Yeah, right." He scoffs.

"Clarke, would you care to demonstrate?" Lexa asks.

"Sure. Please refrain from talking so you can hear it." I say and even the whispers stop.

I turn up the volume as high as it can go and press the button. After we got back, I told Raven we got back safely so I know it works. I did warn her we might be calling her again when we tell everyone we are now allies, so she should be on her best behavior.

I press down the button, making the crackling noise fill the air. "Raven, come in. Raven."

"Hey, Griffin." Raven's voice comes out after a moment, making people gasp. "What's up?"

"I'm just checking again to make sure it works." I say.

"Alright, Clarke. Say hi to your girl's hot sister and her girlfriend for me and don't let them kill me for saying that. See you tomorrow!"

Lexa, luckily, looks amused. Anya and Luna look surprised, to say the least.

"Any more questions?" Lexa asks. We answer a few simple ones about technology and stuff like that but then Quint steps forward again.

"It seems to me like the only reason you are allying by the people who forced themselves on our land is because you share a bed with one of them." Quint eyes me disdainfully.
"Hold your tongue or I will cut it out." Lexa says, her tone rougher and more 'Heda-like,' as I like to call it. "The hundred are allied with us whether you like it or not. They will be helpful in the downfall of the Maunon. They have tek that rivals theirs." She makes eye contact with a few people in the crowd that still seem less than pleased about our announcement. "Any further questions?" No one speaks up. "Luna, Anya, and I will be coming around to ask some of you if you are willing to go to the hundred's camp tomorrow with us. Thank you for your time."

"I'll go back to your tent while you talk to people." I say as the crowd starts to disperse.

"You do not need to." Lexa murmurs, rubbing her thumb comfortingly across the back of my hand.

"I'll give people time to think about everything."

Luna nods in understanding. "Very well. I will be back as soon as I can with dinner."

I nod and squeeze her hand, smiling at her softly so she knows I'm okay. I reluctantly let go and walk back to Lexa's tent.

I stifle a yawn and pull out my sleep clothes, resting them on the bed. I begin to undo the braids in my hair, my fingers moving quickly and easily with how often I do this. Lexa and I both like having our hair down, but know it's more practical to have it up, which neither of us mind.

I hear a rustling as I'm close to getting out the last part of the braid and tense, glad I haven't put away my weapon. It didn't come from the entrance. I finish and put my hand on my swords, slowly walking through the tent. Suddenly, Quint is towering over me.

He's smirking and has his weapon of choice drawn, which is a mace. My eyes widen and I step back. He's not crazy enough to swing that around in here, is he?

"Not so tough without the Commander, huh?" He says mockingly, smirking. I narrow my eyes and draw my swords. "Trying to act like you are, little girl? I could kill you right now."

The sound of voices close outside distracts us both and I sheathe my swords again quickly and take the opportunity to kneel him between the legs. With a howl of pain, he lets go if his mace, which crashes on the ground and drops to his knees, clutching himself. Winding up, I kick him in the side of the face just hard enough to knock him out without causing permanent mental damage. He falls to the ground with a thud as Lexa and Artigas rush in, looking frantic. Artigas stops when he sees Quint on the ground and looks up at me, awe on his face.

Lexa comes straight to me, gently cupping my face. "Are you alright? Are you hurt?"

"I'm okay," I promise. "I'm okay." Lexa still checks my body with gentle touches to make sure. I find it adorable. "Artigas, get him to Nyko. And when he wakes up, tell him that I won't be so nice next time."

"And remind him this. Jomp em op en yu jomp ai op (attack her and you attack me). Next time he tries anything, he will not live to see the next day."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, they go to the hundred's camp! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 77

Chapter Notes

**Implied smut! You're welcome ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Artigas has another guard help him carry Quint away, who's still unconscious. Lexa is still focused on me, barely sparing a glance as they walk out of the tent. As soon as they're gone, she wraps her arms around me in a hug.

"Are you sure you are okay?" Lexa murmurs, her voice slightly shaky. Her head is resting on my shoulder, facing my neck.

"Yes, I'm fine." I try to reassure her.

"I am sorry that I was not here." She apologizes.

"You couldn't have known." I respond gently. "This is on Quint, no one else. Don't blame yourself."

Lexa pulls away just enough so we can look into each other's eyes. She lets out a shuddering breath. "I should have-"

I cut her off by kissing her. It's slow but loving, exactly what we both need right now. The kiss deepens after we kiss long enough to make every other thought flee our minds and I entwine our hands. Lexa's unoccupied hand goes up to rest on my waist. My shirt riding up slightly, making me take a sharp breath. A few times we are too short of breath and have to resort to resting our foreheads together or for me, kissing along her drool-worthy jaw line.

When I make up my mind and kiss her even more heatedly, Lexa pulls back so we can look into each other's eyes, studying my expression. I smile softly and lean in again, quickly kissing her lips. She grins, nudging my nose with hers.

"You're so cute." I laugh.

"The Commander of the Twelve Clans is not cute, Clarke." Lexa huffs, but the sparkle in her eyes tells me that she secretly loves it.

"That's true. You're adorable." We end up smiling dopily at each other, like two fools in love. Which is exactly what we are. "I love you." I murmur.

"I love you too." Lexa says. It's so incredible to hear her say those three words, I can't resist leaning in and kissing her again. It deepens almost immediately and she pulls away a moment later. "Are you sure? You know it is fine if you are not ready. We do have an early day tomorrow."

"I'm ready. I want to show you how much I love you." I say, proud of how little my voice shakes.

Lexa nods, a brilliant smile on her face when I say that I love her again. She's so beautiful, she takes my breath away. She squeezes my hand and we move towards the bed. She looks so in awe,
like I put all the stars in the sky just for her.

We get into her bed, slowly taking off our clothes and savoring the moment. We don't end up going to bed for a while, but I can't find it in myself to regret anything. I fall asleep easily, spooning Lexa. She's the "front spoon", a title she insists on because the "Heda isn't little, Clarke."

We are woken up way too early by Anya, who barges in and begins speaking loudly. "Why are you two not up yet? Usually you are- Oh."

With a smirk, she spins around and marches right back out. I grumble about being woken up and Lexa shushes me. I grin and lay back down, pulling the covers up so our shoulders don't get cold. Lexa hums happily, wrapping my arm around her waist again. I bury my face back against her neck, taking in how amazing she smells before falling into the dream-like state between consciousness and being asleep. The blissfulness is shattered when I hear not one, but two pairs of feet enter our tent. Huh, our tent. I like the sound of that.

"What, Anya? What was so urgent that-"

Oh float me that's Luna's voice. That pause means she probably see us. Can I disappear and fade dramatically into the shadows or something? I press my face harder against the back if Lexa's neck, who squirms a little.

"Anya, we already know they sleep in the same bed." Luna says slowly.

Anya says nothing and the sound of one pair of feet comes closer. She pulls down the covers a little, not enough for them to get an eyeful of boobs or anything, just enough for them to be able to see our bare shoulders. Lexa and I both shiver at the sudden cold and I notice that she's beginning to stir. I feel a sense of pride bubbling up through my panic and embarrassment. I must've really tired her out last night. She even fell asleep first.

"Oh." I hear Luna say, making my cheeks flush.

"That is what I said." Anya says, her voice seeming almost cheerful.

"Why would I want to know that my strisis (little sister) is naked in bed with her girlfriend?" Luna asks, both exasperated and amused.

"Why would you not?" Luna doesn't answer Anya. "Come on, get up. I am sure you were up late, but we have to head to the hundred's camp."

"You go and take the people we spoke to last night." Lexa orders, turning around in my arms to face them. Her voice raspy from sleep and probably from trying to keep quiet last night. I know my voice won't be much better. "Clarke and I will be on our way soon."

"Are you sure, Heda?" Anya asks, her posture straightening as she recognizes the authority in Lexa's tone. "We can wait for you and Clarke."

"Yes. We will come as soon as we can." Lexa says, making Luna and Anya bow their heads before leaving the room, both of them giving us one last wink before going out. Lexa kisses me and then pulls away with a sigh. "We have to get up."

"Ugh." I groan but kiss her nose before standing up on shaky legs. Lexa looks smug when she notices that I had trouble standing for a moment.

I'm sore in places I didn't know even could be sore, but it's a good ache. And it will help me get
through what will be a nerve wracking, long day by reminding me that I have Lexa to come home to.

We get dressed, helping each other back into our clothes and stealing kisses along the way. Then we eat the food that Anya must've left us. We head outside, get Artigas and our horses, then make our way through the forest towards the drop ship.

Chapter End Notes

Well, I thought we would get to the drop ship this chapter, but I guess not! At least Clarke and Lexa finally banged! Hopefully it was good and did their first time justice. Next chapter they will definitely be back at the dropship! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 78

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

We dismount our horses near the hundred’s camp, leaving them with the other horses and the guard. I nearly burst out laughing because it seemed like he was about to fall asleep out of boredom until he saw Lexa and I. That’s when his posture straightened and he wiped the sleep drool from his bottom lip.

When we get to the dropship, Anya and Luna are waiting near the entrance of the fence. They're not watching the road outside like I expect, instead focusing intently on something inside the walls. I follow their line of sight and immediately understand what’s got them so entranced.

Raven is helping some builders carry some heavy looking materials. She's wearing an old dark tank top that shows off her body and tight shorts that go to her knees, showing off her legs and her leg brace. Her skin is glistening with sweat and she chooses this exact moment to slightly stick out her tongue with concentration as she redoes her ponytail.

I have to admit, if I weren't completely in love with Lexa, I would be in the same boat as Luna and Anya, who I'm surprised to see that they aren't literally drooling. Some of the hundred kids that are sitting around are watching Raven too. The confidence in her walk and her smirk makes me realize she knows exactly what she's doing.

"Luna, Anya." I say, trying to get their attention.

"Arms? I mean, what?" Anya murmurs, not taking her eyes off of Raven.

It seems like that was just an automatic response and isn't really comprehending what I said because Raven is taking her attention away.

"Nice to see you again too. Hey Rae!" I call out, waving. I make sure that she's not carrying anything heavy so that if I startle her, she doesn't get hurt if she drops it.

"Hey Griffin!" Raven says back loudly, handing what she's carrying to the builder, who thanks her.

She makes her way over to us, her smirk widening as she subtly looks at Luna and Anya, who still are in awe of her. I give her a hug and she grasps Lexa's forearm, which surprises me because that's the "Grounder" way of showing respect.

"Luna and Anya showed me how to do that." Raven explains. "Everything's been going great, and those two will be starting their class for training hunters and warriors soon. Right?" Luna and Anya nod. "Good. Heda, for now you should probably talk to Bellamy and finalize some of the plans. He's been really annoying all morning, panicking about what will be happening." Raven rolls her eyes. "He tries to act all tough but he's such a mother hen. Clarke, you can come with me into the drop ship and we can talk technology. Everyone good?" When no one says no, she claps her hands. "Alright, let's get to it! If you need me, I'll either be in the top floor of the drop ship, helping builders, or in my workshop."

With that, Anya and Luna head over to the kids who are seated, and apparently waiting for them. And I don't miss how Raven looks at their butts as they walk away. They really need to talk about this.
Lexa heads off to find Bellamy after kissing my cheek. Raven pretends to swoon as she walks away. "Who knew Commander murder could be Commander heart eyes?" She winks at me and I grin at her antics.

"I don't know what's weirder, you calling her Commander murder or Commander heart eyes." I say.

"Well she's Commander murder because she looks like she could kill you without breaking a sweat. And Commander heart eyes because she looks at you like a love sick puppy. It's kind of cute, kind of nauseating. Anyway, to the drop ship!"

We head inside, Artigas following behind me. We push past the curtains that protect the open entrance from wind and rain. It's cooler in here than outside. Climbing up the cold metal rungs of the ladder to the third floor is about as fun as it sounds. I stick my hands in my pockets afterwards to try to warm them up again.

"So who's the leader?" I ask, remembering what Artigas was curious about. It's something I've been wondering too. "At first we thought it might have been Bellamy, but now it seems like it's you."

"Well, I'm technically the leader. That's something I surprisingly got both Octavia and Bellamy to agree on. They tend to take care of the day to day things because I'm usually working on something in my workshop. I end up fixing a lot of things, too since some of these kids are numbskulls and don't know how to treat what I give then properly." She scowls for a moment. "Now, onto more fun topics. How good is Lexa in bed?"

I sputter for a moment and feel my cheeks warm. "What?"

"Come on! Your girlfriend has a big hickey on her jaw and you've got one on your neck!" Raven points out.

I didn't notice that Lexa have me some... I'll have to check out my body later. I do remember giving her that hickey, though. Her jawline is sculpted by the gods themselves and I couldn't resist kissing it last night.

"So?" Raven asks curiously.

"You are way too invested in my sex life." I murmur shyly.

"That's probably true. But seriously, I want to know how good she is. Maybe her sister has similar skills." Raven gets a dazed look in her eyes. "And Anya..."

"I don't need to hear about that. From what I've heard, they're very good. Um. They're not exactly quiet in bed." I say, shuddering at the memory of hearing them. They're practically family, and hearing them do that...

"That's hot." Raven sighs. "I really want to join team Grounder Pounder."

"Team what?" I ask. Maybe I should've had Artigas wait outside. This is probably mentally scarring for him.

"Grounder Pounder. You know." She makes a thrusting motion that makes me blush even harder. "I would really like to be in an Anya and Luna sandwich."

"Ugh, Raven!" I exclaim, making her laugh loudly.
I love Raven so much! And I think I confirmed this already, but Raven Anya and Luna will get together! They just need a little encouragement to get their crap together... Thank you all for reading and your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Raven and I discuss technology and possibilities for an hour or so. We only stop when we hear shouting from outside. I guess Lexa was right, fights are breaking out.

I turn to Raven. "Shall we take this outside?"

"Yeah." She gathers up her pages of notes and some extra paper. "Idiots. Alright, let's go."

We head down the ladder and I help Raven by putting her papers in my bag so it's easier for her to come down. Artigas and I go down first, with Raven following soon after. I have to admit, it's impressive how quickly she can move on the ladder with her leg brace.

Artigas goes outside to make sure it's safe before coming back in. He holds the curtains open for us and we thank him as we walk outside.

The first thing I see is a ring of kids surrounding something. They're cheering on the people who are fighting. Raven and I exchange a look before pushing our way through the crowd. Once people realize who we are, they move out of our way with nervous expressions on their faces.

We reach the inside of the ring and I scowl at the two boys who are rolling around on the ground trying to beat the snot out of each other. The crowd is now silent but doesn't disperse. I see a couple people squirm uncomfortably under my disapproving gaze.

I walk forward and nudge one of the guys with my foot. He's successfully knocked the other one into a daze. He looks up at me and I don't see a hint of recognition in his eyes. I gesture for Raven to step back. I don't want her getting hurt because this idiot is running on testosterone and adrenaline.

He leaps up and immediately throws a punch at me. He's laughably sloppy and I dodge easily, which makes his face screw up in anger. I won't hurt him unless he keeps being stupid and trying to fight me.

He keeps throwing punches and resorts to trying to kick me. He fails every time and gets more pissed off with each attack. Eventually, he throws a punch that's so bad he stumbles toward the edge of the crowd. Realizing how dangerous that is while he's in that state of mind, I grab the closest arm he has to me and yank it backwards.

He falls on his butt and howls in pain, his hand going up to hold onto his shoulder. He looks up at me and it becomes evident to me that while he might be of a clearer mind right now, he wants to kill me now.

Before anything else happens, Raven kicks him directly in the face. She then hits him in the head with her brace, knocking him out.

Raven and I both take an arm of his and haul him to the dropship, putting him on one of the cots. I'll check him to make sure he's okay, but I'm not too worried. I won't be giving him anything for the pain, though. He lost that right when he attacked me.

We go back outside to help the other guy into the drop ship, only to find that Artigas is carrying
him inside. By carrying, I mean he's actually carrying him in his arms like the kid is a baby instead of a 100+ pound kid. I didn't know Artigas is that strong.

He sets the guy into another cot and I check him over first. He got knocked around pretty badly, and he'll have a nasty headache for a while but he should be fine.

I check the guy who attacked me and fight the urge to smile when I notice he has a broken rib or two. That hurts a lot, he's going to have a rough time. Plus I have no doubt Bellamy is going to yell at him until he cries when he learns what this guy did.

Raven and I sit outside on the ramp into the drop ship, discussing technology and what to do from here. A few more fights break out over the course of the day, and it's always been a kid from the hundred fighting another kid from the hundred. That reminds me, I'll have to talk to Lexa, Raven, and Bellamy later about giving them a better name. Calling them the hundred is confusing.

But then, an hour before the sun sets, a kid starts insulting a Grounder, who takes it for a while. Raven and I stepped in no less than five times to stop him from saying things like that. Apparently it doesn't work because they end up fighting. This isn't good for the kid because the person he's up against is a warrior who volunteered to be here and help build. She's a rather large woman with big muscles, even for a Grounder.

Of course, the kid is the one who throws the first punch. I stand when I realize what's happening. The metal attached to his belt... Float me, he has a knife! I know for a fact that Raven and Bellamy didn't say he could have one.

I rush over and see that the kid has pulled out his make-shift dagger and is spinning it cockily. The woman pulls out her weapon, which is an impressively huge broadsword. The guy pales as she brings the sword down at an angle that would cut him right in half.

I step in front of him and bring my swords up to block the attack. The impact rattles my bones with its intensity and as soon as the warrior realizes who I am, her eyes widen.

"Moba (sorry)." She apologizes.

"We will talk later after we get back to TonDC. Lexa will probably want to talk to you as well." I hear the familiar sound of a dagger moving through the air and turn around.

Are all of the hundred idiots that want to get themselves killed? Because he's trying to stab me when I'm the person who just saved him. I easily knock the knife out of his hands with my swords and press one blade to his neck to get him to stop attacking.

Chapter End Notes

Ooh, a kind of cliff hanger! Lexa's going to be so mad at these dumbasses for attacking Clarke... And then there's Quint too! Man, Clarke's just been having bad luck with fights. But hey, she still got laid last night! Thank you for reading and go your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 80

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The guy gasps in surprise, the movement making my sword cut his neck slightly. A small bead of blood slowly forms.

"That's enough." I say, noticing in the back of my mind that my voice is deeper than usual. "Try anything again and I won't be so nice." I warn. "Do you understand?"

He squeaks out a yes. I withdraw my swords from his neck and sheathe them again. I pick up his dagger from the ground, noting the sloppy craftsmanship. I guess we have an arms dealer in our midst.

I gesture for some nearby Trikru guards to keep an eye on them. I have one guard bring the guy into the dropship to await his doom talk with Bellamy.

I head back over to Raven and hand her the dagger. "That was awesome, Griffin! Where did you learn to do that?" Raven questions excitedly.

"I've been trained by both Anya and Lexa." I explain.

"Do you think Anya will teach me some moves?" Raven smirks, a glint in her eyes.

"I'm sure she would love to." I poke Raven in the stomach. "You need to talk to Anya and Luna. Now I know how they felt when Lexa and I were dancing around our feelings."

"You and Lexa danced around your feelings? Tell me everything." Raven demands.

"Soon." I promise, seeing a guard approaching me.

"Moba (sorry) Clarke to intrude on your conversation. Would you like me to inform Lexa what happened?"

"Yes, thank you. Make sure you tell her I'm okay." I say, knowing she will worry nonetheless.

"Of course." With that, he dips his head and jogs away.

"You know she's still going to freak out, right?"

"I know." I sigh. "But we weren't talking about me, stop deflecting." I poke Raven in the stomach again, making her giggle and swat my hand away. "Woman up! Ask them out!"

"I will! I just... I have no idea how they're going to respond." Raven shifts nervously and I soften at the sight of the great Raven Reyes showing the non-cocky side of her.

"Did you notice how they were drooling over you today?" I ask, waiting for her to nod. "I've seen them blush, actually blush when you're mentioned. They like you. They won't say no."

"If they do say no I'm going to punch you in the face before launching myself into the sun."

I laugh. "I wouldn't expect anything else. Besides, speaking of this morning, how are you so fit?"
"I work out." Raven shrugs. "I work with my hands a lot, I need to stay in shape. Why Griffin? Were you drooling too?"

"I have to admit, if I weren't totally in love with Lexa..." I trail off with a wink at Raven. We're quiet for a moment before we burst out laughing.

"That was precious, Griff. How did you get Lexa to fall for your cheesy ass?" Raven cackles.

Before I can respond, I feel something dark in the air. Like something's sucking out all of the warmth and replacing it instead with fear so thick it's almost suffocating. I look up to see Lexa, Bellamy, Octavia, Anya, and Luna all power walking, practically jogging towards us. Lexa's leading them and the others look like they're just trying to keep up.

When Lexa spots me, she gives up trying to walk fast and instead sprints up to me. It's impressive how fast she is. Lexa pauses a little bit in front of me. She searches my eyes worriedly while the others crowd around Raven quietly, letting Lexa and I have our moment.

"Are you alright?" Lexa asks, her eyes trailing across every exposed inch of my body.

"I'm okay." I promise.

Lexa doesn't look like she believes me. I cup her jaw so she has to look me in the eyes again. I know we were going to tone down the shows of affection, but I can't find it in myself to care. Lexa's so worried that I can see the faint beginnings of tears in her eyes.

"I'm okay." I repeat softly. Lexa lets out a shaky breath and rests her forehead against mine.

"I should have-" She takes in a shuddering breath. "Should have been here, by your side. Should have protected you..." She trails off and looks up at the darkening sky, blinking rapidly.

"No, hodnes (love). I'm okay, I'm fine. I can take care of myself." I say in a gentle tone that's hopefully soothing. "I wasn't hurt." I keep saying things in this voice until Lexa gathers the strength to pull away from me.

She takes a deep breath and nods to herself. "What happened?" She asks.

I start explaining everything loud enough for the others to hear as well. Lexa looks positively murderous by the time I finish.

"Where is this boy?" She pretty much snarls.

"In the dropship. But-"

It's too late, she's already marching up the ramp. I follow her, hoping she doesn't kill the two boys that attacked me. I get inside and pause when I hear her speaking.

"If any of you ever touch her again, I will tie you to a tree and give you the death my thousand cuts. Understand?"

The sudden and strong smell of urine makes me wrinkle my nose. At least one of them must've peed their pants.

I walk further in and put a hand on Lexa's back. She's giving the boy who went up against the warrior Grounder a death glare. He's paler and shaking, and there's a wet spot between his legs.

"I hope you know you're cleaning that up." I tell him. He just nods rapidly like a bobble head in an
earthquake. "Good. Bellamy will want to talk to you all as well. Good luck." I smile pleasantly at them as Bellamy marches in, a scowl on his face.

"You stupid floating idiots!" He starts yelling before Lexa and I make it all the way out. "You could have messed up our alliance and killed us all! What kind of-"

We get outside and can't hear the words well, just the yelling.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, will Raven finally woman up and ask Luna and Anya out? Probably. Will Clarke and Lexa bang again? Probably. Will Lexa fück some people up that hurt Clarke? Definitely. Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I leave soon after all of that madness, leaving those boys in the hands of Bellamy and Raven (who's smirking like she has a plan, which worries me).

Artigas, Anya, and Luna decide to stay the night with the hundred to make sure everything goes well. They promised Lexa and I that they would keep a guard on the boys who attacked me at all times. Lexa's more concerned about them than me. I just hope Raven doesn't blow them up or something.

The time apart from Lexa, even if we are just on separate horses, feels like torture. I haven't had much time to be around her today. I've missed her. As soon as we get off our horses, I take Lexa's hand in mine. We both relax instantly and head in silence back to Lexa's tent.

It seems like last night and this morning was so long ago, as though it happened days ago instead of hours. We strip our clothing and cuddle in the center of the bed, not even bothering to go under the furs. Our bodies warm each other up enough so that we don't have to hide from the hint of cold in the breeze.

Lexa gently explores every part of my body, and I don't mean sexually. It feels like she's making sure I'm still here, that I'm safe. She kisses the small bruises on my arms that I got from blocking a few punches from the first guy. We spend about an hour drawing comfort from how close we are until we're both calm enough start talking again.

"You are not injured." Lexa murmurs, breaking the silence. "I know you told me so, but..." She trails off and gives me a shy smile that makes me melt.

"It's okay. I get it. You just had to see for yourself."

I kiss her lips softly, hoping it'll reassure her that I know where she's coming from until we get lost in the moment for a while. We're both breathing heavily when we part and I have a feeling I know how our night is going to go.

"I know from experience that mental pain and scars are not visible on the skin. Are you okay in that way as well? You know you can talk to me about anything." Lexa says, squeezing my hands gently.

"I'm good. I promise. I was a bit surprised that they decided to fight me when I was trying to break up the fights." I admit. "But I was ready for it, luckily. You and Anya trained me well."

Lexa grins. "We had a good student."

I kiss Lexa's cheek and rest my head on her chest. She plays with my hair absentmindedly, slowly removing my braids. I hum contently and fight the urge to close my eyes.

"It seems as though every time we relax, something new happens. What do you think will happen next?" Lexa questions.

"We'll have to try to contact the Ark soon." I respond, sighing. "I just hope that for once they have some sense and don't mess all of this up."
"What do you mean?" Lexa asks, curious.

"Well, you know how strict the laws are up there. I just don't want them to refuse to acknowledge you as Heda. I may not like all or even most of them, but I don't want them to die because of their stupidity and pride."

"I will give them a chance. I do not like them much either, but I recognize that things must have been different in the sky."

"Hang on, that's it!" My head jolts up as I cut her off in my excitement. Lexa looks just as surprised by my sudden movement as she is my outburst.

"That is what?"

"We call the hundred the Sky People! I was trying to think of something else to call them instead and that's perfect!" I exclaim.

"The Skaikru." Lexa murmurs, then nods. "That does seem to fit. Would we call the Ark people that as well?"

I frown. "I'm not sure that the hundred would want to be associated with them. Especially after how they were treated like they're disposable. We might as well just keep calling them the Ark People, or the ArkKru. Is that good?"

"It is." Lexa kisses the top of my head, pride in her eyes as she looks at me.

"Sorry, you were talking before this. Want to continue?" I apologize.

Lexa just hums in response and then starts talking again. "I was talking about how I will treat the ArkKru as fairly as I would treat any clan, even though they are not under my rule."

"They will be. I'll make sure of it. If they go rogue, they'll be signing their own death sentences and I don't want that," I say quietly. "Along with Bellamy, Raven, and Octavia I think we might be able to knock some sense into them."

"Good. Will you try to contact them tomorrow?" Lexa asks.

"Nah." I shake my head. "I'll tell Raven my idea and give her time to fix up the radio so it can reach them."

I yawn after I finish talking and Lexa chuckles. "Ready for bed?"

"Oh my god, we got distracted by talking!" Suddenly I'm wide awake and I bat Lexa's arm with wide eyes. She looks both confused and amused by my reaction. "We were making out and started talking! Raven is right, we're such nerds." I groan.

Lexa just laughs and gives me a quick kiss. "It is better to talk it out than to bottle it up inside, Clarke."

I snort at that. "You're the human equivalent of a fortune cookie. I know, Lex. I'm just saying, we could be having sex right now and instead we decided to talk."

"We do not have to do anything that you do not want to. Are you still sore?" Lexa's eyes take over my body and it's much less innocent this time.

"Only a little. It was more noticeable this morning. If you're up for it, I can see how sore I can
make you."

Lexa's eyes sparkle as she leans in and kisses me deeply. Yeah. It's going to be a long night, but I'm going to love every second of it.

Chapter End Notes

Nice, right? They got to talk about things! And now there are officially names for the hundred and the Ark people! So now I have a question for you lovely humans... Are you interested in seeing how Raven asks out Luna and Anya? If so, I can write a one-shot or the next chapter can be from Raven's point of view! It probably won't be all asking out, I do have plans for Raven to do next chapter anyway... Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
**Raven's POV (Point of View)**

Sorry, there will be no asking out this chapter! Next chapter, probably!

I don't sleep much at night, the ideas swirling around my head usually keep me up. Tonight, after everything that happened today, I actually fall asleep at a normal human time. I feel more safe around here than I ever did on the Ark. Tonight's even especially good, and I try (and fail) to convince myself that it's not because Anya and Luna are in the next tent.

I wake up before the sun's up, but considering the fact I fell asleep early, I actually had a good night's sleep. I sit up and stretch my arms before putting on my brace. I had to scavenge for parts to build it with. Octavia helped me with that because getting around with crutches that are literally just sticks is even less fun than it sounds.

I don't think I've told Clarke about what happened to my leg. I'll have to do that soon enough, she's a healer now for the Grounders. Maybe she can work her magic and help fix my leg.

Speaking of Clarke, I have some idiots to punish... I bet they'll hate getting up this early. I smirk and put on my favorite red leather jacket. Probably not the smartest idea with what I'm planning to do today, but oh well.

I make my way across the camp, cursing my leg in my head for being so clunky and making it difficult to walk. I stop for a moment outside the dropship, sitting on the entrance ramp. I fiddle with my brace until I'm satisfied and then head inside. Everyone in here is sleeping, even Jasper, who's supposed to be guarding the boys who decided to fight Clarke. I kick his foot with my good leg and he wakes up with an alarmed look and a sleepy snort.

"Wha?"

He puts up his gun, acting like he's aiming at something but really he's just aiming at a wall. Plus the safety is still on. I roll my eyes at him. I'm surrounded by idiots.

Jasper is finally semi-aware and just barely aware enough to notice that it's me standing before him with an unimpressed look. He shrinks under my gaze and puts down his gun sheepishly.

"Stellar job you're doing here." I say sarcastically.

"I was uh just blinking." Jasper says. That is the single worst excuse I have ever heard. I'm almost impressed with how absolutely terrible it is.

"That was a really long blink." I deadpan, raising an eyebrow at him. "Help me get these bozos up, they're going to be helping me in my workshop today."

The smirk that I don't bother hiding must unsettle him even further because he scrambles to get up. Jasper is such a mess that he forgets his gun and just leaves the rifle on the floor while he shakes the first boy awake. He's the one that picked a fight with another guy, then decided to try to beat up Clarke. I have to say, Clarke's pretty badass now.

The boy looks annoyed at being woken up but I don't care less. I just stand by him while Jasper
wakes up the other boy. He's not happy about this either but they seem more scared as I silently lead them to my tent. The idiot that decided to fight a giant Grounder elbows his companion, smirking at me. He must think they're getting laid. Man, I can't wait to crush his spirits.

I walk inside my workshop and wait for them to enter hesitantly, as though they think the air in here could suddenly combust or explode. That would be awesome, but I don't have a death wish, I make sure I take basic safety measures. But they don't need to know that.

"Alright!" I say, clapping my hands together and startling them. "You two are going to be my lovely assistants for today! I couldn't care less about your names, so you will be Tweedledee and you will be Tweedledum." I point to them in turn. Tweedledum looks insulted.

"Why am I Tweedledum?" He whines.

"Because you decided not only to insult and pick a fight with a giant Grounder woman warrior with a broadsword that tried to cut you in half, but them you tried to attack our resident badass, Clarke. Who dual wields swords and is the girlfriend of the Grounder Commander. With a tiny knife. That wasn't even sharp before I got it. Now do you see why?"

He grumbles but doesn't try to complain again. Anya pokes her head into my tent, looking worried.

"Can we talk outside?" Anya asks.

"Yeah, sure." I turn back to the boys. "Don't touch anything. I don't want you two to blow up my workshop."

I grin as they pale and move away from everything. I head outside to find both Anya and Luna out there.

"It's early. What are you doing up?" I ask.

"We heard you leave your tent and got worried." Luna says. "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine, I'm just going to have the boys that tried to fight Clarke work with me today. Wait, you heard me get up? Why were you listening?"

"We are light sleepers." Luna says, but she's blushing. Score one, Raven.

"We have to be." Anya elaborates.

"Alright. Well, if you hear explosions or the boys screaming, don't worry, they're fine." I wave a hand dismissively. Their eyes are wide as they stare at me.

"Explos..." Anya shakes her head. "Raven, what are you going to do to them?"

"Just scare them. Maybe even scar them! I bet I can make one of them pass out in fear or cry." I hum. "Talk to you two later! We have something to discuss." I say the last sentence seriously and they nod in response, still looking concerned. "You can go back to bed, I'm just going to go have fun."

"Alright. You will tell us what you did with them later, right?" Anya asks.

"Of course." I wink at her and Luna before heading back into my workshop.

Chapter End Notes
Well... I thought we'd get to the asking out, but I guess not! Next chapter you'll get to see what Raven does to Tweedledee and Tweedledum! And yes, that's what I've named them... After that, she's going to have that talk with Luna and Anya. So I guess we're in for a few more Raven chapters! :) Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 83

Raven's POV

I walk back in to see that the boys are frozen in place, trying not to touch anything. I walk past them and grin when they flinch. This is going to be even more fun than I thought!

I start getting to work on what I'm working on today, an old iPod that I want to make work again. I have my side projects on the sides of my workbench with the iPod in the middle, currently a mess of wiring.

Tweedledee and Tweedledum need something to do... I've been putting off splicing wires, I could make them do that. I hand them each a small piece of wire.

"Your job for now is to splice the two of those wires together. Start by stripping three quarters of an inch on one side of the wire." I order.

Their faces are blank. "Uh," Tweedledum says. "I don't know how to splice wires. I don't even know what that means."

I roll my eyes. "Tweedledee? Do you know?" He shakes his head hesitantly and I groan quietly. "Useless. Fine. Alright. You two are on bullet duty. There's a table over there you can work on. That should be simple enough for you." I grumble and swear under my breath, "Don't know what splicing is."

They start working and don't do a completely terrible job. It's a bit rocky in the beginning. Tweedledum accidentally sets some of the gunpowder on fire somehow, scaring the boys with a small poof but they learn.

I keep switching, sometimes working on my side projects and sometimes on the iPod, but mainly on my side projects. I finish them by setting up timers to set them off and smirk proudly.

"Tweedledee, Tweedledum, you can work over here. I'm going to work on something at the desk you're at." I say.

They don't question me and move their work. I take my lighter and decide that not warning them will be more fun. There's some gunpowder residue left on the table, and leaving it there is more dangerous than doing what I'm going to do. If I leave it, it could build up until there's enough to blow up the entire camp or set everything on fire.

I click my lighter on, making the boys turn nervously at the sound. The flame flickers softly and I bring it close to the table. For a moment, most of the table sprouts flames with a loud sound of crackling and popping. I can't resist the urge to laugh when the boys squeal in fear. The flames linger only where there's more gunpowder, and then go out.

I turn to look at Tweedledee and Tweedledum and laugh harder. Oh, their faces are priceless. They're pale as ghosts, with their eyes wide and fixed on the table behind me, which is no longer on fire but is still smoking.

Anya and Luna come in to see me wheezing with laughter, bent over and clutching my stomach.
while the boys still look like they're about to pee their pants in fear.

"I heard fire." Luna says, frowning worriedly at me.

"I'll explain later," I gasp out, trying to catch my breath. "Oh, that was amazing. You should have seen their faces, it was floating priceless."

"Clarke and Lexa will be here soon." Luna says, "I think Clarke will want to talk to you."

"Alright. I'll be here."

"We will get you lunch, Raven." Anya says. It's not even an offer or anything, if anything it's like she is just stating a fact.

"Okay. Thanks." I smile at them and my grin widens because they look almost flustered by me as they leave.

"What's going on with the three of you?" Tweedledum asks.

"That is none of your business."

"It's hot." Tweedledum says.

"Say that again and I will make clamps just to put your balls between them." I threaten. He squeaks and they both squirm uncomfortably, unsubtly blocking their crotches with their hands. "Get back to work."

Anya and Luna come back not long after that with fresh steaming fish on a plate. They hand it to me and hand a handful of berries to each boy, who both look disappointed.

"Thank you." I say, biting into the fish. It's hot in my mouth but I'm hungry.

The boys begin eating the sad looking berries with equally as sad expressions. They wrinkle their noses in disgust at the taste. I wink at Anya and Luna to let them know that I know they gave the boys bad tasting berries on purpose.

Anya smirks at me as they leave and I shouldn't find that as sexy as I do. My eyes follow them. Hate to see them leave, but love to watch them go.

Clarke appears in front of me suddenly, making me jump.

"Hey, Griffin." I chuckle nervously. "What's up?"

"You're making the boys work for you? Why do I feel like you have an evil plan to punish them?" Clarke sighs.

"Maybe because I do."

"Raven... Okay, okay. I won't ask. I have a feeling you'll tell me later. Just no permanent injury, alright?" Clarke orders.

I give her a two-fingered salute. "Yes ma'am. No promises, though."

As if on cue, my first 'side project' goes off and explodes, making Tweedledee scream and Tweedledum stumble backwards. It's nothing to worry about, it's just a small explosion that's more loud than it is dangerous.
I grin at Clarke. "I have it all under control."

Clarke raises an eyebrow at me. "Clearly. I need you to work on a radio to communicate with the Ark. We need to make sure they know we're alive and about the situation down here."

"Alright, I'll get right on that. I'll even throw in an extra bonus for free, I'm planning to try to hack into the Mountain Men's radio frequency."

"That's a really good idea." Clarke admits.

"Of course it is. I came up with it." I say smugly.

"Yeah, yeah." Clarke's smiling at me. "Just remember to woman up, alright?"

"I'm planning on asking them out tonight, actually."

"Good luck!" Clarke calls as she leaves.

I'm still standing there with a smile on my face that has a 93.4% chance of being dopey while I think about Luna and Anya. The second side project explodes, making both the boys scream. I'll take that as a good sign. The third explodes soon after, making one of them scream and then there's a thud.

I look down to see that Tweedlededee has fainted and is now on the floor. My grin widens. I'll take that as a really good sign.

Chapter End Notes

Okay next chapter FOR SURE she's asking them out. Also, Raven for the win! I am really loving writing from her point of view! Now onto the next order of business, which is me addressing a few inconsistencies that were recently pointed out to me...

The questions and answers are below if you're interested :) Thank you for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!

Question: Why was Lexa's blood drained? Wouldn't her blood be incompatible with normal red blood?

Answer: I'm not great at remembering exact details of my stories, but I'm like 92% sure that the Maunon didn't drain Lexa for her blood to use, just because they captured the mighty Commander and they could.

Question: What happened to the radio Clarke shot out of the Mountain Man's hand and then kept on their journey to Polis?

Answer: As for the radio, I didn't address that at all, but in my mind Clarke lost it when the Maunon took her and Lexa. The Grounders didn't pick it up when they noticed they were gone so it's still in that cave they were in somewhere.
Chapter 84

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Raven's POV

Bellamy takes over with the boys, dragging the unconscious Tweedledee to the dropship with a pale Tweedledum trailing behind him. He looks back wistfully at my workshop and I wave goodbye cheerfully. They're going to get hell from him. I can't wait to hear what he's going to put them through.

I work on the radios for Clarke until I realize that it's getting late. I straighten my jacket self-consciously and try to ignore the bundle of nerves in my stomach. I walk out of my tent to go find Luna and Anya. I don't hear any movement from their tent so I decide to walk around the town.

It takes longer than I expect to find them; they're talking to Lexa in her tent. I'm outside the tent and can hear their voices, and try to respect their privacy and not listen to what they're saying. Who am I kidding? I'm totally eavesdropping.

"Why not just talk to her?" Lexa asks. I lean casually against the wall outside, trying to seem inconspicuous.

"We are going to." Anya says. "Soon, in fact. We should get going soon."

My eyes widen. They have to be talking about me. I really should flee and pretend I heard nothing but (curse my curious nature) I stay where I am.

"Anya, it is almost time." Luna says before anyone else can say anything. "We should start preparing everything and then pick up Raven."

I stand up straight and start heading back to my tent so hopefully they won't see me as they leave. Sadly my leather jacket is simultaneously awesome and really obvious in a crowd. I blend in as best I can and let out a relieved breath when they walk past me.

"Hey Reyes." Murphy says.

I just scowl at him. Of course the place I decided to hide is with him. His smirk and cockiness always has unsettled me for some reason.

I make my way back to my tent and fall face first on my makeshift bed with a groan. My leg is acting up again. I definitely need Clarke to take a look at it. I hate to admit it, but this isn't something I can do on my own. I take off my brace and tinker with it. It's not exactly a thing of beauty, but it does it's job. Most of the time, at least.

I'm in the middle of putting my brace back on when Luna and Anya come in. Unlike some of the idiots here, they don't stare at my leg or give me a pitying look. They just seem happy to see me, which is such a weird concept. Usually when people are happy to see me it's because I can do things for them, like build them something. I'm letting myself feel hope that they're happy to see me not because they want something, but because they like me.

I smile up at them and notice they're in their warrior clothes. Which isn't uncommon for them, they wear that mainly when they want to intimidate or fight someone, or when they're going outside the
"Where are we going?" I ask curiously, standing up and trying to subtly test my leg to make sure it'll hold my weight. It seems like I'll be okay for now.

"You will see," Luna answers cryptically with a wink.

Anya holds the flaps to my tent open and lets Luna and I walk out first. "I never would've guessed that you're a gentlewoman." I tease Anya, enjoying how I can see a light blush coloring her cheeks.

"I am not gentle. Have you seen me fight?" Anya protests.

"That's not what I meant, but I'm pretty sure everyone has gentleness, even you and the Heda."

"You would know if you spent the night in a tent near them." Anya grumbles.

I snort before bursting out laughing. "What? The Commander's a bottom?" I stop laughing and think about it. "Float me, that actually makes sense. No wonder I saw so many hickies on her neck!"

I have to spend the next few minutes of them leading me to some unknown place teaching them about gentlewomen, hickies, and what a top and bottom are. I'm delighted by how much I can make them blush.

"We are here." Anya says soon after I've finished explaining everything.

I take a moment to look around. We must be near the stream where Octavia got attacked by a giant water snake. I trust Anya and Luna not to let me get eaten. By anyone other than them, I mean. But that's a topic for a later conversation.

Anyway, we're at a pool of water that's not too big, but looks just large enough for us to fit in comfortably. It's then that I notice that a few feet from the edge of the water, there's a woven blanket with a basket of food on it.

"You planned out a picnic?" I ask.

"Yes. It is late and we know you have probably not eaten since lunch..." Luna trails off.

They did all of this for me. It's so sweet and unexpected that I have to blink tears out of my eyes. Unable to form the right words, I take their hands and squeeze gently in thanks. I gather myself for a moment before pulling them towards the food.

"I'm starving!" I say, ignoring how my voice sounds rougher than usual with emotions. "Let's eat first and then we can swim."

I stuff my face, making appreciative noises. "You guys are going to have to tech me the Grounder language sometime; it sounds awesome when you speak it."

"Trigedaslang." Luna provides. "It is not too different from your own language. Anya would be better to teach it to you, however. She helped Clarke learn it."

"That's great! Did she ever mess up embarrassingly?"

"Many times." Anya smirks. "In the beginning, I was teaching her to say ai laik, which means I am. But she would say 'I like Clarke' instead. Another time..."
Next chapter, more bonding and Raven will most likely reveal how she hurt her leg and why she got sent down with the 100! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Raven's POV

I can't remember the last time I've had so much fun and laughed so much. They find what I did to scare Tweedledee and Tweedledum just as hilarious as I did! I find myself actually wanting to open up to them, to tell Anya and Luna everything about me. It's simultaneously freeing and terrifying. I've never felt this way about anyone, let alone two people.

We eat (I'll never get used to how amazing the food down here is) until we're stuffed and talk for a while, avoiding the tough topics. For now, at least.

Anya reaches into the basket during a lull in conversation and pulls out a clear bottle with a dark liquid in it.

"Is that what I think it is?" I ask, squinting and trying to read the faded label.

"This is one of our people's best 'whiskey' drinks, as Clarke has told me it is called. It is strong but not too strong, as well as Luna and I's favorite." Anya explains.

"You had me at whiskey. Let's drink it while we're in the pool!"

I'm not an avid drinker, never have been. I don't want to become like my mother. But every once in a while after a particularly bad day, I indulge myself.

Luna pulls three glasses out of the basket and I grin. "You guys thought of everything."

"Except for anything to put on while we swim." Luna murmurs, running hand through her hair and smiling apologetically.

"That's fine, we can skinny dip." I wave my hand dismissively. I can tell they have no clue what that means. "Swimming naked."

Anya, who had just taken her first sip of whiskey from her glass, chokes on it. Luna pats her back, looking just as surprised as Anya.

"Unless you two aren't comfortable with that. Which is fine," I try to assure them. I don't want to do anything that would make them uncomfortable. "We could always just go in our underwear instead."

"That is better." Anya says, her voice rough.

Luna nods and I walk over to the water then unbuckle my brace first. I set it far enough away so it won't get wet. The water looks even more inviting in the dim light, the pale moon reflected on the water. The wisps of steam rising off the water surprises me, I didn't notice that when it was light out.

"You're sure about this?" I ask, turning to face Anya and Luna when I notice they're not beside me. "Because if you're not, I won't be mad or anything."

They exchange a look and nod to each other. I don't know what that means. I'm just about ready to
put my brace back on when Luna slips out of her jacket-like armor thing.

My mouth drops open. Oh float me, I didn't think about how they would be nearly naked too. I ignore the nervous fluttering warmth in my stomach and take off my red leather jacket, setting it next to my brace. We all strip down silently. I keep my back to them to give my cheeks time to stop blushing, but every time I think I'm good I hear another bit of clothing drop onto the ground behind me and the process starts all over again.

Eventually, I'm down to my underwear and bra. I slowly make my way into the water at first. It's warm and inviting but it's hard to balance on one good leg. Luna and Anya come on either side of me and silently help me get further into the water.

There's a shelf in the perfect place for us to be able to sit, it feels like I'm in a hot tub in an old movie. I sigh happily, close my eyes, and let the water work its magic on my tired muscles.

We sit there quietly and I rub the muscles in my bad leg even though I can't feel anything in order to tell if it's helping.

"How did you end up here?" Luna asks.

I turn to the left to see that she and Anya are both looking at me and my breath catches in my throat. They look gorgeous like this, and holy crap they have abs. This shouldn't surprise me, they're obviously fit but it does.

"What do you mean?" I ask after a moment of gathering myself.

"Well you came down with the hundred, yes?" Luna questions, continuing after I nod. "You are the oldest among them. I know Bellamy is older as well, but he snuck into the ship. You do not have to tell us, but I am curious."

"This isn't going to be a short story." I warn.

"We have time," Anya says.

"Alright." I take a deep breath and let it out slowly, thinking about how to start this. "So you know how I helped Clarke get down here, right? I helped her mom rebuild a pod. Jaha always suspected me of helping her, but he and his lackeys could never get any proof. They couldn't float their brightest mechanic without any evidence, so they became increasingly desperate to find something, anything. But they couldn't. I knew about the hundred, both from Abby and from maintaining the dropship to make sure it was ready."

"The dropship is the metal box you came down in, right?" Luna questions.

I blink and then nod. They've moved a little closer to me since I began telling my story. I wonder whether they realize that or not.

"Yeah. So when the day came where they were going to take the hundred, they made sure I was helping fix something in the prison. By the time I realized it was a set up, there was nothing I could do to escape. There were armed guards on either side of me, presumably for my protection. The screams and cries of confusion from the kids were horrible. I tried to get away but couldn't. I was held in place by my two guards, holding onto my arms so I couldn't move. But you know me, I'm stubborn."

That earns a soft chuckle from them. Luna, who's closest to me, places her hand on mine under the water like she can tell it's going to get rough. I take a shaky breath.
"I fought back. I elbowed and kicked and punched and tried to get away. They hit me so hard in the head that the world went dark for a few minutes. When I came to, I was lying on my back on the floor with a guard bending over me. When he saw I was awake, he smirked and said 'this is from Jaha.' They stood me up and he pressed a gun to my lower back. I've never been so terrified. I fought as best I could with swimming vision, and so he shot me in the back."

Chapter End Notes

This is longer than usual because I got so into Raven's story! Next chapter, it continues... Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 86

Raven's POV

"He shot you?" Luna murmurs in a low voice. "In the back? Coward." She's scowling like Anya usually does.

I turn my attention to Anya and shiver at what I see. Her expression is absolutely murderous. She's clenching her fists under the water and glaring straight ahead. I place my other hand (the one that isn't underneath Luna's) on top of hers and she takes in a breath.

"He had better never come down here." She practically growls.

"Who? The douche canoe that shot me or Jaha?" I ask.

"Both." Anya says with finality.

"If they come here, I will hold them down while you behead them." Luna says, making me blanch.

"No, beheading is quick and that is too kind of a fate for them." Anya states. "Either we dismember them while they are conscious or they suffer death by a thousand cuts."

"Um." I blink. I didn't expect Anya and Luna to applaud them for what they did to me, but I definitely didn't think they would start discussing Jaha and that guard's murder in response. "Isn't that going a bit overboard?"

"No, it is not. They both deserve a hundred deaths for harming you." Anya says like it's the most obvious thing in the world.

"What happened after you were shot?" Luna asks, changing the subject.

"Oh, uh. Turns out getting shot is incredibly painful, so I passed out. When I woke up again, I was strapped into a chair on the dropship with the others. We were about to enter the earth's atmosphere when I realized my back was hurting worse then before. I knew that I should stay awake, but I was exhausted from fighting and in pain, so I passed out again." I pause to calm myself down. Just remembering what happened makes my emotions go crazy.

"You are strong, Raven." Luna says quietly, squeezing my hand. Anya nods in agreement and I blush.

"I went in and out of consciousness for a while. We didn't really have a good healer, so no one could really do much to help me. Octavia and Bellamy took care of me the most. And Murphy did too, surprisingly."

"Murphy?" Luna asks. "The scowling boy?"

I laugh at that. "Yeah. Um. That bullet is still in my back right now. It moved around during the whole falling to earth thing, and apparently is too close to my spinal cord. That's why my leg's crap. It hit some nerves or something so I can't move it much. Or at all, really. When I was finally not randomly falling asleep, Octavia got me crutches made of wood that she whittled for me. So I
helped her and Bell get everyone's heads out of their butts and made sure people actually worked."

"Impressive, considering you were an adult and the teenagers have little regard for authority." Anya remarks.

"It helps when I threaten to hit them with my crutches if they slack off."

"Simple yet effective." Anya chuckles, then her face turns serious. "Are you alright? With your leg and everything?"

"It's a lot to deal with, but I'm coping." I give them a small smile but I know they can tell it's fake. As if on cue, Anya and Luna squeeze my hand almost at the same time. "I'm better than I was at first." I say honestly. "And hopefully Clarke can figure something out. There's always hope, even if it's false hope."

We sit in comfortable silence, relaxing for a while until I nearly fall asleep sitting up. Anya and Luna catch my shoulders before I can face plant into the water. I yelp, the sound echoing in the quiet of the night.

"Are you okay?" Anya asks, sounding more amused than concerned.

"I'm okay." Of course it's at this exact moment that I yawn. "I'm a bit tired." I confess. "I have had a pretty busy day."

"Shall we head back?" Luna suggests.

"That sounds great. Uh. Can you lovely gentlewomen help me over to my brace?" I hate asking for help normally, but for some reason it's easier with them.

"Of course." Anya responds almost immediately.

They carefully help me out of the water, treating me gently like I'm some treasure that needs to be handled carefully. To be honest, I would hate the way they're treating me right not if it were anyone else. But it's Luna and Anya, so instead of snapping at them, I swoon. Subtly. At least, I hope it's subtle.

They set me down on the towel/blanket from earlier, which is near my clothes and brace so I don't have to reach too far to grab them. We start redressing and I reflect over tonight.

Despite being in barely anything, Anya and Luna were incredibly respectful and (mainly) kept their eyes on mine. When they weren't looking at my beautiful face, they were looking at my toned stomach. I still haven't managed to get abs, but I'm still toned in ways that I can tell they like. Their drooling is even less subtle than mine.

They have been amazing, and I really appreciate the light they've brought to my life. So I'm going to be brave tonight. I take a deep breath and resign myself for what I'm going to do.

Anya and Luna help me stand, even though I don't need it now that I have my brace on. I don't let go of their hands and we walk back to camp together like this. I keep glancing down at our entwined hands, making sure I'm not imagining everything. And they seem content to let me hold their hands.

I walk them to their tent since it's further than mine from the entrance. Well, like five steps further but still. We pause near the entrance and I can feel their eyes on me.
"I had a great time tonight." I murmur loud enough so they can hear. "We should do this again sometime."

"We should." Anya responds quietly, like speaking any louder will break the moment.

I gather my courage and lean in, giving Luna a soft kiss. Her dazed expression and content smile makes me grin as I lean in to kiss Anya. She is less passive than Luna and our kiss is a bit longer.

I give them a wink as I take a step back before heading into my tent.

I touch my lips gently when I'm inside. Float me, I did it. A grin breaks out across my face.

Chapter End Notes

Nice, right? Finally, Raven's backstory and kisses! Next chapter we'll probably be back in Clarke's point of view! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Clarke's POV (Aka clexa fluff)

It doesn't get any easier, waking up early. At least now I have Lexa next to me, even though it's usually her that wakes me up.

Today for some reason I have woken up before her and so I take the time to watch her sleep. She looks so peaceful. Lexa rarely looks like this when she's awake unless she's alone with me. Or after the end of an 'eventful' night.

Lexa's head is resting on my shoulder and she's curled up against my side. I gently run my fingers through her hair. She moves a bit and I freeze, hoping I didn't wake her up. She needs more sleep. Lexa snuggles further against me and sighs sleepily. Her eyes are still closed and I don't see any signs that she's conscious.

I continue running my fingers through her hair until she starts waking up. Lexa inhales deeply and scrunches up her nose like she hates waking up in the morning as much as I do. It's the cutest thing, and I can't resist leaning over and kissing her nose. Immediately, her features smooth out and she smiles widely, her eyes still closed.

Lexa stretches her limbs and blinks her eyes open like a sleepy kitten. My heart melts into a puddle in my chest when she smiles wider when she catches sight of me.

"Morning," I murmur.

"Good morning," Lexa responds, her voice hoarse.

There's noises coming from outside our tent but I ignore them in favor of running my fingers along Lexa's bicep tattoo. She hums contently and lets her head drop back into my shoulder.

"We will need to get up soon," Lexa says quietly.

"That doesn't mean we have to get up now." I grumble back, earning a kiss to the cheek.

"You are right, but you were very nervous yesterday about the radios Raven is building for you."

I groan. Of course I'm nervous. Raven's reassured me that my mom's okay, but I haven't heard from her (for obvious reasons) since I got down here. Also, there's Jaha and the Council's reaction to the Grounders and Lexa's authority to worry about.

"Ugh. Fine." I grumble. I can't move, though. "Babe, if you want us to get up you should get off of me."

"You are comfortable." Lexa states.

She doesn't move for a moment. Then she sits up in bed, the furs falling down around her waist. I take in her exposed skin, reaching up to trace the tattoo on her back. Lexa sighs and leans back into my touch.

"Lex, if you want us to leave this bed anytime soon we should get our clothes on." I say.
I hate that I'm so sensible sometimes. Putting off the inevitable is much more fun than being responsible. Especially when procrastinating means I can stay in bed with Lexa for longer.

Lexa's back is to me so she turns her head in order to be able to see me. I notice the small frown on her face. "Should I wear my warpaint?"

"Why would you need to?" I ask, sitting up as well.

"Raven is a fast worker, and I have little doubt we will end up talking to the ArkKru today. Should I wear it? It may intimidate them into submission."

I laugh, imagining how they would react to seeing her. "Or it could make them defensive and defiant. You should wear your Heda's armor. If you think it will be necessary, or will make you more confident, I won't stop you from wearing your kohl (warpaint)."

"Why would I need to feel confident? I am the Heda, Clarke." Lexa puffs up her chest dramatically, smiling beautifully when I giggle.

"Well, you will be meeting my mother for the first time." I point out, fighting the urge to laugh when I notice the color draining from Lexa's face. "Don't worry, it might take her a while to wrap her head around me dating the gorgeous Grounder Commander, but she will come around. Eventually."

"You think I am gorgeous?" Lexa asks, her cheeks turning a light red.

"That's what you got from that?" I laugh. "Yu ste meizen (you are beautiful)." I kiss her flushed cheek.

"Mochof, ai hodnes (thank you, my love)." Lexa responds.

I swoon. "Okay, we should get going. Otherwise we're not leaving this bed until tomorrow morning."

Lexa nods, still smiling as she stands. The furs stay on the bed and my eyes rake across her body as she bends down to grab her sleep clothes we tossed on the floor last night. She turns and winks at me when she notices I'm staring.

"Stupid responsibilities." I grumble, getting up.

We've been keeping my armor next to Lexa's in her wardrobe, so I walk over to where she is. She takes in my naked body with hunger, trying (and failing) to be subtle with her ogling. I start putting on my clothes while Lexa finishes up. After she's done, I hear her stifle laughter. I look up and notice that Lexa's looking at me. More specifically, my neck.

"What?" I ask, frowning at her.

She directs me towards the small mirror she keeps for when she does her kohl. I look in and gasp, my hand flying to my neck while Lexa bursts out laughing.

"What the heck, Lexa? My neck looks like a hungry vampire got to it!" I complain, turning to Lexa with a scowl. "That is the biggest a hickey I've ever seen! Lex, stop laughing!"

Lexa composes herself quickly, still snickering a bit. "Moba (sorry), Clarke. I did not think it would get that bad."
I study the little exposed skin her armor shows and smirk. "Well, at least I've got revenge. You have one on your collarbone. Oh, and one under your jaw. They're smaller, though."

"Clarke!" Lexa whines, looking in the mirror.

"Now you get to explain to Anya and Luna where you got them," I tease.

"You have to talk to Raven and your mother with that on your neck," Lexa retorts.

I groan. This is going to be an interesting day.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, they go talk to Raven and see if the radio's done! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 88

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Clarke's POV

In TonDC, I nearly burst out laughing at how Lexa pales and walks the other way when she sees Indra. I keep quiet and don't say anything because the hickey I have is more obvious than Lexa's. We stay in small alleyways on our way to the stables.

We head back to the dropship quickly, leaving our horses with a guard that stubbornly keeps her eyes on our faces. We head into the Skaikru camp with our heads high, ignoring some of the amused and predatory looks from the kids. I keep Lexa's hand in mine and she keeps me anchored so I don't fight some of the boys leering at us.

We head to Raven's tent and walk in, not expecting her to still be sleeping.

"We should let her sleep," Lexa murmurs and I nod in agreement.

We're about to leave when I hear Raven groan. I turn to see her sitting up and stretching. Luckily, she has clothes on. Well, I can just see a tank top that shows off her biceps and will make Anya and Luna drool.

"Morning, Griff. I wasn't expecting you for a while." Raven says, stretching and yawning.

"Actually, we're a little late." I respond.

Raven blinks, looking surprised. "I did have an eventful night. I guess I was so tired that I slept in for once."

"Are you going to tell me what happened?" I ask curiously.

"Yup. Right after you tell me about those giant hickies."

I sigh. "There's not much to tell. Lexa and I had a fun night, and we got carried away. And apparently you had an interesting night, too. Spill."

Lexa sits awkwardly on one of Raven's chairs, gesturing for me to sit on one that she pulled next to hers. Raven tells us about her night, sometimes making Lexa blush and mutter about not wanting to know intimate details about her mentor and sister's love life. At the end, when she tells us about how she kissed them, I reach out my hand and we high five.

"Nice," I remark. "I'm surprised that you didn't invite them into your tent or anything."

"This is the first time in a while that I've liked anyone enough to want to go slow." Raven says shyly. "And hey, I'm not that sex crazy."

"No shaming here, Rae. I know you're not, I just remember hearing Finn complain about how you started sleeping around after you dumped him." I say.

I could hear him whining through my steel prison door, which says a lot about how loud he was.

"How did he even hear about that? He was in prison!" Raven grumbles. "And it was like two
people. Who weren't that great in bed. They were better than him, though. But that's not saying much."

"Please do not go into detail." Lexa says, a tiny bit of pleading leaking into her tone.

"I won't scar you, Heda. Anyway, you came here for the radios. I'm guessing that's why you're both dressed to impress. You guys know there's no video link, right? They can't see us, we can't see them. I'm going to start working on it, but it is in its early planning stages right now."

"Right." Lexa murmurs before raising her voice to her normal tone. "Of course I knew that, I have just found that wearing my Heda's armor makes me seem more imposing, even if they cannot see me."

"Sure," Raven remarks, obviously not quite believing we dressed in our armor for the confidence. "Alright, if you're both ready we can start the first test."

"You haven't tested it?" I ask.

"What would I test it on?" Raven retorts. "Not to mention the fact I only finished it yesterday."

I can't think of anything to respond to that with, so Lexa and I sit in silence as Raven fiddles with a large black box with a bunch of buttons and levers. It looks high tech, and at least three times bigger than any walkie talkie I've ever seen. So this must be the radio and what will patch us through to the Ark.

She flips a switch on the side labelled in blocky lettering "on/off". The box makes a crackling sound and she turns a few dials. I turn around at the sound of swishing fabric to see that Luna and Anya have entered the tent with a bunch of food.

"You are just in time, we are about to attempt to contact the Ark." Lexa says as they hand us each a plate of food.

"You would like us to stay?" Luna asks, sounding a bit surprised.

"You are both smart and will hopefully not lose your heads." Lexa gives Anya a warning look, who nods to her seriously. "Anya is a general in my army and you are the leader of Floukru. You are good advisors. If you do not mind staying, I would like to have you here."

Luna bows her head slightly and smiles. "Mochof (thank you), Lexa."

"Pro (you're welcome)."

"Shh, guys I think I've got the right frequency." Raven says and the tent immediately falls silent except for the hissing and crackling of the radio. "Raven to the Ark, Ark this is Raven Reyes. Respond if you can hear me."

She repeats saying that a couple times, pausing in between to allow anyone to respond, before we hear anything.

"Raven? You're alive?"

Oh float me, that's a familiar voice. Raven hands me the thing I have to talk into and I press the button on the side.

"Mom?" I gasp out.
"Clarke? Oh my god, you're alive." She lets out a sound that sounds like a mix of a cry of relief and a sob. "Baby, are you okay?"

"Yeah, I'm fine mom. Are you alright?"

"I'm much better now." Mom says. "How did you survive?"

"Well, um. It's a bit more complicated down here than we thought. Explaining it will take a while."

"I have Jackson working so unless there's an emergency, I'm free."

I take a deep breath and start at the beginning.

Chapter End Notes

Holy crap, Abby's back! Next chapter, we'll hear her reaction to everything! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
I tell mom about the time I spent on my own first, deciding to start from the very beginning. My mom is impressed by how I survived, and gets worried when I tell her about the giant water snake.

"You almost got killed by a giant water snake?" Mom asks, sounding both fascinated and panicky.

"Yeah, but I'm okay, mom. It didn't hurt me. I did however learn how it found me." Now Lexa perks up, interested. "It follows movement in the water."

"How did you figure that out?" Lexa asks.

"Who is that?" Mom questions. "I don't recognize their voice."

"Um. I'll explain that soon, I promise. To answer your question, I had that as a hypothesis so I decided to test it. No I didn't do anything dangerous," I say reassuringly when I see Lexa's worried expression. "I just threw a big rock in the water away from me and it went over there."

Lexa nods, looking impressed.

"What happened after that?" Mom's voice filters through the speakers after a moment of silence.

"Sorry, got distracted for a moment. Anyway, after that... This is a pretty big thing, you might want to sit down for this."

"Clarke, I'm already sitting down. You told me this would take a while and I'm not as young and strong as I used to be."

I laugh, "Sure mom. Act like you couldn't beat Jackson in an arm wrestling contest."

"I did, recently. Then he had to change all of the dirty bedpans and clean them." Mom says, amusement in her voice. "So what's this big thing?"

"There are other people down here."

There's a pause. "I would assume so, people may have survived in Mount Weather. And the hundred are down now, which you know." She says carefully.

"Yeah but I mean other people. Who live on the ground. The hundred have taken to calling them Grounders."

There's a longer pause. "People survived... On the ground? All this time? How did they survive the bombs?"

"Humans are resilient, like cockroaches." Raven provides unhelpfully.

"How many people are down there, Clarke?"

"I don't know. Thousands," I guess.

the human race survived... And we're not the only ones."

"I know, it was a shock to me too," I say honestly.

"Alright, I'm just trying to wrap my head around it. You can continue, sweetie."

"I had thought for basically the entire time I was down there that someone was watching me. They didn't reveal themselves for a while. When they did, they told me to pack up my stuff and come with them. They had weapons, better than the makeshift ones I had, so I packed up and followed them. They didn't tell me very much on the way, just that we were heading a town. It's called TonDC."

"Like Washington DC?" Mom asks.

"That's what I thought, too. I think they named it after a sign they found when they settled there. But Mom, from the second I saw them I knew things would be different down here. They're so much happier. I'm not saying they have it easy, there are many hardships. But there's a sense of community here that the Ark could never achieve."

"They seem more free." Raven adds.

"The ones that found me are Anya and Artigas. Anya's a general under the Heda and Artigas was assigned to be my guard."

"What's a Heda?"

Anya snorts and I smile, remembering how I said something similar when Anya told me that.

"So there are twelve clans, and then there's one person that's the Heda, or the Commander in our language. She's kind of like the Chancellor, but she's not chosen by the people. I can get more into that later, it gets even more complicated and I don't want to overwhelm you."

"There are twelve clans? No wonder there are so many people." Mom murmurs. "What happened after that?"

"Anya told me the leader of their clan, and the clan is called the Trikru or the Tree Clan as well as the Heda herself is coming to TonDC to see me. The first Heda was someone from the thirteenth clan that fell from the sky, so me falling was a big deal."

"I didn't know that," Raven pipes up. "Wait. Is that why Polis is called that? After Polaris?"

"I think so," I say. "Our histories are entwined in ways I never expected. Anya trained me to fight better and taught me Trigedasleng, their language. Nyko, the village healer, taught me their ways in medicine while I helped him incorporate our ways. They're not familiar with technology like the Ark is."

"What happened with the leader and the Commander?" Mom asks.

"Indra is the leader. She's very intimidating and rarely smiles. She wasn't really impressed with me. And Lexa is the Heda, she's the one you heard talking earlier. Um, aside from Raven, Lexa, and I there's also Luna and Anya in the tent."

"Luna?"

"I'll get to her in a bit. Uh, so after that I met Lexa. She helped Anya train me. After a while, I got
restless. I had become a pretty great fighter, even Anya was impressed. So I asked to go with Lexa on a hunt. Just me and her. And after some convincing, we did. Soon before we left, there was a kid who got seriously hurt by a Pauna."

"What the heck is a Pauna?" Raven asks.

"Basically, a giant bloodthirsty gorilla." I answer.

"You're joking." Raven says but I shake my head. "You're not joking. Okay. That is simultaneously freaking awesome and terrifying."

"So I told Lexa we were going to hunt the Pauna."

"Clarke!" Mom's sharp voice makes me wince. "Of all the things to hunt, you decided to go after a giant gorilla that could kill and eat you?"

"Um. Yes?" I say hesitantly. "It worked out, though! Lexa got hurt while fighting it so it started going after her, so I distracted it with my bow and arrow. And I shot it through the eye as it charged at me."

"Badass," Raven murmurs, giving me a high five.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, more explaining! I'm loving getting to write the commentary! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
"It was a great shot," Lexa adds. "Some of the most skilled marksmen that work under me would have frozen up with the pressure of the moment or missed."

"Thanks," I murmur, squeezing her hand.

"What happened after that?" Mom prompts.

"We found Luna. She had apparently been on her way to TonDC to see 'the girl who fell from the sky' when the Pauna got to her. For whatever reason, it didn't just kill or eat her, it tossed her into a pit near its lair."

"I think it was so it could have an easy snack later," Luna says.

Anya and Raven look stricken at her words. She takes their hands in hers and squeezes, not letting go.

"She just suffered a minor injury, just a twisted ankle." I continue. "It was bad enough that she couldn't climb up the steep sides of the pit. But by some stroke of luck, I noticed a trapdoor near the edge of the pit. Lexa was injured, so I made her rest while I climbed down the ladder and rescued Luna."

"You were..." Luna turns to Raven. "What is the phrase?" Raven murmurs something to her. "Ah. My knight in shining armor. And it was great to be reunited with Lexa."

"You knew Lexa?" Mom asks.

"Sha (yes). She is my little sister. We were both Natblidas (Nightbloods) and grew up in Polis together." Luna explains.

"A what?" Mom questions.

"That's part of the complicated, more confusing part." I say.

"Alright. You will explain it to me later, Clarke."

"I will," I promise. "Luna is also the leader of the Floukru, or the Boat People."

"Alright. What happened after that?"

"Then we went back to TonDC with the body of the Pauna, which was surprisingly delicious. Luna and Anya reunited, that was intense. And then Lexa brought up the fact that there was going to be a meeting in Polis. She asked me to come, and I agreed. Her scouts found a bunch of Maunon along the path we were going to go on."

"Maunon?" Mom asks. "Clarke, what are those?"

"Oh, right sorry. Maunon means Mountain Men. They're the people that survived in Mount Weather and trust me, they're not as friendly as I'm sure you might wish they were. They're extremely weak against radiation so they can't even go outside. If any of them get exposed to
radiation, that person will die. So they take Grounders and drain their blood, doing a transfusion that heals the radiation burns. They take the stronger Grounders and turn them into Reapers, which are basically mindless drug addicted killing machines. They kill so they can get the drug from the Maunon."

"That's horrible," Mom says.

"It is," I agree. "So I figured out the Maunon on the road were there to watch us. I managed to get a radio and listened to their frequency. There was this one guy that kept spouting the most sexist things. Um, we captured two of the Maunon and learned stuff from them. We let them go, even though one of them was the sexist guy, then made our way to Polis for the meeting."

I avoid telling Mom how I started dating Lexa on the way there. I tell her about how Titus hates me and vaguely about the meeting, I'm not sure how much Lexa wants me to say. I tell her how Lexa showed me around Polis but not how it was a date.

"On the way back from Polis, the hundred fell just as the Maunon tried to force us into a cave to get away from their acid fog. Lexa and I climbed a tree so we could see where the dropship fell before fleeing into the cave. The Maunon came and used knockout gas on us. They only took Lexa and me."

"Are you alright?" Mom asks worriedly.

"I'm okay," I reassure her. "They kept me under observation. I think they did a bunch of tests on me. They basically kept me unconscious for a week before I woke up enough to get out. I broke out of the obnoxiously sterile room and held this girl, Maya, hostage with a broken piece of glass."

"Badass," Raven comments again.

"Thanks, Rae. So this old guy tried to stop me, calling the Grounders savages. I was really tempted to punch him, but I didn't. They didn't risk Maya's life. Lo mean, the guards he had with him didn't even know enough to turn their safety off. With Maya's help, I got to Lexa. She told me she couldn't go any further or she would never be able to get back. So I let her go after she told me where to find a map of their layout and where to find Lexa." My jaw trembles at the memory of finding Lexa, so she takes over.

"Clarke found me with the help of some of my people they kept in cages. I was in bad shape. They gave me just enough to keep me alive and drained me of my blood, even though they could not use it. I did not want to leave without my people, but my people and Clarke convinced me to go. But we will go back for them. Even if it means we have to kill every Maunon." Lexa vows.

"You have my support to do that." Mom says, surprising me and everyone else. "They hurt my daughter and treat humans like they're lowly beasts. You have my support," she repeats.

"Thank you, Doctor Griffin." Lexa says earnestly. She was nervous earlier so I told her what to call my Mom. "It means a lot."

"Lexa and I escaped and made our way to TonDC. We came here, made a treaty with the hundred and here we are." I finish. "Oh. Um. And one more thing, Mom. Please don't freak out."

"Why would I freak out? Are you hurt?"

"No, no." I take a breath, feeling Lexa's hand in mine for support. "I'm dating Lexa."

"You're what?!"
Ooh... Next chapter we see exactly how Abby reacts to that news! Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays! :) Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"I'm dating Lexa," I repeat.

I resist the urge to squirm or fiddle with something nervously. Lexa squeezes my hand and I give her a thankful smile.

"You're... That's not something I expected to hear." Mom lets out a breath. "So you're gay?"

"Bi," I correct.

"Okay. Does she make you happy?" Mom asks.

I look at Lexa, smiling softly at the warmth I see in her eyes. "Yeah, she does."

"Good, I'm glad."

There's an awkward silence and I shift uncomfortably in place until I can't stand it anymore and speak. "Um, so are you okay with it?"

"If you're talking about you being with a girl, yes. If you're talking about you being with Lexa, the Commander of Twelve Clans, then I'm not sure yet. Lexa, we will be having some private conversations very soon." Mom says it in a tone that leaves no room for discussion.

"Of course, Doctor Griffin." Lexa replies politely, sounding understanding.

"Good. Now what about the other daughter I never had? Raven, how is the ground treating you?"

Other daughter she never had? I didn't know they grew so close. But I'm not really surprised, and I'm actually liking the idea of Raven as my adoptive sister. Or as I'm sure she will want to call it 'sister from another mister' or something.

Raven steps forward, glancing down at her leg brace. "I've been doing pretty good. My leg's fucked, though."

"Language!" Mom says automatically. "What happened?"

"Some of Jaha's guard dogs, the ones that put me in the dropship, didn't like when I fought back. I got beat up and um eventually one of them said 'this is from Jaha' and shot me in the back."

"That bastard, I'll kill him." My mother growls.

"That's exactly what Luna and Anya said, except they went into more details about Jaha and the guard's murders." Raven laughs.

I pretend not to notice when she wipes away a tear. Luna and Anya both put a comforting hand on her back and she relaxes.

"Smart women. I'll help them with their plans," Mom says. She sounds 96% serious.

"Um thanks Mama G." Raven replies and I grin at her at the nickname. Raven sticks out her tongue
at me. "The bullet's close to my spine. I think it hit a nerve or something so I can't move my leg much. I built myself a brace, though. I'll be okay."

"Sometime soon you, Clarke, and I are going to all talk about it. Okay? I want to see if there's anything we can do."

"Alright. Thanks."

"What else has happened with you? Your leg can't be all." Mom asks.

"Um, I'm dating." Raven says. Luna and Anya move their hands down from her back and entwine their hands with Raven's.

"Really? Do I know them?"

"Kind of. It's Luna and Anya."

"And? Well, you two are full of surprises today." Mom says. "I guess I'll have to talk to them later too."

I smirk at how Luna and Anya freeze, looking like 'a deer in headlights' as the Old Earth phrase goes.

"I'll make sure they don't skip out on you. Can I be here for the talk?" Raven asks excitedly.

"No, it's just between me and your girlfriends." Mom says. "Now, I'm exhausted from all of this new information. I'm going to head to bed to think about all of this, okay? I'll radio you guys back tomorrow."

"Isn't it the afternoon up there?" I ask.

"Yes, but I'm tired."

"You're getting old, Mama G." Raven teases.

"Say that again and I will come down there." Mom threatens.

"Sure you will." Raven responds. "Good night, kriken plan (old woman)."

I blink, surprised that she knows any Trigedaslang. Luna and Anya are smirking proudly at their girlfriend. I have no doubt they taught it to her.

"Clarke? What does that mean?" Mom asks.

"Old woman." I respond.

"Raven!" Mom cries, making the woman in question flinch. "Just wait until I come down there, young lady. Your girlfriends' shovel talk will be the least of your worries."

"You're going to give them the shovel talk?" Raven asks right as I'm speaking as well.

"You're coming down here?"

"Whoa, one at a time kids. Yes of course I'm giving them the shovel talk, Raven. I've told you, you're like the other daughter I never had." Mom replies, her voice softer.
"Thanks, Mama G." Raven's voice is rough and I pretend not to notice that her girlfriends are wiping away a few tears with their free hands. "Just don't scare them away," she says in a more teasing tone.

"I won't. Now as for Clarke's question, yes I do plan on coming down. I'm going to present everything you've all said to the Council tomorrow morning. Minus the dating, of course." Mom jokes. "If you could stay near the radio, that would be great. They might need to hear it from you to believe it. And Raven? If you're okay with it, I would like to have you talk as well. About the dropship and what's happened to you. We might be able to get Jaha removed from the Council or even floated if we're lucky."

"I'll do it." Raven says, squeezing her girlfriends' hands. "Can you do one thing for me? Can you let me talk to Sinclair tomorrow? He was my mentor and he's like a father to me and I would like him to at least know I'm alive."

"Of course," Mom replies. "I will talk to him after the Council. If you're still up to talking to him after the shitshow that's going to be."

"Language!" Raven jokes.

"Shush." Mom says but I can hear the amusement in her voice. "Now goodnight, I'm going to bed. Love you both, Clarke and Raven."

"Love you too," we respond simultaneously.

Raven grins at me and I know that if we weren't holding our girlfriends' hands, she would be making us high five right now.

The connection beeps and Raven turns down the volume on the radio.

"We can set up an extra tent if you two want to stay here tonight," Raven suggests to Lexa and me.

I exchange a look with Lexa, who nods. "Thanks, we'll take you up on that."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, more talking! And I know sexuality wasn't a big thing in the show, but I find it hard to believe that they didn't even use labels for sexuality after just a hundred years in space or on the ground. Plus, I want a bi character to actually say they're bi, so here we are! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa, Raven, Anya, Luna, and I all decide to stay in Raven's tent for dinner and eat together. While I'm out getting food for us, I find Artigas helping a Skaikru kid set up a tent.

"Hey," I greet him.

Artigas turns to see me and smiles widely. "Hello, Clarke!" I know that if he weren't holding a support beam in place, he would be hugging me. "It has been a while."

"It has. When you're done, do you want to have dinner with me? I mean, it wouldn't just be me and you. Lexa, Raven, Luna, and Anya will be there too."

"If you are certain I would not be imposing, then yes." Artigas responds as another Trikru person helps the struggling Skaikru kid tie the beam in place.

"You wouldn't be imposing."

"Then I would love to. Where should I go when I am finished here?" Artigas asks. "I should be done soon if there are not any more problems."

"We will be in Raven's tent." I say. "I'll get your food for you."

"Mochof (thank you)."

"Pro (you're welcome)," I respond.

Artigas releases the beam and smiles proudly when it stays in place. He turns to me and gives me a tight hug.

He releases me, "I will be there soon."

"See you then." I say, smiling at him.

I head to where the food is stored and get enough for all of us. I somehow manage to carry all of the plates back to Raven's tent without dropping anything.

Lexa holds open the tent flaps for me and helps me pass out the food, quickly noticing the extra plate.

"Who else is joining us?" Lexa asks.

"I saw Artigas and asked him to. I hope you guys don't mind."

"No, that's fine. He's the puppy, right?" Raven questions, grinning at me and winking to let me know she's not entirely serious (though when is she ever). "You know. The young guard?"

"He's the guard that was assigned to me when I first got to TonDC, yeah." I elaborate.

He walks in a few moments later, smiling shyly at the three girlfriends and sitting closer to Lexa and me.
"None of this will blow up, right?" He asks, eyeing some of the projects on Raven's desks.

Raven bursts out laughing. "I like this kid. They won't blow up unless I want them to. Most of the time."

Artigas blanches and I hand him his plate of food. It's a bit awkward at first since Anya and I are the only ones who know him well. We quickly get into discussions about tomorrow and fill him in on what's happening.

"The leader of the Sky People had someone hurt you and send you down here? Coward." Artigas scowls. "I hope he is killed for his actions."

"I'm not sure he will be killed. He is the boss up there," Raven sighs, leaning against Luna. Anya moves closer and puts a comforting hand on her lower back. "I don't think they will let him continue to be Chancellor, though. I guess I'll find out later."

"Would you like us to stay here with you?" Anya asks quietly.

"Yes. Thank you," Raven murmurs back.

It's quiet for a bit before Artigas looks outside and frowns. "I apologize for interrupting, but it is getting late. I am going to head back to my tent." He stands and smiles brightly. "It was nice to see you all."

I give him a hug before he leaves, making him promise that we'll be doing this again soon before I let him go. He grins at me and leaves, wishing us all a good night and insisting on taking our dirty plates.

"What a nice kid," Raven remarks, laying back on her bed. She yawns.

I exchange a look with Lexa and then nod to her. She stands as well, lacing our fingers together.

"We should be going as well," Lexa says. "Good luck tomorrow, Raven. Let us know how it goes with the Ark's Council."

"Thanks," she smiles gratefully. "I'll have one of these lovely ladies get you and Clarke if or when we need you."

"Alright," I respond. "See you tomorrow Rae. You're going to be great."

I give her an extra dorky thumbs up as I leave with Lexa, grinning when I hear Raven's laughter behind us.

I take Lexa's hand in mine and we lead us to our temporary tent. While I was off getting us all food, Anya and Luna were telling her where our tent is.

"What do you think is going to happen tomorrow?" Lexa asks me as we walk.

"I have no idea. I'm hoping that they will elect a new Chancellor, but in the Ark, Jaha is a highly respected man. I'm not sure even sending their best mechanic down here with a bullet in her back will make them want him out. But my mom is highly respected too, even more than Jaha to some people. I'm hoping she can convince people that Jaha truly is a terrible person."

"I hope so to," Lexa says. "If he comes down here, I will not hold Anya and Luna back from killing him. In fact, if he comes down here, I will have him pay his life for his people's. Then they will see
what a coward he is when he refuses."

"Then I hope he doesn't come down here. You won't reject the ArkKru just because he won't give up his life, right?"

"Of course not." Lexa says.

She holds open tent flaps. It's not a big tent, just large enough to hold a bed, a wardrobe, a table, and two chairs. Lexa closes the tent behind us and we start taking off our clothes.

"I will use his refusal as an example of his cowardly ways. I will figure it out. But I will not reject the ArkKru because of him." Lexa promises.

"Thanks. I just wanted to make sure. Jaha kind of brings out the worst in everyone." I murmur.

Lexa nods, "He is not a good leader. We have long since discovered that Hedas and Generals and Clan Leaders must bring out the best in their people."

I hum in response and get under the furs. "Come here, babe." I say sleepily, feeling the day catch up with me.

Lexa smiles at me softly and gets in bed. She rests her head on my chest and wraps an arm around my waist. I wrap an arm around her and kiss her forehead. We fall asleep, worried about what the next day will bring but content in each other's arms.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, will Jaha be kicked off the Council? Will he continue to be Chancellor? Will he throw a hissy fit because Raven's still alive and well? (Definitely). I know some of you were hesitant about the whole sexuality still being a thing, but here's what I meant. In their world it's handy to know like: "oh you like these genders/this gender? That's not me so I have no hope of being with you. Okay, what about you?" That kind of thing, if it makes any sense... Happy New Year! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 93

Ravens POV (Surprise! I thought this chapter would be best from her point of view!)

Sometimes I can't sleep on the best of nights, but tonight I definitely can't. Anya and Luna are asleep in my bed with me and I wish that their calming presence was enough to calm me down and to shut off my brain, but it isn't. I'm too worried for my mind to do anything but race.

I slip out of bed, putting on my brace as quietly as I can. I smile softly when I hear their unconscious unhappy mumbles at my absence. They snuggle closer together, trying to keep warm with my body no longer in between them.

I'll worry myself too much if this continues; I need to do something or I'll end up driving myself crazy.

I grab my latest project and take it to the table farthest from the bed. I'm trying to build a screen to connect to the radio so we can see who we're talking to. More like so I can see Jaha's reaction when he realizes I'm alive. I know I won't be able to get any sleep tonight, so this is the next best thing. If I work hard enough, I may be able to finish it before Abby radios us back.

I tinker with it quietly, hoping I won't wake Anya and Luna, though I suspect they're light sleepers. Sure enough, an hour in to working, a pair of arms slips around my waist.

"Come back to bed." Anya murmurs in my ears, resting her chin on my shoulder. Her raspy, sleepy voice does things to me.

I turn around and press a short kiss to her lips. "Go back to bed. I'll be okay. I need something to work on."

Anya looks in my eyes and nods. "I understand. Whenever I am nervous for something, I need something to do as well." She kisses my cheek and gives me a tired smile. "Come back to bed if you get tired, okay?"

"I will," I promise.

Anya gives me a quick kiss and then climbs back in bed, murmuring something to Luna, who still has her eyes closed but nods along to her words.

I smile at them as they cuddle closer, happy that they agreed to stay with me tonight. I wasn't sure if they would say yes, but I'm glad they did. We didn't do anything, there's a silent understanding between us that we're going to go slow.

I get back to work, only noticing that it's morning when Luna does the same thing Anya did, coming up behind me and wrapping her arms around my waist. I relax back against her, smiling when she kisses my cheek.

"Good morning." I greet her, turning around in her arms. "I would think that Anya would be the first up."

"Anya? No, when she feels safe sleeping in a place she is a pretty heavy sleeper. She will be up
soon." Luna responds, letting her hands rest on my waist after making sure it's okay with me.

I feel the blush creeping up my neck, unable to resist the bright smile I give Luna. Anya feels safe in here? That could mean anything but I think she means that Anya feels safe with us and that just melts my heart into a gooey puddle.

"Do I get a good morning kiss? Clarke once told me that it is a thing in your culture after I walked in on her making out with Lexa a few times."

I laugh, "That sounds like something Clarke would do to try to get you to leave. But yeah, that is a thing."

I gently cup Luna's jaw and lean in, kissing her gently. We continue like this, lost in each other but neither of us deepening the kiss, until we hear a grunt from the bed. We break the kiss but stay close, looking over to see a tired but interested Anya lying on the bed, her head propped up by her fist.

"That is a nice sight to wake up to," she says. Anya throws her legs over the side of the bed and walks over to us, giving us both a kiss before sitting back down on the bed with a yawn. "So what is for breakfast?"

"I will find us something," Luna offers. "You stay here and wake up and Raven, you can continue making whatever that is."

"Alright," Anya says. "I will keep an eye on her, make sure she does not blow anything up."

"Hey! I do that on purpose! Most of the time..."

Luna and Anya give me amused looks and Luna gives us both a swift kiss before walking out the tent flaps.

I get back to work, knowing Anya is probably watching me, if only to stay awake. I don't worry about being quiet anymore and finish up a few parts I couldn't while they were asleep. It's finished rather quickly and I whoop happily when it turns on. It works!

"It works, Anya!" I say, unable to keep my excitement contained.

If I didn't have a bad leg, I would be bouncing up and down like Octavia does when she's excited. Anya's smiling at me like I'm one of the cutest things she's ever seen.

"What does it do?" Anya asks, standing up and walking over.

"We can see who we're talking to on the radio. We get to see Jaha's face when he realizes I'm alive." I explain.

"Good. He can see my face when I threaten his life." Anya says, making me laugh.

"He'll pee his pants for sure. You and Luna can be seriously scary when you try."

"What about me?" Luna asks as she walks back in with three steaming plates of food.

"You're a goddess," I groan. I take a plate and start to stuff my face.

"I know," Luna says, mockingly serious and winking at me. "But I am pretty sure that is not what you were saying."
Anya explains the device and tells her how now we can see Jaha's reaction, which makes Luna's eyes dance.

"We can terrify him into submission." Luna says cheerfully.

"Good idea," Anya says. "Maybe if we are intimidating enough, we can make their Council agree to kick him out."

They start discussing scare tactics and I grin at my girlfriends (man, I don't think I'll ever get over how the butterflies in my stomach flutter every time I so much as think of them as my girlfriends).

There's a crackling of the radio that interrupts them and they fall silent.

"Raven. Raven come in." Abby says.

Chapter End Notes

I thought we could use a relatively fluffy chapter before the Council meeting, plus we get to see a bit more of their relationship! Next chapter we'll see what Abby's radioing them about... And in case you're worried, remember that I'm a sucker for happy endings and all of my stories have/will have one! :) Thank you all for reading and for your incredible comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 94

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

Ravens POV

"Raven. Raven come in." Abby says.

"I'm here, Abby. Anya and Luna are here too. Hang on, I worked on something last night. I think I can make a video link..." I trail off and grin when Abby's face comes into view.

"Hello, Raven." Abby gives me a small smile.

"What's up?" I ask.

"The Council has been meeting all morning and they're ready to hear what you have to say."

I take a deep breath and sit down. Anya and Luna silently come over and sit on either side of me. They put their hands on my thigh in an effort to comfort me. It works and I calm down slightly.

"Okay. I'm good. Is Jaha going to be there too?" I ask.

"He's technically still Chancellor, though no one is happy with him right now. So yes, he'll be there too." She takes a moment to pause and look at Luna and Anya. "Hello, you must be Raven's girlfriends."

"It is nice to meet you, Doctor Griffin." Luna says politely. "I am Luna and that is Anya."

There's the sound of someone shouting behind Abby, making her turn her head. She turns back to us after a few more muffled words are said that I can't make out.

"Sorry about that. The Council doesn't like waiting, even for this short amount of time. I'm going to transfer this radio signal over to the Council, okay? I'll be right there too."

I swallow and nod, feeling Anya and Luna squeeze my leg to remind me they're here too. I take a deep breath and let it out slowly, forcing myself not to flinch at the sudden sight of Jaha with the Council. He looks at me in shock, his mouth dropping open slightly before he schools his expression.

"Raven Reyes. So this is where you've been." He says. Abby walks in and sits in her seat, glowering at him. "Your mentor has been pestering me about where you are."

"Cut the crap, Jaha." I snap, not about to let him deny this. "You know where I am, you're the reason I'm here. Though I bet it isn't a pleasant surprise that I'm alive, huh? That bullet did a number on me, but it didn't kill me."

"What is she talking about?" A Council member I don't recognize asks.

"Oh, she's just joking around." Jaha chuckles nervously.

"The bullet that's currently embedded in my spine begs to differ." I say, bringing their attention back to me. "See, he was convinced I helped Clarke Griffin escape and couldn't find proof. So he has me working in the jail the day they sent the hundred down and got me too. I fought back until
his lackeys managed to subdue me and one of them said 'this is from Jaha' before shooting me in the back."

Gasp comes from the others, most in a state of disbelief. "Jaha, is this true?" One of them asks.

"No, of course not." He says, but I can see the fear in his eyes even from here.

"Anya, Luna help me out here." I say, knowing I can't raise my leg high enough to show them on my own. They immediately help, hoisting me up and I show my brace to the Council. "This thing is annoying as heck and I wouldn't wear this if I didn't have to. Here's your proof."

"I thought you said you were shot in the back," Marcus Kane says, sounding more curious than accusing.

My girlfriends put me back down and I thank them quietly. We sit as Abby starts to speak.

"She was. It's lodged in her spine and from my understanding, it's cut off all feeling in her leg."

"I can't feel my leg if I poke it, but it still manages to hurt like hell." I add.

Abby gives me a concerned look. "We'll talk more about that later, Raven."

"So you're saying Chancellor Jaha had someone shoot you?" A Council member asks, sounding incredulous.

"Yes," I say slowly. I resist the urge to make a snarky comment. "Though I don't even know why you guys even let him continue to be Chancellor."

Jaha sits up straighter in his chair, leaning his arms on the table before him with blazing eyes.

"Excuse me?" He says, making it sound like a warning. I wonder how many people that's worked on in the past.

"You heard me. You sent a bunch of kids to the ground, not knowing if they would live or die because they were expendable in your twisted mind. You were going to float Clarke early, paranoid that she would tell everyone about the fact the Ark's dying, despite the fact she had been in solitary the entire time. You refuse to tell the people you're supposed to be protecting the truth, just letting them all slowly run out of Oxygen until they realize this isn't just another shortage."

"I-" he starts.

"No. I'm not done," I cut him off, not missing the glimmer of pride in Abby's eyes. "You had your lackeys hound me about Clarke because you had a hunch. You had them shoot me when you couldn't get any proof. You lied to the Council, to everyone, about what happened to me. So I ask the Council: is Jaha truly fit to lead?"

"No, he's not." Abby is the first to speak after my rant.

"Abby, you traitor." Jaha snarls.

"I don't serve you, Jaha. I serve the people. And you have failed them too many times to be ignored." Abby states calmly.

I resist the urge to go "ooooo!"

"I agree with Abby." Kane speaks up next.
"Marcus?" Jaha looks as shocked as I feel. Kane has been his right hand man since Jake Griffin died.

"What you've been doing is wrong, Thelonias. I am disappointed in what you have become. I propose we take a vote."

"Seconded." Abby says.

Holy crap, this is actually happening. Awesome.

"Sorry, Raven, but this is something that you're not allowed to see." Kane apologizes. "Abby can tell you our decision later."

"Alright."

With that, the radio and the visual go dead.

Chapter End Notes

What will happen next? Will Jaha continue to be the Chancellor? Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Raven's POV

Luna, Anya, and I wait for a while for them to call back, with them staying silent and understanding that I just need them near me. We can talk about all of this later, when I'm not internally freaking out about what's happening thousands of feet above our heads.

When I draw all of the comfort I can from them, I speak up. "Can one of you get Clarke and Lexa? I'm sure they want to know what's going on."

"I can go," Anya offers.

"Thanks." I murmuring softly when she kisses my forehead before leaving.

I lean my head against Luna's shoulder, humming as she starts running her fingers through my hair. It almost lulls me to sleep, my exhaustion from not sleeping last night catching up with me. I take in a sharp breath when the rustling of the tent flaps snaps me out of it.

"Hey, Griff." I greet without looking over my shoulder. I can see their reflections in the dark screen in front of me.

"Hey Raven. How are you doing?" Clarke asks.

"I'm okay." I respond. I don't have to look at her to know no one quite believes me. "I will be."

Anya sits back next to me and takes my hand in hers. She and Luna tell Lexa and Clarke what's been happening. When they're finished, we sit in relative silence until the radio crackles.

"Raven? Are you still there?" Abby asks.

"Yeah, hang on." I flip a few switches and Abby's face comes into view.

"Is that Clarke?" She asks, her eyes going wide.

"Hey sweetie. Is that Lexa next to you?"

"Yes," Clarke replies confidently but I can see the worry in her eyes.

"It is good to meet you, Doctor Griffin." Lexa greets her politely.

"It's good to meet you too." Abby says but it sounds like she's automatically saying it. "Hurt her and I will personally tie you to a rocket and launch you into space to suffocate. Or vivisect you."
"Vivisect?" Lexa asks, cocking her head.

"It's like dissecting except the subject is alive," Clarke explains. I cover my mouth to muffle my laughter when the great Commander pales.

"That was successfully threatening, Mama Griffin." I compliment. "But can we get back on track? What happened?"

"Jaha is no longer the Chancellor." Abby states.

I let out a breath of relief. "Good. So who is? Have you elected a stand in until there can be a proper vote?"

Abby clears her throat and shifts. "Until there's a vote, I am the acting Chancellor."

"That's awesome!" I say, grinning when I see the Chancellor pin on her.

"What are you going to do first?" Clarke asks, the pride in her voice making Abby beam at her.

"First, I have to tell them all what's going on down there with you all."

"Wait, I thought you already did. Then what was that meeting earlier about?" I ask.

"It was about whether we should tell the general population about the hundred. After I, hopefully with all of your help, tell the rest of the Council about what's going on, they might be more accepting of the idea."

"I'll help," I offer.

"We will as well." Luna says after exchanging a look with Anya and Lexa.

"I will too." Clarke adds.

"Thank you," Abby breathes out and gives us a smile. "I'll connect you to the Council's room. I will be there in a moment."

With that, the screen cuts to the Council without Jaha and I fight the urge to smirk victoriously. Take that, you slimy bastard.

"Where did they put Jaha?" Lexa asks. Shoot, I hadn't thought of that.

"He's been escorted to his room." Kane answers. "He will remain there until we decide his punishment." He pauses and cocks his head. "Why are you connected to us? I thought Abby was just going to tell you about Jaha."

"Well, we're here to tell you what's been going on down here on the ground." I explain.

"Alright." He squints at the screen. "Is that... Clarke?" His eyes widen.

"Hey Kane." She waves shyly as her mom walks into the Council's room.

"You survived all this time?" He sounds impressed. "And who are these people with you? I've seen every face of the hundred and I don't recognize them."

"They are part of the reason we need to talk about what's happening on the ground." Abby says as she sits in the chair Jaha was sitting in. "They're Grounders."
Anya groans quietly and grumbles under her breath. "I cannot believe that stupid name has caught on."

"Grounders?" A Council member asks.

"It's the name the hundred have come up with to call the group of people on the ground." Clarke explains.

"There's a group of people of the ground that survived? They can live in the radiation?" The Council member sounds dumbfounded.

"Yeah," I confirm.

"How many people are in this group? Tens? Hundreds?" Kane asks curiously.

"Thousands," Lexa answers.

I snicker when a Council member chokes on the water they were sipping.

"And who are you, young lady?" A Council member asks.

My eyes widen. Oh man. Lexa's not going to be happy about being referred to like that.

"I am their Heda. The Twelve Clans and the hundred answer to me. And I suggest that if you ever feel the urge to call me young girl again, you should cut out your own tongue to save me the trouble." Lexa says in such a calm but stern tone that the Council members all look shaken.

The idiot that called her young girl isn't finished yet, though. "The insolence!" His face is red as he yells. "You should learn manners, girl!"

"And you should learn respect," Lexa responds in the same deadly tone. "My army alone has more people than you have in all of your stations. I have been kind, I have become allied with the Skaikru and was hoping for the ArkKru to join us, but if everyone is like you..."

She trails off and her words leave a tense silence.

"Apologies for him, Heda." Abby says before turning to the man who still looks mad but as mad as Abby. "Johnson, if you speak out of line again I won't hesitate to replace your seat on the Council. She is the leader of the people on the ground, and we should treat her with the respect she deserves."

Chapter End Notes

Whoa, longer chapter... Next chapter, more yelling and Lexa being awesome! And don't worry, even though that guy is a douche nozzle, he won't jeopardize the Ark's future alliance with Lexa because Lexa's forgiving. To a certain extent, of course. Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 96

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Clarke's POV

Lexa nods with approval before changing the subject. "So we will need to retell what has been happening?"

"Yes, please." Mom says.

Lexa and I start talking, using less detail than we did with my mom. We start from the beginning and make our way through time, leaving out the times we kissed or when she took me on a date in Polis.

It still takes us hours until we get up to when the hundred fell. I have noticed that a few Councillors have been taking notes on tablets or pieces of paper.

"So our decision is to either stay up here and definitely die or go to the ground and probably die." A Council member says.

"Pretty much," I shrug. "But I made it. The hundred made it. And the world down here is so much more incredible than you could imagine. Coming down here means the Ark could have a fresh start."

"I think they should leave it up to their people. Take those who want to go down, and leave those who do not." Anya chimes in.

"And who are you?"

Shoot, we forgot to introduce Anya and Luna. I mean, we even mentioned them while telling the Council about the ground but we never introduced them. How did we forget that?

"That's Anya," Raven answers. "And this is Luna. They're my girlfriends."

The idiot Johnson raises an eyebrow at her. "Plural?"

"Plural," she confirms. "Anya is a General in Lexa's army and Luna is the clan leader of the Floukru (Boat People)."

"Okay," another Council member clears her throat. "So what happens next?"

"Now we vote on whether we should tell everyone the truth," mom says. "And that means you won't be able to watch, girls. We'll tell you our decision. And Clarke, Lexa, I'll talk to you both later."

"Alright. Love you, Mom."

"Love you too."

The radio cuts out and the screen goes blank. I take Lexa's hand and her thumb rubs over the back of my hand.
"Are we just going to stand here?" Raven asks after a moment of silence.

"We can, but we could also try to plan on how to get into the Mountain." Lexa suggests.

"Alright, that sounds more efficient than this." Raven stands up.

"We will have to go to Clarke and I's tent. I have the maps there." Lexa says.

"I'll bring the radio." Raven offers, reaching over to pick it up. Anya bats her hand away while Luna takes it instead. "Guys, it's not that heavy."

"I am aware. But we like doing things to help you," Luna says.

I pretend not to notice the heart eyes Raven's giving her girlfriends. I wonder if that's how Lexa and I look at each other. If so, I definitely understand why the others were encouraging us to get together.

I know that if anyone else besides Anya or Luna picked up the radio for her, Raven would yell at them and probably curse at them until they cried. Which, according to Octavia, has happened before when Bellamy offered to help carry some firewood she was carrying back to camp. I have to give her props, though. She actually made Bellamy cry. Though he denies it, saying a twig hit his eyes.

"Ready?" Lexa asks after letting them have their sickeningly cute moment.

"Yeah," Raven says, straightening her back.

"You head to the tent, I'll go get Bellamy and Octavia." I say.

Lexa nods and I give her a kiss on the cheek before going. I know without looking behind me that the Commander of the Twelve Clans is blushing. It's confirmed a moment later when I hear the others teasing her about it.

I grin and walk to the dropship, finding Bellamy napping in a cot.

"Bellamy," I say.

"Wha-" He jolts up instantly in alarm and falls over onto the floor. I snicker at him as he gazes blearily up at me. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing that I know of. Come on, get up and head to Lexa and I's tent. We're going to talk about the Mountain. I'm going to find Octavia, but I'll be there soon."

"She's probably with that Grounder," Bellamy scowls. He stands and dusts himself off.

"What Grounder?"

"The big one." He grumbles as he leaves.

That narrows it down, I think sarcastically. I roll my eyes and walk back outside, looking around. I spot Octavia near the wall, training with a sword with a Grounder I don't recognize.

"Octavia!" I call as I walk towards them.

Octavia uses the distraction of my voice against her opponent, catching him with a kick behind the knee and making him tumble down. The end of one of her her swords touches his neck and she
grins victoriously.

"Ha! Take that! I win!" She cheers, sheathing her swords and bouncing up and down happily.

"That was pretty good." I admit, surprised. I didn't know she was even training.

"Thanks," Octavia grins, helping the Grounder to his feet. "Lincoln's been teaching me Trigedasleng and how to fight."

I recognize the name from somewhere. It hits me after a second and I smile at him. "Hang on, you're Nyko's friend! He talks about you sometimes."

"Then you must be his apprentice, Clarke." Lincoln smiles kindly.

"That's me." We grasp forearms and let go after a moment. "Oh, right. Octavia, we're meeting in Lexa and I's tent to talk about the Mountain."

"Can Lincoln come?" Octavia asks. Oh, she's smitten too. I'm about to say no, knowing Lexa and the others might not like someone they don't know as well in to talk about this. "He knows the area around the Mountain well."

"Do you?" I ask curiously.

"Yes. I was nearly turned into a Reaper before I escaped from their clutches. I know of a tunnel that leads into the mountain itself. The main problem is the Reapers that live in them."

"Lexa will definitely want to know about that. Alright," I nod after a short pause. "You can come. Let's go."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, planning! And hey, Lincoln's finally here! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Clarke's POV

Even deciding on a really vague plan takes a while. Everyone has different ideas and few of them have higher than a ten percent chance of success.

For example, Bellamy suggests we "wing it" which makes Lexa glare at him so hard he visibly pales and shuts up with a squeak that makes Octavia crack up. Raven suggests we “blow shit up” which might be part of our final plan, but isn't going to be our whole entire plan. When I tell her that, she's pretty disappointed.

It's Lexa's exasperation that makes everyone focus and surprisingly Lincoln's general calmness that keeps us from getting to tense or snapping at each other. We eventually come up with a rough plant that satisfies Lexa for the moment.

As soon as we are about to leave the tent to grab food, Raven's radio crackles and we all freeze.


"We're here." Raven responds. "What's the matter?" So she picked up on it too.

"Well, we voted. And we told everyone. The citizens were pissed at first, for us not telling them about the life support systems failing, for us not telling them about the hundred. They calmed down when I told them we have Jaha in custody and that I truly think they should have been told sooner. I think..." Mom trails off for a second. "I think they like me as Chancellor."

"Of course they do, you're awesome." Raven says.

"You're sweet." Mom exhales and I can hear the smile in get voice. "The people are voting right now on what we should do. Our options are basically mass murder, twiddling our thumbs, or trying to figure out how we can get to the ground."

I blanch but know it's true. I just didn't expect my mother to be so blunt about it. "Lets not do mass murder."

"That is a last resort that I hope we don't come to," Mom sighs.

"I'm going to be optimistic and say they will make the right choice." Raven says.

"I would like to think they'll choose correct as well. I just don't know how we can get to the ground without us all dying or without destroying the Ark."

"Have you tried simulations?" I ask.

"A few," Mom says. "I'm sure we will do more if the citizens choose to go to the ground."

"All of the simulations failed?" Raven questions.

Mom nods, "Every single one of them failed. I ran about ten."
There's a muffled sound in the background. It sounds like someone else is talking to Mom.

"Thank you for informing me," Mom says. Her voice is quieter than it usually is through the radio, as though she has turned to face whoever is talking to her.

I can hear the faint noise of fading footsteps through the radio and we stand in silence, waiting. There's shuffling as someone moves closer to the radio.

"Mom?"

"Hey, sweetie. We already have the results of the vote. Apparently it was winning by such a huge percentage we didn't need to continue it." Mom states, pausing for a moment. "Honey, we're coming to the ground."

I grin and snicker as Raven does a dorky happy dance. "That's awesome! So when are you coming down?"

"That I don't know. I know they had to vote on that as well if they chose the option to come down. I'll ask. Hang on one second." I can hear voices talking in the background. "Oh," Mom says into the radio.

"Mom?"

"A week," Mom says slowly. "They want us to come down within a week." She swears and my eyes widen. I didn't even know she knows half of those words. "We need to figure out and execute a plan in a week."

"We can help," I say.

"Thank you. I just don't know how we can pull this off without all of dying or most of us dying." Mom sighs.

"We'll figure it out, Abby." Raven says seriously. "Just let us know what you need."

"I need to figure out a plan. If you turn on the thing so you can see me, you might be able to see the simulations."

"I'll be able to help much better if I can see it for myself." Raven turns her attention to us. "Let's head to my tent."

"Lincoln and I will meet you there," Octavia says. Bellamy glares at Lincoln, who, to his credit, doesn't flinch away. "Chill, Bell. We're not sneaking off to have sex in the woods. I was saying we will get you all food."

"Thanks, O." Raven pats her on the back. "And sex in the woods would be messy. You'd have to a ways away otherwise everyone will here you. Trust me, I know from experience." I look at Anya and Luna, who look annoyed. Oh, so if she's implying what I think she's implying, it wasn't with them... "Bell, remember that screaming in the woods you thought meant a kid was dying?"

Bellamy's eyes widen. "That's what it was?"

"You slept with someone in the woods?" Lincoln questions, looking her up and down.

Raven snorts, "Ha! No, it wasn't me. It was these two other kids that didn't know the meaning of quiet. I was the one that got to lecture them when they unsubtly snuck back to camp."
Anya and Luna relax, but I know this jealousy is not something they're just going to forget. Either they're going to have a heart to heart, or everyone in camp is going to need earplugs tonight.

"Anyways," Raven says, walking out of the tent, her girlfriends walking next to her. "Let's go!"

We head to her tent, going our separate ways from Octavia and Lincoln. Raven works quickly to reconnect the radio to its spot and the screen flickers.

"Hey Mama G." Raven greets her.

"Hello everyone. Raven, Sinclair will be coming by later to see you."

Raven's eyes light up. "That's great! How is he?"

"You can ask him yourself, but he seems okay. Worried about you, but okay."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter they try to figure out how they can make it down to Earth without killing a bunch of people! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"Raven!" A male's voice comes from offscreen.

Raven perks up and beams as a grinning man comes into view. "Sinclair! It's so good to see you!"

"It's great to see you too, Reyes. Abby has caught me up on what's happened to you. How are you holding up?"

"I've been better," Raven says. "But I have also been worse. I will be okay, Sinclair. I promise."

Sinclair nods, "I know you will be. You're too damn stubborn to let anything get you down for too long." He winks at Raven, who laughs. "Now lets finally work together again. What's your brilliant brain thinking about?"

"I've been thinking about a lot of things lately. But right now, I'm fixated on how the heck we are to get everyone down safe." Raven frowns at the screen. "What if we just... Say float it all and drop everything, not caring of the Ark gets destroyed?"

Mom looks at Raven approvingly from beside Sinclair. "That... Actually might work. It's not something I had considered in the simulations, this adds a whole new set of possibilities."

"The stations will break apart upon reentry," I muse aloud. "The connections between them are not strong enough to make it."

Raven nods, catching what I'm getting to. "So we will inevitably lose some stations. If we can predict which ones, we might be able to increase how many survive. Sinclair, you and I can work on the calculations." She picks up a small radio and starts twisting the knob. "I have another radio so we can talk without having to interrupt them."

"Alright, what frequency?"

She shows him the pixilated screen of the radio and he nods.

"Now let's get to work." Raven says cheerfully.

She goes over to her other desk and pulls out some blank sheets of paper and a pencil.

Lincoln and Octavia walk in and pass out plates of food. We start eating in silence until Anya speaks up.

"What should we do while they figure that out?"

"Train?" Luna suggests, then turns back to Mom. "Unless you have something you need our assistance with, of course."

"Not that I can think of," Mom says. "Feel free to go. But Clarke, Lexa? I want to talk to you."

"Oooh," Octavia says teasingly as collects our empty plates. "Good luck having the talk, Lexa."

I groan and she moves out of my punching range before I can do anything. Octavia laughs as she
follows the others out of the tent. I roll my eyes and take Lexa's hand, sitting down in front of the radio.

I glance over at Raven, who's chatting with Sinclair while her hand works furiously writing out equations. She looks like she is incredibly focused on what she's working on. I doubt she even noticed that anyone left the tent. Aside from Luna and Anya of course, who both gave her a kiss on the cheek before they went. Which I find really cute, how much softer they are with Raven.

"Hey, Mom. What did you want to talk to us about?" I ask.

"I don't know your girlfriend very well at all. I know she is the Commander of her people, but I don't know much more about her." Mom explains and I blink. Okay, when she says it like that it's kind of sweet. "So, Lexa. Have you been with anyone aside from my daughter?"

And there it is. This is a polite interrogation of my girlfriend. At least I'm present to make sure Mom does not overstep. I see Lexa's jaw clench slightly and squeeze her hand.

"You don't have to answer, babe." I murmur.

"I will, but thank you for your concern Clarke." She says back before turning towards the screen. My mom is watching her carefully. "Yes, one woman. Her name was Costia and we first got together before I became Heda."

Lexa tells Mom about Costia and what happened to her. To my surprise, Mom seems to be in near tears.

"I'm sorry you had to go through that. I know how hard it is to lose someone you love and believe that it's your fault." Mom responds. "How did you get over it?"

Lexa gives her a small smile. "By repressing my feelings and telling myself that love is weakness. It was Clarke that made me feel differently and taught me that love is strength, that love gives us something to fight for. For you, I would suggest that you let the people who care about you in. Talk about how you feel. It will be light a weight is lifted off of your chest."

I grin at her, proud at how far she has come. I pull up her hand and kiss it before returning it to my lap.

"I do have a concern because of your story, however." Mom says hesitantly after a moment. "I'm worried about Clarke. What if she ends up like Costia did?"

Lexa nods, her expression serious and grave. "That is one of my concerns as well. But Costia was a blacksmith with minimal training in fighting. Clarke might be able to beat even me someday." Her eyes glitter with pride as I blush at her praise. "Clarke is also smarter than Costia. I do worry about her, of course. But I worry more about those who would dare to take her."

Mom takes what Lexa said in and nods. "Thank you for helping to teach her to fight. And for all you have done for Clarke, she's a lot happier with you than she ever was up here."

"It was my pleasure, Doctor Griffin." Lexa says politely with a smile.

"Please, you're dating my daughter. You can call me Abby." Mom says, making me beam happily at her.

"Thank you, Doc- I mean Abby."
Mom laughs, "And good luck with my daughter. She's more stubborn than I am sometimes."

"I do not think I need luck, I used all of it when Clarke said yes to being my girlfriend." Lexa says.

"You are too sweet." I murmur and kiss her cheek.

Chapter End Notes

Well, that turned out cuter than I expected! Next chapter they will figure out a game plan on what to do to help the Ark people come down safely. Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I talk more with my mom while Raven works, mostly about what is happening down here and what it's like.

The most uncomfortable moment is when Mom strays from safe topics and asks if we have had sex. I can't lie to my mom like that, and even if I could she will be able to tell I was lying. So my mother now knows I have had sex with my girlfriend. Lovely.

And then Mom doesn't blanch or anything and talk about a more comfortable subject. After we blush and confirm it, she gives us a half hour long lecture about safe sex. I can tell that for once Raven isn't in the zone because she keeps snickering at us.

Mom finally finishes talking about that. "Raven, I hope you were listening to that too."

I smirk at Raven as she chokes on nothing and looks back at the screen wide-eyed.

"What? Abby, we haven't..." She trails off, blushing just as much as Lexa and I were.

"I know Raven, but I'm sure you will someday."

Raven gives my mom a weird look. "How can you tell?"

"There's some tension between the three of you. That doesn't mean it will happen soon, or ever, but I have a gut feeling it will. When you're all ready, of course."

Raven stares off at a corner of the tent, blushing even more now. I can see she's starting to get uncomfortable, so I stop Mom.

"Let her be, Mom. She has some calculations to do."

"Alright," Mom agrees. "So, Clarke and Lexa. What are the animals like down there. Are they different from our history books?"

Raven mouths "thank you" to me and I smile in response before turning back to Mom.

Lexa chuckles, "That is something Clarke and I talk about fairly often. She is fascinated by the wildlife."

"You would be too if you had never seen an animal until you came down to earth at 17." I retort, maturely sticking out my tongue.

"You're just a nerd, Griffin." Raven says without looking up from her project.

"And you're not? You're the youngest Zero G mechanic in like fifty years." I reply.

"52," Raven corrects. "But who's counting?"

"You, apparently." I tease.

Raven continues on her work, the smirk on her face telling me she doesn't mind my teasing. I
return my attention to Lexa and Mom, who both look amused at Raven and my banter.

I squeeze Lexa's hand and we start telling Mom about the animals down here. Well, Lexa mainly does the telling. I tell her about the differences between the history books and the real things.

"You're a nerd too, babe." I tease Lexa. "You love learning about this stuff just as much as I do."

"That is because it is interesting."

"Hey love nerds." Raven calls, making us pause our conversation. "Get it? Like love birds but you two are nerds. Love nerds! Anyway, I think we've got it."

Raven comes over and sits next to us.

"You're already done with the calculations?" I ask, shocked. I thought it would take a day or two, not hours.

"With two geniuses working on it, it goes much faster. Sinclair and I have calculated the probability of each of the stations exploding on reentry."

Raven passes a piece of paper to me. In surprisingly good handwriting there are the twelve stations' names written out with a percentage next to them rounded to the nearest hundredth.

"These are the probabilities?" I question, frowning. "They look big."

"Yes, they are. Any percentage under five is considered rare or an anomaly in statistics." Raven says.

"Raven... None of these are under five." I say softly.

The room is silent for a moment, the weight of this pressing down on our shoulders. From what I remember of the statistics I had to learn, that means it wouldn't be surprising if they blew up.

"There's a really really low chance that every station will explode, so some people will survive." Raven says. "It's just a question of who gets lucky."

"There are three stations with percentages under twenty." Lexa points out. "Abby, will that be enough to hold everyone?"

Mom frowns, looking more tired than I have ever seen her. "Which stations?" I list them off and Mom sighs. "No it won't be enough. It would be if we didn't have to strap everyone down so we don't all die on reentry and impact. We need another station to hold everyone. What's the next smallest percentage?"

"Twenty six," I read. "That's more than a fourth chance that everyone on there will die."

"Then let's put Jaha on that one." Raven jokes and it succeeds in lightening the mood a little bit.

"He will stay with me and Kane," Mom says, a faint smile on her lips. "We have to keep an eye on him."

"Mom? Don't you dare go on that one," I say. I try to make it sound like an order but it just sounds like a plea.

"If I don't, who will?" Mom asks quietly.
I shake my head. "No, Mom. I can't lose you too."

Mom's eyes soften and she gives me a soft smile. "You won't. A bumpy ride won't keep me from seeing you again."

I choke back tears and know there's no talking my mom out of this. I know she's giving up what should be her seat in the least likely to explode in order to give people she deems more necessary than herself. Like farmers, scientists, parents and children.

"If you die I'm going to kill you," I threaten tearfully. Lexa rubs the back of my hand with her thumb, calming me slightly.

"I wouldn't expect anything less." Mom smiles proudly at me. "Now I'm going to have Jackson and Kane help me decide who goes where. We will announce it as soon as we're done so we can do this as soon as we can."

"When?" I ask.

"Tomorrow afternoon," Mom answers. "I'll call you back tomorrow morning, okay? I love you."

"I love you too."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, we see what happens. Will Abby survive? (Probably. I mean she's a main character in a story) And I couldn't resist adding in a little statistics stuff (at least my AP Stats class is coming in handy)! Also, whoa we are nearly at 100 chapters!! That's insane! And if you're still here reading, that's incredible! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa leads me back to our tent in silence. I appreciate it, knowing I don't want to talk right now. Not in public. Lexa, being the amazing understanding girlfriend she is, doesn't ask about anything. I take the moments of quiet to try to sort out everything that's swirling around in my head.

We sit on the chairs in front of the small table, still not speaking. I wait for Lexa to break the silence, not wanting to do it myself.

"I am here, Clarke." She murmurs softly, running her thumb gently over the back of my hand.

That's what breaks me and tears start running down my face. The fact she doesn't ask if I'm okay like I expected her to because she knows I'm not. The fact that she didn't try to tell me that it will all be okay because she knows it might not be. The fact she doesn't try to tell me that my mom will be okay, that she will survive because she knows she might not. She just tells me she is here for me, and it cracks me open.

Lexa instantly gets up when she sees my tears and gently leads me over to the bed. She sits down next to me and wraps her arms around me. I bury my head against her shoulder and let out all of the tears I have been holding back today. Lexa murmurs out reassurances and comforting words, holding me close.

It takes longer than I expected for the tears to stop, even with Lexa's calming presence. I swallow and clear my throat, knowing that just crying it out isn't enough for me. I need to talk about it too.

"I might lose my mom tomorrow." I say quietly, my voice raspy from crying. Lexa nods, promoting me to speak again. "I don't know if I will survive losing her too."

"You can," Lexa says confidently. "You are strong, Clarke. Sometimes I think you are stronger than I am. No matter what happens tomorrow, you and I will get through it together. Okay?"

"Okay," I murmur.

"You will always have me by your side, Clarke." Lexa says. "I will be here to help you through everything, and I know you will do the same for me."

"I will," I respond less hesitantly. "Thanks, Lexa."

I snuggle up against Lexa's side more and she wraps an arm around my shoulders.

"You are welcome," Lexa kisses my cheek. "If you would not mind, you could tell me about your mom. I have found that remembering good things often pushes away the worries and bad thoughts."

"That's a good idea." I say and think for a moment before I speak again. Lexa waits patiently. "One of my first memories was with my parents. I had stayed with my dad at home all day, playing and having fun. Mom came home after a long day and I was so excited I ran over to her. I tried to kiss her hand but my tiny brain didn't connect right so I ended up biting her hand."

Lexa start laughing and I join in. "That is adorable, Clarke. How old were you?"
"Eight," I deadpan. Lexa looks at me with surprise and I snicker. "I'm kidding, babe. I was like three or four."

I continue telling her stories about my childhood until I get exhausted enough to nearly pass out in her arms. Lexa kisses my forehead and helps me up. We take each other's clothes off until we are both just in our underwear.

We get under the covers and I immediately scoot over to where Lexa is lying on her back in the center of the bed. I rest my head on her shoulder and she wraps her arm around me. Lexa kisses me goodnight and we fall asleep quickly.

I wake up to the sound of someone walking near me. I blink open my eyes tiredly to see Raven in Lexa and my tent. I jolt, shocked. Why is she in here?

"Raven?" I ask sleepily. "What are you doing here?"

"Abby called and said they are getting ready. She wants to talk to you before she goes." Raven explains.

"Alright, I'll be there soon." I promise.

Raven waits, seeming like she wants to wait there for me. "Are you going to get up?" She raises an eyebrow at me.

"Well I'm pretty much naked under here. Unless your girlfriends are okay with you seeing me, you should wait for me in your tent."

"Ooh," Raven drawls, smirking. "Get it, Griffin."

"We didn't even..." I trail off and her smirk doesn't falter. I wave a hand dismissively, careful not to expose anything. "Never mind. Go, Raven. We will be there soon. Now shoo."

Raven winks at me and slips out of the tent. I turn to Lexa, who's somehow still sleeping. I guess yesterday was draining for her, too.

I kiss Lexa's lips softly and watch as a furrow forms between her brows. She stirs, moving a little and opening her eyes slowly. She lets out a little yawn and I resist the urge to say "aww."

"Babe, we have to get up." I say. Lexa groans and I grin down at her. "Come on, wake up. They're getting ready to come down. Mom is on the radio in Raven's tent."

That makes her wake up and she blinks against the sudden light in her eyes. I kiss her again before slipping out of bed. I begin putting on my armor as Lexa gets up. She pouts adorably at me and I stop dressing, letting her help me put on my clothes. I then help her put on her armor and we head out, hand in hand, towards Raven's tent.

"Get some sentries to good vantage points and have them where the Ark falls. I want to know exactly where they are." Lexa orders a nearby guard before we get to Raven's tent. He nods and bows to her before going off to do what she says.

L dexa holds the tent's flaps open for me and I'm greeted by Raven, Anya, and Luna all sitting on her bed with my mom on the screen.

"Hey, Mom." I greet her.
I thought we would get to the Ark falling this chapter, but apparently not! Next chapter, Clarke talks to her mom and the Ark comes down! And holy crap! We hit 100 chapters! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
"Hey Mom."

"Hey sweetie." She greets me with a tired smile.

"Did you get any sleep last night?" I ask worriedly, noticing the dark rings under her eyes.

Mom waves her hand. "I'm fine." I give her an unimpressed look. "I can sleep when I get down on the ground."

"Abby," Raven interjects before I can answer. "The only way you're sleeping when you get down here is if you get knocked out. Face it, you're a workaholic."

"I am," Mom admits. "But I need to be, the people of the Ark need me to be."

"With all due respect Doctor Griffin," Lexa says. "You being sleep deprived helps no one. Your people need you to be rested and focused, not barely awake."

Mom sighs. "Lexa, I told you. You are dating my daughter, call me Abby. And you're right. I will try to have a better sleeping schedule after tonight."

The reminder that my mom might die today makes my heart clench painfully in my chest. As if sending my pain, Lexa squeezes my hand that she is holding. I draw strength from her presence, determined not to beg my mother to choose another station to go on. We Griffin women are stubborn and this is not a decision I will be able to convince my mom to reconsider.

"Clarke, we will start boarding the stations in less than half an hour." Mom says seriously, her voice shaking slightly. "I will have to go pretty soon, make sure everything's going well. But I want you to know I love you, Clarke."

And here come the tears. My eyes fill and my jaw trembles as I try (and fail) to hold them back but no one comments on it. The only indication I get that anyone has noticed is how Lexa's hand tightens around mine and how a few stray tears stream down my Mom's cheeks.

"I know, Mom." I choke out when I gather myself enough to speak. "I love you too."

I hear muffled shouting through the radio and close my eyes, making a few more tears run down my face. Mom must have to go now. Of course she does. I open my eyes, tracing her face and trying to memorize every detail I can. This could be the last time I see her, and the thought makes my heart crack.

Mom's lips twitch up into a sad smile. "I'm coming down to the ground, honey. I'll be there soon. I love you," she repeats before the visual cuts out.

I cover my face with my hand that isn't currently holding Lexa's. I let out a shuddering breath and the tent is silent. Lexa gently rubs her thumb over the back of my hand. She kisses my cheek and I rest my head on her shoulder.

Someone enters the tent hastily, but I can't see who it is because I am turned away from the
entrance. I don't want people to see me cry. I get it is a guard, here to give Lexa an update or something. The way their feet hit the ground with no hesitation, their confidence makes them seem like a warrior. But I could be wrong.

Lexa turns her head to face the woman.

"Heda," the woman says in a respectful tone. "The sentries are in position, watching the skies. They have all been briefed and know what they are looking for."

"Good, mochof (thank you). Send extra guards near their positions to watch for Maunon. I want no surprises today." Lexa orders, easily falling into 'Commander mode' even while she's comforting me with her touch and presence. "Prepare the healers and more guards. We will need to move quickly to help the ArkKru when they land. Tell them what they will be doing, make sure they know we will be there to assist them."

"Sha, Heda (yes, Commander). I will get started on that right away."

The sound of the tent's entrance swishing and footsteps retreating away tells me she is gone. I pull myself together, using my unoccupied hand to wipe away the tear tracks. Lexa returns her attention to me, studying me with gentle eyes.

"Lexa?" I ask, my voice shaky. I clear my throat and then it comes out a little stronger. "I want to watch it."

"You would like to watch the Ark fall?" Lexa questions softly and I know she isn't being condescending, but just trying to clarify what I am asking of her.

"Yes," I nod. "Can we find a good vantage point, like the sentries?"

"Of course." Lexa responds.

"Um," Raven says. "Before you rush out, I just want to let you guys know I'm going too. With the healers and the guards to help the ArkKru." Anya and Luna frown at her and she hurries to continue. "You two will be there, ordering people around and keeping things in line," Raven says to her girlfriends. "I'll be there to make sure we don't all blow up. I can help."

"We know you can." Anya says, kissing Raven's forehead. "We just worry. It will not be a pretty sight. People will be injured and it is almost certain that some will be dead. I just want you to know what you are walking into."

Raven gives her girlfriends hard looks. "It sounds like you're trying to scare me away."

"That is not what Anya meant." Luna says in a soothing tone. "You know yourself better than we ever will. We just want you to know you can handle everything you may experience."

Raven nods thoughtfully and cocks her head. "I get that. I can handle it, and I'll have you both by my side if it gets rough."

Anya and Luna let out sounds of agreement and scoot closer to her. Deciding to let them have a private moment, Lexa and I say our hasty goodbyes and leave. We head out of the camp and I am thankful that no one tries to talk to us as we go.

We head to a tall tree and make the climb up the branches until we can see above the forest. I look at the sky where the Ark should be, unable to see it when it is light out. It has been more than half an hour by now since I talked to my mom. It should be coming down at any moment.
Chapter End Notes

Ooh, sort of cliff hanger... I thought I would get to a worse cliff hanger but oh well! Soon, we will find out what happens to the Ark and if Abby survives! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
I watch the skies, barely blinking. It isn't long before I see something high up and squint. It's getting bigger and I stare as it starts to break apart.

I clench my jaw and try to make out which part is which station. But it's moving too quickly for me to be able to tell.

I nearly jump out of the tree in surprise when one of the stations explodes. Lexa's quick reflexes keeps me from losing my balance and falling. I watch the reds and oranges and yellows in the sky as the magnitude of the sound seems to shake the Earth itself. I look at the other stations, watching in horror as two more explode in quick succession.

Logically, I know there are only four stations that have people in them and I saw at least ten pieces at the beginning. But the fact is, my mom might already be dead. She could have been on one of them.

I keep my eyes on the stations, only wasting a moment to blink the tears away. In the end, only four pieces make it to the ground intact. As in, not broken in half or thirds of quarters or exploded. The impact of the larger pieces can be felt even on this tree. I clutch onto the trunk, managing to not fall somehow.

"The nearest one is over there," I point. "Let's go."

Lexa nods and luckily does not try to stop me or try to make me see reason. Yeah, it's dangerous. But so was falling out of the sky. My mom could be in that station and there's no way I'm leaving her.

We swiftly get down the tree, making risky jumps and drops from one branch to another. If I weren't in such a hurry I would worry about by safety. But now, I'm much more worried about my mom's safety.

As soon as my feet hit the ground, I'm off like a shot. I run through the forest in the direction of the closest station. Lexa, to her credit, doesn't complain and just runs by my side, following my lead. We reach a clearing that wasn't there before, a large station has smashed into the ground here, knocking over trees and other plants.

I stop in my tracks when I see it, recognizing the station. I know the shape from when Dad used to show me the maps of the Ark. This isn't one anyone was in. That means... At least one of the stations with people in it exploded. I shudder at the thought and nearly miss noticing three people standing near the still smoking hunk of metal.

"Heda!" One of them calls. "There is no one here! But there is a lot of tek (technology)!"

Lexa nods. "Then mark this area on a map, we will want to come back later. After you are done with that, go to next nearest station." She turns to me. "Clarke."

I nod, understanding what she isn't saying. "The nearest one is that way," I point so the three others know what direction to head in.
We run through the trees again and any other time, the feeling would be freeing. Now I just have worry and panic settling in my chest that will not go away until I find out what has happened to my mom.

When we finally reach the next station, I nearly cry in relief. Raven, Anya, and Luna are there helping people out of the wreckage. For such a large station, there are not many people coming out of it. I study the shape and my mouth falls open. This... This is the one my mom went on.

"Raven! Have you seen Abby?" Lexa calls.

"No, sorry!" Raven yells back as she helps a little girl get out from the station.

"Abby Griffin?" A nearby woman asks. "Yeah, she was on this station along with Marcus Kane and that bastard Thelonius Jaha. I haven't seen her come out yet. She's probably still in there."

After she finishes speaking, I quickly thank her and sprint towards the station. I hear Lexa's footsteps behind me but don't look back. I step into the hole in the side of the station that is definitely not natural. I put my bets on Raven blowing a hole in the side of it somehow.

I go slower down the corridor, calling out for my mom and Kane. I pause in between to listen and Lexa and I end up finding a few more people who got lost or trapped. She walks beside me, a constant comforting presence. I tell her to keep listening since she has better hearing than I do.

We keep moving until Lexa suddenly pauses. I don't ask, not wanting to disrupt her. She moves to the side of the hall and opens a door. That is when I can hear it more clearly. The familiar sound of something heavy falling and hitting the metal floor. I frown, wondering what the heck that could be when it comes again. And again. With similar time intervals in between the noises.

"It is someone trapped. They are smart, not using their voice. Conserve their energy." Lexa murmurs.

She goes over to the wall where the sound seems to be coming from and knocks along it until she hears a hollow sound. Lexa's face lights up and she pulls the screws out. She takes off the metal plate, revealing an oxygen tunnel. I think that's what it is, at least.

Lexa crouches down and maneuvers herself until she can get into the tunnel. She army crawls forward since it's too small to even try to crawl normally. I follow behind her, impressed by how easily and confidently she moves through a couple twists and turns.

When Lexa reaches our destination, she punches the metal grate in front of her when pushing it only slides her backwards. After a few well placed punches, the grate clatters to the floor and she crawls through. I come through after her and gasp at the sight.

"Mom?"

Chapter End Notes

Ooh, right when it gets interesting! Just so you know, last chapter I was hoping to get to the first explosion to make you think Abby's dead ;)) but nope! Abby's here! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Mom is leaning up against a wall, looking exhausted. Kane is looking at us, wide eyed and holding a thick book. That must be where the sound came from. Jaha is sitting down on the floor, glaring at me with unbridled hatred.

I ignore him and rush over to my mom, pulling her into a hug. She lets out a shaky breath, wrapping her arms around me. I let a few tears roll down my face, resting my head on her shoulder. It's so much to take in. My mom is here and she's alive and she's in my arms.

"Enough." Jaha sneers at us. "Get us out of here."

Lexa reaches down and pulls him up using only the handcuffs. I see how his skin around them goes red. He winces but says nothing, giving Lexa an unimpressed look. I pull away from my mom but stay close, not wanting to be very far from her yet.

"You will not speak to Clarke in that way." Lexa's voice is low and dangerous. It's the one that makes me wish I could just drag her back to our tent and have my way with her.

"Or what?" Jaha raises an eyebrow at her and I almost for him for a millisecond.

Lexa doesn't respond with words, just pulls out her swords and presses the blades against his neck. He strains, trying to pull back, away from them. Lexa doesn't relent until he looks properly scared and a thin stream of blood is slowly making it's way down his neck. I have to admit, seeing her like this is kinda hot. And by kinda, I mean very. She sheathes her swords but stays just as close. Jaha doesn't move an inch.

"You are going to die," Lexa states. "You have done horrendous things to Clarke and our friends and betrayed your own people. You are not worth the air you breathe in. I would be more than happy to kill you where you stand, but the people you have wronged deserve revenge and closure."

Jaha doesn't respond but his silence tells us everything. Coward.

"I like your girlfriend," Mom whispers. She says it quiet enough that only I can hear it. I duck my head and grin.

"Can we get out of here?" Kane asks hopefully after a moment of tense silence.

"Why did you not just use the door?" Lexa asks. "Why would you need us to come to you?"

"The door is automated," Mom answers. "We don't have electricity so it can't open. And the manual override also runs on electricity."

"That's what was stopping you?" I question. "That's a relief. It's an easy fix."

I walk over to the door and pull out my dagger from my sheathe. The blade is flat and tough and should work perfectly. I carefully maneuver it between the door and the wall, sliding it in as far as it can go. I bring it up until I feel it catch against something. I tilt it and wiggle it to make sure it's firmly in there. I push up and hear the satisfying click. I resheathe my dagger and step back, watching as the door swings open.
"Where did you learn to do that?" Mom asks.

"I snuck out sometimes at night to look at the stars or to look at Earth. Dad actually taught me how to do it." I explain, smiling softly. He taught me how to do it just in case of an emergency.

"He was always handy like that, the troublemaker." Mom shakes her head with a find expression then changes the subject. "Clarke, where would the exit be?"

"I know exactly where it is. Follow me. Kane, keep an eye on Jaha."

My mom gives me a look full of pride when Kane nods. Lexa follows my lead once again, walking by my side. I hesitate for a moment before reaching out, a silent offer to hold hands if she's comfortable doing so. She takes my hand in hers and squeezes gently.

I find the hole Raven blew in the station easily and lead the others outside. I hear mom and Kane take in a breath, smiling to myself when I remember how I felt when I first saw this beautiful place. I look around, seeing that Luna and Anya are working efficiently together to help everyone and take them to the couple healers that have come.

Raven freezes when she sees us, looking happy to see Abby but her expression darkens when she sees Jaha. Luna and Anya look over as if sensing their girlfriend's distress. They head towards to her as Raven stalks in Jaha's direction. His impassive expression is back and it really makes me want to punch him.

She stands a few feet in front of him, her hands clenched into fists. Anya and Luna catch up, gently placing a hand on her back.

"Raven?" Luna asks softly.

"Jaha," she growls out.

Luna and Anya seem to stand still for a moment before looking at Jaha. If looks could kill, he would be dead thousands of times over.

Anya marches forward until she is close enough to him to stab him. She goes for the less lethal approach and throws a punch. It hits him in the cheek and I swear I see a tooth fly from his mouth. He collapses on the ground, knocked out.

Luna and Raven move forward to stand beside her. Luna spits on him and Raven kicks him in the crouch hard using her leg that has a brace on it. It looks incredibly painful and I wince at the sight. The pain wakes him up and he lets out a howl in agony.

"No more," Lexa orders.

They immediately step away from him and I don't think anyone feels sorry for him as he writhes on the ground.

"We will get our justice later," I promise.

Raven doesn't look happy but nods.

Lexa gestures for two guards to come over. "You are going to take this man in the shackles to TonDC. He is to be put in prison, in solitary condiment. He is to have no contact with other prisoners and minimal contact with anyone else unless Clarke or I say otherwise. He will be punished soon. Understand?"
The guards bow their heads to Lexa and drag Jaha back towards the woods.

Chapter End Notes

Ha ha! Take that, Jaha! He survived too, and justice will be served... Mwahahaha. Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"What now?" Mom asks.

"We should head back to the Skaikru camp." Lexa answers. "First, Clarke and Abby, you should check on the injured and make sure there is no one that is too ill or hurt to be taken there."

Mom and I nod and make our way over to where everyone's gathered. Most recognize her right away and are more hesitant to let me look them over until Mom reassures them that I know what I'm doing.

There aren't many total people here, which worries me until mom says they only put the people who couldn't fit in the other three stations in here. Almost everyone in this place made it down alive, with the only exception being an elderly man and someone who got hit by debris on impact.

There aren't any kids here, they were all split up between two of the safer stations.

After an hour or so we determine that everyone can be safely moved to the Skaikru camp. Lexa and I lead the way, with Raven, Luna, Anya, Mom, and Kane directly behind us followed by the other people and spread out guards to make sure no one gets lost.

"I don't know if everyone can fit in the Skaikru camp," I murmur to Lexa.

"I do not think they can either." Lexa answers. "We can build a secondary camp nearby for ArkKru while we build a more permanent place for them to live."

"Where would we build the permanent home?" I wonder.

"Perhaps they could incorporate one of their stations into it." Lexa muses.

"That's a great idea!" I say enthusiastically. "It will give them a sense of familiarity and it won't take as much work as building entirely new structures. You're brilliant, hodnes (love)."

I see Lexa's cheeks flush as she squeezes my hand and murmurs out a thank you. It's cute how unused she is to genuine compliments like this.

"Will they be okay in tents?" Lexa worries.

"They just spent their entire lives in a metal death trap in space. They'll be okay." I assure her.

We reach the camp and arrive to see a beautiful sight. All around, there are people hugging each other and crying. Lexa and I step out of the way so the people behind us can join in and find their loved ones. Luna, Anya, and Raven stay by us while Mom and Kane move through the crowd, greeting people.

Kane lights up when he sees an older woman and hugs her. I recognize her, she's the one who was in charge of taking care of the Eden Tree. She must be his mom.

I can see Raven's eyes scanning the crowd, a frown on her face. I wonder who she's looking for. I head footsteps approaching the camp and put a hand on my sword as I look out through the gate. My eyes widen and I run over.
"Nyko!" I cry out, throwing myself in the arms of my friend.

He's at the beginning of an impressively large group of people that includes a bunch on kids. I remember seeing little kids in the Skaikru camp, which means both of the stations with kids in them survived.

"Hello, Clarke." He greets.

Nyko sets me down and lets the people pass us as they head towards the camp. His giant self parts the sea of people easily.

"It's been so long! How have you been?" I ask as we start walking back towards the gate.

"It has been hectic without you," he admits. "I miss having my helper but I understand what you are doing here is important as well."

"I missed you too." I respond with a smile.

We walk alongside each other for a minute or two until Nyko's name is called. He apologizes and excuses himself, giving me one last quick hug before he goes off to help someone.

I head back to Lexa and take her hand in mine after silently making sure it's still okay for me to do so. She smiles and kisses my cheek before looking at the reuniting people.

"Reyes!" Someone yells, making Raven's head snap towards them.

Raven's eyes widen and her mouth drops open into a wide grin.

"Sinclair!" She calls back.

He hurries over and swoops Raven into a tight looking hug but she doesn't seem to mind in the least. This must be her mentor, the one who helped her with the calculations about the station's explodability (her words, not mine).

"Raven, it's so good to see you." He says, tears in his eyes.

"I'm so glad you're okay." She murmurs into his shoulder.

I can't see Raven's face but she is definitely crying right now. He pulls away after a while and beams at her. Sinclair looks up and sees Luna and Anya, who are watching them with soft expressions.

"Hello, we haven't properly met yet." Sinclair says politely. "I'm Sinclair, I was Raven's mentor on the Ark."

"It is nice to meet you," Anya responds. "I am Anya and this is Luna." She exchanges a quick look with Raven like she's making sure it's okay to tell him about their relationship. Raven nods and she continues. "We are Raven's girlfriends. So you are a mechanic?"

"Yes, I am. What do you two do?"

"I am leader of a clan called Floukru," Luna responds. "Anya is a General in the Heda's army."

"Impressive. I'm glad Raven has you to look out for her." He says.

They continue talking and I turn to Lexa. "Should we address everyone?"
Lexa nods. "We should. We can get up on the wall."

"That could work."

"Is my kohl smudged at all?" Lexa asks.

"You're nervous," I gasp out in surprise. I kiss her cheek and squeeze her hand. "Your kohl is fine. We are too. Now let's get up there."

Lexa clears her throat and gives me a shy grin that makes me melt. I kiss her until we're both slightly dazed. Lexa nods to herself and confidently walks up the stairs on the wall with my beside her.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, they talk to the people! And hey, Nyko and Sinclair made it down alright! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 105

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Lexa takes a deep breath as she stands on the Skaikru border/wall next to me. I hold out my hand subtly in case she doesn't want a public display of affection. She takes my hand and squeezes it gently, not letting go.

Most of the crowd has already quieted when they noticed Lexa and I standing up here. They go silent when Lexa holds up her hand. I have to admit, it never fails to impress me, the way she commands everyone effortlessly.

"For those of you who may not know, I am Lexa kom Trikru. I am the Heda, the Commander of the Twelve Clans that inhabit the ground. People of the Ark, my people are starting to build a place nearby for you all to stay temporarily while we help you build a more permanent home. Clarke had the idea of building it into one of the stations that fell."

Lexa nods to me and I step forward to speak. "I am Clarke Griffin and though I used to live on the Ark, I have been down here longer than any of you. I'm sure all of you have heard an abridged version of my story and I won't bore you with the details." I pause for a quick moment to gather my thoughts. "Life on the ground isn't easy. But it wasn't exactly easy on the Ark either, we can all attest to that. And we survived that. Down here, working together with the Grounders, we might be able to live instead of just surviving."

Murmurs go up in the crowd, mostly sounding positive and they continue until Lexa steps forward. The ArkKru eye her with suspicion.

"How do we know you won't betray us?" A man asks.

I vaguely recognize him as someone from the Ark's guard. I'm relieved to see that he seems unarmed. The fact I don't remember his name tells me that he was one of the rude, angry guards I would avoid on the Ark.

"I can give you my word," Lexa says and the man scoffs. "But I know that is not enough for some. You will just have to trust me. If you cannot do that, trust Clarke or her mother."

"And how would they know better than the rest of us? Clarke may have been around you for a few months, but that doesn't mean she knows you well enough to be able to know you won't turn your backs on us."

The murmurs are louder now and I resist the urge to shout at them that I know Lexa better than they think, that I am dating her. But Lexa and I haven't talked about whether or not we're okay with the ArkKru knowing we are together. Pretty much all of Skaikru and the clans know about or at the least suspect our relationship but we haven't discussed the ArkKru. We are holding hands right now, however.

Lexa turns to me, evidently thinking the same thing I am. I nod, giving her silent permission. She turns back to the gathered people, who go quiet almost immediately.

"Clarke knows me better than anyone else I know. We have been dating." I squeeze her hand as I hear gasps. Luckily, they seem more surprised than anything else. Her lips twitch up into a small smile. "Besides, if I ever were to betray you, Clarke has come the closest out of anyone to beating
me in combat."

I raise an eyebrow at that while the gathered people give me a once over. I know I'm good at fighting, Lexa and even Anya have confirmed that. I just didn't know I'm that good.

"Any other concerns?" I question.

"Can we see you fight?" A little girl asks, looking up at us like we hung the stars in the sky.

I grin. "Maybe another time, kid. When things aren't so hectic."

The little girl nods and is pulled away by her mother, who gives us an apologetic look.

"What about the Maunon?" Mom asks from where she's standing near the wall.

"Good question." I say. "This may be a bit graphic, just a warning." A couple people walk away with some little kids. "The Maunon, or the Mountain Men, is a group of people who live underground. The air here is too radioactive for them so they can't leave. They have discovered a use for the Grounders and turn them into human blood bags. Lexa?"

Lexa steps forward. "They have been taking my people for years and have even taken Clarke and me. We are the only ones I know of that have managed to escape alive. They keep my people in cages and drain them of their blood to be used to counteract the effects of radiation poisoning. They have acid fog, which can be deployed around the mountain they live on. After their tests on Clarke, I fear they might want to take you."

People shift, worry in their eyes.

"We have guards and sentries posted around us," I say. "We will be safe here. I suggest that if you have to go far, take someone with you or ask a guard to go with you. We should be safe, but we should also stay vigilant just in case. We're not saying this to scare you, we just want you to be aware of the dangers. And we do have a plan we are working on to take down the Maunon once and for all. Lexa has agreed to wait until after you have all been settled in, unless there's an emergency or you vote for it to be sooner."

"That could be weeks away. You're saying we might have to look over our shoulders for that long?" A person asks incredulously.

"Yes," Abby steps up onto the stairs and addresses them. "We will hold a vote every two weeks starting in two days to decide when to put their plan into motion."

"For now," Lexa says. "Eat, drink, be happy. You have survived the journey to the ground! You came here from space! This is a thing to celebrate. Tomorrow will be when the work begins."

Chapter End Notes

Wow, that was... A lot of talking. But hey, we're progressing! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Despite neither of us really wanting to do anything besides plan or maybe cuddle in our tent, Lexa and I stick around for the festivities. It's pretty good for something that was thrown together in just a few hours. There's food and drinks everywhere, even a makeshift dance floor. Nearby, some Grounders and Skaikru kids are playing on instruments to make music.

Lexa and I keep an eye on everyone as we move through the large group of people. We get stopped every few meters by a person who greets us and most of the time starts up a conversation. Sometimes it's someone wanting to thank us, sometimes it's someone wanting to know stuff about the ground. Once someone had a staring contest Lexa until they broke out into a sweat and backed away.

The cutest thing that happens is when a couple ArkKru kids come up to us and hand us each a flower. It makes Lexa smile genuinely without any anxiety or worry for the first time all day. We both tuck them into our chest pieces, putting them on display, which delights the kids. One of them even gives Lexa a quick hug before they dash off. Her surprised but gentle expression makes me feel like I'm falling for her all over again.

The funniest thing that happens while we are walking around is when a drunk man in his early twenties stumbles up to us. He starts slurring out what seems like stand up comedy to us. Even though I'm pretty sure he's stolen all of his 'content' from the comedic movies we had on the Ark, it's still hilarious. He only goes away after he blanks on any more funny jokes and blurts out 'your faces are scary and cute'.

Lexa and I exchange an amused look as he stumbles his way through the crowd. I tune back into the music and notice a new sound. I look over at where the Grounders and Skaikru kids are sitting and playing. My eyes widen when I see that Artigas is now among them. He's holding an instrument that looks almost like a violin. He is even playing it like it is one. The sound that comes out of it is eerily beautiful and adds a lot to the music.

"What is that?" I ask Lexa. "The thing Artigas is playing? It looks like it's a violin."

Lexa looks and then smiles. "That is because it is one. Only two people in the clans can make one that sounds as good as that. They live in Polis and their products are notoriously expensive but worth it."

"Then how would Artigas have one? I mean, he doesn't seem like he is rich."

Lexa thinks for a moment and then her eyes light up. "Anya. Of course. Anya, being the renowned warrior she is as well as a General, can easily afford one. She does have a soft spot for him, so she must have bought one for him."

"That's really nice of her," I say.

"She is a sweeter person than most would expect." Lexa admits.

We stand for a moment and watch as our people dance and interact. Surprisingly, no fights have broken out.
It's interesting to see the difference between how the Grounders dance and how Skaikru and ArkKru dance. Grounders dance more confidently, so much so that their moves seem choreographed. Some of them are doing the same moves, so some of it must be a popular dance.

Skaikru kids are all over the place, dancing like no ones watching. I even see a few kids doing the robot. ArkKru dance more stiffly, more self-consciously. Except for the drunk ones, of course.

Somehow, Raven managed to get her girlfriends to not only get on the dance floor, but to dance with her. She looks happy, dancing sandwiched between Anya and Luna.

Lincoln and Octavia are dancing as well, a bit more provocatively than is really appropriate when they're surrounded by hundreds of people. I'm surprised that Bellamy isn't prying them apart or giving Lincoln a death glare until I notice that he's dancing with a Grounder woman. When she turns towards me, I see the scars on her face and recognize that she's Azgeda. Lexa told me about this girl called Echo, she's one of the few Azgeda that Lexa actually trusts.

The song switches to something slower and I look up at Lexa when she taps my shoulder.

"May I dance with you, Clarke Griffin?" She asks politely with a soft smile on her face, holding out her hand.

"Of course, Lexa kom Trikru." I respond formally, making her laugh.

She grins and takes my hand. "Do you know how to slow dance?"

I shrug one shoulder. "Not really, but you could teach me." My only experience is seeing people do it in movies.

Lexa smiles wider and pulls me onto the dance floor. I resist the urge to burst out laughing when I see the surprised looks on people's faces when they notice us.

She looks at me like I'm the only thing she sees. It makes me feel like my heart is melting in my chest. Lexa pulls us close together and puts us into a waltzing position. I raise an eyebrow, surprised this dance survived even down here.

The band must be playing a song she knows because Lexa hums along as we dance. It feels like here, in her arms, everything else just fades away and all that's left is me and her and the music. I rest my forehead against hers and close my eyes. I relax, taking this moment in to carry with me when things inevitably get tough.

When my eyes reopen, Lexa's giving me a look that is hard to describe. Loving is the best word I can think of.

"You look meizen, ai hodnes (beautiful, my love)." Lexa murmurs.

"Mochof (thank you). So do you."

Lexa smiles and kisses me, which surprises me at first. I didn't expect her to kiss me out here in public, even if it is a sweet gentle kiss. I quickly sink into it and we pull apart when it we need to breathe. We stay for a while longer after that before leaving to head back to our tent for a night of tenderly making love.

Chapter End Notes
Fluff!! Next chapter, the building begins! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
The next few days are hectic.

More often than not, Lexa and I are by each other's side, which I'm pretty sure is the reason neither of us have snapped yet. It's stressful, with us making almost all of the big decisions for the station we are turning into a livable area for the ArkKru.

Raven, Bellamy, Octavia, Anya, Luna, and Lincoln are a godsend and have become kind of like our underlings, carrying out our commands. They're the ones out there making sure people are working and building it right.

Mom has been helping when she can, but she and Jackson are busy helping the ill and the injured. Not to mention the fact she has been overseen the construction of the hospital area.

Needless to say, we are all exhausted. The builders are tired as well and I know they probably all fall asleep as soon as they get back to their tents. I dream of that happening for Lexa and me. We have been working almost nonstop since the morning after the party, with just a few power naps when we realize we're swaying on our feet.

Everyone notices, but it's mom that calls us out on it on the third day.

"When is the last time the two of you slept for more than four hours?" Mom asks, frowning.

"We're fine."

I try to wave off her concern, but I doubt she's impressed by my suppressed yawn.

"That's not what I asked, Clarke Griffin." Oh no. Last name.

I squint, thinking. The night after the party, we stayed up pretty late making love and I don't think we hit the four hour mark. The night before that I was so worried about mom that I kept waking up and having nightmares. Lexa didn't get much sleep that night either, she spent a lot of time calming me down.

"She has to actually think about it." Raven says, surprised.

"It's not that bad," I try to argue.

"Oh yeah? What were you and Lexa doing last night while everyone else was asleep?" Octavia prompts, crossing her arms.

I pretend not to hear my mom say "do I want to know?" under her breath.

"...We were looking at our plan for the Maunon." I admit. Mom gives me a hard look. "We have to make sure it's as good as it can be!"

"You and Lexa are working yourselves too hard," Mom says sternly. Even Lexa avoids making eye contact with her. "You won't be able to do anything or be of any use if you're too exhausted to think straight."
"They'll never think straight," Raven says and gets a full on Griffin Glare from Mom. She holds up her hands in surrender. "Sorry, Mama G. Couldn't resist the gay joke. It was too easy."

Mom rolls her eyes at Raven but I can see a hint of an affectionate smile. She turns back to Lexa and I, serious again.

"Clarke, Lexa. You two are going to go to sleep." I open my mouth to protest but she cuts me off. "Nope. No questions, no comments. Just... Go get some rest. If anything happens, we'll come get you."

"Fine," I sigh.

I take Lexa's hand as we walk out of our 'planning tent.' It's basically just the headquarters for the building project. Lexa rubs her thumb across the back of my hand as we head to our makeshift tent near the station. It's smaller, just big enough for there to be a bed and somewhere to put a few changes of clothes.

As soon as we step inside, Lexa lets her eyelids droop and she tries to muffle a wide yawn. She succeeds in looking like an adorable sleepy person. I lead my girlfriend over to the bed and we start stripping each other out of our clothes.

I get under the pelts and scoot to the center, holding my arms open wide so Lexa can snuggle up against me. She lays her head on my shoulder and drapes an arm across my stomach, giving my neck a tired kiss.

With her comforting weight on my chest, I fall asleep easily and we don't wake up until the next morning.

I feel refreshed and Lexa looks a lot more calm than before. I hold her tighter against me as the morning sunlight starts peeking through the tent.

"No more not sleeping." I murmur.

Lexa hums in agreement. We stay where we are until we hear the familiar sounds of the building starting again. We get dressed and head over to the planning tent, where Mom and the others look more than happy to see us.

"Good, you're here. Running all of this is more difficult than the two of you make it seem." Mom gives us a kind smile but I see worry hidden behind it.

"Mom? What's wrong?" I ask, concerned.

She shifts on her feet. "Nothing's wrong, something's just out of the ordinary. Um, one of Anya's scouts didn't come back this morning."

Now Lexa looks troubled. "They're all highly skilled and trained. They know to be back when Anya asks them to be."

"Was it Artigas?" I ask. The thought crossed my mind and I have to know.

Any shakes her head. "No."

I let out a sigh of relief. "Good. But you're right, this is weird. Should we send some more scouts after them?"
"I have already done that," Anya says. "I worry it is not something good."

"With our enemy, it will not be a good thing." Lexa says confidently. "We should increase patrols and send a group of trackers to their last known location."

Anya nods seriously. "Yes Heda. Anything else?"

She looks around the room but no one has any more suggestions. She bows her head to Lexa and then leaves the tent.

"What do we do now?" Mom asks.

"We continue working," Lexa answers. "Keep an eye out for anything out of the ordinary. Do not let anyone go anywhere alone. Be careful."

We all nod and the others leave the tent to go tell the builders what's going on while Lexa and I look over a map where Anya has marked where the scout was last seen.

Chapter End Notes

Ooh, what's going on? We'll find out... ;) Happy Valentine's Day! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"Maybe they snuck off with their partner," I suggest.

Lxa raises an eyebrow, unimpressed by my theory. "Someone who trained under Anya?"

I grimace. "That's fair. Anya would never let someone on her team of sentries if she didn't think they would take their duties seriously."

Lxa and I come up with a few more ideas on what could have happened but none of them are good. Lxa is worried that it could be Azgeda committing an act of war like they have been hinting at for years.

We also worry about how it could be Maunon. I mean, they're the most logical explanation. People don't just vanish, especially not a highly trained sentry.

The news we get on the subject throughout the day is never good. It's "we found nothing" repeated over and over and over again. But, like Lxa points out, the absence of any proof is proof in and of itself. If it were Azgeda or (gods forbid) some idiotic ArkKr people, they would have been hasty and would have left evidence the trackers would have found. But there's nothing. So that means either they were really careful (which is unlikely) or... the sentry was taken by the Maunon.

When Anya comes by the planning tent some time after lunch, we tell her we suspect the Maunon are behind it.

Anya nods, her expression grave. "If that is so, even the most experienced of trackers may not know what to look for. If it is alright with the two of you, I would like to ask Raven to take a look at the place where the sentry was last seen."

Lxa and I exchange a look before I turn back to Anya and answer. "As long as Raven's okay with it." Anya bows her head and behind to leave. "And Anya?" I call and she pauses at the tent flaps. "Take Luna if she's not too busy. Be careful."

Anya leaves and silence once again fills the air. It feels like an oppressive smoke, slowly choking me. My worries press down on my shoulders, making them sag under the weight. I chew on my lip and stare blankly at the map before me. I only break out of my trance like state when Lxa puts her hand gently on top of mine.

"Are you alright?" Lxa asks softly, then gives me a small smile.

"Yeah," I let out a breath and run my unoccupied hand through my hair. "It just feels like everything's happening at once. And when I think about everything we have to do... It's so much."

"We will take it one step at a time. We will get through all of this, Clarke." Lxa says with conviction. "Let's start small. What do you want for dinner tonight?"

I laugh, not expecting that. "That's what you're starting with?"

Lxa is grinning now, her eyes sparkling with happiness. "Yes of course. Dinner is very important, Clarke."
"You're adorable." I snort, playfully tapping her nose and making her blush. "I don't know. Something meaty I can sink my teeth into. Get my anger and anxiety out through vigorous chewing."

Now it's Lexa's turn to laugh. "And you say I am the cute one in this relationship. I have never heard of chewing being calming like that."

"It is," I insist, smiling. "It's like a stress ball for your teeth."

"That just sounds like a poorly cut piece of meat with too much fat." Lexa points out teasingly.

I stick out my tongue. "Which is still delicious when you grew up on bland crap." I point out and lean forward, feeling a lot more relaxed. "Alright. What's next on your nerdy to do list?"

"World domination," Lexa deadpans. My expression must be hilarious because she laughs so hard she snorts. "No, I am kidding. Next is looking at how our Maunon plan is going."

"Not as well as I would like," I say. I dig around in a drawer to pull out our plans and maps. "There's so much that could go wrong with our plan. And everything relies so heavily on so few people."

"Who we have chosen because of their unique abilities to do what we need them to. They are all more than willing to help us." Lexa frowns at me, squeezing my hand. "You know this, Clarke. What is it that is really bothering you?"

"You know me so well." I murmur, bringing her hand up to my lips to press a gentle kiss to it. "For the first time since my dad was killed, I feel like I have a family. A crazy, weird, adoptive family but still a family. And these plans of ours put our family in danger. Not just that, but they could be killed for. They could die for us. Because of us."

"That is part of being a leader, Clarke. It is one of the duties that comes the hardest to people." Lexa says in an low, understanding tone. "We have to look in our people's eyes and say 'go die for me.' And we have to live with the knowledge that some will die for us. It is inevitable. All we can do is try to minimize how many times that happens."

I let out a shaky sigh. "I hate that."

Lexa smiles sadly and squeezes my hand again. "I know, ai hodnes (my love). I do too." She waits until I look up at her before she continues. "Our plan is solid. We have pored over it for days. No more improvements can be made. We will do this, Clarke, and we will succeed. Trust in our friends, our family, our allies. We will do this together."

I hum and rest my head on Lexa's shoulder. "You're really good at that. You know, speeches. And reassuring me. But I also know you were avoiding reminding me that 'battle plans do not last long in battle, Clarke'." I deepen my voice in a mock impression of her.

"They do not. An I do not sound like that." Lexa protests.

I snicker at her mock-affronted expression. "You totally do, babe."

Our banter is interrupted by a pale and sweaty trio rushing into the tent. Luna, Anya, and Raven all look like they've seen a ghost.

Lexa straightens her posture and gives them her full attention. "What is wrong?"
"It was the Maunon," Raven says quickly. "And they left a note."

Chapter End Notes

A note? How extra. And cool, right? I love randomly delving into Clarke and Lexa's concerns, I never expect when it happens but I love the way they reassure each other! And I'm getting a better idea on how they're actually going to take down the Maunon... No worries, there will be no dramatic betrayal or character death like in the show! I'm an asshole but I'm not THAT mean. ;) I'm a sucker for happy endings, especially in my own books! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"It was the Maunon. And they left a note."

I blink in surprise, not having expected that. "What does it say?"

Raven pulls out a few pieces of paper that have been stapled together. "The first couple of paragraphs are just them bragging about how they took the sentry without anyone noticing, especially since we increased the amount of patrolling guards. Cocky nomon jokas (motherfuckers)."

"What does it say after that?" Lexa prompts, leaning forward on the table.

Raven flips the page. "Right, okay. So next they talk about how awesome they are and they're like 'hey Grounders remember us? We've been kidnapping your people for a while.' Then they go into explicit detail about what they do to your people and let me tell you, it's not pretty. But they do let slip a couple of things about Reapers and how they work, so that's a bonus."

"Rae, get to the bad part." Luna murmurs.

"This isn't the bad part?" I question.

"Uh. Sadly, no." Raven flips around until she reaches the second to last page. "The last part is them making a proposition. They want thirty ArkKru or Skaikru people. In return, they will release Lexa's people and will never take another Grounder again."

"What would happen to the Skaikru and ArkKru people?" I ask.

Raven grimaces in response. "They'll take their bone marrow, something they don't mention is extremely painful. We asked Abby about it on the way here. They will take all of the marrow they can, meaning that they'll kill the people. Painfully. And then we will have our enemies be able to be outside without worrying about radiation poisoning."

"We are not taking that deal," Lexa says. She exchanges a look with me. "Any, Luna. Gather everyone at the ArkKru camp. Skaikru, ArkKru, everyone. There will be more space at their camp than at the Skaikru one."

"What will the meeting be about, Heda?" Anya asks curiously. "And do you want me to mention the reason?"

"It will be about declaring war on the Maunon." It's deathly silent in the planning tent at Lexa's words. "Our plan has been pushed into motion. Do not tell them yet but make certain that the inner circle is all present."

The inner circle is what we have taken to calling the specific people we need for our Maunon plan. Anya and Luna bow their heads and head out of the tent.

I turn to Raven. "Is the platform ready?"

"Yeah. I'm glad you two insisted on its completion, otherwise I wouldn't have built it until later."
Raven says.

The platform is exactly what it sounds like. We put it against one of the sides of the station, so we will be able to look out at everyone.

"Will you need a megaphone or something?" Raven questions.

I shake my head. "Our voices should be enough but keep one close by just in case."

Raven nods and walks out to set everything up. I look over to Lexa, who's expression is grave but determined.

"We should put on our armor." Lexa says.

"Alright, let's go."

We go to our tent and get dressed quietly, helping each other with tricky buckles and buttons. I take a bowl of Lexa's kohl (coal/warpaint) out. I gently apply it to her face, my fingers tracing the lines easily from memory.

"Mochof (thank you), Clarke." Lexa says softly. "Can I apply yours?"

"Mine?" I ask, sounding as shocked as I feel. I've imagined myself wearing kohl but have never actually done it.

"Sha (yes)." Lexa murmurs with a soft expression and continues almost shyly. "It is alright to say no, Clarke. It will show your authority and how you are a 'Grounder'."

"I was just surprised, Lexa." I say, reaching to touch her arm comfortingly. "Yes, I would love for you to do my kohl."

The way Lexa beams happily at me tells me I definitely made the right decision. She dips two fingers into the kohl and brushes the stray strands of hair from my face with her other hand. She studies my face with serious, calculating eyes.

"Close your eyes, hodnes (love)." She murmurs.

I comply and she gently presses her fingers to my closed eyes and drags her fingers slowly outwards. She pulls them away a few times to get more kohl.

"Why this design?" I whisper to her, trying to move my mouth and head as little as possible.

"It is simple and sharp." Lexa starts, taking her fingers from my face to dip them again. "Like you. Clarke, you are so complex it is almost simple and seems so to others who do not know you. You are wise and smart in ways that continue to impress me. This design will also bring out your eyes. Perhaps we can add more, discuss alternatives. But for now, this is perfect to me."

"I'm sure it will look great."

There's a few more moment of Lexa's fingers against my face before they retreat.

"I am done, Clarke. Wait for a moment while I try to find the mirror."

I stand still with my eyes still closed, listening to the swish of fabric as she moves around the room. I grin at the quiet but adorably victorious 'aha!' Lexa lets out when she finds it.
She walks back in front of me and stops. "Open your eyes, Clarke."

I do and almost don't recognize myself in the mirror. My eyes look piercing and even bluer than usual and judging by Lexa's sharp intake of breath, she thinks so too. The line across cheeks brings out my facial features, making them look more prominent. I look like a dreading warrior goddess. Awesome.

"Beautiful," Lexa murmurs.

I look into her gorgeous green eyes as she sets down the mirror, smiling proudly at me. I reach over and pull her closer to me.

"Clarke, we could mess up our kohl." Lexa warns half-heartedly.

"We won't. But if we do, it'll be worth it." I murmur back.

I lean in and kiss her, keeping it from getting too deep. We don't stop until we have to go talk to our people and tell them we are going to war.

Chapter End Notes

Wow, heavy. And cute. :) The takedown of the Mountain Men will start soon! First, they need to announce the war to their people! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I stand before our people again on the platform, waiting as more and more people arrive. Finally the last few stragglers seem to be here and I nod to Lexa.

"As you may or may not know, a scout went missing." Lexa says, her voice carrying easily. She raises her hand to stop the worried murmuring, staying stoic. "The Maunon have taken him."

The whispers and mutterings get louder until I step forward. "That's enough. Listen to her."

The crowd quiets and Lexa speaks again. "They have offered me a deal. For thirty Skaikru or ArkKru lives, they will release our prisoners and will never take another."

Lexa is forced to be quiet when the crowd starts talking and yelling. She purses her lips and I take her hand in mine. People continue shouting and exclaiming and the fear is practically tangible.

"That's enough." I call out.

"Your girlfriend's a traitor, Clarke!" Someone yells.

I fight the urge to roll my eyes. They haven't even listened to everything Lexa has to say, they just cut her off and jumped to conclusions.

"That's enough!" I say louder.

"Traitor!" Another person yells, throwing what appears to be a very old, worn down shoe at us.

"ENOUGH!" I roar. The place goes silent and I take a deep breath before I continue. "You haven't heard everything Lexa has to say. You cut her off and jumped to conclusions. You will listen to her and you will treat her with respect."

"Mochof (thank you), Clarke. If I had done that, they may have rioted or refused to listen." Lexa murmurs to me before speaking louder. "I will not take their deal. Skaikru and ArkKru are our allies now, and I will respect it even if you all do not."

She makes eye contact with a few of the people who yelled against her the loudest. They look away either in shame or to avoid a fight.

"The Maunon has made their move against us. It is time to retaliate. We have the numbers, we have the strength, we finally have the technology. This time, we will defeat them for good! We have come up with a plan and it will work. If you aren't sure about your involvement or if you would to help, we can use everyone. Come talk to someone who knows all of the plan. For the next few days we will be wearing a red cloth tied to our wrists. Tomorrow, we finalize our plan. The next day, we mobilize and head to the Mountain. Kom war (to war)!"

The Grounders in the crowd echo Lexa's shout and everyone begins to disperse.

"That was a great speech, Commander. I like the red cloth idea, that's smart." Raven says as she limps towards us with Luna and Anya flanking her.

"Mochof (thank you), but Clarke is the one who came up with it earlier."
"We have the cloths in our tent," I say. "Come with us, we'll get them."

"Alright," Raven answers and walks alongside us. "Can you believe that no one trusted Lexa? They just assumed that she's bad and betrayed them. The Skaikru and ArkKru has some serious trust issues."

"They do," I agree. "I guess that's another thing we will have to work on."

"Yeah. And hey, Griffin. I didn't know you could scream that loud." Raven remarks, making me groan.

"Neither did I." Anya says before I can say anything. "And I have slept in a tent near theirs at night."

I blush and clear my throat while Raven bursts out laughing. She gives Anya a quick kiss on the cheek and I snicker when her cheeks turn a rosy pink. Anya scowls at me but it's not nearly as intimidating as when she's not blushing because one of her girlfriends kissed her on the cheek.

Lexa holds open the tent flap, letting us all go in first before she walks in. A moment later, the others join us. Lincoln, Bellamy, Octavia, and Mom all enter together, followed by Indra. I actually forgot for a second that she's here.

Lexa pulls the cloths from the table and hands one to each of us until there's just one left for her. Even though I'm pretty sure everyone knows who she is, I'm not surprised she decided to wear one as well. We help each other tie them around our dominant wrist, which would normally be a pain. In a way, it feels symbolic. What would have been difficult is made easier by us working together. But maybe I'm just cheesy.

I help Lexa while the others start discussing the plan again. We turn back to them, hand in hand.

"Everyone knows the plan?" Lexa asks.

"We have all memorized it, Heda." Anya answers respectfully.

"Good. Tomorrow, many people may approach you and ask questions. We will all need to be prepared for that. Except for Raven. I would like you to focus on your work and only answer questions if no one else is available or if it is about your work. Alright?"

"Okay," Raven nods.

"It is going to be a long few days." Lexa makes fast eye contact with everyone before continuing. "People will be scared and tired, nerves will be frayed. We will need to keep up morale as well as keeping people from blowing up at each other. Be peacekeepers. Especially while we march. That can bring out the worst in some people. Keep a close eye on everyone, make sure the other lieutenants and higher ranked officials do so as well. Report anything out of the ordinary to me or Clarke. We have to be prepared for anything, you never know what the Maunon is planning."

Everyone nods solemnly and I take over. "If there's a question you can't answer or do not know how to answer, direct them to either Lexa or me. Are there any questions you have for us before we dismiss you?" I wait for a moment. "Okay. Be careful and stay safe."

Chapter End Notes
Wow, the Skaikru and ArkKru jumping to conclusions and everything's happening so fast... Soon, they'll be marching on the Maunon and enacting their plans ;) I give away nothing... Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
The next day is a long one. Between Lexa and I going over the plan again, in excruciating detail and the many people who interrupt us with questions, we're both happy when the sun sets.

Tonight it feels like being in Lexa's arms is what's keeping me sane. We make love, though we only go for one round. It calms us both and quiets our minds enough that we fall asleep quickly, wrapped up in each other.

Waking up is less pleasant, however. I jolt awake to the sound of shouting, only to realize that it's just people ordering others around. Because today's the day we start to march against the mountain.

I rub my eyes and yawn, hoping not to wake Lexa if she's still asleep. I look at her to see that her gorgeous green eyes are already open. She smiles softly and raises one of my hands to her lips, gently kissing it.

"Good morning, hodnes (love)." Lexa murmurs.

"What's so good about it?" I grumble sleepily, making Lexa chuckle.

"You are in bed next to me," she replies sweetly. "And you are naked."

I laugh at her response and lean in to kiss her. "That was really cute."

Lexa's smile grows and she doesn't even try to argue that "I'm Heda, Clarke. I'm ferocious and strong, not cute and-Clarke, Clarke. Stop giggling."

"We should get up. We are needed." Lexa says but stays right where she is.

"Ugh," I groan. "Okay, okay." I sit up and smirk at how Lexa's staring hungrily at my now exposed chest. "Babe, come on. We have to lead our people into war. We can do that later, okay?"

Lexa sighs but nods understandingly. She sits up and leans in. We kiss and Lexa manages to sneak her hands up to my chest while I'm distracted by her talented tongue. I chuckle at her antics and Lexa grins at me with a gentle expression. I shake my head fondly and kiss her one last time before I get out of bed.

Lexa stands as well and we start helping each other put on our armor. It would be a faster process if we didn't keep giving each other quick kisses, but neither of us mind. We do each other's kohl and I have to admit, it feels right to have it on my face.

We pack up, going through the tent and making sure we don't leave anything. We attach our swords and hide multiple daggers and I attach my bow and arrows to my back. I also take a gun that Raven gave to me and take a few extra packs of ammunition. Last, we tie each other's cloths to our wrists.

Lexa takes my hand in hers when we're both ready and we walk out of our tent. People are rushing around the ArkKru camp.

Any catches up to us. "Almost everyone is ready to go. We are only waiting on a few."
Lexa nods, slipping into Heda mode. "Alright. Everyone knows what they have to do? Once we get close, there is no room for error or forgetfulness."

"They know. Now come, Heda and Clarke. You will lead us."

I take a deep, shaky breath and Lexa squeezes my hand knowingly. We follow Anya as she weaves her way through the heavily armed crowd. They part for us, but there are so many people that it still takes a while to get to the front.

When we get there, Raven's already there and on a horse. She's not too happy about it because she's one of the very few people who is actually going to be on a horse. But I guess Luna and Anya convinced her that riding a horse is better than walking for however long it takes to walk to the Mountain.

"Hey Griffin," she greets. "Hey Lexa. Bellamy and Lincoln left at dawn. Their radio works and they've been keeping me updated on how close they are to the Mountain. Last time they checked in, they were close enough that they had to leave their horses and go on foot. They should be checking in again soon."

"Good." I say, relieved. At least so far everything is going to plan. "Thanks, Rae."

"No problem. Now are we ready to go?" Raven asks impatiently.

Luna walks up, causing her girlfriends to perk up at the sight of her. "We are ready."

"Stay up here?" Raven questions, looking between Anya and Luna.

Her girlfriends exchange a gentle look and nod. "Of course," Luna answers.

"Are you ready for this, ai hodnes (my love)?" Lexa asks me.

"I'm as ready as I ever will be. Let's do this." I hope I sound more confident than my nerves are making me feel.

Lexa squeezes my hand again and turns to face the crowd of people behind us. "Today we march toward the Mountain. In three days time, we will arrive to fight. They will take no more of us! They will not take any more children, siblings, parents, friends, loved ones. We fight back and remember those we have lost. Jus drein jus daun (blood must have blood)!"

The chant quickly spreads throughout the people and it fills my heart with confidence. Skaikru and ArkKru people are even picking it up and are shouting along.

Lexa pulls out one of her swords and thrusts it into the air. "Kom war!"

With that, we start marching. We make our way through the undergrowth, the sound of thousands of feet hitting the ground behind us. Anya and Luna stay close to Raven and glare at anyone who gets too close.

Lexa keeps holding my hand as we continue walking. We take a few breaks, mostly for the ArkKru and Skaikru who aren't as used to so much physical activity. Scouts continue to give us updates. By the time we have been marching for a few hours, it's confirmed that the Maunon know we are coming. But with Lexa by my side and an army at my back, I'm not too worried.

Chapter End Notes
Ooh, it's getting intense! Soon, the Maunon fight begins! And you'll get to see the brilliant plan they came up with... Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I are crouched in a tree on the outskirts of the makeshift camp. People are setting up their tents and those who are done sit around fires. They talk quietly, talking about their families, who they're fighting for, as well as some war stories.

Raven walks up to where we are perched with Luna and Anya flanking her. When we see them heading towards us, we drop to the ground with a quiet "thud." To Raven's credit, she doesn't even flinch. The serious expression on her face tells me this isn't a social call.

"He's in," she says simply.

The emotions I feel are conflicting. Relief that our plan seems to working so far and that Bellamy and Lincoln are safe. But I also feel the anxiety warming my guts because it's happening and it's happening now. And there's really nothing I can do from here.

"Good. Did they say anything else?" Lexa asks.

"No, I don't think he was in a place where he could speak louder than a whisper." Raven says. "He did say that Lincoln's on his way back to meet up with us. Now all Bellamy has to do is the impossible."

"It is not impossible." Anya remarks confidently.

"Okay, then extremely difficult. Improbable. Especially if you're wrong about Maya, Clarke."

"I'm not." I sound like I believe that more than I actually do. "She will help. Have you told Octavia yet?"

"No," Raven shakes her head. "I came to you two first."

"Alright, then go tell her that Lincoln and Bellamy are okay. And go get some sleep, the three of you. We need you to be well rested."

Raven looks to Lexa to confirm what I've said and she nods. They bow their heads to us before walking past us to the camp. Anya squeezes Lexa's shoulder as she passes her and Lexa relaxes slightly. The tension she has always carried has increased exponentially since we put the plan into motion.

I reach out and take her hand, grinning when she some more tension leaks out of her body. She smiles softly at me, looking tired but I know that Lexa is, like me, too wired to go to bed right now.

"Would you like to go on a quick patrol around the perimeter of the camp before we go to our tent?" I question.

Lexa nods gratefully and tells a nearby guard where we are going and what we're doing just in case someone needs to speak to us. We walk around, using the various sounds coming from the camp to keep us from straying too far. It is mainly peaceful, with the one source of noises not coming from the tents and campfires. And that just ends up being a terrified looking squirrel who must have wandered too close.
It's peaceful, that is until it isn't. The sound of rustling leaves coming from above us alerts us that something is above it. It is not a gentle, whispering sound so it isn't the breeze or a small animal. To make that amount of noise, it has to be a large beast and clumsy or unused to being in trees.

Lexa and I exchange a look, silently confirming that we're thinking the same thing: it must be the Maunon. Or perhaps a curious Skaikru or ArkKru person. So we will have to be careful.

We keep walking, listening as it unsubtly follows us. We pretend not to notice it until it really screws up and steps on a dead, brittle branch. The noise stops suddenly, like they have frozen out of fear of being caught. Finally with an excuse to, I whip out my bow and arrow and Lexa draws her swords. I missed the feeling of my bow. I notch an arrow swiftly but don't turn and aim it just yet.

After a second of staying still, the person moves again and I spin around. I let my arrow fly and it hits the trunk of a tree right next to where I know the person is. He yelps and I resist the urge to smirk as I notch another arrow.

"That was a warning shot," I say. "Reveal yourself."

"Alright, alright." He grumbles loud enough for us to hear and slowly descends down from where he was.

It's obvious that he is Maunon, no one would wear that hazmat suit willingly. Lexa and I exchange an unimpressed look as they carefully climb down from the tree. They turn around to face us and straighten their posture.

"Hello," he greets calmly. "I'm Albert, but you two ladies can call me Mr. West. I assume you got our message, Commander?"

He says it in a way that makes me want to punch him even more. He uses her title, but says it like she doesn't deserve it, like she's beneath him. He also says it like it's something I should be surprised about, like he doesn't think Lexa would tell me about the note.

I scowl and don't lower my bow, aiming it right at his cocky face. He doesn't seemed too phased by that, as though he doubts I would actually shoot him. I'm getting more and more tempted by the second to "accidentally" loosen my grip on the bow string and shoot him in the face.

"Yes, I did." Lexa responds calmly.

The man looks between Lexa and me and frowns, like he's expecting me to interrupt their conversation and ask what the heck they're talking about.

"Well? Do you accept?" He asks.

"No."

"No?" His eyebrows furrow and he looks genuinely confused.

"No. Tell your leader to prepare for war. We're coming for you." Lexa threatens in such a flat tone that it leaves no room for doubt that she means what she says.

"Are you sure? Your people will be wiped." His eyes flick over to me. "Including your little girlfriend."

Lexa bristles in a subtle way that he doesn't notice and takes a step towards him, her fingers
gripping her swords tighter.

"Is that a threat?" She hisses.

"That's a promise. You may want to reconsider."

Her pinky finger raises and I know what that means from when we came up with a way to communicate in case of emergency such as this. I mostly tune out of their conversation and listen to what's around us. Lexa's low, threatening voice is background noise.

I hear a slight rustle and don't give any indication that I heard it, pinpointing the location easily. It's close but perfect for a sniper. Once I have determined that, I turn and shoot.

The "thunk" of my arrow hitting true makes the man stop talking mid-sentence as his comrade falls, dead, from the tree with my arrow through his heart.

Chapter End Notes

Well, that was longer than normal. But cool, right? Clarke's a badass. And I love the idea of her and Lexa having a way of communicating nonverbally! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
The man stares at his fallen comrade with horror as red slowly stains the hazmat suit around where my arrow is still sticking out of their chest.

"Perhaps now you will listen to me." Lexa says in a deathly calm tone. The man looks between me and her, pale and with eyes full of fear. "I do not accept your people's deal. We are at war, and the only way your people will survive is if you surrender."

The man stares at her incredulously before chuckling. "That's a good joke. Like you savages could win against us," he snorts. "Even with the help of your girlfriend and her people, you could never win."

"I guess we'll find out." I say, hating this man more and more every time he opens his mouth.

"Now go," Lexa orders. His eyes snap back towards her. "Tell your people what we have said. And go quickly so we do not get more tempted to catch up and cut off your head or put an arrow in your back."

The man makes a scared squeaking sound and practically trips over himself as he turns and flees. "What should we do with that one?" I ask Lexa once he's out of sight. I point towards the other Maunon that's dead.

Lexa purses her lips. "He is right in the way of our marching. We need to move him."

"We could just bury him," I suggest.

"That is a good idea. Do you know if anyone brought a shovel?" Lexa asks.

"I don't, but I bet someone did." I say. "Hey, we can ask someone else to dig a hole for him."

"Or we could carry him into a nearby bear den. I know one that is not far."

"Lets do it."

Lexa picks him up by his shoulders while I pick him up by his legs. It's awkward to move and difficult to walk, but at least it works. We make our way slowly towards the cave Lexa mentioned.

We toss the Maunon just inside the cave. The sound of his body hitting the ground must wake up the bear, or at the very least makes it really angry if the thundering roar we get in response is any indication.

Lexa and I exchange a look and get out of there as fast as we can. Once we get closer to camp, we slow to a jog then a walk. We stop and sit at the base of a large tree together, catching our breath.

"Well, we have had an eventful day." Lexa remarks, wrapping an arm around my waist.

I chuckle and lean my head against her shoulder. "It will only get busier and crazier from here."

Lexa hums in response and we sit in silence for a relatively peaceful moment. "Should we head
"Yeah," I sigh. "They're probably starting to worry about us."

I stand up first and offer my hand. Lexa takes it and stands, then brushes some dirt off her armor with her other hand. We keep holding each other's hands as we head back towards the camp.

Raven is the first person to notice that we're back, and the relief on her face when she sees us makes the others around her turn to look at us. The group around her is mainly the "inner circle" plus Artigas and Kane.

"You're back!" Mom cries out.

She rushes over to us and wraps us both in a hug. I can feel Lexa stiffen for a moment before she relaxes and awkwardly returns my mom's embrace. Mom pulls back and looks between us.

"Where were you? We've been worried. A guard told us you two were going on a patrol but it shouldn't have taken this long just to patrol."

"We were on patrol." I tell mom, using my hand that's not holding Lexa's to hold my mom's hand.

"Yeah. 'Patrol.' Luna, Anya, and I have done that too." Raven makes air quotes and winks at us.

"That's not what we meant, Rae. We actually were patrolling. We just came across a Mountain Man or two." I say.

Mom starts looking Lexa and I over, checking for wounds until I reassure her we're both fine. I can't keep the small grin off my face, knowing that Mom was concerned about Lexa too.

"So what happened?" Raven prompts us when my mom is done fretting and looking us over.

"Well, at first there was one. He tried being sneaky by being up in the trees but he was noisier than Skaikru was when you first got here." Lexa begins. "Clarke shot a warning arrow and hit the tree right next to him. So he came down and asked about whether I accept the Maunon's deal. I said no and signaled for Clarke to listen for another Maunon." She nods to me, indicating that I should continue.

"There was another one in the trees in the perfect sniper position. So I shot him with an arrow in the heart. Then the other Maunon got scared and we shooed him away to go tell his people that we don't accept." I explain.

"Dang. That's badass, Clarke." Raven raises her hand and I let go of Mom's to high five her.

"Thanks. Has anything happened while we were gone?" I ask.

"One of the Grounders sang a beautiful opera-sounding song." Raven says. I raise an eyebrow at that. "No, I'm not joking. What was it called?"

"Take a Life With Me." Anya answers.

"You're kidding," Raven says. "You're not kidding. Okay, wow. In my defense, it's in Trigedasleng and the only words I know are jok (fuck) and ai (me/I)."

"Oh my god," I murmur under my breath. That is way too much information about Raven, Anya, and Luna's sex life.
"It was beautiful." Mom says.

"It is the song of our people." Lexa says, "It is one of the few songs that almost every person in every clan knows. It is mainly sung during a war, before a battle, or during a ceremony."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, the plan continues!! Maybe we'll get to see what exactly Bellamy's doing up in the Mountain all alone... Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 114

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

After dinner, Lexa and I are preparing to go to bed for the night when Raven bursts in with a hand over her eyes. She must think we are doing or about to do something. We are half naked, but only because we like to sleep naked. I pull on my thin sleep shirt and Lexa puts her undershirt back on.

"Sorry to barge in, guys but Bellamy radioed in. Um, are you both decent?"

"Morally?" Lexa asks, confused by the apparent change in subject.

It's adorable and I can't resist leaning in and softly kissing her nose before responding. "She means 'do we have clothes on'. Which we do, Rae."

"Darn," Raven murmurs. She winks at us when she uncovers her eyes before getting serious again. "Okay, here's the main walkie. Would it be alright if I stay here with you guys and listen?"

I exchange a quick look with Lexa and shrug. "Why not?" I press the side button on the walkie talkie. "Bellamy?"

"Hey Griffin." He greets quietly. "I'm not in the best place to talk to you guys but it doesn't seem like there's any good places here to radio in. I'm hiding in a closet by the cage room, which is creepy as heck by the way. They all looked at me like they wanted to bite my face off until I mentioned your names."

"Have you found Maya yet?" I ask.

"Nope. I did manage to get a key card so I can get around this place, though. And this closet has some spare guard uniforms. I can't tell if I'm just having really good luck or what." He pauses for a moment. "How's Octavia? Is she doing okay?"

"She's missing you and Lincoln," Raven answers.

"Lincoln's not back to you guys yet?" Bellamy questions, sounding worried.

I fight the urge to smile despite the serious situation. I had hoped that a welcome side effect of putting the two of them together on this would be Bellamy ending up liking and trusting Lincoln more.

"Not that we know of." Lexa answers. "He is smart and resourceful, Bellamy. I am sure he is either close or has stopped to rest."

"Yeah," Bellamy breathes out. "I'm going to go find Maya. You guys stay safe. I'll radio back when I can."

"Be careful," I say.

Lexa looks up at Raven. "Go and tell Octavia about what Bellamy has said. Let her know that he has radioed and is safe. Tell her and the guards to let us know when Lincoln gets back, even if it is late."

Raven bows her head and leaves the tent with the walkie talkie after saying a quick goodnight.
"Sometimes I forget how serious she can be." I murmur at the swishing tent flap.

Lexa hums in response and takes my hand in hers. I pull myself from my thoughts and look down at our entwined hands. I look back up at Lexa, who's smiling softly at me.

"Shall we go to bed?" Lexa asks quietly.

I grin and her and take a half step closer. "You just want to see me naked again."

Lexa's smile widens and a light blush colors her cheeks. "Can you blame me? Yu ste meizen (you are beautiful)."

Now I'm blushing and I kiss her. She relaxes in my arms and by some unspoken agreement, we begin gently taking off each other's clothes. She touches every inch of skin that's revealed reverently, like I'm a goddess she can't believe she is allowed to touch.

When she leans in and kisses me again, there's no motivation behind it. That's one of the reasons being with her feels so different than most other aspects of my life. I know that she wouldn't mind taking this farther and taking me to bed but I also know that she wouldn't mind just cuddling, or just kissing like this. It feels like no matter what I give her, it's enough and that makes me want to give her everything.

We gently fall on the bed together and make love.

***

I'm rudely awoken by someone rushing into our tent.

"Clarke! Lexa!" Raven practically shouts.

I groan in protest, still hating waking up early. Lexa and I didn't stay up very late, but it feels like the sun isn't even up yet.

"What?" I grumble, pulling the fur higher and refusing to open my eyes.

"Lincoln's back! He told Anya and Luna what happened and then went into a tent with Octavia. I think you can guess what they're doing now. Anyway, everything went fine on that front. But also, Bellamy radioed again." Raven says quickly.

It takes my sleepy brain a second or two longer than usual to take all of this in. "Alright. What did he say?"

I sit up slowly and frown when I hear Raven squeak. I open my eyes and scowl when I realize that Lexa (who's blinking like an adorable raccoon that just woke up) and I are both naked. And the furs just slid down as I sat up, so Raven's staring at the tent above my head so she doesn't look at my chest.

I groan again. "Just turn around and tell us what happened while we get dressed."

Raven turns around and clears her throat awkwardly. "Right. Um, okay. So Bellamy found Maya and she's going to help him. She agreed with the plan, which is more than I expected. And they're working on planning out the backup plan just in case."

"Good. They're going to work on the fog next, right?" I ask.

"Yeah. Bellamy thought you might ask that. Everything seems to be going according to plan, which
is... Suspicious, to say the least."

"It is," I admit. "What time is it?"

"It's almost dawn," Raven responds and I sigh. I guess I won't be getting any more sleep, then.
"Everyone's getting ready to go. Well, after breakfast. Do you have any last minute changes to
make to our marching positions?"

I think about it for a moment. "Yes. Now that we know for certain the Maunon know we are
coming and coming to fight them, I think there may be some snipers. Make sure everyone keeps an
eye out and put Skaikru with good aim in strategic places."

"Spoken like a true leader." Lexa remarks, taking my hand that's in hers up to her lips.

"If you think there are snipers, maybe you and Lexa shouldn't be in the front or so exposed." Raven
suggests worriedly.

Lexa and I exchange a look and she responds. "No. We stay where we have been. We are not
scared of them." Raven opens her mouth to protest but Lexa speaks again before she can, this time
in a softer and more understanding tone. "We will be careful, Raven."

Chapter End Notes

Slightly longer chapter... Man, this has me hooked! And in case you lovely people are
worried about the possible snipers, remember that I love happy endings and I don't kill
off major characters :) Next chapter, they resume marching. Thank you all for reading
and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 115

Lexa and I put on our armor quickly and eat the breakfast that Anya brings to us. We pack everything up and then head outside to make sure everything's going okay.

Most people are packing up the tents, while the rest either sharpen their weapons or are finishing eating. It's another hour before everyone's ready to go and gets in their marching positions.

Once again, Lexa and I are in the front on foot. Raven is slightly behind us on the horse with Luna and Anya on either side of her. I don't have to turn around to know that she's giving us concerned looks.

Lexa silently starts marching and people begin moving behind us, the sound of hundreds of feet hitting the ground starting not long after we start moving.

Lexa stands on my left side and looks around on the left side of our marching path while I look on the right. It's even quieter than before, with not many people talking behind us, and no one talking louder than a hushed whisper. Well, we did warn them that Maunon may be in the trees to attack and tell them to keep an eye out. That might put a damper on things.

Lexa's finger twitches in my hand and I keep looking, giving no indication that I noticed. Lexa taps her thumb on the left side of the back of my hand once. Alright, one Maunon spotted to the left side. Lexa makes a silent signal back to Anya and Luna with her other hand without looking behind her.

I hear Anya murmuring to someone and the sound of someone breaking formation to go talk to either a Skaikru shooter or a Grounder bow person. I look harder on my side, knowing that Maunon rarely ever travel alone. It's not long before I notice a few abnormalities in the trees. I don't let myself stare at the places, not wanting to give away that I know where they are. I tap Lexa's hand in a few different places on the right side. Lexa nods discretely and signals again.

"We're headed for either an ambush or a sneak attack." I murmur to Lexa. "They're so outnumbered, they must know we'll win in a fight. So this is probably a stealth mission to kill off someone important. Probably us or Anya or Raven or someone else we've put a red band on."

"Then let us show them we are not to be underestimated." Lexa whispers back, a fire in her eyes.

"Should we let them make the first move? Or should we attack so we have the element of surprise?"

Before Lexa can respond, a shot rings out. A sudden pain in my arm makes me hiss and flinch back. I turn around at the sound of a distressed horse's whinny to make sure no one else got hurt. Raven's horse has reared up, the whites of its eyes showing. The ground in front of it has a bullet hole. No wonder it's spooked.

Luna is trying to calm it down, speaking softly in Trigedasleng though her eyes show the same fear the horse's does. Anya is standing on one side of the horse while another large warrior is on the other, arms outstretched to catch Raven if she falls.

Knowing I can't do anything, I turn back around and look for where it sounded like the shot came
from. I pull out my bow, noticing absentmindedly that everyone has stopped and has their weapons out, including Lexa. Another shot rings out and a grunt behind me and surprised exclaims tell me this one hit true. This time I know where it came from and pull an arrow from my quiver and shoot.

I hear a shocked yelp and the now familiar thud of a body hitting the ground after falling from a tree. Lexa and I draw closer together, knowing that now they'll most likely attack now that they have lost the element of surprise.

My eyes move around rapidly but the Maunon snipers aren't where they were a few moments ago. I grit my teeth and hear a shot ring out to the left. I turn and aim, trying to figure out where it came from. Lexa has her swords raised beside me and I wish that she would move away out of danger, especially since she's bringing a sword to a gun/bow fight, but I know she won't.

Another shot rings out and Lexa's hands move up to cross her swords in front of her face. I'm confused for a millisecond as to why she would do that until I hear the unmistakable sound of a bullet hitting metal. Right in front of me. A bullet bounced off of Lexa's swords. If they weren't there...

With renewed determination and anger, I aim and shoot at anything in the trees that doesn't look like it's part of a tree. A few dead large squirrels fall, as well as a few dead Maunon with sniper guns. A few Skaikru in the crowd join in on the shooting and manage to get a couple Maunon. We wait there for another five or so minutes to make sure they're all gone.

I turn to the gathered army. "If you're a Skaikru sharpshooter and don't have a sniper rifle, go up there and get the Maunon's."

A few people come forward and claim the fallen sniper rifles while I turn to Lexa. She's frowning down at her sword now, looking at the new dent in it where the bullet ricocheted off it. I put my bow on my back again and touch her hand gently.

"Are you okay?" I ask worriedly.

Lexa blinks and looks up at me, more fearful than I have ever seen her. "Me? Clarke, are you okay? You got shot!"

Oh, right. I forgot about that. That explains the burning in my right arm. I lift it up to inspect it. The bullet ripped through my sleeve but just grazed me. I look carefully to satisfy Lexa, pulling out a spare white cloth I keep with me to wipe some of the blood away.

I look back at Lexa when I'm done. "I'm okay, I don't even need stitches. It was a graze."

Lexa lets out a shaky breath of relief and sheathes her swords before stepping toward me. She rests her forehead against mine, not seeming to mind that there's an army behind us.

"Thank the gods," Lexa breathes out. "I am okay too, Clarke. Do not scare me like that again, beja (please)."

"No promises, our lives are pretty dangerous." I murmur in response. "But I'll be careful, Lexa."

Lexa nods jerkily. "That is all I ask for."

She leans in and kisses me softly. I easily lose myself in it.
Aww... There was kind of angst and then fluff because I can never resist concerned girlfriend Lexa! Next chapter, these adorable nerds continue on their journey! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
After taking care of the few people that were wounded in the Maunon's attack, we continue marching until we reach where we intended to stop tonight. Hopefully we won't have to stay in this spot for too much longer. That all depends on Bellamy and Maya.

Everyone sets up their tents with higher spirits than they had just this morning. This small win against the Maunon means so much. From what I understand, the Grounders really haven't won much of anything against them so this is a pretty big victory.

Because of that, I decide not to chastise the many warriors and medics gathered around fires that I see passing around bottles of clear liquid which can only be alcohol. I do remind a few I know to be heavy drinkers not to drink too much, for we may have to march again tomorrow.

After that, I head back to Lexa and my tent. I pause for a moment in surprise at the entrance. Everyone with red cloths on their arms are here.

"Hey, what's up?" I ask.

"Bellamy's supposed to radio in soon," Raven explains.

The walkie talkie is sitting on the table in front of her. I walk around everyone in order to stand next to Lexa, who reaches out to take my hand. We wait for what feels like a few hours but can't be longer than one, since dinner hasn't been brought to us yet. That's when the radio crackles and we all jolt, immediately more alert.

"Bellamy? Bellamy, are you there?" I question, keeping my voice quieter than normal just in case.

"Yeah. Hey Griffin." Bellamy says quietly but I can hear the giddy excitement in his voice. Did he succeed? "It went almost flawlessly."

"So it worked?" Lexa asks.

"I'm pretty sure it did." I frown at his answer. If he did everything, the word he should have used would be 'definitely.' "They're pretty pissed. So what happened is that everything was going to plan. I set up explosives while Maya worked on figuring out how to neutralize the acid. But then like as soon as it's neutralized, an alarm starts to blare. And then there's the sound of people in boots running."

I curse under my breath. "So you didn't blow it up?"

"Not yet, no." Bellamy answers. "Maya and I are currently in a metal grate in their air filtration system hiding from them. As soon as the room is clear, we'll blow it up."

"Like I've told you, Bellamy." A woman's voice comes through the radio. "That won't work, they won't leave the room until they've gotten more acid in there and fixed the problem."

"Hang on, shh." Bellamy shushes her.

"Bell-" her voice is cut off like he put his hand over her mouth.
A muffled, more far off comes through the walkie talkie and Raven cranks up the volume so we can hear it.

"What do you mean team Alpha failed? The targets are still alive?" The man sounds like he's someone who has power in the Maunon and is not happy. Is he talking about the people who tried to kill us earlier? There's a quick pause. "No, no. I don't want to hear excuses. Get team Beta ready. They're going NOW. What? I don't care, kill them in their sleep. Those savages will run around like a chicken without its head when they lose their leaders."

The voice fades away as he continues to insult someone on his own radio. Raven turns down the volume on our own and we all exchange glances.

"Did you guys hear that?" Bellamy whispers.

"Yes, we did." Lexa confirms.

"Good. Be careful, you guys. I'm going to blow this sucker up now. I'll radio back in the morning or if I have any information."

"Stay safe," Octavia says.

"I'll be careful, O. I promise. Love you."

"Love you too."

The radio clicks and I look up at the others. Indra is the first to speak. "I will inform the others to keep an eye out and increase the patrols."

Lexa nods and Indra bows her head before walking out of the tent.

"You two cannot stay in this tent tonight." Anya says. "It is large and labeled as the Heda's tent." She exchanges a quick look with Raven and Luna, who both nod. "You can sleep in our tent with us. Let us go there now so the Maunon do not see that you are not in your tent."

"Mochof (thank you)." Lexa says, grasping forearms with Anya. "Clarke and I will sleep on the ground."

"I'll bring you two furs." Mom offers.

"Thanks," I say.

Mom purses her lips and hugs me tightly. She puts a hand on Lexa's arm, knowing she probably would not appreciate being hugged, even if it's just in front of her closest advisors.

"Let's go." Raven says, gesturing for us to follow her.

I squeeze Mom one last time before letting go. I grab the few things in our tent we may need, mainly something to put on our armor so it doesn't smell like we've been wearing it for a while. I take Lexa's hand again and we follow Raven, Anya, and Luna. The guards I see as we make the short journey has more than doubled. They all are standing straighter and look more serious than they did an hour ago.

We get to their tent and a guard comes in to hand us all dinner. We eat in relative silence, with them sitting on the bed and Lexa and I standing up. Mom comes in not long after we finish and hands us furs. She doesn't hold back this time and hugs me then Lexa. Mom kisses my cheek before she
leaves.

We lie down on the floor after that and say goodnight to Anya, Luna, and Raven. Sleep doesn't come as easily as usual when I'm sleeping next to Lexa. She notices and gently moves me so that my head is resting on her chest. I fall asleep to the comforting rhythm of her heart.

Chapter End Notes

The story's progressing! The acid fog is knocked out! And stuff is going to continue to happen... :) Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
My eyes fly open when I hear some loud yells coming from outside the tent. I jolt awake, adrenaline flooding my system and making me more awake than I would usually be five seconds after waking up. I turn and look at Lexa, who of course is already awake.

We get up from the floor and grab our weapons. I guess it was a good idea to sleep in our armor. It was a little uncomfortable, but that's better than taking the time to put on clothes when something's going on outside. Raven rushes in, making us slow down while we pay closer attention to her.

"Okay, so the Maunon's Beta team or whatever is here. They have a bunch of snipers in the trees." Raven blocks me as I try to exit the tent. "Oh no you don't."

"Raven-"

"No, listen. You and Lexa are more than just our leaders in this war. You're symbols of our hope, of how we can win against the Maunon. You're what's keeping us optimistic in the face of a more technologically advanced enemy. So we're staying here. You just get my presence as a bonus, free of charge."

I hate that she's right. I squint at Raven, not buying that she's here willingly.

"They made you come in here, huh?"

"More like encouraged with threats." Raven sighs. "If I don't stay here, Anya and Luna said they won't kiss me for an entire day."

"That's rough buddy."

Raven gives me a half hearted high five for my reference and flops down on the bed. "Come on, you might as well get up here. This might last a while."

I groan and lay down beside her, gesturing for Lexa to join me. After a second of hesitation, she rests her head on my chest. Despite her comforting weight on me, my body refuses to relax when the sound of gunfire and pained cries come from just outside.

"If this goes on too long, there's nothing in the world that can stop me from going out there." I say.

We wait for what feels like forever but in reality is probably twenty minutes. There has been less gunfire, so I guess we have succeeded in taking down some of the snipers.

Lexa and I switch when my arm starts to go numb from her cutting off its blood flow. I rest my head on her shoulder, curled up against her side. Raven's on her back, staring at the ceiling of the tent as we wait.

It's now that someone bursts into Raven's tent. I sit bolt upright, alarmed immediately. If the fact that someone came in without announcing themselves wasn't enough, it's a Maunon with a large gun. I reach for my weapons with wide eyes. Before my fingers can even wrap around a knife, the
man's head is knocked backwards by the force of a dagger being thrown at it.

His arms pinwheel as he tries to keep himself from falling. The glass that protected his face from the radiation is shattered, with Lexa's dagger embedded in it. The man in the hazmat suit falls onto the ground, his gloved hands going up in front of his face.

I almost tell him not to pull out the dagger but he's dead no matter what. Plus he's Maunon and just tried to kill is, so I have no sympathy for him.

The shattered glass reveals a distorted image of his terrified, panicked expression. He yanks out the dagger and immediately drops it, broken glass falling like hardened teardrops from his suit. His eyes roll into the back of his head and he lets out a spine-chilling, agonized scream.

Boils break out across his face and he claws at his skin through the rubber material of his hazmat suit. All of the sudden, he's cut off and he makes one last choking noise in the back of his throat. His eyes go blank, no spark of life left in them as he slowly falls from his knees face-first onto the floor.

"Damn," Raven breathes.

As soon as she says that, a frantic Luna and worried Anya throw open the tent flaps and hurry inside. They pause at the entrance wearing relieved expressions when they see we're all okay. Anya's eyebrows raise when she sees the dead Maunon on the ground and Lexa's dagger by his fallen body.

"Nice kill, Heda." Anya says, stepping around the body so she can look us all over more closely for injuries.

"I did not kill him. The radiation did. I merely broke the seal of his suit." Lexa shrugs humbly.

I turn around from where I'm practically sitting in her lap to give her an unimpressed look at her attempt to play off her amazingness.

"Lexa, you had thrown a knife by the time I was reaching for mine." I point out. Lexa shrugs in response but she has a small satisfied smile on her face.

"Good throw, strisis (little sister)." Luna praises. She bends down and retrieves Lexa's favorite dagger, tossing it back to her. Lexa catches it by the handle effortlessly. "You are all unhurt?"

"We're okay," Raven reassures.

"Thank the gods for that." Luna sighs out, taking one of Raven's hands in hers. "We heard that awful screaming coming from in here after seeing that Maunon burst in here. We thought..."

Raven softens and squeezes Luna's hand before reaching out to take one of Anya's as well. "We're all okay. I promise."

"So the screaming was just from him dying from the radiation?" Luna asks after a short pause.

"Yeah. It was even worse up close. He..." Raven hesitates for a moment. "He was in a lot of pain before he died."

"At least we know our last resort works." I say, trying not to think about what could happen to so many innocent people if we end up having to do that.
The others nod somberly and we lapse into silence, reveling in the fact that we're all okay, we're safe. For the moment, at least.

Chapter End Notes

That last resort tho... Will they end up having to use it? Or will it all work out? ;) We'll find out! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Once Bellamy confirms that the acid fog won't hurt us anymore, it's like a huge breath of relief has been spread through us. Anya and Luna go out to tell the warriors that it's no more while the rest of us continue going over our plan until we are ready to go again.

A few hours after the Maunon's team attacked, we get the news that everyone's ready to march. Mom had worked tirelessly alongside Jackson and a few Grounder healers like Nyko to help the ones injured in the attack. Very few people were killed luckily, and most of them were Maunon.

Lexa and I walk out of our planning tent and start helping to pack up. We assist in taking down tents and placing them in wagons pulled by some of the strongest, largest horses I've ever seen. Which isn't saying much, considering I had never seen a horse until I got to the ground, but still. They're huge.

"Is it true?" A warrior asks when we're about to pass them, causing us to pause and listen. "The fog is gone?"

"Sha (yes). A Skaikru boy by the name of Bellamy made sure of it." Lexa answers.

The warrior smiles, their red kohl (coal/war paint) moving when their face does. "Good. Mochof (thank you). It is difficult to believe that it is gone. May the gods guide us as we fight to free our people."

With that, they bow to us and continue walking. I take Lexa's hand in mine.

"Can you tell what clan they were from?" Lexa asks.

"Really, a quiz on kohl right now?" I question with a raised eyebrow.

Lexa doesn't relent. "It will keep your mind off of what has to be done and what might happen."

"Okay. They're Sankru."

"How can you tell?" Lexa prompts.

"The red kohl. Though it's something available throughout the clans, only Sankru use it exclusively or as their main kohl color."

Lexa hums, nodding. "And what is it made out of?"

"The red clay that's abundant in the desert."

Lexa smiles approvingly at me. "Very good. Did it work?"

"For a second," I admit.

"Sometimes that is all you need to refresh yourself."

I chuckle to myself. "Raven was right. My girlfriend's a human fortune cookie."
"What is that?" Lexa questions.

"I'll tell you when we're not about to fight a technologically superior enemy that you've never been able to defeat."

Lexa nods and then her eyes go back to how our people are finishing putting away tents.

"Do you think we can do this?" She whispers so quietly I can barely hear her. "Do you think we can finally win against the Maunon?"

"Yes I do." I answer confidently and Lexa looks over at me, worry in her eyes. "I'm not saying it will be easy because it won't be. But our plan is solid and our people are smart and strong. We will win."

Lexa nods and lets out a breath. She gives me a quick kiss. "Thank you, Clarke. I needed to hear that." She looks around the makeshift camp once more and her expression turns serious again. "I think we are done here."

I squeeze Lexa's hand. "Then let's march to the Mountain to kick some ass."

Lexa's stoic face breaks and she laughs at my wording. With a more relaxed demeanor, she reaches out to stop a warrior from walking past. They pause immediately and turn to us, their head bowed in respect.

"Sha Heda (yes Commander)?"

"Tell them to sound the war horns." Lexa orders.

They nod and rush off. Lexa and I start walking towards the front of our army. A few of the others, like Lincoln and Raven, fall in step behind us. Our people look at us and seem to realize why we're moving. I fight the urge to laugh when I see a Skaikru girl nearly trip and fall on her face in her excitement.

The war horns sound all at once, making it feel like it's everywhere at once. Some warriors start to cheer and everyone seems to be brimming with energy.

Lexa effortlessly slides a sword out from her holster around her waist and lifts it into the air. "Kom wor (to war)!"

It feels like the sky echoes her shout back to her with how many people repeat it behind us. Lexa resheathes her sword and gives me a confident smile.

With that, we start walking. Lexa takes my hand again and we march towards the Mountain. She lets go soon enough though, when we start getting very close. I pull out my bow and notch an arrow, keeping an eye out for any Maunon.

We do end up finding some and we shoot them all down. Raven turns out to be really good with a gun and knocks down three Maunon snipers on the way. By the way she grins and cackles quietly to herself whenever she gets oke, I can tell she's having the time of her life. Her girlfriends are impressed by her skills as well. They even find Raven's "this just goes to prove I'm good with my hands" remark funny.

It feels like it's not long at all before we reach the Maunon's large metal door. Lexa and I are crouched together behind a large boulder and we nod to each other. Everyone knows what to do. We're ready to enact our plan.
I peek my head out and duck immediately when a shot rings out. Snipers. Of course they have snipers here.

"We need to take them out first." I murmur.

Lexa nods and relays this to Raven, Luna, and Anya, who are crouched behind a nearby boulder. Anya gives out quiet orders and a group of roughly twenty Skaikru and Grounders sneak away towards the hill over the door where the snipers are.

Anya moves closer to us to talk quietly. "This is your chance. Get who you need and go."

Lexa studies her face for a moment and nods. Raven kisses Anya and Luna deeply but quickly before quickly making her way over behind our boulder. A bullet pings off of the rock behind her, missing her by a narrower margin that I would like.

"Let's do this." Raven whispers.

Chapter End Notes

Woohoo! We're finally at the Mountain! And the plan is getting on it's way! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
"Let's do this," Raven whispers.

Lexa nods stoically and then gives Anya and Luna a look that I can't determine. Judging by their grateful expressions, it was a silent promise that she'll watch Raven's back.

"Lincoln," I call quietly.

He comes out from the bushes, crouching and moving quickly. I wince as a bullet narrowly misses his foot. Lincoln practically dives behind the boulder with Raven, Lexa, and me.

"Are we ready to go?" Lexa asks.

"Wait!" Octavia's harsh whisper comes from the undergrowth where Lincoln appeared from.

"You're not going without me."

"Octavia..." Lincoln murmurs and she gives him a harsh glare that would make a baby cry.

"I'm coming, Lincoln. There's no way in hell or Hogwarts that I'm letting you go back to that place without me. Plus, Bellamy's in there."

"Is this okay with you?" Lincoln asks Lexa and me.

I exchange a quick look with Lexa. "Yeah, of course. I'm sure that if nothing else, she could help guard Raven."

Raven frowns at my wording. "I don't need a babysitter."

"I know you don't. But you can't hack into their mainframe and fend off guards at the same time."

I point out.

"That's true," Raven acquiesces. "Should we get going now?"

Lexa shakes her head. "Wait."

"For what?" Raven questions.

"You'll know when you hear it." Lexa says simply.

"Ugh. Fine. Be mysterious." Raven grumbles. "When can I use my grenades?"

"Those are a last resort if you don't care about the Maunon knowing where you are." I remind her quietly, causing Raven to nod somewhat reluctantly.

A few moments later, I hear a surprised yell and yet another thud of a body hitting the ground after falling from a tree. Someone whistles and Lexa grins at me. It's the tune they're supposed to give when we've killed a Maunon sniper. Lexa and I set it up with some group of warriors.

It isn't long before shots ring out, presumably the Maunon trying to shoot the group of warriors we sent up to the hill to kill them. More thuds come between the sounds of gunfire and I turn my
attention to Lexa.

She nods to Lincoln, who bows to her before turning around and slightly poking his head out from the safety of the boulder. No bullets come our way. I guess it worked, they're all focused on their attackers instead of us. Lincoln sticks his head out farther and still isn't hit by a rain of sniper bullets, which is a good sign. He gestures with his hand for us to stand.

"Stay with either Octavia or Lincoln." I tell Raven. "And let us know if you need to slow down or stop or anything. There's no shame in needing assistance."

"Thanks." Raven murmurs back.

Lincoln looks back at us from where half of his body is no longer hidden behind the boulder.

"We're ready," Lexa says.

Lincoln quickly moves behind the cover of another nearby boulder and we follow him as fast as we can. The Maunon snipers are really terrible, they haven't even tried to shoot over at us since they became distracted. The screams and occasional gunfire tells me their fight isn't over quite yet. It will be soon.

Lincoln leads us through the trees surrounding the Mountain's base expertly until we reach what looks like an old sewage tunnel from before the bombs. It's still mainly intact but there are some cracks in the cement, especially across the bottom. Maybe that's because people walk in it.

Lincoln has to bend over in order to fit in the tunnel while the rest of us just have to duck our heads. Our footsteps echo loudly as we walk through it. We emerge out the other side not long after entering it since it's a short sewage tunnel.

The cave system we're in kind of reminds me of the place Lexa and I were in the last time were in the Mountain. It's a lot different, though. For one, the walls are sporadically lined with flickering torches. The walls are almost as dark as the shadows the flames cast and drip with water. The sluggish "plop" sounds as it hits the earth makes this place even more eerie. Other than that sound and the soft crackling of fire, the cave system is almost completely silent. I don't see any kind of rat or roach or any creature skittering across the ground. I decide not to dwell on why that might be.

We all group together, walking closer to each other than we normally would. We automatically move so that Raven's in the middle, protected by the rest of us. Lincoln and Octavia are in front while Lexa and I are in the back, looking back every so often to make sure nothing's following us.

Octavia, Lincoln, Lexa, and I all have our hand on our swords, ready to draw them at a moment's notice. Even Raven is holding her handgun. There's just something about this place that feels off. And not just because it looks creepy.

We're all on edge, so when we hear a terrified scream, we all jump and pull out our weapons. Raven's pointing her gun at the faint outlines the torches provide ahead of us, eyes wide in fear. That scream... I've never heard something like that. It sounded like the person saw death themself as the life was tortured out of them.

Lincoln holds up a hand and slowly moves forward. We ignore how he wants us to stay where we are and continue walking a few paces behind him.

Ahead of us, a torch is flickering wildly where there's a wider area in the tunnel. I can barely make out anything, even as we get closer. The sound of someone eating noisily makes us all pause. Just as we do, the torch light up again and I almost wish it didn't.
There's a large person crouched above another person with a blank stare who has to be dead, their teeth sunk into the dead one's arm. Their head snaps up when the light comes back on and they look right at us. They grin, their teeth stained red with blood.

Of course we went into a Reaper tunnel.

Chapter End Notes

Dramatic, right? And I actually like my descriptions of stuff in this chapter! And whoa, Reaper! They'll have to get past them in order to get to the Mountain... Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
The Reaper grins at us, it's teeth stained with blood.

"Float me, that's creepy." Raven murmurs. "We're allowed to kill those things, right?"

Lexa and I exchange a look. Neither of us particularly want to have dead Reapers on our hands. They were once people and I'm hoping that someday soon we can find a way to get them back. But now, we can't just knock them out and hope for the best. They could blow everything we have worked so hard for.

"Yes," Lexa says finally. "We can kill them. But I would prefer that you don't do so unless they attack first or if you feel like someone's life is in danger. They used to be like us before the Maunon got to them." Raven nods along to Lexa's words soberly. "Okay?"

"Okay. Got it." She confirms.

"I wouldn't shoot in this cave if you can avoid it." I say before Raven can aim at the Reaper studying us with hungry eyes. "The loud noise will let the other Reapers and possibly the Maunon that we're here."

"Yeah, alright. Sorry."

"There's nothing to be sorry about." I shake my head. "We just have to be extra careful while we do this. Now, let's keep moving. If it attacks, we fight back. If not, we don't. But either way we have to keep an eye on it."

We slowly move forward and it's once ravenous expression turns cold and calculating as it growls at us like a rabid dog. We pause and the we all (except Raven) draw our swords, ready to fight. It draws a rusty, bloodied mace and runs towards us.

Octavia and Lincoln step forward while Lexa and I stay near Raven. They dodge it's first attack easily, watching how it moves. Lincoln attacks first, thrusting his sword forward to test it's defenses. It just growls at bats his sword away with its hand, seeming like it doesn't kind getting injured.

Lincoln steps back again and they wait for it to come to them. It does pretty quickly, evidently not very patient. It swings over-eagerly, perhaps too excited by the prospect of us being it's next meal (ew) to focus clearly. Octavia dodges the strike and she moves forward alongside Lincoln in a practiced flurry of blades. Even Lexa looks impressed by how in sync they are and how they almost effortlessly work together.

In the end, the Reaper ends up stabbed right in the heart by Lincoln's spare dagger that he pulls out. Blood drips from it's mouth and it stares vacantly at us. I swear it's lips twitch up into a relieved smile as it closes it's eyes for the final time.

After Lincoln pulls our his dagger, the Reaper falls to the ground, dead.

"Yu gonplei ste odon (your fight is over)." Lincoln says.
Raven, Lexa, and I approach them slowly. Lexa puts her hand on Lincoln's shoulder. His head is bowed as he looks down at the person he just killed.

"Does it ever get easier?" He murmurs.

"Does what get easier?" Raven prompts.

"Taking a life," he says softly.

"No," Lexa answers.

I look over to her in surprise. That's not an answer I would expect from her. I listen more intently now, excited by the prospect of getting to see another side of her.

"We can only learn how to deal with it better." Lexa continues. "Taking a life is never an easy thing to do, and should never be taken lightly. You and Octavia did good. And did you see him in his final moments? He was smiling." I knew it! "He was relieved. He knew he would no longer be trapped in his own mind, enslaved by the Maunon. You did good," Lexa repeats.

"She's really good at this comforting thing," Raven whispers to me.

I nod in agreement, looking at my girlfriend lovingly. She seems to feel the weight of my gaze on her and turns to look at me, offering me a soft half-smile.

"Mochof Heda (thank you Commander)." Lincoln whispers, then nods to himself and raises his head. "I am alright now."

Lexa takes her hand off of his shoulder and takes a step back so she's back beside me. I reach over and squeeze her hand for a second, allowing my touch to linger for a bit longer than I probably should in a tunnel of nightmares.

Lincoln gives Octavia a gentle smile and then we get moving again, silently making our way through the dark tunnels. Luckily, there are some alternate routes that Lincoln knows. On more than one occasion, we hear what sounds like a large group of Reapers. That's when Lincoln takes us into some smaller tunnels that go past them.

The tunnel system seems endless. I can't tell how long we've been in here. It must be a while, though. Especially since Raven even asks to stop or slow down sometimes.

The first time, she's really reluctant to make us stop because of her leg even though we can all tell she was in a lot of pain. As a compromise, she lets Lincoln carry her. She just doesn't realize he meant bridal style. Which ends up being hilarious and just the comedic relief we need in this stressful time. Her shocked expression makes Octavia burst into stifled giggles and even Lexa laughs.

"Sorry, Raven. I would carry you on my back if I thought it would not hurt your leg." He apologizes with a small smile.

"That was really considerate. Thanks." Raven says earnestly. She leans her head back so she's looking at Octavia upside down. "O, your boyfriend is a giant sweet teddy bear. I approve."

"Thank Rae." Octavia replies, amused. "I like to think of him more as a bear with the heart of a teddy hear. He's too ripped to be a teddy bear."

Raven pokes his chest and her eyes widen. "You're so right."
And Lincoln carrying her happens a few more times when Raven's leg starts hurting too badly for her to keep up. She's a lot less reluctant to let us know, seeming to enjoy being carried around like she weighs less than a pebble.

The last time he carries her, he ends up having to put her down. There's a group of Reapers in our way and there's no hidden tunnel, no safe passage. We're going to have to fight.

"Octavia, you stay with Raven." Lexa orders in a whisper as Lincoln sets Raven down. "Lincoln, you stay on the edge of the fight. Try to make sure no one gets over to them. Clarke and I will be in the middle of the fight." Lincoln looks like he wants to argue. "Okay?"

"Okay," he confirms with a nod.

With that, Lexa and I draw our swords and make our way towards the group of Reapers who haven't noticed us. Yet.

Chapter End Notes

Whoo! A slightly longer chapter! Hopefully that makes up for me posting this whenever I do, because it definitely won't be early in the morning like usual. I'm writing this in the car and I don't know when I'll have wifi to post this... Anyway, I couldn't get the idea of Lincoln carrying Raven out of my head (maybe I'm just sleep deprived but it was hilarious in my mind). And props to the couple of people who saw the Carmilla reference last chapter ;) I saw the opportunity and could resist! Next chapter, they fight Reapers! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
With our swords drawn, Lexa and I silently approach the group of Reapers. They only notice us when we're a few steps away, which is better than I expected. When the first Reaper sees us, Lexa and I leap into action. A spare dagger from my armor goes flying right into its forehead as it reaches for it's own weapons. The other Reapers notice when their buddy falls on his back with my dagger coming out of his head.

We rush them, our swords out and ready to kill. We end up cutting down two more before they manage to get their weapons out.

Lexa and I stand next to each other, watching the group carefully as they all look to who must be the leader/boss Reaper. He's the largest out of all of them (which is saying something).

Lexa flexes her grips on her swords as we wait for them to make the first move. It doesn't take long for a Reaper to get impatient and run over at us. We break apart and dodge it's sloppy attack.

It swings it's mace and tries to hit me, apparently deeming me as the weaker out of Lexa and me. I block and push back, causing it to lose it's balance. It stumbles back towards Lexa, who thrusts her sword through it's back. It lets out a gurgle, blood coming out and covering it's lower lip and chin before it collapses on the ground, dead. Lexa pulls out her sword and twirls it, eyeing the remaining Reapers who look thoroughly intimidated.

The Reapers give up all pretense of calmness and patience and come at us all at once, probably hoping to overwhelm us. I find myself thankful that we're so in tune as we duck and dodge from blades. We manage to not hit each other and end up saving each other's butts more times in just a few minutes than I'm really comfortable with.

We shift our positions after Lexa gives me a look. We move in tandem, using a complicated fighting style that, according to Lexa, even the most experienced warriors have trouble with. It involves truly knowing the other person you're fighting alongside and moving with them. When we first started out, we were terrible at this and kept hitting each other. But now, we understand each other on a level I didn't think was possible. Now, the Reapers struggle to dodge our flurry of attacks, let alone try to attack us.

By some stroke of luck (plus a lot of skill on our part), we don't let many Reapers past us. And those who do manage to get past us are either fatally wounded or are injured and then killed by Lincoln, who's waiting a few steps away.

We end up stopping using our technique as the numbers of our enemies dwindles and goes under five. It's not long after that when I see Lexa thrust her swords into the gut of another Reaper out of the corner of my eye.

I'm currently fighting the boss Reaper, who evidently isn't happy about me killing all of his minions. The raw power behind his attacks makes me wonder what the heck they feed these guys. I mean, I know they eat dead bodies and nasty stuff but these guys are seriously muscled. And this one's bigger than Lincoln. Like twice his size. If he didn't hunch over like an old-timey movie villain, his head would scrape the top of the cave.
Lexa's still fighting the others, gesturing for a concerned Lincoln to stay where he is. The Reaper seems to notice my distraction and grins so widely his dry lips crack apart and reveal yellowed and blackened teeth. I nearly gag at the stench coming from his mouth. It smells like death.

While I'm working on my gag reflex, this douche pulls a dirty move and takes one hand off of his sword. It takes all of my strength to keep him from cleaving me in half, there's no chance that I'm going to be able to take a hand off of my weapons and stop him from whatever he's doing. I eye his hand warily, flicking my gaze between that and his giant sword.

He pulls out a dagger and I barely twist out of the way in time to avoid it from sinking into my stomach. He keeps swiping, alternating between his dagger and his sword until he has me backed against a wall of the tunnel.

I decide then that the gentlewoman's rules can go out the window. He used a dirty trick, the I can too. So I do the first thing I think of. I slam my knee into his crotch. His eyes go wide and he howls in pain (I swear I can faintly hear Raven and Octavia's laughter in the background).

He clutches himself and lowers his head with a pained grunt, his face screwed up in agony. I use the hilt of my sword to hit his lowered chin, making his stumble back into the opposite wall.

Annoyed and ready to get this over with, I twirl my swords in my hands like Lexa does and advance on him. He's evidently dazed, with his giant sword clattering to the ground while he loosely holds onto the dagger. His head must have hit the wall or something for him to be so stunned.

I raise my swords and thrust forward with all of my might in order for them to get in deep enough to be fatal. I can't place why he has a smug smirk on his face as he does until I hear Lexa's frantic voice.

I blink and look over at her as I step away from his dead body, slumped against the wall. I snap back into focus and hear the words she's saying instead of just the vague sounds.

"-rke! Clarke! Can you hear me?" Lexa asks, rushing up to me.

I frown in confusion. Why is she leaving Lincoln to kill the last Reaper when she could do it?

"Yeah I can hear you." I confirm. "What's wrong?"

Lexa lets out a choked, disbelieving laugh. "What's wrong? Clarke, you've been *stabbed*!"

My eyes go wide and I look down at myself. Sure enough, the leader dude's dagger is sticking out of my right shoulder. Dang, shock is a helluva drug.

Chapter End Notes

Aaaahhh I couldn't resist. She's okay, she'll be okay, I promise! Just some added angst!! Next chapter, the plan continues! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
I'm still staring down at my right shoulder in shock when Raven and Octavia rush over, stepping over the dead Reaper bodies littering the ground. Lincoln trails behind them and they all wear matching worried expressions.

"Clarke, does it hurt?" Lexa questions.

She reaches up her hand like she's going to touch the dagger. She hesitates as soon as she gets close to the handle, wincing in sympathy and dropping her hand.

"Shouldn't we just, y'know." Raven mimes yanking on something. "Pull it out?"

"If this weren't a serious situation, I would have so many jokes to choose from." Octavia murmurs, causing Raven to snort out a chuckle before swiftly recomposing herself.

"To answer your question, Raven," Lexa begins. "No. If it has cut into an artery, it is the only thing keeping her alive at the moment." Her voice trails off, cracking at the end.

I automatically go reach out my hand and float me, that hurts. I let out a flurry of swears that would make the most battle-hardened warrior blush. Reaching out to hold her hand with my right hand, you know the same side I currently have a knife in, maybe isn't the brightest idea.

"Clarke!" Lexa cries out.

Her hand freezes an inch away from my skin as she takes in my pained expression with concerned eyes.

"Nomonjoka (motherf*cker)." I curse, clutching my arm with my left hand. "Ow ow. I'm just really feeling it now. Wow, moving that arm was a brilliant idea." I groan out.

"Do you think it's in an artery?" Raven asks, her voice noticeably shaking.

Right, that's the whole reason I started to reach out in the first place. I clench my jaw and take a few deep breaths to calm myself down a little before answering.

"No." Everyone's attention snaps over to me as I speak. "There are some arteries in the arms and shoulder, but judging by this angle, I should be fine. Of course, I'm not used to telling on my own body. But I'm like 84% sure that it didn't hit anything too important." I say, hoping it's at least a little reassuring.

Lexa purses her lips, not seeming entirely convinced but she still nods, accepting my words. "So you are saying we can safely pull it out?"

"As long as you don't wiggle it around in there or do anything stupid with it. Just go slow and steady."

Lexa nods seriously. "Would you like me to do it, Clarke?"

"Yes please."
I smile at her, hoping she can see the extent of the trust and love I have for her. It makes a glimmer of light come back into her eyes but I know that she won't really let herself be reassured when I'm injured.

Lexa places her hand just above the hilt and flexes her fingers, focusing intently on the dagger. She's about to reach down when I remember something.

"Wait!" I say, making Lexa freeze with concerned, wide eyes. "No no babe, you didn't do anything wrong. It's just... Does anyone have a spare scrap of cloth for me to bite down on? I don't want to alert ever Reaper in tunnels to where we are if I end up screaming."

Lexa's jaw quivers and she swallows as Raven hands me a piece of fabric. I thank her and take it, consciously making sure I use my left arm. I place it between my teeth and bite down, flexing my jaw. The fabric doesn't slip or tear or anything, so I deem it as good. I relax as much as I can, keeping my muscles from tensing. Especially the ones around where the pain is radiating from.

I nod to Lexa and she reaches up, glancing at my face to make sure I won't stop her again. She gives me a determined look and turns to the others, turning into what I call her "Heda mode." Usually I find it cute (or hot) but I can't help seriously appreciating it at the moment. They need someone to tell them what to do, so they feel useful.

"Octavia, hold her arm. I don't want her accidentally moving it while I pull it out. Okay? Raven and Lincoln, I'm guessing either or both of you have some form of painkillers. Find them. Make sure you know that they are not the kind to cause drowsiness. Despite this, we have a long fight ahead of us. We need Clarke at her best."

They all nod and get to work. Octavia holds onto my arm with both hands, keeping her grasp light. I give her a look to silently tell her that it's okay to exert more pressure. She bites her lip nervously and tightens her grip.

Lexa returns her attention to me and firmly grasps the handle, placing her left hand against my injured shoulder. She carefully keeps her hand away from the wound itself and the area near it that might hurt. She applies pressure with her left, not enough to hurt or bruise, as she slowly and carefully starts pulling out the dagger.

I clench down on the cloth in my mouth, letting out a strangled moan of pain. Lexa's eyes stay on the knife but her mouth twitches into a deeper frown at the sound. It makes an indescribable sound as it dislodges from inside of me and is taken out at a leisurely, steady pace. Lexa grimaces but keeps on pulling it carefully until it's out of my shoulder.

I groan as blood starts to flow more freely from the wound. Lexa, after getting a nod of consent from me, pulls off my shirt. I'm left in my pants and bindings while Lexa takes another couple pieces of fabric from Octavia.

She dips one in her water canteen and gently cleans my wound, flinching sympathetically every time I so much as wince. Lexa then applies a poultice that Lincoln hands her. I hiss at the burning sensation and spit out the fabric from my mouth. It's a disinfectant; I recognize the smell of it from when I worked alongside Nyko.

After that, Lexa carefully wraps up my shoulder. Raven gives me a flask while I do that. I take it with my left hand, raising an eyebrow at her. I take a sip after she opens the cap for me and nearly spit it out in surprise. Dang, that's alcohol. And really strong.

I shrug and drink a little more, letting warmth settle in my body and the pain numbs a little. By a
little, I mean not much. But I have no doubt that whatever it is that Lincoln hands me (after giving Raven an unimpressed glare and taking away my alcohol) will numb it much more. Again, I recognize the smell of it.

"Drink all of it," he urges me.

I take a hesitant sip to test out the taste and gag, making a disgusted face that makes Raven, Octavia, and Lincoln laugh. I take a deep breath and down the rest of it like a shot, but some of it still comes in contact with my tongue and taste buds.

I shudder, repulsed. "Float me, that's awful. No wonder everyone complained about the taste! Ugh."

Chapter End Notes

Wow, that ended up being a bit longer than usual. Like 200 words (20% of a normal chapter) longer. One quick thing, I'm going on Spring Break tomorrow (or today, when I post this). It shouldn't affect my posting schedule other than it'll be a little off because I'll be in a different time zone... So no worries, the next chapter will be coming in three days like usual! If you get worried about when it'll be posted or if you have questions, feel free to comment and ask or message me on Tumblr (wolf3223)! Whatever works for you! Anyway... I'm off to pack because we're leaving the morning! :) Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 123

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

I give Lincoln back the bottle that held the nasty medicine. He takes it with an apologetic, knowing smile. I'm guessing that means he knows what it tastes like. I run my tongue along the back of my teeth, grimacing and trying to get away from the lingering aftertaste that's almost as terrible as the taste. Octavia hands me some leaves and I nearly groan with happiness.

"Thank you." I say before popping the leaves in my mouth and chewing.

"What is that?" Raven asks curiously.

"Mint leaves. Lincoln made me drink that one time when I got beat up especially badly by a Grounder on one of my first days of training. So I know how bad it tastes."

"Oh. And um," Raven hesitates awkwardly for a second. "Clarke? You know you're still shirtless, right? Because as much as I like looking at your abs because wow, your girlfriend is now glaring at me like she's going to kill me."

"Lexa." I say and her eyes snap back to me.

I don't say anything more, just raise an eyebrow and hold out my left hand. Lexa huffs but gives me a soft smile and takes it in her right. It feels weird, holding her hand with this hand instead of my right. But she feels just as perfect as usual. I squeeze her hand gently and she nods before dropping mine.

She helps me get my armor back on, freezing every time I flinch or make a quiet, pained sound. It takes quite a bit longer than usual, since I try to move my right arm as little as possible.

Lexa tugs on the last strap and looks back up into my eyes. "Are you ready to go or do you want to rest here for a little bit longer?"

"I'm good to go as long as everyone else is." I say.

The others all give Lexa a nod of assent. Well, Lincoln and Octavia do. Raven gives her what has to be a purposefully dorky thumbs up.

We start walking again after Lexa picks up the dagger that stabbed me and putting it into one of her spare holsters. Judging by the stormy look in her eyes, she has a plan for it. I don't ask what it is, knowing she will probably want to keep it to herself, at least for now.

Through the rest of the tunnels, we somehow luckily don't encounter any more Reapers. It doesn't take us long to reach an iron door with patches of rust on it. Raven reaches out to touch it and an ear-splitting squealing sound comes out of a nearby speaker, making us all clap our hands over our ears. When Raven takes her hand off of the door, a second later the sound stops.

"Dang," Raven murmurs. "So what do we do?"

I look around and notice an odd patch of rock. It blends in unless you're looking for something out of the ordinary, with it seeming like it's something painted to look like the wall. I walk over to it and press my hand to it. No squealing noise comes, so I count that as a win.
I run my fingers over it and am surprised to find that it isn't rock or metal like I expected, but a painted cloth attached to what feels like a wooden frame. I carefully lift it up and it seems like it's on a hinge because something squeaks. Dust and rock particles fall from it as I slowly lift it. I let go of the frame carefully but it doesn't fall. Underneath it is what looks like a keypad.

I squint at it, trying to make out the keys but it doesn't seem to be on. There's no light emanating from it's rubber-looking keys.

"Rae, get over here." I say.

"What did you find?" She asks as she steps beside me. Ravens eyes light up when she sees it. "You found a keypad! That's awesome! I can hack into this, easy. It's less advanced than we had on the Ark and I used to hack my way in and out of places all the time."

"Is that how you and Mom never got caught?" I ask curiously.

"Yup. They had no evidence. My brilliance was unmatched by those dimwits." Raven mutters almost absentmindedly as she carefully studies the keypad. Raven presses a couple buttons and the keypad lights up. She grins, rubbing her hands together. "Oh how I've missed this."

Her fingers fly across the keypad, pressing the buttons more quickly than I can tell which number she hit. After a couple seconds of that, she pulls back her hand and then dramatically pokes the pound key. The door clicks.

"Please wait for one moment." An emotionless, automated voice comes from the speaker. It plays boring elevator music for a few seconds. "Thank you for waiting. Your party may now proceed into the decontamination chamber." Lincoln and Lexa don't look very happy at that.

Raven, on the other hand, seems excited. She claps her hands and beams. "Awesome."

She turns the door handle and the door groans more than I did when Anya first made me train/exercise.

I walk in first despite Lexa's quiet protests. The room is small and is covered in white tiles on the floor and the walls like a giant shower stall. The white tiles are no longer white. Most of them are stained gray from water damage that's stemming from the sealant. The single light in the center of the ceiling flickers ominously but other than the creepy feeling, it seems safe enough. I gesture for the others to come in and they do, albeit hesitantly. Once everyone's in, the door closes behind us and clicks. We all jump and look back.

"Lincoln!" Octavia bats his arm. "You were the last one in! Why did you close it? It's probably locked now."

"I didn't close it!"

We exchange worried looks, which of course is when cold water starts falling from the ceiling.

Chapter End Notes

Oooh... Weird, right? Aaand it looks like I'll have to look up what the decontamination process is for next chapter... Oh well! Next chapter, we continue with this! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 124

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The cold water stops after a moment and I spit some out of my mouth, disgusted. Something drops to the floor with a thud that seems to echo in this small room and I jump at the sudden unexpected noise.

I look over and am confused to see a generic shampoo bottle and another bottle has fallen to the ground from a hole I haven't noticed before in the ceiling.

"What the heck?" Raven questions, nudging the shampoo with her foot.

"Please wash your hair and scrub your skin clean. Do not scratch your skin, use the soap gently." The automated voice says.

"How does soap and washing our hair with shampoo help?" Octavia questions.

"The skin helps keep radiation from entering the body and can get trapped in the hair, so I guess the soap and shampoo is to get some of the radiation off. I think." I answer.

I'm not 100% sure that that's the reason, but it seems like a logical conclusion based on what I already know.

"Please wash yourselves." The automated voice says.

"Dang, can it see us?" Raven looks around anxiously.

I study the room and notice a nick in the wall I didn't see before that has a camera in it.

"Rae, what kind of camera is that?" I ask, pointing to where it is.

She squints. "That's one that reads heat signatures. Which sucks because that means we actually have to take a shower but it's good because they can't see our faces."

"Then let's get clean." I say.

We pass around the bottle of shampoo and wash our hair. Aside from Lincoln, at least. Octavia has fun rubbing some on his mostly bald head, though. We rub on some soap next, exaggerating our movements so the camera can pick it up. It's kind of awkward, bathing in front of the people I trust most in the world. At least we're clothed.

When we're all done, the water comes back on. Luckily, this time it's warmer. I scrub my hair and try to get all the soap and shampoo off of me.

The water shuts off and I shiver. My armor is sticking to me in the weirdest ways and I'm really hoping all of my moving around didn't reopen my wound. I tried to keep my right arm still, but I've found that it's really difficult to wash my hair with one arm.

"I have to say, Griffin." Raven says. "It was nice to finally see you taking a shower." She starts snickering.

"Float you." I put up my middle finger, which makes her laugh.
She's about to say something in response when air blasting from the walls drowns out everything else. I cover my ears, trying to keep it from murdering my eardrums. When it finally stops, we all look at each other and burst out laughing. Everyone's hair has been messed up, even Lincoln's. We look like we just stepped out of a hurricane. Even Lexa's normally immaculate braids have come undone.

"You may now exit the decontamination room." The automated voice says.

There's a click and I spin around, putting my hands on my swords. It seems like it came from another door, different from the one we came in. I walk towards it and hesitantly open it a crack. Nothing explodes and I don't hear any yelling, so that's a bonus. I pull the door all the way open and walk through. We're in another small room. Please tell me we don't have to go through another decontamination process.

"Please place your outer layer of clothing into the nearest incinerator. New clothing has been provided."

Of hell no, there's no way I would ever part with this armor. Tell me it's a suggestion or that they don't keep track of what's incinerated. The others come in behind me, looking just as happy about the prospect of burning our clothes. There's a lot of extra clothing on some metal tables nearby.

While I mentally work through a plan that could work so we don't have to incinerate our armor, we all focus on making our hair less crazy. Because I don't exactly want to invade the Maunon's base like this. And I think I may have a plan that will work.

"Lex? Can you help me with this?" I question and she comes to my side.

I pick up the most amount of clothing I can in my arms and she does the same. I make my way over to the thing labelled incinerator. It's like a box-sized hole in the wall with insulated walls and a metal floor that's attached to the wall on one side. I dump it in and Lexa follows my lead.

I take Lexa's right hand in my left and we take a step back before I press the button. The metal floor drops open and the clothes go down. We listen to the clacking of zippers and buttons as it falls into the roaring fire below.

"Thank you for your cooperation," the automated voice says. "Decontamination process complete. You may now exit."

The next door unlocks and Raven high fives me. "Dude, that was brilliant! I can't believe you outsmarted an automated system!"

I grin shyly and Lexa squeezes my hand, giving me a proud look that tells me more than a thousand words could. I give her a quick kiss before we exit, but my smile falls when I see where we are. We're in the room of caged Grounders and the sight is just as heart wrenching as it was last time.

"Whoa." Raven breathes out, looking around with a horrified expression. "You told us about this, but... I never imagined it would be worse than you described. Holy crap. Yeah, the Maunon deserve to die; they have no humanity left in their hearts at all."

"They do what they think they must to survive." Lexa explains, and speaks again at Raven and Octavia's incredulous looks. "I am not saying what they are doing is right or morally permissible, I am saying it is understandable. Now come on, let's save our people."
I did look up what you have to do for a radiation decontamination process and it's *kinda* like this. This is according to the CDC... Usually you're separated by sex unless you do this at home, then you strip (outer layers are burned), then you scrub with soap and shampoo (not conditioner, apparently it can trap radiation), then dry off and put on new clothes. Which is simpler than I thought! Anyway. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
**Needle warning! (As in sewing-ish kind of needle used to stitch up wounds!!)

Whispers come from the cages as we walk closer, repeating the same thing. "Heda's back."

"Are you here to get us out?" An alarmingly thin woman asks when we get close enough.

"Sha (yes)," Lexa responds. "We cannot release you yet, moba (sorry). We have a plan to get you all out."

The woman nods her head understandingly. "Thank you all for coming back for us. Stay safe. Do not worry about us if you do not succeed, just stay safe."

The others around her who heard her nod and murmur their agreement, quietly urging us to put our lives ahead of theirs.

"I guess a lot of Grounders really are that selfless." Raven murmurs to herself, her eyes wet with unshed tears.

I reach out and squeeze her arm, hoping it's comforting. We make our way past stacks of cages, too many to count. We reach a door that unlocks with the swipe of a card. I frown at it.

"Should we wait here to ambush a guard?" I ask.

"Nah, I can hack it." Raven waves her hand. "Easy. Guys, watch what I'm doing in case you need to do it. Okay?"

We all nod and I pull out a tiny notebook I had the foresight to bring and a pencil. Raven gives me an amused look before walking over to stand in front of the card reader. We crowd around her, moving around so everyone can see.

"Alright, first things first." Raven murmurs, pulling the cover away from the wall to expose the wiring and circuitry. "Oh man. Really? Their security sucks. I could have hacked this when I was five."

"That's because you're a genius, Rae." Octavia reminds her, making Raven grin.

"Shush. Flattery will get you everywhere. Okay, next step. Did you guys see that? It should spark like that. If it doesn't, you did something wrong. Next..."

She goes through the next few steps, pausing after each one to make sure we all got it. I write down the steps in my notebook, trying to make it as detailed as possible to avoid any possible confusion. When she's done, she puts the cover back, maneuvering it until there's a click. Raven pulls her hand back, keeping it close and beaming victoriously when it stays closed.

"Okay. We're good." Raven says.

She swipes a piece of paper she steals from me through the card reader and opens the door, gesturing for us to go through. We stand in a short hallway leading to a longer hallway and I find myself even more grateful that I memorized the map; I know exactly where we are. We pause here
to go over the plan.

"Lexa and I will go first," I begin. I know we all know it, but it calms me to go over it again. "The second door on the right is the closet you guys are going to stay in. You all know the signal. We're going to create a distraction. You guys stay under their radar for as long as possible while you head to the control room. Lexa and I will join you when we can. Got it?"

"Got it," Octavia confirms.

"One last thing. Octavia, Lincoln. Please stay with Raven. Whenever it's possible, at least one of you should be next to her. Okay?"

"We will keep her safe." Lincoln assures me.

"Mochof (thank you)."

Octavia's sighs, causing us all to look at her. "I'm going to have to endure so many closet and coming out of the closet jokes, aren't I?" We chuckle, keeping our amusement quiet just in case anyone's nearby.

I'm about to make my way out into the longer hallway when Lexa's hand on my good shoulder stops me.

"Clarke. We should check on your wound before we start fighting."

I nod and lean against the wall after helping Lexa take off my chest piece again. She frowns at the red staining the cloth, which is still soaked from the decontamination surprise shower. She takes off the cloth and tosses it onto the ground with a wet slap.

"Clarke, it has not just reopened, it has gotten worse. You need stitches."

"Then can you do stitches?" I ask.

Lexa moves her jaw from side to side and nods. She reaches into a pouch she always carries with her, pulling out a needle and string.

"Does anyone have fire?" Lexa asks.

Raven pulls out a lighter, making me raise an eyebrow. Where on earth did she find that? She shows Lexa how to work it before handing it to her. Lexa flicks it on and heats up the pointed end. She gives it back to Raven, who hands her strips of cloth. One Lexa places in my left hand and I put it in my mouth, determined to keep quiet and the other will probably be used to cover my wound.

I look at Lexa's focused, determined expression instead of the needle. The burning pain makes me want to lock up the muscles in my shoulder but I know that would hinder instead of help. I barely let a sound escape my mouth but I'm grateful for the cloth in my mouth. It keeps my teeth from grinding together.

When Lexa's finished, she presses a kiss above my wound and gently takes the cloth out of my mouth. Lincoln puts on another poultice and spreads it. I flinch at the pain but push through it. Lexa silently wraps my wound and helps me put my chest piece back on.

I give her a lingering kiss in thanks, knowing she hates to see me hurt. Lexa gives me a soft smile and squeezes my left hand.
"Ready?" I ask her.

"Ready," she confirms.

"Be careful," Raven says.

She comes over and hugs Lexa and I, carefully avoiding my injured shoulder and arm. Octavia and Lincoln join in and it becomes one big group hug. We say nothing as we untangle ourselves, giving each other small reassuring smiles. Lexa and I say goodbye to them.

"Don't say goodbye," Raven chokes out. "Say 'see you soon.'"

"See you soon," I repeat.

Lexa looks around the corner of the hallway to make sure it's clear. She gestures for me and we walk down the longer hallway with Octavia, Lincoln, and Raven right behind us. They head into the closet to wait.

Lexa and I walk down the pristine hallway, swords in our hands, ready to start a fight.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, the plan continues! Which is basically spontaneous because I plan pretty much nothing and why do I do this to myself! Oh well. Anyway! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
We don't encounter any guards along the main hallway we were in. So instead continuing straight, we decide to zigzag so hopefully the Maunon won't be able to tell where we came from. It's like an extra layer of protection for Lincoln, Octavia, and Raven's location.

Lexa and I keep track of where we are, using the fact that we memorized the map to this place to our advantage. We check in every couple of turns to make sure neither of us are lost and both of us know where we are in case we get split up or something.

It isn't until about ten minutes after leaving the others that we encounter our first guard. Raven was right, their security sucks. Though I would bet they're not used to "savages" being loose in their hallways.

The guard is a young man, his inform oversized enough to be baggy as he slumps against the wall, seeming bored by his lookout job. Well, it's about to get a lot more interesting.

Lexa and I sneak up behind him, our swords drawn. We exchange a look and have a quick silent conversation before nodding at each other. We'll try to knock him out and if that doesn't work, we'll fight him. Lexa hits him in the back of the head with the hilt of her sword. He crumples to the ground, unconscious.

We sheathe out swords in order to be able to drag him around. We pull him to the side of the hallway under the illusion of trying to "hide" him but we're not really. If we were, the Maunon would never find him. This young guard is bait. Lexa doesn't move to step away, looking down at him with a pensive expression.

"I hate when children get caught up in war." She murmurs.

I move so I'm standing beside her and place a hand on her shoulder. She leans into the touch.

"He's about the same age as you, Lexa." I point out softly.

Lexa purses her lips, her eyes sad. "Maybe so, but I was born for this. He was not."

I don't really know how to respond to that, so I don't. I slide my hand down her arm until I can hold her hand. I rest my head on her shoulder and she relaxes slightly. We both jump when the guard's radio crackles. Lexa and I pull apart and unsheathe our swords as someone's voice comes out.

"Hey pipsqueak, come in." There's silence for a moment. "Pipsqueak. Come on, man. I don't want to deal with this again. Come in, pipsqueak." Another pause. "Dude you better not be asleep on the job again. I covered your ass so it wouldn't be kicked by Cage but I won't do it again. Pipsqueak, come on wake up." A pause. "Crap. You're not asleep, are you? Was there a riot? Did one of those savage sympathizers mess you up? Okay, I'm sending some guards to you. Hang in there, buddy."

"Let's go." I whisper to Lexa. "It would be suspicious if we were just hanging out here, waiting to be caught."

Lexa nods and we jog down a few hallways, keeping close but not too close. We hear some boots hitting the ground, fast enough for the people to be running or jogging.
"Yeah, this is Smitty to Command." A woman says. "Pipsqueak is unconscious, but I don't think it was one of the sympathizers. They aren't exactly the violent type. And the precision indicates a medical or a military background. My gut tells me it wasn't one of us?"

"You think there are savages loose?" The control guy's shaky voice comes through.

"Yeah, but don't sound the alarm until we find further evidence." The radio clicks. "Be on your guard, boys."

"Yes ma'am." A man says, sounding sarcastic.

Looks like sexism survived the apocalypse down here. It certainly explains why their boss is a guy and why the big boss is an old white guy. I can't wait to knock these idiots down a peg or two.

Boot steps come closer and we turn around like we're headed down the hallway away from them. We start walking slowly, our swords drawn.

"Hey!" A man shouts from behind us, making us freeze. He speaks quieter to the others next to him. "Chill, it's just a couple of chicks. No worries."

Lexa and I exchange a look and turn around to face them.

The woman gasps. "Crap. Oh shit. Those are..." She picks up her walkie talkie. "Houston, we have a problem. Like a really big one. The savage leader is here with her girlfriend."

"They're what?" The guy squeaks out. "Dude, you better not be messing with me."

"I don't kid around about stuff like this." The woman snaps. "Sound the alarm. Now!"

The woman reattaches her walkie talkie to her uniform and raises her gun so it's pointed at us.

"Are they really...?" The sexist guy asks.

"Yes they are. Idiot. Didn't you look at the pictures Cage handed out?"

"... No."

The woman mutters explicit words about "overconfident men that think they're above everything."

She gestures with her gun at us. "Drop your weapons!"

"You drop yours." I reply, twirling my swords.

The woman swallows and blinks rapidly but holds her ground. The sexist man beside her however, is quite literally shaking in his boots.

"Drop it or I'll shoot!" She threatens, her voice wavering slightly with fear.

I sheathe my swords but Lexa keeps a hold of hers. The woman eyes me warily as I reach for my belt. Her eyes widen but it's too late for her to do anything. I use the handgun Raven found for me and shoot the gun out of her hands.

The woman yelps and drops the weapon, clutching her now injured hand. The jolt of the gun as it was shot probably broke some of her fingers.

"Nice shot," Lexa murmurs beside me.
"It was, wasn't it?" I say proudly, pulling out my swords again.

We advance on our terrified enemies just as the alarm starts blaring.

Chapter End Notes

Whoo, intense chapter! Next chapter, more fighting! And that poor lady, having to deal with the sexist guy. I have to say, it's really nice to be able to finish this chapter when I did. Because today I have late stay at school. Also, it's my 18th birthday :) It's already going better than last year when I had to take the SAT on my birthday... I did good though! Maybe they felt sorry for me or something. Anyway! Thank you all for reading and for your lovely comments! Stay awesome!
Our first real battle against the Maunon starts with the alarm screaming in the background.

"Did you really aim for her gun?" Lexa asks me as we advance towards them.

"Nah, I aimed for her stomach." I admit.

Lexa chuckles and twirls her swords threateningly. The Maunon guards look absolutely terrified of us. Mainly the three men practically hiding behind the woman who identified herself as Smitty.

"Come on, you idiots have guns!" She urges them, holding up a different gun with her non-dominant hand. "They brought swords to a gun fight!"

The men don't seem to hear her. "Which one do you think is the savage leader? The hot one or the other one?"

"Dude they're both hot, what are you talking about?"

Smitty lets out an exasperated sigh. She raises her gun and points it at us, looking menacing despite how it's shaking in her grip. She clenches her teeth and uses her other hand, the injured one, to help aim it. I raise an eyebrow, impressed. I know how painful breaking your fingers are, and she's not only powering through it, she's using that hand still.

The men seem to snap to attention when Smitty growls out more orders to them. After a moment of hesitance, they get out from behind her and aim their own guns. Their grips are more shaky than Smitty's was, and they don't have the excuse of not using their dominant hand and having broken fingers.

I find myself even more grateful that Raven insisted on making us bulletproof vests to put underneath our armor. Because I don't see how Lexa and I are getting out of this without a bullet or two being shot at us.

One of the guys shoots and it goes wide, hitting the wall by me. It's as if something has clicked in the others. Maybe they've finally realized their lives are in danger. Maybe they noticed how close we are. Maybe the gunshot scared them, a booming sound echoing throughout the halls, loud enough to drown out the blaring alarm for a moment. Soon enough, three more guns are being fired at us.

I grunt as the force throws me backwards and suddenly I'm lying on my back staring at the ceiling. My ears are ringing, or is that the alarm? Lexa's face comes into view, a concerned expression on her face. I blink and squint as her mouth moves but only distorted sounds come out. There's a rushing sound in my ear, like I'm listening to a fast river and then I can hear her perfectly.

"-rke? Clarke? Hodnes (love), can you hear me?"

"Yeah I can," I confirm.

Lexa lets out a choked noise in relief. "Thank the Gods. Are you alright?"
"Kinda dazed," I admit. "Kinda feel like I've been hit by a truck."

"What is a truck?"

"Giant automobile. It's like getting hit by a Pauna. That's a better analogy."

Remembering the people we were fighting, I sit upright with wide eyes, nearly hitting Lexa's head with mine. She moves back just in time to avoid it and that's when I notice that all of the Maunon guards are on the ground, groaning.

"What happened?" I ask.

"I threw one of those 'startling' metal circles that Raven gave me."

"Startling metal..." I think for a moment. "Wait. Raven made a stun grenade? That woman is crazy, I swear." I grumble to myself. "Alright, they won't be down for long. We should get moving."

"Are you feeling well enough to move yet?" Lexa questions worriedly.

"Yeah, I'm good. Just knocked the wind out of me. What about you? Did anything hit you?" I ask, looking her over.

"I was grazed by one, but it only caused a small cut. The other one hit me here." Lexa points to her abdomen. "It does hurt, but not enough to cause alarm."

I frown at her. "Babe, the first thing we're doing when we get to a safe place is checking your stomach. No arguments."

Lexa nods and holds out her hand. I allow myself to be helped up and grunt as my torso moves.

"Float me, I'm going to be feeling those for a while." I groan. "Has anyone tried to contact us?"

"Not yet but they should soon. Come on, there is a storage closet nearby where we should not be disturbed."

I nod and follow her. We move more slowly, but I have to say, I would rather have a couple bruises than a bullet. Worth it.

As soon as we sit down on the floor in the closet, the radio crackles. "Bellamy here. Are you guys here? The alarm's going off. Should I proceed with plan Daedalus?"

"We're here, Bell." I say into the radio. "Yes, proceed with plan Daedalus."

"Alright, I'll get on that in a minute. Who else is with you?"

"Raven, Lincoln, and I are here too." Octavia says, her voice in a whisper. "Operation Pauna seems to be going well, there are a ton of guards headed Clarke and Lexa's way. Just a warning."

"Thanks, O. Good luck."

"You made her come?" Bellamy asks furiously.

"She offered. Insisted, actually." I reply. "Now if you don't mind, I'm going to make sure that my girlfriend doesn't have internal bleeding. Go ahead with plan Daedalus."

Bellamy sighs and the connection cuts off, leaving us alone in the storage closet. The alarm is
muffled in here, and I gently push Lexa up against some shelves. There are some dusty boxes jutting out of them just far enough to mostly block us from sight in case anyone comes in.

I get on my knees in front of Lexa. "Take off your armor."

She nods and complies, taking off her chest piece and placing it on a taller box on the other side of her. She does the same with the bulletproof vest, until she's just in her bindings. I scoot closer to her and carefully study the large bruise blossoming across her lower right torso.

I carefully poke and prod it, taking note of when she hisses or sucks in a breath in pain. I'm glad she no longer hides her pain from me, otherwise this would be a lot more fun.

Satisfied that she doesn't have any internal damage, I'm about to get up when the door opens.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, we'll see what happens ;) It won't be like you think... Thank you lovely people for all of the happy birthday wishes last chapter!! It really made my day!
Thanks for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I freeze as the door to the storage closet opens. My hands are on her hips and my mouth is an inch away from her abs. I'm still on my knees. Who just came in?

There's a low sound of a man humming. I squeeze my eyes shut and pray to whatever gods are out there that he leaves. His slow footsteps stop and I rest my forehead against Lexa's stomach. He must have seen us.

"Oh." He stutters out, his voice telling me that he's an older man on the verge of becoming elderly. "Oh, sorry. I didn't know there was anyone in here."

Why is he being so polite? Does he not see us? I risk a glance toward the door through the curtain of my loose hair and realize that yeah, he can't see us. There are boxes in the way. In almost strategically placed spots.

"I'll just go. You girls have fun, but be careful. The alarm's ringing again, the dang thing." The old man chuckles.

The door opens and creaks as it closes behind the man's retreating footsteps.

"... What?" I ask, confused, looking up at Lexa. "We don't get that lucky. Why did he just leave?"

Lexa frowns at my questions and looks around. Her eyes fall on the boxes, then at me, then her torso and to my surprise, her cheeks go red.

"What?" I prompt when she doesn't say anything.

"Clarke. The boxes blocked his view."

"I gathered that much." I raise an eyebrow, silently urging her to continue.

Lexa clears her throat, her blush darkening as she continues. "Clarke, the boxes block your upper body and my face."

"Yeah, luckily. He could have noticed that I'm wearing armor and that you have warpaint on." I say.

Lexa clears her throat again, swallowing. "From his point of view, he saw a woman on her knees in front of a woman with no shirt on."

"So he thought... Oh. Oh!" And now I'm blushing too. I groan, letting my head fall against Lexa's stomach. "At least this will make a good story."

"Raven, Luna, and Anya will find it hilarious." Lexa says with a chuckle.

I can feel how her laughter makes her chest move against my forehead and stand up. Lexa and I are still flushed from the realization that an old man thought we were... doing stuff in here. I lean in and kiss her gently, easing the tension a little.

"Alright. Now let's go kick some Maunon butt." I murmur against her lips.
Lexa nods and I help her get redressed, peppering her face with kisses whenever she winces from an odd movement. She catches on and suddenly clutches her side when she's fully dressed, groaning dramatically. I give her an unimpressed but amused look and give her a longer kiss that leaves us both breathless.

"Nerd," I whisper.

"You love it." Lexa whispers back playfully.

"I do," I admit.

Lexa looks at me with wide eyes, seeming completely dumbfounded. I stare back, resisting the urge to run. Because right, we haven't exactly said the words yet. We've shown it in little moments, in how we interact, in how our walls melt to nothing around each other. We've called each other ai hodnes (my love) and hodnes (love). But we haven't said those simple words. Yet.

I forget sometimes that we haven't, and I guess now is one of those times. But this isn't a mental slip up, or when I whisper sweet nothings to her, or the time I told her I loved her once she was asleep.

I can see the hesitance in her eyes, the insecurities rooted deep in Lexa's mind. So I lean in and give her a gentle kiss. I pull back just enough to speak.

"Ai hod yu in (I love you)." I say reverently.

Lexa's bottom lip trembles for a moment before she smiles. "I love you too, Clarke." She kisses me and it only stops when a chuckle escapes my lips. Lexa looks at me curiously and I grin dopily at her. "What is it?"

"I was just thinking 'of course our first time saying I love you is right in the middle of a dangerous mission.'"

L Lexa laughs and our peaceful moment is interrupted by someone yelling. And of course it's Cage.

"I don't care, just find them you numbskulls! How hard is it to find two girls?"

Lexa and I exchange a look and pull out our swords. Lexa smirks and flexes her fingers to get a better grip. I politely open the door for my girlfriend, beaming proudly as she rushes out. Shouting starts as she sweeps through the hallway like a hurricane. She leaves no one untouched. I step out, closing the door behind me.

I have to admit, it's kind of hot seeing her fight. The grace and beauty. The deadly skill. She's in her element.

I don't let myself get too distracted, instead looking around for any stragglers. I have the absolute pleasure to see Cage running away like the coward he is. I'm tempted to run after him, but I'm not going to leave Lexa alone. Plus, I have no doubt that I'll be seeing his ugly face again soon.

Lexa and I come together like magnets, fighting with our backs pressed against each other. The Maunon guards are no match for us. Hell, I doubt most if not all Grounders are a match for us. The Maunon excel in things like acid fog and using sniper rifles and guns. But get up close and personal, and suddenly they don't know what to do with themselves. They can't shoot their long range weapons, they can't use swords (they don't have any). I almost pity them. But then I remember the Grounders being kept in cages like beasts.
Lexa and I finish off the couple of guards in the hallway without much trouble. We each sheathe one sword so we can high-five (one of Lexa's favorite things about Skaikru culture; in private of course).

"Shall we go find the others?" I ask, holding out my right hand.

Lexa takes it with her left. "We shall."

Chapter End Notes

Weren't expecting that, huh? Thought it would be angsty, but no. Plot twist. It's an old man who thinks Lexa's gettin' some. I thought of it when I was writing the previous chapter and it made me crack up, so hopefully you lovely people enjoyed it! Also, I can't remember if Lexa and Clarke have said I love you, I looked for a bit and was like 'eh screw it.' So now they have! Next chapter, they go on their way to get to Octavia, Lincoln, and Raven! Thank you for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I make our way down the hallways, pausing at every intersection to listen for Maunon guards. We come across a few stragglers here and there, but they're mainly alone. I guess our surprise attack worked, and they're more focused on sending a big group of guards than on patrolling the halls.

But Lexa and I, we're still cautious. We are in our enemy's lair, after all. There's no telling what kind of tricks they have up their sleeve. So instead of heading directly to the control room, we go the long way. The really long way, as in we get close, loop, and go around again. So if anyone's paying attention to our movements, it will seem like we're lost.

Actually, we do get lost once or twice. Luckily, the map we memorized was so detailed that it included the name of everything. So it only takes an oddly named room or two for us to get us back on track.

After the third loop, we exchange a look and nod. It's time to head to the control room. We still use the smaller hallways and change our direction a few times, but our strides are noticeably more confident.

Just when we are about halfway there, we freeze. There's the unmistakable sound of shuffling feet and muffled voices, the trademark noise of a group of people trying to be quiet. I wish I could be hopeful and say it's Lincoln, Octavia, and Raven but I don't recognize the voices. Plus, Lincoln and Octavia can hide the sound of walking much better than that. It can't be Bellamy either; I told him to start Plan Daedalus. It's entirely possible that he could've ignored my orders, but I know he realizes just how important the plan is.

Lexa draws her other sword so she's dual wielding. I keep one sword in one hand and a handgun in the other. Lexa doesn't seem happy with my impromptu plan, but it's the best one we've got. Lexa gives me a frown to silently show her displeasure.

I rest my back against the wall close to the intersection of hallways, clutching my gun tightly. I raise it and peek over, keeping myself as hidden as I possibly can. The Maunon guards are too focused on moving to notice me.

I get off as many shots as I can before they react. I only manage four, but three hit home and lodge in some Maunon guards. I practically leap back behind the wall to avoid the alarmingly high number of bullets coming my way. They break the plaster walls, making dust billow out from where they hit. Someone's yelling, probably someone not happy about the walls.

"-Just get them!" He shouts. It's another man in power, but it's not Cage.

The thundering footsteps coming towards us let me know that this is not going to be an easy or fair fight. It sounds like there are twenty people coming at us. I raise my gun again, cocking it to pop out the last spent casing. I aim it and wait.

I almost laugh aloud when the first few guards head the wrong way before screeching to a stop and turning around. It does, however, give Lexa enough time to throw some of her daggers at them. They all hit their mark, causing five Maunon to drop to the floor with knives in the back of their
I shoot until I run out of bullets and by then, they're too close for me to consider reloading. I quickly reholster it and pull out my other sword. With one last quick glance at Lexa, who's already tearing through the guards with her swords like they're made of butter, I leap into the fray.

I swing when I see openings, carefully making sure I have one sword available to block any oncoming attacks. I don't particularly care what I hit. They're enemies, they dehumanized Lexa and my people. I have little guilt as I fight them. A few times, I get lucky and someone leaves themselves wide open for a fatal blow, which I take. Otherwise, I do what damage I can.

The Maunon get desperate when they see Lexa and my fighting skills. Their daggers are cheap, rusty things that aren't meant to go against swords. They're pretty much useless. That becomes even more evident when one of their blades snaps right off the hilt after a particularly hard attack from me. So they resort to a lot of hand-to-sword combat. Which they're not really great at, I have to say. A few times, they've gotten lucky and even once nearly made me drop a sword. But it's mainly ineffective, with them getting more cuts and bruises. They also tire themselves out rather quickly, obviously not used to such a rigorous workout.

In other words, winning is a piece of cake. With Lexa by my side, they're all dead or on the floor, injured and groaning within ten minutes. Lexa gives me a proud smile and steps over a couple hurt Maunon in order to get to me.

"Are you alright, hodnes (love)?" She murmurs, carefully scanning me with her eyes as she gently rests her hands on my hope.

"I'm okay," I respond. "Just some scrapes and bruises, nothing serious."

"And your shoulder?" Lexa prompts.

"It doesn't exactly feel great, but it doesn't feel like it reopened. Now come on, we have friends to go find." I say before she can worry more.

"One thing first." Lexa says seriously, reaching out to grasp my wrist as I'm about to turn and start walking.

I pause and give her an inquiring look. "What is it?"

Instead of answering, Lexa leans in to kiss me softly. I melt in her arms, feeling safe despite being in this hellish place. We part with smiles on our faces, gazing at each other. We only tune back into the world when some wounded person lets out a particularly loud groan of pain.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, they head to the control room! And we still have some fun things planned, especially with Plan Daedalus and Cage being alive... ;) Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 130

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

After our fight, getting to the control room is almost laughably easy. Once, we even have a Maunon guard that sees us run the other way. But it doesn't feel like it's a good easy.

I can't really hear anything aside from the alarm continuously blaring. The red lights flash, bathing the hallways in an almost bloody-looking color. The lights are dimmer than normal, only every other one on. Are they trying to conserve electricity?

An automated female voice crackles over the speakers instead of the alarm. "All personnel, please head to floor B4 immediately. This is not a drill. Please head to B4 immediately."

Lexa and I exchange a disconcerted look and move faster towards the control room. Our friends are there, and I haven't heard from them for a while. Maybe it's because we were fighting, maybe it's because they're focused on something else... I just hope they're okay. We practically jog the rest of the way.

We only stop when we reach the control room, no longer bothering to wind our way around. Lexa flexes her grip on her swords as I knock on the door. It creaks open, just a crack. We step back warily and flinch when it opens rapidly next, revealing Lincoln with his swords drawn.

His serious face brightens when he sees us. "Heda! Clarke! You are here! I am glad to see you, come in."

He ushers us inside. Octavia's spinning on a chair, looking completely and utterly bored. She too lights up when she sees us. "Man are we happy to see you! I think they shut off most of the power to this floor. We couldn't get a visual of you guys."

"I'm working on it." Raven mutters from where she's typing furiously on a computer.

Green letters and symbols go across the screen at a rapid pace and I find myself even more impressed by her. I didn't know she was good with computers too.

"Aaaand..." Raven says, drawing the word out. She taps one last key with a dramatic flourish. "Bam!"

The numerous screens at the front of the room light up, most of them with security footage.

"Dang." Octavia breathes out, her voice full of awe. "I was started to doubt your skill, Rae."

"Never doubt me O, you should know that by now." Raven says, grinning over at her friend. "And hey guys, I'm glad to see you guys are okay. You're badasses. We saw some of the fight when the electricity was still on."

"Thanks." I say. I pause, squinting at the screen in front of Raven. "Rae, why are those letters flashing?"

"It would have to be an emergency message," Raven answers.

She spins around in her chair and looks at the screen. Barely a second later, she lets loose a flurry
of curse words, some in English and others in Trigedaslang that Anya and Luna must have taught her.

"Skrish (sh*t). Jok (f*ck)." Raven growls out, tapping furiously at the keyboard once again.

"Rae?" Octavia asks worriedly.

"They're aiming a fricking missile." Raven snaps out.

It feels like time freezes for a moment while all of us process what she just said. We all let out a stream of explicitives that would make us blush if the situation weren't so dire.

"Can you stop it?" I ask hopefully, but I know we don't have good of luck.

"Not in time. It's already armed, they're starting the countdown for ten minutes. Their firewalls are really good, I wouldn't be able to break through before then." Raven's voice is raspy, like she's about to cry.

I put my hand on her shoulder. "It's alright. All we can do is try to stop it. Just know that no matter what, it isn't your fault."

Raven lets out a choked sob and wipes away the tears that have escaped her eyes. She starts typing again, faster than before. Desperately.

"What are they aiming at?" Octavia asks the questions we all want and dread the answer to.

"The hundred's camp." Raven's voice shakes, and so do her hands, but she keeps going. Keeps typing, keeps talking. "But everyone's there, O. The adults have gathered there too, there are Grounders there. If this hits, hundreds of people are going to die."

The silence after that is almost as devastating as the words themselves. I can feel the hole in my chest left by my father's death for the first time in a while. First, it was ignored in favor of surviving in the wilderness, then in favor of learning about this strange place and it's incredible people. Then, Lexa came and the hole of his absence was filled by her presence, by her kind words and by her love. Now, it's gaping open and I almost feel like it's visible, like there blood of it from tearing open again is dripping down my hollow chest.

Lexa's hand slips into mine and we hold on tightly. The contact grounds me, makes the agonized scream rising in my throat go down. I blink back tears, watching blankly as green letters and symbols fly across the screen.

"Good evening," a familiar voice says.

My head snaps up and for a second I'm convinced it's a manifestation of my grief, but the others are all looking at the television screens too, with confusion and contempt. Cage's smirking face fills me with rage and I almost want to run to the front of the room and put my fist through one of them.

"How are you savages doing today?" He asks almost conversationally. "Not well, I assume. Not if you've noticed that we're about to blow up everyone you've ever loved."

I crouch down beside Raven and whisper in her ear. She eyes me warily but she knows this is something I've told her that we may have to resort to. She nods hesitantly and starts typing again.

"We won't let you do that." I say confidently as I stand up again.
"Oh?" His smirk widens. "And how will you stop a missile without hearing what I'm offering?"

Chapter End Notes

Drama!!! What's Cage offering? What did Clarke whisper to Raven? Will we ever learn what plan Daedalus is?? (You will, it's coming up ;) Things are getting crazy! Er, crazier. Thank you all for reading and for you amazing comments! Stay awesome!
"We're not interested in what you're offering." I reply, my tone harsh and unwavering.

"Now, now. That's no way to speak to the man who's offering you all a way out of all of this. At least listen to my proposal."

I'm about to reply impolitely and tell him where he can stick his proposal when Lexa places her hand on my arm and gives me a look. I clamp my mouth shut, giving her a confused look.

"We should hear what he has to say." Lexa says, still looking me in the eyes. She doesn't notice the betrayed look Octavia gives her. "I am not saying that we will comply, but I know it will haunt you if we do this and you do not listen to him." She says the last part lowly so that Cage's microphones in the room won't pick the words up.

I frown and then after a moment of deliberation I nod. Lexa knows me sometimes better than I know myself, and this time I know she's right. If I don't hear him out and we go through with Plan Daedalus, I don't know how I'll be able to live with myself.

"Excellent. And I have to say, it's a surprise that the savage is being the smart one for once." He says, not seeming to care when Lexa's lips curl up into a menacing snarl.

"Your proposal?" Lexa prompts, her voice low and dangerous.

"Ah, yes. It's a simple thing, really. Nothing to it. You can all leave with your people. The only thing I want in return is twelve... What do you call them? Sky People?"

I glare at the image of him in the screens. "What do you plan to do with them?"

"What's necessary for our survival. What's necessary for us to finally be able to go outside." Cage says almost dreamily.

"And what would that be?" I question.

"Removing all of their bone marrow and transplanting it into our own bodies."

"Removing all of their--" I repeat in shock. "That'll kill them!"

"Yes, I'm aware of that. So here's your choice. Twelve lives to sacrifice for hundreds." He says, smirking like he knows he's won.

Well, when he puts it like that... No. I shake my head to rid myself of those thoughts. "Hang on for a minute while we discuss this."

"Of course." He says, almost seeming polite.

I turn my back to him and the others gather around me. Raven, apparently finished already with her task, gives me an incredulous look.

"You're actually considering this?" She asks. "That's twelve of our friends, our family."
"Listen to me." I say in a quieter tone so Cage won't be able to hear me. "No, I'm not. Because if the Maunon can live on the ground, they're still our enemies. All hell would break loose. They may want to exterminate us in order to colonize the lands themselves. So here's what we're going to do..."

"I don't like this plan," Octavia scowls after I'm finished explaining.

"It's our only option." I reply.

"What if he thinks it's a bluff?" Octavia demands.

"Then we will have no choice but to show him it is not." Lexa replies.

I squeeze her hand, which is still in mine. Her touch is what's keeping me calm at the moment instead of panicking or pacing. I appreciate her show of support.

"Alright Octavia, go." I say.

She sighs and picks up the radio. Cage's eyes glitter with excitement, probably thinking we're about to agree to his proposal. Little does he know...

"O to Bell. Come in Bell." She says, repeating it once before the radio crackles back.

"Octavia? What's going on?" He asks worriedly.

"Is Plan Daedalus ready?" she asks, giving Lexa and I a dirty look.

"Yes," he confirms. "Are they really going to do it?" He asks hesitantly, like he's not sure he wants to know the answer. I'm not sure anyone wants to know the answer.

"I don't know," she sighs. "We'll see. We will contact you again soon to let you know. They're all sealed?"

"Yeah, everything's been double and triple checked. I'm in here with them."

Octavia visibly winces. "So if it doesn't work..."

"I'll have to live with it. At least I'm here to provide comfort. They're pretty panicked and worried. I don't exactly blame them, either." He sighs. "Love you, O."

"Love you too, Bell. Stay safe." She says.

"You too," he says softly before the radio clicks.

Octavia sets the walkie talkie back down on a nearby table. She stares defiantly at the illuminated screens making up Cage's face.

"So you've decided?" He asks, his voice filled with barely contained glee.

"Yes," Lexa answers.

She takes a step forward, gently pulling me as well. Is she trying to show him that we are equals or does she just want me by her side? Perhaps it's a bit of both.

"We have a counter proposal for you." I say.
"Oh?" His eyebrows raise, just enough to be noticeable, betraying his surprise. "Let's hear it then."

"You let all of us leave, no tricks or traps." I respond.

"With nothing in return?" He laughs in our faces. "No."

"You will be getting something in return." Lexa says, her voice deadly calm. "Your people will live."

"Typical savages, assuming that you can kill all of us." He chuckles, then turns serious. "You won't do that, kid. You would lose too many people in the fight."

Lexa's lip twitches with distaste. "We did not say we would bring my army here."

Cage pauses, like he doesn't quite understand. He squints at us, looking wary for once and not as cocky. "What do you mean?"

"We will turn off your fans." Lexa states.

Cage's eyes widen and he's actually scared for once. "You can't do that."

"Actually, we can." Raven butts in. "See, your people may have put up firewalls, but no one excepted me."

"And who exactly are you, little girl?" He asks.

"I'm Raven Reyes, professional explosion maker and your personal hell at your service." She smirks.

Chapter End Notes

The plan is sort of revealed... But what is Daedalus? Why do I keep not explaining what that is? I promise I'll explain the name eventually when we lean more about the plan... Also, I love Raven! Hopefully this is good, I just finished doing a project before I wrote this... Thank you for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
"I'm Raven Reyes, professional explosion maker and your personal hell at your service."

Cage doesn't seem particularly impressed by her introduction, though I definitely am.

"So you're telling me you not only made it past firewalls that have kept us safe for over a century, but you have a way to shut down our fans before our technicians can stop you?" Cage asks, obviously not believing her.

"If your abysmal security system is any indication of how good your technicians are, then yeah, I'm good. I could override your card key scanners when I was five." She snorts.

"I don't believe you, little girl." He says.

Raven glares at him with a fire in her eyes that would make the most hardened warrior shake in their boots. I know how she hates being dismissed and underestimated like that.

She returns to her keyboard and taps furiously, pressing the last key with an angry flourish. Raven glares back up at the screen, smirking when the lights flicker wherever Cage is.

"What-?" Cage breathes out, looking up at the ceiling with alarm.

"Just a thank you gift for being such an upstanding douchebag." Raven says sarcastically. "Believe me now?"

She presses another couple of keys and the flickering stops, revealing a thoroughly alarmed looking Cage. He composes himself, running a hand over his slick, greasy hair.

He looks back at us, still looking like he believes he has the upper hand. He smirks. "That's a neat trick, but that doesn't mean you'll stop the fans. Now, I have no doubt that you can, but I don't think you will."

"Why do you think we would not do it?" Lexa asks, her calculating gaze on him.

"You would kill us all." He says, almost conversationally. "And it won't be instant. Radiation will get in and we will all get radiation poisoning. We will be in agony with boils forming on our skin until we finally die, painfully and slowly. And I don't think you want that to happen."

"Why not?" Octavia asks, taking a threatening step forward. "You lost your humanity when you started using actual people as living blood bags."

"Oh, but not everyone likes that we do that. We have a resistance, people who won't get treatment." He rolls his eyes. "They'll just end up dying because of their morals. Not to mention the innocent children here."

I purse my lips, hating the unknowns of our plan. Not knowing if Plan Daedalus will work is the one weighing the heaviest on my shoulders. Octavia gives me an unhappy look, knowing that we're being backed into a corner here. He isn't backing down. If anything, Cage is gaining confidence.

That's further confirmed when an automated voice says, "Lockdown procedure initiated."
The door clicks and Lincoln, who's closest to it, heads over to check. He tries to turn the knob but isn't able to. He turns around and shake his head at our unasked question.

"We are locked in." Lincoln confirms our suspicions.

"You can't leave now," Cage brags. I know we can if we want to, we have Raven. "Take my deal or die in that room. Die and know that I've killed everyone you love."

Crap, the missile. How did I forget that? How are we supposed to destroy that? How can we stop it?

I crouch down beside Raven. "Is there any way you can redirect where it's pointed?"

"Maybe." Raven starts tapping away at the keys, her fingers practically flying over them. "Yeah, that's much easier than trying to stop it. But where do we aim it? There are villages everywhere!"

I shrug. "Space?"

Raven stops and stares at me for a second before she resumes typing at an almost dizzying speed. "Clarke, I swear I could kiss you right now. You're a genius!" She says, grinning. She starts talking to herself, muttering. "It'll need more power, definitely. It won't have enough fuel or oomph to get up there, it's not designed for that. I can't just have it go kaboom somewhere random if it falls back to Earth."

"What is she doing?" Cage demands.

"Okay, so not into space but just far enough outside the atmosphere that it won't kill a ton of people or fall back before it goes boom. Alright, I'm adding more fuel to the rocket. More power to the thrusters instead of the aiming system..."

"You have two minutes to decide. That's how long your friends at your camp have." Cage says, evidently annoyed that we haven't answered his question.

I ignore him. "Tell Bell to check the seals again. We might have to do this."

Octavia nods and grabs the walkie talkie and starting to speak into it.

"Sir?" Someone offscreen says hesitantly.

"What?" Cage barks.

"Someone's tampering with the rocket, we don't have control over the aiming system anymore." The nervous person says.

"You what?" Cage snarls. "Get control of it again, then!"

"We can't, not in the time we have. Their coding is extremely good, better than most of our coders."

"Then do something!" Cage demands.

"I-we'll try, sir."

Cage glares at us, at a smirking Raven as she continues typing. "That's it!" He growls out. "Make your decision! Twelve people for those caged savages."
"No deal," Lexa says calmly. "Take our deal, Cage, and your people will not die meaningless deaths."

"Never," he declares.

"Raven," Lexa says. She looks up from the computer. "Is everything for Plan Daedalus ready?"

"Yeah, we're good. See that lever? Pull that and..." She makes a "ch" sound, running a finger across her throat.

"Mochof (thank you)." Lexa says. She looks back up at the screens.

Cage scowls at us, rage in his eyes. "You're bluffing. You won't do it. You'll kill innocent people!"

"Just like you have, but you are worse." Lexa says lowly.

She makes her way over to the lever, placing her hand almost casually on the round ball part. I'm practically frozen where I am, unable to do anything but watch. The fears, the doubts rise up in me, choking the breath out of me. I really hoped it wouldn't come to this.

Cage's eyes widen at her movement. "You won't."

"I will. I am Heda, I would do anything for my people. You do not think my decisions have not killed innocents before? I have to weigh those risks against the reward. And in this case, the reward outweighs the risk."

"You won't," Cage repeats. His voice cracks, seeming almost afraid.

"I will. Take the deal and your people live."

"No. No." He shakes his head vigorously. "No deal. We will die without their bone marrow. We would just have to take more of your people for our blood supply."

"No deal?" Lexa asks to confirm, raising an eyebrow.

"No deal."

Lexa nods to herself. "Then may the Gods understand, and forgive me." She pulls the lever.

Chapter End Notes

Whoa, that was... Super intense. A lot of stuff happened! And hey, next chapter DEFINITELY we're going to hear what Plan Daedalus was! ;) And yay, a slightly longer chapter! Can you guys believe that I actually forgot about the missile for a bit? Eh, it worked out in the end. Go forgetfulness! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa pulls the lever and Cage's eyes fill with horror. The droning whirring sound of the fans moving slows until it halts.

"You... You actually..." He breathes out. "You've killed us all."

"Bell? How's it holding?" Octavia speaks into the walkie talkie.

We wait with bated breath for his answer. "The seal is holding."

I let out a relieved sigh and everyone in the room relaxes.

"What does that mean?" Cage questions.

I look up at him, frowning. "How are you still alive? You don't have any boils or anything. Raven, did it not work?"

Raven clicks a few things and then her screen shows Maunon civilians, groaning on the ground of a floor. They're covered in blisters and bumps, their skin red. The screams some of them let out sound almost inhuman.

"It worked." Raven remarks, her voice quiet and subdued, her expression horrified.

"I think I'm going to be sick." Octavia says, turning away from the screen.

Lincoln goes to her side and speaks to her in a soft tone as he gently guides her away from the screen.

I move closer to Lexa, who watches the screen without flinching. There's a deep sadness in her eyes but I know she doesn't regret pulling the lever. I reach out and take her hand in mine. Lexa startles at the touch, evidently not expecting it. She looks at me with wide, surprised eyes for a moment before almost mechanically turning back to the screen.

Less people are moving now, only a couple people are flailing or even just twitching. I'm relieved that their suffering is over. I make a mental note to get Raven and Lexa help me find all of their names so I can draw them. They died for us, for our people. And I grieve for them, the ones we couldn't save. I want to draw them in one large painting, to show how they were. They deserve to be remembered.

But Lexa, she keeps staring at the screen, only turning away when the last limb no longer twitches. It's almost like... Like she was forcing herself to watch, despite everything in her wanting to look away. Like she forced herself to see what her decision, what her action had done.

"Yu gonplei ste odon (your fight is over)." Lexa murmurs to the screen before turning to face me. "I will make sure they all get a proper funeral pyre."

"And I'll paint them all to show the future generations what was lost in order for us to win." I say back in a low voice.

Lexa gives me a smile. It isn't quite fake, but there's no mistaking the sadness in it. "That is a good
idea, Clarke. Please, let me know what I can do to help. But first, we have quite a few things to do."

"Yeah," Raven chimes in. She turns off the computer screen and looks up at the television screens. "Um. First of all, what the heck? Douchebag of the year over there is still alive."

Lexa and I look up. Sure enough, Cage's ugly mug is still scowling at us.

"How are you not dead?" I ask, perplexed.

"I had Dr. Tsing take some of your bone marrow while you were unconscious. You, Clarke, are the reason why we know it works. We tested it on me. Sadly, there was only enough for one person."

Lexa gestures for Lincoln to come over. He hesitates for a moment, waiting until a still nauseous looking Octavia gives him a nod before walking over to us.

"Heda?"

"Lincoln, Raven will tell you where Cage is." Lexa says. "I want you to bring him there." She gestures to the blank screen in front of Raven and he understands immediately. "We will meet you there. We have a few things to take care of first."

"Yes, Heda." He bows and leaves the room.

"Raven, you know what floor to start up the fans on, right?" I ask.

"Yes, I do. Restarting now." Raven scoots over to the computer next to the one she was using and taps away on the keyboard. "That floor will be safe for them, but they should probably stay in the sealed place just in case of leaks."

"O? Can you please tell Bell that?" I ask.

"Yeah, nice manners Griffin." Octavia teases with a shaky smile, still not having recovered from seeing so many innocent people be killed.

She walks away and starts talking into the walkie talkie.

"What's next?" I muse aloud.

"Well, there's always the rocket." Raven says. "Which, you're welcome, went boom and didn't kill anyone. Next up is unlocking the first level. Hang on, do we have another walkie so we can make sure everyone outside knows it's us?"

"No," I answer.

"Oh well." Raven sighs. "I can do this the old fashioned way, which is more fun."

She grabs a microphone and hooks it up to the computer, typing for a minute before tapping it to see if it works. The feedback squeals and Raven winces.

"Oops. That was my bad." Raven says, then leans forward to speak into the microphone. "Hello ladies, gents, and others! It's your favorite awesome person, Raven Reyes! Now, I'm unlocking the main door so you can all come in. Make sure to bring some healers, we're going to need them to complete Plan Daedalus. Make sure not to go to the fourth floor without going through a decontamination thingy. If you're confused about that, ask Abby Griffin. Anyway! Welcome to the home of the Maunon."
"Why did we have to name it Plan Daedalus again?" Octavia asks, amused. "I get that Bellamy is a history nerd, but you guys could have vetoed that."

"Because it fits," I answer. "Kinda."

"What is Plan Daedalus?" Cage's voice comes through the speakers in the room.

"I can't wait until I never have to listen to his voice again." Raven grumbles under her breath as she works on the computer.

"It's the plan we came up with to save some of your people." I explain.

"To save..." He repeats, trailing off and looking bewildered. "How? They're all dead!"

"Not all of them." Lexa says.

Chapter End Notes

Can you believe that I told you guys last chapter that I would finally reveal what Plan Daedalus is in this chapter and then I proceeded to not do that? Whoopsie. It's set up this time though, we'll learn exactly what it is next time, I swear! Okay, two important things...

One, someone commented recently and said that it seemed like Lexa was hesitating. So I'm assuming that means when she was like "no let's hear what Cage has to say." That, in my mind, was not her hesitating. Lexa doesn't hesitate about this kind of stuff unless it would put someone she loves in danger (which it doesn't). She knew that Cage wouldn't give them a deal they would take. But she also knew that Clarke needed to hear that they couldn't take the deal. There would always be that niggling of doubt surrounding their decision if Clarke and Lexa pulled without listening to him. If that makes sense...

Two! Aka the more exciting thing I have to tell you... There will be a book two!! :D I kept wondering how I was going to fit it all in one if I want to keep it from getting higher than like 150 chapters... The solution? Another book! Whoo! Anyways! That was a REALLY long author's note... Hopefully it cleared some things up for you guys though! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Chapter 134

Cage wears a shocked expression, his face on the screens in the front of the control room.

"How is anyone else still alive?" He repeats when Lexa and I hesitate for a moment, internally debating on whether or not to actually tell him. "What is Plan Daedalus?"

"Plan Daedalus is what Clarke and I came up with to ensure that even if you made a foolish decision, it would not mean the end of all of your people. A man, Bellamy, infiltrated you before we got here and contacted Maya."

"Maya Vie?" Cage asks. He scoffs. "I'm not surprised she's behind all of this."

"Actually, they're behind all of this." Raven interrupts. "Clarke and Lexa came up with this and told people exactly what to do."

Cage rolls his eyes and glares down at us like he still can't believe he was outsmarted by us. I don't know if it's because we're not Maunon or if it's because we're women. But either way, I really want to punch him.

"So your brilliant plan?" He prompts, evidently intrigued despite his skepticism.

"Maya went through people she knew wouldn't tell guards and would be loyal to us." I explain. "She told them that she would give them a signal or a code word and that's when they would have to go to this room. She and Bellamy did that when he got word that we arrived. Raven here's the genius that made sure all of this could happen."

Raven grins at me. "Yup. The first thing I did when I got here was make sure that no matter what happened to the rest of the compound, that room would still have working fans and would be radiation free. Let me tell you, it wasn't easy. This place is like Swiss cheese with all the holes in the ventilation. Anyway, then all that was left was for them to seal the door. You know, just in case."

"Raven has now made sure that the entire floor is safe but is concentrating the most energy on that room, where medical equipment has secretly been set up." Lexa continues. "Our healers and the doctors from Skaikru are on their way to them as we speak. There are enough Skaikru that volunteered to donate bone marrow for everyone we have been able to gather."

"How many?" Cage asks, his face going through a variety of emotions, none of which I have names for.

"Bellamy estimates a little over thirty," Octavia chimes in.

"And your people... Volunteered?" He asks incredulously.

"Yes," I answer. "We told everyone the predicament you may put them in and quite a few came forward, wanting to help. We actually had to turn some people away."

Cage stares blankly at nothing in particular, looking like a shell of a person. His eyebrows furrow and his eyes refocus on us. "Why is it called Plan Daedalus?"
"My brother's a history nerd," Octavia states with a hint of a smirk. "It's based off of this Ancient Greek myth of Icarus and the sun. I don't know the exact story."

"I do, Bell explained it to me." I say. "Daedalus was Icarus' father and they were both imprisoned in the labyrinth, which reminds me of this place with all of it's hallways. Daedalus, being the master craftsman he was, crafted wings for them both out of wax and feathers. In a way, it's kind of like you and Dr. Tsing created a way to 'free' your people. He warned Icarus not to fly too close to the sun or too close to the water, to follow his path instead."

"Father..." Cage whispers, the microphones wherever he is barely picking up his words. Maybe his dad told him not to follow the path he's taken or something.

"But Icarus loves the freedom of flying," I continue with the story. "In the sky, he felt invincible. He flew higher and higher until his wings began to melt. He had forgotten about the heat of the sun, and it was melting the wax. He tried to fly lower, but it was useless. He was losing too much wax, too many feathers. He plunged to his death into the sea." I pause to let him take this in. "Do you see why it fits?"

Cage swallows, anger and sadness and fear flitting across his face. "Yes."

"Hang on," Raven says. "Who's Icarus? Like in the real world, here in this situation?"

"Cage is Icarus." I explain. "For him, being on the ground without one of those radiation suits was the sun. The temptation. The ocean is the reality of what he was doing. He got too excited by the possible 'cure' and rushed forward, looking only at that instead of considering his options. Does that make sense?"

Raven squints. "Kind of."

At that moment, Lincoln walks into the room where Cage is. Cage whirls around, but not before I see his terrified expression. His shoulders straighten and he doesn't even try to fight back. Lincoln ties up his wrists behind his back and leads him out of the door. Cage gives us a dark glare before he's out of view.

"Shall we go?" Lexa asks.

I nod and then hesitate for a second. Lexa senses this, of course and stays where she is, reaching out to take my hands in hers. She doesn't urge me to speak, which I appreciate. She waits for me to be ready to talk.

"Will you be okay?" I ask finally, concern lacing my tone. "Seeing them?"

Lexa purses her lips and thinks about it, searching for an honest answer. "No. I am never okay when I see the bodies of innocents or the bodies of my people. But I have dealt with seeing such things since I was a child. And I have you by my side now. This needs to be done."

I nod in understanding and bring up her hand that pulled the lever, pressing a gentle kiss on each knuckle.

"Do you want to come too, Raven?" I ask, forcing myself to take my attention away from my girlfriend. "Everyone will probably gather there. And Lincoln's going to make sure no one touches the bodies yet, if that matters. So Anya and Luna will both be there."

"Yeah, I'll go."
"I'll come too," Octavia stands up, looking determined and less nauseous than before.

"O, you don't have to." I don't want her to feel obligated.

"I know. I'm still going."

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, we get to see what they'll do with Cage! And wow, this Daedalus comparison turned into something more lit paper-y than I thought! But hey, I (finally) explained why it's called Plan Daedalus! (Really, it's because I'm a nerd and it's the first name I thought of and was like 'oh that works') Anyway! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa, Raven, Octavia, and I make our way to the large dining room that has become a horror show. The smell gets stronger as we get closer and we have to pause once or twice when Octavia nearly throws up again. I don't blame her, all of us are a little nauseous. Even Lexa.

She walks beside me, clutching my hand like its a lifeline while I do the same to her.

Raven has to hack her way into a few doors to get us there, but it barely slows us down. She goes through it mechanically, her eyes glazed over slightly. I hope that seeing Luna and Anya again will do her good.

Seeing all those people affected all of us, but Raven... She's not exposed to that kind of thing. Not that seeing something like that often would help.

The last door slides open with a whoosh and Octavia's gagging intensifies along with the smell. The sterile, white door opens to reveal a bloodbath. There's blood everywhere from the boils popping and bodies littering the ground, some slumped against tables, still sitting in the chairs they died in.

Grounders and Skaikru alike are standing in the room, staring at the bodies with unbridled horror. They look up at us as we walk in.

Lexa's hand tightens around mine and I squeeze back, hoping the reminder of my presence will at least be a little comforting.

Two people push through the crowd and Anya and Luna rush out, practically running over to Raven. Raven's entire body relaxes at the mere sight of them and I pretend not to notice how she choke back tears when they wrap her in a hug.

Lincoln comes in a couple of moments later, shoving Cage inside the room. Cage stumbles at the force of it, falling to his knees. His eyes widen at the sight of some spattered blood on the floor in his line of sight. His head snaps up and he takes in his fallen people.

He chokes on nothing, his eyes glassy. "Why have you brought me here, savages?" Cage demands. Despite everything, his tone is still full of venom.

"As you may have guessed," Lexa begins. "We will not let you live. Your actions were foolish and selfish and cost many their lives. I would wait until your people can come here to see justice done but that will not be possible for another couple of hours. And you, Cage, do not deserve to live that long."

"Wouldn't life be a worse punishment than death?" Cage questions, his voice a few octaves higher than normal.

"No." Lexa shuts him down immediately. "In our culture, those who have attempted or committed genocide suffer under the pain of a slow death. Perhaps you have heard of it when you had your
people spy on us. We call it 'death by a thousand cuts.'"

Cage's eyes get even wider and what little color was left on his face drains quickly.

"Here?" I inquire, keeping my voice quiet so it's mainly Lexa and Cage that can hear me. "What if the people we managed to save want to live in this place? That's a lot of blood that needs to be cleaned up."

Cage pales further, which I didn't think was possible.

"Clarke, there is already a lot of blood on the floor. We can clean up another gallon and a half."

I eye Cage, then turn back to Lexa. "You do realize that's all the blood he has in his entire body, right? If my weight estimate and calculations are correct, at least."

"I am sure they are. And yes, I am aware. Most do not have much blood left in their veins after we are done with them." Lexa's lips twitch up into a smirk when Cage lets out a squeak.

"That's fair." I shrug. "If they want it to last longer, they should avoid cutting places where the skin is the thinnest and closest to the veins, like the wrists."

I chuckle quietly when Cage slumps to the floor, his knees no longer holding him up. Lexa smiles at me for a moment before she schools her expression and gestures for two warriors to come over.

"Tai em op (bind/restrain him)." Lexa orders.

The warriors hurry to comply, one of them pulling out rope. They take him over to the nearest column that reminds me of Roman architecture in the history books and tie him too it.

They do it so he can sit if he is too weak but Cage stands, his hands tied around the other side of the column. The gathered people pull out daggers and swords, glowering at the now cowering man.

Lexa steps forward and gestures to the warriors, who immediately understand what she wants. They cut off his shirt and cut off his pants above the knee to maximize the skin showing.

"Yo na jomp in (you may begin)." Lexa says.

The first person steps forward and starts the process. Despite how it seems almost barbaric, everyone waits their turn patiently. He grits his teeth at first but eventually gives in to letting out pained grunts and groans turn into agonized screams.

It goes on like this until I see a familiar blonde head in the crowd, leading a group of people towards us. Mom pushes through, murmuring apologies along the way. She wraps me in a tight hug when she gets to me and squeezes Lexa's arm instead of hugging her too, which my girlfriend evidently appreciates.

"Mom." I say in surprise as she pulls away. "I thought you, the healers, and volunteers were already down with the people we managed to save."

"We were behind all of the warriors, taking care of the sick and wounded. As soon as we saw them heading in, we started coming too. Where are we going?" Mom questions.

I look over at Lexa, who answers both my mom and my unasked question. "Clarke and I will take you there. This will not be done anytime soon, we can afford to go. Anya, you are in charge while I
am gone."

Anya nods seriously before pressing a kiss to the top of Raven's head, who looks a lot calmer now that she's standing between her girlfriends.

"I will have Raven inform you if anything happens." Anya says.

"Good. Mochof (thank you)." Lexa nods to her and then begins leading everyone down the hallways with me by her side.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, we get to see the Maunon that survived! And then... Cage's dramatic death scene! Which may or may not be next chapter, we'll see how it goes. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I lead the healers and volunteers down to where the people we managed to save are staying. Mom walks a few steps behind us and it's almost eerie, how silent it is.

There's a somber mood in the air, tinged with hope. The horrors everyone just saw will be something we will all relive in our nightmares until our own deaths. But the hope, the hope comes from the place we're headed to. Despite everything, we managed to save some people.

We pause when we reach the stairs, which we have to use because Raven's directing a lot of electricity to keeping the people alive. Plus, I doubt many people would enjoy being confined in a small metal box after all that.

I use the notes I took earlier as well as my memory to hack into the door, which is easier than I expected. The lock clicks and I grin victoriously, holding the door open for Lexa and gesturing for her to go through first. I grab the rubber doorstop is see in the corner of the stairwell. I place it underneath the door, kicking it for good measure to make sure it's in.

"If you're the last one in, close the door behind you." I say before rejoining Lexa's side. I turn to her as we start our descent down the stairs. "So. Do we have a team working on getting everyone out of the cages?"

"Yes we do," Lexa answers. "Indra is the leader of that group, and there are also a few healers I sent over there to help. The Maunon did not feed us well, if at all, when I was there. So there is another small team, with a few Skaikru who know the technology that they have, that is in charge of getting food to them."

"Good," I nod and we revert back to a silence on the border between comfortable and uncomfortable.

We reach the fourth floor and I hack into the door there too. It takes even less time than before and I try not to show how proud I am of myself because of this. Lexa's knowing soft smile tells me I'm not as successful as I would like to be. Oh well.

I pull open the door and I blink. It's another decontamination chamber. I didn't think it would be right here, but it makes sense, especially in case of emergency situations like this. I let go of the door, keeping my foot between the door and the frame to keep it from closing completely. I mean, I could hack into it again (would I need to? Raven didn't explain that) but I don't want to if I don't have to.

I look at the others. Together, Lexa and I explain what to expect with their lovely decontamination showers and stuff. After we make sure everyone knows what's going on so hopefully no one will freak out, I hold the door open to let everyone head into the chamber.

Going through decontamination is just as fun as I remember it. Everyone has really funny looking hair afterwards, though. That's the only positive to it. I snicker at Lexa's tangled braids and help her get them perfect again. Being her girlfriend, I've learned how to braid the way she likes it, and Lexa's done the same for me. We take turns, swiftly redoing each other's hair while we watch everyone else out of the corner of our eyes with amusement as they try to retame their hair.
After we're done, we head out of decontamination and into the sterile hallways. The fans slowly turn, creating a gentle whooshing sound that's almost calming, yet creepy at the same time.

I pull out the radio and press on the button as we reach the room. "Raven? You there?"

"Yup. What's up, Griffin?"

"Is it safe for us to go in?" I ask.

"Hang on. I'm pulling it up on this handy dandy laptop I stole from some room." She pauses for a moment, the ticking of keys coming through the radio. "Yeah, there aren't any leaks on that floor and the radiation level is below what they need, so you're good. Go ahead."

"Alright, thanks Rae."

"No problem."

The line clicks and I reattach the walkie talkie to a special pouch/holster that Raven gave to me. I have no idea where she got it.

I knock on the door, the clang of the metal a stark contrast to the otherwise quiet hallway.

"Is it safe?" A muffled voice asks.

"Yeah," I answer, raising my voice so they can hear me through the door.

There's more noises that I think are people talking on the other side, but I can't tell what they're saying. We wait patiently until the door unseals with a loud hiss and slowly opens, revealing a hesitant looking boy that can't be more than thirteen. I don't see anyone behind him. Maybe the others are all hiding. After everything, I don't blame them.

"Are you... Clarke?" He asks, his eyes flicking to me. "And Lexa?"

"Yes, that's us." I respond.

He smiles shyly. "Come in, all of you. Bellamy has told us all about you."

He leads us back down a narrow hallway, Lexa in front of me but I still hold onto her hand. The volunteers and healers all follow behind us.

As we get closer, I can hear Bellamy's voice as he excitedly tells someone an in-depth history story. I recognize it as Icarus and the sun and chuckle to myself.

"... And so Icarus plunged to his death into the sea." Bellamy finishes as we enter the room, which is larger than I expected.

His eyes light up when he sees us but I'm too busy staring. There are so many people! They were all here, listening to Bellamy's story. And thirty? The estimate Bell gave us? There are roughly thirty kids, all younger than 18. And Maya. She's here too, sitting on the floor with the others. And there are about fifteen adults.

I let out a breathless, happy laugh. "I'm glad we brought extra volunteers."

Chapter End Notes
Whoo! There are a lot of people they saved! And next chapter we get to see the bone marrow transplants, which I will NOT describe in detail because of many reasons, including the fact that I don't like needles and you need a really big one for bone marrow transplants... So nope! Anyway! Tomorrow, I have not one but two projects due! Hooray senior year! And one of them is an hour-long presentation with my group... Which will be fun, considering I'm like 97% introverted (no really, it said so on a psych test I had to take for my psychology class). Plus, I'm still a little sick so I'll be coughing through the whole thing. Though by the time I post this it'll be done... So hopefully you did a good job, future me! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I stare in awe at all of the people. Mom presses her hand on our shoulders, snapping us back into the moment. Lexa's shoulders straighten and she turns to face my mom.

"What do you need us to do?" Lexa asks.

"Clarke, you stay with the volunteers and the Mountain people to make sure they all know what's going on. Go through what will happen, what it will feel like, and make sure no one has any allergies to any anesthetics. Okay?"

I nod. "Alright."

"Thank you. Lexa, talk to the Grounder healers. I know Clarke has told you in detail about what's going to happen, and I need you to make sure your people will not be frightened or anything that could compromise anyone's safety. Alright?"

Lexa nods, her expression once again serious. "Alright."

Lexa squeezes my hand one last time before heading off to the Grounder healers, who have all unconsciously gathered in one corner of the room. They're close to the wall, which is a common thing for people to do when they feel scared or cornered. It's done so they can see the rest of the room without having to worry about someone sneaking up behind them.

I think it's a good idea to have Lexa talk to them. She's their Heda, and understands what may be worrying or scaring them.

I walk over to where the volunteers have intermixed with the Maunon. Most of the volunteers are helping make the younger kids smile and laugh, while others are talking to some of the adults or comforting some of the older kids.

I take out my notebook and pencil, once again thankful that I had the forethought to bring it. I talk to people as small groups to tell them all about what will be happening, then in groups of ones or twos to talk about allergies and answer any questions they have.

By the time Mom walks back out of the adjoining room, I'm done and have my notes.

"Is everyone good?" Mom asks as she puts on surgical gloves.

"There are a few people who are allergic to this anesthetic," I say, pointing to the name on my paper. "But I know it's one you hate using, so we should be good. Here's the list of people allergic to it, with their names and physical descriptions."

Mom raises her eyebrows. "Great job, Clarke. Do you know if Lexa's done?"

An unexpected hand on the small of my back makes me jump, but I soon recognize the familiar press and relax into it.

"I am done." Lexa answers. "I have made certain that everyone knows what will be happening. The healers are well-trained, and all of them have had at the very least basic combat training. They
should not give you any problems."

"Thank you. Now let's get to work. We've made note of everyone's blood type." Mom says to herself.

"Why does blood type matter, Clarke?" Lexa asks curiously.

"Bone marrow produces three main kinds blood cells, red and white blood cells, and platelets. If the marrow is too different from the rest of the body, it could be rejected and killed off because the body sees it as an invader."

"I see. That is interesting. I did not know bone marrow could do that." Lexa murmurs. "You will have to teach me more about this kind of thing sometime."

"I would be happy to."

Lexa and I watch in the room as Mom does the transfusions. I find it cute how Lexa grimaces at the first sight of the (very large) needle that Mom uses. I don't blame her, really. I knew that she would be using it, but it doesn't make it any easier to see. I really don't like needles.

We help move things along, assisting people who are still a bit loopy from the anesthetics get out of the room so the next ones can come in. It's a bit tedious, but it's funny to see what people are like when they're like that. Especially the kids, they're less hyper, but talk more.

One kid asked me if I see blue as the same color as him, which I had no idea how to answer. Because one, whoa. Two, how does that kid even think of something like that? He's like ten. And three, how would I know? How does anyone know. Lexa has a good laugh at my dumbstruck expression.

"Okay," Mom says after the last injection is a success. "Now all we have to do is go around and make sure everyone's okay before we ask Raven to decrease the circulation of air slightly."

Lexa and I nod, and along with the other healers, we go around and make sure no one's showing too many symptoms of something going awry. Maybe the universe has decided that they've all suffered enough today, because while there were a few mom gets worried about, they all turn out to be fine.

I take out my walkie talkie again after Mom makes sure once again that everyone knows what's going on.

"Clarke to Raven. Come in Raven." I say into it.

"That sounds really official, Griffin. What's up? Is it done already?"

"Yeah, we're done. Can you increase the radiation levels? We want to make sure this works."

"Sure thing," Raven answers. "And... Slowing down the fans."

The Mountain people, well at least the ones old enough to know what's going on, look terrified. The droning swish-swish of the fans in the room slow enough for it to be audibly noticeable. The adults and older kids check themselves and the younger ones' skin to see if there are any boils. The pleased surprise on their faces tell me they haven't found anything.

"It worked." Maya breathes out after checking the last kid. "We're okay."
"Hear that, Rae?" I ask excitedly.

Raven's whoop can be heard through the radio's speaker, making people chuckle and beam as it sinks in. They're okay, they don't have to stay here any longer.

Lexa smiles wide as she wraps an arm around my waist, watching the last of the Maunon cheer and celebrate. She pulls me in for a brief kiss, a silent promise for more later, after all of this craziness is over. I lean against her side, grinning as I see a couple of the smaller kids start an impromptu dance party after noticing how happy older people are.

Chapter End Notes

Aww, cute! Next chapter, Cage... And we see the last Maunon leave their bunker and go up to where their friends and family were killed... Fun, right? Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Once everyone settles down, the healers go around again one last time to check for any symptoms. Meanwhile, Lexa and I head to the room that the transplants took place in. No one is in here, so it's perfect.

"Raven," I say into the radio again. "Come in Raven."

"Hey Griffin. Is it time to shut off the fans all the way?" Raven asks.

"No, not yet. The healers are going around one last time to check on people." I respond. "Actually, I just wanted to ask you about the state of the main room up there. Have they been clearing the bodies?"

"Yeah. And I found a card scanner and a database with all of their faces so we can identify everyone. They're all wrapped in white sheets. Gods, there's a lot of them. Anyway. I think the Grounders usually identify everyone by... What is it? A plank of wood with their name on it or something? Because I've had a team of some very empathetic Grounders working on that, putting the right name with the right body."

"Thank you for doing that, Raven." Lexa says earnestly.

"No problem. So why is that a thing?"

"Many years ago, it was just a way to identify bodies when many had been killed. Some warriors have taken to wearing one around their neck or keeping one in their armor. But it has become part of our culture and it is believed that when the body is burned, the soul is released. It has an attachment to the name it was given on Earth. The planks, as you call them, are wood so they burn too. That way the souls will not feel still tethered to this world. If that makes sense."

"Yeah. That's kind of cool." Raven admits. There's a pause before she speaks again. "So why did you radio me? Are you planning on bringing the Maunon up soon?"

"As soon as we're sure that we are all good and no one will die of radiation poisoning." I answer. "So I asked because I don't want to subject them to seeing what happened to their friends and families. They've been through enough."

"They have," Raven agrees. "I'll see what I can do to speed up the bodies' removal. But it might not be a ton, considering Indra should be back any minute now with all of the freed prisoners. We'll need to focus on helping them, but I'll make sure there will still be some people working on moving the Maunon. And no worries, we're not going to burn them until you guys and the Maunon get to the surface to say their proper goodbyes."

"Thank you Raven." Lexa repeats. "I appreciate what you are doing. Has Luna and Anya been telling you about our culture?"

"Yeah, they have. I must say, it's really interesting to see the similarities and differences to like the Skaikru and what the world was like before the nuclear bombs dropped." There's a short pause. "Okay, so how's it going over there?"
I peek out of the door, which has a circular window at the right height for me to see out of. Mom doesn't look any more stressed than usual, and there's no frantic running around or rushing anyone into this room for an emergency procedure. So I assume it's all good.

"It seems okay, no slip ups yet. But Raven, before Lexa and I go back out there to make sure, I need to ask you about Cage. Is he still there?"

"And screaming," Raven answers. "The Grounders are still having a go at him. Actually, a few Skaikru people joined in. Including me. I have to say, it was very satisfying. Do you want us to move him too?"

I exchange a look with Lexa. "No, it's alright. We'll just warn everyone. Maybe put a sheet over him or something. He's not dead yet, is he?"

"Nope."

"Then we can have the final blows." Lexa murmurs. "And covering him with a sheet would be incredibly painful with his many open wounds."

"Yes, it would be." I admit.

"We can let them decide. The last Maunon." Lexa clarifies. "Shall we?" She asks, placing her hand on the door.

"We shall. We'll talk to you soon Rae, and tell you what the plan is."

"Roger that."

"Nerd," I say affectionately before stopping the connection.

Lexa pushes the door open and holds it for me. I thank her with a quick kiss on the cheek, only now realizing that the room would've been a perfect place to make out for a little bit. Oh well. We can always do that later. Lexa lets it swing shut behind us, with it swinging back and forth before it finally settles.

Everyone looks over at us and I realize they assume that we were making out. Mom gives me an unimpressed look.

"What? We were talking to Raven!" I retort, earning myself many skeptical looks.

"In there? Alone?" Maya teases and I blush.

"Shush, Maya." To change the subject, I explain what's happening with Cage with as little graphic details as possible. "So what do you guys want to do?"

"I want to see him," one of the adults says. "I want to spit on the bastard." Murmurs of agreement ripple through the older kids and adults.

"Do you want him to be covered up? He's not indecent, except for morally, but he will be bloody." I question.

"I would like to see him without a sheet." A teen offers. "We can cover the little kids' eyes or something. And I really want to take a stab at that man. He killed my family."

More murmurs of agreement arise and Lexa raises her hand, causing it to stop immediately. "Very well, no sheet. We will go up there and it will be bloody, it will be horrifying. We are working on
cleaning it up, but there has not been much time. Understood?" The Maunon nod seriously.

Once no one else speaks for a moment, I decide to ask what we've been intending to. "Mom, is everyone good?"

"It appears so," she answers, glancing around the room again.

"Alright. So I'll radio Raven to turn off the fans, see what happens." I say and when Mom doesn't stop me, I do just that. "Hey Rae, it's me again. You can turn the fan off."

"Alright. And... They're off. Oh! Indra's back, I'm going to go help them. See you guys soon, Griffin."

The connection stops again, the crackling being replaced with silence. The blades of the fans slow down at an almost agonizing pace. The mountain people all huddle together, looking hopeful yet terrified. The fans make one last sluggish "whoosh" and then it's eerily quiet. No one moves. It's like time itself is frozen as everyone waits to see what will happen.

Of course we know that they can stand lower levels of radiation, due to no one dying when the fans slowed. But this is different. If this works, they can go to the surface without their hazmat suits.

No one collapses or falls to the floor or gives any signs that they're less than healthy. We wait for what feels like forever for something, anything. But in actuality it's probably more like a couple of minutes. It hits one of the teenagers first and tears stream from his eyes as he sobs with happiness. Just like that, the dam bursts and everyone is clapping and cheering and hugging.

Lexa squeezes my hand again, smiling out at everyone. I rest my head on her shoulder, satisfied.

Chapter End Notes

Whew, that was a LOT of dialogue! Next chapter won't have as much, since we get to see Cage again! Also, this is almost 30% longer than usual because it got out of hand, so you're welcome ;) Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I lead everyone up the stairs, assisting in carrying some of the more tired children. Every adult is in charge of one kid, luckily there's enough people for that. Though the teenagers did protest at first, saying they're not kids. At least they don't use the argument that I'm almost their age.

I'm walk alongside a little boy with skin the color of Raven's and dark eyes full of awe. He has scruffy hair and another adult tells me his name is Lucas and he doesn't talk much. He looks like he's five and I think he may be on the autism spectrum. I was going to pick him up, but the terrified look on his face stopped me. We had a couple autistic people on the Ark, a few of which Mom and I worked with, so I kind of know what to do and what not to do.

I don't offer him my hand, just my silent presence, which he seems to really appreciate. He smiles up at me in thanks.

Lexa, on the other hand, is carrying an even younger kid, a two year old with dark skin she says reminds her of Costia. One of the Maunon adults told us her name is Destiny. To say the least, the others were hesitant to hand her over to Lexa. They're not used to seeing her as a good person. But once they realized that Destiny likes her, they backed off and now just watch warily from a distance.

We lead everyone upstairs, and Lucas powers through all the steps, despite looking exhausted at the end of it. We head to the main room, where the door is propped open and the sounds of people talking comes from. Lexa and I walk inside first, followed by Lucas, who swiftly rejoins my side.

People stop talking and stare at us in confusion. I'm betting no one expected us to resurface with two kids. The others pour in behind us.

I glance around the room, noticing a shower-like cream curtain around where Cage is. Smart. I had hoped that someone would think of something to stop the kids from seeing him. I can't hear his screams either, so I think they gagged him. I mentally commend whoever came up with that.

"You leave for a couple hours and come back with cute kids?" Raven calls as she approaches us, Anya and Luna by her side.

"They're some of the Maunon kids we saved," I explain.

Raven grins at my response, her eyes lighting up as she stops in front of us. "There's so many of them. Amazing."

Lexa sets down Destiny and one of the Maunon adults ushers her and Lucas back to the group of Maunon. I stop her from getting too far and whisper to her about how I think Lucas is autistic.

She nods. "We've been wondering. He's an orphan, has been since before this all happened, so he's been staying with me. We've just been waiting for a diagnosis."

"If you want one, take him to my mom. She's worked with autistic kids before, knows what it looks like. She's your best bet." I say.
"She's so busy, I don't want to bother her..." The woman trails off, glancing over at Lucas.

"She won't mind, trust me." I place a comforting hand on her arm and she smiles thankfully.

The woman nods and thanks me before leading Lucas over to my mom. I smile softly and turn back to Raven and Lexa. Lexa reaches out to take my hand, squeezing gently and not letting go.

"So... What's next?" Raven asks.

"Next, we let the Maunon who want to see Cage see him." Lexa answers. "After that, we let them say their goodbyes to their people. Then, if they want to stay here, we set up camp and help them clean the place."

"Sounds good. Do you want to let them know about Cage?" Raven questions.

Lexa nods. "Yes, Clarke and I will do it. Can you work on making sure the bodies are properly placed? This will be a large fire, we need to be sure it is not too close to any trees."

"We will do that," Anya responds, placing a hand on Raven's shoulder.

"Mochof (thank you)." Lexa says.

"Pro (you're welcome)."

Anya grasps Lexa's forearm before she, Luna, and Raven head towards the exit. Lexa and I walk back to the last Maunon.

"If any of you would like to see Cage, he is behind those curtains over there." I point to it.

They nod and only a few people break off, the others deciding they don't want to or that they would prefer to stay with the kids.

Lexa and I pull out some chairs and sit down for what feels like the first time in a while. I watch as my mom talks to Lucas and the woman, as healers swarm the prisoners rescued from the Maunon, as people go behind the curtain and come back out with a grave expression. I rest my head on Lexa's shoulder, fighting back a yawn. I'm going to sleep well tonight.

As the last Maunon comes out from behind the curtains, Lexa stands and pulls me to my feet as well.

"We must see if he is alive." Lexa explains. "If he is, we will deliver the final blow."

We go behind the curtains to see Cage, slumped on the floor, still bound and gagged. I kneel down in front of him and press my fingers to his neck to check for a pulse. My fingers come away sticky with blood and I nod up to Lexa.

"He's alive, but barely. One cut should finish him off." I answer her unasked question.

"Thank you. Shall we do this together?" Lexa questions.

I nod and Lexa pulls out her favorite dagger, the one she had when we first met. She crouches down beside me and taps his head. Cage's eyes open and then widen, letting out a muffled scream. His feet weakly scramble, trying to get traction on the floor that's sticky with his blood.

Lexa presses the tip of her dagger over his heart. I raise an eyebrow. It's really hard to pierce the heart, we will have to go through the sternum in order to do that. Lexa moves her hands down the
hilt, giving me enough room to grasp it firmly.

Lexa counts down in Trigedasleng quietly. "Fai, fou, thri, tu, won (five, four, three, two, one)."

On one, we push with all our might. There's a cracking noise and Cage draws his very last breath.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, funerals! Yay! So I was writing Lucas and I was like "wait, what if he's autistic" so he is! :) If you want to know more about autism, there's a lot of good resources on the internet! But also, don't trust autism speaks (they're really not good for autistic people). If you want to know why, look up "autism speaks sucks" or "why autism speaks is bad" or something along those lines.

Anyway! I was trying to think of a name for Destiny, so I just decided to name her after this girl I met at camp once. I don't think I've told you guys this (on this story at least)... But a couple years ago I was riding this nice horse named Malakai. We were on a trail ride and went through a pond. It was a hot day and he was like "oh I bet Lindsey's warm, she'll want to get in the water too" so he sits. In the water. With me still on his back. So I fall off into the pond, which has mud that's like a couple inches deep and Destiny, the girl leading the trail ride, is the one to help me out. Anyways, that's just why I named her Destiny. Especially you've managed to get through this long ass author's note, thank you for reading! Thank you for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I cover Cage's body and it swiftly darkens, the red of his blood seeping into the white sheet.

"What do we do with him?" I question curiously.

Lexa uses her dagger to cut the ropes around his wrists and then wraps him tightly in the sheet. She ties the usable rope around it to keep him in place.

"We leave him for the insects." Lexa murmurs as she begins tying the knots and I can't tell if she's serious or not.

"Really?" I ask.

"Really," Lexa confirms. "People like him are not given a proper funeral. We do not burn them. Instead, we allow the earth to reclaim their bodies."

"Doesn't that like trap their soul here or something?" I say, trying to remember the Grounder lore I've been taught.

"Sha (yes). Their souls are restless, doomed to never find peace unless the Gods see that they deserve it and show them mercy." Lexa answers.

Wow. Harsh, but understandable. Especially with Cage.

She gestures for me to come closer and I help her pick up Cage's body. I grimace, trying not to think about how close I am to a genocidal man. At least he's dead. We carry him out from behind the curtains and everyone who notices gives the sheet covered body looks of disgust and rage.

"Hey Rae." I say.

Raven turns around and heads over with Luna and Anya by her side still. The Maunon and some of the prisoners inch closer, eyeing the body warily like he'll jolt and spook them or kill another couple hundred people.

"Yeah?"

"Do you want to come with us to put this douche to rest?" I look around at everyone gathered. "Lexa and I are going to drop off his body. If you want to come, feel free to."

About thirty or so people end up following us as Lexa and I carry Cage out of the Mountain, including Luna, Anya, and Raven. The sky is a little cloudy but there's no threat of rain. The storm has passed, both literally and figuratively.

I shift Cage's weight, glad that Lexa's been encouraging me to keep working out. If I didn't, I would be struggling even more to carry him. We lead him away from the top of the hill where the other Maunon are, towards the woods.

We find a secluded spot where he shouldn't be found by anyone by accident. Lexa and I carefully maneuver him down. She flips it over and uses her dagger to cut slits through the bottom of the
"So he decomposes faster." Lexa murmurs to me.

She gestures for me to help and we roll the body over again. Lexa grabs a spare dagger, a more plain but deadly one that she keeps many of on her person all the time. She stabs it into the center of the sheet then leaves it there, standing up with an almost impassive look on her face.

"Hofli yun keryon nowe hon op chilnes (may your soul never find peace)." Lexa says.

I stand up too and brush the dirt and leaves off my knees. Lexa reaches out and takes my hand. She then looks up at the others and nods to them.

"Say what you would like to him. His soul will hear."

"Good." Some woman mutters before walking over and starting to curse him out, switching between English and Trigedasleng.

I exchange an amused look with Lexa. "The funeral for the rest of the Maunon will start after you're all done. It will be on top of that hill." She points.

People begin taking turns basically complaining about Cage or talk-yelling at his dead body. Or, like the first woman, swearing at him. Personally, that's my favorite to watch. Lexa seems to find them funny too, but her reactions are more subtle than mine. While I smirk or snicker or nod along, Lexa shows her amusement with an uptick of her lip.

I squeeze Lexa's hand, fighting the urge to burst out laughing when it's Raven's turn. She says things that make Luna and Anya blush, even promising to "blow his zombie ass up" if he ever comes back to life.

Anya promises in Trigedasleng that his name will go down in history as a murderous mad man instead of the hero he wanted to be. Luna stands there for a moment when it's her turn and I don't think she's going to say anything after it's like this for a minute.

"Jok yu (f*ck you)." She mutters, looking like she wants to say a lot more than that.

Luna spits on his body and then rejoins her girlfriends. A few more people go after that, but it's over rather quickly. Lexa squeezes my hand and then begins leading everyone towards the funeral alongside me.

There's a platform in front of the carefully arranged pile of logs with stacks of bodies covered in sheets like cage on them, all with wooden tags tied to them. It's a heart wrenching sight. So many people...

There are torches on either side of the platform, which Lexa guides me to step on by her side. Hundreds of people have gathered, all healers and prisoners and warriors and the last Maunon... Everyone.

Lexa holds up her hand and the whispering around us stops immediately.

"Thank you all for coming here." She says in a strong voice, easily carrying enough for everyone to hear. "This is a sad day for all of us. One of the things I have been taught by the Fleimkepa (Flame Keeper) is that victory stands on the back of sacrifice. However, it is never easy when our victory stands on the backs of the sacrifice of so many innocent lives. So many have died today. And we will remember them. Now we will share a moment of silence for those lost."
The only sounds come from the woods, the occasional chirp of a bird, the creak of a tree in the wind.

"Thank you," Lexa says. "Their lives are lost, but not forgotten. Clarke has even offered to paint each victim in a large portrait as a way of remembering them. They will go down in history as the ones unjustly punished by a cruel man, their lives cut too short by his greed and pride. Yu gonplei ste odon (your fight is over)." Lexa says, her last couple of words echoing across the clearing.

The gathered people repeat it, even the ones who don't speak Trigedasleng. "Yu gonplei ste odon."

With that, Lexa picks up a torch and holds it to the wood in front of her.

Chapter End Notes

That ended up being a bit longer than usual... Cool, right? And hey, just so you guys know, I'm planning on ending this book on or before chapter 150. The next book will start on the same day the next chapter would've been out, so three days later! And no worries, I'll definitely let you know when it ends! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa holds the torch to the wood. It takes a moment for the fire to catch but once it does, it spreads rapidly. The fire crackles as it engulfs the nearest bodies, turning the white sheets a crisp black. The name plates darken as the flames lick at them.

The crackling steadily grows louder until it's more of a roar, covering all of the bodies.

Lexa reaches out to take my hand, once again whispering. "Yu gonplei ste odon (your fight is over)."

We all stand here, silent, watching the flames as they reach for the sky. People begin leaving after an hour, but Lexa and I stay until the last fire stops burning. By then, the sun is setting. We turn around and get off of the platform. There's still quite a few people here, including all of the remaining Maunon.

They come over to us, guiding the sleepy younger ones. Maya's the one that approaches us. She stops a few feet in front of us.

"Hey. How are you doing?" I ask her softly.

"We're doing okay, considering. I don't know how well we're going to sleep tonight, though."

"That's good to hear, we'll talk about the sleeping thing in a second. But that's not what I meant. How are you doing, Maya?"

Maya blinks. "Me? I don't know, Clarke. I just feel kind of numb to it all right now. Is that bad?"

"No, it's normal after such a major life-altering event." I reassure her. "You just lost a lot of the people you've known your entire life. You're numb now because your mind hasn't really processed it yet. But you will. And your friends over there will be there for you, just like you'll be there for them when that happens with them. Lexa and I and our people are here to help you get through that as well. I know Skaikru has some doctors specifically for people going through rough times."

"Like psychologists or something?" Maya asks.

"Yeah, like that. They're on their way from Skaikru now. Okay? We're all here for you." I say.

Maya nods, her eyes glistening with unshed tears. "Is it okay if I hug you? Both of you?"

I look over to Lexa, who nods. "Yes, of course." Lexa murmurs, reaching out her hand.

Maya practically stumbles forward and falls against us, Lexa and I holding her up as she hugs us. "Thank you. Thank you so much."

Lexa pats Maya's back awkwardly, not being good with physical affection unless it's with me. I rub Maya's back, and she pulls back with dry eyes. I guess she'll let go later, then. She blinks rapidly then schools her expression.

"About your sleeping arrangements," Lexa says, changing the subject. I don't miss the grateful glint in Maya's eyes. "Where would you all like to sleep? We have a camp set up nearby, we could
put up some tents. Or you could sleep under the stars, we have furs to keep you all warm. I doubt you would like to sleep in there just yet.” Lexa nods towards where the main entrance to the Mountain is.

"Yes, thank you." Maya says. "I'll talk to the others about it. And um. What are you going to do with their ashes?" She gestures to the burnt out pyre.

"Usually, we let the wind blow them away or bury or scatter them in the person's favorite place. We could..." Lexa thinks for a quick moment. "We could scatter them over the Mountain. Ashes are rich in nutrients for plants, it will help them grow. They would become the beauty they craved to see."

Maya blinks. "That's... Beautifully poetic. I like it, but I'll still discuss it with the others. I'll come back in a bit, let you guys know what we decide."

"And Maya?" Lexa calls before she turns to go back to her people. "Have them think about what they would like to happen going forward. We will be discussing this tomorrow."

"What do you mean?" Maya questions.

"Would your people like to become a new clan, like Skaikru? Would you want to join the Skaikru? Would you all like to scatter, go to different clans or join just one? Would you like to stay in the Mountain? That kind of thing." Lexa elaborates.

"Alright. Okay." Maya nods to herself. "I'll talk to them, tell you what they say, and let them know what they should be thinking about tonight."

"Mochof. Thank you." Lexa says in Gonasleng (English) when she remembers they don't know Trigedasleng.

"You're all going to have to teach us that language sometime." Maya remarks.

"We would be happy to. And I will encourage people in the clans to learn your tongue, which we call Gonasleng."

"Thanks. I'll be back." Maya waves and rushes over to her people, who all crowd around her.

"Don't let Anya do it." I say.

"Hmm?" Lexa hums, sounding confused.

"Don't let Anya teach them Trigedasleng. She barely had the patience for me." I say teasingly.

Lexa chuckles. "No, I wouldn't expect that she did. And no, our army has some trainers who specialize in teaching the warriors Gonasleng, so perhaps they can teach them Trigedasleng. I know I have an extra who is not assigned to anything as of yet. I think that as a show of trust and solidarity, you should help teach."

I nearly choke on nothing. "Me?"

"Sha (yes). My trainers are used to teaching warriors, you will keep him in line. You recently learned Trigedasleng, and are already above average in your vocabulary. You will understand the hardships of learning the language."

I bite my lip and nod. "Okay. Okay, I'll help some. But I'll be like a supervisor or something. I don't
think I can teach it, just maybe explain it."

"That is how you teach it, hodnes (love)." Lexa says fondly. "I'm sure they will be happy to have you there."

I smile at her, nervous at the idea but I'm happy to help.

Just then, Maya makes her way over to us.

Chapter End Notes

Shhh, I know the fire probably/definitely didn't burn hot enough to reduce everything (like bones) to ashes. We can pretend. Anyway! This is posted a bit later than it would've been because guess what? I write my chapters a day early, and I wrote the wrong chapter yesterday. I wrote the one I would've written today, my Supergirl story. :p Oh well! It's done now, at least! And next chapter, we learn of the Maunon's decisions! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Maya makes her way back over to Lexa and me.

"What have your people decided?" Lexa asks.

"We want to sleep outside tonight, look at the stars. And they liked your idea about scattering the ashes. When would we do that?"

"In the morning. I can have some warriors put their ashes in something to carry around." Lexa suggests. "It will stop the wind from blowing it away as well."

Maya nods. "Sounds good. I'll let them know." She hesitates, not heading back to her people yet.

"Is there something else?" Lexa prompts gently.

Maya lets out a breath. "Yes. I think I know what we're leaning toward doing, and it's fine, but no matter what... I worry about the kids. Most of us are no older than eighteen. Our oldest hasn't hit fifty yet. Our youngest still needs milk. There are so many young ones and so few older ones. I just don't know how we'll take care of them all."

I think for a moment. "Okay, how about this. Kids are smart, they know at the very least that something terrible happened in there. Some of them might be more aware of that than others. You could ask the kids if they want to stay with you guys, or if they want to join a different clan. It's fine if no one does, remember you have the clans at your side. We can send helpers if nothing else."

Maya nods. "Thank you. What was that word you use for it? Much of?"

"Mochof," I say and repeat it slower so she can hear the difference. "But you were pretty close. You're already doing better than I was when I was first learning."

While Maya seems more relaxed, there's still something on her mind. "What would happen to them if they go to different clans?"

I leave this to Lexa to explain, because while I might be kind of knowledgeable, Lexa knows way more about the workings of the clans.

"In all of the clans, children are seen as gifts to the world. When a kid is orphaned, their entire village bands together to take care of them if no one can adopt them. No matter where they go, they will be taken care of." Lexa promises.

Maya purses her lips. "Even kids like Lucas? Clarke's mom confirmed that he has autism."

"Of course, kids like Lucas are cared for just as well, if not differently to suit their wants and needs." Lexa says. "All of the villages have had people like him, have learned how to help him. If he decides to go, he will be welcomed with open arms."

"I don't think he will decide to go, though. He seems to like it here." I remark.

"Yeah, he doesn't like change all that much." Maya says with a soft smile. "Thank you. Um,
mochof. I appreciate you taking the time to answer my questions."

"Of course," Lexa nods to her.

"Oh, the councilors will be here tonight. We'll send them over after we scatter the ashes, before we talk to you all about what you want to happen next. Okay?"

"Okay. Thanks again." Maya says with a semi-lighter smile on her face.

"Pro. That is you're welcome." Lexa responds.

"Mochof and pro. That's so much simpler to say than thank you and you're welcome." Maya remarks.

"It is," Lexa agrees. "And Maya, some warriors will be here with furs soon."

"Furs?" Maya questions.

"Like blankets, but they're animal pelts." I explain.

Maya nods and thanks us again before rejoining her people.

"I could see her becoming their leader," Lexa murmurs.

"Yeah, I can too." I say and we stand there, watching Maya talk to the last Maunon. "They will need to come up with a new name if they want to become a new clan."

Lexa hums. "I think they might want to become a new clan, and stay in their Mountain."

"Yeah, and I don't blame them. But I don't think everyone will stay with them."

Lexa nods. "Ready for bed, hodnes (love)?"

"Gods, yes." I groan. "I've been standing and fighting all day. I could sleep for an entire day."

"I will not let you go to sleep immediately." Lexa blushes when I raise an eyebrow at her. "I did not mean it like that, Clarke, though I would not be opposed. I just meant that I need to check on your shoulder."

"Oh, right. Honestly with everything else going on, I kind of forgot about that." I say.

"I figured you would," Lexa kisses my cheek. "Come, our furs are calling for us."

"They can't call for us, they're dead."

"Hush," Lexa squeezes my hand, amusement dancing in her eyes.

Lexa leads me to the tent nearby that's been set up for us, for which I'm grateful. My legs and feet have finally caught up to how exhausted I am, and I would have fallen a couple of times if not for Lexa. Raven is lounging (as in cuddling, but they'd kill me for even thinking that) nearby with Luna and Anya. Raven gives me a two finger salute and winks as we pass.

I would roll my eyes if I didn't fear I would pass out. A guard opens up the tent's flap for us and Lexa sits me down on one of the chairs just inside the tent. The flaps swish closed as Lexa begins taking off my armor.
"You just want to see me topless." I say sleepily.

"You caught me, niron (loved one)."

Lexa kisses my now bare shoulder, an inch away from where the bandage ends. She goes through the motions of checking my bandage.

"It seems you have not torn it open again, which is a small miracle." Lexa murmurs.

She peels off the bandage and rifles through a chest nearby until she pulls out fresh ones. Lexa rewraps my wound, which doesn't appear to be infected so that's a plus. She takes my hand and guides me to bed. She carefully pulls off my pants and everything until I'm only in my underwear. Lexa does the same for herself.

I would make a joke or tackle her to the bed if I has any energy left to spare. As it is, I barely have the time to cuddle up to Lexa, resting my head on her shoulder and entwining our legs, before I fall asleep.

Chapter End Notes

Oh my god. Okay, so I actually have a plan for Lucas and Destiny if you guys are up for it. Some of you suggested adoption and I've been thinking about it as I wrote this, so if you're up for it... ;) Clarke and Lexa won't adopt both of them; Luna, Anya, and Raven would take in the other. Let me know what you think! Anyway! Next chapter, they scatter the ashes and if we get to it, they'll reveal what the Maunon want to do! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
I wake up to the feeling of Lexa gently shaking my shoulder. I groan unhappily and try to shake her away, but she persists. It's not frantic, like it would be if whatever she's waking me up for is urgent.

"The only good reason you have for waking me up right now is sex," I murmur sleepily.

Lexa clears her throat awkwardly. "Niron (loved one). We have a big day today."

I sigh and open my eyes to see my blushing girlfriend looking down at me, already fully clothed. "How late is it?"

"Later than you usually sleep." Lexa responds.

"That's not saying much, since you and Anya love waking me up." I grumble, making Lexa grin.

She holds out her hand to me and I take it. Lexa helps me out of bed, gesturing at the table that she has put my clothes on. I yawn and get dressed while Lexa redoes the bed. I smile when Lexa wraps her arms around my waist from behind and kisses my bare neck softly. She pulls back and assists me in putting the rest of my clothes on.

I turn around and kiss Lexa slowly, our lips moving together easily. We melt into each other, her head turning slightly to get a better angle as she lets out a ragged, shaky breath. The kiss deepens, a silent promise of continuing this later.

"Hey love nerds- MY EYES!" Raven cries dramatically, clapping a hand over her eyes.

"Rae, we're fully dressed and only kissing." I point out when I pull away from my dazed girlfriend.

"My innocence!" Raven continues dramatically. "It is gone!"

"I'm pretty sure other people have defiled your innocence before this. Including Luna and Anya." I deadpan.

A dopey smile spreads across her face. "Yeah, they're great."

Lexa makes a disgusted noise. "I do not want to know about my sister and my mentor's sex life."

"Too late," Raven sings out.

"No offense Rae, but why are you here?" I prompt, steering the conversation away from all of that.

"Oh right!" Raven perks up. "The Maunon are eating breakfast now, they'll be ready to scatter the ashes in an hour or so. I suggest you nerds get your own food. As lovely as it may be, Clarke, Lexa's tongue won't exactly sate this kind of hunger." She waggles her eyebrows at us, smirking. Raven does finger guns as she walks backwards out of our tent.

Lexa's cheeks are tinged pink, which I find adorable. I take her hand and make sure our clothes aren't skewed or wrinkled from our make out session. Once I'm satisfied and Lexa's not blushing as hard, we head outside too. Artigas, Raven, Octavia, Lincoln, Anya, and Luna are all sitting at a table nearby, with two more seats open. One of which is at an end, the other right next to it.
Lexa sits on the end and I sit next to her. Lincoln passes us two plates that were waiting in the center of the table. We thank him and dig in, listening to the conversation around us.

Lincoln and Artigas are bonding over their mutual love of drawing. Which is something I didn't know about Artigas, I'll have to talk to him about it sometime.

Luna and Anya, done with their food, are having an arm wrestling contest while Raven and Octavia cheer them on. I'm not surprised that it takes a while for it to end, nor am I surprised by the fact that Anya wins. She is a General, after all.

Once Lexa and I are done eating, we look over to check on the nearby large table where the Maunon are all sitting around. They look like they're mainly finished, with just a couple people still eating.

Some of the warriors take away the empty plates and when the last person finishes, Lexa and I get up. We head over and every adult/teen snaps to attention, eyeing us with a mixture of respect and wariness. I don't blame them.

"Good morning," Lexa greets them, getting murmured good mornings back. "In about half an hour, we will head out to begin scattering the ashes. Anyone who wants to come is welcome to. We will be meeting back here in half an hour."

"Will you two be scattering any?" A teen boy speaks up and shrinks back, paling, when he realizes he just talked to Lexa.

"Not without your express permission." Lexa shakes her head. "These are your people, your ashes to scatter wherever you would like." Some people around the table nod in agreement. "If you decide not to come, the councilors are here to help and will be available. I highly recommend talking to one of them. People who do come are welcome to talk to a councilor after we get back. After that, we will discuss your future with the Mountain and with my people. That is the plan for today. Any questions?"

No one speaks up.

"Very well. If anyone does have any, Clarke and I's tent is the large one right over there. You are welcome to talk to us anytime. If you are not comfortable with talking to us, I would suggest you talk to any of the people at that table." She gestures at the table we were sitting at. "Or Clarke's mother, Abby Griffin, who is the head doctor of Skaikru. They will probably know the most about whatever you have questions about. Thank you for your time."

Lexa nods to them and then we head back to our table to relax for another half hour before we have to go walking around on a mountain to scatter the ashes.

The half hour passes quickly, with us joining in random conversations with the others. Including one with Raven about if there are dogs and cats on the ground. Which there are, and I am super excited about. I can probably convince Lexa to get one after all of this has settled down.

Half an hour has passed before we know it, and the amount of Maunon who want to come is higher than I would have expected. It's time to scatter the ashes of their dead.

Chapter End Notes
Thank you guys for such a warm reception of my idea of adoption! And man, I think everyone who guessed who would adopt who was right. And at least one person got why Anya, Raven, and Luna would adopt the kid. I wouldn't expect any less from the Clexa fandom :) I also got at least one person who was concerned about the pacing. Clarke and Lexa have only recently gotten together, only recently said I love you for the first time. And yeah, the adoption won't be super soon because we need everything to stabilize, the Coalition and their relationship, before they adopt a kid. Because that's a pretty big step, and they need to be sure they're ready for it. Anyway! Thank you all for reading and for your beautiful comments! Stay awesome!
Lexa and I lead the Maunon who want to come with us over to a slightly more isolated place to scatter their people's ashes. We have a horse trailing behind all of us, pulling a wagon filled with the ashes.

Lexa and I stop and lean against a tree, allowing the Maunon to take some ashes and scatter them where they would like. The wind at the moment is perfect for this, blowing in just the right direction without too much force. It can move the ashes farther over the landscape, over where the Mountain becomes more steep and is much more dangerous to attempt to walk on.

We continue like this, but allow the Maunon to dictate where we go instead of leading them places. Lexa only gives suggestions to those who want them, and speaks up when she believes enough has been scattered in an area. The process is mainly silent on our part, though the Maunon sometimes mumble what sound like prayers or poems or even songs as they scatter the ashes.

It takes a couple of hours before the Maunon decide they are done. Since Lexa and I know the terrain and where we are better than the Maunon, Maya urges us to lead them back to the others.

When Lexa and I get back, there isn't much for us to do. The few Maunon we see there seem sadder but also lighter, so I assume they've been talking to the councilors. Mom comes out and directs everyone to where the councilors are. We can't do anything for them at the moment, so instead we head to our tent to relax before we have to discuss their future.

After Lexa checks my shoulder wound again, we sit on the bed, our backs resting on the headboard. I cuddle up to her. She wraps an arm around my shoulder, pulling me as close as she can. I rest my head against her chest and wrap my arm around her torso, hooking my leg over hers.

I yawn, still a bit tired after everything. Lexa chuckles softly and kisses the top of my head. I hum happily and hug her tighter for a moment, allowing my eyes to close. Her heart beats loudly in her chest, a soothing rhythm that lulls me into that gray area between being awake and asleep.

I snap to attention when someone's footsteps keeps getting louder, my eyes opening swiftly. I scoot up a bit, still cuddled up against her, and eye the entrance of the tent. Lexa's muscles twitch and tense, ready to move at a moment's notice. We both relax when it's Raven who pokes her head in. She has her hand covering her eyes. "Is it safe for me to come in?"

"Yes Rae." I reply, amused.

She lowers her hand as she steps inside and blinks at us, her lips twitching up into a smile. "Aww, you look adorable. Now come on, get your sexy butts up. It's time to talk about... The future."

Raven makes dorky sound effects that sounds like she stole them either from the X-Files or some other nerdy sci-fi movie/show.

I shake my head fondly, grinning, and get up. Lexa takes my hand in hers and we head outside, followed by Raven.

The Maunon are all gathered, with Maya at the front, who gives us a determined but nervous smile.
"I've been elected to be the main representative." She explains.

Lexa nods. "Very well. Where would you all like to stay?"

"Most of us want to stay in the Mountain. It's been our people's home for over a century." Maya says. "Some want to stay with the Skaikru, they don't want to relive everything."

I know Lexa and I can empathize with that. "Skaikru will welcome everyone who wants to join them with open arms," I say. "And will keep open communication and possibly establish trade between them and the Mountain. We can discuss that in another meeting."

Maya nods. "Alright. What's next?"

"Would you like to become a clan in my Coalition?" Lexa asks.

"What would that entail?" Maya questions.

"Becoming a clan would help establish easy trade routes between clans. You would be under my protection. My army would protect you from invaders, and no clan would be allowed to take you over or attack you unless they would like to go to war with the entire Coalition. Your people will never go through a food shortage, you will be provided for. If you agree, there is an official ceremony to go through. You will swear your people's loyalty to me and every Heda after me. Your leader will bear the mark of the Coalition."

"How so?" Maya prompts.

"A long metal stick will have the mark on the end of it. It will be heated in a fire and then pressed to the leader's skin." Lexa answers. "The Skaikru leader will be doing the same as well, should you agree to become a clan."

Maya purses her lips, thinking. She glances back at the people behind her. "I'll discuss this with everyone. Would you mind giving us a moment to talk?"

"Of course. Call us back when you are ready to inform us of your decision." Lexa says.

We walk a ways away, far enough to be out of earshot of them so we can't hear what they discuss.

"Do you think they'll become a clan?" I ask as we wait.

Lexa nods. "Yes. Their numbers are small, they cannot fend for themselves. Even with their fayogons (guns). They do not know how to survive outside of their Mountain. They need us. Whether they like it or not."

Maya gestures for us to come back over and we comply. When we get close enough to hear her without her raising her voice, she speaks. "We want to become a clan."

"A wise choice." Lexa says. "I do have one question regarding this. What will your clan be called? I do not know if you would like to still be called the Maunon. It does have a rather negative connotation among our people."

"What's the word for mountain in... Whatever your language is called?" Maya asks.

"Our language is Trigedasleng. The word for mountain is maun. In our language, you could be called Maunkru or Maungedakru."

"What does it translate to?"
"For Maungedakru, geda means gathering, and kru means a group of people, but in this context it would mean clan. The other option is Maunkru, which translates to Mountain Clan." Lexa explains.

Maya looks back at her people again, who murmur what they like and she nods. "I think we like Maunkru."

Chapter End Notes

A lot has happened, plus this is like ten percent longer than usual! Next chapter, more discussion of the future! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
"Is there anything else we need to discuss?" Maya asks.

"Yes, a few more things." I answer. "First of which is about the Mountain. You have technology that's mainly been destroyed by the Ark's fall to earth. I know my mom would love to get her hands on some of the equipment."

"So what's your question?" Maya prompts.

"Will you let Skaikru and the clans use it as another hospital? There's one set up at the Skaikru camp they've been using, but this is much closer to Polis and to some other major cities. It would be the perfect place to train healers in more advanced medicine, and to help people who need it that can't make it to the Skaikru hospital. Um, if that makes sense." I say, cocking my head to the side.

"It does. To me, at least." Maya says. "So... The mountain would be used as a hospital and training place. I'm guessing Skaikru and the clans will want to trade for some things as well." Lexa nods. "I'll discuss this with the others later and tell you if they don't like the idea, but I have little doubt that they'll be fine with it. Okay. What's next?"

"Next, we should discuss when we will make Maunkru and Skaikru official clans." Lexa says. "I would expect you will all need time to settle in beforehand, but we cannot wait too long. We need to convince the clans that you are not a threat to them, that you will not turn on them."

"Do you think that'll happen?" Maya asks worriedly.

"That is what I will discuss next. But first, we should set up a date for which the Skaikru and Maunkru will leave for Polis, the capital." Lexa responds.

Maya nods, a concerned crinkle forming between her brows. She purses her lips. "Alright. I guess... A few weeks would be good. Two or three to get settled in."

Lexa nods. "Very well, we will plan for that. As we near the time of our departure, I will inform you of the exact date and time we will leave. Between now and then, think of which people you would like to bring."

Maya grimaces. "I don't know how many people we can spare. We don't really have many adults, and a few of them want to join Skaikru."

"From what Raven told me, it sounds like a few Skaikru want to join and work inside the mountain on a permanent basis." I say. "They would be happy to help. I know you don't have the engineers, farmers, mechanics, etc. that you need to sustain everything. What Skaikru can do is send over those who want to join you, and add on some temporary workers in exchange for some of your supplies and stuff. They can make sure the kids are okay. So you can take whoever you want. Does that work?"

Maya's eyes are wide and she looks almost overwhelmed. She nods. "Yeah, yeah that sounds perfect. Um. What about what you said earlier, Commander? Sorry, what's your title in your language? Um. Tree-gay-da-slang?" She sounds it out.
"Trigedas leng." Lexa says, saying it slower than usual so Maya can hear it better. "I am called Heda among my people, which means Commander. You can call me either."

"Alright. Hay-da." Maya tests it out. "Okay. So what's this about us possibly being a threat?"

"You must understand my people first, Maya." Lexa begins. "Your people have been our greatest enemy for decades. They were the main reason I was even able to form a Coalition successfully. I have no way of knowing if it will strengthen or weaken following Cage's defeat. Your people, though you are fewer, possess the same technology that has terrorized my people for generations. Many will fear that you will let that power get to you, and that you will use it to take over the clans."

"We wouldn't, though." Maya frowns.

"I know that, but they do not. I will have to reassure them. Not to mention those who take 'jus drein, jus daun' farther than I do. That is a phrase that means 'blood must have blood.' Clarke has told me it is reminiscent of an old Earth code called Hamburger's Code."

"Hammurabi's Code," I correct her, trying to keep from laughing. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

Maya's eyes light up in recognition. "Right, I know that. So what do you mean, Heda?"

"I mean that they may want revenge on all of your people. To kill all, no matter if they are guilty or innocent. Adult or child. It will not matter to them."

"So you think we'll be attacked?" Maya questions.

"It is a real possibility." Lexa admits. "So I will send guards to protect you. Both from the existing clans and from Skaikru. You will be defended at all times. I will hand select the warriors from among the clans, and I will have Abby and Kane select Skaikru warriors who are loyal both to them and to me."

"Thank you. Mochof. I appreciate that. Um, so when will this all be set up? The guards and everything."

"As soon as possible. Some warriors I have here will be good to your people, and we will talk to Abby after that. I am sure she has some Skaikru guards she trusts here."

"Anything else?" Maya asks after a short pause.

"Not that I can think of," Lexa says.

"Alright. I'll head back to my people and let them know what's going on. When will the Skaikru people begin coming over here to stay? When should I send my people over there who want to leave?"

"Whenever they want to go, they can. I'm guessing some of the Skaikru people who will want to stay are already here. Those that aren't will probably head over as soon as they get word it's safe. We'll send over a courier, so they should start heading over in the next couple of days. Your people can go whenever, but with a guard or two. Just in case." I look over at Lexa for confirmation, who nods in agreement.

"Okay. I'll let them know that too. Mochof (thank you)."
With that, Maya turns around and heads back to her people.

Chapter End Notes

Wow, a lot happened/was discussed. That was so much dialogue! Hopefully it was good because I didn't get much sleep last night and my grandparents are over because I'm graduating tomorrow (well, when this is posted it'll be today)... So. Busy life rn! But it's all good. And I'll have some time to plan out what will happen next!! I'm already working on it and I'm super excited for what'll happen next :D

Okay, I've gotten two comments that I want to address on here before I conclude this lengthy Author's Note... One person asked if I will make the chapters longer. I might. As I said earlier, life is pretty crazy for me at the moment, plus I'm heading to England for two weeks on the 24th (which shouldn't mess with my posting but it might, so if I can't post one day that's why), plus I'm heading off to college at the end of the summer... So I'm planning on trying it out next book, with 1,500 words instead of 1,000. We'll see if I can keep it up. If I can't, I'll let you guys know! Another person asked if we'll see more of Raven, Luna, and Anya. Yes, we will! Next book, there'll be a lot more of them and some chapters from their, probably Raven's, perspective! Okay, I'm done for now. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
For the next hour after we finish talking to Maya, we go talk to my mom and discuss everything with her. Afterwards, she goes off to find some of the guards she trusts to guard the Maunon... Maunkru. I keep forgetting they've changed their name. Next, we go to the nearest courier and send them off to Skaikru to let them know it's safe to head to the Mountain now. Lexa sends the next courier she sees to Polis and the towns along the way to give word that the Mountain is defeated and that we now have allies in those that are left.

After that, we discuss which warriors we think would also be good for guarding the Maunkru. Most are here and we spend a bit going around and explaining their next posts to them. Among the warriors is Artigas, who is ecstatic to be trusted with such a mission. He grasps Lexa's forearm and hugs me tightly before scurrying off to ask Maya what he can do to help.

By the time we're finished with everything, it's dinner time and neither of us want to be anywhere except our tent. So we stay inside, thanking the warrior who brought us dinner. Since we don't want to get any crumbs on our furs, we sit at the table, scooting the chairs so they're right next to each other.

I cuddle up to Lexa as we eat and she wraps her left arm around me so she can still eat but can also hold me close to her. I hum contently as I finish and close me eyes, resting my head on her shoulder. I can feel her body twist to bring the food from the plate to her lips under, how her body twists slightly. I open my eyes when she stops moving. Lexa kisses my forehead softly.

"So what's next?" I question, breaking the silence. "We still have two or three weeks until we have to start heading to Polis."

"We still have Jaha to deal with," Lexa reminds me.

"Shit, right. I forgot he's still alive." I remark.

"For a moment, I did as well. We still have to execute him. Where should we do it?"

"At the Ark station they've been working on fixing up." I say after a moment of contemplation. "And Raven, Anya, and Luna definitely need to be there. Will it be death by a thousand cuts?"

"Yes. And instead of me delivering the final blow, it should be Raven. She is the one that he attempted to kill." Lexa murmurs.

"That's a good idea. When should we do that? I know we'll need to pick him up from the prison in TonDC." I muse.

"A week. It should give us enough time to make certain everything is going well here and time to get to TonDC and then the Skaikru station."

I nod. "Sounds good to me. We should let Raven, Anya, and Luna know about this. Tomorrow. I don't want to go anywhere else today."

"Tired, hodnes (love)?" Lexa murmurs.
I yawn in response, making Lexa's shoulder shake slightly under my head with her laughter. "Like you're not."

"I definitely am," she admits. "Let us go to bed before we fall asleep on these chairs."

I don't answer because my mouth is otherwise occupied with another large, jaw-cracking yawn. I blink my eyes sleepily and allow Lexa to gently lead me over to the bed. We strip out of our clothes and slide underneath the furs, meeting in the middle. My head finds her shoulder again and I drape my arm across her stomach, lying on my side to cuddle with her better.

"Clarke," Lexa says after a minute.

"Hmm?"

"We do have one other thing we need to do. As soon as possible." There's worry in her tone, which wakes me up enough to look up at her and listen intently.

"What is it?" I prompt.

"We need to talk to Maya about getting rid of their weapons. Just letting them exist is dangerous. For everyone, including the Maunkru."

"So you want to destroy them." I say in understanding. "Which things? Because I don't think they'll want to get rid of their guns or stuff like that."

"I do not want to take away their fayogons (guns). Skaikru and Maunkru are welcome to use them, and the twelve clans may someday open their minds to using them. In a few decades, perhaps. What I mean is the bombs you have spoken of, the ones that destroyed the world. The missiles that forced me to kill the Maunon. Their acid fog. These are too dangerous to continue to exist."

"I agree, and I think Maya will too." I say. "We will need Raven and her expertise in mechanics and blowing things up."

"Yes, we will." Lexa agrees and then yawns.

I grin up at her, getting up and resting my weight on me knees and forearms so I can hold myself up over her. I lean down and capture her lips in mine. Her eyes flutter closed a moment before mine do. I kiss her slowly, deeply. We're too tired from everything to go farther. She hums happily against my lips, the vibrations making me smile automatically.

The exhaustion in my veins nearly makes me yawn against Lexa, making her chuckle. The hand she's been using to cup my face gently pushes me back until our lips no longer touch. I rest my forehead against hers and open my eyes to see the beautiful green of her eyes.

Green is a color that became my favorite as soon as I came down to the ground and saw more green than I had ever seen in my life. But when I met her, the shade of green that became my favorite is the one that matches her eyes.

I snap myself out of my haze and smile softly down at her. I move over a bit and lay down, still half on Lexa. She doesn't mind and runs her hand up and down my spine a few times before we begin to fall asleep.
Guys. I had enough free time the other day to write up plans for the next book and whoo, I can't wait for you guys to see it! It's three entire pages long and it's not even plans for the entire book... Which features a lot more of Raven, Luna, and Anya and their relationship ;) It's going to be so fluffy! And we'll see, but I'm currently planning on ending this book after they kill Jaha or when we reach chapter 150, whichever comes first. And next book, there'll probably be a bit of a time jump so it's when they're about to leave for Polis. Unless I have something else planned to happen before that which I've completely forgotten about, which is a real possibility. Also, props to the person who commented and gave me the idea to destroy the weapons! Alright, one last thing. I have no idea what I want the next book to be called and the only thing I've been able to think of is "The Ones on the Ground." I was trying to make it kind of similar to "The One Who's Fallen." Do you guys like it or no? I can think of something else if not! Thank you for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
The next morning, Lexa and I eat breakfast then head outside to get Raven. She kisses Luna and Anya before she goes and follows us as we walk towards Maya.

"So what's up? Why do you both have such serious expressions?" Raven asks, sounding a little worried.

"We're going to talk to her about destroying the bombs and acid fog for good." I respond quietly, walking alongside Lexa.

Raven nods understandingly. "Right. I can understand that. No one should have that kind of power."

Lexa nods and we stop next to Maya, who's talking to a couple of warriors. She glances over at us and hurries through the rest of her talk, sending them away when she's done. Lexa is standing up straight, her hands clasped behind her back. She looks like the Commander in this moment, more than usual.

"Yes, Heda?" Maya asks politely. She's getting better at Trigedasleng.

"We would like to discuss your weapons." Lexa says.

Maya nods. "I was wondering when we would get to that. I'm assuming you want them destroyed?"

If Lexa's surprised by Maya guessing correctly on the first try, she doesn't show it. "Yes. I will do it with or without your permission."

"But you're still asking to give me a chance to prove my loyalty." Maya observes, making Lexa's eyebrows raise slightly, betraying her surprise. "Of course you have my permission, Commander. I'm assuming this doesn't include our guns and some of our smaller weapons?"

"Those are fine. It is the large ones, the bombs and missiles and fog, that worry me." Lexa says.

"You have my permission to destroy all of them." She pauses for a moment and turns her head. "Bali! Come here for a moment!"

A man with skin darker than Raven's jogs over. "Yes Maya?"

"The Commander wants to destroy the larger weapons we have. The missiles, bombs, and fog." Maya explains.

"But... Without them, we're defenseless! They're for our protection." Bali says, his eyes wide.

"You are not defenseless, you have guns. You have warriors here, protecting you." I remind him. "The weapons we want to destroy aren't just powerful, they're dangerous and deadly. No one should have that kind of power."

"The clans will not see them as means of defense." Lexa says, continuing where I leave off. "I will not allow you to keep them, but if you do it will be seen as an act of mistrust. Proof that you do not have faith in me and my Coalition. Just having these weapons is more dangerous than you could
imagine. People have been slaughtered for less. Understand?"

Bali hesitates, then nods. "Okay. I'll help. I was chief engineer. I know where all of the weapons are, even the ones well hidden in the system. Come with me."

We follow him inside the Mountain, the lights above flickering.

"What's wrong with the lights?" Raven questions.

"The dam is what's wrong. I've been working on maintaining it all by myself, when usually there would be a minimum five-person team working on it." Bali sighs.

"I have some free time. I can make it mainly automated for you." Raven offers.

"You... You could? Are you an engineer?" Bali asks, surprised.

"Pfft, an engineer." She hides her scoff with a well-timed cough. "No, I'm a mechanic and all-around genius. Raven Reyes, at your service."

"Bali Patel. Nice to meet you." He pauses so they can shake hands. "So you can make it automated? How?"

Raven goes off on a rambling tirade that's truly impressive in the amount of words I vaguely recognize but don't understand and in it's length. By the time she's finished and has allowed Bali to give some feedback, we're at the first area.

"This one is the fastest and easiest to get to. All you need to do is neutralize the acid and if someone releases it, it'll be fog instead of acid fog." Bali explains.

Raven moves to the center console and cracks her fingers. "Let's do this."

She swiftly goes through the list of commands she can use, so fast I can barely believe that Raven can read the words. Her eyes light up and she taps one of the selections, squinting down at it when it says it requires her to tap in a numerical password.

"Try 2052. The year the world ended." Bali suggests.

There's an error message that pops up on the screen and it warns that Raven has one more try before the gas is... released into this room. Lovely.

"1959!" I say. "That's when Mount Weather was founded. That has to be it."

"If it isn't, we're dead." Raven mutters.

She taps it in and braces herself but nothing happens, no hiss of gas. After a moment, the screen lights up and it's green.

"Password accepted," the automated voice says. "Commencing full neutralization."

There's a hissing noise now, but it sounds like it's going into the tank instead of out, which is a good sign. There's an acidity chart up on the screen and it slowly moves up from the bottom, where it's dark red, towards the center where it's yellow.

"Acid neutralized. Would you like to neutralize the backup tanks?" The automated voice says.

"There are backup tanks?" Raven mutters, then presses the big yes on the screen.
"Back up tanks neutralized. Warning: there is now no acid fog. I repeat. Warning: there is now no acid fog."

Raven powers down the console and we head to the next place, where the Maunon stored all of their bombs. My eyes widen as I take it all in. It looks like there's hundreds of them! All missiles, all huge. Just the room is massive.

"How the hell are we going to get rid of all of these?" Raven breathes out.

"Send them into the ocean? Or somewhere we know is deserted." I offer.

"The ocean might work." Raven muses. "They're all on a conveyer belt, yeah?" She walks over to the center console, typing in the same number again to get access. "So I can shoot them all, one after another. Alright. I've got this."

Chapter End Notes

They nearly died... Again! But always remember that I'm not cruel, they'll have their happy ending. I mean, the next book isn't going to have that many life-threatening moments if it goes as I've planned... Next chapter, explosions and stuff! Thank you guys for commenting! It seems like everyone either likes the names "the Ones on the Ground" or suggested some new names. I think I'm going to stick with my name, though you brilliant people came up with some pretty good ideas. Anyway. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Raven stops tapping on the console and stares at nothing for a second.

"Rae?" I ask worriedly. "Raven?"

"Hmm?" She snaps out of it, blinking. "Sorry. I was just thinking... We don't know what'll happen when the missiles hit the water. It could blow up instantly, not explode, or hit the bottom and then..." Raven makes an exploding sound.

"And?" I prompt.

"And... Won't that kill a ton of fish? Just the crap ton of metal being added to the water, how the water will heat up when it goes boom, the fuel... Like that'll be an ecological disaster. And Luna's people, they fish. They could be out of a job. We would never be able to enjoy fish again."

"Raven, I don't think we've ever had fish." I say.

"Yet. But we never will if we blow up the fishies."

I sigh, knowing she's right. "So what are our options?"

"Um. Three that I can think of." Raven counts on her fingers as she goes through them. "One, we commit fish genocide. Two, we shrug and say 'meh' and leave it all here under the best security we can possibly have. Three, we find a place we know is deserted of human and animal life and blow it up."

"I think there is another option." Lexa says, sounding almost hesitant. "Now this tek (technology), you all know I am not good with it. But from what I understand, there is a way to neutralize the missiles. This-arm? Is that what it is called?" Lexa questions.

"Disarm, babe." I supply.

Lexa nods. "Yes, disarm. These missiles are made with metal and could have tek that is useful to the clans. So perhaps you could disarm them, Raven, and have a trusted team take apart the missiles. Sort the pieces into what is useful and what is not."

"That's actually a really good idea." Raven says, and I can practically see her mind going a mile a minute. She pauses and purses her lips. "Wait, there still is one problem with that."

"Major or minor?" I ask.

"Depends," Raven shrugs. "Okay, so the rocket fuel. That shit is crazy flammable and explodable." We all look around warily and step farther away from the nearest missile. "They're fine right now, in protective casings that minimize how much it moves around. So there could be a earthquake and they wouldn't blow up. As long as it's below 7 on the Richter scale, though. We're fine." She waves her hand.

"That's not reassuring, Rae." I say.

"I know. Okay! So the badness of this problem depends on what we want to do with the rocket
fuel. We can use it or set it on fire, basically." Raven says.

"Use it how?" I prompt. "We don't have anything that needs gas, let alone rocket fuel."

"For war?" Raven says hesitantly. "It would make some pretty effective Molotov Cocktails and some nasty bombs. But other than that, yeah it's basically useless. Unless we want to go to the moon or something."

"I do not want them for warfare." Lexa says, shaking her head for emphasis. "Is there a way to safely destroy the rocket fuel?"

"Yeah. We have to be really careful, though. I'm sure there's a shock-resistant cart or something somewhere, they wouldn't have risked blowing themselves up."

"I know where it is, Raven." Bali offers. "I can take you to where it's kept later."

"Thanks." Raven says genuinely. "Okay, so what we need to do in order to get rid of this stuff is take it somewhere remote and set it on fire."

"Won't that be dangerous?" I ask, concerned.

"Nah. This stuff, you pour a little out and throw a rock and KABOOM!" She yells, making us jump.

"Maybe don't yell kaboom in a room full of missiles." I say once my heart stops pounding as hard in my chest.

"Right." Raven nods. "So I'm guessing you want this done before we leave for Polis. I'll need a trustworthy, smart team of people to help."

"Yes. I have a few people that may be able to help. And I am sure Luna and Anya would be happy to assist you." Lexa says.

"And Raven?" I interject before she can respond. "Is there a way you can set it up so you can leave for a short amount of time in roughly a week?"

"Probably, yeah. Why?"

"Jaha," I say plainly.

Her eyes widen. "Right. I almost forgot he's still alive. So I'm guessing that's when his execution date is?"

"Yes. Death by thousand cuts. It will be held at a Skaikru camp." Lexa answers. "If you would like it, I am more than willing to hand off my duty to you."

"Your duty?"

"Yes. Raven, he has wronged you the most out of anyone there. So I would like to at least offer the chance to be the last one to cut him."

"So..." Raven swallows nervously. "I would be the one to kill him?"

"Yes."

Raven purses her lips an paces back and forth a few times. "I don't know if I can do that. I hate him with every atom in my body, every fiber of my being, but I don't know if I can look into his eyes
and kill him."

"If you cannot, that is fine." Lexa reassures her, placing her hand on Raven's shoulder. "Perhaps talk to Luna and Anya about it. They know how difficult a decision like that is."

Raven frowns, looking at Lexa more closely. "And you don't?"

Lexa's lips curl up in a sad smile. "I am Heda, Raven. And before that, I was a Natblida (Night Blood). I have never had a choice. You do. Talk to them and let me know. If you need anything, you know where to find Clarke and me."

Raven nods. "Thank you. I'll let you know what I decide." She sighs and looks out at the hundreds of missiles. "I'll need to work faster than I thought. Disarming all of these will take days."

"What if you have us to help?" I offer. "You can show us what we need to do, and we'll do it. Bali, will you help?"

"Yes, of course."

"Alright. I'll check over your work, make certain you didn't accidentally mix it up." Raven says.

Chapter End Notes

And that's the chapter! A couple people pointed out that maybe blowing up missiles in the ocean isn't the greatest idea, so this way they have more technology and more metal and stuff! Win-win! Next chapter, disarming giant rockets and missiles! Whoo! Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
Raven sends Bali off to find a floor plan of the room, where she hopes there will be a record of how many rockets there are. When he comes back, he nods to her.

"There is a total of 947 rockets. I think. This isn't really recent." He frowns. "Perhaps check with the AI?"

"The AI? You have an AI?" Raven gasps excitedly.

"Yes, her name is Rhonda. I believe it was the name of the head scientist's wife or something. She is not exactly an AI, more a searchable tool with knowledge of everyone and everything in the mountain. It has access to the cameras and everything and can assess a situation. Just say 'Rhonda' while you stand in front of the console and she'll respond."

"That's so cool." Raven breathes out as she steps over to the console. "Rhonda."

The console lights up, the screen blank except for one of those circles that indicate that it's loading.

"Please wait one moment." A feminine, automated voice says.

I recognize it... It's the same one we've been hearing all along in this place! I hear a metallic noise, like a remote control car moving across the floor, except it's coming from up high. I look and it's a camera, swiveling to face us.

"Please face the camera if you wish to continue." Raven complies. "I do not have you in my database. What is your name?"

"Um. Raven Reyes."

"Raven Reyes." It repeats. "Is there an admin nearby who can confirm that you may use my services?"

"Your services, huh? Thanks, but I'm satisfied with the partners I have." Raven jokes.

"Partners? As in plural?" Bali asks.

"Yeah, Anya and Luna. If you do end up helping me with this, you'll be able to meet them soon."

Bali nods and steps closer to the console. "This is Bali Patel."

The camera focuses on him. "Identity confirmed. Name: Bali Patel. Status: Admin. Do you confirm Raven Reyes as an admin?"

"Yes." He states.

"Very well. Raven Reyes is now an admin."

"You can order her around or ask her questions now."

"Thanks. Rhonda, how many rockets do you have here?" Raven asks.
"Alright. And all of them are armed?"

"Yes. Would you like to deploy one?"

"No!" Raven says, her eyes wide. "No. Are all of them the same type of rocket? Same wiring and stuff?"

"Yes. Would you like blueprints?"

"Blueprints? Oh, that would be great." Raven says, grinning. "Yes."

Blueprints go up on the console, with numbers and measurements that I can't decipher.

"Okay. So do disarm them, we have to..." Raven begins mumbling to herself, zooming in on the wiring.

"To disarm the rockets, the green and red wires must be cut." Rhonda says, making Raven jump in surprise.

"Crap, you scared me. Alright. That should be easy enough. Now where's the easiest way to access them?" She mumbles.

"Access panel B-3."

"Oh my god, you're brilliant!" Raven exclaims. "I love this AI. She's like Google, but actually gives you what you're looking for."

She moves the screen around a bit more, presumably to get a better look at where B-3 is on the rocket.

"Do you need anything else, Raven Reyes?"

"Yeah, one thing. What's the safest way to get the fuel tank out without blowing myself up?"

"Access panel E-5 was specifically designed for safe and easy insertion and removal of the fuel tank. There are shock absorbing carts and automobiles made for the rough terrain of earth's surface in storage room C-1. Would you like a map to it?"

"Not at the moment, thank you."

"You are welcome. Goodbye." The console shuts down and Raven looks over at Bali in confusion.

"Did I accidentally say the magic word to get her to shut down?"

"Yes, it's designed to both recognize when a conversation has ended and to shut down when someone says thank you, unless it detects that there's more it needs to do." Bali explains.

"That's so cool. I love her."

Raven strokes the panel in an almost loving caress, but the movement is too exaggerated for me to take it seriously. She claps her hands together, making us jump.

"Alright!" Raven says. "Let's get to work. We have 936 rockets to disarm. I'll show you how to do the first three and keep an eye on you for the first couple you do. Ok?" We nod and follow her to
the first rocket.

"Don't you need a screwdriver?" Bali questions.

"Nope. This panel is specifically designed to be quick and easy to access. You know, in case someone accidentally started a countdown or something." Raven says.

She puts her fingers into a latch, like the kind I've seen on pictures of cars. Raven pulls it out towards us, and the panel swings open.

"See? Easy." Raven says.

She reaches in her back pocket and pulls out what appears to be a Swiss Army Knife.

"What? Where did you even get that?" I ask, bewildered.

I've only seen a couple on the Ark, and they were mainly given to Engineers like my father so he could have tools wherever he was in case of an emergency.

"Believe it or not, Lincoln and Octavia. Lincoln apparently has a whole collection of Old Earth stuff, and Octavia recognized it. They gave it to me. It's actually in amazing shape, considering it's like a century old." Raven explains as she carefully pulls the wires closer to the lights coming from the ceiling. She flips through the Swiss Army Knife. "Aha! Scissors."

They're small, but Raven's determined. She leans closer and pulls out two wires. She presses them close together and cuts through them with her tiny scissors.

The light that I didn't even know was activated on the floor tiles beneath the rocket go dark.

"Good, it does have a sign." Raven says. "Alright! Did you see what I did? You might want to get wire cutters, which I'm sure are around here somewhere. No worries, I'll show you again."

Raven moves on to the next rocket and gestures for us to come closer.

Chapter End Notes

Man, next chapter is the last chapter of this whole book! 0.0 I guess we won't get to Jaha in this book, then. And one more thing! Hopefully this chapter is posted on time because I forgot to tell you guys last chapter that I'm going on vacation with my family and I'll be in England until July 5th! And I'm going to be flying there overnight, so sleeping will be fun... I'll be dead tired. And my vacationing hopefully won't mess up my posting schedule too much, I just don't know when I'll have wifi to post! I should be able to but if I don't post on time, that's why! Okay, I'm done now. Thank you all for reading and for your amazing comments! Stay awesome!
*** Blood and Torture!!! Not of Lexa and Clarke, but Jaha!

The next two days is just us disarming rockets, which is simultaneously terrifying and boring. It's tedious and repetitive and there are 936 of them, and four of us. Not including the times that Raven goes around and checks that we didn't mess up anywhere.

When we're finally done, I'm more than happy that I don't have to go back into that room. Lexa and I spend the rest of the day helping Raven find trustworthy people to strip the rockets down into spare parts.

Luna and Anya agree to help and Raven spends the day teaching them while Lexa and I find people. They'll mainly act as guards and will patrol, making sure no one does anything stupid. They trail off after a while, hopefully to get the shock absorbing carts from the Mountain.

We get a pretty good number of people to help, more than I expected. Roughly twenty are happy to help us, and two even volunteered for helping remove the rocket fuel tanks since they were also once engineers or mechanics. They chat with each other, debating the best way to get rid of rocket fuel without causing a large explosion.

Once we're done with that, Lexa and I eat a quick dinner and pass out on our bed, too exhausted to even talk beforehand.

***

"Ready for this?" I ask Raven.

It's finally time to head back to the Skaikru for Jaha's execution. Raven's been so busy that we've hardly had the chance to see her, let alone ask her what she's decided.

Raven gets up on her horse with the gentle help from Anya and Luna, though I know she hates the fact that she needs help getting on and off the horse. Her lips are pursed.

"I think I'll do it." She says hesitantly. "I'll have my girls with me, so I should be okay."

Anya, who still has her hand resting on Raven's right leg, squeezes gently. Raven smiles softly down at her and Luna before they get on their own horses.

"Just let Lexa and I know if you change your mind," I say.

"I will. But I probably won't. Change my mind, I mean."

I nod and put my foot in my horse's stirrup, using it to push myself up and swinging my body over to sit on top of the saddle. Lexa approaches us on her midnight black horse that shakes it's head impatiently when she stops it.

"Are you all ready? Do you have everything you will need?" Lexa asks.

We all nod. Lexa clicks her tongue and her horse begins moving, it's slightly faster than normal pace telling how happy it is to not be cooped up in a stable anymore. We haven't been able to get
out and ride in a while, not since before we defeated the Mountain.

I ride alongside her, our horses falling in step with each other automatically.

"I don't know if you heard this earlier, but Raven said yes earlier." I say after a pause.

"To being the one to kill Jaha instead of me?" Lexa asks for clarification and I nod. "Good. She deserves that closure. Do you think she will change her mind?"

"No." I shake my head. "Jaha wasn't just terrible to her, he tried to have her killed. That isn't something so easily forgiven and forgotten. Plus, if nothing else she has Luna and Anya with her. She'll be okay."

Lexa nods her assent and we continue riding in a calm, peaceful silence. I spend the time looking around the forest, admiring the beauty around me. And I'm not just talking about Lexa.

The ride is long but the company is good, so I don't find myself minding it too much. Even when Raven gets bored enough to decide to "entertain" us with her singing random songs she remembers from the Ark. Luna and Anya seem more amused than anything, and Lexa doesn't really mind until Raven starts singing some song about sex. Then she minds. She doesn't speak up, but her disturbed expression and her glances back at her sister and former mentor speaks volumes.

It's our last day of riding, and I laugh when I recognize the next song she's singing.

"Perfect, right?" Raven asks happily.

"It is very fitting for our lives." I admit.

"Yup. Now sing with me, Griff!" She encourages.

"Rae..." I sigh, but she shakes her head.

"Nope! You're not getting out of this! Come on!"

I groan and Raven cheers, knowing she's won. Raven sings backup for me, since I have a more fitting singing voice according to her.

"Stealing kisses from your misses, does it make you freak out?" I sing. "Got you fussing, got you worried, scared to let your guard down. Boys. Tell the neighbors I'm not sorry if I'm breaking walls down. Building your girl second story, ripping all your floors out."

Raven joins me and I grin back at her. "Saw your face, heard your name. Gotta get with you. Girls like girls like boys do, nothing new."

We go through the song, even managing to get Anya, Luna, and Lexa to mouth along to chorus.

"That is very catchy." Luna admits with a smile.

"Right?"

The closer we get to the Skaikru camp, the more somber we get. We're all stony-faced when we arrive.

"Hey, it's good to see you guys back." Bellamy greets, but it's more laid-back than usual. Jaha's execution is weighing on all of us, I guess.
He gestures for us to follow him and we do, dismounting our horses and leading them behind us. Which is a lot more difficult than you would think. When I first tried it, my horse stepped on my foot. Which was not fun.

We hand our horses off to people who have become stable hands and follow Bell to the center of the camp. Jaha is leaning back against a thick pole that he's tied to. He's standing now, but I doubt he will be for long.

We wait until everyone gathers at the center of the camp, keeping a visible circle around Jaha where no one wants to stand or be near him.

Lexa begins to explain what will happen. "What is happening today is called 'Death by Thousand Cuts' by the clans. Usually, someone close to the offender would go first and cut him. Small cuts, or he will die sooner than we want. Today, I will be the first to cut him to demonstrate. After that, anyone who wants to cuts him can. If he is alive at the end of it, it would normally be me who kills him. But as many of you know, Jaha has treated Raven horribly. So she will be the one to kill him. Understood?"

Lexa looks around but no one speaks up.

"If anyone does have questions, feel free to ask me or Lexa." I say. "And this will be graphic, so if you're squeamish I suggest you don't stick around."

A few people leave, as well as some parents who usher away their kids. Lexa waits for them to get out of sight before she nods to Anya and Luna.

They smirk and happily rip Jaha's shirt open and off of him, not bothering to even try to be gentle. I can't say I blame them. He glares at them but doesn't say a word, which is smart.

Lexa steps up to Jaha and brandishes her favorite dagger, the one she had when we first met. With that, her armor, and her warpaint that I helped her put on in the morning, she looks very intimidating. He holds his head high and watches her with hatred in his eyes.

Lexa runs her dagger along his chest, pressing just hard enough for blood to come up. He flinches but doesn't make a sound. Lexa steps back and gestures for the next person to go. When people hesitate, I hold out my hand for her dagger, which she places in my hand without hesitation.

I step up to Jaha. "This is for what you did to my family. My blood family, and the family I've gained since coming down here." I hiss to him.

I slice along his chest and he flinches again, a quiet grunt of pain escaping him. A few others come up behind me and use their own knives, made of various materials.

Soon, Jaha's not silent anymore and I know his agonized groans will soon turn into yelling. Which will scare the people and children around us, so I take matters into my own hands. I take his ruined shirt and cut a strip off with my own knife and I wrap it around his mouth to muffle what does come out.

I rejoin Lexa, standing by her as we watch. It's not exactly a pretty sight but I don't allow myself to show my discomfort. Lexa's hand holding mine certainly helps with that.

After what seems like forever, they're done with him. Jaha's breath rattles in his chest and he's slumped on the ground, his eyes shut and his face turned towards the cloudy sky.

Anya and Luna finally approach him, Raven a few steps behind them. They all have their knives in
their hands.

Anya's eyes are hard as she goes up to him first, crouching down in front of Jaha. She sneers at him and twirls her knife threateningly as he watches her with wary eyes. Anya holds it in her grasp, the end pointed downwards. She drags it down his chest, using more force than anyone else has previously. His scream is muffled by the cloth.

Jaha slumps back against the post as Luna crouches before him next. She whispers something to him that I can't hear, but it has to be terrifying in order for them to make a dying man go pale. Her knife slices along the sensitive muscles of his shoulder, which is brilliantly cruel since his shoulders are forced behind his back and tied behind the post. When she stands, she isn't careful about where she steps. By which I mean, she steps on his... You know, his crotch. Yeah. Painful, if the agonized look on Jaha's face and the high pitched screaming is any indication.

Luna leans down one last time to yank the cloth from around his mouth before rejoining her girlfriends.

Wow. I mean, Anya's terrifying sometimes but now I really don't want to mess with Luna either.

Raven approaches him, shaking. It's visible to Lexa and I since we're so close to her, but not to everyone else.

"Stand." Anya orders Jaha.

He glares up at her, but when he's bloody and half-dead, it's not really scary. Jaha stands on shaky legs, wincing the entire time. He breathes hard and stares at Raven, like he's dating her to go through with it. Her trembling gets worse.

Luna and Anya step over to her, using their close physical proximity calm her. Raven purses her lips and finally stops shaking when Luna and Anya both put a hand on her shoulder. She tightens her grip on her dagger, one that she, Anya, and Luna had all picked out for her together.

Raven takes a deep breath and slides the dagger into Jaha's lower stomach. She pulls it back out. His eyes are wide, like he can't quite believe that she actually had the guts to do it.

His mouth opens and there's blood on the inside that drips out. Jaha slumps back against the post, his eyes going blank before he collapses down to the ground.

Chapter End Notes

Hoo! I think this is the longest chapter I've ever posted, it's nearly twice as long as usual! I just wanted to get Jaha's death in this book. Speaking of which, this book is now officially done! The next book will be posted in three days, and it'll be 1,500 words! So 500 more than usual, and about 450 less than this chapter to give you perspective.

Onto the next order of business! So, I recently had people say they want more Luna, Raven, and Anya! Next book will feature a lot more of them! And if that isn't enough for you, I'll tell you my plans for this series... I don't know how long it'll be, we'll see but after the books themselves are done I'll make a new one full of fulfilled prompts! So like you could comment on here or message me here or on Tumblr and say "hey,
write Clexa adopting a puppy" or "Anya's secretly great with kids" or anything, really. And in that book, I'll write your prompts out and stuff. If that makes sense... Hopefully it does! Let me know if anything is not clear or if you have questions! Or prompts, I'll take them early and if they're not something that happens in the next book, I'll store them on my phone or something! Alright! See you guys in three days in the next book ;) Thank you for reading and for your absolutely amazing comments! Stay awesome!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!