Bad Timing, This Goddamn Trick of Life

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Summary

Life has its way of changing someone's destiny. At times, your sister enjoys messing with you, settling a fake schedule so you find yourself at 7 am in the morning, taking a class you have no interest in, too tired to pay attention. When you fall asleep, all you can think is ways of making your sister pay, a slow death at the top of your options. That is, until you're woken up by a curious blonde, smiling widely and stealing your heart. So, maybe you still hate your sister but maybe she's to blame for the rest of your life.
Chapter 1

She couldn’t be late, not today. She had already missed a week of classes. Lexa ran around her room searching for a hair tie, her books, laptop, backpack and every item she was supposed to have on her first day on her new college. Of course she probably should’ve prepared her stuff the night before, only she had been fooling around with a pretty brunette and one thing had led to another. When she woke up to an apologetic note in her pillow, her mind tried to catch up but when she turned to check the time, she rushed out of bed, leaving her night activities for some other time when she wasn’t running late.

She left her dorm, slamming the door, which caused a few annoyed looks from people who seemed to hate being awake at 7 am. The girl paid them no attention, her mind going through the schedule she had last check on her phone, two days before. She knew her first class was at seven, in building C, the number was blurry in her mind but she figured it would come up, eventually, once she got there. She ran through campus, earning a few more grumbles and snarky comments, particularly when she crashed into someone. Too late to apologize, Lexa kept running as fast as she could. When she finally reached her destination, a smile crept upon her features, her classroom was room 408, and she even recall what subject it was, econ 101. She stopped in her tracks, wondering why the hell she was taking an economics class while majoring in History or something along those lines.

“Anya, you’re so fucking dead,” she cursed under her breath, remembering it had been her sister who had arranged her schedule. Being too busy during her vacation, Lexa had trusted her older sis to come up with some classes she should take, in order to get some sort of degree. She already had a few credits under her belt, being a transfer student but her major still wasn't completely settled, it sure as hell didn't point anywhere near the economics department. Her idea was going to Law School afterwards, so taking a few law classes couldn't hurt. She knew pre-law students usually didn't get into the big leagues, so she thought of combing some other subjects and by the end of the four years, counting her credits to see what degree she could get. It wasn't an ideal plan but it was all she had, for now.

Taking a big breath before sneaking in, she thanked for the auditorium like concept. She easily sneaked into the back row with few people noticing her tardiness; the curious ones received her best kill stare, which promptly made them go back to the lesson. She relaxed into her seat and closed her eyes, the professor’s words lulling her to sleep. What seemed to be hours later, a poking in her arm brought her back to reality. People where moving around leaving the classroom. She looked at the source of her waking. Before being able to lash out at the person who had dared to wake her, Lexa's eyes stumbled into a deep blue sea. The girl in front of her had a questioning look on her face, which soon turned into a stunning smiling face. Much, much better than the girl from the night before, which she had now forgotten all about.

“Is it over?” she asked while rubbing her eyes and stretching.

“You mean class? Yeah, I think so. You’re in my seat,” the girl stated. Lexa raised her eyebrows, looking around, still caught in the haze of her early nap. She finally turned to the girl, who she noticed was carrying some sort of art materials along with her backpack.

“You’re not in my econ class.”

The blonde girl shook her head with amusement. “Nope, but you should go before professor Jaha gets here. He gets pissed off easily.”

“Is that so?” The classroom was already half full, on what she assumed where art students, all chirpy
and loud, which she soon found annoying. “On that note, I’m off.” She stood up and walked towards
the door, she turned just as the girl was placing her stuff, neatly organized in her place. “Thanks for
the wakeup call, Clarke,” she added smiling widely and leaving a very confused girl behind.

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Lexa wasn’t sure how she managed to survive the rest of her day. At some point, she just started
following people around and getting into classes she thought were hers. It was her first day and Anya
had set her up with at least 6 classes, many she had already decided she was going to drop by the end
of the day. Around 5 o’clock, she checked her schedule only to realize she still had two more lessons.
She grabbed her phone and dialled her sister.

“The fuck is your problem?” She asked before allowing the woman to salute her properly.

“Hi, is nice to hear your voice too.” As rude as the initial greeting had been, Anya sounded rather
amused by her sister’s annoyance. “I’m guessing you’re calling to thank me for an awesome
schedule?”

Lexa rolled her eyes despite Anya not being able to see her. “You wish, bitch. I can’t believe you
enrolled me into something call Ethics and Theology, really? And you have some nerve with Life
Choices and Housing, the fuck is that?”

Laughter erupted on the speaker, only causing Lexa to hate her sister a bit more. “I’m hanging up.”

“No, wait!” When Anya finally managed to catch her breath, she decided to end her torture. “I may
have something to tell you.”

“Anya.” The warning tone prepared her for an angry person once she told the truth.

“Lex, don’t get mad.”

“Anya, just tell me,” she sighed, waiting for yet another surprise from her loving sister.

“Well… I may or may have not given you a fake schedule.”

The lack of sound through the phone, hinted that Lexa was still processing the information. “You did
WHAT?” And there it was the inevitable scream. Anya couldn’t help it and broke into a fit of
laughter, yet again. “Anya, I swear... if you don’t tell me what you did, I’m coming over to…”

“Okay, okay.” The laughter stopped but Lexa could tell her sister was having trouble keeping herself
together. “Always the dramatic, since you decided to abandon me for three months and go to Mexico
by yourself, leaving me with the daunting task of creating a class schedule. I, your favourite sibling,
decided to make you suffer. Your betrayal earned an interesting and hellish first day, in the form of
some cringe worthy lessons. You can thank me properly next time we see each other. I’ll send you
the real one, the minute this phone call is over.”

Lexa heard Anya’s explanation; somehow the dedication to prank her appeased some of her rage.
“You’ve got to be kidding me. I knew I should’ve asked Lincoln. You couldn't come, you had work
and I bought you a t-shirt!”

“Exactly! Three month vacation and all you can get the woman who paid your expenses is a
goddamn t-shirt. Be thankful I actually got ‘round to enrolling you in college kid.”

The playful banter between sisters had been a common feature in their relationship. At times Lexa
would get seriously frustrated with Anya’s antics but getting back at her, was definitely fun. She considered her options and decided on waiting to strike back. In the meantime, she had to get her college life in order.

“Alright Anya, you win. I have to go, if you could kindly forward me my actual schedule I will be forever grateful.” She made sure the sarcasm in her tone reached her loving sister.

“Don’t overdo it little sis. I love you.” The line was dead before Lexa could reply anything. Then again, she wasn’t much of a sentimentalist so Anya wouldn’t have gotten the reply she wanted.

Lexa looked around her. From her spot under the shade of an oak tree, there was a nice view of campus. People walked around with their friends, chatting happily. Others had their headphones plugged and were oblivious of the world. Ever since she was little, Lexa would love to stare at people and their behaviour. There was something fascinating at imagining what people were thinking or yearning.

A couple of minutes later, her phone buzzed.

Anya (4:55 pm): A thank you gift will be much appreciated.

Attached to the message was the timetable for her actual lessons. Lexa shoved the phone in her pocket, got up and made her way to the fields. The only thing that had mildly interested her was a rugby practice poster that had caught her eye in between running around campus. If there was a place she could possibly let go of all her frustration, it had to be where she could hit other people and not get in trouble for it.

While walking there, she spotted a familiar wavy blonde hair. The girl was standing next to a guy, who had his arm around her shoulders. She felt a pang of something in her stomach which caused her mixed feelings, when realization hit her. She was not going to see the girl on a regular basis, looking at the scene in front of her, it might be for the best, she thought.

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Her body ached in place she didn’t even know it could hurt. Apparently, the best way of introducing you to rugby was, by giving you as many tackles you could fit in 2 hours. She certainly was going back, but as of right now, she really needed to get her shit together.

The water in the shower stopped running. A young woman came out of the bathroom, clasp in just a towel. Lexa turned to give the girl her privacy but the shift caught the girl’s eye.

“Oh, you’re awake.” Lexa grunted in response, not feeling like engaging in any sort of conversation this early in the morning. “Right, sorry. I’ll let you go back to sleep.” The girl grabbed some clothes and turned to leave, before shutting the door, her head appeared on the doorframe. “I’m Raven, by the way.” She wasn’t sure if the other girl had heard her.

The two of them developed a routine over the course of the next weeks. Raven had an early class so she would shower first and leave before Lexa even got up from bed. Fortunately, the brunette’s day started until 10am, which she saw as a sign of Anya’s apology for her first day nightmare. Once her roommate was long gone, she would get ready and wouldn’t come back until late at night, spending most of her time in the library, rugby practice or hanging around on campus. She often went to a nearby café to do homework, plugged in her headphones and disconnect from the world.

Being a shy person, Lexa hadn’t really attempted to make any friends. She got along fine with Raven, who she often found engaged in the weirdest projects. Sometimes, upon arriving at their
dorm, the girl would ask for her help and Lexa would do whatever she asked. Except on the rare occasion, she was behind her assignments or practice had worn her out completely. In that case, she would fall into her bed without uttering a single word. When that happened, she would wake up to a paracetamol and some water in her nightstand.

She also got along fine with the rugby team. Not to the point to consider them as close friends, but she would return their smiles in the halls and around campus. She particularly enjoyed Octavia’s sarcasm and general demeanour towards people. The woman had a unique approach to rejecting guys which often came out as rude. Lexa, on the other hand, thought the girl’s bluntness was simple and effective.

“Alright bitches, party tonight, mandatory attendance.” She turned to stare directly at Lexa, who was putting on her shoes; she felt the girls looking at her and rolled her eyes. “Yeah, yeah okay.”

There was a roar of cheers and slamming locker doors. “We’re gonna show that soccer team, who runs this campus!” Octavia yelled, everyone cheered and laughed. Lexa only shook her head with a smile playing on her lips. She finished getting dressed and exited the locker room. A hand grabbed her by the arm, stalling her departure.

“Not so fast, Commander,” Lexa stopped in her tracks, looking down at the hand resting in her arm, she raised her eyebrows. Octavia let go immediately but didn't budge, “you’re going to the party. I’m picking you up at 10 in your dorm. I’ll drag you out if I have to, so you better be dressed and ready by the time I get there. I won’t let you get out of your pyjamas otherwise.”

Lexa weighted her options; she could try and argue herself out of the party like she had done the last three times, only she knew Octavia wasn’t taking a no for an answer, or she could just go. She simply nodded and brushed past the girl. The captain sighed; she still had to get through the woman’s stoic persona. Ever since the first party they had attended as a team, Octavia had tried to convince Lexa to come. The girl seemed to have an infinite amount of solid excuses so it she had made it her mission to make her come at least once. If she was being honest, she was fond of the girl, not only because she was an amazing pillar but something about her intrigued her. Maybe some alcohol would help loosen up the girl a little.

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The loud banging on her door indicated Octavia’s arrival; she didn’t wait for her to open before barging into her dorm. “I swear Lexa if you…” She stopped in her tracks, when she saw the brunette standing in front of her wearing a dress that fitted her curves perfectly, high heels and light make up, bringing up her green eyes, making them look more alive. “Well, if I were gay I would totally be hitting on that all night. Girl, you’re gonna be turning heads tonight.”

Lexa blushed at Octavia’s honesty. Truth to be told, she wasn’t very self confident with her looks. She knew she wasn’t horrible looking but she had trouble with people complimenting her appearance. “Is it too much? I should change,” she said nervously looking down at her outfit. Octavia prevented her from going back into the bathroom.

“Oh, hell no!” she said while dragging them both out into the hallway “You look fine, and we’re already late. You’re hot Lexa, deal with it.” Lexa laughed and resigned herself, already regretting her decision on going.

Lexa had managed to stay clear from Octavia’s constant shot attacks, she had done a couple rounds with the time but had switch to beer, the minute Octavia decided to rule the dance floor. So far she was enjoying herself more than she thought it was possible, but had ran away into the kitchen to avoid being pushed in the middle of the dance floor. There still wasn’t enough liquid courage in her body to go there, yet. She grabbed another beer and went to the counter to open it.
“You dropped out of Econ.” A voice said behind her back. Lexa turned to find Clarke standing by the kitchen entrance, holding a red cup and looking absolutely stunning in a blue dress, making it very difficult for Lexa not to roam over the girl’s body. She smiled at Clarke trying to hide how nervous she really was.

“Yes, there is so much economics a girl needs in her life.” Clarke blurted a genuine laugh, making Lexa smile and relax a bit. She could totally grow accustomed to the sound of the girl’s laughter.

“One class, that’s all you need?” The irony in her voice was mixed with some playful banter, which Lexa was more than willing to comply to.

“I read a book once.” She meant to sound funny but the look of bewilderment in Clarke’s features, hinted she needed to work on her humour. “It’s a joke Clarke.” It was partially true, but Lexa wasn’t going to go into the details of her economic knowledge. The girl smiled unsure; suddenly remember she had wanted to ask the girl something since their first encounter.

“How do you know my name?” She had reproduced their first encounter in her mind, countless of times trying to figure out how the brunette had known her name. Lexa smiled mischievously.

“Claaarke! There you are.” A currently inebriated Raven Reyes came through the door, crashing directly into Clarke’s body. Lexa raised her eyebrows, amused at the current state of her roommate. “Finn’s looking for you.” The new information caused Lexa’s face to change into a frown. She didn’t know who Finn was but if she had to guess, he was probably the guy, she had seen with Clarke around campus.

“Lexa! You came. You and parties… that’s a no, no, no,” she laughed at her own joke, stumbling with the counter when she tried to reach for a bottle of vodka. Clarke looked at the two of them.

“How do you know each other?”

“Yeaaaah, Clarke, Clarke, this is Lexa; the roommate.” Raven made a military salute before bursting into a fit of giggles. Not sure whether she was being mocked, Lexa stand in the corner awkwardly. Her defenses came back up and her brain began searching for excuses to leave.

“Raven, have you found her?” A voice’s called, soon after it materialized into your typical jock. Lexa was sure she had just gotten her cue to leave. “Oh hey, finally! I’ve been looking for you for ages. You said you were getting a beer.”

“Actually, it seems you sent the drunkest girl to look for me, Finn,” she retorted while trying to balance Raven and guiding her towards a chair.

“I’m sorry babe. I had to show the boys how it’s done.” He hugged her by the shoulders, kissing her on the temple. Clarke was too focused on Raven to care about her boyfriend’s ego.

“Okay Raven, we should take you back to your dorm. Lexa do you think…” She turned to look at the girl but she was no longer there. Clarke sighed tiredly. “Finn, do you think we can drive Raven back to her room?”

Finn touched the back of his neck nervously. “Uhmm… babe, I promised the boys I would go to a bar with them. That’s why I was looking for you, we’re heading out.”

Clarke wasn’t really in the mood to argue. “Fine, I’ll ask O.”

“You’re the best! I’ll call you tomorrow, okay? Maybe we can do lunch or something.”
“Sounds great,” Clarke answered with zero excitement in her voice. Finn pecked her quickly in the lips before running out of the kitchen, shouting to his friends. A snore warned Clarke that the tasked ahead would be more complicated than planned. She left searching for Octavia, confident that Raven wouldn’t turn out to be a missing person in the next minutes in her current state.

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Lexa made it out of the kitchen, avoiding having to face nauseating displays of affection. She wasn’t against them, only being a third wheel, and given Raven state she would’ve become one, was one of the most uncomfortable feelings ever. She made her way in the sea of drunken people, pushing and elbowing her way out towards the door, when she was halted by a petit brunette, she vaguely remembered.

“Hey” Was all she could muster, doing everything in her power to remember the girl’s name. The girl was about to speak when a roar and a mass of bodies began running to the entrance. A guy collapsed against Lexa’s shoulder, making her yelp. “Hey watch where you’re going, asshole!”

Her sudden outburst changed the concerned look on her one night stand into a wide smile. In that moment she decided to be Octavia, or at least apply some of Octavia’s bluntness. “Look, I don’t remember your name but I’m sure I could be yelling it by the end of the night.” The girl’s eyebrows shot to the sky, completely taken aback with what Lexa had just said. She quickly found her composure and replied. “Let’s get out of here.” She headed to the door, holding Lexa’s hand. “I’m Costia, by the way.”

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After half carrying, half dragging Raven to her building, Octavia and Clarke had finally made it to her room with only one minor fall. Clarke reached into Raven’s pocket, digging for her keys while supporting her with her body.

“Please tell me, we can at least make her sleep on the tub,” Octavia asked hopefully, she was really displeased when Clarke had found her and proceeded to interrupt her shots war with the girls from the soccer team. When she heard of Raven’s current situation, she nodded annoyed and followed Clarke, promising the girls she would get her revenge.

“No.” Clarke responded, finally opening the door and pushing it open with her shoulder. If she was being honest, she expected to find Lexa sleeping in there but the girl was nowhere to be found.

“Come on Octavia, a little help here.”

When they finally managed to settle Raven in the bed, she turned dangerously towards the edge, both girls exchange annoyed looks. They went back to the sleeping drunkard and managed to tuck her in, safely between the sheets.

“See, the tub was a better idea. No risk on her falling.”

“May I remind you, last time you were this drunk, Raven drove you all the way back to you parents house and sneaked you in through the window, while I distracted your idiot brother,” Clarke retorted.

“Hey, I’m the only one allowed to curse Bellamy,” Octavia said punching Clarke on the arm. “But you have a point. We should leave before she decides to wake up and forces us to hold her hair while she vomits. Or Lexa comes back and demands to take her back.”

“You know Lexa?” Clarke asked surprised.
“Yeah, yeah,” Octavia said dismissively, “she’s part of the team. I forced her to go to the party. She’s not back so maybe she is finally enjoying herself, for once. How do you know her?”

“I… I don’t. Not really… we sorta met a few weeks ago, but up until tonight I didn’t even knew her name.”

The other girl was looking at her curiously. “Clarke Griffin, do you have a crush on Lexa?”

“What? No!” she denied it a little too fast. Octavia shook her head but decided she was too tired to push on the matter. She made a mental note to invite Clarke to their rugby practice and see her reaction to Lexa’s fit body, running around in short and displaying a pair of great legs.

They left closing the door softly.

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The next day, Raven woke up with a pounding headache that felt as if someone was drilling into her brain. Opening her eyes, she found the familiar surrounding that were her room, looking towards her left side she expected to see Lexa sleeping soundly in her bed, only to realize it looked as if it hadn’t been slept on. She turned to her clock noticing it was only eight in the morning. Deciding she would worry about her roommate in a couple of hours, when the pain had lessened a bit. She rolled over and went back to sleep.

Three hours later, the shutting of the door woke her. Raven sat upright in her bed, a little too fast for her brain’s liking. She stared at Lexa who seemed like a deer caught in the headlights, her eyes bright and wide. “Alexandra Mara, are you doing the walk of shame?” Lexa’s perplexed face told her everything she needed to know. Raven burst into laughter, this was the first time she had seen the brunette with her guard completely down.

It took a couple more seconds for Lexa to gain back her bearings. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” she stated, walking across the room, heading for the bathroom with as much dignity as she could muster. This only resulted in another explosion of laughter from her roommate.

“Hey, don’t feel bad. I’m happy for you. Everyone needs some light entertainment, every now and then. Or was it rough?” Lexa’s astonished face resulted in even more laughter. A flashback of the night before popped into Raven’s head, halting her mirth. “Wait, it wasn’t Clarke you were with, right?”

Her roommate stopped searching in her closet for a clean outfit. That was an odd question, she was sure Clarke hadn’t come up in any of their conversations, apart from the quick introduction the night before. The mild interest she could’ve had for the blonde was definitely not something she had told anyone, yet. “Why would you say that?” she answered with a strange look on her face, going back to deciding what to wear.

“Well, I just remember that before I passed out, I was looking for Clarke and I found her, with you,” she said with an accusatory tone and a pointing finger.

“Yeah, we were talking but that was the second time I’ve seen her.” This wasn’t entirely true but revealing about the anxiety she felt when she saw Clarke or how she always walked the other way, to avoid the blonde, would definitely be more awkward than her current situation.

“So no, it wasn’t her.” She caught a glimpse of the time on Raven’s clock. “Shit, is that the time. Fuck, Lincoln is gonna kill me.” Without giving any more information of her nocturnal activities, she went into the bathroom and slammed the door shut.
Raven dropped back into her mattress considering going back to sleep once again. There was a gentle knock on the door. Getting up and stretching her limbs, she went to see who had prevented her from going back to sleep, yet again.

“Good morning sunshine!” A paper bag was shoved into her hands before Octavia and Clarke barged into the room without an invitation. Clarke placed two cups of coffee on her desk, before sitting on Raven’s bed. She glanced around the room, noticing Raven’s messy side and Lexa’s tidy, organized space, as well as, the unslept bed.

“Uhmm… Raven, did Lexa come home last night?” The engineer was currently shoving into her mouth the breakfast her friends had brought. That didn’t stop her from answering Clarke, mid-bite. “Nuh… Lexa just came back a couple minutes ago. Why’d you care?”

“No reason,” Clarke replied nonchalantly, masking her true feelings. Last night she had expected to find Lexa in her dorm so she could finally get an answer as to why she knew her name. She had been a little disappointed when they got there and the aforementioned girl wasn’t in the room. Today, the jealousy feeling hit her out of nowhere, leaving her confused as to why she cared about what the girl, she had spoken to, twice, did.

Octavia was about to make a comment when the door of the bathroom opened. Emerging fresh from her shower, with wet hair and casual clothes was Lexa. Drying her hair with a towel, she looked up surprised by the unannounced visits. Her eyes fell onto Clarke, who was absolutely enthralled with her and managed to turn the other way, just in time before Lexa became suspicious. Lexa, on her part, was too captivated by Clarke but her brain caught up with the situation. She blurted a couple of hellos and goodbyes and bolted out of the room, grabbing her phone on her way out.

Octavia laughed at her teammate’s reaction. “Well that was subtle,” she said ironically, “Did she say anything as to where she was?”

“Nope, only that she wasn’t with Clarke,” Raven replied, going back to devouring her breakfast, as if it was her last meal on Earth.

“Why would she be with me?” The blonde asked a bit offended to the implication of her cheating on her boyfriend.

This time, Raven swallowed before answering the question. She pointed at Lexa’s forgotten coffee, silently asking if she could drink it too. Clarke nodded and waited. “The last thing I remember is that you were talking to her, hence I jumped to conclusions, which Lexa promptly denied. Don’t worry Clarke, you’re still a prude.”

Clarke didn’t know which statement offended her the most. The fact that Lexa had probably considered the idea of them as laughable or being called a prude. “Hey, I’m not a prude.”

Octavia scoffed. “Whatever helps you sleep at night, Princess. Anyways, Reyes you better get ready now. If we want to get to my parents house by one, we need to get going.”

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Lexa managed to get to the café only 10 minutes late. Lincoln was already there, sitting on the corner and drinking some colourful beverage. Lexa cracked a smile at this; it was typical of Lincoln to order the weirdest thing on the menu. The look on his face showed that he was actually enjoying it.

“Do I even wanna know what you’re having?” she kissed him lightly on the cheek. She pulled the chair in front of his and took a seat. The man smiled widely at her, taking a few moments to examine Lexa.
“You had a late night,” he stated, calling the realization he had by just looking at Lexa. The girl instantly blushed. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” she retorted, noticeably embarrassed. Lincoln cackled genuinely and shook his head.

“If that is the case, you’re forgiven for being late.” Lexa grinned shyly, remaining silent. “You look good, Lex.”

“Thanks, you too.” A waitress approached the table, interrupting whatever Lexa was going to say next.

“Can I get you anything?” Lexa smiled sweetly at the girl, watching her a little longer than she was supposed to. The girl stared at her patiently. She scanned the menu quickly not sure on what to order.

“She’ll have one of these.” The man sitting across the table intervened, pointing at his drink. Lexa stared at him incredulously, turning to the waitress and nodding in agreement. The girl grinned at her.

“Coming right up.”

When she was gone, Lexa shot a furious look at Lincoln. “What?” he said, shrugging his shoulders, “you would’ve gotten something worse with how distracted you were.”

The constant teasing from Anya and Lincoln was one of the things she missed the most. Not seeing them on a daily basis was really scary at first. It took her a while but she got used to the idea of being on her own. Still, she was grateful both of them were only a phone call away and weekly e-mails were still exchanged between the trio. So, Lexa was grateful for the current teasing, despite making her extremely uncomfortable.

“You’re worse than Anya.”

“You love me.”

“You bug me.”

“Here you go, one Everyday Rainbow with a touch of coconut and lemon.” Lexa looked baffled at her drink. She grabbed the glass and smelled its content, it could be worse, she thought.

“I could get you something else, if you’d like.” The waitress chipped in, noticing the obvious chagrin of the girl towards the beverage.

“No, she’s good,” Lincoln jumped in, preventing Lexa from ordering something else. “You could give her your number though.” As soon as the words left his mouth, he winced in pain from the kicked he received on his shin.

“Uhmm… if you guys need anything else, I’ll be over there.” She pointed to the counter, retreating hurriedly unsure whether it was a joke or not.

“So how’s school? Make any friends yet?” he asked as if nothing had happened, clasping his hand on the table.

“School is school. I get along with my roommate. She’s a bit crazy and could blow us up, any day now.” Lincoln frowned. “No worries, is more likely I get hurt during a rugby match than from Raven’s experiments.”

“Lexa.” It always amazed how Lincoln could pull off the concerned dad so easily.

“I’m kidding, I’m kidding,” she raised her hands as a sign of surrender, “Octavia would first murder
“…so you go straight, then turn at the Ark and about 30 meters ahead…”

“Wait, what? The Ark, the same Ark that is downtown?” Realization hitting her, like a storm. “You live here?” Lincoln grinned at Lexa’s excitement.

“What about Anya?” she asked, slightly concerned for the older woman.

“Lexa, Anya is a grown-ass woman that is completely capable of taking care of herself. Besides, we were getting on each other’s nerves, these past few months. Apparently, you were the referee of peace in that household. And, she was glad one of us would be close by. I mean, we were a phone call away but still, we preferred if one of us is in the same city as you. I hope you don’t think we’re prying into your college life. I know it seems overprotective of us but you’re the youngest and…”

Lexa placed one hand softly over Lincoln’s, stopping his rambling. Her eyes were filled with tears, threatening to spill. She took a shaky breath, trying to compose herself. After all these years, she still got emotional whenever Anya and Lincoln acted as if they were family. In a way, they were. There was no blood relation but Lexa had learned a long time ago that family was a lot more than just nature. And having two people care for her, as much as the two of them did, continue to amaze her. She always wondered what she had done to deserve them.

“Thank you.” Those words spoke for more than just now and he knew it. Lincoln looked directly into her eyes, sincere and vulnerable. He leaned over and embraced her tightly.

“Hey, I got you kid,” he said softly, kissing the top of her head. Lexa melted into his arms feeling safe.

A couple of minutes passed with neither one saying much. It was a comfortable silence only interrupted by Lincoln’s phone buzzing. He picked it up, checking the text he had just received.

“As much as I want to hear all about your latest conquest, I have to go to work.” He asked for the check. Lexa rolled her eyes. The waitress placed the bill on the table, winking at Lexa before going back behind the counter. Lincoln picked it up and snorted at the paper. He grabbed some money, putting it on the table before handing Lexa the bill.

“You’re welcome. Don’t be a stranger. And please call Anya; I don’t think I can handle another discussion on tampons.” He hugged her goodbye. Lexa smiled, watching him leave. She looked down at the paper, noticing the scribbles on it, it read the name Laura and a phone number underneath. She averted her eyes to the waitress, who was tending some customers and smiled at her.

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They boys were already there. Monty, Jasper and Bellamy were hanging by the pool, getting the grill ready and goofing around. It was autumn so the pool was covered, to avoid having to remove the leaves once spring came. Either way, the Blake’s was the perfect place for the all to have some fun, cook a barbecue and maybe get a bit drunk. Their parents had gone on a little holiday, asking the
siblings to check on the house. Which to them meant having a little get together with their friends.

Despite being October, the weather was kind to them. The sun was shining with a couple clouds painting the sky. Clarke loved days like these. Mornings warm enough to stay outside and chilly afternoons with some wind blowing. Not cold enough to freeze your nose and ears.

“Finally, these two are about to kill each other.” Bellamy pointed to Jasper and Monty, who were smacking each other. Monty was holding what looked like a remote over his head and Jasper was jumping and pushing him, trying to reach it.

Raven walked the short distance towards the two of them. She took Monty’s distraction as an opportunity and snatched it quickly out his hand. “I’m in charge of the music.” The boys looked at her perplexed but didn’t argue. Everyone else smiled at her antics.

“There, problem solved.” Octavia went inside the house, leaving Clarke with Bellamy.

“You came,” he stated looking sideways at her. He continued to move around the coal to get a decent fire for the meat and vegetables. Clarke came closer and began taking the food from the bags she was carrying; placing it in the table next to the grill.

“Why wouldn’t I?” she asked surprised at his statement. She liked Bellamy, much like his sister, he didn’t beat around the bush, he didn’t beat around the bush. He called it as he saw it, and Clarke was grateful for how straightforward he was. Having to guess what people were thinking, wasn’t something she cared too much on doing. Most of the time, she just thought of those kinds of people as presumptuous.

“Le boyfriend,” he answered in his best French accent. Clarke laughed at his dreadful attempt.

“He’s coming over later.”

“Oooh!” He mockingly bowed, earning a punch in the arm and food thrown at his head.

“Hey! We’re eating that!” Octavia yelled. She was carrying plates and glasses in a tray, as well as, more food that she set on the outside table. Clarke threw one more grape at Bellamy.

“Hey O! I thought you were inviting a girl from your team.” Both Monty and Jasper stopped chasing each other around, when they heard the possibility of one of Octavia’s fit teammates coming.

“Yeah, Lexa. She’s also Raven’s roommate but left before I could even ask. Next time.” The guys slouched disappointed and resumed chasing each other around Raven. The girl was doing her best to ignore them, while setting up the music. Octavia was not so patient.

“Okay, both of you. Knock it off,” she grabbed one ear each, effectively separating them. She handed Jasper a spatula and pushed Monty towards the table. “Help.”

“But mum!” They said in unison, high fiving at their synchrony. A big commotion made everyone shift their attention towards the backyard door, which suddenly opened revealing some guys, among which was Finn. Just like the day before, they entered yelling and jumping. Clarke wondered if they were still a bit drunk. They also were carrying six packs and bags, which by the sound of the clinking, contained more bottles.

“Hey baby!” Finn approached them, stumbling on his feet. His eyes were a little out of focus. Clarke groaned internally. Finn usually got a bit handsy whenever he was tipsy. He tried to kiss her lips but only caught her cheek, he frowned disappointed.

“Bellamy, my man!”
“How you doin’ Finn?” Bellamy saluted Finn, nodding with his head.

“Did you drive here?” The sight of her boyfriend’s friend in a similar state to his, concerning her a bit.

“No, no,” he slurred, dismissing her with his hand, “Wick, drove us.” He pointed at a guy who was just coming in, looking slightly disoriented at his surroundings. He waved his hand shyly, putting it down awkwardly.

“Hi. I hope I’m not intruding or anything. Finn said it was okay if I came.” Were his first words once he reached the grill.

“It’s fine buddy! Right, Blake?” Finn dismissed his friend’s concern. Bellamy nodded his head. He cleaned his hand with a towel and extended to shake the newcomer’s hand.

“I’m Bellamy. Please to meet you.” He smiled genuinely and the guy relaxed a bit.

“Wick,” he turned to Clarke and extended his hand, “You must be Clarke, right?” She nodded with a tight smile. “I’m sorry about him, I didn’t know they were coming here, otherwise I wouldn’t have cut them short earlier. Anyways, I offer to drive them but I don’t want to overstay my welcome.”

“No, you should stay. Eat something, is the least we can do for driving them safely.”

“So, are we eating or what? I’m starving!” Raven had managed to rid herself from Finn’s friends, who were in a similar state of intoxication. She smiled at the guy, standing awkwardly next to Clarke.

“Hi, I’m Raven.” He was completely dumbfounded by the girl’s beauty. Clarke came quickly at his rescue.

“Raven, this is Wick.” Raven looked at him curiously not sure what to make of the new guy.

“Are you drunk?”

He denied with his head, not trusting his brain into formulating a coherent phrase or even words for that matter. The latina had definitely caused an impression.

“Do you speak?” Was her next question. She tilted her head a little, still trying to figure out what was his deal. He cleared his throat.

“Sometimes,” he mentally smacked himself. Raven looked at him amused. She winked before going over to Octavia, with a little bounce in her step. The other girl was currently instructing Monty on how to set the table.

Jasper arrived moments later holding his spatula. He greeted Wick and awaited Bellamy’s instructions. Every time Bellamy told him to do something, he would barge Yes, chef accompanied with a military salute before doing what he was told.

A half an hour later, they had a decent amount of cooked food and were ready to devour all of it.

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“Finn, they could walk in any minute,” Clarke scolded her boyfriend who was currently trying to remove her shirt. They were in the living room while everyone else was outside preparing a bonfire. Finn had somehow managed to get her alone. He hadn’t stopped drinking throughout the day and
was currently acting on pure sexual instinct. Clarke attempted to remove his hands yet again but the boy didn’t relented.

“Oh come on Clarke. No one is here. I missed you,” he said, kissing her neck sloppily. She rolled her eyes at his advances. “I just want to show you how much.” He pressed his crutch against her jeans, as if making a point on how horny he was.

“Look you’re drunk and I’m really not in the mood.” She got off his lap and straightened her clothes. He grabbed her wrist, pulling her to him. “Don’t be such a bitch.” Up until this moment, she had controlled her temper even tolerated his drunkenness. She could feel the rage rising in her chest. Taking a breath to control her anger, she clenched her jaw before speaking.

“Ever since you arrived I’ve been patient with you. I would’ve liked for you to stop drinking but I didn’t say anything because I’m not your babysitter. If you want to drink that’s fine, I won’t prohibit you. But I expect you do the same for me.”

“I’m sorry babe.” He began kissing her stomach, once again. Clarke took a step back completely baffled. “I’m serious Finn. No.”

“Why do always have to be such an uptight? I know you enjoy sex with me.” Of course he believed that, nowhere in his male ego could he actually think that Clarke thought sex with him was ok, not even close to great. She didn’t mind sex, whenever he wasn’t drunk or in a place where anyone could come in any minute.

“Maybe, when you’re actually capable of lasting more than two minutes.” She didn’t mean to sound so harsh but Finn had a way of pushing her buttons.

“Fuck you, Clarke.” He got off the sofa, bumping against her shoulder on his way out. Clarke sighed.

Truth to be told, when they first started dating, Finn was everything she could ask in a boyfriend. He was sweet, gentlemanly, and maybe a little too eager to get in her pants but she allowed it because there was some physical attraction as well. When he started hanging out with Murphy and some other boys, he began partying more, drinking more and even gambling. She thought it would eventually blow over and he would realize they were the wrong crowd. Now, she wasn’t so sure the problem would go away by itself. She wanted to help him. She just didn’t know how or whether Finn wanted her help. Whenever she brought up the topic, he would either ignore her or stumble out in a rage, shouting about trust and her not being his mother.

When she finally went out, she noticed the shift in the mood in the air and Finn sitting on the far end, sulking. Raven and Octavia, both turned to her asking silently if everything was ok. She mouthed a later and forced a grin on her face.

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“So, when are you gonna break up with him?”

Clarke remained looking straight ahead, focusing on the road. It was late, they were heading back to the city and she was the designated driver since she had almost nothing to drink. Octavia poked her arm, encouraging her to answer. Raven stared at her anxiously from the backseat.

“I… it’s not that simple. He needs help.” She wanted to call it quits. She had long known their relationship was doomed but she couldn’t make herself do it. Not while seeing him falling apart before her eyes. Octavia grabbed her hand reassuringly.
“He doesn’t want your help. You’ve tried. You can’t let him drag you down as well.”

“It won’t go that far.”

“It will, honey,” she said tightening softly the hold in her hand. Clarke smiled sadly with watering eyes. Raven pressed a reassuring hand in her shoulder.
Lexa arrived at her dorm. She smiled at the sight in front of her. Octavia was sprawled all over Raven’s bed, reading some magazine. On second inspection, Lexa realized it was actually a history journal. The first time she had seen Octavia reading one of those, Lexa was extremely confused. Upon getting to know the girl, she discovered one of her passions was history so whenever she was in her dorm, she would grab some of Lexa’s material from her classes and skimmed through them. She was particularly keen on war strategies and how they had developed over time. Darting her eyes at the other end of the room, where a little homemade lab was set up for Raven, where her roommate and Clarke were working, the latter was wearing safety glasses. Lexa couldn’t help to think she looked cute in them.

Clarke turned at the sound of the closing door, smiling widely at Lexa. Raven was too enthralled at the task at hand to acknowledge her. She only turned towards her once she finished welding. She put down the tool and pushed her welding helmet up. She brushed the sweat of her forehead, smiling proudly at her job. Lexa simply raised her eyebrows questioning, moving further into the room.

A few days after the party, she had noticed Clarke and Octavia were spending a lot of time in her and Raven’s dorm. Apparently, if your captain and roommate are friends, is only natural your quarters become the designated hanging out place. If said people have a hot blonde friend, she too becomes part of the deal. Or at least, that’s what Lexa thought and why she didn’t mind them being over there all the time. She was still guarded but couldn’t deny she enjoyed the other girls company.

She threw her backpack on her bed. She was exhausted so she went over her drawers to take out her pajamas to call it a night. Octavia jumped out of Raven’s bed, rushing to her side and taking her t-shirt from her hand.

“Oh, no, no, no. We’re having none of that,” she told her, throwing the t-shirt next to her backpack, “we were actually waiting for you. We are going out.” Lexa stared at her serenely. “Don’t look at me like that Lexa. We’re going out, whether you want it or not.” She quirked an eyebrow but remained silent. Octavia tilted her head and Lexa finally cracked a tiny smile.

“Fine, just for a few hours though.” Octavia pounced at her, embracing her in a bear hug. Lexa rolled her eyes. Her eyes met blue and she could’ve sworn her heart skipped a beat. Later she would reason she was imagining things. “Ok, that’s enough, let’s roll.” Without giving the girls a second glance, she went through the doors for the others to follow. Clarke smiled at her on her way out while Raven shoved her out.

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“Cheers ladies!” Clinking their shots, they all downed them in one gulp. “Another!” Raven yelled over the sound of the music, going over to the bar to get more tequila.

“So Lexa, those guys over there haven’t stopped looking this way.” Octavia pointed to some dudes that weren’t too subtle, glancing at them with obvious lust. Lexa was used to this sort of behaviour but still found it irksome. Lucky, or rather unlucky, she glanced at them at the same time one had decided to invite himself over. “Here we go,” she muttered lowly. Clarke chuckled into her drink.

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attention to the guy but analyzing her friend’s actions. That was until one of the friends came over and began speaking directly to her.

“So, if I had to rate you from 1-10, I would rate you as a 9 because I am the one that you are missing.” The look of absolute disgust on Octavia’s face was priceless. The poor guy even retreated a few steps but his friend came to his rescue, or at least, he tried. “Excuse my friend; he obviously doesn’t know that you must be from Tennessee! Because you are the only ten I see!”

The three girls exchanged looks of bewilderment. A couple of seconds later, they burst into laughter. The boys tried to laugh along but one look from Octavia, was all it took for them to be goners.

“What I’d miss?” Raven asked, putting four shots of tequila in the middle of the table.

“Same old, studs throwing bad pick up lines, thinking they are actually clever.”

“In that case, we gotta hit the floor to show them, why they should make an effort. Originality has never killed anyone, people!” she shouted at no one in particular, but gaining some amused looks from others around them. The other girls grabbed a shot each and downed it.

“Let’s go,” Clarke took her hand, making Lexa’s fingers tingle with the contact. She allowed the other girl to pull her to the dance floor, where she let go of her hand and began dancing with the music’s rhythm. Lexa immediately missed the soft skin against her own.

Once again some jocks attempted to dance with them. A tall sturdy guy began grinding against Clarke. She separated herself from him but he wouldn’t take a hint. Lexa acting on instinct grabbed Clarke by the waist and pulled her over towards her. The blonde was feeling a little lightheaded already and feeling Lexa’s warm body rubbing her sensually definitely did not help. She knew the girl was only doing it to ward off the guy but Clarke couldn’t help pushing back against the brunette’s hips. They continued dancing against one another until he finally left. Lexa almost felt disappointed when he turned around and Clarke stopped dancing. She turned to face her, nearing her lips to her ear and murmuring an almost inaudible thanks, causing a shiver to travel down her spine. She simply nodded curtly.

That night while lying on her bed, Lexa had to remind herself that Clarke had a boyfriend.

Was Clarke her friend? Maybe. At least an almost friend. Therefore, Clarke was off limits. The memory of Clarke grinding against her, fresh in her mind, would definitely make everything harder.

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Lexa stared absentmindedly around the café. She came here whenever she was behind on an assignment and needed to finish it soon. The twenty minute walk from campus, under the chilly winds of November, announcing an early winter, was worth it once inside with a cup of coffee. She usually sat at the corner, were she could see most of the café but remain guarded and undisturbed behind a pillar.

Unfortunately, today she couldn’t concentrate on her essay due the next day. Her laptop, a couple books and some sheets were scattered all over the table, haphazardly. A cup filled with cold coffee, long forgotten, next to them.

For some reason, her mind kept wandering back to the night at the bar. Particularly, to Clarke’s hand guiding her towards the dance floor. She didn’t understand as to why, it hadn’t been an earth shattering moment, and maybe that was the reason it puzzled her even more. A simple, almost innocent and meaningless moment, had spurred in her a feeling she could only describe as soothing.
She couldn’t even remember the music pounding in her ears or the bodies she brushed as she passed by, only Clarke’s hand enveloping her own and pulling softly.

The barista shouting someone’s order brought her out of her dazed. The pointer at her screened, which remained where she had stopped writing fifteen minutes ago, kept ticking, mocking her. She groaned internally, she put aside all her thoughts and funnelled all her energy to finishing her essay. She set a deadline on her head and went back to work.

A few hours later, she finally pressed one last dot into her paper. She dropped her glasses on the table. Stretching her arms and moving her neck around, she glanced around the café. None of the customers she had first spotted remain, and it was obviously late since very few people were still hanging around. She stared the time on her computer, 9:45 pm. Looking down at her phone, she saw a pair of missed calls and a bunch of messages from Anya, probably scolding her for not answering. She closed her eyes, allowing them to rest a little. When she opened them, Clarke was standing in front of her, with two cups of coffee to go and an amused expression. Lexa blinked rapidly, making sure she wasn’t imagining things.

“I was going to come over sooner but I didn’t want to interrupt. You seemed really focused,” she explained with her raspy voice. Lexa stared at her dumbfounded for a moment too long before remembering she had to speak.

“Oh! Yeah, I was working.” No shit, smartass.“My essay is due tomorrow,” she added trying to safeguard her dignity.

“Good thing I didn’t come over then.” Lexa was taken aback by the implication of Clarke’s words. Maybe it was the slight hesitation or the tone in which the words were spoken. And then it hit her, she had just witnessed a hint of Clarke’s insecurities. She could almost hear the blonde’s thoughts, regretting coming over.

“I would’ve loved the distraction,” she reassured her, smiling brightly. Relief washed over Clarke’s face, a smile of her own, threatening to escape her lips.

“In that case, I’m sorry I didn’t come over sooner.” Lexa was surprised as how quickly Clarke had shoved her self-consciousness aside, going back to her confident demeanour.

“You’ve been here long?”

“An hour or so, I saw you when I came in. You were so deep in thought I decided against coming right over. Then I got caught up sketching; next thing I know its dark outside.” She then realized she was still holding the two cups of coffee. “Uhhh… this is for you, you haven’t touched yours in hours, and it’s probably already sour milk.” Great Clarke, why don’t you just confess you have been watching her all this time?

“Thanks.” Not sure what to make off the gesture. A waiter warned them the café was about to close. Lexa put away her stuff before grabbing the cup from Clarke.

Once outside, they stood awkwardly next to one another, not sure what to do next.

“Well, thanks for the coffee.” She wrapped her arms around herself, careful not to spill the cups contents on her clothes and regretting not having put on something warmer apart from her hoodie. She began walking away at a quicker space, already planning on shortening her twenty minute walk. A hand grabbed her arm, effectively spinning her around.

“My car is over there,” Clarke pointed to the parking lot, “I’ll drive you.”
“No it’s okay, it’s only a…”

“Lexa is freezing and honestly I don’t want to be blame for your dead. Raven is too fond of you.” Lexa smiled gratefully, giving in and following the blonde to her car.

A comfortable silence settled between them, the radio playing softly in the background. It was only interrupted by Lexa’s phone buzzing, startling the brunette. She quickly dismissed the call, without even looking at who it was before shoving it back into her pocket.

“Sorry,” she mustered. Seconds later it began ringing again, looking apologetically at Clarke, she answered it. Pressing the phone into her ear, she closed her eyes, waiting for Anya to speak. The woman didn’t even said hello, launching straight into her rant, giving her an earful.

*We have rules Lexa, no more than four hours. If I call, you have to report back to me. You can’t dismiss my call. We have an agreement Lexa and if you don’t want Lincoln checking up on you, you better follow through.*

“I’m sorry. I was working and I’m… I can’t talk right now. Can I call you when I get to my dorm?” Lexa prayed Anya would hang up without putting up a fight.

*You better come up with a very good reason or a convincing excuse kid.*

Lexa put the phone down, sighing tiredly. Suddenly, her body felt heavy and all she wanted to do was crawl into bed and sleep. Clarke glanced at her, a bit concern in the sudden shift of Lexa’s mood.

“How are things with your mum?” Clarke asked warily. This was the first time she had witnessed Lexa interacting with other people rather than herself or her friends. Naturally, she was a bit curious.

“No.” Lexa didn’t mean to sound harsh. Only her defenses were up and she couldn’t help it. Anya and Lincoln were sort of a confined topic in her mind. She decided to ask a question of her own, if only to dissipate the tension.

“How are things with your mum?” Lexa didn’t elaborate any further, and Clarke didn’t push her to relent any information. Not tonight.

*A week ago*

Clarke stormed into the room, rambling and speaking way too fast for anyone to understand what she was saying. It was easy to notice she was pissed off at something, or rather someone. She stopped mid sentence when she realized it was only Lexa in the room.

“I thought Rae was here.” Lexa peered at her from behind her book. She wondered how Clarke still looked mighty fine with a flush face and a pulsing vein in her forehead.

“It’s ok. She went to the store.” Her words hinting so much more. Clarke chuckled softly at the implication.

*For the past couple of weeks, Raven had gone to the store, almost on a daily basis. At first, they thought she had ordered something and was going to check upon whether it had arrived. That was until Octavia spotted her, nowhere near the supply store but sitting on the benches, making out with Wick. Fortunately, she didn’t confront the girl immediately, so when Clarke and Lexa heard the story, they prevented her from it. They convinced her Raven would tell them, whenever she was*
“Right, in that case, I’ll come back later.”

“Before she could think twice, words where coming out of Lexa’s mouth. “You’re welcome to wait here. Or you can talk to me if you’d like,” she added nervously, not sure what had compelled her to speak. Perhaps, it was seeing Clarke so distressed or maybe she didn’t want the blonde to leave. Looking up, she saw Clarke standing by the entrance, shuffling on her feet. Lexa was sure Clarke was debating how to let her down easily. A feeling of sadness rushed throughout her body at the prospect of rejection from Clarke. Maybe, she had been to fast jumping to the conclusion they were in fact friends.

“My mum’s great, I love her. She’s a doctor so she can get a bit overprotective. When my dad died, she became even more so. She’s in constant fear something might happen to me. One of the reasons I came here, it sounds awful... but I guess I needed some breathing space. She didn’t speak to me for weeks when I told her. She said I was abandoning her and that I could just as easily study medicine in my state university or somewhere nearby. Then when I said it was art school I thought she would never speak to me again. Anyways, she got over herself but I get weekly calls, texts and e-mails of her, trying to persuade me to reconsider.”

She took a deep breath, before going over Raven’s bed and sitting down. Lexa wasn’t sure what to say. She had no parental experience whatsoever, so she didn’t think she could give any real advice. Clarke had her head resting on her hands, dejected. It was obvious, this situation had happened one too many times.

Lexa shifted uncomfortably in her seat, not sure what to say. Parents weren’t exactly her forte and she couldn’t possible think of a single thing she might say to make Clarke feel better. Suddenly, she remembered her meeting with Lincoln at the café. She breathed deeply still uncertain on whether she should say anything at all.

“Well, of course she worries and probably wants to take all the harm or pain you could get. At the end of the day, I think she only means well. You should explain your feelings and allow her to tell you hers. Maybe, she is just trying to tell you that she will always have your back, no matter what.” She was not sure her words would help at all, so she waited for Clarke’s reaction.

Lexa’s words were filled with sorrow, yet they sounded so honest. Once she found courage to look up, all Clarke was able to see the green eyes staring at her kindly.

“Hey, Lexa help me out a little.” They both jumped startled, their little moment broken. Raven couldn’t have a worse timing. She hated the fact, she wouldn’t know if her words had comforted the blonde, if only a little. Raven looked suspiciously, narrowing her eyes at Clarke.

“Well, I thought about what you said. You were right, it’s natural she is preoccupied. I talked to her yesterday. She seemed to understand my perspective so we’re kind of in the middle.”

“That’s good.”
The rest of the ride, both of them were silent, engaged in their own thoughts.

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“Alright girls, we’re gonna kick some ass today. We’re gonna show those bitches from Jersey what the grass tastes like in Michigan!” The girls in the room cheered and roared at Octavia’s words. “Dirt will come out of their asses ‘till the next century. We are gonna make them regret coming all the way over here. Tomorrow none of those girls will be able to walk properly.” Lockers were being slammed at this point. Octavia put her hands in the air, silencing the locker room. “Remember, pass safe, move fast and tackle hard. LET’S GO! GONNA WIN THIS MOTHERFUCKER!” The girls howled, screamed, cheered and clapped, running out to the field.

Today was Lexa’s first official game. She would be lying if she said she wasn’t nervous. Her skills were good, despite having only trained for a couple months but she ran fast and was good at taking people down. The fact that she had to protect other people, scared her shitless. She had fought plenty on her own, and up until now no one had ever really depended on her. She promised she would do her best. Lexa took a big breath before following the rest of the team.

Clarke watched from the stands as the team came out. She saw Octavia running out in the field; she looked as if she was preparing for battle rather than a rugby game. Looking at the other team’s faces, Clarke thought maybe they were in fact going to war. Searching around the rest of the girls, she tried to spot Lexa but the brunette hadn’t come out yet.

At first, when Octavia had invited Raven and herself to the game, she had declined, arguing she was behind her work and she would rather spend her Saturday morning catching up. Then her eyes fell upon Lexa and she caught a flash of disappointment crossed her eyes, which was gone as quickly as it had appeared. She then remembered Lexa was in the team as well. Lexa in shorts, with a tight shirt. Sweating and cursing. She didn’t let her mind wander more. “I guess I could finish afterwards.” She agreed on going on the condition Octavia wouldn’t mop for a week if they lost.

“Lose? The fuck is that?”

So, here she was with a ton of work back in her dorm but waiting expectantly to see a girl she had barely spoken too and knew very little about, kick some ass.

“Here you go dork,” Raven shoved a beer in her hand. The girl then proceeded to sit down, while balancing a massive amount of food which consisted of popcorn, nachos and hot-dogs, as well as, her own beer.

“Am I getting any of that?” Clarke asked pointing at the food, her stomach grumbling.

Raven seemed aghast at the suggestion of giving away some of her precious food, only reconsidering when she saw Clarke’s begging eyes. “Fine, but you’re getting refills at half-time.” Clarke nodded, taking the hot-dog from Raven and biting it immediately. The other girl began scouting the field.

“Where’s Lexa?”

Clarke shrugged, preferring a silent answer while eating. She searched the field again; suddenly, a new figure appeared at the edge of the field. Clarke’s heart began beating faster. She knew it was rude to ogle someone but she couldn’t help to stare at Lexa’s tanned legs and her fit body, filling the uniform in all the right places. For a moment, she forgot to chew. Raven punched her lightly on the ribs with her elbow, causing the girl to almost choked on her bite.

“You’re staring,” Raven said mockingly.
Lexa’s eyes searched the field, reaching the stands where she saw Raven sitting next to Clarke. If she was nervous in the locker room, she became a complete wreck at the prospect of making a fool of herself in front of Clarke. Their eyes met for the briefest of moments, she smiled tightly, trying to compose herself. When the eye contact was broken with the blonde, a familiar figure caught her eye. A couple of rows below the two girls, Lincoln sat alone drinking a beer, when he felt her watching him, he looked up. He sent a thumbs up her way, smiling. Lexa waved and smiled brightly at him, before turning and heading where Octavia was giving the team last minute instructions. If the brunette had looked back at Clarke, she would’ve noticed the frown caused by her interaction with Lincoln.

“He’s probably a friend.” Raven too had noticed it. She was going to further comment on it, curiosity peaking in, but Clarke’s reaction made her decide against it. She was actually surprised someone had come to see Lexa since she had never talked about any of her friends, the entire time they had shared a room.

Both girls were able to keep up with the game. Octavia had almost indoctrinated them on the subject so lineups, scrums and tries weren’t foreign concepts. Neither of the girls was too keen on seeing their friends getting hit but still they wanted to be there for moral support, whatever that meant.

It took them a few minutes to realize that Octavia and Lexa were amazing at it, almost in perfect sync with each other. The rest of the team appeared to be following whatever the other two girls were attempting, which gained them a couple of tries. These, didn’t go unnoticed by the rival team which soon targeted Lexa, trying to get at her as much as possible. The brunette soon enough was being tackle to the ground far more times than she had expected, only causing her to get more angry every time she hit the ground. Octavia too, seemed pissed. Despite the slight inconvenience of her best player, developing a rapid long term relationship with the floor, the two finally managed to score a try, a few seconds before the end of the first half. When the referee blew his whistle, Raven simply extended her empty can to Clarke, shaking it in front of her face.

Coming back to her seat, she saw the guy Lexa had saluted earlier. He was on the phone, ushering quick words. “Yeah, yeah, she’s fine. Anya calm down, nothing will happen to her. Yeah, I promise… I know… she knows how I feel. Ok… I’ll tell her. Gotta go, she’s going back in. Bye.” Clarke walked fast towards her seat, not wanting to get caught eavesdropping. She wasn’t sure what to make up from what she’d just heard.

Lexa darted running towards number 5. The girl seemed to have a personal vendetta against her and she was going to make sure the girl would remember her vividly. Once the girl grabbed the ball, Lexa ran straight to her, tackling her with all her force. She felt great satisfaction when she heard the girl’s body hit the ground. Octavia was right behind her and went forward, effectively stealing the ball. As soon as the brunette began running towards their end zone, Lexa got back on her feet, following after her captain. Some ten meters ahead, Octavia was tackled. She prevented a girl from the other team to steal the ball and soon after it was back on play, with the girls from their team passing it quickly. When the ball fell on her hands, she didn’t think twice and began running straight ahead. She darted to the right when she saw a girl attempting to stop her, evading her swiftly. Octavia was running a few meters behind her, when another girl went for the tackle Lexa sent a pass to her left, which Octavia easily caught. Recovering quickly, she assisted Octavia. Once again the captain ran ahead and deceived the rival team with a fake pass. A girl caught her almost at the scoring line but the brunette released the pass to Lexa seconds before hitting the ground, yet again. Lexa made one last sprint of the last couple of meters, reaching the end zone and throwing her entire body towards it. This time, she fell smoothly on her stomach with a wide smile on her face. She got up when the referee blew the whistle, signaling the end of the game, ready to celebrate the victory. Suddenly, her eye caught a flash of movement to her right. Before she could even react, she felt the blow to her right side, her head hitting the ground with a loud thud seconds after.
A collective gasp travelled around the stadium.

Lincoln, Clarke and Raven all got to their feet at the same time, running towards Lexa’s body lying on the ground.

Octavia had gotten there in matter of seconds. “What the fuck is your problem?” She pushed the offending girl to the side, glaring but controlling her temper so she would not punch her in the face. Kneeling down next to Lexa, she noticed the brunette had her eyes open but was stunned.

“Hey, you okay?” Her voice came out in a whisper, genuine concern showing for her teammate. A group had formed around Lexa, who remained on the ground. She slowly began getting back to her senses, her head hurt and she could almost focus Octavia’s face. She nodded slightly, regretting immediately when she felt a sharp pain in her brain.

“Don’t move.” Lexa shut her eyes, in an attempt to make Octavia stop spinning. When she opened them, a double Lincoln was crouching above her with a worry look on his face. The paramedics got there and everyone but Lincoln backed off so they could check Lexa.

Clarke remained by Raven but couldn’t tear off her eyes from Lincoln and Lexa’s holding hands. He seemed genuinely preoccupied by the mild concussion and wouldn’t let her stand until the paramedics cleared her.

“That fucking bitch, she better be gone cause if I see her…” Octavia appeared by their side, furious as if she had been on the receiving end of that tackle.

“How’s Lexa?” Raven’s interruption of her rant effectively caused Octavia to calm down a bit.

“She’s fine, mild concussion. Its rugby so we’ve all seen worse but still… they won’t take her to the hospital since she didn’t pass out. Only that fucking bitch hit her when Lexa was off guard. She could’ve been seriously injured… Oh I swear if I see her…” Clarke placed her hand on Octavia’s arm, pointing towards Lexa who was finally getting up, supporting herself from the well built guy.

“Who’s he?” Curiosity getting the best of Clarke. Both Raven and Octavia shook their heads. The three friends came near the pair; upon reaching their destination a voice behind their backs stopped them.

“Hey Clarke!” A way too cheerful Finn was crossing the field, waving at them. He came tottering, unsteady on his feet. Clarke grumbled aware she had to face the inevitable.

“You want me to come along?” Raven whispered in her ear.

“No, I have to get this over with. I’ll meet you guys at the bar, please have some shots ready for me.” Raven patted her lightly on the back, following after Octavia.

Finn pecked her, Clarke pushed him back lightly. He was taken aback for a second but he kept on smiling. “Hello baby! I’ve missed you. Are we finally gonna get down to it?” The blonde contained her impulse to roll her eyes, trying to get over with this as quick as possible.

“We should talk somewhere.” She began walking away, Finn stood there for a couple of seconds, reacting suddenly and following his girlfriend not exactly sure on what to expect.

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Lexa saw the interaction between the two. A bizarre feeling travelled down her body; the girl simply associated with the recent stroke to the head, despite it had felt more like a pang in her stomach.
Unsure on how she felt, she turned to Lincoln who was watching her expectantly as if waiting for her to pass out at any minute.

“Lincoln, I’m fine.” He looked uncertain but quit inspecting her persona.

“Is my head rolling if something happens to you, you know? I’m only looking after myself,” he joked, leaning his body lightly against her. She punched him in return, which only caused him to grin.

“Hey Commander, you ok?” Lincoln quirked his eyebrow at Lexa, the girl sent a deadly stare his way, preventing him to say anything.

“All clear. The nerve of that girl though…” Despite the blow, she knew perfectly well who had hit her. She wasn’t one to hold grudges but she too could play dirty. “She better watch her back.” Octavia smiled proudly, Lincoln sighed dejectedly. Lexa was too stubborn once an idea got into her mind.

“Yeah, we’re totally getting back at her but not today. Today, we celebrate!” She grabbed Lexa by the arm, guiding her into the locker room. “Wait, we haven’t been introduced. I’m Octavia. This is Raven.” She signaled to the girl, who stood behind her.

“Lincoln,” he said extending his hand for Octavia and Raven to shake.

“Well, Lincoln you’re more than welcome to join us. I’m sure Lexa wants to celebrate with you. We’ll be right back.” Lexa’s eyes were wide open, knowing full well what Octavia was implying. The man stood there, just as confused. He knew Lexa would be opposed to the idea of him tagging along. He would’ve been against as well but he didn’t have to look at Octavia twice to know he would be a fool if let her go.

“Sure, I’ll wait in the parking lot.” He was sure Lexa would have objected if Octavia hadn’t dragged her out of the field, Raven following suit.

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Once they reached an isolated place, out of everyone’s earshot, Clarke took a deep breath, turning to face Finn. She couldn’t stop fidgeting so she placed her hands in her jacket pockets, in an attempt to ground herself.

“I thought we were going to your room.” The boy clearly had some a different idea on his mind, of what their Saturday would consist of.

“You need help Finn.” She went straight to the point, not wanting to delay this any longer. The boy stared at her dumbfounded, processing her words.

“Help? Well, you can help me out. In your room,” he wiggled his eyebrows. Obviously, in his mind was following a different path where everything was funny or sexual.

Clarke had lost all her patience at this point. “I’m not having sex with you. Not now…”

“Why not? It’s been ages and every time I want to, you either turn me down or have some excuse.” He was right, Clarke had been avoiding his advances, partly because she wanted to end the relationship but also because the last time, he had been too drunk to get an erection and had lashed out at her.

“Because you are drunk. You’re always drunk. And frankly I don’t want to relive what happened
the last time…”

“Well I’m sorry if you aren’t sexy enough to turn me on.”

Clarke knew that in his current state, Finn would say anything without thinking. It didn’t prevent his words to strike a nerve, her eyes became watery but she would be damned if she let any tears spill in front of him.

“You need help. You won’t let me help you. You insult me and expect me to forgive you time and time again. I can’t do this anymore Finn,” she said dejectedly.

“So what are you saying that we are over? Is that what you’re saying?” he barked, out of control. Clarke stepped back a little. “You know what? Fine, why would I want to be with someone that wants to control me? Fuck you Clarke.” He stormed away, shaking with ire.

Clarke let out a shaky breath. She walked a couple meters when she reached the wall, sliding to the floor trembling. She knew it had to be done, still, it hurt. Even if she didn’t love Finn, he was a good guy making the wrong decisions. When they first started dating there was a time in which she thought he could be the one. Now, she hated the fact she hadn’t been able to help a person she once thought she loved. She braced her knees, counting in her head to calm herself. After what seem ages, she finally found the courage to face her friends. She knew no matter what they said, she would be dreadin the feeling inside of her and putting on a fake smile the entire evening.

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“I hate you,” Lexa whispered harshly in Lincoln’s ear, loud enough so he could hear her over the noise. He hugged her with one arm, gaining a smile in return. Lexa could never be mad at him, not really. They went further into the bar, searching for a table. Raven pointed to the bar and went ahead to get them some drinks. Lincoln grabbed Lexa’s hand, going ahead and making space between people. Octavia followed them, eyeing curiously their interactions. The three of them found a table at the back, which they soon occupied.

“It’s tequila night!” Lincoln was a little surprise on how fast the girl had gotten them drinks. Raven placed a bottle in the table, with a few empty glasses. It was clear she had already started drinking without them. Lincoln and Lexa exchanged a knowing look.

“We need lemons.” Lincoln pushed himself off his stool, making his way through the crowd.

“A man on a mission, I like it,” Octavia noted as soon as he was out of earshot.

“So Lexa, where did you get him?” Raven poured each a shot of tequila. Suddenly, she turned to look at Lexa with her eyes wide open. “Is he the walk of shame guy? ‘Cause if he is, I’m telling you girl, there’s nothing shameful in tapping that!”

Octavia burst out laughing, high-fiving Raven. Lexa had a feeling her friends had jumped into their own conclusions about her relationship with Lincoln. After hearing Raven, she really needed to set the record straight. She was about to clarify their mistake when an all too familiar blonde walked into the bar. Despite the massive amount of people, Clarke managed to stir Lexa’s attention, drowning everyone around her.

“Clarke’s here.” She waved her over and Clarke put on a smile, Lexa was sure it was forced as much as her love for early mornings.

Both Clarke and Lincoln found their way to their table, at the same time.
“Don’t ask,” she groaned, sinking in the stool next to Lexa. The absence of Finn didn’t go unnoticed by the brunette. Despite her slight concern for Clarke, she wasn’t sure she could simply ask about him without raising suspicion from the rest of the table.

“In that case…” Not caring about his highjack seat, Lincoln pushed a glass to Clarke with a slice of lemon. The blonde look up at him, her face frowning upon seeing who was talking. The man pretended not to notice or simply didn’t care.

“I’m Lincoln.” He smiled. The blonde downed her shot, in an attempt to ease her mind and relax; of course the stranger would make it harder. “Clarke,” she delivered curtly without sparing him a second glance.

The evening kept going and the group kept on drinking. By the time Octavia and Raven decided to hit the floor, only Lexa and Lincoln remained relatively sober, or at least it appeared they could hold their alcohol better than the other three.

“Lincoln, we gotta dance,” Octavia slurred, got up and dragged him without giving him a chance to reject the offer. He looked at Lexa for help but she simply shrugged. “Don’t look at me; you’re the one that wanted to come.”

“Ok, ladies. I’m gonna show those two how it’s done.” Raven took a swig straight from the bottle, going after the pair.

The two girls were left alone. To say it was awkward would be an understatement. Clarke had been ignoring Lexa throughout the evening, despite being seated next to each other. Every time the brunette had attempted to engage in a conversation, she had received curt, narrowing rude, answers. After a while, she had given up, turning to Raven instead. The latina was nearly drunk so Lexa amused herself with the girl’s extreme excitement. Apparently building bombs was the sort of hobby Raven would turn to if she had the necessary items, while inebriated. Luckily for everyone at the bar, she didn’t. When Lexa pointed out the possible casualties, Raven went into deep thought. Octavia’s command to dance, snapped her out of it. So now, Lexa was fidgeting with a lemon, and gaining the courage to talk to Clarke again.

“Aren’t you going to dance?”

As expected Clarke snapped her head, sending a deadly glare her way. “No,” she retorted, angrily. Lexa chose to ignore the venom in her tone.

“Come on Clarke! We’re supposed to be celebrating our win,” she tried one more time.

“I’m here for Octavia, not you. I don’t even know why you’re here; you hate anything that resembles fun. But you should definitely go dance with your boyfriend, before he starts grinding against some other girl,” Clarke spat, adding a malicious tone to her insinuation. Lexa cringed, completely taken aback by her words.

“Did I do something?” She wished her voice didn’t tremble, she wished nothing Clarke said had any effect on her. But wishing and getting were two very different things and she had known for a while now, whatever Clarke said would drill into her mind. She was still trying to pinpoint the moment when Clarke Griffin had gone from friend’s friend to girl who could tear my walls down.

Clarke huffed and downed another shot, choosing to ignore the nagging feeling in her chest. Two could play a game and Lexa could definitely play one which involved tequila. She grabbed the bottle, pouring herself one. She took a lemon licked it clean and downed her own. Clarke stared at her, furiously, following her actions, she took another. They kept at it. Fortunately, Raven came
back, snatching the bottle from Clarke and placing it out her reach.

“Ok Princess, that’s enough.” The blonde didn’t look happy to being cut off. She glared at Raven. “You’re gonna tell me what the hell happened?”

Lexa should have seen it coming. She shouldn’t have created a bond with them in the first place. She shouldn’t have let herself be vulnerable around them, if only for a second. She should’ve just gone back to her dorm. Her injury as an excuse but the prospect of being around Clarke had won a lost battle, long before the game. Victory or not, Clarke was attending the game so she would do whatever the hell they had planned for afterwards. And now, a couple of words from the blond would set her straight.

“Well I don’t know Raven. Maybe is the fact that I broke up with my alcoholic boyfriend. Or the fact that he insulted me. Or maybe, it has something to do with the fact that I wanted to drink with my best friends and bare my soul to them but I can’t because they changed me for someone better.” Her blood was boiling, for some reason her jealousy had turned into rage and now, she couldn’t control her word vomit. Not even after seeing Raven’s shocked face, nor the flash of pain that crossed Lexa’s eyes. “Maybe I don’t get why she’s here. Why she’s always here. And maybe I don’t want to spill my truths to some stranger. I get that she’s your roommate and Octavia’s teammate. But I don’t see the rest of the team here, nor my roommate hanging out with us, all the time. Maybe, I don’t want her here. So, why are you here?”

Octavia and Lincoln arrived just in time to see a fleeing Lexa. Lincoln didn’t think twice before going after her, leaving Octavia to untangle what happened.

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He found her a couple of blocks down the street. He was beginning to get worry when a shadow caught his eye. Lexa had found refuge on an emergency staircase of some building. She was sobbing, holding her knees to her chest and trembling. Lincoln sat down next to her, bringing her closer with his arm. She shifted, her tears spilling all over his shirt and her head resting under the crook of his neck.

“I got you kid. I got you,” he mumbled, placing a kiss on the top of her head.

Lexa’s mind was racing. She kept hearing Clarke’s words over and over again. Maybe I don’t want her here. Why are you here? She did her best to rationalize her actions, to defend her. She was drunk. She had just broken up with her boyfriend. She was tired. She hated her. The pang she felt in her chest, ripped across her body. Finally, Lincoln’s voice got to her, at first it sounded muffled, the ringing in her eyes distorting his words. When he finally got across her brain, she began composing herself.

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“What the fuck Clarke?” Raven hissed. Octavia looked shock at Raven’s reaction. Out of the three of them the latina was definitely the composed one, the least likely to explode. “Why the hell did you lashed out on Lexa? I get that you’re upset about Finn, but why the hell did you take it out on her?” The bartender was already eyeing them, ready to kick them out if the fight got any louder or physical. “Did you hear what you said to her? She’s more than just my roommate. And I thought you considered her a friend.”

Clarke stared at her; she was having trouble catching up with the situation. Her brain was in a daze, as if waking from a dream. She wasn’t completely sure but, the feeling in her gut, told her she had just screwed up big time.
“I fucked up,” she rushed out of the bar, suddenly feeling sober. She ran up the street, until she found Lexa holding tightly to Lincoln’s chest. She ignored the feeling of jealousy.

“Lexa,” she whispered tentatively. The brunette stiffened when Clarke spoke, Lincoln squeezed her arm encouraging her to look up. “Just say the word.” She nodded, lifting her eyes from the ground. For a moment, Clarke’s eyes roved her face, searching for a signal, but Lexa’s expression was impassive. There was one thing Lexa had learned over the years, mostly to survive, so when her feelings were too much to handle, she hid them. Her mind would go elsewhere, avoiding the suffocation in her chest and the buzzing in her ears. Having Lincoln or Anya helped massively.

“I’m sorry.” Now it was her turn to search Clarke’s expression. Her blue eyes were gleaming under the lamppost light, blue and sincere as ever. She was cautious, careful in her approach.

Clarke’s mind was rapidly catching up with what she had said. She felt disgusted with herself, knowing Lexa had nothing to do with her pain. At least not consciously, it was a spur of the moment. She was pissed at Finn, his words kept repeating over and over, when alcohol was added to the equation, she was doomed. At that moment she had become her ex-boyfriend, hating every second of it. Usually, a numbing feeling would overcome her body but generally Lexa wasn’t seating next to her with her bright eyes and kind face. Today, not only was she there but she was with someone. A handsome man that made her laughed as if she didn’t have a care in the world. A man that shared inside jokes related to lemons with her. A man that could come back, place a hand on her shoulder without making her flinch. A man Lexa thought she was safe with. A man Clarke was jealous of but too drunk, too blind, too stupid to notice. Now, she had to fix it without baring her heart and soul and losing her small progress in her friendship with the girl.

“I… I shouldn’t have said any of that. I was drunk, which is no excuse. I don’t know where it came from.” Truth was she didn’t. She had never felt her relationship with Octavia or Raven threatened by the brunette.

In that moment, Lincoln freed himself from Lexa’s embrace, getting up and bringing the girl with him. He whispered something in her ear. Lexa nodded, her eyes never leaving Clarke. He brushed past the blonde. “Fix this.”

“The truth is, I was angry and you were caught in the crossfire. I broke up with Finn. He was an asshole about it. Said some things that really hurt me, but that’s no excuse on what I said.” She hugged her middle, nervous on what she was about to say next. She needed to fix this. “In my drunkenness, I got jealous of you, seeing you all happy with my friends, your perfect boyfriend, and your happiness. I lashed out at you because I was envious, I’ve never had what you have.”

Clarke waited for her to say something, anything. Only Lexa was trying to figure out, why she was so quick to forgive the blonde. She understood were she was coming from, she had felt that jealousy plenty of times before. Usually it would take more than a half-hearted apology, full of excuses for Lexa to relent. With Clarke, she simply hadn’t the energy, and her mind was caught in a single detail. I broke up with Finn… really hurt me. Even though, she had resolved to forgive Clarke, her logical, sensible self, advised her not to. Her walls were up, tearing them down would take some effort.

“I understand. But you’re too quick to jump to conclusions. Much like Octavia and Raven, for that matter. You have nothing to be jealous of. My life has been nothing but a continuous path of uncertainty. I don’t mean to sound like a victim, because I’m not. But I won’t let you think I had it easy. You have no idea. As for you, I didn’t mean to become an intruder in your life. You don’t have to worry about me. I’ll stay out of your hair from now on,” Lexa hissed, controlling her anger as best as possible.

She left and Clarke made no attempt to follow.
“Lexa, could you please help me out?” Raven asked from her side of the room, extending a hammer to the new arrival.

“I’m sorry Raven, I have to study,” Lexa deadpanned, dismissing her roommate without even looking at her. It was almost an automatic response. The same one she had been giving for the last two weeks, after her fallout with Clarke.

After the unfortunate night, Lexa had gone back to her secluded self. She barely spoke to Raven, kept away from their dorm as much as possible, and only talked to Octavia if absolutely necessary during practice. Clarke stopped coming to their room so at least she didn’t have to avoid her.

“No, you don’t.” The girl had crossed the space separating them, took the book from her hands and tossed it onto her bed. “How many times do I have to tell you? Clarke’s an idiot. She wasn’t thinking; she was drunk and angry.” Lexa sighed; tired of pretending she was fine.

“Ok, that’s it…. I had enough of both of you,” Octavia barged into the room, bringing, or rather dragging, a reluctant Clarke. “We are not leaving this room, until we fix this,” she closed the door, pushing Clarke towards Raven’s desk chair, silently ordering her to sit.

Lexa stiffened at the sight of Clarke. The tension in the room was almost palpable. Raven and Octavia exchanged looks. Suddenly they were both running to the door and slamming it as they left.

“So we lied, you’re gonna fix this. And by you, I mean Clarke,” Octavia shouted from outside.

“Whatever she said, Clarke’s an idiot, she regrets it and we love you Lexa,” Raven added, “we are your friends, whether you like it or not. So deal with it, ‘cause you’re stuck with us.”

They heard a clasping mechanism, which they both knew was Raven’s doing. Whatever she had done to the door, it meant there was no escape. The girls remained seated across each other, without acknowledging the other’s presence.

An hour later, Lexa had resolved to read a book while Clarke had found some paper on Raven’s desk and was currently drawing. They had spent the first half-hour stealing glances at the other, unsure on what to say. The sound of crumpling paper distracted Lexa from her lecture, not that she had been too invested in the first place, since the blonde’s presence was more than enough to mess up her concentration. Clarke threw it to the bin, missing drastically but making no attempt to picking it up. She felt Lexa’s eyes on her and turned. A couple of seconds passed before either one found the courage to speak up.

“I’m sorry,” Clarke finally said sincerely. Over the past two weeks, she had relived the night, wondering why the hell she had acted that way. A theory had formed in her mind, one she wasn’t entirely comfortable with. “You have every right to be pissed off at me. I deserve it but O and Raven are innocent bystanders.”

“They are your friends,” Lexa pointed out, closing her book and placing it in her lap.

“They are yours too. And honestly, I was hoping you could be mine as well.” She fidgeted with her hands, shuffling in her seat. Taking a breath, she decided it would be best just to tell the truth. “I screwed up.” Lexa huffed. “I know, I know, stating the obvious. I was jealous of you and Lincoln, okay?” Lexa raised her eyes, her heartbeat racing a little faster.
“I had just broken up with Finn and seeing you with Lincoln only reminded me of what I used to have. I was jealous of what I’ve just lost. Maybe, even of something I never had. You two seemed so comfortable around each other, so familiar. He would go and dance with Octavia or whichever and you didn’t care. And when you left, he didn’t think twice before going after you.”

Ok, maybe not the entire truth, she might’ve left out the main reason of her outraged. The part in which Clarke was jealous of Lincoln and had accumulated jealousy from the moment she saw Lexa’s face perking up once she spotted him in the crowd. Jealousy over their linked hands on the field and him looking out for her, worry written all over his face and relief when she reassured him, she was ok. She was jealous of how at ease Lexa was with his arm wrapped around her shoulders, laughing heart lightly at his jokes. So, when she made it to the bar and he was there, she was jealous of him. Of his relationship with Lexa, and the fact he got to have her. Hold her; protect her, cared for her. Of course, she was trying to save a friendship, not doomed it with her recently discovered feelings, so she resolved to tell a half truth, for now.

Lexa listened quietly to Clarke’s confession. Of course Clarke would think Lincoln was her boyfriend. She had made no attempt to deny it at the time, because she knew they wouldn’t listen. Also, she wasn’t sure how to explain the relationship they had. Yes, they were siblings, somehow, but it was more complicated than that. Moreover, she had made a habit of keeping both Anya and Lincoln guarded and she wasn’t ready to open up to Clarke, not yet.

She grabbed her phone and dialed his number, setting it on the bed and putting it on speaker. Lincoln picked up a couple of rings later. “Hey sis! You’re on speaker. I’m on my way to see Anya so shoot.” Clarke’s jaw hanged open, she closed her eyes, kicking herself internally when she realized her mistake.

“Hey, Linc. Sorry, I wanted to clear something out with Clarke.” He laughed. The door of the room opened just in time for Octavia and Raven to hear him.

“That you’re my baby sister, T-Rex?” He sounded amused at the whole thing and even happier to embarrass Lexa over the nickname. “Yeah, I got the feeling they didn’t get it. It was more of a slapped on the cheek when I asked Octavia out and she thought I wanted to cheat on you.” Lexa turned to Octavia, who had an equally astound look on her face.

“Holy shit!” she covered her mouth quickly, regretting speaking up.

“Octavia?”

“Yeah?” she answered tentatively. The woman was suddenly ashamed of her actions, knowing full well Clarke wasn’t the only one who had messed up that night.

When Lincoln had asked her out, she had felt complete aversion towards him. They might’ve been flirting a bit throughout the evening but she didn’t think he would be the kind to cheat on her girlfriend. Let alone be a scumbag and asked her out, just mere meters away from her. So, she had scowled at him and acted solely on an impulse, slapping him hard without even answering.

He laughed, harder as if the whole situation was hilarious. Lexa shook her head, aware only Lincoln could shrugged off their mistake so easily. Octavia covered the few meters separating her from the bed, grabbed the phone and went into the bathroom, slamming the door after her.

Raven looked between the two girls. Clarke was obviously shocked, confused and ashamed of herself since she couldn’t even spare Lexa a look. The other girl was just as uncomfortable.

“In Clarke’s defense, I also thought he was your boyfriend. And on that note, I’m going to the store,”
Raven contributed, trying to ease the tension in the room.

The two girls burst out laughing, stopping Raven in her tracks, as confused as Octavia moments ago.

“Judging by what just happened, it’s only fair if you answer a question Reyes,” Lexa said, stopping Raven from leaving. “Is Wick your brother?” The girl’s eyebrows shot up, her eyes opening wide.

“You know?”

“Well, there is a limited amount of carpentry tools a girl needs in a lifetime. Not even a crazy scientist like yourself, needs to replace a hammer twice a week.” Raven smiled sheepishly, her cheeks blushing.

“Why didn’t you say something?”

“Why didn’t you?” Clarke retorted.

“I don’t know. I guess I wanted to see if it was serious with Wick.” As if on cue, Octavia came out of the bathroom, tossing the phone in the nearest bed and pouncing on Raven to hug her.

“Finally!” the latina patted her back, awkwardly, amused at the dramatics. When she finally let go, she turned to the other two. “Well, since not clarifying relationships within this friendship is dangerous, I’m letting you all know I have a date with Lincoln next week.”

Lexa quirked an eyebrow, causing Octavia’s smile to faltered a little.

“That is if I get your undeserved blessing,” she went over her friend, hugging her tightly. “Please Lexa, forgive me. I swear I won’t do anything to your brother,” she begged, half-joking, half-serious. “Anything, he doesn’t want me to do, that is,” she added mischievously. Lexa snorted and released herself from the embrace.

“Oh, I really don’t want to know. But, if you really are going out with my brother…” she made a point in emphasizing the word, so there was no doubt what her relationship with Lincoln was. “I guess is my obligation to tell you that if you hurt my brother, I will personally hunt you down and make you suffered.” Octavia straighten a bit at the seriousness of her voice but hugged her, yet again.

“Thank you, thank you. I’ll promise I won’t jump into conclusions on who are you dating, ever again. By the way, he said to tell you, that you have to call Anya,” she added in a suggestive tone, causing Lexa to tilt her head. “Who’s probably just a friend, and not my business at all.” She stood up, and left pulling Raven by the hand. “You are gonna tell me all about Wick while these two come to terms with their stupidity.”

Raven waved at them, sending an apologetic look at Lexa.

Once again, the two girls were left in a somewhat awkward silence.

“I’m an idiot,” Clarke stated, biting her lip nervously.

“I’m not gonna contradict that,” Lexa replied, a tiny smile playing on her lips. Clarke returned the smile.

“I meant it Lexa. I want us to be friends. I want you to forgive me.”

“It’s ok, Clarke. I already did,” she said softly. Somehow it became impossible to be angry at the blonde anymore. If friendship was an offer at the table, she would take it any day, over yearning to
see her if only a couple of seconds. The past two weeks had shown her that without looking, she had become accustomed to the girls presence. The three of them giving her a sense of normalcy, she had always yearned.

“No, what I said was not ok. I hurt you. I don’t deserve your forgiveness, not yet.” Her eyes lighten up, an idea forming into her mind. Maybe it wouldn’t be the wisest and she was taking a big leap of faith here, but she had to try. “Let me take you on a friend date.”

Lexa looked utterly confused, not sure of what a friend date meant. Of course, her mind was stuck in the word date. This conversation had turned into an unexpected path, the prospect of spending more time alone with Clarke, making a rather alluring one.

“Friend date?”

“Yeah, I mean… if you want. I’ll take you to dinner or something, to have some bonding time. As friends,” she clarified, trying to sound as appealing as possible, yet respectful and nonchalant. If she was being honest with herself, she should’ve dropped the friend from the date, but getting rejected by Lexa would hurt enough without being a denial for an actual date. And right now, she really wanted to gain the girl’s trust. Baby steps, Clarke, baby steps.

“Fine, I’ll go on a friend date with you,” Lexa answer playfully. Clarke’s heart fluttered in her chest, her smile widening no longer capable of containing her excitement. “You have one chance to convince me we could be friends.”

Clarke covered the meters that separated them, hugging Lexa out of an impulse. A fruity smell, probably from Lexa’s shampoo, filled her nostrils. The brunette yelped in surprise, slowly placing her arms around Clarke’s waist. She hugged her awkwardly, not wanting to let go. Unfortunately, reason came back to the other girl, breaking away quickly. She took a step back, dropping her arms to her sides, tapping her fingers lightly on her legs.

“I’m sorry. I don’t know what came over me,” she blurted sheepishly, her cheeks turning pink, “are you free on Friday?” If she had already acted on impulse, there was no point on not doing it again.

Lexa smiled at her openness. “Yes, Friday is perfect.”

“Good, be ready at 8.” Without waiting for a reply, or maybe not wanting Lexa to change her mind, Clarke fled the room only saying a quick goodbye. Lexa was left standing in the middle of the room, the touch of the blonde still hot on her body.

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“Lexa help me out.” The words sounded more like a command than a polite request but Lexa knew better than to say no. Being locked in her room was not something she could never get accustomed to.

“Sure but it has to be quick though, Clarke’s gonna be here at eight.”

“Yeah, yeah… I know, you’ve only mention it a thousand times over the past two days,” Raven replied, handing Lexa a piece of metal to hold. “Don’t worry; I also know I’m not allowed to come back until at least one. Lucky for you, Wick made plans and we’re going to the planetarium,” she added, wiggling her eyebrows happily and grinning. She focused on inserting some cables to whatever Lexa was holding. The constant shuffling of the girl’s feet, made the task at hand harder than it really was.

“Lexa,” the scolding tone getting her point across. Lexa immediately stopped moving. “Sorry.”
Raven rolled her eyes at her roommate’s anxiety.

It was pretty unusual to see, self-composed Lexa all fidgety and nervous. Only, the past days had given Raven the opportunity to see an entirely different Lexa. When Raven had come back, that day, she found Lexa staring into space. One minute she was convincing her on getting pizza, the next they were bonding and Lexa simply confessed she had a friend date with Clarke. This peaked Raven’s curiosity and after a little bit of probing, her roommate relented that the prospect of expending time with Clarke made her really happy but also anxious.

“Clarke asked me out,” Lexa deadpanned. Raven dropped the phone and screwdriver causing a racket on her desk, which she ignored.

“What?”

“On a friend date,” Lexa clarified.

“What the hell does that mean?” The other girl shrugged, gesturing she had no idea what she had agreed on.

“Honestly? I don’t know. One minute she was talking about earning my forgiveness, the next she asked me out to, and I quote, a “friend date” to have some bonding time,” she said.

Raven chuckled. “That’s the biggest load of bullshit I’ve ever heard.” Her roommate’s eyes lit up in hope.

“You think?” she had no reason to believe Clarke had other intentions. Raven, on the other hand, had known Clarke since pre-school and could tell her whether there was something else. If Raven doubted Clarke, maybe it would be wise to do it as well.

“When was the last time you went on a friend date?” Lexa stared at her, silently. “Exactly.”

Raven wasn’t stupid. She had been observing Lexa for the past couple of months. The brunette might’ve think she was being subtle at stealing glances at Clarke but on occasion her eyes lingered a little too much, her smiled would grow wider when she came into the room to find Clarke sprawled on her bed. And obviously, she had noticed the change of attitude after the night in the bar, seeing the hurt in Lexa’s eyes when Clarke had lashed out. So, Raven suspected Lexa had more than friendly feelings towards her best friend. But knowing Clarke, she felt an obligation to warn Lexa.

“I’m not saying Clarke asked you on a date. I know for a fact she wants some time for herself. After the whole Finn fiasco, she needs to reset. But, I also know Clarke can be blind to her feelings and will be willing to hide them if that meant not jeopardizing a friendship with someone she cares about.” Raven explained, in attempt to avoid the brunette getting high hopes.

“So, Clarke asked me out unconsciously?”

Raven crooked the corner of her lips, shocking her head. Of course, that was the only part of her explanation she had picked up.

“No, I’m saying Clarke will try everything in her power make your friendship work, in the process she could sacrifice whatever chances you two could have for something more. Which is something you would want?” she asked tentatively, testing Lexa’s response. The girl didn’t give away much, nodding slowly in comprehension.
“Maybe, I… Clarke makes me feel content,” Lexa stated simply, not going into details on the warm feeling on her chest whenever she saw Clarke or how her husky tone made her smile. “Thanks Rey.” A knock on the door indicated their pizza had arrived, Raven decided to let it go. For now.

“Ok, that’s it,” she jerked the thing out of Lexa’s hand. “Sit.” The girl followed the command without questioning her.

“I get it. You’re nervous, you like Clarke.” Lexa opened her mouth to object. Raven raised her finger as a warning. “Ah, ah, ah… None of that. You like her. You don’t have to admit it to me. It’s fine. I would seriously doubt your gayness if you didn’t but I have to be the good friend now and remind you, this will be a friend date.”

Lexa sighed. “I know,” she whispered sadly. Raven pulled her into a one arm hugged, rubbing circles in her arm.

“You know this probably will be temporary. Octavia and I are already betting on how long it’ll take you guys to kiss.”

The girl shot her a not too convincing glare, cracking a smile. “You can’t tell her Raven.”

“Don’t worry Commander, your secret is safe with me. Now…” She extended her hand, pulling the girl from the chair and sending her towards the bathroom. “Go get ready.” She gave the girl a soft kick on the butt for good measure.

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“Raven,” the greeting came more like a warning to which the girl just raised her arms.

“Don’t worry Princess, I’m leaving.” With her jacket in her hand, she brushed pass Clarke, whispering as she went. “Good luck.”

Clarke suddenly began to feel really nervous. She’d been thinking about this day for over a week. The idea of spending time alone with Lexa made her both incredibly happy and restless at the same time. Having to suppress whatever she felt for the girl, was a constant nagging in her mind. If only for the sake of their friendship, one she wasn’t sure it had even started yet. The minute the girl came out of the bathroom, wavy wet hair loose and wearing a pair of fitting jeans and a loose shirt hanging from one of her shoulders, exposing a bit more skin that Clarke was expecting, she knew she was doomed. Her throat suddenly became dry, so she had to clear it before speaking.

“Hey Lexa, you look…” A list of adjectives came crashing all at once, beautiful, hot, stunning, heavenly, breathtaking… all of which seem inappropriate for the occasion. “Fresh.” Lexa looked down at her outfit, not entirely sure if she should take Clarke words as a compliment.

“Thanks?” A ding announced the end of a timer somewhere in the room. Clarke searched for the source of the noise. “Uhm… I made popcorn. Raven brought a microwave the other day, and gave me permission to use it before she tears it apart. I don’t have any experience on friend dates but I thought we could watch a movie?”

“Well, we did kick Raven out so…”

“Yeah about that, you’re gonna have to come over more often.” Clarke raised her eyebrows at Lexa’s back, who was taking the bag out of the microwave, with the tip of her fingers. She jolted her hand away when it burned, but gripped it by the edge, throwing it at the desk. She looked over her
shoulder. “To help Raven in whatever she’s doing. She threatened to suit me for illegal eviction unless I help her out. Only, I wasn’t the one to kick her out, so I volunteered the perpetrator. That being you,” she finished, signaling with her hand at Clarke, a smile forming at the corner of her lips. The blonde snorted at her friend’s antics, of course she would make her pay, especially since she had endured a moping Clarke, the two weeks Lexa had stopped talking to them.

“Eviction?” she asked, wondering where the hell Raven had come up with the term to her crime.

“Yeah, I was just as incredulous as you are. Apparently, my room companion has no sense of private property, whatsoever. She’s been picking the legal jargon from my textbooks,” Lexa explained.

The room was filled with the smell of popcorn, when she finally managed to open the bag. She placed the popcorn in a bowl, which lay on the desk, next to her laptop. She turned her back at Clarke, once again, while opening Netflix.

Clarke did a quick sweep of the room. Raven’s things seemed to be scattered around the entire room, some even on Lexa’s bed, apparently it didn’t bother her. The brunette, on the other hand, had a shelf next to her bed, neatly organized, almost full on its entirety, mainly by books. On her bedside table, there was a reading lamp, some papers, a couple of pens but, unlike Raven who had a frame picture of Octavia, Clarke and herself, and another on her desk with Abby, there was no indication of Lexa’s family. She saw a couple of, what appeared to be, law textbooks under some cables and wires in Raven’s desk, which were probably the one’s she had borrowed, without permission so it seemed, from Lexa.

“Well, Raven said you’ve been picking up some engineering and quite fast too.” Lexa snorted. “Uhhh… Lexa, I thought you were studying history and literature.”

“I am,” the girl stated simply. Clarke’s curiosity only peaked at the monosyllabic answer, Lexa noticed and elaborated on her response. “Pre-law is no use if you want to get into a good law school. Hence, I’m majoring in two subjects I like and could be useful while studying law on the side, sort of.”

Clarke didn’t know what to make of the girl in front of her. She was impressed and intrigued which frustrated her to no end, because the minute the word intrigued crossed her mind, the blonde realized she was doomed. Ever since she started liking people, never actually understanding her bisexuality as such, until much later, Clarke noticed that her tell on I like you was the all-consuming intrigue these people instigated in her. The constant nagging feeling of wanting to know more, figuring out their uniqueness. Now, Lexa’s carefree approach to her future had sent her spiraling down a torrent of questions, she knew she had to earn the right to ask.

“So, you’ve been leaving your books around?” Real smooth Griffin. The fact that it was the only thing she could come up with, bothered Clarke to the point of cringing at her own awkwardness.

If Lexa noticed, she didn’t show, answering the question. “Yep, apparently, she reads them for “fun” and afterwards corrects me or uses whatever she’s learned against me. Quite the annoying habit, if you ask me.”

“Well, that’s Raven for you. She used to piss off our teachers, correcting them all the time.”

“What about you? Where you a little troublemaker?” she asked, sending an impish smirk her way.

“Only by association, apparently, teachers don’t like the witty support from the inseparable best friend. I would go on unstoppable, loquacious rants in which I may or may have not indulged entire classrooms to demand for a better education. So, tiny revolutions would ensue. The fallen leaders
being charge with the maximum penalty and getting escorted to the principal’s office.”

Lexa pictured a young Clarke, fiercely protecting a cocky Raven. She could totally understand why teachers would be wary of the duo’s antics.

“Little Clarke, that would’ve been something worth watching,” Lexa spoke softly, almost to herself.

“Ha… I don’t think so. I’m pretty sure I was kind of a brat.” Remembering how mulish and opinionated she could get, to the point of speaking just for the sake of annoying her teachers even more.

“A cute brat, though.” The brunette stiffened and her face reddened, as soon as she realized the words had escaped her lips. She turned away quickly, preventing Clarke to see her embarrassment. She began placing pillows on the floor, next to the foot of her bed so they would be able to lean. Clarke too, had blushed a bit and considered saying something but decided against it. Instead, she grabbed Raven’s pillows and threw them into the pile, so they would be comfier.

“She won’t mind,” the blonde explain, dismissing Lexa’s concern.

They settled with Lexa’s computer and the bowl of popcorn between them. Agreeing it would be best just to let luck decide, they clicked on whatever the first recommendation was and began watching Jessica Jones out of sheer luck. Their past awkwardness all forgotten as soon as they got immersed in the plot and making comments to one another.

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“Please don’t be naked! If you are, cover yourselves!” Raven barged in, covering her eyes with one hand. She reached the middle of the room, the lack of noise unsettling the girl. Bizarre. Curiosity got the best of her, so she peeked through her fingers. The room was dimly lit by Lexa’s computer screen, as the sole source of light, which illuminated the sleeping figures of Clarke and Lexa. Their heads rested on a middle pillow that had served as a division, their faces dangerously close. Raven’s heart warmed at the sight in front of her, smiling fondly, she took out her phone and snapped a picture. She tiptoed to her desk, taking her headphones and going back out again, closing the door with a soft click.

“Everything ok?” Wick asked, pushing himself off the wall.

“Oh, this is too precious!” Raven squealed, excited, “let me send it to O and then we can go.”

Wick peaked over her shoulder.

“Who’s the brunette?”

“Lexa, my roomie,” despite his relationship with Raven was out in the open, Wick had yet to meet Lexa, the mysterious roommate who kept mostly to herself. He knew she helped Raven out willingly, despite the threat of dismemberment or disfigurement, on her projects. So, her bravery was duly noted by the man.

“Her and Clarke?”

“Well, this was supposed to be a friend date” she explained, signaling air quotes for emphasis.

Wick hugged her by the waist, leaning in and whispering in her ear. “Can we have a friend date like that?”
Raven hit him lightly on the ribs, but nodded and smiled nonetheless.

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Octavia sipped from her beer, watching Lincoln take his shot. He hit the cue ball, making it jump over Octavia’s orange thirteen, and hitting four and five to separate holes. Both balls rolled to their intended destinations.

“Fuck's sake. Do you work?” Lincoln smiled, going around the table and taking a sip of her beer. He analyzed the table, settling for a long shot, and positioning his cue stick. Octavia’s phone buzzed, effectively disrupting his concentration and making him miss. A cue of swearwords followed from under his breath.

“Hey Linc, how long has Lexa been crushing on Clarke?” He went over her, taking the phone to make sense of her words. He smiled at the picture and began fumbling with the phone.

“What are you doing?”

“Sending it to myself, so I can send it to Anya later; we’re so gonna give her hell for this,” he explained, winking and smiling wickedly, imagining Lexa’s embarrassment.

“Oh, yeah, Clarke probably won’t hear the end of this. Raven and I will probably make sure of that,” Octavia retorted, already going through the scenarios of Clarke denying her true feelings.

“Good,” he pecked her lips and pushed her lightly towards the billiards table, “your turn.”

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Clarke’s eyes fluttered open, adjusting to the low light and a tad disorientated with her surroundings. Her hand bumped lightly with the empty bowl of popcorn. Rubbing her eyes, she pushed herself into a sitting position, glancing around. Her eyes falling upon Lexa sleeping peacefully, her brow slightly furrow. The brunette’s phone buzzed, the screen lighting showing it was almost one in the morning. Clarke couldn’t help to read the new message.

*Anya (00:54 am): You staying over Saturday night?*

Underneath, an earlier text, which Lexa had ignored or didn’t notice, got the best out of Clarke.

*Costia (10:32 pm): Hey gorgeous! You’re up for a repeat performance? Call me!*

This time, Clarke couldn’t deny the pang of jealousy at the pit of her stomach. Lexa began to stir in her sleep, mumbling and moving agitated. The blonde reacted on instinct, moving towards her, pressing her palm to her arm gently to wake her. Lexa shot up, startled with her eyes wide open. Breathing heavily and her heart pounding against her chest.

“Hey, it’s ok. It was just a nightmare,” Clarke spoke softly, rubbing circles on her back. Lexa shift her eyes towards Clarke’s, breathing deeply in an attempt to regain her bearings. She closed her eyes remembering the dream. Only, it hadn’t been a dream but a memory, a vivid memory she wanted nothing more but to forget.

“It wasn’t a nightmare. It was a memory,” she murmured, smiling tightly at Clarke.

“You want to talk about it?” the girl asked gently.

“No, I want to forget.” She denied with her head. “What time is it?” she asked with a raspy voice,
still a bit disoriented, her eyes squinted.

“Almost one, Raven will be back soon. I should probably leave.” Lexa nodded in her dazed. Clarke looked at her concerned. She wanted to stay, hold her until the girl fell back asleep. Her heart clenched at the sight of Lexa, looking so small and fragile. Whatever was hunting her, the demons she was facing, Clarke wanted to help her face them and alleviate some of her pain. Only, she knew she hadn’t earned the right; she had to work to earn the girl’s trust. It was the constant reminder on her mind.

The vibration of Lexa’s phone brought them back from their thoughts. She picked it up, scanning the message and unlocking the device to answer. Clarke stood up, picking the bowl and some pillows. Lexa saw this on her periphery, dropping the phone mid text, going over Clarke and taking the bowl from her hands.

“It’s ok. I’ll clean up,” the blonde allowed Lexa to take the bowl but placed the pillows on Raven’s bed.

“You sure?” The other girl simply nodded. Before either of them could say more, Raven walk through the door with a smile plastered on her face.

“Ladies, you’re alive!” she said in a malicious, yet playful tone, “anyways, I don’t mean to be rude Clarke but on like some, I would like to rest for the night.”

“Gee Reyes. I’m going.”

“Good, by the way, I don’t know if the Commander here told you but, you need to report for duty, tomorrow at 19:00, to Sergeant Reyes.”

Clarke rolled her eyes. “Sir, yes sir!” she mocked salute, turning to face Lexa while Raven rummaged in her drawers for her pajamas.

“Uhmm… This was nice.” She could see Raven eavesdropping, listening to every word.

“Yes, it was,” Lexa answered sheepishly, “we should do it again sometime.” Her heart racing and hands sweating, waiting for Clarke’s approval.

“I would love that!” A wide smiled appearing on her face, which was soon reciprocated by the brunette. “I’ll see you tomorrow, you dipshit,” Clarke added to Raven, who turned and waved her goodbye, mocking her with a military salute.

She hugged Lexa goodbye, whispering a soft bye in the girl’s ear, sending shivers down her spine.

“So, it was a good night?” Raven asked as soon as Clarke was out of the room.

Lexa turned smiling shyly, nodding.

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“Reyes.”

“Lincoln.”

Raven moved aside, signaling the man to come in.

“Where’s O?” He stared at her, assessing the latina.
“She said to tell you, she’ll come by around 7,” was his simple reply. Raven didn’t need more details to understand, the two had spend the night together.

“Oh, cool! She can help me torture Clarke.” Not pressing on the matter. She hadn’t built a close bond with the guy to actually tease him over how whipped Octavia had him.

“Torture who?” Lexa asked, exiting the bathroom. “Hey Linc, give me a second and we can go.” Raven and Lincoln exchanged looks that went unnoticed by Lexa.

Octavia, she cancelled our breakfast plans,” Raven lied, quick on her toes.

“Right,” she acknowledged, turning to face the girl, “I’ll come back tomorrow, please don’t blow up the place and don’t exploit Clarke.” The latina laughed out loud at her roommates concerned on both her living quarters and her crush’s safety.

“Yeah, I’m not making any promises.” Lexa sighed, motioning Lincoln she was ready.

“Reyes,” he said giving her a curt nod.

“Lincoln.”

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Lexa entered the house, immediately feeling homesick. Lincoln tossed the keys on the bowl, on top of the table by the door. The familiarity of all overwhelmed Lexa. Pictures of the three hanged next to the mirror on the wall. She remembered each and every one of them, as if they had been taken yesterday. She smiled fondly at one in particular; the three of them on the beach, Lincoln had been chasing the girls around, capturing Lexa and about to throw her into the water, Anya running after them. A man had later come over with the picture, giving it to them as a gift. The sound of descending steps interrupted her into going further of memory lane.

“Well, finally. I thought you two had forgotten all about me,” Anya said in an accusatory tone.

“ANYA!” Lexa ran towards the woman, embracing her in a massive hug almost making her lose her balance.

“Hey watch it, kid,” Lincoln warned her, going over and joining the hug, squashing the two girls tightly. Anya stood in the middle for about 5 seconds. “Okay, okay. You’re forgiven, now let me breathe.”

They let her go, all three of them laughing.

“Wait, no. You’ll be forgiven once we make dinner,” Lincoln and Lexa groaned in unison, following Anya into the kitchen. To be honest, they only did it to annoy her since cooking together had become one of their traditions and they all actually enjoyed it. They worked in perfect sync, peeling, chopping, slicing and frying.

Anya instructed them on what to do, soon falling into a sort of dance. Lincoln hooked his music and they fooled around while preparing their food.

“Anya? Are we making what I think we are making?” Lexa asked excited. Anya smiled in response, causing the brunette to jump happily running over the music and changing the song for a more fitting atmosphere. The deep voice of a man coming out of the speakers followed by the sound of trumpets, clarinets, valve trombones and for the attentive ear a sousaphone. The three of them burst into laughter, singing along the banda and preparing homemade enchiladas. At some point, Lincoln and
Lexa began dancing cumbia and salsa, and talking Spanish with heavy northern Mexican accents to Anya’s amusement.

“Ok, ok. ¡A comer!” Anya ordered from the other room, where the table was set and the food was ready. Neither one, had to be told twice. Lowering the music a bit, sitting and diving right into.

“Holy shit! I’ve missed this,” Lincoln exclaimed, tasting and savouring the Mexican food.

“Mmmm… This is so fucking good!” Lexa agreed, while Anya nodded, closing her eyes, letting the flavour expand in her mouth. “And to think, people actually believe Taco Bell is Mexican.”

“Not even close,” Anya concurred.

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"Raven, can I put this lamp down now? Please!” Clarke had been standing on a chair, holding the lamp above Raven so she could get better lighting, for over half an hour. Which she thought was a relief from her previous command, which had almost blown her eyebrows off. At the moment, she couldn’t feel her arm and feared her drawing abilities were at stake.

“Well, I don’t know Clarke. Are you kicking me out of my room if I don’t say yes?” the girl asked, tilting her head and raising her eyebrows questioningly.

Clarke let her shoulders fall still holding the light. “I said I was sorry, how many more times do I need to say it?”

“A couple more… or you could buy me…” Octavia’s arrival left her sentence incomplete. The blonde grateful for the interruption and the bags of food their friend was carrying. They both snatched the food out of Octavia’s hand, forgetting whatever they were doing before.

“Hello to you too” their friend said, ironically. “Give me a tip and I’ll be on my way,” she added, sitting on the floor with her two friends. Clarke was about to open a box of noodles but Raven was quicker and snatched it.

“Ah, ah, ah, I really like noodles.” The blonde rolled her eyes, grabbing a second box and ignoring her friend. “So Octavia, how come you’re not with Lincoln?”

Octavia’s eyes brighten up. “He’s spending quality time with his family.” The emphasis in the word family didn’t go unnoticed by Clarke, who concurred with her friend’s insinuation.

“So he is with Lexa?”

Raven had expected Clarke to ask about the brunette upon arrival, only to be disappointed and they had barely touched the topic. Clarke had warned her about Lexa’s books but she hadn’t gone into further detail of their friend date. Raven had promised Octavia, the teasing would come as a team so she had controlled her impulse on exposing her friend’s crush.

Clarke, on her part, wasn’t really expecting Lexa. Last night texts were hinting a much different Saturday night for the girl. So, she had pushed the issue far into her mind and avoided speaking of her.

“Precisely. Speaking of which, how was your Lexa date?” Octavia tried to sound nonchalant, only there was a slight eagerness to her tone.

“It wasn’t a date and it went fine.”
Raven snorted, no longer being able to control herself. Clarke raised her eyebrows, questioningly.

"Just fine?" fake innocence pouring out of Octavia’s voice.

“Yes,” she said curtly, hoping her friends would drop the subject.

"You expect us to leave you alone without a thorough interrogation?" With that Raven got up. She went over her desk and slid her chair to the middle of the room. Octavia grabbed Lexa’s, settling it a few feet to the right. She sat down, diving into the role of a judge.

“Will the prosecutor call its first witness?”

Raven stood in the middle of the room, placing her hands behind her back and nodding towards Octavia.

“Yes, Your Honour. The People call Ms. Clarke Griffin to the stand.”

Clarke looked at the pair incredulously, realizing she had just been tricked into a mock trial. Lexa was right on how dangerous Raven’s new acquired knowledge could be.

“You’re unbelievable,” she whispered, shocking her head in resignation. Placing her food on the floor, she went over the chair. Octavia placed a book in front of her.

"Do you solemnly swear, under penalty of perjury, that the testimony you may give in the case now pending before this court shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?"

The blonde decided to entertain her friends, placing one hand on the book and the other up, swearing a truthful statement. She sat down on the chair, waiting.

“Could you state your name and age for the record?” Raven spoke, as if this was a real trial, exposing the many hours she had spent procrastinating, watching Law & Order or Suits.

“Clarke Abigail Griffin. I’m 21.”

“Ms. Griffin, where were you the evening of November, 15th?” Raven continued, in a serious tone.

“I was here.”

“You mean this courthouse?” the girl retorted, faking surprise. Clarke controlled the urge of rolling her eyes and played along.

“No. I was at my ex friend’s room. Her name is Raven and she’s a pain in the ass.”

Raven nodded, ignoring Clarke’s insult.

“Was your friend there?”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“She let me have the room for the night.”

“Oh! So this terrible friend, allowed you to kick her out so you could do… exactly why did you wanted your friend’s room?
“I was going to spend the evening with her roommate, Lexa.”

“So you kicked Raven out, to be with Lexa.” Octavia was shaking of laughter, trying to keep the sound muffled with her hands.

“What happened after your amazing, smart, beautiful friend, Raven, left the room?”

“Really? You’re kind of pushing it, don’t you think?” Clarke deadpanned.

“Please, answer the question Ms. Griffin,” Octavia interjected resuming her role of court judge. Clarke turned to face her, glaring but answered anyways.

“We talked for a bit and then we watched a movie.”

“What happened next?”

“Nothing, that’s it; the annoying friend came back and I left.”

“Your Honour, the prosecution would like to show the jury evidence number #1.” Octavia nodded, while Raven took out her phone, finding the “evidence” and showing it to Clarke. The blonde’s face was priceless, shocked at the image of her and Lexa sleeping on the floor. Both her friends were openly laughing at this point. Raven regained her composure, wiping the tears from her eyes.

"Ms. Griffin, could you describe the picture to the jury? Could you identify the people in the photograph and state their condition?"

Clarke wasn’t even sure why she continued with her friends show. She had to admit it was a lot more fun than holding the lamp, that was until a picture of her and Lexa sleeping was shoved into her face. If she was being honest, their position looked a bit too comfortable, intimate even.

“There are two girls sleeping on the floor. The one on the left is Lexa, Raven’s roommate and I’m on the right. We are sleeping,” she explained, knowing full well the interrogation was far from over.

“So, nothing happened,” Raven said intently, taking the phone from her hand. “Your Honour, let it be noticed the witness conveniently forgot mentioning her nightly activities.” Octavia nodded in agreement, containing her giggles at the implication.

"Ms. Griffin, what is your relationship with Ms. Mara?"

“She’s a friend.”

“Just a friend or is there something more?” Raven asked, enjoying every minute of teasing Clarke.

“Just a friend.”

“Do you have feelings for her?” Her question was meant to catch Clarke off guard, which was the case.

“No.” Clarke answered a little too fast.

“May I present evidence #2, Your Honour?” Octavia approved of whatever Raven had in mind, not entirely sure what she had against their friend. Raven went over to her desk, rummaging through a stack of papers until she found the one she needed. She attempted to smooth the page more, which despite having received the weight of a stack of books still had plenty of wrinkles.

Raven turned to her imaginary jury, showing them the page before allowing either of the girls to see
what it was. Clarke cursed under her breath and Octavia rolled of laughter. In front of them, was the drawing Clarke had done while being stuck with Lexa in the room. She had totally forgotten all about it.

The picture showed Lexa exiting the bathroom, drying her hair, draped in just a towel. It closely resemble the day she had ran out of the room, only that day she had been fully dress and not hinting she just had shower sex. Clarke had ripped the paged, crumbled it and tossed it aside, missing the bin. She currently hated the fact her hands had drawn on their own account, while her brain inserted images of a sexy Lexa while the angry girl was sitting in front of her. Upon seeing this, along with the tiny heart at the bottom of the page, there was no denying her attraction for the girl.

“Would you care to comment?”

“No.”

“No further questions, Your Honour,” Raven said proud of how clever she was, smiling widely at her shenanigans.

“Very well, Ms Griffin, the jury has reached their verdict. They had found you guilty on having a crush on Lexa Mara. I’m now sentencing you to confess your feelings to the girl.”

Both Raven and Octavia roared laughing, making Clarke form a lopsided smile. It had been inevitable for her two friends to figure her out.

//

Lincoln was in the sink washing dishes, while Lexa dried them and Anya returned them to their place. Falling back into previous routines came naturally to the three of them.

“So Lexa, what were you up to last night?” Anya asked innocently, placing glasses on the cupboard. Lincoln shook his head, cracking a conspiratorial smile but kept rinsing plates under the spray.

“Uhmm… not much,” Lexa answered carefully. They had just spent an hour and half talking about her general life, nothing specific, her gut was telling her this was something else. “I hung out with a friend.”

She hadn’t told Anya or Lincoln about her crush on Clarke, partly because she hadn’t had the time, partly because she didn’t want Lincoln telling Octavia, which was unlikely but a possibility, and partly because she didn’t want their constant teasing.

“What’s her name?” Her sister interrogated, way too interested for Lexa’s comfort.

“Why do you think is a girl?” she answered with a question of her own, trying to avoid the conversation. Lincoln grinned, aware of what Lexa was doing. Anya rolled her eyes.

“Fine. What’s this person’s name, who agreed to spend Friday night with you mija.” Lexa couldn’t help but smile at the nickname.

“Clarke.”

“Wait. It was a boy?” Anya interjected, genuinely surprised. Lincoln turned and clarified the confusion.

“No. It’s a girl. She’s Octavia’s friend.”
“This is the same girl that insulted you?” Was Anya’s next question, forgetting the purpose of her examination, this was to tease Lexa with the photograph. Lexa shed a killer look at Lincoln. He closed the tap, drying his hands with a towel.

“I had to tell her. You know that,” he defended his actions, calmly. “Besides, I already told her Clarke’s cool. She apologized to me.” This new information caught Lexa completely by surprise.

“What? When?”

“I went to pick up Octavia and Clarke was there. She said she was sorry, that she didn’t mean to hurt you. That she would do her best to make it up to you. Honestly, she rambled a lot so I got half of it. Overall, she is sorry and wants to date you.”

Lexa face instantly blushed. Both, Anya and Lincoln bent with laughter.

“She didn’t say that,” she said, sending a deathly glare their way.

“No, she didn’t say those exact words,” Lincoln complied, “but, you should’ve seen your face. It was epic!”

“I thought you didn’t like Clarke,” the girl said, annoyed at her siblings making fun of her. Lincoln turned serious but kept a soft expression.

“I didn’t. But that was before she apologized. And let’s face it, a girl that asks for her crush’s brother forgiveness, she earns my respect. Also, Octavia vouched for her. If she says Clarke’s sorry, then I believe her.”

“Whipped,” Lexa commented, talking over Lincoln’s shoulder to Anya. He turned quickly at the other woman, noticing the smirk on her face.

“Who me? Because I trust Octavia?”

“So whipped,” Anya agreed. Both girls burst into laughter, while Lincoln stood there, rubbing his neck and considering his sisters words. He sighed.

“Whatever, this is about you and Clarke,” his words killing instantly Lexa’s giggles.

“There is nothing between me and Clarke, and there’s not gonna be,” she assured them, saddened by the idea but attempting to be realistic. Her face might’ve shown her true feelings because Lincoln placed his hand on her shoulder.

“Well, I wouldn’t be so sure, judging by how cozy your friend’s date went. I wouldn’t close my mind to the possibility just yet,” Anya intervened, opening the picture in her phone. Lexa’s eyes widened. Her eyes went to Anya, to Lincoln and back to the photo, searching for an explanation.

“You should be more careful. Falling asleep with Raven around is dangerous. You should know this, she’s your roomie,” Lincoln conceded.

It dawned on her. A chain reaction, Raven-Octavia-Lincoln-Anya, well, that was inconvenient. She stared intently at the picture. Her heart accelerated upon seeing Clarke’s peaceful form, her lips forming a tiny smile, completely oblivious of the world. Their position didn’t insinuate anything, yet it seemed they shared each other’s secrets.

Anya came closer to her, inspecting Lexa carefully. In that moment, she realized her little sister was developing serious feelings for the blonde, and fast.
“Hey kid. Be careful,” she said softly. Lexa raised her eyes, bright and innocent, nodding silently. Lincoln squeezed her shoulder.

//

“Good thing we were gonna give her hell,” Lincoln entered the kitchen with an empty glass in his hand. He went over the sink and refilled it. Anya was seating at the small table, resting her head in her hand. A written page was in front of her.

“I know,” she sighed, “we suck.”

“Nee… we’re awesome. I’m sure Raven will take over,” he leaned on the counter, looking at Anya. “You missed us?”

The woman chuckled, a couple of seconds pass before she answered. “It’s quiet.” Lincoln nodded, sipping on his water, waiting for Anya to say what she really wanted to say.

“We don’t deserve her.” Her eyes gleamed with the moonlight, holding back her tears.

“I know.”

He reached into his jacket pocket, taking out a folded piece of paper, waving it lightly. He looked up, searching for his next words.

“The first time I got one of these, I realized she’d save me,” he paused, collecting himself. “I was waiting for her, she had a dentist appointment. I saw a guy from high school across the street. I didn’t know him that well but I remember having some classes with him. He had a backpack and a bunch of books under his arm. I remembered he once told me he wanted to be a doctor, so I figured he was probably taking pre-med or something. It hit me then. That guy could’ve be me, I could’ve gone to college, get a degree. Just like that, my blood was boiling, my body was shacking. I had my fists clenched. I was in rage, wasn’t thinking straight. I wanted to punch the wall. I was going to punch the wall. I heard her voice whispering my name, frightened. I snapped out of it, immediately.” He stopped, opening and closing his trembling hand. He took a breath, to pull himself together.

“We went for ice cream afterwards. We didn’t spoke the entire way home. She went straight to her room, locking herself. She only came down to dinner when you ordered her and she didn’t say a word. When she finished the dishes, I went in to apologize, before I could open my mouth, she hugged me.” His hand went into his back pocket, reaching for his wallet. He removed a worn paper from within.

“She placed it in my hand, leaving without a word. When I read it, it hit me. I had been angry because I thought of her as an unwanted responsibility, a burden, an obstacle to my dream life. I wanted to run away and I thought she was stopping me. I felt so ashamed of myself, after reading the note. I was being selfish. Family is not a responsibility. She knew this from the start, that’s why she stayed. That’s why she protected us, time and time again. I was wrong, blaming her when the truth is -she gave me the one thing I needed, unconditional love.”

Anya understood. She too had felt the same. Countless of times, she had imagined her life without Lexa. How it could’ve turned out. But she had reached the same conclusion as Lincoln, the girl had given them a lot more than what they deserved.

“A five year old saved us,” Anya murmured.
“Lexa is Thanksgiving, you have to be there!” Raven argued for the hundred time.

Lexa put down the book she was reading. They had been on the topic for at least fifteen minutes and Raven didn’t seem to relent. No matter how many excuses she had given already, the girl kept at it.

“I don’t celebrate Thanksgiving,” she gave in, hoping the truth would get Raven off her back. The girl’s jaw dropped, disbelief washing over her face.

“You are an American, right?” she asked, slowly backing away from Lexa as if she was some kind of alien. Her roommate rolled her eyes, Octavia walking in saved her from answering.

“It’s on, my parents released Bell and I from family duties, so we’re going to Clarke’s. And, I convinced Lincoln, so he’s coming as well,” she said, triumphal.

“Well, maybe you’ll have more luck convincing Lexa. Her latest excuse is, and I quote, “I don’t celebrate Thanksgiving,” Raven informed her, making air quotes to emphasize Lexa’s words.

Octavia looked at Lexa, “so it’s true? Damn! I totally thought Lincoln was making some lame excuse to ditch me. Shit! I need to start trusting your brother more.”

Lexa quirked an eyebrow, grinning lightly.

“Who doesn’t celebrate Thanksgiving? Is like not celebrating Christmas,” Raven continued, completely mortified by the idea.

“That’s exactly what I told him. He laughed, Raven. Laughed!” Octavia too, was scandalized at their friends’ lack of celebratory spirit.

“But… how? Thanksgiving is basically injected in our bloodstream when we’re born.”

“I think it has to do with genetics. It passes from parents to children.”

“Yes, it’s not even taught to us, it comes natural. You just learn it all of the sudden, right?”

“Yeah, we just know!”

They kept at it, so focused on their reasons why it was almost a crime not to celebrate Thanksgiving, how it came naturally to all Americans, that they didn’t heard the soft knock on the door. Lexa got off her bed, ready to escape. She opened the door, pleased to see Clarke standing outside. Without giving the blonde a chance to say hello, she grabbed her hand, tugging her out of the dormitories. The girl was taken by surprised but followed Lexa, not entirely sure where they were going. Lexa noticed she was still holding Clarke’s hand, so she let it go abruptly. They were now on campus grounds, near a small park. The blonde looked at her estranged.

“Raven and Octavia were getting on my nerves,” she explained, avoiding Clarke’s eyes which were most likely searching for an entire different explanation.

“I can relate. What were they doing?” she said in understanding, her friends could be a handful.

Lexa began walking away, realizing she hadn’t thought this through. Clarke followed her, falling into an easy pace.
“Uhmm… They couldn’t believe I don’t celebrate Thanksgiving,” she might as well tell her, since she was going to found out eventually. Clarke raised her eyebrows in surprise.

“That’s… weird. Why?”

Lexa shoved her hands inside the pockets of her hoodie. It was only natural Clarke would ask her. She knew it was estrange not celebrating it, but most of her foster parents wouldn’t dream of spending money in such a holiday. You should be the one’s celebrating us, you ungrateful shitheads. When they escaped the system, they weren’t on a place they could celebrate properly.

“We… had no reason to be grateful.”

Clarke felt a pang in her chest, Lexa’s words echoing in her ears. Looking at Lexa she could tell there was a bigger story, a painful story, a story that the girl was not ready to share but that Clarke would be willing to listen. When the time came for Lexa to open up, Clarke would be there. If Lexa decided she was trustworthy, she had to remind herself. The blonde hoped that would be the case.

“I don’t want to force you to do anything. I will never do that,” Clarke spoke slowly, not wanting to put any more pressure on Lexa. “So if you don’t want to come that’s perfectly fine. I just want you to know I want you to be there. Thanksgiving is kind of a big deal for my mum, she likes to have a full house. I would love it if you come,” she added sincerely.

They had reached a small fountain, the soft sound of running water in the background. Wind was blowing, knocking leaves out of the nearby trees, soon they would have none. A few people were walking by, avoiding the two girls that had stopped in the middle of the trail. Lexa stared into Clarke’s eyes, soft and vulnerable. She had an excuse at the back of her mind, only the words rolling off her tongue sounded nothing like it.

“It would be nice to spend more time with you,” she flushed instantly, dropping her eyes to the ground. “And Octavia, and Lincoln; Raven not so much, there is only a certain amount of time I can handle her energy,” she added chuckling, fixing her slip up.

Clarke was too happy to ruin the moment. She smiled widely, hugging the girl on impulse.

“Great! I’ll tell my mum to get the couch ready.”

Lexa separated herself enough to look at Clarke’s face. “The couch?”

“Yes, for Lincoln. My mum is pretty liberal but I’m sure she’ll draw the line on Bell and Lincoln sleeping in the same room with us girls.”

“Sleep? At your house?” What had did I get myself into? She released herself from Clarke, taking a small step back.

“Yeah, Thanksgiving at casa de Clarke may go well into the night. My mum doesn’t like us to drive back, at least until after breakfast.”

Lexa processed this new information slowly. Oh God! This is not what I signed for.

“I wouldn’t want to impose on your mum. Lincoln and I could leave early.”

“What? Nonsense, I won’t allow it. Hell, my mother will get mad at you. She would even get offended. You really don’t want my mother on your bad side.”

The brunette knew very little about Clarke’s mother, apart from the fact that she didn’t wanted her
daughter living on another state. The fact she could offend her didn’t suit her well. She was fucked. She would have to spend the night in close proximity to Clarke, under the watchful eye of her mother. She smiled tightly, nodding and sealing her fate. Clarke hugged her once more.

“Great! We’re gonna have so much fun! Now, what should we do?”

Lexa raised her eyebrows questioningly.

“You really want to go back to your dorm, where Octavia and Raven are probably still talking whatever got you out in the first place?”

“You’re right,” Lexa replied immediately. “But, I don’t know what we could do.” She wanted to think of something to show Clarke, but her brain was still mid-processing the fact that she was going to spend time alone with the blonde.

Clarke didn’t notice her predicament, her eyes suddenly widening when realisation hit her. “I know what we can do!” she said excitedly. Without hesitation she grabbed Lexa’s hand, which was starting to become a habit of hers. One, Lexa could get accustomed to, fast.

“Clarke, where are we going?” she began to protest, having trouble following Clarke’s pace, unsure if letting the other girl guide her to an unknown destination was the wisest idea. “Can you slow down please?”

The blonde turned with a mischievous smile but kept going. “If you can’t follow, I might as well tell Octavia, she isn’t training you as well as she thinks, she may need to add some laps to your daily routine.”

Lexa huffed. The prospect of having to run even one more lap which she definitely dreaded – because what’s the point of running around if don’t have a goal in mind – prevented her from arguing any further.

They finally stopped five minutes later, in front of a grocery store, just outside campus.

“We need supplies,” Clarke said with determination, going into the store.

“Wait…” she said, reluctantly following the girl into the store, “didn’t you just have dinner? Like half an hour ago?”

“Yeah… so?” Clarke asked over her shoulder, as if there was nothing wrong with her never ending appetite.

She went from isle to isle, grabbing items left and right, which landed onto Lexa’s expecting arms. When they reached the junk food, Clarke simply went ahead with the widest smile, whispering a soft home. Lexa chuckled at the blonde’s reaction, only to be shushed by more supplies thrown into her already enormous pile. She stared at the items she was holding not sure why they needed nail polish, hairpins, wire, batteries, magnets, and massive amounts of junk food.

Finally, a box of candles had been sworn to be the last items, yet, Clarke had left Lexa in the middle of the store to get the essentials. She came back, holding a bottle of wine in each hand and smiling widely. Lexa rolled her eyes but couldn’t help to form a smile of her own.

“Ok, that’s it, let’s go,” Clarke ordered, going straight to the cashiers.

//
“Hey O! My sister with you?” Lincoln asked as soon as Octavia picked up; which had effectively halted Octavia and Raven’s discussion derived from their previous debate on Thanksgiving.

“Nope, she ditched Raven and I for Clarke,” the girl responded, “by the way, I owe you an apology.”

“It’s that so?”

“Yep, your sister told me all about your lack of American spirit,” she said, out of the corner of her eye she caught sight of the clock, noticing they had been going at it for at least forty-five minutes and the girls had yet to return.

She heard him laughing through the line. As usual, Lincoln wasn’t one to hold a grudge or be mad for a long time.

“Apology accepted. Well, if said sister returns, do tell her to call me and to answer her phone unless she wants a surprise visits from her brother.”

“Will do.”

“I’ll let you get back to whatever you and Raven were doing. I’ll call you tomorrow. Sweet dreams,” he said adoringly.

“Bye, I’ll be waiting,” she answered with a smile plastered on her face, ending the call.

Raven pretended to gag, faking disgust at the couple’s cheesiness.

“Shut up.”

//

“Are you going to tell me where are we going?” They had gone back to campus but had walked on the opposite direction of Lexa’s dorm. They had crossed the engineering faculty, which Lexa knew a little because of Raven but where going into the architects’ territory which Lexa barely went to.

Clarke led them to the back of a building, where a steel door with an emergency sign was the only entry at sight.

“Honestly Clarke, a door?” Lexa said in disbelief, “I thought you said you knew a place, I didn’t know you had some kink for doors.”

Clarke rolled her eyes. “Shut up, hand me the pins and paperclips, please.”

Lexa rummaged through the bags, finding the requested items and placing them on Clarke’s extended palm. The blonde took a couple, twisting them with her hands until she got the shape she wanted from each. She went to the door and pushed them inside. Lexa’s eyes widened at her actions, she looked around to see if there was anyone nearby. The place was empty as expected so late at night.

“Are we breaking in?”

Clarke kept fumbling with the pin and paperclip, until she heard a soft click which allowed her to turn the lock. She tried the handle, which opened easily.

“Maybe,” she answered, winking at the brunette.
“Don’t worry,” she said, going in with Lexa following closely behind. “Once we have the cameras
disable, no one will ever know we were here,” she added, going to a small room on the left.

A monitor showed a bunch of camera feeds, changing every thirty seconds or so and showing
different parts of the building. Clarke found the one she was looking for, and after watching the
changing pattern a couple of times, she figured it was the fifth one on the left. She went over a grey
box near the entrance, opening up to find the cables keeping the cameras active. She located the one
providing the live-stream from the door down the hall, and proceeded to cut the wire with her pocket
knife. She could feel Lexa watching her curiously; when she turned the girl had a lopsided smile.

“You’re gonna get us in so much trouble,” she said amused.

“It would be worth it and we won’t have any if you help me. Go over to the screen and tell me
which feed shows a door,” she began cutting the end of the wire, while Lexa did what she asked.
She went over the bags, taking out the duct tape and wire, which she promptly began working with.

“Number three and seventeen,” Lexa said, after a few minutes of watching the monitor. “Seventeen
looks more alike as the feed we need but it will be easier to connect the wire from three.” Clarke
quirked eyebrow at how quickly Lexa had caught up with what she was planning to do.

“What? Raven did tell you I learn fast.”
The blonde laughed.

“Three it is.” She grabbed the required wires, using the new one as an extension of the previously cut
one so it could reach the feed of camera number three. She inserted the pocket knife into a groove in
three, creating enough space for the new wire to enter. Once inside, she pushed until the monitor
showed a copy of the image of camera three in the box of number five, which only a trained eye
would easily notice.

“Done.”

Lexa shook her head, asking, “where too next?”

Clarke smiled mischievously. “One more thing and it’ll be worth it.”

They exit the room, going down the hall to the first door on the right. Lexa looked up; in the corner
was disabled camera number five. She looked down at their last obstacle, when she saw the keypad,
she reached into the bags and handed Clarke the magnets. The blonde was momentarily caught off
guard but smiled anyways, shaking her head.

“You sure it’s only Raven stealing books?” She crouched in front of the door, placing the magnets
around the device; it wasn’t long before the screen showed a bit of static numbers before powering
off. The girls looked at each other smiling. Clarke got up, opening the door.

“After you m’lady.”

Lexa was greeted by a stairwell, sighing, she grabbed a bag from the ground and began climbing.
Clarke closed the door behind them and headed after her. They reached a second steel door which
only had a stick to prevent it from opening it; Lexa left it aside and pushed the door opened.

Her eyes took it the scene in front of her at once. She was not expecting the scene that greeted her,
the roof had no barriers blocking the view, which meant the whole campus and beyond could be
seen clearly. Lexa stood mesmerized at the sight, the blinking lights of the city illuminating
everywhere she looked. She could hear the distant noises of the city, as a quiet reminder of life on the
ground. There was a slight breeze blowing, she closed her eyes, breathing in, letting the air create the sensation of being completely alive and present. She couldn’t help the feeling of being the only person in the world, isolated from her problems and fears.

Clarke lingered behind, allowing Lexa to take everything in. She examined the girl, smiling with relief when Lexa’s eyes brighten with the sight, her lips slightly ajar. Breathtaking.

“You like it?” she asked softly, not wanting to break the spell Lexa was under. The brunette turned around her cheeks lightly tinted and a sheepish smile playing on her lips.

“This is amazing, Clarke!”

Clarke’s smile only grew wider. “I come here when I need to escape,” she confessed, “when it gets so loud that I can’t even hear myself, it brings me peace. It’s kind of hard to explain.”

She took Lexa’s hand, stirring her towards the edge of the roof. There was a small concrete structure, perfect for two people to sit back and recline on it while contemplating the world at their feet.

“I know the feeling,” Lexa said, giving her a small smile. She sat down next to Clarke, placing the bag of groceries between them, which didn’t prevent them from ending incredibly close.

Lexa took some chips out of the bag while Clarke opened a bottle of wine. Clarke passed Lexa the box of candles, allowing the brunette to light some and placed them on the edge of the building, their light creating a soothing atmosphere. They spent some time eating, passing the bottle back and forth and making idle chat, letting time go by without any regrets. Lexa took another swig from the bottle, already feeling the effects of a loosen tongue. They had been stealing discreetly glances at one another, blushing when caught and giggling once the alcohol had hit their bloodstream. The brunette began playing with the tag on the bottle, slowly gathering courage to ask a question that had been bugging her for a while.

“How come Raven lives with you?” she asked, going straight to the point.

Clarke snapped out of her reverie, a bit taken aback by the bluntness of the question. She took a moment, pondering the words in her mind.

“When I was seven, some kid in our school was making fun of Raven. The typical boy who hears bullshit from his parents and goes around bullying kids with information he is too young to understand. Anyhow, he was insulting Raven’s dad; he was an illegal immigrant working whatever job he could get to take care of his family,” she explained, remembering the day as if it had been yesterday.

“Anyways, this kid is telling Raven that she doesn’t belong here, that her father was nothing and that she should be ashamed. When I heard all of this - I couldn’t help myself - I punched him in the face. He blamed us both and we ended in detention, she gave me some candies and we were inseparable afterwards.” She smiled at the memory. She remembered the earful she got at home, getting grounded and still feeling she had done the right thing, never once regretting her decision.

Lexa could easily relate to the sort of bond Clarke and Raven had created. Circumstances similar to the one Clarke had just described had ended with Lincoln, Anya and herself forming a family.

“When we were eight, Raven’s father got deported,” she continued, “her mother couldn’t handle it so she turned to the bottle. Raven began spending more and more time at my house. My parents were conflicted at first, finding it very odd to see a girl climbing out the window at 6 am to go to school. Raven made me swear not to tell why she spent the night, so I refused to tell them until they finally
forced it out of me. Afterwards, Raven was allowed to stay for a couple nights a week and have breakfast with us.” Clarke turned to see Lexa listening intently, not once making any effort to interrupt her. The blonde sighed, unsure how to go on. “I…, I’m not sure if I’m allowed to tell the next part… something happened with her mum and my parents decided to take her in. We were twelve.”

Lexa nodded slowly in understanding, processing the information in a contemplative stance. It brought a whole new dimension into the Raven Reyes persona she had come to adore.

She felt Clarke’s eyes on her; she shifted to look her way. Her eyes immediately were lost into a deep and clear blue, illuminated by the moon, creating a drowning effect that took over her entire body. For a moment, her mind went back to the first time she had seen those same eyes, when she couldn’t begin to imagine the meaning of their depth. Now, watching those eyes she understood some but still remained in the shadows wanting to learn and deciphered the truths and secrets that they kept.

Her eyes dropped to Clarke’s lips. The girl licked them unconsciously, leaving them slightly parted. Lexa leaned in, their noses almost touching; she could feel Clarke’s breathe tingling on her skin. The blonde eyes flickered down to Lexa’s before closing them completely, her instincts taking over her body.

The vibrating phone on Clarke’s pocket startled them both, making the jump apart. Lexa turned around quickly, her mind racing a million miles per hour. Clarke closed her eyes disappointed, reaching for the treacherous object. She looked at the caller’s ID, sighing and rubbing her face tiredly.

“What is it Raven?” Lexa peeked over her shoulder, noticing Clarke’s exasperated features, waiting patiently for her roommate to explain her reasons for calling and the cause of her interruption.

“Yes, Raven, she’s here,” she answered a little too harshly, “… ok, ok, yeah I’ll tell her. Thanks.” She ended the call, shocking her head at the terrible timing her life consisted of. She turned to Lexa, who seemed to be avoiding her eyes at all costs.

“Your brother is looking for you,” she said, bumping her shoulder with her own to gain her attention. Lexa’s eyes widened and immediately searched her clothes for her phone, when she didn’t find it, she stood up abruptly.

“I think I left it in my room,” she began gathering the garbage from the floor, placing it back in one of the bags.

Clarke watched her for a moment, until the girl shot her a look which got her into action. “Right, yeah…” the blonde said, helping out with the leftovers and pulling herself off the floor.

They reached Lexa’s building after an awkward and silent walk, in which neither girl made any attempt to bring up whatever could have happened before Raven’s call. They stood in front of each other, unsure on what to do next.

“I guess, I’ll see you soon,” Clarke finally said, breaking the silence.

The brunette nodded, forcing a small smile on her face. “Goodbye, Clarke.”

They went separate in directions, the feeling of a lost moment heavy in their minds.
“Anya! I need your help.” As usual, Lexa didn’t allow her to greet her properly, going straight to the point. “What does one bring to Thanksgiving?”

Anya groaned loudly. “Not you too,” she whined, “Lincoln just called to ask me that same question.”

“Oh!” There was a silence on the line.

“Lexa?”

“You don’t mind we are celebrating it?” she asked warily. “I could totally spend Thanksgiving with you,” she added enthusiastically. Anya laughed, knowing full well what Lexa was trying to do.

“You’re not getting out of it, young lady. Besides, I already have plans,” she said nonchalantly.

“Really? With whom?” the girl asked, genuinely interested in her sister’s relationships.

“In your dreams, kid.”

Lexa laughed at her dismissal, leave it to Anya to be the most discreet and heavy guarded person on Earth.

“Make a strudel,” the woman suggested casually.

“You’re the best Anya!”

//

Clarke was standing by Raven’s bed, watching amused while her friend ran around the room, throwing clothes haphazardly into a suitcase. Clarke picked up with a finger a rather revealing bra that had come flying, landing at the edge of the bed.

“Uhm… Raven. I’m not sure if you realized we’re going for a couple of days, not an entire week to Las Vegas.”

Raven didn’t seem to have heard her, darting into the bathroom to collect more things. She threw all her toiletries into a small bag, not caring on organizing them or their utility. Clarke tossed the bra onto the bed, glancing around the room. Up until now, she had expected Lexa to be in the bathroom.

“Hey, Rey!” she called from her spot, “where’s Lexa?”

“Lincoln’s,” the other girl, shouted from the other room. “She’s riding with O,” she explained coming back into the bedroom, putting on earrings. She went over her suitcase, placing the small bag on top of everything and folding her clothes messily, only so they would fit. She closed the suitcase without a second glance. Raven knelt and pulled a tool box from underneath her bed.

“I’m sure you will not need that,” Clarke said, pointing to the box, shoving away the disappointed feeling of having to wait to see Lexa.

“It’s just a precaution, in case Mama Griffin needs some repairs at her home,” Raven explained cheerfully.

“Raven, I’m sure mum doesn’t need another singing doorbell, or a shaking bed, nor a talking microwave.”

Her friend smiled, recalling all the improvements she had made at Clarke’s home over the years.
“She loves them. You’re just jealous because she loves me more than you,” she added, grinning widely, her eyes brightening from whatever ideas forming in her mind.

Clarke chuckled, shaking her head. “Alright you… let’s go. I don’t want to intervene between my mum and her favourite mechanic.”

//

“What if they don’t like it?”

Lexa was standing in the middle of Lincoln’s kitchen, wearing an apron with images of Tweety on it, all covered in flour. She was already dress in a simple green dress, which made her eyes stand out, and black heels. Her hair was loose, in her natural wavy form. She had a bird shape necklace, with a matching bracelet. The girl was waiting on her strudel to be baked, avoiding touching any surfaces so she would not crinkled her dress.

Lincoln was working on the counter behind her, putting the last touches on his dish. The sleeves on his white shirt were folded up to his elbows, to prevent them from getting dirty. He too, was in formal attire, with black pants and well polished shoes.

“It’ll be fine,” he assured her; only, it sounded as if he was reassuring himself.

The bell rang along with the kitchen timer, making them jump. Lincoln straightened one last asparagus, before going to open the door. A smiling Octavia greeted him on the other side. She assessed his clothes with a smirk on her face. Lincoln looked at her attire up and down, casual jeans, purple t-shirt and leather jacket, wondering why they hadn’t asked for clothes etiquette.

“You’ve never done Thanksgiving,” his girlfriend stated in a slightly mocking tone. He rolled his eyes, bringing her in for a kiss.

“Hey,” she whispered against his lips, smiling.

“Hey,” he replied softly, enveloping her once more with his lips. The girl sighed content.

“Come on Lexa is freaking out in the kitchen,” he grabbed her hand, leading her into the apartment, to the kitchen.

“T-Rex, we’re overdressed!” he informed his sister, entering the kitchen.

Lexa appeared from behind the counter, carrying a just out of the oven strudel. Her shoulders slumped forward, taking in Octavia’s clothes. She went over the other woman to greet her, placing a kiss on her cheek.

“I’ll go change.”

“No, no, no,” Octavia grabbed her arm, stopping her, “you look amazing, Clarke’s gonna love it. Bellamy’s waiting in the car. We gotta go.”

Lexa turned to her puppy imploring eyes, not wanting to feel self-conscious the entire dinner. Octavia scoffed, not falling for her acting.

“That may work with Clarke but you’re definitely not the sibling that can convince me,” she said, nudging Lincoln, making him smile. Lexa dropped the face, sending a glare at her brother. “Seriously though, we have to go. It’s my ass on the line if we’re late.”
“Fine, Lincoln, could you please grab the bags?” the guy nodded, going to the next room to get them. “Octavia, please help me with Linc’s appetizer,” she said, taking off her apron and placing it on a hook small hook, next to the fridge.

“Lincoln cooked this?” the girl asked, surprise, pointing at the dish. She picked it up, inspecting the food. She turned and found Lexa holding a similar plate, a bit larger. “You prepared that?” the girl simply nodded her mouth turning into a lopsided smile. “Damn! I knew we shouldn’t have invited you. You guys are gonna makes us all look bad.”

Lexa shifted uncomfortably, considering leaving one of the dishes behind. She didn’t know what to expect from a Thanksgiving dinner or a dinner with friends in general. Both, her and Lincoln, had acted on a custom they had learned on the years after getting off the system. Never go to a party empty-handed. Maybe, they should’ve asked Clarke.

Octavia could see Lexa’s brain working a mile per hour, so she interrupted her before she exploded.

“Hey, you worry too much. Abby is gonna love this.” Octavia hoped the siblings had made at least edible food. She made a mental note to complain to Lincoln, for not telling her about his cooking skills.

Bellamy was waiting for them in the car. He was also wearing casual clothes - Lexa noticed when she sat down, next to him. He introduced himself while Lincoln placed the bags in the trunk.

“So, you’re the Commander,” he said, smirking.

“It’s Lexa, actually,” she corrected, not sure what to make of him.

“Nice to, finally meet you, Lexa. The girls have been talking nonstop about you for months. I’m Bellamy, O’s favourite brother.” They shook hands.

“You’re my only brother, smartass,” Octavia clarified sarcastically, getting into the backseat and letting Lincoln close the door for her. The man went around the car, to get in.

Bellamy didn’t skip a bit to introduce himself to his sister’s boyfriend. “I’m Bellamy,” a slight threatening tone could be perceived in his voice; Lincoln ignored the attempt to intimidate him.

“Lincoln. Lexa’s favourite brother,” he extended his hand and Bellamy shook it, already liking the guy. Lexa and Octavia exchanged annoyed looks.

“Yeah, yeah… we can get all chummy on the way. Drive,” Octavia ordered, excited to get there, “this is gonna be so much fun!”

As they got near their destination, a knot began to form in Lexa’s stomach. She was gripping the tray so harshly her knuckles were beginning to turn white. The girl had spent the journey looking out the window, enjoying the changing scenarios to put her mind at ease. She had barely joined the conversation, allowing Lincoln to do the talking for both of them.

Clarke’s house was in a quaint neighbourhood, in the suburbs. A road of houses, led to a nice park, right across from it, to the right was the beige façade of Clarke’s home. The driveway was next to a small garden with a path, which led to the front door. Bellamy drove in, parking next to Clarke’s Audi. Even before he had turned the engine off, Octavia was already jumping out of the car and going to the front door.

Lincoln and Lexa exchanged reassuring looks, which went unnoticed by both Blakes. They lingered behind them, holding the gifts, controlling their nerves in the best way possible.
Abby opened the door a couple of minutes later. Her face was stoic, her lips forming a thin straight line.

“Octavia, Bellamy.” She greeted seriously. Octavia swallowed nervously and Bellamy fidgeted on his spot. Clarke’s mum couldn’t hold the smile cracking on her lips, pulling brother and sister into a massive hug. She opened her eyes, from within, noticing the two other people standing awkwardly behind them.

“Wow! Please tell me those are for us,” she commented excited, staring at the delicious looking dishes.

“Yes ma’am,” Lincoln answered politely.

Octavia freed herself from the hug to introduce them.

“Abby, these are Lexa and Lincoln Mara.” Almost as if they had rehearsed, they both smiled kindly to Clarke’s mum, nodding in recognition since they couldn’t greet her properly due to the trays and bags. Abby smiled widely, amused at the synchrony and politeness of the pair.

“Well Blakes, you’ve got yourselves some competition now. Please, come in,” she motioned aside, to let them pass. Lincoln allowed Lexa in first, not before receiving a light punch in the arm from Octavia.

The interior of the house had everything Lexa had imagined a family should have. No sheets or plastics over the furniture so stupid kids can’t get it all dirty. No dripping ceilings with buckets all over the place, so the floor wouldn’t get wet. No prison like walls, dirty and dripping with mildew. No, eleven cats that received more food than you did. Not the constant feeling of being watched or threatened. It felt warm and cozy with light coming in from the windows and actual flowers in vases.

The entry hall had pictures of Clarke’s family, hanging on the wall. She noticed a man, holding a three year old Clarke on his shoulders, both with an ice cream scoop and sporting bright smiles. Lexa couldn’t help but feel jealous and immensely happy at the same time. All the pictures she had of her family, had burnt in the house fire that had killed her parents. She had no recollection of her faces, only a vague memory of sound. Laughter, she thought it belonged to her father and a calming voice, lulling her to sleep, which she believed to be her mother.

“Clarke’s in her room. She’ll be down in a minute. You can live those bags by the door. Here, let me take this into the kitchen.” She took Lincoln’s tray. “Make yourselves at home,” she added pointing to the living room; Lexa followed her into the kitchen.

Abby put the tray she was holding on a marble counter, making some space for Lexa to put hers as well. The girl gave her a shy smile.

“So Lexa, you’ve never celebrated Thanksgiving,” the woman commented, attempting to make small talk.

Lena tensed up, realizing she had managed to get into the one situation she needed to avoid; being in the same room as Clarke’s mother, alone. If she was nervous before, now she was a complete wreck, her palms sweating and racking her brain to form a coherent, non embarrassing sentence.

“Yes, that’s correct Ms. Griffin.”

She wanted to run out of the room, in fact she had wanted to leave the minute she had stepped into the house, anxiety kicking. Looking at Lincoln had calmed her enough, knowing she had him by her side. At the same time, she didn’t want to seem rude or curt so she made an effort.
“We grew up in the system. Extra big dinners weren’t part of the package,” she explained, trying to keep her tone as even as possible; pushing back the memories. She searched Abby’s face, expecting to see the pity people felt when she told her about her time in foster care, instead, she saw mild surprise and understanding.

“Well, I hope…”

“MUM! Where are the…” Clarke froze on her spot, her mouth slightly ajar at the sight of Lexa. Her eyes drifted down the girl’s body, admiring every inch of fabric and skin, molded in such perfect way thanks to Lexa’s dress. She trailed down her legs, unconsciously biting her lip. Her mother’s voice echoed in her head, bringing her out of the shock.

“Clarke?” she snapped out if it, noticing Lexa’s eyes were brighter.

“Right, where are the…” Abby smacked the back of her head, which caused Clarke to yelp in surprise.

“Hey!” Clarke shrieked, rubbing the back of her head. Lexa chuckled softly.

“Please, show the manners I hope I raised you to have.” Her mother scolded, tilting her head towards Lexa. Clarke cheeks burnt, realising she had not greeted Lexa too busy ogling her.

“Oh shit!” Her mother rolled her eyes, Clarke looked at her apologetically. “Sorry. Hello Lexa,” she greeted, formally.

“Hello Clarke,” the brunette answered, amused at Clarke’s uneasiness. “You have a lovely home,” she added, half- mocking, half-serious, effectively ending the weird tension that had settled in the kitchen.

“Very funny, making me look bad in front of my mother,” she replied, scanning one more time Lexa’s outfit, “I’m not gonna kick you out because you look absolutely stunning.” Lexa’s cheeks turned beet red, her heart skipping a bit at Clarke’s comment.

“Mother, we are definitely underdressed,” Clarke said, pointing to the pair of jeans they were both wearing and casual shirts.

“Well Clarke, I did say Thanksgiving was special so I’m blaming you,” the woman retorted. Lexa’s chest filled with gratitude at the attempts of making her feel more comfortable.

“Clarke, you were looking for something?” she interrupted, remembering Clarke had come in yelling for her mother.

“Oh, yes, I need napkins. Raven still has the bad habit of eating nachos as if they were her last meal on Earth. Your lovely couch wouldn’t appreciate the cheese stains.” Abby quickly grabbed a stash of napkins, rushing out the kitchen, yelling Raven’s name. Clarke had a smirk on her face.

“You lied,” Lexa stated, inspecting Clarke’s features. She had moved closer to blonde so the girl was surprised, once she turned, by their proximity.

Clarke smiled and winked, mischievously.

Lena shook her head amused. “You, Clarke Griffin, are trouble,” she whispered in her ear when she passed next to her to leave the room, brushing their shoulders lightly. Clarke breathed in the soft perfume Lexa was wearing, closing her eyes momentarily. She smiled once more and followed the girl. Oh this is gonna be one hell of a night.
As the evening progressed, Lexa began feeling more comfortable. Her quiet nature prevented her to engage in many of the discussions taking place around the room, preferring to observe the interactions in the group. They were currently sitting in the living room, Octavia and Lincoln on the couch across from her, the former talking to Clarke and Bellamy, while Lincoln chatted animatedly with Raven, jumping from cars, to bikes, to any movable object they could think of. It didn’t surprise her in the least seeing her brother bonding with her roomie, even though their personalities were polar opposites, Raven’s outgoing nature and extreme intelligence was a new challenge Lincoln was more than willing to decipher.

“No, no… Reyes is not possible. Lexa tell her,” he turned to his sister, imploring for support with the latina.

“Yeah Raven, I tried. Changing the tires and messing with the suspension is tricky. Modifying the rake and trail can be a bitch, and somewhat illegal. I did the math for the stability on uneven ground, and Linc insisted on having the probabilities of an accident if I messed up the trail and stability, so I also calculated the statistics. Let’s just said I ended with a broken arm and a pissed off brother,” Lexa explained, gaining Clarke’s attention and an incredulous look on Raven’s face. Lincoln frowned remembering the outcome of his sister’s experiments.

“I was pissed because you lied.” The girl slouched back into the couch, knowing they were going to start arguing as they usually did whenever the accident pop up in their conversations.

“I only pretended I had miscalculated some data. Besides, it wasn’t my fault you couldn’t understand half of the info I wrote in that 25 pages report you made me do,” she defended herself.

“You changed the important part. You wrote there was a 75 percent chance of success, when in reality it was only 50. You did that, knowing full well I wouldn’t let you ride the bike if there was a 50/50 chance of you getting injured.”

“Forty-five,” Lexa muttered under her breath, which only Clarke heard. The blonde was staring at Lexa, not fully understanding the conversation.

“Wait, wait… you have a bike? And made modifications to it based on data you calculated?” Raven wasn’t sure if they were messing with her. The fact that Lexa rode a bike was incredible on its own, the part where she had some mechanical experienced as well as theoretical one, she was still trying to wrap around her head.

Lexa smiled amused at Raven’s conflicted face.

“I had a bike,” she clarified, looking directly at Lincoln. The guy stared back at her, challenging her. “Lincoln sold it.”

“When was this?” Clarke asked softly, extremely curious to found out more about a side of Lexa she hadn’t discovered.

“When she was sixteen,” Lincoln answered quickly, implicitly defending his actions. Lexa rolled her eyes but said nothing. “The point is, if you mess up with the trail by even a couple of millimetres and don’t adjust the trail accordingly, you will lose the stability required, and my sister is an idiot,” he added playfully.

The witty comeback Lexa died in her mouth when Abby announced dinner was ready.
The table was set, a roasted turkey in the middle surrounded by side dishes, such as cranberry sauce, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy. It was a scene both Lexa and Lincoln had seen many times in movies but still were fascinated by the sight of all the food.

Lexa’s stomach grumbled, reminding her that three nachos and five chips weren’t real food. Clarke nudged her softly in the stomach, mocking her hunger.

“C’mon starving girl, let’s get you eating before you decide to eat the furniture.” The blonde guided her into the dining room, directing her towards the chair next to hers.

As soon as everyone was settled, Abby allowed them to dig in. The sound of cutlery, glasses and dishes, along with the orders of passing food around, filled the room surrounding them in a friendly atmosphere, with soft chatter and occasional giggles.

“Mom, what are those?” Clarke asked, pointing towards Lincoln’s dish.

“You have to ask the Mara’s. They brought it.” Clarke turned to Lexa, who denied with her head and pointed across the table. “Don’t ask me, he cooked that one.”

“Guilty as charged. They are asparagus cooked with cheese, nothing fancy but quite tasty. I hope you like it.” He eyed the plate, hoping his efforts had paid off.

“Lincoln these are delicious!” It only took one bite for Abby to realize the man had some hidden culinary talents. Lexa and Lincoln smiled in relief, one down, one more to go.

“Thank you, ma’am,” Octavia kissed him on the cheek, adoringly. Lexa was the only one that caught the small blush that crept onto her brother’s cheeks. Clarke was the only one that noticed the adoration look in Lexa’s eyes.

“Clarke, pass me the stuffing,” Raven’s voice brought both girls back to reality. Lexa turned catching a flustered Clarke, fumbling with the plate and almost spilling all its contents into Raven’s lap.

“Real smooth, Griffin,” Raven said, managing to steady the plate.

“Lexa,” Abby said, distracting her from whatever snarled comment Clarke had given Raven, “you want to be a lawyer?”

Once again, Lexa had managed to settle in her most undesirable place, in close proximity to Clarke’s mother, who was ready to strike a serious conversation with her.

“That’s right, ma’am,” she replied, “I’m majoring in English, though, to keep my options open. I wanted to be a writer when I was little but I feel a necessity to give back… to do some good, I guess.” She continued, wording her thoughts as best as possible.

She wanted to put her time in the system in the past, for good. Let go of whatever demons still clinging to her skin, waking her up in the middle of the night, shuddering with cold sweat dripping from her forehead. She had left partially unscathed. More importantly, she had gained a family, which she wouldn’t trade for the world. She had survived, many didn’t. She knew her luck and she wanted to do something for those who didn’t have an Anya, or a Lincoln to protect them.

“You don’t have to talk about it,” Abby said, noticing the change in the girl’s mood.

“It’s ok. My time in the system wasn’t easy… not by far but, I would like to help kids that are facing worse situations.”
“That’s very noble of you.”

“I don’t know if it’s noble, I rather think of it as being useful.” Lexa felt Clarke shift on her seat, aware she was listening.

“Once you are in, people forget you’re still a kid. They see us as a burden or a paycheck. I’m not saying we were saints, many times we engaged in problematic behaviours but no one cares for the reasons behind them, only trying to get rid of the problem. But I know for a fact that, doing bad things or pretending you did them may also be the easy way out. I still remember when taking the blame was the easiest solution, the safest one. And people don’t understand that, unless they’ve lived it so that’s why I want to be a lawyer. To prevent kids from taking that route of escapism. I was against the odds and got very lucky.” She said this looking straight into Lincoln, who signaled between the two and winked at her.

“No, seriously O, Lexa used to have a modified bike at sixteen!” Raven exclaimed, completely unaware of what was happening at the other end of the table, too eager to continue her previous conversation.

“You’re sh…” Abby cleared her throat loudly, sending a reproaching gaze at Octavia, “…kidding me,” Octavia finished warily.

“Lexa, tell her,” the latina ordered over Clarke’s food plate. Lexa smiled, happy to continue the less emotional conversation.

“Yeah, I really loved Roberta,” she said with dreamy eyes, remembering one of her most precious possessions. Everyone but Lincoln stared at her estranged.

“The bike’s name,” Lincoln clarified; half-annoyed the conversation wasn’t over.

“And you sold her?” Octavia asked, offended as if it had been her own.

“Whose side are you on?” he exclaimed, not sure he could take all three girls fury at once.

“I’m on the side of the person whose bike you sold!”

“Thank you Octavia,” Lexa interjected, earning a stern look from Lincoln.

“You broke your arm!”

“You let me drive her!”

“You lied to me!”

The bickering between them was obviously too amusing for the rest of the table, since all eyes shifted from one person to the other whenever they retorted.

“I barely bent the results.”

“You were sixteen!”

“You sold my baby!”

“And broke your arm,” he pointed out, once again.

“You had no right,” Lexa retorted.
“Someone had to pay the medical bills,” he finally burst, releasing the truth after all those years. Whatever Lexa was going to respond, died in her throat. An uncomfortable silence settled around the table, no one sure of what had just transgressed; only that it was important. Lexa remained still, trying to process his words.

“I’m sorry,” the man apologized staring directly at her. “I’m sorry Ms. Griffin; I didn’t mean to cause a scene. If you excuse me, could I use your restroom?”

Abby nodded. “Down the hall, third door on the left,” Lincoln stood up, apologizing once more before leaving.

Lexa kept staring into space. She suddenly got up. “I’m really sorry too Ms. Griffin. Please do continue; we’ll be right back,” she said, going after her brother.

Lexa was leaning on the wall in front of the door, waiting for Lincoln to come out. Her mind collecting every detail she could remember from the days after the incident. She recalled waking up in a hospital bed, a sharp pain on her shoulder. Later, they would inform her that an operation had been required. Surgery had managed to save her arm and that she had been lucky, a couple of millimeters down and her nerves could’ve been damaged for good, leaving her with a useless arm. Lincoln and Anya were there, relieved to see her awake and pissed at her carelessness. When they had gone back to the apartment, they told her Roberta’s faith. Only the reason was more of a punishment rather than a necessity of money. She didn’t speak to either one for at least two weeks.

Lincoln came out, showing no surprise on seeing her there. He closed the door behind him, resting on it and crossing his arms.

“Why didn’t you guys tell me?” All signs of playful banter long gone from Lexa’s voice.

“We didn’t want you to feel guilty,” he answered in all honesty, “we knew you would blame yourself for the lack of money and Anya thought it was best to pretend we had gotten rid of it as a lesson.”

“And you agreed?”

“I… Yes,” he gave in, “I was so scared, Lexa. I thought I lost you. Then I realized your recklessness and mine. You were a child and I had forgotten. I gave you permission and I blamed myself. We had to sell it but I’m not gonna lie and tell you I wasn’t relief. It wasn’t a punishment; it was for you to understand that if something happened to you, Anya and I would never forgive ourselves. We couldn’t risk you so Roberta had to go. To remind us all, how much our lives matter.”

Lexa took a shaky breath, controlling her tears. “Thank you,” she whispered, hugging him tightly. “I still miss her, though.”

Lincoln laughed into her hair. “Yeah, me too kid, me too.”

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When they got back to the table, the conversation was once again flowing. They sat down, everyone pretending, doing a fairly good job, nothing had happened. Lincoln leaned over Abby, subtly.

“We are really sorry. Do forgive our rudeness.”

Abby smiled at both of them, still impressed at their manners.

“It’s already forgotten. Besides, if only it was the first time I witness siblings bickering,” she gestured
towards Raven and Clarke, as well as, Octavia and Bellamy. “Believe me, you two made siblings fights look polite with your calm exit, compared to the storming out and throwing plates I’ve seen in this house. One time, I had to lock Raven and Clarke in a room so they could talk it out. I went back an hour later to check on them, only to find an empty room and an open window.”

“It was Clarke’s idea!”

“It was Raven’s idea!”

The girls shouted in unison.

“To this day, I don’t know whose idea it was,” Abby confessed to Lexa, who chuckled. “Please keep in mind Lexa’s dessert,” the woman warned them, when she saw Raven serving herself for the third time.

“Is it any good or should I pretend I’m full after this?” the girl asked, playfully while continuing to place massive amounts of food on her plate.

Lexa shrugged, aware being her own judge didn’t help to know whether her cooking was any good.

“Lexa cooks better than me, if that tells you anything,” Lincoln chipped in helpfully.

“You cook?” Clarke asked, surprised. Lexa blushed a bit at her impress tone, nodding. “Well, aren’t you a girl of many traits? Anything else I should know besides your cooking and riding skills?”

“Wouldn’t you like to know?” Lexa replied, bumping her shoulders ever so slightly with Clarke’s. Two could play the game.

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“Alright everyone, I’ll assign cleaning duties and then I’m off to bed.” Abby announced, folding her napkin and placing it on the table. A series of groans erupted all around the table. “Raven you get to wash, plates and cutlery, Bellamy, pans and glasses. Octavia, you’ll dry them. Clarke, get everything back in its place. Mara’s you’re free since what you brought was absolutely delicious.” Both of them open their mouths to protest but Abby’s hand shot up in the air, silencing them. “It’s not up for discussion. Go set the board games, put on the TV, watch the game if you want but don’t go anywhere near my kitchen, you hear me?”

“Loud and clear, ma’am.”

“Good, I’m off.” Lexa signalled Lincoln with her eyes, telling him to follow her, which he did while everyone began gathering plates and used dishes.

“Uhmm Clarke?” She tapped the girl’s shoulder to gain her attention.

“No helping Lexa,” the blonde said firmly.

“I know. I wouldn’t want to mess with your mum. But, could you tell me where I can put my bag?”

Clarke’s hands were carrying three plates, two glasses and the sauce, still she managed to balance it all and point towards the stairs. “Top floor, second door. That’s my room.”

Lexa simply nodded in understanding. She crossed Lincoln in the threshold, who simply told her, “nine o’clock.”

“Okay.”
She carried her bag upstairs, dropping it as soon as she opened Clarke’s bedroom door. The sight before her eyes caught her completely off guard. It was as if she was entering an entirely different house. The walls were splattered with different colours of paint, with no pattern and different styles. Art was hanging on the walls. Lexa assumed it was all Clarke’s. Pictures, paintings, drawings, and doodles, were everywhere. A space in the corner had all the material; one could ever need to be an artist.

Lexa walked around the room, taking it all in. There was no doubt in her mind; Clarke was a true artist, leaving a bit of her soul in every piece she created. She had only seen a few drawings Clarke had left back in her room, so she knew the girl had talent, looking at all these, she realised not only did she have skills but passion. Passion that seeped through her fingers into her creations, clamouring the raw emotions of her audience, leaving them bare with their feelings and fears. Mesmerising, just like Clarke.

She remembered Abby’s words; Lexa went over to the window, inspecting the girls’ escape route. She opened it, getting rid of her heels and climbed through to the roof, noticing the tree on the side of the house, perfect for sneaky teenagers. She smiled, picturing a young Clarke and Raven, trying to be quiet but unable to control their giggles, at the same time they climbed down the tree. She sat down, contemplating the night.

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“Hey stranger, you went rogue on us, for a moment there,” Clarke said softly, joining Lexa on the roof. She stood awkwardly, waiting for the girl to acknowledge her. “I’m sorry you probably want to be alone. I’ll go.” She turned to leave, not wanting to disturb the girl.

“Clarke,” a soft voice spoke behind her back, “-stay, please.” Even though the last word had been whispered, Clarke heard it, clear as the night, effectively making her approach the other girl.

Lexa had gone outside to get some peace and quiet, but she couldn’t deny Clarke’s company was a lot more appealing. She tapped on the roof with her hand, motioning Clarke to sit next her. The blonde walked over the short distance, settling down and looking up to the sky. The air was a bit chilly but the jackets they were sporting kept them warm. It was a clear night, with some visible stars. Lexa contemplated Clarke’s features, the moonlight dancing on her face, creating an ethereal illusion. She followed Clarke’s vision towards the sky.

“When I was little, I would always find places like these.” Lexa didn’t know why she suddenly felt the need to speak, explain herself. “I used to think it was because I wanted to be alone but the truth is, I was running away from my loneliness,” she continued, her voice barely above a whisper, almost as if she was confessing a secret. “There were times it got so loud, people screaming, yelling, buzzing around, yet I felt as if I wasn’t there, as if no one noticed me. That’s when my anxiety kicked in and I simply had to run. I could be gone for hours, my thoughts keeping my company.”

“What did Lincoln think of that?”

“Lincoln wasn’t always there;” Lexa smiled sadly. “So, he hated it when it happened because he knew how dangerous it could get being alone and feeling abandoned.”

The meaning behind her words stung Clarke, the flash of pain on Lexa’s eyes giving away the silent plea of love; the one she had sent so many nights but had disappeared into thin air. Clarke took Lexa’s hand in her own, rubbing circles with her dumb, soothingly.

“Yeah, he freaked out a little just now.” Lexa suddenly looked worried. “Don’t worry I told him you were in my room,” she reassured her, looking directly into her emerald eyes.
Lexa looked down at her joined hands, a sudden feeling of insecurity travelling her body. How could something feel so right, yet so incredibly scary? She felt Clarke’s intense gaze on her. Her eyes travelled up, finding Clarke’s eyes searching her face, interrogating her quietly. Lexa’s eyes darted down to the blonde’s lips. Clarke leaned in closer, slowly. The brunette swallowed, closing her eyes and letting instinct take over her body, closing the small gap separating their lips. The first touch was soft, doubtful, a question on its own; a discovery. Clarke pressed a bit harder against Lexa’s lips, opening her mouth slightly before capturing the girl’s bottom lip with her own and biting it lightly. She ran her tongue over it, prying between Lexa’s slightly parted lips. Lexa granted her access, cupping Clarke’s cheek with her free hand, bringing her closer, allowing the kiss to deepen, getting lost in the feeling of Clarke’s sweet taste invading her senses.

Lexa pulled back a little, inhaling deeply to steady her racing heart. Their foreheads pressed together and their hands linked. She opened her eyes, directly looking into Clarke’s. The blonde was smiling widely, failing to contain her true emotions.

“Finally,” she murmured resting her head on Lexa’s shoulder, nuzzling her with her nose, playfully; laughing softly at her little jest. Lexa’s lips crooked into a tiny grin, the feeling of absolute adoration and happiness, travelling through every fibre in her body. She allowed her body to relax and relinquished in the moment.

“Clarke!” Raven’s head popped out the window, startling both girls and breaking the aftermath bliss of their kiss. “Your mum’s looking for you.”

“Thanks Rae,” Clarke said intently. Taking the hint, Raven left with a devilish grin forming on her lips.

Clarke turned to Lexa, who was staring ahead, a million thoughts running through her brain.

“You should go ahead. I’ll be right there,” the girl said, without sparing her a glance.

Clarke parted her lips to say something but reconsidered, closing them a second later. She knew something had shifted as soon as their lips touched, hell even before when Lexa’s walls had cracked a little, but the minute Raven’s voice shot through the night, it was over. She wanted to say something, anything, but truth to be told, she didn’t know where to take it from here. She didn’t want to scare Lexa off, yet she didn’t want to pressure the girl either. So she let the moment pass, end just as it had started, two girls tentatively discovering each other. She let go of her hand and got up, following Raven back inside.

Lexa let out a breath she didn’t know she had been holding. She traced her lips with her fingers, the ghost of Clarke’s touch tingling as the sweetest memory.
Chapter 5

The living room presented the complete opposite scenario of the rooftop. There were pillows, blankets, and noise, which Lexa finally deciphered as music, once she reached the bottom of the stairs. Lincoln was sprawled over a couch, a lot more comfortable and relaxed, with one arm draped around Octavia’s shoulders, who was resting her head in the nook of his neck. Raven was sitting next to the TV, a bunch of her tools scattered around her while she fumbled with some cables, holding one between her teeth. Bellamy entered the room, holding a guitar in the air, triumphantly.

“Got it! Where’s Clarke?” he asked, glancing around.

“HERE!” Clarke shouted in his ear, coming from behind him and yanking the guitar from his hands, making him jump in the process. She plopped herself on the closest couch, strumming a few chords and tuning its sound. There was a grin of satisfaction once she struck the perfect sound, which warmed Lexa’s body. She could definitely spend a lifetime watching Clarke in her element, being all happy.

Clarke darted her eyes up, when she realized someone was watching her. Lexa looked away quickly, blushing for being caught staring at Clarke. The girl motioned her to come over, Lexa was still hazy from their kiss and preferred having some distance to clear her mind and not do anything stupid, like fall in love with Clarke. Shit!

She walked to the other side of the room, near Lincoln. A pang of jealousy hit her as soon as Bellamy plunged next to Clarke, nudging her ribs playfully.

“Done!” Raven shouted triumphantly. “Ok Griff, you’re on; tell me what’s your beat.”

“Any requests people?” Clarke asked around.

“Teardrops of my guitar!”

“Our song!”

“Just a dream!”

“Breakaway!”

Bellamy, Octavia and Raven began screaming every Taylor Swift, Carrie Underwood or Kelly Clarkson song title that came to mind, making Clarke huff indignantly. She ignored them all, turning to Lincoln and Lexa for help. The two were rather taken aback with the storm of requests to come up with their own.

“Girl Crush?” Lincoln said, faking innocence and shrugging his shoulders, making the rest of them crack up laughing. It prevented them from noticing the blushing faces from Clarke and Lexa, who averted her eyes from the blonde’s.

“C’mon guys, tell me a good song or I’ll being to take y’all seriously,” she said, stressing a southern accent to note how serious she was. The effect was immediate, all three stopped laughing at Clarke, going into deep thought of actual songs they could all enjoy and sing along.
Raven snapped her fingers, remembering the chorus and attempting to get the title. “Dance with somebody! You know we have to.”

“Yes!” Octavia almost jumped out of the couch. “Griffin-Reyes Remix Version though, now that’s a tradition!”

Neither girl needed to be told twice before Raven found the pre-recorded mix on her phone. As soon as the song began blasting out of the speakers, Clarke followed suit with the guitar.

The moment Clarke began singing Lexa entered a trance, she was completely mesmerised by the blonde. Her voice was husky and low, the kind of voice that spilled sensuality and made Lexa realised she was a shameful sinner. Fuck I’m doomed.

It really was a tradition, when the first chorus hit, Octavia and Raven jumped out of the seats (Shot, shot, shots!) and began dancing some sort of choreography to everyone’s amusement.

The rest of the night, they spend it singing medleys and telling stories of one another. Clarke finally noticed Lexa drifting into sleep, her own eyelids heavy from tiredness, so she decided to call it a night.

“Don’t you dare touch anything in my room, Blake!” Raven said, giving a straight warning to Bellamy who was taking over her room, while the girls crammed into Clarke’s bedroom and Lincoln slept on the couch.

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“Morning, chef,” a raspy voice spoke behind his back.

Lexa entered the kitchen, wearing her pyjamas, barefoot and rubbing her eyes, having just woken up. She had made a stop on the way over to brush her teeth and sprayed some water on her face, that hadn’t help at all with her morning fatigue.

“Morning.”

To Lexa’s annoyance, Lincoln was up and ready for whatever this day would bring. It had always been this way, him, one of those people that woke up fresh and chirpy; her, the kind of person that could kill someone if she didn’t have at least a cup of coffee in her system before engaging in any human interaction. He knew this first handed, having been the subject of Lexa’s wrath many times, so he grabbed a mug from one of the cupboards and served her a cup from the pot he had just prepared.

“Here, I don’t want you going all T-Rex on me,” he said, pushing the mug into her hands.

She crooked her lips slightly and took a sip, letting the bitter taste expand in her mouth, allowing the warm to spread.

“Thanks. What’s the plan?” she asked, stifling a yawn with the back of her hand.

“I’m thinking going all American. It’s too soon to delve into something more exotic so let’s stick with the classics.” He pointed towards the ingredients he already had laid out on the counter.

“So, pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, toast and fruit?”

“Yep, basically, sounds good?” he asked, pouring a cup for himself, adding some sugar and cream on it.
“You’re the boss,” she mocked salute, the coffee not quite into her bloodstream.

“Very well, I’ll do eggs and bacon, you handle toast and pancakes.” He began taking a couple of pans and bowls, Lexa followed his commands, taking out plates and spatulas.

As usual, they fell into an easy pace, in which they worked in synchrony. Lexa piling pancake after pancake, while Lincoln kept an eye on the bacon and making a considerable amount of scrambled eggs to feed the remain inhabitants of the house. They didn’t talk much, only asking if something tasted good or if the amount of a certain ingredient was correct, letting their past morning routine settle in.

“Do you think it’ll be warm when they wake up?”

“I’m guessing the smell will probably do its job. I had to tiptoe over Octavia so I wouldn’t wake her but I’m pretty sure Clarke was already in her fifth dream. Raven was mumbling and as her roommate I can assure you that only happens when she’s about to join the living.”

As if on cue, Raven burst into the kitchen, pretending to be a search dog following the smell of food.

“You really are trying to make us all look bad, aren’t you?” she asked, crossing her arms and inspecting the set table with food all over. “Wait, is that fresh orange juice?”

Before either could answer, Clarke stormed into the kitchen, “seriously Raven, you’re an asshole!” Raven ran across the room hiding behind the siblings, who were trying their best not to laugh at Clarke’s painted face. There was not an actual drawing but blots of paint all over, which funnily enough, in Lexa’s eyes, made Clarke look really cute.

“You’ve gotta admit I’m quite the artist,” Raven defended herself from behind the pair, laughing at the sight in front of her. She took out her phone, snapping a picture of Clarke. The blonde darted across the room to try and get it but Raven was too fast and ended on the other end, using the table as a shield. Clarke chased after her, suddenly stopping in her tracks at the sight of the filled table.

“Who…” She turned to the Mara’s, who were standing awkwardly next to the counter. “You made breakfast?”

“Ten points to Gryffindor for stating the obvious!” The middle finger was Clarke’s answered to Raven’s sarcasm, which contributed to Lincoln and Lexa’s amusement. So far, they have witnessed what the real Reyes-Griffin relationship was all about and they definitely wanted popcorn to enjoy it.

“What’s with the racket people?” Octavia came into the kitchen, stretching her arms over her head, a bit grumpy from having been woken up by all the noise. “Where’s Linc?” He waved at her with a sheepish smile on his face, which immediately brightened her mood, placing a smile on her face. “Hey!” she yelped, when Bellamy hit her with the door in the back.

“Sorry,” he apologized, ruffling her hair. Octavia managed to land a punch in his arm before he fully entered the kitchen. “Damn, it smells amazing! I didn’t know you had it in you, Griffin.” He scratched his head, staring at Clarke’s face, raising his eyebrows.

“Raven,” Clarke explained pointing at her face, “Lincoln and Lexa,” she added, motioning to the food.

He turned to them, bowing gratefully and impressed. “Well, Mama G was right; we have some tough competition O.”

“I was right about what?” The original inhabitant of the house arrived to the kitchen, being driven by
the smell of food, raised voices and the mention of her name. “My, my… I thought you meant breakfast for yourselves. You didn’t have to cook for everyone.”

Lexa and Lincoln looked guilty and embarrassed at the misunderstanding, the last thing they wanted to do was overstep their boundaries. Lincoln had asked, the night before, permission from Abby to use her kitchen and cook breakfast; apparently, his message hadn’t gone all the way through.

“Look,” Raven interrupted, auguring a never ending rambling from Abby of you shouldn’t have and you’re our guests, “we can continue arguing and gushing over a million things, my incredible artistic abilities included but, it would be a thousand times better if we do it over a full stomach.” She went over and grabbed a plate, which Abby took from her.

“What? C’mom mum, we can’t let the food go cold,” she whined, “they already put so much effort.” She placed a hand over her heart, fake condescension pouring from her voice.

“Ma’am, if I may,” Lincoln raised his hand shyly, “Raven’s right, the food is already here and the best way to thank us, would be empty plates.”

Abby nodded, giving back the plate. The action set everyone in motion. Lincoln fist pump Raven discreetly. Octavia and Bellamy grabbed each a plate and began piling food on them. Clarke went over the sink to wash her face, Lexa approached her, handing her a towel to dry off, earning a smile from the blonde.

“Thanks, Lex,” Clarke said softly. The little gesture went unnoticed by everyone but Lincoln, who winked at his sister before going back to pouring coffee for everyone. She stuck her tongue at him but smiled to the ground, remembering the night before and unable to control the warm feeling enveloping her body.

“Don’t think I didn’t notice the new art in Clarke’s face, Raven.” The girl stopped eating mid-bite, a sheepish grin playing on her lips; she managed to swallow before mouthing the word sorry. Abby shook her head but dropped the subject, too hungry to waste more energy pestering the latina; there would be time, later on, for them to talk privately.

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“Clarke?” Octavia called from her place peaking out the window. “How long has your mum been dating Mr. Kane?”

Clarke looked at the girl dumbfounded. She crossed the room, yanking the curtain further open to see, what the hell Octavia was talking about. Standing in the porch of her house, were her mum and Literature high school teacher. His hands were on her waist, and a second later he was leaning over to kiss her.

“The fuck!” she pulled the curtain back; a frown formed in her features, not sure what she had just witnessed.

Lexa and Lincoln stared at the scene, not quite understanding what was going on. Bellamy remained quiet, leaning on the door frame and Raven simply plunged herself into the couch, uninterested. Clarke noticed her lack of usual enthusiasm.

“You knew?” she questioned, with an accusatory tone and clearly getting more upset.

Raven glanced around the room searching silently for support. She sighed when she found none and raised her hands surrendering. “I may or may have not, seen your mum sucking Mr. Kane’s face last time I was here.”
“And you didn’t think to tell me?” Clarke countered, barely controlling her anger and taking offense of not being warned of the fact that, she could encounter her mother in a PDA session with their ex-professor. “Hey Clarke, remember Mr. Kane, our mum is having an affair with him, just thought I give you a heads up so, next time you go home, you don’t feel like a complete idiot if you see them sucking the life out of each other in the yard,” Clarke exploded, irony pouring as venom from her voice.

“Abby bribed me into silence,” the other girl defended herself. Clarke huffed indignantly at the confession.

“I swear Raven…”

“She wanted to tell you herself. She made me promise I didn’t say anything so she could explain it, calmly.” Raven tried to appease the situation so far, she had yet to succeed.

“Since when did you start obeying my mother?” the blonde asked angrily.

“Since she took me in and practically adopted me.” Raven’s raised voice was the sole indication that Clarke was entering trouble waters and she should back off before creating a whole different problem.

“What’s going on?” Lincoln whispered into Octavia’s ear.

“Well,” Octavia answered, “Raven’s high school crush, our Lit teacher, apparently is dating Clarke’s mother.” You could tell Octavia was enjoying the drama a little too much.

Raven groaned audibly, while Clarke dropped to the couch, rubbing her temples to prevent the inevitable headache.

“I thought you like Mr. Kane,” Bellamy spoke cautiously, “he was cool.”

“Yeah as a teacher, he was ok, I guess,” she deadpanned, still trying to wrap her mind to what she had seen.

“Oh!” Raven’s eyes lightened up, an idea forming in her mind. “If mum marries him, do you think I’ll get a chance to fulfill my step-father fantasy?”

The pillow thrown at her face was Clarke’s answer to her question, along with a series of expletives and murder threats. Octavia burst into laughter, tears rolling uncontrollably. Lincoln, Lexa and Bellamy had trouble containing their laughter if their contorted faces were any indication. Of course, Raven was the kind of person that had no filter and would say anything that came into her mind, before giving her rather brilliant brain time to process it.

The front door closed and Abby entered the room. Octavia and Raven stopped laughing in an instant and the rest of them remained still. The woman inspected their faces aware of having just walked into something.

“Clarke?”

“Mum.” The tension in the room was almost palpable.

“Uhmm…” Lexa eyed both women carefully, “let’s finish the dishes, you guys,” she intervened, hurrying everyone back into the kitchen. None of them had to be told twice, following after the fleeing brunette.
“You stay,” Clarke ordered Raven, grabbing her by the hoodie of her pyjamas, stopping her escape.

“But I…” Raven slouched, resigning herself on whatever her faith was, right now by the look on Clarke’s face, a slow and painful dead was in her near future. She plunged back into the couch, waiting for her final judgement.

“What’s going on?” Abby asked wearily, looking from Clarke to Raven, who pointed and at the blonde so she didn’t have to explain.

“You tell me mum.”

“Clarke, I really don’t know,” she said calmly, she turned to Raven, who mouthed Kane apologetically. “I was going to tell you Clarke.”

“Why bother? When it’s obviously more fun, to let your daughter find out by displaying just how close her mother is with her high school teacher, in the middle of the street,” Clarke snarled. “But you know what pisses me off? The fact that, you told your other daughter and made her lie to me.”

“I wanted to tell you myself,” Abby defended her actions.

“Well, you didn’t and you told Raven.”

“Actually,” Raven said, from her spot in the couch, “I found out pretty much like you did and it scarred me for life.” She shuddered at the memory of the heavy make out session she had found Abby and Mr. Kane on a weekend she came to visit. “But Clarke,” she added, getting up and facing the blonde, “she’s happy and, that’s all we wanted, right?”

Clarke dwelled on the words for a moment, letting the full meaning sink in.

After her dad had passed, her mother had immersed herself into her job, doing extra shifts to keep her mind occupied. Clarke and Raven had just gone to college and Abby was left alone in a house full of memories of her gone family and her loving husband. It didn’t help that the girls weren’t around to distract her, so she had turn to the one thing that kept her grounded, her job, taking care of people. For a while, knowing she was useful was her only reason to get up in the mornings but at night, Jake’s empty side of the bed, reminded her of a life, that with every day that passed seemed more like a dream.

Clarke and Raven had made an effort to visit as much as they could. Each had gone into their own grieving process but the prospect of a new life and city, far from the place where Jake had created so many happy moments, allowed them to heal. Whenever they went back, Abby’s attempts to appear composed, failed to fool them. So, of course, after almost three years of Jake’s death, they wished Abby could move on and be as happy as possible.

“Are you happy?” she finally asked, almost as a whisper.

Abby nodded, a small smile threatening to cross her lips. “Yes, I am.”

Clarke breathed in, closing her eyes for a few seconds. “I need some time to wrap my mind around it,” she said, “just give me some time, mum, to get use to it. I’m happy for you.” She hugged her briefly, before turning for the door and leaving.

Abby changed her soft expression into a stern look directed at Raven.

“Oh, no, no, no, no,” the girl knew that look, the one that both, Clarke and her, would receive whenever they got into trouble, “I am not to blame here. Octavia saw you guys; she’s the one that
told Clarke. Besides, if you didn’t want to get caught it would’ve been wiser not to give a show in front of the house, I mean…”

The other woman sighed, pressing her fingers to the bridge of her nose. “I know, I know, I messed up, I'll talk to her, later. Now, you and I have a conversation pending, young lady.”

“I don’t recall such thing.” Raven played dumb, knowing full well, she had avoided talking to Abby. Over the past few weeks, she had ignored her calls and avoided coming back so she didn’t have to face the woman.

“Raven, you can’t avoid her forever.”

“Yes I can,” Raven blurted out tersely.

The older woman placed a reassuring hand on her shoulder, staring directly into her eyes. “I know it’s hard and I won’t force you to do anything,” she told her. “But parents make mistakes,” the woman added, pointing at herself and what had just happened, “and sometimes we don’t realized the damage we’ve caused until it’s too late. You don’t have to forgive her, but I don’t want you to regret not giving yourself the chance to hear your mother out. She only wants you to listen to her, whatever happens next is up to you.”

“You’re my mother,” Raven whispered shakily, a sad look on her eyes.

Abby was momentarily taken aback by her words, knowing full well the girl had spoken the truth. “I am,” she said softly, “I will always be your mother, no matter what. And as such, I’m trying to protect you and hoping you don’t make a rash decision out of rage. You’ll always have me Raven, you know this.”

Raven reflected on the woman’s words, nodding and pulling her into a hug.

“Don’t let your anger separate you for a chance of forgiveness,” Abby murmured, holding her tightly. “Your birth mother is far from perfect but at least she has seen the error of her ways and is trying to amend them. Listen to her once, that’s all I’m saying.”

A couple of silent tears travelled down Raven’s cheeks. She felt both secured and terrified in Abby’s arms. The woman had taken her in, adopted her, and shown her how a daughter was supposed to love. She had allowed her into her family, something her own mother had denied her for years. The Griffins had been her safe heaven, her shelter but she couldn’t deny she still hoped her mother had change. She hoped to prove her wrong that she was worth of her love and care. So right now, the latina had to decide whether she would give it a try one last time or simply let go forever and live with that decision for the rest of her life.

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“Raven!” Clarke entered the garage after searching the entire house for her friend, a loud thump followed by a row of curses pointed her in the right direction.

The place was filled with boxes, tools, gadgets and every object Raven couldn’t fit into her own room, leaving barely any space for Abby’s car. After the girl had discovered her passion for engineering and creating stuff, her room became a mess Abby couldn’t clean, Jake had come to the solution of turning the garage into a sort of lab for the girl to experiment without causing mayhem inside of the house. It also stored Raven’s bike which Abby hadn’t allowed the girl to take to university. Raven had relented after being assured the bike would be released into her custody once she had a degree on her hands. It had been Jake’s present to Raven for graduation, and she cherished
the thing more than any other possession she had. She rode it during the weekends or holidays she was in town. She loved how free she felt skipping around town in it, letting the adrenaline take over her body for a while.

“Ouch!” Raven yelped, from underneath Abby’s car once she had attempted to get up without realizing where she was. “Fuck’s sake!”

“Why on Earth is Lexa making your suitcase?” the blonde asked exasperated, making her way towards the feet lying under her mother’s car, careful not to step into something that could explode or sting her.

“Dammit,” she rolled herself out, staring angrily at Clarke, “I hate you.” She got up, rubbing her forehead, a red bruise beginning to form rapidly. She brushed her clothes, getting as much dirt from her coveralls as she could, but failing to take off the grease splattered on the sleeves of her flannel.

Clarke continued to stare at her expectantly, waiting for an answer while the girl threw her wrench into a tool box and grabbed a small towel to clean her hands and the sweat on her forehead.

“Raven?”

“Oh, right Lexa,” she said dismissively, glancing around to consider the mess she’d made. “She offered, almost begged to do it and me being the selfless creature that I am, allowed her dream of making my suitcase come true,” she explained grinning widely at her own wit.

Clarke smacked the back of her head.

“Hey!”

“She said otherwise Raven, something along the lines of a certain latina extorting her.”

“What?” Raven exclaimed indignantly, “I simply encouraged her to lend a hand to others every now and then.”

“Encouraged her through threats of locking her out for the rest of the semester?”

“Lies!” she said, pretending offence, “it was more like fierce conviction.” A second smack to the head, made her yelp once more. “Hey! Seriously, you’ve gotta stop that, you are killing the genius.”

Clarke shook her head, slightly amused at her friend antics. “Whatever,” she turned on her heel to leave, “she’s no longer doing it so you better hurry, unless you want to go back by bus.” With that being said, Clarke left the room leaving Raven huffing at her fail attempt of not packing her luggage.

She turned to contemplate her bike for a moment before following the blond back inside, to the daunting task of getting her shit together. The one thing she was incapable of.

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“Alright people, get out of here,” Abby commanded, pushing Bellamy towards the front door so everyone would follow.

They’d been saying their goodbyes for the last ten minutes and at this pace, they would probably never leave. A collective groan was the confirmation that free meals would get her a bunch of college kids as grounders. The sound of loud thumps, made everyone turn towards the stairs. Raven was dragging her luggage down, letting it hit each step. She lost the hold of it, causing for it to roll down the last five steps, landing in front of Abby’s feet, who gave her a reproaching look.
“What?” she asked, attempting to recover her breath, “if you had let me install that awesome elevator, none of this would’ve happen.”

Abby shook her head; she grabbed the girl and hugged her. “Make your decision by Christmas,” she whispered, the woman pulled away, glancing around the room, clasping her hands together. “Well people, it was my pleasure to host you, do come back whenever you want. Clarke, Raven, I’ll see you Christmas break.”

Everyone nodded, thanked her and hugged her once more, before running back to the cars and screaming shot guns. Clarke lingered behind for a moment.

“I’m happy for you, mum,” she said genuinely, smiling and embracing the woman goodbye.

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Lexa arrived to her dorm Monday morning. She had spent the rest of her weekend at Lincoln’s, devouring some of her favourite books that he had brought with him. The minute Lincoln saw her face brighten up at the sight of his bookshelf, he knew extreme measures would have to be taken to get his sister out of his house. At 9 am on Monday morning, he put the dishes in the sink and executed his plan.

Lexa was immersed in *The Count of Monte Cristo* for the eleventh time or so, not paying much attention to her breakfast, sipping on her coffee every now and then, while her eyes travelled the pages at light speed.

*Lincoln (8:48 am): Need some help, Reyes.*

*Reyes (8:51 am): It will come for a price, Mara.*

*Lincoln (8:52 am): Didn’t expect anything less from you.*

*Lincoln (8:52 am): You have to text Lexa and come up with an excuse as to why she has to be in your dorm, right now.*

*Reyes (8:53 am): And why on Earth would I want to get your sister back into this dorm, when the past few days have been so liberating?*

*Lincoln (8:54 am): Because I know a guy that can get you custom made mirrors for a fair price.*

A couple of seconds later, the ring of Lexa’s phone made him smile proudly. He loved his sister and having her over made him feel a little less edgy, put him back into a comfort zone, a routine he was familiar with. Only, he knew Lexa and her escaping mechanism; reading, reading, reading, hours on end, so engaged with a fantasy world that she would forget her reality.

Lexa huffed at the interruption. She glanced down at her phone, scanning the text quickly, hoping she could ignore whatever Raven wanted. She sighed and closed the book annoyed. She went into her room and came back a couple of minutes later with a bag on her shoulder and the book under her arm.

“Raven just lit my bed on fire. Gotta go, big bro!”

Lincoln was taken aback by how calmly Lexa took in the situation. Surely if someone texted you to inform you that the place where you’re supposed to sleep is becoming ashes, your reaction should be a little bit more alarm.
“Wait, what?” he asked, wondering how much truth was behind Raven’s text and how guilty he was if there was any.

“Yeah, apparently something went wrong with one of her experiments and... I really don’t know. I’ll let you know later, ok?” she said, wanting more than anything to go back to her book. The sooner her thoughts were occupied with fictional characters, the sooner she stopped fantasizing about Clarke’s lips.

“It doesn’t bother you?” He really didn’t know how she could be so cool about it all.

“It’s happened before, I acquired an extinguisher after the first time,” she said, “and Raven always pays me back for whatever damage she causes to my stuff. I mostly keep anything valuable secure, just in case.”

He stared at her perplexed, wondering how the hell, prim and proper Lexa could handle the mess Raven Reyes surely created on a daily basis. She smiled at his brother’s despair.

“I’m taking this,” she added, pointing to the book. Going over, she kissed his cheek lightly and leaving Lincoln to dwell on the information he had just received.

Lexa arrived to her dorm and fumbled with her keys, keeping the book under her arm and her bag over her shoulder. She gave up and dropped the bag, she pushed the key inside but the voices coming out of the room, stopped her from turning the key.

“...you know is not like that. Raven, what should I do? You know I don’t want to go back to experimenting.”

Lexa suddenly felt as if a bucket of cold water had been dropped on her head, as if a punch in the stomach had taken all the air filling her lungs, leaving her dizzy and disoriented. She gripped the doorknob to hold herself, despite her brain was screaming to leave but her feet where stuck in their place while Clarke’s muffled voice continue drifting to her ears.

“What if I messed up? Besides, it felt more like a spur of the moment, you know? It doesn’t have to mean anything.”

Disappointment washed all over her body, her eyes watered and suddenly she felt completely exhausted. The feeling was quickly replaced with anger. She was angry at Clarke for playing with her feelings, for leading her on and using her as some sort of experiment, for her own personal gain. She was angry at Raven and Octavia for bringing Clarke into her life, slowly creeping her in. Most of all, she was angry at herself for being so foolish and letting her walls go down. She scolded herself for being weak, allowing her feelings to numb her convictions. To even have toyed with the idea of a spark between her and Clarke had been careless. How could she possibly be so stupid to think that a girl like Clarke would even consider her attractive, let alone girlfriend material? Stupid, stupid, stupid.

She clenched her jaw and wiped the tears that had inadvertently escaped her eyes. Turning around, she grabbed her bag from the floor and left, forgetting all about the bed on fire situation.

When she went back, later that night, the room was empty and her mind was set. She would continue to befriend the girls, since she belong to the rugby team and Raven would continue to be her roommate for the foreseeable future but a prudent distance would be place, so Clarke wouldn’t feel oblige to anything and she could bury whatever feelings she had for the blonde.

//
Finals week was hectic for everyone, between exams and projects due; Lexa had the perfect excuse to avoid Clarke despite the lack of effort she had to make to pass her exams. She had seen the blonde a couple of times, when Clarke had invaded their dorm to work on some art piece Raven was helping her with. As soon as she found herself in a closed space to the girl, Lexa always grabbed her backpack with the excuse of having to study and fleeing without letting Clarke comment on her actions. She usually went to the library; only she grew bored really fast having to dedicate minimum effort to pass her exams. She considered this a small price to pay, in comparison to having to endure Clarke’s intoxicating presence. She had managed to control the rage she felt the first days, after overhearing Clarke’s words. Now, she simply wanted to stop thinking about the girl altogether.

On Friday, she finished her last exam and decided to head to her room, trying her luck. She knew Raven would be done with her exams but she hoped the girl wouldn’t be back to their room until later that night, after a wild celebratory party of surviving another semester in hell.

Of course, her luck had run out the minute Clarke had kissed her. When she had finally settled on her bed with her computer on her lap and about to press play on a new episode of *Person of Interest*, Raven entered the room, grinning madly. She dropped her bag unceremoniously by the door, as a sign of being finally free of schoolwork.

“Good exam?” Lexa asked from her spot in the bed.

“Amazing!” she said, letting her body fall onto her bed, sighing contently and kicking her shoes off. “You, my friend, live with a genius which theoretically can build a bomb in an hour and a half.”

“Theoretically?” The slight concerned was present in her roommate’s tone, as well as her quirked eyebrow.

“Well, practically too, but my teachers wouldn’t let me;” Raven answered, shrugging. “Anyways, that’s that, no more patronizing idiots who believe you study our ass off for the prospect of money.” She huffed, disgusted with the idea of working for the sole purpose of a paycheck.

Lexa analyze the girl from her end of the room, genuinely interested at this unexpected turn of Raven. She had never considered the girl frivolous or banal but with her abilities, the latina sure could end in a high end job with the commodities those usually included. The fact that her ambition was headed into an entire different direction really caught Lexa by surprise.

Her line of thought was interrupted by a pillow thrown at her face.

“What?”

“Are you coming?” Lexa stared at her blankly, shocking her head, unsure at what was being asked. “To celebrate?” Raven asked, again.

Lexa’s expression morphed into an almost sombre state, the abrupt change caught Raven off guard, making her reminiscence those first days when they barely exchanged a couple words or grunts.

“I think I’m gonna pass,” Lexa said evenly; although there was something slightly off in her tone. If she had to spend an entire evening in close proximity to Clarke Griffin she wasn’t too sure she would be able to control her temper or not lose her sanity. Either way, she would rather stay put and avoid any confrontation altogether.

As if her mind had invoked her, Clarke strolled into the room in a black tight dress that shaped her body perfectly along with a generous cleavage. Lexa groaned internally, her eyes doing a once over the blonde before turning quickly back to her book. She definitely had to stay clear of Clarke.
Clarke smiled wickedly when she saw the effect of her efforts reflected in Lexa’s face. She decided not to comment on it.

“So, you guys ready?” Her good mood was showing in her excited tone.

On her way over, she had decided to take a leap of faith and asked Lexa out. She was done denying the kiss changed nothing, she had felt the shifted in their relationship as soon as her lips had graced Lexa’s. Every time she replayed the moment in her mind, it felt more and more like the inevitable collision of a wave against the shore, in which the retreating water would eventually come back once more to hit again and again.

Raven got up the bed, wearing black skinny jeans and her leather jacket. Clarke turned to Lexa expectantly, the girl felt the gaze upon her but didn’t looked up from her book.

“No, I’m exhausted and I have to pack for the holidays,” she answered, keeping her tone even and unperturbed despite the complete wreck the presence of the blonde was creating in her mind. She ignored Clarke’s dejected look, diverting her eyes when she crossed towards the bathroom and quickly closed the door.

Clarke remained stuck in her place, unsure on what had just transgressed between them. Over the past weeks, she had noticed Lexa’s subtle shift in her behaviour, particularly her unwillingness to engage in any real conversation with Clarke. At first, she had blamed finals week and the pressure that came with it, now, she wasn’t so sure.

“C’mon, Clarke,” Raven urged her, choosing to ignore her roommates behaviour. She too had noticed Lexa’s mood shift but tonight was all about celebrating so the heart to heart would have to wait. Raven went ahead, leaving Clarke lingering in the room until she heard the sound of the shower being turned on. She sighed, giving up on her plan and followed her friend out, no longer in the mood for a party.

Lexa wandered around campus for a while. She had gone to Lincoln’s to leave her duffel bag for the holidays but the apartment felt overwhelming without her brother. Clarke’s words kept resonating in her mind; she hoped the pain she felt would eventually go away.

Clarke stumbled between the throngs of people, pushing them aside carelessly in her search of a particular human being. She spotted Lincoln and Octavia across the room, laughing. She proceeded to go over, ignoring the indignation of a girl whose drink she had spilled over her t-shirt accidentally. When she reached the happy couple, she patted Lincoln on the back to gain his attention.

“Oh, hey, Clarke,” he said, his face turning from an annoyed grimace to a slight surprise.

Clarke ignored him, looking past his shoulder when she spoke next. “Can I borrow him for a
Octavia and Lincoln exchanged amused looks. Lincoln shrugged which Octavia took as an OK sign to let him go. “Bringing back safely,” she said faking concern.

Clarke rolled her eyes, grabbing Lincoln’s hand and dragging him towards a quieter place. She stopped without warning, causing Lincoln to crash against her back but she didn’t budge. She took a deep breath before turning and facing him.

“Your sister is mad at me,” she stated, staring directly into his eyes, alcohol providing her the confidence to talk to Lexa’s brother in such a direct manner.

Lincoln studied Clarke carefully, weighing his options in dealing with a drunken Clarke. He wasn’t completely sure on what the purpose of this conversation but, upon hearing Lexa’s name his defenses were up.

Clarke sighed annoyed, at the lack of reaction from the man standing in front of her. “I don’t know what I did. She’s been avoiding me for the past couple of weeks. She’s only spoken to me when absolutely necessary and even then I could tell she would rather be reading a chemistry book,” she rambled.

“Lexa hates chemistry,” Lincoln said as a matter of fact. There had been many discussions on the Mara household over the low grades Lexa usually ended up with in that particular subject. It wouldn’t have been a problem if Anya and Lincoln hadn’t figured out Lexa did it on purpose, to annoy them. It was a never ending cycle on Lexa complaining on how tedious and useless chemistry was against Anya and Lincoln’s arguments on how life was sometimes boring and dull.

“Exactly,” she continued, annoyed that he had simply stated the obvious. “She would rather do something she loads, than talk to me. She hates me.”

“That’s an overstatement.” He rubbed his neck unconsciously. The man wasn’t sure how much he could help Clarke without getting in trouble with Lexa. She believed Clarke when she said she didn’t know the reason of Lexa’s change of behaviour. It had happened in prior occasions, when Lexa would simply close herself up, leaving the pair of siblings to discover the reason. Sometimes it could be as little as the wrong choice of word or a forgotten grocery item.

“Look, she hasn’t told me anything, so I don’t know what you did. As a matter of fact, I haven’t spoken to her since she left my apartment the weekend after Thanksgiving. I’m gonna stick my neck out for you since I kinda like you and you’re Octavia’s friend,” he told her, aware that if Lexa found out what he was going to say next, he would probably end up in a similar situation as Clarke’s.

“There are a couple things Lexa hates, one is being lied to; the other, is letting herself be vulnerable around someone only to end up getting hurt. If any of those happens, Lexa will shut down.”

“So, what am I supposed to do?” Clarke asked, pouting in defeat.

“Honestly,” he rubbed his face tiredly, “I have no idea. The onetime Lexa behaved similarly towards me, she realized her own mistake and forgave me.” Clarke looked at him dumbfounded, having no clue on what he meant. “I… just..., just try to make her tell you what’s really going on, so you have something to work with. I mean, that’s the only way I think you could have a chance.”

“Great, so basically force her to talk to me or let it go.” Clarke pouted her eyes watering at the prospect of losing Lexa.

Lincoln caught the change of mood on the blonde, making him instantly nervous; a drunken teary
girl wasn’t his forte.

“Hey, hey,” he said, placing his hand on Clarke’s shoulder somewhat awkwardly. “My sister can be a little stubborn but I’m sure you can beat her with your own.”

Clarke gave him a weak smile and turned to leave. Lincoln stepped into her path, stopping her and sporting a serious expression. “Clarke, whatever happens, I have to tell you; if hurt my little sister, you’ll have to face the consequences.”

The blonde sent a death glare his way, alcohol playing an important role in her bravery. Lincoln’s good nature shrugged it off with a smile, displaying the big softie he truly was.

“She’s my baby-sister,” he explained, “brotherly duties include being an overprotective asshole.”

Clarke squint her eyes, as if considering how truthful his words were. “Fine,” she said, “if I hurt her you can intervene at your best convenience.” She extended her hand which he shook, unsure on what he was agreeing upon but noticing Clarke’s determination behind the gesture.

Suddenly, Clarke’s eyes widened. “What if she doesn’t forgive me?” she asked, genuinely concerned.

“Well, in that case, you won’t have to worry about me?” he teased, hoping to get a smile from the girl. Since the Clarke’s reaction was not the one he expected, he was grateful Octavia coming into his rescue.

“Can I have my boyfriend back now?”

“Yeah, yeah, he wasn’t much help.” Clarke said annoyed. Lincoln smiled amused at how moody Clarke could get, storing the information for future conversations with the blonde.

“Whatever Princess, Raven’s looking for you,” Octavia informed her, taking Lincoln’s hand to interrogate him of their conversation.

After wandering around the rooms searching for her friend, she finally remembered Raven would always take over the music if, upon arrival, she thought some leaving at home nerd was controlling the sound. This time, Clarke recalled the words had been fucking Guetta wannabe, before Raven had disappeared in the crowd to fix what she called one of humanity’s greatest crimes, lousy music.

Raven was spinning near the back of the house. A scrawny guy with a shirt that spelled Cool dude and an arrow pointing up to his face, was standing next to her, listening to her instructions over the loud music. Apparently, he was lucky and was allowed to stick around if she was willing to follow the girl’s lead. She noticed Clarke and handed the headphones to the guy, pointing at the set so he could take over.

“I wanted to give you a heads up, Princess. Finn’s around here somewhere and Bellamy is ready to play the part of the protective brother if needed,” she said.

Clarke glanced around, finding Finn playing beer-pong and losing, judging by his swaying stance.

“It’s alright, I think I’m gonna head out,” she slurred, already done with this party.

Once again, someone stepped in her path preventing her from taking her leave.

“Wait a minute blondie,” Raven grabbed a hold of her arm, halting her. “You’re not going anywhere,” she said sternly, “not in this condition; unfortunately, it’s not safe to walk around campus
in your current state. Give me twenty and we’ll go. Just gotta let Wick know.”

Despite her intoxicated state, Clarke remembered the pact they had made. No one goes back alone, no matter what, especially if inebriated. Today, Raven was the designated guide since she had chosen not to drink at all, knowing for a fact Octavia was going back to Lincoln’s and Clarke would be dwelling on Lexa’s… on whatever the hell was happening between them.

“Fine, I’ll wait,” she whined to an already retreating Raven.

Of course, as the messy drunk Clarke was, she wandered off and by the time Raven found her, she was splayed on a couch fast asleep and mumbling incoherent nonsense, drooling into the fabric. A watchful Bellamy was standing close by talking to some guys but keeping an eye on Clarke. When Raven arrived he excused himself and went over to the girls.

“You’re on duty?” he asked, stealing a worried glance at Clarke.

Raven nodded, contemplating the task ahead. She placed her hands on top of her head, weighing her options with Clarke’s current position.

“Can you handle it?” Bellamy was eyeing a girl across the room, who had been stealing glances, not too subtly, at him for the past couple minutes.

Raven caught on the interaction, rolling her eyes. She spotted Monty and Jasper in the other room, talking in hush tones while pretending to be discreet – for everyone else it was clear they were staring at a black haired girl, who has standing a couple of feet away from them –, and gaining courage to go over the girl.

“Don’t worry, I’ll get Monty to help,” she said, pointing with her head towards the boy.

“You’re the best,” he said before dashing away, puffing his chest out and sporting a flirty smile.

She turned towards Clarke, if the snoring was any indication; the blonde had resolved to sleep, clinging to a pillow from the couch. Raven decided it was safe to leave her for a couple of minutes.

She went over to the boys, grabbing Monty by the arm. He looked a bit startled, once he realized who had interrupted his pep talk towards his best friend, he succumbed to getting dragged by the latina.

“Gook look,” Monty shouted over his shoulder to Jasper. The other boy was shifting on his feet nervously, playing with the contents of the cup he was holding when the girl finally approached him.

“So, what am I good for?” he asked confused when they stopped a couple of meters away. Raven placed her hand on his cheek, turning his head towards the sleeping form on the couch.

Clarke stirred a bit on her spot but kept snoring softly. Monty chuckled, amused by the sight of Clarke’s drunk slumber. Raven punched him on the arm, reproachfully.

“It’s not funny Monty, I’m the designated guide,” she informed him.

“Oh,” he said in acknowledgement, “should we wake her?”

Raven considered her options. Anyone who had been friends with Clarke long enough knew that if drunk, she was like roulette; she could go from wild party mood, to philosophical snob or depressed mess. Monty was all too aware of this having met the girls’ freshman year, the parties which cemented their friendship, were proof of the hazard Clarke could become.
“Well, good luck,” he said, turning to leave.

Raven grabbed him by the hoodie, stopping him. “Nuh, uh, you’re not going anywhere,” she said in a stern tone, “you owe me, remember?”

He groaned but didn’t try to leave again. “Fine,” he relented, knowing he had no escape, “but you wake her.”

Raven examined Clarke carefully, creating the best plan to go over this. Monty was watching her expectantly.

“C’mon Rae, we haven’t got all night,” he urged her to act.

Raven sighed in defeat, approaching Clarke and poking her arm. “Alright Sleeping Beauty, time to wake up,” she said, brazing herself for the worst. Clarke simply turned and grabbed the pillow harder, mumbling.

“You’ve got to be kidding me,” Raven said under her breath, clearly annoyed. She grew impatient and began poking Clarke incessantly until the girl opened her eyes. The girl look around, completely disorientated with her surroundings. Her eyes landed on the two figures hovering over her, when she recognized them, she sat up straight a little too fast, blood going up into her head too fast, making her wince.

“Time to go?” she asked in a raspy tone.

“Yes,” Raven said smiling, glad she didn’t have to deal with a peculiar mood. “Your carriage waits,” she added, tapping Monty’s back. The boy simply bowed his head and extended his hand to help Clarke up. She smiled appreciatively at him, placing her hands on his shoulders.

“Ok, Princess, one, two…” Clarke made an effort to jump on his back, Monty managed to catch her legs around his waist, scooting her up and balancing them.

Raven began walking towards the exit, pushing aside people to let them through. Once outside, Raven checked on Clarke, making sure she was still awake, Monty gave her a thumbs up and they were off.

“Please tell me we’re going to your dorm,” Monty panted after some minutes, “Clarke’s on the other side of campus and I don’t think I’ll make it.”

“Are you saying I’m fat?” Clarke slurred in his ear, suddenly very awake and her brows creasing.

“No, no, no,” Monty quickly corrected, deterring an angry Clarke, “I’m just saying I don’t exercise enough.”

Clarke scowled some more, her brain barely making out the situation or where they were going.

“Don’t worry, Monty,” Raven interceded, from a few feet ahead, “you won’t get any back pains before you turn 50.”

She turned right, her building already in sights, a wave of relief washing over Monty. Clarke saw it too, finally catching onto where they were headed.

“I shouldn’t go there,” she pouted, shocking with her head. “Lexa will get pissed at me, and you,” she said pointing to herself and Raven, “and you,” she added, poking Monty’s chest.
“Lexa?” he asked her, turning his head a little to look at Clarke.

“My roommate,” Raven answered, stopping so they could catch up.

“Oh! The illustrious roommate that I’m yet to meet.”

Clarke gasped in surprise. “You haven’t met Lexa?”

Monty shook his head, smiling at Clarke’s aghast, which turned into a contemplative stance a moment later. “Well, I’m not surprised,” Clarke huffed, “the never ending mysterious façade, that’s Lexa for you.”

Raven suddenly jerked to stare at her friend’s face; a couple of seconds were enough to inform her that a rant of truth was coming. She sighed, preparing herself for a mood shift.

“You don’t like her?” Monty asked innocently.

“Don’t encourage her,” Raven warned a little too late, Clarke had already filled her lungs with air and was going into full ramble.

“No, of course I like her,” she started mildly offended, “I really, really like her. I don’t like when she is mysterious with me. She was finally opening up and then I fucked up, but I made it right and I thought I had regained her trust. We kissed, we kissed Monty,” she emphasized for her friend to understand, “you don’t kiss someone you don’t trust. And I was scared at first but I realized I wanted to ask her out – I was going to ask her out -, but she won’t talk to me. I fucked up again and I don’t know why, I don’t even know how to fix it.”

Monty nodded, unsure of what to make of Clarke’s rant whilst Raven stored it in her brain for future conversations with a sober Clarke. They had finally reached the dorms, Monty’s back was forever grateful especially since Raven’s room was on the first floor. The latina went ahead and the two others reached her door, she held it open, allowing the boy to go straight in. He stumbled a bit the last few meters, promptly deposited Clarke in the nearest bed, which happened to be Lexa’s. Clarke nuzzled herself onto the brunette’s bed, smelling her scent on the sheets becoming further intoxicated.

“No, no, no, I can’t,” she said, finally realizing her actions and surroundings. She attempted to get up, failing miserably.

“Don’t worry, Princess, she won’t be back,” Raven reassured her, holding a note Lexa had left on her desktop, wishing her a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Clarke groaned, falling back into the bed, her eyes fluttered shut, falling asleep within seconds. Monty and Raven exchanged surprised looks, contemplating perplexed at how quickly the blonde had abandoned the world of the living.

“I guess that’s my queue,” Monty pointed out.

Raven smiled fondly at him. “Thanks Monty, I owe you one.”

He smiled back, shocking his head. “I’ll collect, Reyes.”

Chapter End Notes
A/N: I would like to thank whoever is reading this story, I really appreciate it. Also, I would like to here your opinions on how I should post next chapter, I'll explain...

Since Lexa and the Grounders speak a second language, I thought it would be cool if the did in my story as well, hence, Lincoln, Anya and Lexa all speak Spanish (next chapter would explain why, also it's my native language). Lexa's POV is written mostly in Spanish (the dialogue between characters) and I would like to know whether I should publish the chapter as it is, with the translations in brackets (which I don't particularly like) or translate the dialogue and post in italics with the understanding that it's supposed to be originally in Spanish (it might change a bit or sound weird since some of it is kinda of slang).

Another option would be, to post the same chapter twice, the original as I have it for anyone who would like to practice or knows Spanish and the modify one with the option that you see fit.

Let me know if you have any preference (a decision will be made but it would really help me decide).

Thanks again.
“My mum wants to see me,” Raven blurted out, lying next to Clarke on the blonde’s bed.

It was the third day of their Christmas break; the girls had both gone back to Abby’s house to spend Christmas with her before going to Toledo, Ohio and spend New Years in the Blake’s household. Clarke had been in a sour mood since day one, locking herself in her room, painting nonstop, only coming out for meals. Raven hadn’t bother the girl for the first two nights, delving into fixing the heating system and doing some modifications to her bike with the parts Lincoln had got her. She was also trying to avoid the inevitable. Tonight, she had finally finished installing her mirrors and adjusting her brakes on her bike.

Clarke continued to stare at the ceiling, letting the words sink in. She could count with one hand, the amount of times Raven had seen her mother since she moved in with the Griffin’s, and she would have fingers left to keep counting. None of her past encounters had ended in good terms; the last one had Abby convincing Raven to stay with them for almost a week. That had been three years ago.

“Do you want to see her?” Clarke asked softly.

There was no immediate answer but Clarke made no attempt to press on the matter.

“She’s my mother.”

“That doesn’t mean anything,” Clarke retorted bluntly, there was no point on sugarcoating what she felt towards the woman and Raven wasn’t expecting her to do so.

“Maybe,” she said sighing, “still, she made some valid points last time I saw her.”

Clarke turned on her side, propping herself on an elbow to stare at the latina. “She tried to guilt trip you into going back to live with her to cash a pension check. What makes you think she won’t do it again?”

Raven had closed her eyes, not opening them when she spoke next, “she says she’s sick.”

Clarke dropped back down, putting one hand behind her head, thinking carefully her next words. She always became extremely protective when it came to her friends, particularly Raven. She knew the girl wished her mother had changed, that she had realized the mistake she’d made and would come back to ask for forgiveness. Clarke, had trouble believing this was the case and she wouldn’t put it pass the woman to lie and trick Raven so she could abuse the girl’s kind heart.

“I don’t trust her Rae, you know that,” she began warily, “but this has nothing to do with how I feel, it’s your decision to make. Just remember, whatever happens, you will always be my family.”

Raven turned her head, smiling fondly at the blonde; she held her free hand and squeezed lightly whispering a soft thank you.

They stood like that for some time until Raven remembered Clarke’s odd mood the past couple of days.

“So what’s up with you?” she asked, peering through the corner of her eye.

“What do you mean?”
If that was Clarke’s attempt to deter the conversation, she really needed to step up her game. It only increased Raven’s curiosity and wouldn’t drop the subject until she got answers. She went over the past few weeks on her mind, trying to remember what could’ve triggered Clarke into becoming a hermit. She looked around the room, noticing a half finished canvas on the easel. The painting depicted a girl sitting on a rooftop contemplating the night. It suddenly dawned on her, particularly by how the girl seemed awfully a lot like Lexa.

“Have you called her?”

Clarke would’ve wanted to pretend she didn’t know who Raven was talking about. She would’ve loved to avoid any conversation surrounding the brunette. Perhaps she could’ve, however, Lexa had been a perpetual and nagging thought that never left. She woke up from vivid dreams in which the girl featured heavily in; only to spend her days, creating new art with the brunette as her sole inspiration. It was as if the girl had taken over her hands and mind, becoming the ultimate muse. There was no line, no stroke, and no brush that wasn’t inspired by Lexa’s essence.

“I called, I texted, hell I even asked Lincoln to give her a message – which he refused – still, nothing,” she confessed dejectedly.

“Are you gonna tell me what really happened? ‘Cause you mentioned wanting to actually delved into a relationship, the whole figuring out yourself already settled, but you never said why. What was the whole spur of the moment thing?” it was her turn to propped herself on her elbow.

Clarke turned her head, watching Raven with a conspiracy glint playing in her eyes.

“We kissed on Thanksgiving,” she confessed.

Raven squealed excitedly, jumping to her knees. “I knew it! Octavia owes me 20,” she said in a victorious tone.

She should’ve been surprised, or at least annoyed, by the fact her friends were betting on her love life; the Thank You card she got from Octavia, a couple days later after breaking up with Finn had raised her suspicions. Clarke rolled her eyes and frowned at Raven for the joy over her misery. The girl understood the message and went back to a serious stance.

“Wait…, why aren’t you all blissful on the aftermath of Lexa’s lips?” she wondered, knowing for a fact Clarke had wanted Lexa for quite some time. “Was it bad? You can tell auntie Raven,” she added, grabbing Clarke’s hands on her own and making a condescending face.

Clarke freed her hands from Raven’s grip, huffing. “Yeah, yeah, very funny,” she said, not finding it comically in the least.

Instead of finding the humour in Raven’s words, Clarke began to wonder if maybe there was some truth behind them. What if Lexa had thought of the kiss as a terrible mistake? What if it had been horrible? So bad that it had caused Lexa to avoid Clarke at all costs.

Raven noticed the shift on Clarke’s expression, realization dawning on her. “Hey, I’m sure the kiss was great,” her friend tried to reassure her, knowing insecurities were a bitch to deal by yourself. “Maybe, she was caught off by surprised? I’m mean having a hot blonde attacking her lips might’ve been something else for poor little Lexa’s gay ass?”

“It’s not little,” Clarke said sheepishly, causing Raven to look astonished and proud at the same time. “I really like her, Rae and not in the “I have a crush on her” kinda of way. It’s as if I have some sort of gravitational pull towards her and I’m scared Raven.”
“Scared?”

“I’m scared I might be falling in love with her.”

Abby’s call for dinner prevented either girl to say anything else on the matter, which was somehow a relief since Raven wasn’t sure of what to say.

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The plane’s wheels touched the ground, making everyone bumped slightly on their seats. It had been six months since Lexa’s last visit, a bit longer for Anya and Lincoln. She contemplated the scene outside her window, going back to the first time she had been to México.

She remembered it vividly. She had just turned sixteen when Lincoln and Anya told her about the kidnapping charges. Their foster parent, Carl Emerson had filed a missing person report on Lexa and somehow managed to convince the police Lincoln had abducted her. Suddenly, there was no choice, leave to survive.

The first time they had crossed the border by car, going south, they had no destination in mind. They needed to get away, fast, living arrangements or any other elaborate plans would come along, as soon as they were safe. So, they drove for hours and hours, unsure whether they were going to make it across. Once they reached the border, fake papers allowed them to pretend they were siblings going to meet with their parents, on the other side, for a vacation. Luckily for them, immigration officers in the Mexican-American border are too busy checking who’s going in, rather than leaving, particularly if they have US passports so they went through unnoticed.

Afterwards, a map - bought in a tourist shop somewhere in Hermosillo - provided them some guidance as to where to go. Eventually, after following the Federal Highway 15 for almost three days, stopping in Hermosillo and Mazatlán to rest for the night, they reached Guadalajara. They stayed there for a couple of months, until a series of events led them to the coast, near Puerto Vallarta. A weird arrangement happened afterwards; they would live in Guadalajara during the off season and went to Vallarta when tourists filled the place.

“She’s going to be so mad,” Lexa commented, unbuckling her seatbelt once the light had been turned off from the sign. “Does she know we’re coming?”

Anya would’ve answered, if it hadn’t been the eleventh time Lexa had asked that same question. They collected their luggage from the top compartments and followed the rest of the passengers. Fortunately for them, their papers with the new identities were solid after spending years with them, permitting them to go through customs with no trouble whatsoever.

Outside, Lincoln whistled, signaling them towards the cab he had got them, in the busy airport terminal. Lexa handed him her bag, whilst the taxi driver took Anya’s so they could place them in the trunk. The driver hurried back to the passengers’ door, opening it for the two girls to hop in. Lincoln climbed in, seating in next to the man and handing him a paper with the address written on it.

“Ya estás, jefe,” (Alright, boss) the driver said, reading the note. He started the engine and got into the morning traffic, going towards the city.

“But she knows we’re on our way, right?” she asked again after a couple of minutes, unable to hide her anxiety.

Anya did her best not to snap at her sister; Lincoln shifted his body to face her. “Hey, it’s fine. She’s
actually really excited we’re back,” he reassured her.

Lexa bit her lip nervously, averting her eyes to the window.

“Woah, woah,” she exclaimed when their driver missed their turn; she tapped his shoulder, “no te quieres pasar de listo güey, esa era nuestra calle.” (Don’t even think of being a smartass that was our street.)

Fortunately for them, the guy’s surprised manifested in wide and scared eyes looking at Lexa through the rearview, with no abrupt movements to the steering wheel.

“Yo que tú, le hago caso, no la quieres ver enojada,” (If I were you, I would listen to her, you don’t wanna see her angry) Lincoln said to the man, who appeared to be more frighten, if that was even possible.

“Perdón,” (Sorry) he blurted out quickly, “le juro que ahorita agarro un atajo y llegamos en veinte.” (I swear I’ll take a shortcut and we’ll get there in twenty.)

Lexa smirked, shocking her head at his antics but didn’t comment any further. The guy took it as a peace offering, settling back in his seat and began talking.

“Oiga, ustedes no son de acá, ¿verdad?” (Hey, you guys are not from here, right?)

This time Lexa tilted her head to get a better look on the driver, smiling at how easily his Mexican personality had shown. One minute they are ready to con you, the next you’re almost family.

“No, somos gringos pero vivimos aquí unos años,” (No, we’re Americans but we lived here for a few years.) Lexa responded, deciding to amuse him.

“Si, ya decía yo,” (Yeah, I had a feeling) he mumbled, “y entonces que, ¿vienen de visita o a quedarse?” (So, are you’re here on vacation or are you planning to stay for good?)

“Venimos de vacaciones y a visitar a unos amigos.” (We’re here on vacation and to visit some friends)

“No pues seguro les va da harto gusto verlos,” (Well, I’m sure they’ll be really happy to see you) he said. “Por cierto, déjeme decirle señorita, habla usted muy bien español eh, mis respetos.” (By the way, let me tell you Miss, you speak very good Spanish.)

Lexa rolled her eyes, smiling. “Gracias, usted tampoco lo habla tan mal.” (Thanks, yours isn’t too bad either.)

The man laughed loudly at the witty response. He kept talking all the way to the house, mainly with Lexa and occasionally Lincoln would jump in. Anya remained quiet the entire journey, settling for looking out the window.

Nineteen minutes and thirty four seconds later, they reached their destination. The cabbie helped them with their bags and Lexa tipped him despite his attempt of a scam.

The house in front of them hadn’t change a bit, the windows were open and the door had the same worn white paint. The laundry was hanging on a wire on the rooftop, where a mix of a labrador and a golden retriever began barking at the new arrivals, moving his tail happily. He disappeared but his barks could still be heard. Despite being a two story house, it was a small home.

Lexa stood behind Lincoln and Anya, shifting nervously on her feet. There was no need to knock
since Nico had already announced them. A few minutes later, the front door swung open, revealing an old woman, in her seventies, with short brown hair and brown eyes. As soon as she recognized the people on her doorstep, a huge smile formed on her face. Suddenly, both Anya and Lincoln were trapped into a massive embrace.

“¡Mis niños! Estaba a punto de mandar a Andrés a buscarlos, ya se habían tardado,” (My babies! I was just about to send Andrés to get you, you took your time) she rambled in quick Spanish, patting their backs. Her eyes finally fell on Lexa, who was looking down to her feet. The woman motioned the pair to go in, “ándenle, pásense, Andrés está en la cocina y Diego ya no tarda para que comamos. Ya saben donde dejar sus cosas.” (c’mon, here, come on in, Andrés is in the kitchen and Diego is almost here, so we can eat. You know where to leave your stuff.)

Lincoln and Anya left, looking over their shoulders warily, unsure on how the woman was going to treat Lexa. The dog followed them, waving his tail happily. She had left six months ago, despite her plight to stay, and she hadn’t contacted them in all that time. Lexa raised her eyes slowly, twisting her mouth a little. The woman contemplated her, measuring her. She suddenly broke into a wide smile, going forward and hugging the girl warmly. Lexa relaxed into her arms, reciprocating the tight hug. The woman took a step back - her hands on Lexa’s shoulders – so she could see her properly.

“Oh God! look at how thin you are, I bet you only eat that awful American junk food) she reproached her, noticing the loss of weight Lexa had suffered over the past few months. “No importa, tres semanas de mi comida y vas a estar de vuelta.” (Doesn’t matter, three weeks of my food should be enough to bring you back.) Lexa smiled fondly at her, making the woman launched herself once again and hugged her.

“I missed you so much, Grams) Lexa whispered in her ear. She couldn’t see the tears welling on the woman’s eyes.

When they entered the kitchen, Lincoln was on his knees, rubbing behind Nico’s ears and avoiding being licked all over the face by the happy dog. An old man was sitting at the table, looking over the newspaper at the soccer game playing on the TV. Anya was having a glass of water while inspecting the contents of the pots on the stove.

“Woah, woah, those are for supper) Grandma Carmen rushed to her side and slapped her hand away from the tostadas.

The interaction informed the man of the new arrivals and he turned to meet the missing Mara. He shot up to his feet - faster than a man close to his eighties would -, going over to Lexa so he could greet her properly.

“Are you kidding me? I’m the only one that doesn’t need a map to get here) she replied playfully.

The front door slam shut, making them all jump, quick steps could be heard approaching the kitchen.

“Graaaaams, I’m here!) the newcomer froze on his spot, registering the scene in front of his eyes. “¡Lexa? ¿Anya? ¿Lincoln?”

“¡Diego!” The three siblings exclaimed excitedly. Lexa launched herself onto him, making them
stumbled a few steps back. Diego laughed, balancing both so they wouldn’t fall. Anya and Lincoln hugged him as well, after their sister had allowed him to breathe again.

“¿Por qué no me dijeron que iban a venir?” (Why didn’t you tell me you were coming?) he asked to no one in particular.

“Era una sorpresa, mijo,” (It was a surprise, son) his grandma answered, happy to see all of them in her house. “Muy bien, ahora todos fuera, ayúdenme a poner la mesa y váyanse a lavar las manos porque la comida ya va estar lista.” (Alright, everyone out, help me set the table and go wash your hands, food is almost ready.) She ushered them out, putting the needed cutlery in Anya’s hands.

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Clarke didn’t expect to find him sitting at the kitchen counter reading the paper. It was just past eight in the morning and she had just woken up. Her mind was fixed on making coffee so she hadn’t registered his presence until it was too late to retreat back to her room.

“Good morning, Clarke,” he said politely.

She dropped the coffee pot startled, causing some of its contents to spill. She didn’t turn to face him, instead grabbed a small towel by the sink and whipped the coffee with it. She let her breathing even out before facing him. He took a sip from his mug, eyeing her curiously, waiting for her to speak.

“Good morning, Mr. Kane,” she rushed out, nodding in his direction. It was too early for dealing with the implications of him being here.

An uncomfortable silence settled between the two, they stared at each other a couple of more seconds until Clarke turned back and reached for a mug from the cupboard. She took her time serving the coffee, aware of the pair of eyes watching her intently.

“What’s a synonym for friendship?” he asked nonchalantly.

Clarke looked over her shoulder, confused, unsure if his words were directed at her. She noticed the pen in his hand and the crossword puzzle he was solving on the newspaper. She took a moment to think.

“Amity?”

He shook his head. “It starts with a c.”

Clarke placed her mug across from him, going over words in her head. “Ca…, camaraderie or comradeship?”

He counted the spaces, “Cama…, yes that’s it. Thank you,” he said, not looking up and reading the next clue.

“You’re welcome, Mr. Kane,” she replied, taking her mug and going for the door.

“You can call me Marcus,” he mumbled.

Clarke’s lips cracked into a small smile. She found her mother coming down the stairs, pulling her hair into a ponytail.

“Morning, Clarke!”

“Hey, ma,” she said, leaning on the banister at the bottom of the stairs, “Marcus made coffee.”
Her mother stopped dead in her tracks, her eyes shifting towards the door at the end of the hall, where the kitchen was. She analyzed Clarke’s features, searching for any signs of discomfort or anger, she found none.

“Oh, okay,” she said warily, going down and standing next to Clarke.

The blonde walked past her, going for the stairs, halfway up, she looked over her shoulder and said, “you should invite him over for Christmas.”

Lincoln unleashed Nico, once they arrived at the beach, the dog ran away towards the sea, wagging his tail joyfully. Anya followed after him; Nico ran back towards her, burying his nose on her legs, she placed a tennis ball in front of him so he could smell it.

“Go get it boy,” she said, throwing it towards Lincoln. The dog didn’t need to be told twice before sprinting towards the ball and collecting it with his mouth. Soon, he was running back and forth, between Anya and Lincoln, occasionally getting his paws wet by the shore.

Lexa watched the scene, sitting on a chair, on the small porch in Vallarta. They arrived here on the 23rd - to the little hotel their grandparents ran during the holiday season – and had been enjoying the warm weather ever since.

She caught some movement out of the corner of her eye, when she saw it was her Grandpa placing a chair in front of hers, she got up to help him. He stopped her, signaling with his hand, whilst finishing arranging his chair on the sand. He opened the cooler he had brought and offered her a beer. Lexa raised her eyebrows, which only caused him to tilt his head and smile encouragingly.

“Ni creas que no me acuerdo cuando te cache, a ti y a Diego, en la azotea tomándose mi mezcal,” (Don’t think I don’t remember the time I caught you and Diego, in the rooftop, drinking my mezcal) he said pointedly. She sighed and took it, with a smirk on her face and faking innocence but getting the bottle opener and effectively taking the caps off. She sat back down and they clinked their bottles.

“Salud,” (Cheers) Andrés said, raising his bottle.

“Salud,” (Cheers) she offered back, nodding and taking a sip, letting the cool drink, refresh her body from the heat.

They stared at the ocean, letting the moment sink in, drinking silently. Lexa hadn’t felt this calm since… Her mind wandered off to the nights spent with Clarke on rooftops; she couldn’t help the pang she felt on her chest. She had done everything within her power to ignore the girl; she had stopped herself from answering her calls or replied her texts. No matter how hard she tried to avoid Clarke, her mind betrayed her constantly. She kept dreaming about her, thinking about her, associating things to her. When she wasn’t getting tired by her constant presence, she was getting annoyed by her lack of self control.

“Sabes mija, en la vida todo tiene remedio, menos la muerte.” (You know, sweetheart, in life everything has a remedy, except death.)

Lexa contemplated the man sitting across from her. He was looking at the horizon. If he hadn’t used the term of endearment, she would’ve thought he was talking to himself. She wondered if her uneasiness was really that evident or maybe it was the wisdom that came from experiencing life at its fullest. She smiled tenderly at him. She stood up - finishing her beer in a swig – and went over him.
“Más sabe el Diablo por Viejo que por Diablo,” (The Devil is wiser because he’s old, rather than for being the Devil) she replied in his ear, placing a kiss on his cheek and going inside to see if she could be any help in the kitchen.

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“Ya saben como es la cosa, agarren cada quien su platito y se sirven,” (You know the drill, each one grabs a plate and serves themselves) their Grandmother informed them, pointing at the side table with all the dishes.

No one had to be told twice; they all lined up and began piling food on their plates. There was pozole, tacos, tostadas, tamales and pambazos, enough to feed a small army. Diego and Lexa instructed their grandparents to stay put, going ahead to serve them.

It was a warm clear night, with some stars illuminating the sky and a half moon. The temperature was cool enough to enjoy their Christmas meal outside. It was anything but fancy, there were plastic chairs around the table and guests from the hotel were dining with them. This wasn’t an uncommon occurrence since Abuela Carmelita was known for her hospitality. Tropical music accompanied the sounds of crickets and the crashing of the waves against the shore.

She sat down next to Diego and began to thoroughly enjoy her favourite dish, pozole. The boy nudged him on the elbow causing the contents of her spoon to spill. He laughed and she glared at him.

“Ah como te gusta joder,” (How you love bothering me!) she said half-annoyed but enjoying going back to their usual banter.

Diego was the first person Lexa had formed a real friendship. Being in foster care meant you had to be really careful with whom you associate yourself with. Lincoln and Anya were her exceptions, the only people she trusted in the system and would engage in any further interaction than the strictly necessary.

When she met Diego, a bond between the two was created almost instantly. He was an orphan, just like them, only he was lucky to have the most caring grandparents one could wish for. He was a wild card, always doing something, whether it was helping with house chores or playing soccer, he always had to be in constant movement. At first, Lincoln and Anya were confused as to why he had clicked so easily with Lexa; she had always been the quiet, introvert kid, reading in the corner. Diego brought out her adventurous side, which used to get them in so much trouble. Raven reminded her, a little bit of him. Despite this, she hadn’t contacted him since last summer and she had expected him to be angry at her. For some reason, this wasn’t the case.

“Ni te hagas, bien que me extrañas,” (Don’t even, you know you miss me) he said happily.

Lexa huffed, “¿A ti? No lo creo, la comida, a los abuelos, el clima, tal vez pero, ¿a ti? Mi vida es tan tranquila desde que no tengo que mentirles a Anya, ni a Linc, sobre donde estoy, ni que estoy haciendo.” (You? I don’t think so, the food, our grandparents, the weather, maybe, you? My life is so peaceful ever since I don’t have to lie to Anya and Linc of where am I or what am I doing.)

He laughed, remembering the many times Lexa had lied for the two of them so they wouldn’t get grounded. His grandparents wouldn’t believe anything he said but Lexa was almost a saint in comparison, also she lied as if her life depended on it.

“Qué tiempos aquellos,” (Those were the days) he remembered dreamily. He took a bite from his taco, sending a lopsided smile in Lexa’s way. “Por cierto, después de cenar nos vamos a tener que
escapar para que te de tu regalo.” (By the way, after dinner, we’re gonna have to sneak out so I can give you your present.)

“¿Qué regalo?” (What present?)

“De Navidad” (For Christmas) he answered winking, as if was the most obvious thing before going back to his food. “Pero antes, me tienes que contar todo acerca de los United, ¿ya hiciste nuevos amigos?” (Now, you’ve to tell me all about America, do you have any new friends?)

They kept talking for the rest of the meal. Lexa made her best attempt to hide her anxiety, due to the fact she didn’t have a present for Diego.

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Anya kept an eye at the end of the table, where Lexa and Diego were chatting animatedly and laughing loudly.

“Esos dos juntos, son de cuidado,” (Those two together, they always smell like trouble) Andrés pointed out in a conspirational tone.

“Yo creo que han madurado un poco,” (I like to think, they’ve mature a bit) Anya said.

Both of them turn to look down the table. At that very moment, Lexa decided it was a great idea to throw some lettuce at Diego, the guy tried to catch it with his mouth, failing miserably.

Anya slapped both hands against her own face, whilst Abuelo Andrés chuckled at the scene, shaking his head.

“Sólo un poco,” (Just a bit) he added, signaling with his thumb and index, just how little the two friends had really matured.

“A veces me pregunto, si fue buena idea venir aquí,” (Sometimes I wonder, if it was a good idea to come here in the first place) Anya confessed, relieving a feeling she had carried for many years.

“Ella sabe porqué lo hicieron. Sus vidas podrían haber sido muy distintas, a lo mejor las oportunidades que perdieron no compensan las que ganaron aquí pero, de una cosa estoy seguro, Lexa nunca te va a reclamar haberla salvado.” (She knows why you did it. Your lives could’ve been very different, maybe the opportunities you missed aren’t compensated with what you gained here but, one thing’s for sure, Lexa will never complain for saving her.) The man spoke softly, no hint of hurt at the implication of her words.

“Pero fue un impulso, éramos unos niños y nos mudamos a un país ajeno sin pensar en que le estábamos quitando su futuro. A lo mejor ni siquiera debimos habérnosla llevado,” (But it was an impulse, we were just kids and we moved to a strange country, without considering the future we were stealing from her. Maybe, we shouldn’t have taken her) she voiced years of internal struggle, hoping to release some of the guilt she felt.

“Ustedes son las personas que Lexa más quiere en este mundo, abandonarla hubiera sido un error. Y seré un egoísta pero me alegro que la vida nos cruzara. Nunca voy a parar de agradecer, el hecho de que ustedes nos pusieran la vida de cabeza.” (You and Lincoln, are the two people Lexa loves the most in this world, abandoning her would’ve been a mistake. And I may be selfish but I’m glad we crossed paths. I’ll never stop thanking, for the fact that you came into our lives, turning it upside down.) He extended his hands to grab hold of Anya’s, a gesture few would dare, “además, ya sabes lo que dicen, pa’atrás ni para tomar vuelo.” (Besides, you know what they say, never go backwards, not even for the impulse to fly.)
Anya smiled tenderly at the man; words weren’t enough to express her gratitude.

“Antes que nada, tienes que prometer que no le dirás nada a la Abuela,” (Before anything, you won’t tell Grandma) he warned her.

They were standing in front of the tool shed, next to the house, where Abuelo Andrés kept most of his equipment to fix whatever needed fixing in the hotel. It was almost four in the morning, everyone had gone to sleep around three and Diego had come looking for Lexa; they sneaked out of the hotel, careful not to make any noises to wake the guests or more importantly, their grandparents.

She rolled her eyes but complied, “Lo prometo.” (I promise.)

He flashed his smile, going ahead and opening the door. Lexa gasped at the sight before her eyes. Right there, in the middle of the tiny shed, was Roberta.

Diego couldn’t help to notice the glint in her eyes, shining brightly and almost mischievously. When a pair of arms wrapped around his neck, threatening to asphyxiate him, he smiled widely, reciprocating the hug. It had taken him a while to track down Roberta’s previous owner and then some more to convince him to sell it to him. Abuelo Andrés had helped him, lending him the missing money, since his part time job as a waiter in a local restaurant wasn’t enough. Looking at Lexa’s reaction just now, he couldn’t care less for the extra shifts he would have to take, in order to pay him back.

“Gracias,” (Thank you) she whispered softly in his ear, letting emotion take over her body. She turned to admire the bike, one arm around Diego, “¿Funciona?” (Does it work?)

He dug into his pocket, taking out a keychain. “Averígualo por ti misma,” (Figure it out) he said, swaying the pair of keys in front of her eyes.

She smiled, snatching them. Without wasting time, she mounted the bike, as if it hadn’t been years since she had done so and turned on the ignition, her transmission in neutral. She pulled in the clutch and the starter button, letting go the bottom as soon as the engine fired. Her smile grew wider with the roaring sound. Diego approached her with a helmet on his hands, placing it on her head and securing it.

“Sino el abuelo me mata,” (Granpa would kill me otherwise) he explained, opening the doors so she could move the bike to the street. She moved to first gear, rolling the bike towards the empty road, realizing slowly until it set into motion. She turned her head, smiling under the helmet and letting go completely, driving off down the street.

The rush of adrenaline pumped immediately through her veins, her heartbeat heavy on her ears. She pushed her body forward, shifting gears while applying throttle to gain speed. It was the most liberated she had felt in years. The bike underneath her kept her grounded, the sound of the engine breaking through the quiet streets of Vallarta at 4 am. The air hit her body, a slight chill going done her spine, but all she could think of, were the endless possibilities.

Her mind went wild. Everything passed like a blur, her body keeping the bike steady. It felt as if she was in a two dimensional world in which, one part of her was present and sensing her surroundings as she drove; the other kept running sketches of her life that had led her to this very moment. And
then, it stopped. A single image formed in her mind. She heard her laugh, the smell of her hair, her hand tugging her towards an unrecognizable place, her blonde hair wild and then she turned, looking over her shoulder at her, with a smile that made her blue eyes shine with excitement – and then she was gone.

Reality came crashing down, the bike stirring a bit, forcing her to brake a little harshly. She managed to maintain the balance, until she fully stopped, placing both feet on the ground. She took deep breaths, closing her eyes to prevent her head from spinning. When she opened them, she looked around to see where she was. When her hands stopped shaking, she pressed the clutch once more, a little bit of throttle and went back to Diego.

He stood up from the sidewalk when he saw her approaching, hands in his pockets and looking serene. She got off, kicking the side leg and dismounting. She took of the helmet, leaving in it on top of the seat.

“¿Qué tal?” (How was it?)

“¡Es el mejor regalo de Navidad! Diego, yo…” (It’s the best Christmas present. Diego, I…) she said nervously, “yo creo que no debo aceptarlo.” (I think I can’t accept it.)

His face fell, looking genuinely dejected. “¿Por qué no?” (Why not?)

She darted her eyes down, no longer able to look at him. “Porque se lo que te debió haber costado y el sacrificio que eso implica. Además, yo no merezco esto.” (Because this was expensive as hell and you probably sacrificed a lot to buy it. Besides, I don’t deserve this.)

He neared the distance between them, taking her face in his hands so she would look at him. “Tú te mereces el mundo y lo sabes…” (You deserve the world and you know it) she opened her mouth to speak but he continued, “Lexa, te quiero como a una hermana, no hay nada que no haría por ti. A parte, si una motocicleta es necesaria para regresarte un poco de la libertad que anhelas entonces el dinero es lo de menos.” (Lexa, I love you like a sister, you know that, there is nothing I wouldn’t do for you. Moreover, if it takes a motorcycle to give you back some of the freedom you desperately yearn, then money should not be a problem.)

“Diego,” she murmured warily. He let go, taking a step back, allowing her the distance he knew she was craving.

“No Lexa, escúchame…” (No Lexa, listen to me…) he interrupted her, “hace muchos años, entendí que tú y yo estábamos destinados a ser mejores amigos. Así que, aunque me dejes de hablar seis meses, no te va a ser tan fácil librarte de mí.” (Many years ago, I understood we were destined to be best friends. So, even if you don’t talk to me for six months, you won’t be able to get rid of me.)

She chuckled softly, nodding before launching herself once more to hug him. After a while, they end up sitting down on the sidewalk.

“¿Me vas a contar quién es?” (Are you gonna tell me, who she is?)

“¿De qué estás hablando?” (What are you talking about?)

“Lexa te conozco mejor que nadie, se perfectamente cuando intentas cubrir tus verdaderos sentimientos. En particular, cuando se tratan de alguna mujer que logra inmiscuirse en tu vida,” (Lexa, I know you better than anyone, I can tell when you’re trying to hide your feelings. Particularly, when they involve a girl tearing your walls down) he answered, aware of her ability to avoid conversations.
“Se llama Clarke,” (Her name is Clarke) she whispered, “y no quiero hablar de ella.” (and I don’t wanna talk about her.)

He sighed. “¿Está guapa?” (Is she hot?) he asked, bumping his shoulder against hers and ignoring her request.

Lexa looked at him out of the corner of her eyes, rolling her eyes and couldn’t hold the smile threatening to escape her lips. The image of Clarke came back to her mind instantly.

“Si,” she murmured, hiding her face in her arms.

“¿Pero?” (But?) he wondered why she wasn’t gushing all over this girl, when clearly the woman had caused more than just a good impression on her friend.

“Pero nada, no va a pasar nada porque creo que no estamos buscando lo mismo.” (But nothing because nothing is going to happen since we aren’t looking for the same thing.)

“Pues en ese caso, ella se lo pierde.” (Well in that case, it’s her loss) He didn’t push her any further, making a mental note to bring it up some other time. Right now, he wanted to enjoy her company, talking of trivial things and remembering their escapades as teenagers.

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This was definitely the last place Raven wanted to be.

The previous day, she had spent a wonderful Christmas with Clarke and Abby having a late breakfast in the living room, opening presents and watching animated films, which everyone agreed were better appreciated at an older age. She wished they hadn’t decided on The Lion King since their tears felt too real this time around; Zootopia had managed to cheer them up and Marcus had found them tearing up for a complete different reason than sadness. After further consideration, she had reluctantly agreed to meet with her mother.

Therefore, this was definitely the last place she wanted to be, having spent such a wonderful day with her family; she only hoped it wouldn’t be ruined by a bitter memory of a failed encounter with her birth mother.

She entered the diner, scanning the tables. She couldn’t deny part of her wanted her mother not to show up, but part of her wanted to confront the woman, once and for all.

Her mother was sitting in one of the booths towards the back of the diner. She had a cup of coffee between her hands, lost in thought, her eyes fixed on a spot on the table. Apparently, Raven’s intense stare was enough to bring her out of her daze, her eyes finding the girl and shooting to her feet instantly and motioning her to come over. Raven walked the short distance, nervously.

“Raven!” she shrieked, hugging with such force, she knocked the air out of her body. Raven remained rigid; she was incapable of reciprocating the embrace or sharing the enthusiasm upon seeing the woman.

“Look at you,” she said; placing her hands on her shoulders and taking a step back to admire her daughter. “You’ve grown so much and you look so beautiful,” she added, gracing her cheek. The gesture appeared loving but Raven couldn’t help to think of it as forced.

“Come, sit.”

Raven sat across from her, inspecting the mother she hadn’t seen in three years. There were bags
beneath her eyes, which had no glint or depth, they looked empty. It appeared as if she had tried to comb her hair but it still looked like straw, as if it hadn’t been treated in years. Some wrinkles could be seen on her forehead and her skin looked ashen. The woman in front of her looked older than her forty-five years. Life hadn’t been kind to her; Tamara hadn’t been kind on herself either.

The waiter came, asking Raven if she wanted anything. The latina answered with a polite no, having already eaten breakfast and hoping this wouldn’t take long. The man nodded and refilled her mother’s cup before leaving the women alone. An awkward silence fell upon them which Raven made no attempt to break; she wanted her mother to make the first move.

Tamara cleared her throat, taking a sip of her coffee. “So, Little Bird,” she began, Raven did everything within her power not to cringed at the nickname, the same that brought painful memories of her childhood when both her parents took care of her. “How’s school?”

Raven creased her brow, not buying her mother’s game but deciding to play along. “College is good,” she answered, emphasizing the level of education, “I could tell you all about the thesis on Hydraulic Engineering I’m currently work on so I can graduate next year,” she baited her mother. She figured if she wanted to reconnect, the least Tamara could do is fake some interest in her education.

“That’s nice,” she said, dismissively. Raven hadn’t expected anything else; hope had long been lost when it came to her birth parents. “Are you still living with the Griffins?”

Raven was taken aback with her words. Her naïve, innocent self had managed to convince her that she could have a shot in reconnecting with her mother; at this moment, she saw the greed seeping through her mother’s proposal.

“I can’t do that,” she answered.

Tamara didn’t waste any more time pretending, her face contorted furiously, her eyes turning into slits, sending death glares at her daughter.

“I’m not asking, I’m ordering you,” said her mother dangerously low and threatening.

Raven was breathing heavily, her hands in fists with as much self control she mustered, “you can’t force me to do anything.”

“I’m your mother and as such, you’re going respect me and obey me,” Tamara replied angrily.

The latina snorted, staring at her mother with incredulity. She stood up, turning to leave.

“I’m your mother, whether you like it or not and you’re gonna regret turning your back at me. The Griffins may pretend to be your family but we both know you’ve overstayed your welcome. Don’t
you think you owe them more than whatever you can offer?”

Raven froze on her spot, Tamara’s words hitting her, one after the other, like bullets to the soul.

“You’ll see, Little Bird,” she seethed, all affection gone from the pet name, “they will abandon you, just like your father did, when it happens, don’t expect me to welcome you with open arms. You will regret this.”

Raven bolted out of the restaurant, unable to hear anymore of her mother’s venomous words. She drove back to her house in autopilot, not really paying any attention where she was going, almost a miracle she got there safely. She went upstairs, straight into Clarke’s room. She stood in the middle of the room, unmoving and emotionless.

Clarke stopped painting, swiveling her chair when she sensed the girl.

“Rae, what happened?” she asked concerned.

The girl stared at her unfazed, her eyes showing no recognition of her surroundings or having heard the question. Suddenly, Tamara’s words came crashing down on her and she broke. Her entire body shivered, incapable of holding her emotions. Raven dropped to her knees, whimpering with tears streaming down her face uncontrollably.

Clarke dropped besides her, shuffling the girl into her lap, holding Raven tightly against her chest. When she calmed down a bit, Clarke maneuvered them onto the bed and kept running her fingers through her hair. Eventually, Raven’s breathing became even, having fallen asleep from exhaustion.

When she woke, Raven didn’t bring up her meeting with Tamara and Clarke didn’t ask.

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“Finally, let’s get this party started!” Octavia yelled above the music, pushing Raven and Clarke inside the house already filled with people. The girls exchanged looks, not sure whether to be amused or alarmed by the throngs of people and massive amounts of alcohol. They both shrugged, ready for whatever the night would bring.

After leaving their bags in one of the guest rooms, both girls checked on their make-ups and hair, once they had satisfactory results, they went back downstairs to enjoy the party.

“Hello ladies!” Bellamy greeted them at the bottom of the stairs, handing each a paper cup filled almost to the brim. “Bottoms up,” he said, toasting with the girls. Clarke and Raven downed half their drinks and followed Bellamy to the yard.

Octavia introduced them to some people from high school, as well as some cousins. By the time it was almost midnight, the party was in full swing. Raven had found some rebound guy, since things with Wick hadn’t gone south a couple of weeks back. Therefore, Clarke found herself on the swing sets, located at the very back, behind the pool, her feet touching the ground, pushing herself back and forth.

She had been alone for almost twenty minutes, she knew it was too good to be true when her eyes darted up and spotted a young man approaching the swing set. She continued pushing herself, ignoring the man when he sat down next to her.

“I hate New Years,” he commented, staring at the loud and messy crowd in the house. “Everyone make some fake resolutions that surely will be forgotten mid-January. I’m supposed to be my father’s top project this year, his ultimate purpose. A father passes his business to his forever grateful – and
forever in debt – son,” he added bitterly.

“Two years and you’ll be running the entire operation – under his watchful eye, no doubt –, and I will be able to focus on my blossoming political career,” he said, using a deeper tone, Clarke assumed was his father’s.

Clarke found herself intrigued by his odd confession, turning to get a better look of him. First thing she noticed was, he didn’t fit in the party; he was wearing a tux and bowtie whilst the rest of the guests sported mostly jeans and t-shirts, some even wore bathing suits, not wanting to miss the opportunity to dive into the Blake’s pool. Second, while people around them bask in the prospect of the New Year, he clearly felt as if a time machine or the ability to freeze time would be the only thing to cheer him up. Third, his intentions were still to be determined but she was inclined to believe there weren’t near the whole, cheap makeout session once the clock struck twelve.

He noticed her inspection on his clothes, as well as the fact he had finally caught her attention. “I’m supposed to be at my dad’s party, filled with penguins,” he said, pointing at his tuxedo.

Clarke couldn’t help to laugh, making Wells’ lips curled into a smile of his own.

“Wells Jaha, miserable penguin,” he introduced himself, extending his hand for a formal greeting. Clarke’s roamed from his hand to his face, searching for any sign of deceit; she only found honest brown eyes and a kind smile.

“Clarke Griffin, penguin fan.”

“So Clarke, since I’m already draped into such pretentious attire, I might as well play the part of the handsome hero and go ahead and ask you,” he spoke smoothly, Clarke prepared for the presumptuous attempt to charm her. “Is the reason of your detachment of New Year’s celebration; your absolute hatred for the daunting prospect of every first of January?”

She didn’t hide her surprise when what’s a beautiful girl, like yourself, being all alone weren’t his next words. Having mentally prepared to leave, she stayed out of curiosity, considering his question.

“Just the one.”

“Oh! That’s a shame, I thought I’d finally found my fierce companion in my quest to expand my hatred towards such an obnoxious holiday. I guess you’ll do for tonight.” He immediately regretted his words when Clarke’s eyebrows almost disappeared into her hairline. “No, no, no, that came out completely wrong. I’m sorry, I never meant to make you uncomfortable,” he rushed out, flushing, “and, I’m just gonna go.” He shot to his feet, ready to flee.

“No, wait!” Clarke jumped to her feet, grabbing his arm to prevent him from leaving. He turned and she dropped her hand, she went back to the swing and gestured with her head for him to sit as well.

They sat there, swinging back and forth lightly, hearing the loud music coming from the house, both of them deep into their thoughts.

“There’s a girl,” Clarke blurted out, unsure what compelled her to speak. Maybe, it was the fact he was a complete stranger, or maybe, there was something about his out of place outfit, it could’ve been the fact he had stay because she asked. Whatever the reason, she had an odd sense of trust towards this man, made her keep going, “she’s the most infuriating person in the world – at least in my world and maybe just currently, because she won’t speak to me nor tell me why. She’s gone, God knows where, and I’m stuck at this party missing her - even though I promised myself I would let go -, and hating the prospect of a new year for the first time.”
“This girl, is she worth it?” he asked, not a hint of surprise or disappointment when he heard about Clarke’s sexuality. She immediately took a liking of him.

Clarke looked up, searching for an answer in the wind blowing the leaves of the nearest tree. Only, she didn’t need to find it since she already knew it.

“Yes. Something tells me if I don’t at least try, I’m going to regret it for the rest of my life.”

“What are you really afraid of then?”

“Honestly?” she glanced at him, her eyes unable to contain the vulnerability she felt. “Getting a broken heart,” she said, barely above a whisper.

Wells nodded pensively, licking his lips slightly. He had come over to escape the hassle of the party. At first, he hadn’t paid much attention to the blonde girl, and he frankly thought she would leave as soon as he started rambling. He should have known loneliness attracts drama. Despite his lack of experience for anything remotely romantic - let’s face it his first kiss was far from memorable in a spin the bottle game -, his high school girlfriend had ended it because they were going to be across the country in college, reasonably enough, he felt he owed Clarke a little support.

He checked the time on his wristwatch before talking. “It’s five minutes ‘til midnight,” he stated, matter of fact, “I’m going to become a huge hypocrite – I’ll break my own code and principles against resolutions - while becoming an enormous romantic sap, so I can tell you to call her. You should tell her she’s the person you want to start the year with. You call her and tell her that tonight you may be apart but you don’t want that for the year to come.”

Clarke was stunned; she never expected such a blunt advice from this stranger. Wells got up to leave, he too was surprised with his words, yet he felt as if it had been the right thing to say. “God, I’m a reckless romantic, I don’t even know the girl but I’m already rooting for you guys. Come find me, afterwards,” he added, going ahead into the house.

Clarke stared absently, his retreating figure disappearing among the buzzing people getting champagne glasses to celebrate the New Year. She dreaded his words for making her abandon her reasoning on letting go and starting fresh; impulsive motions were supposed to be avoided at all cost, if only to save her falling heart. Well, she was damned. If only it had been a frat-boy…

Running through crowds of people can be very simple if your head is set into a particular goal. She ignored Octavia handing her a champagne glass, ran past Bellamy telling her about the countdown and passed by Raven’s perfectly set of fireworks, ready to be launched once the clock struck twelve. For once, her lack of oxygen when she reached upstairs didn’t stop her for reaching the guest room, with her bag and cell phone in it.

“Out!” she practically commanded at the couple making out inside.

They both jumped, the girl covering herself with her shirt, embarrassed. The man looking thoroughly annoyed, not moving from his sport in the bed.

“This room is taken,” he defended, wanting to go back to his previous activities.

Clarke rolled her eyes, grabbing his pants from the floor and throwing them into the hall. She spun around and faced them, losing her patience with every second that past. “Second floor is off limits, now leave if you don’t want little Blake up your ass.”

Clarke was sure that a threat concerning Octavia would be effective. A moment later, the guy was making himself scarce, collecting his shoes as fast as possible while the girl pulled on her shirt,
already heading for the door. She didn’t bother to check if they were already outside, going ahead and retrieving her bag and pulling out her cell. The time read, 23:57.

She unlocked it, opening her contacts. Her thumb danced on top of Lexa’s name, still deciding whether this was a good idea. Her brain worked on its own, pressing the number when another minute went by. She pulled the phone to her ear, were she could also hear her pulsing heart rate, speeding with every ring. There was a soft click on the other end…

“Hello?” Clarke received no answer. The only sound coming in was a steady breathing, just loud enough to inform her, that indeed, there was a person listening.

“Lexa?”

Clarke listened intently, noticing the muffled sound of music in the distance, as if Lexa had detached herself from a party to answer. She could hear the people downstairs counting down from 10… 9… 8… 7… 6… 5… 4… 3… 2… 1…

“I wish you were here.”

The line went dead.

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Lexa hung up, Clarke’s word ringing in her ears. The constant stream of messages had decreased considerably over the past few days; she thought Clarke had given up. Lexa wouldn’t admit it her heart shrunk just thinking of it. Now, after hearing Clarke’s voice, hope was rising in her chest, yet again. Hope was a dangerous feeling.

For one, Lexa was beginning to doubt, not only Clarke’s intentions but the real meaning of the conversation she had overheard. Maybe Clarke deserved the benefit of the doubt. What if…

Her line of thought was effectively interrupted by Diego shouting her name. She jogged to his side, planting a fake smile on her face. Diego sure as hell didn’t buy it, tilting his head questioningly. Lexa ignored him, taking his hand and guiding him to the improvised dance floor.

Anya was dancing with Grandpa Andrés, genuinely enjoying how carefree they could be. For someone who kept a straight face most of the time, you could’ve never guessed that she was the one to ask him to dance. Deep down, Anya was a sweet girl, whose life had put her into the toughest situations, making her grow up way too fast.

Lincoln was swaying along with Grandma Carmen, laughing with her and following her directions. It had been years since she had taught him to dance; still, she kept leading him, bossing him around. He never objected to any of her guidance. He had once confessed to Lexa that Grandma’s A todas las mujeres les gusta un hombre que sabe bailar, (Every woman loves a man that can dance) was the most valuable lesson anyone had ever taught him.

Diego spun her towards Lincoln, who thrust Grandma gently into Grandpa’s arms, whilst Anya and Diego found themselves dancing together. Lexa smiled at him, yielding the lead to him and turning when his hand commanded. She couldn’t deny he had benefited from the lessons and so had her toes.

The next spin sent her to his Grandpa, who slowed them down without losing the beat.

“¡Soy el más afortunado!” (I’m the luckiest man!) he said dreamily.
“¿Por?” (Why?) Lexa asked, looking at him wondering what he meant.

“Aún puedo sacar a bailar a las muchachas más bonitas,” (I can still dance with the prettiest girls) he explained, smiling mischievously, “y la más, es el amor de mi vida y mi esposa,” (and the most beautiful one, is the love of my life and my wife) he continued, staring over Lexa’s shoulder to his wife, who was currently dancing with Diego.

Lexa smiled, appreciating the glimmer in his eyes whenever he looked at his wife. If you looked closely, anyone could see a lifetime of struggles and happiness which had only enhanced the love her Grandparents had for each other. It was present in every small gesture they shared; a small kiss in the morning, holding hands discreetly, or sharing a conspiratorial glance, as if they were the sixteen years old teenagers that had fallen in love all over again.

“Estoy seguro que tú también la vas a encontrar, si no es que ya cayó,” (I’m sure you’ll find her, and maybe you already have) he added with a wink. Lexa blushed, hiding her slight embarrassment in his shoulder.

The dance party kept pushing them closer to midnight, time difference being the reason they’ve yet to celebrate the New Year. As the minutes went by, Lexa wondered if she would let her walls down and call Clarke.

“¡Venga Lexa! Ya casi es la hora,” (C’mon Lexa! Is almost time) Diego said, bringing her out of her reverie.

The entire family was gathered around a small radio, waiting for the cathedral’s bells to start chiming, announcing the New Year. Anya pushed a small plate containing twelve grapes, one wish for every chime.

“Diez… nueve… ocho… siete… seis… cinco… cuatro… tres… dos… uno… ¡Feliz Año Nuevo!”

The chimes travelled through the air and everyone began stuffing their mouths with the grapes. The chimes came faster than their chewing abilities and at some point, Lexa couldn’t think of any more wishes. When she managed to finally eat all but one grape without choking, she paused for a second.

“You’re my wish too, Clarke,” Lexa murmured, popping the last grape into her mouth.

Arms were suddenly around her and she found herself hugging everyone at least three times. She gave her Grandparents one last hug and goodbye with the promise of behaving, before following Lincoln to a place which Diego recommended to continue the party.

The place ended up being a bar by the beach with loud reggaeton coming out of the speakers and terrible, but cheap, alcohol which Lexa wasn’t sure would permit her to see the next day – or afternoon for that matter.

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Apparently, phone calls with the girl of your dreams leave you exhausted and knock you out for at least an hour. When she finally went back down, the amount of drunken people had doubled and the party was nowhere near to be over.

“Happy New Year, Rae!” she shouted over music, going round Raven’s setup to give her a one arm awkward hug. The girl didn’t stop her DJ’s duty, only smiling widely and nudging her head into Clarke’s side. The blonde let go, smiling and pointing with her head to the other room.

“Where were you?” Raven yelled after her.
“I fell asleep,” Clarke answered over her shoulder without stopping to give any further explanations.

She spotted Octavia’s black hair near the backdoor, some people around her but she wasn’t really paying attention to enthralled with her phone. Clarke approached her cautiously, hoping the girl wouldn’t turn and catch her.

“Happy New Year!” she exclaimed, jumping into Octavia’s back and hugging her from behind.

The girl almost dropped her phone but manage to keep their balance. Clarke kissed her cheek affectingly, Octavia’s lips curled up into a smile not really being able to stay angry at her friend.

“Say hi to Lincoln, its closer to New Year’s there than here,” she said, shoving the phone in her face were a smiling Lincoln was waving at her.

“Hey, Linc! Happy New Year!” Clarke said excitedly, inspecting the background over Lincoln’s shoulder. “Where are you?”

“Hey, Clarke! Right back atcha. This?” he asked, pointing with his thumb over his shoulder, “some bar in Mexico, here let me show you.”

Clarke could barely make out the music coming from the phone; she noticed it was probably louder than Raven’s and judging by the people dancing, it definitely induced them to rub their bodies together. Lincoln juggled with the phone, changing the camera to look forward. This way, both girls could see it was a small place, probably by the beach, sand was the floor and if it weren’t for the clothes, girls in skirts and shorts, guys in light shirts, it was similar to their own party.

That was until Clarke recognized a certain brunette dancing in between a guy and a girl, none of them aware of the concept of personal space. She entered into some sort of trance watching her. Lexa swayed completely lost in the music, she grinded her hips back into the guy which simply kept dancing, not too concerned by the fact a girl’s ass was rubbing against his crotch. Suddenly, Lexa spun around and the girl behind her immediately placed her hands in her hips while she reached around her neck, her hips never stopped moving sensually.

Clarke bolted, ignoring Octavia’s calls, incapable of watching what happened next. She stumbled against someone, who caught her by the arms.

“Clarke?”

She recognized the voice, looking up and finding a bemused Wells.

“Take me for a drive, please,” she urged, taking his hand and leading him to the exit.
“Oh good, you’re back.”

Lexa almost tripped under the water stream, holding on to the shower curtain to prevent the fall.

“What the hell, Raven? Get out!” Lexa said exasperated with the intrusion.

“No, can’t do. I have to pee,” her roommate answered nonchalantly, judging by the sound coming from behind the curtain, the statement was true. Lexa huffed annoyed and continued showering, doing her best to ignore Raven.

“So, how was your break, Commander?” Raven asked, not caring on their current situation.

Lexa shook her head, “it was fine, we went south,” she said, not going into further detail, nor asking Raven how her break had gone, knowing for a fact the girl would tell her anyways.

“Christmas was great, movies and presents, what’s not to love. We spent New Year with O and Bell and a bunch of their friends. You guys were invited but O told us you weren’t around, it was a shame, we could’ve used your party spirit after midnight. I mean, I dealt with a miserable Clarke before but that was a treat, compared to moping and dejected Clarke from the first week of vacation.”

Lexa remained silent, staring at the wall, hand midway to applying shampoo on her scalp.

“Do you have any idea why?”

The sound of running water was her only answer.

“I’m just asking because, you know, Clarke gets very talkative – and handsy, come think about it,” she said thoughtfully, “but we are not getting into that…”

“Raven, really, it’s none of my business.” Lexa replied, hoping the girl would leave and let her finish her shower in peace.

“Oooh, I beg to differ, missus. Your name came up several times, usually around the time Clarke was a wreck, all disheveled and unkempt. Fortunately for you, she’s moved on so I won’t kick your ass.”

This definitely captured Lexa’s attention, she opened the curtain, just enough for her head to sneak out. Raven was grinning widely, proud of how successful her bait had been.

“Fuck you!”

“No, my dear, you want me on your side. After all, I’m the one that spent her entire holiday convincing Clarke you weren’t just playing with her,” Raven informed her.

“You shouldn’t have done that,” Lexa said, closing the curtain so she could rinse her hair.


Lexa wrapped herself on a towel and exited the shower. “No, of course not, but she was planning to do that to me,” she said angrily, “and you were planning on letting her.”

Raven was taken aback by her words, her face frowning with confusion.
“I heard you guys talking before the break,” Lexa explained but Raven looked even more confused than before. “It doesn’t matter; just tell Clarke I’m not an experiment.”

A wave of understanding washed over Raven’s face, finally catching onto what Lexa was referring to. “Whatever you think you heard, you’re wrong,” she said, attempting to clarify the situation.

“Whatever,” Lexa interrupted, not wanting an explanation and opening the door for Raven, “let me dress.”

“You fucked up, Lexa! I’m telling you,” her roommate singsong as she left the bathroom. She continued talking to the closed door, “because you might want to get your facts straight or maybe not that straight. Clarke experimented, assuming we’re both talking about her sexuality – and I’m just explaining this because I have both your best interests in mind –, back in high school and she came out as a reassured bisexual.”

This definitely reached Lexa’s brain in a beat, her eyes widening at the information her roommate had just provided. She had never dared to ask Clarke about her sexuality, one she didn’t want to be rude – it didn’t matter who she liked –, but two, she didn’t want to face a reality in which Clarke was straight. Of course, she had had a boyfriend but Lexa had learned not to assume anything on people’s sexuality since it was the thing it bother her most, people always jumping into conclusions on her own. And then, there was the fact they had kissed, which meant nothing if Clarke was simply experimenting but changed everything if…

“I fucked up,” a fully dressed Lexa said worriedly, coming out of the bathroom and sitting on Raven’s chair.

“Yes, particularly because, if I recall correctly, in that same conversation, Clarke mentioned something about being over experimenting and wanting a relationship with someone.”

“What did you mean?” she asked, ignoring whatever Raven had just said.

“Uh?”

“Before, when you said Clarke had moved on?” she asked with a shaky voice, baring herself to hear the worse.

Raven neared her, smiling sympathetically, “Clarke says she has, she hasn’t, so it means you’re in for one hell of a fight.”

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Raven was right. Clarke was avoiding her, or at least, doing everything within her power not to be in the same place as Lexa. When it was inevitable for the girls to be in close quarters with one another, such as Lincoln’s birthday party, the blonde spent the entire evening playing videogames with Monty, pretending Lexa wasn’t even there.

She tried talking to her; which always ended up with monosyllabic answers or excuses from the girl to avoid her. It was impossible for Lexa to dive into any sort of private conversation with Clarke. The blonde was acting distant in a polite manner, which infuriated Lexa to no end. No matter what she tried, Clarke found a way to shut her down, brushing her off as no more than a mere nuisance that was meant to be dealt with, every now and then.

Judging by how many extra laps she had to run during rugby trainings, in the past weeks, Clarke had brought Octavia up to speed on their situation. Apparently, the captain had taken Clarke’s words as a command for having a personal vendetta against her.
It sucked.

She kept running around the field, having already lost count on how many laps she had already done. It really didn’t matter because today’s punishment, for taking five seconds longer than given, to get back on the field after the water break – even though some girls weren’t even back –, was to run for the rest of practice. She watched as the rest of the team had a friendly match to end the day, whilst she was heaving and gasping for air. She was on the verge of passing out, maybe that was a bit of an exaggeration, but she had definitely reached the point in which you feel you’re about to throw up, if you don’t stop, right now.

Despite having a great condition, she still needed to recover from doing nothing during the break, regretting not going on her morning routines, on a daily basis. She had run on the beach before sunrise, a few times, it definitely wasn’t enough for the treatment she was receiving at the hand of a very angry best friend.

Finally, she saw the girls going over the benches to grab their stuff. She stopped relieved, until she heard Octavia yelling at her.

“DON’T EVEN THINK SO, WOODS. TWO MORE LAPS AND THEN YOU’RE DONE.”

She glared at the other woman, even though she couldn’t see her. She considered disobeying her orders and going straight to the showers. Instead, she resumed jogging; swallowing her pride – after all, O was her captain.

Once she was done, she hurried up to the locker room, hoping she could catch Octavia so she could talk to her. It was about time, she explained her side of story and earned a bit of consideration from the captain.

Octavia was already showered when she got there, sitting on a bench and putting on a t-shirt. The rest of the team was still in the showers; Lexa took this opportunity before the other girl bolted.

“Octavia, we need to talk,” she said confidently, standing in front of the girl.

Octavia got up, going pass Lexa to her locker. She took out her hairbrush and continued getting ready in front of the small mirror in her locker, completely ignoring Lexa.

Lexa rolled her eyes at her antics; she pushed the door closed with her hand, effectively gaining a glare and O’s attention.

“You need to cut me some slack.” Lexa saw no point in beating around the bush, besides she wanted this conversation over quickly, not really up for an audience.

Octavia snorted at the girl’s confidence, no one ever told her what to do and Lexa wasn’t going to either. “If you don’t think you’re up for it, maybe you don’t belong in this team, Commander,” she replied, adding a particular bitter tone to her nickname.

Lexa crossed her arms, resisting the urge to roll her eyes, again. “We both know you’re being a bitch because of Clarke,” she said not holding back her thoughts. “If I were slacking with the team I wouldn’t complain, but this… this is personal. There’s no chance in hell I’m gonna let you punish me for something that doesn’t concern you.”

“Doesn’t concern me?” Octavia took step, towering over her despite being smaller, “Clarke’s my best friend.”

Lexa sighed when she noticed everything about this conversation wasn’t going the way she had
planned it. It had quickly escalated to dangerous territory and the rest of the team was back, doing a terrible job pretending they weren’t listening.

“I know she is and I respect your loyalty to her,” she continued, “I don’t expect you to stop protecting her. I’m only asking you to do it outside the field. I come here to unwind from all my problems, the last thing I need is a constant reminder that the girl I like is not talking to me. I’m trying to make things right with Clarke and I’m sorry for how I acted but you have to respect that it’s a problem between the two of us.”

It was true Lexa hadn’t underperformed, far from it, she was sure any other girl would have quit if they had to do laps for an entire practice – after getting up from fainting at some point. But she couldn’t ignore the fact Lexa had hurt Clarke and her best friend was definitely suffering because of the girl standing in front of her. Octavia considered her reasoning for a moment. Maybe, she had gone a little over the top with her actions. It seemed Lexa was suffering just as much as Clarke.

“All right, no more extra laps for petty reasons.” Lexa turned to leave. “But I still don’t think you’re good enough for Clarke.”

Lexa’s lips turned into a small smile, she nodded and went ahead to shower.

Clarke was taking a huge risk being in Raven’s dorm right now. Of course, she hadn’t done it on purpose; it was a simple matter of following events that drifted her to needing Raven and her abilities. Somehow she had managed to insert a virus into her phone. Raven was unwilling to help her unless it was in her dorm since she was, yet again, immersed in one of her projects.

“Seriously Clarke, I swear you have the worst luck with technology,” Raven commented, inspecting the device while figuring out, what the hell Clarke had done.

“I know,” she said defeated. Every computer, phone, radio or electronic device she had ever touched, ended with some kind of error or virus. She kept stealing periodical glances at the door, nervously, while pressuring Raven to hurry up.

“Calm down, Clarke,” Raven said exasperated, “she won’t be back from practice for another half hour. Speaking of which, you need to tell O to back off.”

This definitely caught the blonde’s attention, “what do you mean?”

“You know how O can get, the overprotective Bellamy version she hates when it comes to us. But, whatever she’s doing to Lexa in practice, is too much,” she explained from her desk.

“Why?” Clarke asked warily. She knew telling Octavia would mean, Lexa earning some uncalled treatment from her captain. Now, she wondered if it had been the best decision. Of course, Lexa could handle her own, but she could have underestimated Octavia’s reaction.

“Because whatever she’s making Lexa do, it’s tiring her the fuck out. And I don’t mean in a yawning, doe eye Lexa but dead beat Lexa, barely manages to get to her bed before passing out ‘til the next day,” Raven explained, bringing up her concerns for her roommate.

She had been living with Lexa long enough to know the girl’s routine. She usually got back from practice and would read or study for an hour or two before calling it a night. The past few days, Lexa had come in, muttered a goodnight and had gone to sleep, exhausted. It didn’t take a genius to figure out Octavia was exploiting her and Lexa was too proud to confront her.
Lexa decided to make an appearance in that very moment. Clarke felt immediately bad for the girl, despite her face brightening up upon seeing her. The girl could see the signs of exhaustion in the way she dragged her feet and the bags under her eyes. She gave Clarke a hopeful wave which she returned with less enthusiasm.

Lexa smiled tiredly, she sat down on her bed and winced when she took of her shoes.

Clarke couldn’t stand being close to the brunette, watching her in pain was definitely making her question her decision of avoiding Lexa. She bolted out of the room, knowing it would take a small plea, hell even those puppy eyes staring at her one more second, for her to break.

“Clarke!” Raven yelled after her, catching her by the entrance and holding her phone up.

“Right, thanks Rae, you’re an angel,” she said, retracing her steps towards the latina.

“No problem. By the way, you should know, the reason Lexa wouldn’t talk to you, was because she overheard us talking about you experimenting. As usual, instead of checking the facts, her mind jumped to conclusions, thinking you were just planning on experimenting with her.”

Clarke stared at Raven dumbfounded, her brain working a hundred miles an hour, to make sense of what she had said.

“Shit!”

“Shit indeed. Look, next time she tries to talk to you, you should let her. Whatever is going on with you guys, it needs some sort of closure so if you don’t like her anymore that’s fine but set the record straight and move on, for the sake of all of us. Yes?”

“Okay.” She wanted to walk back in there and talk to Lexa right now. The image of an exhausted Lexa invaded her mind, led her to the exit. This conversation needed to happen with both of them in their five senses. And the girl definitely needed some rest. Moreover, she still needed to wrap her mind around the fact Lexa’s behaviour and reasoning.

“Communication, better communication,” she muttered under her breath to no one, on her way to her room.

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Lexa lay on her bed, for the first time this week sleep didn’t come as soon as she hit her pillow. Her mind kept wandering back to walking into her dorm and seeing Clarke. She hadn’t been able to contain her happiness upon seeing the girl, despite how tired she felt, the small exchange between the two before Clarke’s hurried exit, was the best part of her day. Even if the girl had ran out, she had seen her and that was enough for today.

It was about time she admitted what was really stopping her from going after the girl. She recalled the conversation she had with Anya, the day before leaving Mexico.

*Lexa had gone for a long walk on the beach. Tomorrow, they would go back to Guadalajara and straight to the airport. She wasn’t sure when she was coming back. She would’ve loved to come back on Spring Break or during the summer but she knew money was tight and they probably had already spent more than they had.*

*She walked along the tide, letting the small waves bury her feet in the sand. It was one of her favourite sensations, calm and soothing. It didn’t take long for Lexa to find a quiet spot, where she could sit down and watch the immensity of the ocean. It was a sight she could never get tired of.*
She had been sitting there for a while, when she felt someone sit next to her. She wasn’t that surprised to find Anya, settling in the sand with a couple of beers and sunglasses propped on her hair. She handed her one, taking a sip of her own before speaking.

“Ready to go back to reality?”

“No,” Lexa responded, taking the beer gratefully.

She would miss this too; nowhere in the US could she find good beer. She thought it wouldn’t be a problem until she only found overpriced Coronas everywhere; the only good thing about them, had been a couple of commercials promoting Mexico a few years back. She would take any kind of beer in Mexico over a Corona, Indio, XX, hell even a Tecate but particularly a Victoria. She made a mental note to take a six pack or at least one for the road.

Anya laughed at her honesty, which didn’t come as a surprise.

“So I have to go back?” Lexa whined, a five year old taking over her body momentarily.

Her sister watched her in her periphery, sizing up the yearning behind the question. It was not secret Lexa had fallen in love with Mexico the minute they settled in, she was keen on learning everything from the country and was the first one to adapt. Also, she had become fast friends with Diego and it was clear who their Grandparents favourite was. It had taken them a while to convince her to come back, Lexa had finally agreed, in order to get a better education and follow her dream of helping foster kids. This time, Anya believed a second reason was playing a role on her sister’s reluctance of going back.

“So, a girl finally got under your skin?”

Lexa huffed, “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Oh please! Lexa, you might act all mysterious and shit, but there are at least four people that can read you like an open book. Guess what? I’m one of them,” Anya declared.

Lexa became angry; hating the truth behind the statement and herself for not being able to control her emotions. She didn’t hate Anya but she wasn’t a fan in that moment; she definitely hated her guts and the fact she would tell it as it is, even when she clearly didn’t want to hear it.

“So what?” she said harshly.

“So, you’re scare,” Anya stated simply, earning a disbelief look from her sister. “It’s true and it’s okay. You’ve built these walls around you and some girl has finally cracked them making you question everything you believe; particularly, whether love is real. Love you don’t think exists or deserve. And, it frightens you, so you decided to push her away. Am I wrong?”

“I’m going to kill Lincoln,” Lexa muttered, “he should know better than to meddle with my love life.”

“He loves you,” Anya complied, defending his brother’s noble intentions. “He wants you to be happy.”

“Well, I’m happy here,” she retorted, in a poor attempt to escape this conversation.

“It’s very easy to turn around and leave. I could’ve done it, and time and time again I wonder why I didn’t just do that,” Anya confessed. “Leaving is easy. The consequences of that decision, they will hunt you, filling your future with unnecessary what ifs.”
“But that’s the thing,” Lexa spoke, staring at the ocean, tracing her thoughts in the waves, “what if’s already fill my mind. What if I’m not good enough? What if I’m not what she expects? What if I can’t love her the way she deserves? What if I continue to be a burden?” Her voice broke; unleashing her deepest fears, tears filling her eyes.

Anya was perplexed, completely taken aback with Lexa’s brutal honesty. Few times had she seen her little sister looking so small and broken. Instead of the 21 year old girl, she saw the 5 year old who had scraped her knee and was crying, calling her mum, a woman that was never coming to heal her daughter, ever again. It brought a whole new understanding to the woman next to her.

“You are a brilliant woman, Lexa. It pains me to see you crumble, to see you doubt yourself. You’ve suffered so much from such a young age, and still, you grew up a kind, intelligent, sweet girl when you could’ve been the complete opposite; hell, the odds were against you but you chose to be good,” Anya poured her emotions into her words, wanting Lexa to realize she meant every word. “You were never a burden, and I hate myself for not saying this sooner. If I had known… You changed my life, and Lincoln’s, we were only able to escape a miserable life because you believed in us. There were times I wanted to give up but your drive for a better future, your passion, it was so contagious it became my own.”

Lexa’s tears were trailing down her face, her lip quivering, she held Anya’s hand tightly.

“Any girl would be lucky to have you. I’ve been on the receiving end of your love, Lexa; I know how selfless and pure it can be. If you think Clarke is the one and can make you happy… you have to give yourself a chance.”

That night, she dreamt of the ocean. She woke up with Clarke’s eyes on her mind.

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Lexa closed her eyes, going over one more time what she was about to do, she inhaled deeply. She was standing outside the room where she had first crossed paths with the blonde with piercing blue eyes, that had hunted her dreams ever since. She remembered her infamous first day, wondering if she would recall that day forever if only for being woken up by a drop dead gorgeous woman after an economics lecture.

She probably would and if Lexa were a romantic, she would probably think that moment had changed her life – she definitely was not. Yet again, she was shifting on her feet, palms sweating, holding a mixed bouquet of different sizes of paintbrushes with various colour tips and a few orange tulips, gathering the courage to face potential rejection.

She had come to the conclusion that since Clarke wasn’t willing to be near her, her only option was to corner her. If she was going to force the woman to listen to her, she might as well go all in and see what happens. Biggest leap of faith she had ever taken in her life, including letting Lincoln and Anya raise her.

Several students gave her strange looks as they passed by, while others smiled at her and one gave her encouraging thumbs up with a smile, which she managed to return despite the jitters going through her body.

The door suddenly flung open, a throng of students coming through hurriedly, some of which didn’t even notice her, too busy staring down at their phones. The ones who did weren’t ashamed of sending inquisitive looks her way, glancing around trying to discover who she was waiting for.

The girl did her best to ignore them; standing on her tiptoes, trying to catch a flash of golden locks.
Her little stunt had managed to slow down the vacating of the room. As expected, an exasperated Clarke made her way through the crowd, pushing and shoving people aside, creating a path to leave and get to her next class.

“Oh my God, people! Some of us have things to do,” she exclaimed, frustrated at the people blocking the exit. She pushed herself between the last two people obstructing the entrance, suddenly realizing she was now standing in the middle of the semicircle that had formed around…

“Clarke.”

She darted her eyes up in surprise, taking in the brunette standing in front of her. Lexa was a few feet away from her, the corner of her lips forming a tiny nervous smile, her eyes wide and vulnerable.

She waited a moment for Lexa to speak but the girl seemed to have lost her words. Clarke couldn’t blame her, Lexa was never comfortable with people she didn’t know and right now, she was surrounded by almost the entirety of Clarke’s class and a couple more onlookers.

“Are those for me?” she asked, forgetting she was angry at the girl, too overwhelmed with adoration.

Lexa nodded, smiling nervously and handing the bouquet with shaky hands.

“Thanks,” Clarke said, extending her hands and collecting the flowers, admiring the thoughtfulness behind the gesture of adding paintbrushes to the arrangement. Lexa didn’t let go immediately, causing their hands to brush slightly, the touch of skin sending a shock of electricity through their bodies.

“They’re beautiful,” the blonde whispered, admiring the bouquet. If she had to guess, Lexa had been the one to put it together, careful of combining flowers and paintbrushes to create an art piece on its own.

Lexa stared at her, mesmerized, opening and closing her mouth but still unable to form any coherent sentences.

“Well, say something,” an anonymous voice shouted from within the crowd. Clarke raised her eyebrows, glancing around to see who had talked.

“Clarke, I…” apparently it worked. Lexa inhaled deeply, gathering her last bit of courage and pushing her fears aside.

“Clarke,” she began once again, “I’m sorry. I panicked…”

“Yes, because of what you heard,” Clarke interrupted, “Raven told me.”

Lexa shook her head, “no, no… I mean yes but that was just part of it. And I’m so sorry for the way I treated you and how I handled it all.”

“It’s ok, it was a misunderstanding, I can’t really blame you for it,” Clarke said sincerely, “but I wished you had told me.”

“The truth is, I was scared,” she took a moment before saying what she really had come to say. “I am scared. I am paralyzed, just standing in front of you, seeing how beautiful, breathtaking you are… I’m terrified, because I can’t think of a reason why you would want to be with me. But the thought of you with someone else, makes me selfish, takes over my reason because I know I don’t deserve you but I can’t help to want you. It blurs my mind to the point that I’m standing here, hoping like a fool… that you would be mine.” Her last words came out as a whisper.
By now, you could hear a pin drop, Clarke didn’t move, a few tears threatening to escape her eyes.

The seconds that followed, felt like an eternity to Lexa, she was more than ready to flee... The crashed of lips caught her of guard, making her stumble a bit into the back wall; she didn’t care, reacting at the contact and taking Clarke’s neck, pulling her closer. The kiss was harsh and passionate; both girls were clinging desperately to one another. Lexa opened her lips, deepening the kiss, taking everything Clarke was willing to give.

Loud cheers and whistles erupted from the crowd surrounding them, bringing them back to reality. Clarke smiled, her lips slightly brushing Lexa, while the girl blushed furiously at the realization of what had just transgressed in front of a generous amount of people. This was definitely not part of her plan. She opened her eyes and found Clarke chuckling softly at her embarrassment. The blonde winked at her, grabbed her hand and pulled her towards the exit, through a sea of congratulations and applause.

Once outside, Clarke kept guiding her around campus, never letting go of her hand. Lexa was so caught up in her dazed to notice where they were going.

“Breakfast?” Clarke asked when they reached a nice diner just outside of campus.

Lexa smiled and nodded happily, crossing the street towards the restaurant. She was about to pull the door open, when she dropped her hand and turned to face Clarke, concerned written all over her face.

“You have class,” she stated seriously.

Clarke laughed unconcerned, causing Lexa’s frown to deepen. “I’m serious Clarke, you’re supposed to be in class,” she said sternly, worried that Clarke would miss something important or get in trouble.

Clarke took her hand once again. “Believe me, Art History is the last place I want to be right now,” she explained, pushing the door open with her back. “Besides, this,” she added, pulling Lexa inside and pointing to their joint hands, “is a thousand times better than a pretentious teacher, going on and on about the Renaissance and its deep meaning, there are just so many religious interpretations a girl can handle.”

“Are you sure?” Clarke rolled her eyes and ignored her. Lexa sighed in defeat; letting Clarke dragged her towards a table.

Once the blonde had carefully settled the flowers and paintbrushes in the empty seat next to her, she reassured Lexa some more, “do you actually think I would be able to concentrate on Jesus face structure by Caravaggio, when someone just made me the happiest woman on Earth?”

This time, Lexa couldn’t do anything to hide the instant blush painting her cheeks.

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Her recently acquired girlfriend was way too responsible for her own good, or at least for Clarke’s own good. This had been one of the recurrent thoughts going through Clarke’s head, when Lexa hadn’t allowed her to skip more classes that day.

Apparently, according to Lexa, it was way too early in their relationship to relent to puppy eyes and pouty mouths. I’ll hang on to my free will for as long as I can. When asked if long meant more than a week, Lexa sighed in defeat saying no.
“I’ll break you Commander,” Clarke mocked, pecking her quickly and going the opposite direction towards her class. Lexa waited until she could no longer distinguished her golden locks, and hurried to her own class, the smile never leaving her face.

It turned out to be a disaster for Clarke. Her professors were putting so much effort in teaching her techniques, methods, and ways for finding her inner self; instead, all Clarke could think of was a certain rugby player with killer eyes. Her mind wandered off to the complex being that was her girlfriend. How was it possible, that the woman, who appeared as a warrior on the field, be the same bundle of nerves with a bouquet of flowers, asking her to be her girlfriend? It just added to the levels of adorable and fascinating in which Clarke had placed Lexa.

She really needed to pay attention.

When her professor pointed out that the assignment was to create imaginary scenery, noticing Clarke’s drawing that quite resembled a pair of green eyes; she gave up. She would have to step up on her midterm project and work with whatever she had going on now. The rest of the class, she doodled when the professor looked her way. She made no attempt to advance further, not wanting to mess up with her sketch, an idea on how to fix it already forming on her head. Still, the bouquet of flowers sitting next to her kept distracting her, going back to how sweet and caring Lexa was.

After two hours of fake drawing, they class was finally over and Clarke gathered her things as fast as she could. Her mind was already – since it never stopped, really – thinking on seeing Lexa for dinner. A FaceTime call from Wells was the only thing that distracted her previous thoughts.

“You look gloomy,” was his greeting, skipping all formalities.

“Hi, Wells, how are the New Year resolutions coming along? Have you quit your diet yet?” she mocked, through the smile that was a permanent feature on this day.

He faked being hit by an arrow to the heart, hurt by her words. She laughed at his drama and he chuckled. “You, my friend, are way too happy for being the fourth week back. By this time, your ninety percent of your soul should have already been consumed. Unless…”

Clarke’s face betrayed her, unable to contain her excitement.

“You made up with your girl?”

“Something along those lines,” she replied, “only she wasn’t my girl, and now she is.” It seemed as if realization had just dawned on her. “Shit! Wells, I have a girlfriend,” she said, sounding scared and excited at the same time.

This time his laugh resonated so loud, it reached some people passing by, who looked strangely at Clarke.

“Congratulations, Griffin!” he cheered, “I may need to start believing in the whole wishing upon the New Year.”

She rolled her eyes at him, ready to retort but he spoke before she could. “I don’t want to outshine your news but there’s a reason why I called.”

Clarke raised her eyebrows quizzically, before he could speak, she raised a finger stopping him. She proceeded to take her time to lie back on the grass, getting herself on a comfortable position, preparing herself for his news. “Ok, shoot.”

He shook his head, faking annoyance but his lips curled up when he said, “I’m going to med
school!

All her preparation was for nothing since she shot up immediately, almost dropping her phone in the process. Her eyes widen, fully aware of what this meant for the boy.

When they left the Blake’s house, they had parked on a quiet street and discussed, well into the morning, about their plans for their futures. Wells had explained in detail, how his father treated him and what he expected from his son. He then confessed his only dream was to become a doctor. When Clarke asked why, his answer was simple; I no longer want to be useless. Of course Clarke tried to prove him otherwise, but such heavy words carrying so much meaning to a person, have reasoning behind them. Wells desperately wanted to feel what was like to make a change, stop being taken into account because of his last name. He wanted the freedom to speak his name and be proud of it. And most importantly, he wanted to be proud of it because he could heal someone else’s suffering.

Going against his father wishes was not a light decision to make.

“Are you sure? I mean it’s kind of a huge deal.”

He nodded appreciatively at her concern. “What’s the point of having everything handed to me in a silver plate, if I’m not really happy? Sure, going into the family business would be the easiest path, little effort with a secure reward, of sorts. Comfortable life with no risk whatsoever, settled at the age of 25. But, what’s the point? I’ll probably end up bored out of my mind, wondering how much good I could’ve a done if only I had the courage to face my father,” he ranted, determined to get his point across.

“Don’t you need to take the MCATs and they are tough as shit?” she pestered him, for the sole purpose to see whether he wavered even the slightest.

Wells tilted his head, his brow furrowing. “Are you trying to convince me otherwise, Clarke?”

Clarke sat up straighter, running a hand through her hair. “I’m making sure you’re a hundred percent behind this decision. There’s no going back, Wells.”

“I knew there was a reason I liked you, despite your minor love for superstitions.”

“Hey!” Clarke yelped, mildly offended.

“Just kidding… Geez woman… Anyway, I’m glad you’re not like my so-called friends who; one, think I’m an idiot for rejecting my father’s fortune, or two, a hopeful idiot that would chase a dream only to come back begging for forgiveness.”

“Damn! If those are your friends, I sure as hell don’t wanna know your enemies, Jaha.”

He shrugged his shoulders, “Yep… they’ll probably become former friends in the future. Anyhow, between you and me, I’ve been preparing for the MCATs for the past four years.”

Again, Clarke found herself surprised with the man in the screen.

“What? I told you I wanted this. I’ve been sitting on as many lectures as I could, studying as if I had to take those exams instead of mine. I almost failed a couple of my own because of it,” he confessed. “I think I can do this,” this time he definitely was reassuring himself.

“Yes, you can,” Clarke chipped in her support. “Look at us, taking chances and moving forward.”
“Louis, I think this might be the beginning of a beautiful friendship,” he said, quoting one of his all time favourite’s.

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Clarke could definitely get use to this. They were currently sitting on Lexa’s bed, her head resting on Lexa’s shoulder, the girl drawing patterns on her stomach with her fingertips, underneath her shirt. It was a bit scary, how quickly they had become comfortable with one another, but Clarke couldn’t think of why they shouldn’t.

They hadn’t spoken much after going back to Lexa’s room. She blamed it on the food coma after their heavy meal, since neither of them had self-control when it came to dumplings. It also felt like there was no need to feed the silence with inconsequential words. Their bubble burst with Raven’s no so quiet arrival. They both jump slightly, away from each other, feeling self-conscious at the position they had been found.

“Hey guys,” she greeted, dropping her bag unceremoniously by the foot of her bed and pulling her phone out. Not surprised by the intimate position she had just found her friends in. The same friends who just the day before were in a long time quarrel. “Check this out.”

She went over the girls and Raven, being Raven, plunged herself between both girls, ignoring the fact they had been almost been in each other’s laps just a minute ago. Clarke and Lexa exchanged amused looks and looked at some video on Raven’s phone.

“What the… is that…”

Lexa blushed furiously, realizing she was watching herself pouring out her emotions to Clarke. It definitely explained why Raven was unfazed with their proximity when she came in.

“Yes, damn you’re a good kisser Lexa,” Raven commented, enhancing the girl’s discomfort.

Clarke looked appalled by the declaration, “why is she the good kisser and not me?”

“Oh, Clarkey! I’ve kissed you, you are a B minus at best,” Raven teased her.

This definitely peeked Lexa’s interest, deviating her eyes from the video to her girlfriend and roommate, silently asking for further explanation. Clarke had developed a fascination for Lexa’s bed sheets so Raven rolled her eyes and turned, opening her mouth to speak.

“Clarke…” her friend’s hand covered her mouth, stopping her from saying anything else.

“I should probably get going,” Clarke interjected.

Lexa was intrigued and wanted to know the story behind the girls’ kiss; the sudden change of subject placed a frowned on her features. Clarke laughed at the change of her demeanour. She’s adorable.

“I promise I’ll tell you someday,” she said, getting up from the bed, Lexa copying her actions. “Preferably, when Raven’s not around so she can’t make up what really happened,” she added, looking sideways at her friend.

“Puff, as if… don’t worry Lex, I’ll tell you my side of the story so you can have a complete, detailed version on the infamous kiss,” she joked, rolling off the bed and walking towards the bathroom. “By the way, you guys have gone viral; this video has twenty thousand reproductions. You’re kind of campus famous,” she declared, shutting the door behind her.
“Well, that explains the odd looks we get getting on our way here,” Clarke said.

“And here I thought it was just the piece of chicken in the corner of your lips.”

Clarke’s hand shot up immediately to wipe the food, making Lexa chuckled at her little jest. Clarke scrunched her nose, faking anger.

“So this is what I signed for, grand romantic gestures and terrible jokes?”

“A bit more of the second than the first,” Lexa answered honestly. “Clarke… I’m not overly affectionate,” she continued, fixing her gaze on Clarke’s face searching for any indications to stop, she found none so she kept going. “I’ve been told I come off as aloof and I don’t want it to be a problem. If I ever become distant or too guarded don’t hesitate in telling me, pull me back in the right direction.”

She waited for Clarke’s response, hoping her blunt honesty wouldn’t scare the girl away. Clarke remained on her spot, never tearing her eyes away from Lexa. One more layer had been peeled off, right in front her eyes, and she found herself amazed, again, with the girl. It was as if there were two Lexa’s, the mysterious girl who would talk on the occasions she thought her opinions or insight would bring something new or useful into a conversation; and, the straightforward, direct woman, who would tell it as is, letting her walls down all at once, unapologetic of who she truly was. Clarke was fascinated with both versions.

“Lexa, I want to be with you, the real you. I don’t want you to become something you’re not, or change for that matter. I don’t need overly affectionate when I already feel my heart jumping just by staring into your eyes,” Clarke reassured her, taking her hands on her own. “Whoever you are is more than enough to make me happy.”

Lexa felt a rushed of emotions going through her body. Few people in her life had genuinely believed in her, fewer had made her feel she was worth it. Clarke had gone pass her insecurities, making it so easy for Lexa to accept herself, to just be.

She couldn’t form a sentence at this moment, so she acted on her feelings. She leaned in and kissed her girlfriend tenderly, smiling against her soft lips. Clarke sighed, resting their foreheads together, wanting to remain close to Lexa’s warmth.

“I really have to go, I’ve got an early class,” she whispered.

Lexa nodded, placing a hand on Clarke’s cheek and kissing her again.

“Oh I could stay a bit longer,” Clarke said, when they pulled apart.

Lexa took a small step back, creating the necessary distance not to give in to Clarke’s tempting offer. “No, no… I won’t be held responsible if you fail,” she joked, pushing Clarke softly towards the door, against both their wills.

“Fine,” Clarke sighed, she spun around once outside, crashing their mouths, once more. Lexa moaned when the kiss got a bit more heated for it to be considered appropriate in a public place. Clarke’s cheeky grin made her roll her eyes at her retreating form.

“She might get bad jokes but I’ll end up hot and bothered,” she muttered, “great.”

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“O, please pause it!” Lincoln said, covering his eyes. “I really don’t want to see my baby sis sucking
the soul of out some girl.”

“She’s not a dementor and it’s not some girl, its Clarke,” Octavia corrected, closing the video and pocketing her phone, “and its gold! You’ve gotta admit, it’s incredibly romantic.”

He stared at her in disbelief. “Well, yeah I guess…” He went over to the fridge, bending over and taking out two beers, signaling Octavia to see if she wanted one. His girlfriend nodded so he took off their caps. “Lexa can sometimes surprise you like that.”

“Yeah?” She reached for the bottle.

Octavia had formed an idea on Lexa. It never occurred to her The Commander, a ruthless player with no fear, could become a soft ball, let alone be all romantic and nervous in front of a girl. Not even when that girl was Clarke. It had completely changed her perspective on her teammate, so of course she was curious on what her brother had to say.

He settled next to her, Octavia shifting closer.

“She’s not shy with people she loves and would go to lengths for them,” he responded, draping an arm around her shoulders. He darted his eyes towards the TV screen, to catch the score on the basketball game they were watching. “She acts all badass and tough but the truth is; she’s a big softie. I’ve experienced her cotton love first handed.”

“Sounds like softness runs in the family,” Octavia said laughing.

“Hey!” He tickled her, making her squirm and shift but his hold was firm and she couldn’t escape. “I am very tough.”

“Says the guy who wouldn’t let me kill a plague of ants, even though they were threatening to invade his kitchen,” she said, shuffling and laughing.

“Fine, it may be a family trait.” He let go and settled back, relaxing. “Or maybe, it some sort of defense mechanism we developed growing up,” he added as an afterthought.

Octavia turned her head, to look at him curiously, watching his pensive expression. She reached for his hand, sending a small smile his way. He gazed at her adoringly, showing all the appreciation he felt for her quiet support.

They watched the game for some time, until Octavia remembered he had wanted to talk to her, before she had stopped him to show him the video.

“What did you wanted to talk to me about? I kinda of drifted off topic with Lexa and Clarke,” Octavia asked.

He straightened himself, turning his head. “I almost forgot,” he said, “I’ve got an offer from my bosses in the shop.”

“What kind of offer?”

“They want me to run a new shop in Jersey,” he answered warily, looking at her through his periphery.

“Like a manager?” she asked, wanting to know the details before reacting to such news.

“Kind of… they offered me a partnership,” he explained, sheepishly.
“Well, that’s good, right?”

He nodded, still waiting to see his girlfriend’s true feelings on the prospect of him moving away.

“In that case, I’m very proud of you,” she said, climbing into his lap, placing one knee on each side of his legs and draping her arms around his neck. “Will you take it?”

“I don’t know,” he answered honestly.

It was a great opportunity, one he didn’t expect. It had come out of nowhere, putting him right on the spot on what he wanted for his future – one he hadn’t given much thought to. Lincoln was one hundred percent sure, wherever his life was headed, there was one person he wanted to share it with. Despite his certainty, he also was aware it was too soon to confess to Octavia his true feelings and why it matter so much to him what she thought.

“I think you should,” she blurted out with just as much sincerity, her eyes looking straight into his.

This definitely caught him off guard. He was sure he was going to meet some resistance from Octavia, hell, he even had bought her favourite ice-cream – just in case an apology was needed.

“Really?” he asked, waiting for the punch line. It never came.

Octavia kissed him softly. She pulled away, still staring down into his eyes, “it’s a great opportunity, a rare one too, and not many people trust their employees to become their partners.”

“I know, know. Also, I love it there and having my own shop would mean more independence, put in motion some ideas I have. More benefits too,” he said, laying down the pros of having management rights.

“So, what’s stopping you?”

“One is pretty obvious,” he answered, tickling her sides.

Octavia laughed, managing to get hold of his hands so he wouldn’t go back into a tickle attack. “We’ll figure it out. We’ll do long distance if we have to, but we’ll cross that bridge when we get there, together,” she reassured him.

“I love you,” he blurted out. It wasn’t the first time he had said the words, only this time, he meant so much more by them. Lincoln could tell Octavia felt it too by the expression on her face, all tender and vulnerable, a trait few people would ever get to see on her.

“I love you too.” She placed her hand on his cheek adoringly. He grabbed her hand, placing a kiss on her palm. “That’s one down, what else?”

This part he hadn’t think it through.

“I need Lexa’s approval,” he stated.

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