

## “Obsidian Horse”

Writer: Abby

This was Williams first spring in National City. Before moving from London, he knew there was the occasional alien attack or random pod flying from the sky. He knew the National City real estate was always in a flux, but that you would generally be fine if you had good insurance. (Or you could do what half the employees at CatCo do and become desk-bunk-mates) Nevertheless, William knew all of this before leaping over the pond. What he didn't know was how stressful it was going to be!

Every other day, it seemed like a building was crumbling around him, or someone was trying to “take over the world”. There were little annoyances too like how the only people who seemed to work at CatCo were the ones who lived there. It was near impossible to share a byline with Kara or Nia.

Thus, William has put himself in a predicament... whether or not to use the pair of Obsidian lenses gifted from Andrea. He's sitting alone on a Friday night in an empty office with said lenses getting tossed and turned in his hands. He feels the weight of this new world, he misses home and peacefulness of the pastures outside London. He feels hypocritical for even thinking about using the lenses. From Kelly, he knows there were programming problems but he's facing problems in real life too. There are always problems but maybe just one try wouldn't hurt. So like an addict taking their first drink William puts on the lenses and enters into the Obsidian main frame.

The central location isn't what William expected. It's a crisp white room with a panel showing a selection of different simulations. Walking into the center William takes a closer look at what Obsidian has deemed his deepest desires and dreams. Scrolling through the feed he sees a range of pictures that have him from being a family man, to a secret agent, and the CEO of Catco. William swiftly scrolls past all of these because frankly, they seem like a lot of work. It's only when he gets to a calming picture of a horse with a blue sky that almost looks like it's flying does he stop. William stares at the stimulation titled Comet, it's like it's calling out to him and before he knows it he is swept into a new reality.

It takes William a moment to get his bearing-no wait, his reigns! What he thought was going to be a jump was a trot due to the addition of two legs! What he thought was going to be a scream was a loud neigh! What he thought was going to be a nice horseback ride was him becoming the horseback! Shocked, Williams takes a deep breath in and out. It is after he's calmed down that he looks around at the large meadow and long grass dancing with the wind that the thought dawns on him... that the grass looks awfully tasty.