Taking the Shot

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Summary

Graduation is just around the corner for childhood best friends, Clarke and Lexa. The sweet haze of summer has already begun to set in, but the girls find themselves in an awkward place. Both of them are still virgins and soon they'll be off to college. Not wanting to be unprepared, the two of them decide to experiment with each other for practice. But, as any friends-with-benefits deal usually goes, their emotions catch up and soon, the once-playful relationship turns serious. Their friendship starts to teeter on a precarious edge, feelings run amuck, best-laid plans soon get burned up, and somewhere in the middle, they find themselves inevitably falling in love.

The only question is, can they figure it out before it's too late?

Notes

Here it is at last, the collaboration loosely based off of @decahedra's HSAU anons!

It features both awkward gay bean Lexa and thirst monster Clarke Griffin going through excruciatingly stupid bouts of mutual pining. It's thirteen chapters full of fluff, smut, and just a pinch of angst! Leave us a comment and let us know what you think -- we're open to feedback :)

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Archive Warning: No Archive Warnings Apply
Category: F/F
Fandom: The 100 (TV)
Relationship: Clarke Griffin/Lexa
Character: Clarke Griffin, Lexa (The 100), Anya (The 100), Raven Reyes, Octavia Blake, Lincoln (The 100), Indra (The 100), Gustus (The 100), Abby Griffin
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See the end of the work for more notes.
Prelude

Chapter Summary

Lexa and Clarke have their usual movie night, but someone special decides to make a guest appearance.

Red.

It’s the color of blood, of passion, of years spent conditioning and honing her skills until all she has left is a furnace in her heart and steel in her bones. Her brain is instilled with the red of focus and determination. The crowd is roaring in the stands, bathed in dark crimson as they chant her name in praise, greedily seeking a miracle. Red is all she sees, tastes, and hears in that moment. Red is who she’s always been ever since her blades first christened the ice.

This has always been more than just a sport, but a commitment, a religion, a lifestyle.

“What are you thinking?” A low voice asks, causing Lexa to tilt her head a quarter inch to see her half-sister Anya skating up to her, eyes trained on the frontlines.


“Really?” Anya asks warily. “They’re gonna be on your ass the minute the puck leaves my stick.”

“Let them. We’re not losing this game.”

Anya still looks doubtful, but the rest of the girls on the team seem to be fine with the play. Lexa looks up to the LCD monitor at the top of the rink, sighing at the score. It’s two-two and they don’t have enough time left for something structured. Anya growls out a reluctant agreement before bumping fists with her co-captain and skating into position. The officiators set the clock and the crowd falls into a burbling hum as they look to the screen with worried expressions.

Twenty-three seconds. That’s all the time they have left for one last Hail Mary.

Lexa skates to the far side of the rink, eyes trained on Anya’s figure as her half-sister leans forward in position for the face-off. The blood pounds in Lexa’s veins, red and angry with coursing adrenalin. She grips the end of her stick tight as one defender skates over to her in a check. They stare at each other for a brief second, like a two predators assessing their prey.

But when the referee blows the whistle and the puck clatters to the ice, time slows down to a crawl.

The instant the vulcanized rubber smacks to the ground, Anya flicks her wrist and inverts her stick, pulling the puck in before smacking it forward. The black blur hurtles down the ice, away from their own goalie. None of the opposing team members expect the risky, seemingly inexperienced shot, but to both sisters’ credit, it works.

Lexa shoots forward like a bullet, charging past the two defenders and pooling all of her energy into reaching the puck sailing ahead of her. She barely registers the clattering of skates behind her as she leans forwards to conserve energy and increase her speed. Sweat beads down the back of her neck as she makes it to the puck, curving it into her stick and gliding forward at breakneck speed. Her eyes
are trained on the smirking goalie and the net. The crowd goes insane at the unexpected breakaway, their screams nearly deafening.

As she nears the opposite end of the stadium, however, Lexa hears one particular voice ring out amidst the cheering like a siren’s call. On instinct, her head snaps up and her focus flickers to a familiar blonde in the stands with a giant sign with her name and number on it. Lexa’s stoic facade falters for a moment as she dopily curls her lips upwards in a lovesick grin.

It’s a microsecond of a glance, but that’s all it takes for Lexa to be knocked aside by the charging left defender. She gets brutally rammed into another player, sandwiched to slow her speed and prevent a tie-breaking goal. Lexa growls and hip-checks her opponents before breaking through the block and charging towards the goalie, puck still at the curve of her stick.

Ten seconds left.

Lexa doesn’t slow down. She only has one shot to deliver her team to regionals. The goalie comes out of the hovel and crosses her pads, maximizing her presence in the net. Her crystal eyes set the challenge and Lexa snarls as she accepts. She can see the arrogance in that goading snicker, one that makes her insides curl up in glee. This girl expects her to charge forward like a novice, to face her head-on and hope for the best.

Only, Lexa Woods is anything but predictable.

As soon as she reaches the goalie, Lexa tugs her stick back, pulling the puck between her legs in an inverted ‘tweener. She twists her hips and glides past the post, quicker than the goalie’s reaction time. Her wrists ache at the awkward twisting of her muscles, but she holds strong. At the last second, Lexa flicks the curved end of the stick upwards, sending the puck hurtling into the tight space between the crossbar and the smooth red line of the goal.

As soon as the puck has left, the full-force of the two defenders smack against her left shoulder, smashing her into the fiberglass of the rink until she’s knocked to the ground with the two of them piled on top of her. Yet, the entire time, her eyes remained glued to the soaring puck.

The goalie tries to angle her body to catch the puck in her mitt, but she’s too caught up on the sudden move to coordinate the action. With only two seconds left in the match, the rubber smacks down from the crossbar and passes that red line, resulting in the winning goal and the end of the game. The crowd goes wild and rises to their feet, chanting her name as the team rushes to the ice to congratulate each other on the monumental win. The two players atop her roll off and skate away, bitterly grumbling about their untimely loss and leaving Lexa on the ice.

“You’re an idiot, you know that?” Anya’s familiar rasp pulls Lexa from the daze of the moment. Her head is a bit fuzzy and her tongue feels heavy in her mouth, but her blurry vision is clear enough to see Anya’s frown of concern as she staggers to her feet. Anya helps her remove her helmet, and she winces as something sticky and hot streaks down the side of her face. “You’re bleeding,” Anya says, stating the obvious. “So make that a big idiot.”

Lexa frowns at the comment, but before she can, a familiar voice booms from the now-dispersing crowd. She and Anya both turn to see that beautiful, azure-eyed blonde clambering down the bleachers with her two friends until they’re at the fiberglass barrier. Lexa winces at the fire in the girl’s eyes at the sight of the cut.

“I’ll let you take this one, good sister,” Anya chuckles, slapping her gently on the back. “I did warn you about them being on your ass, you know.”
Lexa rolls her eyes, biting back a snarky remark as her sister skates away to the other end of the rink, but she doesn’t have much time to sulk. Her doom has arrived, and with a sigh, she turns to receive the scolding she knows is coming. “Clarke,” she mumbles in a sheepish voice, unsure what else to say. Clarke is still scowling at her, but her eyes are pooling with concern under the heat of her anger. Lexa disarmingly puts her hands in the air and gulps nervously, clearing her throat to croak out, “Listen, I can explain—”

“You gotta admit, it was a pretty awesome goal.”

“You were slammed into a wall, Lexa.”

“I still scored, Clarke.”

“Lexa,” Clarke groans, but Lexa is relieved to catch the hints of a smile around her soft lips. “Okay, fine, it was pretty cool. I wasn’t expecting it.”

Lexa rises to her feet, throwing her skates over her shoulder, her jersey and shoulder pads free from her torso. “Neither was she,” she chuckles as she stands from the bench. “You should’ve seen her face.”

Lexa looks up to Clarke with a toothy smile, but her cheeks heat up when she finally takes the times to register the adorable red and gold knitted sweater Clarke’s sporting. Her breath is sucked from her lungs when she dumbfoundedly gazes at Clarke’s hair, the blonde tresses spilling out from under a crimson beanie. All semblance of communication leaves her mind, leaving only the recurring whisper of ‘Clarke’ as her last sense of vocabulary. Her throat closes up as she tries to avert her gaze from Clarke’s breasts, pushed up by her crossed arms while still staring at her with a bemused expression on her face. Swallowing thickly, Lexa subtly adjusts the way she’s standing and thanks herself for keeping the thick hockey pants on to conceal the evidence of her inconvenient arousal.

“Are we still good for movie night?” Clarke asks with a smile as she uncrosses her arms.

Lexa beams back, nodding. “Let me just shower first and talk to the coach if she’s still in the locker room.” She slings her bag over her other shoulder, gripping onto the strap tightly. “I’ll be out in twenty, tops.”

“I’ll wait at the front. Don’t take too long, okay?”

Lexa nods and rushes off to the locker room, relieved to find that most of the girls have gone home. Her coach is still there, talking to Anya and Monroe about tonight’s play. Lexa quickly grabs her casual wear and hops into a vacant shower stall, scrubbing off the sweat and musk caked upon her skin. She washes herself in peace, happy that she finally has some privacy.

It’s been a few years since Lexa had started her transition and HRT, but in those years, she’s been lucky to receive nothing but support from her friends and family. At first, she’d been nervous that the girl’s hockey team wouldn’t be accepting of her based on her transition, but their coach, Indra, had been more than pleased to take the star center onto the team. It had been difficult at first, but Lexa worked hard, pushed through the discrimination, and became a leader for her team. The girls
respected her, though some still questioned her role as captain.

After changing into a loose pair of sweats, a baggy shirt, and her letterman, Lexa throws her hair up into a messy bun and slides on her glasses. She makes her way over to where Indra is waiting with Anya. Upon seeing her, Indra arches an eyebrow, somehow looking both pleased and annoyed at the same time. Lexa gulps, ignoring the teasing chuckle from Anya.

“Coach.” Lexa nods her head in Indra’s direction. “Were you satisfied with the game?”

“It was a risky couple of plays. However, that last half was entirely reckless, Lexa. At those speeds, you should be concentrating on getting out of there safely,” Indra replies tersely.

“Not on pretty girls,” Anya coughs under her breath, earning a glare from Lexa. Anya just shrugs, wiggling her eyebrows with a challenging smirk. Sighing, Lexa turns back to her coach. Indra looks to the clipboard in her hand before handing Lexa a piece of paper.

“McGill is sending their best scouts in a few months,” Indra explains, looking at both of them. “They’ve seen both of your audition tapes and are interested in watching you play.”

“A full-ride scholarship?” Lexa reads off the sheet in disbelief. “That’s… whoa. Seriously?”

“Yes,” Anya finishes with a stern voice, “all the more reason for us to focus, Lex.”

“I trust you two will practice outside of the assigned hours. I’ve already given Anya the key to the rink. You’re welcome to use it whenever you want as long as you clean up afterwards,” Indra explains as she gathers her things and walks them both out of the changing rooms. “I have no doubt that the scouts will be impressed, but they’re looking for consistency, not a show. No more of the stunts you pulled tonight, Lexa. While you got lucky, that’s not what they’re interested in.”

“Of course,” Lexa says as she snaps up and puts the paper in her bag. “I promise I’ll shape up.”

“I trust you will,” Indra replies in a slightly softer tone as she glances between the two of them. “I’ve never met two individuals as talented as yourselves. It would be shame to see that potential go to waste. Don’t let this get to either of your heads, however. Keep working hard.”

“Of course Coach,” both sisters answer back in unison before Indra nods and bids them farewell. Lexa and Anya double check their things before making their way over to the lobby to where Clarke and Raven are chatting with each other over the game’s highlights.

“Well if it’s not the Wonder Twins,” Raven chirps as soon as she spots them coming out of the change room. She walks up to Anya and the two meet in a soft kiss, grinning into each other’s lips. Lexa awkwardly shift on her feet, averting her gaze until Raven pulls back, tangling her fingers with Anya’s and pecking one of those chiseled cheekbones.

“We’ll see you two nerds later,” Anya says as she flirtatiously winks at Raven before nodding at Lexa and Clarke with a knowing grin. “Enjoy your sleepover. We’ll definitely be enjoying ours. Isn’t that right, babe?” Raven just kisses her in response, her lips curled up in a smirk.

Lexa fake-gags at the innuendo and Clarke turns a shade of pink when Raven playfully tugs Anya away towards her car. The two girls watch them pull out of the parking lot in silence, still awkwardly avoiding each other’s stares. After the couple has left, Clarke offers up a sympathetic smile and they head in the direction of her beat-up Camero. Lexa tosses her things into the trunk and hops into the front seat, sighing in relief at finally being able to sit down.

“Tired?” Clarke chuckles as she turns on the radio. Lexa nods and sighs. Clarke looks over, still
worried about the other girl's injury from just an hour ago. "How's your head? Are you dizzy?"

"Clarke," Lexa draws out her name with a chuckle, "I'm fine. I get hit all the time."

"Doesn't mean that I don't worry, Lexa. You got hit pretty hard."

"It's my fault, really. I wasn't paying attention."

"And what had you distracted?" Clarke teases as she pulls down to her street. "A pretty girl?"

Lexa gulps and rubs the back of her head. *If only you knew*, she sighs in the back of her head as Clarke rolls the car up her driveway before powering off the engine. She opts to not answer as she exits the car and grabs her stuff from the trunk, joining Clarke at the front door.

* * *

"So, what movie are we gonna watch?"

Clarke aims an amused glance over at Lexa, not bothering to stifle her smile. Her best friend is already buried most of the way in the kitchen pantry, with only the firm swell of her rear sticking out. It's a rare opportunity and Clarke takes full advantage, letting her eyes linger on the impressive sight while the object of her admiration is busy foraging for more snacks. She has to admit, Lexa's butt in sweats is hard to resist. The image burns her to the core.

"I don't know yet," she says, running her tongue over her dry lower lip. Unfortunately, all the moisture in her body has chosen to travel somewhere else—not an infrequent occurrence over the past year, much to her own private embarrassment. "I was gonna let you pick." In all honesty, movies are the last thing on her mind. She knows from experience that she'll probably spend most of it staring at Lexa anyway, watching the glow from the screen flicker across her face and highlight those perfect cheekbones whenever she smiles.

"You *always* say you want to let me pick." Lexa turns with a sigh, an unopened packet of popcorn in one hand and a bag of potato chips tucked under an impressive bicep. "Then when I tell you what I want to watch, you pout until we end up putting in whatever you wanted anyway. So let's just skip that and watch what you want to watch, okay?"

From Lexa's smug grin, Clarke can tell she isn't really annoyed. However, as attractive as those pearly white teeth and adorable dimples are, she can't remain focused on her friend's face for long. The shirt Lexa has thrown on is a bit too short, and the bottom hem rides high enough to offer Clarke an enticing view of her abdominal muscles. It's only a narrow strip of tanned skin, but it's enough to make a lump form in her throat and send a pulse of heat between her legs. It's *more* than enough to dry up her mouth and let reality slip from her mind. Internally, she curses herself for playing into the trap of the average hormonal teenager; but, honestly, she can't help it when Lexa's v-line is right in front of her, tempting her with those perfectly chiseled bones dipping into the waistband of her sweats…

"Clarke? Is something wrong?"

She blinks, realizing she's been caught staring. Coughing to buy herself some time, her eyes search frantically for an excuse. The first thing she spots is the golden lettering across the leg of Lexa's red sweatpants: TIMBERWOLVES, in all caps. "You know when you stare too long at a word and you know it's spelled right, but it still seems totally wrong?" She gestures at Lexa's pants. "That just happened to me. Sorry, I'm kind of a space cadet today."

To her relief, Lexa doesn't question her flimsy explanation and instead nods with an understanding
chuckle. "Happens to me all the time, don’t worry. I’ll be reading and stop on the same word for like sixty seconds. So…” She holds up the snacks. "Will this be enough, or do I need to grab a bag of something from your secret candy stash too, Ms Sweet Tooth?"

Clarke narrows her eyes at the packet of popcorn and the bag of potato chips. *Focus Clarke, now’s not the time for such lewd thoughts.* "Isn’t that a little much for just the two of us?"

Lexa snorts. "Yeah, right. The potato chips are for me, because I know you’re gonna devour all the popcorn in the first ten minutes of the movie. Actually, here." She passes the chips over, and Clarke has to swallow a gasp as their hands brush. Even though she and Lexa are fairly physical with each other, as far as their friendship goes, the slight brush of skin on skin is still enough to send sparks shooting up along her arm. She’s so distracted that she almost misses Lexa’s next words. "Fill up on some of those while I pop the popcorn. Maybe then I’ll actually get to have some."

"Extra butter?" Clarke asks, in a raspier voice than intended.

"You bet." While Lexa throws the packet into the microwave, Clarke steals another glance at her back. She’s never been more grateful that her mother is cold-blooded and keeps the thermostat up higher than most people. It means Lexa usually walks around in more revealing clothes. In the back of her mind she knows that objectifying her friend without her awareness has to have some sort of negative karma associated with it, but she can’t help it. Clarke really appreciates the sight of her in tank tops. The white one she's wearing doesn't have much fabric at the back, and it offers a tempting view of her shoulders. They're the perfect size, broad and strong without being bulky, but still with a soft, feminine curve…

The sound of the microwave beeping snaps Clarke out of her daze. She realizes she hasn't even touched the potato chips, and Lexa is staring at her awkwardly once more. "You sure you're okay, Clarke? If you're tired or something, you can grab a nap and fall asleep during the movie. I'll just do some homework until you wake up. I do have a paper due soon…"

"No, I’m okay," she mumbles, shaking herself back to reality. Falling asleep during the movie is the last thing she wants to do. Movie night means cuddle time once the snacks are devoured, and being around Lexa always leaves her touch-starved. It's actually a little embarrassing. I'm so far gone on her, and she doesn't have a clue. Ugh, Griffin, you're such a cliché, crushing out on your best friend. Could you be any more of a dork?

When Lexa continues gazing at her with concern, Clarke realizes more reassurance is in order. "I'm fine, Lex, I promise. Like I said, just a little spacey, that’s all."

"Okay…," Lexa trails off, but she still doesn't seem convinced. She doesn't bring the subject up again and Clarke has to hide her sigh of relief. Instead, Lexa shrugs and dumps the popcorn into a bowl and shifts it to one arm, trotting off toward the stairs. "Coming?"

*Oh, I wish.* Unable to resist, Clarke threads her arms through Lexa's free one as they go up the stairs, glad they're wide enough for two. Their hands brush, sending jolts of electricity up her bare arm. Not wanting to draw attention to herself, Clarke opts for a weak crack at a joke. She nudges Lexa’s hip with a playful jest and chuckles, "that's what she said." To her credit, Lexa’s lips curl up in amusement as she shakes her head in a teasing scoff.

Together, the two of them climb up to the second floor, stopping in the middle of the hallway. It's mostly empty, except for a framed ceiling panel and a single cord dangling down from its center. Reluctantly, Clarke releases Lexa's arm and passes the potato chips over. She gives the cord a tug, and a sliding ladder descends from the panel, stretching up into the loft above. "C'mon," she says, taking back the snacks and gesturing for Lexa to go first. "I've already got tons of blankets ready in
"Blankets?" Lexa groans. She swings one foot up onto the ladder, and Clarke's heart beats faster in anticipation. She always lets Lexa go up the ladder first, because it offers her yet another opportunity to stare at her friend's perfect backside without being noticed. "Clarke, it's already hot as hell in your house. What do we need blankets for?"

"You know how easily I get cold," Clarke protests. Her eyes stay trained on Lexa's rear as it begins to flex during her climb, and for a moment, she forgets how to form words. Get it together, Griffin. "Unless you're volunteering to be my space heater…?"

Lexa arrives at the top, climbing into the loft and peering back down at her, green eyes glinting in the dim light coming from behind her. She offers up a wolfish grin as she winks. "Aren't I always?" Lexa chuckles, her voice saccharine and smooth. Clarke nervously gulps at the liquid heat that rolls off the teasing words, sending a pulse deep into her belly. Stop it.

She reaches down for the snacks, and Clarke is treated to a fabulous view down the front of Lexa's shirt. She knows her friend is a little insecure about the small size of her breasts, but in Clarke's opinion, they're perfect. Nice and soft, and I bet they'd fit just right in my hands...

"Yeah, you are. Just try not to sweat all over me this time." Please. Sweat all over me. Images of Lexa post-game with her helmet off and sweat matted to her hair rush through her mind, soon coupled by that irresistible sight of her friend dressed down to just her under armour, knee-length wool socks, and thick hockey pants. Clarke shudders. Enough of that. I'm so glad she has no idea how much of a pervert I am, or we'd never have movie night again. Ugh.

She wills the thoughts away and hands the snacks over as she climbs up into the loft herself, switching on the rest of the lights when she arrives. There isn't really a need, since the pale evening light is streaming in through the large attic windows, but she wants the best view of Lexa possible for as long as possible. She steals one last glance of her friend flopping onto the upturned futon couch and shoving a hand into the popcorn before heading over to the rack of movies beside the television. "Okay, I'll pick, but give me a genre. Disney?"

"No," Lexa says from around a mouthful of popcorn. Her jaw works a few times before she swallows, throat muscles bobbing. Clarke forces her eyes away from the sight of her clenching neck veins. "I'm not watching Mulan for the thirtieth time, Clarke. I'm an adult now."

Clarke grins and turns back to her friend at the comment. She does have a habit of watching the same movies over and over again. "What about Moulin Rouge? Is that adult enough for you?"

"Too depressing," Lexa groans in feigned exasperation. She reaches for another handful of popcorn before ungracefully shoving it into her mouth. "Pick something happier."

"What about something weird?" Clarke asks, considering the rack of DVDs again. "A thriller? We could go for some Hitchcock."

Lexus's brow furrows. "Closer."

Clarke's eyes widen as her eyes light on a particular title. "Okay, I know what we're watching." She grabs the box in question and holds it up, waving it back and forth as if she's displaying some kind of prize for Lexa's approval. "Eh?"

After a moment of consideration, Lexa smiles. "Fine. Black Swan it is. Put it in and c'mere." She pats the space next to her, and Clarke hurries to pop in the movie and take her usual place next to
Lexa on the couch. Instead of reaching for the popcorn, she flops onto her back and rests her head on Lexa's lap. It's a warm, comfortable place, and her lashes flutter in contentment as Lexa strokes some loose strands of hair back from her forehead.

"Mm. You're the best pillow, Lex."

"I'm surprised. If I'm a comfy pillow, maybe I should lay off the junk food at your house. These thighs should be rock-hard by now from all the training I've been doing." She gives them a testing flex, and Clarke laughs before her mind wanders back into dangerous territory. **Oh God. I don't want to think about the other parts of her that get hard.**

At first, Lexa's pull had confused her. Clarke hadn't fully realized her own sexuality yet, and being attracted to her best friend, her best female friend, her best female friend who happened to be trans, had been a bit of a mindfuck. Not that the latter half made a relatively significant difference, but Lexa’s confidence in transitioning—followed shortly by her coming out—only served to catalyse her own inner acceptance. (It also made a lot of other pieces click into place, like why she'd been so infatuated with Raven in their freshmen year of high school and why she'd been so jealous when Anya had started taking up all of her other best friend's attention).

She had quickly adopted the 'bi' label and come out to pretty much everyone in her life with minimal resistance, but the 'best friend' part still confuses her. She's comfortable with her attraction to both men and women, and to Lexa in particular, but the thought of admitting it is something else. The last thing she wants to do is put stress on their bond. Lexa is one of the most important people—maybe the most important person, in her life, and the strength of her feelings is a little frightening. At times, it even borders on overwhelming.

And the worst part? Lexa has no idea.

"Want some popcorn?" Clarke blinks at the sound of Lexa’s raspy voice, snapping out of her thoughts. Her best friend is holding a few kernels above her mouth enticingly, her brow cocked in a playful jest. "You've usually eaten half the bowl by now."

Clarke can't resist. She lifts her head and pulls the pieces of popcorn from Lexa's fingers, trying not to be too seductive as her tongue catches a hint of salt from the tips. Still, the way Lexa squirms is enough to make her wonder that just perhaps...

The sound of classical music begins to play, and she forces herself to ignore those thoughts. She sets aside the lingering ‘maybe’ that plays like a loop in her mind, rendering her into a giddy mess. She turns sideways, moving her cheek to Lexa's lap instead as she faces the screen. Once more, Lexa is considerate enough to brush her hair away from her face, and Clarke's cheeks flush. For reasons she's embarrassed to admit, even to herself, the soft touches Lexa gives her are enough to send powerful shockwaves through her entire body.

The movie is fairly distracting, for which she's grateful. Lexa still has most of her attention, and Clarke is closely attuned to the steady in-and-out of her breathing, but she does enjoy the sight of Mila Kunis and Natalie Portman strutting around on stage en pointe. The ballet outfits don't leave much to the imagination, and she snorts in amusement after briefly picturing Lexa in a similar outfit. She certainly has some femme attire amongst her workout clothes and hockey jerseys, and Clarke knows from personal experience that Lexa can rock a dress, but a ballerina, she is most certainly not. She’s quick on the ice, certainly the fastest player on their team, but graceful? Clarke almost snorts at the thought. **Not a chance.**

The scenes pass on seemingly quickly, portraying the high-strung fibers of Nina’s sanity slowly unravelling to the presence of Lily as they challenge each other in the dances. Clarke watches,
enraptured by the alluring presence of both actresses as the infamous restaurant scene approaches. Clarke snuggles a bit closer into Lexa’s thighs, nosing the material of her sweats as Nina accepts the ecstasy-laced drink and gives chase to Lily. She feels Lexa shift under her as the two women make it back to the hotel room and share a passionate series of kisses, all driven by bottomless lust. Lexa shifts again when Nina shucks down Lily’s pants to reveal the black suspender belt lingerie before moving them both over towards the bed, hands fumbling for each other’s skin.

When Lily’s fingers glide over Nina’s small, pert breasts, something flickers in Clarke that makes her wonder what it would be like to graze her own hands over Lexa’s breasts. It takes everything in Clarke’s power to bite back the niggling moan crawling up the back of her throat. Her hands curl and tightly grip at the sides of the futon to divert her arousal, but it’s useless. She can already feel the pool of heat staining her panties, threatening to seep through the thin material of her pajama pants. Clarke gulps when Lily peels off Nina’s underwear and sets to work on eating her out, kneeling before her like a sinner seeking absolution. Clarke subtly grinds her thighs together, trying to ease the pulsing throb that pounds between her legs. She swallows again, now suddenly envious that they’d eaten all their snacks and she has nothing else to distract her.

Until she feels a twitch.

Lexa’s shifting again, and she attributes it to the fact that her head’s been in her lap the entire duration of the movie. But then Clarke feels another twitch, and the presence of something hard under her ear. She plays it off as the scene progresses, but then as Nina’s moans fill the silent air between them, that twitch turns into a steady, seemingly aching throb, that’s when it hits her. 

Lexa has a boner, Clarke gulps down the words in shock, holy shit, she’s got a boner.

As soon as Nina comes, Clarke can’t take the tension anymore. She lifts her head and goes to fix her hair, carefully casting a side-eye to the centre of Lexa’s lap, where, low and behold, a sizeable bulge has formed underneath those red sweats. As if having picked up on Clarke’s wandering gaze, the bulge twitches again in a small salute, pulling a smile to Clarke’s lips. She licks over them, not realizing how dry they’d become since having starting the movie. Not wanting to draw attention to it yet, Clarke returns her head to Lexa’s lap and pretends nothing has changed. Lexa’s still squirming under her uncomfortably, but Clarke doesn’t move.

In fact, she does something a bit… riskier.

Clarke stretches her neck muscles, purposefully dragging her shoulders over the bulge before shimmying backwards to get a bit closer to the apex of Lexa’s thighs. The woman above her groans and Clarke mentally high-fives herself in devilish success. Lexa lets out a barely audible whimper when one of Clarke’s hands finds her thigh, her fingers tracing circle patterns absently into the material of her sweats. She continues to play the innocent card when Lexa’s erection pokes up a bit further, jealous that the attention isn’t redirected to it instead. Clarke grins. Maybe that ‘perhaps’ wasn’t too premature after all.

“Uh, Clarke,” Lexa’s stammering voice cuts in from above her, “my, um, thighs are sore.”

“Why?” Clarke continues her nonchalant attitude, unwilling to let go. “You’re usually fine.”

She can practically hear Lexa’s mewl of desperation when another twitch pokes at the side of her head. Turning onto her side, she looks straight up into the glimmering viridescent gaze that stares back down at her, wide-eyed and embarrassed. There’s a tint of pink adorning Lexa’s cheeks and Clarke barely holds back her giggle at how worked up she’s become.
“The game took it out on me,” Lexa says, though Clarke knows she’s lying, “I just need to stretch.” Clarke deduces when she feels another throbbing pulse under the fabric beneath her head. Shamelessly, Clarke stays put and pouts.

“Clarke, please.”

“Are you cramping?” Clarke asks, offering up a wolfish smile. “I could give you a massage?”

“No!” Lexa quips out rather quickly, before awkwardly coughing and looking at anywhere that isn’t her lap or Clarke’s face. “No, I just need to adjust them. My legs are falling asleep.”

It’s the sheer pleading tone in Lexa’s voice that causes Clarke to finally let up. Groaning in feigned annoyance, she lifts her head and heaves upwards into a sitting position. To her credit, Lexa moves quickly to stretch her legs before grabbing at a pillow and placing it over her lap. Clarke raises her brow, but Lexa furiously avoids her stare, eyes glued to the scene of TV.

Deciding that she’s had enough fun teasing her friend, Clarke settles back in for the rest of the movie. At some point, her head lands in the crook of Lexa’s neck, her fingers gently tracing the loose thread at the hem of her tank top. Everything within her yearns to skim her fingers under the thin material to graze the smooth expanse of those corded abdominal muscles. The desert in her mouth only proves to heighten her thirst for Lexa’s body, to drink in her beauty until she’s sated. She nearly pouts when the movie’s over, because that means the cessation of cuddles.

Even as the credits roll on screen and Clarke pulls away, Lexa remains frozen to her spot, pillow still firmly grasped over her lap. A blush of her own creeps up to her spot, pillow still firmly grasped over her lap. A blush of her own creeps up to her face, still not responding. Clarke sighs and crosses her legs as she pokes at Lexa’s shoulder until the other girl finally gives her the attention she seeks. Clarke offers a smile as she slowly tucks a strand of blonde hair behind her ear and nods to the pillow.

“It’s normal,” Clarke says as calmly as she can, though her voice still quivers. Lexa gulps and rubs the back of her head, still not responding. Clarke sighs and crosses her legs as she pokes at Lexa’s shoulder until the other girl finally gives her the attention she seeks. Clarke offers a smile as she slowly tucks a strand of blonde hair behind her ear and nods to the pillow.

“It’s not… look,” Lexa stammers as she struggles with an explanation. “I just… it… well—”

“I thought it was a hot scene too,” Clarke admits with mirth in her voice, saving Lexa from second-hand embarrassment. “I just got lucky that you can’t see mine.”

Lexa rolls her eyes and groans like a child being scolded, looking away again. It’s an adorable sight, one that sparks a flame inside Clarke’s heart. Lexa pouts and glares down at her lap, still looking frustrated.

“I didn’t mean to… you know,” Lexa nearly whimpers the words, “I can’t control it.”

“I know,” Clarke agrees as she pokes Lexa’s shoulder again, but the action only causes the both of them to jump from the jolt of electricity that travels between their skin. Clarke gulps, thrown off guard by the way time stutters to a halt. Both of them blush again, averting their eyes.

“Is it still there?” Clarke’s mouth speaks before her brain can registers the words. You idiot, way to ruin it, she scolds herself when she watches Lexa’s head jerk upwards so fast that she’s surprised the brunette didn’t give herself whiplash. Clarke’s eyes wander briefly over to the small cut on her temple from the game only a few hours prior to their current situation. Something inside her chest cracks and softens, but Lexa’s voice draws her out of her daze.
“Clarke,” Lexa says, drawling out her name with another pout, “do we have to talk about this?”

“If it makes you uncomfortable, I can drop it,” Clarke tells her seriously, but not before shrugging her shoulders. “I was just curious, is all. I’ve never seen one and I don’t really know how they work. I’ve only heard that they’re supposed to go down after awhile.” Lexa groans again, the sound a beautiful hum inside Clarke’s ears.

“It’s not… fully gone,” Lexa begrudgingly admits. “I mean… I don’t know, I swear it’s so stupid.”

“It’s not,” Clarke tells her firmly, reaching out to gently tip Lexa’s chin so their eyes meet. She tries to ignore the heat coursing through her body from how close her lips are to Lexa’s own, but there’s no use. She wants nothing more than to close the gap, to tangle her fingers in her hair…

“I should go,” Lexa blurts out suddenly, quickly jumping from the futon with the pillow still placed protectively in front of her crotch. “I have a paper due on Monday that I haven’t started…”

“Right,” Clarke says hoarsely as her numb mind tries to register what just happened. “Yeah.”

“I’ll see you soon?” Lexa croaks as she starts fumbling for her things, her back turned to hide her face. Clarke’s still processing her emotions, too numb to compartmentalize like she’s used to doing. Instead, her mouth acts for her again, speaking in tune with her arousal.

“Lexa, wait!” What are you doing, Clarke? Being an idiot, again, duh.

“What are you doing, Clarke? Being an idiot, again, duh. “Just… wait.”

“Clarke.” Fuck. Lexa’s eyeing her, hand hovering over her crotch as she waits, patient as always. Clarke swallows a few times before she gets up and gives Lexa her best, reassuring smile. To her credit, Lexa stays put, though she still squirms as Clarke draws nearer.

“Stay,” Clarke says as she nods to where Lexa’s things are already set up. “It’s getting late.”

“But—”

“Lexa,” Clarke hums as she gently draws her friend in for a hug, moving slowly as to not startle her friend. Lexa lets out a feeble mewl when Clarke’s hips brush against her front, but Clarke only grips her tighter, breathing through her nose to prevent a sound of arousal from escaping her chapped lips. She wets them slightly before softly murmuring, “It’s fine. I don’t care about it.”

“It doesn’t weird you out?” Lexa asks as she pulls back, brow cocked. “It’s like…”

“Ssh,” Clarke chuckles as she teasingly rubs against the soft bulge again. “I told you, it’s fine.”

“Clarke…”

“Oh for God’s sake, Lex.” Clarke chuckles to let her know that she’s not really annoyed as much as she is amused. She nods towards the bed, giving Lexa a playful shove. “If you really want to leave, be my guest, but I’m still cold and I’m tired so either get your butt in bed or don’t.” Lexa looks crossed between jumping ship and burrowing herself in the sheets, but Clarke hides her sigh of relief when she chooses the latter and mutters out a faint grumble of agreement.

“Good, now that wasn’t so hard, was it?” Both of the girls flush at the innuendo. Lexa just groans and face-plants into the pillow while Clarke makes an excuse to head off to the bathroom.

She leaves the other girl in the bed and reaches the small bathroom in a matter of seconds. After relieving herself and washing her hands, Clarke stares at herself in the mirror. The rational side of her brain, the one that pilots the majority of her decisions, is screaming at her to reconsider. However, the
right, more wild side of her that usually only makes a rare appearance during drunken endeavours, is goading her on in a challenge. Clarke wets her lips and sighs.

“Fuck it,” Clarke mutters as she looks to her reflection, “there’s no harm in trying, right?”

* * *

Lexa stares up at the ceiling, unable to fall asleep.

Beside her, Clarke is snoring away, curled up into ball next to her side. Lexa hazards a glance in her direction, remembering how calm her best friend had been during her unfortunate situation. Luckily her body decided to take mercy on her by the time Clarke had returned from the bathroom, but she can’t stop thinking about the night’s events. She’s always harboured feelings for her friend, ones that she’s schooled herself in concealing, but after the response from her tonight, she’s wondering if maybe there’s a chance of reciprocation.

*Don’t be a fool,* she scolds herself. *She was just being a good, concerned friend.*

*Yes, a good concerned friend who purposefully leaned into your boner.*

*That’s not true, she was just adjusting herself on my lap because she was uncomfortable.*

*And yet she was still comfortable enough to offer up a ‘thigh’ massage, right?*

Lexa frowns at the internal battle waging in her head. She turns her head and looks over to the peacefully sleeping blonde beside her, gulping down her own feelings and trying to steady her tumultuous mind. She’s at a stalemate in her discombobulated thoughts, unable to discern which one carries the most logical response to her situation. She rolls onto her back again, groaning under her breath to not wake her friend. There’s only one question that repeats in her mind like a broken record, leaving her restless until dawn.

*Clarke would never… would she?*
Lexa has a little problem and Clarke has a big question.

Come on, Lexa. Just keep cool.

She slams the front door of her pickup a little harder than necessary, slinging her hoodie over her shoulder and swallowing to loosen the nervous lump in her throat. Try as she might, she can't force herself to head up Clarke's driveway. Her feet remain stuck to the concrete, too heavy to move while her knees tremble and threaten to buckle. She knows she has no reason to be so scared—this is Clarke, the person she trusts most in the entire world—but the thought of facing her best friend after the humiliating events of the previous week already has her sweating buckets.

Try to relax. There's no reason this has to be weird. Maybe she forgot about it.

At school, Clarke has been acting just like always. The two of them have eaten lunch together, walked between classes together, and grabbed several meals after school together to go over homework assignments. Nothing's seemed different. But in the back of her mind, Lexa has been constantly aware of the fact that things are different. She usually thinks of her crush on Clarke a bit like the crushes she has on celebrities—fun in a casual sort of way, but completely unattainable. Now…

Maybe I'm reading into things, but last Friday, she actually seemed... interested? Curious? She gulps. Perhaps even... aroused?

Just thinking the word 'aroused' in reference to Clarke is enough to send a pulse of heat straight between her legs. She groans, giving up on approaching the garage door and leaning against the side of her truck instead. The ‘68, cherry-red GMC she inherited from her older brother Gustus is a little rusted around the edges, and definitely in need of a wash, but she loves it anyway. And right now, it's her refuge. She needs a minute to put her thoughts in order before she faces Clarke again. Her fingernails pick absently at some of the chipped paint near the door handle. She knows she’s only drawing it out, but she’s grateful for the distraction. The thoughts flying through her head are hard to separate and decipher.

What am I supposed to say? Should I even say anything? She hasn't brought it up all week, although I have caught her staring at my crotch a few times…

At first, Lexa had thought it was wishful thinking, but by the fifth or sixth time Clarke's flirtatious
blue eyes had wandered there, she’d been forced to admit it was more than coincidence. That had caused quite a few problems. With warm weather coming, her clothes were becoming tighter and more revealing, which meant she preferred to tuck. And being around Clarke, especially lately, meant that tucking wasn’t particularly comfortable. And it wasn’t just her crotch that Clarke had taken to staring at. Now that she was looking for it, Lexa had caught Clarke admiring her ass, her legs, and even her chest way more often than a ‘best friend’ was supposed to. Apparently, it was the entire package Clarke appreciated, and not just what she had between her legs. Lexa wasn’t sure whether to be frightened by that realization, or relieved.

So, your best friend is checking you out. Your best friend, who you happen to have a huge crush on. That doesn't mean anything, right? Girls check each other out all the time. It isn't an invitation for you to hit on her like a creep and mess up the great thing you already have…

That makes the decision for her. Regardless of her feelings for Clarke, and Clarke's ogling of her, Lexa knows she can't afford to risk their friendship. Anya's a great sister, Gustus is a great brother and caretaker, and Indra is a great coach, but she doesn't have many people in her life she can rely on. Clarke is her rock, her place of salvation and comfort. Clarke helps her with her math and science homework. Clarke is there in the stands, cheering for her at every hockey game even if they’re hours away from home. Clarke was there for her during her transition, even before she scrounged up the courage to tell Anya and Gustus. Clarke is the only person in the world she feels truly safe and at home with, and she doesn't want to give that up. She won't give that up, especially not for something as trivial as sex.

Sex. Sex with Clarke. Oh God.

She hadn't meant for her mind to go in that direction. Those kinds of thoughts are usually reserved for private moments, when she can hop in the shower to scald away the awkward memories and pretend they never happened. But now that the image is in her head, however, her mind is fixated. Everything she hears, tastes, feels, it all comes back to Clarke. She can't help but remember the soft weight of Clarke's cheek pressing into her lap, the haze in Clarke's deep blue eyes, the nearness of Clarke's full lips, ever so subtly parted…

Fuck.

With another deep groan of frustration, Lexa shakes herself free of the memory and forces her legs to move. Staying out here all by herself isn't helping. At this rate, she'll be in her truck all night, alone with a frantic heart rate verging on panicky and a painful hard-on because for some dumb reason, she still gets them around Clarke. Sooner or later, she’s going to have to deal with this awkwardness. It might as well be sooner. She glances down at her crotch and glares at the subtle curve bulging at the hem of her waistband.

Fuck. Why didn’t I tuck today? How stupid am I? Or maybe… maybe I wanted it to happen again. Maybe I wanted…

She can’t let that train of thought reach its destination. She closes her eyes and takes deep breaths, but it’s still a few moments before she feels herself softening. Finally, she scolds herself as she glares down at her lap again. This new spontaneous erection problem is embarrassing, and also inconvenient. She has no idea how people with penises who aren’t on hormones deal with having them all the time, because the random ones she gets around Clarke are starting to become humiliating. It reminds her of being twelve years old, back before Gustus could afford her puberty blockers and her penis would perk up during a stiff breeze. Since the rest of her body looks the way she wants it to now, with breasts and curves, her lower anatomy doesn’t make her feel too dysphoric, and she doesn’t get many random erections anymore… except when Clarke looks at her that way.
And Clarke has been looking at her that way a lot recently.

_I can't keep losing my cool like this. Focus, Lex._

By the time she reaches the garage, she's half certain she's going to faint. Her head is swimming, and her sweaty fingers fumble over the keypad as she types in the code. Eventually, she gets it right, but only after several wrong tries. The garage door rises with a low grumbling noise, and she shuffles in, not too surprised to see the door to the house open a moment later. Clarke is waiting for her, and when Lexa sees what she's wearing, the blood rushes straight to her core so fast that she actually sways in place. _So much for getting rid of my problem_, she thinks as she feels herself twitch. Shifting, in place, Lexa tries to tear her gaze away from Clarke's body, failing miserably. Instead of blue jeans and a few layered tank tops, Clarke is clad in a sports bra and a pair of tight black exercise shorts.

_Oh, sweet Jesus_, Lexa thinks, even though she's the least devout person imaginable. _Don't look, don't look, don't look…_

She can't help it. She looks. She starts at the bottom, a whimper cracking in her throat as she takes in Clarke's gorgeous legs. The shorts leave little to the imagination, riding high enough to offer a delicious view of Clarke's soft, curvy thighs. The sight of so much pale skin has Lexa's tongue throbbing heavily in her mouth, but that's not the only place that's throbbing. Still, she can't bring herself to tear her eyes away. It's physically impossible.

By the time she reaches the bare strip of skin at Clarke's midriff, she's practically panting. Clarke's stomach is toned, but it still has a lovely feminine flare to it, and the dip of her navel is almost calling out to be circled with kisses. The slight film of sweat that causes her skin to glisten yearns for a tongue to lap at the tempting salt. And when Lexa's gaze wanders higher… _Oh God. That bra. I thought sports bras were supposed to make your tits smaller, not bigger. This isn't fucking fair._ The dip of Clarke's cleavage is big enough to get lost in, and she does, until she hears her name echoing through empty space as if from a great distance.

"Lexa? Lexa…? Lexa!"

Lexa suddenly realizes that Clarke is staring at her, pouting lips curved in a smirk that is entirely too smug. She pulls her hoodie off her shoulder, relieved that she had the foresight to bring it despite the heat, and wraps it around her waist, letting the sleeves hang down to offer some coverage. Suddenly, her decision not to tuck is feeling a lot stupider.

"Sorry," she mumbles, looking away from Clarke's body and fixing her vision on her shoes with every bit of determination she can muster. After several tries, she finally manages to tie the arms of her hoodie around her waist with her fumbling hands, with the majority of the fabric bunched in front. "I'm just… it's hot out. I think I'm dehydrated."

_You think you're dehydrated? That's the dumbest excuse ever. You couldn't come up with something better? Or even just keep it together for one second to play this off?_

"Well, standing outside in the garage like a moron might have something to do with it," Clarke teases, grinning and stepping back into the house. "Come in and I'll grab you something to drink."

Unfortunately, that means Clarke has to turn around. Lexa almost trips over herself even though she isn't moving when she catches a glimpse of Clarke's perfectly formed rear. Eventually, she remembers how to put one foot in front of the other and follows Clarke out of the garage. Her brain is still only working at half-capacity—and that's being generous—but at least she's managed to figure
out how to walk again.

"So, if you're hot and bothered today, why did you bring your hoodie? It's almost summer."

It takes Lexa several moments to interpret Clarke's words, let alone formulate an answer. She stalls for time by closing the door and kicking off her shoes in the mud room. "Uh, Clarke?" Something else suddenly occurs to her, and she responds to Clarke's interrogation with a curious question of her own. "Why are you in workout clothes? You hate physical activity. I can barely get you to walk around the park with me, and whenever we go skating, you always just make me pull you around."

To her surprise, and her secret delight, the points of Clarke's cheeks flush pink. "Um, bikini season's coming up? I've been stealing one of my mom's pilates videos."

It's plausible, but not quite plausible enough. Even so, Lexa's first instinct is to offer reassurance. "You don't need to get ready for bikini season, Clarke. If you can look adorable in those awful sweaters you wear to my games, you'll knock 'em dead this summer. You're already perfect."

Clarke smiles at her, a big one full of straight, even white teeth, and Lexa momentarily forgets how to breathe. "You flatterer. Remind me why don't you have a girlfriend again? C'mon. I have some Gatorades left over in the fridge for you."

With a sigh of relief that she's managed to dodge the question about the hoodie, Lexa trails Clarke to the kitchen, leaning against the bar in what she hopes is a casual pose. Clarke begins rummaging around in the fridge, and it takes all the willpower Lexa has to keep from drooling when her backside sticks out past the door.

"Blue okay?" Clarke asks, her voice slightly muffled. "It's all I've got left of that pack I bought you."

Lexa has to work some moisture into her mouth before answering. It's suddenly gone dry. "Fine," she says, even though blue is her least favorite flavor—a fact Clarke most definitely knows. She's thirsty enough to drink anything Clark puts in front of her. "You should grab one too. You know, since you were... uh, working out." She still has her doubts about that, especially since Clarke's skin doesn't have the usual sheen of sweat. There's a slight film, but it's mostly due to the late-spring heat.

"You know," Lexa chokes out as she wards the thoughts away, "because you gotta replace those electrolytes, after all that exercise." She hears Clarke chuckle an agreement.

What happens next nearly sends her sprawling onto the floor. Clarke removes a bottle of Gatorade, but instead of passing it over, she cracks open the top and downs several gulps, chin tilted up at an appealing angle. Lexa nearly whines at the sight. She hadn't known it was possible to make drinking from a stupid bottle look so *erotic*, but apparently, Clarke Griffin can make anything sexy if she tries hard enough. It only gets worse from there. Clarke lowers the bottle, wipes her mouth on the back of her hand, and passes the Gatorade across the counter. "Here, have the rest. That's enough for me. I think my thirst is quenched."

"Not mine, apparently."

Lexa stares at the bottle in shock for several moments before taking it in a trembling hand. The offer isn't without precedent. She and Clarke are always sharing food and drinks. Cooties are a thing of the
past for them, and Lexa usually doesn't think twice when Clarke offers her a half-eaten bite of a cupcake or steals fries from her plate. But this… somehow, it's different. Clarke's mouth has been on the rim of that bottle, and she can just see the imprint on its edge.

*Does she realize how weird this is?*

*It'll be weirder if you don't share, dimwit.*

*Oh, fuck it. I need to cool off, anyways. Right?*

*For fuck’s sake, take a drink or don’t. Just do something, idiot! She’s staring at you!*

She grabs the bottle and downs the rest as fast as she can, nearly choking in her ungraceful hurry. By the time it's empty, she's sputtering and even shorter of breath than before. She coughs a few times, trying to play it off as having gone down the wrong pipe. "Um. So. Movie?" She rasps the words out once she can talk again. "Do you… I mean. Do you want to watch a movie? Or work on homework? Do something else? It's your call."

"A movie sounds good," Clarke says, taking the bottle from her outstretched hand and tossing it into the recycling. "But first, I need to change. C'mon, let's go up to the loft."

Before Lexa can object, Clarke is dragging her by the hand, pulling her up the stairs to the second floor. She's still dazed as Clarke pulls the cord to lower the ladder, and she stumbles up the first few rungs, relieved she's going first. This would be way worse if I was watching her go up. I've already stared at her butt too much for one day.

As soon as she arrives in Clarke's attic bedroom, Lexa's eyes dart around, looking for a safe subject of conversation. The bed… me and Clarke on the bed… no, bad idea. The futon? Where last week, the two of us… crap. Oh! Her eyes settle on something slightly out of place beside one of the large windows. "Are those new paintings you're working on?" she asks, gesturing over to the covered canvases as Clarke finishes the climb. "Can I see?"

"Not yet," Clarke says with a wink. "I want to get a little further on them first before I bring in the art critics."

"I'm no art critic," Lexa says, relieved to be back on level ground. She's always admired Clarke's art, almost as much as she admires Clarke herself. "You know I love everything you do. At least tell me what you're using?"

"Oils this time," Clarke says. "They're hard to work with. You need to let each layer dry before you keep going…” Her tongue peeks out, running over her full bottom lip in what Lexa can almost convince herself is a seductive gesture. "And I'm not exactly the most patient person."

Lexa offers an awkward smile when Clarke winks at her. She takes a breath, scolding herself for letting her inhibitions take control. Subtly adjusting herself, she moves away from the covered canvases and tries to train her eyes on something other than the alluring expanse of Clarke’s bare torso. A pit lodges in her throat, and her traitorous shaft gives a subtle flick against the inside of her thigh as Clarke bends over to pick something up off the floor. As if she knows the effect she’s having, Clarke turns and gives her a flirtatious giggle.

*Wait. Flirtatious?*

*Snap out of it, Lexa. She’s probably laughing at your deer-in-the-headlights look.*

Lexa watches as Clarke walks over to the futon, adding a little sway in her hips. Taking a deep
breath only serves to aggravate Lexa’s growing problem, especially when Clarke turns and plops down on the futon, her breasts jiggling as she lands with a soft ‘oof’. The near transparent workout top is incredibly well-fitted to her chest, almost like a second skin, revealing that delectable line of cleavage that trails right between those two…

“Um.” Clarke’s voice snaps her from her lewd thoughts. “Lexa?”

Lexa’s head snaps up, and she visibly pales when she sees where Clarke is looking. Gulping, she follows her friend’s gaze, already knowing what she’ll find. The imprint of her obvious arousal is pressing outward against the seam of her shorts, completely visible.

Well… fuck.

“Lexa, I know there’s the whole second puberty thing when you switch from blockers to hormones, but does this happen a lot?” Clarke chuckles playfully, her tone teasing and light. Lexa blushes and rubs the back of her neck, grateful for the calm and nonchalant expression laced underneath those flirtatious blue eyes. She knows that Clarke doesn’t intend to make fun of her with any malice, but still.

This has to stop happening. And it’s definitely my hormones, but not the ones you’re thinking of.

“What? Are you attracted to me?” Clarke drawls, still smirking.

Lexa’s mouth goes dry, and as per usual, her body responds with just as much grace. “Um, you’re cute,” she says, fumbling awkwardly as she adjusts the way she stands. “It’s not… well, it’s not you, but you are cute, I just… well, it doesn’t always get hard anymore with the estrogen and stuff, but sometimes it has a mind of its own and just—”

“Lex,” Clarke says, suddenly sounding a lot less amused and a lot more genuine. “I was teasing. It’s fine.”

“It’s not like I like like you or anything,” Lexa continues to ramble, fully aware that she’s only making things worse. “Um, you’re cute,” she says, fumbling awkwardly as she adjusts the way she stands. “It’s not… well, it’s not you, but you are cute, I just… well, it doesn’t always get hard anymore with the estrogen and stuff, but sometimes it has a mind of its own and just—”

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“I know,” Clarke replies. “I’m sorry, it’s just, you make it so easy to tease you, babe.” Lexa blushes again at the pet name, pulsing all over again when Clarke bites her lip and zones her gaze back in on her crotch. They’ve used the affectionate term before when referring to each other, but for some reason, today it seems to have a greater effect on Lexa’s already sensitive body.

“A true pal, huh?” Clarke cocks her brow as she stretches out on the futon. “Like gal pals?”

“Clarke,” Lexa whines as Clarke bursts into a laugh. “C’mon. I meant… you know.”

“I know,” Clarke replies. “I’m sorry, it’s just, you make it so easy to tease you, babe.” Lexa blushes again at the pet name, pulsing all over again when Clarke bites her lip and zones her gaze back in on her crotch. They’ve used the affectionate term before when referring to each other, but for some reason, today it seems to have a greater effect on Lexa’s already sensitive body.

“Sorry,” Lexa mutters as she folds her hands over herself. “It’s just…”

“Maybe if you sit down, it’ll go away?” Clarke asks, and Lexa’s about to tell her that that’s not how it works, but the innocent and almost sympathetic look in her friend’s eyes leaves her speechless. She manages a bare nod of her head before she stumbles over to the futon and slumps into it, her hands still loosely placed over her waist as she wills herself to think of the most uninteresting things to rid herself of her blatantly obvious problem. You’ve got a Calculus exam on Monday, practice on Tuesday with Anya, you owe Lincoln ten bucks from that one on one basketball game you painfully lost—come on, brain, think of something!
“This is so stupid,” Lexa grumbles when she’s softened down to a semi, her eyes glaring a hole into the back of her hands. “I’m so sorry. The past couple years, I’ve finally gotten to a place where I’m pretty okay with my body. But fuck, if this is how it’s gonna be, I doubt any girl would want to be with me.” Clarke wouldn’t want to be with me, she thinks pitifully as she removes her hands and closes her eyes in frustration. “It’s so embarrassing.”

“You know that’s not true,” Clarke scolds her almost instantly, those beautiful blue eyes never ceasing to trap Lexa in an blissful haze. “And I’m sorry if my teasing made you feel uncomfortable about your body. If it means anything, I think you’re beautiful, and I bet a lot of other girls do too.”

Lexa knows she should be focusing on Clarke’s apology, but instead, the only word that sticks in her head is ‘beautiful’. Beautiful. Clarke Griffin thinks I’m beautiful! It excites her already rapidly beating heart and causes her stomach to churn. She can barely move when one of Clarke’s hands gently closes over her own, but she manages a smile when Clarke’s thumb drags over the fine hairs of her wrist.

“Well… I’m glad to have the Clarke Griffin seal of approval, but I don’t know about other girls,” she says, pretending not to notice when Clarke lets out a snort on the word ‘hard’. “I want someone who’s okay with me having a… um, a dick?” she says, testing out the word, although it doesn’t feel right. She’s experimented with different ones on her own, even ‘clit’, but so far, most of them have just made her uncomfortable. “But at the same time, I don’t want someone who’s obsessed with it. They need to like me for me, you know? That can’t be the only reason they’re interested.”

“I get it,” Clarke says. “You’re the whole package, Lexa, no pun intended. Any girl would be lucky to have all of you. Trust me.”

Any girl? Even you? Some of her melancholy returns, and Lexa sighs. “I’ve never,” she mumbles, trying to put some space between them. She suspects Clarke already knows the extent of her inexperience, but it feels different talking about it now, when they’re both eighteen, instead of late at night during a childhood game of truth or dare. “I've never… you know. Done any of it. So it’s kind of confusing for me.”

Clarke blushes, pulling her hand away, and Lexa wonders if maybe she's not the only one who’s inexperienced. Well, if she had, she would’ve told me… right?

“Me neither,” Clarke confirms, leaving Lexa’s mind to wander somewhere less decent. “I kissed Wells once, but it was a truth or dare thing, and I don't think that counts.”

“I've never even kissed a girl before,” Lexa mutters begrudgingly. “At least you have some experience. I'm gonna be a total slob, watch me.” She plays with the loose string on the side of her shorts, but as per usual, Clarke saves the day.

“That's not true and you know it,” Clarke replies, shoving playfully at her shoulder. “I know for a fact that ice hockey isn't the only thing you'd be good at, Lex. You'll be fine.” Lexa cocks her brow, confused, but Clarke merely rolls her eyes. “Tongue hockey, Lex. It’s a real thing, you know.”

Lexa gulps and feels her pants tighten again when Clarke drinks in a deep breath and shifts in her seat, like she's on the verge of saying something, but unsure of exactly what. After a few moments of silence, Lexa hears Clarke clear her throat. “Maybe,” Clarke croaks weakly before glancing shyly over at her, “I could… we could… maybe practice? Together? You know, for, um, experience?”

Experience? Practice?

With Clarke?
Lexa wants to reply, but her tongue is tied and her mouth has become a desert. Her eardrums pound
with the reverberation of Clarke’s suggestion, the weight of her words flooding into her veins as she
works her jaw a few times. It’s not like she’s not thought about it before, but could Clarke really
want her that way? She fidgets a bit on the futon, pondering the question in baffled silence, her face
as red as a tomato as images of Clarke’s closed eyes and wet lips against her own fill her mind.

Kissing Clarke? Now that’s an image she never thought would come true.

* * *

Shit.

That's the first word that comes to Clarke's mind as she watches Lexa nervously squirming on the
futon, avoiding her stare. She should have listened when Lexa had said she didn't think of them as
anything more than friends. And Clarke knows she shouldn't have gotten her hopes up about the
spontaneous appearance of Lexa’s, well, *little Lexa*, for the lack of a better expression. She shouldn’t
have played with the boundaries.

Despite everything, Clarke can’t say that she regrets at least *asking* Lexa about experimenting. Part
of it is true, that yes, she doesn’t quite have the experience that Raven and Octavia have, but she
couldn’t care less about that, really. It isn’t about her virginity or lack of intimacy. It’s more about
Lexa. She’s absolutely entranced with the tragic gay mess that is her best friend.

*Hopelessly in love, more like.*

Fuck off, Clarke seethes at herself. If Lexa doesn't see her that way, fine. *But friends can have more
than friendly relationships without it being intimate, right? We can make it work.*

Steeling herself, Clarke is about to propose the idea when she realizes that Lexa still hasn't answered
her first question. A pit of anxiety brews in her stomach when she sees Lexa's face screwed up and
focused on some point in the floor, obviously deep in thought. Gulping, Clarke clears her throat and
tries again.

“Uh, Lex?” Her voice is shaky, apprehensive and nervous all at once. Lexa's head tips up, and she
meets Clarke’s eyes steadily. “I was kidding about before… unless you want to.”

There's some silence, and then Lexa nods. “I do.”

Clarke’s heart nearly leaps in joy. Lexa rubs the back of her neck, obviously embarrassed, and
Clarke refrains from moaning at the smooth expanse of tanned skin and long, slender fingers. *Calm
down,* she warns, *and just be glad that Lexa doesn't know the state you're in.*

“What if I'm terrible?” Lexa asks after some time, and Clarke nearly throws herself at her friend
when she hears the crack in her voice. Instead, she opts for framing Lexa's face in her palms,
drawing them slowly together until their noses are nearly brushing.
“I told you,” she whispers, tracing her thumbs over Lexa’s cheekbones. “I'm sure you’ll be fine.”

“And if I’m not?”

“Then we work on it. But let's worry about that later, babe.” She's about to add another remark, but before she can open her mouth, she feels Lexa's slightly larger hands clasping over her wrists, causing her breath to leave her lungs.

“I trust you,” Lexa murmurs and Clarke's heart nearly melts, partially from cuteness and partially from guilt. While Lexa doesn't know about her feelings, they're not something she can hide from herself. Whatever happens next will only make her emotions worse, but if this is the only way for her to get some piece of Lexa, to imagine that life with her as something more, then so be it. I can control it, she thinks confidently. I control everything. This won't ruin me. It won’t ruin us. She will take anything and cherish it.

“I trust you too,” Clarke replies as she drinks in the sweet, lingering scent of Lexa's shampoo. It’s still caught in her hair, with a hint of fresh citrus. “Are you ready?”

After another gulp and a few more moments of blissful silence, Lexa finally nods.

“On three?”

“Yeah. One.”

“Two.”

“Three.”

The minute their lips meet, Clarke realizes that perhaps she can't control everything. Especially not this. Lexa’s lips are so warm and soft against hers, and even though they’re barely moving, they send a tingle zipping straight down her spine. At first, Clarke doesn’t do anything. Her mind races, filled with a hundred questions. What do I do now? Fuck, this isn't like spin the bottle in sixth grade at all. Do I keep my mouth closed? Open it? Am I supposed to use my tongue? What about my eyes? Do I look at her, or just…

Despite the close positioning of their faces, she steals a glance at Lexa's eyes, deciding to copy whatever her friend has chosen to do. They're open, showing the vivid green of Lexa's irises… and pupils dilated with what looks like sheer terror. Clarke's lips break away from Lexa's for a moment, and she lets out a slight huff of laughter on accident. At first, Lexa's lashes flutter in confusion, but soon, they're both giggling stupidly into each other's mouths. Right away, Clarke feels more at ease. This is it, she thinks, this is what a real first kiss is supposed to feel like. Sure, both of them weren’t entirely experienced and it was a bit of a mess, but it was an amazing, spine-tingling, hair-raising, incredible kiss. It felt like... home. Clarke curls a hand around the back of Lexa's neck, much more confident now.

You beautiful idiot, she thinks as she brings their mouths together again. Lexa tastes good, mostly warm, but maybe with a hint of mint gum or toothpaste. And you were worried you'd be the awkward one. I seriously have no clue what the fuck I'm doing. But suddenly, none of that matters. She wants to find out what kissing Lexa actually feels like. She's hungry for the experience—there's really no other word to describe it. She wants to know, to learn, to figure this out. And so she swipes her tongue tentatively over Lexa's bottom lip, making the first move.

As soon as she does, a soft moan spills from Lexa's mouth and into hers. It tickles, vibrating against her lips, but Clarke soon decides that she likes it. She wants Lexa to make more of those noises, to
discover the different ways to draw them out. Since the subtle, shallow motion of her tongue was effective, she repeats it, eventually moving on to sucking. A shudder passes between them, and Clarke releases a gasp of her own as Lexa takes some surprising initiative and, albeit a bit clumsily, tips her back onto the futon with a soft thud.

Feeling Lexa’s weight on top of her is amazing. She isn’t heavy, but she is lean and muscular, and Clarke whimpers as she feels all that power shifting over her. Lexa is strong, with the toned body of an athlete, but still so, so soft, and the curves of their bodies fit together just right. She loves the way Lexa’s breasts push into hers and their thighs tangle together. She runs the fingers of one hand through Lexa’s hair, sifting through the soft strands, and parts her lips at a slant, flicking out her tongue and hoping Lexa will take the invitation to do the same.

Instead, Lexa groans and rocks her pelvis forward.

Clarke feels the briefest press of the bulge Lexa had been trying to conceal before, but it ends quickly. A split second later, Lexa is pulling back, not just her lips, but her whole body. "I'm sorry," she starts, trying to sit back on her heels, but Clarke surges up and cuts her off with another kiss. It's short, because she knows they have some more talking to do, but she doesn't want to hear Lexa apologize for herself.

"I don't care, Lex," she insists once they've broken apart, gazing directly into Lexa's eyes so her friend can see the certainty on her face. "I get that it might be scary, being a girl with a... what should I call it? Penis just sounds... ew."

Lexa sighs. "I don't know, but please, not penis. That sounds like science class."

"Anyway, I get that it's scary because you're trans, but you're with me. I knew what I was signing up for when I kissed you, okay? And if it makes you feel any better, it's not just you. I feel kind of awkward sometimes about my pussy. Like... what if I taste weird? Look weird? Too much skin or too much hair or something?"

"That doesn't make me feel better," Lexa says, but the corners of her mouth twitch. Once more, Clarke is tempted to lean in and kiss her. The taste of Lexa's lips is still lingering on hers. "I'm sure your pussy is normal. I've never seen one except on the internet, but... you know. Not reliable. And the porn with trans girls in it is usually pretty gross and fake."

"Same with lesbian porn in general," Clarke sighs. "I mean, I'm a virgin, and I still know you aren't supposed to have nails that long." She swallows nervously, then takes a deep breath. "So, how far are we taking this experiment thing? How much 'practice' are we going to do? Because I liked kissing you, Lex. I want to do it again, if you do."

"We...", Lexa's voice cracks, and Clarke feels her heart skip a beat. "We can kiss some more. Or... maybe other things? Later," she adds, a little too hastily.

Clarke nods. "So, what are we talking about? Rounding the bases together so we're not totally inept when we start dating in college?"

A pink flush creeps across Lexa's cheeks, but she gives the tiniest of nods. "Yeah? I mean, we don't have to do everything. But some... uh... some experience would probably be good." She averts her eyes, her words falling to a whisper. "Most people don't understand how my body works, you know? I don't even understand some of it, because it keeps changing on me. I've only been on hormones for a couple of years and it's still so... weird? I dunno, I guess practicing with someone who won't make fun of me or judge me would be kind of a relief. I trust you."
For a moment, Clarke can’t breathe. It feels like she's holding the sun in her chest, bright and glowing. Lexa trusts her. It's something she already knows, but hearing it put in these terms almost makes her tear up. She blinks before her eyes can start leaking, giving Lexa what she hopes is a reassuring smile. "It’s okay for it to feel weird, Lex. You should take it at your own time. It’s your body and how you feel about it is completely valid. I feel the same as well, you know. I’m not trying to diminish what you're feeling, but I think being scared about sex and bodies and stuff is pretty normal for everyone. I'd feel safe with you, too."

"With me?" Lexa repeats. Her eyes shine, and for a moment, Clarke wonders if she's wrong.

*Maybe she feels the same. Maybe this is something more than 'just friends'? Maybe...*

"Okay."

There’s a beat of silence while the word settles in, and then Clarke sucks in a delighted breath. "Yeah?"

"Yeah. So, can we kiss some more?" Lexa asks, unable to disguise her hopefulness. "But just kissing right now. And I promise not to grind on you this time. I’m sorry about before."

"We can definitely kiss some more." Her confidence returning, Clarke grabs the back of Lexa's head and drags her down, hooking a knee around her waist to let her know that it's more than okay to do a little grinding. Their lips meet again, and Clarke can't help sighing in relief. Kissing Lexa makes her body come alive, but there's also something else about it, something almost soothing. Kind of like coming home. Even with this added dimension to their relationship, Lexa is still her safe place. Her best friend.

*No matter what happens, we can't let that change. I don't want to lose her.*

* * *

Later that night, Clarke sits up in bed, staring at the starlight pouring in through the window and listening to the steady sound of Lexa's breathing. After several heated minutes of making out, they had eventually put on a movie, but Clarke can't even remember what they picked. Most of it had been spent kissing, and just thinking about Lexa's lips gliding against hers pushes all other thoughts from her mind. She feels like she’s floating in a blissful haze, her heart still warm and body still tingling from the past few hours.

With a soft smile, Clarke turns toward the sleeping figure beside her. Lexa is curled up beneath the covers, all tucked in with only the top of her head and a few tangled strands of hair sticking out. Clarke can't help but laugh to herself at the sight. Somehow, Lexa is beautiful even as a snoring and drooling human burrito. *Guess that's what love does to you,* Clarke thinks, before she realizes exactly what word she's used. Even though it's only in her head, she feels a jolt of fear. Love? That's serious. But kissing Lexa has changed things. Her feelings don't feel like impossibilities anymore. Instead, she's feeling strangely hopeful—an emotion she knows is dangerous, but doesn't know how to suppress.

Nervously, she glances over at the shadowy canvases on the other side of the room. They're still covered, but she can picture the compositions clearly anyway. It's still a few more months until the art show she's been invited to participate in, but they're already mostly finished. Mostly, because there are still a few details she wants to work out. Details that, even though she's seen Lexa's face a hundred times and thought about it hundreds more, she wants to use something more than a picture reference for.
She might pose if I ask, Clarke thinks, but she puts that thought aside for later. One step at a time. She's drawn and painted plenty of her friends before, including Raven and Octavia and Lincoln, but this seems different. It's Lexa. Lexa is special.

Sighing, she snuggles back under the covers, staring at the ceiling instead. She isn't quite sure what's going to happen, but she's hopeful. Hopeful because it's Lexa, and even though she might not be able to have everything she wants, she's getting more than she could have hoped for.
Closer

Chapter Summary

Lexa and Clarke continue to venture into the deeper end of their FWB relationship.

Chapter Notes

Sorry this took so long to get out but we'll have more for you guys soon :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The sound of lockers slamming and shuffling feet is a dull roar in Lexa's ears as she makes her way down the hall, the strap of her backpack slung over one shoulder. It's full of books and homework—most of it unnecessary, in her opinion—but for once, the heavy assignment load doesn't bother her. It's been two weeks since she and Clarke kissed, but she still isn't over it. Clarke Griffin kissed me. Clarke kissed me! Clarke Griffin kissed me. Clarke kissed me!

A kiss isn’t the same as dating, and Lexa knows from their conversation that Clarke stumbled into the moment of intimacy from a place of trust and curiosity rather than feelings as scary as love, but still. Clarke kissed her. Clarke finds her attractive. Clarke, the woman she’s been pining after since middle school, is interested in her. Not interested the same way she is, but still. Interested. She feels like she could leap over the moon in a single bound.

By the time she rounds the corner, heading for their regular meeting spot by Clarke's locker, her heart is thundering against her ribs. Sweat has pooled in the middle of her back, and her hands are trembling and clammy, and there is a curious ache in her belly that she recognizes immediately as arousal. She had been able to suppress it before, when she had no idea Clarke was attracted to her, but now, it's impossible to ignore.

When she catches sight of Clarke's halo of wavy golden hair, a broad smile spreads across her face. She can't help it. She practically jogs the rest of the way, closing the distance between them in just a few eager strides. "Hey, Clarke," she says, letting go of her backpack strap to wave just as she realizes, Oh shit, she isn't alone. To her immense disappointment, Clarke is in the middle of talking to Finn Collins, who is leaning against the locker beside hers as if he owns it.

Lexa resists the impulse to grind her teeth. Finn isn't a bad guy. Not really. It's annoying, the way he follows Clarke around like a lovesick puppy, but she can't really blame him. She's in the same boat. Until now, he's just had the privilege of expressing his feelings openly. "Hey, Lexa," he says, giving her a calm sort of nod as Clarke turns.

"Hey, Finn."

Then, Lexa forgets all about him, because the sun has risen on Clarke's face, and Clarke's arms are around her, and Clarke is hugging her so tight she feels like she can't breathe even though they just had class together an hour and a half ago. "Hey, Lexa," Clarke mumbles into her shoulder, cheek smushed against her neck.
"Hi there." Hesitantly, Lexa wraps her arm around Clarke as well. The hug is warm and comforting, and her body starts to relax again. Even though she knows it's an asshole move, she can't help but smirk slightly. Clarke might only be up for a friends with benefits arrangement instead of the 'girlfriends' dream in her head, but that's further than Finn's gotten. "So, are you ready for movie night? My truck and I are ready to escort you to my house for a delicious gourmet dinner of hot pockets and leftover candy."

Clarke snorts and pulls away, but not before giving her arm an affectionate nudge. "How can I resist an offer like that? Seriously, Lexa, why don't you have a girlfriend yet?" The comment would have stung if Clarke hadn't given her a smoldering look afterward. It's enough to make Lexa's stomach erupt with butterflies. Her jaw hangs uselessly, unable to form words.

"Oh, you two are doing something tonight?" Finn asks, sounding more than a little disappointed. "I was about to ask if you wanted to catch a movie, Clarke."

"We could try for Sunday, if there's anything good playing," Clarke says. "But I always sleep over at Lexa's on Friday night. Come on, you know this. We've been doing it for years."

Lexa's cheeks burn at the words 'doing it', even though she knows that isn't what Clarke means.

"Come on. Get a grip, you perv! She's choosing you over Finn. Enjoy the moment."

"Yeah, Sunday could work," Finn says, although he still looks a little like a child whose ice cream has fallen onto the sidewalk. "I'll text you?"

"Sure," Clarke says, in a breezy, noncommittal sort of voice. "Come on, Lexa. Take me to my chariot."

The two of them head back down the hall together, walking close enough for their arms to brush.

"Oh, just ignore him," Clarke sighs. "He's cute and all, but kinda desperate, you know? Besides...
She bumps their hips together, offering a wink. "I've got a hot date for tonight already."

Lexa is instantly reassured, but the niggling doubt is still there. "Do you ever want to go out with him, though? You kind of said yes back there. And he's been trying for years."

Clarke hesitates, chewing at her lower lip and leaving it a brighter shade of pink than before. "I don't know? He's pretty intense about his crush on me. But it's flattering, in a way, I guess? It's not like anyone else is knocking at my door."

Just tell her, a voice in Lexa's head screamed. Tell her you don't just want to make out with her in secret. Tell her you want to take her on a date. The movies, a romantic picnic in the park. Fucking Disney World. Tell her you've been in love with her for years and you've just been too much of a coward to let her know...

But she couldn't do that. She had already told Clarke point-blank that she wasn't interested in a romantic relationship, out of fear her love confession would scare her best friend away for good. She couldn't backtrack now. It would only make Clarke mad at her, and then, everything would be ruined. She swallowed, reaching deep inside herself for a 'best friend' speech. "If you're into him, go for it. You deserve someone special."

"Eh." Clarke gives a noncommittal shrug of her shoulders—a reaction can't help but take some relief in. "I'll think about it. But right now, someone else has my attention." She waggles her eyebrows, somehow managing to be both silly and seductive at the same time.
Lexa snorts, feeling much better. Even though Clarke isn't interested in her romantically, it's still nice to know she ranks higher on her best friend's list than pretty boy Finn. Her strides become more confident as she escorts Clarke out to her truck, opening the passenger's side door for her before circling around to the driver's side door.

"Well, aren't you a gentlewoman," Clarke says once they're both inside, grinning broadly. The slight emphasis on 'woman' makes Lexa's heart flutter. She's confident in her gender now, much more so than she was as a kid, but the subtle way Clarke reinforces it, even though she doesn't have to, is really sweet because of their shared history. Back when she was first transitioning, Clarke had been the first person to switch pronouns and start referring to her as a girl at every opportunity.

"Just because I've never had a girlfriend before doesn't mean I don't know how to treat a lady." Lexa leans across the gap between their seats, drawing a little closer to Clarke. The smell of Clarke's body spray and shampoo isn't overpowering at all, but it's present enough to fill the small space—and the familiar scent is enough to make her a little dizzy. "But if you need some practice at being chivalrous too, we could always go to the movies later. You can buy the popcorn."

"I'd take you up on that," Clarke purrs, "but I thought we had other plans tonight? You know, at my place?"

Suddenly, Lexa's confidence is gone. She swallows, trying to ride out the raging battle inside her, a conflict between nervousness and anticipation. In the end, anticipation wins. She leans even closer, reaching out to cup Clarke's cheek, a silent invitation.

Clarke closes the rest of the distance between them, gripping the back of her head and crashing their lips together. It's rougher and deeper than Lexa expected, and a bit sloppy, but that doesn't stop her from shuddering as their tongues glide against each other. Over the past few weeks, she has discovered that she loves kissing Clarke. In fact, love is an understatement. She needs some other word, but she doesn't know if any part of the English language is enough to capture the intensity, the joy, the need, the exhilaration.

She's kissing Clarke Griffin. Actually, she's kissed Clarke Griffin so often these past two weeks that she's starting to lose track of how many times. But every time, it still takes her by surprise and sends her reeling. Clarke's kisses leave her trembling and alive, panting for breath, eager for more, although more of what, she doesn't quite know.

But I bet I'm going to find out, if we ever leave this parking lot.

Lexa is suddenly reminded of where they are. Clarke's kisses make her feel like she's floating in outer space, but that's no excuse. Just because they're teenagers doesn't mean they need to make out in a car like in some B slasher movie. "Should we..." she mumbles between the string of kisses, and it takes her a few tries to pull away from Clarke's greedy lips. "Your place? You know, for some privacy?"

It isn't until the words come out that she realizes just what she's implied. She and Clarke have done a lot of kissing recently, but it hasn't gone any further than that. Lexa isn't even sure if she's ready for it to go further than that yet. She's at a place where she's all right with her body, but she doesn't know how she feels about taking off her clothes in front of someone else in a sexual way, or...

But there isn't time to worry about it. Clarke presses a thumb to her lower lip, flicking the pad against it teasingly to wipe away some lipgloss. Lexa knows her subtle makeup is probably smudged, but she doesn't care. Clarke's bare lips have a hint of the wrong color on them too, but it's actually kind of cute. "Yeah. My room is probably more comfortable, huh?"
“Mmhmm. Comfortable.”

Suddenly, Lexa’s thoughts are overtaken by memories. Memories of the first time she and Clarke had kissed, of how sweet Clarke had tasted, of how right their bodies had felt pressed against each other. They’d been a perfect fit, and she can’t wait to experience it again. Clarke's weight, Clarke's heat, Clarke's tongue sliding smoothly against hers, maybe even the heavy curves of Clarke's breasts if she's lucky...

She doesn't realize she's been staring off into space until Clarke starts laughing. It's not malicious, but Lexa still has to cover up her embarrassment by pulling out of the parking lot and onto the main road. With one hand on the wheel, she disturbs what little remains of her lipgloss even further by wiping a hint of drool from her chin. *It's not my fault,* she thinks, full of self-pity. *She's just so beautiful, and perfect, and... and she definitely won't want to make out with you if you keep acting like a moron. Pretend you're as cool as she thinks you are, just for one second.*

With some luck, she manages to keep her composure until they arrive at Clarke's house. Abby's car isn't in the driveway, to Lexa's relief. As much as she likes Clarke's mom, she's grateful for the long hours Dr. Griffin works. It means they have the whole house to themselves, and all the time and privacy they could want.

Clarke hops out of the truck first, slamming the door hard enough to rock the frame before Lexa's even undone her seatbelt. With a sigh, she realizes Clarke's left her backpack between their seats, and she grabs it along with her own. She does try to be a diligent student, despite the plentiful distractions hockey and Clarke provide.

"You forgot this. We still have homework to do." She closes her own door and circles around the front of the truck, tossing the bag at Clarke's chest. Clarke catches it, but the look on her face is slightly sour.

"I didn't forget. I just had… other things in mind."

All the blood in Lexa's face rushes straight between her legs, and she feels a distinct pulse of ache there. Still, she tries to play it off. Just because Clarke makes her feel like a pile of mush inside doesn't mean she has to act like one. She's always been competitive, and she's pretty sure with a little effort, she can beat Clarke at her own game.

"Other things, huh?" she drawls, swinging her own bag over her shoulder and leaning in. Instead of kissing Clarke's lips, she simply lets their mouths hover close together, gazing deep into Clarke's eyes. "Would you like to explain what you mean, Clarke?" She knows she's scored a goal when the emphasized 'k' makes Clarke tremble. It's a sign that Lexa isn't alone in her desires, and she more than welcomes it.

"You know what I mean, Lexa," Clarke rasps, emphasizing her name as well. "But I think you want me to use my mouth for better things than talking."

Lexa grins. That's her opening, and she's eager to take it. She leans in, bringing their lips together. It's softer than their heated makeout session in the car. More of a promise. She moves her mouth slowly against Clarke's, exploring it thoroughly, trying to drink in the flavor without pushing too deep. For a moment, she thinks that Clarke's kisses might just be enough to sustain her for the rest of her life. She doesn't need anything else. Not food, or water, or even air. Just Clarke's lips, Clarke's tongue, the gentle graze of Clarke's teeth and the soft pant of their mixed breath.

But then Clarke's hand traces along her stomach, fingertips dipping just beneath the hem of her shirt, and Lexa becomes aware of another need. As it turns out, she does want more than kisses. A lot
more. There is a strange hollowness in her abdomen, pressure that needs releasing, only she isn’t quite sure how to begin, or even if she’s ready. She breaks away from Clarke’s mouth, although she doesn’t remove the hand tracing patterns on her side.

"Um. Inside?" She suggests, hoping she doesn't sound as awkward as she feels.

To her relief, Clarke nods. "The loft is more comfortable."

Without another word, the two of them head in, dropping their bags off in the kitchen before climbing the stairs hand-in-hand. Clarke is squeezing her hand a little too tight, in a white-knuckled grip, but Lexa doesn't say anything. She doesn't want Clarke to let go.

Eventually, they have to pull apart to reach the ladder. Clarke goes up first, and for once, Lexa doesn't hide her appreciation. She admires the round, firm swell of Clarke's backside all the way up, and laughs when Clarke catches her, tossing a wink down over her shoulder. "It's nice being able to check you out without feeling like a creep," Lexa says as she starts up the ladder too, climbing hand over hand. "I felt pretty bad about it before."

"Why?" Clarke asks as they emerge into the loft. "I checked you out all the time and didn't feel guilty about it."

That confession causes Lexa's eyebrows to shoot up on her forehead. "Really?"

"Oh, you bet. All the time. You're the kind of girl who looks just as good in a hockey uniform, dripping with sweat, as you do in a dress and heels. That's the kind of girl I'm into, to be honest."

A wide grin spreads across Lexa’s face, one she doesn't bother to stifle. Once more, she's thrilled by the knowledge that Clarke has chosen her out of everyone else. Even if they're just friends with benefits, it's a huge compliment.

"Although honestly," Clarke purrs, reaching around to grip the cheeks of her ass and pulling their pelvises together, "I think you'd look better out of those things…"

Lexa nearly chokes on her own tongue. The provocative statement is head-spinning enough all by itself, but the fact that Clarke's lower half is pressed tight against hers has her absolutely dizzy. She's torn between joy and embarrassment, and she doesn't know how she feels about the erection growing beneath her pants. It feels nice, and Clarke isn't pulling away, but…

"Um. You mean, like… right now? I thought we were going to make out? You know, like…"

Like usual, she doesn't get to finish, because Clarke gives her backside another firm squeeze.

"Making out doesn't require clothes, Lex," she mutters, and Lexa whines as hot lips skim her collarbone. "Or at least, not all of them."

Lexa shifts her weight, unsure whether she wants to back away from Clarke or lean in closer. On the one hand, she’s thought about this hundreds of time. Her and Clarke, trading kisses on top of a plush bed, stripping out of their clothes and pressing skin to skin. It’s something she craves, not just physically, but emotionally. There’s something intimate about being naked, even just partially, with another person. Something she wants to discover, because she’s never done it before.

And that’s the problem. She’s never done it before. Her feelings about her body are complicated, and although she's not disgusted with herself when she looks in the mirror anymore—she's started to like what she sees these past few years—she's uncertain how she'll feel with another person involved. With Clarke involved. Looking at her. Staring.
"Uh..."

"Hey," Clarke whispers, cupping her cheek in a gesture of reassurance. Lexa is grateful. She pushes into the touch, sighing with relief, because she knows what's coming. "I want to see more of you, but we don't have to. Not until you're comfortable."

Lexa bit her lip. She wasn't sure how long it would take her to feel comfortable. *Maybe it's like ripping off a bandaid? You just have to do it and get it over with, and then it feels better. And besides, if I'm naked, that means I get to see her...*

Clarke. Clarke *naked*. That's definitely encouragement. She has to swallow the extra moisture that rises in her mouth as she imagines what Clarke will look like without her clothes. She's caught glimpses of Clarke changing before, and Clarke's workout clothes don't leave much to the imagination, but...

"Maybe if you go first?" she suggests, gathering her courage.

That puts a smirk on Clarke's face. Before Lexa can even process what's happening, she's dragged her shirt up and over her head, revealing the perfect swells of her breasts. They bounce slightly in her bra as she moves, and Lexa feels another stab of heat in her belly. Her lips move, but all that comes out is a croaking, uncertain, "Wow."

*Wow? Seriously, Lexa. 'Wow' is the best you can do? Come on! You're smoother than this.*

Luckily, Clarke seems flattered. She struts as she closes the distance between them again, clearly showing off. "Wow, huh?" She wraps an arm around Lexa's waist, pulling their pelvises together, and this time, Lexa doesn't protest the closeness. The last thing she wants to do is pull away, even if she is half-hard in her pants and Clarke might be able to tell. She can feel the warmth of Clarke's body even better without the shirt, although hers is still in the way. Suddenly, she wishes she'd taken hers off too.

"Can I?" Clarke asks with a twinge of innocence to her voice, nodding toward her shirt.

Lexa gulps and looks down at the fabric separating her from being skin-to-skin with Clarke. "Um..." She fumbles, suddenly unable to speak. "Well, I mean, if you want..."

"Lexa," Clarke whispers beside her cheek. A flush takes over Lexa's skin, and suddenly, embarrassment is replaced with shame as she looks down at her feet. All the negative thoughts in her head, every insecurity she's ever had about her body, is rushing back to her all at once, a stream of voices she can't ignore. Then Clarke's hand rubs soothing circles at the small of her back, offering reassurance. "We don't have to. You're just so beautiful, it drives me crazy."

*Beautiful.* Clarke thinks she's beautiful. That word snaps her world back into focus. She shakes her head, looking up with a weak but genuine smile. "No, I want to. I'm just nervous."

"We'll go slow, okay?" Clarke hums, kissing her gently.

"No sex," Lexa suddenly blurts out when their lips break, and Clarke giggles, causing her to blush even harder. "I mean, it's not that I don't want sex eventually. I do, but not now, because it's too soon. You're really fucking hot, but it's like—"

"Lexa." Clarke interrupts her flustered rambling with a tender smile. "I get it, it's okay."

Lexa groans and slumps her head against Clarke's shoulder. *Talk your mouth off why don't you? Nerd. Keep this stupidity up, and the only kind of goals you'll be scoring are on the rink.*
It takes a whole minute for her to muster up the courage to put some space between herself and Clarke before reaching for the hem of her shirt, still nervously playing at the hem as she looks between Clarke and her hands a few times. It’s then that Clarke clears her throat, drawing a sharp breath before looking her straight in the eyes, those stormy blues suddenly clearing to reveal a dazzling sky within her irises.

“Can I?” Clarke asks, and suddenly Lexa doesn’t feel so nervous anymore.

“Yeah,” she breathes out a little too quickly. “Please.”

Clarke’s hands are soft upon her own as they slowly ease Lexa’s shirt above her head. The nerves return in full force when she’s suddenly standing before Clarke, the shirt discarded on the floor. Lexa gulps a few times as Clarke’s breath hitches, as Clarke’s gaze rakes over her body, drinking it in. Suddenly self-aware, Lexa’s hands go up to shield her breasts.

“No,” Clarke says, taking her hands and bringing them up to her lips with an earnest smile. “Don’t cover up. You’re perfect.”

“But…” Her breasts are a part of her body she has mixed feelings about. They were one of the first major changes her hormone therapy had brought along. Her nipples are very noticeable, currently puckered to hard points thanks to Clarke’s staring, but her breasts themselves aren’t as large as she would have preferred.

“Boobs are great, Lexa,” Clarke teases, her eyes drifting back down to where she’s slowly moved Lexa’s arm out of the way. “They’re beautiful—in all shapes, colors, and sizes. You’re perfect, Lexa. And you are so incredibly beautiful.”

Lexa knows that Clarke is her friend—her best friend, to be exact—but the words send a powerful shudder throughout the rest of her body. More so, she finds herself trembling as one of Clarke’s palms one of the ridges in her firm abdomen.

And at that moment, her unattended problem decides to make a guest appearance.

At first, she panics. Shit! She’s going to notice. Do I want her to notice? I kind of want her to notice…but…

“Well,” Clarke chuckles as she glances down at Lexa’s crotch, smirking at the outline of a straining bulge. “Hello to you, Lexa Junior. No need to be jealous. You’re just as beautiful, too.”

“Clarke,” Lexa groans, but a smile can’t help but curl at her lips. Having that part of her body called beautiful is strange, almost surreal, but since it’s Clarke saying it, she believes it. She feels almost proud. “How old are you?”

“What?” Clarke chuckles, hiding a giggle. “Do you already have a name for it?”

“No,” Lexa mutters with a tint to her cheeks. “That’s childish.”

“If I had a… uh, cock?” She pauses, waiting to see if Lexa is okay with the word.

“I guess for now,” Lexa says. “It’s better than penis, anyway.”

“Anyway, I think I’d name mine something cool… like The Womb Raider,” Clarke suggests as she looks up to Lexa before her eyes get wide with excitement. “What about Just-in-Beaver?”

“Clarke.” Lexa chuckles and shakes her head. “No.”
“Penis Maximus, The Veinful Dodger… ooh, what about Woody the Womb Pecker?”

“Clarke, God no,” Lexa moans as she cringes through her laughter. “Those are all horrible.” But still, she can’t deny that Clarke has put her at ease. Laughing now, laughing at Clarke instead of having Clarke laugh at her for being so exposed, has evened the balance of power.

“One more,” Clarke pleads, teeth digging into her lower lip in a pout. “Please?”

Lexa rolls her eyes and groans. “Fine, but it’d better be a good one.”

Clarke’s eyes narrow and she grins. Lexa braces herself when Clarke’s lips purse.

“Jurassic Pork.”

“Oh my God!” Lexa shoves Clarke a little, but can’t help the laughter that escapes her own throat as both her and Clarke tumble into each other from the force of their giggling. They end up collapsing upon the futon, tangled with each other as they continue laughing. The mood has eased, and Lexa feels less tense and awkward as she lays her head upon Clarke’s bare shoulder, her lips grazing over the hollow dip in her collarbones.

“Clarke?” Lexa hums into her skin, pushing aside the last of her nerves. Clarke grunts and turns her head so they can see each other. Mustering up the last of her courage, Lexa nods.

“I want you to see.”

* * *

Clarke’s never been more sure of her heart’s rapid beating than right now.

The five words that left Lexa’s lips approximately four point eight seconds ago are still ringing loudly in her ears, and she feels dizzy, drunk on the feel of Lexa’s skin upon her own.

You’re fucked, Griffin.

No, she thinks back, I want to be fucked. Specifically by Lexa.

The thought of Lexa over her, on her, grinding and thrusting inside of her, is enough to cause her to splutter on air. In an instant, Clarke knows she’s not ready to go that far yet, but she still can’t get the thought of Lexa out of her head, especially as the source of their problems prods against her thigh, eager to jump in and gain her attention.

“Clarke,” Lexa’s voice wanes in the distance, drawing her out of her lewd thoughts. “You okay?”

More than okay, she wants to say, but instead she settles for a smile and a nod. “Can we put on some music?” Clarke asks, her voice faltering a bit at the way Lexa’s eyes darken upon the suggestion. All she gets is an eager bob of Lexa’s head before Clarke goes ahead and reaches over for the phone to flick on her spotify, instantly choosing the mood music. HONNE & Izzy Bizu’s “Someone That Loves You” slowly begins to filter through the speakers by the television via Bluetooth, and both girls flush a little at the random selection.

“Do you want me to change it?” Clarke asks a bit nervously.

Lexus shakes her head. “No. I like it.”

They sit with each other in a weird silence for only a few moments before they lose themselves to the steady, sensual beat of the song. Their heads lean naturally into each other, their noses grazing and
lips searching like it’s a habit. It’s become routine, to kiss Lexa and taste Lexa, but Clarke finds herself wanting more.

_Thirsty, Griffin?_

_Oh shut up_, Clarke scolds herself as she gasps into Lexa’s warm, open mouth.

But yes, oh hell yes.

“Clarke,” Lexa rasps against her lips, her voice saccharine and sweet. “Can I… you know? Should I take off more clothes?”

Clarke’s head buzzes with the words, and she can’t fumble out her own response because she’s so drunk off the sensation of Lexa’s lips gliding against her own a hot second later. She can only nod into her ear as she closes her eyes, wanting to savour the taste of Lexa before she has her chance to look down and take a glance at what’s been on their minds since their first kiss (and maybe before, Clarke will unashamedly add for herself).

“Clarke,” Lexa hums into her lips, and Clarke can’t help but shudder at the way Lexa pops the ‘k’ so salaciously. She blinks open her hazy eyes to see Lexa’s wide, darkened gaze.

It’s… _smoldering_.

When Clarke takes a breath and looks down, she frowns at the sight of Lexa’s briefs.

“I thought you had something to show me?” Clarke asks with a playfulness that suggests that if Lexa isn’t ready, she doesn’t have to continue with their arrangement.

Lexa shakes her head and offers back a meek, barely held-together smile as she shifts on the futon. “I, um, wanted you to watch,” Lexa blurts out in a stammer. “Is, uh? Is that what you had in mind? Is that okay?”

Clarke can’t help but feel more at ease at the sight of her fumbling friend. It makes it seem less… serious. And Clarke is well aware of just how serious this is about to become. _I’ll deal with it later_, she decides as she pushes aside her own battling emotions. _Not now._

“I’m watching,” she murmurs instead, leaning forward to capture Lexa’s trembling lips back in her own for a reassuring, but chaste, peck. “Whenever you’re ready, Lex. At your own pace.”

Lexa’s hand goes down for the button on her briefs, undoing it a bit ungracefully as her fingers slip upon the cool plastic. To anyone else, it would have been embarrassing, but Clarke can’t help but be mesmerized but the length and firmness of her friend’s fingers, how they fumble around the button before prying it open with a soft pop. Lexa sighs.

“Better?” Clarke asks, unaware of how she’s leaned in so close to her now. Lexa nods.

“Way,” Lexa sighs with relief as she shifts on the futon, her hips involuntarily canting upwards. Clarke’s breath is stolen at the sight, and suddenly her mouth goes dry.

Well… fuck.

“Are you hard?” Clarke can’t stop herself from asking. She isn’t sure whether that’s an okay phrase to say, but apparently Lexa approves, because she fucking _whimpers_ when she nods again, her hips moving up on their own accord once more. Clarke gulps and tries to fight off the lewd thoughts from...
entering her brain, but it’s too late. She’s fixated now.

“You should take care of it,” Clarke tells her in a raspy voice. “You know… so it doesn’t hurt.”

Because oh God, it hurts.

“Clarke?” Lexa gasps her name, almost unsure. It’s a big suggestion.

Do you know what you’re getting yourself into?

“Woman” starts to drift through the speakers now, and HONNE’s soulful and gentle voice calms the mood a bit. It somehow clears the fog in Clarke’s head, but not in the direction her brain had been urging. In this moment, her heart changes the tide and Clarke is selfish.

“Do it,” Clarke whispers as she leans down and pecks Lexa’s shoulder. “If you want to.”

“God,” Lexa practically moans and Clarke keens in desire, “I do.”

“Show me,” Clarke pleads, unsure where her confidence is coming from. It must be a combination of the high-like buzz, the sensual music, and the taste of salt from Lexa’s skin under her lips as she inches closer to her best friend’s smooth and heated flesh.

When Lexa’s hand dips into her briefs and she cups herself, eyes rolling to the back of her head and a groan leaving her lips, Clarke thinks she’s hit the point of no-return. The thought solidifies into a decision when Lexa fishes herself out of her confining briefs, allowing Clarke to finally see the source of her friend’s problem for the past few weeks.

Lexa isn’t particularly large, but she’s not tiny either. Clarke decides just from looking that she’s the perfect length; she’s in-between but slightly curved and slender. Her belly ignites with a canting need as she notices the circumcised, seeping pink head that displays a small divot where weak slips of wetness are spreading around the opening. Clarke follows the ramrod length down past where Lexa’s fingers are curled around the middle into the base of her shaft, noticing the patch of dark brown curls just below her pubic bone.

So… I guess she trims instead of shaving it all off.

But she can’t think about that for long, because Lexa is groaning fitfully on the futon, hips moving erratically, looking about ready to burst. Clarke’s brows raise to the ceiling. She can’t possibly be ready to come so soon, right? Right? She considers herself honored as she ducks in closer to watch as Lexa’s fingers grip the slightest bit tighter, squeezing and releasing periodically.

I want to see her come. It’s a realization Clarke has had before, but she isn’t prepared for the reality. For the intensity. Of this moment, of watching Lexa, of witnessing the thing she’s only fantasized about in person. She wants to see Lexa come more than anything—to see Lexa come for her, for her and most importantly, because of her.

“Lex?” She kisses the ball of Lexa’s shoulder one last time, still staring in awe. “Let go, babe.”

As it turns out, those three words are all it takes for Lexa to abandon any lingering reservations about herself. Clarke drowns in the beauty of Lexa’s scrunched up brows and parted lips, her ragged breathing and slight sheen of sweat as it beads down her temple and collects in her messy curls. Clarke can’t help but encourage her further with a kiss to the neck, her teeth grazing over Lexa’s pulse point and nipping at the pounding flesh until she’s rewarded with the salty taste of arousal seeping from Lexa’s pores.

Lexa gasps and whines, desperate for some sort of relief. Clarke can’t help but smirk as she nods,
kissing her neck with a harder bite. Her hand wanders toward Lexa’s flexing stomach, her fingers tracing tantalizing patterns into each bronzed ring of muscle.

“Come for me,” Clarke coos, her voice strong and low, raspy with a hint of sweetness. “I know you want to, babe. I want you to watch you, Lexa.”

Though she’s never pegged Lexa as someone who enjoys dirty talk (or whatever version of dirty talk Clarke had to offer), Clarke is mesmerized and honored at the way her best friend buckles and whimpers under the pressure of both her touch and voice. Lexa’s breathing picks up and a strangled cry leaves those puffy lips as she jerks again on the futon. Clarke scratches lightly into her flexing abs, and that’s all it takes to end it.

Weak, clear pulses of fluid spill out from the aching head, and Lexa’s head knocks back so fast that if Clarke didn’t have quick reflexes, she’d have gotten a busted lip. Clarke’s gaze is wide and fascinated as the muscle under her hands tenses and coils, and some of the fluid from Lexa’s release spatters onto the back of her hand. It’s wet and warm, but it doesn’t turn her away from the electrifying buzz sparking between their skin. In fact, a strange fascination inside of Clarke aches to bring it to her mouth and taste it, to lap it up greedily.

“God,” Lexa breathes out once she’s calmed down and ridden out her high. “Fuck, that was… intense.” The words are choked out between gasps as she finally relaxes under Clarke’s touch and melts bonelessly into the futon, clearly spent from her climax.

“You’re telling me,” Clarke says as she keeps her eyes glued to that shuddering length, still twitching in Lexa’s hand. She quirks a brow at her exhausted-looking friend, amused at the lazy smile playing at the other woman’s lips.

And then, with a sudden widening of her eyes and a shocked gasps, it hits Lexa.

“Oh my God,” She whimpers as she covers her eyes with her hands, and Clarke’s almost sure that the stickiness from her come isn’t helping with the embarrassment. “I didn’t mean to come that quickly, I just hadn’t done it in a while, and it’s something I really don’t do mostly because I still don’t really like to touch it some days, and sometimes it’s just—”


“No,” Lexa disagrees with a firm shake of her head. “A twelve year old could’ve lasted longer.”

“Trust me,” Clarke murmurs as she stares at the twitching shaft some more. “I would’ve lasted the same amount of time. Honestly, I’m surprised I didn’t come by watching you.”

That causes Lexa to pause, and even peek between her clasped fingers. “Really?” Her voice is muffled by her hands, which makes the scene even more adorable in Clarke’s opinion, but it carries a bit of curiosity, too. Clarke nods and rubs Lexa’s stomach again, smiling widely.

“It was hot,” she admits with a bit of a flush to her cheeks. “Like, really hot.”

“You probably would’ve lasted longer,” Lexa still mutters, closing her eye again.

Clarke takes a breath and licks her lips. Well... it’s now or never, Griffin. “Why don’t we find out?”
Thanks for all the feedback and we'll have the next part up soon! :)

Complications

Chapter Summary

It's Clarke's turn to show Lexa something new.

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the wait on this one! Between my (commandmetobewell) family things and school, I had no time or energy to even look at fics. I hope that this is worth the wait, though!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

For a moment, Lexa can barely breathe. She hasn't even had a hot second to recover from the embarrassment of coming early, and now Clarke is offering to return the favor. To touch herself. To act out the beautiful images Lexa has only been able to see in her mind... up until now.

Oh God. She wants to. She actually wants to.

"Yes please," she rasps, a little startled by how quickly she answers, but not regretting it in the least. She wants Clarke to know how much she wants this. How much she's looking forward to it. It's only fair. She might not be brave enough to confess her feelings, but she can give Clarke her desire. After all, Clarke's desire for her is what gave her the courage to masturbate in front of an audience for the first time in her life. Clarke probably needs the same encouragement.

To her delight, Clarke nods, blonde curls bouncing, face flushed. She scoots up, propping herself against the railing of the futon and adjusting a pillow for cushioning. "Do you want to, uh..." She spreads her legs, gesturing between them, and Lexa gets the message. She shifts into position over Clarke for a front row seat, but not before placing one last, lingering kiss on Clarke's lips.

"Thank you," she whispers as their breath mingles together. "For this. You're perfect. It's... amazing. All of it."

Clarke's face glows with pride, and for a moment, Lexa is able to trick herself. She pretends that Clarke shares her feelings, that this isn't just about friendship and learning, that this experience means as much to the girl she loves as it does to her. But even when the moment of warmth fades, Lexa isn't depressed. She's happy. She's getting to share this intimacy with the woman she cares about most in the world. Not everyone else can say that about their 'first time', if this can count as one. The constant ache in her heart turns into a flicker at the sight of Clarke's smile. The pain and confusion dissipates and for once Lexa feels blissful.

"Okay. Don't talk. Just watch, or I'll lose my nerve."

Lexa laughs lightly, but places a reassuring kiss over Clarke's chest to prove she isn't laughing at her friend, but empathizing with her. "I know how that feels," she whispers.
Gathering her courage, she trails kisses down along Clarke's collarbone, gathering momentum and confidence as she goes. Before she knows it, she's reached the puffy pink peak of Clarke's nipple, and she doesn't know what to do. Do I... touch it? My mouth's right there. Does she want me to...

The question is answered when Clarke's fingers thread through the back of her hair, pulling her down. Suddenly, Clarke's nipple is nudging at her closed lips. She opens her mouth, drawing it in and sealing her lips around it with what she hopes is the right amount of pressure.

She doesn't need to worry, because as soon as her tongue scrapes gently against the puckered bud, Clarke's hips give an unsteady jerk. Lexa feels something hot press against her bare stomach, and with her mouth full of Clarke's softness, it takes her a moment to realize what it is. Wetness. Warmth. Clarke's leaking through her panties. Her panties and her shorts, since she hasn't taken those off yet. Lexa is shocked, but there's no denying what she feels. It's wetness. Slickness she's made.

"Fuck, Clarke," she mutters, releasing her new lover's nipple with a soft pop. "I... I made you do that." She rocks her stomach forward to emphasize her point, and Clarke actually *whines*. It's completely unlike any sound Lexa has ever heard Clarke make before, and it leaves her dizzy with desire. Her shaft, which had softened right after her release, gives a faint twitch, beginning to harden again. It's a shock, but for once, she actually welcomes the reaction. It's one of the first and only times she's actually enjoyed getting hard.

*Clarke likes me hard. It turns her on. So maybe it's okay.*

"Lexa..." Clarke gasps her name out like a prayer, tugging firmly at the roots of her hair. "Please. Keep sucking me. It feels, mmm... feels really good... I didn't expect..."

Lexa can't help but obey to the strangled plea that leaves her best friend’s lips. Making Clarke feel good is all she wants in this moment. Instead of letting Clarke pull her mouth back where it had been before, she kisses her way across to the other peak, lavishing it with similar attention. She experiments, sucking one moment, swirling the next, lapping with light little flicks that have Clarke's hips jerking in short, urgent circles. When she uses the edge of her teeth, Clarke drags her away, and for a moment, Lexa's heart sinks.

"Did I do something wrong? If I hurt you—"

"No," Clarke hisses, and from the needy haze in her eyes, Lexa can tell she's being truthful. "Just need to get my clothes off."

Reluctantly, Lexa draws back, but she's rewarded almost instantly by the sight of Clarke shimmying out of her shorts. They're gone in an instant, although she has some trouble at the knees, and Lexa's eyes widen in awe as she sees that Clarke has dragged her underwear down too.

*Oh God. This is it. I'm actually seeing her.*

For a moment, all she can do is stare. Shimmering trails of wetness have already made their way down Clarke's pale, plush thighs, leading up and up. Lexa follows them slowly, trying to savor the journey, but she can't resist for long. After what feels like an eternity, but is probably only a few seconds, she finally looks between Clarke's spread legs.

There's a short, trimmed tuft of golden hair on top of Clarke's pubic bone, a bit darker than the hair on her head, shaped into a narrow triangle. Lexa is surprised by the sudden urge to kiss it, but she resists, knowing it isn't the right time. Clarke hasn't asked for that. It's too soon. And she still has so much more to look at. She continues down, and her tongue grows thick in her mouth and her throat dries up at the glorious sight of Clarke bare and naked.
She’s bare and naked… for her.

Clarke’s outer lips are thicker and puffier than she expected. They sort of pout open, hanging down a little, letting the shimmering, seashell-pink flesh of her inner lips peek out between them. It’s glistening and rippled, and Lexa is fascinated. A tiny part of her had been worried she might feel jealousy, but she doesn’t. She’s just… curious? Yeah. Curious. Her fingers curl, itching to touch. To stroke. To see if it’s as soft as it looks.

She’s seen porn, but this is different.

This is Clarke.

“Lexa?”

Clarke’s raspy, needy voice pulls Lexa from her thoughts, and she can only gulp nervously. She shifts her gaze upwards to those dark blue eyes, glazed over with lust. Clarke’s chest is heaving, a slight film of sweat shining over her pale skin in the dim light above them. Lexa’s fingers clench and unclench at her side as she tries to calm herself down. What kind of horny freak are you if you can’t hold it in for two seconds? She scolds herself and frowns, but Clarke sees her reaction and takes it differently.

“Oh God, was this a bad idea?” Clarke asks, and Lexa can see some of the lust lifting from her gaze to be replaced by anxiety. “I shouldn’t have pushed you, I am so sorry if I made you—”

“No!” Lexa says almost instantly, startling the both of them. Blushing, she ducks her head and continues in a softer voice. “No, I am just… well… you’re so hot and it’s kinda making me all… you know.” Lexa cringes at her straggling explanation, but she seems to get her point across, or at least she thinks she does by the way that Clarke relaxes in front of her. Offering a flimsy smile, Lexa reaches out to squeeze Clarke’s hand.

“Oh,” Clarke chuckles lightly, eyes wandering down towards the elephant in the room. Lexa blushes even harder, but this time, her own gaze can’t help but wander back down to the beautiful sight between the apex of Clarke’s creamy thighs. She gulps as she trains her stare on each dripping rivulet of saccharine fluid that seeps from those petaled and swollen lips.

“What does it feel like?” Lexa breathes out hoarsely, her voice betraying her as it cracks. Clarke’s eyes roll to the back of her head and her hips involuntarily thrust upwards.

“Shit,” Lexa thinks as she eyes widen at her friend’s response. Did I do that?

“It’s wet,” Clarke rasps as she squirms on the futon. “God, Lex. I’m wet and it’s… pulsing.”

Lexa doesn’t have any words as Clarke’s left hand begins to trail downwards, her middle finger sliding effortlessly through the slick that pools between those lips. Clarke takes another breath and Lexa can’t help the high-pitched whine that whirls between her clenched teeth as that digit takes to swirling in the wetness, nudging closer to her clit.

“It feels so warm, so… electric,” Clarke breathes out, eyes still closed. “God, it’s so sensitive and every touch I feel down there, I feel it everywhere else. My clit is throbbing and hard Lex, all because of you. Watching you come has got me so turned on.”

As if the lewd description hadn’t already turned Lexa back on like a light-switch, the breathy moan that escapes Clarke’s lips when she swirls her middle finger makes contact with her clit causes her shaft to give a jealous twitch. Her own member throbs and aches to be back in the action, but Lexa’s too distracted by the sight of Clarke squirming and touching herself in front of her. She’s captivated
by the pink blush that flowers over her friend’s pale skin, of her heaving breasts and the soft moans that spill from her parted lips.

Lexa is not prepared for the dark lust in Clarke’s eyes as they blink open and stare at her.

“Lexa,” Clarke says with a salacious drawl of her name, “I’m going to go inside. Is that okay?”

All Lexa can offer is an enthused nod and a dry, unintelligible croak of agreement.

Clarke gives her a knowing, teasing grin as she moves that finger downwards, a finger that Lexa can clearly see is absolutely drenched in her arousal, towards her opening. Upon grazing around the small hole, Clarke’s inner lips throb, clenching and unclenching. Lexa can’t help but groan harder when she sees a few more precious slips of fluid seep through those pink walls. Her throat dries up and she finds herself once again as hard as a rock.

“Fuck,” Clarke gasps as she enters herself with a single finger, “it’s so tight, Lex. It’s like I’m being sucked in. I’m tight and hot and wet, Lexa, all for you.” Another moan pulls Clarke’s mouth up into a pleased smile, her eyelids sliding shut again as she pauses her hand movements. Lexa remains fixated on Clarke’s hand, and all she can think about in that moment is what it would feel like to be inside Clarke, to have those warm walls gripping her and pulling her in. She can’t help but swallow thickly to relieve some of the thick, aroused fog that clouds her brain, but the thought still lingers as Clarke begins to move.

Clarke’s thumb slips down and grazes over her pulsating clit and Lexa can’t help her jaw from falling open slightly. Clarke is literally drenched, so each slip and slide of her thumb becomes erratic and almost messy. Clarke’s other finger pumps in and out of her tight walls, drawing more fluid to run down the insides of those pale thighs. With each rivulet and drop, Lexa’s parched mouth grows drier, her tongue aching for a taste.

But that thought is instantly swept away when Clarke picks up her pace and moans louder. Her head tilts backwards and those blonde curls spill over the futon cover. Lexa feels like she’s frozen as she watches Clarke’s blushing, bare chest rise and fall erratically.

“Lexa, oh fuck!” Clarke yelps as she increases the speed of her movements. “Oh God… Oh God I’m coming, Lex. Fuck…”

Lexa can’t help the moan she releases at Clarke’s words as they break through the charged air between them. Lexa’s feels lightheaded and dizzy, and the only euphoria she knows that’s similar to this was the sensation of a scoring the winning goal in her provincial hockey game, or getting a hundred percent in her business management class last term. But even those examples pale to what she feels right now.

Her entire body is buzzing and her heart is roaring in her ears as she watches Clarke unfurl and come undone in a hair-raising moan. The volcano that had been burning in the pit of her stomach suddenly spills over and Lexa can’t help the groan that leaves her own lips.

And then, in the last second as Clarke’s mouth forms the shape of an ‘o’, Lexa feels her own release creep up on her out of nowhere. She can’t even be bothered to stop it because Clarke is coming and the sight of her best friend in the throes of pleasure is too overwhelming.

Great job, Lexa thinks to herself as she looks down to her lap and frowns. I didn’t even touch it and still… fucking hell. She’s about to continue her berating when she glances up to see Clarke looking at her in a mix of awe and fascination, mixed in with the afterglow of lust. Lexa gulps, confused by Clarke’s expression, until she watches her gaze shift downwards.
Well, Lexa scolds herself as she blushes furiously, avoiding Clarke’s stare. Shit. She starts to form an apology, not at all sure what she’s going to say, but knowing she needs to address the mess she’s made of Clarke’s futon. Before the words can tumble from her lips, though, Clarke yanks her back up, taking her lips in a heated kiss and pressing their bodies together. It's the first time they have been stretched out, naked, on top of each other like this, and Lexa feels the jolt in her very core. She’s gone soft, and she's much too exhausted to come again, but it's still incredible—Clarke's body molding to hers, so much smooth, naked skin...

"That was pretty incredible, yeah?" Clarke asks when they break apart.

"Yeah," Lexa says, letting Clarke's dreaminess overtake her for a moment before she remembers her embarrassment. "Except when I came two seconds after I started touching myself. And except for when I came again on your futon...."

"Also my foot," Clarke teased, stifling a laugh.

Lexa groaned, closing her eyes and tucking her face in the safety of Clarke's shoulder. Her face was still covered in a fiery blush, but instead of recoiling from Clarke, she turned to her for safety and reassurance. Clarke had seen her naked, had seen her come, and hadn't been the least bit put off.

"It's okay, Lexa. My foot can't get pregnant."

The statement was half-funny and half-awkward. She didn't really want to think about the possibility of getting Clarke pregnant, even if the hormones she was on made that an extremely remote possibility. The thought stirred up some dysphoria she didn't want to deal with—but it also made her realize something.

I didn't hate my body while we were doing this.

Somewhere deep down, part of her had always assumed she would. Simply broaching the subject of sex, or even just fooling around, had brought all those insecurities to the surface, where they showed right through her fragile skin. But in the heat of the moment, she hadn't been worried. Even now that it's over, she doesn't feel dysphoric, or disgusting, or ashamed, or even confused.

It had felt right. Being with Clarke had felt right. And aside from wishing she'd been able to make the moment last a little longer, if she could have gone back, she wouldn't have changed a thing. Clarke had looked at her like she was some sort of Goddess, with such conviction that Lexa can't help but believe it.

"Lexa? Leeexa? Earth to Lexa? Are you orbiting the moon or something?"

She snaps back to attention as Clarke's fingertips ghosted down her spine, shivering and giggling slightly at the ticklish touch. "Mm. Sorry. Just lost in thoughts."

"Good thoughts?" Clarke asks, and Lexa can't resist pressing a short, sweet kiss to her pouting pink lips.

"Very good..." Lexa sighs happily. She can still feel Clarke's heat and wetness pressed against her thigh from where their bodies are joined, and if she isn't mistaken, she seems to be pressing into one of Clarke's curvy hips as well. "What about you?"

"I was just wondering..." Clarke's fingers move from her back to her hair, twirling the loose strands that have escaped her braid. "Do you think we just lost our virginity? You know, to each other?"

Lexa's brow furrows. They hadn't technically touched each other below the waist, but it feels like
they've done something. "I don't feel like I lost anything," she says at last. "That's a dumb phrase. Losing your virginity. I..." She hesitates, not sure if she should continue, but Clarke is giving her that look again, all sweet adoration, and she melts. "I feel like I gained something instead of losing it. You know?"

"Gained something," Clarke says. She sighs, seeming to relax. "I like that. You're right. And virginity is stupid. Like something men made up to feel special."

"You're special," Lexa says, and Clarke rolls her eyes at the emphasis.

"Now when you say special..."

"No, really," she protests. She begins dusting kisses along Clarke's neck, enjoying the way Clarke squirms and squeals at the light trail. But she doesn't try to escape, and Lexa remains on top of her in their comfortable cuddling position. "This was special. Thank you, Clarke. You made me feel... good." She wishes she could think of a stronger word, but she knows her best friend will understand what she means.

"Mm. Lexa?"

"Yeah?"

"You made me feel really good too. And next time, when you actually touch me, you're gonna make me feel better."

Next time? Lexa's eyes widen, and then a big grin splits her face in two. "We're already planning next time?" she asks, unable and unwilling to hide her eagerness.

"Well, yeah," Clarke laughs, as if it's the most obvious thing in the world. "I want to do this again. And more. Don't you?"

Lexa nodded eagerly. "Yes. Of course."

"But, uh, can we take a shower first?" Clarke gives her a sheepish little smirk that also happens to carry a trace of smugness, and Lexa blushes all over again. "Both of us kind of made a mess..."

"Oh! Sure." Lexa scrambles off Clarke, a little reluctantly, taking a moment to balance on her wobbly legs. Her knees keep shaking, but still, she offers a hand to help Clarke up, simply because it's the gentlewomanly thing to do. Clarke claps her wrist, but uses it to pull their bodies flush again, folding both arms around her neck and leaning in until their noses brushed.

"We can shower together, right? Riiight?"

Lexa's heart fills with so much love that she can hardly keep from bouncing on her toes. "If you don't mind sharing your shampoo."

"Hmph. Like you haven't used my shit before," Clarke says, stepping back and pulling her toward the bathroom. "But this time, I get to scrub you. In places."

Lexa isn't sure exactly what places Clarke has in mind, but she isn't nervous, either. Just excited. And tingly. And maybe still a little bit horny, even though that should be impossible. I've never come more than once before, even by myself...well, I hardly come at all. But Clarke...

Clarke drives her crazy. Clarke makes everything different. And of course, Clarke makes everything better.
Later that night, while Lexa is snoring softly with her lashes just brushing the points of her cheeks, Clarke turns on the mattress and places her feet on the ground. It's cold, much colder than the toasty cocoon of the covers, and so she uses the moonlight shining in through the window to search the ground for a pair of discarded socks. The ones she ends up with are Lexa's, but she pulls them on anyway. As long as her toes don't freeze off, she doesn't care.

Silently, she leaves the bed behind, pausing every few seconds to make sure Lexa won't wake up. She loves Lexa's company when they're both awake, of course, but this is a rare sight. Her best friend, now her lover, is totally at peace. She's not worried about hockey, or her grades, or her family, or their classmates, or even about "gender stuff", as Clarke has heard her call it. While she sleeps, her face is beautifully smooth, and there are no wrinkles of weariness around her eyes.

Lexa pushes herself hard. Clarke has always admired that. She's a warrior on the rink, and a brilliant mind at school, and the kindest, most loyal friend Clarke has ever had. But it's not often she lets herself take a break. Clarke is actually flattered that Lexa is able to relax this much around her—that she doesn't count as one of the stressors in Lexa's life. Actually, she hopes she's the opposite: someone that makes Lexa feel at ease.

*She certainly makes me feel that way. I can always be comfortable around her. Except...*

Clarke heads across the room to her desk, passing one of the covered canvases on the way. When she gets there, she pauses, but doesn't lift the sheet. The painting isn't finished yet, but hopefully, she'll have some time to work on it tomorrow after Lexa leaves. Instead, she grabs her sketchbook, a pencil, and an eraser and switches on the light, dimming it to the lowest setting.

She waits, but Lexa doesn't stir. She remains fast asleep, soft brown hair falling about her face, lips slightly parted.

Once Clarke is sure Lexa won't wake up, she turns her chair and sets her sketchbook on one knee, chewing lightly on the tip of her tongue. Getting Lexa's face right is hard, maybe because she's spent so many years memorizing the details and she can never quite get it on paper to her satisfaction. It's nice to have a model, even though she feels a bit creepy drawing Lexa while she's asleep.

*She'll forgive me later, when I finish the paintings. When I show her...when I tell her...*

She isn't sure she'll ever show the paintings to Lexa, or tell her what they mean, but at moments like this, Clarke has to believe she will. Anything else will drive her crazy. She can't stand the thought of keeping her feelings for herself forever, even though that's just what she's pledged to do.

*Because having her this way is better than not having her at all, she reminds herself, sketching out the rough shape of Lexa's head. She tries to remember how it looked before, smiling down at her, leaning in for a kiss, tossed back in ecstasy...*

A shudder runs through her body as the memories come flooding into her mind. Her pencil moves across the page without her even having to think. *God, it was beautiful. She was beautiful. Every sound, every movement, every facial expression Lexa had made was stamped onto Clarke's soul. She's already certain she will remember them forever, but she wants to be sure. She wants to capture them, just in case the details slip away. The thought of losing them is terrifying.*

She feels different. Different since feeling Lexa's naked body flush against hers. Different since watching the blissful look on Lexa's face as she came. Different since seeing the awe in Lexa's eyes a few minutes later—awe that was all for her. In moments like this, she can believe that Lexa loves...
her. In moments like this, keeping her own feelings a secret seems stupid.

But still, there's that fear. That nagging worry that as soon as the words escape her lips, everything will change. And while things are changing for the better with every day the two of them spend together, exploring this new facet of their relationship...they can still very easily change for the worse.

It isn't a risk she's willing to take.

And so, since Lexa is fast asleep and her heart is too full to keep all her feelings to herself, Clarke draws. She draws, tongue peeking out from the corner of her mouth in concentration, occasionally glancing back over at her new lover for a point of reference. Lover. Lover. Lover. We're lovers now...

It feels like they are, even though they haven't "technically" had sex. She's well aware that virginity is a social construct, but she meant what she said to Lexa before. She feels as if she's been given something precious, and she intends to cherish it for the rest of her life, no matter what happens.

By the time she finishes her work and checks the clock on the desk, several hours have passed. She's lost herself in her sketchbook for longer than she meant to, but even though she'll be yawning all day tomorrow, and she's sure Lexa will wake her far earlier than she's ready, Clarke has no regrets. Not a single one, not when it comes to Lexa. Her best friend. The woman she loves. She'll be able to look at this sketch and remember the first night they saw each other naked, the first night their bodies truly touched, the first night they watched each other reach the peak of pleasure and ride it together—because of each other.

She smiles and sets her pencil aside, putting the sketchbook back on the desk as well and making sure it's closed. She knows Lexa won't snoop through it—she's said no before, and Lexa is always respectful of her boundaries—but just in case, she tucks it off to the side beneath some other papers. Not yet. Maybe someday, but not yet.

Once it's safely put away, Clarke creeps back over to the bed as silently as she left it. By some miracle, she manages to slip beneath the covers without disturbing Lexa's sleep. For a moment, she's sure she'll be caught—she already has an excuse about using the bathroom ready—but Lexa only heaves a sleepy sigh and shifts position.

Clarke smiles. Unable to help herself, she brushes back a strand of Lexa's hair, tucking it safely behind her ear and clearing a space to kiss. Lexa's forehead is warm, and Clarke catches a hint of her own shampoo in Lexa's hair. It's kind of nice, thinking of Lexa carrying something of her scent.

"I love you," she mouths, not quite putting breath behind the words. Even though it doesn't come all the way out, she feels better for saying it anyway. One step at a time.

* * *

Lexa wakes up, disoriented by the pale orange light sifting through the attic skylights above her. Blinking back the lingering sleep at the corner of her eyes, she yawns and stretches, jumping slightly when she feels her arm rub up against something bare and soft.

"Skin? But who...?"

“Shit.” Lexa comes close to jumping out of bed at the sight of Clarke curled up against her side, her head upon her pillow. Luckily, Clarke is a deep sleeper and doesn’t react much other than the displeased groan that slips past her lips. As sneakily as she can, Lexa maneuvers her pillow so that
Clarke can cuddle with it while she slips out from the sheets. The warm summer air hits her nude skin and she smiles slightly, but then remembers just exactly where she is. She allows herself to gaze upon Clarke’s smooth expanse of skin and dwells in the memories of the night before.

Sighing, Lexa lays back down and watches her best friend’s back rise and fall as she continues to slumber, unnoticing of the bright light streaming through the windows.

*How did I ever get so lucky?*

As soon as the thought comes, it dissipates with a twinge to her heart when Lexa remembers that Clarke’s affections only extend so far.

They’re friends, she reminds herself, nothing more.

And yet, she can’t refrain from whispering three words into the still morning air.

“I love you.”

Lexa knows it now, as much as she wants to deny her feelings, that she loves Clarke. It’s something that’s resided inside of her for awhile, but only now does she feel the weight of the words settle in. She sighs again and sits up, tearing her gaze away from Clarke and to her clothes, strewn about on the floor. She reaches for her phone on the nightstand, not surprised to see a slew of messages from Anya and Gustus, wondering why she hasn’t come home yet. As she’s typing away a response, the bed creaks and the sheets crinkle.

“Why are you awake?” Clarke mumbles the question groggily, her voice thick and raspy. She lets out another groan from behind Lexa’s back, stirring from her sleep. Lexa chuckles as she looks behind her to see Clarke shifting on the bed with a childish groan. “It’s too early, Lex. Come back and cuddle me.” She drawls out the last words and Lexa blushes.

“Clarke, it’s almost eight.”

“So?”

“So, you have to get up.” Clarke groans again, louder this time at the words. Lexa rolls her eyes playfully before leaning down to place a chaste, gentle kiss to her friend’s forehead.

“Do you have to go?” Clarke mutters as she wraps herself tighter in the comforter, lazily blinking one blue eye open to stare at her dazedly. “My bed is warm and I’m lonely without you sleeping beside me.”

Lexa sighs guiltily and nods, kissing her head again with a soft kiss. “Anya and I promised we would work on scholarship stuff today. You know how she is when it comes to writing.” She pulls back and reaches for her clothes, slipping them on silently as she moves about the room. When she doesn’t get a response from Clarke, she turns her head to see her new lover staring at her with a blank look, her eyes glued to her flexing torso. She knows her shirt is a little… transparent, for the lack of a better word, but she didn’t think it would draw Clarke’s attention in that sort of way.

“Clarke,” Lexa tuts playfully as she intentionally slips her hand under her shirt and pulls it up to scratch at the tops of her abs. “Are you paying any attention to what I’m saying?”

“Abs…” Clarke gapes as Lexa continues to unabashedly show off. Finally, Clarke shakes her head and snaps back into the present. “Um, I mean, *absolutely*. Anya’s a shit writer, yeah. I totally agree, babe. It’s muscles—*shit*—muscle memory… fuck, okay I get it! I got spacey, okay? No need to be a cocky shit about it.” Clarke mutters the last words in light-hearted jest, making Lexa feel less
apprehensive that her friend was genuinely upset.

Lexa teasingly rolls her eyes before dropping her hand from her shirt. She kisses Clarke’s forehead once more before snagging her watch and belt from the desk. Clarke mutters something incoherent as she curls back under the covers.

“I’ll text you,” Lexa says as she slips her phone into her pocket. “Make sure you wake up at a decent hour.”

Clarke flips up her hand under the sheets and shows her the finger, unamused. “Later, Mom!” Clarke calls out sarcastically, her head hitting the pillow as Lexa laughs and slips on her shoes. She watches Clarke until her friend falls back asleep before making her way downstairs.

She passes Abby on the way out, giving the older woman a small smile. Luckily, Abby looks as haggard as her daughter in the mornings, so the older Griffin only hazards a grumbled salutation, which Lexa shyly returns, as she heads out the door and towards her truck.

It takes about ten minutes for Lexa to get home, and when she does, Anya is waiting for her with her arms across her chest and a frown plastered on her face. Lexa shrugs, tossing her keys into the bowl beside the door as she shuts the door behind her, slinging her bag to the floor nonchalantly. She sees Gustus in the kitchen, brewing a pot of coffee that smells delicious.

“Don’t stare at me like that,” Lexa finally says to the pouting after grabbing a cup of coffee and offering it to her stern-looking sibling. “Look, I’ve even brought you a peace-offering.”

“You were supposed to help me last night,” Anya grumbles, taking the coffee with a scowl. “These applications are due in a week, Lex. I know you and Griff are close, but you need to focus. There’s no chance we’re getting into those schools without at least trying.”

At that, Lexa’s playful expression dies and the seriousness of the situation sets in.

Sighing, she nods. “You’re right. Come on, let’s go and work on them together.” Anya sighs and mumbles out a half-hearted, truly Anya-like apology for being so brash, putting the blame on the lack of caffeine and Raven leaving early that morning to work on her own scholarship applications. She won’t say it, but she knows her sister is completely whipped.

Lexa can’t help but wonder if she’s the same way around Clarke.

“Alright, let’s have a look at them, shall we?” Lexa asks with a grunt, snapping out of her thoughts as they take a seat at the dinner table. They both look at the forms on the mahogany, studying them carefully. Lexa’s about to ask what’s got Anya so silent when she looks up to see her sister blatantly staring at her neck with wide, curious eyes.

More specifically, a dark red spot on her neck.

“Um,” Lexa stumbles as her cheeks turn beet red. “I… I, um…”

“So you and Clarke are finally getting your act together?” Anya asks again, deadpanned. Lexa chokes, her blush deepening to the point where she’s convinced she’s become a human tomato. She rubs the back of her neck nervously and looks around the room, knowing she must appear to be a flustered mess.

“I… we’re… it’s just…”

“You couldn’t wait until school was over?” Anya asks, exasperated. At this, Lexa frowns.
“Excuse me?”

“Well,” Anya says as she leans back in her chair with a proud smirk on her face. “Now I owe Raven fifty bucks and a new screwdriver. I thought it would take until next year with your fumbling. No offense, little sis, but your flirting skills need some work. You’re a bit of a brick wall when it comes to understanding when people are thirsting over you. I was wondering if you’d make a move or if you would just continuing being a flustered mess around Griffin.”

“Thanks for your confidence in me,” Lexa mutters, still embarrassed. Anya barks out a short laugh as she leans forward and shoves her sister teasingly. Lexa tries to shrug it off, but she can’t help the smile that tugs at her lips when Anya stares at her so fondly and warmly.

“Stop looking at me like that,” she says as she snorts, “it’s weird.”

“It’s not everyday that your baby sister gets some. It’s a proud parent moment, you know?”

“You’re literally four months older than me.”

“You’re still the baby of the family.”

“Anya,” Lexa groans as she looks to the papers. “You were literally pissed at me an hour ago for not helping you with these forms. Now you want to discuss my… uh… intimate life?” She stumbles on the word, and as soon as it slips through her lips, both Anya and Lexa grimace.

“Please don’t ever say that again,” Anya says with a frown. “It sounds like you’re forty.”

“Duly noted,” Lexa agrees, scrunching up her face with a scowl. Anya rolls her eyes.

“Anyways,” her older sister drawls as she leans in again, eyes wide with excitement. “How long have you been screwing Clarke? Wait… you have condoms right? Lube? Dental dams? Gloves? I gave you a gift basket of all those goodies for your birthday, so you guys better be using protection. I know that you’re not likely to pop a Lexa-and-Clarke Jr out but still, I am far too young to be a vodka aunt anytime soon, okay?”

Lexa pales at Anya’s inquisition, her mouth drying when she tries to process the words past Anya’s first question. “We, um, we haven’t…” Lexa struggles with the words, turning redder with each second that passes. “We haven’t gone that far.”

Anya’s brows perk and she smirks again. “But you have gone somewhere.”

“Really? That’s what you got out of that?”

“Did you eat her out yet? Raven and I bet that you’d go down on her for hours.”

“Jesus,” Lexa groans as she places her head in her hands. “And you’re supposed to be the older one. How exactly did Raven say yes to going out with you again?”

Anya shrugs and grins. She crosses her arms, her smile turning a bit dopey at the thought of her girlfriend. “I’m the co-captain of the hockey team and I’m fucking stunning. Who wouldn’t say yes?”

“I’m glad to see that humility is one of your star characteristics, too.” Lexa tuts the words sarcastically, rolling her eyes at the blonde. Ignoring the comment, Anya leans forward, still grinning as she waits for Lexa to explain further. Sighing, Lexa swallows and shrugs again. “We’re taking it slow,” she says, and while it’s not a lie, the words sting because they’re not dating. They’re taking it slow sexually, but what if that’s all it was to Clarke?
Anya frowns. “You don’t sound excited,” her sister comments. “Is she not accepting of you? Because I swear Lex, if she even makes you cry over something as stupid as your candle obsession —”

“Hey!” Lexa interrupts with a sharp look. “I love my candles.”

“Yeah, yeah whatever, Grandma. But seriously,” Anya says as her voice drops and her playful grin gets wiped off her face for something more caring and stern. “If Clarke breaks your heart, I will make it hard for even Raven to find her body, okay? Nobody hurts my baby sister and gets away with it without facing my wrath. It’s my duty as your older sister to protect you and I’ll do it, don’t test me.”

Lexa rolls her eyes at her sister, but feels loved and appreciative at the fierce care in Anya’s voice. The two have a weird, bantering relationship, but they had always been super protective of each other since they’d started out as tots. “She didn’t turn me down,” Lexa says, though she still manages to give Anya a grateful smile for her choice words. Taking a breath, she continues in a soft voice, “it was just that… we’re not ready for sex… yet. God, I wasn’t even ready for anyone to even see me naked because… well, you know…,” she trails off for a second, trying to linger away from her complicated feelings about her genitals.

“Anyways,” she says, snapping out of it, “I just was nervous that no one would ever want to be with me, and Clarke was nervous because she was in the same boat—not about the gender stuff, but like the not-having-done-anything stuff—so we decided we would… you know … with each other. Because we trust each other.”

After she’s given her explanation, Lexa realizes that Anya’s not responded yet. She was expecting a witty jab, but instead she looks up to see her sister frowning at her, her facial expression set stoically. Inside her chest, Lexa’s heart beats rapidly, nervously.

“An?” She croaks her sister’s name. “Anya? What’s wrong?”

“Is that all she is to you?” Anya asks, no malice in her voice. Instead, it’s just a plain, clear question.  “Are you both just doing this because you don’t want to be virgins in university?”

“No,” Lexa fumbles, but then her thoughts catch up. “Are we?” “I don’t think so… I…”

“Look,” Anya sighs, reaching out to lightly graze her sister’s hand. “I hope you know that you don’t have to feel bad about not having sex, Lex. You are in control of your body. You don’t have to make decisions you don’t want to just because of what the rest of the world thinks. Virginity is a societal concept that’s stupid and outdated. Just know that this stuff, this friends-with-benefits stuff, it’s risky. You and Clarke are best friends. I know how much you care about her and how much she cares about you, and I just don’t want to see either of you hurt. Are you completely sure that this is what both of you guys want? Nothing more?”

_I do want more because I love her_, Lexa thinks painfully, but she knows that she can’t voice her thoughts. She gets to have Clarke the way she is right now. She shouldn’t mess that up, right? It’s better than losing her friendship with the girl who owns her heart.

The thought alone is petrifying. She could _never_ lose Clarke.

“Yeah,” Lexa croaks out somehow convincingly as she averts her gaze. “We talked about it.”

“You know I’m not judging you, right?” Anya asks softly, still grazing her wrist. “I love you, kid, even if you’re a pain in the ass and make me want to smash my head against a wall a lot of the time.
You and Gustus come before anyone. Family sticks together, yeah? I know Griffin and I know she wouldn’t intentionally try to hurt you but still… just be careful, okay?”

Lexa sighs and nods, trying to fight the entourage of emotions that fight and churn in her stomach. She swallows them all down to offer Anya a tight-lipped smile before gesturing towards the papers. Anya looks less than pleased, but follows her gaze regardless.

“We can discuss that stuff later,” Lexa says, grateful that her sister gets the hint that she doesn’t want to talk about the subject of her feelings for Clarke any longer. “Let’s get this out of the way so we can do other stuff. What part do you need help with the most?”

As Anya slips into a long, irritated ramble about the complicated application essays, Lexa’s mind stays fixated on the thoughts of Clarke, of the events of last night–of this morning and how peaceful it all had been. She wants to focus on her sister, but she just finds herself staring off into the unknown and daunting realm of her mind. She knows Anya’s right, that while they’ve stated their consent, they haven’t talked about their emotional relationship.

Should we? Lexa thinks painfully, her stomach clenching. Does Clarke even have feelings for me? Feelings that aren’t sexual but romantic, instead? Something more than just best friends?

Lexa sighs at her grumpy sister attempting to scribble something coherent down on the paper. As she watches, she realizes there’s only one thought running through her mind.

Feelings really do suck.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading and we hope you liked it!
Three Dimensional Maneuver

Chapter Summary

Clarke decides to give Lexa a little incentive for winning her quarter-final match.

Chapter Notes

Hey all!!

Sorry it took so long for us to update. This fic isn't abandoned, but we both had a lot of stuff so we've been trying to get writing on this as best we can! We hope that this update was worth the long wait :)

There's a little bit of transphobia in this chapter, but nothing extremely graphic or hard to read!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Come on, Clarke," Lexa whines, aiming a pleading look over at the passenger's seat. "Just one fry. One fry isn't going to ruin my diet, I promise."

"Ah ah," Clarke mumbles around a mouthful of potato. She takes her time licking her fingers, smacking them in a way that Lexa might have seen as sexual if they hadn't been covered in salt. "No fries for you, Captain Woods. You're supposed to eat healthy before your games now. Remember what you and Anya agreed on?"

Lexa sighs. Part of her wishes she'd never told Clarke about her diet, but it's too late to take it back now—not to mention the fact that she's terrible at keeping secrets. In fact, there's only one secret she's ever successfully kept from Clarke, and it's one that weighs on her more and more every day.

"Then you shouldn't have asked me to get McDonald's. Now my truck is going to smell like fast food and I didn't even get to eat any." At that moment, her stomach growls loudly, as if to plead her case. She tries to give her best pout, but her best friend ignores it with a grin.

Clarke merely laughs. "I think I pulled a baggie of carrots from the fridge for you and put it in your duffel. Want me to check?" She sets the paper bag full of heavenly smelling food aside with a crinkle and tips her seat back, twisting and leaning in search of the duffel.

For a moment, Lexa forgets about her stomach. Her full attention is on the tantalizing strip of pale skin that's peeking out from beneath Clarke's shirt. Stretched out the way she is, Lexa has a perfect view of her navel and her soft, smooth belly. She groans, distracted by a completely different type of hunger. She feels glad she decided against tucking tonight.

Of course, Clarke notices. She sits back up without the carrots, smirking with clear understanding. Lexa averts her eyes just in time to screech to a stop at the red light before the rink. In all honesty, she hasn't been paying much attention to the road.
Clarke isn't willing to let it go so easily. "See something else you want to snack on?" She asks the question sultrily, winking as she follows it up with a mischievous grin.

Lexa's face flushes. She hasn't actually gone down on Clarke yet—not because she doesn't want to, but because she's afraid of what will happen after she does. Even though it's never been explicitly stated, she's fairly certain that Clarke will want to return the favor, and she isn't sure how she feels about that.

The idea of oral sex is both arousing and terrifying. Judging by the way Clarke's lips feel gliding across the rest of her body, Lexa is sure she'll like the sensations, but when she thinks about how it will look, Clarke's pink lips wrapped around her cock—for lack of a better term—she gets an uncomfortable feeling in the pit of her stomach that's kind of like shame. In the limited porn she's seen, it's something of a degrading act—as well as a very heterosexual one.

She doesn't answer the question. Instead, she remains silent and focuses on the road.

"Lexa?"

Lexa looks at Clarke once more, only to see her friend extending a fry in what appears to be apology. She leans over, snapping it up and pressing a gentle kiss on the tips of Clarke's fingers once she's done chewing.

"Sorry," she mumbles. "Just thinking about the game."

"It's a big one, isn't it?" Clarke asks.

Her phrasing makes Lexa wince. "It's the quarter-finals, so yeah, you could say that…"

"Well, in that case..." Clarke runs the very tip of her tongue over her bottom lip, and Lexa's abdominal muscles clench at the tease. "Maybe I should give you something to encourage you? Maybe a little added incentive to make sure that you kick their asses and win? Hmm?"

"More fries?" Lexa asks, trying to defuse the tension, but it's already too late. Clarke's eyes are locked onto her, and they have a distinctly predatory gleam in those lusted blues.

"Nope. If you score a goal this game, I'll give you an even better reward."

That gets Lexa's attention. Heavy heat twitches between her legs, and a soft groan slips from between her lips before she can stop it. Just the way Clarke says the word 'reward' is enough to put filthy ideas in her head: images of Clarke lying back with her legs spread, beckoning her for... Lexa isn't sure what, but she knows it will be heaven, no matter what.

"What kind of reward?" she asks after she's gotten a hold of herself. She shifts on the seat and swallows thickly. Clarke doesn't need to know just how hard her heart is hammering.

Clarke grins, reaching over to lightly graze her wrist. "I was thinking an orgasm for every goal you score... if you win the game. But as for how, you'll just have to win to find out."

Lexa is sure her face has to be as red as a tomato. So far, she's mostly made herself come, with Clarke's eager assistance. Sure, Clarke's hands have wandered, but that's as far as it's gone. The thought of actually giving Clarke control, allowing Clarke to make her come instead of coming with Clarke pressed naked against, watching... it sends her blood rushing everywhere. Suddenly, she's tingling and alive with energy, eager to get on the rink and play.

"Wait, seriously?"
"Yeah, seriously," Clarke purrs. She leans across the gap between their seats, and Lexa sucks in another breath as a teasing palm skims up along her thigh, feeling her leg through her cotton sweats. "That is, unless you think you'll be too tired and sweaty…"

"No way," Lexa protests. "I could never be too tired for you. But sweaty..." She smirks, determined to give a little of her own back. Clarke can't have all the fun, after all. "I'll make sure to take a long shower in the locker rooms after the game. Nice and steamy."

This time, Clarke is the one who lets a whimper escape. Lexa feels her chest swell with pride. Clarke might be able to turn her into a mess, but she has the same power.

"Not too long," Clarke says as they pull into an empty space.

"Not too long," Lexa agrees. She turns off the truck and grabs her duffel from the back, meeting Clarke around the other side for a kiss. She'd meant it to be a quick peck, but the moment their lips meet, she loses herself in the warm glide. Clarke tastes like salt, as well as sugar from her drink, but Lexa doesn't care. Kissing her is just as addictive as ever. "Wow," she pants when they finally break apart. "I'd score goals just for your kisses, you know."

"Flatterer," Clarke teases. She licks her soft pink lips again, still puffy from the kiss. "Come on. Let's get you into your gear… and I want a hot dog."

Lexa stares at her in disbelief. "What? You just ate! I swear, I don't know where you put it all."

They walk across the parking lot to the rink hand in hand, still arguing playfully along the way.

* * *

Lexa walks into the changing room, grinning as she sees her teammates suiting up for their quarter-final game. Monroe and Harper nod in her direction, offering her a salutary fist-bump as she walks past them and toward her locker. Throwing down her stuff, she starts to get changed when she hears the familiar sound of a high pitched laugh. Her blood runs cold and she pauses.

"Didn’t think you’d make it this far Woods," Nia’s sneering voice sounds from afar. “Hardly fair, though, considering everything with your… situation.” Lexa's head snaps up and her eyes narrow into slits, but she doesn’t move. She doesn’t really have to, because Anya appears out of nowhere, fists clenched. Lexa sighs as she watches her sister growl and shake in rage.

“What did you say to my sister?!” she snaps, stepping into Nia’s face.

Nia doesn’t even flinch. She leers right back, and Lexa feels a stab of fear—not for herself, but for her sister. She grabs Anya’s shoulder, pulling her back before she can make a move to turn the confrontation physical. “An, stop. She’s not worth it,” Lexa whispers. “Save it for the ice. Forget what she said. I’m okay.”

“Never could fight your own fight, huh?” Nia chides again as some of the girls behind her snicker. “I look forward to seeing how that all comes to play tonight, Woods. We'll see who’s the better player. I think it’s time that the Snow Leopards take the trophy home, right girls?”

“The only thing you’ll be taking home are your asses after we kick them,” Monroe says, earning a few laughs from the home team. “I mean, you came all the way over to our change room to try and intimidate us. I think we know who’s really scared tonight, Queen.” Nia scowls, clenching her fists as she looks between Anya and Lexa, before collecting herself, crossing her arms over her chest and puffing herself up.
“At least I know that my girls,” she emphasizes the word as she glances over at Lexa, “are all suited to play.” Lexa grits her teeth, trying to not let Nia’s words bite too deep. Anya pushes against her hand, positively furious. Monroe and Harper also jump to their feet, ready to defend their captain if need be. Nia grins, but Lexa gives her no indication of the effect of her words.

“What do you mean by that?!” Anya snarls as she continues to push against Lexa’s hand. “Are you trying to be discriminatory and transphobic? Because that shit will get you ejected, Queen.”

“Me?!” Nia gasps, holding a hand to her chest. “I would never! I was simply going to say—”

“Enough,” Lexa says coldly, her voice commanding and steady. “Get out of here, Queen. I don’t care what you have to say. Leave us.” Anya looks like she wants to fight her further, but Lexa holds her back. Nia eyes them, grinning still as she realizes that Anya looks ready to snap.

“Well,” Nia says with a shrug as she nods to her teammates, “we better get ready. See you on the ice, Woods.” With that, Nia turns around and exits the change room with her goons.

“Were you seriously just going to stand there and take that?” Anya growls as soon as the girls have left. Lexa arches her brow, removing her hand from her sister’s chest and rolling her eyes.

“I wasn’t about to lose my co-captain in a crucial game, and potentially not allow her to be scouted, just because some no-good asshole riled her up,” Lexa grunts back. “Besides, you don’t get to decide how I should feel or what I should do when someone insults me.”

“I am so glad you got dad’s temperament,” Anya says with a huff, “but I could totally take her.”

“Same,” Monroe pipes up, rolling up her sleeve to show off her muscles. “No one messes with our cap and lives through it. We’ll get her back on the ice for you, we swear.” Harper nods, grinning alongside her friend. Lexa’s gaze softens slightly before she stiffens her back and nods to the girls to get ready. She glances back to her sister, only to see concern in her hazel eyes.

“Seriously though,” Anya whispers, “are you alright? What she said—”

“Didn’t matter,” Lexa tells her strongly, nodding her head. “I’m okay. If it happened three years ago, maybe things would be different. I’m good now. It stings, but I won’t lose my shit over it like you.” Lexa adds a good natured chuckle at the end to ease her sister’s concerns. Anya sighs and rolls her eyes, shoving Lexa playfully before returning to her locker to grab her gear.

“You don’t have to be so cocky about it,” Anya mutters before glancing up with a teasing grin.

“Well, if you could just not be hardheaded in wanting to fight everything that even just breathes wrong in my direction, I wouldn’t have to be.”

Anya grunts again, her cheeks tinting a light pink as she leans down to strap up her thick hockey pants.

“Whatever, asshole,” Anya says as she nods her head back up, “I’m just looking out for my baby sister. Anyone that breathes wrong at you will breathe wrong by me. I took an oath, you know.”

“How noble,” Lexa swoons as Anya chalks hockey tape her way, “my knight in shining armor.”

“Nah, that suit’s saved for Raven.” Anya grins dopily. “Though she’s not as much as a damsel in distress as you are. Though I think Clarke holds the spot for swooping you off your feet, eh?”

“Shut up,” Lexa hisses suddenly, turning a bright red as Anya bursts into a laugh. “Why do you
always have to ruin our good sister-bonding moments like that?”

“Oh hush, you giant gay puddle. Get your shit together before you have an aneurysm,” Anya says, clapping her on the shoulder. “Come on. Let’s win this, Captain.”

They skate out onto the ice and are met with the roaring cheer of their local crowd. As soon as Lexa and Anya skate out together, the audience goes wild for the ‘Wonder Woods’, as they’d been dubbed by many people in the past. They both do a lap and warm up a bit on the ice, taking a few shots on Gina, their goalie. The girl deflects most of them, but can’t save them all.

After their warm up and the singing of their national anthem, the girls get in their positions for the face off. Lexa skates up to face the centre of the opposing team, eyeing her with a commanding stare as they both get into the position for the face-off. The ref skates over and holds out the puck, glancing over at the other players to make sure everything is in order.

She blows the whistle and drops the puck. Lexa reaches out and gets at it first, immediately sending it down the line to Monroe, who carries towards the goalie. The Snow Leopards’ defense is better than before, Lexa notes, especially Nia who seems to be guarding Ontari with every inch of her life. She’s playing far more aggressively than she has done in the past.

The first and second periods are a scuffle for territory, which turns ugly when one of their opponents rams Anya back-first into the glass with a dirty block. They get a few power plays from the rough penalties, but they’re unable to get past the line of defense that Nia has set up. They remain with no goals a piece until the beginning of the third period when one of the Snow Leopards manages to slide in a goal on the top left corner of Gina’s net. The crowd shouts in annoyance as the Timberwolves skate around, watching their opponents celebrate.

There’s a few more dirty hits here and there, mostly instigated by Nia or the right wing, Echo. They both get a few solid hits on their offensive line, with the ugliest one ending in a short fight between Monroe and Echo after the latter girl had smashed into Monroe mid-pass in an unsportsmanlike manner, sending her sprawling to the ground and causing her lip to split.

Echo’s given a five minute penalty, and they’re given a power play.

Lexa skates around the ice, noting the clock. There are about seven and a half seconds left in the third period and the Snow Leopards still have a goal on them. The power play will give them a slight advantage considering it’ll last the rest of the game. If they can’t score in the remaining seconds, however, they’ll be losing their chance at getting into the finals and being scouted.

“I know that look,” Anya mutters as she skates up to her sister, “and we are not doing it, Lexa.”

“We don’t have much time,” Lexa says as she eyes the referee coming over with the puck. “It’s going to be risky, but it’ll work. Trust me.” Anya rolls her eyes from under visor, still concerned.

“Indra’s not going to like this.”

“Indra’s not on the ice right now,” Lexa mutters as she skates past Anya to her starting point. She hears Anya’s grunt but shoves it to the back of her head. She remembers Clarke’s words from earlier and centres herself, focusing on the sight of Ontari in the offending goal. Nia is skating around the goalie, her eyes narrowed solely upon Lexa, causing her to gulp.

Lexa cocks her head back over her shoulder to look at Anya, giving her a nod.

Anya still looks hesitant, but she nods back regardless.
As Lexa turns back around, she keeps her eyes on Nia’s challenging smirk. She bites her lip and squares her shoulders, tensing her quads as she prepares to sprint forward to the goal.

There’s a millisecond of silence before the whistle is blown and the puck is dropped.

Lexa jolts forward like a horse out of the gate as she sees the puck speeding down the ice. She breaks past the right wing and skates as fast as she can to get to the puck before it crosses the line and the play is called offside. She manages to jump and slide over a charging offender, taking a hard right as the puck veers off towards the glass. She sprints up the side of the rink, catching a drift from the wall as she propels forward with her lungs burning for air.

Jutting out her arm, Lexa manages to sweep the puck into the curve of her stick and invert it between her legs. She crosses over around the second last defender, now on a clean breakaway. She keeps her head low and her body as streamlined as possible as she charges down the line, ignoring the concerned shout coming from of Anya who’s skating behind her.

And then, two feet from the goal that could potentially tie the game, everything changes.

Lexa suddenly feels her skates leave the ice and her body violently rockets into the air. Her breath is sucked clean from her lungs as she feels her heart rise up in her throat. Her vision flips upside down and her body twists unnaturally in midair due to the catastrophic force of the hit.

Lexa swears that she feels the wall before she sees it.

The force of the dirty tackle, combined with the insane speed she’d been skating, sends her into the rigid wall, causing her to careen out of control upon landing back on the ice. Her body crumples upon itself in an unnatural barrel roll, putting the brunt of the fall upon her chest as she slams into the ice and the wall with a harsh thud. She can’t breathe as she feels her chest deflate from lack of oxygen. Her vision spots and she wheezes a few times, but no air comes in.

The crowd is screaming, but Lexa can’t hear anything but muddled white noise.

She barely manages to turn her head to the side, catching the blurred vision of her teammates throwing punches at the members of the opposing team. As the fog lifts, she sees Anya decking Nia and shoving her roughly, screaming obscenities before speeding over to where she’s still winded and down upon the ice. Nia goes to follow, but is punched in the nose by Harper.

“Jesus, Lexa.” Anya’s voice is hazy and seemingly far away, but Lexa can still make out the words she’s saying despite the incessant ringing trying to overpower everything. “Fuck, I’m gonna end that bitch’s career, I swear. Shit, can you hear me? Lexa? Indra’s coming, okay?”

“Mm,” Lexa mutters, tongue thick in her mouth. “Mhm, I’m fine. Just… give me a second.”

The referees are breaking up the fight as she sees her coach walk out onto the ice with protective guards over her boot soles. She’s surprised to see Abby Griffin beside her with a first aid kit, concern and worry in her eyes after noticing that Lexa hasn’t gotten up yet. She knows that Clarke’s mom was supposed to come, but she feels awkward now. She glances up to the crowd to see Clarke standing beside Raven, staring down at her with concern and shock. Anya’s hands are suddenly unclasping her helmet, removing it and immediately searching for some blood or bumps, and luckily for her, the older girl thankfully doesn’t seem to find any.

Lexa grimaces, coughing with a wheeze as her body’s adrenaline wears off and she starts to feel the pain. She feels the soreness and ache in her shoulders and back, but that doesn’t compare to the pain she feels between her legs. Her hand immediately skirts downwards and she winces as she feels a
sharp jolt of agony coming from the apex of her thighs. She can’t help but whimper and roll slightly over to her side, trying to pull her knees to her chest to stop the pain. Anya quickly notices where she’s holding herself and her features darken considerably.

“Don’t,” Lexa wheezes as she sees the way Anya’s gaze murderously darts over to Nia. “It’s not worth getting ejected.” Anya seethes, gritting her teeth as she reluctantly stands her ground.

“That bitch should be ejected,” Anya snaps back, venom in every word she hisses. “I swear—”

“Lexa,” Indra’s voice calls out, clearly disappointed but equally concerned as she kneels beside the downed captain. Her eyes flit to where Lexa’s hands are cupping her groin and she sighs.

“Alright sweetheart,” Abby says gently as she kneels beside Lexa’s side. “Look over at me?”

Lexa glances up, squinting when the doctor shines a bright light into her eyes. She follows the light, having done this several times before after being hit or knocked down upon the ice.

“No signs of concussion,” Abby concludes as she pockets the light. “Are you feeling dizzy?”

“A little,” Lexa admits truthfully, wincing when she starts to loosen her leg muscles. “Not from my head though…” She flinches as she sees Abby’s eyes dart to her crotch. It must be delirium, because the only thing Lexa can think about is how Abby’s looking at a part of her that Clarke was touching not even two days ago. A blush creeps up on her face, luckily going unnoticed.

“Alright, we need to get you off the ice so I can check you out,” Abby tells her softly, giving her an encouraging smile. Anya’s at her side in an instant, but just as she’s lifted up, she sees the referee skating over towards her, hands crossed behind her back and a frown on her face.

“Ref,” Lexa croaks as she nods to the woman’s direction. “What’s the matter?”

“Miss Queen was ejected from the team after delivering an unsportsmanlike blow. You’ve been awarded a penalty shot.” She can practically see Indra going red from beside her, but she stands strong on the ice, feeling her pain slightly numb off as the words process in her mind.

“Don’t even think about it,” Anya says sternly, gripping onto her arm. “You’re worth more than a goal, Lexa. Don’t worry, we’ll score in overtime.” At this, Lexa’s brows raise in confusion.

“Wait… I scored?”

“Yes,” Indra tells her as Lexa gets adjusted back on being on her feet. “The last second and the puck went in. The goalie was too distracted in your fall to notice it crossing the line off the bar.”

“Then we can win this right now,” Lexa pushes, shaking herself off from Anya’s grip. “I can do this, coach. Let me take the shot.” Indra’s brows nearly shoot to the ceiling at her request.

“Not a chance, Woods. You’ve already risked enough with your reckless play—”

“I can do this,” Lexa says in a low growl, “please, Coach. I can do this.”

“Can’t I take it?” Anya asks, glancing at the ref, who promptly shakes her head.

“It’s your choice,” the referee says, “you have a minute to decide as we get the players off.”

With that, the referee skates away, leaving the four women to themselves. Lexa glances back at her sister, giving her a pleading look. Anya looks just as disappointed as Indra, but she stays silent. Lexa turns to Abby then, trying to see what the doctor’s verdict is on her condition.
“Abby,” Lexa says as she swallows down the pain, “I’m okay, I promise.”

“I don’t like this,” Abby says with a sigh, rubbing her forehead. “But fine. If you can skate a lap around the rink and not feel dizzy or lightheaded, you can take the penalty.” Lexa’s eyes light up as she looks to Indra, who tries to hide her proud smile with furrowed brows and a frown.

“You’re an idiot,” Anya mutters, letting go of her sister and handing her helmet back. “But if you’re going to do this, you damn well better score, sis.” Lexa sets her jaw and nods, buckling the helmet back on, setting off on an easy skate around the rink before anyone can object.

Finding that there’s nothing really causing her to be lightheaded or dizzy, Lexa skates to the centre of the rink where the referee has laid down the puck. She glances up into the crowd to see an anxious-looking Clarke watching her with a hand cupped over her mouth. Her stomach gets butterflies as she remembers her best friend’s words from earlier. She’s already secured herself one goal, but maybe she might be able to weasel her way into another one right now.

Indra, Abby, and Anya are waiting at the benches with the rest of her team, each of them glancing upon her in concern as the referee puts the whistle to her lips and blows.

Lexa glides down the ice with the puck slowly, building up her momentum as she approaches Ontari. The goalie skates out of her box a few paces, knees bent inwards, low to the ground. Her eyes stay glued to the puck, causing Lexa to smirk in pride. She enters the last few feet and sprints to the side, pulling her stick around her body in a circular motion within a matter of milliseconds, causing Ontari to try and readjust but her attention had been solely on the puck.

With a graceful, seemingly-easy flick, Lexa tips the puck into the top corner of the net.

The crowd goes wild as she fluidly skates around the goal post, grinning as her teammates joining her on the ice to celebrate their victory and advancement. She’s jostled slightly from player to player until she’s embraced by the slender, muscular arms of her sister. Anya’s holding her in a tight, proud grip before she pulls back to glance into Lexa’s eyes for any kind of pain.

“Abby still wants to take a look at you. Let’s go,” Anya tells her with a teasing grin once she notices that Lexa seems to be relatively okay. Lexa sighs and blushes again, causing Anya to bark out a laugh as they skate over to the centre line to shake hands with their opponents.

“Hockey wasn’t the only thing I scored in tonight,” Lexa says with a beaming smirk, taking Anya by surprise. Her older sister claps her shoulder lightly, chuckling as they finish shaking hands.

“When did my idiot sister learn how to be suave?” Anya grins cheekily. “I’m proud of you, Lex. Look at you, winning games in the most dramatic ways and wooing the ladies. What a champ.”

“Oh whatever,” Lexa says, her smile fading as she sees Abby and a stern-looking Indra waiting for her in the hall. She gulps, feeling her face pale at the sight of annoyance and disbelief on her coach’s face. Anya chuckles again, shaking her head as she gives her shoulder a squeeze.

Lexa gulps as she looks past Abby’s shoulders to see Clarke frowning at her, arms crossed over her chest. She shudders on a breath as she notices how Clarke’s cleavage is revealed a little better at the support her arms provide. She tries to snap out of it, but the look her best friend is giving her is a mixture of anger, concern, and unbridled arousal. She can’t help but shiver.

Lexa held up her end of the deal and now it’s Clarke’s turn to make good on her promise.
Thanks for reading and hope you liked it!
Clarke is ready to make good on her promise, but Lexa has a change of plans.

We hope that this softens the hardships that everyone had to face when watching the election today. Please remember that every single one of you are loved and cared for, and that no one can take that away from you. You matter, your life matters, and please, please take care of yourselves. Lots of love to you all <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Clarke remains glued to Lexa's side for the rest of the night.

Clarke is there while Abby does a brief examination, sitting right next to Lexa on the locker room bench. Her grip on Lexa's hand is so tight that it almost hurts more than Doctor Griffin's poking and prodding.

Clarke is there when Abby declares Lexa fit to go home instead of to the hospital, and both of them breathe a shared sigh of relief. The first words Clarke says are, "Can I stay the night with her, Mom? Just in case?" Lexa isn't surprised, but she is grateful, especially when Abby says yes.

Clarke is there when Indra launches into the lecture Lexa has been waiting for, though with a clear hint of pride gleaming in her eyes. Her coach doesn't say so, but Lexa can tell she's secretly pleased. "However, the scouts were impressed with both of you," she says at the end—only after a very long speech about how risking a career-ending injury on the ice isn't worth a moment of glory. The words make Lexa's heart swell, but Clarke's smile fills it even more than Indra's grudging praise.

Clarke is there when Anya comes in for a hug, and before Lexa can even mention it, she says: "You can spend the night at Raven's if you want, Anya. I'm gonna keep an eye on our favorite idiot." Anya agrees, though with a grin that makes Lexa worry for the future. The teasing she'll have to endure for the next few weeks will surely be brutal.

Clarke is there to carry Lexa's hockey bag out to her truck. She takes the keys without being asks and even holds open the door so Lexa can slide into the passenger's seat.

"I'm fine to drive," Lexa protests, but she already knows it's useless. Clarke is determined.

Clarke drives her home in silence, although it's not an uncomfortable one. Whenever they stop at a red light, Clarke's hand wanders over to squeeze the top of Lexa's thigh. It clearly isn't meant to be a sexual touch, but Lexa shudders anyway.

By the time Clarke pulls into Lexa's driveway, they're holding hands between their seats.
"Want me to get the bag?" Clarke asks.

"Leave it," Lexa says. "I'll grab it tomorrow."

They go into the house together, with Lexa fishing in her pocket left-handed for her keys since Clarke has taken her right. Clarke switches on the lights for her, closes and locks the door behind them, and keeps clutching Lexa's fingers all the way up the stairs.

"I'm not going to fall," Lexa tells her.

"I know." But Clarke helps her anyway and doesn't let go until they're on the second floor.

"Your Mom already checked me over," Lexa murmurs as Clarke shepherds her into the upstairs bathroom. Her face flushes with embarrassment and also because Clarke's fingertips have come to rest against the small of her back. "I promise I'm fine. It's just a couple of bruises."

Clarke sighs. She closes the bathroom door and when she turns, Lexa sees that her eyes are shining with concern. There's a tiny wrinkle right in the middle of her forehead, one Lexa wants to smooth away. But when she reaches out, Clarke takes her hand again, bringing it back down. "Take off your shirt and sit on the toilet, okay?"

Lexa obeys. "You're not mad at me, are you?" she whispers, shoulders slumping as she stares at her lap.

To her relief, Clarke laughs. "No. You were just... being you. Stupid, beautiful you."

"I did win the game," Lexa points out, as if that makes it better.

The edge of Clarke's finger tucks under her chin, lifting it up so their eyes meet. There's softness there instead of anger and Lexa lets out a breath of relief.

"Yes you did. Lift up your arms."

Lexa does, allowing Clarke to strip her out of her shirt. The sports bra underneath is trickier. Her upper back and ribs have taken quite a bruising and she knows the process would have been much more painful without Clarke's help. Clarke lets out a quiet gasp when it comes off and Lexa shudders as gentle fingertips probe at the red patches blossoming along her sides. They haven't turned purple yet, but Lexa knows that will come in the next day or two.

"Oh God, Lexa—"

"It's fine," Lexa protests, "I'm fine."

"I'm going to kill Nia, I swear."

Lexa chokes back a laugh. "You'll have to get in line behind Anya if you want to do that."

Clarke doesn't reply. She continues tracing Lexa's injuries while Lexa holds perfectly still. The touch is too light to hurt. If anything, it's tingling and ticklish...until Clarke's hand snakes down her stomach to cup tenderly between her legs. "What about here? I saw her shoulder catch you."

"Uh..." Lexa's face feels like it's on fire. Clarke's hands have wandered very close to that area during their 'make-out and masturbate' sessions over the past few weeks, close enough to graze the base or the side of her shaft as Lexa makes herself come. But this is different. This is all Clarke. If Clarke's hand remains there, Lexa isn't sure she can suppress her reactions. "I'm fine. My cup got it."
"Are you sure?" Clarke squeezes the slightest bit, putting enough pressure for Lexa to feel the motion through her sweats. "Because I could kiss it better for you if you want."

It's a sweet, teasing offer. Lexa can tell without asking that Clarke will not be disappointed no matter how she answers. From the soft tone of Clarke's voice, Lexa is certain that if she says no, Clarke will simply cuddle up in bed behind her with an arm around her waist until morning without even a pretend pout to make her feel guilty.

But Lexa wants more. She has wanted more for weeks. Pressure is building in her lower belly and Clarke's hand feels good resting on top of her. If she takes care of herself like usual with Clarke merely watching, it won't be the same.

Then there is Clarke's promise. Lexa hasn't forgotten. She hasn't forgotten the zip of excitement that raced down her spine in the car when Clarke whispered it or the surge of joy she felt on the ice after scoring that final penalty shot. She's earned this. No way in hell is she going to pass it up because some idiot slammed her into a wall with a dirty check.

"Would you?" she asks, staring directly into Clarke's eyes. "I know we haven't, uh—" She forces herself not to look away. She has to admit, she's curious. Curious how Clarke's hand will feel around her, stroking her, how Clarke's mouth will feel touching her, kissing her, drawing her in…

Clarke grins. A decidedly wicked look flashes in her hooded eyes and her soft pink tongue peeks out to roll across her full bottom lip. Her expression is positively devilish and it sends another stab of want straight to Lexa's core. "I wouldn't have promised if I wasn't going to follow through. I'm ready for this. Are you?"

A groan slips from Lexa's throat before she can stifle it. She swells beneath Clarke's palm, throbbing with anticipation. "Bedroom," she mutters, rising from her seat and lacing her fingers through Clarke's. As much as she wants this, she doesn't want it to happen while she's sitting on a toilet.

Clarke allows the change of location, but she doesn't stop smirking the whole walk to the bedroom. As soon as they pass through the door, before Lexa can even start toward the bed, Clarke's lush body presses against hers, pinning her to the wall. It's quick and passionate, but Lexa is also keenly aware of the way Clarke makes sure not to put too much force on her bruises. It's one of the many little ways Clarke looks out for her and Lexa is grateful.

She's even more grateful when Clarke's hand slides back down along her stomach, slipping under the hem of her shirt to tease her abdominal muscles before dipping beneath the waistband of her pants. Lexa groans as soon as Clarke's hand wraps around her. It feels so different than her own, although she's too fuzzy-headed to articulate why. The first squeeze is light and testing, as if Clarke wants to make sure she's really all right to continue, but then she starts stroking and Lexa's head lolls back against the wall. This is all happening so fast, but she doesn't want to slow down. It feels too good to stop—and it feels even better when Clarke starts dusting kisses along the sensitive skin of her neck.

"Is this okay?" Clarke asks, thumb swiping gently over the slippery head. "Does this feel good, Lex?"

Lexus can only whine in agreement. It does feel good, so much better than she'd thought it would, and she's already embarrassingly close to coming. Part of her still can't believe that Clarke is touching her. Clarke is touching her. It's happening swiftly, against a wall with her pants still half-on, but she doesn't care, because Clarke—her best friend, the woman she loves—is touching her at last.

It starts slow at first. Clarke isn't tentative, but she is thorough, testing her grip to see how tight she
should squeeze and how fast she should pump. "You're warm," Clarke mutters, kissing back up along Lexa's neck to nip softly at her lower lip. "You're so warm and soft..."

Lexa throbs in Clarke's fist and Clarke laughs lightly between kisses. "Okay, not that soft. But you feel good."

She continues experimenting, but Lexa isn't even sure about half of the things Clarke is doing. Her mind is full of exploding colors and she's making sounds that would be embarrassing if she wasn't so distracted. It feels like a dream, one of the many dreams she's had about her and Clarke together, but some part of her knows that it isn't, and that part is in a state of joyful disbelief. She pulses hard in Clarke's hand, leaking more of her arousal over the tops of Clarke's fingers.

Soon, Lexa's hips are jerking frantically. She thrusts through Clarke's loose fist, hardly noticing when Clarke pulls her pants down to mid-thigh. She does notice when Clarke drops to her knees, though. Lexa’s lips quiver, but she isn't sure what to say. Struck speechless by the sight of Clarke gazing up at her with those perfect blue eyes, she simply stares.

Clarke doesn't do anything. Her hand keeps stroking softly, but she doesn't make any movements to do what they've agreed upon. She simply waits, and Lexa can't hear anything but her own ragged breaths and the frantic drumming of her heartbeat. She realizes why Clarke has stopped, but her throat is blocked up and she can't say the words.

Instead, she places one of her shaking hands on the back of Clarke's head. At first she simply strokes Clarke's golden curls, petting rather than pushing. But eventually, the ache inside her is too much. She puts the slightest amount of pressure on Clarke's head, a silent plea.

Thankfully, Clarke decides to take pity on her. She exhales and Lexa feels warm breath wash across her sensitive tip. The head twitches above Clarke's fingers and a soft whimper fills the room—Lexa isn't even sure the sound has come from her. Then Clarke's lips graze over her just so, a light, open mouthed kiss. Lexa moans in astonishment. Even that tiny action has her feeling so much. She threads her fingers tighter through Clarke's hair, shaking from head to toe.

Lexa stares in awe as Clarke's tongue darts out, flicking through the pool of wetness the kiss has created. It's a visual she wasn't sure she'd like until she sees it with her own eyes—and the fact that it's Clarke makes all the difference. Any dysphoria she might have felt is gone before it can even start to form. She's not focused on her own body, but on how Clarke is making it feel. She's not focused on the symbolism of this act, but on how hot and welcoming Clarke's mouth is as it takes the tip of her inside.

"Fuck," Lexa grits out from between clenched teeth, fighting to keep her hips from bucking. She wants more of the heat, more of Clarke's warm lips and silky tongue, but she doesn't know how to ask. It's all she can do not to give in to the fullness pounding along her length. She's already close to coming and Clarke has barely gotten started.

For a moment, Lexa isn’t sure if she should tug harder or not, or even at all. The action seems to borderline on power-dynamics that she doesn't feel like delving into. Deciding to go against a tug, she grazes her thumb over Clarke’s scalp in gentle, soothing strokes. Clarke hums around her and it takes all Lexa has to keep her knees from buckling. She gasps and slides down the wall a bit, her thighs burning with the strain of staying upright. The moment seems both too fast and painfully slow and she struggles to commit it to memory. She never wants to forget this or let it go.

“Babe?” Clarke whispers, pulling away. Lexa tries valiantly to ignore the small string of saliva that connects Clarke’s lips to her cock before it snaps with the force of gravity. Clarke wipes at her lips and stares up at Lexa in concern, obviously confused.
Shaking her head, Lexa gulps and glances at her thighs. “Um,” she mumbles sheepishly, her face turning a deep shade of red. “Can we move to the bed? I… my legs are starting to hurt and they’re still sore from the game and—”

“Lexa,” Clarke scolds, rising back to her feet. She takes Lexa’s hand in her own and leads them back towards the mattress. “You should have told me. Are you okay?”

“I’m fine,” Lexa responds with a smile, which quickly turns sheepish again. “Also… it was a little much. I got too excited.”

Clarke’s brow raises at that. “If that’s the case,” she whispers as she seats Lexa down on the edge of the mattress, “I should finish where I left off, shouldn’t I? Wouldn’t want to leave you hanging.”

Lexa shudders at the sultry rasp Clarke tags onto the last word, but before she can form a response, Clarke’s lips are back on the head of her cock, her tongue swirling around the divot in meticulously slow circles.

“Oh God!” Lexa cries out, hips jerking upward. “Clarke, fuck.” She’d thought having Clarke’s hand on her was overwhelming, but this is unbearable. Clarke’s tongue is so much hotter and wetter and smoother than could have possibly imagined. It feels like heaven, like something too amazing to exist.

Clarke seems to get the hint, because the next thing Lexa feels is that warm mouth sliding down her shaft until Clarke’s nose brushes the bridge of her pubic bone. The explosion of light and the overstimulation is almost too much, but Lexa recovers by shoving a knuckle into her mouth and biting hard. She sucks in a deep breath, trying to keep from exploding. This might be her first time letting Clarke touch her, but that doesn't mean she's going to surrender her pride.

“Babe,” Clarke hums as she pulls back to take a breath, “I want you to do it.”

“But…” Lexa stammers, knowing exactly what Clarke is talking about. Even so, she can barely form words. Her body is a livewire and every muscle is trembling. “Are you sure?”

Clarke smiles, climbing upwards until she's hovering over Lexa. “Trust me, Lex. I want this.”

Lexa’s eyes slide shut when she feels Clarke’s lips effortlessly glide against hers. She gets a faint taste of herself, and she can’t help the twitch that runs up her shaft. Suddenly, she isn’t nervous anymore. That’s something about Clarke that Lexa has always loved the most—her ability to sense what’s wrong before Lexa can even begin to figure it out. Lexa lets herself fall into the kiss, melting into Clarke’s lips. She reaches up and gently frames Clarke’s cheeks with her palms, smiling brightly.

“You ready?” Clarke breathes out, separating their lips for a hot second.

Lexa nods, mute.

“Tell me if you want me to stop,” Clarke says again, stern enough for Lexa to know she’s being serious. Lexa smiles again and nods, still tongue-tied and in disbelief that this is happening. Clarke smirks, returning back to the playful side as she goes back down.

Clarke picks up a soft pace, sliding her mouth up and down the top half of Lexa’s shaft. The heat and the slickness is driving Lexa insane, but her world is shot into space when suddenly Clarke’s left hand reaches up and palms under her cock, tenderly rolling her balls in her deft, slender fingers. Turns out, that’s all it takes for Lexa to finally lose control.
“Clarke!” Lexa cries out, her entire body shuddering. Pleasure pounds along her length and when the fullness bursts free from the tip, she gives a jolting sort of jerk, clawing at the mattress. She stares down at Clarke, in total awe of what she's seeing. Clarke's mouth is still wrapped around the middle of her length, but Clarke's eyes are gazing straight up into hers, and Lexa can almost fool herself into believing the care and affection shining are from her love.

She spills over, small slips of her release disappearing into Clarke's warm, inviting mouth. Clarke swallows every drop, and though there’s not too much, Lexa is still completely astonished that Clarke hasn't spit it out. In fact, she seems to be enjoying it, moaning deeply with each pulse.

The moans only make Lexa come harder. Long after she's empty, her length keeps rippling as she drifts down from her high. Like her heart, her body doesn't want this moment to end.

“Whoa,” Lexa breathes once she finds the words, “just… whoa.”

Clarke finally releases her with a soft peck to the head, letting Lexa's softening shaft rest against the inside of her thigh. The cool air brushes against it, causing it to twitch, but she's too spent for another erection. Exhausted, Lexa collapses back against the bed with a huff. Small beads of sweat slide down her forehead as she closes her eyes. She can hear Clarke chuckling, but she's too blissfully worn out from her orgasm.

Tenderly, Clarke tucks Lexa back in her sweats before crawling up the bed and resting her head on Lexa’s shoulder. Clarke kisses the bruises dotting her collarbone and Lexa hums in contentment. She curls her arms around Clarke's shoulders and nuzzles into her neck with a catlike purr. She feels Clarke peppering kisses along her jaw and cheeks until finally those candied, puffy lips reach her own in a slow dance. Clarke parts her mouth and Lexa dips inside, eager to get a taste of her own release.

“That was amazing,” Lexa says at last, looking at Clarke with a dazed expression. “Thanks for being so… you know. I don’t even know the word. I don’t even have words. That’s how great it was. It was awesome. Wow.” Lexa knows she's rambling, but she can’t help it.

“Did you like it when I touched your… you know?” Clarke asks, not sure of the words Lexa would prefer.

Lexa nods, giving Clarke an assuring smile. “It was all perfect,” Lexa beams as she squeezes Clarke closer, “totally worth the penalty.” She opens one eye to shoot Clarke a cheeky grin, to which Clarke simply rolls her eyes before leaning in to give her another slow, loving kiss. They two of them tangle their legs together and curl up against each other’s bodies. Lexa’s hands wander to the bottom of Clarke’s shirt, her fingers trailing around the hem before grazing the softness of her sides.

“You know, I might need a while to get warmed back up, but I scored two goals tonight...”

She waits for Clarke to get her drift, which doesn't take long.

"You'll need a few minutes before I can give you orgasm number two," Clarke laughs, running her hand over the front of Lexa's sweats again.

"Not really." Lexa places her hand over Clarke's, removing it from between her legs and bringing it to a much more interesting place: Clarke's plush inner thigh. She can't feel Clarke's skin through her pants, but Lexa knows from experience how soft it is underneath. "You promised me two orgasms. You never said they had to be mine."

"It was implied," Clarke points out, but she isn't really protesting. Instead, her eyes are alight with
interest. "Are you saying it's my turn?"

"I think you mean my turn. Come on, Clarke. You just gave me the best orgasm of my life. I want to return the favor—if you're okay with it."

With a wide grin, Clarke rolls onto her back and spreads her legs. She wiggles her hips for a moment, trying to get comfortable, and Lexa can't help but chuckle at the adorable display. As usual, Clarke is fearless.

She continues watching with rising interest as Clarke shimmies out of her pants, tossing them over the edge of the bed. The panties she's wearing beneath are bikini cut, and Lexa's amusement vanishes when she notices the dark stain in the middle. Clarke is already wet for her—wet enough to show through the fabric.

There is a small flicker of uncertainty in Clarke's eyes when she notices where Lexa is looking, but it doesn't last. In an instant, she's back to her usual confident self. "Well?" she asks, her voice only wavering a bit, "are you just gonna stare, or are you gonna do something about it?"

Lexa smirks. Now that it's her turn, she's determined to pay back Clarke for every shudder, every shake, every wicked little tease. She still isn't sure of exactly what she's doing, but she'll figure it out on the way. She's always been good at improvising on the ice. This can't be too much harder.

She starts by running her palms up along Clarke's bare legs. The shiver that passes through Clarke's body is her reward, and moisture rises in Lexa's mouth. Clarke's nipples are already hard beneath her tank top, poking up through the thin material, and Lexa can't ignore them. She tugs down the front until one of Clarke's firm breasts is showing and leans down, breathing over the puckered pink tip. Before she can even take it in her mouth, Clarke's hands shoot down to her hair, clutching it in desperation. "That's mean," she gasps, but she's already arching in invitation.

"You pinned me against a wall," Lexa reminds her. "You're mean." But she doesn't tease any longer. She draws Clarke's nipple into her mouth and sucks, swirling her tongue in the way she knows Clarke likes. This, at least, is familiar territory. Hopefully using her mouth in other places won't be much more complicated.

Clarke responds beautifully. Her gasps grow louder and her hips start grinding, and Lexa's heart flutters when she feels the wet fabric of Clarke's underwear cling to the top of her thigh. She raises her knee and flexes as she kisses her way over to Clarke's other breast, offering a firmer surface to grind against.

The hands in her hair tug harder. While Lexa had tried to be gentle with Clarke's head earlier, Clarke has no such reservations. Lexa doesn't mind, though—feeling Clarke's passion only reassures her that she's doing something very right. Clarke is taut and trembling beneath her and Lexa takes it as a sign of success. She begins kissing her way down Clarke's stomach, struggling to pace herself. She's eager to slide her shoulders beneath Clarke's knees, but she doesn't want to rush. This is a special moment. Neither of them has done this before and she wants to commit it to memory.

Clarke isn't quite so sentimental. "Lexa, please," she groans, nails digging a little deeper into Lexa's scalp.

Lexa can't resist. She never can when it comes to Clarke. She shifts down, pausing her exploration of Clarke's belly and sliding between her legs instead. She does stop to nuzzle the soft, downy blonde hairs right beneath Clarke's navel, but only for a moment. Carefully, she peels down Clarke's panties.
Even though she's seen Clarke naked before, Lexa is still struck dumb every time. Clarke's outer lips are swollen, covered in sticky, clear strands of wetness, and so incredibly soft and pink. They pout open, inviting Lexa's touch, and her curiosity gets the better of her. She wants to know how Clarke feels, outside and in. The closest she's gotten is cupping the back of Clarke's hand as she touches herself, feeling a few slips of wetness seep through Clarke's fingers.

This is different. This time, she isn't just watching. She gets to make Clarke come.

Though her breaths are shaky, Lexa is determined. She brings two of her fingertips to Clarke's heat, drawing them up through the glistening slit. It's even softer than she expects. Clarke's wetness makes everything silky-hot and so, so smooth, and Lexa gasps in astonishment. She presses a little harder and this time she's rewarded with a low moan.

Lexa hadn't known she was hungry for those sounds until Clarke starts making them. She draws her fingers up and down, up and down, watching in amazement as Clarke opens even further for her. She seems to be blossoming apart, and Lexa makes it her mission to explore every inch of her new lover.

When she notices Clarke's clit jutting out from beneath its sheath, she taps one finger lightly over the head, testing what kind of reaction she'll get. She isn't disappointed. Clarke's eyes roll back in her head and she lets out a groan that stabs straight to Lexa's core. A sharp gasp leaves Clarke’s lips as she writhes on the bed, clawing at the sheets for some grip.

“Good?” Lexa asks, her voice low and raspy. Clarke doesn’t reply except for nodding. She's all whimpers and sighs.

Taking that as a sign to continue, Lexa continues her playful exploration. She paints small circles over Clarke's clit, grinning when her hips and thighs jump involuntarily. Maybe I'm not so inexperienced after all, she thinks gleefully. She collects plenty of wetness on her fingers before drawing them down to Clarke’s pulsing entrance, probing inquisitively.

“Clarke?” Lexa asks softly, glancing back up. “Can I…?”

“Please.” Clarke reaches down to wrap her fingers around Lexa’s wrist, gently tugging her forward. Lexa beams, transfixed with the quivering, wet walls that seem to be singing out just for her. And then, with one last breath, she presses into the heat.

* * *

The first thing Clarke realizes as Lexa's fingers slide inside her is how long they are.

She’s always known Lexa to have strong, graceful hands due to hockey and years of playing music, but she’s never experienced them quite like this. Clarke shivers and closes her eyes, drinking in every sensation of the slight coolness of Lexa’s finger as it fills her. She bites her lip and groans, her own fingers clamping roughly around Lexa’s wrist.

“Jesus,” Lexa croaks, her voice strained. “You feel… amazing.”

“Yeah?” Clarke asks. She blinks open her hazy eyes, looking down at Lexa's awestruck face. “Is it good?”

“Clarke, you're so wet and warm, and you're hugging me so tightly.” Lexa gives another soft push, causing Clarke to squeeze down involuntarily. Lexa gasps at the sensation and Clarke smirks, squeezing again on purpose.
“Add another,” she pleads. It doesn’t feel too much different than it does when she slides her own fingers inside herself, but it's also entirely different, because this is Lexa inside of her. Filling her. Taking her.

Lexa nods and dutifully obeys, sliding a second finger in beside the first. The added pressure is slightly too intense, mostly because Lexa’s fingers are a bit longer than Clarke's own, but the fullness is still comfortable. Safe. Right. Clarke takes a deep breath and shudders, adjusting to it all.

“Clarke,” Lexa sighs, lulling Clarke into a comfortable haze. “Can I taste you?”

Clarke’s brows shoot up at the suggestion. She looks down at Lexa’s eager gaze and gulps. “You don’t have to because I did, Lex. I’m okay with you being inside me.”

“But do you want me to taste you?” Lexa asks, her eyes gentle and reassuring. Clarke blushes, chewing at her lower lip, then nods yes. Simply imagining the dexterity and skill of Lexa’s tongue is enough to make her inner walls tremble around Lexa's fingers, and she's thought about it, dreamed about it for so long.

If she’s as good with it as she is when she’s kissing me… Clarke can’t even finish the thought without shivering.

Lexa ducks her head, nuzzling her nose into the coarse hairs above Clarke's mound. Clarke watches, breathless, as her best friend takes her time to learn her, lips gently coasting over her clit, hot breath hitting the sensitive tip and causing her to twitch. Clarke’s eyes roll back in her head as Lexa’s tongue darts out and lightly circles the straining bud, swirling over it with impossibly silky heat. With just a few strokes, Clarke can feel herself hovering on the brink.

Lexa must have noticed, because before Clarke can even articulate her feelings, those long fingers are thrusting in and out, slow and deep. As soon as they're fully sheathed, Clarke feels the tips curl upwards to prod at her sensitive front wall. The sensation is dizzying. Black specks creep up on her eyes and warmth spreads through her body. It starts as a tingle in her spine, then explodes in a rapid burst of energy.

Lexa pumps deep inside her, hooking forward one last time, and Clarke feels the world crumble around her. She squirms across the bed, bowing as Lexa's masterful fingers continue to curl and push, thrashing as Lexa's talented tongue strokes and sucks her sensitive clit. She's coming, coming for Lexa, shivering and squealing and shuddering with sounds that would have embarrassed her if Lexa's mouth didn't feel so fucking good wrapped around her.

Her inner walls ripple and pulse, pulling Lexa's fingers even deeper, clutching them even tighter. She never wants to let go. Lexa feels so perfect, so right inside her, and as her best friend—no, her lover—sends her flying toward the stars, Clarke can’t help but mouth the words she's been holding back this whole time. *Lexa, I love you.* Thankfully, all that comes out is another shout of bliss. Heat surges between her legs, flowing into Lexa's hand and over her thighs.

The orgasm seems to last forever, and it isn’t until Lexa's hand finally stills that Clarke slumps onto the sheets, boneless and spent.

"Clarke,” Lexa breathes, “that was…”

Lazily, Clarke blinks open her eyes only to see something shocking.

Lexa’s chin and mouth are dripping wet, and so are the sheets between them.

“Oh my God,” Clarke gasps. She weakly scrambles to a sitting position, looking at the dark stain on
the sheets in confusion. “Did I… did I… did I just pee on you?”

To her credit, Lexa just laughs and licks her lips. The sight has Clarke twitching and groaning again, but she feels more embarrassed than anything. Lexa seems to notice and immediately stops laughing so that she can crawl up the bed and sit beside Clarke, her hand gently reaching out to tilt her chin upwards. Clarke looks up, still mortified, but when she gazes into those soft green eyes, all her shame dissolves. In that moment, her heart bursts at how gentle Lexa’s smile is.

“I don’t think so,” Lexa says with another beaming smile, “I think I made you…you know…squirt.”

Clarke stares between their bodies again in disbelief. The evidence seems to suggest that Lexa is right. The wet rivers trailing along her legs are clear, and there are thick, sticky strands of whiteness mixed in. “Did I? I've never...I mean, you've seen me come before. I've never done this.”

Lexa keeps grinning. "I didn’t think you had it in you. I’m impressed.”

Clarke can't help but laugh at the ticklish movements of Lexa's lips and the smugness in her tone. She gives Lexa a shove and rolls her lover underneath her, still mindful of the bruises dotting her collar. "Shut up, you idiot."

“You know there’s nothing to feel bad about, right?” Lexa whispers after some time, rubbing soothing lines along Clarke’s arm. Clarke can’t help but melt at the soft tone of her voice. “I don’t care about it, Clarke. Actually,” she says, a little more wistful, “I thought it was really hot. Seriously.”

Clarke just sighs, snuggling closer to Lexa. The two of them move to the drier part of the bed, slipping under the covers and holding each other close.

"Lexa?"

"Yeah?"

"Thank you for sharing this with me. I'm so glad it was you. It feels...right."

There are stars in Lexa's eyes as she answers. "Me too, Clarke. I wouldn't have wanted it to be anyone else."

They kiss softly, lips mingling together, sharing each other's taste.

Clarke knows Lexa is worn out, so it’s no surprise to her new lover is snoring within a few minutes. She takes the time to simply drink in Lexa’s features, trying to commit them to memory. She wants nothing more than to remain in this moment forever, to be Lexa’s lover and her partner until the world stops moving.

The feeling makes her heart leap up in her throat, and so Clarke decides that she’ll let the thought settle for tonight. She pretends that her imagination is reality as she curls up closer to Lexa, sliding one of her hands on Lexa’s belly. Lexa simply snores louder, turning in her sleep so that Clarke is wrapped tightly in her arms.
And then, surrounded by warmth and safety, Clarke allows herself to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

Ste yuj, friends <3
The Question

Chapter by commandmetobewell

Chapter Summary

Lexa flusters over asking Clarke out to Finn's year-end party while Clarke finishes up her most important art piece.

Chapter Notes

Sorry this took so long, y'all!! It was on me (commandmetobewell) -- I was drowning in school work and family drama, but I hope that this update is worth it, even if it is kinda a filler chapter. We'll get back to the action and steamy scenes very soon! :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Lexa?"

Lexa stares down at her notes from fourth period, swirling the tip of her pencil in circles to decorate the margins. She isn't sure what she's drawing—a flower or spirals or something—and her mind is definitely elsewhere. It's back in her bedroom, with Clarke cuddled up naked against her, soft hands running over her body...

"Lexa?"

The memory sends a flash of heat straight between her legs. She chews at her bottom lip, squirming uncomfortably in her seat. The noise of the cafeteria fades around her until the only sound in her head is the soft, breathy echo of Clarke's voice...

"Lexa... Lexa, fuck me. You feel so good, Lexa. I love you, Lexa..."

"Lexa!"

She finally snaps out of her daydream and turns toward the person shouting at her. Anya is sitting across from her at their usual lunch table, staring at her with a knowing smirk. "Nice of you to join us, Captain Woods," she drawls, earning chuckles from the other players around the table.

"Oh, shut up," Lexa mumbles. "I was just thinking about last week's game."

"You mean the one where you fell on your ass?" Raven says from beside Anya. She's cuddled up beside her sister, one hand placed conspicuously on top of Anya's thigh. Lexa tries to ignore the envy that shudders down her spine as she sees Raven's nails lightly scratch over the fabric of Anya's jeans, not because she likes her sister's girlfriend, but because she wants that.

She wants Clarke to sit beside her like that, head on her shoulder, hand on her lap, and to be hers.

"I mean the one where I scored a penalty shot and won the game," Lexa snaps back, trying to hide
her flustered expression.

"Really?"

Quick as a flash, Raven reaches across the table and snatches her notebook. Lexa makes a grab for it, but despite her quick reflexes on the ice, she isn't fast enough to pry it from her friend's hands. Raven has time to see what she's been doodling: including the very conspicuous 'Clarke' in the middle of a field of badly drawn flowers before Lexa finally manages to grab it. "Seriously, Lexa? I know the two of you have a little something going on, but this is some middle school bullshit right here."

Lexa aims a pointed glare at Anya, who merely shrugs nonchalantly, her hands going up to defuse the situation.

"Don't look at me, squirt. I didn't need to tell them," Anya says, lowering her hands. "Everyone already knows. It was painfully obvious even before you started messing around. Best friends don't hold hands and touch each other as much as you two do."

Lexa glances around the table at the other players. For once, Monroe and Harper have nothing to say. They just grin at her, and the back of Lexa's neck suddenly feels like it's on fire. "Guys?" she asks them, almost pleading. "Come on?"

Monroe snorts, unable to hold back. "Are you kidding?"

"We've been taking bets," Harper informs her. "I lost forty bucks. I thought the two of you would get together last year."

"We aren't together," Lexa insists. Even though she knows she doesn't have to, her first instinct is to defend herself. "It's just... it's nothing."

Raven laughs. "I'd like to learn how to get hickies from 'nothing'."

Lexa instinctively pulls the collar of her shirt up only for the entire table to burst out laughing. "Got ya," Raven chuckles, though she makes the jest light and playful. "Now you've just confirmed it. You're doing the dirty with Griffin."

"It's honestly nothing," Lexa mutters, shifting back in her chair to sulk. "We're just making out a little so we don't suck when we go off to college. You know I've never had a girlfriend before. She's helping me out as a favor. That's all."

Raven lets out a low whistle. "Some favor. I wish you would have asked me for those kinds of favors last year." Anya clears her throat and arches her brow, eager to know what point her girlfriend is trying to make. Raven hurries to finish. "Then I would have broken up with you on good terms and started dating your super hot sister so we could live happily ever after."

Anya gives her a suspicious look, but doesn't remove Raven's hand from her thigh.

Lexa flounders, unsure what to say, but she's saved by the arrival of two more people at the table. Octavia and Lincoln head in their direction with full trays, and Lexa scoots away from Harper and Monroe to make space.

Her attempts to distract and escape her inquisition are thwarted, however, because she leaves her notebook out where she had just been sitting. As soon as Octavia sits in the seat she'd just vacated, Raven slides the coiled book across the table at her.

"Octavia, check it out. Lexa and Clarke are doing the friends-with-benefits thing."
Lexa reaches for the notebook again, but Octavia grabs it first. *I can skate up to fifteen and a half miles an hour but I can't grab a stupid notebook? Come on, Lexa. Get it together.* Lexa flushes as she watches Octavia laugh when she sees the field of flowers and Clarke's name in cursive, and instantly pulls out a pen from her own bag to add her own big heart around it.

"Come on, Octavia," Lincoln says, clicking his tongue in disapproval. "That isn't nice."

"Hey, I'm not on the team anymore," Octavia says. Once she's finished scribbling, she hands the notebook back to Lexa. Passing her a disarming grin as she does it, before announcing to her boyfriend, "I've gotta get my hits in when I can, you know."

To Lexa's embarrassment, she sees that her own name has been added above Clarke's, along with a plus sign.

"It's really not a big deal, Octavia," Lexa grumbles, but Octavia waves her off.

"It is so a big deal. We've been waiting for the two of you to pull your heads out of your asses since eighth grade. Congratulations."

"We're not dating!" Lexa practically shouts, loud enough to get the attention of the tables near them. She glares them down until they shrink back and stop paying attention to her. Despite her weakness for Clarke, she can cut quite an imposing figure when she wants to. There's a very good reason why she's been nicknamed the 'Commander' on the ice.

"I'm only going to say this one more time. Clarke and I have made out a couple times so we won't suck at it in college when we actually date people. That's it. There's no dating and we're not girlfriends. We've just made out."

"'Made out,'" Anya snorts, complete with air quotes. "Right. I've seen your laundry, Lexa."

There is a chorus of 'ooohs' from around the table, all except for Lincoln. As always, he's the kindest of the bunch. "Clarke is a good choice, Lexa. She's a really kind and respectful person. That's the sort of girl I'd want my first kiss from." He smiles at Octavia, who stops her laughing long enough to return it.

"Thank you, Lincoln," Lexa sighs, relieved that someone is taking her at her word. The last thing she needs is all of their mutual friends to start pressuring her and Clarke to date. It's just a painful reminder of what she can't have.

"You know, you should take her to Finn's party," Lincoln says. "It's going to be fun. His parents are out of town."

Raven makes a face at the mention of her ex-boyfriend, but Anya gives her waist a squeeze. Lexa watches as Anya's face gently nuzzles the back of Raven's neck, her lips lightly dusting an encouraging and reassuring kiss there. "The two of us are going—"

"Only to rub his nose in it," Raven adds, her lips returning back to the knowing smirk as Anya gives her neck another kiss.

"True. But we're still going. I agree with Lincoln, Lex. You should take Clarke."

Lexa’s eyes grow wide as she thinks about the possibility. *Clarke with me? Maybe this is the chance I have to finally ask her out.* Gulping down her nerves, Lexa nods and flimsily smiles in the direction of her sister and her girlfriend. Anya’s brow cocks, but Lexa ignores the curious expression on her face so that she can gather her belongings and stand up.
“I’ll think about it. We’re both really busy.”

Raven snorts. “You mean getting busy.”

“Raven,” Anya says, thwacking Raven’s side while rolling her eyes. Her gaze flits up to Lexa, concern beneath the stoic expression in her eyes. Lexa blushes further and shakes her head, non-verbally telling her sister that she doesn’t want to talk about it right now. Anya simply dips her head and turns her attention back to Raven. The two of them lean into a kiss, promptly earning groans from the rest of her friends around the table as it gets messy. Seeing an out, Lexa sighs and turns away, holding up her hand in silent farewell. A chorus of ‘bye, Cap’s echo behind her as Lexa throws out her trash before making her way down the halls toward Clarke’s locker. She holds her head up, thinking about all the different ways to ask Clarke out.

Should she try to be suave? Confident? She has been reading a few pickup lines…

_No_, she thinks with a frown, _no pickup lines. Not after what happened last time._

Lexa had gotten a few of the one-liners from Raven and had curiously tried them out one day on Clarke, but the experience only ended in a disastrous collection of giggles and a lot of embarrassment on her end. Luckily she was able to play it off as a joke, but even then, Lexa knows better than to push her luck by making the same mistake twice.

_Just… be yourself. Clarke likes you. Obviously she does if she wanted to do this with you… right?_

Shaking her head, Lexa takes a deep breath and walks up to Clarke’s locker, not surprised to see her best friend nose deep in her biology textbook while simultaneously popping chips into her mouth. She has to take a second to just observe Clarke, her heart thudding inside her chest quicker as she realizes just how beautiful her best friend is. Nothing could ever compare.

“Hey!” Lexa coughs, awkwardly drawing Clarke’s attention. Clarke looks up and smiles warmly, shutting her book before tossing it haphazardly into her locker. She beams at Lexa as she shuts her locker after retrieving a binder. Then Clarke extends her arm and loops it through Lexa’s own, pulling them back into the hall.

“I am so ready to get done with this last exam,” Clarke grins as she pops another chip into her mouth before licking her fingers. “I’ve studied my ass off for it and I just hope I don’t screw it up. It’s not that I don’t know the material, I just feel so uneasy about testing.”

“Clarke, you’re on the honor roll and have averaged a ninety-six on every single test up to date in this class. I have no doubt you’ll not only kick this final’s ass, but you’ll kick all your other final’s asses too. Just… a lot of asses will be kicked.” Lexa ends up rambling the second half, but luckily Clarke seems to find her bumbling endearing as she chuckles and leans into her side, her nose grazing the edge of her shoulder. Lexa flushes slightly when she feels Clarke give her the barest of kisses through the fabric.

“You’re the best, you know that?” Clarke says in a soft voice, her gaze going a bit distant and hazy as she glances upwards. “I don’t where I would be without you, honestly. I know we’ve been kind of radio silent these past few days because of exams, but you’re the best friend I could ever hope to have. You just… you make me feel like I can do anything, Lex. I know it’s really sappy to say, and I must be getting my period soon or something, but the last person who made me feel like that was my dad.” Clarke’s voice gets a little choked as she nears the end, but Lexa quickly reaches down to intertwine their fingers and give a slight squeeze.

“You know,” Clarke chuckles sadly, her eyes misting as she glances back up. “It doesn’t hurt so
much when I’m with you. Missing him, I mean. It was hard for the first few years, but you’ve helped me through that pain. I love you, Lex. I would do anything for you.”

“And I you, Clarke. You know I love you more than I love anything or anyone in the world,” Lexa whispers back, leaning down so that she can peck Clarke’s forehead amicably. “And that includes hockey, you know. And candles… well, maybe not candles…”

“You’re such an ass,” Clarke laughs as Lexa smirks down at her, “you and your obsession, I swear. One of these days you’re going to set fire to your room and Gustus will be pissed.”

“Yeah, yeah whatever. Make fun of me while you can, but when we’re in the apocalypse and there’s no source of electricity or warmth, we’ll see who’ll be crying over candles,” Lexa teases as she leads them up the stairs and towards their class, English with Ms Green. The both of them walk through and take their seats next to each other as other people file in.

“You know,” Clarke whispers in a raspy, low voice. “I can think of several different ways to keep warm that don’t involve candles or electricity.” Lexa blushes again, feeling her nether regions stir with the implication given with the flirtatious look in Clarke’s eyes.

Keep it together! Remember, you still have to ask her.

“Yeah,” Lexa croaks instead before clearing her throat. “Yeah, me too.” Clarke beams, raising their connected hands to peck Lexa’s knuckles before releasing her grip and heading back to opening her binder. She flips through her doodle-ridden notebook. Lexa clears her throat again and turns to face her best friend, sucking in a breath to gather up the remaining courage she has left. C’mon, it’s just one small question. You can do this.

“Hey, uh, Clarke?” Lexa asks, her voice more confident than she expected it to be. “You got plans this weekend?” Clarke looks up and shakes her head. Lexa smiles nervously. “Well, there’s this party. An end-of-school type thing at Finn’s place. I know he’s a dick sometimes, but the gang’s going and I figured I’d ask if you wanted to come as my… you know… um… well,” Lexa stumbles over the words gracelessly, blushing harder.

Just say it!

“As your friends-with-benefits?” Clarke giggles, though something flashes through her eyes that Lexa can’t quite grasp at in her embarrassment. No, Lexa thinks, not that. As my girlfriend. I want you to be my girlfriend because friends doesn’t cut it anymore, and it never has. I’m in love with you. All of these thoughts, and yet Lexa can’t seem to announce them.

Instead, she only manages a defeated, “Yeah, that.”

“Sure,” Clarke says, deflecting to her phone to check her calendar. “I’m free. It’ll be good stress relief.”

Lexa can only flimsily nod, her heart dropped to her stomach as she realizes that the moment has passed and she missed her chance. Luckily, before she’s forced to respond, Ms. Green walks into the room and quietens the class to prepare for her lecture.

* * *

It’s not a date, Clarke tells herself, wiping a ticklish smudge of charcoal from her nose with her sleeve. It’s seventh period, which means art class, but for once, she can’t focus.

It’s not a date, she reminds herself, catching the tip of her tongue between her teeth during her
struggle to concentrate.

_You're only going as friends. Friends who happen to sleep with each other. It's not a date._

But even though she knows it's not a date, Clarke can't ignore the fluttery feeling in her stomach. Lexa doesn't do things casually. She's got a weight to her words and her decisions, a deliberateness that extends to everything she does. She isn't the type to act on whims or emotion. Even on the hockey field, when she's tapped into all her determination and drive, Lexa isn't impulsive. Taken all together, that meant her ask had been carefully calculated.

_But what was she calculating? What does she even want? More sex? Because she could just ask for that without taking me out…_

Clarke sighs, studying the sheet of heavyweight charcoal paper she's been trying to fill for the past forty minutes. The drawing is rough for the moment, more gestural than defined, but it's slowly taking shape: a woman standing on the balcony of a tall tower, gazing out over the sprawling city below. Of course, it's Lexa's face. That decision hadn't even been in question.

Lexa isn't smiling. Clarke can never quite capture the smile she sees on Lexa's face when they look at each other. Instead, her expression is confused, pensive, perhaps even hurt. At the very least, it's weary. The lines around her eyes and throat are stiffer than the ones that make up her body. Her hands are tense as well where they rest at her sides—sides clad in light leather armor from a distant world, but with a familiar shape that Clarke can remember running her own hands along…

Clarke returns to work. As she fills in empty spaces with shadow, she wonders if Lexa will like her drawing. She wonders if Lexa will ever see it. She has an extra ticket to her art show in a few weeks—every artist gets two for friends and family—but she hasn't decided what to do with it. Normally, she would want Lexa to come, but since almost every single drawing in the set is of Lexa, or has something to do with a shared memory of theirs…

She doesn't want to come across as creepy.

The rules of their engagement have always been clear. Friends first. No extra feelings. Drawing someone obsessively over and over again and using them as your model without consent definitely crosses that line, although Clarke can't articulate how.

Still, some part of her wants Lexa to come. Some part of her wonders if she should give Lexa the ticket.

_Maybe after the party._

Putting the decision off is easier. The party will clarify some things. Perhaps then she'll be able to tell whether Lexa's invitation was really a date, or just more of the same. As it is, her relationship with Lexa is both not good enough and too good to give up.

"Is this your final drawing?"

Clarke turns to see not her teacher, but the Principal, Mr. Kane standing behind her. It's something of a surprise. She knows him—her mom is involved in school politics and Clarke suspects she has something of a crush on him, considering he's been over to dinner a few times—but he doesn't usually make his way down to the art room. There must be a special reason.

"Mr. Kane," she says, turning on her stool. She moves to wipe her hands on her pants before realizing that's hardly better.
"It's okay, Clarke. I'm just dropping by out of curiosity. I know you were the student selected for the county art show this year."

Clarke sighs. "Let me guess, Mom told you."

"She did, yes, but I would have found out anyway. I'm expected to go, and since you're participating, I'm looking forward to it." He smiles, bending closer to study the drawing. "This one seems interesting. She almost seems like she could be on the cover of a book."

Clarke gives a weak smile in return. "Yeah. I guess she does."

"And have you heard back from any of your colleges yet?"

It's a question Clarke has been fielding from practically everyone but Lexa for the past few weeks. "They're still studying my portfolio. It'll probably be a few more weeks, but I'm hopeful."

"So am I." Principal Kane begins to turn, but stops in mid motion. "You know, you should invite Miss Woods to the show. I'm sure she'd like that drawing." With a nod of farewell, he leaves the room, although he stops to offer an encouraging word to some of the other students on his way out.

Clarke stares after him for a while before picking up her charcoal again. Great. This is just what I need. My mom's would-be boyfriend somehow knows about my not-girlfriend.

But as she studies the drawing, she starts to think that Principal Kane might be right. She should invite Lexa, as her friend if nothing else. Her tongue has been in my pussy. It's stupid that I'm too afraid to invite her to a stupid art show.

Her mind made up, she dives back into her drawing with renewed enthusiasm. It's the last one she has to present, but she's determined to finish strong.

* * *

It's not a date, Lexa tells herself as she finishes tightening the laces on her skates. The smell of the rink is already in her nose, sweet cold air with just a hint of warm sweat and rubber.

It's not a date, she thinks as she leaves the bench and hits the ice, surrendering to the feel of freedom. But though her body feels like it's flying, her mind feels stuck in neutral.

But if it was a date… she did say yes, didn't she?

"Lexa! Head's up."

The puck comes gliding toward her a moment later and she stops it with her stick, returning Anya's grin. It's just like her sister to keep her on her toes even before practice has begun. She taps it over toward Monroe, and then she's off again.

They warm up their shots and passes before running a few skating drills. Lexa immediately snaps into her commander mode, barking out orders alongside her sister as they whip their team into shape. There's a reason why they are the defending champions, and it all boils down to their work ethic. The expression 'no pain, no gain' was practically invented by them. There's not a single practice in which someone leaves without their muscles screaming and their body coated in sweat. But none of the women would ever defy their co-captains, because despite the gruelling training routine, their skill has increased tenfold.

Deliberate practice, Indra once told them, that's what separates good players from the great ones. You don't need natural talent. You need hard work, determination, and grit.
And as Lexa looks to Anya, speeding down the side of the rink at breakneck speed, practicing a roadrunner passing drill with Harper, she knows her coach is right. They spend maybe ninety percent of their practice just doing drills. And it pays off, because they are able to apply their skills into the games like it’s second-nature to them.

Turning her attention back to the drill at hand, Lexa watches as Monroe and Fox check both Anya and Harper, not afraid to get aggressive and use their bodies to ram them away from being able to pass properly. However, Monroe miscalculates her sister’s approaching speed and violently gets smacked down. Lexa has to hold back her smirk as she watches Harper stifles a giggle from afar when Monroe lands flat on her ass with a discontented grumble.

“Have you forgotten about our physics test from last week?” Harper chuckles as she extends her arm and helps Monroe upwards. “Momentum, doofus. She was going a mile a minute.”

“You so confident, blondie? You face her,” Monroe quips back, rubbing her ass. “You try looking at that scary-ass face charging down the ice and pretend like it’s not gonna hurt when you make the hit.” Anya’s stoic face twitches into the smallest semblance of a smile at the acknowledgement of her intimidation on the ice, but it’s gone just as quick as Lexa skates over. She nods to her teammates, non-verbally bringing them in for the next drill.

“Footwork time, ladies. Everyone pair up,” Lexa says strictly, “we’re doing the Ice Knight.”

This time, Monroe can’t hold back her moan of annoyance. “Oh come on! That’s the worst.”

“We have scouts coming for final game,” Anya says sternly, coming to stand beside her. “All of us have worked extremely hard for the last four years to develop our skills. We are talking about not just being on university teams, but maybe even the national team. Our school ranks the highest in the state, and on this side of the coast, we are the reigning champs. All of you are here because of your hard work and dedication. We’ve never let any amount of pain deter us from achieving our goals, literally and figuratively.” Lexa nods, her lips pulled into a tight line as she stares at her friends, the team that had slowly wormed their way into her heart and became her family in her entire experience in high school.

“We may be graduating this year, but each and every one of you have worked harder not only on this ice, but outside of it as well. So many of you are accepted to so many well-recognized institutions and are going on to become outstanding human beings. We have two games left,” Lexa says as she looks around at her team, her heart getting a bit choked up as she sees how a few of them are blinking back tears. Even she has to school her emotions as she looks to her sister. These women had been there since her first transition, and not a single one of them had ever turned her away or made her feel less than her worth.

And then, in time, they respected her and accepted her leadership like it was a natural role.

Lexa takes a deep breath, her gaze shifting over Monroe, Harper, Fox, and the other women who stare back at her. They may have lost a few team members along the way, either for other sports or for more academic reasons, but these few had been together since they were in middle school, some even since elementary and preschool. She tilts her chin up assertively and grips onto her stick like it’s a staff. Her posture is straight, unwavering, strong, as she nods at her sister and then back at her teammates with pride and passion.

“We have two more games in which we will skate on to this ice as a team, as a family, as a band of sisters. We are more than the pain, the blood, the sweat, and the tears. We are warriors, we are fighters, we are survivors. This team has seen a lot of hard times in its full four year course,” Lexa says, her voice growing solemn as she remembers the hardships they’d endured, from losses to
injuries to close calls on the ice. She shakes away the negative thoughts as she looks back to her team, her voice swapping from sad to driving.

“But all those times we lost hope, fell apart, and picked ourselves back up have made us the women we are today. For that, I commend you. All of you. These last four years have not been easy, but the hard work and determination that each of you are willing to put in is far more than Anya, Coach, or I could have ever asked for,” Lexa tells them seriously, making sure that her appreciation and reverence coat her tone to rile up her team. “That being said, we just have a few practices left. What will we do? Will we keel over and decide to throw in the towel because a drill is too boring or long or painful, or will we do what we always do?” She looks at Monroe, proud to see the shorter woman’s jaw set and her shoulders square.

“We’ll do what we always do,” Monroe says, her voice a fierce growl. The rest of the team assert their agreement through mutters and the clacking of their sticks against the ice. This time, Anya steps forward, eyeing the entire circle of women riled up and ready to practice.

“And what do we do?” Anya asks, holding her up. “What do we do when things get tough?!”

“We fight back!” Comes the chorus of shouts. There’s some more commotion before Anya holds up her hand and watches them all get their blood pumping and their energy running.

“Now everyone pair up and grab the dividers,” Anya barks out, “whistle blows in one minute.” Without any hesitation, the women skate away, grabbing at the necessary equipment before pairing up, defenders with offenders, and the two goalies together.

Lexa and Anya skate over to middle so that they can watch their entire team, setting up the divider between their feet before standing up straight. Lexa quickly skates over to the bench to grab at her whistle before skating back to her position. She looks to her teammates, happy to see them all eagerly awaiting her first blow with hungry, eager eyes.

As soon as she blows it, the drill begins.

It’s one of the hardest, most gruelling drills. A minute of fast-feet, followed by crossovers and backwards-to-forwards pivots, and finishing with some quick touch passes. At the end, each person does a half-turn backwards to switch spots with a new player. All of it repeats, and with each repetition, the increment of time increases until a peak of four minutes, before it climbs back down to it’s original one minute interval. The intense drill doesn’t stop until everyone is back with their original partners, and by that time comes, they’re all wiped. There was no question as to why this was their coach’s favourite exercise.

“Alright,” Lexa says, sweat dripping off her chin as they finally finish their last repetition, “everyone do five slow laps and then meet in the middle for some cool-down stretches. Well done, ladies. I think it’s safe to say that we’ll call it a day after that. Grab some water, too.”

This time, there are a few mumbled groans, not out of disobedience, but soreness. Lexa sighs as she slides in beside Anya, her thighs trembling and aching from the drill. She blushing slightly when she remembers the other reason why her thighs might be trembling. She scoffs to herself as Anya languidly skates beside her, a puck between the curve of her stick.

“Why is it that I always pick the most awkward times to think about Clarke?”

“Because you’re a lovesick nerd,” Anya quips, causing Lexa’s head to jerk upwards and her footing to nearly falter. She thanks the Gods above that she decided to bring up the rear so none of her team members could see her fluster at her sister’s response. Lexa gulps, trying to regain some sort of composure, but her thoughts are still flooded with Clarke.
Clarke’s head on her shoulder, hand wrapped around her, soft and smooth…

Clarke’s *mouth* wrapped around her, hot and wet and silky…

“Alright gross,” Anya chuckles as she feigns disgust, “I love you, Lex, but sometimes you have your head so far up in Clarkeville that it’s hard to communicate with you without learning something I never needed to know. *Ever.*” Lexa frowns at that, turning a slight shade of pink.

“Hey,” she quips back, scowling. “Don’t act like you’re so innocent. I’m still scarred from that time I caught you and Raven fucking in the kitchen when you thought Gustus was at work and I was at Clarke’s house.” Anya rolls her eyes and chuckles, not embarrassed at all.

“Not my fault. It was a Friday. You’re always at Clarke’s on Fridays,” Anya reasons soundly. “Besides, the kitchen was the last place we had left to christen that wasn’t a private space.” Lexa shakes her head, but then pales as she skeptically looks over to her smirking sister.

“Wait…,” she says as she realizes something, “you didn’t… not in the den… did you?”

“Unfortunately yes,” Anya says, having the audacity to look slightly sheepish as she looks over and grimaces, “we got carried away and may have, you know… on the loveseat.”

“That’s where I sit!” Lexa gasps, mentally gagging at the thought. “Anya! That’s disgusting!”

“Not one of our finest moments, I’ll admit, but hey, you only live once.”

“Not me,” Lexa moans as she finishes her last lap, ‘I’m going to die before I’m thirty because of you. Did you seriously have to do it on the loveseat? I watch my documentaries there!”

“Oh hush up, drama queen. At least I don’t draw hearts around my notebook that say ‘future Mrs Griffin-Woods’ like I’m in middle school. If anyone’s disgusting it’s you, little sis. Your heart-eyes are so powerful they could probably melt steel. I know you’re more gushy than me, but this is an all time low, Lex. I’m still baffled you could get even *more* lovesick.” Anya finishes her tease with a gentle elbow to her ribs, making the jest lighthearted and playful.

“Whatever,” Lexa mumbles, the sadness creeping in when she realizes that what she has with Clarke is probably most platonic. Especially with Finn always talking to her and taking up her time recently. The more she thinks about it, the more she remembers that what they’re doing is simply practice. Lexa can’t help but tremble as the insecurities set in.

*Clarke wouldn’t just use you for your body. She’s your best friend. She loves you.*

Right?

“Lex,” Anya says, her voice growing serious as it snaps the younger sibling out of her daze. “Hey, look at me.” Lexa looks up, trying to mask her emotions, but like always, Anya sees right through it. They slow to a stop just on the outside of the rink while the team grabs their water bottles before slowly gathering in the centre of the rink for some cool-down stretches. Lexa swallows thickly, trying to hide the nervousness she’s feeling.

“Listen to me, okay?” Anya says as she gently rests her hand on Lexa’s shoulder. “What you said to the team works the same for us, too. Especially for you, squirt. We’ve been through so much together, more than we should ever have had to go through as kids, but those hardships made us, but especially you, into someone so strong and beautiful and amazing. I don’t have nearly the same amount of strength or passion or altruism that you have.”
Lexa chuckles at that a bit, sniffling as she swallows down another wave of overwhelming love and admiration for her sister, for the woman that would go to war for her over the smallest thing. They may have polar opposite personalities, but their bond was stronger than a magnetic pull. The two of them were conjoined at the hip and were intensely protective of each other’s hearts and souls. While her sister comes off as cold and aloof—a seemingly uncaring and typical apathetic teenager with a permanent resting ‘bitch face’, as she’d called it—she knows that Anya loves those close to her just as fiercely as she does.

Lexa still remembers the time she grilled and threatened Raven when Anya had casually told her that she was dating the aspiring engineer. It’s in their nature to be protective and cautious over each other. Just even thinking about all the times Anya had taken her fists to judgemental people or her sharp, ire-filled glares to skeptical teachers makes her want to cry out of gratitude and love. She doesn’t know where she’d be without her ferocious, and at times extremely intimidating and downright terrifying, older sibling. The thought of a life without Anya makes her shiver involuntarily, but as always, her sister is there to catch her.

“Lexa, hey, I’m not going anywhere,” Anya hums slightly. “I told you already, any girl that can’t see how awesome you are will face my fists, whether you like it or not. The amount of love and kindness inside your heart is abnormally large, but that’s what makes you special. Whatever you have between you and Clarke, whether it be friends-with-benefits or more, I hope that you never, ever forget that you are worth more than just being a warm body for someone. You deserve to be loved and cherished forever. I know can’t protect you or speak for you, I know, but no one hurts my baby sister gets a free walk. The Wonder Woods stick together, no matter what. You and me until the end, squirt. No girl gets in the way of that.”

Lexa’s eyes well with tears as she holds back the emotion burbling up her throat. She can’t take the overstimulation so she chuckles lightly, her voice breathy and shaky as she lightly punches Anya’s shoulder to break the overwhelming amount of emotion she’s feeling.

“And you call me a sap,” Lexa chuckles airily, “if only Raven could hear you now.” Anya rolls her eyes and grins, and Lexa knows that she can tell her sister got the real weight of her words. Lexa can’t help but tug Anya into a hug and burrow into her shoulder, gripping her tightly. Anya doesn’t fight back, instead reaching up and clutching her just as tightly.

“I love you,” Lexa whispers into her sister’s shoulder, “thank you for everything, An.”

“Always, Lex. I love you too.” Anya hums the words back gently, taking the time to slowly rub her back over her padding. “Now let go of me. We still have an image to uphold, you know.”

That breaks the moment, causing the two sisters to laugh and pull apart before joining their team in the middle for some cool down stretches. There’s some light banter and some teasing from Monroe and Harper about how Anya’s going soft, but her sister is quick to clap back with a retort about Monroe’s earlier spill on the ice from a simple body-check. Lexa simply takes the time to enjoy the smiles and laughter of her sister and her teammates.

This, she realizes, nothing beats this feeling right here.

Well… maybe one thing. Or specifically, one person.

“Hey Commander,” Monroe chirps, grinning as Lexa nods her head up, “you should go for it.”

“Go for what?” Lexa asks, arching her brow as she takes the water bottle from Anya and takes a massive gulp, happy to have satisfied her thirst. Monroe’s grin grows even wider.
“Ask Clarke out to Finn’s party,” Harper cuts in before Monroe could say something more inappropriate and embarrassing. “She’d totally say yes, you know. I’m in her art class. You’re not the only one doodling in your notebook. Ask her to the party not as a friend, but a date.”

“Please do,” Anya whines dramatically, “I can’t take the fluffy but still somehow suffocatingly sexual tension between you anymore. Just get together already.” This earns a few cheers and some laughter in agreement from some of her teammates, especially Monroe and Harper.

“Honestly, Lexa, you love Clarke more than you love hockey. Now that says a lot because you love hockey probably more than any human should,” Monroe says with a beaming smirk. “I mean I don’t think I’ve ever seen you sadder than that time the Canucks got slaughtered by the Bruins in game seven of the Stanley Cup. If you were in Van, you’d have started the riot.”

“They were going to win!” Lexa growls, proving their point. “You don’t get it, they put Luongo in goal. Luongo! What were they honestly thinking? The Sedins and Kesler—”

“Yes, yes, it was an unfortunate game and I know you were inconsolable for like three days after it happened,” Anya chuckles as she lightly shoves her sister, “I was there, remember?"


“And don’t use a hockey pickup line,” Monroe chimes in, “no offense, but no matter how great you think they are, they’re honestly terrible, Lex. I get secondhand embarrassment.”

“We all do,” Harper adds, followed by a nod from Anya. Lexa can’t help but roll her eyes.

“Fine I won’t,” she says, throwing her hands up defensively, “But like, the puck one—”

“No!” Anya groans. “Anything but the puck one. It’s the worst.”

“Just ask her out,” Harper says with a chuckle. “We’re behind you, Commander.

Lexa takes a deep breath and looks at each of them, staring at her with unbridled love and affection and she can’t help but nod and smile. A slight blush takes over her face, but her teammates don’t judge her for it. They know she’s always been a bit more reserved when it comes to romance, and judging by the earlier teasing at the cafeteria, they’d known more than they’d let on about her feelings for Clarke. Despite their teasing, they accept her.

“Alright,” she says, mustering up the courage to say the words confidently, “I’ll ask her out.”

The cheer she gets in response is deafening.

And then it hits her, as she swarmed in a massive group tackle, that she’s going to do it.

She is going to ask Clarke Griffin out on a date, and she’s not going to back down this time.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading!!
The Answer

Chapter by commandmetobewell

Chapter Summary

Clarke has a chat with Raven and Anya gives Lexa a little gift.

Chapter Notes

YAY ANOTHER UPDATE! We're gonna have some more for you soon, maybe even as early as tomorrow. Hopefully this will make up for the three month absence from before. Thanks for sticking with this story and reading it!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The bright stadium lights are shining down into Clarke's eyes, but that isn't why her face burns. Everyone else is wearing appropriate attire—light sweaters and hoodies, holding warm hotdogs in a greasy cardboard holders—but she's already stripped down to her tank top despite the chill of the rink. She's flushed and overheated, and it has nothing to do with where she's sitting on the bleachers and everything to do with the woman she's watching.

It's the start of the semifinals, the second-to-last game of the season, and Clarke knows Lexa is nervous. Still, she doesn't look it as she glides around the rink for warm-up laps. Clad in her jersey and padding, Lexa looks a bit bulkier than usual, but her movements are graceful and sinuous. She's a hunter on the ice, swift and determined, and the way she moves has Clarke squirming in her seat.

"Enjoying yourself, huh, Griffin? All those jock girls making you sweat a little too much? Or is it just one girl?"

Clarke turns to look at Raven, who happens to be seated next to her, munching on a handful of buttery stadium popcorn. Her shiny lips are tilted into an obnoxious smirk.

"Are you comfortable?" Clarke shoots back. "Anya looks pretty fierce out there tonight."

It's true. The Woods sisters are both commanding the ice, and Clarke and Raven both watch as Anya executes a sharp turn to zoom off in the opposite direction.

"Don't I know it." Raven tucks her popcorn between her legs and pretends to fan herself. "At this rate, she'll definitely be getting lucky after the game tonight."

Clarke's temperature rises. If things continue like this, Lexa will too, although she doesn't mention it aloud.

Unfortunately, Raven picks up on her thoughts. "You'd better take yours to your house, because Anya and I are gonna be busy at theirs."

Clarke's eyes widen, and she does her best to compose herself. She does have some ability to lie,
although when it comes to Lexa, that ability is sorely tested. "What makes you think I—"

"Don't even try, Clarke. Lexa already told me you two were doing the friends-with-benefits thing. Don’t be mad, we all figured it out first anyway."

For a moment, Clarke hangs in limbo, unsure whether to be offended or exhilarated. She hasn't technically given Lexa permission to tell their friends about the arrangement, but the fact that Lexa wants to talk about the two of them together, in public... she could be very wrong, but it almost feels like she's one step closer to the coveted 'girlfriend' status that always seems to hover just out of reach.

"But to be honest," Raven continues, "I think she's interested in upping her game with you. You know she's gonna ask you to Finn's party?"

Clarke's eyes widen in shock. She's spent the past several days pondering just how to ask Lexa to her art show without scaring her off, and now, the answer has been dropped right in her lap. It'll be a return-of-invitation. Asking her while they're both a little buzzed, hair a little sweaty from dancing, listening to the thump of the bass from some dark corner, sounds just about perfect. She won't feel awkward then, like she's crossing some sort of boundary with no going back. She *knows* Lexa will say yes.

She feels a hand on her thigh, and turns to see Raven looking at her with intense brown eyes.

"Clarke, I'm gonna be honest with you. Lexa has been in love with you for years, and I know you're crazy in love with her too."

Clarke opens her mouth to protest, just as she has every other time her friends have teased them about acting like a couple, but Raven shushes her.

"No, listen. We all know it. You both know it. So what's holding you back? You're *sleeping* together and you still won't admit it."

Clarke feels as if all the wind has been sucked out of her. Raven's just landed a hard check on her, and she isn't sure whether she can recover. She mouths once or twice, but no words come out. Raven has put her entire dilemma into a few sentences, and she has no idea how to respond.

"I... I don't know?" she says at last, completely unsure. It's new for her. Normally, she's the confident one in her friend group, and she never hesitates to speak her mind.

"You scared?"

Yes, she's scared. She's terrified. She wants Lexa more than anything—as a friend, a lover, a partner. But the asking itself is *terrifying*. *What if she says no? What if it ruins what we have? What if it all goes wrong a few years down the road, and then we're out of each other's lives forever? I can't live without her. I just can't.*

"Yeah..."

Raven gives her a light slug on the shoulder. "Well, that's never stopped you before. You told your Mom you wanted to go to art school when she wanted you to be a doctor. You stood up for Lexa when she first came out in middle school and *punched* a guy that called her names. You're the bravest girl I know, Clarke Griffin. So be brave, okay? She told me herself she was going to ask you, and we *all* know it's not just as a friend."

*More than friends.*
The thought makes Clarke giddy. She turns back to the ice, watching Lexa round another lap. Lexa turns, and for a moment, Clarke catches a glimpse of a smile beneath her helmet—a smile reserved just for her.

In truth, she's known this was coming for a long time. Some part of her had known when she and Lexa first became best friends. It had been confirmed the first time they'd kissed, confirmed again the first time they'd touched each other. They aren't just friends-with-benefits, and pretending otherwise is pointless.

*Maybe it's time to stop pretending.*

"Clarke? Clarke? Earth to Clarke?"

She blinks, looking back at Raven several seconds too late. "Huh?"

Raven grins. "What are you, lost in space or something? Or maybe you're lost in *Lexaland.*"

Clarke rolls her eyes, but she leans over to steal a handful of Raven's popcorn. "Thanks, Reyes. You're a good friend."

"Just want to see my girls happy. Now shut up and watch the game. Your girl's about to face off."

Clarke turns back to the ice, smiling broadly. She feels hopeful, enthusiastic, brave—and she hopes at least some of those feelings are transmitting to Lexa as she whoops and cheers.

"C'mon, Lexa!" she shouts as Lexa glides up to face the opposing team's center. "Put some muscle in it!"

Her voice must have carried, because Lexa gives her the tiniest glance, and what Clarke suspects is a smirk. A moment later, the puck drops, and Lexa taps the other center's stick aside to claim it. Before the other center can react, she flicks it over to Anya, who starts speeding off down the rink.

Beside her, Raven cheers. "You've got it, baby!" She turns to Clarke, the picture of smugness. "Next time, just tell Lexa you'll 'reward' her for every goal. Anya's never had a better season."

"Oh, I'm one step ahead of you," Clarke says. She grabs another handful of Raven's popcorn, but her eyes stay locked onto Lexa. She's streaking up the side of the rink, trying to keep pace with Anya and offer some support.

Clarke’s on the edge of seat as she watches the two sisters gracefully skate up the sides, efficiently getting out of the way of the two forwards. They thunder down the ice, and Clarke has to hold back the shudder of pleasure that runs down her spine as she sees the sheer power and determination in Lexa’s face, her jaw set and green eyes lit with determination. Without a doubt, her best friend is in Commander mode.

Barely forty-five seconds into the game, Anya skirts around the last defender before gracefully tucking the puck into the corner of the goal. The horn goes off and the crowd goes wild. Raven is roaring beside her, pumping her hands in the air and cheering for her girlfriend. Anya skates around the goal post and wraps her arm around Lexa’s forearm in their congratulatory salute. The rest of the team members complete the handshake before the puck is back at the center, ready to be played again as the defending team gets ready.

“There’s no way they’re going to lose,” Clarke beams as she turns to an equally-ecstatic Raven, “Azgeda was their last school and that was easily their most competitive team.”
“Those bitches,” Raven mutters, shaking her head. “Anya was so frustrated after that game. Though, I won’t complain. Her methods of relieving frustration are well worth it.” Raven’s lips turn up into a classic dreamy smirk, and Clarke flushes a little.

“I don’t want to know.”

“She bought this toy,” Raven continues anyways, considering that there’s not much going on in the game right now, just a lot of passing and evading from the defending team. “She ordered it online. It was supposed to be a graduation present, but you know how Anya is. Once she’s got her mind set on something, there’s really nothing turning her off it.”

“And you?” Clarke asks, her cheeks turning a deeper pink. “Did you like it?”

Raven grins, leaning back in her seat as she tosses some popcorn in her mouth, looking all too smug. “Wouldn’t you like to know, Griff? I mean, you’ve got a girl with the actual goods.”

“Yeah but we… we haven’t… done that yet. We’ve been taking it slow, okay? Besides, I don’t know if Lexa even wants to do that,” Clarke stutters on the words, tripping over herself in embarrassment. Luckily Raven seems to get the message and loses the smug expression in place of something more serious and heartwarming. She leans forwards and pats Clarke’s thigh encouragingly.

“Hey,” Raven murmurs, setting her popcorn aside to properly face her friend. “Look, it’s okay, C. You guys go at your own place. Besides, losing your virginity to someone is a big deal. Not in the societal sense, but the intimate sense. Contrary to what everyone thinks about us, Anya and I actually didn’t do the deed properly until about six months into our relationship. Don’t tell her I told you this, but as cold and aloof as she comes off, she’s soft and sweet. She was talking to me the entire time, and she fumbled a few times, but she was always asking if I was okay and if I liked or disliked something. I don’t care what happened with Finn. I will always consider Anya as my first time. I love her, and you love Lexa. Treat it the same way. Talk to each other, read each other’s bodies, and most importantly, enjoy it.”

Clarke turns her attention back to the game, only to see that it was just as uneventful as it was five minutes ago, with both teams at an impasse. The opposing team, the Totems, were playing as defensively as they could after that first goal had been made. Lexa and Anya are trying to get around them, but the other women are putting up a good front and blocking them out as the rest of the quarter bleeds past uneventfully. She sees Lexa, barking an order to Monroe and Fox as Anya tries a different tactic of skating up the sides of the boards.

Turning back to Raven, Clarke finally finds the effort to ask the question that’s been crawling in the back of her mind for the last couple of weeks. She takes a deep breath to gather up the courage she has, and thankfully, Raven gives her the full attention she needs.

“Does…,” Clarke trails off, still fumbling. “Does it… you know… hurt?”

“Penetration?” Raven asks, and Clarke turns another shade deeper as she looks at the crowd around them. Raven rolls her eyes and laughs, amused by Clarke’s embarrassment. Luckily, everyone seems to be mostly focused the game to notice their lewd conversation topic.

“Ugh,” Clarke mutters as she hangs her head in shame, “yes.”

“It did the first time,” Raven says nonchalantly. “But again, I said that you just gotta talk through it. The first time Anya used her fingers, it was different. Hers, and Lexa’s I’m presuming because I’ve seen your hands, are longer and stronger. Two of them were enough to cause a sting, but nothing
unpleasant.” Clarke reimagines the night that Lexa had entered her, the blissful sensation of those long and powerful digits filling her up just right.

“As for the toy,” Raven says as she licks her buttered thumb, “that was harder. Anya got one of the standard six-inch dildos with a heavy duty harness, which took some adjusting. But she was slow and gentle and really sweet. My nerd’s favourite part was that we could hold hands while she was inside of me. But boy… that feeling when you’re connected, hip to hip, a part of her inside of a part of you… it’s the most amazing feeling in the world.” Clarke wants to feel disgusted that Raven is openly talking about this in such a public sphere, but a part of her feels happy at the sight of the dreamy, lovesick expression on Raven’s face.

“So really, it depends on how endowed your girl is.” Raven says in a nonchalant drawl. She reaches inside for some more popcorn before tossing another few into her mouth. “While I am curious, I don’t need to know the details. That’s between her and you, most specifically her. I’ll just say that it feels a lot more different than a few fingers, is all. But don’t be scared, when done right, it’s like intimacy on a whole other level. Not to mention, the visual aesthetics of it all are mindblowing. I mean, Anya does this wicked thing with her hips—”

“Alright, that’s enough. I don’t need to hear more about you and Anya,” Clarke says with a scrunched up face, trying to get the visual out of her head. Raven chuckles again, throwing a piece of popcorn at Clarke’s unamused face before shrugging and turning back to the game.

“If you really want to blow Lexa’s mind, I do have a tip for you.” Raven says, drawing Clarke’s attention back to her. She keeps staring ahead, her hungry eyes set on the charging path of her girlfriend on the ice. Clarke watches the other girl gulp as Anya rams another girl into the boards. The girl immediately rises to her feet and grabs at Anya’s shoulders, snapping in frustration as she shoves the other girl back into the boards. As another member of the Totems tries to help her teammate and get into a scuffle with Anya, Lexa charges up out of nowhere, ripping both of the girls off her sister with a terrifyingly arousing snarl.

“What’s that?” Clarke asks almost airily as she watches Lexa and Anya brawling with a few of the other players, causing the refs to come on and blow the whistle.

Raven smirks widely. “Don’t forget to use your Kegel muscles. Anya could feel it even through the toy.”

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“Enough!” Lexa roars as she separates her girls from the opposing team. “Fall back!”

As if on cue, the Timberwolves separate and head back to their positions, leaving the referee to deal with Anya and the other girl that had been involved in the original scuffle. Lexa knows why they’re getting more aggressive. The game is getting tight, there’s no progress being made and both ends of the teams are starting to get a little desperate.

“That’s enough,” Lexa says as she pulls Monroe off another girl. “We are better than this!”

The referee seems to agree, and calls a power-play for the Totems. Anya shakes her head at the call as she’s skated off towards the penalty box. Lexa grits her teeth and skates back out to the left defending corner for the next puck drop. She skates ahead to where she’s meant to be positioned and stakes her ground, watching as Fox steps up to the plate, ready to face off against the Totems’ right wing. Lexa looks up to the crowd to see Clarke staring down at her, those blue eyes burning with something that Lexa hasn’t quite seen before.
It’s so jarring, it almost blinks her out of her haze.

The puck is off and Lexa snaps back to it, weaving in and out of players to try and get a pass from Fox. They’re four playing five right now, so they need to be smart. Unfortunately, just as Fox reels her stick back for a long pass, the Totems’ left wing speeds in and sneaks the puck between her legs before inverting it and flicking the puck through her legs towards their goal. Lexa can only watch, eyes wide and mouth open in shock as the puck soars through the air and pockets itself into the right corner of the net. The opposing team cheers and congratulates the player as they weave around the rink, but Lexa tunes out their sound.

She skates over to their goalie, Gina, the youngest player on their team. Gliding over, she quickly pats the girl on the back and gives her a tight nod of assurance before skating back toward the center. Anya is let back in after the power play times out, passing Lexa a guilty glance. She skates over as the referee gets ready with the puck in the center.

“Calm yourself,” Lexa says as she looks up at the scoreboard. “We have to get back the goal. If they get another one, we may not have the momentum to hold them off. Every move we make has to be calculated. No risks.” Anya nods, clenching her teeth as she takes her spot on the right side. Lexa skates up to the center, passing a few rallying nods to her teammates.

This time, when the puck drops, she doesn’t pass it.

Lexa tucks the puck between her legs and does what she does best.

* * *

Clarke watches in awe as Lexa quickly pivots and spins back on her right heel with the grace of a dancer, causing the right wing that had been aiming for a check to glide right past her. The confusion is enough to give Lexa enough time to charge down the middle before cutting to the side. The two defenders are skating up to meet her, eager to stop her from coming through. Lexa’s head remains on the goal, seemingly uncaring of the two players.

“And here she comes,” Raven beams as she points to the ice. “My baby, faster than a bullet.”

Anya charges behind Lexa and weaves around her sister’s body fluidly. She goes to meet the defenders, who were so focused on Lexa that the sight of Anya randomly appearing causes them to stutter in their charge. Clarke grins as she watches Lexa sneakily tap the puck backwards to where Monroe had been trailing her before cutting straight across the ice. The defenders attempt to change their position to chase her, but Lexa’s far too agile and swift. Anya glides right to the edge of the boards and taps the ice with her stick. The two defenders attempt to go for Monroe, but they’ve made a mistake.

Monroe flicks the puck past their hips to Anya, who, without a pause, smacks it straight across the rink to Lexa’s waiting stick. Before the goalie even has the time to react to the pass, Lexa pulls the stick back over her shoulder and juts her dominant knee forward.

It takes everything in Clarke to keep herself from squirming as Lexa slaps the puck forward violently, causing it to soar through the air and slice through the narrow space between the goalie’s glove and the cross bar. The puck slams downwards and crosses the red line.

The crowd goes wild as Lexa’s hugged by her teammates. The last to be hugged, as always, is Anya. As soon as the two sisters join in their celebratory embrace, the crowd joins in for another roar. Clarke gazes upon them proudly, knowing how much hockey means to them. She isn’t sure if she’s met anyone as dedicated or as hardworking as Anya and Lexa when it came to the sport.
There’s no doubt about it, they are destined for greatness. Sometimes Clarke doesn't believe the amount of hours they both put into training each week. But, since they'd first step foot into the ice, all they'd wanted to be was professional hockey players. She still remembers the day that Lexa and Anya had shown up to their middle school class wearing matching signed Sedin sweaters that Gustus had bought them after they'd seen their first game. She remembers Lexa wearing it with pride before lazily looping her arm around Anya's shoulders to proclaim that they'd be the first wonder twins of the WNHL.

Clarke smiles proudly. And to look at them now, at how far they’ve come.

Once the two pull away, the referee blows the whistle for the last intermission, causing the players to skate towards the benches. The Timberwolves look far more energized and motivated now after that goal.

“That was one hell of a slapshot,” Raven says, smirking. “We lucked out. I’m sure those girls down there in the cheer squad aren’t too pleased that you’re Lexa Woods’ only love interest aside from hockey.” Clarke follows Raven’s gaze down to where a group of the prissy volleyball girls are sitting at the front near the boards, a few of them glaring up in her and Raven’s direction. She recognizes Costia, the girl from her AP Calculus class. Internally, she feels her stomach churn with the blank look the other girl gives in her direction.

“Don’t worry, most of them aren’t after your girl. They’re jealous of me.” Raven is all too smug about Anya being taken, and decides to rub it further in the girls’ faces by standing up and ‘stretching’ to reveal the clearly labelled WOODS 25 on the back of her jersey. A few of the fan-girls roll their eyes and turn away, but a few others seem genuinely heartbroken.

All of them, except Costia.

“What do you know about Costia Green?” Clarke asks, trying to keep the bite out of her voice. Raven sits back down and crosses her arms over her chest, following Clarke’s gaze.

“Only that she has the biggest crush on your betrothed,” Raven chuckles. “Boy, is she in for a surprise when she realizes that Lexa’s heart-eyes only extend to you and Yankee Candle.” Clarke punches her friend lightly in the shoulder as Raven cracks up at her own joke, but she can’t help but feel more at ease knowing that Lexa isn’t interested in Costia.

Her jealousy completely dissipates as intermission ends and the teams skate back out onto the ice. She feels herself relax as she watches Lexa skating beside Fox, telling her something in quick and fast as they prepare for the last quarter. They line up on the center, ready for the last round. Clarke can’t stop herself from staring at Lexa’s ass as she bends down, getting ready for the faceoff. Even though there’s padding, she sees through it with hungry eyes.

The Totems win the face-off, mostly due to an unconventional shoulder check by the Totems’ center. To her credit, however, Lexa seems to recover quickly and Clarke watches her chase after the two wings that are heading towards their defenders. Monroe and Fox quickly shut down the attempted pass between the right and left wing, and carry the puck up back towards neutral territory. Anya and Lexa are already at the top of the rink, but before either of them can get to a clear opening, more players are coming to crowd near them. Clarke frowns, looking as a few of the players keep hassling and checking Anya.

“That classless asshats,” Raven growls as she sits up in her seat. “What are they doing?”

“Look!” Clarke points out to the crowd. “They’re targeting both of them.” They both look to where Lexa is being swarmed by the defenders, leaving her unable to receive a pass.
Before long, the Totems manage to get enough sneaky and well-placed passes in, which causes them to steal another goal when Fox is side checked and Gina is left vulnerable. It’s getting down to the last few minutes, and Clarke knows that soon they’ll hit overtime.

She sees Lexa’s face, tired and frustrated, but not hopeless, and she prays they make it.

* * *

Lexa struggles for the puck as she’s blindsided by the right wing. It’s become apparent to her that the Totems have started a new strategy: keep the puck away from her and Anya. She looks over to her sister, knowing that she’s struggling at keeping her anger back and causing another potential power-play against them. They’re tied and there’s only five minutes left before the whistle blows and they’re heading into overtime.

She surveys her team. Monroe is favouring her right leg after a nasty check from one of the defenders. Harper looks exhausted from trying to be in every place at the same time. Fox seems to be slowing down considerably. It hits her then, as she looks to the other team, that the Totems never intended to play offensively. They played strategically to tire them out.

A whistle is called for an offside, giving Lexa enough time to think. She quickly skates up to Anya, noticing that her sister is leaning heavily on her left side and wincing. The hand not holding her stick is draped around her middle, like it’s holding her up. Lexa frowns and quickly nods her head upwards, seeing the pain underneath the stoicism and determination in Anya’s eyes.

“What happened?” She asks as Anya straightens up with a hiss. Lexa’s hand reaches out and hovers over Anya’s glove.

“Got sticked by that damn left wing,” Anya mutters as she lowers her hand reluctantly, “these refs are blind.”

“We can’t let this go into overtime,” Lexa says as she looks to her other players, “we can’t take it.”

“What’s our plan, then?” Anya asks, gritting her teeth. “We have no special tricks.”

“We have one,” Lexa says as she looks to Anya’s skates before glancing back up. “We could pull this off.” Anya’s eyes widen as she understands what Lexa is trying to say.

“That’s… we… we haven’t done that since we were kids,” Anya splutters as she watches the referee come, puck in hand. Lexa glances over to where Fox is taking the face-off in their defensive zone. She nods to her teammate and Fox gets the message, setting her jaw determinedly. Monroe observes the exchange and nods to both her co-captains.

“Lexa,” Anya says as she looks at her sister. “I don’t know if I can do this. It’s been so long and we only did it because it all happened on accident. It’s a low chance I’ll make it, Lex.”

“You will,” Lexa replies, holding out her arm. Anya embraces it and Lexa tugs gently, noticing how Anya’s eyes darken and her shoulders square. She tugs her sister into her arms and knocks their helmets together lightly, something they used to do when they’d been kids.

“Let’s do this.”

* * *

The puck drops, Fox wins the face-off, and everything seems to slow to a halt.
Clarke’s breath stutters in her throat as she watches Anya and Lexa speed down the sides of the rink while Monroe accepts the quick pass from Fox before shooting it up the sides to Harper. Both her and Raven are on the edge of their seats as they see the wings attempting to come down and block the blonde, but Harper is quick to tuck her stick out and smack the puck at an angle down the ice. Because everyone was so scattered, no one can intercept it.

But… Clarke realizes as she sees Anya make a sharp turn and bee-line for the goal, maybe that had been the point all along. The puck rebounds off the boards at an acute angle, set on course to be accepted by the curve of Anya’s stick. Raven stands up and cheers, though she can hear the tension and the worry in her friend’s voice. They’d both seen the nasty stick that had jabbed into her side not even a few minutes ago, and based on the still-healing bruises from Lexa’s side, she knows that the pain must be nearly unbearable.

Two defenders manage to make their way back to the goal in order to defend it, one of them attempting to slide in front of Anya to prevent her from smacking the puck into the net. The seconds tick by faster now, and Clarke rises to her feet, alongside the rest of the crowd.

And then, in the last four seconds, something beautiful happens.

Anya inverts the stick and turns around, skating a few paces away from the goal. Just as she manages a few feet, Lexa cuts in out of nowhere, right in front of the goal. The defenders swarm Anya’s stick, looking to block any opening, but instead of it, Anya juts out her skate and literally passes the puck with her blade to Lexa as if she were playing soccer instead of hockey.

Because the puck is so close, Lexa manages to curve her stick inwards and flick the puck into the side of the net, just as the last second conks out on the screen.

And with that, the crowd bursts into a thundering cheer. Clarke screams Lexa’s name and Raven screams for Anya, the both of them waving their hands in awe as they watch the team swarm both the girls, bringing them in for a massive hug. Lexa has her arms around Anya, subtly giving her some support as they continue congratulating their team for making the final. As they’re shaking hands, Raven notices that Anya hasn’t quite let go of her sister yet and seems to be leaning on her side heavily.

“They must have got her hard,” Raven mutters, her voice filled with worry and concern for her girlfriend. Clarke notices the tears brimming in her eyes but says nothing about them. “I’m gonna make the biggest bomb and send it to their house. Nobody hurts my girl and walks away in one piece.” They both know that Anya will be okay in the long run, but Clarke empathizes with Raven. She knows the feeling of worry well, especially when it comes to Lexa. She still can’t shake the fear that had rattled her bones when she’d seen Lexa take that massive hit during their last game. The sight of her, laying there, still and frozen…

Clarke shakes her head, fighting down her own tears as she reaches out to rub Raven’s shoulder gently.

"Come on," she says, giving her an encouraging nod, "let's go get our girls."

After watching both Lexa and Anya make it safely back into the change rooms, the two friends make their way out of the stadium and towards the front of the building.

* * *

“Shit! That looks nasty,” Monroe grimaces as Anya peels off her jersey and her shoulder guards. Lexa finishes prying off her own before grabbing the muscle cream and handing it over to her sister.
She takes a seat beside her and gazes at the mottled bruises in concern.

“Do you want me to get Indra? I know how bad it can hurt right after,” Lexa says gently, but Anya shakes her head and gives her sister a weak grin before she peels off her hockey pants, leaving her in her compression shorts. Lexa still looks wary, but Anya waves her off.

“If Raven has taught me anything, it’s that a little pain makes things interesting.” Anya is quick to chirp out the words with a good-natured lilt to her voice, back to her usual self as she grabs her towel and disappears into the shower stall. Lexa rolls her eyes and grimaces at the innuendo, which only causes her other teammates to snicker and laugh at her.

They shower and clean up efficiently and quickly. Even despite Anya’s denial of pain, Lexa lingers near her and waits until her sister ties up her hair before they head for the exit. Just as she’s about to reach for the door, however, Anya’s hand places itself on her shoulder. Lexa frowns and turns around, scared that maybe the pain had been a bit too much for her sister.

But instead she finds Anya scrummaging in her bag for something before tossing it her way.

“Look, I don’t want to do this as much as you don’t want to,” Anya says, rubbing the back of her neck as Lexa’s eyes bug out at the label on the box. “But listen, if it was going to happen, it was going to be either me or Gustus, so I figured you’d rather have me do it than our awkward older brother.” Lexa gulps as she keeps staring at the box in shock and fear.

“You… you got me condoms?” Lexa asks, her voice dry. Anya nods, grunting.

“Gus and I talked for awhile last night and we both decided it’s about time you had some. If you are serious about this thing with Clarke, you have to be serious about the sex, too. I know your chances of making me an aunt are rather low, but it’s important to wrap up for the sake of keeping clean as well,” Anya explains as nonchalantly as possible. “You’ve taken health classes so you know all about this kind of stuff and how it all works, so I won’t go into it. And I know that Clarke is your first and vice versa, but it still doesn’t hurt to be safe.” Lexa stares down at the box again, her hands growing clammy as the weight of it pulls down on her hand. She looks at the labels and she isn’t quite sure of how to feel about Anya’s ‘gift’.

Anya sighs and gently places her hand on Lexa’s shoulder, giving it an encouraging squeeze. “Look, I know we’ve been through this before, with the ‘gender stuff’ as you so eloquently call it, and I know condoms are one of those things that freak you out and make you dysphoric at times. I can’t imagine how it feels, but you need it just in case it does happen. By getting these, however, it doesn’t mean you have to have penetrative sex—”

“Anya!” Lexa balks, turning a shade whiter. Anya, to her credit, also winces.

“I know, I know. But if you do ever feel the urge,” Anya practically gags out the word, “at least you have some. I had to uh… guess your size, so I got a few.” Lexa stares at the ground, her ears tinting a full tomato red now from both embarrassment and awkwardness.

“Right, well, that’s about all I had to say,” Anya finishes quickly. “I won’t ever speak of this again because you and Clarke are both smart young women in charge of their lives. I’m just doing my duty as the older sister to do what Mom and Dad would have wanted me to for you. Trust me, when Gustus gave me the full-blown sex talk, not the one he gave us when we were little, it was far more embarrassing than this. Trust me, you lucked out big time, Lex.”

At the mention of their late parents, Lexa looks up and feels tears well in her eyes. She doesn’t particularly know why she’s so emotional over a box of condoms, but it’s the intent and the care
behind Anya’s actions that make her feel less insecure about sex. She reaches out and tugs her sister into her arms, mindful of her injuries, and rests her head on her shoulder. Anya sighs and lightly rubs her back, pressing a kiss to the side of her head. Lexa closes her eyes and nuzzles closer, grateful for her sister. They're both quiet for a moment, simply allowing the embrace to communicate the words they can't say.

And then, Anya breaks the moment with a soft laugh.

“It’s weird and makes me sound old, but I can’t believe you’re all grown up.”

Lexa snorts, shoving off her sister with a playful eye roll.

“You’re literally only a few months older than me.”

“Age before beauty, Little Lex.” Anya gives her sister a gentle pat on the back. Lexa quickly places the box of condoms in her duffle bag before straightening her collar. Anya adjusts the strap of her bag on her shoulder before reaching for the handle of the door with a shrug, “Now let’s go. Speaking of beauties, I think we’ve got two waiting for us to come home.”

* * *

The first moment Clarke sees Lexa coming out of the locker room, her heart swells so big her chest can barely contain it.

The second moment, she's running, barreling toward her best friend and lover as fast as her feet will carry her.

The third, she's throwing her arms around Lexa in the gentlest but most enthusiastic hug possible, trying not to aggravate any hidden bruises under Lexa's sweats.

"Clarke," Lexa laughs, but she doesn't seem too injured, because she's able to pick Clarke up and twirl her around once before setting her back down. "Did you see that last shot?"

"You bet I did," Clarke says, breathless not just from the memory, but from the happy trembling Lexa's smile brings out in her. She's so energized, and so in love, and Lexa's arms are so warm and comforting around her. "You were great…"

She wonders, briefly, if she should use a term of endearment. Honey or sweetie or something. But she and Lexa have never gone that route before, and even though she's feeling brave, she doesn't want to make the moment awkward.

"…Lex."

"Thanks."

"All thanks to me, of course," Anya says, strolling out of the locker room with her bag slung over her shoulder. "She would have gotten nowhere without my fancy footwork." Before either Lexa or Clarke can reply, a flash of brown whizzes past and the two watch as Anya's treated to a similar tight hug from Raven, whom Clarke had almost forgotten about in her eagerness to see Lexa—but it's hard to ignore the couple when their lips lock in a passionate kiss. Anya’s head ducks down a little and both Lexa and Clarke have to look away when her hands immediately wander downwards to fondle Raven's ass. One of Raven's hands sneak upwards and dart under Anya's shirt, and Clarke knows that she's searching for the source of her lover's pain.

"I'm gonna get those girls," Raven mutters as she pulls away from the kiss to glare over Anya's
shoulder at where a few of the opposing team members are leaving the away team's change room. "Just let me after them. They won't know what's hit 'em."

"Baby," Anya murmurs softly, nuzzling the side of Raven's neck before planting a kiss there. "I'm okay. It's just a bruise."

"No one gets to bruise you except me," Raven says matter-of-factly, "especially not the kinds of bruises I'm talking about." Anya chuckles and shakes her head before leaning in and placing another warm kiss on her girlfriend's lips, humming contently.

"Yeah, yeah," Lexa mutters, rolling her eyes fondly. "Clarke and I will leave you alone."

Raven pulls away from the deep kiss, though her arms remained looped around Anya's neck, while Anya's hands stay on the curve of her rear, her thumbs lightly stroking through the material of her jeans. Clarke recognizes the dark look of lust in her friend's eyes as Raven licks her lips and glances to Lexa. "Have fun," Raven says, throwing them a juicy wink.

Clarke snorts, deigning not to respond. Raven doesn't seem to mind because she's instantly reattaching her mouth to Anya's and their make-out session suddenly turns a little more than just PG. Not wanting to stay longer and run the risk of seeing something she definitely doesn't need to see, she nudges Lexa, who looks a little flushed at the sight of her sister furiously making out with her girlfriend. Clarke beams at the look of embarrassment and awkwardness, noticing how cute her furrowed brows and pink cheeks look in this light.

When Raven moans, she takes Lexa's hand. "Ready to go?"

"Please," Lexa mutters, turning her head away from her lip-locked sister. "Your place?"

"You bet." She smirks, leaning to whisper in Lexa's ear. "I've got plans for you, Miss Woods."

Clarke knows she's said the right thing when Lexa gives a tiny shudder against her. Their bodies are close enough for her to feel the excited quivering, and her face flushes at the thought that Lexa is trembling for her.

Sometimes, the only consolation she gets for being so stuck on her best friend is that Lexa might, maybe, possibly feel the same way about her.

At least, Raven seems to think so. And there's Finn's party.

She considers asking Lexa about it, but decides to wait. If Lexa really is going to ask her, she doesn't want to spoil the moment by jumping on it too early. Besides, she has other things to look forward to. Other plans. Plans that started sprouting up during her conversation with Raven in the bleachers, but which have overgrown to fill her mind.

By the time they make it out to the parking lot, a low, throbbing heat has built between Clarke's legs. In the dim light, she can't wait long enough for the two of them to get home. As soon as the street lights aren't shining directly on them, she backs Lexa into the side of her cherry red GMC, both hands on Lexa's narrow, powerful hips, a thigh sliding between hers.

"I wanna kiss you, Lex," she mutters, staring into Lexa's green eyes with unabashed hope. The night is beautiful, and Lexa might love her, and they are definitely going to end up having some kind of sex. There are endless possibilities, and she's eager to explore them all.

"Clarke…"
Lexa drops her bag onto the ground with a quiet thud, forgetting it completely as she tangles her fingers through Clarke's hair and tugs lightly in a clear 'yes'.

Clarke groans and kisses her, letting their mouths slide together until the heat from her lips meets the heat pooling low in her belly and sets her entire body aflame. She wants this. She wants Lexa. She’s wanted her before, but never like **this**. She wants everything she can get and more, and so she keeps kissing Lexa until she barely has space to breathe. Lexa’s lips are gliding against hers with the same amount of swiftness and power that she uses on the ice. Suddenly, it turns into a clash of teeth and tongue and Clarke’s head gets fuzzy. Her hands scrabble at the front of Lexa’s shirt, aching for something to grab onto. Instead, all she feels is the flexing muscles of Lexa’s abs, twisting and contorting with each breath she takes. She tucks her hands under the loose cotton, fingerling the sides of her hips slowly.

It's Lexa who ends the kiss, though Clarke can tell from the whimpers and the hardness against her upper thigh that she doesn't want to. They’ve shared a lot of kisses, but none as passionate as that one. Lexa is gazing at her with wide, dark eyes, and though the lighting is poor, Clarke can imagine that her tanned cheeks have the slightest hint of a flush.

"Let's go somewhere," Lexa says, letting go of Clarke's hair to stroke the small of her back. Clarke shivers as Lexa's hands move lower and lower, sliding down to cup her rear. The motion isn't too forceful, but it brings them closer together, and Clarke can feel the outline of Lexa's hard abdominal muscles and the slight swell at the front of her sweats more clearly. By now, Lexa’s head has ducked into her shoulder, her lips dusting kisses to her neck. Clarke claws into the soft flesh of her hips, drawing Lexa’s head back to glance at her.

Clarke leans forward for another taste of Lexa's lips. It lasts a long time, and it takes her nearly a minute to tear herself away again, and even that is hard. They're both struggling to catch their breath as they lean their foreheads together. "Do you have a place in mind?"

"Outside. It's warm. There's a blanket in the back of my truck…"

Clarke can't help laughing softly. The thought that Lexa is asking her to park somewhere is actually adorable, and a little surprising. They've made out in the car a few times before, but nothing too intense—Lexa usually isn't much for public displays, even with a low chance of getting caught. But with Lexa asking this time…

"Get your keys," Clarke mutters, placing a kiss on the very tip of Lexa's nose.

This is going to be perfect.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading!
Climax

Chapter by commandmetobewell

Chapter Summary

Clarke and Lexa finally talk about their feelings, amongst other things.

Chapter Notes

FINALLY THE SMUT Y’ALL HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR IS HERE.

Hope it's worth it :D

The drive to the park across the street from the high school is short, but Lexa still feels like it's taking forever. Sweat prickles along the back of her neck—more sweat, she thinks, than she had to deal with throughout the game. Just being near Clarke does things to her, even when Clarke is sitting innocently in the passenger's seat of her truck.

Although Clarke isn't exactly innocent. Her looks are heated, and her hands have a tendency to wander. Lexa can feel one of them massaging her thigh, not going high enough to fully distract her from the road, but making its presence known. The light touch is enough to make her ache, and it's not a stretch to imagine Clarke's hand sliding up, slipping beneath the waistband of her sweats…

She shakes herself out of it as they pull onto the gravel of the parking area. There aren't any other cars there, for which Lexa is grateful. This is a pretty popular make-out spot, but the wind has picked up just enough to dissuade any competition. It doesn't matter. Clarke will keep her warm. She already feels like she wants to peel out of her clothes to get some relief.

Just in case, she pulls a little off the designated area and onto the grass, where the trees will offer a bit more cover. She isn't sure what will happen tonight—the box of condoms in her duffel is burning a hole in her mind—but it's going to end in some heavy petting at the very least. She doesn't want anyone else to intrude.

Clarke doesn't seem to care. As soon as the truck is in park and Lexa cuts the engine, she bridges the gap between their seats, practically crawling onto her best friend’s lap in her eagerness. Lexa doesn't even manage to unbuckle before Clarke's lips are attached to her throat and Clarke's hands are roaming all over her body. Lexa doesn't protest. She can't think of anything she wants more. All thoughts of getting caught, of the condoms, even of the game she's just won fly from her mind as Clarke kisses her. Her mind is blissfully empty for the first time in so long.

At least, it's empty until Clarke's backside presses against the horn. The truck lets out a shrill beep, and both of them break away from each other with a start. A moment later, they laugh, and Lexa cups Clarke's cheek, stroking it with her thumb, somewhat glad that they’d managed to slow down a little. "Let's go somewhere with more room. I have a blanket…"
"So you've said." Clarke climbs off her and opens the door, and they both leave the truck to circle around back.

The set-up is actually pretty comfy. There are quilts for camping, and it doesn't take long for Lexa to build them a little nest. It would have happened even faster, except Clarke's greedy hands are a distraction as they roam along her sides, and Clarke can't seem to stop gripping her ass whenever she bends over. Soon enough, Lexa finishes, and she grabs Clarke's wrists, bringing them both to her mouth for soft kisses.

"Are you sure you're okay with this?"

Clarke's smile is dazzling—and a bit mischievous. "I can't believe you're asking me. You're the one who gets squirrely in public."

"Squirrely?" Despite herself, Lexa is slightly offended. "I'll prove you wrong."

"Do it."

Lexa can't resist that challenge. Clarke wants her, and she is crazy about Clarke, and that's all that matters. This time, when they kiss, they tumble back, rolling around on the soft bed of blankets and nestling in together.

It takes a while for them to find a position they like. There are so many to choose from. Clarke's hands and mouth are everywhere, and soon, Lexa finds herself shirtless, staring up into Clarke's hungry eyes as Clarke's ticklish fingertips trace the muscles of her stomach. She laughs, and Clarke takes that as a signal to be firmer. She rakes her nails up toward Lexa's breasts, and soon, a hot mouth is wrapped around her nipple.

"Fuck," she hisses, trying to keep from bucking her hips. Her hormones are still raging on from the game, and she's all wound up in thoughts of Clarke's hands and mouth elsewhere. Her best friend isn't quite settled over them, but she doesn't want to dislodge her lover.

"Mmm." Clarke releases her nipple with a slippery pop, blowing across the stiff peak so Lexa can feel the chill of the night air on her spit-slick skin. "Your skin tastes so good. And you smell…"

"Like a locker room," Lexa mutters, a little embarrassed. She's taken a shower, but still, it's awkward.

"No. I love how you smell when you're all sweaty." Clarke pecks her nipple again before trailing wet, messy kisses across to the other one. After tugging briefly with her teeth, she continues. "You smell more like you."

"That doesn't even make sense," Lexa groans, but Clarke is sucking her other nipple, and she can't find it in her to keep arguing. Her head is floating into the stars above them, and she's dizzy on everything Clarke. She tangles her hands in Clarke's soft blonde hair and holds on for dear life, hips churning gently despite her efforts to hold still and enjoy the moment.

Clarke only stops kissing her chest to pull off her own shirt and wiggle out of her pants. A little moonlight shines through the gapped canopy of the trees, and it's enough to make Clarke's pale skin glow. Lexa's jaw drops. She is in awe. This is the most beautiful woman she has ever seen, soft and bright with only the barest hint of shadow in between her breasts and at the join of her legs, though she's still got her underwear on.

Lexa wants to tell Clarke, to explain how beautiful the vision is, but she can't find the words. Instead, she says, "I wish I could paint like you."
Clarke looks down at her curiously. "Why?"

"Because… I can't imagine not looking at you this way. If I painted it, I could have it forever."

That puts a smirk on Clarke's face. "Then I'll just have to stick around."

Lexa doesn't want to read too much into that statement, but she can't help it. Her heart is already racing miles ahead of her brain. "Me too, Clarke."

Clarke stares at her with such warmth that Lexa can almost convince herself it's love, before it's replaced by another flash of desire. Clarke's hands stroke down along her stomach to find her sweats, and Lexa groans as she toys with the waistband.

She can't let Clarke take them off. Not yet. Otherwise, she won't get the chance to worship Clarke's body the way it deserves to be worshiped. She flips them over and starts her descent, beginning with Clarke's graceful neck only to nuzzle and nip at her collarbone.

Luckily, Clarke welcomes the attention. Her fingers flex against the muscles of Lexa's back, and the urgent, guiding touch is almost as good as the taste of Clarke's skin under her tongue. She kisses her way down to Clarke's breasts, going around and around the sensitive tips without actually sucking them in. She wants to work Clarke up, to tease her, to spoil her. But Clarke is insistent, and soon, Lexa finds herself latched onto a nipple as Clarke mutters filthy things above her head.

"Fuck, Lexa. Your mouth is so good. So warm. I love this. Don't—don't stop."

Lexa spurs on, eager to continue pleasing Clarke as she swirls the puckered bud into her mouth and gently sucks. Her hands reach up and continue to gently knead and massage her other breast. Clarke moans underneath her, writhing as she swaps to the other nipple, not wanting to leave it without any kind of attention. Another heavenly groan leaves Clarke's lips, and her fingers leave aching red lines down the sinewy muscles of Lexa's back. When she lightly releases her lips from the hardened nipple to bite at the skin of her breastbone, Clarke's hips rut upwards into her own, causing her shaft to throb jealously.

"Lexa," Clarke practically mewls, panting hard. "Please… I need more."

"Need more what?" Lexa asks, continuing her little nips and sucks up Clarke's neck. "Tell me, Clarke." Her voice drops an octave and she mentally pats herself on the back for not slipping up. Clarke's eyes screw shut as she swats to the other nipple, not wanting to leave it without any kind of attention. Another heavenly groan leaves Clarke's lips, and her fingers leave aching red lines down the sinewy muscles of Lexa's back. When she lightly releases her lips from the hardened nipple to bite at the skin of her breastbone, Clarke's hips rut upwards into her own, causing her shaft to throb jealously.

"I need you," Clarke whispers between kisses, tugging on her bottom lip. "I need you, Lex."

The raw emotion behind Clarke's voice numbs the fire a little, causing Lexa's head to clear. She takes a deep breath and nods, pulling her head away for a brief moment so that she can simply drink in the beauty of her best friend in the pale light of the moon. Clarke's eyes are a darker blue now, dancing with lust and another emotion she just can't seem to read.

Could it be… love?

"Clarke," Lexa whispers, one her hands coming up to gently cup her cheek. "I…"

_I love you_, she wants to say. _I love you more than I could ever love anyone._

"Are you ready?" She asks instead, her voice trembling a little on the question. It's a loaded one, but
Clarke knows what she’s asking. Her best friend quivers beneath her and nods slowly. Lexa’s hands slowly become clammy and her mouth dries up as she realizes that Clarke has agreed, that Clarke has given her consent to take the next step in their relationship. That stings her a little, and she can’t help but get slightly teary when she realizes that this, whatever they have, still isn’t a relationship. They’re still just friends.

*But you can change that,* the voice in the back of her head whispers, *just tell her, Lexa.*

“Lexa?” Clarke whispers back, leaning up to roll them so Lexa’s on her back again. Clarke drapes her thighs around her waist as she leans down and places a kiss on her lips. The sensation is dizzying, and Lexa’s hands start to shake as she realizes what’s about to happen. Her heart is beating outside of her chest and she feels like she’s floating again.

And just like she always does, Clarke brings her back down to the ground.

“Are you ready?” Clarke asks her softly, dusting a few kisses to her neck. “We don’t have to do this if you’re not. I want you, Lexa, but I want you to be happy and safe more than I want to have sex with you because I—because you’re you. And I care about you, Lexa. So much.”

Lexa’s eyes flash open to Clarke’s bare gaze and her trembling lips.

For a second, neither of them can speak. In the silence, their eyes give way to their true emotions. Clarke’s fingers gently trace the curves of her cheekbones, while her own hands are massaging the soft skin of her hips, just over the waistband of her panties. Usually, there’s some sort of opposition, a voice telling her not to get her hopes up, but tonight there is none. There’s only Clarke, whose beauty outshines the stars hanging over them.

With one last push of courage, Lexa finds the words that have been lingering in the back of her throat for the past four years. She leans up so their noses brush. She can feel Clarke’s hot breath on her lips, and it takes everything in her to hold back from kissing her.

Well, here goes nothing.

“Clarke,” Lexa whispers softly, “I love you.”

***

I love you.

Clarke stares down at Lexa, her heart thudded to a standstill inside of her chest.

I love you.

I love you.

I love you.

Clarke can’t seem to find the words to reply, but before she can even let the words sink in and for her heart to restart, Lexa’s face crumbles beneath her, having sought out her silence as rejection. Those warm hands leave her hips and that beautiful face turns away in shame.

“Lexa,” Clarke quickly whispers, reaching out to draw Lexa’s chin back up so they’re looking at each other. Her chest aches when she sees the tears glittering in those green eyes.

“I love you, too.”
The words are so freeing, so bright and warm, that she can’t help her own smile from almost splitting her face as Lexa’s eyes widen in shock. *Oh you idiot,* she thinks as she leans down and kisses her softly, tenderly, lovingly. *You big, goofy, charming, awkward idiot that I love so much.* Lexa’s lips are still for a few moments before they eagerly respond. She can feel something wet on her cheeks, and she pulls away to gasp at the sight before her.

Lexa’s cheeks are stained with tears, her bottom lip quivering. Her hands, now back Clarke’s hips, are shaking again. Clarke keeps smoothing soothing lines over her cheekbones, unable to find the words to comfort her lover this time. Lexa leans into her touch, her body trembling as her cries grow stronger. Clarke feels her own tears burn as she leans back down and kisses Lexa, tender and slow, just like the love that exists between them. One of Lexa’s shaky hands reaches up to cup the side of her cheek, drawing her closer.

“Clarke…” Lexa breathes against her lips. Clarke nods, kissing her harder.

“Lexa…” Clarke breathes her name back, letting the four letters ghost between Lexa’s lips. And to her credit, Lexa inhales it, devours every single ounce of devotion and love in her tone. Their kisses soon become more heated, their bodies rolling and grinding against each other in desperation. They seek more friction, more power, more connection.

It takes them a few minutes before they realize what they need to do.

“Lexa,” Clarke whispers as she pulls back again, slightly out of breath, “I want to feel you. I want to feel your skin on mine, your lips on my lips, your hands on my hips. I want to feel you… I want to feel you *inside* me, filling me, completing me. I want you, Lexa. I always have and I always will.”

By the end of it, they’re both reduced back to teary messes. Lexa’s hands are shaking, but Clarke simply takes them into her own and draws them to her lips. A few tears glide over her cheeks and land upon her slender fingers, but Lexa doesn’t seem to mind going by the sound of sheer want that leaves her lips.

“I…,” Lexa chokes on her words, staring up at her, bare and vulnerable. “I want you, too.”

The rest is a bit of a blur to Clarke. They go from exchanging gentle kisses to suddenly peeling each other’s clothes off as sensually and slowly as they can. Lexa’s hands fumble with Clarke’s underwear for a few moments before Clarke manages to lift her hips and help her out a little. She has to bite back a moan as the cool summer breeze starkly contrasts the heated wetness that had been pooling between her legs. But as she goes to explain, her words get caught in her throat at the look of wonder and pure love in Lexa’s eyes.

As soon as she’s free from the confines of her clothing, Clarke’s hands reach down and gently pull at the waistband of Lexa’s sweats. She can make out the pronounced bulge swelling at the front of her sweats and Clarke quickly realizes that Lexa’s freeballing. She eases her pants downwards, her walls clenching around nothing as that familiar hard length snaps up and slaps against the skin of Lexa’s belly. Clarke hears Lexa stifle a hiss as Clarke discards the pants and gently wraps her hand around the base of her shaft.

“Clarke,” Lexa moans out, her voice cracking on her name. “Please…”

Clarke nods mutely, transfixed by the pulsating beads of precum slowly dripping out from the small slit in the head of Lexa’s cock. She runs her thumb over the slippery flesh before slowly bringing her palm down in gentle squeeze. Lexa throws an arm over her eyes and Clarke can tell from the pulsing heat in her hands that Lexa’s close. Knowing that she wants to make their next and last step of intimacy last, she gently lowers her mouth and licks at the tender, sensitive skin at the underside of
Lexa’s shaft, producing another stream of precum.

“Clarke, I’m so close.” Lexa’s whimpering the words, and Clarke can’t help but take pity on her. She’d been sporting the boner since the parking lot back at school, so she knows that Lexa doesn’t just crave release, but she also needs it. She wraps her mouth around the head before taking the next few inches inside easily. Lexa gasps again, and Clarke gently splays her hand on the sharp jutting v-line that leads down to her pelvis and rubs lightly.

“Clarke,” Lexa can’t stop letting her name fall from her lips, “Clarke, oh God—”

“Ssh, it’s okay. I got you, baby. Just relax.” Clarke removes her mouth from Lexa’s cock to whisper the words into the small trimmed curls sitting above her shaft. She runs her tongue down the underside of her cock until she reaches the base. With her free hand, she gently takes Lexa’s balls into her hand and massages them lightly, knowing that Lexa enjoys the stimulation. She’s rewarded with another jerky motion of Lexa’s hips rutting upwards.

When she softly replaces her hand with her mouth, Lexa loses control completely. Spurts of white, milky come spatter against the flat plane of Lexa’s abs, painting the sweat-slicked skin in her release. Clarke continues licking and sucking at her balls before Lexa gently presses down onto the hand upon her hip, nonverbally telling her that she’s over-sensitive. Not wanting to cause her lose any discomfort, she removes herself from where she’d been comfortably nestled and licks her way back up Lexa’s front, collecting her reward on her tongue as she goes. It’s a salty, bitter taste, but not something ever unwelcomed on her lips.

Lexa’s softened down, but Clarke reaches down and gently squeezes to let her know that she’s not done yet. Once again, like last week, she’d scored two goals.

This time, she wants them to reap the benefits together.

“Lexa,” Clarke murmurs against one of Lexa’s breasts, “I want you inside me.”

---

Lexa’s eyes snap open at Clarke’s soft voice. She feels her hands trembling and burning. She’s felt Clarke’s hand and mouth around her, sometimes both at the same time, but she’s never been inside of her. While she’s definitely gotten used to fingering Clarke and eating her out, she’s never learned how Clarke will feel around her, or how she’ll feel inside Clarke. She remembers the sensation of Clarke’s muscles clenching around her fingers, and the thought immediately causes her cock to pulse jealously, eager for more.

And then she remembers the condoms.

Suddenly, her head is swarming with those thoughts again. It’s not like she can help it, but when Clarke talks about her, about wanting her to be inside, she can’t help but feel slightly dysphoric. Like her fingers and tongue aren’t enough. She gulps nervously, unsure of how to tell Clarke what she’s feeling. It’s not that she doesn’t want to be inside Clarke, but the act of being atop her, grinding into her, it’s all too much too fast, and she can’t seem to handle it. She shakes as she reaches for Clarke’s face, needing reassurance and support from those dazzling blue eyes. When Clarke looks up, she gets all that and more. Clarke’s gaze is brimming with love, but also understanding.

“It’s okay,” Clarke whispers as she reaches up to peck her nose. “We don’t have to, Lex.”

Again, her shaft throbs, and Lexa can’t hold back her moan.
“No,” Lexa murmurs as she tries to control her emotions. “It’s not that, I just… I…”

“Take your time,” Clarke says as she continues pressing light kisses up and down Lexa’s neck. Lexa swallows and gulps, trying to quell the nerves flopping about in her stomach.

“I… can you…” Lexa fumbles with the question. “Can you be on top? I don’t know if I…”

Clarke smiles and kisses her pulse before reaching up to kiss her nose, and then her lips. She’s so gentle, so soft and slow, as if any other movement might cause everything they currently have to fall apart and crumble into nothingness. When Lexa opens to try and explain, one of Clarke’s fingers gently places itself over her lips, halting her from speaking.

“You don’t need to explain,” Clarke says encouragingly. “We do this together. If you want me on top, I’m more than happy about that. It might actually be better if I’m on top. You’re a bit bigger than your fingers and I’ve never taken anything wider or longer than them.” Lexa’s heart beats uncontrollably outside of her chest, unable to contain the love and appreciation she has for her lover. Clarke always knows what to say and when to say it, without asking.

“There’s just one problem,” Clarke says, her brow furrowing up, “I don’t have a condom.”

“I do,” Lexa says with a shaky gulp. “There’s a box… in my duffle.” Clarke arches her brow.

“Since when have you had condoms?”

“Since about an hour and a half ago,” Lexa chuckles lightly, feeling less anxious already. “Anya got them for me… or I guess, well, us. She wanted us to be safe. I won’t say it was the greatest talk we’ve ever had, but it certainly was the most awkward.” Clarke giggles alongside her and Lexa is grateful to hear the sound of Clarke’s laugh. It eases the tension and some of the nerves that had been brewing inside of her before this had all begun.

“They’re in the bag?” Clarke asks as she leans up so she’s sitting. “Where?”

“Left pocket. It’s the Durex box. I think they’re lubed, too.”

Clarke nods and quickly steps off of her to reach into her truck to grab the item from the duffle bag. In the seconds that she’s gone, Lexa feels slightly exposed. She suddenly realizes that she’s naked, in public, having confessed her love to the woman over her dreams. For some reason, however, she doesn’t feel scared. Not about the setting or the location, or even Clarke for that matter. She knows now, that Clarke loves her, and that’s all she needs.

“I got it,” Clarke says with a gentle smile as she returns with a foil wrapper. “Do you want to put it on?” Lexa looks to the circular imprint of the latex and gulps. She looks down to her palms to see that they’re still shaking slightly, and she doesn’t want to mess this up so she looks up to Clarke and gives her a desperate look. To her credit, Clarke just nods and smiles.

“You’re lucky I had to practice this in health class… even if it was on bananas,” Clarke says with a smirk as she slowly seats herself back down on her thighs. Lexa can feel the slick heat of Clarke’s sex making contact with her bare skin and it’s enough to make her jerk upwards involuntarily. Clarke eyes her, but says nothing as she rips the wrapper off and cascades it over to where her sweatpants are strewn on the grass.

“Ready?” Clarke asks, her voice growing a tone softer. More serious. Lexa swallows hard.

“Yeah,” she croaks, leaning upwards so that she’s sitting. She wants to be facing Clarke as it happens. She wants to be as close as she can as she feels those hands on her body. Clarke waits until
Lexa manages her trembling hands upon her waist before she nods.

Lexa presses her forehead to Clarke’s own slick one, her eyes trained downwards on the sight of Clarke slowly taking her shaft into her hands. She gives it a good pump before reaching for the condom. Luckily, because it’s lubed, the sensation of it being rolled onto her head doesn’t sting as much as the first time she’d practiced a few years ago in her room. She’d just gotten one in a goodie-bag from health class and wanted to try.

Needless to say, Clarke’s doing a far better job than she ever did.

It definitely feels weird, she notes, as Clarke gently strokes the latex downwards until it snugly snaps down onto the base. She feels secure, but not dysphoric. Her range of sensation is still high enough that whatever feeling of being inside of Clarke won’t be dulled. She sighs in contentment as Clarke’s hands graze up her shoulders and loop over her neck.

“How does it feel?” Clarke whispers the words between a soft kiss. “Is it too tight? Loose?”

“Perfect,” Lexa mumbles back, “thank you.”

She knows that Clarke can see that she’s saying thank you for more than just the condom. It’s a thank you for all the small gestures of love and care that Clarke’s been providing this entire night. Lexa leans forward and captures Clarke’s lips in a slow, tender kiss.

After some time, she pulls back and gazes at Clarke lovingly, unable to form words.

Lexa gently places her hands on Clarke’s hips, just as Clarke’s legs slowly wind around the small of her back, drawing her closer. They look down to see her erection snugly pressed against both their bellies, eager and ready to take the next step in their intimate relationship. Lexa gulps and swallows down the last of her nerves before glancing back up.

“Ready?” She asks softly, nuzzling Clarke’s nose. Her lover nods, smiling with teary eyes.

“For you?” Clarke whispers before capturing her lips in a soft kiss. “Always.”

* * *

Clarke reminds herself to breathe.

Heart pounding, head spinning, her eyes locked with Lexa’s, it’s quite easy to forget. Lexa's smile shines brighter than anything in the whole wide world, and it makes Clarke's chest ache just to look at it, in the best way possible.

Once more, she caresses Lexa's cheek, using the gentle hold to tip her backwards into the pool of blankets. They're a little messy thanks to all the rolling around they've been doing, but it's not too hard to get comfortable. The wind has died down, and Lexa's burning skin provides more than enough warmth to Clarke's bare thighs.

Her eyes dip back between Lexa's legs. Lexa's cock is waiting for her, hard and ready within the thin latex wrapping, and even though it's not as large as the oversized examples she's seen in porn, Clarke thinks it's just right. Just right to fit inside her. That is, if she can actually get it inside without making an idiot of herself.

She relaxes as she remembers Lexa's earlier words: "I love you."

It doesn't matter if she makes an idiot of herself. Lexa won't care. Lexa just wants to be close to her,
and that... that, she can offer.

She reaches for one of Lexa's hands, twining their finger together and guiding her lover's palm down along her belly. "Get me ready?" she asks, giving her hips the slightest push forward to make her meaning clear.

Leka seems relieved to have instructions to follow. Her hand finishes the path by itself, and Clarke gasps as Lexa's fingers make contact with the stiff bud of her clit. It's already slick and puffy, and the way Lexa's fingers stroke on either side of the base has it swelling even further.

"It really doesn't look that different than mine," Lexa whispers, staring in awe.

Clarke smiles. "No. It doesn't." Then her whisper becomes a low groan as Lexa starts circling her tip. The touch is meant to be gentle and slow, but Clarke is already so worked up that her inner walls start pulsing. She bites her lip, trying to focus on the goal of getting Lexa inside her, but Lexa's teasing fingers are too distracting. Soon, she's rolling her hips, trying to position her entrance over them.

Lexa doesn't make her wait. She sinks a single finger inside, and Clarke shudders, arching at the subtle stretch. It's good, so good, but not enough. "Another one," she says, and Lexa adds a second. At last, Clarke can feel the slight burn she's grown used to. Lexa's fingers are bigger than hers, but she likes them that way—and she especially likes how they search for her sensitive, swollen front wall.

"There's your spot," Lexa murmurs, and Clarke can see that she's feeling a lot more confident. She's grateful she asked Lexa to warm her up, for Lexa's benefit as much as hers.

"Y—yee... Lex, baby, you can go harder..."

"Like this?" Lexa hooks against her expertly, and Clarke wails to the canopy of leaves above. Her face heats up, but thankfully, there's no one around to hear. Only Lexa—the only person she wants to hear her cries.

Lexa knows her sounds well enough to interpret them. Instead of stopping, as she might have during their first few times, she speeds up and presses further in, thrusting deep and curling her fingertips.

Clarke's thighs tense and her face scrunches up. She's embarrassingly close to coming, because of Lexa's magic fingers, and also because of the atmosphere—the moonlight, the love in Lexa's eyes, the anticipation. It's killing her, and she doesn't want the moment to end too soon.

"Not yet," she pants, pleading, "I want to come around you..."

This time, Lexa doesn't seem nervous—or if she is, her excitement is greater. She withdraws her fingers with a slick sucking noise, and both of them shudder as the wet pop sounds between them. With one last stroke of her clit, Lexa's hand retreats, moving to the base of her own shaft instead and holding it steady.

"Okay," she says, her shy green eyes hidden beneath her lashes. "Go at whatever speed you want."

For a moment, Clarke is frozen. The picture splayed beneath her is too perfect, and she wonders what she's done in a previous life to deserve this. But Lexa is waiting, and her lungs are burning because, once again, she's forgotten to take in air.

_Breathe, Griffin_, Clarke tells herself. _Let's do this. You're ready._
She bends lower, reaching down to wrap her fist above Lexa's. Lexa's length is warm and firm in her hand, burning even through the thin latex. It's soft, and Clarke can't resist giving it a little squeeze. She's rewarded with a soft whimper from Lexa, and it's that whimper that encourages her to brush the very edge of her entrance against the tip of Lexa's cock.

The contact is electric. They both gasp, and Clarke knows she must be grinning like a fool. She tries again, with the same result—it feels so good to rub herself along Lexa's head, even if it's only light strokes. She shifts further down, trying to take the head in, but she's got the angle wrong, and the shaft bends awkwardly. Lexa's brow furrows, though not in pain, and Clarke uses her hand to fix it.

"Sorry. Let me try again."

On her second attempt, she has more success. The broad tip begins stretching her opening, and Clarke's eyes widen. It feels stuck. She's never had anything so wide inside of her before, and even though Lexa isn't huge, it's definitely bigger than two fingers.

"You okay?" Lexa asks, sounding concerned, and Clarke leans down to bring their foreheads together.

"Yeah. I'm gonna try and get you in."

With painstaking slowness, she begins working the slippery shaft past her entrance. There are a couple moments where she slips, and one or two winces when she tries to take too much at once, but once she's managed the first inch or two, it doesn't really hurt. The rest slides in surprisingly easy, and she gasps as most of Lexa's cock finally seats within her.

She looks down between her thighs in astonishment. Lexa is inside of her. Not all the way, not yet, but inside. Her body has taken the top half of Lexa's length. It feels full, and fluttery, and there's a curious pressure in her lower belly, but she isn't in pain. It's just... different.

"Are you okay?" Lexa asks again.

Clarke smooths the pucker in the middle of her forehead away with a thumb.

"Mnhmm. You? How does it feel?"

Lexa trembles beneath her. "Uh... fuck, Clarke. Just, fuck. It feels... hot. Really, really hot. And tight. You're squeezing down so hard."

"Yeah?" Clarke decides to test that statement by flexing her inner muscles, the same way she does around Lexa's fingers. Lexa's eyes shoot open, her dark pupils swelling the green ring of her irises, and Clarke laughs. "Guess you could feel that..."

"Clarke..." Lexa's tone is pleading, and Clarke already knows what she wants.

"Hold on. We're almost there." She takes Lexa's hand in hers, holding it tight as she sinks the rest of the way.

When their hips meet, they simply stare at each other. The connection places them somewhere beyond words. They are joined, and somehow, it feels inevitable. More importantly, it feels right. Clarke leans down, and Lexa leans up, and when they kiss, they forget about everything else. All Clarke can think of is Lexa, beneath her and inside of her, and she knows Lexa is consumed by the exact same feeling.

She isn't sure which one of them starts moving first. Later, she tries to remember whether it was
Lexa's hips rolling softly up into hers, or her own hips gliding forward to try and find some purchase for her aching clit. But she isn't certain, and it doesn't matter. They begin rocking together, settling into a slow rhythm that's more grind than thrust—back and forth, back and forth. Lexa's length doesn't ever withdraw from her, but Clarke doesn't mind. Feeling it stir within her is pleasurable enough.

Clarke guides Lexa's hands to wrap around her hips, then loops her own arms around Lexa's neck, letting their breasts press flush, sharing as much skin as possible.

"Clarke," Lexa mutters into her mouth. "You feel..."

"Amazing," Clarke finishes for her. "You too, Lex. You feel so amazing inside me."

They look at each other, shyly, and this time, Clarke is the one to say, "I love you," first.

"I—I love you too..." Lexa's pelvis gives a little jolt, and Clarke gasps. Lexa has just hit a very deep spot that her fingers haven't been able to reach before.

"Do that again. Please?"

Lexa does it again, and this time, Clarke adds some force of her own to the motion. It feels good, like a real thrust. Feeling brave, she lifts up, letting an inch of Lexa's length slide out of her before taking it back in.

"Oh..."

Lexa's lips fall open in the softest 'o' imaginable, and Clarke shivers with satisfaction. Apparently, it feels good to both of them. She repeats the experiment, sliding a little higher than before, and when she comes back down, both of them groan beside each other's cheeks.

By unspoken agreement, Lexa begins helping her ride. Clarke adores the way her lover's hands, so strong and confident around a hockey stick, hold her with such tenderness. For her part, she clutches at Lexa's shoulders, not hard enough to leave indents with her nails, but firmly enough for Lexa to feel how she's slowly spiraling out of control. Lexa is her anchor, and Clarke can't think of anyone she would rather hang on to.

Before Clarke even realizes it, she's working herself up and down Lexa's entire length, drawing almost to the wide tip before slamming back down. It's deep, but slow, and it doesn't hurt a bit. All she feels is delicious fullness coiling in her lower belly each time she takes Lexa to the hilt. Her inner muscles are pulsing, on the edge of release once again, but she can't tell how close Lexa is—and though she hasn't mentioned it to avoid putting pressure on her new lover, some secret part of Clarke hopes they might be able to manage coming together.

Lexa seems to read her mind. "Are—are you close?" she rasps, increasingly desperate, "because I... uhh..." Her head tilts forward, and she seems to lose her words in fast panting. Even though she's not doing most of the moving, Clarke notices that a faint line of sweat has sprouted around her hairline—probably from holding back.

Clarke twines her fingers further into the silky hair at the back of Lexa's head. Her inner walls are shivering around Lexa's cock, and she's about ready to snap anyway. The thought that Lexa is straddling the same line is nearly enough to push her over the peak all by itself.

"Kiss me," she says, and Lexa's lips seal with hers, warm and full of love.

The kiss is the breaking point. Clarke lets out a muffled sigh into Lexa's mouth, and her hips give an
unsteady jerk the next time she slides down. She freezes, no longer rising and falling, but holding in place as shudders course through her entire body. She rocks forward, and thankfully, the firm muscles of Lexa's stomach are there to meet her twitching clit. Wetness leaks out around the base of Lexa's cock, dripping down both their thighs, and Clarke bites down on Lexa's bottom lip to show her appreciation.

This isn't like other orgasms. It's not just pleasant ripples, or a feeling of escaping pressure. The fact that Lexa is inside her, fantastic as that feels, isn't even what makes it truly special. It's the 'I love you'. It's the knowledge that her feelings are returned. Never has she felt so safe, so cherished, so at home. It frees her to feel in ways she couldn't have possibly imagined.

She only needs one more thing to make this moment perfect—and that's for Lexa to join her.

"Love you," she coos as their deep kiss breaks up into soft, breathy pecks. "Please... come with me..."

* * *

Lexa's eyes snap open when she hears the words leave Clarke's mouth.

She looks up to her lover, bathed in the light of the moon, skin slick with sweat, and she realizes she’s never seen quite a more beautiful sight. She threads her fingers through Clarke’s own, tugging lightly as she eases herself up in a sitting position.

And good God, is it glorious.

Clarke seems to suck her in even deeper than she had when she’d been lying down. Both women have to gasp and still, trembling with the aching fullness that buzzes between them. Lexa’s free hand lightly rubs over Clarke’s back, massaging between her shoulders as her lips dust kisses to the column of her neck. She laps up the small pool of sweat that managed to collect there over the course of their love-making. Clarke sighs and uses her own free hand to smooth down the expanse of skin from her collar to her breasts, before resting just above her heart. Lexa blinks away tears as Clarke kisses her, long and smooth and slow.

She never thought this was what it meant to be in love, to feel complete.

“Clarke,” she whispers as she lightly gyrates her hips. “Clarke…”

“Lexa,” Clarke gasps into her lips as she matches her movements with steady thrusts. “I’m so close baby, so close… please… I need you… I need you to come with me… Lexa…”

“God,” Lexa breathes out heavily, feeling her balls snap up and tighten. Clarke’s walls are pulsating around her, clenching and unclenching in a need to draw her closer, to consume her. She leans her head down and captures Clarke’s lips in a kiss before squeezing her hand.

And then, under the stars and the moon and the sky, their world bursts into a field of color.

Both of them are moaning, but the sounds are drowned out by the thrumming of blood in their ears. Their bodies jerk and gyrate against each other, discovering the need for friction as they prolong their release. Their hands squeeze tightly, trying to bring each other closer as the wave of pleasure almost threatens to drown them in euphoria and utter bliss.

With a final gasp, Lexa feels her release finally reach its peak. She’s released on Clarke’s hand, on her belly, in her mouth—but never inside of her. Granted, it’s still within the condom, but the feeling of coming inside Clarke, with Clarke clenching down on her with each throb that slips from her,
makes her belly twist and her chest ache with love.

“God,” Clarke gasps, the first to speak. “I can… I can feel you. You’re pulsing…”

“Clarke,” Lexa rasps, another weak shudder running through her. “You’re…”

She can’t find the words. Not when Clarke gives one last clench around her length. It’s a glorious sensation, and Lexa can’t help but slump in her lover’s arms after one final, shivering pulse. Clarke just holds her, hands stroking up and down her back, her lips pressing tender kisses to the side of her head while her own lips stay glued to Clarke’s neck.

“That was…” Clarke breathes out after some time. “That was indescribable… it was—”

“Perfect,” Lexa mumbles sleepily, both her hands curling around Clarke’s waist. “It was perfect. You’re perfect. I love you, Clarke, so much.”

Clarke sighs contently and nuzzles her neck, her legs locking back around her waist despite their gentle tremble.

“Clarke,” Lexa hums as she blearily looks over to her lover, “I have to pull out.”

“Wait. Just… I want a few more minutes, to feel you inside me.”

Lexa’s face screws up a little. “But I’m not… I’m not exactly hard anymore.”

Clarke chuckles. “Doesn’t matter. I like having you inside me.”

The words make Lexa’s heart skip a few beats. She draws Clarke closer, unable to speak the words that tell her lover that she enjoys being seated inside of Clarke, too. Despite having softened, she still feels warm, protected by Clarke as they continue to sleepily explore each other’s bodies. Lexa murmurs sweet nothings into Clarke’s hair before she reaches between them, her hands gently tracing the curve of her lover’s soft belly.

Clarke shudders at her movements, and Lexa can feel her blue eyes burning a hole into the back of her hand. Clarke’s lips kiss her forehead and her cheeks as she continues to lightly thumb over the soft skin beneath her hands. It baffles her, amazing her to no end, that a part of her is inside Clarke. That she’s finally reached a level of connection that goes beyond anything describable and tangible. It’s more than a feeling, it’s a state of existence so unlike anything else. Lexa holds back the choking cry that builds up in the back of her throat.

“Okay,” Clarke murmurs gently as one of her hands clasps over the back of her own, “you can pull out now.” Lexa nods against Clarke’s chest, laying a kiss to her collarbone before she trails both their hands to where Clarke is seated, hip to hip.

“Ready?” Lexa asks, looking up so she can gaze into Clarke’s eyes again. Her lover nods, leaning her head down to press a soft kiss to the underside of her jaw, and then her lips.

With a slow raise of her hips, Clarke and Lexa both reach down for her softened length. With some maneuvering, they finally manage to draw her out. The cool air causes both of them to shiver and cling to each other. Lexa leans up to kiss Clarke, needing to feel that support once more as she feels those swift and nimble hands softly prying the condom off of her length. Lexa breaks away from the kiss to watch as Clarke slowly ties the end before placing it off to the side with the foiled wrapper. Lexa presses a soft kiss to her forehead.

“Wait here,” she murmurs before getting up. The cool air causes her length to twitch, but she’s too
spent for another erection. She reaches her truck and fumbles through her duffle before retrieving two small and unused towels. She returns back to Clarke and gets her lover to lay on her back before she tenderly begins to start cleaning her up.

She goes slowly, memorizing every inch of skin and every pearl of wetness that clings to the soft cotton as she finishes lightly stroking between Clarke’s thighs. At the same time, Clarke takes the other towel and cleans up her length, wiping up any excess cum or sweat that had gathered near the base. They both work silently, gently exchanging kisses every so often.

After they’re done, Clarke tucks one of the other blankets up so it drapes over their bodies. Lexa nuzzles closer to her lover, rolling onto her back so that Clarke can rest her head on her shoulder. She wraps an arm around her best friend’s shoulder and draws her closer, before pressing a kiss to the top of Clarke’s hair. Clarke sighs contently as she lays a few kisses of her own to the spot just above her left breast. For a few moments, they’re silent.

And then, Clarke whispers, “So what now?”

There’s a tremor to her voice, one that makes a lump form in Lexa’s throat and her eyes to mist. Even though they’ve confessed their feelings, what if this was just something in the heat of the moment. Surely it had to be more, right? Surely Clarke must’ve felt the spark, the fire that had burned between them as they’d made love under the stars. She had to have felt it. Lexa’s lungs ache, and that’s when she realizes that she’s stopped breathing for a bit.

“What do you want?” Lexa asks, her voice croaking as she stares up at the moon. Clarke shifts a little so that she’s flat on her stomach, one of her legs thrown over Lexa’s waist.

“What do you want?” Clarke parrots back softly. Lexa swallows back tears and exhales. She closes her eyes, willing herself to be strong. If there’s anytime to ask, it’s now. Just do it, Lexa.

Be brave.

“You,” Lexa replies breathily, the words barely making a sound as they leave her lips. She opens her eyes and stares down at Clarke, vulnerable and bare. She reaches for one of Clarke’s hands and holds it tightly, before drawing it up from under to the blanket to her lips. She presses a soft kiss to those beautiful knuckles before resting her cheek against them. Clarke gives a shudder as she sighs, closing her eyes and snuggling closer to her.

“How do you want me?”

“I want you to be mine,” Lexa replies, her voice as steady as she can keep it. “I want you to be my girlfriend. I want you to be beside me. I want to hold you, to kiss you, to love you. I want to be with you when we’re old and grey. I want to spend my life with you, forever.” She’s crying at the end of it, and she can’t help it, because she knows that if she doesn’t do it now, while she’s laying here with Clarke, skin-to-skin, she’ll never find the courage to do it.

“I’m in love with you,” Lexa sobs weakly, “I can’t hide it anymore, Clarke.”

She expects Clarke to turn away, to think of this as a mistake, to tell her that she’s too in over her head, but instead, Clarke reaches up and takes her chin between her fingers and tilts it downwards. She feels those plump lips massaging her own, coaxing more tears and trembles from her body involuntarily. Clarke holds her, strong and calm, just like she always has. In her arms, Lexa feels safe, protected, like nothing in the world could ever harm her.

“I’m in love with you, too.” Clarke’s words are whispered between shallow kisses and soft cries.
“I’m so in love with you, Lexa. I want nothing more than to be yours, forever.” Lexa opens her eyes to see Clarke’s teary gaze staring back at her and she can’t resist but take her cheeks in her hands and draw her back down for a powerful kiss. They both cry through it, tears of joy and happiness, of freedom and love, of peace and completion. They cry, and the world stops hurting. The tension between them snaps. The bridge gets rebuilt.

It’s… perfect.

“So,” Clarke whispers after they break away, “we’re girlfriends now?”

Lexa can’t help it. She laughs, a full-bellied laugh that has Clarke cracking up beside her. Because, after everything they’ve been through, they’re finally here. They’ve spent the last four or so years skirting around their feelings, trying to ignore the passion and love they share. And now, under the light of the full moon and the clear constellations of stars, they’re here.

Clarke and Lexa, after all these years, can finally admit they’re in love with each other.

“Raven told me you wanted to ask me out to Finn’s party again, but this time as something more than friends-with-benefits,” Clarke says after her chuckles have subsided. “Something about wanting it to be a date.”

Lexa blushes furiously, ducking her head.

Clarke smiles brightly and reaches up to gently stroke the curve of her cheekbone, causing her to shiver. “Well,” Clarke asks, arching her brow with a little bit of tease, “do you want to still ask me?”

“Come to think of it, Finn’s party would have been a lame first date,” Lexa replies, her voice soft and tender as she lifts her hand to thumb over the curve of Clarke’s bottom lip. “I think this worked out a lot better, don’t you?” Clarke smiles again, brighter than the moon.

“Way better,” Clarke hums, leaning down to press a kiss to her lips, “it was amazing, Lex.”

“We can still go, though.” Lexa breaks the kiss to look up at her, sheepish. “If you want?”

“As girlfriends?” Clarke asks, peppering another kiss to Lexa’s lips. A soft chuckle leaves Lexa’s mouth as she rolls her eyes playfully and moves her hands back under the sheets to place them over the curve of her rear. This only causes Clarke’s grin to grow wider.

And then, with a soft sigh and a gentle, sleepy smile, Lexa nods.

“As girlfriends.”

Clarke beams and Lexa can’t help but pull her closer so that her head rests upon her chest. Clarke’s hands find her abdominal muscles and she splays her fingers out over them, tapping each ring softly as she starts to nod off against her shoulder. Lexa keeps her arms wrapped around her lover, her girlfriend, and presses another affectionate kiss to her hair.

The two of them doze off, and when they next open their eyes, it’s to the dawn of a new day.

They wake up beside each other, naked and bare, to the start of a new life together.

Chapter End Notes
Thanks for reading!
Resolution

Chapter by commandmetobewell

Chapter Summary

Clarke and Lexa wind down from their big night, but not without some teasing from their respective family members first.

The next morning, there is little to say as the two of them drive back home from the park. Clarke knows they probably shouldn't have stayed out all night, but she can't find it in herself to care. She is too happy and content, sitting sleepily in the passenger's seat with one of her hands in Lexa's. Lexa's palm is warm and her fingers secure, and the little bit of skin contact reminds her of last night.

Last night...

Clarke sighs happily at the memory. It's a night she'll never forget, and even better, she knows she's in for years and years of happy nights and days just like it.

Girlfriends. The two of them are actually girlfriends. The word echoes happily through Clarke's head, a soothing chant. She knows most people don't stay with their high-school loves, but she has a feeling that she and Lexa will be the rare exception. She hasn't seen everything she wants to in the wide world, but she can't imagine meeting anyone like Lexa again—there can't be anyone as smart, as kind, as brave, as absolutely perfect for her.

She wants to have adventures, but she wants to have them with Lexa by her side, just like always.

"We're almost home," Lexa murmurs, distracting Clarke from her thoughts.

"I know."

Part of Clarke is disappointed, but only a little. The thought of parting from Lexa makes her ache deep down, but she knows she owes her mother an explanation...

That reminds her. Reluctantly, she withdraws her hand from Lexa's and reaches for her phone. The battery is nearly dead, but she manages to switch it on. There are only four texts, two from her mother, and two from Raven. She opens Raven's first, since they're likely to be less scary:

The first one says, 'Having a good night?" followed by several winky faces, an eggplant, and water droplets.

Clarke rolls her eyes, tilting her phone away. She doubts Lexa will be offended—she'll probably think it's funny—but she doesn't want her to see just in case, and she makes a mental note to have a talk with Raven later about being more considerate.

The second text says, 'Dude, your mom called. I told her you were staying the night with us but were out on a snack run with Lexa.'

Clarke breathes a sigh of relief. Hopefully, her mother won't be too angry. Biting her lip, she checks the next text.
The first says, 'Where are you?'

The second says, 'Raven told me you're with Lexa. Please be safe.'

At the next red light, Clarke turns the phone toward Lexa for her to read.

"Why did your mom call Raven?" Lexa asks.

"Probably because I didn't answer." Clarke studies the text again, mind whirring. Her mother is always telling her to be safe, but she can't help wondering if it means something different this time, or whether it's just her imagination.

All too soon, Lexa pulls into her driveway. She looks across at Clarke, and Clarke catches more than a hint of sadness in her eyes.

"Do you want me to come in with you?" Lexa asks.

Clarke shakes her head. "No... I need to do this on my own."

"What are you going to tell her?"

She reaches out to take Lexa's hand. "The truth. Minus some private details." Clarke smiles, tucking a lock of Lexa's soft brown hair behind her ear. "I actually want to tell her. About us, I mean. I'm excited for everyone to know."

"Our friends won't be too surprised," Lexa admits, a little sheepishly. "They knew about my crush on you, and that I wanted to ask you to Finn's party as a real date."

Clarke's heart gives a happy flutter at the world 'real date'. She and Lexa would need to have one of those soon...

Suddenly, she remembers. "By the way, there's something I wanted to ask you."

From the look on Lexa's face, Clarke knows she can ask her girlfriend anything.

"I have this art show coming up in a week. It's kind of a big deal. I was going to ask you at Finn's party, but, well... this feels like the right time."

"Clarke." Lexa's soothing thumb strokes back and forth over her knuckles. "Of course I'll go. There's nowhere else I'd rather be. You know I'm proud of your art."

Even though she'd already known Lexa would say yes, Clarke is relieved. She leans in for an embrace, inhaling Lexa's scent one more time. She smells like herself, with just a hint of the outdoors, and Clarke can't get enough. She doesn't even realize she's started to kiss Lexa's neck until Lexa puts a gentle hand on her chest.

"I should go. I need to tell Gustus where I was... and I don't want your mom to catch us necking in my car."

Clarke laughs. That isn't the way she wants to tell her mother, either. "I love you," she whispers, placing one last kiss on Lexa's lips. It's soft, and sweet, but still, it lingers.

"I love you too," Lexa rasps. "Feels good to say it, huh?"

"Very good." Before she leaves the car, Clarke can't resist one last grope of Lexa's thigh. Then she's off, trying to ignore the growing hole in her heart as she closes the door to the truck.
When Lexa pulls away, her mood sinks—but it starts to rise back up as she heads into the house. She and Lexa are *girlfriends*. Not just friends that occasionally fuck. Lexa loves her back, and that simple fact is enough to cheer her up even in her lover's absence.

She opens the door beside the garage, toeing out of her shoes and creeping into the kitchen. It's pretty late in the morning, but she suspects her mother is already awake.

That guess is proven right when she steps into the kitchen. Abby is sitting at the kitchen island with a steaming mug of coffee, the morning paper divided neatly into sections in front of her.

"Well, good morning there, night owl," she says, giving Clarke a look that has her squirming in her socks.

"I'm fine, Mom. I'm sorry I didn't text. It was dumb."

"Mmhmm."

Clarke heads over to the pantry to make herself a bowl of cereal, but that still isn't far enough to avoid her mother's withering look. Part of her knows she deserves it, so she doesn't complain.

"So, are you going to tell me where you were?"

Clarke turns around with the box of Rice Krispies in her hand. "With Lexa, like Raven said. I promise," she adds at her mother's doubtful look.

"Oh, I believe you," Abby says. "And Lexa is a very responsible girl. But I can't help but think there's more to this story."

Clarke goes to join Abby at the island. Her mother's searching eyes have always been able to ferret the truth out of her. She draws in a deep breath. "I love her, Mom."

She hesitates, waiting for a reaction, but her mother only smiles. "I know, honey."

Clarke's eyebrows shoot up into her hairline. "You do?"

Abby laughs. "I've known since you punched that boy in the seventh grade. That's the one and only time you've ever been sent to the Principal's office, and you didn't have an ounce of regret."

Clarke groans, burying her head in her hands. "How did everyone else figure it out before us?"

"The important thing is that you figured it out. Now..."

Abby's expression turns serious, and Clarke goes pale. "We're using protection, I promise!"

This time, it's Abby's turn to look shocked. "Wait, you're sexually active already?"

Clarke's face is on fire. "I—I thought... didn't you already assume that we...?"

This time, it's Abby's turn to bury her face in her hands. She rests her elbow on the island, cradling her forehead. "Well, as a doctor, I'm glad to hear you're being safe and thinking about your health. As your mother..."

"Can we just pretend this conversation never happened?" Clarke pleads.

Abby raises her head, draining the rest of her coffee before setting the mug aside. "I think she's a good choice, Clarke. I just... I don't want you to grow up too fast."
To Clarke's surprise, Abby leaves her stool. She wraps her arm around Clarke's shoulders, giving her a loose hug. "I love you, baby. And I'm glad your first time was with someone who cares about you so much. But next time, call me. That's all I ask."

Clarke makes no effort to shake off her mother's embrace. She relaxes into it. "I will, Mom. Sorry."

"And the two of you are leaving the ladder to the attic down from now on whenever Lexa is over."

"Mom!"

Abby lets her go and gives her a stern look. "Just because the two of you are sexually active doesn't mean I approve of it under my roof. You can sneak around like I did, and like all the teenagers before you have done since the beginning of time, until you go to college in five months."

Clarke prepares to argue, but her mother silences her with a stare. "Consider that your punishment for forgetting to text me. Do it again, and you're grounded."

Clarke mutters under her breath, grabbing the unopened box of Rice Krispies and leaving the kitchen. Even so, she smiles as she stalks up the stairs to her room. For all their disagreements, she really does have a great mom.

After climbing up the ladder to her loft, Clarke tosses the box onto her bed. She considers heading for the shower—she definitely needs it—but sinks into the comfortable chair in front of her desk instead. She swings her legs for a while, thinking, before pulling out one of her sketchbooks. No point in cleaning up if her hands are just going to get dirty again.

She grabs for a case of charcoal and starts sketching an outline. Even without any pencil-work to guide the way, she knows what she's doing. Soon, Lexa's face begins to take shape, eyes closed, hair flowing beside her cheeks. She looks happy, at peace, and Clarke feels the same way as she thinks back about the night they spent together under the stars.

The rest of the drawing grows rapidly across the page. Soft shapes come together: Lexa, lying on a blanket, nude, but not showing anything too risqué. She's just as Clarke remembers, and her heart clenches.

Adding herself is somewhat harder. Though Clarke has studied herself in the mirror for self-portraits before, this is different. She's going from memory alone, and feeling, but by the time she manages to get her head and arms in the picture, it seems acceptable. It might not be a perfect likeness, but she looks right next to Lexa, at least.

Hours later, she puts her charcoal back in its case with dusty blank hands and heads for the bathroom for a long-overdue shower. Lexa had asked for a painting, but this will have to do. For now.

* * *

Lexa powers off the engine of her truck, still unwilling to move as she stares at the front door of her house with a dreamy expression. The feelings of electricity and affection are still coursing through her. It's not even lust at this point, but love. Most especially, it's Clarke's love. Another dopey smile pulls at her lips as she shakes her head and laughs.

Girlfriends.

After four years of skirting around their feelings, she's finally Clarke's girlfriend.

Sighing, Lexa realizes that she has to exit her truck and face her family. She'd gotten several texts
from Anya, a few lewd and the others serious, and two from her brother. She can see that the lights are on in the living room, which means both her sister and her brother are awake and ready for her to come home. She’s not sure what to prepare for, a scolding or some relentless teasing. Taking a deep breath, she finally decides the wait has gone on long enough. She exits the car and shuts the door before making her way up the steps.

As soon as Lexa opens the door, she hears something sizzling and smells bacon wafting in from the kitchen. Her mouth waters, her feet carrying her in the direction of the heavenly scent. She enters the kitchen to the sight of her brother, all tall and massive and lumbering, over the stove with a frilly-looking apron Anya had gotten for him as a gag gift.

“It’s nice of you to join us,” Gustus rumbles without turning around.

Lexa gulps.

Finally, he looks over his shoulder and smirks. “Nice night?”

“Um, well… you see,” Lexa chokes, all the reserve and strength she’d once had now gone. Her mouth goes dry and even the ridiculous sight of Gustus in an apron can’t calm her down. She fiddles with her fingers as she struggles to find some sort of explanation.

“Was it really that good that she left you speechless?”

Lexa whips up her head to see Anya bounding down the stairs with a beaming grin on her face. Raven follows behind her, dressed in only an oversized shirt and some mis-matched socks. She has her arms around Anya’s waist and her lips pressed to her sister’s neck, but her friend’s eyes are glittering with tease and happiness as they fixate on her nervous form.

“Please tell me you used the… uh… gift?” Gustus asks, clearing his throat awkwardly.

“I… um… yes,” Lexa mutters as she looks to the ground. “Thanks.”

“Good,” Gustus says with a nod, “now set the table. Food’s almost ready.”


“What’s between Lexa and Clarke should stay between Lexa and Clarke,” Gustus chastises lightly, passing Lexa a sympathetic smile as the brunette nods her head up in relief. “If she doesn’t want to share anything, that is her choice. We talked about privacy, Anya. Neither Lexa nor I gave you the inquisition after your first time with Raven. Not that we needed to, though.” The joke added in at the end has everyone chuckling, and whatever nerves that had been tightly wrung up during the few minutes since she’d entered the kitchen were gone.

“But you’re okay, right?” Anya asks as Raven leaves her side to help Gustus take the food into the living room, leaving the sisters alone. Lexa smiles, dopey and flushed as she nods.

“More than okay,” Lexa says, unable to hide the blush that continues to darken her cheeks. Anya arches her brow, but her own grin nearly matches that of her younger sister.

“I’m happy,” Anya says as she claps her shoulder. “You deserve all the happiness, Lex.”

“Thanks for everything,” Lexa replies, getting misty-eyed all over again. “I know that Clarke and I were dumb about our feelings, but I think we both needed the wake-up call from you and Raven.” Anya’s eyes widen at her confession, and now it’s Lexa’s turn to smirk.
“Wait, so you…”

“Yup,” Lexa says proudly, grinning ear from ear. “Clarke and I are girlfriends. Officially.”

“Lexa!” Anya practically screeches as she tugs her into her arms for a massive hug. Lexa giggles as Anya laughs into her shoulder. The two of them hug it out before separating. Anya shoves her again, but Lexa can see the pure happiness and pride in her sister’s eyes.

“I told you she’d feel the same way,” Anya says before pumping her fist in victory. She turns her head over her shoulder and yells, “Raven! You owe me twenty-five bucks!”

The groan that sounds from the other room has Lexa flushed all over again.

Lexa shakes her head and follows her sister into the living room, grabbing her plate of bacon, eggs, and hashbrowns before falling back into the couch next to Raven. She passes her friend a smirk as Raven begrudgingly reaches into her back pocket for her wallet. Anya slides down on the other side of her before pointing her fork in Gustus’ direction.

“Come on, big man, show me the money.” Gustus rolls his eyes and mutters something under his breath before fishing out a few dollars from his pocket and handing it over. Lexa stares on, mouth-open in shock as Anya pretends to spread the money out like a millionaire.

“You all bet on us?”

“Yup,” Raven says as she shoves a forkful of hashbrowns in her mouth, “so far I’ve made a little under fifty bucks. I hadn’t lost a single one up until now. I even bet with Mama G.”

“Wait. Abby was in on this too?”

“She owes me a twenty,” Raven says as she swallows the food in her mouth. “I bet that you lovebirds would get together before the final game. She said you’d wait until college. Boy, I wonder how she’s gonna feel about you now that you’ve messed around with her daughter.”

At this, Lexa pales. She likes Abby. After their parents had passed away, Abby had worked with Gustus in helping them out whenever they needed. Thanksgiving at the Griffins was about to become a whole hell of a lot more awkward, Lexa realizes with a nervous gulp.

“Relax, Lexa. Abby loves you,” Anya reassures her, kicking Raven’s good leg with in a gentle warning. “You’ve always been polite and well-mannered. I mean, she’s just probably not gonna let you and Clarke have your movie nights anymore, at least not without the door open. I’m pretty sure she gave you her seal of approval after you stepped in front of Clarke during that dodgeball match and took a nasty hit to the face to protect her.” Lexa pouts, not because of the threat of no longer having sex with Clarke, but because movie nights were Clarke and Lexa’s personal time, where nothing else existed but them. She doesn’t want to lose that. Gustus, having noticed her silence, clears his throat and gains her attention.

“The same rules apply here,” Gustus says, but offers an encouraging smile regardless. Lexa’s about to protest that Anya and Raven get their privacy, but Gustus holds up his hand. “Let me finish, Lex. I am not saying you can’t do whatever… activities,” he coughs the word out awkwardly, “you and Clarke do in your private time. I just want a heads up so I can conveniently find something to do that involves me being out of the house. I love both you and Anya, but we’re siblings. There’s some stuff I don’t need to be hearing.” At this both Anya and Raven blush and look slightly ashamed, but Gustus just passes them a nod.

“The most important thing to me is that you’re happy and that you’re safe,” Gustus says as he leans
back into his chair and smiles over at her. “I’m not Dad, nor am I Mom.”

“Really?” Anya snorts as she points to his apron. “You sure look the part, you know.”

“Shut up,” Gustus mutters as he tips his fork back and flings little bits of egg and hashbrown to his sister. Lexa chuckles as Anya flinches when the food smacks against her face. Gustus smirks, proud of himself before he turns to look down at the frilly apron with a goofy smile.

“I like the apron. It keeps my clothes clean. Bacon spatters grease everywhere. I already do enough laundry,” Gustus says as he winks over at them, forking some more eggs into his mouth. “Besides, I think it looks great on me.” At that, everyone starts laughing.

Soon enough, Gustus reaches for the television and turns it on, grabbing for the remote as he surfs through the channels. Lexa sits there, watching as the program blares across the TV, the sounds of Anya and Raven bickering and Gustus teasing humming in the background. She looks to her sister and her girlfriend curled up to each other, occasionally offering each other bites of food or exchanging quick little pecks. She looks past them to Gustus stretched out on the lounge chair, watching some mindless talk show with rapt interest. A warm smile takes over her face as she looks to her siblings… her family.

She glances up at the photo of her family, complete with her mother and father, hanging above the mantlepiece. It’s one of the only pictures they have left of their parents, and this one in particular is the most recent one they have before they’d passed away. Lexa looks to her mother and father smiling into the camera, both of their arms looped around their children. Her heart tugs in nostalgia, but as she turns back to Anya and Gus, now arguing over something to do with the TV show that’s playing, she realizes that she’s not alone.

No, she’s young and in love, and she’s happy.

As Lexa settles into her seat and finishes off her breakfast, her phone buzzes. She reaches into her pocket and digs it out, smiling wider at the sight of the message bubble at the front.

Clarke <3 [2 minutes ago]: Missing you, xox. Talk with Mom went well. I love you.

Lexa types up her response, her face still burning with happiness and elation. She settles into her seat and turns her attention to the TV. She’s not really paying attention, mostly because her thoughts are on Clarke, of their night together and how magical it had been.

Lexa smiles dopily as she zones out, lost in a world that only revolves around Clarke.

* * *

Later that night, Lexa finds herself restless. Thoughts of Clark have been swirling in her mind all day, and she can focus on nothing else. Her homework remains unfinished on her desk—an unusual occurrence. She only eats half her dinner. She keeps her nose buried in her phone, texting with Clarke every couple of minutes, even when she doesn't have anything important to say.

Anya notices her behavior, because Lexa catches her smirking a few times, but for once, her sister chooses not to say anything. Lexa is grateful. She wants to keep these moments, these thoughts, and these feelings to herself as much as she can for now. They're something private, just for her and Clarke.

By eleven at night, Gustus and Anya are in their rooms and she's in hers, lying in bed and staring at the ceiling as she remembers.
Clarke's kisses had been slow and sweet, but so insistent. Clarke's skin had been so warm in her hands despite the cold night air. Clarke's eyes had been focused on her, only on her, deep and blue enough to swallow her whole. And when Clarke's tight heat had wrapped around her...

Her phone buzzes. Lexa snaps out of her dream and picks it up, her heart racing. It has to be from Clarke again.

Clarke <3: Come to the window

Lexa gasps in surprise, but she throws the covers off, leaving her phone behind on the bed as she hurries over to her window. It's dark out, but she can make out a shadowy figure in her driveway, waving up at her—and even though she can't see Clarke's grin, she can picture it perfectly.

There's nothing else to do. Lexa hurries out of her room and down the stairs as quickly and quietly as possible.

By the time she reaches the front door, Clarke is already there, waiting. She's smiling in the dark, so beautiful that Lexa's heart stops beating for a moment.

"You're not supposed to be here," she whispers, but she ends up letting out a small moan instead as Clarke flies into her arms, hugging her tight.

"I know," Clarke mumbles into her shoulder. "I had to see you. Had to hold you."

Lexa sighs. She can't send Clarke away—she just doesn't have it in her.

"Come on."

Taking Clarke's hand, she leads her girlfriend—girlfriend... that word still gives her chills—back up the stairs to the second floor. Anya's door is cracked, but her music's up loud, and it doesn't open any further as they tiptoe past.

When they finally make it to the safety of her room, Lexa heaves a sigh of relief. Before she can breathe in again, Clarke's lips are on hers. The kiss is hot and hungry, and Lexa stumbles back before grabbing hold of Clarke's shoulders for balance.

By the time Clarke withdraws, they're both breathless.

"Sorry," she pants, although she doesn't look sorry at all. "It's just..."

"I know."

Lexa feels it too, the incredible desire to be close to Clarke, to share skin, to curl up as close as possible to her and never pull away again. Still, there are rules in her house, and they're rules she isn't ready to break. "Gustus," she protests, giving Clarke a pained look. "He doesn't want us doing... this... when he's home. And Anya is—"

Clarke must sense her nervousness, because she smiles with understanding. "It's okay, Lexa. We don't have to have sex again tonight while your sister and brother are here. I just... needed to be close to you. Texting wasn't enough." She hesitates, biting her lip. "Is that okay?"

Lexa sighs in relief. "More than okay."

They strip down to their underwear by silent agreement, then climb into Lexa's bed together. It's not quite as nice as cuddling naked, but when Lexa slips her hand beneath the hem of Clarke's tank top,
she can still feel smooth skin under her palm. She breathes in the sweet scent trapped in Clarke's hair, sighing deeply.

"You don't mind being the big spoon now, huh?" Clarke asks.

"Just sometimes," Lexa sighs. She can't remember the last time she's been so comfortable or at peace with another person. Her body has always been a source of stress for her, but now, all she can think about is how well it fits with Clarke's. They're like two puzzle pieces, like the dumb words in every bad love song ever written. She feels like she finally understands.

The two of them breathe together for a while, simply being. Lexa's mind drifts toward the next morning. She will wake with Clarke in her arms, and the two of them can go downstairs for Sunday breakfast together...

"Wait, does your mom know you're here?"

"Yeah."

Clarke is usually a good liar, but Lexa can see right through her. "Clarke..."

"She was asleep when I left. I wrote her a note."

Lexa sighs. That will have to do.

"At this rate, she won't let you go to Finn's party."

Clarke's fingers lace through hers, giving them a reassuring squeeze. "She will. She approves of you."

Lexa's face flushes. The thought of Clarke's mom knowing about their romantic relationship is kind of embarrassing, but it's also flattering to think that Doctor Griffin 'approves' of her. Abby is a hard woman to please, and she expects a lot from Clarke—and, she assumes, from anyone Clarke decides to date.

"Apparently, she saw this coming years ago," Clarke continues.

"Really?" Lexa snorts into the back of Clarke's neck, dislodging a few strands of hair. "Gustus, Anya, and Raven said the same thing. There was something about a betting pool..."

Clarke groans. "Did everyone else know before us?"

"I think so." Lexa places a soft kiss at the nape of Clarke's neck. "But it's okay. We figured it out, right?"

"Mmmhmm." Clarke yawns, and Lexa can tell she's getting tired. Her breathing has slowed down, and her voice is a little raspy.

"Sleep," Lexa says, stifling a yawn of her own.

"Okay. Lexa?"

"Hmm?"

"Love you..."

"Love you too."
Clarke doesn't say anything after that, and soon, Lexa senses that she's asleep. She drifts off soon after, with her arm tucked securely around Clarke's waist and her face buried in Clarke's hair.
The Party

Chapter Summary

Lexa and Clarke head to Finn's party, but it doesn't go as smoothly as they'd hoped.

Chapter Notes

Happy one year anniversary to TTS! I can't honestly believe it's been a whole year since we started writing this. It has been a really crazy awesome journey and I'm so happy all of you guys are sticking with us. I know our updating hasn't been as frequent as we'd have liked, but we're doing our best to get you as much as we can! I hope that you guys enjoy this chapter, and that it's worth the wait.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The thud of the bass is loud enough to be heard outside of Finn's house as Lexa pulls her cherry red GMC up to the curb and puts it in park. There are a few people milling about outside on the steps, most with cigarettes between their fingers, but not too many. Through the open windows, she can see more of a crowd inside where the music is blasting.

"Promise me you'll never start smoking," Clarke says, wrinkling her nose in distaste as some of the smell wafts toward the truck. "I don't want to have to kiss you like that."

Lexa's eyebrows lift in surprise. "But you still would?"

Clarke unbuckles and turns toward her, running a teasing finger along the edge of her tank top where it curves across her chest. It's a cut that shows her cleavage, and a shirt Lexa might not have had the confidence to wear had it not been for Clarke's encouragement while picking her clothes. "You know I can't resist those lips. But I wanna kiss them for eighty years instead of forty."

She leans in, and Lexa is so surprised that she forgets to kiss Clarke back for a few seconds. It isn't the first time Clarke has referred to a future that includes the two of them, but the idea still has Lexa's heart racing. She loses herself in the kiss, tasting Clarke's sticky-sweet lipgloss, buzzing with excitement that has nothing to do with the party.

When Clarke pulls away, she leaves Lexa grinning stupidly.

"You're so beautiful," she says, and Clarke laughs, running a hand through her hair.

"Look who's talking. You clean up pretty good yourself, Ms. Woods."

Lexa puffs up with pride. With a tight, curve-hugging tank top to show off her figure and a looser flannel shirt tied around her waist for later, she feels like herself—feminine, but not overly dressed up, either. Clarke is wearing something similar, except she's got one of Lexa's hockey jerseys hugging her hips.
"Should we go in?" Clarke asks.

Lexa's eyes snap back up to her face. "Oh! Yeah, sure." She shuts off the engine and hops out of the car, hurrying around to open Clarke's door for her. To her delight, Clarke remains in place and waits for her, allowing the small act of chivalry. When Lexa extends her arm, Clarke takes it, and they traverse the walkway leading to the front door hand in hand, heading through the cloud of smoke together before the music swallows them.

The bass thums deep in their bones as they make their way through a wad of people dancing in the main hallways. Clarke's hand grips Lexa's bicep, and a big, proud grin spreads across Lexa's face as they weave their way further into the house. They aren't just going to a party together, which is something they've done before. They're going as a couple, and it feels a thousand times better.

"Ay, here comes the newest—but not the coolest—power couple! Clexa, get over here!"

Both girls jerk their heads up to see Raven grinning at them from the kitchen, one arm lazily slung over Anya's shoulders. Lexa smiles, allowing Clarke to tug her toward their friends.

"Clexa?" Clarke asks when they arrive. "You haven't called us that since middle school."

Raven laughs loud enough to startle a few people beside them, and to inform Lexa that she's had a few drinks already. "Thought it was time to break the old nickname out again in honor of... recent developments. Eh?" She raises her eyebrows knowingly, and Lexa's face burns.

She doesn't get a chance to respond. Anya stumbles forward and wraps Clarke in a massive bear hug, drunkenly slurring together words of congratulations before shoving her away and nearly tackling Lexa in an equally massive embrace. Lexa nearly loses her balance, but she returns the hug as best she can. Anya smells like a weird mix of alcohol and perfume, but at least she seems to be having a good time.

"I'm proud of you, Lex," Anya mutters in her ear before letting her go. "I don't say that enough, but I am..."

"Yeah, I know," Lexa wheezes, "but you're kinda crushing my ribs. Ease up, please."

Once Anya has gotten her rare dose of affection out of her system, she bids them a farewell before dragging Raven toward the dancefloor. Lexa chuckles as she watches her sister stumble and Raven catch her, before they disappear out of view. Clarke sighs and turns toward her with an arched brow, a silent question passing through her gaze.

"Drinks?" Clarke asks, taking her hand. "I don't think I'm drunk enough to dance yet."

Lexa starts to reply, but a slew of drunk teenagers rush through them as the song changes into something more upbeat, resulting in a chorus of cheers from the crowd. She looks at Clarke, and both of them burst out laughing.

"I think we'll need it to keep up," Lexa chuckles.

This time, it's Clarke who offers her arm. "Shall we?"

Lexa takes her elbow and the two of them head toward the kitchen where the drinks are waiting.

* * *

Once they've gotten their drinks and managed to talk to most of their friends, Lexa and Clarke
weave their way to the center of the dance where Anya and Raven are grinding up a storm. Lexa fights back a grimace when she watches how Raven throws her arms over her sister’s shoulders and proceeds to nearly devour her face.

“All right,” Lexa mutters, pulling gently on Clarke’s arms, “I think we’re gonna head this way.”

Clarke just laughs and lets herself be tugged along until they’re in the middle of a few unknown teenagers. Feeling much more comfortable, Lexa starts to sway to the music as a new track filters through the massive speakers. The walls seem to vibrate with the bass as Clarke dances in front of her, hand in her hair and teasingly moving her hips closer to Lexa’s own.

Lexa’s breath gets stuck in her throat as she watches small beads of sweat trickle down Clarke’s neck and into the space between her low-cut tee. She licks her lips and tries to focus on the music, of the jostling of drunk teenagers around her, but it’s no use. She feels her compression shorts tightening slightly beneath her jeans, and she feels somewhat glad as she realizes that the sea of drunk people and low lighting make it hard to see anything.

But then, as the song shifts to Phantogram’s “You’re Mine”, Lexa finally loses control.

Clarke cheers alongside the other drunk people as she loops her arms over Lexa’s shoulders. Lexa’s hands find her hips and she can finally feel the alcohol starting to take effect as the power vocals kick in and Clarke sings along, her blue eyes dark with lust.

“You don’t talk to no one, don’t you look at nothin’, focus on me, look into my eyes,” Clarke sings, swaying her hips a little harder until she’s lightly grinding into Lexa. Lexa only grins back, her hands sliding down slightly to gently fondle Clarke’s ass as she sings back.

“Come a little closer, let me tell you somethin’,” Lexa rasps sultrily into Clarke’s ear, her voice quiet but still somehow carrying over the roaring crowd. “Eat your ego, honey, swallow your pride…”

Clarke gasps, and Lexa preens at the sight of Clarke melting under her. While she’s confident as hell on the hockey rink, she feels like a bumbling fool in most sexual situations like this, so it’s a huge boost to realize she’s just as capable of seduction as Clarke is. This new element to their relationship has helped her tap into a well of confidence she didn’t even know she possessed.

The chorus comes through and Lexa reaches with her free hand to cup Clarke’s cheek, running a thumb lightly over Clarke’s bottom lip as she stares down into those beautiful blue eyes. Her own lips part and she suddenly feels too hot as she watches Clarke chase her hand, her tongue flicking out ever so slightly to caress the pad of her thumb.

“But now? Lexa’s sure she’ll explode if she doesn’t get some alone time with Clarke soon. Judging by how Clarke is looking at her, Lexa knows her feelings are not totally one-sided. “I need some
“air,” she says as she points towards the backyard. Clarke nods, breathless.

“Want me to get us more drinks?”

“Please.”

The two girls go their separate ways, with Lexa stumbling through the crowd until she finally manages to get some air. She basks in the cool summer breeze and smiles as she spots some of the girls from the hockey team by the firepit on the other end of the yard.

She makes her way over to them, ready to call out and say hi, when suddenly someone bumps into her. Lexa steps back and apologizes to the girl on the ground before she leans down and helps her up, flashing her a kind smile. The girl dusts herself off and grins.

“Lexa Woods,” she says with a teasing lilt to her voice, “didn’t think I’d see you here tonight.”

LExa smiles and rubs the back of her neck. “Costia, right? Sorry about running into you.”

Costia just giggles and lightly touches her shoulder. Lexa doesn’t think much of the action, other than it being overly friendly. Costia continues to lean into her.

“Oh, you can run into me anytime you want. I wouldn’t mind,” Costia murmurs.

Lexa tries to play off the weird statement with a laugh. She can see her friends looking at her strangely from over Costia’s shoulders.

“Say, do you want to grab a drink?” Costia asks, nodding to the house. “The beer isn’t bad, but I’m pretty sure Finn’s got some harder stuff that’s a little bit more… intense.”

“Ah I think that I should wait for Clarke. She’s coming with—”

“Please,” Costia begs as she places her hands on Lexa’s stomach. “Have a drink with me, Woods. I’m sure Clarke won’t mind. C’mon, the only interaction I ever get with you is watching you snooze through Mr Henry’s AP Calculus classes. Listen, I know it’s the end of the school year and we’re all going different places, but I want to get to know you better.”

“Um…” Lexa fumbles, looking back at the house for a sign of Clarke. “I guess one drink couldn’t hurt. Maybe I’ll find Clarke in there and tell her to join us? Is that okay?”

When she turns back, Costia looks less than pleased at the sound of her girlfriend’s name, but she quickly brushes it off to offer Lexa a smile and a nod. “Yes, that’s fine. Let’s go.”

Lexa gingerly leads Costia back into the house to find Clarke. Costia trails after her as they make their way through the crowd until they reach the kitchen. She hears Raven’s voice screaming out ‘body shots’ somewhere in the house, followed by an encouraging cheer from her sister, but she just chuckles and shakes her head, veering away from their voices. She’s already been scarred enough for a lifetime.

But then, as she enters the kitchen, she feels her world crumble at the sight before her.

Finn stands there, leaned up against Clarke with a drink in hand, drunk off his ass as he flirts with her girlfriend. Lexa quickly looks to Clarke, relieved to see that she looks anything but interested in the shaggy-haired boy. In fact, she looks a little uncomfortable by the distance Finn refuses to give her, but nothing worrisome. If anything, she looks annoyed.
“Oh, isn’t that unfortunate.”

Lexa turns her head at the sound of Costia’s pitiful voice. “Excuse me?”

“I know how much you liked her, but I think Collins got there first,” Costia tells her with an empathetic pout. She puts her hands on Lexa’s shoulders, running them down until they rest down in the crook of her elbows. Costia bats her eyelashes and leans closer as she sadly tells her, “I’m sorry, Woods. That’s really tough.”

Lexa just frowns in total bewilderment. “You’re kidding right?”

“Wait, what?”

Now Costia is the one that looks confused. Lexa just chuckles and turns away, finally having caught on to Costia’s game. She knows that she can be oblivious at times, and maybe it was the few drinks in her system, but she’s shocked she didn’t notice her flirting until now. She pushes through a few football players trying to do a keg stand and makes her way to Clarke just as Finn tries to lean in closer, presumably to kiss her.

Lexa’s blood burns, and the way Clarke jerks back in surprise and obvious discomfort only increases her anger. “Finn?!” She shouts his name, grabbing the attention of both Clarke and Finn. The poor boy stumbles forward and collides with the cabinet beside Clarke’s head. Lexa doesn’t have the energy to laugh at his dazed expression. “What the hell is going on?”

“Lexa, what are you doing here?” Finn asks, still rubbing his head. His tone implies he’s not at all happy to see her and his eyes shift guiltily to the one side, avoiding her gaze.

“I’m more interested in what you were trying to do,” Lexa says, staring daggers straight into his face. Just thinking about how close his lips had been to Clarke’s made her angry—and not just with jealousy. “She’s not your girlfriend and she pulled away when you leaned in. Those should be two idiot-proof signals to back off.”

“Come on, Lexa. They’re not worth your time,” Costia says, placing her hand on Lexa’s arm again and giving Clarke and Finn—especially Clarke—a threatening glare.

Clarke’s eyebrows lift, then lower again in annoyance as she crosses her arms over her chest. “Excuse me? I’m not worth what?”

Lexa shrugs off Costia’s touch. She’d gotten the vibe that Costia was flirting with her, and she’d been willing to overlook it in the hopes that it would tone down when Clarke joined them, but she hadn’t expected Costia to be so rude about it.

“Clarke’s my girlfriend, and she absolutely is worth my time,” Lexa says, shaking her head in disbelief.

“Seriously?” Costia protests, glancing between Lexa and Clarke. “She was almost making out with someone else. A guy. She can’t even make up her mind.”

“No, I wasn’t making out with him, and you need to make up your mind to leave,” Clarke snaps. She steps forward, getting in Costia’s space, and the two of them share a heated look before Lexa gets between them.

“Costia, just go,” she says, threading her arm through Clarke’s. “I want to be alone with Clarke now.”
Costia huffs, but turns away, glancing back over her shoulder. “When you decide you deserve better, come find me, Woods. I’ll be waiting.” She returns the way she came, past the football players and out the back door.

“I’ll just, uh…” Finn mumbles, trying to sneak away, but Clarke grabs the back of his shirt, preventing him from leaving.

“No you don’t. Dude, I know you’re drunk, but that pushed way past my boundaries. I want an apology when you’re not shitfaced and a promise you’ll never do anything creepy like that again. Especially not to your friend since kindergarten.”

Finn has the decency to look ashamed. “I’m sorry, Clarke. I just thought… you know, that you were into me. The moment felt right—”

Lexa tightens her hold on Clarke’s arm. “She’s into me, Finn. You need to respect that.”

Finn’s mouth flaps as if he’s not sure what to say. Clarke lets go of his shirt, pushing him away. “Get out of here, Finn. But we are not done talking about this.”

Lexa turns to Clarke as Finn scurries away. She opens her mouth to tell Clarke that she doesn’t need to talk to Finn at all, that she would be right to end the friendship over this, but she doesn’t get the chance. Clarke surges up, grabbing the front of her shirt and capturing her lips in a deep, hungry kiss.

A groan vibrates from Lexa’s chest, and the blazing heat of anger turns to a different kind of warmth. With just one kiss, Clarke has transformed her anger and jealousy to lust. She kisses Clarke back as hard as she can, taking the lips Finn didn’t get to touch, pressing forward with her tongue and shuddering when Clarke opens for her.

Only when the two of them desperately need air do they break apart. “God, I could have throttled her,” Clarke mutters. “When she touched you…”

“I wanted to kick Finn off a roof,” Lexa replies, still panting.

Clarke laughs. “Is it weird that I find your possessive streak hot?”

“Not weird. I feel exactly the same way…”

Clarke’s eyes shift away from her, darting toward one of the halls. “… wanna get even?”

“What do you mean?” Lexa asks. Clarke’s tone already has the hairs on the back of her neck prickling with anticipation.

“Let’s fuck in his bathroom.”

Lexa lets out a bark of laughter. “What, really?”

“I’m serious. He won’t be able to pee in peace.”

“Clarke…” Lexa gives her girlfriend a fond but skeptical look.

“What? It’s the perfect revenge! Are you saying you don’t want to fuck me?” Clarke’s hand slides around her waist, dipping down to grope her ass beneath the flannel shirt she has tied around it. Lexa gasps, tensing without meaning to.

Clarke leans in, murmuring beside her ear, so close Lexa can feel the movement of her lips. “Are you saying you don’t want to bury your face in my pussy and make me scream, just because you can and
The words send a lance of need straight between Lexa’s legs. She shifts awkwardly, all too aware of the way her jeans are rubbing against her. She flashes back to the dance floor, to the image of Clarke twirling in front of her with her hand in her hair. She swallows, her mouth feeling unusually wet.

Maybe a few weeks earlier, when she and Clarke were just messing around, she might have stammered. She probably would have ‘ummed’ several times before actually forming words. But now, even though she can feel her heartbeat low in her abdomen and her spine is tingling, she feels confident enough to form a coherent response. Clarke has chosen her not once, but twice—first when they became a couple, and just now in front of Finn and Costia.

“Yes,” she says.

Clarke grabs her wrist, dragging her toward the hall with deliberate intent. On the way, she spots Finn watching them from a safe distance away. He looks away as soon as he sees them, but Lexa knows he’s watching as they arrive at the bathroom door. Unfortunately, there’s a bit of a line, but that gives her an opportunity: she grabs Clarke’s ass, spinning her around and bracing her against the wall.

Clarke kisses her almost instantly, sliding both hands under the front of Lexa’s shirt to paw at her breasts through her bra. It’s clumsy and a little rough, but Lexa doesn’t care. Clarke is touching her and that’s all that matters. She doesn’t spare another glance for Finn, or any of the other partygoers who are milling around nearby. They suddenly seem like the least important thing in the world.

Finally, the bathroom door opens. Another couple stumbles out, the boy looking flushed and the girl bowing as some of her friends cheer. Lexa drags Clarke past them and through the door, slamming it shut and clicking the lock.

Clarke is on her in less than a second, walking her back toward the sink and pinning her there. “Turn around,” she growls, leaning in to nip at the crook of Lexa’s neck.

Lexa blinks. She’s still dazed from Clarke’s kisses. “Huh?”

“Take off your shirt and turn around.”

Lexa shrugs out of her shirt, which is kind of difficult since Clarke’s body is still trapping her against the skin and Clarke’s lips are still nibbling at her throat. When she turns in Clarke’s arms, she suddenly realizes the point of the suggestion. She’s staring at her own reflection in the mirror.

She takes a moment to look at herself. Her hair is a mess, her cheeks are flushed, and the peaks of her nipples are sticking out through the thin material of her bra. She gasps as Clarke’s fingers slide up along her abdominal muscles, then under the elastic of the bra itself, tweaking one of the tips.

“I want you to watch,” Clarke says, brushing aside her hair and planting a kiss on the nape of her neck. “Just watch, okay?”

Lexa swallows. She’s never been a huge fan of her own reflection, but this is actually kind of nice—the mirror doesn’t go past her waist, so all she can see is Clarke messing with her tits. The stuff going on below isn’t visible. And there is a lot going on below. She groans as Clarke’s other hand slides around her hip to squeeze her, fingers fumbling with the fly of her jeans.

“Fuck,” Lexa hisses, bracing her hands on the edge of the sink and sagging forward. Clarke means business—her hand dives right into Lexa’s compression shorts and wraps around her, stroking her with clear purpose. The first pump of Clarke’s fist brings so much pressure that Lexa is almost afraid
she’ll come, but she manages to hold back at the last moment. There might be a line outside, but she wants to draw this out at least a little.

“Keep watching,” Clarke mumbles, pressing hot kisses to the side of her neck. She runs her thumb over Lexa’s swollen tip, spreading the wetness there around before squeezing again.

Lexa bites her lip, but a loud moan escapes her anyway. She forces herself to look at her reflection, which is already panting with exertion. She’s too turned on to be embarrassed. She stares into her own eyes, watching her pupils swallow her irises, noticing the way her jaw trembles.

Clarke pulls down the cup of her bra, still plucking at one of her nipples. It’s hard and cherry red, and Lexa can’t help staring as Clarke plays with it. Each little tug sends a throb straight down to Clarke’s fist—a fact Clarke seems to notice, because she slides her hand even further into Lexa’s shorts to give her a teasing squeeze.

That’s almost too much. Lexa bucks forward, but there’s nowhere to thrust. The edge of the sink is already digging into her stomach. She can only squirm as Clarke kneads and pinches and rubs.

“Clarke,” she breathes, clenching the counter even tighter. “Clarke, you’re going to make me come…”

Clarke chuckles, planting another kiss against her hot skin, one with a generous amount of tongue. “That’s the point. I make you come. Not Costia Whatshername.”

Lexa can’t even find it in herself to protest. Clarke has no reason in the world to be jealous, but the possessive streak, as well as the lustful look she can see in Clarke’s eyes in their joined reflection, is driving her wild. Her muscles tense, trembling with need.

“Come for me, Lexa,” Clarke whispers, nipping at her earlobe. “Come in my hand.”

Lexa comes, spilling over Clarke’s pumping fist and arching forward to push more of her breast into Clarke’s hand. Her vision blots out for a moment, but she can still see the look of bliss on her own face, and the smirk of pride on Clarke’s. Just remembering it is enough to feed the pulsing between her legs.

Only when she’s empty and softening in Clarke’s grip does she finally remember to breathe. She blinks the stars away, shaking herself to try and get a grip. “Oh God,” she mumbles, letting go of the sink. Her knuckles have gone white with the fierceness of her grip. “That… Clarke. Fuck.”

“Mmhmm,” Clarke tweaks her nipples one last time, coaxing one last whimper from Lexa’s throat. Then she lets go, stepping away and sliding her fingers into her mouth.

Lexa turns around, feeling herself twitch even though she’s finished. The sight of Clarke licking up the evidence of her release drives her just a little crazy. She runs her tongues over her own lips, her eyes darting down to the join of Clarke’s thighs. “You said something about me burying my face in your pussy?”

Clarke leans back against the wall, hurrying to unbutton her jeans and yank them down past her knees. “Please, Lexa. I’m so wet…”

Lexa wants to feel for herself. She crosses the room in a single stride, sliding her fingertips up along Clarke’s thigh only to find the skin there hot and dripping. When she finally reaches Clarke’s lips, she inhales sharply. Clarke is telling the truth. She’s absolutely dripping, and Lexa wastes no time seeking out her clit.
Clarke stiffens and shudders as soon as she rubs it. “Lexa,” she gasps, shoving the fingers of her clean hand through Lexa’s hair. She starts pushing down, but Lexa catches Clarke’s hand and brings it to her lips, kissing her wrist.

“My turn,” she says, staring into Clarke’s eyes. Clarke has gotten her chance to reassert her claim, and Lexa wants the same thing.

Lexa sinks to her knees, her hands weaving around Clarke’s waist to knead at the soft cheeks of her ass. Clarke gasps above her, but Lexa only continues her motions softly, her eyes glazing over with affection as she notices how much power she truly wields over her girlfriend. Clarke writhes under her touch, but doesn’t shy away. Instead, she seems to inch her lips closer to the hot puffs of air leaving Lexa’s parted mouth.

Lexa’s fingers to the puffy ridge of Clarke’s clit. It peeks out and twitches under her gaze, letting a weak pulse of fluid drip down in anticipation. Lexa licks her lips and grins, flashing Clarke one good smirk before she leans her head forward and sinks in.

Within seconds, her chin is drenched.

Clarke’s sounds are heavenly as Lexa flicks her tongue, sucking the small tip into her mouth. The hands in her hair are gripping hard enough to hurt, but Lexa isn’t deterred by the slight pain. It only spurs her on as she closes her eyes and loses herself in the salty, but still characteristically sweet, taste of Clarke. She scratches her nails lightly down one of Clarke’s thighs, earning a keening wail as her reward. Lexa takes a deep breath as Clarke’s hips jerk unsteadily and the grip on her hair tightens even further. She flicks her tongue downwards slightly, probing at Clarke’s entrance.

“Oh God,” Clarke practically hisses the words. “Please… Lexa!”

“Ssh,” Lexa rumbles against Clarke’s clit, smirking as those gorgeous hips jerk again. “I’ve got you.” She stiffens her tongue and enters Clarke, moaning at the sensation of those hot walls pulsing around her. Clarke has her face almost completely covered, but despite the narrow space for oxygen, Lexa can’t help but feel more turned on. Clarke’s almost screaming now, and in the back of her head, she doesn’t feel the deep thrum of the bass from the music anymore. Clarke’s moans are her music now.

A few quick lashes of her tongue has Clarke screaming her name amongst a slew of other profanities. Lexa sneaks the hand not clutching onto Clarke’s thigh upwards, her fingers sliding through those slippery lips before two of them enter Clarke’s walls with little resistance. She looks up as she curls her fingers, a moan building in her throat as she watches Clarke throw her head and scream her name into the air.

Clarke’s orgasm is violent and messy, with most of her release drenching Lexa’s chin and jaw, as well as soaking the hand between her thighs. But Lexa only laps it all up eagerly, groaning with appreciation as Clarke’s hands loosen their grip and start to pet her hair with gentle strokes. Lexa eases Clarke down from her high with a few lazy thrusts before she finally pulls out and detaches her mouth.

“Damn,” Lexa chuckles as she hobbles to her knees. “That was…”

“Amazing,” Clarke breathes out, her eyes dazed and tired but pleasantly sated. “Your fingers and tongue do wonders, babe.”

Lexa beams at the praise and shyly ducks her head, rubbing the back of her neck as Clarke giggles and wraps her arms around her shoulder. Lexa blushes as Clarke nods her head up and slowly attaches their lips in a slow, soft kiss.
“You okay?” Clarke asks between soft pecks. “I know that was a lot.”

“I loved it,” Lexa nods, “but I don’t know if I would do it again. It was kinda risky.”

“You know we had our first time under the stars in a park, right?”

“How could I ever forget?” Lexa asks dreamily, her hands coming up to Clarke’s waist as she sways them slightly. “That night, with you on top of me with the moonlight bathing your skin as we made love… I don’t think there will ever be a more beautiful sight.”

It’s Clarke’s turn to swoon and blush as she leans her head down into Lexa’s shoulder, humming with delight. Lexa grins and turns her head, pecking her girlfriend’s hair affectionately.

After swaying and exchanging soft kisses every so often, the two girls finally realize just exactly where they are. It takes them less than five minutes to clean up and fix their clothing before Lexa reaches for the door and unlocks it. She opens the door and they step outside…

…Only to find everyone crowding around the door with wide eyes and dropped jaws.

“Um,” Lexa stammers as she sees her teammates near the front with impressed expressions on their faces. Anya and Raven are leaning against the opposite door frame with smug smirks on their lips. And then right beside them are Finn and Costia, who both look like they’ve just seen a ghost. The room is silent for a few moments before Raven clears her throat and raises her glass with a twinkle of amusement and pride in her eyes.

“Well that’s one way to come out as a couple,” she says with a drunken slur before she turns to the rest of the crowd with a beaming grin. The people cheer and Lexa flushes, wanting to cower as Anya makes a lewd gesture in her direction.

The party-goers go back to their drunken dancing as the music starts to play, the moment now forgotten. Lexa relaxes a bit once the attention seems to be off her, and she feels even better when Clarke’s hand squeezes hers. When she turns her head to look at her girlfriend, she can see the care and the concern in those beautiful blue eyes.

“You okay, baby?” Clarke asks softly, stroking Lexa’s thumb with her own. “We can leave if you want.”

Lexa shakes her head. “No, we can stay. I think we made our point.”

“So you guys are really together, then?”

Lexa jerks around at the sound of Finn’s strangled voice. The boy is standing behind a somber-looking Costia, wringing his hands in front of his lap nervously. He looks between them before focusing on Clarke. “I’m sorry I overstepped, Clarke. You were totally right before, and I know I’m not one-hundred percent sober right now but I promise I will apologize properly again in the morning.” He looks to Lexa then, taking a deep breath. “And to you too, Lexa. I went too far.”

“You did,” Lexa acknowledges, her voice tight. “You’re lucky you’re one of Clarke’s good friends, or else I wouldn’t even be giving you the chance to apologize. No matter how much you drink, you don’t force yourself on someone who doesn’t consent, even just for a kiss. I hope you realize how fucked up that is.”

Finn ducks his head in shame as Lexa takes a step forward, towering over him even though she’s a few inches shorter. “Get out of here. You can apologize to Clarke again tomorrow.”
Finn nods and scampers away with one last apologetic glance to Clarke. Lexa sighs and leans back, only to see Clarke stepping forward to get into Costia’s face.

“And you,” Clarke snarls, “if you ever touch my girlfriend again…”

“I won’t,” Costia says, putting her hands up and smiling sadly. “I came over here to make peace. Lexa pretty much proved she’s in love with you. I’m sorry, both of you. Despite how many times you told me Clarke was your girlfriend, I still didn’t back down. I was selfish and petty.”

“I won’t disagree with that,” Clarke mutters, earning another wince from Costia. Lexa sighs and reaches for her girlfriend’s hand, giving it a small squeeze before she turns to Costia.

“Look, Costia, I’m sure you’re really sweet most of the time, but I love Clarke. She’s my girlfriend and I want to be with her. If you really meant what you said earlier about wanting to be friends, then I don’t have a problem with that. We always see each other at practices and games, and I know we have classes together.” Lexa says, ignoring Clarke rolling her eyes not-so-subtly from beside her. “If you want to be friends, we can. But only friends. If you can’t handle that, we shouldn’t talk.”

Costia seems to mull it over for a bit before she sighs and nods, her smile less sad and more genuine. She holds out her hand and Lexa eyes it with an arched brow.


“No funny business?” Clarke asks, obviously still annoyed.

Costia shakes her head. “I swear. You two seem to have a good thing going. I won’t mess it up.”

Lexa turns to look at her girlfriend, noticing how Clarke is still eyeing Costia suspiciously. Costia seems to notice as well, because she sighs and lowers her shoulders.

At last, Clarke speaks up. “I’m still not okay with how you treated Lexa or me. What you said about me— especially considering I’m bi— wasn’t cool. What you said hurt and while I get that you are sincere about your apology, I’m not ready to accept it yet. It’s gonna be awhile before we’re even acquaintances. But I’m not gonna stop you from hanging out with Lexa. I’m just her girlfriend, not her keeper or anything.”

Costia perks up a bit. “That’s fair. I mean, I was a total idiot back there. And you’re right, about what I said about you. It’s totally out of line on my part, and I’m really sorry.”

“We all make mistakes,” Lexa replies with a stern voice, “but Clarke’s right. What you said to her was completely out of line. Clarke is bisexual, and she will still be bisexual whether she’s with a girl or a guy. I love her for it, just like she loves me for being trans. What you said was incredibly offensive. Clarke means a lot to me, and if you hurt her, you hurt me.”

Costia nods slowly, and Lexa feels Clarke squeezing her hand gently in appreciation. After a moment, Costia takes a deep breath, meeting them with a serious and remorseful expression. “I’m sorry, Clarke. Truly, not just because Lexa wants me to apologize. I acted like a child, and I don’t think you’re just using her as some kind of experiment.”

Clarke just nods again, and Costia takes that as a signal to say her goodbyes. The two girls watch as she disappears into the crowd. Lexa glances up to see Raven and Anya standing by each other—or as much as two drunk people can stand—grinning at them.

“Damn, Griffin!” Anya slurs with pride as she stumbles forward and claps Clarke’s shoulder lightly. “You just about knocked that chick on her ass. Up high!” Anya extends her hand and Clarke just
laughs and high fives the older Woods sibling as Lexa rolls her eyes fondly.

“Nah man, the real kudos need to go to little Woods over here!” Raven chimes in as she slings her arm around Lexa’s shoulder, jostling the taller girl slightly. “I mean did you see the look on Finn’s face, babe?” Raven turns to Anya, who just fake gags in response.

“Did you see the look on my face?!” Anya demands with a pout. “I’m her sister!”

“Oh as if you’re innocent in all of this,” Lexa banters back with an arched brow. “I don’t think one time makes up for the dozens of times I’ve heard you two go at it.” Anya flips her the bird and moves off of Clarke to bring Raven into her arms again. Raven giggles and loops her arms around Anya’s neck, smacking a kiss to her lips before burrowing her head into her chest and grinning over at where Clarke and Lexa are standing, hand in hand.

“Best party ever,” Raven beams as she melts in Anya’s arms. Lexa glances at Clarke, her own heart beating out of control at the sight of the sheer love and adoration in her gaze.

“On that we can agree.” Lexa replies as she looks over at Clarke. “I think it went well, all things considered.”

Clarke only rolls her eyes playfully before reaching her free hand up, bringing Lexa in for a real kiss. Her girlfriend moans and weaves the same hand into her hair as Lexa dips her slightly, her hands finding purchase on Clarke’s hips and lower back. Raven hollers something lewd in the background and Anya groans again, but she knows that it’s out of pride and amusement.

She smiles into the kiss as Clarke starts to laugh against her, and as she pulls away to look into those blue eyes, Lexa knows she’s falling deeper into a love she now knows is endless.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading!!
Smiles All Around

Chapter Summary

Lexa and Clarke deal with an unforeseen adversity and venture into uncharted territory.

Chapter Notes

This chapter has some anal play near the end if that squicks you! Sorry for the long wait!

Hope y'all enjoy it and we'll have some more uploaded soon!

Clarke swipes her thumb through her charcoal drawing, smoothing out an edge into blurry shadow. This was supposed to be a final touch-up on her very last piece for the show next Friday, but it’s turned into something of a rework. Her hands are a mess and she’s pretty sure once she goes to look in the mirror, her face won’t be much better.

Part of her wants to stop picking and call it a day, but she’s not quite ready to quit yet. Something about her last portrait of Lexa still isn’t right. This is yet another fantasy version of her girlfriend, with twin swords strapped to her back, and she’s standing in a heroic pose, kind of 90s romance novel cover cheesy. (She freely admits she’s taken some inspiration from the books her Mom had tried to hide while Clarke was growing up. She’d even caught her Dad borrowing from time to time.)

But something’s missing, something she can’t quite put her finger on.

Despite her attempts to keep working, Clarke’s mind drifts. She thinks about the party two nights ago, the way she and Lexa had fooled around in the bathroom. Or maybe fooling around wasn’t the right word. The setting might have been immature—a bathroom at a stereotypical high school party—but God, Lexa’s face had been full of wonder in that mirror. Her bronze cheeks had flushed the most beautiful shade of red as she’d pulled her soft lower lip between her teeth…

Red. Inspiration strikes. Clarke sets her charcoal aside and goes digging in her drawer for the pastels instead. She grabs a handful of red and pink and a little bit of yellow and starts scribbling.

Several minutes later—or maybe it’s been more like an hour, she’s lost track of time—she makes a noise of satisfaction. Most of the drawing is still black and grey, but now the sash flowing from Lexa’s shoulders is a deep crimson, the color of blood, with just a few golden edges. It looks crisp and sharp, a stark contrast from the blurry charcoal, and Clarke is pleased with the result.

It’s a pretty big departure from what she had originally envisioned, but the splash of color is worth it. It feels more alive, more dynamic.

“Hey, Clarke?”

Clarke puts the drawing away as fast as she can without smearing her new work. She knows that
voice and where it’s coming from, and when she checks her phone, leaving a few messy fingerprints on the case, she realizes she has several missed texts. Missed texts from Lexa.

“Hey, Lexa! Did Mom let you in?”

“Uh-huh. I’m coming up.”

Clarke hears the sound of the trapdoor being opened and the ladder coming down. A moment later, Lexa’s head pops up through the floor. “Hey, gorgeous. What are you doing?” Clarke holds up her hands, and Lexa laughs. “Okay, that’s an answer. I thought your art show was coming up sometime next week. Shouldn’t you be done by now?”

“I was,” Clarke protests. “I mean, I am. I was tweaking my last drawing. It just wasn’t eye-popping enough for me, you know?”

“Oh.” Lexa’s eyes light up with interest. “Can I see?” She scooches into Clarke’s workspace, dipping down to kiss her before seeing the mess on her face and clearly thinking better of it. Clarke laughs as Lexa drops a kiss on the top of her head instead.

“Nope, not yet. It’s a surprise. You’ll have to wait until Friday night.”

“Sure, I—” Suddenly, Lexa’s face falls. “Wait, Friday? This Friday? Five days away?”

Clarke’s brow furrows. “Yeah… why? Is that a problem?”

“Maybe not,” Lexa hedges, but she still seems upset. “What time?”

“Seven, but I need to be there half an hour early and I’ll have to change before that.”

“Oh. Okay. Yeah, um… this is a problem. The finals are that day and all the talent scouts are going to be there.”

Clarke’s heart sinks. The finals? She’s been so wrapped up in the newness of her relationship with Lexa that she’s barely thought about hockey. Sure, it’s important to her girlfriend, but she’s really only interested because Lexa is. And with all the other things she and Lexa have been doing lately, talking about hockey has been pretty far down on their priority list. She hadn’t thought to ask the date of the game.

All she can think of to say is: “Oh shit.”

“Yeah.” Lexa perches against the edge of the desk, staring forlornly down at her feet. “I don’t know what to do here, Clarke. Any other night, nothing would stop me from going. I know how important this is to you—”

“And I know how important this game is for you,” Clarke sighs. “It’s not just about winning or something. This is your chance to get a college scholarship. It’s your entire future, you know?”

“But this art show is your future too,” Lexa protests. “So…”

Clarke feels like she’s being ripped in two. It had taken her ages to get the courage to ask Lexa to see the show—a show that features pictures almost exclusively of her. Now, even though she knows how important the final game of the season is, she can’t help feeling rejected.

“I can’t ask you to skip the final game to come,” Clarke says at last. “That’s not fair. I guess we both have to do what’s right for our futures.”
Lexa leans over, taking both her hands and squeezing them tight. She doesn’t seem to mind the charcoal and pastel all over them. “Clarke, I want you to be my future. If you need me to come—”

“No. Your game is just as important. And I’m sorry I can’t be there for you. I wish I could. Any other night, I’d be wearing your jersey, cheering in the stands so loud no one but Raven would wanna sit next to me, and she’d have to wear earplugs.”

Lexa presses her lips together into a pouting sort of scowl. “This really, really sucks.”

“Yeah,” Clarke says. “Yeah, it does. But hey, at least we both understand?”

“I understand it,” Lexa grumbles. “Doesn’t mean I have to like it.”

“Hey, will you record the game for me? Win or lose, I still want to see you play.”

“The games are always recorded, but sure, I’ll get you a copy,” Lexa says, giving Clarke a soft, sad smile. “Will you show me your pieces once you get them back?”

Clarke returns the smile, although it hurts more than a little. “Of course I will.”

“Thanks.”

They’re quiet for a while, and then Lexa brushes aside some of Clarke’s hair, which has escaped her ponytail. “How about you wash your hands and hop in bed with me?”

“Honestly, I’m not sure I’m up for—”

“Just to cuddle,” Lexa assures her. “I get not wanting to do, uh, that when we’re both sad.”

That makes Clarke chuckle a bit. “You can call it sex, Lexa. If you’re old enough to have it, you’re old enough to say the word.”

Lexa snorts. “If you’re such an adult, why do you eat popcorn mixed with candy corn like a pig on Halloween?”

“You dip french fries in your ice cream. You’re one to talk.”

“So do you!”

“Yeah, what’s your point?”

The two of them break down laughing. Clarke still feels a weight on her shoulders, but some of the tension is gone. She gets up out of her chair and steps into Lexa’s embrace, sighing as she rests her forehead against Lexa’s shoulder. “Hey…”

“Hey, Clarke.”

“I love you.”

She can feel Lexa’s smile against the top of her head. “I love you too.”

* * *

Lexa twirls her pencil absently between her knuckles as she stares down at her math homework, her thoughts drifting elsewhere. She sighs and scribbles down a few numbers, punching the digits into the calculator on autopilot. Normally, she’s nowhere near this unfocused or careless with her work,
but her mind is somewhere else.

It’s not that things have been awkward since her conversation with Clarke about her game this weekend, but their relationship seems to have fallen into a state of limbo. Lexa glances at her phone, her heart stuck in her throat at the sight of no notifications. Any other day of the week, her iMessage and Snapchat would be pinging every so often—all from Clarke.

Today, however, things are a bit more silent.

“God, if you stare at that any longer I swear you’ll shoot lasers at it.”

Lexa snaps her head up to see Anya staring at her with a bemused, quizzical expression. Shaking her head, Lexa turns her gaze away from her phone and back to her math problem… which, in the midst of her angst thoughts, she’d forgotten all about. She grumbles and scrunches up her paper, starting over with a frown.

“Jesus, Lex, what’s got your panties in a twist?” Anya mutters from beside her. “Did you and Griffin have a fall out or something? I’ve never seen you like this before.”

Lexa closes her eyes at the words, feeling each one pick at her mind.

Nothing’s wrong, per se, and Lexa knows that. She and Clarke are good. More than good, actually. They’re girlfriends now, after so many years of pining, they’re finally together.

What could possibly be wrong?

“Lexa,” Anya says, a serious tone coating her voice. “Seriously, are you okay?”

“I…,” Lexa trails off, glaring back at her homework. She sighs and shoves it away, figuring she has no chance at completing the question while her mind is bogged down elsewhere. She hears Anya’s seat pushing backwards and after a few seconds, a hand is on her arm.

“Lexa,” Anya whispers, her voice soft now. “What happened?”

“I… it’s Clarke,” Lexa sighs, tears welling in her eyes as she looks to her sister. Anya notices that she’s having a hard time figuring out what to say, so she hands her the half-empty bottle of Gatorade at her desk. Lexa nods gratefully and takes a sip before clearing her throat, her fingers playing with the label that’s slowly peeling off the side. “She’s—”

“Pregnant?” Anya asks, eyes wide with horror. Lexa spits out the Gatorade that’d been in her mouth, sputtering wildly as she gasps for air. Anya, however, seems to be lost in her own presumption as she stands, pacing back and forth worriedly, her hand pressed to her head.

“Lexa, I gave you those condoms for a reason,” Anya scolds her before her voice grows soft again. “I told you… but, okay, so it’s done. We need to talk about logistics. Are you both going to keep it? What about school? It doesn’t matter, whatever you both need, we’re here. Raven too, I’m sure. We can definitely babysit when and if you guys need to go out. Scratch that, I’ll babysit; I love Raven, but she is not the most childproof person. I’m sure we can figure something out with Gustus too. Wait… forget about Gustus, does Abby know?” Anya stops her frantic rambling to turn and face her sister. Lexa, red-faced and sweaty, is still in a state of shock and choking on air from when she’d swallowed her drink wrong earlier..

“Lexa?” Anya asks as she sits down, her brow furrowing in confusion. “Are you listening? Look, accidents happen and I know it’s tough now, but we’ll get through it together—”
“Jesus Christ, Anya stop talking!” Lexa splutters out between gasps. She sheepishly glances at Anya with blushing cheeks and wide eyes, embarrassed that her sister would jump to such conclusions. “Stop freaking out. Clarke’s not pregnant. First of all, she couldn’t be, considering the first time we did it was last week. Secondly, it isn’t likely she even could get pregnant if we did go bare—which we wouldn’t by the way. Even if the condom broke, my hormones cut that chance down really far.”

It takes a second for the information to process before Anya cocks her head in confusion. “So… if she’s not pregnant, then what’s wrong?” she asks sheepishly, having the decency to look the slightest bit chagrined at her overreaction.

Lexa sighs, looking back down at the peeling label on her bottle. “I…well… it’s about Clarke’s art show.”

“Yeah, what about it? You’re going aren’t you?” Anya asks, still confused.

“I don’t know if I can,” Lexa murmurs, looking at Anya with a pained expression. “It’s the day of our final.”

At this, Anya is silent.

Lexa chuckles awkwardly, trying diffuse the tension in the room. “So you’ll freak out over the hypothetical of Clarke being pregnant, but now you decide to be quiet?” The joke falls flat, and both sisters know why. Lexa tries to smile, but it falters and she turns away.

“Lexa,” Anya says in a low voice as she inches closer. “I know you love her—”

“But this game is important,” Lexa interrupts sourly, “believe me, I get it. And so does she. She told me not to come, but I…”

“Lexa, listen to me. I’m not trying to tell you what to do,” Anya starts, tone serious and articulate. “I’m not your mother. I’m your sister and your teammate. You’ve worked your ass off for twelve years to get where you are right now. You and I both. You heard what Indra said. They’re interested, Lexa. They want us. We could even go to national leagues. This is our dream. You have one shot at making that dream a reality, and that one shot is our game. It’s not just about you, either. You’re the captain. Those girls look up to you. They follow your orders. You can’t abandon them, not on the night of our most important game.”

Lexa lowers her head as tears start to burn in her eyes. “Nice pep talk, An.”

“That’s not—look, I get it’s… complicated,” Anya struggles with the words before she sighs. “I’m not trying to guilt-trip you, Lex. If you want to go to Clarke’s art show, you can. You love her, and I get that. I would be just as conflicted if Raven had a symposium or a competition that clashed with my schedule. But at the end of the day, Raven knows what she wants and I know what I want. Just because things don’t align doesn’t mean we don’t love each other.”

“Clarke’s been working on this for so long, too!” Lexa argues weakly. “Ever since her dad died, she’s only had her friends and her mom to cheer her on. I’m her girlfriend—”

“And not her keeper,” Anya finishes with a stern expression. “Lexa, you and Clarke both have bright futures, and I know that she wouldn’t want you to jeopardize your one shot at achieving your dream for her art show, even if it is a big night for her, just like you don’t want her to give up her show for your game.”

Lexa frowns and closes her eyes. “But I still feel bad,” she says with a soft whimper, “I can’t let her down, An.”
Anya sighs and rubs her forehead tiredly. “I know, Lexa, it’s tough. I’d hate to be in your position. If I were you, I’d be just as conflicted and confused, but—”

“You would know what to do?” Lexa asks.

Anya sucks in a deep breath before she nods sadly. Lexa doesn’t have to ask to know her sister’s answer. Anya leans over, placing her hand over Lexa’s shoulder to give a comforting squeeze.

“Raven and I know that no matter what we go through, we’ll always figure out a way to work things out. Sometimes being in a relationship means sacrificing things, and when that happens, it does suck. It hurts and you may have regrets, but at the end of the day, you have to do what is best for you first,” Anya explains with a somber expression. “But Lexa, just keep in mind this isn’t about one game. You know both of us can’t afford to go to university. Our only option is getting a full ride, which could happen if we get scouted at the final.”

“I know,” Lexa murmurs. “I care about it a lot, An, but I also care about Clarke, and I… I just don’t know what to do. It’s times like these I wish Mom and Dad were here. They’d know what to do, wouldn’t they?” Lexa looks up, misty-eyed. Even Anya’s gaze is tearing up slightly at the mention of their parents.

“I’m sorry I can’t be more like them,” Anya says. ‘I wish I knew how to help you through this. I’m not the most comforting person, I know, but I still wish—”

“An, stop,” Lexa chuckles weakly, her throat tight. “You don’t need to be my parent. You’re my sister and I love you for that, no matter how irritating you can be sometimes. We’ve raised each other in a way, and I just… hockey has always been our thing. You and I have been on every team together. You beat up so many girls that shunned me from being on the team because of my gender. You’ve protected me and encouraged me from the start. Hockey is what brought us together and kept us going after Mom and Dad died. We’ve been through the worst and I… I just don’t want to let you down either.”

“Lexa,” Anya says as she smiles and leans forward to wrap her arms around her sister’s shoulders. Lexa immediately falls into the embrace and hugs her back tightly. “No matter what you do, you could never let me down, okay? If… if this art show is really important to you, then I think you should go to it. I won’t stop you if that’s what you want. We can find something else. Maybe Indra can talk to the scouts or something. We’ll figure it out, Lex. No matter what you decide, I will always be there as your number one supporter, okay?”

Lexa nods, unable to stop the tears that slide down her cheeks as she burrows her face into her sister’s shoulder. Anya sighs, but Lexa can hear the small sniffles and she can’t help but hold on just a little more tightly. Anya grumbles something nonchalant before letting go.

“So… we good?” Anya asks, clearing her throat and blinking back the tears. Lexa smiles and nods as she lets go and reaches for her math homework again. Anya turns to reach for her own work when Lexa lets out a soft giggle. Her sister looks over with a cocked brow.

“What?” Anya asks, perplexed by Lexa’s Cheshire grin. “Why are you laughing?”

“I just…” Lexa chuckles again as she looks away from her sister. “I can’t believe your first thought was that Clarke was pregnant. I’m totally going to tell Raven that you’re even more extra than me.”

Anya’s lips form a line as she reels back and whacks her sister’s shoulder. “Whatever. I get worried over you, that’s all.”
Lexa grins over at her, wiggling her eyebrows. “I know. I think it’s cute.”

“I’m not cute, I’m badass.”

“Mhmm, sure.”

Anya eventually goes back to scowling at her physics homework while Lexa turns back to her math problem. Her chat with Anya should’ve made her decision easier, but as she stares down at the mess of numbers before her, she can’t help but feel more conflicted than ever.

* * *

Clarke stares at her phone, biting her lip as she debates whether to respond to Lexa’s texts. She’s not being fair, she knows. It’s not Lexa’s fault she’s hurting—logically, she knows both of them are making the right choices. But that doesn’t help the ache deep inside her chest, right where her heart’s supposed to be. It doesn’t fix the weight in her limbs or the subtle, constant cramping in the pit of her stomach.

This sucks. It just really, really sucks.

After closing her eyes for a minute to calm down, Clarke evaluates her options. Seeing Lexa might make her sadder, but the thought of spending some time with her also brightens her mood a little. Besides, she’s Lexa’s girlfriend.—and not just her girlfriend, but her friend first and foremost. Friends don’t go radio silent. She doesn’t want to hurt the woman she loves by giving an unintentional cold shoulder for two days.

She picks up the phone, which is already opened to her conversation history with Lexa. *hey. are you free tonight?*

Three dots pop up almost immediately.

‘Yes. Should I come over?’

‘yes. :D’

The smiley face is a little much, but Clarke doesn’t want Lexa to get the wrong idea. The two of them deserve a night where they’re not brooding over this. Hopefully, a little snuggling and reconnection will remind her that Lexa does care, even if she can’t be at the art show because of stupid bad luck.

When Lexa texts back an eggplant emoji, Clarke’s face flushes. Maybe cuddling isn’t all her girlfriend has in mind… and it’s probably not a bad idea, either. She doubts she’ll be able to be mad or sad about anything with Lexa’s head buried between her legs or Lexa’s fingers and shaft moving inside of her…

‘Oh god I’m so sorry! That was supposed to be a heart! D: They were next to each other in frequently used…’

Clarke chuckles despite herself. Leave it to Lexa to cheer her up, even unintentionally. She texts back an eggplant emoji of her own, followed by water droplets and a kiss print. Hopefully that’ll convey her opinion on the subject loud and clear.

She spends the next few minutes scrolling through random sites, waiting for her phone to buzz. When it finally does, her sluggish body gets a small jolt of energy. It’s something of a relief to feel the familiar flutter of excitement in the pit of her stomach—for the past few days, it’s been absent,
and she’s missed it. The smile on her face as she tosses her phone on the bed and climbs down from the loft doesn’t feel forced anymore.

When she opens the front door to see Lexa exiting her cherry red pickup, the flutter becomes a flash of heat. Clarke smirks, sucking on her teeth as she soaks in the view. Even in a unisex t-shirt and shorts, with her hair in a messy bun and her glasses a bit bent, Lexa looks like an absolute goddess.

_Fuck. She can miss a hundred of my shows, as long as she keeps walking toward me looking like that._

Lexa clears her throat when she reaches the top of the steps. “Uh… Clarke?”

It’s only then that Clarke realizes she’s blocking the doorway. She laughs at herself, but instead of stepping out of the way, she wraps her hand around the back of Lexa’s neck and draws her in for a kiss.

She tries to keep it soft. She really, really does. But when the familiar taste of Lexa’s mouth spreads through hers, Clarke forgets everything else. She parts her lips with a groan, flicking her tongue in request for entrance. When Lexa gives it, Clarke’s knees buckle. She has to put her other hand on Lexa’s shoulder for balance—or maybe just because she craves more contact.

Lexa seems to feel the same way. Her hands come to rest on Clarke’s hips, not possessive—yet, at least—but definitely settling into place with purpose. Clarke melts at the touch, nibbling Lexa’s full bottom lip before the need for air forces her to pull away. “I missed you,” she breathes, gazing into Lexa’s bright green eyes.

Those same eyes flicker with a tinge of sadness, but it doesn’t last long. “Yeah. Me too. But I wanted to give you space.”

“Hey,” Clarke says with a shrug, finally stepping back so they can both enter the house. Once the door’s closed, she returns to Lexa’s arms immediately. “Yeah, I’m upset, but not at you. In a few months, I bet we won’t even care about this.”

“Right. I bet we won’t.” But although there is a note of hope in Lexa’s voice, she doesn’t sound quite convinced.

Clarke shakes off the last of her melancholy. Lexa is here in her arms, both soft and firm at once, and Clarke’s hands start to hunger for their chance to feel what the curve of her body does, pressed up against Lexa’s breasts and stomach.

“… will it be weird if we, like, mess around first?” Clarke asks hopefully. “I don’t want it to feel like a booty call.”

Lexa snorts with laughter. “Clarke… girlfriends don’t have booty calls. The fact that it’s a relationship specifically disqualifies it from being a booty call.”

“I’m just saying,” Clarke grumbles, but she kisses Lexa again, sucking at her top lip this time and winding both arms around her girlfriend’s neck. Apparently the answer to the booty call question is yes, because Lexa kisses her back eagerly. They trade back and forth for a minute, switching off who has control, hands roaming beneath the edges of clothing without stripping anything off.

But Clarke can’t stay patient for long. “So… wanna fuck me?”

This time, Lexa doesn’t laugh. She reaches into her shorts, a scowl of annoyance crossing her face. “Damn.”
“What?”

“Condoms are in the car. I’ll go get—”

Clarke makes a split second decision. The desire to have Lexa inside her is strong, but her need is much stronger. Now that Lexa’s actually here in person, her smell and her soft skin and those beautiful, expressive eyes, Clarke doesn’t want them to leave again, even just for a short trip down the driveway.

“Nu-uh. You’re staying here with me. Okay, new question. Can I fuck you?”

Lexa’s eyes widen in surprise. “I mean… yeah. If you want. You know I love your mouth.”

There’s definitely some enthusiasm in her voice, but when Clarke searches for the obvious signs of arousal—the blown pupils, the shallow breaths, the slight shivering she’s used to—she doesn’t quite find what she’s looking for. Lexa isn’t quite with her, just a little more distant than usual, and Clarke only needs two guesses for why. If it’s not about the art show and the game, it’s probably gender-related.

“I didn’t ask if I could go down on you,” she purrs, leaning in to catch Lexa’s neck with her lips. She sucks a soft patch of skin there until it’s nice a pink, nibbling up toward Lexa’s pulse point. “I asked if I could fuck you.”

She’s rewarded when Lexa stiffens in her arms—and an answering stiffness pushes against her belly through Lexa’s shorts. “Uh… I—I didn’t…?” Lexa coughs and tries again. “I didn’t know you were interested in… that.”

It’s true. They haven’t really discussed it, but even though Lexa’s voice is hesitant, her body language is much more telling. Her breathing has sped up and her eyes are cloudy, just the way Clarke loves to see them. When Lexa’s tongue makes an appearance to wet her dry lips, Clarke knows what her answer is.

But just to check, she says, “I am, if you are? I mean…” She leans in even closer, whispering right next to Lexa’s ear. “You love being inside me, don’t you? Feeling me all hot and tight… clenching around you…”

That gets a positive reaction. The hardness against Clarke’s belly gives a soft twitch through both of their clothes and Lexa chokes on a quiet whimper. “Clarke…”

“So… why wouldn’t I wanna feel that?”

Lexa lets out a shuddering breath. She kisses Clarke deeply, and somehow, Clarke can sense why—Lexa is drawing courage from her. Clarke offers up all she has to give, and when Lexa pulls back at last, she’s smiling. “Okay. I want to try. But, uh…” Her eyes dart around the entryway. “Not here?”

Clarke grins. “Aw, c’mon. You don’t wanna give the neighbors a show through the downstairs windows? No fun.”

“Definitely not,” Lexa says. “Having sex in Finn’s bathroom was enough humiliation for one lifetime.”

“But you were into it,” Clarke teases in a sing-song voice, leading Lexa up the stairs by her hand. Their fingers stay laced, and Clarke uses them to pull Lexa in close for another kiss half way between the first floor and the second. “You liked coming in my hand,” she mumbles into Lexa’s lips. “Knowing there was a line waiting right outside the door… listening to you… hearing every
moan…”

Lexa’s eyes narrow. “Hmm. Are you sure you aren’t *projecting* just a little there?”

“Fine. We were both into it. But my point still stands.” Clarke stops at the top of the stairs, placing her finger on the point of Lexa’s chiseled chin. She watches carefully, enjoying the way Lexa’s mouth falls ever so slightly open as that same finger travels down the vulnerable column of her throat, and then along her graceful collarbone.

“Clarke…”

Clarke circles her fingertip around Lexa’s nipple, coaxing the soft bud to hardness in a matter of seconds. Sometimes, she really, *really* appreciates that Lexa’s smallish B-cup doesn’t always require a bra. “Hmm?” She continues down, past the firm, clenching muscles of Lexa’s stomach until her finger is resting right over the bulge in Lexa’s shorts. Her girlfriend obviously didn’t tuck today with such loose clothes—and Clarke doesn’t see any need to complain about that either.

“…Take me upstairs.”

They don’t stop for any more kisses on the way up to the loft. Both of them have a goal in mind. As soon as they make it up the ladder, Clarke walks Lexa back toward the bed, pulling her shirt up and off before they even hit the edge of the mattress.

Soon, the attic is filled with Lexa’s low, quiet moans and heavy breathing. Clarke manages to tease a little bit, blowing a stream of air across the stiff brown peak of Lexa’s nipple, but she can only hold out a few seconds before the temptation is too strong. She draws it into her mouth, swirling her tongue around and around until Lexa’s squirming beneath her.

“Clarke,” Lexa pants, threading her fingers through Clarke’s hair. “God, that feels so good.”

Clarke releases the puckered point with a pop, tugging just once with her teeth before kissing her way across to the other side. She spends even more time there, although Lexa earns a few seconds’ break by reaching down to strip off Clarke’s shirt and even the odds.

The feel of skin on skin makes Clarke moan around the prize in her mouth. She’ll never ever tire of the way Lexa’s body feels against hers, whether she’s the one grinding on top of Lexa, or Lexa’s weight is pressing down on her. They’re a perfect fit in every single position.

Lexa’s sounds are so sweet and encouraging that Clarke almost forgets what she’s supposed to be doing. She’s all wrapped up in the way Lexa’s skin tastes, like something sweet and fruity with just a hint of clean sweat on top, and in how *good* Lexa’s fingers feel petting her hair. She only moves on from Lexa’s breasts when her girlfriend pushes gently on top of her head, urging her attentions lower.

Lower is just fine with Clarke. She unhooks her bra and throws it onto the floor along with both of their shirts, squeezing her own breasts for just a moment to give Lexa’s eyes something to focus on. But after that it’s back to business as she skims kisses over the defined muscles of Lexa’s stomach.

“Fuck, you’re amazing,” she gasps, running her tongue all the way from the bottom of Lexa’s abdomen to the top, following the definition line in the middle. Lexa doesn’t have a bulging bodybuilder six pack on display, but it’s easy to feel each bump beneath the thin coat of feminine fat.

“Your stomach, Lex. Fuck. Wanna come all over it…”

“You can,” Lexa says, sounding hopeful—but Clarke shakes her head. She’s got a plan, and she wants to stick to it.
She peels down Lexa’s basketball shorts, beaming when she catches sight of Lexa’s underwear. The bikini cut briefs are plain black, but the noticeable swell in front and Lexa’s long, tanned legs make it a spectacular sight anyway. Clarke runs her hands up along Lexa’s thighs, spreading them as she nuzzles the bulge with her nose. Lexa doesn’t have a particularly strong smell, but what’s there is so nice that Clarke’s head spins. She takes particular pride when she notices there’s a small wet patch on the front where Lexa’s tip is resting.

“You’re dripping,” Clarke whispers, mouthing the spot.

Lexa’s whimpers are music to her ears. “Claaarke…”

“Hey. I like making my girl wet.”

Clarke hooks her thumbs through the waistband of Lexa’s panties, preparing to drag them down, but to her surprise and disappointment, Lexa stops her.

“Wait.”

“Hm?” Clarke stops immediately, halting her hands and lifting her head away.

“If you’re going, uh… inside… I want to visit the bathroom? Um. To check.”

Clarke sighs in mixed amusement and disappointment. “I’m sure it’s fine, Lex. It really isn’t as dirty as most people think.”

“And how do you know?” Lexa asks in surprise.

“Um, because I’ve fingered my own ass before? In the shower,” she adds when Lexa gives her an uncomfortable look.

Or maybe it’s not so uncomfortable, because a moment later, Lexa’s green eyes flash hot. She sits up, and Clarke’s inner walls pulse when she realizes that Lexa didn’t use her arms at all—just the strength in her core. “Two minutes,” Lexa mutters, rolling off the bed and blazing a trail straight for the bathroom.

Clarke decides not to be offended by the lack of a parting kiss. Better to take Lexa’s hurry as a compliment.

While Lexa’s in the bathroom, Clarke takes off the rest of her clothes. Her underwear has a noticeable stain in the middle, and when she slides a testing finger between her lips, the contact makes a wet, sticky sound. Once she starts, it feels too good to stop, and she flops onto her back in the warm patch Lexa’s body has left behind, circling a finger around her swollen clit.

By the time Lexa reappears, Clarke’s got two fingers buried inside herself and her breast in her other hand.

“You could’ve waited,” Lexa says, but Clarke can tell from the lust in her eyes that she isn’t really upset. The hard length between her legs is a pretty obvious clue, too.

“Get over here,” Clarke rasps, forcing herself to withdraw her fingers. “This is supposed to be your turn.”

Lexa crawls back onto the bed, and Clarke climbs over her in a flash, straddling her midsection. Despite her insistence that Lexa should go first, she can’t resist rubbing herself against Lexa’s stomach on the way down. Her clit twitches and her muscles clench as she grinds against the firm
surface, but after a few silky strokes, she tears herself away with a frustrated whimper.

“You don’t have to st—uhh…” Lexa begins to say, but the sentence is lost in a groan as Clarke wiggles down between her legs and plants a kiss right on her tip.

The first flood of Lexa’s taste on Clarke’s tongue is more than enough to make up for losing her stomach. She sucks the head hungrily, lapping up all the little slips of wetness that spill out as her hand slips down to cup Lexa’s balls. Lexa groans when she squeezes them, hips giving a little upward jerk.

Slowly—or, more slowly than she wants to—Clarke works her way down Lexa’s length. She dusts the underside with kisses, enjoying the way the firm flesh pulses against her lips. Lexa throbs in her hand, and Clarke can’t help feeling how swollen and full she is. If she’s going to get to the main event, she needs to speed up a little.

After one final tease—pulling one of Lexa’s balls into her mouth and sucking gently while Lexa whines in surprise—she withdraws and looks up along Lexa’s shivering body. “Flip over, baby.”

Lexa rolls over, and Clarke groans as she’s treated to the sight of Lexa’s gorgeous backside. Her hands are drawn to the taut curves like magnets, and she gropes them eagerly, squeezing the firm flesh and enjoying the way her fingers leave little white pressure rings behind for a couple of seconds. “Your fucking ass,” she mutters, bending down to draw a portion of Lexa’s cheek into her mouth. She sinks her teeth in, enjoying Lexa’s surprised yelp of pain and pleasure. “Do you know how many times I stared at it when I thought you wouldn’t catch me?”

“Probably still less than I stared at yours,” Lexa says, but it’s obvious she’s pleased by the compliment. Her hips give a little wiggle, and Clarke digs her nails into Lexa’s rear to stop the motion.

“Hey, quit it. No grinding. You’ll come early.”

Lexa doesn’t deny it. She stops thrusting into the mattress and spreads her legs hopefully.

Clarke takes her up on the invitation. After one more grope, she pulls Lexa’s cheeks apart, studying the small opening in between. The skin there’s a bit darker than the rest of Lexa’s flesh. When Clarke leans closer, she catches a hint of something in her nose—the smell of the handsoap in her bathroom sink. When she flicks out her tongue, it tastes like soap too, and she snorts. “Lexa… you taste like cucumber melon.”

Lexa stares back over her shoulder with a cocked brow, her expression playful and teasing. “Well, do you want cucumber melon, or old basketball short sweat?”

“Yeah, but did you have to use the whole bottle?”

“I was trying to be considerate,” Lexa protests, but Clarke ends the conversation by swiping with the flat of her tongue. Lexa stiffens and arches, breathing sharply at the sensation.

After another lick or two, Clarke is happy to discover that Lexa tastes like Lexa again—clean and warm, but not artificial. She moans in approval, probing her tongue just a little further in. She’s kind of surprised when Lexa’s opening gives slightly. Clarke tries again, just to make sure, and sure enough, the tight ring of Lexa’s entrance loosens for a second.

“Your fingers?” Lexa moans from above her, half a question, half a plea. “I… I want to know how it feels when you’re inside me…”
Clarke pulls away with one last affectionate nip to Lexa’s firm cheek. She shifts onto her knees, reaching into her nightstand and pulling out a clear bottle of lube.

As Clarke generously coats her index and pointer fingers in the lube, she finds herself smiling. A month ago, Lexa probably would have been uncomfortable with the idea of being taken. Perhaps not so much from a lack of experience—Clarke already suspected she had experimented with herself given Lexa’s surprising pliability. No. Lexa from a few weeks earlier would have been nervous at the thought of Clarke touching her in such an intimate place.

But now, as Clarke glances up from her fingers to Lexa’s warm green eyes, she sees a confidence that hadn’t been there before. Her girlfriend exudes stoicism and power on the ice, and at times in the classroom, but when it came down to intimacy, there was always a small level of conservatism and prudishness that Clarke always found adorable—and slightly annoying. There are still some parts of her lover that are hesitant, but the newly found credence between them has allowed Lexa to open up and be more free with her sexuality.

“Lex,” Clarke murmurs softly as she leans down to kiss Lexa’s ass cheek again. Lexa hums, her eyes closing as she relaxes her head onto the pillow. Clarke can’t resist nipping the soft skin below her, earning a pleased hiss. “I love you,” she whispers reverently, “I love you so much, you know that?”

“I love you too, Clarke. But, I’m kinda… you know…,” Lexa mumbles back. Clarke suppresses a giggle as Lexa’s hips involuntarily twitch against the mattress before she turns her head over her shoulder with an adorable, but equally needy pout.

Clarke can’t keep herself from blushing at the sight of her girlfriend looking so painfully aroused. Deciding to take pity on her, Clarke slowly runs her unlubed hand in a soothing stroke up from her rear to her back, gently massaging the corded muscles bunched underneath, then back down again.

“Clarke,” Lexa whines, wanton and pleading. “I can’t take it anymore. Please…”

“Ssh, baby. It’s okay.” Clarke gently kisses the swell of her ass again. “I’m not gonna tease anymore, I promise. I just need you to do one last thing for me, love.”

Lexa looks up at her, those pouty lips falling open in a quiet whimper. “Clarke?”

“Lex, baby,” Clarke soothes as she strokes the small of her back. “Changed my mind. Turn back over?”

Lexa looks far too lost in her own cloud of her arousal to have understood the question, but Clarke only grins as she leans up on her knees as Lexa awaits further instruction.

After clearing her throat, Clarke rasps, “I… I just want to kiss you when I… you know. Is… is that okay with you?”

Lexa smiles at the question and nods before slowly turning over.

“Ready?” Clarke asks as she maneuvers her way between Lexa’s legs. She takes a minute to drink in Lexa’s features, from her slightly swollen lips, to her flushed cheeks and blown pupils. Every bit of Lexa’s body is showing approval, but she needs to hear it.

“For you?” Lexa whispers, reaching down to hold Clarke’s un-lubed hand. “Always.”

Without missing a beat, Clarke positions herself between Lexa’s thighs. She leans her body over Lexa’s own, their taut nipples brushing and causing electricity to course between them. Lexa’s skin is warm, and Clarke can feel the near-bursting stiffness of Lexa’s length twitching and bobbing up
just under her belly button in anticipation. Clarke gazes into Lexa’s glazed eyes, then at her parted mouth. Slowly, Lexa’s head tilts up, slick forehead resting against Clarke’s own.

And then, as their lips meet in a slow waltz of a kiss, Clarke finally slips inside.
Chapter Summary

Clarke and Lexa get ready for the biggest night of their lives.

Chapter Notes

Last chapter, several of you showed concern that Clarke being penetrated for the first time was portrayed as "a big deal", while Lexa's first time being penetrated was glossed over and happened out of nowhere. We read your comments and agreed with many of the points you made. Because of that, we changed tacts in this chapter. Penetration is important to many trans women, and we hope the rest of the story will show that it's important to Lexa too. n__n She will get her special night too, and we hope you continue to enjoy TTS!

Strange. Not the bad kind of strange, but a floating-in-limbo type of strange. That’s the only way Lexa can describe the sensation of Clarke’s fingers pushing within her. She’s explored things for herself a couple of times, but the sensation of someone else—of Clarke—inside her is like being shot into space.

“Lex,” Clarke whispers against her parted lips, “you okay?”

Lexa swallows hard. She can’t tell whether the tightness in her chest is from excitement or fear. Clarke’s fingers are inside her, stilled and awaiting further consent. She nods, but her breathing increases slightly, and so does the dizziness clouding her head. It’s just nerves. I’m nervous because it’s the first time.

When Clarke begins moving, Lexa whimpers and fists the sheets. It feels good, but also off, and neither her brain nor her body can make sense of it.

“You feel so good,” Clarke hums gently, nuzzling her throat.

For a moment, Lexa relaxes. It's fine. It's normal. Then Clarke slips deeper, and she clenches involuntarily.

“You’re squeezing me so tight, Lex. So hot…”

Lexa grips the covers, trying to ignore the apprehension clawing up her spine. Clarke’s words are familiar. They’re some of the same things Lexa had said when she first entered Clarke. But somehow, it feels different.

“I love being inside you,” Clarke murmurs against her neck.

Lexa closes her eyes, willing her heart to slow down. Her abdomen flexes, her chest heaving in anticipation of something more…
“Lex,” Clarke hums, nipping her pulse point. “You okay? You’re being quiet.”

Lexa tries to answer, but her heart is hammering too hard in her ears for her to hear the question. She’s tensed and wrung all taut, but this time, she knows it’s not arousal.

“Can I move, or should I stop?”

Lexa blinks, staring up into Clarke’s patient eyes. Clarke smiles, but Lexa doesn’t miss the wrinkle of worry on her forehead. It’s strangely reassuring. It helps to know Clarke cares about her, that Clarke is looking out for her.

Her body melts into the sheets as Clarke peppers kisses over her brow and nose, ending with a soft peck to her parted lips. “If you don’t want to do this, we can stop. I don’t want to push you if you’re not ready.”

Lexa feels a dry itch in the back of her throat, but she can’t seem to voice how she truly feels. Instead, she gives Clarke another slow nod before adjusting her hips. “I’m ready. I want this.” At least, I want to want this.

Clarke searches her face for any lingering doubts, but Lexa knows she’s always been good at covering up her feelings. Despite her confusing mix of emotions, Lexa is aroused by what they’re doing, by how it makes her body feel. She twitches as Clarke’s hand starts up a slow thrust, causing small slips of fluid to drip over her stomach.

“Does this feel good?” Clarke asks. “If you want, I can grab some more lube.” Lexa shakes her head, and Clarke smiles again. “All right, I trust you. Tell me if it hurts, okay?”

Inside, Lexa is grateful for Clarke’s gentle patience. It’s normal to feel nervous, she tries to convince herself as Clarke develops a slow but steady pace. I’ve done this before myself and I know I like it. I love Clarke and I trust her. I want her to take me. I just need a bit of time to adjust is all. Clarke probably felt the same way the first time I went inside her. There’s absolutely no doubt in Lexa’s mind that she wants this, but as she blinks her eyes open to stare at her girlfriend, she can’t help feeling slightly unsure. What’s going on with me? I was fine before this. I was even teasing her!

Suddenly, Lexa is reminded of their space from the last few days. The minimal conversations, the awkwardness—Clarke not texting her. The biggest nights of their lives being held on the same day. The inevitability that they’ll have to sacrifice part of their relationship for their own futures. The fear that maybe Clarke’s distance is a sign of something else, and that all of this is just a distraction of sorts.

“Lexa? Hey, baby, look at me.”

If I lose Clarke, I’m not just losing my girlfriend, I’m losing my best friend too.

That’s the turning point. “I can’t,” Lexa croaks, finally aware of the dampness on her cheeks. “Clarke, I—”

“Shhh,” Clarke whispers, pulling out and rolling onto her side.

Lexa tries and fails to hold back tears. Everything is too overwhelming; the dull ache of arousal, the emptiness within her at the loss of Clarke’s fingers, the hole in her heart. It’s all become too much too quickly.

“Lex?”
The tightness trapped in her chest expands and Lexa feels her head spin with a dizzying lack of oxygen. Clarke’s voice is a distant hum, something cosmic and ethereal—but it’s too far away. Lexa inhales, trying to calm down, but the air gets caught.

“Lexa, please, look at me?” Lexa shifts her gaze over until Clarke’s face blurs into focus. “That’s it, sweetheart. Breathe with me, okay? Just breathe in and out with me.”

Lexa feels her quivering hand being taken and lifted, and she follows numbly as Clarke rests it against her bare breast, continuing to murmur sweet nothings into her ear.

Eventually, Lexa manages to match Clarke’s breathing. She tilts her head back, lips falling open in a silent exhale as her body’s nervous system switches off. After regaining some of her strength, she finally realizes what happened. “Oh God,” she mutters, hiding her eyes behind her spare hand. “I’m sorry, Clarke. I thought I was okay with this, but it happened so fast…”

Clarke’s other hand clasps her own, pulling it away from her eyes. Lexa looks up, expecting to find embarrassment or confusion, but Clarke’s expression is understanding. Her gaze is warm and welcoming, not judgmental. “You don’t have to apologize. I shouldn’t have pushed it. I just wanted to feel close to you, like I won’t lose you.”

Lexa curls her body into Clarke’s, resting against her shoulder, inhaling her scent. “I don’t want to go anywhere.” That, at least, she’s certain of.

“Me neither,” Clarke says, obviously relieved. “We can talk about it, if you want?”

“What if I don’t want to talk?” Lexa asks, her voice shaky and dry. Clarke purses her lips in concern, and Lexa inches closer, burrowing her head into the safety of Clarke’s warm chest. “I want to feel you here with me, Clarke, but can we take it slow?”

Clarke hums in agreement, raking her nails lightly up and down Lexa’s bare skin. Lexa closes her eyes, letting her body acclimatize to the soothing patterns. “Are you sure?” Clarke asks, nuzzling Lexa’s ear. “We don’t have to—”

“Clarke,” Lexa says, pulling herself up until she’s eye-level with Clarke. “I’m okay now.”

Clarke processes that response for a bit, and Lexa is content to simply lay in her arms. It takes no more than a few moments until those blue eyes are staring down at her, affectionate and aroused, but still somewhat nervous to take things further. Lexa reaches out to cup Clarke’s face, thumbing her cheekbone before leaning up for a kiss.

Clarke is hesitant at first, still wrapped up in worry, but Lexa squeezes her hand and smiles until Clarke relaxes. “Okay. We can go slow. What do you want, baby?”

Lexa decides to show instead of tell. She brings Clarke’s safe hand down along her belly, urging it to wrap around her. Some of her need has faded, but blood rushes back between her legs at the first squeeze. She isn’t sure why this feels safe when having Clarke’s fingers inside her didn’t, but she’s too relieved to care. Their sexual connection is back, at least for now. She wants to get lost in it, even if only for a couple minutes.

As Clarke starts a gentle rhythm, Lexa slides her fingers between Clarke’s legs as well. She wants this to be mutual, wants Clarke to know that even though things feel shaky right now, her heart is still full up with love. That hasn’t changed, and Lexa doesn’t think it ever will.

She’s relieved by the wetness she finds with her fingertips. Clarke is ready for her, and although Lexa is a little tempted to push inside, she gathers the slickness up instead and paints it around
Clarke’s clit. The bud is swollen, poking out from its hood. That makes Lexa feel better too. Maybe it’s a stupid thought, but it’s nice to think of Clarke getting hard just like she does.

As Lexa requested, the two of them don’t talk. They say everything they need to with slow, deep kisses, stroking each other’s tongues, breathing each other’s breath. The pace is relaxed, and this time, Lexa is able to accept the building pressure in her belly without any nervous butterflies to ruin it. Soon the pressure becomes an ache, then an almost painful pounding. She breaks her rule and says two words after all. “Clarke,” she gasps. “Please?”

Clarke doesn’t make her wait. She gives a couple more strokes of her fist, then slides down to cup Lexa’s fullness. Lexa’s hips jerk, and she moans in surprise and relief as her peak hits. She spills onto Clarke’s stomach, quivering the whole while, panting into Clarke’s sweet mouth. Each squeeze of Clarke’s hand helps her along, and Lexa moans with gratitude. She’s not just thankful for the release, but thankful for everything—especially Clarke.

As her orgasm tapers off, Lexa realizes Clarke is still twitching against her hand. Her flesh is firm, sticky, and very, very hot, and even as Lexa struggles to recover her strength, she resumes the movement of her fingers. She desperately wants to make Clarke feel good too. Thankfully, it doesn’t take much. Clarke’s hand lets go of her, braceleting her wrist instead, and Lexa’s eyes widen in surprise. She gets the message and stops touching Clarke’s clit, slipping past her entrance.

She starts with one finger, more cautious than usual, but when there isn’t any resistance, she adds another. As soon as she does, Clarke comes, hot face pressed into Lexa’s shoulder, sucking the skin there to muffle a shout. Feeling Clarke’s warm mouth at the base of her neck and Clarke’s walls rippling around her soothes the last of Lexa’s sadness. It’s so good to give, to coax these kinds of responses from Clarke’s body, even if it does leave her a little wistful too.

Lexa curls her fingers until Clarke stops shaking. When it’s over, she stays inside, remembering her own sense of loss and longing when Clarke’s fingers withdrew from her. She hadn’t known what it was like to want something so much, and be so anxious about it at the same time. She wonders if that was how Clarke really felt, back when they’d had vaginal sex for the first time. The more she thinks about it, the more she doubts it. Clarke had been nervous, but happy too. Her nerves… hadn’t been happy.

“Thank you, baby,” Clarke sighs, dusting a kiss along Lexa’s jaw. “You didn’t have to do that, but I’m glad we did.”

Lexa nods. Resting against Clarke after they’ve both come has her feeling much more comfortable, even if Clarke’s belly is a little sticky and her arm’s tilted in an awkward position so her hand can stay between Clarke’s thighs.

“Me too.”

“We don’t have to talk about what happened right now,” Clarke says, “but can I ask one question?”

Lexa waits for the inevitable sinking of her heart, but it doesn’t come. They’re still wrapped in post-orgasmic bliss. “What is it?”

“Did I do something wrong before? I, um, wasn’t expecting something like this to freak you out. I thought it’d help your dysphoria, if anything?”

There’s a question in that statement, and Lexa gathers her thoughts in an attempt to explain. “It wasn’t dysphoria. It was…” Thinking deeply about it makes her eyes sting a bit, but Clarke’s arm chooses that moment to drape around her waist, and she exhales. “The first time I went inside you, it
was special. It was this whole magical night, and it was perfect, like something out of a dream.”

She doesn’t give the second part of the explanation, but Clarke gets it. “And I just said, ‘Hey, how about I fuck you?’ when you came over. While we were already being awkward around each other. Or, I was being awkward by not texting you.”

“Don’t feel bad. I wanted to. I still want to try again some other time. I just felt... like maybe it wasn’t that important to you.”

“It’s very important to me, Lex. I’m sorry I didn’t show it enough.” Clarke sighs against her neck. “But if you want to try again, maybe we can make a whole romantic night of it like I got to have? First time, take two. And I can make being inside you for the first time feel extra special, like you deserve.”

Excitement and hope stir in Lexa’s chest. “Maybe you can show me your art pieces and we can watch the recording of my hockey game together?”

“Sounds perfect,” Clarke says. “And I promise I’ll text you from now on. We’re gonna be fine.”

Lexa places another soft kiss on Clarke’s waiting lips. Some part of her had known, deep down, that these little bumps in the road weren’t enough to pull them apart, but now she feels it to her core. “Yeah, we are.”

* * *

Lexa cranes her neck, struggling to wrestle her jersey over all the extra padding. She’s usually got the process of gearing up down pat after so many years, but today is weird. Not entirely bad-weird, either. Even though Clarke isn’t out in the stands, wearing Lexa’s away jersey and waiting for the team to take the ice, Lexa still feels nervous, bubbling excitement in her belly. She desperately wishes Clarke was here, but she’s still eager to play. To prove herself.

“Need help with that?” Anya approaches from the left side of the locker room, already dressed except for her helmet and skates.

“No.”

Anya raises her eyebrows. “You sure?”

Lexa readjusts her elbow and shoves her arm through her sleeve. “Yeah, I’m fine.”

“So,” Anya says, the picture of skepticism, “you’re not worried about the fact that the scouts are out there, getting ready to judge our every move, with college scholarship money hanging in the balance?”

Lexa rolls her eyes. “Way to take the pressure off.”

“Hey, we can do this,” Anya says, clapping her shoulder. “Not just get their attention, but win. I believe in us, and so does Gustus. You remember how excited and teary he was in the car? Our brother, the one who didn’t even cry at Titanic?”

“No one cries at Titanic but you,” Lexa says. “It’s a dumb movie.”

“You’re a dumb movie,” Anya grumbles.

Lexa sweeps some stray hair away from her forehead. Thanks to her struggle with her jersey, her
hair is messed up before she even got a chance to put on her helmet. “Sure. And you’re six.”

“How’s Clarke?” Anya asks, completely ignoring the quip. “Has she pulled her head out of her ass yet, or…?”

“I told you, we’re good,” Lexa insists, a little too loudly. Harper and Monroe glance over from a few yards away, still in the process of dressing. “Seriously though,” she says, a little softer, “we made up. I wish she was here, and she wishes I was there, but it is what it is. We’ve got a special night planned to make up for it.”

Anya smiles. “I’m proud of you, Lex. Acting like a real adult instead of getting sucked into high school relationship drama.”

Lexa smiles, looking down at her skates as she lets the praise wash over her. “Thanks.”

“All right,” Anya mutters with a good-natured punch to her shoulder, “enough daydreaming. We’ve got a game to win.”

Lexa sets her jaw, reaching up to clasp Anya’s hand in her own before they throw on the rest of their gear and head for the rink. When they reach the bench, Lexa can’t help but look at the empty seat next to Raven. This is it, she reminds herself as she laces her skates again and glances over at her team. This is your moment. This is your future.

* * *

“Come on, Clarke. You can only adjust your dress so many times.”

Clarke looks into her bathroom mirror. Her own reflection seems blurry, but Octavia’s face is clear at her shoulder, looking mildly exasperated. She swallows, then smooths down her silky blue dress and turns. “Sorry. Last minute nerves.”

Octavia’s expression changes from impatient to sympathetic. “You’re going to be fine,” she says, rubbing Clarke’s arm. “You’ve been working on this all year. I’m sure anything that takes that long is worth the wait.”

“It’s not that.”

“It’s Lexa, isn’t it?” Octavia asks tentatively.

“We already talked about it. Her hockey game is too important to miss. I’ve got my trust fund and everything, but Lexa and Anya need this scholarship.” Clarke sighs, staring down at the floor. Her silver shoes look lonely against the dull grey tile. “I know it’s cheesy and overdramatic, but…”

“But you love Lexa and you wish that she could be here. Or you there.” Octavia wraps her up in a hug, rubbing circles over her back.

Clarke relaxes, resting her forehead on Octavia’s shoulder. “It’s so stupid—”

“You and Lexa have been best friends since you were in diapers. It’s understandable that being apart on one of the biggest nights of your lives feels absolutely devastating. I would feel the same way with Lincoln.”

Clarke pulls away from Octavia, glancing at the cardboard tube propped against the wall by the sink. Her very last submission. She’d only finished it a couple of days ago, so late she’d had to bring it to the show herself instead of sending it in early with the others. Her fingers itch to keep it hidden until
Lexa can see it first.

“I’m being overdramatic. Besides, it’s art. I can show it to her whenever.”

Before Octavia can reply, there’s a soft rap on the door. Abby’s soft voice floats into the bathroom. “Clarke, can I come in? Marcus is here to take us to the gallery.”

Clarke shares an awkward glance with Octavia. It still feels a little weird that her principal is driving them to the event. She’s not against Kane dating her mother—he’s a nice man with a good heart—but it’s still weird when she has to see him every day. She clears her throat and answers. “Yeah, I’m ready. Come in.”

Abby opens the door, her face lighting up as she takes in Clarke’s outfit. With recruiters from different universities coming to judge the artwork, their art teacher had told them to dress more formally than usual. The ankle-length dress she’s wearing is a sky blue color, one that Lexa said brought out her eyes when they’d gone shopping a few weeks ago. She’s matched it with a simple silver chain necklace, a pair of silver heels, and some smoky makeup. Clarke adjusts her dress again under her mother’s gaze, gulping nervously.

Her mother’s eyes mist with tears as she steps forward and cups her daughter’s face. “Oh look at you,” Abby whispers, thumbing Clarke’s cheekbones. “You look beautiful.”

Clarke leans into the touch, closing her eyes. She doesn’t care that Octavia is probably trying not to watch them. She needs this moment. “Thanks, Mom.”

“Your father would be speechless if he were here,” Abby says, trying and failing to keep the emotion from her voice.

Clarke trembles in her mother’s grasp as she thinks of her father and his beaming grin. “I miss him,” she croaks through a tight throat. “Do you think he’d be proud of me?”

“He’s always proud of you. This is all he ever wanted, for you to follow your dreams. If he were here, he’d be twenty dollars richer because he bet that you and Lexa would be together before college. He loved you so much.”

Clarke nods, nuzzling closer. Even though they’d been distant initially following Jake’s death, she knows her mother has been trying to raise her with the absence of the man she’d considered her soulmate. Maybe it’s hormones, but Clarke can’t help thinking about Lexa again.

“I wish Lexa was here,” she blurs out, unable to hold her feelings back. “I… I love her, Mom.”

Abby leans away to offer a sad smile. “I know. But Lexa isn’t going anywhere anytime soon. You both have your entire futures ahead of you. Sometimes it all requires a little sacrifice.”

Clarke takes a deep breath, trying to clear her head. At last, she nods. “All right. I’m ready.”

* * *

“That’s the scout from Concordia!”

“Look! By the bleachers—there’s UBC and University of Alberta.”

“Forget about them, look over there! It’s McGill’s scout. He was talking to Indra at practice.”

Lexa tunes out the excited voices of her teammates as they continue fawning over the university
recruitment teams. She’s sitting on the bench, watching the rink being prepped for their game. They’ll be allowed to warm up in a few minutes after the ice resurfacers have cleaned and smoothed the rink for their final match. She looks down at her skates, then over to her bag, where her phone is poking out from one of the pockets.

“You know,” Anya says from beside her, “we’ve got a few minutes to spare.”

“Yeah?” Lexa asks nonchalantly, even as her eyes dart to her duffle.

Anya nudges her shoulder. “Give her a call. I’ll tell Indra you forgot to go to the bathroom in case she asks, though I doubt she’ll believe it since she thought you and Griffin were already dating for a few years. Nothing gets by that woman.”

Lexa chuckles and glances in the direction of their coach, who is currently engaged in conversation with one of the scouts from Toronto. Turning away from Indra, she looks at her bag again, fingers itching.

“Lex,” Anya says softly, placing a gloved hand on her shoulder. “Call her.”

After looking to her sister once more for reassurance, Lexa fishes out her phone and toddles awkwardly toward the change room, out of sight of the bleachers so she won’t appear unprofessional to any potential onlookers. She leans against the wall outside of the changing room before ripping off one of her gloves and tapping the screen. Her heart flutters as her lock screen photo pops up, a picture of her leaning back against Clarke’s chest with Clarke’s guitar on her lap. Her girlfriend’s arms are around her middle, strumming the guitar while Lexa dozes lightly against her shoulder.

The photo alone is enough to raise her spirits. Without waiting another moment, she dials Clarke’s number.

* * *

“Clarke, I don’t want to pull a Raven or anything, but is your butt vibrating?”

Clarke snaps out of her daze to see Octavia staring over at her with a confused expression. The scrape of silverware and the low murmur of voices have put her into something of a trance, and her mind feels a thousand miles away. She searches for the source of the buzzing and sees that her phone is half lit in the small purse squished underneath her seat. She pulls it out, smiling at the picture and caller ID, and brings it up to her ear.

“Aren’t you supposed to be scoring goals and making scouts faint?”

“Hello to you too, Clarke,” Lexa says.

Clarke glances out the window, an involuntary smile spreading across her face. “How are you? Not lonely, right?” Even though Anya and Gustus are at the rink, their friends are divided between the game and the art show. Monty and Jasper are both presenting at the gallery, and Lincoln is coming as Octavia’s date, which left Raven to attend the game alongside a few of their other close friends.

Lexa sighs, and Clarke’s heart sinks. “I miss you. You’re my lucky charm, you know?”

“Lexa,” Clarke whispers, biting her lip. She’s managed to keep it together pretty well so far, but hearing Lexa’s voice weakens her resolve. “I…”

“You know, before every game, you were the first person I looked for in the stands. I knew that as long as I could see you, I could do anything. I’ve been in love with you for so long and I guess I
never realized what it’s like to be without you. Tonight... it’s the biggest night of my life. Indra told me that the scouts were impressed with our initial evaluation. I mean, they’re competing against each other to get both Anya and me to join their teams, but I feel like none of it matters because I’m not with you.”

Clarke’s eyes begin to sting. She’d put a lot of effort into her makeup, but now she’s thinking it was a fruitless attempt. Lexa clears her throat, and Clarke knows she’s going to apologize, so she cuts in, her hand growing clammy around her phone. “I wish I was there, baby, but I know that you and Anya are going to go so far. This is what the both of you have been working toward since you could skate. The Wonder Twins have one last game to play before they make it big. Soon you’ll be famous enough to travel the world, be on TV, and have any girl you could ever want.”

“You’re the only girl I want,” Lexa replies in a choked tone. “I love you, Clarke.”

“I love you too, Lexa. I wish I was there, but you can do this. You don’t need a lucky charm. You are a warrior, a leader, and no one deserves this more than you. After it’s all over, we’ll have a movie night, just like we always do.”

Lexa chuckles on the other end. “Can’t say no to that. How are you feeling? Are you nervous?”

“I’m staring at my dinner plate right now, and I want to throw up and pass out at the same time. But I’m happy with the result of my final project. It’s something I’ve been working on for a long time, and it finally feels complete. I almost didn’t take it because I didn’t want anyone else to see it first.”

“How much longer until everyone goes into the exhibit?”

Clarke checks the time on her phone, then looks back out the window, the light patter of rain causing the streetlights to blur. Or maybe it’s the tears she’s trying not to shed. “Soon. It’s gonna be a long couple of hours.”

“Enough time for everyone to see your masterpieces.”

“They’d better stop and stare, after all the work I put into them.”

“That’s right. Your style is revolutionary, and the world is ready to see it. You amaze me every second of the day, Clarke, and not just with your art. I’m so proud to be a part of your life, and I feel like I don’t tell you that enough.”

Clarke’s smile stretches wide enough to make her cheeks sore. She’s speechless, but before she can think of a reply, Lexa’s voice cuts in. “Clarke, Anya’s calling me. We’ve gotta go warm-up now.”

“Okay,” Clarke says, trying to hide the disappointment in her voice. “Good luck. I love you.”

“I love you too,” Lexa replies, her breath hitching. “You’re going to be amazing.”

“You too. You’re gonna kill it, Lex.”

“Same with you. I’ll see you tonight and we’ll celebrate, okay?”

“I’ll hold you to that, Woods,” Clarke chuckles, clutching the phone harder. “Bye, Lex.”

“Bye, Clarke. I love you.”

The call promptly disconnects, and despite the loss, Clarke can’t help but feel less alone.

* * *
Lexa stares at the black screen of her phone the entire time she walks back to the rink. She drops it off in her duffle before following Anya onto the ice where the rest of the girls are warming up. As soon as her skates touch the rink, the crowd cheers. It’s a home game, so the entire stadium is lit up in maroon and gold.

Her eyes flit over to the empty seat beside Raven again, but this time they don’t linger. She buckles her helmet and skates over to where Anya waits with the team. She skates to a stop before them, and the girls pause their warm up to stand in front of her.

“Cap?” Monroe asks, her gloves trembling in anticipation.

Lexa juts her chin forward, and Anya skates over to her side, bringing the two of them shoulder to shoulder. “This is it,” she says, addressing the girls she’s formed a bond with over the past few years. “This is what we’ve spent four years working toward. This is our last game together as a team. We’ve won every year, but this game matters more than any of those other ones.”

The girls all nod seriously, and Lexa softens her gaze. “But,” she says wistfully, “it’s not for the reasons you may think.”

At this, the girls look surprised. Harper clears her throat. “But, uh, what about the scouts?”

“The scouts are important,” Lexa acknowledges, “but that’s not what we should focus on. I want us to play our last game to the fullest. Tonight isn’t about the scouts, or the universities, or even the goddamn trophy. Tonight is about us, girls. Tonight is about showing what we’ve become, about the team we’ve formed. I want all of us to leave everything out on the rink, because this is our last game together. This isn’t about them, it’s about us.”

The girls all look at each other, faces set with determination as they grip their sticks tighter. Lexa looks to Anya, who gives her an approving nod. She holds out her glove and steels her expression. “All in for one last time,” she says as she closes her fist.

Anya’s glove rests atop hers, followed by Monroe and Harper. Before long, the girls are all connected. Lexa looks to each of them with a proud smile as she leads them through their cheer one last time.

After they break apart, Anya claps Lexa’s back and looks to their team. “All right,” she says with her characteristic smirk, “let’s go kick some ass.”
One Last Hurrah

Chapter Summary

Lexa plays her final hockey game while Clarke prepares to showcase her pieces at the art show.

Chapter Notes

Ooh so sorry on the wait! We are almost at the end of this story and we can't wait to bring it to an end. It's been amazing so far and we've had a blast, and we definitely appreciate all those kind viewers who have been leaving feedback and kudos on this fic. It's definitely much appreciate and we love you all! :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Clarke?”

At the sound of her name, Clarke flinches, dropping her fork with a clatter. She’s spent most of dinner in her own head, imagining what Lexa might be doing. Probably getting dressed in the change rooms, or maybe doing a few warm-up laps around the rink. Clarke’s heart is there with her, but she returns her mind to the present to see who is calling her. It’s her art teacher, Mr. Snow, standing beside her chair and looking at her expectantly.

“Sorry, Mr. Snow. I was zoning out, I guess. What’s up?”

Mr. Snow smiles at her, a departure from his usually surly expression. He doesn’t look like the friendliest guy at first glance, with his dark beard and furrowed brow, but Clarke knows better. He’s mostly just quiet, and underneath, he cares about his students. “How is your evening going?”

Clarke gives him a weak grin. “I’m nervous. About tonight, and waiting on those acceptance packets.”

“You and me both, honey,” Abby says from her seat nearby. Clarke’s stomach churns. Being reminded that her mother’s hopes are invested in her college applications too is nerve-wracking.

“I wouldn’t worry about that, Ms. Griffin,” Mr. Snow says. “In another week and a half, your mailbox will be full. And even if it’s not, Clarke…”

“I know,” Clarke sighs. “College isn’t the only path forward.” He’s told her that before. An education can certainly help, but art requires doing the work most of all.

“Right. But for your Mom’s sake, let’s make sure we show them your best anyway. Do you have your last piece?”

Clarke looks at the cardboard tube propped against her chair. She’s been carrying it around all
evening, and she’s not entirely sure she wants to let it go. Don’t be stupid. You brought it, didn’t you? Swallowing to loosen her throat, she picks up the tube and hands it over. “Here it is.”

Mr. Snow puts his hand over the plastic cap. “Do you mind if I have a look before I find the organizer and hang it up?”

Clarke smirks. It’s a good thing she remembered to remove a different charcoal drawing from the same tube earlier: the piece she’d done after her night in Lexa’s pickup. A few nudes at an art show are usually a given, but that addition definitely wouldn’t have been appropriate.

“Sure.”

Mr. Snow uncaps the tube and carefully removes her drawing. While he looks it over, Clarke studies his face, searching for his reaction. Technically, he’s doing her a favor. She begged him to slip it in last minute, even though she’s already submitted enough pieces for her section of the wall.

After a while, Mr. Snow nods. His face reads subtle but distinct approval, and Clarke releases the breath she’s been holding. The last time he’d seen this one, it had only been a sketch in her notebook.

“This turned out wonderfully. Really good work.”

Clarke grins. “Thanks.”

Abby shifts her chair closer, leaning over to look. “I think so too, Clarke. Why didn’t you show me this one?”

“Just finished it,” Clarke says. “I had to rework some stuff.”

“The effort shows,” Mr. Snow says. “So, what about your model?”

“Huh?” Clarke looks at him in confusion. “It’s Lexa again. To fit my unifying theme?”

Mr. Snow chuckles. “I know who it is. I meant, is Ms. Woods joining us tonight?”

Clarke’s heart sinks, but she tries to keep her voice buoyant and cheerful. “It’s the hockey finals. I’m going to give her a private showing later instead.”

“Oh,” Mr. Snow says. “I forgot about that. Too bad about the schedule conflict. You know, I have a niece your age who plays.” To Clarke’s surprise, he frowns slightly. “She’s not the best sport, to be honest.”

“Wait, you’re related to Nia?”

“So you do know her,” Mr. Snow chuckles. “Anyway, I’m sure Ms. Woods will enjoy all your hard work when she gets to see it. For now, I’m going to sneak this into the exhibit hall. I made sure they left an empty space.”

“Thanks.” On impulse, Clarke stands up. After checking to make sure it’s okay, she leans in to give Mr. Snow a brief hug, careful not to smudge her drawing. He hugs her back for a second, then steps back and waves.
“See you inside.”

Clarke smooths down the front of her dress again. “Yeah. See you.”

Once he’s gone, Abby touches Clarke’s shoulder. “What inspired you to draw Lexa like that? With the swords and the cape and the mascara—”

“It’s war paint, Mom,” Clarke protests, rolling her eyes.

“Kidding.”

“Because that’s who she is. A warrior.”

“You mean on the ice?”

Clarke bites her lip. It’s more than that. Lexa is brave, and tender, and brave for being tender in a world that isn’t always good. Above all, Clarke knows that Lexa will fight for her. She smiles as she looks toward the doors leaning into the exhibition hall. They aren’t open yet, but she’s ready.

“Yeah. Even without me cheering her on, she’s gonna kick ass.”

* * *

“Oof!”

Lexa slams into the boards, skidding along the wall. She manages to sustain her balance by groping with her gloved hands, but just barely. Thanks to that check, her head is spinning inside her helmet. The opposing team’s forward is already streaking toward the other side of the rink, crouched protectively over the puck as she weaves past other skaters.

Fucking Mountain Lions. They don’t usually play as dirty as Nia and her cronies, but when they hit, they always hit hard. Plus, their defenders are top-notch. It seems like nothing can crack it, which is why the score is tied at 0-0. They’re more mountain than lion to be honest, completely immovable, and their goal is always locked up tighter than a bunker.

Lexa adjusts her teeth around her mouth guard. One goal. That’s all it takes to win. Anya and I just have to bring down the mountain one time.

Before she can finish rallying, the whistle blows, calling a time-out for the Mountain Lions.

Lexa nods to her teammates, and as a group, they skate over to Indra, who is already prepared with her clipboard and markers. She rattles off instructions quickly and decisively, leaving no room for argument. Lexa struggles to pay attention, but it’s hard when every five minutes she’s glancing up at the empty seat in the stadium beside an excited-looking Raven and Gustus.

“Lexa?”

Lexa snaps out of her daze. She turns to face Indra, puzzled. “Coach?”

“A moment.”

“Good luck, sis.” Anya slaps the middle of Lexa’s back and gives her a sympathetic glance before ushering the rest of the team back to the starting line. Lexa watches them go, then focuses on Indra, straightening her shoulders.

Indra lowers her clipboard. “I know you and Griffin have something going on, but whatever it may
be, you need to focus. This is your last game. This is what you and your sister have been working for all these years. I’ve coached you since you first strapped on your skates, and I won’t stand here and watch all that hard work come undone, you hear me?”

Lexa swallows down a pit in her throat, forcing herself to meet the fierce determination in Indra’s eyes. “I hear you, coach.”

“This is your time, Lexa. This is you.” Indra gestures over Lexa’s shoulder at the rest of the team, lined up in the middle of the rink. “And that’s your team out there. You aren’t just their captain, you’re their commander. They would follow you into hell if you asked. Don’t lose that. You have a chance to make something of yourself, and Lexa, listen to me, okay? You…” Indra chokes for a second before shaking her head and offering a small smile. “You have the making of greatness in you. Nobody deserves this more than you and your sister. This is the last game of your high school career. Make it count.”

“I will,” Lexa replies, a fire igniting inside her. “I’ll make you proud, I swear.”

“You’ve always made me proud,” Indra says, squeezing Lexa’s wrist. “Now, go get ‘em.”

Lexa grips her stick tight and skates off the bench with a powerful push. Gustus is more of a brother figure than a father figure despite stepping in as a guardian, but Indra has always felt like a second mother. While she’s never been what most people would describe as soft, she also cares deeply. Lexa knows, as she glances back at her misty-eyed coach, that tonight isn’t just about herself anymore. She looks back to her teammates, who are eagerly waiting her confirmation of the play.

“This isn’t just about me. It’s about them. It’s about my family.”

“All right,” Lexa says as she comes to stand in front of them, “we need to get those numbers changed. We’re going to take what Coach just said, but add a little twist.”

“Which one?” Monroe asks, glancing over at Harper. “We’ve got so many.”

Lexa smirks, catching Anya’s eye. “Oh, I think I know just the one. Dangle-City.”

A blast from the ref’s whistle signals that the game is ready to resume. Lexa opts out of the face-off and nods to Monroe. With a slight grin of understanding, Monroe assumes the position while Anya and Lexa fall back. Noticing the change, the Mountain Lions’ captain starts barking orders to her defenders, but Lexa only smiles. The captain is most definitely telling them to keep eyes on her and Anya, which is exactly what she wants.

The puck drops, and Monroe wins the face off, tapping it backwards to Harper. Lexa charges forward, with Anya heading in the opposite direction. Their checks, confused at the play, look to their captain for orders. The captain yells for them to follow Lexa, deeming her to be the more dangerous target as Anya speeds away.

Fine by me. Lexa skates as fast as she can toward Harper, who sends her a clean pass. She ducks around their own goalie’s net and heads forward, gleeful to see Anya’s check speeding towards her. Glancing over her shoulder, she catches a glimpse of her own check right on her heels, ready to cross-check. Just ahead, she spots Anya down at the other end with Fox, both of them wide open.

Lexa pushes her legs into full-power mode, racing toward the oncoming defender. Beside her, Monroe is speeding along the boards, also ignored and left completely open for a pass. Lexa pushes herself to go faster, fixing her eyes on the target.

It’s only at the last minute that the defender barrelling toward her seems confused as to why Lexa
hasn’t changed her path. Inches before making contact, Lexa pivots left, pulling the puck between her skates and passing to Monroe, who smacks it down the line to where Anya is waiting, open and ready to shoot.

As soon as the puck leaves Lexa’s stick, the two defenders who had been trying to block her crash together with a resounding thwack. Lexa follows behind Monroe as they make their way to the Mountain Lions net, and with both of their defenders down, there’s no one left guarding Anya. Lexa watches with pride as her sister flicks the puck effortlessly into the top left hand corner, as if the last few minutes never even happened.

The crowd roars as the buzzer for the goal goes off. Lexa skates up to Anya grabs her forearm, pulling her into a ceremonial helmet-nudge as they celebrate the first goal. The two Mountain Lion defenders look shocked and embarrassed as they help each other up off the ice. Lexa glances outside of the pile to see Indra smiling proudly. Behind her coach, she can see the scouts talking and writing things down on their clipboards, a few pointing toward her, Anya, Harper, and Monroe.

“I think that left an impression,” Harper says.

Lexa places her glove on Harper’s helmet and laughs, nodding as the puck returns to center ice once again.

“One down,” Anya replies mirthfully. “Let’s make it two, shall we?”

As they set up again, Lexa watches the captain of the Mountain Lions eying her, a seething snarl curled at her lip. The other girl may stand a few inches taller than her, but she’s not as intimidating as she portrays herself to be. I’ve seen chihuahuas scarier looking than you, Lexa thinks, waving her off with a curt nod and signature smirk. That only seems to infuriate the other player even more as she spits on the ice and steps up.

This time, when the puck drops, the Mountain Lions gain possession. They’ve changed their style of play, however. They’re heavy on their offense, seeming to have figured out that Lexa and Anya are the two strongest players. Lexa keeps her guard on the lumbering but relatively agile captain, preventing her from moving down the ice toward Gina and their goal. Two of the other players have started shoving Monroe and Harper around, while Anya tails the left wing and blocks any possible routes for a shot. The player with the puck, currently guarded by Fox, is looking around desperately for an opening.

For a few moments, it’s a tense game of keep away, until a panicked Mountain Lion passes it off to one of the defenders. Lexa keeps close to the captain, cross-checking her into the boards as she tries to accept a pass. The captain roughly shoves back, but Lexa doesn’t let up her guard in the slightest.

“You want to play dirty?” the captain growls. “Then let’s play dirty.” Confused by the threat, Lexa hesitates as her opponent disengages, skating toward the center line. The overwhelmed defender sends the puck speeding toward them, and before Lexa can move, the captain winds back her stick and rockets the puck forward in a nasty slap-shot.

It happens within a blink of an eye.

Lexa hears the smack of the puck against her skin before pain violently slices along the left side of her face. She doesn’t hear her own screaming until after the ringing in her ears disappears. She crumples in on herself, and her vision goes dark, and in the background, she can hear commotion, shouts and the hiss of skates whizzing around her. She kicks her legs up and down against the ice, trying to redirect the paint flaring from her left eye. She clenches her jaw, barely letting loose the strangled howl of pain. She holds her gloves to her face, still writhing as the sheer agony doesn’t
ease up and instead doubles in intensity.

Fuck, it hurts. Her entire face hurts, and... it’s wet? A wave of dizziness washes over her, and for a second she thinks she’s going to hurl. Lexa presses herself flat to the ice, unwilling to open her eyes. The last thing she needs is to be puking up her guts in front of the scouts. She’s about to consider the scouts and what they must be thinking, but before she can, the pain returns to her eyes. The left one is throbbing; all she can see is a pulsing shadow of red.

In the distance she can hear Anya shouting and the subsequent rattling of the boards as a body is shoved into it. She can picture her sister, toe-to-toe with the massive Mountain Lion captain, pinning her against the boards and threatening all sorts of bodily harm. The whistle of the referee bleeds in next, and she can hear the commotion die down. Lexa presumes that both teams have now recognized that she’s not gotten up and immediately multiple voices from both teams are hollering for trainers and doctors at the same time.

There’s another whizzing of skates as someone approaches her. She sighs in relief as their team’s trainer is beside her in an instant, pressing a towel to her cheek. “Kid, are you okay?”

“Oh my god, Lex,” Anya says from somewhere close by. Other members of her team are there too, circling protectively around her and voicing their concern as the crowd grows agitated. The noise is making her head spin and she motions to her ears with one of her gloves and instantly she can hear the referee shouting for the crowd to quieten down.

Lexa groans in response, but grateful that the noise has lessened and she can regain her bearings. The towel pressed against her left eye has grown damp and warm, and she can smell the bitter, metallic stench of her own blood. Slowly, she opens her good eye, blinking a few times before it finally stays that way. She looks at the massive puddle of blood beneath her and her stomach churns. Wincing, she stays belly-down on the ice, closing her eye again.

“Lexa, do you need help getting up?”

It’s Indra’s voice this time instead of Anya’s, but Lexa barely hears it over a loud round of boos as the referees make an announcement: the captain of the Mountain Lions has been ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct, and the period will end early. The sound of the crowd is less pounding than before, but it still brings a few tugs of nausea to her system. At the news of the captain’s ejection, however, Lexa finds herself sighing in relief, barely noticing the damp towel being switched for a new one against her eye.

“We need the team doctor,” the trainer says. “It hit her left eye, so she’ll need stitches and scans to make sure she hasn’t broken the socket. There’s too much blood for me to tell.”

“Abby isn’t here,” Indra replies. The limited vision Lexa has with her good eye is blurry, but she can tell her coach is worried from the subtle waver in her otherwise steady voice.

“But regulations state that the team’s doctor—”

Lexa coughs, spitting out a wad of blood. “I’m fine.” She rolls onto her back, mindful of Indra’s hand supporting her neck as she struggles to face her teammates. Her breath catches in her throat as she coughs, a few more specks of blood landing on her jersey.

“Yikes,” Monroe says, grimacing as she looks down. “That’s gonna leave one hell of a shiner.”

“Thanks,” Lexa mutters, squinting against the stadium’s bright lights. They remind her a little of Clarke’s golden hair as they swim above her. They’re dazzling, but not in a good way. The
“Lex,” Indra asks her gently as she keeps her hands firmly planted on Lexa’s neck. “Are you going to be sick?” Lexa tries to shake her head, but the motion makes her more dizzy, so she replies with a choked up, “no, I think I’ll be okay. Just… give me a second to adjust.” She hears another pair of skates approaching before a shadow crosses over her face.

“Jesus…,” she recognizes Anya’s voice, laced with concern and anger. “I’m gonna kill her.”

“An…,” Lexa rasps as she shuts her eyes again to ward off another bout of nausea. “No.”

Anya kneels beside her then, unbuckling Lexa’s helmet so the trainer can get a look at her injury. “Looks like the blood’s slowing down,” the trainer says as he removes the towel. She blinks open her good eye to see him wince once he lays eye on the injury. “I won’t lie, that’s a nasty cut, but a few stitches should fix it. You’ll be okay, kid. Now try and open for me.”

Lexa obeys, wincing as the trainer shines an even brighter light in her eyes. Her left one barely responds, but she manages to get it at least a quarter of the way before the pain becomes too much and she shuts it again. The trainer clicks off his flashlight and sighs.

“You don’t seem to have a concussion. I still want those scans, though. Just to be sure.”

“Well, that’s a goddamn miracle,” Anya snarls under her breath, obviously still furious at the Mountain Lions’ cheap shot, but her hand remains soft against her shoulder pad. Her thumb rubs soothing lines against the pad, and Lexa is glad her sister is able to compartmentalize her emotions well enough to be angry at the injury but still be gentle at the same time.

Indra clicks her tongue. “You will have your justice later, Anya. For now, be glad Lexa’s okay.”

With Indra’s help, Lexa pulls herself into a seated position. Her stomach isn’t flipping as violently as before, but she’s still nauseated and her head is pounding. Beside her, Anya kneels and rubs circles into her back, while the rest of the team motions for the crowd to quiet down again. After awhile, she feels the nausea ebb away and she takes a deep breath.

While Anya’s hand rubs circles on her back, she glances up to see Gustus’ seat empty beside a shocked-looking Raven. Before she can ask, she hears her brother’s booming voice. “Lexa,” Gustus exclaims as Harper and Fox lead him onto the ice. They both have an arm around him, dwarfed by his massive size that in any other moment it would appear comical to her. He has his arms around them as they glide him over to where she’s sitting. “Are you okay?”

Lexa nods slowly, even though it makes her slightly queasy. “Hurts.”

“Well, obviously,” Gustus says. “Jesus, that looked terrifying from the stands. We were worried you were going to be stretchered off. Do you want me to take you home, kid?”

“No,” Lexa says as she winces, “I think I’ll sit out the next period and come in for the third.”

Gustus reels backwards as if he’d been burned, but Indra shakes her head and interjects. “Forget being ‘cleared’. Your eye is swollen shut, Lexa. I don’t want you risking further injury. This hockey game is not worth you putting yourself at risk. You played well.”

Lexa looks to Anya for backup, but her sister merely shakes her head, glancing to Indra sadly. “I’m with Coach. We’re not pulling another one of those moments like when Nia crotch-rocketed you. You took a puck to the face, Lex. You have to sit it out. I’m sorry.”
“It’s my last game,” Lexa argues, hobbling to her feet with the assistance of Monroe and the trainer. She’s unsteady, like a newborn foal, but she refuses to keel over. She straightens her back, but allows Monroe to drape one of her arms over the smaller player’s shoulder. “Send me in for stitches and get me back out there. Unless I faint, puke, or die, I’m finishing this with my team,” Lexa urges them.

“Seriously? That’s a terrible motto to have,” Gustus admonishes as he shakes his head, “but I doubt any of us will be able to convince your stubborn ass otherwise, and the only person who could isn’t here. By the way, have a fun time explaining your decision to Clarke.”

“Maybe I won’t tell her,” Lexa mutters. When she’s met with silence, she sees her teammates, Indra, and even the trainer arching their brows, clearly unimpressed.

“Right,” Anya drawls with a lazy flick of her wrist as she skates over to where she stands, “because Clarke is totally not going to notice that half your face is black and purple.”

“Fuck you,” Lexa chuckles, but winces soon after. “Ow.”

Anya rolls her eyes, huffing in frustration. “Come on, stupid.” She takes the arm that had been around Monroe’s shoulders and drapes it over her own. Anya places the other arm firmly around her waist, her palm splayed out over her hip to steady her. Slowly, the two of them skate toward the bench while Indra remains behind to talk to the officials. The crowd claps and gives her a standing ovation, relieved that she’s on her feet and not on a stretcher.

The trainer accompanies them, handing the towel over to Gustus. He motions to Lexa. “Can you help her back to the change rooms?” he asks Anya before nodding off at the opposite team’s bench. “I’ll go get the Mountain Lions’ doctor. Hopefully he can stitch her up.”

“We’ve got her,” Anya says before nodding towards their brother. “Gustus, a little help?”

Gustus steps up to Lexa’s other side, and together, the two of them half-walk, half-carry her away from the rink. Lexa allows herself to lean her weight on her siblings as they make their way through the tunnels and towards their changing room.

“You know,” Gustus sighs when they arrive at the changing room, “I can’t even feel sorry for you, Lex.”

“Thanks, Gus. I appreciate your support,” Lexa grumbles. She manages to slump on one of the wooden benches, and heaves a sigh of relief. For some reason, sitting down reminds her how dizzy she is. Anya comes to take the seat next to her, hand still placed on her hip.

Sighing once more, albeit a bit more dramatically, Gustus squeezes her shoulder pads and takes hold of the towel, before pressing it against her face to mop up the last drizzling specks of blood. “Dad was the same way,” he murmurs as he holds it gently to her eye. It’s a good thing he does, because Lexa feels like she might cry when he mentions their father.

“Yeah?”

“Whenever I got knocked down at games or at practice, you know what he used to say? ‘Gus, until the game is done, we put everything out there. We can lick our wounds when it’s over, but while it’s going, you leave nothing and no one behind. You get knocked down, you get back up. Every. Damn. Time.’”

Lexa’s good eye waters, and Gustus allows a few tears to drip down into his beard too. Even Anya starts sniffling beside her. After a few heavy moments, Gustus clears his throat, smiling sadly but
proudly.

“Little did I know that those words were never meant for me. I couldn’t get into that state of mind, but you…” Gustus chuckles raspily. “You get knocked down, and you always get back up. It doesn’t matter if it is hockey or life in general. You never let anything hold you back.”

“Gus,” Lexa chokes out. Anya’s warm arm wraps tighter around her middle, and Gustus smiles, more tears slipping down his cheeks as he draws them both in for a hug. Lexa clings to him, ignoring the throbbing ache in her eye.

“Both of you make me feel so proud,” Gustus murmurs against their helmets. “And I know Mom and Dad would be proud, too. Dad would be cheering if he were here, louder than all of those fans combined. He’d turn to his neighbours and say, ‘Look at them, those are my girls’. And Mom, she’d probably be pissed at you for continuing, but she’d be proud, too.”

“They’d be proud of you too, Gus.” Anya’s voice is muffled against Gustus’ shirt, but Lexa can tell by Gustus’ softer grip that he heard her perfectly clear. “You raised us to be who we are. We wouldn’t be half the people we are today without you. Lex and I… we owe everything to you.”

“Oh stop, I’m going to cry.” Gustus pulls back and wipes at his cheeks. “This was never meant to turn into a sap-fest. We’re at a hockey game, for fuck’s sake. The only badass thing here is Lexa’s softball of a black eye.”

The door to the changing room opens, and the three of them pull apart as the Mountain Lions’ doctor enters. “How are you holding up?” he asks, setting his medical kit on the bench beside Lexa and crouching down to get a closer look at her. “That was a pretty nasty hit you took.”

“Hurts,” Lexa repeats. It’s basically become her mantra. “But I’m okay.”

“Let’s see.” The doctor opens his medical kit and removes the towel, conducting a brief examination. His probing fingers are gentle, but they still send white spots of pain floating in front of Lexa’s eye. “It doesn’t feel broken, but I want to take an x-ray just in case. No motor or speech issues?”

“No,” Lexa says.

The doctor looks at Anya and Gustus for confirmation, and they nod their heads.

“Okay. Open as wide as you can.”

Once more, Lexa finds herself staring into a flashlight. She must pass inspection, because the doctor says, “No signs of a concussion. Nothing seems out of whack, so I think you should be okay to play after I stitch you up, only as long as you promise you’ll get checked out as soon as the game is over. I’m only giving you the okay because your coach insisted that you wanted to finish playing. I don’t personally agree with her, but I understand.”

Lexa can’t help it. She grins as wide as she can, despite the fact that it hurts. Honestly, she hadn’t expected Indra to back her, especially considering her earlier protests. “Yeah?”

“Yes,” the doctor says with a good-hearted smile before it grows stern again. “I still want you out for the second period, but I’ll give you the go-ahead to play in the third period.”

“I’ll take it,” Lexa says, a beaming grin adorning her face. She can’t even care that it hurts.

Beside her, Anya rolls a puff of air through her lips. “You’re such an idiot. A brave, selfless, lovable idiot. You’re a superstar, Lex, but… you know Clarke’s totally gonna kill you, right?”
“Yeah…” Lexa grimaces as the doctor reaches for a needle and antiseptic. She’s pretty sure telling Clarke about this will be way worse than getting a couple of stitches.

* * *

“Your work is absolutely beautiful, Clarke.”

Clarke blinks, taking a moment to process the compliment. It’s not that she doesn’t appreciate Mrs. Green’s interest in her art, but try as she might, she can’t seem to generate much enthusiasm — not even in what should be her hour of glory.

Come on, Griffin. You deserve this. You worked your ass off to prepare for this show, and you want people to enjoy it.

And yet, the only person whose opinion Clarke really cares about is Lexa. Lexa is the person Clarke keeps in mind as she gives Mrs. Green her best fake smile and murmurs a polite, “Thank you,” hoping it will be enough. “Monty did a really great job with his display. His compositions are really thoughtful.”

Monty, who is standing a couple of yards away, turns at the sound of his name. He smiles and waves, walking over with a glass of what looks like champagne in hand. “It’s non-alcoholic, Mom,” he sighs when he catches his mother eyeing him suspiciously. “It’s a high school art show. Do you really think they’d serve real champagne here?”

“They did at dinner,” Ms. Green pointed out.

“…That was non-alcoholic too, Mom.”

“Oh.”

Clarke lets a genuine laugh slip out. Leave it to Monty to perk her up when she’s feeling sorry for herself. He’s had plenty of practice with Jasper, I guess… but I’m not gonna take him for granted.

“Hey, Monty,” she says, slinging her arm around his shoulder and giving him a sideways hug. “Your Mom was just telling me how awesome I am.”

“Well, you are,” Monty replies, hugging her back.

“You should be proud too,” Clarke says, looking over at Monty’s display. There are a few other pieces of work between her section of the wall and his, but they’re close enough for her to have a pretty good view of his photographs. Unlike her, Monty specializes in photography — and he’s really fucking good at it. This isn’t the first time Clarke’s been blown away by his work. There’s one of a man’s torso, cast in an intricate gridwork of shadow from what looks like a gate…

A weirdly familiar torso.

“Holy shit, is that Lincoln?” she asks, stifling a giggle. “How’d you convince Octavia to let you take a picture of him shirtless?”

Monty rolls his eyes. “Are you kidding? She loves showing him off.” He turns his head toward where Octavia and Lincoln are strutting around. Well, Octavia is strutting while Lincoln shyly brushes off attention from a couple of other high school girls.
“True.”

“What about your girl? Is she gonna rush here after her game?”

“I don’t know,” Clarke confessed. “Part of me hopes so, but it is her night to shine too—”

At that very moment, her phone buzzes. Clarke can barely contain her excitement as she rummages in her purse. Hopefully it’s a score update on Lexa’s game...

It’s a text from Raven, one with an unusually low number of emojis included. ‘Don’t be alarmed, but Lexa’s injured. They took her off the ice.’

Ignoring the first part, Clarke gasps, clutching her phone case tighter. She can only focus in on ‘Lexa’s injured’ and suddenly every single worst-case scenario flies through her head.

“What is it?” Monty asks, leaning in to read over Clarke’s shoulder while she fumbles through a reply to Raven. Her hands are shaking and she feels her pulse increase. Monty winces over her shoulder as he reads the text and mutters a quiet, “Oh, shit.”

“I have to tell my Mom,” Clarke says, clutching her phone tighter in her grip. “She’s the team doctor, and she’s not there! The last time this happened Lexa was almost concussed and her—,” Clarke stops herself there, not sure if Lexa would appreciate the recap of the other injury that night. Shaking her head, Clarke paces in front of the other boy nervously. “Fucking shit, I’m gonna kill whichever of those Mountain Lion girls hurt Lexa. No… no, I’m gonna kill Lexa too. Knowing her, she probably got herself hurt pulling something stupid—”

Unsure whether she’s more angry or fearful, Clarke makes to shove her phone back in her purse, but then it buzzes again. ‘Anya says Lexa is okay. There was a lot of blood, I won’t lie, but she wasn’t stretchered off, so I think she’s fine — don’t worry. She’s in the changing room getting stitches. Out for the second period, back in for the third.’ The message is meant to calm her down, but it only placates her anxiety for a brief moment before she panics again.

Deciding that Raven would’ve called if the situation was more grave, and judging by the smiley face emoji tagged on the end of the sentence, Clarke deduces that the situation is not an emergency. She releases a heavy breath, almost sagging against Monty’s arm with relief. Lexa wasn’t stretchered off, which meant that she was conscious and skated off herself or with help. If they’re letting her play the end of the game, her injury can’t be that bad… right?

But then she re-reads the text and she panics again. She hurries to text Raven back. ‘Blood, Raven? What do you mean blood? How can fine and blood be in the same sentence?’ She must sound frantic and crazy, she knows, but she also remembers a time when Anya had been cut in the arm with a skate and Raven had nearly pummelled through the crowd to get to her. Luckily the cut hadn’t been life-threatening, but there had been so much blood that even Clarke—the daughter of one of the most decorated doctors in the state—was queasy. Since the beginning of the sisters’ hockey career, the two girls have had a mutual, empathetic understanding of their worries about their girlfriends’ safety and health when on the ice.

‘It’s okay,’ Raven is quick to type back, ‘Anya said the bleeding stopped and that it’s all good.’

‘Where was she bleeding from? Face? Body? Was she cut?’ Clarke types back. She can imagine Raven sighing and rolling her eyes at her worry, but she doesn’t care. The dots reappear and Raven
replies, ‘chill, Griff. I honestly didn’t see where it hit her and Anya didn’t tell me, so I think right now they’re more concerned on stitching her up. You could text her if you need to, they’re taking an extended break before the period so they can attend to Lexa. All’s good :)’

‘Fine,’ Clarke sighs, noticing how Raven is less serious now. It places even less emphasis on this being an emergency. ‘Just keep me updated,’ she types back before exiting out of the chat. She pulls up Lexa’s contact information and hurriedly goes to type out a text.

_Do I need to kill you or kiss you later?_

Dots appear on the screen almost immediately. ‘Hopefully kiss me. It’s 1-0 us.’

Clarke groans, but the sound comes out more like a whimper. She feels Monty’s hand squeeze her shoulder in understanding and she smiles, feeling the weight lift from her mind. Her hands are shaking less as she types, ‘You got hurt getting that goal, didn’t you?’

‘No. Captain had a vengeance of some sort against me and hit me with the puck. She’s ejected, so it’s safe to say that karma’s a bitch. Forget about me, though. How’s your show, babe?’

The text gives her mixed feelings—happy, because she loves how selfless and thoughtful Lexa is, but angry, because she can tell she’s avoiding the subject. Clarke gives Monty a sidelong glance. “She’s trying to distract me from the fact that she’s injured,” she tells him.

Monty’s snort implies that he isn’t at all surprised. “She’s stubborn, I’ll give her that.”

Clarke chuckles and sighs, returning to her phone. _‘Don’t change the subject.’_

‘Will you send me a picture?’ Lexa replies back, ignoring the elephant in the room again.

“Damn,” Monty chuckles, “she really doesn’t want to tell you where she got hurt, huh.”

Clarke rolls her eyes. “Well, then she doesn’t get pictures. Two can play at her game.”

‘No. I’m giving you a private showing later, remember?’

There’s a pause this time before the dots reappear. They type and then go back, as if Lexa is struggling to reply. Concern rapidly replaces Clarke’s frustration as she anxiously waits for Lexa’s reply. After a few moments, it comes. _‘I’m so sorry, Clarke. Coach says I have to get an x-ray after the game. I’ll try to make it as fast as possible but the hospital is always busy.’_

“Hospital?” Clarke squawks, drawing the attention of several other people around her, including Ms. Green and her own mother, who have entered a conversation a short distance away by Monty’s exhibit.

“Who’s in the hospital?” Abby asks, in what Clarke immediately recognizes as her ‘Doctor Griffin’ voice.

“Lexus! She got hit with a puck, but they’re stitching her up and sending her back in. And now she says they’re sending her to the hospital after the game!”

Abby places a reassuring hand on Clarke’s shoulder. “If they’re letting her play, the hospital is probably just a precaution.”
“They said x-rays, Mom! X-rays! That’s it, I’m going back to school—”

“No, you’re not,” Abby says, grasping Clarke by the arm to prevent her from stomping off with a swirl of her dress. “I know you care about Lexa, and I know you’re worried, but this is your big night. This isn’t the first time she’s been injured in a game, and she has plenty of people there to look out for her.”

“But they aren’t **me**,” Clarke protests, sniffing back angry tears. Her instincts are telling her to make a beeline for the parking lot, and her heart is racing a mile a minute.

Abby sighs, stroking back a stray lock of Clarke’s hair. “I’m sure she wishes you were there, but she wants you to be here more. That shows just how much she cares about you. You and Lexa have a very mature relationship for your age, and people in mature relationships have to learn to put themselves first sometimes.”

“I don’t like it,” Clarke growls, but her Mom’s words are sinking in. It’s not like I could do much to help her anyway. I’ll just cry and hover over her, and then she might not play well. That’s the tipping point for Clarke.

Lexa’s worked so hard for this—her entire elementary and high school career has been dedicated to hockey. She’s being scouted for the last time tonight. I can’t be a distraction. What if all my stupid feelings ruin the night for her, while all those scouts are watching?

“Clarke?”

Clarke turns to see Monty still standing beside her, with an earnest expression on his face. “Why don’t you show me your display? If you’re staying.”

She can tell her friend is trying to distract her, and she’s grateful. “Okay,” she sighs, giving him a grateful smile. “But you’ve already seen most of it.”

“Show me anyway,” Monty says.

Clarke checks her phone one last time, but there aren’t any more texts from Lexa. Realizing she still hasn’t responded to Lexa’s mention of the hospital, she quickly sends a heart emoji and an ‘it’s okay’ as a peace offering before putting her phone back in her purse. She really doesn’t care when she and Lexa have their private showing, just as long as Lexa is all right.

* * *

Period two brings the Timberwolves less luck.

The Mountain Lions are desperate for a goal, and even with their hot-headed captain out of the game, their alternate is no better. Only while benched does Lexa realize how brutal the Mountain Lions truly are, not to mention frustratingly legal in their strategy. Even Anya, the heaviest hitter on their team, can hardly land any damage. Monroe and Harper are completely overshadowed by their lumbering opponents.

A rattle from the boards grabs Lexa’s attention, and she winces in sympathy, watching Anya recover from a nasty check. The glass creaks, but Anya bounces off, speeding toward the player who shouldered her. Lexa can tell by the movement of Anya’s lips that she and her opponent are
exchanging some not-so-nice words.

*Come on, Anya, keep calm and focus!*

Luckily, Anya stops trash talking and shoves her way through, powering after the stray puck. It slides along the boards, near the Mountain Lions’ bench, while Anya chases it down the rink. That’s when Lexa notices the tallest girl on the opposing team, the right blue-liner, skating toward Anya at full speed. Anya looks up, but not soon enough. The defender rams her shoulder, causing her to tumble over the Mountain Lions’ bench, skates dangling in the air.

The referee blows the whistle, and Anya pulls herself up, staggering back onto the ice for the face-off. Lexa releases a heavy breath. She’s relieved Anya isn’t hurt, especially when she notices the firm divider between the crowd and the bench only a few meters from the crash site.

*I feel helpless,* Lexa realizes, finally putting a name to the weight in her chest. *I should be out there watching Anya’s back, leading my team. Instead, I’m injured and sitting on my ass.*

Anya wins the face-off from the attacking zone, but Mountain Lion’s center sweeps up the puck before the pass reaches Monroe. Lexa watches with a heavy heart as the girl speeds off with a breakaway, gunning toward Gina. Anya follows, clearly giving it her all, but even though she’s the second fastest skater on the team, Lexa can tell she won’t make it in time to prevent a shot on goal.

*Come on!* Lexa scoots up to the edge of the bench, her knees bouncing with excess energy. *Miss miss miss—*

And just like that, with only a few seconds left on the clock, the alternate captain for the Mountain Lions snaps her stick back and fires a shot in the upper right corner of the net. Gina doesn’t even get a chance to raise her glove.

The crowd boos as the Mountain Lions celebrate with a massive hug. Lexa rattles her stick alongside the boards with the rest of her benched teammates in support of Gina’s effort, while the players on the ice skate over, tapping her helmet with their gloves in show of support.

The rest of the period remains touch-and-go before coming to an uneventful end. Both teams head back to their respective locker rooms in silence, with Gina remaining especially quiet.

Lexa limps at the rear of the pack, noting that her coach has chosen to walk beside her. Indra’s eyes are burning a hole through her, and it makes her skin crawl. “Don’t worry about me, coach. I was just going to check on Gina—”

“Hold off, Woods. Team meeting first.”

With a shrill whistle, Indra gets the rest of the team’s attention. They shuffle into a circle near the middle of the locker room, and Lexa finds her place among them, standing beside Anya.

“Listen up, ladies. For many of you, this is your last game on this team. Lots of you are moving on, and some of you won’t play hockey again. The Timberwolves are undefeated, and if we win tonight, we will remain undefeated. But this isn’t about the win as much as it is about the effort. I want you to give everything you’ve got out there, because this is your last chance to prove yourselves.” Indra pauses before turning to Lexa, offering her a significant look. “And that’s why I won’t be making a call for the next play.”

Lexa’s jaw drops. Around her, the entire team gasps as one. Several of the girls exchange glances, mumbling worriedly amongst themselves.
Only Anya is brave enough to voice what they’re all thinking. “Coach, with all due respect, what the fuck?”

“Language,” Indra says, but there isn’t any malice in her voice.

“Yeah,” Monroe says. “What Anya said, minus the fuck.”

Indra sets her clipboard on the bench, and Lexa isn’t sure, but she thinks she can see her coach hiding a smirk. “I might have coached you this season, but I’m not your leader. Yes, I ran your practices, I passed on my knowledge, I honed your technique. But when it comes to pure hockey, when it comes to these games, I’m not the one calling the shots.”

Lexa’s stomach sinks. As one of the team’s captains, making sure the players listen to their coach is her responsibility. *I thought we were doing what Indra wanted, but maybe… maybe I’ve failed.*

“Coach? I’m sorry if we didn’t—”

“No, Woods. Never apologize.” Indra shakes her head, continuing to address the rest of the team. “This isn’t meant to make any of you feel bad about yourselves. I’m saying this because right now, you need your real leader. You need the person who’s been leading you to victory all this time. You need your commander.”

Indra turns toward Lexa once more, this time with a rare smile on her face. The rest of the team relaxes, their frowns turning to grins.

“Wait, what?” Lexa stammers. “I always listen to your plays, coach. Sure, we improvise sometimes, but I’m not the leader.”

“You are,” Harper says, earning many murmurs of agreement. “All of us look up to you, Lex. No one knows the ice better. You always know which play to break out, which strategy to use, which players to target. You know how to run us without running us into the ground. You’re the real reason we’ve remained undefeated. Whatever you want to do, we’ll follow you until the end. Coach is right. You’re our commander.”

Lexa is struck speechless as her teammates tap the butts of their sticks against the ground, creating a rumbling noise that fuels the fire in her blood. Anya joins in with a proud smirk, and that final gesture of confidence is all Lexa needs.

*I’m their Commander. I can do this.*

“Enough.” When Lexa raises her gloved hand, the other girls fall quiet.

“Well?” Indra asks, holding out the clipboard and marker. “What’s the plan, Captain?”

Lexa inhales and straightens her shoulders. Her teammates stare back at her, ready for a plan of attack. She sets her eyes on each of them in turn, feeling her determination rise. Her left eye may be swollen shut, and the stitches on her face are still fresh, but she’s ready.

“All right,” she says, accepting the clipboard, “here’s what we’re going to do.”

* * *

Clarke checks her phone for what must be the hundredth time before glancing back up at her display. Her heart as in her throat, as if it’s preparing to leap out of her body and race down the highway to the hockey rink, but she knows her mom is right. This is her night, and she needs to be here.
As she looks around at her friends and family, she becomes more certain of her decision. Lexa has her hockey family, but Clarke has her art family. Art might not be a bloody sport, filled with violence and danger, but it’s still a tough field. Art is her very personhood painted and sketched onto canvas, vulnerable to critique and crucifixion. Art is her lifeblood — an avenue of expression, a platform for a movement, a blank manuscript for a story.

And Lexa? Clarke’s eyes linger on her most recent charcoal sketch. Lexa is my muse.

“She’s going to love it.”

Clarke swaps to see her mother standing beside her, a half-empty flute of champagne in one hand. The other hand comes to rest on her shoulder, squeezing in reassurance, and she leans into the touch, grateful for the comfort her mother always provides. “Lexa loves everything I draw. She once said a stick-figure I doodled on my history test belonged in the MoMA.”

“That does sound like Lexa,” Abby says. “Always your biggest fan. I know you’re disappointed she couldn’t be here with you tonight, but she’s supporting you in spirit.”

They stand and observe Clarke’s paintings in silence for a while longer, happy to remain in their bubble of serenity. Clarke observes her mother’s eyes, sharp as always, scouring every inch of her paintings for subtle details others might miss. She smiles, a small fleeting thing that curls the edge of her lips. She really couldn’t ask for a more supportive parent…

“Do you think Dad would’ve liked it?” she asks in a quiet voice.

Abby stiffens slightly, the line of her jaw firming up. Clarke opens her mouth, preparing to backtrack, but her mother is quick to reply. “He would have loved it, Clarke. Your father would be parading you around this whole building, trying to show you off and promote you. If this place served alcohol, he’d be trying to contact the Louvre to get you a placing.”

Clarke can’t help but laugh at that. It’s easy to picture her father slightly buzzed, ranting to a curator at one of the most famous art installations on the planet about her pieces.

“The curator for the Musée des Beaux-Arts saw it too,” Abby adds with a proud smile. “Said that they were so impressed, they were wondering if you were considering coming to a school in Montreal for your art degree. She was arguing with the curator from the Vancouver Art Gallery about featuring your work. Both of them seemed really interested.”

Hope swells rapidly within Clarke’s chest. “They did?” she asks, her voice breathless with excitement.

“They did. It’s not every day your baby gets recognized by the most prestigious fine art museums in Canada. I almost dropped my glass when they were singing your praises. But everything they said was true, Clarke. Your work is incredible. It made me think about how silly I was to try and force you to go into medicine.”

The obvious pride in Abby’s eyes makes Clarke’s own well with tears. “Mom,” she says, nestling into her mother’s side, “we’ve been over this. It’s okay. I understand why you wanted me to go. I just… I don’t think I could ever be a doctor. I mean, look at me—Lexa texts me about blood and x-rays and I lose my goddamn mind.”

“But that’s Lexa. If she texted you saying she had a papercut, I’m sure you would have also ‘lost your goddamn mind,’” she adds, letting go of Clarke to add air quotes.

Clarke grumbles and rolls her eyes, but doesn’t dispute the truth.
“Your father loved her too, you know?” Abby adds after a while, gazing up at the piece with a slightly glazed expression before clearing her throat. “He bet me twenty bucks that you’d get together before college. ‘Abs, that girl has stars in her eyes,’ he’d say to me. ‘She’d bring down the moon for our baby girl’. I always saw it, but I never thought you’d realize just how much you loved each other until later in life. But, your father was always a better gambler than me anyway. Must be an engineering thing. You know, good with numbers and all that.”

Clarke sniffs, a laugh clogging up her throat. “Really?”

“Oh darling,” Abby says, kissing the top of Clarke’s head. “I love you so, so much.”

Clarke takes a deep breath and closes her eyes, squeezing her mother back gently. She traces the outline of her father’s watch, still ticking away on her wrist, and smiles.

“I love you too, Mom.”

* * *

The roar of the crowd echoes around the rink, but Lexa tunes out the noise as she speeds across the ice. There are only eight seconds left on the clock. Eight seconds for one final push.

For the last nineteen minutes, the Mountain Lions have returned to their old ways, blocking any and all shots on goal with ruthless efficiency. Lexa knows they’re trying to drive the game into overtime, but she won’t let it happen. This is it: the denouement to an undefeated season. The next five minutes will determine her legacy, and she wants to go out with a bang.

As both teams prepare for the next face-off, Lexa gives Gina an encouraging nod. Gina stiffens proudly, tapping her stick on the ice before getting into position. Anya places her hand on Lexa’s shoulder pad, double checking the full face visor both Indra and the trainer had made her wear.

“You’re sure about this?” Anya asks, glancing at the Mountain Lions’ alternate captain.

Lexa studies the lumbering girl as well, six foot tall and built of solid stone. She isn’t intimidated. She’s got her team behind her, and they’ve trained for this all year. “It’ll work. Just trust me.”

Anya still looks hesitant, but when Lexa curls her wrist and extends her glove, she straightens her shoulders and nods. The two of them fist-bump, and then Lexa watches her sister skate off to center ice.

Red.

Lexa puts her stick on the ice and glides forward to meet the other center at the line.

*It’s the color of blood, of passion, of years spent conditioning and honing her skills until all she has left is a furnace in her heart and steel in her bones.*

The referee glides forward and looks between them both, puck gripped tightly in his hand.

*Her brain is instilled with the red of focus and determination. The crowd is roaring in the stands, bathed in dark crimson as they chant her name in praise, greedily seeking a miracle.*

“You may be their star player,” the alternate captain hisses as the crowd’s screaming dies down to a hushed silence. “But even you can’t stop the loss you are about to face, Captain.”
Red is all she sees, tastes, and hears in that moment. Red is who she’s always been, ever since her blades first christened the ice.

“We’ll see,” Lexa says as she looks up to face the other girl.

This has always been more than just a sport, but a commitment, a religion, a lifestyle.

The puck drops, clattering against the ice. Lexa juts her stick out, smacking the rubber off to Monroe, who dangles it around a Mountain Lion wing. Just as a defender comes up to cross-check her, Monroe flicks the puck to the boards, bouncing it behind the net and toward Anya, who’s waiting on the other end of the rink. Anya charges, putting all her strength in her legs as she speeds ahead of the defense.

Lexa shoves past the alternate captain, leaving the rest of the Mountain Lions in the dust. She can hear Monroe, Harper, and Fox tailing her checks in the background, leaving her and Anya with only the defenders between them and the goal. Lexa catches up, and Anya gives her a nod before passing the puck.

The crowd screams out a countdown as they pass the puck back and forth, trying to confuse the oncoming defenders. They really only have one chance, and Lexa knows they need to score in the next five seconds, or it’ll be hell. The Mountain Lions are notorious for their goaltending, especially in shootouts.

The defense splits up, assuming Lexa will pass back to Anya — and that’s when she makes her move. She dekes, pivoting gracefully around the defender and causing the check that had been following Anya to speed after her. As soon as Anya’s stick is open, Lexa fires off the pass. The defender comes to a sharp halt, attempting to rush back to Anya, but with her momentum broken, there’s no chance. Both Lexa and Anya make one final push on the goal, passing back and forth to confuse the goalie.

Three.

Anya sends Lexa the puck before skating to the front of the goal, blocking the goalie’s view.

Two.

Lexa speeds forward, fuelled by the roar of the crowd and fire in her veins.

One.

As soon as Lexa crosses by Anya, she pulls the puck between her legs and flicks her wrist. The puck sails through the air, smacking into the top left shelf.

The goal horns blare, and the crowd goes silent as the end-of-the-period light shines on.

Lexa skates around the goal, panting as she comes to a halt. She looks up at the screens, waiting for the result of the play. It replays the scene of the puck sailing into the goal while the time runs directly below. The screens pause as soon as the black blur of the rubber puck crosses the red line of the goal.

The time on the bottom reads 0.01.

With only 0.01 seconds left in the game, they’ve won.

The crowd finally erupts with cheers.
Lexa barely has time to shout her glory to the rafters before her teammates skate over and surround her. They collapse onto the ice in a doggy pile, patting each others heads with their gloves and gasping in disbelief. Every single member of the Timberwolves makes their way onto the ice to join the pile while the crowd roars. Lexa feels Anya’s helmet lightly smack with hers, and she reaches through the pile of sweaty limbs and bulky gear to wrap her sister’s arm in a salute.

“We did it!” Anya’s voice is warm, and her lips are pulled in the biggest smile Lexa has ever seen.
“You led us to victory, Commander.”

“That fucking ‘tweener will go down in history, Lexa!” Monroe calls out from somewhere in the pile. “The Commander is a fucking legend! Fuck yeah, motherfuckers, we fucking won!”

The rest of the team cheers in agreement, jostling Lexa further.

Lexa laughs as the group eases off her at last, but not without each of them patting her head and clapping her shoulder in congratulations. They all skate off to form a line to shake hands with the opposing team, leaving only Anya and Indra on the ice.

“Coach,” Lexa says, nodding her head respectfully to Indra, “I—”

“Oh, come here.” Indra wraps her arms around Lexa and Anya both, drawing them in for a tight, almost suffocating bear hug. Lexa hesitates for a moment before gripping back just as tight, and beside her, she feels Anya do the same. Emotions overwhelm her as she realizes this is her last game with the woman who has taught her everything.

“You’ve both made me so incredibly proud,” Indra says as she cradles their helmet-clad heads.
“You’ve given me plenty of stress and grief along the way, but it was all worth it. You two have a future in hockey, my dears. This is where you are meant to be. You not only impressed me, but those men up there are probably starting their bidding for who gets to take you onto their teams. Everything you’ve ever worked for, all the blood, sweat, and tears, it’s all paid off. You’ve created a legacy for this school. I love you both, so much.”

“Thank you, Coach. We… Anya and I… we know that we wouldn’t be half the people we are today if it wasn’t for you,” Lexa says, her voice cracking. “You let me onto the team without even blinking an eye about who I was. I became confident in myself because of hockey and because of you. So thank you.”

Anya can’t even speak. Even though it’s a rare sight indeed, Lexa isn’t at all surprised to see tears streaming down her sister’s face.

“You parents would be so proud of you.” Indra gives their helmets one last tousle before she pulls back to look at the both of them earnestly. “They are proud of you. Both of them would have been storming through the crowd to congratulate you, no skates and all. Now… I think there’s somewhere you need to be, isn’t there, Lexa?”

Lexa hangs her head, remembering her promise. “Oh. Right. The hospital.”

“Not that,” Indra says, smirking slightly.

Surprised, Lexa looks to Anya, who swipes her tears away with her glove and offers a knowing grin.

“But the doctor said—”

Indra claps her shoulder. “If you could handle forty minutes here, a couple more won’t hurt. I already told the scouts that you wouldn’t be able to meet with them after the game because you needed to go
to the hospital. Gustus and Raven are waiting at the front with Anya’s car, ready to go. I’ll drop your gear off at your place. If you leave now, you should be able to make the last few minutes of her showing.”

Lexa’s jaw drops. She looks between Anya and Indra, hope building in her chest, until a dopey grin spreads across her face. “Coach, I—”

“Don’t mention it,” Indra says. “After everything you’ve done, you deserve it.” Lexa smiles, tears welling in her good eye once more. Indra clears her throat, nonchalantly trying to dispel the mist of tears in her own eyes. “Just make sure you grab an ice pack from the locker room before you go. Not that I think it will help, but you can try.”

“Ha,” Anya snorts. “I can’t wait to see Clarke’s reaction.”

Lexa groans. “Shut up. It’s not that bad.”

“Yeah, nice try. Say that to the testicle-shaped lump on your cheek, stupid. It really puts new meaning to balls-to-the-wall, I guess.”

“Anya,” Indra huffs, shaking her head in disapproval.

Anya merely grins. “It’s true, coach.”

Lexa tries to hold a straight face, but she can’t help giggling in reply. Although Indra rolls her eyes in exasperation, Lexa can see that their coach is fighting a smile.

“Well,” Anya laughs, draping her arm over Lexa’s shoulder, “your princess awaits, Commander. Let’s go.”

A sudden thought pops into Lexa’s mind. “Actually, I need to make a quick stop first.”

Chapter End Notes

Thanks so much for reading!

End Notes

Come give us a shout at our tumblrs, @raedmagdon and @a-class-act-president, and feel free to check out our other works if you’re interested in more Clexa fanfiction. Thanks for reading, y’all! :)

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!