More Than Meets the Eye

by electriclimes

Summary

It's a story about college-aged Kara and Lena. Kara is trying to handle her senior year at NCU while doubling as Supergirl. She's also trying to juggle being an intern/working at CatCo. Lena is trying to finish her graduate research while living life as a Luthor; she just needs a hug. They're both just living their lives when aliens start disappearing. Kara/Supergirl is tasked with figuring it all out but how is Lena connected to all this? An easy senior year is all Kara wanted and it winds up being anything but that.

Or

The one where Kara is a college student while being Supergirl. The Luthors could potentially be up to something and she'll have to get to the bottom of it one way or another. A (loose) reimagining of the current story if Kara and Lena were a little younger and in college. Plenty of angst and eventual fluff. Slow burn but of the bearable variety. Even sprinkled in a bit of suspense to keep things interesting.
Be gentle, this is my first fic, so I hope y'all enjoy the ramblings of my mind lol. Being that I'm a college student myself, I felt the urge to add yet another College AU to the collection :).

Sit back and let your mind roam free.

Ps. I don't own any of the characters I'm just using them for the sake of a story. All mistakes/typos are my own and I apologize profusely in advance for any that I make lol.
Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

I’m probably only writing this for my benefit but if you enjoy it as well definitely let me know! I have no idea how many chapters there will be but I don’t image the story will be massive.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Finally,” Kara exclaimed as her head hit her pillow.

With a laugh, “You know, I would think you’d appreciate a change in your routine after the summer you’ve had,” Alex wondered aloud as she watched her sister sprawl out on the bed.

Kara took a calming breath before answering. “Honestly, I’m just ready to graduate. Between my Supergirl duties and Catco I have enough on my plate. Not to mention maintaining a social life!”

Alex threw on her jacket and made her way to leave Kara’s apartment. “I’m going to be late for my meeting with J’onn if I hang around here much longer.” Calling out over her shoulder, “Call me so we can set up a sister date. Love you. Stay out of trouble,” she shouted before the door shut behind her.

Kara blankly stared up at her ceiling not having any other plans for the day. The DEO was nice enough to give her the day off seeing as classes started back up on Monday. For the first time in months, she found herself actually having a lazy Sunday and didn’t like it.

It was still early enough that the day was her’s to spend how she pleased. She could call James or Winn to make plans. Or she could clean up the apartment a little. Or go for a walk. Maybe fly around National City for a while. Before she could decide what her next move would be, the silence of her otherwise empty loft apartment was broken by the sounds of her rumbling stomach.

“Food,” Kara said to herself with a sly grin. Peering over at her alarm clock, it was a little after one o’clock. Which meant it had only been an hour or so since her lunch date with Alex.

Flying to the kitchen Kara rummaged through her fridge for anything edible. Seeing as she spent most of her time at the DEO or at Alex’s over the past few months her food supply was lacking. There were bits and pieces but nothing to make a complete meal. Bread but no sandwich meat. Chicken sausages but no buns or sides worth pairing them with. Cereal but no milk; plenty of juice though.

Kara groaned at the idea of having to go grocery shopping on an empty stomach. The last time this happened, she nearly left the store with three baskets full of groceries. Pulling her boots back on Kara got ready to make this unfortunately necessary grocery run.

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“Hey Eliza! Is everything ok?”

“Everything’s fine sweetheart. I just wanted to call you while I had a moment. Are you busy?”
Kara adjusted the groceries she was juggling in her hands, “No. Now’s good.” Maybe talking to her adoptive mother would keep her from buying more than she needed.

“Well, I didn’t want anything in particular. I was just calling the way I have since you moved to National City. This may be the last time I can make this ‘Before School Starts’ call,” Eliza said with a sniffle.

Leaning against her cart, “Are you going to cry,” Kara gently teased to lighten the mood.

“You’re just growing up so fast,” Eliza declared; definitely crying. “It feels like yesterday you were brought into our lives and now you’re a senior in college. Where does the time go?”

“And I can’t thank you enough for welcoming me into your family.” Kara was aimlessly walking around the store not paying attention to where she was going, or what she was doing. There were way too many people in the store but that was to be expected at this hour on a Sunday. “I know I haven’t been home in a while, but Thanksgiving isn’t too far— Sorry,” Kara shouted.

Distracted by her hunger and Eliza’s phone call, Kara accidentally rammed her cart into the heels of another woman. The brunette spun around with a scowl on her face.

“Eliza, I’ll have to call you back,” Kara rushed to say before the woman could yell at her. She hung up the phone without another word before apologizing again.

“Next time watch where you’re going,” the brunette warned as she rubbed the back of her right ankle.

Grasping the back of her neck, “Uh—yeah. Definitely,” Kara stammered. “Again, I’m really sorry about that. I’m just so hungry I’m not thinking straight. I need to get out of here before I spend my entire check on food,” she rambled on with a chuckle.

For some reason the young woman in front of her looked familiar. She couldn’t place where she had seen her before. Maybe she had saved the brunette as Supergirl, but Kara remembered every single person she had ever personally saved so that couldn’t be it.

The brunette looked down at Kara’s cart and stared at it with wide eyes. “Quite the appetite you have then,” she said as she motioned at the contents of the basket. “Looks as though you’re attempting to feed an entire football team,” she added, a laugh escaping her lips in the process. She had no idea who this gorgeous blonde was, but she suddenly wasn’t as upset at being hit with a cart.

“High metabolism and I haven’t eaten in a while,” Kara said as if that explained everything perfectly. Reaching out her hand, “Kara by the way,” she said in way of late introduction.

The woman looked almost hesitant but shook Kara’s outstretched hand anyway. Being such a high-profile citizen of National City there was no way this rambling blonde had no idea who she was; or was there? “Katie,” the woman lied, going out on a limb and guessing Kara really didn’t know who she was.

“Well, Katie, it was nice to meet you. And again, I’m really sorry for running into you like that.”

Smirking, “Don’t worry about it,” she said, smiling a genuine smile. “I should let you go feed that football team,” she added nodding towards Kara’s cart.

Kara gave her a confused expression, “Oh, yea. The football team,” she laughed nervously. Kara couldn’t deny it, there was something about Katie that drew her in. Normally she could function around attractive women but the brunette threw her off her game entirely.
Katie walked away only looking back once at the blonde seemingly stuck in place. If she could repeat her encounter with Kara over and over she would. Being hit with a basket was preferable to the glares and looks people were throwing her way while she shopped. This was an encounter that surely wouldn’t be forgotten any time soon.

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Kara woke to her alarm blaring through her apartment signaling the start of her day. The first day of her last year in college. In a way, it hadn’t felt as though three years had already passed by. Junior year was rough, being that that was the year she took up the mantle of becoming Supergirl almost full-time. It took her a while, but Kara was able to work out a schedule for both sides of her life.

Most of Kara’s classes for the fall semester were on Tuesdays and Thursdays now that she only really had electives left. With classes on those two days, it left her Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays open for her internship at CatCo Worldwide Media. Having interned at Midvale Newspaper the summer after her sophomore year helped her to secure the position.

Swinging her legs over the edge of her bed Kara stretched out after a good night’s — uninterrupted — sleep. After her eight-a.m. Intercultural Communication lecture she would be heading into CatCo for the remainder of the day. Kara stared into her closet thinking of what she would wear, besides her Super suit. Her weather app informed her it would be on the warmer side even though summer was coming to an end in National City.

She decided on a pair of blueish grey chinos with a salmon colored button down and a medium brown pair of desert boots. An outfit casual enough to head to class in but perfectly acceptable for CatCo. Her friends, James and Winn especially, joked that her wardrobe had morphed into that of a TA during their junior year. She hadn’t noticed, but she always felt good in whatever she wore.

After showering and fighting to get her chest binder on, Kara was out the door with two bagels in hand and a backpack full of mostly snacks. On her walk to campus she made sure to stop at Noonan's for a venti sized tea and maybe even a muffin.

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"Kiera can you come in here?" Ms. Grant called out.

"She'll get your name right eventually," one of the reporters near her mentioned with a supportive smile.

"Yes, Ms. Grant?"

"Close the door behind you please."

Kara nervously backpedaled to close the glass door before turning to look expectantly up towards her boss.

"You've been with us for a while now," Ms. Grant started.

Voice quivering, "Yes, ma'am. It's almost been a year," she answered, even though the older woman hadn't posed it as a question.

"I'm well aware how long you've been around Ms. Danvers," she continued, to which Kara audibly gulped. "Here, why don't you have a seat," the woman motioned as she rounded her desk to sit across from where she pointed for the intern to sit.
Kara cowered under the older woman's gaze. It wasn't harsh nor meant to be intimidating. Kara felt it was more of a searching gaze. No wonder this woman was the CEO of such a conglomerate. Kara's eyes darted around the room at the mostly white decor that was heightened by the sunlight beaming into the office through the glass walls that led out to a private, furnished, balcony. She shifted in her seat, adjusting her glasses that hadn't moved an inch; a nervous habit she had acquired over the years.

Breaking the silence, "Most interns only last a few months or so but somehow you're still here." Pausing, Ms. Grant watched Kara's behavior closely. The young blonde opened her mouth to speak but Ms. Grant silenced her with a swipe of her hand through the air.

"It was a compliment Kiera. I don't find myself giving out very many of those." Standing to pour a glass of water for Kara, "You've somehow managed to woo the majority of my staff to the point your name comes up more than I'd care to admit."

Handing Kara the glass, "You're in school for Communications?"

Kara hadn't realized this time Ms. Grant was asking her a question, unlike before. Ms. Grant raised a brow impatiently before crossing her arms across her chest.

Choking on her water, "Sorry Ms. Grant. Yes, I'm a Communications major. My concentration is in Public Relations. I'm also minoring in Journalism," Kara hurriedly answered. She was doing her best to stamp down her nerves but it was nearly impossible in the presence of the CEO.

The older woman hummed before returning back to her seat at her desk. "When do you graduate?"

"May."

"Good. That'll be all."

Kara fumbled getting up from the loveseat in the middle of Ms. Grant's office. She sat her glass down on the table in front of her and made her way towards the door.

"And keep up the good work Kara."

With a gaping grin on her face, Kara exited the office without a word. She didn't want to make it into a big deal, but in the past nine months of working for the woman, she had never called her by her actual first name. It had to be a good sign.

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Tuesday morning, same routine as yesterday. Kara woke to her alarm and laid in bed for a second to check her school email account.

With a grunt of displeasure, No cancellation emails, Kara thought to herself. It was going to be a little cooler today than the day before with the coming storm in the forecast. Grabbing her umbrella on the way out of the door Kara made her way to campus.

She had pushed her Chemistry class off until the last possible moment. Kara was a genius by Earth's standards but chemistry was one of the few areas she knew needed improvement. She understood the material but there was an obvious disconnect if her high school test scores were anything to go by.

Heading into the chemistry building, Kara walked around until she found the lecture hall the class was to take place. Once she found the classroom, there was a note pinned to the door.
'CHEM 123N Students,

I'd like to apologize for my absence today. Due to an unforeseen family emergency I won't be on campus for a few weeks. For your Thursday class I will have one of my grad students take over in my stead. Should you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to email me. Be advised it may take me 24-48 hours to respond. I'll be sending out an email to all of my classes by Wednesday morning.

So, go grab a coffee/tea and enjoy your day,

Dr. T. Williamson'

Kara's next class wasn't until noon, so she had plenty of time to kill. Instead of taking Prof Williamson's advice she went to the gym instead; texting James to see if he would meet her there.

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"Hey Kara," she heard a familiar voice call out. James had texted her back that he'd be a little late, but he'd meet her at the gym. Kara had been friends with James Olsen since their freshman year. James and Kara, along with their mutual friend Winn Schott Jr., met in a shared English Gen.Ed. class after being paired up for a group research paper. They've been inseparable since. "How was your summer?"

Finishing out her set of arm curls, "Busy," she sighed but with a smile on her face to show she hadn't completely hated it. "It's like the hotter it gets the angrier people get."

James snorted in agreement. "Crime seemed worse this summer than last and I don't think it was because of the heat. Has Alex told you anymore about the disappearances," he questioned in a hushed tone as to not draw attention to their conversation.

"No. There's only been three reported cases so far with absolutely no connections. It doesn't help that they've been of completely different alien races. It all just seems to be so random."

"Nothing's random," James noted.

Kara hummed before moving over to finish out her upper-body workout. "How's preseason treating you?"

James had been starting forward for NCU’s basketball team for two years. He had mentioned in passing to his friends a while back that if it weren’t for his scholarship he would have given up playing after his first year. His love for the game his father had taught him as boy had been overshadowed by his growing interest in photography; another hobby he and his father shared.

Stretching out before joining Kara, "So far we've lost all our preseason games but one. Most of the team was made up of seniors last year so we have to find a new groove. There's a few new guys but we'll see."

Human weights did nothing for Kara with her superstrength. Working out anywhere outside of the DEO just gave her a — sometimes — necessary distraction. James was already aware of her alien biology and hadn't the slightest problem with it. The only downside to Kara being Kryptonian was his inability to beat her at anything athletic unless others were watching, but he always had fun
After a moment of companionable silence, "How is Alex doing by the way," James asked knowingly.

Kara knew exactly what James was inquiring about. During their last fall semester Alex had gone through a pretty bad breakup with her long term girlfriend, Maggie Sawyer. Their group of friends were of the mind that a proposal was around the corner considering how serious they were. They had been together since Kara's freshman year; the year Alex had graduated a semester early. "She's alright. She's been spending all her time at the DEO so who knows what her life is like outside of me."

"I'm sure it'll get better soon. Alex is a catch."

"Hey, that's my sister you're talking about," Kara joked and James just shrugged it off playfully.

After her cancelled first class and a quick gym session, the rest of Kara's classes went off without any further issues. In the middle of her 12 o'clock class Alex had sent her a text asking if she could stop by the DEO once she finished up for the day. It was about 3 o'clock so Kara stopped to grab a snack since all of the food she packed for herself was long gone.

"I come baring doughnuts," Kara yelled for everyone to hear.

Agents gave their thanks to Supergirl before getting back to work.

"We might have more intel about the missing aliens," J'onn began without preamble. "We incorrectly assumed the disappearances weren't connected or may have been a coincidence given the rise in criminal activity amongst our alien refuges."

"All of the aliens missing are listed on the Alien Registry," Alex added in. "So far, that's the only connection we can come up with given the listing is voluntary."

"Who has something to gain by targeting aliens on the Registry? It doesn't make any sense," Kara asked through a mouth full of doughnut.

"That's what we're trying to figure out Supergirl. Luckily, you're not listed, so your identity is relatively safe."

Alex looked worriedly over at her sister. No one wanted to say it out loud, but it very well could be possible someone was trying to weed out Supergirl's true identity. One of the three kidnapped aliens was a male Aellonian but that could be the only coincidence in this entire situation. Kara couldn’t remember the Aellonian’s name but she knew to the people of Earth it had a rather feminine ring to it.

"I hate to bring it up but could the Luthors be involved?" an agent hesitantly questioned.

Everyone looked around the room at no one in particular.

"It's not like they have the cleanest track record," another agent chipped in.

"One Luthor doesn't speak for all Luthors," Kara declared. She had never met any of them but she knew how xenophobic the family had historically been. There was no way all of the Luthors harbored that same backwards way of thinking.
"Don't speak too soon Supergirl," J'onn advised.

Kara made her way down to the training rooms for a sparring session with her sister after the briefing. "You were relatively quiet up there," Kara observed. She knew her sister was going through a lot that she wouldn't talk to her about, but there was something going on.

Alex threw a left hook and swept Kara's feet from underneath her while she was distracted. "I'm fine Kara!"

Kara used her superspeed to pin Alex against the mat. Glaring down at her sister, "There isn't," she asked with a raised brow. Alex shoved at her sister's shoulders knowing she wouldn't budge but Kara surprisingly stumbled backwards.

"Maggie was there today during an investigation. And before you push I don't want to talk about it... Not yet."

Kara left it at that and let Alex leave the room without a fight. She knew her sister hadn't fully dealt with what happened with Maggie. She wanted to help Alex in any way she could but the redhead refused any and all help offered. Eventually they would have to talk but she didn't want to push Alex to rip the band-aid off such a wound.

Kara ended her first day of classes with a mound of potstickers, Chinese food, and two tubs of ice cream. With it being "Syllabus Week", a term most college students enjoy, the impending homework hadn't began, but she was on call for any Supergirl emergencies for the night.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed the first chapter. Comments/suggestions/constructive criticism is welcomed. If you'd like, you can shout at me on tumblr @electriclimes. Since I'm on summer break myself I'm hoping to knock out a chapter a week; maybe more some weeks.

Until next time.
Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

Thanks so much for the comments and kudos I’ve received so far. I honestly wasn't expecting any of it and it felt really good that people liked it. It gave me motivation to keep writing which is why this chapter is a little early.

Side note: When the content of the story changes [becomes a little more mature ;)] I’ll be upping the rating and adding more tags as I think of them. If you think I should add any as of this point please let me know; even trigger warnings I may be missing.

Now sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Mom wants us downstairs in 10.”

Lena leaned back in the leather chair at her desk, dreading what exactly was so important their mother felt the need to summon them.

Her relationship with Lillian, her stepmother, was strained at best and had only gotten worse after her father’s death. Lena was placed in her father’s care at the age of four when her birth mother was killed. Now in her early twenties there wasn’t a time she could remember not being with the Luthors; except one.

The Luthor family had moved between their homes in Metropolis and National City to better accommodate the eldest Luthor offspring while he pursued his education. Lex was the apple of Lillian’s eye; the only remaining Luthor that mattered to her. Lena had never really found a way to deal with the matter but in part accepted it as her reality.

Lex had finished his Masters in engineering a few years back and had taken up a role in management at their family’s company, LutherCorp. Their mother had been made CEO after Lionel’s death and had maintained her role since. Unlike her older brother, Lena had no plans of working at LutherCorp. Instead, she wanted to tackle as many of the world’s problems as she could without her family’s name nor their status.

“What does she want now?” Lena groaned, rubbing her temples with the pads of her fingers.

Lex let out a hearty laugh knowing how much his sister hated being summoned by anyone. “She didn’t say. It must be important if she isn’t relaying the message through me to you.”

Lena glared at her brother under hooded lids and he raised his hands in surrender. It had been a long day and the last thing she needed was yet another distraction from her research.

“How about this,” Lex began to offer. “After this... talk mom wants to have, how about we go out for a treat? Totally your choice.”

Lena bounced the idea around in her head for a bit before rounding her desk to hug her brother. Luthors weren’t raised to be affectionate people but Lex had a soft spot for his kid sister.
He had hated being an only child growing up and had wished many a night for a brother. When his father had sat him down to explain to him that a little girl, who was his half-sister, would be coming to live with them he vowed to himself to always protect her no matter what. Sure, Lena wasn’t the brother he was hoping for but they still had numerous things in common.

Lena melted into the warmth and strength of her brothers arms; it was exactly what she needed. “We’ll be out of here before you know it,” she felt more than heard Lex say to her.

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Lillian's appearance had grown paler and paler over the past several months. Lena had noticed but of course never mentioned it. How could she when it felt as though the older woman was constantly avoiding her? Whenever Lena found herself sharing a space with her mother one snide comment or another was always made in reference to her intellect, her choices, her appearance, or how she was nothing like her brother or needed to be more like him.

Lillian’s study was lit only by the fireplace tucked into the ornately decorated far wooden wall. She sat perched on the edge of her pale blue chaise lounge chair situated near said fireplace. She had already changed from her office attire which Lena found to be unusual. Her desk was also clean of all forms of any kind of paperwork; definitely off. Lena got the sense that whatever Lillian was about to say, it wasn’t going to be good.

With a slight cough to clear her throat, Lillian looked between her two children standing in front of her. “I asked you in here because there’s something I’d like to discuss with you.. both,” she added rather firmly. As if she were validating one of their presences in the room; obviously Lena’s.

A silence fell over the room for several moments. Lena had always known the woman to be quick-witted and confident. It was something she had grown to admire in her mother. For Lillian to almost be stuck on her words was jarring. “Mother, what’s going on?” Lena had to ask to break the uncomfortable silence.

Lillian looked towards Lena with a harsh expression but then softened her features as though catching herself. She struggled to stand from her seat, waving off Lex’s helping hand.

“I’ll just get right to it then,” Lillian said as she wrapped her robe tighter around her body. “As of this coming Monday I shall be stepping down as CEO of LutherCorp and recommending to the board that Alexander take my place.”

Lex opened his mouth to speak but quickly closed it again not having the words because so many were flying threw his head. Lena looked at Lex, then back at Lillian. She could see her brother was at a loss and felt compelled to step in and help.

“Why does Lex need to replace you?”

Lillian gave her daughter a half smile. “Don’t you worry about that right now. Just know that I’m long overdue for a break and your brother is more than capable of taking over the company.”

Lillian walked over to stand directly in front of Lex. Holding his hands in her cold ones, “You can do this Lex. You’re ready.” She placed a hand against his cheek before half turning to Lena. She didn’t part her lips to speak but gave Lena’s shoulder a gentle squeeze. She left the two Luthor heirs standing in her study as she made her way up to her bedroom.
“Well congratulations Mr. CEO. I guess we’re going out to celebrate your inevitable promotion,” Lena teased, attempting to hide her confusion as to who had replaced her mother and why she was so nice; specifically to her. Lillian had her cordial moments with Lena but they were few in number and extremely far apart. In the past it was a sign that Lillian wanted her to do something — usually in relation to her brother — but there was something different about this occurrence.

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“Yes, it’s my promotion,” Lex replied lamely, unable to muster a smile. “I think the team is celebrating my success.”

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“Maybe another night Lee,” Lex managed to get out before leaving the study as well.

Usually, Lex would have taken any opportunity to celebrate any one of his successes, no matter how small. For him to have been speechless and declining a night of booze and reckless abandon was totally out of character.

There was a humbleness to Lex’s gloating and bragging and that was exactly what was missing; the gloating. Every now and then his behavior could read as being douchey but Lena understood where it stemmed from. The way Lillian paraded him around as a golden boy who she saw as the best thing to happen to the human race, it would be impossible for Lex not to come off as an entitled prick every once in a while.

It was late and it had just hit Lena that she hadn’t eaten since breakfast early that morning. Wanting to head off her impending headache, she made her way to the kitchen to grab a quick snack before heading up to her room for the night.

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Kara had only been in bed a couple hours before her alarm rang to get ready for class. Supergirl was needed to help put out a fire at the docks and to assist with a hostage situation at a banking facility. It wasn’t a busy night but it was definitely a long one.

It was Thursday, which meant her first day with the Chemistry TA subbing in for her professor. A part of her was excited to see who she would be starting off the semester with. Another part yelled for her to stay in bed another five minutes.

Five minutes had gone by ten times over and she was late for class. Kara rushed to get dressed using her superspeed to shower and again to put on a pair of khakis, a light blue button down, her binder, a heather grey pullover sweater, and black brogues.

She barely had enough time to grab snacks since she would inevitably be starving during the lecture. She peered down at her phone to check the time. It was ten minutes after nine and she cursed under her breathe. She walked as fast as deemed humanly appropriate and made it to the lecture hall in eight minutes. Kara's apartment was about a fifteen minute walk away from the campus walking at a normal pace.

The building was older and Kara prayed to Rao that the doors wouldn’t squeak when she opened them. As if the universe was having a laugh, the doors did squeak and loudly. To Kara’s surprise there weren’t many student still in the lecture hall. As she walked in, there was a shorter scruffy guy who looked disgruntled and in a rush, making his way out on the other side of the room.

“I can’t be that late. Can I?”

Kara decided to sit in the back of the class, close to the doors, so she wouldn’t draw any more undue attention her way.
Pulling out her notebook and a couple of pens, Kara tried to focus in on the voice coming from the front of the room. She pulled the slab of desk out from beside the stadium style seat and started to jot down the notes that were still being projected on the screen.

The woman hadn’t turned around yet but Kara found herself admiring the woman’s figure. Namely the way her navy pencil skirt hugged at her hips and stopped a little above her knees. Her white collard blouse was of a looser fit and tucked in just a bit all the way around.

Kara had lost focus and hadn’t written anything for two slides. Maybe it was because of her superhearing that she picked up an accent in the woman’s speech or maybe it was just poorly hidden. While Kara was trying to place the accent the woman had, she finally turned around to face the remainder of her students.

*Katie*?!

Lena was looking around at all of the empty seats. She had been a few minutes late to the class after not sleeping well the night before. Her tardiness afforded her the chance to see just how many students she would be teaching until Dr. Williamson was able to return. The lecture hall seated roughly 300 people when filled to capacity but this particular class only had 250 students. She found herself looking out at about two-fifths of the students registered for that time block.

It was disheartening to see that many student leave just because of who they thought she was. Because of who they thought her family still was. She knew better than most that once an opinion had been formed of someone or something it could be difficult to change it.

As she scanned the mostly empty seats her eyes fell upon a familiar blonde and they locked eyes. Lena had no idea the woman, Kara if she remembered correctly, was a student at NCU.

Without meaning to, Lena had stopped teaching to just gaze up at Kara in the back of the lecture hall. A student had to clear their throat just to break her free from the moment.

“Ah, yes. I was going to end early this morning and post the notes to Blackboard,” Lena explained while doing her best not to stumble over her words like a fool. “The first two chapters are mostly introductory and the online assignments should be pretty straight forward.”

Lena walked over to the classroom's designated computer without realizing someone had raised their hand.

“I think there’s a question,” Kara shouted to get Katie’s attention.

Lena looked up with what Kara thought was a smile on her face. Nothing like the one from their first encounter but it was something.

The young woman that raised her hand had a question pertaining to due dates that Lena sufficiently answered. Double-checking there weren’t any other questions Lena dismissed the class thirty minutes early.

Kara packed up her things and waited for the other students to leave before making her way down to the front of the classroom. She hadn’t meant to listen in but Kara could hear Katie’s heart hammering in her chest when she noticed Kara walking towards her.

In an attempt to make small talk, “Funny seeing you here,” Kara tried.

“I guess it was the NCU Badgers football team you were feeding that night,” Lena teased good-naturedly. She could feel a heat rushing through her cheeks she hoped wasn’t easy to see.
“I’ll have you know they enjoyed every bite,” Kara joked back. “I had no idea you were a student here. Well, how would I have known. We had only just met.”

There was the rambling again. Lena couldn’t help but smile again listening to the woman talk about absolutely nothing of importance. “I’m a grad student actually. I’m almost done with my Master’s. You?”

“Wow!—Wait, how old are you then if you’re a grad student?” Kara had pegged the brunette to be at least a few years younger than herself, just on a hunch. Maybe she had been incorrect in her assumption if the woman was in fact a graduate student.

“Hasn’t anyone ever told you never to ask a woman her age,” Lena asked cheekily. Kara gave her an expression that reminded the brunette of a confused puppy, the way her head was tilted to the side. “Never mind,” Lena said, laughing off the momentary awkwardness.

“What year are you?”

“Oh, right,” Kara said excitedly, having completely forgotten the presumably younger woman had asked her the question. “I’m a senior.”

“And you pushed this class off until your last year of undergrad?”

“It’s not my strongest subject area,” Kara admitted with a shrug. “You know,” she said taking a step closer to Lena, still a few feet away.

Lena fumbled with her things as she tried to pack up. She had to be blind not to notice how handsome Kara looked in her outfit. The way loose golden strands from her messy bun swayed around her head like wheat in a field. The way the blue of her shirt still managed to make the blue of her eyes pop rather than draw away from them. This was only confirmation of her immediate attraction to the blonde the afternoon they met in the grocery store.

“I should take you out to lunch as an apology for nearly taking your legs out,” Kara suggested. It was smooth and an easy way to spend more time with the brunette. Not that she was ready to admit she wanted to see more of the other woman.

Lena looked as though she were ready to refuse. Kara cut her off, insisting it was the least she could do considering they’d be seeing more of each other in the coming weeks.

“So Katie. Wha’d’ya say?”

Lena had completely forgotten that Kara had no idea who she really was. Which seemed impossible since she introduced herself at the beginning of the class. Even though some students clearly already knew who she was which triggered the walkouts.

“Before I forget, sorry for being late. I had an eventful night and overslept.”

*That explains it*, Lena thought to herself. She quickly weighed the pros and cons of just coming clean about who she was. There was this nagging voice in the back of her head that told her she couldn’t handle it if Kara looked at her the way so many other people had. Against her better judgement she listened to that voice and went along with the lie.

Bouncing her head side to side, “Since I’m not actually your professor, and I’m only doing this as a favor to Dr. Williamson, I don’t see why not. How about Saturday?”

Kara nearly squealed with excitement. A woman that was as beautiful as Katie she incorrectly
assumed would never give her the time of day, but here she was with a lunch date. “Saturday is perfect. Let’s make it 11 and we can do brunch. I know this great place that does bottomless mimosas.”

Slinging her purse and briefcase onto her shoulder, Lena held her hand out towards Kara. “Give me your phone,” she said with a playful smile. Kara hurriedly handed it over. “Text me later so that I’ll have your number.”

Kara didn’t waste any time. She immediately text Lena a quick message with her name coupled with a few emojis. “There.”

Lena shook her head but laughed at the woman’s eagerness. There was no way a woman that looked like Kara wanted anything to do with her, especially once she found out who she really was.

Kara walked Lena to the door before going their separate ways. With a little time until her next class Kara went to one of the cafeterias to grab a bite not having had a real meal all morning.

"Kar can you stop by my place," Kara heard her sister slur on the other end of the line.

"Of course, I'll be there in five." Kara's classes were done for the day and she hadn't received a call from J'onn to head into the DEO. With it being the middle of the afternoon Kara figured her sister had the day off.

Standing outside of Alex's apartment Kara could hear subtle sobs coming from inside. She jiggled the knob to check if she needed to grab her key. Not surprisingly the door was left unlocked. Kara knocked lightly on the door as she opened it to not scare her sister.

Alex was balled into the corner of her sofa with a tissue box clutched in her hands. There was a half-filled glass beside an empty bottle of Scotch; Alex's poison of choice.

Kara rushed to Alex's side and pulled the woman into her chest. They sat like this until Alex couldn't cry another tear. They sat in near darkness until Kara reached over to turn on the lamp beside the couch.

"Wanna tell me what's going on?" Kara asked without judgment. She was well aware what this was about but she wanted Alex to say it out loud to start the dialogue.

Wiping her nose on the sleeve of her shirt, "Maggie was it for me Kar. Things were great, until I found out she doesn't want kids," Alex explained. "Did you know she proposed," she asked as she peeled herself from her sister's arms.

That was news to Kara. She had a feeling that one of them would be proposing eventually but Maggie had never talked to her about proposing to her sister. Kara shook her head and waited for the redhead to continue.

"She had proposed a few weeks before we broke up. I think the day after the proposal we started to talk about what our family would look like. I told her I wanted a kid or two but I guess she thought I was joking." Alex paused before looking at the blonde head on, "She told me that she likes kids but she never saw herself having kids of her own. She said she was content with it being just me
for the rest of our lives."

Kara watched her sister's heart break a little more as she explained the reason behind the breakup. She held the older woman's hand supportively and nodded for her to go on. Sniffling through her words, "I tried for days to accept that I would never have children of my own and I just couldn't -- I couldn't do it Kara -- I couldn't," the redhead forced out before breaking down into tears again.

As soon as her breathing evened out, "That's why I didn't tell you about-about the engagement. I knew I coul-couldn't go through with it if it meant never having the family I-I had always imagined I'd have." Kara held her sister's head to her chest and rocked them in place. She shushed her sister's cries until the woman had fallen asleep half on top of her.

Kara moved the redhead to her bed before calling to order them a couple pizzas to share whenever she woke up. While waiting on the food Kara cleaned up Alex's apartment a little so she wouldn't have to worry about it the next day. She grabbed the bottle of ibuprofen and filled a glass with water, placing them both on Alex's bedside table.

The pizza showed up a few minutes after she finished straightening the apartment. Starving by this point Kara went ahead and ate her share of the pizzas being sure to leave Alex enough to have leftovers. She kicked her feet up on the coffee table and found something to binge on Netflix.

Alex hadn't stirred in hours but she didn't want to leave the woman alone. Having a few spare clothes tucked into her sister's dresser drawers Kara changed clothes and climbed in the bed with her sister. It was a king sized bed so there was more than enough room for the both of them.

"Thanks Kara," Alex whispered in a sleep filled haze.

"That's what I'm here for."

——

Kara left a note for her sister atop the leftover box of pizza. She had to be at CatCo a little earlier than usual to sit in on a strategy session for the magazine. Kara hadn't been able to attend these meetings as she was just an intern. She had been wracking her brain for why Ms. Grant would email her Tuesday morning informing her that she needed to be in the meeting Friday morning.

Kara stopped by her apartment to shower and get ready for the work day. It was about five in the morning and she had a little time before she needed to be in the office for the seven o'clock meeting.

Just before six Kara headed out for breakfast, "The usual," Kenny, the waiter at Noonan's asked her.

"How about two stacks of chocolate chip pancakes, scrambled eggs, and a few sticky buns."

"Of course!"

"How about some apple juice to wash it down and a couple chicken sausage biscuits for the road."

"Coming right up."

While she ate her food, Kara received a text.
Just making sure we're still on for tomorrow.

It's a date!

Well not a date date. Just an outing.

Between two people as an apology.

I don't want to assume anything. I hope I didn't offend you.

Kara, you're fine. Just text me the details later.

Kara had been smiling down at her phone for a seemingly long time. Not only had Katie text her first, she was making sure their plans hadn't fallen through. Kenny had broken her free of her reverie to give her the bill. She still had plenty of time to make it to work and set up before the meeting so she took the long way to the building.

Several of her coworkers greeted her with smiles and waves as she made her way to the top floor. Kara wasn't the first one in the conference room. She situated herself in the middle of the long table to have a better vantage point of everything that would happen. Eventually everyone that was supposed to be in the meeting was seated waiting for Cat to make her entrance.

"Good morning everyone. What do you have for me so far," Ms. Grant announced. Kara nervously looked around the room not knowing she was supposed to come in with topics to present.

A few people shouted ideas of how to utilize more of their social media presence or setting up focus groups to see what their readers were looking for. Kara hadn't said a peep but took notes of everything that was being said and by who. Ms. Grant had kept an eye on Kara throughout the meeting and felt now was the perfect time to bring her into the conversation.

"And what about you Ms. Danvers?"

Kara's head shot up from her notebook and eyed the woman speaking to her like a deer in headlights. She had skated by most of the meeting without contributing a single idea. She had hoped the remainder of the meeting would pan out the same way.

"Uh..." she croaked out, clearing her throat. "I think what's been presented so far aren't bad ideas."

"Well they are to me. I don't want to do more of what everyone else is doing, I want something new. Different."

This was probably going to be a bad idea, but she needed to offer up something. "Well we haven't done a lot of coverage of Supergirl. She's been doing a lot recently and the general public seems to be taking to her help a little more every day," Kara offered, nervously wiggling her pen in her hands.

"She stands for everything CatCo is about so I don't think it would be a bad idea to feature her more often. Have a weekly Supergirl segment in the online magazine. Millennials are a big part of our demographic and in order to better target that market, publishing online is more effective than in print."

Cat took in Kara's suggestion. Supergirl was a bit of untapped potential for them. The heroine was still relatively new and had declined all interviews by all news outlets. If CatCo could somehow secure an exclusive with the Superhero it would give CatCo the added edge Cat was looking for.

"Kiera, this is now your project. I'll put together a team for you to fully pursue this line. There will
Kara stared at the woman again, flabbergasted. She hadn't expected for her idea to work, let alone for her to wind up the head of a new project team. Cat dismissed everyone but Kara at the end of the meeting to further discuss what her new role would entail.

"Because you're still in school I'll have to appoint someone else to head up your team in your absence. I'll award you full autonomy for this project but you will still need to have a few things approved by Snapper before publication. If this segment proves to be as successful as I know it will be I would like to offer you a permanent position here at CatCo. You will no longer be Kara the Intern."

"Ms. Grant, thank you so much!" Unable to contain her excitement Kara reached out and pulled the older woman into a tight hug. It took a moment for her to realize what exactly she had just done. She profusely apologized for invading the woman's personal space and vowed to never let it happen again; she was just so excited.

"Kara dear, you're fine. Let's just not make a habit of it, hm?"

"Yes ma'am."

Ms. Grant gave Kara this reprimanding look. "From now on, when its just you and I, please call me Cat. And I may work on the Kiera thing. I promise nothing."

"Sure thing... Cat... Yea, that feels weird," Kara snickered.

"I'll give Larry from maintenance a call to set up an office space for you downstairs. Would a team of six be sufficient for now?"

"That should be more than enough."

"I'll send you a few things over the weekend once I have a better idea of who I'm reassigning to your team. If there's anyone you would like to bring on board send me their info to look over before I make any last decisions."

"I do have one person in mind, James Olsen. I know we have a few photographers on staff but I figured he could freelance and he has an amazing eye."

"Have him send over his portfolio and we can go from there. Anything else?"

"Uhm, no. I was going to see if anyone on the floor needed any help before heading down to find Larry and help him out."

"I'll let you get to that then." As Kara opened the conference room door, "Oh, and Kara, I'm expecting a Supergirl exclusive at some point in the coming weeks."

Kara spent the remainder of her day in the office helping Larry move furniture around and setting up her actual office. Cat had assigned her one of the bigger office spaces on the fourteenth floor with a glass front. They had a few private offices in the space, outside of her own, but there were six desks set up in the main area. Kara had envisioned the space as their own bull pin.

In all of her excitement she had no idea how she was going to manage running a part of the magazine now dedicated solely to all things Supergirl while also being Supergirl. How Kara Danvers was going to juggle being college student Kara Danvers, intern and now project manager Kara Danvers, with superhero Kara Zor-El would be nothing short of interesting.
Kara sent off a message in the group message between her, James, Winn, and her sister. Winn had the genius idea to name the group SuperFriends once she debuted as Supergirl and it had held ever since.

<Kara; 3:22pm> Drinks

<Kara; 3:22pm> Tonight at the alien bar

<Kara; 3:23pm> NO EXCUSES!! I have news!

Everyone agreed to the hangout stating about what time they’d be able to show up. Kara was nearly ready to burst but knew she needed to restrain herself to keep from spoiling her own surprise. Working with Larry had provided her with the perfect distraction from her phone.

Assisting Larry and his team, they were able to set up all furniture she felt her staff would need along with a few basics for her own office. IT would be in over the weekend to set up all computers, printers, and televisions so everything would hopefully be up and running Monday morning.

Heading out at exactly five o'clock Kara went home to change into something a little more casual for the bar. Sliding into a pair of ripped denim jeans Kara stared at herself in the floor length mirror positioned between two of her windows. She pulled her wavy blonde hair back into a ponytail to see what her hair would look like short. Zipping into the bathroom to grab a few hair pins Kara situated her hair so that the sides were low and about four inches were visible from the top.

Kara had thoughts of cutting her hair long before she became Supergirl. Now that she was out, it would be hard to explain why she cut her hair the same time Supergirl had. But then again, how no one had figured out that she was Supergirl just by wearing glasses and a ponytail, maybe it would be ok. She had nearly an hour before anyone would be at the bar. She called a few hair salon's for any immediate openings and lucked up. If she thought about this too long she wouldn't do it.
Choking on her beer, "What did you do to your hair?" Alex shouted in disbelief.

Kara bashfully shoved her hands in her jean’s pockets, "Do you guys like it?"

"Uh, yea!" Of course Winn did.

"I mean, hey," James said, lifting his glass in her direction, "it could look worse."

"Does it really look bad," Kara frantically asked, running her hands through her now short hair.

Alex walked over to the blonde, "Kar, it looks great. Next time, can you give us a heads up first?"

With a sheepish grin, "I kind of just decided to get it done. We've been talking about me making a change for years and here it is!"

James went to grab Kara one of her usual mixed beverages, making sure the off-world alcohol was mixed in just for her.

"Winn, I guess its time for you to design a new suit. And can we please nix the skirt. How is fighting bad guys in a skirt functional?"
"I have so many ideas already! And to hide the hair cut a little, how about a headpiece of some kind?" Before Kara could answer, "Say no more Danvers. I'm all over this!"

Staring at Winn scribbling on every napkin he could find, "What did you do to him?" James snorted.

"He's designing my new suit. Which brings me to why I invited you all here."

They all shuffled into their usual booth and waited for Kara to continue.

"So, we all know about my internship at CatCo." Everyone silently nodded. "Well, I sorta got a promotion," Kara added with a small smile.

James and Winn whooped their praises and Alex wrapped her arm around her sister, "I'm proud of you."

"That's not all. Ms. Grant has called me by my actual name like a handful of times this week and I'm not sure how to process it," she laughed.

"It only took her what, a year?" James joked.

"Nine months-"


"Anyway, with my promotion I'm now a project manager. But before you congratulate me, it's for a small section of the online magazine on Supergirl."

They all looked at each other not sure how to proceed. Alex choked on her beer, again, and James handed her a napkin to clean herself up. "So what does that mean exactly," Alex finally asked.

"I'm now responsible for all things Supergirl when it comes to CatCo. Cat even wants me get an exclusive with her in the next few weeks or it's my job. I'm guess on that last part."

"How are we even going to manage that?"

"Well, James, this is partly where you come in," now directing her gaze towards the man. "I recommended you for the role of photographer on my team. You have an amazing eye and you already know about me."

James looked taken aback, "I mean, thanks Kara, but photography is really just a hobby for me right now."

"I thought you might say that. You'll be an independent contractor, so you kind of come and go as you please. We can work something out so that I don't interfere with your classes and basketball. Besides, the checks for all of your published photos," she shamelessly added to further guilt James into a role that was a perfect fit for him.

James mulled over the idea for a moment before agreeing to the terms laid out. "What all will Ms. Grant need from me?"

"Just stop by the office when you have time in your schedule and show her your portfolio. We can even help you pick out a few that Cat should definitely see. Like that one in the park of that protestor?!"

"Wait a second. Since when did you start calling Ms. Grant, Cat," Winn asked suggestively.
"Oh, come on," Kara laughed so hard her sides hurt. "It was her idea, not mine!" she added defensively, but still playful.

"Sure it was," Winn teased wagging his eyebrows.

"Well that was my news. I got promoted and James got a job in the process. Oh, and my haircut," she added with the biggest grin.

They spent the rest of the night watching Winn attempt to play pool and fooling around like every other night they've spent in that bar. Kara spent a brief amount of time preening in the attention she was getting from some of the patrons in the bar that were inadvertently boosting her confidence. If perfect strangers were reacting this way to her new hairstyle, she could only imagine how Katie would respond to it.

Remembering her date not date with the brunette, Kara bid farewell a little before eleven to prepare for the outing. Winn left with her since he had a ten-a.m. Saturday class this semester. A little inebriated Kara pulled her phone out of her pocket and scrolled to find Katie's contact. Her fingers hovered over the screen waiting for her mind to decide on a phone call or a text.

"Hello?" a groggy voice came over the line.

"Oh no, did I wake you?"

There was a moment of silence before Katie spoke again, "No, no. Is everything alright? It's late." She could hear the ruffling of what could only be Katie’s bedding.

"Everything's fine," Kara nearly slurred. She only had two drinks so she wasn't drunk enough to be reckless. "I just realized I didn't text you the details for our outing," she strategically added, not wanting to use the word 'date'.

"Oh, I just figured you'd call me in the morning."

Kara crossed the street without looking and was nearly hit by oncoming traffic. It wouldn't have hurt her but it surely would have exposed her as being an alien. She had to be more careful.

"What was that? Are you out walking?"

"Nothing, someone just ran a red light is all. Tomorrow," she rushed to say before Katie could question her further. "I can either pick you up or you can meet me there." Kara technically didn't have a car but she could borrow Alex's or one from the DEO’s holding facility.

"Depends on where we're going."

"It's about ten minutes outside of town heading east. So about forty-five minutes from NCU."

"I can meet you there. Just send me the address in the morning."

"Sure thing! Have a good night Katie. Sorry again about waking you."

"Goodnight Kara. And be safe, whatever you're doing."

Kara heard the line click as she opened the door to her apartment. She grabbed herself a glass of water and propped herself on the back of her couch. Blankly staring around the apartment, Kara let herself be happy for her latest accomplishments.

Cutting her hair may not have seemed like much to others but it was one of the few things she did
for herself, and not for anyone else. It was a big change but it was helping her maintain some hold on her identity. Her promotion was unforeseen, and would surely be a challenge, but it meant that all her hard work as Kara Danvers was paying off. That she was more than just her circumstances, DNA, and privileges; though they certainly did help in more ways than one.

Without changing out of her clothes, Kara made for her bed and curled up in the center. Putting both her personal and Supergirl phones on their respective chargers, she made sure to turn on their ringers and set her alarm. She fell asleep in a matter of seconds after her head hit her pillow.

Chapter End Notes

I'm enjoying writing this so far which is spurring me to write more often. I've already started on the next chapter and as long as you guys want more I'll keep writing. Of course, questions/comments/suggestions are welcomed!

I would like to thank @foleypdx over on Tumblr for allowing me to use one of her pieces to reference Kara’s new hairstyle. I also love what she did as far as suit design in another one of her pieces and may reference that as well when the time comes. Run over there and check out her work and show your support if you feel so compelled.

I hope y’all enjoyed. Until next time.
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Thought I should mention it before you get started, there's some perspective changes throughout this chapter; especially during brunch with Kara and Lena. Lena's POV, Kara's POV (Lena is referred to as Katie because that's how Kara knows her at this point), but overall third person POV

Chapter Notes

I want to say thanks for all the comments and kudos thus far; it really means a lot!

Sit back and let your mind roam free ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It was finally Saturday morning. The past few days had felt as though they would drag on forever to Kara. She couldn’t place why she was so excited for brunch with Katie, but this was her first outing in well over a year with anyone outside of the SuperFriends.

*Friends go on dates. That’s totally a normal thing. I can see being friends with Katie. Did you notice those eyes... Stop it Zor-El. Get yourself together!*

It was about six in the morning, just before sunrise, and she was already gushing over her brunch date. Kara debated holding off texting the address to Katie because it was so early but overruled her own decision; this way she wouldn’t forget.

<Kara; 6:07am> Hope I’m not waking you up again lol. 12883 Crescent Lake Dr. Wear something comfortable. See you in a few hours.

<Katie; 6:10am> I'm usually up with the sun these days.

<Katie; 6:10am> Comfortable as in come in a onesie? *smirking emoji*

<Kara; 6:11am> *shocked emoji* You would really wear a onesie to lunch???

<Kara; 6:11am> don’t answer that. I meant comfortable as in jeans and sneakers.

<Katie; 6:12am> I think I can manage that.

Kara had mentally made plans for what could follow brunch if things went well. With the diner being right on a lake, they could always go for a walk. The aquarium wasn’t too far back into town either. She figured it was better to be prepared just in case.

Hours had past and Kara still couldn’t decide what to wear to brunch. She had called Alex thirty minutes ago with a non-Supergirl S.O.S. so she should be there any minute.
Right on time, Kara heard Alex before she opened the apartment door. Slipping a T-shirt on to cover up a little she waited for her sister to come to her rescue.

The redhead stood in the doorway and stared at the train wreck that was now her sister’s apartment. Clothes and shoes were everywhere. The apartment was a little bigger than your average loft and somehow Kara had managed to cover most of it with her wardrobe.

“What did I agree to,” Alex mumbled under her breath.

“I heard that,” Kara stated indignantly.

“Oh sweetie, I know.” Alex hesitantly made her way into the messy apartment. “Do I even wanna know what happened in here?”

Looking around at the state of her apartment, “I have this sort of brunch, date, thing. Well, it’s not a date but I think I want it to be. I’m freaking out because I have no idea what to wear. I don’t remember the last time I was this nervous to go eat.”

Alex looked over at her sister knowingly. “Where’d you meet her?” There was no safe space to stand so the older woman hopped up on the kitchen island to sit down.

“I sorta rammed my cart into the back of her legs at the grocery store.”

Bursting into a fit of laughter, “And she still has legs,” Alex shouted, mocking her sister.

“Shut up Alex! I was on the phone with mom and I was hungry.”

“Yea, ok. Sure. So, to apologize you invited her out to eat.”

“Not exactly like that but yea. Turns out she’s a TA for my Chem lecture.”

“Have the hots for teacher! What has gotten into my goody-two-shoes sister?” Alex was enjoying teasing the younger woman.

“It’s not like that,” Kara lightly giggled. “My professor is out for a few weeks and I guess he asked her to fill in. She doesn’t even teach any of the recitation sections like the other TAs. Besides, she’s a grad student,” Kara huffed before searching through clothes she’d already tried on two or three times already.

“Well I guess that’s ok. What do you have in mind?”

“For the not-date?”

Alex gave the blonde a look that said, “Yea, ya big dummy!”

“Well the diner outside of town you showed me has bottomless mimosas on the weekends, so I suggested we go there. If things go well I have a few other things in mind. I told her to dress comfortably.”

“Are you feeling jeans or chinos? It’s not going to be that warm today.”

Kara motioned at the mound of chinos she had already tried on. “They weren’t doing it for me, so I guess jeans.”

“How are you getting there by the way? It’s not like you have a car Kar.”
“I was going to ask you about that.” Kara spun around and flashed her sister her brightest smile. “Can I borrow your car. Just for the date. I’ll bring it back without a scratch.”

Alex immediately had flashback to the last time she was in a car with Kara as the driver. The only reason she could fathom behind Kara’s capability, or lack thereof, to drive was her super powers. Her reactions were too sudden. She drove too fast, but safe. Don’t get her started on the woman’s breaking and signaling ability. “I am NOT letting you drive my car ever again. It’s just starting to drive the way it used to. You scarred us both for life,” the redhead joked. “I have a few errands to run this afternoon so I need my car. You can take the bike. It’ll help you show off a bit.”

Kara flew over to her sister and hugged her as tight as was safely possible. “Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

Alex tried to wiggle her way out of the blonde’s arms to no avail. “If there’s even the tiniest of scratches on her I will personally oversee your killing.”

“I promise! Not a scratch!”

By nine o’clock the women had finally managed to get Kara into an outfit they both approved of.

Even though the cold wouldn’t affect her, she would still have to dress the part. Alex had picked out a dark washed pair of jeans for Kara to put on. She walked around in her jeans and chest binder for a few minutes before picking out an olive green mandarin collared shirt. She grabbed a matching pair of Adidas and a golden yellow hoody to go under her black Perfecto leather jacket.

“That wasn’t so hard was it?” Alex sarcastically asked.

“Keys.”

“You’ll have to drop me off back at my apartment so you can get them. Unless you wanna change into the Super suit just to— “

Kara zipped out of her apartment clad in her Supergirl suit headed straight for her sister’s apartment. She found the spare Ducati bike key and flew back to her place. “You were saying?”

Alex scoffed, “Show off.”

Kara spun out of her suit back into her outfit, cleaning her apartment in the process.

“Why can’t you clean my place like that?”

“Because I don’t live with you and it’s not my mess.”

Alex gave the blonde a side eye before speaking, “Remember that the next time you need to borrow my car.”

It was a quarter til 10 and Kara wanted to make sure she got to the restaurant a little early in case Katie got lost.

Grabbing a grey beanie and her backpack, “Did you want me to drop you back at your place?”

“If you don’t mind. I did ride the bike over here.” Kara grabbed her helmet from the shelf by her front door and locked up her apartment behind them.

Alex had suggested Kara buy a helmet of her own when she first bought the bike. Kara rarely was allowed to ride the motorcycle, but it was good to have her own riding gear whenever she had the
chance to do so. She dropped Alex outside her apartment building in record time then made her way out of the city limits.

——

Kara stood, leaned against Alex’s Ducati. She replaced the helmet with her beanie, slipped off the backpack, and waited for Katie to show up; hands in pockets.

It was nearly eleven o’clock. She hadn’t been waiting long since there had been a bit of unforeseen traffic. A few minutes later a sleek black SUV pulled into the parking lot. She hadn’t noticed it was Katie until she saw the woman slide out from the driver’s side of the vehicle.

Kara watched as Katie’s wavy hair blew in the breeze. Alex was right, it wasn’t particularly warm but it wasn’t exactly cold either due to the slight wind chill. The brunette had on a pair of fitting black slacks rolled up to just above her ankles, a taupe colored long sleeve shirt, white low top sneakers, and a matching plaid blanket scarf.

The blonde couldn’t peel her eyes off the approaching woman.

Without even realizing it, Lena almost walked right by Kara without a second thought. If it weren’t for Kara clearing her throat she would have kept going inside.

“I hope the place wasn’t too hard to find,” Kara inquired, voice slightly quavering.

“I didn’t even notice that was you. You look completely different.. but in a good way,” she added, eyes scanning over all of Kara.

“I’ll take that as a compliment,” Kara giggled.

“I got turned around once or twice but I only really know the city. And that’s only certain parts.”

Kara led them inside and grabbed a booth. “You’re not from around here?”

Lena debated how she should respond. The truth was usually the safest option, but she was already lying to the woman.

Kara shucked off her leather jacket, throwing it into her side of the booth. She pulled her hoody over her head and her shirt came up a little with it. Lena shamelessly stared at the woman’s physique while Kara’s head was still trapped in her jacket.

“In a manner of speaking. I’ve lived here and Metropolis. Even spent time in an Irish boarding school.”

“I knew I could hear an accent!” Kara finally sat down across from her date, straightening up her clothing. “Boarding school. The truck with tinted windows. Maybe there’s more to you than I thought,” Kara stated, gently probing for Lena to talk more about herself.

“You’re one to talk. Last I saw you there was a sizable difference in your hair length,” Lena said, trying to divert attention away from herself. Kara still had on her beanie but Lena could tell there was something different going on underneath it.

“I just needed to do something different.” Before she could continue, their waitress came up and
asked for their drink orders. They both requested to start with the mimosas and a glass of water. Kara also made sure the waitress knew for them to start with the sampler as their appetizer.

“I take it you come here often?”

“Not often, but enough,” Kara chuckled.

“I don’t see a difference,” Lena joked back.

They sat in silence for a bit before their first round of drinks showed up along with a pitcher for their table.

“So…” Kara attempted to start. She nervously giggled and fiddled with her glasses. “Since you’re a grad student, where’d you complete your undergrad?”

“MIT. I actually graduated last December.”

“You must be like, genius level smart.”

“That’s what they tell me,” Lena said, hoping she didn’t come off as an ass.

“What was your major?”

“Mechanical and electrical engineering.”

“And you’re doing your research in those areas?”

“Yes and no. There’s very little I can say about it because of the government being involved.”

Kara looked up at the woman with amazement written in her features. Not only was she more than likely a certifiable genius, she had a government contract for a research opportunity.

Who is this woman?

“Enough about me, what are you doing for your undergrad?”

“Nothing nearly as exciting as engineering,” Kara said. She was beginning to feel smaller somehow in Katie’s presence. The woman’s eyes hadn’t left her since they sat down, and they were only a table’s width apart, but it didn’t change her feeling as though they were leagues apart.

“Oh, come on. Indulge me.”

Kara was about to explain what she was studying when their waitress returned with the sampler.

“Oh Katie, you have to try the mozzarella sticks! Then the infused breakfast sausage. The drunken apples are to die for—you, you just have to try everything!”

Lena couldn’t help but laugh at the blonde’s enthusiasm over their food. If this was how she reacted over a sample platter how was she going to behave with their main courses?

Lena’s happiness in that moment was only dampened by the disgusted look she was getting from their server, but she knew it could’ve been far worse had Kara not been with her.

Lena started with the drunken apples and ended with a few pieces of their sliced up blueberry muffin. Kara insisted on feeding her some of the sausage but had to explain to the blonde that she was a vegetarian. When their waitress returned they each ordered their own meal and Kara refilled
their glasses with more of the mimosa.

Kara had completely forgotten to take off her beanie after sitting down. She wasn’t used to wearing hats of any kind but with the lack of hair she was now sporting it hadn’t felt out of place. Katie had already noticed a difference in her hair so there was no point in hiding it any longer. Not that she was intentionally hiding her hair. After the compliments she received the other night in the bar Kara was looking forward to seeing how Katie would like it.

Setting her beanie on her jackets and backpack, Kara used her free hand to ruffle the strands out a bit.

Lena nearly choked on her drink but recovered before Kara could notice how flustered she had visibly become.

“What do you think?”

Lena grabbed the last bite of a half-eaten mozzarella stick not trusting her voice. Instead, nodding her approval at first.

Swallowing thickly, “You said you wanted a change but that’s a big one. Don’t get me wrong, I like it. It’s hair, it’ll grow back if you want. If you don’t mind my asking, why?”

Kara placed her hands atop the table and took a deep breathe, “I no longer felt like me. Whoever that may be,” she added under her breath. “I’m all of these versions of myself to so many people. I’m the understanding sister, the always-there best friend, the dedicated intern. After a while I lost sight of who I was and what I wanted. The hair cut is me trying to reclaim who I really am.”

Reacting without thinking Lena stretched a hand out to hold Kara’s, “Well I want to meet her when you find her.” Before their fingers could touch their waitress began placing their meals on the table.

They both cleared their throats equally unsure how that moment had almost happened or why it was even about to happen.

They talked throughout their meal, finishing off the pitcher of mimosas. Kara learned that Katie had an older half-brother and her stepmother was her only surviving parent. They talked more about her time spent in Metropolis and in Ireland. Based on Katie’s description of Ireland’s scenery and landscapes Kara knew she needed to visit the country someday.

Kara got the chance to explain more about her studies and where she wanted to go with it all once she graduated. She wasn’t ready to talk about her promotion since she didn’t have a lot of information to divulge. There was also the fact that she didn’t know how to talk about Supergirl with strangers just yet. She didn’t want to risk slipping up and revealing her secret identity.

Their conversation was surprisingly interesting. They found they had quite a few things in common, but Kara was appalled by Lena’s food choices. “You’re missing out on so much. Like this chicken sausage. And ribs. And steak. And just all of the good food Katie,” she had pleaded when the topic came back up.

Lena could hold her alcohol pretty well, but she didn’t feel comfortable enough to drive back to the Luthor mansion at that present moment. Kara had long asked for the check and they just sat waiting, talking about different sci-fi movies and hobbies they enjoyed.

Lena fought Kara over who was to pay the bill. Kara insisted that she pay because she asked the brunette out to eat. Plus, this was an apology meal. After Kara pulled on her jackets and made her
way to the door, Lena made sure to leave a decent sized tip for the waitress. The woman was probably only nice to her because she wasn’t alone, which Lena appreciated. The size of the tip was mainly from how well the woman managed to handle herself while servicing a Luthor she probably wanted to dump their food on.

Outside the restaurant, Kara stood waiting for Lena to emerge.

“I have to say, I enjoyed myself. Thank you for this.”

Kara gave her a modest smile, “Any time. I enjoyed spending time with you.”

They both stood there as if waiting for the other to suggest another outing. Crumbling under the pressure, “You wanna go for a walk? It’s actually why I suggested you be comfortable.”

“Sneaky, I like it,” Lena said in jest.

“You probably saw it on the ride up here but there’s a lake just behind the diner I wanted to show you.”

“Well lead the way,” Lena motioned.

The closer they got to the river the more uneven the ground became. Lena wasn’t exactly the most coordinated person around, but it was remarkable how Kara hadn’t even so much as stumbled over a hidden rock or branch.

“Here we are,” said Kara. “Crescent Lake.”

“I bet you bring all of the girls out here,” Lena teased good-naturedly.

Kara blushed and tripped over her feet at the implication. “You’re the first actually.” Kara didn’t know where the honesty came from, but she thought it best to just go with it.

“Why do I find that hard to believe?”

Kara reached down to pick up a couple stones to chuck across the water. She gazed over at Lena with a sincere expression, “I wouldn’t lie about that,” she answered before skipping the first stone.

Lena reached down and grabbed a few rocks of her own. “How are you doing that?”

“Here, let me show you.”

Kara rolled out Lena’s hand holding the rocks to find the smoothest one. She gripped it in her own hand and showed the shorter woman what to look for.

“Do you mind if I touch you?”

Lena wasn’t expecting the request. It wasn’t very often she found people that innately respected personal boundaries in that way. Lena was a bit touch averse and had been criticized in the past for not liking physical contact. Having Kara ask before just assuming she’d be ok with anything eased some of her unspoken trepidations.

“I’m ok with that.”

Kara rotated their position and wrapped her left arm around the woman. Since Katie was left-handed Kara had to readjust her stance. She guided the shorter woman's body through the motions before throwing the stone together.
Kara laughed at how happy Katie was to accomplish something as trivial as skipping stones.

Kara stiffened in place when Katie hadn’t moved out of her arms. It was the closest she had been to anyone in a long time and it was nice. After the few hours they had spent together Kara could see a friendship easily blossoming between them.

Lena rotated in the taller woman’s arms, holding her breathe. Their proximity bombarded her senses with everything Kara, especially how great the blonde smelled. Eventually, whatever this was between them would end. Either by her true identity being revealed or them never seeing each other again once Dr. Williamson was back teaching his class. She couldn’t allow herself to like the shaggy-haired blonde but she also couldn’t help it.

For the first time Lena felt safe in someone’s arms that weren’t her brother’s. She hadn’t had very many people in her life to base a friendship off of, but she still knew deep down there was something special about the woman holding her.

At the most inopportune time her phone rang. She grunted knowing she should probably answer it but wanted to do anything but that.

“Hello? .... “I’m on my way.” Taking a slight step back from Katie, “I’m so sorry about this but I have to go. Are you ok to drive home?”

Lena shifted her stance and squared her shoulders. “I’ll be fine. Is everything alright?”

Kara knew she couldn’t tell Katie the truth, not yet anyway. “It will be.”

Kara rushed them back to the diner’s parking lot making sure Katie was safe before she made her way back into town.

“Let me know when you get home and we can talk about hanging out again soon.” Kara left without another word.

Slipping on her helmet Kara wasted no time speeding down the dirt road to get to the freeway.

“J’onn, what’s the situation,” she asked over her comm.

“There’s been an attack at LutherCorp. We believe individuals, potentially alien, are holding the CEO hostage.”

Kara was whizzing between cars trying to get back to the city. “Her name’s Lillian, right?” Kara hadn’t officially met the head of the Luthor family but she had heard plenty. Despite the rumors and stories circling about the family she wanted to form her own opinions of them. She had been called naive and too trusting over the idea, but Kara was steadfast in her way of thinking.

“Yes. Lillian Luthor. We have two teams on site, we’re just waiting on you to move in. What’s your ETA?”

“I’m about eight minutes out. I have Alex’s bike and I was kind of on a date so I couldn’t just leave it.”

“Understood Supergirl. Just be careful. We’ll contain the situation until you arrive.”

Kara made it to the LutherCorp building in the time she specified and not a second later. The scene had already been taped off and a perimeter set up.
“Supergirl,” J’onn called out.

“What are we looking at?” Kara was glad Winn had designed a suit with a hooded top after fighting a Statejian in the middle of the desert and getting trapped there after blowing out her powers. Now the hood served as a way to hide her hair until her best friend could come up with a better alternative.

“Alpha Team was able to verify that Mrs. Luthor is in fact being held against her will in her office. The trespassers are a combination of human and alien. We can’t just go in there, guns blazing.”

Alex had walked up being her sister and the Director of the DEO as he was briefing Supergirl on the situation.

“The only other entry point is the balcony. They’ve blocked off all other access to the top floor,” Alex explained, clad in her tactical DEO gear.

“On it,” Kara said before shooting off into the sky. She hovered around the building before making a gentle landing on the balcony Alex had mentioned. She could see through all of the building except the parts of this floor that weren’t wrapped in glass. Strange.

“Heading inside,” Kara stated.

“Copy,” Alex and J’onn answered.

Kara slid the glass door open slowly and looked around the room. The woman who must have been Lillian Luthor was strapped to her office chair, gag in her mouth.

“I have eyes on Mrs. Luthor,” Kara announced softly. The only other people in the room were human and they all had their backs turned away from the balcony.

“Is she hurt?” J’onn asked.

Kara slowly made her way over to the CEO attempting not to startle the woman. Upon seeing Supergirl, Lillian sank down in her chair in relief.

“I’m here to rescue you but I need you to keep quiet,” Kara whispered. Kara reached to pull the gag from Lillian’s mouth when the door clicked open. Kara had to decide in a split second whether to hide or to face off against whoever was on the other side of the door.

“Well, well, well. If it isn’t Supergirl,” a male’s voice called out. “I thought I heard movement in here.”

The figure didn’t look familiar but it was definitely alien. He looked almost humanoid, but his figure was far too bulky, and not in the weightlifter kind of way. He looked almost like a juiced up failed experiment if Kara had to describe him. There were blueish green veins popping out from under his rust red skin. His eyes seemed to bulge out of their sockets without any eyelashes nor eyebrows to help hide them a bit better. His clothes were torn and haphazardly draped across his frame. Now that Kara was getting a better look at the creature in front her, he looked to almost be reptilian and a minimum of seven feet tall.

“Why have you taken Mrs. Luthor hostage, Kara asked. She knew her comms were open so J’onn and Alex would hear everything.

“IT’s simple really. I want revenge for what she’s done to me and my family.” The creature walked further into the office and stood in plain sight of the two women.
“I’m a Llarans. I was a perfect specimen of my race now look at me. I don’t even recognize myself and that bitch is going to pay!”

“Alright, watch it with the language. Got it crocodile Dundee?” It was a low blow but she had to find a way to distract the monstrous sized Llarans. “How about we take a step back and you tell me exactly what it is Mrs. Luthor did to you?”

Kara put her hands up in surrender and reached out to pull the gag from the woman’s mouth.

Lillian spit out a few times, disgusted fabric from the Llarans’ filthy shirt was in her mouth.

“There. Now we can all talk like civil beings. Sound good?” It was a rhetorical question but the Llarans didn’t pick up on that.

With a tilt of his head, the humans in the room raised their weapons and pointed them toward Kara and Lillian.

Kara made sure to put herself between the Luthor and her attackers should bullets begin to fly. “I said to be civil. Does this look civil to you?”

“Supergirl what’s going on up there,” Kara heard over her comms.

“How about this. What’s your name? I’m Supergirl which I’m sure you know by now and I’m from Krypton.”

The Llarans looked as though he were weighing his options. “My name... my name is Pulitd and I’m from the distant planet Llar of the Antares system. My friends call me Pult.”

“I can work with that Pult. So, here’s the thing. If we can’t calm this situation down enough to walk out of here you’ll more than like be shot; possibly killed. But I don’t want that to happen alright. So let’s get rid of the guns. I’m not going to hurt you unless you give me a reason to.”

Pult ordered the humans to leave the room so the three of them could be alone to talk. It was something in the way of progress. Pult sat down on the sofa in the far corner of the woman’s office. Kara took that as a sign that things were turning around.

“Now will you tell me why you’re doing this? Pick up right after the ruining your life part.”

“One night I was approached by this man. A couple buddies of mine, we were leaving The Avenue pretty late; the alien bar.”

“Yea, I know it.”

“There was this man that came up to us. Asked us if we wanted to help our people and if we’re on The Alien Registry. I blew the guy off. I was pretty hammered.”

“Yea, I know it.”

“Then what happened?”

“He left. But the next day he was ringing my bell at eight in the morning. This time he had some kind of government ID. I’m not going to pretend I know all the organizations on this planet.”

“Do you remember what the man looked like?”

“Average male human height. He had a bit of a beard. It needed to be trimmed or at least maintained. He was pretty normal for a human.”
“That isn’t much to go on,” Kara heard over her comms again.

“Anyway, he showed me his ID and asked about the Registry again. Once I showed him my papers and he verified it with his list he asked me if I wanted to help my people again.”

“How many Llarans are here on Earth?”

“Not many.” Pult answered shortly, shifting uncomfortably on the chair. “Those of us that are here are seeking refuge from the wars raging on our planet.” There was a pause to the conversation but Pult continued on. “He said something about my participation in a study being vital to better help the alien population on Earth.”

Kara was confused. She wasn’t aware of any programs studying aliens for any reasons. And if there were any such programs they would most likely be sanctioned through the DEO. Kara turned to look at the still silent and disgusted CEO.

The older woman hadn’t spoken a word the entire time, not even to defend herself.

“So how does that involve Mrs. Luthor?”

“She a part of the program. She’s one of the lead scientists.”

“Care to explain?” Kara questioned.

“I don’t need to explain myself to either of you. Now Supergirl if you wouldn’t mind untying me there are meetings I need to attend.”

“You do understand the implications of Pult’s statement, do you not Mrs. Luthor?”

“I am well aware of what the Llarans is inferring. However, he mentioned a man recruiting him into a program that I allegedly am a leader of. It’s all speculation at this point wouldn’t you agree Supergirl?”

Lillian had gotten her there. Pult very well could have been telling the truth but there was no evidence to suggest the older woman had anything to do with any of it. He could simple be targeting her based on her family’s reputation.

Kara looked torn. She wanted to believe Pult but a part of her also knew the CEO was right as well. “Pult, I’m sorry but we’re still gonna have to arrest you. If you come peacefully we may be able to figure something out.”

“I won’t be pressing any criminal charges as I would like answers surrounding this matter as well.”

Kara had to look at the woman twice. Based on what she’s heard about the Luthors that request seemed completely off base. When she got the chance, she knew she would have to have another conversation with the matriarch about what happened.

“Agent Danvers, did you get all that?”

Alex and her team had already arrested everyone in the lobby of the top floor and were waiting for a signal before heading inside the office itself.

“I think we can take things over from here Supergirl,” Alex declared with a head nod. “Thanks for your help.”

“Anytime,” Kara replied before flying out of the office.
“Debrief in an hour in the conference room.”
“Copy that.”

_____

Usually, debriefings were done in the situation room. The only times Kara had debriefed in private were cases that contained sensitive information or she really messed up somewhere. With the present climate of aliens being abducted, apprehending an alien suspect for potentially doing the same to a human was a delicate matter. Even more so because of the story behind the attack.

J’onn, Alex, and Kara sat at the conference table in silence as J’onn typed on his tablet jotting down a few notes before they began.

“Given Pult came willingly, it should help with his sentencing but it will not change the fact he committed a crime in the first place. I’ve requested for a few of our agents to run some tests on Pult to see what exactly was being done to him.”

“We haven’t come up with anything yet but it’s mostly because we have limited knowledge on Llarans biology. We’re not entirely sure what’s normal and what’s abnormal for him,” Alex tried to explain.

“Maybe that’s what the man meant by asking if Pult wanted to help his people. Maybe the man meant those of his kind living here on Earth.”

“That very well could be true Kara, but right now it’s just speculation,” J’onn supportively tried to clarify.

“We have three open cases of abducted aliens. Pult may be a fourth that’s still alive. I say we try to get as much out of him as we can before more aliens turn up missing.”

“I agree. We have our first lead in months, but we need to be cautious moving forward. We need to be ready for the Llarans’ information to be dead ends. We also need to find out more about this human and who he’s working for.”

“I just don’t understand why anyone would want to do this to aliens.”

Alex looked over at her sister, tears forming in her eyes. “People fear the very things they don’t understand. For some, that translates into violence.”

She hadn’t meant for the conversation to take a somber turn but the two people closest to her were aliens. Two people that could disappear tomorrow if they didn’t play their cards right.

“Kara, how about you and I talk about what happened in the office later on. I’ll give you two a moment.”

“You don’t have to do—“

On his way out the door, J’onn reached down and gave Alex a half hug, kissing the top of her head before finding some other place he could be useful. He usually tried his best but every now and then he couldn’t help but hear the thoughts of those around him. In their meeting, Alex’s voice was
loud, screaming even. Her thoughts gave her away long before her tears had.

“What was that about?” Kara asked.

“Nothing,” Alex lied, brushing off the question. “You know how protective J’onn has gotten over us since dad left.” It was a good cover because it was the truth.

“I guess you’re right.” Something still wasn’t sitting right with Kara about the whole situation. How calm Lillian had been the whole time. Her not pressing charges and wanting answers. Pult surviving whatever it is he went through. The fact that Alex was lying about something. How was Lillian even involved? She had so many questions because things weren’t adding up.

——

<Kara; 7:41pm> Did you make it back without getting lost?
<Katie; 8:53pm> I'm so sorry it slipped my mind telling you.
<Katie; 8:53pm> Yes I did. Was everything alright earlier?
<Kara; 8:54pm> Nothing I couldn't handle.
<Katie; 8:55pm> It was good timing you left when you did. I had a bit of an emergency myself not long after getting back.
<Kara; 8:56pm> Is everything alright?
<Katie; 8:59pm> It is now.
<Katie; 9:00pm> I'll see you Tuesday.
<Kara; 9:02pm> See ya Tuesday. Night Katie
<Katie; 9:15pm> Goodnight Kara

Chapter End Notes

Come holler at me over on tumblr at electriclimes let me know what you think (comments on here are of course welcome as well)!

Until next time.
Sorry for the late update. I’ve been super busy and didn’t have a lot of time to write. I will hopefully have the next chapter up by this time next week. Sorry in advance for any mistakes. Also, where my brain has decided to take this story, from this point on the canon compliance will become less and less as the story progresses. There are still some big themes and topics that will remain but how they’ll be handled/executed will be different. I just wanted to give that heads up in case anyone was curious.

Now sit back and let your mind roam free

Miles above the city Kara hovered, looking down at the city, to clear her mind. From this high up, things never really sounded the same. It was easier for her up here to tune out all of the noise. Of all of her heightened senses, hearing was by far the most sensitive. Alex and Eliza had helped to teach her methods to focus on one solitary sound when she was feeling overwhelmed, but it was harder than they made it seem. When the world and all its parts were shouting at you at the same time, how could anyone single out one sound. Just one amongst the sea of many.

Her thoughts were everywhere. She couldn’t focus because all she could hear was, well, everything. Supergirl’s first encounter with Lillian had left more questions than answers. The aliens being kidnapped made even less sense. Waiting to hear back from Cat with more details about her new position. But there was Katie. Holding the brunette in her arms had replayed over and over in her head. It was nearly impossible to focus on her homework Sunday with ideas of what could have happened had her phone not rang.

She wouldn’t see the woman for another day, so she had a fair amount of time to get herself together. For now, she was out on an early morning Supergirl patrol; that she snuck away from for a bit.

Kara let herself fall through the atmosphere to fly around a little more before she needed to head to class then work. Her stolen moment of solitude had run its course. She had to get back to reality.

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“Did you have a chance to think about things over the weekend,” Cat asked, walking into Kara’s new office space. The woman rarely made visits to anyone else’s workspace. Though she’d never admit it, she had a soft spot for her former intern. She wanted Kara to succeed but wasn’t about to enable her with any hand outs. Every opportunity she had offered the younger blonde was more than earned.

“I have, and I think we can make this work. I’m working on getting in contact with Supergirl to get that exclusive you were looking for. I’ve also thought out other ways we can utilize the space in the spread.”

Cat raised a shaped brow signaling Kara to continue.

“I think we can use the obvious angle of Supergirl being an alien. We can broaden our avenues of reporting on all things extraterrestrial when news on the superhero is slow. I’m sure our audience wants to know more about those that live amongst them and not just the negative press being forced down their throats.”

“I like the idea, but I want you expand upon that. Give me something that I don’t realize is educating me. We can’t be biased. Just because we’ll be working with Supergirl exclusively doesn’t mean we can’t report both sides of the issues aliens face.”
Kara straightened her back a little, “Yes, ma’am.”

“Now, as far as your team goes I’ve retasked a few interns and reporters to this. A few of them even requested to be moved onto this… team,” Cat explained, waving her hands around the mostly furnished office.

Kara was genuinely surprised. She knew the majority of CatCo’s staff by name, but she never knew how much in turn they enjoyed working with her. She had simply attributed her popularity to how often she brought in doughnuts. “Really?”

Cat didn’t answer at first, she just looked over the young woman. After a moment of silence, “This had already been established. Let’s not be redundant.” Kara nodded her head, repositioning her glasses in the process.

Without missing a beat, “When can I expect to meet Supergirl?”

Kara paced around the tables and half-cubicles trying to come up with a reasonable timeframe. Too soon and Cat might get suspicious. Too far out and she may question Kara’s capability to perform her job.

“I can try by the end of the week?”

“Are you asking me or telling me?”

“…telling…” Kara drawled out with a questioning lilt in her voice.

“Hmm…” Cat made for the door, “Nice haircut Ms. Danvers.”

“Thank you,” Kara shouted to the back of her boss.

Moments after Cat left her office, Kara desperately needed to make a call. “Winn, how are things looking with the new suit?”

“Oh, you know. They’re coming.”

Kara threw her free hand up in the air, “What does that even mean?”

“It means perfection takes time Danvers. My work cannot be rushed.”

“Well you have until Friday. Ms. Grant put me on the spot and I told her she could meet Supergirl by the end of the week.”

“You did what? Kara!”

“I know, I know. I panicked, but you’re the best superhero suit designer I know,” she said with a smile Winn couldn’t see with him being on the other end of the line. Winn was a sucker for compliments, so this was the best tactic to calm his nerves a bit.

“I know your tricks Danvers and it won’t work.”

“But you can do it?”

“Of course I can but you owe me.”

“Anything!”

“Remember that. I’ll see you tomorrow on campus?”

Kara hummed.

“See ya then.”

“You’re the best!”

If it weren’t for her new haircut, she could meet with Cat at any time. Hopefully, Winn would be able to pull off something by Friday.

“I’m liking the new office. Well, your first office,” James joked. He had visited Kara at CatCo a few times while she was still an intern. The interns have an allocated room that is the size of a utility closet. Something not meant for more than three people at once. Having an office that now took up most of the fourteenth floor was a definite improvement.

With a raised brow of challenge, “I don’t think that’s any way to speak to your new boss,” Kara shot back with a laugh.

James raised his hands, waving his portfolio around in surrender.

“Did you need me to go up with you?”

James had been considering that very question before walking into the building. He had never met Ms. Grant, but her reputation preceded her. Meeting such a powerful person was a bit intimidating.
There was always the possibility she could rip him a new one and harshly criticize his photos. He didn’t know what to expect during the meeting.

“No, I think I can manage. I need to do this by myself.”

Kara nodded, respecting his decision to do this alone. “Good luck. It won’t be as bad as your thinking.”

Over an hour later James came bursting back in the office, smile plastered on his face.

Looking at her watch, “I take it things went well,” said Kara.

“It was like you said. It wasn’t bad at all. She might have flirted with me,” he added with a confused expression on his face, “but I’m not sure. Anyway, she’s excited to see what I can bring to your section of the magazine. If I can prove myself there could be a permanent place for me here.”

“That’s good right?”

“We’ll see.”

James hadn’t put much thought into where he wanted his future to lead. College was part of the plan after his father all but told him that was what he was doing. Anything outside of that was always up in the air. A future being a photographer secretly sounded like the best career move possible to him.

Photography was more than just a hobby to James but he wasn’t ready to let everyone know that. The SuperFriends had always had positive remarks for the shots he showed them, but friends could be biased. Hearing Cat’s approval, a total stranger to his work, helped boost his confidence for what to pursue after graduation.

“Tell the girlfriend I said hello will you?”

“Of course; Lucy misses you. If It weren’t for her overpacked schedule she’d be able to see everyone more often.” And with that, James left CatCo headed to NCU’s campus for class.

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Kara took her same seat in the back of the lecture hall as last week. Katie wasn’t there yet but Kara had left her apartment ridiculously early that morning.

She was the only one in the room for nearly twenty minutes when another female student came in.

“Do you have the notes from last week,” the young woman asked.

Kara wasn’t expecting the question and was startled. The young woman was wrapped in a university branded hoodie, what looked to be yoga pants - if the yoga mat strapped around her was anything to go by, and sneakers. There was nothing threatening about the woman or her appearance but Kara’s mind was focused on what exactly she’d say to Katie after not talking since the night after their date, not-date.

“Oh—yea! Yea.”

The woman shuffled to slide by Kara and sat down beside here near the edge of the very back row. Kara rummaged through her backpack pulling out her designated Chem binder.

Because her notes had been incomplete, Kara had read over the covered sections from the lecture to fill in a few of her blanks. The PowerPoint Katie had made available for them was also beneficial.

“You can take a picture of it if you want. Our TA posted the PowerPoint on Blackboard too if you haven’t seen it.”

The young woman gave her thanks before snapping a few pictures of Kara’s notes. A few more students were beginning to file in and so had Lena.

As she unpacked her things, Lena kept sneaking glances up at the blonde. The conversation she was filling her time with was on the more animated side and for some reason, Lena felt a pang in her chest. She couldn’t place the feeling so she did her best to ignore it instead.

After getting set up, PowerPoint being projected on the screen, Lena took one last look at Kara at
what she would have considered the worst possible time. The raven-haired woman beside Kara had moved in closer, giggles and all. She looked to be whispering something in the blonde’s ear. There was that pang again.

Clearing her voice into the clip-on mic, Lena started the lecture, looking everywhere but the back row of the classroom.

Kara had waited again until the room was nearly empty before approaching her TA. “You know, I think I actually understand Dimensional Analysis now.”

Lena kept packing up her belongings. Kara stared at the woman, waiting for some sign the woman was going to respond but got nothing.

Crease forming between her brows, “Did I do something?” Kara asked at a complete loss for what was happening.

“You haven’t done anything Kara,” Lena lied, and she didn’t know why.

“Based on how you’re treating me I feel like I did.”

Wanting to desperately to change the subject, “Was there something I could do for you Kara,” she asked, a bit colder than she had intended.

“Wow, ok,” Kara said, shoving her hands in her sweatpants’ pockets. “Uhm, I’ll just talk to you later. I hope you get over whatever’s going on with you.” It was a bit passive-aggressive but the woman had hurt her feelings.

Kara had made it halfway up the stairs leading up to one of the exits in the room. Lena debated with herself on whether she should stop the woman from leaving or not; her behavior had been completely uncalled for. But being raised a Luthor, she was taught to never concede, even if you were wrong; especially if you were wrong. Instead, she watched the woman walk out the door and she never looked back.

Rubbing the back of her hand against her forehead, What did I just do?

——

It was first thing Wednesday morning and Kara was the first one in the office. She walked over to the table positioned in front of the windows partially overlooking the city. She took a seat on the table top and planned out how she was going to address her staff. It was a humorous thought, having a staff. Thinking about it worsened her anxiety for everyone’s arrival.

She had never had to do anything like this as Kara Danvers. Supergirl gave speeches every once in a while. Even gave orders to DEO agents in the field. So why would this be any different? To distract herself, Kara went about straightening up a few things around the bull pen and turning on all of their televisions to prepare for the day.

Once everyone made it in and got settled, Kara took up her place again on the table top. Nervously rubbing her hands together, “I know most of you spent the majority of Monday tying up the last few things from your old positions. Since I wasn’t in the office yesterday I just want to say welcome to everyone. I know a few of you requested the switch and I just want to say thank you. For everyone else I hope you’ll enjoying being part of this team and hopefully over time I’ll be able to earn your trust and respect. That last part goes for everyone,” she added with a chuckle.

Kara repositioned herself on the tabletop before continuing, “Cat has made mention of appointing someone to head up our team in my absence. I’m not sure I want you all reporting to someone who has no idea how we’re going to operate. I need someone that will serve as my backup. In the event any of you need something from me but you don’t feel you’ll get a fast enough response or need me to physically be there and I can’t, this second in charge can fill that gap for you.”

Looking around the room, “So, in the spirit of teamwork I want you all to pitch to me why you should be our... Let’s call this person our first mate,” Kara laughed and so did a few of her staff. “It’s going to take a while but I want us to find a groove that utilizes everyone’s strengths.”
“So what’ll be our first assignment? How are we dishing them out? It’s not like Supergirl is doing newsworthy work all day everyday,” one of the interns questioned.

“That’s a great question…” Kara paused for the intern to state their name.

“Siobhan,” the woman offered.

“That’s a great question Siobhan. I’m looking for our first assignment to be an exclusive with Supergirl.” As she had been expecting, Kara was being faced with several skeptical expressions. “I know, I know. She’s never spoken with anyone on record outside of a few government officials but I have a few connections I feel will pan out.”

One or two of the skeptical looks had morphed into ones of shock. “I want the exclusive to coincide with the launch of the column which is slated for week’s end—fingers crossed.”

“You honestly think you can pull this off?” Siobhan was not letting up.

Kara hopped off the table and straightened out the wrinkles in her clothing, “I’m full of surprises,” she said with a smirk, exuding confidence. She couldn’t look weak on her first day with her new team. “Now, I believe Cat had everyone pulling articles from the site we’ve published thus far on Supergirl?”

“The interns got most of it done already,” one of the reporters supplied.

“Ok, good. I want all the reporters to meet me in the conference room in twenty. Interns if you could, keep pulling those articles so we can relaunch them under the new section.” Before dismissing everyone, “I want to get this out of the way now so there’s no confusion later on. I will not tolerate any xenophobic behavior from any of you. If you feel this is something you can’t comply with I’m asking that you not return tomorrow. There won’t be any hard feelings, but I don’t want that kind of energy associated with this team nor this magazine.”

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“I asked you all in here so I could get a better idea of where your heads are.”

“In what way?” Jackson was an older gentleman who had been with CatCo since the early days. He mostly reported on sports but occasionally tried his hand reporting on the political front of National City.

“I know what I want for our section of the magazine but I want to know where you all see this going.”

“I think it’ll give us better exposure culturally. In today’s climate reporting on Supergirl opens doors to bigger issues,” Finley answered. She was your average middle-aged mother. Her focus had been in entertainment and a few of the parenting blurbs throughout the print magazine. She had been with Catco for nearly ten years after a career change.

“What about you Levi?” Levi was a bit of a mystery to Kara. He was a few years older than she was and mostly kept to himself. He attended several of the company’s events during her time as an intern but she rarely saw him actively interacting with their coworkers.

“Being that I was transferred from the business section I’m guessing I’ll be reporting on the money aspect of Supergirl. How she’s impacted National City positively, but also negatively.”

“What are the negatives?” Kara asked defensively.

“The destruction she causes. I know she’s here to help us, but to what end? Economically she sits in a rather neutral place only because Supergirl paraphernalia is all the rage.”

“I take it you’re not a big fan of hers then?”

“Quite the opposite. I’m a huge fan of Supergirl and what she does and the representation she provides. But I can’t ignore the bad she does just because I like her.”

Kara nodded her head slowly. She had never taken time to realize people could potentially see her the way Levi did. It stung quite a bit hearing it, but she needed to hear it; regardless of her liking it or not. “Well this gives us balance. I agreed with Ms. Grant that we can’t come off as only pro-Supergirl. Levi, you can keep us in line if we’re ever wearing rose-colored glasses on any of the issues we report on.”

Levi nodded. “What did you see happening for the team?”

“The same as all of you. I don’t want us to focus on just Supergirl. Like Finley said, Supergirl opens the door for us to report on so much more. And that’s exactly what I want. I want our team to
almost be self-sufficient. We’ll still have to go through Snapper before publication but I’ll mainly be the one dealing with him. I think with the group we have we can more than make this work.”

The last reporter, Sadé, just sat in silence. Kara had noticed but she didn’t want to mention it in front of everyone else. “I guess I’ll let you guys get back to your work. Any ideas you may already have, don’t be afraid to tell me.”

“There’s that fundraiser—gala—thing Thursday night LutherCorp is hosting. I may be able to snag passes to get a few quotes from the Luthors and other high ranking families of the city,” Finley pitched.

“Sure, why not. Let me know if I can help. — Hey, Sadé can you hold up a sec,” Kara rushed to say before the woman could exit the conference room.

Sadé’s demeanor was defensive and a little closed off. There had been minimal contact between the two in the past but it was no reason for the behavior. “Is everything alright?”

Sadé looked over Kara, silently questioning if she were serious. Kara waited, beckoning the woman to answer her question. With a scoff, “It’s just some personal stuff.”

“So it has to do with your reassignment?” Kara could hear the skip in the woman’s heartbeat indicating she may have been lying.

Sadé crossed her slender arms in front of her chest. “It has everything to do with my reassignment. I was one of the best—“

“And you still are. Why else would Ms. Grant choose you?”

“Politically, what do you expect from Supergirl? Right now, she’s better served with the rest of them,” she said, referring to the other reporters.

“Politically, what don’t you see Supergirl offering you? Not only is she a woman, she’s an alien. Sure, she would be classified as being Caucasian if she were an Earthling, but she’s not. So by most accounts she’s a minority. Her experience won’t be the same as someone of color or even an alien that doesn’t pass as well as human as she does - I recognize that - but there’s still a danger she faces of similar origin. Fear of the unknown. Fear of someone who isn’t like you.”

“I still don’t see what I can bring to this team.”

“There have been several pushes recently to change laws and policies to include aliens or just coming up with new ones altogether in regards to them. You have several politicians who want to ship aliens back to their home planets but they’re here seeking refuge. The political climate is ripe for someone with your experience and voice. I don’t know your stance on all things alien but I can assume you’re at least ok with them being here. Your obvious aversion to this post has to do your career, not aliens. Am I right?”

“Well… yea.”

“Give it some time and we can revisit moving you back. But I have a feeling this is the inspiration you’ve been looking for.”

“How’d you know about that?”

“If you ever want to talk, know I’m here.”

“In that case, there’s a Congressional election coming up. One of the candidates has outwardly taken a stance against aliens and them having fair treatment in the legal system.”

“Is this something you want to write about?”

“I was planning something similar before the move, so yea. I think it’ll give our audience a new level of awareness on these topics they weren’t fully getting from the rest of the magazine. We just reported on candidates, but not always in-depth on their stances.”

“I told you this could work out,” Kara smiled supportively.

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“Show me whatcha got,” Kara requested excitedly.
“If it weren’t for it being the second week of classes I wouldn’t have been able to finish this so fast.”

“Yea, yea. Quit the yapping and start the showing!”

Winn was arguably more excited to reveal his latest creation than Kara was to see her new suit. They were both bubbling balls of energy that just seemed to work so well together; no wonder they were best friends.

“I took all of your requests and suggestions over the past year, coupled with your latest style change, into consideration to make this. And I have to say, it may be my best work to date.”

Winn had designed about three complete suits for Kara since she had officially come out as Supergirl. Each with a different purpose in mind. This suit would hopefully combine the highlights of all of them.

“Close your eyes!” Kara rolled her eyes but obliged. Winn ran out the training room Kara had been in at the DEO to grab the manikin wearing his latest creation.

Standing beside the manakin, hands behind his back, “What’d’ya think?”

Kara’s mouth fell open. This was definitely his best work to date. The new suit carried the same blue and red bulletproof, self-healing, material through the upper body of the suit, but it now continued down into a pair of form fitting pants as opposed to the skirt she was originally in.

Winn had ditched the golden waistband in favor of golden accents throughout the torso and arms of the suit. Replacing the waistband was a kind of utility belt. Her boots had lost their heel in favor of a rubberized bottom for better traction while running but keeping the weight minimal. They also came up to about her knees like her other pair. Her best friend even thought to add in darker blue shin and knee guards that looked to be detachable.

And the cape. Kara had almost missed one of the coolest parts. “You didn’t,” Kara shouted in disbelief.

With a cheeky grin, “I think being dragged through the city once by your cape is enough, so now,” Winn reached for the left medallion attaching the cape to her suit, “when you press here,” he gestured towards the center of the fixture, “your cape will come off, but only when you press it. Neat huh?”

“Uh, ya! And the hood!”

“I thought you’d like that,” Winn laughed. “It tucks under the actual cape but I think it looks pretty cool just being out like that.” Kara had to agree. While the hood wasn’t always necessary, it did look pretty cool coupled with her suit.

Her family’s crest was still proudly on display in the same place as all her other suits, but there was something important missing. “Winn I love it, but what about my head.”

Pulling his right hand from behind his back, “I didn’t forget,” Winn smiled.

Kara took the headpiece from his hand, a tad underwhelmed. “It’s not quite I was I was expecting.”

The band only covered from just under her hairline to her eyebrows and only covered the front of her head from ear-to-ear. It dipped down in the center imaginably between her brows and even had a few spots it spiked down along the edges above where her temples would be positioned. There was no way she could get away with her haircut in this.

To Kara, it looked like a superhero’s headband only meant to be aesthetically pleasing. It did however have a little weight to it which was confusing. She just figured it was because of the material Winn chose to design it with.

“Put it on.” Winn instructed and Kara did just that. She slid it onto her head, positioning it how Winn directed her to. “Now tap one of the sides directly above your temple.”

Kara reached up with her right hand hesitantly. On her suit she had to tap the medallion to detach her cape, she hoped to Rao this didn’t do something similar.

As she pressed the pads of her fingers to the cool metal resting on her face, the band began to morph into a new shape. The band had expanded and wrapped around her head to form a helmet.

Kara gasped, not knowing what exactly was happening on her head. Winn pushed the blonde to the other side of the training room so she could see herself in the mirror on the wall. The front of her
face was exposed but the almost navy blue of her suit and the band before its change was now the prominent color of her helmet. The golden outlining of the band was now a continuation of the theme of gold accenting her suit. It was here and there, but just enough break up all the blue now on her head. Even though the golden crest at the center on her forehead was doing a pretty good job of that.

“Now this is what I’m talking about!”

Winn tapped the wing of her helmet that resembled a flat radio antenna of some sort, “You’ll never have to worry about comms again. I’ve rigged it so there’s a two-way speaker inside. And if you’re even in need of a flashlight your family’s crest lights up.”

“Winn...” Kara started, voice barely above a whisper. She was at a loss for words which was something that didn’t too often. “You really are the best.”

“Awh,” Winn said, slightly teasing the blonde. “What are friends for right?”

With a serious expression, “You’re more like family Winn.”

Kara held her best friend in too tight an embrace before leaving the room. If she were being completely honest about the situation, Winn had done far more than he had probably bargained for. To maintain some form of sanity, and to minimize her levels of guilt, Kara let herself believe Winn had long started designing her a new suit. Because there was no way he had time enough over the past week to do all that.

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Later that night, Kara’s pocket vibrated not once or twice but four times. Katie had profusely apologized for her behavior earlier on in the day and asked to make it up with drinks.

Of course, Kara agreed and they made plans for Friday night; Lena had a prior family obligation for Kara's originally offered Thursday night.


Thursday morning Kara made a point to schedule a sit down with her boss. After Winn came through with the new suit there was no reason to hold off introducing Ms. Grant to her alter ego.

Kara received an email back stating to meet the woman in her office during her lunch hour. To fill her spare time Kara informed her staff that Supergirl would be visiting the office by the end of the week; whenever Cat was ready to host the heroine.

Everyone seemed to generally be excited to meet the woman not knowing that they already knew her on a far more personal level. It was one of the byproducts Kara enjoyed about being Supergirl. It was hard juggling being two separate beings - human and Kryptonian - to most others she encountered, but it had always been worth it.

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“That was fast,” Cat noted.

“Should it have been harder for me to do,” Kara nervously asked. Cat was an eerily perceptive woman, so keeping such a massive secret from her had continued to be on the complicated side.

“I would like think so, but who I am?”

Kara straightened out the nonexistent wrinkles in her button down before speaking again.

“Supergirl told me to mention whenever your schedule would allow she would be more than happy to sit down and have that interview. But she has a few terms.”

“Of course she does,” Cat replied, motioning for Kara to list them.

“One, she will only do the interview with you. Two, if she’s to stick exclusively with CatCo moving forward she wants everyone on the same page. If the working relationship between her and CatCo becomes exploitative she’s walking.”

“I can agree to those terms. So will you let Supergirl know she can stop by my office at any time; my door is always open.”
Kara noticed there was something omniscient in the way Cat said that, but tried not to focus on it. “Does today work?”

Cat’s eyes shot open wide, “Today,” she asked flustered, nearly choking on the word. The woman hopped out of her chair and rounded her desk, “Does this look like an outfit to meet Supergirl in?” Kara went to speak but was cut off by the now visibly erratic woman, “No, don’t answer that.”

Walking over to the closet off to the side in her office, “I think I have something a little more presentable in here somewhere.” Then it hit her. Head rolling backwards in exasperation, “Oh no.” “I'll need you to be a little more articulate Ms. Danvers,” Cat stated, not turning around. She was looking for a particular dress she kept in her office for specific purposes. In this case it was to impress the heroine.

“Not you too?”

“What ever are you talking about Kara.” Cat stopped her search for the dress to hear the young woman out.

“Whenever Supergirl is in a room people tend to forget what exactly they were there for. It’s like they lose the ability to think straight.” Kara had never noticed it herself. Since her first appearance, her alter ego’s popularity had grown exponentially. Alex made sure to mention every time any human — male, female, or otherwise — made sure to make their presence known in her company. The number of times she found random phone numbers written on and/or stuck to her person were laughable. She couldn’t understand why she had that effect on people.

“I mean, have you seen that woman? And her arms? You wouldn’t kick her out of bed for eating crackers now would you,” Cat rhetorically asked, fawning over the superhero.

Kara had never seen the older woman like this; it was a breathe of fresh air. Cat was no different from the everyday people she encountered that reacted in a similar fashion at the thought of being around her alter ego. She just hoped the woman was better at hiding it once she came back clad as Supergirl.

Backpedaling out of the CEO’s office, “I’m gonna go let Supergirl know you’ll be ready for her in thirty,” Kara made sure to mention. Nearly at the elevator Kara heard her boss shouting instructions at her assistant, Eve Teschmacher, in preparation for the pending interview and she giggled at how out of character the woman seemed.

Chapter End Notes

I had several sources of inspiration for the new suit:
The suit was kind of a mix between the Stealth and Earth's Champion Suits by plastic-pipes, and of course foleypdx’s design
https://www.deviantart.com/plastic-pipes/art/Supergirl-Alternate-Outfits-683418231
https://foleypdx.tumblr.com/post/169937148472/wanted-to-reimagine-the-super-suit-for

For the helmet think Thor's helmet in the Ragnarok movie; it's pretty similar.
The headband version was done completely on a whim. After seeing a piece from plastic-pipes on deviantart I just felt the need to include it lol. I even thought a little about Wonder Woman's headband while writing it.

I don't take credit for the work put in by the artists but I will credit my brain for weirdly
meshing the different bits and pieces together into one lol. If my artistic talent in concept art/character design was better I'd draw up a version myself; we'll see, but probably not.

On a completely separate note, I hope y'all enjoyed the chapter and feel free to leave a comment or kudo; it's all appreciated! Or not, that's totally cool too. To everyone in The States, have a great 4th of July (even if you're not celebrating the day for what it is and just hanging out w/ friends/family) and be safe. For everyone else, I hope you have a great week!

Until next time.
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the late update; I think it's late. Rushing to post this (close) to on time I didn't have a chance to do a final read through to double-check for any mistakes. As soon as I get the chance I'll read back through it.

I hope you're enjoying this so far. The storyline is starting to progress now that the framework has mostly been laid out. We'll have several view changes but they'll mainly be from Kara and Lena.

Now sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

There was no reason to be nervous, but Kara felt her heart rate slowly increasing. This was her first official interview and of course she had to make it with the Queen of All Media. She had never met Cat as Supergirl which only added to her anxiety. Then she remembered how flustered her boss was at just the thought of meeting Supergirl; it was helping to calm her down a bit.

Kara decided to wait up on the roof while she waited for Cat to get set up for their interview. Looking out at the city helped to clear her mind and with CatCo located in the center of downtown National City there was no shortage of activity to gaze upon.

Minutes later her phone rang. “Hey Alex, what’s going on?”

“I just wanted to check in to see how you were doing.”

“Well, I have my interview with Cat in a few minutes.”

“Why didn’t you tell me sooner? I would have helped you prepare.”

“I’ll be alright Alex,” Kara said with a laugh. “It’s just Cat. Besides, if anything goes wrong she knows I’ll walk. Without this interview, my promotion is pretty useless.” Then there was silence for a minute or two.

“I think it’s time I’m a little more open to the people of National City.”

“If you think this is something you should do then of course I support you. J’onn and I are here if you need anything.”

Things were rough between Alex and her new sister in the beginning. Now, she was Kara’s biggest supporter – outside of Eliza. She would go to the ends of the universe to protect her sister regardless how invincible the blonde was underneath a yellow sun.

“Thanks Alex. I’ll let you know how it goes.”

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Cat was pacing the length of her office waiting on Supergirl to make an appearance. Kara had told her thirty minutes and she had rushed to ready herself and one of the smaller studios downstairs. The
interview wouldn’t be live which would afford them both a chance to relax into the setting.

The CEO was reading over her list of rushed questions when she heard a knock on her balcony door. “Come in,” she said at normal volume knowing the superhero could hear her just fine.

Cat was further in the office near the door and Kara made her way towards the older woman. “Ms. Grant, it’s nice to finally meet you,” she said with an outstretched hand and a warm smile.

Blushing, “Likewise,” Cat managed to get out. Motioning towards her own head, “What’s this about,” Cat asked, referring to Kara’s new headband.

“Just trying something new,” Kara half-lied. “So, where are we doing this?”

Cat choked on her spit and Kara smirked, and not to herself. She hadn’t meant for the question to come off so suggestive but decided to go along with it instead of running from it. “The interview,” she added because clarification may very well have been necessary.

“I’ve had a space set up downstairs.”

“Lead the way,” Kara motioned.

Kara made sure to smile and speak to most of the people they passed on the way to one of the basement studios. Maybe because these people were technically at work, or the fact that their boss was with her, but the CatCo employees were pretty tame compared to how she was used to being treated.

Cat pointed out the room they would be occupying and let the young woman enter first. She wanted the set to be simple with the main focus being on Supergirl. This wasn’t her first interview with anyone of status but it was her first interview with an alien superhero.

Positioned in front of a backdrop of National City’s skyline, Cat had the crew position director’s chairs catty cornered the screen. There was a round wooden pub table that sat about counter height between the chairs. There were also a few succulent plants situated in the middle of the cups of water meant for the two women. Simple.

Kara took a seat on the right side of the table and waited for Cat to join her. There were a few people walking around the space repositioning the lights and setting them up with their lavalier microphones.

“Is there anything I should know before we get started.”

Cat looked up from her note sheet having added a few more questions to her list on the elevator, “Just be yourself Supergirl. The people of National City already love you.”

“We’re ready when you are Ms. Grant,” a young man called out after situating himself out of the camera’s frame.

Clearing her throat and sitting up almost bone straight, “Ready Supergirl?”

“As ready as I guess I can be,” Kara said with a small smile.

Cat started off the interview with her usual greeting before directing her attention towards Kara. “Supergirl it’s so nice to finally sit down with you after what? Nearly two years since your debut?”

Kara chuckled, knowing Cat took her silence as a personal assault. “Something like that, yea. And
it’s nice to be here.”

“I want to start by asking, why now?”

“Why now do I want to do this?” Cat nodded her answer. “I don’t really have a god answer for that. I just want to help the city in any way I can, but I also want to live my life. The attention can be a bit overwhelming,” she added with a shrug.

“And that’s why you’ve kept your distance?”

“Part of the reason, yes. I feel the people of National City have put me on a pedestal and that’s a lot of pressure. I may not be of Earth, but I still go through a lot of what humans do.”

“I would say it’s a well-deserved pedestal.”

“I’m not entirely disagreeing. But to better answer your question to my timing, I want to use my status here in the city to raise alien awareness. I want to help usher in a more accepting age for those of us that live among you. Beings that are simply seeking refuge from their home worlds.”

“You’re one of those beings are you not?”

Nodding, “I would say so, though my circumstances are a bit different,” she mentioned without outright stating her home planet was destroyed — that there was nothing left to go back to. “I’m not Supergirl full-time. I’m sure you’ve figured that out by now,” Kara said, giggling.

“So what does Supergirl do when she’s not in heroine mode?”

Kara opened her mouth but shut it back with a bright smile, “Nice try Ms. Grant,” Kara said because she almost opened up a little too much about her life as Kara Danvers. This was about Kara Zor-El.

“A woman can try,” Cat smiled in return. “Then how about this, I’m sure the viewers have noticed by now your suit has changed.”

“The people I work with are always looking for ways to better protect me out in the field. There were a few changes to my old suit but this is a full overhaul.”

“Care to show us?” the woman requested.

Kara pushed away from the table and stood facing the camera. She tapped her headband for it to change form and pulled her hood from under the cape. “These are just a few of the changes—oh, and how could I forget the pants. By far my favorite part,” she gushed, sticking one leg out at time as if showing off a new pair of shoes.

“Impressive,” Cat said, drinking in the sight of the other woman. That would definitely have to be edited out later.

Kara morphed her helmet back into headband form and patiently waited for Cat’s next question. “I wouldn’t be who I am if I didn’t ask you your stance of the latest disappearances of aliens here in National City.”

Kara unintentionally prickled at the question and shifted in her seat. “I stand on the side where more needs to be done to better protect the aliens that live here. It’s unacceptable.” Cat hummed in agreement as she was taking a drink from her mug. “I know our local cops and even federal agents are doing the best they can, but we can conclude at this point these are hate crimes; plain and simple.”
“News sources all over the city have stated the aliens that have been abducted were listed on the Alien Registry. Is there any truth to that?”

“Their sources will have to speak to that. It’s not my place.”

“I can respect that. Is there anything that you’d like to say in regard to the situation?”

“I’m working to help solve these crimes and I’m hoping we can make more progress soon. I’m at just as much a risk as those that have been abducted, if not more so for being in the public eye. Whoever is behind this will be caught and dealt with accordingly.”

Much of the interview went on in far lighter a tone but she was glad Ms. Grant had asked her about the alien disappearances. She wasn’t able to discuss just how little information all law enforcement agencies actually had, but there was no need for the public to know that.

Cat asked her a few questions about her home planet and how she was enjoying National City in comparison. She went as far as asking if there was anyone special in the Girl of Steel’s life, to which Kara responded with a drink from her cup of water and a slight blush of her cheeks.

Cat made sure to make it known she wouldn’t wait quite as long for a follow-up interview because I’m not done with you Supergirl. Kara agreed that she wouldn’t be a stranger and that she surprisingly enjoyed herself.

——

As expected, Kara hadn’t said a word to her during her class time. What had surprised her was the blonde agreeing to drinks as fast as she had. Then her brain ruined that thought as quickly as it came. Just because Kara agreed to meet with her that didn’t mean she had forgiven her. Kara may never forgive her once she finds out that she’s a Luthor and has continued to lie about her identity since their first encounter, Lena thought to herself.

//

Lena enjoyed doing these fundraisers but attending the galas her mother felt the need to attach to them was the part she despised. Despite how she felt about them she was always the perfect Luthor.

Lex was to make the big announcement that he’d be taking over the family business and shifting the company’s focus to the future. Lena hadn’t known what to think when Lillian suggested she pick the charity for the evening’s event. It had to be a trick or a test of some kind, but it wasn’t. Lena capitalized on this opportunity to support an organization that she had been a part of for years; the local Children’s Hospital.

Because of her contributions over the years, the hospital was able to start a program for family’s that couldn’t afford the treatments and equipment their children needed. As a result, she had single-handedly helped hundreds of families and their sick children.

“You look stunning,” Lex declared, leaning against Lena’s doorframe in the Luthor mansion.

“Stop it you.”

“Am I no longer allowed to compliment my sister?,” Lex guffawed.
With a playful pout, “No.”

“Good thing you’re not the boss of me,” he noted, sticking out his tongue.

Lena laughed at her brother’s childish behavior. Spinning around from her floor length mirror Lena looked over her brother’s suit. “You still haven’t learned how to tie a tie,” she observed as she pulled the material from around his neck.

“Why? That’s what I have you for,” he teased.

Playfully shoving at her brother’s shoulder, “You know, I should make you do this yourself.”

“But mother would be so disappointed,” Lex said with mock offense.

Lena gave her brother a side-eye then dropped his tie to the floor. “Oh, what a shame,” she snickered.

Lex bent down and picked up his tie, outstretching his hand back to his sister with a pleading smile. “Come on Lee. She’s getting better. She even let you pick the charity for my event.”

“I guess you have a point.” As she did up his tie Lena realized by her mother allowing her to choose the charity she was allowing her to share the spotlight with her golden boy. This was new territory as this had never happened before.

Anything Lex was affiliated with, Lillian made sure to exclude Lena in some way, shape, or form. If Lena had to be a part of it, her role was small – negligible even.

“How’s your research coming by the way,” Lex asked as he waited for Lena to finish dressing.

“It’s coming,” she began, shoulder’s sagging. “A few of the subjects haven’t been responding well to the treatments but we’ve learned a ton in the process.”

“I’m sure you’ll figure it out,” he stated supportively.

“Mostly. I figure: start with a joke, talk about my time at the company, what I look to do as the new CEO, and of course mention I’m the new CEO.”

Lena hummed.

“Oh—how could I forget to talk about your work with the Children’s Hospital? Maybe I’ll move to that after the opening joke.”

“Lex, you don’t have to do that,” she said with a shy grin. “Tonight is about you.”

Taking a step back for a better view of his sister’s face, Lex gently held Lena’s chin between his thumb and forefinger forcing her to look at him. “Lee… You deserve this. You deserve so much more than this and I never want you to doubt that. I’m proud to call you my sister.”

Tears welled up in Lena’s eyes. Lex had always done the best he could to reassure Lena she deserved to be happy. He did everything he could to ensure she felt loved and wanted given how strained her relationship was with Lillian. It not once felt like a burden to him with how supportive Lena was of him in turn. He could never understand how his younger sister was so open and loving despite the things she had been through in her life thus far.

“How’s your research coming by the way,” Lex asked as he waited for Lena to finish dressing.

“It’s coming,” she began, shoulder’s sagging. “A few of the subjects haven’t been responding well to the treatments but we’ve learned a ton in the process.”

“I’m sure you’ll figure it out,” he stated supportively.
“You know Lex, sometimes you give me far too much credit.”

“And you don’t give yourself enough.” Lex stood up from the bench at the foot of Lena’s bed when she held out her necklace for him to help her put it on.

//

To her surprise, Lex had called Lena up on the stage to talk a little about her work with the hospital they were all donating money towards. It was a bit nerve wracking with all the camera flashes, but she reasoned it was for a good cause.

Her entire life she had made sure to stay out of the headlines and avoided photographers at every chance she could. For that very reason there were limited photos of her in circulation. The most recent photo of her being used was taken just before her MIT graduation. She had been out with the only two friends she had made in her entire life, Jack Spheer and Samantha Arias, in celebration. Because her guard was down, and she was comfortable with her present company, Lena hadn’t noticed the paparazzi camped out in the bushes outside the restaurant they were having dinner in.

After her speech, Lillian wrapped her in a warm hug, rubbing her back when she returned to their table. “You did great sweetheart.”

Nothing about her mother lately was making sense. Usually the woman had some critique to offer whenever she did something like this. Every move she ever made was scrutinized even when she performed at her absolute best.

Taking a few gulps from her glass, “I know how hard speaking in front of crowds can be for you,” she heard Lillian say. Lena figured it was probably best to go along with whatever was happening, so she gave her mother a half smile. A few glasses of champagne later, Lena was able to slow her racing heart and forget about Lillian’s strange behavior.

Lex’s speech had gone better than he was expecting it to. Unexpectedly, Lex opened the floor for questions since there were several reporters in attendance. Per the usual, the reporters weren’t holding back with their line of questioning but there were a few things that stood out to Lena about one of Lex’s answers.

He continually mentioned ‘we’ while looking over in her direction. He was sure to choose his words wisely answering the question about the Luthor reputation and moving forward from one of CatCo’s attendees. The Luthor family hasn’t had the best track record in the public’s eye. Unfortunately, there’s little we can directly do to change those opinions, but just know not all Luthors are the same. Get to know us individually before lumping us in with the whole. And again, he looked towards his sister.

——

Kara’s day was jam packed from the very beginning. She was forced awake to respond to a building fire in the industrial district around five a.m. Then there was the official launch of The Super Corner; that’s what some of staff started calling their section of the magazine. She was being bombarded for statements and information by some of the local news outlets. Juggling that and being called out to a bank robbery was enough but it wasn’t everything. When things started to calm down she retreated to her office for a breather.
She was tired and her focus was being pulled in too many directions. Looking at the time, Kara almost forgot she agreed to drinks with Katie later that night. It was nearly six and they were supposed to meet at some bar the brunette mentioned around eight. She was tempted to reschedule with Katie but really wanted the chance to wind down after the day she was having.

Checking her emails, Kara heard a knock on her door. “Come in.”

Friday’s were casual at CatCo and Finley was definitely dressed for the occasion. Not having to be out in the field today, the older woman was comfortable in a pair of jeans and a ‘My Kid is an Honor Roll Student at National City Elementary!’ shirt; not dissimilar to the bumper stickers Kara would occasionally see.

Finley took the opportunity to knock out the bulk of her article to enjoy some time with her kids over the weekend. The Luthors’ PR team requested that anything being published that had to do with the announcement be postponed til Monday, so she had ample time.

“I wanted to get your opinion on this so far,” Finley requested, handing over her draft. “Did you hear that Lex Luthor has assumed the role of CEO at LuthorCorp?” Kara shook her head. She hadn’t had any extra time to think let alone catch up on the latest headlines.

“I went a different route with this article. The event was clearly to announce Lillian’s successor but Lex seemed to share the spotlight with his sister.”

Kara looked up from the woman’s draft, “Lena, right?”

“Yea. She doesn’t make very many appearances. Rumor has it she’s the bastard child of the family, so they tuck her away unless absolutely necessary.”

“That’s a bit harsh don’t you think?”

“It’s what people are saying,” she replied with a shrug. “They’re an interesting family.” Finley pointed down at her article, shifting the focus of their conversation, “I was thinking of positioning a photo of the brother and sister at the top of the article, maybe one of just Lex in the middle somewhere, then one of the three Luthors at the end.”

So far from what Kara had read that seemed as though it would flow. The beginning of Finley’s article talked about Lena’s work with the Children’s Hospital and how she had kicked off the event; sure to mention how much money they had raised. The middle was all about Lex and his background. A little speculation of how well the eldest Luthor child would perform after his father’s passing and mother stepping down. Which lead into a bit of fluff about the family. The photos would fit in perfectly with the article’s flow and Kara was certain CatCo’s staff photographers would have more than enough shots for her to choose from.

“I think that should be fine. Just send me your final by Sunday so I can send it over to Snapper for a final review.”

Finley stood up to leave Kara’s office, “For your first week, you didn’t do a bad job. You should go out and celebrate.”

Kara slouched back in her seat, head hanging to the side, “It’s been a week that’s for sure. I sort of have a date tonight, does that count,” Kara questioned with a giggle.

Finley smirked, “Of course it does! Now get out of here, there’s nothing else to do today.”

Kara nodded and began to log out of her computer. It had been a long day and she needed to head
home to get ready for tonight.

It was half past seven and Kara was just about to head out of her front door when her Supergirl phone rang. With a groan, Kara looked down at her Caller ID – it was Alex.

Kara answered the call but before she could say a word Alex was already speaking. “Kara, I’m sorry. I know you requested the night off but you need to come down to the ship yard. Now.”

“I’m on my way.”

Changing into her new Supersuit Kara was sure to send a message off to Katie asking to reschedule before she touched down in the ship yard.

//

Lena was ridiculously early to the bar. She was so nervous for what Kara would potentially say to her she was already three drinks in. Lena had requested a booth off to the side, out of plain sight, for a bit of privacy. She didn’t want anyone to recognize her, not tonight. But maybe if she had been outed to Kara for who she really was things would be a bit easier. The lying could end.

A little after seven-thirty Lena’s phone lit up on the table’s surface. She had been focused on one of the televisions that was tuned to an auto auction that was taking place. She wasn’t much of a sports fan so there wasn’t anything else for her to pass the time with.

Picking up her phone to check the time, Lena saw she had a text from Kara. Unlocking her phone, she hoped Kara was just saying she was on her way. Upon opening the message she saw it was the exact opposite.

If she was being honest, she did deserve being stood up. She couldn’t help but hope everything was alright.

< Lena; 7:42pm > I understand. I hope everything is alright.

Usually she’d get a text back almost immediately, but she didn’t this time. By the time she got home, undressed, and found something on Netflix to watch she still hadn’t heard from the woman.

//

Kara landed at the ship yard near the shipping containers. White and blue lights were bouncing off of every surface in the vicinity. She immediately spotted her sister doling out orders to other DEO agents and even some of NCPDs officers. Wasting no more time, Kara made her way inside of the police tape to the crime scene.

J’onn was the first to notice her arrival, “Supergirl,” he called out.

Hands on her hips, “J’onn, what’s going on,” she asked with a worried expression.

“NCPD received a call from one of the yard’s employees earlier today because of a smell coming from that container there,” J’onn said, pointing toward a burnt orange shipping container with blue, faded, lettering.

“The first responding officer noticed the container was locked and requested it be opened. The staff refused after realizing it wasn’t listed on any of their logs.”

“And that’s when other calls were made I’m guessing.”
J’onn nodded. “We arrived shortly after. Agents assessed the situation and deemed it safe to proceed with opening the crate.” J’onn began to lead Kara slowly over towards the container warranting their presence. “Once we opened the container,” J’onn slowly began again, “this was inside.”

Kara peered around the open door of the container disgusted by what she saw inside. There looked to be three or four aliens strewn over the length of the container mauled to varying degrees. Kara had to step back, gagging at the sight and smell.

Alex came up behind her, “You alright?”

Kara coughing so hard she nearly threw up. “Who would do something like this?”

“That’s what we’re going to find out. J’onn and I have already requested the bodies be sent back to the DEO for further investigation. You don’t have to be involved any more than you already are, but we needed you to know what’s going on.”

Kara just nodded, afraid that she would hurl if she tried to talk.

“I want you to be careful ok?” Alex waited for Kara’s confirmation but received silence. “Kara—Supergirl, I’m serious,” Alex shouted nearly slipping up.

“Alex, I’m Supergirl.”

Alex threw her hands up in exasperation before walking away. “We’ll talk about this later,” Alex said under her breathe as she walked away, knowing the blonde could easily hear her.

Kara needed to get away from the scene so she flew off to help canvas the area. The fresh air did wonders lessening her queasiness but did nothing to erase the images now permanently ingrained in her mind.

As if the universe knew she needed a distraction, Kara felt her phone vibrating in her utility belt.

“Eliza, can I—“

“Kara honey, I tried calling your sister but she would pick up.”

“She’s heading up a crime scene with J’onn. Is everything ok?”

“It’s your father. I know what you’re going to say: I should have called sooner, but I didn’t want to worry you girls.”

Kara immediately stopped flying, landing atop the nearest building. “Mom,” Kara said hesitantly. “What do you mean ‘It’s Jeremiah’?”

“It’s been weeks and I haven’t seen nor heard from him.”

Without skipping a beat, “Alex and I will be on our way as soon as we wrap up here.”

“Just be careful sweetie. I love you.”

Chapter End Notes

Thanks to @Mlod’s comment I was reminded that I left something out of my notes. For
those of you curious, one of the secrets will be outed in the next few chapters. Will it be Kara's being an alien or Lena's secret/lie of her actual identity? I guess we'll have to wait to see :) Let me know what you think! Hopefully I'll have the next chapter up this time next week.

Comments, critiques, suggestions are always welcome. Until next time!
Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

So... there's a thing that happens. Y'all will just have to tell me what you think :D. All mistakes are my own and I apologize in advance for any you may come across.

Sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The spotlights and shipping crates grew larger in her vision as she returned to the scene. Kara was hundreds of feet away and the smell began to creep back into her nostrils.

Landing near it all, face scrunched in revulsion, “Agent Danvers, may I speak with you a moment” Kara requested, doing her best to fight through her senses being bombarded by so many unwelcome stimuli.

Kara’s mind had been all over the place in a matter of minutes. Eliza’s phone call was completely unexpected. She personally hadn’t spoken with her adoptive father in months, but she didn’t realize others hadn’t either.

Alex was wrapping up overseeing the clean-up of the crime scene and the transferal of the shipping container back to the DEO. Letting the agents know she’d be right back, she made her way over to the heroine. “You don’t look so good,” Alex observed.

“I’m fine,” Kara reassured, brushing off the woman’s concern. Kara glanced around to be sure no one was within earshot. Voice barely above a whisper, “It’s Jeremiah, Alex.”

Alex stiffened, eyes flicking between those of the woman in front her. “What do you mean ‘its dad’,” Alex probed, voice coming out in a strangled whisper.

Kara shuffled the two of them further away from all the commotion minimizing the risk of being overheard. “Eliza called me because she couldn’t reach you. She hasn’t seen or heard from him in weeks.”

Alex had a look Kara couldn’t place. If she had to guess she would have described it as conflicted, cautious maybe. Either way, it wasn’t an expression she often saw in the redhead’s features. “Let me finish up here and we can go. I’m sure J’onn won’t have a problem with it; it’s mom.”

Kara wordlessly stood, hands on her hips, as she watched the older woman mentally chew over something before walking away. Flying to her place, Kara packed a duffle bag of clothes and necessities. She also packed her backpack full of everything she needed for her assignments due in the next few days. Before packing up her laptop she sent an email to Cat explaining that she had a family emergency and would be out of the office for the start of the week, possibly the entire week, but she would do as much as she could remotely.

She sent a similar email to her team while debating if she should talk to Katie. Even if she couldn’t tell the dark-haired woman everything, it would be nice to hear her voice at the moment. But calling her could send the wrong message. She hadn’t forgiven Katie for her behavior Tuesday, but she also
hadn’t given her a chance to explain.

Before she could talk herself out of calling, Kara scrolled through her contacts until she reached Katie’s name. The line rang three times before someone picked up.

“Hello?”

“Katie? It’s Kara.” Kara was going for calm and collected but her voice betrayed that. She sounded frazzled but disconnected.

“What’s going on?”

There was a brief silence before she answered. “Not exactly.” Before the woman on the other end could interrupt her, Kara kept talking. “I wanted to call you to let you know I didn’t blow you off tonight. I really did have an emergency. It’s a-a family thing,” she added as way of explanation.

“I’m sorry to hear that. Is there anything I can do?” Kara could feel the sincerity in the woman’s words.

With a sigh, “I don’t even know what to do.”

“You’re a smart woman. I’m sure you’ll figure it out.”

Kara’s phone beeped. “Hey, I have to go. My sister is calling. If it’s alright with you could I call you back later tonight? It was good to hear your voice.”

“Of course.”

Kara quickly said her goodbyes before clicking over. “Hey, Alex. I’m packed and ready to go when you are.”

“I called mom. She said not to rush to the house; she’s still at the hospital – night shift. I bought us train tickets.”

“Do you want to meet at my place or yours?” she asked, pulling on her olive green pullover hoodie.

“My house. I’ll drive us to the train station.”
Kara crossed her arms across her chest. Crinkle forming between her brows, “I thought we told each other everything?”

“We do, just not everything…”

“Isn’t that what ‘everything’ means Alex?”

The red-haired woman swiped her hand through the air, “Semantics.” Alex leaned forward on the table stationed between them, “It has to do with dad.”

Kara nodded, figuring that Alex’s recent behavior wasn’t for nothing.

“A while back, dad came to me asking for help with some blood and DNA samples; a second opinion of sorts. But he wouldn’t tell me what they were or who they were from. Given my educational background, coupled with him knowing said expertise helped to get my position at the DEO, I put two and two together. The samples had to be alien. Why else would he ask me?”

Whatever Kara had been expecting Alex to say about Jeremiah it was not that. Why did Jeremiah have samples from aliens, Kara asked herself.

“I didn’t see any harm in helping him with whatever he was looking for. I’m still not even sure what that was. Then the disappearances started. I had a bad feeling that dad might be involved somehow but I didn’t want to believe it.”

“He’s not the man you think he is,” Kara mumbled under her breathe, knowing firsthand her adoptive father was a man of many faces.

Alex’s head tilted to the side, confusion obvious in her expression. She wanted to ask what her sister meant but held that information to question later.

“Dad never took the samples back and I had to be sure he wasn’t potentially involved. So… I compared the DNA samples against those we had in the DEO database.”

“What did you find out?”

Alex sat back in her seat, defeat tiptoeing into her expression. “Each sample he gave me matched DNA markers for the types of aliens that had been reported missing.”

“Say it Alex.”

Huffing, “I think dad is involved with something and he may be in way over his. I’m not sure how he’s connected to all this but there’s no doubt in my mind now that he is.”

Kara released a deep exhale. She hadn’t been holding her breathe but she felt as though she had had the wind knocked out of her as she watched yet another person break her sister’s heart a little more than it already was. Jeremiah meant everything to Alex; he was her hero. Whether he, or someone else, was tarnishing that image the older woman held dear, Kara would fight to get answers.

“Why didn’t you tell me sooner? Or J’onn?” Kara tried to be as delicate as possible in her questioning, not wanting to upset Alex further.

“I didn’t know how Kara. What was I supposed to say? ‘Hey, I think our father might be abducting aliens in his spare time’? Yea,” Alex said with a derisive laugh, “That would have gone over really well.”
“You can’t beat yourself up over this. Like you said, you didn’t know, and he didn’t willingly offer up any information either.”

Scoffing, “You would say that. Ms. Perfect,” Alex mimed, mocking her sister. “You’ve been sheltered your entire time on this planet. If you did anything wrong, it was somehow my fault. Whatever Kara wanted, Kara got. When you said jump, everyone asked how high…”

Kara looked as though she had been slapped across the face. Suddenly the conversation turned into an assault on Kara’s entire existence in the older woman’s life.

“I couldn’t do anything even the slightest bit out of line,” Alex explained, pinching her fingers close together to demonstrate her point. “Because God forbid Kara is watching the very things I do. We can’t have sweet little Kara doing anything to make her stand out…” As though she were talking to herself, “The one time I don’t listen to my gut – just hoping that I’m assuming the worst — I could’ve been right,” she went on to say. “We could’ve brought dad in for questioning and maybe we wouldn’t be on this train grasping at straws.”

Kara had had enough. “And that’s my fault? I never asked for any of this. You think I enjoy being looked at as Perfect Patty? It was hard on me too Alex… ‘Don’t do this Kara’. ‘You have to watch your strength Kara’. ‘People can’t know you’re an alien Kara’. ‘Don’t use your powers Kara’. I think I understand better than anyone else how you feel. And don’t get me started on Jeremiah,” she added with a scowl.

It wasn’t very often she spoke negatively of anyone, but there was only so much one could endure before it all spilled over.

The rest of the train ride was filled with an uncomfortable silence. Alex had let her disdain towards herself – for things she couldn’t control – seep out into her interactions with one of the only people that was just trying to help. It was a bad habit she knew she had to fix, but when she was stressed, that thought tended to be pushed aside.

Two hours later Kara had put a good dent in her homework and had only looked back at her sister a handful of times to visually check on her. She could hear Alex’s heartbeat and the short breathes that told her the woman may have been sleeping, but she wanted visual confirmation of that information.

The train jerked into the station as it slowed to a stop. Kara shook Alex awake and grabbed their bags. As she stretched out, “Kara, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to rip into you like that. I just thought what was going on with dad was an isolated incident. You did nothing wrong and I was completely out of line,” Alex apologized, feeling like an ass for attacking Kara the way she did.

Kara’s shoulders sagged as she spun around to look back at the older Danvers. “I’m not going to say ‘it’s fine’ because it wasn’t, but I do accept your apology. I know you’re beating yourself up and I’m not going to make you feel worse about an already crappy situation. Let’s just talk to mom before we jump to any conclusions, alright?”

Lips pulled into a tight line, Alex nodded. “I can do that.”

The two women caught a cab to their childhood home and waited for their mother to return from her shift at the hospital. It was nearly one in the morning and neither of them was the slightest bit tired.

Alex camped out on the sofa in the living room and flipped through the stations until she landed on one of the crime shows she enjoyed watching. Kara sent a text to Katie to see if she was still awake then made her way up to her old bedroom.
She had permanently moved to National City after her sophomore year of college. Contemplating the idea of going public and becoming Supergirl, Kara figured having a bit of privacy wouldn’t hurt. Living in a dorm with four other females, one of which she shared a room with, didn’t bode well with keeping her secret.

Being back in her old room actually felt strange. The memories attached to the space simply served as a reminder for how much she had grown as a woman since moving out. That shielded and repressed child ceased to exist in her current life. Being out of that house helped her to grow and flourish in ways she had only imagined while growing up.

Eliza and Alex had always been supportive of her life choices, but Jeremiah was consistently the hardest on her. Their relationship had been on the brink of collapse since her teenage years. Reflecting on the memory…

Her parents hadn’t realized she was in the house. It was a breezy spring afternoon so they thought she was out with Alex and her friends. Kara sat in her bay window and listened in on their conversation.

“What do you mean Jeremiah? She’s your daughter too. You knew what you were getting into when Clark brought her here.”

“I only have one daughter and her name is Alexandra.”

“Not this again,” Eliza said, exasperatedly exhaling.

“Yes, this again Eliza. You agreed to welcoming an alien into our home. Not me.”

“So, what then? You want us to just abandon her? Clark already did that and he’s her only remaining family.”

Kara heard the man stand up from where he was sitting. With a frustrated growl, “You’ve backed me into a corner, you know that?”

Eliza let her contempt shine through in more than just her words. “You will raise that little like she’s your own do you hear me? Kara has done absolutely nothing to you. I would think of all people you would have a little more sympathy for her given how your father treated you.”

Jeremiah opened his mouth to speak but was silenced by his wife rising up from her seat. “That’s the end of this conversation. You should be ashamed of yourself Jeremiah Danvers.” Eliza left the room without uttering another word.

Kara flinched every time she heard a random object being hurled around the room Jeremiah now occupied alone.

Eliza and Jeremiah had no idea she overheard the entire exchange, even still to this day. That very conversation was why she kept her distance from Jeremiah. If he didn’t want her around she didn’t want him to be a part of her life. She had to laugh to herself at the pride he would display whenever Kara won an award or received one accolade or another; such the hypocrite.

Knowing what she did about Jeremiah and how he felt about her, Kara wasn’t sure of the man’s innocence in this particular situation. If he had his reservations of bringing an alien into his home all
those years ago, how did he feel towards aliens that were strangers? Kara didn’t have the heart to tell her sister, but she was probably well overdue in informing Eliza she’s known this whole time how Jeremiah felt about her being part of their family.

——

Lena woke up a little earlier than usual. It was Saturday morning, but despite this fact she couldn’t sleep in. She had decided at the last minute to head back to the Luthor mansion instead of her apartment in the city. Wrapping herself in her robe and putting on a pair of brown fuzzy slippers, the young woman made her way downstairs to make herself a cup of coffee to start her day.

“Good morning,” Lena heard a woman’s voice call out before entering the kitchen.

Lena did a double-take upon seeing her mother still dressed in her navy button down pajama shirt and matching pants; hair and makeup not yet done either. Normally, Lena only saw her mother all done, even if it was just for breakfast or the weekend. The woman taking an unusually casual approach to her appearance was a tad shocking.

Lillian sat perched in the breakfast nook reading the day’s newspaper. Steaming cup of coffee in hand, “There’s a fresh pot,” she mentioned, knowing full well what her daughter was after.

The brunette hummed, smile creeping onto her face as she shuffled over to the extravagant coffee maker her mother felt they needed to have. Even with her multiple engineering degrees she struggled with operating the machine.

“You’re up awfully early,” the woman noted.

“I wanted to sleep in, but my body had other plans,” Lena replied between cooling blows to her coffee.

Lillian motioned for Lena to join her at the table. Because of Lena’s papers and notebooks piled on the opposite side of the wrap around bench, Lena had no choice but to sit directly beside her mother.

“Your phone was still on the island when I came down this morning, so I put it on the charger in your office. You had a message from last night from a Kara Danvers.”

Lena schooled her features, not wanting to give too much away to her possibly nosey mother. There was no good way to describe who Kara was to her nor was she ready to share that part of her life with the woman.

Lillian passed over the crossword along with a pencil and pen, remembering her daughter’s old morning routine. It had been longer than she’d care to admit since she last attempted a crossword puzzle, but Lena wasn’t about to let Lillian in on that.

“How was Lena supposed to respond to that? It felt like a trap, so she continued working on the crossword. The puzzle wasn’t as big, nor as challenging as Sunday’s would be, but it was something.
After a beat of unintentionally awkward silence, “How are things down at the labs?”

“I’m surprised you’re asking me that.”

Lillian folded up the Business section of the paper and turned slightly to have Lena a little better in her sight. “Why wouldn’t I ask?”

“Considering you were just held hostage there are far more important things to discuss.”

“Oh, you worry too much. I’m fine.”

Lena never looked up from the crossword. Since the matriarch announced she’d be resigning as CEO, Lena had pieced together that her mother was lying to her. “I’m not a child anymore mother. I can handle the truth.”

Lillian mulled over the idea for a second, weighing her options. “You want the truth?”

“That would be a welcomed change of pace.”

Lillian scowled at her daughter, but knew the statement was well deserved. Placing a hand on top of the crossword puzzle currently occupying the young woman’s attention, she waited until she had Lena’s undivided attention. “The truth is that I didn’t want you and your brother to worry. I wasn’t harmed, only a few bruises — which you’ve seen.”

“And,” Lena requested, patiently waiting for the rest of the story.

Placing her hands in her lap, Lillian recalled the events of that day. “I was finishing up a few forms that needed to be signed by Lex and me when I heard screams in the hallway. I reached to unlock my gun safe in the desk but was interrupted when the office door flung open. There was this man, who isn’t human; he’s a Llarans I believe he said. Anyway, the Llarans and his goons rolled me away from my desk and roped me to the chair. He even went as far as to gag me.”

Lena was intently listening to the woman’s story.

“Supergirl arrived and diffused the situation, but there were a few things mentioned that make very little sense to me.” Lillian paused to see if the young woman would ask a question or offer up any information.

“The Llarans said that he was seeking revenge and that I would pay.”

“Pay for what?” Lena inquired, not following where the story was headed.

“He believes that I have something to do with what happened to him. I’ve never seen that being before a day in my life.”

“I don’t understand. Are you trying to ask me something mother?” Based on past experiences, Lena felt her mother was venturing to accuse of her something. The woman didn’t know much about her research, just the basics, and Lena had attempted to keep her as far away from it as possible.

“Why would an alien I’ve never met think I had anything to do with him being tortured, held captive, and experimented on?”

Lena let out a short exhale. Outside of the obvious — their familial reputation — she couldn’t come up with any reason the man would think that. “I don’t know what you’re expecting me to say.”

“You wanted honesty from me, and I’d like the same in return.”
“I’m being completely forthcoming. I don’t have the slightest clue of what that Llarans is referring to.” With a self-deprecating laugh, “But of course I’m the first one you blame.” Lena slid off the bench, turning around only to grab her cup of coffee.

“Lena Kieran Luthor, don’t you dare take another step.”

Lena spun around so fast she nearly spilled her coffee. “Or what mother?” Lena stormed out of the room without further conversation.

She had just sat down in one of the studies in the east wing of the mansion when the door slowly creaked open.

“Can I come in,” Lillian requested, voice soft and wary.

“It’s your house,” Lena replied, sounding like a disgruntled teenager.

Lillian sat down on the sofa opposite Lena, placing a tray of breakfast pastries on the table between them. “I didn’t mean to upset you. That wasn’t my intention. Nor was my aim to blame you for any of this. I’m still learning how to communicate with you.”

Lena looked into her mother’s eyes but quickly looked away, not wanting to seem vulnerable. “You could’ve fooled me.”

Lillian softly chuckled to herself as she placed a blueberry muffin on a napkin. Sliding it across the coffee table, “I know I haven’t always been the best mother to you, I see that now. I also know my reasoning behind my actions was a weak excuse I clung to. I’m trying Lena, and I’m going to mess up. I only ask you give me the chance I know I don’t deserve,” she added pleadingly.

Someone had to have abducted her mother and replaced her with a clone, Lena thought. There was no way the callous and detached woman she grew to know her adoptive/step mother to be after all these years was actually a woman with a caring and sensitive heart. It was implausible. There had to be a catch, or this was some long con her mother was pulling.

Tears brimming in her eyes, Lena did her best to fight against the prickling sensation she could feel fighting to take hold. “Why now when I needed you so many times before?”

It was a question Lillian knew would eventually come up. “In the spirit of honesty…” the matriarch began, “I’m sure you’ve long figured out that I’ve fallen ill with what has yet to be determined. That much is true. I haven’t informed your brother just yet and I’d like to keep it that way.”

The waterworks were in full effect. She may not have always liked the woman sitting in front of her, but at the end of the day she was the only mother she could actively recall. “Then why are you telling me?”

“Because, I’ve done the worst by you and there’s so much I need to make up for. I’ve wanted to work on our relationship long before this all started but never knew how. Whenever we talk we argue and it eats at me every time we do.”

“How long have you known,” Lena asked, wiping her eyes and snot with the sleeve of her robe. “That your health was declining, I mean.”

“I want to say the past six months or so.”

“You’ve known this whole time and never said,” Lena commented more than questioned, surprisingly offended.
“It was my secret to share and I wasn’t ready to tell you two. You’ve already lost your father and birth mother.”

Lena slouched back into the chair, pulling one of the decorative pillows into her lap.

“I’ve found a doctor I want to oversee my treatment and eventual diagnosis, but she’s not local. Several of the business trips,” she said while using gestured air quotes, “I’ve taken lately have been me going to doctor’s appointments and getting various scans and things done.”

“Why am I not surprised you’ve been doing that alone as well?”

“Some things never change,” Lillian offered with a half-smile and they both laughed.

Lillian moved to sit beside her sniveling daughter. Wrapping the young woman in her arms, Lillian did her best to clean up Lena’s face and console her the best she knew how.

Their relationship hadn’t always been so toxic. It had been so long neither of them could pinpoint the exact moment it all began to take a turn. Even if she wouldn’t survive whatever her diagnosis might be, Lillian swore to herself she would do her best to earn back her daughters trust and love. Outside of fighting her illness, Lillian would be spending the bulk of her time learning the woman Lena had grown to become without her guidance.

Overwhelmed by the warmth and care her mother was exhibiting, Lena asked to be excused before she could breakdown any further. She had been taught that crying was a sign of weakness. Something that should only been done in private if it had to happen. She was usually better with controlling her emotions, but it was all too much to handle.

Closing the door behind her, Lena promised herself she wouldn’t get attached to this version of her mother. There was no way she could allow herself to dredge up adolescent wishes. Wanting more than anything to make Lillian proud and to know what it felt like being showered with the woman’s love. If she let herself hope their relationship was evolving all for it not to be the case, it would ruin her completely. It was something she actively worked to avoid after Lillian made her feelings regarding Lena abundantly clear in her youth for the first time.

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Alex was asleep on the sofa - still in last night's clothes - and Kara had bundled up in the blankets on her old bed - stripping down to her underwear. Eventually the need for sleep washed over them both, no longer able to wait for Eliza to return home. Kara’s keen sense of smell jolted her awake with the scent of cinnamon pancakes and bacon in the air. How her mother was still able to cook after working a full night shift, on top of wondering where her husband could be, was beyond her.

Having brushed her teeth and washed her face, settling on a comfortable pair of dark-washed denim jeans and an old holey t-shirt, Kara floated down to the entryway of the kitchen. She watched as Eliza, still in her hospital scrubs, glided around the room with familiarity. It was a sight she had missed.

“Are you going to just stand there or are you going to get in here and give me hug,” Eliza asked with a spirited voice and a huge grin.

Gasping, “How did you know I was there? I didn’t even make any noise!”
Opening her arms for a hug, “A mother always knows sweetheart.”

Kara hopped over to the woman, wrapping her in the tightest hug she knew her mother could handle. “I missed you,” Kara whispered near the woman’s ear.

Running her hands through the sides of the young blonde’s hair, “And what is this about,” Eliza asked with a smile on her face.

Tensing up, Kara ducked her head into her adoptive mother's neck. "Do you like it," she asked anxiously.

Pulling her daughter's head back to face her, "Honey, I love it," the elder Danvers declared, studying the young woman's reaction. “I know you’re hungry so go ahead and eat. I ate at the hospital so be sure to leave some for your sister. There’s scrambled eggs in the little pan on the counter.”

The tension rolled from Kara's body now distracted by the mention of food. She used her superspeed to make her plate and wash all the dishes. Sitting down at the island Kara began woofing down her food.

Eliza peaked out into the hallway to check that Alex was still asleep. Looking back at her youngest child, “How’s she doing? Is she taking care of herself?”

“You know you should probably just ask her,” Kara said with a mouth full of food. Eliza gave her a reprimanding glare, so Kara kept talking. “She’s alright. The breakup with Maggie was pretty rough. Now whatever this is with Jeremiah… It’s all hitting her pretty hard I think. She wound up taking some of that frustration out on me last night on the train.”

Eliza sighed. She wished more than anything that her daughter would talk to her more about what she was going through but recognized she hadn’t always made herself available to do so. At times when she did, she didn’t have the best track record for making the space feel safe from judgment or persecution.

“Come wake me up when your sister gets up will you?”

“Yea,” Kara confirmed. Eliza walked over to kiss her daughter on the forehead, welcoming her home once again. She grabbed a glass of water and made her way up the stairs to her bedroom.

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Kara sat on the porch swing staring out at the ocean. The sounds of crashing waves and squawking seagulls filled her ears. It was a pleasant change from the noises of downtown National City. The honking horns, shouting pedestrians, the ever so random tire squeal; Kara could go on forever, but it was probably better she didn’t.

All in all, things were peaceful. Despite whatever was going to happen once the Danvers women sat down to talk, this moment alone was calming. Kara wasn’t worried about hiding her true identity. She wasn’t concerned with school, though that wouldn’t last very long. She wasn’t focusing on the many things she couldn’t control at Catco.

On the contrary, she paid attention to herself and how she was feeling. Checking in and making sure she was ok with herself and her circumstances. J’onn had mentioned to her in the past that she didn’t spend enough time alone. It was no wonder she constantly felt at war with herself.

‘How can you expect to be at peace with yourself when you don’t truly know yourself?’ J’onn had asked in his usual philosophical manner. For a Martian who couldn’t read Kryptonian minds, he
certainly knew what she was thinking quite often.

Since that conversation Kara had tried to make more time to work on herself. She spent time exploring various avenues of her own interests and expressions. The hardest thing she struggled with was balancing being a Danvers and a Zor-El simultaneously.

Kara’s phone began to vibrate in her lap, interrupting her train of thought. She answered the phone, not even pulling her eyes away from the waves dancing at the shoreline.

“Hello?”

“Hey Kara.”

“Oh, hey Katie,” she said in a rather somber tone.

“Is now a bad time? I just wanted to check in to see how you were doing. I didn’t see your message until a few minutes ago.”

Kara didn’t know how she wanted to answer at first. “I’m not the only one that sounds off,” she went with in order to deflect the question.

“It’s, uhm, complicated.”

“I can do complicated. In fact, I think that’s become my default setting.” Kara had to laugh at the truth hidden in her words.

Lena snickered, “You’re not the only one. But really, if you don’t want to talk about it that’s ok. We can talk about something else.”

Softly exhaling, “Something else sounds good.”

“Ok, well....” There was silence on the line while Katie came up with something to talk about. “Tuesday will be my last day teaching your class. Dr. Williamson should be back Monday, but he wants a few transitional days to catch up.”

“Just in time for the first test,” Kara joked.

“Hopefully you all do well. If not, it’ll make me look bad.”

“I don’t think you could ever look bad,” Kara said, letting the words slip from her lips.

Kara could hear the smile in Katie’s voice, “Look who’s talking.”

Did she just flirt back? Kara thought to herself. The blonde's cheeks had started to warm; she was definitely blushing.

“Well,” Kara drawled out bashfully. Not being able to handle the possibility that Katie was in fact flirting with her, she shifted the topic of discussion back. “What are you going to do once Dr. Williamson comes back?”

“Fully refocusing my attention back to my research. Splitting my time has caused some oversights that may have been avoidable. I’ll be playing catch up for a while.”

“Hopefully you’ll still have time for a date or two. You never know what could happen,” Kara suggested, grinning the entire time.
“I wonder with whom,” Lena coyly answered, knowing full well what Kara was hinting at.

“Oh, you know. There’s this blonde that’s had her eye on you for a little while. She’s tall, super cool new haircut. Did I mention she knows all the best restaurants In National City? Oh, and she’s a total nerd.”

Playing along, “She sounds like a girl I’d like to get to know,” Lena hinted. “Do you have her number by chance?”

Kara laughed at the joke seeing how she had set herself up for that one. “Haha, very funny.”

Kara heard a faint knocking on the other side of the phone. “Kara listen, I have to go but before I do I wanted to apologize for my behavior the other day. I’m not entirely sure what got into me, but I wanted you to know that I understand that my behavior was a bit jarring.”

“Apology accepted.”

“Call me later, yea?”

“Sure thing.”

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It was a little after eleven when Alex finally woke up. Kara knew her sister wasn’t one to sleep in, not since joining the DEO, so whatever was going on inside her head must really be bothering her. Alex perched herself on the countertop drinking a glass of apple juice.

“Morning sleepyhead. Why didn’t you go up to your room last night?”

“One, the couch is comfortable so why move? Two, that bed isn’t nearly as comfortable as the one in my apartment. And three, mind your own business.”

“Alright, geez.”

“Where’s mom?”

“Upstairs,” Kara motioned. “She asked me to wake her when you woke up.”

“I’m surprised you let me sleep that long.”

“You looked like you needed it. Plus, Eliza could use a little shut eye as well. We should probably let her sleep a little longer.” Kara turned around and looked at her adoptive mother’s schedule pinned to the fridge. It was something the woman started doing when they took in Kara, so the young girl always knew where Eliza was.

“It looks like she’s off the next two days, so we won’t be throwing off her sleep schedule.”

Alex and Kara let Eliza sleep until twelve-thirty. The sisters helped each other prepare a small lunch of tossed salad and grilled cheese. Eliza laughed to herself upon seeing her plate on the dining room table. She knew exactly who was responsible for each thing on her plate.

Kara hated just about every green food there was and would never suggest eating a salad. Which left Alex being responsible for the healthy side item, knowing her mother would prefer to have one.

“Thank you girls, but you didn’t have to cook me anything.”
Kara and Alex both looked in Eliza’s direction, smiling compassionately.

“I’ll whip us up something decent for dinner tonight. I’ll even try to stop by that diner you both love so much to pick up a couple of pies.”

Kara grinned from ear-to-ear, excited to have a proper home cooked meal again. The closest she got to a good, old-fashioned, meal was when Winn ‘accidentally’ cooked more food than he could ever possibly consume alone. Living so far from home had its downsides.

The Danvers women sat at the dining room table and played catch up on some of the things they had missed over the past few months. Things that were too lengthy or just too important to discuss over the phone. Sure enough, the topic of Jeremiah came up before any of them were ready.

Though they wouldn’t admit it, they all had their own separate reasons for wanting to avoid the conversation. It wouldn’t be an easy one by any means, but it was a conversation that needed to be had. All parties had pieces of what was possibly the same puzzle, but the information needed to be spoken about out loud.

“Since we’re on the subject... Mom, do you want to tell us what’s going on,” Alex cautiously asked her mother.

Eliza fiddled with the glass of water set between her hands. She didn’t know how to say what needed to be said, so she just started talking, hoping she could find a logical order of progression.

“Your father had mentioned a while back that he was consulting on this project based in National City. In the beginning he was gone once or twice a week; usually only for a day. I started to notice his behavior changing around week three. He was aloof, didn’t sleep very often. He wasn’t his usual self.”

Eliza cleared her throat, “I started to think I was doing something wrong. That maybe he was...” she was ashamed to finish that sentence. Alex wanted to jump in and console the older woman, but she also wanted to defend the man she always believed her father to be.

“One night I came home, and your father was in the office; door opened just a crack. I could hear him shouting but I couldn’t make out what for. Whatever it was, he was furious.” Taking a sip of water, she continued. “Logically, I assumed it had to do with this project he was assisting with. A few days later he told me he was leaving again, and I haven’t seen him since. My texts go unanswered and his phone goes straight to voicemail.”

“Did you contact the police?”

Eliza looked at her eldest daughter, “I didn’t want to involve the police just yet because I have no clue what your father has gotten himself into. I could just be overreacting and not remembering him mentioning how long he’d be gone for.”

Kara and Alex gave each other a quick, knowing glance.

Alex went on to tell her mother the same things she had informed Kara of during their train ride back to Midvale. Though it comforted no one, Alex’s and Eliza’s timelines overlapped with one another, it was simply helpful.

Eliza had figured it was something that may have to do with aliens, but she didn’t say that in front of her girls. She wanted to maintain the image she thought they both already shared of their father.

“Did he leave anything behind in the office,” Kara wondered.
“Not that I could tell but I also had no idea what I was looking for.”

“Aleix and I can take a look.” After looking at both of the other women, Kara went on. “I know you may not want to, but I think we should talk to J’onn. If Jeremiah really is innocent that means someone meant him harm. In that case, they could come after you next. I’d feel better if there was someone around to protect you.”

“I can handle myself just find Kara. There’s no need in you worrying about that.”

Kara’s features stiffened. She needed to convince the other blonde that this was the best, and safest, option until they could figure out more of what was going on.

Eliza was unrelenting. She refused to move forward with any kind of protection because there was no urgent need. If someone was after her they had weeks to do something.

Not getting her way, Kara pulled Alex up from the table so they could look over their parent’s shared study.

Finding research articles and notes about alien DNA and genetics was to be expected considering the line of work both Danvers parents primarily found themselves pursuing. At this rate, it would be like finding a specific piece of hay in a haystack.

Whatever relevant material they could have used, Jeremiah must have taken with him or hidden somewhere in the room. After an hour of intense searching the two women gave up. The trip to Midvale wasn’t completely for not. Everyone was able to find out more about what was possibly going on with Jeremiah, but they were still no closer to figuring it out; things still didn’t make sense.

What came up as a red flag to both Kara and Alex was the fact that Jeremiah made frequent trips out to the city his daughters lived in but never reached out. Not once. It was certainly a bad sign.

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It was Sunday afternoon and Kara found she had a free moment to go over some of her emails. Waking up to an unexpected ‘good morning’ text from Katie had put her in a fantastic mood. They had text back and forth for a little while, still avoiding the bigger things going on in their separate lives. Katie had mentioned she’d be working all day, which was how Kara found herself lounging on the couch beside Eliza, both on their laptops.

She went through all her junk mail first, making sure nothing had ended up there by accident. Switching back to her Inbox she read over names and subject lines to plan out her method of response. She saw Finley had sent over a copy of her finished article before it was to be published. She also saw she missed an email from Cat and another she was CC’d in with all department heads and supervisors. Finley’s article took precedence since it was being put on the site first thing tomorrow morning. With the work having already been looked over by at least one copy editor Kara was just looking over the piece as a whole composition.

The internet in the house was on the laggy side so all she was immediately able to see was the text of the article. Near the bottom of the page a few ads had begun to load in the margins. Scrolling slightly back up the page Kara checked to see if the photos had loaded up. As they had discussed there was a photo, mid-article, of the newest CEO of LuthorCorp. It was a shot from the event, one with him smiling and presumably waving to the crowd as he took the stage. Clad in a navy blue suit with an
all white button down underneath the suit jacket – no tie – Lex looked as though he belonged on the stage.

Scrolling back to find her place Kara had spotted the top of what was to be the photo of the three remaining Luthors. She first saw the top of Lex’s bald head. Then a familiar dark-haired woman appeared next to him, arm around his waist in a half hug with the eldest Luthor on his other side in the same position.

“One of your articles,” Eliza asked unknowingly.

Kara had been so absorbed in the picture she hadn’t heard the other woman speaking to her. “Did you say something?”

Eliza peered over at daughter, eyebrows pinched in concern. “Are you alright? You look like you’ve seen a ghost.” She followed the younger woman’s line of sight down to the photo displayed in the center of her computer’s screen. “It’s been years since I’ve seen a photo with all of the Luthors together.”

Kara raised a shaky hand, “Then who’s that,” she questioned while pointing towards the younger woman in the photo.

Eliza’s brows furrowed even more. “That’s Lena, Lena Luthor,” she clarified with a confused tone. “Why?”

“N-no reason,” Kara lied.

The same woman who’s name she had come to learn was Katie, was in fact a Luthor. And her name wasn’t even Katie, it was Lena. The familial resemblance was minimal but that was to be expected with it being a blended family. This whole time Kat-Lena had been lying to her. Though she had secrets of her own, to Kara, this felt like a completely different kind of lie.

Kara’s problem with Lena wasn’t over who she was, it was that Lena had lied to her about it and was continuing to do so. She found a way to excuse lying during their first meeting. In this day and age, you never knew who you would meet so it was better to err on the side of caution. What she couldn’t excuse was lying everyday since meeting again during her first chemistry lecture.

Of all the ways to discover the woman she was growing to like was keeping a massive secret, this wasn’t even on her list of possible options; nor was finding this out in general if she were being honest with herself.

Chapter End Notes

Sweet, sweet, angst to come lol. I hope everyone liked the latest chapter. What do you guys think of Lillian? And the way Kara found out about Lena? Questions, comments, constructive criticism is always welcomed and appreciated. Your interactions/comments/suggestions help me to become a better writer. I just want to give everyone the best story I can offer. Also, if any of you are dyslexic (like me) I actually write this out first in word using a font called OpenDyslexic and it helps me a ton. If anyone would like for me to make the story available utilizing that font let me know and I’ll figure out how to get it to you. Just thought I should mention it.
Until next time!
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

This chapter is mostly from Lena's POV.

Chapter Notes

I just want to say thanks so much for all of the feedback so far, it really means a lot! I'm really enjoying writing this fic, I just wish I had more time to crank out chapters faster. I hope everyone is enjoying the story thus far. Things are starting to get a bit more hectic the closer we get to Lena being confronted for lying. This chapter is shorter than the others have been, but not by much (I don't think). I went back and forth wondering if I should end it where I did or extending it out. You guys should totally let me know what you think.

Now, sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

There was a faint knock on her bedroom door, “Kara, listen, I have to go but before I do I wanted to apologize for my behavior the other day. I’m not entirely sure what got into me, but I wanted you to know that I understand that my behavior was a bit jarring,” Lena explained, still not having worked out what exactly bothered her about seeing the short-haired blonde. Just because she wasn’t able to process her own emotions, it didn’t give her reason to take it out on the other woman.

“Apology accepted.”

“Call me later, yea?”

“Sure thing.”

After hanging up the phone, “Come in,” Lena shouted. She hoped if there really was a God, he wouldn’t punish her with another conversation with her mother. She needed time – space – to piece together how she wanted to deal with Lillian suddenly wanting to work on their relationship. Not to mention, the woman was sick and working towards solidifying a diagnosis.

Thankfully it wasn’t her mother, it was Lex. “I should have known you’d be hiding up here in your room,” Lex joked with a sound that landed between being a laugh and a scoff. Lena stood up from her bed, heading to her walk-in closet for something to wear. She had left a few pieces of her wardrobe in her old room for situations similar to this: not wanting, or too tired, to go back to her own apartment; better safe than sorry.

With a sigh of relief, “I thought you were mother,” Lena admitted without looking toward her
brother.

“Are you two at it again?”

“I wish,” Lena called out from her closet. Thankfully Lena had the foresight to leave herself one pair of jeans because the remainder of the clothing was all too business oriented, and not the causal kind. She made a mental note to bring the jeans back when she got a chance.

Slipping into the jeans and the simplest blouse in her closet, Lena walked back into her room to see Lex sprawled out atop the bed she was about to make up. He had his dark grey blazer tossed over the footboard, his dark brown brogue monkstrap boots, unstrapped.

Sitting up on his elbows, “So you want to be fighting with her? I’m confused.” Lex had grown used to the weekly discussions with his sister about Lillian’s latest parenting fail. It was sort of a staple in their relationship. Lena had drunkenly confessed in the past to envying Lex’s relationship with Lillian. He had never brought it up again but kept the declaration tucked away, since Lena may not have actually wanted him to know.

Lena opened her mouth before closing it again. She was at a loss for words to explain the thoughts and feelings swirling around inside her head. Huffing, Lena threw her hands up in defeat letting them fall back down at her sides. Lex sat in silence, giving Lena the room to vent.

“It’s—it’s just after all this time you know?”

Lex nodded but had no idea where the young woman was going with the statement.

Lena ran her hands through her hair then began pacing back and forth at the foot of her bed. “For years that woman has hated me—or at least I thought she did,” she quickly added, meeting Lex’s gaze.

Back to pacing, “Our mother and maternal are two things I would never say are synonymous. But she brought me food and held me.” Lena raised her hands expectantly, waiting for Lex to catch up with her train of thought.

“Oh, I can speak now,” Lex realized.

Rolling her eyes, “Yes, you idiot,” Lena confirmed, lips quirked into a small smile.

“Well,” Lex began slowly. “I’ve noticed she has been trying a lot more when it comes to you Lena. She’s even been asking me about things you enjoy.”

Lena skidded to a halt, mouth agape, eyes wide with disbelief. “And this isn’t the slightest bit peculiar to you? Not even a little bit?”

Lex fell back onto his sister’s bed, mindlessly rubbing the wrinkles from his light blue button down. Searching for the best way to answer the question, “Given the circumstances, and the built history, yes, it is a bit odd,” Lex managed to come up with. “But, given what I expect normal families to do I’d say it’s pretty typical. A mother trying to take care of her daughter, even if it is long overdue.”

“Way to be diplomatic. I thought you were on my side?” If she had something to throw at his head, she would have thrown it without a second thought.

Sidestepping the question because they both knew he was always on her side, “Was there anything else?”
Lex had already been told the bare bones version of what happened to Lillian days before—same as Lena. For reasons unknown to her, Lena was hesitant to inform the man of what she had only recently learned.

On one hand, bringing it up could provide backstory to their conversation, Lena reckoned. But on the other hand, it could open up an entirely different can of worms. Lillian made it clear she wasn’t ready for Lex to know about the current state of her health. The brunette held out hope the former would work to her favor and she wouldn’t have to blatantly lie to yet another person. There was already a guilt beginning to consume her for the lie she was still upholding with Kara—no need in adding more on top of that.

“Mother told me more about what happened to her.” Lex sat straight up on the bed. “Apparently, the alien that held her hostage thinks that she has something to do with what happened to him.”

“And what did happen him,” Lex asked, hoping the young woman would provide further explanation. Maybe she was hearing things, or jumping to conclusions, but something in Lex’s tone made her feel he knew more than he was letting on.

Lena shrugged. “I’m not sure exactly. All mother said was that he knew she was involved in some way and he was out for revenge. He even said she was one of the lead scientists.”

Lex noticed the nervousness creeping into the brunette’s features. It wasn’t an easy thing to spot unless you knew what to look for, and he did.

“You look scared.”

Wringing her hands together, “Because I think that alien was connected to my research,” Lena speculated, terrified that she may be right.

Lex waved off her concern with a light chuckle. “How could the two possibly be linked? Mother knows next to nothing about what you’re doing. Besides, practically the whole of America hates our family. Especially aliens. We have our forefathers to thank for that,” he mumbled as an afterthought.

“I mean, think about it Lex—no, I’m serious. Some random alien – who’s a Llarans by the way – just so happens to show up and threatens to harm our mother? An alien species that is in fact one that we—I’m studying? What are the chances of that being a coincidence?”

Lex hopped off the bed, “You have to calm down,” he said, rubbing his hands up and down the sides of Lena’s arms. “You’re probably stressing about absolutely nothing. These things tend to happen; we’re Luthors.”

The worry was still clear on Lena’s face if the creases in her forehead were anything to go by. There wasn’t a bit of comfort to be found in how nonchalant her brother was acting; it was a tad unsettling to be honest. And, ‘We’re Luthors’? How was that supposed to make her feel better about the situation?

“How about this,” Lex began to suggest, holding his younger sister by her arms a little further away from himself. “you can spend the day at the office tomorrow to see if there’s anything there that can help settle your mind. I’m sure you can track anything used for any of the Llarans in your research since LuthorCorp has provided you the bulk of your equipment.”

Lena exhaled slowly, attempting to find some comfort in being able to track down any potential leads; if there even were any to find. Lex pulled the woman into a tight hug and didn’t move to pull away until he felt his sister hug him back.
“I’m heading into the office for a bit to take care of a few things.”

Lena silently nodded in understanding.

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Sunday night, Eliza had insisted that her daughters return back to National City stating again how unlikely it was that she was in any immediate danger. Alex and Kara dug in their heels, only relenting once the woman had agreed to a small protective detail until things blew over. The elder Danvers’ heart warmed knowing that her children were going to such lengths to ensure her safety, but felt it was all unnecessary.

Foregoing the wasted time of taking the train back to the city, Kara wrapped their two duffle bags around her body and picked up her sister, bridal style, flying straight to Alex’s apartment. Having to fly with another person meant she had to move at a slower pace than she normally would. Even with taking precautions to make sure Alex was ok while flying they still made it back to National City in a little over twenty minutes; a fraction of how long the train was going to take.

Alex had thrown her bag onto her couch before pouring two fingers worth of scotch into her favorite glass. Kara knew it was a sensitive subject, but Alex’s drinking was getting out of hand. She was honestly surprised her older sister hadn’t consumed any alcohol for the short time they were in Midvale, but ‘stranger things have happened’, as they say. After her breakup with Maggie things began to spiral.

These days, it wasn’t uncommon for Kara to find Alex asleep on her sofa with a glass either in her hand or within arms reach. There was just no good way to approach the topic of her drinking and they had already argued once during their impromptu trip, no need in sparking another so soon.

“Hey, Alex?”

The redhead hummed with her head shoved in a refrigerator she had forgotten was empty. *Takeout it is*, Alex thought to herself.

“What do you know about Lena Luthor?” The question was harmless enough without context, but she really needed to find out more about the youngest Luthor. She had done a quick online search of the woman but came up with very few results.

There were a few pictures of Lena out with friends at some high-end restaurant, easily three plus years ago. She came across a few articles about the woman’s academic accomplishments while at MIT — most notably her being their youngest graduate to date. There was also an article on a project she had taken up while still in undergrad surrounding her creation of an alien detection device. From what the blonde read, Lena was never able to recreate the device; that may have been for the best.

The hardest piece for the blonde to read was one that was published not long after Lionel Luthor’s passing. A gossip magazine had printed a full spread essentially tearing the Luthor family a new one. There were quotes pulled from various social medias highlighting the horrible things the public had to say about the entire family. Kara was no fool, she knew some of the things people were saying about the high-profile family given their history. They had all these things to say and many of them probably have never met a single member of said family.

Even with what people had to say, and the fact that Lena had been lying to her for the past few
weeks, Kara couldn’t see the woman the public framed Lena to be as the woman she was getting to know.

“Well, I mean,” Alex stuttered as she dug around her kitchen for takeout menus. “I don’t really have an opinion of her one way or another. I’ve never met her.”

Fumbling with her glasses, “What about all the things people say about her and her family? Do you think any of it is true,” Kara questioned, furthering her line of passive questioning.

“Most definitely I think some of it is true. Well, for the older generations that is. Lionel was no saint either. He’s mainly the reason the family is still looked at the way they are. He made his stance against aliens abundantly clear when he publicly vowed to work towards ridding this planet of them. You can’t misinterpret that,” Alex deadpanned.

Kara sat on one of the stools at the island as she watched her sister circle the kitchen.

“Why do you ask?”

Feeling caught, “Oh. No reason, just curious,” she stammered with a breathy chuckle.

Alex paused to glance over at her sister and her bizarre behavior. Saved by the growl of her stomach, “How about I go grab us some Chinese? My treat!”

Alex knew the blonde was hiding something, but she wasn’t about to turn down free food.

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Lena caught a ride with Lex to the National City’s LuthorCorp building. The headquarters was still considered to be the Metropolis office, but Lex had just taken over and hadn’t planned out how he was going to make the switch back out there.

The car was filled with relative silence other than the radio lowly playing in the background. Lena had been formulating a game plan in her head of how she wanted to proceed with her investigation, so she appreciated her brothers typical silence.

She spent some time with Lex in his office, per his request, because he wanted her opinion on how he should furnish the space that had a clinical, almost sterile, feel to it. Everything except the desk, one of the sofas, and a few decorative pieces were white.

On her way out of his office Lena stopped to talk to Lex’s newest assistant, Jessica Lang.

“Please, call me Jess, Ms. Luthor.”

“Only if you drop the ‘Ms. Luthor’. Just Lena is fine.”

They both smiled before parting ways. The elevator doors sprang open to a familiar face.

“Sam! What are you doing here?”

“Seeing as I work here, and you don’t, I should be asking you the same question,” the taller brunette laughed.
Lena and Samantha had met while Lena was still completing her undergraduate degrees and Sam was an intern in the Finance Department at the Metropolis headquarters. After accidentally bumping into each other in the halls on Sam’s third day, the two had become fast friends; something Lena had never quite understood seeing as the older woman was her second legitimate friend.

“I just have to take care of few things.” Sam gave her a worried look as she walked into the elevator. “No, no, everything’s fine,” Lena rushed to mention once she noticed the woman’s concern. “It has to do with the research I’m conducting for my graduate thesis.”

Sam leaned back against the elevator wall, “Ahh. Ok.” She noticed Lena had pressed the ‘B1’ button which meant she was headed down to the labs. “How long are going to be here? We should get drinks tonight.”

“I’ll probably be here all day. You’ll have to come down and get me since there’s no service in the dungeons,” Lena agreed as she slid her phone into the pocket of her form fitting black dress. It was one of a few handfuls of dresses that she owned that had actual pockets.

Silently chuckling, “‘The dungeons’?” Sam didn’t want to ask but there was a part of her that needed to know.

“Yea, that’s what some of the staff calls it,” Lena off-handedly explained. Snorting at how easily it rolled off her tongue, “I guess I’ve picked up a few things.”

Lena glanced over at all the buttons for each floor and saw only her selection was lit up. “Where are you headed?”

“Funny story. I was actually headed to talk with Lex before he was too far along in his schedule for the day. There’s been a few issues with the books. We haven’t been able to figure out.”

Lena’s brows scrunched in the middle, “Has that ever happened before?”

Shaking her head, “Not that I’m aware. I want to get ahead of this before it becomes a bigger problem,” Sam divulged.

“I’m sure if Lex isn’t much help you can always call my mother. She’s got more time on her hands and can speak to anything occurring during her tenure.”

“You actually didn’t say anything negative about her,” Sam gasped. Good-humoredly putting the back of her hand to her friend’s forehead, “Are you feeling alright?”

Swatting the woman’s hand away, “Says the person riding an elevator twice to the same place,” Lena shot back with a matching smile.

Sam let out a guttural laugh, not having laughed that hard in some time. The elevator dinged, signaling Lena they had arrived at her chosen floor.

“Don’t forget to come get me when you finish up for the day, yea?”

“Yes, Ms. Luthor.”

Lena squinted her eyes at the taller woman, going for a look of intimidation, but still lighthearted. She hated whenever anyone addressed her in such a formal manner, unless appropriately called for. Having known Sam as long as she had she knew the woman was only messing with her. The elevator doors closed shut before she could verbally scold the woman for the formality of her agreement.
Lena had worked well past lunch. She was thankful for the coffee Jess had sent down for her, most likely at the request of her boss. The young Luthor had come up with very few answers, most of which had nothing to do with her current dilemma. Needing a break, Lena made her way back up to Lex’s office on the top floor of the building.

Jess informed her that Lex was ‘on a business call but he should be finishing up in a few minutes’, so she decided to wait in his office. After listening for a few seconds, she realized her brother must have been taking a call with one of their Asian investors. If she was right, which she usually was when it came to the man, he was speaking in Japanese; one of the many languages they both fluent in.

Lena took a seat opposite Lex at his L-shaped executive style desk that looked to be made of a stained mahogany. The view from his office was breathtaking. Very few high rises downtown reached the height of LuthorCorp and those that did were a good distance away. With two of the office’s walls being made entirely of glass, there was so much to see — even from where she sat at the desk.

Lena looked over towards the balcony, noticing quite a few plants sporadically placed about. The dark-haired woman knew Lex had never been able to keep a plant alive. The only other logical conclusion was them being left over from Lillian having occupied this space.

Breaking the woman from her reverie, “Were you able to get some answers,” Lex asked supportively.

Lena blinked slowly, pulling her focus away from the balcony. “The only thing of note is that there was a male Llarans who was cycled out of the study.”

“Well that’s something,” Lex applauded, perking up.

“Well that’s something,” Lex applauded, perking up.

“Not exactly.” Lex leaned back into his chair, disappointed. “He was cycled out because he died. I don’t think a dead alien was parading through LuthorCorp or National City for that matter. I may have to include the FBI since they have him in custody. Nothing else is making sense.”

Lex nearly jumped out of his chair as he leaned forward. Elbows pressed down against his desk, “Don’t you think you’re being a little paranoid? There was an alien that willingly participated in your research. He died, possibly at no fault of your own.”

That’s when Lex noticed something that was entirely out of place. There was a green dot that had appeared out of no where resting just above Lena’s heart. Of course, she couldn’t see it, but he could. Lex had to think quick, but also didn’t want to alarm his sister.

He repositioned himself in his seat, sitting straight up. Rubbing his left hand over his bald head, Lex tried to see if the sight was coming from his left or right side. Since the dot, that was most likely the laser sight of a sniper rifle, hadn’t disappeared he reasoned that it was either coming from higher up or his right side.

Voice barely above a whisper, “Lena I need you to stay calm and do exactly as I say.” Lena had frozen in place but tried to keep her expression as neutral as possible. “I need you to knock something off my desk then bend over to pick it up. Do it now Lena,” he finished, voice firm.

Lena looked over his desk looking for something that made sense for her to knock to the floor. She initially didn’t notice anything in her immediate proximity, but there was a pen lying near her edge of the desk. With a shaking hand, Lena reached for the pen, dropping it once she had it in her hand.
Lex wouldn’t know, nor would she tell him later, but her dropping the pen wasn’t actually done on purpose.

Lena’s heart rate had spiked. Her heart was beating so hard she could hear pulsating in her ears and her vision jumped with every beat. As she leaned over to pick up the pen the sound of glass shattering filled the office. Scared and not knowing what to do next, Lena fell to the floor pinning her back against the desk, arms wrapped around her knees.

Before another rang out, Supergirl came soaring in through the broken window. “Is everyone alright?”

Lena opened her mouth to speak but no words came out. Her rapidly beating heart grew far more erratic hearing her brother groan out in pain. She needed to know Lex was ok, regardless of how frightened she was feeling. Shifting onto her knees to crawl to the other side of the wooden desk Lena finally managed to speak. “Lex! Lex are you alright?” Her concern was answered with yet another groan.

As she moved away from her original spot, another shot rang out; breaking another window. This shot was aimed just between the brother and sister. Supergirl had moved herself into the path of the bullet in order to protect the Luthor siblings.

Dropping down to protect Lex the best she could, Kara saw Lena’s head pop out from the other side of the desk. “No,” she shouted, the desperation she was experiencing as Kara in that moment peeking out. “I need you to stay where you are? Do you understand me?”

Lena nodded. “Is-is he alright?”

Kara did a quick scan of Lex’s body. “No major injuries. He was hit in the arm; through and through.”

Lena forced out the breath she hadn’t realized she was holding — relieved.

“I’m going to check that everything is clear. Ms. Luthor, stay where you are.”

Lena did as she was instructed. After hearing the whoosh of Supergirl taking off, potentially in search of their attacker, she wanted to say something – anything – but she was too shaken up. The room was filled with silence until Supergirl returned.

The heroine was clad in a suit she had never seen before. It was different, in a surprising but good kind of way. Lena grasped the woman’s outstretched hand, thanking her for the help. She paid the superhero very little mind as she rounded the desk to check on Lex. There was already fabric from his blazer wrapped around his arm to slow the bleeding.

“Thank you,” Lena called out over her shoulder, voice raspy.

Kara nodded.

“Were you able to find whoever attacked us,” the brunette asked, forcing herself to refocus her focus.

“Unfortunately, I wasn’t. My team and I won’t stop until we do.”

With that, agents in tactical gear converged on the room, securing the area for any other possible attacks while they were there. A few of their paramedics came in to look over Lena and stabilize Lex for transport.
“Agent Danvers will take your statement. You can trust her,” Supergirl reassured the frazzled, but seemingly calm woman.

Lena nodded towards the red-haired woman approaching her. Kara stood off in a corner not wanting to leave Lena alone, while also trying to stay out of everyone’s way. Regardless of how calm the young brunette seemed, Kara could hear the woman’s heartbeat practically shouting in her ears. She wanted to run over and hug the woman, let her know everything was going to be ok, but she couldn’t.

Right now, she was Supergirl. The heroine had technically never met the Luthor so there was no room for affection of any kind. To further complicate matters, Kara Danvers was still enraged by Lena’s lying about her true identity. She was a swirling ball of emotions that had no idea of which would win out in the end. So, for now she would keep her distance and avoid direct conversation.

Thirty minutes later, Alex and Lena had finished up with her statement and Lex had been hauled off to National City General Hospital. An agent had phoned Lillian, informing her of the attacking, and Kara overheard the first question the woman had asked: ‘Is Lena ok?’. It wasn’t quite what Kara was expecting to hear, but she’d take it.

“I can’t thank you enough Supergirl. If you had been a second later my brother could have been killed.”

Kara was used to the needless praise. She wasn’t Supergirl for the vanity and fame. She protected National City because she felt it was her civic duty and it was something she was proud to offer her new home. “It was no trouble at all Ms. Luthor.”

“Please, call me Lena. I think after saving my life you can use my first name,” the brunette humorlessly laughed.

Supergirl visibly twitched away from her words. As Supergirl, the other woman gave the knowledge of her identity freely. Granted, it would be hard to deny who she was under present circumstances, but the problem still remained.

“Did I say something,” Lena worried. She hadn’t thought that maybe Supergirl only saved her and her brother out of duty and not out of a personal desire.

The Girl of Steel cleared her throat before speaking. “I heard your statement with Agent Danvers. You said your brother noticed the sight on your chest first?”

Lena didn’t understand why the woman was so distant, formal even. From what she had seen and heard of the superhero, she seemed so bubbly and full of life; this was not the same woman. Wrapping her arms around her chest, “That’s correct. After I did as he told me, to knock something on the floor, the first shot was fired. If it wasn’t for him, we most likely wouldn’t be having this conversation.”

Kara hummed. “And you’re sure they were after him and not you?”

“The better question is why is someone targeting either of us.” Kara had no response, so Lena continued. “To answer your question, yes,” she confirmed. “Why would someone target me? My mother was recently held hostage and now my brother has had his first assassination attempt. I think we can both reasonably come to the same conclusion.”

The way Lena had pieced together recent events, Lillian and Lex were both targeted. The one thing they have in common—outside of being a part of the same family—was being CEO of LuthorCorp
at the time of their respective attacks. Following that train of thought, one could see why the assailant was after Lex and not her.

If she had to hazard a guess, maybe the attacker targeted her to toy with Lex, Lena speculated. “Why kill someone and they have no idea why? It’s better to make a game of it. Let them know someone is always that close to just killing them.” Lena had to laugh off that last part now having said it out loud she realized how incriminating her words came off. She didn’t want Supergirl to form the wrong opinion of her.

“That second shot wasn’t directed exactly at Mr. Luthor. It was situated between the two of you. I looked back just to make sure I wasn’t crazy.”

Considering the possibility, “Maybe it was a warning shot,” Lena said.

“Whatever it was, we’ll figure it out.”

Supergirl and the remainder of the FBI agents left shortly after their exchange. Jess had been instructed to stay at her desk which is exactly where Lena found her.

“Would you like me to call a car for you?”

Lena could tell the young woman was trying to keep as much of her composure intact as she could. Matching the woman’s calm, “I’d appreciate that. You can also take the rest of the day off.”

Jess opened her mouth to refuse but Lena insisted, stating that mental health was just as important as physical health. She may not have been in the room with them, but she could still hear everything and do nothing about it. Not to mention, with Lex in the hospital there would be nothing for the assistant to do but answer calls that she could forward to her cell.

Jess called downstairs letting the front desk know Lena was on her way down. Before the youngest Luthor could press the call button for the elevator, “Are you ok Ms. Luthor?”

The brunette offered a fake smile and reassured the woman she was alright. She simply wanted to get to the hospital to check on her brother. Not a moment too soon, the elevator chimed as the door opened.

“Oh, Jess. Can you let Ms. Arias in Finance know where I’ve gone? She may come by looking for me.”

“Sure thing Ms. Luthor.” Lena’s lips quirked into a half smile. Eventually she’d get the assistant to call her by her first name.

As soon as the elevator doors shut Lena broke down, tears streaming down her face. She had been doing her best to hold herself together, but the façade was slowly fading. Her mother had been held hostage, someone just tried to kill Lex in front of her, so what was going to happen to her? It was bound to happen if the past few weeks were anything to go by.

At that very moment, Lena despised her last name. She knew how hated the entirety of her family was but there didn’t seem to be anything she could do about it. Simply because of her last name, someone would always be out to get her.

Because of generations of Luthors that despised anyone that wasn’t like them, even profited off that hate, Lena was looked at as being the same as them.

The very people that preemptively judged her based on her last name, never gave her a chance to
formulate her own reputation. If they had, they’d know how different she really was from her ancestors. They’d know that a person was more than their last name.

The elevator signaled she had reached the tenth floor, so Lena began to pull herself together and cleaned up her face using her reflection in the metallic elevator walls. As the elevator doors crept open, Lena straightened her stance—squaring her shoulders. She walked out of the building appearing seemingly unaffected by the events that took place just an hour before.

Phone in hand, Lena dialed Kara’s number doing her best to steady her breathing enough to actually speak to another human being.

Not waiting for the blonde to address her, “Kara, are you free for dinner? I really need to see you.” It was a level of vulnerable she had never been with anyone other than Sam and her brother.

“Of course. We can grab something tonight.”

“My apartment, say seven? I’d rather stay home tonight if you don’t mind.”

Kara’s voice was exactly what she needed. The warmth and calm taking over Lena, having only talked to the other woman, was confirmation enough that she did the right thing in calling.

The level of guilt she felt lying to Kara was no longer negligible. It was nice having someone in her life that judged her, and was getting to know her, for who she really was. With Kara, she wasn’t a Luthor, she was just… Lena; no more, no less. Eventually her luck would run out, she knew that, but for now Lena just needed the comfort of a person who liked her for who she was.

Kara needed the truth, and the brunette was working out when she’d get around to disclosing it, but today wasn’t that day. She hadn’t planned on ever seeing Kara again, let alone actually developing feelings for said woman. She was in over her head and didn’t want to ruin things any more than she already had.

The blonde didn’t deserve to be lied to, but she wasn’t doing it to hurt the woman. Lena could see how her motives could be deemed selfish and self-serving, but when you consider how people tended to hate her without getting a chance to know her, it made a little more sense why she lied to begin with; not to say it was the right thing to do.

Lena settled into the back of the towncar that came ‘round to drive her to National City General. She needed this car ride to calm her thoughts and ready her for whatever was next. Thoughts of being around Kara later that night helped steady her heartbeat and offered up a distraction, if only for just a moment.

Chapter End Notes

About that chapter :D!

I hope I portrayed the conflict Kara was experiencing well enough, but it isn't the end of it. Next chapter we'll get to see a bit more of that inner turmoil but from her own perspective as Kara, not Supergirl.
Lex and Lillian are still mysteries, and I kind of like that uncertainty. Is Lillian just playing Lena and in on everything going on? And what about Lex? I'm having fun writing them as teetering on the line of good vs. evil because it could go either way for
either of them.  
And Lena just needs a hug. 
I haven't forgotten about Pult the Llarans. We find out more about that part of the story next chapter as well.

As always, let me know what you think; all feedback is greatly appreciated. I try my best to respond to all comments I receive. You can also shout at me over on tumblr; same handle. You can ask me questions or just say hello over there too.

Until next time!
Kara, Alex, J’onn and a few other agents were situated around the command center. Being that she was short on time – having to get back into CatCo – Kara began debriefing everyone almost immediately.

“There were shots fired at LuthorCorp, but it’s unclear at the moment who exactly was the target.”

“How so,” J’onn questioned.

Leaning on the circular station in front of her, “Based on Lena’s statement, she was initially the mark but had no clue she was being targeted. She assumes the shooter is toying with Lex,” Kara explained.

“Which isn’t too far-fetched,” Alex chimed in.

“Then why was the second shot fired between them? That makes no sense.”

J’onn and Alex looked at each other, neither having an explanation. The shooter’s intentions were unclear not going after either Luthor. They had a chance to finish off Lex or harm Lena if that was their goal.

“I canvased the area and found nothing. Not even shells. Whoever is after the Luthors knows what they’re doing.” They all hated to admit it, but Kara was right. Going after two of National City’s wealthiest denizens, and getting away, was frustrating. Not to mention it made them look like they couldn’t do their jobs.

It was Alex to jump in and change the conversation. “Well, there is some good news. The Llarans we brought in for holding Lillian Luthor hostage has finally given us some intel to work with.”

J’onn began typing out a few commands on the tablet in his hands as Alex brought her sister up to speed.

“When he first came in we took a few samples of his blood, but we didn’t have much to compare it against. I was able to isolate a few of the compounds in his blood, and not to bore you with the medical breakdown, one was from a performance enhancing drug I’ve only seen once before; the other may have been meant to suppress parts of his DNA. Now, the thing is, there’s no real way for me to know if they were used separately or in conjunction with one another without at least knowing their individual half-life. To know how long these things have been circulating through his system.”
Kara walked over to the screen displaying the molecular structure of the compounds Alex was just telling her about. “So, he was a lab experiment?”

“It seems that way. He can’t remember much about his time wherever he was being held. What doesn’t add up is that he can remember his room. The way he described it they were keeping him comfortable.”

Kara slowly spun around, “Comfortable how?”

“Not the way you’d imaging being treated if someone just wanted to cut you open and study you.”

Kara’s face scrunched up, unwilling to imagine what Pult went through when his situation changed from hospitable to hostile.

“Alright, let’s back track,” Kara pleaded, baffled by all the information being thrown her way. “Pult was recruited to help in some study that could help his people.”

“Correct,” J’onn nodded.

Running her hands through her hair, “Next thing we know, he’s all juiced up and holding Mrs. Luthor hostage. The woman he suspects had something to do with what happened to him,” Kara continued.

“Right. We still don’t know why he’s connecting Mrs. Luthor,” said Alex.

“But we now know he remembers where he was initially being kept… He was put on some kind of performance enhancer…and something that targeted his genetic makeup.” With a deep, stressful sigh, “Am I missing anything?”

“Not that I can think of. We’re trying a few kinds of therapy to see if it’ll help Pult remember anything. He’s been compliant thus far with us. He’s been reclassed and no longer deemed an immediate threat.”

“I believe you’re forgetting The Alien Registry, Agent Danvers,” J’onn said.

Kara was pacing back and forth in thought. “Everything is somehow connected. Pult, the Registry, the Luthors, that strange man Pult mentioned. But how?”

Alex took the tablet from J’onn to look up something. “I still have to talk to all of the Luthors, maybe I can find out a little more when I do.”

“That’s definitely a start. I feel like we’re still asking more questions than answering.” J’onn nodded in agreement. “Well, I have to get back to CatCo. Call me if anything comes up.”

With that, Kara was off. After the attack on Lillian, J’onn made sure to keep closer tabs on the building. If it weren’t for certain precautions he took, Kara may not have been able to make it to the Luthors’ aid in time. The shooter may not have stopped after only two rounds were fired.

Lena stood outside her brother’s hospital room, preparing herself for what was to come next. There were two agents stationed outside the door that were clearly doing their best not to stare at her.
Taking a deep breath, Lena pushed open the wooden door.

Lillian was seated at Lex’s beside – as Lena was expecting – watching him sleep. The beeps and sounds from all the machines filled the otherwise silent room. Closing the door quietly behind herself Lena acknowledged the woman now staring her down. “Mother.”

Lillian moved as quietly as she could, making her way over to Lena. Following the same pattern of recently bizarre behavior, Lena was shocked when her mother wrapped her in a tight hug. Physical affection was something she never experienced from the woman. Not counting her mother consoling her after finding out the woman was sick.

In her surprise, Lena stiffened like a board, arms pinned at her sides. Lillian pulled back, taking a good look at the young woman. “Are you alright,” she asked, brushing strands of Lena’s hair out of her face.

Manicured brow raised in barely restrained confusion, “I’m alright. A little shaken up is all,” Lena said. It wasn’t entirely a lie. In fact, it explained not only her feelings regarding the shooting but what she was presently experiencing as well.

Lillian’s face was twisted into one of apparent worry. She couldn’t bring herself to believe that Lena was ‘alright’. Noticing the woman wasn’t pleased with her answer, “Really mother. I’ll be fine,” she said, awkwardly placing a hand on the older woman’s shoulder. “How’s he doing?”

With a silent huff, almost a sigh of relief, “You know your brother. I’m positive I’m to blame for his level of theatrics,” Lillian explained, laughing to keep herself from unraveling. Both of her children were almost killed and there was no way a mother easily could bounce back from that.

“Well,” Lena drawled with a silent laugh. Lillian bumped her daughter’s shoulder with her own, trying to keep the mood light.

“He’ll need weeks of physical therapy, but the bullet missed anything of importance.” As she made her way back over to her chair, “The doctor said had the bullet hit him even an inch in any direction his condition could be very different.”

Lena sat at the foot of her brother’s bed, rubbing his leg consolingly. He had taken a bullet for her and there was no way she could repay him for that. “He certainly has some kind of luck on his side,” Lena murmured.

The two women sat in silence for several moments, actually enjoying the other’s company. Lena was doing her best to only think of her mother as the woman she had always been. The detached and cruel woman she could handle. This maternal and warm version of the woman was a lot to handle. It was getting harder for Lena to not hold out hope this version of her mother was here to stay.

Clearing her throat, “Lena, there’s something we should talk about,” the matriarch requested. Lex was bound to be waking soon from his medicinally induced sleep. This was a conversation they needed to have before he did.

Lena rotated her place on the bed to better face her mother. Raising her brows expectantly, Lena waited for the woman to elaborate.

“I’ve been thinking…” the woman said before hesitating. “I’ve been thinking that you should take over LuthorCorp for a while.” Lena opened her mouth to speak but Lillian raised her hand to silence the young woman. “Just until your brother is better fit to resume his duties as CEO.”

Lena looked at the woman incredulously, “You want me to do what,” the young woman squeaked,
her voice no longer a whisper.

Lex had stirred, but Lena wasn’t loud enough to completely wake him. Lillian gave her daughter a reprimanding glance as she rubbed a hand across her son’s bald head until she was sure he was sleeping again.

“I would appreciate if you could do this for me. It would only be a few weeks. Besides, you already know the ins and outs of the company.”

Lena didn’t speak. She never wanted anything to do with her family’s company. Sure, she had a mind for business, but how could she not after growing up in the Luthor family. Business strategy and ethics had been drilled into her since her pre-teen years. The dark-haired woman simply waited for her mother to tell her this was a joke. Or for her to make some snide remark as to how she’d never be as good as her brother.

When she didn’t get the response she was looking for, Lena forced herself to make the next move. “I already have school and all that entails right now mother. There’s no way I could do both.”

Expression softening, “Just think about it. If you say no, I’ll understand,” Lillian requested.

Is she trying to guilt trip me?

“I’ll think about it. But I make no promises,” Lena firmly added.

Looking down at her watch Lena noticed the hour was growing late. She had asked Kara over for dinner and there was no food at her place. After their first kind-of date, and their first encounter, Lena knew that the blonde had an appetite big enough to feed a small family. She could either order takeout or try to whip something up the woman may like.

One of the many things Lillian made sure Lena was well versed in was the art of cooking. For when a husband came along in her life. The joke was on Lillian for that last part, considering she was attracted to women, but the know how still came in handy from time-to-time.

After the day she was continuing to have seeing Kara was the best thing for her, she thought. She needed a break, a reprieve, from her own life.

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Kara had made it back into CatCo before anyone was the wiser. Or so she thought. Upon her return, Siobhan – one of the interns – informed her that Ms. Grant wanted to see Kara in her office. The look upon the woman’s face was smug, as if she knew something Kara hadn’t.

There was no need to knock as the front wall of the CEO’s office was made entirely of glass, but she did anyway. The older blonde looked up towards her and waved for Kara to come inside. It wasn’t every day she found herself being summoned to her boss’ office. Her nerves were getting the better of her.

“Have a seat Kiera,” the woman said, motioning to one of the chairs in front of her desk.

This can’t be good. She called me ‘Kiera’.
Cat was finishing up something on her laptop before focusing all her attention on the young woman. It was a power-move that Kara recognized. She had seen Cat utilize this technique with some of her coworkers and those conversations rarely ended well.

The CEO lightly closed her laptop and leaned back in her chair. Crossing her arms across her chest and her legs under her desk, the woman silently looked over Kara.

The penetrative stare from the woman was uncomfortable at best. Unable to take the silent pressure, Kara cleared her throat to break the silence. “You wanted to see me.”

The older woman hummed. “I did,” she confirmed with a nod. “It’s been brought to me, that your attention may be being pulled in too many directions.”

Kara immediately knew who brought this concern to Cat; Siobhan. “I’ll admit, I’ve been spread a little thin. But I’m still learning how to balance this job and school.”

Cat didn’t look impressed by her answer. “I’m expecting nothing but the best out of you Ms. Danvers. So when someone says to me that you’re continually cutting out during your work day it makes me wonder if my faith is ill placed.”

“No, no,” Kara rushed to assure the woman. “I’ll work on it Ms. Grant.”

Cat gave her a soft nod before jerking her chin towards the door. Kara took that as her cue to leave before any more needed to be said. She had been expecting far worse to happen. Nearly out of the door, “And tell our mutual friend I’ll be expecting her to stop by again soon. A talk off the record of course,” Kara heard the woman say.

There was that tone again. It was as if Cat knew more than she was letting on but there was no way that was possible; could it? “Yes ma’am,” Kara replied with a quick glance behind her.

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Lena had bought so many groceries she had to ask one of the doormen for a hand. Thankfully, the familiar man was more than happy to assist.

“Throwing a party Ms. Luthor?”

Lena lightly chuckled, looking down at all of the food. “Believe it not, no.”

“Well it’s good to see you.”

“You as well JP,” Lena said with a soft smile. She hadn’t been spending a ton of her time in her own apartment as of late. Most of her time was spent either in the Luthor mansion, at NCU, or in her lab just outside of the city limits. If she had returned to the building it was long after JP would have left for the day.

After piling everything outside her apartment, Lena searched through her purse to find her keys. “Oh, JP,” she called out before the man could get back on the elevator.

The older gentleman paused to look back at the Luthor waiting for her finish up.

“There will be a young woman – blonde – stopping by for me in a few hours. If you’re still here, can
you go ahead and send her up?”

A gaping grin played on the man’s lips. “Of course, Ms. Luthor.”

JP called the elevator one more time to head back to his post leaving Lena alone in her private hallway. As the elevator doors shut, she had finally found her keys; they were in her hand the whole time. She busied herself with unpacking all the food she bought and began cooking.

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Kara had rushed home to change clothes from what she had on in the office. It was only dinner, a casual thing. Because she had started off her day as Supergirl and rushed to change after, Kara hadn’t had her binder on all day. Knowing she would only be in it a few hours she went ahead and fought to get the thing on. Not overthinking her outfit she pulled on a pair of light colored distressed denim jeans, medium brown suede chukka boots, and a loose fitting pale pink long sleeve shirt.

Kara gave herself a once over in the mirror before double-checking the address Katie/Lena had sent her. Staring at the name that no longer matched the woman she knew, Kara froze. It was already seven o’clock, so she needed to head out. Knowing she needed to leave hadn’t willed her feet to move; not even an inch.

How was she supposed to navigate the evening knowing all that she did now? The article, the possible assassination attempt, the lying. Lena was expecting an oblivious version of Kara to show up. She wasn’t supposed to know who Katie really was and she probably wasn’t supposed to know what happened today at LuthorCorp.

The one thing that was going for Kara not having knowledge of the attack at LuthorCorp was there being no media coverage for it. There wasn’t a single headline out speaking to what happened; which was unusual. Lena knew that Kara was an intern at CatCo – they hadn’t discussed her promotion yet. CatCo would be one of the first to publish a story discussing the details of what happened so she would find out something that way. But, events had fallen in Lena’s favor.

For the remainder of her night, Kara would have to play dumb and pretend she didn’t know exactly what was bothering Lena. Given that the woman was definitely shaken up after the attack, Kara couldn’t help her through it until she talked about it.

Kara exhaled with a shaky breath. After all that was happening to Lena she hadn’t taken a second to step back and evaluate in total how she felt about everything. They still hadn’t handled Lena’s behavior last week in her class. Now to compile on top of that, finding out she was being lied to.

It was nearly seven-thirty. She needed to go. Plugging the address into the GPS on her phone Kara began walking to Lena’s, stopping to grab whatever takeout she would pass on her way.

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JP had accompanied Kara up to the penthouse with very little conversation. The man was pleasant company even if it were only for an elevator ride. She stood outside of Lena’s apartment for a few minutes to collect herself. Before knocking, Kara picked up on two voices. The voice she didn’t recognize was getting closer to the door. She quickly knocked in order to avoid a potentially awkward situation.
Kara took a step backwards as the door swung open. The woman in front of her was dressed in a black pants suit with a white collared shirt underneath. Though the two women shared a similar hair color, she looked nothing like Lena. While Lena’s eyes were a gentle, but piercing, kind of tea green, this woman’s were a strong mocha.

Kara awkwardly stared at the woman who was looking at her critically. “Uh, I’m looking for Katie?”

The woman’s brows scrunched in confusion. Kara knew why but she had to play along.

“One second,” the woman said, before gently shutting the door. Kara wasn’t about to miss out on whatever was about to be said.

“Katie,” the woman questioned with a stern tone. “I thought that was just the name you used when we went out,” the woman now laughed.

Kara could hear Lena moving around as she responded to the other woman. “We’ll have to discuss that another time.” There was a cheeky smile Kara could hear in Lena’s voice. The woman must not have been satisfied with her answer. “Let’s just say the situation got away from me and I’m working on how to fix it.”

“You need to need to tell her before she finds out from someone else Lena.”

Almost being caught listening in, Kara jumped backwards when the door flew open for a second time. The woman’s lips were pulling into a tight line. “Come on in. I was just on my way out.”

Kara nodded and slid past the woman. “Katie’s in the kitchen. And next time, don’t just stand at the door like a creep.”

Kara’s mouth gaped open. How did she know I was standing there?

As if the woman could read her mind, “There are peepholes you know,” she said motioning towards said object.

Kara sighed in relief. “Yea, right. Peepholes,” she said with giddy laughter. That had to have been how the woman knew she was there.

Kara closed the door behind herself and turned to look around Lena’s apartment. The common areas were of an open floorplan. The vastness of the space was heightened by the wall of windows that lead out to a huge balcony.

What had come as a bit of a surprise was how homelike the apartment hadn’t felt. There weren’t any personal photos up. Artwork seemed to only be hung and situated to complement the theme of the décor. It felt…staged. Like a house or apartment for sale. It barely looked lived in.

“You don’t have to stand there.”

Kara fiddled with her glasses, caught this time. With takeout and flowers in hand, she made her way over to the kitchen where Lena was finishing up the meal she prepared for them.

Kara moaned taking in the smells emanating from across the room. “It smells great, whatever you’re cooking.”

Lena giggled as she looked over all that she had plated. “Just Caesar salad and a bit of Thai food. I hope that’s ok?”
“I hope you’re not expecting me to eat the salad,” Kara lightheartedly joked.

Lena laughed, remembering the woman’s aversion to just about any food that was green. “You should at least try it Kara,” she said with a smile. Wiping her hands on her apron, “Are those for me,” Lena asked as she walked over to the woman.

“They are,” Kara confirmed, handing over the bouquet of sunflowers.

Lena sniffed the flowers, her lips quirked up in a smile. “They’re beautiful.”

“I figured you could use a pick me up. You sounded stressed when you called.”

Kara watched as Lena’s shoulders dropped, as if she remembered what exactly prompted her to invite the blonde over.

There was still a lot she needed to learn about Lena, but something told her to ask before just out and hugging the woman. “You look like you need a hug.”

Closing her eyes, “More than you know.”

Kara took the flowers out of Lena’s hands and placed them on the table beside them. Pulling the shorter woman into a hug, Kara let the woman sag into the embrace. After a moment Lena finally let herself get comfortable in Kara’s arms. They had only known each other a few weeks. Even with that knowledge, it hadn’t stopped Lena from experiencing a sense of security when around the blonde. It was strange how easy it was for her to find comfort in the other woman. Her voice, her presence; just her.

Stopping herself before she could get used to such gestures, Lena pushed herself backwards breaking the hug. “You showed up just in time. I was finishing up when you knocked.” Lena pulled off her apron and tossed it into an empty spot on the counter.

“Oh, yea. Who was that if you don’t mind my asking.”

“That was Samantha – we’ve been friends for a few years. She just came by to check on me.”

“Anything you want to talk about,” Kara asked, hoping Lena would take the bait.

“How about we eat. I’m sure you’re hungry seeing as you brought food of your own.”

Kara laughed at the Thai food still in her hand. She had bought it unsure if she needed to grab something or not. “It seems we were both in the mood for Thai,” she said raising up the bag in question.

Lena grabbed it out of her hand a put it in the fridge. “Go ahead and sit where you want,” Lena said motioning her head towards her dining room table. “I’ll bring over the food.”

Wanting to be helpful, Kara asked for a vase to put the flowers in. Looking under the kitchen sink as Lena instructed, she found a tall crystal vase the perfect size for her sunflowers. Lena was pouring them both a glass of red wine when she returned to the table.

Kara placed the flowers in the center of the table and sat beside Lena where she had set her plate.

“How long have you lived here?”

“Let’s see… It’s definitely been a year already. I want to say since starting grad school at NCU.”
“So you’re almost done then,” Kara asked, shoveling forkfuls of the Pad Thai into her mouth.

“My hope is to have enough data collected from my research by the end of the semester. With that in mind, yea.”

“Is that how you can afford this place,” she wondered aloud, looking around the space.

“Something like that.” In an effort to change the subject, “How’s work going?”

Waiting until she swallowed this time, “Really good. Well, maybe not really good. More like ok but not unsatisfactory. I’m not an intern anymore which is why the change. There’s a lot. I’m pretty sure one of the girls that works under me is out to get me.” Kara huffed a deep sigh when her rambling came to a fortunate end.

Lena picked up her glass of wine and took a sip to hide her laugh. “You were promoted. That’s good right?”

Kara’s head fell to the side. She hadn’t really thought that the promotion could be a bad thing. “It’s hard juggling my classes and heading up an entire section of the magazine dedicated to Supergirl.”

Lena looked like she wanted to say something but thought better of it. It may have been that the brunette met the heroine earlier that day. If she were to admit that then she’d have to fess up to several other things.

“You know Supergirl?”

It was like they were playing a game of Gotcha! without realizing it. Kara would now be blatantly lying about her secret identity but there was no way she could tell the younger woman the truth; not yet anyway. Lena was having to delicately navigate their conversation as to not step on a land mind and out any of the secrets she was harboring.

“In a manner of speaking.” Kara had finished her food and had nothing to keep her hands busy with. Her stomach was still growling so piled her plate full of another serving of the delicious meal.

Lena raised her eyebrows with curiosity. “She saved you didn’t she? Most people are looking for any chance to talk about that happening.”

Kara looked towards Lena. What she wanted to say was, ‘I guess you’re not most people either’. What she wound up saying was, “I guess it’s a little personal. It wasn’t just physically saving me.”

Lena took that as her queue to drop the subject. Once Kara finished her second serving, she cleared their plates and asked if the blonde wanted to move over to the sofa. “I don’t think I said it when you came in, but I really like your outfit. You look very handsome,” Lena said with a flirtatious lilt.

“Thank you,” Kara blushed. “And here I thought all you owned were pencil skirts and dresses,” Kara teased back. Lena had dressed down in a black pair of skinny jeans and a navy-blue peter pan collared lace top. An outfit that hadn’t gone unnoticed by electric blue eyes.

Kara flopped down on the sofa and flipped on the television in search for something to serve as background noise. It didn’t take long before she landed on BBC America, there was a *The Blue Planet* marathon running.

Kara had positioned herself in the far-right corner of the sofa. Lena sat beside her, but closer to the middle. They’d been on a couple dates without labeling them as such by this point and they hadn’t exactly defined what they were. They were starting to talk more often but things hadn’t progressed
farther than the occasional flirtatious comment and lingering stares. They were both hopeless.

A half an hour past by with nothing more than narration of the show being offered up as conversation. Lena was nursing a refilled glass of wine, probably feeling how awkward things were getting as well.

Taking the lead, Kara turned the volume down to a low hum and rotated a bit to face Lena. “I think we need to talk.”

Lena gently placed her glass on the coffee table before pulling her feet up onto her sofa, still facing straight ahead.

“I didn’t want to bring it up earlier. I had to cancel drinks last week, so we never got a chance to discuss things.”

“My behavior after your lecture.” Kara nodded. “I’ve been trying to work through that myself.”

“What have you come up with?”

Lena fiddled with her fingers in her lap. “I was fine until I saw you talking to one of your classmates.”

Kara gave her a look of confusion until she realized what she was talking about. “Oh,” she drawled out. “She asked me for the notes from our last few classes. Then some of her friends sat near us. She was telling me something about one of the guys in the group.”

“Did she have to be so close to you?”

The lightbulb in Kara’s mind flickered on. “You were jealous,” she shouted but in a whisper. It was refreshing to think that she had that effect on the woman.

Lena’s cheeks began to turn the slightest shade of red. She could blame it on the wine she’d had, which wasn’t even a lot. In all her excitement Kara hadn’t realized that Lena may not have put a word to her feelings yet.

“Oh, hey,” she said reaching out for Lena’s hand. “It’s ok. It’s a totally normal thing to feel.” Lena still hadn’t made eye contact with her. “If I’m being honest, I was jealous of Samantha earlier.” That got Lena to look her direction.

“You have nothing to worry about with Sam. She’s just a friend.”

“We’re still getting to know each other. Not saying that you are, but if you were talking to other people I guess I’d be ok with that.”

“But you’re not,” Lena observed.

Kara gave her a half smile. While they were both right, it didn’t make this in between phase of their relationship any easier.

“You look like there’s more.”

Kara schooled her features, not realizing she was giving so much away.

Still holding onto Lena’s hand, Kara rubbed small circles onto the back of it. “This might be too soon to say, but I really like you L-Katie,” she confessed, catching herself before she let the woman’s real name slip from her lips.
Lena titled her head to look into Kara’s eyes, “And I you. So why that face?”

She had to decide. There was never going to be a good time to bring it up. The walk to Lena’s apartment hadn’t offered much in the way of clarity. Kara stood and began pacing the length of the living room. How was she going to say it? Should she say it? She had made this into a thing with her reaction to Lena’s question so she had to do something.

She could hear Lena’s heart rate quickening. There was so much the woman was already going through. The last thing Kara wanted was to add to it. But here she was doing just that. She needed an out.

“Have I done something?”

Kara continued her pacing, not even acknowledging that Lena had spoken.

“Look, Kara, I’m sorry for my behavior before. I can’t promise it won’t happen again, but I will do my best to ensure that it won’t.”

Kara still hadn’t spoken. She was trapped in the downward spiral of her own thoughts.

“You’re starting to scare me Kara.”

Without warning Kara made her way for the door. She walked and walked until she found herself outside her own apartment. She had caved under the pressure of knowing more than she should. Maybe things would have been easier had Lena not returned her feelings. Now, she’d never know.

Kara trashed her apartment. She was upset with herself over how she handled things in Lena’s apartment. She was angry over being lied to and she couldn’t even address the issues. She wanted to be there for Lena during a time in her life where she would need the support. Whatever relationship the two women could form was already being built on spotty foundation. There was little chance anything good could possibly come from all of this.

Her phone had been ringing and dinging non-stop since she left Lena’s apartment. Pulling the device out of her jean’s pocket Kara saw she had several missed calls and texts from the woman. Ten missed calls and fifteen unread texts in fact.

The messages varied in wording, but all were the young woman trying to make sure Kara was ok. There were a few that asked if she could call the brunette – so they could talk. She just wanted to know that Kara was ok wherever she was. Kara debated if she should call the woman back but thought better of it. Putting her phone in Do Not Disturb mode, Kara undressed and drew herself a bath.

Just before eleven o’clock Kara was in the bed for the night. She had worked herself into a splitting headache her bath couldn’t fix. Said bath hadn’t been able to accomplish nearly half of what she was hoping it would.

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After a restless night of sleep, Kara stirred before her alarm. It was Tuesday, which meant she had a full day of classes ahead of her. She silently thanked Rao that Lena was no longer teaching her Chemistry lecture. She had scheduled to take her first exam later that day to get it out of the way;
they had all week to take it. With how Lena had taught the class the material, Kara understood the majority of what was to be on the test. There was no way she would get less than a B.

Kara lacked the desire to dress in presentable clothing. It was mid-September and the temperature was beginning cool off. She was a senior, and this was college. It was partially expected for at least one student to show up to class in their pajamas. She wasn’t stooping that low, however, she wasn’t above going to her classes in gym shorts and a graphic tee.

Having woken up before her alarm, Kara had ample time to prepare herself a full breakfast and make it to class on time. As she expected, Lena wasn’t stationed at the front of the room. Instead, her actual professor was present. He was a tall man, slender in frame. His hair was speckled white and cut short. His beard was trimmed, shaped, and entirely grey. He looked like a tenured professor.

Instead of projecting information for the next chapter, he had a breakdown of what was to be on the test displayed. As more students arrived Dr. Williamson let everyone know they weren’t covering any new material today.

“Hello everyone. I’m Dr. Williamson and I’ll be teaching the remainder of this semester. I’d like to thank Ms. Luthor for covering for me on such short notice.” If Kara hadn’t known already who Lena was, she’d have just found out.

The man cleared his throat and sat down on the edge of stage in the front of the room. “Many of you in here have probably never taken one of my lectures. If you have, then you know what I’m about to say, so shut up and don’t spoil it for anyone,” he said with a laugh. A few of the students joined in.

“I believe you all are capable of passing this class and hopefully on the first try. Keeping that in mind, I try to deliver the material in a way that’s easy for most of you to understand. It’s foolish of me to expect all of my students to understand every single topic; its just unrealistic. One of the ways I try to help you guys is by doing a test review before each of my tests. You’ll have four this semester, not including the final. Should your grade be above a B you may opt not to take my final.”

A student raised his hand. “Yes,” Dr. Williamson said motioning up towards the student.

“I thought the chemistry final was a standardized test?”

Dr. Williamson laughed to himself. “It is, and I don’t give a damn. Those tests haven’t been properly updated in years. Standardized tests help no one in my opinion so I don’t utilize them in my classes.” Now Kara could see why so many students liked this man.

“I create my own tests and I don’t word my questions to confuse you. While my final is difficult its not impossible when you utilize your resources. Does that answer your question young man?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Back to the test review. As you can see I’ve outlined what’ll be on the test and about how many questions each topic will have. This isn’t a definite outline, but it’s usually pretty accurate. Today’s class we’ll briefly go over the sections, hitting the high notes, and answering any questions you all may have.” After a slight pause, “Sound good?”

Most of the class either nodded or hollered out in agreement. At the end of the lecture Dr. Williamson made sure everyone knew what his office hours would be and where his office was located. He also told his class that everyone registered to take the exam today would have an easier version of the test. Because he wasn’t around to give them the same study guide everyone else now had at least a day to use, he saw that as making things fair.
Kara left the lecture hall with little fuss and made her way to the cafeteria. Piling her plate full of food, Kara sat and thought again about seeing Lena. When she checked her phone this morning, her missed calls and texts had gone up. They were of course all from Lena. She had been in her chemistry lecture for an hour and a half and no new notifications. Maybe Lena was tired of trying. Kara could at least do the respectable thing and let her know she was still alive.

Sandwich in one hand, phone in the other, Kara typed out a quick message.

<Kara; 11:44am> I’m alive.

That was it. That was all she could think to put. A part of her wanted to apologize for her behavior but she wasn’t fully ready to do that. She reacted the way she had because of Lena. Her actions were her own responsibility. If she was going to apologize for acting strangely and running out, then Lena would have to come clean. There was no way she could say anything until the brunette did.

Kara shoveled far too much food in her mouth in an attempt to avoid her emotions. She loved food, but right now it was making her feel worse. If she didn’t talk to someone she was going to burst.

There was Winn, but he may not be her best choice for relationship advice. He was still pinning after the waitress at The Avenue, Lyra, and she’s been there for seven months. There was always James. Kara wasn’t sure how the conversation would go but it had to be better than with Winn. The only possible snag was the brief moment their sophomore year when they tried dating. They both agreed they were better suited to be friends. Besides, he was with Lucy now and he seemed happy. Then there was Alex, but she was still dealing with her breakup with Maggie. Helping Kara deal with whatever was going on between Lena may not be a good idea.

*James it is.*

That evening, Kara made her way to the practice gym to sit in on James’s basketball practice. Usually all practices were closed, but because she had spent her entire freshman year as the university’s mascot there were very few sporting venues she wasn’t allowed.

Kara set herself up court-side to watch the men’s basketball team hold a scrimmage. Before the game started James came over to talk to her, a look of worry on his face. “Kara there’s something I should tell you.” As James squat down beside her she spotted a familiar head of brown hair. Which was impossible because he transferred universities two years ago.

James realized he had gotten to Kara to late. “Kara-Kara listen. He just got back a few days ago and I haven’t had time to tell you.”

“No, James. You don’t have to apologize. I’ll just go,” she said, lips pulled into a grim smile. James helped her get her things back together before walking her out of the gym. They had almost made it when Kara heard someone running up behind them. Instinctually she clammed up, afraid that it was him.

“Hey Kara! Leaving so soon? We haven’t even started yet.”

James was first to turn around. “Look man, just drop it alright.”

Kara spun around, attempting to hide the discomfort that was most likely visible on her face. “It’s alright James. I’ll be ok.” James looked at once more to be sure she was ok. He handed her her backpack before jogging back to the court.

“Mon-El.” She wanted to say more but that was it. That was all she could bring herself to say.
Mon-El took a step forward, and Kara took the same step back. “Is everything alright? Am I missing something here? I thought you’d be happy to see me.”

There it was. The spark Kara needed to push past how she was feeling. “Happy,” Kara nearly shouted. Fighting to control her tone she went on. “You thought I’d be happy to see you after the way you treated me? After what you did?”

Mon-El looked confused. “I don’t think I did anything wrong.”

Pulling on her backpack, Kara scoffed. “Of course you don’t,” she said under her breath. She turned and left out of the practice gym without uttering another sound.

Kara stood in the middle of NCU’s campus. It was dark out already and very few students were still out and about. The university’s groundskeepers hadn’t shut off the fountain outside of the Student Union. There was something about water that always calmed Kara down. Running a hand through the water, she sat in silence on the edge of the fountain. The past forty-eight hours of her life had been hectic. After what happened with Lena, Kara couldn’t possibly imagine things getting worse; but boy had they.

As if it were some sort of cosmic kick in the ass, her ex-boyfriend was back. Granted, their relationship hadn’t been all bad, but it was undeniably unhealthy. The way he treated her, among other things, left Kara with her own relationship scars. She was the one to end things after finding him at a party hooking up with some cheerleader. It broke her heart to find him half undressed with another woman as he actively tried to deny what was so clearly happening.

Things weren’t great between them, she knew that now, but Mon-El offered her something no one else really could. It took a while for the truth to come out, but once she found out he was a Daxamite things changed. At the time she didn’t know he was a prince. That was of little consequence when Mon-El offered her the opportunity to talk about her home world with someone that could understand the beauty of such a tale, and relate to the loss she felt in the pit of her stomach, having survived the decimation of all she knew.

Maybe that’s why she put up with him for as long as she did. Her sister never liked him, and her friends tolerated him at best. But they were all human and didn’t know what it was like. She hoped to Rao they would never know how it felt to be one of the remaining two of your kind.

Alex must have sensed her sister’s unease because her name popped up on Kara’s caller-ID. It was far more likely that James called her.

“Hey Alex,” she answered with a somber tone.

“Wanna stop by my place? I have potstickers and wings. Even stopped by The Avenue and picked you up some of that off-world alcohol.”

James called her, Kara thought to herself. “Yea. I’ll be there in ten.”

“Door’s unlocked. I’ll see ya when you get here.”

//

Kara found herself hesitating outside of yet another door this week. Granted, the reasoning were different, but there were a few unfortunate overlaps. She knocked twice before heading into her sister’s apartment. She’d have to have a talk with James later for involving the woman, but she was relieved it was one less thing she had to bring up herself.
Alex didn’t move from the sofa when Kara entered. They had danced this dance a time or two in the past. Whenever Kara went through emotionally difficult ordeals, she liked to hide herself away. Talking about the problem only once it had consumed her entirely. Over the years, Alex had found that coaxing Kara in with food and acting as if nothing were wrong could sometimes pull her to her senses quicker.

Doing just just that, Alex looked away from the television for a moment to acknowledge the blonde entering her apartment, before looking back towards the television. Kara saw the redhead was watching some game show so she kept quiet as not to disturb her.

“Food’s on the counter. Rum’s in the fridge,” Kara heard her sister mention as she made her way for the kitchen.

Stuffing her face first with all of the buffalo wings left for her, Kara tried her best to ignore her present problems. That was until a woman on the show Alex was watching reminder her of Lena. Kara scrambled for the fridge in search of the alcohol.

One shot. Then another. That was all it usually took for her to begin to feel something. She poured a small amount into a random glass before returning to her food on the countertop. She swayed in place when she reached out for the potstickers on the container. Laughing at herself, Kara stuffed a few in her mouth. She hadn’t noticed that Alex had seen the whole thing.

The older Danvers sister turned her television down a bit and went to grab a drink of her own. After all, she wouldn’t let Kara drink alone. It was a little after eight o’clock so drinking a glass or two in support of her sister was more than ok. Kara’s eyes flickered to peer at her sister, but never said a word, focusing her attention back on her food. They stood in silence for a beat more; Kara couldn’t take the pressure of her sister glaring at her.

“What,” Kara bit with the beginnings of a drunken slur. She took more sips of the alcohol to wash her food down.

Alex raised her hands in surrender then walked back to her seat on the coach. “Here we go,” she mumbled under her breath. Kara must not have heard her because she hadn’t responded. So Alex sat, and waited, ever the patient and understanding sister.

Kara finished up her food and took the single seat on the opposite side of the couch - wanting her space from her sister.

She huffed and sighed every time the woman that resembled Lena came up on the screen. Alex was beginning to notice the pattern in her behave.

The next time the woman appeared on the screen, “What did that woman ever do to you,” Alex asked, attempting to keep her voice neutral and calm.

Kara just groaned and mumbled something unintelligible under her breath.

“Well if you don’t want to share with the class then by all means quit breathing so hard. I prefer my apartment walls to stay where they are.”

Kara rolled her eyes and slouched down a bit in her seat. Alex was trying to be patient but her patience was wearing thin. Growing tired of her sister’s silence, Alex finally spoke up. “Talk to me Kara.”

“Talk to me Kara,” the blonde parroted in a mocking tone.
“Real mature Kar.”

This was her chance to finally get things off her chest. This is the very reason she went to James, but that went to the Dark Valley in a hand basket when Mon-El decided to make his return known. But Alex had so much on her plate already, how could she possibly add to that stress? So she sat in silence a moment more.

Alex had turned the tv back up to a volume she could easily make out when Kara bursted into tears. She knew it would happen eventually but not quite that way. Kara sat there, drink in hand, bawling her eyes out. There was more going on with her sister than she realized.

It took nearly five minutes before she could calm herself down. Alex was perched on the edge of her massive coffee table, box of tissues in hand. Kar grabbed a few and cleaned her face.

“Now’s your chance to talk about it,” Alex told her.

“You’re still dealing with your own stuff—“

“I’m your sister Kara,” she said, cutting the crying woman off. “That’s what we do.” Jutting her chin forward, “Now out with it.”

Kara and Alex sat for at least an hour rehashing what had happened. Alex was never a supporter of her younger sister dating the Daxamite, but she recognized the woman was an adult - one that could make her own decision because it was her life. Not once had she rubbed Kara’s face in the fact that she was right about Mon-El the whole time. Instead she helped her sister through her first heartbreak.

It took months the get Kara’s spontaneous cries to end. It took double that amount of time for Kara to work out her feelings. In the end, she was able to learn that heartbreak came in many forms. She thought that she was in love with the Daxamite prince, but that wasn’t quite the truth. Her heart was shattered to pieces having to lose the connection they shared. Friends can break your heart, even though she would no longer consider them to be such. Alex had helped her to figure some of that out so there was no need in reiterating any of that back to her.

Instead she told her how it felt to see the man again. When he left National City, Mon-El mentioned he was going to try to make contact with his people one last time. Kara had a feeling that if Krypton had exploded then there was no way Daxam would have survived. It was very likely he knew that as well, but he still held out hope. She never expected to see Mon-El again, even if he hadn’t made contact with anyone.

To see him again, was like ripping the stitches out a half-healed wound. It was like reliving their relationship all over again but in a matter of seconds. Dredging up painful memories she had hoped were long forgotten. And they had been - for the most part - until he showed back up.

“Is that all of it,” Alex wondered. They had talked only of her ex, but she still seemed to be in pain.

“No,” Kara mumbled through a wavering breath. “The reason I was even at James’ practice was because I wanted to talk to him about something.”

Alex nodded for her to go on.

“Remember when I went on that date a few weeks back?” Kara didn’t know how to broach the topic of her having feelings for Lena Luthor. So, she hoped if she beat around the bush enough Alex would say it for her.

Alex nodded again. She remembered vividly poking fun of her sister for nearly injuring a stranger
with her grocery basket. She wasn’t too happy about letting the woman borrow her motorcycle but she did as promised - the blonde brought it back with a scratch.

“Ok.. Do you remember me asking you your opinion of Lena Luthor?” She hadn’t meant to, but her body reacted of its own accord. This was her first time saying Lena’s name out loud in reference to her personal connection to the woman. She had said the youngest Luthor’s name a few times in recent past, but it had always been connected to her jobs - as Supergirl and for CatCo.

Alex had to think a little more for that one, but it did eventually come to her. “Yea. Then you started acting weird and rushed off to get food for— O-Oh,” she shouted upon realizing what Kara was getting at. “Wait, those were the same two women?”

Kara nodded slowly, confirming her sister’s question.

“Then wait—hold up a sec. Didn’t you say that you found out the woman you hit was also your Chem TA?”

There was another slow nod from Kara. In lieu of making another observation, Alex took a long pull from her glass of scotch. Noticing she was almost empty she got up, poured herself another glass, and grabbed Kara’s alcohol as well. Alex sat on the couch closer to Kara instead of sitting back on the coffee table. Kara could tell her sister needed a moment to pull things together in her mind.

It was almost like Alex didn’t want to ask the question. Her voice was strained and didn’t make eye contact with Kara. “You’ve been essentially dating Lena Luthor this whole time and you didn’t think you could tell me.” It had come out like more of a statement but she meant for it to be a question. She was in no place to accuse Kara of anything because she didn’t know the whole story.

“That’s the problem Alex. I didn’t know. When we first met she introduced herself as Katie; not Lena.”

Alex sat up, her forearms bearing down on her thighs. “How’d you find out?”

“Through work.” Kara ran her hands up and down her face before taking a swig straight from the flask the rum was in. “One of the reporters on my team, Finley, covered that gala the Luthors hosted. When we were back in Midvale she sent over her final for me glance over before sending it off to Snapper. Mom was actually the one to point it out. There was a picture of all three of them together.”

“Shit,” Alex drawled, dragging out the beginning of the word. “Does she know that you know?”

Kara bitterly laughed to herself. It was a laugh devoid of all possible humor as there was none to be found in any of this. “No,” Kara said matter of factly. “We had dinner Friday night and I couldn’t keep it together. You know I’m a bad liar,” she said, a smile creeping on her face. “I panicked and ran for it.”

“Smooth Kara,” Alex teased. Before Kara could speak again, “The attack at LuthorCorp was Friday.”

“Now you’re getting it.” Thankfully Alex was picking up on how complicated this all was. It was making having this conversation a lot easier. “I’m angry at her for lying to me but I want to be there to help her through this. That’s why I ran out of her apartment. I don’t know what to do because on the one hand I’m not supposed to know who she really is and I’m not supposed to know about the attack. In the other, I know about all of it and have to keep my mouth shut. There lies the dilemma. I can’t live like this Alex.”

The red-haired woman sat in silence for a moment, swirling the amber liquid around the glass,
thinking of how to respond.

“Do you like her? Taking her lying out of the equation for now.”

Kara hummed. Before finding out that ‘Katie’ was just a front, Kara had already picked up on the fact that she had feelings for the brunette. Nothing serious, but definitely something she wanted to explore further.

“Then you have to tell her. The longer you keep her secret the worse you’ll feel. You’ll wind up resenting her for something she never asked you to do.”

“But how?”

Alex chuckled at Kara’s ability to complicate everything. “You just have to tell her you know. It doesn’t have to be anything crazy.”

Kara nodded, feeling the effects of the alcohol again. Despite that, she was mentally trying to keep notes of all of her sister’s suggestions.

Kara pulled her legs in the seat and sat criss-crossed. Alex was still leaning on her thighs thinking about something else.

“Just be careful Kara,” Alex said in a soft voice.

“I always am—“

“No Kara, I mean it,” she added firmly, now looking the blonde directly in her eyes. “I’m not going to stop you from possibly pursuing something with Lena, but I need you to be careful.” Before Kara could protest she went on, fierceness showcasing in her eyes. “Look at all the things that are connected to her right now. Her mother is potentially roaming around National City having aliens abducted with some strange bearded man. I hope she’s nothing like her ancestors and a secret xenophobe who wants all aliens wiped off the face of the Earth. Not to mention she was nearly killed a few days ago. All of those things are a threat to your very existence and I just want you to be safe.”

Kara hadn’t looked at Lena in quite that way. From what she knew about Lena, she didn’t seem the type to be prejudiced against aliens but they hadn’t exactly brought up the topic. Then there was the very real possibility that the matriarch of their family was linked to the alien kidnappings. But if it weren’t for Kara showing up when she did, both of the Luthor children would likely be dead. She could totally see where her sister was coming from when she looked at it from a different perspective. Even if Alex was the textbook definition of a protective sibling, her reasoning was solid, and Kara always appreciated the woman looking out for her.

Kara reach out a hand to rest on her sister’s knee. “I’ll be careful. I promise Alex.”

Alex rested her hand on top of Kara’s. “Thank you,” she said with a warm smile. “When you talk to her, be sure to consider where she’s coming from. She’s a Luthor after all. One of the most hated families in this country so she likely lied to you for her own reasons. She still has to protect herself. I’m not saying I condone what she did, because I don’t, but I will say you should give her a chance to fully explain her side of things.”

“I will.” Kara had already planned to hear the younger woman out. She needed to know exactly why Lena felt the need to hold up this charade. She needed to hear Lena out so that she could hopefully understand.

“One thing I want to know is how it took you so long to realize she was Lena Luthor?” Alex joked
Kara huffed and fell back into her chair. She wrapped her arms across her chest and pouted playfully. Hoping Alex would stop teasing her, “There isn’t a ton of media coverage of her. Most of the pictures I’ve seen since being on this planet she been ridiculously blurry or her face was covered. There was one when she was a kid, but that’s not much to go on.”

Alex laughed at her sister’s innocence once more. It never ceased to amaze of all the things Kara was still learning after calling Earth her home for ten years. They continued laughing and joking for a few more hours before Alex needed to call quits. She had work first thing in the morning and Kara had one class then work early tomorrow as well.

Alex got Kara an Uber, not wanting the woman to walk home by herself let alone fly home while she was intoxicated. The blonde grumbled at the idea that she needed a babysitter to get home, but realized just how right Alex was when she tripped over her own feet trying to make her way to Alex’s front door.

Kara asked her Uber driver to stop at the first fast food restaurant that was still open at eleven o’clock on a Tuesday night. Alex hadn’t left her a ton of food so she was starving. Not to mention she needed to feed the alcohol she had consumed. Five cheeseburgers, three large fries, a ten piece nugget, and two sodas later Kara’s stomach was happy. She showered and set her alarm for the next morning, hoping she wouldn’t have a killer hangover. She even filled up a tall glass with water, placing it on her nightstand, for future Kara to drink. Nearly asleep, Kara heard her phone vibrate on its charging dock.

With squinted eyes she looked to see who had the audacity to call her at such a late hour. Didn’t they know she had an emotional night filled with shameless drinking? Kara shut one eye to get the screen in focus, but she wasn’t quick enough. Spread eagle in the middle of her queen sized bed, Kara lazily reached out a hand to grab her phone. It was a pitiful motion as her arm barely extended over the edge of the bed. Her arm flopped back down to the bed not having the energy to actually get up for the phone. Kara figured it probably wasn’t anything of importance because whoever it was, they hadn’t called back.

The next morning she would wake to find the missed call had been from Lena.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for all the support y’all have shown, it really means a lot; especially w/everything I’m going through in my personal life right now. Holler at me in the comments or on tumblr and tell me what you think of the chapter.

Until next time!
Chapter Notes

Forgive any typos you may find. Sort of a trigger warning, there's a bit of violence in this chapter but nothing gore-y or described in extreme detail.

Now sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Lena had been calling Kara for days. The only piece of mind she was able to muster came when Kara sent her that two-word text letting her know the woman was at least still breathing. Lena had a feeling in the pit of her stomach that something was wrong. As unfortunate as the shooting was it afforded a small distraction to refrain from worrying about the blonde. If Kara wanted to talk to her, she would pick up her phone.

Lex had been released from the hospital Monday morning. Lillian insisted that he stay with her at the mansion so she could help him recover. It was first thing Wednesday morning and Lena was on her way to check in on both her mother and her brother, only stopping for pastries and coffee for everyone.

Unsurprisingly, Lillian was nowhere to be found. Lena left the pastries on the kitchen island and made her way up to her brother’s room. On the landing for the second floor, Lena could have sworn she heard voices, and they didn’t sound too pleasant. The closer she was to her brother’s door the louder the voices became.

This was why she hadn’t been able to find her mother downstairs – she was with Lex and they were arguing about something. For the life of her, she hadn’t been able to make out what they were saying. Because she didn’t know what she was about to walk into, Lena knocked firmly on the closed door and waited for someone to invite her inside. Lillian swiftly opened the door with a tersely forced grin.

Raising the tray of coffees, “I come bearing caffeine.”

Lillian nodded her thanks before grabbing the cup marked with her name. She took a sip before walking out of her son’s room. It was quite unusual for Lex and Lillian to argue about anything, let alone be caught doing it. The brunette watched her mother make her way down the hall before she walked into her brother’s room.

Lex was sat on the edge of his bed, dressed down for a day to be spent inside. His arm was partially wrapped in the sling he was currently struggling to put on. Lena set the coffees on his bedside table and tried to help him. To her surprise, Lex brushed her hands aside as if he didn’t want her help.

No matter how much he groaned, or how many times Lena asked if he wanted her help, Lex stubbornly continued his hopeless attempt to get the sling on himself; properly.

“What’s going on with you?”

Lex’s head snapped up, eyebrows pulled into a scowl. “As if you don’t already know,” he snapped.
Lena shook her head in confusion. She had no clue what Lex was referring to. “Obviously not.”

The older Luthor released a strangled noise, finally getting the sling in place. “I can’t believe you sided with her on this. You know how hard I’ve worked to get here,” Lex chided his younger sister.

“Lex, I don’t know what you’re getting at. Why don’t you just tell me exactly what it is that I’ve done.”

Lex walked around his room in search of his slippers, giving Lena the cold shoulder. “You and mother have decided that I’m unfit to run the company while I’m recovering. I was shot in the arm, not my head. You of all people I would have thought would be on my side.”

“I did nothing of the sort. Yes, mother and I talked about me taking over while you recovered, and I told her no. So, before you blame me for anything else how about you open your damn mouth and ask me.”

“And you expect me to just believe you?” The way Lex was staring her down was something she had never seen in him before. He looked frightened and angry. Like a trapped wild animal desperately searching for a way out.

*Why is staying in control of the company so important to him?*

“And here I thought you’d be the last person to say that to me.” Lena wanted to cry, but she wasn’t about to let her brother see her tears. Whoever he was in that moment, that man wasn’t her brother. “Call me when you get your head out of your ass Alexander.”

Having chewed out her brother, her next stop was to find her mother and ask her what exactly she’d told Lex. Whatever it was, it was clearly far from the truth if he thought she was to become the acting CEO of LuthorCorp.

Lena found the older woman sat in her study with a strawberry Danish on a small saucer. She was a step into the woman’s office and her mother hadn’t even looked up. “I knew you’d find your way down here eventually.”

Lena scoffed rather loudly, “Well you caused this situation.”

“I did what now?” Lillian rotated her desk chair around to look at her daughter stood in the doorway.

“Lex has just informed me that I’m taking over the company. And, correct me if I’m wrong, I told you no when asked, then, that I’d think about it,” Lena said, words drenched in sarcasm.

“Is that what he told you,” the woman dismissively laughed. Lena watched as her mother slowly strode towards her. The woman closed her office door shut before she continued. “I spoke with Lex about the possibility of you taking over the company. Not once did I say that you were.”

Repeating her brother’s words, “And why should I believe you? I’ve lost count the number of times you’ve pinned us against each other.”

“Because I have no reason to lie to you Lena. Regardless of what you may think of me, I do have your best interest at heart.”

“Even if that’s true, it hasn’t always been the case.”

“Lena, I want you to listen to me, and really hear me when I say this. I’m only trying to protect you.”
Lena lightly brushed past her mother, “How are you feeling? Have you found out any more about your illness?”

“I have,” Lillian answered. “But I’d rather not speak of that right now.”

The two women sat in her study in near silence for a while when someone knocked on the door.

It was Lex who slowly pushed the door open. “There’s an Agent Danvers here to speak with us. Would you like to talk to her in here?” Lex still had that look in his eyes as he looked at them both.

“In here is fine.”

Lillian stood up and straightened out her dress before the agent came inside. Lena stood up as well, curious to see what all of this was about.

She recognized the woman that came into the room as the same agent that took her statement after the shooting. Even though she didn’t know the woman, having that preexisting relationship eased a bit of her tension.

“Mrs. Luthor. Ms. Luthor.” Both women nodded as they were addressed.

“It’s good to see you again Agent Danvers,” Lillian said. Lena cut her eyes towards her mother not aware the two were also acquainted.

“Thank you for allowing me into your home. I only have a few more questions for all of you,” the agent politely said, address all present company.

“All of us,” Lex asked, not even trying to hide his irritation.

Agent Danvers didn’t even dignify Lex’s question with a response. Lillian motioned for them all to have a seat, not knowing how long this could take. Agent Danvers sat in the armed chair at the foot of the coffee table. Lena and Lillian sat together on one of the sofas with Lex across from them on the other sofa.

“I’ll start with you Mrs. Luthor. I know you wanted a few days before I followed up with any questions I had in regard to what happened to you.”

Lillian nodded, aware of her own request.

Agent Danvers pulled out her notepad to take notes as they went along. “Are you still refraining from commenting on the implications of your involvement with the Llarans?”

“I am, as I have no knowledge of what he speaks. That was my first time ever laying eyes on the creature and I should hope it be my last.”

“Are you aware of anyone that may want to hurt you. Out looking for revenge? Anything of that nature?”

“The position I previously held for several years afforded me as many enemies; known and unknown. I’m sure our legal team can coordinate any information you may require.”

“Mother, you should stop speaking,” Lex firmly suggested.

Lena knew the look her mother shot Lex, who was sat in front of her, all too well. There was no need for the woman to verbally admonish him for his behavior, her face did that well enough. Lex cowered backwards into the sofa, resting his injured arm against his abdomen.
“Mr. Luthor, I definitely have a few questions for you. Since you were in no shape to make a statement after the attack, can you tell me in your own words what happened?”

Lex defiantly sat, staring Agent Danvers down.

“We can do this the easy way or the hard way. It really doesn’t matter to me.”

“Answer the agent’s questions Lex,” Lena said. “You’re making this harder than it has to be.”

He sat there in silence, not even so much as parting his lips.

“Alright, then I’ll move onto you Ms. Luthor.”

“Please, call me Lena.”

“Alright then Lena, are you aware of anyone that may want to harm either of you?”

Lena shook her head. “Being a Luthor, I’ve grown accustomed to believing most people want me dead.”

The agent gave her a half-smile before moving on. “I did a little research and found that you’re a student at NCU, but I wasn’t able to find what you were completing your graduate research on.”

Lena had hoped the red-haired woman wouldn’t ask her about her research. Lying in this case was a crime she felt was unnecessary to commit. So, she answered the question without giving anything away. “That’s because the research is being funded by the federal government. I’m not at liberty to discuss the particulars.”

“Seeing as I’m a federal agent those rules may not entirely apply.”

“With all due respect Agent Danvers, if your security clearance were high enough I’m sure you’d already be aware of it.”

The woman laughed to herself before speaking, “I’m sure you’re right.” She stood up, possibly finished with this round of questions.

“Mr. Luthor I’m going to ask that you come with me since you’ve refused to answer my questions here.”

Lillian didn’t even budge when her son shot up and looked towards her. “Are you really going to let her do this?”

“Agent Danvers did ask you nicely and you acted like a petulant child. I’m sure you can handle this on your own. Isn’t that what you told me earlier?”

Lex blankly stared between his mother and the agent waiting for him to move. He was aware the woman couldn’t arrest him because of his injury and Lena could tell he was using that to his advantage.

“Lex, you’re making this more complicated than it has to be.”

“I’ve done nothing wrong. In case anyone hadn’t noticed, I was the one that was shot,” he said, gesturing towards his shoulder.

“No, Mr. Luthor, I’m well aware of your injury. The thing is something doesn’t add up. Your sister believes she was the target, yet you were shot. And might I say, based on your op note you are quite
the lucky man.” Lena watched as the woman crossed her arms across her chest, sizing up her brother. “You see, I have a medical degree and I was quite surprised to read that the bullet missed anything of importance.”

“The way things look, that gunman either had spectacular aim or you really are a lucky man. But here’s the thing, I don’t think luck had anything to do with it. I think your wound was intentional. If Lena really were the target with the precision of your shooter she’d be as good as dead. You would have been better off having the shooter obliterate your shoulder blade so it wouldn’t be as suspicious. Vanity doesn’t agree with injury.”

Lena and her mother were looking frantically between the woman who was rather confident in her accusations and a man who was standing his ground until his last breath.

“And what exactly would you be implying Agent Danvers,” Lex asked, sounding cocky.

The woman was now silent. There really was no reason for her to say it, having just said it in so many words. The smirk on Lex’s face grew wider and wider until a few of his pearly white teeth were flashing through.

“I would dare say that is quite the leap you’ve just made Danvers. Why would I try to have my sister, whom I love dearly, killed?”

“You tell me.”

“I won’t be doing that. Nor will I be going anywhere with you. The way I see it, you’re grasping at straws. A few circumstantial pieces of evidence have fallen in a way that has framed me for what has happened. You’re hoping I confess to something to make your job easier and that won’t be happening. If you had me for anything we wouldn’t be having this conversation now would we Agent Danvers,” he arrogantly stated.

Agent Danvers had a smirk across her face similar to her brother’s. Whatever game those two were playing they seemed to have come to a stalemate. Lena had been so sure that she was the target after the way Lex tried to protect her. Agent Danvers’ line of questioning made her reconsider a few things.

Rising to her feet, “Agent Danvers, how about I see you out,” Lena offered.

“Until next time Special Agent Danvers,” Lex facetiously called out when the women were a few steps away from the door.

“I’d like to apologize for my brother’s behavior. He was already in a sour mood prior to your arrival.”

With a chuckle, “There’s no need. I deal with people far worse than him on a regular basis.”

Lena laughed a little to herself, knowing that Lex was actually pretty tame during their talk. There’s no way she’d want to deal with multiple people a day with an attitude similar to, or worse than, her brother’s. No chance in Hell.

“I’d like to ask you about what you said back there, if that’s ok,” Lena said, voice slightly breaking.

“I didn’t mean to scare you—”

“No, no that’s not it,” she lied. “Do you really think her tried to kill me?”
The woman looked as though she’d rather be answering any other question but that one. “If I’m being completely honest with you Lena, I do. Nothing else makes sense about your case. As sure of a shot as I am, I’m positive that shot to his arm wasn’t a mistake.”

Lena nodded slowly. It wasn’t what she wanted to hear but maybe she needed to hear it. Now her mother saying she was trying to protect her was making a little more sense. But Lex’s motive was still an unknown. Why would he want her dead?

“Here’s my card. If anything happens, call me. Another agent should be coming around in a few days to try one last time to get your brother’s statement.”

Lena looked over the card when something clicked in her head. “Danvers…” she said aloud, fiddling with the card in her hands. “Do you have a sister by chance?”

“I do,” the woman hesitantly answered. “Why do you ask?”

“Oh, no reason,” Lena lied again. Even though the two women looked nothing alike, Lena wondered if she had just met the woman Kara had spoken about a few times before.

Alex nodded and said her goodbyes and Lena addressed her by her title one last time. “By the way, you can call me Alex.” With that the woman was off towards her blacked out government issue SUV not dissimilar to the one she drove herself.

After closing the door, Lena turned around to find her brother storming off to the second floor of the mansion, their mother not far behind him. There was something going on and she needed to figure it all out before someone succeeding in killing her.

No matter how badly she wanted to believe Lex had nothing to do with the shooting, it wasn’t like he denied Alex’s accusations; which hadn’t gone unnoticed. It was unsettling to believe the boy she grew up with, the one that taught her so much of what she knew, possibly held a grudge against her. One so consuming he had to rid his life of her.

She couldn’t wrap her mind around the man that loved her to the ends of the universe and back – the man that was always there to support her – thought so very little of her. There was no way the man she knew Lex to be was the same man currently roaming the halls of the Luthor mansion. Then again, the man that looked at her with cold and disconnected eyes earlier was very likely the same man. She refused to believe that he was a man incapable of being saved. The Lex she knew and loved was there somewhere, he was just buried underneath whatever he was going through.

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On Kara’s way to class she received a call from J’onn. From the sound of things, she’d be missing her Chemistry lecture. By now, Kara had started to make a few friends in her class. On her way back to her apartment, she sent a text to a couple of her classmates asking for the notes in advance because she wasn’t feeling well.

Kara had only made it two blocks from her apartment so there was no need to find the nearest alleyway to change into her Supersuit. Switching the headband to helmet form she was out of her window in the blink of an eye.

“You’re headed to the park near the university. Local PD received a call of a brawl that broke out
not far from The Avenue,” J’onn Informed her.

“On it.”

Kara zipped by building after building trying to get to the scene as quickly as possible. If J’onn called her to intervene things must have been bad.

The park was coming into her line of sight but there didn’t seem to be any altercations. Kara landed just outside of the main entrance and looked around. There were signs of destruction, indicating something had taken place, but there wasn’t anyone around.

“Are you sure they’re still here? I don’t see anyone.”

“The call came in seven minutes ago. Surely, they’re still around. Backup is two minutes out Supergirl.”

Kara walked further into the park for a look around. It was pretty early in the morning, but there was always a decent crowd working their way around the area. At this hour there were usually mom’s out with their children, the pretty common joggers, quite a few business folks out for fresh air before their day stuck in the office, and all the commuters that cut through the park to get where they had to go. But the park was empty.

Something’s not right.

Kara’s head shot to her left at the first sound of a grunt she could make out as being nearby. Flying over, Kara found an alien bleeding out in front of her. She scanned the area to make sure there wasn’t anyone else she needed to check on.

“Hey, hey. You’re going to be alright,” Kara panted as she looked over the female alien. The woman’s blue blood soaked her hands as she searched to find the cause of the bleeding.

“Forget about me Supergirl,” the woman struggled to say. After coughing up a mouthful of blood, “There are others that could still use your help.”

The woman wasn’t able to tell her where before she drew her last breath. Kara shot up into the sky to get a better vantage point. She found that alien near the south edge of the park, so where were these people she was talking about. Abandoning the park, Kara furthered her search closer to The Avenue.

Suddenly there was a midsize sedan being hurled her way. Making a split-second decision Kara used her heat vision to cut the car in half. In the middle of the street was a handful of aliens nearly about to kill each other.

Swooping in to break up the fight Kara was knocked onto her back by one of the larger aliens in the group. She laid there, gasping, just having the wind knocked out of her. The same alien, that looked to share a resemblance with a canine, kicked her like a soccer ball and launched her into the edge of the nearest building.

“Supergirl,” J’onn hollered over the comms, “Are you alright?”

Kara coughed so hard she could have coughed up one of her lungs. “Yea, I’m good. Thank Rao I didn’t eat breakfast this morning.” Even after getting kicked around she still found time to crack jokes.

Kara haphazardly propelled herself into the center on the ensuing brawl, without an inkling of a plan. She ducked and dodged punches and various objects being thrown her way. Despite her unskillful
entrance she was finding her rhythm. The other aliens had her outnumbered, and a few were bigger than her, but they didn’t seem to be fighting with a plan either.

Kara’s fist connected with the jaw of the canine like alien that had kicked her earlier on, knocking him out cold. She had slightly dropped her guard when a woman violently screamed and grabbed her by her cape. This was the perfect opportunity to test out Winn’s latest upgrade to it. Reaching up for her left medallion Kara pressed down on the hidden release for the cape. It separated from her suit almost Instantaneously.

Another alien was seconds away from smashing her head in with a fire hydrant. In one sweeping motion, Kara spun around in a kneeling position effectively taking the aliens legs out from underneath him. As she was hoping, he dropped the hydrant on his own head.

They were still in the middle of a busy street where citizens were hurriedly attempting to keep themselves covered and far away from the scene unfolding in front of them. Kara had to find a way to end this, and fast. She spun around to check her surrounds when she saw a woman - dressed in all black with most of her head covered - just watching her; it was more like staring. Either way she wasn’t paying attention to the last two aliens standing.

All too late, Kara looked over her shoulder to see a lamppost being swung in her direction. It was too late for her to do anything so braced for impact. The light end of the post connected with her temple and knocked her to the ground yet again. Usually that wouldn’t have done much to her, but she was already tired and taken off guard.

A woman only bigger than herself in way of her muscle size stood over top of her. Kara was expecting the woman to pummel her head into the pavement, maybe even pick her up and slam her back to the ground a few times, but neither happened.

Foolishly, the woman held a knife to her throat as she knelt down. “I’m sorry about this Supergirl.” Kara owlishly blinked up at the woman. Tires from what had to be DEO SUVs screeched as they arrived on the scene. The woman hadn’t budged but the man still with her fled as soon as he saw the trucks.

“What are you sorry for,” Kara asked. She was trying to keep the alien talking long enough for the DEO agents to get close enough to subdue her.

“He made us do this. If we didn’t he said he’d go after our families.” Kara studied the woman’s periwinkle face, watching a small tear well up in her right eye. “I’m sorry,” she apologized again. The woman slashed the blade against the side of her throat, but her eyes shot open wide with disbelief. Kara’s being bulletproof was public knowledge, so the female alien shouldn’t have been that surprised that nothing happened; or so she thought.

While the woman was still stunned, Kara threw her off her hips and pinned the alien to the ground this time. “Who made you do this?” Kara shouted. She was unusually tired and would have been fine if the woman had only held the knife to her throat, but she had tried to kill her, so Kara was rightfully pissed. “Who,” she barked again through gritted teeth.

“I-I don’t know his name,” the woman stuttered.

Kara could hear J’onn ordering her to stand down in her helmet, but she wasn’t listening. “Was he human?”

“Yes, yes,” the woman rushed to answer. “*Please* don’t kill me! I was only thinking about my
Kara stumbled backwards off of the woman, stunned she thought she would kill her. Supergirl had a rule that she would never kill anyone unless it was absolutely necessary. Even then, she’d rather not have to do it. Kara fixed her mouth to say something but couldn’t. Agents had swarmed around the two of them and others were hunting down the alien that fled.

Kara had almost forgotten about the woman she saw watching her moments ago. Not having shook off the feeling of being watched, she peered around to find her. There she was, in the same spot, stationed beside a dumpster at the mouth of an alley.

“Hey, you,” she called after the mysterious woman.

The woman began to backpedal away as Kara jogged over towards her. She turned to run but Kara came up short. The woman had jogged a few paces before launching off towards the sky and flying away.

Skidding to a halt, Kara found that she didn’t know what to do next. To her knowledge, there were only two humanoid presenting aliens on this planet capable of flight; her and her cousin Kal-El. With that in mind, Kara had no idea who she could possibly be. Her curiosity was justifiably piqued.

Before having to decide, she heard Alex’s voice over her comms. “Supergirl, where’d you run off to?” Kara didn’t respond, afraid her voice would betray her. She ran back over to where she was last and looked for her sister.

Thinking better of blurting out what she just saw, “There’s a woman – alien – towards the south side of the park. I wasn’t able to save her,” Kara said, feeling conflicted.

Alex re-tasked a team of three agents to sweep the location sending a medic along with them. “You did good Supergirl. There were no other casualties and civilian injuries look to be minimal.”

Kara was feeling a bit woozy. She knew nothing around her was moving and yet everything was spinning. She felt light-headed and weak. Wobbly tumbling to the ground, she could hear her sister’s voice; it was sounding further and further away. The heroine had no idea what was happening to her. Her body felt heavy but also like her limbs were being torn from her core. It was a crippling, excruciating pain. Writhing on the ground at Alex’s feet, Kara cried out in agonizing pain.

It wouldn’t stop, it only intensified. Kara’s helmet was pulled from her head and hands were fumbling over her. She couldn’t take the pain anymore. She fought to get to her feet but could barely move. Her vision was blurring at the edges. Kneeling on all fours, Kara pushed everyone around her away before trying to fly; anywhere had to be better than there. The superhero didn’t move ten feet before falling back down to the street. She tried again not even making it off the ground this time.

There was a sturdy set of arms wrapped under her head and under her knees. As quickly as she felt the person’s arms she could feel they were flying. The further away they were the better she felt. The pain slowly ebbed but her energy still felt zapped. Forcing her eyelids open, Kara realized it was J’onn that came to her rescue. Knowing she was safe, Kara let her eyelids close as she slipped into a state of unconsciousness.

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There were mumbling voices off in the background somewhere. Kara was positive that J’onn had brought her back to the DEO. She was right. There were sunlamps positioned around her bed and she was no longer in her suit. She wanted to call out to get someone’s attention, but no sound came.
out when she tried. Head falling to the side, she was out again.

The sun was well on its way to setting when Kara shot straight up in her bed, gasping for air. Hollering and clamoring for help she was terrified. Alex was at her side in a flash doing her best to calm her sister down. Focusing on the shushing noises the red-haired was making, Kara tried to steady her breathing. Reminding herself she was safe, and the pain was gone.

“There you go. Just breath,” Alex calmly said. The last thing Kara needed right now was her freaking out too.

Kara ran her hands through her hair as she slowed her shaky breathes.

“What happened to me? It felt like I was being torn apart from the inside out.”

Alex gave her an uneasy look, no longer making eye contact with her. The woman was hiding something. “Alex,” Kara said firmer than she was intending.

“What do you remember?”

“Uh…” She looked around the med bay to gather her scattered thoughts, trying to recall what exactly had happened. “J’onn called me out to help with some alien fight this morning. I got there to find a woman bleeding out in the park.” Kara looked up towards the other woman seeking confirmation for what she already knew; the woman didn’t make it.

“After that I found some aliens fighting in the middle of the street a block or so away from the park. I remember feeling weak going into the fight but didn’t think it was a problem. I got knocked around a bit. Then I had a knife pressed to my throat and the alien tried to kill me.”

Alex was nodding, standing a foot away from the bed. Noticing how hard it was for Kara to recount what happened to her, she took the liberty to finish for her. “The alien that tried to kill you was acting under orders by the same man Pult warned us about. He threatened all their families, even knew things about them all he shouldn’t’ve.” She hesitated, unsure how to continue.

“Then how did I end up here?”

Alex uncomfortably shifted where she stood. “There was a substance hidden underneath a few of the cars along the street. It was situated in a sort of perimeter – we think the fight was a trap to lure you in. You were around the rocks long enough for them to weaken your powers. Did you notice that the knife actually cut you?”

Kara reached up to the side of her neck where the weapon had glided over skin. She was under the impression the knife hadn’t done any damage.

“It’s gone now, but it wasn’t deep enough to seriously harm you.”

“I don’t understand.”

“We think the rocks are what caused you to feel the way you did. Why that knife was able to break your skin. We brought in a few samples to test what they were.”

Kara leaned back down onto her bed. *No wonder there wasn’t anyone in the park but that woman.*

“Why was someone after me?”

“That’s the other thing. The alien that fled when we arrived, he was quite the chatter box. He’s under the impression that whoever that guy is that’s recruiting aliens may be after you next. The way he
described it, our possible kidnapper is attempting to build a collection. One of every alien variety on this planet.”

Kara slung an arm across her face, hiding the warm tears streaming down the sides of her face. She was overwhelmed and felt useless. Their inability to produce results in finding this man was causing more harm to be done. Not only was he tricking aliens into participating in something under false pretenses, he was blackmailing them to do his dirty work now too. To make matters worse, he was taking a special interest in her now.

“I’m sure you won’t be happy about this, but we’ve called Clark.”

“You did what?”

Alex pulled her lips into a tight line. “We didn’t exactly have a choice. Once we swept the area and found those rocks we needed to know if he knew anything about them. Seeing as they weakened you, the Girl of Steel.”

“Well, did he?”

Alex was right. Kara definitely wasn’t happy hearing her cousin was consulted. Their relationship was strained at best and she preferred to keep her distance. If he didn’t want anything to do with her after she crashed down on this planet, then she didn’t want anything to do with him now.

“He has a few ideas but nothing concrete. He said that he’d get back to us after doing some research of his own.”

Kara was humorlessly laughing to herself. How did they let this whole situation get so out of hand? She was feeling so bad for herself after what happened she didn’t want to tell her sister about the woman that had gotten away. After hearing that they reached out to Kal for help, why not mention it? Things couldn’t possibly get any worse.

“I guess there’s no point in keeping this from everyone but there was a woman there. At the fight I mean.”

Alex’s eyebrows pulled into a frown. She was a tad offended that her sister felt that she needed to keep anything from her. She defensively crossed her arms over her chest and waited for Kara to elaborate.

“I’m guessing no one else saw her but me because you haven’t said anything.” Stamping her laughs, Kara sat back up, tear tracks shining on her skin. “She flew away from me,” Kara said, lifting her hand to motion how the woman shot up into the sky.

“How did—”

Cutting the redhead off, “I noticed her staring me down during the fight. When I went after her she just…” Kara made the same flying motion again.

“What did she look like,” Alex worriedly asked, sitting down at the foot of the gurney.

“Human, which doesn’t make any sense. Unless your kind can suddenly fly, it should only be me and Kal-El.”

They sat in silence for a moment as Kara watched the wheels no doubt spinning in overdrive in Alex’s head. There was no good explanation for what Kara saw. She was weak during the fight, not delirious, so there was no reason for her sister to doubt her words.
“How about we talk about something else,” Kara suggested, to which Alex nodded. “Have you heard anything else about Jeremiah?”

“No. Mom hasn’t said anything else since we left.”

“No news is good news, right?”

Alex gave her a smile that didn’t quite reach her eyes. Kara could tell her sister was at odds with herself. The relationship she had with her father could likely be the culprit, and understandably so. Even if Jeremiah had just walked out on their mother, it wouldn’t change the fact that there was a bond between them.

Changing the subject, “I don’t know if you already know this, but I spoke with the Luthors yesterday.”

“When you say Luthors…”

“Yes, even Lena, Kara. Mrs. Luthor had wanted some time before we asked her anymore questions. It just so happened to work out the way it did since we also needed to get Lex’s statement.”

“And?” Kara had perked up just a bit. She had been worried sick about how Lena was doing, but she couldn’t bring herself to speak to the woman yet. She was a weird amalgamation of concern, interest, hurt, and embarrassment – with a little of her pride mixed in.

Alex already knew what Kara wanted to know, but she hadn’t completely kept her sister abreast in their investigation. “She seemed alright, but Kara…”

The blonde sat straight up, “‘But Kara’ what?”

“J’onn and I wanted to take another look at everything that took place during the shooting.” Alex paused after noticing her sister was intently hanging on her every word. “We were able to get a copy of Lex’s chart and all scans done while he was admitted. The shot to his arm, it missed anything of vital importance.”

“Yea, I looked over the wound myself. It was basically just a flesh wound.”

Alex nodded, waiting to see if her sister would pick up on what she wasn’t saying. After an awkward beat of her nodding Alex realized she would have to say it.

“I think his gunshot wound was deliberately placed. That level of accuracy…there’s no way some untrained shooter hit him there by accident. There’s no such thing as coincidences Kara.”

Kara leaned backwards, head tilting to the side. If what Alex was saying was true, that means Lena wasn’t the mark after all. It was just staged to look that way. “Can we prove any of that?”

Alex sighed. “Not yet. You weren’t able to find the shooter and all we have to go on is what Lena said happened.”

“Does she know?”

Clearing her throat, “I sort of…might have…said some of this in front of them all,” Alex mumbled under her breath.

Kara spluttered, surprised her sister would make such a bold move. “You do realize what you’ve done right? If you’re right and Lex really did try to kill his sister, you figuring that out just put you on
his radar. He’ll be after you too.”

“You weren’t there Kara. There was something in his eyes and instinct took over me. He all but refused to give his statement and knew that I had nothing concrete against him. He’s hiding something.”

“Still Alex, what were you thinking?”

“You didn’t see the look on that smug bastards face,” Alex groaned, rolling her eyes at her sister.

“You’re not the only one that could be hurt by the things you said. Lena knows now and they’re siblings Alex. Don’t you think things will change now that her brother has been accused of attempted murder?”

Alex opened her mouth, then shut it again. “I know what I’m doing Kara. Besides, Lena was acting cagey when I brought up her research. She answered my question by not answering it.”

“I know she’s a part of some federally backed research project, but what does that have to do with Lex and all of this?”

“That’s what we need to figure out,” Alex stressed. “Have you talked to her yet?”

Kara quickly looked down at her hands. She had been screening Lena’s calls because she didn’t know what to say. “Not yet,” she sheepishly admitted.

Sighing with an indignant sound, “Wha-Kara! C’mon.” That was all Alex said. Kara could feel the older woman staring at her, but she never looked up. Alex left the room leaving her sister to rest a little longer under the sun lamps.

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J’onn allowed Kara to leave the DEO the next morning, having already called her out of work. Whatever she was exposed to, it had drained her to a point she wasn’t able to use her powers. No superhearing, superspeed – she wasn’t even able to fly. Alex drove her home and ordered her to spend the day resting. She would be stopping by after her shift to check in on her.

Kara curled up on her couch in a hoody and sweats. She practically slept the entire day yesterday, so she checked her phone for any missed calls or texts. She had missed a string of texts from her friends in their group message. Everyone was checking to see if she was alright after seeing what had happened on the news. To her disappoint, all of the messages she had, and none were from Lena; the one person she wanted to speak to the most.

In the brunette’s defense, she had stopped calling Kara days ago. So why was she surprised to see she still hadn’t reached out? It had been a week since she ran out of Lena’s apartment. She couldn’t blame the woman for no longer calling; she’d have stopped too. The last call in her Call Log from “Katie” was Wednesday morning at 12:07am.

Kara spun the phone around in her hands a few times before dialing Lena’s number. She still wasn’t ready to talk, but if she waited for that moment to come she’d be waiting forever to speak to Lena again.
On the last ring, the call was picked up. It was the wee hours of the morning, so Lena was likely starting her day. Secretly, she was hoping the brunette wouldn’t have pick up the phone.

“Ho-Hold on,” Kara heard the woman yell out. It sounded as if Lena had dropped the phone rushing to answer it in time. She quietly chuckled and waited for Lena to come back on the line.

“Kara, you still there?”

“Yea. Yea I’m here. It’s good to hear your voice again.” She could just barely make out the sigh coming from the other end of the call.

“You don’t sound too good. Are you sick?”

“Just a little under the weather. Nothing a few day’s rest can’t fix.” It was close enough to the truth it couldn’t really be deemed a lie.

They sat on the phone in silence for a beat. Kara didn’t know how she wanted to proceed with their conversation and guessed Lena didn’t either. They both started speaking at the same time; Lena insisted Kara go first.

“I called because, among other things, I wanted to apologize for running out on you last Friday.”

“I tried calling you to make sure you were alright.”

“That’s the other part of my call. I think we should talk-but, not over the phone.”

“Uhm, ok. I was going to suggest the same.” Kara could hear the nerves strangling Lena’s voice. “How about tomorrow? If you’re not feeling any better, I can come over to your place.”

“That could work. I’ll send you my address just in case.”

“Alright. Well, I’m going to head back into the labs, but I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Tomorrow it is.”

Kara hung up the phone both terrified and excited to see Lena again. She needed to buck up and air everything out. She was taking her sister’s advice because keeping Lena’s secret was eating her alive. With everything else going on, the last thing she wanted to focus on was keeping what she knew in order. Katie was Lena and Lena was in danger, possibly more now than she was before.

Hopefully Lena would come clean as well and tell Kara about the shooting since she only knew that being Supergirl. More than anything, Kara hoped they could move past all of this and work out a better way of communicating with each other.

Now that someone was most likely after Supergirl, Kara’s desire to keep Lena safe had increased. Alex warned her to be safe but there was no way she was going to let Lena go through this alone.

Kara defaulted to watching something on Netflix. She and Alex had agreed to catch up on Grey’s Anatomy together, but it had been weeks since they last watched an episode. Whenever they got the chance to sit down and knock out a few more episodes, she’d just have to pretend she didn’t know what was happening.

After one full episode Kara’s eyelids fell shut. She only woke up a few times to use the bathroom and grab snacks before falling back to sleep. Alex had stopped by like she promised but didn’t stay long. Maybe it was her fatigued brain, but she could have sworn Alex said she had a date. They’d
have to have a long talk about that when Kara regained more of her strength.

Chapter End Notes

I hope y'all enjoyed the chapter! There was a really big revelation, that may or may not pan out. Even dropped in a few more bits and bobs to keep things interesting. Things with Lex. What exactly is Lena doing with her research? And who was the mystery woman at the fight? I think we all know the "rock/substance" was Kryptonite, but how long will it take for them to figure that out? Let me know what y'all think, and as always questions/comments/constructive criticism is always welcomed.

I'm going to be leaving you with a bit of a cliffhanger. I'm taking a much needed step back from a lot of things, but only this for a week. I need to take care of some stuff in my personal life and I know I won't be able to consistently write while I do. So next week you won't have a chapter from me. The following week I'll be back so keep an eye out for an update. Also my birthday is next Friday so that's one good thing to look forward to.

It won't be too long until next time!
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

The talk we've all been waiting for.

Chapter Notes

Thank you so much for all the comments and kudos; really means a lot! Pretty sure some of you were looking for this lol. Sorry you had to wait an extra week to get it.

Warning: there's some brief descriptions of some violence/injury continuing from a past chapter. I've marked it off with (*** if you'd like to skip over it. I tried to only mark the part that could be an issue, so you shouldn't miss out on anything.

Now sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The sun had made its appearance for the day a few hours before Kara heard a faint rapping coming from somewhere in her apartment. It wasn’t obnoxious, but consistent. Groaning and stretching out her limbs, Kara yawned, drinking in the days sunlight. The sunlamps in the DEO were amazing, and definitely could do the job in a pinch, but there was nothing quite like feeling the actual sun trickle across her tanned skin.

Somehow during the course of the night, she had hiked up the legs of her sweatpants and had completely done away with her hoody.

There was that noise again.

Having spent the bulk of the past forty-eight hours asleep, Kara had recouped from being exposed to whatever substance Alex had found lying around during the brawl she was called to. The fight that was just a trap to lure her in.

Kara pushed herself up off her couch and looked around her relatively untidy apartment. She faintly recalled trashing the place after running out on Lena and never cleaning it after.

Shit, Lena!

How had she forgotten Lena was coming over so they could talk? Kara rushed to clean up as much as she could. Using her x-ray vision, she checked to see if anyone was outside.

Maybe that noise was her knocking.

Kara’s phone began to ring. Instead of answering it, she made a b-line for the front door. She swung the door open, faintly out of breath. Sure enough, there was Lena stood on the other side juggling her cellphone in one hand and a box in the other.
“I’m so sorry to keep you waiting. I was asleep and didn’t hear you knocking.”

At first, Lena appeared to be stunned by the speed at which Kara’s apartment door opened. Now it seemed like she was genuinely stuck. Her mouth was moving, and words were likely supposed to be coming out, but never did. Tilting her head to the side in question Kara followed the brunette’s line of sight.

Lena was staring at the lack of clothing Kara was currently covered by. In her mad dash to clean she had forgotten to put her hoody back on. She had answered her door in nothing but her sports bra and rolled up sweatpants.

With nervous laughter, Kara grabbed the box out of Lena’s hand and held it against her front. It wasn’t a perfect solution, but it would cover up her midsection at least.

Clearing her throat and trying to look anywhere but where she had already been staring, “Was now not a g-good time? I can – uhm – come back later,” Lena finally managed to get out. There was a subtle quiver in her voice, and rightfully so. She knew Kara was in shape but had no idea that toned physique was hidden underneath her clothing. The outline of her abs. The lining that beckoned for her eyes to follow a bit further down to the way Kara’s black and green briefs rested on her hips. How they peaked out from under her oversized sweats. It was sinful the images she conjured in her head in such a short amount of time.

Kara backpedaled into her apartment with Lena following her lead. “You’re totally ok. I needed to get up anyway.” Kara placed the box down on the island in her kitchen. “What’s in here anyway?”

Thankful for a change of subject, “Just some soup. You didn’t sound like you were feeling too well, so, soup,” the still flustered brunette said, motioning to the box. “And I didn’t know what you liked so I got a little of everything.”

Kara’s stomach rumbled loud enough for Lena to clearly hear it.

“I guess I showed up just in time,” she said a bit easier, laughing to defuse her own tension.

“Can I get you a glass? There’s water, OJ – I think I have coffee around her somewhere.” Kara turned around and grabbed a glass out of a cabinet beside the sink. Lena came over and took the glass from Kara’s hands deciding water was a safe bet for now.

Kara moved back over to the island, giving Lena a little space. She hadn’t turned back around after getting her water.

“I’m going to go hop in the shower. Will you be alright for a few minutes without me?”

Sagging against the counter and sighing with relief, Lena pushed herself away from the sink when she heard the click of what had to be the bathroom door. Looking around, Kara’s apartment was somewhat what she was expecting it to be. There was a warmth to the place she didn’t feel in her own apartment.
She glanced over the books on the bookshelf by the door. Then glanced around at a few pictures the blonde had placed in various spots. The photo she stopped on was one with Kara and three other people. There was a man she recognized for some reason, but couldn’t place from where, a woman with blonde hair but didn’t quite look like Kara, and the red-haired Special Agent that stopped by the Luthor mansion earlier in the week.

The shower turned off and Kara was out wrapped in her towel a moment later. She must not have noticed Lena standing where she was. Stopping behind the partition – that was most likely there to give the loft some semblance of walls and privacy – Kara dropped her towel and began dressing. Lena quickly spun around, knowing the woman wouldn’t want her gawking any more than she already had.

Lena looked around the apartment a little more while she waited for Kara to change.

“What’s got your attention,” Kara asked, pulling her t-shirt over her head as she walked towards the brunette.

Lena waited a beat before she answered. “These books. They’re pretty advanced stuff. Particle physics… astrophysics… ordinary differential equations,” Lena said, listing off a few of the subjects. “Pretty sure that’s not coursework for Communications or PR,” she added with a soft chuckle.

Kara sheepishly ducked her head. On Krypton, those were all subject matters she had either already covered or was about to before… “Just a little light reading.”

Scoffing, “I’ve read all of those. That’s not light reading.” Lena turned away from the second bookshelf and made her way over to Kara. This time, at least the older woman was in something a bit more presentable and her hair wasn’t splayed and mushed in all the wrong directions.

Kara grabbed a few bowls before sitting down in front of the box. There were at least six clear containers of soup that were still hot. With a smile on her face, she dug in. Lena watched in amazement. She still hadn’t figured out how a woman of Kara’s size ate as much as she did.

“Are you feeling any better?”

Kara nodded, unable to speak with noodles hanging out of her mouth.

“That’s good,” Lena needlessly affirmed.

In no time at all, Kara finished every single container Lena had brought her. They were all fantastic, but she had never had a chicken noodle quite that good. It was even better than Eliza’s homemade version; but she’d never tell her adoptive mother that.

Kara fetched herself a glass of orange juice and motioned for them both to have a seat on her couch. Lena sat on one end, Kara at the other. The elephant in the room had more than enough space to take its place between them.

Kara had hoped Lena would start the conversation, but she had finished her glass before either of them said a thing.

Kara turned, sitting with her legs crisscrossed on the couch, to face Lena. Lena turned as well, crossing her legs at the knee as she had on a dress.

They looked at each other in silence for a beat. Lena was first to cave.

“Kara…”
The blonde sat and waited. She was expecting a follow up, but nothing. Her powers weren’t entirely back just yet, but her hearing was heightened enough she could just make out the brunette’s heartbeat. It was strong and quickening.

“Why’d you leave?”

Kara studied Lena’s face to see how she should proceed. What she wasn’t expecting to find was pain. It wasn’t an obvious thing to spot but there were trace amounts of it. In the way she fiddled with her hands, in the way her brows were pulled into a slight frown, the way she nervously toyed with her bottom lip.

“I didn’t want to, I just didn’t know how to handle something.” She was beating around the bush. She wanted to give Lena a chance to come clean on her own.

Brow furrowing, creasing in the middle, Lena tried to piece together what the blonde was getting at.

She waited, and waited, but Lena hadn’t figured it out. With a huff, breaking their eye contact, “I know your name isn’t Katie.” She was sure not say her actual name.

Lena stiffened in place. “Of course. It all makes sense now.” Slowly, she stood up and squared her shoulders; she was in full defensive mode. Lena had been in this position several times before and everyone had reacted the same way. Once her being a Luthor became known, people tended to run for the hills. The only exceptions to that were Jack and Sam. Everyday Lena asked herself why they stuck around knowing who she was – waiting for the other shoe to drop and they leave.

Kara looked up at the woman who looked to be ready to gather her purse and leave. That wasn’t quite the reaction she was expecting but then again, she hadn’t exactly planned out how this conversation might go. “What are you doing?”

“You know who I am so just say it. Just say it and get it over with.”

Kara shook her head, visibly baffled. “Say what?”

“My name, Kara,” Lena practically shouted.

Kara stood up as well. “Your name…” Lena was looking at her dead on. There was a hardness in her eyes she hadn’t seen before. Her heartbeat had even calmed back down. “You’re Lena Luthor.”

“There. Are you happy? My secret’s out. I’m a bloody Luthor.” Now was definitely not the right time to mention it, but Kara had noticed that Lena’s accent came out more when she was upset or tired.

Kara took a half step backwards. Lena’s reaction had taken her completely by surprise. She was expecting relief or… she didn’t know, just not whatever this was.

Lena’s eyes flicked down to Kara’s bare feet moving away from her. “You’re scared of me now? Now that you know who I am you want nothing to do with me!”

“No, no, that’s not it at all—”

Lena kept talking as if she hadn’t heard Kara say anything. “For fuck’s sake…this. This right here is why I lied about my identity,” she explained, motioning to all of Kara. “When I met you in the grocery store I never expected to see you again, let alone be attending the same university. Do you know how refreshing it is to meet someone and they have no idea who you are?”
Kara snickered to herself because Lena had no idea how much she understood that. Most everyone she met had no idea she was a Kryptonian or that she was Supergirl. It was nice to have a secret identity to hide behind.

“Everyone I meet has some preconceived notion of who I really am. I’m already a closed-minded bigot before people get the chance to know me. I’m some arrogant spoiled brat who thinks they’re better than everyone else. Honestly, you can keep your reasons to yourself because I think I’ve heard them all.” Mumbling under her breath, “You’re just like everyone else,” she said then turned to leave.

“Hold up,” Kara shouted. Lena hadn’t stopped, her feet were still rapidly getting closer to their destination. Jogging behind the woman, Kara shoved a hand onto the opening door, slamming it back shut. Lena drew a deep breath, waiting for Kara to move her hand. When she didn’t she huffed out that same breath and turned to face Kara with her arms folded over her chest.

“No, you do not realize how much of a hypocrite you just were?”

Lena’s eyebrows shot up as she blinked in surprise. “Excuse me?”

“Yea. You’re being a hypocrite. You went on about people judging you without getting to know you and here you are doing that to me. You just assumed I had a problem with who you are.”

“Obviously you do if you ran out of my apartment Kara.”

“Ok, fair point but look—”

Lena moved to open the door again. To completely remove leaving from the table, Kara slid between the woman and the door; blocking Lena’s access to the handle.

“Will you stop trying to leave and just talk to me?”

Lena weighed her options before taking a few steps back from the door. “Go ahead then. Finish what you were saying so I can leave.”

“You’re going to feel like such an ass when I do.”

Lena doubted that, but she’d give the woman a chance to prove her wrong.

“Now that you know I’m aware of your real name, you’ve pieced together that I ran because I’m like everyone else.” It was meant as a question and Lena must have picked up on that because she gave Kara a curt nod. A look as to say, ‘obviously’. 

“You’re wrong. I didn’t run because I see you as this horrible person. I ran because I’m a terrible liar. There was no way I could be alone with you without blurting it out eventually. I was keeping your secret for you and it was killing me. So, I ran.”

“Then why didn’t you say something sooner?” Kara could see the woman’s mood was beginning to shift. Her stern expression was slipping away a little at a time.

“Because you seemed happy Lena. If having me think your name was Katie put a smile on your face, then I’d do that for you. I know what people say about your family, and while I don’t know them personally, I’m getting to know you. The woman I’ve gotten to know over the past several weeks is nothing like what people say. I liked you before I even found out who you really were.”

Lena did feel like an ass. She had jumped to conclusions and reacted inappropriately. This time she
was wrong, and she was mentally kicking herself for it. “When did you find out?”

“Did you read that article CatCo published after that fundraiser your family held? The one announcing your mother stepping down and your brother taking over the company.”

“I skimmed it.”

“A woman on my team wrote it. I looked over the final before publication. Eliza was actually the one to point out to me who you were in the group photo.”

Lena thought back to the article. She had completely forgotten there was a photo with her, her mother, and Lex featured in the midst of it. It had never occurred to her with Kara working at the magazine in question the blonde may have come across the article before she was ready for the woman to find out who she was.

“Eliza,” Lena asked.

“Oh, sorry. Eliza is my adoptive mother. I thought I told you.”

“You told me you were adopted but never the names of your family members.”

“Well we can talk about that later if you’re not gonna run out of here in the next five minutes.”

In surrender, Lena put her purse back on the hook at the door and took her seat back on the couch with Kara following closely behind her.

“So, you knew who I was - what - a week before running out?”

“Eh, something like that,” Kara giggled.

“Then answer something for me. Why stick around after you found out? I lied to you, for weeks, and yet you’re staying.”

“At first I was angry. I couldn’t understand why you didn’t feel I was worthy of the truth. Then I realized it wasn’t about me. Why you did it I mean.”

“Just out of curiosity, then why did I do it,” Lena asked. She wanted to see what the blonde had come up with; if she had figured it out.

“You were doing it to protect yourself. Like you said, everyone assumes they know who you are. That you’re this person deserving of hate and whatever other vile things to be spewed your way. You kept who you are a secret for a chance at something normal. Something you’ve probably only experienced a few times in your life.”

Lena wasn’t expecting the woman to understand where she was coming from. The way she spoke, it was like Kara understood her motive perfectly.

Lena dabbed at her eyes, touched that someone had taken the time to consider her side for a change. “Thank you.”

As she reached over the arm of the chair for the tissue box on the stand beside the couch, “For what,” Kara asked.

Lena took one of the offered tissues and patted her eyes once more, sure not to smudge her makeup. If she had been expecting to cry she would have put on waterproof makeup.
“For understanding.”

“There’s no need to thank me for that. I think at this point we can call the other a friend and that’s what friends are supposed to do.”

“Yea… friends.” Lena couldn’t keep the disappointment from her voice. There was no way Kara would want anything more with her after being lied to like that.

“How about this. How about we wipe the slate clean. What you did was wrong, but forgivable, because I know your intent wasn’t to hurt me.”

Lena painfully tittered to herself. Moving the tissue between her thumbs are forefingers she released an unsteady breath. “It’s ironic I lied to someone that wound up coming back into my life. I’m not particularly fond of secrets and I hate the lies you have to tell to keep them. Yet that’s exactly what I did to you,” Lena said with an occasional sniffle.

Kara noticed how much Lena was hurting herself over the situation. She had to be sure Lena knew she wasn’t blaming her for her actions, she just didn’t like that she had done it. Scooching across the couch Kara wrapped an arm around Lena’s shoulders and rubbed her arm.

“Hey, I forgive you. You did what you thought was best in the moment. All that matters is that the truth is out in the open.” The sardonic nature of that statement wasn’t lost upon Kara.

Lena let herself slip into the comfort of the other woman’s arms. Leaning her head into the crook of Kara’s neck, she breathed in the woman’s cologne officially committing it to memory. It was a clean but woody scent that she had already associated with the blonde after having smelled the same fragrance each time she had seen her. Whatever she had done to deserve Kara being placed in her life, she vowed to do all that she could to keep said woman there. Even if it was only as friends.

There was more she probably needed to fess up to if Kara wanted to stay in her life. Pulling away Lena waited for Kara to reposition herself comfortably on the couch. “There’s probably something else you should know.”

“As long as it’s not that you’re secretly married or you’re some evil scientist, I’m all ears,” Kara playful said. It was all jokes, but she really hoped that neither was true, for both their sakes.

“No, nothing like that.” After saying it, she watched as Kara’s shoulders dropped in relief.

*Why would she be so happy I’m not married? She can’t possibly be that happy I’m not some evil villain. No, it’s just your brain assuming things. Besides, she said you were friends.*

With a soft chuckle, “Ok, good. Then what is it?”

“If you really want to stay in my life, as friends,” she said with added emphasis, watching for how Kara reacted to the word. There was a slight grimace, but nothing concrete to go on. “there’s something you should probably know.”

Kara perked up, her attention fully on Lena’s next words.

“Being a Luthor I have this permanent target on my back. Over the years, I’ve done my best to keep out of the public’s eye. I’d be naïve to think I could accomplish such a thing entirely in this day and age. Anyway, because of my surname someone will always want me dead. The night I asked you over for dinner, there was an attack at LuthorCorp.”

Kara responded as any normal being would having heard this information for the first time. She
immediately grew concerned and fussed over Lena, wanting to be certain the woman was alright. She knew no physical harm had befallen the woman, but Supergirl knew that, not Kara Danvers.

“I’m alright, I’m alright Kara. During the attack my brother was shot. He’s alright by most accounts. A few weeks before that my mother was held hostage by an alien in the same office. I say all this to say being associated with me comes with a certain level of risk. I just want to be honest with you as we move forward. I want you decide if you’re ok with knowing me—if knowing me is worth it.”

Kara looked into Lena’s green eyes with all the determination she could muster. Everything she had just told her, Kara already knew. Having Lena over was Kara making the very choice the brunette was now asking her to make. “You’re more than worth it Lena. I appreciate your telling me but I’m not going anywhere if that’s what you were worried about. Besides, I can protect myself,” she said, flexing an arm for Lena to see.

Lena shook her head and laughed at Kara’s attempt the assuage her guilt at possibly involving another person in the dangers of her life. “Be serious Kara—”

“I am,” she quickly answered. “I know what you’re asking me and I’m ok with the risk.”

Lena leaned on to the back of the couch running her hands up the sides of her messy bun. The hard part was over. Everything that she could legally admit to was out in the open. Despite knowing who she was, and all the dangers that were presently involved, Kara still wanted to be around her.

“Circling back a step, given your family’s status in the city…why wasn’t this on like every local news outlet?”

Hands still playing in her hair, “Luthor money knows no bounds. My mother most likely paid off a few people to keep the issues quiet as long as she could.”

They sat in silence for a bit before there was knock at the door. Lena looked towards Kara. “Were you expecting someone?”

“No,” Kara admitted. Before she could get off the couch a key was sliding into the lock.

Alex has spectacular timing.

Kara and Lena both stood up and turned towards the opening door. Alex was going a mile a minute about something that thankfully had nothing to do with Supergirl or the DEO. She was so engrossed in what she was saying she hadn’t paid attention to the two women watching her making her way around the apartment with familiarity.

“Lena, this is Alex - my sister. Alex,” she said loud enough to get the red-haired woman’s attention, “this is Lena Luthor.”

Both smirking, “We’ve met,” Lena said. “It’s nice to see you again Agent Danvers.”

“I told you, call me Alex.”

“What are you doing here Alex,” Kara asked, keeping her intention clear. She was finally making progress with Lena and Alex interrupting wasn’t helping anything.

“I told you last night I’d be back to check on you. It’s nearly noon and I’m here. Checking on you.”

“You also said you had a date, so I took it with a grain of sand.”
“Salt,” Alex and Lena corrected in near unison.

“It’s grain of salt and I didn’t say I had a date. I said I was going out for drinks. Slightly different.”

“Either way, I’m ok - as you can see - so you can go now.”

Lena couldn’t help but snicker. Lex had used that same tone, implying the same as Kara right now, numerous times before. She wanted her sister gone as soon as possible. From the exasperated lilt in her tone, she’d probably preferred the woman had never shown up.

“Looks like Lena may disagree,” Alex’s teased, using Lena’s laughter to her advantage.

“Oh, come on,” Kara groaned as she flopped back onto the couch.

“So, who was the lucky guy,” Lena asked, enjoying being able to mess with Kara like this. It was fun occupying a different role in this scenario.

Alex cackled as she popped the top off a beer. “Woman actually.”

“Yea yea. You’re gay, the whole world is just so happy for you,” she sarcastically mumbled, not unkindly. There was no harm meant in the statement, she just wanted her sister to leave.

“Alright señor grumpy. If you have nothing nice to say then shut up,” Alex said in jest. She had no idea that Lena would be in her sister’s apartment. Now that she was settled, there was no way she was leaving without giving the blonde a hard time first. That’s what siblings are for!

“Ok then, who’s the lucky lady?”

“Oh, it wasn’t anything serious. I’m still getting over a pretty bad breakup.”

“But you’re getting back out there. You’re trying, so that’s something right?”

Alex raised her beer in a sort of salute then took another swig. “I’m meeting her again in a few days.”

Kara made her way back into the conversation. “A second date is the opposite of ‘nothing serious’.”

“I’d have to agree with Kara. So, what’s her name?”

“Uhm… Sarah? Sasha? Sam? Yea, Samantha.”

“Way to go there champ!”

“Does this Samantha happen to have a last name?”

“You’re almost as bad as stick up the ass over there. I don’t exactly remember but I’ll let you know when I find out.”

“Wait a minute,” Kara shouted. “Can we circle back to how you two know each other.” Kara already knew how but making it public knowledge allowed for a change of subject.

“Your sister and I met the day of the shooting I was telling you about earlier. I’m guessing she’s also working my mother’s case as well.”

“It’s the team I’m assigned to. I prefer to get my own statements for most of my cases when I can.” It was close enough to the truth. Alex did enjoy the simplicity of that part of her job. Being in a
position of seniority at the DEO she could always get someone else to do it, especially because several of her coworkers seemed to be afraid of her.

The real reason Alex had gone out for the family’s statements was because of the suspicion surrounding said family. With everything going on regarding aliens going missing, there was no way she or J’onn would entrust such a task to a rookie. If it weren’t for Alex going to the family’s mansion, she may have missed the opportunity to watch Lex as she accused him of being responsible for his sister’s assassination attempt. Things like that you can’t get from reading a paper statement or not asking the right questions.

“Either way, it’s nothing I’m at liberty to discuss with you as it’s an ongoing investigation,” Alex said to her sister.

“Well, I’ll leave you two to chat. I should get going anyway. There’s a few things I need to take care of before the weekend ends.” Lena went to grab her purse for the last time.

Shooting up from the couch, “Wait, no, you don’t have to go. Alex was just leaving. Weren’t you Alex,” Kara quickly supplied, giving her sister a dirty look over her shoulder as she followed after Lena.

“It’s ok. I have a brother, I know how these things go. Like I said, I have a few errands to run so it’s not a problem.” Her next movements felt familiar – like she had been doing them for years. She leaned towards Kara as if she were going to press a goodbye kiss to her cheek. If it wasn’t for her split-second realization for what she was about to do, she would have done it. Her proximity to the blonde was too close to ignore.

Deflecting from her almost slip up, Lena pressed a gentle hand to the side of Kara’s face, swiping her thumb over the woman’s high cheekbone. “I’ll call you tonight,” Lena told the blonde. She was trying to act as though the last thirty second hadn’t happened – hopefully this was working.

Without another word Lena was gone, door quietly closing behind her.

Nearly snorting the last of her beer out of her nose, “I’d say things went well,” Alex joked.

“Not funny Alex.” Kara purposefully knocked her head against the door, groaning for more than one reason. “I said we were friends. I friend-zoned MYSELF!”

“It’s better than the alternative right? At least you two are still speaking.”

Kara turned around and slid down the length of the door until she was flat on the floor. “Ugh!”

“Eh, it’ll get better. Isn’t that what you tell me?”

//

Kara was so far behind with her class and homework. She could get the DEO to give her some kind of “doctor’s note” so she would have longer to make up everything. Alex left a half hour ago and there wasn’t much else for her to do. Kara moved everything off her dining room table to have more space to get her work done. She could use her desk, but she knew she’d wind up moving for lack of space.

Books, pencils, laptop, and snacks galore piled on the table, Kara got to work. A few hours passed before she ordered herself some pizza and cinnamon sticks. She stopped working on her assignments long enough to eat and watch something on Netflix. As soon as she finished she was right back to it.
If it weren’t for the lack of light in the apartment, Kara wouldn’t have realized the sun was setting off in the horizon. She had knocked out a chunk of her missed work feeling brain fried as a result. The blonde busied herself with cleaning up her work space before plopping down on the couch. Some mind-numbing television was in order.

Kara had no intention of falling asleep but that was exactly what happened. She was comfortable, not focused on anything in particular, eyelids heavy. The only light on was the lamp situated at the other end of the couch. It was perfect napping conditions.

As promised, Lena called Kara’s phone. Only problem, she was still asleep and hadn’t felt her phone vibrating. What did wake her was the sound of her phone hitting the floor. Kara jumped up, sitting bone straight on the edge of the couch. Panicking, Kara looked around the room for the source of the noise. It hadn’t dawned on her just yet that it was her phone.

Kara had gotten used to the fact that she didn’t dream anymore. When she did, they were always nightmares – the same nightmare. She was trapped in her pod, alone, and stuck. She screamed until she had no voice. Cried until tears no longer fell. There was nothing she could do as she watched the end come to her home world. She was a helpless child forced to watch everything and everyone she knew perish.

Stranded in the Phantom Zone, minutes felt like days. Days felt like months. She held out hope that that day would be her last. That someone would come to save her. After a while, she lost track of how long she was stuck there. If she wanted to survive, she needed to put herself into hyper-sleep.

When she first arrived on Earth, every night it seemed she relived that horrific event either in part or entirely. Other nights, it came in flashes. Thankfully the dreams came far less frequently these days. When they did pop up, it was always short lived. But that dream, she watched Krypton explode over and over on some sick loop. She had begun to sweat during the nightmare leaving her shirt stuck to her in awkward places. Her hair was no better, stuck in odd patterns on her forehead. Panting, Kara tried to force herself to remember that she was safe. She wasn’t trapped in her pod. She was alive; a fact she begrudgingly had to admit. Doing the breathing exercises Eliza and Alex taught her, Kara did her best to calm herself down. It took some doing but eventually her breathes evened back out.

Standing up, Kara found that the thing that woke her was her cellphone falling out of her pocket and hitting the floor. Clicking on the screen, she saw Lena had called her and left her a voicemail.

   “Hey, Kara. I was hoping I’d catch you at a good time.” There was brief pause before the woman continued. “It’s just after eight but you could already be asleep. Uh, anyway, just call me back when you get a chance. Feel better.”

It was already nine o’clock. Hopefully it wasn’t too late to return the call.

The line rang twice before Lena picked up. “Hello?”

“Sorry I didn’t pick up earlier. I accidentally fell asleep.”

“No need to apologize. When you’re sick you’re supposed to sleep. How are you feeling?”

“Better, but I could’ve gone without that nap,” Kara said with a humorless laugh.

Lena noticed that the blonde’s laugh was a bit off. It wasn’t the same lighthearted and happy sound that usually came from the woman. With a serious tone, “Is everything alright?”

“Not exactly, but I’ll manage.”
“You sure? You can always talk to me – if you’re comfortable with that I mean.”

With a little life coming back in her voice, “Thanks for the offer. Maybe another time though. . . What about you? Did you get your errands done?”

“I did. I had to pick up some paperwork for my mother before heading into the labs. There were a few things I needed to check up on with my research.”

“How’s that coming?”

“It’s hard to say. I’ve come a long way, but, I still feel there’s so much I can do.”

“Well if anyone can do it, it’s you.”

Kara had been aimlessly walking around her apartment for absolutely no reason. It was the same thing she had seen Alex do when she talked on the phone with Maggie. Every time her sister did, and she was around to see it, Kara made fun of her for it. It was probably best the redhead wasn’t here to return the favor.

“How’s Lex?”

There was a bit of hesitation before Kara got an answer. “He’s doing alright.”

Kara could tell that Lena may not have wanted to talk about her brother, so she moved to change the subject. “You said you picked up paperwork for your mom?” It wasn’t the best change, but hopefully it was enough to begin distancing the conversation from Lex.

“Yea. It’s something that has to do with the company. While Lex is out my mother wants me take over.”

“Well is that what you want?”

“Not exactly. Becoming CEO was always Lex’s dream. He’s the oldest so it makes sense. Besides, I have enough on my plate right now.” There was something about talking to Kara that Lena found comforting. Not even in the woman’s presence she still felt accepted and heard. That was why she knew it was ok to let Kara know the rest. “My mother had our legal team draw up a few documents outlining what exactly my duties will be as acting CEO. Somehow I let her talk me into it.”

“You don’t seem like a woman that can be talked into doing something she didn’t already want to do – even if she doesn’t fully realize she wants to do it,” Kara observed, earning a light laugh from the brunette.

“You’re not wrong Ms. Danvers.”

“I like to think I’m a fairly observant woman Ms. Luthor. But I do have a slightly different question.”

This was it. The question that could make or break whatever relationship the two of them could build. She hoped and wished that she was right. That Lena wasn’t the same woman the media had pegged her to be.

“By all means, fire away.”

“I know you said that your mother was attacked by an alien. Because I don’t want to assume anything, I wanted to ask how you felt about them?”

“Them as in aliens? Or them as in the alien that held my mother hostage?”
“The first one.”

There was brief moment of silence before Lena answered. “I appreciate you asking me in lieu of assuming. Uhm, it’s actually a bit hard for me to answer that question though.”

That was not the answer Kara was looking for. “How so?”

“I have nothing against aliens. Truly, I don’t. But, realistically speaking, there’s a part of me that is afraid of what they could do to me.”

Kara simply hummed. She was giving Lena’s words a chance to set in.

“Maybe I have my reservations because of my mother, and my last name, but there’s nothing wrong with being cautious.”

“But not all aliens are the same. Yea, there are a few here that are only after destruction and chaos, but that’s not the whole. I mean, take Supergirl for example.”

“I will forever be indebted to her for saving my, and my brother’s, lives that day. And I agree, with what you said about not all aliens being the same. Not all humans are mass murderers or rapists or anything along those lines, but the actions of a few can change how the whole is perceived. Good or bad, it happens. I’m not saying it’s right, but everyone is victim of it at some point.”

“Stereotypes aren’t always right. They cause more problems than necessary—”

“And I’m not arguing the point.”

“Ok,” Kara finished with a huff. Lena isn’t against aliens, but she’s wary of them as a whole. Despite what so many people think, Lena didn’t hate aliens, she just nursed a healthy dose of fear for something that was unknown to her. There was nothing wrong in how she felt. She wasn’t condemning aliens for the actions of a few. She was treading lightly because, even with other humans, you never know the kind of person you’re about to encounter.

“Wouldn’t you be at least a little afraid of someone, or something, that could kill you just because? No matter alien or otherwise.”

She was caught there. Kara hadn’t spoken about how she felt after being targeted a few days ago. Mainly because she wasn’t ready to admit that she was scared. Some substance caused her to feel like her insides were being scored with shard of glass with her body splayed out over hot coals. She was virtually invincible underneath a yellow sun. Having something strip that away from her left her physically vulnerable for the first time since her powers kicked in as a teenager.

Speaking from experience, “Yea,” Kara answered with an unsteady breath, “Yea I would be afraid.”

“That’s all I’m saying. I don’t hate aliens and I never have. I just don’t think it’s realistic for me to say the strength of some of them doesn’t scare me a bit; but you’re probably the only person that I’d admit that to.”

Kara giggled at the confession. The conversation was a bit tenser than she would have liked, but it didn’t implode. Now that she knew where Lena stood on the topic of aliens there was nothing keeping her from pursuing the woman.

“Your secret is safe with me,” Kara joked.

Their conversation went on well into the night. Lena was first to fall asleep, doing so mid-sentence.
Listening to the light snores coming from the other end of the phone did nothing to help the butterflies circling in the pit of Kara’s stomach. It was a peaceful sound that could have only been made better if she could lay beside Lena and watch her sleep.

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First thing Monday morning Kara was called into the DEO. It wasn’t very often she was summoned so this wasn’t a good sign. Donned in her Supersuit and helmet, Kara landed on a balcony across the room from the command center. J’onn and Alex were looking over something that Kara couldn’t quite see but it must have been important.

Alex was the first to spot the heroine making her way into the room.

“Alex, what’s going on?” The lack of a response to the question wasn’t quelling any of her growing concerns. With her hands on her hips in her signature pose, Kara waited for someone to bring her up to speed.

“Supergirl, would you mind coming with us a moment,” J’onn requested rather officially.

This really can’t be good.

Kara followed behind her sister and the Director of the DEO in silence. J’onn lead them to an empty conference room and waited for the two women to have a seat.

“Will someone just tell me what’s going on,” Kara worriedly asked.

Alex looked towards J’onn, signaling for him to go ahead. Clearing his throat, J’onn pulled a few photos out of the manila envelope he brought in with him. The photos were of the street she was lured to last week. Kara cringed at the thought of what happened but pushed her feelings aside to remain present for what was needed of her in the moment.

“Alex has informed you that we consulted Superman to help with identifying the substance that weakened you during the fight. As you can see, there is an unmistakable green light emanating from here, here, here, and, here,” J’onn began as he pointed towards each spot on the corresponding photos.

“What were you able to find out?”

“According to your cousin, the rocks we found are something called Kryptonite. It can be lethal to the two of you when absorbed in large enough doses.”

“Wait – let me get this straight. The disturbance you called me to handle was in fact a trap. A trap I sprung that could have killed me?”

“That’s exactly what he’s saying,” Alex confirmed.

“Then why didn’t it?”

“Even though there were four pieces of Kryptonite at the scene, we don’t think the rocks were big enough to kill you. Or, they just weren’t close enough to do the trick. It’s hard to say without running tests.”
“You want to run test on me with that stuff,” Kara shouted with disbelief. “Did you not see how I was affected even being that close to the stuff?”

“Kara—”

“We understand your hesitation to the idea,” J’onn said, cutting off the red-haired woman. “But in order for us to learn more about how this substance interacts with your biology this is something we need to do. There is someone out there that knows more about this than we do, and that concerns me. Who’s to say they won’t keep trying until they succeed in killing you?”

Kara huffed, crossing her arms over her chest.

“We’ll find a way to make it bearable Kara. Besides, this could give us another way to help you. It took us nearly a year to figure out how to draw your blood. There’s nothing wrong with having alternatives.”

“You don’t understand,” Kara aggressively mumbled under her breath.

Alex couldn’t make out what the young woman said so she asked her to repeat it. When Kara’s gaze met hers, she could tell there was something more going on. She hadn’t had a chance to really talk to her sister after she was exposed to the Kryptonite, but something told her she was about to find out why she was so against them studying the substance.

“You didn’t feel it. Neither of you did,” Kara furiously shouted. “I was helpless. It was the worst pain I’ve ever felt, and I had to watch as Krypton exploded behind me. I’ve never experienced anything like it and you just expect me to be ok with being your test subject? No! Hell no, Alex!”

J’onn had warned Alex that things might go this way, but she knew her sister. She knew she wouldn’t react this way, but here they were. Kara was scared and lashing out in fear. It was a normal reaction, but she had hoped the blonde would at least consider where they were coming from.

“We’re only trying to help you Kara,” Alex gently confessed. Getting into a shouting match with her sister wouldn’t solve anything right now. She needed to remain calm and appeal to the logic she knew the other woman possessed.

“Helping me via torture doesn’t exactly scream good time.”

“Your sister is right Kara. Would you rather the alternative? Some unknown individual, whose goal is very likely your demise, turning you into a science experiment because that is exactly what will happen if you won’t help us protect you.”

The time for coddling was over. J’onn moved on to the tough love approach because he needed the heroine to understand what was at stake. They were already steps behind whoever set up that trap. Who knows how much they already know about Kryptonite at how it interacts with Kara’s genetic makeup. He wasn’t willing to take that risk. He saw the two women as his own children and would do all he could to protect them.

Kara felt defeated. She knew they were only trying to help but they just didn’t understand how it felt being exposed to the green substance. The points J’onn and Alex presented were valid. She’d rather learn more about what all Kryptonite could do to her with Alex running the tests than someone else under less than ideal circumstances. She wasn’t happy about it but deep down she knew it needed to be done.

“I’ll think about it,” Kara offered as a compromise. “Can I go now?”
“Not quite,” J’onn answered. Sliding the photos indicating the Kryptonite’s whereabouts out of the way, J’onn slid a few more photos on the metal table. “Do you remember our call out to the docks not too long ago? Where we found the alien bodies in the shipping crate?”

“How could I forget. The smell was horrible, but inside the container…” Kara couldn’t even finish that statement. There was no way she could forget finding the bodies that were most likely there for days.

“I finished up my investigation and I found something I think you should be aware of before we go any further.”

Kara skeptically looked over towards her sister, trying to read her expression. After years of DEO training, it was hard to tell what exactly the woman was feeling. Even knowing her sister as long as she had it was still difficult for her. Kara nodded for Alex to go on as she looked over a few of the report sheets.

“I was able to identify the four bodies and their species. Every one of the bodies belonged to one of the aliens on our list. I noticed that all the bodies seemed to be heavily beaten and marked but I think that was a cover.”

Kara was reading Alex’s report and knew what she was about to say. “Whoever did this mauled the bodies to cover up what they were really doing.”

“Yes,” Alex confirmed with a nod even though the blonde wasn’t looking at her. “There were precise cuts and patterns of removed or scarred flesh. Their attacker was studying them. Testing on them as we were suspecting. Two of the four aliens had a few innards removed as well.”

“Underneath the fingernail of one of the female aliens, there was a tiny bit of different colored skin. I ran a few tests and I found that it was human.”

Looking across the table at her sister, “What did you find,” Kara asked expectantly.

“Then who’s was it?” Kara was practically buzzing with curiosity. This was their first big break after weeks of searching and asking what felt like the same questions.

“It wasn’t a direct match, but Lionel Luthor’s DNA was flagged being the closest to the sample. Based on the markers the DNA belongs to one of his children.”

Then it hit her. Now Kara understood why Alex was reluctant to answer her question. Why she wasn’t excited about what she found. Lionel Luthor had two biological children, one of which she was particularly fond of. Without getting DNA samples from either offspring, there was no
immediate way they could be sure which Luthor was responsible.

“Lillian’s DNA isn’t in the system? Not even a fingerprint?”

“I know what you’re thinking, and she’s never been convicted of a crime. Never been officially suspected of anything. Lionel on the other hand, we have pretty much everything we could ever need from that man. We even know his blood type.”

“So, what’s next? If we don’t know which of them it is, how do we proceed?”

“We’ll have to bring them both in for questioning. We’ll also need to get a warrant for blood samples,” J’onn clarified.

Kara let out an indignant sound. She couldn’t explain it, but she knew Lena wasn’t at fault. Regardless, she would be persecuted all the same because of her last name.

“Well is there any way we could do this quietly? For you to not draw any attention.”

“I know you have feelings for Ms. Luthor, but don’t let that cloud your judgement,” J’onn said. It wasn’t meant to be harsh, but right now Kara needed to think like Supergirl, not Kara Danvers.

“I’m not letting it cloud my judgement. The two were just attacked a matter of days ago. Now they’re both suspected of being involved in not only multiple murders, but kidnapping, blackmail, and whatever else you’re going to charge them with. This isn’t a situation that needs to be handled with an axe and hammer.”

“How about I assemble two small teams to bring them both in, no cuffs, and we go from there. Unmarked cars, no sirens, no need for the theatrics,” Alex offered.

“That could work. I’m coming with you.”

“No way,” J’onn and Alex blurted out.

Putting her foot down, “Either I’m going or this isn’t happening,” Kara firmly stated. She wasn’t about to let anyone accuse Lena of anything without getting her side. Kara knew Alex and J’onn would give Lena a fair shake, but that didn’t mean everyone else would. From the very beginning people suspected the Luthors of being involved before there was any proof. Now that there was, those same people most likely wouldn’t give them the time of day to plead their case; innocent or otherwise.

“Fine. Alex, get your team ready. You’re heading out in thirty.”

Chapter End Notes

I hope everyone enjoyed this week's chapter. I'm not sure that the conversation about how Lena feels about aliens is over, but we'll see. This chapter was bit fluffier and I needed to start setting up a few things for the remainder of the story. I have no idea how many chapters I have left but we're hitting the halfway mark in case anyone wanted to
Let me know what you think in the comments. I always want to hear what y'all have to say and where you think the story is going. I'm having a lot more fun writing this than I expected to. As long as there's interest in the story, I'll keep cranking out chapters. Who am I kidding, I'll probably post chapters even if no one reads it lol.

Until next time!
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

There's going to be a bit of jumping around in the chapter, and changes of perspective. I hope it's easy enough to follow and it flows. But if there's any issues, please, let me know. A new mark I utilized this time (\) just means that we're going backwards a bit to go forward again. Paired with the double-hyphens just means we're going backwards and changing perspective. Forgive me for any errors or typos you may find. If I read over the chapter one more time I'm likely to scream lol.

Thank you all SO MUCH for all the love. The comments and kudos truly mean a lot to me! Keep em coming.

Without further ado, sit back and let your mind roam free...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Kara hovered above the DEO’s downtown headquarters in search of Lena’s heartbeat. It was about nine in the morning so there was no telling where the brunette was exactly. She could be in her labs working on her research, the Luthor mansion, at LuthorCorp, or anywhere in between. It took a few moments, but she heard the now familiar heartbeat coming from the direction of LuthorCorp. Letting her sister know she found Lena, Kara was off, wanting to get there first.

She landed on the balcony of the woman’s temporary office and looked through the glass to be sure she was alone. After jiggling the handle to a locked sliding door, Kara had to knock to get the young woman’s attention. Lena spun around at the sound with a raised brow.

Unlocking the door, “And to what do I owe the pleasure of this visit,” Lena graciously wondered. It wasn’t everyday she was visited by superheroes that saved her life, so she was quite surprised to find the heroine stood in front of her.

“We don’t have much time. May I come in?” Kara tried to be as polite as possible, but she needed to talk to Lena before the DEO agents showed up.

Lena stepped out of the way and let Supergirl inside. “What seems to be the problem?”

Kara stood with her fists resting on her hips. “There’s been a bit of an issue. There are agents on their way here to take you in for questioning. I can’t tell you everything, but I wanted to warn you before they got here.”

Lena’s brows scrunched up in concern. “Why are you helping me? You’ve already saved my life once.”

Kara hadn’t expected Lena to ask any questions. With her coming to the brunette as Supergirl she figured Lena would just take her at her word. She had to come up with something, and fast.

“Uh, I’m friends with Kara Danvers. She’s talked about you a few times and she’s convinced me you’re nothing like your family.”

Yea, that could work, Kara thought to herself.
That seemed to do the trick. With the mention of her secret identity Lena busied herself around the office. She called in her assistant and rattled off strict instructions for the young woman to follow. Lena was typing out her last email when Alex knocked, letting herself in.

Looking at her sister protectively positioned at Lena’s side, Alex shifted her focus towards the Luthor. “Hey there Lena.”

“Alex, it’s good to see you again. Supergirl has already informed me of what’s about to happen.”

“Did she now,” Alex asked with a curious lilt, earning a nod from the young woman. “Well, for the sake of appearances I won’t be putting you in handcuffs, but I will ask that you come with me. You are currently a suspect in the deaths of four aliens found a few weeks back. Your brother is also a suspect and another team has been dispatched to pick him up the same way.”

“May I ask on what grounds the arrests are being made?”

Alex didn’t have to tell Lena anything, but she figured to keep things copasetic it would be best to give the Luthor something. “There was DNA found under the fingernail of one of the victims. It was linked to your father but wasn’t an exact match.”

“Which means it was one of his children,” Lena concluded.

“Exactly,” Alex unnecessarily answered.

Lena stood up from her desk and walked towards the agent. “Thanks for the heads up Supergirl. I know you did it for Kara, but I still appreciate the gesture.”

“Anytime Ms. Luthor,” Kara nodded before heading back out of the balcony door.

Lena followed behind Alex, with two other agents a few steps behind at her flank. Jess, her brother’s assistant, asked if she needed anything else and she shook her head. It was her first day and it wasn’t exactly starting off on the best note.

She cancelled all her appointments for the day and had all her calls forwarded to her mother. Jess was more than capable of handling most of the calls, but if the caller demanded to speak to her Lillian could handle things from there. Among the few emails she was able to send out, she sent one off to her mother explaining what was happening in the briefest of details. She was bound to be furious this had all transpired, but it was better to comply with Alex’s requests than to fight her on it. Lena knew she was innocent of whatever charges she was being pressed with and there was no need in having others doubt that fact any more than they already were.

After the elevator door closed Alex read Lena her rights. Even though the redhead was the sister of the woman she was sort of dating, that didn’t mean she would lax up in her job. It was something Lena completely understood. Regardless of what was happening, and who was involved, everyone still had to do their jobs.

“Thank you,” Lena whispered.

Alex had barely heard the brunette speak. Turning her head to the side, she pulled her eyebrows together in question.

“For handling things this way.”

Alex hummed and continued to stare at her reflection in the elevator walls. “My sister believes in you. Don’t make me regret trusting her judgement,” Alex said under her breath, being sure Lena was
the only one to hear her. Lena’s lips curled up into a small smile in response. It touched her heart that Kara believed in her so much that it extended all the way to the woman beside her and the Kryptonian that came to warn her of what was about to happen.

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The ride back to the DEO was silent. So was the walk to her holding cell. To Lena, this was just a nondescript FBI building. One that was made of what looked to be mostly concrete. Despite the lack of natural light able to get it, there was an abundance of it artificially. Lena’s cell was better than she had been expecting. There were of course the basics; bed, mattress pad, toilet, sink – but the high-tech equipment outside the door didn’t quite fit in with everything else. Not to mention the level of tech she had seen throughout the building along their way to her cell.

Uncertain how long she’d be waiting, Lena kicked off her Louboutin high heels and placed them in front of her cell door. Next was her blazer she could have gone without wearing but had put it on for the sake of appearances. Having no need for her hair to still be pulled back into the neat ponytail she managed to wrangle together that morning, she let down her hair, rubbing at her scalp soothingly.

After an impatient huff or two – or three – Lena lied flat on her back and stared upwards at the blank ceiling. She couldn’t hear anything other than the fan of the AC blowing. Thankfully the weather was forecasted as being a bit cooler so her plain black slacks kept her legs warm. The long sleeves of her red blouse kept her arms and torso relatively warm as well. She peeked down at the silver watch her father had gifted her before his passing several times. An hour had ticked by before Alex had returned to fetch her.

Opening the polycarbonate glass door to Lena’s cell, “Sorry to have kept you waiting for so long,” Alex apologized. “We ran into a few issues when picking up your brother.”

At the mention of Lex, Lena swung her legs over the edge of the surprisingly comfortable mattress pad. “What do you mean ‘issues’?” Lena was staring the redhead down as she waited for a response.

Alex stepped further into Lena’s cell, tapping a command on the inner terminal to shut the door. Alex sighed, weighing her options on how to answer Lena’s question. “A team of three went out to your family’s home. From the very beginning Lex wasn’t cooperative. I’ve been told, the agents did all they could—”

Lena clutched the edge of the floating platform that served as bed. Her grip was so tight her fingers lost all color at the tips. “They killed my brother,” Lena gasped with trepidation, her voice strangled by the words being forced out of her mouth.

“No, no. God, no,” Alex hurriedly tried to say in order to reassure the fuming woman in front her. “I’m sorry. I guess I could’ve gone about explaining this in a totally better way.” Alex ran a hand through her hair, thankful she shut the door after coming in. “Lex, he uh-he refused to come in. Because of his arm the agents weren’t able to handcuff him. I don’t understand why he keeps trying to use that to his advantage,” Alex digressed under her breath.

Lena was beginning to relax after finding out her brother was in fact still alive. “Then what happened,” the brunette prompted.

“The agents had to result to use of excessive force. All other options had been exhausted. That’s why you were kept in here so long. We should have arrived at the same time as the other team with your brother. He was taken to the med bay when they got here but he’s still unconscious.”

Lena looked as though she were taking it all in. Her brother’s behavior made no sense. In fact, none
of this made sense. She tried to piece together how her life had even gotten here when Alex cleared her throat.

“If you’re ready, I’d like to sit down and talk with you. There’s a few questions I’d like to ask after I get a few DNA samples from you.”

Lena of course hadn’t objected. Alex let herself back out of the cell and waited for the young woman to get her shoes back on.

“Since you took my phone, am I allowed to make a phone call?”

Alex was leading them down to the med bay where she had everything she needed set up. Under normal circumstance her answer would have been no, but there was nothing ordinary about this. “I’ll have to check,” she said, to which Lena hummed. That should buy her a little more time to gauge how she wanted to proceed.

The redhead had done her absolute best to remain as professional as possible; Lena appreciated that. She respected it even more after continually seeing Supergirl hover outside of the infirmary.

“Does she always look so…apprehensive,” Lena mindlessly asked. Alex had no idea what the woman was talking about, so she looked at her with a questioning gaze. Lena nodded her head towards the half glass wall and waited for the agent to turn around.

Alex stopped drawing a vial of blood from Lena’s arm and peeked over her shoulder. Sure enough, there was her sister clad in her Supergirl suit, headpiece shifted back to the headband that reminded her of a crown. She was pacing back and forth in the hallway peering into the room ever few steps. When they made eye contact with one another, Kara halted in place. She didn’t think the two women would notice her; she was caught, looking like a deer in headlights.

Alex sighed before turning back around. “It’s hard to say,” Alex lied. She knew perfectly well while Supergirl was pacing in the hall; it was because of Lena. Alex had assured her sister she would do her best to protect Lena by doing everything herself. She even put the Luthor in a cell of her own instead of leaving her to sit where all eyes would be on her.

“She can come in if she wants.”

Alex knew Kara could hear everything they were saying. She knew that would be all it took for Kara to break free from the laps she was making in the hall. Alex shook her head. “I don’t think that would be a good idea,” she said as a warning to the heroine.

Lena sat, holding the small gauze pad to her arm, and waited for Alex to finish up gathering all she needed. So far, the woman had taken a saliva and blood sample. All that was left was one of her hair.

Back turned, “Can you tell me anything about your mother,” Alex asked as she typed away at her computer.

Lena was caught off guard by the question. Why would Alex be asking about Lillian at a time like this. “I’m sure she’d love to answer that question herself. I’m actually shocked she isn’t here now after what happened with her precious Alexander.” Lena laughed a bit derisively to herself. Despite the strides her mother had been attempting to make lately, it hadn’t made of for the years of abuse and ridicule she had endured.

Alex spun around on her stool, lips quirked into a soft smile. “I meant your biological mother.”

“Oh-uhm…” Lena looked around at everything in the infirmary, never looking up into Alex’s
intense stare. It had easily been years since she had spoken about her birth mother. Mainly because there was very little she definitively knew about the woman. Well, that and the fact that no one else encouraged the discussion.

Lillian had shut down talks about her birth mother as soon as she stepped foot in the Luthor household. Any time she spoke about the woman it was in a diary she kept hidden in the back of her wardrobe; a spot she knew her stepmother would never check. As soon as she could get out of this government building she would go looking for those old journals.

“If I’m being honest, there’s actually very little I know about her. Far less that I can remember,” Lena self-consciously admitted.

“That’s alright,” Alex kindly replies. She didn’t mean to bring up a sensitive subject, but there were a few things she wanted to cross-check in the DNA samples. Alex could see the tears brimming in the brunette’s eyes and turned to give her some privacy.

Lena thought she heard Alex mumble something under hear breath but wrote it off as a trick of her mind. “Do you mind if I make that phone call now?”

Alex had stopped typing and sat in silence for a minute. There wouldn’t be any harm in letting her make a call. It would presumably be to Lillian, and it wasn’t like she was officially under arrest. “I’ll get someone to grab your things,” she relented without turning around.

Alex made a call from the phone on her desk and requested Lena’s belongings be brought up to them. There was a bit of push back, but her request was followed in the end.

“Where’s Lex,” Alex heard the young woman ask.

“Just on the other side of the wall over there.”

Lena took a peek over her shoulder and saw there was a doorway towards the end the wall. Now that she was looking at it she couldn’t figure out why she hadn’t noticed it when they first came in.

An agent still dressed in her tactical gear came into the room with Lena’s things. Looking at the woman’s nametag, “Thank you Agent Vasquez.” The woman nodded without speaking to her; a normal interaction for Lena. The agent took up a post by the door as she waited for Lena to get what she needed.

The plastic bag she was handed was clear so she could see everything inside. There was a label in the top right corner with her name and other basic information scribbled onto it. Pulling her phone out, Lena powered it on and waited. Alex had begun moving around the room, typing things into different computers and using pieces of equipment she recognized.

As soon as her phone was on, there was one ding after another. She had several missed calls and emails; even a couple text messages, which was unusual. The bulk of her missed calls were from Lillian – there was even a voicemail from the woman that she didn’t bother to check.

Lena dialed her mother’s number who picked up after the first ring.

“Oh, thank God! I’ve been trying to call you for hours. Are you alright?” The woman actually sounded relieved to finally be speaking to her daughter.

“I’m alright mother,” Lena said in attempt to reassure the matriarch she was fine.

“The agents that came. They said you were being picked up along with your brother.”
“I was,” Lena replied. “I heard what happened to him.”

Lena heard a gruff sound come from the other end of the line. It was a sound she had never heard from her mother. If she had to guess, it almost sounded as though she was at her wits end with something. Whatever it was, she didn’t sound happy.

“Alexander wouldn’t listen. He fought them every step of the way...I’m just glad you’re alright,” Lillian sympathetically added.

Lena couldn’t bring herself to speak. There it was again. Her mother was more concerned with her wellbeing than she was with her son’s. No matter how many times she did it, it still hadn’t felt right. She may never get used to this change in the older woman’s behavior, no matter how badly she had wished for this very thing to happen as a child.

“They wouldn’t tell me where they were taking the two of you.”

“That’s not surprising. I don’t imagine they’ll hold me here much longer,” she said, looking over to Alex for an answer.

“We still have a few things to discuss but the results should be back soon,” Alex explained.

“Oh, good. I want you to come straight to the house when you’re released. Jessica and I have already spoken and she’s handling things at LuthorCorp for the day.”

Lena hummed before saying her goodbyes.

She kept the call as short as possible. She only wanted to touch base with her mother to let her know everything was alright; at least on her end. Lena looked over the messages she had on her phone, both from Kara. The blonde had sent her a message earlier on in the morning. She had missed it in her attempt to make it to work early to get settled. The second had come a half hour ago. It was a simple request for Lena to call her when she got off work.

*If I even get out of here by then,* Lena thought to herself.

The other message on her phone was from Jess, warning her that she had spoken to Lillian and the woman did *not* sound very pleased. Lena powered her phone down again to hand her things back over to the agent waiting. The woman took her things with a slight nod before leaving the room again.

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On her way back to the DEO, there was a car crash that could benefit from her assistance. She wouldn’t be Supergirl if she neglected the needs of the many citizens of National City over her desire to be there for one person. One person who wasn’t in any immediate danger. Alex had promised her she wouldn’t let anything happen to Lena while she was at the DEO, but Alex was just one person. She didn’t want to take any chances, so she lingered outside the med bay – from a distance – and waited. That hovering quickly turned to pacing the length of the hallway.

“She can come in if she wants,” she heard Lena say. She definitely heard that, she wasn’t making it up, was she?
Confirming that she did in fact overhear Lena invite her inside, Alex had all but insisted it was a bad idea. Kara thought the piercing scowl really wasn’t necessary. Part of her knew the red-haired woman was right, but she wanted to ignore that part of her so badly. Lena didn’t need to be here. She was innocent for crying out loud. But that all had to be proved before they could let her go.

Unexpectedly, Kara’s phone began to ring. It had startled her a little as she was unaware she had it set to ring. Looking at the Caller ID she saw it was work.

Can one thing go right today, Kara thought to herself with a sigh.

Pinching the bridge of her nose, eyes closed, “Hello?”

“Hey Kara, it’s Levi. I know you said you’d be in a bit late today, but your mom is looking for you.”

“What do you mean my ‘mom is looking for me’?” She hadn’t meant to be so short with him, but her patience was already wearing thin.

“I mean that she’s here in the office.”

Unable to come up with a reason as to why her mother was at her job, let alone in National City, Kara let out a quick sigh, this one shorter than the first. “Ok. I’m-I’m on my way. Don’t let her leave before I get there.”

Kara left the hallway on a mission to find J’onn. Nearly circling the entirety of the building, she couldn’t find the Director. She had already wasted enough time trying to find the Martian, so she left without any explanation. Stopping back at her place to change, Kara didn’t stop again until she was landing in an alleyway near CatCo.

She straightened out her light-blue band collar button down and readjusted her belt as she made her way to the building with haste. Once again, Kara ran through every possible reason she could think of for her adoptive mother’s visit and none of them were good – so she stopped thinking about it.

It could be nothing.

The elevator felt unusually slow today. Thankfully she was the only one on board so there weren’t any unnecessary stops along the way. With the ding of the electronic bell Kara was bouncing on the balls of her feet impatiently waiting for the doors to widen enough for her to escape. Rudely bumping past a few people, Kara yelled out apologies without stopping.

Opening the door to their bullpen, “Where is she,” Kara anxiously asked no one particular. Siobhan and Levi pointed towards her office, saying something she wasn’t listening to.

Kara shoved her office door open, slamming it shut behind her. She had startled Eliza, who had shot up from her chair at the sound of the door being opened.

Giving the woman a once over, “Is everything alright?” After asking the question she knew things were the exact opposite. Her mother’s eyes were puffy with trace amounts of pink in the lids. The tracks from her tears had been poorly wiped away. It wasn’t very often she saw her mother with her hair pulled up into a bun either. Things definitely weren’t “alright”.

Seeing the concern in her daughter’s eyes, Eliza broke down again. She promised herself she would keep it together. That she wouldn’t fall apart again so soon. Kara tried to pull the woman into a hug but she was waved off from doing so.

Forcing herself to speak, “It-it’s your fa-father. He-,” the older blonde began.
“What about Jeremiah? Did he come back?” Kara was trying to get a good look into her mother’s eyes but couldn’t as her attention was fixated to something on the floor.

“He’s in the hospital Kara. I got here as fast I could.” The woman’s cries had subsided for the moment. All that remained was the hitching of her breath.

What her mother said made sense, but, it didn’t “Why did you come here then if he’s in the hospital?” It was a valid question. Midvale had an excellent hospital. She knew because her mother worked there. So why was she in National City?

“He’s at National City General.”

There’s the why, but how did Jeremiah wind up in a hospital hours away from their home?

“Ok…” Kara didn’t know what else to say. Her brain was still trying to catch up after being so focused on Lena. Processing what was going on would take some time. Clearly Eliza came here because she couldn’t bear going to the hospital alone. She came to her job because on any other Monday – at this time – this is exactly where she’d be.

“Why don’t you sit back down. I’ll see about getting us over to the hospital, yea?”

Eliza half-heartedly nodded. Being near her daughter had begun calming her rather erratic heart. The young woman’s presence hadn’t entirely done away with her nerves, but something was better than nothing. Right now, any piece of mind she was provided she’d take.

Kara stepped outside of her office, running her hands through her hair. She couldn’t call Alex because she was tied up at the DEO. But Jeremiah was her father, she needed to know what was going on. Not to mention she had up and left without warning – in her defense she did at least try.

The hospital wasn’t terribly far from CatCo, so she could get them an Uber there – or a cab, whichever would get to her faster honestly. She’d get her mother to NC General and she’d find out how Jeremiah was doing. That way she’d have information when she presented the situation to her sister.

There. She had a plan, and it was a decent one.

“Kiera is everything alright?”

Kara almost slipped up and audibly groaned when she heard the woman’s voice. Cat couldn’t have had worse timing.

“Not exactly. I’m trying to handle a family emergency at the moment.”

Without further explanation, Cat grabbed Kara’s arm and walked them back into her office. The CEO hadn’t been expecting anyone else to be inside and nearly jumped when she saw the other blonde head of hair.

“Cat this is my mother, Dr. Eliza Danvers. Mom, this is my boss, Ms. Cat Grant,” Kara said to introduce the two women.

Cat nodded with a sympathetic smile when Eliza looked her way. She hadn’t meant to make a fuss, so she was thankful Ms. Grant wasn’t either. “I’m sure Kara and I can handle it but thank you.”
Clearing her throat, “Actually,” Kara quickly cut in getting both women’s attention. “We need to get to NC General. We’re a little short on time so we should get going.”

“Of course. Don’t let me keep you.” Cat moved to let the women out of the room. Remembering that Kara walked to work, Cat hurried to stop the mother and daughter before they left. “I’ll have my driver take you. It’s no trouble at all,” she added when it looked like both of the Danvers women were about to refuse the offer.

Eliza thanked the other woman once more then turned to leave; Kara hadn’t followed.

“Thank you Cat,” Kara said with earnest. She quickly pulled the woman into a tight hug before leaving the office herself.

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Alex had motioned for Lena to follow her. Where they were off to she had no idea. She was expecting Supergirl to still be outside the med bay, but sadly the superhero was gone.

*Why do I care that she’s gone? She did save my life…*

Alex had led them to a small conference room a few doors down from where they just were. There was a television hung in the center of the far wall, a glass table set up in the middle of the office space. This room was more along the lines of what she was expecting the FBI headquarters to look like, not everything else she had seen. Alex had sat down, tapping away at her tablet. Lena sat across from her, hands clasped on the tabletop.

Several minutes had passed in silence. Lena couldn’t figure out if this was some kind of power move or if Alex was stalling. Maybe it was neither of those things. Either way she was getting antsy. She was forced to wait when they arrived and now she has to wait again; for whatever reason. There was no small talk, not even a random sneeze or cough to break up the state of their current monotony. Lena sighed with relief when there was a knock at the door.

Alex got up to answer it, taking a paper from an agent on the other side. After closing the door, the woman read over the papers. There was a perceptible shift in the agent’s posture.

“Well, I have some good news…but nothing about this is all that great,” Alex began to explain, hoping that would soften the blow of what was to come next.

Lena knew exactly what the woman was about to say, but she still braced herself anyway. Suspecting it, and hearing it confirmed aloud, were two wholly different things.

Alex returned to her seat and handed over one of the documents. Lena quickly scanned over the page understanding every word. Recognizing symbols and acronyms as she went along.

“My DNA isn’t a match,” Lena stated, voice just above a whisper. She knew she wasn’t guilty of anything and yet that hadn’t stopped her from running every worst-case scenario in her mind. Someone could have tried to frame her, or something far worse – whatever that may be.

If her DNA wasn’t the match that meant her brother’s was. A detail she had been actively trying to avoid admitting. Alex hadn’t gone into great detail about what happened to the aliens. Most likely because she couldn’t. Regardless of what the woman could or couldn’t say on the matter, Lena was
having a hard time picturing her brother as being capable of something so horrible.

The boy she grew up with, the man he had become, he wasn’t this person. There was no way Lex had done something like this. Then she thought back to the redhead implying that Lex had tried to kill her only a week ago. If he really was responsible, if he really had tried to have her killed, there was no doubt in her mind that that version of Lex was more than capable of being behind whatever he was being accused of.

“I know the information is bittersweet at the moment, but I need to ask you some questions.”

Lena was still staring down at the page. “Of course.”

“Have you noticed any changes in your brother’s behavior as of late? Anything that seems out of character.”

Lena shook her head. Until recently, Lex had just been, well, Lex. If there was something going on, growing up a Luthor had taught him well how to hide it from everyone.

“Maybe small things I suppose. But they all started a while ago.”

Alex leaned forward in her chair, resting her elbows on the table, “How do you mean?”

“Lex and I have always been close. Since I’ve moved back to National City, I’ve noticed he’s been a bit…distant. I thought I was just making things up but now I’m not so sure. He’s not as – I don’t know – happy, as he used to be. When I was primarily staying at the mansion, he was keeping odd hours. I’m not sure that’s still the case but I wouldn’t be surprised. Little things like that.”

“So he’s been withdrawing socially? Has that only extended to you? Does he have many friends?”

Lena laughed at the questions. “Lex and I are completely different people. Where I prefer isolation and being left alone, Lex thrives in the company of others. The people he associates himself with I wouldn’t exactly call his friends. They’re more like fans. The one friend I can recall him having was Clark Kent. They were best friends actually. I still don’t know what happened there.”

Alex stiffened in her seat. She had no idea that Lex had a relationship with Kara’s cousin. Then again, it’s not like the two Kryptonians spoke very often. She made a mental note to discuss this with Kal, as soon as possible.

There was another knock at the door, this time it was J’onn meaning to get Alex’s attention. He asked if she could step outside a moment then excused himself from the room.

“What is it,” Alex asked, a bit upset by the interruption. She was getting somewhere with Lena and didn’t want to mess up the groove.

“Kara is here.”

“Yea, I know. She was watching over Lena like a hawk, so I moved in here for some privacy. If she keeps it up, it’ll only be a matter of time before Lena figures out they’re the same person.”

“No, Alex. Kara is here.”

“Wait, she was just here as Supergirl.”

Alex wasn’t catching on fast enough. “It’s Jeremiah. She’s downstairs waiting for you. I can take over from here–just until you get back,” he quickly added. He didn’t need to read Alex’s mind to
know how important this case was to her.

The Danvers sisters always protected each other, no matter what. Now that Lena Luthor’s presence was growing in her sister’s life, she had to be certain the woman wasn’t up to anything. That Lena wasn’t putting Kara in any unnecessary danger.

But right now there was something going on. Thankfully Kara had the good sense to keep her distance from the conference room as herself, which was why J’onn is relaying the news.

Swinging the door open to the conference room, “Lena, if you don’t mind I’ll have to wrap things up. You’re free to go, but Lex is officially under arrest and won’t be allowed to leave once he comes to. He won’t be allowed any visitors until we transfer him to another facility.”

Alex was proud of herself for still being able to function after finding out her father had returned. Based on J’onn’s expression, things weren’t good, but that didn’t matter right now. He was back, and boy did she have a few choice words for him.

Grabbing the paperwork from the table, Alex swiftly moved to leave the room. But before she did, “Don’t make plans to leave the city any time soon,” was all she said before exiting the office. She left J’onn to handle everything else.

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Kara stood like a statue by the door, arms crossed over her chest. That was as close as she wanted to be. Even in his condition, looking at her adoptive father made her skin crawl. She wasn’t happy to see him, but she was glad he was alive for her mother and sister’s sake. Eliza had pulled up a chair at her husband’s bedside and quietly sobbed into the blankets. It had been a half hour or so of her just standing, keeping watch, while her mother tried to stifle her cries.

When she and Eliza had arrived at the hospital, the doctor’s warned them he was in pretty bad shape, but he’d live. They gave him medication to make him comfortable, but he’d probably be asleep for a while. Kara wanted him to wake up. There were so many questions she needed to ask. One of the firsts being how he ended up in National City. Followed by what had he had done to wind up in the hospital.

Even if she didn’t have perfect vision she could tell that his right eye had swollen shut. There was a knot that had formed on his cheekbone underneath his swollen eye. His lip was busted and there was a nasty gash on his forehead that extended up past his hairline. They must have stitched it before sedating him. Not mention all the bruises she could spot coloring parts of his exposed skin.

With her x-ray vision, she saw he had a couple broken ribs, his nose had been broken – the doctor’s must have set it – and there was something going on with his knee. From the looks of it, someone must have stomped it, but not hard enough for it to break. She could see a few fracture lines, but it wasn’t a complete break.

Knowing that Jeremiah would at least live through this ordeal, Kara deemed it an appropriate time to inform her sister. Eliza most likely wouldn’t have noticed her absence but she let the woman know she was leaving to get Alex. There was a faint hum and hint of a nod from the woman that Kara took as confirmation her mother heard her. She gave Jeremiah a final once over before leaving his room.

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Alex worriedly looked at her sister, waiting for the blonde to tell her what was going on. The young woman had pulled her into a vacant hallway so they could talk in private.

“All J’onn said was that dad was back. Why is he here?”

“He’s in the hospital.” Kara supportively squeezed her sister’s shoulders hoping that would be enough to keep her from panicking. “He’s banged up but otherwise he’s alright. Eliza’s here too.”

“Mom’s here? When did she get here?”

“I’m not sure. I got a call from work saying she was in my office. That’s when I found out. I wanted to get more information on his condition before I told you. I hope that’s alright.”

“No, no. I’m glad you did. At least I know he’s alright.” The freneticism in the redhead’s voice had lulled. It wasn’t gone but she had calmed enough to hide it better than she had.

“I can take you to him now if you want. He was asleep when I left, maybe he’ll be awake when we get back.”

Alex swung her arm, gesturing for Kara to lead the way. They wound up taking her car instead of grabbing an Uber. It didn’t take long at all for them make it to the hospital and into Jeremiah’s private room.

As Kara had thought, Jeremiah must have woken up while she was gone. That may have been for the best because she didn’t think her sister could handle seeing him the way he was on top of him being unconscious.

“Hey, dad,” Alex said softly, meeting the man’s gaze. She hesitantly walked to his bedside, trying to be as gentle as possible when she sat on the edge of it opposite her mother. Her father winced at the slight jostle of his body. Alex quickly apologized, not meaning to hurt the man further.

“It’s quite alright Alex. How’s my sweet girl doing?”

The tears that had welled in her eyes after seeing her father were now streaming down her face. It was overwhelming to see him this way.

Scoffing, “How am I doing,” Alex barked through a disbelieving laugh. Wiping at her tear stained face, “The better question is how are you doing?”

Jeremiah looked towards the door, noticing his youngest daughter hadn’t come any closer than that. He wanted to beckon her over but thought better of bringing attention to their distance.

“I’m fine Alexandra. Don’t you worry about me.”

Eliza was sniffling and sobbing, happy to see her husband awake and talking. The only person that didn’t seem shook up was Kara.

Kara had been completely silent up to this point. “So…what did happen to you Jeremiah?” Her voice was neutral but her face, scrutinizing. Nothing about Jeremiah’s reappearance made sense to her and she wanted answers.

Glaring over her shoulder, “Can’t you just be happy he’s back Kara,” Alex questioned, voice unmistakably elevated. Kara didn’t take the woman’s agitation personally. She knew her sister was most likely feeling a lot of things at the moment and needed a minute to process it all.
Waving off his eldest daughter’s concerns, “It’s all a bit fuzzy,” he said without breaking eye contact with his youngest.

“Then why don’t you tell us what you do remember. Do we need to call the police?”

Eliza was now the silent one. She watched as her husband and daughter eyed each other critically. Kara was right to question the man’s whereabouts. She also knew part of her daughter was trying to protect her. She didn’t know how to intervene without taking a side, so she only waited; listening intently.

Jeremiah had disappeared and had been gone for weeks without a word. Eliza was overjoyed that he had returned and was more or less alright, but that didn’t mean that she would excuse his behavior. Just because he was badly injured, it didn’t let him off the hook for what he had done. Whatever explanation he had, it had better be a good one.

“Your mother and I had discussed my leaving to consult on a project here. The few times I was physically needed in National City I was only away from your mother a day or so. This last time I was expecting the same; a day or two – three at most.”

“Then what happened?” Kara’s patience was wearing thin. Whatever tale Jeremiah was attempting to string together, she already didn’t believe a word of it.

Jeremiah was looking into the bleak but warm faces of his wife and eldest daughter. He wanted to do the best to console them but there wasn’t much he could do. Not with the way he must look and their current surroundings. Telling them what he knew wouldn’t be beneficial either, but necessary.

“I remember landing at the airport and following the same routine I had been when I came to the city. I got my work done in a couple of days and that’s where things get murky. I remember walking back to the hotel the last night to check out in the morning. I had gone for takeout at a restaurant around the corner from the hotel. I walked by an alleyway and then – nothing.”

“Dad. That was weeks ago,” Alex explained as gently as she could. There was clearly a lapse in his memory.

Kara attentively watched Jeremiah’s reaction. If he was aware of the amount of time that had passed he hid it well. Worry, then disbelief flashed across the man’s face.

Shaking his head, wincing in pain, Jeremiah refused to accept what he was being told. “No. No I was only gone a few days.”

Eliza grasped onto her husband’s hand, tears resurfacing in her eyes. It pained her to see her husband so distraught. “Honey, do you know where you are?”

“I’m going to assume we’re still in National City.”

Oh, he’s good.

Alex and Eliza both nodded their heads. Seeing that he was attacked in the city, still being there was a logical conclusion.

“You don’t remember anything after being attacked,” Kara asked again. She really wasn’t buying this whole act, it was far too convenient. To disappear for weeks, worrying his wife, and acting like no time had passed; it was more than a coincidence.

Jeremiah locked eyes with the blonde. It was a look Kara had grown familiar with. Whenever he
disapproved of something she did or wanted to say something he couldn’t in the moment he would
look at her this way.

“I’m sorry. No,” he said through tight lips. There was a hint of irritation in his voice that only Kara
picked up on; being well acquainted with the subtle shift in his tone.

Kara steeled herself for her next moves. Her mother and sister might be buying this charade, but she
wasn’t about to believe him so quickly. There were questions that only he could answer, and she was
bound and determined to have them answered. “Then let’s start from the very beginning. Why did
you have Alex testing samples of alien biomaterials?”

Spinning around in place, “Kar,” Alex hissed, face situated in a warning for her to stop.

Jeremiah slid himself up a bit on the gurney. He wasn’t going to take this line of questioning lying
down; no pun intended.

“If you must know, I needed a second set of eyes. Your sister is brilliant, and I had hit a roadblock.”

Kara didn’t even attempt to hide the roll of her eyes.

“Of course, compliment her to get her on your
side.

“There was always mom,” Kara offered up as an obvious alternative.

“Your mother had enough on her plate. With her work at the hospital and one of her new patients…
she’s been making trips out here to National City as well. Besides, your sister’s security clearance is
high enough that I could ask her for help on this project.”

This not only got Kara’s attention but Alex’s as well.

“What does my job have to do with this?”

There was a nagging voice in the back of Alex’s mind. A voice that was reminding her of her initial
concerns. Not only had her father asked for her help, the work was now linked to four mutilated
aliens and several others that were missing – likely with the same fate. There was a war being waged
inside of her she could no longer silence or ignore.

“It doesn’t,” Jeremiah assured the redhead with a gentle hand clasped on top of hers. “It was just an
added benefit that I wouldn’t run into any problems getting an outside perspective.”

Making her way into the conversation, “What even is this project that you’re working on? Why do
you need a security clearance to be part of it,” Eliza questioned.

“There isn’t much I can say about it. Honestly, you all know too much as it is—”

“Yet we know nothing,” Kara exasperatedly interjected.

Jeremiah expelled a deep sigh wrangling in his anger. “If I could say more I would. Just give it a rest
Kara.”

Eliza released her husband’s hand and walked over to her youngest daughter. “I’m going to go grab
us all a snack.” Looking towards the young woman, “Kara dear, will you give me a hand?”

Kara’s arms fell to her sides. She knew the question was more of a demand. Based on past
experiences, refusing the woman would be a bad idea. Especially with the sternly resolute look that
was currently being thrown her way by the woman.
Kara gave her sister an apologetic look as to say be careful before following behind their mother. Their walk to the cafeteria was filled with an uncomfortable silence. She knew, as soon as they were alone, she was in for a tongue lashing to set her straight.

The cafeteria sign was in her sights when her mother gently shoved her into a utility closet. Her mother had never laid a hand on her. Usually, the older blonde saved chewing her daughter out for more private settings so that had to be what was about to happen, Kara reasoned.

Eliza waited until the door clicked shut behind them, taking steadying breathes in the meantime. The change in locale, her mother’s deep breathes, it was vexing. Not to mention she was getting whiplash from the changes in everyone’s behavior.

Alex knew Jeremiah was connected with their ongoing investigation, but it seemed like she had forgotten all about it. Eliza had been mostly silent during Kara’s exchange with her adoptive father. She knew her mother had a few reservations of her own surrounding her husband’s disappearance, but nothing was adding up for the young woman.

Having taken the necessary time to collect herself, Eliza leveled her gaze on her daughter, lips pulled into a tight line. Kara waited with bated breath, and rather patiently she’d say. Her hands were clenching into fists at her sides as she eagerly waited a moment more.

Breaking their loaded silence, “I have no proof, but your father is lying,” Eliza confessed. “Call it a…feeling – a hunch even.”

“You don’t believe him either?!” Her mother shook her head in response. “How can you be gone weeks and not remember a thing? And he just showed up at the hospital today. Not the night his attack had supposedly taken place.”

“You’re right, it doesn’t make any sense. In the past your father has always consulted me when stuck on a project. We have the same clearance level. If he was allowed to participate, then so would I.”

Kara could now see how unsettled her mother was by the things she had said. She could see the weight of her own words sinking in, in the woman’s eyes. This wasn’t her intention when she began questioning Jeremiah. Everyone in that room deserved answers – the truth – particularly Eliza.

“But Alex…”

“You’ll have to give her time,” she said softly as she rested a hand on Kara’s shoulder. “I know you both have different relationships with him, but Jeremiah means the world to her.”

“What about you?” It was legitimate question. If Alex was clearly struggling with the possibility that Jeremiah wasn’t the man she had always believed him to be, how was she doing; he was her husband after all.

There was a small, reassuring smile that played at the corners of her lips. For the sake of her children, she had to keep it together. At least for now. “I’ll be alright sweetie. I just need you both to be ok.” Right now, that truly was all that she needed. There was only a matter of time before the truth reared its ugly head. What’s done in the dark will come to light eventually.

Eliza wordlessly pulled her daughter back along their path to food. Kara hadn’t eaten all day; she was beyond famished. Her snacks turned into a whole meal that brought about a genuine smile on her adoptive mother’s face. It was the first time she had really smiled all day.

Kara didn’t return to Jeremiah’s room, stating she needed to get some air for a while. Eliza more than understand and simply reminded her daughter to be safe. They still hadn’t informed the matriarch that
Kara honestly hadn’t been expecting for the concession stands to be open. It was a preseason game and very few people were usually in attendance. This was how she found herself stuffing her face with her third hotdog topped with the works.

Lena had called Kara while she was out walking and let her know what had happened earlier on in the day. Leaving out nothing. When Kara proposed they go to the basketball game the brunette was more than happy to meet her at the arena. They both needed a chance to destress. To not focus on their lives for a few hours.

Per her usual, Kara was early. This time it worked to her advantage because she could pig out before Lena would get there. James had joined her in the stands and talked with her a bit before he needed to go warm up with the rest of the team.

He profusely apologized again for her being blindsided by Mon-El’s return, and she waved him off for a second time as it really wasn’t his fault. He had informed her that he had all but threatened bodily harm if the Daxamite got close to her again. It was a warning that carried little weight given the parties involved. Besides, Kara was more than capable of handling herself in anything were to happen.

Warmups were nearly finished when her phone rang. Lena had called her one last time to make sure she knew where Kara was seated. Having gotten then early, she was able to snag a seat midcourt, a few rows up for a good view. More people had come out than she originally thought would have. It was nice that the team had support even in the preseason.

With tipoff, Kara spotted a dark-haired woman approaching from her left. Having taken a seat in the middle of the row, the woman had to squeeze past a few people to get to her. Turning her head to be sure she was right, Kara froze in place.

Lena had her hair down. She must have washed it before coming because it still looked a little damp. Even in an NCU basketball jersey and dark denim jeans the woman was still breathtaking. Lena’s wardrobe was continually surprising her, meaning Kara clearly needed to adjust her expectations.

Standing up to greet the woman, “You look amazing,” Kara said, blushing at her own admission. She wanted to reach out and pull the woman into a hug, refraining from doing so. She was still learning Lena’s level of comfort with physical contact. It was a hard adjustment for her given how physically affectionate she was with just about everyone. It was her small way of bringing a little light to other people’s lives.

“You’re looking rather handsome yourself,” Lena suggestively replied, darkening the tint of the blonde’s cheeks.

Kara glanced down at her outfit suddenly self-conscious over what she had on. Similar to Lena, she had on a dark-washed pair of jeans with a t-shirt from the basketball team’s past season. It wasn’t anything over the top; she was going for comfort. The brunette said she liked the outfit so why was she now wishing she had put on something else?

Lena took her seat beside Kara, leaving the blonde stood there alone. Someone shouted for Kara to sit down – the game had already started – breaking her free from her swarming thoughts.

Kara absentmindedly handed over her container of popcorn then grabbed for her drink. Lena
grabbed the popcorn from the woman’s hand, crossing her legs to set it in her lap. Without meaning to, her foot brush across the back of Kara’s leg. It wasn’t her foot touching the other woman that got Lena’s attention, it was how stiff Kara looked after it happened.

She opened her mouth to apologize but Kara sat back in her chair to ask her a question. Most likely to avoid the embarrassment of her reaction.

“Do you follow basketball at all,” Kara asked just before grabbing a handful of popcorn then shoving it into her mouth.

Lena couldn’t help but laugh at the sight. The goofy nature of the woman sat beside her couldn’t have been rehearsed. There was no way one person could be this unabashedly awkward while simultaneously being painfully charming. She couldn’t believe that it was something in Kara, that was a tad quirky but, she found to be attractive. On anyone else, that probably wouldn’t be the case.

In an attempt to hide her snort, Lena ate a bit of popcorn herself. “Don’t know a thing about it,” she proudly admitted. “Sports were never really my thing.”

This got Kara excited. After the day they both had, this was exactly what they needed. A mindless distraction, even if it wouldn’t last forever.

Kara spent the rest of the game explaining the basics of it. She no longer flinched away when their shoulders bumped. Or when their hands grazed each other after going for a bit of popcorn at the same time. She was hyper aware of Lena’s foot still positioned just behind her leg, bouncing in place every once in a while. This was the closest they had been since their sort-of date at the diner and it felt good. It felt natural, like driving home after a long day at work, brain on auto-pilot. You don’t quite remember the drive, but you’re home now.

It was a tough match but the NCU Badgers wound up winning the game by five points. On their way out of the stadium, Kara had noticed they were getting a few unpleasant looks. It was most likely because they recognized who Lena was and not because they were two women noticeably flirting with one another.

Knowing that Lena most likely also saw the way people were looking at them, Kara’s protective instincts kicked in. After holding the door open for the brunette to walk through, Kara effortlessly wrapped her arm around the woman’s shoulder. No part of her was ashamed to be seen with the Luthor, nor should she be. They had a great time during the game, and she wasn’t about to let a few closed-minded idiots ruin their evening.

Lena had stumbled a bit, caught off guard by Kara’s embrace. She realized she must not have been the only one to notice the looks off passersby.

“You know. Supergirl said something to me today that makes a bit more sense.”

Kara hummed, wondering which part of what her other identity had said stuck with the brunette.

“She said that you convinced her I was worth the trouble. That I wasn’t anything like my family.”

“Because you aren’t,” Kara vehemently answered, tightening her grip around the woman’s back.

Finding comfort in their proximity, Lena followed Kara’s lead and wrapped her arm around the blonde’s waist. She wasn’t ready for her day to end. She wasn’t prepared to be away from Kara just yet.

“It’s probably a stupid question because you always seem to be hungry, but, do you maybe want to
grab a bite? It’s ok if you don’t.” Lena kept her eyes straight ahead, afraid of what Kara would say.

Slowing their pace to a halt, Kara looked down at the side of Lena’s face. She waited until the woman looked her direction. “I would love to, but I need to check on Alex.” Kara hadn’t explained what all her day had entailed as she didn’t know how to.

Lena figured she shouldn’t mention that Alex had appeared a tad unraveled after informing her that her DNA wasn’t a match. Mentally she had connected the two things; Alex’s unusual behavior and Kara needing to check on her. The two things may be completely unrelated, but what are the chances? Whatever the case, Kara would tell her when she was ready to talk.

“It’s a family thing—”

Placing a gentle hand on the blonde’s cheek, “There’s no need to explain,” Lena said, shushing any further justifications in her needing to leave. “You can tell me when you’re ready.”

Kara leaned down a bit to wrap the younger woman into an embrace, thanking her for understanding. As she pulled away, arms still wrapped around the woman’s waist, she noted the way Lena’s tea green orbs flicked from her lips back up to her sapphire eyes.

They were both thinking the same thing. Kara had to fight the urge to close the gap between them with a searing kiss. Lena was fighting the desire to do the same as her arms were still wrapped around Kara’s neck. They stood like this for several seconds that felt like a lifetime to them.

They were so absorbed in the moment, so focused on each other, they hadn’t noticed the camera flashes in the distance.

“Goodnight Lena,” Kara said with a husky voice.

“Night Kara,” Lena said, voice equally filled with lust.

It took another moment before they were able to break free from each other. Kara waited with Lena until her driver showed up, turning down a ride home. She didn’t trust herself to be that close to Lena and not act on her urges. A walk back to Alex’s apartment should calm her back down.

Chapter End Notes

I hope everyone enjoyed the chapter! Writing it was a tad stressful for me, but not in a bad way. What I wanted to cover this chapter I couldn’t see playing out any other way. There was something happening with everyone, but some of it was happening at the same time. The overlaps were fun to do.

We’re getting more Lena and Kara time, which I personally enjoy. Having it at the end like that was like a cool down from everything else that happened this chapter lol.

Let me know what you think down in the comments or come holler at me over on Tumblr @electriclimes. Also, do y’all like having longer chapters? Should I keep them as long as they’ve been or switch it up every so often?

All suggestions, not just for the chapter lengths, are ALWAYS welcomed. I actually encourage it! Comments/suggestions/observations/constructive criticism, it all helps me. If I can make the story better let me know how.
Until next time...
Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

Maybe it's because I'm super excited about writing the next chapter that I struggled with this one. It took longer than usual for me to finish and I'm still not entirely happy with it. If I tried to rewrite this one more time y'all wouldn't have had a chapter on time. If you're in the States I hope you had a fun Labor Day. If not, I hope you had the least Monday-ish, Monday ever lol.

I added the (*** for a trigger warning again. It's just one paragraph (towards the end) this time and it's for the same reason as previously used. DESCRIPTIONS OF VIOLENCE IN MORE THAN BASIC DETAIL. If you feel this may bother you, please, skip over it. You won't be missing anything of major significance.

Now sit back and let your mind roam free...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You should've kissed her. You had the chance and you didn’t take it. But you’re ‘friends’. . .smooth Danvers, real smooth.

Kara was so wrapped up in her own thoughts the walk to Alex’s apartment had gone by in a flash. She could have sworn she had just left Lena after the basketball game. One minute she was closing the door to Lena’s towncar and now she’s knocking on her sister’s heavy metallic door.

It didn’t take long for the redhead to open the door, glass of Scotch in hand.

“I thought you were cutting back,” Kara mentioned, gesturing to Alex’s nearly empty glass.

Alex rolled her eyes, leaving Kara stood on the other side of the threshold. “No, you thought I was cutting back. I never agreed to anything,” she replied, plopping down on her sofa.

Kara busied herself straightening up the few things out of place in Alex’s apartment. They were small things: a few dirty dishes not in the sink, parts of Alex’s uniform, things of that nature.

“Do you – I don’t know – maybe wanna talk about it?” Her question was met with silence. Kara could tell Alex was intentionally ignoring her, even if she hadn’t noticed the woman turning the volume up on her television.

Snatching the remote out of her sister’s hand, Kara shut the television off. Sat on the coffee table, she waited. The staring contest was intense, but she wouldn’t break. Present behavior included, there was no way Alex was ok, no matter how loudly she’d try to deny it.

Alex went to refill her glass. What was odd was that she hadn’t poured more into the empty glass. The bottle was in her right hand, glass in the left, but she never tipped the bottle. Her breathing was shaky but the rest of her was unmoving.

This was Kara’s opening. “Is Eliza still at the hospital?”

Alex cleared her throat before setting the bottle of Scotch and her empty glass on the counter. “They
gave mom a cot and let her stay the night. I didn’t want to...” she trailed off.

“Why not?”

All the fight seemed to seep from Alex’s frame. Her shoulders sagged and her posture was less rigid. She must have been asking herself the same question, Kara thought. J’onn had given her the rest of the day off and shifted her schedule the rest of the week so she could be with Jeremiah. So why wasn’t she at the hospital? Why couldn’t she bring herself to stay?

Alex slowly turned around to face her. Her eyes were glassier than they were a moment ago. The red-haired woman huffed as she leaned back against the counter.

“Before Clark brought you to us, dad and I used to do everything together. Mom called me his shadow,” Alex added with a sorrowful laugh. Kara gave her sister a pitiful half-smile but didn’t move to interrupt the trip down memory lane.

“Mom and dad both are what got me interested in medicine. Becoming a scientist one day. Dad and I used to conduct one crazy experiment after another that mom usually cleaned up.” There was noticeably more life to Alex’s laugh this time. “Then you came along, and things changed. I now had a sister I never wanted. I hated you because I had to share our parents. Those first few years were rough but I wouldn’t go back and change them. The beginning got us here. If it weren’t for you I wouldn’t be doing the work I am now. If it weren’t for you, I probably wouldn’t care as much as I do about the welfare of aliens on this planet.”

Kara was hesitant to speak, but she wanted to know where her sister was going with all this. “What are you saying?”

“I’m saying that gaining a sister, albeit an alien one, has taught me a lot. I fight the hardest to protect you and I’ll never stop doing it.” There was a brief moment of silence before Alex continued. “I’m choosing to protect you now over my love of our father.”

“Alex—”

“I know you didn’t ask me to,” Alex hurriedly said, cutting off her sister’s protests. “You never had to.” Kara watched as the fierce, steadfast glint in Alex’s eyes partly returned. “Dad means the world to me, but things change. I didn’t want to admit it, and I’d still rather not, but something isn’t adding up. That voice that tried to warn me when dad sent me those samples is back and I’m trying to listen this time.”

Kara let out a sigh of relief, head slightly rolling backwards. This was exactly what she was expecting. The very thing Eliza knew her eldest daughter was struggling to come to terms with. It was difficult for Alex to grasp the shift in the man she had once idolized. A change that would most likely be hard for anyone in her position. Kara sympathized her sister’s plight. Having to make a decision of this caliber couldn’t have been an easy one to accomplish.

“Can you answer a question? And I want you to be honest with me?” Alex left the idea of another drink alone and returned to her seat across from the blonde. Kara hummed with a bob of her head. “Why is this so easy for you?”

Kara guffawed, honestly not having expected for that to be the question. When she noticed the sincerity in her sister’s eyes, Kara realized she was being serious. Alex really wanted to know how she was taking this all so well.

Kara purposefully cleared her throat in a futile attempt to distract from her laughter. “Nothing against
the man you know Jeremiah to be, I’m sure he was like that once upon a time, but that’s not how I
know him.” Kara leaned forward, elbows on her thighs. She gave her sister a look as to ask if she
was ready for whatever was to follow that statement. Understanding the look, Alex nodded and
waited for Kara to continue.

“It wasn’t long after you guys took me in. I’m guessing Eliza and Jeremiah thought I was out with
you. Otherwise, I highly doubt they would’ve had this conversation with me around to hear it.” Kara
drew a deep breath, giving herself a moment to weigh if she should tell Alex the truth. The redhead
had asked for her honesty, but the woman didn’t know what she was really asking her to admit.

Exhaling, Kara’s eyes flicked closed. *Here goes nothing.*

Looking into expectant brown eyes, Kara finally told Alex the truth of why she was so distant with
Jeremiah. As she spoke, she could tell Alex wasn’t fully prepared for this particular truth. It was
probably better that she knew considering the events that were transpiring. It was a secret Kara had
kept for years from everyone.

“I had no idea Kara! Why didn’t you tell me sooner?”

“Because he means a great deal to you. I eventually made my peace with the situation… All I need is
you and mom,” Kara confessed with a small grin. Alex reached out to grab her hands, squeezing
them between her own.

“That explains *SO* much,” Alex giggled. “Now I understand why you wouldn’t let up at the
hospital.”

Kara lightheartedly shrugged her shoulders. “For your sake, I want to believe Jeremiah is telling the
truth. But given all that we know, that’s highly unlikely.”

“I know what you mean,” Alex replied. “The samples all being linked to now dead aliens. His
disappearance and the story that goes along with it… But there is one more bit I wanted to run by
you.”

Kara pulled her hands from Alex’s and leaned backwards a bit, using them to prop herself up. “The
security clearance thing?”

“Yea,” Alex nodded. “What do we know about Lena’s research?”

“That’s my point. Lena’s research is federally backed. She mentioned my security clearance may not
be high enough to know about it. Then dad shows up and spins a similar tale. I think they’re the
same project.”

“Ok, I see what you’re getting at but there’s no proof the two are even the same. Whatever Jeremiah
is working on clearly isn’t the same thing.”

“Be realistic here Kar. Sure, we have no idea what Lena is actually studying. But it has government
money attached to it requiring you have a security clearance. It’s so easy for you to see the bad in
Jeremiah but you turn a blind eye to Lena? How’s that fair?” Alex was trying to keep an open mind,
but in doing so she had to look at Lena with an equally scrutinizing eye. If they were suspecting
Jeremiah to be involved, then Lena shouldn’t be overlooked so easily; their situations were
unfortunately similar.

Kara was on the defensive. Alex had trusted her judgement up until now and she hadn’t been wrong
thus far. She could see the connection the redhead was making, but it looked circumstantial. “I’m not turning a blind eye. You’re just jumping to conclusions and looking for the easiest person to blame. Because it would be the end of your world if Jeremiah really was solely responsible.”

As soon as the words left her mouth Kara knew there was probably a better she could have phrased it. It stung a little to have Alex all but accuse her of dismissing any suspicions surrounding Lena because of their growing relationship. In a way, Alex was doing the exact same thing except she was looking at Jeremiah as the man he used to be.

“That’s not fair Kara, and you know it,” Alex said, a spark of anger in her chest begging to be lit into a flame.

“It goes both ways Alex. Lena hasn’t given us a reason to suspect her, yet you’re repositioning the target back to her. It’s not like Jeremiah’s all that innocent here. We have proof of that.”

“Maybe not Lena, but the DNA I found on the body was Lex’s. DNA that could have easily been hers. At that point she was just as much a suspect as her brother. Two siblings in a family that has historically hated anyone that wasn’t like them.”

Sitting up bone straight, “Lena’s not—” Kara began but was cut off.

“Her family. I know. You keep saying that,” Alex said, knowingly finishing her sister’s sentence.

From the beginning, Kara had been adamant about judging the family based on their own, individual, merits, not as a whole unit. In this, Kara had been right; yet again. Outside of Lena lying about her identity, which Alex actually came to understand, the brunette hadn’t given any cause for suspicion. She’s been compliant thus far in the investigation. It’s just the research Lena’s conducting that the voice in the back of Alex’s mind keeps nagging her about.

“And I’m going to keep saying it until you believe me.”

“I’ll talk to J’onn tomorrow about all of this. We’ll try to formulate some kind of plan. I’ll let you know when we do. But you,” Alex said, pointing towards her sister, “need to focus on school. I know all of this is really inconvenient and you want to help, but Kara Danvers wants to finish school. And her sister would like to see her graduate. So I want you to take a step back for a while. At least for right now.”

Kara sighed, curling in on herself. Outside of the first, maybe, week and a half she had been neglecting her studies. The only upside was that the only course of importance this semester was her chemistry lecture. A class she would have probably been flunking by now had it not been for Lena’s help temporarily filling in as a TA.

Midterms were coming up and she needed to buckle down and focus. Two of her classes only had two tests the whole semester; the midterm and final. If she performed poorly on the midterm, it could screw up her entire grade. What Alex was saying was right. If Kara wanted to keep her job at CatCo she needed to graduate; preferably on time. She only had one semester left after this one so now wasn’t the time slack off. Refocusing her attention back on school may be for the best; as far as her personal life is concerned.

After being attacked with Kryptonite, she needed to take it easy. Whoever targeted her could try to come after her again. Every time she went out as Supergirl the chances of her being attacked with Kryptonite increased. Kara had spent some time mulling over the idea of working with the DEO to better understand the substance’s effect on her body and she still wasn’t fully on board. As long as she could have a say in what they did and how they did it, she supposed she’d go along for the sake
of obtaining answers. It was J’onn and Alex after all.

“I guess I can do that,” Kara conceded.

Alex had been expecting more of a fight. After narrowly avoiding an argument with the younger woman, she was willing to take any win she could get right now. “Alright. Well, go home and get ready for your classes tomorrow. I’ll also talk to J’onn and see about pulling back on some of your Supergirl shifts.”

They both stood and looked at each other for a second in silence. Kara was the first to move, wrapping her sister in as tight a hug as she knew the redhead could handle. Alex coughed and splutter, shouting that Kara was going to break something if she didn’t let go. As Kara pulled back, “Just promise me you’ll think about everything I said. Don’t be so quick to place blame, no matter if it’s Lena or Jeremiah,” she requested before breaking the crushing embrace.

Kara made her way to the door, Alex right behind her. “I’ll do my best,” she heard the woman say.

After leaving Alex’s apartment, Kara was hungry again. She stopped by three fast food restaurants, picking up a smorgasbord of food. The hour was late when she finished eating. She needed to be up early for her nine-a.m. lecture so she needed to shower and go to bed. It was only after she was snuggly wrapped in her comforter that her phone rang.

Grunting and groaning because she had to move from her comfortable spot, Kara rolled to the side to see who was calling.

It was Lena.

Her annoyance was quickly replaced by excitement. An unbridled exuberance amplified by the butterflies fluttering through her chest and stomach. Butterflies that hadn’t been there a moment ago.

The two women hadn’t talked for more than a half hour before they both fell asleep; still on the phone. Lena had thanked Kara again for inviting her to the game. Stating once more how she had enjoyed herself. Kara had had the sudden urge to ask the brunette out on an official date, but let her nerves get the better of her. She had psyched herself out. Stuck on the idea that they were just friends, even after nearly kissing the woman a few hours ago.

It was a peculiar dance she was leading but for now she was just happy with any time that was spent with Lena. A part of her was growing tired of not acting on the feelings she harbored. In the meantime, Kara resigned herself to believing that when the time was right she’d speak up.

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Kara woke the next morning with her cellphone stuck to her cheek wondering how it had gotten there. She remembered Lena calling, and vaguely what they had spoken about, but couldn’t remember hanging up. The lightbulb in her head flickered on. She had fallen asleep on the phone with Lena, that’s why she couldn’t remember hanging up. Kara smiled to herself at the intimacy of the simplistic act. It wasn’t some grand gesture, but it was definitely something she could get used to doing.

Lena must have been the one to end the call. It was a little before eight – Kara had woken up before her alarm – so the brunette must have already started her day. Kara checked her emails for any cancellations or necessary info for the day, per her usual. It was the first email and it was from one of her professors. Her class right after the normal time she ate lunch was cancelled – her professor’s kid was sick.
Then Kara had a brilliant idea.

_I can try to see if Lena might want to grab lunch with me since I have extra time today._

Checking her messages next, she saw there was a text from Lena.

<Lena; 6:47am> I hope you have a great day. I haven’t slept that well in weeks. Thanks for getting me out of my head.

<Kara; 8:01am> Any time. I know your days are chaotic now so no pressure to respond. Have a good day! :)

Having a little time to spare, Kara made herself a few pancakes and scrambled eggs. While she ate she typed out a few emails to send to her professors asking if she could make up her work; with notes for any absences she may have of course. She couldn’t remember if she had missed very much. Overall, maybe a couple quizzes and a few in class assignments – oh, and that lab she missed, Kara quickly recalled.

Thankfully, there wouldn’t be a heck of a lot to make up. The hardest part would be reading the textbooks and looking over Powerpoints to take notes that she hadn’t gotten to. Tedious, but necessary, work.

The weather forecast called for off-and-on showers all day, so Kara dressed accordingly. With an olive green and grey baseball tee, medium wash denim jeans, and duck boots, Kara grabbed her yellow duffle raincoat and backpack and headed for campus.

Her chemistry lecture had gone as well as to have been expected. Dr. Williamson had given them all access to the study guide for his midterm. He cracked a few jokes and answered every single question posed. Midterms were in about two weeks, so he was giving them ample time to prepare.

The group of people Kara had met – thanks to one of the young women asking her for notes a while back – had asked about her absence. She had only missed a few lectures but it was nice to know someone noticed. They had all talked and goofed off a bit after their class, killing a bit of Kara’s extra time.

It was only eleven o’clock; still too early for lunch for anyone other than her. Needing to get through at least another hour of her day, Kara text Winn to see if he was on campus yet. They hadn’t spent a ton of time together since he redesigned her suit. Now seemed like the perfect time to catch up.

Not even a minute later Kara got a response with Winn saying he was in the engineering building. Kara made her way over, finding Winn animatedly conversing with another student. Predictably he was in the middle of an argument over which superhero was better. He was so engrossed in his debate he hadn’t noticed his best friend sat right beside him.

“Supergirl isn’t so bad,” Kara stated, joining in on the conversation.

The other student, a young man with an unfortunate bowl cut, snickered; dismissing her suggestion. “Ppsshh, Superman could totally kick her ass. Even in that new suit he’d wipe the floor with her.”

“Not even,” Winn basically shouted. “She’s clearly faster than he is. And that suit is far more practical. Superman just flies around in his underwear.” Kara caught the slight blush to her friend’s cheeks. She had almost forgotten about the crush Winn had on the Man of Steel.
Their conversation had gone on in pretty much the same fashion for another twenty minutes. Kara was at her wit’s end and tired of stating the same things over and over. The passion Winn and the other guy were exuding was a sight. One she was used to seeing in the man whenever he was interested and invested in something.

She was finally able to break Winn free from the now heated discussion once he admitted to knowing Supergirl; his usual trump card in such conversations. Kara laughed at the defeated look on the student’s face when he found out. What was funnier to her was that the guy had debated Supergirl’s abilities with the heroine herself without even knowing it.

Winn suggested that Kara walk with him to the library since they had already wasted enough time. She tried to tell him it wasn’t a waste, it was actually refreshing. To have another conversation that didn’t revolve around her other job. Not having to focus on the details of everything going on was a relief. As they walked, she did have to explain the Kryptonite situation to him, but only in minor detail.

Winn inquired about the suit’s performance and if he needed to make any alterations. The only thing she hadn’t used yet was her utility belt but that was only because of the situations she had to deal with. For the time being it served its purpose in holding her cellphone. Other than that, she had zero complaints.

“The helmet was genius. I love that thing,” Kara gushed. It had quickly become her favorite part of her new suit.

“I had a feeling you’d like it. Some of my best work to date,” Winn bragged with pride, puffing out his chest a bit. “So where are you off to?”

“My one o’clock was cancelled so I’m thinking of taking Lena out to lunch,” Kara said, bashfully.

“Oh yea,” Winn exclaimed, “That reminds me.” He quickly pulled out his phone, stopping in place. He looked like he was searching for something. Shoving his phone in her hands, “Care to explain,” Winn asked.

Kara gave him a puzzled expression before looking down at the phone. “I saw that this morning,” Winn further supplied.

Getting a good look at the screen, Kara couldn’t believe what she was seeing. It was a photo of Lena wrapped in her arms. They looked happy. Definitely like more than friends. It was taken last night after the basketball game, she knew as much because that was the only time she had held Lena quite that way. Her jaw dropped open, not realizing there was anyone around that wanted to snap these photos of them.

Mouth still agape, Kara looked back up to meet her best friend’s awaiting eyes.

“Every tabloid in the city is talking about that picture. I think there was one that called you two ‘gal pals’,” he chuckled, putting extra emphasis on the term via air quotes.

Kara was shaking her head. “I didn’t even know!”

With a teasing smirk, “Oh, I can tell,” Winn joked, then proceeded to make kissing faces towards the blonde.

Winn winced, feigning hurt, after Kara lightly punched his shoulder. “Oh, please. I barely touched you,” Kara said, laughing along with the young man.
Winn pursed his lips once again before jogging off to avoid another swing. Once Kara caught back up to him, “Well, are you two a thing?”

Kara rubbed at the back of her head, nervously laughing. “Not quite.” Winn flashed her a disapproving look, brows scrunched in the middle. “I’m working on it!”

They made it to the library with Winn’s jokes barely decreasing in frequency. She hadn’t walked him inside, on a mission to get to LuthorCorp to see Lena. Maybe she hadn’t seen the photo yet either. It would probably be best if she broke the news instead of some gossip rag. Winn said he’d text her after his work shift tutoring, because he was up for another trip to The Avenue. Depending on how her day went, she’d be up for the same. A little relaxation amongst friends.

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Kara had googled and searched for every article that pertained to the photo Winn had showed her. The particular picture he showed her was just one of several from different angles. Every photo showcased how enraptured the two women were with each other. How oblivious they were to their surroundings. Kara made a pitstop to pick up a bouquet of flowers, hoping that would soften the blow of the photo.

Kara forced herself to put her phone away once she was outside of LuthorCorp. She had been nervous about asking Lena out to lunch, now she was terrified having to show Lena the photo on top of that. She panicked the entire ride in the elevator up to the top floor.

There was a young woman, long dark hair, sat behind a desk. Kara had to remind herself that Supergirl had seen the woman before, not her. The woman greeted her with a warm smile, asking if Kara could give her a moment.

Jess circled her desk and walked over to Kara, asking if she could help her with anything.

“Hi, uhm, can you let Ms. Luthor know Kara Danvers is here to see her.” Before Jess could ask, “She isn’t expecting me,” Kara added, raising the flowers in her hand as some kind of explanation.

Jess left her with a soft smile then knocked on Lena’s office door. The assistant had spoken softly but that didn’t matter. Kara could hear Lena’s voice either way. She perked up upon hearing the woman inform Jess to allow Kara in whenever she stopped by and letting the assistant know to let her in.

Jess walked back over to Kara and let her know Ms. Luthor was ready for her. Jess diligently returned to her work, no longer paying the blonde any mind. Kara knocked twice on the acting CEO’s door and waited to hear Lena call her in. It took a moment, but eventually Lena’s voice rang out from the other side of the door.

Lena’s head was tilted to the side as she typed away on her laptop. She had quickly glanced up towards Kara, but it seemed like more of a reflex than an acknowledgment. Kara stood by the closed door before pushing herself to walk to Lena’s desk.

You’re doing the most right now. Just talk to her.

“H-hey, Lena. I hope I’m not disturbing you,” Kara stuttered.

There was a brief silence before Lena stopped typing and stood from her desk. Smoothing the wrinkles from her maroon slacks, “No, no. I’m always glad to see you. Just some work stuff,” she said, swinging her arm to her laptop, “that I’d rather not be dealing with.”

Kara walked a bit closer to Lena, hand outstretched with the flowers. “These are for you.”
The corners of Lena’s lips quirked up into a smile. Looking over the flowers, “I think I recognize this one,” Lena said. “It’s uhm-oh gosh, I’m drawing a blank.”

“The Bells of Ireland,” Kara said, returning the woman’s smile.

“That’s it!”

“The purple ones are Hyacinth,” Kara explained, shoving her hands in her pockets.

Lena’s manicured brow quirked up at the information. “What are you sorry for?”

“You know what they mean,” Kara gasped.

“In case you haven’t noticed Kara, I’m a bit of a nerd,” Lena said, laughing at herself but not in a harsh manner. “I read a lot as a kid and because I couldn’t keep a plant alive I read about them. If I’m not mistaken, The Bells symbolize good luck?”

Kara ducked her head in a nod. She hadn’t expected Lena to know what the bouquet meant – she hadn’t until the florist pointed out which was which. She was hoping Lena would just appreciate the gesture and that would be it.

“Why that face,” Lena asked, off in search of a vase to put the flowers in.

Fiddling with her glasses, “I take it you haven’t seen,” Kara stated more than asked.

“Seen what,” Lena asked with a quick glance over her shoulder.

“Had I of known, I would have stopped them.”

“Stopped who Kara?” Lena couldn’t find an appropriate container for the bouquet of flowers, so she put them in the glass pitcher of water on the table by the door. Bringing the pitcher and flowers along with her Lena placed them off to the side on her desk and stood in front of the blonde.

Their close proximity wasn’t making things easier on Kara. She pulled out her phone and pulled up the last article she had been reading on her way there. “This,” she said, handing her phone over to the brunette.

Lena slowly nodded her head. “I see. At least it’s a good photo,” she tried to joke handing Kara’s phone back to her.

“So you’re not mad?”

“What for? You did nothing wrong.”

“I know you like your privacy, and this is the opposite of private. There’re usually only sports photographers at the games. Had I’ve known, I would’ve done something.”

“Kara, really,” Lena said, gently placing a hand on the woman’s arm, “it’s ok. I’m not upset, and you’ve done nothing wrong,” she reiterated once more. Lena was trying to console the woman, because she had clearly worked herself up over nothing.

Kara let out a sigh of relief, “Ok. Good. I was really worried you’d be upset.” Hardest part out of the way, Kara switched gears. “Since you’re not mad, Lena, would you like to go to lunch with me?”

With her arms crossed, hip jutted to the side, “Are you asking me on a date? Because it sounds an awful lot like you’re asking me on a date,” Lena teasingly asked. She watched as Kara grew more
and more flustered. Realization of how she posed her question setting in. Lena was enjoying how easy it was to draw that kind of reaction from the blonde.

Straightening up, with a little more certainty in her tone, “Yes. I am,” Kara confirmed with a new level of confidence. This time, Lena was the one caught off guard. Her flirting was meant as a joke, but deep down she actually was hoping for Kara to finally ask her out.

“It doesn’t have to be lunch-today, I mean, but I would I like to take you out on a date. If you’ll allow me the honor.”

“I would love to,” Lena said, a coy smile playing at the corners of her lips.

“Good-great,” Kara said with a bit too much energy. “I’ll set something up!”

“Well…”

Kara gave the young woman a look, brow raised in question. “‘Well’, what?”

“There’s this gala Saturday night. Seeing as a photo has already been taken of us once, I don’t see the harm in having you as my plus one. Before the event, we can do whatever you’d like as our actual date.”

“Oh, so you just want me as your candy arm,” Kara playfully quipped.

Lena laughed at Kara’s simple mix up. “It’s arm candy, and no it couldn’t hurt. I’m sure whatever you put on you’ll outshine me.”

“Not possible,” Kara said, looking at Lena up and down. Kara was proud of the way she was able to make Lena blush.

“Lunch,” Lena choked out, breaking their now intense eye contact.

“Yes, lunch. I’m starving!” Lena couldn’t help but find the humor in Kara’s words. “What? I haven’t eaten since breakfast. Not even a snack Lena!”

“Fine, let me just grab my things and let Jess know we’re headed out.”

Kara was almost bouncing in place she was so excited to finally be eating. That, and she now has her first official date with Lena. She wasn’t about to question how her confidence had changed so quickly. Either way, she was grateful it had. She had only come to the woman’s office to let her know about the photo and go to lunch. If it weren’t for Lena using her words against her, Kara might not have had the gall to actually ask her out.

If it weren’t for the inadvertent push they may have been waiting weeks before Kara could do it on her own. Knowing how the Luthor galas typically went, Kara would be spending the week looking for a tux and figuring out a adequate date idea. It would most likely involve food but that was as far as she had gotten. Which was the same as starting from zero; she was always thinking about food, so it didn’t count.

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Wednesday morning, Kara was late to work thanks to one too many drinks the night before. The
SuperFriends all met for a drink but wound up closing down the bar. It had been a few weeks since they were all together; James even managed to bring Lucy along.

Winn hadn’t wasted any time showing everyone the photo of Kara and Lena once he showed up. The only person that seemed to be against her affiliation with Lena was James. He never offered a good reason for his disapproval. He continually harped on, repeating the same schtick of how dangerous the Luthor family could be to her. She was an alien after all.

Opening the door to the Super Corner – they had to come up with a better name – everyone was busy at work. As she greeted everyone, Kara dropped off the box of doughnuts she hadn’t already eaten on an empty table. Before she could go into her own office, a familiar voice called out her name.

“Ms. Grant wants to see you in her office,” Siobhan mentioned with a smug grin plastered on her face.

Internally, Kara groaned. She was getting the sense that Siobhan didn’t like her very much, if at all. Sporting a strained grin, Kara turned around to acknowledge the woman speaking to her.

“I’ll head up now. Thanks.”

Kara put her things down in her office and made her way upstairs. She had already planned to thank Cat again for her help a few days ago. Eliza had made a point in reminding her to do so.

Outside of Cat’s office, Kara lightly knocked on the closed glass door. There was a faint whisper from the woman inviting her inside. Without thinking about it, Kara walked in and took up a seat in front of the CEO’s desk.

“This is becoming a regular thing,” Cat said with a disapproving frown.

“I’m actually not even sure why I’m here,” Kara admitted. “All Siobhan said was that you wanted to see me.”

“Yes. Siobhan,” the older woman sighed. “Did you two have a spat or am I just to assume something a bit more…personal?”

Kara spluttered at the implication. “What? No!” Fiddling with her glasses this time, “I would never abuse my position.”

“Funny you should mention positions.”

Kara gave her boss a curious look, her usual crease forming between her brows. “Uhm, I’m not following.”

“When I came down to your office Monday, I actually wanted to speak with you. I’ve. . .noticed a few things.”

Kara had no idea what Cat was talking about. Whatever it was, she sounded sure despite her pauses. It seemed as though she didn’t know how to broach the subject, but she would do it anyway. A totally Cat Grant thing to do. When she wanted answers, she would get them. Kara sat, forcing herself to patiently wait for the older blonde’s follow up.

“For starters, my voice was barely even a whisper when I told you to come in. And my door wasn’t open.”
Before Kara could defend her actions in an attempt to cover her slipup, Cat waved her off.

“Not only that, but your haircut. It’s quite the coincidence when you made the chop Supergirl’s suit changed. Even adding a helmet.”

Kara was freaking out on the inside. She had no idea Cat was paying this much attention to the things she did. “Obviously a coincidence,” Kara stuttered, nervous laughter slipping between the cracks of her faltering self-assurance.

“That’s what I thought at first too.” Cat stood up from her desk, walking around to lean against it beside Kara. “As pestering as that young woman is, every time Siobhan has brought up your absences and disappearances they’ve coincided with calls Supergirl has answered. Still a coincidence?”

She knows…

“I mean, you did put me in charge of a team that handles all things Super in the city; no offense. But I can see how you’d think there was a connection between Supergirl and myself.”

Cat was not convinced. “If you’re not her then there shouldn’t be a problem if we set up another interview. I’ll need you there as an assist.”

Panic nearly flashed across her face. That would completely be a problem. “I’m sure we all can work something out.”

“Good,” Cat said with a smirk turning up the corners of her mouth. Kara could tell the woman felt like she had won, and at the moment Kara had been bested. There had to be an option she hadn’t thought of yet.

Swiftly switching topics, “Now that that’s out of the way,” Cat skimmed through a pile of papers and magazines on her desk in search of something in particular. Pulling out one of National City’s known gossip magazines, “I wanted to speak with you about this,” she said, thumbing through the pages.

Kara didn’t even have to look, already knowing what the woman was searching for. “You mean that photo of Lena and I.” There was no need to pose it as a question because she already knew of its existence.

Cat hummed, flipping the magazine around. Kara had only looked at online articles surrounding the photos, so she took a second to read over this article. This would give her a chance to prepare for whatever other onslaught of questions Cat was about to hurl her way.

“Well…”

Looking up into the other woman’s eyes from her seat, “What do you want me to say?”

“Only what you’re comfortable sharing.”

Kara took a moment to gather her thoughts. “I didn’t even know there was paparazzi at the game. I sometimes forget she’s practically a celebrity, with her last name.”

“It’s more likely that someone tipped them off of her being at the game. She’s done a fantastic job of keeping her private life private over the years.”

“That’s why I didn’t know who she was when we first met,” Kara sighed with a laugh at the memory of their meeting in the grocery store.
“As long as you’re happy, I’m happy for you. Also, I don’t want your relationship with Ms. Luthor to get in the way of your work here at CatCo. The more you’re seen out and about with the young heiress, the more your life will change.”

Kara had fixed her mouth to respond when a breaking news alert flashed across one of the screens in the back of Cat’s office. There was a multi-alarm fire in an apartment building in a neighborhood a few miles outside of the downtown district. Kara’s hands clutched at the magazine in her hands, knowing she needed to be there. She was hesitant after the conversation she had just had with her boss. A woman that was already suspecting her of being Supergirl.

Cat motioned towards her balcony door. “You’d better get going.”

The fire looked ruinous but if she left she’d be proving Cat’s suspicions. So she sat and waited, feeling her phone buzz in her pocket. It was most likely Alex or J’onn sending her to the fire she was watching unfold on one of the many televisions in Cat’s office.

Kara was bouncing her head side-to-side weighing her options. There most likely wouldn’t be any harm in Cat knowing she was Supergirl. The woman had taken a liking to the heroine since her debut. She was even responsible for giving Supergirl her name.

On the other hand, too many people already knew her secret. She hadn’t even told Lena yet. She wanted to, was planning on it, but that still hadn’t happened. If she stood here much longer the residents trapped in the burning building could die.

She had her answer, Cat wouldn’t have to wait until that interview to find out the truth.

“Hey, Kara. I’m headed down to that apartment building to see if I can get a few shots of Supergirl. I could use the assist,” a man’s voice requested from outside Cat’s office.

“Yea, sure!” When she turned around it was James asking for her help. Kara knew she recognized the voice. Her shoulder’s sagged and her worry dissipated. She was almost forced to out herself as Supergirl if it weren’t for James’ impeccable timing.

Without another word Kara was off with James in tow. She hadn’t seen it, but there was a knowing smile on the CEO’s face. A proud one she would have called it, had she actually seen. What she did catch was the faint sound of a, “Go get ‘em Supergirl,” coming from Cat as she entered the elevator.

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It had taken a bit of convincing but J’onn finally agreed to let Alex return to work. She wasn’t due back until the following week; a point J’onn was sure to mention thrice. With Eliza planning to spend whatever time she had outside of the hospital at her place, getting back to work was a top priority. That and her work was one distraction from her life at the moment.

They had Lex in custody and his transfer to a nearby prison was scheduled for Friday morning. It was a facility that only housed supermax inmates. Alex was on second shift and took upon the responsibility of handling the medical side of Lex’s transfer. A gambit of things that would take up a good chunk of her shift. A few agents had already completed a basic physical after his arrest; considering how it went.

In order to clear him, she had to repeat what was previously done to make this physical
comprehensive. This wasn’t the first time Alex had to sign off on a transfer. She even had a process that she followed to speed things along; quick and thorough. She had requested that Lex be moved from his cell and brought up to the med bay so she could get started. As she waited, Alex washed her hands, gloved up, and began pulling out all the necessary equipment for the exam.

“Alexandra Danvers.”

“Alexander Luthor…” she trailed off in response.

This had become Lex’s usual way of greeting the redhead since his arrest Monday morning. Alex wasn’t aware the man knew her full first name. The way he said it, it felt like there was so much more than her name that he knew.

“Why don’t you have a seat,” Alex suggested. The agents that had escorted Lex left the room once Alex assured them she could handle things on her own from there.

In his DEO issue sweats and t-shirt, the young Luthor slowly made his way over to Alex and the examination table. Lifting his hands clad together in cuffs, “What can we do about these,” Lex asked.

Alex hadn’t spoken a word until he was seated. “They’re staying on,” she said with a mock frown.

Alex felt Lex’s eyes on her like a walk the entire time she examined him. He didn’t speak, just observed. What exactly she didn’t know so she refrained from letting her face show any emotion. As she jot down the last of her notes Lex cleared his throat.

Alex was really hoping this was going to be easy. He had sat for nearly two hours without speaking. Why was now so special? “What?” Her tone was gruff, conveying the lack of desire she currently possessed to entertain him.

“You have a sister don’t you Alexandra?”

As she peeked at the bald man from the corner of her eye she noticed that familiar glint in his eyes. It was the same one he had the day she questioned the entire Luthor family.

“I don’t see how that matters and will you stop calling me that?”

“How does he know that?”

“Kara. Kara Danvers isn’t it?”

“Kara. Kara Danvers isn’t it?”

Her evident indifference was no longer. “And what’s that supposed to mean?” Alex had switched into protective sister mode.

Leaning back against the elevated exam table, “Oh, nothing,” Lex said in a singsong voice that made Alex’s skin crawl. “Just stirring up conversation is all. Being alone in that cell can be stifling.”

Alex hummed, not believing a word of his bull.

“The title of first born is burdensome. The pressure we’re under. The constantly moving line of our parent’s expectations. It’s so easy for us to disappoint them. But our siblings, they can never do any wrong can they?”

That sat in silence for another moment before Lex spoke again. His hands were wedged behind his
head as he stared up at the blank ceiling. “I can tell you’re an intelligent woman. If we excuse your nearly flunking out of medical school. Heartbreak can be an arduous experience.”

Alex’s head snapped to the side to look at Lex. The only person that knew about her time in med school was J’onn. No one kept a secret better than that man. Another good question was how he knew about her breakup with Maggie. He never said her name, but the insinuation was there.

“But you’ve pulled things together. You’re getting back out there.” She watched as Lex sat up enough to look her in the eyes. “I’m happy for you Alexandra. Really, commendable effort on your part.”

Alex’s threshold was a few sentences away. There was only so much more she could listen to before she could no longer maintain her composure externally. Lex shouldn’t know any of this. But she couldn’t let him get under her skin. That was clearly his aim.

“You’ve probably already come to the conclusion that I’m guilty of killing those aliens,” he said. Alex caught the sneer he tried to hide by titling his head out of her view. “But how sure are you?”

Alex moved away from her workstation, staying directly in front of the Luthor. With hands clasped behind her back, Alex stood up straight; physically conveying her dominance in this situation. He was the one under arrest, not her. He was clasped at the wrists with meant to restrain aliens, not her. He was out of moves and simply looking to cause more problems on his way out.

“Give it up Lex. I personally found the DNA on those aliens. You were a one-hundred percent match.”

“I’m guessing you only checked one of them. Or maybe you stopped once you found that one insignificant sample.” Lex shrugged his shoulders, releasing a barely audible sigh.

A noncommittal groan rattled around Alex’s chest. When she found the DNA sample it had been her team’s second full check of all four aliens. Her eyes and hands weren’t the only ones looking for any pieces of evidence.

Lex sniggered to himself, most likely assuming he was right. “Intelligence is a double-edged sword Ms. Danvers. You think you have this all figured out, but you have no clue what’s happening. There’s so much more going on than my allegedly having murdered aliens for the hell of it.”

“Sounds like a confession to me.”

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Sitting up straight, Lex rested his hand in laps; fingers intertwined. “The way their bodies were mutilated. The look of pure terror in their eyes. Bodies dismembered and left strewn about. The stench of decaying flesh. I can imagine it would be hard for anyone to gaze upon the sight. Stumbling across such a find. A discovery that couldn’t have been coincidence. . . You found it because you were supposed to.”

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Alex’s hands were clasped so tightly behind her back her left hand had gone numb. She had the strongest desire to break his nose. Hit him so hard he’d lose consciousness for a second time this
week. Lex had all but come right out and admit to killing those aliens. Similar to her name, and the way he mentioned Kara being “special”, they were all things he shouldn’t know, and somehow, he did.

This was a game to him. Some sick, twisted, game he was enjoying orchestrating. If the DEO was supposed to find those bodies, then why? What purpose does it serve if he’s caught in the crossfire? Or maybe that was part of his plan too. To be pinned as a suspect now to be overlooked later.

“I’m certain all protocols were followed when handling this case. But, if I were to have a lawyer have your findings double-checked, I’m positive they’d come up with more than just my DNA. In which case, my DNA could be thrown out in court. It would have the appearance of charges being discriminately pinned against me. Your boss wouldn’t like that very much would he.”

“You talk a big game for a man in cuffs. The same man who continually refused to be questioned. Which, I’m sure in all your infinite wisdom, you know is a crime; obstructing justice and all. The same man who seems to know more about this case than he should. A man whose DNA was found on a murder victim’s body. Tell me Lex, how do you see this playing out for you? From here, your few options are looking pretty grim.”

Head slowly shaking in awe, “I applaud your self-confidence. Even in your ignorance you’re convinced that your answer is the right one. Truly amazing,” he offensively stated. The pompous air to the Luthor’s words was pissing Alex off. “The way I see it, after my transfer I’ll be released in a matter of days. At which point you’ll realize just how wrong you were. You and this entire organization.”

Alex had to remind herself, if she hit him she’d be doing exactly what he wanted. It also wouldn’t look good in court. Leaving the room to cool off, the red-haired woman found a pair of agents to escort Lex back to his cell until tomorrow morning.

Lex asked if they could stop for a second, just before they past Alex still outside the med bay.

“If it were me, I’d check any body part that could be used as a weapon. Should be a gold mine of information. Then again, I’m sure you’ve checked so I wouldn’t worry about it.”

The agents carted Lex off towards his cell, realizing it was a bad idea to have stop. “Just food for thought,” Lex said before being pulled around the nearest corner just to get him away from Alex.

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Alex’s thoughts had been scattered and loud. Loud enough for J’onn to seek her out find out what was worrying her this way.

“It would make my day a lot easier if you weren’t psychically yelling at me from across the DEO,” she heard J’onn’s warm voice call out from the med bay doorway.

“I’m sorry. It’s just – I finished clearing Lex’s transfer.”

“That’s a good thing, is it not?”

Alex hadn’t met the Martian’s eyes. She had no idea how to explain what had just transpired. How she now doubted every decision she had made. Was verifying every single piece of evidence pertaining to this case.

She hadn’t heard J’onn leave the doorframe and walk towards her. There was a hand on her shoulder meant to calm her but it was having the opposite effect.
“Why don’t you walk me through whatever’s going on?”

Alex’s hands still on a manila folder she about to set down. With a shaky breath she began explaining her unnerving conversation with Lex. How something about what he said wasn’t sitting right with her.

No one who was truly caught was that cocky. They would plant seeds of doubt but even they ultimately knew they were at the end of their rope. The way Lex spoke, there were several strings left for him to pull. This wasn’t the end, it was only the beginning.

Chapter End Notes

You guys really are the best! Thanks for your comments last chapter; they always motivate me. I hope that I can keep delivering good chapters for y’all. But more than anything I hope to keep the story interesting/entertaining for all of us. Next chapter might be a little shorter but it will strictly be about Kara and Lena’s (first official) date! I hope that’s ok w/everyone.

How much are y’all hating Lex right now lol? I applaud Alex for keeping her cool because I would’ve flipped out. SN: I’m trying to come up with ways to include more of SpaceDad; I’ll figure something out.
If you thought Kara and Lena were cute this week, JUST WAIT!!
As always, let me know what you think about the chapter!

Until next time...
Kara had barely slept a wink. Every time she tried to get some sleep she tossed and turned until she just gave up—again. She even tried to sleep floating above her bed; that was even worse. The cover was half on the foot of the bed. The sheets were hanging off opposite sides of the mattress. Somehow, she had managed to lose one of her pillows during the course of her restless night. It was about seven in the morning and she couldn’t stand being in her bed another second.

Kara had planned out, what would hopefully be, the perfect first date for her and Lena. All of that planning was having to be rethought after Friday’s news coverage. Whoever Lillian had paid off, that money must have reached its limit. Every local news outlet, even CatCo, was reporting on everything as of late that revolved around the Luthors and Lex’s imprisonment that was now public knowledge.

The news stories weren’t shy about mentioning the alien component to Lex’s charges. Nor were they holding back in their speculations. Some newscasters had said it had only been a matter of time before Lex lived up to his family’s reputation. Others weren’t even surprised by his alleged actions but were concerned why the public was just now finding out what was going on.

Kara had even caught a late story that talked about Lena taking over the family’s company. She didn’t even know why the news anchors’ words surprised her. Lena being dragged into her brother’s mess should have been an expected occurrence.

That was probably why she couldn’t sleep. There was no way Lena didn’t know what was going on. Lex’s face and their shared surname were plastered everywhere. The stories were repetitive, but they kept coming.

What Kara had planned for their date was very public. With everything going on, she figured Lena may not be up for that level of exposure. A thought reinforced by the fact that they hadn’t spoken of the woman’s brother at all the night before during their phone call. There were still a few ideas floating through her head, but she’d get Lena’s opinion to see what she was willing to do.

Kara and Lena had talked on the phone every night that week. And every night they had fallen asleep that way. It was becoming a habit. Thursday night, before everything started, the two women had discussed the general plan to their date. Kara was keeping it a secret no matter how much Lena begged to know. The brunette hated surprises, but Kara promised her the entire day would be the good kind of surprise. She wasn’t going to spoil a thing!
The only information Kara was nice enough to divulge was a dress code for their outing and the time she would be at Lena’s apartment; much to Lena’s dismay.

It was already decided that Kara wouldn’t meet Lena at her apartment until ten. This was the problem with not having slept but only a couple hours; she had too much time on her hands. Breakfast was an entire pan of sticky buns with a tall glass of apple juice to wash it down. The next round would be the remainder of her box of Eggos.

The blonde sat in her pjs flipping through stations for something to watch. Changing the channel too quickly, Kara had missed the first news station discussing a breaking news event. Pausing to stuff another piece of sticky bun in her mouth Kara landed on another news station reporting on the very thing she initially sped past.

“Uh, yes, you’re absolute right Donita. At seven-thirteen this morning, officials were called out to National City’s supermax prison to answers calls in regard to an escaped convict. They’ve since begun a search canvassing the area around the facility.”

Kara watched and dreaded having to possibly go handle things with the escaped inmate. Have bad guys ever heard of a day off, Kara exasperatedly thought.

“I’m just getting word that the prison has taken a headcount and there is in fact only one inmate missing. Alexander Luthor.”

“Terrific,” Kara grumbled under her breath.

As the name was said, Kara’s phone rang from her bedside table.

“Kara, we need you—”

“I know. You need me to help look for Lex,” Kara groaned, cutting J’onn off midsentence.

Speeding into her suit, Kara grabbed another sticky bun then flew off in the direction of the prison Lex had only been kept in a day.

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She had nearly searched the entirety of National City with no luck. It was like Lex disappeared without a trace. From the time of him breaking out, to her beginning her search, it had only been an hour; hour and a half tops. For most people, that would be ample time to escape and find a place to lay low for a while. For a man of Lex’s intelligence, that was more than enough time for him to possibly flee the country.

But there was one place she hadn’t checked yet; Lena’s apartment. Kara pushed the sounds of the city into the background to single out a now familiar sound. When she heard it, the heartbeat sounded slightly elevated.

That can’t be good.

“J’onn, I’m going to check one last place.”

“Be careful Supergirl.”

Kara was landing on the woman’s balcony when she heard two voices. One distinctly Lena’s, the other belonging to her brother. He had escaped prison and gone straight to his sister. This worried Kara. If Alex was right, he did try to kill the brunette once already.
Kara watched as the brother and sister seemed to be in the middle of an argument. She didn’t want to eavesdrop, they didn’t even know she was there.

There was only a few ways Kara thought she could handle this. She could either bust in and apprehend Lex; no questions asked, or, she could wait until Lena caught sight of her and gauged the situation for herself. Though they were arguing, things seemed to be relatively calm.

It took a moment or so longer before Lena finally spotted her. With a cautious wave, Kara then awkwardly gestured for Lena to open the door. She watched the brunette’s head roll to the side as she noticeably drew a deep breath. A look of discontent as her situation unraveled further.

“Why am I not surprised you’re here so soon Supergirl,” Lena said, still stood in front of her brother.

Lips pulled into a line, Kara shrugged. Lena had no idea just how much she loathed having to be there. If it were up to her, she’d still be in her pjs woofing down the rest of her breakfast. But no, the presently elder Luthor had to go and spring an escape. This was just as much an inconvenience for her as it probably was for Lena.

Lex moved out of the way, granting Lena passage to the sliding glass door.

“Sorry to intrude,” Kara began, “but I kinda have to. I’m sure you understand,” she said, as she walked into the apartment.

“Of course, I do,” Lena answered, giving Lex the coldest side eye Kara had ever seen.

“Lee, how many times do I have to say it. I had already made plans to celebrate your birthday today. How was I supposed to break our tradition?”

“Oh, I don’t know. By being a law-abiding citizen and staying in the jail you were imprisoned in.” The sarcasm wasn’t lost upon Kara. If she had been in the siblings’ company under different circumstances she would have laughed at their bickering. It reminded her so much of her relationship with Alex.

“I didn’t know it was your birthday,” Kara interjected, trying to distract the brother and sister.

Lena wrapped her arms over her chest, raising a curious brow. As she walked away from Supergirl, “It’s not,” Lena huffed.

Looking between Lex’s amused expression and Lena’s backside, “I’m confused,” Kara confessed, crinkle forming between her brows. Lex had just said he made plans to celebrate her birthday. How was it not her birthday then?

It was Lex to speak up this time, “I’m sure you know my sister isn’t fully my biological sister; we share paternal parentage.”

Kara nodded, this wasn’t news to her. She knew the Luthors had adopted Lena at a young age, but time had revealed that Lionel was actually her biological father. Completely changing their family’s dynamic.

“When the Luthors so graciously let me into their home, there was a bit of an issue,” Lena said, following up her brother’s admission. It was a bit unclear why he was being so open, but she’d play along. It wasn’t as if she disliked Supergirl, and the information was harmless enough.

Lena took a seat on the arm of one of her sofas before continuing. “At some point, several of my official documents had been damaged. Namely, my birth certificate. The day and month had been
obscured. Lionel wasn’t able to acquire a duplicate to get the correct information because I wasn’t born here. I guess he didn’t see the point in wasting his time and money trying to figure it all out.”

“And thus the, ‘Every Day is Your Birthday’, tradition began. Every year, I pick random days and just celebrate the birth of my sister. Eventually we’ll guess correctly, but we won’t know even if we do,” Lex added with a laugh.

Kara watched as the brunette stared her brother down. The woman clearly wasn’t happy, but Kara wasn’t sure why exactly. Logically, it would be because of Lex being in her apartment still dressed in his orange prison coveralls. It couldn’t have been about his celebrating her birthday, but it was all kind of the same thing at this point.

Lena must have noticed Kara’s still confused expression because she looked ready to explain things further.

“Officially, I don’t have the slightest clue as to what day I was born. Unofficially, Lillian had Halloween put on my American birth certificate. It was one of the holidays I enjoyed growing so she probably felt like she was doing me a favor.”

Things were making a little more sense to Kara, but she still didn’t understand why Lex needed to go as far as a prison break over it.

Fists still resting on her hips in her signature pose, “Ok. But I’m still not understanding why Lex is here…” Kara trailed off, drawing out her words.

“Because he’s an idiot and being here isn’t helping either of us.”

“Because every fake birthday I’ve been with you,” Lex said, directing his attention back to his sister. “I wasn’t about to let some jail cell get in my way.”

“Speaking of which, I have to take you back.”

“I have a better idea. Give me ten more minutes with my sister and I’ll go quietly. You can call whatever reinforcements you have to.”

Kara studied Lex’s expression. If they were telling the truth, which it certainly looked like they were, Lex wasn’t doing any harm in this apartment. J’onn would burst a blood vessel if he found out she was going to grant his request.

“I can’t guarantee you a full ten, but you have however long it takes for the agents to arrive.”

Lex looked as though he were fixing his mouth to thank her, “Don’t thank me. I’m doing this for your sister,” Kara said, voice stern. She needed to convey the seriousness of his actions and that she wasn’t some puppet for him to control.

Regardless of how different the man who was the prime suspect in the murder of four aliens was to who was currently stood in front her, Kara needed to keep her guard up. There was no denying the level of Lex’s intellect, and the moment she did could be her last. Who he was right now could be an act, and a very convincing one at that. Better safe than sorry, Kara thought.

With a mischievous grin, “Do tell that sister of yours hello for me,” Lex requested, earning a vexed expression from Lena. Kara was sure to hide any concerns she had over Lex knowing Supergirl had a sister. What was far more troubling was that he possibly knew her identity. That was the only way he could know of her familial relations.
Before she spun around to leave, “Happy maybe birthday Ms. Luthor,” Kara said, then shot off making it seem like she was headed somewhere other than the roof of Lena’s apartment building.

Circling back, and landing on the roof, Kara radioed for J’onn to send a team to her currently location because she had found Lex. She stayed put until she heard agents cuff Lex and escort him out of the building. If she left, and he got away, she wouldn’t be able to forgive herself.

There was no way to be sure that he hadn’t done something before making his way to Lena’s apartment. All they could do was hope he went straight there, without any pit stops; as unlikely as that might be.

Kara was really hoping that Lex’s only intentions were to see his sister for her fake birthday. But the odds were currently against that being the case. She couldn’t focus on that right now, she needed to focus on her day with Lena. A day that would be starting in forty-five minutes.

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What was Lex thinking showing up at her apartment like that? When Lena turned on her television that morning and saw the breaking news alert her heart dropped to the pit of her stomach. Her sinking suspicions were confirmed when she saw Lex’s name flash across the screen.

Thursday morning, an FBI agent had called to let her know that Lex was being transferred to a supermax facility until his court date. A court date that wasn’t scheduled to take place for several months. After his escape today, there was no doubt that hearing would be moved up.

When the agents arrived to arrest him once more, he had done as he said; Lex let them cuff and haul him away without a fight. Minutes after his departure her bell rang. It was too early for Kara to be there and she wasn’t expecting anyone else to show up. Peering through her peephole, there wasn’t anyone outside but there were a number of boxes of different shapes and sizes.

Opening her door, Lena looked up and down her hallway to see if anyone was still around. Predictably not finding anyone, she moved the boxes inside. There were a few medium sized boxes that read ‘FRAGILE’, so she moved those inside first.

With a chuckle rumbling her chest, Lena found a way to laugh at her brother’s antics. He broke out of prison to see her on one of her many pseudo-birthdays. He even had someone deliver all these gifts for him. One by one she went through them all.

There was the usual clothing and jewelry he got her every birthday. One of the larger boxes was a juicer with a note that read, ‘What do vegetarians eat anyway?’ Lex had always teased her about her lack of meat consumption but he never forced his thought process on her about it. Instead, he did laughable things such as buying her a juicer to support her choice.

One of her favorite gifts was the hand carved wooden chess set; it was a tabletop board. He had gifted her a standalone board a few years back that currently resided in her room at the Luthor mansion. It was a contemporary chessboard made of Red Amboyna Burl, Bird’s Eye Maple, and Spalted Maple inlays with an Ebony frame. There was a separate box with cases of traditional chess pieces carved from Original Boxwood and Ebony.

Not recognizing the other pieces, Lena pulled out of the box to take a closer look. Upon further examination, she snickered. The pieces were Celtic in theme. Of course he would find a way to tie
that into everything. After so many years, and so many celebrated birthdays, the man surely had to be running out of ways to remind her she was Irish.

If it weren’t for her pulling out that set of pieces, Lena would have missed the note tucked underneath.

My Dearest Lena,

This may be my last chance to celebrate what could be our last impromptu birthday together. If I was successful you won’t see this until much later. Because I know you so well, you’ve probably found this already. I contemplated leaving you this note for several days but I feel I owe you this much. Just know, it was never your fault.

In due time this will make more sense.

Yours truly,

Alexander

There was a knock at her door. Wiping away tears Lena looked down at her watch. It was ten o’clock on the head and Kara was predictably right on time.

Hobbling uncoordinatedly overtop open boxes and gifts Lena made to let Kara in. She had meant to be dressed and ready by the time the blonde arrived, and she was neither. At least she had already gotten her shower out of the way.

One last swipe to her eyes, Lena opened her front door. Kara was stood on the other side, a look of concern already on her face.

“Is everything ok? You look like you’ve been crying,” Kara worriedly observed.

Lena gave the woman a half smile and turned to walk away without uttering a sound. She was two steps away from her door when she felt a hand gently grasp at her forearm, spinning her back around. The blonde’s brows were pulled in at the middle with a matching frown. There was no way she could ignore Kara’s concern.

Sniffling, Lena felt herself being pulled into the woman’s chest – a gesture she hadn’t been expecting. With the sound of her apartment door closing the brunette shut her eyes with it. She still hadn’t gotten used to Kara just knowing how she felt and being able to comfort her without question.

There was a hand delicately swiping at her back, the other tightly wrapped around her just below that. Against her own will she began crying again, nearly ruining the front of Kara’s pullover sweater.

“We can talk about it when you’re ready,” she heard Kara say against the top of her head.

Kara held her like this until she was sure Lena was alright; calmer than she had been before this all started. Taking a slight step backwards, Lena looked up into fretful blue eyes. Kara’s eyes hadn’t left hers. It seemed as though her eyes were searching for answers within Lena’s. Seeking out confirmation that Lena was in fact alright.

“I’m sure you already know,” Lena managed to croak out, voice hoarse from crying.
Kara nodded. “I saw. The news said he was found and is currently in the custody of federal agents.”

Breaking free from the blonde’s visual and physical hold, “He was here,” Lena flatly stated. She was headed to her kitchen for a glass of water, hoping that would help her scratchy throat.

“What do you mean he was here? Are you alright?”

“I’m fine Kara, just shaken up is all.”

Kara was still posted by her door, unmoving. Lena watched as the woman glanced around the apartment. She watched with particular interest as Kara seemed to stare too long at the boxes in the middle of her oversized living room.

“In case you’re wondering, yes, they’re from him,” Lena explained. If she were in Kara’s shoes, she’d be wondering the same thing.

Walking over to the boxes in question, “Is that why you’re upset? Because he bought you things.”

The corner of Lena’s mouth turned up in a half-smile. “No,” she answered, taking another sip from her glass.

With a deep, hitching breath, Lena told Kara the same story she and Lex explained to Supergirl nearly an hour ago. How her brother broke himself out of prison to see her on one of her many quasi-birthdays. Days he had always picked at random. Explained that the gifts Kara was currently looking at were to celebrate the day.

Shrugging, “I guess that was nice of him,” Kara joked in an attempt to lighten the mood.

Scoffing, “That’s one way to describe it,” Lena said, a faint laugh hidden under her breath.

“Is that why you were crying?” Kara had seen everything there was to see. When she spoke, she was leaning on the back of one of the single seats in her living room to better pay attention to Lena.

“Among other things.”

“Like what?”

The woman didn’t sound pushy, simply curious. Kara was her friend. A friend that hadn’t judge her for her family and had given her a chance to be herself. Outside of Sam and Jack, neither of which currently in the city, Lena had no one to talk to about these things.

“I don’t know how to explain it…” she said, trailing off at the end.

“Try me;” Kara said as she walked towards her.

Lena took a moment to take another drink of her water.

Is she asking because she cares or because she feels obligated to ask?

Kara sat at the kitchen island, her gaze expectant. She was waiting on Lena to dish out whatever it was swarming around the woman’s head, but Lena didn’t know if she was fully ready to take that leap. Kara hadn’t given her cause to be nervous around her. She had always been so supportive. Lena knew she would never have an answer for her trepidations if she never gave herself the opportunity to find out.

So here she was taking that chance, even if she was apprehensive about doing so.
“I’ve noticed a shift in my brother. It’s more than just his behavior. It’s almost like he’s an entirely different person. Or maybe that’s who he was all along. The guy I grew up with wouldn’t have been arrested in the first place, let alone break out of jail if he had been.” Lena rubbed her thumb and middle finger above her eyebrows, headache moving into the forefront.

Kara hummed every once in a while, remaining quiet otherwise. Something Lena didn’t realize she needed if she was going to get through everything she had to say.

“I don’t know how much you know about Lex’s arrest, and I’m pretty sure I shouldn’t be telling you any of this… The news stories yesterday weren’t wrong. Lex is suspected of murdering four aliens. Thing is, he’s too smart to get caught even if he did do it. Lex’s IQ is genius level and I think his escape today was just to show that he could. He was only in there a day. Imagine what he could do in a week’s time?”

“Do you think he’ll come after you?”

Lena hadn’t thought that far ahead. It was a valid question, but it was one she hadn’t considered. It was more likely that Kara didn’t know about Lex’s possible assassination attempt, and for now she’d like to keep it that way. One Danvers sister piecing that together was enough for now.

“Let’s talk about something else,” Lena answered. “Like where you’re taking me,” she said, a small smile appearing on her face.

“After watching the news all yesterday I thought I’d leave it up to you. What we do depends on how exposed you want to be today.”

Rolling her eyes, “That’s considerate of you. I hate that Lex has a finger in my life even when he’s not here,” Lena groaned.

“Do you want to be outside or in? It’ll be cool today, but not cold if that helps.”

The past few days Lena had been cooped up in LuthorCorp and then her lab to finalize a few things. She was tired of circulated a/c and could do with a bit of fresh air.

“Outside is fine.”

“Then our plans are set. I’ll wait here while you get ready.”

Before Lena was fully out of the kitchen, “Pick something comfortable. We’ll be doing some walking,” she heard Kara say. She could even hear the smile in the woman’s voice. The smile that usually flashed a full view of pearly white teeth and was so big her eyes nearly shut. Just the thought of the woman’s happy expression put a smile back on her face.

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“Where exactly are you taking me Kara?”

The park Kara had planned to go to was only a fifteen-minute walk from Lena’s apartment. They were nearly there, but Lena was clearly impatient.

Bumping Lena’s shoulder with her own, “We’re almost there—calm down,” Kara laughed.
As they rounded the next block, the entrance to the park was in sight.

“That’s where we’re headed,” Kara said, pointing towards the park’s signage.

“Maymont Park. I’ve heard it’s lovely.”

“It is,” Kara promised. “There’s fountains, and flowers, and abandoned train tracks, and a petting zoo. You’ll love it!” If she hadn’t caught on to her own rambling, Kara would probably still be listing off features of the park.

They both laughed, taking this small moment for themselves. During their walk to the park, no one had stopped them to harass Lena. No one had shouted rude things their way nor had anyone given them vile looks. It was a small win, but a win none the less.

This was why Kara let Lena choose what they’d do. If the brunette was ok with being out, then she had a few ideas of how to spend their day. In light of recent news going public, if Lena wanted to avoid the public by any means possible she had backup plans for that too. She wasn’t thrilled by the thought of their date-day being hindered, but Kara swore she would make the most of it either way. You only got one first date with someone.

With it being the first day of Autumn, the park was having a discounted day of entry; members got in free. Since Kara was a member she got in at no cost and paid for Lena’s ticket, refusing to let Lena cover the cost.

Once inside the park Kara stopped in front of the blown-up map, putting one in her back pocket for reference later on.

“There’s no way we’re getting through the whole park today, so what do you wanna see?”

Lena looked over the map to see all that was available. Kara had a feeling she already knew what the brunette may want to do.

“Well, we’re closer to the Butterfly Garden,” Lena said as she pointed at the map. “Then we can head through the Gardens on our way to the Japanese Garden.”

Kara smiled to herself, she had been partially right. “I had a feeling you’d want to see the butterflies,” she said, laughing a little.

“What are we still standing here for then,” Lena joked, playfully pushing Kara away from the board.

The noon sun was shining above them, warming the air around them just enough. The entrance to the Butterfly Garden was near the beginning of all the animal exhibits and habitats.

There was a sign above the entrance that read, ‘Caution: Drunk Flying Ahead’. The sign always made Kara laugh when she saw it because it was the perfect description of a butterfly’s movements. As they walked underneath the sign, she was sure to point it out to Lena.

The farther along the path they wandered the closer the two physically became. What was once a small gap between them had dwindled down to shared personal space.

Kara had gotten so excited when a butterfly landed on her nose she had grabbed hold of Lena’s hand to get her attention. She swatted Lena’s other hand away from scaring the butterfly away, never letting go of the hand clasped in her own. Eventually the Pipevine Swallowtail butterfly flew away on its own, but Kara never let go of Lena’s hand.
There were small children running around the path, chasing after the majestic critters. Whenever Kara toured the Butterfly Gardens with Alex, she was a spitting image of the children frolicking around them. They had made it through the entire Garden before Kara realized she was still holding onto Lena’s hand. If the brunette was aware of it, she hadn’t made a move to take her hand away.

Awkwardly clearing her throat, Kara gestured in the direction they were headed next with their clasped hands. It was her way of passively making sure the hand holding was ok.

As they walked, Lena withdrew her hand from Kara’s. There was a faint frown of disappointment on the blonde’s face, but she hid it well. Because she was looking everywhere but to her right, Kara hadn’t noticed that Lena had only let go of her hand to close her navy-blue double-breasted trench coat around her.

What had gotten her attention was Lena not only grabbing hold of her hand, but she wrapped her other arm around hers. Kara was just fine in her shawl collared sweater and chinos, but she was also an alien. Maybe it was a bit colder than she realized.

“Are you cold? We can go if you are,” Kara offered.

“I’m fine. The wind just has a little bite is all.” Changing subjects, “Where are we headed next?”

“For a walk through the Gardens. I wonder how many of the flowers you can name,” Kara wondered aloud.

“Is that a bet,” Lena asked, looking up into Kara’s piercing blue eyes.

“No,” Kara drawled. “Besides, it’s not like I’d win anyway,” she added with a laugh.

“You’re no fun,” Lena pouted, and Kara melted. If this was how Alex felt whenever she used her signature pout on the woman, she could see why the redhead always caved. How could she possibly say no to that face?

With a defeated huff, “Ok, fine. What are your terms.”

Lena looked off into the distance for bit. The woman was beautiful. She had her hair down, curling over the notched lapels of her collar. The wind wisped strands of her long locks around her face ever so slightly. She had suggested for Lena to wear something comfortable and her light blue jeans were just that. Kara was even surprised to see that Lena owned multiple pairs of sneakers. Her golden yellow long-sleeved shirt was a nice touch as well. If she didn’t know any better, she wouldn’t be able to tell that Lena had a rough start to her day.

“I’m assuming food will be a part of this date at some point.”

Kara gasped, feigning offense to the assumption. She laughed at herself, knowing how predictable she was when it came to food.

“I’d assume correctly then,” Lena giggled. “So, if you win, I’ll share a milkshake with you.”

This was a win in Kara’s book because Lena was so serious about her diet. She was extremely particular about the things she ate, always insisting that Kara eat more green foods. ‘Disgusting!’

“And if you win,” Kara curiously asked.

“You’ll just owe me a favor. How does that sound?”
Kara groaned, still not liking her odds. “You’re going to win anyway Lena. Why tempt me like this,” Kara joked, voice with trace amounts of sadness.

“Final offer. Take it or leave it.”

Lena had made it sound so convincing. Kara knew, without a shadow of a doubt, there was no way she was going to win this bet. But the way Lena was looking at her and the way the brunette sounded, she felt she had a chance at winning. If Lena stuck with being CEO of her family’s company, there was no way she wouldn’t get whatever she wanted if this was anything to go on.

Rolling her eyes and giving in, “Fine,” Kara said, dragging Lena back along with her.

As she thought, Lena had named every single flower correctly. How she did it, Kara had no idea, but she was regretting taking this bet.

Lena was graciously gloating, not rubbing Kara’s nose in it too much. When the blonde had had enough, she started tickling Lena’s sides. At the light trace of her fingers across the woman’s body, there was a scream. Not in terror but rooted in surprise.

Kara’s eyebrows shot up. “You’re ticklish aren’t you?”

Lena was caught. “No—no! Kara,” she yelled in warning. Kara had already lost the bet so why not have a little fun being the loser.

Mischievous grin on her face Kara’s brow twitched up in challenge.

“Kara Danvers don’t you—”

Lena hadn’t been able to finish that sentence because Kara was now chasing after her. Kara was happily letting Lena think she was getting away before she snuck up behind her, wrapping her arms around the woman’s waist.

Lena shouted again, snorting as she laughed. Kara spun the woman around in circles before planting her back down on her feet. As Lena spun around, she slapped Kara across the arm.

Pulling her trench coat back down a little, “You still owe me,” Lena said with a smirk and raised brow.

“Do I,” Kara jested, hands raised, fingers wagging in place – the universal sign of being tickled. Lena swatted at her hands and shook her head. “Revenge shall be had,” Lena good-naturedly mumbled but Kara heard every word.

They played like this their entire walk through the Japanese Gardens and then again on their walk out of the park.

It was half past one and all Kara could think about was food.

“Where do you wanna grab a bite? We have plenty of time before we need to get ready for the gala.”

As they walked, their hands continually bumped into one another, but Kara hadn’t moved to hold Lena’s hand again. Not wanting to push her luck, when their hands bumped again, Kara wrapped her pinky around Lena’s. Not quite holding hands, but close enough. Plus, it would keep their hands from weirdly colliding every few steps.

“I’m sure you already have somewhere in mind.”
“I do,” Kara admitted. “You mentioned earlier this week there was a new Mediterranean place you wanted to try. Still want to?”

Lena looked her way, mouth slightly agape. Lena must not have thought she had been paying attention.

“Their waitlist is months long. There’s no way we’re getting in.”

Kara smirked towards Lena, saying nothing. She had already taken care of the reservations. The head chef had promised her a seat at any of his restaurants whenever she came by after the wonderful piece she had written covering one of his previous openings. Besides, lunch wasn’t one of their busiest times the chef had informed her.

Kara flagged down a taxi, letting Lena slide in first. They sat close to one another, Kara’s hand tracing nonsensical patterns on the back of Lena’s. The younger woman had flipped her hand over allowing Kara to continue on her palm.

The ride to the restaurant was over far too soon. Kara paid the fare, refusing yet again to allow Lena to pay for anything.

Holding the door open for Lena, Kara asked for Lena to wait in the seating area. The hostess had recognized Kara and had escorted her to the kitchens to speak to the chef.

As she was expecting, the chef had a table set up for the two women in the center of the restaurant. Kara hoped the location wouldn’t be too public for Lena given everything that was going on. When she returned, Lena was typing away on her cell phone.

“Sorry, work email. I’m putting it away…” trailing off, but still typing. “Right. . . now,” she said after a moment. Kara wouldn’t chastise the woman for doing her job. She was in charge of one of the world’s leading tech companies after all; even if it was temporary. While they were at the park, Lena hadn’t touched her phone once, so one quick email wouldn’t hurt anything.

They talked nonstop, not even breaking conversation once the food arrived. It was effortless how they were able to speak with one another. Even when Lena thought she was being far too technical when she spoke about LuthorCorp, Kara was able to keep up. She had her time spent on Krypton to thank for that.

“How did you manage to get us in here?” Lena was curious to know. She hadn’t even been able to make reservations so soon.

“The chef and I kind of know each other. Earlier in the year I was assigned a fluff piece. Chef Tómas had opened a string of successful restaurants in the city and I was charged with getting his story.”

Raising her glass of water to Kara, “It pays to know a reporter,” Lena joked.

“It has its benefits,” Kara nodded.

The food was amazing, but Kara wasn’t full. Lena must have sensed that much.

“How about we stop for something sweet,” Lena suggested.

Kara could definitely go for a sweet treat. “I’m not sharing,” Kara laughed.

As Lena pulled on her jacket, “I didn’t think you would.”
The two women walked around aimlessly having planned to stop at the first dessert shop they passed. Kara spotted a small gelato shop on the corner of the block, hurrying Lena along with her.

Lena got a scoop of mint chocolate chip on top of a waffle cone. Kara went with a pint of something called ‘Don’t Ask’. The scooper preparing Kara’s snack told her it had a little of everything in it.

Taking a seat on a bench outside of the dessert shop they ate in near silence. Every so often Kara would drum up a bit of small talk, but it was hard to hold a conversation when she kept moaning about how good her gelato was.

Lena turned a bit to face Kara. “Kara, you—” Lena was trying to tell Kara she had gelato on her cheek. How she managed that when she was eating with a spoon was a mystery.

Kara kept making goofy faces to make Lena laugh and it was working. Lena was swiping at her own face, signaling for Kara to mimic her movements with zero luck. Kara was catching on so Lena stretched out the hand she was holding her cone in to wipe the bit of gelato from her face. Because she wouldn’t keep still Lena wound up rubbing a little of her mint chocolate chip across the blonde’s nose.

“You didn’t,” Kara humorously inhaled in disbelief.

Doing her best to stifle her own laugh, “All you had to do was sit still,” Lena giggled.

That was it, Kara would get her revenge. Holding her pint of gelato in one hand, Kara leaned into Lena’s cheek, smearing in both their desserts. Now she wasn’t the only one who was messy. As she pulled away Kara swiped a quick bite at the woman’s cone, successfully getting a mouthful.

“You’re insufferable,” Lena laughed, no meaning truly behind her words.

Proud of herself, “Eh, you like me anyway,” Kara shrugged, getting back to her cold treat before it melted further.

Kara caught the way the brunette cut her eyes in her direction. “You’re lucky I do.”

There was a blush creeping up Kara’s neck. If it weren’t for the collar of her sweater Lena definitely would have been able to see. Her cheeks felt like they were on fire after the admission. Kara would say that things were going well for their date. Things must have been good if Lena just admitted to liking her; but she could have meant it in a friendly way, Kara tried to convince herself.

She was nearly done with her pint when she noticed a photographer on the other side of the street. Based on his position he was definitely snapping photos of the two of them. She wasn’t aware of his presence until that moment so there was no telling how long he had been there. Before Lena could notice the man hidden behind bushes and cars Kara suggested they head back to Lena’s apartment. A recommendation that went over without a fight.

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It was four o’clock and Kara was asleep on Lena’s couch. The blonde had sworn she wasn’t tired and yet here they were. Kara’s head was in her lap, still facing the television; they were supposed to watching some chick flick Lena had never seen together. It wasn’t how she was expecting their afternoon to go, but it was still a favorable outcome.
Spending time with Kara had felt like something Lena had been doing for years. It had been far too long since she had laughed this hard. She couldn’t honestly remember the last time she had felt so free. Even after everything with her brother Kara was still here. Kara was treating her like an actual human being and not how everyone else in National City tended to. The woman was truly a breath of fresh air.

During their date, Lena had noticed a few lingering stares and parents pulling away their children, but their behavior was relatively subdued; given what she was used to experiencing. Being out with Kara must have kept everyone at a safe distance.

Lena scratched and massaged Kara’s scalp, listening to the blonde’s light snores. The sleeping woman was a gorgeous sight. If it weren’t for them needing to head to the mansion, Lena would happily let the woman continue sleeping.

“Kara,” Lena gently whispered. When the woman hadn’t answered Lena lightly shook her shoulder. “Kara, it’s time to wake up,” Lena repeated, voice still a soothing whisper.

This time Kara grunted. Stretching out, the older woman rolled over. As Kara’s face was now buried into her abdomen, Lena felt more than heard Kara mumble something.

Laughing at the ticklish sensation from Kara’s moving lips, Lena tilted Kara’s head back just enough to break the contact the woman’s mouth had with her front.

“Care to try that again,” Lena asked, brushing strands of the woman’s hair off her forehead.

“I said,” Kara grumbled, face fixed into a pout, “Five more minutes,” Kara begged, her eyes still shut.

*That pout has to be cheating. How can I say no when she looks like that?*

Dragging her nails over the nape of Kara’s neck, “I already told you we have to stop by the Luthor mansion before the gala. You can go back to sleep in the truck sleeping beauty,” Lena jested, patting the woman’s hip to fully wake Kara up.

Voice still rough with sleep, “I’m more of a Prince Phillip,” Kara retorted, hiding her face back in Lena’s shirt.

She should have expected the woman to fight her on waking up. Kara completely snuggled back into Lena. She even went as far as trapping one of Lena’s arms in the crook of her neck, the other now trapped under her head. The brunette’s arms were tangled in such awkward positions. Even half asleep, Kara was still stronger than she was.

Attempting to wiggle out from under Kara’s head, “I guess I’m going to this gala by myself.” Freeing herself just enough to let Kara’s head fall onto the seat cushion, “I was even going to stop on the way to pick up some food.” It wasn’t entirely the truth, but Kara didn’t need to know that. She was quickly learning that bribing the woman with food would all but ensure her compliance.

That seemed to get the woman’s attention.

“Fine. I’m up, I’m up,” she groaned.

Lena wasn’t easily convinced.

Opening one eye just enough to look at the woman now towering over her, Kara gave her a toothy grin. “Is this better,” she asked, sitting up. Lena could work with this.
Heading to her bedroom, Lena left Kara to finish waking up alone. Thankfully she already had her outfit for the event set aside, all that was left was packing it up to take with her.

“We can stop so you can pick up your clothes,” Lena called out from deep in her walk-in closet.

She heard something that sounded like Kara’s voice but she wasn’t exactly sure. If she could hear Kara, how in the world did Kara hear her? There were far better things to worry about right now than that, so she brushed the thought aside.

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Kara wolfed down her fast food on the ride over. She would make for a far better date with food on her stomach. All that would be at the gala would be hors d’oeuvres and similar finger foods. With the blonde’s appetite, all that would do is make her mad. Feeding her first was a good idea even if it wasn’t initially part of the plan.

They still had a little time before they needed to leave for the gala so Lena offered to give Kara a tour of the house. Lillian had no idea she was bringing a date, let alone that that date was a woman.

They cleared the first floor without finding Lillian which was surprising. The gala didn’t start until seven, but Lillian was always there early to “supervise”. It was a quarter after five so her mother would most certainly be on her way out soon.

Passing one of the many spare bedrooms, Lena had Kara put her things down inside. This way the woman had a bit of privacy when it came time to change. By some miracle, Lena finished the tour of her family’s home without a single sign of her stepmother.

Lena left Kara to her own devices while she checked on a few things. She had greatly enjoyed her date with Kara but unfortunate matters that revolved around LuthorCorp didn’t take a day off. As against running the company as she was initially, Lena was finding a groove. Not all that surprising, she even had a knack for it. Since starting, there had been a few things she had to consult with others for a bit of assistance, but she was picking up everything rather quickly.

The biggest downside was all the paperwork. It seemed like everything that was done had some piece of paper, or several, attached to it. It bogged down everything else, but Lena was coming to realize it was a necessary evil. Much like the paperwork she now had to sign off on for a new area of research for the R&D Department. Or the paperwork that pertained to the company’s last quarter. Tedious work.

Lena had gotten so wrapped up in her work she hadn’t realized the time. It was 6:22. It would take them thirty minutes just to get to the city. They were definitely late.

There was a knock at her door. “I know. I’m late,” Lena shouted, dreading what her mother would have to say on the matter when she found out.

As the door slowly creaked open, “It’s not as if you enjoy these events,” a woman’s voice knowingly stated.

“Mother. I wasn’t sure you were still here.”

Lillian brushed off her words with a tiny wave. “I was out in the garden. Why aren’t you dressed yet?”

Lena lifted her bag in response, “I was trying to answer a few emails and look over a couple of the requests Jess sent over. I lost track of time.”
Lillian gave her a supportive grin before turning to leave. “You probably shouldn’t keep that young woman waiting. She’s in the kitchen when you finish up.”

Shit! She’s seen Kara.

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Tucked into the breakfast nook, back turned to her but still a vision, was Kara. All Lena could see was the top of Kara’s maroon suit jacket. It was enough to make her knees weak. She wasn’t sure, but judging from the back of Kara’s head, her hair seemed a lot curlier than it was before they arrived.

Louis Vuitton heels clacking across the floor, Lena walked over to the drawer with all their car keys inside.

“You look…”

Lena turned her head, glancing at Kara over her bare shoulder. The little she had seen of the blonde was nothing compared to seeing all of Kara. A woman who stood handsomely awestruck staring at her.

The maroon of Kara’s blazer continued on in her matching pants that stopped just above her ankles. The shine of her black tassel loafers highlighted the contrast between the darkness of the suit and the pop from her white semi-cutaway collared button down. And she had been right. Kara must have done something to hair because it was curly; a look she hadn’t seen before.

Turning around completely, Lena was at a loss. She tried to form words, they were on the tip of her tongue, but she couldn’t speak. “You look handsome,” she inelegantly spat out.

Kara was blushing, something Lena was proud of. Kara was taking small steps towards her, as if she were approaching a frightened doe. The woman’s warm hands were resting on her hips as she took a closer look at Lena’s attire.

“…simply amazing,” Kara confidently finished.

“You both look beautiful,” Lillian said as she entered the room.

Kara took a respectful step away from Lena now that her mother was in their company. Lena wanted to give her mother a few choice words for her interruption but thought better of it.

“Thank you,” they both said in near unison.

Lillian was stood beside them both, but the matriarch’s attention was on Kara. She looked as if she wanted to say something, like maybe she already knew who the young woman was.

“Hi, I’m Kara Danvers,” the blonde said with an outstretched hand.

With a tiny smirk, “Lovely to meet you dear,” Lillian replied. “I take it you’re my daughters date this evening?”

Squaring her shoulders, “Yes, ma’am. I am.”

Lena watched as her mother looked over Kara with a scrutinizing eye. The last thing she wanted to do was defend her life choices to her mother. To have to protect Kara from said woman’s vicious attacks.
Lillian handed her clutch over to her daughter and reached out to grab Kara’s shirt. Lena panicked, having no idea what was happening. Kara hadn’t broken eye contact with the woman, but she had no idea what her mother was capable of.

After unbuttoning the top button of Kara’s shirt, “There,” she said with a smile, patting the woman’s shoulder. “If you’re not going to wear a tie, leave that unbuttoned. It looks remarkably better this way. Wouldn’t you agree Lena dear?”

Lena’s mouth was partially agape in shock. She’s giving clothing advice now? That woman really was changing, Lena thought to herself. “It does,” Lena croaked, her voice betraying her.

Taking her clutch back, Lillian moved to leave. Standing in the doorway, “David is waiting for me, but I’ll see you both there. And Kara,” the woman said, fixing her gaze solely on the woman in question, “take care of my daughter tonight.” The woman left without another word.

Lena waited until she was sure her mother was out of earshot. “That was weird,” she mumbled, voice low.

“She seems nice,” Kara said, just as bubbly as ever. “But who’s David?”

“Her driver. She refused my offer to take her since we’re going to the same place. I’m actually surprised she’s still here seeing as it’s already seven o’clock.”

“We should get going then,” Kara suggested.

Lena adjusted the arms of her dress one last time before grabbing the set of keys she was originally looking for. “We’re not taking the truck.”

Kara gave her a confused expression but didn’t argue. In the garage, Kara stopped at the bottom of the four stairs. “How many cars do you all own?”

With a slight chuckle, “It’s probably better I don’t answer that question,” Lena answered.

She unlocked the doors to her McLaren 570GT and waited for Kara to meet her.

Kara looked over the pacific blue vehicle, mesmerized.

Knowing exactly what Kara was thinking, “It was a birthday gift from Lex last year. I don’t get the chance to drive it very often.”

“Birthday, birthday, or fake birthday?”

Lena laughed again as she opened her door. “Birthday, birthday.”

Kara climbed in without another word and they were off.

//

Lena pulled up to the gala forty minutes after its start. Kara instructed for her stay inside; she was going to come around and let her out. It took a little maneuvering, but Lena climbed out of the low sitting sports car with Kara’s help. Tugging her form fitting black dress back down she let Kara lead her to the sidewalk outside of the venue where a red carpet was set up.

The camera flashes were something she’d never get used to. People despised her family and yet they were always seeking to find out more about them. The Luthors hosted this gala every year to bring together all of National City’s prominent citizens. Rubbing elbows with other affluent members of
the city was a necessary thing.

Since her childhood, it had been drilled in Lena to ‘keep your friends close and your enemies closer’. Know what others are doing, giving up little about yourself in the process. These were the people they conducted business with. The people they shared memberships with at their favorite country club. As hard as she tried, there was no getting away from this crowd. A crowd she had been groomed to assimilate into when the time was right.

Temporarily taking over LuthorCorp unfortunately sped up that timetable. This was a gala Lex was supposed to be attending, but seeing how their situations had evolved…

With Kara by her side, schmoozing this crowd would be far more bearable than having to do it alone. Lillian was most likely fielding questions about Lex’s arrest by now. Knowing her mother, the woman probably had a list of answers to those questions to accompany any number of things someone would rather not have known. Information was the true currency in this crowd.

Intimidation was one of Lillian’s strengths and she knew how to use it. Not only that, but the woman could navigate a conversation so well she left whomever she was conversing with confused as to what they were even speaking of to begin with. A skill that proved useful in business.

As if Kara could sense her growing discomfort, Kara grabbed her hand and wrapped it around her arm. Leaning in, “I’ll be right her the whole time,” Kara whispered in her ear. She could feel the supportive smile in the woman’s words as they grazed by her ear.

They stopped to take a few obligatory photos, ignoring all questions hurled their way. Questions if this was Lena making their relationship official. Others asking if they were even a couple; if it was just for the publicity. There were a few photographers that offered up compliments to them both, but there weren’t very many.

Once Lena had her fill of flashing lights, she tugged at Kara’s arm signaling she was done. Kara understood and escorted her inside without question. Once inside, Lena swiped a glass of champagne from a passing server, knocking back the contents of said glass. Kara chuckled and held the champagne flute until she could hand it off to another server.

They mingled and spoke with several people. Lena was sure not to stay with any one group for too long, needing to make her rounds through the entire party. Kara had kept her word, she hadn’t left her side except to grab them both food or a drink when the need arose.

Whenever Kara did vanish, those in Lena’s company asked numerous personal questions about the nature of their relationship. She was even surprised by the number of guests who asked if Kara was single; or a question of a similar nature. The audacity of those who were bold enough to ask seeing as Kara was her date. She couldn’t blame them though.

A part of her felt like she was throwing Kara into the deep in, hoping the woman could swim. Their first few conversations were rough but that quickly changed. Kara had become so confident, even taking the lead in a couple conversations. When Kara spoke, all Lena could do was watch her.

How she was able to navigate such business orientated conversations was a welcomed surprise. A few of the guests spoke at length about cutting edge technologies, but Kara was able to keep up and shamelessly asked educated questions when she didn’t know something; it was sexy, Lena thought.

If it weren’t for her champagne flutes, Lena would have been caught more times than she would care to admit biting her bottom lip. Or staring for far too long at her date.
Kara would step in and save her when one of father’s old business partners got a little too handsy. She spoke up when someone made a sexist remark or implied that Lena wasn’t fit to be the CEO of such a prominent company. Even when Lena was fully capable of defending herself, Kara did it without a second thought.

Lena’s attraction to the blonde was undeniable. Matters were amplified by how attractive Kara was in her suit. Lena couldn’t figure out how she lucked up in finding someone like Kara. A woman who as handsome as she was brilliant. Someone who clearly cared for her and had no problem showing it. There was no need in Kara telling her because Lena could feel how cared for she was. Maybe entertaining the idea of making things official wouldn’t be such a bad idea.

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Kara was off for her umpteenth serving of hors d’oeuvres from the multiple tables set up. People had given her strange looks after the first few rounds of her piling her plate high with finger foods. Lillian had shown up and explained a better way of going about eating more without the off-putting stares.

As Lillian had instructed, Kara was stood with a warmed glass of champagne from holding it so long and a tiny plate of food rested on top. Whenever the plate emptied, Kara would refill it with whatever she wanted next. Having the glass in hand, people would think she was trying to feed her alcohol instead of just being there to scarf down food.

She hadn’t lost sight of Lena the entire time she was away from the brunette. If she were being honest, Lena was all that she wanted to look at it. The way Lena’s dress hugged her curves, it had to be a sin. No one should be allowed to look as gorgeous as the brunette did in that dress.

Kara could tell how nervous Lena was when they first arrived, but that version of the woman was slowly replaced by this confident business woman. A woman who hadn’t covered away from any of the entitled businessmen in attendance. She gave it even better than she got it; something a few of the men hadn’t been too fond of. For every gripe they had about her position, Lena had a perfectly articulated retort. You could tell Lena was fed up. Her words cut their intended target like poisoned daggers thrown from a sunny expression.

Kara was making her way back over to Lena but was stopped by some woman they had already spoken to. She entertained the woman’s questions about CatCo but her eyes kept wandering over to Lena. Every so often, she would look up to find Lena’s green eyes staring back at her. Their eyes would lock and nothing else mattered.

Even as Lena was making her way over towards her, Kara couldn’t be bothered with looking at the woman talking to her. There was a fierce look in Lena’s eyes. One that reminded Kara of a predator tracking its prey; she’s been watching a ton of Animal Planet lately. Lena had politely asked if they could be excused, to which the woman graciously understood.

With purpose, Lena meandered them through the crowd; hand in hand. She declined every conversation along the way, stopping once she was sure they were alone in a service hallway of the museum.

Kara stumbled backwards, Lena’s hands gently pushing at her chest.

“I want to ask what’s going on, but I get the feeling I should shut up.” Lena gave her nod of
confirmation. “Yup, shutting up. Definitely keeping quiet,” she continued, unsuccessfully stopping her own rambling. Lena placed a finger over her mouth. “Right, quiet,” she mumbled around Lena’s figure.

Lena’s eyes flicked from her lips back up to her eyes, not lingering in one spot too long. Then Kara understood what was going on. It was obvious now because Kara had been thinking of doing the same thing. She couldn’t handle seeing Lena in work mode in that outfit. She had kept herself talking throughout the evening to distract herself from those very thoughts. For the most part, it had been working.

Grasping Lena at the hips, Kara moved the woman to flip their positions. Now Lena was the one pinned to the wall. The sound of Lena’s heart undoubtedly pounding in her chest was intoxicating. Kara lightly placed one hand on the side Lena’s cheek. Lena heaved a light sigh as Kara ran a thumb under the brunette’s bottom lip.

There were light green orbs staring up her, waiting for her next move. Lena’s hands were still on her chest, one twiddling with the lapel of her blazer.

Slowly Kara leaned in, never breaking their eye contact. “Lena…” she said, voice raspy.

There was a hand at the base of her neck, lightly urging her along.

Lips brushing across Lena’s, light as feather, Kara asked the question. “Can I kiss you?”

Lena’s eyes had fluttered shut. Kara felt the way Lena’s body vibrated at the slight touch, but she nodded. The anticipation for this moment was palpable. Energy was bouncing off the walls as it radiated off the both of them.

Moving her hand, Kara lightly tilted Lena’s face up towards hers. She was sure to move slow, giving Lena the chance to withdraw if she changed her mind at the last second. Kara could feel Lena’s shaky breath dance across her lips they were so close.

Kara closed the gap between them, pressing her lips gently against Lena’s at first. It was a chaste, hesitant kiss; one of discovery. She was doing her best to keep her strength in check, not wanting to hurt Lena even the tiniest bit.

Moving in again, this time surer than she was a moment ago, Kara deepened their kiss. Lena hadn’t pulled away nor moved to stop what was happening. That was all she needed. Kara’s hands were at the sides of Lena’s face as she guided them through their kiss. Pulling back for air that she didn’t really need yet, Kara giggled before kissing Lena again.

Desperate for more, Lena nipped at her bottom lip as she pulled Kara completely against her. Kara had to put a hand on the wall to catch herself as to not crush Lena. Her face was hot with desire feeling the way Lena gripped at her waist, urging her on.

There was a groan that escaped Lena’s lips as Kara parted them. Teeth clashed against, teeth, lips seeking purchase upon lips. It was a heated affair that was slowly unfolding. What had begun as an innocent first kiss had quickly turned into the outpour of urges and desires that had been pent up and building since they first met. There was no longer any chance of deny how one felt about the other. Not after the way this kiss was going.

The hand Kara had been holding herself up with had found itself sliding down the side of Lena’s dress along the seam. Her hand was making a turn to rest at the small of Lena’s back when she heard someone clearing their throat at the end of the hallway.
Reluctantly pulling away, Kara wiped a hand at her lips. Lena peeked over her shoulder to see who had caught them, then ducked her head into Kara’s chest.

“No wonder I couldn’t find you two,” the eldest Luthor’s voice rang out. “I’ll be heading home in a few. Lena, I’ll see you in the morning?”

Lena’s voice cracked when she tried to speak the first time. “Of course mother,” she replied after clearing her throat.

Lillian gave her a devilish smirk, warning in her eyes. The woman didn’t make a scene over finding the blonde with her daughter pressed against a wall. Once the door closed behind the older woman, Kara couldn’t keep herself from laughing. She laughed so hard her sides were beginning to cramp up.

Stifling her own amusement, “It’s not that funny Kara,” Lena admonished in jest, swatting at Kara’s shoulder with her clutch purse. “My mother just caught us like we were a pair of common teenagers.”

Moving out of Lena’s reach, “It was kind of funny,” Kara replied with her fingers pinched together.

When Lena raised her arm once more, Kara pinned the woman’s arms to her side. Giving the woman a quick kiss on the lips, Kara gave the woman a beaming smile. “All things considered, that could have gone much worse.”

Wrapping her pinned arms around Kara’s midsection, “I suppose you’re right,” Lena admitted.

The smell of Lena’s floral shampoo with a subtle hint of the woman’s perfume filled Kara’s nose. She didn’t want to let the brunette go but she could hear a few of the guests inquiring about their whereabouts.

“We should probably get back out there,” Kara suggested.

“With my mother leaving, I now have to play the part of the gracious hostess.” Lena grunted but pulled herself out of Kara’s warm arms. Lena wiped as much of her lipstick off of Kara’s mouth as she could. It wasn’t perfect, but it would do. Kara had returned the favor, fixing the minor smudges around the woman’s mouth. There wasn’t anything she could do for how kiss-swollen the woman’s lips were though; nor her own.

The night continued on as if the kiss had never happened. Lena was dragged into one conversation after another, occasionally peeking beside her. Kara’s arm had taken up residence around Lena’s waist, never leaving her side.

There were giddy smiles and laughter between them as they both recalled what had transpired in a now far off hallway. Kara continuously caught herself staring at the woman’s mouth as she spoke. Those were the very lips she had trapped beneath her own for the first time. A position she wanted to find herself in for the rest of her life.

Kissing Lena had been effortless. It was like her mind had been kicked into autopilot, knowing exactly what she was doing in supposedly unfamiliar territory. A feeling not dissimilar to how she felt around Lena. Being around the woman felt natural, and comfortable. There was a connection she couldn’t fake.

By the end of the night, Lena was walking around with her heels in hand. She was double-checking that the caterers and other staff didn’t need anything else before she left for the night. Jess had promised she’d stick around until everyone left, putting Lena’s mind at ease.
It was well after midnight when Lena had parked outside Kara’s apartment building. Lena said she’d walk her up, but Kara refused. Stating there was no need, ‘besides, your feet already hurt.”

As she said goodnight, Kara leaned in for another kiss. This kiss was nothing like the one they previously shared. This was tender, a promise of sorts. A promise there were more to come. A hope that they’d have a lifetime filled with more of these intimately delicate touches.

Lena gave her one last quick kiss to her cheek. “I had an amazing day today,” Lena said, hand resting on Kara’s cheek.

If it weren’t for the dark of the night, Kara had no doubt Lena would be able to see the blush creeping into her cheeks. ‘I’m glad you enjoyed yourself. I hope we can do it again soon. Minus one of your family’s parties,” Kara added with a bit of laughter.

“Admit it, you actually enjoyed yourself tonight.”

Lena was right, but Kara wouldn’t tell her as much. In lieu of answering, Kara pulled Lena’s hand from her face, lightly kissing the back of it.

“I should let you go,” Kara said, voice low and raspy.

“If you insist…”

“I don’t.” The words rushed from Kara’s mouth before she could stop them.

“You really are cute you know that?”

The blush in Kara’s cheeks deepened, reddening her neck in the process. “Just cute,” she suggestively asked, overcoming the slight moment of embarrassment by her lack of control over her speech.

Lena was blushing now, Kara was sure of it. “Get out of my car,” the woman playfully demanded.

Conceding, “Let me know when you get in,” Kara requested, to which Lena nodded.

As she pushed the car door down to close, Kara leaned her head back inside. “Happy belated fake birthday,” she said with a flirtatious grin.

Lena had a matching look upon her face as she looked into Kara’s deep blue eyes. “Goodnight Kara.”

Kara took a step back and waited for Lena to pull off. Traffic was minimal as she watched the red of neon taillights disappear down her block. Their multipart date had been a success.

It didn’t matter that Lex had started their day on a rocky note because it had ended perfectly for the two women. For a good portion of their day, they were just Kara and Lena. Two women who were smitten with one another. Two women that were finally having their first official date. A date that was a success on all accounts.

A date that continued into them intentionally being publicly seen together. Lena was already comfortable enough to be seen out with Kara, throwing caution to the wind. A gesture that Kara was sure to notice. She was able to observe another side of the brunette. A side that was just as fascinating and inspiring as the woman she already knew Lena to be. Watching Lena effortless tackle the elitist circle that attended the gala, all to return to her usual self when they were alone was a sight she wouldn’t have believed had she not witnessed it herself.
The way she felt for Lena had already taken root. After the day they had shared, there was no way those feelings were going anywhere. The only thing that could make how she felt better was knowing that she wasn't in this alone. That Lena was in this just as deep as she was. Knowing that her feelings were reciprocated is all Kara wanted to hear.

Chapter End Notes

I am honestly surprised I got this up today. Albeit late in the day, but I didn't think it would happen at all. I've been sick since last Thursday so everything has been thrown off. Thankfully I had a good chunk of this chapter written out so my update wasn't impacted too much.

With that said, there's a good chance next week's chapter will be late. I haven't even started writing it yet. On top of that, where I live, Hurricane Florence could cause a lot of problems. I'm going to do my best to get y'all the next chapter on time, but I make no promises. I haven't been able to respond to all of last week's comments but I will as soon as I get the chance.

As always, let me know what you thought of the chapter. Comments/suggestions/opinions/constructive criticism (whatever you like to call it) are always welcome and greatly appreciated.

Until next time...
SN: I like how I said this chapter might me shorter, but it's longer than usual lol.
Chapter 14

I just want to say thank you so much for all the comments everyone leaves and the kudos. It seriously means a lot to me. I'm sure you hear that a lot of from other fanfic writers but it's true. Reading what y'all have to say is something I look forward to with every new chapter.

This chapter is a little shorter than usual but I hope the content makes up for that. Per usual, please excuse any of my mistakes/typos. I also went back and corrected a day error in CH12. For anyone that may have caught it, the date actually took place on a Saturday, though it was originally mentioned to be on a Friday. I thought I had fixed it before posting CH12 but it slipped through the cracks.

Now, sit back and let your mind roam free.

Kara’s been standing outside her apartment building for ten minutes, far too excited to go inside. Even with her exhaustion catching up to her. There was this giddy laughter that kept bubbling up. She had kissed Lena. She had finally done it. As far as first kisses go, that one was one for the record books; and no, she’s not being biased.

As she ran her thumb over her bottom lip Kara’s thoughts drifted back to the hallway at the gala. Flashes of how assertive Lena had been until she wasn’t. How the brunette seamlessly melted in her hands. How unsurprisingly soft Lena’s lips were. The way they both craved more.

Then she thought of how Lillian conveniently found them. Kara had been so immersed in the moment she completely missed the older woman approaching. All things considered, Lillian could have found them in a more compromising position – they were still at least fully clothed.

Much like any other night, this one had to come to a close, but she’d remember it forever. Now outside her apartment, there was a faint sound of a heartbeat. With minimal effort she could tell it was Alex’s, but something felt off. Like there was an echo to it, maybe? With no one else in her hallway Kara spun out of her suit into her Supersuit, minus the helmet. Whatever she was hearing, Alex wasn’t alone in her apartment. She even used her x-ray vision to doublecheck, and nothing.

Sliding the key in her lock, Kara slowly eased her door open.

So far so good…maybe I’m just being paranoid.

The apartment was dark even though she had left a lamp on when Lena stopped her off to pick up her clothes. Alex could have turned it off she thought. Gliding across the floor, feet barely touching the floor, Kara checked on Alex first. There weren’t any signs of injury or foul play. The red-haired woman was fast asleep, wrapped in a blanket with a bare foot hanging out.

That faint echo was still there. Before she could take another scan of her surroundings a figure stepped out from the shadows.
Hands held up in surrender, “I mean neither of you harm,” the figure announced. They were completely concealing their identity. Covered from head to toe in black Kara couldn’t make out who they were. It didn’t help they were using some kind of voice modulator.

Protectively positioned in front of Alex, “Who are you and what are you doing in my apartment,” she asked, hands grasping at air at her sides. She really wanted to punch first and ask questions second but that rarely worked to her favor.

“You’re in danger—”

“Wait a minute,” Kara whispered, but in a shout. “I know who you are. You were downtown that day, but you flew away. How?”

“You’re full of questions, aren’t you?” Taking another step closer, “Yes, I was there, but that’s not important right now. Lex Luthor is dangerous. I urge you to proceed with caution,” said the modulated voice.

Kara was doing her best to keep her voice low as not to wake Alex. If she woke up, this intrusion could become disastrous. “Why, what do you know?”

“Is it not enough for you to take me at my word?”

“Considering I don’t know who you are, uh, no.”

After a noncommittal sound from the distorted voice, “Things are only just beginning for the young Luthor. This is merely a game to him and you’ve become his latest piece. It would do you well to cut ties with that sister of his.”

That reignited Kara’s irritation. “I won’t stand by and let you bad mouth Lena. She’s done nothing wrong here. So far, you’ve fled a crime scene and now breaking and entering.”

“Naïve girl. I wouldn’t be so sure,” the woman spat in frustration, then took off out a window without further explanation.

Kara flew after the woman but soon lost track of her. The cloaked woman gave her the slip around one of the many corners they were weaving through. She flew around the city a few times just to be sure the trail had been lost.

Back in her apartment, Alex was still asleep. Nothing was out of place and nothing had been stashed for surveillance. Kara grabbed her clothes from the hallway and showered to calm her thoughts.

She hadn’t been seeing things before, the woman actually could fly – and wasn’t bad at it. She wasn’t particularly fast but her movements were decisive. The woman had to know with her speed, matched against Kara’s, she was at a disadvantage, so she planned her escape accordingly.

If the woman really had only been there to warn her, why tonight? Why sneak into her apartment while Alex was there? A woman that’s a trained federal agent, works with aliens, and isn’t exactly gun shy. If Alex had been aware of her presence, at any point – it was a risk.

All factors considered, the entire encounter was a gamble. The woman was counting on Kara restraining herself. Alex remaining asleep. Kara’s desire to get answers. All to what? Warn her of something she and the DEO were already suspecting? If Kara’s safety was so important to the woman then maybe they were underestimating Lex.

It had been hard to get a sure read on the man. One constant had been his affection towards his sister.
But Kara was left second-guessing that since they still hadn’t proven whether or not Lex was behind Lena’s assassination attempt. The only sure thing so far is Lex knowing far more than anyone realized. That alone made him a threat. Something Alex and Kara now both knew firsthand.

They still needed to figure out the extent of his crimes, if he had even done what he’s been accused of thus far. That woman showing up was proof they weren’t solving this fast enough. Lex was in the prison just shy of twenty-four hours and had escaped. There were nearly two hours of time his whereabouts were unknown. What had he done between the time of his escape and Supergirl finding him at Lena’s apartment? It was one of the many questions that bugged Kara until she fitfully tumbled off to sleep.

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Lena was first to wake so she set about making a pot of coffee and setting out the day’s newspaper already at the end of their driveway. In a way, Lena was trying to soften her mother up enough that her disappointment in her behavior the night before would be bearable. They hadn’t discussed her bringing a woman as her date nor had they spoken about her being caught kissing said woman.

Her sexuality had always been a sensitive topic in the Luthor household. Her father had once made a passing remark about it being unacceptable. She needed to marry and birth an heir of her own. He went on to say that marriages weren’t always about love – something she’d learn as she got older. While she had only been with one woman in her life, no one had ever spoken about it. In fact, to her parents the only relationship she had ever officially been in was with Jack. A relationship she only allowed herself to enter to appease them. She loved Jack dearly but as nothing more than a friend.

She hated that she was using him in such a way but maybe her father was right. Maybe some people married for reasons other than love. Jack had known all along why Lena was with him but hoped she could one day love him the way he loved her. Maintaining the farce that was their relationship hurt the youngest Luthor more than anything, so she broke things off with Jack a few years later. He understood why it needed to happen. It took a while before Jack was ready to resume being friends, but once he had they were back to their regular ole selves.

As Lena flipped through the comic section of the paper Lillian slowly strolled into the kitchen.

“The pot’s still warm. The paper’s on the table,” Lena announced without looking up from the newspaper.

She faintly heard a hum of thanks from her mother before the room was filled with the sounds of clinking drinkware.

It didn’t take long for the matriarch to settle down at the table beside her daughter. Usually Lillian took up the seat at the head of table regardless of who was sat where. Lena generally stuck to the middle of the dining table that was large enough to comfortable seat a group of twenty.

Blowing over her steaming cup of coffee, “Sleep well,” Lillian inquired.

“I did, and you,” Lena politely replied.

“I’ve had better nights. I’m thinking of buying a new mattress.”

Lena snickered lightly, “Didn’t you just buy that one late last year?”
“And your point,” the older woman retorted, with a small smile turning up the corners of her mouth. There was a bit of awkward silence after that. Lena knew her mother was waiting for her to break. That was usually how these things went.

“Kara Danvers.” That was all Lillian said. Her voice was flat, vaguely devoid of inflection. It came off as a probing question, like she was gauging how she should proceed. A novel approach for the woman.

“Kara Danvers,” Lena parroted in a similar tone.

After a beat of tense silence, “She seems like a lovely young woman. Where’d the two of you meet?”

Lena nearly spit out her mouthful of coffee. She had been expecting to hear how her behavior was unnatural or something of the sort. Not her mother curious to find out more about Kara.

Roughly forcing herself to swallow the coffee, Lena coughed a bit having choked herself in her surprise. “Do you actually want to know or is this just you pretending to have an interest in my life?”

Without looking up from the paper, “I’ve always been interested in your life. Who do you think sent all those gifts when you refused to come home during the holidays? Or made sure there were books on Russian history in the library? I noticed things Lena, I just never spoke on them.”

This was not at all how Lena saw her morning going.

Lena took a moment to clear her throat one more time. This gave her a few extra seconds to work out a response. “We met in a grocery store not too long ago.”

That got Lillian’s attention. Shifting in her chair, “You shop for yourself?”

Lena laughed at how surprised her mother was by the news. “Yes, mother. I do a bit of my own shopping. You should try it some time.”

Lillian good-naturedly waved off the suggestion, setting her eyes back on the article she was reading.

“Turns out Kara is a student at National City University while she holds a job at CatCo Magazine.”

“I see,” the woman hummed. “That explains that photo I saw of you two after one of your school’s basketball games.”

“You saw that,” Lena bashfully asked. A part of her wanted to rush to defend her actions. In the past, she would have brought up the photo just to get a rise out of Lillian. But here Lillian was broaching that very topic of her own accord.

Lena could spot the slightest smirk to her mother’s lips. “Which is why I wasn’t alarmed to find her here before the gala. She was quite the hit at the party.”

This calmed Lena down for the time being. She would have preferred telling her mother about Kara herself, but she’d take what she could get. It wasn’t like she was actively trying to hide anything.

“I think I answered more questions about her than about the company. Which was a welcome distraction.”

Lillian flapped the paper closed, folding it back on the tabletop. Her demeanor had shifted to one more suited for business. Lena could recognize the look anywhere.
With a slight sigh, “Speaking of the company,” Lillian began, and Lena froze in place.

If this was a segue into a performance review she’d have to stop her mother right there. It had only been a few weeks and she was still learning the ropes. Per their board members, she had been doing a great job so far; even with her limited knowledge of the ins and outs to the company.

“Since your brother’s arrest, stock prices have plummeted. Public perception is horrible. Not to mention it was just all-around bad press for us in general. Shareholders are threatening to jump ship.”

“What does that mean?”

“The board has motioned for a vote to oust Lex as CEO of LuthorCorp.”

Lena sat, shell-shocked. It had only been a few days since Lex’s arrest, and subsequent imprisonment, went public and the board already wanted to separate LuthorCorp from the accused. Not even giving him a chance to defend himself against the allegations.

“I’ve spoken with all members of the board and given my recommendation.”

Lena’s expression was fixed, but perplexed. “I hope you told them Lex deserves a chance to state his side.” She was following her mother’s words but she couldn’t piece it together to figure out the end result.

There was a look of earnest in the older woman’s tired eyes. Lena couldn’t shake the feeling she was in over her head this time. That she wasn’t prepared for what was coming. “The board and I unanimously agreed you should assume the role of CEO fulltime.”

“Wait, wait, wait.” Lena stammered, shaking her head in confusion. “You all agreed I should do what? You do all realize I’m still in grad school, right?”

“We are all well aware. An education you are months away from completing if you’d quit dragging your heels with your research.”

“I’m not—” Lena had fixed her mouth to argue the accusation but decided it wasn’t worth the energy right now. It was a moot point in light of everything else. Releasing a deep breath Lena continued. “Why can’t you be interim CEO until they find someone else?”

“Are you forgetting I stepped down because of my health? Besides, I’ve lived a full life. I’ve run that company once already; I’ve had my fill.”

Lena looked as though she were going to debate the point, but Lillian spoke up again before she could. “Lena, it’s been decided. The board already voted. We want you as the new CEO of LuthorCorp.”

Lena sat in silence once again, digesting the information. Her biggest concern wasn’t running the company, it was how it would impact her research. Lillian had implied that she had been delaying the completion of her study, but the work she was doing was helping so many. How could she possibly call it quits and it hadn’t been a full year?

She had long gathered enough data to write her thesis, but the more she worked, the more she discovered. The more she learned the more she could add into her paper. The more of her findings she could publish for public consumption. Then she had a thought.

Once she was on her feet and had a little more experience under belt, she could start her research back up. There were no conflicting reasons she could think of that would hinder the pursuit such a
goal. It even fit into a few of LuthorCorp’s current research areas.

“Why me?”

Lillian’s features scrunched up at the question. “Why not you?”

“You’ve never entrusted me with something of this caliber. In fact, everything that came down the pike you handed over to Lex. Lex has *always* been your first choice and now that he’s messing with the company’s revenue you figure, what? I couldn’t possibly screw up as severely as he just did?”

The woman stretched out a hand to rest on top of her daughter’s. “That’s not it at all sweetheart,” Lillian assured the brunette with a soothing tone. “There’s nothing I could say in this moment to make you believe me, but you deserve this. I didn’t recommend you to the board because you’re the only other Luthor. I didn’t recommend you because I want you to fail. I did it because I see the potential you have to run this company in a way your brother could only dream of. I’m doing what I should have done years ago. I’m choosing you.”

As she wiped away Lena’s tears, “I’m not perfect and I’ve made some choices I regret to this day, but I promise you, I’m trying Lena,” Lillian explained in hopes it would comfort her daughter in some way.

Lena left the kitchen a few minutes later. She no longer had an appetite and could do for a bit of fresh air. Not only had the entire board voted for her to replace Lex, her mother agreed with them. As much as she wanted to believe her mother had ulterior motives behind backing her, she couldn’t come up with any. None that would still stand on their own that is.

Her brain was spinning, and her thoughts were all over the place as a result. She thought of Kara and wondered how she was spending her Sunday morning. She thought about Lex and wondered how he’d react to the news. Thoughts of her older brother were bittersweet but she couldn’t stop thinking about him. Then she thought of Lillian. Lena wanted more than anything to believe that her stepmother had changed. That her intentions were genuine. But it was so hard to do after years of such cruel treatment.

On top of that, she had called Lena a Luthor. Since being with the Luthors, Lena had constantly heard from the woman that she wasn’t a real Luthor. That she’d never be one of them. How was she supposed to take that? After hearing something for so long you start to believe it yourself. Another thought she’d shove off to the side for now.

Monday morning her life would change forever. She wanted to call Kara to talk it out, but she didn’t want to ruin the high they left things on. Her next best option was Samantha. She already worked at the company and would understand how frustrating this all was. Not that Kara wouldn’t, but Sam has an inside perspective.

First, she was thrown into being acting CEO – something that was only supposed to last a few weeks. Now, she’s the new CEO; where would it end?

Without putting another thought towards the matter, Lena made her way to the garage. Hopping in her SUV she was off to Sam’s apartment still dressed in her pajamas. Before she self-destructed, Lena needed to talk to someone. She usually liked to deal with these things on her own but handling this alone was very likely the wrong choice. She’d revisit the conversation with Lillian again once her thoughts had settled and she had a better grasp on how she was feeling.
There was a commotion coming from the other side of the apartment. It wasn’t the television; that was off. This was two women talking with an undertone of exasperation coming from one of them.

Alex.

Kara tried stuffing a pillow over her head but that did nothing having super hearing. Taking a peak out of her cover cocoon, she was disappointed to find it was only eleven a.m. She was really hoping to sleep in before heading to the DEO to debrief the events of yesterday. That was evidently out of the question now.

Brushing her teeth and washing her face, Kara made her way out to her kitchen to investigate the racket.

“Oh, honey! Did we wake you,” Eliza asked, fretting over the young woman still plagued by sleep deprivation.

She wanted to say yes, because they had, but she was raised better than that. “I’ll be alright,” was all she could bring herself to say. There was no need in flaring tempers so early on a Sunday.

“Mom cooked. That should cheer you up,” she heard Alex say.

The redhead was sitting at the island, cup of coffee in hand. “I’m taking my key back,” Kara said, eyes open little more than slits.

Smirking over her cup, “My spares have spares.”

Voice low in warning, “Stop teasing your sister Alexandra.” While her mother’s head was turned, Kara stuck her tongue out at her sister.

Further capitalizing on Eliza’s momentary distraction Kara moved around the woman to make a plate. “When did you get here last night?” All she knew was Alex was knocked out on her couch by the time she got in. She’d leave out the part of her unwelcomed house guest until Eliza left.

“I didn’t have overnight so I crashed here. I wanted to see how your date went with Lena,” Alex teased again, emphasis on the Luthor’s name with a sing-song voice.

With a mocking laugh, “That desperate for secondhand affection?”

“You wish you—”

“Alright, that’s enough you two,” Eliza chimed in, voice stern. “Kara sit down and eat. Alex just… behave.”

Kara and Alex both laughed at Eliza trying to break up their bickering. It brought back memories for them both when the woman would try keep them from coming to blows in the midst of a heated argument. They may have an idyllic relationship now, but it wasn’t always so.

“I got here around ten, maybe,” Alex said, circling back to her sister’s question. “I wasn’t sure when you’d be back so I tried waiting up. Needless to say that didn’t work out.”

Kara nodded, shoving forkfuls of food into her mouth. “I didn’t get in until after midnight.”
“Why so late?” Eliza had refreshed her cup of coffee and joined her daughters sitting at the kitchen island.

“Oh, uhm.” Kara hadn’t exactly told her adoptive mother about the extent of her relationship with Lena Luthor. “Well, you see, I had a date yesterday.”

Eliza gave the blonde a slow nod. “Ok,” she added, drawing out the word.

Alex was enjoying the spotlight being on Kara for a change. It was just too good. Usually her sister was a babbling mess and at this rate their mother would find out when cows could fly. “It was with Lena Luthor. They went to that gala last night together too,” Alex blurted out.

“Thanks Alex,” Kara mumbled, cutting her eyes at the redhead.

“I see. So, what’s the problem?”

“There’s no problem. I just—I didn’t know how you’d feel about me going out with a Luthor,” Kara admitted, shoving more food in her mouth to keep from speaking.

“Don’t you worry about that sweetheart. Now go on, tell us how the date went,” Eliza encouraged. She could tell her daughter wanted to talk about it. The gleam in her youngest’s eyes told her everything she needed to know.

And Kara did just that. She was a bit reluctant to include the parts that involved Lex, but because no one was hurt she deemed it as ok to mention. She recounted every important detail of the day, save for the kiss. Alex was giving her funny looks as she spoke; most likely knowing that she was hiding something. Kara hated that her sister always knew when she was lying. It wasn’t fair!

There was this bubbling sensation that tickled her insides again. Her face had been stuck with one of the biggest grins she’s ever showcased. If she were human there’s no doubt her cheeks would be sore from her constant smiling. Her heartbeat was even all over the place. All of that and all she did was talk about the date.

Eliza and Alex both were happy for her. It had been so long since they had seen the blonde this happy. To speak so highly of someone since everything happened with Mon-El. It was good to see Kara moving on.

“What about you mom? Not that I’m not happy to see you – and the pancakes were amazing – but why are you here and not with Jeremiah?”

The woman’s features shifted from that of joy to something else entirely. “That’s actually why I’m here.”

Alex and Kara looked at each other before returning their gaze back to the older woman.

“Your father and I will be heading back to Midvale later this afternoon; he was discharged yesterday. I’ll be there long enough to make sure he’s settled then I’ll be back.” As she spoke, Eliza kept half her attention on her coffee mug and the other half looking between her daughters.

“Why are you coming back?”

Eliza looked at her eldest daughter, if a bit hesitant. “J’onn has asked that I come into the DEO. He wants to see if I can answer a few questions about your father. It seems like we’re not the only ones that don’t believe his story.”
“Why can’t you do it before you leave? That way you don’t have to make a second trip out here,” Kara wondered. It was a valid question that logistically made a lot more sense.

“That’s the other part I need to talk to you two about.” Eliza sat up straighter in her chair, prepared to rattle off more information that should have been divulged sooner. “I’m not sure if you two remember your father mentioning I had a patient here in National City?” She paused to wait for their responses.

“Yea, when he was in the hospital,” Alex spoke up.

Eyes trained solely on Kara, “Yes… well that patient is Lillian Luthor,” she finished.

Kara’s mouth fell open a tad. “Your patient is Mrs. Luthor?”

“Yes. She sought me out months ago. Something neither of you know is that your father and I knew the Luthors years ago. Jeremiah and Lionel were a part of the same research group when we were about your age.”

“Why don’t I remember them ever coming around?”

“Because Jeremiah and Lionel had a bit of a falling out. Lillian and I stayed in touch for a while after but that eventually faded away as well. This was long before you came along Kara.”

Alex leaned into the back of her chair. Kara’s brain was still trying to keep up.

“Is this a personal favor or…?”

“Personal, but Lillian insisted on covering all expenses and paying me for my services. She’s even come out to Midvale a few times when my schedule wouldn’t permit traveling.”

“Is she ok,” Kara finally asked, joining the conversation once again.

Eliza gave her a half smile. “She will be. That’s the hope.”

“So you coming back out here to speak with J’onn, you’re also seeing Mrs. Luthor?”

“Yes.”

“Does Lena know you’ve been treating her mother?”

“She made me promise not mention anything. Last we spoke of it, she informed me that Lena now knows she’s sick but not Lex. I’m not sure why, but it’s none of my business.”

They all sat in silence for a few moments, letting the news sink in; it was a lot to unpack. No wonder Eliza wouldn’t have a problem with her daughter dating a Luthor. She was treating the head of the family, a woman with whom she previously shared a friendship. Which was more astonishing than Eliza being her doctor. At least Kara wasn’t alone in being in the dark about the Danvers’ shared history with the Luthor family. It was news to both her and Alex.

“I’m going to pack up my things at Alex’s then head to the hotel to fetch your father. Call me if either of you need anything.”

Eliza got up to put her coffee cup in the sink and waited for her hugs goodbye. Alex was first as she was closest.

“I’ll see you in a few days,” the matriarch said, wrapping her oldest in a tight hug.
Next was Kara. “As long as Lena makes you happy you won’t have any issues from me,” she whispered into her daughter’s ear.

“Thanks mom,” Kara said, lightly kissing her mother on the cheek.

“Love you both,” the older woman called out before leaving the apartment.

With the sound of Alex shutting the front door, the woman spun around on her heels, arms stretched out. “What. The. Fuck,” she shouted, with her voice just above a whisper.

Kara gave the woman a look as to say, ‘Tell me about it’.

They both strolled to her couch and plopped down on opposite ends. Kara was hugging onto one of her decorative pillows, looking at her sister. Alex was staring at her with a blank expression.

“I guess I’ll have to add to the weird news then.”

That familiar crinkle formed between Kara’s eyebrows. “What do you mean?”

“I wanted to wait ‘til we were alone but now it doesn’t seem like it makes much of a difference.”

Kara stiffly nodded her head, urging Alex to just spit it out.

“Uh, how do I say this.” Alex crossed her legs on the chair, tucking them underneath her. “Before you showed up at the DEO to tell me about dad. . .I got the test results back confirming the DNA we found was Lex’s.” There was a brief pause before she continued. “I took the opportunity to ask Lena about her brother. You know, just to find out more about him.”

“Ok. Sure.”

“Most of it fit what I already knew. But there was something else. Apparently, Lex and Clark used to be friends. The way Lena tells it, Clark was his only real friend. . . until they weren’t.”

Kara pinched her eyes shut, shaking her head. There was only so much more she could take before her head would explode. Rubbing her fingers over her temples, “I take it you followed that up?”

“Yesterday actually. With Lex breaking out of jail I was curious to find out more about him. Clark met me for coffee so we could talk about it. That’s really the reason I crashed on your couch last night. I felt you should know as soon as possible but I didn’t want to ruin your day.”

There was no going back now. “What did Kal-El say?”

“The Luthors have a couple estates across the country. One of those being in Metropolis. The guys crossed paths while Lex was at MIT if I’m not mistaken. They hit it off and became best friends. Lex wound up finishing school out there to stay near your cousin.”

Kara was realizing there was quite the overlap between her family, both Kryptonian and human, and the Luthors. The nature of which she was only discovering the extent to today.

“Close to Lex’s undergrad graduation, he was kidnapped and held for ransom. Superman was obviously the one to rescue him and not long after Lex figured out that the hero and his best friend were the same person. Clark said things got weird between them. Cold was how he described it.”

“I take it the relationship never bounced back.”

Alex shook her head. “Things got so bad, Clark had to force Lex to see him so they could talk about
what happened. Lex had felt betrayed. He felt like he wasn’t worthy of Clark’s trust because he kept his identity a secret. Then Lex of course blamed it on him being a Luthor and that Clark felt like he was better than him in some way. From my understanding, that was what did it. The secret. I asked Clark if he knew anything about Lex’s relationship with Lionel, for perspective.”

“And?”

“I’m sure you can imagine it wasn’t a picturesque father-son relationship. Lex was always trying to earn his father’s respect and trust. He was trying to live up to Lionel’s expectations that were constantly changing. If I had to guess, after not being able to please his father for so long, reliving a version of that with Clark broke his heart. Lex probably felt like he’d never be good enough for anyone. His best friend didn’t even trust him enough to entrust his biggest secret with him. No one wants to feel like they’re not enough.”

While the story of Kal-El and Lex’s friendship was enlightening, it actually answered another question for Kara.

“Lex says hello by the way,” Kara unexpectedly mentioned.

Alex was looking her at her head on. “When did you see Lex?”

“Yesterday, when I found him in Lena’s apartment As Supergirl.”

Alex eyes shot open wide. “He knows?”

“At first I wasn’t sure. I thought maybe he was fishing; just trying to get a response out of me.”

“Did he,” Alex quickly asked, a hint of panic in her voice.

Calmly, “No. I flew off and called in the location for a team to pick him up,” Kara answered. “Now that we know he was close friends with Kal at one point, there’s no doubt in my mind he knows exactly who I am.”

“This isn’t good Kara.”

“Oh, I know. But what can we do about it? Lex is smart, way too smart in fact. He’s toying with us.”

“So our parents were close with Lillian and Lionel. Dad and Lionel had a falling out after a difference of opinions. Mom is Lillian’s doctor. You’re basically dating Lena. Lex used to be friends with Superman a.k.a. your cousin. Not to mention Lex was, and very well still could be, out there killing aliens. The same Luthor that knows Superman’s secret identity as well as Supergirl’s. Lovely,” Alex sarcastically added, throwing her hands up in defeat.

“The only thing going for us there is that Lex doesn’t know that we know. I didn’t give him an answer.”

“Don’t kid yourself Kar. If he wasn’t a hundred percent sure he wouldn’t have said anything. He did it on purpose, now we just need to figure out why.”

They both sat, fitting the pieces of new information together with everything they already knew. Kara hadn’t even gotten to the part of the intruder.

“I wonder how Lex feels about his kid sister dating Supergirl,” Alex snickered, finding some pleasure in the idea.
“Will you stop saying we’re dating? We haven’t had that talk yet,” Kara said, cheeks reddening.

Alex couldn’t stop her snorts of laughter. “I wish you could see how your face lights up when you talk about her. You’re dating kiddo. Besides, you’ve already kissed her.”

“I never said that I did!”

With a shit-eating grin, “It’s cute that you think you had to,” Alex laughed, teasing her sister a little more. Eliza no longer around to stop her.

Swiftly refocusing their conversation, Kara told Alex about the woman that was lurking in her apartment. That wiped the smug grin off the woman’s face. Kara assured the red-haired woman that nothing happened. The woman had only showed up to warn of the threat Lex posed to her. News that was supported by her previous conversation with Alex.

Alex shoved her sister off the couch, rushing her to shower so she could head into the DEO for her debriefing. There were so many parts to their current situation they could barely keep up. Whenever they thought they had a grip on everything, the rug was pulled out from underneath them. New details and tidbits to consider dumped on top of everything else, reshuffling the board.

Chapter End Notes

I hope everyone enjoyed the chapter this week. For those of you who may be wondering, I weathered Hurricane Florence safely. Because of a shift in direction, the city I live in wasn’t hit all that bad.

Let me know what you thought of this week's chapter or things you'd like to see in coming chapters. Comments/suggestions/constructive criticism always welcome. Either here or on Tumblr, @electriclimes. I've gotten a few messages over there as well and you guys (all of you) are the best!

PS. Something I know everyone will be happy for, next week there will be post-date Kara and Lena :D

Until next time...
“I think I’ll head out for the night.”

Lena had been distracted all evening. If she were being honest, her mind had been elsewhere all week.

It was Kara removing herself from the couch beside her and packing up her things that got the brunette’s attention. Lena could faintly recall Kara talking about her day but couldn’t repeat any of it back if asked.

She had been blankly staring off in the direction of her television, unmoving, for quite some time. She managed to LuthorCorp before six o’clock to meet Kara at her place for dinner. A meal she had planned on cooking herself but lacked the desire to follow through on. With that in mind, Lena picked up something from a restaurant on her way. Kara hadn’t minded the change – at least not Lena was aware of.

The blonde was halfway to the door when Lena was finally able to pull herself from the deepest recesses of her own mind.

Standing from her seat on the couch, Lena turned to face a departing Kara. “Wait.” She hadn’t thought of anything else to say other than that. Somehow that was enough to halt the blonde in her tracks after an evening of minimal conversation on her part.

Kara stood, backpack strapped on her back, hands shoved her pockets, expectant. She was waiting for Lena to say something, anything; Lena knew as much. She willed herself not to squirm in place now being the single point of focus in her quiet apartment. Wrapping her arms around her torso Lena opened her mouth to speak but no words came.

She didn’t have a good excuse for her behavior. Really, there was none with how guilty and disgusted she was feeling. If Kara knew the truth she’d hate her. This she was sure of because she hated herself. She hated that she didn’t see this sooner. Wasn’t smart enough to see between the lines; to be aware there were even lines to see through. She couldn’t figure out how she had let this happen and was inadvertently still allowing it to.

If Kara knew, it would be the end of them; whatever they were. There’s no way the blonde would look at her the same way if she knew. Even if this wasn’t her fault, Lena had to admit it looked bad.
Given her surname, it looked even worse. They say the road to Hell was paved with good intentions after all.

These were all things Lena had been convincing herself of — and with an unnecessary level of conviction — since Tuesday; it’s been three days. Maybe a part of her was preparing for the worst case to happen. It was only a matter of time before the proper authorities would connect the dots and work their way back to her. When that happened, everyone would turn their back on her. It was something she was used to; being shunned, outcasted.

Because of her feelings for Kara, and how close they had become, if that happened it would ruin Lena. She couldn’t handle it if Kara looked at her the way practically the whole of National City did. So, she was pushing herself away from the blonde before that could happen. She wasn’t intentionally doing it, though she wasn’t entirely sure of that. Deciding it was an unconscious decision gave the semblance of comfort, but, it was short lived.

Voice barely above a whisper, “Just... let me know you got in safely,” Lena softly requested, disappointed in herself and her behavior.

To her surprise Kara was walking towards her. If she were in Kara’s shoes, she’d have left the apartment without looking back.

Lena knew she was the problem right now and there was no need in denying it. Her lacking experience with interpersonal communication was her downfall in this situation. If she knew better how to articulate how she was feeling, what was worrying her, one could logically conclude she wouldn’t be shaken by the idea of Kara approaching her.

After days of her being distant without spoken reason. Days of them physically spending time together but not being present, there was no way Kara wasn’t fed up. That’s possibly why she’s leaving, Lena thought. Truthfully, she wouldn’t want to be around herself either. She couldn’t be pleasant company on anyone’s scale.

If she wouldn’t want to be party to her own behavior, why was Kara cradling her head in her hands? Why did Kara look like it was breaking her to see Lena this way? How could she still care about her after being treated so indifferently? These were all questions circling Lena’s mind. Each one betrayed the idea that Kara would hate her when she found out what had her acting this way. There was a flicker of hope they could survive the news but there were no guarantees.

Lena’s eyes flicked shut at the stinging sensation urging tears to fall. The warmth that was enveloping her was amplified by the tender press of lips against her forehead. It was a gentle gesture she felt she didn’t deserve.

When Lena finally had the courage to look up, there were soft, blue, eyes gazing back at her. There was sympathy and longing in those eyes that were launching attacks at her fortified walls. A shield the blonde had been single-handedly tearing down, ruining the integrity of the structure. It was sure to crumble any day now.

They stood like this for a beat before Kara’s undemanding voice broke their silence.

“I noticed things were off when you barely spoke at lunch Monday. We didn’t talk at all Tuesday – which is totally ok,” she said to assure Lena there was nothing wrong if they took time for themselves. “Yesterday was the same as today. You’re here but your mind is elsewhere,” she added, gently tapping a finger against the side of Lena’s head.

With a raspy voice from her lack of speaking, “I’m sorry,” Lena apologized, looking away from
Kara’s supportive expression.

Kara shook her head. “You don’t have to apologize. I know you have a lot going on right now, so I’m guessing you had a long week,” Kara knowingly stated. “You don’t have to talk about it until you’re ready. I don’t want you to feel like you have to entertain me while you’re dealing with other stuff.” Tilting her head down a bit, “But I am here for you. Even if it’s just as an ear. Or someone to help you,” Kara offered.

The corners of Lena’s lips turned up into a faint smile. There was still the slight chance the voice in her head had been wrong about the way Kara would react, but the jury was still out.

Kara placed another tender kiss near the corner of her mouth as a goodbye before leaving her apartment for the night. By the time Lena had straightened up the little that remained in her kitchen and living room, Kara sent her a text letting her know she made it in safely.

Spending extra time in the heat of her shower, Lena tried once again to figure out how she had wound up in this situation. And again, she came up with nothing. None it made any sense. Lena stood under the beating of the water until she was nearly wrinkled all over. Bogged down by her thoughts the minutes slipped away, unnoticed. The shift in water temperature prompted Lena to move her fretting elsewhere. Like the comfort of her king-sized bed.

Lena slipped beneath her Egyptian cotton sheets curling up in the middle of the bed. Despite the barrage of thoughts Lena drifted into a slumber she would later have wished she had avoided altogether.

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It was morning, a detail that was needlessly harped on at the sound of her blaring alarm. Maybe, if she just shut her eyes as tightly as possible, she’d be anywhere but here; be anyone but her.

Lena had spent the better part of the night pouring over recent reports from her research so she could begin bringing things to a close. There were so many charts she had to look over and compile. Then arrange those groups once more. Each group had at least two subgroups by the time she finished. What was supposed to be a two-hour project turned into an all-night affair.

It hadn’t been a full year and she had over two-hundred patients that participated in her research. There were a few that had been long-term participants but most just contributed what they could before leaving the study.

Now that she had accepted the position as CEO of LuthorCorp, Lena wouldn’t have the time to focus on both her job and her research. At least, she wouldn’t be able to dedicate the necessary time to ensure the success of both endeavors separately. With the data she had collected thus far, she had more than enough to write her thesis for graduation.

Before graduating from MIT Lena had an idea. It came to her after creating her alien detection device. It hadn’t dawned on her the potential issues her device would create. At that time, she felt everyone deserved the right to know who among them wasn’t human. She should have seen the flashing red lights going off in her head when her mother complimented her for the idea.

She had gained national recognition for the device; something she secretly grew to despise. The buzz surrounding the little scanner had grown to a point manufactures were contacting her to mass produce her invention. In good conscience, Lena couldn’t let such a device make it to market, so she lied.
During one of her interviews with a local news outlet surrounding the success of the detection device, Lena had said that she hadn't been able to replicate it. That there had been a number of unforeseen issues.

Lena didn’t think the public needed to know the actual truth. Her inability to recreate something that could further discriminate against an already disenfranchised group of beings without further explanation would have to suffice.

They wouldn’t believe her even if she had been forthcoming with the real reason behind turning down every offer she was presented with. No one would believe that a Luthor would ever work to help aliens.

One of the many offers she received to manufacture the device was from the government. They had no intention of making the offer, nor use of the device, public knowledge. It would be yet another weapon in their arsenal American citizens knew nothing about until they wanted them to. This is what inspired Lena’s research. During a liaison’s last attempt to convince her to sell her device she countered his pitch with one of her own.

In the country’s current climate, anyone could throw a penny in the air and there was a favorable chance it would land on someone who feared the aliens seeking refuge on their planet. Those people harbored that same fear, whether knowingly or unwittingly, her father did. The same apprehension she had.

Her entire life, Lena had seen what her father’s fears had done to him. What her ancestors’ fears had done to them. The fear of the unknown was a powerful thing and she didn’t want it to consume her. She wanted to avoid being the stereotypical Luthor; hate filled and subjectively ignorant.

Instead, Lena wanted to use that fear to propel her along a journey to better understanding the beings she was afraid of. So she proposed that the money they were offering her to assume her patent be used to help the aliens of this planet. As far as Lena knew, there weren’t any medical programs in place specifically tailored to the alien population. With a limited knowledge of their biology it would be difficult to treat them. So that’s what she would do. In order to provide medical care to an entire group of people, she’d have to learn more about them and Earth’s effects on their respective species.

It was a massive project; Lena knew that going in. Not only could this help countless aliens Lena would be working through her fears and resulting ignorance. There could be aliens falling ill and dying from something that could have been treatable had there been a system in place to help them.

It took a lot of convincing, and an eventual sit down with the President herself, to get her idea off the ground. One of the biggest selling points was that LuthorCorp could absorb some of the costs of her research by donating some of the equipment and space necessary for the project. It didn’t take long before Lena had the approval she needed and financial backing necessary to start.

One of the requirements for any alien to participate in the research was that they had to be listed on the Alien Registry. It was a point stressed above all others by the President. A simple condition, but Lena could see why that would be a problem for some of her potential candidates.

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There was good and bad being attached to such a registry and she could understand why any alien would decline being listed if given the choice. Lena was offered a list of all known aliens in National City after her move to the city from the east coast. She initially thought she’d have to recruit aliens on her own – which would definitely be an problem if they knew who she was – but they had already been notified of the study.
One of the government officials she had to report to notified her they had already taken care of contacting all eligible aliens in the area. If they were interested, they knew how to find her. Lena was sure to ask if the aliens knew their participation wasn’t mandatory. She didn’t want to force her idea on anyone, no matter how much it could help. When she was assured all that were contacted understood as much, they moved on to other points of interest.

They spoke at length about data that was to be collected, how it would be collected, and kept. The first phase was biologically learning more about the participants. What type of alien they were, where they were from, if their planet was home to different species of aliens. If the participant had learned of any acquired powers since landing on the planet, like Superman had. Or vice versa; if they had learned of any limitations the Earth’s environment presented for them. Getting base information like that was the foundation for everything else.

The second phase was learning how to treat these aliens for any illnesses exclusive to their kind or that they were otherwise susceptible to. Also, things as simple as allergies; even if the substance wasn’t found on this planet. Lena had learned that Superman being a Kryptonian was the reason he was, by all accounts thus far, invincible. His genetic make-up afforded him the ability to not have to worry about such things. But even Superman must have his own weaknesses, Lena assumed.

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Lena had spent her night organizing roughly ten months’ worth of these findings. All of which was only scratching the surface of what she had learned during said time.

As she made her piles and scratched reminders from her list she began to notice a pattern. It was a pattern that had an unlucky connection. It was the same thing she worried of when she was nearly killed in the office of LuthorCorp that was now hers.

Because some of the aliens that decided to work with her were already sick, a few had died during their time with her. It was an unavoidable thing, but she fought to do the best she could. Making them comfortable in the end if her best wasn’t good enough. Every alien that died, she remembered; thankfully there weren’t very many. So why were their so many names she didn’t recognize that were marked as being deceased?

It couldn’t be a coincidence that some of the aliens marked as ‘Deceased’ in their chart, matched the species of an alien that had been reported missing or killed. Lena had triple-checked herself to be sure.

One, maybe even three, would be a coincidence, but to have every news report she could find linked to an alien associated with her research, wasn’t. Even the aliens Lex had been accused of murdering. There were the four murdered aliens on top of the eight that were actually reported missing by someone.

In her new stack of charts for the dead aliens, for every one that was linked to a police report of some kind, there were at least two that weren’t. That guesstimate wasn’t including the aliens she personally remembers passing, which was the frightening part.

There was the connection she had been struggling to make. The aliens that were turning up missing, the aliens that were killed, her research, and the Alien Registry. If she was right, the aliens she had in her pile that had the red stamp of death on the outside of their chart were in danger; if they weren’t already.

There was no way for Lena to find a way to legally check in on those aliens. The list she had been given in the beginning was only a list of names and species; that was it. If she were to request more
information about them, so late in her research, it would be suspicious. There was no need in sealing her fate in bringing light to this situation just yet.

If she did, there was no way she could prove it hadn’t been her behind the killings. She couldn’t possibly prove that her researched hadn’t been a front for her kidnapping aliens and experimenting on them in a carefully constructed mass murder project all along.

The one thing she did have was that she hadn’t worked on this project alone. There was no way. Her medical knowledge alone wasn’t sufficient, so she needed to partner with others to fill in her blanks. There were a few others beneath them that performed the menial tasks of the research but that still meant she wouldn’t be the only one pinned for these crimes.

In the end though, the research had been her own and everyone acted upon her say so. She was the one in charge. If anything happened, it all fell back on her to fix the problem or take the blame.

These had all been things Lena thought about as she stared into the darkness of her room. She hadn’t been able to sleep longer than ten minutes straight since she climbed in her bed. When her alarm reminded her that she still had to face the world after her shocking realization a few hours ago, Lena burrowed her head further into her pillow.

Slamming her hand down on her now annoying alarm clock, Lena laid on her back blankly staring up towards her ceiling. If she stayed in bed much longer she’d be late for her second day as CEO. It was a title Lena didn’t think she’d ever get used to. As she dressed and got ready, Lena felt it may be best to head to the lab at some point during the day.

She wasn’t able to convince herself she incorrectly assumed the connections between her and the aliens the night before, but it wouldn’t hurt to be absolutely sure. Stood in her kitchen drinking her cup of coffee, Lena looked over her schedule to see if there was a break she could capitalize on.

Somehow, her first meeting wasn’t until eleven. It was of course with another one of their investors she would predictably have to convince not to take their money elsewhere. It was a conversation she was already tired of having and it was only Tuesday. If she was going to make the trip now was the only time she’d have.

By eight o’clock Lena was in her lab double-checking files pulling all pertinent documents to be looked over once again. A few members of her team had offered their help to which she respectfully declined.

Something she hadn’t noticed the night before, from her lack of sleep no doubt, was that her signature looked different on some of the papers. There was something in the way the ‘L’s were written that stood out to her.

Lena left the lab having confirmed her suspicions and laying the ground work for new ones. During her drive back to the city Lena intentionally rode with the music so loud she couldn’t hear herself think. The more she thought about this the worse she felt. The worse she felt the more she blamed herself for being blind to something going on. It was a slippery slope with a one-way ticket to self-loathing.

To add insult to injury Kara had sent her a good morning text. Usually, she looked forward to either sending or receiving one these messages but today it was a pang to the heart.

Kara was this sweet woman who had taking a liking to her. By some miraculous odds, the universe
allowed the two of them to meet. Even after Lena had lied, something she later regretted, Kara hadn’t written her off as ‘some Luthor’. From the very beginning Lena could tell that Kara was the physical embodiment of sunshine and rainbows; she was just one of those happy-go-lucky people.

*How am I supposed to look Kara in the eye after this?*

That was the singular thought that drove Lena mad for the remainder of the day. It bothered her so much she never returned any of Kara’s texts she received.

It scared her. The idea of Kara looking at her like she was some villain wounded her. How was she supposed to ruin one of the only good things in her life right now? How could she even explain something like this to someone like Kara?

Lena wanted to believe the woman would be understanding. But she wasn’t willing to risk their friendship to find out; not yet. No matter what happened, she wasn’t ready to lose Kara.

So Lena sat through meeting after meeting, looked over file after file, in order to distract herself from the present. Active denial, that never backfired on anyone in the history of human consciousness. She went back to her apartment and stared at the charts again, hoping that she was wrong. When she couldn’t convince herself otherwise Lena through all of the charts back into the boxes she had transported them in. Back to denial.

When she slept that night, her dreams were shrouded in nightmares. One after another of every alien she’s ever treated dying right in front of her. There was nothing she could do but watch. Her screams in the dream were translated to actual cries out loud. She managed to wake herself up once or twice as a result.

The guilt was eating her alive. Something she was acutely aware of when Kara sat in front of her, telling her something about her classes, and she couldn’t meet the woman’s eyes. They had previously agreed to repeat lunch after their shared date Monday afternoon. This was something she had wished she had the forethought to avoid. It had completely slipped her mind until Jess was letting her know she was heading to pick up her lunch and that Kara was there.

She couldn’t turn the woman away now, so she powered through. Every so often she would hum or agree with something the blonde said to have her think she was listening. Kara had said her goodbyes and seemed none the wiser.

Another night came filled with more nightmares. This round had taken full advantage of her insecurities. While she still helplessly stood by as aliens were being killed off there was the added element of Kara walking away from her. A disappointed look decorating her features before she turned. No matter how loudly Lena shouted or how desperately she pleaded Kara wouldn’t turn around. She never stopped.

After watching Kara walk away from her over and over the night before, there was some part of Lena that needed to see her. When Kara text her suggesting dinner she quickly agreed and volunteered to prepare it herself. Pending no hang-ups in her schedule, there was no reason she wouldn’t be able to leave at a reasonable hour.

There being no issues to handle had been wishful thinking. Not only was there an accident in one of LuthorCorp’s labs she was somehow double-booked on meetings for two hours. By the end of the
day, all of Lena’s energy had been sapped. From nights of fitful sleep, she was more than physically tired. She had mentally been working herself into a frenzy on top of having to run an entire company. Emotionally she was stretched just as thin. It was mostly her own fault, but the distress felt all the same.

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Kara had put a lot of thought into allowing Alex to study the Kryptonite. It was hard for her to agree when just the thought of the rock reminded her of that day. There was no way she wanted to go through that ever again, but she trusted Alex. She trusted that her sister would stop long before anything like that happened.

Alex had the overnight shift and there was nothing keeping Kara late at CatCo on a Friday evening. Now was probably the only time they’d get to test this for a while.

“Winn and I fitted this training room with the Kryptonite. He created these…” Alex’s voice trailed off as she gesticulated with her hands what she was trying to describe. “Yea, I don’t know how to explain it,” she laughed.

With a soft, sympathetic grin, “I’ll just ask Winn when I see him.”

It’s not that technology isn’t Alex’s strong suit. Once Winn got going and provided her with far too technical an explanation, it all started to go over her head. Kara understood that Alex usually stopped listening when that happened, so it was no surprise her sister couldn’t explain every detail of their friend’s work.

“Basically, we’ll be able to control how much of the Kryptonite you’ll be exposed to at one time. Which is the most important part,” she stressed without breaking eye contact with the blonde.

Kara nodded. “Got it.”

Knowing that it wouldn’t be all or nothing put Kara at ease. When the idea was originally presented, Alex and J’onn had no idea how they’d test out the Kryptonite. At least now there would be some kind of control; more control she could regain.

After double-checking that all of the independent leads were secure against Kara’s skin and suit, “Alright,” Alex said with a renewed level of energy.

Dressed in her Supersuit, Kara stretched out, bouncing in place to warm up. She didn’t need to but it was a habit she picked up from Alex after all their sparring sessions. She even tapped a few of the wireless leads herself for good measure.

Alex had picked up her tablet and tapped away at the screen. Kara couldn’t tell what she was doing but whatever it was small holders came out of the walls in every corner. There was also one in the ceiling right above her head.

“We’ll do a few tests first to make sure all of the leads are transmitting. Sound good?”

“You’re the boss.”

Alex had Kara test her strength and speed to serve as their base to compare everything else against;
their control group. Once Alex was satisfied with Kara’s performance she switched on Winn’s devices. She also called J’onn in from the upstairs gallery as her assist.

“We’ll start at a ten percent exposure.” Alex looked towards her sister for permission before she did anything.

The was a nervous energy taking hold inside Kara. She reminded herself she was around family. These were two of the people she trusted the most and they’d never intentionally hurt her. They both wanted to keep her safe.

There was a slight green hue in the corners of the room that Kara hadn’t missed. She had noticed them as her eyes followed J’onn circling her, ready to begin.

“All right Kar. We know that the Kryptonite has no effect on J’onn so you’ll be sparring with him. If this is going to work, you can’t hold back.”

“Don’t worry, I can take it,” J’onn quipped.

Without warning J’onn moved in, nearly sweeping her legs from underneath her. Dodging the left hook that followed the sweep Kara steadied herself on her feet. J’onn couldn’t read her mind but he was still a skilled opponent. He had years of experience on her so he wouldn’t be taken down very easily.

After rounds of connected punches and defensive maneuvers Alex announced that she was upping the exposure to twenty-five percent. Kara had felt just fine under the ten, but that wasn’t still the case. J’onn’s body shot to her ribs clued her into that. She even felt a little winded which was a first.

She had to switch her tactics. Kara couldn’t be aggressive on her offense in order to keep J’onn on his toes. Instead, she switched her focus more on her defense; something she was not at all used to. J’onn and Alex noticed her fighting style changing. J’onn especially picked up on the increase in near misses from his punches and kicks. They were all attacks she had dodged no problem before the increase.

At fifty percent Kara could barely keep up with the flurry of J’onn’s advances. He even managed to trap her in a headlock. Her vision began to darken at the edges forcing her to concede.

Kara’s coughs sound more like winded barking as she tried to catch her breath, prompting Alex to rush over to make sure she was alright. Waving off the woman’s concerns Kara shouted for another round. J’onn hesitantly looked to Alex knowing it was best to quit while they were ahead.

Still heavily panting, “I’m fine. J’onn just got the drop on me. We can keep going,” Kara responded, with no one believing she was ‘fine’.

“Kara… For one thing you’re sweating. Not to mention I don’t think I’ve ever seen you out of breath before. Are you sure you want to keep going? We can always—”

“Alex, I’m ok,” Kara answered in a calm tone, cutting the red-haired woman off.

She really was fine. Frustrated, but fine. Things were already going better than she had been expecting them to. Kara had been anticipating a repeat of her first exposure and this wasn’t that. Winn coming up with a way to limit her contact was the very thing she needed. She was willing to see this through so everyone could breathe easier knowing just how this off-world substance affected her.

Kara didn’t wait for J’onn to agree. She took this moment of confusion to get him off balance
enough to land a few punches of her own. When that didn’t work she switched her strategy yet again.

Alex announced an increase to sixty-five percent.

She slipped up and J’onn had managed to get a hold of her cape. As if that wasn’t bad enough the Martian swung her body to the ground before hurling her into the far wall. Kara tried to fly in the opposite direction to at least slow herself down, but she couldn’t. Bracing for impact Kara covered part of her head with her arms for protection. She hit the wall so hard she bounced off it, nearly rolling back to J’onn’s feet.

“That hurt,” Kara groaned with a bitter laugh. Rolling onto her back, she took the outstretched hand to help her up. Her body was stiff and all of her hurt in some way. “Is this what people mean when they say they feel like they’ve been hit by a truck,” Kara asked, wincing more than laughing this time.

Alex shook her head and laughed. As she looked over her sister she noticed something alarming. “How hard did your head hit the wall?”

“Uhh.” Kara wasn’t sure. She remembered putting an arm in the way, but she had shut her eyes before impact. “I’m not sure, why?”

Alex pulled a small gauze from her pouch and wiped at Kara’s temple, then another at her lip. Raising the gauze up for Kara to see, “That’s why. You’re bleeding.”

Kara rubbed soothingly at the side of her head hoping that would dull the pain. “That’s not good.”

“No. The Kryptonite weakens you to a point of physically vulnerable,” J’onn observed.

“I wasn’t planning to go higher than eighty percent exposure, now I’m glad I wasn’t. Any higher and we’d be right back to when you were attacked.”

“At twenty-five percent your stamina had begun depleting. You weren’t moving as quickly and shifted to a defensive tactic.”

“Fifty is when I really started to feel it. J’onn’s right. I was tired and needed to catch my breath before that. When he threw me at the wall I couldn’t even fly backwards to stop, that’s why I covered my head.”

Alex was jotting down everything they were saying, even things she had observed during their fight. Next was just heading to the infirmary to make sure she didn’t need stitches and running a few more tests.

J’onn helped Kara into the med bay before leaving to check-in that nothing had gone amiss in his absence. Alex was grabbing different vials and slides for her microscope. There was also a small case beside Kara that Alex told her not to open.

Alex attempted to draw blood from Kara’s arm using a regular syringe and needle. Because of her previous exposure, the needle broke her skin with no problems. Getting what she needed, the red-haired woman set everything aside and cleaned up Kara’s cuts. Thankfully the one on her temple wouldn’t need stitches.

Tapping the box beside her, “What’s in the case I can’t open,” Kara curiously wondered.

“I wasn’t sure if I’d need it,” Alex began, slowing opening the case. “After your first encounter you
were left without your powers. So, I figured that if complete exposure could do that, making a few needles out of the Kryptonite would allow the chance to break skin.”

Alex spun the case around for Kara to see the needles she had fashioned. They looked exactly like the needle the older woman had just used.

“I know we used radiation similar to a red sun in the past, but this would minimize your side effects. Instead of weakening all of you just to draw blood I could use this and only affect one spot on your entire body. It’ll be a lot more efficient.”

Kara hummed, seeing that maybe some good could come from that Rao forsaken rock. “Thank you,” Kara whispered.

Cleaning up the little that was left, “For what,” Alex wondered.

Kara’s voice was soft when she spoke, if a bit sheepish. “For being you. I was so sure this was basically going to be torture but you found a way around it. I was more important than the discoveries yet to be uncovered in the Kryptonite.”

Alex stopped what she was doing and gave her sister a heartfelt smile. “You’re my sister Kara. Of course you’re more important. And it’s nothing you have to thank me for. Thanks to you, J’onn owes me twenty bucks,” Alex chuckled.

“You guys bet that I wasn’t going to do it,” Kara said with an affronted gasp.

“In my defense, I knew you’d come around,” Alex smirked.

Kara threw a small metallic bowl towards her sister that she was able to dodge. Before she could grab something else to throw, her phone began to buzz in the belt of her suit.

“Lena. Is everything alright? I wasn’t expecting to hear from you so soon.”

“Can you come to my place? I would really like to speak to you.”

“Of course. Give me an hour and I’ll be over.”

Alex was trying not to eavesdrop, but it was kind of hard when they were the only two people in the room. “Is she ok?”

Kara was shoving her phone back in its pouch as she answered. “I’m not sure. Lena’s been pretty off all week so I was giving her some space. That was last night. Now she wants to talk.”

With pursed lips, “Good luck.”

“Thanks,” Kara replied heading to the locker room to shower and change.

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Kara was leaning against the back of Lena’s sofa as the brunette stood in front of her, twiddling with her hands. It had only been a day since they had seen each other last. With how stressed Lena had seemed this week, Kara had no intention of adding to that level of worry. When she left the woman’s apartment last night she knew giving the Luthor a bit of space was for the best. Even if she didn’t like the idea of doing so.

This was Lena’s first week as LuthorCorp’s new CEO which was no small change. The woman had been adamant that she had no desire to pursue this line of work but let it slip, in passing, that she was
surprised by how much she enjoyed the job. The new position on top of everything relating to Lex, there was no refuting Lena was going through a lot. And she was most likely going through it alone, but Kara wouldn’t force her company onto anyone.

Still wringing her hands together, “If I’m going to say everything I need to, I need you to not interrupt.”

Lena’s usually lighter green eyes were darkened and hidden behind swollen lids. There was no need in asking if she had crying because the evidence was clear. The trouble and conflict Lena must be feeling was all Kara could see when she looked at the younger woman. As much as she wanted to reassure Lena and provide her with any words of comfort she could, Kara nodded her understanding. Giving Lena the floor to air out whatever it was that prompted her to call just over an hour ago.

“I shouldn’t be telling you any of this. The two nondisclosures I signed were very clear on such matters…”

Kara knew there were steep penalties for breaking any kind of nondisclosure agreement so whatever Lena was preparing to tell her must have been more important.

“You already know that I’m at NCU to complete my graduate research for my thesis. You also know that same research is solely backed with government money. What you don’t know is what I chose as my focus.”

Lena had stopped messing with her hands and began to pace a small distance back and forth. Kara’s powers weren’t completely back so she had to strain to hear what Lena said next.

“I was conducting research to better understand the alien population here on Earth.” Speaking up with a bit more conviction, “A research project that could be the foundation for an alien healthcare program. Which is why I was able to acquire the backer I did,” Lena went on to explain.

Kara’s head slightly panned back and forth with Lena’s movements. So far, things didn’t sound so bad. She wasn’t understanding why Lena would be so upset over such a groundbreaking project. There must be more, Kara thought.

“My research isn’t exactly the problem. Well, not quite,” Lena mumbled to herself. “I planned to stop the study for now and pick it back up once I found a comfortable rhythm at LuthorCorp. I have more than enough to write my paper so the only problem would be that the clinic would be closing for a time.”

Lena ran her fingers through her hair and held them there. A few steps later she stopped pacing all together.

Staring off into her kitchen, “As I was going over all of the patients’ charts, something stood out at me. As you can imagine, dealing with sick aliens that we were learning how to properly treat, a few died before we could. I remember every one of them I lost.”

Kara couldn’t see Lena’s face but she could hear it in the woman’s voice, she was crying. Her voice was growing shakier and the cadence of her words was off. This was why she asked that Kara not speak until she finished; she was barely able to do this in her silence. Kara didn’t want to think how this could have gone had she been able to say something.

After a shuddering sigh Lena powered on. “I remember them all and for some reason there are more. Of those extras several of them match up with aliens reported missing over the past several months.”

Lena turned her head to the side, meeting Kara’s eyes for the first time. “Even the four aliens my
brother allegedly murdered.”

Kara sat bone straight after that. How in Rao’s name did the aliens that participated in Lena’s research wind up connected to those crimes? It didn’t make any sense. Kara was upset, and her confusion flashed across her face before she could stop it from showing. Lena must have seen because she went back to her pacing, staring at the floor as she went.

More than anything Kara wanted to say something but resisted the desire to do so.

“I’m not sure how it happened…and I don’t think it’s a coincidence. I didn’t do anything Kara but if word gets out no one would believe me.”

Lena went on, blaming herself for not noticing sooner. Saying how afraid she was to tell Kara for fear of being judged incorrectly. Kara couldn’t stop her own fidgeting upon hearing the hurtful words Lena was using against herself so she put a stop to it.

Pushing off of the couch, Kara wrapped the brunette in a tight hug as she turned into her while pacing. Lena fought against her, tears still streaming down her face, but Kara wouldn’t let go. This wasn’t the first time they found themselves in a similar embrace.

Lena had barely looked her in the eye all week. She had been unsociable and aloof and now Kara knew why. It hadn’t been because of LuthorCorp at all. It all had to do with potentially being framed for corralling aliens in to murder them later. Kara knew how this situation looked. To any other eyes, all they would see is Lena the Luthor, not Lena; just Lena.

Kara could now see that Lena must have convinced herself that she would hate the brunette for what she had just told her. That she would lump her in with the rest of her family. After hearing Lena’s side, Kara wanted to find out more before she placed blame on anyone. Though she had a good idea where to start looking. If those aliens had been cycled out Lena’s study, then what happened to them between then and their current state?

Quietly shushing the woman’s cries, Kara gently caressed the woman’s head lying against her chest. “I believe you,” Kara whispered, and Lena cried even harder.

They stayed wrapped in this position a moment or two longer before Kara peeled herself free from Lena’s hold.

She kept her voice low and soft when she spoke. “We can talk about it more tomorrow. For now, how about I draw you a bath and get you to bed?”

“I’ll be ok Kara. You don’t have to stay,” Lena sniffled.

Gearing up to walk down the hall, “I want to,” Kara said with finality in her tone.

Still in a weakened state Kara was better able to gauge the temperature of the water in the tub. She poured in small amounts from two of Lena’s bath soaps making sure the bubbles didn’t spill over. Lena came in a minute later with a towel and change of clothes in hand.

“She sat so long her butt began to hurt so she laid out in the middle of the hallway. It wasn’t like anyone was around to trip over her. Kara overheard the sound of water draining out of the tub followed by random drips sprinkling onto the tiles that adorned the floor inside.

Lena slowly pulled the door open, a small smile creeping into her features. “Comfortable?”
“Eh, I’ve spent time on better,” Kara joked back. Popping up Kara gave Lena a once over. “How are you feeling?”

“Like I stressed myself out about losing you for no reason,” Lena answered, swiping a hand over her slightly damp hair.

With a reassuring smile, “I’m sorry you didn’t feel like you could tell me. Or that you felt I’d hate you for it. I had no idea I gave off that impression.”

“It was nothing you did. After a lifetime of people walking out of my life for less I whole-heartedly believed there was nothing keeping you around. I’m sorry I lacked faith in you being all that you’ve shown me.”

Kara wasn’t sure how to react when Lena was the one pulling her into a hug. Her hair smelled of flowers with the lavender from the bath radiating from her skin. She wrapped one arm behind Lena’s back and picked her up bridal style to carry her the rest of the way to her bedroom.

After Lena’s yelp of surprise, “Which room is yours,” Kara asked, eyes jumping from one door to the next.

Swatting at Kara’s shoulder, “End of the hall,” she answered.

Lena was nice enough to turn the knob because, ‘I’d do it myself, but my hands are kind of full’, Kara had lightly joked, bringing a small laugh from the brunette.

The bedroom was the exact opposite of the rest of the apartment. Where the common areas lacked a personal touch and warmth, Lena’s bedroom was full of character. When Lena flicked on the lights Kara’s eyes had landed on the photo at her bedside. It was a picture of her and Lex caught in the middle of laughing at something. It looked only a few years old at most.

There was another photo of Lena in her cap and gown at her graduation from MIT with a dark-haired taller woman and a guy she didn’t recognize; they all looked genuinely happy. There was a book hanging off the edge of her bed and random tools and parts strewn all over the place. The room felt lived in, like a small oasis Lena might consider home.

Kara thought about tossing Lena onto her bed as a joke, but that thought was quickly countered with a reminder of why she was there in the first place. Lightly letting Lena down, Kara took a step back, unsure if Lena would want her to stay or not.

Lena was pulling the throw blanket over her legs when Kara noticed she was saying something. “Will you stay a while longer?” The woman’s voice was so small. It felt to Kara as though she wasn’t used to making such requests. She could feel how nervous Lena was to ask. How vulnerable it was making her feel.

“Of course,” Kara affectionately answered. She was actually hoping Lena wanted her to stay for a bit because she wasn’t ready to leave her.

Kara jogged off down the hall, grabbing herself a glass of water, downing it, then shutting off all of the lights. Before heading back to Lena’s room, she checked to make sure all the doors were locked. She wasn’t sure when her powers would be fully restored, so better safe than sorry.

Lena was sat up now with a perplexed expression on her face. “Just shutting everything off,” Kara explained.

She climbed atop the king-sized bed laying down on her side to face the other woman. They laid,
looking at each other, without uttering a sound. Lena’s eyes had drifted closed a few times but they quickly fluttered back open.

Scooching to the middle of the bed, Kara flipped to her back and propped her head up with one of the many pillows at her disposal. Opening her arms, Kara motioned for Lena to move over towards her. Lena gave her a look of mock defiance, but eventually gave in.

Lena’s head was resting against her chest, a hand lightly grasped onto her t-shirt. Kara was lightly stroking the length of Lena’s back as she stared out of one of the windows in the room.

“You’re welcome to turn on the television if you’d like.”

“Does it require me to move from this spot,” Kara questioned.

“Yes…”

“Then I’m fine right here.”

It didn’t take long for Lena to fall asleep, with Kara not far behind her. It was after midnight when Kara woke back up. Lena hadn’t let her go. There was the sound of light snores which made it harder for Kara to will herself to move. She tried her best to not wake Lena but she had failed. She had only managed to untangle their legs when the brunette stirred.

Voice heavy with sleep, “Kara,” the brunette murmured.

“I’m here,” Kara answered, voice a tad crackly.

Stretching out, Lena let go of her shirt. “What time is it?”

“Uh,” Kara pushed down one of the pillows for a better view of the alarm clock. “Almost one. I didn’t mean to fall asleep. I can go.”

“Don’t be foolish. Just shut the light off and come back to bed,” Lena said in a sleep filled haze.

Kara’s cheeks flushed at the sound of Lena’s words. She knew what Lena meant, but it had such a domestic feeling to it. Like this wasn’t the first time Lena had uttered that instruction for her to follow. At that moment, she was glad Lena still had her eyes shut and had snuggled her head into a pillow.

Kara got up to turn off the light as instructed. Before climbing back into the bed, she pulled off her socks and joggers leaving her in her t-shirt and athletic shorts that were underneath. Drawing the comforter back Kara climbed in the bed and fought to get Lena underneath it as well. It took some doing but Kara somehow managed it without waking the woman a second time.

Getting comfortable once again, Kara let Lena wrap herself around her frame. She shivered when Lena rubbed her cold feet against her for warmth. Smiling down at the sleeping woman, “Goodnight Lena,” Kara uttered.

Kara was under the impression the young woman had fallen back to sleep, so she wasn’t expecting a response back. “Goodnight darling,” Lena replied then contently wiggled in place before snoring once again.

Chapter End Notes
I just want to say this was not my original intention when I said there would be some Kara/Lena time last week. After four straight days of writer's block, this is what transpired. I'm sorry for the depressing chapter, it just kind of happened. Please don't hate me!

In a way I felt this was something in the realm of possibility. Lena doesn't know how to have friends, or a Kara, so this could happen. She'd draw her own conclusions on what would happen without checking in with the other person. Or she wouldn't give it a second thought and basically ghost the person. Or maybe I'm crazy; that's entirely possible too haha.

Next week the aim is, well, not that again lol. (Finger's crossed) I'm gonna update the tags and summary as well, but I make no promises. I'm terrible at coming up with summaries.

Until next time...
Chapter 16

Chapter Notes

A trigger warning. There is a bit of violence in this chapter that involves a gun. I (***) a paragraph for maybe like a step up from canon-typical violence just to be safe. Not reading it, you won't miss anything. It's at the very end.

I also wanted to say thank you to everyone that leaves comments or kudos or just reads the story in general. I APPRECIATE EVERY. SINGLE. ONE OF YOU!!

Now sit back and let your mind roam free...

The first rays of light were shining through her bedroom window and there was something solid, but warm, on her back. Lena quickly reviewed the events of the day before in her head before she realized what she was feeling was a sleeping Kara. Lena rolled over to face the blonde, doing her best not to shake too much. Easier said than done since she was pinned near the edge of her own bed.

During the course of the night Kara had sprawled out in the middle of the bed, at a weird angle, taking up majority of the space. Looking down on the woman’s peaceful expression, Lena took a moment to appreciate what was right in front of her. It had been so long since she had met someone that believed in her as much as Kara did. If she had anything to say about it, there was no way she was letting this woman get away from her.

The sight of Kara’s features scrunching up as she wiggling her nose warmed Lena’s heart. Unable to suppress her giggle at how cute Kara was while she slept, Lena accidentally caused the woman to stir.

Stretching out with a loud yawn, Kara turned her head to the side finding Lena’s green eyes looking back at her.

Shutting her eyes with her smile, “Good morning,” Kara croaked, voice thick with sleep.

There was something familiar in the way Kara looked without her glasses, but Lena couldn’t place why. “Morning.” Lena lightly brushed strands of blonde locks from the woman’s face. Motioning at all the empty space beside the woman, “I take it you slept well.”

Kara hummed in agreement then rolled to press her face into Lena’s stomach. Tilting her head to the side just enough that Lena would hear her, “This bed is so comfy. How do you get anything done when this thing is just…here!”

Lena laughed again because she often wondered the same thing; she might have done her job too well while mattress shopping. Which explained why she spent some evenings pouring over her work in bed.

“Coffee or tea?”

“Whatever you’re having is fine,” Kara answered, voice slightly muffled in Lena’s shirt.
When Lena moved the slightest inch, Kara wrapped her arms around the woman to keep her there a little longer. “No, you can’t go,” she groaned good-naturedly.

Lena did all she could to fight herself free but she couldn’t break the woman’s hold. “Fine, I’ll stay,” she conceded, accepting defeat.

Looking up into Lena’s face again, “I knew you’d see it my way,” Kara gloated.

The sound of the woman’s laugh, that smile that reached her eyes, all of it caused a fluttering in her chest Lena hadn’t felt before. It must be a good thing if Kara was the one causing her to feel this way.

Knowing Kara wouldn’t let her leave the bed yet, Lena slid up to lean against her headboard. Kara rolled to her back to accommodate the position then rested her head in Lena’s lap. They sat like this for a few minutes before Kara broke their comfortable silence.

“What do you want to talk over caffeine?” Her voice was soft, not wanting to pressure Lena into talking if she wasn’t ready.

Lena looked away from Kara for a beat before answering. “Sure,” she replied without looking at Kara directly.

“I know I said we could talk tomorrow. And well, today is tomorrow, but if you’re not ready to do that we can wait until later. I don’t want to push you to do something you’re not ready to do. So, you know, whenever you’re ready,” Kara rambled, barely taking a second to breathe.

“I appreciate your concern, but I want to do it. We should probably call your sister as well; she’ll want to know what’s going on.”

“Oh, good,” Kara exhaled in relief. “I was thinking the same thing. The telling Alex part I mean.”

Kara was first to pop up off the bed. Lena watched her, wondering how in the world the blonde had so much energy not long after waking.

“Are you always this energetic first thing in the morning?”

Kara shrugged her shoulders. “Sometimes, but waking up to you helped,” she answered with a warm smile that quickly turned into a smirk as she left the bedroom.

Kara was sat at the island waiting for her when Lena emerged from her room. Wrapping her robe around herself, Lena began to grab all she needed to make them some tea.

Without preamble, Lena jumped right into their conversation. Rehashing everything she had to muster the courage to say the night before in greater detail. Notifying Alex was a priority. The agent was working her brother’s case and may have access to resources that would otherwise be illegal for her to look into.

Kara agreed that what she found couldn’t have been a simple happenstance. Based on what they knew, Lena would be the one blamed for all of it. She was being framed and she didn’t know why or even by who.

Not once did Kara question her integrity, nor did she try to convince Lena that she was being irrational. Kara believed her from the very beginning. So it came it no surprise when the blonde offered to help in any way she could; starting with calling her sister.
It was still fairly early so Alex may not have gotten back to her apartment yet. She had third shift and would be working the same shift for the next few days. If Kara hurried, she may still be able to catch her.

Lucky for them, Alex was just getting to her apartment when Kara’s name popped up on her phone. The blonde kept the details pretty cut and dry, stressing the urgency of the situation. She was half out of her leather jacket when she answered the call. Sliding her arm back into the sleeve, Alex left her apartment in route to Lena’s.

Kara was sat off in a corner, looking over the chess table Lex gifted his sister for her fake birthday, cup of tea in hand. She watched as Lena showed Alex everything she had, going into more detail with her because of the redhead’s background in medicine. What she wasn’t expecting though was Alex mentioning she had already started looking into Lena’s work.

The way Alex explained it, she had been suspecting the same things as Lena. She left out any parts that involved Jeremiah, but there was no concrete evidence that he was involved. Yet, Kara thought to herself. Alex hadn’t had full access to Lena’s research without filling official requests, but the little she could pull had been a red flag for her.

Lena was thorough, something Alex was anticipating. She was impressed by the sheer amount of information, and detail, the young woman was able to acquire but focused on the essential pieces.

“You were right to have Kara call me. A few of these aliens I recognize from a list we’ve already put together,” Alex divulged.

“What do we do now?” Kara probed, finding an appropriate moment to reenter the conversation.

Alex thumbed through a few more sheets before speaking. “Now that I have all this I want to do a little more digging. But I’ll have to bring this to the Director. Four of these aliens are already connected to an ongoing investigation. The rest we haven’t been able to locate. Unfortunately, the one thing they all have in common is Lena’s research. That is, if we leave out The Registry.”

Expelling a deep breath, “Which is what I was afraid of,” Lena admitted.

“It’s not to say there isn’t some other connection, but right now, that’s all we’ve got.” After a pause, “Was there anyone else that had access to this list,” Alex questioned, spinning the document around for Lena to see. It was the sheet with all of National City's registered aliens.

With a quick glance, “Not that I’m aware of. There are at least two other people that had access to the area it was stored.”

Taking a shot in the dark, “Would Lex have been one of those people?”

“It’s entirely possible, yes,” Lena nodded. “Considering it is a LuthorCorp facility he would have had access to everything as CEO.”

Alex gave Kara a solemn look. She didn’t want to say it out loud, but that voice in her head was yelling at her that something was off again.

Kara’s phone began to ring where it sat on one of the side tables near her sister. Without looking to see who it was, Alex tossed her the phone. She was more focused on asking Lena a couple more questions about the research.

All that appeared on the screen was ‘UNKNOWN’. Kara answered her phone, slowly moving it to her ear with the lack of a greeting.
“Let me guess, you’re in my sister’s apartment no doubt after spending the night together?” Before Kara could utter a sound, Lex continued. “It would be unwise to do that, Supergirl.”

He knew. Whatever hope she was holding onto that he was simply riling her up just went out the window. “It would be such a shame to have to hurt that lovely woman that opened her home to you all those years ago.”

“Kar, who’s on the phone?” Alex asked after taking in the crinkle forming between her sister’s brows.

Kara had to think of something quick. “Just a guy from one of my classes.” This seemed to be enough to get Alex off her case; for now.

“I don’t have my notes with me, but I can let you know when I do,” Kara played along with the charade for Eliza’s safety. There was no telling what Lex had up his sleeve, even in prison.

“Good girl,” Lex replied approvingly, making Kara’s skin crawl. “I take it she still doesn’t know.”

Voice low, “No,” Kara curtly replied, barely containing her anger.

There was a breathy chuckle on the other end of the line. “And what do you think will happen when she finds out? She’ll hate you for lying to her.”

After a quick glance to Lena, Kara got up to leave the room. She needed to take this conversation away from Alex’s attentive ears. She didn’t answer until she was halfway down the hall. “There’s no way to know that.”

“More than anything else, my sister despises being lied to. You see, our parents did enough of that when we were growing up. Especially to her.” Briskly changing subjects, “Enough about that, there’s something I want you to do for me Ms. Danvers,” Lex mentioned in a no-nonsense voice.

Closing the bathroom door behind her, “Blackmailing me into helping you now?”

“Blackmail is such an ugly word. Think of it as more of... strategic leverage, if you will. You’ll do what I say because I know your secret. It would also be no trouble at all to pay your mother a visit.”

“Don’t you dare hurt her,” Kara furiously warned through gritted teeth.

“That’s entirely dependent upon you. There’s a warehouse just outside the downtown district on 41st street. Head there tonight, at eight, and await further instruction.”

“And how do I know you won’t harm Eliza or tell Lena the truth, even if I do what you ask?”

“That’s what makes this so interesting.”

Kara opened her mouth to speak, coming up short at the sound of the call ending.

This was bad. Even if she told Lena the truth Eliza was still in danger. Lex had played that perfectly. Regardless of what she did, someone was still a target. In a way, she had even played into his hand by keeping her secret from Lena.

Alex already seemed suspicious of the call. She’d have to come up with some story to throw the woman off somehow. Her sister was smart, and always knew when she was lying. She prayed to Rao that this time things would be different.
While Kara was taking her call, Alex realized she may need to rope in some assistance to get a better handle on what Lena had uncovered. Scrolling through her contacts, she reluctantly made a call of her own.

The phone nearly rang to voicemail, being picked up on the final ring. “Danvers,” A groggy voice answered in the form of a question.

“Sawyer are you at the precinct? I need your help with something.”

“Today’s my day off but I can meet you there,” Maggie answered, more awake than she was a second ago.

“Good. Meet there in 30?”

“On my way.”

Hanging up the call, “I’m headed to Maggie’s precinct. I shouldn’t be gone long but I’ll call if anything comes up,” Alex announced to her remerging sister.

Kara said her goodbyes and Alex was off with a few boxes in hand. Lena had curled into the corner of her sofa, looking out at her balcony.

There was still time for her to tell Lena everything. The longer the woman didn’t know she was Supergirl, the longer Lex could use it against her. She had planned to tell Lena about her secret under better circumstances, but there wasn’t anything she could do about that now.

Kara mentally pumped herself up, preparing for this conversation to pan out any number of ways. With a quick exhale, Kara put one foot in front of the other. She had to do this. Alex may not approve of her decision to reveal her identity, but it was her secret to tell. Furthermore, she wanted to do this because she trusted Lena. She’d even go as far as to say she trusted the brunette with her life – which she was essentially doing by telling her she was Supergirl and in turn a Kryptonian.

“Lena there’s—” Kara was cut off by the sound of Lena’s phone unexpectedly ringing.

“Lena Luthor,” the brunette greeted.

Kara watched as tension began to take over the woman’s frame. Her relaxed shoulders were rising, and an unimpressed brow was inching higher on her face. Whoever was calling, Lena wasn’t happy with whatever they had to say.

She ended the call without saying more than her name. Phone in hand, her arm dropped down to her side as she ran her other through her dark brown locks.

Moving part of her hair off to the side, Lena turned to look at Kara with an apologetic sigh. “There’s some kind of emergency at LuthorCorp that needs my attention. I’m so sorry.”

“No. No. It’s ok. I need to start studying for my midterms anyway, but uhm…”

Lena’s brow quirked up once again in question. “Can we maybe meet when you finish up? I need to talk to you about something.”

Lena didn’t like the way that sounded. “Are you breaking up with me,” the brunette self-consciously asked, retreating in on herself at the thought.

Kara quickly walked over to Lena, grabbing her free hand in her own. “No, it’s nothing like that,”
Kara assured her. Heat in her cheeks growing, she was blushing at the implication behind Lena’s words. “I didn’t know we were a thing yet.”

Lena gave her a perplexed look. “Isn’t that usually how this works? Two people date to see if there’s any hope of a relationship or did I not understand something?”

Kara giggled a little to herself with a heartfelt smile that was lightening the mood. “Yes, but you usually don’t break up at that stage. Unless you want to make us,” she said, moving their hands between them, “a thing. Which I’m totally ok with by the way.”

“After the past few weeks I felt that conversation wasn’t necessary. We’re both still here which is conversation enough,” Lena bashfully explained.

Placing a delicate kiss to the back of Lena’s hand, "Yea, it has been an interesting couple of months. But, if this your weird way of asking me to be your girlfriend, my answer is yes.”

Lena took the opportunity to laugh a little at her lack of experience when it came to dating. “I suppose it was,” she confirmed, inciting a hearty laugh from them both.

Slowly exhaling, Lena looked into Kara’s sparkling blue eyes. “I really need to go. You’re more than welcome to stay here until I get back.”

“Your job is important. I understand.”

Kara’s head snapped to the side, looking out into the horizon through the windows of Lena’s living room. She could have sworn she just heard someone yelling her name.; at least part of it. Maybe they were just yelling about an actually motor vehicle, Kara reasoned.

She brushed off Lena’s concern for her startling shift in behavior. Rushing the woman down the hall to her room, Kara grabbed her hoody and sweats then made her way to her own apartment. If it weren’t for that ill-timed phone call, Lena would know her secret by now.

Now that their relationship was official, Kara couldn’t help but feel guilty for not just saying it. Recognizing that if she had just blurted out her secret, when Lena’s mind was being drawn elsewhere, it would have been selfish. Lena needed to know, yes, but that didn’t mean her secret was more important than everything else going on. It was better that they talked later.

——

It had taken her fifteen minutes to dress and make it downstairs to the garage. Kara left to study and she was left having to handle a situation Jess wouldn’t go into much detail about. It was standard protocol the CEO be informed of all security breaches immediately. What wasn’t part of the protocol was the necessity for Lena to be there. That’s what they had a head of security for.

Lena’s SUV zipped through the city with ease now that she knew a few side roads to take in order to avoid traffic. There were three local PD cruisers parked out front of LuthorCorp; lights flashing, sirens off. The security guard stationed by the front doors helped her inside and had Jess notified that Lena had finally arrived.

Stepping off the elevator Lena looked around at all the bodies moving around. Some were taking notes, others were set up with laptops typing away. Making eye contact with her assistant, “What’s
going on,” Lena inquired.

Jess kept her voice low with there be so many ears around to hear their conversation. “Someone hacked into the company’s servers an hour or so ago.”

Lena’s expression shifted from confusion to affronted. “That’s impossible. I reworked the system myself when I moved to the city.”

Lena handed her purse over to her assistant, asking to speak to whoever was in charge.

“I’m Detective Solis, I’m in charge here,” a man’s voice boomed from across the room. They obviously weren’t as quiet as they thought.

Lena went into full Luthor mode. Steeling her expression, she made her way over to the man prepared to hear how her being a woman meant she was inferior or some other misogynistic bull he would come up with.

The man couldn’t have been more than a few years older than Lena, but he wore the years of his stressful job poorly in his features. His hair was slicked back with what had to be half a jar of gel with an ill-fitting suit draped over his frame. He was hunched over a table glancing between multiple computer screens.

“Would someone care to explain to me what’s going on here,” Lena questioned, voice calm but stern.

“And you are,” the detective replied, drawling out the question.

Lena cut her eyes at the man without answering. “What exactly has happened to warrant all of this,” she reiterated, gesturing to the whole of the foyer of the top floor.

With a smugness to his tone, “The company’s system was accessed from an unapproved terminal which triggered part of the company’s security measures. We’re working now to find out where the signal originated from.”

He was speaking to Lena as if she had no clue what any of what he said would make sense to her. Little did he know, from the looks of it, she knew more than him apparently. Smoothing out a wrinkle from her dress that wasn’t even there, Lena turned around in search of Jess.

When the woman was in her line of sight she waved her over. “Do we know what’s been taken, if anything?”

It wasn’t the young woman to answer her question, though she looked ready to. “From what we’ve been able to gather, it was just one folder. It did contain several project schematics and notes though,” the detective answered.

Lena had to fight the urge to cringe hearing the man’s voice. Without addressing the detective, Lena requested everyone leave her office except Jess. Detective Solis had refused at first but came around when Jess stepped in. She suggested everyone in the office just set up in the lobby area for the time being.

Lena sat at her desk and began hunting. Searching access logs and the like, she needed to be sure it wasn’t the folder she was thinking of. Ten minutes later, with Jess standing guard at her side the whole time, Lena found it.

“Was this what they found?”
Jess looked over the screen confirming what Lena hadn’t wanted to hear. Whoever hacked their system had access to a folder containing all of Lex’s projects. Lena had looked over it once, but, that was nearly a year ago. When she had skimmed through it there was nothing good to be found inside.

More than anything, Lena wanted to believe that it was a collection of work Lex didn’t want to see created. One of her biggest concerns was the folder labeled ‘K’. That was it. It was mostly a collection of notes on how a substance affected an unknown being, and not in a good way. It was a journal of sorts how it read. Then there were schematics for a type of suit and a gun that supposedly could injure any alien that found themselves at the end of its barrel. Needless to say, this was the last thing she wanted being discovered.

Lena called the detective into her office informing him that they could handle things from there. She was sure to mention how appreciative she was for their assistance and he would have to forgive her for wasting their time.

“No offense sweetheart, but you don’t have that kind of authority.”

Jess stiffened in place afraid for what Lena was going to say next.

Lena slowly stood from behind her desk staring the detective down. Lacing her fingers together, she let her clasped hands fall to her thighs as she took a steadying breath.

“I don’t have my glasses with me, could you read the name outside that door you just walked through for me?”

The greasy haired man gave her a weird expression but read off the name anyway.

Lena silently waited for the detective to figure out why she made such a random request.

“She’s Lena Luthor,” Jess explained, unable to take the awkward silence a second longer.

Fumbling with his tie, the detective profusely apologized for his behavior. “I didn’t know. I just thought you were someone they sent in to handle the alert.”

There was a devilish smirk curling the corners of Lena’s mouth as she watched this man backtrack everything he had previously said and done. This was one part of her job she enjoyed. Watching men and women cower before her once they realized the power she wielded in most circles. This was her home arena and she was playing a game she had been taught to win since her preteen years. There was no way she’d lose to someone like him. A pompous ass that threw his title around for the hell of it and evidently lacked a basic level of respect for women.

“Since I am the head of this company I do have the authority to call off any further investigation. You’ve done your job and you’re free to go.” Before the man was out of her sight, “And leave your full name, badge number, and precinct with my assistant before you leave,” she added with a smile.

Jess followed the man out closing Lena’s door behind her. This was one of those times she was thankful to have Jess around. The woman had proven to be an invaluable asset yet again, so Lena made a note for herself to give the woman a raise when this was over.

Lena spent the next hour going over how somehow had managed to gain access to LuthorCorp’s servers, and remotely at that. Whoever it was, they couldn’t have tried and got in on their first attempt. This had to be the result of weeks of work, finding any and all weaknesses they could along the way that they could exploit.
In order to not focus on what she was about to do, Kara had filled all of her time studying for her three midterms in the coming week. It did the trick until the sun set behind a few of the buildings downtown. She tried calling Eliza a couple of times, but her phone kept going straight to voicemail. She even called Alex who didn’t answer her call either.

Unable to get in contact with anyone, Kara went out for a Supergirl patrol around seven. Breaking up a drunken fight in the park and preventing a couple car crashes managed to kill an hour of her time. It had been easy work, something she was thanking Rao for with what she was about to do.

Eight o’clock on the dot Kara landed outside the abandoned warehouse Lex had mentioned. Glass was broken out of quite a few of the windows and a few of the entrances had been boarded up.

<8:01pm; UNKNOWN> Head inside. Take the first flight of stairs down until you reach a solid yellow door.

The message appeared and was gone seconds later. Kara made sure no one was around to see her before she entered the building. Tearing down the wooden panels securing the door, Kara cautiously walked inside. Glass crunched beneath her feet, screws and other hardware rattled around as she unintentionally kicked them out of the way. It was quiet, a little too quiet.

Locating the staircase off to her left, Kara switched her headband into helmet mode just in case. There was no telling what Lex had her walking into.

The flights of stairs felt like they went on forever. From the outside, this building did not look like there were ten floors hidden beneath it; maybe that was the point. The yellow door Lex must have wanted her to find was just before the twelfth flight of stairs.

Kara used her x-ray vision but couldn’t see a thing on the other side. Of course this door was lined with lead. Anything else would have been too easy.

Depressing the handle, Kara stood off to the side as she slowly pushed the door open. Thankfully, nothing happened. Then Kara started to wonder if she was being paranoid. As quick as the thought came, it was gone again. The door slammed shut behind her and every light in the room flickered to life.

There were two giant sets of flood lights set up beside what appeared to be cages. Kara had to blink away the white spots in her eyes to be sure of what she was seeing. Holding up a hand to block the light, Kara confirmed what she thought she saw. There were two decent sized cages and there were people inside them.

Kara took two steps when a voice rang out. “Not another step Supergirl. Unless you want to kill them, then by all means keep going.”

Kara’s feet stuttered to a halt.

Emerging from the shadows across the room was Lex, oddly enough dressed in a black suit. Unusual attire for a man who should be in a prison jumper.

“What do you want Lex,” Kara shouted. “Let these people go and we can discuss things ourselves. There’s no need to involve innocent people in whatever this is.”
Lex had sat down in a chair positioned between the two oversized cages, directly in front of her. Crossing his legs at the knee, Lex pointed to his right; Kara’s left. With a quick glance in that direction, Kara saw what looked to be an unidentified woman curled up inside the cage, unconscious.

Looking between the two cages, “Take a closer look,” Lex instructed.

Kara took a few more tentative steps forward but still couldn’t see it. She could practically reach through the bars when she noticed. Racing forward the last few steps, Kara grabbed the bars to rip them apart. As her fingers connected with the bars she was met with a high voltage shock that knocked her backwards a step.

“Electrifying isn’t it,” Lex joked, arrogant expression never faltering.


There was movement in the cage to her right. She was mentally kicking herself for not noticing it at the door. The haircut, the hair color; it was her sister. Alex wasn’t in the cage alone, Eliza was in there with her.

Lex spoke again as Kara walked over to the cage with her sister and adoptive mother. “I needed to ensure your compliance moving forward. That shock you just felt was a warning for you, but it would kill a human. I suggest you do as I ask, and everyone can leave here alive.” After a beat of silence, “It’s really that simple.”

There was a groan off to her left and she looked over. It was the last person she was expecting to be in this situation.

Lena had sat up, rubbing the side of her head. “Your own sister,” Kara hissed.

“There’s a special interest for you there too,” Lex replied, reminding Kara that he was aware of more than just the secret she was keeping. “See, I knew Ms. Danvers would beg you not to do as I ask, but you’re close to her.”

Alex and Lena were both fully conscious, looking between Lex and Supergirl, wondering how they wound up in their current predicament.

“Which brings me to Mrs. Danvers. No need in explaining that. But Lena…” Lex left it at that with a smile that made Kara want to knock it right off his face.

“Supergirl,” Alex mumbled. “Whatever he wants you to do, you can’t do it.”

Lex raised a hand towards the redhead. “I do enjoy it when I’m right.”

Alex sneered at the bald man before focusing her attention back on her sister. “Supergirl, I’m serious. Don’t do it.”

Kara took a few steps back looking between both cages. If she didn’t do as he asked, Lex would hurt them somehow. She was out of moves and she didn’t even know what he wanted from her.

With a defeated expression, Kara looked at Lena who was staring back at her. Then she looked over to her sister as she tended to their mother.

“Lex why are you doing this,” Lena questioned with an indifferent look about her. "Better yet, how did you escape prison again?”
Lex ignored her questions and continued to watch for how Kara was going to respond to her family and Lena being trapped.

Realizing her brother wasn’t about to answer her, Lena stood up and walked towards the bars of her cage. “Alex, are you—”

Lena was a step away from the bars when Kara shouted out for her to stop. “Lena! Don’t touch those,” Kara yelled using her super speed to get to the woman before she electrocuted herself. She was just in the nick of time.

Restraining her strength to shove the woman backwards, Kara managed to keep the brunette from accidentally killing herself but it came with a price. Kara cried out in pain as her arm grazed the bars on the way back out. Stumbling backwards, Kara held her arm close to her chest. Lena was sat on the ground in front of her asking if she was alright but all she could hear was the derisive laughter from the older Luthor.

Using her speed once again Kara shot off to get her hands on Lex. As soon as he saw her move he pulled a remote out of his pocket, holding it for her to see. Kara stopped mid-sprint examining the small remote.

“You didn’t think I’d leave myself so exposed, did you?” Lex stood up from his chair and tapped the air in front of him. He was safe behind a particle barrier of some kind that was invisible to even her eyes. The remote must switch it on and off, Kara thought to herself.

She snarled in anger, banging her fists against the shield. No matter how hard she punched or how many times she hit the barrier, it had no effect.

Panting in frustration Kara turned to her sister to try to calm herself down.

Returning to his seat, “You have a choice,” Lex stated.

Kara turned only her head to look at the Luthor. “What do you mean, I have a choice.”

It was Alex that spoke up. With a solemn tone, the redhead answered what she thought to be an obvious demand. “He wants you to choose who you’ll save. Us or Lena.”

Kara’s head snapped back round, disbelief clear in her eyes. “No, no I can’t do that,” Kara firmly whispered. Spinning around, tears brimming in her eyes, “You really expect me to make that choice. Even if it meant you had to kill your own sister?”

“If you don’t do as I ask, then yes.” There was a brief moment that Kara doubted that he would see such a deed through. There was something she saw in the way his eyes flicked to the brunette when he thought Kara wasn’t looking.

“You haven’t even asked me to do anything yet,” Kara responded.

Lex laughed to himself, not realizing he had skipped that part.

Looking off towards the back of the room, Lex pointed out something else she missed after coming in. There was some type of helmet stationed atop a medium length metal table. It reminded her of all of the tables in the med bay at the DEO.

“What am I supposed to do with that,” Kara wondered.

“Well,” he began, jutting his chin in the direction of the device, “I need you to use your heat vision.”
Kara looked at him as to say, ‘that’s it,’ and walked over to the table. If it meant keeping Eliza, Alex, and Lena safe, she’d do this one, simple thing.

“Until you solar flare,” Lex clarified, expression deadpanned.

Alex began to protest, reminding Kara there was nothing good that could come from this. There was a contained level of concern she picked up on but ignored.

“Why do I need to do that?”

Lex spread is hands then interlaced them again on his knee. “The energy you can generate from a flare is what I need. That’s all you need to know.”

Kara straightened her stature, making herself as big as she could. “And if I refuse?”

“You get to choose who I kill,” Lex answered matter-of-factly.

Kara was weighing her options in her mind. On one hand she could do as Lex asked, it was just a flare. But that would leave her vulnerable should he not keep his word. If she didn’t comply with his only request she would either lose her mother and sister or her new girlfriend.

“You’re taking too long,” Lex calmly called out. Letting the shield down, Lex walked beside his sister and pulled a gun from from it's holster on the back of his waistband. Waving the handgun around, “Maybe you need a little motivation,” he suggested, the gun now pointed at Lena’s head.

The brunette stood, shell-shocked. She couldn’t believe that her brother would ever hold a gun to her head, let alone threaten to kill her. How had they gotten to this point, she thought to herself.

“Lena, Lena look at me,” Kara shouted. The woman was unmoving for a time, but she eventually looked at her. Taking her own helmet off, “Everything’s going to be alright,” Kara said, attempting to reassure the young woman now in harm’s way.

Lena’s voice was so low, she wouldn’t have been able to hear her if it weren’t for her super hearing. “You don’t know that.”

Lena looked at her brother with a wounded expression. She pleaded for the man to spare the other two women. She did her best to convince him not to harm Supergirl, with no luck. Seeing the way his sister cared more for the Kryptonian’s life than he was expecting only seemed to piss him off.

Lex clicked off the safety, then racked a round into the chamber of the gun.

Eliza had finally come to and not a moment too soon. Kara could hear the two women whispering but kept her attention on Lena. “Lex, put the gun down. I’ll do it, alright– just– put the gun down. Please!”

“What the Super begs,” Lex quipped. “Who would have thought.”

Kara slid the helmet onto her head and moved the visor into place in front of her eyes. She let her anger wash over her and shot those lethal red beams from her distressed blue eyes.

Lex had won. He got what he wanted and barely lifted a finger in the process. With all the abilities this planet exposed her to, Kara was powerless in this moment. Even if Lex hadn’t trained a gun to his sister’s head she would have made the decision. Solar flaring was a small price to pay to ensure everyone’s safety. Even if it meant risking her own in the process.
With the flash of a reddish orange light, Kara fell weak to her knees. She had exhausted herself and rendered her powers useless. It was done. Kara shoved the helmet off her head then looked up to Lex not having moved an inch.

“I did what you wanted, now let them go,” Kara panted out.

Lex was slowly strolling towards her. Crouching down on his haunches, Lex tilted her head up with the barrel of the gun. One second he was examining her face the next a shot rang out in the room.

The pistol was so close to her face, all Kara could hear was a high-pitched ringing in her ears. She couldn’t feel it at first but there was a warmth spreading through her shoulder. She looked at the man with a stunned expression then looked down at her chest.

The blood from the gunshot was spilling over the gold emblazoned crest of the House of El. Looking back and forth again between Lex and the sight of her own blood the shock was wearing off. The pain she was feeling was dulled by her adrenaline kicking in to keep her alive.

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Lex clasped a hand to Kara’s shoulder, shoving his thumb into the wound. The pain lanced through her entire body in seconds. He didn’t let up until Kara’s screams became hoarse groans. She could see his mouth moving but couldn’t hear anything over the ringing in her ears and sound of her own erratic heartbeat.

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It didn’t take much for Lex to push her over, causing her to fall on her wounded shoulder. Grasping onto her own arm, Kara looked towards the women trapped inside the cages. They were all screaming something, she could tell that much. It even looked like Lena was crying. Even as her consciousness was slipping away from her Kara hoped the three of them wouldn’t touch their cages.

It was bad enough Lex had shot her in the shoulder. She wouldn’t be able to handle it if they still got hurt. She watched as Lex picked up the helmet she just had on and left the room. They were alone, and Kara could barely move.

She rolled to her back to get some of the pressure off her shoulder when she began to lose consciousness. Her head rolled to the side with the last thing she saw being Alex and Lena both fighting to get out of their confinement. Whether from the pain or blood loss, it didn’t matter at this point, Kara slipped into the darkness despite her efforts to stay away just a moment longer. Someone had to come. Someone had to save her family…

Chapter End Notes

What a cliffhanger!!! There was some fluffy SuperCorp, then SuperCorp becoming official, that damn Lex and all his shenanigans... I actually enjoyed reading over this chapter to edit it. It was cute, it was kinda angsty, there was some suspense; there was a lot lol.

Holler at me in the comments or over on Tumblr and let me know what you thought of the chapter. I’ve already started next week’s chapter and :D... that’s all I’m going to say.
Until next time...
Chapter 17

Chapter Summary

The answer to that tense cliffhanger with 75% SuperCorp.

Chapter Notes

Sit back and let your mind roam free...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Supergirl! Supergirl you have to get up!”

“Lex you bastard! Get back here. You can’t just leave us in here—Alexander!”

Kara was unconscious on the floor across the room and they were trapped. Lex had essentially left them to die and Alex was thinking of any way possible to get free. The men that grabbed her were thorough. She was halfway to Maggie’s precinct when some jackass cut her off.

At the time, it just seemed like any other time she had been cut off while riding her motorcycle; some drivers had a tendency of not looking for a motor bike on the streets. When she came to a screeching halt, a white van swooped up beside her and she was being lifted off her bike. It all happened so fast she barely had a second to fight back.

One of the men jumped out and hopped on her bike, riding it off in the opposite direction. They took her gun and other weapons stashed on her person. Even her belt for some reason.

There was no lock to the cage door and Alex was exhausting every option she came up with for an escape. Lena had gone quiet, presumably doing the same thing she was. Lex was long gone by now, so they had to fend for themselves.

“Anything,” Alex heard Lena ask.

Looking over at her mother as she spoke, “Nothing. You,” Alex replied.

“Not that I can see. They took my heels and earrings so I have nothing of use. If there was a lock I could use my underwire but from the looks of it, its magnetic.”

Eliza was knelt down near the edge of the cage she shared with her eldest daughter, watching her youngest bleed out a little more every minute.

“We need to get to her Alex,” Eliza whispered only loud enough for the redhead to hear.

Alex’s voice was no louder than her mother’s. “I know. I’m trying.”

The two young women bounced idea after idea off of each other with nothing panning out. Ten minutes had come and gone. Kara didn’t have a lot time if they wanted to save her.
“Is she going to be all right,” Lena asked after a despondent moment of silence. She had been staring at the fallen heroine, crestfallen at the sight.

It’s a good thing she doesn’t know that’s Kara.

Alex stared at her sister, hoping her words would not only convince Lena, but herself as well. “She’s strong,” she began slowly. “She’s a fighter, but she needs us to do our part and get out of here. There has to be some way for us to get out of here.”

There could have been smoke billowing from her ears with how hard she was thinking. Alex was beginning to lose hope when a crashing sound rang through the room and a door was being blasted in their general direction; bits of the wall along with it. Alex crouched down to protect Eliza from the debris that flew through their enclosure.

When Alex turned back around Kara was gone. She nearly slipped up and shouted Kara’s name. “Where did she go,” Alex yelled to no one in particular.

“I couldn’t see anything,” Lena answered.

There was a stifled yelp of surprise that drew Alex’s attention away from the vacant spot her sister’s body was in. There was a woman stood in front of Lena’s cage with her hand wrapped around the woman’s throat. The Luthor’s feet dangling about two feet off the ground.

“Hey,” Alex hollered. “Let her go!”

The woman slowly turned her head to look at Alex, stopping her in her tracks. There was an anger in the woman’s eyes she had never seen before. There was so much pain, but why?

“Why should she live? A Luthor,” the woman added, face twisted into a scowl.

There was a quick flash of red in the woman’s eyes and Alex knew she had to act quickly. “I totally get where you’re coming from with the Luthor thing, but she’s not her family. Her brother’s the one that put us in here,” Alex pointed out.

She never thought she’d be defending a Luthor, but Kara was right. Lena wasn’t like her family. In fact, she was shaping up to be just as much a victim to her family as the rest of National City, and here she was being punished like the accused.

Alex could hear Lena trying to say something around the pressure pressing down on her throat. She couldn’t make out a word of it but the woman choking her apparently could. She dropped Lena before prying the bars to her cage open. It wasn’t much, but it was wide enough for the brunette to get out.

“Who are you,” Eliza spoke up, with Lena coughing loudly in the background.

“My name is not important right now human. Tell me where I must take Supergirl,” the woman commanded.

Alex took a wary step backwards as the woman strolled over to their cage with a surly look about her. Watching what happened to Lena was all the lesson she needed.

Lena was still coughing attempting to catch her breath, so Alex felt safe enough to speak her next words. “You have to get her to the DEO. I can show you where it is.”

The woman used her strength again and yanked bars off of their cage. Alex felt a firm grasp on her
hips and then everything was a blur, until it wasn’t. The night’s cool breeze tickled at her exposed skin. She didn’t realize just how clammy that basement level was until she was breathing fresh air again. Her eyes hadn’t quite adjusted to the sudden darkness either.

She was just getting her bearings when the woman lifted her to her feet from her spot on the ground.

“Where is this DEO you speak of?”

The woman’s face was all stern lines and flat expressions. She went from rage to indifference in seconds but that wasn’t as surprising as her ability to fly.

“You can fly. You have superhuman strength. And I’m guessing that was heat vision you were about to use on Lena. You’re Kryptonian aren’t you,” Alex cleverly deduced.

“If Supergirl is precious to you you’ll quit wasting my time with your questions.”

Alex saw it in the woman’s eyes. There was feeling behind that fury she barely contained in that room. Being able to read people was one of the things she appreciated the most from her DEO training.

With her head tilted to the side, “She means something to you too. I can tell.”

The woman’s face seemed to soften at that but only for a brief moment.

“Fine, I’ll show you but—”

Alex was whisked off yet again, this time landing on a rooftop beside her sister. “You’ve gotta stop doing that,” she requested, cutting her eyes at the alien woman. She hastily checked to make sure the blonde was still breathing. Her breathes were short and pulse thready, but they were there. Kara was still alive. Ripping off a part of her shirt, Alex pressed the cloth to the wound to stanch some of the bleeding.

The mysterious woman picked up both her and Kara and floated into the air. Alex instructed the woman to fly as fast as she could and not to stop until they made it to the DEO. Alex was gently placed down on the roof of the headquarters a matter of seconds later.

“Thank you,” Alex acknowledged, voice barely above a whisper.

“Astra,” the woman said before flying off to who knows where.

It was a weird way to say, ‘you’re welcome’, Alex thought, so it had to have been the woman’s name. Alex rushed to get inside to grab a few agents and a gurney hoping beyond measure the woman got them there in time.

Storming onto the roof, “What happened,” J’onn inquired, trying to contain his own panic at the sight of Kara.

Without looking at the Director, “It’s a long story,” Alex offered as an explanation that would have to do for now. “I need to get her to the med bay if I’ll have any chance of saving her. She’s lost way too much blood already.”

Alex pushed past the Martian with one singular goal in mind; she had to save her sister. Having J’onn hover wouldn’t make it any easier. The gun shot was thankfully a through and through so she wouldn’t have to go digging around to find the bullet. Stopping the bleeding was her first priority. Once Kara was stable she could then be moved under the sun laps to regain her strength. She was in
for a long night.

Before focusing her full attention on the task at hand, “Vasquez, I need you to inform the Director that there needs to be a team sent out to the abandon warehouse on 41st street. My mother and Lena Luthor are still there.”

It seemed like the agent wanted to ask her a string of questions, starting with how she got back, but the young woman nodded and jogged back out of the room.

———

It had been a few days since her brother had her drugged and kidnapped in her office at LuthorCorp. The same passage of time since she watched Supergirl rendered powerless then shot before her eyes. By some miracle she hadn’t heard from Kara since she left her apartment last weekend. That may be for the best right now, Lena thought. It was understandable with Kara’s mother and sister both being held in a cage only twenty feet from her own.

A situation she still couldn’t fathom the reasoning behind. She hadn’t the slightest clue but there was a random thought that crossed her mind. It came to her once or twice before, but it seemed foolish. There was no way Kara and Supergirl were the same person... Right?

The night air was chilly against her skin causing her to shudder with every whistle of the autumn wind. Staring out across the city, Lena called out for Supergirl as she had done the past few nights. She needed to know the heroine was ok. Some sign she was still alive. Five minutes turned to twenty that tumbled on to an hour. Frozen to her core, Lena went inside, closing her balcony door behind her. As she prepared a cup of tea, a dark shadow was cast against the far wall.

Startled, Lena hesitated, mentally going over every weapon within an arm’s reach. The silhouette was unmoving then there was a cape flapping idly to the side. Turning her head to look back at her balcony, Lena’s heart rate lulled at the sight of Supergirl being the one stood outside.

This was what she wanted. Her concerns were answered but new questions arose. Did Supergirl hate her for what her brother did? She never knew the heroine to take a life, but maybe she’d be the Kryptonian’s first.

“Come in,” Lena said, voice steady despite her nerves and crowded thoughts.

Supergirl gingerly entered the apartment, keeping a safe distance between them as she looked around.

“Is everything alright? I heard you calling my name.”

Lena hadn’t planned out what would happen if Supergirl actually showed up. She had no idea what to say.

After a round of unintentional silence, “I just needed to know you were ok. That Lex hadn’t…” Her voice trailed off lacking the strength to finish that sentence.

“That he hadn’t killed me,” the heroine finished in too composed a tone.

Lena watched as the woman took a few steps forward, then stopped again.
“I wasn’t sure you’d come.”

“Why wouldn’t I?”

Lena’s head snapped up. “You know why,” she firmly answered.

Taking a few more steps forward, “I know it wasn’t your fault Lena. I don’t blame you.”

Lena shook her head. “Kara’s mother and sister were both there… He could have killed any of you…”

“Are you forgetting that you were there too? You’re allowed to be upset you know.”

There it was. It was entirely possible her outlandish thought earlier had been right.

Lena walked around the island in her kitchen, resting her hip against the edge of it. Crossing her arms under her chest, Lena studied the heroine in front of her.

“What I haven’t been able to figure out is why he chose Alex and Mrs. Danvers.”

Supergirl gave her a vexed look. She was either playing dumb or had no idea why her brother chose the two women either; perhaps a combination of the two.

“It’s especially peculiar when I know you’re friends with Kara. Why not trap her in that cage instead her mother for example?” Supergirl rested her fists on her hips at that but her face gave nothing more away. With a curious tone, the lilt of her accent peeking through, “Then Lex said there was a special interest for you when he looked at me. Why is that?”

Supergirl didn’t answer her question at first.

“It sounds like you already have an answer.” The Kryptonian took two more steps forward, positioning herself at arm’s length from the brunette.

“I was ambivalent to start but I’ve had a few days to think on it.” Lena stared into the woman’s steadfast blue eyes before continuing. “We both know Kara. We know how insanely supportive she is of the people she cares about.”

Supergirl nodded in agreement.

“I’ve never had anyone in my life remotely close to Kara. So you see, to now have two women in my life that believe in me to such a degree, in spite of my last name, I should have known it was too good to be true. There’s no way I’m that lucky considering most people wouldn’t touch a Luthor with a ten-foot pole.”

Supergirl’s features were steadfast. Not even a stuttered breath giving her away.

“Kara is this brilliant and beautiful woman,” Lena confessed with heartfelt eyes. “One I would have never imagined would give me the time of day.”

After a brief pause, Lena’s lips began to curl at the edges as she went on. “She makes these cute little mistakes messing up common phrases and idioms. Every now and then she disappears with a poor excuse that I let her think I believe. She once showed up for lunch, her hair smelling like smoke. Little things you see,” she mentioned with a slight gesture of her hand.

Lena waited to see if the Kryptonian would clue her in if she was on the right track, still nothing. If she were right, Supergirl would have stopped her by now, or, playing along was an attempt to throw
her off.

She should be nervous with such a strong and capable alien stood in front of her. One that nearly died only days ago. One that could kill her and not even break a sweat. And yet, there was a sense of tranquility that washed over her. One she only felt in Kara’s presence.

“Then Saturday night you took off your helmet.” Lena reached up and rested her hands on the sides of Supergirl’s helmet. Gradually lifting it from the heroine’s head, “And I noticed something. When Lex had the gun pointed at me, you looked at me in a way I’ve only seen from one woman.”

Lena sat the helmet down on the counter beside her. “That morning, I got a good look at Kara without her glasses. I couldn’t help but wonder why there was something else familiar about her.” Lena cast a scrutinizing eye over the Kryptonian. The haircut, the amiable blue eyes, the way both women treated her. The cat was out of the bag, so to speak.

Lena rested a tender hand to the Kryptonian’s cheek, swiping her thumb back and forth over her cheekbone. “Why didn’t you just tell me?”

There was the hitch she was look for. Kara’s breath was caught in her throat and her stoic appearance faltered for a fraction of a second. That was all the confirmation she needed.

With the expelling of a deep breath, “I wanted to tell you, but I also wanted to keep you safe. If people found out you knew my real identity they’d try to get to me through you,” Kara admitted, if a bit shamefaced.

“That’s why Lex chose me. He already knew.” It was meant to be more of a question, but there was no need in asking a question she already knew the answer to. Kara nodded, confirming it anyway.

“There’s actually a story behind how he knows.”

After dropping her hand, “Not tonight. I think you being Supergirl is enough for one night.”

Kara reached out to hold Lena at the waist, but the woman took a step away from her. There was a halting hand gently being pressed to the center of the blonde’s chest. A wounded expression passed over Kara’s face. “Are you mad at me?”

“No, I’m upset because of what you did,” Lena replied in a colorless tone. Meeting the blonde’s watering gaze, “I understand you were doing it to protect me and you see how that turned out. I just — I need some time if that’s alright.”

Kara took a step back of her own. “For how long?” Her voice was small and defeated. She wasn’t expecting Lena to react this way to finding out she was Supergirl.

“Were you even going to tell me Kara?”

“Yes,” Kara promptly answered. “I was going to tell you before you left for LuthorCorp that day. It was what I wanted to talk to you about.”

Lena inclined her head slowly meeting Kara’s eyes for a brief second.

“I apologize for lying to you,” Kara whispered.

“I’d be a hypocrite for holding this against you seeing as I did something very similar when we first met,” Lena said with a short, self-deprecating, chuckle. “I’m just surprised is all. And I hate being lied to.”
Kara reached for her helmet and Lena grabbed hold of her left hand. “I’m glad you’re alright Kara, truly.” Pulling the woman into a hug, “I know you’re probably thinking it, but I don’t hate you... I could never hate you.”

Kara hugged her a bit tighter before letting go. “Call me when you’re ready,” she said, placing a feather light kiss to Lena’s forehead.

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Kara had only been out patrolling for a couple of hours when she heard Lena calling out her name again; this time her actual name. Flying as fast as she could Kara touched down on Lena’s balcony within seconds, but Lena wasn’t outside. Testing the door to the balcony, she found it was open.

“Lena, it’s me,” Kara called out.

“I’m in my room,” she heard Lena say thanks to her super hearing.

When she opened the bedroom door, Lena was sat up in her bed, fiddling with her hands. A habit Kara now knew was something the woman only did when she was nervous.

“I might have reacted incorrectly earlier,” Lena began with a breathy voice. “You weren’t intentionally lying to me and I’m sorry if I made it seem that way. It was your secret to share and you were Supergirl long before you met me.”

After a moment’s hesitation, “Similar to what you told me when you found out my name wasn’t Katie. I was trying to protect myself when I lied but you, you withheld the truth to protect me. Being only Kara with me quite possibly was your version of normal. For me, it was not being a Luthor for a time. I say all this to say, I get it.”

Lena ran her hands through her hair, sighing once she finished saying all that she had rehearsed before calling her. “I just couldn’t go to bed knowing I hurt you because of my behavior.”

“Thank you for your apology. I was sure that you wouldn’t want anything more to do with me.”

“Kara, you’d have to do something far worse to get rid of me. You’re the best thing that’s happened to me in a long time.”

Kara gave her a reassuring smile then flew over and sat down on the bed beside her.

“Are you done with your patrol for the night?”

“I wasn’t even supposed to be out there, so, yea,” Kara mumbled through a laugh.

“Kara,” Lena gasped in a disapproving tone.

“What,” Kara beamed. “I hate sitting around while everyone else is out risking their lives.”

“I think my brother has proven that you’re not invincible Kara. You need to take it easy.” When it looked like the blonde was ready to refuse, “For me,” Lena pleaded. “I can’t watch that happen to you again.”

Pulling the brunette into her side, “Ok,” she agreed. “I’ll take it easy, but I won’t let others get hurt in my name.”

“I guess that’s as close to a full yes as I’m going to get.”
“Pretty much,” Kara giggled. “If you still want space I can stay until you fall asleep,” Kara suggested, not forgetting the woman’s prior request.

“I’d like that,” Lena replied. As she snuggled into the warm woman beside her Lena felt the need to continue with her honesty. “You scared me.”

Lena heard a hum of confusion from her girlfriend that she knew was paired with a furrowing of eyebrows. “I thought you were dead and there was nothing I could do but watch. It’s entirely possible a part of me already knew you were Supergirl which is why it hurt so much to see you in pain.”

Kara held her a bit tighter, but never said a word. The blonde leaned back, giving Lena enough space to better cuddle into her side. She was rubbing circles into the brunette’s back when she heard the slowing of her breath. It was almost midnight and Lena had to be up early the next day. It was no wonder she fell asleep so fast.

She kept her word and left Lena’s apartment once she was sure her girlfriend was asleep. She didn’t like it, but she would respect Lena’s wishes. Lena had every right to feel the way she did, Kara was just glad it didn’t mean the end to their relationship. If space was what Lena needed right now, she’d give her that much. Lena wanting to see her one last time before bed to apologize was a good sign.

——

It was another two days before Kara heard from Lena. She was at a bar with Alex, sulking, when she got the call. Lena wanted her to come over for a night in; dinner and a movie. After their past few outings, the brunette wanted to avoid the paparazzi for one evening.

Perking up, Kara rushed back to her place to shower and change then flew over to Lena’s not wasting any time.

Opening the unlocked balcony door, Kara announced herself upon entry. It was perfect timing as Lena was just coming up the hall.

With a dopey grin on her face, “I really missed you,” Kara admitted still standing by the glass door.

“I missed you too, which is why I ordered way too much food that I know you love.”

Kara was practically bouncing in place which drew a subtle laugh from the other woman.

“Is it ok if I hug you,” Kara sheepishly asked.

Lena gave her an enthusiastic nod and Kara had to pace herself so she wouldn’t knock the woman over. The brunette’s grip was tight around her neck but Kara didn’t mind.

“I really, really missed you,” Kara mumbled into Lena’s neck causing the woman to squirm in her arms.

Kara pulled back just enough to see her girlfriend’s face. She didn’t miss the way green eyes were focusing on her lips. With a surge of confidence Kara pressed her lips against Lena’s soft ones, tilting her head the side. Lena pressed herself firmly against Kara, igniting a fire in the base of her stomach. They were both lost in the push and pull of the other’s lips.
Lena deepened their kiss after a moan escaped her lips. The sound brought Kara back to their first kiss; she couldn’t wipe the resulting smile off her face.

Slowly walking Lena backwards, Kara lifted her girlfriend onto the countertop keeping her hands firmly grasped to the woman’s hips. Lena pulled back to take a breath and Kara chased after her lips, desperate for more. Her tongue slid against Lena’s bottom lip, probing for entry. Kara’s silent request was answered with Lena’s tongue gliding against her own, urging her to explore new territory.

There were so many pent-up emotions between the two what was originally meant to be a simple kiss turned into a heated make out session. Lena’s hands were clasped at the sides of her neck while Kara’s were firmly pressed to the small of Lena’s back and gripping at her thigh.

Lena pulled back once more and Kara slowly began to kiss a line down her jawline to her neck, stopping just below her ear.

Lena’s moans turned into a grunt of frustration when Kara stopped. Resting her head on the woman’s shoulder, “That was...”

“Amazing,” Kara finished, not even a little out of breath.

“I was going for unexpected, but yes, that too.”

Breaking through the sound of their joined laughter Kara’s stomach growled not having forgotten about the food previously mentioned.

Heavily breathing in an effort to recapture her breath, Lena laughed again at the noise as she picked her head up from the blonde’s arm.

“Sorry,” Kara apologized with blushing cheeks.

“It’s quite alright darling,” Lena responded, causing Kara’s blush to deepen. She still wasn’t used to the term of endearment. Especially not when her girlfriend’s accent accompanied the term like it just did.

Lifting Lena off the countertop, Kara pulled the brunette behind her to the couch where the food sat on the coffee table.

Sliding a hand over the back of her neck, “Sorry I didn’t ask first. The way you were looking at me on top of—”

“You don’t have to apologize,” Lena cut in. “You don’t have to ask me every time, especially if it’s like that, but I appreciate the gesture,” Lena shamelessly admitted.

Kara pulled her girlfriend in for another quick kiss before digging into the smorgasbord of food spread out. They spent another ten minutes discussing how Lena had never seen any of the Disney princess movies – ‘Not even Cinderella, Lena? Everyone’s at least seen that one!’ – before watching just that.

One movie turned into two with Lena falling asleep halfway through the second. Even in her sleep filled daze, she wouldn’t let Kara leave for the night. Kara put Lena to bed then made herself comfortable for another night in the brunette’s apartment. Once again, Lena rubbed her surprisingly cold feet against her before they both drifted off.

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Kara woke in the middle of the night to an empty bed. Checking her surroundings, Lena wasn’t in the room at all. After a quick scan, she saw the brunette was nursing a cup of something in the kitchen.

With a quick peek at the stove’s clock she saw it was two in the morning. Rubbing the sleep from her eyes, “Couldn’t sleep,” Kara asked.

Lena was blankly staring down at her mug for a time before she got around to answering Kara’s question.

“Lex was the only one I had for so long. I knew father loved me but it always felt conditional. Mother I thought hated the very ground I walked on... but, she’s changing. I’d rather not get attached to who’s she’s becoming and wind up hurt in the end. Again,” Lena reluctantly added.

It sounded as though she were speaking to herself; like Kara wasn’t there at all. She could see that Lena didn’t need her to speak yet, she just needed someone to listen. Guiding her girlfriend over to the dining table, Kara waited for Lena to get out everything that was bothering her.

“To have him...” Lena harshly swallowed around the lump building in her throat. “The one person I trusted completely.” There was another moment of silence. “He knows you’re Supergirl and he used it to hurt us both. Lex knew about Kara Danvers’ connection to me and he used that against me. In true Luthor fashion he targeted my weakness.”

One solitary tear broke free, slowly trickling down her cheek. She didn’t want to cry but how could she not. Her brother, and only friend for years, had cut her to her core. It was a betrayal she thought only their parents were capable of; apparently not.

“It was my first day as a Luthor and Lex was stood at the door. I dreamt about that day. He was so happy to have a sister. He was the one that taught me to play chess,” she said, looking over at the set that was her birthday present. “He checked my closet for monsters. Motivated me to be the best I could be... He was my protector against anyone that ever tried to hurt me. Everything you’d expect from an older sibling, he did them and more.”

Lena looked deep into Kara’s eyes in search of an answer she knew she wouldn’t find. “How could he hate me too?”

Kara’s heart cracked with the way Lena was struggling to comprehend what happened to her. She had physically gone through an ordeal herself, but Lena’s emotional struggles were of a different league entirely.

Alex hadn’t threatened to kill her without even batting an eye. Hadn’t used her as a bargaining chip in some evil plan. Kara had seen a flash in the man’s eyes that day. It was enough to convince her that there may still be some of the Lex remaining Lena was talking about inside the man.

Kara reached out and held Lena’s hand in her own, giving it a comforting squeeze. “If I could answer that question for you I would,” Kara honestly answered.

“Can we go back to bed,” Lena requested, voice small and barely above a whisper.

Kara had no objections to the idea. She placed Lena’s cup in the sink before walking them back down the hall. She motioned for Lena to move in closer but the woman shook her head.

“If you hold me, I’ll cry,” Lena explained.

Lying face to face, Kara stared into Lena’s darkened green eyes and just waited. In case there was
more, she was ready to listen.

With an outstretched hand, “You never told me how your arm was doing,” Lena pointed out without touching the injured limb.

“Oh, Alex had to do a little doctoring but I’m ok,” she replied, completely downplaying the whole thing. “I spent most of Sunday and Monday under the sun lamps before Alex let me go back to my apartment. J’onn and Alex both grounded me so I wasn’t able to come when you were calling for Supergirl. I snuck out once Alex fell asleep the night I did.” She was unintentionally rambling. Talking about the consequences of Lex’s actions may not be the best thing right now, Kara thought.

“House arrest?”

“Extreme house arrest,” Kara elaborated in a disgruntled whisper. “My friends visited but I worked from my apartment and only left to take my midterms.”

“How did they go?”

Kara truthfully had no idea. She didn’t have time to properly prepare for all of them. Not to mention she was worried about Lena and if Lex would strike again while she was healing. Needless to say, she was justifiably distracted.

With a bit of nervous laughter, “I’ll let you know when I find out.” After a beat, “But that’s not important right now; you are.”

Shutting her eyes, letting out a shuttering breath, “I wasn’t the only one affected.”

“But you were affected differently.”

Lena didn’t respond to that. Admitting that right now, out loud, was more than she could handle; so she was avoiding it. In so many words, that was the very same thing she already mentioned to her girlfriend. But saying those very words meant that it happened and maybe Lex wasn’t the same man she once knew.

Lena held Kara in her arms until she was positive she could handle whatever may come when she shut her eyes. The weight of her girlfriend partially on top of her reminded her that she was wasn’t alone. She hadn’t lost the bubbly blonde at her brother’s hands. Kara listening to her without judgement, making sure she was ok, it was more than she felt she deserved but knew she needed.

Before her eyes shut for the night, Lena whispered out into the dark of the night. “Supergirl may be National City’s resident superhero, but Kara Danvers, you are my hero.”

Even though she knew Kara was still awake, she wasn’t expecting a response; nor did she want one. That’s not why she said it. Not everything needs a reply and that was one of those things. Sometimes things just needed to be said to put the information out there. With Kara, Lena’s goal was to always be as honest and forthcoming as possible. She knew what secrets, lies, and lack of communication could do to a relationship and she wanted that nowhere her and Kara.

It took a few more minutes before they both fell back to sleep. Lena was first but only because Kara wanted to make sure the brunette wouldn’t spend the night alone with only her thoughts for company.

Chapter End Notes
I wanna give everyone a heads up. For the next 2 or 3 weeks I'm going to be super busy but I still want to update once a week. The chapters may be late or shorter but I want to do my best to post something. That's actually why this chapter was a day early. If I didn't post it today it wouldn't be out until Friday. I'm also glad I was able to give you guys a conclusion to that cliffhanger last chapter on time lol (perfect timing).

With that out of the way, thanks so much for reading the chapter. I hope you enjoyed it! Comments/suggestions/constructive criticism, all of it is welcomed. Or just say hi, that's cool too haha.

From here, things will be getting lighter between Kara and Lena now that their big secrets are out of the way. We're not super close to the end of the story, but we're getting there. I've been thinking about expanding it with more of a focus on SuperCorp. If that's something y'all would be interested in let me know! Or if you have other ideas/something you want to see, don't be afraid to tell me. I like the input from you guys :)

Until next time (which, fingers-crossed, won't be too long)...
Chapter 18

It had been a couple of weeks since the incident. Kara and Lena were ok, but deep-down Kara could feel that something was off. Not with their relationship, but with Lena. She had been a bit more reserved; not as open when they were alone. Lena constantly assured her girlfriend that she was alright, but Kara could see right through it.

In a way, Lena was still trying to wrap her mind around what had happened to her, but it wasn’t enough. She needed to know why it happened. Why Lex threatened her life; toyed with it so easily. She was relieved that Kara had healed rather well, all things considered. She was grateful that the other Danvers women were doing alright as well. It had to be a family thing because they were all checking on her at random points of the day. What she hadn’t been expecting was how maternal Mrs. Danvers was towards her. They hadn’t spoken at length, but it was the small things. The random phone calls first thing in the morning, sending food via Kara when she had the chance; little things like that.

Far more shocking was Lillian’s behavior. It took a few days before Lena found the strength to fill her stepmother in on her kidnapping. When they spoke, the matriarch hadn’t interrupted her. Hadn’t even accused her of lying in the name of seeking attention. The woman even asked if there was anything she needed or anything she could do. She was… sympathetic, which was as startling as it sounds.

“Where’d you go?”

Lena was broken from her train of thought at the sound of her girlfriend’s soothing voice. “Sorry,” she answered with a small smile. “What were you saying?”

Kara rubbed Lena’s shoulder comfortingly before speaking. “I was asking what you wanted to do for your birthday. It is a week and half away.”

“Oh.” Lena didn’t have an answer. What she wanted to do was curl up on the couch with the world’s most supportive and best girlfriend ever and waste the day, but she had a feeling that wasn’t the answer Kara was looking for.

If she were in Kara’s position, she’d try using her birthday as a distraction. After the past few weeks
it was a logical assumption on Lena’s part.

Staring out of the café window, “Saturday we’re having a small party at the Children’s Hospital to give all the kids a chance to trick-or-treat. That’s all I really had in mind.”

“That sounds like fun,” Kara said in a bright voice. “But I was thinking more…day of.”

Lena briefly held the blonde’s gaze before returning to absentmindedly people watching. “I’ll be working but we could hand out candy to the children in my building, or yours, it doesn’t have to be anything big.”

“If that’s what you want, then sure.” Kara reached out for Lena’s free hand, entwining their fingers. Rubbing odd shapes into the palm of Lena’s hand, Kara was reluctant to continue. “I spoke to your mother this morning,” Kara rushed to mumble.

Lena slowly turned to face her girlfriend again. “You spoke to whom?”

Forcing out a cough, “Your mother. She called me,” Kara answered slowly, keeping an attentive eye on the brunette’s reaction.

Lena had an unusual look on her face. As if she found the news amusing. “This should be good,” she stated, leaning back in her chair and crossing her legs at the knee underneath the table.

Kara clammed up. Lena’s reaction creeping her out a little. “She mentioned she wanted to throw you a party. Sort of a Halloween slash Birthday party. I told her it probably wasn’t a good idea. I hope I didn’t overstep.”

“No,” Lena promised. “I haven’t been in the party mood lately. But knowing mother she’ll find a way to guilt me into it.”

“Whatever you want to do, I’ll be there.”

With a glance down at her watch, “Looks like we both have to get back to work,” Lena noted, effectively ending the discussion there.

Outside of LuthorCorp Lena pulled Kara into a quick kiss goodbye. “Thank you again for getting me out of that office.”

Cheeks flushing, and caught off guard by the affection, “Uh, yea. That’s what I’m here for.” She literally couldn’t come up with anything better.

Lena tugged at Kara’s shirt collar before speaking. “You’re cute when you’re flustered,” she flirtatiously pointed out before heading inside. Leaving Kara locked in place, stammering unintelligently and fixing clothes that were undisturbed.

Typically Lena wasn’t up for more than just hand holding in public; even the occasional hug. Kara had even gotten used to the light pecks she’d leave on her girlfriend’s cheek before they parted. To have Lena initiate that kind of PDA – she was unprepared was all.

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“Supergirl, I’m glad you’re here. We have a few more developments to discuss.” J’onn was getting straight to business which couldn’t be good.

Alex and a handful of other agents were already at the command center waiting for her arrival. If her
sister’s expression, and J’onn’s tone, were anything to go by, Kara knew she wasn’t going to like what they had to say very much.

Kara motioned for J’onn to begin.

With a nod to one of the agents in the room, J’onn started their briefing. “It’s been weeks since you and two of the Danvers women were taken prisoner. Since that time, we haven’t heard a peep from Lex Luthor. Not even a snapshot from a traffic or an ATM camera. Which worries me.”

Features scrunched in the middle, “Why,” Kara found herself saying out loud.

“The working theory was that Lex was connected to the alien disappearances. After finding his DNA on the aliens that was all but confirmed until Alex did a second check.”

Kara quickly looked over at her sister. She had no idea the redhead was reexamining the bodies.

“Lex had alluded to there potentially being more than just his DNA on the bodies. It just wasn’t sitting right with me so I double-checked our findings,” Alex explained. “I should preface what I’m going to say next by mentioning that I had a chat with Lena Luthor. She informed me that her research involved aliens. She’s been giving them medical treatment while biologically, and genetically, learning about them.”

This wasn’t news to Kara but it was to everyone else in the room but J’onn.

“Once again I found Lex’s DNA, but I also found Lena’s.” Before anyone could chime in, “It should also be mentioned that all of Lex’s DNA were found in places on the victim’s bodies that could be used for self-defense. Most often underneath fingernails.”

“It’s reasonable to conclude that Lena’s DNA was only found because of her research. Work that we now know she had legal clearance to perform.” J’onn silently looked around the room before he continued. “The alien abductions, the Registry, all of it. Ms. Luthor’s research was the missing connection we were looking for.”

“That doesn’t mean she’s innocence,” an agent harshly called out. Kara rolled her eyes, tired of hearing the same argument. Alex gave the man an intimidating glare, daring him to speak up again.

“Come off it,” Vasquez impatiently shouted at the agent that spoke up. “Do you really think she’s guilty after her psychotic brother held her hostage?”

“A point I was just about to bring up,” J’onn said, jumping in before their meeting descended into chaos. “In light of that, I don’t believe we need to look at the younger Luthor. Her brother is our prime suspect, but he seems to have gone into hiding.”

“Like J’onn said earlier, Lex going into hiding is worrying because the attacks against aliens haven’t stopped. In fact, they seemed to have increased.”

Kara could think of answering calls from the DEO that involved aliens recently, but she wasn’t aware it had become a regular thing. “How so?”

“Not on the level of kidnapping and murdering aliens.” Alex made a point in mentioning that first. “There have been several reports of hate crimes over the past few weeks. Random brawls in the streets. Things of that nature, and aliens have continually been the target,” she went on to clarify.

“It looks like Lex has a following,” Vasquez pitched in.
“Yes, which is the problem.” J’onn crossed his arms over his chest and looked around the room. “The publicity of Lex’s crimes is having the opposite effect. It seems to be giving other xenophobes the motivation to turn their hatred outward and for some, act on those prejudices.”

This was a bridge none of them wanted to cross. There was no definitive way to stamp out the problems that were sprouting up. Public arrests with sure punishments weren’t doing the trick. Which didn’t leave them with very many options.

“Ok, so what do we do?”

“What we’ve been doing. Hunting down any leads to Lex’s whereabouts and attempting to contain the situation that has transpired.”

“I have to agree with Agent Danvers,” J’onn began. “Until we catch a break our hands are tied. We have more information than we did a month ago so let’s use that and get the job done.”

There was an uproar of affirming, “yes, sir,”’s in the room before agents began dismissing themselves. J’onn asked that Alex and Kara both stay behind.

Alex was first to speak up once the room was relatively empty, “What is it?”

“I spoke with Mrs. Danvers and I’m afraid I don’t have good news.”

Kara let out a sigh having a general idea of what was about to happen. “Let me guess, it has to do with Jeremiah.”

“It does,” J’onn confirmed but looked towards his protégé instead.

Alex shuffled her stance, listening intently to what J’onn had to say.

“According to your mother, Jeremiah left again. They were only in Midvale a few days before she returned here. You both know she was kidnapped on her way to the city. She was on her way to meet with me to discuss your father.”

Kara urged him to go on. She wanted to hear the rest of it.

“We met briefly before her trip back home. When we spoke, she aired out her concerns surrounding his disappearance. How the two of you,” he said looking toward Kara this time, “knew he was lying about something.”

Kara nodded. “There was just something about his story. It was too convenient while some parts didn’t add up.”

“She went back to Midvale to check on your father but he wasn’t there. She tried his phone several times and he wouldn’t pick up. She called me immediately and filled me in. I’m sorry for this, but I’m marking Jeremiah Danvers as a person of interest in this investigation until further notice.”

“Don’t apologize,” Alex said, voice steadier than Kara was expecting. “He’s up to something and we need to find out what. This is the second time he’s walked out on our mother.”

“You two don’t have to get involved with his arrest. I know this is personal for you both.”

Alex gave her thanks and left the room without another word. This was harder for her than it was for Kara. The situation had escalated from suspecting something was going on to potentially having to arrest her own father. It was a whirlwind both J’onn and Kara could sympathize.
Halloween was one of the holidays Kara particularly enjoyed celebrating. The candy, the thrill from being scared, carving pumpkins with funny faces for whatever reason humans came up with. It was a night for fun and maybe a little debauchery if she let her sister talk her into it. It was a night she found that helped her to feel a little more human and less alien while on this planet.

Last Saturday, she put on her Supersuit and met Lena at the children’s hospital, much to her girlfriend’s surprise. They had agreed that they’d share the experience together before Kara got the idea to go as her alter ego. The kids would enjoy seeing the heroine more than just regular Kara Danvers.

She hadn’t been wrong in her thinking. Lena was of course a hit with the staff and children – she dressed up as witch this year – but Supergirl stole the show. Lena had to remind herself that there were cameras going off everywhere, one of the drawbacks of the event, so she had to keep herself in check.

She couldn’t be caught looking at Supergirl the way she looks at her beautiful, human, girlfriend – Kara Danvers. The public didn’t know they were one in the same; that’s the point of a cover identity. If even one camera caught her making heart eyes at the Kryptonian it would be the only headline that mattered to the mass the next day.

It would be remiss of Lena to be unaware of the impact Supergirl showing up would have on the public’s perception of her in particular. National City’s beacon of hope appearing at a Luthor hosted charity event for sick children, uninvited. ‘Supergirl’ even insisted on having photos of the two of them taken. Even a few candid photos of Lena interacting with the children and their families.

This was definitely a CatCo article Lena wanted to get her hands on once it was published. Since the heroine herself was in attendance, Kara’s team would likely author one covering the event.

During the car ride back to Kara’s apartment, Lena’s thoughts wandered about. After watching her girlfriend goofing around with the children at the party Lena began to wonder what Kara would be like with their kids. She let the idea of their relationship progressing to the point of having their own family rattle around for a while. It gave her a giddy feeling, with accompanying butterflies, that bubbled up to a grin that hurt her cheeks. No matter how hard she tried to wipe away the smile it wouldn’t leave her.

That elated feeling was snatched from her grasp when she hopped out of her truck and pulled the nametag off her dress. It had slipped her mind that the sticker was still there. The sight of her last name reminded her of her brother and what happened now three weeks ago. That was all it took to tarnish her mood.

Kara was up and out of her apartment early. It was Lena’s birthday and she was still asleep in Kara’s
bed. A thought that plastered a smile on her face. There had only been a handful of nights they hadn’t spent together since Lex. It was unnecessary to finish that sentence because just his name was reminder enough for them both.

Breakfast in bed, flowers, one of her birthday gifts. There was a plan and Kara was bound and determined to stick to it.

As Kara sped back to National City, the sun was rising in her trail. She had a few more minutes before Lena’s alarm would go off. Instead of an alarm, it would be Kara’s warm and loving voice waking the brunette. The first part of her plan.

She was stood at the foot of the bed waiting for the clock to flick to six a.m. Lena was curled up in the middle of the bed and had no idea what she was about to wake up to. Kara was actually surprised her girlfriend couldn’t smell the food yet.

Six a.m.

“Lena,” Kara said in a sing song voice. “Lena it’s time to wake up babe.”

Lena began to stir. She rubbed her face into Kara’s pillow before stretching out, hand patting the mattress for her girlfriend.

Kara waited a second more before Lena opened her eyes, still half asleep.

“Hey, sleeping,” she said in a low voice.

Lena smiled at the sound of her girlfriend’s voice and sat up to find her. She wasn’t expecting Kara to be sat at the foot of the bed with a dopey grin on her face and food in her hands. “What’s this,” she giggled, voice hoarse from a good night’s rest.

“It’s your birthday, duh,” Kara laughed.

Lena had a look like she forgot what the day was but quickly recovered by leaning forward and placing a light peck to her girlfriend’s cheek. “Thank you darling. It smells amazing.”

“It was too early so I couldn’t get your favorite breakfast from that restaurant you told me about in Metropolis.”

“Oh, that’s alright,” Lena swiftly replied.

“If you would let me finish,” Kara joked with a playful smile. “I was going to say I already spoke with the chef and he agreed to make it for you this morning. I just had to pick it up.”

Lena’s whole face lit up at that. She looked down at the veggie omelet with a side of toast and their homemade strawberry jam and practically melted. She hummed in anticipation, reaching out for the tray of food.

Kara placed the tray down over the birthday girl’s lap. “He told me to tell you happy birthday and you have to stop by soon. He even threw in like five jars of cinnamon applesauce,” she said in a sort of question.

There was that twinkle in her eyes again, Kara noted. Moaning around her food, “I don’t know what they put in that stuff but it’s amazing,” Lena swore.

“It can’t be that good, it’s just applesauce,” Kara laughed.
Lena’s expression grew serious. “Just wait,” she said with a nod. “I’m telling you…” Instead of finishing that sentence she went back to eating.

Kara sped out of the makeshift room and grabbed the next part of the morning’s venture when Lena finished eating.

“A little birdie told me plumerias were your favorite. I was also informed that you loved handwritten notes.”

Lena looked at the Kara’s hands and lightly chuckled. “Well, I see one of those things.”

With a wiggle of her brows Kara smiled a mischievous smile. “Who says they’re both not here?”

Lena accepted the gifts with a quick sniff of the flowers. “These aren’t even in season. How’d you manage to track down Hilo Beauty plumerias,” she wondered.

“I took a trip,” Kara nonchalantly shrugged.

Lena giggled once more before gazing into her girlfriend’s blue eyes. “I don’t think I’ll ever get used to you having powers,” she casually mentioned.

“One day,” Kara stated more than queried.

Since Kara’s reveal, Lena had taken to her being alien surprisingly well. More often than not, Lena questioned Kara for hours about her home planet. What it looked like, the technology they had; things of that nature. Lena wasn’t a fan of the system in place for marriages but saw the efficiency in it. ‘It’s just not right taking that choice from people,’ she had said late one night deep in the midst of one of their conversations.

“So, what’s this,” Lena wondered, shaking the small wrapped box in her hands.

“It’s actually two gifts inside. Go ahead, open it,” Kara gestured, bouncing in place from her spot on the bed.

Lena delicately pulled the wrapping paper off just to ruffle Kara’s feathers. “It’s meant to be torn off,” Kara impatiently shouted, good-naturedly of course.

Lena smirked, raising an unimpressed brow. “Oh, I know. But it’s so much fun watching you squirm.”

Kara nearly fell off the foot of the bed. She knew exactly what her girlfriend was hinting at. They had been together for a few months and the farthest things had progressed was second base. Generally someone’s shirt came off in the process, most often her own, but she wasn’t complaining; not exactly.

Things were good, and Kara was all about consent. There was no need in rushing anything. Not when she was still trying to find the right time to tell Lena those three big words. One thing at a time – something she had to consistently remind herself of.

“Well it’s two gifts inside,” Kara croaked out. Changing the subject was good now that thoughts of groping her girlfriend were flitting around and turning her on at an otherwise inappropriate moment.

Lena opened the brown box to two oddly paired gifts inside. Pulling them both out, “Uh, I’m not sure what to say Kara.”
Kara laughed at the honest reaction. “They’re level ten puzzles. That one,” Kara said pointing at the blue rectangle, “is the Lotus Puzzle, or something like that. The other one is the Tree Puzzle Box.”

“Ah,” Lena drawled curiously.

“Since you’re a genius and all it shouldn’t take you too long to solve them. I’ll give you ‘til the end of day– max!”

“That still doesn’t quite explain why you’ve given them to me.”

“That’s the funny part actually,” Kara nervously laughed.

Training her attention on the blonde, “Funny how,” Lena asked, placing the gifts down in her lap.

“The uhm, the Lotus Puzzle is actually from your mother. She gave it to me to give to you.” Before Lena could refuse the gift, Kara placed her hand over the puzzle. “She felt like you wouldn’t accept any gift if you knew it was from her.”

Lena didn’t answer. In the past, she would have told Kara to take the gift back. Now, that wasn’t so much the case.

“She told me how much you liked puzzles growing up and we decided to both get you one. I mean, what do you get a woman that could literally buy whatever she wanted?”

A hidden smile crept onto Lena’s face at her mother’s gesture. Maybe she hadn’t been lying before when she mentioned being responsible for the gifts Lena received during the holidays while in boarding school.

“I used to ask for the these growing up.” Pointing towards the metal lotus puzzle, “I even asked for one just like this.” After a beat of silence, “Thank you Kara, I love all of it.”

Kara expelled a sigh of relief as she spoke. “Good, I was worried you’d hate it. The note is inside one of them and I won’t tell you which.”

Lena’s brows scrunched in the middle. “How’d you two get it inside? Did you solve it already?”

Kara snorted with laughter. “No. Your mother paid for one of them to be made specifically for you. That way it was already inside and you’d be the first to solve it.”

“Of course she did,” Lena realized then joined in on Kara’s laughter.

Kara dutifully cleared the tray and the gifts from the bed. Before Lena could crawl out of the bed to get ready for work Kara gently tackled her back down, effectively pinning the woman beneath her. Straddling the brunette’s waist, Kara relentlessly tickled her girlfriend until her laughter turned into a pitiful wheezing sound.

Letting Lena catch her breath Kara left light kisses across the woman’s exposed skin. One at her temple.

“When I imagined being out of breath—”

Another along her jawline.

“And in your bed—”
One at her pulse point.

“This was not what I had in mind.” She was barely able to get out the last bit.

A gentle brush over her collarbone.

Pinning her mouth intentionally just below Lena’s ear, “Oh, you’ve imagined it have you?” Kara’s voice was low and raspy, knowing full well the effect it had on the young Luthor.

Afraid her voice would betray her, Lena simply hummed with a tiny nod. Her subtle panting turned into heavy breathing. She was grateful for past Lena leaving tank tops for future Lena to sleep in at Kara’s place.

Kara wiped strands of brown locks off of Lena’s face then looked lovingly into her eyes. Swiping her lips against the other side of Lena’s neck, Kara smiled into the kiss at the sound of her name being moaned out of her girlfriend’s mouth.

Mindlessly, Lena pushed her hips upward into the blonde’s center. They had been in this position so many times before – in some way or another – but this time she couldn’t control her urges.

Kara sat up, pinning Lena’s arms above her head. “Do that again and we’ll both be late for work,” she said in a tone that left nothing to question.

Lena fought the urge to wriggle beneath the weight of the other woman. Her girlfriend occupying a more dominant role in this familiar exchange was wreaking havoc on her self-control. There was a warmth creeping up her body that screamed to be released.

With a quirked brow, Lena attempted to move her hands. As she expected, Kara hadn’t let her move an inch. She was so used to being the one in control that Kara controlling her brought about a pool between her legs.

Kara sat back a little, releasing her hands; expression fixed. It was like she was daring Lena to challenge her authority. Biting at her bottom lip, Lena watched Kara hop off the bed and stare back at her. Adding unfair temptation to an already provocative situation, the Kryptonian pulled off her t-shirt revealing her sculpted physique. Leaving her in only her sports bra and shorts.

“What,” Kara obliviously asked.

Lena’s neck began to redden. She was unable to hide how turned on she was a second more. Propping herself up on her elbows, “I wasn’t expecting that from you,” she admitted, still toying with her lip.

It took her a second, but Kara caught on. When she did, her brain immediately jumped to damage control like she had done something wrong. “Oh, I’m sorry—I didn’t—”

“Do not apologize,” Lena interrupted, climbing off the bed. “I’m curious to see what comes next.”

Lena stood on her tiptoes capturing Kara’s lips in an all-consuming kiss. “I liked it,” she mumbled between breathes.

Kara broke their embrace too soon, mentioning again that if they didn’t stop they’d both be late for work. Something neither one of them minded after what just happened. She was a CEO now. Being late because of sex seemed like a very good excuse.

She had to fight every fiber of her being, but eventually Lena managed to pull herself away from her
innocently alluring girlfriend. She quickly hopped into a cold shower and dressed before giving her girlfriend the bathroom. The blonde was done and dressed before she even got her heels on.

Putting the puzzle boxes in her purse, Lena left Kara’s apartment already having a better birthday than she’s had in years. Not that all of Lex’s celebrations weren’t appreciated, but things with Kara were just… different, somehow.

After a quick peck goodbye, Kara hopped out of Lena’s SUV, thanking her again for the ride.

“Whatever you want to do tonight just have Jess fill me in. If not, I’ve already got a backup plan in mind,” Kara mentioned as an afterthought before shutting the truck door.

Lena agreed to the simple request before pulling off. Kara waited until Lena’s truck was out of her line of sight before heading into CatCo to start her workday.

Lena had all but buckled Kara into the driver’s seat when she offered to drive them out to the Luthor mansion. It was meant to be her day off, but she had to work from her apartment first thing that morning. After saving an acquisition that had nearly fallen through, Lena just wanted a little time to decompress. A forty-five minute drive outside the city would require too much of her attention right now.

It took some doing, but Kara managed to talk her stubborn girlfriend into shutting down her work laptop for the afternoon. Lillian had called once again and asked if the two of them could stop by the house that evening. Lena wasn’t the only one to think the invitation strange. Not to mention, Lillian called her, not Kara, when she asked.

Now that it was autumn, the sun was practically setting behind the tree line by half past six. By the time they pulled into the long drive outside of the Luthor mansion the last rays of light were losing their battle for visibility.

Walking hand in hand, Lena led the older woman up to the front door. She pulled out her key and opened the grand mahogany door to a usual sight. The foyer and entry hall were empty. The house was quiet and everything seemed normal.

“Mother, Kara and I are here.” Undoubtedly, Lillian was in her study so she should have heard her announcing their arrival. The limited staff her mother employed could be anywhere so someone was bound to have heard.

Just after Kara and Lena shrugged off their jackets, Kara hanging them in the coat closet, there was a shouting uproar ringing through the open space.

Lena nearly jumped out of her skin she was so startled. She could feel her heartbeat in her throat as she tried to steady her breathing. Clinging onto Kara’s arm, who had to have heard their unexpected company, Lena got a good look around.

She spotted Alex first. The red-haired woman was stood next to Sam who was wrapped around the older Danvers in a way that mirrored how she was holding on to Kara. She made a note to mention it later and kept looking into the faces of everyone else.
Based on Kara’s descriptions of her friends, the taller black gentleman must have been James and the nerdy, curly haired guy stood beside him must be Winn. There was a shorter, feisty, looking woman stood near them; that had to be James’ girlfriend, Lucy.

She recognized several other random faces but one of the people she hadn’t seen was Jack. Lillian was walking towards her before she could think any further on the matter.

Handing her daughter a glass of champagne, “Happy belated birthday sweetheart.”

Chapter End Notes

I wanted to say thank you to every single one of you that interacts with this story. Whether you're only reading it, leaving comments, kudos... whatever it is, I sincerely appreciate it. I was super self-conscious about writing this and I tackled a huge fear of mine by doing it. I'll probably thank you all every other chapter :D!

So how are we feeling about Lillian? How do you think Lena is going to react to her mother throwing that party? Even though Kara warned her against it. Do you think Kara knew Lillian was going through with the party? What about Lena’s birthday? I took a slightly different approach to this chapter. Mainly because I knew my time to write was limited and I wanted to cover everything I had in mind. Small time jumps were the only way I could think to do it. There'll be some in the next chapter as well. In case you were wondering, the next chapter will pick back up right where we left off.

Questions/comments/constructive criticism/whatever you want to do, per usual, is appreciated and welcomed!

Until next time...
“Happy belated birthday sweetheart.” Lillian’s endearing expression and loving tone was a stark contrast to what Lena was expecting.

There was a party going on for her birthday. One that she could have sworn her girlfriend warned her stepmother against. The group was small – not intimately so, but enough. Taking a small sip from the glass of champagne the matriarch had handed her, Lena turned slightly in Kara’s direction.

Kara adorned her usual pleasant grin upon her face as she looked around the room. That is, until she caught a glimpse of the cold look her girlfriend was throwing her way.

With a light chuckle, “Don’t look at me with those eyes, and that…” Kara wiggled her finger near Lena’s arched brow, “that eyebrow of yours. I didn’t know she was going through with this.”

In lieu of an answer, Lena took another sip from her glass. Their party guests had gone back to their conversations. Someone had even turned the music back up; just enough to fill the background with noise.

“That’s new,” Lillian pointed out, somewhat lifting the necklace in question at the base of her daughter’s neck.

“It was a gift from Kara.”

“Ah,” the older woman drawled. “The gemstones were a nice touch. Emerald for you and sapphire for Ms. Danvers I suppose?”

“Mrs. Luthor, please, you can call me Kara.”

“Well then, Kara,” she began, with an added emphasis to the name, “do you mind if I borrow your girlfriend for a moment,” she requested as she wrapped an arm around Lena’s, locking them at the elbow.

Kara and Lena stared at each in shock. Lillian had just called Kara her girlfriend.

Being sure her mother wasn’t looking in her direction, “What…” Lena mouthed to the blonde with thinly veiled surprise.

After clearing her throat, “Uh, I don’t see why not,” Kara answered.

The two Luthor women walked in relative silence. A bit of harmless small talk to fill the passing moments. They didn’t stop until they were inside her mother’s study. Lillian sat her glass on her desk with a look that said there was something she needed get off her chest. Lena hadn’t been paying attention, she was still trying to wrap her mind around the girlfriend thing.
“I take it you finished the puzzle?”

It took a second for her mother’s words to register; her mind was elsewhere. Lena had finished both of the puzzles by lunch on her birthday. Meaning she found the note Kara had mentioned was inside one of them. But that’s not what she wanted to talk about – she’d get to that.

Smile long wiped from her face, Lena stared at her mother as she tapped her champagne flute with a fingernail. She watched as confusion flashed over her mother’s face. The woman gestured with her hands for Lena to answer yet she remained silent. It was passive-aggressive, she knew that, but Lena had questions of her own.

“I distinctly remember Kara saying she advised you not to throw me a party.” Her voice was cold, far too harsh for the occasion.

Lillian was perched on the side of her desk, watching Lena cautiously.

“You really thought I’d be in the mood for a party? When have I ever asked for something like this? I came because you asked me to. Had I of known it was for this I would have stayed at my apartment.”

Lillian was looking at her dead on and for the first time Lena didn’t feel as great as she was hoping after speaking her mind. She could see that she had hurt her mother’s feelings – something she didn’t even know was possible.

Picking up her glass, Lillian stood up and made her way to the still open door. “A party may not have been the best idea, I see that now,” Lillian softly apologized. “I was only looking to do something for your birthday. I know it doesn’t make up for the past but...” She looked at the stern expression upon her daughter’s disapproving face with tears brimming in her eyes.

“I’m trying Lena,” she whispered in a broken-hearted voice. With a last glance over her shoulder, “The house is yours for the remainder of the weekend,” then the matriarch was off for good.

It was unexpected, but Lena genuinely felt like an ass for her reaction. Downing the remainder of her glass Lena snuck close enough to the party to grab another before disappearing down a random hallway undetected.

It wasn’t very often she found herself wandering the halls of the mansion, but it had been years since she felt the need to. If she had to endure plastering a fake smile on her face for the next few hours, she at least wanted a chance to prepare first. Then again, she could always feign sick and ask everyone to leave. Or she could just ask everyone to leave and just be alone with her girlfriend. That’s a good idea too, she thought.

She was just about to head up one of the back staircases when she felt a hand clasp over a mouth. She was being dragged back in the direction she came. Her instincts told her to scream around the hand pressed to her mouth; Kara could still hear her if she did.

Before she could make a choice, Lena was pushed into a room by a tallish figure that closed the door behind them. The figure turned on the lights and she tensed.

Through gritted teeth, “Lex, what the hell are you doing here?”

\——

“Funny seeing you here,” Kara laughed as she approached her sister. Alex was stood with their shared group of friends plus a woman she didn’t recognize. “Hi,” she said to the unknown woman
with an outstretched hand. “Kara.”

“Sam,” the woman answered, shaking her hand. There was a weird look on Alex’s face but Kara ignored it.

“Did Lillian invite you,” Kara asked the group.

Forcing down her gulp of champagne, “Something like that,” Alex began to clarify. “She called me, and I called them,” she continued, motioning at everyone but Sam.

“How could we turn down an invite to the mysterious Luthor mansion,” Lucy joked.

Kara shook her head and laughed. Of course Lucy wasn’t in it for the party itself. “What about you Sam?”

“Oh, uhm, I work at LuthorCorp,” she explained with a nod.

Kara nodded slowly along with her. “Cool.”

“She might’ve also called me because I’m her daughter’s best friend.”

Kara nearly choked on her champagne. Wiping at the corners of her mouth, “Well…”

Alex reached for a new glass immediately killing half of it.

“Well, Lena wouldn’t exactly call me her best friend. You know Lena.”

That Kara did. For a woman who considers herself to have no friends, she’d never admit to having a best friend.

“Kara, hey, can you uhm—.” Alex nodded off to the side, meaning she wanted to talk to Kara alone.

She followed her sister away from the group and waited for what was so important she couldn’t say it in front of the others.

“I’ve been meaning to talk to you about something.”

“What’s going on?”

“It, uhm… Well, I wasn’t sure at first.”

Kara squinted at the redhead. “Sure about what?”

“The night Lex shot you. I was only able to save you because someone else intervened.”

“Yea, we’ve talked about this already,” Kara began, like what Alex was saying was old news. “You said you were able to get out your cage and you called J’onn.”

Alex gave her an uneasy expression and wouldn’t meet her eyes.

“…or did that not happen?” Her voice was calm but threatening.

“Not exactly— listen, Kara, you have to believe me. I would’ve said something sooner but I wasn’t sure how.”

“Then tell me now.”
Alex looked around the space being sure no one within earshot was eavesdropping. “The only reason any of us got out of there was because an alien broke us free.”


“It’s not what you’re thinking. I promise,” Alex confidently affirmed.

“Then what should I be thinking Alex?”

“I thought it was just you and Clark, Kara. She was angry. First, she broke down the door. She almost killed Lena using heat vision,” Alex admitted before rushing past the Lena nearly dying part. “She pried open Lena’s cage and tore bars off of mine and mom’s—.”

Kara didn’t let her finish. “So what? A lot of aliens here are strong.”

“Not all of them look human Kara. They definitely can’t fly.”

Kara had to admit, Alex was right. “So you think they were Kryptonian?”

“Nothing else makes sense. The strength, the heat vision, the flight capability. I think she’s the same woman that showed up before.”

“The one when I was exposed to Kryptonite,” she asked, keeping her voice low.

Alex nodded.

“The one in my apartment that night? That one?”

“When she dropped us off at the DEO I think she was trying to tell me her name. Does Astra mean something to you?”

Kara looked stunned. There was no way they were the same two women. There was no possible way this woman was her aunt. Her Astra was imprisoned in Fort Rozz. A prison she was sentenced to spend the rest of her life in. Not to mention no one escaped Fort Rozz.

“You look like you’ve seen a ghost,” Alex observed. “Do you think you know who she is?”

“Let’s just—can we drop this for now? I need to-to go find Lena,” Kara stammered.

Alex wasn’t given the chance to ask another question. She was off in a corner alone watching the back of her retreating sister as she bumped into random people.

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Lena had her arms crossed over her chest, impatiently waiting for her brother to answer. Lex was leaning against an old side table that she could see was half covered in dust. The room they were in looked familiar, but so did a lot of rooms in that house.

Lex was looking around the room with a fond look upon his face. “Do you remember this room,” he asked in too chipper a tone for Lena’s liking.

She took another glance around the room, and another, before she figured it out. This was the same
room Lex would hide in whenever they played hide-and-seek. It was the same room the two siblings turned into their unofficial playroom as children. Their secret hideout; or lair was how Lex would occasionally refer to it.

“First you have me kidnapped, basically threaten to kill me, and now… what? You want to stroll down memory lane? What the hell do you want?”

“Ouch,” Lex gasped, feigning hurt by her words. When he realized Lena wasn’t about to let up he went ahead with what he wanted to say. “If I know you, I’m guessing you’re looking for an explanation for that night.”

“Well, I don’t not want one,” Lena answered, voice verging on irritation.

“The energy I got from Supergirl’s solar flare gave me more than what’s necessary to power one of my projects.”

“It was you that hacked into the LuthorCorp’s mainframe.”

“Surprise,” he said with a big grin and open arms. “It took me a while, but I got what I needed.”

Rolling her eyes, “Keep going.”

“Right. I need the energy to power a suit I’ve been working on. We’ll never have to be afraid of another alien again. Everything father warned us about we can avoid.”

“What?”

“Humans,” he levelly stated as though it answered all of Lena’s questions. “We’ve become a target. This planet is our home and we need to protect it. It’s aliens like Superman,” he sneered, “that are a threat to our very existence.”

“What does Superman have to do with this,” Lena rightfully asked. Why was he singling out the Super?

Lex stood up to be at eye level with his sister, or close to it since he was the taller of the Luthor progenies. “You don’t know what they’re capable of Lena,” he started. “They’re the enemy and I’m doing what I have to in order to protect my family. The human race.”

“Lex, what the hell—”

In a matter of seconds Lex snapped. “You don’t know what he did Lena! You have—” He stopped himself from going on. Taking a deep breath to calm himself, Lex walked over to Lena.

“Superman and I were friends once upon a time, but he betrayed me. He deemed me undeserving of his trust.”

Lena frowned. “I still don’t know what you’re getting at.” Lena was nervous after Lex’s outburst. She was just glad that her voice hadn’t given that discomfort away.

“Fine, then I’ll make things simple for you. Kryptonians need to die. Both of the Supers. They’re a danger to this planet and I intended on keeping my promise.”

Lena took a tiny step backwards. “What promise Lex?” She could even hear the worry in her own quavering voice now.

Looking away from Lena, Lex took in the room once again. “It was in this very room that I vowed
to always protect you for the first time. Even if I have to protect you from yourself,” he mumbled under his breathe; Lena still heard.

“So, you did kill those aliens. For what? What did they ever do to you?”

Lex began walking closer towards her. For every slow step he made forward, Lena backtracked away; matching his pace in order to maintain a safe distance.

“Does an infectious disease have to personally harm you before you want to eradicate it? Does a predator need a reason to attack or is it just in his biology?”

Lena remained silent. She had her own answers, but she also knew they weren’t in line with her brother’s current line of questioning. It better to keep them to herself for now.

“I’m ridding the planet of those infernal creatures before they cause more harm.”

“The only problem I’m seeing is you. You’ve given aliens every reason to hate us and yet you see yourself as the victim.”

The man’s face twisted up into a snarl. “How dare you,” he bellowed.

Lena had the idea to scream for Kara again but she didn’t want to risk her girlfriend’s life. There was no telling if Lex had rigged the room with something that could take the Kryptonian down.

She had a singular focus of maintaining an equidistance from her brother. Lena had been so fixated on the things he was saying she didn’t notice she was a step away from an ottoman. With that very step, Lena stumbled backwards falling onto the piece of furniture.

Lex closed the space between them and tightly grabbed onto Lena’s shoulders.

Suppressing a wince, “Lex, stop,” she pleaded while swiping at his arms. “Lex, you’re hurting me,” she indicated a bit louder.

It was like watching a small child walk into a glass door; their internal struggle to grasp what exactly happened. Similar to the child’s lack of understanding of what was right in front of them, the look on the man’s face was one of unadulterated bewilderment. Like he wasn’t aware of his behavior. He didn’t let her go but he did lighten his grip.

“You have to understand Lena, whether you see it or not, we are sitting ducks. Maybe not today, or tomorrow, but eventually. As soon as those aliens realize they’re genetic superiority they’ll capitalize on that advantage. I know I would,” he added as afterthought.

Lena tried to keep herself from shaking but her body had a mind of its own. Showing weakness was the opposite of what she wanted to be doing. Lex wasn’t the same man she grew up with, she could see that now.

“I know,” Lena said, hoping to flip the conversation around.

“You do,” Lex said, visibly happier than he was.

“That night you held that gun to my head. I thought it’d be colder but it was the first gun I’ve had that close to my face.”

Lex let her go and stood up.

“You were willing to kill me to get Supergirl to do what you wanted. You just… you bargained my
life like it was nothing."

“You were never in any real danger,” Lex scoffed. “Don’t be so daft.”

“Daft,” she responded in a raised tone.

“She wasn’t about to let you die.”

“Who, Lex?” He simply stared at her so Lena pressed on. “Who wasn’t going to let me die?”

Lena stood back up. She was close enough that the fabric of her top could have touched that of Lex’s shirt. “I shouldn’t have been in that position to start. She shouldn’t have had to make that choice because I shouldn’t have been in that position. No one should have.”

“Supergirl—”

“You’re a big boy Lex, you can say her name,” Lena said, cutting him off. “You know it so say it!"

“Kara. Danvers.”

There was a wicked smile on both their faces.

“I used you because of your relationship. Is that what you wanted to hear?”

“If it’s the truth, then yes. Lucky for you, Kara wouldn’t harm a hair on my head. But you…”

“And that’s why they’re a problem!”

“Do you hear yourself? I get it, Superman hurt you. But now you hate all Kryptonians? How does that make any sense?” When Lex didn’t answer she continued. “Kara doesn’t even know you. Killing her, you’d basically be killing me. Is that what you want?”

Lex’s head shifted to the side. “You care that much about her? An alien?”

“I don’t care that she’s an alien. It doesn’t matter one way or another.”

He looked disgusted by that. He clearly couldn’t understand why his sister felt that way. “You’re defending them? I’m trying to protect you from what I went through.”

Lena had no intention of answering that question. She wasn’t trying to defend anyone because none of this made any sense. It’s hard to defend someone from something you don’t fully understand. “Are you just killing random aliens until you can get to Superman? Is that it?”

Lex appeared to be thinking that over. “No, but, it is a good idea. I’m killing them because they all need to go. Not just the Kryptonian cousins.”

“I don’t know what you want from me,” Lena admitted. “We’re going in circles and I don’t even know why you’re here.”

Lex backed away from Lena and began circling the room. “When I heard that mother was throwing you a party I knew it was a bad idea. Naturally, I had to be here.”

Lena fought the urge to ask how he found out in favor of letting him answer her in full.

“Not to mention, this is the first birthday of yours that I’ve missed. Since your new friends are getting in my way.”
Lena watched the man as he spoke. She noticed how irritated he seemed by the inconvenience of having officers of different calibers keeping tabs on him. He wasn’t her Lex anymore, Lena reminded herself.

“I want you to leave,” Lena said, voice flat and steady.

Lex chortled. “You want me to do what?”

“You heard me Lex. You’ve made it quite clear that you intend to wipe out the alien population on this planet; a sentiment I don’t condone. You’ve admitted to killing innocent beings under the notion of what you believe to be right. You toyed with my life and have even tried to have me killed.”

Speaking up immediately, “You’ve finally figured that one out have you?”

“Very clever having yourself shot. Staging it so that you were ever the protective brother.”

Lex stopped on the other side of the room and gave her a half bow.

Lena was close to tears. She was fighting the desire to breakdown because what she was about to say was something she never thought would be leaving her mouth.

Voice quivering, “I don’t even know who you are anymore Alexander.”

“Oh, come on, Lee… It’s me. I’m still the same guy.” His voice was nauseatingly upbeat again.

“No,” she denied, shaking a tear loose. “The Lex I know would never harm a sole. The man I trusted implicitly would never be that flippant with my life like it was some child’s play thing.”

If her words hurt the man in any way he didn’t show it. His stare was blank and detached. He watched her fight back her tears without a care in the world. He barely batted an eye when her breathes grew ragged in her efforts.

It shouldn’t have come as a surprise after their lengthy discussion, but Lex clearly didn’t care about her. Not anymore; not that she could see or believe. He was championing a cause, in her name no less, that he had conjured in his head. Something she had never asked for nor wanted. Someone had tainted Lex. There was no way he got to this place all on his own.

Lex was a brilliant man, but whatever was going on had to be orchestrated by someone else. There was no way her brother harbored this much hate, and was executing a full plan of attack, in such a short amount of time. Then again, she had no idea when he started feeling this way.

“I thought you’d be on my side. I thought you’d see where I was coming from and support me.”

“Get out,” Lena whispered.

Lex stood his ground. Didn’t move an inch.

“I know you heard me Lex. I said, get the hell out here!”

“If you’re not with me, you’re against me Lena.”

Lena straighten up and schooled her features. “You don’t know me very well if you honestly thought I’d support this plan of yours. So, put me down as against you while you run off to whatever hole you were hiding in.”

Lex shoved his hand in his pocket as he scowled at her.
This is it, Lena thought to herself. In no world would she support something like this, even if it was her brother asking. She had morals that she wasn’t about to set on the shelf because of one man. Especially not a man who didn’t care if she lived or died.

He didn’t say anything but Lex exited the door on the other side of room. Lena heaved a shuttering sigh of relief as she stared at the closed door. She had been gone too long. Someone was bound to have noticed; most likely Kara. Wiping her face once more, Lena got her breathing under control in order to leave the room she was forced into. No one had to know what just happened.

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After walking around the entire mansion at least once – which was strange because she couldn't pinpoint Lena's heartbeat or voice while she was looking - finally, she found her girlfriend; but she stuttered to a halt when she had. At the end of a vacant hallway stood her girlfriend with a pale look on her face. It took Lena a moment before she collected herself and made her way back into the throng of the party where Kara was hovering.

Lena was by her side when she noticed something familiar in the way she looked. “That face,” Kara examined, speaking more to herself than the brunette. “That face— why do I know that face?” Kara positioned herself directly in front of Lena, searching her features for the answer.

The moment Lena parted her lips Kara knew exactly what it was.

“It was Lex. Lex was here,” the young woman revealed in a broken whisper.

“Are you alright? Did he hurt you at all?” Kara was frantic but dialed it back enough to not alert the other party guests.

Lena shook her head but Kara paid it no mind. She pulled off her glasses to search the entirety of the Luthor mansion. Predictably, Lex was nowhere to be found.

The party went on for several minutes with Lena continuing to smile and carry on in civil conversation as though nothing had happened. Until something did.

The lights shut off and the music stopped abruptly. There were random screams and shouts as everyone tried to adjust to their new environment. Lena could have sworn Kara had just been right by her side, but she could barely see a thing.

“Kara,” she called out in a level tone. There was no need in panicking; not yet, Lena repeated like a mantra in her head.

Before anyone could get too comfortable in the darkness, the sound of breaking glass echoed through the hum of all the muddled conversations. There were a few loud thumps and a singular bang before everyone was blinded by flashes of light.

“Lena, we have to get you out of here,” Sam shouted into her ear.

“Kara? Where’s Kara!”

There were men shouting, storming through the room. She was being bumped around while others were trying to get to safety. But Lena, Lena was stuck in place searching the darkness.
“I’m not sure. Alex only told me to find you and get you out of here.”

Internally, Lena was a somewhat controlled fretful storm, but Sam seemed, well, more put together than she currently was. Recognizing that her friend was of a sounder mind Lena heeded her suggestion. Standing around like a statue wouldn’t help their situation. Not when she knew, without a shadow of a doubt, that the intruders were after her. Why else would they be there?

As they walked in crouched postures, Lena could faintly recall her girlfriend whispering in her ear for her to stick with Sam not too long ago, but it didn’t make any sense until this moment.

Sam was dragging her through the flurrying crowd when she heard a man’s voice booming over the others. He was shouting out orders to his crew and the innocent guests unfortunately caught in the middle of this.

“Lena Luthor! If you give us the Luthor everyone can leave here still breathing!” The man’s accented voice was hard and unyielding. Lena didn’t doubt that he’d follow through with killing any number of the people here until he got what he wanted.

Lena had tried to stop. She wanted to hand herself over to keep everyone safe but Sam wouldn’t let her. The woman’s grip on her hand was unforgiving. She would have compared it to being dragged behind a fleeing buffalo if she had a moment to think.

“Don’t even think about it,” Sam knowingly warned in a faint tone. “Alex is going to take care of—”

Shots were fired across the kitchen. Lena could barely make out the fixtures as Sam tugged her behind the island.

“Being friends with you really should come with a safety warning these days,” Sam whispered, not meaning anything by it.

“I tried telling you that years ago but you wouldn’t listen,” Lena retorted.

The lights were still off, the house was quieting back down from all the screaming, shouting, and crashing of windows and doors, and they were trapped in the kitchen.

The kitchen!

Voice barely above a whisper, “There’s a door to the wine cellar. It’s on the other side of the room,” Lena mentioned as a possible escape route.

Sam was preparing to move them closer to the entrance Lena was describe when they both heard something that sounded like a woman talking. A little more talking, and something that sounded like a laugh, then a gun shot. With Sam’s hand still tightly clasped in her own, they sat for a second more.

Whoever took shots at them a few moments ago was holding his position on the other side of the room. Lena could hear footsteps approaching from the hallway then footsteps from behind them.

Sam switched places with Lena, putting her on the inside, before scooting them both around the island. This way, whoever was coming up the hall couldn’t see them, and they were blocked by the other counter. They were in a blind spot of both the shooter and whoever was coming up the hall.

The footsteps stopped at the door. It was silent for a time; a tense moment of silence. These two people were just waiting. Waiting and leaving Lena drowning in suspense figuring she was about to die and be responsible for her friend’s death as well.
If it were just her in that room, she’d have found a way to make her peace but this was torture. None of her guests signed up for this. It probably sealed the deal of that James guy hating her. It’s not like this was her fault, but who cared; she is a Luthor after all.

Finally, movement. Whoever was stood at the door tossed something across the room. There were three shots, a pause, then another followed by the sound of a thud on the floor. A noise remarkably similar to a body hitting the floor Lena realized.

“Sam? Lena, are you in here?”

Lena immediately recognized the voice. It wasn’t who she was hoping for but she was still comforted by the familiar voice.

Peaking her head above the counter, “Over here,” she whispered back even though they were alone.

Alex sighed a breath of relief. She circled the island and crouched down in front of the two women.

“Supergirl handled things out there. Are you both alright?”

“Relatively speaking.” Lena couldn’t see it, but Alex and Sam both rolled their eyes at her response.

“The lights should be back on any minute. Did you want to head back out there or are you good down there on the floor?”

Alex’s sarcastic tone was oddly soothing to Lena. She was almost killed but Alex was still Alex. She was being pulled to her feet when the lights flicked back to life, blinding her for a second time that night.

There were police sirens coming up the hill when they made it back to the party guests. Supergirl was standing heroically in the midst of the crowd answering every question being thrown at her.

Lena was shaky but the sight of her girlfriend was what she needed to calm her back down. Kara must have heard the attackers coming and warned Alex. And with Alex being who she is, charging into dangerous situations head first, she entrusted Lena’s safety to someone she knew Lena trusted. It was a half-cocked plan, but it worked out somehow. So far, everyone was safe and that was all that mattered.

Supergirl flew off once National City’s finest arrived and had the situation under control. Kara reappeared a minute or so after the heroine disappeared.

“You’re alright?”

“I’m alright,” Lena confirmed, nuzzling her head into her girlfriend’s chest. Kara held her tight and only let go when Samantha and her sister were at their side.

“Thank you for keeping her safe.” Kara’s praise was directed towards her sister.

“You’re welcome,” Sam answered as she bumped her shoulder against Alex. “Where were you anyway?”

Kara, Alex, and Lena all looked at one another, panicked for an answer when Kara noticed something on Sam’s shirt.

“Hey, are you ok,” she asked, redirecting the attention to the hole in Sam’s flowy dark violet blouse. The woman must not have noticed if her scrunched up features were anything to go by. Kara
watched as the taller brunette ran her fingers down her top until the found the hole Kara had pointed out.

“Oh, er...” Sam wasn’t aware she had hurt herself, let alone ripped her top. “I hadn’t noticed,” she passively answered. “Must’ve happened in the midst of everything. I’m alright though. No bleeding,” she off-handedly continued.

Lena hadn’t missed the way Alex worried over the woman. She didn’t miss the way their hands grazed, clearly yearning to be held by the other. If this was a thing, they were keeping it a secret. She’d respect their right to privacy, but she wanted to see how long those two could keep this up at the rate they were going.

“Well everyone is giving their statements and I’m sure they’ll want to hear from you,” Alex said nodding toward the young Luthor.

“This is becoming a regular thing,” Lena sighed.

There was a shared bitter laughter amongst the group but no one exactly said anything. Kara trotted over to check on her friends while Lena gave whatever statement necessary to get everyone out of her family’s home. She never even wanted this party and the turn of events cemented that dreaded feeling.

It was just her luck she would be targeted and nearly killed during a party she knew nothing about prior to. Lex had to be responsible. After their talk, she figured he already had a team waiting to take her out should she not provide the responses he was looking for.

This was her life now. Monthly assassination attempts by her own brother. There was no way she was going to get used to this.

Happy birthday to me...

Chapter End Notes

My schedule just seems to keep getting busier. What I thought would be 2-3 weeks, I now have no definitive timetable for. I hope everyone is ok with shorter chapters for a while or me not keeping to our usual schedule.

I hope everyone enjoyed the chapter. Let me know what you thought. Questions/comments/high fives, always welcome lol.

Until next time...
Chapter 20

Chapter Notes

I want to start by sincerely apologizing for being gone for nearly a month. I really had no intention of being gone so long but life happened. I did however manage to write a little at a time during my time away. As a result, we have some time jumps because I was a different person every time I sat down to write again lol.

I dealt with a lot of writer's block and just generally lacking the motivation to write at times because I was so overwhelmed by outside factors. I was more scatterbrained trying to write this chapter than all the other. Hopefully, there's an easy flow and continuity while reading. If not, please, *please* let me know. As a gift for being away without notice, this chapter is longer than usual and I really hope y'all like it. Please excuse any mistakes/typos you may come across. I tried to edit as I went along but I'm sure I missed a few things.

Sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

After the attack at the Luthor mansion, Kara boarded up all the broken windows and cleaned up as much of the mess throughout the first floor as she could. It was harder to do – having to hide her powers – with the mansion’s staff moving in and out of rooms doing the same thing. Lena had offered to help but Kara refused it every time.

Instead, Lena showered and began to wind down for the night. It was barely ten o’clock and she was bundled up on the sofa in her bedroom. Legs sprawled out in front of her, Lena mulled over her thoughts for the hundredth time in the past hour alone.

As soon as Kara finished downstairs she went off in search of Lena. As she opened Lena’s door Kara could tell Lena needed another moment to herself. So, she grabbed the towel set and pajamas Lena laid out for her without breaking the silence the brunette was enveloped in. When Kara finished, Lena was staring into the unlit fireplace, still motionless.

Kara fixed her mouth to speak then closed it shut like a fish gasping for air. For perhaps the first time in her life she had absolutely no idea how to proceed. She found herself at a loss for words that were meant to bring a peace of mind. Couldn’t decide what actions would be most appropriate in this particular situation.

Lena felt her girlfriend stood off to the side of her, just watching. It was a loaded silence that almost felt unbearable. She could feel the weight of words that were going unsaid and grasping at her throat vying for any way out they could find. Not dissimilar to Kara, Lena had no idea what words to speak, and in what coherent order. Which words to set free to lighten the tension that was beginning to grate at her nerves.

There was the party she didn’t want, her brother showing up, nearly being killed – again. Not to mention her behavior with Lillian. Lena berated herself for it knowing that it was uncalled for, unprovoked, and slightly out of line.
With an uneasy breath, “I didn’t even want this party,” Lena started with as she pulled her knees to her chest, making room for Kara.

“If I had known I would’ve warned you or taken you back to your apartment.”

“It’s not your fault Kara,” Lena stated rather dejectedly.

“Is there anything I can do?”

After a moment’s silence, “This was Lex. I know it.”

Kara did her best to follow Lena’s train of thought. “The attack you mean?” She attentively sat down in front of the young Luthor.

“It’s him. It’s all him but I can’t prove it yet.” It was like she was talking to herself and not with Kara. “He hates Kryptonians and he wants to kill you both. Superman more than you.”

Kara slowly reached out for Lena’s hand, holding it comforting within her own.

“Superman and Lex used to be friends. Whatever happened between them has some connection with Superman’s true identity because Lex spoke of trust.”

With a slight bow of her head, “It does,” Kara confirmed.

Lena looked into Kara’s eyes for the first time since she entered the room. “Is that how he knew your identity?”

Kara slowly nodded again. “When Lex was kidnapped years ago, he figured out that his best friend and Superman were one in the same.”

“Wait, Clark? Clark Kent?”

There was very little reason of keeping this from Lena any longer. “Yup…”

“I knew it,” Lena gasped. Kara turned to squarely face Lena. “It’s not just Kryptonians Kara. He wants to follow in my father’s footsteps and attempt to rid this planet of all alien life.”

“How do you know?”

“He flat out said as much,” Lena replied matter-of-factly. Kara didn’t take the tone personal because she knew it wasn’t really being directed at her.

“Did he say anything else?”

Lena dropped her knees in a cross like manner before looking at Kara; not directly so, per se. It was a look that peered through the blonde as though Lena were searching the dimly lit background of her room. “He said he would do everything he could to protect me, even if it meant protecting me from myself.” After a beat, “He sees himself as the hero in this narrative. I don’t think there’s anything I could have said that would have gotten him to see reason.”

Kara pulled Lena into her side and rubbed her back slowly. “I believe that he wants to keep you safe, I do. The problem is that he wants to protect you from beings that aren’t a threat to you, or anyone else for that matter. Not without being provoked like they have been over the past few months.”

“I’ve lost him Kara.” Her voice was somber with the undercurrent of her broken heart breaching through.
Kara wished there was something she could say to convince the woman that that wasn’t the case, but she had nothing. She wasn’t there, and Lena knew her brother better than everyone – Lillian excluded. If this had been her and Alex there was nothing anyone could say that would make her feel better, so Kara said nothing.

They sat like this for some time before Kara spoke. “Can I move us to the bed? You should get some rest.”

Lena nodded into her chest before she wrapped Lena in her arms. They were cuddled in the warmth of Lena’s old bed as they both stared quietly into the dark. Lena was twiddling with Kara’s fingers while the blonde played in her hair. This was the very position Kara fell asleep in leaving Lena awake and alone.

She couldn’t keep herself from replaying the night over and over in her mind. The more she tried to not think of it, the more she did. At some point during the night an unfortunate reality dawned on her. If Lex didn’t stop what he was doing, go on trial for his crimes, she may have to be the one to end things. It was a chilling realization, but it existed inside the realm of possibility.

In every way Lena could foresee events unfolding, she had a hand in her brother’s demise somehow. The more she thought about it the worse she felt. The worse she felt the more she hated Lex for putting her in this uncompromising position. The more she despised Kara being put in harm’s way. Sure, Kara was Kryptonian, but they couldn’t always count on her alien biology – that much had been proven when she was shot and nearly killed.

Thoughts of that night caused her to haphazardly spiral even further into the darkest depths of her own mind.

Before she sank too far, Kara mumbled out something unintelligible. Thinking nothing of the sound Lena rubbed at Kara’s back as she was now pinned beneath the woman’s weight. Another moment, maybe longer, passed by when the blonde stirred again but this time it was different. Lena didn’t recognize the language Kara was speaking and the sleeping woman had a tight hold on her silk pajama top.

After a noncommittal groan, there a brief moment of quiet, then shouting. She could barely make out Kara’s face, but Lena knew something was wrong. There had been countless night’s they had slept together, and Kara had never had dreams that did this. Lena tried and tried to get Kara to wake up, but it seemed impossible while trapped underneath her.

As soon as Kara let go of her shirt Lena rolled to turn on the lamp at her bedside and hurried back over to Kara. She couldn’t understand a word the woman was saying but she knew pain when she saw it. Kara was hurting, and not physically. The tear tracks staining her cheeks were evidence enough of that.

“Kara,” Lena calmly said in an elevated tone. “Kara, I need you to wake up love. You’re having a nightmare.”

Her words went unnoticed.

**How do you even restrain a Kryptonian?**

Lena straddled Kara’s hips to keep her still. It wasn’t the best plan, but something was better than nothing. She had to think of a way to get Kara to wake up before she hurt herself, or worse, Lena; even if it was an accident. Kara would never be able to forgive herself if she physically hurt Lena.
“Darling, it’s only a dream. All you have to do is wake up, ok?”

Kara’s thrashing died down somewhat, but it hadn’t stopped. Her breathes were ragged and short, like she was hyperventilating. Lena reached down for Kara’s hand and placed it on her chest.

“Kara… Please…” Lena pleaded. She shut her eyes and waited. She repeated her girlfriend’s name over and over hoping the woman would hear her.

It took some time but eventually Kara fell still beneath her. Lena pecked through lidded eyes to make sure she was right, and she was. Kara was looking at her in much the same way she imaged she was looking at Kara; startled and worried. Trepidation eased away for protective concern to take its place.

“You’re awake,” Lena said more that asked.

“I’m awake,” Kara confirmed with a confused look on her face.

Lena wasn’t ready to let go of Kara’s hand. “You were having a nightmare.”

It took a second before Lena’s words set in. Kara’s eyes bulged open upon realization. “I had a nightmare! Are—are you alright? Did I hurt you at all?”

Lena shook her head and cracked a sympathetic smile. Of course, Kara was worried about hurting her when she was the one having the nightmare. “Darling, I’m fine. It’s you that I’m worried about.”

Kara sat up with Lena still on top of her. She didn’t let go of Lena’s hand. “I’m sorry—”

“Don’t you dare apologize Kara Danvers,” Lena quickly interrupted. “Everyone has bad dreams. It’s nothing for you to apologize for.”

“But I could have hurt you Lena,” Kara rushed to say with a firmness in her tone.

“See,” Lena said, leaning back for Kara to get a good look at her, “I’m fine Kara. What language was that?”

The question was enough to distract Kara from her line of questioning. “Huh?”

Lena inelegantly tried repeating some of the words she heard. Even with knowing as many languages as she did, it offered very little help in this particular situation.

“Oh, uhm, Kryptonese or Kryptonian, whichever you prefer. It’s the language of my people.”

Lena noticed how small Kara’s voice sounded. She went from robust and sure to battered and afraid in seconds. Lena deduced that Kara must have had a nightmare about her home world. A far-off place they hadn’t gone into much detail about. Lena knew surface level information but that was it. She still hadn’t gotten the full story of how the Supers came to call Earth their new home.

“You’ll have to teach me,” Lena went with instead of the obvious probing into what brought on Kara’s bad dream.

Kara nodded then slid Lena off her lap. She made her way into the bathroom and splashed her face with water. She drank several gulps of water from the palm of her hand before staring at her reflection in the mirror.

She had been doing so well. It had been a decent stretch of time since her last nightmare and all it took was the mention of one woman’s name to send her spiraling back. There wasn’t even any proof that the person Alex was speaking of was even her aunt, but a part of Kara hoped it was.
She knew getting her hopes up was a double-edged sword. On the one hand that meant it wasn’t just her and Kal. She would have the chance to see her aunt again. But it also meant that the woman somehow escaped imprisonment. If she and Kal weren’t the only two Kryptonian’s on Earth, why was there a third and what business did they have on the planet?

These were all the basic questions she had been forcing herself to ignore; until she fell asleep that is. She watched her home world die over and over but this time there were flashes of her aunt Astra. The last time the two saw each other was a frequent occurrence during the dream.

She must have been in the bathroom too long because Kara could hear Lena restlessly shuffling on the bed. Taking one last sip of water, Kara made her way back into the room and sat on the bed.

Sunlight was beginning to break through the curtains as Kara took in Lena’s expression. She had to make a choice – to either keep the dream to herself or talk – and there was no overwhelmingly good choice.

Kara drew a heavy breath, expelling it slowly. There was a comfort that washed over her that signaled she was about to make the better choice. Yes, Lena had a lot going on in her life, but this is part of what relationships are about — communication. Being able to lean on your partner when you need the help, and right now they were leaning on each other.

Kara whole-heartedly trusted Lena so she started from the beginning. She started by giving her girlfriend the full truth of why her and Kal-El were the only two to flee Krypton. She didn’t stop until she talked about the woman who may, or may not, be her aunt. Not to add insult to injury, but it was an unfortunate coincidence that the woman that went by Astra also tried to kill Lena.

The only things Kara omitted were Jeremiah, the DEO, and what she knew of the Danvers/Luthor connections. Parts of their shared family history weren’t her place to speak on.

After their heavy discussion, Lena fought sleep most of the morning, eventually succumbing to exhaustion tied behind her laptop in her study. Kara found her with her head face down on a pile of forms and a pool of drool sopping the papers. It was an endearing sight to say the least. One that Kara definitely did not sneak a picture of.

She moved Lena to a more comfortable seat with minimal fuss, leaving her a note in case she woke up. Supergirl was needed to assist with an ongoing car chase that was endangering civilians and Kara didn’t want to wake the sleeping woman after a night of no sleep. She planned on returning before Lena was the wiser.

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Kara and Lena were stood off in a corner of the studio waiting for Cat’s team to finish setting up for their interview. Cat was running through her notes one last time as a cover for watching the couple entertain themselves. They were all smiles and giggles as they existed in their own bubble.

As Cat watched the two young women, she was grateful they found each other at such a precarious time in both their lives. With Lena’s now monthly assassination attempts and taking over her family’s company, having someone like Kara in her life was more than she could have predicted happening.

Cat knew her ex-intern’s secret – without Kara every saying a word – and understood the weight she carried with it. They were an unlikely match, but it looked to be working. They appeared to be
happy in their relationship despite their less than ideal circumstances.

“We’re ready when you are,” one of the crewmen hollered out to the room.

Unbeknownst to Kara and Lena, Cat had requested there be a camera setup to film the two of them. She was taking a different approach with them and wanted to utilize the footage as additional B-roll. Her ideas always panned out better than she planned, and this would be no different.

Hand in hand, the young couple walked over to the stage that had a very casual feel. It wasn’t quite like the setup Cat chose for her interview with Supergirl. It reminded Kara of any unplanned encounter with an old friend. Speaking with someone you once knew in the grocery store, flipping through old photos, catching up with friends that live thousands of miles away in a coffee shop or restaurant, that kind of feel. It was an affable and warm atmosphere, while maintaining a professional and familiar air.

“Ms. Grant, it’s lovely to see you again.”

Kara looked between her boss and her girlfriend, dumbstruck. She wasn’t aware the two women knew one another.

“Likewise,” Cat replied. As if sensing Kara’s unspoken questions, “I had the pleasure of meeting your other half years ago during a few conferences she was forcibly made to attend. I guess you can say we shared a bond in our misery of listening to men explain things they are in fact not an expert of.” The two women shared a laugh at the memory.

“Anyway, shall we get started,” Cat said attempting to shift their conversation back before they got too far off track.

Lena nodded and sat back into the leather sofa with Kara wrapping an arm around her shoulders. Kara crossed her leg, resting her ankle atop her knee, settling in herself.

“You two have gotten quite the attention these past few months. I mean that separately and as a unit.”

Kara giggled as she looked over at her girlfriend. “Completely unintentional,” she admitted. “I thought we were doing a good job staying out of the spotlight,” she joked.

Cat cracked a small smile. “Oh, you’ve been anything but. You two are all entertainment news outlets can talk about – CatCo included. You sealed your fate after that NCU basketball game.”

Lena and Kara both blushed at the mention of that night.

“Is that how you two met?”

Kara had to keep herself from bursting into a fit of laughter. Cat looked between them waiting for a verbal response of any kind.

“Should I tell it,” Lena affectionately asked, to which Kara nodded with muffled laughter. “I think we both know how massive Kara’s appetite can be,” Lena began.

“It’s not something easily forgotten,” Cat said in jest.

“Well, this one,” Lena said poking her thumb in her girlfriend’s direction, “bumped into me with a shopping cart with what had to be half of the store’s stock.”
“It wasn’t that much stuff,” Kara quickly supplied, coming to her own defense. Lena gave her a telling look. “Ok, maybe, but you should never grocery shop while hungry,” she laughed, a playful pout twisting her lips.

Cat couldn’t help the smile turning up the corners of her mouth. “And the rest is history I suppose,” Cat fondly wondered.

“Something like that, yea,” Kara answered as she looked into Lena’s eyes.

“It’s been headline news since Lena’s statement earlier this week. Kara, how are you feeling about Lena’s latest business move?”

Kara took a second to gather her thoughts before answering. “What I hadn’t been expecting was Lena asking my opinion before she went through with it. We come from very different backgrounds and her business savvy is far superior to my own. So, when she brought the idea to me, I listened, offered whatever insight I could from my perspective, and I trusted she knew her own mind. I’ve been insanely supportive of her choice to rebrand LuthorCorp. With Lena at the helm, LCorp will only grow.”

“Care to add to that?”

“I think that about sums it up,” Lena answered with heart filled eyes. “I couldn’t ask for a better partner.” Lena’s voice trailed off as she looked down at her hands. “I’m acutely aware of the way some view Luthors and I want to change that. It won’t be done overnight but I want to show that LCorp is a force for good. I can’t change the past, but I can work towards a better future.”

“Some might point out your timing of such a change. Everything revolving around your brother, Lex Luthor, can’t be good for the company.”

“I thought about the same thing, but this isn’t about a dollar. This is about standing up for what is right even if it means losing a few things along the way. I in no way support what my brother has done and I want to make that abundantly clear. LCorp has no affiliation with ways and thinking of Luthors past – or present for that matter.”

“I have to say, in all my years reporting and running CatCo I don’t think I’ve seen a Luthor take the steps you are now. It doesn’t hurt that you have Supergirl on your side.” It was subtle, but Kara caught the way Cat looked right at her as she said it.

“It was a surprise to all of us that she showed during the Halloween party at The Children’s Hospital. The kids really enjoyed her being there.”

“We have Kara’s team to thank for CatCo’s coverage of the night.”

“I got a call an hour before that she’d be there, so I let the team decide who’d cover the event. One of our staff actually has kids so she brought them along. I heard it was it blast,” Kara explained, knowing it was only partly the truth.

“Seeing a Super and Luthor working together was refreshing. Can we expect any other projects from the two of you?”

“I’m not supposed to say anything yet but LCorp has become one of the sponsors for the Unity Day Parade. I know Supergirl has attended every year since her debut so, it’s possible.”

“Well, I look forward to seeing what’s to come from you both.”
Cat went on to ask other miscellaneous questions about their relationship and how they were adjusting to their new level of popularity. She never crossed a line where her questions became too invasive because she knew the character of her present company.

They closed out the interview with Cat thanking the young women for their time and sat for a half hour more with Cat and Lena catching up. Lena gave her apologies citing LCorp as her reasoning for needing to cut things short. As expected, Cat walked them as far as the elevator leaving the two lovebirds with a bit of alone time before they split. Kara would be getting back to work and so was Lena.

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“Are you sure you don’t want any help?”

Eliza exhaled with her smile, touched that this was Lena’s fourth time offering her help. “Lena, my answer still hasn’t changed.”

Lena nodded in understanding then walked to join her girlfriend and her girlfriend’s sister on the couches. The sisters were consumed in yet another debate over who broke Eliza’s favorite casserole dish three years ago. Lena quickly learned after the first go round it was better to not get involved because there was no winning no matter whose side she chose.

With a break in the sisters’ debate Lena finally found a moment to change the subject. “Is anyone else coming for Thanksgiving?”

“I don’t think so. Last year we all did Friendsgiving. This year the group made plans to be with their families. Winn’s tagging along with James.”

Alex hummed in agreement but looked like there was something she wanted to say. Lena had spoken with Sam a few days ago and she had mentioned having plans for Thanksgiving, but oddly hadn’t said more than that. It was kind of a surprise that the woman wasn’t here after what Lena saw between the two women at her birthday party. Lena shrugged it off as she took a sip of Kara’s cider.

“Girls, would you mind coming over here?”

Kara was first to pop up with Lena and Alex in tow. They all circled the island in Kara’s kitchen waiting for Eliza to finish garnishing the dish in front her.

Eliza took a peek at the clock on the wall before she spoke. “We’re running a little behind but it’s not a problem.”

Alex voiced the question on all three of the young women’s minds. Brows furrowed in confusion, “Late for what?”

“Lillian invited us all over for Thanksgiving.” Eliza was looking directly at Lena as she spoke.

Kara and Alex both, not so subtly, looked over at Lena in an effort to gauge her reaction. Lena was quite expectedly an enigma. It didn’t matter what she was feeling the Danvers women couldn’t read it on her face or in her body language. But Kara, Kara could feel a shift in her girlfriend. On the bright side, it was faint and nontreathening.
Before anyone could say the first word on the potential issue the doorbell rang. Eliza was hesitant to walk away at that very moment – so was Kara. Tipping her glasses down, Kara checked to see who was on the other side since they weren’t expecting anyone. Alex was shuffling to the door before Kara could get out who was there.

Alex was speaking in a low enough tone that only Kara could make it out. Pushing the door open a bit wider, Alex turned around slowly with a sheepish grin.

“I hope Lillian is ok with one more,” she joked with an airy chuckle.

“Hey, Sam!”

Lena quirked an amused brow. “Sam.”

Eliza wiped her hands again on a dish towel and walked towards the open apartment door. “I’m Eliza, Alexandra’s mother. Sam, I take it?”

With a nervous nod, “Yes, ma’am.” She froze in place for a moment when Eliza pulled her into a warm, maternal kind of hug. Lena could see the tension seep from her friend’s shoulders as her mind caught up to what was happening.

Pulling back out of the hug, “It’s nice to meet you Mrs. Danvers.”

“Please, Eliza.”

“So, what’s this about Lillian?”

“My mother has invited us for Thanksgiving dinner,” Lena passively explained.

“Ah,” Sam said with slow nod. “I guess I showed up just in time.”

“Is everyone ok with the change,” Eliza found herself asking.

“Really, that’s up to Lena,” Alex said.

Lena took a moment to take in the four faces looking back at her, waiting for a response. She had only seen Lillian once since the surprise birthday party and even that was in passing. Lena had wanted to apologize for her behavior and check on her mother – really, she did. The thing was, one avoided phone call turned into avoiding the mansion, which graduated from just one day to a full week. Which is how she’s standing here now being asked if she’s ok with seeing her stepmother.

“You don’t have to worry about me,” Lena said, trying for reassurance. “It’s fine. We can go,” she went on, because it really wasn’t a problem. She wasn’t willing to admit it but a part of her was relieved to be going.

“Oh then. Uh,” Eliza ran her hands over her apron as she appraised the room. “Kara and Alex, you two load up the car with the food—and be careful,” she hurried to add just as Kara hopped away to start. “Sam and Lena, if the two of you wouldn’t mind helping me straighten up a few things here, we can be on our way sooner.”

“Mom, what do you want in which car?”

“Anything sweet will not be with your sister,” Eliza humorously said. Kara’s mouth fell open in mock offense as she audibly gasped. “You heard me.” The smile on her face was so big, Lena was sure it made the matriarch’s cheeks hurt.
“I guess the better question is which vehicles are we taking,” Alex wondered as she looked around the room.

“My truck has enough space depending on who rides with me.”

“Kara and Lena will obviously want to ride together. I can ride with Alex, and Eliza you can hop in with whoever you like,” Sam suggested.

“That can work,” Eliza answered.

The Danvers sisters began taking the food down to the respective vehicles as everyone else cleaned up. Another hour later and they were pulling up to the Luthor mansion. Before anyone exited their vehicle, Lillian was stood on the front porch with a welcoming wave.

“She looks happy. That’s a good thing,” Kara absentmindedly said.

“I just hope she’s not angry with me.” The words came tumbling forward before Lena could stop them. Since Eliza told them they weren’t spending Thanksgiving in Kara’s apartment that was one of the many concerns she was faced with.

Kara rubbed Lena’s shoulder supportively, leaving a gentle peck against her cheek. “I’ll be by your side the entire time,” she whispered. “If you want to leave just say the word, ok?”

Lena couldn’t speak around the lump that was forming her throat. After a shaky nod, Lena tilted her head against Kara’s. Taking a deep breath, inhaling what she’s come to recognize as her girlfriend’s scent – sandalwood wrapped in the covering of fresh, untainted air – Lena built up the courage to move from the driver’s seat of her SUV to the well-known walls of her childhood home.

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An early dinner was had, and seconds were served to Alex, Kara, and Sam. To everyone’s surprise, the afternoon into evening passed relatively easy. There were a few hiccups, but nothing that couldn’t be salvaged.

Something everyone could agree was a highlight to the day was what everyone was thankful for. Eliza led things off with, ‘my two amazing daughters that never cease to remind me just how proud of them I am.’ Lillian followed that with, ‘second chances,’ as she looked at only her daughter.

Lena was next. ‘I’m thankful for everyone here,’ she started. With her eyes meeting her mother’s again, ‘and I do mean everyone.’ Kara gave Lena’s hand a quick squeeze under the table. Similar to everyone else, Kara wasn’t prepared for Lena’s candor.

Kara kept it simple. ‘I’m just happy and thankful that everyone is safe, relatively speaking.’ Then there was Alex. ‘I’m thankful for new beginnings.’ Sam closed it out on a similar note as she looked around the table. ‘I’m thankful for the people I have in my life and the opportunities I’ve had in the past year.” She was mainly referencing her promotion to CFO of LCorp under Lena’s leadership as CEO.

Lillian had been watching her daughter the entire meal, Lena had been doing the same, but neither of them noticed. Everyone else had, but not them. Lillian had asked for Eliza’s help to bring out dessert, seeing that it was just before six o’clock and Kara had been dropping thinly veiled hints for the better part of an hour.

“You should really just talk to her Lillian. She’s more understanding than you give her credit for.”
Lillian looked over at her friend as she spun the pie pan around in her hands on the counter. “There’s so much that needs to be said,” Lillian softly began. “I’m not sure she’ll want to hear it all.”

“Waiting is keeping you two from moving on.”

“I know, I know. There’s my health, not to mention how we know each other… your moving into the mansion—”

“We can do that last part together.”

With a small smile, “Thank you Eliza.”

With a smile of her own, “What are friends for? Now, we should really get back out there before Kara goes into some kind of sugar withdrawal,” she laughed.

//

They were all sitting in one of the living rooms watching A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving since no one was particularly excited to watch football all day; no one except Alex and Sam anyway. Lillian and Eliza were seated in their own single armchairs while Kara and Lena were on one couch. Alex and Sam were across from them on their own chair, a coffee table separating the two couples. The movie was coming to a close when Lillian cleared her throat.

As pairs of eyes peered back at her, Lillian schooled her features and went on with what she needed to say. “There’s something Eliza and I need to discuss with all of you.”

Lena studied her mother, while Alex and Kara did the same with Eliza. Sam sat staring into her mason jar, feeling out of place with where the conversation looked to be headed.

“What’s going on,” Kara curiously inquired.

It was Eliza to speak up. “As much as I’ve enjoyed spending time with both you,” she began, looking between her daughters, “I’m not enjoying going between your apartments and a hotel.”

“Mom, I told you. You could stay at my place as long as you need. It’s no trouble. Really,” Kara was quick to explain. In hindsight, it hadn’t been the best solution, but it was working; or so they thought.

“I know honey,” Eliza exhaled. “But you’re both adults and you have lives. Lives that include partners and don’t revolve around your mother.” Alex had never said anything about being in a relationship with Sam, but a mother knows these things.

“Then how does that involve you?” Lena’s question was intended for her mother.

“Seeing as I’m in this big house alone I’ve offered for Eliza to move in. Temporarily of course.”

Lena, Kara, Alex, and Sam were looking back and forth between the matriarchs. Lena and Sam were the only two that didn’t know the two women used to be friends.

“That’s awfully nice of you,” Lena said after a moment.

Lena watched as Eliza looked at Lillian as they seemed to be having a silent conversation.

“Once upon a time I was once close friends with your parents,” Eliza began to explain to Lena. “To keep a long story short, we weren’t much older than you all when there was a falling out between our husbands and we lost touch over the years. This is more of a favor from a friend if you will.”
Though Eliza was the one speaking, Lena was addressing Lillian when it was her turn to speak. “That still doesn’t quite explain everything.”

“You know I’ve been sick for some time now. When everything started back up there was no one I felt I could trust. Then I thought of Eliza. She’s been the one overseeing my care as of late. Those trips I told you about, when I left town? It was my way of making things easier on Eliza.”

“This is just as much to help me as it is to help your mother Lena.”

Lena sat in silence, with a heavy sigh every so often breaking up the monotony.

“Why are we just finding out?” Lena’s question didn’t spur a response, not for several minutes at least.

“That’s not exactly true…” Kara’s voice was lacking a certain level of strength and was cautious. Lena seemed calm right now but how would she react finding out Kara had been keeping another secret from her?

Lena shifted on the sofa to better see her girlfriend. “How is that?”

Kara looked at her sister and her adoptive mother for help, with Alex looking away. Eliza wanted to say something but felt an explanation might be better coming from Kara. She would step in if the need arose.

“I told you a little about Jeremiah and how he disappeared a while back?” Lena silently nodded.

“Aren’t you going to be upset with anyone, it’s me that deserves it. Our intention wasn’t to lie to you all but in order to tell you everything I needed to tell you about my health first. At least… that was the plan.”

“You still haven’t actually.” Lena’s voice was flat. It wasn’t firm nor cruel. Anyone could see she was hurt, but she was taking this all in stride. Lena wasn’t lashing out like she had a month ago; she had learned from that mistake.

“We can discuss that more later, but for now, does anyone have any questions?” Lillian’s question was geared towards the whole group.

“Do we need to help you move any of your stuff,” Alex asked.

Eliza shook her head. “Lillian had my things picked up a few days ago.”

“I suppose you won’t need a ride back then,” Alex said with a breathy laugh. It was an attempt to lighten the conversation.

“I suppose not,” Eliza answered, lightly laughing in turn.

Lillian slowly stood and beckoned for her daughter to follow. It was a short walk to Lena’s office where Lillian led them to. They stood in silence for a time before either of them spoke. Lena was perched on the arm of her leather armchair while her mother sat at her desk.

“I want you to know it wasn’t my intention to keep the Danvers a secret from you. I knew Eliza and Jeremiah had two daughters, but I didn’t know the youngest was your Kara.”
“That can happen when your adopted,” Lena tried to joke but it fell flat. “I just want to know how you’re doing mother. You’ve been keeping it to yourself since you told me.”

“Given your brother’s recent change in behavior, and poor choices on my part, it shouldn’t come as a surprise.”

Lena stared at her mother with a blank expression. Lex was the last thing she wanted to talk about right now. Not to mention Lillian was still in the dark with everything her son had been up to when it came to Lena.

Lena’s latest assassination attempt had been explained to Lillian as a simple home invasion with no mention of Lex. Neither had his involvement been mentioned in her recent kidnapping. Lena knew she had to fill her mother in eventually, but the appropriate time hadn’t revealed itself as of yet.

The room was silent once again.

“Maybe I—”

“You should know—”

The two Luthor women began to speak at the same time.

“No, you should go first,” Lena motioned.

“I was saying you should know that I’m fine – in a manner of speaking. Eliza and I were both concerned with my breast cancer risk.”

“… I didn’t know.”

“I never mentioned it, and that’s my fault. The good news is it wasn’t that.”

“And the bad news?” Lena didn’t notice she was holding her breath.

Lillian tilted her head to the side. “It’s not bad, but it’s not the best either. One of the unfortunate parts of being diagnosed with autoimmune diseases is that there’s no cure for most of them. It’s just a plan of how best to manage your symptoms.”

“And Eliza has found a course of treatment for you?”

“More or less, yes.” After a thoughtful pause, “This is actually something I’ve dealt with for the better part of my life. I contacted Eliza to see if there was something more we could try.”

Lena wanted to speak but she didn’t know the right words to say.

“Some days are better than others. I go through these… periods, if you will, between my flares where my symptoms calm down. The past few months they’ve come back with a vengeance. Nothing we’ve done for the body pain has helped and I’m tired all the time. I have full faith in Eliza, but I also know there’s only so much we can do.”

“You could’ve told me you’ve been feeling like this.”

There was a soft smile that crept on to Lillian’s face. “No, I couldn’t have. We both know that.”

There was no need in denying the truth. “I wanted to apologize. For my reaction on Halloween. I was out of line and you were only trying to do something nice for me. I saw that, but my reaction was more of a gut reaction.”
“I’d like to apologize for springing the party on you the way I did. Kara had explained it wouldn’t be the best idea to throw you a surprise party and I didn’t heed her advice. We’re both learning.”

Lena couldn’t stop the smile she had that mirrored her mother’s. After a short chuckle, “We are definitely still learning.”

Lillian stood up from Lena’s office chair and walked towards her daughter. With a hesitant expression, she opened her arms and waited, leaving the choice for Lena to make.

Choking back a sob, Lena stepped into the hug, wrapping her arms around the matriarch little by little.

“It’s just you and me now Lena,” Lillian whispered.

Dipping her head lower Lena was reminded of just how factual that statement was.

“I don’t want to get my hopes up,” Lena plainly stated, pulling herself out of the hug.

“I’m not going anywhere Lena—”

Sniffling, “That’s not what I mean…” Lena wiped the tears away, mindful of her makeup, before looking at her mother head on. “All I’ve ever wanted was for you to see me mother. If you’re just doing all this as some sick joke let’s just cut things off here and save us both the time and trouble.”

Lillian placed a cold hand to sides of Lena’s face. “I’ve always seen you Lena and this isn’t a joke to me. Do you hear me?”

The women both had tears streaming down their faces. Lena committed the sight to memory because she had never seen her stepmother cry; ever. Not even at Lionel’s funeral did the woman spare a tear. There was no way these were crocodile tears.

“Promise me you and Eliza will keep me updated with any changes to your health.” It was more of a demand than a request but a reasonable one Lena thought. Her relationship with Lillian wouldn’t be anything like Kara’s with Eliza, that was a given, but it was bound to be better than it was. They were trying.

“I can agree to that,” Lillian answered with a airy giggle. “Now, we should clean ourselves up and get back out there.”

The evening closed out in a more upbeat tone. Sam needed to get back home so Alex drove her back to Kara’s apartment to pick up her car before returning to the mansion. Kara was oblivious, still, to the nature of Alex and Sam’s relationship, even after watching them leave together.

It was the middle of the night and Lena was parched. Now that she was awake, she had a taste for something sweet too.

*I hope Kara didn’t get to all of the pie…*

Slipping into her robe and slippers, Lena made her way out of her room as quietly as possible. She had gotten ample practice slipping out of her room in her apartment and not waking Kara. Being in the mansion was no different.

At the bottom of the stairs Lena could see that the kitchen light was already on. Her fight or flight senses were going haywire. It could be anyone inside. Lena took several wary steps to her destination being sure to keep the sound of her footsteps muted. Peaking her head around the corner
there was a familiar head of shorter red hair that afforded her some peace of mind.

“You know, it’s usually your sister that I have to keep out of the kitchen at these hours,” Lena quipped.

Alex smiled around the spoonful of ice cream she had shoved in her mouth as she turned around. “I was hungry?” Lena could barely make that out with her girlfriend’s sister talking with a full mouth.

“It’s ok. I’m here for the same reason,” Lena explained with her eyes on the pie pans. After filling a glass with water, she grabbed a fork from the drawer and dug in.

The two women ate in companionable silence for several minutes before Alex spoke. “I’ve been meaning to talk to you.”

Lena’s brow quirked as she hummed. “Is that so?” She had a feeling she knew where this was going.

“Yea,” the red-haired woman answered. She shoved her spoon into the ice cream before she continued. “Things seem to be getting pretty serious between you and my sister.”

Lena hummed again. “I think so.”

Alex’s features were fixed, her stare intimidating, but it was lost on Lena. Her voice was unwavering as she spoke. “I’m not going to give some big speech and tell you that I don’t want you dating my sister. I like you Lena, but if you hurt her there are countless ways I can make your body disappear,” Alex explained without the slightest crack in her demeanor. Not even a random blink of the eye.

Lena, face deadpan as well, offered her own words of warning. “It would be a shame if something similar were to happen between you and Sam. I was just starting to like you,” she said with a devilish, but playful, smirk.

Alex laughed offhandedly to herself for a second. “Why does it not surprise me you know?”

Lena shrugged, scooping up more of the chocolate pecan pie. “I’m usually busy, and otherwise distracted, but I notice things. Not to mention you did invite her for Thanksgiving.”

“Does Kara know?”

Alex was first to laugh at the thought. It took no time for Alex to join in once she realized who she was talking about. “Your sister is the worst with hints. I’m almost positive she wouldn’t notice a bus headed straight for her until it hit her.”

They both laughed so hard they could barely breathe. Once the fun died down, “Have you met Ruby?”

Alex cleared her throat before she answered. “Not yet, but Sam talks about her all the time.”

“And you’re ok with her having a kid?”

“Why wouldn’t I,” Alex wondered. “The reason my ex, Maggie, and I split was over the topic of children. Our versions of a family didn’t exactly match up.” She moved to put away the ice cream and filled a glass with water for herself.

“Kara had mentioned Maggie being your ex but hadn’t said more than that.”

“Yea…”
Attempting to save them from suffering a moment of awkward silence, “Well, thank you for telling me.”

“No problem. And I’ll talk to Kara, soon.”

“I won’t say a word.”

Alex said goodnight, leaving Lena alone with the pie she had put a small dent in. Of all the ways that conversation could have gone, now that it had happened Lena couldn’t see it playing out any other way. It also felt good to threaten someone dating one of her closest friends, but she wouldn’t be admitting that out loud any time soon.

It was also nice to have a moment with Alex. They came few and far between for the two of them, but it always left Lena – and Alex – feeling like she was getting closer to the other woman in their own weird way. If her relationship with Kara lasted for the long haul, Lena didn’t mind one bit gaining Alex as a sister.

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Kara and Alex had becoming regular fixtures in the Luthor mansion after Eliza’s moving in. It had been a few weeks and their mother was more than settled in. Lena had even made a point of stopping by the house when she finished with work when she could. Things were calm. Things were good.

There was nothing wrong with the change in everyone’s routine, but it was unnerving. After months of nonstop madness, having a reprieve, no matter how brief, was off putting. Alex couldn’t shake the feeling that something was coming. There was still no sign of Lex but the hate crimes against aliens hadn’t decreased, which was odd. If Lex really was the only one behind it all, with his laying low it was a reasonable assumption things would calm down until he resurfaced. Since that wasn’t the case, maybe Lex wasn’t working alone.

There was still no sign of Jeremiah and neither of the Danvers sisters so much as mentioned his name around Eliza. They could see the toll his actions were taking on their mother. The bags under her eyes were proof she wasn’t sleeping well. She was more withdrawn than usual and had barely left the house; even before moving in with Lillian. Her smiles weren’t as bright and that hurt Kara the most. She knew Eliza was putting on a brave face for her children, but the stress of the situation was eating away at her happiness a little more every day.

Kara’s one moment of good news came during her meeting with Cat. It was the very conversation that sprung her to drop in on her girlfriend at work unannounced. She had called Jess, Lena’s assistant, just to make sure Lena wasn’t in a meeting, but Kara was already on the elevator at that point.

“Hey Kara, your timing is perfect, as always. Ms. Luthor just finished a conference call, so you can head on in.”

“Thanks Jess,” Kara replied, before dropping a small bag of chocolate candies on the woman’s desk with a thankful smile.

Foregoing a knock, Kara slowly pushed Lena’s office door open, poking her head through the slot. It took a few seconds for Lena to notice her door was being opened, but once she had her face lit up.
“Hey you,” Lena affectionately called out. Motioning for Kara to come in, “Are you sure you can’t read minds because I was just about to call you.”

Nervously laughing Kara walked further into Lena’s office, closing the door behind her. When she didn’t answer, Lena looked up from her paperwork with a worried look on her face.

“Is everything alright?”

“Yea- yea, everything’s ok. Good—great actually,” Kara rambled, fiddling with her glasses. Sitting down on Lena’s black sofa that they regularly ate their lunch on, Kara ran her hands across her thighs. She was thinking of the best way to explain what just happened to her.

“Then why do you like everything’s not…”

With a strangled chuckle and head bob side-to-side Kara found the words she was searching for. “I had a chat with Cat this morning. I thought we were going to talk about your article but uhm…” She watched as Lena traipsed over to sit beside her, heels clacking against glistening white floors. “I’ve worked at CatCo for some time now, and I’ve always looked at Cat as my mentor.”

“You’ve learned a lot from her. I can imagine she sees something in you since she gave you that promotion.”

Kara bowed her head. “It extends farther than just the promotion.”

“How do you mean,” Lena asked with raised eyebrows creasing her forehead.

“You know I only have a semester’s worth of classes before I graduate.” Lena hummed, confirming the statement. “She spoke with the Dean of the Arts and Letters College. During our meeting she told me that my work with CatCo gave me more than just the three internship credits I earned the semester I started at the company.”

Lena was following Kara’s story, but it wasn’t clear just yet where it was going. “Ok,” she drawled, trying to understand what exactly Kara was trying to say to her.

Kara stared into Lena’s understanding eyes, drawing a deep breath. Exhaling audibly, Kara pushed out the words that summed it all up. “After speaking to the Dean, whatever they talked about, I’m able to graduate this semester.”

“Wait, aren’t your finals in a week or so?”

“Yea,” Kara confirmed. “Just shy of two weeks.”

Lena spoke simply to verify what she thought Kara was saying. “Then… If you pass all your finals, you can graduate?”

“Pretty much. The Dean pushed a few things through so that it looks like I applied for graduation on time should I choose to go that route. I can pick up my cap and gown Friday.”

“Is that what you want?”

“I hadn’t really thought about it because I thought I had one more semester.”

“And now? How do you feel about it?”

“It’s happening really fast, but I want to do this. It’s good… It’s good,” she repeated more excitedly.
Lena placed her hand to her girlfriend’s cheek, swiping a thumb over her cheekbone. “I’m happy for you love. You deserve this.”

Kara involuntarily blushed as she leaned into Lena’s hand. “Thank you. I just don’t know why Cat is doing this.”

“Sometimes it’s better not to ask questions,” Lena said as she leaned in, gently planting a kiss upon Kara’s lips.

“Like now,” Kara asked as their lips separated.

After another quick peck, “Especially now,” Lena flirtatiously answered. Pulling back to look into Kara’s eyes, “I believe we’re due for a celebration. Have you talked to Eliza and Alex?”

“Not yet, they’re next. I wanted to work it out with you before I talked to them.”

Lena seductively swiped her lipstick off of Kara’s lips before standing and tugging her skirt back down to full length. “You go talk to your mother and sister and I’ll see you tonight at the house.”

“Did you want me to pick you when you got off?”

“There’s no need. I have a late afternoon meeting with a few prospective manufactures. It shouldn’t run long, but I want to make a few stops first.”

Kara stood, wrapping her arms around the brunette’s waist. “I’ll see you tonight then.” As Kara leaned in for their usual goodbye kiss, Jess knocked on the door. Simultaneously sighing and laughing, “She’s the one with perfect timing,” Kara joked. Lena didn’t understand the joke but giggled anyway.

This wouldn’t have been the first time Lena’s assistant caught them with someone’s tongue down the other’s throat. Jess learned fairly quickly to always knock whenever Kara stopped by.

——

Kara was donned in her black cap and gown, with different university and club sashes around her neck, as she waited outside of the coliseum. Kara was waiting on Alex to call so it would be easier to find each other after the ceremony. While she waited, Kara inhaled a filling gulp of cold air and let the cacophony of the city’s sounds consume her senses.

It was a chilly Tuesday afternoon that felt like any other. As Kara’s head rolled backwards, she closed her eyes and the chatter of other excited graduates became white noise. She was the only motionless presence in a sea of chaotically animated beings. She was, content.

When Kara woke up that morning, her thoughts were so loud and scattered. But now, now that she’s actually graduated, Kara could finally exhale. All throughout her finals and the extra time between her last exam and graduation day, she couldn’t shake this feeling that something wasn’t quite right.

With all the help Lena could offer, Kara aced her Chemistry final; which was a standardized test. Having Lena as a study partner meant that Kara had more time to focus on her other classes. Time that was more than needed after not doing so well on her midterms. The higher her test scores, the better. But there was still that sinking feeling.
Lex had been gone for too long. Something wasn’t adding up and it bothered more than just Kara. Alex had spent her free time at the DEO checking, and rechecking, all their leads for anything that could help. Lena was, well, she was handling all things Lex in a very Lena way. Meaning there were boxes, a lot of tiny imaginary boxes, shoved down deep that were actively being avoided and disregarded. She would talk to Kara when prompted, but never initiated conversations. Lillian was even walking around the mansion as though she were holding her breath, waiting for the other shoe to drop. Alex kept repeating that it seemed like Lillian knew more than she was letting on, but she hadn’t come up with a good way to question the woman’s actions without proof.

With all that, Kara had graduated. She walked across the stage and received the sheet of paper that was a place holder for her actual diploma; that would come in the mail in about a month, she had joked to herself. This was a milestone for Kara Danvers thanks to the support of her boss and mentor Cat Grant. A woman Kara had yet to formally thanked, but she wasn’t the only one Kara hadn’t addressed.

After Alex told her about the woman that introduced herself as Astra, Kara was bombarded by thoughts of what it would have been like to share this milestone with her aunt. A woman that didn’t even get to see her graduate high school, let alone see her grow into the woman she now was. It was a depressing sequence of thoughts that she had yet to verbalize to anyone and wasn’t going to until she had confirmation of this woman’s identity.

Kara’s pocket began to vibrate, and she groaned. Not because she wasn’t overjoyed to see her family and girlfriend, but because opening her eyes meant that she had to get back to her life.

“We just got out of the building. Lillian wasn’t feeling so great so she and mom’ll meet us back at the mansion.”

“That’s ok. Uhm, I’m across the street. There were less people over here and I thought it would be easier to find me.”

“We’re on our way.”

Kara could hear her sister’s heartbeat along with her girlfriend’s. Two of the calmest noises in her life right now. Before she could focus too keenly on the sounds, Kara was bumped on the shoulder and she was actually moved. Normally, when bumped by a human she never budged an inch unless she wanted to. Realizing what being moved meant Kara frantically looked up to find who collided with her. Searching every face and head of hair in her vicinity Kara couldn’t place anyone. Not until she spotted a familiar streak of grey hair accentuated by the brown hair it rested upon.

“Earth to Kara,” Alex laughed as she swiped her hand in front of Kara’s face. “I’ve been calling your name ya know?”

Kara turned to face her adoptive sister with a puzzled expression before turning back to find that vein of grey.

“Hey, is everything alright,” Alex asked in a low, concerned tone.

Kara lost the head of hair when she looked away. “I, uh, I thought I saw someone I knew…”

Alex rubbed her hand slowly up Kara’s arm. “Hey, today is a happy day. No frowning. Tell her Lena.”

A warm smile covered Lena’s face, creasing her eyes at the corners. “Darling, she’s right. You still have to decide where you want to celebrate.”
“If you don’t, I have it on good authority that your girlfriend will try to buy out a restaurant for the
day just for the occasion,” Sam chipped in, bouncing a little girl in her arms.

Kara cracked a smile at Sam’s warning because she knew the lengths her girlfriend would go to in
such a situation. “Well it’ll have to be somewhere this cutie will have fun too,” Kara said as she
wiggled her fingers near the child’s grabbing hands.

“Oh, you don’t have to worry about us. I actually need to get this one to a doctor’s appointment in a
few hours,” Sam mentioned as she looked down at her daughter.

With an exaggerated mock pout and laughing the entire time, “Oh, that’s no fun. Ruby is definitely
my favorite person! What will I do without those chubby cheeks and perfect spit bubbles?” Alex and
Lena swatted at her arms then laughed along as well. Ruby giggled louder as if she knew just how
adorable she was.

“I know James’ graduation was yesterday, and I think Winn’s was this morning. I have no idea when
Lucy walks. We can always see if everyone just wants to head to The Avenue for a few drinks,”
Alex proposed. “We don’t have to do anything too over the top since mom is throwing you that party
this weekend.”

“That could work,” Lena chimed in as she gestured towards the redhead.

“That sounds perfect actually. We can check in with mom and Lillian in a little while too.”

Alex grabbed Ruby from Sam so the brunette could grab something for Ruby out of her diaper bag
that was more of a backpack than traditional diaper bag. “Lena actually called during our walk over
here to make sure they made it back to the mansion ok. They left right after you crossed the stage.”

Kara’s graduating class from the College of Arts and Letters wasn’t large, but her last name did start
with a D, so the two women had an adequate amount time to at least make it out of the city limits.

All of a sudden, Kara couldn’t shake the feeling she was being watched. Not in an ominous,
someone wants to kill her kind of way, but a protective, someone’s just watching over her kind of
way. She searched the rooftops around them but couldn’t make out anything. Lena noticed Kara’s
fluctuating behavior but kept her observations to herself until they were alone.

“I can drive us to the bar,” Lena offered.

“Shotgun,” Kara exclaimed.

Alex and Sam both shook their heads. “I’m going to walk these two to their car and I’ll meet you
guys there.”

Kara nodded. “I’ll call everybody else and see if they’re free.” Then everyone went their separate
ways.

Lena had her arm wrapped through Kara’s as they walked to the parking garage. They had another
two blocks to go so it was now or never to make sure Kara really was fine.

Briefly glancing to her left, “You seem distracted. Is everything alright?”

Kara hummed as she searched the skyline for nothing in particular. “Yea, why do you ask?”

Lena weighed her options carefully. She didn’t want to say the wrong thing, or the right thing the
wrong way. “You haven’t really been yourself since you found out you’d be graduating. Were you
not ready or is it something else?"

There was no immediate answer from Kara, just silence. In fact, she was quiet the remainder of the walk to Lena’s SUV. She remained silent as she opened Lena’s door for her, and even after hopping in the truck herself.

“IT’s my aunt,” Kara whispered, voice cracking. “At least I think it’s her.”

There was a crinkle between Lena’s brows as her features scrunched in the middle. “I don’t understand,” she plainly confessed.

“Remember when we talked about the woman that saved us all after Lex kidnapped you?” Lena nodded. “Alex told me during your birthday party that the woman went by Astra, the same name as my aunt.”

“You think they’re the same woman?”

Kara was reluctant to admit it, but who better to than Lena since her sister wasn’t around? “I do. I can’t explain it, and I know it doesn’t make sense, but I think she’s alive and on Earth. I think she’s been watching over me the past few months.”

Lena gave her girlfriend’s forearm a supportive squeeze. “IT doesn’t have to make sense to me Kara. If you believe she’s alive then we’ll just have to find out.”

“Do you mean that?”

“Of course I do Kara. She’s your family. Have you talked to Alex about this?”

Shaking her head, “Not yet. She already knows about it because the kidnapping wasn’t our first encounter with her. I just haven’t gotten around to telling her that I think my aunt is this mysterious woman we’ve been trying to track down for months now.”

Lena’s light giggle brought a tiny grin to Kara’s face. “You may want to do that soon love.”

Kara turned to face her girlfriend, resting her elbow on the middle console. “Thank you, Lena,” Kara said with all the sincerity and feeling she could muster.

Lena studied Kara’s eyes and melted at the way she was being looked at. Kara was looking at her like she was Kara’s favorite star in the night sky. A sight painstakingly more special than seeing a flicker of Krypton’s light one last time in that vast blanket of darkness. “I know the Luthors have a bad reputation, but I do care Kara.”

“And I’m so glad I’m one of the people you care about.” Kara hoped that Lena caught on to her word choice. They both knew that they loved the other but neither of them had so much as uttered the words out loud to anyone other than themselves. One day, and hopefully not the day after never, they would finally get to say those three little words to each other.

Lena delicately kissed the corner of Kara’s mouth with loaded eyes. She knew exactly what Kara was trying to say without saying it, but it was a big step for her. Lena had never said she loved anyone since living with the Luthors. Wanting to tell Kara, and knowing it was the only way she could describe how she felt about the blonde, was a lot for Lena.

Considering what she was experiencing with her brother, she didn’t want to speak the words too soon. She didn’t want Kara to think that she was expressing her true feelings only because of their current situation so Lena held back. She wanted to say those three words at the perfect time and not
have doubt dancing around on the fringes.

With one more soft peck from Kara this time, Kara pulled out her cellphone and began making her calls. Lena waited for a moment longer before turning on her truck and pulling out of the hectic parking deck.

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Kara was leaned, with her back turned and elbows resting on the bar, as she waited for everyone’s next round of drinks. Lena predictably insisted on opening a tab for everyone when she and Kara arrived. Taking in the moment, Kara watched everyone from across the bar.

Alex had successfully goaded Lena into a pool match, loser having to do something ridiculous that Kara couldn’t quite remember. Winn was flirting with his favorite waitress per everyone’s support and telling him to just bite the bullet. Kara fulfilled her promise to a favor of curly haired man’s choosing by starting up a conversation between him and Lyra, the waitress on his fancying. James and Lucy were at the pool table with Alex and Lena egging on the trash talk.

She was happy and overflowing with adoration and love for her present company. Maybe she had been wrong before for thinking something bad was going to happen. Everyone was having fun and enjoying themselves. When their drinks were ready, Kara started with giving Winn and Lyra’s theirs before heading to the pool table to join everyone else.

“Maybe you don’t have terrible taste in women Danvers. This one just might beat Alex at her own game,” Lucy laughed as Kara walked up.

Alex had a hand on her hip, pool stick in the other as she waited for her turn. Kara noticed the way her sister was studying the table, calculating her next moves should Lena miss her shot.

Kara sat the tray of drinks on a nearby table, “I tried to tell her not to doubt Lena. She went to boarding school. That should be warning enough that this wasn’t going to be an easy win.”

After Lena sank her shot, “And what it that supposed to mean,” she asked with mock offence and a quirked brow.

“Oh nothing,” Kara snickered.

Lena sank her last two balls then the eight ball in the middle pocket from what Kara thought was an impossible angle. Lena stood, graciously gloating, beside Alex. Like the good sport Alex is, she shook Lena’s hand before swatting it away and grabbing her drink.

Lena laughed good-naturedly at the motion as she walked over to Kara, wrapping her arms around Kara’s waist. “Care for a game?”

“Oh, no, I’m good. I can barely beat Alex, and when I do it’s by luck. You just did it with no sweat. Those are losing odds,” Kara recognized as she took a sip of her drink, pushing her glasses up the bridge of her nose as she did so.

“I’ll take that challenge,” Lucy shouted. James, Lena, and Kara gave her look while Alex waved her on towards the abandoned pool stick.

“Heads up, she doesn’t play fair,” Kara whispered with a smile.

“I heard that,” Lucy said as she racked the balls.
“Kiss for good luck,” Lena requested, to which Kara instantly granted.

Feigning disgust, “You two are so cute it makes me sick,” Lucy teased. “Now, are we going to play or are you two just going to suck face the whole time?”

“For someone so small you sure have a lot of bark, that I can only imagine rivals your bite,” Lena joked in turn.

“Only if you’re into.” Lucy’s suggestive grin was so big Lena nearly missed the woman winking at her.

“I think I can get on board with that,” Lena quipped, innocently playing along.

“I mean, I’m not here at all,” James said, laughing a little at his girlfriend’s casual behavior.

Lucy started the game off but ultimately lost right along with Alex, who chuckled every time Lucy brushed against Lena to distract her. Or bent over to get Lena to look away from her shot. Everyone knew how harmless Lucy’s actions were but it made it funnier to watch as they essentially had no effect on Lena’s ability to play.

Winn and Lyra stopped by to let everyone know they were leaving for the night. Winn told Kara he’d see her at the party, flashing his toothy grin and a thumbs up at his friend as he left with his crush.

Staring at the shutting door, “What would he do without us,” Alex questioned with an endearing smile.

“Still be tongue tied while gawking at Lyra from across the room,” James said lightly in jest.

“But he’s so cute,” Lucy said in a sing-song voice.

“He is,” Lena agreed, her head tilted to the side as she after watching Winn awkwardly interact with the alien woman all evening.

Trading pool for random conversation, the group returned to their table closing out their evening. Alex was first to leave having work in the morning. James and Lucy weren’t far behind her. Lena settled their tab and walked towards her girlfriend stood by the door with their coats in hand.

“Why thank you,” Lena smiled.

Helping her girlfriend into her coat, “Did you enjoy yourself?”

“The question is, did you?”

Kara nodded at Lena’s back then realized the woman didn’t see her make the gesture. “I did. It got my mind off things for a while. Which I really needed… I had fun,” she fondly mumbled to herself.

“Then I’d say the time was well spent.” As the two walked out of the bar Lena wrapped her coat tighter around her body as she looked around.

Lights from neon signs and traffic lights danced across every surface that glistened. There wasn’t a chance in the forecast, but by the looks of things, at best, there was a period of moderate misting.

For a Tuesday night, the area was busier than usual. Lena had to slide off to the side so she wasn’t in the direct path of passersby. Moving was the best decision because it got her out of the eyeline of a strange man across the street that appeared to be staring at her. Kara was beside her a moment later,
running her hands along the sides of Lena’s arms to warm her up.

“What do you say we—”

Lena couldn’t get her question out before Kara had her wrapped in her arms and shielding her from something. It all happened so fast, Lena wasn’t confident in what she had just seen.

That stranger that was staring at her, Lena thought she saw him make his way across the street. It could’ve been him but there were a number of people in the same area and it was dark out. One second he was there, the next he wasn’t. People stared at Lena all the time, so she hadn’t put stock into this man being any different.

“Lena, Lena are you ok,” Kara shouted.

Lena was trying catch up to the fact that she was pinned between her golden-haired girlfriend and some random sedan. It took Kara a few tries of asking before Lena, in a shaky motion, nodded in response. Her brain was still reeling.

The man was there, then gone. Kara exited the bar and then… There was a small blank there, but she watched the whole thing happen.

“Lena, I need to make sure everyone else is ok. Will you be ok for one second by yourself?” There was a barely perceptible shake to Lena’s hands as Kara held them. “I promise, I’ll be right back. I won’t be far.”

He was there, and then he wasn’t. What was she missing…

“Yea—yes,” Lena distractedly answered. “I’ll be fine.” Jutting her chin forward, “Go.”

Kara had run off and Lena went over the past few minutes once again in her mind. A man in a damp jacket, who had to have been outside waiting for something, was watching her exit the bar. When she had, he changed locations. Kara wasn’t far behind her… Then the blonde tensed up. Lena remembered the grasp of Kara’s hands on her arms tightening before she was weightlessly being shoved into the car. Kara was using herself as a shield from an explosion.

The man had vanished because he was a part of that explosion. He must have been waiting for confirmation that she, or Kara – or both of them for that matter – were inside. Then again, The Avenue is – was, Lena corrected – one of the only alien friendly bars so it could be a coincidence that they were even around for this. But how likely was that?

The Avenue was there one moment, and gone the next. As she regained control of her sense of self, Lena heard blood curdling screams and car alarms blaring at varying levels. Knowing she needed to help in any way possible, Lena started with those closest to her.

There was a woman reaching out for help a few feet from her that Lena dragged away from the burning building. There was a group of people trying to help lift a car pinning an alien underneath. The couple that owned the vehicle were still inside. As Lena looked around at the wreckage and debris, she realized that if it weren’t for Kara, she’d be dead. The blast radius went well into the street, and even beyond where they stood.

The businesses surrounding The Avenue weren’t in much better shape. Lena went right back to helping those that she could until Kara returned, most likely as Supergirl. But before she did, she dialed Alex’s number not having a better resource to call in this situation.
As Kara left out the bar she noticed that Lena wasn’t on the other side of the door. Someone had stopped her to ask about directions to the nearest ATM, to which she graciously assisted with. When she found Lena, she could tell that the woman was shivering without even touching her. Her beanie and heavy coat were simply for show, but she knew that Lena hated being cold.

To keep her girlfriend at least slightly warm Kara rubbed her hands against Lena’s arms hoping the friction would bring the woman some warmth. It was faint at first, but then Kara was sure that she could hear a man’s voice calling for people to move. There was a look on Lena’s face that wasn’t there a second ago and that was all the indication she needed.

Positioning herself between Lena and the direction the man’s voice was coming from, Kara braced herself for whatever was to come. There was the shrill shout from a random woman, silence, then the characteristic sounds of an explosion.

Shrapnel rapped against her back as she used her entire body to cover Lena. In a split second she had to decide how to proceed. If she had seen the man, or even noticed his voice sooner, she may have been able to save everyone on the street, but the sad reality was that she didn’t. There were far too many people around for her to strongarm the bomber and she wasn’t even in her suit. If any of that had been the case, none of this would have mattered. She could have potentially saved everyone.

Lena was looking everywhere and nowhere at the same time. “Lena, Lena are you ok,” Kara shouted.

The brunette’s eyes were distant. She wasn’t responding but she looked ok, just shaken up.

“Lena, I need to make sure everyone else is ok. Will you be ok for one second by yourself?” She wrapped her hands around Lena’s minutely shaking ones. “I promise, I’ll be right back. I won’t be far.”

After a beat, “Yea—yes,” Lena distractedly answered. “I’ll be fine.” Jutting her chin forward, “Go.”

With all the confusion and chaos going on, Kara found a small corridor to sneak into to change into her Supersuit to better help the victims of the attack. There were so many people screaming out for help. She couldn’t get to everyone fast enough. The roof of The Avenue had collapsed onto its patron’s with only a few surviving.

She checked the entire pile of rubble before she moved onto the other buildings, keeping a well-trained ear out for Lena. She had already touched base with J’onn when she overhead Lena and Alex on the phone. J’onn had told her they were about four minutes out and for her to contain the situation as best she could.

Kara had just about finished clearing the area when she heard the distant and distinct sound of DEO sirens. It wouldn’t be much longer now ‘til backup arrived.

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Kara was pacing back and forth behind the command center in the DEO headquarters, still suited up, with two sets of eyes on her. Lena was in the infirmary being looked over despite her repeated refusal.

“Just start from the beginning one more time,” J’onn requested. “I just want to make sure we’re all on
Kara sighed as she pinched the bridge of her nose in frustration, continuing along her path. “Lena and I were leaving The Avenue. I was stopped by someone asking for directions on my way out. When I got outside, I overheard a man’s voice shouting for people to move.”

“You didn’t see his face at all,” Alex questioned.

“For the fourth time, no,” Kara curtly replied. “Lena might have. All I heard was his voice. It was raspy and strained. It sounded like he gargled rocks his entire life.”

Alex snickered to herself, then cleared her throat, coughing to cover it up. “Continue,” she said, forcing out a more professional tone.

“There were a number of civilians on the street, so my options were limited. I barely had enough time to get Lena out of the way when the blast went off.”

“From the evidence and statements we were able to gather at the scene, the attacker was a suicide bomber.” J’onn shook his head as he read back over his notes on the case for the umpteenth time trying to figure out a motive.

“The Avenue was clearly his target because he stopped just outside its door. Not to mention the hate crimes we’re still handling. There’s a connection there, but a bombing, like this, doesn’t fit the profile. Not one bit,” he added to himself, rubbing at his chin in thought.

“Do you think the man was targeting Lena?”

“I was just as much a potential target as Kara or any of the aliens in that bar,” Lena answered as she entered the room. “His jacket was soiled so he had been standing out in the rain. He was waiting for someone, that much is clear.” Lena walked to stand by Kara’s side before continuing. “I don’t think I was the target, but I believe I was meant to see it. The man crossed the road once Kara and I were both outside. He watched me and waited until he saw her.”

“The only person we know with that kind of motive is Lex, and he’s been in hiding for months now,” Alex pointed out.

J’onn had looked up from his tablet as he studied both Kara and Lena. “There will be a few forms for you to fill out seeing as you know about Kara.” J’onn’s tone was light, but his voice left little to imagination.

Kara hadn’t gotten around to informing everyone that she had shared her secret with Lena, but when did she have time? Alex had picked up on the fact that Lena was calling Supergirl by her cover identity but didn’t see it as a big deal. If this had been back when the two first met, Alex would have been livid. At that time Lena was your run of the mill Luthor and a stranger. Now, the way the two women looked at each other, there was no way Lena didn’t know Kara was Kryptonian. It was Kara’s truth, and if she felt comfortable and safe enough to share that with Lena, who was she to get in the way of that? Even still, she would always operate from a place of caution as Kara’s older sister and would naturally be wary of everyone in her sister’s life.

They weren’t given the briefest of moments to dwell on the news when a symbol appeared across every monitor in the room. Alex whipped out her phone and the same logo was brandished there as well. It read, ‘C.A.D.M.U.S.’ and revolved in a slow circle. It was a name, an organization, they had never heard of before that night.

The logo spun round and round for a few minutes when a man’s voice came booming from every
“Attention denizens of National City,” a man’s voice rang out. Everyone at the command center stared at one screen or another as they listened. “Many of you have already received word of the attack that took place downtown earlier this evening. You may also be wondering why anyone would carry out such a heinous act. We are C.A.D.M.U.S. and our mission is quite simple. To rid our home of this alien infestation that we have been plagued with. Tonight was merely the beginning.”

The message repeated a few times more before shutting off and screens returned to normal.

“I guess we have our answer,” Lena spoke up, waving her arm forward in a general manner.

“Question now is who’s C.A.D.M.U.S and to what end are they willing to accomplish this goal of theirs,” said J’onn.

Without looking at anyone directly, “Something tells me my brother is behind this. Lex disappears, and this group pops up taking responsibility for the bombing. What are the odds?”

“Lena’s right. This has to be Lex. First, he tried to kill Lena with that shooter, then the other attacks since then. More than any other alien, he wants Kal-El and I dead so tonight wasn’t a coincidence. It was a strategic attack. He was after me,” Kara explained, face expressionless.

“I still don’t think he’s acting alone,” Lena went on to say.

Alex shook her head. “You might be right about that. Maggie and I are still following the trail from the paperwork you gave me a while back. We may even need to look into any L.Corp facilities in the surrounding areas as potential hideouts. He’s a wanted man with very few options at his disposal.”

“I can get on that first thing. I’ve shut down quite a few projects and factories that Lex pushed through. I’m bound to stumble across something.”

“Alright, everyone has their assignments. Lena and Alex, both of you find as much as you can to Lex’s potential whereabouts and who’s funding this operation. Kara and I will do what we can to keep the peace in the meantime.”

Chapter End Notes

Because I want to see this story all the way through, I'm going to space out my updates to every other week on Tuesdays or Wednesdays. By doing so, I'm hoping to take some of the (self-imposed) pressure off myself to update every week. Now that a few things have shifted in my life I don't have the same time on my hands to maintain our weekly schedule. I hope that's alright with everyone. I'm not quitting on you, just readjusting things :)

Now that that's out of the way, what did y'all think of the chapter?! There was a lot going on but I tried to break it all up in a semi-comprehensible manner. We went through a(n American) holiday and a graduation. There was Lena and Lillian. Alex and Lena even had a moment. More development with Alex and Sam. I plan on circling back so we can find out more about Cat helping Kara, again lol. What else? CADMUS! Ruby! All the goodies lol. Tell me what you liked the most and where you see things
heading.
Constructive criticism/opinions/suggestions/all that good stuff, it's always welcomed and appreciated.

Once again, I'm sorry for ghosting everyone but I'm back!
Until next time...
Chapter Notes

The day after posting the last chapter I started getting sick, and I’ve been sick since. I only started feeling better on Sunday. I really wish I was joking when I said that. I apologize for being late, but I come bearing my usual gift lol. I want to forewarn everyone that I wrote the end of this chapter in what I believe to be a fever-induced haze lol. Other parts, I wrote a sentence or two before falling asleep at my desk. It was a doozy writing this chapter and I’ll only be accepting half-responsibility for whatever may transpire :). But I hope everyone’s doing alright!

There's a bit of violence, but nothing horrifically described. I apologize for any and all typos/mistakes. Oh, and I almost forgot, the underlined sentences are being spoken in a different language (it'll make sense when you get there).

Sit back and let your mind roam free.

For the first time in weeks they were alone. They were snuggled into one another, on Kara’s sofa, watching some holiday movie Kara had begged to watch. Now that Eliza was more than settled into the Luthor mansion, the Danvers girls and Lena were spending more time elsewhere. Lena had barely step foot in her apartment in the same amount of time but had plans of going first thing in the morning.

“You’ve been awfully quiet.” Kara’s voice was soft and supportive. She kept her focus on the television not wanting to spook or force her girlfriend into talking if she wasn’t ready. It was usually better if she treated these kinds of situations like they were no big deal. Similar to not running to a small child when they fall. Let them tell you if anything is wrong before assuming it is. “What’s on your mind.”

Kara leaned to grab the remote, turning the television down incase Lena really did want to talk about anything. Lena squirmed around a bit before wrapping her arms around her center. After a muffled huff, “Alex and I have narrowed down Lex’s whereabouts, but we’ve come up with nothing. I feel like we’re missing something.”

“I thought we were taking a break from that tonight,” Kara asked, reminding Lena of their conversation not even an hour ago.

“We did, but I can’t shake this feeling,” Lena worried, running a hand through her hair.

It was clear Lena wouldn’t be taking a break from their investigation, so Kara adjusted herself on the couch to give her girlfriend her full and undivided attention. “Ok. What’s your gut telling you?” Kara was going for supportive and hoped it was coming off as begrudging or impatient.

Underneath it all she was upset they weren’t going to finish the movie. The couple hadn’t spent a whole of time together outside of working Lex’s case. When one of them had a block of unplanned time the other was busy, and it continually worked out that way. This was the first night where their schedules matched, and it only took a couple hours for them to circle right back the very thing
Kara wasn’t angry, in fact, she wasn’t even all that surprised. Stopping Lex carried an altogether different weight for Lena. If the two were going to spend their time helping the brunette to work through her trains of thought instead of decompressing, Kara would oblige because she knew Lena wasn’t deliberately avoiding spending time with her. She was, in part, understandably distracted.

Lena ran over everything one last time in her head before rattling off the list of concerns she and Alex had come up with. “Now that CADMUS is a player, which could still be Lex, the game has changed. Given all the moving parts and pieces to this, I can’t help but wonder what’s next. When I allow myself to explore the possibilities based on recent events, I’m led to believe the parade will be his next target.”

Kara nodded slowly. “Because of the bar?”

“The bar, the kidnappings, the assassination attempts… We’ll both be there. What better place?”

Kara was silent for a time, examining Lena’s thoughts from her own perspective. “Why so publicly then? The parade will have both aliens and humans. Besides, it’s the holidays.”

“Are you forgetting the bombing? There were human and alien casualties Kara.”

“I know, I know,” Kara hurriedly replied. Shifting uncomfortably in her seat and fiddling with her hands, “Ok, let’s say you’re right. The parade is in a few days and there’s no way the Mayor will cancel it. What are we supposed to do? Not show up?”

Lena looked like she was mulling it over herself. “This has become a game to Lex. If he’s playing to win, it’s about more than making a statement. There’s something else he stands to gain by doing this.”

“Killing a Super would definitely be top of that list,” Kara huffed as she leaned backwards, intentionally wry. She folded her arms over her chest.

Lena’s thoughts came in quick succession after that. She shot up off the couch so fast she scared Kara. “That’s it Kara. It’s not about either one of us. If he can cause a big enough scene that you and the FBI couldn’t handle on your own, guess who’d show up,” she said with an exultant half smile that was growing larger because she just knew she had figured it out.

“Superman,” Kara answered with a low, breathy voice. “That makes sense Lena! An attack on the parade is the best cover to draw him to the city.” Kara popped off the couch and held Lena’s face in her hands.

She quickly kissed over Lena’s face, proud that the brunette had potentially figured out Lex’s plan. “I’m going to head over to my apartment,” Lena giggled, the delicate touches of her girlfriend’s lips tickling her face. “I think Alex and I need to doublecheck our findings. There’s one warehouse in particular I think is sturdy enough to contain your cousin.”

“Sure,” Kara said after one last peck to Lena’s nose. “I’ll head in and talk to J’onn.”

Lena gave her beautiful girlfriend a kiss goodbye, assuring the blonde she’d be back as soon as she found what she was looking for. The ride over to her apartment was quick. The elevator ride to the top floor was even faster. Her key clicked into the two locks one after another. Flicking on the lights, Lena threw her purse on the stand by the door, her keys falling right after it.

Glancing to her left, wondering where she left the file box specifically tailored to her brother, Lena
noticed a body in the corner sat at her chess table. If she were anyone else, such a sight would have frightened her. After the past few months she’d experienced, this hadn’t even phased her.

Her apartment had been unoccupied for weeks, so someone being inside was alarming; even if she didn’t outwardly convey as much. Then she thought about it. She hadn’t been back to her apartment in a while. She had accidentally created the perfect hiding spot.

“Why am I not surprised that you’re in my apartment,” Lena asked with a tone as rigid as her posture.

“I thought you were in need of a house sitter,” Lex answered, voice cool and only slightly jovial.

“That doesn’t give you reason to make yourself at home. You’re a wanted fugitive.”

“Fancy a game?” Lex’s deflection had almost worked. When Lena hadn’t budged more than inch, “Oh come on. You want me to apologize? Is that it,” he dismissively laughed, but Lena picked up on the exasperation in his tone.

“You wouldn’t mean it even if I asked,” Lena flatly stated, “so why even bother?”

With a devilish smirk, “How about this? One game, and you can ask me anything until someone wins.”

Lena weighed her options carefully. If Lex was here, there was very little she could do on her own. It was entirely possible that he already had a contingency plan in place should Lena have showed up at any point. It’s even more likely that he knew she’d be stopping in at some point. Until Lena got the answers she was looking for, her best bet was to play along; again.

She sat, legs crossed at the knee underneath the wooden chess table. She had turned on a few more lights along the way for better visibility of more than just her brother and the table. She hadn’t ruled out the possibility this was yet another of his well devised traps.

Traditionally, whoever was in possession of the white – or lighter – chess pieces made the first move. Lex already had the board set up and was in possession of the advantage. Oddly enough, he offered for Lena to go first.

After moving her first piece, “Why are you here and not elsewhere?”

“I have several hideouts Lena, this was merely temporary.”

Lena hummed, confused by her brother’s opening move. His playing style had always been one of swift attack, but he was taking a more conservative approach. It was… peculiar.

Another move. “Care to fill me in on what’s to come?”

“That’d be too easy,” he chuckled as he moved a pawn one space forward.

Lena stared into her brother’s twinkling dark eyes and waited to make her next move. They sat like this for a silent moment before she moved a bishop further out on the board.

It took several more moves before Lena spoke again. “I’ve figured you out,” Lena said, voice low as she studied the board.

“Have you now,” Lex curiously asked, clasping his hands on his knee.

“We’ve been playing each other for years, so I can read you fairly well. Even when you completely
change your method of play.” Lex sat silently, waiting for his sister to continue. “You haven’t even so much as grimaced after losing a single piece. Which is unlike you. Not to mention, I’ve noticed you’ve set up several weak points across the board. You never leave your queen unguarded and there she is in the center of the board.”

Lex grinned approvingly, “So you were paying attention.”

“Since when do you let me make the opening move when I don’t hold the advantage?”

Dancing around another question, “What have you learned?”

Lena focused on the board as she spoke. “You’re playing a reserved game. A game that you don’t care if you lose because you’re after something else.” After a beat, “You’re watching me, aren’t you?”

Lex touched a finger to his nose. “Go on.”

“You’re trying to see how I respond to certain openings and if I’ll even go for it.”

“I’ve never doubted your intelligence. Now,” the man drawled, “you said you’ve figured me out. Care to enlighten me?”

Lena didn’t answer until she had won the match. An achievement accomplished in a matter of minutes. She thumbed her King through her fingers as she spoke. “Trying to kill me, shooting Kara, we were just practice for you. The real target is Superman. A man you plan to eliminate during The Unity Day Parade.”

Lex somewhat fumbled as he repositioned his pieces on the board. Lena had caught the subtle slipup and took it as confirmation she was on the right track.

“You hate aliens, you’ve made that abundantly clear, but, your pursuits were a means to an end. To what end, I haven’t fleshed out but I’m confident I will.”

Lex looked over her face, a contemplative look on his own. The look in his eyes reminded her of who he used to be before this madness began to consume him, then it was gone in a flash. Breaking their eye contact, Lex stood from the board, straightening the wrinkles out of his suit as he moved.

“Let’s say you’re right. Let’s say, hypothetically speaking, I’ve devised some plan that will lure Superman to National City. Seeing that you and Supergirl will both be front and center for the event, how could you stop me?”

Lena harshly exhaled, growing tired of talking in circles. “Much like you, Kara and I aren’t working alone.”

Lex stopped in his tracks, turning on his heels to face Lena once more. “Who says I’m not?”

“Cut the act,” Lena cursed. “I know you, and this—,” she said motioning vaguely around the room, “—this isn’t you. At least not you alone. Before things progressed this far, there were reports of a man with a scraggly beard recruiting aliens to my study. A man who’s still a mystery. A psychopath I’m guessing is your partner or you’re manipulating him.”

“While I’ll neither confirm nor deny your statements, we both know I have the intellect to pull this off on my own.”

Groaning and head rolling back, “No one is questioning your intelligence Lex. But I am left with
more than a few questions in regard to your motive.” Before Lex could utter another word, Lena boldly stalked across the room to stand directly in front of her brother. “If you do this… there’s no coming back.”

Face reddening in anger, Lex inhaled deeply through his nostrils to calm himself back down. Towering over his sister, Lex arched his brow to further convey his ire burning beneath the surface of barely controlled composure. “Whatever happens, he has coming and fully deserves.”

Lena wasn’t given a chance to respond before Lex began getting himself together to leave her apartment. She opened her mouth to speak, once, twice, but no sound came out. There were still so many questions left unanswered. After everything that had been said, Lena had enough information to support her notion of Lex attacking the parade. All that was left to do was to coordinate with Alex and J’onn to keep National City’s residents out of harm’s way. Now that Lex was out of her apartment there was no telling where he had gone. Especially after his confirmation of having several locations he was using to lie low.

As she searched for the box that originally sent her to her apartment, Lena called Kara hoping the woman was still with J’onn. With some fraction of luck, she had caught her girlfriend at the perfect time. Lena brought both J’onn and Kara up to speed, leaving the safety preparations up to them. It was Alex’s night off, but something told Lena J’onn had someone call her in for this.

Before hanging up, J’onn informed Lena that he’d be keeping better tabs on her apartment and her family’s mansion since this wasn’t the first time Lex had just popped up. He also suggested she employ a security detail until this was all over. Predictably, she’d laughed off the recommendation stating that she’d ‘take it under advisement’.

——

Kara was out for one of her usual night patrols. The night air was crisp as it flowed across her face and over her suit. The sky was relatively clear calling even more attention to the full moon perfectly illuminating the city. For the most part, the night was quiet. NCPD seemed to have everything under control. Supergirl’s presence hadn’t been requested to intervene with any call the entire time she was patrolling. Nights like this came few and far between.

Vasquez contacted her via comms a few minutes ago letting Kara know it was ok to call it a night. It was a few hours earlier than she had been expecting, but she’d take what she could get. Kara decided to take a few minutes for herself and was situated on a random rooftop in the middle of the city. She sat on the roof’s edge, dangling her feet over, and watched the traffic whiz by beneath her.

The Unity Day Parade was Saturday morning; only two days away. Kara let her mind drift to all possible scenarios of the day’s event should Lena be right about her brother. It wasn’t an upbeat way of passing the time but preparing for anything was necessary.

Lex had proven that he was capable of diving to unspeakable depths, so there was no guarantee of the lengths at which he would go in order to achieve his goal – whatever that is, Kara thought to herself.

Kara overheard a soft whooshing sound from behind her but wrote it off as her cape shifting about in the light breeze.
Kicking her heels against the building, being sure not to damage the wall in the process, Kara moved onto more pleasant thoughts. Like anything that had to her relationship with Lena. Or how happy she was for Alex after their talk.

It was a casual evening at the mansion after Kara and Alex were both off for the day, but before Lena got back as she was running late. Kara’s reaction to the news lifted an unspoken weight off of the redhead’s shoulders. Alex hadn’t realized that she had all this pent-up anxiety around officially telling her sister about her relationship.

Things with Sam were good, really good in fact. Her heart wouldn’t be able to handle it if Kara hadn’t approved – and so enthusiastically at that. Alex felt she should have seen Kara’s suggestion coming. A double-date aligned perfectly with who she knew her sister to be. Now that the conversation was had, Alex laughed at how nervous she was over nothing.

Kara thought of possible places they could all go, making sure it was a spot Ruby could enjoy so long as she was awake for it. Toddlers, they’re sleepy little bundles of terror, but Ruby was by far the most adorable kid Kara had ever seen. Kara’s thoughts wandered even further down the kiddie express, pondering what it would be like to have children with Lena. Before she let herself get too invested in the idea, Kara was reminded that she had no clue where Lena stood when it came to raising children of her own.

The two women were practically living together at this point. If they weren’t sleeping at the mansion they were in Kara’s apartment. Lena only ventured to her place to pick up clothes, which had been twice now. They were formulating routines and creating joint schedules; even if they weren’t physically in the same places that often. Their relationship was one of the few things not falling apart and they both were working hard to keep it that way.

Kara loved Lena with her whole heart, but she hadn’t gotten around to saying it out loud. To Lena. She’d rehearsed, countless times, how she wanted to ultimately declare her love for her girlfriend. The timing was either off or something more important was happening. It would happen, Kara would tell herself, there was no need in rushing it.

Lena’s struggles were of a different type. She knew she loved Kara. So fiercely so it frightened her. It was no easy feat for her to genuinely love someone, but how she had fallen for Kara so quickly was jarring. She had no intention of falling in love with anyone, but there Kara was being her usual upbeat self.

If she were being honest with herself, Lena would say that what she was afraid of wasn’t loving Kara – that part came effortlessly – what scared her was knowing the power Kara now held over her. Her track record with the people she’d loved was bleak. Her mother and father were both dead and her brother had turned against her. She had been hurt in some way by every person that’s held her affection and she couldn’t even imagine the damage that Kara could inflict. Then in the same breath Lena would remind herself that Kara wasn’t that type of person. Her heart was held in the gentlest of hands by loving Kara. Putting that thought in forefront of her mind calmed her heart every time.

The two women were so hopelessly in love with each other, and they knew it, that they were unsurprisingly having issues actually making it known.

Once again, Kara ran over how she wanted to tell Lena she loved her, mumbling corrections to herself along the way. She was twiddling with the hem of her cape she was so worked up.

There was the sound again, which was unusual because her cape was in her hand. Which meant that sound may not have been her cape the first time. Kara pivoted her upper body to the side to peak over her shoulder. The roof appeared to be empty save for a few lawn chairs and broken glass
bottles. She turned back around and drew a deep breath. Before she exhaled, she heard a woman’s voice.

“The night sky is beautiful here.”

The way the woman spoke, it sounded as though this sky wasn’t the only one she had gazed upon in her lifetime. To add to the oddity of the moment, Kara swore she knew that voice. It had been years since she heard it last which was why she was so unsure.

“It is,” Kara softly spoke. Having her back to this woman, whomever she may be, wasn’t the best idea, but so far she didn’t seem like a threat; the lack of her announcing her presence set aside.

There was a brief moment of silence before Kara stood, spinning on her heels in an about-face, in search of the woman occupying the space with her. On the other side of the roof, thirty feet or so away from her, was a figure, presumably the woman. She was stood half turned in Kara’s general direction with her hands clasped behind her back. There was a stoic air to her stance that reminded Kara of J’onn.

Proceeding with caution, Kara put one foot in front of the other, with her fists firmly planted on her hips. “Come up here often then?”

The woman hummed lowly before answering. “You could say I’m new to the area.”

Kara had been so wrapped up in trying to figure out who the woman was she didn’t immediately pickup on the language they were speaking. It had been years since she carried a full conversation in her native tongue, but some things you never forget. Teaching Lena presented more opportunities that Kara had longed for over the years, but they only ever spoke in broken sentences. This was conversing with fluent rhythm.

Upon the startling realization Kara stuttered a few steps before stopping dead in her tracks. Despite her best efforts, Alex hadn’t picked up on the language very well. Which left Eliza, who understood more than she could speak herself. She didn’t want Alex to be right. Well, she did but she didn’t – it was confusing.

There was literally no other woman she could think of that she could be speaking with. The language of her people essentially died right along with them. Kal-El was far too young to speak the language when he was jettisoned off the exploding planet, which meant he wouldn’t be so quick to teach anyone. That only left Kara, Kara and her aunt that is.

The name was caught in her throat. It felt like trapped a frog the way it bounced around inside her. Her heart felt like someone was squeezing tighter and tighter with every breath she drew. And she was sweating, or maybe she thought she was, it was hard to tell because there was a very strong chance her Aunt Astra was a mere twelve feet away from her. If the woman’s head wasn’t covered by her hood Kara would know for sure.

Sensing the young woman’s panic driven hesitation, the woman turned to face Kara bit by bit. It was agonizing how slow she moved. To Kara, everything was happening at a snail’s pace but that was the adrenaline taking over.

As the woman’s hood inched closer to her hairline Kara held her breath. If she wished it wasn’t her aunt, it would reinforce her previous beliefs that Astra was still locked in Fort Rozz. Adversely, Kara didn’t think she could handle if it really were her aunt stood in front of her. Overwhelmed only scratched the surface to describe what Kara was experiencing. Conflicted wouldn’t even do it justice.
The hood inched just past the woman’s hairline and Kara dropped to her knees. It felt like she had been punched in the chest and all the wind had been knocked out of her. She lost all control of herself being flooded by feelings of relief, shock, anger, bewilderment… it was everything at once and all it took was seeing the stripe of white on the left side of her head.

Kara clutched at her chest fighting to get air into her lungs anyway she could as she gasped for air like a fish out of water. She cried but few tears fell. At this rate she was going to work herself into a panic attack if she didn’t get a grip. She needed to calm down, but, how could she? Her aunt was alive and on planet Earth – which should have been impossible – and she hadn’t aged a day.

There was a firm, but gentle, hand rubbing at her back. Her first reaction was to recoil away but she was physically unable to do so; her limbs were rebelling her commands to move. There was a chilling breeze to the back of her neck that strangely brought her some form of comfort.

“Little one,” Kara faintly overheard. Hearing the term of endearment sent her barreling over the edge. The tears that rested behind her lids that were previously unshed came cascading over with the blink of her eyes. She was feeling so much she had no idea what to express first so she wept. She wailed till her voice was hoarse and her tear ducts were a barren wasteland. Her sobs ceased shortly after the vice grip her anxiety held on her chest was lifted.

Pushing up on wobbling limbs, Kara brought herself back to her feet. Astra was really the one doing most of the work. Exhausted, emotionally and physically, from the reveal, Kara’s head rolled backwards a bit as she looked up into the starry sky. Audibly exhaling, Kara released a guttural scoff at her present situation. There was a laugh that was empty, momentarily devoid of happiness. Feelings of betrayal and abandonment were beginning to set in which wasn’t a good sign.

Lacking the desire to speak in anything but English, “How long,” Kara questioned, voice crackling. Even if Astra answered her in Kryptonian, Kara was adamant she would only be speaking in English.

Astra’s brows were scrunched in the middle as she silently watched her niece, perplexed by the question.

When Kara’s question went unanswered a second longer than she wanted, her head snapped back down. She deeply stared into her aunt’s blue eyes that were a lot like her own. “How long Aunt Astra?” Her tone was unyielding, voice laced in anger.

Schooling her features, Astra prepared for whatever was to come next. “Not long Kara.”

Taking a shocked step away, “What’s ‘not long’?”

“Long enough to know you’re in danger. That Luthor has something planned.”

Kara humorlessly laughed to herself once again. “So, you’ve been here long enough to know about Lex.” Kara’s head bobbed in place. “Good to know.”

Astra huffed before she powered on. “I know you’re upset with me;” she began, being sure to look her niece squarely in the eyes. “-you have every right to be. I promise we’ll have ample time to talk but I need to make sure you’re going to be safe during that parade.”

“How are you so sure that something’s going to happen?”

“You have to believe me.” Astra placed a hand to Kara’s cheek swiping away the remnants of tear streaks, with the other squeezing Kara’s upper arm sympathetically. “I’m only trying to protect you Kara.”
Kara nodded, nearly imperceptibly, at her aunt’s candor. The sincerity in her voice convinced Kara she should heed the warning. “We already have a team going undercover. Whatever happens, we’ll be ready.”

“I’ll be around should you need further assistance.” Astra backpedaled, gearing up to leave the rooftop. Kara caught her by the wrist before she was out of reach.

“How will I know how to find you?”

The smile on Astra’s face knocked the chill off Kara’s heart. It was the same toothy grin she remembered from her childhood. The memory hurt but it also brought a bit of comfort along with it. “You only ever need call and I’ll be there.”

——

Kara dropped in on Alex at her apartment first thing Friday morning. The redhead was due to be up any minute for work and Kara was there with coffee and sticky buns from Noonan’s in hand. It took Kara knocking for nearly five minutes for Alex to open her front door.

With sleep-filled eyes, and a bad case of bedhead, Alex swung her apartment door open prepared to wail on whomever was on the other side. Seeing it was Kara, with breakfast no less, she snatched up one of the to-go cups from the drink carrier and trudged over to her couch.

“What are you doing her this early?”

Kara shut the door as she entered the apartment. “We need to talk,” she answered shortly.

Alex quirked a brow, taking another sip of the hot beverage. Kara picked up on her sister’s silence as her way of beckoning Kara to go ahead with whatever she needed to say. Fifteen minutes later with all sticky buns consumed, Alex was entirely abreast of Kara’s encounter with her aunt the night before. Fully explaining how she was the woman they spoke about during Lena’s birthday party.

Alex was sat on the edge of her sofa staring at her sister who decided to sit on her bed for some reason. Alex needed to be at work in a half hour and she hadn’t even showered, but now seemed like a better time than later. She had been planning to wait until she got off to have this talk with Kara but there was no real reason to wait. She was there now.

After a decisive moment of silence, Alex began to ease into another matter that required their attention “This probably isn’t a good time to tell you about dad then, huh?”

“Alex,” Kara groaned, flopping back on the mattress. Her brain couldn’t take more than it was already loaded with. First Astra and now Jeremiah. A man that had been M.I.A. for weeks.

“I know, I know,” Alex quickly supplied. “You’ve been suspicious of dad since the beginning. J’onn even has his doubts that things aren’t exactly above board with him either. There has to be some connection between his popping up and your aunt all but confirming that Lex really does have something planned. I’m sure of it.”

Kara slowly sat up, propping herself on her elbows. “I just want this all to be over. We’ve basically missed every holiday since Thanksgiving. New Year’s Day is next week. I’ve been trying to tell Lena that I love her but something new is constantly popping up. Whatever happened to work-life
balance,” Kara grumbled and rolled her eyes, not looking for an answer for any of it.

“Wait, wait, wait. Go back!” Alex was happy for the change in conversation and excited by what the blonde slipped between complaints. “You’re not just going to breeze by that without more information. Do you love, or are you in love with, Lena?”

There was a heat that licked at Kara’s cheeks, leaving a blushing trail in its wake. She had hoped that Alex was going to leave it alone, but deep down she knew better than that. “I’m head over heels, can’t get her out of my mind, don’t want to spend a moment of my life without her in love with her. She’s more than I could have ever hoped for Alex, but I don’t want to rush and say it too soon.”

“You’ve been together for what? Four months or so now?” Kara nodded. “I see the way the two of you look at each other. When you’re out on patrols she has at least one television set to a news station. She’s doing CatCo interviews with you for Pete’s sake. The chemistry between you two, and the way you just fit together so well... You basically gravitate to each other whenever you’re together. There’s no way she isn’t in love you Kar.”

Kara took a moment to really understand what Alex was saying. If Alex had seen those things in Lena’s behavior, then maybe she wasn’t fabricating a tale of their love in her head. It was real, and it felt amazing being able to love a woman as incredible as Lena Luthor. There had been a few bumps in the road, and more were surely to come, but they were a team. A team Kara wanted to shout about to anyone that would listen.

Alex pushed off of the couch and grabbed her things to take a shower. Before she crossed the threshold to the bathroom, “You really should tell her. You’re Supergirl and she’s Lena Luthor. There may never be a perfect moment to tell her how you feel. Do it when it feels right. Just a piece of unsolicited advice.”

The door was being shut but before it closed completely, “How will I know when it’s the right time,” Kara inquired in a heartfelt tone.

Alex didn’t open the door back more than a crack because she knew her sister could hear her just fine. There was a small smile pulling at the corner of her mouth because this was one of the few conversations they’ve had lately that felt normal. Conversations that didn’t scream they were playing hero due to their constant attempts at trying to save someone, or National City, with very little to go on.

“You’ll know,” was all Alex said before shutting the door. “And you’re taking me to work,” she added after the fact.

——

The Unity Day Parade was the last big celebration National City threw for the year. Positioned towards the end of all of December’s holidays, the parade was in theme for the time of year. It brought together nearly every belief and faith into one immense festivity with floats, balloons, blimps; the works. No expense was spared, and every year was bigger than the last.

There had been a push with Supergirl’s debut for a more alien inclusive parade, with the heroine herself being the face of that very change. Aliens were able to showcase their home world in any way they chose. It was usually presented in the form of an ornately decorated float, but there was no
shortage of exposure to the different cultures and beings.

The Unity Day Parade was something most citizens looked forward to every year. The different foods and treats, arts and crafts, and comradery were like nothing else the city hosted during the year. The streets of the Downtown District were shut down and it was a nightmare navigating by car anywhere near the outskirts of the area.

The parade typically kicked off the day with the Mayor leading the procession. It was immediately followed by the festival that hosted everything else. Booths that had been erected first thing that morning were now open. The smell of popcorn, cotton candy, some off-world delicacies that were available for sampling, all of it mixed and mingled to fill the air.

You could hear people laughing and talking, children playing and screaming in joy. This was what the holidays were about. Even seeing all the joy this day created for the residents of National City, how could Lex want to target such an event. It was a new low, even for him.

Lena had been nervous for the day, not because of her brother and what he was potentially going to do, but because this was LCorps first community event. Mentioning her company’s involvement during her and Kara’s interview with Cat Grant was a bold move, but it paid off. Several members of her staff had signed up to volunteer with either cleanup, manning the LCorp stand, or decorating a float to showcase LCorp’s move to a better future. Lena still couldn’t believe so many people were genuinely interested in participating given the company’s history.

After the opening remarks, Supergirl flew around above the crowd before landing on the stage. Lena couldn’t help her smirk and chortle, but Kara really had a flare for the dramatics. The entrance was a tad over the top, but Lena knew how much Kara enjoyed the holidays; even if they weren’t afforded an opportunity to celebrate.

Alex had met with her before Kara’s theatrical entrance and ran over the game plan with her. She and Kara were going to be near each other off and on for a portion of the day, then meeting up at the Ambassador’s panel they’d both be sitting on. A slew of agents were canvassing the area and not just the parade. If Lex was going to pull anything they were prepared.

Lena declined the offer to spearhead LCorp’s float in favor of staying near their booth. It was the perfect cover to keep human interaction to a minimum; if she needed to retreat, she could. She wasn’t like Kara. Being out in front of so many people, for such an extended amount of time, went against her nature. Events like this Lena had always steered clear from, and just donated money to. Her name put a big enough target on her back, no need in over exposing herself.

There were cameramen wandering around all over the place and Lena had to remind herself to watch how she looked at Supergirl. Her relationship with Kara was favored public knowledge, so if she was caught adoringly watching the Kryptonian doing anything it would be in every news circulation by the end of the day.

After Supergirl’s words of welcome was her talking with so many people, human and alien alike, in the crowd. The parade was starting two blocks over and would wrap around by the podium so everyone that watched the speech was able to see it. Kara had all the time in the world to speak to everyone that was waiting for her. It wasn’t much, but it meant everything to those she spoke to. The little things always went a long way.

It was increasingly difficult for Lena to keep herself from seeking out Kara wherever she was. Watching the heroine give her rehearsed, uplifting, speech was the start. Kara spoke with so much love and respect for everyone. Her heart was bigger than most and far more forgiving. The woman’s capacity for tolerance and understanding was one of her most understated qualities. The more Lena
thought about it, the wider her smile would grow when she gazed upon Supergirl doing anything.

Now that all of LCorps employees that weren’t on the float had their shirts and were comfortable with their assigned tasks for the event, Lena took a moment to recharge a little before the parade came to a close. The masses would soon be unleashed, and she needed to prepare herself. It dawned on her, that maybe she underestimated what she was getting herself into. There were thousands of people, even with it being first thing in the morning. There were bound to be even more in a few hours and she already needed a break.

The parade came to a close and Supergirl was left to her own devices and a chance to enjoy the festival portion of The Unity Day Parade. With some down time, Kara sought out her favorite person on the planet. She found her, talking to a young girl about her first-prize-winning science fair project. Lena didn’t belittle the girl’s project. She spoke to her as though were equals.

Kara crept up behind Lena, with only the young girl able to see what she was doing. She stood beside Lena, just out of her view, silently waiting for her to notice. The girl kept giggling and when Lena asked what was so funny she pointed right at Supergirl making funny faces. Lena caught the heroine sticking out her tongue and crossing her eyes. Even she had to laugh.

“Oh, hey there Ms. Luthor! I hope you don’t mind my interruption,” Kara laughed, going for nonchalance all the way.

With a slight shake to her head, “Of course not Supergirl. What can I do for you?”

“I was just stopping by to say hello is all.”

With parted lips of astonishment, “You know Lena Luthor,” the girl gasped. Kara and Lena both looked at each other almost as shocked as the cute little girl. They were both kind of expecting for her to ask if Lena knew Supergirl, not the other way around.

Clearing her throat to cover for the slip, “Uh, yea. We’re friends,” Kara confirmed.

“Wow,” the girl drawled. “That’s so cool!”

The amazement brought small giggles from both women. It was refreshing to see someone more interested in Lena than Supergirl, especially a girl who hadn’t been tainted by the city’s opinion of all Luthors.

“Did you have any other questions for me Bree?”

The young girl looked over towards her mother who stood off to the side enjoying what was unfolding before her eyes. With a nudge of her head, she urged her daughter to ask the question that brought them to LCorp’s table.

“Can I have your autograph?”

With a warm smile turning the corners of her mouth, Lena was more than happy to oblige. She used the girl’s metallic sharpie to sign her name before addressing Bree’s mother.

“Whenver you two have some time, I’d love it if you stopped by LCorp. I could give a Bree a tour of the facilities.”

“That would be lovely Ms. Luthor. I know Bree would enjoy that very much,” the mother politely answered.
Just before Lena could give them instructions for what to do whenever they could make the time, Bree crashed into her front, wrapping her in the tightest hug Lena had ever received from a perfect stranger. It was one that could likely rival one of Kara’s over enthusiastic embraces when she forgot her own strength.

The girl and her mother left shortly after, leaving Lena as close to alone as she was going to get with Kara.

“Well that was something,” Kara warmly stated.

“That’s one way of putting,” Lena laughed. “I think we talked for at least ten minutes before you showed up.”

Kara playfully bumped Lena’s hip with own. “I’m pretty sure you’re one of her role models. That doesn’t surprise me one bit.” Kara had a look far too loving for being friends with Lena prompting Lena to search their general area for any camera recording the interaction. Thankfully there weren’t any.

“Supergirl shouldn’t be looking at me with melty heart-eyes. I’m dating Kara Danvers remember,” Lena joked in a hushed tone.

“Can I at least hug you? Is that appropriate for us to do,” Kara sarcastically requested. She knew the answer, but she was having fun teasing Lena for being so paranoid.

Relenting, Lena let her girlfriend, that wasn’t her girlfriend right now, wrap her in a quick hug; keeping it short for obvious reasons. No lingering hands or fond expressions. Kara spoke with everyone at Lena’s booth to make it seem natural that she wandered over. It wasn’t long before she was lost back in the crowd, mingling with everyone that stopped her.

Kara was at her fifth station to sample different foods, never mind the candy canes and snickerdoodle cookies in her hands. She had been stuffing her face of everything that either looked or smelled good and so far, everything was. She hadn’t seen Alex of Lena in a long while, but they were both technically working. So was she, but in a more relaxed manner. She had to be Supergirl, the resident hero, in more than one way that day. Listening out for anything that was happening as well as being one with the people she helped to protect. It required a certain level of split-focus and the food was helping.

“Kara, Kara if you can hear me you need to prepare yourself. There are several strange radio signals being thrown across the city.”

Kara immediately recognized the voice as her aunt’s. Instead of preemptively freaking out, she glanced around the crowd looking for anything out of the ordinary.

“Everything seems fine on my end. Nothing out of place.”

She spoke too soon. As the last words were leaving her lips the first explosion went off several miles away from the festival.

Kara shifted her headpiece back into its helmet. “Alex, we need to get everyone out of here!” Kara shouted into her comms.

“Supergirl? What are you—” the line crackled before ultimately cutting out completely.

Kara cursed under her breath as she quickly tried to formulate the best course of action to begin funneling people elsewhere.
There was another explosion, this one setting off in an alleyway off to the side in the middle of the main event space. There was no more time for thinking, she had to get to Alex so they could start getting people away from the area. She shot into the direction she recalled being Alex’s last whereabouts. Fortunately, the agent hadn’t wandered very far from that point.

“Supergirl, comms are down. It’s going to be hard to coordinate an escape with the team until they’re back online. We’re too spread out.”

Another explosion was set off, this one some distance away.

“I’ll do what I can. Hopefully J’onn is on his way.”

“If you pass anyone just tell them to get as many civilians away from here as possible.”

Kara nodded her understanding and flew to check there wasn’t anyone injured near the closest explosion to the previously densely occupied area. When she landed in the alleyway it looked clear of all life forms. All that remained were charred pieces of debris and other bits of trash from the destroyed dumpster.

“Aunt Astra, I need your help. We have to keep as many people safe as we can.”

The next explosion was so loud Kara swore it went off right beside her. It sounded so close because it was. The spectator booths for the ambassadors and VIPs that were put up for the parade were up in smoke. LCorp’s booth was relatively close by. It was the last place Kara left Lena and her heart was racing triple time.

With every fiber of her being Kara pushed herself to move faster. She needed to be sure Lena wasn’t nearby – that no one had been inside the tents. Thankfully, those who were in the booths must have fled the area when the commotion began.

Two more explosions were set off. This made little sense to Kara. If Lex wanted to kill as many aliens as possible this wasn’t the way to go about it. It seemed like the bombs were detonating in random places. That was until she thought about what was actually happening.

The bombs were being set off in specific places on purpose. They were pushing people to move away from them. Lex was corralling everyone to one central spot. She had to tell Alex. She needed to find Lex to stop this.

Kara flew back to where she left Alex who was still in the area. “Alex! Alex, we have to stop! We’re doing exactly what he wants.”

Alex looked at her sister as though she were speaking gibberish, a foreign language even. “What do you mean ‘stop’,” she shouted over the yelling of the citizens.

“He’s doing this on purpose.” Her last words were punctuated by the sounds of two more completely separate explosions. “He’s decreasing the perimeter a little at a time. He’s trapping everyone here! Moving everyone to the center is what he wants!”

Astra landed by her side not a second later, startling Alex.

Foregoing formal introductions, Kara instructed her aunt to help Alex in any way she needed. She needed to find both of the Luthor siblings to hopefully put a stop to this.

The earth rattled beneath her feet as yet another explosive was detonated. This one blocking off yet another potential exit for anyone escaping by land.
“Be careful,” Alex shouted, not dwelling on the emotion of the sentiment.

“I agree. Keep your head about you with whatever you shall do.”

Kara gave them both a quick nod then flew above the crowd, high enough to gain a decent vantage point. She searched and searched but there was no sign of Lena. She couldn’t even pick up the woman’s heartbeat which was weird. Kara told herself there was no need in jumping to conclusions – the worst one that is. There could be any number of reasons she couldn’t hear the familiar thump as there was so much going on her sense of hearing was being inundated.

Unable to find Lena fast enough, Kara switched tactics. She tried to put her mind in that of Lex’s. If she were in his shoes, trying to trap this many people in such an open and public place, where would she wait it out?

Atop a building came to mind, but that would be too risky. It’s the first place most people would check. Inside said buildings would ultimately have the same effect, though they’d take longer to check. Then there was the off chance he was holed up in a vehicle outside the perimeter, or he wasn’t even onsite.

There were too many buildings for her to check alone. Even if she weren’t the only one looking, there still wouldn’t be enough time to check them all and all other possible options in case he wasn’t inside.

She needed Lena’s brain. She may be the only person that would have a better idea where Lex was hiding until he had accomplished his first step.

Four explosions sounded off simultaneously. This entire time the explosions were loud, they groaned and banged lowly, but these four were different. The way the ground shook it was akin to an earthquake, even from where Kara was floating.

Streets as far as the eye could see were broken up and torn apart. All potential exit routes were now sure-fire deadly obstacle courses. There were large craters in the streets, cars overturned, large hunks of asphalt and rock jutting out in every direction. That wasn’t even half of the damage Lex’s bombs had created.

The physical damage to structures and fixtures was never as bad as the resulting injuries to those unlucky enough to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. There were aliens of diverse origin attending The Unity Day Parade, but there were also whole families – even human ones. There were children screaming, mother’s calling out for those lost children, men shouting out in agony from being crushed or trampled.

If this was what he wanted, mass - uncontrolled - panic, then he got it. Lex effectively cut off all means of commutation for the DEO agents on site. There was no way for First Responders to make it inside the boundary his explosives formed. Anyone that couldn’t fly or escape by other means was trapped and Kara was drawing blanks on how to get them out safely. She hoped that Astra and Alex were having better luck than she was.

Kara touched back down and tried to help as many people as she could. She freed everyone she could find trapped inside a car or pinned beneath signs or debris. She grouped together as many separated kids that she could find, leaving a few people in charge of them for the time being. It wasn’t much but it was something. It was damage control.

Suddenly, she had an idea. Kara could work with her aunt and J’onn to try to knock out small holes in the surrounding buildings. Holes big enough to get people out but small enough not to jeopardize
the buildings structural integrity.

That could work, Kara thought to herself, proud she’d come up with something. She was on her way to Alex when she heard Lena’s voice. It nearly knocked her out of the sky the brunette’s voice was so broken. It was the same tone she picked up on whenever Lena was met with her brother. Then she overheard Lex calling out her alter ego’s name in the complete opposite direction of Lena’s. He was forcing her to choose who to go to.

Knowing Lex, based on past actions, this could be a trap; either his voice or Lena’s ran the risk of being recorded. She still had no idea the state of Lena’s condition which understandably worried her. Then there was Lex, the man behind all this; the man she needed to stop by whatever means necessary. Kara didn’t need to understand Lex to know what his next move would be. He was either going to start picking off innocent people one by one or doing away with the whole lot - or majority of it - at once.

It had to be Lex. She had to choose him in order to save everyone else. She had to make this sacrifice and hope she was making the right choice.

She shot off as fast as could, expecting there to be a trap or for him to not even be there. To her surprise, there he was. He was dressed in a form fitting black Italian suit that didn’t even have a speck of dust on it. The shine of his leather loafers was even more unnecessary proof that he hadn’t even been around to witness the chaos he had unleashed.

“I’m quite surprised you chose me,” Lex confesses, lacing his hands in front of him. Kara wasn’t certain, but there was something about the way he spoke that made his words feel genuine. Like he was honestly expecting Kara to choose Lena, even in this situation.

“I only came to stop you. I can’t let you follow through with the rest of your plan,” Kara yelled as she walked over fallen lamp posts and debris to get closer to Lex. Slowly as not to make any sudden movements that Lex would deem threatening.

“And what would that plan be?”

“You’re going to kill everyone here. You’ve trapped them here and turned them into fish in a barrel.”

Lex was blankly looking around as he spoke. “I wonder where your cousin is hiding.”

Instinctively Kara double-checked her surroundings. It had slipped her mind that Lena had predicted luring Superman to National City was the reason for this attack. Now that it was confirmed, Kara didn’t like that she couldn’t sense Kal-El anywhere. If he didn’t show up, things could take a very nasty turn.

Kara made it to the base of the parade float Lex was perched upon. It was decorated to resemble Santa’s sleigh with small makeshift houses underneath it. When she requested to come aboard, Lex seemed more than willing to allow it. It gave her an unsettling feeling in the pit of her stomach that signaled it may have been a better idea to stay where she was. She went up anyway.

“Is Lena alright?”

“I’m quite positive that if you weren’t alien, I’d be happy for the two of you being together. You make my sister happy.” He seemed reluctant to add the last part.

Kara wasn’t sure how to respond to that, so she didn’t.

“I don’t expect you to understand why I must do this.”
“You don’t have to do this Lex. Your fight is with Clark and Clark alone. There’s no need in putting more innocent lives in the midst.”

“But you see I do. Your cousin only seems to respond when his precious humans are being put in danger. He lied to me Supergirl.”

Kara was going to go for honesty here. It was just her and Lex and maybe if she showed him her sympathetic side, she could talk him out of following through with this. “He lied to you and abandoned me. If anyone understands having a problem with him, it’s me.”

“Do you know what it’s like to have your closest friend betray you? Treat you as less than human… as less of a person, when they’re not even human themselves?”

Kara slowly shook her head because she hadn’t experienced anything close to that. “I can’t say that I have.”

“He lied to me for years and I was never the wiser. No alien can be trusted. If one day the desire arose, you and your cousin especially, could wipe Earth’s surface clean of the human existence. Could make it so that we never existed. You’re dangerous. The two of you gallivant around, expecting us to adore you for fixing problems we never faced prior to our collective knowledge of your existence.”

“You can’t know that,” Kara tried to argue, paying close attention to keep her tone flat. Lex was getting worked up, and she needed to refrain from adding more fuel to his fire than necessary.

“I promised my sister I would protect her and then she went and fell in with an alien. Of all the human women she could have gone after and she chose you,” he sneered, looking Kara up and down.

Kara stood tall in the man’s scrutinizing gaze. She wasn’t about to give him the satisfaction of getting beneath her skin. “Protecting her by killing beings who never brought you harm? No matter the human collateral? That seems a foolhardy philosophy.”

Lex didn’t answer her at first. Instead, he looked out amongst the array of people and... smiled. As much as Kara wanted to render Lex unconscious and work to clean up this calamity, she was still holding out hope there was some good left inside him.

“You can stop this you know? Just turn yourself over and we can end this.”

Lex released a short and throaty laugh. “You really don’t get it do you?”

“I don’t,” Kara surmised. “So why don’t you explain it to me.”

Lex turned to face Kara, only a few feet away from her. They were so close now she could see the bags beneath his eyes with no need for her heightened vision. The young man looked as though he hadn’t slept in days. She even picked up on the stubble around his chin and on top of his head. The madness he had dissented into was more evident in his eyes than she had previously seen.

“You have to die. You and Clark. It is my responsibility to rid this world of its greatest threats because only I know the risk we face if you two are left breathing. The more alien scum I can tack on the better.”

That was all he had to say for Kara to lose hope. There was nothing she could say that would convince Lex he was wrong. That the aliens that now considered Earth their home wouldn’t risk that feeling so easily.
There was a faint beep coming from under the float. As she heard it Lex began to make his way off the structure.

“Where do you think—“ Kara was knocked backward by a high voltage jolt of electricity.

“I’d love to stick around and watch your final moments, but I’m pressed for time.”

After the minutes of calm there was that deafening sound again. That repeated reverberation of bombs being detonated.

“Lex you have to stop! Haven’t you hurt enough people already?” Kara tried running forward again but it ultimately led to the same result. This time she was knocked back a few feet by the shock with her momentum being used against her.

“You can keep trying but you won’t be able to escape. Of all the aliens I’ve studied and dissected that Kryptonian was by far the most fruitful.”

“What do you mean Kryptonian? There’s only me and Kal-El.” Except for Astra. But if he had turned Astra into his test subject there was no way he’d still be alive. Kara knew the depths of her aunt’s temper and such a powerful emotion wouldn’t subside until there was vengeance. But if it wasn’t her, who was he talking about? Then again, there was always the chance he was lying.

“In a few moments you will be stuck, powerless, as you watch them all die. The air inside your confinement will be seeded with Kryptonite and you shall perish not long after your beloved alien loving humans.”

Kara banged and banged against something that wasn’t there to even her naked eye.

“You can fight as much as you want but once that timer runs out,” he began to explain, pointing at something beneath the float, “you’ll be met with your last breaths.”

When Kara realized she couldn’t escape she slouched down to her knees defeatedly. There was a chance that Astra overheard all of this but who knows how long Lex had this shield up. It was nearly impossible to know if anything could even be overheard that was said from within. When Lex used this screen last, when he kidnapped Lena and the Danvers women, it was merely used as a partition. This was a full-on isolating containment barrier.

“Just tell me that your sister is safe.”

Lex studied her for a moment. “Had you of gone to her voice, you might have the answer to that question.”

“Lex, please,” Kara pleaded, her head hanging low. “I just need to know she’s alright... if you’re going to kill me at least do that much.”

“If our roles were reversed, I’d want to hear the woman I loved was still alive; even if it wasn’t the truth. But I won’t grant you that mercy. I’ll leave you to die alone, and unknowing.”

When she didn’t answer, Lex turned his back to leave.

The beep of the bomb was drowned out by more screams and detonation after detonation. He was making the already confined area of safety, smaller. He waited until everyone was lulled into a false sense of security before snatching it away from them. A moment later it was a lot like Lex said.

There was a green mist that began to circulate around the enclosure. Kara did the best she could to
cover her mouth and nose with her cape but it was rendered ineffective after a short time. The more she inhaled the harder it was to breath. The more of the lethal substance that was in her body the weaker she became. She was choking on her own breath barely even able to carry her own weight. Her hearing was of average level and so was her sight. She was forced to watch as a plume of black smoke cascaded above a red-orange flash of light erupted in the center of the helpless crowd.

There was no way to be sure from her perspective, but it was the same direction Lex had disappeared into. She couldn’t tell if he was part of the explosion or the cause. Right now, that didn’t matter because the pain from the kryptonite exposure was taking over her body. If she had the strength she’d be writhing in place. There was some irony in her dying. This whole time they all believed that Lex only wanted to see Clark dead for what he did. Everyone else was just a learning experience. No one believed that he’d actually see through with killing her since he would destroy his sister in the process. But if he was willing to see the end of Kara, that meant Lena was already dead. At least that’s what Kara convinced herself of.

The number of times Lex almost killed his sister or showed up just to talk to her. Not to mention his escape from prison just to celebrate another one of her fake birthdays. There’s no way he’d hurt Lena this way after all that, not when he had every other opportunity to do so. There was no way Lena was still alive, Kara repeated to herself.

Before her eyes shut there was a figure running up the stairs on the float. There was a head of red hair that made her think it was her sister. She didn’t want Alex to see her like this but there was nothing she could do.

Kara reached out her hand to keep Alex at bay but it was no use. There was a familiar streak of white in her periphery that brought her a sense of calm. Astra could get Alex away from the float before the bomb beneath her went off. It was a small consolation, but she was willing to take what she could get.

Suddenly, Kara felt her body being lifted from where she lied on the float. A sensation she wasn’t expecting in the slightest. She was weak and trapped, there was no way she was flying. When she looked to her left, she could see her mother’s face.

When Astra came back into her life, not only had she gotten her favorite aunt back, in a way, she also got her mother. At least her looks since the two women were identical twins. In the end, she had just about everyone that mattered, but the only face she longed to see was Lena’s.

As Kara looked to her right, Alex was searching threw a kit for something. Kara reached out once again to stop Alex, to get one last good look her but her reach was too short. Astra was just far enough away from Alex that Kara couldn’t reach her. Kara wanted to grunt, wanted to make any noise at all other than her hacking cough, but she couldn’t. Not even a little.

Out of the bag Alex pulled a metallic oversized pill shaped container. There was an orange liquid coursing through it not dissimilar to the Kryptonite lancing through her veins.

Alex took two unsteady steps toward Kara holding the unknown device in her hands. It looked like Alex was telling Astra that she wasn’t sure it would work. Next thing she knew Alex was backpedaling away from them. She clicked a button on the top of the metal object before tossing it into the air above them.

They were being showered with a translucent orange haze not even a second later. Whatever Alex had done it must have been a last resort to save Kara.

Kara rolled her head into Astra’s chest and let whatever was to come next be what it may. She no
longer had the strength to fight no matter how badly she wanted to.

Chapter End Notes

I'm nervous for what everyone is going to say, but in a good way. Rest assured, there is a happy ending to the story. I wholeheartedly promise that! I left so many questions unanswered this chapter but answers are on the way :D.

As always, let me know what you think. Good, bad, or in between; it's always appreciated. Also, hit me with any questions you may have. I always look forward to interacting with everyone that leaves a comment.

Now to go down some Nyquil and make a cup of tea. Another early night for me!

Until next time...
Chapter 22

Chapter Notes

I know it's late for some, but I wanna start by saying Happy Holidays to everyone! If you don't celebrate any of the holidays during this time of year, Happy December/Winter/Almost End of the Year!

I planned out and wrote this chapter in a number of ways. I wasn't entirely happy with most of the attempts but I found a version I liked better than the rest. I had a bit of writer's block which is why I wrote it so many times but I think some good came out of it. I'm really hoping y'all like it.

I did this chapter a bit different; it's a twist of something I've previously done. We have some jumping around from Lena's POV, Alex's POV, and also Kara's mixed in throughout. You'll have to tell me what you think in the comments.

We're going back to the Festival/Parade and looking at parts of it from other perspectives for some answers. We're going backwards to move forward. There's a sentence I wanted to warn of that can be considered a graphic term. Its blocked off with (***) on both ends. Should you choose to skip it, it essentially says that no one would have survived under the conditions of the explosion. Everything blocked off with (*) ——(*) is safe to read, it's signaling a switch to Kara's POV.

As usual, I apologize in advance for any typos/errors I may have missed. I don't think I'm forgetting to mention anything so...

Sit back and let your mind roam free.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Not long after Kara – Supergirl – left the LCorp stand, Lena began to find a rhythm with the crowds of people. Bree was the icebreaker she needed to ease her nerves. She received a few strange stares when the girl hugged her. Most of the passing glares softened however after Lena returned the gesture. Bree’s mother was even surprised by the unexpected embrace.

Kara had been gone for a while and Lena hadn’t seen Alex either. At this point, that could mean any number of things. To avoid assuming the worst, Lena returned to handing out LCorp branded knickknacks and answering questions. If she kept at her current pace, her t-shirt would soon show signs of how hot she was; her heavy knit sweater had to go. She pulled her phone from the sweater’s pocket to put it in the back pocket of her jeans. In the switch, Lena noticed she had four missed calls from Jess.

She stepped off to the side to return the call, shielding her eyes from the direct sunlight beaming on the other side.

The phone rang once and Jess wasted no time, getting straight to the point. “Ms. Luthor, I’ve been trying to reach you for the past half hour. There’s something at LCorp that requires your attention.”

“What is it?” Jess didn’t sound worried so maybe it was something simple. Lena couldn’t believe she
was thinking it, but she was actually upset at the possibility of needing to leave the festival. Right when she was beginning to enjoy herself.

“I’m on my way to you now. You’ll have to meet me with the streets being blocked off.”

“What aren’t you telling me?”

Her assistant wasn’t quick to answer the question. “We’re at risk of losing your latest acquisition. The CEO refuses to deal with me. He says he wants a meeting in an hour.”

Lena had practically walked that merger through to the very end by herself. She had logged enough hours with the company’s leadership, so she was fully aware of how temperamental and needy their CEO was. Even still, something wasn’t adding up.

“When we last spoke, he assured me there wouldn’t be any further complications with the deal. I made sure of that by offering fifteen percent above value.”

“Maybe it wasn’t enough after all.”

Lena could detect the slight sigh in the woman’s voice. While it should have conveyed a sense of annoyance at the newest complication, Lena felt there was more disappointment behind the breath of air. Jess was lying, but Lena hadn’t figured out why just yet. “Where am I meeting you? I can be on... Baker St. in say, five minutes? Right after the barriers.”

“I’ll meet you there,” Jess confirmed before ending the call.

Slipping back into her sweater, then her overcoat, Lena’s first thought was to tell Kara she was leaving; Alex was a good backup if only she knew where the redhead was. Lena spun her phone in her hand replaying her conversation with Jess over again.

Why would she lie about the acquisition?

The only reason Lena could come up with, that made any sense at all, was that Jess was trying to get her away from the festival for some reason. Lena trusted Jess, and she was trusting that her assistant had a reason for doing this. Lena told her employees there was something at the office that required her attention and that she enjoyed spending the day with them.

Everyone was sad to see her go but understood the worldwide tech conglomerate didn’t take a day off, so neither could Lena. It was comforting for her to know that her subordinates at least viewed her, in small part, as a human being. They were even sympathetic to her not being able to enjoy one day that didn’t revolve around the business aspects of LCorp.

At the corner of North Main and Baker St. sat a blacked-out town car, most likely with Jess in the backseat waiting for her. When Lena pulled the handle to open the rear passenger door, there was no Jess.

“Get in,” Jess shouted from the driver’s seat.

Lena went to question why she was driving but Jess cut her off before she could. “We’re running short on time. Just get in,” she instructed hurriedly.

Lena slipped into the vehicle without protest. Wherever they were headed, Jess was hightailing it there. Lena paid close attention to every street they passed and every turn they made. Jess wasn’t driving toward LCorp tower, she was driving them as quickly as she could in the opposite direction. They were getting further and further away from the festival instead.
Jess pulled into a semi-vacant parking lot and shut the car off. She unlocked the doors and climbed into the back seat with Lena.

“Unless I moved LCorp and forgot about it, this doesn’t look like our stop.”

Jess rolled her eyes and slumped into the seat, the leather making noises with her movements. After a minute, Lena cleared her throat calling Jess’ attention back to the present. When the woman kept looking down at her watch, Lena began to worry.

Leaning to the side to meet her assistance’s eyes, “Are you going to tell me why you broke practically every traffic law to get here?” Lena inquired as she waved a hand towards the shut windows.

Jess huffed once, then a second time after a deep breath. She sat up straight and studied Lena very closely. Lena could tell the woman was trying to protect her from something but she wanted to know from what. There was a low rumble, but Lena wasn’t sure if she was hearing things or not after being forced to sit in relative silence.

“A few hours ago I received a call,” Jess slowly began, voice almost strangled as she tried to explain her actions. “I ignored the call the first time because I didn’t recognize the number. When they called right back I figured it was important.”

Lena patiently, but expectantly, sat and listened to what Jess was trying to tell her. She was beginning to regret leaving without checking in with Kara first.

“When I answered, it was your brother,” Jess explained, her voice barely a whisper by the end.

There was another low sound mimicking the first. This time Lena was sure she heard it, whatever it was. She looked out every window she could but saw nothing explaining the noise. It almost reminded her of an earthquake.

“He uhm—,” Jess swallowed hard, like she was fighting against some invisible force controlling her ability to speak, “—he gave me a kind of ultimatum.”

“What kind of ultimatum?” Lena reached out for Jess’ hand that rested in her lap. “It’s ok Jess, you can tell me.”

After a self-assuring nodded, Jess told her boss the rest at the sound of the next rumble. They were getting louder and coming from different places. “That I either help you or watch you die,” she explained plainly. “When I agreed to help you, he gave me strict instructions on what to do and by what time.”

Lena was doing her best to keep her frustration with Lex directed only at him. Jess had nothing to do with this, she was only trying to help. She could hear the heat building in her chest seeping into her words despite her best efforts. “So you were trying to get me away from the festival?”

There was a cascade of rumbles that jostled the car. Whatever was happening was on a massive scale if they were feeling it as far away from downtown as they now were, Lena assumed.

“I’m really sorry Ms. Luthor but I wasn’t allowed to tell you why you were leaving - I had to lie. I
was instructed to get you out of there. He told me where to go and to wait it out.”

Lena watched the woman with a vexed expression. She was far more confused when multiple firetrucks and ambulances sped by the parking lot they were in.

Letting go of Jess’ hands, “What aren’t you telling me Jess?”

The young woman dropped her head, almost in shame. She opened the door but didn’t move. Lena realized the opened door, it wasn’t for Jess to get out, but for Lena to clearly hear what was happening. At first, all she could hear were sirens and horns honking. That fit considering what just drove by them. Then there was something that sounded like an explosion. That made little to no sense at all.

Lena opened her own door and climbed out of the town car, slowly but surely. There were multiple plumes of black and grey smoke drifting towards the sky. She wasn’t able to see any of it from her side of the backseat. Another explosion sounded off, shaking the ground again. The deep rumbling vibrations before had been explosions. All of them had been. Jess drove like a bat out of Hell to get her away from that.

“I couldn’t save them, but I could save you,” Jess croaked.

Lena stared blankly into the distance as she spoke, looking through her assistant that was stood on the other side of the car. “My brother used you. He was too much of a coward, so he used you because he knew you’d have my best interest at heart.”

When Jess didn’t answer, Lena kept on. “You we’re manipulated into making the choice he wanted you to make. He didn’t want me there because he knew what that meant.”

“I’m so sorry Lena,” Jess cried. “I’m truly sorry.” After a few sniffles and stuttered breaths, “He threatened my mother’s life if I contacted Supergirl- or anyone else for help. The only thing I could do was get you to safety.”

Right as Lena was going to forgive Jess, because none of this was actually her fault – she was just caught in the middle – there was a blast, a bright flash of light she saw from at least a mile away, and a gush of wind; in that order. The ground shook enough to knock her into the car which wasn’t a good sign.

Kara was still there. Kara. “Kara!” Lena screamed as the realization set in. “No, no, no! No! Jess we need to go back! I have to go back! ...Kara’s still there...” Lena had dissolved into desperate pleading and unashamed begging. It didn’t matter what happened to her, she needed to get to Kara. She needed to know Kara was safe.

“I can’t! I want to, but I-I can’t. Lex told me about the explosions. He said that once I got you here, there was no going back.”

Lena spun around with fury lighting her way. “What do you mean you can’t? Can’t or won’t?”

“The way your brother described it, he’s going for scorched earth. He plans to ruin everything around the festival.”

Lena wasn’t taking that for an answer. She needed to get to Kara. Logic wasn’t her first mode of thinking anymore. Her actions were purely being fueled, and motivated, by emotion alone.

“You can get in or stand here but either way I’m leaving.”
Jess wiped her snot and tears on her blazer’s sleeves then tossed the keys over the sedan. Seconds later, tires were screeching against pavement and Lena was off, ready to move heaven and Earth to get to Kara. She shouldn’t have left without saying anything. She continuously chastised herself the entire drive back to the festival. For not telling Kara where she was going, not even looking for Alex, and everything else Lena could think of because she felt like she deserved it, worse even.

\——

Alex was fumbling with her pack trying to find it. She knew it was in there, but why couldn’t she find it?

Lex was in her sights, she had the shot, but she couldn’t take it. There were far too many people bopping in and out of her line of sight. Realistically, if she had fired her weapon, she ran the risk of hitting a civilian; even with her level of expertise. Lex must’ve known that as he watched her from where he stood.

When he looked back at one of the parked floats, Alex saw what else he could’ve been smugly gloating over. Kara was hunched over griping at her chest which didn’t bode well. Lex had been at least fifty feet away from Kara, and she wasn’t doing anything about it. Which meant Lex had to have done something to her. There was no doubt in Alex’s mind.

When she looked back at the man he gave her a look as though he was challenging her. He had forced her to choose between saving her sister or killing him. If she could have, she would’ve done both, but she couldn’t. There were just too many innocent people between them. When Alex made her choice, Lex continued walking away.

She was halfway to Kara, shoving random people out of her way that had been slowing her down. Kara was far too still lying on the float. Alex didn’t have any idea as to what was wrong, but she had to get there faster.

Alex was knocked forward a few feet, knees skidding over the cement of broken sidewalks. There was another explosion, that one more consuming than the rest. Had she of focused on killing Lex she’d likely be dead right now instead of helping Kara. She had been barely outside of the blast radius as it was. Not far from where Alex last saw Lex was the exact spot the bomb went off. There was no way he survived a detonation of that magnitude. No one within a thirty-foot radius of him would have.

There was a high-pitched ringing in her right ear blocking out all other sounds from her attention. It was probably for the best because she mentally only had enough space to focus on Kara. Anymore and the guilt of leaving innocents to fend for themselves would have eaten her alive. So, she didn’t focus on everything else going on. “Astra, it’s Kara! She’s hurt!” Alex knew that’s all she had to say, Astra would find them, and she had been right.

The steps to the float were high but not impossible. After a well-timed lunge, Alex vaulted the remaining steps two at a time. Kara had reached out to her and she caught Kara’s hand just before it fell. After a quick assessment Alex knew exactly what Lex had done. The green substance she saw coursing through Kara’s veins was indication enough.

Astra landed right after, cradling Kara in her arms.
Alex pulled her med kit from her waist as she spoke, going for calm and employing all her training. “It’s Kryptonite. He poisoned her again.” She was fumbling through her kit because she knew she packed it. She remembered going back for the damn thing after nearly forgetting it – twice – so it was there.

Astra gave her a puzzled, yet harsh expression. “Tell me you can fix this here.”

With an irritated quirk of her brow, “What does it look I’m trying to do? Find a doorway to Narnia?”

Astra didn’t dignify the remark with a response. Most likely because she didn’t understand the reference. Either way, Alex was grateful.

“Found it!” Alex shouted.

“Will it work?”

Alex’s tense expression said more than her words could. Upon J’onn’s suggestion, she and Lena had been trying to come up with a way to combat the Kryptonite poisoning in the field, but nothing short of a sun bath was going to help. Which was exactly what they had devised. It was only a prototype, but it was all they had right now. If Lena pulled it off, which it was very likely that she had, the two scientists had crammed enough yellow sun radiation into the grenade sized capsule to essentially jump start Kara’s system. It was like a concentrated dose of her time spent under the sun lamps.

Alex took a couple shaky steps forward. “I don’t know if it’ll help,” Alex answered honestly. She pressed the release and tossed the grenade in the air, hoping for the best. She skipped back a few steps to keep a safe distance from the spray because its effects hadn’t been tested on humans as of yet. It hadn’t even been tested on Kara to see if it would work. It was a shot in the dark but they had to do something.

When Kara wasn’t responding to the dosing of radiation Alex had to call it. Keeping Kara there was more of a liability than having Astra take her to the DEO. She used what she had on hand to help but it didn’t look like enough. The green traces in her skin had slightly lightened but it wasn’t a significant improvement. Not enough anyway.

After instructing Astra to take Kara in, Alex returned to her job on the ground. She could let herself focus on everyone and everything else. Lex was dead which meant the last of their problems was over with.

As quickly as she thought it, she was being swept off her feet and being huddled away from the holiday float. One second she was walking down the stairs of the float, the next she was being yanked by the arm.

Kara was on the ground beside her and Astra was bending over them, shielding them both from something. Through the gap between Astra’s arm and torso Alex spotted the familiar orange flash of explosive light. Had it not been for Astra’s Kryptonian biology, and her still being on that float, Alex would likely be dead for a second time in almost ten minutes.

She was pulled to her feet when it was safe to do so and not a moment sooner. She was brushing herself off and Astra was helping to fix her uniform. Alex gave Kara a once over to doublecheck her condition before sending Astra off one more time. Alex didn’t seem like she was about to make a big thing about Astra saving her life nor did Astra. They were both content to keep it that way.

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*_____*
The morning’s rays were warming her face, which meant Kara needed to get ready for work soon. There was a slight shift on the mattress and Kara immediately knew who it was. Rolling over, Kara nuzzled her nose into the shoulder of the body beside her, wrapping her arm around their waist.

The last thing she could remember was drifting off into unconsciousness and then nothing. Maybe she was still trying to piece the aftermath together, Kara figured. She had inhaled quite a bit of the Kryptonite and there was still the unknown possibility that the substance had a different effect when ingested or inhaled. At the sound of a tiny moan Kara inched upwards on the bed, leaving light kisses on exposed skin.

Kara was practically thrown from the bed before she could move any further.

“Kara, what the hell!”

When the woman, whose hair was a reddish brown, rolled over, it wasn’t her girlfriend. It was her sister. “Alex! What are you doing in my bed?” Now that she was thinking about it, what was she doing in her apartment? And why was Alex’s hair brown, and longer?

“You asked me to come over last night. We had a little too much to drink so I just crashed here.”

Kara couldn’t remember any of that. The last thing she could remember was Lex trying to kill her. Him denying her the chance to know if Lena was alright before ending her life.

Lena. “If you’re here then where’s Lena?”

Alex climbed out of the bed, stretching and looking around for something in the process. “Didn’t we leave the aspirin out?” Alex asked distractedly.

Kara spotted the bottle on her nightstand then chucked it towards her sister. “Where’s Lena, Alex?” Kara asked with a firmer tone this time.

The obviously hungover woman pinched the bridge of her nose, motioning for Kara to take it down a notch. “Lena who?” Alex sighed but shied away from the name like she knew something.

Kara watched her sister’s retreating form with her mouth partially agape. How did she not know who Lena was? That was impossible.

“My girlfriend Lena,” Kara elaborated, speaking slowly just to be sure Alex was understanding her. “Lena Luthor. The only Lena we know.”

Kara heard her sister’s snort of laughter in the kitchen, before following behind her. “What’s so funny?” she called out.

“You having a girlfriend,” Alex lightly laughed again. “One-night stands, friends with benefits, sure. But a girlfriend? You’ve been intentionally single since…” Alex’s voice trailed off as she avoided her sister’s searching gaze.

“Since what?” Kara asked in a worried tone.

“You made me promise to never speak of it again,” Alex answered.

“Well I’m giving you permission to talk about it. So, spill!”

Alex profusely shook her head, no longer concerned with her throbbing headache. “No. I’m not
“Going through this with you again. The last time we did this you nearly heat visioned my head off. I’m particularly fond of where it is, thank you very much.”

Alex was rummaging around the apartment for her things, getting dressed as she moved around. “Come on Alex. Please!”

Alex winced at the volume of her sister’s voice. Her eyes narrowed to threatening slits prompting Kara to silently apologize. Just as she was grabbing her keys, Alex huffed impatiently as if she knew exactly what was going to happen, but she was going to do it anyway. “We haven’t talked about your dating life since her death. It’s been months and I don’t think you’ve given yourself a chance to heal. Instead you’re just... avoiding it and numbing the pain with sex and drinking. A very me thing to do by the way.”

“Who died?” Kara asked with genuine curiosity. Everything else that was going on was strange enough, whoever her sister was about to say couldn’t have been much worse than this.

Rubbing the back side of her hand over her eyebrows, “Lena did,” Alex cautiously answered. “You pretty much forced us all to act like she never existed. You would flip out hearing anyone talk about her. How do you not remember any of this?”

Something wasn’t right. What Alex was saying couldn’t have been true. Had she really lost months’ worth of time and memories? No matter how hard tried she couldn’t remember any of what her sister was talking about. “I... I don’t remember any of it.”

With her features scrunched in confusion, Alex looked at her sister. First with a subtle hint of humor because Kara was really selling the whole thing, but then there was something in the way Kara looked. It was like she had answered the very question Kara had been looking to have answered. Like her answer was the very thing Kara didn’t want to hear, and she was hearing it for the first time. “Wait, you’re serious.”

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Astra was pacing at the foot of Kara’s gurney with her arms crossed over her chest. When J’onn caught a break from managing everything else, he was hovering outside the med bay like a protective parent. Alex was on one side of Kara’s bed with Lena on the other. It took some doing, but Alex had to convince J’onn to hold off on Lena’s arrest. There was too much going on and everyone wanted to be sure that Kara was going to make it out of this.

The Kryptonite was eighty percent flushed from Kara’s system, but she was still unconscious. Alex and Lena both ran tests to be sure. All signs were pointing towards Kara being out of the woods, but she hadn’t regained consciousness.

“You said you could handle this,” Astra tersely spoke up, voice cutting the silence like a sharpened blade.

“I did,” Alex mumbled under her breath. “If it weren’t for the yellow sun grenade we’d be having a very different conversation right now.

“Alex is right,” Lena began to say, but Astra was quick to redirect her anger.

“How dare you speak,” Astra spat. “This is your family’s fault. That brother of yours deserves
worse.”

Lena had been biting back her irritation since she arrived. She was put in handcuffs the moment she entered the building. A part of her understood why that was, but it was really an unfounded action. Someone was going to have to take the blame for the explosions, and Lena was the next best Luthor. That didn’t mean she was fond of being pinned as the scapegoat for her brother’s actions, but such was life living as a big bad Luthor.

“Don’t get me started on who deserves to speak in this room,” Lena bit back. She peaked over her shoulder, being sure to make direct eye contact with the woman who had her hand wrapped around her throat not all that long ago.

“If it weren’t for Lena we wouldn’t have that grenade. You might want to remember that,” Alex suggested, coming to Lena’s defense.

“She’ll be fine,” Lena mumbled lowly to herself for reassurance. “She has to be.” Her hands were wrapped so tightly around Kara’s hand that if she were human there would be bruises. Lena’s fingertips were devoid of any sign of blood flow she was squeezing so tightly. “I need her to be ok.”

Alex respectfully didn’t acknowledge what Lena had lowly said to herself. She knew it was meant to be private because she was internally saying the same things.

When J’onn entered the room, everyone stiffened, especially Lena. She knew she was on borrowed time and every time the Director entered the room it could be her last moment to be with Kara.

“Any changes?” J’onn inquired.

Alex shook her head. She looked at Lena, who had turned back to face her and Kara, then back up at J’onn who shook his head in turn with a solemn look about him.

Lightly clearing his throat, J’onn took a few steps closer to Lena. “Ms. Luthor, I’m very sorry for this but it’s been hours with no sign that Kara will be waking up any time soon. I have to ask that you come with me to answer a few questions.”

The ire was growing tenfold in the pit of Lena’s stomach. Alex recognized the look on the brunette’s face straightaway. It was indistinguishable to how she looked when Alex found Lena being ushered to one of the interrogation rooms. Alex had been able to postpone the inevitable then, but there was no way she could do it a second time. She could see that Lena had a lot of pent up anger and her arrest must have been the tipping point. That well-crafted and perfected Luthor control was a distant memory. Knowing exactly what was about to happen, Alex motioned for the agent posted by the door, there only to keep an eye on Lena, to shut the door. There was no need in having an audience to what was about to unfold.

A moment after the door shut, Lena sat up straighter on her stool and let out a breathy laugh. It was cold and unlikely any sound Alex had heard come from the young Luthor. This was the side of Lena that Alex never wanted to be on the receiving end of. Though Lena was calm externally, the storm brewing within her was clear as day in her eyes.

“You think I had something to do with that,” Lena rhetorically asked as she spun around to face J’onn.

“That’s what I’m here to figure out, yes,” J’onn simply answered.

Lena nodded to herself then continued laughing. It was unsettling, even to Alex.
“How could I possibly have had anything to do with it? I was there practically the entire time. I’m the one that helped your organization figure out my brothers next target,” she elucidated in a condescending tone. “What possibly makes you think I was complicit with this... massacre?” She spoke the last word with so much pain it appeared to hurt her to have to use the word.

“It’s as you said: because you were the one that figured out your brother’s next move. I’m not saying it’s a coincidence, nor am I accusing you of anything, I just want your version of what happened out there.”

Lena’s disapproving laughter harshly continued. She stood from her seat to be on equal footing with the Director. “It’s because I’m a Luthor.” When J’onn looked ready to deny the accusation Lena cut him off but walked towards Astra. “It’s because my surname just so happens to be Luthor that everyone assumes the worst from me. Your niece,” Lena said, only a step away from Astra, “never looked at me like a Luthor. She was the first person in so long I never had to defend myself to. And here I am, watching her, powerless to help her because of a Luthor. Here I am, defending myself to two people who know next to nothing about me. That are so quick to judge me because of a last name.”

Lena circled back and refocused her attention back on J’onn. “Honesty works both ways Director. I had no control over what happened today, nor prior knowledge. I can’t even begin to tell you why Lex continued to keep me safe, because-,” throwing her hands up with a shrug, “-I haven’t the foggiest.”

Alex sat quietly still watching over Kara, but proud that Lena wasn’t taking being accused of mass murder sitting down – literally. If she needed to, she’d jump in, but there was no pressing need. Lena had this under control.

“I hear what you’re saying Ms. Luthor, but at the end of the day we still need to know what exactly happened.”

“You were out there so you know.”

“I want to hear it from you. We crossed paths outside of the festival, so why weren’t you there?”

Lena expected that’s what he really wanted to know. If she were in his place, she would too. Her disappearance was well timed and most convenient. There wasn’t anything she could do about it, but it was still a fact. She wasn’t around when the bombs started going off. J’onn motioned for her to answer so Lena took a moment before diving in.

Lena spoke in a very official manner, commanding the respect she rightfully deserved. “Before the parade Agent Danvers met with me and we went over the tentative plan for the event. Upon the conclusion of the parade, Supergirl made her way to LCorp’s tent. I would say a few hours had passed without my seeing Supergirl or Agent Danvers. I received a call from my assistant informing me my presence was needed elsewhere but I felt she was lying to me.”

“And you went anyway?” J’onn questioned with a raised brow.

Returning the intense glare, “I did,” Lena stated. “I trust my assistant and I knew if she was lying it had to be for a particular reason.”

“Continue.”

Lena wanted to roll her eyes like a petulant child but fought back the urge. “Jess, my assistant, she drove us pretty quickly away from the area blocked off for the festival. When she stopped in a
random parking lot, she explained what brought her to lie.”

“Which was,” Astra impatiently asked.

Lena maintained eye contact with the man in front of her, ignoring Astra as best she could. “My brother called her prior to picking me up. He told her she could either save me or watch me die; the choice was hers. I have a feeling Jess being involved was Lex’s first choice, with a backup plan in case she chose not to get involved.”

“Clearly she helped you,” Alex said.

“Yes,” Lena nodded. “That’s why I wasn’t there. Jess drove me to a predetermined location by a specific time so I’d be nowhere near the explosions. As soon as I realized what was going on I rushed to get back. I needed to get to Kara.”

“Which is when I found you,” J’onn said. “I apologize for deceiving you in that way, but the citizens of National City need to believe Supergirl is alright.”

“You went out as Kara?” Alex asked, not being aware of that part.

“I did. When Astra arrived with an unconscious Supergirl, there were few options we were left with. I was already on my way out with several other teams.”

“So, you’re ok with an unknown alien bringing in Supergirl, but a Luthor being absent from an active – Luthor related – crime scene, is a glaring red flag to you?” Lena scrutinized.

“I only left once I was sure Kara would be alright. And no, you both are under close observation.”

Astra gave J’onn an amused look but never uttered a sound. She didn’t care for Earth’s rules, and that extended to J’onn and the DEO. She was a General that answered to no one on this planet. She was only there for her niece and very little mattered outside of that.

“That’ll do for now Ms. Luthor, but we’ll have to have a more in-depth conversation later. And on the record,” he added.

Lena relaxed her posture and returned to her seat, shifting her attention back to what was important.

“Lena and I were able to get a sample of the Kryptonite in Kara’s system,” Alex mentioned, capitalizing on the moment of calm silence in an otherwise volatile atmosphere.

“What did you find?” J’onn and Astra prompted almost simultaneously.

“Somehow Lex found a way to create his own Kryptonite.”

Astra took a step forward. “What do you mean, create?”

“We compared the sample against what we already have here,” Alex began to explain.

“It’s the same but a synthetic blend,” Lena finished without looking at anyone other than Kara.

“And there’s no telling how much of it he already had,” Alex uncomfortably stated.

As Alex was expecting, J’onn wasn’t happy to hear that. “Then it’s a good thing he’s no longer around to use it. There’s a few teams still out scouring the scene as we speak.”

Lena scoffed, then rolled her neck around to stretch it out. “You really think he’s dead?”
Alex looked from J’onn to Astra, all in unspoken agreement. “Lena, I know he was your brother, and maybe you’re experiencing a bit of denial, but… He couldn’t have survived.”

Lena looked up the redhead for a brief moment, before looking down at her hands clasped with Kara’s. “I’m not in denial and you aren’t looking at this for what it is.”

“How so?”

Lena cleared her throat before explaining her thought process. “Clark was the one to hurt Lex. Kara must have been a happy consolation prize for his trouble. I know my brother, and being raised a Luthor, there’s no way he’d be foolish enough to kill himself without even attempting to take Clark with him.” After a beat, “Besides, there’s no way for you to be absolutely certain that he’s actually dead – or alive for that matter.”

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Kara had dressed and left her apartment in a hurry. She moved so fast she beat her sister, who was already dressed and ready to go, out of the apartment. Lena couldn’t be dead. There was no way that was possible, or rather, she didn’t want to believe it was true.

To be sure Alex was telling the truth, Kara went to the first place she could think Lena would be. It was a kind of in between time where Lena could be in her apartment, her office, or in transit. It all depended on how early Lena managed to get out of her apartment.

She was outside of Lena’s door when her phone vibrated for the second time. It was Alex. Kara declined the call and listened for any signs of life inside. There was nothing but silence on the other side. A part of her was desperate enough to break down the door to check for any sign that Lena even lived there, but she wasn’t going to let herself slip that far. Not yet.

Her next stop was the top floor of LCorp. When she arrived, standing on the sidewalk and looking up, the sign still read LCorp which was definitely a good sign. That meant Lena’s work hadn’t been undone. Using her CatCo credentials, under the guise that she was there for an interview, Kara snagged a visitor’s pass and rode the elevator to the top floor.

There was a guy that was about her age, clearly not Jess, sat at the desk in the upstairs lobby. He greeted her with a pleasant smile and asked for her name.

“Ms. Danvers, was Mrs. Luthor expecting you?”

Kara’s head snapped back to the man’s face, bewildered. “Mrs. Luthor?”

There was that gentle smile again. “Yes,” he laughed gently, not meaning to offend her in any way. “Who were you here to see again?”

“Oh, uh, I never said,” Kara stammered before pushing by the otherwise decent replacement of Jess’ - she still preferred Jess being at that desk.

The young man was calling for her to stop, saying that Mrs. Luthor was in a meeting and didn’t want to be disturbed. Kara pushed open the door, hoping Lena was on the other side. She was still wishing that Lena wasn’t dead. While being married wasn’t a great alternative, at least she was alive in that scenario.
Flinging the door open in its entirety, Kara held her breath with her eyes pinched shut. Surprised voices echoed through the room with only one being of a familiar register.

“Kara...” the woman said in a sad and breathy voice. Kara hadn’t opened her eyes yet, but she could tell the woman was shocked to be seeing her.

Slowly opening her eyes, Kara had to fight back tears because she still hadn’t found Lena. “Mrs. Luthor,” Kara respectfully replied. She wanted to leave the building, but Lena’s mother was asking for her to stay before dismissing the man in her office. He didn’t particularly enjoy being brushed to the side for an intruder.

The man purposely bumped her shoulder on his way out, but Kara ignored him. She moved further into the mostly white office but only enough to not be hit by the door as it was pulled closed by the assistant.

“Please, have a seat,” Lillian requested as she motioned towards the empty chairs on the other side of her desk.

Kara raised a hand and shook her head. “Thank you but I’m alright right here.”

Lillian nodded in understanding then sat back down. Kara looked around the office and noticed just how different it was from how Lena had it decorated. Lillian still had her plants but there were photos on the walls that Lena never had. There was a Luthor family photo when Lena and Lex were both children. There was a more recent picture with Lillian and Lena at a gala. They looked overjoyed to be taking the photo together. Then there was a photo of Kara and Lena sat on a porch swing caught in a fit of laughter. She didn’t remember the picture so it must have been taken during her memory lapse.

Lillian caught sight of what was calling for Kara’s attention and smiled. “It’s one of my favorite photos of you two you know?” Kara shook her head because she didn’t know. “Not that I’m not happy to see you Kara, but why are you here? Is everything alright?”

Kara could barely bring herself to look away from the photo of her and Lena. “Not exactly,” Kara spoke with a strangled voice. She was getting choked up looking around the office with no sign of Lena’s presence outside of framed photographs.

“What seems to be the bother?”

Kara broke herself away from the photo and looked at Lillian. The matriarch was watching her like she was a spooked wild animal. She was treading lightly in unknown territory. Kara could tell Lillian was handling her like a fragile being and didn’t want to do, or say, anything to upset her. This only furthered the narrative that Lena wasn’t alive, and Kara must have taken the news extremely rough whenever it happened. Kara tried to convince herself that maybe she had blocked the whole thing out of her memory. It was possible... right?

“Kara,” Lillian called out to get Kara’s attention. “Here,” the woman said before getting up from behind her desk to get Kara a glass of water.

Unfortunately, Kara instantly recognized the pitcher as one Lena turned into a makeshift vase for a bouquet of flowers she had given the brunette. As Kara held onto the glass, a tear slipped from her eyes, then another. Before she knew it, she was breaking down in Lillian’s office.

The woman guided her over to the soft yellow couch in the room and let Kara get it all out. When Kara’s shuttering breaths eased up Lillian deemed it an appropriate moment to speak. “I’m
guessing you needed that.”

Kara nodded slowly before saying anything. “How long has it been?”

Lillian knew what Kara was referencing without asking further questions. “Almost a year. When we last spoke you blamed yourself for all of it.”

“Because it was my fault,” Kara wetly replied, tears brimming for another round.

“I know you feel guilty but there was nothing you could have done.” Lillian was comfortingly rubbing Kara’s back, lightly shushing her cries in their shared silence.

“I could have saved her,” Kara cried. “I had the choice and I didn’t make it.”

“Kara, look at me,” Lillian requested. When the blonde didn’t budge Lillian asked once again, but it was more of a command with how resolute her tone became. Kara twisted to the side and looked up at Lillian who was looking at her with one of the softest expressions she had ever seen the woman make.

Lillian wiped away Kara’s falling tears while she held the young woman’s face in her hands. “I know you loved my daughter. I also know that it wouldn’t have mattered what you did. You’re only human and I wish you would quit carrying around all that guilt. It wasn’t your fault and there was nothing you could have done.”

That’s just it, Kara thought to herself. I’m not human.

Kara did blame herself for Lena not being alive. In her eyes, the culpability fell upon her shoulders alone. It was a guilt that eclipsed all others. She had the choice to pick Lex or Lena and she chose Lex, who wound up trying to kill her in the end.

During the attack, Kara couldn’t hear Lena because her superhuman hearing was being overwhelmed a little more with every passing second. The bombs detonating, the screams in agony and terror; it was all too much. In such a state, in order for Kara to single out Lena’s heartbeat she’d have to channel all her focus on just that sound. Blocking out everything else around her.

At first, this was something she was willing to do, but the more she scanned the terrified faces around her she couldn’t bring herself to do it. Not without a guarantee that Lena was actually in danger. That was the tale Kara tried to persuade herself was the real reason she made the choice she did.

The truth that she wasn’t ready to admit to, was, what if she did listen in for Lena’s heartbeat and heard nothing? She’d be devastated. She’d be plagued with a rage she didn’t think she’d come out of without blood-soaked hands. She couldn’t fall apart yet. She couldn’t let her ire take root setting her on a path towards revenge. She’d only had to remain strong, keeping her rage in check, long enough to stop Lex.

Maybe it was for the best that she couldn’t remember how Lena died. Based on everything else, it had to have happened that day. Lena died without her even knowing, and the worst part was that she didn’t even remember it.

“I’ll clear the rest of my day and you and I can go somewhere.”

Kara nodded even though she wanted to be left alone. Being around Lillian wasn’t making this newfound information any easier to handle. Not to mention she didn’t understand how the matriarch was handling things so well after losing both her children. Maybe there was more going on.
The growing tension between Astra and Lena was working on Alex’s last nerve. Alex had been sitting so long she had gone stiff, so she asked Astra to take a walk with her. There was still very little she knew about Kara’s aunt and this was as good a chance as any to find out more about her.

They made it a good distance away from the infirmary without either of them speaking. Alex realized if this was going to go anywhere, she’d have to kick things off.

“Soooo...” Alex drawled.

“What would you like to know,” Astra knowingly replied without glancing at Alex for confirmation.

“Well, for starters, are you really Kara’s aunt? I mean, I’m just checking.”

“Yes. Next question.”

“Ok. How long have you been on Earth?”

“It hasn’t been very long. I’ve been on your Earth for the year. Though it could be shorter.”

“Why didn’t you contact Kara when you had? She was already Supergirl by that point.”

“I didn’t want to disturb her life. I observed from a distance not wanting to interfere.”

“Just to make sure I’m not confusing you with anyone else, it was you that was there when Kara was first exposed to Kryptonite,” Alex said more than asked.

Astra nodded, swinging her arms behind her back and clapping them in place. “I was also there the night of the Luthor gala. And again when Alexander Luthor kidnapped the three of you. Lastly a few nights ago.”

Alex glanced over at the windows opposite the command center, noting that the sun was already setting. “Is that why you hate Lena? Because of that night?”

There was a momentary beat of silence before Astra answered. “That’s a very complicated answer.”

Alex gestured around the grey hallway as she spoke. “Well, we have nothing but time.”

“I didn’t land on this planet alone. I can imagine my niece informed you of my incarceration, yes?”

“Yea.”

“As there are many ears that report back to me, there’s no shortage of information I’m privy to. There had been talks of some scientific research backed by a Luthor that was linked to alien disappearances. It didn’t take me long to trace it back to Lena and her brother.”

“We already worked out that Lex was the one behind it- the disappearances I mean. We had orders to capture, not kill, so he’d be tried for his crimes.”

“Which was a grave error in judgement on your leader’s part. Alexander had already proven capable of outsmarting your government on more than one occasion. The only punishment fit for his crimes
was death.”

“That’s not how things work on this planet.”

“Your judicial system is quite flawed,” Astra pointed out matter-of-factly.

“No argument here. But if you already knew Lex was guilty why not talk to Kara, or me? Why are you taking it out on Lena?”

“I’ve seen that Lena is a brilliant woman. I’m positive she’s of a mind far superior to her brother’s. Perhaps I have acted too harshly in regard to her, but I only do it to protect my niece. One Luthor has already attempted to end her life several times, I shall not see that come to pass at the hands of another.”

“I was a little wary in the beginning too, but Lena seriously cares about Kara. I know she’s your blood, but Kara’s also my sister. A woman I’ve spent the past ten years with. I do everything I can to protect her.”

“I’m not calling your nature to question Alexandra. You are brave and your heart is strong. I’m glad my Kara has you.”

The two had talked most of the walk but Alex was pulled off to assist with an unruly inmate on their way back. Astra understood and said she’d find her own way back to the infirmary.

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Alex and Astra were going for a walk at the younger woman’s insistence. If Lena could have, she would’ve left the room a long time ago for some air. Instead, she was being unofficially detained and confined to the square footage of the infirmary. Even if she did leave the room, it wouldn’t be without an armed escort of some sort.

So, she sat, and watched Kara, praying to a universe she wasn’t even sure was listening. Lena blamed herself for Kara’s condition even though it wasn’t the logical explanation. She had nothing to do with Lex and his attempts at an alien genocide. But because she was in a relationship with Kara, a Kryptonian, she was constantly being put in harms way. Or maybe Kara was safer because of their relationship. The jury was still out on the matter. The voices in Lena’s head were loud with their opposing arguments. All she felt for sure was her guilt and hatred towards her brother.

She wasn’t eavesdropping, but Lena had overheard a few agents talking outside the infirmary. According to them, there was no way Lex could have survived the explosion. She had heard the same thing not long after being handcuffed when she first arrived. She hadn’t seen much of the scene itself but based on what she felt a few miles away from the blast initially led Lena to believe the same.

***With an explosion of that size, any living thing was most likely turned to pink mist.***

With that being the case, there weren’t going to be any bodies around to examine to be certain of her
brother’s death. At this point it was only speculation, but everyone believed him dead. Knowing Lex the way Lena did, he wouldn’t have gone out so easily. Not without taking out his main target – Superman. Armed with that understanding, Lena no longer believed her brother perished in the explosion.

Astra returned to the med bay by herself some time later. Lena knew full well who Astra was. While that information was empowering, it was also vaguely daunting. She was one of Kara’s last remaining blood relatives, and Astra didn’t seem the type to ask questions before acting. There was no doubting that the Kryptonian woman wasn’t a fan of hers; not even a tiny bit. That much was clear during their first encounter, but a part of Lena still wanted to make a good impression for some reason.

“I think she’s in pain,” Lena reflexively found herself saying. “She’s been grimacing since you two left.”

Astra didn’t speak. She walked over to vacant side of the bed and looked down at her niece. Lena idly sat by as she watched a side to Astra she hadn’t seen before surface. The woman’s features softened, and it almost made Lena cry. Beneath that angry façade was a woman hurting. Astra’s eyes glistened as she gazed upon her niece’s face. With an unsteady hand, she lightly wiped the stray hairs from Kara’s face.

“She’s strong,” Astra whispered with a quavering voice.

“She is,” Lena agreed, matching Astra’s tone.

It didn’t take long for Astra to bottle her emotions back and force them aside. She straightened her posture and fixed her dark shirt and jacket. When Lena noticed the woman was leaving again, she felt compelled to question why.

“Where are you going?”

Astra stopped in her tracks in the door’s threshold, only turning her head to acknowledge Lena’s question. “If Alexandra or J’onn wish to speak with me tell them I’ve gone for answers.” Without another word, Astra left with a dutiful nod and stoic stride.

*——*

Lillian had brought Kara along for her errands as a way of distracting the young woman from thinking about Lena. For the most part, it had helped. The only problem was that she was bound to be alone eventually, and what then?

That night, when Kara tried to sleep, she couldn’t dream. She tossed and turned all night sleeping in her bed alone. She had gotten so used to sleeping with Lena beside her, it didn’t feel right sleeping alone.

It was just before four in the morning and Kara was tired of fighting. She flung the covers off her body and swung her legs over the side of the bed. She rustled her hair around and tried to think of anything she could do to pass the time.

Kara distractedly shoved her limbs into a pair of sweatpants and a hoody. She was hoping she could find anything to occupy her mind since sleeping clearly wasn’t an option. Some fresh air could be
just what she needed. She wound up wandering around the still sleeping city. Every so often she’d pass someone on their way to work or someone likely just getting off.

Kara had incorrectly assumed she had been aimlessly drifting through the early morning darkness that fell over the city before dawn. A part of her brain had other plans and wound up leading her to Lena’s apartment building. She stood outside the building, staring up to the top floor. She took another moment to contemplate if she even wanted to go inside, but her feet had already made the decision. The doorman let her in without question and the woman sat at the front desk spoke to her like they were old friends.

She knew Lena’s apartment was locked, yet she stood there wishing the door would spontaneously open on its own. The longer she stood with nothing happening the more she yearned to be inside. Then she remembered Lena’s balcony – a door she rarely locked. Taking the stairs back down, Kara jogged over the nearest alleyway for cover.

Just as she thought, the sliding glass balcony door was unlocked. Very slowly, Kara gingerly made her way inside. There was no need for her to cut on any lights, but she flicked on every light switch near the kitchen anyway, gasping at what it revealed. Everything was as she remembered, just covered in drop clothes or a thick layer of dust.

Easing her way through the space, Kara dragged a lazy finger over the island and another across a lamp beside the couches. Everything had been packed up from Lena’s bookshelf with the boxes stacked in front of it. Opening the top box, Kara thumbed through its contents. She vacantly stared across the empty apartment waiting for Lena to pop out from behind a closed door.

Putting one foot in front of the other, Kara strolled down the hall and didn’t stop until she was outside of Lena’s bedroom. There was something propelling her forward with an opposing force holding her in place. It was a battle within herself to venture further than where she stood. The was difficult to move anywhere with the photo of Lena and Lex staring back at her from across the room.

It took some doing, and even more convincing, but Kara made the decision to walk inside the vacant bedroom and confront her unspoken fears. To her left was the photo of Lena after her MIT graduation and she snagged it off the wall as she walked by. The bed had been stripped of its sheets and pillows, but that didn’t matter. Kara put the photo of Lena and her brother face down on the nightstand finding it too hard to see his face right now.

Cuddled up with the photo in the middle of the bed, Kara stared off into the dimly lit space. Memories of her first night with Lena in that bed came back to her in pieces. How she carried Lena to bed after her bath, then the two of them accidentally falling asleep together. Her favorite part of the memory was Lena’s cold feet.

Every night they spent together, Lena had a habit of rubbing her feet against Kara. At first it was just some ridiculous thing the brunette kept doing but over time it was a part of their nightly routine. Some nights Kara wouldn’t sleep comfortably until Lena was in bed beside her with her unusually chilly feet. It was something so simple, but Kara’s heart ached at the thought of it never happen again.

Lena was dead. She didn’t want to believe it, fought against it even, but everyone was right. Lena’s apartment was further evidence of the truth.

Tears slowly trickled from her eyes dampening the mattress with every drop. Eventually she drifted off to sleep with the rise of the sun. At first it was nothing but darkness then Lena’s face appeared in the center of vignette edges. There were tears in the woman’s eyes and she looked relieved. If she could, Kara wanted to stay like this forever, as long as she got the chance to see her girlfriend’s
Once again Lena was alone with Kara. Alex had popped in for a quick update before being pulled away. Astra was, well, who knew where she was. All Lena was certain of was that she felt bad for whoever got in the Kryptonian’s way.

Kara had told her that Astra didn’t have any children, and that she was the closest thing the woman had to having kids of her own. If that was the case, Astra was being driven by a maternal sense of protection over Kara. By some miracle, Astra had only verbally gone after Lena. She knew that anger was actually meant for Lex, but she was the closest person Astra could get at the time.

So far, Lena had done well keeping herself together no matter how intensely the tears were stinging her eyes. That all came crashing down when Kara began to stir. It was small motions at first, like Kara was fighting against something, then her eyes began to gradually open.

They were tiny slits, but it was enough for Lena to see those beautifully electric blue eyes that she’d recognize anywhere. One tear, then three more followed. Kara grunted in pain just before Lena called for someone to call J’onn and Alex to let them know Kara was waking up.

Lena let go of Kara’s hand in favor for fussing over the weakened Kryptonian. “Take it easy Kara.” Despite her best efforts Kara was still fighting to sit up so Lena stopped trying to keep the blonde still.

Once Kara’s eyes were completely open, she stared at Lena. Her eyes were swimming with a wounded surprise. Like seeing Lena hurt her for some reason.

With a relieved sigh, and tears streaming down her face, Lena gently placed a hand to the side of Kara’s neck. “Darling, you have no idea how happy I am to see you awake.”

Kara blinked at her in confusion, then looked around the room. There was a crinkle forming between her brows as she took in her surroundings. When Kara’s gaze returned to her face the blonde stopped moving altogether. She could see that something was wrong in the way Kara was looking at her.

“Lex… he…”

Lena wasn’t initially understanding. She pulled the stool back towards her and patiently waited for Kara to go on.

Tightly squeezing her eyes shut, Kara began to vehemently shake her head. “This isn’t real,” Kara said under her breath. “This isn’t real. He killed you. I’m dreaming and you’re not really here.”

Lena reached out to grab Kara’s hand again but when she did Kara jerked away from her as if she was a poisonous snake threatening to attack.

“You’re not real!” she shouted.

Lena pulled her hand back with a baffled look. She couldn’t figure out what Kara was talking about. Lex hadn’t done anything to her.
“Kara you have to listen to me. Lex didn’t kill me. I’m still alive and so are you.” Kara’s reaction was beginning to make more sense. The heroine must have thought that Lex had killed her before everything happened to her. She almost died thinking Lena had already met the same fate. Seeing her face must have been a lot for Kara to take in just as she was waking up.

Kara had pulled her knees to her chest and kept whispering that she was dreaming over and over again. It broke Lena’s heart to see her girlfriend that way. She wanted to reach out and hold Kara, to assure her that she was alive, but that was a bad idea considering how the Kryptonian reacted to their hands barely touching.

The last thing Kara knew was that Lena was dead and she wasn’t far behind her. Now she’s awake, or she doesn’t think she is, and she’s being forced to see a woman she presumably started to grieve.

Alex came rushing in a moment later and ran directly to her sister. Upon noticing her sister curled in on herself, Alex whipped her head to side in search of Lena for an explanation. “What happened to her?” she firmly questioned.

Lena was shaking her head as she backed towards the door. “I’m not sure. She woke up and told me I wasn’t real. She thinks I’m dead Alex. She thinks that Lex killed me so if I’m here she must be dreaming.”

Alex tilted her head low enough to catch the attention of flitting blue eyes. “Hey, you,” she softly started. “You’re ok. Everything’s going to be alright.”

“I’m going to…” Lena slowly made her way out of the infirmary since her presence was a distressing addition. It wasn’t what she wanted in the slightest, but it was what Kara needed right now. Alex nodded acknowledging what Lena had said without looking away from Kara.

Walking through the halls without a purpose, Lena was sure she’d be stopped by someone and handcuffed again. Now that Kara was awake J’onn would be looking for her to give her statement. Having a small familiarity with the building Lena made her way to a conference room she remembered being in before and waited. Regardless of how long it would it take she wasn’t going to leave Kara. Lena wasn’t going to leave her, especially not while Kara wasn’t in her right mind and thinking she was an apparition. Nothing else really mattered to Lena right now but her girlfriend. Everything else could wait.

Chapter End Notes

What did y'all think?

I wanted to use Kara's being unconscious to break up everything else that was going on. Alex's POV was different for me. I started it off with her looking for the yellow sun grenade on purpose and then going back to explain how she wound up looking for it. I thought it would be a different way of doing the same thing I did with Lena; going backwards to explain her side.

I also wanted to point out that Lex forcing Alex to make a very similar choice to Kara's was intentional. Kara went after him due to the uncertainty of Lena being in danger. Alex didn't pursue Lex only because she didn't have a clear shot, which paid off in the end.

I hope where I was trying to go with this chapter translates the right way. So let me know if anything didn't/doesn't make sense or if you just have questions about the
chapter in general.

For the next chapter, I already had in mind picking up where we left off. I'll admit, writing this chapter wounded me a bit but comfort will be on the way! Kara and Lena both need a hug and so do I lol. I really want to know if anyone was expecting any of this chapter to happen? Specifically the unconscious dream kind of thing and Kara's reaction coming out of it. I seriously have no idea where my brain came up with it, but here we are. In a way it helps me to extend the story. If I'm being honest, I've already written more than I was expecting to. So maybe I keep doing things like that on purpose so I won't have to end the story, even though I already have the end planned out.

At any rate, I hope y'all enjoyed the chapter. Questions/comments/concerns/critiques it's always welcome and appreciated. Leave a comment just to say 'hi' if you'd like; I'm ok with that too haha.

Until next time (in the New Year).
Chapter Summary

Lena gets comfort from an unexpected place. Kara gets a chance to babysit. Kara and Lena see each other and cuteness/fluff/comfort post hurt ensues. Eliza walks into the middle of a conversation she wasn't supposed to hear.

Chapter Notes

Happy New Year everybody!! I hope everyone had fun celebrating however that may have been.

I want to apologize in advance for any mistakes or anything you may come across while reading. I finally got a chance to repost the chapter post-edit; think I got everything, if not most of the errors/typos.

Sit back and let your mind roam free.

Well after midnight an uncomfortable calm fell over Lena’s interrogation room. It was so quiet she could hear her eyes as they shifted in her head. Lena was used to silence, an atmosphere that was usually sought after, but this was too quiet. Whatever distraction she was after, it wasn’t going to be found in that room. She knew this, of course, before she settled in, and here she is. Alone, aching, and in tears.

It wasn’t very often that Lena found her face damp in quite this way. To see Kara recoil from her touch, deny her very existence as she had... These things only wounded her as deeply as they had because she loved Kara. Words could barely describe the depths of which her feelings occupied. She loved Kara, but more importantly, Lena was in love with her. Just the sight of her on most days took Lena’s breath away.

If Kara had been anyone else, had treated her the way the general public tended to, this would have been an entirely different story - a completely different reaction. She wouldn’t have cared.

The sound of the room’s heavy metallic door caught Lena by surprise. She wiped at her reddened eyes to clear away any and all signs that she had been crying only a moment ago. She wasn’t particularly fond of letting just anyone see her in such a state.

Thankfully, it had only been Alex popping her head in; presumably looking for her. The woman let out a soft sigh, the tension rolling from her shoulders just before she pushed the door open wide enough to enter. “I don't know why I didn't think to look here first.”

Lena attempted to crack a smile but wound up pulling her lips into a tight line. She watched as Alex closed the door behind her then sat down in the chair across from her. The red-haired woman didn’t speak at first, not for some time actually. She slouched down in the seat a bit before letting her head
roll backward. It was clear to Lena that Alex needed a moment's reprieve as much as she did. It had
been a long, trying day for everyone.

The older Danvers sister rolled her arms out across the table in a stretching motion, yawning as she
sat up while pushing her hands toward the ceiling.

“I made plans to see Sam,” Alex began to mention. “Dinner in and a kiddie movie for Ruby. At least
until she fell asleep.” Alex shrugged as if the inconvenience of the day was no big deal. “I called her
as soon as I realized I wasn’t going to make it. Lucky for me Sam forgot about our date and was
already putting Ruby down for the night.”

Lena was hesitant to speak. She hadn’t figured out if Alex just wanted to talk for the sake of
conversation or if Alex was only telling her about the date to get Lena's mind off of Kara.

It appeared that Alex only had that topic of conversation in mind, probably hoping Lena would bite.
Any other day she might have, but today...

In a hoarse and ragged voice, “Whatever it is, you can tell me,” Lena said as she repositioned herself
in her seat. In that very moment, she realized she hadn’t moved since sitting down. She hadn’t even
so much as lifted a finger in what was probably hours.

Alex took her words into consideration before saying anything. Lena pensively watched her and held
out hope that the woman would just spit it out. Whatever it was, good or bad, Lena wanted to know.

“Alex, please.”

Nodding to herself, Alex got up to leave the room. With a scrunched brow of confusion, Lena just
stared at the closed door. That wasn’t at all what she had expected to happen. She honestly thought
she’d have to deliver a convincing argument to get Alex to talk so soon, not have her walk out
without so much as an explanation.

A few minutes later Alex returned with a tablet in hand. When she sat down, she tapped out a few
commands and a video feed of the med bay, alongside what looked like Kara’s vital readouts,
popped up on the screen. Alex slowly turned the tablet to face Lena.

The young Kryptonian was curled on her bed but it looked like she was fast asleep. It was a vision
the polar opposite of how Lena left her. With a quick look to the side Lena saw that other than
Kara’s abnormally high heart rate, everything else looked fine.

“It took me a while, but, I got her to tell me what was going on.” Alex’s voice was soft as she knew
she was treading on thin ice.

“And?” Lena croaked, her voice cracking in the process.

“She uhm, well, the thing is-“

“Just spit it out,” Lena demanded, regaining some of her assuredness.

Alex cleared her throat. “Ok then... From my understanding, while Kara was unconscious, she was
dreaming.” When Lena looked ready to cut in again, Alex raised her hand slightly from the table’s
surface, stopping her before she could. “A completely normal occurrence. I know. Anyway – the
dream – it all took place during the course of a day or so. It all seemed normal, but it was a year in
the future, and you were...”

“Dead,” Lena dejectedly filled in to finish Alex’s sentence.
“Yea,” Alex replied with a sympathetic half smile. “She said she looked for you but there were so many signs pointing to you not being alive. She fell asleep holding onto one of your photos when she saw your face. I’m guessing that’s when she actually came to, but she thought she was still dreaming.”

“Does she still think that,” Lena worried.

Alex bobbed her head around not having a good answer to that question. “Yes and no. When Lex poisoned her, she was so sure that he had killed you. It’s hard to say for sure but given how your brother keeps protecting you it’s hard for me to believe that he’d hurt you. Physically, he’s already tried a few times, but the emotional he’s gone out of his way not to do. With that in mind she believed Lex would never kill her if you were still alive. It would be the one thing to ruin your relationship with him.”

“I suppose I can see how that makes sense.”

“Thinking you were already dead, on top of having her dream reaffirm that assumption – a situation that felt very real to her might I add – was too much too fast. She was waking up to something that didn’t match her expectations.”

Lena chewed over Alex’s words while watching over the feed of a sleeping Kara.

“How are you feeling?” Lena heard Alex’s voice pipe back up before too much time could pass.

“I’m ok,” Lena lied, and she didn’t even know why.

“No, you’re not. No one would be after that.”

Lena didn’t speak for a moment but she knew she had to. It didn’t look like Alex was going to take anything less than the truth.

Lena briefly looked up towards Alex through hooded lids then back down at the table. “What do you want me to say? That it hurt to be rejected in that way, even though neither of us had control over what transpired. To have Kara look at me like I was some kind of imposter- like, I wasn’t me, practically broke my heart. I knew my being in that room was only going to make the situation worse. The pragmatic thing to do was to leave.”

Lena drew a deep breath, placing her head in her hands. “All I wanted to do was hold her, just...touch her. It was more for me than her but what I need matters very little right now when the woman I love doesn’t even believe I’m alive. I can’t even blame her because I would’ve reacted the same way, if not worse.”

Looking away from her blurry reflection in the tabletop, Lena slowly wiped her pointer finger across the tablet’s screen after she spoke. That was the closest she was going to be to Kara for who knows how long.

“It matters to me and I want to make sure you’re ok too. I had to sedate Kara to calm her down but I’m sure we’ll all make it through this. I’ve had a couple agents set you up in one of the sleeping quarters because I don’t want you to be alone. I’ll be down there myself once I wrap up a few pieces of paperwork.”

“Thank you for the concern, but I think I’ll stay here,” Lena declined, referring to the interrogation room.

Alex huffed and folded her arms over her chest. She waited until Lena finally looked up to notice her
unimpressed expression.

“You’ve been here just as long as I have, and you don’t even work here. You’re being stubborn and punishing yourself, but if you’re so hell bent on following through with it, I’m not about to stand by and watch you deal with it alone.”

Lena wanted to refuse Alex for a second time. It was for the best that the other woman was looking out for her best interest because Lena wasn’t focused on herself. This was Alex’s way of showing that she cared about Lena, and the brunette was warming up to the idea of having people in her corner. Not just Sam and Jack when she allowed them to be, but a whole group even when she doesn’t want the help.

When Alex got up to leave the room for the last time, she looked over her shoulder to give Lena one last once-over. “I know you haven’t eaten in a while. There’s food downstairs if you want it.” Just before opening the door, “And if I come back and you’re still in this room, you won’t like the result,” Alex deadpanned.

A tiny smile formed on Lena’s lips knowing Alex’s words weren’t a threat but a promise. Physical confrontation wasn’t her strong suit, Lena knew that, but either way, she wasn’t about to pick a fight with Alex; not one she couldn’t win anyway.

Lena was left by herself with the tablet for a few minutes before she tracked down the nearest agent to point her in the direction of where she’d be sleeping for the night. It wasn’t her pillow top king-sized mattress, and Kara wouldn’t physically be with her, but it was better than confining herself to an interrogation room with lights that were driving her to develop a migraine. The bottom bunk of the bunkbed would just have to do for now. Lena wrote herself a note, reminding her to call Jess when she woke up to let her assistant know she’d be taking a few necessary days of leave.

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A few days after the attack and Lena was back at the Luthor mansion. She didn’t want to admit it, but she wasn’t ready to go back to her apartment. For the past several weeks, if she wasn’t at the mansion or at work, she had spent most of her time in Kara’s apartment. The thought of staying anywhere other than that studio apartment was a painful reminder that she hadn’t been able to see Kara yet. At least at the mansion she’d have a chance to be around Eliza; the closest she could get to her girlfriend right now.

After setting herself up in her office, Lena headed to the kitchen to fix herself a cup of coffee and maybe grab a snack while she was in there. Her appetite had been nearly nonexistent since everything happened. Lena was hoping she could make it downstairs, get what she needed, and get back to her study without anyone noticing her. Everything was going smoothly until she was caught on her way back.

“Eliza told me you got in late last night,” Lillian called out to catch her daughter’s attention.

Lena’s shoulders sagged as she sighed, slowly turning around to face the matriarch. Lillian was the last person she wanted to see right now. Seeing her stepmother meant she would have to talk about Lex. A conversation she had been actively avoiding.

“I’ll stay out your way, I promise.”

Lillian waved off her words as she walked closer to Lena whose feet felt stuck to the floor. “Don’t you worry about that,” the older woman said with a small smile turning up her features. “I just wanted to make sure you were ok.”
Lillian’s hands ghosted at the sides of Lena’s face. It was uncomfortable for both of them. Neither exactly knowing how to proceed without talking about it.

“I’ve certainly been better,” Lena answered, talking around the subject at hand. She knew Lillian was hinting towards the Lex ordeal since she had limited knowledge of Kara’s wellbeing. Eliza most likely told her Kara was injured during the attack, leaving out everything else that pointed to the blonde being Supergirl.

Lillian dropped her hands from Lena’s face. “You’ll tell me if you need anything?”

Lena nodded as she hummed a yes. She took a sip of her coffee buying her a few more seconds before she needed to add something of substance to their conversation.

“How are you doing?” It was a loaded question, Lena knew that, which is why she was surprised she actually strung those words together to form that question. She was curious to know how Lillian was handling her perfect son tarnishing the Luthor name in a way she always accused Lena of inevitably doing.

It was bittersweet this moment, but it didn’t feel nearly as gratifying as Lena had originally thought. The hurt being broadcasted in Lillian eyes, the way she was clearly fighting to keep herself together, it was awful. Lena wondered if this was how others felt watching her up to the moment of Lex attacking the parade. Seeing her begrudgingly realize her brother was a completely different man from who she knew him to be. It was tuff to go through, but she found it was nearly impossible to watch. No one knew better how Lillian was feeling than Lena.

When Lillian didn’t answer the question, Lena reached a hand to grab one of her mother’s. It was an attempt to convey her support and understanding in their current situation. She gave the woman’s hand a comforting squeeze before turning to walk away. They didn’t say another word to each other the rest of the day.

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Kara was lounging in the pillow fort she had constructed, wrapped in a mound of blankets. Alex and J’onn had both finally signed off on her being ready to leave the DEO. The holidays had come and gone, and so had New Year’s. She spent the better part of the past few weeks trapped in the DEO’s med bay without seeing anyone other than random agents, J’onn, Alex, and Eliza.

It took hours of talking and repeating the same story over and over for Kara to understand what had happened. It was hard for her to differentiate between her dream and reality at first. With her adoptive mother and sister’s help, it got easier. J’onn and Alex had found a way to visually walk Kara through everything that had transpired. They found a way to string together CCTV footage, various photos taken at the event, and cellphone camera videos to show her what really happened.

Kara constantly asked questions about Lena and how she was doing. In the beginning Alex was more than reluctant to provide her with even the tiniest of details because Kara wasn’t ready. Eventually though, her older sister caved. Alex had even shown her a quick snippet of Lena walking around the city. Not only was Kara getting what she was asking for, Alex saw the benefits of showing her sister things like this. It wouldn’t hurt anything, in fact, it would help convince Kara that Lena was really alive and doing alright – all things considered.
Even though her powers had returned the day after the attack, Kara had still felt drained. J’onn sent word to CatCo providing her with an excuse to be out of work for about a month. Close to drifting into another nap Kara was appreciative of J’onn’s forward thinking because she could barely make it through the day as it presently was.

There was a light rapping sound on her door and Kara perked up. Alex said she’d be stopping by before her midday shift and Kara was starved for any kind of human interaction. Floating out of her fort, Kara used her x-ray vision just to make sure it was sister on the other side. It wasn’t Alex outside her apartment, but Sam, kind of bouncing in place, and she wasn’t alone.

“Hey,” Kara curiously greeted as she opened her door. “I wasn’t expecting you to stop by.”

Sam was rocking the little girl laid against her chest trying to get Ruby to fall asleep. With her voice barely above a whisper, “Alex told me you’d be home and I’m kind of in a pinch.” Sam walked into the apartment before continuing.

Kara closed the door as lightly as she could, realizing that Sam was keeping her voice down to not wake Ruby. The sound of her door wouldn’t help matters.

Sam looked at the carefully constructed pillow fort erected in front of Kara’s television, then back at her girlfriend’s sister. “I hate to do this, but I’m running late for a work trip. Do you mind watching Ruby for me? The babysitter’s sick and there was no one else I could get on such short notice. If it’s too much of me to ask I totally understand.”

Kara quickly shook her head, holding out her arms to take the toddler from the woman. “It’s no trouble,” Kara lightly giggled, matching Sam’s whisper.

The brunette plopped Ruby’s diaper bag on the kitchen island then ran her hands through her hair. Kara picked up on a sense of worry in the woman’s movements but politely didn’t mention it, attributing it to needing to find someone to watch her daughter.

Kara was swaying with Ruby in her arms as she lightly rubbed the little girls back. Picking up on the little snores coming from the sleeping child Kara knew it was safe to return to a regular speaking volume. “I’ll call you or Alex if we need anything, yea?” she said with a supportive grin.

Sam nodded a few times before taking her leave. “Everything you might need is in her bag. I should be back tonight to pick her up.”

Kara smiled once again and shooed the woman out the door. Since Ruby was napping, Kara decided to take a nap of her own. Finding a comfortable position in the fort, Kara laid back letting Ruby sleep on her chest. She had asked for human interaction only an hour ago, but she honestly didn’t think she’d be getting any. Not even a dose from such a small package. Kara hoped everything was alright with Sam, outside of needing a sitter, but she was happy to be spending time with Ruby.

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With Ruby in her arms and wrapped in her purple bubble jacket, Kara was walking as quickly as she could to the only available person she knew could help. Sam was supposed to come back to pick up her daughter but that was almost two days ago. Alex was stuck in the middle of a twenty-four-hour shift, so she was absolutely no help.

Kara was pacing outside of a familiar wooden door hoping her knocks wouldn’t meet the same response they had in her dream. A dream she knew wasn’t real but was still struggling with the aftereffects.
One major difference was that she heard a steady heartbeat inside. This was the first time that Kara would be seeing Lena with her own two eyes and not on a computer screen. When she had imagined seeing her girlfriend – if she could still call the woman that after all this time – it didn’t include Ruby and being worried about the little girl’s mom.

Kara firmly knocked thrice then pretended to steal Ruby’s nose to keep her entertained. It was really to distract herself from thinking about what was about to happen when the door opened. Ruby, who had been a chatter box the past couple of days, had gotten quiet during the walk to Lena’s apartment and Kara worried that the little girl was picking up on what she was feeling and reacting accordingly. That morning Ruby had even asked where her mommy was, and Kara didn’t have an answer because she didn’t know herself.

Kara could hear Lena rummaging around for something just before opening her apartment door.

“Thanks, keep the—”

Lena was stuck in place with Kara looking at her with a sheepish grin. When the brunette looked down at the now excited toddler and back up at Kara’s face, Kara felt compelled to explain a few things.

“Sam stopped by a couple days ago and asked me to watch her,” Kara began, shifting Ruby from one arm to the other so she had better access to Lena. Pushing her glasses back up the bridge of her nose, “You don’t happen to know where Sam is by chance,” Kara nervously chuckled.

Lena waved for them to come in, quickly shutting the door behind them. “What do you mean? She didn’t tell you when she’d be back?”

“Can I set her down?” Kara distractedly asked. Lena looked around her apartment, saying yes, then quickly scooping up anything that Ruby could potentially hurt herself with. Kara let the girl out of her jacket then took out a few toys for her to play with. When she had Ruby situated, Kara turned around to look for Lena.

“Sam said she’d be back that night to pick her up, but I haven’t heard from her.”

“Does Alex know anything?”

Kara shook her head then wrapped her arms around her torso. She peeked over her shoulder at Ruby who was playing with her dolls before speaking. “She’s in the middle of a double shift. When I called, she was busy; I didn’t want to worry her.”

Lena hummed and poured herself a glass of wine. Not only was she seeing Kara for the first time in weeks, she showed up at her door with a child in tow. Lena didn’t want to admit she melted a little seeing Kara with Ruby. It’s not like she hadn’t seen the two together before, but this time was different for some reason. “Where did Sam say she was going?” Lena wondered after a rather large sip of her red wine.

Kara gave Lena a questioning gaze. “She said she had a work trip… How do you not know about that?” Kara didn’t mean for the question to come off like she was accusing Lena of anything, but it was too late; the words had already been said.

Lena’s brow quirked in challenge, evidently picking up on Kara’s accidental tone. “If you’re accusing me of not knowing what’s going on with my own company—”

“No, no, Rao,” Kara quickly interjected, huffing before continuing. “You know I didn’t mean it like that,” she added with a softer tone. “I just meant, if it was a work thing, you’d know about it, right?”
Lena sighed, feeling foolish for completely overreacting. She knew Kara would never accuse her of something like that, and she didn’t understand why she jumped to that of all conclusion. “I wasn’t aware of Sam going on any LCorp related trips. That doesn’t necessarily mean that she isn’t where she claims to be.”

Looking back at Ruby again before she spoke, “So what do I about Ruby?” Kara wondered. “I’m out of clothes for her and I’ve already bought more pullups.”

Lena set her glass on the counter and moved to stand beside Kara. “I can get a few things picked up. What I have here may not fit her anymore.”

Before Kara could answer there was another knock at the door.

“That would be my dinner,” Lena needlessly pointed out. Kara sat down on the island stool facing the rest of the apartment while she waited. The way Lena answered the door, when it was her, made more sense seeing that she was waiting on her food delivery. Lena was on the phone seconds after shutting her door listing off a slew of things for someone to buy and bring to her apartment. It was probably Jess that she was talking to, but Kara didn’t want to eavesdrop to find out.

She had been so focused on making sure that Ruby was ok Kara hadn’t really paid much attention to her surroundings. She looked at the bookcase that didn’t have its contents packed into boxes. She looked at surfaces that weren’t covered in either drop cloths or dust. She tried fighting the images, but flashes kept taking over her vision. What was once a well-lit and occupied apartment was now a dreary and abandoned space. It was cold and lifeless. The hairs on her arms were standing on end and her hoody felt like it was constricting her airway.

A light touch on her shoulder startled Kara enough to bring her out of it.

“Are you alright?” Lena’s voice was light but concerned, and for good reason.

In small part Kara was reliving her dream and it hurt more than she ever could have expected. Pushing her own feelings to the side, Kara focused back on Ruby hoping it would be enough to keep thoughts of anything else away.

Kara gulped around the lump in her throat and nodded her answer for Lena. “’M ok,” she said with a forced smile on her face.

Lena stared at her a moment longer, not buying what Kara said for a second. She wanted to ask again but felt it was better not to push the blonde. This was the first time they were seeing each other, and she didn’t want to ruin anything – not yet at least.

“Well,” Lena said, clearing her throat a little, “I ordered too much food so you’re more than welcome to have some if you’d like. It’s Chinese,” she said as she lifted the bag to Kara’s line of sight. “I asked Jess to pick us up some stuff for Ruby, she should be here soon.”

“I fed Ruby just before we got here. She still has some snacks in her bag, but I don’t keep kid friendly food stocked at my place,” Kara joked.

“Those tater tots you love are definitely kid friendly,” Lena quipped, adding onto Kara’s attempt at lightening the mood.

Suddenly Ruby was crying because her doll had rolled too far under Lena’s couch for her to reach. Kara was by the girl’s side in the blink of an eye and Lena was right behind her.

“What’s wrong Ruby?” Kara asked in a soothing voice.
Lena sat down on the other side of Ruby before picking her up and setting the upset little girl in her lap.

“I can’t,” Ruby said between stuttered breaths. When she pointed under the sofa Kara peeked under and then popped back up with a smile.

“Oh,” she said in a sing-song voice. “You can’t reach your doll.” Ruby slowly nodded as she wiped at her nose.

Kara used her superhuman strength and picked up Lena’s couch which completely stopped Ruby’s tears. The girl was clapping and laughing at Kara’s display. Lena even joined in with a playful grin taking a chance to enjoy the moment. Kara ducked her head to hide her blushing cheeks then handed Ruby back her toy. She sat in Lena’s lap without much more fuss.

Sitting back and watching the two of them playing together Kara wanted nothing more than to see more of similar interactions. She thought again of what it would be like to have a family with Lena. The two of them and however many kids Lena wanted, as long as it was more than two – and maybe a dog or something, but no cats. Absolutely no cats. Streaky was the only cat that ever liked her, and Kara had long found a way to be ok with that.

Even thinking to herself, Kara had the tendency to ramble. She had spaced out staring at Lena and at first the woman hadn’t noticed. When Lena had picked up on a pair of eyes gazing at her, Kara did anything she could to busy herself, acting like nothing had even happened.

After pulling off her hoody Kara hopped up from her place on the floor and got Lena’s food and chopsticks. She plated it the way Lena liked and brought it over to the coffee table, placing it just outside of Ruby’s reach. The girl was cute, but sneaky. Kara learned that the hard way eating with the toddler on her lap at her dining table. It was a hard lesson learned but a funny one none the less.

Kara played with Ruby long enough for Lena to eat in peace, or as close to that as you could get with a child in the room, before the doorbell rang followed by a few gingerly knocks. Lena answered her door for a third time that evening. Jess had gotten way more than they needed with the help of a few others to get everything on Lena’s list in such a short timeframe.

Kara left Ruby sprawled out on the couch watching cartoons to help Lena with everything.

“Clothes, food, more toys,” Lena said motioning around at all the bags at her feet.

“Lee,” Kara slowly said.

Lena absentmindedly hummed while looking around at everything she just had her assistant buy. She slowly looked up, being met by Kara’s amused grin.

“But don’t think you might have gone a little overboard here?” Kara teasingly pointed out, but in good fun.

Lena shook her head in denial before realization set in. With a hand covering her face out of embarrassment Lena couldn’t do anything but laugh at herself because she had gone a little over the top. There were enough clothes to dress Ruby for at least two weeks without her repeating an outfit, more food than the girl could eat on her own, and she didn’t even want to look at all of Ruby’s new toys again.

Kara shoved her feet between a few bags to make space for her to stand. She couldn’t help her laughter as she ran her hands up and down the brunette’s arms. “Hey, it’s ok,” she said, continuing to laugh. “It just shows how much you care about Ruby. You want her to be alright and there’s nothing
wrong with that.”

Lena moved her hand from her face to jovially stick her tongue out at Kara. Having no parts of that, Kara scooped the woman up and spun them out of the way of Ruby’s new stuff. Lena squealed when she felt her feet leave the floor, but she trusted Kara to not drop her. Ruby was peeking over the back of the couch and laughed right along with them. She slid herself off the couch and awkwardly ran over to join in on the fun.

Little hands were patting on her leg before she looked down at Ruby. “Oh, you want some of this too?” Kara let go of Lena for a second to pick up Ruby, playing like she was biting the girl’s tummy and growling. Ruby’s excited laughter filled the apartment nicely. Just when Lena thought she was safe Kara had her arm wrapped around her waist, and Kara and Ruby both were tickling her.

Lena gasped, feigning hurt at Ruby siding with Kara. Now being held by Lena it didn’t take long for Ruby to switch sides. Kara jokingly cowered away from them both pretending to be afraid of Ruby. She was squirming so much Lena could barely keep her grip on her goddaughter. Kara was lying on her back with her arms held up to Ruby, so Lena slowly lowered her down to the blonde. Kara took her from Lena’s hands and let the little girl climb over her like she was a human jungle gym. When Ruby asked, Lena held Kara’s arms and hands in place so she could tickle Kara or do whatever it was she was trying to do.

Lena knew perfectly well that Kara was willingly letting her arms be pinned. If Kara didn’t want to play along she could easily push Lena away or fight against her hold. This was Supergirl, the heroine that could topple buildings in her spare time if she so chose. The woman that lifted pieces of furniture like they were feathers. Being aware of how powerful Kara was only added to their lighthearted moment of fun for Lena. It made her love Kara more than she already did; if that was even possible. That and other feelings she was trying not to focus on at the moment just thinking about Kara’s arms.

Unfortunately, Lena had to break up everyone’s fun when she noticed it was after nine o’clock. They had been having so much fun together Lena didn’t notice how much time had passed. While she gave Ruby her bath for the night, Kara started washing all of Ruby’s clothes except her last clean nightshirt and cleaning up the living room.

By some miracle Lena drew the line at buying Ruby her own bed seeing as she could only be with them for another day. When she finished with Ruby’s bath the little girl could barely keep her eyes open, but she made sure Lena knew she wanted Kara to read her a bedtime story.

Lena was helping Ruby pull on her shirt when Kara walked into her bedroom. She didn’t want to say anything, but Lena noticed how painful it was for Kara to cross the bedroom’s threshold. She wanted to tell Kara she could take Ruby to one of the spare bedrooms to make it easier for her, but she forced the question back down.

Propped up on the pillows at the top of the bed, Ruby listened to Kara animatedly reading Goodnight Moon; one of Ruby’s favorites. Lena had rested her head on her hand, wrapping herself around Ruby, also listening to the story. It took no time at all for Ruby to fall asleep, but Kara finished the book anyway.

Kara peeked out of the corner of her eye to check that Ruby was still asleep before leaning back against the headboard with a tired exhale. She drew in a deep breath and held it for a for seconds before expelling an equally heavy breath.

Lena was far more cautious about moving being as close as she was to Ruby. Their play fight tuckered the girl out, but Lena didn’t want to risk waking the toddler.
“I can watch her tonight if you need a break,” Lena offered in a soft voice.

Kara shook her head before closing her eyes. Her breathes were heavy and her attention had been drawn elsewhere. Lena wanted to say something else – anything else – but she couldn’t. The words were there but she couldn’t bring herself to utter another sound. So they sat in a silence that was for the first time uncomfortable for Lena. There was so much they needed to talk about but weren’t. Someone had to take the first plunge and Lena reasoned it may have to be her.

With the sound of the washer signaling the end of its cycle some time later, Lena slowly pushed off the bed to go check on the clothes. She positioned the pillows around her side of Ruby to keep her from rolling off the bed while she was gone. Before leaving the room, she took a second to just look at Kara. Lena couldn’t tell if she was sleeping or playing possum, but eventually, she moved to silently leave the room.

She had moved all of her goddaughter’s clothes to the dryer a minute ago, but she was still stood in the laundry room. Lena used her arms, pressed against the washer, to hold herself up. Her head was slumped down between her shoulders and she was close to tears. She was so close to Kara and yet they felt so far apart.

Lena thought she heard someone coming but when she looked towards the door, there was no one in sight. She let her head fall back down and drew a steadying breath. Lena was preparing to face this situation head on because she couldn’t live like this. She finally worked up the courage to talk to her girlfriend and readied herself to go and have a much needed conversation.

Right as Lena was shifting her weight to her heels, there was a pair of warm, strong, arms wrapping around her torso. There was a forehead pressed to the base of her neck and a throaty voice that said, ‘I missed you’. The movement of lips ghosting on her back caused Lena to tremble, but not out of fear. She replied with a breathy voice, “I missed you too,” just before shutting her eyes.

Lena no longer wanted to move anywhere. She wanted to stay in that moment, in her laundry room, for as long as the universe would allow. Lena stood up straight, pressing her back flush against Kara’s front. Her head lolled to the side with her ear pressed to Kara’s cheek. Kara’s frame was bent over Lena’s as it lovingly enveloped her. They stood like this without speaking for a few minutes. Neither of them wanted to the break the tranquility that was mutually longed for.

Lena turned in Kara’s arms and looked into her favorite pair of blue eyes, trepidation written across both their faces.

“We should talk,” Kara whispered, and Lena agreed in the form of a head nod.

Kara’s hands slid under her t-shirt, nails lightly dragging over her skin. If the look on Kara’s face was anything to go by, it seemed to Lena that her girlfriend was confirming a thought. Being certain that Lena was really there, with her. She was a tangible figure and not a figment of Kara’s imagination. The blonde’s hands stopped at the small of her back when Kara was staring deeply into her eyes.

Lena reached down to grab Kara’s hand and led her out of the laundry room on the way to the living room. Sat on opposing sides of the same couch Kara and Lena were unusually quiet. There were so many words they both wanted to say but didn’t know where to start. Lena nervously played with her hands, legs crisscrossed, while Kara had her legs crossed at the ankles in front of her filling the space between them.

“I want to start by apologizing,” Kara began, voice cracking along the way. Lena didn’t speak out of fear that she would stunt Kara’s progressing.
“Other than not picking up on your heartbeat, at the time I had no reason to believe you were in any danger. I looked for you, but… I should have known it would’ve been a trap either way,” Kara regrettably sighed. “When Lex poisoned me, I was so sure that you were dead. He presented me with a choice – you or him – and I chose him.”

“Lex already had a plan for my life,” Lena offered as an explanation.

With her usual crinkle forming between her eyebrows, “What do you mean?” Kara questioned. Her head was slightly tilted to the side.

“He essentially blackmailed Jess to get me away from the festival. I was nowhere nearby when the bombs started going off.”

Voice low, like she was speaking to herself, “If you weren’t there that means the voice I heard was prerecorded.”

“Voice?”

Looking back into Lena’s eyes, “Yea,” Kara nodded. “Before I went after your brother, I heard you calling my name. It was your voice but there was no heartbeat.”

“Is that why you’re apologizing? Because you feel like you gave up on me?”

Looking down at her lap, ashamed, “Partly,” Kara honestly answered. “I gave up on the idea that you were alive, I chose to stop Lex because I couldn’t face it if you weren’t alive. For how I reacted after waking up. I’m apologizing for all of it really.”

There was a tiny sympathetic smile pulling at the corners of Lena’s lips. Lena had wanted to apologize to Kara for a few of the same reasons, but mainly for everything including Lex; which was basically everything. “Is it alright if I ask you what happened while you were unconscious?”

With a small nod, Kara looked back up Lena. She ran her hands through her hair and licked her lips. “How much do you want to know?”

“As much as you’re ready to share,” Lena answered in a supportive tone.

Kara started with an explanation of her train of thought before being poisoned. She told Lena that going into it, she was already at a point of believing that Lex had killed her; though there was still a fragment of hope. With that out of the way she told Lena everything. Waking up to Alex being in her bed, Lena being dead for a year, Lillian running LCorp and having a picture of them in her office. No detail was too small.

Up to that point of the dream, the recollection had been easier than Kara originally thought. It only took a difficult turn when she neared the end, which Alex told her had to have happened just before she came to. Lena picked up on Kara’s hesitation and opened her arms signaling for Kara to come over.

With Lena running her hands through her hair Kara found the strength to tell her girlfriend the rest. It came as a surprise when Lena apologized for Kara having to go through the whole ordeal in the first place, even though she had nothing to do with it.

“Nonsense,” Kara dismissed and gazed up into Lena’s eyes from where her head rested in Lena’s lap. “Alex says that if it weren’t for the yellow sun grenade, I may not have survived. So, thank you Lena.”
Sometimes, Lena wasn’t very good with compliments or praise. “I wouldn’t have had to design it had it not been for my brother,” Lena reflexively deflected.

“Still,” Kara interjected before Lena could go any further. “We both have things we’re sorry for, but we’re here. I wholeheartedly accept your apology, even if it’s unwarranted.”

“And yours,” Lena lightly chuckled. Her hands had stopped flowing through Kara’s hair as she stared off into space. “These past few weeks have been torture without you,” she admitted.

Kara was looking out of Lena’s windows at the dark night sky previously thinking about the same thing. “Truth?”

Lena quickly glanced down at Kara with a nod. “Always.”

Kara rolled onto her back so only Lena was in her direct line of sight. “I’m still struggling to grasp the fact that I’m not dreaming anymore. Falling asleep in the dream to see your face, which was actually me waking up and you being by my side, is hard to differentiate. One just seemed to flow into the other with no lag whatsoever. I thought I died, but I didn’t. I thought you died, but you didn’t.”

Lena looked away from the wall in favor of Kara’s face. She could hear the sadness and confusion of Kara’s tone. If roles had been reversed, and she was the one having to piece together reality versus fiction, she’d likely have a hard go of it herself.

“Alex wasn’t ready to let me leave the med bay until she was comfortable with how I was progressing. The day Sam dropped off Ruby was my first day in my apartment.”

“I didn’t even come here after you woke up.”

“Why not?” Kara curiously probed.

“Because we’ve spent so much time in your apartment the thought of mine just seemed…”

“Lonely?”

“Kind of,” Lena nodded. “I was at the mansion until a few days ago. Being around Eliza reminded me of you, so it helped.”

“Part of my – therapy I guess you could call it – was watching you.” Kara didn’t initially hear how creepy that sounded but quickly moved to correct her wording once she did. “Not like that,” she chuckled and clapped her hand to her forehead. “I meant, Alex thought it was a good idea for me to see you doing things. You just being alive and existing to help me separate myself from the dream.”

“Did it help?”

“Sort of. I was fighting against everything in the beginning because I wasn’t ready.”

“Alex did something similar for me,” Lena admitted. “She gave me access to the med bay’s camera feed so I could be sure you were alright.”

Kara smiled to herself as she pulled Lena’s hands into her own. “I’m not a hundred percent yet but I’m working on it. I may need you to remind me I’m not dreaming from time to time, but I’m hoping everything will get easier.”

With a smile of her own on her lips, Lena promised to do just that. Even if it meant she had to record
small videos for Kara to watch on a constant loop she’d do it for as long as Kara needed. She’d find a way to get to the moon and back again for her girlfriend so what she was asking was no huge feat for Lena.

Lena’s heart swelled with so much love and adoration for her girlfriend she felt it was going to burst at any moment. She gazed deeply into such loving and receptive eyes. Orbs that mirrored a sense of familiarity and longing that struck her to her core.

In the short time the two women had known each other, feelings had developed and evolved much faster than either thought possible. Being separated from Kara for an extended period of time made one thing abundantly clear to Lena. It was something that was calling to her from the bottom of her heart; an ache that always subsided in Kara’s presence. She didn’t know why she hadn’t figured it out sooner. Why it took her this long to realize that Kara was her home.

Hearing other people talk about what home meant to them it was so often a place. She didn’t understand how a person could feel like home until now. It was a grand revelation that meant more than most words could convey, but there were three that came damn close.

“I love you Kara Danvers,” Lena whispered in Kryptonian. She knew Kara could hear her just fine, but the blonde was pretending she didn’t catch it with a goofy grin on her face. She waited until Kara was sat up and facing her before she said it again. “I said, I love you Kara Zor-El Danvers,” Lena lovingly repeated, punctuating Kara’s name with light kisses across the woman’s face.

“Your accent’s gotten better,” Kara joked, and Lena playfully swatted at her arm. She couldn’t help the laughter bubbling inside her but she kept her voice low to not disturb a sleeping Ruby. “I love you too Lena Kieran Luthor.”

Kara had pulled Lena into a tight embrace which ended with the brunette lying on top of her on the couch. They stayed like this for a few moments, both blushing and beyond elated that they had finally said ‘I love you’ for the first time. The circumstances weren’t ideal, but the feelings were undeniable and had been for some time.

It was almost midnight when Kara carried her sleeping girlfriend to bed. Ruby had slid down the middle of the bed but still protected by the boundary of pillows. For the first night since the parade and festival, Lena slept peacefully through the entire night. Though Kara didn’t dream it was better than her nightmarish alternatives. It was a peaceful night for all of them.

Lena woke early the next morning to keep Ruby from waking Kara and kept her goddaughter busy until Kara woke up. They took turns watching Ruby so the other could shower before heading back to Kara’s apartment together.

The weeks the two women were apart still existed between them, but it was no longer a looming issue. They both knew it wasn’t a decision made out of malice on anyone’s part but for Kara’s wellbeing. It was a long couple of weeks, but it was thankfully over with. There would be an understandable adjustment period that they had briefly discussed. They kept their expectations on a leash to thwart as many potential issues as possible. Communication was going to play a huge role in their relationship moving forward and it was a priority for them both. Now that the air was relatively cleared between them, it didn’t mean it was going to be a cake walk, but it also wasn’t going to be the most arduous thing either of them had to deal with.
Eliza had finished with her errands sooner than she was expecting. She even had enough time to stop and pick up a few groceries for the house. Lillian had told her a few times she didn’t need to buy anything, she had staff that handled it, but Eliza only politely brushed her off. They even joked about how high maintenance Lillian had become over the years when they talked about it.

Brown paper bags in hand, Eliza was on her way to the kitchen when she overheard two voices, but one sounded a bit farther away than the other; like they weren’t in the room.

“This has gone on for long enough,” Lillian irately shouted into her phone. “No! I trusted you with my son and look—”

There was a momentary pause in the conversation, but Eliza knew her old friend had never appreciated when anyone cut her off; especially not when she was angry.

“No, you listen to me Jeremiah. This was in no way what we agreed to. You preyed on a vulnerable young man and molded him to your needs. You took advantage of my child and you expect me to be ok with that?”

Before Eliza was able to take another slow drawn full breath, Lillian was speaking again. “There’s no way in hell I gave you the impression I’d be ok with your using Lex for more than just his access to Lena’s research.”

From where Eliza was, she could hear Lillian let out an irritated huff and then pace a few steps. “Do you honestly expect me to believe this was all Alexander’s doing? All his plan?”

Eliza tiptoed closer to the kitchen to better hear the conversation as it was unfolding. She could even hear the other voice a bit better.

“He could barely kill a fly as a child and what? He just morphed into a genocidal maniac overnight?” Lillian continued in a firm and vicious tone.

“Believe what you want Lillian.”

Eliza was close enough now to realize that Lillian had the phone call on speaker the entire time. It was clear that the woman didn’t hear her come in, not expecting her back at the house for a few more hours. If she had, there’s no way she’d be taking this call out in the open like this considering who she was arguing with.

After a brief pause, “Maybe you don’t know your son as well as you think you do.”

Lillian scoffed at the accusation. “I’ve been many things in my day Danvers and a fool was never one of them. And you’re in no position to talk to me about not knowing your child.”

Eliza’s heart felt like it was going to beat out of her chest, or worse, just stop working all together. There was no other way to interpret Lillian’s implication. Somehow the woman knew about Kara.

Jeremiah fell silent at the sound of the figurative finger being pointed his way. Eliza could hear the devilish smirk most likely on Lillian’s face as she went on. “I’m honestly surprised Lionel didn’t find out about her. You really think you two would’ve remained partners if he knew about your—”

With a threatening tone, “Don’t say another word,” Jeremiah snapped.

“Whatever it is you’re planning I want no part. Just as I told you all those years ago.”
“You were a coward then and you’re a coward now. Your son sees the bigger picture and that’s all that matters.”

“No- no, we’re through. I care very little for how you’ll be inconvenienced. Get your own hands dirty for a change.” Lillian ended the call in the middle of Jeremiah attempting to say something, exasperatedly slamming the phone down on the kitchen counter.

Eliza took the last few steps to stop in the doorway to the kitchen. With a saddened but shocked expression on her face, “Is there something you want to tell me?” Eliza asked as she eyed down the startled Luthor.

Chapter End Notes

I haven't really planned out the next chapter yet because I've been so busy. I know I want to expand upon Eliza/Lillian's conversation and the Sam situation, but that's as far as I've gotten. Let me know if there's anything you want to see in future chapters or any comments you had about this update.

I hope everyone has a happy new year and you're able to tackle at least one thing this year you've wanted to accomplish; even if it's something really small/minor. I want nothing but the best for everyone and I'm sending good vibes your way! I wish you all good luck in your endeavors and for prosperous opportunities to fall in your life; whatever they may be. Hugs and high-fives for everyone!

Until next time...
Howdy everybody!

This chapter is a lot shorter than usual because I've been sick since the start of the year. I seriously wish I was kidding when I said that. I'm honestly proud of myself for getting this much written, and editing this and the last chapter, considering how crap I've felt. (I should've forewarned y'all that I tend to get sick pretty often during the winter. This most likely won't be the last time I get sick before finishing this story.)

With that out of the way, this chapter is basically a resolution to parts of the last chapter. I had something else in mind to add, but I didn't had the energy to see it through. So, I'll be adding it into the next update. Also, if you've already read the last chapter there's no need to go back and re-read it. I just fixed some typos and inserted missing words. There were no changes to the chapter other than that stuff.

I hope everyone likes this little update!
Now sit back and let your mind roam free.

“Is there something you want to tell me?”

Eliza’s soft yet wounded voice was the last one Lillian expected to hear. She had a feeling in the pit of her stomach that the day was going to be a complicated one. Jeremiah Danvers’ phone call had proven that gut feeling true. But to have Eliza hear even a tiny part of her conversation was not in her plans.

Lillian knew full well how her conversation must have sounded, but it wasn’t entirely what it seemed. Drawing a deep breath, Lillian slowly turned to face the woman who had caught her in a rather compromising moment.

There was so much hurt and betrayal in her friend’s eyes. Lillian took a brief moment to consider telling Eliza the truth or lying to protect herself.

“It’s not what you think Eliza.”

The woman’s brows shot up in astonishment then leveled into a threatening glare. “What it looks like,” Eliza slowly began, “is that you’ve been the only one my husband has communicated with for however long. To make matters worse, you graciously invited me into your home knowing what I’m going through and never said a word.”

Lillian wanted to defend herself but that was exactly what it looked like. Proceeding with the truth was going to be in her best interest. Insulting Eliza with more lies would only worsen the situation. “It was never like that. Just please—Eliza, just give me a chance to explain.”

The Danvers woman was hurrying to set down her bags so she could leave the house again. “Why should I? You’ve been less than forthcoming this entire time. Who’s to say you’ll actually be honest
Lillian stopped her attempts to keep Eliza from leaving before she could explain. “Because,” she said, going for a softer tone. “You’re one of my oldest friends and I wanted nothing to do with this.”

That at least got Eliza to stop fumbling around with the grocery bags. “Go on,” she defiantly instructed, crossing her arms over her chest.

“How much did you hear?”

“Enough…”

Lillian nodded to herself before continuing. “If memory serves, it was a few years after Lionel and Jeremiah split as research partners that your husband reached out to me. He said there was a project he was working on that he needed some assistance with. He was mainly looking for access to Lionel’s journals and notes from their time working together.”

“That doesn’t explain the phone call,” Eliza butt in.

“I’m getting to that,” Lillian assured her. Growing tired of standing, Lillian moved to take a seat in the breakfast nook, motioning for Eliza to join her. The reluctance in the woman’s movements were apparent, but she complied none the less.

“When Jeremiah realized I wouldn’t give him Lionel’s work he disappeared for a few years. When he contacted me again, it was after you and I lost touch. He spoke about some alien research project he was spearheading but couldn’t give me more details than that.”

“You know that wound up being both our research focus,” Eliza pointed out. “We’ve done so much over the years.”

“Yes, but when he grew agitated with my questions I knew something wasn’t right. I had a feeling the research wasn’t exactly… above board.”

Eliza’s features scrunched up in confusion similar to how hers had all those years ago. Lillian had known Jeremiah to be a simple man. For him to withhold information made very little logical sense to her at the time. His level of secrecy and avoidance added to the shady nature of his actions.

“Because your husband was nothing like my own, it was a red flag. I told him then that I didn’t want to be associated with any work I didn’t know anything about. I had enough on my plate dealing with Lionel.”

“Why didn’t you talk to me about this?” Eliza questioned. “I could’ve talked to him and found out more.”

“Can you recall any research he conducted around the time of adopting Kara?”

Eliza seemed to clam up at the sound of her youngest daughter’s name and was on the defensive again. “No, he was spending more time with the girls,” she firmly supplied. “We both took a step back from our work to get her settled.”

“I’m not insinuating you had any kind of involvement. In fact, I think this is something he kept from you all these years.”

“That seems to be going around,” Eliza mumbled under her breath. At regular speaking volume, “Some of our work is funded through a number of entities, and some have rather strict instructions on
what we’re allowed to disclose to others,” she explained, covering her previous statement.

Lillian let out a soft sigh then folded her hands in her lap. “You don’t see it as an awfully big coincidence Jeremiah took up a research project, without you for that matter, not long after adopting your youngest; and it has to do with aliens? Research he couldn’t talk about nor said he was conducting,” she added with a particular emphasis.

Eliza was silent for a beat, but she never broke eye contact with Lillian. So far, it felt like Lillian was beating around the bush. Like she didn’t want to ruffle any more of Eliza’s feathers, but if they were going to get to the bottom of things Lillian need to be frank with her. Regardless of what exactly she was alluding to. “Based on what I overheard, I know you know about Kara. So just say what you mean Lillian.”

Lillian nodded once before steeling her posture. “Alright then. This is just conjecture but I have no reason to doubt its validity.”

Eliza motioned for her to go on, so she did; no holds barred.

“Your husband has used both of my children in order to further his own vendetta against the resident alien population on this planet. A goal my husband was very keen to accomplish before his death. Being married to a man such as Lionel as long as I was, makes me keen in pointing out such behavior in just about anyone.

Jeremiah’s side projects increased in number once Kara was dumped on your doorstep. That’s no coincidence. He used Lena for her research that was meant to support alien life on Earth via Lex because of his position with both LuthorCorp and his sister’s work.”

There was a beat of silence before Eliza said something. “Why should I believe you?”

“Timing,” Lillian simply answered. “Jeremiah has done a fantastic job of covering his tracks and redirecting attention away from himself thus far. He’s using me and my son in order to do that.”

“How do you mean?” the blonde curiously asked, shifting in her seat.

“Our husbands had a heated disagreement over their stances towards aliens. Jeremiah at the time was pro-alien. I’m guessing his opinion changed over the years, but, he’s now using that outdated assumption of his character to his advantage. Why would anyone suspect a man that has dedicated a large portion of his career to alien welfare of xenophobic hate crimes?”

As Lillian was expecting, Eliza didn’t have an answer for that particular question. Her response was exactly why Jeremiah’s cover was as good as it was. Most wouldn’t give him a second look within this realm of possibility.

“We know the Luthor reputation is tainted and now soaked in blood. Who better to use as a scapegoat when it’s a predicament that revolves around alien hatred?” Lillian rhetorically asked.

Eliza couldn’t deny the reasoning behind what Lillian was saying. After all these years she had no idea what drove the two men apart, but if Lillian was telling the truth, everything else about her husband became a little clearer.

Jeremiah had been distant, and occasionally cagey, over the years. As much as she wanted to, Eliza couldn’t forget scolding Jeremiah for his initial reaction, and words, toward Kara all those years ago. With that in mind, it wasn’t that far-fetched to believe what Lillian was saying.

His disappearances coinciding with the increase in alien hate crimes. That phone call Jeremiah had
before disappearing. His story in the hospital not adding up. How he even wound up in the hospital in a completely different city to begin with. All but Lex’s most recent attack had the potential of being walked back to Jeremiah as the source. The more Eliza thought about it, the more she realized that her husband of twenty odd years was not the same man she married.

“Let me get this straight,” Eliza said leaning her elbows on the table to bear down on. “You’re saying Jeremiah has been studying aliens in order to hurt them? He’s been doing it and hiding behind your family’s reputation?”

“In so many words, yes,” Lillian confirmed. “He’s somehow gotten Alexander on his side and has been using him to do his dirty work. Jeremiah’s hands are practically clean, but not completely.”

“I think we should talk to the girls,” the Danvers matriarch quickly interjected.

“No,” Lillian nearly spat. Calming her voice to a reasonable level, “No, not yet,” she went on to clarify.

“And why not?”

“I’m just getting Lena back and I’m not ready to lose her.”

“So you want to lie to her? You want me to lie to her for that matter?”

“For now. At least until I have a better grasp on the situation.”

“I can’t do that Lillian. I’m not keeping your secret for you. We both know that lying would be worse than telling her the truth.”

Lillian was annoyedly pulling at the hem of her blouse under the table. “I’ll talk to her, but I’m doing it on my terms.”

“Do what you want Lillian, but I hope you realize you’re making a monumental mistake. That girl is far more understanding than you give her credit for. I won’t go out of my way to tell Lena, but I won’t keep it from her should she ask either.”

Eliza slide out of the bench and went to unpack the food she bought. She hated the thought of lying to her daughters, and Lena, but she had an idea. Lillian keeping this between the two of them would only prove to benefit Jeremiah. The very man working to frame, and ruin, her family for something of his own design. When she got the chance, hopefully that night would present an opportunity, Eliza decided she would call Alex. Her work and resources at the DEO were exactly what this situation needed.

——

Going from overseeing Kara’s care, to never ending double shifts meant very little downtime for Alex. She had managed to send Sam a text at least once every day for the past week but, the past few days had been met with no responses. It was unusual, but Sam’s job could be just as hectic as her own.

Alex had finally finished her shift and was going to be off for the next four days straight. The first
two she had already planned to sleep through. Pulling on her jacket to leave the DEO, she moaned at the thought of being back in her own bed for a change.

Zipping through the city on her motorcycle, Alex only stopped for dinner and snack foods to last her until she reemerged from her overdue hibernation. She has halfway through her dinner when an unexpected knocked echoed through her apartment. She wasn’t expecting anyone to stop by, but it could be Kara. It definitely couldn’t be her neighbors again, her television wasn’t that loud.

Wiping her hands over her black sweats, Alex checked that her mouth was clear of food in the mirror before opening the door.

“Sam,” Alex gasped. “What are you doing here?”

The woman was unmoving, running her car keys through her fingers. She was looking at Alex with a vacant stare.

“Sam… Sam, is everything alright?” Alex poked her head out of her apartment to check if there was anyone around. Feeling confident there was no immediate threat driving the woman’s reaction, Alex pulled her girlfriend inside.

She walked to her kitchen to grab a glass of water for Sam, then shifting her line of questioning. “Where’s Ruby?”

Sam didn’t answer, still fiddling with her keys. When Alex tried to hand the woman the glass, she absentmindedly reached for and held it in place.

“Ok,” Alex worriedly sighed.

She pulled Sam along with her to the couch, taking the glass out of her hands, then muting the TV. As Alex worried over Sam, she realized that the brunette wasn’t dressed for the weather. Even to Alex, the nights had gotten colder, so Sam had to be chilly in her thin, no sleeve blouse, and dress pants that stopped just above her ankles. No coat, blazer, or sweater to shield her from the wind chill. As she ran her hands up and down Sam’s arms, the woman didn’t even feel cold.

“Samantha,” Alex calmly called out, ducking her head to catch her girlfriend’s attention. “Did something happen?”

Sam’s distant brown eyes finally looked into Alex’s concerned ones. “I had a work trip,” she plainly stated.

Alex nodded. “I know. Kara told me you stopped by her apartment before you left.”

“No, I had a work trip…”

Nodding as she spoke, “So you’ve said.” Alex even chuckled good-naturedly, not yet grasping what Sam was trying to tell her.

“Alex, you’re not hearing me. I had a work trip, but I don’t remember going anywhere.”

A crinkle formed in Alex forehead as she tried to process what Sam was saying. “What do you mean you don’t remember going?”

Intently staring into Alex’s eyes, “I remember running late because the babysitter called to tell me she was sick an hour before I had to leave. Then panicking because I needed someone to watch Ruby. I can remember dropping her off with your sister and being driven to the airport, and then… nothing.”
Sam did her best to recount her steps from a few days prior before she began to nervously stumble over her words. “I can’t remember getting on the plane Alex.”

“Hey,” Alex said in a soothing voice, pulling Sam’s hands into her own. “It’s ok. There could be any number of reasons you don’t remember catching your flight.”

“Are there as many explanations for losing time? Days’ worth of time?” Sam interjected.

“Well, uh,” Alex cleared her throat as her mental differential diagnosis list dwindled down to only a few options. “We can figure this out. First thing tomorrow.”

There were tears forming in Sam’s eyes when she spoke. “Something’s wrong Alex. I can feel it.”

Shifting closer to her girlfriend on the couch, Alex pulled the brunette into her side. Sam’s head rested on her shoulder as the woman curled into her. “Let’s not get ahead of ourselves. I’m sure it’s nothing serious and I’ll worry when I have something to be worried about.”

It was all an act. On the inside Alex couldn’t come up with anything that would explain what Sam was describing; that worried her. She was concocting a whole plan with a battery of tests she thought to run. It was better to check for everything than risk missing even the smallest thing along the way.

The two were calming back down and trying to talk about anything other than the past few days for differing reasons. Alex did eventually find out that Ruby was Kara and Lena, which was good. Alex had returned to eating her food when her phone rang from its place on the kitchen island.

She popped up to grab it, almost missing the call. “Hey mom, it’s late. You alright?”

“I’m heading back to Midvale for a few days to consult on a case at the hospital, but I wanted to ask you a favor.”

“Yea, sure.”

“When I return, would you mind sitting down with me at the Luthor mansion? There’s some things we need to discuss.”

Lowering her voice and turning away from Sam, “I don’t like the way that sounds,” Alex mentioned.

“We’ll talk more when I get back. And don’t tell your sister.”

“Uhm, ok,” she curiously responded. “Why—”

“Alex, I need you to promise me this will stay between us for now.”

“Yea. I promise. Should I be worried or…”

“I promise I’ll explain everything when I get back. I love you.”

“Love you too.”

There was a quick pause before Eliza hung up, leaving Alex staring at her phone with a perplexed look fixed upon her face.

“Is everything alright,” Sam called out from across the room.

Gradually turning back around, “Yea, uh, just my mom calling to let me know she’s going back to Midvale for work. She says hello,” Alex covered.
Sam didn’t ask any more questions, thankfully. Alex tried to run over any reason her mother would have been so vague during the call. All she could come up with was that it may have been something that had to do with Lillian or her dad. Little did she know she was right on both accounts.

Alex’s plan to relax on her days off were just thrown out of the window entirely. Regardless, she was happy to help those she cared about, so it was of little consequence. At this point, all Alex really wanted was a restful night’s sleep in her own bed. Everything else was tomorrow’s problem because there was nothing she could do to help anyone until then.

Chapter End Notes

What did you think?

There’s some development going on with Lillian, and inadvertently Jeremiah. And then there’s Sam. This chapter wound up following about 50% of my outline and I didn’t even realize until I was looking back over it lol.

Next update I have in mind to refocus the story back to Kara and Lena a bit because it’s been really plot heavy lately. I don’t know, let me know what you want more of. I’ll try to squeeze in as much of it as I can before the end; we’re almost there. I know I’ve said that a few times before, but now that we’re finding out more about Jeremiah and Lillian it really is the end. I’ve already decided there’ll be a part 2 so that’s a bit of good news!

Like always, any and all feedback is more than welcome/appreciated! I really enjoy interacting with everyone that comments or messages me on Tumblr. You guys are seriously the best and I want to thank all of you for interacting with my story! It means a lot :)

Until next time...
Chapter 25

Chapter Notes

I wholehearted and sincerely want to apologize for being gone for so long. It wasn't my plan but my life has become so hectic. If it wasn't my crazy schedule keeping me from writing or not having the time to write when I was inspired, then it was just me having a loss for what to write. I don't want anyone to think I'm abandoning this story because that's not the case. Rest assured that I fully intend on seeing this through, life has just happened in an all at once kind of way.

With that said I want to say thanks a ton to @SirCalvin for being my beta-reader for this chapter and just helping to inspire/motivate me to finish writing this chapter.

This one is shorter, but it's strictly about SuperCorp so I hope that makes up for my absence :D *crossing my fingers*.

Two sets of eyes going over this hopefully means there are minimal/no errors but excuse any you may find :).

Now, sit back and let your mind roam free...

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

It was a Friday afternoon, Sam and Alex had just picked up Ruby, and Kara and Lena were lounging around Kara’s apartment in a mutual silence. They had hit a point in their relationship where silence had become its own form of a conversation. They could exist in the same space and find comfort in the other without words. If Lena had a random idea or thought, she’d just start talking out loud. Kara had even impressively improved at deciphering if Lena wanted her to respond or not. It was almost like the two women had spent lifetimes together and knew how they each operated on a fundamental level.

Kara had been flipping through the channels with no allegiance to any one program running. She had spent a little time catching up on the news before Alex and Sam came to pick up Ruby. The way Lena kept fidgeting around hinted to Kara that she may have been uncomfortable by the stories being covered, so Kara deliberately stuck to anything but the news once she made the connection. Since Lex’s attack, every major and minor news outlet was running some kind of coverage on the event - still. Kara didn’t need her time spent at CatCo for reference to know that the intentional silence on the matter from the Luthor women wasn’t exactly helping. Neither matriarch nor CEO made any indication they either condoned Lex’s actions or condemned him for them. Lena had at least made strides to separate LCorp from the Luthor reputation during her CatCo interview with Kara and Cat Grant, but the media was having a field day with the current ambiguity of their taciturnity.

Deep down, Kara wanted to convince Lena to do something. Even if it was just releasing a statement distancing herself from Lex for good. Leaving nothing to chance or misinterpretation. But in the same thought, Kara knew Lena could handle herself in in regard to these matters. Lena knew her own mind, and it was very likely she had already formulated some kind of strategy to handle whatever was to come.
She had to get her mind off it. Kara didn’t want to dwell on the interpersonal of Lex’s actions. If she did, she wouldn’t be able to appreciate one of the best things in her life. The woman that she was head over heels in love with.

“I’m not sure that I like how quiet the apartment is now that Ruby’s gone,” Kara randomly felt compelled to mention.

“You know,” Lena began, looking up from her book, “I think I’d have to agree with you on that.”

Kara turned her head just enough to look at Lena as she was engrossed in what she was reading. A crazy idea came to mind, but Kara set it aside for now. With everything that was going on, she didn’t want her asking Lena to move in with her to seem like a circumstantial request.

Lena must have felt Kara’s eyes focused on her because she quickly peaked over at Kara with blushed cheeks. Neither of them spoke, leaving it as a silent acknowledgment that Lena knew Kara was watching her.

Before she could lose the courage, Kara decided to ask her girlfriend a different question that had been burning the tip of her tongue to be set free since babysitting Ruby.

“Do you think that you’d want kids in the future? I mean, with someone – not necessarily me – but, you know. The idea of kids.”

Kara nervously fiddled with her glasses because that was not at all how she wanted to phrase her question. “How do you feel about kids,” she slowly corrected, after the amused expression she caught on Lena’s face.

With a raised brow, “Are you asking me if I want to start a family with you?” Lena bluntly questioned, knowing it would throw Kara even further off kilter.

Kara instantly choked on her own spit. “Uhm—”

Lena couldn’t help the laugh bubbling up inside her. “Darling, it’s fine. I knew what you meant.” Teasing her girlfriend was just too easy sometimes.

If Kara was capable of sweating, she’d have needed a change of clothes she was so flustered and caught off-guard. Secretly, Kara was hoping that Lena did want just that. The thought of what their family could look like was a pleasant image to ponder every now and again, but they weren’t there yet.

“When I was younger, I never wanted kids. After my experience with my own parents, I didn’t want to potentially inflect that on anyone else.”

*Well this is off to a bad start,* Kara thought to herself.

“You’re nothing like them,” Kara supportively supplied, because Lena wasn’t.

She wasn’t anything like Lillian and didn’t seem capable of treating her hypothetical children the way her stepmother treated her. How Lena told it, Lionel cared for her, immensely, but there was a sadness in her eyes that went beyond losing a parent whenever she spoke of him. Lena didn’t remember much about her birth mother, but Kara would bet her last dollar that the best parts of Lena were that of her biological mother.

With a warm smile, Lena graciously accepted the complement before continuing. “When Sam got pregnant, I knew she would need a support system. She had been working on her relationship with
her mother, but, regardless, I didn’t want her to be alone. Neither of us was certain things would pan out with her mother.”

Kara slid across her sofa to be closer to Lena. “I’m sensing a change of heart coming,” Kara lightly chuckled.

Lena gave her a confirming head nod. “Ruby is such an amazing little girl. I’m beyond grateful to have both her and Sam in my life. They were my family when I felt like I didn’t consistently have anyone.”

“So Ruby’s the reason you changed your mind?”

“Yes and no,” Lena honestly answered.

Kara’s features scrunched, telltale wrinkle forming between her brows. It was more than evident that the blonde was no longer following what Lena was saying.

Lena slotted her bookmark where she stopped reading and sat her book on the end table. She closed the gap between her and Kara by scooching forward a bit, placing her legs over Kara’s.

“Ruby helped me to realize that just because I’m a Luthor, that doesn’t mean I’ll be as ruinous a mother as Lillian was to me. While I can’t say with overwhelming certainty that I do want children, I’d be lying if I said I’m wholeheartedly against having them.”

Without breaking eye contact with Kara, Lena went on to explain the rest. “One thing I’m sure of is that with the right person, children would be in my definition of a family. Does that answer your question?”

Lena wrapped her arms around Kara’s neck and waited for her response.

“When you say, ‘right person’?” Kara bashfully probed.

Lena’s entire expression lit up, spurring her to leave a gentle peck to the top of Kara’s nose. Without saying another word, Lena slowly peeled herself away from Kara and moved to put the kettle on for tea.

“That wasn’t an answer,” Kara pointed out with a timid laugh.

“Wasn’t it?” Lena joked. “How do you feel about kids? I’m assuming you’re all in with the idea?”

Kara caught on to Lena deflecting her question with one of her own. Even with Lena’s lack of response, Kara had a feeling she knew what Lena was hinting towards. “I love kids!” Kara answered excitedly, spinning around to catch a glimpse of her girlfriend.

“I’m not sure if I can have kids myself, but adoption was never out of the question.”

Lena spun around and looked towards Kara with a gentle but pointed stare. “Let me guess… A bushel of kids and a few pets to round things out.”

Kara rubbed at the back of her head then found something to keep her hands busy. “Am I that easy to read?”

“Oh, on this, you’re as transparent as glass,” Lena quickly answered in jest. “But it’s cute,” she flirtatiously added.

Restraining herself, Kara lightly tossed a throw pillow in Lena’s general direction. They both
laughed at Kara’s playful response, resulting in more things being thrown around the apartment.

Kara eventually caved when Lena cheated by - intentionally - brushing her lips over Kara’s neck. It sent a jolt through Kara’s body that she was becoming harder to ignore. Things hadn’t intimately progressed very far in their relationship, mainly at Kara’s own hesitation, but boy had thoughts run rampant through her mind. The last thing Kara wanted was to hurt Lena, but she also wanted to be with her girlfriend in a way that was far more vulnerable than she had ever been with any other being. She knew, without a shadow of a doubt, sex would be so much more than that with Lena because she, and what they had, was different.

Lena had expressed her willingness to wait as long as Kara needed, but it always baffled Kara why Lena trusted her to such an extent. Whenever the topic came up, Lena would always say, ‘I know you’d never hurt me on purpose Kara,’ but how could she know that for sure? If Kara lost control even a little bit, it could lead to untold bruises or broken bones for Lena. This was the usual path Kara’s mind would trek whenever the thought of carnally having Lena in her bed came up.

Lena had her pinned to the floor, dark curls cascading around both their faces. Letting instinct take over, Kara eased Lena’s face down to her own, pulling her into a long overdue searing kiss. Kara’s mind went blank of everything but Lena. How soft the brunette’s lips felt against her own. How sweet her lip balm tasted. The floral fragrance of Lena’s shampoo. Pushing up off the floor, Kara picked Lena up by the waist, setting the woman down on the edge of the dining table.

In the heat of the moment, there were only sounds of heavy breathing and teeth clattering together. It was a shared desperate urge to be as close as they could get. The thin layer of their clothing even felt like too great a distance to be separated. Kara could barely remember to give Lena a chance to come up for air her senses were so consumed by the woman.

Kara thought she heard a ragged whisper, but it didn’t initially register. A few deep pants and the sensation of a hand against her chest later Kara realized the strangled voice was that of Lena’s.

“Are you sure?” Lena paused, being sure that Kara really wanted this. Consent was important to her. She wasn’t complaining, nor would she stop Kara if this was really what she wanted, but it seemed to come out of left field.

Kara was gradually coming back down enough to form coherent thoughts and hopefully that would extend to her speech. Wiping at her swollen lips, “Do you- do you not want to?”

“No, no,” Lena hurriedly assured her. “You have no idea how much I want to. I just want to make sure this is something you actually want to do and it’s not because of my teasing a moment ago.”

At the whistling of the kettle, Kara sighed, gently resting her head against Lena’s. “I hate being scared to touch you.”

“I know.” Lena lightly rubbed Kara’s back, looking to provide the saddened woman with any sort of comfort she could provide her. “I trust you and when you’re finally ready we can revisit this.”

They stood like this for a moment when Lena had an idea. “Will you go on a date with me?”

When Kara pulled back, there was a small grin on her face. “A date?”

Lena nodded. “Nothing fancy. Just something simple like when we first met.”

“We could also check to see if there’s another basketball game,” Kara lightly joked. “But… are you sure you want to be seen so publicly just yet?”
“I’ve considered it and the risk of anything happening is relatively low.”

Kara hummed. “I know you’ve been getting back to your life, and nothing has happened yet, but I’m still concerned for your safety.”

Lena fixed her shirt, deciding to leave it unbuttoned, before sliding off the table to grab the wailing kettle. “I think you’re forgetting something.”

“Oh really, what’s that?”

“I am friends with Supergirl.”

Kara laughed out loud at her girlfriend’s subtle bragging of knowing the heroine. Like she wasn’t also dating National City’s beloved Super.

“Now that you mention it, I heard you two seemed to be awfully cordial at the Unity Day Parade,” Kara teasingly pointed out, going along with Lena’s banter.

Lena feigned surprised by Kara’s tone, gasping as she lightly placed a hand to her chest. “Kara Zor-El, is that jealousy I hear in your voice?”

Kara’s laughter grew louder with their exchange because how could it not? Lena was really selling Kara and Supergirl being two different people. “I have nothing to be jealous of considering National City loves the two of us together. She’s the one with some stiff competition.”

Lena’s flirtatious smirk, coupled with her raised brow, was driving Kara insane.

“I guess you have a point.” In a sultry tone of voice, “The way her suit grips her body. And her arms. The way something so solid just...” Lena coyly worried with her bottom lip.

That was all it took for Kara to realize something she had never noticed with her girlfriend. “You have a thing for Supergirl!” When Lena looked ready to deny it Kara kept on. “Why didn’t I see it sooner? Me in the suit totally turns you on!”

Lena felt there was no need in contesting the observation, she was caught. “What can I say, there are certain perks to dating the Girl of Steel.”

“Apparently that list begins and ends with my body. Most importantly my arms,” Kara smirked.

Swatting at those aforementioned arms, “Oh hush,” Lena giggled.

“See, you can barely help yourself!” Kara snorted with laughter at Lena’s poorly timed gesture.

Lena put all her effort into pushing Kara backwards but only managed to move the blonde a few steps.

“How about this? What if we do dinner in for our date? I’ll even cook.”

A shocked expression fell upon Lena’s face but quickly shifted into one of amusement. “Need I remind you of the last meal you set on fire?”

With a playful pout, Kara feigned hurt and wrapped her arms across her chest resembling the fit Ruby attempted to throw when she didn’t want to go to bed. “That was only two times.”

When Kara nodded Lena stood on her tiptoes to lightly place a kiss on Kara’s forehead.

“Dinner and dessert. That way we won’t need Supergirl on standby.”

“And I can spend some quality time with the most beautiful woman on any planet,” Kara lovingly supplied.

After a few more stolen kisses, Kara left her apartment with the list of groceries and supplies they’d need for the meal Lena had in mind. Dessert was Kara’s responsibility and she had just the treat in mind.

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A rushed trip to the grocery store – picking up more than was requested – followed by a quick stop to Midvale for one of her favorite pies in the entire universe after dropping off the groceries, and Kara was nearly finished. She could hear that Lena had already started cooking so she had plenty of time to add that extra touch to their impromptu dinner date.

Kara sped around her apartment in search of Lena’s keys, kissing her girlfriend on the way out. Lena had absolutely no idea what Kara was up to and Kara wanted to keep it that way. After perusing Lena’s extensive wardrobe, Kara decided one of Lena’s form fitting red dresses would be perfect for their date. She grabbed three different pairs of heels for Lena to choose from just to be safe, but she had an idea which pair her girlfriend might pick.

It was a short trip back to her apartment where she found Lena leaning against the counter typing something on her phone. Kara stood in her doorway lovingly staring at the brunette. Even something as ordinary as preparing a meal Lena somehow managed to look regal while doing so. It didn’t take long for Lena to notice Kara’s harmless staring.

“What’s that?”

The garment bag draped across Kara’s arms had momentarily slipped her mind. “Oh nothing,” she laughed. “I just grabbed you something to wear for dinner.”

Lena set her phone down on the island. “Can I have a peak?”

“Even better. You get to pick something out for me.”

Lena’s brow quirked, intrigued by the idea. “What’s our dress code? Where would we be going in my outfit because I already have several ideas for you?”

“Well, think one of your fancy restaurants where the salad is like fifty bucks.”

“Say no more,” Lena gushed then turned her attention to the foods sizzling on the stove.

Kara hung up Lena’s dress with her shoe options positioned underneath it.

“I have one more stop,” Kara shouted on her way back out the apartment.

“What do you have up your sleeve Ms. Zor-El?”

“You’ll just have to wait and see Ms. Luthor.”

The rooftop of Kara’s building had different types of string lights illuminating and decorating the space. There were a few lounge chairs and a couple tables, but it didn’t really give off a date vibe. Not yet at least. With minimal effort, and a few additions from her own apartment, the mood was set.
A trail of tea lights leading to their table, now draped in a snowflake decorated tablecloth – it was all she had on hand – and two chairs from her own dining table. She even pulled the firepit closer in case Lena got cold. All of the white and yellow lights were plugged in and lighting the now clean and presentable rooftop. The fortune of having a clear, starry, night sky was the finishing touch.

Lena was going to love it, Kara thought to herself. She knew her girlfriend was a sucker for these kinds of romantic gestures. After the past few months they’d both had, a little girlfriend time was in order. It wasn’t over the top, but it was enough, or at least Kara hoped it would be. There was no doubt in Kara’s mind that Lena needed this just as much as she did herself.

The effects of essentially dreaming about Lena dying had taken an unspoken toll on her heart. The dagger was plunged deeper every time Kara needed confirmation, or reassurance, that it was only a dream. Lena was still alive and sympathetic toward Kara’s predicament.

Sooner than she had been expecting, Kara overheard Lena finishing up their dinner. The key she had made for Lena was weighing heavy in her pocket and she meant to find a cute little box to present it in. In the back of her mind, Kara reminded herself to find something around her apartment, but if she couldn’t it wouldn’t be the end of the world.

——

Kara was going to hate eating the kale salad, but because of Lena, Kara always finished it. Lena even knew Kara was beginning to like the leafy vegetable, though the blonde would deny it to her dying breath.

Lena was giving Kara’s wardrobe a once over when she heard the front door shut. There were gentle arms sliding around her waist as an unconscious hum vibrated her chest.

“Smells good,” Kara lowly acknowledged in her ear.

Lightly patting Kara’s hands, “It’s just pasta. Creamy fettucine. Steak for you, tofu for me.”

“And the cocktail?”

“Oh! A berry gin fizz- but there’s wine too. Thought we’d try something different.”

Kara flopped down on her bed like a starfish while Lena continued to pick out an outfit for her.

“Close your eyes,” Lena instructed. When she was sure the heroine wasn’t peaking, Lena moved the suit she picked out for Kara into the bathroom.

“Am I supposed to get dressed in there?”

“Yes!” Lena shouted from inside.

“Fine,” Kara grumbled.

The woman bolted into the bathroom, changing at a superhuman pace then swung the door open for Lena to see.

Lena was sat on the edge of Kara’s bed, waiting, already knowing she was likely to drool over Kara the second she saw her. When she did, her reaction was right on par. The dark floral-patterned suit
was somehow better than she had imagined. Her black loafers clicked with every step as Kara made her way over.

“What do you think?”

Kara was strutting around, showing off the outfit. It wasn’t out of vanity but genuine curiosity that she was asking, Lena could sense that much.

“Handsome… Absolutely beautiful love.”

Before Lena could get too sucked into the way Kara looked, she needed to change as well before the food got cold.

They were both on the same page. Kara told her to go ahead and get dressed and to meet her on the roof. Everything made sense until Kara mentioned the roof.

“Uh, ok. I’ll be right up,” she nervously replied.

Lena slipped into the wine-red dress, noticing how Kara picked something that showed off her legs. She opened all of the shoe boxes before deciding on the black Alexander McQueen heeled boots Kara selected. It wasn’t one of her usual choices, but Lena thought Kara was perfect company to test the look out on.

Lena was going to stop in the kitchen to grab their dinner, but there was nothing for her to grab. On her way out of the door, Lena grabbed Kara’s keys to lock up and made her way for the stairwell. Lena had never wished that her girlfriend couldn’t pick up on her heartbeat before, but the trip to the roof was her first time.

She was nervous. There was no reason to be, but she was. It was just a date, with the woman she loved, on a rooftop, in the middle of January.

And Kara has no idea how cold it is...

With a steadying breath, Lena gave the rusty door to the roof a good push and instantly lost her next breath. There was a candlelit path with her gorgeous girlfriend stood waiting for her at the other end. In the time it took her to cook their dinner, Kara had set all of this up. There were tears stinging her eyes as she clasped a hand to her chest and mouth.

“Kara,” she breathlessly tried to say, her exhale visible around her in the cold night air.

The golden-haired woman was slowly making her way to where Lena stood. “Do you like it?”

Looking from one set of lights to another, “I love it,” Lena nodded. “No one has ever done something like this for me.”

Kara offered her arm then walked Lena over to her seat. Being her usually chivalrous self, she even pulled Lena’s chair out for her.

“If you get too cold I can add more wood to the fire.”

“How did you even have enough time to do this?”

Kara lightly snickered to herself. “Superspeed,” she gently pointed out.

Lena’s head bobbed side to side, grateful the tears had retreated. “Duh.”
Kara poured Lena half a glass of the cocktail she’d mixed before doing the same for herself. Not once did the mention of anything Lex related come up while they ate. They mostly talked about Lena’s work and their friends. What everyone planned to do after their respective graduations. Light conversation because that was all either of them could handle, but more importantly that they wanted to focus on – the positive.

Kara had run down to her apartment to grab their dessert leaving Lena alone for only a few minutes. She stared out across the night sky, letting the alcohol warm her body from the inside out. Even though Lena hadn’t said anything, Kara added more wood in the firepit, so that was likely helping as well.

Kara cut herself a healthy portion of the pecan pie, giving Lena the smaller piece she asked for. Lena didn’t know why she was surprised to hear that Kara flew all the way to Midvale just for the pie, because it was completely like Kara to do something like that. It was food. When Kara finished her piece, Lena fed her girlfriend the last few bites of her own that she wasn’t going to finish anyway.

She noticed how nervous Kara suddenly appeared when they finished their slices of pie. She thought everything was going well and was a little upset that Kara may not have been thinking the same.

“So, uhm, Lee… There’s something I want to talk to you about.”

Lena’s frown was an involuntary response. In her history of hearing the words ‘I want to talk’, nothing good tended to followed. Kara setting up all of this now felt like a punch to the gut. Of everyone in her life, Kara was the absolute last person she would expect to do something like this. To butter her up before delivering world stopping news. Because coming from Kara, anything negative, with respect to their relationship, would be heart clenching.

Lena’s thoughts ran away from her and she couldn’t get them in check. She stood from the table, straightening the wrinkles from her dress, and stumbled backwards a step or two. How fast she shot out of her chair coupled with how heavy handed she had been with gin was not a good mix.

“Just get it over with!”

Kara jumped up from her seat, face full of surprise. “What are you talking about?”

“You’re breaking up with me, aren’t you? After all of this Kara, this is how you do it?”

Kara’s mouth flew open, then her hands went up in the air as though she were surrendering to something, or someone.

“No, no! That’s not it at all! The date was your idea, I just wanted to make it special.”

“Oh,” Lena sighed, feeling foolish for her reaction. She should have known better, but some habits were hard to unlearn. “Then what was it?”

“Give me your hand.”

Lena looked from Kara’s outstretched hand back to her girlfriend’s now pleading face. She looked like a wounded puppy and Lena was the heartless individual that inflicted that pain. With one foot placed gingerly in front of the other, Lena crept over to Kara, giving over her hand.

Kara reached into her pocket, leaving it there.

“I didn’t mean to scare you, I just… Well, I didn’t really come up with a good way to ask. And I know the timing isn’t great but after everything that happened at the parade…”
Kara’s voice trailed off, even cracked, and Lena could clearly see she had been far off the mark.

Lena gently rested a hand upon Kara’s cheek. “Whatever it is, you can tell me.”

Kara drew a deep breath before gathering the strength to go on.

“Lee, will you move in with me?”

Lena didn’t realize she had stopped breathing until she noticed Kara was waiting for an answer. She had to say something. One second turned into ten before she was smiling so wide her eyes nearly shut. Then she laughed. At first it was only a chuckle that grew into a side cramping roar.

That familiar crease formed between Kara’s brows, not understanding Lena’s reaction.

Once Lena caught her breath, she looked square into Kara’s eyes. “I seriously thought you wanted to break up with me.”

Kara slowly nodded because what else was she supposed to do. “I see that.”

“No, you see. Even though I know I’m safe with you and I love you beyond measure, my warped brain still jumps to worst case. I trust you, my brain understands that and-” Lena cut herself off with another round of laughter.

“If you were anyone else, I’d take your laughing personally,” Kara smiled.

“And I wouldn’t blame you,” Lena breathed. She was sure to regain her composure before she gave Kara a straightforward answer. “Yes, I’ll move in with you. In this lifetime and every other I find myself falling in love with you.”

Kara let out a sigh of relief then pulled the key from her pocket.

“When did you have time to have this made?”

“Oh, I had it done months ago. Timing seems to be our issue.”

“Ahh.”

Lena cozied herself into Kara’s front, basking in the way they perfectly melded into one another. How could she possibly have thought Kara wanted to break up with her? Lena leaned back to look into Kara’s eyes, which were flicking between her green orbs and parted lips. Lena pushed herself onto her tiptoes, closing the tiny distance between them, hovering teasingly close to Kara. They were so close, Lena could feel Kara’s heavy breaths tickle the blonde hairs across her cheeks.

Kara’s hands couldn’t keep still. One second they were on Lena’s waist, the next they were traveling over well-acquainted terrain; never in one place long. The bite of the coming breeze brought a reflexive shiver over Lena’s frame, propelling her flush against Kara once again.

The smirk on Kara’s lips stemmed a heat deep in Lena’s belly that couldn’t be put out. Letting desire take the wheel, Lena lightly placed her lips upon Kara’s, giving the woman a chance to back away if she wanted.

When Kara didn’t move away, Lena’s eyes shut and all she could feel was Kara. The cold no longer existed. Time could have sped up and Lena wouldn’t have cared. Kara’s moans were music to her ears and Lena wanted more.

“I love you,” Kara whispered against her cheek.
Lena rolled her head to the side, giving Kara access to the side of her neck.

“Do you want to move this back to our apartment?”

Lena’s smile was mostly hidden on the side of Kara’s head, but she knew the blonde could feel it. “Obviously,” Lena quipped between panted breathes.

When she separated herself from Kara, Lena slowly backpedaled to the door, never breaking eye contact with her girlfriend. Not until Kara spun around to use her freeze breath to put out all of the candles and the fire pit. While Kara was busy doing that Lena tried to hurry down to the apartment before Kara could beat her there. Before she could step off of the last step Kara had her cradled in her arms, shoving open the apartment door, nearly breaking her key and the door in the process.

It almost happened at the same time. The apartment door closing and Lena being delicately placed on the bed were nearly simultaneous. Kara was stood at the foot of the bed, gradually pulling off her blazer. Lena was practically undressing her with her eyes already, but there was no need since Kara was readily working on that.

Crawling across the bed, “No,” Lena called in a low voice.

Kara was on her second shirt button when her hands froze in place.

“Why don’t I help you with that.”

Kara slowly untucked her shirt eying Lena as she moved at a similar pace unbuttoning her shirt. At the last button, Kara pulled Lena in for another all-consuming kiss thumbing at the zipper to Lena’s dress. She waited for Lena to give her permission before she moved the zipper an inch.

Lena moved herself from the bed, letting her dress fall to form a wine red puddle around her feet. She eased off Kara’s belt and dropped it to the floor beside them.

Little by little Kara moved her fingers into Lena’s curled hair, soaking in her girlfriend’s presence. She was scared she could potentially hurt Lena if they went any further, but the brunette trusted her, so Kara had to do the same for herself.

Softly, Kara kissed at the corner of Lena’s mouth, then again just under the woman’s ear. “Do you want to keep going?”

Lena’s head moved so fast, Kara thought she gave herself whiplash. The vibration from Kara’s laugh on her ear made Lena jump a little, but she just held on to Kara tighter so she wouldn’t go anywhere.

“Yes,” Lena croaked, subtly hiding her excitement.

Lena moved her hands just beneath Kara’s binder and waited. “Is it ok if we get you out of this? You can keep it on if you’re more comfortable.”

With a small step backward Kara graciously smiled. “Thanks for asking.” With a practiced rhythm, and so glad she didn’t get stuck in the process – because that would be anything but sexy – Kara pulled off her binder. Bare chested and vulnerable Kara watched how Lena examined her body; taking in every inch of her exposed skin. Kara had no expectations but was pleasantly surprised by how softly Lena ran her hands across her skin.

Lena pulled Kara by her belt loops, moving them onto the bed. Kara constantly reminded herself to watch her strength. She was getting in her head and Lena noticed.
“Hey, we can stop.”

Kara shook her head because she wanted to keep going. “Just- you have to tell me if I’m hurting you.”

“I happen to like a little pain with—”

“I’m serious Lena.”

Lena soothingly shushed the powerful Kryptonian hunched over her. She was trying to help ease Kara’s worries, but her words had the opposite effect. “If it’s more than I can handle I’ll say something.”

“Promise?”

“Of course.”

All conversation ceased for a moment. Lena’s lacey bra was the next thing to go and then Kara’s pants. They both had a good laugh at the rubber duckies on Kara’s boxers then easily found their way back into the groove they had created.

Though it was their first time becoming intimately familiar with the other’s body, Lena and Kara moved with an understanding some work a lifetime to attain. They spoke without words and had a keen sense to what the other desired.

Their heated and aroused entanglement lasted well into the early hours of the morning. The world could have come tumbling down outside the walls of their loft, and it wouldn’t have mattered. It was an experience as blissfully fulfilling as they had both imagined. Too exhausted to go on, Lena fell asleep wrapped in Kara’s arms just after sunrise.

Chapter End Notes

What did you think?

A little fluff never hurt anyone, and Kara and Lena definitely needed something lighter. Next chapter I’ve half planned out and we’ll get back to the plot w/more fluff mixed in. Or at least, that’s the goal lol.
As always, questions/comments/suggestions/critiques/random hellos, are more than welcome! Don’t be shy :).

Hopefully it won’t take me another month to write the next chapter. I’ll do my absolute best to shoot for two weeks. Y’all are awesome and I want to say thank you for hanging in there with me.

Until next time...

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!