Room to Grow

by swanqueenfic13

Summary

When something crash-lands in the deserts of California, life in the Danvers-Luthor household is bound to be upended.
Crash-Landing

Married life was treating Lena and Kara exceptionally well. After their honeymoon, they returned home to find that no one had adopted any more surprise animals, and their house was in one piece. For Halloween, Lydia convinced them all to dress up as the Incredibles. They spent Thanksgiving in Midvale, then visited again for Hanukkah and Christmas Day. They rang in the new year at Alex and Maggie’s house. Through Valentine’s Day and St. Patrick’s Day, Easter egg hunts and a spring break trip to the Montana house for some skiing with Jamie and Alison, Lena and Kara were rock-steady. Even when they fought over their own workaholic tendencies, Lena’s deep-seated insecurities, and Kara’s stubborn streak, they worked through it. At the end of every fight, they’d kiss each other and remember the vows they took to each other.

Everything was perfect, and neither was looking forward to something that would rock the boat. It was a warm afternoon in mid-May when something crash-landed into their lives and, of course, upended their easy peace.

“Supergirl, an unidentified spacecraft has crash-landed in the Colorado desert. You have to intercept before any civilians get hurt. Determine if the occupants are friendly, but stay on the comms. We’re deploying Alpha Desert Team, but they’re at least half an hour out,” J’onn warned over the comms.

“On it,” Kara said, rocketing through the skies. She had been flying a lazy patrol over the city for the afternoon, but it had been a slow day. Clearly, criminals were taking advantage of the nice weather like most everyone else was, including Kara’s wife and daughter who were playing at the park and feeding the ducks. It only took Kara two minutes to cross the state and arrive at the coordinates J’onn had sent.

She paused in the sky, hovering about a hundred feet above the ground, narrowing her eyes in disbelief. There was a small crater in the ground where it landed and a long ditch where the ship seemed to have skidded before coming to a halt, still smoking from entry into the earth’s atmosphere. The ship was about as tall as Kara was standing and twice as long, pentagonal and charred, but the charred outer layer was flaking away in front of her eyes to reveal gleaming silver. Kara immediately recognized the design.

“Supergirl, report back. What do you see?” Alex barked over the comms.

“Director, we need a team here ASAP. This is a pod—a Kryptonian storage pod. I’m going to approach.” Kara ignored Alex’s and J’onn’s protests and orders to stand down until backup arrived. All she could think about was the possibility of another survivor—another Kryptonian. She didn’t dare hope for it to be someone specific as she landed next to the pod. Kara reached forward to place one palm on the hull of the ship to try and find the seam to pry the lid open. The moment her hand made contact with the smooth metal—Kara had sudden memories of walking through the storehouses in the Science Guild, excited to be able to discover the secrets within—a large split appeared on one face of the pod and it slid open to reveal an empty pod.

Well, it’s not empty, she supposes. There are containers, sure, but there’s no Kryptonians escaping the destruction. She should have known that it wouldn’t have a passenger. This was specifically a storage pod, the equivalent of a U-Haul truck. It didn’t have any life-sustaining capabilities, so even if someone had snuck into this, they wouldn’t have survived the journey. Still, Kara feels a hollow echo in her chest and she feels her lower lip wobble.
“False alarm,” she says, hearing the tremble in her voice. “The pod is empty. It’s just stuff.”

“Supergirl, Alpha Desert Team is twenty minutes out. Agent Danvers and I are less than two minutes away from your location.” The wind whipping in the background lets Kara know that J’onn is reporting while flying at top speed while carrying Alex.

“Supergirl, do not interact with the contents until we can examine them more clearly,” Alex said firmly. “We’re on our way to you.” Kara nods though they can’t see her. Just from her visual observation, she can see some of the small containers marked with the Science Guild and History Guild emblems. The containers had all been jostled in the landing, and Kara could’ve sworn she saw the House of El emblem on something buried in the back of the container.

“Supergirl!” J’onn shouted as he landed, putting Alex down on her feet. Kara hadn’t realized she was reaching towards the pod, reaching in as if to pull something out. She pulls her hand back as if it had been burned.

“Sorry, I wasn’t thinking,” she apologized.

“Kara, you need to listen when J’onn or I give orders like this! What if this had been a hostile? What if it had been filled with Kryptonite or something designed to poison humans?” Alex scolded, grabbing Kara by the shoulders and looking over her as if looking for any shards of Kryptonite Kara had neglected to mention.

“I just thought there might be someone inside,” Kara said, her voice small. Alex quickly felt her anger evaporating. She pulled Kara into a hug.

“I’m so sorry, Kara,” she whispered. “I am so sorry,” she repeated in Kryptonese. Kara closed her eyes, forcing herself not to cry. She was at work. She was a professional. She was a hero.

“Thank you, Alex. I’m good, I’m good. I promise.” She pulled back and gave Alex an unconvincing smile, but Alex let her be, likely sensing that Kara was trying to keep herself together.

“Okay, well then, what can you tell us about this craft, Supergirl?”

“It’s a storage pod, meant to safeguard our history, our research, our art, everything important. It was fireproof, waterproof, insulated against the cold, practically indestructible. Some were even designed to evacuate in times of emergency to remove our national treasures. As far as I knew, they were only meant to move from one part of the planet to another to escape small disasters like fires, storms, and the like. I didn’t think they had space travel capabilities. That must be why it took so long to get here.”

“It could have been seeking out your pod or your cousin’s,” J’onn mused. Kara nodded.

“From what I can see, this seems to be a mixture. That right there is the Science Guild emblem. That one is the History Guild. There’s the War Guild and—that! Doesn’t that look like the corner of the House of El sigil?” Kara said, pointing emphatically. J’onn narrowed his eyes while Alex stayed a few steps back, unable to hover above the pod to observe the way Kara and J’onn were.

“Could be. Once the team gets here, we can start to catalogue this and move it to the desert base for further study. You should return to the city. There’s nothing more you can do here,” J’onn said. Kara nodded mutely.

“If it’s quiet, you could go be with your family for a bit. Just keep the comms in for emergencies,” Alex said and Kara nodded again, kissing Alex’s cheek and letting J’onn clap her shoulder supportively before she took off back towards the city. Kara flew high up into the atmosphere she
she could blame her tears on condensation from the clouds she passed through.

Thankfully, the city remained quiet without much more than a small, manageable fire by the wharf. Kara was able to put that fire out quickly before returning to dinner with her family unnoticed. Lydia did ask why it suddenly smelled like a campfire and stinky fish, but Lena just laughed and assured her it must have been a passing car. Kara quickly ran to the bathroom to spray some deodorizing cologne over herself (okay, so technically it had been a gag gift from Lena since it was meant for dogs, but it worked in a pinch). Kara distracted herself from the contents of the pod by playing games with Lydia, helping her get ready for bed, and reading her stories until she fell asleep.

“Do you want to talk about it?” Lena asked gently when Kara finally came to join her in the living room. Lena was curled into the corner of the couch in navy blue sweatpants and a tattered National City University sweatshirt she’d stolen from Kara. Her hair was pulled into a messy bun on top of her head and she wore her glasses and striped fuzzy socks. Fish was curled up on top of her feet, perking his ears up at Kara’s approach and shifting to look at her.

“How about what?” Kara asked, hoping to put off the conversation. “What are you reading?” she asked as she sat on the other end of the couch, stretching her feet and tucking her toes under Fish.

“The Murder of Roger Ackroyd. But you’re changing the subject. Something has been bothering you since you got off duty,” Lena said, narrowing her eyes as she put a bookmark in her book and set it on her lap. Lena exhaled softly. “If you don’t want to talk about it, we don’t have to. I just want you to know that you can, if you want. I’m just worried.” Kara closed her eyes and tilted her head onto the back of the couch. Reaching for one of the throw pillows she’d accidentally kicked off the couch, Kara opened her eyes and placed the pillow on her lap.

“It’s not that. I just… We found a pod today. From Krypton,” Kara said, staring down at the pillow. Just thinking about it brought back that gut-wrenching emptiness in her chest. Lena gasped softly but said nothing, waiting for Kara to lead the conversation at her own pace. “I knew it wasn’t a transport pod. It couldn’t have sustained life inside, but I just…”

“You hoped,” Lena finished, turning her body to face Kara fully. Fish grumbled unhappily as he was forced to shift, laying lengthwise with his snout in Kara’s lap and his back paws and tail on Lena’s. He was practically sinking into the back of the couch as Lena and Kara let their legs tangle and Lena draped a blanket over the both of them, making sure Fish wasn’t completely smothered. Kara scratched behind his ears and his tail thumped lightly against Lena’s leg.

“I hoped,” Kara confirmed, tears in her eyes. “But it wasn’t a Kryptonian, obviously. I was just so… excited about no longer being the last.” Lena nods. She had listened to Kara talk about the burden of being the last true Kryptonian many times (“Kal is Kryptonian by blood, but he was raised human. English is his first language, not Kryptonese. If I had been here to raise him-“” Kara always broke off here, tears and guilt overwhelming her).

“I’m sorry, Kara. I can’t even imagine…” Lena trails off and leans forward, offering her hand if Kara wants it. Kara’s hand shakes, but she reaches out and clings to Lena. “Do you want to talk about what was in the pod or do you just want comfort and silence?” Kara shrugged, pondering the question for a few minutes. Lena was content to wait, letting her hand be strangled in Kara’s grip and her lower back grow sore from her hunched over position.

“Can I hold you?” Kara asked after a bit, looking shyly up at Lena, as if the answer could ever be no.
“Always,” Lena smiled. Fish huffed as he was forced to move again, moving to stand in Lena’s vacated corner of the couch as Lena clambered over and laid her head on Kara’s chest, wrapping one arm around Kara’s waist and the other around her shoulder. Lena tangled their legs together and felt Kara wrap her arms around Lena’s waist, holding her tight. Lena sighed in content, feeling Kara do the same as Fish resettled himself on top of their feet. Lena isn’t sure how long they laid in silence before Kara spoke again.

“It’s a storage pod. We used them to house important artifacts, scientific research, things like that. We had one in my house, too. It held family heirlooms, important research for my dad, legal documents for my mom. It’s kind of like a portable closet that can move itself when it senses danger.”

“It… moves itself?” Lena asked curiously. She cleared her throat. “Sorry, don’t feel like you have to answer that.”

“No, no, it’s okay. Um, the pods were fireproof, waterproof, and insulated against weather. They were equipped with sensors, too, so if it sensed a sudden rise in temperature, moisture, or anything like that, it was programmed to try and find a safer environment. I remember once when I was little, I made it a game trying to set off the pod and watch it fly away from me. After a while, it started registering my presence as the danger and just… took off anytime I came too close.” Kara laughs, suddenly remembering the memory. Her father had been annoyed at first when he couldn’t find the pod that held his research, but he never could be too mad at her.

“That’s… amazing.” Kara could hear the gears turning in Lena’s head as she tried to figure out how to adapt that for Earth technology. Kara left her to her brainstorming, content to just hold Lena for a while. Already, she felt a little better, though it still felt like losing her world all over again.

“I’m sorry, you were telling me about what was in the pod,” Lena said after a while, suddenly remembering. She picked her head up to give Kara a gentle peck on the cheek. “Do you want to keep going? Don’t feel like you have to right now.”

“I don’t know exactly what was in this pod,” Kara sighed. Lena settled back against her chest, the weight helping to ground Kara in the moment. “I didn’t get a good look at it all. J’onn and Alex insisted on waiting for backup to help them move it all to headquarters. Alex is there right now with a team to go through it all, but they sent me away. Told me to take some time. I’m going to go in tomorrow, I think. They won’t be able to identify everything without me. Alex’s Kryptonese isn’t that good,” Kara chuckled.

“Alex speaks Kryptonese?” Kara hummed. Lena paused, considering her words. “I’d like to learn, if that’s alright with you?”

“Of course! Don’t feel bad about it,” Lena said warmly, settling her head back on Kara’s chest. “Do you want to watch TV?” Kara nodded so Lena reached for the remote, putting on some cop show Kara loved. Lena just tuned it out, closing her eyes and relaxing as Kara played with her hair. The next thing Lena knew, it was dark and Kara was carrying her to bed. Lena promptly fell back asleep.

“So, some of these seem to be history records. We’d like to transcribe them for our records, if you want to help us with that?” The next morning, Kara met Alex at the DEO. Alex had been at work all
night and before her shift ended, she was going over her findings with Kara. Kara would spend some time looking over everything and identifying some of the things Alex and her agents couldn’t decipher before heading to Sunny Start to run a few art activities. “We’ve also got what seem to be some tech, but we don’t know what they are exactly. You probably do, though. Let’s see… oh, there are a few things with, um, your family sigil? We left those for you to open.” Kara inhaled sharply, pausing for a minute. Alex had greeted her in the lobby and was bringing her down to the room where they had moved the pod.

“Thank you, Alex,” she said sincerely.

“’Course,” she smiled. “Text me if you need me, but J’onn is also here for when you file the official report later. You ready?” They paused in front of the door. It was locked with a bio-sensor. Only Kara’s, Alex’s, and J’onn’s DNA sequences could open it. The door also required a retinal scan and a key code. Kara put her hand on the bio-lock, stood in front of the retinal scanner and punched in her code, taking a deep breath as the door slid open.

“Ready as I’ll ever be,” Kara murmured. She turned to smile at Alex before walking in as the door closed behind her, leaving her alone in a room with the last remaining relics of her world. Kara took a few deep breaths before approaching the pod. It stood tall in the center of the room and several lamps illuminated it from all angles. Gleaming metal tables were placed in a semi-circle, each littered with varying containers and objects. Kara noted that they had been separated based on the sigil on the outside of each small container.

The first table housed a few relics from the temple. There was a copy of their holy text that Kara remembered studying as a child. She made a note to translate that for Alex later. There was also a painting depicting one of the constellation myths. Kara stared at it for a few minutes, updating the description of this particular artifact on the tablet Alex gave her before moving on.

Kara continued in this way, looking through the history annals from the History Guild, strategic battle plans and antique spoils of war from the Military Guild, and a holographic record of the major pieces of Kryptonian art from the Arts and Culture Guild. The first thing to give her pause was the table with two containers from the Science Guild. One was the equivalent of a tablet, a digital record of the modern research from the time just before Krypton’s destruction. It detailed medical innovations, means of safer and faster transport, and blueprints for common household items. The other was a gavrrigehd, a Codex. A Kryptonian birthing chamber.

Lena and Kara had many conversations about expanding their family. Due to the scarring in Lena’s uterus, her doctors warned she had a very low chance of successfully carrying another child. To even attempt could put her life as well as the life of the fetus in danger. Kara, despite her similar anatomy, wouldn’t be able to carry a child either. Her Kryptonian strength wouldn’t allow for the fetus, untouched by sun and therefore not yet strong, to push and stretch her body. Alex warned them that the lack of expansion would crush the embryo before it even had a real chance.

Adoption was their best chance, and they knew it. Neither really found any fault with the process, especially considering the fact that they had both been adopted. Kara would absolutely still want to adopt, but there was also something appealing about the option of continuing to Kryptonian bloodline. Sure, Clark and Lois had been thinking about having children, but part of Kara was still hopeful. She would have to talk to Lena about this.

Putting down the Codex and shelving any further thought of babies, Kara moved over to the container with the House of El symbol. There was only one box, unopened. The moment Kara put her palm against it, the box opened to reveal a holodex. It was similar to the one that held the scientific records, but as soon as Kara started opening the files, it was clear that this came from her
home.

One of the files was a slideshow of images, historic images of her ancestors and even pictures of her parents, her aunt, and her holding baby Kal. Tears sprang to Kara’s eyes as she watched the images roll by. The ache of missing her family grew, threatened to swallow her whole. *Go, Kara. We love you.* She remembered the feel of their arms hugging her goodbye, but the sound of their voices was starting to fade from her memory. Kara desperately tried to cling to the memory, afraid of what would happen when she forgot.

The next file on the holodex was a family tree spanning dozens of generations, followed by a detailed history of the great and illustrious house of El. Kara flipped through the records until she found entries about her father: his birth, his marriage to her mother, the birth of his daughter, his rise through the ranks of the Science Guild. She found her uncle Jor-El, Kal, and even herself.

Kara was startled from her reverie by the beeping of her alarm, a reminder to wrap up before heading to Sunny Start. Kara weighed the holodex in her palm, considering the repercussions of putting it in her pocket and take it with her. Kara had gone so many years without any relics from her home. The only parts of Krypton on earth were radioactive, poisonous to her. Now that she had some real memories, she wasn’t keen on the idea of letting it out of her sight. Sighing, Kara knew it was irresponsible to bring it with her. Not to mention, J’onn would be pissed.

“I’ll be back,” she whispered as she sealed the holodex back in its container. She walked backwards towards the door as if trying to memorize the sight of Kryptonian relics before her, terrified she might wake and discover this was all a dream.

After dinner that evening, while Lydia played for a while before bed, Kara sat down with Lena and told her about her discoveries.

“Kara, that is… amazing, right? You’ve got… a piece of your family back! I mean—wait, no. It’s not exactly—it’s not the same as having your family back. Shit, that came out wrong. I meant it’s like… you have something… I don’t know. I’m sorry,” Lena said quickly. Kara smiled, though her eyes were watering.

“I know what you meant. And I know it won’t ever replace them, but it is nice to have a piece of them back, even if they are only images and family histories. I haven’t even finished going through it yet, I ran out of time. Maybe there’s more. Maybe there are videos or voice recordings. Who knows?” Kara tightened her grip on Lena. They were once again lounging on the couch, though Fish was with Lydia this time. Kara found it much easier to talk about missing her family when she was able to hold onto her new family, hugging Lena or, when she was younger, Alex.

“I’m so happy for you, love,” Lena whispered, squeezing Kara.

“There’s more,” Kara said, voice hesitant. Lena shifted, looked up at Kara and waited for her to continue. “A Codex, a Kryptonian birthing chamber. And I know we want to adopt—and I still really want to do that! But, I started to think… why couldn’t we do both? Like, one child from the Codex… and then one we adopt a while after? I just… and we don’t have to discuss this right now. You can take some time to think about it, if you need. I just… it’s an option, now. We could look into it with Alex and… But, you have to think it over first, of course,” Kara rambled.

“Kara,” Lena interrupted, beaming. “I absolutely would love to have a little Kryptonian baby with you. A little baby with your eyes? Imagine?”
“Or your eyes,” Kara quipped, leaning down to kiss Lena’s nose. “But, you really would want to? I know we’d always talked about adoption—”

“And we still can. Kara, we could adopt a whole brood of kids if that’s what we wanted to do. Lord knows we have the resources, and you have enough heart to sustain a small village worth of children.”

“Hey, don’t count yourself out, miss I-donate-billions-to-charity-monthly. You have the most heart of anyone I know.” Lena blushed, burying her head in Kara’s chest. They stayed silent for a moment, both imagining their home filled with blonde hair and green eyes, dark hair and blue eyes, thundering feet and happy children.

“Are we really talking about this? Are we really doing it?” Lena breathed. A large part of her was terrified. She certainly hadn’t had the best examples of healthy parenting, and she didn’t come from a large family. For a few years, her family was just her and Lydia. The thought of growing their family thrilled her, but it also terrified her.

“I’m game if you are,” Kara whispered, pressing a tender kiss to Lena’s temple. And Lena knew. She knew with absolute certainty that regardless of the challenges they would definitely face, she and Kara would do their best by Lydia and their family. They would approach the obstacles and difficulties head on, hand in hand.

“Then let’s make a baby,” Lena said, waggling her eyebrows suggestively. Kara laughed and slapped Lena’s shoulder, causing Lena to giggle excitedly. When they had both settled again, Lena continued, “we can talk to Alex about it as soon as you want.”

“What’s your schedule looking like tomorrow?” Kara grinned.

“I can always make time for our family.” Our family. Lena smiled at the sound of that.

“Then it sounds like a plan. I’ll text her to figure out a time,” Kara said, shifting as she reached for her phone to text Alex.

“Can’t wait,” Lena sighed, closing her eyes. She couldn’t wipe the smile off her face.
The Science of the Miracle

Chapter Summary

In which Lena, Kara, and Alex figure out the practical aspects of creating another Kryptonian.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

They met with Alex first thing in the morning after dropping Lydia off at school, both practically buzzing with excitement.

“So, you’re telling me that this is a birthing chamber? Like… How exactly does it work?” Alex asked, eyes wide. “‘Is it like an external womb? Or more advanced in vitro? Something else?’”

“Well, I’m not totally sure,” Kara said, frowning. “Working with the Codex was a highly specialized branch of the Science Guild. I wasn’t technically inducted into the Guild yet, so I don’t really know how it works. The other thing, the tablet? It should have the schematics and we can figure out how it works by studying those.” Kara held out a hand and Alex passed over the tablet.

“Kara, love, deciphering schematics to figure out their secrets is one of my favorite things. May I?” Lena asked, quirking an eyebrow.

“Please. But you’ll need me to translate.”

“I’d need you no matter what if we’re making this baby together,” Lena grinned, pumping her eyebrows up and down.

“Hi, hello, yes, I’m here still,” Alex said, clearing her throat.

“Oh, relax, Alex. Making a baby with the Codex would be more like us spitting into two vials than us having sex,” Kara laughed, rolling her eyes.

“Not to say that we can’t do both,” Lena added, crossing her arms over her chest and leaning into Kara with a smirk.

“You’re the worst,” Alex deadpanned.

“And yet, you love us enough to help us decipher these schematics so we can potentially make a baby?” Kara asked hopefully.

Alex sighed dramatically but joined them behind the table to peer at the schematics on the screen. “I suppose.” Kara beamed and with a few taps, the schematics were projected like a hologram above them.

“Fuck, I love space technology,” Lena exhaled.

“Me too,” Alex grinned, holding up her hand for a high-five. Kara just shook her head and laughed, muttering something about loving a bunch of nerds.
It took a few days to actually figure out how to make the Codex work. It had gotten damaged in the crash, and Lena needed to make some minor repairs. Then, they had to figure out how to operate it. This took well over a week. It would have been quicker if Lena hadn’t been splitting her time between the DEO and L-Corp, but she couldn’t just leave her company to run on its own. They were still rebuilding their reputation from the damage Lex and Lillian had done and Lena was reluctant to leave it to anyone else even for just a few weeks (though she knew she’d have to get over that once it came time for her to take maternity leave with Kara).

By the time they had actually gotten the Codex to work and figured out how to make it work, it was the middle of June. National City was heating up and Supergirl was busy fighting forest fires and rescuing civilians with heat stroke in the desert. The school year was coming to a close and Lydia was getting ready for another summer of camp, going back to her friends and getting ready to make new friends. Lena and Kara still hadn’t brought up the idea of adding a new baby, a combination of nerves and lack of time and focus keeping them from bringing it up. They justified the procrastination since the Codex hadn’t even been ready yet, but that excuse was quickly becoming null and void.

“This is a medical miracle. You realize this, right? Infertile people… partners who are different alien species… Same sex couples… They can all benefit from this one machine. It’s amazing. You’ll make a fortune,” Alex marvelled once they were finished.

“Do you think that’s ethical?” Lena mused. “Copyrighting and profiting from a medical innovation like this?”

“What do you mean? You have to copyright!” Kara exclaimed. “People should know that Lena Luthor is responsible for this! Be proud of your accomplishment and your contributions to the world!” Kara was always trying to help Lena find reasons to be proud of her company and her family name, despite Lex and Lillian’s attempts to destroy that.

“It’s not an issue of pride, Kara. It’s a question of ethics! Nils Bohlin, the man who invented the three-point seatbelt? He convinced Volvo not to patent it, costing them potentially billions of dollars! It saved millions of lives. They knew that the life-saving effects of making the seatbelt design open to the public far outweighed the amount of money they could make. And Jonas Salk! When he refused to patent the polio vaccine, people asked why he would give up so much money. He responded ‘could you patent the sun?’ Salk knew that his contributions to the good of the world was more important than his money! How could I in good conscience patent something that could change so many lives?” Lena sat, tangling her fingers in her hair, which had been pulled back while they worked.

“Patenting something doesn’t make you unethical,” Alex said, face scrunching up and tilting her head to one side. “A patent is literally just something to make sure you can protect your intellectual property. It makes sure you get credit where credit is due.”

“I can still get credit without making a profit.” Lena sighed. “Besides, I didn’t do this on my own. It’s primarily Kryptonian technology. I just adapted it, so I can’t really take credit for something I didn’t really invent. At most, I used a translated schematic to make some slight changes to an existing technology. It’s like… I was copying a copyrighted work. Someone on Krypton probably patented this! I’m a patent stealer! Oh my God,” Lena gasped, one hand on her stomach as she began to pace.

“Hey, whoa, take a chill pill, Debbie Doomsday.”

“Don’t be mean, Alex. But, Lena, she is right. You’re jumping to the worst possible conclusions. How about we table the discussion of patents for a bit and talk about the practicality of using the
Codex to add to our family? Isn’t that the more exciting part of this whole thing?”

Lena rolled her eyes. “Well, yes, of course it is. But, I have to be back at work by one for an interview. We need a new department head for the med-tech branch, ironically.”

“So, Lena, the ultrasound scans we gave you last time you were here did confirm that your uterus is scarred, and the chemistry is hostile to an embryo, according to the cervical tests you had your doctor do,” Alex reported once they moved to Alex’s office. Lena and Kara were seated on the couch while Alex pulled over a chair and sat facing them, hoping it would feel less formal than a trip to the doctor’s office.

“Great, so I’m basically infertile.” Lena said it as if she were trying for casual and unaffected, but the way she cleared her throat had Kara squeezing her hand and rubbing circles on her back. “So Kara carries the baby.”

“Well, while it’s true that her reproductive system is startlingly similar to ours, that isn’t a perfect solution either,” Alex said, folding her hands on her lap. “When the embryo attaches to the uterine wall, the body starts to stretch and shift to make room for the growing fetus. Just like with a human embryo, Kara’s body is too strong because of the yellow sun, so she wouldn’t be able to accommodate the shifting of a growing fetus, even if that fetus is Kryptonian.”

“But why? The only thing as strong as a Kryptonian is another Kryptonian,” Lena pointed out.

“Our powers come from the sun. The embryo won’t have been exposed to it at the time of implantation,” Kara answered.

“What if you put the Codex with the embryo out into the sun for the first few days or weeks? Let it grow in strength so it can safely attach to the uterine wall.”

Alex shook her head. “If we let it grow for too long, transplanting it into Kara’s uterus will be unsuccessful. Her uterus will struggle to make room so quickly. Even when it happens naturally, the pain of the uterus shifting and stretching is noticeable to pregnant people. Imagine suddenly shoving a grapefruit in a space meant for an orange.”

“Ow! I don’t want that!” Kara yelped, one hand dropping to her belly as she made a face. “But, why can’t we just let the fetus grow to full term in the Codex? It’s how most Kryptonians were born. Kal was the first natural birth in a long time on Krypton.”

“I mean, it’s a possibility,” Alex admits. “But, you’d have nothing that made this appear to be a natural birth. Everything about this child’s future existence would be done with fake documents. There’s no precedent for a baby born and delivered from a tube.”

“Someone has to set the precedent!”

“Kara, love, we can keep exploring that option, absolutely. And when this technology becomes public—which we still need to figure out, by the way—society and government will need to figure out a protocol for this. But, perhaps we can explore other options. Like finding a way to get your uterus ready to accommodate the future fetus while we let it strengthen under sunlamps.” Lena shifted, pulling her legs under herself. The move pushed her a little further from Kara, but she had that look in her eye when she’s envisioning a schematic in her head. She sat a little straighter and fixed her hair so the bun was even tighter, and she held her hands aloft in midair, narrowing her eyes as if waiting for inspiration to strike.

“What if, instead of just trying to make the fetus more Kryptonian, we also make Kara more human?
Then, we can allow her uterus to stretch and—"

“Please no more talking about stretching my internal organs, okay?” Kara interrupted.

“Kara, that’s literally our biggest obstacle right now to using this Codex. Now, you know I believe that family isn’t about sharing DNA or whatever, but I know that it’s different for you because of your... Well, your lack of blood relatives. Sorry,” Alex said, wincing. “So, if you want us to continue working on this to help you have a healthy, happy, half-Kryptonian, half-human baby, we need to figure out how to prepare your body for any sort of fetal implantation.”

“Well, to be fair, the uterus barely stretches during the first month or so. At least, I didn’t feel any real pain or discomfort until around five and a half weeks. By the end of the first trimester, it was more uncomfortable, but I’ve had worse period cramps, so…” Lena trailed off with a shrug. “We may be overreacting a bit about this whole early pregnancy uterine stretching. We should do some more research on early pregnancy before making any big decisions. But, I still believe we should look into making Kara slightly more human and making the baby slightly more Kryptonian, at least for the pregnancy. We should figure out some simulations to determine how much sun exposure the baby would need and how long it would maintain any powers or effects once it’s in utero and not in the sunlight.” Lena started ticking things off on her fingers. “Maybe figure out a way to mimic the effects of the red sun long term. Make it portable. Or maybe, not enough to fully take away her powers but enough to make it easier for the fetus to survive.”

“I can start working on that if you need to go, Lena,” Alex said, writing the list in her notebook. “Kara, you can go, too. J’onn is on Supergirl duty right now. Take your wife to lunch, or something. I’ll call you when I’ve got something.” They nodded, bidding their goodbyes before Kara took Lena by the hand and pulled her out of the DEO to Big Belly Burger (despite Lena’s argument that Kara should start eating better since she was going to be eating for two soon).

Lena was, of course, not content to sit and wait for Alex to call her with something. When she got home from work, after sitting down to dinner with her family and reading two more chapters of the Magic Treehouse book she and Lydia were reading together, Lena retired to her home office. She slaved over her notes and her sketchpad, trying to figure out a portable way to mimic the effects of a red sun. Kara practically had to pry her away from the office at one in the morning, threatening to pick Lena up and throw her over her shoulder to get her to bed if necessary. Of course, Lena had simply purred and begged Kara to do just that.

The next day was much of the same, though Lena actually went into the DEO to collaborate with Alex on this one. Kara was on Supergirl duty, so she could only periodically stop in to make sure her wife and sister were eating enough and drinking water and taking frequent enough breaks. Luckily, Maggie would also call or text when she was free, making sure Alex was taking care of herself, too.

After the third day, they figured that they were ready to start making prototypes of the portable red sun emitters and start testing them. It took another few days to properly balance the energy output required with the need to make it compact and portable. In the end, they came up with a small, smart-watch sized wristband. It resembled a smartwatch enough that no one would think twice of it on Kara’s wrist, and it brought her down to an almost human level of strength. Kara was still stronger than the average human and her immune system was infallible, but her skin, and more importantly her womb, was no longer so strong that it wouldn’t yield.

Alex and Lena calculated the amount of solar exposure the fetus would need before implantation in order to maximize its Kryptonian strength while minimizing the risk for Kara’s body rejecting the implantation for lack of preparation. All three women agreed that it was safest and most optimal to
implant the fetus after five weeks of constant exposure to the solar rays (“so it can photosynthesize or whatever it is you do,” Lena had laughed). They had prepared everything they needed before actually making the embryo.

Everything, that is, except talk to Lydia about it.

Chapter End Notes

Please note I have never been pregnant. I get this information (and shoehorn it into my rough understanding of Kryptonian birthing practices) from the internet, and from a close relative who is currently pregnant and sharing some of the trials and tribulations of the first trimester.

6/12/19:
Made a few minor edits, including the length of time the fetus would spend outside of the womb.
Conception and Implantation

Chapter Summary

From DNA sample collection to implantation to the first ultrasound!

After countless debates, hours reading parenting blogs, and asking their friends, Kara and Lena decided not to tell Lydia about the upcoming addition just yet. It was an experimental procedure, as yet untested. There were an infinite number of ways it could go wrong. It could even take years for it to be successful! Even though both women wanted to be as open and honest with their daughter as possible, they didn’t want to set her up for disappointment or confusion if this process took longer than they thought, if it would even prove successful at all.

“We can just start slowly introducing the idea very slowly,” they compromised. So, together they went out and bought some new books to start rotating into their nightly readings. Some books dealt explicitly with new babies while others had it as a background story plot and still others referenced a baby brother or sister as the sibling of the main character. Lena and Kara hoped that by reading these kinds of stories with Lydia, it would help her start seeing this as a possibility for their family.

While trying to debate the pros and cons of telling Lydia sooner rather than later, they also worked very closely with Alex and her team to make sure everything was looking ready to go. Lena and Winn were constantly running simulations to make sure their calculations were correct and that the Codex could synthesize their DNA well enough to make it combine and create a child. Kryptonians may have the same number of chromosomes as humans, but there were so many other differences that Kara had worriedly asked if her baby would be born with wings or a tail or three heads. Thankfully, Lena’s IQ and ingenuity combined with Winn’s cleverness and perseverance, and Alex’s medical knowledge assured Kara that their baby would likely not have a tail, wings, or multiple heads. Their DNA may differ slightly from a human’s or a Kryptonian’s under a microscope, but those differences would be virtually unnoticeable without DNA sequencing.

“It will be fine,” Lena soothed. “El mayarah. We are stronger together and we will work through this together, okay? I promise.”

“El mayarah,” Kara repeated quietly as Lena kissed her forehead. “We can do this. We’re ready.”

Finally, on a muggy day in late June, they were ready to start the procedures.

“Today is just the DNA collection. I’ll take the samples and then we put them in the Codex and monitor it while the fetus forms,” Alex reminded them. They had been discussing this for days, but Alex was a stickler for formality and needed to follow protocols regarding informed consent. “So, I’m taking some hair follicles, blood, skin, and saliva. Since Kryptonians don’t have eggs or sperm, all it takes is some DNA from the parents to combine and make the embryo.”

“Truly… fascinating,” Lena murmured, a statement she had repeated many times while working on the Codex.

“Hey, Lena, does this mean we get to give you Father’s Day presents next year?” Kara asked
suddenly as she hopped up on the exam table next to Lena, bumping her wife’s shoulder with a teasing grin.

“If you’re about to make some ‘Daddy’ joke, please remember that red sun lamps are on so I can and will strangle you,” Alex deadpanned as she snapped on her blue nitrile gloves. Lena snickered but Kara inhaled sharply, choking on air as her eyes bulged out.

“Oh my—you didn’t—oh my God, Alex! That is so not what I was going to say! Get your mind out of the gutter. Ugh, no,” Kara coughed, cheeks bright red. She couldn’t even hold eye contact with Alex for more than a few seconds. Lena just bit her cheek, smirking.

“Well, where was I to assume you were going?” Alex scoffed as she pulled over her blood draw cart. “Roll up your sleeves.”

“I was going to say that it’s like Lena is fathering our child since her DNA is combining with mine and I’m carrying the baby. It was a stupid joke,” Kara grumbled as she rolled up her sleeves and offered her forearms to Alex for inspection.

“A stupid heteronormative joke,” Alex pointed out as she felt Kara’s vein, tying the rubber tube around Kara’s upper arm to make it stand out before putting in the needle.

“I know,” Kara sighed, resting her head on Lena’s shoulder to avoid watching as Alex took a few vials of her blood.

“Well, the same could be said for you, love,” Lena pointed out as she rubbed circles on Kara’s lower back. Kara made a soft questioning noise. “I mean, neither of us are donating an egg or sperm, so really either one of us could be seen as the ‘father’ of this child. And of course, we can do Father’s Day gifts next year if you want. As it is, Lydia already uses the day as a second Mother’s Day.” The previous week, Lydia had come home from school with ‘Father’s Day’ crafts, though she had scribbled over the word ‘Father’ wherever it appeared and wrote ‘Mommy + Mama’. The school year ended early this year, before Father’s Day, so there was no in-class event like there had been for Mother’s Day.

“Okay, fair point—ow!” Kara yelped as Alex pulled out the needle, satisfied with the seven vials of blood she drew. She cleaned and bandaged the small needle mark before moving on to Lena, who had much more practice with blood draws than the Girl of Steel and thus had no such aversions to seeing her own blood.

After drawing Lena’s blood, Alex took the liberty of plucking twenty hairs from both women, follicles included, and put them carefully in specimen jars. Then, they spit into different jars and let Alex carefully scrape some skin cells. By the time they were finished, Alex had dozens of different vials and tubes and specimen jars on her cart, each labelled with their initials and the date.

“Now what?” Kara asked. She knew, of course. They’d been discussing this for ages. Now, Lena and Alex would go into the lab and put the samples into the Codex. They’d supervise the process as it reworked the DNA to recombine it into a new zygote. Then, they’d expose the Codex to the yellow sun lamps in a secure room until it was time to implant.

“Now you guys go to Pam in HR and meet with Ellie from legal. There are some papers you both need to sign to give me official permission to do this. When you’re done, Lena will come tell me I can start the process. After that, all that’s left to do is wait until it’s time to implant.” Alex grinned, waving Kara and Lena off to go fill out stacks upon stacks of paperwork as she wheeled away the cart to her lab. When she said ‘some papers’ she really meant at least a Redwood’s worth of trees full of complicated legalese that it would take Pam and Ellie hours to finish walking them through.


“Hurry up and get started so I can start making your baby!”

About ten days after the DNA collection, Lena and Kara got a call from Alex.

“What? What’s wrong?” Lena said frantically as they closed themselves in their bedroom. Lydia was in the living room playing with her stuffed animals and hosting a tea party and they didn’t want her to overhear.

“Nothing is wrong,” Alex assured them immediately. “Nothing is wrong, just... an unexpected development.”

“Does the baby have wings and a tail? I knew it would have wings and a tail,” Kara groaned, falling back onto the bed. Lena crawled across the bed next to her.

“Alex, did you hear that? Our baby doesn’t have wings, does it?” Lena repeated nervously. She had certainly teased Kara enough for worrying about three-headed, winged babies with tails, but now she wondered if Kara wasn’t wrong to be worried about that. After all, this was an experimental procedure.

“Could you two, like, chill? Jesus Christ,” Alex huffed. “There are two zygotes. Not two heads, not two wings or tails or, like, scales or some shit. Two completely separate zygotes. Twins.”

“Oh,” Kara exhaled, eyes wide. “Two? Like... like, two?”

“Two,” Lena echoed, voice hoarse.

“Yes, two babies. Twins. Are you guys, like, are you breathing? Do I need to get someone to check on you?”

“We... we’re breathing. Just trying to, um... wow. Twins. Okay. Okay, um, are they, like, identical? Like my mom and aunt?” Kara forced herself to get it together. Twins have always run in the In-Ze family, so this should come as no surprise but somehow it still seemed to rock her to her core. Two babies? At once? That seems like a lot.

“Hard to tell at this stage. We can’t know for sure whether or not they separated in that way because they’re identical or because of the way we programmed the Codex or how it combined the DNA. Basically, we don’t really know. I’ll need you guys to come in so we can discuss some of the details since we didn’t expect this.”

“What kind of details?” Kara asked when it became clear that Lena wasn’t going to be saying anything anytime soon.

“Well, I mean, the initial plan was to implant one zygote after five weeks of sunlamp exposure. But now, there’s two zygotes. Do you want to implant both? Should we implant earlier if you plan on implanting both? If you only want us to implant one, what do you want us to do with the other zygote? Things like that.” Kara could practically see Alex ticking off the questions on her fingers.

“Could we have some time to let this settle in, maybe?” Kara said. She was getting worried about Lena now, easing the phone from her wife’s hand. Lena was sitting stock still in the center of their bed, mouth open and staring at the wall.

“Yeah, yeah, of course! Just wanted to make you aware. Call me later to set up a time to come in and discuss the changes to our plan. Have a nice night,” Alex said.
“Yeah, thanks, you too. Night, Alex.”

“Night,” Lena echoed weakly. Kara winced as she hung up.

“Babe?” she asked after a moment. “You alright?”

“Twins,” Lena murmured. “That’s… two babies. Plus Lydia. Plus Fish. Plus any other children we wanted to eventually adopt. That’s… a lot.” She suddenly whipped her head around to look at Kara. “That’s a lot! Twice as much!”

“I know,” Kara agreed calmly, taking Lena’s hands in hers. “And that’s why we’re going to have a calm, adult discussion about this and what we can handle and what we need to do. Okay?”

“Okay,” Lena murmured, forcing herself to take deep breaths. “Okay, so what do you think?”

“I think… we should take some time to think on our own, maybe? I mean, it’s a big decision. A big life change. We need to… gather our thoughts.” Kara smiled at Lena and squeezed her hands three times in quick succession.

“I love you.

“Kara, please? We both know you do better processing information by talking it out,” Lena said, exhausted. She leaned her head forward to rest it on her and Kara’s entwined hands. “Please?”

“Are you sure? Because we both know that you need some time to gather your own thoughts before starting a conversation,” Kara pointed out.

“I know, I know, but everything is just… My mind is spinning out and, like, I can’t even grasp just one thought and I don’t… I need to just focus on one element at a time. I need… I need, like, I need you to help me focus and just relax and talk this through rationally and—and—and—”

“Okay, okay, okay,” Kara soothed. “Just come here.” She pulled at a pliant Lena until she was cradling her in her arms, gently floating up the bed until they were sitting against the headboard. Though this was far from the first time Kara had flown with her, Lena still struggled to get used to the sudden weightlessness. Once they were settled, Lena nestled against Kara’s side with her head on Kara’s shoulder and Kara with one arm around Lena’s waist and the other holding hers, Kara spoke. “So, do you want to hear my thoughts on this whole thing?”

“Yes, please,” Lena murmured. Lena pulled their intertwined hands into Kara’s lap and played idly with Kara’s fingers.

“Well, twins run in my family. My mom had a twin, remember? An identical twin. It was really rare at that time in Krypton.” Lena nodded, remembering some of the stories Kara had shared. “And my great grandfather on my mother’s side was a twin. And my great-great grandmother. So… I probably should have known it was a possibility, but twins are kind of a… fluke with the Codex. It was stunning enough that my mom and my Aunt Astra were both born healthy and survived past infancy.

“And… I have to say that I am kind of excited about the possibility of… continuing that kind of… not tradition, exactly, but… having something that connects me to my ancestry, I guess? And I don’t have a lot of biological family left. And I know biology isn’t the be-all-end-all when it comes to family, of course. It is… different, I will say, because I don’t really have much biological family.” Kara stopped and cleared her throat. Lena squeezed her hand three times and nuzzled in closer to her. “But there’s also the fact that two babies is a lot of responsibility. And it is a financial commitment.”

“The financial aspect doesn’t scare me. I’ve set up a sizable trust fund for Lydia and set aside funds for future children and an emergency fund for our family. My lawyers have made sure it’s
untouchable in case my business tanks for some reason. Basically, the whole business could go up in flames right now and we would still be set,” Lena interjected.

Kara smiled and chuckled ruefully. “Still not used to marrying the female embodiment of the Monopoly Man.”

“What’s the point of being filthy rich if I can’t spoil my friends and family?” Lena drawled.

“This week on True Life: I Married My Sugar Daddy,” Kara laughed.

“Technically, I would be a sugar mommy, wouldn’t I?” Lena drawled, turning her head to grin up at Kara.

Kara tilted her head back and laughed. “I guess you would.” She sighed. “Okay, so twins wouldn’t add a huge financial stress for us. But, we both have high-stress jobs and busy lives. Babies require time and energy, so two babies? And they say there’s a huge jump in difficulty from one child to two so going from one to three? That has to be a big jump. We need to be realistic about knowing if we can handle it.”

“Right, but… we have a nanny. Several very good babysitters. We have friends and family in the area. It’s not like we’re alone in this,” Lena reminded her. “I could take some time off, shuffle some duties around, go from five or six days a week to only two or three. J’onn can help you out sometimes and take over Supergirl duty.”

“It would be very cute,” Kara sighed. “You, me, Lydia, and two little ones? Do you think they’d have powers? Probably not. Even Kal didn’t get his powers until he got older. So… No superpowered babies, I guess.”

“I think that’s probably best,” Lena smiled. “Let them develop any powers they may get when they’re a little older.”

“You said ‘they’. Are you using it in the singular since we don’t know the baby’s gender or…” Kara trailed off, trying to keep her voice neutral.

“I think… we’ll definitely need some help with childcare. Some more babysitters, nannies who have experience with multiples. I’ll have to figure it out at work to make sure things will run smoothly, but I’ve got about eight months or so to figure it out.”

“Just to be very sure that we’re on the same page, we are saying we want to implant both zygotes? Twins?”

“I’m game if you are.” Before Lena had even finished speaking, Kara was squealing and lifting her up as she hugged her and planted kisses all over her face and neck, floating them to hover up above the bed as she kissed a giggling, squirming Lena.

“We’re—having—twins!” She punctuated each word with a kiss, eyes sparkling and beaming with a grin spread from ear to ear.

“We’re having twins,” Lena whispered with hushed reverence, clinging to Kara even though they were barely a foot above the bed. They kept kissing like that until Kara heard a curious Lydia come looking for her moms.

In the end, Lena and Alex concurred that they would implant the twins after five weeks under the
sun lamp. The babies were each barely the size of an apple seed, hardly able to be seen when examined by the naked eye. According to Alex, and the gynecologist they’d recruited and promptly memory-wiped after a consult, the babies were looking perfectly healthy and normal. Kara had been wearing the red sun emitter long enough that they were able to give her a mild sedative for the process. For Kara, the whole implantation process was over in the blink of an eye. For Lena, it was a stressful hour of waiting and resisting the urge to check her watch.

When they got back home it was to an empty house. Alex and Maggie had agreed to watch Lydia and Fish, explaining to their daughter that Kara needed to have a little procedure done but she wasn’t hurt or sick. They promised to call her every morning when she woke up, a Snapchat before they dropped her off at camp and again when they picked her up, then a phone call before bed.

Alex had recommended Kara take it easy for a few days after implantation, leading to Lena doting on her wife. Kara was uncomfortable as her body adjusted. Even the tiny little fetuses (zygotes, technically) were a very sudden change for her body and it was rather uncomfortable to suddenly adjust. Lena was patient even when Kara was fussy and whining, demanding foods then suddenly declaring herself nauseous after taking three bites.

“’M sorry I’m being so terrible,” Kara mumbled sleepily one night. She was already half-asleep, exhausted from a long day of watching Parks and Rec reruns while groaning and letting Lena massage her belly to try and relieve some of the cramping.

“You’re not being terrible. Not at all,” Lena assured her softly, also on the brink of sleep. She gently wrapped her arms around Kara and squeezed. Usually, Lena preferred being the little spoon. There was just something so intensely calming about being held, she felt. But since the implantation, Kara had been so uncomfortable and restless that Lena found herself spooning Kara so she could keep her from kicking off the blankets or punching Lena in her restless writhing. It felt nice holding Kara, keeping her safe and warm and loved. “I love you,” Lena whispered, kissing Kara’s hair to reassure her.

“Will you still love me even when I’m as big as a whale, vomiting all the time, and all emotional? Crying and screaming and laughing?” Kara continued.

“I’ll love you always, no matter what,” Lena promised.

“Mmm, love you too,” Kara mumbled before promptly falling asleep. The next morning, Kara didn’t even remember the conversation.

The week after implantation, week six since conception, brought the classic nausea and morning sickness.

“Why is Mama sick all the time? Thought she wasn’t supposed to get sick since she’s a alien,” Lydia yawned.

“An alien, sweetie. And she is, but sometimes she can still get sick. She’ll be better soon, don’t worry,” Lena explained as she packed Lydia’s lunch and backpack for camp. Kara would be dropping her off and Lena would pick her up later. Kara still wasn’t going back to active Supergirl duty, but she was going to make an appearance on Ellen and record an episode for Sesame Street over the next few days.

“She’s not gonna die?” Lydia asked, fiddling with the hem of her t-shirt.
“Oh no, sweetie,” Lena assured her, quickly spinning and kneeling down, ignoring the discomfort of kneeling in her pencil skirt. She squeezed Lydia’s shoulder and brushed back the loose baby hairs that had slipped out of her braids. “No, baby, Mama isn’t gonna die. She’s just not feeling so great right now. What makes you think she’s going to die?” Lydia shrugged. “Well, if something is bothering me, you know you can talk to me or Mama, right? Or Tia Maggie or Auntie Alex?” Lydia nodded.

“Olive says her mommy is really sick. She’s throwing up lots and lots and she lost her hair and Olive says she’s gonna die. It made me really sad and scared for Mama,” Lydia said after a minute and Lena remembered.

One day earlier in the summer, Lena had run into Olive’s mother at pickup. She was glad to have caught one of Olive’s friend’s moms, she said. She’d been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor on her spinal cord. They had tried chemo and radiation to shrink it, but it wasn’t responding. Lena had started to offer her sympathies and bumble through her awkward condolences, but Olives mother Sylvia had waved her off and said she didn’t want pity or condolences. She was simply preparing Olive’s friends’ parents for any questions about death or dying. She was going to tell Olive soon and Olive would take some time off from camp, but when she came back, Sylvia knew that Olive would likely be talking about death or dying or illness and that would probably filter into other kids’ homes.

“Oh, honey, I bet it was really scary to hear about Olive’s mom being so sick, right? And now your Mama is sick.” Lena tugged her daughter into a hug. “It is very scary, what Olive and her family are going through. And it is very sad. But Mama isn’t the same kind of sick. Olive’s mom has a very serious illness called cancer. Mama just has a little bit of an icky belly right now, but it’ll go away, I promise. It might take a few weeks, but she will feel better.”

“Promise?” Lydia sniffled, clinging to her mother’s silk blouse. Lena would have to change it before heading to work.

“Promise. Mama will get better. She’ll tell you the same thing when she comes down, okay?” Lena’s shoulder was wet, but Lydia’s grip had slackened.

“That’s right, sweetheart,” Kara said softly. Lydia perked up as Kara came over to kneel next to them. “I just have a little… a little bit of belly trouble. It’ll be better in a while. Auntie Alex is helping me with it.” That much was true. Alex was testing anti-nausea bracelets with Kara while Lena researched alternative solutions like anti-nausea hard candy drops and ginger and lemon drinks.

“Okay,” Lydia said softly, lunging towards Kara for a hug. “Love you Mama.”

“Love you too, sweet girl. Forever and ever and always,” Kara said, kissing Lydia’s hair. While Kara held Lydia, Lena went upstairs to switch out her shirt, putting the wrinkled, tear-stained blouse in the hamper for dry cleaning. She said goodbye to Kara and Lydia, promising to pick Lydia up after their music and singing time, and left for work.

By week nine, Kara was hardly ever vomiting. Instead, she was cycling between nausea and being ravenous. For two or three hours, she would be nauseous, then as if a switch flipped she was starving. Kara would scarf down whatever was closest to her until a wave of nausea hit her again and she was back to ginger ale. As annoying as this cycle was, Kara and Lena both agreed it was preferable to the noisy vomiting that was scaring Lydia so much.
“The babies are growing at a nice rate. They’re about the size of a pair of cherries, less than an ounce each. This one right here? Closer to your cervix? That’s baby A. And this little blob right here is baby B,” Alex explained, pointing to the ultrasound screen. It had been about ten weeks since the babies’ conception, as it were, and five weeks since the implantation.

“And when exactly is the first trimester over? We want to make an announcement after the first trimester ends, but we need to talk to Lydia first, of course,” Lena asked. She put one hand on the back of the exam table Kara was propped up on and the other on Kara’s belly as Alex wiped off the gel.

“Generally people say after week 12 or 13 is when the first trimester is over.”

“And you think the babies are healthy? They’re really… they’re good? Both of them?” Kara asked, a nervous tremor in her voice.

“Developing perfectly on track with human babies,” Alex assured them. “Both babies are looking great. Your symptoms aren’t too severe. No signs of fetal distress or anything. You’ve lost a pound or two, but that could be water weight or it could just be from the morning sickness. Everything looks good so far.”

“Okay, but what if something happens? It can still happen in the first trimester without any real… any big reason?” Kara squeezed Lena’s hand and pulled her shirt back down over her belly.

“Most are caused by chromosomal anomalies, but yeah. You don’t have any other risk factors, though. You aren’t getting any infections any time soon. No uterine or cervix abnormalities. You don’t smoke or do drugs or drink. You haven’t been exposed to any toxins—”

“Supergirl gets exposed to toxins all the time!” Kara yelped. “I’ve cleaned up everything from oil spills to nuclear power plants!”

“Your body metabolized that instantly. The only toxin that would affect you is Kryptonite, but there’s none of that in your system. And you haven’t been exposed to any toxins since you started wearing the red sun lamp,” Lena pointed out before Alex could jump in.

“Exactly,” Alex agreed with a nod. Kara still looked uncertain. “You don’t have any diabetes, autoimmune diseases, or thyroid disease. And you’re young, so you don’t have any risk factors.”

“Except for chromosonal abnormalities! We basically played Rao here! Played God, whatever. We combined our chromosomes and we don’t know what kind of abnormalities they’ll have!” Kara jumped up and started pacing. “So many things could go wrong!”

“I know, love. It’s terrifying,” Lena whispered, taking a few steps towards Kara with her hands outstretched. “This is absolutely terrifying and I almost went mad when I was pregnant with Lydia. There’s an infinite number of things to go wrong, but there’s also an infinite number of things that could go right. We’ll feel the babies kick. Hear their heartbeats. Fight over names and design a nursery. All the cute baby clothes. Maybe they’ll have your eyes or maybe they’ll have mine. Maybe they’ll have powers and maybe they won’t, but we have so much to look forward to.”

“I can also do an amniocentesis if you like. Take a small sample of amniotic fluid to see how they’re developing, check for chromosomal abnormalities, that kind of thing,” Alex offered. “We did one at five weeks before implantation, of course, but if it would settle your mind, we can do another right now.”

“But the amniocentesis also has a risk of miscarriage.” Kara’s head whipped around to widen her
eyes at Lena.

“Less than 1% but… yeah,” Alex sighed. “Somewhere between 1 in 200 and 1 in 400.”

“Well, then what do we do?” Kara asked in a small voice.

“That’s… we have to decide. It really isn’t as dangerous as it used to be,” Lena pointed out. “Is it worth it to soothe your anxieties when weighed against a miniscule risk?”

“I’ll step out. You let me know when you decide?” Alex said a little awkwardly, nodding once when Lena murmured her assent.

“I think we should do it,” Lena said as soon as Alex had stepped out. “The risk is small and when weighed with your anxieties? I think the benefits outweigh the risk.”

“But if it does cause a miscarriage?” Kara shot back, running a worried hand through her hair as her other sat on her hip. “How could I ever forgive myself?” Lena sighed.

“Kara, babe, love of my life,” she finally said, taking Kara’s hands. She stood in front of Kara and kissed her knuckles. “Sweetie, I love you so much and I will stand behind whatever choice you decide. This is your body carrying these babies. You are the one doing the heavy lifting, so I will support any choice you make, understand?” She kissed the palms of her hands. “You want to leave it and avoid the risk? We’ll do that and we’ll keep finding ways to manage your worries.” She kissed Kara’s wrists. “You want to know for sure? I will hold your hand the entire way and we will share the blame should anything terrible happen, okay?” She pulled Kara close and placed Kara’s hands on her waist, resting her arms on Kara’s shoulders. Lena leaned up on her toes to plant a quick kiss on Kara’s lips. “El mayarah.”

“El mayarah,” Kara repeated softly, dropping her forehead onto Lena’s shoulder. They stayed there for a few minutes, silently holding each other until Kara spoke. “Rao protect them, but I want the amniocentesis. I need to know for sure.”

“The procedure itself was quick. They increased the red sun lamps in the room, gave Kara a local anaesthetic, and drew the fluid. Alex had insisted on setting up a curtain so as not to scare Kara even more by letting her watch the needle get stabbed into her uterus. Then, Alex took it straight to her lab to examine. She was back by the time the anaesthetic was wearing off, beaming.

“Two perfectly healthy babies! No chromosomal abnormalities at all. You wanna know the sex?” Alex announced, bouncing on her toes.

“No!” Kara shouted at the same time Lena said “absolutely!”

“Uh-oh,” Alex whispered. “I’ll let you figure that out between yourselves.”

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