

Love, Judgement and Forgiveness

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Love, Judgement and Forgiveness

by [Dhaskoi](#)

Summary

Lena's illegal experiments with Kryptonite are headline news, L-Corp is under investigation, the CatCo board is in an uproar and there's a new superhero in town who's mysteriously hostile to Supergirl. Clearly it's going to take Cat Grant to sort this mess out. Despite everything they've been through, Cat and Kara may not be ready for what they're about to discover . . .

Notes

For fictorium, for this prompt: With Lena going to the dark side, Cat has to come and rescue her company from Lena's clutches. Kara Danvers and Supergirl have to decide their loyalties. In restoring CatCo, Cat and Kara end up getting together. Bonus if one/both are endangered by Lena's experiments in the process.

It traveled a bit from the original prompt, but I think I kept to the spirit.

Prologue

Prologue

She tears into the sky, fast as she can fly, faster, faster, pushing herself beyond every limit she thought she had. The cloud cover is less than a whisper against her skin, the sunlight clear and unobstructed as she punches through the tropopause into the stratosphere, higher than she's ever gone. Now she can really cut loose, high enough up that the sonic boom won't be obvious. Be careful, they've always told her, be safe, don't take risks, we worry, we love you, we only want what's best for you. Always, always holding her back. And not out of love, oh no. She feels strong now, alive, rising into a clear sky, unaffected by the incredibly strong winds that blow here. She breathes deep, straining against the thinner atmosphere – she's nearly as high as it's possible to go and still suck in a breath, even with Kryptonian lungs – and alters course so she's curving away from the earth instead of accelerating straight up. She times it just right to be parallel to the Earth's surface as she hits the mesopause, the coldest part of Earth that still counts as being on the planet at all. A hundred kilometers up the view is incredible, the horizon curving away below her as she's only ever seen in pictures (pictures that had fueled a carefully hidden desire to see the real thing with her own two eyes – after all she's one of the few people on Earth who can) and the vastness of space opening around her. She truly understands now why it's called the edge of space.

No time for wonder though, not now. She feels a tiny flicker of regret, knowing she may never get another chance. But odds are she's already been missed and it's a matter of minutes before they track her. Once they do it won't take them much longer to realise what she's doing - because there's only one reason for her to be going this fast with no destination in mind. Her – that woman – is awful, but she's not stupid. She braces herself and *pushes*, pouring more and more energy into her speed. The stars turn to constant streaks of light and the earth below becomes a mass of indistinguishable colour. It feels like she's being drained from the inside even as everything goes pale and streaky around her. Heat and cold shiver under her skin and she's glad for her studies and her planning. Sneaking her suit and the cloak without anyone noticing was hard enough. If she'd tried to grab a rebreather as well someone would have noticed before she could get away, but if she was trying this at a lower altitude the friction would incinerate her.

Here is the sweet spot where the freezing temperatures offer enough protection from the heat of her passage to make the journey survivable if not pleasant, and there's still enough oxygen to breathe. Enough for a Kryptonian, anyway. Despite that she's moving so fast that the thin, cold atmosphere is tearing at her, friction heating her skin to the point that it's uncomfortable even for her. She keeps going, straining for that last shred of energy that will carry her through. She knows it's possible, she knows it can be done, it's all there in files she read, the time Kara pulled Uncle Barry's trick and went fast enough to travel in time.

Fast enough to change time.

There! Flashes of imagery, visions of people she knows, first in familiar settings and then strange ones and she can see them changing, growing younger . . .

She's doing it. She's doing it! She can make this happen!

All the hurts and losses will be swept away, all the wrongs made right. She can fix everything.

All she has to do is destroy Lena Luthor.

And then everything will be okay.

Chapter 2

Cat leans back in her seat with a sigh as she lays the paper down on the empty seat next to her, the DC cityscape slipping by outside the town car's window. When you work in the big white house your workday never really ends, but she's found that with an early start she can snatch some time to herself on the drive in, usually spent flipping through her preferred papers. Her fondness for newsprint is a little old fashioned, especially when her own publications (and she will always think of them as hers, no matter what shenanigans take place with CatCo stock) are steadily switching over to a focus on digital content. The smooth transition to a significantly greater online presence is one of the things James has gotten right. But Cat can't imagine a time when she won't love the tangibility of ink under her fingers, the weight of the folded paper in her hands, the rustle of the pages. The day that picking up her morning paper doesn't give her a little thrill she'll know it's time to cart herself off to a nursing home to play shuffleboard and be wheeled out into the sunlight at set times like a potted plant. God willing she'll die before there's any risk of *that*.

She knew it would be hard, walking away from CatCo and National City for the second time. She knew that this would happen, reading about Kara's adventures and triumphs second or third hand and feeling left out. The traitorous voice that used to whisper that she was already left out hardly even stirs these days, after all the times she's repressed it. Cat had told herself that White House Press Secretary was a job worthy to the challenge of keeping her fully distracted from what she'd left behind. It turns out that once she'd settled into the role and started to get the hang of Beltway maneuverings the mechanics of the job were in fact *less* challenging than being a CEO. She hadn't realized how badly her schedule had been bloated by encounters with murderous, superpowered ex-employees, scheming billionaires (other than her), alien invasions and whatever crisis of the week their resident superhero had to deal with.

That said, she's learning a lot from Olivia. She suspects her old friend had more reasons than a desperate need to replace her decimated staff when she offered Cat the job, but Cat is so used to being on the other side of that equation that it took her an embarrassingly long time to realise she was being groomed for more. She's still considering what path she wants to take after her stint as press secretary wraps up. On to communications director to put her name on some worthwhile legislation and get the experience she'd need to make a credible run for governor or the senate? She doesn't intend to be one of those idiots who thinks they can spend their way into an office without any accomplishments to prove she's worthy of the task.

Some new business enterprise? The way news gets distorted on social media has riled Cat for years, but being the WHPS has given her a new, more urgent perspective on the subject. It's different hearing briefings from the FBI about acts of violence set in motion by lies spread on Facebook and Tumblr. Idle thoughts about a new type of media platform that integrates social media more directly, combined with rigorous fact checking and moderation, have been growing less idle lately. Getting a new company off the ground at this stage of her life sounds like a nightmare, especially in a field that cutthroat, but the money from the

CatCo sale and Carter's impending college years are two significant differences from the insane and sleepless days when she was getting CatCo off the ground.

Which brings her to door number three. A return to CatCo with the skills and knowledge she's acquired here, using them to elevate her company further, take it to even greater heights. Her understanding of how to leverage media influence for social change has been honed to an even sharper edge by her time in Washington – new knowledge of how the political machine works from the inside has given her some interesting thoughts about changes she'd like to make at CatCo if she went back. The thought of it is tempting and unnerving in almost equal proportion. Would she be moving forward or falling back into the same old rut if she went home to the city where she truly made her name? And could she bear to see a certain bright-eyed reporter growing closer to the woman who has stepped into the place Cat used to occupy? These are questions she doesn't have answers to yet. Until she does she'll keep supporting and learning from Olivia –

Something in her driver's body language catches her attention and Cat frowns, turning away from the window to reach forward and tap her on the shoulder.

"Lisa is there a -"

The whole world *blurs* as the car jerks to the side and Cat is thrown against the seatbelt suddenly cutting into her torso. Force, pure force tossing her around. It's like being a bug in a jar, picked up by the hand of a giant angry toddler and shaken hard. Cat still remembers her first encounter with the sensation from her mercifully brief stint as a war correspondent when she'd been too close to an IED. For years after she'd persisted in the happy delusion that that part of her life was over, until with the arrival of its own superhero National City suddenly seemed to have a new hostile alien or ridiculous metahuman attacking every damn week. No matter how many times it happens you never get used to it. Noise, tyres screeching, engine revving, Lisa in the front seat swearing - and then silence for a second before the sound of voices shouting and feet pounding. Cat raises a hand to her head and tries to focus past the shock and the disorientation. There's an ache in her neck that makes it hard to raise her head. Don't stop thinking, that's her rule in situations like this and it has always served her well. First task? Check on the person in the car with her, who is also the one person who might immediately be able to tell her what's going on, or get free? Do both. Cat scrabbles at her seatbelt even as she calls out.

"Lisa? Lisa can you hear me? Lisa?"

No response. Cat hopes she's merely unconscious. The crash didn't feel as though it was that bad. Did they have an accident or – no, there's gunfire. Despite the circumstances and the surge of adrenaline Cat feels a sort of tired resignation creeping over her for a second. Does this always have to be her life?

Then the door slams open and rough hands are grabbing at her shoulders, yanking her out unceremoniously to land on her hands and knees on the unforgiving tarmac. She feels it cutting into her palms and her knees and takes a moment to be grateful that the situation isn't triggering a flashback. Therapy works, apparently.

Ordinarily the Press Secretary simply doesn't rate their own secret service detail and Cat hasn't broken the tradition. Due to her colourful personal history (most press secretaries have never faced a single attempt on their life, let alone multiple attacks by supervillains) Cat has the distinction of being offered a detail by Olivia. The worry was that someone with her high profile assuming such a public position might become a target in a way that the Press Secretary usually isn't, but Cat dismissed the concern. She doesn't need a coterie of bodyguards to feel special - and she doesn't believe that men and women whose job it is to take a bullet guarding the country's leadership should be used as adornments to someone else's ego. Vanity is one thing, but that just smacks of insecurity to her.

And if she's being honest with herself she couldn't tolerate the loss of freedom, especially freedom of movement, that came with a security detail. Evidently, that was a mistake.

There's indistinct yelling around her as she looks up – right into the barrel of a gun, wonderful – and she catches something about 'alien loving bitch', oh of course, Cat thinks, the woman who named Supergirl becomes the face of the administration that passed the alien amnesty act. It was only a matter of time before some bunch of backwoods bigots crawled out of the woodwork. She really should have seen this coming, except she can never take these kinds of lunatics as seriously as she probably should, refuses to engage with the fearful mindset that considers them real threats. Cadmus running around being, well, being Cadmus, also made it easy to forget that they weren't the face of all prejudice in America and the threat didn't end with Lillian being locked up.

Looks like she's going to pay for that now.

The reality finally sinks in as she sees her assailant's finger tighten on the trigger, some nondescript thug in coveralls with weaponry easily brought at any gun fair in the country.

This is it. This is where she dies. No lucky escape or last-minute superhero save this time. The smallness of it stings a little. After everything she's survived *this* is how it all ends for her?

Time slows.

Cat has always known that the time gifted to us is finite and too precious to be wasted. She's understood so ever since she came home from school at the age of ten and found her beloved father dead in his study from a stroke decades too soon. As a child she was furious, betrayed, she blamed everyone and everything and cried out the injustice. As an adult she came to understand, slowly, that loss and pain are part of life, that they sharpen the edge of every experience. Cat doesn't fear death. Unfinished business, on the other hand . . .

Carter. He's not so little nowadays, but he'll always be her baby and he still needs his mother. This is going to break his heart. Will his father come through for his son this once? If any deity should be listening, please let him grow up happier and steadier than she did.

Adam. They've stayed in touch, sporadic yet ongoing. He even sent a card for her last birthday. She can never be the mother to him that she wanted to be, but there was hope for closeness, for something of the relationship she thought she'd lost any chance at.

Kara. There's a lot she still wanted to say to the most promising young woman she ever mentored. A lot that she might never have said, regardless of what she tells herself in this last moment. She can only hope Kara knows, that her veiled and not-so-veiled comments made it clear how important the other woman was to her, and in how many ways. And she's selfish enough to hope that she'll be missed, that Kara will shed a tear or two just for Cat.

And then -

The familiar whoosh of displaced air and the distinctively heavy thump, felt as much as heard, that can only be caused by a pair of strong legs suddenly hitting the ground at speed. There's no stopping the smile that begins to form on her face, an ingrained reaction to the knowledge that a certain blonde Kryptonian is still her guardian angel.

Cat looks up and is startled to see a flash of dark hair instead of the expected blonde. With a flicker of disappointment, she realises it's *him*, not *her*, and then she has to check that assumption too as further details sink in and she realizes something very strange is happening. Black and white is her first impression. A black, vaguely leather looking bodysuit with a metallic sheen and a matte white cloak that sweeps back from her shoulders. Long dark hair falling in a queue down her back. She's moving too fast for Cat to see more than that, as she pushes herself to her feet.

The mystery woman – mystery *girl*, Cat realizes - rips through the attackers with superspeed and rather less moderation than she's used to seeing from Kara or Superman, although it doesn't look as if her surprise savior has killed anyone. Her shoves and throws as she blurs from one location to the next are more than forceful enough to break bones and she throws their weapons away with enough energy to put bystanders at risk. One of the thugs gets thrown into the side of the van that rammed Cat's car with enough force to leave an ugly dent.

She's new, says the analytical part of Cat's mind that *never* switches off, even when the rest of her is saying her final goodbyes. Determined but short on practical experience. Like Kara when she first started out the new arrival isn't familiar with the million little details that add up to doing a complicated job right and she hasn't had the benefit of anyone else's experience. She's trying, but it's clear no-one has taught her how to fight safely with her strength.

What are they going to call her, Cat wonders? There's no convenient letter shaped symbol on her chest to hang a name on, no obvious theme for branding. With a jolt of realisation it occurs to her that these decisions are not hers to make anymore. Someone else – Kara? James? Please god not Lois – will choose a name for this new arrival. The sense of loss she feels at that realization is stronger than she might have expected. Then Cat realizes it's over, every attacker down, and the new superhero in town is headed towards her at a swift trot. The expression of concern on her face is a little surprising from someone Cat has never met.

Oh hell – Lisa. Cat rushes towards the car, a little unsteady on her Jimmy Choos but not slowing down as she heads towards the driver side door to check on Lisa.

"Ynugh! Cat," a hesitant pause at Cat's lack of response, "Miss Grant! Miss Grant are you okay?"

The voice isn't quite the light, warm tone so familiar to her (yet another giveaway of the secret she's supposed to keep ignoring) but it's close. And so are those worried blue eyes. The face though . . . there's something about it that claws at the edge of Cat's memory. Something that's obvious yet out of sight. She pushes it into a corner of her mind for later consideration, so she can focus on the more urgent present.

"I'm fine, I'm fine, Lisa, my driver, I think she was knocked unconscious -"

Before Cat can complete the thought the girl is reaching forward and with a tearing shriek of abused metal the door is ripped away and flung aside. Lisa's seatbelt is no obstacle to Kryptonian strength (Cat's assuming – she's certainly got the flight, the strength and the speed) and in the time it takes Cat to blink Lisa is being laid gently down on the road by the mystery brunette. Cat is already shrugging out of her blazer to make an impromptu pillow while the brunette looks her over with an analytical care that Cat recognizes. That's a tick for x-ray vision then.

"She's okay, she's okay. It's safe, she doesn't have any spinal damage," the young brunette says reassuringly when she sees Cat hesitate to disturb Lisa's head.

"It's just bumps and bruises and a mild concussion," she goes on as Cat tucks the folded blazer under Lisa's head.

"I am *so* glad you're okay, Miss Grant."

"So am I, miss . . ."

Cat lets her voice trail off questioningly. Danger past and her immediate fears assuaged her investigative instincts are kicking in. She wants answers. She wants the story.

She wants to know what the hell is going on.

The young woman focuses an intense gaze on Cat, before breaking into a beaming smile. Finally, able to get a clear look at her, what stands out is how pleased she looks with herself. Cat is reminded more than anything of Carter as a child when he thought he'd managed to sneak an extra cookie without her realizing. He was so adorable when he did that she occasionally let him get away with it, purely for the pleasure of his happy I'm-so-clever smile. She's striking, no surprise (why do superheroes always look as though they came straight from central casting?) with fine features, clear skin, long dark hair and the blue eyes Cat already took note of. Possibly the brightness of the smile she's directing at Cat is skewing her judgment slightly there.

"I'm a friend, Miss Grant. I promise you that."

Cat looks her dead in the eye and makes a show of dusting herself before planting her hands on her waist, summoning every ounce of poise she has.

"Really? Isn't it considered friendly to introduce oneself where you're from?" Cat smirks a little, reminded of her earlier thought and a long past conversation with Kara. "If you don't provide a name you'll have to live with someone else's pick."

“I’m sure you’ll come up with something suitable,” she says, still grinning, “you’ve got some practice naming superheroes.” She tilts her head in way that’s familiar to anyone who has spent much time around Kara, focusing elsewhere for a second. Add another tick for super hearing, Cat decides. “And that’s my cue to leave. Stay safe, Cat.”

She grins wider and it’s so bright and fiercely joyful that the connection Cat had wondered at is undeniable. Then she tenses, and Cat barely has time to take a faltering step back before the girl launches into the sky, going fast but not so fast she can’t be seen, until there’s a strange shimmer and she’s simply *gone*. Cat stays watching for a moment, the way most people do when they’ve just seen one of the supers fly away, before the sound of sirens shakes her out of the reverie.

“That never stops being impressive,” she murmurs before returning to Lisa’s side, already drafting the release and considering how the administration will break the news without admitting they don’t know anything.

The next several hours are spent in the D.C headquarters of the D.E.O, recounting the same five minutes over and over, while Sam Lane pitches a hissy fit in the background. Which explains why she’s hours behind the curve when James Olsen decides outing himself as the Guardian is a good idea.

Chapter 3

Her moms are fighting again. They always say they're not, and it's not like they *yell* or anything, but she can tell. She can always tell. Mom gets this pinched, tight look and she does the thing where she's smiling with her mouth instead of her whole face like she does when she's happy for real. She says she doesn't do that, but Elaine can always tell. Mother goes around looking all sad, but under the sad it seems like she's, kind of? Happy? Happy and angry? It's hard for Elaine to tell.

Elaine can't quite explain it, but she always gets a weird itchy feeling when Mother does that, like she's supposed to be apologizing even when she *knows* she hasn't done anything wrong. She doesn't like it. Sometimes she says sorry even when she knows she hasn't done anything wrong anyway, and it feels bad, but it seems like Mother likes it when she does. She hasn't told anyone about that, not even auntie Cat.

She likes being able to visit Cat whenever things get weird at home, even though she knows both her moms seem unhappy about it. Auntie Cat never smiles unless she means it. She smiles a lot when she's not happy, but you can always tell they aren't happy smiles. She never ever pretends to be happy when she's not.

With an irritated flick of her head Elaine shakes the old memories away. Seeing Cat today, so young and vital compared to her memories of the wheelchair-bound woman she used to sit next to, and now being here, floating a thousand feet above the L-Corp building, has been harder to deal with than she thought. A thorough scan has already shown her where Lena Luthor's office is and she knows if she can penetrate the security there she'll be able to access everything. Between her speed and her tools that won't be hard, although it might not take long before someone notices she's there. There's less shielding than she expected, only a few critical areas insulated with lead, which means she can target some of the security systems with her vision before she breaks in. Of course, that damage will attract attention before too long, but it should buy her the time she needs.

Elaine takes a deep breath, doing her best to quell the butterflies in her stomach. This is it. She hasn't changed things too much yet. She could fly away now, return home, go on with her life. Try to make things better there . . .

No.

She's going to do this. How bad things have gotten, the number of innocent people whose lives have been destroyed . . . if she was going to back out she wouldn't have come in the first place.

With a thought she's falling, a few quick blasts of heat vision to cut off certain security systems inside the building and she accelerates, blasting through the reinforced glass and straight into Lena Luthor's empty office and the computer that has all the information she needs.

Chapter 4

The call comes in at about one in the morning, when she's had all of two hours sleep. Despite what she claims, these days Cat prefers a little more shuteye than that. Especially after a day like the one she just had. Between endless briefings about the appearance of what appears to be another Kryptonian superhero on earth (who decided to perform their first rescue a few miles from the White House for the extra panic points) and the knowledge that James Olsen has apparently gone *completely insane* Cat has accomplished almost nothing despite her unusually long day. Few things bother her as much as a day that's wasted.

Her irritation is tempered slightly when she sees it's from one of the sources she still maintains in National City. She'd been foolish enough to imagine that that part of her life was behind her when CatCo truly became the multinational she'd dreamed it would be. Then the appearance of a certain Superhero – brave, kind, *good* but sometimes naïve and terrible at protecting herself – had motivated her to give certain old skills a dusting off. While Kara had been learning her craft and Max had been maneuvering Cat had investigated, made contacts and laid contingency plans of her own. It had been fun in a way, doing her own investigative work again. The DEO might have been good at fighting aliens, but they were hopeless when it came to information control, beyond obvious and unsubtle clampdowns that offended Cat's sense of professionalism almost as much as they did her belief in a free press. Lena Luthor's subsequent arrival – clearly intending to settle in – and the way she'd rapidly cottoned on to Kara certainly hadn't been a reason to worry less. It's not as though she's investigated Lena (it's not as though she has the time nowadays), preferring to trust that Kara knows what she's doing, and that if she doesn't her hypercompetent and fiercely protective sister will ensure Kara's better nature isn't taken advantage of. It's neither healthy or wise (for either of them) for Cat to monitor or run Kara's life by proxy, especially when letting Kara flourish on her own was one of the reasons for her leaving. That said, having a few National City contacts who can keep her in the loop on important matters is useful.

Cat grasps blindly for her obnoxiously loud phone, still shaking off the last remnants of sleep. Every time she gets woken up like this she curses the more awake Cat Grant who chose this ring tone. Her more awake self never changes it because she wants to be sure that sleeping Cat doesn't miss anything important enough to for someone to be calling her on this number.

“What?”

Cat's mind turns clear and sharp as she hears what the voice on the other end of the line has to say. A few curt sentences inform her of events that are going to upend a great many lives before the speaker abruptly hangs up. It's a worst-case scenario come to life. Alright, not a *worst*-case scenario. No-one has died, the city isn't under attack and CatCo is still standing. But if it's as bad as it sounds the fallout is going to be as ugly as it can get without anything actually being on fire. Cat reaches for the tablet that permanently occupies her bedside table and checks the alerts she set up nearly two years ago on certain blogs. They're not the sort of reading material anyone would normally associate with her. Conspiracy rantings so marginalized that they don't even rate the attention of the occasional troll telling the poster

how idiotic they are. One of them posits that Supergirl *obviously* works for CatCo, based on analysis of where she most frequently appears. Of course, the same blog states that there's a secret laboratory in the basement of the CatCo building where scientists employed by Cat herself created Supergirl in a test tube, as part of a plan to achieve global media dominance – whatever that would even mean in the post internet age.

Cat never sued or tried to have them shut down or even bothered to report them to certain authorities – not that she could have done the last without tipping her hand rather too much – she's well aware of the Streisand effect and has been since long before a pop culture website gave it the name. Instead she watches, quietly, relieved to see the same few dozen basement dwelling morons having the same arguments over the same irrelevant trivia, over and over again. She'd even considered giving jobs to a couple of the least deranged, as they were clearly paying more attention than some of her own journalists, but in the end she'd decided there was no way in hell CatCo would ever provide a paycheck to people who sincerely believed that the Earth was flat or the moon landings were faked (how anyone can embrace that delusion while accepting that there were aliens on Earth who traveled untold light years as children to get here is one of life's perpetual mysteries). Still, on the rare occasion they stumble over something legitimate – something that reputable news services can prove is legitimate – they're blogging about it while mainstream outlets are still fact checking. That makes them a halfway useful sort of early warning system for what the media knows or is going to know about Supergirl and matters related to her.

And right now, every single one of them is ranting about revelations of L-Corp's illegal experimentation with Kryptonite and anti-alien weapons, creative accounting, apparently unauthorized medical testing and more. Reading between the lines it looks as though Lena was highly economical with the truth during the investigation into Lex's activities. Cat quickly flicks from one window to another, quickly finding that many of the more responsible self-styled 'citizen journalists' are running with the same story, as are some of the smaller local news sites. A quick check of wikileaks and several of its more current derivatives reveal – yes, it's there too. Clearly whoever leaked the information must have sent copies to all of them simultaneously, and if they sent copies to all these outlets they probably sent copies to all the major outlets to. Those will still be fact checking and verifying the reliability of the information, but probably not for much longer. Cat saw the copies of the files that are already online and she's almost certain they're legitimate. After decades in the business you develop a feel for these things. Her gorge rises as the implications sink in. Lena is finished, probably. Even if she beats the charges – which with her lawyers she might - the damage to her reputation will haunt her for years. CatCo will be in difficulties too, between James' little revelation and now this. Cat's worry though, is all for Kara.

Kara who considers Lena a friend.

Kara who looks so hard for the good in everyone.

Kara who can't bear to lose anyone she cares about.

This could break her.

Cat curses and launches herself out of bed, mind racing ahead as she calculates everything that needs to happen over the coming day. It looks like the choice she was agonizing over less than a day ago has been made for her.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Kara is having a day.

The L-Corp leak has everyone panicking. Lena's nowhere to be seen and James doesn't seem to know what to do. He basically told everyone not to do anything with the story except repeat 'no comment' a lot and that's not going to work for long when every other news outlet in the country is running it. She can see him through Cat's glass walls now, pacing back and forth as he has a heated conversation with someone on his cell (a board member who wants to know where Lena is, super hearing told her before she stopped eavesdropping). No-one at CatCo seemed to know anything about it until it started to break on the other major outlets mid-morning, seemingly everywhere at once, although by now they know that it appeared on fringe blogs and smaller news sites in the early hours of the morning. If Cat were here she'd have flayed her staff alive for being so far behind the curve. Whoever leaked the information seems to have sent it to pretty much everyone simultaneously. Kara caught herself wondering if James missed this because he'd been distracted planning the spin for coming out as Guardian (Kara still hasn't decided how she feels about that) and then chastised herself for the uncharitable thought. Although there's a voice in the back of her head whispering that James' frustration is at least partially because the only attention Guardian is getting today is as Lena Luthor's boyfriend – and whether Lena has her own private vigilante in addition to all her other dirty laundry. It's certainly not the public reception he was hoping for, although Kara's not entirely sure what he was hoping for. She's not sure if James knows either.

CatCo's lack of comment has already become part of the story, emphasised by every talking head on the air, usually in conjunction with phrases like 'cover story' and 'conflict of interest'. The suggestion that Lena brought her share in CatCo so she could control coverage of her activities is already taking root, the speculation being repeated as fact. Kara knows that not getting ahead of the story like this is a critical failure. Aside from anything else their silence makes CatCo look complicit and the single bland, boilerplate denial of knowledge James issued isn't nearly enough to stem the tide. Other outlets have already set the tone and she remembers what Cat had to say about momentum and how quickly it can build. It was one of the reasons, Cat had told her during one of the after hours lectures she would deliver when they seemed to be the last two people working in the building, why she'd been so quick to brand Supergirl. She'd wanted to establish Supergirl as a hero before any alternative interpretation, 'noise' Cat had called it, could gain traction. It was a point Kara hadn't entirely appreciated at the time although she's been a reporter long enough now to see the effect in action.

Her personal turmoil isn't making the situation easier to deal with. Lena is being savaged by every news service in the country. At least that's what it feels like to Kara, who has spent the last several hours in a fretful cycle of checking the news, checking social media, being horrified by what people are saying about Lena, resolving not to look anymore and then worrying about what people might be saying now and checking again. There are a dozen

variations on the theme of the supers being under threat by the Luthors yet again, with more than one journalist styling it as a generational feud passed down from mother to daughter. Locally, where there's greater awareness of Supergirl's personal relationship with Lena Luthor, the tone runs more towards the betrayal of a friend and speculation, ranging from the seemingly sincere to the lurid, about how she's handling the betrayal. All the Luthor baggage Lena's worked so hard to separate herself from has caught up to her in one roaring mass of outrage. Kara aches for her friend, but the hardest part is what Lena's detractors are saying about her – about Supergirl, that is. Without exception they're angry on Kara's behalf, worried for her and about the threat they believe she faces. Some of them seem honestly afraid Lena might have hurt her, which led to Kara sneaking out for a quick, highly visible patrol of the city to reassure them. At least it worked to distract her for a little while. The worst part is that all their worry and fear, so far as she can tell, is entirely genuine.

Kara struggles to hold herself back from replying to the comments she sees. She wants to defend Lena, tell people they're mistaken, that Lena is a good person, a friend. Except . . . a lot of people have complaints and concerns that seem genuine. The more she reads, the more she realises she doesn't have good answers for some of the questions being asked. Questions she hasn't asked. Why did Lena feel it was necessary to make Kryptonite at all? How did she pay for it? How did she use L-Corp resources for such an involved project without anyone at the company knowing? What safety precautions did she take? There are L-Corp employees who are furious that their boss was experimenting with a notoriously dangerous radioactive substance inside the building where they work. There are L-Corp shareholders furious that company resources have been misappropriated for research that they don't approve of – that Lena didn't get anyone's approval for. Some of them are Supergirl supporters who only invested because they believed Lena had Supergirl's support. They're especially furious. Several legal advice blogs are speculating on how many laws Lena has broken (answer: probably a lot). A tumblr that Kara happens to know is run by another alien has a long rant about Lena's false promises of change:

‘After she came up with that fucking ‘alien detector’, which, let's face it, was mostly useful for outing aliens who were blending into earth society and living peacefully, I don't know why anyone's surprised by this bullshit. Kryptonite is really only good for killing Kryptonians, particularly for making it easy to kill them. There's no other reason to have the stuff. And if Luthor was making her own that means she had to work at it and spend a lot of money and time coming up with it. She must have wanted it pretty badly.’

When Kara found out about the Kryptonite she'd been furious and betrayed – and scared. She's felt the sheer agony of being exposed to Kryptonite, the poison that seems to exist solely to kill her and her cousin. It's still difficult to think about her actions while she was influenced by Red Kryptonite, or Kal-El affected by the Silver. And the memory of Astra being tortured with it is one of many old wounds she's not sure she ever came to terms with – it got shoved into the dark along with all the other memories she doesn't want to think about. She never thought of it as something that affected anyone but her, she realizes with something that feels uncomfortably like shame.

Kryptonite is personal. The laws Lena may have broken, the other people who might have been hurt by her actions . . . Kara's own sense of betrayal was so vast it completely overshadowed all of that. So when Kara started to wonder if she had been justified in her actions she only thought in terms of her worry, never giving a thought to anyone else's right to be angry. Now she's coming to understand that this affects a lot of people. People who are angry about being lied to. L-Corp employees who think their boss compromised them by involving the company they work for in research they don't approve of. People in the street who don't approve of private individuals 'messing about' with Kryptonite. Kara is left to wonder, are they right?

And then there's Alex.

Alex is pissed.

Alex is the angriest Kara has ever seen her, except for Jeremiah.

It hadn't occurred to Kara that she and Alex hadn't actually talked about Lena's Kryptonite, or where it really came from, or how it was stronger than natural Kryptonite or how Lena lied about why she had it . . . there's a lot she and Alex hadn't talked about.

They're certainly talking about it now.

It turns out Alex had assumed the Kryptonite was left over from Lex's obsession with Clark and that Lena hadn't known about it at first. Alex thought that was the only way Kara would be okay with Lena having it. When she'd gotten the full story, she'd started yelling about bringing Lena in for questioning and the DEO's responsibility -

Kara can't say exactly what snaps her out of her reverie, only that there's a sudden shift in the atmosphere of the office as backs straighten and heads turn or duck depending on whether the owner is more curious or fearful.

It's Lena, exiting from what Kara still tends to think of as Cat's elevator. She feels the familiar mix of hope and worry that seems to be the default whenever she sees Lena lately. Judging by the storm in Lena's eyes as she strides straight towards Kara the worry is more justified than the hope.

"Lena! Hi, are you okay, I've been so -"

Lena's tone is freezing.

"Kara. The next time you see Supergirl, I want you to tell her that I absolutely will press charges for trespass, theft, destruction of property, criminal damage-"

Kara boggles. She knows things are bad between her and Lena at the moment, but all their disagreements have been over things she's actually done, not false accusations.

"Lena, please, I don't know what you're talking about."

Kara hates the pleading note that's crept into her voice. Lately it seems like she can't talk to Lena about anything for more than a minute before her friend starts lashing out and it hurts.

"You know exactly what I'm talking about," Lena hisses. "Last night she broke into L-Corp, again. She sabotaged my security, stole confidential information and let me be clear she is not above the law. I will -"

"Actually Lena," another voice breaks in, "I strongly suspect that she didn't. And I suggest you calm down. You're making a scene."

For a second Kara brain goes completely offline at the sheer unexpectedness of that voice. Then her head snaps round in shock and from the corner of her eye she notices James doing the same thing from his office. Even Lena's eyes widen a little as she turns to face the new arrival.

Cat Grant, looking as sleekly perfect as ever in a pinstriped black body hugging dress and towering heels, elegant silver jewelry at wrist and throat.

There are so many different emotions welling up inside her Kara's hardly sure what she feels. Shock, happiness, worry, relief, discomfort, appreciation (Cat looks fantastic) and a few others she's not ready to put a name to. Seeing Cat in CatCo always makes her feel as though something wrong has been made right, her world spinning a little more steadily on its axis. But there's something about seeing Cat and Lena facing each other down like this, especially here, in a space they both lay claim to, that makes her uneasy.

"What exactly do you mean by that?"

"I don't blame you for not having heard yet," Cat says airily, in the way that she does when she's about to stick the knife in and twist, "what with everything else you're clearly failing to juggle, but there was an attempt on my life yesterday."

Kara's stomach, which has been riding its own private rollercoaster all day, decides it's time to take flight. Someone tried to kill Cat!? Again!? Why didn't she hear about – oh. Because yesterday was cleanup from Reign's earthquake and goodbyes and James outing himself . . . she's been busy.

"Miss Grant, that's terrible. Are you alright?" James asks, joining the conversation.

"Oh I'm fine. It wasn't anything major," Cat says, correctly reading their expressions – Kara's expression anyway – "just one of those ugly little militias. This one happened to be led by someone who had a brother working for Cadmus. He died during the attack on National City and after raiding some old Cadmus facilities for equipment he decided, in the absence of any kind of plan or objective, to lash out at the first convenient target. Me."

"I'm very sorry to hear that Cat, but I'm not quite seeing the relevance?" Lena's tone is cool with her impatience.

It stings Kara to hear her so dismissive of what Cat went through. Without Kara being there to protect her. Kara had thought Cat would be safe in Washington, it was one of the reasons

she'd tried to accept Cat's second departure rather than persuade her to stay in the city where the older woman seemed incapable of avoiding danger for more than five minutes at a time.

"It's relevant, Lena, because the reason I'm still here to bless you all with my presence is intervention of the super powered variety. I was saved by the timely arrival of a young woman – and I do mean young – who was very strong, very fast, bulletproof, and could also count x-ray vision and flight among her many talents. Sound familiar? I assume whoever it was that broke into L-Corp displayed similar abilities? Surely you wouldn't accuse Supergirl of serious crimes without evidence that it was her, unless you had some other reason to suspect her?"

Cat smiles like a very pleased shark.

"Another Kryptonian -"

"Cat, are you okay -"

"As interesting as this, it doesn't explain why you're here."

"Emergency board meeting. I've been invited to attend." Cat says casually, answering Lena's question. "And as it's about to start, we we'd best get going, yes?"

"No-one told me about this!" Lena snaps.

"I'm sure they would have if they could have dear, but you've been incommunicado the last few hours."

This last is tossed over shoulder as she sashays past them.

Lena and James exchange a loaded look before they both turn to follow Cat, leaving Kara standing alone in the middle of the office, suddenly aware she's the centre of attention. It's too much. For a moment Kara wants to just give up. Shut down completely, go home, crawl into bed, pull the covers up and sleep. Let all this be someone else's problem. Rao's light, doesn't it ever stop?

Someone tried to kill Cat.

There might be another Kryptonian on Earth. Kara should feel happy about it. She wants to feel happy about it. What she actually feels is trepidation. It seems like every time there's a chance to reconnect with some part of her heritage hope betrays her. She doesn't think she can handle another disappointment, especially when choosing to stay on Earth – being able to choose instead of having the choice made for her – has given her as much closure as she's ever going to get on the matter.

Oh, and there's an emergency board meeting that Cat's here to attend.

Kara can't begin to guess what that's about. Well alright, she can, but she doesn't want to think about it. Not when she doesn't know what to think.

The sound of sirens is almost a relief.

Chapter End Notes

Slight edits to correct repetitive word use, 17/8/18.

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Flying over the city is always a balancing act between getting there in time and not breaking anything on the way. It only took one editorial about the damage done by low altitude sonic booms for Kara to learn to ameliorate the effects of her high-speed flight. A few rattled windows are one thing. Knowing that the mortar bomb crack of her breaking the sound barrier was enough to set off panic attacks and flashbacks was another. A seemingly offhand observation from Cat about being able to judge when fixing the emergency in front of you justified making a mess elsewhere and when it didn't had given Kara some perspective on the matter. Besides, when you're travelling a mile every five seconds in a straight line you can get to any place in the city almost instantaneously anyway.

Kara knows almost before she sees that it's a fire. The sounds, the smell, even the distinctive way the rising heat affects the air currents over the city form a picture of their own. It's an apartment fire, only half a dozen blocks from her own place and spreading through the building fast. Too fast – Kara focuses her senses and realizes she's got seconds before a ruptured gas line explodes. She accelerates, homing in on a trio of panicked heartbeats, praying she'll get there before the ruptured gas line, revealed to her by a trace of its scent in the air, explodes. Let the windows rattle, let them shatter, lives are more important.

Even as she's homing in on the building, a heartbeat away from smashing into the right apartment, Kara realizes with growing horror she's too late. With all the stress and distraction of the last few days her timing is slightly off, only by a second, but that second is all that matters.

She sees the fireball blossom from the side of the building, sees . . .

Sees a figure in a white cape *flying* barely ahead of the explosion, her arms wrapped around a mother and her children. As Kara watches she sees the figure roll – what is she thinking, Kara panics, exposing them to the explosion – and then to Kara's shock she unleashes a gale of freezing breath, pushing back against the force of the explosion, extinguishing burning debris and sending it back into the building instead of falling on the firefighters and emergency services below. It's not something Kara's ever tried, or even thought of, her instinct always being to put her body between whoever she's protecting and danger, but it seems to have worked.

She begins to slow herself, shedding speed so she can come in alongside the other hero without disturbing their flight or jostling their passengers.

“There's a firefighter caught on the fifth floor! Everyone else is out!”

With a thought Kara changes direction, already tracking the other heartbeat that was obscured by the firefighter's breathing apparatus and the three closer heartbeats of the family already rescued. She heads in through an already blown out window and a quick application of x-ray

vision lets her locate the woman in short order, trapped behind a collapsed doorway. Kara's done this so many times it's almost routine. Almost, because she never lets herself forget that there are lives on the line.

Scan the room to make sure she's not going to hit a load bearing wall or a gas line or anything else critical.

Go in through a non-loadbearing wall in the next room from where the firefighter is so there's no risk of collapse or injuring them with debris.

Scan them for injuries she'll need to be careful of, all good, then grab, carefully, tuck their head under her chin and leave the same way she came, as fast as is safe to do so with a passenger.

Re-orient and head toward the nearest available paramedic.

Drop her off with them and head back up to see about putting the fire out.

And that's where things really stop being routine because the woman - the teenager, Kara sees as she lands, Cat was right about that – is already there, applying her freeze breath to the blaze.

She's inefficient, Kara can see. Despite her earlier trick blowing back the shockwave she doesn't know how to starve the fire of oxygen to keep it from spreading or target hotspots. Kara tries to demonstrate by example and to her credit the new girl is a quick learner. Between the two of them the fire is soon out. Kara lands to do her standard check in with the chief and sees the girl in the white cape is doing the same, landing near the family she rescued a minute ago and crouching down to speak to the younger girl.

"Supergirl! Always good to see you."

The expression on the chief's face is one she's familiar with. Respect, appreciation, gratitude, but not the awe she's uncomfortably accustomed to from people she rescues. It's why she likes dealing with emergency services – these days they tend to treat her as a fellow professional, someone who's good at her job and appreciated, not an almighty savior. Especially after the events of the last few months she appreciates that.

"Hey chief, need me for anything else?"

"Nah, I think we're all good here. Between you and your friend," he tilts his head towards where the girl in the white cloak is patting the girl on the head and accepting the thanks of her grateful mother, "we got everyone out safe."

He and Kara exchange the relieved smiles of people who know that isn't always the case.

"Hello Supergirl."

The new hero's greeting is friendly enough on the surface, but there's a wry twist to her lips as she openly looks Kara up and down that isn't exactly friendly. Kara takes in her close fitting black bodysuit without insignia and white cloak, both clearly made by someone who knows what they're doing, although the material is nothing like what Winn uses -used – for her suits. The cloak is thick and hangs with a heaviness that suggests there's armour, or something else, between its layers. Kara files that away to mention to Alex. Whoever she is, the new hero in town has someone supporting her.

“Hello . . . ?”

The girl grins at her as though she's enjoying a private joke.

“I don't really have a name yet. I'm sure someone will pick something out soon. Anyway, gotta be going. Seeya!”

With that she's off, shooting into the air with an abruptness that gives Kara a taste of what it's like for everyone else when she has to leave suddenly.

“Sorry chief, if you'll excuse me?” Kara's already airborne as she finishes speaking, wincing at the rudeness but knowing this is an opportunity she can't afford to waste.

The other Kryptonian is moving away at speed and Kara is forced to accelerate to keep up.

“Hey! Hey, I just want to talk.”

“Sorry Supergirl, no time to talk today! I've got things to do-o!” the girl calls out in a sing song as she adds speed.

Kara races after her, frowning. She's getting a definite impression that this girl doesn't like her, although she hasn't done anything hostile. It's a strange sensation for Kara. Ordinarily when people don't like her they *really* don't like her. She's accustomed to being either loved or hated when she's in the suit. There never seems to be a middle ground. This casual irreverence is something different. It feels personal, even though she knows she's never met this girl before, and that's not a good sign.

Right, Kara decides, enough playing around. A sudden burst of speed puts her alongside the other Kryptonian, who rolls away, snaps her cloak right in Kara's face and –

FLASH!

The painfully bright burst of light smashes into Kara with almost physical force, a bolt of pain that drives straight through her eyes into her brain. She's sent tumbling, falling hundreds of feet before she can bring herself to a halt, hovering half-blind, gasping as she waits for the pain to clear. By the time she can see (and think) clearly again, the girl is long gone.

What the hell was that?

Chapter End Notes

Edited for spelling errors, 17/8/18.

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Cat resists the urge to sigh or rub her temples or perform one of the dozen other tells provoked by her impending headache. Any minute now James Olsen is going to come storming in and she's not looking forward to the confrontation. She's back in her office, Lena has been ousted and the board seem mostly, well *relieved* is probably the best word to describe it, that she's back.

After being woken at an ungodly hour this morning Cat had then needed to wake a lot of other people up. Olivia, thank god, had still been awake. After nearly a year in the Marsdin administration Cat suspects Durlans need a lot less sleep than humans and that Olivia leverages that advantage ruthlessly. Olivia had understood even before Cat had explained the situation, although that explanation had led to hasty calls to the FBI and the DEO and several other federal agencies, and then to Lucy Lane, clearly dragged from her bed, showing up at the White House to be briefed on the situation. If it hadn't been such an unholy mess Cat would have felt a little smug (fine, more than a little) that *she'd* been the one to bring this to everyone else's attention. Lucy had gotten over her astonishment and horror quickly and begun to grasp the intricacies of the situation.

She's an inspired choice for handling the situation, Cat thinks. The major is a known quantity for Kara and Alex and most of the personnel at the DEO, generally liked and respected, but her posting to Washington means she's had no contact with Lena Luthor. She has far too much professionalism and integrity to let herself be swayed by those friendships and her legal background makes her well qualified to navigate the thorny ins and outs of Lena's relationship with the DEO. By five in the morning Lucy had been appointed the head of a joint taskforce between the DEO and Homeland Security that would be investigating Lena Luthor's activities and Cat was on her way to the airport to catch a flight back to National City, Carter napping in the seat next to her while she got most of the CatCo board on conference call.

It had been harder for Cat to reach some of them than it had for her to speak with the president. Fortunately, once they heard what she was calling about they went from angry from desperate in the time it took them to click the links Cat texted to them. Even more fortunately James' announcement already had some of them leaning in the direction Cat intended to shove them in, not that she'd needed to give them so much as a nudge in the end. The board hadn't exactly been thrilled with Lena's presence in the first place. Some of them struggled enough with Cat as CEO, a woman with decades of experience in the field who'd founded the company whose board they sat on. Lena arbitrarily installing herself as CEO with no prior media experience after a last-minute stock purchase had been a bitter pill for some of them to swallow. Much as she loathes the sexism involved, their concerns weren't unjustified. Lena had treated CatCo as a hobby more than a job and this latest scandal had been the last straw. Once they'd heard Cat might be available to resume her former position they'd practically fallen over themselves to offer her the job. It won't last, Cat is well aware,

but presented with the opportunity to dodge the fallout of Lena's actions by replacing her with Cat - whose brand and reputation have only been enhanced by her time as White House Press Secretary – they'd been all too eager to support her.

Lena had tried to fight it and been shocked to discover she couldn't. The shareholders agreement under which Lena was able to buy a controlling interest in CatCo for rather less than half of what the shares were worth specified that she was legally obligated to sell them back to Cat – at the same percentage of their current value she'd paid for them – provided Cat could pay the sum in full and had no conflicting obligations. Lena had tried to cite Cat's position as WHPS and thrown what was essentially a very reserved tantrum when Cat had informed her she'd resigned from the position that morning. Then she'd tried to refuse to sell and been told in no uncertain terms that this wasn't an option. Cat's trustee hadn't done enough to protect her company from Edge's attempted takeover, but her lawyers had written an airtight contract for the purchase.

Lena hadn't seemed to know how to handle someone who simply refused to go along with what she wanted no matter what.

"I thought that the board had moved beyond being suspicious of my motives simply because of my last name. I can't help my last name. I can't help the crimes of my family. But I shouldn't be held accountable for them. I would have thought that after last time the board would know better than to leap to conclusions."

Lena could certainly declaim with the best of them, Cat had privately acknowledged at the time. Her charisma and looks had probably carried her through more than one awkward encounter where the facts weren't on her side, and having James Olsen standing behind her looming angrily added nicely to the effect. Unfortunately for Lena Cat had bulldozed through too many confrontations using similar tactics to be impressed.

"No-one's holding you accountable for any crimes but your own, Lena. The ones you're suspected of, that is. There's a slight difference between accusations from a private individual based on wholly circumstantial evidence and the FBI wanting to speak to you because your own files indicate you broke so many federal laws I need the calculator app on my phone to keep track of them."

Behind Lena James looks uncomfortable and Cat wonders how much he knows. Meanwhile Lena seems determined to brazen it out.

"I haven't done anything wrong. You have no right to pass judgment on me!"

"Mm-hmm. You're right Lena, you won't be judged by me, you'll be judged by a court of law. They work on evidence and I understand there's rather a lot of that. But even if you're found innocent on all charges I don't need a justification to claim my shares back. And the board doesn't need any more reason than loss of confidence to move to have you replaced."

That had been that. She hadn't looked defeated as she stormed out of the boardroom – Cat's not sure Lena Luthor understands the concept, which is a trait she might admire if it wasn't rooted in privilege even greater than Cat's own (Cat sure as hell hadn't inherited a multibillion dollar company before the age of thirty-five, she'd had to make hers) – but she

had looked shocked. Was that why she'd been so willing to sign the contract in the first place, Cat wonders? Did Lena think she would just always get her own way?

And she still hasn't had a moment to talk to Kara yet. Cat wishes there had been time for that earlier, rather than casually upending Kara's world as she breezed past, but there hadn't been time. And there isn't time now, because a furious James Olsen is barging into her office.

Oh, how pleasant this is going to be.

As James storms in Cat makes a private bet with herself over whether he's more pissed at Lena losing her job or his own impending demotion.

"James, come in, have a seat – and close the door behind you."

James at least has the grace to sit down instead of trying to loom over her. As soon as he has he leans forward, expression firm yet compassionate. Cat realises, with crystallising disappointment, that he thinks he's going to explain things to her.

This conversation is going to be more unpleasant than either of them were expecting.

"Are you sure this is a good idea Cat?"

"Would you care to clarify that statement, James?"

She knows perfectly what he means, but Cat wants to see exactly how deep a hole James is willing to dig for himself.

"Don't you think this is kind of an overreaction? I mean, quitting your job, rushing back to CatCo . . . I'm sure this is all going to blow over soon. The media is overreacting. This time next week they'll be fixated on something else. You know how it goes."

Cat resists the urge to roll her eyes. Does he think he can magically make all this go away?

"James. When the CEO of a major company is caught fiddling around with Kryptonite, it's slightly more significant than Kanye's latest twitter idiocy. When the media outlet the aforementioned CEO has a significant stake in is the only news source in the country not commenting on her actions, the words 'conflict of interest' are not nearly sufficient to describe the fiasco."

"Lena only wanted to help. You have no right to punish her just because -"

"Maybe she did. But until I hear a good explanation for why she wanted to use *my* company to whitewash her reputation after she got caught violating multiple federal laws pertaining to the unlawful creation of radioactive material I'm reserving judgment."

James has the look of someone who wants to say something and hasn't realized they don't have a rebuttal until after they've opened their mouth. Cat's been seeing quite a bit of that lately. What is it about Lena Luthor, she wonders, that persuades people to leap to her

defense when her actions should condemn her? How does she cast herself as the victim and still look strong?

“You wouldn’t be saying any of this if her last name wasn’t Luthor.”

Cat has had enough of this.

“This isn’t about her last name, James. For the last time, it’s about what she’s actually done! Did you know Kryptonite is defined as a nuclear byproduct material? I didn’t, before this morning. Apparently the nuclear regulatory commission takes that sort of thing very seriously. Homeland Security also want to talk to Lena because having quantities of the material that can be used to kill Superman and Supergirl is a national security issue. The FBI want to know if she lied during the investigation into her brother’s activities. The SEC want to know how she paid for all that very expensive research – it turns out manufacturing an exotic radioactive element that doesn’t occur naturally on earth is expensive, who knew? And OSHA want to know what kind of safety precautions she was taking while working with radioactive material that sometimes goes boom all over the place!”

She has to pause to take a breath and James seizes the opportunity.

“Lena would never put anyone’s life in danger like that. She was careful,” he breaks off for a second, thinking. “You know she offered to step down before, when Edge accused her of poisoning those kids? That’s how serious she is about doing the right thing. Just the possibility that she might have harmed someone horrified her.”

“I did hear about that,” Cat says, dry as any martini she’s ever had. “Although I imagine that it was an easy offer to make when she knew she was innocent.”

There had been a *lot* of information in those files, and while everyone else focused on the Kryptonite Cat, once she’d looked beyond that shiny, dramatic distraction, had been struck by what *else* had been released. One of the more interesting tidbits was information on the weapon Lena had used during the Daxamite attack. Give the woman her due, she’d gone to some effort to make sure it was safe for anyone born on planet earth. She’d also refrained from releasing that information when Edge made his allegations, even though it could have cleared her in a heartbeat.

James’ eyes widen. Has he actually read any of the leaked files himself or did he default to playing the gallant knight for his girlfriend without bothering to find out what he was protecting her from? Not that Lena Luthor needs anyone to protect her, in Cat’s opinion.

It clicks, suddenly, the way he’s speaking, the way he’s acting. James isn’t denying that Lena did any of these things, he isn’t even questioning it. He’s denying that it matters. The rush of clarity as Cat realises exactly what he’s done – or what he hasn’t done – overwhelms her for a second.

“You knew.”

“What?”

“About the Kryptonite. You knew that Lena had made it all along. For how long James? How long did you know that Lena Luthor had broken multiple federal laws, misused company property, conducted dangerous experiments without oversight and played around with a material that’s fatal to Supergirl and Superman without reporting it to the authorities or writing about it?”

“Write about it? You think I should have done an expose on *Lena*?”

He stares at her as though it’s the most outrageous thing he’s ever heard.

“We had a conversation once, do you remember? About the duty of journalists to tell the truth? About what happens when we don’t?”

“It’s not the same. Lena’s actions didn’t hurt anyone -”

“Yet. You didn’t report it. It never even occurred to you that you should report it, did it? Tell me, James, were you protecting your girlfriend or covering for your boss when you made that decision?”

In fairness, Cat doesn’t really think James was thinking with his dick. He was thinking with his *pride*, too invested in the role of protector to see anything else.

“You’re fired, James.”

“You’re not serious.”

“You failed to do your job, failed to act with an ounce of professional integrity and you abused your position at CatCo to suppress a major story because you found it personally convenient to do so. In the process you probably made yourself an accessory after the fact to several criminal acts. Yes James, I am serious. You. Are. Fired. Be grateful it’s not out of a cannon from the top of this building!”

James lurches out of his chair, gaping at her. Cat braces for the torrent of vitriol, the condemnation. She’s heard it all before, although it’ll sting a little more coming from this man she once genuinely liked and respected.

It doesn’t come.

“As easy as that.”

“There’s nothing easy about it, James. Even without this disappointing revelation, the Guardian thing -”

“The Guardian *thing*?”

Now he’s getting properly angry. This is personal, in a way that defending Lena wasn’t. For a moment Cat considers letting it go. It’s been a day of ugly confrontations and revelations and she doesn’t particularly want another, especially when she’s already fired him. Only

there are things she wants to say to Mr Olsen, things she thinks he needs to hear, and this is the last chance she'll have for a while have to say them.

"Yes James, the Guardian thing. When you decided that being in charge of a Fortune 500 company wasn't enough of a challenge and decided to take up vigilantism on the side."

"You mean when I decided to step up and make a difference. Be a hero," he declares, so full of self-righteous certitude it wafts off him like a chemical weapon.

There's a difference, Cat thinks, between feeling you have a duty to help and wanting to be known for it. She's known some remarkable people in her time, many more heroes than just the ones who can fly, and one thing they all had in common is that none of them *wanted* to be a hero. They were all simply doing what they felt they had to.

"I know you've saved lives, James. And I know you've risked yours. I won't pretend that means nothing. But was dressing up in a silly outfit and hitting people really the best way you could think of to help people? A black belt and some fancy body armour don't make you special."

"I *help* people, and -"

"And you couldn't do that with the resources of CatCo at your disposal? Or was setting editorial policy and exposing social injustice not as fun than punching out thugs in back alleys? And now you've gone public. Couldn't resist the glory, could you?"

James' expression tightens, and he leans forward, intense.

"I decided I didn't want to hide. No mask, no secrets. I wanted people to know who was helping them. You can't understand what it means for people to see a hero and know it's someone like me."

"You're right, I can't. That's why I wanted you for *this* job. You were qualified, yes. You had the experience in the field that I wanted anyone who took over to have. I believed that you would give the job your all, which I was clearly mistaken about, but more than that I wanted you to bring that perspective to CatCo. Especially now, when bigots and cowards and idiots preach intolerance and fear and act as though their privilege is a divine right I wanted someone at the helm who understood what it's like to live with that prejudice in a way I never could. I thought you understood that."

James rears back in genuine astonishment. Did he truly not realise? Regret slices into Cat, sharp and deep.

"Instead you threw the opportunity away because felt left out of the superhero club. You can't be someone who reports the news, or worse someone who sets editorial policy for the people who *do*, if you're also someone who makes the news they report on. You were responsible for deciding the stance CatCo reporters would take while *reporting on your own actions!*"

"What about Kara? She reports on herself. She *interviews* herself!"

James clearly regrets the words as soon as they're said. Does he still honestly imagine she doesn't know who Kara is? A full face helmet didn't stop her from identifying him. Truthfully, Cat had put that together before she'd ever set foot back in National City but pretending to 'recognise' him had been hilarious and the least of what he deserved for thinking he could fool her like that.

"*Kara* doesn't determine policy for one of the largest media conglomerates in the country. Kara didn't put herself on the front page in a secret identity *after* she'd been a journalist for more than a decade and Kara didn't have editorial oversight of a large number of the people reporting on her activities! I should have dealt with this before now, only you'd been tolerably careful about not meddling in Guardian coverage and Olivia made her offer."

Cat's voice rises steadily until she's roaring at him as she launches out of her chair.

"Then you outed yourself and put every CatCo reporter, writer and editor in an untenable position! They couldn't write about anything you're involved in without their reporting being distorted by knowing that they're writing about their boss. Anyone reading an article they'd written in which you appeared would be within their rights to question their objectivity."

James mutters it under his breath, but Cat catches it all the same.

hypocrite

"Hypocrite, James," she asks, her voice going soft in a way the signals an imminent evisceration. James clearly recognizes it too, but he's past the point of caring.

"I'm guessing you never gave Kara this lecture," he sneers.

"Kara's saved the world a couple of times. Kara wasn't in a position to make a bigger difference in the world outside of her costume than in it. The crucial difference, James is that Kara and Clark -"

James feels himself tense with shock but Cat merely rolls her eyes at him.

"- Yes of course I know who they both are, I've known for ages, *not the point*."

"You know about Clark?"

Cat actually rolls her eyes at him, unimpressed that he's hung up on the irrelevancy.

"He used to leave his clothes in the toilets after a quick change and he always smelt of smoke and gunpowder and burnt rubber. It was fairly obvious. The difference, as I was trying to say, is that they didn't seek power. It came to them and they had to make a choice about what to do with it. Whether or not they could live with wasting it. You went the other way."

A long, silent moment passes.

"I guess there's nothing else to say."

“I suppose not,” Cat sighs.

“James!”

“What?”

James grits his teeth. He doesn't want to drag this scene out with Cat any further, especially not in his office – her office again (did it ever really stop being her office?) - in front a dozen CatCo staffers. He doesn't want what he suspects will be the last conversation he has with her for a while to end with shouting. But when he turns around Cat look less hostile than he expected and she's holding out a plain cream card. It's for him, obviously, but he's cautious as he crosses over to her.

“What's this?”

Cat's gaze is steady. He's not afraid to look her in the eye, but it's not the easiest thing he's ever done.

“Bruce Wayne's personal line. He's been looking to expand into media. Not on this scale, it's more of a personal project for him, improving the quality of local journalism in major cities starting with Gotham, but you might find it interesting. It's more of a consulting position, not editorial, so there wouldn't be a conflict of interest. You probably wouldn't have to relocate. Even if you don't want the job,” she pauses, thoughtful rather than hesitant, “call him anyway. I think you'll find the conversation fruitful.”

James manages a nod and takes a few steps forward so he can accept the card, recognizing the gesture for what it is, reminded after the conversation he just had why he does respect this woman as much as he does.

“James. I hope the choices you've made work out for you. I do. But you can't be the Guardian and work here.”

“Thanks,” he manages as he takes the card.

Then he's gone.

Chapter End Notes

Tiny editing mistake fixed, 2/8/18.

Chapter 8

“As far as I can tell, you’re fine. Going by your symptoms whatever she hit you with worked like a directed stun grenade, but it didn’t have any permanent effect.”

“Thanks Alex,” Kara sighs. After her confusing encounter checking in with the DEO seemed like a good idea – especially after she got a call from Alex demanding that she come in to be debriefed on her encounter with their new mystery.

“Are you sure she was Kryptonian? Unless you’ve been holding out on me all this time about your freaky flash powers.”

Kara wrinkles her nose at Alex’s phrasing, not least because it reminds her of Barry in a *really* awkward way.

“That’s the weird thing. I don’t think that was a power. The way she moved – it looked like there was something built into the cloak she was wearing. And yeah, she was definitely Kryptonian. Between the flying and the freeze breath I’m pretty sure. I don’t even know of another species of alien that has that combination of powers. Cat thought she was Kryptonian too.”

“Yeah, I’ve seen the report. She was pretty sure our mystery girl had x-ray vision and super hearing. Taken together it’s pretty conclusive.”

Alex sighs and the sound sums up Kara’s own weariness nicely. Her sister is having to field some awkward questions about why the DEO didn’t do anything about Lena’s Kryptonite and Alex doesn’t have a good answer. Beyond Alex’s initial blow up they haven’t talked about it – yet – but Kara knows Alex isn’t thrilled with her for the complication Kara has brought into her professional life when she should be settling into her new position. One more thing to feel guilty about. One more thing she can’t explain even to herself now that she’s confronted with it.

“A Kryptonian flying around with anti-Kryptonian weaponry? That’s not good.”

Kara slumps. Having this new, not-exactly-friendly, Kryptonian in town is bringing back bad memories of discovering Astra was alive and present on Earth. Compared to a lot of the aliens she’s met this encounter was positively peaceful. Even so, between discovering Argo City and finding her mother still alive, only to have to say goodbye to her again, the old wounds have been rubbed a little raw.

“I wish Winn was here for this,” Alex adds after a moment.

“Yeah. It was weird, though. She wasn’t angry, she didn’t attack me, she just . . .”

By now Kara is familiar with the sensation of an investigation coming together as the pieces begin to align - Cat's comment about the hero who saved her being young, memories of a teenaged Alex asserting her independence. The thought is there, right on the edge of being known, the one that will provide the framework to turn an arbitrary set of facts into something coherent.

"Just what?"

"She was showing off," Kara realizes, the idea coming taking shape as she speaks it.

"She's a bratty teenager and she was showing off."

An hour later Kara's trying to sneak back into CatCo without its namesake noticing she was gone. Under other circumstances she might be enjoying the nostalgia of it. As things are it's one more reminder of how much things have changed and are changing again.

she can hear Cat's voice from down the hall and as she enters the office she sees that Cat's/James'/Lena's/Cat's office again (that's going to be confusing for a while) is packed with staff. Department heads, the cream of CatCo's investigative journalists and reporters and the most high profile columnists, all the people who'll have a stake in a story this large and wide-ranging. Cat is in fine form as she declaims and Kara wishes she could appreciate the sight, the queen returned to her throne, without being weighed down by thoughts of why she's back. Even so, it's a bright spot in Kara's day to see Cat Grant in full and passionate flight.

"We print what we can prove, people! Our job is to ask the questions and look for the answers – not decide in advance what we think the answers *should* be! Especially when we have the rare luxury of the truth being interesting enough without having to embellish it! We might not have been the first to run with this story, but we will be the best."

"The implications -" one of the investigative reporters begins, only to get cut off.

"Yes, yes, there are all sorts of interesting implications to Ms Luthor's actions. Let's be careful to distinguish between evidence and opinion. According to some of the coverage I've seen she's plotting to set off Kryptonite bombs in childcare centres, assassinate President Marsdin and may also be responsible for faking the moon landing and reanimating Elvis! Our readers look to us to make sense of these situations, not contribute to the confusion. I'm seeing a lot of assumptions being made. About what Supergirl thinks of this whole mess, for instance. Tell me, has anyone actually spoken to her?"

Silence. Cat mm-hm's with a clear lack of surprise.

"I thought not. I'd quite like to know what the woman herself thinks, not what everyone imagines she must think. You can all put that on your to-do lists, in addition to everything else."

Cat's gaze ranges across the assembled staff and, judging them suitably chastened, flings both hands out to wave them off.

“Alright go, get, you know your jobs. Kara, in here, now.”

Kara's not surprised that Cat noticed her hovering

She steps to the side to let the other employees flow past her, getting some glances, sympathetic and not, from those she knows personally. Kara made a lot of friends during her time as Cat's assistant for her ability to wrangle their mercurial and uncompromising boss, but not everyone believes she succeeded on her merits. At first Kara hadn't really grasped how unusual it was for Cat to allow anyone the familiarity she'd been permitted, so she hadn't given much thought to what her burgeoning friendship with Cat looked like from the outside. Later she'd decided not to think too much about what so many other people saw that made them think what they did about her and Cat.

After Cat came James, whose friendship and supposedly former romantic interest in Kara were an open secret, and then there was Lena, who liked to play favourites and was neither shy or subtle about it. Between her close relationships with all three of them Kara's acquired a reputation for always being the boss' pet. She can't do anything about it except work hard, be the best reporter she can be and trust that her actions will speak for themselves.

As Kara enters the office Cat is already heading out to the balcony, gesturing for Kara to join her. She hangs back a little, admiring the picture Cat makes, sunlight glinting off her jewelry, the breeze ruffling her hair slightly.

“She should release a statement,” she says absently as Kara joins her outside. “Supergirl, I mean,” she clarifies.

Kara hates the false little chuckle that Cat's words startle out of her.

“Why are you telling me this,” she pauses uncertainly, “Miss Grant?”

Cat says nothing for a long few seconds and Kara senses that she's trying to decide what to say. It's strange. Cat is never, ever, lost for words. When all else fails she'll leap right in with absolute certainty that if she talks for long enough her point will somehow materialise. Kara can't remember ever seeing Cat hesitate like this.

When Cat does speak her tone is odd. Trying to be light and instead falling somewhere between sad, tired and something Kara would almost call jealous, except that it's not quite any of those things.

“You can still me Cat, Kara. We're friends, aren't we?” It's not quite a question. “And you're the one with all the Supergirl exclusives, these days. You're the closest thing she has to an official spokesperson.”

The notion that she's her own press agent startles a more honest laugh out of Kara, even if there's something slightly off-putting about the idea.

“Right. And I'm always going to be your friend - Cat.”

“Even when I've just booted another friend of yours out of CatCo?”

“Even then,” Kara replies, and it’s true. It’s not her nature to spurn one friend over another, no matter how worried she is on Lena’s behalf. She heard it on her way into the building, snatches of a dozen different gossipy conversations alerting her to news that wasn’t especially surprising. Seeing Cat back in her office had only confirmed something she’d been anticipating, on some level, since the moment she first heard about the leak. Still -

“Did you have to do it?”

Kara hates how plaintively the words come out. She knows how unimpressed Cat is by anything she perceives as begging.

“I’ve already had a very unpleasant conversation with Mr Olsen about exactly what constitutes a conflict of interest today. I hope I won’t have to have the same conversation with you. It’s not as though I stole the shares from her.”

Kara can’t help but feel torn. She does understand why Cat came rushing back to depose Lena. Is depose the right word? She knows more about the terms of Lena’s stock purchase than she probably should, which includes Cat having the right to repurchase it any time she liked. And it’s Cat’s company, the product of her hard work and vision, successful in no small part because of Cat’s own reputation. There’s a reason the name never changed.

“I feel bad for Lena,” Kara admits. “This must be horrible for her.”

Cat makes a non-committal sound.

“You do understand why I had to do this? The L-Corp leak is the biggest story in the country right now and her position at CatCo made it almost impossible for us to report the story properly. Especially after the delay in responding.”

“I know, I get it,” Kara sighs.

“You don’t like it because it hurts someone you care about.”

“Yes.”

Another stretch of silence before Cat speaks.

“When Supergirl was . . . not herself . . . I had to make a public announcement denouncing her. It was one of the hardest things I’ve ever done. She was my friend, someone I admired – someone I *liked* – and I knew that my words would hurt her. Damage her reputation in ways that might be hard for her to recover from. I did it regardless, because it had to be done. And I had faith that she would understand why I did it. I believed that she would never expect me to put personal fondness ahead of integrity. And if I was being true to the ideals she stood for, to help and care for others and to put their good ahead of personal interest, then I wasn’t truly being disloyal to her.”

Kara swallows, taking all that in. They’ve never really talked about that horrible time, the things Kara said and did, beyond Cat’s quiet acceptance afterwards, the forgiveness so

implicit it didn't need to be spoken. When Kara thought about it at all she supposed her cruelty, her words and actions, would be what haunted Cat. Not the actions Cat had to take.

Foolish her.

Cat pushes herself away from the railing suddenly, heading back into her office.

"Come on. We still have to talk about your new position."

What?

Cat's talking over her shoulder, trusting Kara has followed, as she moves around her office.

"There's an opening for a junior editor in features. You don't have to take it, but I think it would be good experience for you."

Somehow, Kara had managed to forget this feeling of being caught up Cat's wake as she charges ahead, already several thoughts beyond the conversation Kara thought they were having.

"An editing position? Now? I'm a reporter. I write stories."

It's hard not to feel a little hurt, a little insulted for that matter. The last time they'd spoken Cat had complimented her work. Doesn't she think Kara's good enough anymore?

"Some time as an editor will make you a better writer. You're at a good point in your career for this."

"Somehow, Miss Grant, I don't think this is about my professional development," Kara snaps.

Cat spins around, focused on her in a way that Kara has always found both flattering and a little unnerving.

"Kara, I'll be blunt. You're one of Lena's best friends. You wrote a piece exonerating her of involvement in the lead poisoning – when she was already your boss – and you are also, as I was just pointing out, Supergirl's chief media contact. The woman who, rightly or wrongly, is already fixed in the public mind as the chief victim of Lena's actions. You are part of this story. You're right in the middle of it. You cannot be a part of reporting it. And on that note, it might be a good idea if you didn't interview Supergirl for a while. Although she should talk to someone. Right now, a lot of other people are putting words in her mouth and the public is lapping it up."

"And you would be that someone?" Kara asks sharply.

Cat's return look is serious.

“It doesn’t have to be me,” and Kara can see how little she likes saying that, “but for all the reasons we’ve discussed it probably shouldn’t be you. If you see her before I do advise her to reach out to a reporter she’s willing to talk to. Failing that, a statement the next time someone asks her for a comment at the scene of a rescue should be sufficient. Everyone will want to ask her about it so I’m sure she’ll have plenty of opportunities.”

Kara’s spent most of the day in shock, almost numb to everything that’s happening. This, though, is too much.

“Like you’ve never let a story get personal.”

Cat takes a deep breath, clearly trying to reign in her temper. Kara wonders, a little meanly, why she’s bothering.

“Yes Kara, I have. It happens to all of us sometimes - it’s impossible to avoid. We tell ourselves that, as journalists, we’re all perfectly objective and neutral all the time and have no opinions of our own, because sometimes we need to believe that, but it’s bullshit. We’re people. We’re invested, we care. If we didn’t we wouldn’t be doing this job in the first place, and caring means it’s personal. Taking a stance on an issue and kidding yourself that you can be objective about a story you’ve been in the middle of since its inception are not the same. I’ve already had to fire James for exactly that.”

Kara doesn’t lose her train of thought then – it jumps the tracks and goes careening down a metaphorical mountainside.

“You fired James?”

Kara hears how the words come out, shocked and accusing, and winces with the knowledge that she’s set herself up for another Cat Grant lambasting. She couldn’t help it and she’s not sure she regrets it. Cat fired James? Why?

The rant Kara’s expecting doesn’t come. Instead, Cat throws herself onto the couch and lets out a sigh so evocative it could be a third participant in their conversation.

“He decided that being Lena Luthor’s boyfriend was more important than his responsibilities running CatCo. And he was more than personally compromised. By choosing to conceal information that was potentially damaging to someone who *was*, at the time, a major CatCo shareholder, he compromised the entire company. Tell me Kara, if I became aware of damaging information about a member of the CatCo board that was legitimately newsworthy, and I had proof, and I chose not to run the story because I considered them a friend, would that be ethical?”

When she puts it like that, Kara’s not sure what to say. Cat makes it all sound so black and white, so simple. When it’s someone you know and like and trust it isn’t simple at all.

“And on top of that by being Guardian – and coming out as Guardian – he undermined the ability of every CatCo journalist to report major news stories. Any story that the Guardian is part of is tainted because they’re writing about their boss, our readers *know* they’re writing about their boss and *they* know they’re writing about their boss, which means the likelihood

of their being truly objective, even if they're trying to be, is about good as my offering Megyn Kelly a job."

"You've been in the news yourself, you're a public figure. CatCo reporters have had to write stories about you."

Cat shoots her a dead-eyed look that shows what she thinks of that argument.

"There's a slight difference between fluff pieces about my attendance at a charity gala and reporting on whatever crisis most recently struck our fair city. And there's a more than slight difference between happening to be present at an event because you're a public figure and actively throwing yourself into situations you know CatCo will have to report on. James didn't get caught up in a story, he didn't get involved in the story, he chose to make himself the story."

"He only wanted to help people," Kara objects

"That's all well and good, and if he wants to keep being the Guardian I'm not stopping him. But he can't be the Guardian and run CatCo."

Kara's opening her mouth to object, not even sure what she's going to say, when Lena's name catches her attention.

The screens that dominate the wall behind Cat's desk have already been restored to their old configuration (for half a moment Kara wonders which beleaguered member of the IT department was responsible). Until now Kara was in no mood to pay them any attention.

She stares in horror at the scene playing out on every single screen in Cat's office. It's Lena, being marched out of the L-Corp building by a bevy of federal agents. In their neat suits they could almost be a retinue of her own employees if it weren't for the way they're hustling her along, or Lena's cuffed hands (the ticker along the bottom is repeating a message that Lena has 'stepped down' from her position at CatCo – no doubt Cat made sure to get that news out as quickly as possible).

She tenses with the need to act, to fly straight there and do . . . something . . . she doesn't know what, when she feels a careful pressure on her arm.

"What exactly do you think you could do, Kara? Fly down there and attack a bunch of federal agents doing their jobs? Start a fight with law enforcement?"

Cat's voice is as calm and even as Kara's ever heard it. On some level Kara recognizes she must be a mess if Cat's trying to soothe her, but she's in no mood to appreciate that right now.

"I've got to – I've got to help her. She's my friend. I have to do something."

"Does being her friend mean you have to ignore the law?"

No, of course not, Kara wants to say. So why does it feel that way? Why does she feel as though letting Lena be arrested makes her a bad friend? Kara startles as she notices a poker-faced Lucy Lane on the edge of the scene, conferring with a DEO agent Kara doesn't

recognise. It strikes her that if she does go there she'll be in conflict with people she considers friends and allies – and Lena isn't above the law.

It takes a moment for the thought to sink in and she stumbles, feeling as though she's just been sick, an experience she suffered through exactly once after getting drunk on alcohol that could actually affect her Kryptonian physiology. It's the only frame of reference she has for the combination of nausea and lightheaded clarity she's experiencing now.

“Shh, shh, easy now,” it's Cat's voice, Cat's hand firm but not ungentle between her shoulder blades, that brings Kara back to herself. She's sitting on one of the couches – when did that happen? – with Cat leaning over her.

She can't be here right now. Kara lurches to her feet, babbling excuses.

“I'm sorry, I have to go. I have to be -”

Elsewhere, anywhere that isn't here, anywhere she can't hear, can't see what's happening. CatCo is not that place.

Then she's gone.

It's not until Kara sees an evening news item about Lena which mentions that James Olsen is 'assisting authorities with their enquiries' that it dawns on her.

Cat was trying to protect her.

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