

## **LARP**

By Helene Griffin

*Lyla Stevens is a 17 year old high school student. She is currently in an unhappy relationship with a boy named Brock; he is very controlling but doesn't put effort into their relationship. Calix Carlson, also 17 and in Lyla's grade, is the president of the LARP club; the club's only other members are Calix's friends Ellie and Ted. Ellie and Ted are pretty stereotypical dorks; Ellie wears baggy and unflattering clothes while Ted is a bit stuck up about his passions. Right now, Lyla is sitting on a park bench, waiting for Brock to meet her; he is forty minutes late.*

*LYLA: (sounding embarrassed and apologetic as she leaves a message to Brock)*

Hey Brock, this is Lyla – again. I'm sorry that this is my seventh voicemail and I'm sorry for all the screaming on the third and fifth ones but I was just wondering: did you think that meeting at 5 at the park for our date was a suggestion? Because I totally meant it as a solid plan. Any way, it's 5:43 now and I'm getting really hungry so if you feel like stopping by, feel free! Okay... well, I love you – and I know you don't love me back! You made that very clear in that Valentine's Day card. But still. I love you. Alright. Bye. *(closes phone and sighs)*

*Footsteps come thundering from the side of the stage and there are a couple enthusiastic cheers. Lyla looks over as Calix, Ted, and Ellie enter, wearing long cloaks with silver and gold blue stars on them. They are looking pretty nerdy.*

CALIX:            Alright everyone let's get this party p-p-poppin'! What's our scenario for the day –

*Calix notices Lyla, who is pulling her sweatshirt hood up in efforts to go unnoticed.*

CALIX:            Now hold on just a moment!

*Ellie and Ted grab on to the park bench as if they're holding on, clearly thinking they are hilarious.*

CALIX: Are my eyes playing cruel and beautiful tricks on me or is that Lyla Stevens, clearly trying to pretend she doesn't notice me, on that bench?

*Lyla groans and pulls down her hood a bit.*

LYLA: *(giving Calix a pained fake smile)* Hi, Calix.

CALIX: Well hey there DeLYLA! *(Ellie and Ted snort-laugh)*

ELLIE: Sick wordplay!

CALIX: Thanks, I worked on it for a while and have been waiting to use it. Anyway, Lylabug, what brings you to the park? Heard the announcement for our meeting and decided to show up?

LYLA: *(confused)* What, you mean there's some organization behind you dressing like that?

ELLIE: 'Course. We're the Lincoln High LARP Club.

TED: LARP means Live Action Role Play.

ELLIE: Meaning we come up with a setting and our own characters and act out everything our characters do.

TED: And guess what?

ELLIE: It's friggin' sweet.

CALIX: Guys, Lyla's not stupid; she can tell a cool thing from a stupid thing.

LYLA: *(eyeing the clubs' costumes)* Oh, yes. Yes, I can.

CALIX: *(sitting down next to Lyla)* So, come on, Lylaloops; what brings you to the bench?

LYLA: *(Lyla rolls her eyes at Calix acting as if 'the bench' was some cool hang out)* I'm waiting for someone.

TED: Someone who?

LYLA: *(glaring)* Someone.

CALIX: *(to Ted and Ellie)* I bet it's her boyfriend.

TED: Who? Kyle?

ELLIE: No, she's dating Jack.

TED: Who can keep up anymore? I mean, the girl gets around.

LYLA: Hey!

CALIX: Come on, guys; lay off Little Miss Lyla. She's dating Brock.

*Ellie and Ted groan.*

TED: Brock?  
ELLIE: I hate that kid. Brock isn't even a real name.  
LYLA: Yes it is!  
ELLIE: Oh yeah? What's it mean?  
LYLA: (*struggling*) It means the word rock with the letter B in front of it!

*Ellie and Ted laugh unkindly at Lyla.*

CALIX: (*stern*) Seriously, quit hating on Lyla. She can date who she wants to date.  
LYLA: (*smiles a bit, speaks with a tone of pleasant surprise*) Thanks, Calix.  
TED: (*rolling his eyes*) Calix, cut the cute stuff; we got a meeting to get to.  
CALIX: (*clears throat and voice takes an authoritative tone*) Right, right! Alright, so I think we agreed that today we're in the Kingdom of Nightingale?  
ELLIE&TED: Yup.  
CALIX: I'll be Ardworf, King of Nightingale. Ellie, you'll be Iris, revolutionary peasant –  
ELLIE: (*this apparently is an undesirable role*) Ugh, kill me.  
CALIX: Ted, you're Deerheart, famous knight and... (*turns to look at Lyla, who is sitting on the bench pretending to text*) Lady Lyla, would you like to be Queen Victoria?  
LYLA: Not at all.  
CALIX: (*slightly whiny*) Come on!  
TED: We've never had a girl in the club to play her!  
ELLIE: (*offended*) Hey!  
TED: (*oblivious*) What?  
LYLA: Guys, Brock is going to be here any minute.  
CALIX: What time is he supposed to get here?  
LYLA: Five.  
TED: I think that already happened.  
LYLA: (*snapping*) I know that!  
TED: Then why can't you play with us?  
ELLIE: Are you too cool?  
LYLA: No!  
TED: Of course she's not; she's the one who got stood up!

*Lyla glares at Ted while Ellie 'oohs'.*

CALIX: Alright, guys, love and LARP, love and LARP. There's no hating here –

LYLA: *(interrupting)* Fine. *(stands up and walks over to the box filled with costumes)* I'll be Queen.

*Calix looks as if he could die happy right there.*

TED: Do you even know how to LARP?

LYLA: Can't be that hard if you can do it. *(slips on a large and poofy pink dress)* My first order of business as Queen is to strip Ted of his knighthood *(Ted gasps in horror)*; you will now be a mere peasant.

TED: You can't do that! On what grounds?

LYLA: *(eyes narrowing, starting to get into the game)* Are you questioning my authority?

TED: Yes. Yes I am!

LYLA: I'll have you beheaded.

TED: You can't do that! *(turns to Calix)* She can't do that!

CALIX: She's Queen.

TED: But you're King!

CALIX: Eh, King Ardworf believes women should have equal ruling power. *(shrugs)* The times are a-changin'.

LYLA: Great! Now, Iris, I hereby appoint you to Knighthood.

ELLIE: *(jaw drops and she stares around as if even she can't believe her good luck)* Pinch me I'm dreaming!

LYLA: Nope, it's all real! Well, sort of.

TED: This is why we've never let girls into the club before.

ELLIE: Hey!

CALIX: Ted, that's enough.

LYLA: You've never let girls into the club before because no girl wants to join the club.

ELLIE: I have been in this club for two years and I am a girl. These are breasts, not fat deposits.

TED: No, we've never had girls in the club before because they always need help. You're a prime example of a girl who can't do anything without guidance.

LYLA: You sound like Brock!

*Lyla gasps and covers her mouth when she realizes what she's said.*

LYLA: *(trying to cover herself)* I mean... like, you guys have the same voice tone.

*The club remains quiet for a few moments. Lyla sits down on the bench dejectedly.*

CALIX: Does Brock boss you around?

LYLA: Yes.

ELLIE: Is this the first time he's stood you up?

LYLA: No.

TED: Is he the reason you're a crazy dictator Queen when it comes to punishing men?

LYLA: Probably. That and because you're an asshole.

*Calix smiles at Lyla and offers her a hand to stand up.*

CALIX: Did you know that standing a girl up for a date is a punishable offense in Nightindale?

LYLA: *(laughs a little and reluctantly takes Calix's hand)* Sure.

CALIX: I'm serious! It goes against the Anti-Douchebag Act of 1543! I believe you, Queen Victoria, enacted it.

ELLIE: You also proclaimed it was child abuse to give your children idiotic names.

CALIX: *(nodding at Ted)* And then you proclaimed that nerds who are too into Live Action Role Play must spend 30 minutes of their day outside socializing, not on their computers or watching Battlestar Gallactica.

TED: Hey, that's a personal attack!

CALIX: *(puts a hand on Ted's shoulder)* It's an intervention; it'll be good for you, I promise.

TED: *(sighs)* I know.

LYLA: Hm. Well, in that case I sentence is the dunce Brock to *(checks her watch)* 50 years in prison, one year for every minute of his tardiness! And to his parents, Lady Rita and Sir Jeff, I sentence them to a trip to Ye Ol' Hallmark to find a scroll of baby names to rename their son something less stupid. And to the peasant Ted – I mean, Deerheart – though you clearly need to see the sun

more (*pointing at his pale skin*) I will show mercy on you.

*Ted rolls his eyes.*

LYLA: I sentence you to get to talk to a girl and actually get to know her; she may not be as helpless as you assume.  
TED: Where am I going to find a girl to hang out with?  
ELLIE: Seriously, I promise you all that I have a vagina.  
LYLA: Ellie would be fine.  
TED: Huh. I always viewed you as kind of gender-neutral.  
ELLIE: You really are an asshole.  
CALIX: Well, I must say, Queen Victoria is getting more work done in this Kingdom than has been done in about seven meetings! (*turns to Lyla*) Normally we just run around and poke each other with plastic light sabers. You're really good at this, Lyla.

*Lyla is oddly very flattered by this compliment and grins at Calix.*

LYLA: You think?  
CALIX: Yeah, you're kind of a badass!  
LYLA: No one's ever said that about me before.

*Just then Lyla's phone rings.*

LYLA: Hold on, just a second. (*answers phone*) Hello? Oh, hey, Brock... oh, you were at B-Dubs? Yeah, I guess their wings are hard to pass up... No, I'm still at the park... Yeah, I guess that is kind of pathetic (*tries to laugh along with him but then starts to get angry*) Wait, actually that's really pathetic. You know, I've been waiting for you for an hour? Just sitting on this park bench, cold and hungry. You could have at least called. You could have at least come for a little bit! You could at least not be such a douchebag all the time; like, doesn't that take energy out of you? You live two blocks from the park, you could have at least drove by and shouted out that you weren't coming. It's okay though; I made new friends. People

who actually want to hang out with me. So don't bother coming now. Good day.

*Lyla hangs up and Ted, Ellie, and Calix applaud wildly.*

TED:            Alright, that was kind of cool.

CALIX:         Hey, we still got about another half hour of the meeting. I know you probably have other things to do, but you're welcome to stick around and keep playing with us for the rest of the meeting.

*Ted groans. Lyla thinks for a moment before smirking.*

LYLA:            Quiet, peasant *(she takes a sword out of the box)* or I'll have to fight you.

CALIX:         This is awesome.

*Lyla and Ted begin hopping around one another, flailing their fake swords. The group is all chanting and cheering; it's good times for all. Calix begins to run offstage.*

CALIX:         Victoria, lead the way! *(turning to Ellie and Ted)*  
Onward, gentlemen!

*Calix and Lyla exit, running off the stage.*

ELLIE:         Do I need to tie an 'It's a girl!' balloon to my wrist or something?

TED:            Don't worry, Ellie; I definitely know **you're** a girl.

*Ellie looks confused before Ted swoops in for a very awkward/uncomfortable looking kiss. They both enjoy it, though.*

TED:            Sorry 'bout all those boy jokes, babe; sometimes you gotta hurt 'em to get 'em hooked. *(He gives a hair flip that looks more ridiculous than cool and walks offstage. He is definitely not suave at all)*

ELLIE:         *(totally charmed by Ted's nerdy ways)* I love LARP.