**Promises**

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**Promises**

by C0phineLives

**Summary**

Picking up where Season 4 left off, Delphine is prepared to do all that she can to keep Cosima safe, even when the cure doesn’t work. Fic warnings: Consensual Kink, Sub/Dom, Violence, Femslash, Swearing, Consensual Sex acts

**Notes**

Let me know if you like it and want me to continue. It’s been a while since I’ve written anything besides academic papers, so I might be a little rusty. I have been looking everywhere for a Cophine fic that eventually includes a Cophine baby and cannot find one, so I chose to write my own. So yes, a Cophine baby is ahead. The next two chapters will come within the next couple of days.
Cosima inhaled sharply through her teeth as she felt the paddle land square on target. She felt the gush between her legs as heat spread through her ass cheeks; felt the strong hold Delphine’s hand had on her hips as she ever so slightly thrusted into the blonde’s lap.

“You know better than that, or do I have to remind you?” Delphine’s playfully sharp tone cut through the sexual tension running through every atom of her body as she gulped, unable to hide the smile from her face.

“Sorry mistress. Three! I meant to say three!” She stammered out.

“And just for that, on a besoin de recommencer! From one.” The Frenchwoman declared.

Cosima felt the sting of the wood on her ass again and this time, she made sure to count it “One!” She counted each swat as it hit the tender flesh, quickly turning it a bright pink, then a dark shade of red. She was dripping by the tenth swat and felt herself throb for her lover’s touch. Delphine gently rubbing her heated ass cheeks didn’t help anything. She whimpered and looked up at her girlfriend, or was she her wife? Definitely her wife. She looked up at her wife with puppy dog eyes and saw Delphine melt instantly.

“Mon petit chou, I cannot stay in character with you making faces like that.” She cooed, scooting out from under Cosima and sliding up to lay next to her. She tucked a stray dread behind the younger woman’s ear and gently kissed her cheek, inching her body as close as she could. “Did I hurt you?” she asks, worried, feeling the tears welling up.

Cosima shook her head, leaning in and pressing a soft kiss to Delphine’s lips as her own curled in to a smile “No. That was really, really good. Like WOW good! Like can we do that every night? good. I just. I can’t… I’m so… ugh… there’s too much throbbing.” She then cut herself short by rolling her lips between her own teeth and pressing her thighs together.

Delphine smiled and let out a little chuckle “Putain” Delphine chided with a chuckle.

“Pu-what?” Cosima asked with her own giggle. “I think you forget some times that I don’t speak French. What the heck is a Pucaine?”

Delphine let out a belly laugh and pressed a firm hand to Cosima’s shoulder, indicating that she wanted her to roll onto her back. Cosima complied.

“It means that you’re going to enjoy this next part.” Delphine pulled off her own shirt, heavy breasts falling from it as the material was peeled clean off. Her nakedness now only half matching Cosima’s, whom she’d made strip for her the moment the brunette sauntered in after work. Delphine nudged Cosima’s legs apart with her knees and smiled wider as the young scientist eagerly spread wide for her.

“Oh yeah, and what exactly’s going to happen next?” Cosima asked, raising both eyebrows as she brought her hands up to rest on Delphine’s hips.

“Well, mon amour, I am going to show you my appreciation for taking your spanking with such… enthusiasm.”

“Are you now?”
“Ah, bien sûr.”

Delphine started kissing a fiery trail down her torso, slowing right above the patch of dark curls. Delphine looked up at her like she was about to say something. The moment froze in Cosima’s mind as she studied every curve of Delphine’s face. She noted the dazzling reflection of lights in those deep brown eyes that looked almost glazed over in want and need as they stared back at her. Her own eyes quickly fluttered to Delphine’s hair; tousled and slung over to one side. The curls added such softness to the perfect symmetry that was Delphine. In almost slow motion, the object of her observation dipped down, between her legs. Cosima’s eyes rolled in the back of her head in pure anticipation, her attention now returned to the tight pulsing between her legs. She gasped, feeling the tip of Delphine’s tongue on her and her ears filled with the sound of a baby crying.

Wait…crying?

Somehow she wasn’t actually shocked or confused, just frustrated as she let herself deflate onto the bed. She felt Delphine scale up her body and kiss her cheek.

“Bébé…” she noted, apologetically.

Cosima blinked hard, the perfect image shifting in and out, interspaced with a blurry one of what she could make out as wood and tarp. What was going on? Just as she was turning the thought over in her head, Delphine spoke again, this time sounding further away.

“Bébé, c’est temps de te lever. Cosima, wake up” Delphine softly whispered.

Cosima’s eyes slowly opened as she felt lips press to her forehead. She was freezing. She pulled Delphine to her. The doctor followed her lead, pressing a hand to her forehead as she rubbed Cosima’s arms. A kettle whistled in the background. Hadn’t there been a baby? Cosima looked at Delphine, confused.

Delphine gently slipped Cosima’s glasses on to her. “How did you sleep? I’ve made some tea.”

Cosima looked around what appeared to be a Yurt, trying to remember what had happened, how she’d gotten here. She opened her mouth to speak, but nothing came out. She felt exhausted. She tried again, but was too tired to speak. Everything hurt. Everything was cold. Her chest was so tight. She erupted in a coughing fit that made Delphine pull her closer, rubbing her back. She curled in to the warmth and safety of the doctor as she felt the wetness and tasted the copper of the blood she knew had just exited her lungs.

“I know, I’ve got you. It’s all going to be okay my love. You had a rough night but I’m here now, I’ve got you. I’m right here” she whispered, holding Cosima close to her and rocking her. “Quelle chance avons nous? God, when I saw you walk in to camp last night. Oh merci Dieu!” Delphine choked out, holding back the tears as she continued to gently rock Cosima. “You were hypothermic. And it doesn’t seem to have worn off. Mon petit chiot, you’ll feel better soon. I’ll take care of you.”

Cosima’s mind swam with memories as she tried to separate what she had dreamt from reality. She had been with Charlotte…Charlotte!

“Char..?” she managed to choke out

Delphine nodded “She’s okay. She’s here too, recovering in another cabin.”

Cosima nodded and felt herself relaxing into Delphine. She was starting to drift off as Delphine whispered to her, switching languages back and forth. Cosima couldn’t seem to follow what she was saying, but just the fact that Delphine was with her, holding her, saying something brought a rush of
psychological warmth and comfort to her. She must have fallen asleep because suddenly, Delphine was laying her softly onto the bed. She whimpered at the loss and curled in to herself.

Delphine’s voice traveled the Yurt, dancing in her ears as she smiled. She heard another person’s voice as well though, a man’s. She forced herself to pay attention.

“No, you have had enough time with her. It is time that we move her” the man’s voice demanded. “She is still hypothermic Elliot, and with her condition she needs medical observation” Delphine countered, not ready to have Cosima taken from her.

“You cannot claim ailment forever, Delphine.”

Cosima’s heart shattered. Where would they bring her? What would they do to her? Would she be a lab rat? Treated like she had seen those Brightborn babies treated? She was imperfect after all. She hated her body in this moment, filled with tumours and growths; like pustules boiling over her insides. If it weren’t for this sickness, she wouldn’t even be here. And to take her away from Delphine?

She waited until she heard the front door to the cabin close before she left out a choked whine.

“Delphine?” she quivered.

She was quickly wrapped in arms, a cup pressed to her lips.

“This will help. Come on darling, drink.” Delphine encouraged as she rubbed her back.

Cosima complied, feeling the warmth of the tea slide down her throat, leaving a trail of warmth right to her belly. The soft flavour comforted her so she could focus on Delphine’s presence.

“I am going to call the others.” Delphine noted mater of factly “Finish that cup while I do.”

Delphine helped her sit up with her back against the wall. She felt lethargic, much akin to a wet noodle, trying to stay upright. Delphine pressed a firm kiss to her forehead, keeping a firm hand on her chest.

“We’ll get you better Cosima. It won’t be much longer. I’m going to get us out of here so you and I can work this out and get you cured.” she told her. Delphine took a step to walk away, but turned back like she’d forgotten something. She then crouched down to look in to Cosima’s eyes. “Je t’aime. And I want to spend my life with you.”

Cosima smiled weakly and though her voice cracked, she had to lighten this mood “A life of crazy science sounds great.”

Delphine smiled and nodded, tears filling her eyes as she took Cosima’s hand and kissed every inch of it, pressing it to her heart. After a deep inhale, the doctor stood up and headed over to a bench, where she had carefully stashed the cell phone that she had found on Cosima earlier. She flipped through the numbers, wondering who to call. Her eyes fixated on Mrs’ S’ number and she quickly dialed it.

Cosima pried her eyes off of the back of the head covered in blonde curls, focusing on drinking the tea in her hand and enjoying it warming her from the inside out. She closed her eyes and breathed deeply. Everything would be okay. Delphine must have a plan. Delphine always has a plan. She took her final sip of the tea and choked it down before her body erupted in a coughing fit. She brought her hand to cover her mouth and felt that familiar warm stickiness against it.
“I’ve got Cosima here. We’re still on the island. You need to send someone. NOW!” Delphine informed Mrs. S.

“No, I do not want to sign up for your credit card. Now is not the time.” Mrs. S retorted back.

Delphine had a moment of confusion until it dawned on her that Mrs. S. was not alone. She quickly hung up and scoured the contacts in her lover’s phone, growing desperate until she saw Art’s number. She quickly connected.

“Arthur Bell, my name is Delphine Cormier and I have Cosima here. She needs help” she blurted out.

“Cosima? Is she okay?” He asked

“She won’t be for much longer. You are a police officer, non? I need a helicopter to Moreau Island. Latitude: 67.487545, longitude: -27.279053” she told him.

“I just sent one to those coordinates with Sarah 10 hours ago. We lost contact. Is Sarah with you?” he asked

“Sarah? Sarah is here? On the island?” she asked

“Yeah, she went after Rachel”

“Rachel is here as well.” Delphine stated with venom in her voice.

She took a deep breath and covered her forehead, standing up to pace. She heard Cosima coughing and glided to her side, putting a hand on her back and rubbing small circles.

“Look, Arthur, we do not have much time. I can get Cosima to the northwestern beach of the island. Can you get the helicopter there?” she asked, desperate

“I’ll radio them over. But what about Sarah?” he asked, concerned.

“Once Cosima is safe, I will find her” Delphine retorts.

Delphine heard the sound of Art communicating with someone on the other line, before he came back to her.

“The chopper will be there and waiting in 10 minutes” he informed her.

“I’ll have her there”

Delphine hung up and then stood, running around the yurt and hastily packing two bags: one with food and survival gear and one with medical supplies. She made sure to tuck the box with the cure in a small fanny pack. She then grabbed the two bags and headed to Cosima. She bent over and strapped the fanny pack around Cosima’s waist, tightening it securely.

“Cosima, we need to go” she told her, starting to pull clothing on the smaller girl’s frame, being careful to conceal the pack.

Cosima nodded and let Delphine dress her. Her voice crackled as she spoke. “I don’t think I can walk” she worriedly informed Delphine, looking up at her with cracked, quivering lips as her whole body shivered.

Delphine held her face in her hands, running her thumbs over her lover’s cheeks. “Then I’ll carry
you” Delphine countered, returning her hands to the efforts of getting the jacket zipped onto the younger scientist before bundling herself up. She put hats on both of them.

“What about Charlotte?” she asked

“They’ll take care of her here. She’ll be okay so long as we get you and the cure out of here. If we stay, that cure will be used to test her.” Delphine informed Cosima.

Cosima just nodded, knowing that if anyone had the cure and a clone, it would mean a life of being tested on like a lab rat. Still, she wondered what Delphine had planned.

Delphine finished dressing them, then reached under Cosima’s mattress to pull out a folding hand saw. “I was keeping this in case of emergency, et bien sûr, ceci est une situation d’urgence.” She opened it and went to the lattice frame at the back of the Yurt, dropping to her knees and going to work on cutting through the wood and tarp.

The French doctor worked tirelessly, finally getting a decent sized hole cut in the back of the cabin. She tossed the two bags out, then came back for Cosima. She wrapped an arm firmly around the younger woman and supported her as they made their way to the hole.

“I’m going to go first. Lay down. I’ll have to pull you out.” Delphine instructed.

Cosima nodded as she let herself be placed on the floor and gently laid down. Delphine crawled out of the hole and then Cosima felt herself being pulled out by her feet. She allowed her body to be dragged across the wood floor and in to the forest.

It was colder outside and she immediately shivered. She felt her arm being tugged before her body was lifted as Delphine slung Cosima over her shoulders, carrying her in a fireman’s carry with each bag on an arm.

“Ne t’inquiète pas mon amour. I’ve got you” Delphine comforts, knowing that she is speaking for herself as much as Cosima.

She is not sure that she can do this. She is not very strong. But she knows that she must. She takes her first step and it is shaky. Her legs wobble and threaten to send them both toppling over, but she grits her teeth as she faces the sun rising between the trees of the dense forest. She knows where she is going. She has jogged to this beach every morning since she’s been recovered. Behind her, she can hear the sounds of camp waking up and only hopes that no one will go check on them anytime soon. She fears the waves of dogs that would be sent after them. She fears the altruism shown to date will be dried up. She fears the worst.

This only pushes her further. She puts her head down and focuses on putting one foot in front of the other.

“Delphine?” Cosima asks

Delphine just grunts in response.

“I love you” she whispers.

Delphine moves just a little bit faster. The beach is in sight. She can hear the helicopter. With a couple more steps, men in black hop out and are taking Cosima from her. She holds on until the last moment, then she turns to one of the men.

“I will call you when I find Sarah. Get her to safety. She is hypothermic and needs medical care.”
“No! Delphine!” Cosima cries.

Delphine steps up to her and kisses her passionately. When she pulls away, she can see the tears in Cosima’s eyes. Delphine memorizes every inch of her face.

“I must. I made a promise that I intend to keep” Delphine explained. “I love you. I will find you. Tu es mon cœur et vivra toujours dans ma poitrine. Je t’aime avec tous les étoiles au ciel.”

With a final sweet kiss, Delphine stepped away and turned, running down the beach.

Cosima burst in to tears, her whole body shaking from the cold and the uncontrollable sobs escaping her frail frame. She had only just found her and now she was gone again. The chopper lifted up off the beach. She was seated in a bucket seat and was wrapped in emergency blankets. Someone then covered her ears with a headset.

As Delphine ran, she wondered where they would take Cosima. She worried about Mrs. S. and Kira, wondering who it was that had caused Mrs. S. to be unable to reply to her. She did her best to push aside the worry she felt for Cosima, the worry she thought for herself at the potential loss of her love yet again. But she was right, she had a promise to keep and she’d be damned if she broke another promise to that woman. So she ran, right down the coast. If Sarah was here, then she would be near the large house on the hill that Delphine knew more about than Elliot and the others thought she did. Delphine’s mind raced with nightmares of what Rachel was doing; what she had done, what she will do. She thought of the state that Sarah might be in after a run in with the less than stable clone. No matter what had happened, Delphine knew that she would have to get Sarah out and to safety. No matter what it took. But for now, she knew thought that she would need to stick to the coast, out of sight. That’s when she spotted the boat.

With burning lungs, she ran towards the docks.

“Hello?” she called out.

When there was no answer, she boarded it. It was a simple vessel and the keys were in the ignition. She had never driven a boat before, but from what she could see, she made a few deductions. Delphine rushed to untie the vehicle from the dock, and looked around the perimeter, finding an anchor which she lifted on board. She turned the key and grabbed an arm labeled “throttle”. With a deep breath she pushed the arm and the boat lurched forward. Grabbing the steering wheel, she maneuvered it to stay close to the coast. Keeping her eyes to the island, she pushed on.

Cosima was jolted from her slumber as they landed. She felt arms pick her up and a steady stream of drool escaping her mouth. Only it wasn’t just her mouth, her nose was dripping as well. How embarrassing; she’d been drooling and snotting all over herself. The voices around her were frantic but so far away. She felt herself being placed on a bed, but was too exhausted to open her eyes and simply let herself drift back to sleep.

Delphine saw the house on the hill and turned the boat towards the shore. As she approached, she noticed someone was on the beach. She carefully got closer and noticed that the person was asleep. She killed the engine and allowed the boat to gently move up to the edge of the water. That’s when she recognized the form. It was Cosima’s, only it wasn’t. She knew instantly that it must be one of her sisters. Her mind sparked one name: Sarah.

Delphine jumped from the boat and ran to the girl. She shook her, looking down to see all of the blood.
“Sarah, wake up” she cried, reaching down to put pressure on the wound that she’d located. Delphine shook her again.

Sarah moaned and slowly opened her eyes “Delphine?”

Delphine nodded and started trying to pick her up “We need to go” she told Sarah

“No” Sarah mumbled, starting to wake up “We need to get Cosima. She’s in the house.”

“Listen to me. You need to get up and get on the boat. I cannot carry you. Cosima is safe” she informed the clone.

Sarah just nodded and let Delphine wrap an arm around her waist, wrapping her own around Delphine’s shoulders, standing up and crying out as she put too much weight on her leg. Delphine held up tighter, trying to pick her up a little as they waddled over to the boat. That’s when Delphine heard the barking.

“We must go quickly. They sent the dogs. They’re chasing us.” she instructed.

Sarah picked up her pace, much to the chagrin of her leg. They got to the boat and both did their best to get Sarah on board. With flailing arms and legs, the clone toppled in to the vessel. Delphine was about to jump in herself, when she looked up and saw the german shepherd barreling towards her at full speed. She hoisted herself into the boat, just as the dog latched onto her arm. She let out a tiny yelp as she used her free arm to smack between the dog’s eyes, trying to get him to let go. She felt his teeth deep in her flesh as it tore. Then suddenly, a crack rang out as the ship’s anchor collided with the dog’s head. He let go, going limp. Sarah stood perched above Delphine, breathing hard and leaning on the seat.

“Now we’re even, ya?” she informed.

Delphine nodded and held her mangled arm to her chest as Sarah steered the boat out into the open water. Once they had gotten far enough that the shore was out of sight, she stopped the boat and turned to Delphine.

“Where is she?” she asked

“I don’t know. I put her on the helicopter and they took her away” she told Sarah.

Sarah stood to her full height and approached angrily “Shite Delphine! You put her on a chopper with randos and sent her off?” she yelled, angrily

Delphine shook her head “They are Arthur’s people. It’s the helicopter that brought you here.” She informed.

At this, Sarah sat back down and dragged a hand through her hair.

“We need to bandage our wounds and call Arthur” Delphine explained, reaching for one of the bags.

She’d packed medical supplies for this reason specifically. Reaching in, she pulled out a bottle of rubbing alcohol and bandages. She stood up and walked over to Sarah, kneeling down and looking up at her. “May I?” she asked.

Sarah nodded and shrugged, slumping back in to the chair.

Delphine went to work and in no time, they had both been bandaged up. As soon as her work was done, Delphine pulled out the cell phone and called Art.
“Hello?” the detective inquired.

“Where did they take her?” she demanded an answer

“Calm down, Cosima is safe and asleep at Cal’s. I just got the call an hour ago. Did you find Sarah?” Art wondered.

Delphine breathed a sigh of relief “Yes. We are safe for the moment. I found a boat and we are far away from the island” she told him, a thought coming to mind “You might want to check on Mrs. S. I called her earlier and something was wrong” Delphine says in a whisper, trying not to alarm Sarah.

“I’ll get right over there. Is there a GPS on board the boat?” he asked

Delphine looked around and found a device labeled “Garmin”, knowing that was a popular GPS brand, she nodded “Yes”

“I’ll text you the coordinates to the docks closest to Cal’s. Put those in the GPS and I’ll have a team meet you at there. Is Sarah okay?” he inquired.

“She’ll be alright. And Arthur, thank you” she sincerely noted.

“Just keep yourselves safe. I’ll call back once I know what’s going on over here” he told her and hung up.

“Oi! What’s up with Mrs. S?” Sarah demanded.

“I…I don’t know. I tried calling her earlier and she…was clear that she could not speak to me” Delphine told her “Arthur is going to check in.”

Sarah nodded her nostrils flaring with worry for her mother and daughter. “And the cure?” Sarah squeaked out desperately

“The cure is safe with Cosima” Delphine assured.

The phone vibrated and coordinates displayed in a text message. Delphine reached for the GPS, turning it on.

“Arthur gave me coordinates to Cal’s docks. He told me that a team would meet us there” she informed Cosima as she punched the numbers in.

“Why are you telling me this? Eh? Since when do you share your information with the rest of the class?” she noted defiantly

“I am on your side. There is no sense in keeping information from you now” Delphine informed her “I was protecting you all to the best of my abilities. Cosima has always been my priority, and she made the rest of you one as well.”

“What is that supposed to mean?” Sarah asked, not convinced.

“She made me promise to love and protect you all as I did with her. I am keeping my promise” the French woman assured.

Sarah accepted that with a nod as Delphine put the GPS back on the dash. Sarah took the wheel again and followed the arrow on the screen.
No, this is not an ending. There is plenty more to come. Thank you to everyone who’s taken the time to review, follow, favourite, and even just read this fic. If you want Tumblr updates on this, you can follow me at the same username on there as here. That’s the best way to catch my attention and I love getting messages on there. Please let me know what you think. I plan on getting the next chapter up by Tuesday evening EST. That will probably be the end of the quick and long updates. From there on, it'll probably be either long or quick updates. And for the record, I know some science, but not the extent to which I am writing. All of these “fic facts” as I like to call them are from very shallow research and my own deductions. Anyways, hope that you’re all enjoying so far.

Cosima’s eyes fluttered open to a blurry ceiling fan. She was finally warm in what felt like ages. She closed her eyes again and let out a long, contented sigh, just happy to not be cold. She pulled the duvet she was snuggled under closer up to her chin and smiled for a moment. Then the reality hit. Delphine was gone…again. She swallowed hard and felt the goose egg in her throat, sitting heavy and unmoving. Tears stung her eyes. She didn’t know where she was, but she didn’t much care right now. She threw the covers over her head and curled into a ball, just letting the tears fall. That’s when the coughing started.

Delphine flew in the room, rolling up the sleeves of the borrowed flannel and peeling back the covers.

“Cosima, qu’est-ce qui se passe?” she asked, worriedly. Her eyes then saw the blood and she reached for some tissues, holding them to her lover’s mouth and catching it. She cleaned Cosima’s hands with the Kleenex and kneeled next to the bed as her other hand went firmly to Cosima’s back. “Mon pauvre” she cooed.

That goose egg dissolved instantaneously the moment the sweet velvet of Delphine’s voice wafted to her ears and she looked over at the blonde who was smiling back at her. She was here. She was okay. She was here. She was here. Cosima hugged her fiercely. The hand that was on Cosima’s back shot to her forehead.

“Oh mon Dieu! You’re burning up” Delphine exclaimed

In that moment, Cosima’s body went rigid and her eyes went wide. Delphine’s matched them as she clued in to exactly what was happening. She cleared the bed, taking one of the pillows and placing it against the headboard above Cosima’s head just as she started to convulse. Delphine watched in horror as blood spilled from Cosima’s mouth and her body shook. There was nothing that she could do but watch.

“Just let it happen my love. It will be over soon. I’m right here” she attempted to comfort.

She wished that a day would come where she wouldn’t have to say those words on a daily basis. She would never grow tired of trying to comfort Cosima, but those words just seemed so empty right now. They had been overused and like old chewing gum had lost their flavour. Delphine called Cal’s
name, knowing that she had to get this cure in to Cosima’s body and fast.

Cal rushed in, still unfamiliar with the French doctor but willing to help.

“Can you um…” Delphine snapped her fingers a couple of times, keeping half of her attention on Cosima with a gentle hand on her chest as she searched for the English word. Her brain raced a million miles “…fetch! Can you please fetch me my supplies from the kitchen table?” she asked

Cal stared in shock at Cosima, who had finally stopped convulsing on the bed. She was unconscious, blood exiting her mouth and nose.

“Is she okay?” he asked

Delphine swallowed hard, fighting her own tears. She was painfully aware that Cosima was dying. Without the cure, she wouldn’t last until tomorrow and that thought terrified the young doctor more than anything. “I am afraid she is not well. We need to get the cure in her sooner than originally planned” Delphine informed him.

He just nodded and left the room as Delphine rolled Cosima into a recovery position, resting her forehead on the younger woman’s shoulder. She closed her eyes and breathed deeply. It had been some time since she’d slept, but she knew that she could not right now. As much as she wanted nothing more than to curl up with Cosima in her arms, she had too many things to do. Cal came in the room a few moments later, his large butcher block full of what Delphine had taken from the camp and had been working on at the table. He rolled it over to her.

Delphine looked up at him, watery-eyed and whispered a thank you. He nodded, put a hand on her shoulder and walked out. Delphine pulled up the desk chair in the room, positioning it right at the side of Cosima’s bed and got back to work.

Slides went under the microscope, and then were pipetted with droplets as Delphine carefully observed every tiny change. When she saw it- saw the cure in action- the tears fell. She quickly mixed it in a vial with some aluminum salts, formaldehyde, and saline. She then placed a drop of the solution on a clean slide and observed.

“Tu l’as vraiment trouvé.” Delphine whispered to herself.

She quickly loaded up a syringe and capped it, moving to the bed and taking off her gloves. She brushed Cosima’s dreads back with her fingers and stooped down to kiss her.

“Wake up mon petit chiot, it’s time to cure you” she whispered in to Cosima’s ear, gently running her tongue in to it.

Cosima woke with a smile at the wet attention and wrapped her arms weakly around Delphine.

“I have the cure ready” Delphine whispered to her unable to keep the now tears of joy streaming down her cheeks and the bright, wide smile spreading across her face.

“Of course you do” Cosima whispered back in a hoarse voice.

Cosima leaned in and kissed her softly. Delphine returned it, wishing it be the last copper-infused exchange they had. Well, at least with the lips on Cosima’s face. Delphine deepened the kiss, feeling 48 hours of stress and worry fall from her body. When it eventually broke, both women were breathless. Delphine placed her forehead on Cosima’s and they both closed their eyes. They stayed like this for a few moments before Delphine pulled away and reached for the tourniquet on the block. She sat up and watched as Cosima struggled to do the same against the headboard until eventually the smaller woman was seated upright.

Delphine put on new gloves and grabbed an alcohol swab, ripping it open, and cleaning Cosima’s inner elbow. She looked up at her other half as she uncapped the syringe.
“Are you ready?” Delphine asked.

Cosima smiled and nodded, her eyes barely able to stay open. Delphine noticed the pale, blotchy quality to her skin and noted how beautiful she was. She gently slid the needle in to Cosima’s arm and slowly injected the substance. Cosima’s head leaned back against the headboard, it becoming too heavy for her to hold up on her own.

Once the plunger met its end, Delphine slowly pulled the needle from the tender flesh of her partner and placed a cotton ball on the injection site. She recapped the needle and disposed of it in the sharps container on the bottom rack of the wheeled butcher’s block. After peeling the gloves off, Delphine slid up against Cosima’s body. She held the brunette’s back against her chest as she entangled their fingers. Cosima leaned in to her and let herself melt, letting her heart finally feel at home.

“Sarah?” she asked

“Asleep in the next room. Cal’s been keeping an eye on her, but she is doing well. Her wounds are painful but minimal.” She informed.

Cosima’s hand gently ran over the bandages on Delphine’s forearm.

“And you?” the dread head asked.

“I’ll be okay. It is, as you say “simply a flesh wound” ” Delphine joked.

Cosima gave a weak chuckle as Delphine’s arms encircled her and she felt lips press to the top of her head. Delphine’s chin then came to rest on her shoulder.

“When can we go home?” the younger woman asked

“Soon. First, I have something that I need to do” she stated.

Cosima turned her head to face Delphine. “What?”

“You have some sisters that are not yet safe” Delphine told her.

“No” Cosima objected

“Oui, mon chéri. I must” she insisted.

Cosima gulped and the goose egg was back. “Hold me…a little longer?”

Delphine nodded and wrapped her arms around Cosima a little tighter. Cosima felt the tears rolling down her cheeks. Every time Delphine went out there, there was a risk that she would never come back. Cosima knew that she was going after Rachel. Afterall, she had made her promise to love and protect ALL of her sisters. Rachel counted. But Rachel was dangerous and unpredictable.

“When we get home, and you’re all better, on va acheter une maison. It’ll be a nice little place, avec beaucoup de caractère et un grand jardin. We’ll grow watermelons; lots of watermelons and peaches. We’ll have a big porch swing and sit out there all morning, drinking our coffee and on fumerait des joints à plein étoile. We’ll live simply. And I will love you every day” Delphine whispered to Cosima

Cosima smiled and wiped her tears “We’ll have our own lesbian book club.”

“Oui, oui mon chéri. We’ll read our way through every facet of science and literature” Delphine fantasized “And share everything we learn”

“Sounds like a good life” Cosima spoke, the end punctuated by a rough cough.

Delphine nodded and kissed Cosima’s face, giving her a gentle squeeze.
“It will be our life. But now, you need to sleep and I have an errand to run” Delphine noted.

Reluctantly, Cosima nodded and let Delphine lay her down and tuck her in like a child. Delphine kissed her forehead and her eyes looked up, filling with tears for what felt like the millionth time that day. Cosima’s lips quivered.

“If I ask you not to go, will you listen?” she breathed softly to her lover.

Delphine shook her head. Cosima nodded again and wrapped her arms around Delphine’s neck, holding her close for a bit longer.

“I love you. Just…know that” Cosima informed her, as if she did not already know.

Delphine smiled “Et je t’aime comme si c’était la première fois que mon cœur bat.”

Cosima let those words penetrate the fear and worry she was feeling all over again. Everything that Delphine said in French sounded and felt so much more authentic, so much more sincere. She wondered if that was something the French woman did purposefully and made a mental note to ask her later; because there would be a later.

Delphine kissed her chastely before pulling away.

“Make sure to get some more sleep and something to eat. You’ll need your strength” Delphine instructed as she pulled on her clothing, bundling up again. Once she was dressed, she turned back to Cosima and smiled.

“Delphine?” Cosima whimpered from the bed.

“Oui mon amour?” she asked

“You look good in flannel” Cosima half-joked, wanting to lighten the mood.

That was four hours ago. Now, Delphine sat just barely outside of the camp, hidden by the deep forest and masked from the dogs by the scented decoys the Art team (as she had come to call them in her head) had set up. They sat and waited for the distraction, having located where Charlotte was being kept. The dogs barked in the background and the trees bustled with movement as the forest lit up with the shouts of men. She heard the snap of gunfire as the two commandos next to her exploded out of the forest, guns up. They motioned for her to get up as they told everyone to stay where they were.

Delphine did her part and stood behind them as they ordered the people in the tent, out. They told them to bring the girl with them. Every order was complied. The moment Charlotte was in view, Delphine’s heart leapt in to her throat to see the girl with not a scratch on her. Despite what she had told Cosima, she had feared for this girl. She knew that she would be okay. After all, she had Cosima in her, but Cosima had been in much more imminent danger. It took everything she had in her to not let her mama bear instincts surge to life and rush over to the girl, pulling her to safety.

Instead she waited as the two men holding the young clone let her go. Charlotte looked terrified, her hands in the air, unsure of what was going to happen. She had two guns pointed in her direction so she stepped forward as she was instructed to, every body part shaking in fear and her eyes closed. The moment she was far enough away from the rest of the people, Delphine reached for her and pulled her in to a fierce hug.

“You’re safe. It’s okay. It’s all going to be okay. I’m a friend of Cosima’s” Delphine told her as tears streamed down Charlotte’s face.
“You are?” the young girl asked.

Delphine nodded and walked her backwards, holding tight. She saw the signals going through the group being held hostage that meant they were gearing up to all reach for their weapons. Her eyes went wide and she kept her eyes on them.

“You need to listen to me, when I say so, you run as fast as you can towards the beach. Get on the helicopter and tell them to go. Do you understand?” she asked Charlotte nodded.

Delphine waited.

Delphine observed.

Delphine saw it.

“Go now!” She told the girl.

Charlotte ran. Charlotte ran as fast as her leg would let her. Delphine jumped onto her stomach, covering her head as the gunfire erupted. She stayed as close to the forest floor as possible. She watched as the two commandos took bullet after bullet to the chest, unmoved as their vests and training absorbed the shock and damage. Their shots rang out and the camp’s inhabitants fell one by one until they were all lying on the ground.

She knew it was but a moment’s safety as she got to her feet and the men ran with her towards the beach. She saw the helicopter, saw Charlotte get pulled up. She heard the dogs and men behind her. The commandos ran alongside her as they got to the helicopter just as the gunfire burst behind them. They were each pulled aboard as it took off safely.

Delphine reached for Charlotte, pulling the girl’s head to her chest. The young girl wept. Delphine moved them so that they were seated and buckled them in, getting Charlotte’s headset on first, then putting on her own. She adjusted the mics.

“Are you okay? Did they hurt you?” she asked

“No. I’m fine. That was just really scary and…and… Cosima was back there” she informed Delphine.

“No, I got her out earlier. She’s safe. We came back for you” Delphine rebutted.

“She is?” Charlotte asked, looking up expectantly at Delphine, tear-stained cheeks.

Delphine nodded and wiped a few tears away.

“She’s safe and has been cured, resting in bed right now” Delphine told her.

Charlotte smiled and hugged Delphine.

“Thank you. Thank you for coming for me” she told her.

“You are very welcome” Delphine retorted, hugging back.

Delphine eventually let go of the girl and smiled at her as she wiped away her own tears.

“Are we going to see her now?” Charlotte asked

Delphine shook her head “We have one more stop” she told her.
Charlotte nodded and turned to face the front of the helicopter.

“You ever flown in a chopper there, little girl?” the pilot asked

“No” Charlotte answered.

“You afraid of heights?” he asked

“No” Charlotte responded

“Well then you’ll want to look down” he told her.

Charlotte turned and looked out of the chopper.

“Wow!” she exclaimed, patting Delphine’s shoulder “You need to see this”

Delphine shook her head “I, unlike you am afraid of heights. I’d prefer not to” she responded, keeping her chin held high and fighting the urge to now look down.

Charlotte nodded and looked back out the window. “There’s the house!”

The helicopter slowly eased back down to touch on the beach. Delphine looked to the leader of the Art team “Do not hurt her’ she told him and handed him a syringe “Anywhere on the body will do. It’ll work quickly but wear off within five minutes. Make sure you’ve got control of her” she instructed.

He nodded “Yes, doctor”

She patted his arm “Thank you”

He nodded again and ordered his team out of the helicopter.

Cosima woke up and rolled her neck, feeling the crick from having been lying for too long. She coughed once, but it was different. She hadn’t had a cough actually clear her throat in a long time. It was one and it was over. No blood, no pain. She reached to her neck and rubbed it before swinging her feet out of bed and carefully standing up. There was an initial rush of light-headedness, but then she felt fine; great in fact. She smiled softly and tossed on the sweats Delphine had laid out for her. She lightly padded out of the room and to the kitchen.

“The dead walks. I thought that you’d never wake up. How are you feeling?” Sarah asked, seated at a kitchen table with a set of crutches next to her.

Cosima chuckled and walked over pulling her into a hug.

“Oi! Watch it with the touchy feelies” Sarah griped.

“Oh, you love it. Glad to have you back, sestra” Cosima told her.

“Yeah, likewise. Word on the street was that you gave us all quite the scare” she told her.

Cosima shrugged and pulled a knee to her chest, tucking the other leg under herself on the chair. “Yeah I guess so. Luckily I had a great doctor. Speaking of, have we heard from her?” she noted, resting her head on her knee.

“You mean Delphine?” Sarah wondered.
“Yeah, Delphine” Cosima clarified, rolling the last syllable of her lover’s name off her tongue as it came out.

“Yeah. The pilot radioed us after they got Charlotte. They’re on their way to Rachel. So that’s it? You’re cured?” Sarah asked.

Cosima smiled and nodded, then dipped her head to the side “Well, theoretically.”

“What does that mean?” Sarah asked.

Cosima sat up, freeing her hands to talk with “Well what happens under the microscope doesn’t directly translate to what happens in a real human body. You see the human body is a complex network of systems all trying to work together, or in my case, some working against others, and it all creates this very unpredictable environment” she taught.

Sarah looked confused “I thought that’s what all this science was for, right? Don’t we know all about how our bodies work? Maybe you’re a little rusty on the science there.”

Cosima chuckled and shook her head “We don’t know everything, especially about cancer and the environment it creates. If we did, we wouldn’t be having such a hard time curing it all. Each cancer acts differently.”

“Oh, well, all of this science crap is jibberish to me, but hey, I’m glad you’re well.” Sarah sincerely told Cosima.

Cosima smiled “Me too. And you?”

It was Sarah’s turn to chuckle “Your lover girl put 8 stitches in me and patched me up. Good as new.”

“8 stiches? Holy crap, Sarah, what happened?” she asked.

“Rachel” sarah sighed “knifed me in the bloody thigh. Then went all poking around it with her fucking cane.”

Cosima’s eyes went wide, and just as she was about to ask more questions, Cal walked in with two large paper bags. He plopped them on the table.

“I present you: breakfast! Hot off Sal’s griddle down the road. Cosima, glad to see you’re up.” Cal mentioned.

Both women basically ignored him as they tore in to the bags. Cal just chuckled “Boy am I glad I ate in the truck on the way home.” He took a seat next to Sarah and pulled his coffee out of the tray, sipping it as he scrolled through the paper.

Cosima realized that it had been quite some time since she had last eaten. She was ravenous. Styrofoam flew open as she found the plastic fork and dove in to a pile of eggs. Had she looked over, she would see Sarah doing the same.

Delphine felt her eyes threaten to close and she quickly opened them. She knew that she should have gone to get Rachel with the team, but her body wouldn’t let her. Besides, Charlotte had a vice grip on her good arm and had no intention of letting go.

“What’s going to happen to me now?” the brunette asked.

Delphine took a deep breath and wrapped an arm around her smaller body “I’m not sure but we’ll keep you close. You’re a part of the group now and we’ll keep you safe.”
“I am?” she asked

Delphine nodded “There are so many people you need to meet”

“Clones?” Charlotte wondered

“Yes, and others too. All people working hard to keep all of you safe” Delphine whispered to her, rubbing her arm softly.

Charlotte leaned in to her. She had never really needed anyone as far as she could remember. She’d had a sterile childhood, detached from human emotions, but after the past few days, it felt good to be held; to feel protected and looked after. She never knew how much she had craved it. Even if it was momentary and fleeting, even if in the morning Delphine would never hug her again, right now it was exactly what she needed. She felt safe. She closed her eyes, curled up in the older woman’s side.

Delphine saw the rush of bodies coming towards them as they carried Rachel’s limp body on board. She was zip tied and black bagged. They sat her in the seat at the far back of the helicopter. Delphine felt Charlotte shoot awake and tense so she held on a little tighter.

“She won’t hurt you. I won’t let her” she whispered to Charlotte who nodded and did her best to relax again.

Delphine put on their headsets as two more men boarded, helping an older woman who was covered in blood.

“Susan!” Charlotte exclaimed, getting up from her seat to go to her guardian.

Susan smiled “You’re safe” she noted, delighted. “And Comsima?”

“Cosima is safe” Delphine snipped.

“French accent, perfect hair, you MUST be Delphine. Pleased to finally meet you” she smiled, extending a hand.

Delphine stared at it, refusing to take it in to her own and shake it.

“Manger de la merde!” Delphine spat out.

She turned forward and let Charlotte go sit next to her caretaker.

Cosima hung on every word as she watched Sarah on the phone.

“But you’re alright, ya?” Sarah asked “Well good. Bloody Ferdinand can rot in a cell a thousand kilometers away from Rachel’s once we get her back. You’re sure Art can make the charges stick?”

Cosima smiled and sat back in her chair, wrapping a hand around the back of her own neck and using her other to bring the cup of herbal tea to her lips. She closed her eyes, savoring the flavour, thinking about Delphine.

“Good. I just want to get this shite all clear so we can get back to our normal lives. Send Kira my love.” Sarah told the other line with a tone of relief. “I love you too, S. Yeah, we should be back soon. Ok, bye”

Sarah hung up and reached out, gently gripping Cosima’s upper arm.

“You alright?” she asked.
Cosima nodded, opening her eyes and dropping her foot from the chair. “Yeah, just thinking about how I don’t remember what normal feels like.”

“I don’t think I’ve ever been bloody normal” Sarah states with a chuckle, ripping off a piece of toast and popping it into her mouth. “But you and the doctor, then?”

Cosima sighed “I don’t know. All I know what that it was such a...relief seeing her.” she looked up at her sister “I just can’t get enough of her. I know, there’s a lot we need to talk about but...I just can’t help...falling back in all over again.”

“Yeah, I kind of know exactly what you mean” Sarah levelled with her, leaning over to catch a glimpse of Cal in the next room, reading his morning paper. He’d walked out to let them talk.

“Ah, I see. I guess I’m not the only sestra running to the past” she chuckled “He’s cute you know, smart too, and kind, not to mention monstrously generous” she noted.

“If you’re waiting for me to tell you the same about Delphine, don’t hold your breath” Sarah spat.

Cosima nodded and waved her hands in front of her “That’s fair.”

Sarah got serious and leaned in to her scientist sestra “Can you really trust her?”

Cosima shrugged, looking down “I mean, she’s gotten us this far, hasn’t she? I was dying and she just...kind of came to my complete rescue. Like a knight in shining blonde curls or something” they both chuckled.

“She did, didn’t she? Well, she didn’t exactly have to come for me either. But she did.” Sarah shook her head.

“Besides, I don’t know if I can stay away. After...after...after thinking that she was...gone, I just” she closed her eyes and took a deep breath “My heart needs her close. It’s not that I’m not weary, it’s just that I can’t do anything else”

Sarah sighed and sat back in her chair, running a hand through her tousled locks. “What is it with us sestras and our darn hearts?”

Cosima chuckled “Maybe it’s just in our DNA. Our hearts want what they want. With Alison, that’s Donnie, Helena and Jesse, you and well, Cal, then Vic, then Paul, then Cal again, then some bar randos, now Cal again.” Cosima teased.

Sarah whacked her with the food bag now full of trash playfully “Need I remind you of a certain Shay?”

Cosima laughed a deep belly laugh and took the bag from Sarah “I’ll take Shay over Vic any day” she stuck her tongue out.

“You’re lucky you’re sick or I’d kick your arse right here and right now” Sarah threatened, flicking Cosima’s arm.

“Oh yeah? You forget that I know exactly where you’re ticklish.” Cosima threatened, raising an eyebrow.

“You wouldn’t!” Sarah exclaimed, feining outrage.

Cosima waved her fingers “Would’t I, ms. dry between the eyebrows?”
They both burst in laughter, only calming after they were both crying and Cal had walked in, looking confused and shaking his head.

“I just thought you would want to know, we have contact. They’ve got Rachel and are on their way back. Everyone’s accounted for. Ten minutes until they touch down” Cal informed them

They nodded “Thanks Cal” Sarah told him, tenderness in her voice.

He smiled at Sarah and tapped his hand on the archway frame before popping back into the living room.

“Thanks, I needed that laugh.” Cosima told Sarah, wiping the tears from her eyes. She sighed. “I can tell you one thing, I’ll be glad to not have to worry about her getting killed after all of this.”

“And you don’t even have kids to worry about” Sarah retorted.

“I don’t know how you manage” Cosima told her, finishing her tea and standing up “I think I’ll go meet them outside. Care to join?”

“I think I’ve seen enough of Rachel for a while” Sarah snapped with venom.

“I get that, you do you.” Cosima added in support as she turned and left the room to get bundled up and ready to head out.

Delphine spotted a house with a large yard, right on the edge of the water. She recognized it instantly as the place where Cosima was waiting for her. She felt her chest light up and the butterflies jumped to life with full flutter in her stomach. She then saw the two little specs, slowly coming in to focus. She assumed one was Cal, but knew without question that the other was Cosima. Her mind filled with worry. She shouldn’t be out in this cold. The helicopter couldn’t land soon enough.

Cosima shielded her eyes against the bright morning sun with a gloved hand as she watched the chopper land. She smiled wide as she saw Delphine pop out first, heading towards her. Without thought, she ran towards her love, jumping out at her and sending them tumbling in to the snow together as she pressed her body to the blonde’s.

“Cosima!” Delphine cried, caught off guard by the smaller woman.

“You’re safe” Cosima whispered, pulling back far enough to lean in and kiss Delphine gently.

It started chaste and quickly their lips moved to a familiar dance of warm velvet on warm velvet, gliding over each other. Cosima gently sucked Delphine’s bottom lip in her mouth as she felt herself light on fire and Delphine responded with a tiny whimper. When she let go, Delphine countered by running her tongue softly over Cosima’s lips. The brunette opened her mouth and granted the doctor access. Delphine was happy to take it, softly running her tongue in to Cosima’s mouth and over her tongue. The world faded away. No one else existed but them. Cosima then needed to pull away to let out a few weak coughs. Delphine held her cheeks.

“You should not be outside, mon amour” she chastised.

“I’m feeling a lot better” she smiled at Delphine, leaning down to press another kiss to her lips.

In that moment, Charlotte bowled Cosima over with a hug.

“Woah! Tiny genius on the move.” She hugged the girl back and looked up at Delphine, whispering a thank you.
Delphine simply nodded, standing up.

“I’m so happy you’re okay” Charlotte confessed.

Cosima ruffled her hair and smiled ear to ear “And you have no clue how glad I am to see you”

Charlotte smiled and gave her another quick hug before standing up. Cosima got to her feet with the help of Delphine’s extended hand.

As she stood, she caught Rachel’s eye. The clone might have been tied up in the back of the chopper, but she shot daggers at Cosima and Charlotte. Cosima wrapped a protective arm around Charlotte and another around Delphine’s waist. She held them close to her, not breaking eye contact. She flared her nostrils, and then cracked a smile. She turned to the young girl and whispered to her.

“I bet you could use a big plate of French toast” she whispered.

“You bet!” Charlotte exclaimed excitedly.

Cosima nodded and turned to Delphine “And I bet you could use a nap”

“Are the bags that obvious?” she asked, touching her face, worried.

Cosima chuckled “You’re beautiful” she kissed Delphine’s cheek, making her blush.

“You two go ahead. I want a word with the pilot” Delphine told them.

Cosima nodded, keeping her arm around Charlotte and pecking Delphine on the lips before steering her younger counterpart towards the house.

Delphine sighed and tousled her blonde curls, walking over to the helicopter. She walked over to the Pilot’s window and knocked. He rolled it down.

“Where are you bringing them?” she asked

“We have orders to arrest both Rachel and Susan Duncan on charges of illegal cloning” he told her.

Delphine swallowed hard and nodded “And what of the clones?” she asked.

“What clones? You mean the attempts at cloning illegally, followed by illegally euthanizing human beings? We have evidence tying Neolution and a faction of the military to Brightborn” he told her with a smile on his face.

Delphine tried hiding her own smile by rolling her lips in between her teeth as she nodded. She couldn’t however stop the faint chuckle that escaped. “You’re cheeky. I tend to like that” she told him.

He chuckled himself “All Art’s idea, m’am. Says he’s got enough fire power to throw away the key on the whole operation”

“Well I hope so” she noted before her demeanour turned serious. “And thank you for all of the help, all you and your men have done” she told him.

“Our pleasure. Getting our names on this case is thanks enough. We’re legends. And you, blondie should really consider a career in Special ops” he informed her.

“Oh no, I think I have had enough of covert operations for a couple lifetimes. Maybe I’ll teach” she
piped in.

He shrugged “Whatever suits you.”

“Anyways, I should let you get back to work” she noticed “I just wanted to show my gratitude”

He nodded “Have a safe trip back to Canada, Blondie”

“You as well, commander”

Cosima stood at the stove, cooking as Charlotte read the paper at the table next to Cal and Sarah, heads bent together. She flipped the four pieces of French toast and took a deep breath, resting her hand on her hip and cocking it to the side, rolling her neck. She was looking forward to being home. Despite feeling a million times better than where she was this morning, she felt her body ache and scream for a couple weeks of R&R.

She heard the back door to the kitchen open and then felt arms snake around her waist, kisses pressed to her neck. She smiled and turned around in the embrace to kiss Delphine softly, snaking her arms around the taller woman’s neck. She smiled against her lips.

“Hungry?” Cosima whispered.

“Starving” Delphine answered, pressing a hand to Cosima’s forehead.

Cosima moved it away “You don’t have to baby me. I’m fine. I’m cured, remember?”

Delphine shook her head “You’ve had one round of the cure. You’re still at risk”

“Delphine, really. I feel fine.” She told her, then kissed her cheek “Now sit down and relax while I finish up the food. It’s my turn to take care of you” she told her.

Delphine chuckled “Yes m’am!” She then left Cosima with one more kiss and turned, dropping in a chair next to Charlotte. Her eyes never left Cosima, watching her as she cooked.

Charlotte put the paper down and looked between Delphine and Cosima. She then lifted the paper again, going back to her reading but spoke up to Delphine “Your pupils are dilating”

Delphine turned to Charlotte, confused “Excusez-moi?”

“Tes pupilles sont dilaté” Charlotte repeated.

“Tu parles français?” Delphine asked excitedly. It had been so long since she’d been able to speak in her mother tongue.

“Yes. Along with German, Yiddish, Ojibway, Afrikaans, Italian, Spanish, and a little bit of Cantonese and Mandarin. I’ve had a lot of time on my hands and a lot of books” she informed Delphine. “You really love her, don’t you?” she asked Delphine.

Delphine looked back to Cosima and nodded.

“Avec chaque molécule dans mon corps.”

Charlotte smiled “It shows in your eyes”

Delphine chuckled at the girl “You’re very observant”
“I was raised on science” she noted “I was trained to be observant”

“Well now, it’s time to be trained to be pumped full of sugar” Cosima told her, catching the very end of the conversation as she slid a plate in front of Charlotte, piled high with French toast, smothered in butter and maple syrup with a side of eggs. “And don’t think I forgot you” she told Delphine, sliding another plate in front of her.

Sarah saw this and was about to pipe up with what Cosima was sure would be a complaint about being left out. Cosima slide a plate in front of her and shook her head “I know, if it’s food. Sarah needs it. Don’t worry I didn’t forget about you sis” she told her, and then handed a plate to Cal before getting up and bringing the orange juice and some glasses to the table. She poured everyone a glass before heading back to the counter to pour herself and Delphine chamomile teas from the whistling kettle.

“Oh wow! Cosima! Wow!” Sarah praised between bites.

“Thank you Cosima” Charlotte mentioned, careful to not forget her manners.

“My pleasure mini me” she said before easing in to a chair next to Delphine, passing her a tea. She gave her lover a smile and it was automatically returned.

After breakfast and a hot shower, Delphine slid happily in to bed. Cosima had taken Charlotte to get her comfortable in Kira’s room with the promise to join her once she had the girl settled. Delphine wondered what was going to happen with Charlotte. Susan would be in jail, and she knew the girl didn’t have anyone else. Perhaps Alison would take her in. After all, Alison had always wanted a child of her own and this was the closest that she’d get. Besides, Alison knew kids, had kids. She sighed, hoping the girl would stay close. She enjoyed her company and looked forward to conversing in French with her.

Delphine heard the door open and didn’t bother to look up or open her eyes. She felt the weight on the bed, and then she was being wrapped in Cosima’s arms. She sighed happily as she was showered with kisses.

“No more missions for you. No more being a hero. No more running in to the line of fire. I don’t think my heart could take it” Cosima told her.
Delphine smiled and nodded “No more. I promise”

Cosima nodded and closed her own eyes. She knew that she wouldn’t fall asleep, but was very happy just holding Delphine right now; just feeling her close, feeling her heart beat against her own chest, feeling her breath tickle the skin right above her breasts. She was so happy to be home.
I hope that the translation method worked out like I hoped it would. Please let me know your thoughts on it, and if there is a method you think would improve it. I had them in bold but didn't know that the formatting wouldn't paste over and it would take a lot to go in to the HTML and find all the bold lines so I just left them. I thought that this chapter would get a little further than this, as we have yet to get to the main story element but I felt like this was a necessary part of the story telling. Either way, it’s a sweet little chapter that gives a little insight in to some of my personal thoughts on character’s backstories. I have no timeline for when the next chapter will be out, but I am hoping that it will be in the next week. Thank you for everyone reading reviews, commenting, leaving kudos, or even just reading. Thanks for sharing this little fantasy world with me. I hope you all enjoyed.

“I want you to tie me up and take me” Delphine’s lips pressed gently against Cosima’s ear as she whispered to her. “I want to be under your control; I trust you with all of me.”

Cosima gulped and nodded, snaking her arms under Dephine’s shirt and up her back, toying teasingly with the strap of her bra before she leaned in to her lover’s ear and whispered back “Do you want me to tie you spread eagle to our bed? Is that what you want, you dirty doctor?”

Cosima watched as Delphine’s eyes fluttered closed, seeing the effect that her words had on her wife.

“Oui. I need to be wide open to you. Mon Dieu, Cosima, I am so wet. I want you so badly.” Delphine’s voice cracked, heavy with desire. Her eyes turned up to Cosima’s.

Cosima smiled and leaned in, kissing Delphine softly, then aggressively bit her bottom lip. Delphine pressed deeper in to her, letting out a moan.

“You better stay wet for me, then” Cosima instructed.

Delphine nodded and Cosima took a step back, going to the bed and sitting on it before lounging back on her elbows. She watched Delphine, raising an eyebrow . “Strip for me” she instructed.

Delphine felt the heat rising in her body as she slowly unbuttoned the flannel shirt, revealing her black sports bra. She bit her bottom lip as she unbuttoned the khaki pants she’d worn to work that day. The doctor slowly slid them down her body, steeping out of them. She then used a hand to flip her unruly curls up and over her face as she stood up again. She watched Cosima admiring her body.

Cosima’s heart was racing, watching Delphine disrobe. She wasn’t even fully nude yet, but the girl was anxious with anticipation. Delphine was perfect. She was hard in all the right places, but mostly soft. She was so soft and so warm. Cosima watched as her hips moved so slightly while her wife fumbled with her own bra. Cosima got to her feet, walking over and taking the material from the blonde. She helped it off and over her head, watching as Delphine’s perfect breasts fell to her body. She loved seeing them in their natural state. They were perfectly rounded and hung so nicely on Delphine’s frame.
The Blonde’s nipples were rock solid and Cosima couldn’t take her eyes off of them.

“See something you like?” Delphine teased.

Cosima’s eyes snapped up to Delphine’s face “Huh?” she asked, confused.

Delphine chuckled and brought her face in to kiss it “I love the way you look at me. You make me feel so very beautiful” she confessed.

Cosima’s heart melted and she smiled “That’s because you are and you deserve to be treated like it” Cosima retorted, placing a hand over Delphine’s heart.

“Well right now, I want to be treated like your dirty, dirty girl. Do you want to take control of me?” Delphine asked.

A smiled spread across Cosima’s face and she bit her bottom lip into her mouth “Fuck, I want to so badly.”

“Then take me already” Delphine told her.

That was all the encouragement Cosima needed as she wrapped a hand around Delphine’s waist, pressing it to the small of her back and pulling her in tightly. She kissed her wife hard, their lips crashing against each other in an intensity that made Delphine shudder in pleasure. Cosima yanked down the fruit of the loom’s that were hiding Delphine’s cunt and then pressed a firm hand to it, looking up at her for confirmation before continuing.

Delphine gave her a nod with a smile and Cosima pushed a finger inside of her. She immediately felt the blonde doctor’s nails dig in her shoulder. Cosima pressed the single digit deeper then gently pulled it out. She made eye contact with Delphine as she brought it to her own lips, then rolled her tongue around it before sucking the entire finger in her mouth and sucking it clean. Delphine’s taste was magical. It was smooth and sweet with a slight bite to it; much like Delphine herself. Cosima saw Delphine’s knees go weak and took a step towards her, starting to back her up towards the bed.

“Do you want the silk rope or scarves?” she asked, sultry in her voice.

Delphine’s chest heaved with breath; causing her breasts to slightly bounce “I want the bite of the rope” she informed her love.

Cosima placed a tender hand on her shoulder and gently pushed the blonde doctor on to the bed. Delphine let herself fall backwards. Cosima gripped the duvet and pulled it clean off the bed, placing it on top of the trunk at the end of their bed as Delphine positioned herself to lie on the pillows.

“You better get comfortable” Cosima instructed “because it might be a while before I’m done with you.”

With that, Delphine piled up the pillows and laid on them as she watched Cosima go to her nightstand and search for the rope.

“Another night to order in?” Delphine noted

Cosima chuckled and nodded.

“Pizza or Chinese?” Delphine asked.

“Does it matter right now?” Cosima asked, encircling Delphine’s left wrist with the rope, securing it to the bedframe.
Delphine shook her head.

“Good. Because if it did, I might have to punish you. The only thing I want you thinking about right now is how exposed your body is to me and the pulsing in your cunt” Cosima instructed, knowing that this was one of Delphine’s ongoing fantasies.

Delphine nodded again as Cosima grabbed her left ankle and secured that to the bed as well. She then went for the right ankle and as soon as it was tied up, her eyes flickered to her wife’s pussy. She gulped, feeling herself excite as she noticed the red puff of Delphine’s swollen lips and the light glisten, marking her wetness. Delphine was itching for her. She could already imagine the sweet tightness of her lover’s insides. She could already imagine the slick hardness of Delphine’s clit in her mouth. She couldn’t wait to tease her endlessly, have her begging for release time and time again.

The temperature rising caused Cosima to pull off her own shirt and pants, leaving her half naked and in her undies. She mounted Delphine’s waist as she made quick work of tying up Delphine’s right hand, making sure to sway her breasts in the blonde’s face. She sat up when her work was done and looked down at Delphine.

“Happy now?” she asked

“Tellement” Delphine told her “Please touch me, Cosima.”

Cosima smiled “Oh, Delphine, Delphine, Delphine, who’s in control here?” she asked.

“You, you are in control” Delphine responded.

“That’s right. So who decides when you get touched?” Cosima purred.

“You do” Delphine responded.

Cosima reached down to flick one of Delphine’s nipples with her index finger, making the woman moan and buck her hips. “That’s right, I am in control. And maybe I’ll leave you here writhing while I, I don’t know…read a book?” she threatened.

“You wouldn’t!” Delphine exclaimed with wide eyes.

Cosima chuckled as she lowered herself to lie on top of Delphine “No, I wouldn’t, but you thought about it” she noted.

Delphine’s head shot back as Cosima took a rock hard nipple in to her mouth, rolling it around.

“Please Cosima! I need you” she panted

“You know I didn’t think it would take this long for you to beg” Cosima expressed.

Delphine pouted and Cosima quickly covered her lips with her own, letting her hands explore the planes of Delphine’s lithe body. As her tongue danced across Delphine’s, she ran a finger gently up Delphine’s slit, relishing in the sensation of the juices that coated it. She could feel the small puffs of air from Delphine’s moans into her mouth. She found her lover’s clit and just let her finger linger over it.

Cosima broke their kiss to lower her head to gently kiss Delphine’s neck, her hand leaving Delphine’s clit to coil backwards. She felt Delphine’s body tense as she knew what was to come. Cosima let her hand go, giving Delphine’s clit a little slap, making her lover jump, buck, and moan; her hips, pulsating now as Cosima’s hand pressed against her, feeling the outpouring of liquid.
Cosima’s eyes shot open and she sighed, rolling on to her back, squinting to make out the world around her. She was so very comfortable, feeling the weight of a familiar arm around her waist. She looked over and saw Delphine, fast asleep next to her and she smiled at the peace on her face. Cosima yawned and reached for her glasses, putting them on and taking a look around.

She lay in bed, unable to stop herself from smiling as she looked at the ceiling and bare walls of their new bedroom, from the comfort of their most recent furniture purchase: a king sized luxury bed.

It had been a week since they had left Iceland and with the generous salary DYAD had provided them, were able to put down a hefty down payment on a house close to the University of Toronto. After much deliberation (and much to Delphine and Cosima’s delight), it was decided that Charlotte would live with them and attend the University, along with Cosima who would finish her PhD remotely, while using the University’s lab. U of T was delighted to help such an esteemed student. In turn, Delphine had taken a temporary job as a family doctor at a local clinic.

Cosima sighed, thinking it all over in her head. Everything was turning out so well; although, the real test was still ahead. Today, she, Charlotte, and Delphine would tackle Ikea. She’d heard the horror stories of other couples who enter what they call the pit of relationship despair. She chuckled softly. It seemed so silly compared to what they’d been through. Still, they were in dire need of furnishings beyond the beds they had bought the day after they moved in. Cosima had lost everything at her old apartment that had been left behind when she had not shown up or paid the rent in 2 months. The same had happened to Delphine. They’d found out when they had called their landlords to look into moving their stuff out. After that, they had to start from the ground up.

Cosima rubbed Delphine’s arm softly, turning over the list of things they needed to buy in her head. As she was thinking, she noticed how wet her PJs were, her mind then jogged back to the dream. She felt the heat rise and leaned over, kissing Delphine’s shoulder. When Delphine didn’t respond, she aimed higher, going to kiss her face. As soon as her lips connected, Delphine sucked in a breath and yawned, her eyes squinting open to Cosima’s face.

Delphine’s first vision as she woke was of Cosima’s warm, sweet face. She smiled and ran a hand through her hair.

“Ma belle! How late did I sleep in?” she asked.

Cosima shrugged and grabbed her phone, looking at the time “It’s only 10” she noted.

“Only?” Delphine’s eyes shot open “Half the day is gone!”

Cosima chuckled and kissed her softly “Want to waste more of it in bed with me?”

Delphine softened and kissed Cosima sweetly, cupping her cheeks “I would love to, mon amour but we have so much we need to do today. Tonight?”

“Okay, but there are no guarantees we won’t rip each other to pieces before then. Might want to get me while I’m hot” she joked.

“Cosima, you are always hot” Delphine joked back.

“Touché. Well, how about just a taste, then?” she asked, running a hand over the crotch of Delphine’s boxers.

The blonde inhaled sharply, swallowing and coming to face the desire in Cosima’s eyes. She caved, reaching up and grabbing the back of Cosima’s neck to pull her in to a deep kiss. Delphine quickly rid herself of the boxers, never breaking her lips contact with Cosima. They had been so busy this
week that they had yet to make love to each other. In fact, they hadn’t since before Delphine joined Topside. Cosima felt the weight of the 2 months without each other build up a pressure in both her mind and body.

Cosima’s hands eagerly peeled off Delphine’s top as the blonde reached to cup one of Cosima’s breasts in her hand.

Cosima had always slept naked, loving the feel of the sheets on her skin. Delphine however, liked her lower body covered. Still, she left her top half nude in order to sleep skin to skin with Cosima. It had been this way ever since they had made the decision to move in together. Cosima prayed that this would continue, since she hadn’t slept this well in years. She felt so at peace wrapped up in Delphine, feeling the doctor’s bare chest pressed to her back. Delphine would rub her tummy in her sleep and it gave Cosima warm fuzzies just thinking about it.

The gasp that escaped her mouth as her girlfriend’s hand made contact was so heavy and thick that she didn’t even know it was hers. The sound waves echoed through Delphine’s mouth and throat, only to escape back in to her own mouth in a quick series of vibrations. She shivered and her skin instantly turned to goosebumps. She broke the kiss and looked down at Delphine.

“Are you sure you want to?” she asked

Delphine nodded and smiled “Je suis certaine, especially after that warm up” she joked. “Are you?”

Cosima gulped and felt the pressure of months sit on her, felt the pressure of their trust issues, felt the pressure of the heartbreak, and the torment of the betrayal. She bit her bottom lip and hung her head, rubbing her palm against it, fighting the tears.

Delphine swallowed hard but rubbed Cosima’s neck “It’s ok Cosima. We can take this slow. We knew it would be hard.”

Cosima shook her head and hugged Delphine hard “I just want it to be like it was our last time in the lab, but it can’t. Too much had happened and… and I just…”

“Shh, it’s okay. We’ll get there again. I know I…I know things got very confusing and it doesn’t help us now, but just keep talking to me and I promise to keep talking to you. As much as I love being with you like that, I don’t want anything to do with it until you’re ready. Until you feel secure and comfortable, and confident in us. I don’t want parts of you. I want to love all of you all at once.” Delphine confessed, kissing Cosima’s temple. “Your emotional safety is just as important to me as your physical safety.”

Cosima nodded and let her tears fall into Delphine’s shoulder, taking comfort in her words. She was right. Any sex they had while she was still feeling this way would be empty, void of the deep, heavy emotions she felt for Delphine in her core. Any sex they had right now would make her feel icky. She didn’t want to feel that way with Delphine ever again. She sniffled.

“How do you feel about it all?” Cosima wondered, whispering the question in to Delphine’s neck.

Delphine put a strong hand on the back of Cosima’s head and whispered in response “I think I need some time too. All this domesticity and moving in together and buying a house and having a child that we are responsible for is a lot. I think we both need the time to wrap our minds around it all, settle in, get to know each other again. Like I said, let’s just keep talking to each other, ask any questions we have when we have …”

She was promptly cut off by Cosima “Did you sleep with anyone else?”
“No” Delphine stated without hesitation “From the moment you first kissed me until the moment by moment beating of my heart right now, you are all I think about. You and your sisters have been my priority and although my methods might not have always been the best, my intentions have always been for the love and protection of all of you.”

“I know that now, but in the moment. God Delphine, I hated you. I felt so betrayed” Cosima stated, raising her hand as she talked. “And it destroyed me” her bottom lip quivered and her hand came down to rest it’s finger tips against her forehead. “Then I thought you were dead and…I almost ended it. It was so confusing. I told myself I hated you because it was so logical, but I never stopped loving you.”

Delphine took a deep breath, stroking Cosima’s dreads “And Shay?”

“She was a distraction.” Cosima admitted through tears. “I thought it would do me some good to get back out there, try to forget you” she confessed. “But it only made things worse. She was glaringly not you. It’s not to say I didn’t have feelings for her, but they just…they were on the surface. I had told myself that you and I were over. She was a compromise and it was a shitty thing to do to her, but at the time it felt like it was the right thing”

“I know that feeling all too well” Delphine noted, reaching for Cosima’s hand and gently intertwining their fingers.

Cosima nodded, pulling out of the hug to leave a soft peck on Delphine’s lips. She lay down, pulling Delphine to her as the blonde rested her head on Cosima’s shoulder. Cosima wrapped herself around Delphine. They linked hands again, Cosima playing with Delphine’s long, slender fingers.

“What do you want out of life, Delphine?” Cosima asked, it being a question that she’d been turning around in her head. It was something they had never really talked about.

Delphine smiled against her girlfriend’s skin, a vivid image coming to mind. She closed her eyes. “I want a family with you. I want to surround ourselves with love and people and books. I want to raise beautiful, wise children with you by my side. I want to see my parents again. Mon Dieu, I haven’t seen them in…years. Maman is probably beside herself. I stopped calling and answering her calls. It just seemed easier that way with…what I was doing. “ She smiled and sniffled back a few tears. “I want to do something to make them and myself proud. I want to teach. I don’t really care what. But above all of this, I want to be with you, I want you to be safe and happy and feel loved and built up to your true strength. So the real answer to the question is: I want what you want. Whatever that may be”

Cosima shook her head “That’s not fair to me or to you. If we’re going to do this, Delphine, you need to stop putting me first. I need you to put yourself first. We’ll help each other take care of ourselves, but we are our own people with our own desires.”

Delphine’s mind turned around that concept. It was contrary to everything she knew about love. Partners were supposed to take care of each other and sacrifice for each other. How could she put herself first?

“I don’t think I understand that” Delphine confessed.

Cosima nodded “I know. Just think about it, okay?”

Delphine nodded, the wheels still turning in her mind.

Cosima kissed Delphine’s cheek softly and sighed “I love you”
“Je t’aime aussi” Delphine returned.

“Well, we should probably get up” Cosima noted, giving Delphine another quick kiss before pulling herself up out of bed and to her feet. She padded over to their ensuite bathroom to empty her bladder.

Delphine watched her ass sway as she walked out of the room and took a deep breath before forcing herself out of their comfortable bed. She went to her suitcase and pulled out clothes for the day.

“We’ll need to make sure we make a list of everything we need” Delphine elevated her voice so Cosima could hear.

“Yeah, I don’t want to have to make like 8 trips” Cosima answered back. She coughed.

“We’ll have to make sure to get Charlotte a good desk. She’ll need something substantial for her studies” Delphine noted.

Cosima stared down at her hand, covered in blood. She swallowed hard, tasting copper.

“Cosima?” Delphine called out when her girlfriend didn’t answer.

Cosima reached for the toilet paper, wiping her hand and mouth clean, and clueing in to Delphine’s voice “Uh, yeah. For sure.”

Delphine popped her head in the bathroom “Are you okay?” she asked.

Cosima nodded. She didn’t want to worry Delphine. She’d had enough of being mothered by her lover and just wanted things to be normal again. Maybe this was just a lingering cough and was the blip at the end of it all. After all, she was cured.

“Yeah, just got lost in my own head. You know me” she covered.

Delphine smiled and nodded, going back to finish getting dressed.

Cosima finished on the toilet and washed her hands, brushing her teeth and splashing her face with water. Delphine came in and started on her makeup.

They did the dance of their morning routine with Delphine finishing first and descending the stairs to Charlotte standing at the kitchen island, nose in a book as she eats a yogurt cup.

[Author’s Note: English translations immediately follow french dialogue.]

“C’est tout que tu as mangé ce matin? That’s all you’ve eaten this morning?” Delphine asked the girl, opening the fridge and grabbing an apple. She leaned against the counter, taking a bite and crossing her arms.

Charlotte nodded “Je ne voulais pas vous déranger. I didn’t want to disturb you guys.”

Delphine smiled and walked up to the girl “C’est ta maison aussi, Charlotte. Nous voulons que vous vous sentiez à l’aise ici. It’s your home too, Charlotte. We want you to feel comfortable here.” Delphine put a hand on her shoulder.

Charlotte looked up at her and nodded “Je sais, mais je ne suis pas habitué à être libre de faire ce que je veux. I know, but I’m just not used to being free to do what I want. ”

Cosima came downstairs, unable to stop herself from checking out Delphine in those tight black jeans with the tucked in white button down. She bit her bottom lip and smiled, descending the last
“Char, glad you’re up. Ready for a big Ikea day?” she asked.

Charlotte turned her attention from Delphine to her older sister and smiled “Do I really get to pick out my own stuff?” she asked excitedly

Cosima chuckled “Well yeah, it’s hard to make something your room without you picking it all out.”

Delphine turned and smile at Cosima, tossing her the apple she’d taken a single bite out of “We should grab breakfast on the road” she stated.

Cosima caught it and smiled, bringing it to her lips and taking a bite out of it “Yeah. Probably do some groceries soon too” she noted, chewing.

Charlotte winced at the apple bite “Je sais que vous vous aimez et tous, mais ack, il y a des fois que vous êtes déglace. I know that you guys are in love and all, but yuck, there are times you are disgusting.”

Delphine belly laughed and walked up to Charlotte, resting a hand on her shoulder “Un de ces jours, tu sauras comment il se sent. One of these days, you’ll know how it feels.”

“Sometimes I wonder if I’ll forever be in the black when you two are together” Cosima sighed.

Delphine winked at Charlotte “Shall we go?” she asked, looking up.

Cosima nodded, heading to the door as she grabbed her purse off the banister and slipped her shoes on, a Canadian custom Allison had accustomed her to. Frankly she now loved slipping off her shoes and walking around barefoot in her home.

Delphine and Charlotte followed, Charlotte sitting on the second step of the stairs to pull her shoes on and Delphine grabbing her keys and wallet from the top of the cardboard box they were using as a temporary entry table. She was excited to get furniture in the space, and even more excited to not have to use the plastic utensils any more. Allison had offered to lend them a few things, but they declined, knowing that they would acquire their own things within the week. She was happy that it was finally happening.

Delphine ran a hand through her hair as Charlotte stepped out the door. She followed and locked it behind her.

Delphine climbed in to the driver’s seat and started the car as Cosima pulled out the note pad and pen she kept in her purse and the three of them made a list of things to buy while they were out.

“Don’t forget we’ve got everyone coming over tomorrow night for that housewarming party Allison insisted on” Cosima reminded her partner.

Delphine nodded “We’ll have to pick up wine. I think it’s a great idea, get Charlotte introduced to the rest of the family.”

Cosima smiled and nodded. They were family, weren’t they? All of them. She smiled, thinking of how great it would be for Charlotte to grow up in that space; how great it would be for her kids to grow up surrounded by loved ones. She looked to Delphine and smiled, resting a hand on her thigh.

“Yeah, you’re right” she noted.
“I’ll get to meet Kira?” Charlotte asked from the back seat.

Cosima turned her head around to see Charlotte in the back seat, a look of glee on her face. She smiled.

“Yeah. And Oscar and Gemma. Your nieces and nephew, I guess” she noted.

“Yeah, but I like to call them my cousins. I’ve wanted to meet them so badly” she admitted.

“Demain” Delphine promised.

Charlotte nodded and sat back in her seat. She stared at the back of Cosima’s head, and then looked down to her braid.

“Cosima?” Charlotte asked

“Yeah?” Cosima answered

“Why is your hair like that?” the younger clone wondered.

Cosima took a deep breath.

Delphine paid close attention, never having asked Cosima that herself, but wondering the answer. She expected her girlfriend to tell the young clone that she liked it that way or that she thought it was cool. She didn’t expect this answer.

“Well, honestly my dad never knew how to do anything else with long hair” she told her counterpart.

“Didn’t your mom help?” she asked

“I didn’t have a mom. I grew up with two dads. Dad and Papa. Papa was always at work early. He was a marine biologist who studied the tides’ effects on marine life and so had to be up early. Dad always got me ready for school” she explained, basking in the memory of her parents.

“You have two dads?” Charlotte half exclaimed, half asked.

“ Well, I had two dads. I’ve only got one now” she admitted, pain in her voice.

“What happened?” Charlotte asked

“My Dad was born in Haiti. To this day there’s still a huge HIV outbreak there. He got infected before he came to the States. He met my Dad at a coffee shop” she smiled “He always told me that he knew the moment they locked eyes that this was the man of his dreams. Papa took care of Dad until he was buried. He worked hard. Dad always wanted kids. They had me through a surrogate. Papa loved me, but I was the apple of Dad’s eye. I was seven when he died. Papa dedicated himself to science from that point. I remember thinking that he would die of a broken heart. I had a bag packed and everything in case I had to be on my own. But the science saved him and I let it save me” she took a deep breath “Dad always loved my hair and the last time I talked to him…” Cosima’s eyes watered and she took a breath, feeling Delphine squeeze her thigh in comfort “…he told me that dreadlocks were a sign of power in his home village and that every morning when he groomed me, he poured all of his love and power in to my dreads, hoping it would be enough to get me through this world. He told me that he was so proud of me and who I had become; that I would do great things and be a powerful woman, that the world needed powerful women. And then he told me that he loved me. Ever since, I’ve been taking care of them just like he taught me. Every morning, pouring my own love for myself and feelings of power in to them.”
“Cosima, I never knew…” Delphine whispered.

Cosima wiped away the tears “It’s okay, I haven’t told anyone about it in a very long time.”

“Where’s your Papa now?” Charlotte asked

Cosima smiled “He’s retired, still living in San Fran. I call him once a month. He’s been begging me to come visit and I feel bad but I just haven’t had the time or the money” she admitted.

“I guess we both owe our parents a visit” Delphine noted, turning in to the parking lot.

Charlotte looked down “What happened to my mom?” she wondered, all of this talk about parents hitting a soft spot in her.

“Marion…” Delphine whispered as she put the car in park. She took out the keys and turned to look back at the young girl. “I am so sorry Charlotte, I had not even thought about her. I…I don’t know what happened to her”

“Is she dead? If she is, just tell me. I just want to know” Charlotte asked of her new guardian. Although Marion was her adoptive mother, the only one she had known, she did not have many positive feelings for the woman. She had always kept the girl at arm’s length, never being particularly warm. Yes, she was cared for by the best nannies and attended the best schools, but it was all meaningless without the love of a parent. Either way, she wanted to know. The woman was still important to her. If she was alive, there was a good chance that she would try to come and claim Charlotte; take her away from her new-found family.

Cosima looked to Delphine who seemed to be stumped for an answer “Delphine?”

“I don’t know. All I know is that she went underground” she noted.

Cosima nodded and turned back to Charlotte “We’ll find out. As soon as we get the house set up, I’ll have a few weeks before school starts and will get Cal’s help to hack every mainframe I need to in order to find out, okay?” she asked, reaching over to give Charlotte’s good knee a little shake.

Charlotte smiled and nodded.

“But for now, how about we hop in and get some meatballs for breakfast?” Cosima suggested.

Charlotte chuckled and hopped out of the car.

Delphine rubbed Cosima’s knee “Thank you”

“Anytime, Dr. Cormier” Cosima teased before hopping out of the car.

“So, can I get a big book case?” Charlotte asked

“Go wild” Cosima told her. “We’re spending DYAD money today”

“Yes” The girl pumped her fists.

Delphine smiled, bumping shoulders with Cosima.

After 6 hours and 2 meals in Ikea, all 3 of them found themselves sprawled in the living room, the space covered in paper instructions, cardboard and allen keys- the notes and melodies of a French ballad in the background. Cosima rubbed her eyes under her glasses and put down the wrench.
“Fuck it!” she exclaimed in frustration.

“Cosima, little ears” Delphine chastised.

“I’ve heard it before” Charlotte mentions, turning her attention back to the front entrance table she was putting together.

“That’s not the point” Delphine noted.

“C’mon Delphine, who cares if she swears? It’s not a big deal. You know science has proven it’s cathartic. All though nothing can provide enough catharsis to get me over the frustration of this fucking table!” Cosima exclaimed, kicking the wrench across the floor and sitting down “It must be defective”

Delphine took a deep breath “We clearly have very different parenting methods. And I told you to follow the instructions.”

“Yeah, maybe we do. And I tried. All their pictures with the stupid fucking bubble dude don’t make any sense. I’m not some master builder over here. Fuck, whose idea was it to buy everything from Ikea anyways?” she asked

“Language! And it was yours, Cosima. It’ll be fun, like Legos you said. I think you just wanted meatballs” Delphien teased, much to Charlotte’s delight.

Cosima’s nostrils flared.

“Oh come on, Cosima. Just read the directions. It’s easy” she said, taking the directions and looking them over.

“Don’t belittle me” Cosima fumed.

Delphine looked up at her and cocked her head “Well if you had listened to me in the first place, we would have had someone come and put it together for us.”

“This was supposed to be family bonding time” Cosima blurted angrily.

“Well your mouth isn’t exactly family friendly now, is it?”

“Hey! You’re not my mother. And if you think you can put it together, then fine. Go right ahead. I’m going to take a fucking bath. Yes, I said fucking. Deal with it!” Cosima stood up and stormed off.

“Cosima…” Delphine called after her, rolling her eyes, then putting her hands on her hips. Cosima ignored her and stomped upstairs.

“Well that was dumb” Charlotte noted, setting the small table on its feet and getting to her own to admire her handy work.

Delphine shook her head and took over Cosima’s job on the kitchen table “She can be so stubborn sometimes” she noted.

“Peut-être qu’elle n’est pas seule. Maybe she’s not alone” Charlotte noted.

Delphine gulped, knowing it was the truth. She looked at her watch and saw how late it was. It had been a long day. They had gotten most of the furniture together, including their entire office, the spare room, Charlotte’s room, the bathrooms, and all of the peripherals. All that was left was the
kitchen table, the coffee table, and the couch. Delphine looked around the room, surrounded by large bookshelves, just waiting to house thousands of volumes. She looked to the kitchen; now home to three barstools perched under the island. In the living room were the end tables Charlotte had put together that would bookend their new couch. They had covered a lot of ground and their home had started to come together. She took a deep breath, understanding Cosima’s frustration after such a long, work-filled day. She grimaced as she realized that she’d indeed antagonized her overwhelmed and frustrated girlfriend. Maybe she was frustrated and tired herself.

“Nous devrions prendre une pause. Manger un souper. We should take a break. Eat some supper.” Delphine noted to Charlotte.

Charlotte nodded “Peut-être commander du chinois. Maybe order some Chinese.”

Delphine smiled “Clever girl.”

Delphine pulled out her cell and dialed the number. She hated ordering Chinese-Canadian food. She found it greasy and lacking in nutritional content, but it was Cosima’s favourite. She could tolerate it and even had come to like a couple of the dishes. It would definitely work as a peace offering. She placed the order, hung up, and smiled at Charlotte.

“Trente minutes. Aide-moi à finir de construire cette table? Thirty minutes. Help me finish constructing this table?” Delphine asked of her ward.

Charlotte smiled and nodded “You should bring her a glass of wine too” she offered, holding up a piece for Delphine to tighten the bolt.

“I clearly need to keep you around for Cosima romance tips” Delphine praised.

Charlotte beamed proudly “I’m observant”

“Cheeky, just like your sister” Delphine retorted.

They made quick work of the table, and then started on the chairs. Delphine, with Charlotte’s help put four of the eight they bought together before calling it quits on the Ikea building for now. Together they put the table cloth on, set the table, and Delphine lit candles, taking a bottle of wine out to breathe.

Charlotte looked at the table and smiled “I’ve never had a family dinner like this” she noted.

“We’ve had family dinners the past week and a half” Delphine noted.

“But those were out. I’ve never sat down at my table, at home, with my family and just…ate. My mother would always take her dinners late, after I was in bed and the few times we did eat together, she was always on her cell phone. It’ll be nice.” She noted

“Demain, je vais cuisiner pour toute notre famille et on va nous nous assoir à un bon repas ensemble. Tomorrow, I will cook for our whole family and we’ll all sit down to a good meal together.” Delphine promised the young girl “Et je te promets qu’au moins une fois par semaine, nous mangerons ensemble à la table. D’accord? And I promise you that at least once a week, we’ll eat together at the table. Okay?”

Charlotte nodded “D’accord.”

Delphine hugged her and planted a kiss on her forehead “You’re one of us now and we’re going to make sure…I’m going to make sure that you get the childhood you deserve. Now go wash up for
dinner. I’m going to talk to your sister, try and call a truce.”

“Good luck” Charlotte told her, giving her another hug before she limped up the stairs.

Delphine watched her go, happy to be able to provide for the youngster. She turned and poured a glass of wine for Cosima. She picked it up and headed upstairs. She turned towards their bedroom door and slowly pushed it open, stepping inside. She found the room empty so she continued towards the bathroom. Peeking inside, she saw Cosima in the tub. She saw the woman open her mouth to speak and held the glass of wine out.

“Red wine flag. I call a cease fire” Delphine attempted.

Cosima seemed to be okay with it since she just closed her mouth. Delphine walked over to the tub and sat on the edge, handing Cosima the glass. Cosima took it and downed the entire glass in one gulp.

“Guess I should have brought you the bottle” Delphine teased.

Cosima shot her daggers.

“I know, no time for jokes. I’m sorry Cosima. I didn’t mean to belittle you. It’s just been a long day” Delphine admitted.

Cosima nodded and took a deep breath “I’m sorry too. I tend to get quite worked up and emotional when I’m frustrated. I needed a moment”

Delphine reached down to play with the bubbly bath water and closed her eyes, taking a deep inhale “I remember smelling this on your skin frequently. What is it?” she asked.

“Rice milk and mallow” Cosima answered, handing her the bottle “It’s my favourite.”

Delphine smiled, turning the bottle over in her hand “Charlotte and I finished the table and a few chairs. Cosima, I think we need to pay special attention to her. She’s missed out on a lot and I don’t want her to miss out anymore”

Cosima nodded “We can’t treat her like a little kid though, Delphine”

“But she is, Cosima she is only 8 years old” Delphine noted.

“She may be 8, but she’s got the mind of a 30 year old. Besides, shielding her from the world isn’t protecting her or helping her. I don’t want to be Allison” she told Delphine.

“You are right. I have this idea of what a parent is and I think I was just acting that out. I’m a little lost in all of this” Delphine admitted.

“What was that? I’m right? Dr. Cormier, did you just admit that?” Cosima teased.

Delphine splashed her playfully “Goof”

Cosima laughed and reached for Delphine’s hand, holding it “I give us props, we at least made it out of the store without a fight. That’s more than most couples can say”

The doorbell rang and Delphine sprung up “I have to get that”

“We’re not expecting anyone” Cosima noted, confused.
“Well I am, a certain Mr. Fung” she tossed out as she left the bathroom.

“Vixen” Cosima chided under her breath as she stood up to dry off before stepping out of the tub.

She dressed in a pair of sweat shorts, a loose fitting red t-shirt and put on her long striped cardigan over it all. She slid in to her slippers and headed downstairs. She stopped midway down to look around. It was home. Her eyes fell to the perfectly set table that Charlotte and Delphine sat at, pulling the food out of the paper bags. She looked to the kitchen, whose glass cabinet doors now peered in to cabinets full of dishes and food. Then her eyes fell on the living room with its large book cases soon to be filled. She smiled and descended the last few steps, walking over to Delphine and wrapping her arms around her neck, leaning in and kissing her face as she rested her chin on her girlfriend’s shoulder.

“This is our home” she beamed.

“Do you like it?” Delphine asked

“I love everything about it” Cosima informed her, giving her a kiss on the temple before she sat down to the meal.

Delphine poured each of them a glass of wine and then Charlotte a glass of the sparkling lingonberry juice they’d picked up. Charlotte raised her glass.

“I propose a toast” she told her guardians who also raised their glasses. “To home, family, and the beginning of everything”

“Here, here!” Cosima seconded.

They all clinked glasses and sipped their beverages.

Dinner was filled with laughter and light teasing, along with a full re-enactment of Delphine and Cosima’s fight earlier. It was a Charlotte production, where Delphine was played by an egg roll with chow mein hair and Cosima, a chicken ball. They all ate until they were stuffed. Cosima was the first to get up and clear the debris from the new fluffy rug on the living room floor so that she could lie down on her back, stretching out. Charlotte then followed. Cosima brought the girl to her and Charlotte happily snuggled up. Delphine then joined them, lying next to Charlotte. They laid there, silently digesting for a few minutes.

“Are you guys going to get married?” Charlotte asked.

Delphine and Cosima looked at each other. Delphine’s face went soft, wondering what Cosima’s answer would be.

“I think so” Cosima noted.

Delphine smiled at her and winked.

Charlotte, still staring at the ceiling asked another question “After you get married, are you going to have a baby?”

Cosima this time raised her eyebrows at Delphine who smiled.

“Yes. But not for a little while” Delphine too her turn and answered.

“Good. You will make great moms” Charlotte noted.
Cosima’s heart melted in her chest and she held Charlotte a little tighter. Delphine felt tears in her eyes. It was the best compliment that she’d ever been given.

“Well right now, we have you to give all of our attention and love to” Cosima noted.

“I don’t need much” Charlotte informed them.

“We plan on giving you more than you need” Delphine told her.

“Yeah. If it gets too much, tell us to stop but we’re going to fill up that empty love meter of yours” Cosima told her, turning on her side to prop herself up on her elbow.

Charlotte giggled “I think it’s pretty full already. Thank you for everything. For saving me, for today, for being here, for being you.”

Cosima smiled and looked to Delphine who proped herself up as well.

“You are more than welcome but you know, there’s only one way to seal up a nice, full love meter” Cosima noted.

“Yeah? How?” Charlotte asked with a giggle

“With big cheek kisses. You game?” she asked.

Charlotte giggled and nodded. Cosima and Delphine each leaned in to plant a big kiss on each of her cheeks. She felt safe and loved. She felt at home. She wanted to remember this moment forever; here, on the floor of this half-furnished living room with the smell of new textiles, wood, and Chinese food in the air.

It wasn’t long before she was showered and tucked in bed, cuddled in to Cosima who was reading her a few chapters from Nancy Drew (Cosima’s admitted favourite series growing up). They had stayed up late to put the rest of the furniture together, leaving only the art to hang in the morning. Cosima had suggested the blonde go unwind with a hot bath while she tucked Charlotte in.

The brunette felt Charlotte’s body get heavy and limp mid-chapter so she bookmarked the page and just laid with her little sister a while longer. It was terrifying, knowing Charlotte was her responsibility but it was made okay by Delphine’s aid. She wanted more than anything to not screw up this little girl. She kissed Charlotte’s forehead and told herself that she needed to do everything in her power not to screw this up. She slowly got up and laid the young girls’ head on the pillow softly before pulling up the blankets. She looked around the room. The large desk and empty bookcases fit with Charlotte’s persona. There were also a couple boxes, filled with toys and dress up costumes, an easel, and a play table all ready to be enjoyed. It all made Cosima smile. She turned on the night light and turned off the main light, closing Charlotte’s door as she left. She headed downstairs to clean up.

Delphine brushed her damp curls, having already pulled on a pair of loose fitting boxers she’d been borrowing from Cosima. She closed her eyes when she finished and took a deep breath. It had been a good day. Such a change from the life her and Cosima were living before she was shot. She looked at the scar in the mirror. It was an angry flash of light skin, raised in the pattern of an explosion. She remembered the feeling less than fondly and was happy to be where she was. She grabbed her toothbrush, squeezing some paste onto it, and started brushing her teeth. Cosima entered and stripped. Delphine leaned against the bathroom door frame, allowing the shorter woman to pass in to the room.

“Downstairs is cleaned up and dishes are done. Remind me to vacuum before people get here” Cosima told her, reaching for her own tooth brush.
Delphine nodded and smiled at Cosima.

“Wha’?” Cosima asked through the toothbrush in her mouth.

Delphine leaned over and spat out her mouthful of mint. “T’es adorable” she complimented before returning her brush to her mouth.

Cosima smiled and turned a deep shade of red. They made eyes at each other until Delphine was finished and rinsed her mouth. She braced a foot on her shin and crossed her arms as she leaned into the door frame, watching Cosima.

“I like that you asked Charlotte for consent before kissing her. I think it’s important that we continue that”

“Oh, tottawy” Cosima nodded, her eyebrows stitching together. She leaned over and rinsed out her own mouth, putting her tooth brush away. Cosima looked in the mirror, taking off her glasses and pumping a few squirts of makeup remover in to her palm. She lathered it between her hands and the scrubbed her face with the lather. “I think it’s so important to teach her about that now. That her body is her own and that she’s allowed to say no” Cosima noted, closing her eyes to remove her eye liner.

The doctor nodded “I agree.” Delphine’s head cocked sideways and she paused for a moment. “Do you really want to marry me?”

“Of course” Cosima told her, rinsing off her face, and grabbing the hand towel to dry it off. She tossed the towel in the hamper and pulled out a new one, hanging it up. “I want to get settled first though, I think before we do anything, we need to get through tomorrow and have a nice long talk about parenthood. Before I marry you, Delphine. I want to be on the same page.”

Delphine smiled and nodded “I’ve been thinking a lot about what you said; about us being our own people and I think I want to keep my last name”

Cosima smiled “Of course! But…would you mind if I took it?” Cosima asked “I’ve always loved it”

“Really? You would want to do that?” Delphine asked, shocked.

Cosima nodded and stepped closer “Yeah, I think Cosima Cormier sounds sexy. Besides, that would make me Dr. Cormier in a few months. That means our mail would come addressed to Dr. & Dr. Cormier”

Delphine chuckled and wrapped her arms around Cosima’s waist as she approached. “I would love for you to take my name” she told her girlfriend.

Cosima hugged her, letting their bodies lay flush together. Cosima let out a soft cough, tasting the blood but refusing to let it escape her mouth. She swallowed it down. Delphine heard but chose to ignore it, knowing that if something were wrong, Cosima would tell her.

Cosima sighed “I’m so tired.”

“I think it’s bed time for both of us” the blonde doctor commented.

Cosima nodded “Remember when you carried me for a kilometer?” she asked.

Delphine chuckled “That was fueled by adrenaline. I doubt I could do it now”
“Darn” Cosima pouted. “Guess I’ll have to walk to bed like any other human”

“I guess so” Delphine commented with a twinkle in her voice.

Cosima pulled out of the hug reluctantly “Join me?” she asked

“Right behind you, mon amour” Delphine responded.

Cosima let go and walked over, falling in to bed and turning on the reading light they’d mounted to the wall. Delphine turned out the light and joined her, sliding between the sheets to wrap an arm around Cosima’s stomach and bring their bodies flush against each other. Cosima fidgeted with her pillow for a while until she settled and sighed.

“Goodnight Delphine” she whispered.

“Goodnight Cosima” Delphine responded.

Cosima turned her head sideways and leaned back as Delphine leaned forward, capturing her lips in a soft kiss.
Chapter Notes

This plot is taking quite longer than expected to ramp up. I guess I’m very much invested in the fluffy parts of the story and building this up at least somewhat realistically. This is out a lot sooner than expected, but I’m really excited to get to the meat and potatoes so I’m writing quickly. Thanks again to everyone reviewing, following, and reading. I appreciate your time and energy. I hope that you enjoy.

The music rang out in Delphine’s ears as she felt her heart rate pick up. She smiled and waved at neighbours enjoying their morning coffees on their porches as she ran passed. She’d run this route a few times before, just happy to be back to exercising. She ran through the City Park and looped back home, feeling her lungs just barely start to burn. She got to the front lawn and took the time to slowly stretch on the lush grass, newly green after the freeze.

Her attention turned to the empty flower beds and she started planning out a garden in her head. Thoughts of her mother flooded her memory. She’d been taught to be a housewife and she’d always fought that idea. But now, now it sounded quite nice. She remembered coming home from élémentaire to her mother elbows deep in the garden, picking fresh vegetables for dinner as she bounded up the steps and entered a home full of the scent of fresh bread and cookies. She scanned her new home and could imagine her child doing the same. They could have memories like that.

Delphine took a deep breath, enjoying the slightly damp smell of vegetation. She could still see her breath, but the air was nice and balmy. Spring was just starting.

After a nice stretch, she headed inside to a still sleeping house. Quietly climbing the stairs, she made it to her bedroom and saw Cosima asleep in bed. The brunette was tangled in the sheets, seeming more like a bundle of blankets than a person. Delphine smiled and chuckled slightly, shedding her workout gear and tossing it in the hamper in the bathroom. She walked over to Cosima’s side of the bed and stooped down to leave a light kiss on her forehead before she continued to the shower.

The water felt so good on Delphine’s slightly chilled skin. She couldn’t help thinking about how great this life was. Her legs were comfortably sore from her run and she flexed them as she scrubbed the sweat from her body. She stayed in the warm stream of water a little longer than usual, enjoying this time to herself.

After her shower, Delphine blow dried her hair, deciding that she would keep it tucked back in a bandana until she was done cooking and cleaning. She exited the bathroom and opened her brand new wardrobe. She pulled a sports bra over her head and secured her chest in place, simply pulled on a pair of overalls, and finally tied the red bandana around her head - making sure that it kept the hair out of her face. She made the decision to forgo her makeup. She’d have to shower before people arrived anyways. After dropping another light kiss on Cosima’s cheek and popping her head in to Charlotte’s room to find the girl just as fast asleep as her sister, she headed downstairs to start cooking.

Charlotte was up first. Delphine heard the footsteps upstairs and pulled the breakfast plate she’d made for the girl from the oven, placing it in front of a barstool at the island she was working at. She then poured the girl a glass of water and a cup of orange juice, adding utensils to the plate and
making sure that the ketchup was accessible. She’d noticed that the girl liked to slather her eggs in it. Delphine had made sure to make a nice, complete breakfast for them as she knew they would be working hard that day. Setting up a dinner party was a lot of work.

Once she was satisfied that Charlotte’s breakfast was ready to be eaten, she turned back to the stove and stirred the pot of rice. She had bread rising and the turkey was cleaned out and ready to be stuffed with the rice and mixture she was working on. The asparagus was washed, chopped, and hanging out in some water. She took a step back and sighed, using the back of her wrist to wipe the sweat from her brow.

“Is this for me?” Charlotte asked

Delphine jumped and put a hand to her chest

“Ma belle, tu m’as surpris. You surprised me” Delphine explained, sucking in a deep breath.

Charlotte giggled “Perdu dans vos pensées? Lost in your thoughts?” Charlotte asked, taking a seat at the island.

Delphine nodded “And yes, that’s your plate.”

Charlotte smiled “Thank you. It looks great.”

Delphine winked at her “We need to feed you up so we can put you to work. We’ve got that big party tonight.”

Charlotte nodded “Oui, je vais rencontrer mes cousins. Yes, I’m going to meet my cousins.”

Charlotte saw the tea cloth covered bundle next to her and peeked under it. “Quoi d’autre cuis-tu? What else are you cooking?”

“Umm, rice, cranberry, and asparagus stuffed turkey with fresh bread and a garden salad. Tu m’as rappelé que j’ai besoin de l’aneth pour la vinaigrette. Quand Cosima se lève pourriez-vous s’il te plait sortir avec elle pour l’acheter? Elle ne peut pas dire à l’aneth du persil. You reminded me that I need dill for the dressing. When Cosima gets up could you please go with her to buy some? She can’t tell dill from parsley” Delphine asked.

Charlotte laughed around a bite of ketchup-slathered egg and nodded.

“Merci” Delphine thanked her.

She then put her efforts back on the meal. When Charlotte was done, she gave the girl the task of preparing the glaze for the asparagus, written on a recipe card. Charlotte eased in to the task.

“Musique?” Delphine asked

Charlotte nodded and smiled, carefully measuring the ¼ cup of maple syrup.

Delphine plugged her phone in to the speaker and turned on her favourite cooking playlist: a soft, French coffee house mix. They cooked side by side until a particularly upbeat song came on.

“Care to dance?” Delphine asked, extending her hand.

Charlotte nodded and took it. Delphine twirled her, giggling. The French woman then caught the young girl, dipping her down with an arm only to swoop her up again. Charlotte couldn’t stop giggling.
This is the scene Cosima came down the stairs to see.

“Well I’m glad you waited for me to have all the fun” she noted, wiping the sleep from her eyes.

Delphine looked up and twirled Charlotte again.

“You snooze, you lose” Charlotte told her sister.

Delphine laughed and winked at the girl, putting her on her feet. “I think what you sister needs is a big, sloppy, good morning kiss, right Cosima?”

Cosima nodded and finished coming down the stairs “I think that’s exactly what I need”

“I’ll leave that to you Delphine” Charlotte told her, scrunching her nose and continuing to dance on her own.

Delphine gave a small chuckle as she approached her girlfriend, placing a hand on either cheek and leaning in for a nice, soft, deep kiss. “Did you sleep well?”

Cosima smiled and dropped her head, nodding “Smells good in here. And you, Dr. Cormier look amazing in those overalls”

Delphine blushed “Why merci, mon amour. Now that you are up, we can hang the pictures. First though, you need a good breakfast. Charlotte hop up, I’ve got a treat for you too” she instructed.

Charlotte and Cosima looked at each other eagerly and got in to the barstools. First, Delphine placed Cosima’s breakfast plate in front of her, then took out the jam and a knife before pulling out a fresh loaf of bread from the oven.

Charlotte’s eyes lit up “Alright!”

“My grandmother’s recipe” she told them, slicing in to the loaf and handing a piece to Charlotte, then one to Cosima. Charlotte spread the jam on thick but Delphine took a nice big bite of the bread dry and let her taste buds bring her back to being 12 and her grandmother compensating a rainy day for a baking day. She smiled. “We can share the others, but I made this loaf especially for us.”

Charlotte inhaled her piece, licking her fingers. Cosima took one bite and savoured it.

“Well, Delphine…wow!” She praised.

Delphine smiled and put her bread in her mouth before she poured herself and Cosima coffees, handing the brunette a mug.

“This is the first piece of homemade food in our new home” Charlotte noted with a smile.

“And much more to come” Delphine reminded her, opening the oven to baste the turkey. “Speaking of, love I need you and Charlotte to run out and grab some dill for the dressing”

Cosima nodded, putting down her bacon to raise her hands “Anything you need, I’m your girl. Do you think we have enough wine?”

Delphine sighed, resting her hands on her hips “I think so. We’ve got four of the red and white. Do you think that will be enough?”

Cosima sighed “I think so. If not, I’ve got a bottle of Glenfiddich that we can crack in to.”
“And plenty of rootbeer for us kids. The good kind too!” Charlotte exclaimed happily.

Delphine nodded, pulling out the ingredients for the dessert she was making next.

“Can I help?” Charlotte asked

Delphine nodded and pulled up the step-stool they’d bought yesterday. “Want to learn how to separate eggs?”

Charlotte nodded.

“Go wash your hands” Delphine instructed.

Cosima bit her bottom lip as she watched the two. Delphine turned around and saw the look on her face.

“What?”

“You’re really sweet with her” Cosima admitted, piercing some egg with her fork and putting it in her mouth.

Delphine’s eyes twinkled and Cosima didn’t miss it. Charlotte stepped up, taking on a new height next to Delphine. Delphine turned and smiled at her, handing her an egg.

“Now you have to crack it like usual, but this time, pour the egg in to your hand, gently” she instructed.

Charlotte followed the directions, erupting in a fit of giggles when the egg hit her hand. “It’s so slimy”

Delphine smiled “And cold, n’est-ce pas?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded “Now what do I do?”

“Gently open your fingers just ever so slightly, then transfer the egg to your other hand and do the same thing. Keep doing that until all of the albumin is in the bowl beneath you. That’s it” she praised, watching Charlotte. “Now put the yolk in the clean bowl” she instructed.

Charlotte followed.

“Bien fait ma belle! Well done!” Delphine praised “Now do that 11 more times”

Charlotte nodded and reached for another egg. Cosima in the meantime had finished her breakfast and had brought her plate to the sink, starting to wash it.

“Do not worry about that, chiot. I will get it later. Just get ready to head out?” Delphine asked.

Cosima turned and sighed “Are you sure? I feel like you’re doing everything”

“I want to. I want to make sure everything is perfect for tonight. It’s Charlotte’s first time meeting a lot of her sisters and I want it to be perfect.” Delphine confessed.

“And it’s your first time seeing most of them since Dyad” Cosima surmised.

Delphine gulped and nodded “I cannot reverse their first impressions, but maybe I can leave another. I know what they think about me being with you and I want to prove to them that I am devoted to
this family; that I am devoted to our family. And that I can take care of you and Charlotte.”

Cosima let half of her mouth smile as she placed a hand on Delphine’s chest “They’ll see that
without some big fancy dinner party. They’ll come around Delphine.” Cosima paused for a minute
“I’ve asked Allison to take Charlotte for the night so we can…be alone. Have that talk that we’ve
been talking about having.”

Delphine nodded and let out an anxious sigh “Maybe you should buy another bottle of wine for
tonight…or two”

“Maybe I keep that Glenfiddich hidden for just the two of us?” She suggested.

Delphine simply nodded, putting her hands on her hips and dropping her head to her feet.

“Hey, nothing you say can change this, okay?”Cosima attempted to reassure.

Delphine just swallowed hard and nodded.

Cosima kissed her cheeks “So you need Basil?”

Delphine chuckled “Dill. This is why Charlotte is going with you”

“Oh, so she’s my babysitter…I see” She teases.

Charlotte looks over and smiles, then holds her hands up “I’m done”

Cosima laughed and grabbed a tea towel, wrapping it around her dripping hands. She wiped the egg
off as best she could.

“You know she’s taller than you on that stool” Delphine teased.

“I am?” Charlotte asked, looking at Cosima “I am! Haha!”

Cosima shook her head “Hey, I like being short. Probably as much as I like having Delphine around
to reach things on the top shelf for me”

Delphine laughed and shook her head at Cosima “Maybe I should start hiding things up there”

Cosima stuck her tongue out at her girlfriend then turned to her sister “Let’s go get washed up and
leave stretch to her cooking”

Charlotte nodded and they both headed upstairs.

The house was alive with noise; from the jazz playing softly in the background, to the knives
clinking on plates, and the laughter around the table. Everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves.
Delphine sat back in her chair, finished with her dinner. She had a glass of wine in hand and every
muscle in her body was sore from a day of hard work. She leaned over to peek at the kids, sitting
around the coffee table to eat their dinner at what they had dubbed “the Royal Court”. Needless to
say, they had gotten in to the costume chest and were breaking in the new threads. Delphine then
turned her attention to Donnie and a very pregnant Helena laughing at the stupidest jokes that he’d
been making all night. Allison had her head bent with Felix, and Sarah, Cosima, and Mrs. S seemed
to be talking logistics. She sipped her wine and noticed that most plate were completely clean, save
for Helena’s. She snapped out of it when she noticed Helena and Donnie looking at her.

“You cook nice Del-pheene.” Helena told her.
Delphine smiled “Thank you, I am glad that you are enjoying it”

“I enjoy a fourth plate, yes?” Helena asked.

Delphine nodded “As much as you’d like”

“Now don’t tell her that, she’ll eat you out of house and home” Allison chirped in.

“You two must be related then” Mrs. S. looked to Sarah “This one ate through three times a week market trips when she was a teenager”

Cosima chuckled “I was an eater too. Still am. Must be genetic or something.”

Delphine smiled “Well it’s a good thing that Cosima and I are financially comfortable. No doubt Charlotte will have a keen appetite as well. It is too bad Scott could not attend.”

“He’s busy with Art, yeah? He’s the main witness, the safest of us to testify” Sarah added in.

Delphine nodded “I know. I just wish he were here”

“So what’s the plan now, luv? You’re cured?” Mrs. S. asked Cosima.

Cosima nodded and smiled “Yup. And you’re looking at the plan” she looked to Delphine who was seated next to her and took her hand “We umm, we plan on getting married. Nothing’s official yet, but…we’ve been talking about it”

The table shifted uncomfortably. Everyone stopped talking and there was silence. Delphine felt her heart sink. Finally, Mrs. S. cracked a smile “Well congratulations to the two of ya! And thank you Delphine, for this lovely meal and inviting us in to your beautiful new home.”

The table rang out with thank yous, but still were unable to make up for the uneasiness at the announcement, but still Delphine raised her glass along with the others.

“May you find lots of love, trust, and prosperity” Mrs. S toasted.

Everyone clinked glasses and sipped their drinks.

Dessert was served not long after and Delphine made small talk the rest of the night, aware of Cosima’s ever present grip on her thigh. She got through a few glasses of wine before everyone had left. As Sarah and Felix bid their goodbye, Delphine was already cleaning up the kitchen.

Cosima closed and locked the door behind them and walked back in to see her girlfriend, on the verge of tears. She walked over, blinking fast and pulled Delphine in to a hug.

“I’m so sorry” she whispered “Leave the mess. I’ll get it in the morning”

Delphine held her tightly nodded as she let the tears fall “I don’t know why I thought it would be different. I just wanted…family”

“I know. They’ll just…need time. Tonight was perfect Delphine. You made a beautiful meal and I know that Charlotte appreciated it. She had so much fun tonight with Kira and Gemma and Oscar. You made tonight really special for that little girl”

Delphine nodded and stepped back, wiping the tears from her face.

“And wow, that seven layer cake! Can I put in a request for my birthday?” She asked, trying to
lighten the mood.

“Of course” Delphine told her.

Cosima pouted “I don’t like seeing you sad” she said, rubbing Delphine’s hip “How about I draw us a nice bath? We put on a little music, have a little more wine and just soak together.”

Delphine swallowed hard “There is something that I need to tell you…I’ve needed to tell you”

“Well tell me when we’re neck deep in rice milk and mallow bubbles” Cosima suggested.

“No. Cosima, I think you should sit down” Delphine insisted.

Cosima gulped and nodded, pulling out a barstool and doing as instructed. Delphine shook her hands, trying to shake out the nerves as she paced back and forth.

“I really don’t want this to all go away because of what I’m about to tell you. I was…trying to protect you” Delphine stopped and turned to Cosima, bending over and leaning her crossed arms against the island, standing opposite her girlfriend. She rested her chin in them and did her best to hold back the tears of fear “I don’t want to lose you”

Cosima sighed and reached out, placing her hands on Delphine’s forearms “You’re not going to lose me. I told you, there’s nothing you could say that would…”

“I psychologically tortured Shay” Delphine blurted out, cutting Cosima off.

She waited, searching Cosima’s face for a sign of how she would react. Cosima gave her nothing. She just sat there, expressionless.

“Please, say something” Delphine begged.

Cosima closed her eyes and took a deep breath “Why?”

“You told me that she had tipped Castor off to the book. I thought that she had betrayed you.” Delphine stood up and rubbed her face. “I was scared for you, who knew what she’d tell Castor…what she’d already told them about you and your sisters. I needed to find out what she had. So I went to her apartment and…threatened to kill her” Delphine swallowed, feeling the shame that had been weighing on her for months “make it look like a suicide. I would have done anything to protect you and Allison, and Sarah.”

Cosima nodded, her nostrils flaring as she turned this truth over in her head; it made her own secret weigh heavier. She lowered her eyes and took a deep breath.

“Delphine, I’m sick…again” she admitted.

Delphine stopped in her tracks and looked at Cosima “What do you mean? We cured you” Cosima nodded, her nostrils flaring as she turned this truth over in her head; it made her own secret weigh heavier. She lowered her eyes and took a deep breath.

“Delphine, I’m sick…again” she admitted.

Delphine stopped in her tracks and looked at Cosima “What do you mean? We cured you” Cosima shook her head, the tears now falling freely “Yesterday, I started coughing up blood again. It didn’t work and now I’m scared because…there’s nothing left to do” She wiped her running nose with her sleeve and hugged herself. “I hate that you were ever a person who could do that to someone but…I need you now. I need the person you are now.” She admitted, shaking slightly as she cried.

Delphine walked over to her side and wrapped her up in her arms. She’d felt her heart sink to the bottom of her stomach the moment Cosima had made her confession. She held the girl to her,
rubbing her back slightly as Cosima curled in to Delphine’s warmth.

“We’ll find another way” Delphine told her.

Cosima just nodded “I’m so scared Delphine.”

“I know, mon petit chiot. I know. But I won’t let you die, do you hear me?” she asked.

Cosima nodded.

“How about that bath?” Delphine suggested.

Cosima simply nodded against her again as she let herself be helped up and walked upstairs.
Delphine didn’t know how long she’d been watching Cosima sleep; she’d been so wrapped up in her own thoughts. A lot had come to light tonight; they had told each other everything. Delphine had not held anything back from her girlfriend and she felt the same was true of Cosima. She ran a gentle hand over Cosima’s exposed shoulder, taking a deep breath. Sleep would not come for her tonight, she knew that.

Cosima had taken everything surprisingly well. Perhaps she had come to terms with the person Delphine was before tonight. Delphine assured her that everything had been absolutely necessary. She’d refused to apologize for any of it and had let Cosima know that she would do it all again if necessary. Cosima seemed to understand that.

Delphine extracted herself from Cosima’s embrace, tucking the duvet up under the dreaded woman’s chin and planting a soft kiss on her temple before heading downstairs.

She poured herself another glass of wine and took a seat in the main floor’s office. The large window peered out in to a silent street, lit intermittently by the glow of the streetlamps and the porch lights some residents left on. She opened her brand new computer, complete with new accounts for everything.

The French woman poured over research, keeping an eye on the time. She eventually brought two bottles of wine in to the office and let herself indulge. The moment 4am rolled around, she sent out a Skype call to Cal who was still in Iceland. To her delight, his face popped up.

“Ah, Delphine! Isn’t it” he peered at the clock on his computer “4am there?”

She nodded “I have some urgent business to conduct. Do you think you could help me break in to Susan Duncan’s system?”

His eyebrows rose as he sipped his coffee “Hello to you too. Yeah, I’ll just umm, grab my gear. Hold on for a moment”

Delphine nodded “Thank you”

Cal got up and left the frame. Delphine ran her hands through her hair and sighed, feeling the emotional and physical exhaustion take over. As she waited, she took the time to finish her current glass of wine and pour another. For some reason, she wasn’t feeling the effects of the alcohol the least bit.

Cal walked back in frame, carrying a heavy duty laptop and it snapped Delphine out of her own mind.

“Alright, it looks like Duncan’s network is unmanned at the moment. Just sitting behind some police firewalls. She gave up the data” Cal looked up, amazed

“Non! It’s not possible she wouldn’t….” Delphine whispered.

Cal typed away and looked up at Delphine “I’m in. Where do you want it sent?”
“Can they trace it?” She asked

“No. I’m making a copy and infecting it with a self-destruct. The moment I hit enter, it will delete itself from Duncan’s cloud and a copy will be where you want it. You’ll need something big…some kind of large amount of storage. An e-mail won’t do.”

“Hold on” Delphine told him, opening a new browser and heading to her old DYAD cloud. She sent him the information. “Will that do? Can you hide it?’

“Yes, this will work. I’ll have to split it and hide it from the main cloud. I can give it self-destruct options so that once you get the data to a local drive, all trace of it will disappear from the cloud. Do you have a hard drive on hand?” he asked.

She rummaged through the drawer of her desk, pulling two out.

“I’ve got 3 terabytes of storage” she told him

He nodded ‘Way more than enough. Okay, I’m going to transfer now. Included in the cloud file will be an encryption program. Download that first and run it. It will hide your machine during the download. Once that is installed and running, then download the content. The moment it is done downloading, uninstall the software.”

She nodded “Thank you Cal. I really appreciate this. When are you coming to Toronto?”

“As soon as I get this place sold” he informed her. “And I can buy Sarah and Kira a home. Maybe we’ll be neighbours.”

She sighed ‘I’d like that. It’s been… tough. The family is not that fond of me.”

He smiled and let out a little laugh “You need an outlaw pal. Cowboys on the outside of it”

She chuckled “I could have used one last night.”

“And Cosima, how is she?” he asked.

Delphine dropped her head and shook it “This is for her. The cure…was not what we had hoped.”

“You’re hoping that you can find another way, with all the information at hand. Smart.” Cal noted.

Delphine nodded “Thank you”

“My pleasure, Finny” he told her, using the nickname he’d given her during their stay. He always joked that when it came to Cosima, the moment something was wrong she’d flip around like a fish out of water.

She chuckled “I do not know why I find that nickname so endearing. It will be nice to have you around.”

“It will be nice to be there. How’s Kira?” he asked

Delphine nodded “She’s good. The cousins had a great time last night. They all ended up at Allison’s for a sleepover. No doubt they’re in sugar comas right now and have Allison scrubbing every surface”

“Good. It’s about time they get to be kids” Cal affirmed.
Delphine nodded “Thank you again Cal. I cannot express my gratitude”

“Anything you need. We’re family now” he told her. “Be well Delphine and let me know if there’s anything else I can do to help.”

She nodded “Of course. Have a great day Cal”

“You too and, get some sleep Finny, you’ve got the bags starting up” he teased.

She smiled “I will. Bye”

He waved and hung up.

Delphine laughed to herself for a moment. Maybe the rest of the family disliked her, but at least she’d have a brother in law on her side. Family he’d told her. She took a deep breath, and then set in to work.

She ignored the sun rise as she looked over document after document, study after study, test after test; searching for any grain of hope.

The door opened and arms wrapped around her neck “Have you been up all night?” Cosima whispered

Delphine nodded “I could not sleep.”

“What is this?” she asked, rubbing Delphine’s chest as she let her chin rest on the blonde’s shoulder.

“Susan Duncan’s data. All of it” Delphine told her.

“Woah, Batman! How did you get this?” She asked, letting go of Delphine and kneeling next to her at the desk, getting a closer look at the screen.

“Cal helped. Susan gave it all up to the police” she told Cosima, sitting back in her chair and gently rubbing her own lips with her index finger as her chin sat in the crook of her thumb.

Cosima turned back, wide eyed.

“Don’t worry, we took precautions” she informed her.

Cosima took a deep breath “Can we trust it?” she asked, her eyes never leaving the screen. “If she gave it up willingly, there’s a good change it’s been tampered with”

Delphine nodded, reaching out to play with the back of Cosima’s head “That’s a chance we’re going to have to take. We don’t have a choice.”

Cosima turned to Delphine, biting her bottom lip. She reached out and wrapped her arms around Delphine’s neck. Delphine pulled her in, getting Cosima to sit in her lap. Delphine kissed her face.

“Thank you for last night” Cosima told her, taking her hand and watching her hand play with Delphine’s fingers as she laid her head on the blonde’s shoulder.

Delphine wrapped an arm around Cosima’s waist and watched their hands as well “I think we both needed it”

Cosima nodded and snuggled deeper “I feel so much better about us now, knowing everything. Delphine, I love you so much that it hurts.”
Delphine took Cosima’s hand in hers firmly “I know how you feel. Il y a des fois quand tu es proche où je te jure que mon coeur éclatera dans des millions de petites étoiles. There are times when you're near where I swear my heart will explode into millions of little stars.”

“That sounded like it sounded beautiful” Cosima told her, chuckling.

Delphine smiled “I have a hard time expressing how I feel about you at all, and even though I am used to English now, I barely have the words in French. I could translate but, I feel like it would lose its meaning- its essence.”

Cosima smiled “Maybe one day I’ll catch on to all of this French speak. I’m starting to.”

“Oh yeah?” Delphine asked

Cosima nodded “Like, I know that amour is love and coeur is heart. What are eatwholes?” she asked.

Delphine chuckled “I think you mean étoiles. Those are stars.”

Cosima smiled “I like eatwholes better.” She took a deep breath and buried her face in Delphine’s neck, resting her forehead against it. “I like this, just sitting with you”

“You mean sitting on me?” Delphine teased.

“You’re comfy” Cosima complimented. “I might not know what you say in French, but Delphine I feel it.” She closed her eyes “I feel it deep in my core”

“Then you know exactly how I feel” Delphine told her.

Cosima nodded and slowly stood up from her super comfy chair. She extended her hand to Delphine “Come. You need to sleep”

“Cosima, I don’t think…” Delphine protested.

“Charlotte: someone will have to pick her up in a few hours” Cosima joked.

“I’ll pick her up. Anyways, do you think that you’re in any condition to drive?” she asked, glancing to the empty wine bottle. “Work will be there after a few hours of sleep. I’ll look it over in the meantime. And I’ll be here and kicking at least until you get up” Cosima joked.

“That is not funny” Delphine told her shaking her head.

Cosima nodded “I know.”

Delphine conceded and stood up, letting Cosima lead her upstairs to their room. She sat on the edge of her side of the bed and let Cosima gently undress her to her boyshorts. Cosima crawled in bed herself, wrapping herself around Delphine.

“It’s your turn to be little spoon for once” she directed Delphine.

Delphine nodded and felt Cosima wrap her hand onto her belly. Delphine put her hand on top of it. She started drifting off immediately in the safety of Cosima’s arms, her mind winding down. She could feel Cosima’s heart beating against her back softly. Her mind drifted with her body, thinking about the hand over her stomach and how one day, it would be resting over a small bump that would
grow with the life inside of her. She had an idea, a stroke of brilliance, asking herself why she hadn’t thought of it before. Just as she told herself to get up, her body rebelled and carried her off to sleep.

Cosima snuggled with her until her clone phone vibrated. She rolled over and checked it.

It was a text from Allison: The kids are up and I’m making breakfast. Do you and Delphine want to join us?

Cosima texted back: She just got to sleep. It was a bit of a rough night but I’ll be there in 30 minutes.

Cosima got up, causing Delphine to whimper and reach for her in her sleep. Cosima smiled and walked over to her, kissing her hair.

“I’m going to get Charlotte. I’ll be back soon. You should sleep” she whispered to the blonde woman.

Delphine just nodded and curled back up. Cosima busied herself with getting dressed, just pulling on a pair of sweats and an oversized sweater. She then wrote Delphine a note, leaving it along with two Tylenol and a glass of water on her bedside table before heading out to the car.

Charlotte was sitting next to her cousins, who were all playing Lego avengers on the Xbox, waiting for Allison to be finished with breakfast.

“You’re so lucky you get to live with Auntie Cosima. She’s so cool. Are Cosima and Delphine your mommies?” Gemma asked.

Oscar bumped her.

“What? I Gertie in my class has two mommies.” Gemma clarified.

Charlotte bit her lip and shook her head “Cosima’s my sister.”

“But then how are you our cousin?” Oscar asked.

“I’m not. I’m your aunt, but I don’t like it. I’d rather be your cousin” she told him

He accepted that answer and turned back to the game.

“Gemma, be careful!” Kira warned, pointing on the screen just in time for the younger girl to avoid one of the villains. Kira then leaned to Charlotte “Don’t worry. I know that Cosima wishes she was your mom as much as you do” she told her.

“She does?” Charlotte asked.

Kira nodded.

“How do you know?” Charlotte wondered.

“I just do. I feel things from my mom and my aunties. From you too” Kira informed her “It’s okay, I won’t tell. I just thought you should know.”

“What about Delphine?” Charlotte asked.

Kira shrugged, looking back to the screen “I can’t feel her. All I know is that Cosima loves her very very very much. Almost as much as she loves you.”
Charlotte smiled as Gemma turned to them “You’re whispering secrets.”

“No we’re not” Charlotte countered.

“Come on, I want to know” Gemma demanded, hitting the pause button.

“We were talking about how Charlotte and I want to play soccer” Kira covered.

“Really? But Charlotte’s leg” Oscar intervened.

Charlotte shrugged “If Delphine can cure Cosima, then she should be able to help with my leg.”

“Oh yay! That would be so much fun!” Gemma excitedly shouted.

Charlotte turned to Kira and smiled.

“Kids, pancakes!” Allison called downstairs.

“My mommy makes the best chocolate chip pancakes! Come on!” Oscar told the others as him and his sister got to their feet and raced upstairs.

Kira and Charlotte stood up and Charlotte turned to Kira “I think that you’re my best friend”

Kira smiled “I think you’re mine”

They climbed the steps hand in hand “Are you really gonna go to the University?” Kira asked.

Charlotte nodded “I’m majoring in Geology”

“What’s that?” Kira asked.

“The study of rocks” Charlotte told her as they sat down.

“Could you teach me some time?” Kira wondered.

Charlotte nodded “Sure.”

“You should come to Bailey-Downs” Oscar told her from his spot at the table. “It would be nice to have another friend”

“I’m going there next month” Kira told him as her and Charlotte sat down as well, joining Oscar and Gemma.

“Maybe I could go too” Charlotte told them.

“What grade would you be in?” Gemma asked.

“I don’t know.” She confessed. She had never been in a school where she was part of the grade system.

“Well, you’re 8 like me and Kira. So you’d probably be in Grade 3.”

Gemma pouted “I’m only in grade 1”

“Yeah but you get the fun play equipment still” Oscar consoled her “and you have lots of friends at school”
Allison started serving them their pancakes, in the shapes of their names. She even used a different coloured batter for each letter. She then placed little ramekins of syrup next to each of them.

“There. Perfect for little hands. And remember, sticky hands get washed as soon as you’re done” she instructed.

Charlotte giggled as she looked at her pancakes “Thank you Allison. This is so cool”

Allison smiled wide and stopped to look Charlotte in the eye “Why thank you Charlotte. You, young lady have impeccable manners.”

Charlotte beamed as there was a knock at the door. Allison opened it, revealing a smiling Cosima.

“You have the most perfect timing. We were just about to get started” Allison told her, holding the frying pan away from their bodies as she hugged her sister.

“Auntie Cosima!” All the kids got to their feet and rushed towards her.

Cosima chuckled and gave them each a hug, each kid talking over the other, trying to tell her all the cool things they’d done. When she got to Charlotte, she stooped down and looked her in the eye, taking her hands.

“How about you? Did you have a good time?” Cosima asked her.

Charlotte nodded “We slept in a blanket fort”

Cosima chuckled “I’m sure your…” she stopped herself from saying auntie “I’m sure Allison really appreciated that”

Charlotte giggled.

Allison butted in “Actually I didn’t mind. Charlotte made sure they cleaned it up.” She then plated pancakes for the four grown-ups, even though it would be a while before Helena and Donnie woke up.

“Nice one, Char. Way to get on her good side” she praised, patting Charlotte’s shoulder. “Go finish your breakfast there, mini me.”

Charlotte nodded and went back to the table.

“Well now we see who the cool aunt is” Allison enviously teased.

Cosima chuckled and plopped down at the island in front of a mass of pancakes “We all know its Helena. They just like me because I’m the big, mysterious lesbian”

“Do not say that word in my house. It sounds so dirty”

“Lezzzbian” Cosima purred, giggling.

“Cosima” Allison chastised.

Cosima chuckled, taking a bite of her breakfast.

“So, how was last night with…” Allison asked, taking a seat next to her. The kitchen was already clean and the pancakes were all neatly stacked on a plate.
“You can say her name, its okay. She’s not like Voldemort or something” Cosima informed Allison

“Volde-who? Anyways, it doesn’t matter. You said last night was rough?” Allison asked. “Did she…?”

“What?” Cosima asked confused, all of a sudden, clueing in to what Allison meant. “Oh, god no, Ally. We just talked. I learned a lot last night. That’s not to say that I’d mind if she did…I mean if it was consensual of course”

Allison turned bright red and didn’t make eye contact.

“Come on, you can’t tell me you and Donnie have never done that” Cosima said, bumping elbows with her sister.

“We have and that’s all I’m going to say about it” Allison spoke quickly as she carefully buttered her top pancake with some form of yuppie low fat coconut oil.

“Allison, the dominatrix” Cosima teased. “I can totally see that. I bet he loves it”

Allison turned an even deeper shade of red.

“Well no, we umm, haven’t yet. Not since…before” Cosima admitted. “I wasn’t ready but, I think I finally might be”

“Yeah, and that’s something that’s good. Yes. That’s good. I’m happy for you” Allison tried to convince herself.

Cosima sighed “You know she’s a very kind and generous person, Ally. She’s different than you all see her”

Allison nodded “I guess, but I can’t seem to get passed the cold hard B that she was to you. And I don’t know how you can either.”

“We talked about it all. She went back, Allison. She went back for Charlotte and Rachel and Sarah” Cosima reminded her.

“And why did she do that?” Allison’s head snapped to Cosima. The kids went quiet, turning their attention to them. Allison smiled at them “Sorry. Go ahead, eat your breakfast children.” They listened and Allison lowered her voice again. “Why would she go back for Rachel? The biggest B of them all. Do I need to remind you that she stabbed Sarah and wants us all dead.”

“Because she’s one of us, Allison, whether we like it or not.” Cosima took a deep breath “Look, I made her promise me that she would love all of us the same. The things she did, Allison…she did some hard things to keep us safe. I know that now. And we made her job impossible. She’s devoted her life to making sure that we’re happy and safe. I can’t fault that”

Allison nodded and took a chaste bite of her own breakfast, chewing thoroughly before swallowing “Ok, ok Cosima. Maybe I’m being unfair. I really care about you and Charlotte. She’s a great girl.”

“I know Ally. You and Delphine have the same motives; just trust me on this one. And maybe cut her some slack? She was pretty upset about last night”

“About what? We were nothing but gracious and kind to her” Allison asked, cutting up her pancakes viciously now.
Cosima raised her eyebrows “You were gracious and kind about our announcement?” she asked, and then put some pancakes in her mouth “I’m just saying, she was hurt. She put a lot of work in to last night and you all kind of treated her like she was the devil. Even for those couple minutes. It cut deep”

Allison put down her utensils and nodded “You’re right. I’ve been feeling bad about that all night. It was just really unexpected.”

“Our life has been a series of unexpected events, but I won’t apologize for my heart. I want her to be my wife. And I want you all on board with that. We’re a family, and she’s part of that” Cosima explained.

Allison rubbed her forehead “Okay. You know what? How about the three of you join us for dinner and a movie here Wednesday night?” Allison turned to Cosima “I want to make it up to her.”

Cosima hugged Allison “Thank you”

Allison rubbed her back “It’s the least I can do. Besides, I think the kids get along”

Cosima looked over at the table to see the kids spelling out and laughing at the nonsense word their left over pancakes made, each trying to pronounce it and erupting in giggles.

“I think you’re right” she told Allison.

Cosima took the last bite of her pancakes and stretched in the chair “We should get home. Delphine got her hands on Susan Duncan’s data and I promised I’d go over it. Also, I’m on kitchen clean up after last night”

“Oh, give me a second” she said, getting up and stooping to grab something from under the sink. She came back, handing Cosima a dollar store spray bottle full of a clear liquid with a beautifully pinterest-like label on it that read ‘Ally’s Magic’.

Cosima looked at Allison confused.

“It’s my own recipe. Non-toxic and chemical free. Completely biodegradable. But most importantly it works like magic. Use it on anything and everything: grass stains, counters, stuck on grease, burnt pans. A little goes a long way.”

Cosima chuckled “How very housewife of you” she teased then leaned in, giving her another hug “Thanks Ally, I’m sure it’ll help”

“I just want us all to be happy and safe” Allison told her. “And no one is happy about cleaning stuck on grease, especially when it’s left to stew overnight.”

Cosima laughed and she stood up “Thanks for breakfast too. Stellar cakes of the pan!”

Allison smiled “Any time. I love making breakfast. I’m pretty sure it’s what Donnie stuck around”

“You sure that it wasn’t the latex cat suit?” Cosima teased, just in time to see Allison go red again before she turned to the kids. “Alright, rock girl, ready to head home?” Cosima asked Charlotte.

Charlotte nodded. Cosima turned her head to look at the word they’d spelt.

“It says ralaeo” Kira told her.

“No, it’s Leoara!” Oscar argued.
“Hold on guys, I’ve got this” Cosima told them, taking over and rearranging the letters.

Charlotte instantly started to chuckle and then Cosima bumped her. “Wait, before I finish, let me get my niece and nephew good byes” she cleverly told them.

They each gave her a hug and then she put the last few letters in place, grabbing Charlotte’s bag. All of the kids started trying to pronounce the word she’d spelled out. She’d gotten out the door when she heard:

“Mommy, what’s an areola?” from Gemma.

“COSIMA!” Allison yelled after her.

Her and Charlotte giggled as they got in the car.

“Go, go, go!” Cosima urged, getting in and buckling up.

Allison peeked her head out of the door and started walking out, waving a wooden spoon.

“You buckled up?” Cosima asked.

“Yup. Go Cosima!” Charlotte urged.

Cosima pulled out of the driveway as Allison had stepped off the porch. She drove away.

“Bitch!” Allison expressed before heading back in to the house.

Cosima drove, laughing and coughing.

“Why is she so mad about the name of a body part?” Charlotte asked.

Cosima caught the blood on the sleeve of her shirt and wiped her mouth as she turned on to the main street.

“Some people are weird like that” she told the girl.

Charlotte shrugged “Kira’s my best friend now” she told her sister.

“Yeah? That’s good. I’m glad you had fun” she told her, coughing again into her elbow.

“Are you okay?” Charlotte asked, concerned.

Cosima nodded “Umm…yeah.” She told the girl “Must just be a cold”

Charlotte accepted that and looked out the window “Can I go to Bailey-Downs with my cousins?” she asked.

“I thought you wanted to go to the University with me?” she asked.

“I do, but everyone at University is going to be old” Charlotte noted.

Cosima chuckled “Hey!” the coughing started again.

“You know what I mean. There aren’t going to be any kids. Besides, I’ve never been to a real school before” she admitted, sadly.

“That’s because you’re wicked smart. Don’t you think you’d be bored? The worst thing for your
education is to get bored” Cosima informed her “Trust me”

“I could keep doing my degree online and just do that work in the normal classes, while the other kids do their work. Then I could go to recess with them and gym class and have lunch like a regular kid. And maybe if…if Delphine can fix my leg…maybe I can play soccer for Auntie…for Allison’s team. Or figure skate.” Charlotte suggested.

Cosima nodded “I think it’s a great idea. We’ll talk about it as a family and see what we can do, okay?”

Charlotte nodded and smiled “Thank you”

“Of course…” Cosima stopped to cough, noticing that her sleeve was quickly covering in blood. She focused on getting home.

Charlotte stayed silent the rest of the ride.

Cosima felt herself get lightheaded a few blocks from home. She pulled over immediately.

“Why are we stopping?” Charlotte asked.

“I just need some…” Cosima stepped out of the car, seeing double “…fresh…air.” Cosima stumbled, clinging to the side of the car. She fumbled with her phone, getting it in her hand as she felt the blood drip from her face. “Charlotte, call Delphine” she managed to choke out as her body went limp and the world went dark.

Charlotte felt everything in her panic. She rushed to Cosima’s side and saw the blood.

“Cosima! Cosima!” she screamed, feeling the tears well up in her eyes.

A neighbour came over as Charlotte felt for a pulse.

“Are you alright, little girl?” she asked, before seeing Cosima “Oh good God! Im gonna go call 911”

“Go tell Del…my mom! Go tell my mom. We live two blocks down. 248 Lippincott.” Charlotte told the woman.

When she didn’t feel a pulse on Cosima’s neck so she wiped the blood away from her nose and put a hand there, trying to feel for breathing. There was nothing. With her arms covered in her sister’s blood, she turned Cosima on to her back. She knew what to do. She’d been certified since she was four. She started chest compressions.

“Tell the dispatcher that she’s unresponsive and doesn’t have a pulse; suspected heart attack. They’ll get here faster.” Charlotte told her.

The woman looked at her, horrified and nodded, running down the block as she dialed 911. Charlotte turned her attention to Cosima, refusing to let the tears fall. She had to stay strong. She had to keep pushing down. It took all of her weight to get her sister’s chest compressed enough to be worthwhile.

Delphine had been in the office, looking over the data when she saw a woman running towards the house. She recognized this woman from her morning runs. She got up and ran to the door, swinging it open.

“Yes. 166 Borden. Hurry. She’s not breathing” the woman spoke to the phone.
Delphine’s eyes went wide and she was already putting her shoes on. The woman hung up and looked at her.

“Your daughter sent me” the woman told her, out of breath. “There’s a woman, bleeding. She’s not breathing. The kid started doing CPR”

Delphine forgot about her other shoe and took off running. She knew where the woman lived. She sprinted as fast as she could towards the address, shoving people out of her way. When she got there she saw Charlotte, blood up to her elbows, doing chest compressions on a completely still Cosima. A crowd had gathered. She felt the horror rise inside of her as she moved as quickly as her body would allow, sliding in next to Charlotte.

“I’ve got it now, let go Charlotte. It’s okay” she instructed.

Charlotte let go, curling up next to Delphine as she took over CPR. She could feel Delphine shake and could hear her losing control as she sobbed.

“No. You’re not allowed to leave me. Come on Cosima! Charlotte, how long?” she asked.

“13 rounds of compressions. She just…she pulled over and got out and…I’m sorry. I should have…” Charlotte finally let the tears fall, gripping Delphine’s waist.

Delphine never wavered from her compressions “It’s not your fault. She is not going to die. You’re going to be okay, Cosima. Reviens à moi, mon amour. J’ai besoin de tes étoiles. S’il vous plait, Cosima. Mon ciel serais si foncée sans vos étoiles. Comeback to me, my love. I need your stars. Please, Cosima. My sky would be so dark without your stars.”

Delphine kept compressing and talking to Cosima until the paramedics arrived and took over. The moment the woman’s hands were covering hers, she let go. The world flooded back to her.

“She’s been unresponsive for 10 minutes. No pulse, no signs of breathing. She has a rare cancer that has taken over her lungs” Delphine told them, wiping her face with the back of her wrist before wrapping both of her arms around the crying girl at her side.

“Does she have a DNR?” the paramedic asked.

Delphine felt something in her snap “No, she doesn’t have a fucking DNR you piece of shit!” she spat, her face turning bright red as she physically spat out the words, saliva spraying in her anger “If you do not try to resuscitate her, I will gut you where you stand”

She was shaking and sobbing by this time, staring at Cosima’s face. She watched the paleness set in and rubbed Charlotte’s back, clinging to the girl as much for herself as for Charlotte. She stared as they jump started Cosima’s heart, whispering under her breath, praying the woman would return to her. Her eyes clung to the ECG monitor, every moment dependent on a certain pattern of waves appearing. She saw the whole life she’d imagined with Cosima flash in front of her. There would be no laughing children, there would be no wedding, there would be no making love under the stars, there would be no large family Christmases, there would be nothing. She held Charlotte a little tighter, clasping a hand over her mouth as she felt her entire world crumble.

Time froze still as she watched them try to shock Cosima back to life. She watched as the body that once contained the love of her life jump as the electricity ran through it. She sobbed as her entire body revolted against the horror. She made sure to hold Charlotte to her chest, not letting her see what was happening as she turned her head to the side to vomit. Everything in her wanted out of this situation.
Charlotte shut her eyes tightly, burying herself into Delphine. She didn’t want to see. She didn’t want to think. She just wanted to cry. She started mentally listing off every type of rock and mineral she could think of. Obsidian, granite, quartz, pumice…

Delphine tried to remember to breathe. Her breath kept getting caught in her throat. She couldn’t get it down, she couldn’t get it up. She mentally scolded herself for all that time away from Cosima. All that time she didn’t just say fuck it and run back to Cosima. All that wasted time. She could not take her eyes off Cosima’s face, just praying that the girl would make the smallest movement.

Then, it was there. Cosima took in a deep breath and was swarmed by paramedics. Delphine kissed Charlotte’s head and gently got out from her grip. She joined the paramedics.

“I’m a doctor, let me through” she told them. “Somebody get me a cannula.” She held Cosima’s face “It’s alright. I’m here Cosima.” She held back her tears and took the plastic tubing she was handed. She fit the pieces inside of her girlfriend’s nose and felt her pulse, a hand on her chest to feel her breathing. She nodded and looked to the paramedics “Toronto General?” she asked.

One of the paramedics nodded as they put her on a stretcher. Delphine held out her hand for Charlotte and the girl immediately took it. She got them both in the ambulance. The moment Cosima was in, Delphine took her hand, wrapping her free one around Charlotte.

“You did such a good job, Charlotte. Can I kiss you?” Delphine asked.

Charlotte nodded and Delphine showered her face with kisses, holding her tightly. “You saved her life. Do you know that?”

Charlotte nodded “Is she gonna be okay?” Her eyes, glued to the pasty faced Cosima.

Delphine sniffled “I’m not sure, but the doctors are going to take good care of her.”

“I guess the cure didn’t work” she noticed, sadly.

Delphine pulled back the girl’s long, loose hair. “No, mon petit, it didn’t.”

“That means I’m still sick too” she noted.

Delphine hugged her “I’m going to find a way to cure you both.”

The paramedic gave them a look, confused. Delphine shot him daggers. He looked away.

They finally got to the hospital and Delphine and Charlotte got out. Cosima was rushed in to the ER. They were told to wait in the waiting room. Delphine never let go of Charlotte. She pulled out her cell phone and called Felix.

“Delphine? Did I forget something last night?” he asked.

“Félix, I need you to go to the house and grab my medical bag out of the den. It’s black.. umm… black…cuir…black leather! And has my initials carved in the handle. And lock up, please?” Delphine pleaded through tears.

“What happened?” he asked, immediately changing his tone. He was already grabbing keys off the table and slipping out of his flat.

“I had to..I had to run out. It’s Cosima. Call the family? She’s at Toronto Gen.”

“Is she okay?” he asked.
Delphine sobbed “Félix, it is bad.”

“Shit” Félix exclaimed “Okay. Don’t worry about a thing, uncle Félix has you covered. Just take care of Charlotte. Is she with you?”

“Yes” Delphine answered.

“I’m on my way” Félix told her.

“Thank you” Delphine told him

“Don’t mention it” he responded.


“Bye” Félix answered.

They both hung up. Delphine could still feel Charlotte sobbing against her side. She rubbed her back.

“Do you want me to carry you?” Delphine asked, wiping her own tears.

Charlotte nodded and reached up. Delphine picked the girl up and put her on a hip, letting Charlotte wrap her arms around her neck. Delphine carried her in to the ER waiting room and took a seat, sitting Charlotte on her lap. She couldn’t help but remember just hours earlier when Cosima cuddled up in her lap. A much larger version than the current clone snuggled in to her, but Delphine took the comfort of having Charlotte nearby. She held her tightly.

“We’re going to make it through this together” Delphine whispered to her.

“If…if she doesn’t…who will I live with?” Charlotte asked. It had been on her mind.


Charlotte nodded and curled back in. Delphine rocked her. Eventually, the crying had exhausted her and she’d fallen asleep. Delphine waited. She looked at the clock. It had been 45 minutes and she’d heard nothing. She stood up, carrying the sleeping girl on her hip. She walked to reception.

“I’m here with Cosima Neihaus, I’ve been waiting and I haven’t heard anything” she told the receptionist.

“Are you family?” she asked.

“She is my girlfriend. We live together” Delphine explained.

The receptionist popped her gum “No info unless you’re family.”

Delphine’s nostrils flared as she watched the receptionist pop her gum again, giving her that apathetic look. She played over a million ways to kill this woman in her head. She felt the anger flare up, and then heard Charlotte sigh in her sleep. It snapped her out of it. She turned and went to sit down again.

Fifteen minutes later, Sarah came through the doors with Félix, Mrs. S, and Kira. They ran towards her.
“How is she?” Sarah demanded.

Delphine swallowed hard, biting her lips into her mouth and shook her head “I do not know. They won’t tell me anything. I’m not family” she explained.

“Yeah, well I am” Sarah barked, marching up to the receptionist.

Mrs. S. put a hand on Delphine’s shoulder. Felix handed her a set of keys and put her bag down next to her.

“All locked up. You know, the key on the doorframe trick is too easy. You should get a gnome or something. Your neighbour lady gave me the car keys, car’s all parked.” He said with the usual venom in his voice, and then his tone softened “I picked up these three on their way to your place. Our little madam Zostra picked up on the Cosima Charlotte vibes.”

“Thank you Felix” Delphine told him earnestly.

He sat next to her. Kira gave Delphine a big hug “Charlotte’s so scared” she noted, looking to her best friend.

Delphine nodded “She saved Cosima’s life. Started CPR a good time before I arrived. She sent someone to get me and called the ambulance and…she’s terrified I’m going to leave her”

Mrs. S. rubbed Delphine’s shoulders “She’ll be okay, luv. She’s a smart girl.”

Sarah walked over, a hand on her head. “She’s in recovery right now. They say she’s got a couple cuts and bruises, a mild concussion. But she’s goinna be alright.”

Delphine felt the tears pour in relief and she gasped for breath through them, sobbing deeper than she had yet. Sarah hugged her.

“She’s goinna be alright, Delphine” Sarah repeated.

Delphine nodded, sobbing in to Sarah’s shoulder before pulling away. “Can I see her?” she asked.

Sarah nodded “They said only 3 at a time though, so…sorry guys” she told Felix, Kira, and Mrs. S.

They nodded. Delphine turned to them “I’ll make sure you all get to see her soon” she explained.

Felix nodded “Go get your girl” he told her.

Delphine smiled “Thank you, all of you.” She stooped and picked up her bag, making sure she had a good grip on Charlotte as she stood.

They all nodded as Sarah motioned towards the doors “Come on”

A nurse was waiting and walked them to the room.

Delphine will never forget walking through that wing. Every room they passed, she expected to see Cosima. When she finally rounded that corner and saw her, she felt her heart ignite. She rushed towards her.

“Cosima” she whispered.

Cosima smiled weakly, then saw Charlotte, covered in blood “Is she okay?” she asked, her voice cracking.
Delphine nodded and leaned in, giving Cosima’s cracked, dry lips a firm kiss. One of Cosima’s hands went to Charlotte’s back, the other around Delphine.

“I thought I’d lost you” Delphine cried, breaking their kiss. She hugged Cosima.

“I’m okay. I’m right here, Delphine” she whispered back, reassuring.

Cosima looked up at Sarah and mouthed a thank you. Sarah nodded.

“I’ll give you two some time. Let me know when you’re up for visitors” she said.

Cosima let go of Delphine briefly and waved Sarah over. “Come here”

Sarah sighed and rolled her eyes, but couldn’t hide the tears that were falling as she walked over. Cosima wrapped her in a hug.

“I love you, Sarah” Cosima admitted.

“Yeah I love you too…geek” Sarah responded.

Cosima chuckled and rubbed Sarah’s back before she pulled away. Sarah nodded and left the room. Delphine took a firm hold of Cosima’s hand, stooping her head to kiss it.

“I thought I lost you. Oh mon Dieu, I can’t believe I almost…you almost…” Delphine’s eyes filled with tears as she stumbled over words.

Cosima pulled her in to a hug “I know. I’m sorry” she whispered. Cosima coughed a few times, grabbing the tissues she had been brought and put one to her mouth.

Delphine rubbed her back. “The stem cell treatment helped with the symptoms, non?” she asked

Cosima nodded “For the 10 days, yeah”

“I know it’s not a cure but…it helps” Delphine suggested, wiping away her tears.

“Please?” Cosima pleaded.

“Can I put her in bed with you?” Delphine asked

Cosima nodded and shifted over, lifting a tired arm. Delphine gently eased Charlotte down, letting her head rest on Cosima. Cosima shook her head.

“Not there” she whimpered.

“Sorry” Delphine apologized, moving Charlotte’s head off of Cosima’s chest, to her arm.

Cosima coughed hard. Delphine kept a hand on her stomach as she bent over to reach in to her bag. She pulled out a vial and turned to Cosima. She leaned in close and rubbed Cosima’s arm.

“I’m going to go find your doctor and let him know I am going to give you a dose of this” she told her. “Will you be okay with her?” Delphine asked.

Cosima nodded “Wait a minute though” she whispered with a rough voice. “Sit with me a little longer” she asked.

Delphine nodded and sat next to Cosima, lowering the railing of the bed. She reached out and
grabbed Cosima’s face in her hands, pulling her girlfriend’s forehead to her, gently touching them as they both closed their eyes. They sat like that for a couple minutes. Cosima rubbed Delphine’s forearm gently.

“Will you marry me?” Cosima asked, opening her eyes.

Delphine’s own eyes shot open to look up at her. She didn’t even hesitate “Oui. A million times yes. Mon Dieu, yes.” She smiled, closing her eyes again.

“Well I guess we’re engaged” Cosima coughed out.

Delphine nodded, leaning in to kiss the corner of her mouth as she coughed.

“Did I crash the car?” Cosima asked, not remembering anything passed driving.

Delphine shook her head “You pulled over two blocks from our house. Charlotte performed CPR and sent a neighbour to call 911 and get me” she explained.

“Way to go, kid” Cosima whispered, brushing back the girl’s hair with a hand.

Delphine smiled and nodded “I think someone earned a day full of ice cream for that one”

Cosima nodded. “She wants to go to school with her cousins. Start back with online courses. Do them in class” she relayed, just in case.

“I think that’s a great idea” Delphine told her.

Cosima was about to nod, but instead coughed. Delphine held the Kleenex for her. “I think I’m ready for that doctor now” Cosima confessed.

Delphine nodded and kissed her forehead, disposing of the Kleenex. “The family is also here to see you. Want me to send them in?” Delphine asked.

“Yeah, sure. I bet they’re worried sick. I wouldn’t want Allison to have a literal cow” Cosima joked.

Delphine smiled and ran back to her, kissing her deeply “Thank you for coming back”

Cosima nodded “For you, it was easy”

Delphine kissed her again, and then left the room to find the doctor.

Delphine walked in with the doctor and Kira, who ran up and hugged her aunt. Cosima hugged her back, rubbing her shoulder. The doctor grabbed her chart and looked it over, then nodded to Delphine, whispering to her.

“I knew you’d be okay” Kira told her.

“I’m happy you have” she paused, coughing “such confidence in me” she finished, spitting the blood into the dish she’d been given.

“Cosima, Dr. Fawkner here has approved your dose of treatment” Delphine informed her.

“Thank you Dr.” Cosima whispered.

He just nodded and left, acting like he had better things to do with his life.
“ER doctors are always so grumpy. Never enough sleep” Delphine told her, sitting back down.

“He was grumpy” Kira confirmed “Are you going to be okay for good Auntie Cosima?”

Cosima shrugged and extended her arm for Delphine as she saw her girlfriend prepping in the corner of the room. “I don’t know, but I’m okay right now.”

Kira nodded. “When can you go home?”

Delphine put her prepping down and grabbed the chart at the end of Cosima’s bed, looking it over.

“They’re just waiting for labs and your CT to come back. Probably to rule out a brain hemorrhage. Probably another 30 minutes and we should be able to get out of here” Delphine informed them.

“Thank god, I hate hospitals” Cosima sighed.

Delphine got back to her work and drew up the dose.

“Kira, distract me? I hate this part. What happened after I left today?” Cosima asked.

“Auntie Allison got so mad at that word you spelled with the pancakes. Gemma kept asking what it meant and she kept getting so mad and telling her that it was inappropriate but Oscar asked why you would write something inappropriate. So then I told them that we could look it up. It’s just the dark circle around nipples. What’s so bad about that? So then Gemma and Oscar said that their Mum might be a little coo-coo coconuts.”

“Did you spell areola with pancakes this morning?” Delphine asked

Cosima shrugged “Maybe” she replied, trying to not giggle. “I had to, the letters were staring right at me. And they had them arranged to spell like, leoara or something like that’

Delphine chuckled and shook her head as she pulled the needle out of Cosima’s arm. “You’re such a trouble maker.”

Kira giggled.

Cosima turned to Charlotte, then back to her niece “Did you guys sleep last night?”

“Yeah. For like an hour. We had a lot of fun” she admitted.

Cosima nodded “She’ll be out for a while.”

Delphine turned to Kira “How about we have everyone come see Cosima now?”

Kira nodded and Delphine stood, going to take Charlotte from Cosima. Cosima shook her head.

“I want her close” Cosima pleaded to Delphine with her eyes as well as her words.

Delphine nodded and dropped a kiss to her forehead “I’ll talk to the nurses. Get everything ready. We’ll get you home”

“Thank you” Cosima acknowledged.

Delphine walked out with Kira. Allison had arrived with the gang and Scott was there too. The moment Delphine saw Scott, her mind jogged back to that morning, right before she’d fallen asleep. She sent Gemma and Allison in, and then pulled Scott aside.
“What is it?” he asked

“I need your help. Do you have a lab?” she asked.

He nodded “Yeah. I’ve just been on a bit of a vacation, or more of a staycation.” He told her “It’s a really cool space. Excellent for a D&D play-a-thon”

“Well you might have to pause that. I need you to do something for me…today.”

“Yeah, sure. I umm, already called today off. Which genome can I sequence for you?” he asked.

Delphine gulped. She was unsure of this. She knew she should talk it over with Cosima, but she was hardly in any shape to make difficult decisions. Besides, this was the most viable path to the cure that Delphine saw.

“I need you to get me pregnant” she told him.

His eyes went wide and he got instantly hard and crossed his hands over his crotch to try and conceal it “Woah! Umm..I don’t…umm…okay”

She rolled her eyes. Men!

“No, that’s not what I meant.” She took a deep breath “Cosima’s best chance is with stem cells. The ones from the zygote were probably easily fought off by the antibodies in her system. That’s why it worked for a little to clear up the symptoms and delay the spreading. We can keep that up and delay the spread, but it is not a cure. What we need is umbilical cord blood” Delphine explained.

Scott came in to realization “You want me to clone her and implant the clone embryo in you?” he asked.

Delphine shook her head “Precisely. I’ll carry the child to term, and we can use the umbilical cord to develop a cure for all the clones.”

Scott was amazed “Even for the child herself. Delphine, that’s brilliant! And Cosima’s okay with this?”

“She can’t know, Scott. I’ll tell her once it is done” Delphine told him. “She would never agree but her life depends on it. All of their lives depend on it”

He nodded “I’ll head straight to the lab from here”

“Good. I’ll get them home, get them settled, and then I will meet you in the lab. The data is too sensitive to send online. And I’ll come with…with a sample”

He nodded and as Allison and Gemma came out. Once everyone had been in, Delphine had told them that she would keep them updated and asked Scott to bring the car around. She told him that they’d give him a ride. She tossed him the keys, and then headed to Cosima’s room. She picked Charlotte up and got Cosima into a wheelchair, despite her protests.

Delphine put Charlotte in her lap and wheeled them both out the front door.

Charlotte woke up with a groan and squinted her eyes open. She was in Cosima and Delphine’s room. She looked over and saw Cosima fast asleep next to her, and felt the firm arm around her. She smiled and snuggled in, hugging her sister’s arm like a stuffed toy. She could hear typing next to her and looked up to see Delphine, propped up in bed, typing on her computer.
“Is Cosima okay?” she whispered to her guardian.

“You are awake” Delphine noted in a whisper. “She is going to be okay. Just a mild concussion and a few contusions.”

“Good” Charlotte noted, scooting closer to Delphine. “Are you working on the cure?”

Delphine nodded, opening an arm so Charlotte could snuggle in.

“It needs to work this time” Charlotte whispered, laying her head on Delphine’s shoulder.

Delphine typed to Scott that she would be back in 30 minutes and closed her computer, setting it aside. “It will” Delphine had a look at Charlotte’s arms. The blood wasn’t all off yet. “How about I draw you a nice bath in our tub with Cosima’s bubble bath?” she suggested.

Charlotte nodded “Could you shampoo my hair though? I hate doing it”

Delphine nodded and stood up, heading to the bathroom.

She drew Charlotte a luke warm bath, adding in the bubbles and took a deep breath of their familiar smell. She then grabbed the girl a wash cloth and laid it over the tub.

“Appelle-moi quand tu m’as besoin. Call me when you need me.” Delphine instructed the girl.

Charlotte nodded and Delphine stepped out of the bathroom, closing the door. After going in to Charlotte’s room and grabbing her a clean pair of PJs, she headed back to Cosima. Setting the clothes on her nightstand, she slid in to bed next to Cosima, spooning her carefully. She softly kissed the back of her girlfriend’s neck, before resting her head against her back. Cosima took her hand, pulling it up to her chest cuddling it under her chin.

Delphine smiled, breathing deeply, trying to memorize everything about this woman. She tried to commit the way that this moment felt to her memory; how Cosima felt and how her heart felt when she was near this woman. Like millions of bursting stars, she’d said. She closed her eyes and took another deep breath. That’s exactly what it felt like; like coming home to way back when they were all just stardust floating in space.

“Delphine?” Charlotte called out.

Delphine was too caught up in Cosima to notice.

Charlotte waited for a moment and when Delphine didn’t come, she called out again.

“Maman?” she called, instinctively. As soon as the title came out, she feared Delphine’s reaction. She hadn’t meant to, it had just happened.

That got her attention. Delphine’s head popped up and her heart smiled. She got out of bed, grabbed the clothes, and headed towards the bathroom.

Delphine popped her head into the bathroom, a gigantic smile on her face.

Charlotte saw the smile and her fear gave way to excitement. A smile spread on her own face “Je suis prêt pour mes cheveux. I am ready for my hair.”

Delphine hung the clothing on the hook on the back of the door, then walked over and lowered herself to the floor, grabbing her shampoo as she did. She arranged her long limbs on the tile near the tub and squirted some shampoo in her palm, massaging it through Charlotte’s long brown hair.
As-tu jamais pensé à couper tes cheveux? Have you ever thought about cutting your hair?

Delphine asked as she worked the product in.

Charlotte nodded “Marion m’as toujours dit que c’était trop long et belle. Ce serait une honte de les couper. Marion always told me that it was too long and beautiful. It would be a shame to cut it.”

Delphine chuckled “Bien oui, c’est tellement belle! Mais ils sont vos cheveux; c’est ta décision. Of course it’s very beautiful. But it’s your hair; it’s your decision.”

Charlotte thought about that for a minute “J’aimerais bien les couper. C’est si difficile les matins et pendant mes bains et ils prennent toujours à sécher. I’d really like to cut it. It’s so hard in the mornings and during baths, and it takes forever to dry.”

Delphine finished the lather and reached for the shower head “Je vais appeler mon coiffeur. Tu l’aimeras bien. Et puis on a encore besoin de t’acheter des nouveaux vêtements. Sa serait une journée de maman et fille. D’accord? I’ll call my hair dresser. You’ll like him. And also, we still need to buy you new clothes. It’ll be a mother-daughter day. Okay?”

“Ton coiffeur va couper mes cheveux? You hair dresser is going to cut my hair?” She asked, dumbfounded.

Delphine nodded “Ce n’est pas la seconde venue. It’s not the second coming.”

“C’est pour moi. Tes cheveux sont…incroyables! It is for me. You hair is…incredible!”

That elicited a belly laugh from Delphine “Pence ta tête en arrière. Lean your head back.”

Charlotte followed the direction and Delphine rinsed her hair with the shower head. Once she had gotten all the soap out, she turned off the water.

“I’ll get you our biggest, fluffiest towel.” Delphine told her, standing up.

She went to the new shelving unit they’d picked up and grabbed a clean towel from the top shelf. She left it on the closed toilet lid and turned to leave.

“Maman?” Charlotte asked.

Delphine turned around, unable to keep the smile from her face yet again. “Oui?”

“Can I call you that from now on?” Charlotte asked.

Delphine smiled and nodded “I would like that a lot.”

“Me too” Charlotte beamed back.

Delphine walked out and closed the bathroom door. She leaned against it, her heart so happy. She was a Maman. She was Charlotte’s Maman.

Chapter End Notes

Holy long chapter! I just couldn’t stop writing. Well, the plot cat’s out of the bag here. What do you guys think about that? I told you that I wouldn’t kill her. Anyways, hope
that you enjoyed. I appreciate every single one of you who are coming on this journey with me. It’s gonna be a wild one, so hold on to your boot straps.
Playing Doctor

Well, I was hoping to get this out around dinner time for all those folks who like me, enjoy a Saturday night in. Mid-chapter I got a bit wrapped up in writing a one shot. Anyways, I hope that you enjoy this one. A little fluff, a little angst. It’s all just the usual with me. Thank you to everyone who keeps taking time out of their lives to read what I write.

Cosima’s head shot up as she heard the car pull up. She rolled back from her computer to glance sideways out of the office’s window. She saw Delphine hop out of the car and smiled. She turned back to her computer and hit the save button, shutting the top of her laptop. She stretched in her chair as the front door opened.

“We’re home” Delphine called out.

Cosima slipped her slippers on, got to her feet, and walked in to the front entryway.

“Hey” she purred, rubbing her neck. She saw Charlotte, whose hair was now cut to just below her ears and parted in the middle. “I’m digging the locks, kiddo” she told the girl, reaching out to ruffle her newly cut hair.

“Thanks. It feels so light!” Charlotte noted “Wait until you see my new wardrobe.”


“Oh, you will. Tomorrow though? I’m going to Kira’s tonight” Charlotte promised.

“Sure thing, kid” Cosima responded.

The youngest clone headed upstairs, taking the bags from Delphine to put them away.

“Well it looks like you two had a good time” Cosima cooed to her fiancée, leaning in for a kiss.

Delphine closed the gap and left a sweet kiss on Cosima’s lips, taking a bite from her lower one and holding it as she pulled away.

“Mmmm. You know I did some shopping of my own earlier?” Cosima purred.

“Oh yeah? Where’d you go?” Delphine asked.

Cosima bit her bottom lip and looked Delphine up and down, checking her out “Remember those dreams I was telling you about?” she asked.

Delphine rolled her tongue between her bottom teeth and lip, the images from the dream Cosima had relayed to her now flooding her mind once again. She cleared her throat and nodded.

“Well there may or may not be a bag upstairs on the bed” Cosima teased, raising her eyebrows.
Delphine held up a bag from la Vie en Rose, letting it swing on a single finger “Well this may or may not go with that”

Cosima felt her jaw open, imagining what Delphine could have bought from there.

“Alli’ve petit is at Félix’, I am going to take really good care of you” Delphine promised, leaning in to give a slack jawed Cosima’s neck a nibble before heading upstairs, leaving Cosima stunned and dripping wet.

Delphine skipped up the stairs, her belly full of the DavidsTea iced tea her and Charlotte had gotten at the mall. It was a great day already, and now there was the promise of indulging in Cosima’s body tonight.

She pushed their bedroom door closed as she stepped in, seeing the bag on her side of the bed. It was plain grey. She ran to it, peeking inside to see a paddle, some silk scarves, and an empty package. She pulled the package out and saw that it once housed a feeldoe, but instead of a silicone toy in the plastic, there was a note in Cosima’s distinct writing.

“I’m wearing it” it said.

Delphine groaned, feeling her juices pool and her clit twitch. She knew she had to keep this game going, get the last laugh. She stripped down and pulled on the black lace lingerie she’d bought earlier, pulling her clothing on overtop. She took the tag from the set and grabbed a pen from her bedside table, writing her own note on it. She headed back downstairs, where Cosima was dishing up slices of the pizza she’d made. Delphine made a point to keep a few portions of the dough in the freezer. Cosima wasn’t much of a cook and sometimes Delphine didn’t feel like it. This way, they didn’t have to order in; Cosima could just roll the dough out and top it. That’s what she’d done earlier. Charlotte was already sitting at the kitchen table, nibbling her pizza.

“Can Kira come spend the night tomorrow?” Charlotte asked

Cosima shrugged, turning to Delphine who nodded.

“Sure” Cosima told the girl turning back to her. “Oh, and let’s get you registered for classes this weekend too, kid.”

Charlotte nodded. Cosima handed Delphine a plate with a couple slices and Delphine kissed her cheek, handing her the tag. Cosima looked at her oddly but Delphine just went and took her place at the table.

“Did you talk to the principal at Bailey-Downs?” Charlotte asked.

Cosima opened the folded tag and looked down at it “Yeah, I umm…” she paused as she read it. Three words in neatly written cursive, overttop of a picture of a blonde wearing black lace lingerie. The three words: “So am I”

Cosima forgot what she was saying.

Charlotte waited “You what…?”

Cosima looked up “What?”

“You were saying that you did something…Bailey-Downs…the principal…?” Charlotte reminded her.
Delphine chuckled under her breath and looked up to see Cosima shooting her daggers. They were going to have some epic love making that night after all of this teasing. Delphine winked at her and saw Cosima turn bright red, starting to adjust herself below the belt. Once everything seemed to be adjusted, Cosima looked back up at Charlotte who was waiting expectantly.

“Delphine and I are going to meet with your teacher Monday and go over the plan. You should come too. You know, get a say in your own education and all” Cosima suggested.

“Okay, yeah” she agreed taking another bite from her pizza.

Delphine smiled as Cosima walked back over to the table, taking a seat. Once she saw that the brunette was settled, the French woman made eye contact and missed her mouth with the pizza, smearing sauce all over her lips. She rolled her tongue out of clean up what she could.

Charlotte started laughing at her, but Cosima watched that tongue, feeling her cunt tighten around the bulb of the toy nestled inside of her. She watched, the tightness only increasing as Delphine used a single digit to clean the rest off of her cheek and sucked it into her mouth, using her tongue to get every last drop. Cosima breathed heavily, looking towards her pizza, trying to focus on it. Her mouth filled with the memory of Delphine’s taste. Salty and sweet with a little bit of bite.

Delphine watched as Cosima struggled to sit still and decided to cut her some slack. She turned to Charlotte “Are you packed for tonight?”

Charlotte nodded “Kira said that Uncle Felix is gonna let us paint a wall!”

Delphine chuckled “Well your uncle Felix is a great artist. Make sure you get some pointers.”

Charlotte nodded and turned to Cosima “Will you walk me over after dinner?”

“Sure, kiddo” Cosima confirmed.

Delphine was unable to hold in a laugh, imagining Cosima waddling down the street with that toy in her pants. She wondered if Felix would notice.

Charlotte turned to Delphine, putting a hand on her back “Are you losing it?”

It was Cosima’s turn to laugh, trying not to spray the coke she was drinking out of her nose.

Delphine shook her head, and calmed her laughing. Charlotte looked between the two adults, so confused as they laughed. Then the women made contact. They each bit a lip. The laughing stopping.

“You guys are weird” Charlotte told them, returning her attention to her pizza.

“Yeah, yeah we are” Cosima confirmed.

Charlotte noticed the looks they were giving each other “Is this some weird sex thing that I don’t understand yet?”

“Exactement” Delphine took her turn in confirming.

“I don’t think I’ll ever understand. I’m glad I’m going to Kira’s tonight” Charlotte told them.

Cosima chuckled and winked at Delphine, grabbing her pizza and taking another bite.

As soon as they were done with dessert, Cosima walked Charlotte down to Felix’s. It was a short
walk and it wasn’t long before she was banging on his door.

Felix swung it open “Hey! Monkey number 2, nice new do!” he called as Charlotte stepped up for a hug.

Kira ran to the door and took Charlotte’s hand, pulling her in.

Cosima smiled at Felix “Hey Felix. Thanks again for watching them. They can’t seem to get enough of each other”

“We all know what best friends are like” he told her, pulling her in to a hug. He quickly pulled away and looked at her crotch. “Mummy’s packing.” He crossed his arms and leaned against the doorframe, his tongue in his cheek.

Cosima turned bright red and leaned in, whispering “Is it obvious?”

He laughed “No, I just know what I’m looking for. Big night, huh?”

Cosima shrugged, contorting her face.

“Right, well I’ll leave you too it. Make sure she fucks you right” Felix warns her.

She nods “She always does” Cosima leaned sideways to see the kids. “Hey Char, have fun tonight.”

“I will. Enjoy your sex!” She called back.

Cosima turned bright red this time and Felix couldn’t stop laughing.

“Oh! Little bit, that was genius!” he praised, closing the door and heading over to give her a high five as she giggled.

Cosima turned and started back home.

Delphine had candles lit throughout the room. A Bluetooth speaker was playing a slow, sexy playlist from her phone and she’d stripped down to her lingerie. She sprawled herself over the bed, waiting for Cosima.

Cosima walked in the door and immediately started stripping “Delphine?” she called out.

She ripped off her shirt, tore off her bra, and then tried to get her pants off as she climbed the steps, hopping on each foot for a moment, until the material was finally peeled from her body and left behind as the last crumb in the trail of clothing leading up the stairs.

“Delphine, you better be in that bedroom” Cosima called out, now naked of everything except the cock.

She stumbled in and stopped in her tracks. She gulped audibly and her mouth went dry. Delphine was there, sprawled out on the bed.

Cosima’s eyes trailed Delphine’s body as she slowly drank in the sight in front of her. Black, fine mesh covered Delphine’s slender feet and continued upwards. Cosima started breathing heavy just above Delphine’s knee, where her thighs started. She imagined nudging them apart. She could feel her heart beat pick up as her eyes scanned the lace detail at Delphine’s mid-thigh, where the garter was holding the material in place. She bit her bottom lip, continuing up to Delphine’s black lace-clad pussy. Her eyes stopped there for a moment, breathing heavy, and mouth now salivating. She needed this woman.
Her eyes continued their journey, drinking in her fiancée’s toned, white stomach. She watched the muscles there ripple and move as Delphine breathed. Next, was the blonde’s gorgeous, heaving chest. The material of the bra clung to her, giving the brunette teasing glimpses of skin between those two glorious mounds. Then, Cosima looked up to her face; that beautiful face, staring back at her with the same amount of longing she was sure that she radiated.

“I want you so badly” Cosima whispered over the air between them.

Delphine pulled the paddle out from behind her back and Cosima’s knees went weak, her mind protesting.

“Have you been a bad girl?” Delphine asked.

Cosima shook her head “Another time” she whispered.

Delphine nodded and put the paddle away. Cosima walked over to her, getting on to the bed by tossing a leg over the blonde’s hips and sitting back, onto her frame. She looked down at the beautifully long body sprawled beneath her.

“You are just so beautiful” Cosima whispered to her “I don’t think I tell you enough.”

Delphine smiled and reached for the silicone cock. She took a firm grip on it “Can I take this out? I want you tonight. The real you. I want to feel you move inside of me. This is fun and sexy, but maybe when we use the paddle?”

Cosima nodded and moaned as Delphine popped the bulb of the toy out of her, watching Cosima’s body release it and her very swollen lips open up to let the cream-covered silicone bulb release from her body. Delphine couldn’t help but marvel “Mon Dieu, that was…” she bit her lip and instead of continuing, she pulled Cosima down in to a bruising kiss.

Cosima braced herself on the bed with a hand, the other holding Delphine’s cheek as she gave in to the kiss completely, pouring all of her emotions in to it.

Their lips glided against each other, all wet softness and friction. Delphine felt Cosima’s tongue run over her lips and opened her mouth wide enough to meet it with her own. Every nerve in Delphine’s body tingled as their tongues danced against each other. She opened her legs, and felt Cosima nestle her hips between them, laying her body against Delphine’s. The French woman couldn’t help but gasp at the shock of sensation that ran through her body. She trembled and Cosima broke their kiss.

“Oh fuck I forgot how great that feels” Cosima purred, burying her face in Delphine’s neck as she felt the blonde’s hands running up and down her bare back.

She kissed behind Delphine’s ear, sending zappy signals directly to the doctor’s clit. Cosima felt Delphine’s hips start to pulse under her and moaned in to her ear. Delphine’s nails turned to claws in her back, goosebumps erupting on her skin as her own nipples hardened.

Cosima smiled, noticing this as she kissed across Delphine’s neck, stopping to give her a hickey. She sucked eagerly as Delphine bit her bottom lip and her breathing increased.

“Cosima” she moaned, her toes already curling.

Cosima reached around the back of the bra, wanting nothing more than the feast her eyes on her fiancée’s chest. She looked up at Delphine as her hand stopped at the clasp “Can I?” she whispered.
“Please. I need you to touch me” Delphine answered back.

Cosima unclasped the bra, tossing it aside and closing her eyes against the sensation of their bare chests pressing together before lowering herself to run her tongue softly over a nipple.

Delphine gasped, her back arching. She was on fire. The rush of lubrication between her thighs only intensifying the swelling of her entire cunt. It was throbbing, begging to be touched. She could only imagine how sweet Cosima’s tongue would feel on her aching clit.

Cosima pulled the nipple in to her mouth, gently sucking on it. She could feel Delphine’s stomach tremble and knew the effect she was having on the woman. She let go of the nipple to make her way back up to Delphine’s face. She was pulled right back down in to a kiss and flipped, finding herself on her back. She smiled up at Delphine, raising her arms over her head in a stretch.

“Mmm I love it when you top me” Cosima hummed.

Delphine smiled and raised an eyebrow “And I love the way you feel, writhing beneath me”

The brunette pulled her own bottom lip in to her mouth and could barely contain her body from writhing just at the mention. Delphine ever so gently ran a hand over Cosima’s left breast, barely grazing the skin. This time, Cosima writhed, her whole body responding to the touch. She watched as Delphine slowly circled her nipple with a single digit, still keeping the pressure as light as possible.

Cosima whimpered, her body begging for more.

“Are you enjoying this?” Delphine asked.

Cosima nodded enthusiastically.

“So you would not want me to stop, would you?” Delphine asked.

Cosima shook her head. Delphine smiled wide and lowered her head to the brunette’s ear.

“Do you want me inside of you?” she asked.

“Oh god, please Delphine. My body is begging for you” Cosima cried.

Delphine crushed her mouth in a kiss as she moved beside her fiancée’s body while her hand trailed down Cosima’s chest, to her stomach, and started playing with the small, well groomed patch of dark curls that peppered her mons. The young scientist eagerly opened her legs to the French doctor.

Delphine then moved her hand to the inside of Cosima’s thigh, using a firm pressure as she took her time making her way to the source of the heat.

Cosima felt the tortuous pull, her mind begging Delphine’s hand to slip just a little bit further. She was drenched and could smell her arousal from the pillow she had her head on. Both lips were curled in to her mouth as her back arched.

Delphine watched Cosima’s expression carefully as she let her hand move to cover the woman’s cunt. Her vulva was hot and so wet. Delphine’s eyes fluttered and she held back her eagerness, wanting to draw this out. It had been so long for her. Cosima had Shay, but Delphine had not done this since Cosima. Her body was full of pent up sexual energy that was finally finding it’s release. And that release was coming with a flood of emotions as she gently ran finger down Cosima’s length.
“Merde! You are so wet” she gasped.

Cosima shook in anticipation “Please, Delphine. I need you inside of me” she pleaded.

Delphine nodded, kissing her deeply. She used two fingers to gently rub Cosima’s clit as she positioned herself between Cosima’s legs once again. She could feel the hard nub grazing against the pads of her fingers as the young scientist’s body jolted in response.

Cosima only existed in her clit and lips at the moment. All feeling, all blood flow was directed to those areas. She was unconscious to the digging of her nails into Delphine’s skin and the jerking of her body. Delphine’s lips were everywhere. Cosima tried to keep up. She felt surrounded by the love of her life and it felt amazing. The muscles around her opening twitched in anticipation. Her clit was getting so very sensitive, and Delphine’s lips on her own were driving her wild.

Delphine moved her mouth to Cosima’s neck, licking her jawbone all the way to her ear. She gently sucked on the lobe before pulling back to look in to Cosima’s eyes. She leaned in for a sweet, tender kiss as her fingers moved down to rest gently against the entrance to the smaller woman’s body. She held Cosima’s eyes with her own.

“Are you sure you’re ready?” Delphine asked, needing confirmation.

Cosima smiled and nodded, leaning up to kiss Delphine softly before laying her head back down. Her eyebrows knit together “I trust you” she whispered to Delphine.

Delphine held her gaze as she slowly inserted a single finger in to Cosima. She watched as Cosima’s mouth opened wide and her eyes stayed fixed. She felt her own mouth hang open and a shiver erupt in her body. Cosima was so warm, so wet, and so damn soft. She felt the brunette’s walls hug her finger tightly. Their gaze never broke, even when Delphine was buried in that warm velvet to her knuckle.

“Merde!” Delphine cried.

“Oh fuck!” Cosima countered.

The young scientist pulled Delphine tightly to her, Delphine resting her forehead on Cosima’s as she started to move.

“Oh fuck!” Cosima repeated. “Oh my God. Delphine!”

Delphine knew this body. It took her no time to find Cosima’s favourite spot deep within her. She started to thrust her finger in and out, making sure to hit that spot every time.

Cosima couldn’t control her reactions. Her abs were impossibly taut as everything in her body tightened. She trembled uncontrollably, grasping at the body above her. She managed to get a hand up to tangle in Delphine’s hair. She massaged the taller woman’s scalp, pulling her head in for more kisses. With each stroke, she felt her body try to hold on to Delphine, and then Delphine’s finger push its way back through the tight walls. She needed more.

“More…please…Delphine…fuck!” Cosima trembled, shaking as her body responded.

Delphine nodded and kissed her cheek, pulling her finger out and bringing it to her mouth to suck it clean. Her eyes rolled in the back of her head. Cosima was delicious. She wanted to taste her so badly, but not as badly as she wanted to hold her. She sucked on the second finger before running them both down her fiancée’s body, until they slipped between Cosima’s labia majora to play with the slick wetness found all along her vulva.
Cosima captured Delphine’s lips once again, kissing her deeply as she opened herself up to the woman in her bed. Sex with Delphine was unlike any other she’d ever had. There was this... undertone of warm comfort and safety. Delphine satisfied so much more than her physical needs. She closed her eyes and breathed in the smell of Delphine’s skin, ran her tongue gently over the woman’s lips, took a handful of hair, and ran her other one up Delphine’s back.

When Delphine slid back in to her, Cosima felt her cunt stretch to accommodate the girth and it sent flashing lights behind her eyelids. Her back arched, bringing her body into Delphine’s. Their skin slid against each other as Delphine started working in and out of Cosima’s body once more. The brunette’s senses were alive with everything Delphine.

Delphine was treated to the slight bounce of Cosima’s breasts with every thrust. She relished the feeling of their nipples brushing against each other and sunk her weight down on to Cosima, crushing their chests together. Her fingers kept tirelessly thrusting in and out of the woman beneath her.

Cosima’s entire body rolled as her hips took on a mind of their own, bucking up to meet Delphine’s thrusts. The taller woman’s weight on her was so welcome. She wrapped her arms firmly around Delphine’s neck and moaned loudly, feeling her body start to coil, gearing up for the release. She kept kissing the woman, biting her lower lip gently, then quickly soothing it with her tongue.

Delphine could feel the change in Cosima’s body. She knew that she was getting close to the edge. Using her thumb, Delphine rolled Cosima’s clit with the pad of that finger, brushing against it with each thrust in.

Cosima’s moan turned in to a higher pitched cry as she wrapped her legs around Delphine’s waist, locking her feet in place. She finally broke their kiss, breathing heavily.

Delphine opened her eyes, looking down at Cosima. She noticed that hers were still closed. “Look at me, mon amour” she asked.

Cosima’s eyes fluttered open to stare up in to Delphine’s. Her cheeks were flush and her eyes looked like puddles, full of tears.

“Do you want me to stop?” Delphine asked, slowing down slightly.

Cosima shook her head “Please no. Happy tears” she confessed, followed quickly by a moan.

Cosima hadn’t even known that they were there until she’d opened her eyes. She was just so full of emotion right now; tucked under Delphine, open wide to her, no walls or barriers. She felt completely exposed and completely safe. Delphine was everything. Delphine was everywhere. Delphine had her heart overflowing right now, spilling out of her body to cover the bed, carpet the floor, and paint the walls.

Delphine saw the complex tangle of emotions in Cosima’s eyes. She watched them as she slowed her pace right down. She took care to hit that perfect spot with each long thrust, earning her a moan and a jolt of Cosima’s body every time. She loved this. She loved being skin on skin with this woman. She loved being allowed inside of her. She loved that look Cosima gave her. Like she was the only one on the planet right now, and Cosima could see nothing else. That slight hint of a smile in the twinkle of those gorgeous brown orbs, even when they were filled with the rippling effect of tears threatening to fall.

One more thrust and Cosima held tightly to Delphine as her body flung itself over the edge.
“Oh fuck! Delphine, oh my fucking God!” she cried.

Delphine held her just as tightly, gently pulsing her fingers deep inside of the warm velvety walls.

Cosima’s head shot back as contractions rippled through every muscle in her body. She went lightheaded as her cunt exploded in an earth shattering orgasm. She could feel Delphine’s lips on her neck, mixed with the flashing lights and ringing in her whole body. She felt high. The best high she’d ever had. She could hear Delphine whispering to her but everything was slightly fuzzy. Her orgasm rolled on, as soon as it felt like it was ending, her body erupted again. She was trembling uncontrollably in Delphine’s arms. Finally it stopped and her body went limp, her lips curving in to a smile as the tears that had been threatening to fall, fell.

Delphine pressed her lips to each tear that graced Cosima’s cheek as she slowly pulled out, whipping the wetness on the hand towel she’d set on her nightstand. She ran the backs of her fingers across the crying woman’s hair line and stared at her adoringly.

“I’m supposed to be the one who cries” Delphine whispered to her.

Cosima just reached up, pulling her close “I almost missed this. I can’t believe that I almost missed this.”

Delphine’s heart shattered and she hugged the smaller woman fiercely “But you didn’t. You’re right here.”

Cosima nodded, kissing Delphine’s cheek gently.

Delphine swallowed hard, feeling impossibly guilty. Cosima had trusted her so openly and yet, she was still hiding something from her. It felt dirty.

Cosima felt the feeling return back to her limbs and started kissing Delphine’s neck, eager to have Delphine feel what she just did. Delphine slowly pulled away, taking a hold of Cosima’s hand that was on her face.

“Non. Cosima. I need to talk to you” Delphine told her, tears now filling her eyes.

The young scientist swelled with worry “Okay. What’s up?” Cosima started playing with Delphine’s hair.

Delphine took a deep breath “I’ve been…keeping something from you and it’s not right. We should talk about it.”

Cosima retreated in to herself, sitting up in front of Delphine and pulling the sheet around herself “Okay, umm…” she rubbed the back of her neck, feeling the sticky wetness between her thighs she took a deep breath and shook her head, a different kind of tears falling now “…I’m just gonna… clean up” she said, motioning around her crotch with a hand before standing up, keeping the sheet wrapped around her exposed body.

Delphine felt the sting. All that trust just went out the window. She silently stripped out of the lingerie, discarding it to the chair in the corner and pulled on a white tank top and a pair of boxers. She wiped the tears from her face with the back of her forearm and grabbed the hand towel off the nightstand. Blood. Not a lot, just a trace, mixed with Cosima’s fluids smeared over the cloth. Delphine ripped the blankets off the bed and breathed a sigh of relief when there was no sign of more of it. Cosima was due to start anyways, so it wouldn’t be that out of the ordinary. She plopped the bedding back on the bed, turned off the music, blew out all the candles, and finally knocked on the bathroom door.
“Yeah?” Cosima called from the shower.

Delphine cracked the door open, careful not to look in. Clearly, Cosima wanted privacy right now. “There was some blood. Are you okay? Did I hurt you?” she asked.

Cosima’s first answer was going to be a snide comment, but instead she took a deep breath, determined to handle this maturely. She didn’t know what Delphine had to tell her yet, but she wanted to make sure that Delphine actually ended up telling her. “No. I umm…I just started” she responded.

There was a pause.

“Okay. I’ll be downstairs. I’ll make us some tea. Meet me there when you’re ready” Delphine’s voice was barely a whisper. She was terrified about what this meant for them. “Take all the time you need.”

The blonde closed the door and headed downstairs.

Cosima sobbed, leaning against the shower wall. She thought that they’d finally gotten over all of this. Everything had been so perfect. But it hadn’t. This whole time, there was something else. Did Delphine just want another good fuck? Cosima felt incredibly used. The worst part was that she’d been so sure in that feeling of safety and warmth. She’d let her guard down and let herself fall in to it, floating on the backs of Delphine’s promises and soft spoken words. She’d given herself completely over, in full trust and that was gone. Had it ever really been there? Was Delphine just a really good liar?

It couldn’t be. It felt way too real. She felt it deep within her. Delphine had given everything for her and her sisters, for their daughter. She’d had the urge to pack a bag, but that dimmed as she softened, remembering the past few months. All those times she thought Delphine had betrayed her were illusions. It had only felt like betrayal.

The logician in her tried to reason with it, while her emotions raged with fear, anger, and hurt. She was so hurt.

Delphine sat on the couch, staring down at the coffee table covered in file folders: all of the science she and Scott had been working on this week. Everything had been ready. She was supposed to go get implanted tomorrow while Cosima thought she was at work. She’d quit the job she never started a few days ago when she’d realized how quickly everything was going to move. Walk in clinic work was stressful and long, it would be really tough on her body and she couldn’t do that while pregnant. She ran a hand through her hair and took a sip of her tea, pulling her knees to her chest and covering herself with the blanket on the couch as she sobbed. She just prayed Cosima would stay.

The Frenchwoman stared at her cup of tea, untouched on the coffee table. Her life could very well come crashing down tonight. She dropped her head to her knees and cried.

Cosima watched from the bottom of the stairs, her heart aching to hold the woman but her brain telling her to run. She compromised, taking soft, slow steps that carried her towards the living room. She grabbed a blanket from the rack they kept, wrapping it around herself. She always shivered when she got emotional. She took a seat in their oversized arm chair, wrapping the blanket tightly around herself and sliding the elastic of her sweats over her feet to cover them.

Delphine looked over at her by rolling her head to the side, keeping it supported by her knee. Her face was tear-stained as her whole body shook in violent sobs. “I’m sorry” she cried quietly.
Cosima’s bottom lip quivered “What did you do?” she asked. She didn’t get an answer and so she added some volume and timber to her voice “What did you do, Delphine?”

The doctor shook her head “Nothing yet. Cosima, I’m so sorry. I should have talked to you sooner. Je suis si stupide.”

Cosima scanned the file-covered coffee table, her nostrils flaring “What is this?” she asked, turning her head back to Delphine.

“Your cure” Delphine whimpered.

Now, Cosima felt her temple flare up. No shivers, she was hot. Her legs catapulted her upwards “YOU’VE HAD THIS ALL ALONG?” she screamed.

Delphine was shocked. How could Cosima think that? “No! Cosima, I’ve only been working on this since Sunday.”

Cosima felt that cool her system slightly, but she shook her head, scowling “Why didn’t you tell me?” she asked Delphine.

“Because I knew you wouldn’t like it” Delphine admitted, reaching out and picking up a file. She handed it to Cosima. “Just read this” she whimpered, putting her forehead back in to her knees. “I never wanted to betray your trust. It’s the only way Cosima.”

Cosima scanned the contents of the file, her hands shaking as she did. The information flowed in to her and she felt her stomach react. She looked up to Delphine “You want to create another clone?” she asked.

Delphine nodded.

“The cord blood..” Cosima’s eyes went wide as she dawned upon a realization “You were going to carry her. You were going to have Scott impregnate you behind my fucking back?” she spat, throwing the folder at her “FUCK YOU DELPHINE!” she cursed, shaking now “How many times do I have to tell you before you get it through your fucking skull, this is MY BODY, this is MY BIOLOGY! You don’t get to make decisions for me” she yelled.

Delphine flared up now, instigated by the connotations “And what about Charlotte? Eh Cosima? What about Allison and MK? Tony? What about Danille Fournier and Katja? What about Jennifer and the millions of others? Is that YOUR decision?” Delphine rushed forward, taking Cosima’s hands in her own and kneeling in front of her, looking up “This could be a cure for all of them; for all of your sisters.”

“And what if it isn’t?” Cosima countered, her tears flowing now. “Now there’s another one of us who is sick with no answers. What do you do then?”

“What do we do now?” Delphine asked “Cosima, you are going to die if we do not do something soon. I can’t let that happen” Delphine cried, her own tears falling.

Cosima pulled her hands away, turning away and covering her mouth as she sobbed.

Delphine’s body sank until she was seated on her heels, staring at the carpet.

Long moments passed with no word or movement from either woman, save for the sobs.

“She’d have your eyes and your face” Delphine whispered, hugging herself. “A little Cosima,
“running around.” She paused again, swallowing hard “I’ve never felt a joy like what I felt when Charlotte called me Maman.”

“Delphine, I don’t want to have a child with you out of desperation. That’s not right for her” Cosima reasoned softly, still not turning around. She knew that she couldn’t face Delphine in her current state.

Delphine shook her head “I just want to have a child with you. Whether it’s now, later, in the middle of a war. It might be selfish, but I want nothing more.”

“You’re right, that’s really fucking selfish” Cosima cried.

Delphine closed her eyes, defeated. “Please, Cosima…”

Cosima shook her head “I need to sleep. Take the couch tonight” she instructed, heading upstairs.

Delphine let her body sink to the floor as she broke down, sobbing.

Cosima slammed the door to their bedroom and fell onto the bed, sobbing. Her phone rang and she noticed that she had a bunch of missed calls from Felix.

Every emotion was wiped from her body as fear for her daughter set it. She hastily dialed the number on the house phone.

“Mummy?” Charlotte cried from the other side.

“Charlotte! What’s wrong?” she asked, already getting dressed.

“I don’t know. Kira told me that you were hurting badly. Mummy, I want to come home” she pleaded.

Cosima let out a relieved breath and shook her head “I’m okay Char, Maman and I are just having a…very hard talk” she compensated

“Okay. Is Maman okay?” she asked.

Cosima sniffled “Yeah. I think she will be.” She hated lying. She knew Delphine wasn’t okay and that this was more than just a little fight, but there was nothing Charlotte could do. It was better for her to go back to having fun. Cosima didn’t really know where she and Delphine stood…if this was it or not. She couldn’t think. She was emotionally exhausted and just needed to sleep.

“Can we pick out my classes tomorrow?” Charlotte inquired, excitedly.

“Of course. Umm, I’m really tired tonight Char, I don’t think I’m going to make it to brunch tomorrow. I’ll let auntie Sarah know, but I thought you should have the heads up” the brunette informed her daughter.


“Yeah. Let me get her on the line for you” Cosima told her as she texted Delphine to pick up the house phone. “Goodnight little one. I love you.”

“I love you too, mummy” Charlotte answered.

Delphine got the text and jumped to her feet, wiping her own tears. She grabbed the phone.

Cosima hung up and she heard the click.

“Maman! I just called to say goodnight.”

“Bon soir mon petit chou. Je t’aime à la lune et de retour. Goodnight my little cabbage. I love you to the moon and back.” The blonde doctor cooed through her tears.

Charlotte giggled on the other line “Je t’aime aussi, Maman.”

Charlotte hung up and so did Delphine. Delphine directed her body to the couch and curled up in the fetal position, not bothering to pull it out to its full size. She wrapped herself in the blanket Cosima had been wearing, clinging to her scent that still lingered on it.

Cosima stared at the ceiling, turning the evening around in her mind. Her body still felt so immensely satiated and she remembered the intensity and tenderness from the love making. Charlotte had called her mummy. That little voice had reached out and wrapped around her heart. Delphine was right, no joy could compare. She sat on that. She sat on Delphine’s words, on her confession. She let it all stew. After a few hours, she knew that she needed to sleep and rolled over, pulling the duvet up under her chin.

The brunette tossed and turned for another hour or so. What was she really upset about? It turns out that Delphine hadn’t held back during their long talk last week. But she was going to do this behind her back, had planned to. But then again, she hadn’t. She’d told Cosima. Still, that sting of being left out of a big life changing decision was monumental. That’s what she was mad about: not being included in that conversation. She was mad that for some reason Delphine thought that she could just make decisions for her. And she was absolutely pissed that Delphine would have Scott impregnate her.

Cosima sighed heavily. Still, she was glad that Delphine had told her. It showed that she was trying. It meant a lot to Cosima. She looked at the clock, seeing that it was already 3am. She stood up and headed downstairs.

Delphine was still curled up on the couch, quietly sobbing. Cosima walked over, pulling the straps on the couch to pull the rest of it up. Cosima slowly laid down next to Delphine. She curled up to the shaking form.

“Cosima, I…” she sobbed. Delphine’s face was a mess of tears and snot.

Cosima shook her head “Let’s just sleep” she told Delphine. “This doesn’t mean that I’m not pissed.”

The blonde nodded, turning in to Cosima’s chest and crying in to it “Please don’t leave me. Don’t say it’s over.”

Cosima stroked her hair and gulped, flaring her nostrils as she fought the urge to simply kiss Delphine’s face all over and tell her everything would be okay. She instead lowered her head to the couch and closed her eyes, rubbing her crying fiancée’s back as she sobbed.

Charlotte and Kira were tucked in to their sleeping bags on Felix’s floor. They’d been lying there for a while and were supposed to be asleep.

“Kira, are you awake?” Charlotte whispered over to her.

Kira sat up “Yeah. I can’t sleep” she confessed.
Charlotte nodded, sitting up too. She scooted her sleeping back closer and they both laid back down, where they could hear each other whisper.

“I’m worried about mummy and maman” she confessed.

Kira nodded “What did they say when you talked to them?”

“That they had a fight but were okay” Charlotte informed her

“It didn’t feel like it. Auntie Cosima felt broken” Kira told her cousin.

“Do you think they’re gonna break up?” the young clone asked, a hitch in her voice.

“I don’t know” Kira admitted, wrapping her arms around Charlotte in a hug.

Cosima woke up in Delphine’s grasp and everything was perfect for one moment. Then the memories flooded back. She took a deep breath and closed her eyes again, enjoying the feeling of Delphine wrapped around her for just another couple of minutes. Boy did she miss their bed!

She extracted herself and covered Delphine’s body with the blanket, making sure she didn’t get cold. Cosima stood up, sniffing and wiping her face with the back of the sweater sleeve she was wearing. She walked in to the kitchen, starting to get a breakfast together.

Delphine woke up and immediately knew Cosima was not beside her. Her heart sank as she slowly sat up. The clattering of dishes came in to focus and she turned around to the kitchen to see Cosima pouring coffee. She ran a hand through her hair, ruffling it as she looked towards the kitchen table. French toast. The only thing Cosima could cook reliably well.

“How’d you sleep?” Cosima asked softly as she walked over to the table, putting the coffees next to their respective plates. Delphine took hers black, while Cosima preferred a little milk and sugar.

Delphine just shrugged and stood up “If you’re having company over, I can go out.”

Cosima shook her head “It’s for you.” The young scientist sighed and walked over to her, sitting on a bent leg to face her “Last night, my emotions were all…wonky. I’m sorry that I exploded. I’m still like super pissed at you, but I’ve had time to think about it.” Cosima reached out and gently ran her index finger over Delphine’s hand. “Charlotte called me mummy last night” she confessed.

Delphine let a grin grace her face “She is very brave”

“Yeah” Cosima responded “and it felt so fucking good. I…it reminded me of what you said: that it was the most joy you’d ever felt”

Delphine nodded and lifted her index finger to also play with Cosima’s hand.

Cosima’s bottom lip quivered as her eyes swelled with tears that fell immediately “It felt so good that you told me about this. It took me some time to realize that, but it does. It means the world.”

Delphine pulled Cosima immediately in to a hug. Cosima squeezed her back. She held Cosima so close to her, keeping a gentle hand on her fiancée’s head. After she felt Cosima settle down, she slowly pulled away.

“I’m also really mad that you were gonna let Scott do the deed. If anyone is going to get you pregnant, it should be me” Cosima half-joked, trying to lighten the mood.

Delphine let out a small chuckle “That’s a deal”
Cosima took a firm grip on the blonde’s forearm “But seriously, can we have a mature conversation about this over breakfast?”

Delphine nodded and wiped the tears from her face “Oui.”

They both stood up and walked over to the table, taking their respective seats. They ate in silence for a few minutes until Cosima looked up.

“I think one of the reasons why I was so angry is that it’s a big decision, even without all of the clone mumbo jumbo.” She took a bite of her French toast. “Having a baby, Delphine…it’s a lot”

Delphine finished the bite she was chewing and took a sip of coffee “You’re right. I’m sorry. That is a decision I never even should have been thinking without talking to you.”

Cosima chewed the inside of her lip, looking over Delphine’s features “Is it really what you want? I mean, now?”

“Yes” Delphine’s voice rang out clearly.

“Even if I wasn’t sick, would you want that now?” Cosima inquired.

Delphine dropped her fork and shook her head “That is not fair.”

“Alright. I guess.” She took a deep breath and a long sip of her own coffee “I just don’t want to do this for the wrong reasons”

“Can we be clear here? What are the wrong reasons, Cosima?” Delphine asked.

“Wanting this child so that I don’t die instead of wanting this child because we want her” Cosima explained.

Delphine stood up and walked around the table. She kneeled, taking Cosima’s hands. She’d been doing this a lot lately, but it seemed to get her point across to Cosima.

“Cosima, I want this child. Ever since we moved in here and have been Charlotte’s parents, I have wanted to carry our child, to raise our child. Yes, she would save your life, but she would give my life so much joy. Charlotte could have a sister. I know that it is a lot sooner than we were planning, but the world has spat in the face of every plan we’ve made. Let’s make someone beautiful together.”

Cosima nodded “Okay. But I don’t think that this is something just the two of us should decide. Like you said last night, it’s not just my biology. If we’re going to do this, then we need all the sestras we know of on board. That’s how this is going to go down.”

Delphine nodded. “That is completely fair” she reasoned, standing up and hugging Cosima.

“And for real, no Scott in your lady bits unless it’s an emergency” Cosima reminded her.

Delphine smiled and kissed her cheek. “Only you get to play doctor with me” she stated, sitting back down to finish her meal.

“Well, I like the sounds of that Dr. Cormier” Cosima poked back.
“I’m going to Bailey-Downs!” Charlotte yelled to the world the moment they’d left the school.

Cosima and Delphine beamed at her.

“Hold your horses; we need to get the paperwork in order first, kiddo” Cosima reminded her.

Charlotte ran to her mummy, squeezing her waist “Thank you, thank you, thank you” she repeated.

Delphine chuckled, absolutely delighted by the joy radiating off of her daughter “I’ll talk to Mrs. S about getting the necessary documents.” She, herself needed to get her visa in order to work in a non-medical field. It turned out that the school was in need of a part-time French teacher, something that the grade 3 teacher had made Delphine aware of after it was explained that they would have to live within the school district, unless a parent was a teacher at the school. It really was a win-win for Delphine.

The family loaded in to their Jeep, buckling in.

“When are all of the aunties coming over?” Charlotte asked.

“At 7, mon petit” Delphine responded.

“Will Kira, Oscar, and Gemma be there?” she asked.

Cosima turned around to look at her “They’re gonna be with Uncle Donnie and Felix.”

“Okay” she said sadly.

“What about a group sleepover Saturday night?” Delphine compensated “We’ll have all of your cousins over for movies, forts, and dinner? Celebrate you and Kira starting school Monday.”

“Can we have a piñata?” the tiny clone asked

“Why not?” Cosima piped up

“Score!” Charlotte pumped her fist.

Cosima turned to Delphine, smiling “The little things.”

Delphine smiled back and turned her attention back to the road, reaching over and taking Cosima’s hand.

Cosima felt her cheeks get tight as she smiled uncontrollably, sliding her fingers in the spaces between Delphine’s.

When they got home, Charlotte collapsed onto the couch, turning the TV to cartoons. Delphine and Cosima sat down at the kitchen table together, flipping through the files of information, talking it all over.

“We should make a list of talking points” Delphine suggested.
Cosima nodded and grabbed the notebook she’d been keeping notes in, ripping out a page as they worked together to get it all down. After an hour of sitting there, they were still making the list. Cosima stood up and stretched.

“I’m gonna make some tea. Do you want some?” the brunette asked.

“That sounds wonderful. Thank you” Delphine confirmed.

“Mummy, can you please get me a snack?” Charlotte asked from the couch.

“I’ve got you covered, kiddo” Cosima responded.

She went to the kitchen, putting the kettle on and washing a bunch of cherries. As she waited for the water to boil, she rubbed her stomach against the cramps that had been plaguing her all day. She took a moment to gather herself, and then brought a bowl of the fruit to her daughter on the couch.

“Thank you” the sweet little girl whispered.

“You’re most welcome” the older clone responded before heading back to the kitchen.

When the water was finally boiled, Cosima poured their tea and walked back to the table. After putting the two cups down, she sat back down, closed her eyes and leaned forward, resting her head on Delphine’s shoulder.

Delphine ran a hand up her back and rubbed it gently “I can finish here if you want to lie down”.

Cosima shook her head “I’ll be fine. This is important”

Delphine nodded and looked over everything “We’re confirmed that everyone will be here?”

Cosima nodded against Delphine’s shoulder “Art is getting a visitation with Rachel in a private booth. They’re saying it’s for further questioning, but he’s bringing his computer. We’ll put her on the monitor Allison’s bringing along with Tony and MK who are Skyping in.” Cosima let out a big sigh “Can I have kisses?” she asked

Delphine smiled and put the files down, turning and holding Cosima’s face in her hands as she slowly and gently kissed her forehead, her nose, each eyelid, each cheek, and then gave her a soft, deep kiss on the lips. She pulled out slowly “Any time, mon amour.”

Cosima’s eyes stayed closed with a dreamy look on her face “That was really nice.” She then frowned and her brow scrunched as she groaned, rubbing her stomach.

Delphine hugged her “Maybe you should give your body a break from the menstrual cup” she suggested.

“That’s a probably good idea” Cosima responded and kissed her fiancée’s cheek, getting up and going to the bathroom upstairs.

Delphine rubbed her forehead. She sat back and scanned the table. She could only hope that they could get the sestras to cooperate. This was all so very important. Sure, they had the big ask to do for the baby, but there were other things that needed to be discussed. Delphine took a deep breath and tried to remember that everything only seemed easier when she would just make decisions for everyone; it in fact was a whole lot more difficult since they always screwed up the plans. Besides, this was the right way to do things.
Cosima pulled the cup out of her body and swallowed hard, seeing how full it was. It was the third in an hour. Cosima felt her hands shake as she dumped the blood in to the toilet and put it on the counter. She took a seat and braced her head in her hands. She took a minute to be terrified. She took a moment to let herself feel the gripping fear of her own mortality. She could hear the TV downstairs and the distant chatter of Delphine and Charlotte speaking in French to each other. They would be okay. Charlotte had Delphine. Delphine had Charlotte. She just wished that she could have the chance to be a part of her own family.

The brunette cracked a smile. At least there was the chance that she’d get to see Delphine pregnant. She knew that she wouldn’t make it to the birth of their child. Delphine would be surrounded by support though, and if her sisters, brother, and daughter decided that this pregnancy was the best course of action, then hopefully Delphine and Scott would continue the work and cure the rest of them. Cosima made the commitment to write impeccable lab notes; keep everything so clear that Kira could figure out the science and know what to do once the baby arrived. If she couldn’t be saved, her family would be.

She heard Charlotte giggle and smiled herself, letting the feeling of joy that she felt every time she heard that giggle wrap itself around her.

Her moment was over. She exhaled and grabbed a few pads, lining her underwear with them before she stood.

Charlotte couldn’t stop laughing at the paper eyebrows and moustache her Maman had cut out and taped to her face “Tu es si drôle, maman. You’re so funny, maman.”

The french doctor put on her best grumpy face “Qui est ce maman? Je suis papa. Tu vois ma moustache? Who is this maman? I’m papa. Do you see my mustache?”

“Stop, I’m going to pee” Charlotte giggled.

Delphine laughed herself as she went to peel off the paper disguise, but was stopped from a voice in the stairwell.

“Wait, I want a picture of this!” Cosima called out as she raced forward.

Delphine looked up at her, slightly embarrassed but went along with it.

Cosima pulled out her phone and took a picture of Delphine, then turned to Charlotte. “Get in on this, kiddo” she instructed.

Charlotte happily got up and came over.

“You should get in too” Delphine suggested.

Cosima turned around and turned the selfie mode on her phone. Delphine picked Charlotte up and Cosima snapped the picture.

“Now a goofy one” Charlotte suggested.

They all made faces as Cosima snapped another one.

“I think we need a kiss the kiddo shot, whaddya say?” the dread head asked her daughter.

Charlotte giggled and nodded “Kisses!”
Delphine and Cosima each took a cheek, the picture capturing the moment of pure joy on Charlotte’s face as it was squished between her mom’s and maman’s kissy lips.

Cosima smiled as she put her phone away and tugged on a corner of an eyebrow gently.

“You used tape? Oh god babe, it’s attached to your eyebrow hair” Cosima chuckled.

Charlotte covered her mouth and laughed even louder.

Delphine pointed at her daughter “You think this is funny, non?” she asked, doing her absolute best to contain her own laughter.

Charlotte watched as the paper eyebrows rose with Maman’s. She nodded, doubling over in laughter.

It was contagious as Cosima started up herself, earning a poke in the side from the woman in front of her.

Delphine pouted and Cosima frowned as she continued to chuckle “My poor puppy, I’ll get them off” she assured, continuing to slowly peel off the adhesive.

Charlotte made faces at Delphine who just shook her head in jest, finally unable to keep it in.

Cosima got one eyebrow off and they all slowly settled down.

“The things you do for comedy” Cosima shook her head as she worked on getting the other eyebrow off her fiancée’s face.

Charlotte sat back on the couch, watching them, taking in the deep breaths she missed during the laughing fit “It was worth it. Can I see the pictures, mummy?” she asked.

Cosima nodded and stepped back from Delphine to hand Charlotte her phone. Charlotte turned the screen on, then input the password she knew her parents kept to nearly everything: 324b21. She found the pictures and landed on the goofy one “Can I get the goofy one for my room?” she asked.

“Bien sur mon petit. Next time we are at Costco, we will print all the pictures we have taken. Mummy and I were going to anyways” Delphine explained.

Charlotte smiled and nodded “Merci. I’m gonna go call Kira and let her know I’m going to school with her” the girl mentioned. She stood up and handed Cosima back her phone as she picked up a house phone and headed upstairs “Thank you mummy.”

“You’re welcome, kiddo. Tell Kira I say hullo” she called out after hr daughter, then pulled the last of the second eyebrow off the blonde’s face. Cosima then gently peeled the mustache off her fiancée’s upper lips. She traced the slight red mark the tape had left over her lips and smiled at her “I love watching you with her.”

Delphine smiled back at her “She is a very fun person to be around.”

Cosima nodded “She is.” Cosima’s smile then slowly fell and she closed her eyes “Delphine, I’m bleeding pretty heavily” she told her.

The French doctor sighed and nodded, reaching out to put a hand on Cosima’s stomach “I know, mon amour. Periods are the worst sometimes.”

Cosima made eye contact with Delphine “Sixty millilitres in an hour, heavy.” She swallowed hard.
Delphine searched the brunette’s face in horror “We should get you to a doctor… Cosima…”

The young scientist shook her head and her bottom lip quivered slightly, but she kept it all down “And they’ll do what, Delphine? You’re a doctor, what could you do for me?”

Delphine thought for a moment and deflated “Well 60 ml is not enough for hypovolemic shock. I would probably send you for testing to see what’s wrong, prescribe you iron, and tell you to drink salty fluids” she conceded.

“We already know what’s wrong and I’m taking iron” Cosima re-iterated and scrunched her lips to one side of her face, shrugging.

It was Delphine’s turn to close her eyes against the rush of emotions. She took a deep breath “What can I do?”

Cosima leaned in to her, thinking and earning Delphine’s arms around her. She hated this, and hated having to rely on Delphine as a caretaker even more. She was supposed to be enjoying the life of a newly engaged 31 year old woman, not a 70 year old, old lady. But this was Delphine, relying on her to help was part of being married. “Keep an eye on me tonight? Maybe even a hand” she asked, knowing that it would help curb the fear she’d been feeling over getting another concussion from passing out cold and smacking her head on the ground.

Delphine nodded “I can do that. If it gets to be too much, will you let me know? I know how you hate when I mother you” she explained.

Cosima gave a little huff of a laugh “I don’t think that there’s a way around that at this point. Besides, I mostly hate it when you use it as a way to avoid conversation” she clarified.

“I would like to think that we are passed that point. No more keeping things from each other. No more avoiding. This time, we build on trust and communication” the blonde reminded her.

“Yeah. This is a nice change from how I used to do this. It honestly feels a lot better, feeling like I can come to you and just let you know. Besides, If your mothering instinct needs some play time, I am going to need a really fucking good cry after tonight because honestly, Delphine, I’m barely holding it all together right now and it all feels so much more manageable in your arms” she confessed, a lip quivering.

Delphine nodded and dropped her forehead to Cosima’s as they both closed their eyes, fighting back the tears. “We’ll breakdown together tonight. But now, we do what needs to get done to save our family.”

Cosima nodded in response and took a deep breath, shaking her head as a tear fell down her cheek.

The French woman left a very soft kiss on the brunette’s cheek and whispered to her “I am going to put the lasagna in the oven and you are going to take another iron pill. Then, I am going to go to the store and pick up some sports drinks while you hang out with Charlotte” Delphine instructed “How does that sound?”

Cosima nodded “What if something happens?”

“Charlotte knows what to do. She did it last time” Delphine reminded her “I won’t be long.”

“Okay” She breathed hard and bit her bottom lip “Delphine, I’m really scared”

“I know, mon chérie. But you are safer here than out walking right now. Let’s hope that the bleeding
stops soon.”

“And if it doesn’t?” Cosima asked

“Then we will figure out next steps then. For now, you are right. There’s nothing anyone can do. While I’m gone, stay on the couch. Do not get up for anything. Please, Cosima do not take that risk.”

The brunette nodded “I won’t” she spoke, taking another deep breath, trying to clear the tears “it’s a good thing my eyeliner is waterproof” she joked.

Delphine cracked a small smile and nodded, kissing her cheek and pulling her in to a tight hug “Je t’aime.”

“I love you too, Delphine” Cosima responded sincerely.

They broke apart and Delphine nodded, wiping her own tears and helping Cosima to sit on the couch. She brought the clone her cup of tea and headed in to the kitchen.

“Do you think the other kids will like us?” Charlotte asked Kira

“I don’t know. But at least we’ll have each other and Oscar. My mum always says that there’s power in numbers” she responded.

“Of course she would, she’s got some awesome sisters and when you put them all together, they can do anything” the young clone noted.

“That’s true. Did you hear? My daddy’s coming to Canada this week! I haven’t seen him in so long” Kira informed Charlotte.

“Really? Your dad’s the coolest! You know he bought me a cinnamon roll every day while I was in Iceland with him” Charlotte said.

“Sal’s Cinnamon Rolls are my favourite! He used to get me those all the time. You should ask Auntie Delphine if she could make them for us some time. She cooks really good. Better than Mrs. S!” Kira praised.

“She’ll probably teach us how to make them” Charlotte noted.

“Even better!” the cousin exclaimed over the line. “How is auntie Cosima?”

“She’s okay. She’s downstairs peeling tape off maman’s eyebrows” she told her cousin.

Kira giggled “Why is she doing that?”

“Because Maman was being funny and taped paper eyebrows on to act like an old man” Charlotte explained. “We got some good pictures out of it”

Kira laughed again “I need to see those. Nothing fun ever happens here.”

“Are you kidding? Uncle Felix is the funnest!” Charlotte countered.

“Yeah, you’re right. He’s pretty fun. He said that next sleepover he’s going to let us watch a scary movie” Kira told her.

“Really? That’s so cool. By the way, my mummy and maman said that Saturday night we can have a sleepover here. We’re gonna have a piñata” the young brunette informed Kira.
“That is going to be epic! Is Auntie Delphine going to make dinner?” Kira asked.

“More than likely. She likes cooking, especially when I help. She always gives me the fun stuff like cracking eggs” Charlotte explained.

“You’re lucky, my mommy won’t let me anywhere near the kitchen. She says it’s dangerous” Kira grumbled.

“I’ll get maman to teach us” Charlotte reconciled.

“That sounds like fun” Kira responded, then was called by her mother “I’ve got to go, Charlotte. Will you tell me what happens tonight?”

“Yeah, I’ll call you tomorrow. Will you tell me about what you guys end up doing tonight?” she asked.

“Of course. Talk to you tomorrow. Bye Charlotte” Kira called out.

“Bye Kira” Charlotte responded.

She hung up and headed downstairs. She saw her mummy curled up on the couch and sat next to her, snuggling in.

Cosima smiled. She loved when Charlotte initiated cuddles. It happened frequently but it was still nice. She wrapped an arm around her kid and ruffled her hair “How’s Kira?” she asked.

Charlotte laid her head on mummy’s chest “Good. I told her about the sleepover next weekend.”

“Awesome! We’re gonna have a blast” Cosima told her.

Delphine came over and kissed the top of Cosima’s head “Dinner’s in the oven. I’ll be back soon” she told her fiancée, then turned to their daughter “Charlotte, take good care of mummy.”

Charlotte nodded “Where are you going?”

“Just to pick up a few things from the store” Delphine told her as she pulled on her shoes.

“What’s for dinner?” she asked

Delphine chuckled “Lasagna and roasted veggies.”

“Mmmm. I’m excited for dinner now” Charlotte told her maman.

“That is what I like to hear” Delphine responded, grabbing her wallet and keys before heading back to the couch “Goodbye kiss?” she asked Charlotte.

Charlotte nodded and promptly received a kiss on the cheek.

Delphine then headed to Cosima and kissed her lips deeply, putting a hand to the brunette’s chest “My cell is on if you need me.”

Cosima nodded “Okay. Be safe.”

Delphine nodded and rubbed Cosima’s chest gently before standing up and heading out the door.

Cosima rubbed Charlotte’s shoulder “How was your day today?”
“Really good. I like spending time with you and Maman” she explained.

“I like it too. Like a lot. And I really like the side of your maman that you bring out. She gets so goofy” the older clone noticed.

“Really? I thought she was just like that” Charlotte countered.

“Not at all. That’s all a Charlotte special. And I love it” she noted.

Charlotte took a deep breath “Mummy, what is sex like?”

Cosima was taken slightly aback “Wow. We’re at that conversation already, huh?” she stopped for a moment and thought about it “It really depends.”

“On what?” Charlotte asked, curious.

“Who it’s with, how you feel about them. I mean it all feels really good, but it’s just…extra special and extra good when it’s with someone you really care about and who really cares about you” she explained, feeling like she was talking down to Charlotte and not liking it. She sighed “It’s like, normally awesome like aluminum. Very common, sometimes useful, and you can do fun things, but when you’re with someone you really care about, it’s like a adding iron oxide to it. Have you seen a thermite reaction?” Cosima asked.

Charlotte shook her head and Cosima smiled, pulling up a video on her phone. Charlotte watched in amazement as the reaction of two common solids erupted in to a fountain of bright sparks. She felt it reach somewhere deep inside of her and answer the question in the only way that she’s been satisfied with to date. “That’s what it’s like with maman?” she asked.

The older clone sighed dreamily and nodded “It is. That’s what it’s like with someone who you trust completely. Nothing holds you back and your emotions and body are totally connected. That’s not to say that any other kind of sex is wrong or not fun, but that’s what it feels like when it’s with someone you are really connected to. That’s what almost everything is like, even just holding hands.” Cosima ruffled Charlotte’s hair “I think maman and I need to have a good talk with you though. If you’re asking this, I bet you’ve got a million more questions, eh?”

Charlotte nodded.

“We’ll answer all of them and I promise we’ll tell you the truth. Maman and I have talked a lot about this and we’ll never lie to you to try and protect you from things like this. This is something you need to know about and it’s our job to make sure that you are well informed and as knowledgeable about your own body and feelings as rocks and minerals.”

“Thank you” Charlotte told her, honestly. “I’ve tried asking grown-ups before and they just tell me about how I’m too young.”

“You kiddos know and understand a lot more than us grown-ups give you credit for. I remember being your age” Cosima noted.

“You do?” Charlotte asked.

“Oh yeah. I head a head full of questions, only back then we didn’t have the internet to find answers” she told Charlotte. “Which, by the way is not the best place for most of them, unless you’re using reliable sites. Remember that: forums and blogs are for the most part, not a good source of information.”
Charlotte chuckled “I know.” She paused “What if I have questions about boys?”

“Well, I can answer the anatomy questions, but maman I’m sure is full of good info on boys” she said.

“Maman dated boys?” she asked, astounded.

“Oh yeah. I was the first woman she dated” Cosima explained.

“I never knew that” Charlotte said, thinking about that.

“We’re open books” the dreaded woman told her. “We just really want to make sure that you feel like you can come to us and that you get accurate information and are doing your best to keep yourself and other people safe in all ways. That’s so important”

Charlotte nodded “Is that why you and maman always ask me if you can hug or kiss me or pick me up?”

“Yeah. It’s a big part. We want you to know that your body is your own and that we respect your space and your right to your own body” Cosima explained.

“Why don’t you and maman ask each other to kiss or hug?” Charlotte asked confused

“We’ve talked about it and both told each other that we like surprise kisses. We’ve talked about how we like to be touched and how and where we don’t and what we need to ask about. We’ve also talked about how we’re okay with hugging and kissing without asking every time but we promised to let each other know if we don’t want something. We trust that the other will respect those boundaries.”

“Do you ever tell her no?” Charlotte asked.

Cosima nodded “All of the time. Like when it’s too hot to snuggle at night, or if I’m sore somewhere, or sometimes I just don’t feel like being touched. I also ask for hugs and kisses when I want them. It wouldn’t be fair to just expect her to know when I wanted them all the time. Much easier to just ask and we’re both happy.”

Charlotte thought about that “I like that. You know, mummy. I like surprise kisses and hugs too.”

Cosima smiled “Yeah? Do you promise to tell me if you feel uncomfortable or don’t want something?”

“I promise” Charlotte told her.

“Well, in that case…” Cosima started, finishing her sentence by leaning in and kissing Charlotte’s cheeks over and over.

Charlotte giggled “I love you, mummy”

Cosima stopped the kissing and hugged her daughter to her “I love you too, kiddo. I love you so very much”

Charlotte hugged her back fiercely “Don’t tell Maman, but you give the best hugs” she whispered.

The older clone laughed and nodded “I won’t.”

A few hours later, there was the first knock on the door. Delphine swung it open to reveal Allison.
The soccer mom clone smiled, her hands full.

“Allison! Good to see you. Let me give you a hand” Delphine insisted, rushing forward and taking the monitor off her hands.

“Thank you Delphine” she responded, straightening her top and taking hold of the bags she had around her forearms.

“We’re setting up at the kitchen table” Delphine told her “You’re the first to arrive.”

“I like to be early” she states.

“Well that’s a nice change from living with your sister” Delphine teases loudly so Cosima can hear.

“Hey! I warned you about that our first date” the clone piped up from her place, still snuggling with Charlotte on the couch “Hey Ally.”

Allison slipped off her shoes and put her bags on the kitchen counter, opening the fridge “How are you feeling, Cosima?” she asked, unpacking the bags she’d brought in to the fridge.

“Oh, just peachy. Whaddya bring?” Cosima asked, intrigued.

“Trifle” was her response as she closed the door and pulled something else out of the bag “And a gift from Scott. The kids, Donnie, and Felix are having a games night with him tonight. He figured that you might want a little…herbal remedy.”

Cosima nodded “I will never turn that down.”

Charlotte turned to her mother “Is she talking about marijuana?” she asked.

The dreaded clone nodded “I bred a special strain to help with the symptoms” she clarified, running a hand through Charlotte’s hair.

“Cosima, should you really be talking so openly about it with a child?” Allison asked.

“I already know about marijuana. It’s been used for centuries as a natural medicine for all kinds of things. It’s status as an illegal substance is largely due to the racism rampant in lawmaking as it was in the past and to this day more associated for its alleged popularity among street gangs and what the police and media have dubbed “thugs”, rather than its use as a common recreational, healing substance used widely by individuals of multiple creeds, cultures and races.” Charlotte explained to a wide eyed Allison.

“And that’s why I talk to my kiddo openly. Nicely done, Char” Cosima praises, rubbing her arm as the girl snuggled back in.

Allison felt her jealousy rise. How could Cosima be a better mother than her and be doing everything wrong? There was no doubt that Charlotte would have issues later, but right now she seemed so happy snuggled up to Cosima. Why did her kids stop cuddling her? It wasn’t fair.

Allison handed Cosima the baggie and she tucked it into the pocket of her sweatpants “Thank you for this, Ally” she told her sister, smiling and opening her arms for a hug.

Allison let her animosity go for the moment, packing it down to the slightest eye twitch as she hugged her sister. “You’re welcome” she told her.

Cosima let go and settled back in to the couch.
Charlotte stood up “Can I have a hug, Auntie Allison?” she asked, looking up at her aunt.

Allison was taken aback. She had never been asked for a hug before, and here was this tiny human just asking. It made her feel so incredibly happy that Charlotte seemed to want to hug her and not being instructed to like she had become accustomed to with children. She nodded “Of course.” Allison stooped down, opening her arms.

Charlotte hugged her.

Cosima watched, rolling her lips in between her teeth as she beamed with pride. She then bent her head sideways to see around the two to Delphine had stopped her task to watch the exchange as her face expressed an equal feeling pride. She caught Cosima’s eye and winked.

Allison then dropped in to the arm chair and started conversation with her sister and niece.

The door rang and Delphine walked by to open it. Sarah and Helena were on the other side. She gave them a warm smile and stepped aside. “Allo. Glad you could make it” she expressed warmly.

“Hullo Dr. Blonde hairs. You cook tonight?” Helena asked, rubbing her belly.

Delphine chuckled “Yes I did. I made you a lasagna for yourself”

“This is good. Thank you Delph-eene” Helena responded, walking in.

Sarah lingered by the door “Are you gonna tell me what this is about?” she asked, hands tucked in to the pockets of her leather jacket.

Delphine kept the smile on her face “Right down to business, non?” she asked, closing the door behind Sarah.

“I’m not really a fan of the bush beating” Sarah told her.

The blonde doctor nodded “I understand that. There are simply some things that we wish to discuss with all of you that are quite important. You have nothing to fear any more Sarah, I am keeping nothing from any of you. Tonight is about making sure that everyone has a voice in this decision.”

“But I bet you would like to just make it yourself, yeah?” the Leda leader raised her eyebrows.

“Non. Not anymore. It is not something for me to decide. I am simply here as a source of information and will be taking no part in the actual decision” Delphine told her.

“I’ll believe it when I see it” she told her.

Delphine’s lips twitched in to a slight smiled and nodded “D’accord”

Sarah walked over to the living room where everyone was currently situated. Charlotte was looking up at Helena.

“Why do you ask me this, child?” the blonde clone asked.

“Because I want to make sure you want a hug before I give you one” Charlotte explained, thrilled with this new skill that seemed to baffle and bring joy to all the adults.

“I want a big hug. Little arms around neck and feet around belly. Like koala.” Helena told her.

Charlotte giggled and reached up. Helena stooped down and picked the girl up as Charlotte wrapped
around her like a Koala, her legs sitting just above her round belly.

“I ask you now?” Helena asks.

Charlotte nods.

“I tickle baby koala?” she asked.

Charlotte giggled even before the fingers came to her sides and she nodded.

“I tickle baby koala!” Helena expressed, getting under Charlotte’s arms as the small girl squirmed and giggled.

Sarah laughed at them “I think it might be my turn soon.”

“Sestra, you want baby koala?” Helena asked.

“Damn straight I want me a baby koala” Sarah jumped in.

Helena looked to Charlotte “Baby koala want to go to Auntie Sestra?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded “Thank you for asking Auntie Helena”

“This is not a problem, little one” Helena told her.

Helena then passed her to Sarah and Charlotte hugged her.

“How are you?” Sarah asked, holding Charlotte on her hip.

“Really good. You missed how goofy Maman was earlier. You have to see the pictures Mummy took” she informed her auntie.

“Is that right?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded.

“It’s hard for me to see Delphine as goofy” Sarah told the girl with a scrunched face.

“It’s hard for me to see her as not goofy” Charlotte countered. “Mummy says it’s a side of her she only sees when Maman’s with me”

“Well lucky you” Sarah told her. “Are you excited to start school Monday? Kira can’t stop talking about how excited she is to go to school with you and Oscar.”

The youngest clone nodded “So excited. We’re gonna play together every recess”

The doorbell rang again and Allison answered at Delphine’s request, as she was busy getting connected to MK and Tony who were going to eat with them over Skyper before they got Rachel online.

“Umm, Delphine told me to be here for the umm… clone people meeting” Krystal snubbed from the door “Are you supposed to be another one of me?”

Allison turned back to the room “Delphine?” she asked, her eyebrows high as she cranked her neck to the side.

Delphine dropped what she was doing and headed to the door “Krystal. How nice of you to join us,
come on in”

Sarah made a face at Charlotte “Pantene Pro-v’s here.”

Charlotte giggled and hugged her aunt’s neck, whispering in her ear “I haven’t met her yet.”

“She’s not that bad, just not the brightest” Sarah whispered back and set Charlotte down. “Go ahead, meet your auntie.”

Charlotte nodded and walked over to Krystal who jumped.

“You went back in time and cloned me?” the beautician shrieked as she saw the girl.

“No, I was born using one of your clone’s DNA eight years ago” Charlotte replied “My name’s Charlotte.”

“It talks! It has a name? Why does it have a name? Shouldn’t it have like a serial number or a barcode tattoo or something?” Krystal asked, freaked out.

Sarah walked up “Oi! She’s a kid. Stop. Any you’ll believe she’s your clone, but not me?”

“Well she actually looks like me when I was a kid. You and your rat’s nest…not so much. So like, who are all of these people? I thought there were supposed to be clones here and all I see is… apparently you and the mini clone” Krystal questioned.

Charlotte looked up at her maman, confused. Delphine simply shrugged at her kid.

“How about I introduce you to everyone?” Delphine suggested, stepping inside.

Krystal followed as she was brought to the living room.

“This is Cosima, my partner and your sister” Delphine started, continuing until she’d gone around the room.

“So you’re all supposed to be versions of me?” she asked.

“Yup. Pretty much” Cosima told her, motioning with her head for Charlotte to join her on the couch again.

Charlotte sat back down between her and Helena.

Krystal was still trying to figure it out.

Delphine had in the meantime gone back to her task and now had Tony online.

“Allo, Tony?” she called “Can you hear me?”

“Yeah” He responded. “And holy mother fucker, Frenchie. You’re a stunner. You should call me after this is done so we can have some fun” he told her.

Delphine laughed “I was warned about you. I am sorry to inform you, but I am taken.”

“Warned eh? My reputation precedes me apparently. And I don’t see a ring” he mentions.

“We’re working on that” she told him.

“Well, who’s the lucky guy?” he asked.
“Is that Tony?” Sarah asked as she came over.

“Ah, Sarah. How you been, sis?” he asked.

“Good. How have you been?” she asked.

“Not so great. Been coughing up all this blood lately. Nasty stuff” he told her.

Sarah nodded “We’ve got a lot to talk about.”

In the meantime, Delphine had walked over to the couch and dropped a kiss on Cosima’s head. She leaned down and whispered in her ear “Let’s get you to the table while everyone’s distracted.”

Cosima nodded and slowly stood up. Delphine put a hand on her lower back and kept it there until she was seated at the last seat on the right side of the table.

“Woah!” Tony exclaimed the moment Cosima was in frame. “And I thought you were the hot one, Sarah. Clearly you didn’t tell me about dreads” the guy clone mentioned over the internet.

Cosima chuckled and waved “Hi, I’m Cosima. Tony, right?”

“Yeah. You definitely win hottest of us” he told her.

“Trust me, I’m so much more than my looks. I only get like way sexier the more you get to know me” Cosima beamed.

Delphine chuckled and kissed her forehead “You are right about this, chérie.”

“Ah, you’re the boyfriend. Hot dykes. I love it!” Tony called out.

“Language!” Allison called out.

“Okay, easy Suburbia.” Tony called out.

Helena was laughing uncontrollably “He call you suburbias. Funny man. Tell more jokes funny man.”

Delphine was working on getting MK online as Cosima turned her attention to her fiancée’s form; more specifically the patch of exposed skin on her lower back, caused by her shirt riding up as she stretched to reach the keyboard and mouse. Cosima watched as the muscles in her back and arms rolled under the skin as she moved her hands across the keys. She bit her bottom lip and took a long drink from her Gatorade, thinking things she normally wouldn’t in a room full of her siblings.

Delphine stood up and headed to the kitchen, asking Charlotte for help. Cosima was pulled from her thoughts as Helena put a hand on her shoulder.

“How are you feeling, sestra?” she asked

Cosima smiled at her sister “Tired. But I’m okay. How are you? How’s my little niece or nephew?” she asked.

“Good. Tired too. Lots of piss. Baby kicks all the time. You want to feel?” Helena asked.

“I’d love that” Cosima told her.

Helena took Cosima’s hand and placed it on her belly. Cosima smiled as she felt the kick.
“That is awesome” she chirped “Can I kiss your belly?”

Helena nodded “Baby will like attention from Auntie.”

Cosima lowered herself to Helena’s stomach “Hi there little one, it’s your Auntie Cosima. I just want you to know that I love you very very much and am so excited to meet you” she told the stomach before kissing it softly.

“Thank you sestra, I am excited too. Babies have tiny feet. I like to kiss them” Helena added.

Cosima giggled.

“Everyone, come take a seat, we’ll start dinner” Delphine called out.

Everyone stood and headed to the table, saying hi and introducing themselves to the clones on screen. They started filling their plates as Delphine put wine on the table, while Charlotte walked over and put glasses of apple juice in front of Helena and her own spot. Going back to the kitchen, the doctor grabbed Cosima a second sports drink out of the fridge and brought it to the brunette with a kiss on the cheek.

Cosima smiled up at her “Thank you”

Delphine nodded and took her seat at the head of the table, bookended by Charlotte on one side and Cosima on her other. Charlotte was busy talking to Tony and MK on the screen and Helena had started a conversation with Sarah. She took the moment to turn to Cosima.

She scooted her chair closer and whispered in her ear “How are you feeling?” she asked.

“I’m okay. A little dizzy and warm, very crampy but I’m alright. This is nice, having everyone together” She smiled.

Delphine nodded and put a hand to her forehead “You’re a little warm. Do you need anything?”

“No, thanks for checking in though” Cosima told her.

Delphine nodded “Of course, mon amour. I know this is important, but if you need to lie down, let me know.”

Cosima nodded and they pulled away from their whisperings “Dinner looks wonderful, Delphine” the brunette noted.

“It’s so good maman” Charlotte piped in just before she put another piece of lasagna in her mouth.

“MK, you really should have shown up. You’re missing out” Sarah called over the table to the screen.

“I have pickled herring. I am happy” the digitized female clone told her sister who all laughed, save for Helena.

“Dr. Blonde hairs, next time we have pickled herring?” she asked.

“Sure, Helena. I’ll make sure next time we have some just for you.”

“Thank you Del-pheene” Helena responded.

They ate and conversed happily, Delphine actually enjoying the company. She noticed that Krystal
was pretty quiet, observing the rest of the clones with a sense of distaste. Allison kept trying to make conversation with her, but she kept getting snubbed.

Allison eventually dropped by their end of the table “Who does she think she is? Marilyn fudging Monroe?”

Delphine chuckled and Cosima looked down the table at Krystal “I’m gonna go talk to her” she told her sister.

Cosima started getting up and Delphine was immediately up with her. Sarah noticed, confused.

The dreaded clone turned to the doctor “I think I’m okay on this one.”

The French woman nodded and took a seat, watching her like a hawk. Cosima took each step carefully until she was seated in Allison’s spot. Allison went to the kitchen to get dessert together.

Cosima turned to Krystal “Hey. Having fun?”

“Well at least you’re a nine!” Krystal exclaimed, exasperated “I don’t see how you all think that these women look anything like me. Maybe I’m not a clone.”

Cosima chuckled, coughing slightly “I’d say that I agree with you, but you see that little patch of dry skin, right between your eyebrows?” she mentioned, pointing to it “We kind of all get that”

Krystal gasped “I’ve tried everything to get that moisturized and nothing works”

Cosima nodded and scrunched up her face “I know, right? Creams, lotions, the whole shebang, but nada.”

“We must be clones!” Krystal finally decided, looking at Cosima.

“Yeah, welcome to the fucking trip” the dread head added in.

“Are you sick?” Krystal asked.

“Yeah. But don’t worry, it’s not contagious. It’s one of the reasons we’re here tonight” she said.

“Oh, okay. And the little one, who’s is she?” the esthetician asked.

“My daughter…our little sister actually, but my partner Delphine and I adopted her” the brunette let her know, smiling wide.

“You don’t look like a lesbian, neither does she” Krystal commented.

“I bet I don’t look like a scientist either” Cosima noted.

Krystal looked her over “No, you definitely look like a scientist. You your hair is really beautiful” she told Cosima, reaching out to touch it.

Cosima sucked in air through the curve in her lips “I’m not a huge fan of people touching it without asking” she told her sister.

“Oh, sorry. I should have told you that I’m an esthetician. Just admiring the work. Who did these?” she asked.

“My dad started them and I keep them up” Cosima told her.
“Oh, you didn’t like get them done professionally? They’re really well done” Krystal told her “and they look awesome on you”

“Thanks, but that’s not the reason I wear them. It’s long and complicated but yeah. They are a part of me.”

“Sorry again about the touching thing” Krystal emphasized.

“It’s all good. Now you know” Cosima told her. She looked down and saw that the woman had only eaten salad “Not a fan of lasagna?”

“I don’t do carbs or meat” she said, scrunching her hair in her hand.

“Oh, I didn’t know, sorry about that. We’ll make sure to have something veggie and no carb next dinner. Can we get you something else? I think we’ve got some Tofu in the fridge, I’m sure Delphine could turn those roasted veggies into a pretty great dish for you” the scientist offered.

“Why are you being so like…nice to me?” the blonde asked.

“Why wouldn’t I?” Cosima responded.

“Touched” Krystal told her.

“Sorry, what?” she asked.

“I don’t speak French. I don’t like the way it makes my mouth look, so just imagine that word, in French” the blonde clone explained.

Cosima nodded “Alright then. Touched it is.”

“That veggie dish sounded great. Thank you” Krystal whispered.

“I’ll ask her to whip it up. And Krystal? Try to make some friends. We’re all siblings after all” Cosima told her.

“If you insist” the esthetician sighed.

“I didn’t, the dry patch did” Cosima reminded her.

The sick clone stood slowly and made her way back to Delphine, who stood and returned her protective hand to Cosima. In her absence, Delphine had noted how little she’d eaten.

“Can you make Krystal some kind of tofu veggie dish? She doesn’t eat carbs or meat” Cosima asked.

“Of course, but Cosima, you need to eat more” she told her.

“Delphine, ease up a little. Let me worry about what I eat and when, okay? I appreciate the concern though” Cosima tried to soften.

Delphine nodded. Sarah came over immediately after witnessing this exchange. She hated how overprotective Delphine was being of her sister and read it as a jealousy thing. Every time Cosima got up to go talk to someone, Delphine had to make physical contact, and she gave her this awful look of warning. After all of her own experiences, seeing Delphine act like this to her sister, she assumed the worst. She needed to talk to Cosima now. As she walked up to the pair, she purposefully didn’t make eye contact with the blonde doctor.
"I need to talk to you, upstairs, now" Sarah told her dreaded sister.

Cosima shrugged “Okay. Yeah.”

Delphine gave Cosima a look.

“It’s fine” Cosima reassured her, rubbing the blonde’s shoulder.

Delphine sat down, sighing.

Cosima linked arms with Sarah, trying to seem nonchalant and they made their way upstairs. Once in the bedroom, Sarah shut the door, silencing the noise of the dinner party happening below. Cosima made her way to Delphine’s side of the bed and laid down, taking a deep breath. Sarah walked over, sitting beside her, on the scientist’s side of the bed.

“What in the bloody hell is going on?” Sarah asked, running a hand through her hair “Is she hitting you, Cosima?”

“What?” Cosima asked, startled. She shot up to a seated position “No, Sarah. Not at all. Why do you guys always think that?”

“Because I’ve been through that, and what was happening downstairs looked a lot like it when we were around people.”

“What do you mean?” the dreaded woman asked.

“She’s all over you, the hand, following you across the room, scrutinizing what you eat. It’s not okay” Sarah told her.

Cosima nodded “It’s not what you think” she sighed, pulling the weed out of her sweater and reaching across Sarah to pull her vape and accessories out of the nightstand. “Lay down. Take it easy, and don’t worry, I’m sharing.”

Sarah went to debate, but listened, lying down on her sister’s side of the bed and stretching out.

Cosima prepped her vape, setting it aside once she did, and then turned to look at Sarah. She cracked a small smile “I’m not in good shape” she admitted.

Sarah’s face softened and she turned on her side to look at her sister “What happened?”

“I thought it was just my period, and it might have been, but…it’s out of control now and there’s not really anything we can do” Cosima confessed “I just kind of keep bleeding.”

“Cos…” Sarah whimpered, reaching for her sister’s hand.

Cosima took Sarah’s hand, reaching for the vape and taking a couple puffs before passing it to Sarah “Low temp, light buzz. Just to take the edge off, make you real snacky.”

Sarah nodded “Thanks. I’m guessing you told Delphine?” she asked, taking a puff.

“Yes. I asked her to keep an eye and a hand on me tonight. I’m…I don’t want another concussion. I don’t think my body could take it.”

“Is that why we’re here?” Sarah asked, exhaling and handing Cosima back the vape.

“Part of it. I think I should wait to tell you with the others” Cosima told her.
“That’s fair, Cos” the Leda leader admitted.

“Sarah, if something happens…if for some reason I don’t make it…I need you to take care of them” Cosima asked of her.

“Come on, don’t talk like that, Cosima” the sister scolded.

“I have to, because it’s a very real possibility. I’m going to sit down with Delphine this week and draw up my living will. And I want to put you as Charlotte’s guardian in case of both of our deaths. I need to make sure that, that kid stays with family. She’s been through enough” the scientist told her sister, feeling the earlier emotions well up. “And it might break Delphine. I know she’s not your favourite person, Sarah, but she’s fought so hard for me and our family and she loves me so fucking deeply. I won’t be around to miss her, but I’m worried what my death will do to her. I need to know that someone’s gonna have her back.”

Sarah gulped. She really did have a distrust of the blonde doctor-a lot of it stemming from the odd feelings she’d had after that kiss they shared at the DYAD event- but if Cosima needed this from her, then she’d work for it.

“Fine. But I’m not fucking her” Sarah told Cosima.

“Woah! Totally not asking you to” the sick clone countered with a chuckle.

Sarah nodded and nudged Cosima’s arm with her elbow “I’ll take care of it.”

“Thank you” Cosima told her.

“We should get back, eh?” Sarah noted.

Cosima closed her eyes, feeling the sharpness of the cramps, the nausea, and the weakness just barely get fuzzy. It was slightly better, but it felt monumental.

“Cos?” Sarah inquired, nudging her.

“Yeah, I’m coming” the scientist sighed, slowly getting to her feet.

Sarah found herself running to Cosima’s side and wrapping an arm around her waist “Easy now.”

“Thanks” Cosima smiled at her, wrapping her own arm around her sister as they left the room “I wonder what we would have been like as kids; growing up together would have been interesting.”

“Naw, I’d just get you in trouble” Sarah told her as they headed downstairs.

The meal had been cleared and every seat had a file folder in front of it. Rachel was connected and Delphine was standing at the head of the table. She smiled as she heard Cosima and Sarah coming down the stairs.

“Perfect timing. Take a seat” she told the sisters.

Sarah let go of Cosima once she’d gotten close enough to the table and took her own seat. Cosima looked down and saw a mug full of what looked like soup. A simple broth with bits of tofu and veggies cut up very small. She looked up at Delphine and mouthed a thank you. Delphine nodded back in response.

Delphine then turned her attention to the table at large and took a deep breath. “Well, here we are. I bet you’re all wondering why we’re meeting. There are a few things that Cosima and I talked over
and knew that all of you should debate as a group. First thing on the agenda, birthdays. I know some of yours, but if you could just go around the table and list your date of birth so we can make note, that would be great.”

“Yeah, It sucks not knowing who’s when. Makes it tough to buy you guys super awesome shit” Cosima noted, after finishing a sip of the soup.

The table was silent, no one wanting to speak first. Helena looked around “Sestra Sarah and me are March fifteen.”

Charlotte took that down, as she was tasked with notes.

“I’m March 9th, 1984” Cosima piped in.

“Older than me, eh?” Sarah shook her head from across the table.

Cosima stuck her tongue out at her sister who giggled.

“I’m July 18th” Charlotte informed the group.

“March 15, like Helena said” Sarah added.

Allison smiled slyly “April 4th.”

“Tony?” Cosima asked.

“March 25th, the second coming” he informed the group to a couple chuckles.

“I am April 1st” MK tossed in.

“March 31st” Rachel reluctant drawled out.

Krystal had a look of glee on her face “I’m the youngest! May 5!”

Charlotte raised an eyebrow, very characteristic of Cosima and stared at the esthetician “I’m the youngest.”

Krystal’s smile dropped “Oh, right”

“Well, now that, that’s over, we need to talk about the elephant in the room. You each seem to have a genetic illness that affects your epithelial tissue: lungs, uterus, and esophagus” Delphine informed the group.

“Yes, we know this. Get on with it” Rachel spoke from the monitor, adjusting her jump suit.

“I didn’t know about this? I’m sick?” Krystal asked in complete horror.

“Yes, but not quite…we don’t know” Cosima expressed.

“That is one of the decisions you can each make for yourselves. I know that you have been subject to a myriad of medical testing without your consent your entire lives, but I feel that it is crucial that we continue to monitor each of you. It is your personal decision as to whether or not you come in for testing, and you get to choose what of it all you get done, but we are closer to figuring out the inner workings of this illness if we have all of your data. I have secured some clinical space at a local clinic and Rachel, I have spoken to the prison. For those of you who are interested, I can do the testing myself with the aid of Scott and Cosima, but can also receive data from a physician of your choice.
The choice is completely yours, individually.”

“Yes, but guys, its super important. Finding this thing early, if anything else can help like…boatloads in treating it. We’re hoping to just get a cure that we can give you all so that we can cure it before you get it, but once you do…it’s bad.”

Allison nodded “And what kinds of tests will be done?”

Delphine flipped through her packet “On page 30 of the packet in front of you, I have detailed a suggested schedule of tests. Of course the results of this testing will be made available to you. You will know exactly what is happening at all times, and can stop any test at any time. You are in control. You are not science, you are patients.”

“Well, I’m in. I mean I’ve already got the thing” Tony said.

“Thank you, Tony” Delphine sighed. “I have also included on the first page of your packet all the information to the Clone Cloud, a portion of storage where all of this information and anything we find will be posted. The second page is everyone’s contact information…”

Delphine’s voice drowned out in Cosima’s mind as they all talked about the logistics that her and Delphine had wanted to sort out before the big problem came up. Her mind wandered. For feeling so crappy, she felt really good. Maybe it was the weed, but she felt like a big part of it was not having to carry her illness alone. She wasn’t carrying the fear of falling over and smacking her head and killing herself on her own shoulders. She could look over at Delphine, and knew that with a single look, the woman would be at her side. She shared the burden and it seemed so much more bearable. She was snapped out of it by Charlotte tugging on her sleeve. She looked up to see everyone very consumed in what was being said by Delphine.

“Mummy” Charlotte whispered a whimper.

The dreaded clone turned to her daughter and her stomach hit the floor. Charlotte’s hand was splattered in blood, some blotted on the corner of her mouth. Cosima took her kid’s hand and got up, walking her to the bathroom. She fought her tears, knowing her daughter was as scared as she was. She closed and locked the door behind them. She sat the youngest clone on the closed toilet lid and grabbed a wash cloth, getting it wet. She kneeled in front of her daughter.

“Is this the first time?” she asked calmly in a hushed tone.

Charlotte nodded, tears filling her eyes. Her mother wiped her hands, and then dabbed at her mouth. Cosima then leaned forward and hugged her. She felt the tiny arms wrap around her neck and she rubbed Charlotte’s back softly.

“It’s going to be okay, alright little one?” Cosima whispers, quickly putting a hand to the tiny forehead. “You’re nice and cool, that’s good. Does anything else hurt?”

Charlotte shook her head. And Cosima nodded, putting two fingers to her kid’s wrist, taking her pulse.

“What’s gonna happen to me, mummy?” Charlotte asked, terrified.

There was a knock at the door “Charlotte? Cosima?” Delphine asked from the other side.

“Do you want me to let her in?” Cosima asked her kid.

Charlotte nodded and Cosima unlocked the door, opening it to Delphine who whirled in to the
bathroom, closing and locking it behind her. She immediately had a hand to Cosima’s forehead, another firmly on her back.

“I had everyone take a break. Are you okay? What happened?” she asked, flustered.

Cosima took Delphine’s hand off her forehead and shook her head “Not me” she whimpered, her bottom lip quivering.

Delphine’s composure crumbled and she turned to her daughter, shaking her head and kneeling. She saw the cloth that Cosima was holding, covered in the blood of her daughter and she dropped to her knees, hugging her little girl. Charlotte hugged her back.

“What can we do? She has no fever, dizziness, or other symptoms” Cosima asked.

Delphine took a deep breath, trying to shake off the tears. She pulled away so she could look her crying daughter in the face. She wiped away the tears with her thumb and kissed her cheek. “Are you feeling okay?”

Charlotte nodded “I’m scared though”

Cosima covered her mouth, knowing that fear all too well. She couldn’t imagine having to deal with this as a child.

Delphine nodded and took her hands “Je sais, mon petit amour. Ce soir, après qu’on est finit avec tes tantes et ton oncle, nous allons nous mettre sur le sofa et pleurer ensemble, d’accord? Mais, maintenant, si tu peux, nous avions besoin de retourner à la table et avoir cette conversation. I know, my little love. Tonight, after we’re done with your aunts and uncles, we’ll put ourselves on the couch and all cry together, okay? But right now, if you can, we need to go back to the table and have this conversation.”

Charlotte nodded.

“You can sit in my lap, if you want, okay?” Cosima suggested.

Charlotte nodded “I don’t want anyone to know.”

Cosima ran a hand through the girl’s now short hair “I know how you feel. Pity feels pretty lousy, but they should know, Charlotte. It might help them see the situation we’re all in. I think some of them think they’re immune like Sarah and Helena.”

Charlotte nodded and looked up at her parents. She reached out for Mummy’s hand and it was promptly wrapping itself around her own, much smaller one. She held tightly, using that link like a lifeline.

“I will go out first. I do not think that anyone has noticed yet” Delphine suggested.

Cosima nodded and looked at her kid as Delphine walked out “I have some Eskimo Pies hidden in the freezer so your maman doesn’t eat them all. I know for sure that one has your name on it.”

Charlotte shrugged and looked at her feet.

Cosima watched, letting her daughter have that moment to feel it all. She’d taken a similar moment earlier in the day. In fact, she’d taken a few. As much as she wanted to, Cosima fought trying to fill the silence. She simply held her daughter’s hand and let her feel.
After a couple more moments, Charlotte looked up “Ok. Let’s go back out.”

Cosima nodded “You’re a brave one. Let’s do this” she affirmed, pushing the door open.

Delphine had been right, most people had not even recognized what had happened, or if they did thought nothing of it. Cosima went and took her seat again, closing her eyes against the weakness she felt in her shaky legs. Once lowered, she opened her arms to Charlotte, who eagerly climbed in to her lap, resting her body in the crook of her mummy’s arm. Cosima wrapped both arms around her protectively, gently swaying them.

She looked up at her fiancée and cleared her throat, coughing, and swallowing the blood that came up. She let her cheek fall to the top of Charlotte’s head and reveled in snuggling her daughter as Delphine called everyone back to the table.

“So, I have left the large chunk of why we are here for last, but before I bring it up, I just want a show of hands: who here has been experiencing symptoms of the disease? Coughing up blood, vaginal bleeding beyond a normal period, seizures, nose bleeds?” she asked, waiting expectantly.

Cosima’s hand shot up “Well, duh” she joked.

Everyone looked around. Tony’s hand went up on the screen, followed my MK’s, and Rachel’s. Everyone kept looking around, the looks of horror growing in gravity as Krystal raised her hand, but no one expected the horror that would befall when Charlotte buried her face in to her mummy’s chest and raised her arm, Cosima kissing her face and holding it close to her.

Allison gasped “Oh no” she covered her mouth.

Sarah stared at Cosima, awaiting confirmation. The scientist nodded, tears in her eyes and Sarah dropped her head to the table, swearing under her breath.

Allison, Helena, and Sarah were the only ones without a hand up.

“Now that we understand the gravity of the situation, let us continue. Scott, Cosima, and I think that we may have found the cure” Delphine told the group.

“Oh thank gawdie!” Krystal outburst.

Rachel was more leery “Then why call us here? To announce it? That seems highly unlikely”

Delphine nodded “We think that we have found it, but it does not mean that it is complete. We are here to discuss whether or not you, the Leda clones wish to pursue it, based on…”

“But of course we want to pursue it” Allison piped in “I vote curing, anyone else?”

Hands shot in the air. Delphine took a deep breath.

“Guys, let her finish. It’s important” Cosima chimed in.

Everyone’s hands went down and Allison sat up a little straighter, folding her hands together on the table.

“Thank you, Cosima. The issue is that the cure we have in mind is based on the umbilical cord blood of a perfect genetic match” Delphine finished.

“You want to make another clone?” Sarah asked, dumbfounded.
“Well, well, Dr. Cormier, I didn’t think you had it in you” Rachel mentioned “I am completely interested in this plan.”

“Wait, wait, why can’t we use Helena’s baby’s cord blood?” Sarah asked.

“Klara. I call her Klara” Helena interjected.

“Klara, whatever. Why can’t we just use that blood? I mean, she’s ready to bloody pop” Sarah noted.

Cosima shook her head, still trying to calm Charlotte by rubbing her back “It won’t be a close enough match.”

“The strongest chance we have is to create another Leda child” Delphine explained and sat down. “I am here for questions, but I want to make it clear that I am not participating in the debate.”

“So, how do you expect to create a new clone?” Tony asked.

“We have Susan Duncan’s data from Charlotte’s creation. That, matched with Kendall’s sequenced genome and the lab notes have proven to be enough. The science is done and complete, Scott has embryos ready to be implanted, but we are waiting for all of you to decide about this” Cosima told her siblings.

“Who will carry the child?” Allison asked.

“Does it like, matter? I mean, if it’s going to make me better than like holy Toledo, yeah I want someone to get preggers and pop out a baby that will save my life” Krystal added to the conversation.

“Well, it does to me” Allison piped up.

“I will carry the child” Delphine informed her.

“I agree with this. Dr. Blonde Hairs, you are good mommy to little clone” Helena agreed.

Sarah stared over at her dread headed sister “Cos, is this the only way?” Sarah asked.

“No. It’s not, but it’s the only way we know of right now, and it’s going to be the most predictably successful method. There’s a reason people are conserving their newborn’s cord blood. Those stem cells are precious, especially to the child who’s specific DNA they contain. The previous failure of the cure was because the stem cells pulled from the embryo were not yet at the stage that those in cord blood would be. This is our best shot at kicking this thing’s ass” Cosima explained.

“So what? We’re just supposed to let you and Delphine run around, playing house and creating a life so that we can get cured? What about that poor child?” Allison asked, tears falling.

Everyone looked to her.

“Ally, it’s not like that. Delphine and I have talked at length about this. We want this child. It’s sooner than expected, but…”

“And what about all the crazy people who are always trying to kill us and kidnap us and torture us? Do you think because of some trial and two arrests it will all stop? That child will be hunted the way Kira was, the way Charlotte will be. I cannot get on board with this. I’m sorry Cosima, I know this is about saving you, but…I just can’t” Allison argued, her hands shaking as she tried sitting on them
and containing her sobs.

“That’s not what this is about Ally. I won’t make it to nine months” Cosima told her with no emotion.

“This is not about me. It’s about you, all of you and keeping you all alive.”

Cosima felt Delphine’s hand on her shoulder and Charlotte hold on to her neck a little tighter. The table went silent.

Sarah took a deep breath “Cos, if this is the best shot, then I’m sorry Allison, but I cannot sit back and watch you all die without us having tried everything” Sarah noted, looking up at Delphine. “You have my blessing and even if they do come at this kid, we’ll handle it like we have everything so far. We do this together, as a family, yeah?” Sarah looked around the table.

“Family” Helena nodded.

“And hey, I don’t really know all this DYAD stuff, it sounds like a load of shit I don’t want in my life, but if Blondie wants a baby, go ahead. More little kiddies to call me cool Uncle Tone” Tony added, sipping his beer.

Allison shook her head, having none of this.

Everyone turned to the monitor.

“MK, what do you think?” Cosima asked her sister.

MK slowly pulled the mask up off her face to reveal the blood dripping from her nose. She wiped it away and nodded. “Yes. Make the cure.”

The table fell silent with the exception of the incessant tapping of Allison’s heels on the floor as she bounced her knee with anxiety.

The silence set in for a while, until finally Charlotte sat up in Cosima’s lap. She wiped the tears from her eyes and cleared her throat.

“I really don’t want my mummy to die” she started, taking a deep breath as fresh tears stung her eyes. She felt her mummy’s hand rub her back softly and didn’t have to turn around to know that she was crying. “I don’t want anyone to die. Auntie Allison, I know you’re worried about the intentions of my mummy and Maman, but…” she stopped and turned to look back at her parents “out of everyone in the world, I would pick them to be my parents every time. My little sister is going to feel so loved and happy because it’s how I feel every day with them. Maman having a baby might seem like a gift to Maman, but it’s really a gift to the baby. And all of you, and Uncle Cal, Uncle Donnie, Uncle Felix, Mrs. S., Gemma, Oscar, and Kira…being a part of this family all full of love and laughing and caring is a privilege not many people get. Anyone would be lucky to be a part of our family” Charlotte ended, then looked up at her Maman “Maman, I want you to have this baby.”

Delphine let her eyes overflow and nodded, gently tracing Charlotte’s face with her index finger “Thank you, Charlotte.”

Charlotte then put her head back in to Cosima’s chest.

Cosima leaned in and kissed her, whispering in her ear “Thank you, kiddo. That was beautiful” The youngest clone nodded.

A few moments passed in silence.
“Okay” Allison whispered.

Every head in the room turned to the soccer mom.

“Charlotte, if your mothers are half the parents you say, then okay. But I want to babysit…a lot” Allison told the group, barely above a whisper.

Delphine smiled “That will not be a problem” she told Allison.

Allison nodded and looked at her hands.

“We’re having a baby” Cosima told the table and everyone chuckled.

“For once, you lot have made the right decision. It took you damn long enough” Rachel told the group.

“Delphine, send my people a list of all the required equipment and a quote for a completely finished lab with top of the line equipment. In exchange, I ask that you call the moment the cure is finished and send a dose of it with a courier to me. Do we have a deal?”

Delphine looked at the table “Any complaints? It would make testing all of you much easier” Delphine told the group.

“All in favour, say Oi” Sarah suggested.

A chorus of “Oi!” rang out around the table.

“We accept, Rachel” Delphine told her.

“Good. I will have my people contact you tomorrow evening. Have your papers in line by then. For now, I must return to my cell” Rachel told them.

“Yeah, I’ve gotta run too. Braves game is on” Tony called out.

Rachel signed off and everyone said their goodbyes to Tony and MK.

“Yeah. I’m outtie too. Thank you French Doctor lady and slightly less hotter than me, for your hospitality” Krystal said while standing.

“Hospitality?” Sarah asked.

“Yeah, whatever” Krystal shrugged, walking out.

“Helena…” Allison indicated, clearing her throat as she continued to wipe tears away.

“Oh yes, I go to sestra Allison and Donnie Hendrick home tonight. Much thank yous Sestra Cosima and Dr. Blonde hairs” Helena told them, slowly pulling herself up out of the chair with a hand from Sarah.

“Anytime, Helena” Delphine told her.

“Can I say goodbye to little sestra-niece?” Helena asked.

Charlotte nodded and sat up.

Helena walked over, hugging her and leaving a very overplayed kiss on the top of her head “Muah! I am sorry you are sick, little one. Your mommy will make things better. Do not worry” Helena
Charlotte smiled, this reassurance from her Auntie being void of the pity she expected.

“Goodnight little family” Helena told them, going to put her shoes on.

Charlotte ran to her maman and hugged her firmly.

Delphine scooped her daughter up and held her “My turn now” she whispered, snuggling Charlotte close to her.

Allison stood up and stepped up to Cosima “It was nothing personal, Cosima” she tried to explain.

Cosima put a hand up “I get it Ally. You’re jealous that we can have a biological child and you can’t. It’s okay. I’m sorry that this was so difficult for you.”

“That’s not…it’s not….hmmmff” Allison huffed. “Just bring the Tupperware back next time we see each other” she spat out, having been found out. She promptly turned on her heels and headed to the door. “Let’s go, Helena” she urged her pregnant sister.

Cosima smiled “I love you too” she called out after the soccer mom.

The front door closed and Sarah let out a breath “Bitch.”

Cosima chuckled and picked up a pencil, flinging it at Sarah. Sarah attempted to use her reflexes to knock it out of the air, but ended up smacking herself in the side of the face, the pencil hitting her chin and falling in her lap.

“Oi! You could have poked my eye out!” Sarah blurted.

It took them a moment, but the sisters burst in to laughter. Still laughing, Sarah stood and walked over to Cosima who pulled herself to her feet. They hugged.

“Thank you, Sarah” Cosima told her, rubbing her back “You helped a lot today, little sis.”

“You’re not gonna let us forget that you’re the oldest, eh?” Sarah asked

“Hell no. But seriously, we all look to you when we’re lost. I appreciate you taking my side” Cosima thanked her.

“It’s my side too, Cos” Sarah told her, squeezing just a little harder “And If I know this woman over here” she said, pulling out of the hug and turning to Delphine “you’re not going anywhere. We’re gonna cure you.”

Cosima smiled and nodded “Yeah. I mean, we’re sure as hell going to try.”

“Auntie Sarah?” Charlotte asked from her Maman’s lap.

Sarah walked over, rubbing her nose with the back of her fist as she squatted down “Yeah?”

“Can you please not tell Kira about me?” Charlotte asked.

Sarah’s face softened and she nodded, giving Charlotte a light punch to the shoulder “It’s safe with me.”

“Thanks” Charlotte told her. “And I trust you to hug me and kiss me without asking. I promise to tell
you if I don’t like something.”

Sarah smiled “Is that right? Well, the same goes for me, little bit.”

Charlotte flung her arms around Sarah’s neck and kissed her cheek. She whispered in her auntie’s ear “Thank you for my sister.”

“Oh you will have your mommies to thank for that” Sarah told her, letting go. “I guess I should go pick up my kid, eh?”

“Might be a good idea” Cosima noted.

Sarah stood up, running a hand through her hair and looking around “Do you guys need any help cleaning up?”

Delphine shrugged “We will leave it to morning, go be with your daughter”

Sarah nodded, giving Delphine a side eye “You know, you’re starting to grow on me, keep it up Frenchie!”

Delphine laughed “Well, this feeling is mutual.”

“Alright guys, have a good night. I’ll call tomorrow” Sarah told them, heading to the front entrance and lacing up her boots.

Cosima turned around in her seat “I’ll be waiting by the phone all day, like a sad puppy just waiting for your call.”

“Cosima, stop being a brat to your sister” Delphine chastised her.

Cosima frowned comically.

“I like this, she calls you out on your shit” Sarah noted with a chuckle as she tossed on her leather jacket.

Cosima shook her head “Get home safe Sarah.”

“I will” the Leda leader called out before heading out the door.

Cosima put a hand to her head and sighed, practically collapsing in her seat “I am exhausted.”

“Mummy, you promised me an eskimo pie” Charlotte whined.

“You have eskimo pies?” Delphine asked, a wild fervor in her eyes.

Her eyes still closed, the brunette cracked a smile. “Well-hidden for this reason. Don’t worry, tonight I’m sharing” Cosima informed her family, just happy that the conversation with her siblings was over and they were finally alone.

“Well then I’ll have to share my snickers stash” Delphine told them.

“Maman! You have snickers?” Charlotte asked, dumbfounded.

“Bien sûr!” Delphine exclaimed.

“Clearly I need to find something to hide” Charlotte told them.
Delphine and Cosima threw their heads back in laughter.

Chapter End Notes

So this has been the longest between updates. A whole 4 days! I took a little time away to spend hiking with my lady and playing lots of hockey. Hopefully the length and content make up for the wait. This ended up being a tough chapter to write, since I’m mostly focused on Cophine; but I’m happy with the way it turned out. I hope you all enjoy. Yay for a Cophine baby on the way and more science I don’t know nearly enough about! Thank Gawdie for fic facts!

I just also want to take a moment to extend my gratitude to everyone who is still reading. We’re like 50,000 some odd words in, in a super short time span. That’s a lot of reading! Extra special appreciation for everyone who has left me a comment, review, or contacted me to tell me that they like what they’re reading. It really does mean the world to me and keeps me highly motivated. See you in the comments and/or next chapter!
The spring air hit Delphine’s face the moment she opened the door. She could smell the blooming flowers, the fresh cut grass, and the kiss of sunshine that shone down from a freshly risen sun. She stepped outside and closed the door, having a look around the quiet street. It had been a few days since she’d run, and felt it necessary to clear her mind after the intensity of last night’s family meeting.

She stepped off the porch and started jogging down the street, her mind on the eight year old and the love of her life tucked safely in to the same bed, snuggled together and still fast asleep. Her brain was putting together a treatment plan when she passed Mrs. Levinworth, whom she’d made fast friends with after Cosima’s accident. The woman waited for her every morning on her porch.

She ran up to the porch, smiling “Bonne matinée Mrs. Levinworth” she beamed.

“Delphine! I have missed you these past couple of days. No running?” the older woman asked.

“Things have been a little hectic at home” Delphine told her as she ran in place.

“Is everything with your little one alright?” Mrs. Levinworth inquired.

Delphine debated telling her the truth as her mind immediately went to last night in the bathroom. But her brain stepped up “Yes. She’s starting school Monday.”

“Well that’s fantastic. And that wife of yours?” the older woman asked.

Delphine sighed “She’s made a full recovery but is still pretty sick.”

Mrs. Levinworth nodded and shook her head “It’s such a shame for someone so young. Well you go ahead and enjoy your run, young lady.”

Delphine chuckled “See you soon Mrs. Levinworth” she called out.

The older woman waved at her as she went in to her house and Delphine jogged away.

Delphine felt the pangs of that reminder: Cosima and Charlotte were sick. She made it to the edge of the tree lined park before she stopped, doubling over as the sobs took over.

Her family was dying.

Cosima was right, she probably wouldn’t make it the 9 months; not the way she was going right now. Cosima was going to die. Nothing terrified Delphine more, except the idea that Charlotte would follow. She couldn’t let that happen. No, she would make sure that her daughter would have a
full, happy life. But Delphine’s heart strained with the knowledge that she had less than 9 months left with Cosima.

She’d been without the woman before, but that had been different. There would be no Cosima left in the world; she would just be gone. Times like this she wished that she had some form of religious affiliation, something to at least comfort her and tell her that Cosima would exist somewhere out there.

But she didn’t believe that. Cosima would simply cease to exist. Delphine vomited in to the bushes and wiped her mouth. She took a couple of deep breaths until she heard her name being called.

“Delphine?” came the familiar voice from a distance.

The French woman turned around to see Cal running towards her, clearly outfitted in running gear himself.

“Cal?” she asked, wiping her tears.

He ran towards her and smiled “I got in a few hours ago. I didn’t know you ran. Are you okay?” he asked.

Delphine bit her bottom lip, unable to answer. Cal pulled her in to a big hug

“Is it Cosima?” the lumberjack asked.

Delphine nodded, hugging him back.

“Delphine, I’m so sorry” he told her.

She patted his back and let go, continuing to wipe her tears “I thought a run would help me forget for a moment but…”

It was Cal’s turn to nod “I get it.”

Delphine took a deep breath. She shoved down the emotions for later, eager to change the subject “So, you sold the house in Iceland?” she asked

“Not exactly. I’m renting it out. I got tired of being away from my family and figured it might be nice to have it just in case” Cal explained.

“Yes. That is smart. Are you living with Mrs. S. right now?” she asked.

“That I am, but we are looking to buy in Scarborough. The school board gave us 60 days to find residence there. Shouldn’t be too hard” he replied.

Delphine chuckled “I find it very hard to believe Sarah will be a suburban resident.”

“Yeah, that took some convincing, but with Kira was the decider. I hear Charlotte’s going to the big BD too. How’d you swing that one?” the taller man asked.

“You are looking at Bailey-Downs’ newest French teacher” she told him.

“Nice! I like it. I think teaching will suit you” Cal complimented. “I know you guys just got settled and all but, you should really consider moving out to Scarborough as well. It would be nice to be in the same neighbourhood; get these kids playing outside together.”
“It would be nice, but Allison, Sarah, and Helena in the same neighbourhood? Imagine the scandal” Delphine reminded him.

Cal chuckled “Quadruplets?”

“From different regions?” the blonde asked.

“They were all adopted” Cal suggested.

Delphine sighed, defeated “I’ll think about it and talk it over with Charlotte and Cosima.”

“I’m just saying that it would be nice to have a sane family member close and I’m sure Charlotte and Kira would love to stay walking distance apart” he informed her.

She nodded “Yeah, best friends.”

He nodded “Well, care if I join you for the rest of your run? I’m kind of oblivious to the geography of this place right now.”

Delphine gave him a friendly clap on the shoulder “Sure, buddy.”

He smiled “Thanks.”

Delphine smiled back at him and tossed her head slightly sideways to tell him that she was going to start up again.

And they were off.

“So, Sarah texted me that you and Cosima are going to have a baby” Cal mentioned as they ran side by side through the park.

Delphine couldn’t help a beam of sunshine spread across the face “Yes. As soon as the lab is finished we are going to start trying.”

“Congratulations, that’s huge. I’m sure Charlotte is eager to have a little sister” Cal added.

“Bien sûr. And honestly, I am very excited to be pregnant” she confessed to him. It felt good to have a friend. Sure, she had Cosima and Charlotte but to have a friend outside of her immediately family was something that she hadn’t had since she left France. It was refreshing.

“I can see that. You’re already a knock out, I can only imagine the folks who will fall at your feet while you’re pregnant and glowing” the lumberjack complimented.

Delphine laughed “Yeah, right.”

“I’m serious. I know Sarah’s got a bit of a thing for you. She tries to hide it but I honestly think it’s at least a little bit of the reason she’s so distant with you” Cal noted.

“That would actually explain a lot. You know we kissed once? She came to a DYAD event as Cosima” the Frenchwoman explained.

Cal laughed so hard he had to stop running for a moment, then eventually caught up “You’re kidding.”

“I wish I was” Delphine informed him.
“Oh, I can’t wait to tease her about that. I thought I had enough fire power with the crush on you, but THIS I can’t wait to pull out of my belt” he stated.

“Go easy on her. I’m sure it’s not easy, not being able to have me” Delphine joked cockily.

“I’ll do my best” he assured her.

They continued their run, the whole while lightly teasing each other until they parted ways to head home. Delphine stretched in the front yard as she always did, and then went in for her shower.

She walked in to the room to Cosima cradling a whimpering young clone in her arms. Cosima’s head lifted to her.

“She’s got a pretty bad fever” Cosima’s voice cracked with grogginess.

Delphine walked over to the bed and took a seat, leaning an arm on the bed over both of them to hold herself up. She put a hand to the back of Charlotte’s head. She was burning hot. The young girl shook with chills as her body sweat. Delphine smoothed back her hair.

“Mon petit, tourne-toi sur ton dos pour que je puisse t’examiner. My little one, turn onto your back so I can examine you.” Delphine told her.

Charlotte nodded and received a kiss on the forehead from mummy before she rolled over and looked up at maman.

Delphine started by checking her lymph nodes and then looked up to her kid “Can I lift your shirt?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded and the doctor gently lifted the t-shirt Charlotte was wearing to reveal her tummy.

The mother gently palpated the tiny stomach “Does this hurt?” Delphine asked.

Charlotte shook her head.

Delphine put her shirt back down and leaned in, kissing Charlotte’s cheek “I am going to get you some medicine, shower, then take some blood to run labs. For now, you snuggle with mummy, d’accord, ma petite chouette?”

Charlotte nodded and curled back in to mummy, who kissed her face and wrapped her arms around her tightly. She buried her face into her chest and moaned in pain.

Delphine closed her eyes as her heart broke. She looked to Cosima “How are you feeling?”

Cosima gave Delphine a look of despair and didn’t say a word. She swallowed hard and laid her head back down on the pillow.

Delphine sniffled back the tears and nodded, gently rubbing Cosima’s hip through the blanket “I will be right back.”

Cosima nodded, whispering to Charlotte that everything would be okay.

The French doctor stood up and headed in to the bathroom.

Twenty minutes later, the blonde was back in the bedroom, showered, dressed, and medical bag in hand.
“Cosima, I’m going to run yours as well” Delphine told her as sat down on the edge of Cosima’s side of the bed. She put her supplies down and started rifling through her bag, finding what she needed.

“Yeah. Probably smart” Cosima mentioned, then turned to her daughter “Hey Char, do you want me to go first?”

Charlotte nodded and whispered to mummy “I don’t like needles.”

The dreaded woman frowned “I don’t either. Maman’s super gentle though and if you look at her face or concentrate on how warm she is, it’s not so bad. You almost forget’ she instructed.

Delphine smirked as she laid her items out and pulled the sharps box out from its spot inside of Cosima’s nightstand. The blonde’s hands then placed themselves lovingly on her partner, helping her sit up.

“I saw Cal this morning on my run” Delphine told Cosima, trying to distract her as she put the tourniquet on and prepped the area.

“When did he get in?” Cosima asked, her voice cracking again.

“This morning, early” the French woman informed her fiancée as she slowly slid in the needle.

Cosima grit her teeth as she felt the familiar sensation of the needle pierce through and slide in to her flesh.

“Apparemment, they are moving to Scarborough, in to the same neighbourhood as Allison” Delphine relayed. “He suggested we look in to it.”

“But we just got this place” Cosima told her, stroking Charlotte’s hair with her free hand as the girl curled into her lap.

“I know, but it would be nice to live all together. We could put the new lab in the basement. You would not need to use the University. We’d have lots of room for our family to grow” Delphine mentioned with a hint of sadness in her voice.

Cosima closed her eyes and shook her head before opening them up again and biting her bottom lip. Delphine knew what she was thinking “Cosima…” she looked up, stopping what she was doing to search her fiancée’s face.

Cosima swallowed hard and took a deep breath “Yeah. You’re right; living close would be nice.”

The doctor smiled and turned back to her work, drawing up another tube. The dreaded woman looked down to the child in her lap.

“Hey, kiddo. Are you hungry at all?” she asked.

Charlotte shook her head. Cosima looked up at Delphine again, concerned painted all over her face.

The doctor finished and pulled the needle out. She then disposed of the sharp and the gloves, handing Cosima a cotton ball. The brunette laid back down, pulling Charlotte to her.

“All Charlotte felt was the fear that had a vice grip on her. The only thing making her feel okay was
being held by mummy. A moment later, she felt Maman lie down on the other side of her and gently rub her back. She felt her scoot closer as Maman wrapped her tall body completely around her small frame, kissing her temple. The young clone kept her eyes closed, letting this warmth slowly melt her fear.

“Je sais que c’est épeurant, et on peut rester ici pour toute la journée si tu veux. Dites-moi quand tu es prête, ma grande. Mais, pour le moment, nous vous tenons. I know this is scary, and we can stay here all day if you’d like. Tell me when you’re ready, my eldest. But, for the moment, we’ve got you.” Delphine whispered to her, sealing the statement with another soft kiss to her temple.

Cosima ran her hand once again through Charlotte’s hair “I don’t know exactly what Maman just told you, but we’re both right here, honey.”

Delphine reached out, rubbing a hand down Cosima’s arm, and bringing it down to settle on her waist; hugging both of her girls at once “Je t’aime tous les deux. Vous êtes chaque chanson que mon cœur chante. I love you, both of you. You are every song that my heart sings.”

Charlotte let go of mummy and turned to face Maman, nodding.

Delphine gave her daughter a smile through all of the sadness “Ok. I am going to let you stay all wrapped up in mummy while I do this, okay?”

The little girl nodded as Delphine helped Cosima sit up against the headboard. She opened her legs so that Delphine could position Charlotte between them. Charlotte collapsed against mummy, feeling so lethargic. Maman pushed the drenched hair out of her face and frowned.

“Oh mon petit, this won’t take long” Delphine assured as she pulled over the second set of equipment.

Cosima wrapped both arms around Charlotte’s shoulders and hugged her close, leaning in to whisper in her ear “Maman’s gonna take such good care of you. Trust me, she’s the most gentle doctor ever.”

Charlotte nodded as she let Maman have her arm. The tourniquet felt so tight and she winced.

“I know, little one. It won’t be for long” she reassured, rubbing Charlotte’s palm with her gloved thumb.

Delphine made eye contact with her fiancée, nodding.

Cosima intook a breath “So, we’re thinking of moving to Bailey-Downs maybe even being neighbours with Kira, Gemma, and Oscar. Would you like that?”

Charlotte nodded.

“What would you want our house to be like?” Cosima asked.

Charlotte shrugged, jumping slightly as the needle slid in to her arm.

“Oh, okay. How about a pool? Would you like a pool?” the older clone asked.

A nod from the girl as she whimpered.

“You’re doing so well Charlotte, almost done” the blonde told the girl.

“I want a big window in my room” Charlotte whispered “And a playroom.”
Cosima smiled “I’m sure we can find that. What about your own lab? Eh? Maybe a mass spec?” Cosima asked.

“That would be nice” Charlotte responded her voice barely above a whisper.

“All done” the doctor explained, putting a band-aid on the site and kissing it.

Charlotte took her arm back and rubbed her eyes. Delphine started cleaning up, being careful with the samples.

“I am going to bring these to the lab and have them put a rush on them” she told Cosima. “You two should stay in bed. I’ll bring up some breakfast before I leave.”

“Delphine, I need to pee” Cosima told her.

The doctor nodded, walking over “Charlotte, I’ll bring her right back” she promised, getting to Cosima’s side.

Charlotte slid down on to Maman’s side of the bed as she watched her help mummy to her feet.

Cosima held tightly to Delphine, wavering as she walked. Her legs refused to keep her upright. Delphine caught her every time, finally getting her safely on the toilet.

There was this unbearable tightness in the oldest clone’s chest. She tried her best to breathe “Delphine” she panicked, trying to suck in breath.

“Stay here!” Delphine instructed, running out of the room.

She flew across the bedroom, to the closet. She took the oxygen tank out of the closet and rolled it to the bathroom.

Cosima immediately started shaking her head “No, please no, Delphine” she pleaded, still trying to suck in breath.

The doctor crouched in front of her, putting a hand to her chest. She could feel the harsh rasp of her partner’s lungs trying their best to pull air in to her body and having a very hard time of it. “I know, Cosima. But you must. Please.”

Cosima nodded reluctantly and Delphine’s hands flew to attach the cannula. She carefully looped it around Cosima’s head and hooked it on to each of her ears, slowly inserting the nose tubes.

The dread head took a deep breath, finally able to breathe properly. She calmed down.

“Thanks” the brunette whispered “Super sexy, right?” said insecurely, gesturing with a hand to her face.

The blonde’s eyebrows knit together as she held Cosima’s chin in her hand, lifting it to meet her eyes. She looked in to them sincerely.

“Always.”

A smile spread across Cosima’s face, her cheeks turning a rosy red colour just as they were each kissed by Delphine. The blonde’s arms flew across Cosima’s shoulders as she rested her head on the brunette’s chest.

“I hate this” Delphine whispered.
The clone sighed, wrapping her own arms around her partner “I’m sorry that you have to play doctor for us.”

“I just want to be Maman and your wife. I love taking care of both of you but…I hate that I have to” Delphine felt the tears “And Charlotte…mon Dieu, Cosima….”

“Hey, hey…I know” Cosima whispered, stroking the back of Delphine’s head as she held her to her chest, kissing the top of it. “You don’t have to hold it together for me. It’s okay.”

Delphine nodded in to her and sobbed, clutching at the solid form of the woman she loved. She used that to remind her that she was still here. She wasn’t gone yet. Her hands clutched at skin and muscle and bone; she listened to organs and the steady sound of Cosima’s raspy breathing; and she felt warm, soft, slightly wet lips press to the bare skin on her forehead as she sobbed in to her partner.

“What do you need?” Cosima asked, gently running her finger tips under Delphine’s shirt to stroke her back.

Delphine’s sobs stopped for a moment and she sniffled, staying close to Cosima’s body “I need to know what is happening with Charlotte.”

“Then go get those labs done. We’ll be okay. I’ll keep an eye on her” Cosima told her.

The French woman nodded, wiping her own tears.

“Hey” Cosima called.

The blonde slowly craned her neck up, Cosima’s hands immediately on her cheeks, wiping away the tears.

“You don’t have to do this alone. Talk to me, talk to Cal, talk to whomever. Please don’t hold it all in” Cosima asked of her.

Delphine nodded.

“I love you” the brunette whispered.

“Je t’aime aussi, Cosima” the blonde replied.

Cosima leaned in halfway. Delphine met her in the middle, kissing her softly, letting their lips dance across each other as they drunk from the wells of warm safety that was the energy that flowed between them. They slowly pulled away as each pair of eyes fluttered open. Words could only do so much. That kiss filled in the rest.

Delphine carried that kiss with her as she waited at the lab. The results they’d told her would be a half an hour. Her knee bounced anxiously as she bit her nails, sitting in the waiting room. She received a text from Scott.

“So, are we implanting today?” he asked.

“Not yet. We still need some equipment. Scrap the current embryos and I will let you know when we are ready to make more” she replied.

“Copy that” Scott ended.

Just as she was about to put her phone away, it buzzed. An unknown number came up on the screen with a picture of a house.
“I just bought this. Cool, eh? By the way, it’s Cal” it read.

Delphine smiled “Very cool” she texted back.

Another picture of a house alerted her “The one two doors down is for sale. Would be perfect for you. Want to see it today?”

“I can’t leave Cosima and Charlotte for long” she told him.

“I can send Sarah” he replied.

“Fine. I’ll look. But no promises” she texted back.

“I’ll e-mail you directions. See you soon” Cal sent.

Delphine sighed and called Cosima.

“Hey” she heard the familiar voice on the other line.

“Cosima, I am going to an open house with Cal. Sarah is on her way over to you. How are you?” Delphine asked.

Cosima sat up slightly and yawned, pulling her sweater around herself tighter “I’m okay. I think today might be a wright off though. Charlotte’s sleeping through it and I think I might need to do the same.”

“Good. Rest. You both need it. Did she eat?” Delphine asked.

“A couple sips of the nutritional shake, a bite of the granola bar. Not really” the brunette informed her partner, sighing as she watched her daughter sleep.

The blonde ran her hands through her hair “And you?”

“I took a couple hits and finished the shake” Cosima told her.

“We may have to get Charlotte some form of cannabis. If it’s working so well for your appetite, it might help her too” Delphine suggested.

“I’ll look in to it. We should be able to get a tincture or something” the eldest clone replied.

The lab tech called Delphine over.

“Cosima, I have to go. The results are back. I’ll be home in an hour or so” Delphine told her.

“Okay. I love you. Have fun with Cal and tell him I say hi” Cosima replied.

“Je t’aime aussi, and I will. Enjoy your time with your sister” Delphine closed.

She hung up and stood, taking the results.

“Cos?” Sarah called out as she stepped in the door.

“Upstairs” Cosima yelled back, ensuring that the covers were tucked tightly around the shivering form of the small child next to her.

Sarah walked in and her face fell “Oh God, Cosima. Are you okay?” she asked, rushing forward, putting a hand to her sister’s forehead.
Cosima removed the hand “Hey, I get enough of that from Delphine. I look like that much of a mess, huh?”

The Leda leader sighed and dropped her hand “Yeah, actually. Little scientist not feeling well either?” she asked motioning to Charlotte.

Cosima shook her head, turning to Charlotte, then back to her sister “It’s bad” she tried keeping her voice low. “Delphine’s out running labs on both of us and apparently looking at a place with Cal.”

Sarah huffed “Yeah. Didjya hear? I’m moving to the bloody fucking suburbs. Hard to believe huh?” she asked, pulling up a chair and bracing her feet on the edge of the bed to lean back in it.

“Well, we might be neighbours apparently” the dreaded clone responded.

“Yeah, if we’re not careful, we’ll all turn in to Allison” Sarah joked.

They both chuckled, then went silent. Sarah leaned towards Cosima, worried.

“Are you two gonna be okay, Cos?” she asked.

The dreaded woman took a really deep breath, sighing heavily as she looked at her daughter “I don’t think so. I’m just going to try to spend as much time with my family as possible.”

The brunette put a hand on Charlotte’s back as the girl slept. She felt a similar hand on her shoulder.

“Anything you need…” Sarah reminded her.

“I know” Cosima whispered.

“So it’s a 5 bed, 4 bath 2 storey house. 3 beds 2 bath upstairs along with laundry; an open concept kitchen and family room with a half bath and one bed on the main level; and a 2 bed, 1 bath basement with a large open, unfinished space. The kitchen is all state-of-the-art, the master’s ensuite features a whirlpool double sized tub, and there is an inground pool in the backyard” the real estate agent informed Delphine.

She looked around and smiled. It was large, but it felt very cozy. She turned to Cal.

“This is perfect” she told him.

“I thought that you’d like it” he replied.

She turned to the real-estate agent “Can we take a look around?” she asked.

“Be my guest” was the answer.

The doctor climbed the stairs, heading upstairs. She started snapping pictures with her phone to show Cosima and Charlotte. The master was very large, but nothing impressed like the bathroom. She stepped in and knew Cosima would fall in love with this tub. It was more than large enough to fit both of them. Her own mind wandered to how it would be the perfect birthing tub. The bathroom also had double sinks and a separate walk in shower.

Across the hall were the two other bedrooms, connected by a shared bathroom. She got to the second one and saw the wall-sized window that overlooked the driveway. She walked up to it and smiled. Just what Charlotte had wanted.

A short trip to the basement proved it to be a well-built space. There was no feeling of musky or
dampness. It was nice and cool. Delphine looked around the large space and nodded, turning to Cal.

“This is the perfect size” she told him. “We’d have to knock out that wall, but once that’s done, we could easily make this a lab.”

“I charge in beer, pizza, and good company” he told her.

“You do contract work?” she asked, confused.

He raised an eyebrow and pointed to himself with both thumbs “Lumberjack.”

The blonde laughed and nodded “How soon could we get this going?”

“Well, with a few sets of hands, I could have this basement finished and ready to be set up in 3 days tops.”

She nodded “I have to talk this over with Cosima.”

“She’ll say yes” Cal noted.

“I hope so. This place feels like home” the doctor noted.

“Well, I guess we’re gonna be neighbours” he nudged her.

“I guess we are, buddy” she nudged back.

Cosima was pulled from her nap by her phone dinging. She looked up to see Sarah had been woken from it as well, having fallen asleep in the chair.

She grabbed it and checked her notifications. Pictures from Delphine. She smiled when she saw them.

“That your woman?” Sarah asked.

“Yeah. Sarah, this house is incredible” she told her “Holy tub-ledo!”

Cosima showed her the picture.

“Hey, mine doesn’t have one of those!” Sarah complained.

The last picture was a selfie of Delphine with Cal in the background in the basement with the caption: “Our new lab?”

“Those two really get along, huh?” Sarah asked.

Cosima smiled “Yeah. Like hardcore. You’d think they grew up together or something.”

“Are you maybe a little jealous? I mean, Cal’s well…Cal and Delphine’s bi” Sarah noted.

The dreaded clone laughed “No. Not at all. Why? Are you?”

Sarah opened her mouth but hesitated.

Cosima patted her thigh “Don’t worry, I’ve known for a while.”

“Cosima…” Sarah started.
“Really Sarah, it’s all good. She’s sexy, isn’t she? I don’t blame you one bit” the older clone reassured her sister.

“It’s not like that. I just…damn Cos, you shouldn’t be so cool about this” the Leda leader chastised.

Cosima shrugged “Can’t control how you feel. Besides, Delphine wouldn’t go there. So go ahead, crush out all you want.”

“That thing she does, with her lip” Sarah mentions, leaning in.

Cosima smirked “Oh yeah, I know that thing.”

Sarah sighed “I kissed her that one time and it was all I could think about for a while.”

Cosima’s jaw dropped “You kissed her?”

“Don’t get your panties in a ruffle, I was undercover as you at DYAD” the English woman expressed.

The west coaster laughed “I can’t wait to hear about this.”

“You know I wouldn’t do anything, right? It’s just like…” Sarah started.

“Harmless little feelings, I know. I just catch you sometimes eyeing her when you think no one is watching” Cosima informed her sister. “It makes me giggle.”

“Well I’m glad someone’s having a good time with it” Sarah confessed.

“Allo? Cosima?” Delphine called out as she walked in the front door.

“Haven’t moved” she called back.

“Not a word, Cos” Sarah warned.

Cosima laughed, shrugging.

“I swear, you tell, I’ll tell her about that secret tickle spot” Sarah threatened.

Cosima shut up as Delphine and Cal walked in. The blonde let the lumberjack walk up to Cosima first.

“Hey there dreads” he told her.

“Oh, it’s everyone’s favourite flannel chest. Nice to see you Cal” she replied as he came in to give her a hug.

“It’s great to finally be here. How ya feelin’?” Cal asked.

“I’ve got tubes up my nose” is all she said.

“Fair enough” the lumberjack answered, looking to Sarah and kissing her softly “Hey babe. You ready to go? I’m sure Kira’s waiting”

“Yeah. Umm…” she turned to Cosima “You call me if you need anything, okay?”

“Definitely” she answered.
Sarah hugged her “I love you. Get better, Cos”

Cosima nodded and returned the squeeze “I’ll do my best”

Everyone let Charlotte sleep in peace as they left. Delphine took her turn to walk up to the bed once the lumber couple was on their way out.

“Did you get the pictures?” the Frenchwoman asked.

Cosima smiled and nodded “I love it. Can we afford it though?”

Delphine sighed and nodded “Yeah. We can. We can even keep this house as a safe house. I forget that you haven’t seen my bank accounts.”

“Dr. Cormier, are you swimming in it?” Cosima asked

“Not quite, but we are fairly well off” she informed her wife.

“Does it have a pool?” Cosima wondered.

“Yes. Inground and beautiful” the blonde told her.

“Let’s get it” the brunette countered.

“But Cosima, you haven’t even seen it” Delphine logically justified.

“We need that lab sooner rather than later” Cosima noted.

“Alright. If you’re sure, I’ll call right now” Delphine said, pulling out her phone.

After having talked to the real estate agent and set up an appointment that night to go over the paperwork, Delphine pulled out the lab work ups she’d gotten earlier. She laid in bed next to her wife, handing Cosima her own as she read over Charlotte’s.

“The good news is that she’s a good candidate for the embryo treatment. The bad news is that she’s declining quickly” Delphine noted, handing Cosima Charlotte’s work up. “Kids are bouncy though.”

“What do you mean?” the brunette asked, looking over her daughter’s troubling numbers.

“They fall quickly but bounce back very quickly as well” Delphine explained.

Cosima gave up, sighing and handed the doctor her labs “I’m too tired to focus. Just tell me what it says?”

Delphine took the papers and carefully read them over. She set them aside, pulling Cosima to her.

“That bad?” she asked.

The doctor simply nodded, holding her close.

Cosima nodded “We should call a lawyer.”

“For the house?” the blonde inquired.

“And my will” Cosima stated matter of factly.

“If that is what you wish” the French woman agreed.
“It is. Not having one would be a bad idea” Cosima noted. “How long do I have?”

“It is hard to say. Some people…” Delphine was cut off.

“How long, Delphine?” Cosima asked again, pleading with her fiancée to tell her the truth.

“Four months is my best estimate” the doctor informed her patient.

“Four months to live and a lifetime of things to do” the brunette noted, tears filling her eyes. “A lifetime of love to give you two in four months.” Her bottom lip quivered as she didn’t bother holding the tears back.

“They’ll be great months” Delphine tried to assure her.

“I want to marry you, Delphine. Sooner rather than later. I don’t need a big wedding, just something small with our family here, Papa, your Maman, in our new backyard.” She shivered as the tears threatened to take complete control. “I just really want to be your wife before I die.”

Delphine smiled and nodded “A life without having had you as my wife would be incomplete. We will put something together quickly. Next week” the blonde smiled, cradling her fiancée’s cheek. “Next Friday night, you will finally be my wife.”

Cosima nodded and sniffled back the tears, reaching for her phone “I think it’s time I called my Papa. He…he has a right to know about everything.”

Delphine nodded and pushed a stray dread behind her ear “I will take Charlotte, give you some privacy. We’ll be just in her room. I should call Maman too.”

Cosima nodded and bit her bottom lip.

Delphine leaned in, kissing her forehead before she stood up, going over and picking the sleeping, fevered child in to her arms. She grabbed her med bag and headed out of the room, shutting the door.

Cosima picked up her phone and dialed the number. She put a hand to her forehead as it rang. Finally, it stopped.

“Papa? It’s Cosima. Do you have time to talk?” she asked her father.

Delphine laid on the bed, placing Charlotte to lay on her chest as she dialed her mother’s phone number.

Pourquoi?

Delphine was outside, the drabble of a priest speaking in the background. It was cold, raining, everything was tinted grey. Looking to her left, Sarah was staring at her. The blonde ignored the clone, turning her attention to the priest.

“And though they lived happily, the mighty Lord will accept the child lovingly into his kingdom…” the old man droned on.

“Non” Delphine cried internally, unable to move her lips.

She looked towards the ground where two holes were dug. A pale faced, sunken-eyed Cosima lay hovering over one hole, her body draped in dirty rags to cover her chest and groin while Delphine was tortured by the emaciated elements of her once vivacious figure. Bones protruded grossly, skin sunken between ribs, organ outlines on full display.

Over the second hole was her daughter, swaddled in a blood soaked white sheet. Her features were drowned out, much like her mother’s.

“Mon Dieu, non!” Delphine sobbed in her own mind.

Her attention then shot to the priest who continued his ceremony.

…while her mother rots in eternal hell, paying with damnation for her sins” the old man condemned.

“Cosima!” she cried out.

“You did this” Sarah snapped causing Delphine to turn and look at her.

A gunshot, then a searing pain. A pain she knew. She looked down to see herself very pregnant, her belly oozing out from the wound.

“Your child’s life for penance” the priest told her, waving an arm.

Cosima and Charlotte’s bodies dropped down into the holes, lost forever.

Delphine’s eyes snapped open and she sat up in bed. There was a hand on her chest. She was sweating. She breathed hard, looking around. She was home. She was in bed. Cosima was here.

“Hey, hey honey, slow down. Another one?” her fiancée asked.

The French woman gulped and closed her eyes, nodding as she laid back down.

Cosima coughed into the crook of her elbow, rubbing Delphine’s bare chest with her other hand. Once her body had stopped it’s raspy convulsions, she settled next to her fiancée.

“Are you okay?” the brunette asked.

The doctor nodded, the heaviness from the dream only adding to that sinking pit in her stomach that had been falling since she’d seen Cosima’s lab results earlier in the week.

“I have to get up” she told Cosima, sitting up and grabbing her shirt, pulling it over her head.

“Delphine…talk to me” the brunette pleaded, turning her head to cough into her elbow again.
The blonde crouched and kissed Cosima’s face and shook her head “I do not have words, Cosima. I need to do something.”

The clone accepted that with a slight nod “Okay, but talk to someone.”

“I’ll bring you up breakfast” Delphine told her.

The blonde left the room and Cosima sighed and collapsed onto the bed, looking up at the cathedral ceiling of her new bedroom. This was eating up Delphine. She could tell her fiancée was stressed. They had just moved to the new house and she was so busy doing all of the wedding legwork, helping Cal finish the basement, putting final touches on lab gear, preparing for her first day of work Monday and the sleepover set to happen tonight, and then taking care of her on top of it all.

Cosima was ever so thankful for this and many other reasons. Also that Charlotte had responded so well to treatment. The younger clone had (just as Delphine told her) bounced right back. But she, she was bed ridden. Her legs could not physically hold her up any more, her stomach ached, and her lungs and throat burned with every breath. She hoped sincerely that Delphine would talk to someone.

Cosima rolled over, grabbing her laptop and working on the D&D game she was setting up for the cousins tomorrow night. Apparently Scott had prepared a one-shot for them during the sestras talk and the kids loved it. She figured it would give her some quality time with the kiddos that was calm and non-strenuous. Cosima also hoped that it would take some of the pressure off of her partner.

Charlotte looked over the notebook closely “This is awesome, Opa. Amethyst, agate… wow.”

The large-framed tall man let out a hearty chuckle as he laid a hand on her shoulder “It’s nice to have someone appreciate them.”

The large German man had caught the next flight out after his daughter had called. He could hardly believe the things she had told him. A clone? There were other Cosimas out there? And she was going to be married! The news just rolled on: he was an Opa. But of course, nothing had prepared him for the news that his baby girl was sick. Four months she said. He’d be damned if he was going to waste that time away from this new-found family. Delphine was an absolute delight, even while running around stressed. Her love for his daughter was strikingly clear. It was everything he had ever wanted for his little Cosima: the same love he had the opportunity to have in his life with Andrew.

He knew the loss of the love of your life. He knew exactly what the tall, slender French woman must be feeling in this trying time. He was gentle with her in every interaction. She was his newest daughter and he would watch over her. He watched her rush in to the kitchen and grab random items that he knew were for his daughter.

Helm turned to his granddaughter “You can keep this if you like, I have copies.”

Charlotte beamed up at him “Thank you, Opa”

He looked up to the flustered blonde, stood up from his seat at the table and walked to the oven. He opened it and handed Delphine a plate “Oatcakes with peanut butter frosting and raspberries. She’ll eat them.”

Delphine turned around from the fridge, staring at him. She sighed, feeling a bit of the pressure leave her frame. Putting back the items she’d collected, she looked up at him gratefully “Thank you, Helm.”

“Go take a seat, I’ll bring her downstairs” he reassured her. “There’s fresh coffee in the pot and a
plate for you on the table.”

Delphine kissed the cheek of her future father-in-law, whom she’d come to adore for his support these past few days. “Tu viens de Dieu. You come from God” she told him, grabbing a coffee and then heading over to the table and taking a seat next to Charlotte who was flipping through the notebook.

The blonde took the time to relax for a moment. Her life was so hectic. She closed her eyes, taking a long, luxurious sip of her coffee. She let it all melt away for this brief time. No one was sick, no one was dying; she was just drinking coffee with her kid.

“Maman, look at this. Opa’s found all these cool gemstones” Charlotte told her, scooting the notebook between them.

The blonde smiled and sat up, paying attention as her daughter gave her a lesson in geology. After a couple minutes, the young clone stopped and looked up at her.

“By the way, I know mummy doesn’t really like diamonds, so I think you should get her a jasper ring” Charlotte informed her maman.

“Oui? Et pourquoi? Yeah? And why?” the blonde asked, forking a piece of oatcake and putting it in her mouth.

“Jasper is supposed to help the wearer through tough times. It’s supposed to bring tranquility and well-being. I think Mummy can use some of that” the young clone told Maman.

“You little romantic” Delphine teased.

Charlotte blushed as she turned her attention back to the book.

“Thank you. I might take you up on that idea” the blonde nudged her kid, taking another bite of her breakfast.

Helm walked in at that moment, carrying his daughter easily in his brawny arms. He sat her down at the table, bringing her breakfast over.

Cosima beamed, happy to be out of bed and eating at the table like a regular person.

“Thank you Papa” she told him, taking a bite of her oatcake and smiling at her daughter “Oh cool, I see Opa’s sharing his research.”

“Yeah. Did you know that he’s seen 584 different kinds of rocks and minerals?” Charlotte asked mummy.

Cosima laughed and ruffled the young clone’s hair “I did actually. I was with him when he found most of them.”

“That’s so cool! Opa, could you bring me one day?” the tiny person asked.

“One day. When your Maman and Mummy bring you out to see me in San Fran I’ll show you my whole collection and we’ll go out every morning” he told her, putting a finger to her little nose.

Charlotte giggled.

Cosima’s eyes closed, that giggle affecting her the way nothing else could.
“Thanks for getting me out of bed, Papa. I needed it” she sincerely thanked.

“Oh, no trouble at all Mima” he cooed her childhood nickname to her.

The brunette smiled “No one’s called me that in ages.”

His eyes grew so full of emotion “Your Dad used to call you that.”

Cosima nodded “I know.”

“Well, I thought that maybe I could take you and our little geologist here out today. Let Delphine and the big guy work on the basement in peace” he suggested. “I have years away from a granddaughter that I need to catch up on and someone has a wedding outfit to pick out” he told his daughter.

The brunette shook her head “Papa, I don’t think I can.”

Just then, Delphine’s phone buzzed. She pulled it out of her pocket and opened the e-mail. It was from her father.

“Delphine,
Your mother has filled me in on your plans and what you have been up to. How dare you desecrate the sacred act of marriage! Canada has corrupted you in to the ways of the heathen. I suggest you stop this little charade immediately, return the child to the authorities to be placed in a real home, and come home yourself. My priest has assured me that there is a place for you in the parish and that he can start the work with you to correct these horrible sins.

How dare to slap the face of god and destroy this family’s reputation!

I am disappointed,
Your father
P.S. You weren’t worth the French.”

Delphine turned her phone off, feeling the blow strike her in the chest. She ignored it the best she could as she turned her attention back to her breakfast.

The conversation was still happening around her. Delphine stayed silent, staring at her plate.

“If not now, then when? There has never been a better time than right now, Mima” he re-iterated the words Cosima’s dad used to tell her in his final months.

That struck a chord deep within her. It revamped her perspective. She remembered her dad in those months leading up to his death. He was alive. He was so sick but he didn’t let it stop him. She had some of her best memories in that time.

She turned to Charlotte and smiled “Why not now, then?”

“Perfect” he chimed.

Cosima felt the warm comfort of the slender hand on her thigh and she met Delphine’s eyes.

“Are you sure?” Delphine asked worried.

Cosima smiled and nodded “Yeah. It’ll be nice to get out of the house.”

The blonde nodded, turning to her daughter “Did you take your medicine?” she asked.
Charlotte rolled her eyes “Yes, Maman!”

“Oh no, the eye rolling has begun! The pre-teen is coming!” Cosima joked, feigning fright.

Cosima felt the laugh take over her body, shaking her frame until it slowly turned into a cough. She pulled on her oxygen and breathed deeply, feeling it slightly soothe her destroyed lungs.

The front door swung open and Cal stepped in.

“Uncle Cal!” Charlotte called, getting up and running towards him. He scooped her up and twirled her around, heading back towards the kitchen.

Helm stood and shook the lumberjack’s hand.

“Cal, nice to see you. There is a plate for you” the larger man told him.

He shook his hand “And you as well, Mr. Neihaus. Thank you, but Mrs. S. came by and made us some flapjacks this morning. I’m all full up.” Cal turned to Delphine “Ready to get started?” he asked.

She nodded and finished the final bite of her oatcake, taking the last sip of her coffee, before stooping and kissing each of her girls.

“I love you. Have fun. Take it easy. I will see you tonight” she instructed.

“Love you too, babe” Cosima responded, taking another bite of her oatcake.

“Bye maman. Have a good day” Charlotte told her.

Delphine gave Cal a hello hug, and then grabbed her wallet and keys before she headed out the door, Cal on her heels.

Cosima sighed, taking another bite, unable to stop the smile on her face.

Helm noticed, smiling at his daughter “Oh, you are so in love with her.”

Cosima scrunched her nose and nodded “I really am.”

“But not as much as you love me, right?” Charlotte asked with a pouty face.

Cosima leaned in and kissed her daughter’s cheek “Not as much as I love you!”

The young clone giggled and kissed mummy’s face, wrapping her arms around the older clone’s neck and resting her head on her shoulder.

“Mummy, can I get a new outfit for school Monday?” she asked.

“Why don’t you let your Opa spoil you to all the clothes you can imagine?” Helm offered, much to Cosima’s displeasure.

“One new outfit, and school supplies. There will be very minimal spoiling. You just got a whole new wardrobe” the brunette countered.

Charlotte pouted and turned to her Opa, who put his hands up.

“What mummy says, goes” the grandfather gave up.
There was an adorable little sigh from the tiny human “Fine. But can I get my own dice for tomorrow?”

“That is a most definite yes” Cosima told her, chuckling as she ruffled Charlotte’s hair.

“Dice?” the older German man asked, confused.

“Mummy’s going to run a D&D campaign for us tomorrow night. We use special dice for the game. All my cousins played a game with Scott earlier this week and they said it was so much fun!” Charlotte explained.

“It’s a role playing game with Dragons and Dungeons and adventures and stuff” Cosima attempted to explain to her father, who still looked clueless.

“I never understood all that stuff” he shook his head.

“Trust me Papa, I know. I still remember how clueless you were with some of the board games dad and I played” the dreaded woman answered.

Delphine looked at her list “We still need tile” she told Cal.

He bit the inside of his cheek, looking each way in the giant store, trying to guess as to where the tile will be. Delphine spotted an employee and walked up to him.

“Excuse me. I am looking for tile. Could you please point me in the right direction?” she asked.

“Aisle 32. Go down to the lumber and it’s two aisles down from that” he told her.

She smiled “Thank you.”

Delphine walked over to Cal and took hold of the cart full of lumber and supplies, pushing it towards the aisle.

“How are wedding plans coming?” he asked as they walked.

She sighed “I have a million things to do, but the basement is my priority right now.”

“Delphine, I can do this if you want. You’ve got enough on your plate” he suggested.

The blonde shook her head “It will go faster with two of us. We need fast.”

“I’m worried about you, Finny. I don’t think I’ve ever seen you so stressed” Cal noted as they rounded the corner to the tile aisle.

Delphine took a deep breath “I can handle it. I have to.”

“Well, I think I am going to get your ass drunk tonight. Loosen up. Have a little fun” the lumberjack told her.

“Cal, I do not have time for fun” she told him, scanning her options in the tile, reaching out to touch each sample.

“Well, at least have a few beers with me while we work. I’ve got a case in the truck” he informed her.

“That, I can do!” the doctor agreed as she picked up a tile “This will work. We need how much?
1000 square feet?"

“Yup. It’s a huge space” he noted.

They got to work loading the tile up onto their full cart.

Cosima sat in the wheelchair being pushed by her daughter, feeling like a complete lump. She hated being in the chair. She hated how it confined her and vowed that if she ever got the chance to, she’d walk every moment she could. But for now, she was stuck here.

The cool air of the mall rolled around her as they walked in. First on her list were Delphine’s rings. She knew that her fiancée wanted an engagement ring with a few tasteful diamonds. Cosima liked the idea herself, and so allowed herself to be pushed towards the jeweller.

“Are you gonna get maman diamonds?” Charlotte asked, letting go of mummy’s chair the moment they got to the display cases.

Cosima smiled, loving to see Charlotte browse the precious gems found there. She peered over the case. “Yeah. Your maman is a fan of diamonds.”

“Do you want to know what I think?” Charlotte asked.

Cosima laughed “I’m always on the market for a professional opinion.”

“I think Maman will like a diamond engagement ring, but I think that she’d really like a Jasper wedding ring” the young clone told her mother, putting her plan in motion.

“Oh yeah? And why’s that?” Cosima asked

“It’s a stone that is meant to be calming and bring tranquility and well-being” she quoted almost verbatim from earlier. “I think Maman could use that reminder when she thinks of you” she added sadly.

Cosima thought about that for a moment. Giving Delphine a ring that would help keep her tranquil with the idea that Cosima wanted her to be well. That was exactly what she wanted to tell her wife every time she looked down at the ring on her finger. She wanted Delphine to be okay when she was gone. She wanted her to be able to keep the smile that she’d seemed to have recently lost.

She hadn’t seen a true, sun bright smile illuminate Delphine’s shining face in so long. Yes, she wanted to give Delphine a ring that would show her how much she wanted her to be well.

The older clone smiled at her daughter “I like that idea.”

Cosima called the jeweler over.

Delphine stood in the basement, two beers in. Cal was still stone sober. They had just finished clearing all the appliances and storage boxes out of the basement. They were currently spreading out tarps.

“So she doesn’t have too long?” Cal asked

“Four months” Delphine told him.

“That’s rough. That’s really fucking hard. How the hell are you coping?” He asked.

“I’m not. I don’t have time to cope” she told him, taking another swig from her third beer.
“Isn’t there anything you can do?” the lumberjack asked, laying down the tarp.

Delphine stopped what she was doing and shot him a steely gaze “If there was, wouldn’t I be doing it?”

“Yeah, sorry. That came out wrong. I didn’t mean you specifically. Geez Delphine, this is tough” Cal admitted.

She grit her teeth and tapped the tarp in place. Out of the corner of her eye, she could see the corner of the hospital bed peeking out from behind the slightly ajar door to a bedroom. The room was dark, the lights out. She stopped for a moment, unable to stop from staring at it.

Cal noticed, following her eyes “That’s gonna be her room, isn’t it?” he asked, his stomach falling as he thought about the connotations.

The blonde nodded. This was where the love of her life would die. This was where that dreaded last moment with Cosima would happen; where she would cease to exist. Delphine had avoided that room for those reasons. To her, it already reeked of death. She could feel the grim reaper behind her every moment she got close to it. She was building Cosima’s crypt. She was digging her own wife’s grave.

Delphine’s phone buzzed from atop the window sill. She rushed to it, brushing passed him.

“Woah, where’s the fire?” the lumberjack asked.

“Lab results” she told him as she picked up the phone, checking her e-mail.

Cal watched her scroll through. She stopped, and he watched as her jaw set, nostrils flaring. She didn’t have to say a word. He knew: the results were not good.

The doctor carefully placed her phone back on the window sill before calmly walking over to the sledgehammer, resting against an exterior wall. She picked it up.

“Delphine?” Cal asked, concerned.

Delphine swung the hammer at the useless wall with every ounce of anger she had. The tool ripped through the drywall and blew a huge hole in it, popping out the other side. She swung again.

Cosima was going to die.

Cosima was going to die here.

Cosima was going to die soon.

Cosima was going to fucking die.

And there was nothing she could fucking do about it.

Nothing.

All of this money.

All of this power.

All of this knowledge.
All of this love.

And there was nothing.

She was just going to die.

Delphine let the hammer fly, adrenaline fueling her muscles to strain beyond their capability as the tears streamed down her face. She was so pissed at the world right now. It wasn’t fair. They were good people. Why was this happening?

The wall came crashing down, crumbling as its supports shattered from the force of the last hammer blow. She dropped the hammer and fell to her knees, sobbing.

“Pourquoi?” she cried.

Cal kneeled next to her, putting a hand on her back as his own tears fell. “Delphine…” he spoke softly.

“She is everything, and…I cannot even…I just wanted a simple life. I wanted to…” she sucked in hard, a high pitched screech emanating from her body as she cried harder than she ever had “I just wanted to spend my life with her…with our family. I just want to hold her and not hear her lungs begging to stop working.” Delphine’s sobs increased as she shook her head “I just want to be a family.”

Delphine stopped talking and let the final thought linger just below the surface; the final secret that she had yet to tell anyone.

She let herself open up, let herself finally let it out “I am scared of what this world will be like when she stops being a part of it; when she is just gone. Merde, I am so terrified of that.”

Call pulled her in to a tight hug and let her sob in his arms. Delphine let all of her tears out. She didn’t have to worry about scaring Cal. She didn’t have to worry about putting too much on Cal’s shoulders. He was emotionally strong enough to handle it right now. He wasn’t involved like Cosima was. He didn’t have to worry about Charlotte overhearing.

“Charlotte…” she sobbed, letting go of Cal “…she can’t…she is already been through enough, now this? Cal, what do I do? I do not even have words to comfort her. I do not even have words to comfort myself. How do I think I can take care of that little girl when Cosima is gone? How can I possibly give her what she needs when both of our hearts are broken? I do not know what to do. What do I do?”

Cal took her face in his hands and looked in to her eyes “Delphine, you will take care of her. I know you. You will be fine. It doesn’t feel like it and it’s gonna be a fight, but you will make it out. You always have me, and Sarah, and Charlotte has Kira. We’ve got Mrs. S. and Helm. We’ve got Helena and Jesse, Allison and Donnie. We’ve got Felix. You are literally surrounded. Together, we’ll help get you and Charlotte through this. You don’t have to do it alone, okay?”

Delphine nodded, shaking as he kissed her forehead. She was so grateful for his friendship right now. She looked up at him with blood shot eyes “Thank you.”

He nodded and turned to look at the wall “Well, our work today is done. I didn’t expect you to singlehandedly take down that wall in five minutes flat.”

Delphine shrugged as Cal reached over and pulled the case of beer closer, taking one out, popping the cap off, and handing it to her. He grabbed one for himself.
Delphine tipped it back, drinking from it like an infant from a bottle. She felt numb already and was eager for her body to match her emotions.

“I’ll hire a contractor to take over. He’ll have it done sooner. My wedding gift” he told her, taking a drink from his own bottle.

“Thank you” she whispered to him again.

“Anything for you and yours, Finny. We’re family” Cal reminded her.

Cosima stared at herself in the mirror. She loved the way that the white shirt fell on her shoulders, the way the black bow tie emphasized the symmetry of her face. She wanted to feel like she was beautiful. She wanted to see the way the wedding outfit hugged her body and made her short legs stand out, her hips curve. She wanted to see how the shoes curved her calves slightly with their heel to make her that little bit taller and seem that little bit more muscular.

She stared at the chair she was in. Its chrome and black vinyl making all of the other qualities seem moot in her mind. She shook her head.

“But Mummy, you look great!” Charlotte told her.

“But Mummy, you look great!” Charlotte told her.

“Maybe from the top up” she moaned sadly.

Helm looked at his daughter, confused. Cosima had never been one to be insecure. She was a strong, confident, beautiful woman. He leaned over and picked her up out of the chair.

“Papa? What? What are you doing?” she asked as his strong arms were pulling her up after being looped under her arm pits.

“Charlotte, sit down” he told his granddaughter.

Charlotte complied, sitting in Mummy’s chair. She stared up, confused.

“Papa, what is this?” Cosima whispered, well aware that for now they were hidden in the veil of the private dressing area and hoped that it would stay private.

“Tell me she’s less than beautiful” Helm whispered to his daughter. “Go ahead and tell me that you’re thinking that” he whispered to her, hugging her slightly as he wrapped an arm around her waist to hold her up.

Cosima stared at her daughter, the young girl oblivious to what her grandfather was asking her mother. She played with the wheels, turning and looking in to the mirror. Cosima watched, unable to tell herself that the kid was anything less than beautiful. She shook her head, looking up at her father.

“It doesn’t define you. Don’t let it. Not the chair, not the medication, not the needs you now have, not the illness itself. You are still you” he reminded her. “And you, my little one; you are so beautiful. Try to see yourself as your daughter sees you, as I see you, as Delphine sees you.”

Cosima smiled, letting that sink in.

“Alright, little geo, up out of mummy’s chair” Opa told Charlotte.

Charlotte stood up and smiled as she went and tried on one of the bow ties they’d brought in to the dressing room. Helm helped his daughter back in to the wheelchair and Cosima settled. She turned to face the mirror again, taking another look.
The brunette imagined being next to Delphine, surrounded by family, under the spring sun. She thought about looking up at her gorgeous fiancée who was staring down at her. She focused on the mirror and shook her head, smiling. She’d chosen the tux, thinking that it would make her more comfortable from her seated stance. She felt the truth set in.

“Not this one” she told them. “I want a dress.”

Helm smiled “Alright then. To the bridal store.”
Cosima rolled into the bedroom, her lap full of bags. She’d convinced her father to let her get into the bedroom herself, promising to take a nap. Shopping had been exhausting, but they’d finally found her a dress and gotten Charlotte everything she would need for school Monday, even stopping by the post office to pick up the textbooks that had come in the mail.

She didn’t expect to see Delphine fast asleep in bed. She looked at the clock: it was only 3pm. She put the contents of her bags away quietly and then rolled over to Delphine’s side of the bed. She smiled, seeing the peace on her fiancée’s face as she slept.

Cosima drank in the sight, watching as each blonde ringlet fell perfectly on Delphine’s head. She watched the gentle rise and fall of this woman’s body with each breath in absolute awe. She reached out, gently brushing back the blonde curls with a soft hand. Her fingers trailed down to outline Delphine’s cheeks and hold her face gently.

The brunette smiled, moving over to her side of the bed. Cosima braced herself on the bed and used everything she had to pull herself onto the soft, plush mattress. She sighed, lying behind Delphine. The clone made sure to untangle her oxygen line from the chair as she rolled on to her side, spooning her fiancée from behind.

Delphine felt the heat spread across her tummy as the familiar touch snaked over it. She instantly smiled and turned on her back.

The dreaded leaned down, connecting her lips to those of the blonde woman beneath her. It was a sleepy, lazy kiss that brought wafts of beer to her sense of smell, but soothed with the soft caress of lips.

“Allô” Delphine whispered as she pulled away, eyes still closed.

“I didn’t mean to wake you. Was gonna curl up for a nap” Cosima told her, a free hand now running through her fiancée’s curls as she kissed her cheek.

Delphine’s lips curved up in to a bright smile as she wrapped her arms around Cosima, allowing the girl to get settled on her chest.

The young scientist allowed herself to get comfortable, nuzzling in to Delphine’s shoulder, lips pressing to her long, exposed neck softly before she settled completely.

“Been drinking?” Cosima asked.

Delphine nodded “Cal and I had more than a few.”

“Good. You have fun?” she asked.

Another nod, followed by a smile “I feel a lot better.”

“Even better” Cosima told her, reaching up Delphine’s shirt to gently rub small circles on the blonde’s bare belly. “How’s the basement coming?”
“Cal’s getting us a team to do it. Wedding gift. It will be done by 5pm tomorrow. Equipment is coming in Sunday. We will implant Monday. I have already texted Scott.”

“Oh, but right now, we nap” Cosima told her.

Delphine rubbed her arm and nodded. “You feeling okay?” the French woman told her.

The dreaded woman let out a sigh as she nodded “Yeah. Let’s just sleep.”

Delphine pulled the blankets up around Cosima’s shoulders a little snugger, making sure she was well covered before she drifted off to sleep.

Charlotte walked in a few hours later, hoping up and crawling in to bed with them. She sat there, staring at them, waiting for them to notice her. When they didn’t she leaned in and kissed each of their foreheads. Both sets of eyes fluttered open.

Cosima’s first sight was on her daughter. She smiled and reached for the girl, pulling her down to snuggle.

“No, Mummy. Dinner’s ready. It’s time to get up” Charlotte told her.

Even in her haze, the brunette respected her daughter’s no and let go, curling back in to her partner “Five more minutes” she grumbled.

Delphine patted her chest, waving the young girl over, her eyes still closed.

“Oh, but only five. I’m hungry and I want to show you some of the new rocks I found” Charlotte told them.

“Cinq minutes” Delphine re-iterated.

The girl curled in to her maman, placing a hand on mummy’s shoulder as she enjoyed lying in their company for a while.

A few minutes later, there’s a knock at the door and Helm leaned in “What is this? I send you to wake them up and you’re joining the snuggle pile?” he chastises his granddaughter.

“Maman’s comfy” Charlotte responds.

“True that, kid” Cosima grumbles.

Delphine laughs, feeling the lightness her breakdown had lent her for the time being. It had felt so good to let everything out. She felt cleansed.

Cosima too felt different after that nap. Had it been the nap though? Or had it been the slap in the ass her father had given her earlier? She didn’t care. It was nice to finally feel even slightly free from the confines she’d created around herself and her illness. She was so comfy in Delphine’s embrace. But she knew there were some things that she’d have to talk to the blonde about. Some things still weren’t quite sitting right with her.

“Come on, time to get up. Dinner’s getting cold” he told them.

Charlotte sighed and got up first “Fine.”

Helm walked over to his daughter, going to pick her up. Cosima allowed herself to be pulled out of bed. The blonde stretched as she sat up. Her head was pounding from the beer, but it was a minor
price to pay. She swung herself out of bed and grabbed Cosima’s chair, carrying it downstairs behind the large German man who was carrying the smaller woman.

“Maman, I think I dropped the coolest rock between the couch cushions earlier. Can you help me?” Charlotte called from the living room.

Helm positioned Cosima in the chair and pulled the brakes off as Delphine turned to her daughter.

“Umm, Oui. After dinner, darling” Delphine answered.

“Go ahead. It’ll take me a minute to pull it out of the oven anyhow” Helm told her before he winked at his daughter.

Delphine saw the smile spread on Cosima’s face and became instantly suspicious. What were they having for dinner? She ignored the two for now and headed to the living room, rolling up her sleeves.

“It fell between these two cushions” Charlotte told her. “I was showing Opa and I just dropped it.”

“Okay Charlotte, attendez un moment” she told her kid, reaching between the cushion. She felt around the inside of the couch until her hand hit something cold and smooth “I think I’ve got it.”

Charlotte giggled, unexpectedly excited.

Delphine pulled her arm out and held up the…ring?

Her jaw hung open as she put two and two together. It was a gorgeous diamond encrusted engagement ring. She turned it over, watching the gold band and the diamonds sparkle in the lighting. She felt the happiest tears she’d felt in a long time roll down her face and a warm hand on her back.

“I knew I put that somewhere” Cosima joked.

Charlotte walked over to her Opa, looking up at him as he congratulated her on a job well done.

“Cosima, it is…” Delphine started, turning to look at her fiancée. “It is perfect.”

“It helps having a geologist in the family; who also happens to be the perfect wingman” Cosima told her.

Delphine sat on the couch, turning completely to face the love of her life. She leaned in, kissing Cosima so deeply that everything fell away for a moment. Her heart was so light and airy and just happy. She was going to get to marry Cosima. She wrapped both arms around the smaller woman’s neck, running her hands up in between the dreads, holding the brunette’s head closer as she moved her lips over those of the love of her life.

Cosima broke the kiss “So you like it?”

Delphine nodded, handing the ring to Cosima as she outstretched her hand, allowing her partner to put it on her finger.

Cosima gently pushed the ring on to the long, slender finger.

“It fits perfectly!” Delphine exclaimed.

“Oh come on, I wouldn’t be a very good lesbian if I didn’t know how big your fingers were”
Cosima told her.

Delphine chuckled and kissed her again before getting up and going over to her daughter, dropping to a knee and pulling her in to a hug. “Petit rétif! You had me fooled” she mockingly scolded.

“Congratulations, maman” Charlotte told her, squeezing her back.

Delphine let go and stood to give Helm a hug “Thank you for everything.”

He pulled her in to a bear hug “My pleasure! And...I am taking Charlotte out for some pizza and arcade games tonight. Not a peep out of either of you. You need some time to celebrate. Dinner’s on the table.”

Cosima smiled “Thanks, Papa.” It is followed immediately by a rough cough and a smear of blood.

Delphine looks at her, concerned. The coughing continues. The doctor grabbed a Kleenex from the box on the end table and brought it over, holding it in front of her mouth.

Cosima took the tissue and moved away from Delphine’s hand. She doesn’t need to be blotted like a 2 year old. Shooting her lover a glance, she watched Delphine back off. The coughing finally stopped and she wiped the blood from her face.

“Charlotte, you ready to go?” Opa asked.

Charlotte nods, but turned to her mother “Mummy, are you okay?”

The older clone smiled and nodded “Yup. I’m fine. Just a cough.”

The young girl accepts the answer, looking up at her maman, knowing that if maman’s here, mummy will be okay. Once Maman nods at her, she goes to the door and starts putting her shoes on.

“Hey, you be good for Opa, okay mom petit?” Delphine calls out, running a hand through her blonde curls.

“I will. Have fun having sex” Charlotte called back before heading out the door.

Helm let out a belly laugh as he followed his granddaughter out the door.

The door shut and Delphine turned to Cosima “Dinner?” she asked.

The brunette nodded and started to wheel herself to the kitchen. Delphine moved to take hold of the chair, but the clone whipped around in a flash of dreads.

“I've got this” Cosima told her.

Delphine backed off, heading over to the table where a beautiful meal was laid out. She took a seat, pouring herself a glass of wine. Cosima wheeled up to the table and reached for the bottle to pour her own. The blonde’s hand instantly shot out and closed around the strong fingers holding the barrel.

“Do you think that is wise?” Delphine asked.

Cosima’s eyes closed as she took a breath, doing her best not to snap “Yes. And I would appreciate it if you could stop mothering me. I’m fine right now. I’ve got my oxygen in, I’m in the chair, I’ve taken all of my meds. Just let me enjoy my evening.”

Delphine looked at her, fighting the internal struggle to tell her what to do. The blonde slowly pulled
her hand away from the bottle. She softened slightly “I simply think that you should take it easy”

Cosima poured her glass of wine “I’m not dead yet” she whispered under her breath.

Delphine set down her glass and raised her eyebrows at the sick clone “Excusez-moi?”

The brunette’s eyes closed and she grit her teeth “I said: I’m not dead yet” she spoke louder, taking a sip of her wine.

Delphine threw her arms up, staring at Cosima “What do you mean? Of course you are not. Why would you say that?”

“Because it feels like it. Delphine, you don’t look at me anymore. You don’t kiss me or touch me like you used to. That kiss after the ring has been the only genuine one we’ve exchanged since we’ve had a timeline. The rest is just all in passing. Like you’re walking right through me” Cosima explained, the words full of hurt. She shook her head and took another sip from her wine, still not making eye contact with her fiancée. “Until today, I felt so gross and ugly. Like this illness had taken me over completely; a shadow of who I was before. And if it’s like that, Delphine, then please don’t marry me. If you don’t see me as anything more than a memory, don’t marry me. If all you’re going to be is my doctor and caretaker, I don’t want to call you my wife. I’m tired of being a ghost. I feel invisible to you and it hurts.”

“Cosima…” Delphine whispered as she felt the pain radiating off of her partner. Her face went through the myriad of emotions she was feeling. Had she really done that? She thought back to the last week.

She had.

She swallowed hard.

She didn’t know when she stopped seeing Cosima as Cosima, and instead started seeing her as a patient, but it had happened. When had she stopped checking this gorgeous woman out? When had she stopped fantasizing about the way she smelled? The way she felt wrapped around her fingers? The way she tasted?

She wasn’t sure, but she knew that it had happened.

Delphine let her eyes trace Cosima. She allowed herself to open up; tried her best to forget the illness, the chair. In all of her need to take care of her partner, she’d forgotten about her emotions; forgotten that those needed to be taken care of as well.

The blonde stood up and walked around the table, gripping the back of Cosima’s neck hard and pulling her in to a deeply bruising kiss. She climbed into her lap, letting her knees rest on either side of the smaller woman’s thighs, mounting her in the chair.

Delphine’s tongue came out of her mouth to gently run over the lips that she had kissed so hard, soothing them as she held the brunette’s head firmly in her hands.

Cosima snaked her hands up Delphine’s back, pressing her close. She felt so alive, so much more present than she had lately. She felt sexy and wanted.

Delphine slowly pulled away, looking down at her partner from her position perched above.

“I did not know that we had gotten lost. I never want you to feel unloved or invisible. I will not let it happen again. Je t’aime Cosima, illness, chair, cannula” she whispered, her fingers lightly brushing
across the plastic tubing. “I love all of you. I got so wrapped up in myself and I do not know where I turned, but I am here now, mon amour. And I am so sorry that I ever made you feel like you were less than everything I have ever wanted…” Delphine continued, placing her forehead against the brunette’s as she played with the dreads. “…because you are.”

Cosima smiled, staring up in to Delphine’s eyes. As the woman spoke, she saw them soften completely; she saw them open up and drink in all of her; she saw them well up, clear, and then pierce in to her; and she saw them fill with love. She could hear the words Delphine spoke to her, but they were washed out by the tidal waves her eyes were communicating in this moment.

“I’ve missed you so much” Cosima whispered up to her partner.

Delphine frowned and smoothed the skin on her cheek with the softest touch, leaning down and leaving an equally soft kiss on the young scientist’s lips.

“Well I’m here now. All of me” Delphine replied.

Cosima felt herself blush and nod, pulling Delphine in to a tight hug. She sighed against the softness of her fiancée’s body. She breathed deeply, inhaling from the tank as she enjoyed the moment.

Cosima slowly leaned back to look at Delphine “So, dinner? You’ll need the energy. I plan on destressing you tonight.”

Delphine was about to protest, claiming that Cosima was sick, but she didn’t. Instead, she smiled and nodded, allowing those words to sneak up her thighs and gently tickle her clit.

“Well then, we should both eat” Delphine told her.

Cosima leaned up and gave her another tender kiss before slapping her ass, indicating for Delphine to get out of the chair.

Delphine laughed and dismounted “Ooo, I liked that.”

“Of course you did, you naughty doctor” Cosima teased, wheeling herself back to the table and taking hold of her wine glass.

There is was: that happiness she had felt not so very long ago.

Delphine took a seat, winking across the table at Cosima. Her Cosima.

“So how great is it, bring parents?” Cosima asked, spearing some asparagus on her fork and putting it in her mouth.

Delphine sat back in her chair and sipped her wine “So great!”

“I love that little girl so much. She’s so excited for school Monday” the brunette noted.

The blonde doctor nodded, cutting a piece of her meat. “Honestly, I am excited as well. I am looking forward to teaching” she told her partner.

“God those are some lucky kids. I wonder how many will have crushes on you? Mme Cormier, the hot French teacher” Cosima teased, taking another bite of her dinner.

“Well at least I will be pregnant soon. Not many crushes will last when I am the size of a truck” Delphine joked.
Cosima shook her head, smiling “I can’t wait. You’re gonna be so fucking gorgeous.”

“Cal said the same thing” Delphine told her, scrunching her nose as she took a sip of wine.

“You guys are really buddy-ing up, huh?” Cosima asked.

“It’s nice to have a friend. I have not had one in a very long time” she told her partner.

Cosima nodded “I’m glad you’ve got that.”

Delphine smiled and chuckled as she remembered something “Do you remember that night in Iceland when he chased you around with an icicle?” she asked.

Cosima laughed, coughing slightly but managed to catch her breath “I warned him I was gonna do it. He just kept chasing me.”

Delphine laughed harder tossing her head back as she slapped the table “He ran right at you and you just opened the door.”

“Whamo! Face first in three feet of snow. That’ll teach him” Cosima smiled as she grabbed her wine glass and sat back in her chair.

“Yes, Whamo! Indeed” Delphine chuckled, her laughter slowing.

Cosima took another bite as Delphine watched her eat for a few moments.

The French woman put her wine glass on the table and smiled “You are the most beautiful person I have ever met. I am so very lucky to be soon calling you my wife. People dream of being married to someone like you.”

Cosima blushed, looking up at her fiancée as the piece of roast beef dangled from her mouth. She made a show of mawing at it with her lips covering her teeth as she spoke “I know, right?”

Delphine chuckle “You are such a goof” she told her.

Cosima laughed, taking a bite from the piece and letting the rest fall “Whatever, Dr. Paper-eyebrows-stuck-to-my-real-eyebrows.”

“We got some good pictures from that” Delphine reminded her with a small chuckle.

“Oh yes we did. I think for Christmas you should blow one up for Charlotte. It’s like her favourite thing ever. Sometimes I catch her just staring at it and giggling” the brunette informed her partner.

“Speaking of, what should we have for dinner tomorrow night at the sleepover?” Delphine asked

“Ah let’s just order pizza or something” Cosima suggested, taking another bite from her dinner.

“Cosima, you know how I feel about pizza” Delphine grumbled.

Cosima rolled her eyes “Okay, we’ll order a pizza and make a nice big salad! Happy vegetable queen?” she asked.

“Well at least I now know where Charlotte gets the eye rolling from. Thank you for that, by the way” the doctor grumbled in return.

“You are most welcome for our sassy little kiddo” the dreaded clone retorted. “But let’s be real, she
gets some of that sass from you too.”

“I am not sassy!” The blonde exclaimed, shocked.

“Yeah, okay. Sure” Cosima replied, shaking her head. “Whatever Sassy McSasspants!”

They both burst in to laughter, sitting back in their chairs and sipping at their wine.

“I love you” Cosima told her fiancée.

It earned her an ear to ear ray of sunshine that spread throughout Delphine’s face.

“Je t’aime aussi, mon Coeur. I love you too, my heart” Delphine responded.

Cosima picked her utensils back up and worked on finishing her dinner, a feat she had not been able to complete without weed in a long time. Maybe it was the happiness coursing through her, but she felt so very interested in this food right now. Perhaps it was the company.

After a final bite, Delphine picked up her wine to slowly finish it. She watched her lover eat gingerly, amazed at how she’d gotten half of her plate down. But her mind wandered when she saw that soft, warm tongue sneak out of Cosima’s mouth to lick her lips. She licked her own in response, feeling her breathing hitch.

Cosima’s attention turned towards the woman sitting across from her. She’d heard the slight hiccup in Delphine’s breathing.

Those eyes trailed up to the blonde from behind the wide framed glasses. Cat-eye make-up accentuating the dark hazel eyes that peered back at her. Delphine bit her bottom lip, rolling it between her teeth as she felt her body course with desire, blood spreading to fill her nipples and cause her clit to become unbelievably tight.

A mischievous smile played across the brunette’s lips as she recognized what was happening. She set herself to quickly finish her dinner, took a big gulp of her wine, and looked up at Delphine.

The blonde giggled, seeing the eagerness in her fiancée’s movements.

“Take me upstairs?” Cosima asked in a nearly pleading tone.

Delphine placed her glass on the table, slowly standing. She let the material of her t-shirt that had bunched while she was seated, fall and straighten itself out to hang off the curve of her breasts. The tall blonde slowly walked over to her partner, bending over and wrapping her arms around the woman’s waist.

Cosima wrapped her own arms around Delphine’s neck and allowed herself to be pulled to her feet and up, flush against her fiancée’s body. She couldn’t help her eyes fluttering closed and a contented sigh escaping her throat at the contact.

Delphine placed a wisp of a kiss on the brunette’s neck as she took off the cannula and steered them to the stairs, carefully climbing each one with a solid grip on Cosima. Once they got to the top of the steps, Delphine stopped and faced Cosima.

“What?” Cosima asked, giggling at the scrunched up face Delphine made.

Delphine reached down to pick up Cosima by her ass. The smaller woman laughed, wrapping her arms and legs around the blonde to hang on. Delphine bounced her slightly, patting her bum as she
kissed her neck.

“Mon petit panda. T’es si légère. My little panda. You’re so light.” Delphine cooed to her, walking
them to their bedroom.

Cosima snuggled happily in to Delphine’s shoulder, much like she’s seen Charlotte do a million
sleepy times. She felt herself being placed gently down on the bed. Reluctantly, she let go of the
solid frame, pouting up at the blonde.

“I’ll be right back, mon amour. I have to go get your tank” she reminded her.

Cosima grumbled and let her head fall back on the pillow.

“Une minute, c’est tout” Delphine assured her as she walked out of the room.

Cosima reached over to the nightstand to grab a tissue, holding back the cough. She got it just in
time. She thought about how they should really just get red bedding. It would solve a lot of
problems.

As promised, Delphine was back quickly, oxygen tank in tow. She set it up next to the bed before
climbing on to the mattress next to Cosima. She leaned in, kissing her partner softly at first as she
hooked the plastic tubing around each ear and gently inserted the nose tubes. She then continued,
reaching for Cosima’s shirt.

The brunette arched her back and allowed the French woman to pull the fabric off, her nipples
hardening at the slight chill in the air. Her skin rose into a million tiny little goosebumps as she pulled
Delphine closer, trapping her bottom lip between her own.

Delphine’s hands found the taut stomach, tracing the ghosts of muscle that used to lie beneath the
skin. She flattened her palms against Cosima’s flesh, determined to touch every inch of her as she
sucked the woman’s top lip, mounting her thigh.

The tall blonde broke the kiss, sitting up and taking off her shirt. Cosima’s hands were instantly on
her hips, rubbing around to her back. She looked down at her love and could not stand not kissing
her for another minute.

Just as Cosima’s hands found the perfect weight of Delphine’s breasts, the French woman bent down
to capture her face in her hands once more, parting her lips to gently lick the brunette’s own before
the softness descended, pressing against them in a passionate kiss.

The young scientist gently squeezed the supple breasts in her hands, letting her palms run against the
hard nipples she found before letting go to pull Delphine down to her. Those hands quickly fell
down to the perfectly hard ass cheeks belonging to her gorgeous woman. She slipped her thumbs
into the waistband of the boxers Delphine was wearing and pulled them down.

The blonde lifted herself to help kick them off, now completely naked, perched atop Cosima’s knee.
She watched as Cosima admired her body. Delphine’s hand went to her hair, flipping back the curls
as she smiled down at her.

“See something that you like?” she teased.

Cosima nodded and ran a hand down her body, the other one pulled off her glasses and put them on
her nightstand. “Come here. I want to taste you.”

“Are you sure?” Delphine asked, wearily.
“Fuck yes. Besides, what a better use for a cannula?” she joked.

Delphine giggled, moving up Cosima’s trunk to her face. She braced herself by taking hold of the headboard as she allowed her legs to lower her aching core to the brunette’s face.

Cosima’s head spun as she was treated to Delphine’s smell. She watched in awe as those pussy lips slowly descended to her face, hanging just slightly from her fiancée’s body. She hooked her arms around the blonde’s hips, pulling her closer as she let that scent intoxicate her.

“All Cosima could smell was her fiancée’s musk. She inhaled deeply from the cannula as she latched on to Delphine’s clit, sucking it, along with the upper parts of her pussy lips into her mouth. She felt the woman’s hips stop bucking and instead pulsed as she hungrily sucked at the quickly growing bundle. She then added her tongue to the mix, slipping it expertly under Delphine’s clitoral hood to apply direct stimulation.

Delphine felt the electricity zap up from her clit and quickly gasped, throwing her head back as her body reacted to the exposure and stimulation of her move sensitive part.

“Cosima” she whimpered.

Cosima let go, using her tongue to now bathe between every fold of Delphine’s cunt. She ran it along the outsides of each lip before sucking each of them into her mouth and running down their length.

“Mon Dieu Cosima!” Delphine cried.

The brunette then moved back up, focusing her efforts on her partner’s clit. She used her free hand to gently lift the skin of Delphine’s abdomen to expose the organ for better access. This time, she stayed on it. Even as Delphine moved her hips again, grinding her face, she kept her tongue on that hard little bundle.

“I…gonna…Cosima” Delphine moaned between deep breaths.

With this encouragement, Cosima latched on again, sucking hard as she felt Delphine tense, then soften around her.

Delphine’s body exploded as she felt herself melt in to Cosima. She’d forgotten how good she was with her mouth. Delphine slumped down, her orgasm rolling over her every inch. She rode it out, whimpering at the sensation of release. Then it stopped and she was left twitching with the aftershocks. She careful dismounted the brunette’s face to move down her shorter body and sit down on her hips. She took a deep breath, reaching down to gently roll Cosima’s breasts in her palms.

“Mon Dieu, Cosima” she breathed.

Cosima smiled, wiping her sloppy face, then reaching up to put a hand on Delphine’s hip “Yeah, I heard that one a few times” she joked.

Delphine chuckled and rolled off of her, curling up on her partner’s shoulder.
“You better not think I’m done with you” Cosima whispered to her, rolling over onto her side and gently running the backs of her fingers over a still erect nipple.

Delphine smiled and looked up at her “Ben non! I am simply taking a cuddle break.”

Cosima thought for a moment, pursing her lips before she nodded “I’ll allow it” she joked.

“Oh will you now?” Delphine asked “You will allow it?”

The clone nodded “Just this once” she told Delphine, followed by a giggle.

Delphine joined in, giggling like mad before she kissed Cosima’s cheek.

“God, I love you” Cosima whispered, turning to look at her.

Delphine’s laughter settled and she leaned in, kissing Cosima passionately. She pulled away slowly, smoothing the skin of Cosima’s cheek with her thumb “Je t’aime aussi, mon amour.”

Cosima reached around Delphine’s neck to tangle a hand in her hair and pull her close again. She entangled their lips, gently nibbling Delphine’s top one as it slid between her own. She quickly soothed it with her tongue and ran a hand up Delphine’s torso to take a handful of breast and squeeze it gently before running a thumb over her nipple.

Delphine moaned in to Cosima’s mouth, reaching around her to rest a firm hand on her lower back, drawing her closer. It could never be close enough. She felt the heat rise between them as their nearly naked bodies pressed together. She’d have to do something about Cosima’s bottoms.

Never breaking the kiss, the Frenchwoman reached down and tugged Cosima’s sweat shorts down, fumbling with them as she kept trying to rid her partner of the material. She felt Cosima smile against her lips and she smiled back. Her fiancée’s hands joined in the effort and before long, the bottoms were gone.

Delphine let her hand slide up the olive skin of Cosima’s hip, moaning at the contact. She took a firm hold on the joint and as she slipped her tongue in to the scientist’s mouth, she pulled the hip close, keeping it flush with her own.

They were now pressed all along each other, stark naked.

Delphine looped a leg over her fiancee’s hip, pulling her in closer as she felt Cosima’s hand leave her breast to reach around her back. Cosima broke the kiss.

The tall blonde lowered her head to look her partner in the eye. She saw that Cosima’s eyes were shut and she was biting her bottom lip.

“What is wrong mon amour?” she asked in a hushed tone, leaning in to pepper Cosima’s neck with kisses.

Cosima moaned as she felt Delphine’s tongue run in and out of the crook of her collar bone.

“Woah! Mmm…Delphine…I really want you to ride me” she moaned, feeling the blonde then gently nibble on her earlobe.

Delphine swirled her tongue in to Cosima’s ear before leaning in and whispering in to it, slightly blowing air on to the wet flesh as she did “Oui? And how do you want to do that?”

Cosima smiled as she rolled her hips, her back arching slightly. She had shivers all the way to her
Delphine’s mouth then went back to work on her neck as she reached over to her nightstand, trying to find the handle to the drawer without looking.

The Frenchwoman chuckled, letting go of her partner’s neck to lean over and open the drawer. She saw immediately what Cosima had been reaching for. Her hand closed over the toy and pulled it out, closing the drawer. She sat up on Cosima’s hips, putting the toy on her tummy.

“Is this what you wanted?” Delphine asked, raising an eyebrow.

Cosima nodded “There’s lube in there too if we need it” she told her partner.

“I do not think that will be necessary” Delphine purred.

The tall blonde swung a long leg over the woman beneath her to dismount her. She lied back down next to her and ran a hand slowly up Cosima’s thigh, lightly raking her nails across the skin. Her eyes flickered up to Cosima’s face.

The brunette’s head was thrown back and her eyes were closed as she felt the hand nearing ever closer to the space between her thighs that was pulsing with need. She spread her legs, giving the woman she trusted more than anyone unrestricted access to the sensitive bit of flesh that lead to the inside of her body.

Cosima opened her eyes, staring up at Delphine as she smiled.

“Do you want me to touch you?” the blonde asked, a hand hovering over the unbearable heat radiating from her partner’s core.

The brunette nodded with a slight whimper “Please, Delphine.”

It always felt so good to hear how much Cosima wanted her. She lingered a moment longer just barely out of reach before she let her hand come in to contact with Cosima’s cunt.

Delphine let out a low, grumbly moan as her lips left a trail of kisses to Cosima’s breast.

“You are so wet” she moaned, circling a nipple with her tongue.

Cosima felt every hair on her body stand on end at the contact. She couldn’t help but writhe under her fiancée’s touch. She reached for Delphine’s head, taking a handful of hair and pulling her in to a fevered kiss. She needed more. She needed to feel Delphine.

The clone’s hand reached for the feeldoe that was still on her tummy and she handed it to the blonde.

Delphine felt the toy being thrust in to her hand and she gripped it, kissing Cosima as deeply as she could. Her hands found their way through the familiar territory of the tiny, slick folds that made up her partner’s vulva as she slowly slipped the bulb into Cosima’s opening, lovingly reaching in to pull the brunette’s pussy lips out of the way.

Cosima felt her lower back muscles twitch as she stretched to let the bulb in. Her jaw shook and she held on tightly to Delphine’s head.

The blonde pushed the toy in until it was nestled safely inside of her partner. She smiled, taking hold of the shaft that now jutted out from Cosima’s body and gave it a tug.

The clone’s world erupted as the bulb pushed against her g-spot and the ridges on her end of the shaft brushed her clit. She shuddered and started up the kiss again, eagerly making out with the love of her life.
That reaction sent a stream of juices dripping from between Delphine’s legs as she placed a hand on her fiancée’s stomach, giving the shaft another tug. When Cosima’s body reacted the same way she smiled wide. This was going to be fun.

Delphine broke the kiss to kneel on the bed, her knees resting on either side of Cosima’s hips. She took hold of the shaft and lifted a leg, tilting her pelvis to give the brunette a great view of the head of the shaft that she ran through her cunt lips.

“Fuck, Delphine” she whispered, doing her best to not buck her hips and slide right in.

Cosima’s hands reached up to each take a breast in them and she moaned, looking up in to her partner’s eyes “Please? Can I please be inside of you now?” she asked.

Delphine smiled, lining the head up and letting her body ease down on to it. She felt herself widen to accommodate the girth and leaned back, her stomach muscles rolling with the tightening of her body as she felt that delicious stretch. She was so wet, her body was so ready for this.

Cosima could feel the tug against her g-spot as she watched the cock bury itself inside of the love of her life. She watched with bated breath as Delphine’s lips fanned out around the intruding object. She watched on the edge of her seat as her future wife took the entire length, her clit merely centimeters from her own stomach.

Delphine felt herself reach the hilt and moaned, letting her body get used to the size of the new toy. She looked down to see the amazement in Cosima’s eyes and she let a whimper escape as she rolled her hips.

Cosima gasped, quickly lying back down as her insides were jolted by the movement.

“Oh fuck Delphine, you feel so fucking good” she moaned.

“Me? Merde, Cosima” the blonde whimpered, leaning back and taking hold of her partner’s ankles as she continued to move her hips.

Delphine felt the movement deeper inside of her than anyone had ever been. She felt so very full. The sensations running through her own body mixed with those she was receiving from watching Cosima respond to her movements. This was amazing. She could not wait to be on the other end and sliding in to Cosima. But that was for another day. Right now, she was going to ride Cosima until her eyes rolled back in her head and her knees buckled.

Cosima felt her hands being taken and placed on Delphine’s tits. The blonde held them there, squeezing herself with Cosima’s palms. The clone’s mouth was dry and her eyes were scanning up from the expression of ecstasy on Delphine’s face, down to where her cunt was eagerly sucking in the shaft jutting out from her body. As Delphine slid further up and down the toy, she felt the changes inside of herself. She couldn’t help but pulse her hips to meet her partner’s movements.

Delphine’s whole body rolled as she felt Cosima push in to her. Her mouth hung open as she felt the head push through her sensitive walls. She fell forward, bracing herself on her elbows but allowing her now sweaty body to press against Cosima’s. She kissed the woman’s neck and moaned deeply in her ear.

This only encouraged Cosima further, taking hold of her fiancée’s hips and bucking her own to fuck her deeply. The young scientist felt her body tense at it teetered on the cusp of falling over the edge.

Delphine relished the feeling of skin on skin, but her cunt ached to be fucked hard. She could feel that Cosima was close, could tell by the tightness in her body. She braced her knees and sat up again
slightly, bouncing herself in to a full gallop on top of her partner.

Cosima’s back arched as her toes curled and everything flexed. Her body trembled. She could feel Delphine drip down onto her stomach and opened her eyes to lock them with those of her love.

After catching the look in Cosima’s eyes, Delphine looked down to see her juices dripping down the shaft and onto Cosima. She’d squirted. Just the idea was enough to send her teetering.

“I’m so close” Cosima whimpered.

“Moi aussi, mon amour….mmm” Delphine whimpered.

Cosima reached up, brushing Delphine’s clit with a thumb. The blonde lurched forward, her stomach shaking as she nearly fell onto her partner, catching herself at the last minute on her outstretched arms.

That did it for Cosima and spots clouded her vision, her body finally giving in and erupting in an orgasm that ripped through every nerve and muscle inside of her. She felt herself twitch in Delphine. The blonde responded by squeezing her thighs, the added stimulation intensifying her orgasm.

Delphine’s eyes were shut so tightly against Cosima’s body as the tears fell against the soft skin. Her orgasm didn’t relent. Her ass clenched as she felt all of her vaginal muscles get a vice grip on the shaft inside of her.

“Fuck!” Cosima cried, getting toppled over the edge again as the clench of Delphine’s muscles caused the bulb inside of her to jump against her g-spot again.

Cosima noticed that the bed beneath her was wet, but didn’t care as her next orgasm rolled over, taking her body on another wild ride.

Delphine breathed hard against her body, kissing the sweaty neck in front of her as she held Cosima through her second orgasm.

A few moments later, Cosima’s body relaxed and she sighed happily, reaching up to stroke Delphine’s hair.

The blonde lay happily on Cosima’s chest, careful to support her own weight. She needed a moment before she dismounted. She was catching her breath.

The clone ran a lazy hand up and down the skin of Delphine’s back, feeling the clammy sweat that permeated its milky perfection. She took a deep breath, glad for the oxygen and turned her head to kiss her future wife’s cheek.

With one hand playing with Delphine’s hair and the other running up and down her back, Cosima smiled “Wow.”

Delphine nodded against the sweaty shoulder beneath her, still catching her breath.

“I think that was the best sex I’ve ever had” the clone admitted.

The butterflies erupted in Delphine’s stomach and she let the biggest smile spread over her face. She’d done that. She turned her head to kiss the skin on Cosima’s shoulder, moving up to rest higher, letting the dip of her nose press in to the curve of the clone’s cheek.

“Moi aussi” Delphine whispered.
The blonde pushed her face into Cosima’s neck, letting the tears fall as her index finger traced the curve of the breast next to her.

Cosima smiled, holding Delphine close.

“Je t’aime” Cosima attempted.

Delphine’s heart smiled at the gesture “I love you too.”

The blonde took another deep breath and kissed the brunet’s cheek before she sat up, wincing now at the shaft still inside of her sensitive cunt. She carefully pulled off and rubbed Cosima’s stomach.

“Do you want me to take it out?” she asked the dreaded clone.

A nod confirmed and Delphine took a grip on the base of the bulb. She gave it a gentle tug, but it was firmly in place. She giggled.

“You are going to have to let it go” she joked.

“No. Mine” Cosima retorted.

They both laughed and that seemed to do the trick, the bulb sliding right out. It was coated in white cream that made Delphine crave a taste. She looked up at Cosima as she placed the toy on her nightstand for later cleaning.

“Can I clean you up?” she asked.

The brunette smiled and nodded, running a hand through Delphine’s hair as the blonde positioned herself between her legs. She sighed happily as she felt Delphine’s tongue trace her folds.

“When my lungs and legs will let me, I am going to drill you so hard with that thing” Cosima whispered to Delphine as she relaxed and enjoyed the treatment she was receiving.

The moment the taste hit Delphine’s tongue she moaned, running the organ over every inch of Cosima. She was so warm and creamy. Men never tasted like this. She was sweet and tangy and coated her mouth.

She sucked Cosima clean, and then kissed up her body to meet her partner’s awaiting lips.

“Mmm…I like the sound of that” the blonde crooned, leaning down and finally connecting their soft flesh.

Cosima moaned at the taste. She loved the way she tasted on Delphine’s tongue. She let her own roll out to meet more of it, running gently over every taste bud inside of the blonde’s mouth. She pulled her tongue back in to her own mouth to savour it as she moved her lips softly over Delphine’s.

When they finally broke away, Delphine was holding her cheeks, pressing their foreheads together.

“I have never in my life felt something so amazingly deep as being naked and pressed against you” Delphine whispered to her.

Cosima smiled “Well I’ve never slept as well as when you’re naked pressed against me” she replied with a tiny yawn.

The brunet took hold of Delphine’s hand, taking it with her as she rolled on to her side. The French woman turned with her, allowing herself to be pulled into a spooning position. Cosima then laid the hand on her tummy, tracing its tendons and veins with her index finger as her eyes closed.
Soft lips pressed to her back as she sighed happily.

Delphine pulled the duvet up to cover both of them before settling back in to the snuggle, moving her hips to meet the curve of the smaller bum that was in front of them. Her tall frame wrapped itself around Cosima’s smaller one.

She never could get quite close enough.

Chapter End Notes

Well, after a couple dark chapters, it was time for some light. I had a lot of fun writing this chapter and hope that you all enjoy. Thank you so much for the wonderful comments, reviews, and messages you all have taken the time to send me. I appreciate and cherish each one. Thank you to everyone who is still reading and with me as well. I am going to start posting every Thursday at 4pm EST. I may also post between then, but there will for sure be a new chapter up every Thursday at that time, unless life gets in the way. I hope you all are having a wonderful time. See you in the comments or next Thursday!
Delphine watched her step as Oscar and Kira ran across her path, on their way to the kitchen table from a bathroom break. She smiled as she stuttered her step, holding the pizza boxes up higher to let them by. It felt good to have a house full of laughing children. She continued on her way to the kitchen, getting the pizza and salad plated up.

“Okay, so you walk into the room and there’s this huge throne…” Cosima starts.

“How big is it?” Gemma interrupts.

Cosima smiles and expands her hands “Like way big. Like a throne for Godzilla big. And it’s got all these weird numbers on it. Across the room is a bookshelf, full of these books about Monsters and Wizards. No one else is in the room, but there’s a big door on the other side with a huge deer head hanging above it.”

“Do you think we should try the door?” Oscar asks his cousins and Scott who are all now seated at the table, each with a set of dice, character sheets, and a pencil in front of them.

Delphine peers over at the group and smiles. They’ve already been playing for a couple hours and each kid seems so involved in it. Not that Scott’s any less interested. He’d heard they were playing and begged Cosima to join.

The blonde laughed and gently shook her head at the group. She looked out the backyard window at the piñata that was hung and ready to be broken open and their yet to be opened pool. Should they open it for the wedding next weekend?

The wedding came back to her thoughts as she portioned out salad onto each plate. Most of the planning was complete. Luckily for them, neither wanted a huge affair. Just like they’d talked about: immediate family in their backyard. They’d ordered a full spread from a number of local restaurants and rented a set of speakers with an iPod input. Tables and chairs were being pieced together by the guests. Donnie was officiating, having gotten his certification as a frat joke in college. She just needed a dress and to make some more logistical plans.

Taking a deep, breath the blonde picked up a bunch of plates, carrying them over to the table and serving the players one by one. She received a round of thank yous before the adventurers turned back to their fantasy world. She grabbed two more plates and a beer, heading to the basement stairs where Helm was working.

The German father had already put in one assisted lift on the stairs leading upstairs, and was now putting one on the basement stairs. He saw Delphine and sat down on the step, smiling as he accepted the plate and beer that she handed him, pleasantly surprised when she sat down, joining him.

“It looks great, Helm” she praised.

He smiled and took a swig from the beer “Thank you. Not too tough at all. Should allow her a bit more movement.”

Delphine nodded, taking a bite from her salad that she’d added a chicken breast to.
“No pizza?” Helm asked, noticing Delphine’s plate.

She shook her head “I need to make sure to keep my diet focused on nutrition. Especially since I am ovulating” she told him.

He smiled “I’m glad to see you already taking care of my second grandbaby.”

Delphine smiled at the idea “I cannot wait.”

Taking a bite of his pizza, her soon to be father-in-law laughed “I remember that feeling” he told her as he turned to look at his daughter, laughing with her nieces, nephew, daughter, and Scott. “Even with the surrogate it was pretty special. Just wait until you see that little girl’s eyes looking up at you” he remembered out loud.

Delphine took another bite of the salad, looking over at Cosima. “She is incredible. Thank you for that, for her” Delphine said sincerely.

“She’s got a lot of her dad in her. He was a wonderful man” Helm smiled, twirling the ring on his finger.

“I would have loved to meet him” Delphine noted.

“Oh he would have adored you! He had a love of people and cultures. It’s what drew us together at first. He was fascinated with my German background. Well that, and he always said that I was kind. Andrew had a real knack at seeing people’s hearts, looking at them free of judgement. She learned that from him” the large man informed his daughter-in-law.

“I can only hope that I will raise our little one as well as you and Andrew raised Cosima” Delphine praised.

Helm turned his attention back to Delphine “You will. And you know Delphine, I don’t go away when she does. You are my family now. You, Charlotte, and this future baby are my whole family. I will support you.”

Delphine smiles, wiping the tears that had not quite fallen from her eyes “Thank you. It is good to know that I will have people to lean on.”

“And what about your parents? Are they coming to the wedding?” he asked, sipping on the beer.

Delphine nodded, smiling now “My maman is. She is flying in from France. My father…no. He will not be attending” she told him sharply.

Helm gleaned the reason. He’d seen enough of kids being rejected by parents for their hearts in his lifetime to recognize it. “Well, then he is missing out. I’m glad I get to meet your mother though. I bet she’s a gem.”

The blonde chuckled “Oh, she is. Especially after a couple glasses of Sherry. She is a really wonderful woman.”

“Well then I see who you take after” Helm joked, gently nudging the woman’s arm.

Delphine laughed and nodded “I am definitely her daughter.”

“It’s nice to know that Siobhan and I will have some more company amongst all of you youngsters” he noted.
The blonde nodded, sniffling back her tears.

“Those kids are really enjoying that game they are playing” he noticed, looking over at the table.

“So is Scott” she joked.

“Do you have any clue what it is about?” he asked.

Delphine chuckled and shook her head “Not a clue. Dungeons and those dragons are not in my interests.”

“Me neither” he told her, wiping his hands together as he finished his meal, taking another pull from the beer. “I am almost done here. I’ll keep an eye on things. How about you go take some time to yourself? Enjoy that new tub” he suggested.

“Are you sure?” she asked, taking another bite of her salad.

“Of course. I’ll play grown up and you go relax. You’ve been running around all week” Helm told her.

“Thank you, Helm” she said sincerely, standing up and taking their plates to the kitchen before she headed upstairs to draw herself a bath.

The blonde added Cosima’s favourite bubbles that they’ve since had to buy in bulk since Charlotte and Delphine had also taken a liking to them. She slowly stripped and lit a few candles. If she was going to take the time to relax, she was going full out relaxation. The new bathroom was luxurious. She sauntered over to the built in stereo and selected her favourite relaxation playlist before she shrugged off the sweater she’d been wearing, slowly stripping out of the rest of the clothes on her body.

She sunk into the tub, cutting off the flow of water as it reached an acceptable height in the receptacle, and took a deep breath. The blonde closed her eyes and immediately thought about all of the things she should be doing. The contractors had finished the basement a few hours earlier and she should really go and clean it. There was also the task of making sure all the logistics for the equipment delivery were taken care of for tomorrow. She still had to call her maman and make sure that they had her travel plans complete.

This all floated around her mind until the water finally got to her; its fluidic responsiveness adapting to every curve of her body, wrapping her in warmth. There was only one other warmth that could compare. She smiled as she thought of it; her love. That all-encompassing blanket of serenity that surrounded her every time she thought of Cosima wrapped itself firmly around her. It wouldn’t be long until she was finally her wife.

Delphine let her body slide down the tub, holding her breath as she eased entirely below the water’s surface. Her senses clouded, all dulled by the body of water she was entirely engulfed in. She held herself beneath the water, surrendering completely to its silence, to its stillness.

She emerged moments later, gently wiping the bubbles from her eyes as she laid back once more into the tub’s curve, her neck gently supported by the pillow on the edge. She looked across the tub to the second pillow; Cosima’s spot. She mentally thanked the brunette for having a planned activity for the kids tonight.

“But Oscar, if we maybe talk to the deer head” Gemma whined, tired of being talked over.

“Gemma, be quiet. We’re trying to figure this out. I search the throne” Oscar tells his aunt, rolling his
“18, with a +3. 21. I’ve got to find something”

Cosima holds her tongue, shrugging “It’s a throne. It’s big. It has numbers all over it.” she repeats for the third time. “You do see a really big bum mark in it, perfectly worn into the foam.”

Everyone but Oscar giggles.

“Okay, I search through the books to see if the numbers on the throne match anything in them” Kira mentions.

“Roll investigation” Cosima tells her.

Kira rolls the die. “7”

“With your modifier?” Cosima asks to clarify.

Kira nods.

“It is a book. It’s pages have numbers. Some of them match the numbers on the chair. There are 3s and 9s and 5s and 1s and 6s and 7s and…”

“…okay, mummy. We get it” Charlotte interrupts. “I am going to try and pull all the books off the shelf. Does anything happen?” Charlotte asks.

“You reveal a...spider web and a lot of dust” she tells the group.

Everyone sighs and huffs. Cosima turns to Gemma.

“Princess NiceDress, do you want to do something?” she asks.

Gemma nods “I walk up to the deer head and say “Hello, I am sorry they cut your head off. I wish I could have saved you.”

The table rolls their eyes.

Oscar, exasperated with his sister starts “Gemma, I told you…”

“The deer shakes off the dust that’s been coating her for hundreds of years. An ancient voice speaks through the deer “And who would be so kind to wish such a thing?” it boomed throughout the room, shaking the walls” Cosima interrupted.

The table gasped. Gemma smiled and turned to them “I TOLD you so!”

“That’s not fair, you changed the game to make her feel good about herself” Oscar complained.

“Oscar, shut up. You never rag on the DM” Scott tells him between his teeth. The geneticist turned to Cosima “Sorry Cosima. I apparently didn’t teach him too well” he apologizes.

Cosima chuckled and looked down at her notes “It’s all good” she told him, running through the page as she tore it in half, right at the moment they were at. She looked back up “Oscar, you keep questioning everything buddy. But yeah, it’s all in my notes.”

Cosima handed him the ripped top half of the page and smiled. “All good?” she asked.

The boy read it over and sighed, nodding. “Sorry Gemma” he apologized.
“Ok, good. So, where were we?” She looked down. “Right! “Who would be so kind to wish such a thing?” she asks again in the deer’s voice.

“Why Princess NiceDress” Gemma informed the deer.

Cosima chuckled with the rest of the table. She could feel herself slowly fading. She was exhausted, even though she had just been sitting here. She made eye contact with Scott and gave him a look of pleading. The geek nodded at her and stood up.

“Alright my little adventurers, Scott’s gonna take over” Cosima informed them.

“Awwww” rang out around the table from everyone but Charlotte.

“Hey, be nice you little haters. He’s fun. I swear he’s fun” she told them, putting her hand on her lower back as she stretched it. “I will be back to join a little later. You okay with them Scotty?” she asked.

He smiled up at her, pulling a chair over and taking her spot at the table while she rolled out of it. “Peachy. I will direct the fearless MonkeyBums through the battlefield” he told her.

The kids erupted in giggles at their group name. Cosima hung her head, shaking it as she laughed. When she picked it up, rubbing her neck, Charlotte was watching her.

“Are you okay, mummy?” she asked from her seat at the table.

Cosima nodded and smiled at her daughter “Five by five. Just a little tired. Mind giving me a push to the airlift?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded, standing up to help her mom out.

Delphine was half asleep in the tub when Cosima rolled in. She opened a single eye at the sound of the wheels on the tiled floor. The blonde immediately sat up.

“Cosima, are you okay?” she asked, worry painting her face.

“Yeah, yeah. Just a little tired” she admitted, rolling up the sleeve of her sweater and trailing her hand lazily through the bubble filled water.

“Do you want to join me?” Delphine asked

“No, no. You enjoy. I’m gonna have a little power nap. Think you could go round up the ankle biters and get them outside in a bit? Scott’s running the rest of the adventure” Cosima informed.

Delphine nodded, taking a deep breath as she watched the sadness cloud Cosima’s face. She reached for the hand that was playing with the water, intertwining their fingers.

“Do you want to talk about it?” Delphine asked.

Cosima took a deep breath and pushed her glasses further up her nose, leaning back in the chair.

“I can’t even sit down for more than a few hours without getting tired. I hate how this thing is completely taking me over. I should be downstairs, spending my last days with all those littles or up here, knuckle deep in you, but I can’t even walk. I can’t even stay awake for a full day” she explained, shaking her head against the tears.

Delphine felt the pain radiating off of her and it hit her deep. Her heart wrenched at how upset
Cosima was. She slowly stood and grabbed the towel she’d laid out. The blonde watched as Cosima’s eyes followed her face as she stood. The brunette’s bottom lip quivered as her eyes brimmed with tears.

“Mon petit chou, I am so sorry that you have to go through this. But I assure you that I am quite happy to have you nap half the day away if it means I get more half days with you” she told Cosima as she dried off. “And I am sure that those kids are very happy that you are spending time with them at all. They all look up to you so much. You are the cool aunt” Delphine joked, smiling as she cupped one of Cosima’s cheeks once she’d finished drying. She watched as Cosima leaned into the touch, closing her eyes. “If you do not take care of yourself, you will not be able to have adventures with them anymore.”

Cosima nodded, shaking her hands out as she took a deep breath. She lazily trailed a finger up and down Delphine’s tummy in front of her. “You’re right. I just hate this so much. I hate not being able to fuck your brains out until you pass out” she breathed.

Delphine laughed, stooping down to kiss Cosima’s cheek “Oh ben, mon amour, you do. I’m just usually on top for it now” she tells her.

Cosima smiled, remembering that time “Oh yeah. I forgot about that. We need to do THAT again soon!”

Delphine nodded, aiming lower with her kiss now to gently press one to her fiancée’s lips. Cosima let the associated sensations sink deep into her chest and warm her from the inside out. Delphine broke the kiss with a gentle bite to the brunette’s bottom lip, watching as the flesh fell back in to place after she let go of it.

“I cannot wait for our wedding night. I am going to arrange for Charlotte to spend the night at Kira’s and we are going to sleep and make passionate, crazy love all night and through the next day. No one will be leaving the bed for at least 24 hours. We will get lost in each other” Delphine purred, inches from her face.

Cosima moaned, leaning up and clasping Delphine’s lips in hers for another soft, passionate kiss. She reached out, wrapping her arms around the blonde’s waist, her fingers dancing across warmed skin.

Delphine leaned in to the action of affection, dipping her head to one side as she flicked her tongue over soft, plump lips. She met her fiancée’s tongue as Cosima parted her lips. Delphine gently rolled the tip of her’s over the surface of the clone’s.

They broke apart, coming up for air. Delphine watched as the soft smile spread slowly across Cosima’s face, her eyes still shut.

“Want me to wheel you to bed?” Delphine asked, kissing Cosima’s full, rosy cheek.

The brunette nodded “As long as I get snuggles” she told her future wife.

“You are going to get so many snuggles!” Delphine assured, taking the chair and pushing it into the bedroom.

Cal stepped through the front door to the sounds of frustrated groans and the chatter of kids trying to organize themselves. He laughed, kicking off his shoes and spotting Helm. He walked up to the older man and shook his hand.

“What’s going on here?” he asked.
“Demigods and Dunes I think” he laughed. “I’m not really sure. But they have been playing for a while.”

Cal looked at him, confused.

All the kids cheered in the background. The lumberjack turned to look at them, realization dawning on his face.

“Oh…Dungeons and Dragons. Yeah, we played with Scott. It’s actually pretty fun” the lumberjack admitted, chuckling. “Anyways, I came to see how the basement turned out.”

Helm nodded “Go have a look. I’m just putting the finishing touches on this lift.”

“Thanks, Helm” the younger man said, heading down the stairs. He stopped to have a look at the mobility lift and nodded. “Nice work for an old man” he teased.

The German man laughed and took a bow, tightening a screw as the lumberjack continued down the stairs.

“We’re so close!” Charlotte called out, turning to Kira. “Ashanta, think you and Princess NiceDress can inflict some damage? I can charge with my greatsword on my turn” she asked.

Kira nodded “I can use Divine Smite!”

“I can throw my axe” Gemma said “It should help with some damage.”

“And I can use a binding spell to keep it from dodging!” Oscar added.

“Okay team MonkeyBums, let’s do this!” the youngest clone exclaimed, turning to Scott who looked mildly terrified at the intensity of these kids.

Scott looked to the board and to his notes. These kids were going to beat a dragon. Sure Cosima had modified the monster slightly and had made sure that their party was well rounded, but it was still a feat he wasn’t sure his party could master. He worked through the scenario, watching as they rolled for each move, making notes on the paper in front of him. Their plan was working. Scott saw that it would come down to Charlotte’s roll. He turned to her and she smiled.

“I charge at the dragon, greatsword in hand, and I yell “No one messes with my friends you pipsqueak piece of dung!” and I slash at his throat with all my strength” she says, rolling her two die. They roll into the middle of the table as everyone hangs onto the edge of their seats. A perfect 20. All the kids cheer as Charlotte quickly looks at her character sheet, slowly looking up to Scott.

Cal, having just climbed the steps back up hurried over at the commotion. He leaned against the table, watching intently.

“23” she tells the Dungeon Master.

“It hits” Scott informs the party “roll for damage”.

Scott waited, staring at the number on his page. The dragon’s HP. If they didn’t kill it here, it would destroy them on its turn.

“16” Charlotte

“Your greatsword sinks into the dragon’s flesh and cleaves its head clean off. Its body falls to the ground, gushing blood. The dragon is dead” Scott tells them, scratching out the Dragon’s remaining
A roar erupts as the kids jump from their seats, cheering and hugging. They all immediately start dancing.

“MonkeyBums are number 1!” Kira starts, the rest following in the chant.

Helm laughed loudly, watching the group and taking a video on his phone as Scott and Cal shrugged at each other, joining in on the chanting and dancing themselves.

Cosima heard the roar from downstairs and laughed, it pulling her from the lucidity of her pre-sleep as Delphine put a hand to her chest, looking at her confused.

“Those rascals just took down the final boss” she noted, stretching her hands above her head before holding her own hands together and dropping a forearm to rest on her forehead.

“Boss?” Delphine asked, still confused.

“They beat the dragon at the end of the dungeon” Cosima clarified.

Delphine laughed and shrugged, still not understanding.

“They won, Delphine” Cosima told her, giggling at how adorably naïve her fiancée was about this stuff. “One day I’ll get you in to it. Trust me, it’s a lot of fun.”

“If you say so” she told Cosima, leaning in and leaving a peck on her lips “I should go down and get the kids on to the next activity. They will probably be excited and hyper for a while after winning” she noted.

Cosima nodded and pouted “Do I get one more kiss before you go?”

“Bien sûr, mon amour” Delphine told her, leaning in for a deep kiss. She broke it, smiling “I will make sure I get lots of pictures and videos for you.”

“Good. I hate missing out” Cosima told her. “I don’t think that I can sleep knowing what’s going on down there.”

Delphine smiled at her, leaning in to kiss her temple. She reached up and turned off the table lamp, darkening the room. She laid on her back, pulling Cosima to her chest.

“Just close your eyes and relax. I am not going anywhere until you are fast asleep” she told her fiancée.

“But..” Cosima started.

“No buts. They can wait” Delphine countered.

The blonde felt the clone settle in to her and she kissed the forehead right next to her chin, gently rubbing Cosima’s upper arm as she started humming. Cosima smiled, snuggling closer as she got lost in the perfectly pitched vibration of Delphine’s voice, echoing through her.

Delphine started a childhood lullaby in her native tongue, gently rolling each word over the air in the bedroom, filling it with the melody she learned from her maman’s nightly serenity song. She thought of the baby she would soon be singing this to. The tiny perfect baby that was made of Cosima who would be nestled so snugly against her body as she rocked her to sleep, purring out this same song to sooth the infant. She could feel Cosima’s body getting heavier.
Cosima’s felt herself filled with the waves of sound and tranquility radiating out of Delphine’s crooning words. She didn’t understand the words, but she knew that voice. She would know that voice anywhere. Delphine’s siren song tugged at her like a string attached between them, pulling her even closer than their physical bodies could get. She felt the tune slowly sink into her skin, entangling their souls in a sweet surrender of nothing short of bliss. This was the last thing she remembered.

Delphine felt her partner drift off, accompanied by the slight hiss of oxygen entering her system through the plastic tubing. She continued the song, not satisfied until it was finished and she was sure that Cosima was fully overtaken by sleep.

The blonde slowly extracted herself out from under the slumbering Cosima. She dressed quickly and exited the room, silently shutting the door behind her. She walked down the stairs, walking in to the kitchen to see the group still dancing and cheering.

Delphine let a laugh rip through her at the impromptu dance party. She made eye contact with Cal who smiled.

“Finny! They beat the dragon!” he called out.

Charlotte ran to her, hugging her waist “I dealt the killing blow, Maman!”

“You did?” Delphine asked, ruffling Charlotte’s hair smiling down at her.

“Uh huh. I cut its head off with my great sword!” Charlotte told her, letting go of her.

“Well I think that deserves candy. What do you say? Piñata time outside?” she asked.

Charlotte’s eyes lit up “I forgot about the piñata!”

“Bien, we need to get out there and break it open then” Delphine told her.

“I vote for a big game of road hockey after we’re all full of sugar” Cal said, bumping Oscar with a hip.

All the kids ran to the door. Scott looked down at the table.

“Don’t worry Scott, you can play goal” Cal told him.

Scott’s face lit up as he ran to put his shoes on. Delphine laughed, shaking her head. Scott was such a big kid. It’s why he and Cosima got along so well. Delphine turned to Cal as they walked to the front entrance.

“Thanks for the basement. It’s perfect” she told him.

He nodded “No problem, Finny. I’m glad they did such a great job.”

Helm came up behind them, putting a hand on each of their shoulders “And the delivery’s coming tomorrow?” he asked.

Delphine nodded “Tomorrow at 1pm. Scott’s spending the night. He claims that he wants to be here when it arrives to set up”

Helm laughed “Claims?”
Cal answered “We all now he wants to play video games and build forts with the kids. Scott’s like the uncle of any parent’s dreams”

Delphine nodded, high-fiving Cal for that one. Helm laughed.

“Oh, I see” the German man added.

“Well, we should follow them out. There’s hockey to play and a piñata to smash” Cal noted, heading outside.

“The piñata is in the backyard, Cal. Get them there!” Delphine called out and was answered by the wave of his hand.

Helm smiled at his second daughter “Are you doing okay?” he asked.

She smiled and nodded “I am. This is a lot of fun”

“Good. Because those kids are having the time of their life. Keep it up, kiddo. You’re doing a great job” he assured her.

She hugged him “Thank you. I needed to hear that.”

He nodded, rubbing her back. “Now go play some hockey with all of them. I’ll keep an ear and eye out for Mima.”

Delphine nodded and headed outside to re-join the MonkeyBums. She was right, today had been a lot fun.

Chapter End Notes

So there’s a nice little fluffy chapter! I hope you all enjoyed it and please feel free to let me know how you feel about the scheduled weekly chapters in the comments. Once again, I appreciate all of your reviews, comments, messages, kudos, bookmarks, follows, and everyone who just keeps up by reading on a regular basis. See you all in the comments or next week!
Cosima smiled up at her fiancée, giving her belly a gently rub “You ready?” she asked.

Delphine nodded and reached for the hand on her stomach from her spot on the adjustable hospital bed. At least when it was your own equipment, you could line the stirrups with padding. She took a deep breath as Cosima too her hand and gave it a squeeze.

Everything had finally come together: the lab and medical equipment had been delivered to the finished basement, Scott had moved in to the basement room and had gotten his section of the lab together, the clone embryos had been produced, and Delphine was still ovulating. So now the blonde was wide open to her wife, speculum in place, and the catheter was in her uterus. She’d made Cosima practice a thousand times on the dummy beforehand; and she wouldn’t want anyone else to be doing this.

Cosima took a deep breath herself, holding her thumb on top of the syringe’s plunger. She chuckled and gave Delphine’s hand another squeeze.

“Okay, I’m gonna inject now” she informed the blonde.

She slowly depressed the plunger, watching as the fluid was pushed out of the syringe, through the catheter, and up in to Delphine’s uterus. She couldn’t help but smile at the thought of Delphine pregnant. If this took, she would be pregnant for their wedding. Of course she wouldn’t be showing, but it was a nice thought.

Cosima felt the burn in her throat and quickly turned her head to cough into her shoulder, despite already wearing a surgical mask. She kept her hand as steady as possible. Clearing her throat, she turned back to her partner who wore a look of concern.

“I’ll just do all the bleeding you won’t for the next 9 months” she joked, knowing her mask was splattered in blood.

Delphine didn’t laugh. She laced their fingers together, intertwining them perfectly.

“I’m gonna pull out now” Cosima told her.

“That is what he said” Delphine joked back this time.

It earned a chuckle from the brunette.

Charlotte nibbled on the pad thai Maman had made her for lunch as she listened to Oscar talk about how fun gym class would be. His words were tuned out in her mind, coming as a secondary source of importance for her attention, compared to the stares she was getting from the other kids in the class. They had quickly learned that Oscar didn’t have any friends but them. They were the weird kids. Charlotte didn’t much mind, but wished that they would stop staring. It was making her self-conscious about how messy her lunch was. She made a mental note to ask Maman for a bologna sandwich. It seemed to be what most kids had.

The bell pulled her from her thoughts and she packed up her lunch. She still had not figured out the schedule, but knew that a bell meant it was time to pack up and move on to something else.
“Oh, it’s long recess” Oscar informed them, packing up his own lunch.

“Another one?” Charlotte asked, not at all excited by the prospect of all those kids running wild around her again.

Maybe regular school wasn’t for her. She longed for the quiet company of her parents and the security her home provided. She missed having a nice hot meal for lunch and not having to worry about people watching her eat. Nevertheless, she finished packing up her lunch box and followed her chatting cousins to the hallway where she stored her lunch box in her backpack.

Once outside, she felt the spring sun shine down on her face and had to squint against the brightness. Kids had already started up games. She followed Oscar and Kira to the corner of the playground where the fence met the building. They all sat down.

“We should start playing D&D during recess. I’m sure Auntie Cosima could make us up a campaign” Kira suggested, turning a rock over in her hands.

“Are you crazy? We’re already freaks!” Oscar exclaimed to his cousin.

“Well at least then we’d be MonkeyBum freaks” Charlotte joked with a chuckle.

Kira laughed and nodded, using her character’s voice “The MoneyBums would not stand for this!”

“No, this is pure vacuousness! Pretty sure Princess NiceDress would kill them all with a toss of her axe” Charlotte noted.

“You better keep it down, people will hear” Oscar worried in a hushed tone.

A group of three kids in their class walked up to them. “Oh people already hear. It’s not like we don’t know you’re already a freak, FREAK!” the tallest of them shouted at the group while the other two laughed.

“Just go away Josh” Oscar told the kid.

“Just go away Josh” the girl to the kid’s right mocked, sticking out her tongue.

“I didn’t know that you had more freaks as friends either. We weren’t even sure anyone even could stand being around you. Isn’t that why your parents put you up for adoption?” the kid teased, jutting out his lip in fake sadness.

“That’s enough, Josh” Kira told the kid. “Just leave us alone.”

“Oh, the freak speaks. And what about you, peg leg? You got a voice? Or did it get lost in that giant nerdy book you’re always reading?” he asked Charlotte.

The small clone peered up at him through narrowed eyes. She didn’t have anything nice to say. She was going to keep her mouth shut.

“That’s what I thought” he told her. “I’d say that I’d see you in gym, but we all know you can’t participate. It must suck to be broken. Look at you, freaks, nerds, one abandoned by his parents, one with only one leg, and you…I haven’t figured out what is wrong with you yet, but it MUST be something” the kid glared at Kira.

The kid to Josh’s left made a show of punching his own hand “Maybe we should make something wrong with her” he suggested.
“If you touch her, I will have to do something about it” Charlotte promised, speaking for the first time.

“Oh yeah, and what you gonna do peg leg? Stare me to death?” Josh’s left hand asked.

“Just walk away Devon” Oscar told him. “You don’t want to mess with her. She took out a dragon” he informed the bully.

That’s right, thought Charlotte. I took out a dragon. I am a mighty warrior. And these are my friends.

The three erupted into a fit of laughter, leaving Charlotte standing there, fuming at them. She was thinking about the best course of action. She knew her brace was heavy and she knew her other leg was strong. She smiled, daring them to make the first move.

The laughing kids each picked up a rock as they laughed “Peg the dragon freaks!” Josh yelled.

The moment that first rock was thrown, it hit Oscar’s forehead, opening up a gash. Charlotte reacted, putting all of her weight on her good leg and swinging the braced one up in a vicious kick to Josh’s face. She felt the force from the impact vibrate through her leg and sting her knee, but continued following through. She watched as he dropped, clutching his face. The entire playground went silent and ran over. His friends dropped their ammunition and kneeled at his side as he wailed in agony.

“Don’t you EVER touch my friends” she told him, turning to Oscar and putting pressure on his wound as he cried.

Finally, a teacher came over.

Helm knocked on the basement door.

“Come on down, her legs are back together!” Cosima called up the stairs, earning a look from Delphine. “What? They are.”

Helm opened the door and descended the steps, holding the phone. He held it out to Delphine.

“It’s for you” he told her.

The French woman took the phone “Hello? Dr. Cormier speaking” she informed the other end.

She listened carefully, nodding as the other line spoke.

“Is she okay?” she asked, nodding at the response, “I am on my way” she spoke, hanging up the phone.

“Who was that?” Cosima asked.

“The school. Apparently Charlotte is suspended” Delphine responded with a huff, shaking her head.

Cosima laughed “What for? Being too smart? How does Charlotte of all people get suspended? Oh please tell me she schooled the teacher” the brunette laughed.

“Cosima, this is not funny” Delphine told her. “She got in to a fight and seriously injured another student.”

Cosima raised an eyebrow “Charlotte? Are you sure? I don’t believe it. Our sweet little Charlotte got in a fight?” she asked again.
Delphine flipped her hair up, swinging her legs over the edge of the bed “I have to go pick her up.”

“Wait, Delphine. I’ll come with you” Cosima informed her.

“Are you up for that?” the blonde asked.

“I had a nap already. I’m fine. Besides, you’re quite wound up right now. At least one of us should go in there with a level head” she suggested.

That revved up Delphine’s anger engine, making her fume for a moment while she considered Cosima’s words. She recognized how angry she was. Maybe Cosima was right. She looked to her future wife who was waiting for a response back with two raised eyebrows. Maybe having Cosima there to balance out her anger would be a good thing. She nodded and reached for her underwear, pulling them on under her sun dress.

Cosima rolled to the lift, Helm meeting her halfway there to help.

Charlotte sat in the office, arms folded. She was the only one there. Oscar and Josh had been brought to the nurse room by the secretary to be treated. This wasn’t fair. She had only been defending her friends. Maman was gonna be so mad. She wondered what would happen. Still, she was convinced that she had done the right thing. For some reason Josh and his goonies held power over Oscar and by proxy her and Kira, which he seemed to hold by being the scariest kid on the playground; the best way to win that back was by being an even scarier kid. She was sure that from now on, Josh would think twice about coming after them. She had the power now.

Alison flew in to the principal’s office, seeing no secretary and turning to spot Charlotte.

“Charlotte, where’s Oscar?” she asked.

Charlotte pointed to the medical room and Alison ran to it, opening the door and walking in. Charlotte listened as she grilled the secretary about what had happened to her son. It was all muffled through the closed door, but Auntie Alison’s voice was loud enough that she could make out what was being said.

The young girl sighed and crossed her arms, hoping Mummy came and not Maman. Mummy would be a lot more sympathetic. But she knew that she couldn’t drive anymore. Maybe she’d get lucky and Opa would come instead. Yeah, that would be the best case scenario.

All hope was lost when she saw the blonde curly head walk up to the front door of the school. Luckily once the door was open, she could hear the wheels of Mummy’s chair. She breathed a sigh of relief. They both walked in and she gulped.

“You okay, kid?” Cosima asked her daughter.

Charlotte nodded, looking up to Maman.

“What happened?” the blonde asked, trying to hide her anger for the moment. Cosima’s hand on her lower back was helping.

“I kicked Josh in the face with my brace” she admitted “I am sorry, Maman. He was teasing us and they were throwing rocks and I had to balance the power dynamics and get them to stop” she blurted out in one breath.

Delphine dropped to her knees, checking the brace out. She saw the blood on it and the dent.
“Charlotte, what were you thinking? Your leg isn’t that stable. You could have broken something” she worried, making quick work of removing the brace and lifting her daughter’s pant leg to reveal a fresh bruise forming the length of Charlotte’s leg, wrapping around her knee.

“I was thinking that my brace was hard and heavy” she looked up to her mummy “force equals mass times acceleration.”

Cosima rolled her lips into her mouth to not show the smile. Of course Charlotte would use science to take down a bully.

Alison walked out of the room with Oscar, holding a mound of gauze to his head.

“He is going to need stitches. I’m bringing him to the hospital. This damn school can’t keep their bullies in line. Someone needs to answer for this” she grumbled.

“Yeah, my kid. Charlotte’s suspended” Cosima informed her.

Alison’s mouth dropped, turning to Charlotte “Are you the one who kicked him in the face?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded, not making eye contact.

“You get extra dessert next sleepover” she told her, walking out of the room.

Delphine shook her head, looking up at her daughter “Do not think that this was heroic. Violence is never the answer” she told her. “You sit here while I go talk to your principal. We’ll discuss your punishment when we get home” the blonde told her daughter, turning to Cosima. “And you, do not encourage her. I am going to deal with this.”

Cosima raised her hands in surrender as she watched her wife storm into the principal’s office. The brunette wheeled herself closer to her daughter, reaching out for a hug. Charlotte eagerly took it.

“I’m a freak mummy. I hate it here. Can I please just come home?” she asked.

Cosima took a deep breath and rubbed her daughter’s back “I know how you feel. I was the weird kid when I was young. But this is going to make you stronger. You need to be here Char, and it will get better. I promise. Either you do things to make the kids smarten up, or you get tougher. I got tougher. It seems like you’re going the other route. It’s all good though. Just make sure this doesn’t become a regular thing.”

“I don’t know why Oscar put up with this for so long” Charlotte noted.

“He probably didn’t know how to deal with it” Cosima reasoned to her daughter. “He got tougher.”

“I don’t want to just get tougher. I don’t want any of the other kids to have to deal with this. Josh has this power over everyone. I don’t understand why they let him or how he got it, but I don’t like it” Charlotte told her mummy.

“He HAD that power. Unfortunately for him, the dynamics of our culture dictate that once you get beaten by a girl and cry for your mommy in the middle of the playground, you lose that power” Cosima explained.

“But why? He was really hurt. I would have probably cried too” she explained.

“Because these boys have been taught since they were young that emotions and needing people are
signs of weakness” the brunette taught the young clone. “And using the power you have over people to hold them hostage is strength.”

“So what happens now?” Charlotte asked.

“Now we go home and you serve out your suspension, and you come back. You will have the power of everyone’s fear. It will be up to you to decide how you are going to use it” she told her daughter.

“But I don’t want to be a bully” the girl told her mother.

“Then don’t. You decide what to do with this power. I’m not going to say that what you did was the right move, but it worked. I’m super glad, little dude that you stood up to the bully” Cosima mentioned.

“I wasn’t going to let him hurt Kira and Oscar” Charlotte explained.

“And that’s way admirable. Maybe next time, you won’t need violence. We’ll work on some ways to use words at home, okay?” the dreaded woman asked.

Charlotte nodded “Maman’s so angry. I wonder how she’ll punish me.”

“You let me worry about Maman. Not saying you won’t have consequences, but I’ll settle her down” Cosima assured.

Charlotte nodded, playing with the bottom button of her shirt.

Delphine walked out of the principal’s office, flipping her hair back and shaking her head at her kid.

“Let’s go home”

Chapter End Notes

It’s been a busy week for me. Glad I got this done on time. Thank you all so much for your continued comments, review, messages, kudos, and for reading. I am super excited to write chapter 13! It’s gonna be so gushy and cute. A very special thank you to maritexxa1982 who did the cover art for this story! It’s so nice to have fan art! Anyways, happy Thursday and I hope that you enjoy this chapter!
Delphine smiled, feeling like a small child again as she saw her mother’s unforgettable form walk towards her with an equally bright beam. She ran towards her, giving her a tight hug. The woman was the same height as Delphine with a short pixie cut in the same shade of blonde. She wore a bright red top and a long, flowing skirt, ruby earrings dangling from her earlobes, accessorized with a thin pair of glasses. There was something so bright about her.

She was just as Delphine remembered. The moment the blonde doctor hugged the woman who had raised her, she was transported back to being 5 years old, standing next to her in the kitchen and waiting to have a turn to knead a loaf of bread. She still smelled like yeast and sugar with a touch of honeysuckle.

“What business, this air travel! Next visit, you are coming to see me; I hate recirculated air. My beautiful, little Delphine, it's by God's grace that I see you again. How is it going? When do I get to meet my new daughter and grand-daughter?” she asked all in a rush, still not breaking the hug with her daughter.

Delphine chuckled and pulled back, kissing both of her mother’s cheeks “Maman, une question à la fois. Elles sont ici. Viens! Maman, one question at a time. They’re here. Come!” Delphine answered, taking her mother’s hand and walking her through the busy airport to where Charlotte was making a game of trying to balance on the back of Cosima’s chair.

Both of them were laughing as they tipped backwards slightly, then landed forward again. Charlotte looked up and saw her maman, getting down immediately, knowing that she’d been warned not to do that.

Cosima turned to see her fiancee and this very similar-looking woman walking towards them. She watched as Delphine gave their daughter her trademark mom look and spoke up before she could scold the child.

“You must Annette, bonjour Mme Cormier” Cosima spoke, smiling up at the woman and mentally kicking herself for her attempt at french.

Delphine forgot about Charlotte’s disobedience for the moment as she couldn’t help but chuckle at Cosima’s terrible pronunciation. She turned to her mother, whom she saw was pleased by the attempt.

“Bonjour, yes, I am Annette. I am assuming that you are the famous Cosima” she noted, extending a hand to the woman in the wheelchair.

Cosima gave the woman a quick wave before taking the offered hand and shaking it “Why, yes I am. Hardly famous, but very much Cosima” she replied.

“But in my daughter’s eyes” she expressed, watching Delphine turn a shade of red. The woman then turned to Charlotte “And that would make you Charlotte” she deducted.
Charlotte nodded and held her hand out to her grandmother. “Pleased to meet you” the young girl expressed.

Annette looked to her daughter and smiled “Ah, je vois que quelqu’un connait ses manières. Ah, I see that someone knows their manners” the older blonde noted in a pleased tone.

Charlotte giggled as Maman beamed proudly at her and shook her hand.

“Charlotte, this is your Mamie” Delphine told her daughter, smiling as she rubbed her mother’s shoulder.

“She’s tall like you, maman” the young clone noted.

“Yeah, well don’t get any ideas, you’re gonna be my height, kid” Cosima told her kid, ruffling her hair “and it’s almost time for a haircut.”

Charlotte giggled “I know! But it’s nice having someone around who can reach the top cabinet” she told her mummy, making a face at her in jest.

Cosima shook her head and went to respond, coughing into the hanky she grabbed from the pocket in her chair instead.

Delphine walked over to her, rubbing her back gently as she looked up at her daughter “Charlotte, help Mamie get her luggage? We’ll meet you two over there” she instructed.

Charlotte nodded “D’accord, Maman” she responded, taking Mamie’s hand and walking her over “Pendant que tu es ici, je dois te montrer mon collection de roches, et bien mon laboratoire. Maman et Mummy m’ont donné mon propre section. While you’re here, I have to show you my rock collection and my lab. Maman and Mummy gave me my own section” the girl informed her grandmother.

Cosima kept coughing and Delphine wheeled her over to face a bench, which she sat on. She leaned forward and rubbed the brunette’s back, trying to shield her from the stares.

“Do you need another handkerchief?” Delphine asked.

Cosima nodded and Delphine reached for the backup she kept inside her own pocket. She switched it out for the one that was saturated and leaking into Cosima’s palm. She slipped the old one into the wet bag in another pocket of the chair before she checked her fiancee’s oxygen tank level, opening the pressure valve a little more.

The french woman felt her heart in her throat. She continued to rub Cosima’s back, doing her best to shield her from the world as she waved away concerned security guards. There was nothing they could do, nothing anyone could do. It would only further embarrass Cosima.

Cosima thanked her lucky stars that Delphine was here. She could feel the eyes burning through her back. It didn’t really matter as her attention was taken up by the burning in her lungs and the rough shaking of her body with every cough. Delphine’s steady, strong hand on her back reminded her that she wasn’t alone in this. Tomorrow, they would be married. Cosima only wished that she could hang on long enough for that.

When the coughing finally subsided, Delphine pulled out a package of wet wipes and handed one to Cosima, taking the handkerchief and tucking it away. “Do you want to wash up in the bathroom?” the doctor asked, concerned.
The brunette shook her head and cleared her throat, wiping her face and hands on a series of wet naps “I’m okay. Did you turn the oxygen up?” she asked.

Delphine responded by nodding her head “Is it too much?” she inquired, concerned.

“No, it’s good. We’ll have to umm...change the tank before we head home” the clone stated, clearing her throat again, reaching behind herself to grab the bottle of water in the holder. She took a few swigs and put it back, looking up at Delphine “I’m okay” she assured.

The blonde smiled and nodded “Okay. Let’s get my maman home then. She’ll probably want a nap.”

Cosima chuckled softly, her exhaustion now taking a firm grip on her “We should take one too, especially with tonight’s activities. Any clue what Cal’s got planned?”

Delphine chuckled “Knowing us, we will just play darts at his place” she told Cosima “You are the one who is going to have the crazy wild bachelorette party. Sarah’s told me a couple of things her and Alison have planned. So have fun, and remember who you are marrying” Delphine joked, kissing Cosima’s cheek.

The brunette blushed and slowly shook her head. She took a deep breath and relaxed back in the chair, curving her spine to sink in as she braced an elbow on the armrest and waved her hand around as she spoke “Do you really think we shouldn’t let Charlotte go with the kids tonight? She’s already been grounded from like everything for the week” Cosima reminded her soon-to-be-wife.

Delphine closed her eyes “Cosima, we have talked about this. Punishment is punishment. If we ground her from TV, internet, the phone, and friends for a week, we need to stick to it” the blonde argued.

Cosima grimaced “Hard ass” she accused.

“Yeah well someone has to be, mummy chill-out” Delphine countered, leaning in and kissing Cosima again. She looked up and saw her mother and daughter walking back, each wheeling a bag.

“Fine” Cosima conceded. She’d tried, but Delphine was right and they had agreed on the punishment. She turned around to see Charlotte and Annette laughing. It didn’t seem like a night alone with Delphine’s mother would exactly be punishment anyways.

Delphine set up her shot, taking aim before snapping her wrist and sending the dart whizzing to the board, where it hit with a soft thud. She turned to Cal and chuckled shrugging.

“Guess that’s game” she told him, heading to the board and pulling her three darts out, the last one having landed on the triple 1 to get her triple out of their game.

He shook his head “Seriously? How did you get so good at this?” he asked.

“Cal, we’ve been doing this every day” she reminded him.

The blonde walked back to the bar table that was set up right at the line for the dartboard and took a sip of her root beer. Cal had started brewing the stuff himself and she had to admit that it was way better than any other root beer she’d had. He had it on tap and everything.

“Donnie should be getting here soon” Cal noted, leaning against the table and taking a swig from his own glass. “Any clue what’s going on over at the Hendrix’?” the lumberjack inquired, heading over
and flopping onto the couch.

Delphine followed, sitting down across from him, letting her long legs swing up and tuck under her sideways “I know Alison mentioned that Sarah had picked out a porn they were gonna watch. Oh, and they were going to order pizza and strippers” Delphine informed him.

He chuckled “I’m sure Helm will appreciate all of those forms of entertainment” the lumberjack joked, taking another sip of his root beer.

Delphine laughed, nodded “It is funny to think about what his face will look like.”

Cal joined in on the laughter “We should sneak over there just to watch his reaction.”

The blonde gasped and reached over, hitting his arm “You are terrible.”

“It makes me fun. Besides, we’ve got a full night ahead of us. Pool and more darts and pasta and a very healthy salad, oh and Donnie and I want to hear gross doctor stories.”

“You sure about that? I think Donnie might pass out” Delphine informed the lumberjack with a scrunched nose.

“Even more fun!” Cal teased as the doorbell rang. He jumped up “There’s the man of the hour.”

Cosima was in her chair, set up in front of the TV as she waited for the surprise Sarah had for her. She smiled, looking around the room. Ali was pouring glasses of red wine for everyone, making sure they were set up for the drinking game that accompanied this surprise. Sarah was fiddling with her computer that was hooked up to the still off TV. Scott was currently seated next to herself, looking awkwardly into his glass of wine and telling her about his newest board game find. She was half listening as she noticed Felix and Helena talking about her pregnancy.

Even just being in the room with all of them was a party enough. She knew though, that Felix and Sarah would never let her get away with such a tame bachelorette party. And neither would Alison it seemed, which was oddly out of character for her. Cosima eyed the housewife through squinted eyes, thinking about why that was. She made a mental note to ask Ali about her own bachelorette party, having a sneaking suspicion that it was less tame than her sister would like people to think.

While she was busy watching her sister a loud moan erupted from the TV and a series of different reactions peppered the room. She turned her attention and laughed when she saw what Sarah had gotten on the screen. The video was quickly paused on two women (a tall blonde and shorter brunette of course) making out. Sarah pointed at her and nodded. Cosima shook her head, flopping dreads from side to side as she relaxed back into her chair.

“This is all for you, sestra. All girl porno drinking game, with the exception of our sestra-mother-to-be of course” the punk told the room. “Rules are simple, drink every time one of these things happens: “Moans that aren’t real”, “Holy shite those nails are way too long”, and my personal favourite, drain your drink for “There’s no way in bloody hell that was a real orgasm”.”

Cosima laughed, hearing Scott exhale as slowly and loudly as a balloon slowly losing air.

Helena looked at Felix, confused “What is this, this prono sestra Sarah is speaking of?” she asked.

“Oh, bollocks, really?” He asked the pregnant woman, rolling his eyes. “Sexy movies, Helena.”
“Like the kissing they are doing?” she asked, pointing to the screen.

“Sometimes I get reminded that you grew up under the convent rock. It is going to be so much more than kissing. Hope you wore thick panties” Felix told her.

She gave him an odd look and drank her grape juice.

Cosima looked over at her father, shrugging at him. Helm laughed and shrugged back, taking a swig from him beer. The brunette gave her father her signature incisor-filled smile as she turned her attention back to the screen.

“Well, what are we waiting for? Let the lesbians fuck for me” she told Sarah.

Sarah hit play and took her seat.

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Delphine speared another fork of penne and chewed it happily while Donnie spoke.

“Yeah, so unfortunately Oscar’s team is losing their coach next year. It’s gonna be tough finding someone to take the job. None of us really know anything about hockey” Donnie told the two of them. “And all the kids are upset because he’s been with them since they started. It kind of really sucks.”

Cal nodded “What do you need to coach?” he asked.

“There are a few clinics and certifications, nothing too difficult. Why, are you interested?” the male Hendrix asked.

“I might be. Kira’s expressed an interest in playing. The kids play out in the street whenever they’re over. You guys really need to get some street hockey gear” the lumberjack told them.

Delphine shrugged “I had no idea they were that interested. Charlotte hasn’t said anything.”

“Well of course she hasn’t, she can’t play with her leg and all” Donnie mentioned to Delphine.

Delphine took a deep breath and nodded “It would be difficult.”

“Well I mean, she could play goal” Cal mentioned. “We train her as a stand-up tender. Then, when Finny here heals her knee, we can ease her into butterfly.”

Cal was speaking a foreign language to Delphine, having no idea what he was talking about “Are you still speaking English?” she asked.

The men laughed and nodded “Sorry, I was just saying that she’s got one good knee, so if we teach her how to play mostly standing up, she would only need to get on a knee to cover the puck. Once you heal her, we can teach her to play more on her knees” the rugged man explained.

“I do not know. I would be worried about her getting hurt” Delphine told them, taking another bite.

“Everyone gets hurt. It’s a sport. She’s gonna get hurt in soccer” Donnie told her.

“I’ll talk it over with her and Cosima” Delphine told them.

“Well, if Cal here takes the coaching spot, you could always be the trainer” Donnie informed her.
“What’s a trainer? Like fitness?” she asked, confused.

“No, no. Medical. Every team has a trainer on the bench during games so that if someone gets hurt, there’s an adult who is trained in hockey-specific first aid to head onto the ice. You being a doctor and all, and also if she did get hurt, you’d be the first one to respond” the suburban husband explained.

“Oh. Well, I’ll think about it” Delphine told them.

The doorbell rang and Donnie squeaked in glee, immediately getting a look of disdain from Cal.

“Who else is coming?” Delphine asked them. She didn’t get an answer “Les gars?” she inquired again, suspicious as Donnie stood up to head to the door.

Cal stood too, handing Delphine a napkin “Might want to wipe the sauce off your lips” he told her.

“What is happening?” she asked as Cal started pulling her chair back from the table.

He picked it up with her still in it and set it in the middle of the kitchen. Suddenly the room was filled with dance music as two women in lab coats followed an excited Donnie into the kitchen.

“Strippers!” Donnie squealed in absolute excitement as he continually went to clap his hands, too excited to even allow them to make contact.

“I hear we’ve got a naughty doctor who is getting married” one of the women told the blonde.

Delphine laughed and looked up at Cal “Vraiment?” she asked.

The lumberjack shrugged and crossed his arms “Told you to wipe the sauce off.”

Delphine quickly wiped her face, balling the napkin and throwing it to hit him square in the chest as the women continued to walk towards her, stopping a few feet away. She turned a dark shade of red and put a hand to her forehead, shaking her head. Out of her peripheral vision, she saw Donnie counting a wad of fives at the table.

“So doc, can we trust you to be an absolute riot tonight?” the shorter brunette woman asked.

Delphine laughed and looked up, shrugging “What the hell, bien sûr. An absolute riot.”

“Well then, Mandy. There’s a job to get done” the taller brunette responded, turning to her partner.

Each woman took a grip on the front of their lab coats, tearing them clean off to reveal some of the sexiest lingerie Delphine’s ever seen.

“Woahoho!” Donnie expressed, his eyes going wide.

Cal chuckled as he watched Delphine’s eyes go wide “You’re welcome, Finny. Enjoy” he told her, pulling out his own wad of 5s and handing it to her.

Delphine took the money. She’d never had a lap dance before and handed the money to the woman identified as Mandy who was now standing right in front of her. Mandy laughed and shook her head.

“Not all at once, like this” she instructed Delphine, skimming a 5 off the top. She used her thumb to gently stretch the waistband of her underwear and trailed her hand with the five slowly down her torso to slide the bill into the waistband before snapping the elastic closed.

Delphine felt the heat in her rise at first with embarrassment, then with lust as she watching this
woman’s gorgeous body inches from her face. “Oh, oh, okay” Delphine stuttered.

The second stripper turned the music up and Mandy took another bill, putting it in Delphine mouth. She leaned in, straddling the tall blonde in the chair and lowered her head to take it out of the doctor’s mouth, using her own. She could hear the french woman gulp audibly. It made her smile. She guided Delphine’s hands over her thighs to grip her ass as she started to undulate in the woman’s lap.

Delphine felt all sensible thought leave her as she looked down to watch the hips rock into her. This was incredibly new. Cosima had been the only woman who had ever been this close to her in such a sexual manner, let alone with all the exposed skin. She looked over to see Cal watching her and laughing as Donnie got his own dance from the other woman.

“Relax, blondie” Mandy whispered in her ear “Enjoy this. You’ll be married tomorrow. Enjoy your last night as only a fiancee and not a wife.”

Delphine nodded, pulling a bill out. What would she do with it? She took a deep breath and threw her inhibition to the wind. She tucked the bill into her own bra and giggled with the woman dipped her face down to take it out.

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“That was not an orgasm! You liar!” Alison yelled at the TV, draining her juice.

The room followed with their own drinks as Cosima laughed. She’d already had a glass and that was enough for her tonight. Scott was beet red and she knew the pillow he was holding over his lap was concealing something that had sprung to life about an hour ago. Almost everyone was drunk at this point, with the exception of Helena, Alison, and Helm who had allowed himself a single beer.

Sarah got up and stumbled to her computer, turning off the porno.

“And that, ladies and gents concludes tonight’s presentation of lying lesbos, a drinking game look into the world of shitty made for men lesbian porn” she called out, raising her newly filled glass for a toast.

Everyone laughed and toasted before Alison sprung up “I think it’s time for gifts” she said.

Cosima chuckled “Gifts? Really? Who does gifts at a bachelorette party?” she asked.

“We do, now just enjoy it” Felix told her “You are bound to get some really naughty things from this group.”

“Yeah, tomorrow’s about the blenders and china. Tonight’s about the…the…” Scott couldn’t even get the words out.

“The dildos” Sarah stepped in for him.

Helm choked on his sip and Cosima laughed “Papa, you can head back home if you want. It’s fine.” He shook his head “No. I umm…I just wasn’t expecting that.”

“Get used to it Daddy-o” Felix told him, clapping him on the shoulder.

Helm chuckled, raising his eyebrows at this twink. He found Felix quite amusing. The young man had no clue that he, himself was a gay man. It made for some quite amusing comments on the lad’s
part. He and his daughter had come to joke about it afterwards. He supposed it would all come to an end tomorrow at the wedding, when there was mention of Cosima’s dad. But for now, he enjoyed the bliss of Felix’ ignorance.

“I guess I will have to” he told him “This dildo stuff must be new for me, right?”

Felix rolled his eyes “Must be. Well, come, come. Open mine” he told Cosima, grabbing a box off a hidden table and walking it over to Cosima.

The brunette raised her eyebrows up at him and laughed “Okay. I guess this is happening” she said, tearing the booby wrapping paper. She opened the box and nodded. She pulled the assless chaps out of the box and held them up. “Felix, you are awesome” she noted, chuckling.

“Everyone’s got a cowboy fantasy. Or cowgirl in your case. Delphine’s getting a matching pair so you can go all Brokeback Mountain together” he told her.

Cosima laughed and nodded, an image of the tall blonde in assless chaps crossing her mind. She could already picture how red Delphine’s face would be when she opened the gift.

“Thank you, Felix” the eldest clone mentioned.

“You are very welcome. Well, who’s next then?” he asked.

The gifts kept coming. A few dildos from Helena who admitted that Felix had bought them for her, some organic edible massage oil and lube from Alison along with a book about erotic massage and something she called an OM (apparently standing for Orgasmic Meditation), a restraint system for the bed from Sarah and some bondage rope to go with it. Scott had gifted her a set of what he called “carefully curated pornographic films” along with a comical 55 gallon drum of lube that he told her would be delivered by UPS tomorrow. And her father had tastefully given her a giftcard to an online store. Thank the stars for that one.

“Great! Now it’s time for games. Never have I ever?” Alison asked the group.

“What HAVE you done, Alison?” Sarah joked.

Delphine’s hair was a mess and she was almost out of 5s. Mandy had moved on to Cal’s lap and now Candy was all over her. Candy was a lot more handsy than her partner. Delphine wasn’t complaining. Both women were now completely nude and the scent of pussy filled the air. Delphine couldn’t tell if it was her own or the strippers’, but it was delightful.

Candy was currently in some wild position. Her body was supported by her hands on the floor and her ankles were over Delphine’s shoulders, allowing the blonde a nice view of between her legs. She HAD to tell Cosima all about this later. She knew her partner would be mad with desire at hearing about how hot this was. Just the idea made her giddy.

The men had switched to beer and whiskey a while ago and she could tell they were getting pretty drunk. She didn’t mind staying with rootbeer, her mind still keeping firmly in the middle of it the fact that she very well might be pregnant. Every time she remembered that, it made her smile.

But right now, despite the ever present thought of carrying a child being in her mind, at the forefront was this glorious smell of female lubrication. Candy was moving closer to her face and she inhaled deeply, noticing how different she smelled than Cosima. Delphine placed a trail of bills down the stripper’s back. The woman then hooked her feet on the back of the chair, bending her knees and
bringing herself even closer to Delphine to allow the plastic money to roll off the back and down her head to land on the ground below her.

Then suddenly she was off Delphine’s lap. Before the blonde could protest, a very well muscled guy in a speedo had taken her place, grinding his crotch into her stomach. She laughed in complete shock and turned to Cal.

He winked at her “Didn’t think I’d forget about the other half of your sexuality, did you?” he asked, his head then being turned back to face the woman in his lap by the woman in his lap.

“I am going to get you back for this” Delphine called out as he tossed her another pack of 5s and sat back in his chair, his hands behind his head. She caught the bundle, still laughing.

“Oh, I am hoping you do” the lumberjack replied.

The man in her lap turned around to shake his ass in her face and Delphine slapped another bill into his waistband.

“Never have I ever done anal before” Scott told the group.

Everyone turned to look at each other as they watched Sarah, Felix, Cosima, and Helm all drink. Allison let out a burst of disgust.

“Ali, you’re missing out” Cosima told her, laughing. It turned into a cough and she grabbed the hanky from her chair.

“You’re all gross. Except for you Felix. I understand that it’s a part of your sexuality” she noted.

“It’s a part of all of our sexualities” Sarah informed her.

“Felix doesn’t have another choice of hole though” Alison told them “Nevermind, I am not getting in to this right now. Cosima, it is your turn.”

Cosima nodded and finished coughing, taking a sip of her water to clear the taste from her mouth as she cleared her throat and folded the blood stained material in her hand.

“Okay, never have I ever...lied about my period to get out of having sex” she said, rolling her head over to stare at Alison. “Drink up, pinocchio.”

Alison flared her nostrils and took a sip. “Not fair” she stated, looking less than pleased. “Well, never have I ever gotten a lap dance” she told the group.

“We could have guessed that” Cosima countered, not drinking.

Sarah gasped “Cos, come on, never?”

Cosima shrugged and made a show of it with her hands as she sat back in the chair “I just haven’t.”

Felix chuckled “Well luckily that is going to change. Allison…”

Alison smiled and hit a button on the remote. Cosima’s eyes went wide as she processed that Allison might possibly be about to give her a lap dance. “No. No. Please no, keep your clothes on, Ali.”

“Excuse me but I wouldn’t strip for anyone, let alone you. That’s what she’s for” she said, opening the door to the backyard and a tall blonde nurse walked in.
“Ohhhhh” Cosima called out “You got me a stripper? You guys are the best!” she called out, then waved to the woman “Hi, I’m Cosima.”

The stripper was thrown off “I’m umm...Heidi...I mean I’m Ginger” she corrected herself.

Sarah walked over to her sister and handed her a bundle of bills. Her, Cal, and Donnie had gotten a bunch of them from the bank earlier. She wondered how Delphine’s surprise was going. The Leda leader gave Cosima a soft punch on the arm.

“Don’t spend it all in one place” she joked.

Cosima looked down at the money and laughed, pulling a bill out and waving it at the stripper “I think these are for you.”

“Make me earn them, baby” Ginger replied.

Scott gasped as he watched in amazement. Felix was busy making more drinks for the group and Helena was completely enthralled by what was happening.

“So now she dances for sestra Cosima?” she asked Sarah.

“Yes. In her lap” Sarah told her, not taking her eyes off the stripper.

“While getting much naked?” Helena asked. Her eyes were being opened to a whole new world tonight. Why had no one ever told her about pornography and strippers and dildos?

“Yeah. Pretty much. Now shut your face meathead and enjoy the show” the other twin threatened, bumping Helena with an elbow.

Cosima couldn’t believe how much this woman looked like Delphine and told herself to ask Delphine to give her a lap dance tomorrow night. She did her best to enjoy the woman stripping for her as she ground her body all over Cosima’s, but she couldn’t help the exhaustion. Cosima pulled her sweater closed a little tighter around herself and smiled politely at the woman.

“Your pool’s open, right?” Donnie asked Delphine as they cleaned up the confetti left by the grand finale of the strippers.

“Yes and it is very expensive to have open this early, but Cosima wanted it ready for the wedding.”

“Oh man, your hydro bill is going to be through the roof” Cal noted.

Delphine nodded with big eyes as she dumped the last dustpan of paper into the recycle bin.

“We should go skinny dipping” the male Hendrix told the other two.

Delphine chuckled “Yeah. That sounds like fun”

“Better yet, we should go crash Cosima’s party and get everyone to come with us” Cal suggested.

Delphine nodded gratefully. She was aching to hold Cosima right now. They hadn’t spent this much time apart since getting back together. Especially with this week’s happenings, she felt particularly in need of physical touch and assurance from her partner. She closed her eyes and smiled, remembering what hugging Cosima felt like. The smaller woman was so warm and comfortable. It was like being wrapped in the largest, comfiest duvet, surrounded by a pit of pillows on a cold winter’s day.
Donnie finished his beer “Let’s go!” he called out, putting his shoes on and running out the door. “Last one there’s gotta streak the girls’ party!” he told them. Big mistake.

Delphine and Cal (the two runners) took off behind him.

The room applauded as Ginger took a bow and collected her 5s.

“Thank you, that was fun” Cosima told her.

“My pleasure. I wish all of my clients were so respectful” the stripper told her, pulling her shoes on.

Cosima smiled “Well you do a great job. Have a nice night, Heidi.”

The stripper smiled, blushing as she waved and put her long coat on, walking out.

Sarah hollered at Cosima “You charmer! I have never seen anyone get a stripper to blush like that”

“She was nice, okay?” Cosima argued.

At that moment, Donnie burst into the room, his hands holding his junk as he ran bare assed in socks and running shoes through the basement.

“Donnie! Stop that! What are you doing?” Allison yelled at him, grabbing a broom and starting to swat him with it.

“I’m sorry honey, I lost the race” he told her.

Delphine and Cal high fived each other as they stepped up to the door frame, laughing. Cosima felt her heart explode as she watched the blonde frenchwoman make eye contact with her. She gave her fiancee a little wave and Delphine returned it with a wink.

“Cal? You’re not supposed to be here!” Sarah called out.

“I know, I know. Hear me out. We wanted to know if your party would like to join us for a drunken skinny dip?” the lumberjack asked the room.

Felix started stripping already “Naked in water, I am there” he said.

Sarah laughed and shrugged “What the hell? Why not?” she called out.

“I do not swim” Helena told the room “And my Jesse is waiting.”

Helm nodded “I’ll take you home, Helena. I’ll leave the skinny dipping to you kids”

“Thank you large German sestra father” the Ukrainian clone told him.

He smiled and walked over to his daughter, giving her a kiss on the forehead “Have fun. Love you, kiddo”

“Thanks Papa. See you at home?” she asked.

He nodded and stood, hugging Delphine “You too. Enjoy this.”

Delphine nodded and patted his back “I will. Let Charlotte know that I will come say goodnight when we are finished.”
Helm nodded and ushered Helena out of the room.

“Skinny dipping!” Scott called out and people started flooding out of the basement.

Delphine went against the crowd, heading to the brunette who’s embrace she’d been craving all night.

“Hi” Cosima giggled up at her.

Delphine lowered herself to hug Cosima, letting out a sigh of relief and a slight moan at the sensation “Hi. Did you have a good time?” she asked, taking a deep breath of her partner’s scent.

“I did. Did you?” the clone asked in return.

Delphine nodded “Hold on tight. I’m gonna pick you up to get you up the steps.”

“Delphine, I’m too heavy” Cosima protested, but still held tightly to the blonde’s neck.

“I’ve got you” the doctor told her, sliding a hand under her knees and motioning for Alison to grab the chair.

Cosima had lost a lot of weight int he last few months and was significantly lighter than her usual self. Delphine had no trouble pickign her up and walking her up the couple steps into the back yard as Alison brought her chair up behind.

“Okay, someone got strong” Cosima noted, settling into the warm body she was pressed against.

Delphine smiled “I have been doing the weights” she told her partner who giggled.

Alison set up the chair and Delphine kissed Cosima’s cheek before setting her down in it.

“Do you really think they are going to skinny dip?” Alison asked.

“Yes” was Cosima’s answer. She rolled her tongue into the side of her cheek “Most definitely.”

Alison shook her head and locked up the house before following the two back to their place. Sarah had turned on the pool light and the strings of lights set up and ready for the wedding tomorrow. The pool had been heated against the still chilly spring air and a mist lifted from the water’s surface as the hot steam hit the cool night air. There were naked bodies everywhere.

Cal turned on a chill out playlist on the bluetooth sound system, making sure the volume was low enough to not disturb the neighbours too much. Alison was grateful that she’d gone door to door a few days ago to get permission for the possible noise. Suburban dwellers were quite sympathetic to the noise of a couple bachelorette parties for a couple who are getting married so that they can enjoy their final time together until one of them dies. No one was willing to complain.

The housewife rolled her eyes at her husband helicoptering his penis to the laughing group.

“Alison! We see why you like him so much now! And we thought Paul was Mr. B.D.” Felix called out.

Donnie beamed with pride and cannonballed into the water. He popped up a moment later “Honey! Come on! This is fun!”

Alison stomped towards him “You are drunk and naked Donnie. Everyone is seeing your peter!”
“And they love it! Come on, honey berries. Just come in, in your undies. Daddy needs some sugar” he pleaded with his wife.

Sarah had snuck up behind her sister, already stark naked and dripping wet.

“No, come out of there Mr. Hendrix!” Alison called.

“Hey Alison, is your phone in your pocket?” Sarah asked.

“No, why would you…?” Alison started before she was shoved into the pool by her nude sister. Sarah laughed and jumped in.

The housewife bobbed to the surface as the group chuckled “Well that wasn’t very...oh it’s nice and warm in here” she noted, looking around the water.

“Come on, Alison. Bare that buttoned up body of yours. Have at least a little fun!” Felix called out.

Delphine started stripping off her own body, getting her shirt unbuttoned and her bra off before she turned to Cosima “Want some help?” she asked.

Cosima nodded, letting her sweater fall off her shoulders and taking off her t-shirt. Delphine smiled at her as she lifted her up from below her arms, moaning at the contact of their bare chests together “I have missed you tonight” she confessed to Cosima.

“Me too” Cosima told her, flashing her a toothy grin before she unbuttoned her jeans and slipped them down with her underwear.

Delphine used her foot to pin the material to the ground and helped Cosima out of it, followed by her shoes. The blonde took off Cosima’s glasses and reached back, tucking them in the seat of the chair. She picked her up again, waking her to the pool and sitting her on a step. The blonde pulled away and started unbuttoning her own pants.

Cosima waited, pleased at the temperature of the water. She watched Sarah who was staring at the oblivious Delphine and laughed. No doubt Sarah had picked out the stripper. She watched as her sister peeled her eyes off of the blonde and jumped onto Cal’s back. Scott was shooting Felix from across the pool with a water gun, which he then turned to Cosima, hitting her square in the chest. She laughed until suddenly she was pulled into the most familiar and warm of bodies, being shielded from the spray by Delphine’s back.

There was a mass of blonde curls cocooning her as Delphine supported her in the water, leaning down to kiss her tenderly.

Delphine felt the night’s worth of sexual tension release in that one moonlit kiss. The softness of Cosima’s lips gliding along her own created a sheet of safety and calmness in her. Nothing compared to this. The warm water from her waist down counteracted the chill on her torso making her nipples stand at attention. She let a hand glide over the skin of Cosima’s stomach and smiled against the lips her own were currently kissing. She gently pulled away, the sounds of the others laughing and playing in the background coming back into focus.

The blonde opened her eyes and smiled at the expression of pure bliss on Cosima’s face. She was so very perfect for Delphine.

“Wow. That was...talk about the romance Dr. Cormier” Cosima purred.

“Romance is easy with you” Delphine told her, sinking a bit lower into the water.
“Especially when we’ve got a 55 gallon drum of lube” the smaller woman told her.

“What?” Delphine asked.

“Oh nothing, just be ready for a delivery tomorrow, thanks to Scott” Cosima informed her partner.

Delphine laughed and leaned down, kissing Cosima again before turning them to face the party. Everyone was laughing, having started up a series of playful fights in the water. Delphine watched as she enjoyed the sensation of the water on her body and the embodiment of home in her arms. She looked up to see a star-laden night sky.

The moon was bright. She was sure her daughter could pick out every constellation right now. She slowly let go of Cosima to let the woman float, laying down in the surface of the water herself to let her buoyancy take over. She held Cosima’s hand, trying to find the big dipper.

A beam of light shot across the sky and her eyes went wide. She’d never seen a shooting star before. She immediately closed her eyes tightly and made a wish.

She wished that despite what happened, that Cosima’s remaining time here filled her partner up with a lifetime’s worth of happiness.

Delphine turned to see Cosima’s eyes closed as well. The brunette turned to look at her and smiled “You saw it too?” the smaller woman asked.

The blonde nodded “And I made the wish that I have been wishing every moment of every day”

“Don’t tell me, I want it to come true” Cosima told her.

Delphine chuckled. Even if she didn’t fully believe in the superstition, it was comforting in this moment. It was beautiful. It made Cosima happy. Instead she turned her head back to the sky and let the water carry her.

“Me too” she whispered to the starry expanse. “Me too.”

Chapter End Notes

Okay, so it’s not the wedding chapter as promised, but what’s a fluffy family fic without bachelorette parties? Also, since I found out that the 21st is fanfiction writer appreciation day, I figured that I would give you guys a double whammy this week to show my appreciation for you. Sunday, August 21st you can expect Chapter 14 to be up. After that, no more fiancées, only wives.

I also tried something new this chapter with the line jumps. I’m sure that’s not what they’re called and that they have a technical name, but that’s what I’m calling them.

I had no time to read this over and it’s already late so I apologize for grammar and spelling. I’m sure that I’ll go over all of the chapters in the near future and give them another solid proofreading. It’s so hard to delay posting for that so I apologize if it’s getting on anyone’s nerves.

Anyways, happy Thursday and I want to thank you as always for sticking with me this far. I appreciate and cherish every kudo, comment, review, message, and chapter read!
Keep being awesome! See you in the comments, or next chapter!
Delphine carefully watched her own hands adjust Charlotte’s bow tie. She was seated on the bed and her daughter was already in her dress pants and short sleeved button up in front of her. The weather was cooperating. It was a warm spring day, warmer than most.

“Voilà ma petite. Tu est si mignonne. As-tu encore les anneaux? Voilà my little one. You are so cute. Do you still have the rings?” Delphine asked her daughter.

Charlotte smiled and nodded, pulling them out of her pocket to show Maman. She received a kiss on the cheek as Maman’s hands covered her shoulders to turn her towards the mirror. Charlotte turned and smiled when she saw her reflection. She’d never liked how she looked before. This, she loved. She stood up a little taller and beamed a smile at Maman in the mirror.

“Today is your day too, Charlotte. Are you ready to make us an official family?” Delphine asked, rubbing the girl’s arms.

Charlotte nodded “Tellement.”

“Bon parce que je suis tellement prêt à être votre maman, selon la loi. Good because I am very ready to be your Maman, according to the law.” Delphine answered, hugging her daughter to her.

Charlotte giggled and enjoyed the embrace until she saw the time on the clock “Maman, shouldn’t you be getting in to your dress?” she asked.

“Give me another minute just to look at you. I want to remember every moment of today. It won’t be long until you do not need help with your bow tie” Delphine noted, feeling the tears well up at the idea of time with her daughter flying by.

“Will you help me with it at my wedding, even if I don’t need it?” Charlotte asked, looking up at the blonde woman.

Delphine smiled and nodded “Of course. But you are not allowed to grow up too fast.”

“D’accord, Maman” the young girl agreed.


The younger blonde chuckled and gave her daughter one more kiss before she stood up and face her mother “Okay, okay. I am getting ready. How’s Cosima? Did Helm change her tank?” Delphine asked, heading into the bathroom to start putting on her makeup.

Annette followed “She is fine. Ne t’inquètes pas d’elle, ma chérie. Don’t worry about her, sweetie.”

Charlotte bounded into the bathroom to sit on the edge of the tub and watch Maman get ready.

“She’s going to be my wife, Maman. Of course I am going to worry about her” Delphine told her mom, turning to Charlotte “Do you want to try on some make up?” she asked.

Charlotte thought about it for a moment and nodded “But just a little” she told her.
Delphine chuckled and nodded, grabbing a couple things and going to work on her daughter, keeping everything light and natural. She smiled when she finished. “There. A different kind of dapper” the blonde noted to her daughter, looking in the mirror to put on her own eyeliner.

Charlotte giggled and stood up, checking out her face in the same mirror. “I like it. Merci, Maman”

Annette shook her head at the two, reminiscing about the days Delphine would follow her in to watch her get ready. Staring at the tall blonde woman in front of her now who was all strong confidence, it felt like a lifetime ago. Sometimes she forgot that her daughter now is the same person as the little girl who would ask her eight questions a minute and play doctor with her stuffed animals. And yet here stood that same little girl, about to be married to someone Annette could not imagine being anything less than the love of her daughter’s life.

A knock on the bedroom door brought her out of her thoughts and the older french woman headed towards it, opening the slab of wood to reveal Cal, looking handsome in his suit. He was holding a bouquet.

“Is she ready?” the lumberjack asked “Sarah, Kira, and I just got here.”

Annette huffed “Of course she is not ready. Come in though. You must be Cal. I have heard a lot about you.”

The rugged man chuckled “Yeah, I’m hime. And you are Mrs. Cormier. You look just like your daughter.”

“I like to think that she looks like me” Annette retorted.

Charlotte heard her uncle’s voice and took off running for him “Uncle Cal!” she yelled, jumping into his arms.

He scooped her up with the arm not holding the flowers and kissed her forehead, giving her a hug “Hey Kiddo. You look really good. Don’t forget, I get to do your hair” he told her.

She nodded and hugged his neck tightly “I haven’t. Maman did my make up” she told him.

“Well she did a great job. You look so very handsome” the lumberjack told his niece, putting her down on her feet.

Charlotte looked up at her uncle and smiled “You look really nice too. Our bow ties match” she noted.

He laughed “Yeah, they do.”

Delphine walked out of the bathroom, still in her tank top and a pair of Cosima’s boxers. Her makeup was perfectly classic. She smiled at her best friend “You got them!” she noted, directing her eyes to the flowers as she put in an earring.

“Yeah. They were hell to find, but I got them. Want me to sneak them in now?” he asked.

She smiled and nodded, going to the nightstand and pulling out a tiny card she’d written ahead of time. She handed it to him “Tuck that in as well.”

“Will do, captain” he told her, looking her up and down “You do realize that the ceremony starts in 15 minutes, right?” he asked.
Delphine chuckled “I’ll be ready. Just get those to my bride before she walks down the aisle” she informed him.

“What are you getting to Cosima?” Annette asked.

“Just a surprise Maman” Delphine told her.

Cosima stared at her reflection. She could hear her Papa blubbering behind her already as Sarah helped Kira into her dress.

“You look beautiful, Mima” Helm told her, wiping his eyes.

Today was so hard. Helm had spent hours upon hours speaking with his husband about what their daughter’s wedding would be like. They both knew that there was a very real possibility that he would never get a chance to be there, but it hurt nonetheless. He reached into his pocket, feeling the disc in there and knowing that it was nearly time to reveal the surprise he’d been sitting on for so long.

But right now, his daughter smiled at him in the mirror.

“Thanks Papa” Cosima told him.

She took a deep breath. She’d woken up feeling the best that she’d felt in a long time. Whether it was the nature of the day or some force of nature that was going to allow her to fully experience it, she was grateful. She felt stronger and more present than she had in months. And now, looking at herself in the mirror, it was more real than ever. In an hour, she would be married to the most beautiful woman she’d ever met. Delphine would be her wife. On top of it all, Mrs. S. had gotten the final hurdle jumped for Charlotte’s full legal adoption. Today, the Cormiers would become a family by law. They would sign their marriage license and immediately after, Charlotte’s adoption papers.

She had not felt this happy in a long time. She turned around and hugged her father tightly.

Helm returned the embrace, but broke it after a moment and wiped his tears “Mima, I have a pre-wedding gift for you. Are you all ready?” he asked.

Cosima smiled and nodded, looking down at her dress “Yeah. What’s this gift? Should we go get Delphine?” she asked.

Helm shook his head “She’s got her own during the ceremony” he told her, going over to the TV.

He put the DVD in and turned the TV on.

Cosima came over and stopped next to the bed, followed by Sarah and Kira.

“What’s this, Cos?” Sarah asked.

“I don’t know. Papa just told me about it” She told her sister.

Helm hit play and backed up, smiling immediately.

Cosima gasped as her parents’ faces appeared on the screen. Both of them.

“It’s my dad” She told her sister, thanking the stars for waterproof makeup as her smiling father on the screen brought on the water works.
Helm smiled and put a strong hand on his daughter’s shoulder.

“Hi Mima” the man on the screen waved as a younger Helm smiled at him on screen. “I guess you are about to get married. I am so sorry that I could not be there in person, but I know you look beautiful. Papa and I wanted to make sure that you knew how much we love you and how very proud we are of who you have become. I have no doubt that my little girl has grown into a strong, beautiful woman. I only hope that you have chosen a partner who is worthy of you.”

While the video played, Sarah took the moment to sneak into the hallway just as Cal was coming out of the master bedroom, flowers in hand “All god, yeah?” she asked.

He nodded and handed her the flowers, kissing her cheek “All good with Finny, how’s Cos?” he asked.

“Bawling her eyes out over a video of her Dad, but she’s really good today” she explained to her boyfriend.

“Good. Now get in there before she notices” the lumberjack instructed his partner.

Sarah shrugged “You look mighty fine in that suit, Mister. I might have to find a private room to get you out of it in” she told him.

Cal raised his eyebrows suggestively “I wouldn’t mind. But later.”

Sarah nodded and kissed him quickly before heading back into the room.

“And even though I may not be there to walk you down the aisle, I will be there with you. How could I miss my little Mima’s wedding. So Mima, enjoy this day and do not be sad that I cannot enjoy it with you in person. I guarantee that I will enjoy it from your heart. So keep your heart full today and you will feel me. I love you so very much. And Helm, my big teddy bear. Make sure our little girl is well taken care of. I know we have talked about this day for so long and I want you to have fun. Our family is growing and it is no time to be sad.”

“Why’d you have to do that? This isn’t about me” The younger Helm on screen argued.

The smaller man smiled over at his partner “She is a part of us. Anything regarding her will always be about you. Besides, I know that you are watching this crying right now.” he turned to face the camera again “Pull it together, man.”

Helm laughed from his position next to his daughter as his husband blew kisses to the camera and the video ended. The large German man turned off the TV and sat down on the bed to hug his daughter as they cried together.

Sarah slipped the flowers into Cosima’s bouquet.

“That was Auntie Cosima’s Dad?” Kira asked.

“Yeah” Sarah answered.

Kira nodded “That was nice of him” she told her mother.

Cosima pulled away from her papa and he wiped her tears as she smiled “I miss him so much, Papa.”

“I know, I do too. But like he said, he is here with us. He wouldn’t miss today for anything in the world, Cosima” Helm reminded his daughter.
Cosima nodded and smiled, sobbing for a moment as she leaned into her papa’s chest. He kissed her head and rubbed her back, remembering when she used to be even smaller in his arms. He smiled.

“It’s so hard to believe sometimes that I used to be able to hold you in my palm” he told her “And now you’re getting married. He was right, Cosima. I am so very proud of the woman you’ve become” he told her.

She smiled and nodded “Thank you. I really needed to hear that.” she pulled back, wiping her eyes, reaching into her chair’s pocket to pull out a hanky and blow her nose. She handed her spare to her father who took it and did the same.

The young scientist swallowed hard and took a deep breath, turning to her sister “So that was my Dad’ she told her.

Sarah smiled “He seemed really cool, Cos.”

Cosima nodded and scrunched her face “He was the coolest.”

Helm chuckled “So very cool.”

Sarah laughed and handed her the bouquet, now peppered with bright blue flowers.

“I didn’t know you’d ordered delphiniums” Helm noticed.

“I didn’t” Cosima responded, confused. A moment later a smile spread across her face as her heart warmed. “Delphine” she whispered.

Every face in the room smiled at the gesture. Cosima noticed the note card and pulled it out, opening it up to read:

Something blue, and to say that I am with you, every step of the way. -Delphine

Cosima smiled so wide that her cheeks hurt. She held the note to her chest for a moment, then reached into her bra, tucking it there. She smiled up at the room. “I’m getting married” she expressed in awe.

“Yeah, kind of the reason we’re all here” Sarah told her.

Annette knocked on the door and Kira opened it.

“Are you all ready? Guests are all here and seated. Delphine, Cal, and Charlotte are downstairs” Annette let the room know.

Cosima’s heart exploded inside of her chest in pure bliss. This was happening. Delphine was waiting for her. They were going to be married. She was late to a lot of things, but did not want her own wedding to be one of them. She looked to her bouquet and to her father.

“Are you ready, Mima?” he asked.

Cosima nodded emphatically “I have never been more ready for anything in my life.”

Delphine adjusted Cal’s bow tie and then crouched to pat down a strand of Charlotte’s hair that Cal had slicked back like his own with a wet gel. Out of the corner of her eye she saw the wheels of Cosima’s chair. A giggle burrowed up from the pits of her stomach to scatter through her chest and
express itself out of her mouth. She felt like a kid.

As Delphine stood up, she felt her mother turn her head with a firm hand to face away from Cosima.

“Attendez, ma petite. Vous la verrez quand elle descend l'allée centrale. Wait, my little one. You will see her when she walks down the aisle” Annette told her daughter, linking their arms.

Cosima leaned sideways the moment she was in line, trying to see around the tall figures. She caught glimpses of white and a hand she knew was Delphine’s. She was anxious to see her. She was anxious to touch her and to finally be married to her. She could hardly wait. Her father put a steadying hand on her shoulder and smiled at her.

“Relax, Mima. You’ll see her soon enough” he assured.

The music started and Delphine and her mother walked down the aisle, followed by Cal and Sarah. The blonde saw Alison already in tears, snapping pictures. Scott held a video camera, capturing every moment. She smiled as she looked over the faces of her family and friends. The guest list might have been small, but everyone was here. Tony, Adele, and their dates had even flown in for the festivities and were staying with Alison and Sarah. It was so nice to have everyone together to celebrate.

When they finally got to the end of the aisle, Delphine smiled at Donnie and he winked at her as she took her place, turning to face the rest of the procession. She watched as Cal and Sarah walked arm in arm down the aisle, noting how sharp they looked together in black. She gave her best man a bump as he took his spot next to her. Sarah stood opposite them, waiting for Cosima.

Delphine’s attention as then brought to her daughter and Kira walking down next to each other in their formal wear. Everything was perfect. The blonde was careful not to sneak a peek at Cosima at this point. She wanted the full effect and her full attention when seeing her partner for the first time in her dress. She watched her daughter instead, beaming with pride as Charlotte and Kira parted at the altar, the young girl breaking the script and hugging her waist when she got there.

“I am so happy, Maman” Charlotte whispered to her.

Delphine smiled and rubbed her back, returning the hug “Then you know how I feel” she whispered back.

Charlotte let go and Delphine straightened, taking a deep breath as her eyes fixed on her bride.

She felt all the breath leave her body and her eyes instantly welled up. Cosima was radiant. She could hardly believe that she could be so lucky as to have the chance to marry this wonderful woman. She barely registered Helm standing next to her as her entire world wrapped around the bubble of space that currently contained Cosima. The butterflies danced in her belly as the tears finally fell.

The moment her daughter was out from in front of her, Cosima caught sight of Delphine. If shed had any doubts about this, they were completely gone. “I get to marry her” she whispered to herself.

“Yes, you do” her father responded.

She let out a giggle of glee and rolled her lips over her teeth as a smile spread across her face. Delphine looked like a movie star. Her bright red lipstick the perfect contrast to the light blonde curls that were currently tucked into a sort of updo that she’d seen the blonde wear multiple times. When Delphine smiled at her, Cosima felt that security and warmth that only their relationship provided. She wheeled herself down the aisle with her father next to her.
Delphine’s heart steadily grew in her chest with each foot Cosima got closer. No one else existed.

Finally, after the two minutes that felt like hours, they were facing each other. Delphine wiped her tears, reaching to do the same for Cosima’s.

“Hi” Cosima whispered to her.

“Bonjour, mon Cosima” Delphine responded, doing her best to fight the urge to kiss Cosima here and now.

“You look gorgeous” the brunette told her blonde.

Delphine blushed and giggled “Merci. But look at you! You are the vision of perfection.”

Cosima smiled wide, winking at her partner as they turned themselves perpendicular to Donnie and Delphine took a seat on the bench facing Cosima to bring them to the same eye level. She reached across and took the brunette’s hands in her own.

The smaller woman’s eyes fluttered up to meet those of her wife to be.

Charlotte watched this exchange, for the first time realizing the depth of her parents’ connection. She knew they were in love, but this was something that she’d never quite taken the time to take in. But here, where all eyes and all attention was on her parents, she couldn’t help but catch wave after wave of this unwavering ribbon of connection between them. Maman shone bright yellow, like the sun as Mummy’s blue moon of a colour drank in the rays while embracing them in a shade of coolness until they mixed to a shade of green.

The small clone felt a tear fall and finally understood so much more in this world. But she had so many more questions. She felt Cal’s hand on her shoulder and looked up at him, smiling. He winked at her.

“Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to honour the love and commitment between Delphine and Cosima” Donnie started. “As per Cosima’s request to, and I quote “Not make me wait too long with all the boring yada yada stuff because I’m just gonna wanna kiss my bleeping bride the moment I see her” we will keep this short.”

Delphine chuckled and rubbed a thumb over the back of Cosima’s hand as her partner shrugged and gave her a toothy grin.

“We will open with a word from Delphine’s mother, Annette Cormier, followed by a brief reading from Helm Neihaus, Cosima’s father. Before the vows are exchanged, Charlotte will grace us with a speech. Then vows, rings, and boom. Marriage!”

The group laughed as Annette walked up to the podium, Donnie stepping out of the way to allow it. The older blonde looked to her daughter and smiled, wiping her tears “Delphine, my beautiful little baby girl. Welcome to the rest of your life. Marriage is not something to be taken lightly. Although it will be much different for you than it was for me. I wish I would have had the forethought to marry a woman” Annette admitted to a laugh from the guests and the wedding parties. Delphine put her head in her hands, shaking it as she laughed.

“But in all seriousness, I am very happy that you chose Cosima to bring into our family. She is everything I have ever wanted for you, ma belle. I can see how deeply happy she makes you and how light your heart is whenever she is around. Hold on to that. And Cosima, my beautiful new daughter. Thank you for always being so kind and open hearted. I am very excited to continue to
learn more about you. I could not have picked a better partner for Delphine myself. And to you as a new couple, marriage may not be easy. You will fight and you will cry but you will love each other. And you will never be alone again. The kind of love you share is something that will continue to provide you happiness, even beyond death. So as you take your vows, remember that even though you exist as two people, this joining strengthens everything about each of you individually. You not only have my blessing, and my love, but every well wish I could ever imagine. Je t’aime tous les deux” the older French woman told them before bursting smiling and stepping down from the podium to let her tears fall.

Annette walked over to the couple and hugged each of them before taking her seat. Helm had already stepped up and waited for Annette to get settled.

“Umm...Hi...I’m Helm and I really hate speaking publically” the large German told the group. More laughter erupted. Cosima’s father reached into his pocket to pull out a piece of paper and the stone his granddaughter had given him for luck before the ceremony. He clenched it in his fist as he unfolded the paper “I have a letter that Cosima’s father and I wrote to her and Delphine a number of years ago. And although he cannot be here with us today in person, I would like to honour his presence and wishes by reading it to you all.”

Cosima felt the tears spring to life again. They were followed by Delphine gripping her hands tightly in support. She returned the squeeze, smiling.

Helm’s attention turned briefly to Felix who he saw was trying to figure out the meaning of those words in his head. He watched as the twink jumped to his feet and pointed.

“You’re gay?” he yelled.

Helm put his hand on his stomach as he laughed, followed by the brides’ own laughter. The wedding guests looked confused and shocked at the young gay man who was now standing.

“Yes, Felix” Helm told him.

“You were playing me, you jolly old wanker!” Felix yelled “All this time?”

Siobhan gave her foster son a look of anger and Felix responded by holding an open hand up to Helm “He let me make all the jokes about him being straight.”

“Sit down, Felix” Siobhan scolded.

Felix sat down like a small child, crossing his arms.

Helm ceased his laughter “Yes, for all those in attendance who did not know, I am gay. Cosima was raised by myself and my late husband who left us a number of years ago. But, proceeding…” he started, looking down at the letter.

“To the person our daughter chooses to share her life with: You are special. You must be so very special for such a very special person to choose you above everyone else to share herself with. Do not ever forget that. Cosima is a very strong girl and can be stubborn. Do not let that harden your heart towards her. As stubborn and hard headed as she can be, she is soft, and she is loving. We have done our best to raise her to be constantly striving to grow as a person and we expect the same from you. So on this day when she promises to share herself completely with you, you must do the same for her. Never hold back. That is what marriage is: never holding back, but doing so in the most loving and kind way possible. If you are angry, express that to her. If you are scared, let her know.
Expect the same from her.”

Helm took a moment to drink from his bottle of water. In that moment, Delphine met Cosima’s eyes and their gaze solidified.

Cosima’s father started up again “And to our loving daughter, Mima. Never forget your roots. Never forget your strength. And above all, never forget your capacity for love. You have a tendency, little one to close yourself off when you are faced with great challenges. Overcome that. The person standing across from you is there because they are promising to always be your rock, your sounding board, your home. Remember how much you trust them. So when you feel your walls being built, remember these words. Never stop talking. We love you and wish you nothing but a life full of happiness and love. Always in your corner, Papa and Daddy.”

Helm nodded to the quiet crowd and stepped off the podium to embrace both women at once. “I love you both.”

“Us too, Helm” Delphine told him, knowing Cosima was crying too hard to respond right now.

Delphine knew that her partner needed a moment and made eye contact with Donnie, showing him five fingers. He nodded at her and took the podium again.

“Thank you, Mr. Neihaus. We will now take a short break. Tissues are available at the end of every aisle, along with a mid-ceremony light snack” Donnie told the room.

As people stood and stretched, Delphine pushed Cosima around the back of the large banner that had been erected as a backdrop. She kneeled in front of her wife’s chair, pulling her into her arms.

Cosima cried into her partner, hugging her tightly.

“I am here, mon amour. We can stay here as long as you like” Delphine whispered to her, gently rubbing her back.

The brunette nodded and allowed herself to sob quietly in Delphine’s embrace until finally, the tears slowed. She unstuck herself from Delphine and was handed a tissue that the blonde had pulled out of a pocket on her chair. She smiled and took it, wiping her tears.

“I didn’t think I would spend most of today in tears” Cosima admitted.

Delphine chuckled “I did. It is a big day” she told her partner.

The brunette nodded and smiled “Yeah, I guess I should have seen that one coming.”

“It does not matter, Cosima. You cry as much as you need. I will always be here to hold you” the blonde reassured her.

Cosima finished wiping her nose and tucked the used kleenex away “And I, you Delphine. What do you say we go stop being fiancees and start our lives as wives?” she asked.

Delphine beamed at her “Nothing sounds better than that.”

Delphine kissed Cosima’s forehead and lead them back to the proceedings, taking up her spot on the bench again and nodding to Donnie before accepting the water bottle that Cosima had reached down and grabbed for her. She took a swig and handed it back. Just as Cosima went to take a drink, Donnie knocked it out of her hands.
“No kissing until after the vows” he scolded.

Cosima laughed “We weren’t kissing”

“Swapping spit, same dif” he insisted.

Cosima shook her head and reached down to grab the second bottle, taking a drink. Donnie walked back to the podium.

“Folks, we’re ready if you want to take your seats…” he called out and everyone quieted down, sitting once again. “Charlotte?”

Charlotte left the circle of cousins and walked up to the podium which was much too tall for her. Cal chuckled and brought her a step stool. She thanked him and stepped up, clearing her throat. She had everyone’s full attention.

After all the lovely words from their parents, the brides were eager to hear what their daughter had to say. They linked hands again and turned their full attention to the mini clone.

“My name is Charlotte. I am 8 years old and I have the best parents in the world. Today they are getting married. Today I am also getting adopted officially” she announced. The guests cheered and the small girl smiled a toothy grin exactly like her mummy’s. She turned to her parents and smiled, linking her hands behind her back “You two are like celebrities today. I don’t have the fancy speech skills of my grandparents, but I did want to say a few things that I have wanted to tell you but didn’t know how before now” she told them.

Charlotte took a deep breath and looked at her list of things “We have a lot of fun. More fun than I have ever had before I became your daughter. Maman and Mummy, you teach me a lot. Like how kicking someone in the face isn’t the best form of conflict management” she joked.

Oscar cheered for her before he was silenced by his mom. Delphine rolled her eyes and shook her head as Cosima chuckled at her side, patting her partner’s hand.

“But in all seriousness, you taught me what it feels like to be loved. Mummy, you are always so honest with me. Honest in a way that grown ups aren’t with kids. You make me feel like a real person and not some pesky little kid. When I speak, you listen. Maman, you are so warm and loving. You give the best hugs. Thank you for letting me be my own person and encouraging me to do so. That day at the salon was one of the best days of my life. Thank you for being so good at taking care of mummy and me. There are very few kids who get to see their parents get married, but I am very happy that I get to be one of them. I will never forget the moment when you two stood in front of each other for the first time today. I hope that one day I get to marry someone I love as much as you two love each other. I love being a family and I love you two very much” the small girl told her parents, folding her paper and putting it in the chest pocket of her dress shirt before she stepped down.

Delphine opened her arms to her daughter who ran over and hugged her fiercely “Very well done, Charlotte. Thank you for your kind words. Je t’aime de mon coeur, ma petite.”

Charlotte kissed Maman’s cheek and smiled, moving to hug Mummy who pulled her into a tight embrace.

“You did a great job, kiddo. We’re so very proud of you” Cosima whispered to her kid, showering her face in kisses. “I love you, mini me” she finished.

Charlotte let go “We’ll hug more later. Right now, you two should get married already.”
Cosima nodded, making the OK sign with her fingers “Gotchya.”

The small girl giggled and took her spot next to her uncle once more.

The brides’ attention went back to Donnie.

“Alright. Well, time for vows. In true Delphine and Cosima fashion, wow that’s a mouthful...let’s just call them what I do in my head: in true Cophine fashion, the traditional heteronormative vows wouldn’t cut it. They wrote their own. Delphine?”

The blonde turned to her daughter and took the ring that she was holding, curling her hand around it to warm it in her palm.

Delphine nodded and smiled, turning back to face Cosima. She spoke up, despite her want to just speak to her partner.

“Cosima, I am nothing short of completely in love with you. Every day I get to share with you feels like a blessing. I am... so very lucky that you are choosing me to commit to. As you know, I do not take my promises lightly. So today, I sit here and make new promises to you that you know I will fulfill to the absolute best of my abilities. I promise that you will always have someone to run to. That no matter how bad it gets, I will be by your side. I promise to do my best to fix your heart after life has torn it apart. I promise to always communicate with you, despite how terrible I think something is for you to hear. And as your father has asked, I promise to do so in the most kind and loving manner I possibly can. And above all, I promise to love you and our family all with an equally full heart. You are my stars, you are my sky, you are my heart. I love you, Cosima, and today, I make you my wife” Delphine spoke with a smile.

Cosima sniffled and smiled, taking the ring that her kid had put in her hand and warming it in her own palm.

“Wow. Umm, way to make me cry before I have to say words” Cosima joked, sniffing and wiping her eyes. Delphine reached out to help with a smile. Cosima cleared her throat, pleasantly surprised that the action was void of the usual tang of copper.

“Okay so, vows” the brunette bride reminded herself. “I mean, come on. You’re Delphine. Do I even need to say how much I love you?” she asked.

The guests laughed and hollered. Delphine blushed.

“Well, I mean, I’m going to tell you anyways because that’s what this part’s all about. And I think you kind of want to hear” Cosima continued.

The blonde nodded at the smaller woman, waiting expectantly.

“I may be your stars and sky, but you are my sun. You light up every corner of my life, Delphine. You are the one who makes my heart so full that it can never forget you. The time I spent away from you was the worst time of my life. I still cannot believe that after all of that pain and heartbreak, here we are. We found each other again. We will always find each other. And although our time together in this life may be much shorter than either of us wants, I have no doubt that I will find you lifetime after lifetime. No one has ever made me feel so safe and so warm and so alive. So today I promise to always fight for you. I swear that I will never stop finding my way back to you, finding my way back to us at our very best. No one knows me as completely as you do. And although I wish my Dad was here to share today with me, I am happy that it is you standing across from me. I choose you. I choose you every time. So today, I vow to surrender all of my
thoughts and feelings to you freely in communication. I swear to do my best to never break your trust and to admit when I do. I swear to continue being my imperfect self and to always work on growing to be the person you see when you look at me. I promise to stand beside you, hand in hand, facing anything that comes our way over and over again. From this life until the next. As long as you’ll have me” Cosima told her now, blushing and crying bride.

Delphine wiped her tears and kissed the ring her hand before looking up at Cosima “This ring contains all the promises I have made today and is a symbol of my neverending love for you. Will you do me the honours of wearing it and taking me as your wife?” Delphine asked.

“Of course I will” Cosima told her, holding out her hand. Delphine slipped the ring on her finger. Cosima felt the warmth in the metal that had been transferred from Delphine’s hand and let it light her insides on fire. Everything about this was perfect. She smiled and lifted her own hand.

“And Delphine, I’ve poured the energy of my commitment to you into this ring. By taking it, do you promise to uphold your end of our partnership?” Cosima asked.

“Bien sûr, mon amour” Delphine purred, extending her hand to her partner and smiling at the warmed metal on her finger. She looked down and saw that she also had a piece of Jasper in her wedding band. She looked to her daughter and smiled. The sneaky romantic little bugger.

“Well, with the power invested in me, from I don’t even remember where, I now pronounce you married. Go ahead and seal it with a kiss” Donnie told them.

Both women smiled wider than they had all day and met in the middle for a chaste kiss, marking the beginnings of their time as wives.

Cheers erupted as Gemma and Oscar each took over a bubble gun that had been hidden under their seats, showering the entire yard in a flurry of bubbles.

Delphine looked up and smiled, this time leaning in to give Cosima a passionate kiss filled with all the joy she currently held. They both laughed as their lips were pressed together.

They were broken apart by Donnie clearing his throat.

“Sorry to interrupt, but sign the license?” he asked, extending the papers and a pen to them.

Delphine took it eagerly and signed her name, passing to Cosima before taking the second piece of paper that finalized Charlotte’s adoption. She signed that as well and passed it over.

Cosima couldn’t write her name fast enough. Both documents were completed and handed over to Donnie.

Charlotte ran over and hopped into her parents’ arms “Is it finally here? Are we finally the Cormiers?” she asked.

Cosima chuckled and nodded, as both her and Delphine kissed their daughter’s cheeks “Yes. It finally is” the brunette answered, hugging her now legal family.

Finally.

Chapter End Notes
A/N: Happy FanFiction Writer’s Appreciation day, folks! I know I say it all the time, but I wanted to thank all of the people out there who are consistently reading this fic. Thank you for all of the comments and reviews and kudos and messages. This chapter is dedicated to all of you. It took me nearly all weekend, but it is worth it for all the love you always send my way. I hope that you all enjoy this very special chapter. I cried the entire way through. For anyone who was expecting the reception and wedding night to be included, I am sorry but you will have to wait until the next chapter. I want to make sure that I can make it a nice, long night of fun and this chapter is already quite wordy. Have a great week and I will see you all in the comments and/or Thursday.
Delphine couldn’t remember ever being this happy. She was seated at the table, pleasantly full from a good dinner. She could hear the kids laughing from the living room and Cosima’s hand was firmly in hers. She smiled at the new feeling of the second ring on her finger. She sat back in her chair and smiled as she let the sounds of her family surround her.

“Hey, you okay?” Cosima asked, seeing the blonde with closed eyes.

Delphine nodded, keeping her eyes closed and basking in the feeling “I am the best I have ever been” she informed her new wife.

Cosima smiled at her, leaning in and kissing her cheek “I know exactly what you mean.”

The doctor opened her eyes and reached up, cupping the brunette’s face “This has been perfect. I am so very glad that we did this.”

“Hey, I am game for any event where I get hummus, mac and cheese bites, pot roast, and cake all at once. We need to get married more often” she joked, shoving more hummus covered pita bread into her mouth.

Delphine’s heart sung. She hadn’t seen Cosima with an appetite like this in a long while “Well we will now have anniversaries to celebrate” she reminded the smaller woman.

Cosima giggled and patted Delphine’s knee, leaning in for a quick kiss. The room hollered and applauded and she smiled as she chuckled “I thought we had finally gotten a moment. Boy was I wrong” she told her wife.

The brunette took this moment to look around, herself. The tables Alison had brought had been perfect for their space, allowing everyone the chance to sit and eat. They’d move a couple outside in a moment. And the spread was killer. They’d ordered from four different restaurants in the city, each of them picking a dish from each restaurant. It resulted in the most epically diverse menu. Cosima was fairly certain that Charlotte had exclusively eaten hummus covered mac and cheese bites and she’d had to remind her wife to tone down the mama bear today.

Her gaze then moved to the place they’d set for her late Dad. It had been Delphine’s idea and it was perfect. His plate sat full of a selection carefully curated by Papa. The detail warmed her heart. And she closed her eyes to feel the love that had stayed with her all of these years; that warm safety that was her dad.

Cosima’s attention turned to her father who was sitting with Annette and Mrs. S, as they had been all night. The parents had been sharing stories of their offspring non-stop all night, much to the chagrin of their children. Currently, Sarah and Felix were drinking scotch and seething at the group. Felix still hadn’t forgiven Helm for the previous non disclosure of his sexuality. Cosima made a mental note to remind him that in a way he now had that gay uncle he’d always wanted.

“We should cut the cake soon” Delphine butted in to Cosima’s thoughts.

The smaller woman nodded, already salivating at the dulce de leche layered devil’s food cake “Yes please. I have been dreaming of this cake” she admitted, licking her lips.
Delphine laughed and rubbed her thigh “I know. If I need to hear you call “dulce de lece” out one more time during what I previously thought was a sex dream, I am going to sleep on the couch” she teased.

Cosima gave her new wife a fake grimace in jest.

“Come on, let’s go get you your cake” the blonde told Cosima before she stood up.

Cosima followed, wheeling herself to the kitchen.

“They’re cutting the cake! Hey everyone, it’s cake time!” Alison called out, camera in hand.

Delphine blushed. She wasn’t used to so many eyes on her. As she waited for the family to gather, she caught a glimpse of the slideshow her soccer mom sister-in-law had already put on the TV. The pictures were beautiful. As they scrolled through, she already knew which one she would blow up and put over their fireplace.

Charlotte, upon hearing that it was time for cake came running into the kitchen, jumping into Maman’s arms.

Delphine giggled, catching her daughter and hoisting her up to watch. She sat Charlotte on the counter as she picked up the knife, smiling at her wife.

Cosima returned the smile and covered Delphine’s hand with her own as together they cut the first slice of their wedding cake.

Delphine winked at her wife, picking up that first slice and biting her bottom lip as she knew exactly what to do with it. Cosima was already cutting more slices as the blonde giggled, bringing the cake up to meet her daughter’s face.

The room gasped as Cosima laughed.

Charlotte’s mouth hung open and she picked up a piece of the cake off her face and ate it “Oh wow. That’s good cake”

Delphine chuckled “Yeah?”

“Oh yeah, do you want to try some Maman?” Charlotte asked, picking up a piece for her cheek and holding ti out.

Delphine reached down and took the piece between her teeth, moaning “Oh mon Dieu, you’re…” she was cut off by a slice in her face, placed there by none other than her daughter.

The room erupted in a roar as Delphine continued to laugh, leaning in to give her daughter a kiss on the cheek. The blonde could hear Cosima laughing at the interaction.

“Oh yeah? You think this is funny?” she asked.

The brunette nodded and promptly got her own kiss, Delphine making sure to smoosh some cake onto her face.

Alison was already there with paper towels. She started cleaning off her niece’s face first as the newlyweds started making out “Sweet baby Jesus, you would think that you were all children. Charlotte, close your eyes” she instructed.

Cosima was lost in a sea of dulce de leche Delphine, happily kissing the blonde anywhere there was
The sun had gone down and the stars and moon had turned on. The backyard was full of string lights and music. The kids were in and out of the pool, and on and off the dance floor. But right now, an epic water fight was in progress. Kira and Gemma had teamed up against Oscar and Charlotte.

Delphine watched this from her seat as she sipped a hot cocoa. She watched Cosima dance with her sisters, giggling at them. She’d taken a break from the dance floor, finding that she was quite tired. Cosima though, had found some kind of energizer bunny energy today. It had been a good day for all of them, but for her wife in particular. Her wife. There was no way not to smile at that.

Cosima wove her arms in the air to the music as Sarah leaned in to her, her breath laced with scotch. “You know, I am so glad you took her name” Sarah yelled over the music.


“Because now, Geek Monkey gets turned into C.C.” Sarah joked.

Cosima looked at her confused before she realized that they were her new initials. She stopped dancing and pouted at her sister. CC was not a nickname she was fond of “Sarah” she whined.

Sarah laughed “What? I like it”

Cosima continued to pout.

“Oh, stop your whining, CC” the Leda leader told her.

A wet body came and sat Delphine’s her lap, covered in a towel. She smiled and hugged Charlotte to her, removing the girl’s swim goggles from her forehead “Are you having fun, mon petit amour?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded, leaning in to Maman “Today has been the best” she whispered and yawned.

Delphine chuckled “Uh oh. I think you and I might fall asleep before my first dance with Mummy” she joked.

The young clone nodded, closing her eyes and leaning further in to Maman. Delphine rocked her, reaching for a towel on the chair next to her and using it to cover the girl’s legs to keep her warm. Delphine let the girl nap on her.

Annette saw this and walked over, sitting next to her daughter “Longue journée pour la petite. Long day for the little one” she told her daughter.

Delphine smiled and nodded “Oui. Les cousins sont tellement actifs. Yeah. The cousins are so active” the new bride answered her mother.

“Mais, ma belle je ne parlais pas de Charlotte. But my little one, I wasn’t talking about Charlotte” Annette responded with a smile. “Je parlais à propos de l’autre petite. I was talking about the other little one.”

Delphine gave her mother a confused look as she felt Charlotte nod off completely in her arms. “Et de qui exactement parle-tu, maman? Kira? And who exactly are you talking about, maman? Kira?” she asked.

Delphine’s mouth dropped in complete shock. Not even Helm knew about that. He knew they were working on a cure for Cosima using Delphine, but they had not told anyone outside of the sestras and Scott about the pregnancy. She guessed that maybe Sarah had told Cal or someone had figured out why she was not drinking at her own wedding. Maybe Cal had figured it out at her bachelorette party.

“Maman, on ne sait pas encore si je suis vraiment enceinte. Mais on essaye. Qui t’as dis? Maman, we don’t’ know yet if I’m really pregnant. But we’re trying. Who told you?” the blonde asked, slightly peeved.

“Personne. Une maman connaît toujours. No one. A mother always knows” Annette replied with a smile. She rubbed her daughter’s knee “Je suis si contente pour toi Delphine. T’as une belle famille et t’as déjà me donner deux belle filles. Je ne peux pas attendre de rencontrer la troisième. You have a beautiful family and you’ve already given me two beautiful girls. I cannot wait to meet the third.”

Delphine smiled at her mother “Moi non plus, maman. Me neither, maman” the blonde whispered.

Cosima rolled over to the group and smiled, pouting out a lip at her sleeping daughter “She conked out already?” she asked.

Charlotte giggled and Delphine’s eyes went wide “No” the girl told them “And Maman’s pregnant?” she asked.

Cosima looked to Delphine and her mother “You told her?” she asked

“They thought I was asleep” Charlotte answered “Which I mean, I was, until I heard enceinte! I’m gonna be a big sister?” she asked.

“Shh. Shh. Charlotte. Lower your voice” Delphine chastised “We don’t know yet. Mamie is getting a little ahead of herself.”

“How far along are you?” Charlotte asked. “Is it the clone baby that’s gonna cure Mummy?”

Delphine put her head in her hands and shook her head “Cosima, a little help?” she asked.

Cosima chuckled and patted Charlotte’s tummy “How about we talk about this tomorrow? If you keep this secret and stop asking questions until tomorrow at breakfast, I’ll make french toast, deal?”

“Deal!” Charlotte told her with a big smile.

“Good. Well someone’s not tired anymore” the dreaded bride noted. She looked to her wife “Baby, you ready to dance with me?” she asked.

Delphine smiled and nodded, patting Charlotte’s leg to ask her to get up. The kid listened, standing up to let Maman stand.

Donnie was waiting, mic in hand. Cosima nodded at him.

“Attention. I would like to call the newlyweds, Delphine and Cosima Cormier to the dance floor to share their first dance as a married couple” Donnie announced.

The dance floor cleared and the kids got out of the pool, wrapping themselves in towels to watch.
Charlotte started pulling on her formal gear over her wet bathing suit, not wanting to miss out.

Delphine took Cosima’s hand and directed them to the dance floor they’d laid overtrop of the grass. Cosima stopped at the edge as the opening notes of The Scientist by Coldplay rang through the air.

“What’s wrong?” Delphine asked

“Think you can hold me up?” the dreaded woman asked.

“Of course” came the reply.

Cosima smiled and used every ounce of strength to lift herself out of the chair, pulling the cannula off her head. She reached for Delphine as warm hands wrapped around her waist. Delphine pulled her in close.

The blonde walked them to the middle of the dance floor as she hugged her wife and sighed happily, burying her nose in Cosima’s neck.

Cosima wrapped her arms around Delphine’s neck and allowed herself to be swayed side to side by the love of her life. The stars were so bright tonight. She caught a glimpse of Charlotte watching them. She wanted this for her daughter. She wanted the small clone to grow up as happy and loved as she had been. She wished more than anything she could be there to see it, but she knew Delphine would fill in any gaps if she wasn’t.

The brunette smiled, relaxing her head against Delphine’s shoulder as she let the emotions from the day well up and fill her soul. Pure happiness was the only way to describe it. If she had to go, this was the day she needed to feel okay with that. One last party with her family, all of them. One last dance with her love. One last perfectly pure memory. One last really good day. It was more than a lot of people got. She felt so lucky to have been allowed it by her body and by the universe.

The song ended and everyone clapped for them. Delphine got Cosima back to her chair and helped her get the cannula back on before she kissed her sweetly.

“I will never forget our waltz under the stars, mon amour” Delphine whispered to her.

Cosima smiled and kissed her wife deeply before her father showed up, tapping Delphine’s shoulder.

“Excuse me, but I would like a turn as well” he told her.

Delphine chuckled and motioned for him to take over, going to find her mother.

Helm smiled at his daughter “I don’t think I’ve ever seen you this happy” he told her.

“That makes two of us. Now come on, let’s get our boogie down” she told her father, reaching up and taking his hand.

Kira leaned in to Charlotte as they watched the brides dance with their parents “All of our aunties are really happy right now. I’ve never felt this before. Auntie Alison, my mummy, Auntie Helena, even Auntie Krystal” the girl told her cousin “But your mummy is so happy right now. She’s so happy that she’s a little bit sad.”

Charlotte nodded and smiled at her parents. She knew what they were both thinking. It was a
thought she’d been trying to put out of her mind all day “They’re both a little sad. So am I” she admitted.

“Why?” Kira asked.

Charlotte smiled and shrugged “Mummy’s dying.”

Kira let that sink in as the song wrapped up. She watched her best friend walk over to her parents and get placed in Auntie Cosima’s lap as a fast song started up.

Cosima hugged her daughter “Your turn to dance with me, kiddo” she told her kid, tickling her.

Charlotte giggled in Mummy’s lap, wriggling around to try and get away from the tickling fingers.

Delphine carried Cosima across the threshold of their bedroom, just as she had into the house. The guests were gone and they were alone. She put her giggling wife down on their bed before she collapsed next to Cosima. Both were still in their dresses. She tried not to think about the mess in the backyard or downstairs. She felt Cosima’s hand between her breasts, rubbing her cleavage as her wife’s lips found her neck. She giggled.

“How do you still have energy?” she asked the brunette.

Cosima shrugged and moved to her ear, whispering in it “It’s our wedding night, aren’t we going to consummate our marriage, Dr. Cormier?” she purred.

Delphine giggled “Of course. I am just going to close my eyes for a minute first” she told her wife.

“Come on, Delphine. We’re married now and Charlotte’s with her cousins at Ali’s, our parents took a two day trip to tour niagara; we’re all alone in this big house” she told the blonde, rubbing across to a breast.

The doctor giggled “Ok, Mrs. Cormier, I have shut my eyes, now I devour you” she joked, rolling onto Cosima and blowing a raspberry on her neck.

The brunette giggled and bucked wildly under the familiar size of her wife. She wrapped both arms around Delphine’s waist, pulling her body down to meet Cosima’s own as she felt the blonde kiss across her neck to her cheek to finally meet her lips.

It was a sweet kiss of gliding soft lips that spoke volumes of emotions held between the two of them. Delphine broke the kiss first to open her eyes, waiting for Cosima to do the same. The moment the brunette’s eyes fluttered open, she smiled at her wife.

“Je t’aime, mon amour” she whispered with all the sincerity she could muster at the moment.

Cosima closed her eyes and inhaled slowly, letting the air that those words were trapped on fill her tired, aching lungs. She was filled with a gentle warmth, basking in the beautiful feeling of the connection she had with this wonderful woman on top of her.

The brunette’s eyes opened again to meet those striking hazel ones “I love you too” she whispered and leaned up, capturing Delphine’s lips in a steaming hot kiss. Cosima wrapped her legs around her wife’s hips, her hands moving to the dress’ zipper and slowly pulling the metal down along it’s track.

Delphine’s tongue found Cosima’s and danced with it eagerly between their two linked mouths.
They teased each other, both smiling against the other’s lips until their tongue kiss became a wrestling match and they broke apart, laughing.

Delphine placed a peck on her wife’s lips as her body shook with the laughter and the brunette eagerly wrapped her arms around Delphine’s neck, hugging her tightly. The blonde enjoyed the embrace, letting her body rest gently on top of Cosima’s while she moaned into the smaller woman’s neck.

Cosima loved this feeling. She was so light. She was so happy. Delphine was so tall and on top of her. She could feel the blonde’s stomach tremble against her own through the fabric of their gowns with each laugh. It was turning her on and causing her own laughter to increase at the same time.

Still laughing, Delphine let a hand trail up Cosima’s thigh. Dresses were great for this. She made eye contact with Cosima and raised her eyebrows “Do you want me to touch you?” she asked, her fingers gently dancing as she played twinkle twinkle little star on the brunette’s inner thigh.

Cosima knit her eyebrows together, trying to figure out the pattern of her wife’s finger taps. “What is that?” she asked.

Delphine snorted and rolled her lips over her teeth before she spoke “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” she admitted “It’s the only song I know on the piano.”

Cosima laughed “Soooo sexy. And yes, I do want you to touch me, Doctor Cormier.”

Delphine giggled and moved her hand up to rest on the outside of Cosima’s underwear, feeling the wet heat waiting for her beneath the fabric. She moaned and kissed her wife’s cheek “Should I keep playing it here?” she asked.

The brunette’ head flew back as she laughed loudly and nodded, her eyes filling with tears.

Delphine started tapping her fingers in the pattern again. It was so good to see Cosima this happy and laughing. And she was so wet. Clearly the laughing was doing good things to her wife’s desire.

Delphine suddenly needed to be kissing her wife and so lowered her mouth to Cosima’s. The laughter slowed until it stopped and was replaced by Cosima’s hands on her head, reaching for the clips keeping her hair up. Each one was plucked free and tossed aside (in the truly Cosima nature of throwing things on the floor) until Delphine felt her hair be fully let down. She smiled at the relaxed feeling it caused. A moment later hands were in it, tangling eagerly amidst the blonde curls.

Cosima moaned at the feeling of her hands in that familiar hair. She adored Delphine’s curls. She loved how when they were down, they cascaded around their faces, shielding them from a world that isn’t just the two of them. Even if for a moment, Cosima forgot about being sick and only saw Delphine. She existed solely in her own mind and attached to this woman’s lips.

The blonde moved her hand, bringing her hips down between Cosima’s to gently rock against her wife’s still underwear-clad vulva. It seemed to be enough as she felt the moan elicited by the movement in her mouth. But this wasn’t enough for her. She needed more. She needed skin. She needed to feel like if she tried hard enough, she could sink into Cosima through every pore on her body.

Delphine broke the kiss, sitting up on her knees and letting the spaghetti straps of her dress drop from both shoulders.

The smaller woman propped herself up on her elbows and smiled, watching her new wife shimmy out of her wedding dress and slowly reveal the blue lace bra and panty set that she knew must be
new.

She observed in awe at the power and grace that was Delphine’s body. She tried to imagine it growing larger and rounder as the blonde’s pregnancy advanced. She imagined the way the stretch marks would creep across the woman’s hips and belly and breasts. She watched in awe as her brain sent images of skin that hung a little more loosely on the tall frame and of a post-pregnancy belly with a little more padding than Delphine usually carried.

She watched as Delphine’s body slowly wrinkled and sagged. And as she imagined the grey hair taking over the blonde curls, and the laugh lines spelling out each and every smile they’d shared, she couldn’t help but wish that she wouldn’t have to imagine it; that she could experience making love to Delphine’s body in all of these stages. She smiled sadly at her wife.

Delphine watched the emotions play out on the smaller woman’s face and grew concerned.

“Mon amour, what is going on inside your head?” she asked.

Cosima cracked a smile, being pulled from her thoughts “How very beautiful you are and how I…” her bottom lip quivered as she shrugged using a single shoulder “How I don’t want to miss experiencing the depth of it in all of its forms”

Delphine closed her eyes and nodded. She sat down on Cosima’s hips, putting a firm hand on the woman’s belly, simply being present for her wife to feel this emotion.

Cosima took a slow breath in and out “How cruel is this world that we spend our lives building them and filling them with love, and these relationships, and all of this happiness, to only have it all stripped away in the end?” she asked.

Delphine thought about that for a moment. It was a feeling she’d been having a lot lately. What did this all mean, if we all just died anyways? So she gave Cosima the only answer she had come up with.

“It does not all get lost when we are gone” the blonde informed her wife. “You are not lost when you are gone. I will remember you” Delphine told her wife, her own bottom lip trembling as she let the tears fill her eyes “I will never let you be lost. Your sisters and their children will keep their super cool Auntie Cosima alive. Charlotte will keep us both alive. It is not all for nothing. Love is the reason we are here, and I believe that love is what keeps us here even after we are gone. And Cosima, you have so much of it and you love so deeply. You will never really leave” Delphine told her, stroking her cheek.

Cosima nodded and smiled up at her wife, reaching up to wipe the tears “Come here” she whispered.

Delphine lowered herself again, hugging her wife as they cried. She shifted off the smaller woman’s frame and to the bed next to her. She pulled Cosima along, holding her closely as they cried together.

“I just love you so much and I’m going to miss our life together. You’re going to have our baby and raise our kids and do all these great things, and grow old and I won’t be there. And I really want to be there. I’ll never get to see you old and grey. We’ll never sip tea on the porch and talk for hours about the memories of our kids and grandkids. We’ll never have that” Delphine sobbed.

Delphine nodded and smiled through her tears, playing with the baby hairs on the back of her wife’s neck “But we will. Because there will not be a moment during any of it that I will not have you on my mind. And when Charlotte gets married, you will have a place set next to me. Every birthday, every Christmas, every graduation, you will be there. Je t’aime, Cosima. I love you in a way I never
even thought possible.”

Cosima nodded and held her wife close “Promise me you’ll go easy on Charlotte. If I’m really with you, I should be there to balance you out” she reminded her partner, chuckling slightly through the tears.

Delphine nodded “Of course. What would Mummy do?” she offered.

They both laughed.

Cosima leaned over and kissed Delphine, letting their tears merge and fall together. The kiss was gentle and wet and salty and perfect. And when they pulled away, they kept their foreheads connected.

“Make love to me, Delphine. I want to feel you everywhere. I want to feel your light in every corner of my mind” Cosima whispered to her wife.

Delphine smiled and nodded, reaching back to unclasp her own bra before reaching behind Cosima to pull down the zipper on her dress. Cosima’s hands found her bare back as she started to slide the material on her wife, down her body until it was far enough down that she could pull it completely off. The blonde stood and walked to the closet, carefully hanging it up and zipping it in to a garment bag.

The blonde turned back to her wife “Maybe one day, Charlotte will want to wear it” she informed the brunette before taking up her spot on the bed again.

Cosima’s arms were instantly around her again and she leaned in to kiss the streaks of tears on those beautiful cheeks. Delphine unsnapped her wife’s bra and tossed it aside.

Their bare torsos were together and both women sighed in unison at the overwhelming sensation that was being skin on skin together. Lips met again.

Cosima hooked both of her thumbs in the waistband of her underwear and pulled them down, using her feet to kick them off. She kissed her wife sweetly and softly as her fingers came to close around the girth of Delphine’s wrist. She moved it towards her waiting heat.

“I need to feel you” the dreaded woman whispered.

Delphine nodded and complied, gasping at the feeling of her wife’s vulva against her fingers.

Cosima’s hand slipped up Delphine’s arm to grab her bicep as the sweet contact of familiar fingers ran through her cunt lips. She gasped and tensed at the intensity of the sensation.

The blonde’s mouth hung open. No matter how many times she touched Cosima, she was always surprised and in awe at how amazing it felt. The warm wetness of velvet skin against her finger tips was beautiful. It was so sweetly divine that she knew if there was a god, then she must be a woman.

With mouth still agape, Delphine met her wife’s eyes. She felt Cosima tug at her underwear in question and she nodded, a moment later, feeling the material slide off her legs. She parted her thighs slightly and shuddered at the contact against her own heated core.

Lips found each other again and each woman started the gentle teasing of each other that they knew would escalate rather quickly. But for now, they took their time enjoying the sensations that accompanied being so close and so naked and so very married.
Cosima finally hit the point where she wanted more. She took a quick assessment of how she felt and made the decision to use her new found energy and strength to get on top of Delphine.

“Cosima, what are you…?” Delphine started.

“I’m okay. I want to do this. I want to have you like this” the brunette whispered to her wife.

Delphine smiled and nodded, reaching up to cup Cosima’s cheek in her palm and smooth over the skin she found there with her thumb. After a moment, she guided the brunette’s lips down to meet her own as she felt Cosima’s hand dip down to collect some of the wetness her body had produced only to rub it over the entirety of her cunt.

“Mmmm…I am going to need you inside of me soon” Delphine whispered, letting her lips glide over Cosima’s as she spoke.

“I was hoping so” the brunette replied, deepening the kiss.

Cosima replaced her hand on Delphine with her thigh as she moved up to pal the perfect round weight of the blonde’s breast.

Delphine gasped, finding that all of this teasing had caused that part of her body to be extra sensitive. She poured against her wife’s thigh.

“Mmm. You feel so good, Delphine” Cosima whimpered as she kissed the blonde’s as she spoke.

“I am very sensitive it seems” the doctor replied, her hands running up and down the smaller woman’s back.

Cosima smiled, taking that information and lowering her face to do a little more with it.

Delphine knew what Cosima was about to do and her back was already arching in anticipation “Mon Dieu, ma femme!” she cried, slightly chuckling.

Cosima chuckled in response and kissed the soft flesh of her wife’s breast, avoiding the nipple that had very quickly become erect.

Delphine ached for her wife’s mouth where she needed it. She took a handful of dreads and squeezed, her other hand rubbing down Cosima’s back as her body responded intensely to not only the sensations Cosima was causing, but also to the knowledge that this woman who was making love to her was now her wife. It felt different somehow. She couldn’t really explain it, but it felt so much warmer than usual.

As her mind started to drift in to why it felt different, Delphine was snapped back by Cosima’s tongue finally circling her nipple. She jumped and yelped at the intensity of it.

Cosima stopped and looked up at her with wide eyes “You okay?”

Delphine nodded and laughed “That was…intense. Keep going” she urged.

The brunette smile and leaned up for a quick kiss. She moved back to the nipple and flicked her tongue over it, dragging it’s width over the puckered flesh slowly. She felt Delphine shudder and reached down with her now free hand to play in the new wetness the blonde had expressed thanks to her ministrations.

Cosima sucked the nipple in to her mouth and felt the delicious rise of Delphine’s lower back as she
arched. She could hear Delphine’s fast breathing and that mixing with the overabundance of wetness collected between her thighs, she had a new craving.

Delphine could feel her hips starting to buck as her body demanded release. She felt Cosima’s mouth leave her nipple and cover her own. She whimpered into the brunette’s mouth and broke it to communicate her need.

“I want your tongue on me” she whispered, staring Cosima in the eye.

Cosima chuckled “I was just thinking that. Your wish is my command” the brunette whispered back with a smile before she scaled down the long body and gently opened Delphine’s knees.

Delphine let out a breathy exhale as she followed her wife’s lead and spread her legs, letting the smaller woman lie between them. She could feel Cosima’s breath cause an evaporative cooling effect on the wetness that coated her cunt lips and inner thighs.

And then that tongue reached out and slid up her entire length. The blonde felt her breath hitch at the feeling and her hips drove in to the bed as her hand moved to the back of Cosima’s head. She felt her other hand be grasped and opened it to allow her wife to intertwine their fingers.

Cosima’s tongue moved skillfully and knowingly along Delphine’s body. The young scientist knew this woman inside and out. Sucking hanging cunt lips into her mouth and eliciting a gasp, she smiled.

Delphine’s belly was slowly building with the familiar sensations of an impending orgasm. She could feel the delicious growth of the warm sparking tension in her abs. Cosima’s tongue found her clit and she jumped, squeezing the brunette’s hand. Mon Dieu was Cosima good at this.

The blonde lifted her ankles off the bed, draping her long legs over Cosima’s shoulders and tilting her hips up to give her wife better access to all of her.

Cosima welcomed the new angle, it giving her a better vantage point from which to suck Delphine’s entire vulva in to her mouth, which she of course did. Delphine tasted better than usual today. Her usual sweet tang was laced with notes of honey and a tartness Cosima had only ever tasted on her wife. She could feel Delphine getting close. She wanted to make this last though and so she slowed, letting Delphine’s lips out of her mouth as she looked up at her wife.

“Do you want me inside?” Cosima asked, rubbing the now quivering belly right above her head.

Delphine nodded “Mon Dieu, yes. But I want your lips up here” she expressed.

Cosima obliged, moving up her wife’s body to kiss her as two fingers pressed against the excessively wet entry. They slid in easily and the brunette was rewarded with a moan from her wife. She felt it reverberate through her own mouth as Delphine’s hips bucked to take more of her fingers in. Finally Cosima was knuckle deep in her wife.

“You feel so fucking good, Delphine. Fuck. I will never get over how amazing this feels with you” she whispered, kissing the corner of her wife’s mouth.

“Mon Dieu, Cosima. Please, make love to me” she begged, her thigh shaking with need. She wrapped her hands around the back of the brunette’s neck and pulled her in to a deep, passionate kiss full of need.

Cosima slowly dragged her fingers out, feeling not only them coat in the thick cream that Delphine was now producing, but get gripped hard by her wife’s cunt walls. Her clit twitched at the feeling and she knew that she was drenched and swollen. She slowly pushed back in and was rewarded
with a gasp and yet another back arch from her wife. She slipped her free hand into the free space the arching of Delphine’s back created between her body and the bed and let the warmth of her palm press to her wife’s lower back.

Delphine felt surrounded by Cosima. The deliciously sweet and torturously slow tug and shove of the brunette’s fingers fucking her was causing everything in her to tense and tremble. Every inch of her skin was so sensitive. Cosima’s hand on her lower back was so warm and so stable. She felt shocks jump through her body between her wife’s fingers inside of her and the hand on her back.

The blonde’s lips stopped moving as she felt herself teeter on the edge. Her nails dug into Cosima’s back as her legs wrapped around the smaller woman’s waist. Her hips pulsed as the sensation in her stomach grew. Everything was so intense. It was like someone had turned the volume up on her emotions and sensations.

She erupted in a series of escalating shockwaves that cause white lights to dance behind her closed eyes.

Cosima felt the death grip Delphine had on her shoulders and pulsed gently inside of her. She felt the wetness of the blonde’s tears on her neck as their kiss was broken and her wife buried her face into her neck. Delphine was grinding herself on the two fingers buried inside of her.

“Let it all go, Delphine. I’ve got you. Ride it out. Experience every moment of this” Cosima purred into her wife’s ear.

The words and tickle of Cosima’s voice in her ear caused the fluttering in her stomach to intensify and her orgasm rise. Nothing had ever felt this exquisite. The fingers inside of her caused a white hot streak of lightning to surge through her body. She knew she was crying, how could she not?

Cosima felt her own tears sting her eyes. The intensity at which she knew Delphine was currently cumming radiated off her wife in waves and penetrated the brunette’s skin. The grip of Delphine’s orgasm, causing a slow eclipse of a beating heat in Cosima’s body. Her heart fluttered and she reached behind her back to grab one of Delphine’s hands, bringing it to her cunt. She needed to feel this, she needed to join her wife in the sweetest surrender and merging of their bodies.

Delphine felt her hand being guided. She didn’t know how it was possible that she was still cumming, but she was. Her hands met Cosima’s vulva and she felt the brunette push all fingers but two into her palm before placing the two remaining ones to her entrance.

“Please” the brunette whimpered.

Delphine took control, pressing in to her wife’s cunt. She shook as the feeling of her fingers sliding through slick folds to reach even slicker walls and push past a myriad of ridges took her own orgasm to the next level.

Cosima moaned and let her breath fill her lungs and escape in short gasps as the build-up of Delphine’s earth shattering orgasm came crashing down around her.

The blonde smiled as she felt Cosima join her and they released together. She used her hand to pull her in close and kiss her desperately.

They writhed in each other’s arms, bodies sweaty and sliding against each other as their simultaneous orgasms took control of the moment. They kissed sloppily and lazily, neither able to fully concentrate on anything beyond the explosion of psychosomatic sensations coursing through their linked bodies.

Nothing had ever been so sweet.
Nothing had ever been so intense.
Nothing had ever been so perfect.
With one final shudder, they both wound down.
They both breathed hard.
Their hearts beat fast, kissing through their skin.
Lips dragged lazily over each other.
Tears merged and danced over cheeks pressed tightly together.
Hearts melted in chests as bodies recovered.

Cosima was the first to open her eyes. She watched Delphine’s face as her wife attempted to recover her connection to reality. She leaned in and kissed a wet cheek.

Delphine smiled when she felt Cosima’s soft, plump lips on her face. She opened her eyes and met the only ones she’d ever need to look into. She felt so safe and so loved and so secure. She leaned in, softly dragging her lips across Cosima’s in the laziest of kisses, broken after a short time as she hugged Cosima close.

“Wow” Cosima whispered to her, running a hand up and down the dip of Delphine’s spine as they laid intertwined.

Delphine nodded and closed her eyes, melting into the embrace. She felt Cosima’s fingers wiggle inside of her still and laughed.

“Just checking that I still had feeling in them” Cosima informed her partner.

“Do you?” Delphine asked.

“Nope. And I don’t care” the brunette replied, kissing her wife’s forehead.

They stayed in the embrace, enjoying the afterglow and the serenity that came with it. Until Delphine kissed Cosima’s temple and slowly pulled away.

“I have to pee” she whispered, giggling.

“I guess I have to untangle from you then, huh?” Cosima realized, scrunching her face in disproval.

Delphine pouted “I will be right back” she reassured.

“Fine. But you owe me like a million kisses” the brunette replied.

Delphine chuckled and left another kiss on Cosima’s jawline “I do not think that, that will be a problem.”

Cosima untangled herself from her wife, pulling out of her and rolling onto her back. She felt Delphine slip out of her as well and sighed at the tingling in her belly. She was kissed quickly before she felt Delphine’s weight leave the bed.

The brunette stared at the ceiling, bringing an arm up to drape across her forehead as she smiled. She could not believe that this was her life. She heard Delphine in the bathroom and her smile grew.
Her mind went back to the blonde in her wedding dress. That first sight she’d gotten of Delphine would be with her forever. She inhaled deeply and slowly, thankful for the few moments she’d gotten today without her cannula. She knew she should put it back on, but she wanted to enjoy this.

Her body felt incredible. She smiled at the deeply satisfied bubble in her chest. Everything was still tingling.

Cosima felt Delphine’s weight on the bed again and smiled.

“Hey babe, help me put my cannula back on?” the young scientist asked.

Delphine put a hand to her wife’s belly “Are you feeling okay?” she asked.

Cosima smiled and nodded “Yeah. I just want to make sure I can cash in on those million kisses” she whispered.

The blonde chuckled and reached for the tubing on the nightstand. She draped herself over Cosima’s body to reach the tank, turning on the valve. She brought the tube to her wife’s face, placing it lovingly around her ears and gently inserting the tubes into Cosima’s nose. She kissed the brunette’s cheeks one at a time.

“Mind if I clean you up?” the blonde asked.

Cosima laughed and shook her head “Of course not. You know it’s my favourite part” she reminded her wife.

Delphine smiled and nodded, leaving a quick peck on the brunette’s lips before she lowered herself to lay between her legs.

The blonde moaned at the scent. She salivated in anticipation, getting closer and running her tongue over the very swollen lips of Cosima’s vulva. She collected all the wetness she could, slipping between folds and lapping eagerly at everything left over from their lovemaking.

Cosima moaned at the overwhelmingly loving sensation that this always gave her. Delphine’s tongue exploring every inch of her sensitive vulva was pure bliss. But what she really loved was the after clean up kiss.

Delphine finished, savoring every last drop before she moved up her wife’s body and ran her tongue over her lips. She giggled, watching as Cosima stuck her tongue out and took the remnants off her wife’s tongue. She pressed her lips to Cosima’s and smiled into the kiss.

Cosima sighed happily, returning the exchange as she felt Delphine take hold of her hands on either side of her head. After she’d enjoyed every last taste, she broke the kiss and felt the exhaustion slide over her.

Delphine felt the change in her partner and smiled “Sleepy?” she asked.

Cosima nodded “Very much so” she responded.

The blonde nodded and pulled the duvet over them. She reached for the remote and turned off the light, snuggling up to Cosima’s chest. Her hand palmed a breast, gently massaging it and enjoying the feeling as she looked up and kissed her wife.

Delphine broke the kiss and nuzzled their noses together.
“Today was the best day I’ve ever had” Cosima whispered in the darkness.

The blonde nodded and smiled “Moi aussi, mon amour. Me too, my love.”

“Let’s have more like it” the brunette replied.

“Everyday” Delphine whispered.

Cosima sighed and leaned down, kissing Delphine quickly “I love you, Delphine.”

“Je t’aime aussi Cosima” the doctor replied.

Cosima rubbed her wife’s back, loving the feeling of Delphine being curled up to her like this. It was so warm and so comfy. Their bed felt softer than it ever had. Delphine felt more perfect than ever. She still couldn’t get over how happy she was, and despite her want to stay up and make love all night long, she was exhausted and she knew Delphine was as well.

They could always continue this in the morning after a good night’s sleep. MMmm…breakfast in bed. She wondered if anyone would deliver to them naked in bed and chuckled at that idea.

“What is so funny?” Delphine asked, half asleep already. She rubbed Cosima’s shaking belly.

“Do you they’ll deliver a pizza to us naked in bed?” she asked.

“I think that if we get the right pizza guy, he’d not only deliver it to us, but would consider it his tip” Delphine joked in a sleepy voice.

Cosima laughed and nodded, running her hands through Delphine’s hair.

“But we could also ask Alison to do it and laugh about that reaction for years to come” the blonde suggested.

“You are so bad, Dr. Cormier. And I love it” Cosima noted and punctuated it with a yawn.

Delphine patted a boob “Sleepy Cosima.”

“Happy, sleepy Cosima” the dreaded woman replied. She yawned again “Goodnight, Delphine. I love you.”

Delphine moved her head up to kiss the brunette “Bon soir, Cosima. Je t’aime aussi.”

Delphine was fast asleep a moment later, snoring ever so gently against the brunette’s chest. Cosima smiled and ran her fingers through her sleeping wife’s hair.

Yeah, this was happiness.

Delphine’s eyes fluttered open and she smiled, realizing that she was still snuggled up to her wife’s chest. She could hear the steady, even breathing beneath her, permeated with that rasp that was uniquely Cosima’s lungs.

She stretched and looked up. The brunette was still fast asleep. Delphine watched the serenity of her face for a moment before she leaned over her wife to check the oxygen tank’s level. She still had another hour before it ran out.
The blonde took the time to prop herself up on an elbow, running a hand gently over Cosima’s torso, simply enjoying the feeling of her skin as she drew lazy circles on her wife’s tummy.

After fifteen minutes, she couldn’t resist dropping a kiss on Cosima’s cheek. She expected her wife’s eyes to flutter open like they usually did, but when she pressed her lips to the warm skin, there was no reaction.

Delphine looked at her oddly. She ran a hand over Cosima’s cheek.

“Cosima?” she whispered.

She gulped, moving her hand to her wife’s shoulder and she gave the smaller woman a bit of a shake.

“Come on mon amour, let’s order that breakfast. I will call Alison” she joked.

She waited, a realization setting in. She panted as the tears came and her mouth hung open, a hand coming up to over it.

“Cosima?”

Chapter End Notes

Yeah. This one’s late. It is also much longer than anticipated. I’m so sorry that I’ve been terrible at proofreading lately. I want to get these chapters up on time and am guessing that you guys would rather getting them quicker with more errors, than later with less.

I know, all the feels this chapter. I don’t really have much to say about it.

I super appreciate all of you joining me on this roller coaster of a journey through this story. All of your comments, reviews, messages, kudos, and reads mean the world to me and keep encouraging me to be brave in putting this out there. These are emotions and worries that I have in everyday life. One of my biggest worries and fears is losing the woman I love. I frequently think about that day and wonder if all of the happy memories we make will be worth that kind of pain. I did not even realize it was working out like this, but this fic is allowing me to explore these feelings. So it’s as much an emotional project for me as it is a creative and passionate one.

See you in the comments and/or next week.
Delphine stared at the coffee dripping slowly into the pot. She stood perched against the counter, the sleeves of her knit cardigan pushed up to her elbows. The afternoon sun was...bright; too bright. The backyard was still full of tables and chairs to be picked up tomorrow. As she realized that Alison must have stacked them before leaving last night, her attention wandered:

“Cosima?”

The blonde doctor shot out of bed, her hands moving to her hair as she stared down at the brunette in bed. She froze. What was she supposed to do?

“She forced herself to tear her eyes off Cosima’ unconscious body “Patient presents with rare, spreading, terminal cancer” she paced, shaking out her hands to try and get her brain to work, “I’d want an MRI and a CT, full blood work up. It’s probably spread to…” she stopped in her tracks and turned to her wife “…to her brain.”

There was no debate now. She raced to the nightstand and grabbed her cell phone, frantically dialing as she searched Cosima’s drawers for something to dress her in.

Charlotte ran in the house, beyond excited to see her parents. Uncle Cal had taught her how to play goalie and she couldn’t wait to tell them! She’d wanted to come home (she was supposed to come home right after breakfast) but Auntie Alison had told her that her parents needed a little more time alone.

She knew that meant they were having sex. She thought it would have meant more time with Kira, but instead her best friend had gone to bed, saying she didn’t feel well. When Uncle Cal came out with the street hockey pads and offered to show her some tips, all else was forgotten.

She saw Maman standing, for some reason watching the coffee maker. The house had a feeling of greyness to it that made the young girl’s palms sweaty. She looked around for her mummy, expecting to see her on the couch reading, or at the table. She was probably still sleeping or at the store.

The coffee kept dripping. Delphine’s attention didn’t waver, even as she heard the front door open.

Drip.

Drip.

Drip.

Cal’s phone rang and Delphine’s name lit up across the screen. He rolled over, letting go of Sarah as he reached for the cool plastic. His hands fell on it and he yawned, answering the call.
“Hey Finey, you have any idea what time it is? Did you guys stay up all night?” he joked, getting out of bed and heading to the bathroom, as to not wake the slumbering woman next to him.

“Cal, non... I... Cosima she... I am at the hospital. Cal, she did not wake up this morning” Delphine explained through a series of deep breaths.

The blonde paced the hallway outside of the CT room. The tears were a constant fight to hold back.

“Should we come? I’ll get the kids and be over there..” he started.

“Non. It’s... she’s... gone. They’ve got her in for a CT scan right now. After all the tests, I will be taking her home. I need you to pick Charlotte up from Ali’s after breakfast and keep her occupied until I get home. I do not want her to hear about this without me there” Delphine interrupted the lumberjack.

“Yeah, Finey. Anything you need. What else can I do?” he asked, scratching his beard.

“Nothing Cal. Thank you for the help” she told him.

“Maman?”

Delphine was pulled from her memories. She turned around and faced her daughter.

Maman’s face was puffy and red. She’d been crying, Charlotte noticed. The young clone dropped her backpack and ran to her, wrapping her arms around the tall blonde’s hips. She felt Maman stoop down and hug her tightly. Tears wet Charlotte’s skin as she held on to the tall blonde tightly, her own forming in her eyes.

“Where’s mummy?” the young girl asked.

This only made Maman cry harder.

Delphine cried into her daughter, the heaviness of this situation taking hold of her in a way it hadn’t since right after waking up. Cosima was dying. Her worst fears were happening and they were happening now. She held tighter to the eight year old in her arms and heard Charlotte asking questions and trying to comfort her simultaneously. But her mind wasn’t in the room right now. Her mind was upstairs, half a day earlier:

Delphine ripped another of Cosima’s shirts out of the dresser, tossing it in a pile as she felt her emotions well up. She turned to her wife, still lying motionless in bed.

“Don’t you have ANYTHING that buttons up?” she screamed at her through clenched teeth and the blurr of teary eyes.

Delphine took a sharp breath, staring at the unmoving form. Then she took another.

She slammed the drawer, causing the items on the surface to shake and rattle.

Another sharp inhale.

She abandoned her wife’s wardrobe and went to her own. She grabbed a flannel, tossing it on to the bed in the pile of clothes she was about to dress her wife in.
“Where’s Mummy?” Charlotte asked again.

Delphine could no longer hold the weight of the answer. It hung thick in the blonde mother’s heart. No amount of its beating was pumping them out. Her legs gave out under the gravity pulling her down and she sat on the kitchen floor, desperately clutching at the little girl who was so much her mummy Delphine could hardly stand it. All she could do was cry and hold on.

“Maman, what happened?” Charlotte tried, not willing to let go of the tall blonde.

It replayed again in Delphine’s mind:

*She stared at the scans.*

*The neurologist spoke to her in the background.*

*It was nothing she did not already know.*

*He continued anyways.*

*She nodded along with him, her eyes stuck on the indications of the lesions on Cosima’s brain.*

“Of course we could attempt to go in surgically, but with the severity of her condition, unless we can find a way to prevent the spread, it would be an unnecessary risk” he told her.

Delphine nodded “Yes, of course. What of her kidneys? Have they taken the MRI yet?” she asked, her brain reeling with all of the other things that could be going on in her wife’s body.

“She should be there right now. She was second in line when I dropped her off. I understand you will be bringing her home and she will be receiving hospice care?” he asked.

Delphine swallowed the lump of tears “Yes. We’ve..I’ve prepared for this.”

*He nodded and smiled, seeing the ring “You must love her very much. How long have you been married?”* 

*Delphine caught a glimpse of the clock “Twelve hours” she answered, a straight face. “Thank you doctor, I appreciate your work. Have a good day” she told him before walking away, leaving his jaw on the floor.*

The reel stopped.

Delphine sniffled.

Her head beat with her heart.

This was going to hurt.

“Charlotte…” she started, bottom lip quivering.

Charlotte’s face fell as realization dawned, filling her chest with black poison. No.
“Mummy is… she… she didn’t wake up this morning” Delphine blubbered, bursting into tears once more, unable to get any other words out.

Charlotte slowly sat down in front of her mother. Her morning with Uncle Cal seemed so unimportant now. Her brain tried to work around this, but all it was able to do in this moment was repeat over and over Uncle Cal telling her to keep her stick on the ground until it changed to flashes of memories of Mummy.

The small girl looked up at Maman “Is she dead?”

Delphine shook her head “No” she admitted, hiccupping and reaching out to rub the tiny clone’s shoulder “the growths have… they’ve… they’ve moved to her brain. She’s in a coma.”

The tiniest sliver of darkness removed itself from Charlotte’s chest. “Is she at the hospital?” she asked.

All the tall blonde could manage was a shake of the head.

Charlotte jumped up, running to the basement. She knew where Mummy was. She knew the room: the one Maman was scared to go in, the one Maman was afraid to even look at. She ran to it, opening the door to see the lights on inside of it for the first time. The curtain that normally covered the window was open, casting sunlight over the familiar form of her Mummy, fast asleep.

The small girl stood in the threshold, looking around the room. Monitors beeped quietly, the walls were bare, it was sad. She watched a chest she’d been snuggled into a million times rise and fall. She was still breathing.

Charlotte’s eyes fell to her feet. She urged them to take steps, to walk towards the bed, towards the woman who was half of her family, whom she held so much love for. She didn’t look like Mummy. Mummy was bright and bubbly and talked with her hands. Mummy was animated, even when she was sleeping. This woman was bland; like the taste of boiled chicken and rice.

Still, with all the courage she could muster, she a step towards her. If Mummy died, she wanted to make sure she got one last kiss. She wanted to make sure she knew how much she loved her and how much she changed her life.

Another step.

She’d have Maman. She’d always have Maman. She would be okay, but could she be happy?

Another step.

She knew this day was coming. She felt lucky somehow that they now had warning. Mummy could be dead, but she wasn’t yet. She still had time.

One last step and she was reaching out to touch the dark dreads that she’d been so curious about in the beginning. She remembered first touching them on the island, when she’d first met Mummy. And then again, in the car when she’d learned why she wore them.

Charlotte leaned in and kissed Mummy’s cheek carefully, tears falling anew at the warmth she unexpectedly found there.

“I love you, Mummy. I miss you so much already. Please, please don’t leave us. I just found you” she begged, throwing her arms around the comatose woman.
“Please don’t leave.”

Chapter End Notes

I’m not crying, you’re crying.

So here’s the deal: I missed last week’s update due to a medical issue and not being able to sit until like yesterday, but I am healing very nicely. I’m sorry for the folks who didn’t get the update about it but I wasn’t sure how to go about letting you know any way other than Tumblr. Anyways, to make up for it, expect another update before next Thursday in addition to the one I will be making at the regular time next Thursday.

Sorry for this one being shorter. I just felt like it was done.

See you in the comments and/or next chapter!
Delphine watched Charlotte run ahead of her through the door, her heavy backpack staying in place despite the enthusiasm of the young girl. The blonde admired her daughter’s energy, something that she had been lacking as of late. She walked through the front door and closed it behind her, dropping her briefcase in it’s usual spot on the front bench.

“There’s my little scholar” Helm called out, picking up his granddaughter and hugging her. “How was school?”

Charlotte threw her arms around the large German man’s neck and kissed his cheek “So good. I finished my first class and Maman says I can take the exam Friday” she beamed.

Delphine sniffed the air, something smelling familiar and nostalgic. She kicked off her shoes, wiggling her toes and sighing against her exhaustion as she stepped further in to see her mother in the kitchen. She knew that smile.

“Well it’s a good thing I made macarons to celebrate! Ma petite fille, t’es tellement intelligente. My granddaughter, you’re so smart.” the older blonde praised.

“Mamie!” Charlotte cried out.

Helm put the girl down and let her run to her grandmother as he hugged his tired daughter-in-law. Delphine welcomed the embrace.

“And how was your day?” Helm asked her.

She sighed “Exhausting” she breathed, letting go of him and taking a step back. “Grade 8s are so apathetic.”

Helm chuckled “Well you should put your feet up, Annette and I are cooking dinner tonight. You’ve been working too hard lately.”

“And it’s not good for the baby” Annette chastised from the kitchen.

Delphine rolled her eyes “Maman, we don’t even know yet” she whined.

“Delphine, vraiment? T’es toujours épuisée, t’as jetté toute formes de fleurs dans la maison, et je peux deviner que tes seins sont incroyablement tendres. Delphine, really? You’re always exhausted, you threw out all forms of flowers in the house, and I can guess that your breasts are incredibly tender” Annette noticed, returning to her chopping of an onion.

“How did you…?” Delphine started.

“A mother always knows” Annette told her daughter with a twinkle in her eye “When I was pregnant with you, my breasts were always so very tender. Oh, and you loved to breastfeed. I should have guessed then” the older woman joked.

“Maman” Delphine whined.

Charlotte chuckled and looked to her grandfather “Were your breasts tender with Mummy?” she
joked.

This caused the large man to laugh in response, ruffling Charlotte’s hair “Yes they were” he responded.

Delphine chuckled “Charlotte, take a break from studying tonight. You’ve earned it. I’m sure Opa could use some time with you.”

“Thanks Maman” the girl told her.

“And get over here and get a macaron” Annette instructed.

Charlotte skipped over.

Delphine smiled at the sight and headed downstairs. She walked in Cosima’s room and smiled at Scott who was finishing an article from the journal he’d been reading Cosima.

“Oh, hi Delphine. How was work?” he asked.

She smiled “I had grade 8s today” she explained.

He blew out the air from his cheeks “Rough” he responded.

Delphine walked around Cosima’s bed, leaning over and kissing her cheek softly. She put a hand on her wife’s shoulder and examined the monitors “How is she?”

“Same as always” he responded “Just keeping her company with some light reading.”

Delphine smiled at the young man “I’m sure she appreciates it. I know I do” she whispered.

The tall blonde tucked an errant dread behind Cosima’s ear. She sighed. It had been three weeks and Cosima was stable, but still comatose. It had been a lot: the weekly scans at the hospital, the daily tests at home, taking care of herself and Charlotte in the midst of it all, and to top it all off, she’d started work last week; although, that had proven a silver lining. It was good that she got out of the house.

Delphine checked Cosima’s IV bag before she allowed herself to smile at her wife. She was beautiful, even now.

Scott bookmarked the page and stood up “Well, I should get going” he told Delphine.

She turned towards him and put a hand on his shoulder “Why don’t you stay for dinner, Scott? Our parents are cooking and it is bound to be great” she offered.

He smiled at her and blushed “Actually, I have a date tonight. Krystal and I are going to this sweet little italian place up on Spadina and King. Thanks though” he informed the tall blonde.

Delphine chuckled and smiled, turning to Cosima “A date, with Krystal, you’d make a few jokes if you were awake, wouldn’t you, mon amour?”

Scott chuckled “Something along the lines of Krystal asking to beam me up” he noted.

The teacher laughed and nodded “That’s our Cosima” she said sadly, letting out a breath. The blonde took Scott’s seat.
Scott put a hand on his friend’s shoulder “We’ll get her back, Delphine. We’ll find a way. We always seem to find a way.”

“I know” she nodded “I know we’ll try. I just do not know what else we can do short of umbilical stem cells.”

“We could get marrow from Kira again” he suggested.

Delphine shook her head “It’s too soon from the last harvest and she’s run out of baby teeth. We need something synthetic at this point, or…” she sighed again.

He nodded “I’m sorry.”

Delphine looked up at him and smiled “I know. I knew this was coming, but I never thought it would quite be this difficult. She’s here but she’s...not.” Delphine looked over at Cosima again “Tomorrow’s her birthday. I had a big surprise honeymoon planned. I’m giving it to Maman and Helm. They’ll have fun” she informed him.

“You’ll just have to reschedule it for when she wakes up” Scott told her, shouldering his bag “I’ll be back tomorrow, same time.”

Delphine nodded “And Scott, have fun tonight” she told him.

He smiled, nodded, and patted her shoulder again before heading upstairs to leave.

Delphine pulled her stockings off her legs and propped her feet up on Cosima’s bed, scooting the lounge chair closer so she could hold the brunette’s hand. She felt its heat and intertwined their fingers. She looked behind her to see that she was alone with her wife.

“You would not believe the day I had. Would you believe that those kids made a betting pool at recess about who would get to date me first? The worst part is I think they thought I could not hear them talking about it” she laughed, stroking the back of Cosima’s hand softly. “You would have so many hot teacher jokes. I can almost hear your laugh in my head right now.”

Delphine took a deep breath “Charlotte finished that class. She takes the exam Friday and will be one class closer to her degree. Cosima this is so much harder than I thought it would be. We miss you, we miss you so much, mon coeur” she whispered, wiping the tears as they fell.

“I bought a test today. I know I can run a blood test here, but there’s something so very how would you say it...retro about a home pregnancy test. Maman is convinced I am, but I don’t know. I have been under a lot of stress lately and that can account for most of the symptoms.”

At that moment, Delphine reached behind her and unsnapped her bra, moaning in relief as the material that had been pressing against her tender flesh was finally loosened. “Maman was right though, they have been very tender. I don’t know, maybe I am pregnant.”

“I baked you a cake. It’s in the fridge. If you wake up, I want to make sure I have it. If you do not, then Charlotte and I will celebrate. I plan on taking the test at midnight, there is something poetic about finding out on your birthday.” Delphine chuckled “I may have to nap before then though.”

The blonde doctor stood up slowly and bent over, kissing Cosima’s lips softly “Je t’aime, mon amour. And mon Dieu do I miss you so very badly. Our bed is so empty without you. I’ve been having a hard time sleeping.”

“Maman?” Charlotte called from the doorway.
Delphine smiled, turning around and wiping her tears “Charlotte, I was just telling Mummy about my day, come sit” she instructed, waving the girl over.

The tiny clone limped towards the bed, sitting down in the now empty chair and taking Mummy’s hand in her own. She looked up at Maman “I didn’t know you were having trouble sleeping.”

“It’s fine, Charlotte. I just miss mummy so much. I am so used to having her in bed with me” she admitted, smiling weakly “It’ll just take some getting used to.”

“I can sleep with you. You need to be getting lots of sleep Maman. You need to take care of my sister” the young girl reminded her mother.

Delphine nodded “You’re right and I would love some company.”

The brunette nodded “Then it’s decided. See mummy? I’m taking care of her, just like you asked” Delphine’s heart melted. She walked over and kissed Charlotte’s cheek “Why don’t you visit with her while I go get out of my work clothes?”

Charlotte nodded and turned to her mother, launching into a monologue about her day.

Delphine yawned, hearing the beeping of the alarm she’d set. She rolled over, turning it off: 11:57. She smiled and heard Charlotte whine in her sleep, rolling over. The blonde turned towards her daughter and pulled the duvet further over her shoulder, smoothing back the girl’s hair before she got out of bed. She walked to the bathroom and shut the door.

She was excited and nervous. Trembling hands reached for the medicine cabinet and she pulled out the test. She could barely get her fingers to cooperate and ended up tearing open the cardboard. She yanked down her boxers and sat on the toilet, doing her best to pee only on the stick. She capped it off and finished.

The blonde stood, wiped, flushed, and washed her hands before she set a timer on her phone. Three minutes. She paced the bathroom.

Cosima needed this. If there was any hope, then it would be in this baby. Delphine doubted her wife could hold out that long, but it was all they had. She smiled: she’d wanted this for so long, a baby with Cosima. She’d wanted to be pregnant since she was a little girl. And now, she couldn’t wait for her family to expand. She knew Charlotte was excited to be a big sister and that her Maman and Cosima’s Papa were more than excited to be grandparents.

She chuckled. She never noticed that they had a Maman and Papa.

But a baby would change so much; it would change her body, the way people looked at her; and she worried it would change the dynamics of her extended family. Sure, being pregnant with her parents, partner, and daughter would be a delight, but she was worried about Cosima’s sisters and what this would mean now that it was real and not just some idea.

Still, she could almost picture the tiny little bundle in her arms and she bursted with love and excitement. The only sadness clouded over her was that of the realization that Cosima should be here. Delphine wondered how she would break the news to her wife. Balloons, a bun in the oven, an extra setting at dinner? She smiled at the possibilities.

The timer beeped and she ran to the test.
The blonde bit her lip and smiled.

She was pregnant. She looked at herself in the mirror and put a hand over her belly. She was pregnant. At this very moment, there was life growing inside of her: a part of Cosima was growing inside of her. Her eyes closed and happy tears flooded her cheeks. She smiled brightly and shook her head, not quite believing it. These things never worked on the first try.

But this time it had: she was pregnant.

Chapter End Notes

I was hoping to get this out sooner, but do not fret: this will still be a double update week. Expect another chapter Thursday around 4pm EST.

Thank you for all of your comments, kudos, reviews, messages, and for everyone still with this slow burning little bundle of fun. For those who need to hear it again: Cosima will not die. See you tomorrow...or I guess later today!
Flowers

2 am. Honeysuckle. All Delphine smelled was honeysuckle. It wafted in over fresh, crisp spring air from the open window and it made her stomach churn. She tried to breathe against the nausea, hoping it would pass. When it didn’t, she jumped out of bed and bolted to the bathroom. Barely making it to the toilet in time, she lost her dinner in heavy heaves as she hung around the bowl by her forearms.

The familiar tiny patter of feet entered the bathroom: Cosima. She felt the relief wash over her. Her heart filled with love and comfort surrounded her. A small hand rubbed her back while the other held her hair back.

This wasn’t Cosima. She felt her heart sink, but promptly swell at the voice that came with the touch.

“Maman? Is this the baby?” Charlotte asked.

Delphine nodded, taking in deep breaths as she felt the waves of nausea pass.

“Ok. I am here. Tell me what you need” the tiny voice whispered to her.

Delphine reached for the toilet paper and cleaned around the bowl before reaching up and flushing the toilet “Mouthwash?” she asked of her daughter.

Charlotte nodded and let go of her hair momentarily to stand and grab the bottle and a cup from the counter. She handed both to her maman and went back to rubbing her back.

“Merci” Delphine chimed, sitting down next to the toilet and rinsing out her mouth.

“De rien, maman. Can I get you a ginger ale?” the small girl asked, knowing it made her feel better when she was sick.

Delphine spit the mouthwash into the toilet and shook her head. “I am okay. Could you close the window in the bedroom please? The flowers are making me nauseous” she asked again of Charlotte as she slowly stood.

Charlotte helped her up and nodded, running ahead and closing the window. The small girl came back to help her mother back in to bed.

Delphine laid down and let out a sigh, pulling Charlotte to her body as the girl covered them in the duvet “I thought you were your Mummy for a moment there” she admitted to her daughter.

Charlotte smiled sadly and nodded against Maman’s chest “I miss her too. I’m sorry I can’t be her for you.”

Delphine chuckled “Oh no, ma chérie, I am glad that you are you for me. Mummy is one thing, but nurse Charlotte is wonderful. Thank you for taking such good care of me and your baby sister” Delphine praised, rubbing the girl’s arm.

Charlotte beamed a smiled and reached for a kleenex, coughing violently into it. She whimpered against the taste of blood. This had started happening again and Maman said that there was nothing they could do right now. She was scared that she would be like Mummy, she didn’t want the disease to get to her brain.
The coughing stopped and Delphine reached for another kleenex, wiping her daughter’s face and taking the used one from her. She put both in the garbage next to the bed and held her daughter tighter, kissing her forehead as she heard the tiny whimpers escaping a blood lined throat.

“I know, petite. It’s going to be okay. I am right here” the tall blonde whispered, rocking her daughter slightly.

Delphine started humming a french lullaby as Charlotte started to quietly sob, feeling the gravity of her situation and this illness finally set in and rest on her small shoulders. She closed her eyes and let Maman soothe her. She breathed in that smell that was particularly Maman and let it carry her to sleep.

Delphine smiled at her wife, her laptop propped up on her knees. She was looking up midwives, trying to find a solid list of people to contact.

“This one is from San Francisco. He is 62 and has delivered thousands of babies” she informed her wife, scrolling down to the about me section. She sighed “he does not believe in hospital births. Next” she joked.

Charlotte popped her head in and knocked on the door.

The blonde turned her head around and smiled “Bonne matinée ma petite. Viens ici. Good morning my little one. Come here” Delphine called out to her daughter, setting the laptop down on Cosima’s bed.

The tiny clone was more than happy to walk over to her Maman. She crawled into her lap and sleepily laid her head on the familiar warm chest as Maman snuggled her.

“Did you just get up?” Delphine asked, kissing the girl’s forehead.

Charlotte nodded and rubbed her eyes “What are you doing?” she asked.

Delphine touched a single finger to the girl’s nose “I am searching for a midwife right now.”

“Shouldn’t you see an obstetrician?” the young girl asked

“Some people do, but where I come from midwives are widely used. I was born with a midwife. Besides, I am pretty sure Mamie will insist on a midwife” Delphine informed her daughter. She scrunches her nose “also I kind of like the idea of having the baby at home. I have had enough of hospitals.”

“Yuck, me too. Could you really have her here?” Charlotte asked.

Delphine nodded and tickled Charlotte briefly, much to the delight of the young girl “Yes. And you can be there if you’d like. I might need you if Mummy still hasn’t woken up.”

“I could hold your hand and let you squeeze mine like in the movies” Charlotte noted.

The blonde chuckled and kissed her daughter’s head again “Oui, ma grande.”

“Did you know that she’s the size of a sesame seed?” Charlotte asked her mother. “She’s so tiny in your uterus Maman.”

“I can see someone’s doing their research” Delphine praised.
“Mamie and Opa brought me to the bookstore and let me pick one out” Charlotte told the tall blonde.

“I am so very glad that they decided to move closer. It has been great having them around” Delphine noted.

Charlotte nodded “I really like having them close. They’re so funny together. I think they’re best friends."

“I think you’re right, little one” Delphine told her daughter. She sighed and felt her stomach grumble “Breakfast?” she asked.

Charlotte nodded and gave Maman another hug before she hopped out of her lap.

Delphine sighed as she continued to scroll through the names on the website she’d found. She was opening each link and vetting out the midwives, making a list of who to call. She could hear Sarah and Kira downstairs, talking to Cosima. Every Sunday the family had gotten in the habit of coming over to visit the dreaded clone. Delphine liked to give them their space.

The tall blonde sipped her tea, looking over at her daughter who was lounged on the couch, nose firmly in the pregnancy book she had talked about earlier. Turning her attention back to the computer, she clicked on a tab.

Her eyes went wide at the face staring back at her. She quickly saved the page in her favourites and started exploring the website. Educated at York University, strong believer in a working relationship with the hospital in case of emergencies, raving reviews, and she was queer identified. She was perfect. Delphine sighed and thought about the baggage that came with that face.

At very least she needed to be in touch with this woman to introduce her to her family. But having one of Cosima’s sisters deliver their child, would it make things better or just hurt? She closed her eyes and took a moment to think. On one hand, it would be kind of like Cosima was there, but on the other it would make her miss her wife’s gentle touch. This woman wouldn’t know her like Cosima, she wouldn’t smell and feel like Cosima. She couldn’t expect that of her. Besides, it would be creepy to think of her midwife as well, her wife, wife.

Delphine sat back and sipped the tea. But if she got to know this woman first, then it would be more like Alison or Mika, expect she would be...what is this woman’s name? The blonde flipped back to the top of the page: Ky. If she got to know Ky then it would be Ky, not Cosima.

Delphine took a deep breath and leaned forward, sending the woman a quick e-mail before Sarah walked back up the stairs with Kira. The blonde smiled up at her sister-in-law and niece.

“No changes?” Sarah asked.

Delphine shook her head.

“Auntie Delphine, you can take more of my bone marrow” Kira suggested.

The blonde sighed “Oh Kira, I cannot. You have had the procedure too many times. Your body needs to heal.”

“But you can use your baby right?” the young girl asked.

Delphine smiled and stood up, walking over to them “Well first we need her born and healthy and
Charlotte walked over “Right now she’s like a tadpole” she piped in.

“Really?” Kira asked.

The tiny clone nodded and showed her cousin the book. The two sat down on the floor and started to explore it.

Sarah walked over to Delphine “You feeling okay?” she asked.

The blonde nodded “Very tired and the nausea’s started, but I’ve had help. Thank you”

“Yeah, well S said she’d be by later with a casserole and you know you’ll get about four from Alison” Sarah let her sister-in-law know.

Delphine nodded and gave her a weak smile “Thanks Sarah. Family is helping very much right now” she admitted, swallowing hard.

“Hey, Delphine, anything you need. I know we’ve had our differences in the past but, you’ve been good to my sister, yeah? And you’re carrying another and well...Charlotte...”Sarah paused and took a deep breath. “I guess I’m sorry for doubting your intentions is all I’m saying. I was hard on you.”

The blonde smiled and nodded “I have long since forgotten about all of that, Sarah. You are family.”

Sarah smiled “Yeah, yeah I am” she sighed and tucked her dark hair behind an ear.

“Oh, something I have been meaning to talk to you about: Mika, she did not come in for treatment this morning. I have tried calling but there is no answer.”

“Aw shite, stubborn Mika. I’ll go check up on her today” Sarah informed Delphine.

“And there’s something else” the doctor noted, reaching for her computer. She showed Sarah the picture of the midwife “Another sister?”

“That is definitely another one of us. How did you find her?” Sarah asked.

“I am searching for a midwife and saw her face. I sent her an e-mail, but thought that maybe you would want to tell her about her family” Delphine informed the LEDA leader.

Sarah nodded “Thanks, Del. Yeah, let me know when you meet with her. I’ll get her up to speed and I want to make sure she’s gonna take care of you and my little niece in there.”

Delphine smiled “I never thought I would ever hear you say that.”

Sarah squeezed Delphine’s shoulder gently “You’re family. In the words of a Dinsey channel original musical I never thought I would ever watch, let alone know the words to: we’re all in this together” she chimed in. She gave Delphine’s arm a pat “And don’t ask me to do the bloody dance.”

“You know the dance?” Delphine teased.

Sarah gave her a comic side eye “Don’t push it, blondie.”
Gemma and Oscar sat on the couch with Charlotte, they were all playing Lego Avengers on the Xbox while the grown ups visited.

“Are you taking folic acid?” Alison asked Delphine, fiddling with her ponytail.

Delphine nodded “I started when we started trying.”

The soccer mom nodded in response, sipping her coffee.

“Well you look gorgeous. You’re glowing” Donnie added.

“Thank you Donnie. You’re very kind” Delphine told him. She noticed how sadly Alison stared into the swirl of milk in her coffee cup. “She’s the size of a sesame seed” she told the woman. “And I cannot stand the smell of flowers right now. They make me so very nauseous.”

Alison looked up at this “I could share a morning sickness recipe with you if you like. It should help with the nausea. How are your breasts? Are they sore?” she asked, practically clawing at the table now for information and inclusion.

“Honey…” Donnie started.

“No, no, it’s okay” Delphine reassured “Yes. Very much so. I find it hard to wear a bra” Delphine told her sister-in-law.

Alison drank it all in, letting her knowledge of pregnancy and all the hours of research shine through “Well it’ll be summer soon. It might be a good idea to invest in some loose dresses and tights. If you get the right cut, you won’t need to wear a bra.”

Delphine smiled. She felt something inside of her bubble. She’d never had a conversation like this with Alison. The housewife was completely engaged and eager about this. “Would you like to come shopping with me? We could take the kids. I know Charlotte needs some new summer clothes as well. She’s growing like a weed.”

Alison’s face lit up and she reached across the table to cover Delphine’s hand with her own. The excitement bubbled in her “We could do lunch!”

“Yes we could” Delphine affirmed.

“What are you doing next Saturday?” Alison asked, pulling out her planner.

Donnie sipped his coffee quietly.

“I am all yours. Let me ask Charlotte” she told the soccer mom. “Hey Charlotte, do you have plans next Saturday?” she called out.

“Non, Maman” Charlotte called back.

“Want to go shopping with Auntie Alison, Oscar, and Gemma?” Delphine asked.

“Definitely!” she responded as the cousins started to high five each other.

Delphine smiled and nodded to Alison “It’s a date then”

“A lunch date!” she expressed back “So, when are you going to start on the nursery? We could do a nursery shopping day too”
“I think that’s a little in the future, but I would like that” Delphine informed Alison.

Delphine was just settling down into bed, yawnning as she turned out her side light.

“Not too late, Charlotte” she instructed the girl who was sitting up in bed, still reading the pregnancy book.

“D’accord, Maman” she responded, scooting over to be closer to her mother.

Delphine smiled and marveled over how great of a kid Charlotte was. Her new fascination with her pregnancy was adorable. The blonde felt Charlotte press a kiss to her forehead.

“Sweet dreams, don’t let the bed bugs bite” the young girl whispered to her mother.

Delphine’s smile widened and she closed her eyes, reaching over to let a hand gently rub her daughter’s tummy while she read. The doctor liked knowing her daughter was close. Charlotte was right, having someone in bed with her was helping her sleep.

She started drifting.

Her phone rang and she groaned, reaching for it. She felt Charlotte climb over her and grab it, handing it to her. She answered.

“Hello?” she groaned.

“Delphine? It’s Sarah” the Leda leader informed her.

The blonde yawned and rolled over “Did you find Mika?” she asked.

There was no answer.

“Sarah?” Delphine asked.

“She’s dead. I got to her trailer and...Delphine...there was blood everywhere. They say she choked on it. I’m at the hospital now” the clone spoke through the phone.

“I’m on my way” she told the woman on the other line.

Charlotte was already up and heading to her room, having heard everything. Delphine started changing into sweats as she dialed her parents’ number. She felt the heaviness of death once again descend on the room. Another clone had succumbed to the disease. She should have checked in on Mika sooner. She felt guilty. It was her job to keep the sestras safe and she was failing. She heard Charlotte cough from the other room and her heart sunk. She was going to lose all of them. She’d be left standing with Sarah and Helena and watch her family die.

No. She had to do better. She had to cure this.
Delphine stared down at the deceased clone on her table. She breathed against the lump in her throat.

“You don’t have to do this, you know? I can take care of this” Scott told her, muffled by his surgical mask.

Delphine looked up to him, eyes shielded by plastic. Why wasn’t the smell she knew was present getting to her? She ignored him. Of course she needed to do this; this was for Cosima.

The blonde reached for the sheet, pulling it back to reveal what was once Mika’s chest.

“Delphine, come on. I mean it, you don’t have to be here” Scott urged.

There was still no response from the french woman. Instead, the air filled with the sound of the bonesaw whirring as Delphine turned it on. As she made the first cut and was met with the haunting sound of Mika’s chest being sawed open, she was glad that she had taken the day off to do this and that Charlotte was at school. No doubt this could be heard upstairs. She wondered if Cosima could hear it from behind the door just across the room.

With the dissection complete, Delphine put the saw away and reached for the 15 blade.

“Pull out the Kidneys?” she asked of Scott, not looking up.

“No, Delphine, you shouldn’t be doing this. Please, just let me take care of this” Scott urged.

Delphine closed her eyes and took a deep breath to prevent an outburst. “Scott, pull out her kidneys” she insisted.

“Delphine, stop it” Scott gently pried.

“No Scott, you stop it! I need to do this, d’accord? I need to know that I did everything I could” she yelled at him louder than she would have liked. Her nostrils flared as she felt her anger rise “If I don’t do something, I am going to watch all of these women die. I am going to watch my family die. I am going to watch my wife and my children die! And in the end you and I will be standing all alone, next to each other, watching our entire worlds be put in the fucking ground. So yes, I have to do this. Now pull out her kidneys!”

Scott gulped and nodded “Okay, Delphine. Two kidneys, coming right up” he whispered.

The dissection of Mika’s body was long and grueling, the scientists searching diligently for every single growth and polyp, setting them aside for preservation and further study. Every bit of bone marrow they could extract from the clone, they did. Anything they felt could be of use was taken from one sister to help the others.

Delphine’s legs were sore and her eyes could barely stay open as they started the process of closing up the body. She knew she needed a shower and a nap.
“Scott, can you finish here?” she asked, her eyes already closed.

“Yeah, I’ve got this. Go. I’ll call the funeral home to come get her afterwards. Go take a nap. You look like you’re going to zonk out at any minute” he urged.

Delphine nodded and put a hand on his arm “Thank you, you are a good friend. I am sorry I yelled earlier.”

“It’s been a tough time for all of us Delphine. I understand” he voiced.

“I still want to hear all about your date with Krystal. Will you stay for dinner? It’s taco night...it’s Cosima’s favourite” she explained.

“Sure. I love tacos” he smiled back.

Delphine nodded and headed to the basement bathroom.

Charlotte and Kira stared blankly at their lunches. It had been a rough day for the cousins. Oscar and Gemma had not shown up to school today.

“So she’s at your house?” Kira asked, still not looking up.

Charlotte nodded “Maman and Uncle Scott are going to try to study what they can to help the rest of us.”

“How’s Auntie Cosima?”

“The same”

“Do you think she is going to die?”

“Yes. And then I will” came Charlotte’s answer.

The smallest of the clones picked up her sandwich and took a bite.

Delphine held Cosima’s hand to her tummy as she sobbed into her wife’s neck. She’d carefully crawled in to the hospital bed next to Cosima, needing to be near the love of her life more than ever before. Mika was gone. She’d failed her.

“I don’t know how much longer I can do this. I need you, Cosima. I need you to wake up. I need you to remind me to take my vitamins in the morning and I need you to hold my hair while our baby makes me sick” she cried. “Je t’ai besoin, mon amour. Je suis si perdu sans ma lune et mes étoiles. I need you, my love. I am so lost without my moon and my stars.”

It was slow, the sinking into the deep sleep that Delphine’s body so desperately needed. Half of her wanted to stay awake and listen to Cosima breathe, to her heart beat. But the half that made her body heavy with fatigue won and carried her away.

She woke up to the phone ringing. The blonde groaned as she felt the fog of sleep try and pull her back in. The ringing stopped and she sighed in relief, settling back down next to her wife with a resolve to fall back to sleep.

There was a knock on the door and she groaned “What?”
Scott popped the wooden slab open “Umm...the school’s on the phone” he explained.

Delphine let out a series of whines and kissed Cosima’s cheek before dragging herself out of bed to meet Scott halfway and take the phone.

“Hello?” she asked.

“Hi, Delphine? This is Sonia” the school secretary informed her new friend “I think you should come get Charlotte. She is not coping too well with the recent loss. She is telling everyone that she is going to die.”

“I’ll be right there” Delphine said sadly, hanging up the phone.

The blonde turned the device in her hands, her mind turning over and over. Scott watched, worried. Eventually she looked up.

“Charlotte’s next, isn’t she?” she asked.

Scott hesitated “Her numbers are plummeting” he told her.

“Did you leave them on the table last night?” Delphine inquired.

“Yeah. But she can’t possibly know what they mean” he reasoned.

Delphine closed her eyes and gently shook her head “She understands more than people could ever imagine” she tried to explain.

The blonde let out all the air in her cheeks and flipped her hair back with a hand “I’ll be back. I have to go pick her up.”

Charlotte sat in the office. The same chair she had sat in when she had gotten suspended. She smiled, remembering that day. Maman had been so pissed, but she could see the pride in Mummy’s eyes. She missed mummy’s eyes. Although she knew the evidence was inconclusive, she hoped that there was something or somewhere after you died. At least then she could see mummy again, see Auntie Mika and all the other Aunties she never got to meet. She wouldn’t be alone.

But Maman, maman would be alone. She would be all alone with a new baby. Sure she would have Opa and Mamie, but they were old and would die soon too. And one by one her Aunties would join her until only Auntie Sarah and Helena were left.

She heard Maman’s heels before she saw her, not wanting to look up. She smelled Maman before the long arms wrapped around her in a tight hug. She made no move to return the hug, letting how small she felt in her mother’s arms comfort her for the moment.

“Ma petite…” Delphine whispered.

“Maman” Charlotte returned.

Delphine picked her up and carried her on her hip as the young girl wrapped her arms around Maman’s neck and pushed her face into her sweater.

The blonde walked up to Sonia and smiled “Thank you for calling. Apologize to Mrs. Leevy for me. I should have kept her home today. Is Kira…?”

“Ms. Manning already picked her up” Sonia explained. “I am very sorry for your loss.”
Delphine nodded “Thank you” she replied, not quite knowing what to say. “I will see you Monday. The funeral is tomorrow so I will not be in.”

Sonia nodded “Take care of yourself, Delphine.”

“I will” came the reply.

Delphine turned and carried her daughter out of the school.

Scott had just finished cleaning up not long ago and was starting to test the samples when he heard people walking down the stairs.

“But why not?” Charlotte asked defiantly. She’d been trying to get Maman to let her help with the science. “I know how to use a microscope and how to pipette and prepare slides. Mummy taught me how to do a lot” she explained.

“Because Charlotte, this is important. We don’t have much tissue in the first place” Delphine explained as they finished walking down the stairs.

“Please Maman. I can’t just watch TV when everyone is going to die. I need to help” Charlotte reasoned.

“Sounds familiar” Scott whispered to himself.

“What was that, Scott?” Delphine asked.

“I just said that it sounds familiar; like mother, like daughter” the geek spoke up, pushing his glasses up his face.

Delphine took a deep breath and turned back to Charlotte. The girl was exceptionally smart. They had some skin, hair, and nail samples that were plentiful and more for thorough collection than for anything important. She chewed the inside of her cheek.

“Fine. But you need to follow in lab procedure, okay?” Delphine told her.

“Mummy made me a chart” she indicated, pointing to a sign in Cosima’s distinctive writing, hung on the wall above the lower workstation that had been set aside for Charlotte. “I even have a notebook for lab notes. I’ll write down everything I find” she promised.

“Okay. Scott, where are the hair, nail, and skin samples?” she asked.

Scott pushed off the lab top with a hand and rolled his chair over to the fridge. He opened it and pulled out the samples, rolling back to Delphine and handing the three containers to Delphine.

Charlotte hurried over to the sink to wash her hands thoroughly as she felt her excitement brew. She was going to get a chance to work on helping Mummy and her Aunts.

“Be very careful with the solutions, ma grande and call me over if you spill anything” Delphine instructed, placing three tubes on Charlotte’s work space.

The small girl walked over and pulled on some gloves “I will. Je te promets. I promise.”

“So yeah, it was a good night. Krystal is...wow. Like at first she seems pretty flighty, but as soon as
she gets into a conversation you notice that she’s actually kinda smart” Scott told them, taking another bite of his taco.

Delphine chuckled “Smart?” she asked. “Are you sure that we are talking about the same Krystal?”

“Hey, you laugh, but she’s great. We are going out again next week” he explained.

“It is hard for me to imagine you with Auntie Krystal. You are very different people” Charlotte told her uncle, taking a sip of her apple juice as her legs swung beneath her, too short to reach the ground yet.

“Yeah well so are your moms” Scott reasoned.

Charlotte giggled “Good point Uncle Scotty.”

Delphine smiled and sighed, sitting back in her chair “So, Charlotte, what did you find today?”

“There’s something weird about the samples you gave me. I think it might be a buildup of something. They all had it. It was this really weird, thin substance that was barely noticeable” she explained. “I’ll do more research on it after dinner.”

“Non, Charlotte after dinner you need to study. Your exam is Monday. Just because they bumped it a few days for you does not mean you get those days off. You need to focus on your schooling” Delphine explained.

“What’s the point?” Charlotte asked pushing the lettuce that had fallen out of her last taco around on her plate with her fork.

“Hey, kiddo, your education is important” Scott told the girl. “You need a degree if you want to work in a lab and do cool science for the rest of your life.”

“There’s not much left to my life, so what does it matter?” she asked.

Scott’s eyes went wide and Delphine swallowed hard “Charlotte, ma belle, listen to me: we are going to beat this, okay? You, me, and Scott, we are going to figure out how to wake Mummy up and how to fix all of this. I will not let anyone else die.”

“You couldn’t help MK” Charlotte noted.

There was silence as Delphine felt those words cut deep.

“I’m not hungry anymore” Charlotte said, pushing her plate forward and getting up from the table. “I am going to study with Mummy.”

Delphine watched in silence as her daughter grabbed her book bag and walked downstairs. She took a breath and put her head in her hands on the table. The stress was starting to get to her.

“She didn’t mean that” Scott tried to console his friend.

“She did” Delphine stated.

Scott watched Delphine, face painted with concern. She slowly turned green and he noticed her swallow desperately for some reason. It looked like she was going to…

Delphine stood up and darted for the kitchen, happy the sink was clear as she lost her dinner in to it.
Scott stood and took a step towards her but stopped, not quite knowing what to do.

“Are you okay?” he asked.

He was answered by the wave of one hand as Delphine put her hair up with the hair tie she’d started permanently wearing around her wrist for situations like these.

The blonde breathed deeply as she shook from the violence of the heaves. She spat out what she could as it stopped and slowly subsided. “It’s okay, it’s just the baby” she explained to Scott.

“Delphine…” he said with a worried tone, eyebrows stitched together. Cosima should really be here. She’d know just what to do.

“No, I am okay” she assured, turning on the tap to wash away what she could of the vomit in the sink.

The blonde dipped her head under it to take in a mouthful and move it around in her mouth before spitting it out. With another deep breath she turned off the tap and reached back, opening the fridge and pulling out a ginger ale.

“I’ll be fine.”

_____________________________________________________________________________

“Mika was a part of all of us” Sarah started. She looked down to the words she’d scrawled on the paper as she fought her tears. “Fuck it, just fuck this speech” she said, crumpling the paper in her hands. She looked up to see her family; the same group of people who not a week earlier had been drunk and celebrating Cosima’s wedding.

“This is fucked up. This is hard and it is fucked up and I don’t think any of us knows what the fuck to do or say. Mika’s gone and it hurts like hell. She was our friend, she was our family, and I already miss her like hell. There are...there are faces missing here today; too many to name, some we don’t even know. So I think that all we can do right now is appreciate our time with each other. I love you all...so much. Just a few years ago I didn’t have a family, I never thought I would ever have a family, but you all pulled me in. I know Mika felt the same.”

“We were a lot alike her and I. Both living on the outskirts of society, no one really fully able to understand us, and unable to understand our own loneliness…”

Charlotte barely heard her Aunt talking. Maman’s hands were on her shoulders and she’d never quite felt the absence of Mummy as strongly as she did today. Mummy would know how to cheer everyone up. She would know how to bring the sun to eradicate this cloud of darkness that seemed to hover over her family wherever they went. She would know what to say, what to do.

But Mummy was gone. That’s what she knew.

She stared at the dark wood and shiny chrome of the coffin, perched and ready to be put into the ground and she knew that it might as well have been Mummy’s.

Charlotte wondered what her own coffin would look like. She made a mental note to write up a letter to Maman, letting her know that she wanted a purple one. No, she wanted to be made into a diamond. She had heard that some places were starting to do that. It was fitting, a geologist turned into a precious stone. Maman could have half and her baby sister could have the other, the stone to be made whole again once the baby eventually died.
Maman kept saying that everything would be okay, that they would find the miracle cure that would save them all.

But as she watched them lower Auntie Mika’s coffin into the ground and them start to shovel dirt on top of it, any ounce of hope she’d had left her.

Her hope was now buried with her aunt.

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