A Flower's Dare

by Bee_Charmer

Summary

The day of her wedding, Clarke Griffin expected a great number of things. She expected to love her dress, to love being surrounded by those she cared about most. More than anything, Clarke expected her best friend so smile his brightest when he saw her coming down the aisle.

What she did not expect was to lock eyes with the beautiful florist who would completely change her life.

OR

The (loosely based) Imagine Me & You AU I couldn't get out of my head.
Lexa was always on time.

Her reputation depended on it.

That, and her uncanny ability to provide the exact thing every person who hired her or entered her shop needed.

It was the greatest feeling in the world, finding the right blend of colors, the right match of texture and meaning that would allow a person to share their message. Lexa loved it. And every wedding magazine and blog loved her for it.

She had the award plaques as proof.

Grounders had been named the best flower shop in Polis for the last four years in a row. Her bouquets had graced the tables in many of Polis’ homes, thrown at numerous weddings, and given to men and women alike by doting lovers. The people of her little neighborhood loved Grounders with or without the awards.

Last year, she’d won best florist in all of Arkadia. That’s when the orders—and money—came flooding in.

When she’d gained the attention of the richer parts of the city, she struggled to keep up with demand. Day after day, she sourced the rarest flowers and created beautiful designs for the fanciest weddings.

She still made sure the orders from Polis were filled first.

Which was exactly why she now faced the possibility of being late for the biggest client she’d ever had.

“I want something that says ‘I’m sorry for your loss, but not that sorry. He was just a dog and you shouldn’t have loved him more than me.’ Can you make something that says that?”

Some small part of Lexa mentally kicked herself for bothering to open the shop at all on the very day she absolutely could not be late.

“I’m sure I can manage something for you, Nia.”

If Lexa hadn’t known the family—hadn’t known the very dog in question—she might’ve had more questions for the cantankerous old woman.

Truth be told, Lexa didn’t blame Roan for loving his dog more than his own mother.

Lexa was able to throw together something in near record time. She grabbed strands of green so dark it was nearly black, white blooms reminiscent of the tufts of fur the old dog left in its wake, and lastly, she tucked in flecks of icy blue. The blue would last the longest in the vase, leaving Roan with a gentle reminder.

Nia huffed when the bouquet was handed over.

It was the closest thing Lexa would get to praise. She tilted her chin ever so slightly higher, once again letting Nia know she could not get under her skin.
Fortunately for Lexa, Nia handed her money over quickly and was out the door without another word. Lexa immediately threw the deadbolt and flipped the Grounders sign to ‘closed’.

Checking the time, she picked up her pace as she headed to the back of the store, eager to get the rest of the wedding flowers loaded into her car.

“Well don’t you look nice.”

Lexa might’ve jumped if she wasn’t so used to Anya showing up unannounced.

Before Lexa could do anything but roll her eyes, Anya continued. “Oh, I forgot today is the day of the big wedding.”

“No you didn’t.” Lexa said.

“No. I didn’t.” Anya smirked. “I just couldn’t help but see how well you were handling the stress.”

“There’s no need to stress when you know a client is going to love your work.”

“Someone’s feeling a little cocky. Good.”

Lexa grinned slightly at that as she grabbed the last of the flowers and began to load them into her beat up Land Rover. She was good at what she did and no matter the client, she was confident her work was well worth the money. In this case, it was a particularly large amount of money.

Anya peered into the back of the SUV. “This can’t be all you’re taking.”

Locking the back door of her shop, Lexa shook her head. “I took the rest over in the van this morning. These are mostly for the groomsmen and I just have to make sure everything else is arranged.”

“So you’ll be free tonight?” Anya asked, although it never quite came across as a question.

With a sigh and a quick glance at the time, Lexa answered, “I don’t know. The venue is huge and I need to finish setting up the reception room.”

“I don’t have Aden tonight so I was going to head to TonDC for some drinks. You should come.” Anya said.

“I doubt I can.”

Anya quirked her brow. “Come on, dressed like that, you’ll have girls falling all over you.”

Lexa shrugged. It was true, a tailored blazer and skinny jeans had always served her well in the past when she cared about anything more than her shop.

“I don’t need—“

“Yeah, yeah.” Anya waived her off. “I’ve heard it enough times. But that doesn’t mean you can’t join me and the others for a drink. It might be just the thing you need after dealing with those snobs.”

“They might not be snobs.” Lexa said, not entirely convinced herself.

Anya’s expression set into something that would make many people cower before her. “Yeah, I’m sure the wedding of the Chancellor’s son to a councilwoman’s daughter will attract our kind of people.”
Lexa was unable to stop a hint of laughter from escaping.

“Consider it.” Anya said. “We’ll be at the bar for a while and it’ll do you some good to think about something other than work.”

Lexa checked her watch. She might have to break a few traffic laws, but she could get to the venue with plenty of time to make her flowers perfect. “I’ll send you a text if I can make it.”

“Uh huh.”

By the time Lexa merged onto the highway, she already knew she’d go straight home once her job was done.

__________

Clarke was never up before her alarm.

She loved being tangled in sheets until the sun’s warmth gently pulled her from a deep sleep. Even then, she preferred to lounge around, mussed hair splayed across her pillow until she felt ready to face the day.

Alarms had always been her enemy, had always yanked her away from mornings she wished she could have.

Until it was her wedding day.

She sat at the edge of her bed, watching as her alarm ticked down the last few seconds. Before it could go off, Clarke swiped across her phone’s screen with a smile on her face.

The numerous messages she had from Raven and Octavia made it very clear her morning would be anything but relaxed. Clarke couldn’t bring herself to mind. She’d be just as excited if one of them was getting married.

Even if they were only marrying a friend they’d had their whole lives.

Only moments after her alarm was set to go off, she heard her friends banging on the front door.

“Yo, Griffin! Open up!” Raven’s voice boomed, no doubt disturbing Clarke’s neighbors.

Clarke couldn’t bring herself to care.

As soon as she flung the door open, Clarke was met by the excited screams of Raven and Octavia.

It was her wedding day. And her friends would get her through it.

In a flurry of movement, Raven and Octavia stormed into Clarke’s apartment, mercifully handing her a cup of a coffee.

“Are you freaking out yet?” Octavia asked, carefully hanging the rather large garment bag containing Clarke’s wedding dress.

With a shrug, Clarke answered, “Why would I? Wells has been my friend since before I can
“Clarke is fine. She’s got this.” Raven offered. “Hell, Clarke, you’re lucky things have worked out this way. You easily could have been pushed toward someone much worse than Wells.”

“I actually like him, Raven.”

“Fine, but you know families like yours have done worse to their kids.”

Octavia laughed. “Wells is getting the better deal. You know his dad would’ve made him marry someone awful if his best friend didn’t happen to be our one and only little Griffin. At least this way, you two have a chance at being happy.”

Clarke grinned. “I really think we do.”

“Still, Clarke, you’re getting married. You’re allowed to freak out, even if you’re getting a pretty good deal.” Octavia added.

“Okay, fine. I’m freaking out a little.” Clarke added.

Octavia checked the time on her phone. “Yes! Within the first five minutes, you better pay up, Raven.”

“Really, Clarke? You couldn’t have pretended to keep your cool for another thirty seconds?”

“Hey!” Clarke threw the nearest pillow straight at Octavia. “How many other bets have you two made for today?”

Raven kissed her on the cheek. “None you need to worry about.”

If Clarke weren’t so use to the little bets Raven and Octavia made, if she hadn’t fully expected to be the subject of at least one on her wedding day, Clarke might have protested. Instead, she helped her friends as they prepared to face the day in their own way.

“You’ve gotta wish us luck.” Raven said, adjusting her dress.

Clarke nearly laughed. “What?”

“Bridesmaids always get laid at weddings. Your boy better have some cute friends.” Raven threw a scandalous wink toward Octavia. “Not all of us have secret bartenders we run off to visit.”

“You’re still seeing him?” Clarke smiled, happy to not be the center of attention for a little bit longer until her stylists arrived.

“It’s not…” Octavia hesitated. “Look, he’s super hot and everything but he works down in Polis and I think my brother would kill me if he found out, so let’s not mention it, okay?”

Raven laughed. “Oh I’m not going to say a word. I love when Bellamy has no idea what’s going on.”

“Consider my mouth shut too. If this Lincoln is as great as you say, I’m not going to do anything to get in the way of that.” Clarke said, noticing how Octavia blushed over the name.

It made Clarke smile more.

“Thank you. Now can we get back to focusing on the bride? It’s her love life we should be talking
about.”

“It’s not—“

Clarke’s reply was cut off by another knock at the door. As soon as Octavia answered it, Clarke knew her peaceful morning of quiet excitement was over. The stylists fluttered into the room, carrying bags and contraptions of every size and shape.

Sighing, Clarke eyed the various people eager to fawn over her. Of course her mother would have made sure the wedding planners hired more people than remotely necessary. Raven caught her eye and she knew without a doubt her bridesmaids were thinking the same thing.

“Now where’s the beautiful bride?” A vaguely familiar face—likely someone Clarke had met and promptly forgotten at one of Chancellor Jaha’s fundraisers—chirped as soon as she entered the room. “Ah! There she is!”

Clarke smiled and resigned herself to the pampering.

In truth, she didn’t entirely hate it. Clarke let herself enjoy the excited buzz around her, knowing her wedding had been the biggest gossip in recent months. She’d grown used to it, the fawning over her and Wells as soon as they’d announced their engagement.

Their families held power and people always loved to gossip about those in power.

Wells had been her friend through it all and long before that. They both understood their relationship was largely political, but they hadn’t minded. Raven and Octavia were right—they each could have done much worse. At least this way, their friendship might very well grow into more and they would be one of the few couples still talked about in a positive light fifty years from now.

Clarke had faith it would, had faith that if anyone could do it, they could. She found herself wondering how great Wells would look in his tux and smiled, knowing he was likely freaking out far more than would be worth Raven and Octavia betting on.

Sooner than expected, Clarke’s hair was pinned into an elegant updo, her makeup was flawlessly applied, and she was being ushered into her dress.

“Damn, Griffin.” Raven and Octavia said almost in unison, earning them a few scowls from the posh stylists.

Clarke spun to catch sight of herself. The dress was perfect. It hugged every curve of her body exactly how she hoped, delicate lace creeping along the fabric as if it were a vine joining with a tree. She felt wonderful, beautiful.

She only felt better when her father walked through the door. Jake was always her rock, the steadying force that kept her going when she questioned her path. His eyes lit up when he saw her draped in the dress she’d spent months searching for.

“Hey dad.”

“You look absolutely wonderful.” He said, immediately wrapping his arms around her, much to the dismay of the stylists scattered around the room.

“You’re one to talk.” Clarke said with a grin, tugging at the lapels of her father’s custom tux.

“And yet my girls will always outshine me.” He said, taking care to also cast a glance to Raven and
Octavia.

Kissing his cheek in thanks, Clarke asked, “Is it time for us to go?”

“The limo just pulled up. Shall we?” Her father offered his arm, and with butterflies dancing in her stomach, Clarke tucked her arm in his.
Lexa managed to arrive at the church moments before the wedding planners. She watched as they frantically checked every vendor’s work, pausing only briefly near the flowers she’d placed that morning. A heartbeat later, they’d moved on to inspect something else.

Smiling to herself, Lexa took their disinterest in her work as a sign she’d done well.

She’d been one of the first vendors hired for the wedding and with the budget they gave her, there had been no issue getting exactly what the bride wanted. Or, maybe more accurately, what the wedding planners convinced the bride she wanted. Lexa had been doing this long enough to know which was more likely for weddings such as these.

Brides often had vague ideas. If Lexa ever got an order for something specific, it was almost guaranteed the idea came from someone other than the bride.

For this wedding, it had not bothered her in the slightest to have a few constraints. Occasionally, she needed the challenge and she’d nailed it once again.

Her phone buzzed.

Ignoring it, she went to retrieve the last of the flowers from her car.

The phone buzzed again.

And again.

Sighing, Lexa reached for it.

**Anya:** I mean it.

**Anya:** Join us tonight.

**Anya:** It’ll be good for you.

Rolling her eyes, Lexa typed out a response.

**Lexa:** I’m working.

**Anya:** Too much.

Shoving her phone back in her pocket, Lexa ignored the next two texts that came through. Anya was determined and there wasn’t a thing Lexa could do to change that.

In the years they’d known each other, it was Anya’s persistence that kept them in touch. Neither of them had many friends and when life got hectic, they’d turned to each other. Anya had helped Lexa after breakups, had dragged her out before when work was getting to be too much, and Lexa knew if she refused Anya’s offer, Anya would find another way to pester her soon.

Grabbing the boutonnieres from her car, Lexa continued to ignore Anya’s attempts to distract her.
She wasn’t sure she’d be swayed to go out but she was damn sure she was going to do her job. Which meant there was no way she was going to let the guys pin their own flowers to their lapels.

When she finally tracked down there groom’s dressing room, she was surprised by the peace she found within. All too often, she entered rooms with pacing grooms and barely sober best friends who looked as though they regretted the choices they made the night before. What Lexa found instead was two men laughing as if they had no care in the world.

They smiled as soon as she entered.

“Hi, I’m Lexa.” She said, offering her hand to the groom. “I did your flowers.”

He shook her hand eagerly and Lexa had to give him credit, his hand was much steadier than the majority of the grooms she met.

“Wells Jaha.” He spoke and Lexa finally saw the flash of nerves in his eye. “The flowers are absolutely lovely. Aren’t they, Bellamy?”

Wells nudged the man beside him.

“Absolutely. Or they would be if I knew anything at all about flowers.” He smiled what Lexa assumed to be his most charming.

She nearly laughed.

Wells fidgeted. Barely noticeable, the movement was enough to give away how anxious he really was under his carefully maintained facade.

“Thank you both. Even if you don’t know much about flowers, I hope you like these well enough.” Lexa said, trying to be polite as she stepped toward the taller man.

“I’m Bellamy.” He said as Lexa began pinning the flowers to the jacket of his tux.

The corner of Lexa’s mouth flickered toward a frown. She knew what was coming next.

“And yes, I do work out.” Bellamy added.

Carefully placing the boutonniere, Lexa responded, “I don’t really like men with muscles.”

“Well under this rugged exterior lies a warm, caring man.”

Llexa focused only on the flowers before her.

“Uh huh.”

“It’s true, just ask Wells. He will happily tell you about me.”

Shaking his head with a silent laugh, Wells said, “You don’t want me to tell her about you.”

Bellamy scoffed in mock offense.

“Okay, Wells, your turn.” Lexa said, already pinning the flowers to the groom’s impeccable white jacket.

If Bellamy was upset she’d so blatantly ignored him, his pride didn’t seem too wounded. Of course, given the strange boost in confidence too many groomsmen experienced on their friends’ wedding
days, Lexa wasn’t entirely sure Bellamy realized how uninterested she was.

“Look at you, Wells, your father might actually smile when he sees you.” Bellamy said.

Lexa couldn’t tell precisely why Wells laughed in response. Or, perhaps it was because she did not give a damn about Arkadia’s overall politics—helping in Polis had always been her larger concern—but the groom’s laughter filled the space around them.

“My father will only smile because Clarke agreed to marry me. He doesn’t have to worry about me running off with some girl he doesn’t approve of mingling our family with.” Wells added, “If only he knew exactly how Clarke felt about him for thinking she’s a better choice for me.”

Lexa excused herself, needing to track down the wedding planners to make sure everything for the wedding itself was good to go. She knew it would be, but it always made her look better to ask.

They were easier to find than expected. Busy ensuring the last of the details were in place as the final guests began finding their seats, the planners were delighted to report the flowers were perfect. Something about the way they greeted her told Lexa some poor vendor had not lived up to expectations.

Checking her watch, Lexa realized if she didn’t finish her final adjustments in the reception room, she might very well disappoint someone.

And still she couldn’t bring herself to leave. She couldn’t help it. She needed to finish checking the reception space, but she wanted to see the bride who would have such an extravagant wedding.

The church was more than big enough for her to slip along the side without drawing attention to herself. Pews were filled with people in expensive suits and even more expensive dresses. Hats adorned the well-coifed heads of older ladies who would no doubt scoff at Lexa’s audacity to wear jeans in their vicinity.

Which is precisely why she’d worn them.

When the bride’s music began, Lexa paused at the exit, hidden behind the standing crowd. She watched as eyes at the front of the church began to fill with tears, watched the groom smile. Then she saw the bride.

Her breath caught, trapped within her.

The bride was gorgeous and Lexa found herself taking a slow, careful step closer. Blue eyes turned and looked straight at her. Lexa froze, unable to do anything but stare back.

It lasted only a second but Lexa couldn’t ignore the way her heart skipped a beat.

Suddenly, she was sure of why she’d felt the need to stay, why she could not bring herself to leave before the ceremony started.

And it absolutely terrified her.

Lexa slipped out of the church before she saw the bride turn to look for her once more.
She needed to focus on something else, anything else other than the look she’d shared with the bride. Before she even made it to the reception room, she knew adjusting each table’s centerpiece so it looked absolutely perfect no matter the angle from which it was viewed and the thousand other tiny details she put into her work wouldn’t distract her. Not enough, at least.

She did not consider her work to be done until the guests were already beginning to grab drinks from the rather well stocked bar and fill the space. She should leave, she knew it.

Lexa never stayed this long for weddings outside of her neighborhood. She ensured everything was good to go, ensured Grounders’ reputation as the best flower shop around, and she left. There was no need for her to stay longer than that.

She didn’t know these people; still, she lingered.

It was foolish and absolutely the last thing she should do, but she did it anyway.

She tried to tell herself it was only for a minute, only to admire the work of the wedding planners who had created a wedding that would be all any bridal magazine or blog would talk about for the next year.

She knew she was lying.

Laughter and the sound of drunken stories being shared filled the air around her. She stayed to the edges, trying not to draw any more attention than what she’d get for her lack of formal attire. At least unlike many vendors she’d worked alongside, she looked presentable. More than presentable if she were in any other context.

Lexa saw her as she entered the room, hand in hand with the groom. This time, the bride did not look toward her, did not stare at her through a crowd as if she was the only one around. Lexa shoved aside the disappointment.

The bride broke away from Wells once the fuss of them entering died down. Lexa watched as she made her way toward the corner of the room where drinks were displayed in crystal bowls. Before she fully knew what she was doing, Lexa followed.

She attempted to rationalize each step. She failed. But when she reached the table where the bride stood, Lexa could not bring herself to care.

“Hi.” Lexa let herself smile. It was genuine, warm.

It’d been too long since she smiled at a girl like that.

“Hi.” The bride’s blue eyes shone as she turned to respond.

“We, uh, we haven’t met. I’m Lexa.”

“Clarke.”

Only later would Lexa realize neither of them seemed capable of looking at anything but each other.

“I did your flowers.”

Clarke’s gaze softened. “Oh, did you? They are absolutely wonderful. I admit, I didn’t know what to expect but I couldn’t have imagined anything more perfect.”

Lexa felt a blush begin to warm her cheeks. Mentally chastising herself, she said, “I’m glad you like
them.”

They smiled at each other for a moment longer.

Clarke cast a nervous glance over her shoulder toward the punch bowl. “I, um, would offer you some punch but I’m afraid I can’t.”

“Is there something wrong?” Lexa stepped closer, her hands firmly in her pockets. “I’m here to help.”

Hesitating, Clarke looked around before sighing and turning to fish around in the punch with the ladle.

“My ring. I was getting something to drink and…”

“Your wedding ring?” Lexa laughed slightly as she leaned closer.

Clarke laughed and Lexa found herself smiling more at the sound.

“Yes. My wedding ring fell off and in there.”—Clarke swirled the punch and the fruit floating in the ruby liquid around—“My wedding ring is in there.”

“And you’ve tried to ladle it out?” Lexa asked, trying not to sound as though she found the situation oddly amusing. Trying harder to notice just how close Clarke was.

Clarke nodded, the hint of a smile tugging at the corner of her mouth. “No luck.”

Lexa added, mostly to herself, “And you can’t empty it, no, it’s too big… All right then, only one thing to do. Cover me.”

“What?”

Without thinking, Lexa reached out for Clarke’s waist, moving her so she (and her dress) would block most of the view. She felt Clarke’s laugh more than she heard it.

Shrugging out of her blazer, Lexa draped it over Clarke’s shoulders. “Here, hold this.”

Clarke immediately turned to look at what Lexa was doing. Lexa turned her away again, fanning out the dress to provide more of a screen. She hadn’t missed the way Clarke’s eyes lingered on her exposed tattoo though. She’d blushed again because of it.

For the first time that night, Lexa reconsidered the need for a drink.

Lexa reached into the punch, diving in nearly up to her elbow in search of the ring. She heard Clarke clear her throat in warning immediately followed by the all too close sound of footsteps. Her fingers closed on the ring right as the man came to a stop in front of Clarke.

By some miracle, he did not notice as Lexa pulled the ring from the punch right behind Clarke.

“Clarke. So nice to finally meet you.”

The man’s disinterested voice alone was enough for Lexa to write him off immediately.

“I’m Murphy. I work with Wells.”

Lexa grabbed Clarke’s ringless hand, hiding it between them as she slid the band onto her finger.
Yes, I’ve heard so much about you.” Clarke said and Lexa wondered if she imagined the threat hidden beneath her tone.

Given the way Clarke tensed when he leaned a little closer, Lexa immediately knew she hadn’t.

Lexa stepped forward, angling herself between Clarke and the man.

“Hi.” Lexa forced some semblance of a pleasantry into her tone.

“This is Lexa, she’s our florist.” Clarke offered as an introduction.

Murphy extended his hand. “The name’s Murphy. Although you can call me anything you’d like.”

Lexa took his hand in hers, delighting in the way he squirmed as her punch covered hand came into contact with his skin. “And I’m sure I will.”

Clarke barely contained her laughter at the disgusted look on his face as he walked away.

Lexa locked eyes with Clarke and it felt as if her heart jolted once more toward awareness of the world.

“Thank you, really.” Clarke said as Lexa finally tore her gaze away to find several napkins with which to clean her arm.

“It was my pleasure.” Lexa surprised herself with how much she truly meant it.

Then she thought of the look they’d shared as Clarke walked down the aisle and all traces of surprise vanished.

“I can get that off you now.” Lexa said, smiling as she reached for her blazer.

“Oh, it’s really—“ Clarke stopped herself, choosing instead to hand over the jacket.

Lexa opened her mouth to say whatever she could to keep talking to Clarke but before she could, a woman swept in and took Clarke by the arm, already pulling her away.

“Clarke, dear, I finally found you! Wells must miss you.”

“I’m sure he is just fine, Mom.” Clarke looked back over her shoulder as she was urged back toward the groom.

Lexa tilted her head in farewell, trying to ignore the sinking feeling in her stomach.

She needed to leave.

She needed a drink.

Lexa sent the text without bothering to read whatever Anya sent her.

Lexa: On my way. Try not to drink everything before I get there.

Chapter End Notes
Thank you to everyone who took the time to let me know you're already enjoying this fic! I must say, it's been ridiculously fun to work on and I'm very excited I'm finally getting it posted.

Leave me a comment here or find me on Tumblr!
Clarke reluctantly let her mother lead her back toward the crowd.

The next time she looked over her shoulder, Lexa was gone. Scanning the room, Clarke looked for any sign of her, any hint of the cascade of brunette hair so exquisitely draped over her shoulder.

She couldn’t find her.

“Clarke? Are you even listening?” Her mom scolded.

No.

“Of course.” Clarke guessed her mother hadn’t strayed far from her first comment. “I’m sure Wells is just fine talking to people on his own.”

“That might be true, but it’s your wedding, Clarke. You should be seen together.” Her mom’s voice had dropped to a near whisper.

Clarke had never explicitly told her family the true nature of the wedding, but she had a hunch they, unlike the rest of the guests, weren’t under the impression that the newlyweds were madly in love with each other. It had been a necessary lie. The Griffin and Jaha families were expected to marry well, of course, as were all families on the council. But it was never expected for the marriages to be arranged. Doing so would make it seem as though the current council was creating a next generation to replace them without any input from the rest of Arkadia.

Clarke knew there were people trying to do just that, which is why she’d agreed to marry Wells. If they worked together, they could do some genuine good for the people. All people.

They’d talked about marrying for years. At first, because almost everyone expected them to. Later, it was because they fully understood their situations. They could wait and hope someone came along who they loved and their families approved of. Or, they could marry each other and avoid the possibility of ruining the reputation of their families.

So they decided to do just that.

Clarke had been friends with Wells for as long as she could remember, long before their families were elevated to the council. Their friendship had lasted through awful breakups with college lovers, awful fights with their own families, and on the rare occasion, awful fights with each other. They could spend the rest of their lives together, they both knew it.
When they’d first discussed their marriage in earnest, they also both knew there was a chance for something more—a chance their friendship would finally stretch into romance. It would take time, but there was a chance. Clarke was happy enough with the odds for actual tears to prick her eyes the day Wells proposed to her.

She’d even been slightly nervous as she started walking down the aisle toward Wells and the tux he’d so carefully picked out.

And then she’d seen her.

Lexa.

They’d locked eyes for only a second, barely even long enough for Clarke to register the green eyes staring right at her. It had been enough. Clarke went through the motions of her vows, smiling right before Wells kissed her, but she could not stop thinking about the woman.

Which had only grown into a larger problem once she’d actually met her.

“Abby! There you are.”

Clarke’s attention was forced back into focus as some man enthusiastically greeted her mother. Clarke smiled as he shook her hand and offered his congratulations. It was a practiced, tight smile, the same she’d used during every fundraiser or event since she was little.

Much to her mother’s disappointment, they were stopped twice more before Clarke laid eyes on Wells. As she’d guessed, he was in the middle of a group of his father’s friends, talking to them as if they were the only people in the world. She knew him better than that though. She knew the stiffness in his shoulders was a silent plea for the crowd to leave him alone.

The song changed and she saw an opportunity to rescue her friend. Her husband.

She wove her arm around his waist as soon as she reached him. From there, all it took was a warm smile and a simple question and Wells was free and leading her to the dance floor.

“I cannot thank you enough.” Wells said as he took Clarke’s hand in his and began waltzing her across the dance floor.

“You act like I didn’t pull you away as an excuse to avoid my mother.”

Wells laughed. “Abby has been trying to make sure I’m with you at all times too.”

Another couple congratulated them as they danced. Clarke and Wells both and gave an automatic, hollow “thanks”.

“My mom is terrified people will see straight through this and it will lead to some scandal.” Clarke said in a whisper.

Pulling Clarke closer so he could speak directly in her ear as they danced, Wells asked, “Does she really know?”

Sighing, Clarke said, “I’m afraid she does. She won’t confront us about it though, no matter how much she suspects. As long as we can fool everyone else in this town, she won’t care. It does look good for the family, after all.”

Wells laughed again and Clarke knew everyone in the room would think she’d said something
charming to him, perhaps something a little scandalous, even. Their guests would eat it up.

“Your father knows.” Wells said.

Clarke stiffened slightly before forcing her body to relax into the steps of the dance once again.

“Clarke, you can’t be surprised. Jake knows you better than anyone. When I asked him for your hand, he made it clear he knew why I was asking.”—Wells pulled away so Clarke could see him clearly, could see his smile—“He also knew you had already agreed to this plan and his only response was ‘you’ve been a good friend for my daughter and I have no doubt you will continue to be so as her husband.’”

Smiling, Clarke looked around the room for her father. She should have known he’d guessed.

They chatted through the end of the song and then another. Wells told her of the people he’d already been forced to talk to, of the encounters he’d had with his own friends.

“It sounds like I had the much better conversation.” Clarke said after Wells described one particularly cringe-worthy discussion he’d had with some distant relative.

“Is that so?”

“Our florist, actually.”

“Then I am jealous! You got to talk to someone who isn’t here vying for future favors. She already has our money.” Wells said with a wink. “I talked to her a bit earlier too. She does seem nice.”

Clarke ignored the twinge of… something… she felt spring into her belly at Wells’ words.

“She managed to send Murphy scampering off.” Clarke added, not offering precisely how Lexa had done so, lest she have to mention why Lexa’s hand was covered in punch.

“She also managed to completely ignore Bellamy earlier. Which, of course, means he’s all the more interested in meeting her again.”

Clarke stopped herself from saying “So am I.”

Still, she felt her cheeks warm over the mere thought of seeing Lexa again.

Instead, she forced a laugh and said, “I’m not entirely sure he’s her type.”

The music ended before Wells could say anything else and as soon as their feet stopped gliding across the floor, they were approached by more guests.

Forced to mingle, Clarke stayed by Wells’ side as she had so many times in the past.

Clarke occasionally looked over her guests’ shoulders, hoping to see Lexa.

Somehow, she knew she wouldn’t.

The crowd around her and Wells changed, new faces appearing and offering the same well wishes for their marriage. Mercifully, Raven and Octavia joined the crowd and managed to shift the focus of the conversation from the wedding itself.

“No, no, I can’t take credit for the program.”—Clarke motioned toward Octavia—“She was the one who first started the classes. Our foundation just offered to help.”
Nodding, Octavia turned to the round faced man who had originally began asking about the education program Clarke was getting involved with. “I started offering self defense courses which has now branched into a few other hand-to-hand based classes.”

“Does teaching them to fight not add to the crime levels?” The woman’s voice was dripping with condescension.

Clarke stamped down her annoyance at the woman’s tone. Smiling sweetly, she answered with, “Absolutely not. Polis is not the place so many people believe it to be. If you are interested in starting a class there yourself, you could see first hand?”

The woman had the decency to recognize she was being scolded. Huffing, she asked, “I’m sure you’re teaching them other things though.”

Raven spoke up, “Clarke has been working on expanding their arts programs. Personally, I’m doing my best to turn them into hackers and little grease monkeys.”

Clarke smiled at the confused faces around them. “She means she teaches classes in mechanics and computer science.”

The faces changed from confusion to something resembling respect. It wasn’t quite there, but almost. Which was about as good of a response they’d ever received when talking about the Griffin Foundation’s recent involvement with the Polis community.

The worst responses were anything involving acting as if they were saints for venturing into that particular neighborhood. There’d been more than one occasion where Wells had to keep a steadying hand on Clarke’s back to keep her from saying precisely what she thought about those who turned their nose up at the people of Polis.

Octavia rarely managed to hold her tongue. She’d eventually reached a point where she refused to attend meetings with the council unless it was absolutely necessary. From the looks of things, if the woman made one more comment, Octavia wasn’t going to let it slide, propriety be damned.

They were all saved by waiters pouring into the crowd to make sure every guest had a drink in hand. Taking her own champagne flute, Clarke heard Wells sigh.

Speeches.

Clarke leaned into him, silently giving him the comfort she knew he needed. They’d both been ready to play their parts during the ceremony, but watching their friends and family buy into their lie was something far more complicated.

Wells’ father took the microphone first. It was a speech devoid of the emotion one would expect from anyone else. Thelonious’ voice was calm, peaceful even, but it held none of the passion a wedding speech should have. It was precisely the kind of speech Clarke expected from the Chancellor.

When Jake stepped forward to offer his speech, Clarke could already tell she would cry by the end of it.

He did not prove her wrong.

“We all knew from the moment Clarke and Wells met, they’d be special in each other’s lives.” Jake said. “They were inseparable. Still are. Wells has been a true friend to my daughter for too many years for me to count. From the time she fell off her bike and scraped her knee, to when we told her
she absolutely could not go to a party and he helped her sneak out of the house—yes, I know about that—Wells has been there.”

The room filled with laughter.

Wells’ arm tightened around Clarke’s shoulders.

“I know my daughter will be happy with him. As a father, what more could I ask for?” Jake finished, raising his glass toward Clarke.

She saw it then, the slight hesitancy in her dad’s eyes. He knew she and Wells weren’t in love. And he was hoping their friendship would be enough.

Clarke raised her glass in return.

She hoped so too.

__________

Any smirked as soon as Lexa stepped through the door. “Well I’ll be damned, you actually came.”

“Hey, Lexa!” Lincoln waved as he finished pouring a beer for another patron.

“Where’s everyone else?” Lexa asked as she bellied up to the mostly empty bar.

Motioning to Lincoln for a refill of her drink, Anya said, “Indra and the others left earlier. I’ve been here for a while, you know, since it took you so long to finally show up.”

From the slight hint of pink on Anya’s razor-sharp cheekbones, Lexa knew the empty glass sitting on the bar was not Anya’s first for the night. Or second.

“I told you, I had to work.” Lexa offered with a shrug.

“And I told you, you work too much.” Anya threw back.

Before Lexa could respond, Lincoln appeared.

“Any’s right. You do work too much.” He said.

Lexa leveled a glare at him. “Oh no, you don’t get to pick sides.”

Lincoln laughed. “I just mean it’s been too long since I’ve seen you.”

“So since I’m here now, my first round is on the house?” Lexa asked, teasing Lincoln.

“If you say yes, she might come back more often.” Anya said, words tainted every so slightly by the drinks she’d consumed.

Lincoln was already reaching for a glass. “This one is on me then. Whiskey or beer?”

She and Anya spoke at the same time.

“Whiskey”
Anya eyed her skeptically. “I usually have to fight you on drinking more than a beer. What’s up?”

“Nothing.”

“Bullshit.”

Lexa shrugged.

Anya kept staring.

Lexa sighed, taking the glass of whiskey Lincoln handed her and throwing it back. She held up her hand to Anya before she could say anything else.

“Lincoln, since Anya here has had a few already, do you mind pouring me another?” Lexa said, extending her glass toward the bottle in his hand.

Lincoln poured a little heavy.

“How long are you going to make me wait? I would advise just saying whatever the hell it is you need to say because I’ve had four drinks and you know I—“

“I think I met someone.” Lexa said, taking a sip from her glass.

Anya lifted her glass and put it back down without tasting the whiskey. “You what?”

Lexa could only nod.

“So why the hell are you making that face.”

Lexa was suddenly too aware of her scowl. It deepened.

“I met her at the wedding.”

“Lincoln!” Anya summoned the bartender.

Lexa cringed.

“Our little Lexa apparently met someone at that fancy wedding where your girlfriend was tonight.” Anya’s lips quirked toward the closest thing to a smile she usually let people see.

Looking up from her glass, Lexa felt her brow raise. “Lincoln has a girlfriend?”

“No.”

Anya scoffed.

“Okay, I might be seeing this girl who—“

“Fancy girl.” Anya quipped.

“She was at the wedding you were hired for. At least I assume it’s the same one. Not too many options given it’s the Chancellor’s son getting married.” Lincoln shrugged as if it made all the sense in the world for a girl he was dating to be seen at the wedding. “But I didn’t get yelled at to come here for the sake of revealing my own personal life.”

“At least not entirely.” Anya said.
Lincoln threw his bar towel over his shoulder. “So who did you meet?”

“It’s nothing, really.” Lexa said.

It was one of the biggest lies she’d ever told. She hadn’t been able to stop thinking about Clarke since she’d first laid eyes on her. The curve of her waist, the blue of her eyes, the way she’d smiled when Lexa was talking to her. Every little thing kept playing out in Lexa’s mind.

Even how her hands had so briefly rested on Clarke’s hips.

“That’s not the face of nothing.” Lincoln said.

Lexa was blushing.

Damn it.

“It was the bride.”

Any’s laughter filled the bar.

Chapter End Notes

Leave a comment here or find me on Tumblr!
Clarke decided one of her favorite things of married life had been the chance to decorate a new home. The new apartment she and Wells moved into was perfectly blank inside—perfectly suited to give Clarke an artistic challenge.

She loved it.

Her art often had to be placed to the side for the sake of her family, for the sake of being the perfect daughter. She painted every chance she got, but it would never be enough to satisfy her. Which is why she’d been so happy when Wells showed her the apartment he’d found.

When they first saw it, it had been Wells who pointed out the various places Clarke could hang a painting, the architectural elements they could pull out to decorate. As always, he’d been supportive of every idea she’d had, encouraging her to let her artistic side take over. Part of her thought he’d pointed out the apartment largely because it would give her a creative outlet.

It was the kind of thing that always made her hope her friendship with him really could become more some day. Perhaps once she’d relegated the second bedroom entirely to a space for painting instead of it doubling as her occasional bedroom (for the nights she didn’t fall asleep next to Wells after a movie marathon and a shared bowl of popcorn.)

Wells seemed to be pleased with it too, even before Clarke began hanging art and working with him to make the space fully their own. And how could either of them complain? The apartment looked out over the city with a view of the nearby park, so carefully groomed into lush green.

Clarke had tried to ignore how her thoughts immediately went to the color of Lexa’s eyes the first time she awoke to the sunrise flickering across vibrant leaves.

The apartment was perfect.

“So the budget is two thousand?” Wells asked as they entered the warehouse.

Clarke had her eye on a vintage leather sofa she was convinced would bring together all of the various decorations and paintings in their living room. Wells had been the one to let her know when the auction was taking place. He’d also been more than happy to pick up coffee for them both before Clarke even managed to drag herself out of bed.

Smiling, Clarke said, “Yes, but I want that couch.”

Laughing, Wells nodded. “Yes, but two thousand dollars?”

“Of course!” Clarke said with what she knew was a hint of something mischievous in her eye.

No matter what, it would be an expensive couch but she couldn’t let something so old and in such perfect, useable condition pass her by. Wells likely knew it too, which would explain the playful nudge he gave Clarke’s shoulder.

Clarke looked over the other items up for auction. Several vintage pieces of trash was mostly what she found, although there were a few desks and other pieces of furniture perfectly suited for the right
space, the right person.

Wells found an old cash register and was busy looking over it when he pressed precisely the wrong button if he wished to go about their day unnoticed. The loud ringing of the register as the drawer opened caught the attention of every other person around them.

Clarke laughed and tugged him away. “Maybe keep your hands to yourself.”

An older woman on the other side of the aisle spoke up. “Don’t tell him that too often, dear. You don’t want him to actually listen.”

She added an exaggerated wink as she walked away in case her meaning wasn’t clear enough.

Both Clarke and Wells laughed. Even with his dark skin, Clarke could tell Wells was blushing just as much as her.

They hadn’t. They wouldn’t. Not until they were both sure that’s what they wanted.

“So…” Wells segued. “Speaking of keeping hands to oneself, Bellamy can’t stop talking about the florist from our wedding.”

Clarke felt her heart skip. “Oh?”

“When I met up with him for drinks last night, he kept mentioning her. He seems to think they hit it off. I didn’t see him talk to her again, but he must have since I’m not entirely convinced she was interested based on the interaction I saw.”—Wells shrugged—“But I was thinking we could invite them both over for dinner?”

Clarke’s mouth went dry.

Wells continued, oblivious to Clarke’s reaction, “Do you think she’d mind? I know you mentioned you’d enjoyed talking to her and we’ve been meaning to have people over to the new place.”

She smiled, suddenly grateful Wells was more interested in looking at the antiques around them than at her.

As casually as she could manage, Clarke said, “I don’t know if he’s exactly her type, but I’ve been considering stopping by her shop to thank her for doing our flowers. Maybe I’ll swing by this week and ask about dinner.”

Clarke’s heart raced.

Yes, she’d considered stopping by Grounders every time she drove into Polis for her classes. Yes, she’d almost done it several times in the month since her wedding, but she never actually let herself. Now she had the perfect excuse.

Her body hummed with excitement, with something more she was too scared to name.

The auctioneer called for the crowd’s attention.

“It’s time!” Wells grabbed Clarke’s hand and tugged her back toward the couch they were determined to bring home. “We’ll just glare at anyone else who tries to out bid us.”

Clarke returned Wells’ smile, happy to see he was having fun.

“Guard this couch with your life, Wells.”
“I would dream of doing nothing else, wife.” His exaggerated smirk pulled another laugh from Clarke.

They’d been sure to refer to each other as husband and wife—they were too worried someone might ask too many questions if they didn’t—but nearly every time, it had resulted in laughter when the words were said in front of each other.

The auctioneer moved at an almost alarming rate. Pieces scattered around the warehouse were spotted with bright tags indicating they were sold.

An old, far too beat up dinner table was next on the auctioneer’s block. Their couch was right after.

Dinner.

Clarke mentally went through how she could ask, how she could convince Lexa to come over. Every scenario she went through made no mention of Bellamy or Wells’ half-hearted attempt at a double date. Clarke didn’t want to bring him up, didn’t want to scare Lexa away if she was right and Lexa wasn’t into men.

Clarke knew she didn’t want Lexa to come over for Bellamy’s sake.

It was for her own.

“Okay, here we go.”

Clarke vaguely registered Wells’ words.

Numbers were shouted around her.

If Lexa said no, if she wasn’t interested in meeting Bellamy, then taking the time to invite her would mean Clarke could see her again.

She was frightened by how desperately she wanted to.

“Damn!” Wells’ exclamation yanked Clarke from her thoughts. “We lost it.”

Clarke heard auctioneer call the price of the couch higher and higher.

Two thousand three hundred.

Two thousand eight hundred.

Clarke stood, throwing her hand in the air.

“Four thousand!”

The couch was hers.

__________

Lexa worked quickly, arranging the scraps from other bouquets she’d made throughout the day into something beautiful all its own. Like the majority of her practice arrangements, it would end up
adorning a space in Anya’s home or her own. Unless, of course, Lexa happened to pass buy someone in Polis who looked as if they needed a bright spot on their day.

If she bothered to keep count, Lexa would know all but a few of her arrangements went to the tables of other families throughout the neighborhood.

She was nearly happy with her current project when the door to Grounders was pushed open and the familiar jingling of a bell rang throughout the shop.

“What brings you in?” Lexa asked,

“You gotta help me. I need a flower. Just one. A good one. The best.”

“Okay…” Lexa began, head tilting ever so slightly at the twitchy man.

“My last chance flower.” He added.

“Your last chance?” Lexa asked, mildly worried he would actually explain.

“I really fucked up. Only the right flower can save me. A red rose. What would that say?”

“Love.”

“Love’s nice. That works.”

“And fidelity.” Lexa said flatly.

“Not a red rose then.” He shuffled around the store some more, examining blossom after blossom.

Lexa watched him, waiting to see what he was drawn to, waiting to see how she could help.

“If this really is your last chance, we need to find you something spectacular.” Lexa’s brow creased in thought, partially out of an attempt to figure out what kind of person hadn’t left this man already.

The man hummed in agreement, eyeing some of Lexa’s more unique flowers. She opened her mouth to offer a suggestion when she heard the bell on her door ring. Without looking, she greeted the newest patron.

“Be right with you!”

“That’s fine.”

Lexa knew it instantly by the slight rasp, the hint at so much more behind a simple greeting. Clarke.

She turned and felt her mouth spread into a wide smile. “Hey.”

“Hi.”

Clarke’s smile matched her own.

“How are you doing?” Lexa asked, her customer momentarily forgotten.

“Great. I just—”

Clarke was cut off by the man. “What’s your favorite flower?”

Clarke hesitated only a moment before offering an answer. “I think I like lilies.”
Lexa felt a knot form deep in her stomach.

Lilies.

Of course.

“They’re wrong.” The man dismissed Clarke’s suggestion and began circling the store once again.

Lexa sighed with increasing annoyance. “Sorry, I’m just dealing with…”

She trailed off, unsure of how to categorize the man.

“Oh, no, of course. Go right ahead.” Clarke said, a hint of a smile still lingering on her full lips.

Lexa tried to untangle the feeling within her, tried to push it aside.

“How about this.” Lexa said, reaching for a particularly bright flower and showing it to the man. “Bird of paradise.”

Pausing, he considered the spikes of orange and yellow Lexa held in her hands. “Keep talking.”

“The real name is Strelitzia but I don’t know if a single flower has a more fitting common name. It’s named after Charlotte of Strelitz, who married King George III. They had fifteen kids together and never spent more than an hour apart.” Lexa was poised to continue when the man threw up his hand.

“Oh, stop talking.”

Lexa felt the muscles in her jaw tense. She shot Clarke an apologetic look.

From the look on Clarke’s face, she didn’t seem to mind the annoyance at all.

The knot in Lexa’s stomach tightened.

Suddenly, an idea jumped into her mind as bright as a spark. “You know, I think I have just the thing for you.”

Lexa quickly made her way to the most well-lit spot in her whole store. There, spread out on a high shelf were her least used, yet most hardy, plants. Grabbing one of the larger pots—and in her opinion, least attractive—she handed it to the man. His eyes immediately lit up and Lexa knew without a doubt she had another satisfied customer.

Somehow.

“Yes. This is it, my last chance flower.” His eyes never left the cactus as he reached into his pocket and pulled out a wad of cash.

He’d overpaid, but he was already half way down the block before Lexa could hand him his change. With a shake of her head, she turned back to Clarke.

“I am so sorry for that.” She said a bit nervously.

In the sudden stillness of the store, Lexa could swear she could hear the pounding of her own heart. She’d never expected to see Clarke again.

“No, it’s okay. It was interesting to watch you. I mean, it was interesting to see you tell him about the
flowers. Do you know the stories behind each one?”

Lexa did not miss the way Clarke’s cheeks shone with the hint of a blush. It was enough to make her smile as she said, “I do.”

Clarke’s expression turned to one of genuine amazement. “Really? How do you keep track?”

Lexa shrugged. “I find it interesting. Each flower has its own story, its own meaning. Humans have been using them practically forever to send messages, good or bad. I like the histories. I like where they overlap and I like when one culture assigns a completely different meaning to a flower than another culture. I…”

Stopping, Lexa felt herself break into a bashful smile. She wasn’t usually so willing to share why she loved her job so much.

“Go on, I really don’t mind.” Clarke smiled over her shoulder as she examined the flowers around the store.

“No, I’m sure you didn’t stop by to hear me ramble. How can I help you?”

“I, um…” Clarke faltered only slightly. “I was in the neighborhood and wanted to come by to thank you.”

Lexa’s brow lifted. She wasn’t sure why Clarke would be in Polis.

As if she’d spoken her doubts aloud, Clarke offered. “I help with art projects at one of the schools.”

Lexa found her lips quirking toward a smile.

She’d immediately pictured Clarke covered in paint, working with the very kids Lexa frequently ran into.

“I knew your shop was around here and I thought I would thank you again for our flowers. They were absolutely wonderful.”

Lexa bowed her head slightly to acknowledge the praise. “It was an absolute pleasure.”

“And, um, I wanted to invite you over for dinner.”

Lexa froze. “You what?”

“Dinner. With us, Wells and me.”

It took Lexa a moment to fully hear what Clarke had just asked her.

“I mean, you don’t—” Clarke began to say as if she took Lexa’s silence as refusal.

“No!” Lexa cut in. “No, I would love to.”

She absolutely should refuse. Lexa knew it, knew it as soon as she finally understood what Clarke asked.

“Really? How about this Friday? At seven?” Clarke asked.

“Friday works for me.”
“Great!” Clarke walked toward the register and grabbed a pen and piece of paper. “Here’s our address.”

“Thank you.” Lexa’s lip threatened to curl into another grin.

Clarke tugged her lip between her teeth and Lexa fought with herself to keep from staring.

“And, um, there might be a friend of ours there too.” Clarke added.

“Oh, uh…” Lexa hesitated, unsure what Clarke was getting at.

“I don’t know if he’ll show, but I get it if you want to change your mind.”

Lexa should.

She wouldn’t.

“No, no that’s fine.” Lexa reassured. “I’ll see you on Friday. I’m looking forward to it.”

Clarke smiled, her blue eyes all the more stunning with the blue top she wore. “Me too.”

After a moment, Clarke moved toward the door. “Well, I should be going. I’ve taken up enough of your time already.”

“You’re welcome here any time.” Lexa grabbed a bright yellow flower before Clarke could leave. “Here, since I made you wait while I was helping that other guy.”

“A daffodil.” Clarke smiled as she took the flower. “Are you going to tell me what this one means?”

“It means you brighten a room.” Lexa stared into Clarke’s eyes and couldn’t help but smile when she noticed the barest hint of a blush creeping along Clarke’s cheeks.

“Thank you.”

Lexa held the door open for her, each of them taking the time to say they were looking forward to the weekend once more. Lexa tried not to read into it, tried to remind herself that she’d essentially agreed to a double date—one where Clarke would be on another man’s arm—but Lexa couldn’t help but notice the way Clarke’s gaze slipped to her mouth as they said their last goodbyes.

As soon as Clarke was gone, Lexa leaned against the wall, fighting to close herself off from the awful hope she felt every second Clarke spent in her shop.

Clarke was married.

Lexa was a fool. A fool who agreed to see Clarke again when she could have let it go, she could have ended it. Instead, she’d given Clarke a flower. She’d handed her a flower as if she hadn’t let the last few years convince her love would never be hers.

Lexa had given Clarke a flower, but she had not given the full meaning. She had not given voice to the meaning she’d had on her mind when she picked the flower from her collection.

Unrequited love.

Chapter End Notes
Leave a comment here or find me on Tumblr.
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

First of all, I recently found out my other fic, In Another Life was nominated as Best Soulmates Fic for the Clexa Fanfiction Awards. Thank you so much to everyone who nominated and voted for me. Honestly, I had no idea it was happening and when I saw the list, I couldn't believe my fic was there.

I just hope this fic is just as enjoyable, if not more so!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“I need to reschedule tomorrow’s movie night.” Lexa said as soon as she dropped the takeout onto Anya’s table.

Eyeing her, Anya asked, “Why?”

“I have plans.”

Anya’s mouth crept toward a smirk. “Do you have a date?”

“No. It’s not a date.” Lexa said, knowing she sounded too defensive.

She refused to look at Anya, choosing instead to focus on removing lids and folding open the containers of their Chinese food.

“But?”

After a slight pause, Lexa said, “But I am going over to someone’s apartment for dinner.”

“How is that not a date?” Anya asked, happily breaking her chopsticks apart.

“Because it’s not just us. Her husband and one of their friends will be there too.”

“Holy shit.”—Anya let out a laugh—“Please tell me it’s that bride you decided to drink yourself stupid over. Clarke? That was her name, right?”

Before Lexa could answer, Aden came into the kitchen, eagerly reaching for the first egg roll he saw.

“What’s so funny in here?” He said around a mouthful of food.

“Nothing.” Lexa said, shooting a glare at Anya.

Aden didn’t miss it. “What did Lexa do?”

“She met a pretty girl.” Anya answered, handing her little brother his usual carton of noodles.

“Good!” Aden said with genuine delight. “Maybe she can hang out with us too!”

“It’s not like that.” Lexa said, grabbing her own food.
“So it’s like the pretty girls Anya meets and pretends like I don’t know why she’s out late?” Aden teased.

“Hey!” Anya pointed her chopsticks at her brother.

Lexa couldn’t help but laugh.

“No, not like that either.”

“Unfortunately for Lexa.” Anya added.

As per usual, their jabs and teasing died down as they ate. Lexa asked how Aden was doing in school, Anya acted offended whenever he told Lexa something he hadn’t told her. Lexa knew Aden did it on purpose, but in truth, it was clear Anya knew too. It didn’t matter, Lexa was with them often enough for Anya to stay up to date on how her brother was doing, even if Aden didn’t tell her directly. Anya never seemed frustrated by it.

At some point during their friendship, Anya had decided Lexa was a perfectly fine addition to the little family she had left and never let Lexa drift too far. Lexa didn’t mind. She remembered when Aden was born, how he was a surprise to Anya’s parents who already had their hands full with a teenager. She also remembered how confused he’d been the night Anya had to tell him their parents weren’t coming home. And at the end of it all, Lexa needed people too.

Later that night, when Lexa was back at her own home and readying for bed, her phone vibrated.

Lexa smiled as soon as she read the text.

Anya: Don’t think I didn’t notice how you avoided my question about exactly who you’re having dinner with.

Lexa: Goodnight, Anya.

Anya: You better let me know how it goes.

It was almost an hour later when Lexa finally hit send on her message.

Lexa: I will.

The next day at work was practically a blur for Lexa. She placed her orders, made perfect arrangements for customers, and even managed to talk a nervous young boy through finding the right flowers for his date to an upcoming dance.

She barely remembered anything that had happened by the time she walked into her apartment—she’d been too preoccupied thinking of the dinner at Clarke’s.

It wasn’t a date.

There was no way it could be.

But it didn’t stop Lexa’s stomach from tightening into a knot as she looked over her wardrobe, trying to decide what to wear. If it were a date, Lexa would know exactly which clothes to reach for. It’d been a while since she had dated (as Anya was always quick to point out), but Lexa knew how to clean up. Then she remembered Clarke had already seen her in the outfit she would undoubtedly wear for a date.
Clarke had seen her and the very jacket Lexa felt best in had been draped across Clarke’s shoulders.

Groaning, Lexa tilted her head back, closing her eyes as she gathered her resolve.

She could do this.

She quickly threw an outfit together, each choice deliberate, each choice made without the chance to second-guess herself. Nice boots, nice dark jeans, loose v-neck shirt, and all topped with a forest green jacket to fight the slight chill creeping in as Autumn took hold.

She bunched the sleeves of her jacket.

It wasn’t a date.

Lexa fought with her own mind the cab ride to Clarke’s, forcing herself to remember it would not be just the two of them.

Clarke’s husband would be here.

As well as the man that was intended to be her own date.

Still, the flowers she carried were for no one other than Clarke.

__________

Clarke settled on the fifth outfit she tried on. The first had been too much. There was too much cleavage, too much of the fabric hanging to every curve. It was a dress she’d wear for a first date, not what she should be wearing to host a casual dinner. But it had been the one thing she couldn’t stop picturing herself in as she prepared for the night. No matter what she did, every other outfit somehow seemed wrong.

She eventually made her choice, opting for her favorite pair of skinny jeans and her favorite ruby red shirt. The shirt definitely cut lower than she would ever wear to one of the dinners held by the council, but damn if it didn’t make her feel amazing.

Maybe not as amazing as that dress, but amazing nonetheless.

Putting the finishing touches on her makeup, she caught herself feeling once again that she was readying herself for a date. It was ridiculous. She was having dinner with her husband, a friend, and…

And Lexa.

Checking the time, Clarke’s heart gave a flutter as she realized Lexa would arrive within the hour. Not just Lexa, Bellamy too. Her guests. Plural. She tried to convince herself the nerves were entirely due to the fact that Wells should’ve been home twenty minutes ago.

When he walked into the apartment a moment later, Clarke’s nerves still remained.

“So sorry!” Wells said as soon as he saw Clarke.

Laughing, Clarke tried to calm him and settle herself at the same time. “It’s really okay. I got all the
groceries for you and I can help you get things ready.”

“You're a saint.” He said in relief.

Seeking her favorite earrings, Clarke shooed him away. “Go change before they get here!”

“You look wonderful, by the way.” He said before ducking out and heading to his own closet.

Another flutter rolled through Clarke’s chest, but deep down, she knew it wasn’t Wells she’d worn the outfit for.

She pushed away the thought.

Wells was her husband. Wells was who she’d chosen to spend her life with, to have by her side as she continued build upon the foundations her family created. She chose him.

At the last minute, Clarke reached for the perfume Wells bought for her during one of his business trips.

Wells found her again in the kitchen as she began to mise en place the various ingredients Wells needed for the pasta he’d planned for their meal.

“Do you think she’ll be into him?” Wells asked, buttoning his clean shirt.

Clarke paused, unsure of what to say. “I thought she would back out as soon as I said he was coming, but she didn’t. So maybe he does have a chance.”

Clarke could name the thing that surged within her as she spoke. She knew it well and knew it was the last thing she should feel at the thought of tonight going well. Jealousy.

“Good.”—Wells smiled—“Now we just have to hope he doesn’t make a fool out of himself.”

“Always easier said than done.” Clarke laughed.

They fell into their usual, comfortable conversation then, asking how each other’s day went, sharing any interesting stories. Wells often had stories of particularly difficult clients, Clarke shared stories on more than one occasion of potential donors to the Griffin Foundation expecting a little more than a nice lunch with Clarke. Clarke always made sure those individuals were left off the guest lists of any events for at least the next year. More often though, Clarke told Wells about the latest demands her mother placed on her ‘for the sake of the family name’.

Mercifully, Wells frequently opened a nice bottle of wine for those nights.

Clarke kept checking the time every few minutes, simultaneously wishing for the clock to tick faster and for time to stop entirely, keeping her from facing the very woman occupying too many of her thoughts.

Right on time, the doorbell rang.

“I’ll get it!” Clarke yelled, wiping her hands clean and already moving before Wells stepped out of the pantry.

Clarke forced herself to take a steadying breath before she opened the door.

It could be Bellamy, she reminded herself.
It wasn’t.

“Hi.” Clarke managed to say.

There was a hint of a smile on Lexa’s lips. “Hey.”

“You look amazing.” Clarke meant it.

She’d thought she looked great the first time they met, with Lexa in a fine blazer and still so out of place, but the Lexa standing before her was more casual, more… her.

“Nothing compared to you.” Lexa said almost timidly and Clarke felt her heart rate somehow increase further.

Lexa handed over the bundle of flowers she carried. “Here, I brought these for you.”

Lilies.

Lexa had remembered.

“They’re lovely! Thanks, Lexa.” Wells said as he placed his hand on Clarke’s shoulder. “It’s nice to see you again.”

Suddenly, Clarke realized Lexa was still standing on the other side of the threshold. “Oh, come on in, I’m sorry.” Clarke said.

“I’ll grab a vase for these flowers. I’m sure Clarke will be more than happy to show you our brand new, very expensive couch!” Wells yelled over his shoulder as he made his way to the kitchen with the flowers in hand.

“You can’t put a price on comfort.” Lexa said as if she was defending Clarke.

Without thinking, Clarke said loud enough for her husband to hear, “See? A woman after my own heart.”

She looked absolutely everywhere but at Lexa, terrified her blush would be too apparent. She could feel Lexa beside her, could feel those green eyes on her.

Risking only a quick glance over her shoulder, Clarke asked, “Would you like a glass of wine? Is red okay?”

“That would be great, thank you.” Lexa said.

Clarke wasn’t sure if she was imagining the slight hint of nerves in Lexa’s voice.

When she handed over Lexa’s glass of wine and Clarke saw her eyes slip to the neckline of her shirt, Clarke tried to convince herself she’d imagined that too.

“Tell me about yourself, Lexa.” Clarke said, taking the role of hostess while Wells finished their dinner.

“I’m a florist.” Lexa said, brow quirking as she took a sip of the deep red liquid in her glass.

Clarke sensed the tease, sensed the borderline challenge, making it all the more difficult to come up with a witty response. “A rather good one from what I hear.”
Lexa smiled and Clarke found herself smiling in return.

“I would ask what else you’ve heard about me, but I have a feeling the answer is not much.” Lexa said.

“Hence why I’m asking.” Clarke looked over the edge of her glass, locking her eye’s on Lexa’s before the first taste of wine touched her lips.

Lexa looked at her for a moment, a smile more present in her eyes than anywhere else.

“I lied when I said I was free tonight.” Lexa relaxed against the back of the couch. “I was originally planning on going over to my best friend’s house for a movie night with her and her little brother.”

Clarke paused at that, knowing very well she should not ask the very thing already sneaking past her lips, “Why did you decide to come here?”

“You asked.” Lexa shrugged as if her answer didn’t send a jolt through Clarke.

Bellamy would arrive soon, but Clarke found that she desperately hoped he would be late. Well, even later than usual.

“So tell me about yourself.” Lexa said.

“Is that really all you’re going to tell me?” Clarke teased.

“Would you like—“

Lexa was cut off by the sound of Bellamy’s arrival.

Clarke gave Lexa an apologetic grin. “That must be Bellamy.”

Taking a long sip of her wine, Lexa responded. “Right. Bellamy.”

Clarke let him into the apartment as Wells emerged from the kitchen with a large bowl of pasta.

“You’re late, Bell.” Wells said, although like always, he never actually sounded annoyed.

Shrugging out of his coat, Bellamy shot back, “What do you mean? You’re just now putting the food on the table. I think that means I’m right on time.”

He reached a hand toward Lexa before Clarke had the chance to properly introduce him. Bellamy had the same look on his face he did each time he approached a beautiful woman in a bar.

Clarke felt the jealousy—that awful, irrational thing—swell within her once again.

Lexa greeted him, but her smile was tight, reserved. It almost looked forced.

Nothing like she smile Lexa had given her.

“Now that Bellamy has graced us with his presence…” Wells began, only to have Bellamy interrupt him.

“Hey, I was only a few minutes late.” Bellamy said with his usual casual smile.

Teasing, Clarke asked, “Aren’t you always?”

Bellamy took the wine she offered him before taking his seat at the table. Clarke did not miss the grin
he gave Lexa as he did so.

“At least this time, the food hasn’t had a chance to get cold.” Wells laughed, taking his seat next to Clarke.

As Wells dished out their food, Clarke couldn’t take her eyes off Lexa, who seemed to pay very little attention to what Bellamy said.

The reminder of Lexa’s reasons for cancelling her original plans flashed through Clarke’s consciousness.

You asked.

She hadn’t come to meet Bellamy again.

Lexa had come to see her.

It was a frightening thing to accept, but as Clarke locked eyes with Lexa over the rim of her glass, she found she didn’t mind.

If only she’d worn the dress.

Chapter End Notes

As always, you can leave a comment here or find me on Tumblr!
Lexa couldn’t stop thinking about the way her night began. She thought about the way Clarke’s eyes lit up as soon as she opened the door, about how their conversation rested on the edge of flirtation, about how she’d been unable to stop herself from letting Clarke know why she’d really agreed to dinner.

As soon as the words left her mouth, Lexa knew she should have said absolutely anything else. Lexa had admitted she’d come to see Clarke. Her words weren’t exact, but they’d been enough.

Clarke understood.

Lexa knew it. And more than anything else running through Lexa’s mind, the way Clarke looked away for the briefest second as a blush flooded her cheeks kept replaying over and over again. Which made it very difficult to focus on dinner and conversation.

Clarke looking at her so often didn’t help either. On more than one occasion, Lexa struggled to catch up with whatever Bellamy and Wells were talking about simply because she’d been too distracted by Clarke’s laugh, by her smile, by the simple proximity of her.

Lexa found herself grinning, even as she fought to choke down every bite of the pasta in front of her.

Bellamy sat his fork down as soon as his plate was clean. “Wells, I have to say, in all the years you’ve been making me eat your cooking, this is by far the worst thing you’ve ever made.”

“You think so?” Wells scooped the last of his pasta into his mouth.

“It’s atrocious.” Clarke said with a laugh. She downed the last of her wine as if to wash away the taste of her husband’s meal.

Thankfully, before Lexa was asked for her input, Bellamy changed the subject, seemingly happy to not harp on his friend too much.

“Anyway, more importantly, how is the married life?” Bellamy asked.

“You could always get married and find out yourself.” Wells smiled as he abandoned his dinner.

Clarke laughed and Lexa couldn’t help but notice the way her own stomach lurched at the sound.

Lexa met Clarke’s gaze.

Again.

It was becoming an easy habit, searching for those blue eyes when she wanted to say something she couldn’t actually say.

“Please, like Bellamy could make the commitment.” Clarke teased. “We’re talking about two or three years of his life.”

Lexa had to admire Bellamy’s ability to remain nonplussed under the scrutinizing gazes of Clarke and Wells.
Then Clarke looked at her and Lexa could think of nothing else.

“You know me. I’ll commit when the time is right.” Bellamy said. “Or when I meet the right girl.”

“Do you think you’ll know right away if you’ve finally found her?” Wells asked.

When Lexa looked to Clarke this time, it was as if she was purposefully avoiding her. Lexa watched as Clarke tilted her head as if studying her napkin. The movement hid much of Clarke’s expression, but it could not hide the blush growing on Clarke’s cheeks.

“Well I’m definitely good at knowing right away if I’m interested in seeing more of a girl.” Bellamy said with the hint of something scandalous in his tone.

“But really”—Bellamy continued—“How are you supposed to know when you’ve found the right person?”

Clarke was the one who answered.

“You don’t know straight away. Sure, you can tell if you’re attracted to someone, but love? I think love grows and each day that goes by, you become a little closer. Then one day you’re surrounded by this warmth that tells you ‘yes, this is it’.” Clarke said, making sure to throw a smile toward her husband.

Lexa thought there was something behind it, something hinting that Clarke’s words might have been for herself more than anything.

“Yeah.” Wells smiled. “I like the sound of that.”

“Sounds good to me.” Bellamy said, reaching for the bottle of wine.

Lexa shook her head. “I don’t agree.”

She watched as Clarke’s brows drew together slightly in confusion, surprise.

“I think you know immediately. As soon as your eyes meet, you know.” Lexa said, unable to look at anyone but the woman across from her. “Then everything that happens from that point on just proves you were right. Each smile, each kiss just tells you that you were right in that first moment when you suddenly realized you had been incomplete and now you are whole.”

Everyone around the table fell silent for a second before Bellamy and Wells looked at each other, gave a nod, and spoke in tandem as they reached for their wine.

“Actually, I’ll go with her idea.”

“Me too.”

Wells stood to clear away their plates. “So who wants dessert?”

Bellamy was already climbing to his feet to help Wells when Clarke said, “No.”

Lexa saw she was staring right at her. “No?”

“If you think that, you think everyone who doesn’t have the person who makes them ‘whole’ is settling for less. You’re saying that their lives aren’t as good.”

Curiously, Lexa felt her jaw tense. “That’s not what I’m saying.”
Cheeks flushed from anger, wine, or something else, Clarke shot back, “That kind of is what you’re saying.”

Wells was the one to reach over the table, breaking the hold Clarke’s eyes had on her. Lexa wasn’t sure if she was thankful or not.

“I think she said it a bit nicer, but we can all agree that dinner was great and dessert will be more amazing, right?” Wells asked, a slight laugh running under the tension in his voice.

Lexa heard Bellamy’s voice, but she was too preoccupied watching Clarke. She’d stiffened, something rigid hiding in her after the disagreement. Lexa felt the tension too. There was something in the way Clarke fought back, something in the way her tone had changed that made Lexa want to know whether or not Clarke really did agree with her.

“Dessert sounds great.” Lexa said, trying to coax the tension from Clarke. “I’m sure it will delicious.”

Bellamy laughed. “Don’t tell him that or he’ll start to think he can actually cook.”

Lexa listened to Clarke speak, but could barely hear what was actually being said. Clarke was still looking at her, still staring into her as if she was searching for something. Lexa stared back. She could feel the way her brow creased ever so slightly in concern, could feel her heart pounding in her chest. Then Clarke’s eyes softened, turned into something almost broken. Lexa saw it for only a moment before Clarke looked away and laughed at something Wells said.

The tension faded more and more with each bite of the dessert. Lexa didn’t seek out Clarke’s reaction to comments until she felt the heavy gaze of Clarke’s blue eyes on her. When they locked eyes again, Lexa caught the slight smile tugging at Clarke’s mouth. She knew the smile was for her.

Whatever she’d said to upset Clarke seemed forgiven.

Lexa felt her own body relax, as if she’d carried the weight of Clarke’s turmoil herself.

She was a fool. She shouldn’t have agreed to dinner. The more time she spent around Clarke, the more painful it would be to think about the first time Lexa ever saw her. And she thought about that moment too often as it was. She didn’t need to add more evidence, more of a reason to feel how she did, but god if she didn’t have the urge to bear the weight of Clarke’s troubles, whatever they might be.

The conversation continued even after plates were empty. Lexa listened as Wells and Bellamy discussed their work, listened closer as Clarke offered her input on the various things discussed. Lexa said very little, knowing how quickly the conversation could turn to Polis and the politics surrounding her neighborhood.

Eventually, Wells began to gather the plates with Clarke’s assistance. Lexa excused herself, not interested in trying to fend off Bellamy’s advances. Fortunately, he didn’t seem inclined to hold her up as she headed down the hall toward the bathroom. On her way back, she caught sight of a door leading outside.

She was outside before she knew it, the light rain dancing against her skin, barely falling enough for her to feel it. From the time she was little, Lexa could not ignore the pull toward the smell of fresh rain in autumn air. Closing her eyes, she let the cool air envelope her.

She tensed slightly at the sound of the glass door opening behind her.
“I saw you come out here.”

Clarke.

“Sorry, I couldn’t help myself.” Lexa leaned back slightly, letting the mist cool her. “It’s gorgeous out.”

“It’s raining.” Clarke said with an incredulous laugh.

Smiling, Lexa said as she turned to face Clarke, “It’s still gorgeous.”

“You’re wet.” A smile spread wide on Clarke’s lips.

Lexa waved off her worry. “I’m fine.”

Still, she was moving back inside before she could think about it. Standing so close to Clarke in the dim light of the room, there was very little Lexa could think about.

“And you’re cold.” Clarke trailed her hand down Lexa’s forearm.

The bumps that spread over Lexa’s skin were absolutely not from the chilly air.

“I’m fine.” Lexa said with a smile, trying to ignore the way her skin came to life under Clarke’s fingertips.

“Look,”—Clarke hesitated—“I’m sorry about dinner.”

“I’ve eaten worse.”

“No, I mean… I mean I’m sorry for snapping at you.”

“You didn’t snap at me.”

Clarke raised her brow.

Lexa grinned. “Okay, you might have snapped a little bit, but don’t worry about it. I, um, hope you know I didn’t intend upset you though?”

“No, it’s not that. I just…"

Clarke stepped closer and Lexa would’ve sworn her heart was pounding loud enough for Clarke to hear.

Lexa couldn’t stop but let her eyes drop to Clarke’s mouth. Everything inside her was screaming for her to step back, to turn away every thought of Clarke’s lips. And still Lexa stayed.

“Yes?” Lexa asked, her question barely a breath.

“I—“

“Hey! What are you guys up to?” Wells’ voice shattered the tension.

Lexa stepped back only slightly faster than Clarke. They answered Wells in unison.

“Nothing!”

“Well Bellamy is getting antsy and I’m sure he’s about to suggest that we play strip poker so I’m
inclined to kick him out.” Wells said.

“I should head out too.” Lexa said, quickly moving farther away from Clarke.

She didn’t trust herself, didn’t want to know what would happen if either Wells or Clarke insisted she could stay. If she stayed, she might look at those lips more, might let her eyes linger a little too long where they shouldn’t.

Looking at Clarke as she stood beside Wells—the very picture of a newlywed couple saying goodnight to their guests—Lexa wondered how much she’d hate herself for coming in the first place.

But she wouldn’t.

She couldn’t.

It had been another chance to see Clarke.

And the pain was worth it.

“Thanks for coming over tonight.” Clarke said, looking only at Lexa.

“Here, Lexa, can I see your phone?” Wells stretched his arm toward her.

She obliged.

“There’s my number. Send me a text later and maybe we can do this again sometime?” He said, handing the phone back.

Lexa offered a tight smile. “Yeah, of course.”

She put the phone in her pocket, knowing she couldn’t send him the text, knowing it wasn’t his number she wanted in the first place.

“Let me give you a ride?” Bellamy asked, shrugging on his coat.

Lexa eyed him suspiciously. “No, you really don’t—“

Smiling, he said, “Look, I’m heading your way anyway so I might as well take you with me. No pressure.”

Lexa nodded once, agreeing if only because it would mean she’d get home sooner. Not to mention Bellamy hadn’t actually made a move on her.

Bellamy smiled at her. “I’ll take that to mean yes.”

“Great!” Wells said, smiling a little too much for Lexa’s liking. “Thanks again. Maybe if you come over some other time I can manage to cook something a little more palatable.”


“Thanks again for inviting me.” Lexa tried to force some semblance of happiness into her voice as she reached for the door.

She couldn’t stop thinking about Clarke being so close to her as the rain fell against the glass. She couldn’t stop thinking about how she’d let herself slip and allowed herself the indulgence of coming to dinner. And still, she knew she’d do it again and again.
“Bye, Lexa.” Clarke said with a small smile.

Lexa’s stomach twisted at the softness of Clarke’s tone.

“Goodnight, Clarke.” Lexa let the door close behind her, following Bellamy to his car.

Once they were near Polis, Lexa gave Bellamy directions to her home.

“Or, and here me out on this, you can join me for a drink.”

Bellamy held his hand up to cut off Lexa’s protests before she could voice them. “You’ve got something on your mind, that’s obvious. I get that you’re not into me and I’m beginning to wonder if any guys are your type—”

“They aren’t.” Lexa said with a grin.

“Perfect.” Bellamy continued as if the dinner hadn’t been an attempt to set them up. “So maybe you’re dealing with some girl trouble. I know how that goes. Have a drink with me, share what’s going on because under this rugged exterior is a sensitive soul.”

“No there isn’t.”

Bellamy laughed. “No, there isn’t, but I hate to see you sitting there looking so bored. I’m going to a bar near your place anyway.”

Lexa thought for a second before asking, “Where are you even going?”

“Some bar called TonDC?”

With a laugh, Lexa said, “I know the place. So sure, a drink it is.”

Only once Lexa grabbed a round of drinks and they were seated at a corner table away from the loudest, drunken patrons did Lexa ask why Bellamy was interested in this particular bar.

“My sister.” He said, sipping his beer. “She’s dating one of the bartenders and I just want to make sure he’s a decent guy.”

Lexa narrowed her eyes, not looking at him. “Do you question him because you do not trust your sister or because you do not trust Polis?”

She knew her voice was hard enough to make her point clear.

“It’s not that.” Bellamy was quick to say. “I have no problem with Polis, I only want to make sure my sister is taken care of. She’s my responsibility.”

“So you don’t trust her.” Lexa stated simply.

“That’s not—“

Lexa looked straight at him before he had a chance to finish whatever he was going to say in an attempt to convince her his actions were noble. “Look, I don’t know your sister, but I have a feeling I know who you’re here to spy on. Lincoln is a good man.”

“How did you know it was Lincoln?” Bellamy asked.

“I’ve known Lincoln since we were little kids, and he won’t shut up about Octavia. I’m assuming
that’s your sister?”

Nodding, Bellamy looked almost impressed. It made Lexa relax ever so slightly.

“Okay, enough of my own drama, what’s bothering you?” Bellamy asked.

While she wasn’t entirely keen on explaining why she was so lost in her own thoughts, Lexa was more than happy to talk about something else. She was protective of her friends and didn’t want Bellamy to start prying her for information on Lincoln.

She was thankful it was Lincoln’s night off.

“It’s nothing.” Lexa said, relishing the sweet burn of her whiskey.

Bellamy tilted his head. “Come on.”

The words were forming before she could stop them. “Have you ever met someone but…”

“But?” He prompted.

“But there was someone else already?” Lexa finished, wondering if she should go ahead and ask for a second round. She might need it.

“Yeah, sure. Hot ones are always taken.” Bellamy said with a shrug.

“What do you do?”

“Me? I go for it.”—Bellamy sipped casually from his beer—“The partner is their problem, not mine.”

“I think you don’t mess with other couples.” Lexa said. “You shouldn’t cause that kind of pain. So all you can do is acknowledge it can’t happen and… walk away. Find someone who is available.”

“Where’s the fun in that?” Bellamy joked.

“There isn’t any.” Lexa said as she threw back the rest of her drink.

Walk away.

It’s what she should have done from the very beginning.

Chapter End Notes

As always, you can leave a comment here or find me on Tumblr!
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Clarke was quiet. Wells had asked more than once if she was okay, and each time she assured him she was. Clarke knew he wasn’t convinced, but in truth, neither was she. There was nothing for her to be upset about, but she couldn’t get out of her head, she couldn’t shake the feeling of something hanging over her.

She pretended like she didn’t know the cause.

But she did.

It was a crush, a stupid, infuriating crush. That was all.

Each hour since she’d said goodbye to Lexa, Clarke tried to push away the thoughts of how she’d felt when she saw Lexa standing in the rain, when she stood so close to her she could see the way her green eyes seemed lit from within.

Each hour, she failed.

Part of her blamed Bellamy. If she could pretend like Lexa wanted him, if she could tell herself that Lexa wasn’t actually interested in women, maybe she could stop thinking about her. Bellamy had denied her that opportunity. She hated him for the text he’d sent her, joking about his own inability to gauge his chances with some women—he’d even included a particularly detailed reminder of a night out in college when he had spent all night talking to the girl Clarke ended up taking home. She hated him because she didn’t want the reminder, didn’t want to think about what might have happened if she’d met Lexa at any other point in her life.

She loved him for it too though, because if nothing else, Clarke knew for sure she wasn’t imagining the way Lexa looked at her.

She nearly groaned when she felt her stomach flip at the reminder of how Lexa’s gaze lingered a little too long on her lips right after she’d come in from the rain.

“Remind me to get cookies.”

Blinking away her thoughts, Clarke asked, “What?”

“Cookies. I’m craving cookies.” Wells said as he shifted the car into park outside the Polis grocery store.

Clarke went to respond right as her phone buzzed.

Mom: We need to go over your plan for this week’s investor meeting.

“Oh, hold on,”—Clarke said, stopping Wells from leaving the car.—“it’s my mom.”

Clarke: I know.

Her phone began to buzz incessantly.

Clarke sighed as she accepted the call. “Hi, mom.”
“I figured it was easier to call you.” Abby said, rushing headlong into her lecture, “Since you didn’t invite them to the wedding, you’re going to have to find another way to suck up to these people.”

“Mom, I know.”

“If you knew, you would’ve invited them to the wedding.”

Closing her eyes, Clarke cut her mom off before she could say anything else. “Don’t you have plans with dad today?”

Abby paused slightly before answer. “Well, yes, but we need—“

“Enjoy your weekend, Mom. Wells and I have some errands to run. I’ll talk to you this week.”

Clarke ended the call before her mother could say anything else.

“I take it that went well?” Wells laughed.

Exasperated, Clarke said, “As well as it ever does. I thought she might back off after we were married, but she seems to have doubled her efforts to force me into meetings with Arkadia’s most obnoxious rich men.”

“But those rich men do fund the Griffin Foundation’s programs.”

Clarke looked sideways at him. “Like I don’t know that.”

“Sorry.” Wells said with a grimace. “You know what I mean. This is why we got married. We can work together to make sure all this money being thrown around gets into the hands of people who are interested in doing something good with it.”

As if to lighten the mood, Wells added with a smile, “Like Octavia teaching these kids to kick ass.”

Clarke grinned, feeling the weight of her mother’s expectations slipping away slightly. This was why she’d agreed to marry Wells. He’d always been able to make her feel better and if she couldn’t risk marrying for love, she was more than happy to have him by her side.

“Right. Like that.”

“And now we can buy some cookies.” Wells said, grinning as he jumped out of the car.

Following him, Clarke couldn’t help but smile.

They were meeting up with Octavia later at some restaurant Lincoln had taken her to. According to Octavia, it was some of the best food she’d ever had and while she was determined to never share Polis’ best kept secret, she’d made an exception for Clarke and Wells. Raven, too, if she wasn’t too busy building some contraption or too hungover from whatever she kept herself busy doing last night.

Clarke welcomed the impending distraction. Even better, when she and Wells walked into the grocery store a block away from the school where Octavia was busy with her Saturday morning martial arts class, Clarke noticed her thoughts started to focus more on a day spent with her husband and their friends instead of Lexa.

So of course Wells had to bring her up.

“I think last night went great, don’t you?” Wells said, happily steering their cart straight toward the
“Wells…” Clarke said, trying to think of how to explain Bellamy’s text from that morning.

“They even left together and I haven’t heard from Bellamy today so maybe—“

“Wells, the thing about Lexa is that she’s…” Clarke trailed off, her heart jolting at the sight before her. “Right here.”

“Hey!” Wells said as soon as Lexa came fully around the corner.

Clarke watched as Lexa’s eyes widened in surprise. It took only a moment for Lexa to look straight at her. The spark Clarke had seen in those eyes last night seemed to ignite once more.

“Clarke?”

Clarke’s heart pounded in her chest as her name fell from Lexa’s lips.

“Hi, Lexa.” Clarke said, hoping to god she wasn’t blushing as much as she feared she might be.

“Hi.” Lexa answered as if it had taken her a few seconds to realize what was happening.

Clarke’s heart raced at the sight of the grin tugging at the corner of Lexa’s mouth.

The taller woman at Lexa’s side said nothing, her sharp features arranging into a slight scowl.

“We were just talking about you!” Wells said. “All good things of course.”

“Ah, yeah, thanks again for dinner.” Lexa stood straighter. Clarke couldn’t help but notice the way her hair was pulled back in an intricate braid as if to show off her gorgeous jaw line.

Clarke forced herself to look away, to look at anything but Lexa.

She couldn’t do this, couldn’t be this close to Lexa, not with all the thoughts of rain drops, of lingering gazes, of desires too scary to name.

“What brings you around here?” Lexa said, a hint of something defensive in her tone.

Gathering herself, Clarke answered, “My friend teaches martial arts classes at the school. I’m meeting her for lunch. Um, we are meeting her and her boyfriend for lunch here in a little bit.”

The other woman with Lexa grinned. There was no warmth in it, only something feral that made Clarke square her shoulders a little more.

“I hope she’s taking you somewhere good.” Lexa said, eyeing her friend as if in warning.

“We hope so too.” Wells joked. “We aren’t familiar with a lot of things around here but we’re excited to get to know the neighborhood.”

“There’s been a lot of that recently.” The other woman said with barely masked disdain.

Clarke pressed her lips together before saying, “Well, it’s great seeing you again, Lexa. We can let you get back to your shopping though.”

She caught sight of the way Lexa’s jaw twitched.

“Of course. Thanks again! I hope the two of you enjoy your day.” Lexa said with a smile completely
lacking the warmth Clarke had seen before.

“You too!” Wells added.

Lexa nodded to Clarke again before walking away, the other woman in tow.

Clarke looked over her shoulder as she trailed behind Wells. Lexa looked over hers too.

Clarke felt helpless with Lexa looking so intently at her.

She’d never felt like this.

She knew she couldn’t feel it now, shouldn’t.

“So anyway, what were you saying about Lexa?” Wells said, grabbing a nearby box of crackers and tossing them into the cart.

Clarke sighed. “I was trying to tell you she’s gay.”

“She’s gay?” Wells asked, turning back toward the aisle Lexa disappeared from.

Clarke nodded. “I already had a feeling and then Bellamy sent me a text this morning.”

“Oh. Hmm.”—Wells paused for a second—“Well done.”

——

No.

Not here.

Clarke couldn’t be here.

Lexa felt Anya’s gaze boring into her.

Damn it.

“So that’s Clarke.” Anya said with too much pleasure.

Lexa sensed Anya’s grin before she turned to see the mischievous glint in her eye.

“Yes. That’s her.”

“The married woman you had dinner with last night.”

“Yes.” Lexa pushed the cart on, trying to focus on getting her groceries.

Anya crossed her arms as she followed Lexa through the store. “The very dinner you refused to talk about this morning.”

Lexa stopped the cart, sighing as she turned to Anya. “Yes. That dinner. The dinner I shouldn’t have gone to because she is married and it doesn’t matter how I—“
“Hi again!” Wells said as he and Clarke rounded the corner.

Lexa clenched her jaw.

Damn it.

A sense of dread washed over her as Wells stretched a hand out toward Anya.

“I’m sorry I didn’t introduce myself. I’m Wells Jaha.”

Anya eyed Wells’ hand for a second too long to be polite before finally taking it.

She still didn’t offer her name.

Wells pressed on as if Anya had been as polite as could be, “And are you Lexa’s girlfriend?”

Anya barked a laugh. “Oh, no. No, she’s not my girlfriend.”

Lexa felt her jaw tighten, felt her teeth grind. This couldn’t actually be happening.

She looked at Clarke who was blushing more than Lexa thought possible. Lexa wasn’t sure her own cheeks weren’t just as red.

Lexa stiffened as Anya threw an arm over her shoulders. “Seems she has her heart set on another.”

She was going to kill Anya.

Shrugging out of Anya’s grasp, Lexa said, “Ah, no. This is Anya, my friend I was telling you about, Clarke.”

Clarke, somehow gathering herself smoothly, smiled and Lexa’s heart lurched.

“Oh, then I have to apologize.”

Anya’s head tilted slightly. “Oh?”

“Yeah, Lexa told me she canceled her plans with you. I’m sorry for monopolizing her time—“

“She’s not.” Anya said with a smirk.

Lexa elbowed her in the side as discreetly as she could.

“Oh,”—Clarke faltered—“well I’m glad she’s at least hanging out with you today.”

Lexa cut in before Anya could say anything else. “Well, we don’t mean to keep you from your shopping. See you around.”

“For sure.” Wells said, smiling as if he completely missed the tension around him. “Like I said, Lexa, send me a text sometime!”

“Yeah…” Lexa trailed off, already pushing the cart farther away, farther from Clarke.

It wasn’t thirty seconds after Clarke and Wells vanished from sight again that Anya stopped her in her tracks and forced Lexa to look at her. “So are you going to tell me what’s really going on?”

Scowling, Lexa said, “What is there for me to say?”
“For starters, you can explain what the hell I saw back there.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” Lexa huffed, trying to get their shopping trip over with as soon as possible.

Trying to get away from Clarke like she’d sworn to herself last night she was going to do.

“Oh, I’m sorry, did you somehow miss the fact that you haven’t looked at a girl like that since—“

Mercifully, Lexa’s glare managed to dissuade Anya from finishing her thought.

Rolling her eyes, Anya continued. “Fine, but you weren’t the only one who could barely function.”

“She’s married.”

Anya laughed. “You might want to remind her of that next time you see her.”

“Anya…” Lexa tried.

“What? She sure as hell doesn’t look at her husband the way she looks at you.”

Sighing, Lexa said, “There won’t be a next time. I can’t see her again.”

Anya’s brow arched, her body growing tense. “Uh huh.”

“I can’t. I can’t just be her friend, Anya.”

Anya let loose a huff that sounded dangerously close to a snarl. “After all this time of trying to get you to find someone, after everything you said about trying when you knew it was worth it…”

Lexa dropped her voice. “Stop.”

Anya relaxed, a smile tugging at the corner of her mouth. “Fine, but you’re the one who has always told me fate plays a part in these things. What was it you said when I was seeking guardianship of Aden and it looked like I might not win my case? ‘Don’t give up on what’s meant to be?’ You were right.”

Lexa started to speak, started to say this wasn’t the same. Anya didn’t let her.

“So take your own fucking advice.” Anya growled before pushing past Lexa and throwing a bag of chips in their cart.

Lexa couldn’t bring herself to argue with Anya. Part of her knew she’d lose, the other part of her was too busy working to convince herself everything she felt was nothing more than a crush—a crush on a beautiful girl with beautiful eyes and a smile that sent Lexa’s pulse pounding.

She went through the rest of their shopping list with Anya mostly in silence, speaking only to point out Anya’s disgusting tastes when appropriate. Anya was more than happy to tease her right back.

“Are you kidding me?” It was the only thing Lexa could think to say as she stepped up to the checkout line to find Clarke a few rows over.

Anya chuckled. “Should we stop at the liquor store on the way back to my place?”

“Shut up, Anya.”
Anya grinned.

Clarke acknowledged her with a wave and the smile was already growing on Lexa’s mouth before she could stop herself. Clarke smiled back.

“Uh huh.” Anya said, loading their groceries onto the belt.

Lexa glared at her.

It was short-lived, however, as she turned her attention back to Clarke. She and Wells—her husband, Lexa reminded herself—were finally leaving.

Lexa should be grateful she wouldn’t run into her again, should be glad she could move on with her day and try to stop thinking about Clarke, about the way she’d stepped closer after calling Lexa back inside from the rain.

She wasn’t.

She already missed blue eyes and the way her heart skipped when Clarke was near.

It was ridiculous.

It was more ridiculous how she searched for Clarke in the parking lot as she and Anya headed out.

As soon as groceries were loaded and Anya got in the car, Lexa asked, “Can we just go pick up Aden now?”

Anya smirked. “Sure, if we hurry over there, maybe we can catch his instructor and find out where she’s going for lunch.”

Lexa groaned.

“Oh relax, I wouldn’t do that to you.” Anya’s mouth quirked. “I mean, I would, but not today.”

“Great, thanks.” Lexa said, draping her hand over the wheel and slipping the car into reverse.

“But I’m definitely going to give you shit for this forever.”

Rolling her eyes, Lexa turned up the music’s volume to drown out Anya’s laughter.

Chapter End Notes

As always, you can leave a comment here or find me on Tumblr!
Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Two weeks later and Clarke still couldn’t get Lexa out of her mind.

She moved through her days, meeting with various donors her mother lined up, meeting with political allies that might come in handy in the future. Some helpful for her mother, some helpful for Wells and herself. No matter what the potential benefit of meeting with them, each investor, each politician congratulated her on her marriage. Each time, Clarke forced a smile.

They spoke of how beautiful young love was, how great it was for the Griffin and Jaha families to unite. They spoke of everything Clarke expected them to, wanted them too. It would make her work easier. She could cash in favors, prevent other families from taking power they would only abuse for their own gain.

But she couldn’t stop thinking of Lexa.

The dinner—and the moment they’d shared in front of a rain streaked window—played over and over in her memory. Clarke had argued for a love that could grow in her marriage. Lexa spoke of an impossibility, spoke of a feeling so certain it could be known with a simple glance.

Impossible.

And yet all Clarke could do was think of Lexa.

She was almost grateful Lexa never texted Wells. Maybe she should have been offended Lexa didn’t want to see them again, but Clarke couldn’t manage it. She wasn’t sure she should see Lexa, wasn’t sure what she would do if she had Lexa’s number. No, that was a lie, she knew exactly what she would do.

Clarke would ask questions. She would send short messages to piece together how Lexa saw the world, how she would react to the people Clarke dealt with every day. Clarke would want to know everything about Lexa.

She already did want to know. Two weeks after they last saw each other, Clarke still wanted to know.

And, with growing acceptance and frustration in equal parts, Clarke knew her curiosity wasn’t platonic.

She knew it was best Lexa had never contacted them again, for the same reason she knew not to go to the flower shop. She had been tempted, oh so tempted, almost every day. But she wouldn’t. She knew how foolish that would be.

Clarke needed to forget Lexa.

But it was the last thing she wanted to do.

So she shook hands and welcomed congratulations from politician after politician, donors with deep pockets, and anyone and everyone who might have something she needed in the future. She shook hands and she forced herself to think of Wells, of Wells and the hope she had for what their
friendship could turn into. One day.

Her only reprieve came in the form of texts from her friends and a lunch planned with her father. Or so she’d thought.

Lunch had started off well, until Wells arrived too.

It was meant to be a pleasant surprise for her. It would have been if it hadn’t been for the guilt gnawing at her, the guilt of not thinking of Wells enough, the guilt of being sorry to see him. She’d never been disappointed to see him before. Especially not in the company of her father.

Her guilt only grew.

Clarke was nearly silent, offering her opinion rarely. It was unlike her to be so quiet in the company of the men she loved—in one way or another—but she was distracted. The knot in her stomach tightened with each passing minute. She should be able to focus on Wells, should be able to appreciate him for the friend and ally he was. It had been enough for her to marry him. It needed to still be enough.

She pretended not to notice how often her father looked at her with barely recognizable worry. She was too quiet. So she forced herself to sit a little straighter, to pay attention a little more.

A few minutes later and her laugh rang out, sounding almost as full as it should.

“But I really don’t understand how no one else can see how much of an ass Murphy is.” Wells said, shaking his head. “It was great to see him called out like that, but god, the man has the sweetest girlfriend.”

“He has a girlfriend?” Jake asked with genuine surprise.

Nodding, Wells said, “Yes! He cheats on her like crazy though. I’ve never been on a business trip with him, but the stories I’ve heard are awful.”

“Does the girlfriend really not know?” Clarke asked.

Wells shrugged. “I don’t know how she can miss it. He’s not exactly the most discreet.”

“Maybe she’s ignoring the signs.” Clarke paused before adding, “She might not want to leave.”

Jake cut in. “Personally, I don’t know if I believe in signs exactly, but things happen and you choose to interpret it one way or another. Doesn’t the way you interpret it tell you how you feel and what you want to do?”

Wells nodded.

So did Clarke, wondering what kind of sign she hoped for.

Her chance to settle her mind came days later when she began her rotation with a new class in Polis. The class was learning about planets, tasked with creating something artistic to express their understanding of the material. It was art where Clarke excelled, where she was more than happy to donate her time.

She also enjoyed the chance to meet the families, meet the heart of Polis. The second day with the class was the day her father’s words echoed too loudly in her mind.

She’d already grown fond of one of her new students, but she didn’t see who dropped him off
“Anya.” There was no mistaking the woman who stepped into the classroom.

Clarke watched as an intimidating brow arched across Anya’s already severe expression.

“Hello, Clarke.” Anya said, that almost feral grin spreading across her face once again.

“You know my sister?” Aden asked her, eyes wide with surprise.

Anya was the one who answered him. “We’ve met.”

There wasn’t hostility in her voice. Clarke had the distinct feeling it was amusement.

“Cool!” Aden exclaimed, throwing off his backpack and seemingly oblivious to the tension around him.

“I need to go. Have fun today, kid.” Anya said, rubbing her hand teasingly through Aden’s hair.

“It was nice seeing you again, Anya.” Clarke offered.

“Oh believe me, the pleasure is all mine.” Clarke didn’t miss the way Anya’s eyes lit up with something mischievous. “I’ll tell Lexa you asked about her.”

Before Clarke could say anything, Anya was gone, her slight laugh disappearing down the hallway.

Aden popped up at her side. “You really know Lexa too?”

Clarke nodded, an idea forming.

A reckless, foolish idea.

One she could not stop.

“Want me to prove it?”

__________

Lexa threw herself into work. It was the only thing she could think to do to clear her mind.

Anya hated it.

Lexa did too, if she was willing to be honest with herself.

She wasn’t.

So she found herself working on arrangements hours after she usually closed the shop, found herself coming in earlier than reasonable every morning. It still wasn’t enough. She still thought of Clarke.

It didn’t help that Anya had not let the issue drop. Almost every day, Anya made some comment, some attempt to goad Lexa into doing something. Her attempts had only led to Lexa ignoring her texts.
In response, Anya had brought Aden over for a surprise movie night at Lexa’s apartment. Lexa grumbled through the whole movie—a rom com, of course, even though Anya despised the genre—but it hadn’t dissuaded Anya from making sure they watched the entire movie. And commenting on the way the two women ignored the obstacles in their way in order to be together.

Lexa scowled.

Anya was married.

Anya didn’t seem to give a shit.

The next morning, Lexa found herself back in Grounders right as the sun peeked over the horizon. She’d already gone through her usual workout routine, but her mind was anything but clear.

Lexa’s frustration was quickly building toward anger. She welcomed it. It would give her something else to try to focus on instead of Clarke.

The bell to her shop rang, signaling the start of what Lexa absolutely hoped would be a challenging day.

Unfortunately, after the morning’s usual handful of customers, the show grew painfully quiet. Lexa busied herself as best she could, but there was only so much she could do. Her phone buzzed earlier only for her to completely ignore it. She knew it was Anya.

Eventually, she gave in, figuring she would have to open the message at some point. She sighed with relief when she saw the message made no mention of Clarke for once.

**Anya:** I have to work late a few days this week. You good to pick Aden up from school?

Thinking nothing of it, Lexa agreed.

**Lexa:** Of course. Let me know what days. I’ll bring him back to my place and you can meet us for dinner whenever.

**Anya:** Tomorrow for sure. I’ll bring food.

Lexa was about to put her phone down when it vibrated again.

**Anya:** Oh, and there’s a hot art teacher helping the class now. You should pick him up from the classroom instead of waiting for him outside ;)

Rolling her eyes, Lexa chose not to answer. At least Anya was showing some small signs of going back to her usual teasing. It was a welcomed change. Lexa wasn’t sure how much more she could take of the reminders of the way Clarke looked at her. She already spent too much time trying not to think about it and every other thing she’d noticed about Clarke—the intelligence Lexa only caught the most tantalizing glimpse of, Clarke’s eyes and they way they always seemed to find her own, the soft curve of her body Lexa couldn’t help but crave to know.

“Hello!” A woman burst through the doors, pulling Lexa from her increasingly bitter thoughts.

Forcing a smile, Lexa greeted the customer.

The woman was too happy. Lexa could already feel her skin crawling with desperation for this interaction to be over as soon as possible. Lexa knew she shouldn’t sulk through the rest of her day, but that’s all she could find the urge to do.
And maybe fit in an extra workout in hopes of leaving her body aching.

“I just found out my husband and I are having our third child and I can’t wait to tell him.” The woman beamed.

“That’s wonderful!” Lexa hoped her voice didn’t sound as empty as she worried it might. “What kind of arrangement are you hoping for?”

Lexa worked with the woman, pointing out the various blooms with meanings in line with the woman’s tastes.

The woman talked through it all.

“Oh these are so lovely!” She plucked a dark purple stalk from one of the nearby bins.

The grin tugging at the corner of Lexa’s mouth wasn’t entirely forced. This was the part of her job she loved.

“They absolutely are. It’s often referred to as ‘lavender of the sea’. With it’s significance as a flower of remembrance, I often use Statice in the arrangements I make for more tragic events, however.”

The woman practically threw the flower back in the bin. “Can’t have that, now can we!”

Lexa’s grin grew. “No, I imagine you’ll want something a little more upbeat to take home since you have such great news.”

“Yes!” The woman hadn’t stopped smiling. “We were so excited with our first one and the second one and now there’s a third!”

Nodding, Lexa refrained from saying anything lest she point out the obviousness in the woman’s statement. Instead, she made suggestions, choosing the flowers herself when the woman seemed incapable of making a decision. Lexa didn’t mind.

When the bouquet grouped together in Lexa’s hand, she showed the woman for final approval. Tears started welling immediately.

“The woman’s tears brimmed over and fell onto her cheeks. “I am just so excited, I can’t help it.”

Growing more uncomfortable, Lexa tried to finish tying the bundle as quickly as she could. In her efforts, she didn’t see the woman approaching her until it was too late. Arms were wrapped around her and she was brought into a crushing hug.

Lexa stiffened. “Um.”

The woman’s voice choked around her joyful sobs. “I love kids so much and my husband is going to be so happy.”

A jolting ring echoed through the shop and Lexa wasn’t sure if she’d ever been more happy to hear Grounders’ phone ring. Scrambling out of the woman’s grasp, Lexa answered, eager to to avoid the woman’s emotions.

“Hi, I’m calling to see if you could make a delivery sometime within the next hour?”

“Delivery?” —Lexa eyed the woman whose smile was still firmly etched on her face—“Yeah, I have time now.”
"Oh fantastic! I, uh, don't have any instructions on the kind of flowers or anything, only that I was to call your shop specifically."

Lexa didn’t care. She just wanted to get this woman out of her store and off to her husband so they could celebrate.

She took the details of the order and made quick work of sending the overly happy woman on her way.

There were no instructions for the kind of bouquet she was meant to bring, no hint of the reason for the order. So she made what felt right. As long as no one asked the meaning of the flowers, it wouldn’t matter. They looked pleasant enough without revealing thoughts of what could never be.

Bouquet in hand, Lexa walked into the school in search of someone who could tell her where she was supposed to make the delivery. When the secretary gave her the answer, Lexa paused.

She asked the secretary to double check the room number.

It was Aden’s class.

“Do you need help finding it?”

“No, no, I know where it is. Thanks.” Lexa said.

She felt the crease in her brow as she walked, trying to figure out why Aden’s teacher had ordered the bouquet.

As soon as she walked through the door, she froze.

Clarke.

Blue eyes lit up as soon as they laid eyes on her.

Lexa couldn’t hold back the storm of things surging within her. She wasn’t supposed to see Clarke again, wasn’t supposed to be able to do anything but work on forgetting the few moments she’d shared with her. Her heart raced and mouth grew dry. She wasn’t supposed to let herself feel.

But she couldn’t stop it, not with Clarke walking toward her with a smile and a slow sway of her hips.

God, she didn’t want to stop it. She wanted let go, let the storm swallow her, wanted to let her feelings for Clarke overtake her.

“Hey, Lexa.”

“Clarke.” Lexa felt her lips slip toward a smirk.

Every excuse she’d given Anya for almost three weeks began to fade, leaving Lexa with no reason to avoid the truth she so desperately needed.

“Lexa!” Aden launched himself toward her.

She braced for the hug, letting him collide with her. Clarke laughed.

As if she hadn’t tried to forget the way that laugh made her heart soar, Lexa relished it, taking it in like water for a parched throat.
“I’m sorry if my order interrupted anything.” Clarke said.

Lexa handed the flowers over. “Don’t be sorry. This is the best part of my day.”

She meant the words.

She shouldn’t, but she did.

She didn’t care.

She’d say them a thousand times.

Aden’s face took on the same mischievous glint Lexa was so used to seeing in Anya’s expression. Before the words were out of Aden’s mouth, she knew she wasn’t going to like what he said.

“Because you get to see a pretty girl?”

“Aden!” Lexa and Clarke said at the same time.

“What?” He asked as if Lexa couldn’t see straight through his pretend innocence.

He shrugged and went back to what he was working on.

Lexa mumbled to herself, “I swear, between him and his sister…”

“Ah, yeah, Anya.” Clarke said, a blush clinging to her cheeks. “I ran into her this morning. Aden didn’t believe me when I said I knew you too. I had to prove it.”

Lexa laughed slightly. It was easy to fall into this thing between them, this bashful, tense thing Lexa missed like a drug. “So you had me deliver flowers to your room?”

Clarke smiled and there was a challenge in her look. “I didn’t have another way to contact you.”

Lexa smiled in return, unable to do anything else.

To hell with it.

Like the fool she was, like the fool Anya had spent weeks pushing her to be, Lexa let herself go. She let herself do exactly what she wanted. The decision was made. Pen in hand, her grip found Clarke’s bare wrist a second later.

“If you ever need to prove you know me again, here’s my number.”

Chapter End Notes

I know I’m changing a lot of things from the movie, so let me know what you think here or find me on Tumblr!
It took Clarke two days before she sent Lexa a message. She’d been so close so many times before. She would type out a message, her fingertip would hover over send, and then she would inevitably delete the message instead. For two days, she tiptoed closer and closer to a line she was terrified to cross—a line she so desperately wanted to know what she’d find on the other side of.

She told herself she’d find a friend should she send a text, told herself she would enjoy Lexa’s company, enjoy talking to her, enjoying having her over for dinner again. With Wells, of course. Clarke told herself all these things, but there was a whisper speaking of something else, of something more than friendship she might find. It was a whisper, but it was a dangerous one, one she could not afford to believe in, one that kept her from reaching out to Lexa at all.

Then one morning when Wells was out of town, she awoke before the city, it seemed. The bouquet Lexa delivered to the school sat in a vase beside her bed, the first and last thing she saw each day. The petals reflected the early morning’s light, still as fresh as the day Lexa handed them to her. Clarke wasn’t sure why she did it, why she needed to be outside when the air was crisp with chilly autumnal air, but she found herself out on her balcony as the sun crept over the horizon.

Coffee in hand, she watched the sun’s first rays dance along the tops of trees, damp with the hint of coming frost. She thought of Lexa—like she did so often since the night she’d found her outside—and the whisper started again. It was a warning. A warning to not think of Lexa at all, a warning to only remember the night Lexa had joined Clarke and her husband for dinner, a warning to not think of Lexa at her side now, with dark hair catching the sunrise.

Clarke typed out another text as she had almost each hour since she transcribed the numbers from her wrist into her phone.

There was a line, a line she should not cross.

She hit send.

**Clarke:** Your flowers are still beautiful.

It was early, Lexa likely wouldn’t respond, but Clarke fretted every second that went by. She shouldn’t have sent it.

There was a line.

Her heart jumped into her throat when her phone chirped ten minutes later and Lexa’s name popped up on the screen.

**Lexa:** While I give a lot of flowers to a lot of people, I’m hoping I know who this is.

Clarke was thankful no one was around to see the blush she was absolutely sure turned her cheeks a bright red. Of course Lexa didn’t know it was her.

There was a line she should not cross.

**Clarke:** And who do you want it to be?
Lexa: You, Clarke.

The message made Clarke’s breath catch. It was wrong for her heart to react the way it did, wrong for her to feel such a thrill in those words. The whisper grew louder in her conscious, telling her as much, but she didn’t care. She couldn’t stop it.

Before she could reply, another message came through.

Lexa: I was starting to wonder if you hated them.

Clarke: How could I?

Lexa: There’s a first time for everything ;)

Clarke could practically see the smile behind Lexa’s words.

Clarke: Yeah, like me being up this early. Let me guess, you’re a morning person?

Lexa: Guilty.

Clarke: I don’t know how you manage. It takes several cups of coffee for me to get going on days when I have early meetings.

Lexa: The city is beautiful this time of day.

Looking from her balcony, at the park with leaves of green so similar to Lexa’s eyes, Clarke couldn’t help but agree.

Clarke: It really is. Who knows, I might be persuaded to be a morning person some day if it involves views like this morning ;)

Lexa: Well I have a feeling I wouldn’t be able to sway you by talking about how much more peaceful it is to work out in the morning. Even if it comes with a beautiful sunrise.

Clarke laughed as if Lexa were standing right beside her instead of nothing but text on a screen.

Clarke: Absolutely not.

Lexa: Well what has you up so early this morning?

The conversation was easy. Almost too easy, Clarke thought as she sent message after message.

Their texts went back an forth for days, sent between meetings and demands on their time, but they were there. Clarke often found herself smiling just at the thought of what Lexa might say next.

Being around Aden made it worse. She tried to not show any favoritism toward him, but he was as eager to talk to her as she was to help him with his project. Clarke also couldn’t help but hear how he liked the latest movie Lexa had watched with him the night before.

Clarke was fine with the arrangement, fine with texting Lexa and talking to the boy who might as well be her brother, until Aden invited her to join them for the Unity Day bonfire. Then everything she’d been doing, every conversation with Lexa she’d stayed up too late for, every smile she’d worn for hours after Lexa sent her a picture, felt too real. Until then, it had been easy to act like it all meant nothing.

Clarke knew it didn’t, but she’d been able to stave off the guilt, to pretend well enough that she could
go on as if nothing was wrong, nothing was different. Then she’d been asked to entwine her life even more with Lexa’s, to take one more step beyond the very line she’d drawn for herself—the line she knew she’d already left behind.

**Clarke:** So… Aden asked if I wanted to go with you to the bonfire tomorrow.

**Lexa:** And what did you tell him?

Clarke was scared she knew exactly what Lexa wanted her to say, more scared because she wanted to say it too.

But she couldn’t tell Lexa she would be there with her.

**Clarke:** My family would kill me if I didn’t show up. Can’t have a councilwoman’s daughter skipping out on Unity Day, now can we?

**Lexa:** Of course not.

**Clarke:** So I’ll be there, but with my family.

**Clarke:** And Wells.

She sent the last message, mostly to remind herself.

Lexa’s reply took too long.

**Lexa:** Who knows. Maybe I’ll still get the chance to see you.

Clarke typed a message.

Deleted it.

Sent her question to Raven and Octavia instead.

**Clarke:** Do you want to meet for a drink before the bonfire tomorrow?

**Raven:** Hell yes!

**Octavia:** The usual bar?

Clarke worked out the details. If she’d sent the message to Lexa, she knew she’d recommend the new bar that opened a couple blocks from the city square where the bonfire was held. Clarke couldn’t bring herself to make the same suggestion to her friends.

The new place would be too romantic.

Her conscious flared a warning.

It should have been too romantic for Lexa too.

Clarke pushed the thought aside. After all, she hadn’t asked Lexa anyway, there was no reason to feel guilty. But it wasn’t Wells she thought about seeing before she was forced to spend time with her mother.

Although when the time came to meet Raven and Octavia, Clarke couldn’t bring herself to be too
upset it was her friends she met up with.

The first drink went down too smooth. Her friends’ did as well. The second round was slower, sipped on while they updated each other on their lives. Clarke did not mention Lexa, did not pick up her phone once to see if she had another message. Part of her knew there would be. She definitely knew her friends would ask the reason for her smile if there was.

After many minutes and many laughs, Clarke almost managed to forget the possibility of seeing Lexa later, of seeing her again for the first time since they’d started talking. Almost.

“A kid was telling me about his grandparents the other day.”—Raven started into her story as she finished her drink—“Apparently they eloped on the day they met.”

Octavia’s eyes widened. “Oh shit, really?”

“Bold, isn’t it?” Raven smirked before adding, “Although there are a few parents at the school I would be more than happy to run off with for a little while.”

Clarke and Octavia laughed.

“I can’t imagine doing something like that though, not really.” Raven said. “I mean, sexy weekend getaway, sure, but not randomly marrying someone.”

Clarke was barely listening, too busy stirring the remnants of her drink. Eventually, she spoke up.

“Do you think it’s even possible? The whole love at first sight thing? That you could just meet someone or… see them across a room and know with that one glance that you’re meant to be together?”

Octavia shrugged. “I don’t know, but I will tell you the first time I saw Lincoln, I knew there was something about him.”

“Yeah and you’re disgustingly in love with him after a few weeks.”

“Doesn’t mean it was at first sight.” Octavia said, tilting her glass in order to reach the last of her drink. “Just… a feeling that told me love could be possible with him.”

Clarke nodded, unsure of what to say.

“What’s got you asking?” Raven asked, her eyes narrowed in suspicion.

“Oh, nothing.” Clarke waived the concern away as best she could. “It was just a thought.”

“Sure.” Raven said, entirely unconvinced.

“Right.” Octavia didn’t seem much better.

There was nothing Clarke could say to them, nothing she would say. Lexa was her little secret.

Secret.

The gnawing guilt returned.

Clarke flagged down the waiter to order another round.
Lexa didn’t mean to, not really, but she kept scanning the faces of the crowd. Clarke was here somewhere in the sea of people, all illuminated by the glow of the fire. Lexa wondered then what it would be like to watch the fire dance in Clarke’s eyes, to see the ruddy warmth spreading across her cheeks against the chill in the night. The thought of it alone was breathtaking.

“There she is.”

Lexa’s head jerked to where Anya’s gaze rested. “Where?”

“Absolutely no one, but now will you admit you’re distracted?” Anya smirked around her bite of popcorn. “Looking for Clarke?”

Lexa grumbled.

“That why you keep checking your phone too?”

Rolling her eyes, Lexa answered, “She’s with her family.”

“So?”

“So I wouldn’t want to interrupt. Besides, I’m with you and Aden.”

“I think Aden’s fine where he is.” Anya pointed toward Aden, who was more than happy to sit with a few of the friends he’d seen from school.

“Fine, I’m hanging out with you.” Lexa said.

“But you’d rather be with Clarke.”

Lexa tilted her head back in defiance, not trusting her words to be able to offer convincing denial.

Anya laughed. “What’s with you two?”

Lexa shrugged.

“Obviously, it’s been going well based on the number of times I’ve seen you smiling at your phone lately.”

Sighing, Lexa said, “Fine, you’re right, it is going well.”

“Too well?” Anya asked.

“Too well. Except she hasn’t responded to my texts all evening.”

Before answering, Anya glared at a man who stood in the middle of the path, unaware that he was forcing people to walk around him. Anya walked straight into him, shouldering him out of the way.

Ignoring his grunts of protest, Anya and Lexa kept walking until they found a bench they could claim as their own. Aden continued to play with his friends, uninterested in doing anything else.

“What are you going to do?” Anya asked after a minute.

“I don’t know.” Despite everything, Lexa found herself smiling. “It’s dumb, but I miss talking to her.
I like talking to her.”

Anya smirked. “Bet you’d like doing more than that.”

“Hey!” Lexa protested, but couldn’t help the slight laugh that escaped. “Look, we both know I can’t have—”

“No.” Anya said firmly. “You’re the one telling yourself that.”

Lexa rolled her eyes. “Anya, do I have to remind you again she’s married?”

Anya stared right at Lexa. “Do you want me to remind you that I’ve seen how she looks at you? How she blushed when I said your name? Do you want me to ask what the two of you talk about? If she mentions her husband at all in those texts?”

Lexa said nothing, her jaw firmly clamped shut.

“Didn’t think so.”

Lexa didn’t want her to ask. She’d been asking herself the same questions already. There was something about Clarke, something about her marriage that didn’t seem right. At first Lexa thought her own desires led her to see only what she wanted, but there was a nagging thought in the back of her mind she could not shake—Clarke did not love Wells.

Clarke saw her. Through a crowd of bundled people, all carrying warm drinks or snacks, Clarke caught sight of Lexa. She sat next to Anya, her face lit by the warm glow of the fire. Somehow, she was more beautiful than Clarke remembered. No, she knew that wasn’t it. Lexa had always been beautiful, but now Clarke knew she was so much more.

Clarke froze, unable to do anything but stare.

It hit her then, how badly she wanted Lexa. Clarke knew what she wanted to do. She wanted to run to her, weave her arms around Lexa’s neck, feel the warmth of their bodies together. Clarke wanted to spend hours going over their conversations again, just to hear the words from Lexa’s mouth. She wanted everything Lexa could give her.

She wanted the one thing she could never have.

“Hey, you okay?” Wells asked.

Wells.

Her husband.

Shaking her head, Clarke answered. “Uh, yeah. I think I’m just a little worn out from today.”

Wells smiled kindly. Too kindly for Clarke’s guilty conscious.

“I think we’ve been here long enough for your mom to not complain too much if we sneak away. Plus, I’m sure Jake will be willing to keep my dad from looking for us. Want to go home?” He
Wells was too good to her, too understanding.

She couldn’t hurt him, couldn’t tell him the reason for why she’d been so disconnected, why she seemed exhausted.

“Yeah…” Clarke said quietly. “We should go.”

Clarke looked through the crowd once more. Lexa was gone.

It was easy for them to slip away. Wells made sure of it.

Clarke felt her guilt grow. Wells was a good man, a good husband. He could be enough.

As soon as they were back in their apartment, Wells’ phone rang.

“Damn it. It’s work. Give me a minute?” Wells ran off to his office to take the call.

Clarke grabbed her phone. She wanted to apologize to Lexa for not seeing her, to apologize for ignoring the texts Lexa sent earlier. She tried typing out her apology, tried to make the words work. They wouldn’t.

Before she could think enough to stop herself, Clarke called her.

It rang once before she hung up.

Lexa’s voice would be too much.

“Sorry about that.” Wells said as he came back. “And even more sorry that I have to cancel our plans for next weekend…”

“What? Why? You’ve been looking forward to this game all season.” Clarke asked, happy to have the distraction, happy she could focus on anything other than the fact that she was about to talk to Lexa.

“I’ve just been informed there’s a dinner for work. Ugh, I hate these things.”

“Would you want me to go with you?” It wouldn’t be the first time Clarke attended a function just to keep Wells company.

“I wouldn’t want to put you through it too.”—He smiled—“You should still go to the game. I’m sure we can find someone else to go with you.”

“I can—“

Then her phone rang.

Lexa.

“Perfect timing!” Wells grabbed the phone off the counter and before Clarke could stop him, he answered with all too honest enthusiasm, “Hey Lexa! It’s Wells. Listen, I have a question for you. I was supposed to take Clarke out next weekend, but something came up at work and I can’t anymore. Do you mind escorting my wife somewhere?”

Clarke could barely understand what was happening over the pounding of her heart.
Lexa must have hesitated, must be just as shocked as Clarke to hear Wells’ offer.

Wells continued. “Go on, say yes.”

His eyes lit up and Clarke knew he got the answer he wanted—the answer Clarke secretly wanted as well.

“Great! I’ll let Clarke fill you in on the details. Thanks for this!”

And just like that, Clarke had a date.

Chapter End Notes

Let me know what you think here or find me on Tumblr (the link is finally working now!)

Also, let me know if the text messages are clear enough here or if I should post them in a different format? I obviously want to make sure you can follow what's happening!
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

Anya and Lexa have a chat.

Clarke and Lexa have part 1 of their date!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Anya reacted in exactly the way Lexa knew she would. After Lexa told her she’d been asked to hang out with Clarke, Anya had laughed, had spent an hour teasing Lexa. Eventually, Lexa snapped, unable to understand the things going through her own mind, let alone Anya’s interest.

Furious, she’d turned to Anya practically growling, “Why do you even care?”

Anya’s face stilled before she answered, gathering the sharpness of a coming storm. “How many years have we known each other?”

Lexa opened her mouth to answer.

Anya cut her off, her expression growing soft. “Too many, maybe, but in all of our years, you’ve told me what you think of love. After your heart got broken, your opinion never changed. Every time I try to set you up, every time I’ve asked you if you were going on a second date with some girl, you always told me the same thing, that you would know her when you saw her.”

Anya paused.

Lexa was too scared to say anything.

“Lexa, I don’t know for sure what the hell I believe when it comes to love, but I know you haven’t been like this since… well, you know. And fine, I know she’s married, but she makes you happy. It could all come down in a ball of flames, but I know you, and I know you wouldn’t be acting like this for just anyone, so maybe it’ll work out. If this whole love at first sight thing is real, maybe it’ll work out. But the only way to know if you’re right is to actually give it a try.”

“Anya, I—“

“No. That was as sappy as I am going to be for at least the next five years so whatever you’re about so say, fuck off.” Anya said, her features hardening once more. “I answered your question.”

Anya walked off then, leaving Lexa to fend with her own thoughts.

Hearing Anya had been refreshing, necessary. Lexa played over the words day after day as the weekend approached. Part of her agreed with Anya, part of her knew she needed to talk to Clarke, needed to see her again. Another part of her knew she was only setting herself up for heartbreak.

She wasn’t sure she cared.
Lexa: So are you going to tell me what we’re doing tomorrow?

Clarke: You hate surprises, don’t you?

Lexa: If I say yes, will you tell me?

Clarke: I’d tell you anyway ;)

If Lexa wasn’t already excited, she would have been as soon as Clarke told her she had great tickets to probably the biggest soccer game of the season. The tickets must have cost a fortune, Lexa thought vaguely, but between how happy she was to go and how much happier she was that she’d be there with Clarke, the thought passed quickly.

It had taken her ages to fall asleep that night.

When morning came, she pushed herself through a grueling workout, relishing the burn in her muscles. By the time she showered and threw on a clean tank top and pair of sweats, Lexa was barely surprised to find several messages from Anya along with the usual good morning text from Clarke.

Lexa read the message from Clarke first, smiling as she did so.

Clarke: Tell me know if you’re planning on backing out tonight so I can buy an extra bottle of wine at the store.

Lexa: Wouldn’t dream of it.

Like so many times during their conversations, Lexa stopped herself from saying more, stopped herself from outright flirting as much as she wanted to. But it didn’t keep her from thinking what it would be like to share a bottle of wine with Clarke late into the night.

Clarke: Good! Are you excited? Because I definitely am.

Lexa couldn’t help but notice Clarke had not specified what exactly she was excited for.

Lexa: More than you know.

Knowing Anya would be annoyed if she left her texts unanswered for too long, Lexa finally opened them.

Anya: I’m bringing Aden over after his lesson.

Anya: Just because you’re going out tonight doesn’t mean you get to avoid us entirely today.

Lexa was in the process of typing out a response when she heard a key in the door. A second later, Anya stormed into Lexa’s home with Aden following her like a shadow.

Glancing at the time, Lexa realized her workout had gone longer than she thought.

“Really? You were going to ignore my messages?” Anya said, dumping a box on the table.

“No! I was texting you right now!” Lexa said, holding up her phone as proof.

Anya eyed her skeptically before turning her attention to Aden. “Hey, go clean up. You’re all sweaty.”
Entirely unbothered by his appearance, Aden shrugged, taking his time before disappearing down the hall. He didn’t have a lot of clothes at Lexa’s, but she’d always made sure to keep something around for him, something to make him feel like he could be at home with her too.

“And as for you,”—Anya pointed at Lexa—“I really hope you’re planning on wearing something else later.”

Lexa rolled her eyes. “Obviously.”

“Although Clarke might be into the sweaty lesbian look.” Anya said. “Maybe you could wear…”

“Will you please stop looking at me like that?” Lexa asked.

Anya’s grin only grew as she took up comfortable purchase on the couch. “Absolutely fucking not. I’m trying to decide what kind of outfit Clarke would enjoy the most. She probably would be into the tattoo for sure, but she might prefer to get to see it in a more, let’s say, intimate environment.”

“Anya.” Lexa meant it as a warning.

Anya ignored her.

“So how is this date gonna go?”—Anya leaned forward, eyes gleaming—“Do you have to get her home by a certain time.”

Lexa dropped to the couch next to Anya. “Look, I’ve said this many times, but I think I might actually kill you now.”

“You wouldn’t dream of trying.”

Anya’s grin was contagious.

“Maybe not, but you’re getting close.” Lexa said. “It’s not a date.”

“You’d miss me too much. But sure, it’s not a date so how are you feeling about this not-date, absolutely a date?”

“It’s not a date.” Lexa took a minute before responding adding, “Tonight should be fine. It’ll be good.”

“Too good?”

“Of course.”

Anya laughed. “Well, at least then it’ll be worth not letting Aden and myself pester you until the ungodly hours of the morning.”

Smiling, Lexa nudged Anya. “Like the two of you will let me off that easy. I know I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Damn right you will.”

Aden soon joined them, freshly showered and dressed in one of Lexa’s old t-shirts he refused to let her replace. As she always did, Lexa asked him how his lessons went, knowing he was a natural at martial arts like everyone else in his family. Even better, he loved his lessons.

Lexa fell into her usual routine then, chatting with Aden and dodging the various teasing barbs Anya
would throw her way. She would never admit it—especially not to Anya—but Lexa appreciated the
distraction. Having them around prevented her from worrying too much about the not-date she had
with Clarke, even with Clarke’s messages occasionally lighting up her screen.

“So are you going to let me help you get dressed or what?” Anya asked when she noticed just how
often Lexa was checking the time.

“What’s wrong with what she’s wearing?” Aden asked, scraping the remnants of a piece of cake into
his mouth.

“I’ll freeze if I try to wear this out, kid.” Lexa said, climbing to her feet.

“You’re leaving?”—Aden tried to wipe his mouth, succeeding only in smearing icing across his
cheek—“Why are you leaving?”

Lexa looked between him and Anya, eventually asking. “You didn’t tell him?”

Anya smiled, throwing a long leg over the arm of the couch. “Lexa has a date with your teacher,
Aden.”

Aden’s face crumpled in disgust. “Ew, Mrs. Q—“

Lexa rushed to cut him off. “No, not her. With Clarke.”

“See? You’re calling it a date too.” Anya’s brow lifted, daring Lexa to challenge her.

Lexa glared at Anya. “It’s not a date.”

Anya smirked. “Uh huh.”

“Ooooh where are you going?” Aden asked.

Lexa answered, knowing he would be a little jealous of where she’d be. “I’ll be at the game if you
want to watch it on TV and keep an eye out for me.”

His eyes lit up. “No way!”

“And speaking of which, I need to get ready.” Lexa said, retreating to her bedroom.

If she hadn’t planned her outfit hours ago, if she hadn’t already picked the layers from her closet she
hoped Clarke would like best, it might’ve taken Lexa longer to get ready, might’ve tipped Anya off
to how nervous Lexa really was. But she’d already done the hard part and as soon as the clothes
were on her body, she knew she’d chosen the right thing. Anya’s exaggerated whistle only served to
inflate her ego a little more.

She only hoped Clarke thought she looked good too.

“Let me know how it goes.” Anya said as Lexa reached for the door, her tone slightly more tasteful
than it would have been if Aden weren’t in the room. Only slightly.
Clarke couldn’t remember the last time she was this nervous. It was ridiculous.

She’d taken three times as long to get ready, had painstakingly planned outfit after outfit, but nothing felt right. Only after the third outfit attempt did she realize she absolutely should not be as worried as she was. It didn’t matter if Lexa found her attractive. She wasn’t married to Lexa.

She could never be married to Lexa.

Clarke shook away the thought. There was no use wondering how much her mother would hate her for squandering her potential by marrying outside the realm of political power.

Still, she could not fight off the nerves, could not stop herself from hoping Lexa was looking forward to the evening as much as she was. More than anything, she could not stop herself from wondering what the night might be like if she weren’t married, if she could allow herself to think of nothing but Lexa and the crush Clarke could not abandon.

Her heart gave a jolt as her phone when off.

Lexa: I promise you I am almost there.

Clarke: Don’t worry! I just got here.

It was a lie. This was one of the few times in her life Clarke had made sure to be unnecessarily early.

She’d been amazed she managed after how long it took her to get ready, but when she finally saw Lexa making her way through the crowd, she was thankful she’d taken the time to find the right outfit.

Lexa’s eyes lit up when she saw her and Clarke desperately tried to ignore the way it made her heartbeat skip.

“Hey.” Clarke said, unable to form more words as Lexa approached.

She looked amazing, eyes shining against the copper color of her jacket. Clarke wanted to tell her, wanted to be able to say anything that would let Lexa know just how good she looked, but Clarke knew if she said anything, she’d say too much. She would not be able to only compliment the outfit, she would tell Lexa how much she enjoyed talking to her or how much she’d been looking forward to seeing her. Perhaps worst of all, Clarke knew she might end up telling Lexa how she felt.

“It’s nice to see you, Clarke.”—The way Lexa said her name made Clarke’s already racing heart skip another beat.—“You look great.”

“Thank you.” Clarke smiled.

Lexa meant the compliment, it was evident in the way her eyes lingered, in the way she grinned. It was exactly what Clarke hoped for.

“I’m so sorry I’m late.” Lexa said.

Clarke assured her there was no reason to apologize and as they found their seats, she pointed out that Lexa still had plenty of time to buy their first round of beer before the game even started. Lexa acquiesced, admitting that she might not have been late exactly, but she’d kept Clarke waiting which was worth an apology itself. It was the excuse Lexa used to pay for both of their drinks.

Clarke knew Lexa would have insisted on paying anyway.
It felt like a date.

It shouldn’t.

“I guess I should have asked a week ago, but do you like soccer?” Clarke asked, sipping her beer and trying to pay more attention to the game than the woman at her side. She was failing.

Grinning, Lexa answered. “Yeah, Anya and I played when we were younger. It’s been a while since I’ve been to a game though, so thanks for bringing me along.”

Clarke nearly laughed. “Somehow, I’m not at all surprised you were a jock. I should’ve known you wouldn’t mind coming here with me.”

Lexa’s grin caught an edge to it, sending Clarke’s heart racing. “I wouldn’t mind being with you anywhere.”

“I—“ Clarke wasn’t sure what to say. “Yeah.”

She took a long swallow of her beer.

Lexa acted as if she’d said absolutely nothing hinting at whatever this was between them. “I hope you’re enjoying the game though?”

In answer, the swarm of people around them because yelling as one of Arkadia’s strikers took off on a breakaway, quickly approaching the goal. Clarke’s shouts joined right in with theirs.

When the shot went wide, Clarke groaned in disappointment before turning her attention back to Lexa.

Lexa was smiling. “I’ll take that as a yes.”

“Hah, yeah. I’ve gotten more into it in recent years, but I’m not exactly athletic myself.”

“Is that why you never learned how to yell?” Lexa asked, leaning a little closer.

“What?”

Laughing slightly, Lexa explained. “When you yell, there’s no force behind it. You end up sounding a little, uh, shrill.”

“Excuse you!” Clarke said in mock offense, nudging Lexa with her shoulder.

“Hey, if you want the players to hear you, you have to project.”—Lexa smirked—“It’s not my fault if you’re bad at it.”

“Then teach me.” Clarke said, allowing a hint of too much flirtation to slip into her tone.

She didn’t regret it.

“Okay then.” Lexa accepted. “First of all, tighten your stomach muscles.”

Clarke laughed. “I don’t think I have any.”

“You do.” Lexa grabbed the beer from Clarke’s hand, sitting it and her own drink aside.

Clarke protested, “Hey, first you accuse me of being shrill and now you’re taking my drink—“
Lexa ignored her. “Your muscles are here.”

Clarke felt the pressure of Lexa’s hand against her stomach, felt how close she was.

The beer was forgotten.

“How tighten them.” Lexa said.

“They’re pretty tense.” Clarke managed to say.

“Okay, next, broaden your diaphragm.”—Lexa moved her hand higher—“It’s here.”

“Oh.” Clarke whispered.

She couldn’t help but wonder how her hand would feel against bare skin, how it would feel for Lexa’s hand to rest just under her breasts.

Lexa was close. So close Clarke could smell the notes of evergreens and tree bark in Lexa’s cologne.

“Now push out against my hand. You can feel it, right?”

Clarke let the words go before she could think to stop them. “Maybe if you put them both there.”

Lexa’s hesitation was barely noticeable, but it was there. And yet, Clarke did not miss the way her eyes darkened, how her lips threatened to curve into a smile as Lexa moved to wrap her arms around her.

Clarke leaned into the embrace, unable to do anything but feel Lexa’s body pressed against hers.

“Okay, and now for the most important part.” Lexa said, her voice so achingly close, the only thing Clarke could focus on even with the crowd around them.

The instructions were low, meant only for Clarke to hear. She wanted more, more of the things Lexa might say if it could be just the two of them, if bodies could be pressed closer.

With hands never moving, Lexa continued, “Imagine the roof of your mouth is a cathedral. Imagine your mouth is that big and you have to fill it with sound.”

Clarke inhaled, preparing to try, only for the breath to dissolve into a fit of laughter as her nerves got the best of her.

Lexa stepped away and Clarke immediately missed the contact, even though she would gladly stare at Lexa’s smile for the rest of the night.

“Sorry!” Clarke said as the crowd roared around them. “I just… I don’t know how to do this.”

Lexa nodded, a smile still stretched across her lips as she turned back toward the game.

Clarke looked just in time to see another missed shot.

“Like this.” Lexa said, offering a smirk before shouting, “You’re a wanker, number nine!”

Everyone in the crowd near them turned to look, surprised at the power in Lexa’s voice, just as surprised as Clarke.

The smug expression on Lexa’s face when she looked at Clarke once again was nothing but
endearing.

Clarke never wanted the night to end.

Chapter End Notes

As always, let me know what you think here or find me on Tumblr (the link is finally working now!)

Just so you know, this will be the only update this week too. I know I've been posting around twice a week (save for last week... oops) but my grandmother passed away and I need to be with my family.

At least I only posted last week for a good reason! Well, I mean, it IS possibly the most angst-filled porn I could imagine, but I enjoyed writing it ;)

As one friend said, read this is you want to cry over Clexa while being ridiculously turned on. Fair warning, it's not Lexa in Clarke's bed...
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

It was getting harder to convince herself it wasn’t a date. Lexa knew it shouldn’t be, but the feeling was there in every step.

She’d ushered Clarke through crowds, stopping just shy of placing her hand on Clarke’s lower back like she so desperately wanted to.

She bought their drinks.

It couldn’t be a date. Not a real one, but Lexa was finding it harder and harder to ignore how often she thought of their time together as exactly that.

But it wasn’t a date, even if Clarke had asked her to hold her, to wrap both of her hands around her.

It wasn’t a date. And yet, no matter what Lexa called their night, Clarke was flirting with her; Lexa sure as hell wasn’t going to miss the chance to flirt back.

Touching was too much though, Lexa knew it as soon as she’d wrapped her arms around Clarke. She was too close. It was too comfortable, too clear that Clarke felt the same. And touching Clarke only made Lexa want her more.

Flirting with a married woman was something Lexa could do, something she had been doing. Allowing herself to do more than that, to brush a strand of hair from Clarke’s face, to hold her close against the chill in the air, could only cause this thing between them to come crashing down. Lexa would flirt, but she couldn’t do more. Even if that’s what she desperately wanted.

“So where did you learn to yell such, uh, let’s say ‘amazing’ insults?” Clarke asked as they filed out with the rest of the crowd.

Arkadia won the game, but in the final seconds, all Lexa could focus on was the way Clarke’s eyes were lit with excitement.

“It’s an old joke between Anya and myself. She might’ve been a little drunk one night and she’d run out of the usual insults she used when we played together, so she started getting a bit… creative. I have no idea why that’s what she went with.” Laughing, Lexa added, “Don’t ever mention I told you though or she’ll kill me.”

Clarke smiled, even as a drunk fan almost ran into her. He would have, if Lexa hadn’t wrapped her arm around Clarke’s waist to pull her out of the way, to pull her closer.

Clarke turned to look at her and Lexa let her hand fall away. Clarke’s eyes had darkened as their bodies pressed together, had shifted toward something irresistible. It was too much.

“I like it.” Clarke eventually said after she’d moved away once again. It took Lexa a second to understand what Clarke was referring to. “And I like knowing a little secret about Anya. Now I know what I need to yell if I ever want her attention.”

Grinning, Lexa responded, “I don’t know if you’ll want the kind of attention you’ll get for that one.”
“There’s someone else’s attention I’d prefer anyway.”

Lexa felt like her heart jumped into her throat. “Oh?”

The look in Clarke’s eye told Lexa everything she needed to know. Clarke hadn’t meant to say those words, hadn’t meant for Lexa to hear them. Clarke’s furious blush only made it more clear.

Clarke hadn’t meant Wells.

Clarke’s next words came out as a jumble. “So, um, since I dragged you to this game—“

“You didn’t drag me here.” Lexa said quickly.

“Fine.”—Clarke grinned and it was as if she’d forgotten her barely veiled confession—“I didn’t drag you here, but you should still pick what we do next.”

Lexa remained silent, trying to think of what she’d like to do. She could only think of quiet bars with dark corners.

“Unless you’d like to go home?” Clarke asked, misunderstanding the reason for Lexa’s silence.

“Absolutely not.” Lexa said with a smirk tugging at the corner of her mouth. “I was just trying to think of something.”

Something that wouldn’t resemble a date.

It was hopeless, no matter what they did, Lexa wouldn’t be able to think of Clarke as only a friend.

“Do you feel like dancing?” Clarke asked with a playful glint in her eye.

Lexa hesitated, unable to think of anything but dancing with Clarke, with her hands on Clarke’s hips and their bodies pressed together, lips inching closer.

“You can always say no.” Clarke added.

Shaking her head, Lexa tried to answer quickly before Clarke could think yet again she was uninterested. She was too interested, that was the problem and it was a problem she wouldn’t dare give voice to.

“Dancing sounds wonderful.” Lexa said.

Clarke wove their arms together, tugging Lexa down the street. “Perfect!”

Lexa should have pulled away, should not have let herself stay locked arm in arm with Clarke, but she couldn’t bring herself to do anything but follow along. Lexa settled in beside Clarke as they walked, trying to ignore the warmth spreading through her body every time someone looked at her, looked at the woman on her arm.

Trying to ignore just how good it felt to do something so simple as walk down the street with Clarke, Lexa asked, “What are the odds you’ll tell me where we’re going?”

“You do hate surprises, don’t you?” Clarke teased.

“Yes.”

Laughing, Clarke promised, “Well you only have to wait for another block. It’ll be worth it.”
Whatever Lexa had in mind, it was certainly not the door Clarke eventually stopped in front of.

“An Arcade?” Lexa asked.

“An Arcade.”

Before Lexa could ask anything else, Clarke stepped confidently toward the entrance. Lexa managed to reach the door just in time in order to hold it open for Clarke.

The smile Clarke gave her was all Lexa needed in order to know she was doing a very bad job of pretending like this wasn’t a date.

Lexa no longer cared.

“How did you know about this place?” Lexa asked, admiring the flashing lights of the machines around them.

“I used to come here with my dad when I was little.” Clarke said with a grin. “I haven’t been here in a while, but I hope it’s just as fun as I remember. If it’s not, I hope it’s at least fun for you.”

“With you here,” Lexa said boldly, “I’m sure I’ll have a great time.”

Clarke was unsuccessful at hiding her blush.

“What was your favorite game when you were a kid?” Lexa asked out of both curiosity and a desire to let Clarke ignore her comment if she wanted.

Clarke’s blush faded as she answered. “I, um, liked the shooting games the most, actually? There was a dancing game I also played a lot.”

Lexa understood even before Clarke pointed to the machine. She laughed. “Dance Dance Revolution.”

“I hope you aren’t regretting coming along?” Clarke asked with a grin.

Lexa felt her lips curl into a challenging smile. “There’s no way I could.”

“Good.”—Clarke said, walking away toward the game—“Because I have a feeling I’ll have a new favorite by the time the night is through.”

__________

Clarke hadn’t felt this free, this bold, in longer than she could remember. She’d started the game terribly, unable to focus on anything other than how easily Lexa kept up, how simple it was for Lexa to control each movement of her body.

The first few steps Clarke missed could be blamed on being a little rusty. The next few were harder to offer an excuse for, especially after Lexa caught her staring.

She didn’t care. It’s not like she was great at the game in the first place.

Eventually, they both stopped bothering to time their steps perfectly and fell into easy laughter as the
songs became more and more ridiculous and the required steps came faster—even Lexa began to miss.

The voiceover encouragements never ended though, even as Clarke began to fail hopelessly. She kept trying to hit her moves, only laughing harder when it became apparent she had no hope. She expected to lose.

She did not expect Lexa to jump over to her platform and begin helping her with the moves. If Lexa hadn’t been so close, if the platform hadn’t been so small, the additional help might’ve been enough to keep them going, but Clarke completely lost the ability to focus on anything with Lexa moving beside her.

Clarke couldn’t remember when she’d had so much fun.

When the game ended, her breaths came heavier. From dancing, from laughing, or from the thoughts she could not prevent about Lexa, Clarke wasn’t sure. They played another round, neither of them caring how well they did.

It was better than any date Clarke had ever been on.

But it wasn’t a date.

Not really.

And yet, she was more than happy to challenge Lexa to various games to keep the night from drawing to a close.

Clarke flirted too much, but she could not bring herself to stop. Each smile she gave Lexa was met in kind, each comment given a reply that pushed the boundary slightly further. Clarke only noticed just how far she’d pushed when she saw Lexa’s gaze linger on her lips. She should’ve ended the night then, should have made her excuses and left, but she couldn’t.

Clarke only admitted the arcade would close soon after she challenged Lexa to one more shooting game. The outcome hadn’t been remotely close. Clarke won.

Clarke offered a rematch, but Lexa declined. They both knew she’d lose again and they didn’t want to be the reason the employees couldn’t go home on time.

They still stood outside though, unable to say their goodbyes until well after the lights of the arcade went out.

“Think you’d take me up on that rematch some other time?” Clarke asked.

It was too daring of a question, too much like an offer for a second date instead of being an offer between friends.

Clarke felt her heartbeat flutter at Lexa’s smile.

“Sure that’s a good idea?”

Clarke knew what Lexa meant.

It was the closest they’d come to acknowledging this… thing between them.

Clarke could only shrug.
“Well how about you just text me if Wells…”—Lexa dug her hands inside the pockets of her jacket—“Text me if you want to hang out again.”

They both fell silent after Lexa’s mention of Wells.

Clarke wanted to tell Lexa the truth, wanted to explain how she’d married him only to please her family and give herself a future with someone she could always count on. She wanted to tell Lexa she didn’t love Wells, that he wasn’t the one she thought about each night.

There was no point. She’d married Wells. Going back on that now would only shame her family more than her mother—and the society in which they flourished—could tolerate.

Forcing a smile, Clarke pushed past the mention of her husband. Her voice wasn’t as steady as she hoped.

“Deal.”

Clarke knew she couldn’t, couldn’t ask to do this again, not when she’d already made her choice. Not when she’d married Wells.

“I’ll call a car for you.” Lexa said with a hint of awkwardness as she retrieved her phone from her pocket.

Clarke covered Lexa’s hand with her own before she thought about it. “There’s no need. I only live a few blocks away and I think I’d like to walk.”

Clarke should move her hand away, the faded, barely-there thought was at the back of her mind. But Lexa’s hands were too soft, too unexpectedly warm under her touch.

It took everything in her power not to reach for Lexa again once the phone was away.

“Then let me walk you back. It’s late.” Lexa said, her tone leaving little room for Clarke to argue.

If she’d wanted to in the first place.

“You really don’t have to.” Clarke barely protested, already starting to walk toward her apartment.

Lexa smiled as if she knew Clarke let her win. “No, but I want to.”

Clarke took Lexa’s arm in hers as they walked, telling herself it meant nothing more than it did when she took Raven or Octavia by the arm. It was a lie. She’d seen the way Lexa straightened as they linked arms walking out of the stadium, how the shift in posture made Lexa commanding, protective.

Clarke wanted to be on Lexa’s arm as long as she could.

“What does that one mean?” Clarke asked, pointing toward a yellow flower peeking out from a pot on someone’s porch.

Lexa answered almost immediately. “Freesia. They’re usually given as a sign of trust and friendship.”

“And that one?” Clarke pointed to another pot.

Laughing, Lexa asked, “You want to know what a petunia means?”

Clarke nodded confidently as if she cared at all what flower Lexa defined for her. She just wanted to
hear the passion in Lexa’s voice as she spoke.

“Petunias mean both resentment and also a soothing presence. I don’t work often with petunias.”

Smiling, Clarke said, “No, I imagine they don’t fit for most people.”

As they walked, Clarke would point to other flowers around them, quizzing Lexa each time. Without hesitation, Lexa would give an answer, often with a detailed history of how a meaning changed over time.

Clarke loved it. She knew it would be over too soon, each step they took bringing them closer to the end of their night together.

“What about pine?” Clarke asked eventually.

Lexa laughed. “Pine?”

Clarke looked down briefly before she gave her reason. “Your cologne.”

Lexa’s smile was small, knowing, before she answered. “Pine in general is a symbol of hope.”

“Now tell me about the lily.”

Lexa looked away quickly. “You don’t want to know about the lily.”

“It’s my favorite.” Clarke said, turning the final corner to her apartment.

“Ask me about the azalea.” Lexa said determinedly.

Humoring her, Clarke said, “All right. What about the azalea?”

“The azalea means ‘may you achieve financial security.’”

“Ugh.” Clarke rolled her eyes and pushed her shoulder into Lexa.

She was given a low chuckle in return.

“Hey,”—Lexa said—“thanks for this evening.”

Clarke shook her head. “No, thank you.”

“It was my birthday.” Lexa said as casually as a person could manage.

“Today?” Clarke said as she came to a stop in front of the imposing gate guarding her building.

“This is you?” Lexa asked, pointing to the brand new apartments.

Clarke nodded, but refused to ignore what Lexa had said. “You should have told me it was your birthday.”

Lexa shrugged. “This evening was already perfect.”

“I…”

“I’ve kept you out long enough though. Good night, Clarke.” Lexa began to back away, a smirk tugging at her lips.
“Wait! Before you go, you have to tell me.”

Lessa stopped, brow rising. “Tell you what?”

“What the lily means.”

“Clarke…”

“Lexa.” Clarke challenged.

“The lily means…”—Lexa took one step forward, then another, until she was standing right in front of Clarke—“The lily means ‘I dare you to love me’.”

Clarke’s breath caught. Lexa was so close. The warmth of her, the smell of her, was intoxicating. Clarke wanted nothing more than to be closer, to allow herself the one mistake she knew she could never come back from.

Her body moved before she fully understood what she was doing.

She was reaching for Lexa, leaning forward to press their lips together, to see what it would be like to give in.

Then she remembered where she was, remembered all the reasons why she couldn’t.

Clarke pulled away, heart pounding over what she’d nearly done.

“Good night.” She said, stumbling over her words.

She wasn’t sure if Lexa said anything in return—Clarke was already through the gate and practically running for her home.

Chapter End Notes

Hey y'all! I'm back after making you wait a whole 8 days for part two of the date. Hopefully it's worth it ;)

Let me know what you think here or find me on Tumblr (the link is finally working now!)
Lexa sent the text as soon as she stepped inside her apartment.

Lexa: Good night, Clarke.

She didn’t expect an answer.

Not yet.

It had taken the entire trip back to Polis for Lexa to decide what to say, if she should say anything at all.

Each step she’d taken back to Clarke’s side had been a mistake. Telling Clarke’s the meaning of the lily had been a mistake. Being so close when the dare slipped from her mouth was the worst mistake of all.

Lexa would happily do it again, would do everything she knew she shouldn’t.

She’d step too close, whisper words she shouldn’t, feel her heart race as Clarke’s gaze fell to her lips. Clarke almost kissed her.

It would have been so easy to lean in, to taste Clarke’s lips against hers. Lexa could have closed the distance between them, could have given in to her quickly building desire.

She would have.

If Clarke hadn’t pulled away.

The thought kept her up well into the night. She should be grateful nothing happened. She should be able to rest easy knowing Clarke had not cheated on her husband. But Lexa stared up at her ceiling, wondering how much she should hate herself for wishing the kiss happened.

The next morning, she had a few blissful moments before she remembered how her night with Clarke went. Then a different, guilt-tinged kind of bliss found her. It had been the best date she’d ever been on.

She groaned into her dawn-lit room, too aware of how utterly fucked the situation was.

Lexa checked her phone. Still nothing.

She tried to tell herself it was only because Clarke was still asleep. Even without a reply, Lexa had sent a text every morning since Clarke’s first message and she couldn’t bring herself not to send one now.

Typing and deleting what felt like dozens of messages, Lexa couldn’t decide what to say. She couldn’t mention the almost kiss, couldn’t really say how much she enjoyed their night, but she didn’t want Clarke to think she regretted a minute.

Eventually, she hit send.
Lexa: I hope you enjoyed last night as much as I did.

Her message wasn’t even close to the honesty Lexa wished to share. The thought plagued her through her workout. She couldn’t help but think of what she’d say if the situation was different, if Clarke wasn’t married. She could flirt as openly as she wished, say the things she’d bitten back each time she was around Clarke, each time their conversations drifted toward something deeper. Lexa could give Clarke her all and with each block Lexa raced down, she began to realize with greater clarity just how much she wanted to.

She completed her run in record time.

While Lexa usually returned from her morning workout to at least one text from Clarke—Lexa tried exceedingly hard not to remember the time Clarke had sent her a picture of herself still tucked in bed with mussed hair and a sleepy smile—there was nothing.

When her phone buzzed not too long after her first customer left with an armful of flowers, Lexa’s heart felt as if it jumped into her throat.

Anya.

Lexa closed her eyes in frustration, in embarrassment, in a slew of emotions she desperately wanted to keep in check.

It was only Anya.

Anya: I’m cooking dinner tonight.

Lexa: And you assume I’m coming over?

Anya: It’s that or I break into your apartment to get the full story on how last night went.

Lexa: Ugh.

Anya: I can’t fucking wait for the details.

Ignoring Anya, Lexa kept checking her phone, digging it out of her pocket after each customer in case she’d missed a notification from Clarke.

Hour after hour went by without a single message from her.

Lexa couldn’t help but notice how weird it felt to not talk to Clarke. She’d gotten so used to telling her about particularly difficult customers, about new clients, or doing nothing but letting Clarke vent about the entitled assholes she had to deal with. She missed those little conversations.

She missed them, and each time she checked her phone, she knew she had no right to miss them.

Clarke wasn’t hers.

And maybe Clarke regretted their night.

Maybe Clarke had decided to end whatever it was they had between them.

By the time she closed up shop and made it to Anya’s, Lexa’s scowl was firmly in place.

She didn’t notice until Anya called her out for it.
“Shit, rough day?”
Lexa’s scowl shifted ever so slightly toward confusion. “What?”
“You look like you want to kill someone, Lexa.” Anya stated simply.
“Oh.” A moment later, Lexa managed to relax her face enough to keep Aden from saying anything when he came to greet her.
As soon as he said his hello, he was running off again.
All Anya had to say in order to explain her brother’s behavior was, “new video game.”
Lexa nodded in understanding, feeling a hint of a smile start to form on her lips.
“So how did the date go?”
Lexa’s smiled vanished.
Rolling her eyes, Anya said. “Fine, how did the not-date go?”
“That’s not what I’m…”—Lexa sighed—“It went well.”
“Oh, so we were right and you enjoyed yourself too much?” Anya said, her expression smug.
“You could say that.”
“What happened?”
Lexa couldn’t decide where to start.
Anya sighed with barely hidden annoyance. “Lexa…”
“She almost kissed me.”
Anya stopped, her surprise quickly morphing into an all too pleased grin. “Well god damn.”
Lexa groaned. “What’s for dinner?”
“Oh no, you’re not getting off that easy. What the fuck do you mean she almost kissed you?”
“I mean exactly what I said.”
Anya glared.
Resigning herself to the fact that Anya would likely refuse to feed her if she didn’t cooperate, Lexa began detailing the evening she’d spent with Clarke. She told Anya about the game, about how her arms had been wrapped around Clarke—though she did not mention precisely what she’d said in order to teach Clarke how to yell. Lexa told her about how Clarke had taken her to the arcade, about how they’d flirted. Eventually, Lexa told her about the almost kiss and the lack of texts from Clarke.
“Shit’s fucked.” Anya said, matter of factly.
Lexa said nothing.
Anya eyed her for a second longer before asking, “Want me to bring out the whiskey?”
Clarke kept staring at her phone. Of course Lexa had texted her, she always did. And yet, Clarke wasn’t sure she was ready to talk to Lexa.

She’d almost kissed her. She’d almost kissed Lexa, almost allowed herself to give in, almost forgot she agreed to marry Wells for a reason.

For the first time since Clarke agreed to marry Wells, agreed to use their joint political influence for something good instead of squandering it with someone their families pushed them toward, Clarke questioned her decision. She’d expected it to be difficult at times. Clarke knew it would be, but she’d never once in her life met someone who fit with her as perfectly as Wells did. She expected she never would. She certainly never expected to find someone who felt like they could be even more.

And then she met Lexa. Lexa, who sent her heart racing with every smile, who’d given her the best evening Clarke could remember.

Lexa, who she’d almost kissed.

Picking up her phone for what felt like the thousandth time, Clarke stared at the most recent messages from Lexa.

**Lexa:** Good night, Clarke.

**Lexa:** I hope you enjoyed last night as much as I did.

Clarke didn’t know how to respond.

She wished she could tell Lexa the truth. Clarke wished everything was different and she could apologize for leaving, apologize for abandoning the kiss. But she couldn’t.

So she said nothing.

Hour after hour, she said nothing.

Not to Lexa.

She asked Wells to dinner instead, asked him to go out with her when he got home. Clarke suggested one of the more expensive restaurants in Arkadia, knowing it was likely they would be seen, knowing potential donors and political allies needed to see them together. It was the kind of charm and manipulation they’d agreed to, the kind of thing at which Clarke excels, the kind of thing that would allow Wells and her to expand the Griffin Foundation and keep money-grabbing assholes out of office.

Clarke needed the reminder, needed to remind herself why she’d chosen Wells.

Her phone buzzed minutes after she sent the text.

She knew it wasn’t Lexa, but Clarke couldn’t stop the pang of disappointment when she saw Wells’ name on her screen.
**Wells:** Sounds great! I’ll be home in another hour or so. Keep painting until then because I know that’s what you’re doing :)

At that, she couldn’t help but smile. He was right. She’d spent the last… she wasn’t sure how long, mixing colors and trying to let herself get lost in her work. Trying to distract herself more than anything.

She thought she’d done well until she stepped back and truly saw the image in front of her.

It was too raw, too full of emotions Clarke couldn’t face. There was too much of her longing, too much of the war waging in her mind, too much of a familiar green.

**Clarke:** You know me so well.

She meant it. With everything in her, Clarke meant the words.

He was her friend.

She never wanted to hurt him.

But it didn’t stop her from thinking of Lexa, who, given time, could know her more.

**Clarke:** I’ll try not to be covered in paint when you get here.

By the time Wells arrived, Clarke was nearly presentable. She’d thrown on the first dress she thought would be passable then tried again. She needed to do better. She needed to care more, even when it was only dinner with Wells.

Especially when it was dinner with Wells.

So she changed.

Eventually, she settled on a dress her father insisted on buying for her, even though the cost had been exorbitant. Clarke might have protested initially, but she knew she looked wonderful in it. Each time she put it on, she was amazed by the effect of the seemingly simple black and white dress.

She felt good in the dress, felt even better with her favorite heels on and her lipstick applied.

Before she could stop herself, the question crashed through her: would Lexa like it?

Closing her eyes against the thought, Clarke took a moment to gather herself. Wells. She needed to think of Wells.

When Wells stepped from his own rooms, Clarke was relieved to feel an easy grin tug at her lips.

He was her friend.

The man she’d chosen to spend her life with.

“You look fantastic.” She said, meaning the compliment.

Smiling, Wells said, “You tell me that every time I wear this jacket.”

“Maybe, but I mean it every time.” Clarke couldn’t quite get her smile to match the radiance of Wells’.
He did look great and he was right, Clarke was quick to tell him so each time he pulled the deep purple blazer from his closet.

“And as I always tell you, everyone will only look at you.” He grinned. “Shall we head to dinner?”

Clarke nodded, unable to think of anything to say that would continue their usual banter.

The restaurant was not new to them, but there were always new menu options, new people, to discuss. Wells fell into his usual easy conversation. Clarke tried to keep up.

She was usually so good at making every conversation sound natural, as if talking to the person in front of her was the easiest thing in the world. With Wells, she never had to bother trying. Their conversations were smooth, they flowed together until hours passed and neither of them were quite sure where the time had gone. Until now.

Clarke could feel it, could feel a weight slowing her responses, dulling her wit.

“How was the party last night?” Clarke asked, adding an extra touch of joviality to her tone.

Wells sighed. “You know how those things are. I’m sure you had a much better evening.”

Clarke stilled. Yes, she was sure she had. When she’d asked Wells to dinner she, perhaps foolishly, did not consider what to say if he asked her about the game, about what happened after. She didn’t trust herself to speak.

“Oh, but I do have some exciting news for you!” Wells grinned over his wine glass, mercifully moving on without missing a beat.

“You do?” Clarke asked.

“I managed to convince one of my father’s biggest donors to make a contribution to the Griffin Foundation.”

Clarke smiled fully for the first time since they sat down. “Really? That’s great, Wells! How did you manage?”

He waived away her praise. “I was talking to him about my dad’s last campaign, he mentioned he heard I got married, and suddenly the conversation got much more exciting because I could stop acting like I cared about my dad’s campaign. An hour later, he was ready to write a check.”

This was why she’d married Wells.

He could help her achieve her dreams of doing good for the people of Arkadia—for the people of Polis.

Clarke felt a thought swell within her, a dangerous curiosity weave into her mind. Lexa could help with those very same dreams. It wasn’t as if Clarke hadn’t talked to her about it, hadn’t learned that Lexa made frequent donations to the school, that she made sure those who needed a bright spot in their life were given a flower arrangement for their table.

“Clarke?”

She snapped back to attention, blinking away her thoughts. “Yes?”

Wells smiled kindly. “Did you miss the part where I said just how nice of a contribution was made?”
Clarke couldn’t stop the blush from warming her cheeks. “Sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry, I am more than happy to tell you again. We have a shiny new check for one hundred thousand dollars waiting to be turned into the next big project.”

“That’s so fantastic!” Clarke immediately called to mind all of the program expansions she’d talked to Octavia and Raven about, all of the ideas they’d shared, all the discussions they had over what to do as the foundation grew.

She had to stop herself from reaching for her phone to text them.

To see if Lexa had sent anything else.

“See? That’s more of the reaction I was hoping for.” Wells said with a wink.

“I owe you, Wells. This is great.”

“Nope. You don’t owe me a thing. I’m your husband, remember? And that means we do this together.”

A wave of guilt surged through Clarke, stealing her breath.

Wells reached for the bottle between them, his joy painfully evident to Clarke.

“More wine?” He asked.

Clarke could only nod.

When their glasses were filled once again, Clarke watched as Wells’ brow creased in genuine concern.

She hated seeing such clear proof that he cared about her.

“Hey, Clarke, are you doing okay? You’ve been a little quiet lately.”

Clarke forced a smile. “Sorry, I guess my mom has just been a lot to deal with recently.”

She spoke too quickly, too sure of herself, for it to sound like anything other than a lie. Wells knew her, he would see straight through her attempt to write off her reticence.

He smiled.

It wasn’t one of his real smiles. It was closed off, tight.

“Okay then.”

Wells knew her. He knew she was lying.

And Clarke knew his smiles.

This one was wrong.

No matter Clarke’s intentions, she’d already hurt him.

Chapter End Notes
Let me know what you think here or find me on Tumblr (the link is finally working now!)

Also, for those of you who were wondering, yes, I did base Lexa's cologne on a real thing you can buy. Trust me when I say it smells great because I, like Lexa, am a useless lesbian and this is the cologne I wear ;)}
Chapter 13

Three days. Lexa had stared at her phone for three days without a single text from Clarke.

Those days felt like a void.

She went through the motions in her shop, creating bouquets and centerpieces, discussing latest trends with new clients, finding the right flower for the right situation. As she had for weeks, Lexa reached for her phone to tell Clarke a story of a particularly entertaining customer each time the opportunity presented itself. A clever joke, a thinly-veiled compliment, whatever it might be, Lexa had previously sent the message without a thought. Lexa didn’t realize how often the urge had overtaken her before, not until she didn’t have Clarke only a message away, not until Clarke no longer sent her messages with her own jokes, her own words that left Lexa’s cheeks warm and rosy.

The first day, the day after their near-kiss, after a night Lexa would happily play out a thousand times, Lexa thought would be the worst. She thought going to bed that night—ever so slightly past acceptably tipsy thanks to Anya’s heavy pouring—without any sign from Clarke would be the hardest.

She was wrong.

The first day had been easy. The first day, she’d been able to let Anya convince her Clarke just needed time. She knew Anya was right.

Clarke needed time.

Then day two came and went without a message and Lexa itched to reach out again. She almost had, the morning of the third day, this morning, but she’d stopped herself. It had not been easy, deleting the message she’d typed, but she could not bring herself to hit send. So she read her own words, said them aloud.

“I miss you.”

Her voice had fallen quiet, barely a whisper, barely enough to be heard in the silence of her bedroom. But she’d said them, and the weight of what she said rested heavy on her shoulders. She would give Clarke time, but Lexa did not know how long she could be satisfied with confessions to an empty room.

Lexa tried to keep her own desires from creeping into the arrangements she made like vines clinging to walls which would one day crumble under insidious roots. She failed. While none of her customers were aware, each time they asked her to create, she wove in a thread of herself. Longing. Desire. Futile pining. Love. These were the messages Lexa handed to the people who came to see her, these were the things tainting arrangements meant for wholly different purposes.

No one noticed.

Except for Anya.

“You skipped the meaning of that blue thing you put in there.” She said as soon as Lexa’s last customer left.
Turning her sign to say ‘closed’, Lexa hid her expression. Anya was too damned observant.

Still, Lexa tried to pretend as though it hadn’t been on purpose. “It’s been a long day, the meaning slipped my mind.”

At that, Anya laughed. “I don’t know what the hell you call that flower, but I’ve seen it here more than once so you absolutely know what it means.”

Lexa busied herself with tidying the shop.

“Right.” Anya said as if Lexa had given her anything to respond to. “So Clarke still hasn’t texted you back and you’re moping about it.”

Sighing, Lexa felt the muscles in her jaw clench. “I don’t mope.”

“You do.”

Straightening, Lexa turned to Anya and said, “Well what else would you have me do?”

Anya shrugged. “I don’t know. Text her again. Call her. Do literally anything?”

Scowling, Lexa asked, “What happened to ‘give Clarke some time’? You’re the one who was so insistent on that approach before.”

“I very clearly did not mean ‘never try talking to her again’. I meant she will need time to process what happened. You can still talk to her.”

“I sent her those texts. She knows she didn’t scare me off after she almost kissed me.”

“No she doesn’t.” Anya said simply.

Lexa waited for an explanation.

Rolling her eyes, Anya continued, “Would you let those texts reassure you if the situation was flipped? Or would you agonize over whether or not you overstepped? We both know the answer.”

With a glare that would have likely sent anyone but Anya running, Lexa asked, “She’ll answer my texts if she wants to.”

“Oh, Anya crossed her arms over her chest—“you could pick Aden up from school.”

Lexa felt her heart rate quicken. “No.”

“Oh why not?”

“She won’t even answer my texts, why do you think she would want to see me?”

Anya smirked as if she’d backed Lexa into a trap. “Well, there is that whole thing where she tried to kiss you. Clearly there’s something about you she likes seeing.”

Lexa groaned. “Anya…”

“C’mon. You know you want to see her.”

“So what if I do? What if that’s exactly what I want. What if all I want to do is see her and see if I’m what she wants?”
In all their years together, emotions had never run close to the surface. They talked around how they felt, asked after each other in ways no one would be able to tell were sincere. Lexa knew it was one of the things that kept them together, this ability to talk through their problems in a way that did not pull forth all the emotions they each knew others would demand from them.

Years of joking, teasing conversations rarely devolved into something so raw as the admission that fell from Lexa’s lips.

Anyā was quiet for a long moment.

“You just want to know, don’t you?” She asked eventually.

Lexa sighed a quiet “yes”.

“Then all the more reason to go.”

A long pause filled the air before Lexa said, “Fine.”

“Good, I stole your keys anyway.”

“Anya!”

Grinning, Anya pulled the keys from her pocket. Before Lexa could think to grab them, they were tucked even deeper into Anya’s jacket. “You can have them when we get back.”

Shaking her head, Lexa asked, “Why are you so dramatic?”

Anyā’s eyebrow arched as a challenge. “Who the hell are you to talk?”

Lexa started to protest, would have, if she’d had anything at all to say. Instead, she offered a half-formed glare and finished the last of the chores around her shop.

When Lexa was ready to go, Anya’s mouth curled into a triumphant, almost feral grin. Lexa refused to ask.

“Ready?” Anya asked, smile still in place.

“No.” As she said it, Lexa marched toward Anya’s car, unwilling to let her mind stop her.

The entire, albeit short, drive to the school was full of Anya’s subtle attempts at encouragement. She was never particularly good at it so the conversation quickly turned to Anya making it very clear Lexa would be the one to physically enter the building to get Aden.

When the school came into view, Lexa doubted herself again, questioned if she was doing the right thing. She wanted to see Clarke. She needed to see Clarke, needed to know what existed between them, if anything. But Clarke might not want to see her.

“Stop it.” Anya said, sensing Lexa’s darkening mood.

She said nothing else, only brought the car to a halt along the curb and waited impatiently for Lexa to get out. Jaw clenched, Lexa climbed from the car, straightening to her full height.

She could do this.

She would.
With each step, she gathered her courage, pushing aside thoughts of how she couldn’t remember ever being so nervous. She refused to let it show.

She climbed the stairs, taking deep, measured breaths. When she reached Aden’s door, Lexa lifted her chin, ready to face whatever Clarke would say. No matter what, at least she would have an answer.

Aden saw her as soon as she entered, his eyes lighting up with surprise, with joy. Lexa scanned the room, hoping for the same look in the blue eyes she couldn’t stop thinking about.

Lexa felt a wave of disappointment surge through her veins.

Clarke wasn’t there.

------

Clarke checked the time. Of course she was running late. Even though she’d left the school early, she would undoubtedly give Raven and Octavia enough time to finish one round of drinks before she joined them. She supposed it didn’t matter—they were celebrating, after all.

Clarke couldn’t blame Raven and Octavia for being so excited. The money they’d begun to collect was quickly growing into something they could use to fund more than their own classes. They could bring in more instructors, purchase new equipment for the school. The moment Clarke walked in until their plates held no sign of the delicious food they’d shared, they’d talked about nothing other than what they could do with their latest donation. The conversation quickly turned to what they could do with more interest in the foundation, more donations.

With each new idea Raven and Octavia threw out, Clarke forced herself to remember the ideas relied on donors. Donors she and her husband were meant to line up. Together, they were supposed to work toward something good for Arkadia.

Together.

She needed Wells.

He needed her.

Their families needed them both.

That’s why they’d gotten married.

“Yo, Griffin, you okay?” Raven asked, crossing her arms over her chest.

“What? Yeah, I’m fine.” Clarke said, waiving away Raven’s concerns.

Neither she nor Octavia looked convinced.

“Something’s up with you, Clarke.” Octavia added.

Clarke began to protest. “No, I—“

Raven cut her off. “We’ve known you too long for you to convince us everything is fine. Don’t try.”
Slightly chagrined, Clarke kept her mouth shut as Raven continued.

“Don’t get me wrong, a few days ago I would’ve sworn I’ve never seen you happier. Hell, you were giving Octavia a run for her money on the ‘spaced out, dreaming about someone’ face.”

“Hey!” Octavia objected.

Raven ignored her. “But unlike her, who tells me in excruciating detail how great Lincoln is, you seemed desperate to hide what was going through that head of yours. So what’s up?”

“Did Wells do something?” Octavia guessed. “Wait, are you two actually, you know, ‘getting along’?”

Raven leaned forward, grinning. “Nah, that can’t be it. Clarke’s never been able to kiss and not tell.”

Clarke blushed, remembering just how much she’d shared with them in the past.

The warmth in her cheeks spread until she couldn’t hide it from her friends.

“Well damn, maybe you’re right, O.” Raven said as she pointed to Clarke’s burning cheeks.

“It’s not that. I didn’t kiss anyone.” Clarke said.

It wasn’t a lie.

Octavia’s head tilted slightly and Clarke immediately knew her mistake. Octavia was too observant, to quick to pick up any tiny error.


Clarke shook her head. “Wells. I didn’t kiss Wells.”

She hadn’t almost kissed him. It wasn’t Wells she’d spent the last few nights thinking about, wondering what it would’ve been like if she’d let herself go for only a second longer. Wondering what other things might feel like, taste like.

It was Lexa.

Clarke had spent too long thinking of those things, trying not to think of more and being unable to do anything else. Each night, it started with the guilt of not responding to her texts. Then her mind turned to memories of their night together, then turned to thoughts of what that night might have become if it weren’t for so many things.

What it might have been like to kiss her. She thought of Lexa’s lips, of her hands. It was too easy to remember how her heart fluttered with Lexa’s arms around her, too easy to wonder what it would be like to feel those same hands on her skin, trailing down her bare chest.

And then, both nights, it had turned into Clarke desperately burying her face into her pillow to stop herself from moaning Lexa’s name.

Raven leaned forward, voice dropping toward a whisper. “Yeah, I don’t think it was Wells either of us are asking about now. Did you meet someone?”

Clarke looked away, trying to keep her friends from seeing her fully.

It was as good as admitting her guilt.
“I fucking knew it.” Octavia said, turning to Raven. “It’s within the first year, you owe me BIG for this one, Reyes.”

“Ugh, stop. She hasn’t said shit yet.”

“What the hell?”—Clarke glared at both of them, keep her voice low and threatening—“What did you bet on this time?”

“Nothing.” They said in unison.

“I swear if you actually bet—“ Clarke didn’t get the chance to finish her threat.

“Hey Mama Griffin!” Raven yelled as she looked over Clarke’s shoulder.

Clarke would have been grateful for the interruption if it had been anyone other than her mother. Fortunately, her dad was only a step behind.

“Good afternoon, ladies!” Abby said, sweeping into the room and stopping next to their table.

Raven grinned, the gesture sliding into the same half-flirtatious smile she somehow managed to reserve only for Abby.

Clarke rolled her eyes.

“It’s so nice to run into you girls.” Jake said, taking the time to place a kiss on Clarke’s forehead.

“Yes, what a pleasant surprise.” Abby said.

Clarke caught the way her mother’s eyes landed directly on her. She knew it immediately. This wasn’t a surprise. Her mother meant to corner her.

She felt her blood run cold in fear of whatever her mother had in store.

Clarke stamped the feeling down, refusing to let any sign of her apprehension.

“Clarke, I thought to ask you earlier to join your father and me for dinner some time this week. Maybe you can come by our table when you’re finished here?” Abby asked.

It wasn’t a question.

“Of course, mom. I’ll find you soon.”

At least her father would be there and form his smile, he was more than happy to have the chance to see his daughter. He always was.

“Perfect.”—Abby turned her grin toward Raven and Octavia—“Again, lovely to see you both.”

“You too!” Octavia said.

As soon as her parents were gone, Raven and Octavia turned to look at Clarke.

Octavia was the one who said, “So we have to let you go, don’t we?”

Clarke nodded.

“Any idea what it’s about?” Raven asked.
Shaking her head, Clarke answered. “No idea. I probably ignored too many of her calls or something.”

“Well have fun with that.” Raven added.

If she wasn’t about to face her mother, Clarke would be relieved the previous conversation had been abandoned.

The look Octavia gave her as she and Raven left told Clarke the conversation might’ve been cut off, but it wasn’t forgotten. Clarke sighed, unable to worry about what she would say when the time came.

She had her family to worry about first.

Approaching her parents’ table, Clarke took the seat closest to her father, leaning over to give him a quick kiss on the cheek as she sat.

“So nice to get the chance to see to you.” He said. “I know you just ate, but this pasta is to die for if you want some?”

Before Clarke could answer, her mother spoke up.

“Jake, dear, would you be so kind as to get my coat from the car? I’m a little cold.”

Whether he realized Abby was trying to get Clarke alone or not, it didn’t matter, Clarke’s dad wouldn’t refuse anyone a favor. “Of course!”

With a smile and a quick brush of his hand over Clarke’s shoulders, Jake was gone.

Clarke’s attention snapped to her mother. “So what is it?”

Abby wasted no time. “Why is Wells coming to me to ask if you’re okay?”

Clarke was speechless for a moment.

“Wells talked to you?” She eventually asked, keeping her tone light, ignoring the edge in her mother’s tone.

Abby smiled. “Don’t sound so surprised, Clarke. He knows I care about you.”

“Why did he ask you that?”

“I was hoping you could shed some light on the situation.”

“I…” Clarke began, trying to find something, anything to say.

“Look, I don’t know what kind of problems you’re having, but they can’t continue.”—Abby sipped from her glass of wine—“We’re surrounded by sharks, you know that, and any hint of blood in the water will never go unnoticed. You marrying Wells has made for a powerful alliance. I think you know that better than most.”

Clarke stilled. “I do.”

“Your marriage led to a lot of whispers amongst people who aren’t fond of our family. They, too, know how much power could be found in the two of you so they will take whatever they can and spin it into a scandal that could ruin you, ruin us. If they suspect your relationship isn’t a happy one,
if they think anything of you and Wells, they will use it to cut off whatever plans you are weaving together.”

Clarke opened her mouth only to shut it as soon as her mother raised a hand.

“Don’t look at me like that, I know you and I know Wells. I know you have plans for great things. So my only message to you is this, if you want those plans to work, you need to figure out whatever it is that has had such an effect on you recently. Wells isn’t the only one who has noticed.”

“I’m not—“

“Oh, stop. You don’t need to defend yourself or try to convince me nothing is amiss. I know you, Clarke, and I know there is something distracting you. Figure it out, talk to your husband, and we can move on. Don’t let it grow into something that splits the two of you and gives our rivals something to whisper about.”

Clarke felt her mouth press into a thin, frustrated line.

“And you understand?” Abby asked.

Clarke could only nod before her father returned to their table and both she and her mother forced pleasant smiles as if all was well.

As if Clarke didn’t feel as though her heart was being torn from her chest.

Chapter End Notes

Hang in there, y'all, you're going to love me for the next chapter.

And you're going damn me to hell five minutes later.

Not to mention, you might already hate me a little bit for dragging this out and doing my best to make this thing angsty as hell (so it's sweeter in the end, I promise.) So hey, if you want to yell at me, go for it here or on Tumblr
Lexa sat on the steps outside her store, half-heartedly pruning one of the plants she had on display. It’d been a quiet day, only a few customers that morning, and despite the chill in the air, Lexa found it easier to be outside. There were more distractions, more opportunities to do anything other than get lost in her own mind.

Her thoughts hadn’t been the most comforting; they rarely were. She was too good at tormenting herself.

So she sat, watching the people in her neighborhood as they prepared for the end of their day. Lexa was ready to go back inside and search for her phone—she’d taken to hiding it in a rarely used drawer—to see if Anya had plans for the evening when she saw the one person who could stop her in her tracks.

Clarke.

The sight of her took Lexa’s breath away. It’d been too long, too many painful days, without seeing her, talking to her.

“Hi.” The greeting fell from Lexa’s lips like an answered prayer.

“No.”—Clarke shook her head, unable to look Lexa in the eye—“No, you can’t…”

Lexa’s brow furrowed in confusion as Clarke stormed straight past her, heading inside the store as if she knew Lexa would follow.

Lexa could do nothing else.

The door closed behind her as she opened her mouth to say something, anything, but Clarke wouldn’t let her.

“No. You can’t be happy to see me. I don’t want you to be happy to see me.”

Lexa stilled, muscles tensing as her breath caught in her throat.

“Okay.” Lexa forced past gritted teeth.

“Okay.” Clarke paced the shop.

She still hadn’t looked at Lexa.

Lexa watched, tracking Clarke’s movements. Lexa had never seen her like this, frazzled, frantic, fighting with something unseen. That, more than anything, tightened around Lexa’s heart, threatening to make it shatter.

Lexa waited. She waited for the fire in Clarke to burn out, for there to be a sign there was something, anything she could do. She waited until she felt like she would burst if she waited any longer.

It had only been seconds when she opened her mouth to speak.
Clarke beat her to it. “I’m here because I don’t know what’s going on. I don’t… You make me feel something I wasn’t supposed to feel. Something I absolutely cannot feel.”

Lexa’s heart skipped a beat, eyes widening as Clarke’s words registered.

“I’m married.” Clarke continued, “I’m married my best friend and he’s done nothing wrong but I…”

A customer pushed into the shop, the ringing of the bell cutting off Clarke’s confession.

“Excuse me,” said the customer, “I’m hoping you could help me. I’m looking to start an herb garden.”

Clarke sighed in frustration as Lexa bit back what would have undeniably come out as a snarl. Lexa nodded toward the door to her back room, urging Clarke to wait for her there.

The old man who interrupted their conversation—no, not just a simple conversation Lexa thought to herself—continued as if the tension in the shop wasn’t palpable.

“There’s a pretty little corner space…”

Lexa grabbed the two herb pots closest to her. “Here. Take these. On the house.”

His mouth parted to say something.

“Go.” Lexa growled, shutting the door behind him.

She raced after Clarke, bursting into the back room.

Clarke finally looked at her and Lexa’s heart felt as if it would tear in two at the pain in Clarke’s beautiful blue eyes.

“I can’t…” Clarke started again, “I can’t do this. Do you see? I can’t actually do this. I can’t keep hoping you text me again. I can’t keep staring at the pictures you sent me. I can’t keep thinking about you. I can’t!”

“Clarke…” Lexa tried, stepping closer.

“Do you understand? It’s over.”

Clarke didn’t let her answer, didn’t let Lexa say anything. As quickly as she came, she was gone.

Lexa stared after her, blinking away the shock and her own pricking tears. Before she could do anything, before she could take a step toward the door, could find the will to move an inch, Clarke came storming back in.

Later, Lexa would be able to remember the seconds leading up to the inevitable. She would remember the look in Clarke’s eye as she came back, the way Clarke’s eyes darkened. She would remember the way her heart pounded in her chest. More than anything, she would remember the brief moment, the brief flash of something akin to relief in Clarke’s eye as Clarke reached for her.

The kiss was like an ember thrown to kindling. Their lips met, the glowing coal of their desire immediately burning through every uncertainty. Clarke took Lexa’s bottom lip between her teeth, demanding more, demanding everything Lexa was so willing to give. Lexa obliged, deepening the kiss as she led Clarke through the room.

Her back pressed against the wall, Clarke’s weight holding her there, Clarke’s lips hungrily moving
along her jawline. Lexa felt herself shaking. Each kiss Clarke left on her skin, each brush of Clarke’s touch set her alight. She couldn’t believe it.

She pulled Clarke’s lips back to hers, needing the taste of her, needing to know this was actually happening. Her need coiled within her, tightening until it was almost unbearable, sinking lower and lower until it reached her very core.

Clarke moaned against her lips as Lexa slipped her hands under Clarke’s shirt. Lexa’s fingertips trembled against the warm, soft skin of Clarke’s waist.

Lexa’s grip tightened as Clarke’s hips rolled against her. She could feel the wetness growing between her legs, knew her body had never responded to anyone else so strongly. And each kiss made her want, need, Clarke even more.

She moaned and it was as if Clarke had been waiting for the sound. Lexa felt Clarke reach under her shirt, run her hands over the muscles of her stomach, slide lower until her fingers hooked into the waist of her pants. Lexa couldn’t help but push her hips forward, begging Clarke to touch her, to slide her hand lower.

Lexa threw her head back against the wall as Clarke dipped her hand, pushed aside the band of Lexa’s underwear.

“Oh, fuck.” Clarke whispered against her jaw.

Lexa barely heard her, too adrift in the ecstasy of Clarke’s hand between her legs.

She groaned in protest as Clarke’s hand retreated. She needed Clarke closer, needed to feel Clarke against her, inside her. Lexa’s complaint died in her throat as she opened her eyes, watching as Clarke brought her fingers to her mouth.

“Clarke…” Lexa breathed.

In answer, Clarke kissed her, letting Lexa taste herself. Lost in bliss, Lexa barely registered Clarke tugging at her jacket, sliding the fabric off her shoulders. She stepped away from the wall, obeying Clarke’s silent plea as she threw the jacket to the floor, leaving only her tank top.

Lexa stood with arms bare as Clarke’s hungry gaze took her in. Her smile wasn’t given the chance to form fully before Clarke was crashing into her again, pushing her against the wall.

Lexa hissed in pain.

Clarke pulled away, concern painted clearly in her shining gaze. “What’s wrong?”

Lexa could only laugh. “Thorns.”

“Oh!” Clarke’s laughter mingled with hers, filling the room. “I’m so sorry!”

Shifting her position, Lexa moved away from the roses she’d so carefully hung on her wall to dry. They were ruined. She didn’t care.

Clarke was laughing and smiling and kissing her again and there was nothing on Earth she cared about more.

The ringing of the door bell interrupted them. Clarke moaned in protest and Lexa swore her stomach flipped.
“Let me get rid of them.” Lexa said, dropping her voice low.

Lexa held her close, a smile on Clarke’s face—echoing the brilliant smile Lexa couldn’t hold back—as she tried hush her heavy breaths. Lexa couldn’t still her hands, couldn’t stop herself from running fingertips along the curve of Clarke’s waist. She needed to move, needed to send the customer away, needed to lock her door and keep anyone out who would stop her from kissing Clarke again and again. But she couldn’t bring herself to do it. Clarke was still pressed against her, still smiling at her.

All Lexa wanted to do was stay and let Clarke trace the tattoo on her arm, let Clarke look at her with that dark glint in her eye, let their kisses turn to something more, something Lexa craved so desperately.

Then the customer called out, seeking Lexa.

She froze.

Wells.

“Lexa, are you in the back?” He asked.

Forcing the panic from her voice, Lexa answered. “Uh, yeah. Don’t come in. I’ll be right there!”

She stared at Clarke, blue eyes flickering with horror. Lexa placed her hand on Clarke’s cheek, willing her to believe it would be okay.

“Stay here.” Lexa whispered.

Lexa watched the tears form in Clarke’s eyes, watched the storm of emotion play across her expression. Lexa kissed her again softly, lips carrying a plea.

Heart racing, Lexa carefully slipped out of her back room.

She’d kissed Clarke.

She was very much about to do more than just kiss Clarke.

And now she was standing before Clarke’s husband.

“Sorry, I was counting stock. I…” Lexa began, only to cut herself off. “Hey.”

Wells grinned. “Hey, yourself.”

“What do you want, Wells?” Lexa asked, the question laced with a hint of bitterness.

He let out a light laugh. “To buy some flowers. What else?”

Lexa clenched her jaw, catching herself. “Right, flowers. Of course.”

“Not for me though. For my wife,” Wells smiled the same charming smile Lexa first saw him with.

She hated seeing it.

He continued, the smile slipping from his face. “Recently, she’s been a bit… I don’t know. But I thought some flowers might help cheer her up. My usual methods haven’t been working as well as they did before. So I thought I would try one of your arrangements.”
Lexa nodded, swallowing the lump in her throat before she asked, “What does she like?”

“You know what she likes.” He said simply.

Lexa felt her breath catch in her throat.

Wells added, as if to himself. “Lilies. She likes lilies.”

Nodding, Lexa said, “Lilies. That’s easy enough.”

She felt the muscle in her jaw clench, teeth grinding together almost painfully. She’d thought a hundred times about the lilies she would give Clarke, about the perfect bouquet for the woman she lov—.

No.

“Did you enjoy the game the other night?” Wells asked to fill the heavy silence around them.

Turning so Wells could not see her warming cheeks, Lexa answered. “It was an experience.”

Wells chuckled.

The silence fell again, thicker this time.

Lexa worked, weaving together an arrangement, thinking of nothing other than her kiss-swollen lips and the way Clarke looked at her.

“Hey, Lexa…”—Wells hesitated—“When you were with Clarke, how was she?”

Lexa felt her heart beat quicken again.

“She seemed fine.”

“Fine?”

Lexa looked over her shoulder to see the small crease between Wells’ brows as he struggled with the questions he wanted to ask.

He said, “I don’t suppose she…”

“No.” Lexa said quietly.

She didn’t want to have this conversation now. Not when Clarke was in the next room, listening to every word.

“I was just wondering if she said anything about… me. Or, or… I just think I’m doing something wrong, is all.”

There was a vulnerability, a hollowness to Wells’ tone. Lexa felt her chin tip up slightly in defense. She did not want this.

Wells kept talking. “And if she said what it is that I’m doing, or not doing, then I can stop it. Or start. Whichever it might be. Then we can get back to being the friends we were before.”

Friends

The word picked at a thought in the back of Lexa’s mind.
She couldn’t focus on it, couldn’t try to decipher the feeling. All she wanted to do was scream at Wells to stop.

“She didn’t say anything?” He asked once more.

“No.”

Wells hesitated. “I’ve embarrassed you.”

Lexa could not explain the true reason for her blush. She could not explain what she’d done, that she still throbbed with the thought of Clarke’s touch.

“And myself.” He laughed, the hollow sound disappearing into the bright blooms around them. “Which is more normal than you might think.”

He eyed the flowers in Lexa’s hand as she finished wrapping the lilies. Clarke’s favorites.

“These are beautiful.” He said. “How much do I owe?”

“They’re on the house.” Lexa insisted.

He smiled, but the expression didn’t reach his eyes. “Thank you.”

Lexa could stop herself as she said, “You should ask her if there’s something wrong, you know. Not me.”

Wells let out a sad, broken laugh. “I can’t do that. It’s too scary.”

“Why?”

He paused right before he walked out as if he needed to gather the strength for his answer. “What if there is?”

Wells was gone before Lexa could answer. For that, she was grateful.

As soon as he was out of sight, Lexa closed the shop, practically slamming the deadbolt in place.

“Clarke?” She called as she ran into the back.

The room was empty.

Clarke was gone, leaving nothing but the open window behind.

Chapter End Notes

I was originally planning on posting this and Clarke’s part together, but it quickly turned into a beast of a chapter. I’m aiming to have the next part up soon though because it’s about time Clarke explained herself, yeah?

Anyway, yell at me here or on Tumblr.
Clarke’s lungs burned. She’d started running, unsure of where she was headed, unsure of anything other than the need to just… go.

The wind whipped around her, flowing past the sparse trees and rusting benches of the park in which she found herself. Each ragged breath she took in hurt, hurt from the pain in her lungs, hurt from the strain of trying not to cry, trying not to completely break down.

She’d lost herself, let herself stop thinking for one moment and she’d been consumed.

Clarke thought she owed it to Lexa to say goodbye in person. She thought she was making the right choice, but the moment she saw her, the moment Lexa’s eyes locked onto hers, Clarke should’ve turned around and never stepped foot in the shop. Clarke had tried to push on, but she’d tripped over her words, fought to keep herself steady.

She failed. God, how she failed.

She’d kissed Lexa. Clarke gave in to the desire burning through her.

The kiss was everything Clarke hoped for, everything she’d thought about night after night. She lost herself in the feel of Lexa pressed against her, needing more and more. She’d never felt like that, never needed someone like that before, never felt so engulfed in desire. With Lexa’s lips pressed to hers, Clarke needed to know if Lexa felt the same, if her body was responding as intensely.

So she’d let her hands wander, let her own longing take over. She felt the heat of Lexa’s body, felt the way her hips rolled, and when she couldn’t stop herself, Clarke felt the desire between Lexa’s thighs. Clarke’s legs had almost given out as the knowledge Lexa wanted her too. From there, all Clarke could think about was giving in, giving Lexa everything she could.

But then it all came crashing down, the brief moment of ‘what if’ crumbling back into the reality of Clarke’s position.

So she ran.

Clarke ran, desperately fighting for some semblance of control over her own mind.

She could still taste Lexa on her lips.

She could still hear the pain in Wells’ voice.

So she kept running.

“Clarke!”

She heard Lexa’s call, her approaching footsteps.

Clarke should have known Lexa would find her, should have expected the lack of effort it took Lexa to catch up to her.

“Clarke, wait!”
Unable to bring herself to keep going, Clarke stopped, wiping away her tears. Lexa stood in front of her, cheeks flushed from the wind. She looked gorgeous, wisps of hair coming loose from her braid.

Clarke felt the bile rise to her throat as she had to fight the urge to tuck the loose strands behind Lexa’s ear.

She shouldn’t.

She couldn’t.

She’d already done too much.

“Lexa, please.” Clarke’s voice broke under the weight of her pain.

Lexa’s gaze softened, green eyes full of concern and pain and heartache. “Just talk to me, Clarke.”

Clarke couldn’t look at her, couldn’t stand knowing she was the reason Lexa looked so hurt, couldn’t stand knowing she’d already hurt Wells.

“What do you want me to say?” Clarke asked in desperation.

She felt Lexa’s gaze on her still and forced herself to look, forced herself to watch as the forest of Lexa’s eyes darkened.

Voice low, steady, Lexa said, “I want to know what’s going on.”

“Lexa…”

“Tell me.”

Emotion swelled within Clarke, pulling the words from her, “I heard him! I was standing there and I heard him. I heard him say everything, Lexa.”—Clarke let out a choked, stuttering sigh—“He’s blaming himself for this. He thinks he’s the one who fucked up but it’s me. I’m ruining everything.”

Shaking her head in confusion, Lexa asked, “What are you ruining?”

“It’s… complicated.”

“Your marriage?”

“Yes. No…” Clarke trailed off, unable to calm the storm inside her enough to think about what she could say.

Lexa left her in silence for a moment. Clarke tried to think of something to say, of a way to explain herself.

She couldn’t.

Eventually, after the weight of everything they’d shared thickened the silence, Lexa said, “You don’t love him.”

It wasn’t a question.

Clarke stilled, fighting to find the words to deny Lexa’s claim. It was useless.

They both knew the truth.
“You only refer to each other as friends.” Lexa added hesitantly, as if she was scared to admit it to herself, “I’ve seen the way he looks at you, the way you look at him. It’s not… It’s not the way you look at me.”

Clarke wrestled with herself, struggled to speak past the knot in her throat. “It’s—“

Lexa cut her off, brow raised. “Complicated?“

“Yes.” Clarke answered.

Lexa gaze was intense, unwavering. “So tell me why it’s complicated. Tell me, Clarke. Why is he the one you’re running to?”

Clarke knew the unspoken words Lexa wanted to say.

Instead of me.

“Lexa.” Clarke tried, feeling her tears threaten to spill over.

“No.” Lexa’s voice was clipped, short as if each word was painful. “I need to know why. I need to know I’m not imagining this.”

“I can’t!”

“Why, Clarke?” Lexa yelled, tears gathering in her green eyes.

“Because my happiness means nothing! Because I was expected to marry someone for the sake of my family’s legacy, not my own desires! By marrying Wells, I could at least marry my friend. I married Wells to keep my family, my mother, happy. Can’t you understand?”

“No!” Lexa cried.

“There are expectations I’m supposed to meet.” Clarke’s words fell out in a frantic rush. “In my life, you marry for power, for prestige and hope you manage to tolerate the person you’re with. My mom is on the council, my family needed me to marry someone who would strengthen our position. I thought I was doing the right thing—I did the right thing—by marrying Wells instead of some asshole who would expect me to follow his plans and have no ideas of my own. With Wells, I can raise money for more programs like the one Aden is in! I can actually do something good… I can make everyone happy.”

“Everyone but yourself.” Lexa said quietly, tensely.

“Wells is my friend.” Clarke felt her hands begin to shake. “He was supposed to be enough. I wasn’t supposed to… I wasn’t supposed to fall for you.”

“Clarke…”

“I can’t. It would ruin my family’s reputation.”—Clarke struggled to keep her voice steady—“It would ruin everything Wells and I have been working toward!”

Clarke ran her hands through her hair, sighing in frustration, in anguish. “I married Wells. I can’t throw all of that away.”

Clarke saw the moment the fight left Lexa.

It was the moment Clarke’s heart broke.
“Then tell me to go.” Lexa said softly.

Clarke stared at her for a long moment, heart pounding. Lexa said nothing else, did nothing else but stand there staring back, jaw clenched.

“Is that what you want?” Clarke asked, voice barely a whisper.

She watched as the muscles in Lexa’s jaw twitched before she said, “I want you.”

“Lexa…”

“I know.”

“I can’t…”

Lexa’s chin tilted toward the sky slightly, eyes closing as she said, “I know.”

Clarke took a step forward before stopping herself, knowing there was nothing she could to ease Lexa’s pain.

“You can’t do this.” Lexa said with painful finality.

Clarke felt as though her heart splintered.

Lexa stood rigid, as if she were shutting herself off more and more with each passing second.

Clarke opened her mouth to say anything that would stop Lexa, but there was nothing she could say.

Lexa said, “You can’t do this. So I’ll walk away and you’ll never see me again.”

Blue eyes locked with green.

“I…” Clarke began in a whisper.

She couldn’t find anything to say.

Lexa’s eyes closed again, a single tear running down her wind-kissed cheek. She nodded to herself once as if she needed to gather the strength to say, “Don’t forget me.”

Clarke felt her heart splinter further, the shards fracturing apart like broken glass.

She moved before she could think of the thousand reasons she shouldn’t. Clarke would take this one thing, this one other step too far. It was unfair, it was selfish, but she couldn’t stop herself. She threw her arms around Lexa, holding onto her as if she needed to memorize the feeling, to lock the memory of Lexa away. She did need to, Clarke realized as a tear slid down her cheek—all she’d have were memories.

“I won’t remember anything else.” Clarke whispered against Lexa’s ear.

Lexa’s arms tightened around her, holding her close. Clarke took in the smell of Lexa’s skin, the softness of her hair, the way their bodies fit together.

Clarke didn’t want to let her go, didn’t want to lose her.

But she had no choice.

No, perhaps she did, but Clarke made hers the moment she married Wells.
So Clarke wrapped herself in Lexa, lost herself in the scent and weight and warmth enveloping her. She’d made her choice, but she would carry memories of a choice she wished was possible.

Lexa pulled away, brushing her lips against Clarke’s cheek.

And Clarke memorized the feel of her lips too.

Neither of them spoke as Lexa stepped back, hands still in Clarke’s. Clarke fought the urge to pull her back in, to weave their fingers together and keep Lexa from leaving.

Lexa didn’t give her the chance. With one final nod, one last painful glance, Lexa turned on her heel and walked away.

Clarke watched her leave.

Rooted in place, all Clarke could do was watch.

The image burned in her mind for two days. Two excruciating days.

Clarke moved through the hours like a ghost, full of forced smiled and barely there laughs.

Wells gave her the flowers, Lexa’s flowers, and Clarke fought to keep tears from flooding her eyes. When he handed the lilies to her, he said nothing of the concerns he’d shared with Lexa. Clarke was thankful he didn’t.

She needed to talk to him.

Some part of her knew she should have talked to him weeks ago.

But she wasn’t ready.

Clarke kept the flowers where she could avoid looking at them. It was too painful to see the blooms, to know where they’d come from, to have the reminder of that day—the kisses and confessions. So she hid them as best she could as she worked up the nerve to finally tell Wells.

It took her two days.

The night Clarke decided she could do it, she could talk to her friend, she paced their apartment, waiting for him to get home. Of course he’d gone out after work. Of course he was late the day she finally found the courage to tell him.

Clarke deserved it, she supposed.

As the clock approached midnight, she didn’t expect to still be mulling over the things she wanted to say, hoping they were right, knowing they very likely weren’t. Clarke thought the hours she’d spent agonizing over what to say would be gone, she thought the worst would be over. The clock kept ticking and Clarke began to wonder just how long she’d have to wait.

Eventually, finally, she heard the key in the lock.

Clarke breathed a sigh of relief even as her heart felt like it would beat through her ribs. She couldn’t remember being so nervous.

When Wells stepped into the apartment—their home—Clarke’s relief turned sour.

He was drunk.
Drunk and trying to sing.
Clarke tried to laugh, tried to find it amusing, but the sound came out strangled, uneasy.
“Heeyyyy.” Wells slurred, smiling wide as he saw Clarke. “I didn’t think you’d still be up.”
“Shit, Wells. Where have you—“
Wells started singing again, throwing his jacket over the back of a chair before disappearing into the kitchen.
Clarke followed, desperately wishing she could somehow sober him up.
“Wells?”
He fumbled with in a cabinet, retrieving a glass he immediately filled. “Eight glasses before bed and the next day, you feel no pain!”
“Wells…”
Wells held his hand up as he chugged his water before saying, “Yes my darling dearest?”
Clarke felt the corners of her mouth sink. “Please don’t call me that.”
He laughed as he filled his glass again.
Clarke watched as he went through the post-drinking routine he’d learned in college. It was not the first time Clarke had seen it, not the first time she’d helped him, but it was the first time Clarke found herself fighting tears with every drip of the faucet.
She needed to talk to him.
Wells finished another glass, his brows knitting together in confusion. “Why are you still up, Clarke?”
She looked away, trying to keep her voice steady. “I wanted to talk to you about something.”
Grinning as he filled the glass again, Wells said, “Just a few more of these and I am all yours!”
Clarke knew she shouldn’t, knew she should tell him it could wait. But she wasn’t sure she could. She’d spent hours thinking over what to say, spent hours worrying over how much to tell him. Clarke wasn’t sure she could work up the nerve again.
“I’ll wait out here.” Clarke said, leaving Wells to his water.
A moment later, he came stumbling out, crashing onto the couch they’d bought during what felt like another lifetime.
“Okay, shoot.” Wells said as he made himself comfortable.
Clarke ran her hands through her hair, the words she’d practiced so many times fleeing her thoughts now that she was actually about to give them voice.
“I…”—Clarke took a deep breath—“I wanted to talk to you because…”
He nodded along, eyes heavy from the amount of alcohol he drank. “Very listening.”
“Wells, I have to talk to you because this thing happened. I wasn’t looking for it, it just… it just happened and although it’s over, you have a right to know.” Clarke continued, each word coming out slow and thick, “You have a right to know why I’ve been so distracted lately, why I…”

She sighed, stopping with her back to him, too scared to look at him as she said, “I fell for someone. I fell for someone and it wasn’t you. I’m sorry. I’m so sorry. I always hoped something might happen between us, that maybe our friendship could grow into something else. I thought that would make it easier on us, and maybe it would have, but… it wasn’t you I fell for.”

“Wells, I…”—Clarke turned around, looking for her friend, looking for a sign that he did not hate her—“Wells?”

She felt the blood drain from her face.

Wells was asleep.

“No, no, no. Don’t sleep.” Clarke begged, “I can’t say this more than once.”

Wells didn’t stir, too gone in his booze.

Clarke couldn’t stop the rest of her words from spilling out, “I’m staying. Please know I couldn’t, wouldn’t, leave you, not after everything we’ve talked about doing. I told you I would do this with you, so I will.”

The guilt over her feelings for Lexa still twisted within her like a knife. She could not make them stop, but she would find a way to ignore them. For Wells, she would find a way to make their marriage work.

“You’re my best friend, Wells. That was enough before. It’ll be enough again.”

Clarke reached for the blanket draped across the back of the couch, carefully covering Wells before she stepped away and retreated into the silence of her room.

She didn’t see Wells open his eyes before throwing the blanket to the floor.

---

Chapter End Notes

Since we’re at the height of the angst here, I wanted to take the time to thank you all for reading and taking the time to comment/leave kudos/subscribe/etc. I’ve been dealing with more than I’d like lately and working on this fic has kept me going on days when I really don’t want to do anything at all.

So that being said, hang in there, ’cause I promise this one has a happy ending! And as always, feel free to leave a message here or on Tumblr.
Lexa was miserable.

She knew the pain would fade eventually. She would take her heartache and weave it amongst the other scars that ran under her skin. It would be a challenge, but it was one she would take head-on. She’d promised Clarke she would.

Whether or not she did so in Polis, well, that’s the thought that kept her up at night. That, and too many ‘what ifs’.

Sleep eluded her as she considered how long it might take for her to feel as though she hadn’t lost Clarke, for her to accept that Clarke was never hers to begin with. So she tossed and turned, wavering between believing she would be able to move on as if nothing happened and considering the idea of getting away for a while.

She did not like to think of it as running away, Lexa knew better than that—on more than one occasion, she and Anya had taken trips to ground themselves—but some part of her hated how easily Clarke slipped past her defenses, how easy it had been to shake Lexa’s being. She wasn’t surprised though, how could she be when she thought of the first time Clarke looked at her? With that one glance, Lexa knew she was gone, knew every wall she’d built around herself would come crumbling down.

Even as she stood amongst the rubble, with her heart vulnerable and breaking, she still felt her pulse quicken at the memory of Clarke’s smile, of her blue eyes.

Sighing, Lexa checked her phone as a text came through.

**Anya:** Since you drank the last of my whiskey already, should I get more or is beer enough?

**Anya:** I vote for beer. It'll go better with tonight’s pizza.

**Lexa:** Beer is fine. Water is also fine.

**Anya:** Fuck water.

At that, Lexa felt the corner of her mouth inch toward a smile. As always, no matter what, Anya was there for her. As always, Lexa was grateful.

When Lexa told Anya what happened, Anya had spent a solid minute staring at her in silence. Then she’d called Lexa an idiot. Then she grabbed two glasses, poured more whiskey in each than was entirely responsible and called Lexa an idiot again before downing her drink in one gulp. Then they’d gone to the bar.

The hangover Lexa had the following morning had nearly kept her from opening the shop, but Anya was there for her again with medicine and coffee. Fortunately, she’d had no trouble getting out of bed this morning, although the boredom of sitting in a mostly empty shop all day began to wear her down.

No customers meant she had too much time to think about Clarke, about herself, about staying, about
leaving. She was eager to see Anya and Aden again, if only for the distraction. No, not just for the
distraction, for the love they’d always shown her.

She caught a shadow as it passed along the glass of her front door.

Lexa’s brow furrowed as she saw who entered her shop.

“Bellamy?”

“Lexa.”

There was nothing pleasant to his tone and Lexa immediately felt her body grow taut.

“What brings you in?” Lexa asked, barely trying to sound welcoming.

She saw the look in his eyes and warning pulsed through her veins.

“It is you, isn’t it?” He asked, anger clouding his expression.

“What are you—“

Bellamy cut her off. “Wells doesn’t know who it was. He said she never told him. I figured it out
though. It had to be you.”

Glaring, Lexa asked, “What did he say?”

“Just tell me I’m wrong.”

Lexa’s muscles tensed, jaw setting defiantly as she stared back at him.

Bellamy took her silence as his answer. “How could—“

Anger surged within her.

“Don’t start.” Lexa commanded, daring Bellamy to keep talking.

He scoffed. “Don’t start? I’m the one who saw Wells, I’m the one who was there to pick up the
pieces when he called me.”

“Get out, Bellamy.” Lexa warned. “You aren’t my friend, I don’t give a shit what you think
happened.”

“She’s married!” Bellamy shouted. “What was that thing you said to me that night after dinner?
When you were apparently trying to talk yourself out of fucking things up for my friends? ‘Don’t
mess with other couples’? You really stuck to that one, didn’t you?”


Bellamy hesitated as if he was thinking of something else to throw in Lexa’s face. Before he could
say anything, the door opened again as a customer stepped into the shop and began looking around.

Lexa threw a glare as sharp as a knife toward Bellamy, silently daring him to say anything else.

“Take your own advice, Lexa.” Bellamy said as he ripped the door open. “Walk away.”

If he thought to say anything else, Lexa didn’t let him. She slammed the door on him, narrowly
avoiding hitting him with it as he stepped over the threshold.
Lexa took a deep breath before addressing her customer. “Sorry about that. How can I help you?”

The man waved his hand dismissively. “I’m looking for a breakup plant.”

Lexa scowled, thankful that the man’s back was turned to her. “A what?”

“A breakup plant.”

Lexa tried to stamp down her ever-increasing annoyance. “Explain.”

The man sighed as if Lexa was wasting his time.

Her annoyance slipped closer to anger.

“Well, I don’t like my girlfriend. I want to break up with her. With a plant.” He said.

“It should be a breakup bouquet, and it should be hydrangeas.” Lexa reached for the flower in question as she explained, “They mean it’s over, but think well of me.”

The man glanced at the flower Lexa held.

She couldn’t help but notice he had not looked her in the eye once.

“I’ll take one.”

“One bouquet?” Lexa asked, hoping she hadn’t misunderstood the man.

He sighed again. “No. One hyer-whatever.”

“That’s not—”

The man held up his hand. “Look, I don’t care if she thinks well of me.”

“You know what?”—Lexa returned the flower to it’s vase as fury swelled within her—“Fuck off!”

The man finally looked her in the eye. “Excuse me?”

“You heard me, get the hell out of my shop.” Lexa said, tilting her chin toward the much taller man as she stepped toward him, pushing him back. “Go.”

He grumbled something low under his breath as Lexa ushered him out the door. Lexa didn’t care.

She yelled after him, “She’s better off without some ass like you anyway!”

As soon as she was along inside her store, Lexa flipped the sign to ‘closed’. Taking a deep breath, she closed her eyes, trying to calm the storm inside her.

She could power through, pretend like nothing happened.

Or she could go.

Lexa felt the clenching of her jaw and knew what her answer would be.

A moment later, steadied by the newly found surety of what she should do, Lexa locked up her shop and grabbed her things. She’d be early for dinner, but it wouldn’t be the first time Anya came home to find Lexa already on her couch.
Sure enough, a few hours later when Anya and Aden walked through the door, there was hardly a flicker of surprise on Anya’s face when she saw Lexa.

“Lexa!” Aden yelled.

Smiling, Lexa got up to hug him. “Hey, kid.”

“I already told Anya we aren’t allowed to have pineapple on our pizza tonight.” Aden said matter-of-factly before disappearing to rid himself of his backpack and school clothes.

Confused, Lexa asked Anya, “But we never order pineapple?”

Anya shrugged. “Hell if I know, there was some debate at school about it. I was just going to go for the usual.”

Laughing slightly, Lexa said, “Yeah, please do.”

“And I’m going to order said pizza as soon as you tell me why you closed the shop early.” Anya said, grabbing two beers.

Happily taking the beer Anya handed her, Lexa explained with a shrug. “I had to deal with a couple assholes and I got tired of kicking people out of the store.

“Fair enough.”

Anya didn’t press for details.

“I also figured something else out.” Lexa said.

“Oh?”

“I’m leaving.”

Anya’s expression hardened. “It’s that bad, huh?”

Sighing, Lexa said, “I’m going on vacation. I don’t know where, but I’m going. I need to clear my head.”

Anya took a long pull from her beer before nodding to inclining her head toward Aden’s room and saying, “We’ll be here for you when you get back.”

__________

Clarke knew it would get easier eventually. It would get easier to wake up every morning and say hello to Wells as if nothing happened. She still felt guilty, still played over the words she’d said to him when he was passed out.

He hadn’t said anything the next morning or the next. Clarke didn’t say anything either, too scared to say the words again, too unwilling to do anything but try to push on.

Faintly, she recognized that Wells seemed to be avoiding her, but it was only the slightest tickle of a thought. She was too concerned with herself, too exhausted from being unable to sleep, too focused
on pretending like she didn’t have feelings for someone other than her husband.

Clarke knew she should, but she couldn’t bring herself to delete Lexa’s number or the messages they’d shared or even the pictures Lexa sent. Clarke kept them all, insisting she wouldn’t look at them. In truth, she hadn’t, not yet. Her resolve held.

How long it would, if it would, she was not sure.

She would move on though.

She had to.

The first moment of real panic she felt after her confession to Wells, after saying goodbye to Lexa, came the first time Clarke stepped back into Aden’s classroom.

She’d worried at first, been terrified of what Anya would say to her when she came to take Aden home. Clarke knew part of her worry was because she knew she’d deserve whatever awful thing Anya said to her or whatever hateful scowl Anya sent her way. She’d been ready for that, been ready to face Anya’s wrath. She deserved it, after all.

What she was not ready for was Aden.

Aden, and his insistence on telling her about the movies he watched with his sister, about the times Lexa joined them. Clarke could have stopped talking to him, should have backed off and only helped him with his paint and charcoal and crooked lines, but she couldn’t. As if she wished to twist the knife she’d buried in her own heart, she clung to every word, every description of the life he shared with Lexa.

And at the end of each day, he walked himself downstairs where Anya stood by her car. Only once did Clarke catch Anya’s glare through the window.

She still would have preferred Anya storming into the classroom and screaming at her to the conversations she shared with Aden. Yet, every day, she’d talk to him.

“So did you get to watch the game last night?” Clarke asked Aden as she sat beside him once again.

Foolishly, she knew.

Aden shook his head. “No, I went to help Lexa pack instead.”

Clarke felt her brow furrow. “Lexa’s leaving?”

“Yes.” Aden said, oblivious to the way Clarke’s heart sank.

It had no right, she had no right to feel anything.

“Where’s she going?” Clarke asked.

She had no right.

She had no right.

Aden shrugged. “I don’t know, she just said she was going to be gone for a few weeks. She’s leaving tomorrow though so I won’t even get to watch that game with her.”

Tomorrow.
Clarke nodded, fighting the tightness in her throat.

Aden didn’t seem to notice then or for the rest of the day how the knowledge of Lexa’s leaving settled heavily on Clarke. He continued to paint, continued to work on his project as if nothing at all was wrong.

Clarke tried, tried to not let her mind wander to thoughts of why Lexa would leave, tried not to blame herself for forcing Lexa to run away. It was impossible not to though. She couldn’t help but allow this one more thing to add to her guilt.

It weighed on her through the day, after Aden walked himself out once again, after she got home, after she showered to try and release some of the tension in her body.

She started to accept it, started to wonder if this would be another facet of the pain she already fought.

Her phone buzzed and for one frightening, hopeful second, Clarke thought of Lexa.

It wasn’t her. Of course it wasn’t her.

**Raven:** Girl’s day tomorrow?

**Raven:** I can get some new parts for a car I’m working on, Clarke can get some more paint, and Octavia can body slam poor unsuspecting dude who hits on us at whatever bar we end up going to later.

Clarke read over the message, a slight grin forming.

She started to respond, but Octavia beat her to it.

**Octavia:** I’m in! This week has been hell so I could use a good Saturday with friends.

Clarke hated to be the bearer of bad news.

Especially when she would much prefer being with Raven and Octavia.

**Clarke:** Sorry, I told my parents I would go over to their place tomorrow.

**Octavia:** Guess we’ll just have to have fun without you.

**Raven:** And drag your ass out with us to the bar anyway because I don’t know what happened, but you’ve been a bit out of it lately.

Scowling at her phone, Clarke typed out a response, deleted it, typed out another, then deleted it too.

She always hated how easy it was for her friends to read her. Between the two of them and Wells…

Wells, who she’d pushed away.

She typed out another message.

**Clarke:** Believe me, I need a date with the two of you and I wish it could be tomorrow.

Because tomorrow was when Lexa was leaving.

**Raven:** A date with us or a date with whoever you were talking about the other night? ;)
Raven: Don’t think we forgot about that, Griffin.

Octavia: Raven! Now you’ve scared her off.

Octavia: You know you can’t ask her things like that until you have her cornered and she can’t avoid us.

Clarke debated not answering, debated doing exactly what Octavia thought she would. Instead, she responded, too tired to avoid the string of texts Raven would send if she didn’t.

Clarke: … can we not talk about that?

Raven: Damn, Clarke. Are you sure you can’t get out of seeing your parents?

Clarke: You know I can’t.

Octavia: But you’re definitely going out with us after. I’ll come get you myself if I need to.

Clarke knew she meant it. There’d been a few times in her life she’d been dragged out of her apartment by either Raven or Octavia and Clarke couldn’t blame them for wanting to do so now. The only thing that scared her was knowing that no matter what, no matter if Octavia hauled her away in the middle of the day, it wouldn’t be enough to distract her.

Lexa was keeping to her promise.

Lexa was leaving.

Chapter End Notes

We're nearing the end and I won't lie, I'm pretty bummed about it. Don't worry too much though, there are still a couple chapters in store! Plus an epilogue I will do my absolute best with to make sure I leave you satisfied.

Let me know what you think of the story so far here or on Tumblr.
Lexa eyed the bag resting by the door. She was sure she’d packed everything, there had never been a single trip where she hadn’t been prepared, but knowing all her things were ready to go made the weight of what she was doing settle heavier on her shoulders. No, not the weight of what she was doing, the weight of why.

She never thought someone would be able to take hold of her heart the way Clarke did. She never thought it was possible for someone to consume her so completely. Lexa sighed, refusing to let her mind wander down that path once again. It was done.

“So did you finally figure out what you’re going to do while you’re gone or did you bother doing anything other than book a ticket?” Anya asked as she stepped inside the store.

“Good morning to you too.” Lexa said.

“I brought you coffee. It is a good morning.”

Lexa laughed slightly as she took the offered cup. The laugh sounded hollow even in her own ears.

“To answer your question, I rented a cabin.”

Brow quirking slightly, Anya said, “So predictable.”

Lexa could only shrug.

Anya sipped her coffee. “You sure you want to do this?”

Lexa said nothing for a moment. She’d asked herself the very same thing time and time again over the last few days.

“Yes.”

As it had each time she gave the answer to her self, there was little power to the word. Lexa wouldn’t give in to the sliver of doubt though, she couldn’t.

Anya said, “You love her though.”

Lexa felt a familiar tightening in her throat.

“Yes.”

This time, the word crossed her lips with certainty.

“So are you sure?” Anya pushed.

Lexa stared at her, gaze leveled as her chin tilted up slightly. “I have to.”

Lexa had spent years with Anya learning her ins and outs, learning the various facets of the hard face Anya presented to the world. Lexa knew her, understood her better than Anya would admit, but she was still stopped in her tracks at the unexpected softness in Anya’s tone as she asked, “Have you thought about telling her you’re leaving?”
Lexa felt the muscle of her jaw jump.

“I thought about it. Wanted to.”

“But you didn’t.”

“I would never.”

Anya gave a terse nod.

“Thank you for watching the shop for me.” Lexa said.

Anya shrugged.

“I’ll be back before you know it.”

“Good.” Anya said, “I’ll probably drive off all your customers if you’re gone too long.”

“You’ll be fine.”

Anya pointed to the closest flowers. “I don’t even know what these are called.”

Lexa laughed. “When has that ever stopped you from bullshitting?”

Smirking, Anya answered, “Not once.”

“See? You can make it through this weekend. After that, I’ve already made it known the store will be closed for a bit.”

“You just didn’t want me to be better at your job than you are, that’s why you’re closing.” Anya teased.

Grinning, Lexa said, “No, I didn’t want you to scare everyone away.”

“Where’s the fun in that?”

They both laughed, the sound lacking the heaviness that had sat around them since Lexa first announced she was leaving for a while.

After a moment, Anya asked, “Are you sure you don’t want me to give you a ride?”

“Don’t worry about it. You’re already doing too much for me.” Lexa said.

“You’re right.”

“I know, which is why I called for a car a few minutes ago.”

Lexa felt her lips spread into full grin as the expression was mirrored on Anya’s countenance.

It was Anya who spoke first, ushering Lexa on her way. “Go, I think your ride just pulled up.”

Grabbing her full backpack, Lexa threw it over her shoulder. It didn’t matter if the car outside was for her or not, Anya hated goodbyes—they both did—and neither wished to drag them on longer than strictly necessary. So Lexa walked out, leaving her shop in Anya’s hands.

The familiar nagging pulled at the back of her mind, the small voice accusing her of running. She pushed it away, knowing it wasn’t true, knowing not even Anya thought her a coward. Instead, she
focused on the thought of what she would find when her plane landed and she was amongst the trees and stone and leaves of the forest.

Lexa would be able to clear her head.

She’d be able to focus.

She’d be able to get over Clarke.

Minutes later, the car arrived. Sliding into the back seat, Lexa directed the driver to the airport. She eyed the door of her shop until she no longer could, then she settled in, reminding that small voice in the back of her mind that she’d chosen to leave for a good reason.

She turned off her phone, the first step in giving her heart the chance to heal.

__________

Clarke sat in her parents’ living room, staring at a spot over her father’s shoulder.

She hadn’t realized she’d been doing it until her father leaned into her field of vision, offering her a warm smile.

“Are you okay, dear?” He asked, his worry poorly concealed.

Smiling, Clarke answered. “Sorry. It’s been a long week.”

Her smile didn’t reach her eyes, she could feel it. From the way Jake’s own smile faltered, he noticed the strain behind hers.

“Leave her alone, Jake. Of course she’s okay.” Abby said.

Clarke saw the look in her eye, caught the edge in her mother’s gaze. It was a look of warning, a look daring Clarke to be anything other than fine. As she’d done for years, Abby managed to send a reminder of an unpleasant conversation with one glance.

Clarke wanted to yell at her mother, wanted to scream and cry and explain how hard it had been to do exactly what Abby had asked of her that night Clarke was ambushed at dinner. Clarke wanted to tell her mother every last painful thing she’d thought about, every ‘what if’ she’d abandoned in the name of the Griffin family. Clarke had done it, had done what her mother asked.

Clarke chose her family.

She chose Wells.

She broke her own heart.

Swallowing the taste of bile quickly rising in her throat, Clarke reached for her coffee.

She felt her father’s eyes on her. She knew he could tell something was wrong, he’d always been able to tell. Clarke couldn’t bring herself to look at him.

Clarke couldn’t bring herself to look at anyone.
She couldn’t remember the last time she felt so… numb. She tried to push past it, tried to jumpstart anything that would make her seem like her usual self.

An uncomfortable silence settled in the room.

When her mother could no longer abide the tension, she spoke and Clarke wished the silence had stretched on forever.

“The Council Gala is in three months and I am so very curious to know if the two of you will have any surprises in store for the attendants.” Abby said, her gaze dropping toward Clarke’s stomach.

Clarke’s eyes widened in understanding. “Mom, god, no!”

On impulse, she looked to Wells whose dark skin paled.

“We’re enjoying our lives as newlyweds for now. It’s hard to feel the need to shake things up when we’ve been so happy.” Wells said, his voice slipping easily into the diplomatic tone he used for work. If everyone in the room didn’t know him so well, there might not have been anything amiss in what he said, but Clarke recognized the lie and so did her parents.

“I’m glad to hear how well things are going for you both.”—Abby’s eyes narrowed ever so slightly —“Keep in mind though, one does want to have grandkids while one is still young enough to pick them up.”

“Mom!” Clarke practically begged Abby to stop talking.

Jake laughed, cutting in to save Clarke from whatever else her mother would be tempted to say, “Dear, leave them be. They’re happy as they are.”

He caught Clarke’s eye over the rim of his coffee cup. Clarke knew the look, knew he was asking her a silent ‘right?’

She looked away, fighting the pull of her mouth as it crept toward a frown.

“We’ve got a lot of things to accomplish together first.” Wells said, a smile not quite forming.

Clarke saw it then, saw how forced it was, saw how very unhappy he really was.

He turned to her and Clarke saw something in his eyes, something partially hidden. She knew then, somehow, that he’d heard her that night, he knew every word she’d said. Then she realized why she knew, understood why she hadn’t noticed before—it was the first time Wells had truly looked her in the eye since her confession.

Abby must have seen it too, seen the shadows in Wells’ eyes.

“Wells, is something wrong?” Abby asked, head tilted slightly.

Clarke looked away, scared the fear of Wells’ answer was painted too clearly on her face.

“No, I…” Wells hesitated.

Clarke couldn’t bring herself to look at him.

Clearing his throat, he stood. “Sorry, I think I need some fresh air.”

Clarke blinked in surprise as he walked out.
She looked to her mother, her father, whose expression of genuine concern was too much for Clarke to bear. She excused herself and followed Wells out. She didn’t know what she would do, what she would say to him, but she couldn’t wait with her parents, couldn’t face the questions they would inevitably ask.

So she followed Wells toward the garden, hoping the right thing to say would come to her before she saw him. She found him too quickly, facing the view toward the city.

“Wells?” Clarke called to him, feet crunching the gravel of the garden’s path.

He turned, eyes connecting with hers as he said, “I heard everything. The other night, I heard it all.”

She stopped, unable to get any closer to him, too scared to see what emotion swirled in his gaze.

“Why didn’t you say anything?”

“It hurt too much.”

“Wells…”

He was the one who stepped closer and Clarke saw the turmoil raging just under the surface.

Clarke didn’t know what she could say.

With a sigh, Wells asked, “Do you really want this?”

“Wells, I… we talked about this, we talked about—”

“No, we didn’t.” There was a bitterness in his voice.

Clarke deserved it.

“What do you want, Clarke? Tell me the real answer.”

She felt tears beginning to form in her eyes. “I never wanted to hurt you!”

He shook his head. “You don’t even understand how you hurt me.”

Clarke felt the blood drain from her cheeks.

Wells pulled in deep lungfuls of air as if in meditation, as if he needed the time to gather whatever he would say.

Clarke braced herself, knowing she deserved everything Wells could throw at her feet.

“I’m hurt because you didn’t come to me first, Clarke.” His posture softened, shoulders sagging as he continued, “We’ve been friends for as long as either of us can remember. We’ve always talked about crushes and first kisses and everything happening in our lives. I never wanted that to change, I still wanted to be that for you after we were married. I thought I could be.”

Whatever Clarke had expected, prepared for, it was not the sincerity, the kindness, in Wells’ tone.

“Wells…”

He shook his head. “It was our friendship I valued most, that I still value most. That’s why I suggested this marriage in the first place. I wanted to have a friend by my side as I dealt with my
father, with every expectation placed on our shoulders. Sure, I thought it might be possible for us to become more than that, but..

Clarke cut in, “Please, Wells, let me—"

“I will always love you as a friend, Clarke. Always.”—Wells grinned even as a tear slid down his cheek—“And it’s been tearing me apart because I didn’t know what was wrong, I thought it was something I did, but then it wasn’t, then it was something else entirely. Something you should have told me about.”

Nodding, Clarke couldn’t bring herself to say anything. Wells was right. She should have talked to him.

“I thought I would ignore it, I thought I would let you make the call. I don’t think you realize I heard everything that night. I suppose I should have said something about it too, but I was too mad, too upset you hadn’t mentioned it before. So I thought maybe it was best to act like nothing happened.” Wells laughed, a full smile resting on his mouth when he was done. “But god, I was wrong.”

Clarke’s brow furrowed. “What do you mean?”

“You’re miserable, Clarke.” He said simply.

She started to argue, started to deny it.

She couldn’t.

Wells said, “I love you, never forget that. You are my friend and I know you too well for you to act like you’re actually okay with us going on with this marriage like nothing changed. I thought that’s maybe what you wanted, but I know it’s not and I can’t pretend. I won’t pretend, not when you look so unhappy. I don’t want that for you.”

“Wells…”

“Nope.”

“I told her I couldn’t do it, I told her I…”

Wells’ smile grew a fraction. “So it is Lexa?”

Clarke went still.

“Oh, Clarke, I’m not mad you met her, I was never mad about that. I just wanted you to talk to me.”

Relaxing slightly, Clarke said, “But everything we talked about depends on…”

Shaking his head, Wells stopped her. “We will find a way. We always have. If you think you can truly love her, if you think she will make you happy, I will not stand in the way. I will not be the reason for your sadness.”

Clarke shook her head, unable to do anything else.

“Clarke…” Wells began as he rested his hands on Clarke’s shoulders.

“It’s too late.” Clarke’s voice came out as a whisper.

Wells grinned and Clarke faintly recognized the actual warmth in his expression.
“When have you ever given up so easily?” Wells asked.

“No, you don’t understand… I told her I couldn’t do it, I couldn’t be with her. She’s leaving.”

“When?”

“Today.”

Wells glanced at his watch. “The day isn’t over yet.”

Clarke felt her heart rate pick up, chest pounding as if her ribs might crack under the strain. She could barely understand what Wells was saying, could barely comprehend what was happening.

Wells stood in front of her, a smile on his face, no hint of the anger Clarke expected, the hatred she thought she might see. Of course it wasn’t there, of course Wells was the same friend he’d always been.

She should have talked to him at the start.

He grinned as if he saw the reasons behind the loosening tension in her body, behind the hopeful expression she sensed overtaking her.

With a wink, Wells said, “Let’s go get your girl.”

Chapter End Notes

It’s about time they talked, yeah? And it’s about time for that happy ending ;)

As always, feel free to leave a message here or on Tumblr.
It only took seconds for Clarke to reach for her phone. As soon as Wells’ words sank in, as soon as she understood he had every intention of helping her, Clarke reached for her phone. She needed to stop Lexa.

*Your girl.* Clarke’s mouth pulled into a grin as she latched onto what Wells said.

Clarke was so grateful, so painfully grateful she hadn’t been able to bring herself to delete Lexa’s number. With hands slightly shaking from fear, from the rush of what she was about to do, Clarke lifted her phone to her ear.

The call went straight to voicemail.

As if it would make any difference at all, Clarke tried again.

Still nothing.

She hung up in frustration.

Clarke fought with her shaking fingers to send a message.

**Clarke:** Lexa, I need to talk to you.

**Clarke:** Please call me… please.

“What’s wrong?” Wells asked.

Clarke frowned. “She must’ve turned her phone off. What if she’s on the plane already? What if it’s too late?”

“Maybe it’s not.”—Wells’s eyes lit up with excitement after a moment of thought—“We can go to her shop. Maybe she’s there? Or maybe there’s someone who can tell us where she is or where she’s going.”

Clarke nodded absently. There were too many things running through her mind. She didn’t care. The only thing she wanted to think about, needed to think about, was Lexa.

“I can get us there and will probably only break a couple speed limits.” Wells said, pointing toward the house.

Clarke grinned.

She was going to apologize.

She was going to make it right.

She was going to find Lexa.

Clarke launched herself toward Wells, throwing her arms around his neck. “Thank you.”
“Oh come on, there’s no time for that.” He said, the smile evident in his voice.

“Hush.” Clarke said as she pulled away, unable to find the words to explain how thankful she truly was.

Wells didn’t seem to expect anything more, reaching for Clarke’s hand to drag her inside. It took no prompting at all for Clarke to follow him.

When they entered the house, racing back into the living room where Clarke’s parents sat in silence, Wells didn’t give anyone a chance to react before he spoke.

“Sorry, we need to leave. Jake, does your car have a full tank of gas?” Wells asked, his excited grin a stark contrast to how he’d looked when Clarke’s parents saw him minutes ago.

“Um… yes?” Jake said, his head tilting slightly in confusion.

“Perfect. Mine is empty and we’re in a rush. Keys in the usual place? Clarke, I’ll pull the car up front if you want to explain!” Wells disappeared down the hall before Jake could answer.

Clarke could only smile.

Then she realized what she would have to do and the smile fell from her face.

When she turned to look at her parents, her father’s eyes danced with something akin to amusement while Abby’s mouth was set in a firm, stern line.

“Yes, please explain.” Abby said.

Clarke started. Stopped. She wasn’t sure where to begin.

“Clarke, is everything okay?” Jake asked.

His voice was soft, but the question was different than it had been before. He wasn’t truly concerned, not in the way he has been when she first arrived.

She nodded. “Yeah. Yes. I, um…”

She struggled to figure out how to explain, how to tell her parents. Clarke realized then just how much she was about to shake up their lives too, how much political damage control would need to be done. She realized it, and in the same breath, realized she didn’t care at all.

Wells was on her side. No matter what, she had him.

So she went for it.

“I fell in love with someone.”

Her father’s eyes were alight with joy.

Her mother’s expression soured.

Clarke nearly laughed.

“I’m sorry, what?” Abby eventually asked.

“I met someone. I’m in love with someone.” Clarke said as if it were so simple.
“Who could be so lucky?” Jake asked.

She grinned. “Her name is Lexa.”

Abby’s glare landed heavily on Clarke. “What are you saying, Clarke? What about Wells?”

Clarke’s grin grew, spread into a full smile at the thought of what her friend had said to her. “Wells is going to keep me from making the biggest mistake of my life.”

Somehow, Abby’s expression soured further and Clarke could practically see the various scenarios running through her mother’s mind. “Clarke—“

Whatever Abby was going to say, her words died as Jake interrupted her.

“What do you mean, a mistake?”

Clarke’s smile faltered. “I, uh, I told her I couldn’t… She’s leaving.”

“Good.” Abby said quickly.

Both Clarke and her father ignored her.

“Hence the car.” Jake said.

“Yes.” Clarke said with a nod. “I’m going to tell her I was wrong.”

“Clarke, we need to talk about this.” Abby said.

Jake was the one who spoke first. “No, we don’t. Abby, you know as well as I do that Clarke married Wells to make us happy.”

Abby started to protest, but Jake would not let her. “Don’t. I remember the night you downed a bottle of wine. You found it within yourself then to admit it when you were sure no one was listening to our conversation. We pushed her into this, the pressure we placed on her shoulders… the pressure Wells surely felt as well…”

“Dad, you don’t have to…” Clarke wasn’t sure what to say.

He shook his head. “I do. I should’ve said something before, I should’ve made it clear we would stand behind whatever choice for a partner you made.”

“Jake, what are you saying? If the Wallace family, if anyone hears about this, we will be neck-deep in the scandal for years!”

“And I will stand by our daughter through every minute.” Jake’s voice held no room for argument.

Clarke felt a tear slip down her cheek. She hadn’t noticed she’d started crying, hadn’t felt anything other than love for her father swell within her chest.

“Clarke, follow your heart.”—Jake stood, wrapped his arms around her—“Be braver than the rest of us.”

Clarke clung to him. She buried her face against his neck like she had a thousand times as a child.

“Thanks, dad.”
A car horn shattered the moment. Wells was waiting for her.

She started toward the door, her heart thrumming within her at the thought of Lexa, at the thought of her father’s love.

She couldn’t bring herself to care about her mom.

“Well okay then!” Jake reached for his jacket as he followed Clarke.

Clarke paused.

“You’re coming too?” She asked.

“I would certainly like to meet the woman my daughter has fallen head over heels for. Abby, are you coming too?”

Her mother hesitated for a moment before rising to her feet as well. “The gossip is going to run rampant anyway so I might as well be there to know how this goes.”

Jake sighed slightly before saying, “That’s a decent enough reason, I suppose. Come on then, after you, Clarke.”

Clarke looked between her parents, debated arguing, but settled on the idea that it would be a waste of time.

She needed to get to Lexa.

Climbing into the car, Clarke only smiled as her parents slid into the back seat. Wells started to question it, then seemed as if he too realized there was no use.

“Okay, let’s do this.” He said, revving the engine.

Clarke checked the time. There were still many hours left in the day, but too many had already been lost to the morning. Lexa might already be gone. But she might not be. That was the thought Clarke forced herself to focus on.

As an excited silence engulfed the car, Clarke sent another text.

**Clarke:** Please talk to me.

Part of her hated how desperate she seemed. Part of her knew she’d drop to her knees before Lexa and beg forgiveness anyway.

“What’s the plan?” Jake asked as Wells raced down the highway.

“Are you sure you want to do this?” Abby asked, looking as though she questioned ever agreeing to come along.

“Yes.” Clarke said without a thought.

“I just—“ Abby began.

Jake cut her off again. “Abby. Either get out of the car the next time we stop, or accept the fact that Clarke’s happiness matters.”

Abby huffed, her scowl softening when she caught Clarke’s gaze in the rear view mirror. “I don’t
want Clarke to be unhappy, I only—“

Clarke’s brow raised as she said, “Mom, quit while you’re ahead and don’t finish that sentence.”

Wells and Jake joined in with Clarke’s smile as Abby fell into silence.

“So you are going to tell us how the two of you met?” Jake asked as Wells took the exit for Polis.

“At the wedding.” Clarke said with the faintest hint of a laugh.

“She was our florist.” Wells said, grinning ear to ear.

The car practically skidded to a halt in front of Lexa’s store. They’d made it far faster than was reasonable and Clarke added one more thing to her list of things to thank Wells for.

“Wait here!” Clarke said, throwing open the car door, barely registering the loud thud of it slamming closed behind her as she ran into the shop.

Bursting through the doors, Clarke frantically looked around.

Anya.

Anya was there.


“Want to try that again?” Anya’s expression was set into a glare Clarke was sure could make almost anyone cower before her.

Not Clarke though, not now.

“Anya, I need to talk to Lexa.”

Only then did Clarke notice the tall, older lady in the shop glowering toward her, clearly offended by the interruption.

Clarke didn’t care.

Anya didn’t seem to either, choosing instead to continue staring down her nose at Clarke.

Anya’s eyes narrowed as she finally said, “She’s doing what you asked of her.”

“I was wrong.”

“You’re the one who told her no.”

“I know, but Anya, please. Everything I said to her, I was wrong… I… I love her and I can’t lose her.”

Clarke watched as Anya shifted, muscles coiling as if she was an animal ready to strike.

Clarke still stood her ground.

The corner of Anya’s mouth quirked as she spoke. “It’s about damn time you pulled your head out of your ass.”

Something akin to relief flooded Clarke’s veins.
“Her flight hasn’t left yet.”
Clarke was already turning, ready to jump in the car and race toward the airport.

“Wait!” Anya commanded.
Clarke stopped mid-stride.

“Like hell you’re leaving me here.” Anya said before turning her attention to woman whose scandalized expression was in danger of settling on her face permanently, “Nia, get out. The shop is closed now.”

The woman rose to her full impressive height, an indignant glare in her eye. “I have never—“

Anya immediately stepped toward Nia, her features arranging into a calm that was somehow more terrifying than the glare she’d given Clarke.

“So what? I told you to leave.” Anya said, voice dripping with menace.
Clarke tried in vain to hide her smirk as the woman left with a huff.

“Well, now that that’s done. Let’s go.” Anya said, locking the door behind her as she practically pushed Clarke out. “Lexa only left a little bit ago.”

Neither of them took much time to climb back in the car—Anya hadn’t even hesitated to make Abby slide over into the middle.
Wells spared a brief glance and warm smile toward Anya before asking, “Where to?”

“Airport.” Came Anya’s gruff reply.

As Wells sped down the streets, Clarke asked Anya, “Have you been able to get in touch with her?”

Shrugging, Anya said, “She probably turned her phone off.”

Clarke sighed.

“Well, if memory serves me, there’s a shortcut you can take through some back streets. Take the third left up ahead.” Jake said, pointing toward the intersection in the distance.

Wells did as suggested, only to turn into a mob of cars all blocked by a construction crew.

Clarke froze.

“Hang on!” Wells said, throwing the car into reverse right as traffic began to pile in behind them.

They were stuck.

And time was running out.

__________

Lexa checked the time. She was running late. She hated being late and the longer she was stuck in
traffic, the closer she inched toward missing her flight.

It had taken enough willpower to book the flight the first time, she didn’t want to think what it would take to do it again.

Sighing, she turned her attention to the driver.

“Hey, do you know how much longer it's going to—“ Lexa didn’t get the chance to finish her question before the driver held up his hand.

“Do you mind? I’m on the phone.”

Lexa bit back her retort. She knew he was on the phone. He’d been on the phone talking to god knows who about things Lexa had no interest in hearing for too long already.

She decided against arguing with him, choosing instead to focus on literally anything else to avoid knowing exactly what kind of night he expected to have when he got home.

Lexa checked the time again. If the construction crew couldn’t be bothered to move their cement truck soon, Lexa was going to miss her flight.

She ran her hands through her hair, eyes closing in exasperation.

The driver kept talking.

Lexa hated him.

She rolled down her window, happier to listen to the jackhammering and sounds of cars honking than her driver.

A minute that felt like an hour ticked by and the cement truck didn’t move an inch.

Frustration growing with each second, Lexa reached into her bag for her phone. If her flight was delayed, well, then she wouldn’t have to worry so much about being late.

As soon as the screen came to life in her hands, she saw the notifications come through.

Clarke.

Clarke: Lexa, I need to talk to you.

Clarke: Please call me… please.

Clarke: Please talk to me.

Lexa felt her throat constrict, felt her resolve begin to waiver.

Jaw clenched, she pushed the feeling aside, leaving Clarke’s texts unanswered.

She checked on her flight.

On time.

She was going to be late.

Lexa took a deep breath, trying to settle her thoughts as they began to tip dangerously toward
questioning herself.

To make matters worse, her phone began to ring.

Lexa stiffened as she saw the name on her screen.

Clarke.

Lexa’s grip tightened around the phone.

She answered.

“Clarke.”

"Lexa!"

Lexa was too busy glaring at the bike messenger happily singing as he wove through traffic to notice the relief in Clarke’s voice.

"Listen, we have to talk, I—"

“There’s nothing to talk about.” Lexa didn’t want, couldn’t bear, to listen to Clarke’s voice. It hurt too much. “You can’t do this. Bye, Clarke.”

With that, she hung up the phone and turned it off once again.

_____

Clarke called again.

And again.

“Come on, please just pick up…”

It was no use, the call went to voicemail each time.

“Clarke, are you okay?” Wells asked.

No.

She wasn’t.

“She hung up on me.”

Jake reached from the back seat to rest his hand on Clarke’s shoulder. “She’ll be back. She’ll come back and then you can…”

Clarke shook her head. “She doesn’t even want to talk to me.”

Anyaa mumbled something that sounded a lot like “fucking idiot.”

Wells began to say something as a bike messenger rode toward them. She heard his singing faintly at first.
“Wait…” Clarke said, watching the cyclist draw closer, hearing his voice grow louder. “That singing.”

“What?”

“I heard that singing before.”

Clarke laughed as she climbed from the car, looking around for any sign of Lexa.

Lexa, who was stuck in the same traffic.

“What are you talking about?” Abby asked.

Clarke barely heard her. She was too focused on finding Lexa. It was no use, she could only see a few cars around and Lexa could be anywhere in the tangle of angry drivers and honking horns. So she did the only thing she could think to do. She climbed on top of the car.

“Lexa!” Her voice barely caught the attention of the drivers right around her.

Clarke tried again. “Lexa!”

Abby shouted something from inside the car.

Clarke ignored her.

“Lexa! Please!” Clarke shouted once again.

She felt the disappointment welling within her. There was no way Lexa could hear her over the roar of machines and obnoxious sounds of car horns.

Then she remembered.

Clarke remembered what Lexa taught her.

She held her hands over her stomach, let the memory of Lexa’s touch guide her.

With a shaky inhale, Clarke prepared for one last effort.

“You’re a wanker number nine!” Her voice rang out, demanding the attention of every single person nearby.

Clarke watched.

Waited.

Until a car door in the distance began to open.

She never heard Anya’s growled response to Clarke’s words.

It didn’t matter. Nothing anyone said mattered.

Lexa heard her.

She was too far away for Clarke to see her exact expression as she climbed out of the car. Clarke couldn’t tell what emotion Lexa held in her verdant gaze, but Clarke didn’t care.

“Lexa! I can do this!” Clarke yelled.
Lexa stood there, staring at her and Clarke felt her stomach twist into a knot. She yelled again, willing Lexa to understand. “I can do this!”

Lexa began to move. It was slow at first, hesitant, but then her pace picked up.

Clarke watched Lexa weave closer for only a second before she climbed down from the car, running toward Lexa as soon as her feet hit the pavement.

She wasn’t sure how long it took, but as her heart pounded in her chest, Clarke came to a stop in front of Lexa.

“I can…” Clarke trailed off, too overwhelmed to finish the thought.

“Did you mean it?” Lexa stared at her, wisps of hair floating in the breeze, lips slightly parted as if in disbelief.

Clarke nodded slowly. “Lexa, I want this. I want you. I—”

Clarke stopped herself from saying anything else.

She wanted Lexa to hear what else she had to say, the three words Clarke almost let slip, but not now, not like this.

Clarke felt her panic rise as Lexa remained silent. She scrambled for something to say.

“And I get it if you don’t… I couldn’t let you go, not without telling you. You can leave if you want, but—“

Clarke wasn’t able to finish the thought. The words died as Lexa stepped closer, wrapping her hand around the back of Clarke’s neck.

The kiss stopped anything Clarke might’ve said, stopped Clarke from thinking about anything other than the softness of Lexa’s lips against her own.

Clarke kissed her back, letting the world around them fall away. She needed this, needed Lexa’s body against hers, needed to feel how much Lexa wanted her too. So she kept Lexa close, chased her lips and lost herself in the woman she loved.

Too soon, Lexa pulled away.

“Clarke.”

Clarke looked at Lexa then, sensing the doubt, the plea for this to be real in her own eyes. Lexa smiled and Clarke’s worry fell away.

Lexa said one thing before Clarke lost herself again.

“I want this too.”

Chapter End Notes

If you’ve seen the movie, you know this is the end. If you’ve been stalking the
comments, you know I'm not going to leave you just yet.

My current plan is to give you one hell of an epilogue so if there's anything you really want to see (or a particular *ahem* rating you're interested in), let me know here or on Tumblr.

For those of you who are just curious, well, let's say I might've mentioned that gala for a reason ;)
Epilogue

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Lexa’s breaths left clouds around her as she ran. Even with the late afternoon sun, the cool air sapped her warmth. She didn’t mind. The chill made it easier to push herself a little harder, to shave some time off her run before returning to her apartment where a long shower awaited her.

By the time her apartment came into view, Lexa’s whole body burned with the effort of running up hills and along quiet streets. She loved it.

Lexa loved the sight of Clarke standing at her door even more.

Weeks had gone by of shared kisses, shared beds, but a jolt of excitement still coursed through Lexa every time Clarke looked at her. Blue eyes would lock with green and Lexa was more and more sure every time that her heart belonged fully to Clarke.

Clarke, her girlfriend.

Clarke, her love.

“Hey.” Lexa said through the heavy rise and fall of her chest as she came to a stop.

“Oh, no, I just got here.”—Clarke shifted the garment bag she carried and Lexa immediately knew it was a lie—“And like I said, I was early. Wells had to go pick up his tux for the Council Gala so he wasn’t around to give me the details on that trip he’s taking next week. At least he’s going somewhere warm.”

Lexa took the bag from Clarke and decided to not mention how relieved Clarke looked as she said, “Well it’s warm inside so come on. You’ve been standing out here too long.”

As soon as they were inside, Clarke said, “Thanks again for letting me get ready over here. I—“

“Clarke, of course.” Lexa said, hanging the garment bag to preserve the undoubtedly pristine condition of Clarke’s dress.

Clarke had first mentioned getting ready for the gala at Lexa’s under the pretense of it being easier for the car to pick them up if they were already in one place. Lexa had agreed, knowing it wasn’t them being in one place that made the arrangement easier, but that most of Clarke’s things were already scattered around Lexa’s home. Lexa had smiled, the realization dawning on her suddenly—her home was becoming theirs.

The next day, Lexa had made a key for Clarke, keeping it nearby until she found the right moment to ask Clarke to move in. Lexa hadn’t asked, too distracted from imaginings of how she might ask something else of Clarke, how it might play out when the time came for her to drop to one knee.
“How was your workout?” Clarke asked as she wrapped her arms around Lexa’s neck.

Lexa smiled. “You can join me next time and find out.”

“Oh god no.” Clarke said before leaning in for a kiss.

Lexa could sense it as soon as their lips touched, the energy coursing through Clarke, the desire for more. Lexa felt it as if she were standing on the edge of the shore as the tide rolled in, each kiss a promise of the waves to come. She wanted to get lost in it, wanted to let the kiss grow into something deep.

So she did.

Lexa slid her hands across the curve of Clarke’s waist, pulling her in, holding their bodies together as their mouths sought each other. Having Clarke with her was intoxicating, a taste of something she wanted for the rest of her life. Her heart pounded in her chest as Clarke’s lips drifted to her jawline, to the spot right below her ear.

“Clarke, you’re going to have to stop kissing me like that if you want us to be on time.” Lexa said even as she tilted her neck to the side, exposing her throat to Clarke’s searching lips.

“What if I don’t care?” Clarke murmured against Lexa’s skin.

Lexa smiled, eyes closing with pleasure. “But you do. You need donations and if you don’t attend a function specifically designed to raise money…”

Clarke kept kissing her.

“Clarke.” Lexa said, barely a protest.

“You just look so good after a workout.” Clarke said, a smirk on her face as she stepped back.

“I’m sweaty.”

“It’s hot.”

Lexa laughed. “It’s gross.”

Clarke’s eyes darkened. “Then let’s get you in the shower. We do have to get ready, you know.”

“I believe I was the one trying to remind you of that in the first place.”

Lexa kissed Clarke then, unable to keep away from the smirk, the ever-building need for Clarke to be closer.

Clarke pulled away. “Are you sure you’re okay with going tonight?”

“Clarke, this is important to you and what you do. I might not have much experience talking to potential donors and trying to convince them to part with tons of money, but I want to be there for you.” Lexa said. “If I can handle the past few weeks of your mother testing me every minute, I can handle talking to these people.”

Clarke smiled and Lexa felt her heart soar. “You’re going to be great.”

“I know.” Lexa smirked. “And remember, I have actually met a few of these people before thanks to their willingness to spend ungodly amounts of money on their wedding flowers.”
With a hint of playfulness in her tone, Clarke asked, “Who would do such a thing?”

“Fortunately for me, you did.” Lexa answered.

Laughing, Clarke kissed her.

Lexa sank into the kiss, remembering that first day they met, remembering how they’d locked eyes across the room. As Clarke’s tongue pressed against hers, Lexa fought back a moan, remembering how lucky she was.

Clarke’s hands began to wander. Some part of Lexa knew she should stop her, should do something to keep Clarke’s hands from brushing against the muscles of her back, but with each kiss, Lexa found it harder and harder to think of how she should do her hair or the dress she needed to slip into. All she could think about was Clarke.

“So about getting ready…” Clarke whispered into her ear.

“Later.” Lexa commanded, already pushing Clarke toward the bedroom.

“Lexa…”

Lexa’s stomach rolled at the sound of her name on Clarke’s lips, at the feel if Clarke reaching for her, tugging at the bottom of her shirt. Lexa kissed Clarke as they moved. Her lips eagerly sought Clarke’s with each step, each grasp of searching hands.

She broke the kiss long enough to remove her shirt.

Lexa pulled Clarke closer to kiss her again, but Clarke stepped back, pupils wide as she stared at Lexa. It was a look Lexa had grown accustomed to, a look of desire and need Lexa would give anything to see for the rest of her life.

Eyes dancing over Lexa’s body, Clarke whispered. “You’re gorgeous.”

Lexa’s brow quirked right before she took off her bra. The look Clarke gave her then sent a spark straight to her core. The way Clarke grabbed her, the way Clarke kissed her as fingertips brushed over bare skin, turned that spark into an inferno.

Clarke’s hands were on her, pressing into her back, begging her to be closer. Lexa gave in, holding Clarke to her as they kissed, their movements building toward an inevitable crescendo.

The first time they slept together, the first time wandering hands and eager mouths filled their night, Lexa thought she’d never experience anything like it again. She was wrong. The pleasure she felt grew the next time, grew each time Clarke touched her, each time she had Clarke’s taste on her lips.

Lexa craved the high she got from having Clarke under her, on top of her, from having Clarke in her.

“Clarke.” Lexa nearly moaned as Clarke’s lips found her neck once again.

Clarke hummed against her neck.

“Take off your clothes.” Lexa said, eyes closed as Clarke began to kiss down her chest.

Lexa felt Clarke’s breath against her skin as she said, “Take them off me.”

Something in Lexa gave way. The desire building within her flooded her veins, pushing aside all thoughts of the gala, all thoughts of anything other than Clarke.
Lexa hungrily forced Clarke’s mouth back to hers, sliding her hands under Clarke’s shirt as the patience in their kiss dissolved. Breaths coming quicker with each second, Lexa pulled away, yanking Clarke’s t-shirt over already tousled waves of golden hair.

“Fuck.” Clarke whimpered as Lexa pushed her back on the bed.

Lexa took in the sight, basked in the image of Clarke on her bed, her heavy breaths drawing Lexa’s focus to the rise and fall of Clarke’s chest. She stared, transfixed by the lacy bra, by the softness of Clarke’s body, and lust dancing in her eyes.

“God, I love when you look at me like that.” Clarke said, her raspy voice sending a wave of warmth between Lexa’s legs.

Lexa felt the smirk tug at the corner of her mouth as she tugged at the button of Clarke’s jeans. “Like I want you? Like you’re the most beautiful woman I’ve ever seen?”

Clarke sat up, hand wrapping around the back of Lexa’s neck to pull her down for a kiss.

“No.” Clarke said, “Like you love me.”

Their next kiss was full of smiles as Lexa said, “I do.”

For a brief moment, the heat of their kisses died down, flames burning toward embers.

One bite of Lexa’s lip was all it took for the fire to surge once more.

The rest of Lexa’s clothes—what little there were—quickly joined Clarke’s shirt and jeans on the bedroom floor, wholly forgotten.

Lexa couldn’t bring herself to strip Clarke bare, not yet.

She loved seeing what Clarke wore under her clothes, the underwear and bras that fit so perfectly against soft hips and full breasts. Lexa knew she didn’t have the time to admire Clarke as much as she wanted, knew no matter what, they would have to leave her bed too soon, but she couldn’t bring herself to rush.

“Lexa.”

Clarke moaned as Lexa ran her hand up the inside of Clarke’s thigh.

Slowly, she moved higher, tracing her thumb over the crease of Clarke’s hip before moving away.

“Lexa…”

The plea came as a whisper.

Lexa’s fingertips brushed over the fabric of Clarke’s underwear.

Lexa could feel the wetness soaking through, could feel the heat between Clarke’s legs.

Clarke whimpered as Lexa moved her hand away. The sound was enough for Lexa to give in, for her to free Clarke of the last of her clothing. Still, it was not enough for her to cave into her desire for the sound of Clarke’s release.

Her mouth moved to Clarke’s chest, her own body responding as she felt Clarke’s hips moving under her, a silent plea for her mouth to be elsewhere.
Clarke writhed under her as Lexa’s mouth caressed the peak of Clarke’s breasts. Soft kisses leading to a harder press of lips, of teeth. Clarke moaned with each movement.

Lexa felt her wetness growing, her need for Clarke coursing through her. It only increased as Clarke wound her hands through Lexa’s hair, holding her closer, begging for more.

Lexa relented, her desire to taste Clarke sending her kisses lower along the smooth skin of Clarke’s stomach.

Clarke rolled against her as Lexa’s mouth reached the crease of Clarke’s hip. Lexa couldn’t bite back her hum of pleasure. Clarke wanted her, needed her, and Lexa couldn’t bear the thought of making her wait any longer.

The first pass of her tongue was deep, languid, as Clarke let out a moan of bliss and surprise.

Lexa felt a knot form in her stomach at the sound, felt it tighten and slip lower with each press of her tongue, each whimper and moan Clarke gave her.

Clark’s hands searched for Lexa, searched for something to grab onto as Lexa’s mouth brought her closer and closer to release. The slow pace of Lexa’s deep kiss quickened, pressure placed right where she knew Clarke needed her. She relished the taste of Clarke, the way Clarke held her head as she moved, the way Clarke’s hips searched for a way to let Lexa’s tongue reach all of her.

Not for the first time, Lexa wondered if she could find her own release from nothing but watching, listening to, Clarke build toward hers.

Clarke’s moans grew deeper, grip grew tighter as her thighs began to quiver. Lexa held her, savored the taste on her lips, the heat against her tongue as she brought Clarke over the edge.

Her moan pulsed through Lexa, an echo of Clarke’s pleasure settling between Lexa’s legs. She ached to be touched, ached to have Clarke against her.

“God, that was…” Clarke said with her ecstasy-thickened tongue.

Lexa kissed her way up Clarke’s body, lips stalling at Clarke’s chest as the sound of moaned half-protests reached her ears.

With a smile, Lexa kissed her, letting Clarke taste herself. Her own desire slicked her thighs, the evidence of her pleasure at seeing Clarke come undone.

“Fuck, you’re so wet.” Clarke said as Lexa’s thigh slid over hers.

Lexa couldn’t deny it. “Seeing you come does that to me.”

“Let me show you how I react when you’re the one moaning.” Clarke said, eyes swirling with dark desire as her hand trailed down Lexa’s side.

If she didn’t need Clarke, if she wasn’t on the verge of begging Clarke, Lexa might have used her body to pin Clarke to the bed, to hold her there while she brought Clarke crashing down once again. Instead, Lexa’s eyes drifted closed in pleasure as Clarke flipped her onto her back.

Lexa did not have to ask, did not have to give voice to what she so desperately wanted. Clarke’s weight was on her, Clarke’s hand was between her legs, Clarke’s fingers were inside her, before Lexa could do anything but give in to the euphoria of Clarke’s touch.
Clarke’s fingers curled inside her, pressing against the very core of Lexa’s pleasure. Lexa lost herself in the sensation, in the rhythmic thrust of Clarke’s fingers.

“I love watching you.” Clarke whispered between kisses left in the hollow of Lexa’s throat.

Lexa barely heard her, the increasing tension in her body overwhelming her. She could only feel. Lexa could feel Clarke in her, could feel her wetness allowing Clarke deeper, could feel when Clarke straddled her thigh.

Lexa’s eyes shot open, searching for Clarke’s as Clarke began to grind down on her thigh, the thrust of her hand matching the pace of her hips.

Moaning as Clarke’s hips pushed down harder, her fingers pushed deeper, Lexa felt herself climbing, felt her rapture coming closer and closer.

“Come for me, Lexa.” Clarke demanded.

There was nothing else Lexa could do but obey. She let herself go, let her cry pass her lips as she held onto Clarke, pressing her thigh up as Clarke continued to move against her, within her. Clarke stiffened against her, muscles tightening as her own orgasm ripped through her, her moan lost in Lexa’s mouth as their kiss held them in synch.

When the need for air became too great, their lungs forcing them apart, Lexa smiled through her ragged breaths. Clarke stared down at her, her own smile wide and full of the love Lexa felt bursting from her chest.

“So, about that shower…” Lexa said.

“Are you sure we can’t be late?” Clarke asked, eyes glinting.

Lexa grinned before kissing her again.

__________

Clarke dug through the drawer, searching for the lipstick she knew was the perfect shade. There was no sign of it. Frowning, she looked again. She would’ve sworn she’d brought it, would’ve sworn it was one of the many things that had found its way out of her apartment and into Lexa’s home—the home that was beginning to feel more like theirs although Clarke was too scared to admit it.

She’d thought to wait until she was entirely ready before she let Lexa see her, thought it would be worth the look on Lexa’s face. Even without her lipstick, the last touch before she was ready to face the crowd at the Council Gala, Clarke stepped out of the bathroom.

Lexa’s expression told her there was no need to consider the lipstick, no need to do anything other than stand before Lexa in her dress the blue of coming night and deep oceans, echoing the color of her eyes as if Clarke herself was the sky come to life. She’d picked the dress specifically for Lexa, specifically so Lexa would look at her with desire tangled in love.

“Clarke… you look…” Lexa tripped over her words.

Clarke grinned, knowing there was undoubtedly a a hint of a real blush peeking through the painted
pink of her cheeks.

“You look amazing.” Lexa eventually said.

“I was actually hoping to have some lipstick on too.”

“The red one?”

“Yeah.” Clarke said, watching breathlessly as Lexa walked toward her. “That dress is… beautiful.”

Clarke eyed the black dress draped perfectly on Lexa’s body, Lexa’s cascade of dark hair over one shoulder, Lexa’s toned arms on full display, the hint of her long leg peeking out with every step. She looked incredible and Clarke could barely focus on anything else.

“You don’t have lipstick on yet.” Lexa said, the corner of her mouth lifted slightly.

Clarke stepped closer. “I don’t.”

“Good” was all Lexa said before Clarke was enraptured with another kiss.

Immediately, the heat began to build between Clarke’s legs once more. She pulled away in frustration over having to leave, in frustration that she could have Lexa make her come again. “You can’t keep kissing me like that.”

Lexa laughed breathily, “Now where have I heard that before?”

It was intoxicating, the smell of rich Lexa’s cologne contrasted with the feminine cut of her dress. It was a contrast, a contradiction that sent Clarke’s heartbeat racing to her core.

“It’s already going to be hard enough to keep my hands off you all night.”

Lexa smiled, a smile full of honesty and love. “Do you have any idea how hard it’s going to be watching you in that dress all night?”

“Well I did buy this for a reason.” Clarke said.

Lexa kissed her again, hands drifting slowly down her curves.

Clarke sighed in disappointment as Lexa stepped away.

“Clarke, the car has already been waiting for twenty minutes.” Lexa said, only a slight hint of chastisement present in her tone.

“We’re going to be late, aren’t we?”

“We already are.”

Clarke grinned. “It was worth it.”

By the time Clarke found her lipstick and she managed to convince herself she’d had enough of the taste of Lexa’s lips, enough of the feel of their bodies pressed together (for now), they were pushing their arrival time to well beyond fashionably late.

Clarke couldn’t bring herself to care.

She began to question her decision to attend the gala at all as she sat beside Lexa in the back of their
limo. It was torture keeping her hands from blatantly wandering up Lexa’s thigh, torture to keep herself from kissing down the delicate, exposed line of Lexa’s neck.

Lexa leaned over to her as their driver brought the car to a stop and moved to open their doors. Whispering, she said, “The way you’ve been looking at me already is making me wet Clarke, keep that in mind.”

Clarke’s mouth went dry as she felt Lexa’s teeth tug at her ear.

Before Clarke could say anything, Lexa was climbing out of the car. Clarke pressed her legs together, knowing it was going to be absolute hell to try and focus on anything anyone said to her throughout the night. All she could think about was how Lexa had felt under her, how it had felt to have Lexa’s fingers inside her as the shower’s hot water beat against her back, and how desperately she wanted to do it all over again.

“Ms. Griffin.” The driver offered his hand, clearly aware of how lost Clarke was in her own thoughts.

She hoped the fierce blush blooming across her cheeks did not give too much away as to exactly where her mind had been.

When she was out of the car and on Lexa’s arm, Clarke felt a different kind of fluttering in her stomach accompany her craving for more of Lexa.

As if she’d noticed a shift, Lexa asked, “Are you okay, Clarke?”

Nodding as they climbed the stairs to the massive doors that would lead them to the source of Clarke’s newfound anxiety, Clarke said. “I think this is the first time I’ve been nervous for one of these events.”

“Really?” Lexa said, nodding politely to the man who opened the door for them.

Clarke smiled hesitantly. “This is the first time I’ve truly cared about the person I’m with.”

The hallway before them was littered with a few faces Clarke recognized. She knew there would only be more as soon as they entered the main hall, many of which had been all too eager to spread the gossip of her divorce as soon as she and Wells had filed the paperwork.

Clarke added, “Not to mention, this is the first time we’re undoubtedly the conversation topic for many of these people.”

“Then we’ll have to make sure we give them something to talk about.” Lexa said, wrapping her arm around Clarke’s waist.

Clarke grounded herself in the touch, focusing on Lexa’s steadying presence. “I love you.”

Lexa tightened her grip. “I’ll be with you all night, don’t forget.”

“Believe me, forgetting is not the problem.” Clarke said as she leaned toward Lexa, letting her voice drop so Lexa would know precisely what she meant.

The faint blush she got in return sent Clarke’s lips toward an unstoppable grin.

Lexa’s blush still hadn’t faded as they reached the main doors and crossed the threshold into what felt like a different world. Clarke’s smile grew as they entered the hall. Couples swirled around the
center of the room, coaxed to the dance floor by the rich sound of stringed instruments. It was opulent, it was too excessive, and Clarke felt her nerves ease away, morph into something entirely different.

Pride.

Pride at facing the demons her mother insisted would await her for choosing Lexa.

Pride at having a gorgeous woman on her arm.

Pride at knowing how deeply, truly in love she was with Lexa.

Heads turned to look at them as they descended the steps.

Clarke watched as some of them turned to their own partners, whispering their thoughts. She watched as some gave her a polite nod. Those were the people she vowed she’d speak to first.

In time, the crowd’s attention shifted, leaving Clarke and Lexa to find their friends.

Anya was the first they saw, flanked by Octavia and Lincoln.

“I do hope she doesn’t hate me for inviting her.” Clarke said as soon as she saw Anya’s scowl.

“She could have said no and might have if she didn’t know more people who would be here, but don’t worry, she can hold her own.” Lexa said as they approached. “Besides, it’s not like she won’t enjoy scandalizing as many of these people as she can.”

“You’re damn right.” Anya said, having overheard the tail-end of Lexa’s reassurances.

Clarke smiled in greeting. “I’m glad you came, Anya.”

“Not as glad as I am.” Lincoln said, clinking his drink against Anya’s nearly empty rocks glass.

Anya grunted in return.

“I love your dress, Clarke!” Octavia exclaimed after a thorough examination.

“Not as much as Lexa does, I bet.” Anya said, smirking.

Lexa rolled her eyes. “See, Clarke? I told you Anya would enjoy herself.”

Clarke might have offered more than a small laugh in acknowledgement if it hadn’t been for the way Lexa’s hand slipped to the small of her back, then lower, the movement hidden.

Clarke commended her own ability to school her features as Octavia said, “Just wait until Raven gets here, she’s our usual scandalous friend. I can’t wait to see what happens when she has Anya to goad her on.”

“Speak of the devil.” Raven said as she stepped into their circle.

“Finally!” Octavia said.

“Look, I had to scrub some oil stains of—” Raven stopped as her attention fell on Anya. “Hi.”

“Hey.” Anya said.

Clarke watched, feeling her brow rise with each passing second as Anya and Raven couldn’t tear
their gaze apart. When she felt Lexa look toward her, Clarke saw a knowing glint of something in her eye.

Anya cleared her throat before saying. “You must be Raven.”

Raven nodded. “And you must be Anya.”

No one else said anything as the two women continued to stare at each other.

Stepping toward Anya, Raven said, “So, uh, I don’t have a drink yet and you look like you need another…”

Anya stared, her gaze lacking its usual intensity. “Yeah. I… I’ll come with you.”

Clarke, along with everyone else, stared in shock as Anya and Raven strolled toward the bar.

“What the hell was that?” Lincoln asked.

Octavia held up her own empty glass. “I believe that might be the start of hearing way too many details of Raven’s sex life.”

Lexa nodded. “Yeah, Anya’s not going to live this one down any time soon.”

Their time with their friends was cut too short as Clarke saw her parents weaving through the ever-growing crowd.

“Clarke! Lexa! So glad you made it.” While there was a clear hint of her disappointment over how late she and Lexa were, Abby managed to sound mostly pleased as she approached the circle.

Jake’s greeting, as per usual, was much more genuine as he enveloped them both in a hug. “You ladies look absolutely stunning.”

“Thank you, Jake.” Lexa said, her tone slipping toward formal.

“And you must be Lincoln.” Jake said, offering his hand. “I’ve heard you’ve made one of my extra daughters very happy.”

Lincoln smiled and Clarke knew her father would need little else to be convinced of the love Lincoln and Octavia shared.

They chatted over the sounds of the band, sharing pleasantries and compliments. Clarke could focus on nothing other than the weight of Lexa’s touch.

“Clarke,”—Abby’s voice startled Clarke out of her memories of how she’d spent the early evening —“I would love to introduce you to a few people if you have the time.”

“Of course.” Clarke said as she tried to force a smile.

She knew there was no choice in the matter. At every function, she was expected to make her rounds with her mother. The conversations were often dull, and more often best described as political minefields. Clarke had warned Lexa, had even extended the invitation to Anya so Lexa would have someone to talk to if Abby’s opponents or allies became too taxing. Lexa had insisted she would stay by Clarke’s side.

And so she did.
For what felt like hours, Clarke followed her parents from group to group with Lexa in tow. Usually, she had no trouble conversing with her mother’s contacts, angling for donations, but she could not stop thinking of Lexa. Lexa, who still sent her heart racing with every look. Lexa, who effortlessly spoke to the people around her as if she were born for it. Lexa, whose presence along with Jake’s were making the political conversations bearable.

After one old man was rather enthusiastically complimenting Clarke on her dress, she’d had enough. She sought an out, looked for a chance to be with no one but Lexa.

“Clarke, we should discuss who could be our—“ Abby began.

Lexa cut her off. “Actually, Abby, I hope you don’t mind, but I’d like to show Clarke I was not lying when I told her I knew how to dance.”

Jake smiled and Clarke recognized the pride hidden in his expression. “Oh of course, Lexa. We’ve taken too much of your time. Go on, Clarke, enjoy the gala with your girlfriend.”

Hearing the warmth in her father’s tone nearly sent tears to Clarke’s eyes. Jake had been wonderful to Lexa from the start, defending Clarke’s relationship with her time and time again when conversations regarding the potential impact of Clarke’s divorce arose. Somehow, he’d even managed to convince Abby to give Lexa a chance. A chance Lexa had quickly taken and began to win Abby over as well, bit by bit.

Watching Lexa through the night, Clarke couldn’t help but think her mother would have little to complain about given Lexa’s ability to encourage a donation or two during every conversation.

Lexa stretched out her hand as she asked, “Clarke, would you like to dance?”

She didn’t bother trying to hide the relief in her voice. “Absolutely.”

Lexa took her in her arms as the band flowed into another song.

“Thank you for rescuing us.” Clarke said, “It’s always exhausting to talk to all those people. Are you sure you’re okay?”

Lexa pulled her closer as they took their first steps. “Between admiring how beautiful you look and thinking of my mouth between your legs, I am doing more than okay.”

Clarke couldn’t stop the faint moan from building in her throat. “Damn it, Lexa.”

Lexa said nothing, only smirked as they began their dance in earnest.

Clarke had expected Lexa to be a decent dancer. She’d expected Lexa to be rusty, to stumble over her steps right along with Clarke who had never been blessed with much grace. Clarke absolutely did not expect Lexa to be phenomenal at leading her across the floor. She should have and with each turn, she wondered why she’d doubted Lexa at all.

Clarke felt the stares of people, felt them talking about her and what she’d done. Each time, she looked at Lexa and lost herself in the green eyes she wanted to wake up to every morning.

They danced for a few songs, taking the time to whisper promises of things to come later in the night, taking time to enjoy nothing but each other. Eventually, the music began to fade once again and Clarke found herself being led toward the edge of the dance floor.
Lexa brought her to a stop and only then did she realize why.

“May I cut in?” Wells asked, his full smile greeting them both.

It was Lexa who hugged him first. “Of course. I should probably go make sure Anya hasn’t poured her drink on someone yet. This assumes she’s here and hasn’t already found her way into Raven’s bed.”

Before she slipped away, Lexa placed a lingering kiss on Clarke’s cheek. Somehow, such a simple kiss had a greater effect on Clarke than she would have thought possible. She ached as Lexa walked away, ached as she fought the urge to pull Lexa back to her.

“Clarke, I must say, that dress really is fantastic.” Wells said, wrapping her in a hug.

“Thank you again for helping me decide.”

“Did Lexa love it as much as I thought she would?” Wells asked with a wink.

Laughing, Clarke said, “Let’s just say we were a bit late tonight for a good reason.”

“If only my excuse was as good as yours. I was on the phone trying to sort out my hotel and the time difference is already a nightmare.”—Wells said as he offered his hand for a dance—“Shall we?”

Clarke easily stepped into his embrace. He was a good dancer as well, but Clarke could not help but keep thinking of how effortlessly Lexa had carried them across the room.

As they made their way deeper onto the dance floor, Clarke asked, “So do I get to know where you’re going?”

“An island off the coast of Hong Kong.”

Clarke tilted her head in surprise. “That’s a long flight.”

“It’s absolutely too long.”—He grinned—“But who knows, maybe I’ll have a seat next to some cute girl.”

Wells sent her into a slow twirl and as she came back to him, she kissed him on the cheek. “I certainly hope you do.”

They continued to dance, staying together even as the song ended. Clarke noticed the attention they were getting, noticed there were more eyes on her dancing with Wells than there had been while she was in Lexa’s arms.

“I wonder what kind of gossip we’re starting now?” She asked.

“Hey, it’s not every day someone’s girlfriend accepts an offer for a dance from her very recent ex-husband.” Wells said with a laugh. “Especially when you were dancing with a woman as gorgeous as Lexa. They’re probably watching us and wondering if you’ve decided to downgrade again.”

Clarke joined in with his laughter. “I’m going to miss you while you’re gone.”

“I know, but I think you’ll be just fine in Lexa’s hands.” He said.

Blushing, Clarke couldn’t bring herself to say exactly how grateful she was for Wells’ undying approval of Lexa.
Before she got the chance to say anything, Clarke felt Wells stiffen.

“Wells?”

“You’ll see.” He said as he spun them around in order to give her a look.

Her mother stood in one of her usual flocks, surrounded by faces new and old. With her stood Lexa, who seemed to be the focus of one person’s attention—a person Clarke absolutely wanted nothing to do with.

“Why the hell is Cage Wallace talking to them?” Clarke asked, bringing the dance to a halt herself. “We should—“

“Yep.” Wells said, already heading straight for the group.

As soon as they approached, Clarke could feel the tension in the group. As to be expected with the political vultures in attendance, what had once been a small social circle was quickly turning into a crowd of spectators.

“Clarke, so nice to see you!” Cage said, his smile bordering on a sneer.

Lexa’s smile was full of love for Clarke.

Clarke did not miss the threat coiled in her words as Lexa said, “Clarke, Cage here was just telling us he intends to focus some of his company’s work in my neighborhood.”

She immediately felt the muscles in her jaw clench painfully. “Oh?”

Clarke could sense the tension in Lexa’s body, could sense that whatever Cage had already said in front of her, Lexa had used all her restraint to not hit him.

“Yes,”—Cage lifted his drink to those gathering around them—“as I was telling everyone else, Polis has great potential. Some of those properties could be worth millions if we sweep in to clean the place up.”

Clarke wrapped her arm around Lexa’s waist. “There absolutely is potential in the neighborhood, which is abundantly clear the more I’m around the people who already live and work there.”

“And imagine what it could be if my family takes over some of the buildings there.” He said. “Just think, we could bring in more top-notch businesses like your girlfriend’s flower shop, Clarke. I hear she does wonderful weddings.”

Abby was the one who spoke, her own anger at the taunt unreadable to all except Clarke. “I imagine any buildings you purchased would end up like your previous projects.”

More than one of others in the group had the decency hide their reactions to Abby’s bold words. It had been no secret how poorly Cage and his father had treated their previous tenants. More than one story ran in the papers, each one featuring a quote from Clarke’s mother or father decrying the business practices so readily turned to by too many of Arkadia’s richest.

The months of scandal had made the Wallace family a permanent enemy of the Griffins, but Abby’s approval rating had soared and so it was deemed a worthy trade. For a time, at least, the dust settled. Then the gossip of Clarke’s divorce began, however, at which point Cage had felt bold enough to slither from whatever pit he was seemingly born in.
Cage ignored the scandalous whispering around him. “Say what you will, but our foundation has come across some donors who are very interested in finding ways to clear out the, well, more undesirable aspects of the locations we are scouting.”

Lexa’s brow rose as she said, “Interesting, since this is a charity function and I have yet to see you gather a single donation.”

“Our donors are, unfortunately, otherwise disposed tonight.” Cage said. Barely there, but noticeable to those familiar with him, was a flash of apprehension.

Lexa stepped forward, out of Clarke’s grasp. “I think you’ll find donations tend to go to people interested in assisting a community instead of replacing it. The Griffin Foundation is a perfect example, which I’m sure I don’t need to explain to you. If things worked differently and it were so easy to push out people who, as you say, are undesirable, then I imagine your own office would be vacant.”

Clarke watched Lexa draw herself to her full height as the murmuring of the people around them fell into silence. Cage stood before her, face reddening in anger, in shame. More than one person gawked at him, smiles beginning to form despite their clear effort.

Lexa lifted her chin as she said, “Now if you’ll excuse me, my girlfriend and I need to thank a few of tonight’s Griffin Foundation donors. Abby, please let me know if I can answer any additional questions for your friends.”

Lexa did not give anyone time to say anything else, before she took Clarke’s hand and walked away.

Once they were away from the main crowd, Clarke took over, pulling Lexa out a side door and toward a well-hidden balcony.

As soon as they were alone and the night air enveloped them, Clarke threw her arms around Lexa. “Lexa! That was amazing. I’ve never seen Cage so flustered.”

Clarke felt Lexa’s laugh echo through her chest. “The pleasure was all mine.”

Clarke stepped back, taking Lexa’s hands in her own. “Lexa, thank you. That truly was amazing. Even my mother was speechless.”

Lexa dipped her head in acknowledgement. “I think I might’ve won a few points tonight, yes.”

Laughing, Clarke said, “Maybe now she’ll realize just how much of a power couple we could be.”

Clarke tried to ignore the way her heart skipped a beat at the thought of doing this for the rest of their lives, at the thought of Lexa being the one by her side for years to come.

She wanted it, wanted Lexa to be the one.

Her lips were against Lexa’s before she truly knew what she was doing. Lexa melted against her, held her close and deepened the kiss. Clarke wanted this too, wanted to kiss Lexa for the rest of her life.

Pulling away, Clarke rested her forehead against Lexa’s.

“I love you.” Clarke whispered.

“I love you too, Clarke.”
“You’ve been incredible tonight.”

Lexa kissed her cheek. “Let me, and I’ll always be incredible for you.”

Clarke’s laugh bubbled from her chest. “No wonder you’re able to charm so much money out of these people. You always know just the right thing to say.”

“Would you like to go back inside and see if I can get a little more money for you?” Lexa asked, hands trailing down Clarke’s arms as if to ward off the pressing cold.

“I don’t know if there’s anything else you could do. I imagine there are people writing checks to my parents simply as a thank you for pissing off the Wallace family.”—Clarke looked toward the stars twinkling overhead—“Anyway, it’s nice out here.”

Clarke fought off a shiver.

“It’s cold.”

“It’s nice.” Clarke insisted, even as her breath fogged the air between them. “Fine, it’s cold. I just like being with you and can you blame me for wanting to take you back to bed?”

Lexa pulled her closer, a smirk on her lips. “If that’s the case, we could go to our home.”

“Our home?” Clarke asked.

Carefully, almost as if she was scared of her words, Lexa said, “Well, you have spent every night at my place for the last couple of weeks and I know it might be soon, but…”

Clarke felt her smile stretch. “Are you officially asking me to move in with you?”

Lexa nodded once, a grin tugging at the corner of her mouth.

Clarke’s heart swelled. She could see the twinge of fear in Lexa’s eye, the raw love exposed in Lexa’s vulnerability. As she did with each passing day, Clarke fell more in love.

“Yes, Lexa, let’s go home.”

Chapter End Notes

I might’ve made you wait a little longer than I initially thought, but I have to admit, part of the delay was because I’m sad to reach the end of this story (probably why this is twice as long as the actual chapters). The other part was because I wrote this fluff.

Hopefully the wait is worth it though!

As always, find me on Tumblr for more fic ideas and general f/f yelling.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!