

## Signs

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# Signs

by [lostariels](#)

## Summary

When she was 12 years old, Kara was in a car accident that killed both of her parents.

Since that day she hasn't spoken a word.

Working as a librarian in National City, Kara meets Lena Luthor, and as much as she wants to talk to her, she still can't make her voice work.

# Chapter 1

## Chapter Notes

This is my first fic, please be nice.

Any feedback would be greatly appreciated.

It was quiet in the library as Kara pushed the trolley down the aisle, placing books back onto their shelves as she went.

The sound of the automatic door opening broke the silence, followed but the clicking heels as the latest person walked towards the cluster of computers in the middle of the room.

As she walked between the rows of shelves, reshelving the books still on the trolley, Kara caught glimpses of long, dark hair, and slender hands typing away at a keyboard.

Pushing the trolley back behind the counter, Kara sat back down at her desk. As she picked at her lunch, she catalogued the latest shipment of books into the library's database. She looked up as the dark haired girl at the computer stood up and walked over to the business section.

The girl was elegantly dressed, and Kara watched her as she walked, taking notice of her long, pale legs.

Spinning around in her chair, Kara made herself busy with some paperwork and tried to ignore the clicking sound the girl's heels were making as she wandered up and down the aisles.

Immersed in her paperwork, Kara didn't hear the footsteps make their way towards her until the gentle thud, of books being placed on the counter, broke her concentration.

She spun her chair around to face the person standing on the other side of the desk. It was the girl again, standing behind a stack of books, with a smile playing at the corners of her mouth.

“Hi, I’d like to borrow these books please,” she said, holding out her membership card. Kara took the card and scanned the barcode, bringing up the woman’s profile on her computer.

Lena Luthor.

That was her name.

Kara handed her back her card and took the first book off the top of the pile. *Electroanalytical Chemistry*. Kara raised her eyebrows in surprise. The rest of the books also surprised her: physics, computer programming, business and economics.

She placed the last book back on top and gave Lena a smile.

Lena thanked her and picked up her pile of books, and with a smile, walked towards the front door. Kara watched her leave, and blushed when Lena looked back at her before opening the door.

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That night, at Alex’s place, Kara couldn’t stop thinking about a pair of piercing green eyes, and a smirk playing at the corner of a pair of lips.

“Kara?” Alex’s voice cut through her daydreaming.

Kara shook herself out of it, and turned to look at Alex, giving her a questioning look. Alex rolled her eyes and repeated her question.

“How was work today?”

Kara smiled at her sister, and flashed her a quick ‘OK’ with her thumb and index finger, once again thinking about Lena Luthor. As she picked up another slice of pizza she wondered when she would see her next.

## Chapter 2

It was a week before Kara saw Lena again. Kara thought about her every day for those seven days. Why hadn't she seen her at the library before? Was she new to National City? Where did someone with an interest in electroanalytical chemistry, of all things, work?

Since she'd opened up the library that morning, every time the door had slid open Kara had eagerly looked up from her computer screen, hoping it was Lena, only to be disappointed when it was a college student cramming for finals, or a mom bringing her baby to the kids corner for story time.

It was one o'clock, and Kara was reorganising the shelves in the romance section when the sound of the automatic door opening caught her attention, followed by the gentle thud of books being placed back in the return box.

Kara peered around the end of the bookshelf to see who the new arrival was, but was disappointed again when she saw it was just one of the college students on their way out. She sighed as she pushed the trolley back up the aisle, picking up the next book and crouching down to slide it back into its place.

As Kara stood back up she found herself staring into the same eyes she'd been dreaming about all week. Lena Luthor stared back at her through the bookshelf, a smile slowly spreading across her face. Trying to mask her surprise at seeing her, Kara smiled back at Lena, ducking her head down as she felt her cheeks flush with excitement.

"Oh, it's you again!" Lena said, sounding a bit surprised to see Kara.

"I didn't see you when I walked in," she continued, walking around the bookcase to stand in front of Kara, "I was wondering if you could help me, I'm looking for something."

Kara nodded enthusiastically, her smile widening. She was still a little bit in awe at how beautiful Lena was, and the fact that she was here, again!

“I’m looking for any books you might have on pathogens and viruses, particularly airborne ones,” Lena said as Kara nodded, gesturing for her to follow.

As Kara led Lena over to the science section of the library, she snuck little glimpses at her out of the corner of her eye, biting her lip to hide a smile when she realised Lena was doing the same thing. They wound their way through the bookcases, until Kara stopped in front of a shelf and started pulling out books about pathogens and viruses.

One by one she passed them up to Lena, feeling a thrill pass through her body when Lena’s fingers touched the back of her hand. She looked up and felt her face turning red when she realised how close Lena’s face was to hers. She awkwardly ducked her head, pushing her glasses up the bridge of her nose, as she picked up the rest of books and stood back up.

“Thank you so much for your help! You’re a lifesaver,” Lena gushed, as another smile spread across her face. Kara’s hands fluttered at her sides, making half formed signs as she acknowledged Lena’s thanks with a dip of her head.

They slowly walked towards the end of the aisle, carrying a pile of books each. Lena led them both over to the counter, waiting as Kara walked around, and sat behind her desk. Slowly, Kara began to scan each book, as Lena leant her elbows on the counter, her chin resting on her interlocked fingers.

“You don’t talk much do you,” Lena mused, her lips turning up at the corners.

Kara closed her eyes, and exhaled through her nose as a gentle sigh. She opened her eyes to look in Lena’s piercing green eyes, a faint smile playing on her lips.

*‘I don’t know if you understand sign language, but I don’t talk because I can’t’*

Kara’s fingers flitted through the familiar signs, watching Lena’s face as her playful smirk was replaced with a shocked and slightly embarrassed expression as she realised that Kara couldn’t talk.

“Oh my God, I’m so sorry, I’m such an idiot, I had no idea you were deaf, I’ve been talking to you this entire time and you probably have no idea what I’ve been saying-” Lena rambled on, as Kara suppressed a laugh.

Reaching for the notepad and pen she kept next to her desk, Kara quickly wrote out *‘I’m not deaf, I just can’t talk’* before holding it up for Lena to read. Still halfway through her tirade, Lena stopped when she realised Kara was holding up the notepad. With her elbow still propped up on the counter, Lena placed her face in her palm, her long, dark hair spilling across the counter.

“Well now I’m even more embarrassed,” Lena laughed, looking back up at Kara, who was scribbling away at the notepad.

*‘No problem, I get it all the time, everyone thinks that the only people who need sign language are deaf people’*

Kara held the notepad out for Lena, exchanging it for another one of the books. She smiled down at her desk as she scanned the barcode on the backs of the rest of the books, placing them back on the counter in a neat pile.

“I’ll remember that for next time-“ Lena said, breaking off midsentence. “Sorry, I don’t know your name,” she said sheepishly, waiting as Kara picked up the notepad again.

*‘My name’s Kara, it’s nice to meet you’*

Lena smiled again, her eyes gently crinkling at the corners. She extended one of her delicate, pale hands towards Kara. After subtly wiping them on her trousers, Kara shook her hand, the tingly feeling in her stomach making her heart race.

“I’m Lena, it’s nice to meet you too Kara.”



Later that night, Kara knocked on the door of Alex's apartment, ready for 'sister plus Maggie' night with pizza's in hand.

It was Maggie who opened the door, flashing Kara a smile that showcased her dimples.

"Hey Kara! Need a hand?" Maggie beamed at her, opening the door wider and grabbing a pizza box off the top of the pile.

Moving further into the apartment, Kara spotted Alex sat on the sofa in her pyjamas. Handing her a pizza box, she flopped down next to her, taking a slice out of her own box.

"Hey, I was starting to think you were going to bail on us," Alex said through a mouthful of pizza.

*'And miss an episode of Homeland? Not a chance'*

Kara signed back at her, her pizza slice clamped between her teeth.

Maggie carried over three beers, and cuddled in next to Alex, reaching over to Kara to hand her one.

"Anything exciting happen at the library today?" Alex asked, pressing play on the latest Homeland episode. Kara felt her face going red as she toyed with her bottle of beer, wondering whether she should tell her sister about Lena. Freeing up her hands, she started to sign her answer.

*'I met someone today. We've met before, but today we actually talked. It's nothing big, but they're really nice'*

“Wait, you *met* someone?” Alex exclaimed, choking on her mouthful of beer. “Like someone you like?”

“Wait, what” Maggie asked, “I only got like half of what you said, you know I can’t keep up when you sign that fast.”

“She met someone, someone she likes, Kara actually talked to them,” Alex replied, filling Maggie in on what she missed.

Kara rolled her eyes and gestured to get their attention.

*'Hello I'm right here! I don't like like her, we've only talked once, but she's nice and kind, and she didn't even get scared off when I started signing'*

Alex and Maggie shared a knowing look, before turning back to Kara. She nervously pushed her glasses up her nose and took a bite of her pizza.

“So what’s her name?” Alex asked.

*'Lena Luthor'*

“LENA LUTHOR?!” Maggie yelled, “like THE Lena Luthor?”

Kara gave her a confused look and shrugged her shoulders, wondering what the big deal was, and if her Lena was in fact THE Lena Luthor, as Maggie put it.

“Her brother’s Lex Luthor, he's serving 3 life sentences for setting off a bomb in congress last year, apparently his sister just moved here to take over as CEO of the company,” Alex explained, “they’re in the middle of rebranding Luthor Corp, they lost a lot of investors after what Lex did.”

“You might want to be careful there, Danvers,” Maggie cautioned, reaching across to give Kara’s knee an affectionate pat, before turning back to the TV.

Kara sat there dumbfounded. She weighed this against everything she knew about Lena, which wasn’t much beyond her taste in books. Now that she thought about it, the obscure topics made sense for the kind of research and technology Luthor Corp had produced in the past.

Then there was the fact that Lena seemed so eager to get Kara to talk to her. Kara didn’t want to read into it too much, especially after learning that Lena had just moved to National City. It struck Kara as quite odd that the CEO of a multi-billion-dollar company would want to talk to a librarian, and then it hit her.

She’s lonely.

# Chapter 3

## Chapter Notes

I kind of wasn't expecting this many people to read it, so thank you.

I'll try my best to get chapters up as fast as I can.

The next time it was three days.

Kara was just walking back into the library after her lunch break when she spotted Lena standing between the rows of books, reading the back of the book clutched in her hand.

Kara let herself behind the counter, waving at her best friend Winn, who was the library's I.T. guy, before sitting behind her desk. She took a sip from her coffee and peeked over the top of her computer screen to catch a glimpse of Lena, who was pulling another book off the shelves.

A small crease formed between Kara's eyebrows as she watched Lena. Surely it wasn't right to judge her because of her brother? She seemed so sweet, especially when she got flustered the other day. Even now, as Kara gazed at her, Lena looked so normal, flipping through the pages of the book she held.

A few minutes later Lena headed out of the stacks of books, carrying a small pile with her. Kara stared at her, hoping she'd look over, and when Lena's attention slide to the front desk, Kara waved. A wide smile lit up Lena's face as she strode towards Kara.

"I was wondering where you were!" Lena said by way of greeting, as Kara reached for the nearest notepad.

*'Lunch break! I had to make a coffee stop'*

Kara held up the notepad, picking up the cup of coffee she'd forgotten about whilst she'd been gazing at Lena. She took a sip, waiting for Lena's reply.

"I'm just finishing up my own lunch break, I thought I'd swing by and pick up some new reading material," Lena explained, "I'm glad I caught you before I left."

Kara smiled down at the notepad, biting her lip as she scrawled down a reply.

*'I wasn't expecting you back so soon, you still have a four more days left on those books you borrowed'*

Lena let out a short laugh, quickly clapping her hand over her mouth as the sound disturbed the silence of the library. Lena mouthed an apology at an irritated college student who was glaring at her over the top of his laptop. She leaned in closer to Kara, dropping her voice to a whisper.

"I thought I'd make an early return, there were some new topics that caught my attention last time I was here."

With a smile, Kara picked up the first book. *Signing for Dummies*. She quickly looked back up at Lena, who was still leaning over the counter with a smirk on her face.

"Someone reminded me that sign language isn't just for deaf people," Lena whispered, winking at Kara. Or at least she tried to wink. It came off as more of a blink, which Kara thought was even cuter. Feeling her face flush, Kara picked up the next book, getting flustered when she realised it was another book on American Sign Language.

Scanning the last book, Kara placed it on top of the rest of the pile. Six books. All on sign language. She couldn't stop smiling as she handed Lena back her library card.

"Well, I better get to it," Lena said, picking up the books and flashing Kara another smile, "I'll see you next time."

It wasn't a question.

Lena knew she'd be back to see Kara, checking out more books as an excuse to keep coming back.

And Kara knew that she would be counting down the days until she saw Lena again.

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It was Friday night, which meant that Kara was at Maggie's favourite dive bar, squished into a booth with Winn, who she'd dragged along with her.

Alex and Maggie carried over beers for everyone, before settling in opposite Kara and Winn. They were already deep in conversation about one of Maggie's cases at the police department.

"So we managed to track one of the guys to an abandoned warehouse where they'd been setting up their underground fight club. We took him into the station, and within five minutes of interrogating him we had the name of the person behind it," Maggie said, looking smug.

"Right, because you're soooo intimidating," Alex laughed, "what'd you do, flash your dimples at him? I bet he was terrified."

"I'll have you know I can be very threatening when I want to be Danvers," Maggie pouted, pretending to scowl as Kara and Winn joined in with Alex's laughter.

*'Okay detective dimples'*

Kara signed at Maggie, triggering another round of laughter.

“Hey! I understood that,” Maggie huffed, crossing her arms, “learning sign language for you was a terrible idea, you’re wounding my pride here Kara,” she joked.

“We’re just messing with you babe, I’m very proud of you,” said Alex, kissing Maggie on her cheek, “but you have to admit, you’re dimples are super cute.”

Kara smiled, she felt all warm inside seeing Alex happy with the person she loved. Taking a sip of beer, her mind turned to someone else she knew with cute dimples.

“Kara?”

She brought herself back to the conversation, looking at Winn who had just spoken. “Are you okay? You’ve been distracted all day,” he continued.

She nodded, smiling as she held up her empty bottle of beer. She gestured towards the bar as she got up. Taking the empty bottle with her, she pointed at it and held four fingers up at the bartender.

As she waited she thought about what Winn had said. It was true, she’d been distracted all day thinking about Lena, and had come to the conclusion that she would make up her own mind about her. She understood why Alex had told her to be careful, she had always been too trusting, but she knew her trust wasn’t misplaced in Lena.

As she carried the bottles back to their booth, she smiled to herself.

She couldn’t wait to see Lena again.

## Chapter 4

It was Wednesday morning and Kara was walking out of her favourite café with a vanilla latte in one hand, and a paper bag containing a cinnamon roll in the other. She shaded her eyes with the bag, noticing a familiar beige trench coat sticking out in the crowd.

It was Lena.

Kara wanted to call out her name to get her attention, but knew that it was hopeless. Not being able to talk was rarely an inconvenience to Kara, the people closest to her knew sign language, and she could get by with simple gestures and written notes if she needed to. But then sometimes, like when she wanted to get a girl's attention, it was the most frustrating thing in the world to her.

Luckily for Kara, Lena was walking straight towards her. As she got closer, Kara waved her hand holding her cinnamon roll, catching Lena's attention. Lena's face lit up when she realised it was Kara.

"Sorry, I was in a world of my own, I almost didn't see you then," Lena said as she moved closer. Kara tried to reply, but realised she didn't have a spare hand to write with. She gestured to Lena to wait a moment, clamping the paper bag between her teeth and pulling out her phone. She quickly typed out a reply and held her phone out to Lena.

*'I was just stopping for some coffee before work, I thought I'd say hi'*

Lena handed Kara her phone back. "I'm glad you did, it's been a terrible morning so far, I could use some cheering up," she replied with a grimace as someone walking past bumped into her. Kara took her by the elbow and steered her towards one of the tables outside the coffee shop, moving out of the way of the stream of shoppers and business people rushing down the street.

Kara waited for Lena to settle into the chair opposite her before pointing at her and giving her the OK sign, figuring that Lena would understand.



“Just family and work stuff you know,” Lena sighed, “my mom’s in town for this business gala, which is a nightmare, and there’s so much work to be done at the office, and so much planning to make sure it all goes well.”

Kara recalled Maggie talking about the rebranding of Luthor Corp, which Kara assumed was what the gala was for. She watched Lena as she carried on ranting about the gala, realising she spoke with her hands a lot.

*‘Why don’t you just do what you want to do?’*

Lena laughed as she read the message, “Well that would be too easy now, wouldn’t it,” she said sarcastically. She sighed again, staring intently at Kara, like she was making up her mind about something.

“I don’t know if you know, and well, you’re still talking to me so I figured you don’t know, because if you knew you probably wouldn’t want to talk to me anymore,” Lena rambled, getting all flustered. Kara grabbed one of Lena’s hands and trapped it underneath hers on top of the table, taking an exaggerated breath in and out to make a point.

“Right,” Lena said, calming herself down, “well, I was adopted when I was younger by the Luthor family, you might’ve heard of that name before because my brother owns Luthor Corp, except now I’ve taken over because ... he’s the guy who bombed congress last year.” She looked at Kara, fighting back tears as she waited for her reaction.

*‘I know’*

Lena looked up from the phone, a crease between her eyebrows from the confused look on her face. “If you know then why have you been nice to me this whole time?” she asked.

Kara’s heart hurt for Lena. She’d been right, she was lonely. How many people had turned their backs on her after her brother had blown up all those people? How many people

held her responsible? Did people not realise Lex had hurt Lena too? It wasn't hard to imagine why she had decided to move to National City and rebrand the company. She was looking for a fresh start.

*'Because none of it's your fault, and I think you're hurting too, and it's not fair'*

Lena read the message and gave Kara a sad smile. "You know, you're the first person to tell me that, all of my friend's back home ... they wouldn't answer my calls, they stopped texting me, they just cut me off," she choked out, "sorry, I didn't mean to get all upset on you, but you're the only person who's actually had a proper conversation with me since I moved here."

Kara grabbed Lena's hand and gave it a gentle squeeze, giving her a reassuring smile.

*'Well what are friends for?'* Kara typed out, holding the phone up for Lena to see. They both wore matching grins as they looked at each other, and Kara hoped she'd cheered Lena up, even just a little bit.

Lena reached forward and plucked Kara's phone out of her hand. "Well if we're friends now, you should at least have my number," she said as she typed it into Kara's phone, handing it back when she was done.

Kara smiled down at her phone, looking at the new contact in her phone. She laughed when she saw that Lena had typed in her first and last name, as if there was another Lena that Kara might know.

"And speaking of being friends, would you please come to the gala, you might actually make it fun," Lena begged, biting her lip as she waited for Kara to answer. Kara nodded her head enthusiastically, beaming at Lena, a matching smile spreading on her face too. How could she say no when Lena looked so cute when she was nervous?

"Brilliant, I'll text you the details," Lena said, glancing down at her watch, "but now, I had better be getting back to the office, I'll see you soon," she said, pushing her chair out

from the table and standing up.

Kara waved goodbye and watched Lena disappear into the crowd. Finishing her latte, she stood up and headed to work, hoping she wouldn't be late.

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She text Lena as she walked to work, so she had Kara's number.

The rest of the day passed by in a blur of texts between her and Lena, and Kara found it impossible to stop smiling, even when the head librarian, Miss Grant, had scolded her for being ten minutes late to work.

# Chapter 5

## Chapter Notes

Happy supergirl day!

Supercorp might not have risen in the show, but they're rising in this chapter.

Kara didn't see Lena for the rest of the week. She did, however, get a text from Lena on Thursday with details about the gala. It was this Saturday night, a formal event, and Lena told Kara she'd arrange for a car to pick her up and bring her to Luthor Corp.

Of course, she didn't know that Kara hadn't been in a car since she was twelve years old. She hadn't been able to make herself get in any sort of vehicle since she'd been in the car accident that killed her parents. Even now, she still had nightmares about the crunching sound of metal hitting metal, waking with her mom's scream still ringing in her ears.

Instead, she chose to walk everywhere. She lived in an apartment in the city which made it easy for her to get around, so walking to Luthor Corp wouldn't be a problem. She could still remember the trip home from the orphanage. Eliza, Jeremiah and Alex came to pick her up but she refused to get in the car, so instead they walked home. It took over an hour, and they stopped off for ice cream on the way. In that moment Kara loved her new family already.

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When Saturday came around, Kara could barely focus at work. She'd received a message from Lena that morning, double checking to see if she was still coming. She had text Lena back, reassuring her that she would be there as long as there were potstickers.

Alex came by after she finished work, collapsing onto Kara's sofa. She picked up a pillow and jammed her face in it, letting out a frustrated yell. Kara raised an eyebrow at Alex, as she jammed pins into her hair to keep her chignon in place.

*'Bad day at work?'*

Alex sighed, sitting up properly and leaning on the pillow. Her face arranged itself in a sober expression. "I'm afraid that's classified," she said, before cracking a smile. It was a running joke between them, as Alex worked for the FBI and was rarely allowed to divulge information.

"We've got a big case at the moment, everyone's a little on edge at headquarters," Alex sighed. Kara was used to Alex's frustration, her job was stressful, and in Kara's opinion, she was overworked. Maybe it's time for another sister night, Kara thought to herself.

Kara walked over to her clothes rack, rifling through her dresses. She narrowed her options down to two. The black looked more professional and classy, but Kara thought the blue brought out her eyes better. She hesitated, before turning around and holding them up for Alex to see.

"Blue," Alex answered for her, "it's your colour, and make sure you wear it with the nude coloured shoes." Kara signed a thank you at her, before changing into the dress. She applied some lipstick and slipped the heels on, turning to Alex for her approval.

*'How do I look?'*

"Perfect, now you better get going or you're going to be late for your date," Alex replied. Kara rolled her eyes, shooting Alex an exasperated look, which was ruined by the blush flooding her face.

*'It's not a date, we're just friends,'* Kara protested.

Alex laughed, pushing Kara towards the door. "Okay, whatever you say, but just so you know, you've spent more time fussing over this gala than you have about any date you've ever been on, so I'm pretty sure it's a date."

Opening the door, Alex picked Kara's clutch up off the counter, handing it to her, as she herded her through the door. "Have fun on your date, stay safe, don't stay out too late, and I love you," Alex instructed, her overprotective side showing, as she grabbed a coat for Kara to wear over her dress.

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Kara approached Luthor Corp, joining the line of people queuing up to get inside. Once she reached the front of the line the woman at the door flashed her a smile, "Good evening, may I see your invitation please?" she asked.

Kara faltered for a second. Lena hadn't given her an invitation. Fishing her phone out of her bag, Kara typed out a reply for the woman, holding it out for her to read.

*'Sorry, I don't have an invitation, I was invited by Lena Luthor, my name's Kara Danvers'*

The woman's face lit up with recognition as she read Kara's name. "Of course Miss Danvers, please, go straight in," she said as gestured for the security guard to let Kara pass.

Once inside, her coat was exchanged for a numbered tag by one of the attendees at the coat check, before she was directed through to the main party.

The room was very modern and spacious, decorated in black and white, with the lights slightly dimmed to add to the mysterious ambience of the room. Elegantly dressed men and women were packed into the room, wandering around with glasses of champagne or stood chatting in groups. Kara looked around, hoping to spot Lena somewhere in the crowd.

It wasn't hard to find her. She always stood out. Kara wasn't sure if it was because of her commanding presence that demanded your attention, or her unparalleled beauty, which drew every eye in the room to her.

She was wearing green, and Kara smiled, if blue was her colour, green was Lena's. She looks beautiful, Kara thought as she moved through the crowd, heading straight towards Lena. She was still a few feet away when Lena spotted her, a smile lighting up her face. She excused herself from the conversation, and walked towards Kara.

"You came!" Lena exclaimed, beaming at Kara. She leant in closer and lowered her voice, "I'm so glad you're here, I was getting tired of all the fake compliments and the- oh, Susan, how lovely to see you again," Lena said, trailing off midsentence as a woman walking past greeted Lena. "We must talk later on, I can't wait to hear about your new granddaughter," Lena continued, air kissing the older woman.

She turned her attention back to Kara, taking her by the elbow and steering her through the crowd. "Where were we? Oh, right, well thank you for coming, it means more than you know," Lena said, smiling up at Kara. They stopped in front of one of the servers, "and as promised, potstickers," Lena laughed, gesturing to the tray the man was holding.

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Lena gave Kara her undivided attention that night. She seemed unconcerned with the business behind the gala, happy to spend all night talking to Kara. The only time she left her side was when it was time for her to give a speech about the rebranding of the company, and unveiling of the new company name, L-Corp.

Lena rejoined Kara as soon as she walked off stage. Kara grabbed two glasses of champagne off the nearest waiter, and held one out to Lena.

*'To L-Corp and to you'* Kara typed out for Lena to read.

They wore matching smiles as they clinked their glasses together, toasting to Lena's success. Lena was taking a sip from her glass when her face fell. Her jaw tightened as she looked at something across the room. Kara followed her gaze, noticing a woman making a beeline straight for Lena.

“Mother,” Lena said coldly, lifting her chin, “I didn’t expect to see you here.”

“I wanted to see what you’ve done with the place. I know Lex trusted you to make the right decisions, but you never had his imagination,” Lena’s mom said, looking around the room with disdain. She brought her focus back to her daughter, before her attention slid to Kara. “I don’t believe we’ve met before,” the woman said, holding out a hand, “I’m Lillian Luthor.”

“Mom, this is Kara,” Lena said as Kara shook Lillian’s extended hand. Lillian stared at Kara, as she replied to Lena, not even bothering to look at her.

“I’m sure Kara’s perfectly capable of introducing herself Lena, you might be in charge of the company but you don’t need to take charge of everything,” Lillian spitefully threw at Lena. Kara dropped Lillian’s hand and gave her half-empty glass of champagne to Lena.

*‘Of course I am, if you’re perfectly capable of understanding sign language. Otherwise I’m more than grateful for Lena’s help’*

Kara smiled sweetly as she signed to Lillian, enjoying the look of surprise that spread across her face. “Kara can’t talk,” Lena said tightly, the muscles working in her jaw. Lillian cleared her throat, trying to come up with a smart retort.

“Well, isn’t that nice, you’re making friends,” Lillian replied smugly, as if Lena had failed one of her tests and proven Lillian right. Something flashed in Lena’s eyes, and she wrapped her arm around Kara’s waist, pulling her towards her.

“Yes, well, Kara’s a *very* close friend, I’m sure I don’t need to explain,” Lena said, baiting her mom. Kara willed herself to keep a straight face, as she snuggled up next to Lena. Being pressed up against Lena’s side was well worth it, but Kara got some extra satisfaction out of seeing Lillian’s face darken. She didn’t even reply, she just turned on her heel and marched off.



“Sorry about that,” Lena apologised, her hand lingering on Kara’s waist as she turned to face her, “well now you’ve met my mom, I’m sure it’s not hard for you to see where Lex got his personality from,” she said with a wry smile.

*‘It’s no problem, is she always like this with you?’*

Lena laughed, sweeping some more potstickers off a passing server. She handed one to Kara, who gave her a grin in return. “She wasn’t always, she’s never been the most loving mother, but there was a time when she wasn’t quite so bitter,” Lena replied, steering them away from the loud conversation around them.

“Lex was always her favourite. She never tried to hide it, and it never really bothered me. I should thank her really, it gave me a thicker skin and a good edge for working in the business industry.” She paused here, looking down at her hands as she played with the ring on her finger.

“I tried to help him, you know, before he went off the rails. We’d always been close, and I could see he wasn’t right,” she looked up at Kara with a pained expression on her face. It was obvious how much it hurt her to talk about this. “And then he blew them all up, and my mom loves him more now than she’s ever loved me, even before she found out that I like girls. We’ve been on a downward spiral for years, we try and avoid each other as much as we can, I’m surprised she even bothered to come tonight.”

Kara was silent as Lena told her about her family. At the end, she reached out and covered Lena’s hand with her own. A silent encouragement to show her that she wasn’t alone.

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Kara was just about to start heading home, and Lena was walking her over to the coat check, looking a little flustered. Pulling her coat on, Kara looked at Lena and gave her a smile. She moved to pull her phone out of her clutch when Lena stopped her with her hand.

“Wait, I, uh, want to try something,” she interrupted, a small crease forming between her eyebrows. She brought her hands up and started signing out some words, frowning as she moved her fingers through the movements.

“I think that’s it, wait, no, it’s like this right? Is that right?” Lena babbled as she finished the last sign, finally looking up at Kara.

*‘Do you want to go for a drink with me some time?’*

Kara smiled wider than she had ever smiled before. She nodded shyly, holding up an OK sign for Lena to see, watching as her face flooded with relief.

“Okay, yeah, amazing, um I’ll text you and we can work out a date?” she asked shyly. Kara nodded again, still smiling.

She didn’t stop smiling the entire walk home.

## Chapter 6

Kara didn't hear from Lena the next day.

At work on Monday, Kara kept sneaking glances, over her shoulder, at the door. It was nearing lunch time and she was hoping Lena would stop by.

"You know, you could at least try and be less obvious," Winn whispered, wheeling his chair over to Kara's desk. Kara, who was glancing at the door again, jumped, spinning back around in her chair. She gave Winn an innocent look, pretending to not know what he was talking about.

"Oh come on Kara, you haven't taken your eyes off the door since we opened," he said, rolling his eyes. "You wouldn't happen to be waiting for a certain CEO to stop by, would you?" he asked innocently.

*'How do you know about Lena?'* she signed back as her cheeks turned pink.

Winn laughed, "Aside from the fact that she's been in here every couple of days for the past three weeks? Alex told me." Kara sighed, of course Alex would have mentioned it, especially because Winn worked at the library too.

*'Winn, have you been gossiping with my sister again'* Kara signed back, raising her eyebrows.

"Well, I mean, I wouldn't call it gossiping, but she did mention Lena at the bar the other night and we might have ... yeah, we were gossiping," Winn rambled, a sheepish smile on his face. Kara rolled her eyes, smiling at him to show that she didn't mind.

Winn's eyebrows shot up, looking at something behind Kara. "Incoming," he said, rolling his chair back over to his desk. Kara gave Winn a puzzled look, before spinning her chair around to see Lena walking in.

“Kara, hi!” Lena said quietly, not wanting to disturb the other people in the library. She dumped some of the books she was carrying into the return slot before making her way over to the front counter.

“So, I thought I’d come and see you instead of texting you about drinks,” Lena said, leaning forward on the counter. She was wearing a dress that showed off her collarbones, and other assets. Kara tried not to look down, feeling her cheeks turn pink as she smiled at Lena. She could see Winn staring at them both from out of the corner of her eye.

*‘I’m free any night this week, what day’s good for you?’* Kara wrote down on a spare sheet of paper. Lena tilted her head, looking up at the ceiling as she thought. Kara stared at the white expanse of Lena’s throat, her gaze moving upwards to the sharp line of her jaw, and then further up to Lena’s lips that were pressed together. Kara quickly looked down at the piece of paper in her hands, trying to hide her flushed face.

“How does Friday night sound to you?” Lena asked, oblivious to Kara’s straying thoughts. Kara nodded, writing down a reply.

*‘Sounds great, do you have anywhere in mind?’*

“There’s a bar on thirty-first street I’ve been dying to check out, I’ve heard it’s really good,” Lena suggested, waiting for Kara’s reply. Kara nodded again, smiling at Lena.

“Perfect,” Lena grinned at Kara, “I’m just going to go and find some new books, any suggestions?”

Kara held up the paper again, with Harry Potter scrawled underneath her last reply. Lena quietly laughed, “Harry Potter? Aren’t they for children?”

Kara gave Lena a look of mock outrage, quickly writing down another reply.

*'Harry Potter is for everyone! I can't believe you haven't read them before'*

Lena held her hands up in a defensive gesture, "Okay, okay, Harry Potter it is, I'll be back in a second." Kara watched her wander off in search of the books. The sound of someone clearing their throat made Kara jump.

She turned to look at Winn. "Harry Potter. Really?" he whispered to Kara. She shrugged her shoulders, her face flushing. "Oh man, you've got it bad," Winn laughed, making Kara's face turn even redder. She pretended to ignore him.

Lena walked back over with the first three Harry Potter books held close to her chest. "Here we go, three Harry Potter books," Lena announced as she planted the books down on the counter, "and I'd like to check out these ASL books again," she said, sliding forward the two books she hadn't returned.

After Kara scanned all of the books they said their goodbyes, both hoping Friday came around quickly.

---

That night, Alex invited Kara over to her apartment for Chinese food with her and Maggie. Kara picked up the food on the way and made her way over to Alex's place.

They were halfway through their food, with Kara hogging the pot stickers, when her phone vibrated. She picked it up, finding a text from Lena.

*I was wrong and I can't believe I've lived my whole life without reading these books.*

Kara smiled down at her screen, her phone buzzing again as another message came through.

*Also the bar on 31<sup>st</sup> is called The Pen, shall we meet there at 7?*

Kara text back her approval, looking back up as she put her phone back down. Alex and Maggie both had their chopsticks raised halfway to their mouths, with identical raised eyebrows.

“What’s got you all flustered, Danvers?” Maggie asked, a sly grin spreading across her face, “or should I say who?” Kara turned bright red, picking up another pot sticker so she could keep her hands busy.

*‘Just making plans to hang out with a friend’* she signed back after she finished eating.

“A friend huh?” Alex questioned, “It’s clearly not Winn, and James and Lucy aren’t in town, so what other friend is this?” Kara let out a deep sigh, clearly they knew she was messaging Lena.

*‘Lena and I are going for drinks on Friday, after work’* Kara informed them, slowly signing so Maggie could keep up.

“Drinks?” Alex echoed.

“You do realise that’s a date right?” Maggie chimed in.

Kara protested, gesturing widely with her hands.

*‘It’s not a date, it’s just, I don’t know, it’s just drinks’* Kara signed back, feeling her cheeks turn pink as she said it. Alex and Maggie dropped the topic, not wanting to embarrass Kara.

“You do like her though right? I’m just checking,” Maggie asked curiously. Kara nodded in reply.

“Like as in *like* like,” Alex elaborated. Kara rolled her eyes at them both.

*‘Yes as in like like, but I think she needs a friend right now more than anything else’*  
Kara signed back, thinking about how Lena’s face always lit up when she was around Kara.

Kara knew that she would do anything to keep making Lena smile.

# Chapter 7

## Chapter Notes

Thank you for all the nice comments, it means a lot :)

After work on Friday, Kara rushed back to her apartment and quickly changed, before heading towards thirty-first street. It was already dark by the time she made it to The Pen. She'd left early to make sure she wasn't late, but as she walked closer she could see the outline of Lena, silhouetted by the lights from the bar.

Kara waved as she approached, a shy smile lifting the corners of her mouth. Lena's face lit up as she took a step towards Kara.

"Hi, you're early," Lena greeted her, moving to give Kara a quick hug and a gentle kiss on the cheek. Kara blinked, slightly taken aback by Lena's affection. A goofy smile lit up her face, as she pulled out her phone.

*'Looks like you beat me to it'*

Lena laughed, "The habit of making sure I'm not late to business meetings," she said with a roll of her eyes. She motioned for Kara to go inside first, her other hand gently lingering on Kara's back as she ushered her into the bar.

It was fancy, Kara could tell straight away. She felt panicky inside, maybe this was a date, and if it was, she was way underprepared. A woman greeted them as they walked in, and once Lena gave her her name, led them to a private, circular booth in the corner.

They sat at right angles to each other. Not quite opposite, but not right next to each other either. Kara felt Lena staring at her as she studied the drinks menu. She looked up at Lena, gesturing towards the wine list. Lena moved in closer, brushing her hair back with her long fingers. They settled on a bottle of rosé wine.



After the server set the bottle and two glasses down, Lena turned to Kara. She looked like she was debating whether or not to tell Kara something, a small crease forming between her eyebrows.

“I hope you don’t take this the wrong way, but I bought you something,” Lena began, pulling something out of her bag. It was a little whiteboard and a marker. “I don’t want *you* to think that *I* think it’s an inconvenience, having to type everything out, but I thought this might be easier until my sign language gets better, I’m-” Lena continued.

Kara put a hand on Lena’s arm, interrupting her rambling. She picked up the marker and wrote something down.

*‘It’s perfect, thank you’*

She quickly wiped it away with the eraser attached to the end of the marker. She smiled widely at Lena, touched by her thoughtfulness.

Lena shifted uncomfortably, hesitating before she spoke. “I don’t want to pry, but were you born this way, or ...” she trailed off at the end, waiting for Kara to reply.

*‘It’s caused by extreme trauma. I was in a car crash with my parents when I was 12’*

Kara held it up for Lena, before wiping it off and continuing.

*‘I watched them die, and I haven’t been able to talk since. The doctor’s said it’s called Mutism, it’s a PTSD reaction to the trauma’*

Lena sat there speechless for a moment. This time it was her who took Kara’s hand, giving it a gentle squeeze. “I’m sorry,” she whispered.

Kara gave her a sad smile, squeezing her hand back.

*'It was a long time ago'*

"I was adopted when I was four, you know," Lena confided in Kara, "I was too young to even remember anything other than my family, and I don't want to sound like I'm being ungrateful, but sometimes I wonder about what my life could've been like, especially when I see my mom."

Kara thought back to the gala. She couldn't imagine growing up with a mom like that. It must have been hard for Lena, being put up for adoption by one mom and then adopted by an unloving mother. She sent silent thanks to Eliza and Jeremiah for all the love and support they had shown Kara since they had adopted her.

---

They were two bottles of wine into their night, and Kara was feeling a lot more relaxed. She liked spending time with Lena. They talked about everything and nothing, getting to know each other better as the night went on.

"Can I ask you a question?" Lena asked, leaning in closer to Kara, who nodded. "Do you ever get frustrated not being able to talk?" Kara smiled, if only Lena knew.

*'Sometimes, I think it's worse because I used to be able to talk, but it's been so long that I'm used to it now'* Kara wrote, erasing it once Lena finished reading it.

*'There are times when I just want to scream and yell though, and then I get even more frustrated'*

*'Or when I want to laugh out loud at the stupidest things, but nothing comes out'*

Lena read the last one. “The best laughter is silent though! The kind where you’re laughing so much that you start crying and your shoulders are shaking, and there’s no sound coming out,” she replied, “if you always laugh like that then that’s the best laughter in the world!”

She seemed a bit embarrassed by her outburst, crinkling her nose as she laughed at herself. Her cheeks were flushed from all the wine and Kara thought she looked beautiful. She prayed that she didn’t do something stupid, as she felt herself getting tipsier as the minutes ticked by.

After the third bottle of wine, Kara scribbled away at the whiteboard, showing Lena once she finished.

*‘There’s somewhere I want to show you’*

They got the bill, and Lena protested when Kara pulled out her purse, insisting that it was her treat.

Once outside, Kara pointed in the direction they were heading, her new whiteboard tucked under one arm. She clenched her other hand inside her coat pocket, resisting the urge to reach out and hold Lena’s hand.

---

They walked through the city, Kara sometimes reaching out to touch Lena’s arm to direct her, until they came to a small park full of trees.

Kara led them through the twisting path between the trees, until they came to a clearing with a small pond and a bench. The place was lit up by strings of fairy lights strung around the trees bordering the edge of the clearing. The park was deserted at this time of night, except for a couple of ducks gliding along the surface of the pond.

They sat down on the bench, watching the ducks swim. “It’s beautiful here,” Lena whispered, turning away from the view to look at Kara.

*‘It’s my favourite place in the city, I like to come here in the night when there’s no one around. It looks more magical in the night, and it’s always so quiet, it’s peaceful’*

“Is that why you work at the library?” Lena asked. Kara nodded in return, wiping the whiteboard clean.

*‘There’s less pressure to make small talk if you’re not supposed to really talk in libraries, that doesn’t stop some people though ...’* Kara grinned at Lena, the bridge of her nose crinkling.

Lena laughed, “I’m sorry for interrupting you, I would’ve done it a lot sooner if I’d had the courage though.” Kara frowned at Lena in confusion, she’d only seen her at the library starting a few weeks ago.

“I signed up for the library as soon as I moved here, and I saw you stacking books the first time I went there. It was so quiet and you looked so peaceful, you were reading a few pages of the book you were putting back. I didn’t want to disturb you,” Lena explained, looking a bit embarrassed to be admitting it.

*‘I’m surprised I didn’t see you, I think I’d notice you anywhere now’*

Kara smiled shyly at Lena. The way Lena was looking at her made Kara want to kiss her. It would be so easy to lean in and press her lips to Lena’s in a quick kiss. She knew it was because she’d had too much wine, it was making her brave, but she also knew even if she was sober she’d still want to kiss her, she just wouldn’t have the guts to do it.

She moved to write something else down on the whiteboard, but was stopped by Lena grabbing her hand. “Wait, I want to see how much ASL I remember, can you sign whatever you’re about to say to me?” Lena asked. Kara smiled, thinking of a way to make her question obvious.

Her hands gestured in front of her as she signed to Lena, trying to do it slowly and over exaggerating the movements to make it easier. “Okay, that means me? Leave? Go, I don’t know what that one is, that one’s you?” Lena puzzled through the signs, picking up a few of them.

Kara laughed silently. “Wait a second, I downloaded this sign language visual dictionary app, let me see if I can figure it out,” Lena said, as she rummaged through her bag for her phone.

“Okay, can you give me a hint at what the first letter of the first word is? There’s a lot of words on here,” she said, smiling at Kara.

Lena’s stubborn side came out as she refused to let Kara write down the question. It took almost five minutes before she put the first few signs together, and then figured out the rest of the question without having to look.

“Date? That sign means date right?” Lena asked, looking up at Kara to see if she was right. Kara smiled, waiting for Lena to connect the dots. “Will you go on a da- oh!” Lena gasped in surprise, as she figured out the rest of the question.

She smiled widely at Kara, flashing her dimples at her as she tucked a lock of hair behind her ear. “A date, with you?” Lena double checked, raising her eyebrows. Kara nodded, writing down a reply.

*‘Like a proper cheesy date with flowers and milkshakes and we do something ridiculously cliché like go to the zoo’*

Kara held the whiteboard up, a hopeful expression on her face. Lena smiled, gently brushing Kara’s hair out of her face. “I’d love to,” she whispered, her hand briefly resting on Kara’s cheek, “but for now, it’s late and we should start heading home.”

They headed back to the main street, and Lena flagged down a taxi. Kara tugged on Lena's sleeve to get her attention, as the taxi slowed down.

*'I can't go in cars anymore, I'll walk home, but I'll message you about our date?'*

Lena stepped away from the taxi, waving the driver on. "Then I'll walk you home first," Lena stated, taking Kara by the elbow and ushering them on.

Lena didn't let go of Kara's arm the entire walk back to Kara's apartment, only dropping it when Kara opened the door to the lobby. Lena walked Kara all the way up to her door, waiting until she unlocked the door.

"I had a really great time," Lena began, as Kara flicked the lights on and made her way inside. Smiling, Kara nodded in agreement, pointing to herself. "Um, I'll message you about Sunday then?" Lena said, lingering just inside the doorway.

Kara nodded again, taking a step closer to Lena. She reached out, gently smoothing her thumb over one of Lena's high cheekbones. Kara willed herself to be brave for just a second, trying to still the butterflies in her stomach.

Lena's eyes flickered from Kara's eyes, to her lips, and back up, her lips parting slightly. Kara moved her hand to cup the back of Lena's neck, her thumb resting just behind her ear. They hesitated just for a moment, before they met each other halfway.

Their lips crashed together, Lena's lips parting under Kara's. She let out a quiet moan as Kara took Lena by surprise, pushing her up against the wall. They broke apart a moment later, both breathing heavily, as Kara rested her forehead against Lena's.

They stood like that for a few moments, grinning at each other, their cheeks slightly flushed. Kara let go of Lena and took a step back.

Kara signed goodbye, as Lena stepped back through the door. She hesitated for a second, before quickly pressing a soft kiss on Kara's lips. "Goodnight Kara," she whispered before leaving.

Lena looked back once, as Kara stood in the doorway, her face flushed with excitement.

# Chapter 8

## Chapter Notes

Thanks to Lena's dramatic hoes for distracting me with supercorp angst as I was writing this.

Sunday was only two days away, but to Kara it felt like forever. She'd spent all Saturday night badgering Alex and Maggie with questions. They were happy for Kara, and a little bit smug that she was going on a real date with Lena.

Lena had to go into the office to finish up some work, so Kara told her she'd meet her there. It was just after four o'clock when Kara entered L-Corp. The girl at the receptionist's desk looked up as Kara walked towards her. "Miss Danvers?" she queried, continuing when Kara nodded. "Miss Luthor has instructed us to let you straight up, her office is on the top floor."

Once Kara made it to the top floor, she stepped out into a small waiting room. The receptionist behind this desk looked up too, "Miss Danvers?" she asked. Kara smiled and walked over. The woman got up, "This way please." She led Kara down the hallway, opening the door at the end.

"Miss Danvers is here to see you, ma'am," the woman said, opening the door wider for Kara to step inside Lena's office. She was sat behind her desk, her fingers pressed to her temples as she stared at her computer screen. She looked up at Kara when she walked in, a wide smile spreading across her face. Kara was glad to see Lena had taken her advice and dressed casually for their date.

"Thank you, that'll be all," Lena directed towards her assistant, as she walked around her desk. Kara held out the bouquet of flowers she was carrying, smiling at Lena.

"Plumerias!" Lena exclaimed, as she took the flowers, "these are pretty rare, thank you!" She set them down on her desk as Kara scribbled on the whiteboard.



*'I didn't want to get you ordinary flowers when you're anything but ordinary'*

Lena blushed, smiling widely as she ducked her head down shyly. Kara gestured towards the door, eager for them to start their date. Lena looked like she'd been having a stressful day at work until Kara had shown up. Also, seeing as she was at the office on a Sunday, Kara figured that Lena worked too much.

"Let me just get my coat and bag," Lena said, walking over to a built in cupboard. She slipped her coat on, sliding her handbag onto her shoulder. Pulling the door open, she gestured for Kara to go first, following behind her.

"I'm heading off now Jess, I'll see you tomorrow, have a good night," Lena said as they swept past the receptionist, and got into the elevator. They were silent the entire ride down, sneaking glances at each other and smiling sheepishly when they caught each other. Kara's fingers were itching to reach out and take Lena's hand. They stepped out of the elevator, Lena waving goodbye to the staff at the front desk as they walked to the entrance.

Once outside, Kara pointed in the direction they were headed. She felt relieved that things with Lena were going smoothly so far, she'd been worried that there might've been some awkwardness about the kiss the other night. Feeling brave, Kara laced her fingers with Lena's, causing Lena to look up at her in surprise, her lips quirking up into a small smile.

---

Kara stopped outside an arcade, the windows plastered with posters for games such as bowling, air hockey and laser tag. She faced Lena, her eyebrows raised and her hands spread in a 'what do you think' gesture. Lena laughed, "you did say it was going to be cheesy and cliché, but it's perfect."

They wandered inside, and Kara immediately dragged Lena over to the bowling alley. Trading in their shoes for some bowling ones, they made their way over to their lane.

“I’ve never been bowling before,” Lena confessed, as she picked up a ball and weighed it. Kara looked shocked, what kind of person had never been bowling before? Lena picked up on Kara’s surprise. “Yeah I know right, my family was more of a golfing or show jumping kind of family.”

They played two games, with Lena winning both of them. She had a more logical approach to bowling; calculating angles and force behind her throw. Kara’s goofy side came out as she bowled backwards through her legs, or slowly rolling it from the line, and one time, even managed to skip her ball into the next lane, taking out someone else’s pins.

After they finished bowling, they went over to the food bar. It had a classic American diner vibe, and Kara and Lena sat down in one of the vinyl covered booths. They both decided on cheeseburgers, fries and cokes. Once the waitress placed their food in front of them, Lena laughed. “You know, I can’t remember the last time I had food like this. It’s ridiculous, I feel like a little girl,” she said, smiling at Kara.

*‘I hope you’re having fun’* Kara wrote down, sticking a few fries in her mouth.

“More fun than I’ve had in a long time,” Lena replied, taking a sip of her drink. She hesitated before continuing. “Actually, the last time I had fun was with you too, you have a way of making me forget all of my problems.” Kara smiled, her nose crinkling, and reached out to touch the back of Lena’s hand.

They finished up their food and Kara held out the whiteboard.

*‘What’s next? Is it time for me to win you the biggest teddy bear they have?’*

Lena looked around the arcade, her eyes lighting up when she saw the air hockey table. She dragged Kara over, inserting a few quarters into the machine. Setting the puck on the table, she looked up at Kara. “I was captain of the field hockey team at boarding school,” Lena said, hitting the puck towards Kara.

After a few matches, with Lena winning all of them, they made their way around the various arcade games. Kara made every basket on the shooting hoops game, and Lena

managed to hit a fifty on the skee ball game. Kara convinced Lena to try the Dance Dance Revolution Game with her, and they were equally as bad as they danced, trying to hit all the steps. Lena didn't think she'd ever laughed so much in her whole life.

An hour later they had a giant stack of tickets, thanks to Kara surviving every round on the Space Invaders machine. They made their way over to the prize counter, and Kara held up her whiteboard for Lena with a wide grin.

*'Time to pick a giant teddy'*

Lena laughed, scanning the rows of stuffed animals. "Umm, I'll take the giant golden retriever," she told the girl, dumping all their tickets onto the counter. The girl handed it over, and Lena struggled to hold it comfortably. Kara raised one of her eyebrows in question, a half smile on her face.

"What? It reminds me of you," Lena smiled down at the giant teddy, "you're like sunshine, kind of like golden retrievers," she said, looking up to smile at Kara. Face flushing with happiness, Kara reached out and took Lena's hand.

---

Kara wanted to play a game of laser tag before it got too late. Giving in, Lena allowed herself to be dragged over to the line waiting for the next game to start. They stored their bags, and Lena's teddy, in the starting room. Kara joined the blue team, and Lena picked up a red team chest plate to make it a competition. They helped strap each other into their chest plates, and lifted the guns up as they surveyed each other. Kara had to admit, Lena looked good in her fake combat gear. Lena was thinking the same thing about Kara.

They went through the separate doors, plunging them into darkness, except for the neon lights on everyone's chest and back. The game started and Kara set off through the dimly lit maze, intent on finding Lena. She managed to hit two people before she found Lena. They almost ran into each other, jerking back in surprise just before they collided.

Kara was faster, and shot Lena on her chest plate, grinning widely at her before darting off. "I'm going to get you back for that, Miss Danvers," Lena shouted after her as Kara ran, silently laughing to herself.

They were almost to the end of the game, so far Kara has landed more shots on Lena than Lena had on her. She'd lost track of her for the moment, and was creeping along one of the paths, her gun poised to shoot.

Facing a dead end, Kara turned to leave, but found Lena blocking her way. "Got you," Lena whispered as she stalked towards Kara, her gun held loosely at her side.

Grabbing Kara by the front of her chest plate, Lena carried on walking forwards until Kara stumbled into the wall. Lena took another step closer, pressing herself up against Kara. She ran her thumb over Kara's bottom lip, before gently taking Kara's face in her hands, reaching up to place a gentle kiss on her lips.

Lena pulled back slightly, and Kara pushed forward trying to recapture Lena's lips. They paused for a second, smiling at each other as Lena ran her fingers down and along Kara's jaw. Their lips crashed back together, and Kara tilted her head to the side, her lips parting beneath Lena's.

She could feel the cool wall behind her, and the weight of her gun swinging by her side as she let it go to tangle her fingers in Lena's hair. Kara ran her tongue along Lena's bottom lip, and Lena opened her lips obligingly.

They stood in the dark corner, Lena still pinning Kara to the wall, as the game carried on around them. It wasn't until a loud buzzer went off, signalling the end of the game, that they jumped apart, frightened by the sudden noise. Lena laughed breathlessly, her nose gently bumping Kara's as she pressed another kiss to her lips. And another.

Lena stepped back, and Kara untangled her fingers from Lena's hair, brushing it back into place for her. Lena laughed, reaching up to gently rub away the lipstick marks she'd left on Kara's mouth.

“We should go,” Lena whispered, breaking the silence. Kara nodded, picking up her gun in one hand and Lena’s hand in the other. They followed the glowing path back out to the entrance, unstrapping each others chest plates, and picking up their bags.

---

Kara led Lena over to the bar in the diner, writing down a message as they sat down on the stools.

*‘Time for an obligatory cheesy date move’*

She wrote something else down and held the whiteboard up to the guy behind the bar, wiping it off and handing over a few dollars before Lena could read what Kara had written.

A few minutes late the guy placed a strawberry milkshake down in front of them. It had two straws, and Lena let out a loud laugh.

“You’re right, this is very cheesy, did you get all your dating tips from the sixties?” Lena teased. Kara rolled her eyes, her cheeks turning pink.

“Hey,” Lena said softly, laying her hand on Kara’s arm, “I love it, no one’s ever made me feel special before.” She knew Kara knew she was teasing her, but she also wanted to make sure Kara knew how much she had appreciated everything.

On their way out Kara spotted a photobooth machine, and pointed it out to Lena. They squeezed inside with Lena’s giant teddy, shutting the curtain behind them.

The first photo they put their arms around each other, smiling as their faces were pressed together.

For the second photo they poked their tongues out, Lena's eyes squeezed shut and Kara's nose crinkling.

The third picture, Lena poked Kara in the ribs where she was ticklish, smiling widely at her as Kara threw her head back in silent laughter.

And for the last one they kissed.

---

Kara made them make one last stop on the way back to her apartment for some froyo. She insisted that it wasn't a proper date without dessert.

It was still relatively early by the time they made it back to Kara's place. They sat next to each other on the sofa, watching the TV as they ate their froyo and talked.

Spooning some of her strawberry froyo into Kara's mouth, Lena followed up with a kiss. Her lips were cold against Kara's, but they tasted like strawberries as Kara's tongue ran along her bottom lip. Abandoning their froyo, they dissolved into kisses, Lena pinning Kara down on the couch cushions.

They straightened up as Kara's phone buzzed. It was a text from Alex.

*How's the date going?*

Kara sighed, thinking about how great Alex's timing was. She knew she'd have to give a full recount tomorrow, and weather through a million questions.

Lena left not too long after that, her giant golden retriever in tow. They hovered at the door for a few moments before Lena left, pressing kisses to each other's lips.



## Chapter 9

Kara came home from work on Monday to find Alex and Maggie raiding her fridge. She rolled her eyes as she walked in with a stack of pizza boxes, placing them down on the counter.

“Bless you little Danvers, I’m starving,” Maggie said, as she dived into the top box. Kara shook her head at Alex, smiling as she took her coat off.

“So how was the date?” Alex began. Kara shot her an exasperated look, picking up one of the pizza boxes and sitting on the sofa. Maggie and Alex joined her, waiting as Kara put her pizza slice back in the box before signing back.

*‘It was good, we had a lot of fun’*

“Did you actually take her to the arcade?” Maggie asked, switching the TV on.

Kara nodded, a shy smile lighting up her face. Her hands formed different shapes in the air as she told them about her night, leaving out a few details. Alex wasn’t stupid though.

“So have you kissed her yet?” Alex asked bluntly. Kara choked on her pizza, feeling her cheeks warm as her face turned red. She swallowed her mouthful, and took a sip of her drink, trying to avoid Alex’s question.

“Well that’s a yes then,” Maggie concluded, laughing at Kara’s face, “looks like little Danvers has got some game huh?” she laughed, playfully nudging Kara’s shoulder.

Kara rolled her eyes good-naturedly, smiling down at her lap as she thought about Lena kissing her last night.



*'Yes, your text had great timing last night Alex'* Kara signed.

Alex covered her mouth with her hand as she tried not to laugh, and Maggie turned on Alex.

"Alex you didn't!" Maggie berated her.

"Sorry! I figured your date would be over by then," Alex laughed, holding her hands up in her defence. Kara let out a silent laugh, shaking her head as she grinned.

"So when do we get to meet her then?" Maggie asked, looking expectantly at Kara whose eyes widened at the thought.

"Yeah, we'd love to meet her, maybe you can bring her to Friday night drinks to make up for bailing on us on Friday?" Alex asked, a smug smile on her face. Kara groaned internally, there was no way she was getting out of this one.

*'I'll ask her if she's free'* Kara signed, her shoulders rising and falling as she let out a dramatic sigh.

*'I can't make any promises though'* she added as Alex clapped her hand together, grinning in triumph.

---

It was almost lunch time on Wednesday when Lena walked into the library. Kara looked up as she approached the front desk, her face lighting up when she realised it was Lena.

"Hi, I was wondering if you could help me find a book," Lena asked, winking at Kara as she smiled. Kara smiled back, standing up and walking around to meet Lena. Grabbing

Kara's hand, Lena led them to one of the aisles at the very back of the building. Looking around to make sure they were alone, Lena grabbed Kara's waist and pushed her against one of the bookshelves.

Lena's lips found hers as the shelves bit into Kara's back. Taken by surprise at the intensity of the kiss, Kara's hands scrambled for purchase on the bookshelf behind her, accidentally pulling a few books off the shelf. The thud of the books hitting the floor was loud in the silence of the library, and Kara knew Miss Grant would come and investigate.

She pulled away from the kiss, and quickly stacked the fallen books into a pile, hearing the sound of approaching footsteps. Miss Grant rounded the end of the bookshelf, taking in the scene of Kara knelt on the floor next to the pile of books and Lena casually leaning against one of the shelves with a book in hand.

"Kara, what on earth are you doing," Cat hissed at Kara. Lena straightened up, replying before Kara could.

"She was just helping me find some books, but clumsy me dropped them," Lena said, smiling sweetly at Cat. Miss Grant stared at Lena for a moment, ignoring Kara as she straightened up with the rest of the books cradled in her arms.

"There's a fine if you damage any books," Cat warned Lena before stalking back off through the rows of books. Lena raised an eyebrow at Cat's retreating figure, turning to look at Kara.

"She seems ... nice," Lena laughed as Kara slipped the books back where they belonged. Kara shrugged flashing Lena a bright smile.

"So, I thought I'd come and see if you'd had your lunch break yet," Lena explained, waiting until Kara shook her head before continuing. "There's this great sushi restaurant I know if you'd like to come and have lunch with me?" she said, turning the last part into a question.

Kara nodded her head vigorously, leading Lena back to the front counter so she could pick up her coat and bag.

*'I'm just going on my lunch break'* Kara signed at Winn, whose eyebrows were raised as he sized up Lena. He waved a goodbye, turning back to his computer.

---

They were halfway through their sushi, and Kara was slowly picking at her food.

"Everything okay?" Lena asked, tilting her head to the side as she surveyed Kara's face. Kara smiled sheepishly at Lena.

*'I'm not a big fan of sushi'*

"Kara!" Lena scolded her, "why didn't you tell me!" Kara threw her an apologetic shrug.

*'You seemed really excited for sushi, and I wanted to spend time with you'*

Lena rolled her eyes, "as long as I was eating lunch with you I didn't care where we ate. Come on, let's go somewhere else." Kara stopped Lena from getting up, and shoved a piece of sushi in her mouth, trying to smile through her mouthful of food.

"Kara-" Lena began, getting cut off by Kara as she swallowed and crammed another piece of sushi in her mouth, giving Lena a thumbs up. "Kara!" Lena giggled, "you're going to make yourself sick!" she protested, taking hold of Kara's wrist as she reached for another piece.

Wiping her hands on her napkin, Kara picked up her marker and scrawled on the whiteboard.

*'I'm buttering you up because I have something to ask you'*

This piqued Lena's interest, and she leaned forward, propping her chin on her hand, "Well now I'm intrigued," she replied, watching as Kara erased her writing and scribbled down something new.

*'I was wondering if you wanted to come out for drinks on Friday? It's kind of a weekly tradition and everyone wants to meet the girl I ditched them for last week'*

She smiled, a hopeful expression on her face. How could Lena ever say no to that?

"You want me to meet your friends?" Lena asked quietly. Kara nodded, she was worried that this was going to be too much too soon for Lena.

"I'd love to," Lena said, smiling back at Kara.

---

It was Friday night.

Kara met Lena outside L-Corp, walking up and greeting her with a kiss on her cheek. She looked as beautiful as always, with her dark hair spilling across her shoulders, an expensive coat hiding the dress she was wearing underneath.

Kara looped her arm through Lena's and set off towards the bar, listening as Lena told her about her day. She loved watching her talk, Lena's face animated as she waved her free hand around.

As she got nearer to the bar, Lena asked about Kara's friend. "So who are we meeting up with?"

Kara fished her phone out of her jeans and typed a message out for Lena.

*'My sister Alex, her girlfriend Maggie, and my best friend Winn'*

Lena stopped in her tracks, jolting Kara backwards as she kept on walking.

"Your sister?" Lena repeated, her stomach tying itself into knots. Kara nodded, tugging gently on Lena's arm to get her to carry on walking.

"I, um, no one's ever introduced me to their family before," Lena confessed, biting her bottom lip as she worried. Kara realised that this was a big thing for Lena, and she was worried that she had overstepped and pushed Lena to do something she didn't want to do.

*'We can go if you want to'* Kara signed with one hand, gesturing back over her shoulder with her thumb, hoping Lena got the gist of it. Luckily she did, and she quickly hurried to reassure Kara.

"No, no, of course I want to meet your sister, I'm just a bit nervous now," Lena said with a worried smile. Kara squeezed her hand in encouragement, placing a quick kiss on the corner of Lena's mouth.

They walked up to the plain, dirty building and Lena's eyebrows drew together. "This is the bar?" she asked, looking at Kara. Laughing at Lena's expression, Kara nodded. Of course Maggie's dive bar wasn't the five star bars that Lena frequented, but Kara thought it would be good for Lena to do something normal, like their date.

Kara opened the door, and Lena took a deep breath, steadying herself before she followed her inside. Holding on to Kara's hand, Lena allowed herself to be led over to the group of three huddled around a table.

They looked up as they approached the table, Kara smiling widely. She gestured to Lena with one hand, not needing to explain who she was. Lena gave them a smile, reaching a hand out to Alex, who was the closest.

“Hi, I’m Lena, you must be Alex?” she said, as Alex shook her hand.

“Nice to meet you,” Alex replied, staring at Lena intently. Lena recalled Kara telling her that Alex worked for the FBI, and Lena knew she wasn’t someone she wanted to piss off.

She turned towards Maggie, who tilted her head and flashed her a dimpled smile as she shook Lena’s hand. “I’m Maggie,” Maggie introduced herself.

“And you must be Winn, I recognise you from the library,” Lena smiled at Winn, shaking his hand too before she sat down. Kara stood behind her, smiling widely as she gave Lena’s shoulder a gentle squeeze.

*‘Drinks’* Kara signed to everyone, before she went over to the bar.

“So, how are you liking National City so far?” Alex asked, leaning back in her seat.

“It’s good, I haven’t had much time to see the city yet, but I like it here,” Lena replied, a faint smile playing on her lips as she thought about why she liked it here so much.

Maggie gave Lena a knowing look, “well Kara is a special person,” a slight warning behind the words.

“I know,” Lena agreed, a serious expression on her face.

Kara placed the beers in the middle of the table, taking a seat next to Lena.

*'Interrogation over?'* Kara signed, looking around the table.

Alex and Maggie laughed, “relax little Danvers, we were just reminding Lena that there’s a federal agent and a detective here,” Maggie teased. Rolling her eyes, Kara signed an apology at Lena.

“It’s fine Kara,” Lena laughed, laying a hand on Kara’s arm, “it’s nice that you have people who care about you.” Kara nodded in agreement, still slightly embarrassed that Alex and Maggie were being overprotective. She was surprised then hadn’t planned a stakeout when she’d taken Lena out on their date.

“So what’re we celebrating this week? Anything exciting happened?” Winn asked.

“I got a new lead on the main suspect for my underground fight club case,” Maggie informed the table, a proud look on her face, “apparently it’s this woman that goes by the name Roulette.”

“Roulette?” Lena echoed, and Maggie nodded in confirmation.

Lena’s eyes widened, “I think I know who you’re talking about, her name’s Veronica Sinclair.”

“How do you know this?” Alex asked, her tone a bit suspicious.

“I, um, went to boarding school with her, she was always big on betting games, that’s how she got her nickname,” Lena explained, “the last I heard, she was running a casino here in National City.”

Everyone just stared at Lena in shock as she just cracked Maggie’s case for her.

“Luthor, I could kiss you right now,” Maggie said smiling widely at her, “nice catch little Danvers,” she said turning to Kara, who rolled her eyes, even though her entire face lit up with happiness. She knew they would like Lena, but she'd still been a bit worried they would hold her family's reputation against her.

---

They didn't stay at the bar too late, and Lena walked Kara home afterwards.

She seemed nervous as Kara brought over two cups of coffee for them, and sat next to her on the sofa.

*'Everything okay?'* Kara wrote on her whiteboard, as Lena fidgeted with her hands, wringing them nervously.

“I wasn't completely honest at the bar because I didn't want to make things uncomfortable in front of your sister, but I don't want there to be any secrets between us Kara. You know that I don't have anyone else, so it means a lot to me that we can trust each other,” Lena rambled, looking down at her lap. She looked like she was about to start pacing back and forth.

Kara gently raised Lena's chin so they were looking at each other, giving her a reassuring smile. She trusted Lena completely, she'd never had any reason to doubt her.

“I did go to boarding school with Roulette, it was an all girls school and that's where I realised I liked girls,” Lena explained, “I've never been in a proper relationship before, but Roulette and I did use each other for sex. I haven't seen her in years now, there was never any feelings between us, but it felt wrong to keep it from you.”

Setting her cup down on the coffee table, Kara picked up one of Lena's hand and placed a kiss on the back of it, before leaning in and pressing a kiss to her lips. Of course Kara had figured she wasn't the first girl to catch Lena's eye. She had been worried that it was going to be something bad, but Lena clearly took it seriously and Kara didn't want to belittle her. She picked up her whiteboard and started writing something down.



*‘Thank you for telling me, I don’t want there to be any secrets between us too, but I’m not going to hold your past against you either’*

Lena nodded, giving Kara a relieved smile. She had a lot of problems in her past and she didn’t want them to come between them. She knew her mom would be a big problem though, and would come between them just to spite Lena.

“I know I said I’ve never been in a proper relationship before, but I do want to try. It all feels different with you, you’re different,” Lena whispered, her hands coming up to cradle Kara’s face. She brushed her lips against Kara’s, softly at first, and then harder as Kara closed the gap between them.

Pulling away, Lena rested her forehead against Kara’s. “Thank you for trusting me,” she murmured, and Kara knew it meant more to Lena than she was letting on. She signed back.

*‘Always’*

# Chapter 10

## Chapter Notes

Sorry for the delay, I've been working a lot more this week.

They'd been dating for a little over two months, although Lena was hesitant to label it. Kara was okay with that, knowing that it was Lena's first relationship.

It was like Kara had come alive and broken out of the box of her normal life. They ate lunch together, and Lena became a permanent fixture at drinks every Friday night. She got along great with Winn, the two of them spending hours talking about mechanics and technology.

Lena took Kara to expensive restaurants and upscale art museums, and Kara took Lena to the cinema and ice skating. Lena still came into the library every couple of days, surprising Kara at work and picking up another one of Kara's favourite books, and Kara became a frequent visitor at L-Corp, bringing Lena flowers and making sure she left the office occasionally. Sometimes late at night they would walk to Kara's park and walk around the pond hand in hand, feeding the ducks some bread.

The more time they spent together, the more they learnt about each other, and the closer they became, picking up each other's habits and vocabulary. Kara had been thinking about introducing Lena to Eliza soon, wanting her adoptive mom's approval. She wanted Lena to be included in her family, seeing as she wasn't close to her own. Alex had suggested that Kara bring Lena to Thanksgiving at their mom's house so that Eliza could meet her.

They filled in the gaps for each other, and everything was perfect.

They were happy.

James and Lucy were in town, so the next Friday night, they skipped the bar and everyone met at one of the more popular clubs. Winn couldn't make it this Friday because he had a World of Warcraft tournament with his computer friends.

"Kara!" Lucy squealed, pulling her into a hug as soon as she saw her. Smiling widely, Kara embraced James as well, happy to have her friends back in town. She hadn't seen them in a few months and she missed them. She was excited to introduce them to Lena though.

*'This is Lena'* she signed, gesturing to Lena.

James had actually photographed and interviewed Lena before, when she still lived in Metropolis, and fell into an easy conversation about L-Corp and James' latest article he was working on.

Maggie and Alex showed up not long after, Maggie complaining about having to drag Alex away from work, and the party got started. Lena had used her name to snag VIP access for them, so they all settled down in one of the large booths, away from the dancefloor.

They all caught up over a few drinks, laughing at the stories Lucy and James told. The tipsier they got they got tipsier as the night wore on, and Lucy decided talking time was over and dragged James over to the dancefloor.

Kara raised her eyebrows at Alex, smiling widely at her.

"Oh no, you're not getting me up there," Alex argued, understanding what Kara was getting at. Kara protested, gesturing at Maggie to help her out. Maggie just shrugged.

"Your sister's not the dancing type little Danvers," Maggie said, matter of factly.

Kara shot Maggie a confused look.

*'Not the dancing type? So Alex didn't tell you about her wild college parties?'*

"No way, I have to see this," Maggie laughed, dragging Alex out of the booth. Alex sighed, giving in easily as Maggie led them onto the dancefloor.

Kara turned to Lena, smiling at her.

*'Your turn'* she signed, sliding to the end of the seat and pulling Lena along with her.

"No, definitely not, I don't dance," Lena protested. Her sign language had improved a lot over the past two months, and they didn't have to rely on the whiteboard quite as much.

*'Everyone dances'* Kara signed back, gesturing towards the heaving crowd moving with the beat.

*'You don't have to be a good dancer to dance, and you can't be worse than me'* Kara silently laughed as she replied.

Lena rolled her eyes, giving in as she scooted along the bench. Kara threw her hands up in victory, leaning in to give Lena a quick kiss in thanks.

Kara had been right. There was no way Lena could have been worse than her. She didn't even dance in time with the music, and Lena had no idea where she got her dance moves from. She thought it was adorable. Kara clearly didn't care, she was too drunk and having too much fun.

They didn't leave until the club closed in the early hours of the morning. Everyone stumbled out of the club, too drunk to stand properly. Lena, probably the soberest out of them all, held Kara up as she swayed on her feet.

Everyone was waiting for a cab, and Kara hugged everyone goodbye as one pulled up alongside them. Alex cast a worried look at Kara, who she knew wouldn't get into the cab even in her drunken state.

"It's okay, I'll make sure she gets home safe," Lena promised Alex, as Maggie slipped into the back of the cab next to Lucy.

"Thank you, I'll see you later," Alex replied, sliding in after Maggie.

"Come on, let's get you home," Lena said, smiling to Kara, whose head was resting on Lena's shoulder.

Placing Kara's arm around her shoulder, Lena took half of her weight and got Kara to start walking forward. They staggered home towards Kara's apartment.

---

Lena half carried Kara up the stairs, trying to be quiet so she didn't wake up the neighbours. Stopping outside Kara's door, she propped her up against the wall, digging into Kara's pocket for her key.

Flicking the lights on, Lena led Kara inside, shutting the door behind her.

"Come on, let's get you into bed," Lena whispered, leading Kara towards her bedroom.

Lena sat Kara down on the edge of the bed, catching her as she fell forwards. Kara's shoulders shook with silent giggles as Lena sat her back up and she flopped backwards. She laid there staring at the ceiling, still giggling, as Lena took her shoes off for her.

Pulling the sheets back, Lena dragged Kara up the bed, resting her against the pillows as Kara smiled at her. She helped Kara out of her jumper and jeans, and took her hair out for her so she'd be more comfortable. Covering her with the quilt, Lena slid Kara's glasses off, placing them on the bedside table.

"Stay here," she whispered, walking out of the bedroom.

She came back a moment later with a glass of water and some aspirin, putting them down next to Kara's glasses, ready for the morning. Lena figured that Kara was in for a not so fun hangover tomorrow.

She brushed Kara's hair out of her face, smiling at her as Kara squinted up at her through half-closed eyes. A slow smile spread across Kara's face as she pulled Lena down towards her, placing a clumsy kiss on her lips. Lena pulled back slowly.

"Kara, that's not a good idea," Lena whispered, stroking Kara's cheekbone with her thumb. A little frown line formed between Kara's eyebrows as she gave Lena a confused look, signing something at her. The movements were clumsy, but Lena's breathing hitched as she understood what Kara was saying.

*'But I love you'*

Lena knew it didn't mean anything. Kara was drunk, she wasn't her usual self, and she wouldn't remember it in the morning.

She smiled sadly down at Kara, "I wish I could hear you say it."

Once Kara had passed out, Lena placed a gentle kiss on her forehead and stood up. She made her way outside, switching the lights off and locking the door as she went. She flagged down the next taxi she saw, heading back to her apartment.

## Chapter 11

The next morning, Kara woke up with a text from Lena and the worst hangover of her life. The bright light coming through the curtains hurt her eyes, as she slipped her glasses on, bringing everything into focus. She quickly swallowed the two pills on her nightstand, chasing them down with the glass of water next to them. She picked up her phone, reading the text.

*I'm on my way over with breakfast, I'll be there in 15 x*

Kara checked the time, it was almost eleven o'clock. Lena would be here any minute. Rolling out of bed, Kara dragged herself upright, her head pounding from the movement. Her stomach lurched, and she ran to the bathroom, throwing up all the alcohol from the night before. A loud knock on the door sent a shooting pain through Kara's head. Now she remembered why she rarely got drunk. Hangovers were the worst.

She opened the door for Lena, who was smiling widely. Kara was envious of how well put together she looked that morning, her hair pulled back in a ponytail, dressed casually for in terms of what Lena thought was casual. Clearly she didn't have a hangover.

"Good morning," Lena chirped, walking in with coffee and a paper bag. "Darling, you look awful," Lena commented, taking in Kara's dishevelled appearance as she opted for a kiss on the cheek.

*'I feel awful'* Kara signed, wincing at the sound of the door slamming as she shut it behind Lena.

"I'm not surprised," Lena laughed, setting the food down and making herself comfortable.

*'Oh God, what did I do? I can't remember anything'* Kara signed, burying her face in her hands.



“Well at one point I ordered a round of some shots called Snake Juice for everyone, and you drank them all,” Lena said, her tone half surprise and half awe, “I didn’t even have time to stop you, you just downed all of them.”

Kara threw her head back, groaning internally. That would explain the terrible hangover.

*‘What else? I feel like I’ve been hit by a truck’*

Lena shrugged casually, taking a sip of her coffee. “Nothing else really. We drank, you forced me to dance, and I practically had to carry you home,” she laughed.

“Now, as much as I love the view, did you want to put some pants on before breakfast?” Lena asked, smirking at Kara. Feeling her face turn red as Kara realised she was half dressed, Kara nodded, holding up one finger before she darted into her room.

After a quick shower, where Kara was sick twice more, she dressed and went back out to the kitchen. She took a seat opposite Lena and reached for the other takeaway container.

*‘I could kiss you right now’* Kara signed as she took a sip of her coffee and dug into the waffles Lena had brought. Lena shook her head, smiling over the top of her own coffee.

Clearing her throat, Lena smiled at Kara. “So I decided to take the whole day off. I thought we could spend the day together, help you fix your hangover,” she said, raising one of her eyebrows.

Kara smiled. Lena overworked herself, rarely taking days off from the office. She loved it when they spent time together without Lena having to run off to sort out some business at L-Corp.

*‘Sounds perfect, what do you want to do’*

Lena rested her chin in her hand, deep in thought. Her eyes lit up as she turned to face Kara. “How about nothing?” she smiled. Kara frowned, not quite understanding where Lena was going with this.

*‘Nothing?’*

“Yes, nothing. Let’s just stay here, you don’t look like you’re in the mood to go out. We can watch your favourite films from when you were kid, and we can get takeaway later,” Lena said, tilting her head as she smiled at Kara.

Kara nodded enthusiastically, happy for any excuse to spend some time alone with Lena. They usually went out instead of staying in, sharing their favourite places with each other, with Kara trying to ensure that Lena did all the things she’d missed out on doing as a child. One of those things was watching Disney films, but somehow that didn’t surprise Kara. Lena was probably too busy taking apart machines and trying to get Lillian’s attention.

Lena made a pot of fresh coffee whilst Kara dragged her coffee table out of the way, replacing it with a pile made from every pillow in her apartment. She brought her quilt from her bed too, making a nest on the floor in front of the TV. Bringing two cups of coffee over, Lena settled in next to Kara.

“So what’s first?” Lena asked, looking at the TV. Kara smiled and pressed a few buttons, bringing up the first film.

“The Fox and the Hound?” Lena asked, her tone a bit sceptical. Her childhood hadn’t left room for childish films, instead she’d been forced to take daily piano lessons and extra tutoring up until she’d been sent away to boarding school.

Kara smiled widely, pressing play. She started writing something down as the film started playing.

*'This was my favourite film as a kid, I used to want a pet fox because of it. When I got adopted by the Danvers I moved to Midvale, it's a small town so there's a lot of fields and trees'*

She waited for Lena to finish reading it before erasing it and continuing.

*'Alex and I would spend hours walking around trying to find a fox so I could keep it. Pretty sure she thought it was weird but I was her new sister so she was trying to be nice'*

Lena laughed, of course Kara would think keeping a wild animal as a pet was a good idea. They both turned their attention to the screen, as Kara snuggled in next to Lena, who looked down in surprise, quickly putting her arm around Kara.

She was still getting used to having a girlfriend, it even sounded weird to say it, and Kara was a very affectionate person. Lena loved that about her, she was never afraid to take Lena's hand as they were walking, or cuddle her like she was doing now.

Lena was trying too though. She'd slowly become comfortable with the fact that she was in a real relationship, and she tried not to keep herself closed off from Kara. Her past didn't really make it easy for her to open up to people, but she shared everything with Kara. Lena was also adamant that they take it slow, she didn't want to rush into things and risk ruining everything. Kara meant more to her than she let on.

---

They watched the first film, and then Kara put on Mulan, another childhood favourite. She mouthed along to all the songs, smiling at Lena as she bobbed her head along to the tune.

By the end of the fourth film Kara was starting to feel better. With the help of some more aspirin her headache was mostly gone, and besides throwing up a few more times, as Lena held her hair back, she was fine.

After watching *Beauty and the Beast*, Lena ordered Chinese food, hoping some potstickers might make Kara feel better. They ate it on the floor, surrounded by pillows, as they watched the next film Kara put on. This time it was *Tangled*, and she mouthed along to all the songs again as Lena watched her, laughing.

Lena ended up spending more time watching Kara watch the films than she actually did watching them herself. She loved watching her facial expressions, Kara's face would light up as she watched the happily ever after at the end of each film. She was like a little kid, and Lena thought that maybe some part of Kara still believed in fairytales.

They watched *The Little Mermaid*, and Kara confessed that it had been her favourite since she had been in the car accident. Lena didn't understand at first, but then she got to the part where Ariel traded her voice for legs and then it made sense.

It made Lena sad. Not to say that whether or not Kara could talk would have made a difference to their relationship, but Lena would be lying if she said she didn't want to know what Kara's voice sounded like. Or her laugh. Or want to hear her sing along to the songs in the films. Lena didn't even know if Kara could sing, she could've been the worst singer in the world for all she knew, but she still wanted to hear it for herself.

She also knew it frustrated Kara sometimes when she couldn't get Lena's attention from across the room, or she when she was trying to order food. It didn't bother Lena though, she tried to be patient. She never wanted Kara to feel like it was a nuisance for Lena to have to figure out what she was saying in sign language, and then have to write it down in the end when it turned into an elaborate game of charades.

She thought about last night, when Kara had signed 'I love you' to her. She hadn't brought it up, because either Kara was drunk and didn't mean it, or she couldn't remember it at all. Either way, Lena wanted to hear it come from Kara's lips, and maybe that was selfish. Maybe it was selfish that she hadn't said it to Kara herself, but wanted to hear Kara say it as some form of self-validation. Lena had no one who loved her, and she wanted someone to say it, and even more than that, she wanted it to be Kara.

Kara gently nudged Lena in her side, bringing her out of her thoughts. She looked concerned, a faint crease between her eyebrows.

*'Are you okay?'* Kara signed.

Lena smiled, “yeah I’m fine, and don’t frown, you’re going to give yourself wrinkles,” she said quietly, smoothing the creases away before she placed a quick kiss on Kara’s lips.

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It was early hours in the morning. On the floor in front of the TV Kara and Lena were wrapped up in the blankets. They’d fallen asleep in the same position they’d been in as they’d sat watching *Sleeping Beauty*.

They were propped up against the pillows, Kara’s head resting on Lena’s chest, her glasses still on, and Lena’s head thrown back against the sofa, one arm still wrapped around Kara. They both looked peaceful, their breathing slow and in sync as they slept on in each other’s arms.

It was the first time one of them had stayed over.

## Chapter 12

It was Tuesday, and it was Lena's birthday.

She didn't know Kara knew, and it was understandable why she didn't mention it to Kara. Lena never celebrated her birthday with her family, her mom didn't care, and she'd lost all of her friends.

It had taken some digging, but Kara had finally gotten it out of Lena's assistant Jess. She didn't plan something big, she knew Lena wouldn't like it if Kara made a big fuss about her birthday. Instead, after finishing work, Kara stopped by Lena's favourite sushi restaurant, picking up some for Lena to go with the little birthday cake she'd bought that morning. She made her way over to L-Corp after that, intent on dragging Lena away from her work, no matter how hard she argued.

Once making it up to the top floor, she passed by Jess, who raised her eyebrows knowingly, and walked into Lena's office. Lena looked up from her computer as Kara strode in, walking over to Lena to give her a kiss.

"I wasn't expecting you darling, I thought I was coming to yours tonight," Lena said, equal parts happy and confused by Kara's surprise visit.

*'I thought I'd surprise you, we can go back to yours instead'*

Frowning slightly, Lena glanced at her laptop. She still had a lot of work to get through before leaving.

"I might be a while," she started, before Kara walked around the desk, closing the laptop as she sat herself down on Lena's lap. Lena smiled as Kara placed another kiss on her lips.

*'Or you could leave early tonight'* Kara signed, raising an eyebrow suggestively.

Lena looked at her closed laptop and the stack of papers, a look of uncertainty crossing her face. Kara took this opportunity to place gentle kisses down Lena's exposed throat, continuing further down as Lena rolled her head to one side, giving Kara more access.

Lena groaned in frustration, "you're making it very hard to say no." Her eyes were closed as she savoured the sensation of Kara's lips trailing down her neck and her hand running up one of her thighs. Kara sat up straight and Lena opened her eyes to see what Kara was about to sign.

*'I also bought sushi just in case you needed some extra convincing'*

Lena cracked a smile at Kara, leaning up to kiss her. "You already had me convinced, but now I'm really motivated to get out of here. Just give me a minute to pack up."

Kara nodded, jumping up off Lena's lap, waiting as she stuffed a stack of files and her laptop into her satchel. She picked up Lena's coat and helped her into it, taking her hand when Lena was ready to go.

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They walked back to Lena's apartment. Normally they wouldn't go to Lena's place in the night, because Lena didn't like Kara walking home alone in the dark, but Kara would let her worry about it later.

Once inside, Lena slipped her heels off and shrugged out of her coat before throwing herself down on the sofa. She let out a frustrated groan into the pillows as Kara came and sat down next to her. She tapped Lena on the arm, waiting for her to sit up.

*'How was work?'*

Lena rolled her eyes, her shoulders tensing as she started to rant. “I had a meeting today with the board of directors and it was awful.”

Kara patted the space between her legs, waiting for Lena to come closer, before she starting massaging her shoulders. Kara hated seeing Lena stressed, and no matter what she said, Lena wouldn't cut back on her work. She was determined to prove that she was capable of running the company.

Lena vented to Kara about her day as Kara massaged away at her shoulders. “They're all so condescending just because I'm a woman. They shut down every idea I tried to present and then complained about how they were 'concerned' the company was at a standstill. I don't know why they bothered electing me as CEO if they're not going to take me seriously,” Lena told Kara, her shoulders tensing up even more. Kara pulled her phone out of her pocket and typed a message, holding it out in front of Lena so she could read it.

*'Massages are supposed to be relaxing you know'*

Lena sighed, “I know, I'm sorry I'm complaining so much, I'm just so frustrated,” she apologised.

*'Don't apologise, you're right. Maybe you could nominate some women to join the board of directors, it might help tip the scales'*

“I thought about doing that actually, it might be enough to turn some of the indecisive ones to my side too, at the moment they're just following the majority,” Lena thought out loud, “anyway, enough about work.”

Kara kissed Lena's shoulder before she jumped up and took the sushi out of the fridge. She poured Lena a glass of wine too, hoping that would help her relax more. They ate in front of the TV as they watched a science documentary called Particle Fever that Lena wanted to watch.

After they were done eating, Kara took their rubbish to the bin and snuck the cake out of the fridge, trying to hide it from Lena as she put some candles in and lit it. She also pulled



a wrapped gift out of her bag, hiding it behind her back as she walked over to the sofa.

Lena looked up from the screen for a second as Kara walked back over, doing a double take when she realised Kara was holding a birthday cake. She threw her head back against the sofa, closing her eyes. “How?” she asked.

Kara smiled, placing the cake in Lena’s lap and kissing her on the cheek. Picking up her phone, Kara pulled up a video of the happy birthday song. Lena’s cheeks turned pink as she sat there waiting for the song to end, although she was biting her lip as she tried not to smile. Once the video finished, she blew out the candles and turned to face Kara.

“Thank you,” Lena whispered, leaning in to kiss Kara. Taking the cake, Kara placed it on the coffee table and pulled the present out from behind her, handing it to Lena. Kara was nervous, she wanted Lena to like the present. Well, she knew she’d like one part of it, she just hoped she would be excited for the second.

Unwrapping the gift, Lena looked down at the book in her lap. It was the A Wrinkle in Time quintet, Lena’s favourite book when she was a child. Kara had remembered her mentioning it in passing, how it had got her into science, and how her dad had read it to her every night until he died.

“I can’t believe you remembered,” Lena laughed, her eyes lighting up as she opened the book. She let out a surprised sound as two pieces of paper slid out from between the pages as she flicked through. Her forehead creased in concentration as she picked up the two tickets and read them.

That was the second part of the gift. Lena might have gone into business and engineering, but Kara knew that Lena loved space too. It was two tickets to the observatory located outside of National City, for a tour and a private meal under the stars. She’d planned it all out, they could catch a train there, Kara would be fine with that.

“I love it, thank you,” Lena whispered, pressing the book and tickets to her chest. Kara smiled, her eyes crinkling at the corner as Lena leant in and kissed her. She was glad Lena liked the presents. She hadn’t known what to get for someone who could afford anything they wanted but also didn’t want to celebrate their birthday, so she’d opted for something small and sentimental.

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They spent all night talking and eating cake. Lena had never understood why people loved celebrating their birthday, but sat here with Kara, spooning mouthfuls of chocolate cake into her mouth, and the thoughtful presents Kara had bought her, she understood why.

It was the warm feeling in her stomach that came from someone caring about the fact that she was born. It was the little things, like how Kara knew her favourite cake was chocolate, or that Kara had remembered her favourite childhood book, even though Lena hadn't read it since her dad had died.

Until tonight.

She read the first chapter out loud to Kara, who lay with her head in Lena's lap and her eyes closed as she listened. Kara could listen to Lena read to her every day for the rest of her life. She wasn't sure if it was the book or Lena's voice, but she had never truly appreciated the way words sounded until Lena was reading that first chapter out to her.

It was late when Lena finished the first chapter, setting the book down on the coffee table. She looked down at Kara, gently running her fingers through her blonde locks as she kept her eyes closed. Her fingers gently moved, running down the side of Kara's face, down her neck and along her collarbones. Kara flinched, her eyes flying open as she pulled away from Lena's fingers, her nose wrinkling as she smiled.

"Ticklish?" Lena asked, her other hand running down Kara's side, laughing as she watched her wriggle. Kara sat up, giving Lena an exasperated look. "Sorry, I couldn't help myself," Lena apologised, not looking the least bit sorry as she smiled at Kara.

*'It's late, I should probably leave in a minute'* Kara signed, looking down at her watch. She got up off Lena's lap and picked up the empty plates, taking them over to the sink.

“Let me just get my coat and shoes and I’ll walk you home,” Lena told Kara, getting up off the sofa. Kara rolled her eyes from the kitchen, waving to get Lena’s attention.

*‘You don’t have to walk me home, I’ll be fine, I’ll message you when I get in’*

Now it was Lena’s turn to roll her eyes. They’d had this argument before. “Darling you know I don’t like you walking home alone this late. You might trust everyone but I don’t, and if anything happened to you I’d never forgive myself,” Lena said coming into the kitchen.

*‘I know, but you’ll have to make two trips when it’s unnecessary’* Kara protested.

“Well I think it *is* necessary,” Lena argued, “either you let me walk you home or you can stay here, the guest rooms are all made up,” Lena offered. Kara had never stayed over at Lena’s place, and Lena hadn’t stayed over at Kara’s, not unless you counted them falling asleep on Kara’s living room floor.

But things had been different since then. They’d woken up the next morning wrapped up in blankets and each other, and cooked breakfast together. It had seemed like the most natural thing in the world.

*‘Or’* Kara signed, slowly walking towards Lena as she shrugged off her cardigan.

*‘I could stay over with you’*

A slow smile spread over Lena’s face as she pulled Kara closer by the front of her shirt. Kara pressed Lena up against the wall as her lips came down on Lena’s. Their lips parted for each other, and Lena’s hands reached for edge of Kara’s shirt and untucked it from her pants. Her hands were gentle as they slowly explored upwards under Kara’s shirt.

They both froze when Lena’s fingers hit the first scar. Kara stiffened and pulled back slightly. The majority of the scars from the car accident could be easily hidden, they were

mostly on her stomach, back and chest, and a few on her upper thighs, which meant that very rarely did anyone see them. It also meant that Lena had never seen them, which made Kara nervous.

They weren't pretty. Some of them were thick, ropy scars. One side of her back and chest was full of scars where her ribs had snapped and been pushed out of her skin. There were others from where metal had bent and glass had broken, slicing through her body on impact.

"It's okay," Lena whispered, "we don't have to -, we can-, just tell me what you're comfortable with," she stammered, worried about Kara closing herself off. Kara took a deep breath before she cupped the side of Lena's face and leant back into the kiss.

Lena gently held Kara by the waist, waiting for her to make the first move as they kissed. Kara pressed herself back up against Lena, bringing her other hand up to twine in Lena's dark hair. Lena's hands trailed up Kara's back, her fists grabbing handfuls of Kara's shirt.

Kara brought her hands to the top button on her shirt, undoing it and moving on to the next one. Her hands shook slightly as she fumbled with the button.

"Here, let me do it," Lena whispered, gently grabbing Kara's hands, placing a kiss on the back of each one, before leaning in and capturing her lips with her own. She slowly undid each button, taking her time as she judged Kara's body language to make sure she was okay.

She kissed her way down Kara's neck, pulling one side of the shirt off her shoulder as she continued to press kisses along her collarbone. One of Kara's hands ran up Lena's thigh, hitching her dress up the higher she went, whilst the other kept her waist pinned against the wall in place.

Kara's shirt came off completely, and Lena's hands ran down her back, gently tracing all of the scars with her fingertips. Kara pulled back, bringing Lena with her as she moved backwards towards the hallway. She reached behind Lena, searching for the zipper to her dress as they kissed.

They left a trail of clothes to the bedroom. They fell through the door as their hands roamed each other's body. Kara pushed Lena backwards until her legs hit the bed and they fell onto the mattress. Straddling Lena, Kara leant down and placed a hard kiss against her lips, hooking one of Lena's legs around her waist. They laughed as Kara's glasses hang off her face, and she quickly took them off before resuming their kiss.

Kara sat up, and Lena trailed after her, not willing to let go of her lips. Placing her hands on Kara's waist, Lena watched as Kara reached around to the back of her bra and undid the clasp, flinging it across the room. Her hands slowly trailed upwards as Kara leant down to kiss her again. Lena flipped them over so she was straddling Kara, before she moved down the bed, kissing every one of Kara's scars. Once she'd hit the last one on Kara's thighs, she slowly moved back up as Kara grasped at the sheets.

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The next morning Kara woke up alone in bed. She fumbled next the the bed, searching for her glasses. Pulling the sheets with her, she sat up, looking around. She could hear sound coming from the kitchen and assumed that it was Lena.

Getting up, Kara searched for her clothes, coming up with her knickers and Lena's bra. Tiptoeing down the hallway in her underwear, Kara stopped at the end, her arms crossed over her chest. She stood there watching Lena make breakfast in her dressing gown, smiling to herself as Lena flipped an egg. She padded barefoot over to Lena, grabbing her waist from behind and placing a kiss on her neck.

"Oh, you're awake!" Lena exclaimed, turning around to face Kara. She looked down, "and you're not wearing any clothes," she laughed. Kara blushed as she rolled her eyes and smiled.

*'I seem to have lost them all'*

"Well I'm not complaining, but your shirt is over there," Lena pointed over near the sofa. Kara slipped it on and buttoned it up before putting on a pot of coffee. As she waited for the coffee to brew she stared at Lena, thinking about last night. Lena caught her staring and raised an eyebrow.

*'Just admiring the view'* Kara signed, her eyes crinkling as she laughed.

Lena joined in with the laughter, pulling Kara closer by the bottom of her shirt. "That was incredibly cheesy," she murmured as she pressed her forehead against Kara's, their noses gently bumping. They slowly kissed, savouring the other's touch as their hands wandered. The smell of something burning interrupted them, and Lena quickly hit the eject button on the toaster, bringing up two burnt pieces of bread.

"How am I ever going to get anything done when you're so distracting," Lena sighed, putting down another two pieces of bread before turning back to kiss Kara again. She seemed less stressed this morning, and Kara didn't have to guess why. She didn't think she'd ever been this happy either, just looking at Lena made her feel a rush of love, and she still wasn't used to the thrill that went through her every time they touched. Kara didn't think she'd ever get used to it.

She was staring at Lena again, debating whether or not to blurt out how she felt. She'd known it for a few weeks, that she loved Lena, but she hadn't told her out of fear of scaring her away. Now seemed like a good time, but she still wasn't sure Lena was ready to hear it.

"You're staring again," Lena said, rubbing away the little frown line between Kara's eyebrows, "what're you thinking about so seriously at this time in the morning?" Lena asked, one half of her mouth quirking up in a smile. Kara's frown deepened. She was still debating whether or not she should say it.

Making her mind up, Kara ejected the toast before it burnt again, placing it on their plates along with the bacon and eggs. Lena poured them both a cup of coffee and they sat at the table as Kara listened to Lena talk.

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After they finished eating, Lena led Kara to the shower. They spent as long as they could in there, before finally switching the water off and getting ready for work. Lena gave Kara a clean shirt, and she had to admit, she loved seeing her wearing her clothes.

They put their coats on and Lena opened the front door, waiting for Kara to walk out. Once they got into the elevator, Kara stared down at Lena out of the corner of her eye. Lena tilted her head to the side, looking at Kara. “You’re awfully watchful today,” Lena noted, a small smile lifting the corners of her mouth.

Kara took a deep breath, turning to face Lena.

*‘So there’s something I need to tell you’* Kara signed, her stomach fluttering with nerves. Lena’s face dropped, picking up on Kara’s nerves.

“Please don’t,” Lena begged, “I’m sorry if things are moving too fast for you, if last night was too much I-,” she rambled. Kara shook her head, taking Lena’s face in her hands and smoothing her thumb along one of her cheekbones. Lena trailed off and Kara pulled her hands back, trying to stop them from shaking.

*‘I love you, Lena’*

Kara stood there biting her lip as she waited for Lena’s reaction. It took a moment for Lena to register what Kara was saying. Of course she knew what the hand movements meant, Kara had said it to her before when she was drunk, but she hadn’t been expecting her to say it sober.

“Oh!” Lena let out a surprised gasp, looking down at her hands. A nervous smile spread across Kara’s face, not sure how to take Lena’s reaction. Lena reached out and grabbed one of Kara’s hands, and looked up at her. Her eyes were glassy as she smiled up at Kara, leaning up to kiss her.

“I-,” Lena looked down, clearing her throat before she looked back up, “that means more to me than you know,” she choked out. Kara smiled again, this time in relief, pressing her lips against Lena’s again. They broke apart as the elevator doors opened, walking outside hand in hand.

She didn't care that Lena hadn't said it back, Kara just wanted her to know that she loved her. And she did, and that was enough for Kara.



## Chapter 13

A few weeks later it was Thanksgiving. Kara and Lena took the train to Midvale, along with Alex, Maggie and Winn. Lena was trying to stay calm about meeting Eliza. So far she'd gotten along great with Alex and the rest of Kara's friends, but this was Kara's mom. Lena didn't get along great with Lillian, but she knew that Kara loved Eliza and she wanted to make a good impression.

Once the train pulled into the station and they all disembarked, Alex, Maggie and Winn piled into a taxi with everyone's luggage, making their way to the Danvers' house. Looping her arm through Lena's, Kara started walking. It wasn't a long walk to the house, and Kara got to show Lena some of her favourite places in Midvale as they strolled along.

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They climbed the porch steps and Lena took a deep breath, steadying herself. Kara smiled, squeezing Lena's hand and gave her a quick kiss before opening the front door. She took Lena's coat and placed it on a hook next to her own, listening to the muffled whispers coming from the living room.

Smiling, Kara dragged Lena into the living room. She wasn't worried, Eliza was so open and loving, it would be almost impossible for her to not like Lena.

"Hi sweetie, come give me a hug," Eliza smiled, opening her arms as she got up off the sofa. Kara's face lit up as she ran into her arms, squeezing her tightly as she kissed Eliza on the cheek. Pulling back slightly Eliza studied her youngest daughter's face, smiling as she pulled her in for another quick hug.

Smiling widely, Kara took Eliza's hand and pulled her over to Lena, who was lingering in the doorway, looking nervous. Kara picked up Lena's hand too, giving it another quick squeeze before dropping it.

*'Eliza, this is Lena. Lena this is my mom, Eliza'*

Kara was smiling widely as she introduced them to each other, her eyes crinkling at the corners. She was so excited to finally introduce Lena to her mom.

“It’s lovely to meet you Mrs Danvers, thank you for having me,” Lena smiled, holding out a hand for Eliza to shake. She let out a surprised sound as Eliza wrapped her in a hug, kissing her on the cheek.

“You’re very welcome Lena, and please call me Eliza.”

Lena smiled in relief, her nerves calming now that she’d gotten the introduction out of the way. She just hoped the rest of the weekends would go just as smoothly.

“These are for you,” Lena said, pulling two bottles of wine out of her bag. Kara rolled her eyes, she’d told Lena she didn’t have to bring anything, but of course she hadn’t listened.

“Oh, thank you!” Eliza exclaimed, giving Lena’s arm a gently squeeze before she took the two bottles, “I’ll go and put these in the kitchen, make yourself at home Lena.”

Kara beamed at Lena, kissing her forehead before they sat down on the sofa. “You can relax now,” Alex smirked at Lena, who let out a nervous laugh.

“That wasn’t as bad as I thought,” Lena smiled wrapping an arm around Kara’s waist.

“Don’t worry, I was the same the first time I met Eliza,” Maggie confessed, flashing Lena a dimpled smile, “and I don’t get nervous that often, so that’s saying something.”

Alex laughed, “out of all the things to get nervous about, it was my mom?” Maggie rolled her eyes, nudging Alex with her elbow.

“But that was *before* I met her,” Maggie argued, “your mom loves me now.”

Kara smiled, she loved watching Alex and Maggie. You could see the love in the way that they looked at each other, in their smiles, in their gentle touches. They didn’t have to say it, it was just obvious, it’s like they were connected by an invisible force.

She turned to smile at Lena, who had turned to talk to Winn. Lena still hadn’t said she loved Kara, but it was obvious in the way she had her hand around Kara’s waist even though she was turned away from Kara, or the way she always walked Kara home, or the way she woke Kara up with breakfast and a cup of coffee every morning after they stayed at each other’s place.

There were a thousand ways to say I love you without using saying the words, and they all meant just as much to Kara, and maybe they even showed Lena’s love better than those words ever could.

Kara gave Lena’s knee a squeeze as she stood up.

*‘Does anyone want a drink?’* Kara signed as she made her way to the kitchen.

Everyone assured Kara they were fine, before she walked out of the room. The kitchen counters were covered with dozens of bowls, pots and pans. Eliza was busy finishing off a chocolate pecan pie. Kara’s face lit up, it was her favourite dessert, and the best part about Thanksgiving in her opinion.

“Hey sweetie, can you turn the potatoes off for me please,” Eliza said, looking up as Kara walked in. She nodded, lifting the big pot off the stove and dumping the potatoes in the strainer. Kara took the pot over to Eliza, and started mashing the potatoes as her mom set aside the pie and started peeling carrots.

“So, Lena seems nice,” Eliza whispered, lowering her voice so the others couldn’t hear. Kara smiled at Eliza, nodding in agreement, “she’s very pretty too,” she continued, smiling at Kara as she looked at her out of the corner of her eye. Kara nodded again, her cheeks turning slightly pink.

*'She is, she's smart too, and so kind'* Kara replied.

"And you love her?" Eliza asked, turning to face Kara. She felt her cheeks turn redder as she stared at the pot of potatoes she was mashing, nodding shyly. Eliza brushed the hair out of Kara's face, kissing her on the cheek.

"Then I hope she loves you too, and makes you happy," Eliza smiled, as Kara looked up at her.

*'She makes me happier than she knows'* Kara signed, smiling at her mom.

Eliza wrapped her in a hug. She was happy that both of her daughters were happy. Sometimes she worried about being so far away from them, she felt like she missed out on so much.

"I hope I'm not interrupting," Lena's voice came from the doorway, she was wringing her hands nervously, "I came to see if you needed any help preparing the rest of the dinner."

Eliza and Kara broke apart, smiling over at Lena.

"Oh no sweetheart, it's fine, I'm almost finished here. Why don't you help yourself to a drink and take Kara back in with you," Eliza told Lena, smiling at her. She turned to Kara, "go on, I'll be in when I'm done."

Kara poured them both a glass of wine before taking Lena's hand and leading her back into the living room.

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They all sat around the table, holding hands as they went around and said what they were thankful for. Really what they were all thankful for was each other.

Kara was thankful for her adoptive family, her friends, and most of all, she was thankful for Lena this year.

Lena was thankful for Kara, above anything else, but she was also thankful towards the Danvers for making her feel welcome. Eliza had shown her what it was like to feel a mother's love and she was more grateful than she could explain.

And Eliza was thankful for both of her daughters, and for their girlfriends. Seeing them both so happy and in love made her think about her and Jeremiah when they were younger. She'd seen Alex and Maggie together dozens of times since they'd started dating, so she was used to seeing them laugh together and finish each other's thoughts.

But tonight, she got to see Kara and Lena together, and she could see how much they loved each other just from the way they gazed at each other. Kara had told Eliza all about Lena over the phone. Everything from her company, to her adoptive family, to her wariness when it came to dating. Looking at Lena now though, Eliza wasn't worried, she knew Lena adored Kara.

They were so different, yet so similar.

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After dinner, Lena insisted on helping to wash up, despite Eliza's protests. Alex agreed with Lena, and poured Eliza a glass of wine and sent her to relax in the living room. Kara placed all the leftovers into Tupperware containers as Winn scraped the rest of the plates and bowls clean. Lena washed the dishes and Alex and Maggie dried and put them away.

They all joined Eliza in the living room once they were finished. Maggie bringing in a bottle of wine with her. It wasn't long before they started playing charades, a Danvers holiday

tradition. Everyone paired up, the girls obviously teaming up, leaving Winn and Eliza as a team.

“And no cheating this time, Kara,” Alex warned her as Kara prepared to go first. Kara protested, her mouth opened in fake outrage.

“Little Danvers, don’t even try and act innocent. I was here last Easter and even I picked up on the sneaky sign language and I sucked at it back then,” Maggie laughed, as Kara closed her mouth, giving everyone a sheepish smile as she shrugged.

“I’m sure we won’t need to cheat when we’re going to beat you all anyway,” Lena said, a cocky smile on her face.

Winn let out a whistle, “someone’s confident,” he remarked.

Lena raised one of her eyebrows as she smiled, “you can’t doubt yourself in business, Winn. You either come ready for a fight or you find another job, and I always win. Plus I’ve only been learning ASL for a few months so a lot of the time it’s felt like we’ve been playing a game of charades.”

“Okay Luthor, let’s see if you’re all talk or if Alex and I can beat you,” Maggie laughed, rising to Lena’s challenge.

The game went on for hours, as everyone bickered over whether Alex was trying to cheat with sign language to get back at Kara for cheating at Easter, or whether it counted if Winn gave a running commentary as he acted out his film. In the end they all agreed, some begrudgingly, that Kara and Lena won.

As everyone fell into conversation, Kara slipped out of the room. She fetched a pair of scissors from the kitchen and went outside, cutting a few flowers from Eliza’s garden. She went back inside and hovered in the doorway, watching everyone. Eliza and Lena were deep in conversation, they both looked up when they saw Kara stood there, a small smile on her face.

Eliza cupped the side of Lena's face, whispering something to her before she nodded her head in Kara's direction. Lena smiled, getting up and walking over to Kara. They both put their coats and shoes on, at Kara's direction, before walking outside.

It was cold out. Kara's breath was visible in front of her as she turned to face Lena. It wouldn't be long before winter arrived. She tucked the flowers under her arm, freeing up her hands.

*'I want to take you somewhere, it's a special place,'*

Lena nodded, taking Kara's hand in hers. They walked for some time through the quiet town. The sun was fully set by now, the streetlights lighting their way. They passed the orphanage Kara had been at until the Danvers had adopted her, but she didn't point it out to Lena. It wasn't important now.

"You're awfully quiet," Lena said to Kara, not realising what she said until Kara raised an eyebrow and waited for Lena to understand.

"Ugh, you know what I mean," Lena sighed, gently nudging Kara with her elbow, "everything okay?" Kara nodded, a half smile pulling up one side of her mouth.

It wasn't until they turned in at a gate that Lena realised where they were going. And probably the reason for Kara's silence on their walk over.

It was a cemetery with thousands of graves stretching into the distance. She quickly looked at Kara, the words not coming out as she tried to say something. Instead she just squeezed her hand.

Kara led them through the cemetery, the twists and turns of the path familiar to her. They stopped in front of a giant tombstone engraved with the names of Kara's parents. She turned to face Lena.

*'Sorry if this is weird for you, but I wanted you to meet them'*

Turning back to face the tombstone, Kara knelt down, replacing the dead flowers with the fresh ones she carried. Eliza came here often with fresh flowers from her garden, when Kara wasn't here to do it.

Lena stood there with her hand on Kara's shoulder as she knelt there. It wasn't until Kara's shoulders started shaking that Lena realised she was crying. She sat down next to Kara, pulling her in her lap and cradling her head against her chest. Kara sobbed into Lena's coat, her tears soaking through the fabric, as Lena held her, gently stroking her hair as she murmured reassurances and apologies.

They stayed that way for a while, alone in the dark. Lena hadn't seen Kara cry before, it hurt her to see her this way, and seeing her heartbreak, it was enough to bring tears to Lena's eyes too.

Once Kara's sobs slowly died down, Lena pulled a handkerchief out of her pocket - because of course she would have one - and pulled away from Kara. She gently tilted Kara's tearstained face up and wiped away the tears, even as more took their place.

*'I'm sorry'* Kara signed, as she let Lena dab at her face.

"Don't you ever apologise for crying or showing emotion," Lena whispered, taking Kara's face in her hands, "not ever."

Lena handed the handkerchief over to Kara, and wrapped her arms around her as they sat there in front of the grave. She didn't know what to say, she couldn't remember her parents and in some ways that was a relief, but Kara had to deal with twelve years' worth of memories of her parents that would never go away.

Kara stood up, wiping the dirt off her pants. Lena sat there for a second before leaning forward, placing a hand on the tombstone.



“I love your daughter, I’ll look after her for you, always,” Lena whispered, leaning in, “I promise.” She pushed herself up, turning around to face Kara who was staring at her, as surprised look on her face.

“I do you know,” Lena confessed, “I do love you.”

A small smile pulled up the corners of Kara’s mouth as Lena moved forward, cradling the side of Kara’s face as she pressed a kiss to the other cheek.

---

They were in Kara’s bed, wrapped up in the blankets as Kara lay on Lena’s chest. The house was quiet, everyone else had gone to bed too. Lena ran her fingers through Kara’s blonde locks, as her other hand stroked her back.

“You know, you told me you loved me that night you got really drunk and I walked you home,” Lena whispered to Kara, smiling to herself in the dark.

She felt Kara lift her head, and lifted her hand too, tangling her fingers in Kara’s curls. In the dim moonlight seeping through the curtains she could tell Kara was looking at her accusingly.

Lena laughed quietly, “I didn’t know if you meant it and I didn’t want to hold it against you.” Kara sighed, and Lena could almost hear her rolling her eyes.

“I knew I loved you then too, but I was too afraid to say it,” Lena confessed, “I just want you to know I didn’t wait this long because I wasn’t sure, I was sure the moment I saw you eat twelve potstickers in a row at the gala,” she laughed here, remembering that night, “I just -, I wasn’t brave enough to tell you, even when you told me. I was scared but I have never loved you any less even though it took me this long to tell you.”

Kara pushed herself up, her hand brushing Lena's cheek as she leant forward, her lips searching for Lena's. She pulled herself on top of Lena, deepening the kiss as she undid the buttons on Lena's pyjamas. Her hands wandered further down, toying with the waistband of Lena's bottoms.

"Kara, I don't *want* to stop you, but I should probably remind you that your mom, sister, and best friends are separated from us by very thin walls," Lena whispered against Kara's lips, her hand stopping Kara's before she went any lower.

Kara smiled against Lena's lips, sighing as she settled back down onto her chest, listening to Lena's heart race. Kara fell asleep like that, her breathing slowing as she relaxed. Lena lay there a little while longer, tracing patterns across Kara's skin as she stared at the ceiling. It wasn't long before she felt herself drifting off.

She shifted slightly, trying not to wake Kara as she pressed a kiss to the top of her head and removed her glasses for her, before laying back against the pillow.

"I love you," she whispered once more before falling asleep.

# Chapter 14

## Chapter Notes

Here comes the angst

A few weeks later winter came.

Kara stepped out of the elevator at L-Corp, waving at Jess as she walked past her desk and headed towards Lena's office. She didn't notice Jess' silent, wide-eyed warning, but as she got closer she could hear a raised voice.

She hesitated outside the door when she heard Lena yelling. Knocking twice, Kara opened the door just enough to poke her head in. Lena whirled around, her face stony and her eyes blazing with anger. Kara shrunk back, closing the door before Lena could react.

She'd never seen Lena so angry before.

The yelling cut off and the door opened two seconds later. Lena stood there awkwardly, looking down at the floor as Kara walked in. She sighed as she shut the door and walked over to her desk. Sitting down, Lena put her head in her hands, exhaling slowly before she looked up. Kara was watching her with concern, but Lena wouldn't meet her eyes.

"Sorry about that," Lena said, barely concealing her anger as she picked up her tablet, tapping the screen with unnecessary force.

Kara reached out and lifted Lena's chin up, forcing her to look at her. Lena's shoulders dropped as she sighed again, closing her eyes for a moment. She could see the questions written all over Kara's face.

“I’m fine,” Lena uttered, rubbing her forehead as she looked back down at the tablet. Her gaze flashed back up as she saw Kara’s hands move.

*‘You’re clearly not fine, you can-’* She stopped signing as Lena slammed her tablet down on the counter.

“I said I don’t want to talk about it,” Lena snapped.

Kara flinched at the steel in Lena’s voice, her hands falling uselessly into her lap. Lena saw the hurt flash across Kara’s face and immediately regretted snapping at her.

“Fuck, I’m so sorry Kara,” Lena whispered, looking ashamed. Kara picked up her bag and stood up.

*‘It’s fine, you obviously have a lot going on, I’ll just call you later’*

Lena shot out of her seat, reaching across the desk to try and touch Kara.

“No, please don’t go, I’m sorry,” she begged, “I know it’s not an excuse, but it’s been a long day.”

Kara hesitated, and Lena took that opportunity to walk over to her. She gently kissed Kara, cradling her head between her hands.

“I’m sorry,” Lena apologised again, “look, I’ll get my things and we can leave.”

---

Lena had made reservations at a new Chinese restaurant, hoping that Kara would enjoy it there. The food was amazing, but Kara couldn't enjoy it knowing that something was going on with Lena. She had barely said anything all through the meal.

They were supposed to be going ice skating afterwards. It was a couple of weeks before Christmas and the outdoor ice skating rink had been set up. Kara had gone every year since she had moved to National City, dragging Alex or Winn with her to get peppermint hot chocolates and skate for a few hours. She had been excited to go with Lena, but now she was considering just going home and coming back another night.

Lena paid for the meal and took Kara's hand, walking outside. "Okay, which way is it to this Winter Wonderland?" she asked, flashing a small smile at Kara.

*'Maybe we should just go back to mine'* Kara signed.

"What? No! I said we'd go so we're going," Lena argued, "come on Kara, please can we just have a good night?"

Sighing, Kara nodded, pulling Lena in the right direction. On the walk there Lena tried to make up for her silence during dinner. She didn't tell Kara what was wrong, but she told her about the rest of her day.

---

Once they got to the outdoor rink they bought tickets for the next ice skating session. They still had some time to spare and Kara pointed to the giant ferris wheel, her face lit up with excitement. Lena couldn't say no to her.

They were halfway round the first rotation and Lena sat there, her hands clenching the bars as tightly as she could. Kara was amazed by the view, she'd always wished she could fly when she was younger, and was leaning over the side of the carriage.

She moved a little far over the edge for Lena's comfort, and Lena grabbed her by the back of her coat, pulling her back down into her seat. "Please don't do that, you're making my nerves bad," Lena told Kara, her face was even paler, which was saying something.

She hadn't told Kara she was afraid of heights. Going on business trips was one of the things Lena dreaded most, because even a tiny glimpse through the windows of how far up she was enough to make her stomach drop.

They were nearing the top of the second rotation when the wheel stopped turning. Lena grabbed the bars, panicking slightly. "Why have we stopped?" she panicked, looking at Kara with wide eyes.

*'It's okay, they're just letting people on or off at the bottom, relax'*

"Relax?!" Lena laughed hysterically, "we're dangling a hundred feet in the air!"

Kara covered her mouth with her hand, trying to hide her smile. Lena Luthor was afraid of heights. Lena saw her smile anyway, and rolled her eyes.

"Go ahead, laugh at me," Lena smiled, leaning back in her seat and closing her eyes. Their carriage rocked gently as Kara slid closer to Lena, who tensed up in fear.

Kara brushed Lena's hair off the side of her neck, and pressed her lips to the exposed skin. Lena exhaled softly, all of the tension draining out of her. Kara's lips wandered up Lena's neck and along her jaw, before capturing Lena's lips with her own.

They stayed locked together for the rest of the ride, and Lena didn't even notice that they stopped twice more. She was in a much better mood by the time they reached the bottom and got off.

They donned their hats and gloves before lacing on a pair of skates and making their way onto the ice. Lena was getting good now, she didn't fall over as much anymore, and she held onto Kara's hand instead of shuffling along as she held onto the side of the rink.

Kara was quite good at skating, but slowly gliding along on the ice was worth it if it meant she got to hold Lena's hands as they made circuits around the rink. After a while, Kara managed to convince Lena to skate out to the middle. They stood in the middle facing each other, slowly turning in small circles as Lena held on to Kara.

Lena accidentally kicked the ice as they were turning around again, and tripped herself up. She fell forwards into Kara, who tried to help her catch her balance, but instead lost her own. They fell into a pile on the ice, tangled together as they laughed. Lena had Kara pinned down, and she smiled as she leant down to kiss her.

She tried to get up, but slipped, collapsing back down onto Kara, laughing again. After a few attempts, and failures, they both managed to get back onto their feet. Lena turned Kara around, brushing all the crushed ice off her back. They decided to call it quits after that, skating over to the exit and replaced the skates with their shoes.

It was freezing cold by this time, so Kara dragged Lena over to one of the food trucks, ordering a serve of donut holes and two peppermint hot chocolates. They found an empty bench and sat down, watching people skate. The hot chocolate warmed their hands as they sat there, eating the donut holes.

Lena sighed heavily, her breath creating white clouds in the cold. She stared straight ahead as she spoke. "It was my mum," Lena began, "on the phone earlier."

Kara didn't say anything. Lena hadn't wanted to talk about it earlier and she didn't want to push her right now. She'd tell Kara what she wanted to.

"She knows about us. She's not very happy about it, in fact, she started making some threats. Apparently she has some dirt on me that could remove me as CEO, not that I know what she's talking about."

Kara squeezed Lena's leg, getting her to look at her. Lena smiled, giving Kara's hand a squeeze in return.

"It's nothing to worry about, everything's fine," Lena reassured her, "she can't blackmail me, I just got mad."

*'Go to the police, tell Maggie or Alex, they can help you'*

"No, that'll only make it worse. If I try and stop her she won't stop until she takes me down. You don't know her but she'll fabricate evidence, blackmail employees, anything to get her own way," Lena told her.

Kara was worried now. If Lillian wouldn't stop, what choice did Lena have, except to end things with Kara? Lena seemed to read Kara's mind because she lifted Kara's chin and pressed their lips together. It was a cold kiss, but as Lena ran her tongue along Kara's bottom lip she tasted peppermint and chocolate.

"We're okay," Lena whispered, pulling back slightly, resting her forehead against Kara's, "no matter what, you know I love you, and nothing can change that."

---

They went back to Lena's apartment, soaking wet from the rain that had poured down as they walked home. They were shivering as they stripped off their wet clothes, waiting for the bath to fill so they could warm themselves up.

Lena came up behind Kara, grabbing her by the waist before she trailed her hands upwards, smiling at the goosebumps that appeared beneath her touch. Smiling, Kara leant back into Lena, revelling in her touch.



They both slipped into the bath, facing each other as they relaxed into the hot water. They lay there for a while in silence, until Lena reached for the body wash and moved forward. She kissed Kara, tangling one hand in her hair as Kara pulled her into her lap. Lena left a trail of hot kisses down Kara's neck, laughing as Kara's hands traced patterns on her skin that tickled.

They scrubbed each other clean, placing kisses all over each other. Once they got out, Lena got them both some warm pyjamas as Kara made them both a cup of tea. They sat down in front of the TV, and Kara switched it over to *Elf*, her favourite Christmas film.

Kara loved this time of year. It was probably her childlike optimism, but she loved the magic of Christmas and her apartment looked like a Christmas bomb had gone off. Lena wasn't as excited for Christmas. She'd bought a miniature tree for her apartment, more to please Kara than for her own benefit, but that was as into the Christmas spirit as she got.

As a child she had been given anything and everything she wanted, but the Luthors never celebrated it as a family, and she'd usually been left with Lex and their nanny. As an adult Lena spent Christmas, like every holiday, alone at the office. This year she was going to be spending it at Kara's place though, so it would undoubtedly be the best Christmas she'd ever had.

Lena fell asleep before the end of the film. Clearly she'd been overworking herself, and the added stress of her mother had probably made Lena even more tired. Kara waited until it was over before she gently shook her awake. Still half asleep, Lena let Kara guide her to the bedroom and tuck her into bed before getting in next to her.

Kara pressed herself up against Lena's back, wrapping an arm around her and pulling her closer. Lena turned around in Kara's arms, kissing her before she turned back over.

"I love you," Lena whispered, and Kara lightly traced the words on Lena's skin in reply.

The next morning, they got up and got ready for work. They took their time in the shower, and once they got out Kara borrowed an oversized sweater off Lena that just came down to her wrists.

They ate a rushed breakfast, taking their coffee to go as they hurried outside, pulling their coats on as they walked out the door. They'd spent too much time in the shower, but neither of them regretted that.

They walked outside into the bitter cold, and Kara realised she'd left her scarf upstairs.

"I'll go up and get it, it'll just take a minute," Lena insisted when Kara told her.

*'No it's fine, we're going to be late, I'll get it another time'* Kara signed, taking Lena's hand and setting off towards L-Corp.

They kissed goodbye outside the office, trading 'I love you's' before Kara set off towards the library. Lena seemed to be in a better mood than yesterday, and everything was fine.

Until it wasn't.

# Chapter 15

## Chapter Notes

Sorry

It was Tuesday and Lena left work early to meet Kara at the library.

Kara's face lit up when she saw Lena waiting outside. She hurried over, giving Lena a kiss hello.

*'Shouldn't you be at work?'* Kara signed, letting Lena loop her arm through hers.

"I *should*, but pizza and you sounded a lot more fun than another couple of hours stuck behind my desk," Lena explained, pulling Kara closer.

It started snowing on the way back to Kara's apartment and Kara crossed her arms across her chest to keep herself warm. Lena realised Kara wasn't wearing her scarf.

"Ah shit!" Lena cursed, "I still have your scarf at my place."

Kara rolled her eyes, *'It's fine, I have more than one scarf'*

"But it's your favourite scarf! And you're freezing," Lena argued.

*'That's because I left my other scarf at home, and it's fine I'll just get it tomorrow'*

They were cuddled up on the sofa under a pile of blankets, eating pizza as they watched another Christmas film. Lena wasn't really focussing on the film though, instead she was watching Kara, who was captivated by the screen.

Lena got up off the sofa, kissing the side of Kara's head as she picked up their empty mugs and carried them to the kitchen.

"Coffee or hot chocolate?" Lena yelled over her shoulder as she pulled the milk out of the fridge. She turned around for Kara's answer and set about making her a hot chocolate, and a coffee for herself.

Carrying the mugs back over to the sofa, she handed Kara one piled high with marshmallows and leant forward for a kiss. They sat there sipping their drinks, and Kara finished off the rest of the pizza.

Her attention wandering again, Lena reached under the blankets and placed her hand on Kara's knee. Her expression didn't change, so Lena let her hand slide further up Kara's leg, smirking as she slowly trailed her fingers upwards. Kara turned her head slightly towards Lena, her eyes still focused on the TV. It wasn't until Lena's fingers pressed against the skin on Kara's stomach that she pulled her attention away from the screen and pushed her lips against Lena's.

Lena rolled them over so that she had Kara pinned beneath her, smiling as she lowered herself down to recapture Kara's lips with her own. Her hands had just made it past the waistband of Kara's sweatpants when Lena's phone started vibrating on the coffee table. Kara started to turn in the direction of the buzzing, pulling away from the kiss.

"No, leave it," Lena mumbled against Kara's lips.

The vibrating stopped after a while, and Lena carried on with her wandering hands. Until her phone started ringing again. Sighing, Lena sat up, straddling Kara as she reached over to the coffee table and picked up her phone.

It was Jess, and Lena was annoyed. She knew not to call Lena once she'd left the office unless it was important, and it had better be *really* important for her to be interrupting them now.

Kara propped herself up on her elbows, sliding one hands up along Lena's thigh and disappearing up her skirt. Lena's face turned serious as she listened to what was being said on the phone, and she stopped Kara's hand with her own.

"Fuck, I'm on my way, don't panic, don't touch anything, I'll be there soon," Lena rambled, scrambling off of Kara as she hung up. Rushing around the apartment, Lena gathered her coat, shoes and bag, as Kara stood there confused.

"I'm sorry, there's an emergency at the office, I'll call you later," Lena explained, hurrying over to kiss Kara goodbye.

"I love you," Lena promised, kissing her again before she walked out the door.

---

Kara stayed up late waiting for Lena to call. She finished the end of Home Alone by herself, and then turned the TV over to a nature documentary that she was only half paying attention to. She was too busy wondering what was wrong. It had to be important for Lena to rush off like that.

In the end, she went to bed. It was just past midnight and Kara assumed that Lena had fallen asleep when she got home and forgot to call. Besides, Kara had to be up for work in the morning and needed her sleep. She'd talk to Lena in the morning

---

It was eight o'clock in the morning and Kara had just started work. She still hadn't heard from Lena, and was a bit annoyed that she hadn't replied to her texts. Kara told herself not to overreact, of course Lena would have a good reason, maybe her phone had gone flat and she hadn't gotten around to charging it yet.

Busying herself with her work, and with listening Winn's stories about his Dungeons and Dragons game last night, Kara managed to put Lena out of her mind for a little while. Of course she was still anxiously awaiting a text back.

An hour later, Kara got a call from Alex. That was weird, Alex never called her; one sided conversations weren't very fun. Furrowing her brows, Kara answered her phone, waiting for Alex to talk.

"Kara?" Alex's worried voice came through, immediately filling Kara's stomach with dread. "Okay, I need you not to panic, Lena's fine." Kara let out a breath she didn't even know she was holding, relief flooding her body.

"We had a tipoff last night that the CEO of L-Corp was embezzling funds, the FBI was sent there last night, and an investigation is underway," Alex rambled as Kara's panic flared back up.

"An arrest warrant was sent out this morning and Lena's in FBI custody, but she's okay Kara, I took her in myself. I'm not supposed to be telling you any of this but I promised Lena I'd call you for her."

Kara was close to tears at this point.

"You can't see her, she's still being questioned and then they'll probably transfer her straight to jail, but she'll be let out on bail in the next day or two," Alex's voice was shaking as she explained the situation to Kara, and that worried her more than anything.

Alex was the strongest person she knew, but Kara could hear the worry in her voice, and that made it a thousand times worse for her. She knew Lillian was the source of the

tipoff, because of course it was. It was all too convenient that a few days after she had threatened Lena, and tried to blackmail her, that Lena was arrested for embezzlement.

“She wanted me to tell you that she loves you,” Alex continued, pausing as she waited for Kara to take it in.

“I have to go now; I’ll message you later. We can meet up for lunch and I’ll tell you everything else,” Alex promised before hanging up.

Kara fell back into her chair, her phone dangling uselessly at her side. Fighting back tears, she tried to make herself look busy. She could feel Winn’s questioning eyes watching her, but Kara ignored him.

At lunchtime, Kara grabbed her coat and bag, rushing to meet Alex at their favourite café. The first thing Alex tried to do was reassure Kara that everything was fine, wrapping her in a tight hug when she walked in.

*‘It’s her mom’* Kara told Alex, supposing that it didn’t matter now if she told Alex about the threats. Either way, Lillian had tried to take Lena down.

“I know you love her, but there’s a lot of incriminating evidence Kara,” Alex softly explained, holding Kara’s hands across the table. Kara nodded, of course there was. Lillian wouldn’t do anything half-assed, the evidence would be very convincing, Kara was sure of that.

*‘She’s not that stupid Alex, and her mom’s been threatening her; I told her to come to you but she said she’d handle it’*

Alex sat there, a thoughtful look on her face as she considered what Kara was saying. “There’s going to be a full investigation, so if you say she’s innocent we’ll find out,” Alex comforted Kara, taking a sip of her coffee, “Lena’s cooperating well so that’ll complicate things less, and that also helps her case.”

*'When can I see her?'*

Alex sighed, "Probably not before she gets let out, she might be able to call you in there, but that doesn't really help. She won't be in there long, money and power helps move things along faster so she'll definitely be out by the end of the week."

Kara swallowed the lump in her throat as she focused on pulling apart the bagel on the plate in front of her.

"Hey," Alex stopped Kara's hands, "she's going to be fine Kara."

---

Kara went home after work. The rest of the day had passed in a blur of worry and panic. Alex's reassurances had done nothing to help stamp down Kara's worry.

She would be in jail by now, stuck in there with actual criminals. Kara couldn't stop thinking about Lena. She jumped when her phone started vibrating, thinking it was Alex with another update, but it was a private number. Kara frowned at her phone before she answered it, waiting for the other person to talk.

*An inmate from National City Correctional Facility is attempting to contact you, to accept the call please press one.*

Kara almost dropped her phone in her rush to press one, before pressing it back to her ear in anticipation.

"Kara?" Lena's voice came through from the other end. Kara's shoulders relaxed as all of the air in her lungs rushed out. She had never felt so relieved to hear Lena's voice before. Her eyes filled with tears, and her panic died down a bit.



She was okay.

“Are you crying? I can hear you sniffing,” Lena sounded amused, and Kara could picture her smiling, her eyes filled with tears too.

“Sorry I didn’t call you sooner, everything’s a mess right now,” she let out a shaky breath before continuing, “I knew she’d try and frame me, I wonder how long she’s been planning it. She probably has year’s worth of fabricated evidence; offshore bank accounts, a paper trail, God knows what else,” Lena let out a bitter laugh.

“Everything will be okay though,” she whispered, trying to reassure Kara, “I have the best lawyer in the city, she’s getting my hearing moved up so I can be released on bail. I should be out in a few days.”

“I miss you,” Lena’s voice cracked as she said it, “I know you can’t say anything, but I’m just going to tell myself you miss me too.”

Kara smiled, sniffing as she tried to stop her tears from falling. It had only been a day, but all the worrying had made it seem longer than that, and all Kara wanted right now was to be curled up next to Lena on her sofa.

Kara could hear another voice saying something in the background.

“I have to go now,” Lena sighed, “I’ll call you tomorrow if I can.”

There was another pause. “I love you Kara,” she choked out, laughing as she added, “I’m going to assume that you’re saying it back too. I wish I could hear your voice right now.”

She said I love you again before hanging up, and Kara thought it back a dozen times, wishing Lena could hear it.

---

Kara didn't hear from Lena the next day. She tried not to worry, and Alex assured her that prisoners didn't have the liberty of making calls whenever they felt like it.

She didn't hear from her all day on Friday either. Kara almost considered skipping drinks that night, but the thought of going home to an empty house was unbearable. She walked in to the bar, and found Alex, Maggie and Winn already sat there.

Alex looked up in surprise when she saw Kara walking over to their booth. Her surprise quickly turned into a frown.

"Wh-what're you doing here?" Alex asked, confused. Kara's frown mirrored her sister's. Winn and Maggie shared a look with each other, both staying silent as Kara replied.

*'It's Friday? I didn't want to be alone'* Kara signed, sliding in next to Winn.

"Shouldn't you, uh, be with Lena?" Alex asked, shooting Kara another confused look.

*'You said I wouldn't be allowed to visit her in jail'* Kara reminded her sister.

Alex's eyes flickered to Maggie and Winn, who were both trying to act like they were invisible.

"Sh-she didn't call you?" Alex asked, stumbling over the words. Kara's eyebrows knit together in confusion, she hadn't spoken to Lena since yesterday.

"She had her hearing today, the judge granted her release on bail, she's out Kara," Alex explained, reaching across the table to touch Kara's hand.

Kara sat there dumbfounded, Alex was wrong. If Lena was out of jail she would've called Kara straight away. It had only been a few days; things hadn't changed that much. Sliding out of the booth, Kara hurried out of the bar, waving goodbye over her shoulder.

She text Lena's phone as she walked through the city. No reply. She texted her again, and then called. Still no answer. She didn't know where Lena would be, but Kara's best bet was that she was at her apartment or at L-Corp, and the office was on the way to Lena's apartment.

There was an FBI car parked outside, still conducting their investigation. No one stopped Kara as she walked inside, heading towards the elevator and going up to the top floor. She walked out of the elevator. Jess saw her and stood up, walking around from behind her desk to block Kara's path.

"I'm sorry Miss Danvers, you don't have permission to be up here, I'm going to have to ask you to leave," she informed Kara, giving her an apologetic look.

Kara frowned. If Jess was here that meant Lena was here, and if they were allowed up here with the FBI in the building, it wouldn't make much of a difference if Kara was up here too. Ignoring Jess, Kara tried to walk around her.

Jess stepped into her path, blocking her way again. "I'm really sorry, but Miss Luthor has cancelled all visitation rights for you," Jess explained, a sad look on her face.

That couldn't be right. Lena would never stop Kara from visiting her. She had to see Lena, and she wouldn't take no for an answer. She pushed Jess out of the way with her shoulder, trying to be gentle (she liked Jess), before she walked towards Lena's office.

Jess trailed behind her, trying to convince her to stop, but Kara didn't listen as she barged into Lena's office.

Lena had her back to Kara, talking to the two FBI agents. Her office was bare. All electronics had been removed, and all of her personal files and paperwork had been taken too. Lena turned around at the sound of the door banging open.

Kara froze in her tracks, taking in the black eye and split lip. Lena stiffened, her jaw tightening as Kara rushed forward, her hands outstretched. Lena took a step back, turning to the FBI agents.

“Could you excuse us for a moment please,” she directed at them. They nodded, walking out with Jess, who shut the door behind her.

Kara slowly walked forward as Lena placed her hands on her desk, facing away from Kara.

“You should go,” Lena told her, her voice shaking.

Kara frowned as she carried on walking forwards, placing her hand on Lena’s shoulder. She gently turned her around, cradling Lena’s face between her hands. Her fingers hovered a hairbreadth above the bruise covering the left side of Lena’s face. Lena wouldn’t look her in the eyes.

A choked sob burst out of Kara as she pulled Lena against her in a tight hug, pressing kisses to the side of her head. Lena’s hands circled Kara’s wrists and pushed her back. A hurt expression crossed Kara’s face as she reached out for Lena.

“Please don’t,” Lena whispered, a tear sliding down one cheek. Kara stopped herself from wiping it away.

*‘What happened to you?’* Kara signed, her hands shaking,

“My mother had someone waiting on the inside,” Lena said, “she was there to pass along a message.” She gave Kara a bitter smile.

“I’m sorry Kara, but you should go now,” Lena told her, crossing her arms as she sat down on the edge of her desk.

*‘No, I’m not leaving you, just tell me how I can help, I can pick you up some food or get you some clean clothes’* Kara signed.

“Enough, Kara,” Lena snapped, her eyes brimming with tears, “I don’t want you to do anything, I just want you to leave, and not come back.”

Kara flinched as if she’d been slapped. So Lena *had* purposely banned her from her office. Kara didn’t understand. They’d been fine the last time they had spoken. Whatever message Lillian had passed along to Lena had changed things.

Kara raised her chin, her stubbornness flaring up as she stood her ground.

*‘I’m not leaving’* Kara told her.

Lena looked pissed off now, she’d been hoping Kara would just go, it would have made things a lot easier for her. “I don’t want you here, Kara, this was all a big mistake, please don’t make it any harder,” Lena told her, her eyes flitting around the room, looking everywhere except at Kara.

Kara felt like she’d been punched in the stomach, it hurt to breathe. This couldn’t be happening. She took a step forward, her eyes filling with tears.

*‘Please don’t do this Lena, I love you, and you love me’*

Lena tried to take another step back, but hit her desk.

“I’m doing this *because* I love you,” Lena uttered sadly, “she can overlook a gay CEO if I don’t have a girlfriend, and if I don’t give her what she wants she’s going to come for you next. She’ll ruin your life, and I’m not going to sit by and let that happen.”

*‘I don’t care about any of that, I just want you’*

“I’m doing this to protect you, because I love you,” Lena told her, her jaw twitching as she tried to keep her face a blank mask.

“No, don’t come any closer,” Lena warned Kara, who started moving forward, “don’t try to change my mind.”

Kara had her arms wrapped around her, holding herself together as her heart broke. She was openly crying now, tears running down her cheeks as her shoulders shook with silent sobs. She opened her mouth to say something, anything, just trying to make the words come out. She wanted to yell and scream at Lena, to beg her not to do this.

Lena stared at the ground as she waited for Kara to go, she was too ashamed to look her in the face. She didn’t leave straight away, she stood there holding herself together as she waited for Lena to say something. Eventually she nodded to herself, and walked over to the door.

She didn’t turn around when she heard a choked ‘I’m sorry’, instead she pushed the door open and walked out. Kara stood outside the door for a few moments, choking back her sobs as she tried to calm herself down.

A crash sounded from inside Lena’s office. Kara was itching to go back inside, to hold her tightly and make sure she was okay. Instead, she went home, walking through the snow, cold without her scarf and Lena’s warmth beside her. Kara cried the whole way home, her tears freezing on her cheeks as they fell.

Kara lay in her bed, her hand reaching across to the cold half where Lena should be as she rested her head on her wet pillow. She had collapsed onto her bed as soon as she walked in and hadn't moved since. She'd ignored Alex's texts and calls as she sobbed into her pillow. Her heart felt like it had been ripped out of her chest. Kara cried herself to sleep that night, missing the feeling of Lena's back pressed against her front.

In her office, Lena lay on the floor in front of her desk, surrounded by the broken pieces of a vase and a photo frame from where Lena had pushed them off her desk in a fit of anger. The FBI agents didn't come back, and she assumed Jess had gotten rid of them before she went home too. Plumerias were strewn around her, the water from the vase soaking into her dress, and she held the broken photo frame in her hands. She didn't care about the jagged edges of the glass that cut into her hands as she tightly held the photo to her chest. It was the photobooth strip from her first date with Kara. She lay there all night, her tears mingling with the pool of water and blood as she cried herself to sleep.

# Chapter 16

## Chapter Notes

Sorry for the delay, I went away for a few days and didn't have wifi or a laptop.

Thanks to NerdyKAL on twitter, that's the first tweet I've seen about my fic :)

The next morning, Kara woke up early.

The events of last night came crashing down on her, hurting just as much as it had last night. She lay curled up in bed for hours, sobbing into her pillow. She didn't move all morning, ignoring her phone as it buzzed on the nightstand.

It wasn't until there was a knock on her door that Kara stirred. She had considered ignoring it, but the only person it would be was Alex. Before, she knew it would've been Lena showing up at her door, but now she knew that was hopeless. Lena would be the last person to show up, no matter how much Kara wished she would.

Wiping uselessly at her face, Kara padded barefoot over to the door. She was still in yesterday's clothes, her face was blotchy from crying so much, and her eyes were bloodshot behind her glasses. Alex was in for a shock.

Pulling the door open, Kara turned around, trying to hide her face as she walked over to the kitchen and put on a pot of coffee.

"Good morning to you too," Alex said, shutting the door behind her and sitting down at the table.

"You've been ignoring my calls all morning so I'd thought I'd come over on my break," Alex said, getting a shrug off Kara who still wouldn't turn around.



“I’ve been with Lena all morning, she looks awful,” Alex continued, staring at Kara’s back, waiting for her to say something. Kara knocked over one of the mugs, her hands fumbling to upright it as her eyes stung with tears.

Alex frowned, “okay, what’s wrong? If the fact that your girlfriend’s face is black and blue, and she looks like she hasn’t slept in a week, isn’t enough to get a reaction out of you, it must be bad.”

Kara’s hand tightened on the handle of the coffeepot as she filled up their cups, gritting her teeth as she willed herself not to cry in front of Alex. Steeling herself, she turned around to face Alex.

Her face went slack as she took in Kara’s appearance. She half rose out of her seat as she took in Kara’s puffy, tearful eyes.

“What’s wrong?” Alex panicked, her hands fluttering in front of her as she debated whether or not she should reach out for Kara. Walking over to the sofa, Kara set their mugs down on the coffee table, curling up with a pillow as she sniffed, trying to hide her tears.

Alex walked over, laying a hand on Kara’s shoulder. That made things worse, causing Kara to burst into tears again. Alex put her arms around her sister, holding her together as Kara sobbed into the pillow.

“Hey, it’s okay, I’ve got you,” Alex murmured, kissing Kara’s hair, “shh, it’s alright.” Alex pulled her into her chest, cradling her sister as she cried.

It wasn’t until Kara’s sobs had subsided that she told Alex what had happened. Her head resting in Alex’s lap, she signed the events of last night as Alex stroked her hair.

*‘She’s just gone’* Kara signed, her hands falling uselessly to her sides as she finished explaining.

“Luthor,” Alex cursed, balling up her fists, “I hope she likes pandas because I’m going to give her another black eye when I see her again.” Kara closed her eyes, letting out a small sigh as Alex ranted. Then Alex cut off, remembering what Lena had looked like this morning.

“Oh no, this is bad,” Alex muttered to herself, “oh God, I can’t even be mad at her, she actually looked awful, she’s clearly heartbroken.” That didn’t exactly make Kara feel better, all she could picture was Lena, alone, with no one to comfort her. Kara had been her comfort. Another tear slid out of the corner of Kara’s eye, dripping down onto the pillow.

“Christ, never mind me, just ignore what I’m saying,” Alex rambled, noticing the hurt look on Kara’s face. She hated to see her sister like this, she had actually been ecstatic that Kara had Lena. Of course, Alex had had her reservations at first, but as she’d gotten to know Lena she knew she had been wrong. They were a perfect match, and it hurt her to see them both in so much pain when they loved each other.

Alex made a promise to herself that she would go after Lillian Luthor with a vengeance. She wouldn’t let Lena’s mom be the cause of Kara’s heartbreak. She also had a few choice words to say to Lena. She may have been upset too, but Alex was hoping she could talk some sense into her, knowing that Kara would forgive Lena in an instant.

Before she left, Alex made Kara shower whilst she made her a sandwich. Kissing her sister on the cheek, she left her tucked in on the sofa watching TV.

Alex had to make another visit to L-Corp.

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“Luthor!”

Lena spun around at the shout. It was Alex, and she didn’t look impressed as she stormed towards Lena. This morning, she’d been calm and reassuring, taking Lena’s

appearance as a side-effect of spending a few days in prison, not as the side-effect of Lena breaking up with her sister. Clearly Kara had filled her in now.

Lena swallowed the lump in her throat as Alex made her way towards her. She was ready to take whatever Alex threw at her, she deserved it anyway.

“What the hell is wrong with you?” Alex hissed, “I just spent my entire lunch break trying to get my sister to stop crying because you broke her heart.” She stopped in front of Lena, glaring at her as she crossed her arms.

“I-” she swallowed thickly, her eyes stinging as she blinked back tears, trying to keep her mask of stone in place, “I’m trying to protect her.”

Alex raised an eyebrow at her, “and you’re doing such a good job at that.”

Lena flinched and Alex felt guilty about the flicker of pain that flashed across her face. It wasn’t Lena’s fault, in some ways Alex admired her for having the strength to be so selfless. She liked to think she’d do the same for Maggie if they were in the same situation.

“Come on, get your stuff,” Alex told her, waiting for Lena to move.

“The, uh, they told me I need to stay here to answer any questions,” Lena explained, gesturing to the other agents standing around.

“Well the questions can wait, you need to eat and shower, you look like shit,” Alex argued. Her bluntness got a quick laugh out of Lena, who picked up her bag and gestured for Alex to lead the way.

---

Lena opened the door to her apartment. It was dark inside with all the blinds shut, and the air was cool. It didn't feel like home to her. She had never really liked staying here, it's why she spent so much time at the office. The only time it had ever felt like home was when Kara stayed here with her, but that was more to do with the fact that Kara *was* Lena's home.

Alex trailed in behind Lena and they both hung their coats up on the rack. Lena flipped the light switches as she walked further into the apartment. The place felt empty, like there was no one living there. It had been ransacked by the FBI a couple of days ago, anything that could be holding information had been taken.

"I'm going to shower," Lena murmured, leaving Alex in the kitchen.

She took her time in the shower, letting the hot water wash over her skin, rinsing away the remnants of her tears. She felt numb, she didn't even have the energy to turn on the cold water. Instead, Lena just stood under the stream of hot water, letting it burn her skin as she stared down at the water swirling down the drain.

After getting out of the shower, Lena rejoined Alex in the kitchen, wearing a pair of sweatpants that were too big for her. Alex gave her a sad smile, realising that they were Kara's. They were the only comfy clothes Lena had, and they made her feel less alone. Her hair was wet, and strands of her dark hair stuck to her skin in stark contrast.

She looked ghostly in the darkness, her pale skin luminous. Her eyes were ringed by dark purple shadows, and the skin around her left eye was dappled in shades of black and blue. The bruise stood out against her milky complexion.

"I made some coffee," Alex told Lena, "your milk is gone off so you'll have to have it black." She poured a cup and put it down in front of Lena, who nodded in thanks.

"I made you a sandwich too."

"I'm not hungry," Lena whispered hoarsely, hugging her arms around herself.

“You need to eat,” Alex encouraged, nudging the plate towards her.

Alex laughed to herself, "I can't believe I not only have to babysit my sister, but also her girlfriend who *just* broke up with her."

Lena didn't reply as they sat down on the barstools lined up along the other side of the kitchen counters. She took a small bite out of the sandwich, staring at the plate as she waited for Alex to talk. They hadn't spoken on the way over, but Lena could tell that Alex was dying to say something.

“So, I know you think you're doing the right thing,” Alex started, “but I don't think this is the way to do it.”

Lena sighed, putting down the sandwich before she swivelled her stool to look at Alex. “So you'd prefer it if I let my mom drag your sister through the mud? She would destroy her, and the worst part is that she'd only be doing it to spite me.”

“But-,” Alex started to argue. Lena held up her hand, closing her eyes as she took a deep breath.

“Please don't. You think I didn't go over every possible outcome for this whilst I was in prison? Do you think that I didn't try and think of a way to keep my mom out of it and stay with her?” she raised her voice, getting upset. Lena banged her hand on the counter, clenching her jaw tightly. “I know that my mom has never loved me, I don't care what she does to me, but if she hurt her I would never forgive myself.”

“I love her, more than my own happiness,” Lena choked out, turning to look at Alex.

“I'm sorry,” Alex whispered, her hand hovering over Lena's shoulder. She was a cold person, all sharp angles and calculating shrewdness, and whilst Alex had seen that coldness melt away around Kara, she didn't think Lena would appreciate Alex trying to console her.

“I will catch your mother, Lena,” Alex promised, comforting Lena in the only way she knew she could.

“You can’t see the difference that you’ve had on her, but I can. I’ve been her sister for twelve years, and she is loving and kind, but she doesn’t get close to people. She’s never loved anyone the way she loves you, she let you in and I’m so grateful to you for that.”

Lena closed her eyes, she didn’t want to hear this.

“I won’t let your mom take that away from her, from both of you,” Alex swore.

She left not long after that, leaving a miserable Lena curled up on the sofa watching *The Little Mermaid*.

---

Later that night, Kara opened the door to find Alex and Maggie carrying bags full of food.

“Hey you,” Maggie smiled as she walked in, the smile not quite reaching her eyes, or bringing out her dimples.

“Maggie wanted to help out,” Alex explained, feeling slightly guilty, like she was rubbing her relationship in Kara’s face.

*‘Thank you’* Kara signed to Maggie, before reclaiming her spot in front of the TV. It looked like she hadn’t moved since Alex had left her there earlier.

“Did you eat yet? We brought potstickers,” Alex called over, pulling cartons out of the bag, “and Maggie brought ice cream, but I don’t think you’ll like it, it’s vegan.”

Kara wrinkled her nose at that, her expression matching her sister's.

*'I'm not hungry'* Kara signed.

Alex let out a sigh, "potstickers are your favourite."

"She can have them later," Maggie said, squeezing Alex's arm in warning before pulling some beers out of another bag. She walked over to Kara and handed her one of them.

"What your sister needs right now is to get drunk, eat some ice cream, and let it all out," Maggie said over her shoulder, sitting down next to Kara.

"And turn off this depressing film, God what is that? The Notebook? Jesus, little Danvers," Maggie shook her head. She reached over, tipping Kara's bottle up, "you need to drink up."

"I texted Winn, he said he'll pick up some donuts on his way over. He's getting pizza too," Alex mentioned as she sat down in between Kara and Maggie, stealing some of Kara's blanket.

They sat there watching some comedy sitcom that Maggie switched over to, sipping their beers in silence. Kara's mind was occupied with thoughts of Lena.

The time they'd made pancakes at midnight, slow dancing around Lena's kitchen in the light from the fridge.

The first time Lena had come to game night and Kara had had to teach her the rules to all the games after Lena had confessed that she'd never learnt because she didn't have any friends to play them with.

The time they'd hired a tiny rowing boat to go out on a lake and Kara had almost overturned the boat when she'd shifted her weight forward to kiss Lena.

They hurt. Each memory was like another stab in the chest, leaving her heart in tatters that could only be healed by the one person who was the cause of her heartache.

Kara tapped Alex's hand, dragging her attention away from the TV.

*'How is she?'*

Alex's expression softened, "not good," she confessed.

Kara nodded, blinking away the tears that threatened to fill her eyes. It gave her no satisfaction to hear that Lena was taking it about as well as she was. The worst part was that it had only been a day. She would have to relive the heartbreak every day - open her eyes every morning to see the blank space where Lena should be laying. To be reminded that her heart was missing, and in its place, an ever growing hole of loneliness.

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Across the city, Lena lay curled up on the sofa, watching *The Little Mermaid* for the fifth time that day. She held a bottle of wine clutched to her chest, her shoulders shaking as she sobbed into the cushions on the couch. She'd spent all day packing up all of the things had given her, except for the scarf she'd left here.

Wiping her face, she took another sip from the bottle, her eyes fixated on the screen as she thought about Kara.

She had never felt more alone in her life.



## Chapter 17

They had only seen each other once since the day they broke up. Kara never worked Sunday's but had covered an extra shift for the other Librarian, Siobhan, the following week. She'd heard the unmistakable sound of heels clicking on the floor, the sound that had used to fill her with excitement and joy. Instead it filled her with sadness and yearning as she looked up to see Lena staring at her from just inside the door.

Lena looked tired, her face drawn. The bruise on her eye had all but disappeared, replaced by dark circles under her eyes. Kara could see her shudder as she took in a deep breath and drew herself up to her full height, lifting her chin as she walked over to the counter. It took everything Lena had to face Kara, to look at the hurt on her face as she stared back with blue eyes glassy with unshed tears.

Trying to be as quick as possible, Lena dumped the latest books she'd drawn out into the return before turning around. She didn't move, just standing there with her back to Kara, feeling her gaze on her back. Talking to her would only make it worse, but it was killing Lena to hurt Kara like this.

If only she could explain.

That wouldn't really help either. She had tried her best, and knew Alex had probably tried too, but in the end it didn't make a difference. Lena had broken both of their hearts in her struggle to protect the only thing she cared about in this world.

She turned back around, meeting Kara's gaze.

*'I'm sorry'* Lena signed, her lower lip trembling.

Her jaw tightened as she fought to keep her face straight, not wanting to show weakness in front of Kara. She had made her choice, and now she had to live with it. Without waiting for Kara to reply, she turned on her heel and hurried out.

Kara watched Lena go, her breathing hitching as she itched to chase after her. To pull her back to her, to feel her warm lips on hers as they kissed in the chilly morning air. It was too late for that; she'd only be hurting them both more. Instead, Kara turned away from the door, focusing on her computer screen as she tried to carry on working.

---

A few weeks passed.

Christmas came and went in a blur.

Kara went through the motions of her daily life, without any of the enthusiasm and optimism she had exuded before. Alex hosted Christmas dinner at her place this year, inviting all of their friends and Eliza.

Kara tried to get into the Christmas spirit, but her enthusiasm fell short of its usual standards. No one wanted to push her, and Eliza spent most of the holidays fussing around her daughter.

She missed Lena. This was supposed to be their first Christmas together. It was even worse for Kara, knowing that Lena had isolated herself from everyone. At least she got to spend Christmas with her family; Lena would have no one. After a few drinks, Kara had to stop herself from marching over to L-Corp and barging into Lena's office. Instead, she spent the rest of the night miserable, nursing her heartache with a bottle of wine and Winn's renditions of Eliza's favourite carols.

---

Lena spent Christmas alone at L-Corp. She was still under investigation, but was determined to get the company back on track, despite the heavy scrutiny. To her, Christmas was just like any other day. She'd ruined her chances of having a proper Christmas with a real family. Instead, Lena spent all day and night alone at the office, going over paperwork as she made her way through a bottle of wine.

On Christmas Day it took everything in her not to break down after finding the gift she'd bought for Kara, and the dorky Christmas sweater she'd bought to wear. Knowing how much Christmas meant to Kara, she'd bought it as a surprise for her, hoping to make her laugh when she saw Lena turn up in a bright red sweater with a reindeer on it, so different from anything she'd expect her to wear.

She didn't leave the office until almost midnight, and walked home alone through the dark city, her cheeks stinging from the cold. Lena was so distracted that she didn't notice the blonde haired figure waiting outside her door at first.

It was Eliza.

Lena stopped in her tracks. She'd already had to face one Danvers, and she knew that Alex had taken pity on her. Would Kara's mom do the same?

"Mrs Danvers," Lena greeted, frowning slightly as she walked towards her door, "wha-, um, what're you doing here?"

"You can still call me Eliza sweetie," Eliza said, reaching out towards Lena.

She was so maternal, it hurt Lena's heart. She didn't deserve her kindness; Eliza should hate her for breaking her daughter's heart. But no. Lena could see the pity in her eyes too. Under any other circumstances Lena would hate to be pitied, her pride would not have allowed other people to look at her with that expression on their face.

Eliza cupped Lena's face between her hands, tilting her head from side to side.

"Oh honey, you need to take better care of yourself," Eliza tutted, taking in Lena's tired eyes and gaunt face, "when was the last time you slept?"

Lena shrugged looking down at the floor.

“Can I come in?” Eliza asked, taking in the sad appearance of the girl stood before her.

Lena nodded, unlocking the door and flicking the lights on as she went.

“Coffee?” Lena asked, setting her stuff down on the counters.

“That would be wonderful, thank you,” Eliza said, smiling at Lena.

Lena set about making a new pot of coffee, taking as long as she could to avoid the inevitable conversation she was about to have with Eliza. Obviously she was here for something, but Lena was still trying to figure out what that was. If she was here to try and get Lena to reconsider, she could save her breath. Alex had tried in vain, and if anyone could make someone do something, it was Alex.

“You can make yourself at home,” Lena said, gesturing to the stool with one of the mugs clutched in her hands. She sat down next to Eliza, setting the coffee cups down in front of them. She looked at Eliza, waiting for her to talk.

“I don’t mean to invade your privacy,” Eliza started, meeting Lena’s hard gaze. She was all cold edges tonight, her defences rising as she waited for whatever Eliza was about to say or ask.

Instead, Eliza reached into her bag, pulling out two things. The first was a Tupperware container filled with food.

“I hope you don’t take this the wrong way, but I know you don’t have any family and I just wanted to make sure you had something to eat today,” Eliza said, putting the container on the counter.

Lena blinked a few times, trying to keep the tears at bay. “Why are you being so nice to me?” she whispered thickly, trying to swallow the lump in her throat.

“Because she loves you, and you love her, and I know you Lena Luthor. I know you’ve been beating yourself up about this for the past few weeks,” Eliza said, laying a hand on Lena’s.

Lena gave her a confused look.

“Alex told me,” Eliza admitted, looking a bit guilty at being caught gossiping behind her daughter’s back, “and it’s not your fault. I understand why you did it and I just wanted to thank you for being so selfless. You’re braver than you think Lena, and I love you for caring about my daughter so much.”

Love.

Lena didn’t deserve anyone’s love. Eliza shouldn’t be sat here *praising* her for breaking her daughter’s heart. She should be here with a pitchfork and a torch, ready to chase Lena out of town. But no, Kara had her adoptive mother’s heart, so instead, Eliza was *thanking* her. Lena knew her own mom had never loved her, but hearing it come from Eliza, she somehow believed her. Eliza truly did care about Lena, and that made this whole situation even worse. She could’ve had the family she had always wanted with the Danvers’.

Lena looked away.

She didn’t want Eliza to see the look of pain on her face, or to see the way her bottom lip was trembling. Lena bit down on it hard, trying to get her emotions under control.

“I’ll just pop this in the fridge for you,” Eliza said, resting her hand on Lena’s shoulder for a moment as the dark haired girl sat there looking away.

When Eliza sat back down, Lena raised her head to meet her gaze. Eliza hesitated, an uncertain look on her face as she picked up the second thing she'd pulled out of her bag. It was a gift, wrapped in green paper adorned with snowmen and a giant red bow. The entire thing screamed Kara. Eliza held the present out to Lena.

With shaking hands Lena took it off her. She took a deep breath, opening the gift. It was another book. The Gargoyle by Andrew Davidson. Kara had suggested it to Lena a couple of months ago, buying her a copy. She had sent it back to Kara, mixed in with everything else she had packed up to give back to Kara. Lena had loved the book, even more so because it was one of Kara's favourites. But now, it hurt to hold it.

She opened the cover and her breathing hitched as she read what Kara had written inside when she had given it to Lena.

Two words were written in black ink.

*'It's you'*

And underneath that there was a new addition written in blue ink, slightly smudged as if tears had fallen onto the page and made the ink run.

Three words.

Three words that broke her heart even more.

*'It's still you'*

This was all wrong. Kara shouldn't be this forgiving, she should be angry, holding a grudge against Lena. Of course, she knew why Lena was doing this, but that didn't mean she had to be so accepting. It would've been better if she was a screaming, vindictive ex, instead of the understanding and loving person Lena loved.

It hurt even more knowing that Kara had written this after they had broken up. If she hadn't dwelled on it, and tried to move on, Lena would've been happier. She would always put Kara's happiness before her own, and more than anything, she wished that Kara would let her go so that at least one of them wouldn't be miserable.

"She didn't want to risk bringing it over herself, but she said it was important," Eliza explained. Judging by the tears welling up in Lena's eyes, Eliza assumed that it was important to them both.

Lena let out a shaky breath, clutching the book to her chest as she looked up at Eliza, blinking away her tears.

"Thank her for me," Lena sniffed, her voice cracking.

Eliza nodded, draining her cup and standing up.

"I should leave now, it's late," she told Lena, "and you should get some sleep dear."

Lena nodded miserably, carefully setting the book down on the counter as she got up to walk Eliza to the door.

Eliza pulled her into a tight hug. Lena stiffened for a moment, before she let herself relax into the hug and be held like a little girl. She buried her head into Eliza's shoulder as she wrapped her arms around her.

Pulling back, Eliza stroked Lena's cheek, giving her a sweet smile. "If you need anything you have my number," she reminded Lena, who nodded. She was too independent to actually call Eliza for help, but she was touched by the sentiment.

"Merry Christmas honey," Eliza said, giving Lena a kiss on her cheek before leaving.

Lena took her advice and went to bed as soon as Eliza left. She fell asleep with one arm clutching the book to her chest, and the other wrapped around the giant golden retriever teddy Kara had won for her on their first date.

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The new year came and went. Lena spent it at the office, surprise surprise. She received a text off Alex at midnight, wishing her a happy new year, and returned the well wishes. Lena had grown to like Alex a lot more over the past few months, appreciating the effort she was putting into Lena's case. Her trial was set for the end of January and they'd spent hours together, piecing together evidence for a defence and also to take down Lillian in the process.

Kara spent her new year at the bar with everyone else. The waifs and strays who frequented the bar were also there, and it was the most fun Kara had had in weeks. The hardest part was when the clock struck midnight and everyone found someone to kiss. Kara sat there, the hole in her chest aching as she watched Maggie pull Alex into a deep kiss. They were so in love that it hurt to see sometimes, not that Kara would ever begrudge them their happiness.

Kara silently slipped out of the bar, not telling anyone she was leaving. Alex would probably message her later to make sure she had gotten home safely anyway. The fireworks were still exploding over the city, lighting up the sky in flashes of colour between the skyscrapers.

She ended up at her park.

It had been a while since she'd come here, worried that Lena might be here. They hadn't seen each other in over a month now, and as much as Kara wanted to see her face, she knew it wouldn't end well.

Sitting down on their bench, Kara looked up, watching the last few fireworks explode overhead. Alex had kept her updated on Lena's case, knowing that Kara would want to be kept in the loop. More than anything, Kara wished she could help. It would only complicate



things though. Getting Kara involved in her mess was exactly the kind of thing Lena had been trying to protect her from. Not that Kara wouldn't give up everything to help if she'd had it her way.

Life wasn't fair. That had become clear to Kara when she was younger and she had never forgotten that. It wasn't fair that her parents were taken away from her when she was twelve, and it wasn't fair that Lena had been taken away from her now. Kara kept this to herself though, not wanting to sound like a complaining child who didn't get their own way.

She was counting down the days to Lena's trial.

No matter the outcome, she would go to her. If Alex took down Lillian she would go run back to Lena with open arms, with no need to forgive her because she had never blamed Lena in the first place. If Lena was found guilty, she would go to her anyway and make her see sense. Kara didn't care if she was in prison – well she did care, but it wasn't enough to stop her from loving Lena. She knew she was innocent, and nothing could change that. Kara would make her see sense.

This time she wouldn't take no for an answer.

Her heartbreak was almost at an end. She smiled sadly to herself as she froze on the little park bench, alone in the dark as the city celebrated on around her.

If only Lena was here now to fill in the gaps.

# Chapter 18

## Chapter Notes

Don't hate me

The morning of Lena's trial, Kara sat at home, anxiously pacing back and forth. Alex hadn't thought it was a good idea for Kara to be in the courtroom. If things went south she didn't want her sister to have to watch the girl she loved get sentenced to prison and dragged off in handcuffs. Kara wanted to message her, but she didn't want to upset Lena when she was about to be picked apart in front of a jury. Alex had assured Kara that Lena would be fine, and she knew her sister would never lie to her. She clung to the hope that Alex was right like a lifeline, silently praying that the judges wouldn't be fooled by Lillian's scheming.

The whole ordeal would be televised because it was such a highly publicised case. Kara had seen Lena's face everywhere she looked. On the front page of the paper, on the news, on the front of magazines. It had been upsetting for her, seeing how bad Lena looked.

Kara made herself a cup of tea, deciding to forgo the coffee because she was already jittery enough, before she sat down in front of the TV. Her leg bounced up and down as she waited for the trial to start, checking her watch every few minutes.

Her phone buzzed and she dived for it. It was Alex.

*Just going in now, try and relax x*

Kara rolled her eyes. Try and relax? That seemed unlikely, she'd already bitten all of her nails until they bled and she hadn't gotten a wink of sleep last night. She'd relax when the trial was over, when Lena had been found innocent and found her way back to Kara's arms.

She turned her attention back to the TV, watching the news as the trial started. There were dozens of reporters outside of the courthouse, giving a recount of the known facts so far,

and speculating about the outcome of the case.

It was going to be a long day.

---

It took hours.

They were some of the worst few hours of Kara's life.

It wasn't until the afternoon that a decision was made. Kara collapsed onto the floor in front of the TV, her shoulders shaking as she silently cried.

Innocent.

They had believed her. The jury hadn't let her mother's bribery trick them, or her family name blind them with hatred and their own personal bias because of what Lex Luthor had done. Kara had never felt so relieved in all of her life. Free of all charges, free from Lillian's threats. She scrambled for her phone, texting Alex.

*How is she? When can I see her?*

The text back was almost instantaneous.

*She's fine, very relieved. I'll be at yours soon x*

Kara couldn't stop smiling, wiping her tears away as she listened to the news coverage from the reporters outside of the courthouse. It was over.

And there was Lena, a small smile playing at the corners of her lips. She looked the same, but at the same time she looked as if a giant weight had been lifted off her shoulders. Her lawyer made a few comments as she led Lena over to the waiting car ready to whisk her away from the pressing crowds and flashing lights of photographers snapping pictures.

---

Alex showed up an hour later, pizza in hand. She looked tired. Kara knew she'd been spending all of her time trying to prove Lena's innocence, barely taking a break. The second Alex put the pizza down on the counter she was engulfed in a giant hug from Kara. They stood like that for a few moments, Alex laughing as she returned the hug.

Kara pulled back, smiling widely at her sister, the spark back in her eyes. Her eyes were still a bit glassy; she hadn't stopped crying since the verdict had come through.

*'Thank you Alex, thank you so much'*

"It's okay, I just want you to be happy," Alex smiled, gently nudging Kara with her elbow as she pulled a slice of pizza out of the box.

Kara fidgeted, trailing after Alex as she carried the rest of the pizza over to the sofa, sitting down to watch the recap of the trial on the news.

*'Did she say anything?'* Kara asked, an anxious expression on her face.

Alex swallowed her mouthful of pizza, hesitating before she looked up at Kara. She gave her a sad smile before answering.

"I'm sorry Kara."

Kara frowned in confusion, she didn't understand.

"It was never about her, it was about her mom," Alex explained, reaching out to put her hand on Kara's knee, a look of pity on her face. She rubbed small circles, trying to comfort her as Kara let her words sink in.

This changed nothing then. In Lena's eyes anyway. Kara had every intention of taking her back, but Lena wasn't coming back. Maybe it was her blind optimism to blame, but she had thought this would make everything okay. That Lena would show up at her door like she used to, that wide smile and loving gaze on her face that she reserved just for Kara.

But Lillian was still out there, and whilst they had shown evidence incriminating her, she was still free. An arrest warrant had been sent out, but that didn't make a difference unless she was caught. This wouldn't actually be over until she was arrested, and locked away for her crimes.

Tears prickled at the back of Kara's eyes as she reached for a slice of pizza to busy her hands, not knowing how to reply. It was like cardboard in her mouth as she chewed, all of the enthusiasm and hope draining out of her. Of course, she was still relieved that Lena was free, but she'd been hoping for more than that.

"Hey, it's okay to be disappointed," Alex murmured, patting Kara's leg, "I know you thought this would fix things, but she just wants to make sure things won't go wrong again."

Kara nodded, staring down at her lap.

"She still loves you Kara, don't ever doubt that," Alex reminded her.

*'Then why won't she let me make my own decision?'*

Alex opened and closed her mouth a few times, trying to come up with a reply. The truth was, she couldn't fault Lena. She actually liked her more for her stubbornness, for her

refusal to given into her love for Kara. Lena was a businesswoman, and she was a good one. Both logical and analytical, she wouldn't let herself be ruled by her heart, not matter how much it hurt her.

Kara knew that Lena wanted to keep her safe, and it was no use reminding her of that. Besides, Alex thought her sister had a point here. They would catch Lillian eventually, so they may as well just put this behind them now. It was taking their toll on both of them. Neither of them could move on, both still desperately in love with the other.

The only thing that could help now would be for Alex to catch Lillian. After all of this was over, she was going to take a nice holiday with Maggie. It was exhausting working every second and babysitting two fully grown adults.

---

The start of March came around with dreary rain and grey skies. It was then that Maggie got a tipoff about a secret deal going down at the port. She told Alex, and with the full force of the FBI and National City police, they finally caught Lillian Luthor.

Her trial was moved up, and the evidence was damning. She would be locked up for a long time.

Kara watched the trial from her apartment, just as Lena was watching it from her office. She had decided to forgo the actual trial, not wanting to see her mother, even for the satisfaction of watching her get sentenced to prison.

With all the evidence that Alex had helped collect for the case against Lillian, the trial didn't take long. Lillian Luthor was found guilty of all charges. She was going to prison, without the chance of parole, and she would probably die in there. At the very least, she'd be too old to be much of a bother by the time she finally got out.

As soon as the verdict was announced, Kara grabbed her coat, not even bothering to change out of her sweatpants as she rushed out into the rain.

---

“It’s all over.”

Lena turned the TV off, turning to face Alex. Her smile was full of relief as she took in Alex’s words. Over.

She walked over and gave Alex a hug, surprising them both. She wasn’t a warm person, but she would be forever indebted to Alex for everything she had done to help Lena, and Lena would never forget that. She had grown fond of Alex, and knew that they had solidified their friendship forever. Perhaps it was the charm of the Danvers sister’s, but Lena had let her guard down around Alex and learnt to become more trusting.

“Thank you, I don’t know how I’ll ever make it up to you,” Lena whispered, squeezing Alex tightly before letting her go. She meant that too. There was nothing in the world that she could do that would make up for Alex freeing her of her mother. For giving Lena the chance to be with the girl she loved without fear of any repercussions.

“Just do me a favour Luthor,” Alex smirked, crossing her arms as she leant against Lena’s desk.

Lena raised one of her eyebrows, tilting her head slightly.

“Go and get the girl.”

---

Kara was nearing L-Corp, she was on the opposite side of the road. It was starting to get dark outside, even though it was only nearing dinner time. The streetlights shone on the

wet pavement, as more rain poured down. It was hard to see through the raindrops collecting on the lenses of her glasses, and Kara shivered as water slid down the back of her coat.

She stopped opposite the building, just as someone walked outside. Kara would know her anywhere. Lena didn't see Kara stood there as she struggled to put up her umbrella, walking towards the road. Kara smiled, a surge of love rushing through her body as she drank in the sight of Lena. She was wearing Kara's scarf, the one that she hadn't got back all those months ago. After all those months of wishing she could see her, here she was, just a few metres away, oblivious to the fact that Kara was right there.

Lena managed to get her umbrella up, looking both ways as she stepped into the road, sending ripples through the puddles. She could've taken a driver, but for the past few months she'd taken to walking everywhere, hoping to catch a glimpse of Kara wandering around the city.

Kara.

She would be at her door within the hour, begging her to take her back. No apology would be enough, but Lena was going to try. She wouldn't let her go again, no matter what. These past few months had been torture for her, her heart had ached every second of every day they were apart. Maybe she should get a driver so she could get there faster, because even the thought of being separated from her for a moment longer would kill her.

Lena looked straight ahead as she took another step forward, and then she froze.

Kara.

She was here, smiling at Lena as she watched her. Lena's face broke into a matching smile, her heart felt like it was going to burst out of her chest.

Lena didn't see the car run a red light at the corner, speeding down the street towards her. She was too busy staring at Kara, oblivious to what was happening around her.



But Kara saw it. Saw the narrow beams of the headlights light up the raindrops as they fell. She saw everything perfectly, like time had slowed down. The smile on Kara's face turned to a look of horror as the car sped towards Lena.

She stepped into the road, trying to get Lena's attention. Kara wanted to cry, a soundless shout shaping on her lips. Not now, please not now, she silently begged. After everything Kara had been through in her life, this was the one thing that would ruin her. She couldn't stand here silently and watch the love of her life die.

She raced forward, silently screaming as she tried to yell. She took in the wide smile on Lena's face, still oblivious as she gazed at Kara running towards her. Not her. Kara wouldn't allow it. The trauma of seeing her parents die in a car crash twelve years ago could not compare to the fresh trauma of seeing Lena hit by a car. She willed her vocal chords to do something, anything.

"E ... a" the sound burst out of Kara's mouth, croaky and broken.

Lena frowned slightly, still smiling through the confusion. It sounded like Kara had said something.

"LENA!" the yell erupted from between Kara's lips in full force, right as the headlights of the car lit up Lena's face, finally dragging her attention away from Kara, who had just made it to the middle of the road and was still coming closer.

Lena looked back at Kara, a look of surprise and horror on her face. One hand reached up to touch Kara's scarf wound around her neck.

"I love you," Lena whispered, her words whipped away by the wind and the rain. She closed her eyes, accepting her fate. At least she had got to see Kara one last time. The image of her face was burnt into Lena's eyelids, the last thing that she would see.

The car hit.

# Chapter 19

## Chapter Notes

I've never been told to go and fuck myself or called a devil so much in my life lmao.

Sorry about the cliffhanger, hopefully you love me again.

She slowly opened her eyes, the bright light above her hurting her eyes. Her body felt stiff and numb. She couldn't feel anything, she was confused.

It was silent in the hospital room, except for the slow ticking of the clock and the beeping of the machines. Oxygen flooded into her mouth and nose through the mask on her face. She reached up and knocked the mask aside with a heavy hand. It was covered in plaster.

She frowned at her arm, flopping it back down into place. She was obviously in hospital, pumped full of drugs to numb the pain, which would help explain her confusion.

What happened to her?

Then it all came rushing back in flashes. Two people stood on opposite sides, filled with love and smiles. The speeding car. The light catching the raindrops as they slowly fell. The scream tearing from Kara's throat.

She tried to lift her head up, but it was like lifting dead weight. Her body had no strength, and the brace wrapped around her neck limited any movement. Panic rose in her throat, she tried to open her mouth but found that she couldn't. Her jaw was wired shut, stopping the broken pieces from shifting. She let out a weak groan.

The sound of someone moving nearby caught her attention. A face loomed over her, and she blinked, trying to bring it into focus through the swelling of her eyes and the lack of

glasses. She made out brown hair, cut to just above the shoulders. A concerned face, white with worry. Those warm brown eyes, they were as familiar to her as her own.

“Shh you’re okay,” Alex whispered, her hands fluttering frantically above the bruised and broken body, not knowing where to touch her. “You were in an accident; do you remember?”

She grunted in reply, tears stinging her eyes.

The sound of someone else shifting on the bed caught her attention. Her eyes flickered to the figure sat next to the bed, hunched forward in their chair so they could rest their head on the bed. One hand gently laying on the hospital blankets covering her broken body, as if they were making sure she was safe as they slept.

She was here.

Her Lena.

She couldn’t lift her head to see her properly, but Kara would know that dark hair anywhere, spilling across the sheets as she slept.

“She hasn’t left your side for three days,” Alex whispered, following Kara’s gaze. She smiled slightly, glancing back down at her sister. Her face turned serious again as she took in Kara’s puffy, bruised face, unrecognisable as she lay in the hospital bed.

“Don’t ever do that again,” Alex warned her, gently stroking Kara’s hair. Kara tried to smile at her sister, but it turned into a grimace of pain as her face muscles protested.

“Let me wake her up and then I’ll go and find your doctor,” Alex said, placing a gentle kiss to Kara’s forehead before walking around to the other side of the bed. She gently shook Lena awake.

As Lena sat up, Kara was able to see her face properly. She was paler than usual, black bruises under her eyes from worrying and a lack of sleep. Her hair was a mess, tangled into curls as if she hadn't brushed it in days, and her face was blotchy as if she had fallen asleep crying.

She turned her attention to Kara straight away, checking to make sure she was okay. A look of surprise crossed her face when she realised Kara was awake. She lunged forward, her hands shaking as they hovered above Kara's body.

"You stupid, stupid girl," Lena sobbed, her hands resting either side of Kara's face. "Don't you ever do that again Kara Danvers or I swear to God I'll kill you myself."

Alex laughed as she made her way over to the door, smiling over her shoulder at them both as she walked out of the room.

Fresh tears welled up in her eyes as she yelled at Kara. This had been the worst three days of her life. Lena thought being away from Kara for the past three months had been bad, but all that pain had been obliterated by three days of uncertainty as she waited for Kara to wake up. Praying that she *would* wake up.

A silent laugh shook Kara's body as she listened to Lena's threats. She would do it a thousand times over if it meant she could keep her safe. It was Lena, her Lena, it would always be her. Maybe it was selfish of Kara, but she would rather die than watch Lena die and have to live the rest of her life without her. Even if it meant Lena had to live without her.

She noticed that Lena's left arm was encased in plaster. Kara frowned, trying to bring her arms up to sign. Her own plastered arm was heavy to lift, and as she tried to move the other one, she noticed the pins and brace holding it together. She hadn't thought about the repercussions of jumping in front of the car, Kara had only been thinking about Lena, but now she realised just how badly she was hurt.

She looked up at Lena, frowning in confusion.

“You, uh, you’re hurt a l-lot,” Lena stammered, tears sliding down her cheeks, “the doctor is going to come and tell y-you now.” Her breathing kept hitching as she cried, looking down at Kara’s broken body. It was all her fault.

---

Lena closed her eyes, accepting her fate. At least she had got to see Kara one last time. The image of her face was burnt into Lena’s eyelids, the last thing that she would see.

She never felt the car hit.

She felt the warmth of Kara’s body pressed up against her as she slammed into her. Lena’s eyes opened in shock as she was pushed out of the way. She fell hard on the curb, her wrist giving out under her weight as she landed at an awkward angle.

Her eyes were wide with horror as she looked into Kara’s eyes. Lena’s heart broke as Kara gave her a sweet smile, her eyes crinkling at the corners. Her lips couldn’t form the words as she stared at Kara stood in the road.

The car ran straight into her, she didn’t even have a chance to try and move out of its way.

A gut-wrenching scream tore out of Lena’s mouth as Kara’s body smacked into the bonnet of the car, cracking the windscreen before rolling over the hood, and off the back end of the car.

The car sped off as Lena crawled into the road, unintelligible screams and sobs coming out of her mouth as she scrambled towards Kara. Her tears mixed with the rain coursing down her face as she crawled forwards.

She cradled Kara’s body in her lap as the rain soaked them both. Blood dripped into the puddles, swirling into the water as they mixed. Lena couldn’t do anything as she sat there

in shock, holding Kara's limp body to her chest.

She was broken, her limbs held at awkward angles, the sharp points of splintered bones stabbing out of her skin. Lena sobbed as she searched for her phone. She had to call an ambulance, that's what she had to do. Everything would be okay if she could just call an ambulance. They would fix Kara.

Her sobs turned hysterical as she couldn't find her phone. This wasn't how it was supposed to go. Lena was supposed to turn up outside Kara's door, a bouquet of flowers, her heart on a silver platter, promising to never leave her again. Now Kara was the one leaving her.

She didn't get the chance to call an ambulance. As Lena knelt in a puddle of water, crying into Kara's body, Alex walked out of L-Corp. She was on her way home to Maggie's place when she saw Lena sat in the middle of the road, soaking wet.

Inching forward, Alex knew something was wrong. "Lena?" she yelled over the rain.

She didn't turn around as Alex walked closer. Only then did she see Kara, bloody and bruised, cradled gently in Lena's arms.

"KARA!" the scream echoed around them as Alex raced over to her sister.

"No no no, please God no," she cried, staring down at the peaceful face of her sister. Her eyes were closed, blood trickling from multiple cuts on her face. Her eyes were already ringed by dark bruises.

"Oh God, no no no," Alex sobbed, the sound mixing with Lena's own sobs.

"Did you call an ambulance?" Alex asked, looking up at Lena's face, white with shock as she cried. She didn't even register Alex's words as she stared at her hands, drenched

in blood as she pressed Kara closer to her. She felt the stinging slap on her cheek, breaking her out of her shock. She blinked twice, looking up at Alex.

“DID YOU CALL AN AMBULANCE?” Alex screamed at her, her eyes wild with terror.

Lena slowly shook her head, her mind taking a while to string the words together. “No, no I can’t find my phone,” Lena choked out, looking back down at Kara.

Alex scrambled for her phone, punching in the number and frantically yelling their location at the operator.

It didn’t take long for an ambulance to show up, bundling Kara and Lena into the back before racing off, Alex following closely behind on her motorbike.

---

Lena choked back a sob as she thought about Kara’s broken body, so small and fragile in her arms as she bled out in the middle of the street.

They didn’t have to wait long for the doctor to appear, bustling in, all business. Pillows were placed under Kara’s head so she could sit up slightly. She noticed the room was overflowing with bunches of plumerias, covering every surface and filling the room with a sweet smell.

Kara had forty-seven broken bones. Not to mention the bruises and cuts covering every inch of her. She’d had to have multiple surgeries to set the bones in one arm, both legs, and her spine, as well as have her jaw wired shut. Then there was the internal bleeding in her abdomen from the blunt force of the car. The doctor said she had flatlined twice on the table, congratulating Kara on still being alive, by some miracle.

She was going to have a lot of new scars to add to the ones she already had. Including new scars on top of the old scar tissue where her ribs had poked through her chest again. She would recover from all of those. Broken bones healed quickly.

A more concerning matter was her compressed spinal column. The doctor was confident that from the waist up Kara would have a full range of motion and normal functioning. But from the waist down, she wasn't so sure. There was a chance that Kara would recover through time and physical therapy, but there was a fairly large chance that she would be paralysed from the waist down.

Kara lay there, blinking back tears as she took the news in. She wanted to be angry, she wanted to scream, but she couldn't.

How could she be angry when she had purposely put herself in this situation? She would never bring herself to regret taking Lena's place. There were so many variables that could have made the outcome a thousand times worse if Lena had been hit. Kara might be at a funeral right now, instead of laying in a hospital bed.

If she was paralysed, she would get through it, and it would be worth it to know that Lena was safe and okay.

"Do you have any questions?" the doctor asked, finishing up her speech about her treatment plan for Kara.

Kara shook her head as Lena started to talk. "Oh, she can't speak," Lena told her. She furrowed her brow as she looked over at Kara, "or at least she couldn't, but she said my name before the car hit."

The doctor nodded, "that's been known to happen in traumatic situations, facing one's fears can negate the psychological block," she explained.

"How long has it been since you could talk?" she asked Kara. Lena answered for her.



“Is it thirteen years now?” she checked with Kara, sure that the anniversary of her parent’s death had passed in the last few months. Kara nodded slightly in agreement.

“Well that’s certainly a long time. The usual approach to this would be counselling; I can arrange for you to see a psychologist to help work through this for you. Considering the length of time you’ve been mute, I’d also suggest seeing a speech therapist to help speed things along and get you back to speaking properly,” the doctor informed Kara, who nodded along as she listened.

The doctor left not long after, leaving Kara and Lena lone.

“I’m so sorry Kara,” Lena whispered, gently picking up Kara’s hand, holding the cold fingers between her warm hands. She pressed a kiss to the back of the plaster.

Kara shook her head as much as she could, she didn’t want to hear Lena’s apologies. Not for anything. She had no reason to apologise, especially not for this.

“It’s my fault,” Lena insisted, her eyes sparkling with unshed tears. “Maggie found and arrested the driver whilst you were unconscious, he-” Lena broke off, staring up at the ceiling as she swallowed the lump in her throat.

“He was working for my mother, Kara,” she whispered, “her last revenge on a daughter she never loved. I bet she’ll be shocked to hear that she didn’t kill me.” Lena gave Kara a bitter smile.

Kara shook her head again. No matter what Lena said, it wasn’t her fault. She didn’t pull Kara in front of her to save herself, she had stood there in the middle of the road, accepting the fact that she wouldn’t be able to move out of the way in time. Kara had made the decision for her, and she would carry that decision on her own.

It didn’t stop Lena from feeling guilty though, as she gazed at Kara’s face. She didn’t look like herself, with her puffy, bruised eyes and swollen nose, but Lena stared at her with all of the love she felt. Nothing would ever change that.

“I love you,” she whispered, giving Kara a sad smile.

The monitor measuring Kara’s heart rate skipped a beat and they both smiled.

“I ... uv ... u,” Kara croaked out.

Between her broken jaw and vocal chords rusty with disuse, it didn’t sound like much, but to Lena it was everything. She had dreamt about the sound of Kara’s voice, what it would sound like to hear her say I love you, to listen to her name roll off Kara’s tongue, to hear her sing along to her favourite songs.

Kara had a long way to go, but it was a start, and Lena let out a tearful laugh as she kissed the back of Kara’s hand again.

---

Alex came back with a coffee in each hand, gently nudging the door open as she snuck back in. She leaned across the bed, handing one cup to Lena, before dragging her chair closer and sitting down.

“Sorry, I didn’t know if you were allowed coffee,” Alex apologised to Kara, taking a sip out of the paper cup. Kara rolled her eyes, the scabs on her lips cracking as she smiled.

“I called mom, she should be here soon,” Alex told Kara, who nodded in acknowledgement. She was getting tired of nodding already. Not being able to speak *or* sign was a nightmare, especially now that she’d finally broken through the barrier that had been in place for thirteen years and spoken.

“I should probably leave when your mom gets here,” Lena said, rubbing her thumb along Kara’s split knuckles. A croaking sound from the back of Kara’s throat was the only

protest she could manage. She didn't want Lena to go, ever.

"Shh, it's okay, I'll come right back," Lena reassured her, "I should just probably shower and change my clothes, it's been a few days."

"I didn't want to say anything but ..." Alex commented, smiling at Lena, who rolled her eyes in return.

"Did you want me to bring you anything? Pyjamas? Do you have a spare pair of glasses so you can see properly?" Lena asked. She waited for Kara to reply, before realising that she couldn't use her hands. She'd never seen Kara's muteness as a hindrance before, but now that she couldn't use her hands, it was frustrating not being able to communicate properly.

"Right, well I'll just pick up what I think you need," Lena replied, "do you need me to bring you anything Alex?" she asked turning to face her.

"No, I'm fine thank you," Alex smiled at Lena.

Kara lay there slightly shocked at how familiar and comfortable Alex and Lena were around each other. Of course she knew they'd spent months working on Lena's case and putting Lillian in prison, but they were *friends*. Lena, the most distrusting person she knew, and her sister, the most cynical, were actually friends.

---

Eliza showed up half an hour later. She'd been staying at Alex's place for the past few days, as they took turns sitting by Kara's bedside.

Except for Lena, who stayed by her side from the moment visiting hours were open, until the nurses kicked her out of Kara's room when they were over. After being kicked out of Kara's room, Lena would go to the waiting area at the front of the hospital and stay there all

night, drinking cheap coffee from the vending machine and trying to nap in one of the hard, plastic chair. Alex had brought her a change of clothes, and she'd tried washing the blood off in the toilets, but she still looked a mess. It had been a rough three days for her.

"Oh my little girl," Eliza sighed as she took in Kara's appearance. She hurried over to the bed, placing a gentle kiss on Kara's forehead.

"Never scare me like that again, I've been worried sick," Eliza scolded her as Alex grinned in the background, laughing at her mom fussing over her sister. Turning around, Eliza planted a kiss on Alex's forehead, before walking around the bed to Lena, giving her a kiss too.

"Here, you can have my chair," Lena said, standing up and offering it to Eliza.

"Oh no honey, I can stand, really," Eliza protested, smiling at Lena.

"No really, I'm going to go home for a bit," Lena told her.

She stepped closer to the bed, smiling down at Kara. Gently cupping the side of her face, Lena ran a thumb over one of Kara's bruised cheekbones, barely touching her out of fear of hurting her.

"I won't be gone long, I promise," Lena swore, a sincere expression on her face. Standing up straight she said goodbye to Eliza and Alex before walking out, a backwards glance at Kara before shutting the door behind her.

---

Lena was gone for an hour.

She couldn't bear to be gone from Kara's side for any longer than that. After a quick shower, washing away the smell of the hospital and the last remnants of Kara's blood, she changed into some fresh clothes. Feeling more like herself, Lena checked in at L-Corp, the company coming to mind for the first time since she'd left the building three days ago. Jess assured her that everything was fine.

Next stop was Kara's apartment. It had been months since Lena had last stepped foot in here. It was like coming home after a long trip. Not that Lena had ever felt at home anywhere before. But now she knew what that felt like. Kara was her home.

She picked up a few things for Kara. An old pair of glasses hidden at the back of the draw in her bedside table. A few books. Kara's favourite pyjamas, and the blanket draped over the back of the sofa.

There was one last stop she made before making her way back to the hospital. Kara's favourite café. Lena couldn't stand the thought of Kara eating hospital food, it was bland and tasteless, so she decided to pick her up something to eat on her way back. The only problem was that Kara's jaw was wired shut so the only option was soup. Lena picked up some chicken soup, remembering that it was supposed to make you better when you were sick. Not that she was foolish enough to think that it'd fix Kara's broken bones, but it's what you were supposed to bring the people you cared about when they were unwell.

She quietly opened the door to Kara's room when she made it back to the hospital, just in case she was sleeping. She wasn't.

Eliza was quietly talking to her, smiling at her youngest daughter. Maggie must have already been and taken Alex with her as she left, because she wasn't in the room. Kara and Eliza looked up at the door when Lena stepped in, smiling at the two of them.

"Hi, I brought you some soup," Lena murmured, lifting the paper bag up.

Kara smiled as much as she could, wincing in pain. Her pain medication was wearing off; she should be due for another dose soon. Lena sat down in Alex's vacant chair, putting down the bag she had packed with Kara's things.

“I brought you some other things too,” she told Kara, unzipping the bag. First things first, she brought out the glasses, gently sliding them on to Kara’s face, mindful of Kara’s broken nose. Her eyes were still almost swollen shut, but she smiled up at Lena’s face as it came into sharp focus.

Next she pulled out the blanket, laying it over Kara and drawing it up to her chin. “It’s a bit cold in here so I brought your blanket, just in case you’re not warm enough, these sheets are quite thing,” Lena fussed as she tucked the blanket in around Kara, careful not to bump her metal braces encasing her arm and legs.

Eliza sat there with a bemused smile on her face, watching as Lena fussed around her daughter, pulling out toiletries and clean pyjamas. Lena had been sure to only bring oversized t-shirts that Kara would be able to wear around the wires taped to her and the bulky casts. She had thought of everything that Kara would need to stay comfortable whilst she was in here.

The love between the two of them was palpable as Lena gazed at Kara, smiling widely the entire time. She still felt guilty, no matter what Kara said, but her whole body was filled with relief, and love. So much love she thought she would explode.

Eliza left a little while later, leaving them to it with a kiss on both of their foreheads and promises of coming back in the morning. She had no doubt that Lena would be here all night. Probably every day until Kara was released.

Lena pulled her chair right up next to Kara, as close as she could get without getting on the bed. Carefully, she spooned mouthfuls of chicken soup out of the container, holding it above Kara’s mouth as she let it dribble it. It was a messy affair, but Lena was patient, wiping at Kara’s mouth as she accidentally dribbled soup everywhere. Once she had finished all the soup, Lena held a cup of water up for Kara, holding the straw to her mouth as she sipped. Then the pain medication came, sliding through the tubes and hitting Kara’s bloodstream in a rush. She felt the pain and tension drift away, smiling as she relaxed into the pillows.

Lena talked to her for hours, filling her in on the past few months. She wanted to tell Kara everything, every tiny detail that she had missed. There had been moments when Lena had struggled with the urge to call Kara and tell her what had happened that day. Kara was content, laying there listening to Lena talk, watching her eyes light up, her hands gesturing wildly.

Oh God she loved her so much. It might not have been ideal circumstances but Kara didn't want to be anywhere else. All she really wanted now was to feel Lena's lips on hers. It had been so long and it was maddening.

"ss ... e," Kara couldn't distinguish the sounds clearly enough, but that was all she could manage right now.

Lena broke off mid story, jumping slightly, still not used to the fact that Kara could talk. Sort of.

"What is it? What's wrong?" she panicked, her hands fluttering nervously over Kara, trying to find the problem. Kara rolled her eyes, groaning in frustration. She tried clearing her throat.

"Tish ve," she mumbled, her jaw aching as she fought against the wires keeping her jaw locked shut.

"Tish ve? What does that mean, oh!" she let out a surprised sound as Kara pursed her lips, her eyes crinkling at the corners as she smiled. A look of uncertainty crossed Lena's face. She didn't want to push things with Kara. They'd been apart for so long, and whilst they had clung on to the love they had for each other, that didn't change things. And now that Kara was badly injured, Lena was hesitant to touch her, scared by how breakable Kara seemed. This wasn't how she had wanted their next kiss to go.

"Kara I'm not sure that's a good idea," Lena whispered, frowning slightly as she tilted her head to the side. Kara sighed in frustration, rolling her eyes.

"Eea peas," Kara begged, her fingers groping at the sheets as she tried to find Lena's hand. Reaching out, Lena smiled, gently tangling her fingers with Kara's. She stood up, hovering above Kara's face, placing her other hand by the side of Kara's head to prop herself up.

She hesitated.

She was nervous, she had been waiting for this moment since the last time she had kissed Kara. Dreaming about the warmth of their lips pressed together, her hands tangling in Kara's golden hair.

The monitor measuring Kara's heart rate sped up as she stared at Lena in anticipation. In one quick movement, Lena lowered her face to Kara's, capturing her lips with her own.

Finally.

The heart monitor went wild as Kara's heart rate sped up. She pushed back against Lena's lips as much as she could, relishing the feeling of Lena's soft, warm lips against her own split and swollen ones.

Lena pulled back, her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkling. She gave Kara a flirty smile, one side of her mouth pulling up at the corner.

"That's all for now," she whispered, pressing a soft kiss to Kara's forehead.

It was like coming home; for both of them.

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It was late.

The moon filtered in through the blinds, casting lines across the room. It was quiet in the hospital room, except for the clicking and beeping of the machines. Two figures were illuminated by the soft light of the lamp in the corner of the room.



Kara lay tucked into the bed. She looked uncomfortable laying on her back, her body all straight lines as the pins kept her held together, but her face was peaceful, painless. Curled up next to her on top of the covers was Lena, her head resting against Kara's. She had spread Kara's blanket over the two of them, revelling in the warmth of Kara sleeping next to her, but careful not to touch her even whilst she was sleeping. A book was resting on Lena's side, open at the page she had been reading aloud to Kara when they had both drifted off to sleep. Kara lulled by Lena's soft voice bringing the words to life, and Lena by the steady, comforting thud of Kara's heartbeat that she could feel where their shoulders touched.

They were both fast asleep, breathing in sync as they subconsciously fell into a routine. Despite everything they'd been through, both of them looked content as they slept next to each other, surrounded by the comforting smell of familiar flowers and the warmth of each other.

A nurse came in to check on Kara. Visiting hours were over by this time, but seeing them both sound asleep next to each other brought a smile to the nurse's face. He'd kicked Lena out of the room every night that Kara had been in here, but now he didn't have the heart to. Instead he went back to work, leaving them both oblivious to the hospital rushing around them.

## Chapter 20

*The sound of a car speeding forward.*

*Her scarf wrapped around Lena's neck.*

*Green eyes and a sad smile.*

*The feeling of urgency as she flung herself forward not knowing if she would make it in time.*

Kara's eyes flew open.

She was breathing heavily, a panicky feeling in her chest. It was just a bad dream. Lena was safe, curled up next to her on the bed. The heart rate monitor was beeping fast as Kara tried to calm herself down. Everything was okay.

She closed her eyes, trying to quietly steady her breathing and heart rate. Exhaling slowly, Kara opened her eyes, looking up at the ceiling. Her glasses were still on her face, having fallen asleep listening to the gentle rhythm of Lena reading out loud.

She turned her head as much as she could with the neck brace, trying not to jostle the bed too much so she didn't wake up Lena. It was the first proper night's sleep she'd had in days. Her head was resting against Kara's shoulder, her eyes flickered side to side beneath closed eyelids. A tiny crease between her eyebrows was the only thing marring her peaceful face.

Kara wasn't sure how long she lay there, listening to Lena's slow breaths and feeling the gentle rise and fall of her chest pressed up against Kara's side. Morphine coursed through Kara's body, numbing the pain and making her feel drowsy. It was quiet as Kara lay there, thinking things over.

She was pulled out of her thoughts by the sound of Lena's breathing speeding up. Her eyebrows were knit together and a low moan fell past her lips. She was having a bad dream too. Kara tried to lift her arm to shake Lena awake, but the morphine made her body feel loose and her arm was too heavy to lift. A quiet gurgle sounded at the back of Kara's throat, not loud enough to wake Lena up.

"NO!" the frightened shout tore out of Lena's mouth as she shot up in bed. Turning to look at Kara, she visibly relaxed. Her eyes were wild and her chest rose and fell in time with her heavy breathing. She ran her fingers through her hair, brushing it out of her face as she gasped for air. Once she had calmed down, she gently brushed her fingertips along the side of Kara's face.

"I dreamt that you died in my arms," she sobbed quietly, staring at Kara's face as if she couldn't believe she was actually here. Kara made a small sound in indignation; she didn't like the fact that Lena was having nightmares too.

Settling back down on the pillows, Lena curled up next to Kara, relaxing as she felt the warmth of her beside her. Right now, she was wishing that she could feel Kara's arms wrapped around her, making her feel safe. But it was enough to know that she was here.

They lay next to each other in silence, taking comfort in the fact that they weren't alone, until the nurse came in on his rounds. It was breakfast time, and for Kara that meant a watery porridge that could be dribbled in through the gaps in the wires. Lena insisted on feeding her herself, and the nurse left, informing them that he'd be back later on to check on Kara.

Eliza showed up as Lena was scooping up the last spoonful. Kara and Lena both looked over at the door as it opened and Eliza poked her head in. She smiled at the two girls, getting a bright smile off Lena and what resembled a grimace off Kara.

"Hi sweetheart, how are you feeling" Eliza said, walking over to the bed and placing a kiss on Kara's forehead. She leant even further forward, placing a kiss on Lena's forehead too. Kara tried smiling again, letting Eliza know that she was feeling fine.

“You look tired honey,” she told Lena, rubbing her thumb along one of Lena’s cheekbones, just under the dark circles under her eyes.

“Oh I’m fine Eliza, really,” Lena waved away her concerns, “I haven’t slept as well as I did last night in months.” Lena’s eyes flickered to Kara’s for a second, before she smiled at Eliza. She put the empty bowl on the tray, pouring a cup of water and taking a sip.

“Water?” Lena asked, waiting until Kara gave a tiny nod before she placed the straw to her lips and let her sip the rest of the water.

“I spoke to Alex, her and Maggie are going to stop by on their lunch break, and she said Winn stopped by this morning but you were both fast asleep and he didn’t want to wake you,” Eliza told them, pulling a chair over to Kara’s bedside. Kara nodded slightly, smiling at Eliza.

“I might go home for a bit, while your mom is here” Lena said, looking at Kara. “I’ll just shower and get some food and come straight back.”

Kara nodded, and Lena slid off the bed, turning to face Kara. She hesitated, aware of Eliza watching them both. Clearing her throat slightly, Lena leant forward, placing a gentle kiss to Kara’s forehead.

“I won’t be long,” she promised, straightening back up.

She said her goodbyes to Eliza and left.

Eliza smiled at her youngest daughter, “I’m happy for you, you know,” she said. Kara’s lips curled slightly at the corners. Mindful of the brace and pins in her arm, Eliza covered Kara’s hand with her own.

“You’re going to get better, and you’ll get out of here, and then you’re going to be so happy,” Eliza smiled, rubbing her thumb across Kara’s knuckles, “you deserve it, and so does

she.”

“I like her, a lot,” Eliza confessed, and Kara’s lips cracked as she smiled wider, her swollen eyes closing further as they crinkled at the corners.

“I’m just so relieved you’re okay though honey, I haven’t been so worried since Jeremiah died,” Eliza smiled sadly, thinking about the day she lost her husband. That had been the worst day of her life, but she hadn’t had to sit by the side of her youngest daughter, not knowing whether she would ever wake up again.

She’d rushed to National City as soon as Alex had phoned her, arriving at the hospital a few hours later. She hadn’t known what to expect, and her heart leapt into her throat as she looked at Alex’s tearstained face, and Lena sat there next to Maggie, in shock. Eliza had pulled her daughter into a tight hug, holding her closely as they both cried. Alex told her everything the doctors had said, which wasn’t much.

Then she had crouched down in front of Lena. She was soaking wet still, her damp hair curling as it dried in the warmth of the waiting room. She was covered in blood; her hands shook as she stared at them. Lena had tried to keep Kara together, tried to stop the blood from pouring out. Eliza talked to her in a gentle voice, trying to get her to say something, but she just sat there shaking with silent sobs. There were no tears, she’d already cried them all. There had just been silence.

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Lena was back within the hour, a tray of coffees and two bagels in hand. The nurse was here, changing Kara’s IV drip and checking her vitals. He smiled at Lena as she walked back in.

“I was surprised to see you’d left I almost thought you were glued together,” he joked as Lena walked into the room. She gave him a tight smile as she handed Eliza one of the coffees and offered her a bagel. Lena didn’t appreciate his joke; she was worried about Kara. Just because she was awake didn’t mean that everything was fine. Lena wouldn’t be going anywhere until Kara was released from the hospital.

“Everything’s fine here, I’ll be back later, just let me know if you need anything,” he smiled, wheeling the trolley out of the room.

“I brought you a coffee too,” Lena smiled at Kara, walking around the bed to place the cups and the other bagel on the tray. Kara thumped her hand down on the space beside her, waiting for Lena to sit next to her, instead of in the chair she was pulling over. Smiling, Lena reclaimed her place next to Kara.

The three of them sat there talking, sipping their coffees. Or at least Eliza and Lena talked and Kara tried to chime in with vague facial expressions that could have meant anything.

Early on in the afternoon, Alex and Maggie showed up, bringing lunch for everyone, and more soup for Kara.

“Good to see you awake little Danvers,” Maggie said, flashing her dimples at Kara as she dug in to her noodles. Alex gave Eliza a hug before pulling herself up onto the end of the bed.

“I think Winn’s going to try and come again tomorrow before work,” she said, scooping up some noodles. Kara nodded, opening her lips as Lena held another spoonful of soup out and carefully dripped it in. She was careful not to do it too fast, just in case Kara choked on it. Her own food lay forgotten for the moment.

Eliza left whilst Alex and Maggie were here. Pretty soon she’d have to go back to Midvale, but for now she was still staying at Alex’s place.

They finished eating their food, listening to Maggie talk about her latest case until the nurse came back.

“I’m just here to, uh, give you a little sponge bath,” he said, looking at the four of them as he leant on his trolley. “So, uh, is now a bad time?”

“We actually have to get back to work,” Alex said, checking her watch for the time, “I’ll see you tomorrow,” she told Kara, leaning forward to give her a kiss on the forehead.

“I’ll see you tomorrow too,” she said to Lena, giving her shoulder a squeeze.

“Okay, bye,” Lena said, smiling at Alex and Maggie "stay safe". They waved goodbye as they slipped past the nurse, patiently waiting in the doorway.

“Alright then, so did you want your girlfriend to do this or are you comfortable with me doing it?” the nurse asked Kara, setting up next to the bed.

“I can do it,” Lena told him, raising her chin as she looked at him.

Kara felt her face flush. She didn’t want Lena to have to give her a sponge bath. That was the complete opposite of romantic, and she wasn’t sure if Lena would be okay seeing the injuries that Kara could feel. At the same time though, she didn’t want someone she didn’t know washing her, and she knew that Lena would insist that she do it anyway.

The nurse raised an eyebrow at Kara, and she gave him a little nod. They may as well skip the argument. Lena's stubbornness would win in the end, it was inevitable.

“Alright then, here’s some hot water, flannels, and towels. Try to be careful with the wires and the braces, and try not to get her too wet,” he explained, “oh, and don’t trying and turn her or lift her, just wash what you can see. Just give us a shout if you need some help.” He left them to it, shutting the door behind him.

Lena walked around to the other side of the bed and moved the tray out of the way, pulling the blanket and sheets back. It was the first time Kara had seen her legs. They were a thousand shades of black and purple and there were stitches in the places where her bones had snapped in half and pierced the skin. Thin spikes of metal skewered her legs, attaching to the frame of the braces.

Lena's jaw tightened, the muscle twitching as she stared with a hard expression on her face. She pulled the hospital gown off Kara, trying to ignore the similar injuries on her chest. Dipping the cloth in the water, Lena gently washed Kara's face first.

She was silent as she worked. Her expression turning more and more painful as she wiped at Kara's skin. She patted her dry and covered Kara with a sheet as she went to ask the nurse if she was allowed to wear her own pyjamas. He came back in to help Lena dress Kara in one of the oversized shirts she'd brought, his movements gentle but methodical, having done it a thousand times.

After the nurse left, Kara looked at Lena. She sat next to her, her shoulders tense and her face like stone. She was upset. Kara nudged her with her cast, but Lena just stared up at the ceiling.

"Een," Kara gurgled, trying to force her full name out.

Lena looked down at her, her eyes glassy with tears.

"You-" she cut off. She closed her eyes, taking a deep breath and trying again.

"I can't look at you like this," her voice trembled as she spoke, "I'm filled with guilt every time I look at your face, and that's not even the worst part." She let out a humourless laugh, sniffing as tears threatened to spill over.

"Iss ine," Kara wheezed, lifting a heavy hand into Lena's lap, stretching her fingers until she met Lena's hand.

"None of this is fine Kara," Lena choked out.

"Tiss ve," Kara asked, turning her head towards Lena and pressing her lips together.



“Kisses can’t fix everything Kara,” Lena laughed weakly, wiping her eyes before pressing a quick kiss to Kara’s lips. She was right of course, but with Lena’s lips pressed against her own, Kara forgot about the aching pain for just a moment, and that reprieve meant everything to her.

“I’m sorry, I just-” she let out a shaky breath, “I just hate seeing you like this.”

Lena pressed another kiss to Kara’s forehead, before laying back down and resting her head against Kara’s.

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The next dose of morphine caused Kara to drift off, feeling safe and warm with Lena beside her.

Lena silently worked on some paperwork for L-Corp, quietly tapping away at her keyboard. She hadn’t given the company a second thought over the past few days, but now she would have to take back control. At least she had the liberty of taking her work home with her, so she could keep Kara company in the hospital and still run her business.

She stayed there all night, and the nurse let her again, smiling as he checked in on them. He snuck in a few jelly cups for Lena, and a cup of black coffee, giving her a wink as he pressed a finger to his lips.

Ever the night owl, Lena worked long into the morning, the quiet clicking of the keyboard keys, the beeping of the monitor, and Kara’s slow breathing keeping her company. Lena was glad that Kara slept for so long, hoping that her sleep was painless and her dreams were good.

Every few minutes she found herself checking to make sure she was still there. And she was, almost like she used to be when they would spend the night together, just with a few more bruises than usual.

It might not have been the way it was before, but she was still her Kara, and Lena loved her all the same.

Nothing could ever take that away from her.

## Chapter 21

Things were looking up for both of them.

Their bruises slowly faded and scabs healed, and besides Kara's new pink scars and the dark shadows under Lena's eyes, all signs of the accident had disappeared. All external signs anyway.

Lena had been forced to start spending nights at her apartment, and she woke up screaming almost every night, her heart pounding as she shook away the bad dream. She would frantically search next to her for Kara, before realising that she was at her apartment in her own bed, and Kara was still in hospital. Only then would she be able to calm herself down. Soon she stopped sleeping altogether though, spending her nights catching up on paperwork that she didn't have time for whilst she was at the hospital.

Kara worried about Lena. She was stuck in hospital, surrounded by care and support. Anything she wanted she just had to ask for and Lena would get it for her in an instant. She was at Kara's side from the moment visiting hours opened, a fresh bouquet of plumerias and a coffee with her every morning, to the moment they closed. The bags under her eyes worried Kara the most. Except for those, Lena seemed fine. But this bags made it clear that she wasn't taking care of herself properly, devoting all of her time to Kara. Not that Kara didn't love spending every moment with Lena, but she wished that she'd take some time for herself. Even when she went home, Kara knew that Lena spent all of her time working. Lena waved away all of Kara's concerns though, insisting that she was fine.

They let Kara out of the hospital two months later.

She traded in the hospital bed for a wheelchair, still incapable of even so much as wiggling one of her toes. Kara and Lena both had their casts removed after six weeks, and a couple of weeks after that, Kara had the pins and braces removed. The biggest relief was when the wire was removed from her jaw. Just the thought of eating real, solid food was enough to get Kara excited as she packed everything up and got ready to go home.

The next day she was allowed to go home.

Home was Lena's apartment, as her own didn't have an elevator, and dragging her wheelchair up and down flights of stairs was going to be extremely difficult. Lena had spent all week getting her apartment ready for Kara to stay there. She made sure everything Kara would need was within reach if she was sat in her wheelchair, and that she would be able to move around the apartment freely. She made multiple trips back and forth Kara's apartment, packing up small things that Kara might need, and other things that would make Kara feel more at home at her place. It made no difference where Kara stayed though, as long as she had Lena. Anywhere was home with her. Either way, she couldn't wait to sleep in a proper bed, to finally be able to wrap her arms around Lena as they fell asleep next to each other. It was everything she had been dreaming about for the past five months.

Winn came to the hospital to help Lena take her home. They wheeled her outside, and she cherished the feeling of fresh air and the wind on her face as they made their way towards the car. Ironically enough, jumping in front of a moving car to save the girl she loved had helped her get over not only the trauma causing her to be mute, but also her fear of getting in cars. Kara let Winn lift her out of the chair and place her in the car, doing her seatbelt up for her before he got in the front seat.

Lena drove them to her apartment, and they managed to get Kara back into her chair and upstairs without any issues.

"Okay, well I'll let you settle in," Winn said, putting down Kara's bag and giving her a hug. "I'll see you later."

Lena showed him out before she walked back in. She hesitated at the end of the hallway, watching Kara as she looked around the room. Her eyes found Lena's and she smiled.

"So I was thinking for your first proper meal we could get potstickers," Lena suggested, walking over to Kara.

“I love you,” Kara replied, reaching her hands up to pull Lena’s face down to her level so she could kiss her.

Over the past two months, Lena had taken the doctors advice and arranged for a speech therapist to come and visit Kara once a week. She gave Kara vocal exercises and warm ups to help her vocal chords adjust to Kara’s newfound ability to talk again. Together, Lena would help Kara practice, revelling in the sound of hearing Kara talk. She didn’t think she’d ever get over hearing the sound of her voice.

Lena pulled away from the kiss a moment later.

“I’ll um, go and phone the Chinese restaurant and place out order,” Lena said, walking over to her bag to search for her phone. Kara sighed, Lena was still hesitant to touch her, even now when she was fully healed. She knew it was because Lena still blamed herself.

Listening to Lena’s voice in the kitchen, Kara wheeled herself over to the TV. It felt great to use her arms again after so long. If only she could feel her legs again too. For once Kara’s optimism was actually advantageous, she hadn’t given up hope yet. It had only been two months and she was only just starting her physical therapy. She was sure she’d be back on her feet in no time, and maybe that would help ease Lena’s guilt.

Lena came over, carrying a hot chocolate piled high with marshmallows and a cup of coffee. Handing the hot chocolate to Kara, she sat down on the side of the sofa closest to Kara’s wheelchair.

“Did you want me to get anything?” Lena asked, watching Kara as she sipped her hot chocolate. Kara shook her head, smiling at Lena with melted marshmallow foam above her top lip. Lena snorted, reaching out to wipe it away for her.

“You’re such a dork,” she sighed, as Kara laughed. It was like music to Lena’s ears; better than music.

“I’m fine, really, you don’t have to worry Lena,” Kara rasped, clearing her throat as she spoke. She was still a little rusty, but at least she could talk in distinct sentences now.

Lena smiled at the sound of her name on Kara's lips.

They sat there in silence, watching the TV as they sipped their drinks. Lena ran a fingertip around the rim of her mug, looking at Kara as she contemplated asking her question. She didn't want to upset Kara, but she just wanted to help. Clearing her throat slightly, Lena opened her mouth.

"So, I was thinking about what your doctor said when you first woke up, about you seeing a therapist," Lena began, as Kara turned to look at her, a curious look on her face.

"I think it might be a good idea to, you know, talk about what happened," Lena continued. She waited for Kara to reply, hoping that she would agree. Lena knew she was stubborn and that was an asset in business, but she didn't want to force Kara to do something she didn't want to do.

"But I can talk to you about it," Kara said, a small crease forming between her eyebrows. What was the point in talking to a stranger about her feelings when her girlfriend was right here?

"Well yes, but maybe you should talk to a professional, someone who can help you work through what you're feeling," Lena said slowly, trying to get her point across more clearly.

"It just, I don't know, seems stupid," Kara laughed, "I'm fine Lena, I don't need to talk about anything." She reached out and took Lena's hand in her own, squeezing it slightly. Staring at Lena's face, she took in the tired eyes full of concern, ringed by dark purple bags.

"Maybe-" Kara hesitated, "maybe you should see one."

Lena stiffened. After everything she'd been through in her life, she'd never visited a therapist. She was always too proud to admit she needed help, even if she had needed it desperately. Whilst she may have softened under Kara's touch, she still had her walls up with everyone outside of the vicinity of Kara's family and friends. Lena was exhausted, she knew

that, but she couldn't talk to someone about that. She kept it locked inside, only opening that door when she was so tired that she passed out and let the nightmares out.

She was saved from rejecting Kara's idea by a knock on the door. Getting up to find money, Lena opened the door to the delivery guy and took the food, thanking him as she shut it again. Bringing the food over to the sofa, Lena put a container in Kara's lap, smiling at the look of excitement on Kara's face.

"Thank you!" Kara sang, digging into the potstickers instantly. Lena laughed, opening her own container with a lot less enthusiasm.

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Lena lifted Kara out of her wheelchair, trying to be as gentle as she could as she half lift and half dragged Kara into bed. She peeled off her clothes, before redressing Kara in her pyjamas and covering her with the blankets. She quickly undressed herself before padding to the kitchen. She returned a few moments later, carrying Kara's pain medication and a glass of water.

"Here," Lena said, handing them to Kara and watching her swallow them. She crawled into bed next to her, and picked up the latest book she was reading.

"Therapy isn't a bad thing you know," Kara said, turning her head to look at Lena. Sighing, Lena put her book down on her stomach, keeping track of the page number. She looked at Kara.

"I used to think it meant I was weak," Lena quietly admitted, "I know now that it doesn't, but that doesn't mean I need therapy."

"Well why won't you kiss me then?" Kara argued. Lena rolled her eyes, reaching for Kara so she could place a quick kiss to her lips.

“That’s not what I meant,” Kara sighed, sounding exasperated. “You barely touch me, except to make sure that I’m okay. I’m not breakable Lena, I might have been hurt but it wasn’t your fault and I’m not going to break under your touch. It’s been two months and you’ve barely even touched me.”

Lena lay there in silence, staring up at the ceiling as tears filled her eyes. It was true, every word that Kara said. Lena had been so worried about hurting her while her bones knit themselves back together, and yes she blamed herself, but Kara was right. Her bones were fixed, she wasn’t a china doll, she was fine.

“Just kiss me,” Kara begged, staring at Lena with longing on her face, “kiss me properly, like real people kiss.”

Lena sat up, turning to face Kara. She moved so that she was hovering above Kara, careful not to put any of her weight on her. Her dark hair fell in a curtain around them as she stared into Kara’s blue eyes. Lena’s breathing grew faster as she cupped Kara’s cheek, closing her eyes as she leant down and pressed their lips together.

Kara ran her tongue across Lena’s bottom lip, and Lena let her deepen the kiss. She relaxed into it as Kara’s tongue explored her mouth, realising how much she had missed the feeling of Kara’s lips crushed to hers in a passionate kiss.

Lena broke off the kiss, and left a trail of kisses along Kara’s jaw and down her neck. Her hand pulled down the neck of Kara’s top, revealing the scarred skin of her shoulder. Lena placed a soft kiss on the scar. Her hands drifted down to the bottom of Kara’s shirt, pulling it up in one swift movement. Kara’s pants quickly followed.

Carefully, Lena placed a kiss to every single scar on Kara’s body. Her fingers shook as she traced them all, staring at the old, white ones and the shiny new pink ones criss-crossing her body. Each one of the old ones was a mark of Kara’s past, and each new one was a reminder of Kara’s sacrifice, and Lena swore that she would kiss them all every day for the rest of her life.

Pulling herself back up on top of Kara, she recaptured her lips. They kissed deeply, revelling in the sensation of the other’s warm lips pressed against their own, and their tongues fighting for dominance.



Lena pulled back, breathing heavily. She smiled down at Kara, who was breathing just as heavily. Shifting further down the bed, Lena rested her head on Kara's chest, smiling as she felt Kara's arms encircle her. The familiar comfort of Kara's embrace took away the last of Lena's worry as she lay there listening to Kara's heart beat slow down. She hadn't felt this safe in a long time.

"I've missed you," Kara whispered, kissing the top of Lena's head.

"I love you," Lena whispered back.

For the first night in two months, she slept soundly, safe in Kara's arms.

# Chapter 22

## Chapter Notes

Uni starts tomorrow so I probably won't have time to update as often

The first week home was tiring for both of them.

Lena tried her hardest to make sure that Kara was comfortable at all times, and she was too stubborn to accept help off anyone except Alex. She insisted that she could do everything alone. And she did. Alex came over on her lunch breaks, bringing them coffee and donuts.

By the end of the week they'd settled into a routine, finally finding their rhythm. They never fought, but over that week, tempers flared up on both sides. Not out of anger at the other, but at themselves for not being able to do things properly.

Kara would get angry that she couldn't walk, couldn't go to the bathroom alone, couldn't dress herself. All the small things she'd taken for granted.

Lena would get frustrated that she wasn't strong enough to get Kara into the bath properly; worried that she was hurting her as she half pulled her in. She would get angry when Kara was in pain, blaming herself for it.

Whilst the pins had been removed, and her bones healed, there was still a lot of pain. It would take a while for that to go away. She tried her hardest to not show it, she knew how much it upset Lena, but sometimes her whole body would ache. Except for her legs, it was like they weren't even there. At night, she would lay awake, watching Lena sleep until the pain medication kicked in and she could drift off to sleep.

The first Friday home, Maggie insisted on a games night. It had been too long since everyone had been together and argued over who was winning at monopoly. Especially since Lena had been gone for a while, and she was the prime target for everyone to gang up on.

Alex and Winn showed up first, carrying half a dozen board games each as they walked in. The only game Lena had in her apartment was chess, because at least you could play that by yourself.

“Hey you two,” Alex smiled as she walked over to the sofas. Her and Winn set the games down on the coffee table and gave Kara a hug. They smiled at Lena, knowing how she felt about hugs.

“Maggie’s picking pizza up on her way home from work,” Alex said, making herself comfortable.

“Do you want a drink?” Lena asked, getting up and walking to the kitchen. “I have wine, and I got some of that beer you like, Winn,” Lena called over her shoulder as she pulled out a bottle of wine.

“Have I mentioned how much I love your apartment?” Winn asked, walking to the kitchen to get a beer off Lena.

“Like a thousand times,” Kara croaked, she let out a choked laugh as she tried clearing her throat.

Alex smiled at her sister, her face filled with wonder. They were sisters in every sense of the word, they had been family for thirteen years, but she had never heard a single word or laugh out of Kara in that time. Over the past two months as Kara had slowly started pronouncing full syllables, Alex had been filled with amazement. She could talk!

Her voice was still scratchy, and Lena was still helping her with her vocal exercises every night, but Kara’s voice suited her. It was bubbly and excited, and suited her optimistic

personality perfectly. Every time she spoke, everyone stopped to listen, cherishing the sound of every word.

“Alex?” Lena called, holding up the bottle of wine.

“Ugh yes! Thank you,” Alex groaned, “it’s been a rough week.”

Lena pulled the cork out and poured two big glasses of wine; she knew all about rough week’s. She got a can of soda for Kara too, seeing as she couldn’t mix alcohol with her pain medication. Bringing the drink over, she sat next to Alex and sipped her glass of wine.

Maggie turned up a little while later, carrying a stack of pizza boxes.

“Hey babe,” she kissed Alex, setting the boxes on the coffee table, “hey everyone.”

“There’s scotch on the kitchen counter,” Lena told her, and Maggie went off to pour herself a glass, before sitting down next to Winn.

They ate whilst they talked about their day. Winn told Kara the new gossip at the library, which wasn’t much considering it was such a small and quiet place, and nothing scandalous ever happened there. Lena kissing Kara was probably the most shocking thing to happen in between the stacks of books.

First up, they played Uno, jumping straight into the hard-hitting games. They were all wary of each other, not trusting one another as they played. Winn accused Lena and Kara of cheating, as they never seemed to use their big cards on each other, and maybe it was because he was losing too. Lena put a pick up two card down, followed by another one by Kara, and then Alex put down a pick up four card. She gave Maggie a sheepish smile.

“Are you fucking kidding me?” Maggie complained, sighing as she picked up eight new cards and everyone laughed. She definitely wasn’t winning this round.

Alex won the most rounds, and was declared the champion of Uno. Then it was time for monopoly, and everyone got serious. They all ganged up on Lena, knowing that she was the one to beat. She had half of the board already, and

“Okay this isn’t fair,” Lena complained, “you’re all cheating!”

“Ugh it’s not cheating,” Maggie scoffed, “Alex just didn’t want to sell you that station.”

“But I offered you more than her!” Lena protested, glaring at Alex.

“Yes, but then you’d probably win, and you’ve won every other time we’ve played so I have to prove a point,” Alex explained, taking a sip of wine as she smirked at Lena.

“Well that’s rude,” Lena pouted, a bit put out that everyone was ganging up on her. Kara and Winn laughed as Lena sulked.

“I guess I’ll just have to beat you to prove a point then,” Lena told everyone.

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Lena did win, despite everyone’s best efforts to bring her down. She sat there smugly, listening to everyone talk. As the night wore on, her exhaustion caught up with her and she fell asleep on the sofa. Kara pulled her blanket off the back of the sofa and carefully draped it over Lena, tucking it in around her.

Winn left first so that he could get started on double xp weekend for some videogame he played. Kara, Alex and Maggie sat in front of the TV, talking in hushed tones so they didn’t wake Lena up. Alex and Kara were discussing going to Midvale to see Eliza. Alex

thought it would be good for Kara to go home, she could visit her parents grave and spend some time in the fresh air with her family.

Their quiet conversation was disrupted by a loud shout as Lena shot upright, her eyes wild as she breathed heavily. She scrambled in the corner of the sofa, frantically looking around. Her eyes locked with Kara's and her shoulders dropped in relief.

Alex and Maggie had both jumped up at the shout, and Maggie sat back down with a wary look on her face as Alex crouched down in front of Lena.

"Hey, are you alright?" Alex asked, her voice worried and a concerned look in her eyes.

Lena rubbed her face, putting her feet on the ground to steady herself. "I-, yeah I'm fine," Lena mumbled, not looking at anyone.

"Lena," Kara said hoarsely, her arms half stretched out as if she was going to get up and pull Lena into her arms. Instead she sat there in her wheelchair, waiting for Lena to look at her or say something.

"I'm fine, I just, uh, excuse me," she muttered, standing up and going to the bathroom.

Inside the bathroom she ran the tap and splashed some cold water on her face. She studied her face as she wiped it dry. The circles under her eyes were dark, and her face looked sickly pale in the bathroom light. Shadows exaggerated the sharpness of her face, and her skin looked like it was stretched too tight over her bones. Since Kara had come home, Lena had been sleeping a lot better, but even her embrace wasn't enough to keep the bad dreams away. The warmth of Kara's body was enough to stop her from waking up screaming though, thankfully.

Taking a moment to steady herself, she took a deep breath and walked back down the hallway. Three pairs of eyes looked up as she walked in, their hushed whispers trailed off as

they looked at Lena. She gave them a fake smile, trying to act as if everything was fine, but she didn't fool anyone.

"Lena-" Kara croaked, a pained expression on her face. Lena cut her off before she could continue.

"It's getting late, we should get you ready for bed," Lena said, brushing her hair put of her face. Kara opened her mouth to protest, but Alex stopped her with a hand on her arm.

"Yeah, uh, we should get going anyway," Alex said, standing up.

"Right, we've got ... work," Maggie added, hesitating as she looked from Alex, to Kara to Lena. She picked up the empty glasses off the counter and took them to the kitchen, putting them in the sink.

They collected their jackets from the hooks by the door and said their goodbyes, leaving Kara and Lena alone. Kara waited for Lena to come and push her to the bedroom; she was still too weak to push herself.

Lena was silent as she helped Kara brush her teeth and got her changed into her pyjamas. She switched all the lights off and came to bed with a glass of water and more pills for Kara. Kara wriggled her upper body across the bed until she managed to roll over into Lena arms. Lena moved so she could put her arm around Kara, placing a kiss on the top of her head as they lay there in the dark.

Kara couldn't take the silence anymore. Lena heard her take a deep breath and waited for the words to come out. It took a few seconds before Kara's hesitant whisper broke the silence.

"I don't think we can do this," she said, her voice cracking. Lena shifted up, turning to flick the light on. She looked at Kara, a lump forming in her throat as she panicked.

“Please don’t-” Lena choked out. Kara stopped her with a gentle touch.

“Just listen,” Kara interrupted, “I think we should – both of us – should see someone.”

Kara took a deep breath waiting for Lena’s reaction. She didn’t say anything; she just lay there thinking about what Kara said.

“It’s just, it’s hard, and I think it would help both of us,” Kara continued, trying to fill the silence, “if we both agree to go, we- we can get help, it might make things easier, we-”

“Okay,” Lena whispered.

Kara looked up at Lena, “okay?” she repeated, her eyebrows raised in surprise.

“If- if you think we should, then we’ll try, together,” Lena agreed, rubbing soothing circles on Kara’s arm.

Kara was right, they couldn’t carry on like this. As hard as Lena tried to pretend like everything was normal, it wasn’t, and they couldn’t move on from this without help. For Kara, Lena would bend her pride and do this for her, for both of them. Even if Lena wasn’t overly fond of the idea, she had to admit that she was exhausted.

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They decided to go together, they didn’t have any secrets from each other, and they wanted to work through this as a couple. Lena booked an appointment with a psychologist for the following Wednesday, straight after Kara’s physical therapy session.

That morning, Lena made them both pancakes, hoping that it would be a good day. She was wary about their first counselling session, and she knew physical therapy was tiring for Kara. Maybe if they had a nice breakfast, it would set the tone for the rest of the day.



“So,” Lena began as she sat a stack of pancakes down in front of Kara, “there’s going to be a bit of time between physical therapy and counselling.”

She brought her own pancakes over to the table, sitting down and drizzling maple syrup over them.

“I thought we could go to the park, it’s a nice day and you could use some sun, you’re looking a little pale darling,” Lena said, stroking Kara’s cheek.

“You’re one to talk,” Kara said, her nose crinkling as she smiled.

Lena laughed, rolling her eyes at Kara.

“Can we feed the ducks?” Kara asked through a mouthful of pancakes, a hopeful look on her face.

“Only if you promise not to eat all the bread this time,” Lena laughed, and Kara joined in, shrugging as she stuffed another forkful of pancakes into her mouth.

Once they finished eating, Lena helped bathe and dress Kara, before getting herself ready to go to their therapy sessions. She wheeled Kara into the elevator, and outside. Her personal driver got out of the car and helped Lena get Kara into the back seat, before Lena slid in after her.

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They started off with stretches to Kara’s legs and lower back. She lay on one of the tables as Lena and her physical therapist helped bend her legs into different shapes, ensuring that the muscles didn’t atrophy. Her arms and upper body needed less work, as Kara still had movement there, but she moved through the exercises the physical therapist gave her.

Next, the physical therapy gave Kara a round of electrical muscle stimulation, hoping to trigger the muscles into contracting. Kara couldn't feel a thing in her legs, as tiny electrical impulses zapped her legs. Lena kept up a stream of conversation throughout the session, hoping to take Kara's mind off what was happening, even though she couldn't feel anything.

Afterwards, Lena pushed Kara in the direction of the park. They stopped along the way to buy a loaf of bread for the ducks, and again to get some ice cream.

Lena parked Kara's wheelchair in a patch of sunlight next to the bench, and she sat down on the bench, in the shade of the trees. They ate their ice cream quickly, as it melted in the heat, watching the water ripple as the ducks glided across the surface. The park looked different in the day, it was still beautiful but it held a different kind of magic than it did at night time. It was hot today; summer was definitely here.

Lena wheeled Kara to the edge of the lake and watched her as she broke pieces of bread off the loaf and threw it to the ducks. She was smiling, sunlight turning her hair golden as the wind caressed it. She was beautiful and as she looked at her, Lena didn't know how she had ever thought anything else had been beautiful.

She put her arms around Kara from behind, kissing her on the cheek.

"I love you," Lena whispered, "but we have to go or we're going to miss out appointment."

Kara threw the rest of the bread in and crumpled up the bag, turning her head so she could look up at Lena. She puckered her lips for a kiss and Lena smiled as she leant down to press one on Kara's lips. Lena wheeled Kara back out of the park, heading towards the office of the therapist.

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Lena sat back on the sofa, legs and arms crossed as she stared at the therapist. Her name was Megan, and she had seemed nice as she welcomed them into her office and sat down in her armchair.

“So, Lena, your body language is very closed off, you don’t want to be here,” Megan stated it like it was a fact.

Lena self-consciously uncrossed her arms, rubbing her hands along her thighs. She raised her chin in defence as she cleared her throat.

“Not particularly, no,” Lena replied, her voice strained. She had promised Kara she would try, but she could already feel her walls reinforcing themselves as Megan got ready to pry into her private life.

“Well the first step is coming to therapy,” Megan reassured her in a soothing voice, “once you’re here it becomes easier to admit there’s a problem, and then we can move forward.”

Lena nodded, looking at Kara who reached out and gave Lena’s hand a squeeze.

“Kara, you’ve talked about your accident and your recovery so far. I think it’s time we heard your side of this Lena,” Megan said, her eyes flitting between the two of them.

“I, uh, well it was ... it was horrible,” Lena said, her voice hesitant as she tried to find the words. Truth be told, there weren’t any words to describe watching Kara get hit by a car right in front of her. Even worse, getting hit by a car meant for Lena.

“Undoubtedly, but can you tell me how you’re feeling? Kara, you said sleeping has been hard for both of you?”

Kara nodded, “yes, there’s, uh, been some bad dreams, sometimes Lena wakes up screaming.” Her eyes flickered to Lena’s face, filled with worry.

“Sleep disturbances can be due to many things, but in this situation I’d say it’s the posttraumatic stress of watching a loved one getting hurt,” Megan explained.

Kara and Lena nodded. Obviously that was the reason why they were here.

“Lena, what are these dreams like for you?”

She didn’t want to say it out loud, but she could feel Kara watching her. Waiting. So she spoke anyway. “It’s like I’m reliving it all over again, every night,” Lena admitted, her jaw tightening as she clenched her teeth. Images from her dreams flashed through her head.

“And how does it make you feel?”

She hesitated. Kara hated it when Lena blamed herself, because she didn’t blame her, but Lena still felt like it was her fault.

“Guilty I supposed,” Lena confessed.

“And why is that?”

Lena was getting tired of this interrogation, she could feel her anger flaring up in irritation. Of course, Megan was just doing her job, but Lena didn’t like to be pressed.

“Because my mom sent the driver to run me over, it’s my fault.”

Kara sighed, “I’ve told you, it’s not your fault, you didn’t force me to jump in front of the car.”

“But if it wasn’t for me, there wouldn’t have been a car there in the first place,” Lena replied, looking at Kara.

Megan observed them as they spoke, taking in the way they looked at each other, their body language, the way that they reached for each other’s hands for comfort. Sitting forward, she wrote down a few things on her notepad before interrupting them.

“First things first, I think we should address the guilt,” Megan told them, “Lena, for you this seems like a big part of why you’re struggling, and Kara, I think Lena’s guilt is one of the reason’s why you’re finding it hard to move on.

They both nodded; Kara enthusiastically agreeing and Lena giving a stiff nod of her head.

“Sometimes saying things out loud can make them true, so Lena, I want you to say it’s not your fault, out loud,” Megan commanded her, watching her carefully. Lena nodded, taking a deep breath.

“It’s not my fault,” she rushed out.

“It’s not your fault,” Megan repeated.

Lena repeated it back to her a few more times, her shoulders dropping as a weight fell off them. She felt better just saying it, even if she didn’t believe it entirely yet.

The rest of the session passed quickly. It wasn’t nearly as bad as Lena had been expecting, and if she wasn’t so stubborn she might have admitted that it had actually helped her. Kara had also found it helpful, Megan had been a patient listener as she talked about her losing her parent’s as a child, her muteness, and her reasons behind pushing Lena out of the way.

They made another appointment to come back next week.

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That night, they took some advice Megan had given them, and tried to do something normal as a couple. Lena had been so worried about taking care of Kara that she had almost taken on the role of a nurse than a girlfriend. Her constant fretting over making sure Kara was okay had left little room for romance. After dinner, Kara asked Lena to run a bubble bath for them both.

It had been a struggle arranging Kara in the bath with Lena, but they had managed. Now, Kara sat in front of Lena, her legs stretched out uselessly before her as she leant back against Lena.

“Thank you, for today,” Kara said, her eyes closed as Lena washed her hair for her, her fingers rubbing soothing circles into Kara’s scalp.

“Of course,” Lena murmured, placing a kiss on Kara’s shoulder. She

“Did – do you think it’s helpful?” Kara asked, turning her head to look up at Lena.

“Don’t move,” Lena scolded, as she started rinsing Kara’s hair with a jug of water, one hand making sure the water didn’t run into Kara’s eyes.

“I think ... that she’s good at her job, and ... maybe you were right about it helping us move on,” Lena admitted slowly, washing the rest of the shampoo out.

Kara smiled smugly, turning around as far as she could to face Lena. Rolling her eyes, Lena started washing her own hair.

“Please don’t say I told you so,” Lena sighed.

“I would never,” Kara scoffed, pressing a hand to her heart in mock offence. “I’m just happy that you think it will help, that’s more than enough for me.”

Lena smiled, shifting to one side so she could kiss Kara.

“But you were right,” Lena whispered, pulling back and smiling at Kara with dimples. Kara hadn’t seen them in a while, the smile never truly reaching Lena’s worry-filled eyes. She wrinkled her nose as she smiled back.

“I was, wasn’t I,” Kara laughed.

---

It was a hot night, and they both slept in their underwear to keep cool as they lay wrapped up in each other. Kara lay on Lena’s chest, finding comfort in the rising and falling of her chest as she took slow breaths, and the steady rhythm of her heart beating.

When Lena woke up them both up from a bad dream, Kara was there, caressing her face as she waited for her to calm back down. Rolling herself onto her back, Kara pulled Lena onto her, cradling her head against her shoulder as she pressed a gentle kiss to Lena’s hair.

“It’s not your fault,” she whispered.

“It’s not my fault,” Lena whispered back.

## Chapter 23

Weeks passed.

They went to their therapy sessions once a week and Kara's physical therapy twice a week. Lena reluctantly went back to work at Kara's insistence, spending as little time as she had to at the office.

As more time passed with Kara still having no sensation in her legs, she became less and less optimistic. She tried to plaster a smile on her face and fake positivity for Lena's sake, but slowly but surely, her hope of walking again was dwindling.

Despite her fake positivity, and the progress they made in therapy, things were still hard. They argued when Kara got frustrated at herself and Lena tried to calm her down. Kara would shout, letting out thirteen years' worth of anger and frustration that she had silently held inside. She still talked with her hands a lot, a habit she hadn't had time to break yet.

Lena would let her rant, knowing how important it was for Kara to be able to vent out loud. No matter how frustrated she got she would never try and silence Kara, knowing firsthand what it was like to see her struggle with being silent.

Even when they fought though, it didn't last long. They never went to bed angry, and would apologise to each other as they cuddled in bed, reasoning with each other and working through their frustration.

It wasn't all bad though. Lena's nightmares stopped and she learnt to let go of her guilt, and Kara relaxed more as Lena took better care of herself and stopped treating her like she was breakable. Therapy had helped them a lot, they were quicker to laugh, and the scars they held inside healed. Kara left the house more often, for things other than therapy and counselling, and they spent more time as a couple.



It was a Thursday and Lena was at the office.

She'd gone home at lunch time to check on Kara, bringing her a sandwich and some flowers. At this rate, she was surprised the florist had any plumerias left. Alex was already there, on her own lunch break. They'd all eaten together, chatting about their morning as they sat around Lena's table. When Lena left Kara had been fine, parked in front of the TV with a book and her coffee, Alex sat on the next to Kara, flicking through the channels. Lena had kissed Kara goodbye, promising to bring home a curry on her way home from work.

Typing away at her keyboard, Lena was interrupted by her phone vibrating. Kara's name lit up the screen and Lena smiled as she answered. She loved to be able to hear Kara's voice whilst she was at work; she hadn't had the liberty of this before.

"Hi darling," Lena said as soon as the call connected.

Her happiness quickly turned to panic as she heard Kara's sobs on the other end. Lena shot up out of her seat.

"Kara what's wrong?" Lena panicked, scrambling for her coat and bag.

*"I was j-just trying to take a bath,"* Kara's sobs came through the other end, *"I c-can't get up."*

Lena's heart leapt into her throat as she hurried out of her office and straight into the elevator, pushing the button for the ground floor. She could hear Kara's breathing hitch as she cried, sniffing as she tried to keep the tears in.

"I'm on my way, just- just don't panic, I'm coming," Lena said, her voice quavering as she herself panicked.

Her driver was already waiting outside, Jess having phoned and let him know in the time it had taken Lena to make it to the ground floor. She threw herself in the back, waving

him away as he tried to open her door for her.

Her heart was bounding as she got into the elevator at her place. She ran to the door, her hands shaking as she tried to unlock the door.

“Kara?” she shouted, dumping her bag on the floor unceremoniously as she rushed down the hallway. The bathroom. Kara said she was trying to take a bath.

Before she even made it into the bathroom Lena stepped in a puddle of water seeping into her bedroom.

“Kara?” she asked again, her voice breaking as she hurried into the bathroom.

The bath was overflowing, spilling more water onto the floor as the taps gushed out more water. Kara lay in a pool of water, soaking wet as she softly cried to herself. Her wheelchair was overturned nearby.

Lena fell to the floor next to Kara, pulling her into her lap and pressing her against her chest.

“It’s okay, you’re okay,” Lena whispered, stroking Kara’s wet hair as the water seeped into her dress.

“I’m sorry,” Kara mumbled, her voice cracking.

“Shhh, it’s okay,” Lena murmured, pressing a kiss to her forehead.

She lay Kara down for a second as she righted the wheelchair, before lifting her into it. Next, Lena turned the taps off and pulled the plug out of the bath, letting the water swirl down the drain.

Wheeling Kara out of the bathroom, Lena felt her pulse slow. She was okay, just soaking wet and upset. That was nothing a cup of tea, some warm pyjamas and a bit of cuddling couldn't fix. Lena took them into one of the other bathrooms in the apartment and started filling the tub with hot water.

"Hey, look at me," she softly whispered, crouching down in front of Kara and lifting her chin. Her eyes were bloodshot from crying.

"What were you thinking?" Lena asked, her voice sad.

"I just- I wanted a hot bath," Kara sniffed, a tear racing down her cheek. She closed her eyes and sighed.

"I got the water running, but I put the plug in and – and the wheelchair tipped, I tried to pull myself back in but I wasn't strong enough."

Her breathing became shaky as she explained what had happened. Lena closed her eyes, breathing deeply as she tried not to get angry. It was anger because of how worried she had been, not at Kara. She pushed it aside for now, focusing on how upset Kara was. That was more important right now.

"You scared me to death, you could've drowned," Lena scolded her as she peeled off Kara's soaked clothes and then her own wet dress. Gently, she lifted Kara and lowered her into the bath before climbing in after her.

After quickly warming them both up and washing Kara's hair, Lena got out. She left Kara drying in her wheelchair, wrapped in a towel, as she went and got dry clothes for them both. Lena set the kettle to boil as she lay Kara down on the sofa and covered her with a blanket. Placing a gentle kiss on the forehead, Lena left her there with a cup of tea as she pulled a stack of towels out of the linen cupboard and set about mopping up the flooded bathroom.

Once everything was cleaned up, Lena came and joined Kara on the sofa, cradling her head in her lap. She ran her fingers through Kara's damp hair as they watched the TV.

"I'm sorry," Kara muttered again, looking up at Lena.

"You don't have anything to be sorry for, I'm just glad you're okay," Lena replied, "but you shouldn't have tried to get in the bath alone Kara, that was a really stupid idea."

"I know," Kara whispered, closing her eyes, "I'm just tired of feeling like this, I can't do anything by myself and I just feel so angry."

She sounded bitter, and Lena felt a twinge of guilt.

"I'm sorry."

The words fell past Lena's lips before she could even stop them. She knew that Kara hated it when she apologised, and even though Lena had learnt to forgive herself, it had become a habit during those first few months.

"Please don't start with the apologies again," Kara snapped, rolling her eyes.

She sighed, immediately regretting snapping at Lena.

"Sorry, that was rude," Kara apologised, "you know I'm not angry at you for this, I could never be angry at you." She reached up and cupped Lena's face between her hands as she stared up at Lena's green eyes. They were glassy, like she was about to start crying, which knowing Lena, she was.

"But I wouldn't blame you if you were," Lena smiled sadly.

“Stop it,” Kara commanded, “I would do it a thousand times over. I love you Lena Luthor, and I would throw myself in front of that car over and over again to keep you safe, even if it means that I’ll never walk again.”

Lena ran her fingers along Kara’s cheekbone, leaning down to press a lopsided kiss against her lips.

“I love you too, come on,” Lena said, lifting Kara’s head off her lap and moving her to her wheelchair. She stood up, going to fetch their coats and some shoes.

“What’re you doing?” Kara called after Lena.

“We’re going out,” Lena’s muffled reply came from their bedroom.

She walked back out and slipped some socks and shoes onto Kara’s feet.

“Lena, we’re in our pyjamas,” Kara told her, looking down at the grey sweatpants and old t-shirt. Lena blinked, looking down at her similar attire. She waved away Kara’s words.

“It’s fine, we’ll go as we are.”

Kara frowned; Lena dressed up for everything, she never left the house without makeup on, so she was puzzled as to where they were going.

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Lena wouldn’t say where they were going.

She made a quick stop at Walmart, leaving Kara in the car as she dashed in. She came out with a trolley full of bags and quickly loaded them into the trunk, smiling at Kara's puzzled expression as she got back in the car.

They pulled up outside an old warehouse, encircled by a chain-link fence. Lena got out to unlock the gate, dragging it open before driving them into the compound.

"Where are we?" Kara asked as Lena got her wheelchair out of the back of the car and lowered her into it.

"Just an old warehouse where I keep some of my stock," Lena replied, giving Kara a smile.

"What're we doing here?" Kara asked, a bit wary of the building looming in front of her. Of course, nothing bad would happen if she was with Lena, but she was still confused about what they were doing here.

Lena let the inside to the warehouse, flicking on the lights. The fluorescent lights chased away the darkness, and Kara could see it was mostly empty inside, except for two large shipping containers and a dozen crates all stamped with the L-Corp logo.

Lena unhooked the bag off the handles of Kara's wheelchair and set them on the ground. She crouched down in front of Kara, opening up a box. Kara waited patiently, trying to figure out what Lena was doing.

Smiling up at Kara, Lena held up a glass. It was just a normal drinking glass, cheap and ordinary. She gave Lena a puzzled look.

"Take it," Lena told her, smiling as she offered the glass to her.

Kara took it, holding the glass in her hand as she looked at Lena, "now what?"

“Throw it,” Lena commanded, still smiling.

“What?” Kara asked, her eyebrows shooting up in surprise.

“You’re angry and you’re trying not to lash out at me, but you shouldn’t keep it inside,” Lena told her, nodding to herself slightly.

“So break some things, I bough glasses and plates, smash them and let all your anger out.” She looked proud of herself, smiling up at Kara with a sparkle in her eyes.

Kara frowned at the glass in her hand, and with a slight hesitation she threw it across the room. The glass shattered against the side of one of the shipping containers, shards raining down to the ground as it burst apart.

She smiled, looking back at Lena, whose smile had gotten wider. Accepting another glass off Lena, Kara threw it with more force this time. Lena joined in, throwing a china plate at the ground and watching it smash.

Before long they were both laughing, surrounded by thousands of pieces of glass and china mingling together. Lena sat down in front of Kara’s wheelchair, smiling up at her as she laughed breathlessly.

“Thank you, I needed that,” Kara smiled, reaching a hand out towards Lena.

Lena placed a kiss to the back of Kara’s hand, “you’re welcome,” she murmured, “do you feel better?”

“Surprisingly, yes,” Kara laughed, pulling Lena up towards her so she could kiss her. Lena sat on Kara’s lap, smiling into the kiss.

At their next therapy session, Kara and Lena opened up about what had happened last week.

“I’m just worried that she’s going to hurt herself by trying to do things alone,” Lena confessed, squeezing Kara’s hand as she looked at her.

“And Kara, how do you feel about Lena’s concern,” Megan asked, scribbling down some notes whilst she waited for Kara to answer.

“I want things to go back to normal, I want Lena to be able to go to work without worrying about whether or not I’m okay, I want to be able to take a bath and make myself a cup of coffee without having to disturb her,” Kara rambled, trying to voice her frustration.

“You’re not disturbing me,” Lena sighed, sounding exasperated.

“But I’d still like to do things by myself,” Kara admitted.

“You said you used to be a librarian, is that something that you feel capable of still doing?” Megan asked Kara.

“I guess so, I used to spend most of my time behind my desk,” Kara told her.

“Then perhaps you should consider going back to work part-time, it might help you develop some independence and get out more,” Megan suggested.

Kara blinked in surprise; she hadn’t thought about going back to work yet. She had been holding onto the hope that she would walk again, and then go back. Perhaps it wasn’t such a bad idea though, Winn would be there to help her, and it wasn’t a physically demanding job. She looked at Lena for her opinion on the matter.



“I think that’s a great idea,” Lena agreed, smiling at Kara.

Kara smiled back at her, thinking about going back to her old life. She was glad Lena approved, it made Kara feel more excited about the idea of it. Perhaps this was the next step Kara needed to move on from the car accident, another step in her recovery.

---

Kara went back to work a few weeks later, having arranged everything with Miss Grant, who was surprisingly gracious and accommodating. They agreed that three days a week Kara would work at the library, and Lena was supportive.

Her first day back went smoothly, and Lena organised a night out with Alex, Maggie and Winn to celebrate. They went to Kara’s favourite Chinese restaurant and Kara ordered two plates of potstickers as a well done to herself.

“So Cat wasn’t too bad then?” Alex asked, scooping up a forkful of rice.

“No, she was actually really nice to me, it was a bit shocking really,” Kara admitted, her eyebrows rising as she thought about how nice Cat had been to her. Not that she was a horrible person, but she had never been particularly kind.

“Well at least she was nice to you, she still doesn’t even know my name,” Winn grumbled, picking at his food.

“Hey, she called me Kiera for a year,” Kara reminded him, smiling at the memory.

---

After they finished eating, Maggie suggested that they go to their bar. Kara agreed enthusiastically; she hadn't been there since her accident, but now that she was off her pain medication she could finally have a drink.

Lena reminded Kara about her physical therapy session the next morning, not wanting to spoil her fun but also reminding her that she had to be up early in the morning and a hangover wouldn't be fun.

Kara really enjoyed herself. She had forgotten what it was like to go out drinking and enjoy herself with her friends. Their Friday night game night was one of Kara's favourite part of the week, but it was a nice change to be out together with them. Things were really getting back to normal for her.

---

At work on Friday, Lena came in on her lunch break, bringing back the latest pile of books she'd checked out. She could've let Kara take them in with her but it gave Lena the opportunity to come in and see Kara for a few minutes.

Kara's face lit up when she saw Lena walk in and deposit the book in the return box, smiling as she walked around to the front of the counter. She kissed Kara hello and waved at Winn, who was fixing one of the computers behind his desk.

"How's the shift going?" Lena asked, leaning on the counter as she smiled at Kara. It felt just like it had when they had first met and Lena would find any opportunity to come and visit her at work.

"Good, it's been quiet so far," Kara whispered in reply, pushing her glasses up her nose as she smiled up at Lena.

They spoke for a little while, Kara keeping an eye out for Cat just in case she was in a bad mood and wanted something to pick at. Lena had to leave after a while, having a business meeting to attend. She kissed Kara goodbye, telling her to enjoy her lunch with Alex before she left.

---

The sun had disappeared behind the clouds as Alex pushed Kara's wheelchair down the sidewalk. They were headed to their favourite café, looking forward to the sandwiches and coffee. Kara listened to Alex talk as they weaved in and out of people.

Kara shivered slightly, wishing she'd brought a jacket to wear over her dress. It might have been summer but it was cold today.

"God the weather's miserable, I can't even feel my toes," Kara complained as Alex laughed, scolding Kara for not bringing a cardigan just in case.

Kara clutched the arms of her wheelchair, turning her head to look up at Alex.

"Stop, stop, we have to go back," Kara frantically told Alex.

"What is it, what's wrong?" Alex asked, going into panic mode as she moved around to crouch in front of Kara, her hands fluttering over Kara as she tried to find out what the problem was.

"You have to call Lena right now, and take me to the hospital," Kara told Alex, her eyes wide as they filled with tears.

"Why? Tell me where it hurts Kara," Alex panicked, hands fumbling as she pulled her phone out of her pocket and finding Lena's number with shaky fingers.

Kara smiled widely at Alex, laughing as she let out a choked sob.

"I can feel my toes."



# Chapter 24

## Chapter Notes

We're almost at the end, I'll try my hardest to get the last chapter up by the end of this week.

Kara had never been so relieved in all her life. She could feel her toes!

Lena rushed to the hospital as soon as Alex called her, telling Jess to cancel the rest of her appointments for the day as she hurried out. Practically running up to the front desk, Lena got directions to Kara off the man behind the counter and set off searching for her.

As she walked into the ward, she saw Kara sat on the edge of a hospital bed, her legs dangling over the edge as Alex sat in one of the chairs, talking to her. Kara looked up, almost as if she could sense Lena's presence. Her face split into a smile, and Lena's mirrored her expression as she rushed over to the bed.

Lena sobbed as she pulled Kara into a tight hug, kissing her on top of her head. She drew back, cupping Kara's face as she smiled through her tears.

"I can feel my toes," Kara smiled widely, her eyes filled with tears.

"You can feel you toes," Lena replied, laughing in disbelief.

---

It turned out the severe bruising and compressed spine that Kara had sustained to her lower back during the accident had caused temporarily paralysis as it struggled to repair

itself. There was a very high chance that she would have never regained sensation below the waist, but by some miracle, she was one of the lucky few.

It was like a huge weight had been lifted off their shoulders. This was everything Kara had wished for since the accident. Her optimism came back full force as she vowed that she would walk again, no matter how long it took.

They upped Kara's physical therapy sessions to three days a week, making real progress with Kara's muscle strength and the sensation in her legs. Every morning Lena took her to the pool, easing the pressure on Kara's joints as Lena held her afloat.

It was another month before Kara wiggled her toes for the first time.

It was early on a Sunday morning, and Lena was helping her get dressed. As she grabbed Kara's foot to put her sock on for her, her finger touched the bottom of Kara's big toe. It just so happened that Kara was ticklish, and her big toe twitched in response to Lena's touch.

"Oh my God!" Lena gasped, smiling up at Kara from where she was crouched in front of her, "you just moved your toe!"

"What?! No way!" Kara exclaimed, pushing herself up onto her elbows from where she lay on the bed. She could make out her feet in Lena's lap, one hand gripping her heel as the other held the forgotten sock.

"Can you do it again?" Lena asked, staring at Kara's feet in amazement.

Frowning in concentration, Kara willed her toes to move. Ever so slightly, she managed to wiggle two of them on her right foot.

"You did it!" Lena clapped in excitement, rising from her crouch to lean forward and give Kara a kiss.

“You’ll have to show everyone tonight!” Lena smiled, her face filled with joy. She was so happy she felt like she could burst, Kara was really getting better

---

They were at Winn’s favourite pizza place that night, crowded around a table as they devoured three giant pizzas between the five of them.

“Hey, do you guys want to see something cool?” Kara asked, buzzing with excitement as she looked around at their faces. Lena gave her a knowing smile, filled with her own happiness.

“What is it?” Maggie asked, taking a bite out of her slice of pizza.

“Can you help me a second?” Kara asked Lena, gesturing at her feet.

Lena gently unlaced Kara’s shoe and took her sock off.

“Hey we don’t need to smell your feet at the table,” Alex complained, wrinkling her nose as Lena straightened Kara’s leg out, holding her foot in her lap.

“Just watch,” Kara commanded, smiling as she scrunched her face up in concentration.

Everyone stared in puzzlement, and Alex took a sip of her drink as she waited for Kara to say or do something.

“What are we- OH MY GOD!” Winn yelled, drawing the attention of everyone in the restaurant as he pointed at Kara’s foot. Alex choked on her drink, shooting out of her seat to

give Kara a big hug.

“This is fantastic!” Alex laughed, kissing Kara on the cheek, “you have to tell mom!”

“Way to go little Danvers,” Maggie congratulated her, raising her glass to her as she flashed her dimples.

---

By the end of the next month, the leaves had started to fall, painting the city a thousand shades of orange and red as leaves blew down the street and collected in puddles in the road.

Kara could stand.

Not without support, but it was standing all the same. They were at her physical therapy session and Kara was grasping the bars of the railing either side of her as she used her upper body strength to keep herself from crumpling to the floor. Lena stood in front of her, her arms outstretched, ready to help Kara back into her wheelchair when she got tired.

She had made a lot of progress over the past seven weeks. It was like her paralysis had been slowly creeping away without her realising, and bolted at the last minute. All of a sudden Kara could feel everything. She couldn't walk yet, her body still orienting itself around its newfound ability to move again.

“You're doing great,” Lena murmured in support, watching as Kara let her legs take some more of her body weight. They shook slightly under the pressure, and Kara grimaced as she strained herself.

“Okay, that's good,” Lena said, helping Kara back into her wheelchair, “don't push yourself too hard though.”



Kara sighed, “I know, I’m just getting impatient, it’s been so long.”

Lena bent down, giving her a quick kiss, “and you’re doing amazing, I’m so proud of you.”

Kara smiled up at her, basking in her praise. Lena’s words were true though. Kara had been working hard to get back up on her own two feet, she’d made great progress, and she was glad she had Lena to remind her not to push herself too far.

“How go to that new Thai restaurant you’ve been wanting to go to as a reward for all your hard work,” Lena said, raising her eyebrows suggestively.

“Sounds perfect,” Kara smiled, taking one of Lena’s hands and pressing a kiss to the back of it.

---

It was Lena’s birthday again. This time it wasn’t a secret, Kara had told Lena she was planning a surprise for her, and she had to play along. Lena agreed, somewhat reluctantly, but trusting Kara not to do something that Lena wouldn’t like.

The morning of her birthday, Kara woke her up with breakfast in bed. She’d snuck out of bed as quietly as she could, making sure not to make too much noise as she dragged herself into the wheelchair. Making breakfast had been difficult, but she’d managed it and wheeled herself into their bedroom with a proud look on her face. She’d tied a huge bunch of balloons to the handle of her chair, and carried a giant bouquet of plumerias in with the food.

“HAPPY BIRTHDAY!” Kara yelled as loud as she could, startling Lena from her sleep. She looked shocked, a hand pressed to her heart.

“Jesus Christ Kara, you scared the shit out of me,” Lena laughed, brushing her hair out of her face. Her shoulders dropped and her face softened as she looked at the tray Kara was holding. She thanked Kara as she accepted the flowers, pressing her nose into them as she smiled.

“How did- never mind,” Lena laughed, taking the tray off her and setting it on her lap.

“It looks great, thank you,” Lena smiled, as Kara wheeled herself around to the other side of the bed and pushed herself forward, flopping onto the bed and wriggling until she rearranged herself.

“And now, I believe this is the part where I feed your breakfast to you whilst naked,” Kara said, wiggling her eyebrows at Lena, who laughed as Kara speared a strawberry and offered it to Lena. She chewed it quickly, smiling as she leant forward to kiss Kara.

“Oh, right, gift time!” Kara beamed, rolling herself to the edge of the bed and awkwardly sitting herself in her wheelchair. She was only gone for a moment, before she returned with a large wrapped box balanced across her knees, and a smaller one on top.

“For you,” Kara smiled, placing the box on Lena’s lap.

Lena smiled widely, ripping open the wrapping paper to expose the picture of a telescope on the side of the box.

“I know it’s not a big fancy one, and you could probably build a better one yourself, but I know how much you love space,” Kara babbled, looking at Lena with a hopeful expression on her face, waiting to see if Lena liked it.

“Thank you,” Lena beamed, hugging the box to her chest, “I love it, I love you. Come and give me a kiss.” She held one of her arms out towards Kara, and Kara leant forward as much as she could, grasping the back of Lena’s neck as she pulled her closer to kiss her. She tasted like strawberries.

“There’s also this one,” Kara said after she pulled back, handing over the smaller gift.

Lena tore the paper open, laughing as she took in the NASA logo on the grey t-shirt. “This is perfect,” Lena said, her eyes sparkling as she held the t-shirt up. Two tickets fell out of the shirt as it unfolded, dropping into Lena’s lap.

“Oh,” she exclaimed softly, setting the t-shirt down so she could read the tickets. Her face split into a wide smile and she quickly whipped her head up to meet Kara’s gaze.

“No way! This is the best present anyone has ever gotten me,” Lena choked out, her eyes shining with tears, “thank you, Kara.”

Kara’s eyes crinkled at the corners as she smiled at Lena, gently stroking Lena’s cheekbone as she cupped her chin. She’d bought her tickets to the NASA centre for tonight. A surprise meal for both of them after a private after hours tour around the complex. Of course, it was open to the public during the day anyway, but Kara may have used Alex’s FBI connections and dropped Lena’s name to get them their own special evening.

“There’s another gift for you too, but you’ll have to wait until tonight for that one,” Kara told her, gently kissing her again.

---

Lena insisted on going into the office for the morning, and Kara insisted that she would be fine home alone. She ended up going in for an extra physical therapy session with Alex instead, enjoying their time together as Alex helped Kara with her session. Usually she was at work, so she rarely came, but Kara liked it when she could come.

Alex came back to Lena’s apartment with her after the session was over. Lena came home at lunch time, just like she had promised Kara, and found Alex, Maggie and Winn there with gifts and cards. Lena was embarrassed by all the attention but appreciated the love she felt from all of them. Even Eliza had passed a gift along to Alex to give to her.

Kara wheeled herself over to the fridge whilst Lena was distracted opening her presents. She slipped the cake out and poked some candles in it, lighting them as quietly as she could. As she wheeled herself back over to everyone, Lena looked up seeing her holding the cake.

As the four of them sang her happy birthday, Lena buried her face in her hands, turning red. She laughed as she blew the candles out, making a wish at Kara's insistence. Maggie helped cut the cake into slices, dishing it out to everyone.

They left not long after finishing the cake, leaving Kara and Lena to get ready for their birthday celebrations.

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Inside the NASA building, Lena pushed Kara around the complex, softly exclaiming or gasping at things that caught her attention. She explained the mechanics behind some of the machines to Kara as the tour guide led them around.

They ended their tour in the observatory. The glass roof gave them a brilliant view of the clear sky, even if the stars weren't as brilliant due to the city lights. A table for two was set in the middle of the room, and the personal sushi chef that Kara had hired stood next to the table.

Lena wheeled Kara into place behind the table, before sitting herself down. Kara poured them both a glass of wine, and held it up to toast Lena.

"Happy birthday, Lena. I- there are no words to describe how much you mean to me," Kara whispered, smiling as she gently clinked her glass against Lena's, "I love you more than you will ever know."

Lena smiled, "believe me, I know."

She gestured to the wheelchair and Kara let out a small laugh. Lena had a point there, but still, Kara didn't feel like that was enough to express how much she loved Lena. She was so grateful to have had her with her over the past eight months, even if it had been hard for them both. Kara couldn't imagine her life without her. Even now, their meal for two under the stars served as a reminder of the gift Kara had bought Lena for her last birthday, which they had never gotten around to using.

They ate their meal as they talked, soft music playing in the background. The personal sushi chef was the same chef from Lena's favourite sushi restaurant, and she loved every bite of the food. She thanked Kara again. She didn't think the night could get any better.

"I think it's time for your last surprise," Kara smiled, her eyes lighting up with excitement.

"Oh, okay," Lena said, setting down her glass of wine as she patiently waited for Kara to tell her what it was or give it to her.

Taking a deep breath, Kara wheeled herself backwards. She wheeled herself over to Lena, taking her hand and leading her to the open space next to the table. Wheeling herself backwards away from Lena, Kara stopped her wheelchair. With a deep breath, she braced herself on the arms of the wheelchair, slowly pushing herself up. She stood shakily on her own two feet, nothing to hold on to for support.

She smiled at Lena, who smiled back at her, one hand slightly extended, ready to dart forward and catch her just in case Kara started to fall.

Slowly but surely, Kara took her first wobbly step in eight months, and another, and another until she fell into Lena's waiting arms. She could feel Lena shaking with silent sobs, and maybe laughter, as they clutched on to each other tightly. Lena pulled back, her eyes wet with tears as she looked at Kara, who gave her a tearful smile in return. She pressed a soft kiss to Lena's lips, putting as much love and happiness behind it as she could.

She could walk.

# Chapter 25

## Chapter Notes

Okay so I know I said this would be the last one, but I changed my mind bc there was a few filler things to add in before the epilogue.

So the next chapter is the last, like for reals this time

Kara recovered in leaps and bounds. Each week she grew stronger and more confident about her ability to walk. The transformation was amazing to see, and Lena had to choke back tears every time Kara took another step, slowly growing stronger and more surefooted after months of sat in a wheelchair.

Lena and Alex alternated taking Kara to her physiotherapy sessions, both of them watching Kara walk, first grasping onto the railings and then without them, with proud looks on their faces. It was a long time coming, but she slowly got her footing. There were days where she had a few mishaps and trip over her own feet, laughing as she crashed onto the floor. Then she'd get back up, determined to stay upright. Slowly but surely, she learned to walk again.

Winter came again. The freezing cold and howling winds weren't enough to dampen Kara's high spirits, especially with Christmas just around the corner. Especially on this particular Thursday morning when she got out of her wheelchair for the last time, a huge smile on her face as she put it away.

"I can't believe it, I'm free!" Kara laughed, pulling Lena towards her as her face crinkled. Lena laughed with her, letting Kara squeeze her in a tight hug. She pulled back slightly, kissing her quickly before her expression turned serious.

"I actually want to talk to you about something, now that you're officially up on your feet," Lena told her, a nervous look on her face as they sat down for breakfast.

Kara gave her a puzzled look, "what's wrong? You look worried."

Lena bit her lip, reaching into the pocket of her pyjamas as she took a sip of her coffee. Her hand came out, clenched around something small.

“I- I know I told you to stay here because I had an elevator and I could look after you more easily, and now that you don’t need the elevator anymore you can go back to your own apartment,” Lena babbled, “but you don’t have to, I mean, you could ju- you can move in? But only if you want to.” She held her hand out towards Kara, slowly opening her fingers to show her the little silver key nestled in the centre of her palm.

Lena looked at Kara with wide eyes and a little crease between her eyebrows, worried that Kara would want more space now. For Lena, it was the opposite, she didn’t want to go back to Kara having a drawer here and alternating between staying at each other’s apartments.

Kara smiled widely, letting out a choked up laugh, and Lena realised her eyes were full of tears. She stretched her hand forward, picking up the key. For the past few months she’d been taking the spare key whenever she’d gone out with someone other than Lena, putting it back as soon as she got home. Now, she had her own.

“I love you,” Kara whispered, half rising from her seat to lean forward and kiss Lena, tasting the bitter coffee on her lips.

“I guess I need to start packing,” Kara smiled, taking a bite out of her toast. Lena’s face split into a wide smile, filled with relief and love.

---

One half of Lena’s closet was cleared, making room for Kara’s clothes. Lena bought some bookshelves for her office, and soon the walls were lined with hundreds of Kara’s books. At night, after they had both finished work, Lena would sit behind her desk, finishing off some paperwork, and Kara would pull a book off the shelves and curl up in the armchair, reading until she managed to coax Lena away from her computer and into bed.

They would curl up next to each other, staring up at the ceiling, skin to skin as their breathing and heart rate slowed. Lena would wake up first in the mornings, getting Kara up with a coffee and promises of a shower together if she got up right now.

Work was great for both of them. Miss Grant left the library and Kara took over as head librarian, and Lena was able to leave behind her family's wrongdoings and business for L-Corp was better than ever. Sometimes they were so happy that they forgot about everything they had been through to get to where they were, and then they would appreciate their happiness even more.

They deserved to be happy.

---

That Christmas, they went to Midvale. Lena wore the dorky sweater she had planned to wear last year, and she was right, Kara thought it was hilarious and sweet of Lena to try and enjoy Christmas. This year she didn't have to try very hard though, surrounded by people who loved her and the love of her life.

"Okay who's ready for charades?" Maggie asked, clapping her hands together as she looked around the room.

"Me!" Maggie yelled, raising her arm, "you two are going down," she said, pointing to Kara and Lena who laughed.

"No cheating either, with sign language *or* talking now," Winn warned them both, pointing a finger at them.

It made no difference, they still won. Fair and square this time.

They spent the rest of the holidays playing board games and eating good food. Eliza and Lena spent a lot of time together. She would stand in the kitchen helping Eliza cook as



they gossiped and laughed, and Kara would join in or watch from the sides with a smile on her face.

Winn went back to National City after Christmas, pulled away by a promise he had made to his latest girlfriend about spending the new year with her parents. Everyone else stayed for the new year though, and Kara pulled Lena into a big kiss at the stroke of midnight, whispering happy new year to her as they smiled. This time there was no crying alone at home, this time there was only love and thankfulness at having each other by their side.

---

Before they headed back to National City after the holidays, they made another stop at the cemetery. They had come on Christmas Day, placing a wreath on Kara's parent's graves, and Lena held Kara as she cried, this time sobs that wracked her entire body, instead of the silent ones there had been last time they were here. Kara had wanted to come again before they caught the train later on in the afternoon.

Today, they brought fresh flowers, replacing the wreath. It wasn't as hard for Kara this time, just a few tears that froze on her face in the cold. Lena held her hand tightly, comforting her as best as she could through that small gesture.

Before they left, Lena bent down and whispered something.

On their way back to the house they took a shortcut through a field, hugging the trees as they walked along the edge. They were walking over the mud and icy ground, holding hands as they tried not to slip, when they heard a sound.

"Did you hear that?" Kara asked, looking down at Lena.

"Yeah, it sounded like something crying," Lena frowned, looking around for the source of the sound.

They heard it again. And again.

Eventually they found it in the form of a little baby fox, freezing cold and curled up next to the dead body of it's mother as it cried.

"Oh Lena, look at it," Kara cried, catching it easily as it was too cold and weak to move very fast.

"Can we keep it?" Kara asked, looking at Lena with hopeful eyes.

Lena laughed, thinking about the story Kara had told her about how she and Alex would spend hours looking for foxes so Kara could keep one as a pet. "I guess you never got over your fantasy of having a pet fox, huh?" Lena asked, teasing Kara.

Kara rolled her eyes, "they're cute!" she protested, tucking the fox deep inside her coat to keep it warm.

Lena sighed dramatically, rolled her eyes at Kara. How could she deny her anything? She'd have them living like Snow White if Lena let her, which was part of the reason why she hadn't taken Kara to the pound yet. Knowing her she'd adopt half of the animals.

"Go on then," she smiled, "what are you going to call it?"

Kara thought for a second. "It just wouldn't feel right if I didn't name it Todd, I mean, that's where my obsession started," Kara smiled, looking down the front of her coat to peer at the baby fox.

"Todd," Lena laughed to herself, "Christ, just imagine how bad our kid's names will be." She said it without thinking, and wanted to kick herself as soon as she realised.

Kara stopped walking, tugging Lena back as she tried to carry on walking. Lena winced as she looked at Kara, shrugging apologetically.

“Kids?” Kara asked, tilting her head to the side as she looked at Lena.

“Sorry, that wasn’t supposed to come out,” Lena wrinkled her nose, looking at Kara, whose eyes softened as she reached up to brush a stray lock of hair out of Lena’s face.

“So how many are we having?” Kara asked, smiling at Lena.

Lena blushed bright red, sighing as she closed her eyes. “I didn’t mean that we were *actually* going to have kids,” she muttered, looking down at her feet, still feeling embarrassed. She didn't like Kara making fun of her.

“Well I would definitely like one of each, but I’d also like sisters, close in age like Alex and I, you know?” Kara smiled at Lena, who looked up quickly, smiling as Kara talked.

Kara wasn't making fun of her, she had plans for her future.

Their future.

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Later that afternoon Eliza dropped the four of them off at the train station, giving them all a hug and a kiss goodbye. Kara carried a small pet cage with Todd tucked safely inside with food and water and a warm blanket. They’d taken him to see a vet after they found him, and the vet had approved of their plan to keep him, knowing that it would be likely that the fox would be shot as a pest if released back into the wild.

“Stay safe, and please, please, *please* stay out of trouble,” Eliza begged them, looking at each of them in turn before rounding on Kara, “especially you.”

Kara rolled her eyes, kissing her mom on the cheek and an extra tight hug, “I can’t make any promises, but I’ll try my hardest.”

“Don’t worry Eliza, I’ll keep her out of trouble,” Lena smiled, opening her arms to Eliza’s hug.

Kara smiled as she watched Eliza embrace Lena, whispering something to her as Lena smiled and nodded. Kara loved to watch Lena with her family, it filled her with so much happiness she thought she would explode. Her whole life had fallen into place. This was everything she had ever wanted.

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They walked into their first therapy session of the new year, smiling at Megan as they both sat down next to each other on the sofa. By the end of the session they were out of things to discuss, sitting next to each other in a relaxed manner.

“You’ve both made a lot of progress, I’m proud of you both,” Megan smiled at them.

Kara squeezed Lena’s hand, smiling down at her.

“I think we’re done here in terms of how much I can help you,” Megan told them, sitting back in her chair.

“That’s it?” Lena asked, her eyebrows shooting up in surprise.

“Well you can come back as often as you like, regular therapy is good, but you’ve both overcome your struggles and I believe that you don’t need my help with the problems you originally brought to me,” Megan told them, a small smile on her face at having been able to help guide them to this point.

Over the past few months they had gotten used to therapy, enjoying the openness it had brought to their relationship, and appreciating how close they had become because of it.

There were no secrets between, except maybe one.

# Chapter 26

## Chapter Notes

The last chapter is finally here :(

I might have actually teared up a little bit writing this one, but I hope you all like it and I hope it does the story justice.

I just want to say thank you to everyone who has read this, and to Lena's dramatic hoes for encouraging me. I probably wouldn't have made it past the first chapter without all of your nice comments and kudos.

It was the middle of summer, two years to the day that Lena first saw Kara.

Not the first day they met, but the first time Lena had walked into the library and saw Kara stacking books between the shelves. Kara didn't know the significance of this day; she was oblivious as she sang loudly along with the radio as she drove.

Surprisingly she was a good singer, and Lena smiled as she watched her behind the wheel. A few months ago Kara had got her license, finally overcoming the final barrier in her fear of cars.

The sun beat down on them as they left the city behind them. It was the middle of the day, and they had a long way to go.

"You're staring again," Kara stated, turning to face Lena. Her glasses covered her eyes but Lena knew they would be crinkling at the corners.

"I like staring at you," Lena told her, lifting one of Kara's hands off the steering wheel and placing a kiss to the back of it. Kara rolled her eyes, smiling widely as she concentrated on the road.

“So when are you going to tell me where we’re going?” Kara asked, raising an eyebrow and turning her head slightly in Lena’s direction.

“I’ll tell you when we get there,” Lena smirked, taking in Kara’s frustrated expression.

It was a surprise, something she had planned for Kara because she knew she would enjoy it, even if Lena wouldn’t.

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It took them hours.

They drove through the desert, basking in the warmth of the sun as they chatted and Lena listened to Kara sing whenever a song she liked came on.

Everything was right in the world, and neither of them wanted to be anywhere else. It was hard to imagine that two years ago, Lena was scared of getting attached, of loving someone, and Kara couldn’t talk and hadn’t been able to overcome the trauma of her childhood. It seemed as if Lena had been made to love Kara, to shower her with love and affection, and these days Kara would talk nonstop, filling every silence with her bubbly chatter. Lena could hardly remember a life without Kara’s voice in it.

By the time they got there Lena suspected that she was three shades whiter, already dreading her decision. She was so scared, and maybe a little bit nervous as they pulled over where Lena indicated. They got out, stretching their legs after sat in the car for so long.

“Now what?” Kara asked, gazing around at the featureless landscape. There were some gigantic rocks a hundred yards away, and a lot of sand, but besides that there was nothing.

“This way,” Lena said, holding her hand out for Kara to take.

The sun shone brightly on the horizon as Lena led them towards the rocks; sunset was almost at hand. Out here it would be spectacular, nothing to interrupt the sight. None of the big city lights to hide the stars once night had fallen.

The rocks grew larger the closer they got, and with each step Lena grew more nervous. She grasped tightly at Kara's hand, seeking comfort and reassurance. Kara would never let anything bad happen to her.

Up close the rocks were easily a hundred feet tall, casting giant shadows, which the welcomed after the blistering heat of the sun. Still, Lena led them forwards, bringing them out the other side of the rocks.

Kara shaded her eyes against the sun, letting out a surprised gasp as she took in the view. A dozen yards away a man stood next to a half inflated hot air balloon, the source of Lena's fear and anxiety.

"No way!" Kara squealed, throwing her arms around Lena, who laughed as she hugged her back.

"Oh my God, I can't believe we're going in a hot air balloon," Kara laughed, bouncing with excitement, as she beamed at Lena.

"Only for you would I do this," Lena smiled, feeling warm inside from Kara's excitement. Right now she was glad she had thought of this, but in a few minutes she was sure she'd be regretting it.

They walked over to the man, who waved as they got closer.

"Miss Luthor?" he asked, shaking hands with Lena and then Kara. "Nice to meet you both. It should be ready in a few minutes."



Lena nodded, and they both listened as he explained how to work it. Kara's excitement was palpable, she kept shooting Lena smiles as they listened. Meanwhile, Lena grew more tense, a knot of fear settling in her stomach.

---

Ten minutes later the balloon was fully inflated, straining against the ropes as it tried to float away. The owner led Kara and Lena over to the basket, helping Kara in. Lena took a deep breath, steadying herself, before accepting help into the basket.

"Alright then, if you need any help just radio down, if it's an emergency use the flags," the man informed them, loosening one of the ropes.

One by one, he undid them all, and Kara enthusiastically opened the gas valve at his command, filling the balloon up. It gently rose off the ground, and Lena squeezed her eyes shut holding on tightly to the ropes. She listened to Kara's gasps of wonder and excited comments as they rose higher and higher.

She felt gentle fingers on her face as Kara caressed her cheekbones and jawline.

"Lena, open your eyes," she whispered, leaning in close to press her warm lips against Lena's.

Slowly, Lena opened her eyes, staring straight into Kara's blue ones. They were crinkled slightly at the corners, filled with a spark of excitement and love. Lena let out a shaky breath as she turned away from Kara's stare, looking out at the view.

Her stomach dropped, all the air leaving her lungs as she saw how high they were. The wind whipped her hair around her face and her knuckles turned white as she tightened her grip on the edge of the basket.

It was beautiful.

She had planned it perfectly so that the sun would start setting once they got into the sky. They could see for miles in each direction, a barren landscape except for their tiny car on the side of the road and the massive rocks below them. On the horizon, the sun started sinking lower, painting the sky a thousand colours in its wake.

“It’s beautiful,” Lena let out a shaky laugh, her nerves getting the better of her. She could feel the lump of fear in her throat as she stared out at the landscape, as the basket gently shifted under her feet. Kara moved to stand behind her, resting her chin on Lena’s shoulder.

“Thank you for this,” Kara said, her hands encircling Lena’s waist to keep her grounded in reality. She wouldn’t let anything happen to her, even up here.

“I know how scared you must be feeling right now,” Kara smiled, raising one hand to pull Lena’s hair out of her face, placing a gentle kiss behind her ear.

Lena let out a breathless laugh, turning her head to smile weakly at Kara, “you don’t know the half of it, darling.”

“Well I love you more for doing this,” Kara smiled at her, “it’s incredible up here. I almost didn’t think you were going to get in the basket.”

Lena turned around in Kara’s arms, her hands holding onto the rim of the basket, baring her teeth in an anxious smile.

“You told me once that you wished you could fly, and well, I didn’t think skydiving would be quite as romantic,” Lena laughed nervously, her heart racing as she looked into Kara’s eyes.

How grateful she was for those beautiful eyes that she loved so much.

The sky was darkening, the first stars revealing themselves as sparkling dots against the inky blue sky.

“I’d follow you anywhere, even to the moon itself,” Lena admitted breathlessly, “and if you want to fly I’ll try my best to make it happen, and if you want to touch the stars I’ll do that too.”

Kara smiled widely, her eyes full of love and adoration as she looked down at Lena. Letting go of the railing, Lena reached up and braced herself against Kara’s shoulder, gently but firmly pushing her backwards.

“I love you Kara, I really do, and I didn’t think it was possible for me to ever love anyone,” Lena laughed, her eyes filling up with tears. She could feel her heart pounding in her ears as Kara stared at her across the basket, her head tilted to the side as she gave Lena a confused smile.

There was a gap between them.

Enough space for Lena to kneel down, pulling out the little box that had been weighing down her pocket the entire drive here, and for the past two months as she had planned the perfect night.

Flipping open the little box, Lena took one of Kara’s hands in her own. She kissed the back of it, gripping it tightly as she looked up at Kara, before letting it go.

*‘Will you marry me?’*

Her hands were steady and sure as she signed the question, even as Lena fought back tears. For the first time since she had stepped foot into the basket, she wasn’t scared. There were no doubts or hesitations as Lena knelt there, offering up the ring nestled in the velvet folds of the box.

All the air seemed to rush out of Kara's lungs as she looked down at Lena. It was picture perfect; the sky fading from inky black and starlit down to a deep orange as the last rays of the sun disappeared over the horizon. The hot air balloon was lit up from within by the gas flame keeping it afloat. And Lena looked beautiful, bathed in the moonlight and warm, orange glow of the flame flickering above her.

A tear slid down Kara's face as she smiled widely at Lena.

"Yes," it came out as a sob, and she laughed, "yes!"

Lena let out the breath she didn't know she was holding, laughing in relief as she slipped the ring onto the fourth finger on Kara's left hand, placing a kiss on it.

Kara half pulled Lena up off her knees, enveloping her in a warm hug as she cried tears of happiness. She pulled back, noticing that Lena was also crying, and brought their lips together, putting all of her love behind it.

Pulling back, they both laughed, sniffing as they smiled and brushed away each other's tears. Kara gently brushed Lena's hair out of her face, and placed another soft kiss to Lena's lips as her hands cradled her face.

"I love you," Kara told Lena, her voice hitching as she tried to stop crying. She was just so happy, she had always thought she would be the one to propose, when Lena was ready. It meant more to her than Lena would ever know that she had learnt to let go of her past and let Kara love her. And for her, Lena had let her walls down and loved Kara unconditionally.

"I love you too," Lena whispered.

Together, they stood side by side, Kara's arm wrapped around Lena's waist as Lena leant her head on Kara's shoulder. The last bit of sunlight had disappeared over the horizon, leaving nothing but darkness pierced by dots of light and the hot air balloon floating in the sky.

The soft glow of the hot air balloon illuminated the figures of two people intertwined, the pale scars of a sacrifice, the letting go of a fear, the promise of tomorrow, and the ring on a finger.

All signs of their love.

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