Second Chances

by kellsbells

Summary

Kara hasn't seen Lena Luthor in almost twenty years. In the time in between, she's been married to Cat Grant, the love of her life, until Cat's death at 70. Kara meets Lena at a charity gala in Metropolis, and they speak for the first time since the Daxamites left National City. Something grows between them, and Kara is conflicted about whether to have another try at love, given that it can only end in heartbreak once again. However, when someone else dies, things are brought to light - things Kara couldn't have imagined - and suddenly she is given a second chance, and Lena Luthor with her.

Notes

Here’s a little something I’ve been working on for a while. Today seems like a good day to start posting it. My first shipping experience was with Bering and Wells, a non-canon ship on Warehouse 13. I have never been overly concerned about whether the actors or showrunners or whoever support shippers or don’t; I just write because I enjoy it and it’s therapeutic for me. I have never expected SuperCorp to be canon (though of course, if it were Lucas Luthor instead of Lena, we wouldn’t be having this conversation. Monologue. Anyway.) But this weekend at Comic-Con broke my heart. I thought we were past this sort of stuff, especially given that we have Alex, a late-in-life lesbian, as part of the canon universe. The idea that Kara could fall for another woman is not ridiculous; in fact I understand it’s now canon from the comic books. So I will continue writing these amazing characters for as long as they inspire me, and I urge you all to do the same. Read/write/draw what inspires you. Kara Zor-El wouldn’t have laughed at that stupidity, nor supported it. This weekend, Katie McGrath has been my Supergirl.

This fic is somewhat inspired by this piece by JoyfulTemplar, which I urge you to read. It is
beautiful, though completely heart-breaking. https://www.fanfiction.net/s/11735484/1/Five-
Time-s-Kara-Didn-t-Understand-Mortality

There is a lot of death in this fic; it’s intended to have a larger scale, timewise, than any of my
other stories. There is also a part detailing a suicide attempt, so please read with caution. This
fic is tagged as SuperCat as well as SuperCorp. If anyone would like me to remove the tag
because the fic is mainly about Lena and Kara, I will do so – please shout in the comments.
But the SuperCat relationship is just as important as the SuperCorp one; it just happens to be
in the past, here.

Apologies for the giant note; I’m not much of a notes writer, generally, but I had to just get
that off my chest.
Chapter 1

Lena Luthor.

Kara’s not sure when she last saw Lena. She knows it was after the Daxamites were driven from earth, but she’s not exactly sure when. Kara had been so preoccupied back then with her own guilt about what happened with Mon-El, with the fact that she was in love with him and he was gone to Rao only knew where, that her memory of events afterwards was pretty foggy. He never did come back, and while Kara is sorry about that, her greatest regret is that she gave him her mother’s necklace. She would never be able to get that back, that last part of her family - barring a miracle.

Lena fled National City not long after the Daxamites were driven off-world by the lead-seeding device. She left LCorp to the board, who appointed someone completely forgettable to take Lena’s place. She filled Kara’s office with plumerias one last time, with a note that said, simply, “I’m sorry.” Her phone was disconnected.

Kara had been tempted to fly after her, to find her wherever she was hiding in the world and talk her into coming back home, back to National City. Back to Kara. But she ultimately decided that having superpowers didn’t give her the right to invade Lena’s privacy. (Okay, so Alex might have persuaded her that finding Lena by listening out for her heartbeat was borderline creepy, without her consent.) So Kara reluctantly stood back and waited for Lena to return, believing with all her naïve Kryptonian heart that Lena would, because they were best friends, right? She had underestimated Lena’s stubbornness, clearly. Because here she is, setting eyes on Lena Luthor for the first time in almost 20 years. She knows she’s staring, her eyes wide as she takes in every detail of the woman she had loved so very fiercely back then. Platonically. Mostly.

Lena hasn’t seen her yet. She’s talking to the Mayor of Central City, who for some reason is here in Metropolis for this charity gala. The particular gala is for a children’s cancer hospital, a cause close to both Kara’s heart and Supergirl’s. Being Supergirl is a little more complicated these days. Thankfully Kryptonite is no longer a thorn in her side, since Winn and Alex came up with a ‘cure’ for her sensitivity to the radioactivity emitted by the rock. But Supergirl hasn’t aged in the last 20 years, and Kara has had to, because she has people in her life who don’t know she’s Supergirl, and those people don’t need to know. Her staff at CatCo, for starters, not to mention pretty much everyone involved in her Kara Danvers-Grant life who isn’t a close friend or family member. So Kara has to use some modified tech that Barry Allen and his team provided, tech that makes her look like she has crow’s feet and wrinkles and like her body has lost some of its tight musculature, spreading a little in the middle. Kara doesn’t mind; she finds the process of ageing fascinating and is more than a little upset that she won’t get to experience it firsthand. Seeing what she would look like if she had the chance to age normally is kind of cool.
Kara shifts uncomfortably and something about the movement must catch Lena’s attention, because she looks in Kara’s direction and does an actual double-take, her mouth falling open ungracefully. She quickly excuses herself, walking over to Kara so quickly that it could be mistaken for a run.

“Kara,” she breathes, holding her arms out. Kara swallows her misgivings and steps into Lena’s arms, putting her arms around Lena and squeezing her carefully, at human strength.

“Lena Luthor, as I live and breathe,” she says, stepping back and smiling. Lena is stunning. Her once black hair is shot through with lines of bright silver, and while on some people it might make them look old, on Lena it just looks… right. There are little crow’s feet at the corner of her eyes, a few more wrinkles near her mouth. But all in all she doesn’t look much different from the 24 year-old CEO Kara knew a lifetime ago. Her hair is swept over to one side, leaving her neck exposed, and she’s wearing a deep red dress. Daxamite wedding gowns aside, red has always been her colour.

“Kara Danvers. Or is it Danvers-Grant?” Lena asks, smiling. Her face falls, then, as Kara’s does. “Oh God, Kara. I’m so sorry. I… I’m so sorry. I heard about Cat. She was such an incredible woman.”

Kara bites back tears, mustering up a smile from somewhere.

“She was,” Kara murmurs, standing back a little, as if to take Lena in. “And you. You’ve been making quite the splash. I hear that this hospital is going to be out of business shortly?”

Lena bites her lip bashfully.

“It is, with any luck. One more round of trials to prove that there really aren’t any side effects to this version of Biomax, and then Jack’s vision will become a reality. Cancer will be the first target, and my board are arguing over the next. In any case, we expect to have eradicated most of the world’s fatal diseases within the next two decades.”

“I wish Cat had been around to see this,” Kara says, her face twitching a little as she tries to maintain her composure. If Cat had lived a few more years, it might have been possible to cure her heart condition with Lena’s tech.

“I’m so very sorry, Kara,” Lena says, touching Kara’s shoulder gently. She’s still so sincere, it makes Kara’s heart ache. She wants to shout at Lena, ask her why she deserted Kara all those years ago when she was so lost. But she nods instead, and is relieved when Lena takes her hand back, leaving
Kara’s skin cooling in the overly moist air of the ballroom.

“So, you’re still at CatCo, I hear,” Lena says, after a moment, clearly not wanting to end their conversation just yet.

“Yes. Cat wanted me to take over from her as CEO, but I didn’t want that. The news is kind of in my blood, now,” Kara says, fiddling with her glasses. It’s been a long time since she has done that, but Lena Luthor has always made her a little nervous. “I’m running the News Division. I don’t have to do the day-to-day editing, but I still have the power to kill stories or to run them as I see fit. I definitely didn’t see that in my future when I worked for Snapper all those years ago,” she says, her smile a little more sincere, now. Lucas had been a son-of-a-bitch, but she’d been devastated when he had an aneurysm at his desk at CatCo. It was how he would have wanted to go, she knew, but that didn’t make it any easier on her. She is tired of losing people. Eliza has cancer, now, and while the doctors have given her another five years or so, it’s just another reminder of everything that Kara is going to lose during her very long life.

They talk for a little while longer, and then Lena leaves to make her rounds, elegant as ever, touching Kara’s arm for a little too long before she disappears. Kara is in her hotel room an hour after the gala has ended, sipping some Aldebaran rum. Since Cat’s passing she carries it with her, for when she really can’t turn her brain off. There’s a knock at the door, just then, and when she answers, a hotel staff member hands her an envelope. Inside it, there is a hotel room key, with a room number on the sleeve, signed with an L.

She thinks about it for a while before she finds herself standing outside of the door of Lena’s hotel room, key in hand, hesitating. She takes a deep breath before touching the keycard to the sensor. The door opens slowly, and she steps inside, into the semi-darkness. The room is a suite, of course – Lena has always been used to the finer things – and Lena is curled up on the couch in the room, watching whatever is playing on the wall screen.

Kara watches her for maybe half a minute, because Lena hasn’t heard her coming through the door. She takes in the waterfall of hair, now messy, and the comfortable but stylish pyjamas. Lena’s legs are tucked up underneath her, and she’s leaning with one elbow on the armrest of the couch.

“Lena?” Kara says, as quietly as she can manage, not wanting to startle her, but Lena is startled anyway. She almost falls off the couch, so Kara moves forward at slightly less than superspeed to steady her.

“Hey,” she says, and Lena smiles at her. It’s her ‘Kara’ smile, the one that Kara had only ever seen directed at her.
“Hey yourself, Kara,” Lena says, her eyes soft. “You came. I didn’t know if you would.”

“Why wouldn’t I?” Kara asks, with a shrug. “I missed you, Lena Luthor.”

Lena winces a little, but Kara is smiling, and there is no bite in her tone. She really has missed Lena.

“Can I get you a drink?” Lena asks, looking at Kara uncertainly. Kara still has a hold of one of her elbows and is almost on her knees in front of the couch. Kara shakes her head, she doesn’t want a drink. But she does want something. She lets her other hand reach up and cup Lena’s face gently, and her eyes roam across Lena’s familiar features, cataloguing the tiny differences that 20 years have wrought on her friend’s visage.

“You are so beautiful, Lena Luthor,” Kara says, and Lena blushes, biting her lip. That’s all it takes for Kara to move forward, touching Lena’s lips with her own for the first time. It’s not earth-shaking passion, not almost violent the way her first kiss with Cat was, but then everything with Cat was a fight. But it’s definitely not nothing, and when Lena leans forward and opens her mouth and lets out a tiny little gasping moan as Kara sucks on her tongue, it becomes something really fast. Lena slips one hand around Kara’s neck and pulls her hair down, throwing the hair-tie away somewhere where it pings off something made from glass. She is a hair puller, something that doesn’t surprise Kara, but she’s almost tender with it, little short pulls interspersed with scratches and rubbing, and Kara immediately falls in love with Lena’s touch. Their kiss starts to escalate, and Kara decides that, while she’s supposed to be middle-aged and her muscles starting to give in to gravity, that doesn’t mean she’s not allowed to have any muscles at all. She encourages Lena to wrap her legs around Kara’s waist, and then she lifts her, carrying her to the bedroom and pinning her up against the wall for a few moments while she kisses her way down Lena’s pale neck and sucks on her earlobes and bites and nips at her, grinning at the tiny noises that Lena makes.

She’s quiet, restrained, and Kara isn’t surprised by that, either. She’s always had to be restrained, Lillian beating any sort of spontaneity out of her as a child. But she is responsive, physically, her head falling back and her eyes rolling in her head as Kara moves a hand to her breast, rubbing softly first before squeezing at the nipple and chuckling as Lena gasps.

She carries Lena to the bed, letting her down gently and then climbing on the bed to hover on top of her, Lena’s eyes widening at the show of controlled strength. Maybe she should have pretended to shake or dropped her a little, but she wanted to be gentle with Lena. She deserved to be worshipped. Kara was still hurt by Lena’s disappearance, by the long years between their last meeting and now, but she is still as attracted to Lena as she ever was, and she still cares. It’s part of what makes Kara who she is, perhaps, but Lena has always brought out her protective nature and caring spirit, mostly because Lena is just as caring and in some ways just as sweet and naïve as Kara was as a 13-year-old alien, landing on an unfamiliar planet with no idea what she would find.
The sex is slow, long-awaited as it is, but passionate. Kara is well-practised in how to make a woman come; she’s been married to Cat Grant for almost twenty years, and Cat is… was not a patient woman when it came to her own satisfaction. Kara has always enjoyed taking her time, but there would come a certain point when Cat’s patience would run out and she would grab Kara’s head or hand or whatever toy they happened to be using and put it where she wanted it, regardless of how much Kara might want to tease her and drag things out. Kara used to love it when Cat got to that point, because it meant that she’d driven her past politeness (not that Cat had ever put much stock in that idea), past her usually soft, sweet nature when it came to Kara. Lena, it turns out, has done her homework, too, and Kara wants to know how many women she has practised her skills on, while at the same time not wanting to know at all. She loses count of how many times they come, together and separately, trying a little of everything and taking breaks for water or the bathroom. They fall asleep around 5, Kara thinks. When she feels the first rays of the sun stirring at her cells, she wakes to a sleeping Lena lying on her side, holding a spare pillow to her abdomen, almost in the foetal position. Her back is bare and marked by Kara’s mouth and fingers. Kara was a little rough at times, she has to admit, but she doesn’t think Lena minded. She was pretty sure she’d be sporting more than a few bruises herself, if her skin wasn’t impenetrable.

Kara hadn’t expected to end up in bed with Lena Luthor when she arrived at the gala the night before. She hadn’t expected to see Lena at all. But it somehow felt fitting, that they had ended up in bed together after all this time. It was something they probably would have done had things gone differently all those years ago. She kisses Lena’s cheek gently, managing not to wake her, and makes her way back to her room to shower and change. She has the hotel deliver some plumerias to Lena’s room and then heads back to National City with a small smile on her face. She’s been on a leave of absence for the last ten months, since Cat’s death, but it’s past time for her to return, and she’s ready, now, thanks to Lena. She doesn’t understand why one night with Lena Luthor has helped her to get back to reality, but it has and she decides not to question it.

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It’s two months after the gala and she’s fully back in National City as both Kara and Supergirl. But she’s not feeling like herself; she feels restless, as if something is missing. Cat is gone, of course, and that is so much of a gut punch that she can’t quite understand how she’s still standing. But that’s part of her curse, as a Kryptonian here on earth. Unless someone finds something as lethal to her as Kryptonite once was or manages to make her solar-flare and then kills her and destroys her body entirely, she’s effectively immortal. It makes her sick to think that Astra died of something so simple as a sword to the chest, when she could have lived for an eternity under this yellow sun. Another part of her wonders if maybe Astra might have been revived by Sol’s light, and where she might be, now.

Kara spends her down time at the home she’s shared with Cat for the past two decades. Sometimes Carter comes to stay for the weekend, his husband Daniel coming along most of the time. They don’t live far from National City, but she still insists they stay when they come by so they can all drink a little and get silly. Carter and Daniel are adopting a baby girl soon, and Kara is looking forward to having a grandchild. However, part of her is devastated that Cat doesn’t get to do this. Cat would have been the most amazing grandmother. She was an amazing mother to Carter and, eventually, to Adam. (Once he got over her marrying the assistant he’d dated for five seconds, that was.) She
would have doted on the baby fiercely and that kid would have grown up knowing exactly how much her grandmother loved her. Katherine Grant, Cat’s mother, had been a harridan, a screeching hell-witch who had systematically torn Cat to pieces as often as possible. One of Kara’s first acts as Cat’s wife was to ban Katherine Grant from CatCo and from Cat’s home – their home. It caused a rift between Cat and her mother, but since Katherine couldn’t hurt Cat if she never saw her, Kara was glad she’d done what she did. Probably there was some deep-rooted trauma in Katherine’s past that had made her the evil harpy who hurt Cat so profoundly, but when Kara had watched her wife reduced to a weeping mess on CatCo’s balcony for the third time, she put her foot down. She had never regretted it.

Alex and Maggie come by often, and they bring their son, James, and their daughter, Astra. Kara had never quite managed to get over Astra’s death at Alex’s hand, but she had forgiven her sister for saving J’onn. It’s what Kara would have done herself. Alex’s decision to call her daughter after Kara’s aunt had broken her, but in the best way. Her nephew and niece are so precious to her. She has already arranged for a trust fund that will pay for their education, courtesy of the fortune Cat had amassed during her time on earth.

But that something is making Kara restless, and she isn’t sure what it is. She spends some time with Lois and Clark and their four children (all adopted, as Kryptonians seemed to be unable to breed with humans the ‘normal’ way) in Metropolis, and as she checks into her hotel that night, she remembers her night with Lena Luthor. Perhaps that’s been the reason she’s been feeling restless? She decides to contact Lena, sending her a quick text message, and an hour later they are sitting next to each other on the couch in Kara’s hotel room, having a conversation that reminds Kara of all the time she’d spent with Lena all those years ago, introducing her to movies and television shows that had passed her by as a Luthor. It leads her to think of the way things ended, and she is tempted to ask Lena to explain. But it seems a little pointless after all these years, so she just enjoys the moment. When Lena moves a little closer and murmurs in her ear about how much she’s missed Kara, she shrugs internally and opens her mouth to Lena’s tongue. Cat wouldn’t judge her for this; her wife was remarkably flexible about sex and how Kara met her needs. They had tried all sorts of things together, and Kara had surprised herself with her own appetite. It had been difficult for them to sleep together during Cat’s last few years on earth; her heart had been failing her and she wasn’t able to exert herself in the way she wanted. She had encouraged Kara to find a partner just for sex, but Kara wasn’t interested in anyone but Cat. Now, however, knowing that her time with Cat is over, she doesn’t feel bad about what she’s doing. Lena is supple and pliant and she clearly cares about Kara – this isn’t just about sex. It isn’t for Kara, either. She has always loved Lena Luthor, in one way or another, and she can’t ignore the fact that this feels right. She is late to lunch the following day, and Lois comments on how much better Kara is looking, suddenly. Kara just smiles.

They fall into a pattern, then. Kara travels to Metropolis fairly often for business, anyway, and visiting Lois and Clark and the kids is no chore, especially not when she gets to see Lena, too. They meet at Kara’s hotel for the first few months, until one night when Lena invites Kara to her apartment. Kara stays the night, and it’s a turning point. What was sex between two friends who had reconnected is now something more. Kara isn’t ready to name it, but she knows that the time is coming when she will have to.
Lillian Luthor was given a Presidential pardon for her part in getting rid of the Daxamite invaders, and had taken over LCorp a few years afterwards. While Kal and Kara had both visited her to warn her that they were watching, it appeared that she’d lost her appetite for mayhem. She continued to develop the transmatter portal technology that Lena had unwittingly invented with the help of Queen Rhea of Daxam, and had for some reason decided to use the portals for mostly charitable reasons. She’d set up a global network of portals and allowed their use by people too poor to travel, and had even used LCorp resources to deal with drought and famine in the third world. Thanks to how she’s used the technology, the world is a much better place, now. Kara finds that deeply ironic.

What she finds more annoying than ironic is that Lena and Lillian had stayed in touch over the 20 years since she’s seen Lena, and that Lena is almost fond of her formerly evil stepmother. Lillian has taken steps to reform, Kara has to admit, and she has never told Lena Supergirl’s true identity. But now that Kara is back in Lena’s life, she is concerned and unhappy that Lillian is still around. Lillian has hurt Lena so deeply in the past that Kara can’t help but be concerned. She doesn’t have to be concerned for long, however, because it’s about six months into their relationship, whatever it is, when Lena calls her to tell her that Lillian Luthor is dead.

Kara is surprised by how much pain Lena seems to be in. She hadn’t fully grasped the significance of Lillian’s place in Lena’s life, it appears. She agrees to come to Metropolis right away, and finds it darkly funny that Supergirl will be attending the funeral of one the most anti-alien humans who has ever lived. However, Lena needs her, her pale face even paler than usual, her eyes deeply shadowed. She is a wreck, and Kara is devastated for her.

“I’m so sorry, Lena,” she murmurs, as Lena cries against her in the car on the way to the funeral. Lena has been trying to remain stoic, as Lillian no doubt would have preferred, but she loses it on the way to the church for the ceremony. Kara holds her until she is calm, helps her fix her makeup, and sits next to her in the church, holding her hand. Lex Luthor is long dead, another inmate having killed him many years back in retaliation for the death of a relative during Lex’s crusade against Superman. Looking at Lena’s wan face, Kara almost wishes that Lex were still here, because Lena is now the last of the Luthor family and she’s never looked more alone. That’s when Kara decides to take an action she hadn’t thought they were ready for. She has to talk to Carter, though, first.

After the funeral, Kara stays for a few days and then, when Lena insists, she heads back to National City. She does her usual balancing act between CatCo and her Supergirl duties, but manages to get time to see Carter the following weekend.

“What’s wrong, Momma K?” he asks, after she’s been fiddling with her glasses for an inordinately long time. She smiles at him. It’s been years since he’s called her that.

“I… there’s something I need to tell you?” she says, and Carter smiles.
“You want to tell me that you’re seeing Lena Luthor?” he guesses, and she gapes at him.

“How?” she gasps out. Daniel comes in at that point and laughs.

“Is she finally telling you about her and the Luthor lady?” he asks, and Carter grins up at his husband.

“Yeah. Took her long enough, am I right?” he says, and the snark in his voice reminds her so much of Cat that tears fill her eyes. God, she misses her wife.

“Yeah, it did,” Daniel says, smiling at Kara and leaning over to pat her hand, seeing the conflict on her face. “It’s almost as if she forgets that you’re part-owner of CatCo, and that you haven’t therefore seen hundreds of paparazzi photographs every damn day of her spending time with another prominent citizen? Do you think that possibly your Momma K might think that you somehow wouldn’t want her to be happy?” he asks, and Carter shrugs, while tears run down Kara’s face.

“I think it might be something like that, Dan. But then I’m not sure, because my mom would have wanted her to move on, and she always liked Lena Luthor, so I don’t see the problem myself, do you?” Carter asked, his eyebrow quirking up as he looked at Daniel.

“It doesn’t really make sense, when you put it like that, honey, but then Kara is an alien, so who knows what kind of crazy goes on in that head of hers?” Daniel asks, with a sly smile in Kara’s direction. Kara mock-glares at him, wiping away some of her tears.

“Are you two quite finished?” she manages, eventually. Her son and his husband stand and envelop her in a hug that steals the breath from her lungs. She misses Cat so much, but she still has a family, and it’s time for her to remember that.

“I love you, Kara,” Carter says, kissing her on the top of her head. He’s so tall now, so unlike his tiny mother who Kara probably could have carried easily without her superpowers.

“I love you too, sweet boy. And you, Daniel, despite your insufferable manners,” she says, in her best Cat Grant voice, and her son-in-law chuckles, kissing her cheek.

“I love you too, Momma K,” he says, and Kara is unaccountably relieved that this has gone well. Now it’s time to talk to Lena. About everything.
She tells Alex and Maggie, later that day, and Alex frowns, predictably.

“Do you think she’s going to be okay with it, Kara? I mean, it’s been 20 years, and she’s still a Luthor. She might take it badly,” Alex says.

“She might,” Kara shrugs. “But we’ve been seeing each other for a while now and I am planning to ask her to come and live with me. I can’t do any of that if there are lies between us.”

“Oh my God, Kara! I thought you guys were just fucking!” Maggie exclaims, and Kara just smiles. She’s used to Maggie’s potty mouth now, and it no longer makes her blush. Plus, no-one is as foul-mouthed as Cat Grant, she has discovered. As Cat was, anyway.

“We were, for a while. But it kind of got serious there, on me, and I talked to Carter earlier and he gave me his blessing, so… I can’t carry on pretending I’m just 40-something Kara Danvers-Grant, reporter, when I’m actually an alien who’s chronologically almost 70 and will probably live until earth’s sun turns red, if not longer,” Kara said, with a bit of a sigh.

“I love you, Kara,” Alex says, her face creased up in worry. She pulls Kara into one of her extra-tight hugs, knowing that Kara can barely feel human-strength hugs. Kara appreciates her big sister more and more every day, knowing that the time that they have together is limited, and that she’ll live thousands of years without Alex. The thought makes her jaw tighten and her eyes fill.

“I love you, too,” Kara manages, squeezing Alex carefully, making sure not to break any of her fragile human bones.

“I trust your judgement. If you want to tell Lena, you should. And you’re asking her to move here? I can’t believe you didn’t tell me, Kara!” Alex says, with a hint of protest in her tone towards the end.

“I… I guess I’m still a little conflicted. I didn’t mean to get into this thing with Lena. And it turned serious on me. I realised when Lillian died that it was time to move forward,” Kara says, her voice shaking a little. She is deeply conflicted, still. Sometimes she feels like she is being unfaithful, even though Cat is gone and Kara knows she isn’t coming back.

“Oh, Kara. You know that Cat would want you to find someone,” Alex says, and Maggie nods her agreement, rubbing Kara’s back gently.
“I know. I just didn’t expect it to be so soon. It was supposed to just be sex. Just scratching an itch with someone I liked. I thought it would be easy because she just left, back then after the Daxamites, so I figured she wouldn’t get attached, and neither would I,” Kara says. She hears Maggie stifle a snigger next to her, and she glares at her sister-in-law. “Spit it out, Sawyer,” she says, eyes narrow.

Maggie pales a little.

“Uh, sorry. I always forget, you know, the, uh, superhearing? Anyway. I was pretty sure you and Lena were going to get together back then, Kara. She had a major boner for you and Supergirl. And you always looked at her like she was the most interesting, most pure thing you’d ever seen. I was surprised you didn’t run after her and carry her back, bridal-style, to National City,” Maggie says, shrugging.

Kara blushes a little.

“I told her not to,” Alex says, softly. “I figured Lena had a right to run away if that’s really want she wanted, without being followed by a Superstalker,” Alex shrugs.

“You and I are gonna talk, missy, about interfering with other people’s choices,” Maggie says, sternly. Alex nods, looking almost submissive, and it makes Kara wonder for a second what goes on behind closed doors in the Danvers-Sawyer household. She stops wondering almost straight away, though, however, given that it makes her think about Cat’s dominant streak, and she doesn’t want to think about her sister in that sort of situation.

“And Kara, you don’t always have to listen to Alex, you know. It’s not like she had a great track record back then when it came to matters of the heart. I mean, she proposed to me after we’d been going out for five minutes. She brought a whole new definition to U-Hauling. Not that I’m saying you should regret any of it; you and Cat got it together and that was how it was meant to be, I believe that. But you should trust yourself and follow your heart, Kara. It’s your best feature. I mean, you’ve got great abs, too, but it’s the heart that makes you a real hero,” Maggie says, teasing as usual, and Alex elbows her in the ribs – gently – when she mentions Kara’s abs.

“I still have great abs, too, Sawyer,” Alex says, mock-annoyed. A short tickle fight follows, with Maggie giving in after a few minutes. Her close family and friends know that tickles are Maggie’s Kryptonite.

“Thanks, you guys,” Kara says, after the tickling furore dies down. “I appreciate the advice.”
“Anytime, Little Danvers,” Maggie says, head tilted, smiling in that endlessly sweet and sympathetic way she always does. Kara is glad, and not for the first time, that Alex had met Maggie all those years ago. They are quite the pair, complementing each other almost perfectly. Sure, they both have rough edges, but a lot of that has been smoothed by time and having kids. They are happy, they are together, and they will grow old together, barring accident or illness. As Kara flies away towards Metropolis, she envies them. It’s unlikely that she will ever get that chance. From what Alex and the other scientists at the DEO project, she (and Kal) might easily live until earth’s yellow sun turns red. In about 5 billion years.
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Kara thinks back to her time with Cat, and she and Lena Luthor have a long-awaited conversation. Warning for a story concerning a suicide attempt.

5 years earlier

Cat is getting ready for bed, her perfume leaving a trail for Kara to follow around their apartment. Kara’s been out fighting with yet another rogue alien – how the humans hadn’t noticed earlier that they weren’t alone in the universe is quite beyond her. She is bruised, this time, but only because the alien was born on a red sun planet and had strength that surpassed Kara’s own. He was four hundred years old. Once the surprise wore off, they managed to have a conversation, and he stood down, allowing the DEO to take him in for processing and to register as an alien visitor. Kara is fairly sure he was drugged, maybe so he’d be an easy mark for a thief, or maybe it’s something else, like a resurgence of Cadmus. Kara rubs her forehead gingerly, hoping it’s not the latter.

“Kara? Are you okay?” Cat emerges from the bathroom in a cloud of steam, her bathrobe wrapped around her tightly, drying her hair vigorously with one hand. She notes the bruise on Kara’s face with some concern.

“What happened?” she asks, moving closer and touching Kara’s face gently. Kara hisses. She’s still not used to pain, after so long without it.

“A new alien species. He’s from a red sun planet, and he’s older than I am. He was… really strong. But I managed to talk him down, and he’s probably talking to J’onn right now. It’ll heal tomorrow. I could have stayed on the sunbeds but I wanted to get home to you,” Kara says, lifting Cat’s hand from her forehead gently and kissing her fingers.

“Silly girl. You know Alex is just going to make me turn on the sunlamps in our bedroom,” Cat says, rolling her eyes. “And that means I’ll have to sleep with sunblock on.”

“It’s okay, sweetie. I’ll be fine in the morning. I really don’t need the sunbed,” Kara says, and then she shuts her mouth because Cat lifts one eyebrow at her. She’s so whipped; she’s more than aware
of the fact. Cat has always known how to press her buttons, and she does it with more and more flair as their life together progresses.

They talk for a little while as Kara eats a small mountain of food. Cat hired a chef a month after they married, deciding that life was too short to cook the huge amounts of food that Kara needs to consume on a daily basis, and the woman had become adept at making meals with a huge calorie count that were still marginally healthy. Of course the chef had signed so many NDAs that she’d be in court until her grandchildren had white hair if she ever breathed a word of how much Kara Danvers-Grant could eat. No-one needed to put two and two together and come up with Supergirl.

“He was over four hundred years old, Cat,” Kara says, after she’s finished her food and is sipping a truly exceptional Bordeaux that Cat has finally managed to get her to savour. (Kara doesn’t tell Cat that she’d much rather have chocolate milk than wine. Some lies really are white lies.)

“And you’ve started to think about your mortality, or lack thereof? And my mortality, which is coming at us like a speeding bullet?” Cat asks, with her usual bluntness. She is staring at her hand, which is marked with signs of age. She has always taken excellent care of her body and she looks almost the same as she did when she and Kara first met, but some signs are inevitable. The skin on her hands is thinning and wrinkling more as time goes by. It is a visible reminder of their age difference. Cat is not embarrassed or concerned about their relative ages; Kara is chronologically the same age as she is, but literally cannot age under the radiation of the yellow sun. It’s just another sign of her alien origins, something which Cat came to terms with many years before.

“Yes,” Kara admits, her head in her hands. “I was looking at him, and he has all these extra limbs and eyes, but he looks so young, like he’s a juvenile of his species, and he’s four hundred years old, Cat. If nothing happens to me in the meantime, I’m gonna look exactly like this in another 300 years and I can’t… I can’t understand that. It’s not like my people lived that long, you know? I mean, we were technologically advanced, but I think our oldest recorded death was 170 years or so. Bodies should wear out, but because I’m here, I may never. Can you imagine living for another 5 billion years, Cat?” she asks, and Cat looks at her, sees how faraway her eyes are. She shivers a little before pulling herself up and bending down to bite Kara’s ear sharply.

“Ow! What was that for?” Kara asks, eyes wide and offended.

“Am I dead already, Supergirl?” Cat asks, acerbically, running a finger down the side of Kara’s neck, letting her nail catch a little on Kara’s skin. Kara shivers.

“No,” she says breathily.
“Then stop talking, Kiera, and take me to bed. You’ll have time enough to worry about this tomorrow,” Cat says, and Kara does what she does best – Cat’s bidding, that is. There will be time enough tomorrow and all of the tomorrows that follow, she reasons, because unless someone works out a way to kill a Kryptonian on earth, or she finds a habitable planet under a red sun, she will live a long, long time.

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She lands in an alleyway near Lena’s building, taking a second to spin into her Kara Danvers-Grant façade, using the facial transmogrifier provided by Barry Allen’s tech team. The tiny device has been worth its weight in gold, given that it’s allowed her to continue in her ‘real’ life for this long. Without it, Kara Danvers-Grant would have had to retire and disappear by now.

She has already sent a message to Lena saying she’s coming by, and Lena quickly answered, saying she was home and to come on up. Kara tenses herself. This is going to be make or break for their relationship, such as it is, because not only does she have to tell Lena that she’s been lying to her, but she has to ask Lena why she disappeared the way she did. She’s not looking forward to the conversation, but she steels herself. Cat’s voice echoes in her head, telling her to pull her big-girl pants up and get on with it, so she does.

She knocks on Lena’s front door, smiling when Lena’s cat winds its way between her ankles as she stands there. The little thing is a free spirit and is rarely to be found inside Lena’s penthouse unless it is hungry or tired. It meows loudly and Kara picks it up. She can never remember the little creature’s name. It might as well be a mayfly – remembering its name just seems like the road to more grief. She sighs heavily, and Lena opens the door right then.

“Kara! You’re here. Where are your bags?” Lena asks, looking puzzled, and a little concerned.

“I… it’s kind of a long story. Can I come in?” Kara asks, her crinkle in full bloom, hoping that Lena hasn’t noticed that particular tell of hers.

“Of course,” Lena steps back, pulling the door fully open, and Kara moves inside, still carrying the tiny cat. She sets it down on the couch before going to stand by the balcony door. She wishes she had brought some of the Aldebaran rum; it would have helped with this conversation.

“What’s wrong, Kara?” Lena asks, standing behind Kara and touching her shoulder hesitantly. Kara turns to look at her. Lena’s eyes are so green, brighter even than Cat’s were, and Kara’s not sure she’ll ever get used to how piercing her gaze is. She doesn’t speak for a long moment, trying to gather her thoughts.
“Come on, sit down. I have a feeling I’m going to need some wine for this,” Lena says, searching Kara’s eyes. Kara nods, and Lena goes to the kitchen to open a bottle of the same red Kara had always enjoyed more for Cat’s enjoyment of it. She huffs out a laugh to herself. Lena sits on the couch, not quite next to Kara, as if she senses that she’s going to need the distance between them. She pours Kara a glass and Kara sips at it for a moment before speaking.

“I always thought about you, you know. For the last twenty years, give or take. I wondered where you’d gone, why you had changed your number. I considered coming to find you but Alex wouldn’t let me, and I think that I believed you would come back. And I think I was waiting, still, but Cat – she wouldn’t let me wallow, in what happened between me and Mon-El, or between you and me. So I moved on,” Kara began. Lena winced at Mon-El’s name, and Kara saw her rub at her wrist absently. “I know I don’t have the right, and I’m not angry or anything. I guess I just – I need to know what happened, before we can… before we can move forward, assuming that’s something that you want.”

“I… what do you mean when you say move forward?” Lena asks, looking more than a little nervous.

“I… I have a question, that I want to ask you,” Kara says, and Lena’s eyes nearly fall out of her head. “Relax. I’m not asking you to marry me, Lena. I just… I miss you, and I know that you can do your work from anywhere. So I wanted to ask you to move in with me. But before that, I need to know what happened back then, and there’s something I need to tell you. If you want to move forward with me, with us, then I don’t want there to be any secrets between us, Lena,” Kara says, and Lena’s face blossoms into a huge smile.

“You really want that?” Lena asks, incredulous.

“Why wouldn’t I, Lena? I think I’ve made it pretty clear how I feel about you by now,” Kara says, smiling at her sweetly.

“I think I was still waiting for the other shoe to drop,” Lena says, and Kara frowns.

“Well. Part of why I’m here is to tell you something I should have told you a long time ago, and you might see that as the other shoe dropping. It has nothing to do with my feelings for you, though,” Kara says, sincere but worried.

“Okay. Well then, I guess we should talk,” Lena says, taking a deep breath and leaning back into the
couch, tucking her legs up underneath her and grabbing a cushion, wrapping her arms around it.

“That’s the idea,” Kara says, taking another sip of the wine and waiting for Lena to speak. It takes a while for Lena to begin, and once she has, Kara almost regrets asking the question. But she doesn’t want any secrets between them, and so she waits and listens.

“When the whole thing happened with the Daxamites, with Rhea, I was crushed. I’d come to National City with my sights set on reforming LuthorCorp, on making it a force for good in the world. To turn it away from the xenophobic principles it had been operating under. And then Rhea came to town. I can look back now and see how vulnerable I was, especially to a mother figure like her. After Lillian had treated me horribly for so long.” She takes another deep breath before continuing. “I wanted so badly to make a difference, Kara,” she says, sighing and pushing her long black hair away from her face, momentarily distracting Kara so much that she forgets to dread what’s coming.

“A! After what happened, after I had basically done what even my brother couldn’t, and made our planet uninhabitable for an alien race - and I realised that I had either killed your boyfriend or exiled him – I lost it a little, Kara. A lot, I suppose. I looked around me and I realised that I hadn’t accomplished a damn thing other than re-naming the company. Everyone who looked at me still saw a Luthor. And then my mother took credit on Cadmus’ behalf for getting rid of the Daxamites, and I just… I cracked. I decided that I was done, and I resigned from LCorp. I packed up and I went back to Metropolis. I sent you some flowers, which I know was exceptionally cowardly of me, I will admit. But I wasn’t – I knew that if I saw you, you’d change my mind. You’d stop me. So off I went. I got my affairs in order and I sent my mother an email. I didn’t think she’d read it, or if she did I didn’t expect her to find me. I went to a hotel and I… I cut my wrists. Well. I cut one. I must have cut too deep or in the wrong place, because I could hardly use my left hand, and I… well. I managed a small cut but then I passed out. My mother found me. The crazy old bat had planted a tracker on my keys and my phone and even under my skin, believe it or not,” Lena laughs as she thinks about Lillian. Kara doesn’t respond. Her face, her body, is frozen. Lena pauses for another minute before continuing, looking at Kara nervously.

“So. My mother found me, and she saved my life. She stitched me up, did a really good job. When I woke up, she was crying. Honest-to-god sobbing. She wasn’t doing it for my benefit; she hadn’t even noticed that I was awake. I was suspicious, I checked that she hadn’t been monitoring my heart or anything. But I was in my old bedroom in the Luthor manor, no medical equipment to be found. So I had to accept – I have since accepted – that she was actually worried about me. That some part of her actually cared about me. She was shaken; even I could see that, despite my condition. Her face was pale and there were tear-tracks as if she’d been crying for a while. Honestly I felt like she could have saved me a job – if I’d ever seen her like that before I might have had an aneurysm on the spot.”

Kara is not enjoying Lena’s particular brand of snark currently. She is silent, and Lena swallows, her hand shaking as she reaches out to pick up her wine from the coffee table. She takes a sip and then places it on the table before settling back to hug the cushion once again.
“My mother – Lillian – she looked up and saw that I was awake, and she basically threw herself at me, holding me so tightly that I thought she might break something,” Lena says, her eyes far away. “She carried on sobbing, telling me how much she loved me, and she begged me – begged me – to tell her what she could do to stop me from ever, ever doing anything like that again. I couldn’t really talk right away. She got me some water and she composed herself. When I could speak, I begged her to stop the madness. To leave aliens alone. To let them be, let them live their lives and let us live ours. To stop perpetuating Lex’s insanity. It took a while, but she agreed. And to this day, Kara, I can’t find any evidence that she did anything other than what she said she would. She took over LCorp, presumably after disbanding what was left of Cadmus, and she started mass-producing the Transmat portals, as you know. She set up so many charitable endeavours that really helped people that LCorp actually became the force for good I had hoped. After I recovered, I bought up the last stock in Biomax, including all of Jack’s research. And I put my intellect to use. There have been people in my life since, most significantly Lana Lang, who I know was your cousin Clark’s girlfriend at one point. But there’s been no-one serious until you. Until now,” Lena says, sighing as she pushed her hair away from her face again. The gesture has always made Kara’s breath catch. Before Cat had opened her eyes to her own needs, her own desires, she wouldn’t have even identified the feeling as being attraction. But now she knows exactly what Lena does to her.

“So there you have it. Lena Luthor ran away from her life in National City, from her best friend, from her company, so she could kill herself in a tragically lonely end in a hotel room. Only to be saved by her crazed, anti-alien mother, who, in exchange for the tragic Luthor agreeing not to make such an attempt again, rejected her anti-alien ways and gave her life in service to the poor and needy,” Lena says, her tone deeply mocking. Kara takes a deep breath. Lena would never change, in some ways. She would always use sarcasm and dark humour as a defence.

Kara takes a minute to get herself together. It’s a hell of a thing to absorb. She wants to go back in time, to save Lena from her pain. Kara loved Lena then, not in quite the same way as she does now, but the thought of Lena ever being in that much pain hurts Kara deeply. She moves to sit next to Lena.

“Can I look?” she asks, wondering how she has never noticed that Lena has a scar on her wrist. Lena looks at her uncertainly, lifting her arm after a moment and offering it to Kara. She is wearing a wide bracelet on her wrist; it’s probably her preferred method of hiding the evidence of her suicide attempt. Kara takes the bracelet off carefully and turns Lena’s arm, exposing her wrist and palm. The scar is surprisingly small, extending only two inches or so. It was clearly a deep cut, however, because it is a little raised. It is red against the delicate, pale skin of Lena’s arm, and Kara kisses it gently, her lips lingering, tears falling from her eyes and landing on the scar tissue. She lifts Lena’s other arm then, finding only a thin, silvery scar on that wrist, one she wouldn’t have noticed had Lena not told her the story. She kisses that, too, and then pulls Lena to her. This is more about comforting Kara than it is about Lena, she knows, but she holds Lena close as she herself cries for the pain of the youngest Luthor, for what she had been through all alone.

There is silence as they stay wrapped together, Kara crying and Lena dry-eyed. Kara doesn’t know whether Lena is over the feelings that led to her attempt to end her life or whether she’s trying to
comfort Kara at the expense of her own feelings.

“I’m so sorry that you felt that way,” Kara says, when her tears have dried up. “If I’d known, if I’d had any idea – I thought I was giving you space, Lena. I was expecting you to come back. And then, eventually, when I realised you weren’t, I was really hurt. I thought you hated me. And then eventually… I gave up, Lena. I gave up on you, and I should never have done that. I’m so sorry.”

Lena draws back, a slightly chiding expression on her face.

“How were you supposed to know what I was thinking about? Have you got some sort of mind-reading power that I should know about?” Lena asks, tilting her head. Kara shifts uncomfortably.

“I don’t. But I feel like… you were my friend, Lena. I should have known what you were going through!” Kara protests.

“I didn’t know what you were thinking back then, Kara. For example, I had no idea that you had a thing for Cat,” Lena says, a little slyly.

“You didn’t ask,” Kara says, archly. “And that’s not the subject at hand, Lena Luthor.”

“I know. Look, Kara. You didn’t know. I made sure you didn’t. I disappeared on you and there was no way you could have found me,” Lena says.

“Actually, that’s not true,” Kara says. It’s time. “I did have a way to find you, and I chose not to use it.”

“I don’t understand, Kara,” Lena says, and she waits, then, for Kara to tell her. She’s always been patient, and has always let Kara speak in her own time.

Kara stands up, needing to move, to pace a little.

“Do you remember when we met?,” Kara asks.
“Of course. You and Clark Kent, barging your way into my office. When the Venture exploded,” Lena says, smiling in reminiscence.

“You know that Clark believed you were just another evil Luthor. I didn’t know, either way, but I wanted to give you a chance. I don’t believe in judging people on the basis of anyone else’s actions.”

Lena smiles a little wider, remembering that meeting, clearly. It is one of Kara’s better memories from that time, too, so she smiles back.

“We met that day, and you struck me as such a sincere person. Like you really cared, and you meant what you said. And then we met again, because Metallo was trying to kill you with a drone.”

Lena just looks at her, clearly not putting the pieces together just yet. Kara takes off her glasses, back to Lena, and unbuttons her shirt. It’s one of her favourites, salmon pink and soft as butter between her fingers. She lets the sensation calm her as she continues to speak.

“I saw that he was going to kill you with that stupid drone, and I threw myself in front of it while Kal-El went to take out the other drones he’d sent to hurt people around National City. Then Corben fired a rocket and it nearly knocked me out; I was so scared he was going to kill you. But I managed to get up again and I destroyed the drone, and then you looked at me like I was a total asshole, and you barked at me:” Kara says, and Lena finishes the tale with her.

“What the hell was that?!” they say, in unison, and Kara turns to face Lena. Lena’s mouth is slightly open, her cheeks red.

“Lena Luthor, it’s nice to meet you. Kara Zor-El, last daughter of Krypton, at your service,” Kara says glibly, bowing at the waist a little the way her mom taught her.

Lena stares at her, and then she lifts her glass of wine to take a huge gulp, almost emptying it in one draught.

“So. Do you prefer to go by Last Daughter, or Kara, or Princess Zor-El? I mean, how does that work, exactly?” Lena asks, her eyes crinkling up. She isn’t quite smiling, but she doesn’t look ready to murder Kara, either. Kara sits down, feeling exhausted, all of a sudden. She starts to undo her braid, letting her hair down, and Lena smiles gently.
“I am not a princess,” Kara says, one eyebrow quirked up. “My family were nobility – the house of El had a long and noble history. But they – we – weren’t royalty.”

“Oh,” Lena says. She has one of those mocking but sweet expressions that only she seems to be able to pull off properly. “I am terribly sorry. So are you a Lady? Lady El? Or would it be Lady… did you say Zor-El?” Lena asks.


“So, Lady Kara. You are a Kryptonian, and after all these years you’re telling me. What made you change your mind about me?” Lena asks, her eyebrow up, her eyes a little wider than normal, clearly mocking. But there is a hint of vulnerability underneath, and Kara’s eyes well up.

“Nothing. I never changed my mind about you, Lena Luthor. I always trusted you, and I never wanted to lie to you. I never wanted to lie to anyone. It’s not really in my nature,” Kara says, with a wry half-smile. “I just… things were complicated, back then. You were my safe harbour, Lena. With everyone else I had to be Supergirl, and you just let me be myself with you. You never expected anything from me, and I just got to be Kara. I really… I really needed it, back then. It was a very confusing time for me. I had met Mike – Mon-El – and he was from Daxam, the sister planet to Krypton, and I kind of thought I had a second chance with him, to help him the way I was supposed to help Kal-El,” Kara says.


“You know, you humans think you know so much about the universe, but really you don’t know a whole lot,” Kara says, with a smile. “On Krypton, our scientists were a lot further advanced than yours. Centuries. What you all call the laws of physics are pretty much a misunderstanding of it all. The space-time continuum, faster than light travel – some of your suppositions are right, some… not so much. There’s this place that kind of exists and doesn’t at the same time, and we called it the Phantom Zone. Poetic, I guess. But time doesn’t pass there. It’s an endless void. Our people discovered it and when a criminal was judged to be evil enough, they were sent there. There was a prison there called Fort Rozz, and the worst criminals in our history were held there, in stasis. Honestly I think it would have been less cruel to execute them. In any case, when Kal-El’s pod took off, I was a few seconds behind. I promised my mother that I would look after him, that I would protect him and raise him. And then Krypton exploded and the shock wave sent my pod off course. And I ended up in the Phantom Zone. So Kal-El’s pod went straight to earth, and mine was caught in that void for twenty-four years. I… I don’t remember a lot of it. But I was there, and then a being called Indigo, who was a sort of hybrid computer being, she managed to access my pod’s nav system and she switched it on. Somehow she also managed to get my pod to drag her with it. She was in Fort Rozz, and my pod pulled the prison ship with it. A million tonnes of metal, full of the worst criminals in the galaxy,” Kara says, sighing. “That was the price of my freedom. It took me years to...
find them all and deal with them. A lot of them had served their time, though, so were let out on a sort of probation. But I’m getting off topic,” Kara says. “So my pod landed, and someone pulled the top off. It was a man, standing there in these bright colours, and he was wearing the crest of the House of El. He introduced himself in the worst Kryptonese you can imagine, and… bam. My purpose was gone. My cousin, who I’d sworn to raise and protect, was an adult and a hero, and I was still in the body of a child. A child whose entire world was gone. So you might understand what Mon-El meant to me, now. He was a chance at redemption, at being what my family wanted me to be when they sent me away to earth. Of course, as an adult, I understand that my family just wanted me to live, and my sacred duty to protect Kal-El was just an excuse to get me in that pod. They had no way of knowing if either of us would make it,” Kara says. She has been staring at her fingernails, but now she looks up to see Lena’s eyes, filled with tears.

“Jesus, Kara,” she breathes, and Kara shifts uncomfortably. “I had no idea. I don’t know how I could have missed it, now that I look at you. But my god you’re really her. And you… how old does that make you?” Lena asks, awed.

“I’m… 70, give or take,” Kara says, with a shrug. “I honestly don’t remember much about the Phantom Zone, and I didn’t age in there, so I don’t know if it counts? Also, there’s something else,” Kara says, pulling the facial transmogrifier from the pocket of her blouse. She switches off the face that everyone else sees, showing Lena who she really is. A 70-year-old who still looks 26. 30, at a push.

“Shit. You’re… you look exactly the same. Jesus fucking Christ,” Lena says, covering her mouth with both hands, her eyes wide.

“As you can probably tell, having seen Kal-El and I in our super personas, we don’t age very quickly under a yellow sun. Our solar system had a red star. We called it Rao. It was our god, our source of life, our home. And when my parents sent me here, they did so knowing that it would make me into this, a being more powerful than any human. They wanted me to be safe,” Kara says, and she tries hard, but doesn’t quite manage to keep the bitterness from her tone.

“Oh, Kara,” Lena says, moving across to enfold Kara in her arms, and this time she’s crying. It’s all backwards, Kara thinks, because now her eyes are dry, and Lena is holding her, consoling her, and she doesn’t really understand why. But she knows one thing – she can’t lose Lena, not now. Not after this. She is in love with Lena and though the timing is not ideal, given that Cat hasn’t been gone for that long, she knows that she has to take this chance while it’s here. Love waits for no man. Or woman. Or Kryptonian.

She stays in place, Lena holding her, squeezing her fiercely, and for the first time since she kissed Cat Grant for the last time, Kara Zor-El feels something akin to peace.
When she wakes up, she’s still in Lena’s arms. Sunlight is streaming through the windows of Lena’s penthouse, making Kara’s cells thum with energy. She whispers a prayer of praise to Rao, for his light and warmth, for the power his light has given her here on this alien planet so many light years from home. She might not be happy about seemingly interminable future, but she is grateful for the powers she’s been granted and for the opportunity to do something meaningful with the life that she has been given, especially since it came at the expense of so many others.

“Is that your native language?” Lena asks, her voice rough with sleep.

“Yes,” Kara says, turning to look at Lena. She’s always at her most beautiful in the morning, Kara thinks; dishevelled, her hair messy but her eyes clear.

“God. I’d forgotten,” Lena says, her hand coming up to cover her mouth. “You look just like you did when we met,” she whispers, caught somewhere between shock and awe, Kara thinks.

“Curse of an immortal alien in a foreign land,” Kara says, with a tight smile. Lena’s eyes narrow for a second, uncomprehending, but then she simply nods.

“Breakfast?” she asks, as if it’s even a question. Kara smiles, a genuine one this time, and Lena nudges at her to get up.

Half an hour later, they’ve both showered and Lena is making pancakes with bacon and eggs. She leans back against the counter in the kitchen to look at Kara, who’s sitting at the breakfast bar sipping coffee that’s mostly creamer and sugar.

“You said last night that you had a way to find me. Is there a Kryptonian power that I haven’t heard of? Some sort of homing signal? A hormone you rub all over your unsuspecting prey so you can track them?” Lena asks, her smile wide. She loves to mess with Kara, and knows that comparing her proud species to some sort of house cat is bound to make her a little mad. Kara takes a deep breath and lets it pass, however, because she hadn’t explained herself very well, what with the big reveal and all, and Lena deserves to know everything, regardless of what happens between them from now on, because Lena has been so very honest with her.

“No, there isn’t a homing signal or a special hormone. But I do have exceptionally sharp hearing. I can hear a pulsar on the other side of the galaxy. Tracking someone by their heartbeat is child’s play
compared with that. But Alex said that it was borderline stalker behaviour since you’d made it so clear that you wanted to be left alone. So I did,” Kara said, her heart clenching. If Lena had succeeded – if Lillian hadn’t found her – Kara might never have seen Lena again. The idea of it, the idea of her dying alone and in such emotional pain – it was devastating to someone as empathetic as Kara.

“I think that… sometimes things work out the way they were supposed to,” Lena says, as she puts a plate heaped full of food in front of Kara, and a much smaller portion next to it for herself. She sits down as Kara’s brows furrow.

“What do you mean?” Kara asks, quietly, starting with her pancakes and bacon, smothering them in an indecent amount of syrup.

“I mean… if you’d come to find me, if you’d saved me from what happened, you and Cat might not have married. And I don’t think I would have reconciled with Lillian. So perhaps things happened as they were meant to. And now we’ve got this second chance, to see how things can go between us,” Lena says.

Kara thinks about it for a few moments before speaking.

“I… do we have a second chance? Because I did wonder if you’d ever forgive me, for not telling you that I was Supergirl. That it was my decision to send Mon-El away and kill all of those Daxamites. To kill Rhea. And the whole alien thing is a lot to take on, Lena. I would understand if you didn’t want to deal with all of that. I still fight aliens and run into burning buildings a couple of times a week. There are no guarantees,” Kara says, her eyes serious.

Lena sighs.

“Look, Kara. I won’t deny that I felt something akin to betrayal when you told me who you are. But I can’t say I don’t understand. At first there was the fact that I was an unknown quantity, and then there was the fact that you just wanted one friend who liked you for you. I definitely understand wanting to escape other people’s preconceptions of who you are. Did you really think that I wouldn’t?” Lena asks, her smile open and sweet.

“I suppose not,” Kara says, smiling back at her.

“And as to the alien thing – I think it will be an adjustment. A big one, I’m not going to lie. Not
because I care whether you’re from Earth or Jupiter, Kara, but because you put yourself in danger for others on a daily basis and I am not used to that. But I’m not willing to give up a chance to be with you for the sake of shielding myself from possible future pain. So if you’re in, Kara, then I am,” Lena says.

Kara’s breath whooshes out of her lungs in a rush. She is so relieved that she almost feels dizzy. She kisses Lena, her mouth sticky with syrup, and feels Lena smile against her mouth, before kissing back much more seriously. Lena is an amazing kisser, and she has Kara gasping for breath in moments, torn between her breakfast and going back to bed to ravage Lena.

“You’re thinking about finishing your breakfast first, aren’t you,” Lena says, deadpan, as Kara draws back in indecision. She nods, conflicted.

“Finish your eggs, then follow me to the bedroom,” Lena says, walking away and taking her tshirt off as she goes. She looks over her shoulder with a smirk, saying, “and bring the syrup.”

Kara finishes her eggs in record time.
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Kara and Lena make plans to move in together, and Lillian's will is read. Something interesting is hidden in one of Lex's labs

Now that the decision is made, they have to iron out the details in between Lena’s work as CEO of Luthor Spheerical and Kara’s twin duties as mild-mannered reporter (well, news chief) and superhero. They set a moving date and Kara just has to visit the potential properties that Lena’s Executive Assistant has picked out as suitable. She drags Alex and Maggie along to view the properties, and they settle on a penthouse by the river, not far from where she dumped Alex’s flight all of those years ago when she first came out as Supergirl. Everything is going well and Kara is beginning to look forward to Lena’s arrival rather than worrying about the details, when Lena calls her in the middle of the night, National City time. Kara remembers vaguely that the reading of Lillian’s will was happening this morning, Metropolis time, but she doesn’t understand why that would make Lena’s voice shake so much.

“Kara, I need you to come here. As soon as you can. Lillian left me some of Lex’s stuff, and you need to see it. If it’s what I think? I think you and your cousin will want to see it. You need to get here.”

Lena hangs up, leaving a confused and slightly upset Kara on the other end of the line. She changes into her suit and is in Metropolis in ten minutes, landing on Lena’s balcony followed a few seconds later by Clark, who she called en route to let him know that something had happened that had shaken Lena’s legendary composure. She taps on the glass of the balcony and Lena appears from her bedroom, waving her hand to invite them in.

“Lena?” Kara asks, and Lena throws herself at Kara, wrapping herself around her.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t know what else to do,” she says, looking shaken. “I just… I wish I’d known what Lex had, before.”

“It’s okay, Lena,” Kara says, trying to sound soothing despite her own alarm. What on earth can Lena have found?
“Miss Luthor, what did you find?” Clark says, sounding a little unnerved.

“It’s better if I just show you,” Lena says. “Can you give me a lift, Supergirl?” she says, with a little of her usual sass. Kara nods, lifting Lena up into her arms and carrying her, following her directions to a storage facility in the middle of town. It’s open and well-lit, looking more like a modern art museum than a storage facility.

“At least it’s not a creepy dark warehouse for a change,” Kara comments, and Clark grins.

“Come on,” Lena says, leading them to a large, open room which seems to have been kept at a low temperature for some reason. Her hands shaking, she leads them to a vault that stands alone in the middle of the room. She takes out a small blade, wincing as she cuts into her palm, wiping some of her blood on a plate that opens the door.

“Lex was always theatrical, and for some reason he only wanted me to have access. I don’t think Lillian ever knew what was here,” Lena says, shivering. Kara detaches her cape quickly, wrapping it around Lena’s shoulders. They shuffle into the room in an awkward group, Kara and Clark both a little unnerved by how shaken Lena is. She steps aside and points at two separate devices, clearly Kryptonian in origin. One, Kara recognises right away.

“A birthing pod? Rao, Lena! Does it have the biological processor attached?” Kara asks, and Lena nods. She points out a small section at the back, and Kara goes to look more closely, reading the Kryptonese words on the side.

“Kara, is that what I think it is?” Clark asks, his eyes wide.

“It is. If it works, Clark, we could… we could have biological children,” Kara says, awed.

Clarks eyes fill. He has been trying to have a child with Lois since they married, and they gave up after consulting with Star Labs and concluding that, with the current available technology, it wasn’t possible. Kara clasps his forearm and he smiles at her through tears.

“I think you might want to have a look at this,” Lena interrupts, and Kara turns, nodding. There will be time to talk about the implications later.

Kara approaches the other piece of technology. It’s a tall chamber, tall enough for the tallest man to
enter, with a number of crystals on one side. She hasn’t ever seen anything like it before, or at least not in the flesh. She thinks she might have seen it in one of her holobooks as a child, but she isn’t sure what it is. She has a closer look at the crystals and lifts the one she believes is essentially the device’s AI, putting it in place right at the top of the cluster, where it would logically go if it followed the pattern of other devices she used on her planet.

“Please state your name and House,” a disembodied voice says. Kara looks at Kal, who shrugs.

“I am Kara Zor-El, heir to the noble house of El,” she states, her voice proud. Something clicks, and a figure appears in front of them.

It’s her uncle, Jor-El, or at least his image. Even after seeing him at the Fortress so many times, she is shaken by seeing him stand in front of her.

“Kara Zor-El. Your parents would be pleased to see you grown and strong,” Jor-El says, his voice emotionless. It reminds her of her mother’s AI, and she shudders a little.

“Thank you,” she says, politely. “What is the purpose of this device?” she asks.

“This device is a regeneration chamber. Its purpose is to heal Kryptonians,” Jor-El’s image says.

Kara freezes. There were no remaining regeneration chambers on Krypton during her own time on the planet – at least not to her knowledge. But this one had clearly been here for a long time.

“When did Lex find this?” she asks, turning to Lena.

“He found it behind a wall in a cave in Smallville, near where Clark’s pod landed, I understand,” Lena says. “I believe that Jor-El came to earth before you were born,” she says, nodding at Clark, “and left this here for you to use if you had need of it. Had Lex – and my father – not intercepted it, I’m sure you would have come across it when you came of age. I’m so sorry that you didn’t,” Lena says, and Clark, to Kara’s surprise, shakes his head.

“That’s not your responsibility, Miss Luthor. Lex’s madness was his own, and I hold more blame for that than you ever will,” Clark says gravely. “How long have you known who I am?” he asks, and Lena smiles.
“Not long. I figured it out not long after Kara told me who she was, because her cousin Clark Kent bore a profound resemblance to the Man of Steel, who was also her cousin. I don’t think you thought that part through, sweetie, when you told me who you were,” Lena says, touching Kara’s arm lightly.

“I’m sorry, Kal,” Kara says, aghast. She really hadn’t thought about it. She should have – Lena is more than smart enough to have worked this out on her own.

“It’s fine, Kara. Lena’s part of the family now, from what I understand, and if you trust her, then so do I,” Clark says, and Kara nods, relieved. She looks back at the device in front of her – the regeneration chamber – and she thinks about how she could have saved Astra with this. So easily. And instead she had to send her aunt into Rao’s light alone. She clenches her fists, trying to get control over herself, with some difficulty.

After a moment, Lena coughs politely.

“I’m sorry, Kara, I know you’ll probably need time to… to process this. But there is more. Based on my understanding of this technology and a brief talk with Jor-El’s AI, I think it could be used to… to make a human into a Kryptonian, essentially. To change their cellular makeup to that of a being born under a red sun,” Lena says.

Kara’s legs go out from under her. She can see only one thing, and it’s Cat’s face. Cat, who died because human medicine is so primitive. Cat, who could have lived forever, assuming that this technology does what Lena thinks it will. Cat, her wife, the love of her life. The first love of her life, she amends, because part of her is still aware of Lena next to her, clutching at her, holding her tightly. But the other part of her mind is keening Cat’s name, over and over, because this wasn’t how it was supposed to go. She falls mercifully unconscious a moment or so later, and Clark must carry her and Lena back to Lena’s penthouse, because she wakes the following morning in Lena’s bed, with a worried Lena watching over her.

“Hey,” Lena says, her voice soft, as she smooths some of Kara’s hair away from her face.

“Hey,” Kara says, and then yesterday’s events hit her again and she feels like someone has punched her in the solar plexus. She sits up, feeling punch-drunk. “What happened?”

“Jor-El – he used the chamber to send you to sleep, somehow. A beam of some sort of energy. He said you were in a state of emotional distress and you needed rest,” Lena explains.
“Oh,” Kara says, weakly.

“Can I help?” Lena asks. “I don’t know how to help you, Kara.”

“There… I don’t know, Lena. I think we just need to get the technology somewhere safe. And then we can decide what to do with them. I am pretty sure Clark will want them at the Fortress and J’onn will want them at the DEO. I honestly don’t know what’s best,” Kara says, muttering to herself. She has a headache. She hasn’t had a headache like this since Clark was affected by silver Kryptonite and tried to beat her to death.

“We can deal with that, honey. But this… I know this has to be hard for you. If I’d known, Kara, I swear I would have told you. I would have given you access to all of it, I swear,” Lena says, and she’s actually wringing her hands. Kara reaches over to grab Lena’s hands in between hers, stroking Lena’s soft skin gently.

“This is not your fault, Lena. It’s a blow. I… Cat was special. What we had was special. And if I had known that the regeneration chamber was here, sure I would have wanted her to use it, because I wanted her by my side. I wouldn’t have married her otherwise,” Kara says. “In some ways, it kind of feels like I’m losing her again, because there’s this thing that could have saved her. I could have carried her child, or she could have carried mine – the birthing pods worked for same-sex couples or polyamorous families, too. It feels like a lot of things were stolen from us, because Lex took this technology that was meant for Kal and, by extension, me. But none of that is your fault, Lena,” Kara says, looking at Lena intensely, willing her to believe that Kara is being truthful.

“Kara, I understand. If this changes things, between us? Because I know that you would have chosen Cat, given the choice. And if this is making you rethink us, I can completely understand. This whole thing is complicated, beyond belief, really.”

Lena sighs, staring at their joined hands with unseeing eyes. Kara doesn’t know what to say. It has been a blow. A double blow, really, because not only could she have saved Cat, she could have saved Astra, too.

“Does it change things for you?” Kara asks, finally.

“What?” Lena asks, incredulous. “No, of course it doesn’t.”
“It doesn’t change things for me, either. I won’t pretend this isn’t difficult, Lena. And I know it must be difficult for you to watch me… to see this. I know you must be feeling… something, I guess, about my relationship with Cat. But she’s gone now and we decided to try being together, Lena. This doesn’t change that,” Kara says, and her eyes are filling. The thought of Cat being here, being able to stay with Kara, is almost completely crippling, because it was so close. In terms of Kara’s projected lifespan, a year or so is nothing. If Cat had held on, or Lillian had handed over this stuff sooner – Kara and Cat could have had their happily ever after. It is hard not to be bitter about that.

“I love you, Kara. I know that things aren’t exactly… equal, in that department. But I want this, with you,” Lena says, and the pain in her eyes cuts Kara.

“Lena,” she says, her voice low and pained. “I… I completely understand if you don’t want this. I… I shouldn’t be subjecting you to this. Cat was my wife. It’s my loss, and clearly I haven’t dealt with it completely. You deserve better than this.”

Lena takes a deep breath, and at her hesitation, Kara feels her heart clench. It is selfish of her; she should let Lena go and find someone else, someone who’s worthy of her. But Kara doesn’t want to let her go, because despite losing Cat, she has been happy for the most part since she and Lena reconnected.

Lena looks at her, her eyes clear.

“You are the great love of my life, Kara Zor-El. I hope, with time, that I will become one of the great loves of your life. I can’t say I’m not a little jealous. A lot jealous, really. But I can acknowledge that Cat was your wife and that you were together for a long time. I know that losing her was terrible. And I don’t want to replace her. I just want the honour of standing by your side, for as long as you want me to. Whether that be a month, or a year, or a billion years,” Lena says, and Kara takes a deep, gasping breath. Because of course that is an option, now. She might not have to be so alone. Yes, she missed the opportunity with Cat, but that doesn’t mean that she can’t have it, with Lena.

“I’m sorry. I surprised you,” Lena says, her eyes shrewd. “But I haven’t stopped thinking about it since I talked with Jor-El. Or his AI, I suppose. He was happy to give me information about the chamber and how it works, and I can’t say that I’m not fascinated, both as a scientist and as a human being who is all too aware of her own frailty. But first things first, Kara. If we’re in this together, then we make our decisions together when the time is right. For now, I want to continue on with our plan, and I want to move to National City to live with you. Is that still what you want?” Lena asks.

Kara nods. Her eyes are filled with tears, once again. She is tired of crying, tired of being sad. She came to earth as a remnant of a dead race from 27 light years away. She owed it to her people to make the most of this life, because she was the last. Kal-El was the first natural birth on Krypton in centuries, and that made her the last genetically engineered Kryptonian, born in a pod and made
perfect by the work of millenia of research and scientific discovery. She could reproduce those genes, now, and have a family who might live as long as she will. This has been a blow in some ways, she acknowledges, but it could be the start of a new era for her and for Krypton. She could start a family.

“Yes, Lena. It’s what I want. I want you, and I want us to move in together. And I know that you think I don’t love you the same way, Lena, but that’s just not true. I have lost one great love, but she would have wanted me to be happy, and it’s about time I started honouring that,” Kara says, pulling Lena closer to her until they are pressed against one another. She kisses Lena with everything that she’s feeling at that moment, the mixture of fear and pain and love and sadness and joyful anticipation, and Lena reciprocates so fully, so deeply, that it’s not long before they are coming, hard, together.

“I love you,” Lena whispers, afterwards, her head on Kara’s chest. “I love you, Kara Zor-El.”

“Khap zhao rrip,” Kara murmurs, and Lena looks up at her, startled. “I love you,” Kara explains, with a smile.

Lena tries it out, rolling the ‘r’ as Kara had, but not quite getting it. Kara’s not sure a human can make that sound, the little trill on the ‘r’ that Kryptonians did. But Kara can, and perhaps her children might be able to, one day. It’s a little difference in the folds of the vocal cords, Eliza told her, when she was little. Kara hoped to hear it one day again.

“So we’re really doing this, then?” Lena asks, looking insecure and a little lost as she looks up at Kara.

“We’re really doing this,” Kara confirms, lifting Lena’s hand to her lips and kissing it as she looks at the woman she loves with nothing but love and certainty. It’s time.

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The move goes well, and though Lena is snappy with Kara while they’re finally getting all of their belongings into their new apartment, she calms down later. Kara has cooked dinner, chicken parmesan which she knows is Lena’s guilty pleasure, followed by a nice glass of red wine and a hot bubble bath. Kara joins her in the bath a little later and their first evening together in their new home is marked with sex in the bathroom, on the couch, and in their bedroom. The sex has been good from the beginning, so it’s no surprise to Kara that they spend the night completely lost in each other’s bodies.
The following morning they have a leisurely breakfast before beginning the unpacking. Kara allows the boredom of the task to send her into a sort of daze, and she thinks about the Kryptonian technology that’s now residing at the Fortress of Solitude. There have been a number of arguments between J’onn, Kara, Kal and even the President about the tech and its use. Since the regeneration chamber, at least, had been intended for Kal-El, Kara asserted that the technology belonged on Kryptonian soil, and the President reluctantly agreed. Alex and Winn were both up North working on the tech in the Fortress, with Kal and J’onn flying back and forth to assist them as necessary.

“What are you thinking so hard about?” Lena asks, unwrapping a picture of her and Kara on the beach a few months back.

“The stuff that Lex left you,” Kara said, absently. Lena touched her arm gently before returning to her unpacking.

“I am sure that Alex and Winn will figure it out,” she says, reassuringly.

“I know they will,” Kara says, but she’s fidgety, and Lena clearly takes pity on her.

“Kara, do you want to go to the Fortress later? We can do a little more unpacking, and eat lunch and then we can go up and see how they’re getting on with it. How does that sound?” Lena asks.

“That sounds… great. Thank you,” Kara says, looking at Lena gratefully. Sometimes she wonders if Lena has powers of her own, powers that allow her to accurately read Kara’s moods at all times. But then she remembers that no-one can read a Kryptonian’s mind – they were quite literally designed that way.

They fly to the Fortress after they eat, having unpacked about a quarter of their belongings. The essentials are unpacked already – cooking utensils, clean sheets and the wallscreen, because Kara needs her Netflix – but they still have a lot to do. Kara knows that ideally they should be doing more unpacking right now, but she is preoccupied with the Kryptonian tech, with the idea of reproducing her genes, with the idea that she might not have to be alone for an eternity. She feels a driving need, now that she knows it’s possible, to save something of Krypton.

“Are you okay, love?” Lena asks, wrapped up in her arms wearing a huge coat that makes her look extremely cute. The fortress is much too cold for her, and she shivered the whole time they were there during their one visit for her to see Kara’s heritage.
“I am. I’m just… I thought that Krypton would die with Kal and me. Well, with me, I suppose, because he’s really a human in a Kryptonian body. I am the last of the genetically engineered Kryptonians, unless there are any others out there who were off-world when Krypton died. I feel like… I feel a drive, to try to keep something of Krypton alive,” Kara says.

“I think I understand,” Lena says. “It’s why we have a sex drive, I suppose. To keep our species alive. Perhaps this is some sort of dormant drive that’s been triggered now that it might be possible for you to reproduce?” she asks, her voice muffled by the scarf she has wrapped around her neck. Her nose is buried in it, and it’s almost unbearably adorable, Kara thinks.

“Perhaps? I don’t know. There’s so much I never got to learn about my own people,” Kara says, wistfully. She had spent a long time in the Fortress a decade or so ago and had learned a lot about Krypton and its various people and religious beliefs and technological and scientific advancements. But how did one person assimilate the knowledge of an entire planet, thousands of years’ worth of music and art and books and everything else that makes up a civilisation? The answer was of course that no one person could. But if she can create a new generation of Kryptonians, however small that generation might be, some of that history might just live on in them.

When they reach the Fortress they are subjected to numerous scans and tests – including a fire test to ensure neither of them is a White Martian – and they enter to find Alex and Winn working with the birthing pod, replacing loose connectors with their modern-day earth counterparts. They are talking about the birthing matrix, where the information is stored, and how it might be degraded, depending on how well it was stored over the years. Kara is not worried. Kryptonian technology was built to last.

They sit and talk quietly for a while about inconsequential things, and Alex and Winn congratulate them both on moving in together. Winn’s wife Lyra is pregnant again with another brood of babies, and she is even more volatile than usual. Winn has become used to her frequent death threats and generally terrifying behaviour, and smiles gently when he tells them how she tried to drive away in his car to the alien bar a few nights previous.

“I had locked the CPU to only allow me to drive – she’s a terrible driver most of the time, because she’s used to hovercars or whatever, and she keeps trying to jump over the cars in front of her. But now she’s pregnant, she’s horrifying,” Winn says. Kara personally thinks Lyra shouldn’t be allowed behind the wheel of any moving vehicle or ever be allowed near any sort of weapon, ever. But Winn loves her and they seem to balance each other out.

“So how’s it going?” Kara says, eventually, unable to curb her impatience any longer.

“You in a hurry to make babies, Kara?” Alex asks, raising an eyebrow. Kara blushes, rather
predictably.

“No,” she squeaks, “but I do want to know if it’s possible or not.”

“Relax, Kara,” Winn says, taking pity on her. “We have no reason to believe it won’t work. We had to replace a couple of things because of damage that Lex probably did, but everything seems present and correct. We just need a test subject for once we’ve finished the renovations.”

It takes everything in Kara not to blurt out that she will volunteer to test the pod, to have baby after baby and repopulate her species. She feels Lena hold her hand and straightaway feels more at ease.

“Before you jump up and volunteer as tribute, Katniss, Kal-El has asked if he and Lois can be the first ones to try it. If the foetus develops and is viable, then we’ll see about reproducing the technology,” Alex says. “But there is one small problem.”

“Which is?” Kara asks.

“Money. Specifically, that the DEO’s mission is not to help Superman and Supergirl procreate,” Alex says, and then stops, a look of disgust on her face. “I mean separately, with their separate partners,” she clarifies. Lena stifles a snort of laughter.

“I can cover that,” Kara says. Cat left her a fortune, after all. She owns a third of CatCo and has a private plane that she doesn’t (need to) use and a property portfolio that rivalled that of the Hiltons.

“And if it becomes too much, I can cover the rest,” Lena says, squeezing Kara’s hand gently. “I just inherited the world’s largest multi-trillion dollar company, after all.”

Kara had actually forgotten that Lena was now the sole owner of LCorp and its holdings. Boy, they really didn’t have to worry about money, did they? Kara was already a billionaire, and Lena’s personal fortune combined with Luthor-Spheerical and LCorp probably made her richer than anyone else on the planet.

“That’s settled, then,” Alex says, relieved. “I’ll tell J’onn.”
“And what about the regeneration chamber?” Kara asks.

“We’ve had a really good look at the insides, and bar a few chipped crystals that we’ve been able to repair with the AI’s help, it seems to be completely functional,” Alex says. “Unfortunately, there’s no way to know whether it will actually work without someone going in there. I suppose we could wait until the next time you’ve been hurt, Kara, and put you in there, but that will only tell us half the tale. The other part is whether it will be able to transform a human’s cells the way Lena believes it will. For what it’s worth, I think it will. The Jor-El construct is certain of it, too.”

Kara takes another deep breath. And then another.

“It… it could really work?” she whispers, not really asking anyone. She just needs to absorb the information.

“It’s okay, Kara,” Lena murmurs, knowing that only Kara will hear her. “It will be fine. Whatever happens, happens.”

She has never been so grateful for Lena’s steady, sweet nature than she is right at that moment. She is flailing in all directions, emotionally, and Lena grounds her with a few simple words and a light touch. The only other people who’ve ever been able to do that for Kara are Alex and Cat.

“Thank you, guys. For doing this,” Kara says, holding Winn’s gaze and then Alex’s. “I can’t tell you how much this means to me.”

“We know, Kara. That’s why we’re doing it,” Alex says, and Winn nods along, a gentle smile on his face.

Kara only cries for a few minutes, which she personally thinks is pretty good. Because her friends, her family, are the best thing that’s ever happened to her. She’s never felt as lucky as she does right now.

They head home a little later and half-heartedly tackle a little more of their unpacking before Lena insists they order takeout and cuddle. They put on a new series about lesbians in space (or at least that’s what Kara says it’s about) and they eat potstickers and noodles and ice cream huddled up on the couch under a soft blanket. Kara drifts off to sleep in Lena’s arms, her head still in the far North, and part of her heart still with Cat Grant.
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Lois Lane makes a spontaneous decision, and the results leave Lena and Kara with some decisions to make. And Alex, too.

Lena Luthor was born to a simple family, from what she can discern. They were of Irish descent, living in Boston. Lena’s mother looked very much like her. Her father left when she was an infant (presumably because of Lena’s mother’s infidelity with Lionel Luthor) and her mother died when she was four. That was when she became aware that she had a whole different family, and she was shipped off to live with them first in Metropolis and then in Smallville, of all places. Her mom’s house had been warm and comforting. The Luthor house was cold and forbidding. Lionel was nice to her, but she became aware very quickly that she was one of the few who were shown that side of him. Lex was her best friend, her chess buddy, her stalwart defender. Lillian was the mother she never wanted, and who never wanted her. Nevertheless, she persisted in trying to meet whatever impossible standard it was that Lillian seemed to want her to meet at any given time, not knowing that all Lillian wanted was for her never to have existed in the first place.

Given the evil that Lillian Luthor had inflicted upon Lena during her lifetime, and the pain she had caused Kara, Lena knows that Kara doesn’t understand why she had ever reconciled with the woman. But Kara hadn’t been there when Lena tried to end her life, and while Lena doesn’t blame her for that – it was entirely by design, after all – she knows that Kara would feel differently if she’d seen Lillian that day, and the days after. She had been entirely broken. And yes, Lillian was a superb actor, Lena knew that. She’d been taken in by it on more than one occasion. But it seemed that her mother had grown to love Lena and had been heartbroken that she’d attempted to end her life, especially since at least part of it was due to Lillian’s own actions in claiming the lead-seeding device as her own anti-alien work. It had been the proverbial straw that broke the camel’s back when it came to Lena’s fragile mental health and Lillian had never forgiven herself for that.

Lena hadn’t trusted it at first, the new side of Lillian. She’d spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on private security and consultant detectives, all of whom reported back that Lillian had quietly dismantled Cadmus and that some of their number had unexpectedly handed themselves in to police or were quietly disappeared. Cadmus was gone and when Lillian took over LCorp later, she ensured that any projects that Lena had had a hand in were seen through to their (usually charitable) conclusion. The alien detection device became a tool for emergency personnel to quickly check the species of their patient before giving them potentially dangerous medications or treatment, and the transmat portals were set up as a global network for primarily charitable reasons. That wasn’t to say that the rich weren’t able to purchase the technology; it had to be paid for somehow, after all. The portals would replace air travel eventually, Lena was sure, once they were able to find more of the off-world minerals that went into building them.
Kara is sleeping on top of her, half-crushing Lena with her dense Kryptonian body. Lena has asked her on more than one occasion how much she actually weighs, fascinated by the difference in their molecular densities, but Kara is apparently sensitive about that and won’t tell her. Lena’s been idly thinking about having a few sets of scales installed throughout the apartment in places where Kara usually stands, just to satisfy her curiosity. But she figures that she’ll probably upset Kara if she does that and Kara finds out, and if there’s one thing she hates more than any other, it’s upsetting Kara. Lena still feels guilty about leaving National City after the Daxamite invasion. Yes, she had her reasons, and she knows Kara understands, but she also knows that she hurt Kara. And that if she hadn’t left, they might have moved in together back then instead of now. And Kara wouldn’t have married Cat after she came back to National City, and Lena wouldn’t be competing with the ghost of the Queen of All Media for Kara’s love. But if things had happened differently, Lillian might never have stopped with her vendetta against aliens and the Supers in particular, and God only knows how that would have ended. Lillian could easily have killed Kara on more than one occasion, and only she knew why she didn’t.

Lena isn’t able to sleep or to concentrate on the space lesbians television show, which to be fair actually does seem to be about just that. Because she’s thinking about the regeneration chamber and the birthing pods. She’s thinking about the two things Kara wants more than anything – a partner who will live as long as she will, and a future for Krypton, and how these devices were in Lex’s possession the whole time. How, if Lillian had given her the location before her death, Lena would have handed the devices over to the DEO without question and she’d probably be watching a new superhero emerge in National City with a stature suspiciously similar to that of Cat Grant. Followed years later by a brood of Kryptonian-human hybrid superheroes. But because events have fallen as they have, it’s Lena who might get to be Kara’s partner for more years than any human would reasonably be expected to live, Lena who might get to have a whole bunch of children with the love of her life. Part of her is excited, exhilarated even, by the prospect of an unbreakable body, the power of flight, virtual immortality. And part of her thinks it’s a terrible idea. Because in her forty-four years on this planet, she can count the times when she’s been happy on the fingers of one hand. What if Kara falls out of love with her? What if Kara isn’t, in fact, in love with her at all? Because Cat was Kara’s great love, and Lena doesn’t know if she can compete with that.

She decides to wake Kara and head to bed, because she’s not achieving a thing sitting here, and at least if she can’t sleep she can slip out of bed to do some work without disturbing Kara. Currently, given that Kara is half-draped over her, that is not going to be an option.

She manages to get Kara to the bathroom and then in bed without too much fuss, though there is a lot of complaining. But she’s pleased when she goes to bed and Kara’s body heat and soft snores send her off to sleep and she doesn’t have to rely on her work to give her something to focus on.

The next few weeks are busy, because Lena has work to do with LCorp and Luthor Spheerical. She has no desire to be the CEO of LCorp again, so she’s sent out headhunters to find her the right person, and she’s anxious to get back to her real calling, working out the last kinks in Biomax to get it to those who need it. She doesn’t care if people can pay for the nanite treatment or not; she has enough of a fortune now that should she still be alive in a thousand years, she would still be a bajillionaire, as Kara has named her. She suspects that some of the other stockholders do mind,
However, so she is bent on making Biomax a profitable business venture as well as making a real difference in the world. She thinks that with the right backing she can make the nanites free to those who need it, first in America and then the rest of the world. Part of the development of the nanites made them basically unhackable. The tiny little bots have one job, which is to treat whatever ailment the body presents with. They cannot be used to control people in the way that they were used against Jack, Lena’s ex. Any attempt to control the swarm in any other fashion results in them dissolving harmlessly.

She is deep in a complex algorithm when her secretary, Ingrid, knocks on the door to tell her Kara is on the phone. She frowns and picks up the call, confused as to why Kara hasn’t just popped in or called her cell, which is fully charged up as always, since virtually every surface it ever sits on charges the tiny device.

“Kara?” Lena answers, knowing she sounds confused. “Is everything okay?”

“They got the regeneration machine working, and Lois used it when Kal was away. She managed to hack the interface, somehow,” Kara says, almost babbling. “I need you… will you come with me?”

Lena nods, stunned, before remembering that she’s on a voice call, and tells Kara she’s ready to go. Lena calls out to Ingrid, telling her to clear the rest of the day, and manages to put her coat on before Kara has swept in and flown her halfway to Seattle before she can blink. Lena takes a deep breath and decides not to say anything, since Kara is holding her carefully, supporting her neck and spine like a baby’s, to stop it from being damaged by the extreme speeds. Even so, Lena is almost ready to pass out by the time they arrive at the Fortress.

“I’m sorry,” Kara murmurs, when she sees Lena’s white face.

“It’s okay,” Lena says. “Just… give me a minute?” She leans forward, her hands on her knees, trying not to throw up. After a moment or so in the extremely cold air, she’s more than ready to go inside the Fortress which, while not exactly warm, is certainly better than standing here where she can feel that her tears and snot are frozen.

They step inside, passing the scans they all agreed on, but which Kara is clearly beginning to chafe at. She needs to get inside and she’s almost ready to rip the security devices from the walls to get in.

“Kara, if you do anything, you’re going to get super-tasered,” she murmurs, knowing Kara can hear her. “Just be patient. We’ll be inside in a second.”
Kara shoots her a rare look of irritation before taking a deep breath and then nodding. They pass the rest of the security without incident.

When they pass the giant statues of Lara Lor-Van and Jor-El, Lena shivers a little. She knows that they were just people, and that this monument is more a sign of Superman’s power than of theirs, but she feels as if she’s in the presence of gods, something much more than human, and she feels unworthy.

Kal is sitting on a small couch they moved to this area for Alex and Winn to sit on in between working on the devices and sleeping. His head is in his hands, and Lena’s heart sinks. Only Alex and Winn are standing next to him.

“Kal, what happened? Is Lois okay?” Kara asks, rushing to his side in a blast of superspeed that causes a gust of wind that blows Lena’s loose hair everywhere. She is cursing herself for leaving her hair down today, but she wasn’t really expecting to end up at the North Pole without any notice or time to change.

Kal looks up, and his eyes are red-rimmed. He looks… broken. Lena is taken aback. She has never seen Clark Kent anything other than smiling or, very occasionally, angry, when he’s fighting. She’s never seen him like this.

“She’s… she’s still in there,” Kal says, and Lena suddenly notices the low humming sound she can hear. She turns to look at the regeneration chamber and she can see Lois in there, hands against the glass, eyes closed. She’s surrounded by light that’s a bright gold. It’s a comforting colour.

“How long does the process take?” Lena asks, and Alex and Winn turn to look at her.

“We have no idea,” Winn says. “We were going to take some time with the AI, ask him everything about the process before we did anything. But she managed to get herself up here without anyone knowing – God knows how – and she sneaked in when we were asleep.”

“She left some DNA samples in our freezer with a note, explaining that she wanted to do this now, before she got any older,” Kal says, head in his hands again. “She knew I wanted us to have children with both of our genes, so she left genetic material behind in case this doesn’t work. Goddammit, Lois!” he yells, eyes filling.

Kara rubs his shoulders comfortingly, and Kal turns to her, openly weeping. Lena shifts
uncomfortably, and Alex comes over to her, taking her arm and leading her to a small chamber far enough away that they can’t hear Superman crying in his cousin’s arms.

“How did this happen? I didn’t even know that the machine was operational. And how did she get it to work without a Kryptonian giving the order?” Lena asks. Alex leans back on the counter behind her as Winn disappears before re-emerging with some mugs. He goes around the corner, out of Lena’s sight, and a moment later Lena hears the sound of a kettle boiling. It’s odd to hear such a domestic sound here, in what might as well be a palace of the gods.

“Honestly, Lena? We have no idea. We were pretty sure we had the machine working, and the AI confirmed it was operational. So we told Kal yesterday and he said he’d come up after work today. When Winn and I woke, she was already in the chamber. Kal thinks that she left in the middle of the night, and that she arrived here at 8am or so, National City time. That would mean she’s been in there for about 4 hours, give or take,” Alex explains.

“But how would she manage to convince the AI to run the regeneration cycle without a Kryptonian present?” Lena asks. “He talked to me, sure, but anytime I asked him to do anything, even open the chamber door, he just said ‘your access is unauthorised’ and switched himself off.”

Alex chuckles at Lena’s impression of Jor-El’s voice.

“That’s what he did with us, too, until Kal told him that we were both to be treated as authorised users or whatever,” Alex says. “But Lois is smart. A lot smarter than she lets on. She might have managed to reconfigure the crystals to bypass the security protocols, or maybe she managed to make Jor-El believe that Kal was authorising it, somehow? I don’t know, honestly. But what’s done is done,” Alex shrugs. “Someone had to test it, and Lois clearly decided it was going to be her.”

Winn emerges from the other section of the small kitchen and presents Lena with a cup of tea made the way she likes it and Alex with a cup of black coffee. He sits down at a small table and Lena and Alex go to join him.

“What are the odds, here?” Lena asks, knowing that none of them really want to think about this, but they need to work out a strategy.

“We have no real way of knowing,” Winn says. “According to the AI, the machine is fully functional. So unless his program was damaged in some way, we can assume that we’ll be getting a fully-fledged Kryptonian in an unspecified amount of time.”
He shrugs, but still looks concerned.

“The trouble is,” Alex says, “that this is an entirely untested procedure. I was going to find a candidate to test it, someone who was in a coma, perhaps. Someone with nothing to lose, and everything to gain. But Lois beat us to the punch.”

“So if it does work, what will she be like? Will she still be her current age, or will she revert back a few years, or decades?” Lena asks.

Alex and Winn spread their hands in a universal ‘your guess is as good as mine’ signal, and Lena decides that she’s asked enough questions for now. She has a sneaking suspicion that Lois had some help with her plan, perhaps from a young man who’s avoiding her gaze at this very table, but she decides not to say anything. It won’t change the outcome, and will just upset people. Winn seems to be aware of her attention, however, because he squeaks out something about telemetry a few minutes later and flees.

“He totally did it, didn’t he?” Alex says, dryly.

“Yes,” Lena says, nodding. “He certainly did."

“We never tell Kal, though, okay? If something happens, he’ll never forgive him. And that will crush Winn,” Alex says, voice low. As if that will stop any Kryptonians in the vicinity.

“Of course,” Lena agrees. She drinks her tea, and settles in to wait.

An hour or so later, Kara comes into the small kitchen and kisses Lena gently.

“No change in her condition, the AI says everything is proceeding as it should, but won’t estimate how long it takes. Winn tried to get some telemetry from Lois, but the chamber is blocking us from checking her vitals. She’s alive, though, because her breath is fogging up the window,” Kara says.

“Let me get you a drink,” Lena murmurs, and Kara sits down next to her, nodding gratefully. Lena busies herself with making tea for her and Kara and coffee for Alex, who fell asleep some time ago, having been woken early by hurricane Kal-El. She lets her mind wander, thinking about what might happen, now. If Lois is all right, if the process works, is it really something Lena wants? Should she want it? It’s putting a lot of pressure on her relationship with Kara, to change herself into what
amounts to an immortal being for Kara’s sake. What if their relationship doesn’t work? It’ll be a slight bummer, to say the least, to be alone for a couple of billion years, especially if she can’t get access to Kryptonite to end things if it gets to be too much.

But then she thinks about the future that Kara wants, the future Kara is clearly visualising for them. Children, lots of them. They are only limited by the number of birthing pods they can make. Assuming that they can, in fact, replicate the technology. Some of the components might be made from metals or other materials not found on this planet, like the Daxamite portals, which might present an issue. However, interstellar travel is becoming more and more likely due in no small part to the DEO’s work with alien technology. So, assuming that humans are able to reach out to their nearest neighbours other than the Martians and hash out trade agreements with them and others, alien materials may become easier to come by within the next few decades. And if she goes through with the regeneration procedure, a few decades will come to mean no time at all.

She has an image of a nursery full of children, all hers and Kara’s, a mixture of their features – black hair and blue eyes here, pale-skinned blonde with green eyes there – and her heart swells. She knows that she has already made her mark on the world, first with the transmatter portals and now with Biomax, but she has never really thought about creating a population, rescuing them from extinction. It suddenly feels like a worthy ambition, just as worthy as the eventual eradication of so many diseases that have been killing humans for millenia. And to do it for Kara, the last survivor of Krypton? That would be a true honour.

Lena can feel that her heart has already made this decision, that if Kara wants her to go through the procedure, Lena will agree. And she isn’t afraid, or concerned about the repercussions, because she is in it for the long haul. She loves Kara and loving Kara comes with a whole different set of concerns than most, what with her throwing herself into danger to save the lives of others. And now that Lena knows that, and has the opportunity to develop powers that might help others, along with the opportunity to resurrect a dead race, who is she to turn that down?

She’s a Luthor, and the Luthors make the hard choices and shoulder the heaviest of burdens. That’s something that Lillian Luthor taught her, eventually, by dissolving Cadmus and turning her skills to the betterment of mankind. She was still responsible for the murder of a bar full of aliens, and Lena was always aware that Lillian wasn’t really sorry about what she’d done; she was only sorry about the effect it had had on Lena herself. But nonetheless, Lillian had made the hard choices and paid the price in hours of blood, sweat and tears.

Lena is asleep in her chair in the little kitchen when she hears Winn shouting. She sits up, realising that the deep humming that was coming from the regeneration chamber has stopped. She shakes Alex awake – she’s been asleep with her head on the table and there is a serious pool of drool that has soaked into her sleeve, but Lena diplomatically hands her a tissue and then walks quickly to find out what’s happened.
“It stopped! It stopped!” Winn shouts, as he sees her approaching. She bites back a sarcastic rejoinder, because of course it’s stopped; the humming is no longer echoing through her entire bone structure.

Kara and Kal are standing close to the chamber, but from what Lena can see, Lois is still in the same position. There is another noise, and bright light floods into the chamber. It takes about five minutes for Lois to stir.

Kal falls to his knees, Kara murmuring to him, and Lena takes a breath of relief. Thank god, or Rao, or whoever. At least she’s not dead. It’s hard to see her face, but she is moving.

A few seconds later, the door opens and Lois staggers out and into Kara’s arms. Her face is obscured by her hair, and Lena is wondering what happened in there, what happened to Lois, when her question is answered. Lois stands on her own, pushing her hair back, and everyone stops breathing. Because Lois Lane is no longer in her fifties. She’s thirty years old at most, her face free of the wrinkles that were starting to appear because of her perpetual frowning and/or smirking. She looks healthy and vital and then she concentrates hard, before levitating her body about half a metre from the icy floor of the Fortress.

“Yes!” Winn yells, dancing around with a bemused Alex in tow. “Yes, yes, yes!”

Kal stands up, looking at up Lois’ face as she hovers in the air, a little unsteady.

“You did it. You really did it!” he says, and Lois smiles at him.

“I did, you big lunk. Now you don’t get to tell me to stay home and stay safe, because I’m as invulnerable as you are, Smallville,” she says, her smirk returning.

Kal pulls her to him, and they kiss, and it’s such an intensely private moment of joy that Lena turns away, her face blazing. But then Kara is in front of her, and Kara turns Lena’s face to hers.

“I love you,” is all she says, before kissing Lena until her knees are wobbly and she’s almost entirely breathless. But what she’s saying is that she wants this, and every part of Lena agrees with her wholeheartedly. She would step into the chamber now, if they’d allow her, but she knows that they will want to observe Lois and test her cells and her powers exhaustively before they use it again. It’s okay though; Lena can wait. A few months or a year is nothing, if the prize is an eternity with this incredible creature in front of her.
“Khap zhou rrri, Kara Zor-El,” she says, and Kara lights up, her smile wide and infectious.

“You’re speaking Kryptonian now?” she asks, one eyebrow up.

“I’m gonna have to learn it if I’m going to teach our kids, am I not?” Lena says archly.

If she’d thought Kara lit up at her words before, she was wrong. Because now she is luminous, her whole heart shining from her beautiful eyes.

“I love you so much, Lena,” she says, kissing Lena so deeply that Lena’s a little worried about how far Kara wants to go, here in front of their friends and Kara’s family. Because Lena wants nothing more than for Kara to tear her clothes off right now and take her until she forgets her own name. When Kara pulls back, her eyes are dark, stormy, passionate, and her cheeks are flushed. Lena’s breath catches at the sight of her, and she bites her lip unconsciously.

“If you Supers and your wives are quite done eye-fucking, I think it’s time for us to head back to the DEO,” Alex says acerbically. When Lena turns to look at the others, she sees that Lois and Clark are in much the same condition as Lena and Kara are. Lena just shrugs a little and Alex’s mouth twitches.

“Now we’ve got three aliens and three humans, so who’s taking who?” she asks.

“I think I should probably carry you both,” Kal says, to Winn and Alex. “I don’t think Lois is quite ready for carrying someone. Flying takes a little practice,” he says, with a grin at Kara. She laughs; her first rescue almost had her taking out a bridge in National City, and he’s never let her live it down.

“No need,” says a strong voice from near the Fortress door. J’onn Jonn’z strides into view, in full Martian getup, and Lena smiles. She loves that aliens are able to walk around freely, generally without fear of reprisal or difficulty. The earth has changed in many ways, and this is one of the better ones.

Kara lifts Lena quickly and hovers while the others decide who’s going with who. Superman carries Alex and J’onn takes Winn, while Lois is hovering around, trying to gain some control over her powers of flight. She’s already fairly impressive, at least to Lena’s eyes. They take off and head straight up through a skylight that snaps shut behind them before being covered again in what appears to be the snowy peak of a mountain of ice. No-one is getting into the Fortress that way,
They reach the DEO a short time later; Lena’s not entirely sure how long because she nods off, exhausted from the long hours of sitting and waiting for something to happen. Flying with Kara can be exhilarating, but when a person is tired and the person carrying them is abnormally warm, sleep is pretty much inevitable.

There are more tests at the DEO, of Lois’ new powers, of her blood, her skin, her muscles – she looks pained as Alex takes samples using Kryptonite-coated equipment – but eventually the results come back, and Alex sits them all down in a conference room to tell them the results.

“I’ve run every test I know how, and unless there is something else I am missing, Lois Lane is now 100% Kryptonian. Lois, we’ll need to test out your powers once you’ve had some time to train. But other than those tests, there’s nothing else we need to do. As Lena thought, the regeneration chamber can and does change humans into Kryptonians. That means that, from now on, any children you have will be Kryptonian, not half-human, half-Kryptonian,” Alex said, and Lena turned to see a look of pure joy on Kara’s features, a look that took her breath away.

“Now we have a problem. Because everyone in this room knows that the Regeneration Chamber exists, and now that we have a proven test case, anyone who’s ever dreamed of having their own superpowers will want to use it. We need to keep this one of our most closely guarded secrets, and I’m not sure that the Fortress is a secure enough location for tech as fundamentally life-changing as this,” Alex says gravely. Kal takes a deep breath.

“I… I suppose you’re right, Alex. If Lex Luthor was still alive and he heard of this tech, he’d do anything and everything to get his hands on it, whether that be to use it or to destroy it. And he was never the only bad guy who was obsessed with aliens. I have a few ideas as to where we might be able to hide the chamber and maybe even the birthing pod, if that works,” Kal says. “Of course, we all need to talk about it and agree, especially you, Kara, since this involves you more directly than anyone else. We want to preserve our bloodline, to keep Krypton alive. I’m not willing to let this fall into the hands of someone who wants to use it for their own gain.”

Kara nods, her hand seeking out Lena’s under the conference table. Lena squeezes back reassuringly.

“For now, I have sent off a detachment of the DEO guard to subtly watch the Fortress. I think you all should go home and get some sleep. Superman, once you have some options for secure storage of the Regeneration Chamber, please let us know and we’ll talk. The DEO’s resources are at your disposal,” J’onn confirms, with a subtle nod at Kara and Lena, who will, after all, be bankrolling anything that has to do with the Birthing Pod and the Regeneration Chamber. “Kal, make sure you stop by Vasquez’s office on your way out to grab another facial transmogrifier for Lois, will you?”
Kal nods and stands, holding his hand out to Lois, who takes it with a smile. They wave at everyone else before leaving.

“Shall we go home, love?” Lena asks, as she sees Kara looking around anxiously.

“Actually, would you be okay if we went to Alex’s for a while? Or maybe she came with us? I really want to talk to her,” Kara says.

“Why don’t I leave you two to talk, instead?” Lena suggests, as Alex turns to look at Kara quizzically. “I’m just going to fall asleep, anyway. I’ll call a driver to pick me up.”

“No, that’s okay, Lena. I’ll drop you home, and then Alex and I can talk,” Kara says.

Lena nods, and within a few minutes Kara is dropping her off on the penthouse roof, where she takes the elevator into the living room, shedding clothes as she goes. She’s asleep before she can even pull the covers up over her body.

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Kara meets Alex at her apartment where Maggie is wrangling the kids into doing their homework. Maggie makes herself scarce when she sees the look on Kara’s face. Kara’s not entirely sure what she looks like, but she knows what she’s thinking about, and this matters to her so very much.

Alex turns to look at her when she sits down, and her face is set in fairly severe lines, more severe than usual. Kara has a feeling that she knows what Alex’s answer to this question is going to be.

“Alex, I… seeing Lois today, knowing that she’s going to be with Kal for as long as he lives, it got me thinking. I am pretty sure that Lena is going to want to do the same thing. I… I was wondering, if maybe you and Maggie would think about… about using the chamber,” Kara says, her eyes already filling with tears.

“Kara, I love you. You know that I do,” Alex says, and Kara feels the tears overflow onto her cheeks. “Maggie and I have already talked about this, and I… you know I would die for you, Kara. In a heartbeat. I would do most things for you. But the idea of living indefinitely, after everything
Kara nodded, wiping tears away from her face angrily. Of course Alex wouldn’t want to stay with her. Why would she? She had the perfect life, amazing kids, a woman who had loved her through thick and thin for more than two decades. It was selfish of Kara to even ask.

“I… thank you, Alex. I have to go,” she says, standing up and quickly making her way to the window and out. There are many things she can deal with, but Alex’s pity right now isn’t one of them. She makes her way to the roof of the penthouse and as she steps out of the elevator she follows the trail of Lena’s discarded clothes to their bedroom. Lena is lying on her belly, part of a sheet covering her legs and that’s about all. She looks so beautiful that Kara’s heart catches, as it so often does when she sees Lena.

She watches Lena for a moment, her eyes still streaming tears, and is glad that she knows that Lena, at least, is all in and will not leave her to live out an eternity alone if there’s an alternative. Kara doesn’t blame Alex for not wanting to change herself on such a fundamental level. But it still hurts, because she had once thought that she and Alex would be by one another’s side forever. She had been rather swiftly disabused of that notion when Maggie Sawyer had turned up in their lives, and part of her will never forgive the woman from taking Alex from her; Alex who was the only reason, until Cat, at least, that Kara ever felt at home on this foreign planet under a different sun.

“Kara?” Lena murmurs, her head turning. “Come to bed, sweetheart.”

Kara wipes her eyes again, furiously, and strips herself out of her suit, discarding it on the floor, deciding that it’s future Kara’s problem. She lies next to Lena, allowing herself to be drawn into her arms, and lets herself drift off to sleep as soon as the tears stop.

The following morning she calls in sick to work; not that she needs to, particularly, since she’s the boss. But she wants to make sure she isn’t bothered by anyone. She needs time to think, and she won’t get that done in the middle of the bullpen. Lena looks at her curiously when she sees her making the call.

“What’s going on?” she asks, sitting up in bed with the sheet wrapped around her. She is luminous in the morning, her skin glowing in the early morning light, her eyes brighter than they really should be, by any law of the universe.

“I just… need some time to think, after yesterday,” Kara says, trying not to think about Alex. Lena just nods at her, sending a quick message on her own phone before grabbing some comfortable
clothes from the closet and getting dressed.

“Breakfast?” she asks, and Kara nods, following her to the kitchen. She doesn’t speak, and she can see Lena worrying about her, but she doesn’t have the words. She sits and waits, watching Lena as she moves around the kitchen getting things ready. It’s not long before Kara is sitting with a stack of pancakes and bacon in front of her. She pours her usual river of syrup on top and eats as Lena studies her silently from across the breakfast bar.

“Are you gonna tell me what’s wrong, or should I guess?” Lena asks.

“I’m fine,” Kara says, mechanically.

“Is this something to do with whatever you and Alex were talking about last night?” Lena asks.

Kara looks away, her eyes filling. She can’t even think about it. It hurts too much.

“If you want to talk, I’m here. I’m working from home, so anything you need, just tell me, okay?” Lena says, reaching over to take Kara’s hand and squeeze it.

Kara nods, and Lena falls silent, leaving her to her thoughts.

Kara leaves Lena in the apartment after breakfast and goes up onto the roof in a bikini, allowing the sun to soak into her. It’s better than any other feeling she can think of – apart from good sex, maybe – but this is every cell in her body, being filled up with energy and strength and power, and she doesn’t know how to explain that feeling to anyone else. Lois will know, by now, and of course Kal knows.

She takes a deep breath and thinks about Alex. Her sister, the other half of her soul here on another world. The one person who has always been there for her, until she wasn’t. She doesn’t blame Alex, not really. People don’t live their lives for the sake of their sister, no matter how special said sister might be. When Alex saw Maggie, she fell in love, and Kara can’t compete with that. Wouldn’t want to compete with that. But part of her still feels the same pain she did twenty years ago, when she had her 13th Earth birthday and Alex made a plan to go to a concert with Maggie, instead. Kara had never even entertained the idea that Alex would ditch her on that day, never mind on that particular earth birthday, the one that marked 13 years on earth. It had a deeper meaning to Kara, because she’d spent her first 13 years on Krypton, and getting past that stage on earth was… devastating. But Alex explained afterwards that she would always be there, that it was just that Maggie had been so nice, getting them VIP tickets to see that band, whoever they were. Kara nodded along, smiling, and split a cupcake with Alex, and she pretended everything was fine. But it wasn’t. And it continued not to
be, because Alex practically threw her at Mon-El, because she was romantically happy and she wanted Kara to be, too. Part of Kara thought that it was more to do with the fact that Alex didn’t want to have to worry about Kara when she was so deliriously happy with Maggie, and she had that confirmed when Mon-El was sent into space and Alex left her alone again. The old Alex would never have done that, no matter how many times Kara told her it was okay, she’d be fine alone. She would have held on and never let go. That Alex was long gone, though, and this most recent debacle was just a reminder of that fact. Alex-before-Maggie would have signed up to be Kryptonian in a heartbeat, if it meant protecting Kara. Alex-after-Maggie won’t, and that just hurts so badly.

Kara cries herself out, trying to accept the pain, trying not to let it master her, but it is so deeply painful that she continues to cry until she falls into a deep sleep. Lena wakes her up an indeterminate amount of time later with a stack of sandwiches and plenty of water and tea. Kara thanks her, rousing herself to eat. She finishes the stack of sandwiches quickly and turns to find Lena watching her carefully.

“What?” Kara asks, trying to make the question as soft as possible.

“Alex called me,” Lena replies, frowning. “I’m so sorry, darling. I didn’t know you wanted her to… I mean, it makes sense, that you would. But I guess I just didn’t realise that… it would hurt you so much,” she finishes, gesturing helplessly. “I’m so sorry.”

Kara nods.

“I didn’t know that I wanted her to do it either,” Kara says, thoughtfully. “But when I saw Lois, I guess I just… I can’t imagine living without Alex. She saved me. Kal left me with the Danvers because he wasn’t ready to look after a kid, and Eliza and Jeremiah were both wonderful, but they were a little frightened of me. Alex was kind of a dick at first, but she came round when she realised that I wasn’t trying to take her place and that I was completely devastated by losing my world and then losing Kal, too. She kept me grounded and sane. For the first thirteen years I lived on this planet, she was my constant. And then Maggie came along, and since that day, the Alex I knew was just gone. I’m not saying – I mean, I know that she is happy and I would never want her to be unhappy. It’s just that I always thought she would be there for me, and she hasn’t been, not for a long time. Not unless it was convenient for her at any given time. This… it just brings back a whole lot of pain for me,” Kara says, wrapping her arms around her abdomen, though it’s not remotely cold.

Lena goes to sit behind her on the sun lounger, wrapping her arms around Kara, stroking Kara’s hands with hers, and murmuring soothing words in her ear. They sit there for a long time quietly, and Kara lets herself relax back into Lena.

“You know I want to do it, don’t you?” Lena murmurs, and Kara nods. “Should we decide on
“when?”

Kara nods again.

“I have a few things to wrap up at work, but I should be able to finish them within the next few days. Maybe the weekend?” Lena suggests.

“Yes. If you’re sure, Lena,” Kara says. “I don’t want you to do this out of some misguided sense of pity, or something.”

“I want to do this for me as much as I want to do it for you, Kara. If we manage to do this, we get to bring an almost extinct race back to life. That’s a worthy goal, don’t you think? Just as important as any of the other legacies I might leave behind,” Lena says, conviction ringing in her voice.

Kara turns in Lena’s arms, sitting cross-legged in between her legs, a look of wonder on her face.

“Is that really how you feel?” she asks.

“Yes, of course it is! I get to be the mother, or father, or parent, of a new generation of Kryptonians. And when they’re old enough hopefully they will breed more Kryptonians or half-Kryptonians, and your culture will live on. I think that’s a noble goal, Kara. From what I’ve read, your people weren’t perfect, but they certainly had a lot to recommend them, and it would be an honour to be able to bring that culture back from the brink of extinction.”

“Thank you, Lena,” Kara breathes, leaning forward to kiss Lena. “Thank you for understanding what this means to me.”

“Always, Kara. I love you, and you’re so important to me, darling. So your people are my people, now.”

Kara has never been more grateful than she is right then. Lena understands her the way that Cat did. Somehow, that makes Kara feel so much better about moving forward now. If Alex doesn’t want to do this, Kara will get over that pain, as long as she has Lena by her side.
Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Lena goes into the Regeneration Chamber and meets someone she doesn't expect

The weekend comes quickly, and Lena has spent her week getting her affairs in order, because no matter what happens next, her world is about to change. And just because the machine worked once, doesn’t mean that it will work again. She could end up just a Lena-shaped stain on the floor of the Fortress. So she has seen every lawyer she has on retainer and ensured that, in the event of her death, all of her wealth and resources will be left to Kara to do with as she will. With the potential future earnings from the transmat portals and those from Biomax, Kara might end up being the richest person on Earth, considering that she also owns one third of CatCo outright.

Finally it’s time to go to the Fortress, after a lot of negotiation with the DEO and Clark, who is doubtful about someone else attempting the procedure so soon. However, Lois is fine and just as strong as Clark, from what they can tell, so both Kara and Lena want to just get the process over with before they talk about the next step – Kryptonian babies.

Lena is freezing, despite the giant coat and boots and gloves and scarf she’s wearing over her thermal clothes. She’s hoping that this will be the last time she’s bothered by the cold; Kara never seems to be, and it’s one of the many things that Lena envies about her Kryptonian physiology. They arrive at the Fortress a little while before Clark and Lois do. They are bringing Winn and Alex with them, just in case something goes wrong. At least that’s why Kara says they’re coming. Lena doesn’t see how they can do anything, since they couldn’t even read Lois’ vitals when she was inside the Regeneration Chamber. But she just shrugged and agreed. She knows Kara will be frantic the entire time she’s in there, so she doesn’t mind her having company for the time it takes for Lena’s transformation – or sudden, squishy death – to be over with.

They are just looking at each other, standing in front of the Regeneration Chamber, when Kara says, “Fuck it,” stunning Lena, who can’t remember ever hearing Kara say the word before, even in bed. She picks Lena up in a whirl of motion and by the time Lena’s eyes refocus, she’s on a huge bed in the middle of an ornate, crystal-walled room. The crest of El is on the bedlinen, and Lena blinks at that before her mind is completely distracted by Kara. They make love urgently in Clark’s giant bed (what the guy is overcompensating for, Lena doesn’t want to know) and Lena gets lost in every sensation, every feeling, because this could be it. This could be the last thing she does before she dies. Not a bad way to go, she supposes, but she’s not ready. She’s not ready to die, to leave her legacy as it is. Not only that, she wants to be with Kara for every second they are allotted. They kiss and bite and fuck and it’s the most amazing time yet, because Kara is only barely holding back her Kryptonian strength and it’s such an immense turn-on that it overwhelms Lena. That, and the fact
that Kara is telling her almost with every breath that she loves her, she needs her, she wants her. It’s almost a chant and it’s ringing through every part of Lena when Kara suddenly sits up, her head turning suddenly, like a terrier who’s heard a dog whistle in the distance. There’s a sudden whirlwind around Lena and she finds herself standing outside Kal-El’s giant bedroom, fully dressed, her hair loose around her shoulders.

“That’s the last time you’ll need me to do that for you,” Kara says, with a wink.

“And that’s the last time you’ll start something you don’t finish,” Lena says, with a wink of her own. They walk hand in hand to where the Regeneration Chamber sits, finding Clark, Lois, Winn and Alex waiting for them.

There is silence, for some reason, until Lena remembers what happened between Kara and Alex earlier this week, and suddenly the tension makes sense.

“Hi,” Kara says, awkwardly. There is an awkward rumble of ‘hellos’. Alex looks deeply uncomfortable, and Kal is looking from Alex to Kara in confusion. To forestall any arguments or extended conversations that Lena knows Kara doesn’t want to deal with right now, Lena takes a deep breath.

“So, are we doing this, or shall we just wait here until I turn into a Luthor popsicle?” she asks, a little too brightly. Kal barks out a surprised laugh, and the stupid joke seems to break the ice.

“Is there anything you want to ask, before you go in?” Lois asks, and Lena shrugs in response.

“I don’t know what to expect, exactly, so if you want to just tell me what happened to you so I don’t panic?” Lena says, and Lois leads her over to the chamber.

“Basically, the door closes, and then you’ll feel like all the air has been sucked out of the room, and a few seconds later you’ll hear a humming noise,” Lois says. “After that, it’s pretty much just like going to sleep. I had some weird dreams, and I felt a little bit like someone was kind of… rifling through my memories, I suppose. And then there was this white light and I woke up feeling… amazing,” Lois says, with a wide smile.

“Thank you, Lois,” Lena says, taking another deep breath as she looks at the small chamber ahead of her. It looks like an odd rock formation until you notice the irregular opening, covered with a glass-like substance, and the crystal control panel on the side. “It’s time,” she says, turning to look at Kara.
Kara comes over and kisses her, murmuring into her ear.

“I love you, Lena Luthor,” she says, before dropping Lena’s hands and waiting for her to enter the small chamber. Winn has moved to the control panel and is now talking with Jor-El in a low voice. The door opens and Lena steps inside. She seeks out Kara’s face, holding her gaze, and mouths a final ‘I love you’ before the machines start to make noise. The door closes and she keeps her eyes on Kara as she starts to feel the air leave the chamber. She’s glad that Lois decided to share that piece of information, because it’s a little disconcerting to feel the air being sucked from her lungs. There’s a loud humming, and then there are endless waves of black, and Lena sails out to sea on them.

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Lena is inside the Regeneration Chamber, her hands resting on the glass, her eyes closed. While Jor-El is satisfied that the machine is functioning correctly, Kara is still worried. Because Lena is her future, and she wants that, now. She wants centuries with Lena by her side, Lena who is so gentle and yet so commanding, so cool, so calm. Lena who is truly there for Kara, without any sort of agenda. Kara knows that Lena is doing this for her. Sure, most people would accept superpowers if they were offered them, but Lena knows power, and doesn’t want it. Or at least she doesn’t want it in the way that people like her brother always do, to use it to dominate and cow those who oppose them. Lena just wants to make the world better, and it is a constant surprise to Kara that a person who was brought up by the Luthors, a family who have been likened to a den of vipers by many, can be so unerringly good.

They sat around quietly for a while, Winn trying to persuade Jor-El’s AI to give them telemetry from inside the Chamber. The AI just says that all is proceeding as it should, and Winn gives up after a while of rephrasing the question a hundred different ways or so.

They play Monopoly, the game slightly less unpredictable these days now that the boards are holographic and therefore the pieces can’t be blown away by Kara’s accidental use of superspeed or her clumsiness. Still, the humming continues from the machine, and by the six-hour mark, Kara is exhausted by her own worry. She goes to claim Kal’s giant sleigh bed without asking, falling asleep quickly with the scent of Lena surrounding her from their earlier activities in there. She does make a mental note to change the sheets before letting anyone else use the bed, however.

“Kiera, could I trouble you for a moment of your time?”

Kara hears Miss Grant shouting for her, and she is confused. Firstly because she is in her office in a whole different section of the building, and secondly because Cat has Eve Tessmacher to run errands for her. Nevertheless, she goes to Cat’s office almost on autopilot, an iPad in her hand and her hand poised, ready to take notes.
“Miss Grant,” she says, as she steps through the door to find Cat looking over her glasses, clearly irritated. “Did I miss a meeting?” she asks, adjusting her glasses nervously. She really can’t think of anything she might have done wrong.

“No, not exactly, Kara. But I haven’t seen you around here since our little chat about your lost love, and I am beginning to be concerned. What’s wrong with your face?” Cat asks, scrunching her own up as she indicates Kara’s visage vaguely.

“What do you mean, Miss Grant?” Kara asks, truly confused.

“Oh, do sit down, Kara. And call me Cat. You don’t report directly to me anymore. What’s wrong with you, is what I’m asking? You seem down, and it’s making me moderately concerned. I rely on your sunny demeanour to piss me off bright and early each morning, and here you are, moping around with a face like that girl on ‘The Bachelor’ who didn’t get the rose,” Cat says, still waving her hand vaguely in Kara’s direction. However, Kara feels something warm in her chest. Cat has been worrying about her. And she called her by her real name.

“Thank you, Cat, for noticing. I guess I’ve been a little preoccupied. My boyfriend left, and right after that, my best friend left, too, and she won’t answer my calls. I know you don’t like to hear about millennials and their abandonment issues, but I kind of feel like everyone is leaving me right now,” Kara confessed.

“Not everyone,” Cat says, her smile genuine, and she meets Kara’s eyes for one long moment that has Kara’s heart pounding loudly. Have her eyes always been that clear, that green? Kara doesn’t remember them ever being that bright before, but then Cat was never really known for prolonged eye contact with underlings.

It becomes a thing, then. Kara pops round to Cat’s office once every few days for coffee and a chat, or scotch, depending on the time of day, and firstly she is just venting about how alone she feels, because she really, really does. But then it turns into something else. Cat kicks off her shoes and sits next to Kara on the couch in her office, and they talk about everything. Cat tells Kara about her days at the Daily Planet, and Kara – after a while – tells Cat about her childhood on Krypton and her time in the Phantom Zone. It’s not like Cat didn’t know, anyway. She was just staying quiet for Kara’s sake, to allow her to stay at CatCo without bringing up their previous discussions on the subject. It all comes to a head a month or so later, when Kara spends almost a full day fighting a centaur-like creature that looks like a combination of Khal Drogo and his horse. She finally takes the thing down but is badly beaten in the process, blowing her powers out and being confined to the DEO for a full week afterwards, first in a coma and then awake but stuck needing a sunbed to rebuild her strength.
She goes back to CatCo the following Monday and is approached by a terrified Eve Tessmacher not long after she arrives, begging her to please talk to Cat who is on some sort of a rampage. Kara goes to Cat’s office, finding her screaming at the Features Editor. When Cat sees Kara’s face, it seems like her whole body relaxes. Kara takes the opportunity to insinuate herself in between the Queen of all Media and the unfortunate Editor, who takes the opportunity to flee.

“Cat? Are you okay?” Kara asks, and is shocked and fairly stunned to see that Cat Grant is shaking. And then there are tears running down her face. Kara leads her to the balcony, to preserve her dignity, and wraps her arms around Cat as she cries.

She’s stunned when Cat turns in her arms and thumps Kara, hard, right in the middle of her chest.

“You disappeared, you stupid alien, and I thought you were DEAD. I was ready to hunt down Agents Mulder and Scully by scent to find you. Your sister dropped off the map, too, and James couldn’t tell me a thing. Where were you?”

Kara is astonished and unprepared to deal with Cat’s anger.

“Cat, I… I’m sorry. I had that fight and I lost my powers and I was in… a little bit of a coma? And then I had to stay at the DEO for a few days to get my powers back. And then I came back to work right away. I’m so sorry! I had no idea you’d be so worried.” Kara blurts all of this out in one long ramble, and Cat glares at her.

“A LITTLE BIT of a coma? How can you be in a little bit of a coma, Kara Danvers? What the hell is that?”

“I had a fractured skull, I guess? And maybe a severed spine,” Kara mutters the last bit, but Cat catches it anyway, and her glare this time is even harder.

“I didn’t know you could be hurt like this,” Cat says, and she’s touching Kara’s face now, gently. Kara is confused and the feeling of Cat’s soft skin touching her face is just… confusing her more. She’s trying to make sense of it all when Cat grabs her collar and pulls Kara’s face down to her level, and then Cat Grant is kissing her. Kissing her. Like as if Kara is a person that Cat Grant would kiss. Kara is lost, wondering what is happening, but then Cat has her tongue in Kara’s mouth and she bites Kara’s lip hard enough that she really has to have chipped a tooth, and that’s where Kara stops thinking entirely. She pushes Cat against the wall, lifting her and pulling Cat’s legs around her waist. Kissing Cat is as exhilarating as fighting the strongest alien, and Kara thinks dimly that aliens could take lessons from Cat on how to fight, because every part of her is a weapon, precise and deadly. Kara fights back, biting at Cat’s neck and sucking on her earlobe, leaving a
mark that she knows she is going to be smug about later, and Cat’s going to be furious about. Kara can’t bring herself to care, however, because Cat is panting into her mouth and Kara is ready to take her right here, take and be taken, and then she remembers that they’re in Cat’s office on a Monday morning at 8.40 and fucking Cat against a wall is probably not her best course of action, no matter how much she wants to do exactly that. She pulls away with an effort that rivals lifting Fort Rozz into space.

“Cat…” she murmurs, kissing Cat’s neck gently, not able to move away just yet. “Where did that come from?” she asks, her tongue tickling at the edge of Cat’s ear.

“You scared the shit out of me, Kara Danvers, and I couldn’t stay away from you any longer,” Cat says, letting out a small moan as Kara sucks on her neck.

“I never thought I’d be grateful to that Khal Drogo wannabe,” Kara says, and Cat chuckles.

“He really did look like him, didn’t he?” she murmurs, and Kara turns her head to kiss Cat again, slowly, languidly, because this is something that Cat wants, and Kara hadn’t ever really acknowledged how much she wanted this, too, because she never thought it could be real. She kisses Cat and it’s so much better than any other kiss she’s ever had, so much better than James or Mon-El or any of those poor unfortunates who ended up with a broken nose. She kisses Cat and the world falls away, and she feels like she’s flying, and that’s the best thing Kara can say about anything, ever. It feels like flying, and she never, ever wants to stop.

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“Kara. KARA!”

Kara falls off the bed, managing to catch herself, hovering, before coming round fully.

“What’s wrong?!” she asks, turning to see Alex standing in the doorway of Kal’s bedroom.

“Something’s wrong with Lena,” Alex says, and Kara shoots off at superspeed to see that Lena has partially collapsed inside the Regeneration Chamber, her body wracked with seizures. The hummin that emanates from the Chamber has changed frequency, sounding deep and almost angry.

“What’s happening?” Kara asks, trying not to scream. Winn is talking urgently to Jor-El’s AI, which
disappears after saying something to him.

“He says it’s a test!” Winn shouted. “It’s part of the process, he said. Then he disappeared. I don’t know, Kara.”

Winn stares at the Chamber helplessly, clutching his tablet to him as if it can save Lena if he just squeezes it tightly enough. Lena is still seizing, and Kara can only remember feeling this frightened once before, when she was in her pod watching Krypton explode behind her. She falls to her knees and prays to Rao for Lena’s life, because Kara needs her so much. She needs Lena’s gentleness, her love, her steady presence. She prays and she feels Alex’s hand on one shoulder, and then Clark and Lois are both kneeling next to her. Clark mutters under his breath in Kryptonian and Lois speaks in English, but they’re both speaking to Rao. Kara’s eyes are streaming, and she continues to ask Rao to save Lena, to bring her back, whether she be human or Kryptonian, because all Kara wants is for Lena to be by her side, no matter how long their time together might be. She knows she is sobbing, because Alex is wrapped around her, now, stroking her hair and whispering soothing nonsense in her ear. Kara keeps her focus on Lena, on Rao, the light that fills her life with purpose. She thanks him for the life that she has been granted, for the people who have supported and cared for her along the way, and she asks that he allows her to keep this person, the one she loves.

It’s a few minutes later, or a century, perhaps, when the humming changes frequency.

“She’s… she’s coming out of it,” Winn says, and Kara staggers to her feet, seeing that Lena’s seizures seem to have stopped, and she’s now leaning more comfortably against the back of the chamber. The humming continues as it was before, and Kara falls to her knees again, this time to thank Rao for not taking everything away from her again.

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“Lena?”

Lena looks around, confused and concerned. She was doing something important, something life-changing. She needs to be somewhere. What’s she doing here? Where is this place?

She looks around, her vision starting to sharpen, and sees that she’s in the garden of the Luthor mansion in Smallville. It’s been a long time since she was here. The last time was before Lex went crazy and tried to murder… who did he try to hurt again? That doesn’t even make sense. Why would Lex want to hurt anyone?
She walks towards the sound of the voice and finds her mother sitting on a bench under her favourite tree.

“Ah, there you are, darling,” Lillian says, with a wide, welcoming smile, and something about it doesn’t seem quite… right, to Lena.

“Hello, mother,” she says, confused, and Lillian looks up at her.

“Is everything okay, darling?” she asks, concerned.

“I… I’m really not sure,” Lena says, sitting next to Lillian on the bench. Lillian places her lips on Lena’s forehead, checking for a fever.

“You don’t seem feverish, sweetheart. What’s wrong? Why are you wandering the garden at this hour?” Lillian asks.

When Lena looks up, she sees the stars. And a comet. It’s familiar; it was in the sky in 1997, she thinks. Hale-Bopp? Something like that. It’s beautiful, and she stares at it for a moment before looking back at Lillian. For a second she expects a sneer, but then she remembers that this is her mother; why would her mother treat her badly?

“I love you, Lena,” Lillian says, linking her arm with Lena’s and pointing up at the constellations. “That’s Hydra, and that’s Virgo, and that’s Corvus, where Rao is situated. You remember Rao, don’t you, Lena?”

She remembers bright blue eyes and an impish, joyous grin. A clumsy person, tripping over her and saying that name.

“Oh, Rao, Lena! I’m so sorry.”

Kara. That’s her name.

“Mom, where’s Kara?” Lena asks.
“She’s up there, where she belongs, dear,” Lillian says, pointing at Rao. “Remember, you and I sent her home, when we engineered the Medusa virus to kill the Kryptonians, too.”

Lena stares at her.

“What do you mean? We did what?”

“The Medusa virus. You managed to integrate the isotope and we re-engineered the virus to take down the Kryptonians, too. She went into ‘Rao’s light’ as she wanted to, and the earth was freed from the alien parasites who had been infesting our home.”

Lillian’s voice is perfectly calm, and she smiles at Lena so very lovingly that Lena’s heart stutters. She knows that at one point or another in her life, she would have given anything for Lillian to look at her that way.

“You killed Kara?” she asks, incredulous, pulling away.

“No, darling. We killed Kara. It was your idea, darling, after Lex killed that other creature. And she asked us for it, after all, since she didn’t want to live without her cousin. As if creatures like that have feelings, like we do,” Lillian chuckled.

Lena flings herself backwards so violently that she ends up sitting her ass on the ground, looking up at her mother.

“You’re a monster,” she says.

“Yes, darling. But so are you,” Lillian says, and she turns to look at Lena, and her grin is feral, and her eyes are made of fire.

Lena sits, dumbfounded and terrified, as her mother stands, her body being consumed by flame, her eyes somehow brighter than the rest of it. A being made from crimson flame stands before her, and Lena is awed and terrified.
“Rao,” she breathes.

“Indeed,” the flame-being replies. “You wish to become my daughter, child of my enemy?”

“If I am worthy, yes,” Lena says, her eyes on the ground. She does not feel worthy to even look up at the being in front of her. She is cowed, worthless, and before her stands a god, judging her.


“For her. For Kara,” Lena says. She is grovelling in the dirt, and some distant part of her feels shame. The rest of her doesn’t care in the least, however, because this is where she belongs.

“You believe yourself worthy of my daughter, my most precious child? The Last Daughter of Krypton?”

“No,” Lena says, truthfully. She will never, ever be worthy of Kara. But she loves her, and she hopes that her love will be enough. “Never. I will never be worthy of her,” Lena says, her forehead to the ground. “But I love her more than I have ever loved another person. I will spend every last one of my days trying to be worthy of her. That is all I can do,” Lena says.

“So be it,” Rao says, his voice getting louder and louder in her head, and then it’s a bone-shaking hum that sends her off into the darkness again, floating in a sea of nothing at all.

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When Lena wakes, it’s anti-climactic. The humming changes frequency again, and Kara, who’s been on her knees in front of the Chamber since Lena’s seizures stopped, looks up to see the light inside the chamber changing colour, and then a minute or so later the door opens and Lena steps out, her skin practically glowing. She looks just like she did when Kara first met her two decades before.

“Lena,” Kara breathes. She stays on her knees, and Lena comes to her, wrapping herself around Kara.

“I love you,” Lena murmurs, squeezing Kara tightly. So tightly that she hears her bones creak against
each other.

“You changed,” Kara says, pulling back and smiling at Lena brightly.

“It would appear so,” Lena says, with a little of her signature swagger. The eyebrow is quirked and she is smirking.

“Thank Rao,” Kara says, before pulling Lena back to her.

“I am,” Lena says, quietly, and they stay like that for a long time.

When they extricate themselves from each other, there are congratulations all round, and as Kara is speaking to Alex, she sees Lena sneak off with Lois towards the bedroom. Kara’s curiosity is piqued, so she tunes in to their conversation with her super-hearing, and is surprised to hear the unmistakable sound of a fist hitting flesh. Upper chest or shoulder, she thinks – nothing vital, from the sound.

“That’s for not telling me I would have to go through a trial by Rao to get through this, you fucker!” Lena says.

“I suppose I deserved that,” Lois says, with some consternation. “But did you honestly want to face Rao with doubts in your mind, with fear about your future or any sort of worry at all?”

There’s a pause.

“You may have a point, Lois,” Lena says, obviously reluctantly.

“I always have a point, Luthor. That’s something you’re gonna learn about me at some point during this stupidly long life we’re about to embark on,” Lois says, and they re-appear a few seconds later, Lois’ arm around Lena’s shoulders as she speaks expansively about how much Lena is going to learn from her. Lena looks positively terrified, and Kara has to stifle a snigger before she tunes back in to whatever Alex is saying.

A little later, they take off, Lena holding Kara’s hand at first before she grows more confident, flying
under her own steam for the first time in her life. The whoops of joy from her throat make Kara laugh out loud and throw a few barrel-rolls into her own flight.

“Who’d have thought it? A Super and a Luthor, flying together,” Lena shouts, in between whoops of joy.

“Not me,” Kara shouts back, smiling back at Lena so brightly that her cheeks start to hurt.

When they get back to their penthouse, they have sex so loudly and so vigorously that they break the bed and bring part of the ceiling down on them.

“Oops,” Lena says, pushing part of the ceiling off her now-unbreakable body. “I don’t think I realise my own strength. And that heat vision is a little inconvenient,” she continues, looking up at the holes in the ceiling.

“Yeah, that one takes a while to get used to,” Kara says, smiling. The way Lena looks at her in return is all hunger and heat, however, so Kara she drags her first into the huge sunken bath and then into the guest bedroom, making love to Lena with all of her strength, enjoying the deep, animalistic pleasure of not having to hold back with a partner for the first time in many, many years.

“So what happened to you in there?” Kara asks, when they’re both finally exhausted and her head is on Kara’s chest, Kara’s hand running through her hair.

“I… I guess I met Rao,” Lena says, after a moment of thought.

“Really? What did he look like?” Kara asks, mouth dropping open. Rao?

“My mom,” Lena says, chuckling. “It was horrifying. I was in the mansion in Smallville, in the gardens. Lillian was there, and we were sitting there, looking up at the stars, and she showed me where Rao was. I asked her where you were, and she told me that she and I had worked together to kill you and all of the other aliens on earth using the Medusa virus. It was… it was horrible, because she smiled at me and she was so proud, Kara. And I fell onto the floor, and her eyes turned to fire, and then she was… Rao. He asked me if I was worthy of you, if I was worthy of… this,” she says, indicating her newly-minted Kryptonian body. “I said no. And I said that I would fight every day to love you enough, to be worthy of this, of you. And then I went to sleep, again. And when I woke up, I was like this,” Lena says.
Kara can’t describe the feeling that’s welling up in her. She’s lost in Lena’s eyes. Lena feels unworthy of her? How is that possible? Even Rao has judged her worthy, given that she’s now a Kryptonian.

“I love you so much, Lena Luthor. And I pray that one day I will be worthy of you. It’s never been the other way round,” Kara says.

“Shut up, Zor-El. Your god is looking out for you, Last Daughter of Krypton, so if anyone here is more worthy than the other, it’s you. I love you,” Lena says, and when Kara tries to protest, she kisses her to quiet her. And that turns into one last bout of vigorous sex that wears both of them out completely.
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

The aftermath of Lena's change, and the unveiling of Biomax.

Lena opens her eyes, the humming that was holding her under dying away. She feels different, young, alive. Vital, in a way she’s never felt before. It’s as if the humming has been transferred under her skin, into her cells, and now she feels stronger than she’s ever been.

She sees Kara kneeling on the floor in front of her, and she moves forward to take Kara into her arms. Kara’s eyes are red-rimmed and there are tear tracks on her face. She’s obviously been crying, so Lena squeezes her, knowing that Kara needs to feel the pressure, needs to feel the person in her arms. Kara’s bones seem to give under her hands, and Kara murmurs into her ear that she’s changed. That’s when she remembers why she’s here. She has changed, and now she is a superhuman being. Not only that but she gets to live alongside Kara for as long as they are both allotted.

She has a word with Lois, punching her in the shoulder and telling her off for not warning her about the whole visitation by the god of Krypton thing, but Lois is right; had Lena been nervous, had any doubts in her heart, things may not have gone anywhere near as well as they did. When Kara takes her hand and helps her to master her flight power for the first time, her heart soars just as much as her body does. Flying is just as she had imagined it would be; she can see city lights below her, like tiny pinpricks on black velvet, and she can feel her body creating and maintaining a sort of anti-gravity field. The more power she gives to it, the more it resists gravity and the more thrust she produces. She can’t wait to play with it, to test her limits, but now all she wants to do is get Kara home and make love to her without Kara having to hold anything back. It is, as she has always imagined, transcendent, and Lena accidentally takes part of the ceiling down when she comes, her heat vision almost obliterating it.

They go to the bath and Kara makes love to her over and over, taking her to the guest bedroom where Lena tells her about what happened inside the Chamber, and then they sleep, wrapped up in each other, starting the first day of their new life together.

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The first few days after Lena’s transformation are probably some of the most enjoyable that Kara has experienced since she was a kid. They go flying together in a deserted area of the desert, and Kara
teaches Lena how to clench her eye muscles in the specific way that causes her heat vision to activate and deactivate.

“When I was a kid, just starting to go through puberty, I would look at someone and if I found them attractive, my eyes would start to heat up. I didn’t know how to control it at all. So I had to call Kal and explain it to him. I’m still not sure who got the worst part of that deal,” Kara says, and Lena laughs hysterically until she falls out of the sky, her control over her flight completely lost to her attack of the giggles.

“You, Lena Luthor, have no idea how lucky you are to be a fully-grown adult receiving these powers. Imagine trying to talk to your mom about how you accidentally set the garden on fire because the pizza guy was hot!” Kara exclaimed, coming to land next to Lena and tickling her until she apologised for laughing.

“You’re amazing, you know,” Lena says, and Kara turns her head to look at her quizzically.

“Why is that?” she asks, and Lena smiles at her gently.

“You are a literal alien, torn away from your home, and when you land on the new planet you’re some sort of superpowered being. You managed to deal with the loss of everything you’d ever known and you learned how to control these powers and used them to help people – a lot of whom would probably happily kill you or send you back to Krypton in a heartbeat. You’re amazing, Kara. My brother got a bit annoyed because there was an alien on earth who could do things he couldn’t, and he ended up nearly destroying Metropolis as a result. You lose literally everything and you’re still, you know, you. I know it was random, but some part of me can’t help but wonder if it was fate that it was you who came here, and not some other Kryptonian who would have used their power to control humans,” Lena says. She’s smiling, but she’s perfectly serious.

“I… I figure I owe it to them, Lena. I have this life that so many people died to give me. They didn’t know that they were sacrificing their lives, and I didn’t ask for any of this,” Kara says, sitting up and wrapping her arms around her knees. “I didn’t ask for it, but it’s a gift, nonetheless. If you were the last human left, do you think your people would want you to brood over the loss, or do you think they would want you to live and enjoy the life you’ve been given?”

Lena smiles at that.

“I think a lot of humans wouldn’t care, they’d only care that they weren’t alive. But I understand what you’re saying. The people of Krypton gave you this life, whether on purpose or not, and you’re going to live it the best way you can. The fact that you don’t even see how rare that is, how different
and how wonderful you are? That’s one of the things I love most about you, Kara Zor-El.”

Kara’s heart swells with the beauty of Lena’s words. She has known love in her life, but it never stops surprising her in its sweetness.

“The fact that you don’t see the kind of beauty that lives in your heart, Lena Luthor, is one of the things I love most about you,” she says, leaning down to kiss Lena, first lightly, and then a bit more seriously.

They spar in mid-air, they fly with J’onn, they train each power carefully to ensure that Lena is completely in control. And then the day comes when there’s a huge fire in an apartment complex and they need all hands on deck. Luckily, they’ve prepared for this eventuality. Winn has been designing a suit with the El crest on it for Lena. It isn’t a short-skirted cheerleader uniform, however; it’s a one-piece suit based on the suit that Kara’s aunt had worn at one time. It has a cape but the moment any pressure is put on the clips that attach the cape to Lena’s costume, they snap so that enemies can’t use the cape against her as they have so often in the past with Kara. (This is a universal design, now, as the cape-related accidents/injuries were becoming ridiculous.) Lena’s boots are red, her El crest red and grey against the black background, and the last part of the costume is a stylised bird mask. A Raven. Lena says she doesn’t care whether she is called Raven, Red Raven, Blackbird, whatever. Just as long as her name doesn’t have ‘girl’ in it anywhere.

She flies in to where the fire is raging, Kara by her side, and they quickly land by the Fire Chief.

“Supergirl. And… your friend. Hi. We have approximately one hundred people trapped on the upper floors. The lower floors have already burned almost completely, and the building is coming down. It’s just a matter of time. Can you get them out?” he asks, and Kara and Lena nod.

“You ready?” Kara asks, and Lena sets her jaw and nods. She can do this.

J’onn has already arrived and is pulling people from the building, dropping them in a safe zone far enough from the building that they won’t be hurt when it does collapse. Lena pushes her speed, grabbing two people at once, starting from the lower floors and working her way up. She is out of breath for the first time since her transformation, and her muscles are burning. She’s also completely euphoric. She is pulling another couple from the building when a shout goes up from the firefighters. The building is coming down, and there’s no more time. She quickly flies back into the burning building, grabbing people in bundles, and she somehow manages to carry eight at once, grabbing collars and ankles and encouraging people to hold on to each other as she flies at ridiculous speeds. She returns to take another eight as the building starts to collapse beneath them. She does a quick x-ray of the upper floors and sees that there are still far too many people at the top, and the building is slowly collapsing in on itself.
“Kara,” she says, into her earpiece. “Fly to the third floor from the top – I have an idea.”

They meet a second later and Lena quickly explains. They punch and use heat vision to cut through as much of the supporting concrete and cabling as they can, J’onn joining in quickly as he realises what they’re doing, and suddenly they are holding the entire weight of the top three floors of the building - like the top layer of a tiered wedding cake – between them. They fly carefully and set the last remaining part of the building in a nearby clearing, knocking a hole in the side of the building so that the inhabitants can get out – with the help of the emergency services, at least. Because Lena certainly won’t be rescuing anyone else today, and by the looks of her, Kara won’t be, either.

“You okay?” Kara asks, sounding completely exhausted, and Lena turns to give her the thumbs up.

Once the last of the people are safely retrieved from the top level of the building, the people give the superheroes a round of applause. Kara stands up, reluctantly, waving at the crowd, and Lena does the same, seeing J’onn waving behind them.

“Time to go, aliens,” Kara says into her earpiece, and they all take off simultaneously with the failing remainders of their powers. When they reach the DEO, J’onn takes himself off to his secret bedroom in the bowels of the building, and Kara and Lena are placed next to one another on sunbeds.

“That was amazing,” Lena says, eventually, and Kara turns her head a little to smile.

“It really was. And that was an amazing idea, Lena. They all would have died without you,” Kara says, and her voice is so full of pride that it warms Lena in a way that only the sun can, normally.

“I love you,” she says, and Kara links their hands together, and Lena falls asleep amidst the humming machinery and general noise of the DEO.

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When Kara wakes, Alex is standing nearby, checking something on a tablet.

“Hey,” Kara says, and Alex turns to smile at her.
“Hey there, sleepyhead. How are you feeling?”

“Super?” Kara says, with a little bit of a wince at the old joke. “No, really. I’m great.”

“Good. You guys did good, yesterday. Saved everyone, and there were only minor injuries. That thing you did was good thinking,” Alex says, and Kara smiles before looking at Lena, still fast asleep next to her.

“It was Lena’s idea. The building was already collapsing, and she just told me her idea and we went for it. She deserves the credit, not me,” Kara says.

Alex nods, her face a little tight. Kara chooses not to question it. Alex made her decision about joining Kara’s family, and while Kara understands it, it will never not hurt. If Alex is jealous in some way of what Lena has done, Kara will not put up with it.

“So, the press are calling her Raven, except for the Daily Planet who are trying to call her Red Raven. Honestly. Cat names one superhero and Lois has never been able to get over it,” Alex says, shaking her head.

Kara laughs.

“Lois can name herself, if she ever decides to go down the superhero route. I think Raven will stick, though, for Lena. It suits her, with the hair and everything,” Kara says, regarding Lena in a fashion that she suspects others might describe as ‘dreamy’. But how can she not? Lena is amazing at everything, including superhero-ing.

“Yeah. She’s doing an amazing job. Have you guys talked about bonding?” Alex asks, and it sounds casual but Kara knows that it isn’t.

“No, not yet. We are meeting with Lois and Clark next week to talk about using the birthing pod. I know that you and Winn are working on reproducing it, but there’s one sitting there, just waiting to be used,” Kara says, enjoying the feeling of Lena’s hand in hers.

“So you’re not even gonna marry the poor girl before you knock her up?” Alex asks, and Kara
throws a pillow at her, nailing her directly in the face and making her drop her tablet.

“Dammit Kara, that was nearly Kryptonian strength,” Alex complained, throwing the pillow back at Kara half-heartedly.

“That, sister dear, was nowhere near. Now stop whining. And of course I’m not knocking her up; the babies grow inside the pod, not inside a womb,” Kara says.

“But they could, couldn’t they?” Alex asks, and Kara wonders if they’re nearing whatever question it is that Alex is dancing around.

“I guess? We could use the computer to create the embryo and then it could be implanted into a human,” Kara says, and then she figures it out. Alex wants to have a baby that is biologically hers and Maggie’s, but after everything that’s happened, she doesn’t want to ask Kara for permission. “You could try it, you know. Kryptonian tech is centuries ahead of earth. Even something as old as that birthing pod is miles better than what the leading labs are doing here,” Kara says. “You and Maggie could have a baby that’s biologically yours, if you wanted. I know Clark won’t mind. Theoretically the brain could be used as often as you like, as long as the pod isn’t disturbed,” Kara says.

Alex froze as soon as Kara mentioned her having a biological child with Maggie, and now she stands as still as stone, the frantic beating of her heart the only indication that she’s heard Kara at all.

“You would… you wouldn’t mind?” Alex asks, eventually.

“No,” Kara replies, softly. “I would do anything for you, Alex. And for Maggie.”

Alex practically throws herself at Kara, wrapping her body around Kara’s in one of her super-duper tight hugs. Kara takes a deep breath, enjoying the feeling of being surrounded by Alex’s strong body and soothing scent. Alex’s hugs have been few and far between for a long time, and Kara hadn’t realised why until she accidentally overheard Maggie complaining about Kara being too tactile with Alex.

“She’s my sister, Maggie,” Alex had answered, completely confused.

“Not by blood,” Maggie had countered.
“In every way that counts,” Alex had replied, but she had been more physically distant since then, and Kara had mourned their closeness for a long time now. To have Alex back like this, if only for a minute – it made Kara’s heart soar.

“I didn’t think you would want me to use the tech, after I said I didn’t want…” Alex says, into Kara’s neck.

“I would do anything for you, Alex,” Kara says, simply. “Nothing will ever change that.”

Alex sobs into her shoulder, and Kara just hugs her a little tighter.

A little while later, after Alex has left, Kara feels Lena stir next to her. She’s starting to feel restless, so she’s glad when Lena comes round.

“Hey, sweetie,” Lena says, when she is awake enough to speak. “Have we been here all night?”

“Yeah. It’s almost ten,” Kara says, and Lena nods before leaning over to kiss Kara gently.

“Breakfast?” Lena suggests, and Kara laughs. Kryptonian-Lena eats as much as Kara does, and gave up on healthy eating on the second day after her transformation, because her salads and soups just didn’t provide enough in the way of calories to keep her going.

“Let’s,” Kara says, and they check in with J’onn and Alex before leaving to head to a diner that serves the hugest breakfasts, big enough even for a Kryptonian appetite.

“You know, before this whole thing, I really did like kale. I liked all of my healthy stuff. I could see that my body was healthy because of it. But now it’s like… like I’m a Maserati, and everything I put in becomes high-performance fuel. And some of this stuff you’ve been introducing me to… it’s amazing. It’s like I found this whole new pleasure in life, as well as everything else I’ve been given. It’s amazing,” Lena says, marvelling, and Kara snort-laughs.

“You used to make fun of me all the time for what I ate, for bringing you donuts and all of those other things that I used to do,” Kara says, shovelling food into her mouth as she speaks. She’s an old hand at talking while eating; she’s had to be. Otherwise she’d barely ever speak.
“Well, I understand now. And while I do think your diet could do with a little more healthy food in it, I definitely understand why you go for stuff like this. It’s good fuel,” Lena says, grinning.

They part ways a little later, Lena heading in to check on final approvals for Biomax, and Kara to check on coverage of the fire and of the new superhero on the block. She’s pleased to find that Travis, Snapper’s replacement, has correctly painted Raven as the one who came up with the idea of detaching the top floors of the building, and she has nothing but praise for the coverage her team have come up with. As she looks around at the bullpen from her office, she’s struck by how proud Cat would have been. CatCo is an amazing legacy; the legacy of an amazing woman who didn’t get enough time on this earth, by Kara’s reckoning. She takes a moment to think about what Cat would have been like as a superhero. The thought makes her laugh; Cat would have taken over superheroing in the US, beating the Batman and his cohorts into submission until they did things the way she wanted them to. It would have been a wild ride, Kara thinks, and she’s momentarily struck dumb by grief. It’s a thing that never goes away, she is finding. Cat was her first real love, the first person to really see all of Kara and accept her, and the idea of outliving her has always been a devastating one to Kara. Being without Cat still feels like trying to breathe without lungs. Life goes on, and Kara knows that, but every now and then it hits her once again that Cat is really gone and isn’t coming back.

When she gets home that evening, she sinks into the comfort of Lena’s arms.

“What’s wrong, honey?” Lena asks, and Kara just says Cat’s name, and Lena’s arms tighten around her.

“I didn’t know her very well, but I know she’d be so proud of you, Kara,” Lena says, kissing the top of Kara’s head. “For everything you’ve achieved at CatCo, for Supergirl, and for being brave enough to try to find happiness after losing her. You’re amazing, Kara, and wherever Cat is, she’s proud.”

Kara cries for a little while, Lena holding her tightly, and some part of her feels a lot lighter when she eventually stops.

“Did you really mean that?” she asks, once she’s wiped her face and composed herself a little.

“What?” Lena asks.

“About Cat being proud. Of me finding you, I mean?”
“Don’t you think she would be?” Lena asks, and Kara thinks for a moment.

“I think she would be. She would have wanted me to – hell, she tried to get me to find someone after it became clear that we wouldn’t be able to have sex anymore. But I never thought of it that way, that she would think I was brave for trying again.”

“Well, I think she would. The pain of losing her, the woman you loved for twenty years? That had to be… I don’t even really want to think about it, Kara. When I lost Jack, it was terrible. And we weren’t even together back then. So being brave enough to find someone else, to put yourself out there and risk the love and the loss again? I don’t know how you did it. I doubt I could have,” Lena says.

“Thank you,” Kara says, after a moment of quiet. “For being you, for seeing things in me that I can’t see in myself. Cat would have liked you a lot, you know.”

“I would have been honoured to know her. I know you don’t give your loyalty easily,” Lena says.

They have a quiet and relaxed evening together and they make love hungrily several times before dawn breaks.

“That’s another real advantage of this,” Lena says, in the early hours of the morning.

“What is?” Kara asks, smiling up at Lena, who’s straddling her body.

“I know that technically we do need sleep, but being able to stay up all night doing this and then being able to get up and go to work? That’s just… wow,” Lena says, and Kara laughs.

“I will admit, it’s much more fun when the person you’re with is just as strong,” she says, and then Lena rotates her hips a little, and they don’t talk for a long time after that.

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It’s the morning of Biomax’s release to the public, and Lena is nervous. She’s had the world’s foremost experts on nanotechnology look at the code for the swarm and it has been definitively
proven to be safe. She even sought out a Coluan who was able to speak to the nanobots in some sort of binary language, and the blue man confirmed that the code was correct and that the bots weren’t hackable, even by him. So Lena decides to go ahead with the launch, ensuring that her first stop afterwards will be the children’s cancer ward at National City General Hospital.

As far as speeches go, it is a bit of an anti-climax. No-one tries to blow her up or shoot her, and while she has come to realise that she isn’t quite as hated these days as she was before, it still surprises her. They do a demonstration of the tech, showing that it heals a self-inflicted cut on a volunteer, and before the end of the day she has thousands of healthcare providers signing up for it. She knows that health insurance companies in the US are going to hate her for this tech, but she doesn’t care much. This, much more than LCorp or the transmat portals or anything else she’d ever worked on – this is her life’s real work, and Jack Spheer’s legacy. When she is finally finished with the corporate part of her day, Lena makes a hasty exit and has her driver take her to National City General. She’s already arranged with the hospital administrator that she’d be stopping by and personally administering Biomax to any child with cancer whose parents consent to the procedure. She is surprised and pleased to find Kara waiting for her by the door.

“I hope you don’t mind the surprise, but I was going to send someone down to document this, anyway, so I figured it might as well be me,” Kara says. There is a photographer with her, a girl who Lena doesn’t recognise, but she has a state of the art holo-camera that Lena’s pretty sure isn’t even on the market yet. Lena smiles and nods at Kara, and they head to the cancer ward with more press joining them as they go. Lena’s not thrilled about the press presence, so she asks the hospital administrator to bar the rest of the press from the ward, and they do. She is careful to ask each child for their permission to have their picture taken or to be mentioned in the Tribune, but no-one disagrees.

The first child is a refugee from what used to be Syria. He lost an arm in the conflicts there only to end up with leukaemia that was determined untreatable a few weeks back. Lena injects the boy with nanites and watches as his body changes in front of her, cell by cell. The yellow colouring fades from his skin – jaundice from his failing liver – and his skin clears, a healthy brown, his eyes clearing as the pain medication leaves his body, no longer needed.

It’s a surprise when the arm starts re-growing in front of them. It had worked in mice and rats, but Biomax clearly sees the missing limb as unhealthy and it begins to regenerate in front of them as Lena watches in surprise and awe. There are limits on the technology; it doesn’t do as it pleases, but Lena still hadn’t expected it to regrow a limb lost in an old injury.

“I wasn’t expecting that to happen,” she admits, low enough that she knows only Kara will hear.

“Can we please get some high-protein food for Fathi?” she calls out, and a nurse scurries off to find something appropriate. “It’ll take a fair bit of energy to grow back a whole arm,” Lena says to the boy’s parents, who are looking at her as if she’s some sort of goddess. “If he’s hungry for the next
week or so, let him eat. But don’t let him fool you in a month’s time if he says he needs ice cream for his arm,” she says, grinning at the boy, who giggles before returning to stare at his slowly re-growing limb in wonder.

Lena leaves the room and has to take a moment to let her tears fall, Kara shielding her from the hospital staff as she does. Biomax works. It really works, and those kids are not going to suffer anymore.

The rest of the day is a blur, but the good kind, where she can’t keep each face straight in her head because they are all looking at her the same way – as if she hung the moon and stars; as if she has changed their lives. And she has. By the time she’s finished for the day, she’s completely exhausted in a way that she can barely recognise. It isn’t a physical thing; it’s entirely emotional. Lena’s just not used to so much happiness in one short space of time, and it’s overwhelming.

Kara is watching her carefully, as if she’s somehow able to read what’s going on with Lena. It’s not much of a surprise, therefore, when she walks Lena around the corner into a dark alleyway and spins quickly into her Supergirl suit, lifting Lena up and flying them back to their apartment. She speeds around for a few seconds and Lena can distinctly hear the bath filling, and there’s a glass of wine in her hand, and she’s in a silk robe with her hair loose around her shoulders. Even with her own Kryptonian senses, she didn’t see Kara move at all. She figures she has time to work on training her powers, however, and sets herself down on the sofa to sip at her wine. Kara returns to the living room a few minutes later with a plateful of leftover Chinese food that she’s obviously just re-heated with her heat vision. Lena smiles and demolishes the food in seconds.

“Thank you,” she says, smiling at Kara who’s just finished her own plateful. “You always know what I need.”

Kara shrugs.

“You looked like you were a little overwhelmed,” Kara says, and Lena nods.

“I was. I am. It was an amazing day. I guess I just didn’t realise how much it would mean. To see Jack’s work finished. To see those kids healing right in front of me? It was fantastic,” Lena says, a little dreamily.

“You’re amazing,” Kara says, fervently. “You finished what Jack started. You have just revolutionised healthcare in the US, Lena. You changed the lives of those kids and their families today. You may have just eradicated cancer, Lena. I couldn’t be more proud,” Kara says, looking at her in the same way those kids and their parents had, and Lena flushes.
“You… don’t look at me that way, Kara,” she says, squirming.

“Like what? Like you are the smartest, sexiest, most fascinating woman that I’ve ever met?” Kara says, and Lena can tell that she means every word.

“Hey, didn’t you run a bath?” Lena asks, and Kara pales.

“Oh, Rao,” she mutters, before disappearing.

“Phew. Just caught it before it started overflowing. Come on, Lena Luthor, Nobel Prize Winner,” Kara says, lifting Lena up in her arms and whisking her into the bathroom, stripping both of them and placing them in the sunken bath carefully. The water is hot, but not uncomfortably so, and Lena lies back, her back resting against Kara’s chest. Kara puts her arms around her and Lena turns her head a little so they can kiss.

“I love you,” Lena murmurs, and Kara squeezes her just a little bit tighter.

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The next day, they fly to Midvale, Kara carrying Alex along with her. They land in Eliza’s garden, beside the huge tree that Kara had spent a lot of time underneath when she first landed, finding it one of the most peaceful places in her new home.

Eliza looks drawn and worn, and every year of her life is written in the lines of her face. Jeremiah’s disappearance had been horribly painful for her, Kara knew, but when he turned up working for Cadmus and then died trying to save Alex from the real Hank Henshaw, Eliza had never been the same. Sometimes Kara wondered, despite knowing that it was scientifically unlikely to say the least, if her pain from losing Jeremiah had somehow poisoned her from the inside.

“Girls? What are you doing here?” she asks, confused.

Lena steps forward and introduces herself.
“I know who you are, Miss Luthor. Believe it or not, my daughters do occasionally talk to me,” Eliza says wryly, and Lena blushes a little. “Plus I believe congratulations are in order,” Eliza adds.

“Well that’s actually kind of why we’re here,” Kara says, ushering Lena inside, Alex bringing up the rear.

They sit on the couch in the living room, and Kara relaxes subconsciously. She doesn’t come back to Midvale often, but every time she does she feels better, grounded.

“So, you wanted to talk to me about Lena’s invention?” Eliza asks. “I’m a little out of touch these days, girls, but I can probably find someone to help if you have a problem with your product?”

She looks quizzically at Lena, but it’s Alex who answers.

“There’s nothing wrong with the invention, Mom. We’re here because Lena wants you to have the treatment. We all do,” Alex says.

“You know, I’m going to die someday, girls,” Eliza says, after a long moment.

“I know, Mom. But you don’t need to die from cancer when one injection will treat you,” Alex says, reasonably. “Plus the kids needs their Grandma. Don’t make me go get them so they can give you the puppy eyes,” she says, mock-threateningly.

“Is it what you want, too, Kara?” Eliza asks, and Kara’s eyes fill with tears. How can Eliza even ask her that? She would give her left arm for another second with Alura, her birth mother. And Eliza has been her mother for a lot longer than Alura was, ultimately.

“Of course,” Kara says, and Eliza smiles at her in that sweet and compassionate way she always has.

“Oh, baby,” she says, and Kara throws herself forward, her head in Eliza’s lap. Eliza strokes her hair. “I’ll do it,” Eliza says, bending down to kiss Kara’s hair. “Anything to spend more time with my kids and grandkids,” she says, and Kara lifts herself up and squeezes Eliza tightly.

“I love you, Eliza,” Kara says, and Eliza smiles at her.
“I love you too, my sweet little alien,” Eliza says, rubbing their noses together and giggling as Kara starts to laugh.

“Come on, let’s get this over with,” Eliza says, looking at Lena with one eyebrow raised.

“Of course, Mrs Danvers,” Lena murmurs, and Eliza’s eyes narrow.

“Now, young lady, I know that we don’t really know one another, but I’m not really the kind of person who appreciates being called Mrs anything. It’s Dr Danvers to those I work with, and Eliza to family. And that, apparently, is you,” Eliza says.

Lena inclines her head a little.

“Of course, Eliza,” Lena says.

She takes Eliza into the kitchen and Alex and Kara follow behind silently, as Eliza drags her sleeve up and Lena swabs her arm – unnecessarily, because Biomax will destroy any infection inside her body immediately – and injects the small swarm of nanites into her bloodstream. They sit, all except for Alex, who appears to have the jitters. She fills the coffee maker and sets it running, and they all sit in silence and watch as Eliza’s colour changes and improves, and she suddenly seems to sit up straighter, taking deeper breaths. It’s evident, suddenly, how much pain she has been in this whole time, because her whole body has now relaxed and she looks at least ten years younger, healthy and vital.

“Wow. That really, really worked, didn’t it?” Eliza says, in wonder. She presses on her abdomen and her eyes widen when there is no pain. “Lena Luthor, I cannot thank you enough,” she says, her eyes wide and astonished. “What you’ve done… it’s amazing.”

“It wasn’t just me, Mrs… I mean, Eliza,” Lena says. “Jack Spheer and I started the project together a long time ago, and he would have finished it, had he not been murdered. I only finished what he started,” Lena says, self-deprecatingly.

“It doesn’t matter if there were a hundred or a thousand others involved in this, Lena. You just cured cancer. I don’t know if you had different ambitions or you have something bigger in mind, but this is a hell of thing you’ve done here. This is the kind of achievement that most scientists would kill for. Die for. Why are you not more excited about this, sweetie?” Eliza asks, leaning forward and taking
Lena’s hand in hers.

The ‘sweetie’ and the holding of her hand – it almost completely undoes Lena, and Kara is tempted to interfere, but she feels like maybe she should let this play out, because the whole thing between Lena and Lillian had broken Lena in so many ways. Maybe it would take a real mother like Eliza Danvers to help repair some of those broken places in Lena. So Kara keeps her mouth shut and watches.

“I… I guess I just… I’ve been working on it for so long, and I know what it can do, so it doesn’t really seem like such a big deal,” Lena says, shrugging and looking supremely uncomfortable with Eliza’s attention.

“Not a big deal?” Eliza asks, incredulous. “I’m a scientist, Lena Luthor, and right now, if it wasn’t for you being with my daughter, I’d kiss you. Because you just literally saved my life and you’ve changed the world. I think you maybe need to let that sink in a little,” Eliza says, standing and pulling Lena to her feet so she can give her a real hug. Lena melts into it, and Eliza responds by squeezing a little tighter. “Congratulations, Lena. I’m sure your mother would have been proud.”

Kara isn’t sure how Lena keeps from losing it, but she does, just stepping back and smiling tentatively at Eliza.

“Now,” Eliza says, with the air of someone who’s ready to ask the serious questions. “Tell me about how you and Kara got together.”

It’s a few hours and a few cups of coffee (and two delicious chocolate pecan pies) later, and they’re all sitting on the comfortable sofa. Alex is sitting next to her mom, with Eliza’s arms around her. She seems to be having some sort of belated reaction to the success of Lena’s Biomax treatment, and has been clingy with Eliza to an unusual degree.

“So, you and Lois Lane are fully Kryptonian?” Eliza asks, her mouth wide open.

“Yes,” Lena says, smiling. Kara’s arms are wrapped around her, and she can feel how relaxed Lena is as she talks to Eliza. It makes her heart warm; the idea of Lena as a part of her Danvers family as well as her El family is a wonderful one.

“So when am I going to get more grandchildren?” Eliza asks, and it’s so predictable that Kara laughs in delight.
“Actually, Mom? About that. Maggie and I have been talking, and it turns out that the Kryptonian baby pod thing can swish our eggs together and make a Sanvers omelette,” Alex says. “So we’re going up to the Fortress next week to do it.”

Eliza is delighted, so Kara decides to leave the good news at that for now. They still have to speak to Clark about who gets to use the birthing pod first, and he and Lois have been wanting a biological child for much longer than Kara and Lena. So it will probably be at least half a year before they’re ready to announce any additions to their family. Plus, Kara has been thinking hard about what Alex said to her, about knocking Lena up without marrying her first. It’s been playing on her mind, and while she knows that Lena is happy with things as they are, it doesn’t feel… respectful, to Kara, to do things this way.

When they head back to National City, they leave a content and healthy Eliza behind. She’s talking about moving to National City now that she’s healthier, now that she has more of a future, and Kara wants that so much that she doesn’t even know how to articulate it. The idea of Alex and Maggie having another kid – or kids – and Kara and Lena getting pregnant, with Eliza living nearby, where she can be grandmother to the whole brood? It’s the kind of thought that fills Kara with both joy and terror. Joy at how it will feel, to be surrounded by family that way, and terror that it will all be taken from her again like Krypton was.

Lena seems to sense her mood, and when they’re in the safety of their home, she takes her clothes off slowly, standing in the middle of the living room, and beckons for Kara to follow her. Kara does, shedding her own clothes as she goes, and Lena takes her again and again until all of the turmoil in her brain is settled, until her heart beats only for Lena, her muscles thrumming, her eyes focused, her mind crying out as she comes again and again.

*Lena, Lena, Lena*...
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Kara is being secretive, and Lena is scared of what it might mean. Some things come to a head.

There is something on Kara’s mind, and she won’t tell Lena. It’s been a week since the staggering success that was Biomax’s release to the general public. Luthor Spherial has more orders and more money than it knows what to do with, and Lena is on the front page of practically every publication on planet earth, being touted as the next big thing in science, as if she hadn’t already changed the world with the transmat portals.

She’s just received an email from one of her assistants telling her that the hospital bills she was intending to pay – those of the children in the National City Cancer ward – have already been paid, by an anonymous donor. She smiles to herself as she thinks who else would have been thoughtful enough to do something like that. Kara.

She calls, just to hear Kara’s voice, and while she is her usual sweet, sunny self, there is an undertone of... something. Something that Lena can’t quite place, and it makes her feel uncomfortable, insecure. Her insides feel a little like they’re squirming, and she doesn’t like it, not one bit. When she left National City all of those years ago, it had been with the firm intention of ending her miserable existence once and for all. After her mother found her and she sought treatment for her mental health issues, she decided against returning to National City, assuming that Kara would hate her after what happened to Mon-El. It took her years to be able to make another friend, but once she had, she found a strength in herself that she wasn’t aware existed. She made one friend, and then two, and then she met a woman – Lana Lang – who made her heart full, at least for a while. Not in the way Kara did, but it was enough.

Her relationship with Lana ultimately didn’t work out, but Lena had been careful to always be hopeful and always be open to the idea of things working out. She hasn’t spent much time on insecurity since the bad old days when she was in National City and believed that everyone hated her. She is not happy, therefore, that Kara is making her feel this way now, after all they’ve been through.

It takes a few days, but she decides to bring it up with her customary directness. It’s a week or so after their visit to Eliza Danvers, and they are about to eat a small mountain of Thai food while watching the most recent thing that Kara’s had recommended to her by the entertainment editor at CatCo.
“Kara?” Lena asks, noting that Kara isn’t paying much attention to her, another fact that upsets her. She has the right to be seen in her own home, by the person she’s intending to spend the rest of her (potentially very long) life with, isn’t she?

“Yes, honey?” Kara replies, not looking away from the wallscreen where she’s wrangling with the Netflix menu.

“Kara, could you please look at me?” Lena asks, and she is careful to keep the irritation out of her voice.

Kara turns to look at her, blinking.

“What is it, Lena?” she asks.

“You’ve been light years away this week, Kara,” Lena says, reaching up to run her thumb across Kara’s cheekbone. “It’s beginning to worry me. I don’t understand what’s happening with you.”

Kara sighs.

“I was hoping you hadn’t noticed,” she says.

Lena’s heart starts to beat faster. She is struck by the sudden, absurd thought that she’s about to be dumped after signing up for eternal life with the woman in front of her. It would be just like her to be embroiled in such a cosmic joke. She is choking on thin air, then, trying and failing to breathe. This can’t really be happening, can it?

“Lena? Lena, honey, breathe for me. Breathe.”

Kara is tapping on her back, and Lena unconsciously breathes with the rhythm of it, and a few minutes later she is calmer.

“I’m so sorry, baby. I had no idea you were so worried. It’s nothing bad, or at least I hope not. And I should have listened to Alex. She said you were too observant for your own good,” Kara says, rambling.
“Kara, what’s going on? Please, tell me?” Lena is practically begging, now.

Kara slips off the couch and onto the floor, onto her knees, and she produces a ring and a bracelet from somewhere. They are matching, platinum with small green stones surrounding a grey-coloured diamond in the centre.

“Lena Lutessa Luthor, would you do me the great honour of becoming my wife, my bond-mate and the parent to my children?” Kara asks, and Lena is stunned. She had never expected this from Kara, not after she had lost Cat, the woman she described as the love of her life. Lena knew she was the runner-up, the consolation prize, and hearing Kara ask her if she will marry her? It’s enough to make her question if the last year or so with Kara has been a dream.

“I… are you serious, Kara?” Lena asks, her mouth open.

“From my heart to yours, I wish for you to be my bondmate, from now until we return to Rao’s light together,” Kara says, and there’s something in the rhythm of it that Lena recognises as coming from a Kryptonian song or poem that Kara has read to her at one point or another. Her gaze is steady on Lena’s, her eyes full of love.

“I will marry you, Kara Zor-El. Of course I will,” Lena says, her heart suddenly swelling in her chest.

Kara slips the ring onto her ring finger, and the bracelet onto her opposite wrist, and she kisses Lena fervently. They make love right there, on the floor by the couch, the Thai food cooling on the coffee table as Netflix flashes on the wallscreen, asking if they are still watching. (They are not.) The food becomes a midnight snack in between rounds, and Lena wakes up in the morning with her face almost touching the ceiling.

“Hey, babe, watcha doin’ up there?” Kara asks, and Lena falls to earth, landing on the bed and bouncing impressively.

“What was that?” Lena asks, laughing, leaning forward to kiss Kara.

“It used to happen to me, when I had a good dream or I was really happy. I guess I just felt weightless, and that translated into my body floating,” Kara says. Lena smiles at her, and Kara’s smile in return is almost blinding.
“You asked me to marry you,” Lena says, and Kara nods.

“I did. You noticed that, huh?” she asks, and Lena giggles. Actual giggles, of which she’s not even ashamed, because she’s just so incredibly happy.

“So, I should apologise,” Kara says, propping herself up on one elbow.

“You should?” Lena asks, confused.

“Well, I did kind of take my time getting here,” Kara says. “I had all these things going on in my head, and I wanted to be fair to you.”

Lena shrinks back.

“Fair to me? What does that mean?”

“No, no. It’s nothing bad. Please, let me finish, before you get mad or upset? Please? Because I’m not that great with the words when you’re naked and beautiful in my bed, Lena,” Kara says.

“Okay,” Lena says, taking a deep breath. “Go on.”

“I… you know that I loved Cat. So much. I never expected to be thinking about any of this stuff without her. And I never expected that if she passed before me, I’d ever be thinking about having children with someone else,” Kara says.

Lena nods.

“I… Alex talked to me, a little while ago, about the birthing chamber. The night we saved those people from that fire? And she made this joke about us, like that I could at least marry you before I knock you up. And I realised that I’ve been so unfair to you, Lena, and you’ve just been… taking it. I don’t really know why? But I have been so wrapped up in losing Cat that I’ve taken you for granted, and that’s not okay. I didn’t intend on starting a relationship with you, I know that you
know that. But I don’t regret it, and I want to be with you forever. I would never have let you set
foot in the Regeneration Chamber if I didn’t believe that this – us – was a forever thing. So I have
been thinking about how to propose, and how to make it up to you, and instead of making things
better, I got so preoccupied thinking about the proposal that I pissed you off before I even got started.
So I hope that you’ll still want to keep that ring on your finger, now, after everything. Now that you
know how much of a complete idiot I am,” Kara finishes, sounding almost out of breath.

Lena thinks for a while, saying nothing. Kara is right to say that Lena has just been letting Kara treat
her however she wants, not believing herself really worthy of Kara’s love. She’s done everything
that Kara wants without asking for any sort of commitment from her in return, all the while offering
herself up on a plate without much regard for the effect it might have on her. She’s become
essentially immortal for Kara’s sake. While to some people that might sound like a dream come true,
Lena has never truly recovered from her look into the abyss, and the idea of eternal life is more of a
punishment, to her mind, than a gift.

She takes a deep breath, steadying herself, and decides absently that she is going to begin meditating
again. It helped a lot after her suicidal episode, and she believes that she needs it now, to centre
herself, to remember that she matters just as much as Kara does. Kara was always the special one,
Kara was her light. But Lena is not nothing. She is something. Perhaps she is the pale moon,
reflecting the light of the sun onto the earth. But she is not nothing, and it is past time that she realised
that.

“I think that you have treated me the way I have allowed you to treat me,” she says, eventually. “I
have never thought much of myself, and despite being a fully-grown woman these days, I still
haven’t grown out of that. My mother ensured that it was ingrained in me long before I left home,
and I have never left that behind. But your mother, she made me think about that. I cured cancer,
Kara. And of course other people were involved, but ultimately, I used my time, my intellect, and at
times my own money to get Biomax from seriously flawed prototype to market-ready product, a
product that will give life to people who would otherwise be dead. And that’s only the beginning.
Regardless of what you and I might achieve together, I have achieved something that no-one else on
Earth could. I have found a treatment for all types of cancer, and with some work, I believe that
Biomax will be able to eradicate disease and radically improve life on this planet. So I need to stop
believing that voice inside of me that tells me I’m not worthy of this, of you. I am worthy, and I
won’t stand for being second best anymore. I know how much you loved Cat, and I am so glad you
got to have the time with her that you did. But you’re with me now. If you want me to marry you, to
bring a new generation of Kryptonian children into being, you’ll need to mean it,” Lena says. She
slowly takes off the ring and bracelet and hands them back to Kara, whose eyes are filled with tears.

“I’m not saying no. I’m saying, ask me again. When you’re sure. In the meantime, we’re still us. But
I expect you to treat me as if I’m your partner, not a stand in for Cat, and not your sidekick. Partners,
or nothing,” Lena says.

Kara nods, tears spilling over onto her cheeks, and Lena wants to make it better, wants to take it all
back and comfort Kara. But something in her tells her to wait. Kara does love her, and Kara will
“Thank you,” Kara says, eventually, when she’s calm. “For being honest, for giving me a chance to make this up to you.”

“I love you, Kara Zor-El. Married or not, children or no children, I love you with everything in me,” Lena says, simply, and they kiss lazily in the light of the late morning, falling into one another as they have always been able to do since that night at the gala in Metropolis. In this, at least, their bodies and hearts are in sync.

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Kara is alone, and she hates that. She has hated it since she spent 24 years floating in a timeless void, trapped in a tiny pod. She wasn’t awake for most of it, or at least not entirely, but the sensation of being alone and terrified, exposed and lost, it will stay with her forever.

She is being a little dramatic, she will admit. Lena is in Hong Kong dealing with distribution issues with Biomax. She said before she went that she was fairly certain that the issues will disappear once she speaks to a certain government official. She will give the man a ‘gift’, and suddenly Biomax will be in every hospital in Hong Kong. Biomax is flooding out across the world, and when Kara watches the miraculous scenes being played out on the wallscreen over and over again, she is humbled. Because Lena Luthor is a genius. Had she been born on Krypton, she would have been a once-in-a-lifetime intellect. Here on earth, she is one of a kind. Kara has what amounts to a supercomputer as a brain, and she still hasn’t managed to impact life on this planet in the way that Lena has. Of course Supergirl gives people hope, and there is now a chance that she might be the mother to a new Kryptonian race. But besides that, she has done nothing with the intellect her parents gave her. Lena, despite all of the pain in her past, has managed to initiate a network of transmatter portals that have revolutionised travel, reduced carbon emissions and changed the lives of hundreds of millions of people who were too remote to be helped by the usual means when they were stricken with drought or poverty or illness. It is unbelievable, really, that Lena hasn’t been given more accolades for her work in science. At least now it appears that a Nobel prize is in her future, not to mention a medal of some sort from the President of the United States.

The reason Kara is alone is that Alex has children and a wife, and Lena is in Hong Kong, and Winn is at home with Lyra and their brood, and though Carter had offered to have her over for dinner, she recognised the reluctance in his voice – he and Daniel have spent very little time together lately because of their various work commitments – and said no. So she’s sitting on her own in the apartment she shares with Lena, wondering where she went wrong. Lena isn’t away because she is angry. In fact, she doesn’t appear angry in the least. Kara isn’t sure why that is, exactly. She thinks that she would be angry, in Lena’s position.
She lies flat on the couch, a pillow under her head, and puts a movie on the wallscreen, trying to let her mind drift. But it drifts in one direction only, today, and that’s to Lena.

She makes a hasty decision and is in the air and heading north before she really thinks it through. Alura’s AI is in the fortress, now, and she feels the need to talk to her mother, so she flies and enjoys the cool snow as it settles on her cape and in her hair.

“Mother,” she says, in automatic greeting.

“My dear Kara,” Alura says, her voice emotionless as ever.

Sometimes Kara wishes she had a moment’s holovideo of her mother speaking instead of this automaton, because she loves her mother, but sometimes she hates the blank stare of the AI.

“I have asked Lena Luthor to marry me,” Kara says.

Alura’s eyes go even blanker, a sign that she is processing information, and then she looks at Kara.

“She appears to be a worthy mate to you, my daughter,” Alura says, her lips moving in a smile that is as empty as it is pretty.

“She is more than simply worthy. If I were to ask you if I were worthy of Lena Luthor, mother, what would you tell me?” Kara asks.

Blank eyes process.

“I would say that you are earth’s champion. You are genetically superior to humans and your brain is more powerful than any supercomputer on earth. You are stronger and faster than Kal-El, who is
widely known as the most powerful being on earth.”

“I have been given gifts as a result of living under a yellow sun. But I have done little to distinguish myself, otherwise,” Kara says.

A pause.

“This could be considered true. However, in human terms, you have exceeded expectations. You have held a successful career as an investigative reporter before taking a position in which you are the ‘boss’, I believe humans call it? Lena Luthor seems a more than worthy match to such a person, especially given your superhuman abilities,” Alura points out, rather reasonably.

“She has those gifts too,” Kara says.

“The Regeneration Chamber?” Alura asks, and at Kara’s nod her eyes go blank again. “Then it could be considered that the more powerful partner is Lena Luthor, given the achievements she has made. She has contributed significantly to humanity’s future in a way that you have not.”

Kara nods.

“Thanks, Mom. That’s what I thought,” she says. She has a brief desire to try hugging the holo-construct, but the AI has no form and trying to seek any form of comfort from it is ultimately an exercise in futility.

“Congratulations, my dear Kara,” Alura says, as Kara turns to leave.

“Thank you,” Kara says, turning to kiss her hand and hold it up towards her mother’s image. “I love you, mom.”

She flies home with a lighter heart, and after a quick goodnight call with Lena, sleeps deeply.

She begins to plan, and within a few days she’s almost prepared. She treats Lena like she should have from the beginning, asking after her day and listening closely to the answer, rubbing her feet, ensuring she eats and sleeps even though she doesn’t technically need as much sleep as she used to.
She writes poetry in Kryptonian, reciting it as they float under the stars on a moonless night. She invites Alex and Maggie and the kids round, and they play Scrabble and Monopoly and the kids insist on “Aunt Lena” reading a bedtime story, because she knows how much Lena loves the kids, and that it frustrates her that she gets to see them so seldom.

She finds some information in the Fortress that she thinks might be helpful in cracking the code to other diseases using Biomax, so she puts it onto a data hub to bring to Lena, who’s concerned about those diseases and conditions where they still don’t really know the cause. It helps Lena work her way into a breakthrough, and several weeks later Luthor-Spheerical makes an announcement that it’s been able to cure several chronic illnesses even without knowing the cause.

“So I had this idea, which kind of came from the stuff that you brought from the fortress, and from the alien detection device? Which was to identify the cells that belonged, and to mark any that didn’t. Kind of like the alien detection device turned green if it identified your cells as human, and red if it didn’t. So the nanites went hunting through the cells of those with ME, Fibromyalgia, CFS, and a dozen other chronic illnesses, and it found a concentration of these cells where they shouldn’t have been,” Lena gushes, showing Kara the cells in question on her tablet. “We got three volunteers to have those cells removed and replaced with healthy ones, and within a week they were fully healthy. The rest of the patients agreed to the procedure, then, and the results were the same. The nanites might need to remove future overgrowths of that particular cell type, but from what we can tell, we have found a way to cure those diseases – at least, as much as they can be cured without a true understanding of what causes them. But just knowing what they have in common has sent the research into these conditions into overdrive. Research facilities are buying Biomax to use purely to scan people cell by cell, to help with diagnosis and treatment of all sorts of conditions. It’s amazing, Kara,” Lena says, and her eyes are sparkling such a vibrant green-grey that Kara can’t help but kiss her until they’re both breathless.

“What was that for?” Lena asks, looking a little stunned. Kara, too, is stunned. She hadn’t meant to kiss Lena like that, and it has left her weak at the knees, too.

“You are amazing, Lena Luthor. What you’ve achieved with Biomax? I couldn’t be more proud – or more impressed. You have changed the future of this planet, Lena, and now everyone knows just how incredible you are. If you don’t get every scientific award on this planet, I will be stunned,” Kara says, taking Lena’s hand in hers and kissing each fingertip and knuckle gently. “You amaze me, zrhuoeiao,” she breathes, and Lena leans in to kiss her, and then they don’t talk again for a while, wholly absorbed in each other’s bodies. Sex between them since Lena’s transformation has been a revelation, but it is even more so now, because Kara gets it in a way she didn’t, before. Gets how insanely lucky she is to have been chosen by not just one, but two incredible women, both of whom have changed the world in their own way. And Lena is just getting started. She is a marvel, and Kara will spend the rest of her life making sure that Lena knows that.

“You’re so beautiful, Lena Luthor,” she says later, as she brushes back damp hair from Lena’s forehead. She was always beautiful, whether she was 24 or 44, but now she’s somewhere in between thanks to her Kryptonian genetics, and Kara is glad that she’s able to see Lena like this,
without a mask or a facial transmogrifier to hide her real self.

“You’re one to talk, genetically engineered perfect being,” Lena says, but she smiles, taking the compliment, and they fall into one another almost violently, damaging several walls in their enthusiasm.

Kara absently makes a mental note to reinforce the structure of the apartment at some point before they start filling it with super-powered babies and toddlers.
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

Kara is continuing her efforts to treat Lena as she deserves. Our ladies make a last-minute decision.

Lena’s head is spinning, because the President of the United States is standing in front of her, handing her a medal for special services to science, and Lena actually feels like she deserves it. She does deserve it, because she persevered, even though Jack died, even though she almost died, even though she lost the love of her life for 20 years. She persevered, working nights and weekends, letting her personal life be a distant second to her work, and it paid off.

She looks at the medal for a long moment, and then makes a short speech to the assembled dignitaries, and then she’s off, flying back to National City by private jet. Kara hadn’t been able to make it, having several editorial meetings to handle and a small alien infestation to find and contain.

Lena isn’t expecting, therefore, to arrive at their apartment and find a dark red dress draped over the couch, with a pair of shoes she knows Kara did not pick out, because even after 20 years with the Queen of all Media, she still doesn’t know her Chuck Taylors from her Manolo Blahniks. There’s a note saying “Wear me.”

Lena rolls her eyes, but she’s not truly upset. It’s nice that Kara has made plans. They spend most of their together time at home or, rarely, at Alex’s or Winn’s. Lena loves any time spent with Kara, but it’s nice that she has made this effort to make Lena feel special.

She showers and dresses, letting her hair fall around her shoulders in waves, and when she picks up her phone to check if anyone has called, there’s a message telling her to answer the door. Just then, the doorbell rings, and it’s a driver from the car service she usually uses. Unusually, he’s driving a ridiculously overpriced limo, which makes Lena grin. Kara knows she doesn’t care for the trappings of wealth, not really, and this is her way of teasing her and showing her that she’s valued all at once. Lena gets in, and is brought to one of National City’s most expensive restaurants, Del Mare.

Kara is waiting outside, and opens the door to Lena, helping her out of the car before handing her a single red rose. She’s wearing a tuxedo, her hair loose around her shoulders, and Lena can tell that she’s wearing black, knee-high leather boots under those tight trousers. Boots with heels. Lena shivers.
“Good evening, Miss Luthor,” Kara says, dipping down to kiss her hand.

“Miss Danvers,” Lena says, inclining her head.

“Would you be so kind as to accompany me to dinner?” Kara asks, offering her arm. Lena takes it.

“I would be honoured,” she says, with a hint of teasing in her tone. Kara smiles down at her.

Lena loves it when Kara is that extra bit taller than her. She couldn’t say why, she just thinks it’s… fucking hot.

They walk straight upstairs, bypassing the main restaurant, and when they step in through the doors to the next floor, they are greeted by a roar of “Surprise!”

Lena very nearly flies off, the noise startling her so much that she feels like she’s going to have a heart attack. When she is greeted by what appears to be Kara’s entire (earth) family and all of their friends, including two young men who look like they could be Carter and Daniel Grant, Lena surprises herself by bursting into tears of joy.

Everyone backs away to give her time to collect herself, as Alex and Kara and Eliza and Lana Lang (Lana Lang is here?) gather her up into a five-way hug. Lana is still one of her best friends, but she hasn’t seen much of her since she moved.

“What did you do, Kara?” Lena demands, once she’s over the surprise and has composed herself somewhat.

“I called these people together to celebrate your incredible achievement, Lena. Because you deserve to be celebrated. You have literally changed the world, and I wanted your friends and family here to tell you how proud they are,” Kara says, and she starts Lena crying again.

There’s a video on a wallscreen of Lena working in her lab, which has to have been bribed out of a Luthor Spheerical employee, there are pictures and videos of Lena with James and Astra, Maggie and Alex’s kids, including one that she can’t help tearing up at, because she’s asleep on Alex’s couch with both kids haphazardly piled on her, all three of their heads together.
They have a wonderful dinner, everyone swapping tables so that they have different company for each course (Kara’s idea, of course) and afterwards a band appears from behind a curtain and they dance.

Even Lena’s impenetrable Kryptonian body is exhausted by her long day, so she takes a seat after a few songs, and she’s approached by some guests she had seen, but not yet spoken to.

“Mr and Mrs Spheer,” she says, smiling. The couple ignore her outstretched hand and pull her into a hug, and she cries as they murmur about how proud Jack would be, and how proud they are of her for ensuring that his legacy was completed the way he would have wanted. She’s wondering, at this stage, why she bothered putting any makeup on at all, since she has to have cried it into the shoulder of one or another of her party guests by this stage. However, there are still tears to come, and she isn’t ready for it when she hears Kara’s voice, raised in song.

Of course she’s heard Kara sing before, in the shower, along with the radio. She knows Kara can sing, that Kara has a beautiful voice. But now Kara is singing her favourite song of all time, “A song for you,” by the Carpenters. It’s one of the only things that Lena has left over from her birth mother; a vague memory of a dark-haired woman singing along with a record of the Carpenters.

“I love you in a place where there’s no space or time
I love you for all my life, you are a friend of mine
And when my life is over, remember when we were together
We were alone and I was singing this song for you”

Lena’s hand goes to her neck, and she knows that she must look ridiculous with her makeup smeared everywhere, but Kara is singing to her, and she is surprised she hasn’t melted into a puddle of gay on the floor. Mr and Mrs Spheer have moved off to one side, and Kara is standing in the spotlight at the front of the band, and she has untied her bow tie, because apparently wearing a tuxedo wasn’t gay enough. Lena has to keep taking deep, calming breaths, because she can’t handle how ridiculously attractive Kara looks right now, even wearing her 47-year old Kara face, which makes her theoretically less attractive. (But not to Lena. Never to Lena.)

Even with this amazing dinner and dancing, even with Kara singing to her in front of their friends and family, Lena is still not expecting it when Kara gets on one knee when the song finishes, holding up a familiar band of platinum and sparkling gems.
“Lena Luthor, would you do me the honour of becoming my wife?”

And maybe it’s not fair of Kara to ask her here, because Lena could only say no if she was heartless, let’s face it. But on the other hand, this is the kind of proposal that Lena deserves, here in front of the people she loves. It’s clear immediately that Lena has no intention of saying no – she never had. She just wanted Kara to work a little harder, to realise that Lena isn’t the sidekick, the consolation prize. And Kara obviously has, so Lena just walks forward and allows Kara to place the ring on her finger. And then Kara is standing and kissing her and everyone is applauding and Lena just knows that she’s going to wake up in the morning with her face stuck to the ceiling, because she has never been this happy before.

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Kara has managed to pull off an entire surprise party for Lena without letting anything slip at all. She feels terribly grown up, because this is probably the first time she’s ever managed to keep a secret – other than her identity – and she’s never managed it when it’s someone that she loves. The look on Lena’s face when she saw that all of those people were there for her had made all of the organising more than worth it. And Kara felt, now, that she had proposed in the right way and at the right time. She placed the bracelet on Lena’s right arm when they arrived home that night, and they set a date for the following month.

Their next job is to talk with Kal-El, Lois, Alex, Maggie, Winn and J’onn about the Kryptonian birthing chambers. They have postponed several times, but somehow manage to get free all at the same time on a Friday evening, and all gather at the Fortress to talk it out. They quickly agree that the first couple to use the pod’s computer should be Kal and Lois, and they quickly and painlessly give the computer their DNA. It makes various noises and then offers the option to simply combine the DNA into an embryo that they can store, or send it into the pod to gestate. Winn and Alex are watching numbers on their tablets, which are somehow hooked into whatever the pod is doing, and it’s probably ten minutes later when they look at each other, smile, and high-five.

“It’s working. Little Kent-Lane cooking right there!” Winn says, smiling and offering a fist-bump to Kal, who’s been swinging Lois around like an idiot. He rolls his eyes and pulls Winn into a bro hug.

Lena and Kara exchange glances, small smiles of excitement. This could be them, in six months.

“The gestation period is six months, right?” Kara asks. There weren’t many children being born when she was growing up, and while she knew the gestation period of a naturally-born Kryptonian (seven months, and she’d marked off every single day as she watched Lara grow huge with Kal in her belly).
“From what we can tell, it can be adjusted,” Winn says, looking from his tablet to Alex nervously, as is his habit when answering questions. “But we think it would be best to leave it at six months, at least for the first pregnancy, just to be safe. There’s a lot we don’t know.”

Kara nods, and notes that Alex is drawing Maggie across the room. They are about to deposit their DNA in the pod’s computer, and then they’ll be transferring it into Maggie or Alex, she figures. She’s not sure she wants to know how they’re going to do that, and she’s fairly sure they should be left alone for that, so she shoo’s everyone into the little kitchen, leaving Alex and Maggie behind to do… whatever they’re going to do. They make coffee in the little kitchen, and Kal pulls out a small bottle of whiskey to spike their drinks.

About ten minutes later, they can definitively tell that Alex and Maggie are sharing some form of intimacy, judging from the noises coming from the guest room further down the corridor. Kara sticks her fingers in her ears, but it’s no use. Her Kryptonian hearing is cursed her, and from the look on Lena, Kal and Lois’ faces, they are being traumatised by the noises they are hearing.

“Perfect timing for this,” Lena says, unexpectedly, pulling a small device from a bag that Kara hadn’t noticed her bringing. She pulls out what looks like a silver block, twists the top, and suddenly they are in blessed silence. They can hear each other, but anything past a meter or so is silent.

“Lena, I love you so much right now,” Kara says, and there is a general sound of amusement and disgust around the table.

“They’re certainly enthusiastic,” J’onn says, wincing, still able to sense their emotions.

“I’ll see if I can make something for you, J’onn,” Lena says, her mind clearly racing about telepathic blockers.

“I would welcome it right now,” he says. Winn snickers, and J’onn glares at him. He shrinks back, but it’s mostly for show. Winn is Alex’s second, now, and what he lacks in combat skill he makes up for in strategy and technical knowledge.

“Could I talk to you for a minute, honey?” Lena asks, out of the blue.

“Of course,” Kara says, and they go to Kal’s room, where they can still hear Alex and Maggie, but they can mostly block it out.
“What is it, honey?” Kara asks. She is concerned, suddenly, that her second proposal was too soon, or that she has done something to upset Lena again.

“It’s… I was wondering if maybe, we could… get started with our family, too? You know, have a natural birth? Because I know we can wait and have a baby grow in the chamber, but honestly I’ve always wanted to carry a baby, and 45 isn’t that old for a human to have a baby. I didn’t want to say anything; I thought maybe it was too soon, but I just… I don’t want to wait, Kara. That picture of me with James and Astra, it just made me realise how much I want it. I want a family. I want your children, and I want to grow at least one of them myself. Is that… is that okay?”

Kara’s is pretty sure that her response makes it clear that she is happy about Lena’s suggestion. Twice.

(Lena says later that she is very, very glad that she brought her prototype sound dampener with her.)

The process is simple; they put their blood and hair in a slot, and the machine tells them they have a baby. More or less. They can choose things like the gender and eye colour and other things, but Kara is familiar enough with the technology that she just sets it all to randomly choose, much as mother nature would. And then there’s a little injection of a compound that makes Lena’s body welcome the embryo, and then there’s a little appendage that they have to place carefully on Lena’s abdomen, with the guidance of the machine, so that the embryo is placed inside the womb and in the right place. There is no need for a turkey baster or whatever they use on this planet nowadays, so Kara isn’t exactly sure what Alex and Maggie were doing in the guest room of the Fortress. Well, given that she’d just done exactly the same thing (twice) she’s not so much wondering as she is confused as to why they couldn’t just wait until they got home to bang. But then she thinks that she couldn’t wait, either, and she swallows any further objections her brain might come up with. She definitely understands the need to be close right now, because she’s just pressed a button that may have made Lena pregnant with their child, and Lena’s giving her that look, and it’s all she can do not to take her right there against the crystal columns, in front of her aunt and uncle’s memorial statues.

Alex and Maggie return then, with a little bit of a swagger. J’onn gives them a look of disgust and they exchange quick farewells, everyone as eager to leave the two couples to their activities as the two couples are eager to be gone.

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Lena is, for the first time since she changed, tired. She is pregnant, almost 4 weeks, and besides that she has had barely a minute to herself since the night they went to the Fortress and made their baby. They haven’t checked the sex, yet, but they are planning to do so before the baby comes.
Between Biomax, getting LCorp back on track, and her new superhero duties, Lena feels run ragged. She has barely any free time, and when she isn’t working, she’s… well, horny. The hormones involved in pregnancy seem to encourage a lot more sex, something Lena has never quite understood, but she isn’t going to argue with it. And it’s not like she and Kara didn’t already have a lot of sex. Especially when Lena became able to keep up with Kara’s Kryptonian stamina. It was just a little more… intense, now.

Their bonding ceremony is in two days. Kal-El and Lois have been bonded for many years, but since the Regeneration chamber they have been thinking about having another ceremony, because their relationship is now on a different level entirely. The idea of being practically immortal is as new to Lois as it is to Lena, so she certainly understands how they feel.

Lena is nervous because she’s never pictured herself doing the marriage thing. When she was younger she thought no-one would ever love her because of her family, and after the Daxamites and her own brush with mortality, she had half-decided that it wouldn’t be fair to marry someone, just in case she ever had the impulse to hurt herself again. But then Kara had stumbled back into her life, and as she had done so many years ago when they first met, she’d upended Lena’s life.

Lena is trying on her dress. It’s modest, for her taste – a lot less boobs than normal – but it’s in the Kryptonian style. Understated and more like a robe than a dress, really. She looks at herself in the mirror and doesn’t recognise the young woman she sees looking back at her. She’s not used to seeing herself with a young face. She’s had twenty years of getting older, and she’s grown used to wrinkles and gray hairs and the usual ravages of age. To have that reversed because of a few hours standing inside a Kryptonian Regeneration Chamber – it still hasn’t quite sunk in.

The robes are in a deep blue silky material, with piping and other embellishments in yellow and red, with the El crest on the left side of her chest. She is about to become an El, now. She is happy to have the Luthor name die out with her, and to add her name to the halls of Els who came before Kara and Kal. It’s a better legacy than any she ever thought she’d make.

“You look beautiful,” Alex says, doing something complicated with Lena’s hair. “I think Kara’s going to combust at the sight of you.”

“At the moment, we both combust at the sight of each other,” Lena replies, dryly. “Pregnancy hormones have me at their mercy. What about you?”

Alex blushes, and Lena chuckles.

“Not just a Kryptonian thing, I’m guessing?”
“Well, between the morning sickness and our late-night activities, I’m kind of… exhausted. I never really thought about being pregnant, myself. Maggie was going to carry it, but she’s two years older, and according to the docs at the DEO, those two years really make a difference at our age.”

Lena nods, laughing internally as she realises that she’s agreeing with Alex because chronologically they’re both a similar age, but Lena looks at least fifteen years younger, now, when she’s not using the facial transmogrifier. The universe really has thrown her more than a few curve balls in her time on earth.

Dress fitting complete, Lena goes out for brunch with Kara, Eliza, Alex and Maggie. It’s the kind of thing she never would have expected, before Kara. Having a simple meal with people who considered her family, without any tension, just laughter and fond conversation. It’s simple and warm, but it’s possibly one of the best moments of her life so far, and she determines to savour the feeling.

It’s two days later, and the wedding (or bonding, as Kara keeps calling it) is planned for later that day at the Fortress. Lena is extremely glad to be Kryptonian, because the Fortress is really very cold, especially when a person is wearing a wedding gown. At least the one she’s going to wear for this wedding is a little less revealing than the Daxamite wedding dress, she muses. On the morning of the wedding she flies to Metropolis, to her family’s graves. She talks to them about the changes she’s undergone, and tells them that she hopes that they have gained some insight and understanding in death, and can now see how incredibly good Kara and her cousin have always been. She cries a little as she says goodbye to her old family, because it’s her last day as a Luthor. She is keeping her name professionally because it is part of her company name, but from now on she and Kara will be known as Luthor-Danvers. Kara wants them both to be known as Zor-El, but to use that name will present questions that they can’t answer, for now. They have spoken about what they might do when their natural earth lifespans come to an end, but they have a while before that becomes an issue, so they decide not to worry too much until they have to.

Lena kisses her fingertips and presses them to the top of the joint headstone, praying to Rao or whoever else is listening that her family are at peace. After a moment, she takes off, heading back to National City and her new life. It’s time to marry the woman she loves.
Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

A dream, a wedding, and two births

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

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Kara’s too hot. She kicks off the blankets, only for one of her wives to grumble.

“Kara, it’s cold,” Lena whines.

“Sorry, sweetie,” Kara says, wrapping the blankets carefully around Lena and her huge belly. Cat snuggles up to her from behind, then, her baby bump against Kara’s lower back.

“Is she too cold again?” Cat murmurs.

“Yeah. And I’m way too hot. And you’re too hot. We need to get one of those beds with the different climate areas. I know they cost a fortune, but it’s not like we can’t afford it,” Kara says, smiling.

“Mmmm. You go get one tomorrow, Supergirl,” Cat breathes.

Kara turns and kisses Cat, a little sloppily.

“I can’t believe we’re here,” she breathes, eyes sparkling. “I never believed you and Lena would both want to be with me, let alone that you’d agree to become Kryptonian when Lillian turned over the regen chamber. And to have the babies, too? It’s like a dream come true.”

“If you think that’s a dream, sweetie, try having end-stage heart disease and suddenly waking up with the power to level a city, when before you couldn’t even breathe,” Cat says, wryly.
“I know. I’ve never been so relieved in my life to see my uncle Jor’s face. I nearly lost you, Cat,” Kara murmurs, a tear dripping from one eye.

“Nonsense. You’d never lose me, darling. Even if Lena hadn’t turned up with her eleventh-hour cure and her amazing breasts, I would always have been with you. Perhaps not physically, but always, in some way. You make my happy, Kara Danvers. You have since the day I met you.”

“How did I get this lucky?” Kara wonders.

“You’re the beloved of Rao, my darling, the last of his people, and the first of his new generation. That’s what he called you, anyway, when I was in that chamber. I think you deserve this and much more, especially given what you’ve given to the world since you got here.”

“I love you,” Kara murmurs, smiling luminously. Lena stirs, then, and turns ponderously, joining them in their kiss and then in some slow, languorous love-making, which is about all that Kara’s wives can manage at this stage in their pregnancies.

“I will always be with you, Kara, whether it’s by your side or in your heart. Don’t you dare close yourself off to love, my darling, because I swear to Rao I will find a way back and I will kick your ass.”

Kara drifts off, and those are the last words she hears before she falls into endless night.

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Kara is crying. It’s the day of her bonding, and she knows that she should be happy. Dammit, she is happy. But she’s sitting at the graveside of her first wife, crying at the words she had carved into the headstone with her heat vision almost two years before. The contented feeling from her dream of the night before is lingering, and she can’t help but feel the pain of the loss of her first love more keenly as a result.

“Catherine Jane Grant, beloved mother, wife, and muse to the world.”

Losing Cat had been the second great loss in her life after Krypton, and she would never truly leave
either loss behind. But it’s past time she let Cat go, because she has to live the life that Rao has given her. She wants to live this new life. She has a beautiful woman waiting for her, a woman who is already pregnant with their child, and she is more than ready for this new part of her life. She just doesn’t want to say goodbye to Cat. She doesn’t want to, and she cries as she touches the marble with her fingertips, praying brokenly in Kryptonian for strength.

“She wanted you to be happy, Kar,” Carter says, and Kara jumps. She hadn’t even heard him approach.

“I know. I just… I can’t help but feel that I’m betraying her. And it could have been so different, Carter. She could have lived as long as I will. She could have carried a child. Our child. It’s… it’s not fair!”

She lifts her face to the sky and lets her heat vision blast straight up, cutting through the grey clouds above the cemetery. It helps to release some of her excess energy, and she calms a little.

“You’re not betraying her, Kara. You know what she was like. If Lena had come back when you two were together, she might even have invited her to join you both. Mom wasn’t like everyone else, Kara. And for the last twenty years of her life, her main concerns in life were keeping her sons and you happy. So if you think for one minute that she’s not going to be up there somewhere, hanging around the afterlife, sucking on a martini as she watches you and Lena get hitched and cheering you on? You didn’t know her very well.”

Carter moves a little, and Kara sees, belatedly, that he’s carrying his six-month old daughter, Janey. It took a long time for them to adopt the girl, and she was in fact the second girl he and Daniel had applied to adopt, but she is finally theirs, and Kara has been spending a lot of time helping her son get used to having a child around. It’s good practice for her, too.

“Hey, Janey baby!” Kara coos, holding out her arms. The baby gurgles at her and Kara lifts her, smelling that beautiful baby smell in her hair. Something strikes Kara, then. She is going to have one of these very soon, one that looks like her and Lena. And Carter is right. Cat would have been nothing but supportive of this next step in Kara’s life, and she might even have finagled the three of them into some sort of polyamorous situation if Kara and Lena had become reacquainted while she was alive, like how Kara had dreamed the night before. Cat would want Kara to live a long and happy life, and she would have been an enthusiastic participant in bringing Krypton back.

“I love you, Catherine,” Kara whispers into Janey’s tufty hair, into the air, and she sees Carter smile next to her.
“She loves you too, Momma K,” he says, and Kara pulls him closer, wrapping an arm around his shoulders, though he is far too tall for her to do that these days. He bends down, though, tolerating the touch, and they snuggle together, the last remnant of the Danvers-Grant family.

“Up, up and away,” Carter says, after a few minutes of hugging and some tears that neither mention.

“Yeah,” Kara says, moving back and wiping her eyes with one hand. She passes her granddaughter back to her dad carefully, and kisses Carter’s forehead before hovering slowly, higher and higher, until she’s at a safe distance to fly at speed.

“See you later, Momma K!” Carter shouts, and she laughs into the wind as she flies back to her new life.

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The ceremony is fairly small, restricted to those who are aware of Lena’s transformation to Kryptonian (and James and Astra, who are too young to talk to anyone about it, yet.) Maggie and Alex are dressed splendidly, in full lesbian tuxedo mode. Kal and Lois are there dressed in formal Kryptonian robes, and J’onn is officiating. Other than that, there are only a few trusted with the secret. Lucy Lane and her spouse, Susan Vasquez, James Olsen and his wife Tara, who live together in Metropolis, Eliza Danvers and Winn and Lyra. (Their children are not invited because there are almost 40 of the little nippers and it would be too much of a distraction. Thankfully juveniles of Lyra’s species are small, much smaller than humans, otherwise they’d have to rent an apartment block to accommodate all of them.) Last but not least are Kal and Lois’ children, looking like an Abercrombie and Fitch catalogue, wide smiles on all of their faces.

Kara stands at the end of the aisle, waiting for her bride to approach. Lana Lang has been inducted into those who know about the Regeneration Chamber and Lena’s transformation. She is helping Lena with last-minute adjustments to her hair and clothes, and Kara is disproportionately pleased that Lena has someone else to talk to, someone who wants to be her friend and cares about her.

The Fortress AI begins to play a beautiful Kryptonian piece of music from its memory banks. The song rings through the huge hall, crystalline and shimmering and discordantly gorgeous as Lena enters the hall in her Kryptonian robes. She is transcendentally beautiful, her eyes like crystal in the bright light of the Fortress. Her robes fit her figure closely and her hair is loose around her shoulders, her lips painted ruby-red as always. She is a vision of perfection, and Kara turns to look at the AIs of her father and mother, who are beaming at her from J’onn’s side. They are usually expressionless but Winn did something to them to make them more natural. It seemed right to have them there, to witness, even though they are just empty holograms.
Lena reaches her and Kara can’t help but kiss her immediately. J’onn chides her gently and everyone laughs at her eagerness, but Kara isn’t laughing, because Lena is there, giving herself to Kara, and that means that this moment is sacred.

The ceremony is performed in Kryptonian, and J’onn’s rumbling voice adds a gravity to the occasion. Lena’s answers – variations on “I do” and “I will” are given in slow but clear Kryptonian, and Kara thinks she has never been more proud of anyone than she is of Lena in that moment. To come back from the horror of depression and attempted suicide to become who she is, to stand up and be counted as the mother of a race, to cure disease and make life easier for those who are sick or poor or in trouble? She is beyond amazing. She has tried to change the name Luthor, and to use her money as a force for good, and that is something that she has achieved in spades. In short, it is Kara who is humbled here, in the presence of her ancestors and her family and friends. Because she is no worthy match for Lena, yet Lena loves her still, and is standing in front of her, agreeing to be her bondmate for an eternity.

Kara gives her responses in proud Kryptonian, smiling as Kal-El beams up at her – he has always struggled to master the accent, and he knows that she misses the sound of her native language.

J’onn finishes the Kryptonian ceremony, but holds up a finger.

“In conclusion, I pronounce you, Kara Zor-El, and you, Lena Lutessa Luthor, bondmates from now until death parts you. May you one day return to Rao’s light together.”

Kara pauses, looking at J’onn for permission. He mock-glares at her for a moment, and then he’s grinning.

“You may kiss your bondmate,” he confirms, and everyone laughs again. But not Kara, because Kara is drowning in green eyes, listening to Lena’s familiar strong heart beat and the tiny thrumming beats of the baby in her uterus, and then they’re kissing each other deeply, and it feels as if every other moment of her life has led her irrevocably to this one. There is a second when she feels like she is being unfaithful, because this is marriage, but she can almost hear Cat’s voice telling her to grow a pair of ovaries, this is big-girl time now. So she kisses her new wife, thanks her old one for knocking some sense into her, and smiles somewhat foolishly at her family and friends who are cheering them on.

The party afterwards is less than raucous, because Lena can’t drink, for a start, but they return to National City for a meal in an expensive restaurant, as a family, and there are toasts and tears and declarations of “El Mayarah” from their friends and relatives.
They are married, and it’s time for them to take a break before they start to focus on the next part of their lives together. They head home that night and make love in the tub and on the couch and in the kitchen, and when they wake in the morning they dress casually and fly to Hawaii without benefit of plane.

They spend two weeks in a luxury resort, eating and drinking much more than any humans would ever be able to (virgin cocktails only, though, just to be safe). Kal and Lois join them for part of the second week, and they explore the volcanoes and swim deep underwater, playing with dolphins and whales and even sharks. The sharks aren’t particularly interested in them after an exploratory chomp on invulnerable skin, but seem to enjoy belly rubs, and both Kara and Lena are delighted to provide them.

When they arrive back to National City, it’s like nothing has changed, but everything has changed at the same time. They are still who they were, but underneath, the foundations have changed. They are a couple, now, bonded forever. Mates for life, as long or as short as that might be. They go back to their daily routines, reporting the news and changing the world through technology, and they wait for the next phase of their life to begin.

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Lena’s pregnancy is a little shorter than they would have preferred, but after a 10-hour labour in the Fortress, she gives birth to the first new Kryptonian. Lois’s little one is still cooking in the birthing chamber, and she is comforting as she helps Kara tend to Lena, but her wit is acerbic as always. She is so incredibly pissed that Lena’s baby is ‘born’ first that she doesn’t speak to her for a week afterwards. While she’s labouring, though, Lois is there, mopping her brow and holding her hand.

Lyon-El is born in the early hours of the morning, a perfect mixture of Kara and Lena. Blue eyes, which will turn green before he’s six months old, dirty blond hair and the palest of pale skin. He’s quiet and wide-eyed, watching everyone around him, and while his skin is impenetrable and his strength incredible, he will not develop his other powers until he’s much older, much to the relief of his parents.

“He’s so beautiful, Lena,” Kara says, bending down to kiss the little guy’s nose. Some babies look like tomatoes or cone-headed aliens when they’re born, but not their little one. He’s Kryptonian, and he is stronger than most ten-year olds already at birth.

“Are you sure you don’t mind me naming him after my father?” Lena asks, exhausted. The labour wasn’t painful as such, but it certainly was a labour and she needs some time at home under their portable sunbeds.
“Not at all, baby. He might have been the CEO of a company with questionable ethics, but he was hardly a crazy person like Lex or Lillian. I’m glad his name will live on in our son. But I get to name the next one,” Kara says, teasingly.

“You carry it, you can name it,” Lena says, wearily. Lois sniggers behind them, and Lena shoots her a filthy look. “You can laugh at me now, Lane, but one day your boy scout is going to persuade you to carry a child, and I, for one, hope the kid kicks you in the lady parts on the way out. A lot.”

Lois sticks her tongue out, and Kal leaves the room abruptly. The corn-fed Kryptonian can’t handle Lois and Lena’s verbal duels – he finds the cursing disturbing and blushes like a schoolgirl.

After a quick check at the DEO, and a quick visit to introduce Lyon to Alex and Maggie and their kids, they head back to bed for their first night together as a family. They have already produced, with the help of the DEO, a formula that they can use for their son when and if Lena isn’t able to breastfeed, and they have all sorts of unbreakable baby equipment that Lena, Alex and Winn came up with together. It’s as safe a place for a Kryptonian baby as any other.

“We’re going to need to get a nanny at some point,” Lena says, as Kara is adjusting the sunlamps carefully around their bed. Lyon is asleep on Lena’s chest, making faint burbling noises.

“I know. I put a little thought into that, actually. There are a few candidates. I was wondering what you’d think about asking M’gann? She loves kids but doesn’t want her own, and neither does J’onn after what happened to his kids on Mars. And I know she’s restless now that the bar has been franchised.”

M’gann and J’onn are bonded, in the Martian way, but they don’t spend all of their time together. M’gann has retained her independent nature, carefully cultivated as a defence when she first came to Earth, and she likes to spend time out working in different parts of the globe, helping where she can.

“Do you think she would want to do it?” Lena asks, confused.

“I think she will. It’s a guaranteed job for a while, especially if we have as many kids as we intend to. Even a white Martian will have their hands full. It’s a challenge, and I think she needs that.”

“Okay. Ask her, then. We’ll see what she has to say,” Lena says, smiling contentedly as the sun’s rays fill her depleted cells, and her baby son snuggles a little closer into her chest. She can’t remember being any happier than she is now.
A few days later, Kara flies off to the Fortress to be there when Jon-El is born from his pod. He’s named after Clark’s late Earth father. Lois comes by afterwards with her four adopted children, Mark, Darryl, Steph and Francis, and baby Jon-El, to introduce the cousins to one another. Lois’ older kids are at various points of early adulthood, from 15-22, and have been in discussions about whether they want to become Kryptonian at some point or another. The discussion has been tabled for now, though, because it has been decided that no-one should use the Regen chamber until they’re at least 25 years old, in case it stunts or interferes with their growth somehow (unless it’s an emergency).

“Jon, meet Lyon,” Lois says, putting the two infants next to each other on a fluffy blanket on the floor. The boys watch each other, but turning their necks that far is about as much as they can manage at that age, even with their Kryptonian physiology.

“They look so cute,” Lena says, heart swelling to see her son and his cousin together. Kara is busy snapping pictures on her new holo-camera, and is making loud exclamations of delight.

“She’s something, your girl, you know. All that rage and all that sunshine in one lanky body,” Lois murmurs, knowing that Kara won’t be listening in when she’s so concentrated on something else.

“She is. She amazes me,” Lena says.

“You amaze her, too. That’s the way it should be. It is with me and Clark. He loves my talent and my strength, and I love him for his compassion and his talent, too, but also the flying and the other hot stuff he got from being Kryptonian. I never thought I’d end up here. Now I’m a Kryptonian, with yet another kid, and happy about it, of all things. And I’m looking at this potential future of thousands or millions of years, and I don’t really know how to feel about it all. How is it that they have managed to talk us into this business, Luthor?”

Lois leans back lazily, watching her older kids play some complicated video game on the wallscreen, and her newest baby kicking away happily on the floor.

“I don’t know what they did to us, Lane. I don’t know if Kara ever told you why I left National City, but suffice it to say that a long life wasn’t what I had in mind.” Lena said, looking at her son and thanking Rao that she didn’t die that horrible day in Metropolis.

“Oh, honey,” Lois said, grabbing her hand and squeezing it.
“It’s… water under the bridge, you know? But I could never have imagined wanting to sign up for a life that could last for an eternity, in comparison to a normal human lifespan. Now it seems like the best life ever. Being Eve for a new civilisation of Kryptonians is… well. Not everyone gets to do that,” Lena says, shrugging.

“Hey,” Lois says, and slaps her arm gently. “I’m Eve. You don’t get to be Eve. Kal got here first!”

“Who had their baby first, Lane?” Lena taunts. Lois glares at her.

“Fine. You can be Eve. Just don’t start with me, you little upstart. Clark was the first one here, so don’t start getting cocky.”

Lena smiles. Something about Lois just makes her feel better.

“I’m glad I know you, Lois. You’re a breath of fresh air.”

“Likewise, kid. They’re so very earnest, these Kryptonians, aren’t they? Sometimes you need to bitch a little, give a bit of sass to let off steam. They don’t really get that. I think you do.”

“With my family?” Lena snorts. “Yeah. I get it. With my family, if I didn’t learn how to laugh at the really dark stuff, I would have just given up.”

“You and me both, Luthor,” Lois says. “My dad is hardly a bundle of laughs. He was fine when my mom was around, but when she left he turned into this complete asshole, and I was too young and shallow to look after Lucy the way I should have.”

“That wasn’t your job, Lois,” Lena says. “It’s shitty, but it wasn’t your fault. Lucy turned out just fine, so far as I can tell. She and Susan are obviously happy.”

“I called her, you know, a while back. Asked her if she wanted to become Kryptonian. She said no. She never was as curious as I was,” Lois says.
“I had to try it,” Lena admits. “Like I said, before – I hadn’t ever considered such a long life. But when the opportunity came up, I just… I had to, you know? Living an eternity with anyone else never would have interested me, but with Kara? It seems like it’s the only real choice.”

“I know what you mean,” Lois says. “I know Clark is a little dull, when he wants to be, but he’s my kind of dull. He’s strong and stoic and amazing, with the things he can do, but he’s also silly and he makes me laugh and he’s a great father to the kids, and even when I sit down and think about it, 5 billion years doesn’t seem like too long with him by my side.”

“I know what you mean,” Lena says, sighing happily. She lies back in her chair, putting her feet up a little, and Kara looks over at her and smiles. Lena’s heart thumps, and she smiles back, eyes wide. This is what joy feels like, she knows, and it takes some getting used to.

Chapter End Notes

If you've put a comment on this story recently, thank you, and I'm sorry if I haven't replied. My laptop is being an asshole and I can't stay on the internet for more than a few minutes without it making my whole home network implode. While I wait to get it fixed, I probably won't be able to reply to comments. I hate to do that, believe me, but I don't have another laptop and I cannot for the life of me manage to reply to comments on my phone. I promise I read them and cherish every single one.
Kara and Lena talk for a while after Jon-El is born, and they decide to use the original birthing pod to grow another baby. (Alex and Winn are close to replicating the technology, but it’s not quite ready, yet.) Kara decides that she wants to carry a child, too, at least once. So they go to the Fortress with Alex, who sets the two pregnancies in motion, and smiles and goes to make herself some decaf coffee while Kara and Lena excuse themselves to one of the guest bedrooms afterwards. Alex is heavily pregnant, having two months or so to go before their baby is born. She has a happy glow about her, now, and she looks amazing even though she is almost 50 years old. Luckily, scientific advancements on Earth have made such pregnancies much more successful, but Kara hovers over Alex even more than Maggie does, or so Lena has observed. It makes her laugh, though, because she herself is starting to be the same with Kara, even though she knows Kara is practically indestructible.

Luthor Spheerical is now one of the wealthiest companies on the planet, and the nanobots have found the causes of a number of strange and outlandish diseases, curing them with ease. There is an ongoing effort to treat the third world with the nanobots, and the results of that effort are incredible. The infant death rate in countries in Africa, Asia, and South America with little to no wealth or assets has been dialled back almost to zero. The child death rate is slowly falling, and Lena has spent significant amounts of profit from her own pocket to set up schools for those children who would otherwise not have existed. CatCo and LCorp have joined her in that effort, and a number of other large companies across the globe have pitched in with money and resources. In short, Lena (with a lot of assistance) is meeting her own goal of changing the planet for the better. It has been years since anyone has sneered at her for being a Luthor. It’s far more likely now for new people to smile when they see her, or even thank her for the work she’s doing with Biomax or the transmat portals or the schools in the third world.

When Alex goes into labour, Kara is about four weeks pregnant, and already starting to show. She jumps up and down in excitement and Lena kisses her exuberantly before calling M’gann to come and look after Lyon-El. A few minutes later, they are on their way to National City General, where Alex has chosen to have a water birth.

Watching Kara watching Alex in pain is not fun, and Lena does her best to keep her bondmate calm while Alex is screaming through her labour. Ten hours pass, and they might be the longest ten hours of Lena’s life, other than her own labour, but then Alex is smiling and glowing because her daughter is born.
“We’re going to call her Alura,” Alex says, sharing a fond look with Maggie.

Kara falls to her knees, her eyes pouring with tears.

“I can’t… you want to name her for my mother?”

“If it wasn’t for your mother, you would never have come here, and Maggie and I wouldn’t have this little miracle in our arms right now. I know she did some questionable things, Kara, but the one thing she got right is you, and I couldn’t be more grateful to her,” Alex says, tears of joy in her eyes.

“I love you so much,” Kara says, throwing herself (carefully) at Alex and Maggie, and there’s a serious group hug with baby in the middle, and three crying women on the outside.

“Jesus, Lena. You couldn’t stop them from crying for five minutes?”

Lois sashays into the room, and Lena snorts in amusement.

“You try stopping them, Lane. I gave up a long time ago.”

Lois sweeps across the room and greets the others, asking to hold the little one.

“I haven’t even held her yet!” Kara protests, but Lois only grins.

“You snooze, you lose, kid,” Lois says, winking. She picks up little Alura and kisses her forehead, holding her carefully and cooing at her. Kara glares at her, and Lena has to stifle a giggle.

They bring Alura back to Lena and Kara’s apartment, first, for her to meet Lyon-El and Jon-El, who arrive a little while later with Kal-El. It’s a moment that Lena wants to remember forever. The beginning of a new race, the hope of a new civilisation born from the ashes of the old one. She takes several pictures with a holo-camera, recording the scene for posterity. The joy on everyone’s faces is contagious, and Lena prays silently to Rao, thanking him for the opportunity they have all been given. A second chance at life, a second chance for the Kryptonian race to live, for their knowledge and skills to spread and help others the way that it has already helped the people in this room.
Two years later

Kara watches, holding Alexandra, the child she carried in her own body, while Lena holds Kar-El, their first child to be born from a pod. They are both a little too old to be held like this, but it’s a solemn occasion, and the last thing Kara and Lena want to do is disrupt things. Lyon-El stands next to them, a sturdy little boy with a solemn face.

Maggie Sawyer is dead. Maggie, the love of Alex’s life. The woman who has been by her side for twenty-something years, the woman Alex wanted to be with forever. She wasn’t even on duty. She had stepped inside a bodega on an ordinary afternoon, grabbing some of Alex’s favourite candy and some gum. That’s when she turned around, and a wanna-be robber had held her at gunpoint for a few minutes. She tried to calm him down, but her jacket flapped open and when he saw her police badge on her belt, he panicked and shot her. Kara got there just in time to hold Maggie’s hand and promise her that she’d always be there for Alex.

“Tell her… to do the stupid Kryptonian thing…,” Maggie had choked out. “It was because of me that she didn’t want to do it. Tell her I love her, Kara.”

“I will,” Kara promised, tears streaming down her face. “I will.”

Maggie’s heart stopped right there, and Supergirl screamed in anguish and rage.

The young man who attempted to rob the bodega was handed in later that day by his family, who’d heard that he shot a cop who was a friend of Supergirl’s. Supergirl had sacrificed so much for the city that she was more or less revered, now. The robber was not treated well by Maggie’s co-workers, but for once, Kara couldn’t bring herself to care about the injustice of it.

“I’m so sorry I couldn’t get there in time,” Lena says, quietly.

“It wasn’t your fault,” Kara says, shaking her head. “I was there, and all I could do was watch her die. We need to develop some more healing devices. She refused to have BioMax, saying it was better off being given to someone who really needed it. So fucking stubborn.”

“I know,” Lena says, wiping a tear from her cheek. “She was so stubborn.”
Eliza is standing next to a shaking Alex, ignoring the Catholic priest who’s droning on about something or another, and she wraps her arms around her oldest daughter, whispering comfort into her ear.

As if on cue, Kar-El starts wailing in Lena’s arms, and Alexandra joins in. M’gann appears, as if from nowhere, and takes both children. She is supposed to be in Lagos helping with some sort of natural disaster, but clearly J’onn has called her home. Lyon-El stays with his mothers. He’s well aware of the solemnity of the occasion, or as aware as a three-year old can be. His sharp eyes are green, his hair a dirty blonde. He’s supernaturally strong and invulnerable, but his other powers won’t develop until puberty, something for which Kara is particularly grateful. She squeezes Lena’s arm, moving to her sister’s side, and Alex collapses into her arms.

The priest seems a little fazed by the overt show of grief, but powers on. None of Maggie’s family have turned up, but half of the police precinct did, and they are dressed up in shiny uniforms, wearing white gloves, hats under their arms in a show of respect. Captain Sawyer was popular with her people.

“I’m so sorry, Alex,” Kara says, choking on the words. Alex squeezes harder, and Kara holds her as tightly as she dares. Alura is in Eliza’s arms by now, and Kara lets Alex cry herself out in her arms. She made a promise to Maggie, and she intends to keep it. She will look after Alex, and she will do her damndest to get Alex to go into the regen chamber, if it turns out that it’s what her sister wants.

They are sitting on the balcony of Lena and Kara’s apartment, the rest of the guests having already taken their leave. Alex is asleep with Alura in a guest room, and Kara and Lena and Eliza are watching the sun go down, sipping from alien alcohol and red wine, respectively. The rest of the children are asleep in their rooms, James and Astra asleep in the other guest rooms, all cried out.

“Do you think she’ll ever get over this?” Lena asks, quietly.

“I think she will, in time,” Kara murmurs. “It’s the hardest thing she’ll ever do, but I think she will.”

Lena takes her hand, squeezing sympathetically.

“You’re always so upbeat, sometimes I forget what you’ve lost,” she says, moving Kara’s hand to her lips and kissing it.

“Alex is a survivor,” Eliza says. “She’s been through a lot. She’ll get through this. She has Alura
now, as well as James and Astra. She has something to live for, and that’s so important.”

“You’re amazing, Mom,” Kara says, leaning over to kiss Eliza’s temple. Eliza is healthier than ever, now, strong and muscular because of BioMax.

“I still miss Jeremiah,” Eliza says. “But it’s a distant thing, now. I know Alex will get past this the way you did when Cat died. She’ll never get over it, but she’ll be able to live.”

Kara’s heart spasms a little at the thought of ever getting over the loss of Cat. She never will, she knows, but she also knows that she would never get over the loss of Lena, either.

“It’s okay to miss her,” Lena murmurs, under her breath, knowing that Kara will hear her but Eliza won’t. Kara shoots her a grateful smile.

It’s going to be a long time before Alex is over Maggie Sawyer, but her whole family are by her side, and that’s all that matters.

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It’s a shock when Kara wakes up one morning a few months later to an obituary in the online edition of the Midvale press. Eliza Danvers has apparently passed away in her sleep. Kara cries helplessly, wondering why the paper has been delivered to her tablet when she has never subscribed to it. She is getting ready to fly to Midvale to find out what went wrong, wondering why Eliza was even there in the first place, when there’s a knock on the door.

It’s a young blonde woman, entirely striking, with eyes as blue as Kara’s own. She’s wearing a variation of Kara’s Supersuit, and it takes entirely too long for Kara to realise who she is.

“Eliza?!”

“It’s me, darling,” the young woman says, grinning. “I decided to use the regeneration chamber, but I didn’t want you to know in case it didn’t work. J’onn and Winn helped me.”

“Oh my god!” Kara yelps, pulling her foster mother in for a full-powered hug. “Why did you do
“I realised that I couldn’t bear to be left behind,” Eliza says. “I want to see the kids grow up, grow into their powers. I want to be here, to see you and Alex and Lena and Kal and Lois grow and change and become everything you can. So I couldn’t just die, not when there was another option.”

“I can’t believe it!” Kara yells. She calls Lena and asks her to meet her at Alex’s place, and then she flies with Eliza on her right and they land on Alex’s balcony.

Alex is standing in the kitchen, stirring something on the hob, a lost look in her eyes. Alura is asleep on the couch, looking entirely adorable.

“Kara? Who is this?” Alex asks, eyes wide.

Eliza crosses her arms, narrowing her eyes.

“Do you really not recognise me, Alexandra?” she says, her tone acid.

“Oh my god! Mom?”

Alex throws herself into Eliza’s arms, and Kara grins as Eliza squeezes too hard and Alex yelps.

“I haven’t got the hang of the whole strength thing,” Eliza says, sheepishly.

“It’s fine,” Alex says, holding her ribs. “What the hell, Mom? Why did you do this?”

Eliza sits down, then, at the table in Alex’s kitchen, and explains why she’s made the decision.

“But mom, I’m not… I decided not to become a Kryptonian,” Alex says, puzzled.

“I know, sweetie. And if that’s what you want, it’s fine by me,” Eliza says. “And if not, I have Kara
“There is something I should tell you, though,” Kara says, a little reluctant.

“What?” Alex asks, eyes narrowed.

“Maggie… she said something to me,” Kara says. “When she was… when I got there, at the bodega…”

“She told you to look after me, I know,” Alex cuts in. “You’ve told me already.”

“That’s not all she said, Alex.”

Alex glares at her.

“Tell me what she said, Kara.”

Kara takes in a deep breath.

“I’m sorry I didn’t tell you before. I wanted you to have time, to deal with Maggie being gone, before I brought it up.”

“Just fucking tell me, Kara,” Alex snaps. Just then, Lena shoots into the room through the window, in her Raven costume. She takes off the mask, looking between Kara and Eliza in confusion.

“You remember my foster mother, Eliza?” Kara asks, blandly. Lena squeals, throwing herself at Eliza, and Kara takes Alex’s hand, leading her into the living room while Eliza explains things to Lena.

“She said that she wanted you to do the stupid Kryptonian thing,” Kara says, eyes on the floor. “She said she knew you’d refused because she didn’t want to do it, and she didn’t want to let that stand. She said you should do it, and she told me to look after you, and she told me to tell you that she loved you.”
Alex starts sobbing helplessly, and Kara lifts her into her arms, carrying her to her bedroom so they don’t wake Alura. Alex cries for an hour, eventually falling asleep in Kara’s arms, and Kara lifts her sister carefully, pulling the covers aside, and puts her to bed, wrapping her up in warm blankets. She floats into the kitchen to avoid waking the sleeping woman, and finds Eliza and Lena waiting for her.

“How is she?” Eliza asks, anxious.

“She’ll be okay. I think it was a shock, especially since I didn’t tell her before.”

“You did the right thing, sweetie,” Eliza says, patting her hand gently. It’s a strange thing, to hear Eliza’s voice coming from this young woman’s mouth, and Kara smiles involuntarily.

“I want to believe that,” Kara says. Lena touches her arm gently. In the distance, they hear a siren, and all three heads snap up.

“Is it okay if I come along?” Eliza asks, standing up, looking every bit the hero.

“Of course,” Kara says. “Lee, can you stay with Alura until Alex wakes up?”

“Of course, sweetie,” Lena says, going to sit in the living room, waving at them as they hover and then take off into the city.

It’s a bank robbery, and Kara lands beside the Chief of Police, Maggie’s boss until recently. He nods in respect, one eyebrow up when Eliza lands next to Kara.

“They have eighteen hostages, and there are several bombs in there. We’re not sure how many,” the chief says, moustache moving impressively.

Kara looks through the building, noting the position of the men with guns. She notes Eliza doing the same, and grins.

“You take the guys on the left, and those three bombs,” she says, “and I’ll take the guys on the right and the remaining bombs. The bombs will be rigged to explode if they’re tampered with, so use your
top speed to take them from the hostages and get them up as far into the air as you can. Take the robbers out first.”

Eliza nods, and they both fly into the bank faster than the human eye can follow. Kara is impressed at Eliza’s speed and efficiency; it’s almost as if she was Supergirl in a different lifetime. They wrap each criminal up in the bent barrels of their guns, removing the bombs at superspeed and flying up as high and fast as they can.

They’re both momentarily stunned by the explosions, falling a little before catching themselves. When they land, the police are cuffing the bemused robbers, and Kara and Eliza take a moment to remove the bent weapons so that the police don’t have to use heavy machinery to do it later.

“Nice work,” Kara says, offering a high-five to her foster mother. “You got a name yet?”

“I was thinking I might go with Power Girl,” Eliza says, shyly.

“No problem,” Kara says, grinning. She waits until the police chief approaches, shaking his hand, and then introduces Eliza.

“This is Power Girl, a relative of mine. She’s part of the house of El, too,” Kara says.

The chief nods in respect. “Glad to have your help, Ma’am.”

Eliza blushes, and it’s all Kara can do not to giggle. Her foster mother has never blushed in her presence before, not even once. It’s endearing and hilarious.

They take off, waving as the people below applaud and shout out their thanks, and a few minutes later they’re landing at Alex’s apartment. They both flop on the couch, exhausted. Lena is carrying a half-asleep Alura around as she gets some food ready for the girl, and she immediately picks up her phone and calls for a huge amount of takeout to be delivered to Alex’s place, seeing the look of hunger on Kara’s face.

“Well done, Eliza,” Lena says, offering her mother-in-law a fist bump. Eliza returns it, grinning. “There’s no other feeling like it, is there?”
“There really isn’t. I find myself understanding why you’ve thrown yourself at danger since you arrived here, Kara.”

“It’s because someone has to,” Kara says, shrugging. “Why not the bulletproof girl?”

They smile at each other, and later, when a wan Alex joins them, they all eat takeout and fall asleep on the couch watching old movies until it’s time for Kara and Lena to go back to their own children.
Chapter 11

Chapter Summary

Kara and Lena take a trip, Alex makes a decision, and some unexpected guests show up, rocking Kara's world on its axis.

Chapter Notes

Apologies for the delay in updating this. I am still working on this, and my other fic, "Starlight in your eyes of blue", even as I put out other stuff. Just please bear with me - it's absolutely my intention to finish everything I've started posting. :)

Alex decides to make the transition to Kryptonian a few months later. Of all of those who have stood in the chamber, Kara is least worried about Alex, because she is the most courageous person Kara has ever met, and filled with love. She steps out six hours later, young and strong, and she weeps on Kara’s shoulder at the strength she can feel radiating through her body.

“I don’t know how you ever stood not using your powers,” she says, eyes wide. “I have no idea where you get your self-control from.”

“I got it from you, and Eliza and Jeremiah,” Kara says, squeezing Alex’s shoulders. “And you don’t need to hide it, Alex. You can be a superhero now if that’s what you want. You’ve always been my hero; you never needed these powers for me to look up to you.”

Alex smiles at her before going to hug Lena, then Lois, and Kal, and Eliza. J’onn holds her for about ten minutes, both of them crying, and Kara can’t help but well up. They’re her family, and now all of them are going to live this long life with her. Alex changing her mind has to have been one of the best moments of her life, not including her weddings or the births of her children, of course.

Alex chooses the name ‘Warden,’ wearing an intimidating mask that covers most of her face and a black suit with red trim, the El crest above her left breast. She looks scary, but she is almost as fast as Kara and just as strong, and when she’s on patrol Kara knows she can rest easy. Between Alex, Kara, Lena and Eliza, the city now has four Kryptonian guardians, and the arrival of the new heroes has been noted in the press. Kara manages to get ahead of it, however, by doing interviews as Kara Luthor-Danvers with each superhero and confirming that they are relatives of Supergirl’s from
another part of the galaxy who heard tales of Kryptonians on Earth and came to be reunited with family. That way, she figures, people won’t be trying to find out their human identities. Hopefully, they’ll assume that the new heroes don’t have alter-egos.

Eliza has a new human identity, now, as Linda Lee, and she has DEO-forged credentials based on her actual work experience. She works at the DEO in the labs and occasionally in the med bay, helping to identify and come up with counter-measures for alien’s powers, or healing aliens and humans alike who have been hurt.

When Alex has been Kryptonian for six months, Kara decides to talk to Lena about something she’s been wanting to do for many years. Lena is enthusiastic, and they spend months building a spaceship large enough to hold two people, with an souped-up FTL drive that will take them to Rao and back easily within a few months. Between their superhero duties and their work commitments, the work on their ship is slow, but when it’s finished, they are both excited and delighted. Lena is excited at the opportunity to see the universe the way Kara has, and Kara because she hopes to revisit her origins.

They get permission from J’onn and from the President, a young gay man called Eric Jenkins, whose chief of staff is none other than Lucy Lane. Within a few weeks of finishing the ship, they are leaving the kids with Eliza and waving goodbye to their family as the ship hovers and takes off slowly, Kara’s hands sure at the controls.

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It’s been two weeks already, and they are nearing the system where the pieces of Kara’s dead world reside. Lena has found the gradual lessening of her powers strange and unpleasant. They have several sun grenades stowed away in case of emergency, but their defences are limited to small hand weapons and a stealth cloak for the ship that Kara, showing her incredible scientific mind for once, invented. They don’t want to run into any remaining Daxamites or any other species who might be holding a grudge against the Kryptonians in general or Kara in particular.

It’s been a revelation, despite the loss of her powers, and Lena watches Kara, absorbed in reading the information on a data cube she brought from the Fortress. It’s stories from her childhood, and Lena has already read them, but Kara still loves to revisit them, and is rapt as she reads about Nightwing and Firebird and other legends of ancient Krypton.

Kara seems to sense Lena’s eyes on her, and she turns, smiling.

“What are you looking at, Mrs Danvers?” she asks, and Lena smiles. That name never ceases to
make her smile, even after being married for several years. According to Kryptonian tradition, she should be called Lena Kar-El, since Kara is the namer in their relationship, or rather she was the namer for their first child, but they decided a long time ago that tradition didn’t make sense in their case, since they would both be carrying children. The position of namer was unnecessary. In Lena’s heart, she calls herself Lena Danvers Zor-El, and she hopes that, one day, she will be able to call herself that in real life.

“The most beautiful woman in two galaxies,” Lena says, smirking.

“You’re just saying that because you’ve left your home galaxy and now we’re in this one,” Kara accuses, smiling.

“I am,” Lena says. “So what are you going to do about it?”

Kara’s eyes brighten, and she stands, leaving the pilot’s chair, advancing on Lena. She removes her suit, which is like a second skin, and Lena watches appreciatively. Kara is still the single most beautiful thing she’s ever seen. Lena stands, pulling off her own suit, leaving her undergarments for Kara, and she’s ready when Kara reaches her, grabbing her hair in one hand and pulling her head back. Lena hisses in enjoyment and aggression, and Kara grins.

“You need to be taught a lesson, wife,” she says, eyes hard, and Lena swallows. It’s not often that they have time for this sort of play, with their busy lives and alter-egos and children, but when they do – Rao, it’s worth it. They’ve been making love almost every day on the ship, because they can, but it’s been sweet and slow. Now, it appears, Kara is done with sweet.

She sinks her teeth into Lena’s neck, humming appreciatively when it leaves a mark.

“I like it when I can mark you as mine,” she growls, and Lena shudders helplessly. Kara has a way of making her weak at the knees, and she still can’t fight it. Nor does she much want to. She allows herself to be pulled towards their bunk, smiling as Kara drops to her knees and removes Lena’s underwear with her teeth. Then Kara’s diving in, and it’s all that Lena can do not to scream, because the metal bulkheads echo something awful when there’s a high-pitched noise, and she doesn’t want to hurt Kara’s ears or her own. Instead she bites her forearm, throwing her head back, and she whimpers when Kara pulls her ass closer to the edge of the bed, wrapping strong arms around her hips to hold her still. It’s not long before Lena’s crying out, on the edge and then crashing over, and Kara’s kissing her, and Lena can taste herself on Kara’s tongue.

“Man, you just get better at that,” Lena says, as Kara wraps her up in her arms. “I can’t believe I ever thought leaving you behind was a good idea, Kara Danvers.”
“I can’t believe it either, but here we are,” Kara says, cheekily. She looks up at Lena through lowered eyelashes, and Lena’s libido flares up again. She pulls Kara up a little, flips them, and then she’s the one making Kara bite into her forearm. All in all, it’s an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon.

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They are finally at their destination, or their first destination, at least. Krypton’s former co-ordinates, now its grave. Kara prays for days as they rest in the deep crimson light of Rao. Lena stands watch with her, and she prays to Rao herself, too. It’s a bit rich for her to continue her lifelong habit of complete atheism, given that she’s spoken to an actual god. And now, if the Kryptonians are right, she is bathing in the light of His presence.

Kara tells her stories of the ceremonies they had when she was growing up. Her naming ceremony, her betrothal, her coming-of-age – there was a ceremony for every important part of a Kryptonian’s life.

“Could we just… dial back to your betrothal, Kara?” Lena asks, confused. “You were what? Thirteen, when you left?”

“Well, yes, but… it was a betrothal, not a marriage,” Kara said. “A promise. I was supposed to marry one of the younger sons of the House of Zod. Then Zod went crazy, and the betrothal was quietly cancelled. Not long after that, I was sent to Earth and the planet exploded.”

“So technically, you’ve been betrothed three times, Kara Zor-El?” Lena asks, archly. “You should have told me that before we married – I mean, three times?”

“Oh, shut up,” Kara says, rolling her eyes. “It was barely an engagement. And anyway, you went out with my cousin’s ex. That’s just gross.”

“Have you seen Lana Lang?” Lena asks, arching an eyebrow. “She’s hot, and smart, and sexy, and powerful. Clark was an idiot to let her go. I mean, Lois is great and all, but Lana could do better than Clark.”

“That’s enough,” Kara says, wincing. “That’s so gross. You and Clark are spit siblings.”
Lena snorts, rolling her eyes.

“So, how much more time do you want to spend here, love?” she asks, patiently.

“Another day, if that’s okay? There’s this…”

“Ceremony?” Lena asks, smirking.

“Yes,” Kara replies. “It needs to be performed when Rao is in the right position. And that would be tomorrow.”

“Of course, darling,” Lena says. She finds them some food and they eat, their appetites dampened by the red sun.

Two days later they are on their way to Thanagar, Kara animated and more than ready to go back to a planet she hasn’t visited since her childhood. Unlike Starhaven and so many other planets, Thanagar has managed to remain fairly stable, unmarred by civil war. The Thanagarians are a long-lived race and they have a noble history, and their planet is a trading post for nearby galaxies. They should be able to get any supplies they need from there, and perhaps establish some sort of trade agreement between the Kryptonians on Earth and the Thanagarians, if they are lucky.

When they approach Thanagar, they are challenged by the authorities at the space dock, and Kara introduces herself and Lena over their comms as Kryptonians of the House of El. There is a startled silence before they are given permission to dock. The ship is drawn in by the Space dock’s AI, and Kara and Lena step out hand-in-hand, sighing in relief as the radiation of the blue sun fills them. They are both suddenly powerful and the feeling is a rush. Kara grins at her and Lena grins back, her eyes wide and excited. She’s on a different world, about to talk to an alien – well, another alien, because technically Lena, herself, is an alien, now – to talk about trade with a new Krypton on Earth.

They are met by a tall, slim woman with a greying mane of hair. She is wearing a sort of crown that looks like a hawk’s mask, and she introduces herself as Kayala, Prime of Thanagar. She is surrounded by female guards with deadly-looking weapons, both blades and small arms.

“We have not seen a Kryptonian for decades,” the woman said, in a rich voice. “How did you come to escape the destruction of Krypton and Daxam?”
Kara bows, and Lena follows her lead.

“I am Kara Zor-El, and this is my wife, Lena. I am – or was – the last daughter of my house. And my planet. My family sent me to Earth the day of Krypton’s destruction. I grew up on Earth and married the woman beside me, who has become Kryptonian as a consequence.”

Lena keeps her face straight at that. Kara doesn’t want the Thanagarians to know about the Regeneration chamber, clearly. She makes a mental note to ask her wife later why she’s lied.

“That is wonderful news,” Kayala says, smiling widely. She is even more beautiful when she smiles.

“I agree,” Lena says, smiling back.

“We have children, now, and a cousin who came to Earth with me has also had children. We are building a new civilisation and we need materials to build technology from Krypton, to advance science and medicine and transportation,” Kara continues. “This is the first time I have been off-world since I was sent to Earth. My first thought was to come to Thanagar. My understanding, after speaking to other off-worlders on Earth, is that Thanagar is still a peaceful trading hub. I hoped that we could extend the hand of friendship and perhaps talk about trading.”

“That is an interesting proposition, Kara Zor-El,” Kayala says, making a miniscule movement of her fingers. She leads them to a room where they are served wine and fruit, and Kara descends into paroxysms of delight over the taste of fruit that hasn’t passed her lips in half a century. Kayala looks on, amused, and Lena smiles at her wife’s giddiness.

“She is something of an innocent, your wife, is she not?” Kayala says, smiling at Lena.

“Indeed she is,” Lena agrees, her eyes fond. “It’s one of the things I love most about her.”

“Your marriage is new?” Kayala asks, her fingers idly touching the edge of her own glass.

“It is. Kara was married before, and her wife passed away from an avoidable illness. We were friends, first, a long time ago. And then we came back to each other, by some miracle. I’ve never been happier.”
“You make a beautiful couple,” Kayala says, smiling. Kara is still engrossed in the food and drink. “What materials do you require?”

She is suddenly all business and Lena is in her element, now. She takes out the list of materials that she and Kara had written up together with Alex and Winn. She and the Prime talk for hours, making offers and counter-offers, haggling over issues small and large. In the end, they clasp arms, and Kayala makes a vow in her language. Lena replies, Kara whispering the correct response into her ear, and Kayala beams.

“It has been a pleasure to trade with you, Lena Zor-El. And with you, Last Scion,” Kayala says, nodding at Kara. “I believe we are in agreement. Your goods will be sent to Earth, except for those you asked to be given immediately. Since you do not share our credit system, I will agree to your offer of gems and precious metals. And I am very interested in perhaps renting some of your system’s asteroids for mining purposes. Please do respond to me on that, won’t you?”

Lena nods, and their trading is done. They shift some of the gems and other materials from their cargo hold easily, and the Thanagarian workers are amazed at their strength. Thanagarians are strong, but nowhere near as strong as a Kryptonian, especially not a Kryptonian on a blue sun planet.

“Is it normal to feel like this?” Lena asks, as her eyes crackle and spark with energy from her heat vision – heat vision she has not deployed.

“I’ve never been to a blue sun system since my powers developed,” Kara says, shrugging. “My parents never mentioned it, and I don’t remember them being anything but perfectly normal when we were here. I was, too.”

It’s a mystery for another day, and Lena puts it to one side after taking some general radiation readings from the atmosphere around them. They are served a banquet by the Prime and her family, all women, and then they are on their way back to Earth, a tenth of their materials stowed in their hold, and the rest yet to come.

“You trust them to come through with the rest?” Lena asks, idly, as they’re about to drop out of hyperbolic and into the Sol system again.

“I do,” Kara says, distracted by checking readouts on the control panel. “They’re widely known as an honourable people, or at least now that the women are in charge.”
“Oh,” Lena says, head tilting as she considers. There were men around on Thanagar, but they were
typically quiet and working. The Prime had no husband. She wonders how she missed that, but puts
it down to the fact that many of those around her are in same-sex relationships. The lack of men
surrounding Kayala hadn’t even registered with her.

They land on Earth a little later, dropping their ship on a specially made pad on the building in which
they’d built the ship months earlier. Using their own small transmat portal, they send some of the
material to the Fortress and some to Lena’s private lab. They plan to make more birthing pods and
transmat portals, and they have planned to build a small base on the moon which will hold the
Regeneration chamber. Hopefully there will be more than one of those, too, when Lena is finished.

They return to their apartment, empty of children because M’gann is looking after them for the time
being, and they fall asleep, Kara wrapped around Lena as had always been their habit, because Lena
was always cold when she was human. It is late the next morning when they both rise, and Kara is
bleary-eyed, so Lena goes to make them some food and coffee as Kara showers. She takes to the
shower after Kara is done, pondering their last few weeks and the time to come. They need to see the
President and discuss their talk with the Thanagarian Prime.

There’s a knock at the door and Lena hears Kara scream. She speeds into the living area, water
dripping from her body, not wearing a stitch, where she finds Kara on her knees in front of… Alura?

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Kara is munching on a bacon pancake sandwich when someone knocks on the door. A quick scan
with her x-ray vision shows Alex standing outside, with others behind her. Kara opens the door and
smiles at her sister, and then steps back, falling to her knees. She screams. Her aunt Astra is staring at
her, eyes wide, a tremulous smile on her face.

“Oh, it’s okay,” Alex says, stepping forward, touching her sister’s shoulder. “It’s a long story, but
Astra is really here. And so is Lara.”

Kara stares in disbelief as Lara Lor-Van, her long-dead aunt, steps into the apartment from the
outside. She’s smaller than Kara remembers, her hair cropped short instead of long and flowing as it
had been when Kara was a child.

She felt like she was going mad, and suddenly Lena was standing in front of her, naked and dripping
from the shower, and both Kryptonians have been hoisted up and are being held against the wall by
“Let them go, Lena,” Alex says, her voice cajoling. “There’s no danger, I promise.”

Lena turns and looks at Kara. She nods, her eyes streaming with tears. Lena looks magnificent, some part of her brain can’t help but notice. Astra, when Lena lets her fall back to the ground, comes to kneel in front of Kara.

“It’s really me, Little One. And Lara. We will explain, I promise. But it’s really us.” She strokes Kara’s hair soothingly.

Kara stares, and Lena stands, still naked, looking from Kara to the other women in confusion.

“Um, Lena, much as I appreciate the female form and all... could you maybe go and dress?” Alex asked, after a long, tension-filled moment.

Lena blushes, and Kara stares at her.

“I love you,” Lena mouths.

Kara nods, and Lena disappears in a flash.

“I will never get used to that,” Lara Lor-Van says. “Astra told me of these powers, but I still didn’t believe it.”

Kara looks up at her curiously. It looks like her aunt. Kal-El looks so much like Lara that it’s a little scary. But how can it be? Kara saw Lara on Krypton as her own pod sped her away, and seconds later the planet exploded. How did she have time?

“You’re probably thinking that I can’t be Lara,” her other aunt says. “I promise you, Little One, it is me. Come and sit, and we’ll talk like civilised beings.”

Kara allows herself to be helped to her feet and she sits on the couch. Alex makes tea, and by the
time it’s ready, Lena is there, at Kara’s side, a constant support.

“You must be Lena,” Lara says. She bows slightly from the waist, and Lena reciprocates. Astra is eyeing her with suspicion, so Lena gives her the same look right back.

“I am. Kara is my wife,” Lena says, her voice calm.

“But you are of the Luthors,” Astra says.

“I was,” Lena says. “Now I am Lena Zor-El, and Kara and my children are my first priority. And I will take down anyone who stands against my family, Astra In-Ze.”

She lets her heat vision show a little, and it crackles around her eyes as it had on Thanagar. Astra is startled by it, and settles back with a huff.

“A word against Lena is a word against me,” Kara says, simply.

“Understood,” Astra says, but she looks calmer now, and almost seems to be looking between Lena and Kara with respect.

“How did you get here?” Kara asks, then.

Alex is sitting on Kara’s other side, holding her hand.

“They landed a few weeks back. This is the first time they’ve been out of the DEO,” Alex says. “We knew you landed last night – we’ve been tracking you in case anything went wrong. So I thought it was best if I brought them here right away. I maybe should have called first,” she adds, thoughtfully.

“That might have been a good idea,” Lena says, raising an eyebrow.

Alex blushed.
“Anyway. They made several transmissions asking to land, and in the end we sent Clark and Lois up to talk to them, with J’onn in reserve.”

“Lois is a worthy match,” Astra declared, as if making a pronouncement as a judge. It reminded Kara of Alura.

“Yes, she is,” Alex said, with an air of patience. “They talked it out, took some DNA and contacted some off-world friends, and confirmed that they are who they say they are. The Green Lanterns helped out.”

Kara nodded. She hadn’t had much contact with the Lantern Corps, but their agents were typically good people and though some of their laws were a little archaic, they had helped Superman and the Justice League on a number of occasions.

“Now that you are confident of who we are,” Lara said, sounding a little impatient. “Your uncle kissed me as we watched you and Kal-El speed off in the pods. And then he knocked me out. The idiot. I woke up in deep space around a week later in one of those pods, close to Starhaven. I made my way there, for want of a better choice. The Blight came soon after and I decided, with my old life essentially over, that I should use my skills to help the Starhavenites. I worked to find a cure for the physical symptoms while the scientists worked to destroy the source of the Blight. It is not completely done, but the air is clearing there, beginning to smell like cinnamon again. There has been civil war and disturbance, but in most ways it was a safe place to call home. I had many friends and sometimes lovers, and I was content. And then a patient told me that he was a junker, and that his ship had picked up what appeared to be a Kryptonian stasis pod on a planet near Rao. He brought it to me, and to my astonishment and distress, it was the criminal Astra In-Ze. How she had escaped Fort Rozz and the Phantom Zone, I had no idea.”

Lara sighed, standing, tapping her fingers on her thighs. It was a strange habit of hers that Kara had forgotten about. She begins to pace.

“I had a choice to make. She had been killed by Kryptonite. I had come across it since our world’s death, of course. Krypton’s corpse still spreads across the known galaxies. But I had developed a vaccine and I knew that I could bring Astra back. The question was, of course, should I? I had none of the information from the trials before the planet died, and they had been held in secret. All I knew was that Alura was heart-broken to have to send her own twin to the Phantom Zone. I decided to trust in Rao, and so I brought her back. Her first word was your name, Little One, and I knew then that I had made the right choice.”

Astra nodded at Lara gratefully.
“As I recovered, I told Lara my story. My misguided attempts to take over Earth, to make it safe. My idiocy and my hubris. I didn’t know what had happened after I left, but I hoped to find that you had managed to defeat my husband. I asked Lara if she would come to Earth, because you were there, and her son, too. She had savings, and I mined on a nearby asteroid for months to pay for the ship. Once we had it, we came here, and the rest, as you say, is mystery.”

“History,” Alex corrected fondly. Kara lifted a surprised eyebrow at her sister, who flushed again. Odd.

“Okay,” Kara said, eventually. “And you’re confident these really are my family?” she asked Alex.

“Yes,” Alex said. “If they aren’t, they’re perfect clones, one with all of your Aunt Astra’s memories. We can’t verify as much with Lara, of course, but I’m sure.”

“Okay,” Kara said, nodding. “Okay.”

She is shell-shocked, still, so Alex leaves her and Lena, telling them that they should come by the DEO the following day to talk about how they should move forward.
Chapter 12

Chapter Summary

A bit of family time, and Lena gets a good laugh at Lois's expense

Lena holds Kara until the shaking stops. She can hardly blame her wife; if Lillian or Lex popped out of nowhere and knocked at her door she wouldn’t just be shaking. Especially not after this many years.

“What if it’s not them?” Kara keeps saying.

And then.

“What if it is?”

Lena just hums gently and rocks Kara like she would their children. She misses the kids, misses their warmth and their unceasing love. Being alone with Kara for so long has been a revelation, something she’s sorely missed since the kids came along, but she loves her children just as much as she loves Kara, if not more. It’s strange to compare them, so she shuts that thought down, concentrating on calming her wife down.

It’s a little later, and three extra-large portions of potstickers and 7 extra-large pizzas are now only a memory, and Kara seems to be finally absorbing the fact that two of her aunts are alive. Have been alive ever since Krypton’s fiery death.

“I never even… I saw Lara, saw her kiss Kal goodbye and put him in the pod, and then my mom and dad were pushing me into mine, and that was the last time I saw them. Seeing Astra on Earth first time around was just… it was crazy, you know? Especially since she started off by beating the hell out of me. But after Alex… I mean, I thought… She was dead. She died in my arms, Lee.”

“I know, baby,” Lena says, her heart breaking for Kara. “But this means you get her back. Her and Lara. Your family might have screwed some things up; maybe they were responsible for what happened on Krypton, and maybe they weren’t entirely to blame. I mean, look what happened to Astra when she tried to get the word out? But at least Jor-El made sure your aunt Lara didn’t die for his sins, too. You get a second chance, Kara. I know you’re still scared it might not be them, but
really, what are the chances that someone would know everything your aunt Astra knows? I trust that the DEO has run every possible scan to make sure they’re Kryptonians right down to the last amino acid in their DNA. We have the most advanced technology on Earth.”

“I know,” Kara says, shifting in Lena’s arms. “But the best technology on Earth doesn’t mean much out there. There are thousands of civilisations out there with technology light-years away from anything on Earth. I mean, no-one has officially left the solar system, except for you and I, and that’s only because I’m an alien and you’re a genius. Imagine what Earth technology would be like in twenty thousand years, thirty thousand years. That kind of tech is pretty much like magic, and I know that the technology exists to make clones from a hair or any sort of epithelial cell.”

“I get that, honey, but a clone wouldn’t have Astra’s memories, or Lara’s. It’s unlikely in the extreme that they are anyone except who they say they are. I’m not saying we shouldn’t be cautious, but I’m also saying that you shouldn’t let your fear overcome your love,” Lena says, squeezing Kara the way she likes, until her bones creak a little. There was a far too long period in Kara’s life when the only hugs she could really feel were Kal’s and J’onn’s, and Lena is trying to make up for that every day.

“Thanks, baby,” Kara says, sighing in her wife’s arms. “You’re the best.”

“I know,” Lena says, chuckling. “You wanna go get our kids from their aunt M’gann?”

Kara sits up suddenly.

“I’d forgotten all about them! Rao, our babies! Come on, Lee!”

She becomes a blur, shooting around the apartment tidying and cleaning and getting dressed all at once. She ends up in the middle of the living room, two feet stuck down one pant leg, with a bag of garbage she’s collected now upended all over her prone body. Lena sighs at her before clearing up the mess at normal speed, and after Kara takes another quick shower to get the remainders of the garbage off her body, she’s ready to go.

They pick up the kids and are taken aback by how much they’ve all grown, even in the few short months they’ve been away. Lyon-El is much taller, Alexandra is babbling like Kara in a panic, and even little Kar-El is attempting to walk, now. They stay with M’gann for a while, giving her a few presents from Thanagar, mostly small pieces of technology that don’t exist on earth yet, and then they head home.
They spend a blissful afternoon with the kids, playing games and watching cartoons and eating more than any family would normally eat in a year, and in the evening they get several visitors.

This time, Lena gets the door, checking carefully with x-ray vision before she opens it. She’s already laughing before she pulls the door open, and Kara is looking at her in confusion.

Kal-El is there, Jon-El on his shoulders, and behind him is Eliza, beaming. But what’s making Lena laugh until she cries is Lois Lane, standing there with a huge baby bump, shame-faced.

Lena can’t speak, and Lois is getting redder and redder, so Kara intercedes and welcomes everyone inside, and soon the apartment is cheerfully chaotic. Lois is pointedly not looking at Lena, and Lena is still paralysed with laughter.

“I hope your stomach hurts, Luthor,” Lois mutters.

“I hope that kid kicks you in the vuh-jay-jay,” Lena managed, before collapsing again.

When she recovers, she offers Lois a couple of sticky buns as an apology, and Lois chomps them down gratefully, still shooting Lena dirty looks.

“You let him persuade you, huh?” Lena says, after a while.

“Hmmph,” Lois replies, looking away.

Lena bumps her shoulder gently.

“Come on, Lane. What did he say to you? You’d look so beautiful pregnant? It’s what he’s always dreamed of?”

Lois turns and glares at her.

“Ah, I gotcha,” Lena says, sagely. “How’s the pregnancy sex?”
Kal starts violently on the other side of the room, knocking down the pile of bricks they’ve been using to build a Fortress of Solitude. Lois lets out a high, ridiculous giggle, and it undoes Lena completely. She ends up on the floor again, and Kara, passing by with a tray of treats for the kids, rolls her eyes and sighs. That doesn’t make it any better; Lena just laughs harder.

When she’s calmed down, she does have a talk with Lois, using her noise cancelling device to save Kal’s blushes, and they talk frankly about their increased libido during pregnancy. Kara joins them for a while but has to back out, blushing, causing both women to laugh raucously. Eliza joins them a while later, and they all sip hot chocolates late into the night until all the kids are sparked out. They turn off the noise cancelling device after a while and Kal and Kara join them. It’s a quiet night, a comfortable, family affair, and Lena revels in it. It’s something she has come to enjoy more and more since meeting Kara, this easy time spent with people who don’t hate her and don’t want anything more from her than her company. She still hasn’t fully relaxed into it; it’s not easy to do so, after spending the first 40-something years of her life guarded and rigid, always tensed for a blow. Metaphorically. And hey, maybe physically too, because one of the best things about being Kryptonian was that no matter how tense she was, her muscles never hurt, her tooth enamel never gave way to her grinding, her jaw didn’t cramp and ache. Even though she’d spent 40 years or thereabouts in that state of hyper-vigilance, she was stunned when she made her transformation by how much pain she had been in as a result of the constant tension. It became clear how much it had been hurting her only in absence of the pain. Yet another gift given to her as a Kryptonian.

Kara and Clark are talking quietly and Lena tunes in her super-hearing enough to realise that they are talking about Lara’s return to their lives. Clark had never expected to see his mother, and he is just as taken aback and lost as Kara is.

“She has Astra’s memories, but what if it’s all a trick?”

“I don’t know, Kara. I never met my mom – I’ve only seen her in the holograms, and they’re not exactly life-like. You’re the only one who knew them. Trust your instincts, cuz. I trust you.”

Kara nods gravely, and the cousins fall silent. Lena and Lois watch them fondly.

“5 billion years, huh?” Lois says, rubbing her baby bump.

“All downhill from here, right?” Lena says, and they clink their mugs together.

When their guests are all asleep, Kara and Lena switch on the sound-proofing in their room and they
make love slowly and sweetly. Afterwards, Kara cries a little in Lena’s arms, overwhelmed by the events of the day. Coming home was enough; seeing their babies again, having their family back together. But then Astra and Lara arrived, and then the other Kryptonians, and it had all devolved into a whirl of overwhelming. Lena holds her wife close, murmuring quiet words of love in Kryptonian, and they fall asleep, limbs wrapped around each other intimately.

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