

Supergirl Part 2 Chapter 3: Climbing The Learning Curve

Susan slowly awoke from the deepest, most restful sleep she could ever remember. Drifting quietly along that uncharted boundary that separates sleep from consciousness, she reflected on her incredible experiences of last few days. Aware of an unusual contentment and a deep seated feeling of incredible wellbeing that surpassed even her exuberance as a teenager, she began to consider the surprising depth of her feelings for the blonde lover whose presence beside her had become so central to her life, her very heart, in such a short time.

Sighing happily, she was about to roll over toward her new lover when she was shattered to full alertness by the sound of the telephone. She quickly jumped out of bed. "Oh Shit!," she yelled as she found herself describing a graceless cartwheel through the air, barely missing the light fitting, coming to a sudden halt where the ceiling met the wall and abruptly encountering the floor as gravity suddenly managed to re-exert its normal effect on her body.

Shaking her head she gingerly got to her feet and, keeping one hand against the wall, shuffled carefully out to answer the telephone's insistent summons.

"Wienczorkowski", she said, looking towards the clock on the wall. "0630" she thought as she recognised the voice of Inspector Maggie Sawyer, her superior officer in the Metropolis Special Crimes Unit.

"Susan," Maggie said. "Sorry to call so early. I felt I needed to check up on you after yesterday."

"Hey, no problem," replied Susan, warmed by the note of obvious concern in her superior's voice. "I feel great! But I do need to speak with you, privately and ASAP." She looked up at the bedroom door, where her now preternaturally acute hearing had picked up Kara's quiet movements, her green eyes encountering a thoroughly naked and charmingly tousled blonde vision. Kara nodded, smiling faintly.

"About what you told me yesterday?," enquired Maggie.

"Yes, and more," replied Susan quickly, relieved that her superior had called so early.

"Right," said Maggie, decisively. "Come over for breakfast. Can you make it by 7:30? Apartment 1409, 4501 Wiltshire?"

"Yes." said Susan. I need to bring a friend."

"Fine," said Maggie. "See you then."

Susan gently hung the phone up and gingerly got to her feet again, seeing the amused twinkle in Kara's eyes. With a wicked grin, Kara said "Do you always get out of bed so, uh, energetically?"

Susan placed her hands on her hips, trying to look stern but knowing her attempt was doomed to failure as a sheepish grin spread across her face. Kara gracefully floated into the air and over to Susan, gently placing her hands on her cheeks and pulling her into a lingering kiss.

"Lover, it looks like we've got some work to do," breathed Kara as she broke their kiss. "Let's get showered and dressed and go see your boss."

"You heard?," asked Susan, blushing as she realised what she had just said.

"Yep," grinned Kara as she caught Susan's hand and headed towards the bathroom.

Kara reached into the shower and turned on the hot water. She looked back at Susan, her blue eyes sparkling. She nodded, looking pleased. "You look even denser to my tachyonic vision now, than you did yesterday," she said. "And this morning's gymnastic display looked astonishingly close to flying to me," she added, grinning cheekily.

Susan looked back at Kara, her heart in her eyes. "I don't know how I could possibly, ever, thank you enough, Kara," she whispered, as she stepped up to her blonde lover and kissed her slowly, lingeringly.

Together the lovers stepped into the steaming shower. Their intense passions largely sated by the afternoon and night just passed, they were both content to just touch and be touched, caress and be caressed as they luxuriated under the hot water. A feeling of wonder passed through Susan's mind as she reflected on the incredible changes she was experiencing. She suddenly realised that before her miraculous 'enhancement' she could never have tolerated the shower as hot as it now was. Yet to her new senses it just felt comfortably warm.

o o o

Maggie answered the door quickly, flabbergasted to see Kara with Susan. She stepped back and let them in, quickly closing the door behind her visitors. "Supergirl!," she exclaimed. "This is a surprise."

"Please, call me Kara."

"Thanks, Kara. This puts a slightly different complexion on what Susan told me yesterday. I was starting to worry that she was losing it," Maggie admitted. "Sorry, Susan," she added.

"Don't worry about it. I was starting to wonder the same, myself, for a while there yesterday," replied Susan. "I'm sorry to intrude on you this early," she apologised.

"No apology necessary," said Maggie briskly. "My 'partner' is away for the week, visiting her folks. Come and eat."

The three women adjourned to Maggie's dining area where she quickly served up a simple but nourishing breakfast. As they ate, Susan filled Maggie in on the changes she had been experiencing, finishing with "Then this morning I bounded out of bed to answer the phone and found myself tumbling head over heels through the air and hitting the ceiling." Kara giggled.

Maggie smiled. "That would have been something to see," she said. "Do you have any real idea yet of the scope of your new abilities?"

"I don't even know how to control them properly, yet," admitted Susan.

"We need to take some time out to do some serious testing," contributed Kara. "As well as training."

"I can see that," said Maggie. "Well, as I said to you yesterday, Susan, you should take some time off. You're certainly due for a break. You've hardly taken any time off since you joined the force. Since Mike will be in hospital for a few days yet and won't really be fully fit for duty for several weeks, I'll announce that I've detached you for some special training."

Susan smiled her thanks. The women, having finished the meal, got up from the table.

"Something else I can't help noticing, Susan," said Maggie. "You are moving differently. I've never seen you move so smoothly and effortlessly before. Almost like a cat in some ways. And I'm positive that your bust is a couple of sizes larger."

Susan blushed. From anyone but Maggie, that would definitely have been a line.

"That goes with the rest of Susan's enhancement," contributed Kara. "My breasts actually function as energy stores. The more energy I accumulate in my body, the larger they get. As for the movement, that's part and parcel of enhanced strength."

"Don't worry about me spreading this around, either," said Maggie seriously as she quickly cleaned up. "We need to keep this under wraps. Susan, depending on how Kara's testing and training of you goes, you may need to consider resigning from the unit. I'll be very sorry to see you go, of course, but I think you will probably be acquiring some pretty heavy responsibilities along with your new powers, that won't fit in very well with a 'normal' job."

"Let's just play that by ear for the moment," suggested Kara as Maggie escorted her guests back to the door.

"Oh, by the way," Maggie added as an afterthought. "You remember what you said about a noise coming from Dan's car yesterday?" Susan nodded. Maggie continued, an amused expression on her face. "The engine blew up halfway back to the station. The mechanic said that it had run completely out of oil," she said as she closed the door on her early morning guests.

Susan's jaw dropped and she looked at Kara in amazement. Kara grinned back at her. "C'mon, lover. We've *definitely* got some work to do," she said.

o o o

Kara alighted in the isolated, lightly wooded valley, her red headed lover cradled in her arms. Susan reached up and wrapped her arms around Kara's neck, pulling her head down for a deep kiss. "Mmmm", murmured Kara, returning the kiss for a few moments. Then she reluctantly pulled back and deposited Susan's feet onto the ground. "I could keep doing that all day," she murmured happily, "But that's not what we came here for."

Susan released the blonde super girl with equal reluctance. "So could I, love," she murmured back.

Taking a deep breath, Kara began, "Okay, let's start with flying. I want you to cast your mind back to this morning when you jumped out of bed and started flying across the room." Susan nodded. "What were you feeling at the time?"

"Sheer astonishment," Susan replied promptly. The two women giggled together for a moment.

"What were your feelings just before?," asked Kara.

"I felt really warm, cosy. I was thinking about you, us, and I was about to turn over toward you. My breasts were tingling slightly, just as if I were getting slightly turned on. Then when the phone rang, I thought, got to get over there quickly before the noise wakes you. I sort of tensed my thigh muscles like I was going to leap out of bed and the room just seemed to fall away."

"Good. I'd like you to try and recapture those sensations now," instructed Kara, "but take it slowly and easily."

Susan did as Kara had requested. She cast her mind back to her morning reverie and felt her breasts start to tingle again. She closed her eyes to better concentrate on the feelings, then she lightly flexed her thighs. Feeling that something was suddenly different, she opened her eyes to find herself floating in mid-air, ten feet off the ground. She gasped and, suddenly afraid of falling, tensed her thighs harder. She screamed in sudden fear as she found herself soaring rapidly higher. She lost her balance then, windmilling her arms frantically and tensing her body in panic as she abruptly nosedived into a large boulder. The boulder disintegrated with a sharp "Craaak", fragments of granite flying in all directions. Susan staggered to her feet, swearing quietly to herself and spitting out fragments of grit and dust. She saw Kara rushing towards her, a concerned expression on her face. Susan held up her hands. "I'm okay," she said. She wiped the dust from her face and brushed herself off. "Damn it, I'm going to get this right. I want to be able to fly more than anything else."

She closed her eyes, reopening them moments later as she again became airborne. Returning to her previous height, she hovered unsteadily for a few moments. She started to lose her balance once more and suddenly shot off to one side, screaming again in panic as she found herself ploughing into the side of the nearby hill at great speed. Abruptly finding herself in intimate contact with Terra Firma again, and unhurt, her panic ebbed and she set about trying to extricate herself from under a few tons of soil. A couple of minutes later she realised that she had been frantically digging downwards. Reddening in embarrassment at her unthinking reaction, she remembered Kara's explanation of her super vision and recalled how she had somehow managed to zoom in on the shard of glass in the alley. Concentrating on regaining that strange vision, she abruptly found herself able to see through the hillside.

Looking around, she soon became aware of a strange distortion in her new vision. The distortion stopped and she realised that she was looking straight at Kara. She surmised that Kara had been looking at her with her own tachyonic vision and that somehow they had interfered with each other's view. Relieved that Kara was watching out for her and would help her if she needed it, she looked further around her until she found the shortest route back to the surface. Recapturing the tingly feeling in her breasts, she experimentally flexed her leg muscles and felt herself starting to slowly move through the soft soil. She experimented with clenching and releasing different muscles and soon found that she was able to turn around until she was pointing in the right direction.

Confident that she knew *where* she was going, she poured on the coals, flexing her powerful leg muscles. Moments later, she shot back into the air. Keeping a tight rein on her emotions, she gingerly continued her experimentation, rapidly achieving her balance and gaining a degree of control over her direction and speed. Euphoric now, she flew through the sky, doing barrel rolls and impossibly tight loops and even somersaulting in sheer exuberance. "Oh," she thought to herself. "This is wonderful. This is better than I ever thought it could possibly be." Eventually remembering her patient instructor, she scanned around herself, getting her bearings. Then she gracefully flipped around and accelerated back to the valley from which she had departed so precipitately.

Moments later, she flipped around again to land feet first and began to slow down. Realising she was coming in too fast, she flexed her thighs harder, then harder again. At the last moment she realised that she was still going too fast and it was now too late to correct. Flushing with sudden embarrassment, she felt herself impact feet first on the soft ground, coming to a halt moments later, hip deep in the earth. Kara stood ten feet away, a gently amused smile on her face.

Mortified by her graceless landing, Susan quickly extricated herself. Finally standing on the ground again, rather than in it, Susan looked down, ruefully observing the crater she had just made, then glanced down at her dusty, dirt streaked body. She blushed as she realised that her clothing had given up the battle some time earlier and she was standing there totally naked.

Kara floated over to her and gently took her in her arms. "That was *very* well done, love," she murmured reassuringly. "You picked it up astonishingly well. Now you just need to practice hard to build up the right reflexes."

Susan threw her arms around Kara's neck and kissed her passionately. Coming up for air, she said "Oh, Kara. It felt so wonderful. Thank you, love." Then she turned and regarded her fresh crater. Blushing again, she said, "You're right about me needing to practice though. I don't think the city would be very happy if I created potholes like that every time I came in for a landing. I see it can get rather hard on clothes as well."

Kara cracked up at that, doubling up in her mirth. "Sorry, love," she eventually burbled. "I shouldn't laugh at you. You really *did* do outstandingly well and I've been trying hard to restrain myself but you looked so funny."

Susan laughed then, as well. "I guess I did at that, love." The pert redhead and the Girl of Steel kissed again.

"Okay then," said Kara eventually. "You seem to be getting the grip of your tachyonic vision quite nicely, too."

"I meant to ask you about that," admitted Susan. "When I buried myself before, I noticed my vision distorting weirdly when I first looked at you. Was that because you were using your tachyon vision to check up on me?" Kara nodded, a pleased smile on her face. "I thought so," continued the redhead. "You know," she admitted, blushing slightly, "I thought to myself just after we met that if I had 'X-ray' vision I'd be checking out every woman I saw."

Kara winked at her lover. "You'll soon get tired of doing that," she grinned. "I only do it on special occasions, myself. Like after I met you." Susan blushed again. "After I'd flown off I looked back and checked you out pretty thoroughly."

"I wish I'd known," admitted Susan. "I felt so stupid there. I was worried that you might have thought I was making a pass at you and that I'd offended you."

"You mean, it wasn't a pass?," said Kara, faking a downcast expression for a moment, then winking.

Susan grinned back. "What's next, teacher?," she quipped irreverently.

"Well, we need to work on your strength, and especially your control of it," replied Kara. With that, she rummaged around in the backpack she'd brought and tossed a very brief pair of denim cut-offs and a loose teeshirt at Susan. "But first, get dressed. You are *very* distracting like that," she chuckled. As Susan quickly restored herself to an approximate semblance of decency, Kara rummaged again in her backpack, eventually producing several objects made of different materials. Selecting a short bar of brass, she passed it to Susan. "I want you to try and squash it," she instructed.

Wide eyed, Susan accepted the lump of brass, grasping it in her right hand. With a dubious expression on her face, she started to squeeze.

"As hard as you can," ordered Kara.

The muscles of the redhead's right arm and shoulder suddenly exploded into a mass of chiselled curves as she complied. She gasped in astonishment at the sight of her new musculature. "My God!," she exclaimed to herself. "I've suddenly got more curves than a pro bodybuilder."

Slowly, the bar of brass began to deform under her fingers. "Harder," she ordered herself. Reaching within, she marshalled her seldom-tapped reserves, doubling the force she was applying. She felt the heat starting to radiate from her arm as her muscles and tendons almost seemed to hum under the tension she was placing on them. The brass deformed further, heating up in the process. Susan stared disbelievingly as the brass began to actually melt, runnels of the molten yellow metal flowing sluggishly between her fingers. Then she felt herself beginning to get aroused, her pussy moistening and her nipples starting to tingle. "I don't believe this," she gasped, as her grip began to tighten even more, the molten brass now flowing like water. A stream of the molten metal splashed down along her leg and onto her foot. She looked down in amazement, expecting to feel intense pain from the contact but feeling nothing except a pleasant warmth.

"Okay," nodded Kara with a pleased expression on her face. "You can ease up now."

Susan released her grip, gazing down at the cooling metal in amazement. "My God," she gasped. "How much force is needed to do that?"

"Oh, a couple of hundred thousand pounds, probably," Kara tossed off. "Now try it again, only this time I want you to hold this tennis ball in your left hand while you're doing it."

Susan accepted the ball and exerted her grip on the deformed bar again. "BANG!" went the ball a few moments later, the sharp sound echoing through the valley like a gunshot. She looked down at the scrap of rubber in her left hand, her jaw dropping in surprise.

"See what I mean," said Kara. "Control! The object of this exercise is to improve your muscular control to the point where you can hold something really fragile in one hand while exerting tons of force with the other. Now, try it again," she instructed, offering her lover another tennis ball.

Her mouth still open in her amazement, Susan accepted the second ball. She tentatively squeezed it in her left hand, getting the feel of its resilience under her incredible new strength. Then she transferred it to her right hand, doing the same. Then she took up the brass lump, with her left hand this time and began to squeeze. Again her muscles pumped up enormously as she pitted her amazing new strength against the lump of mere brass. Keeping some attention on the tennis ball in her right hand, she progressively stepped up her effort, again watching the brass slowly deform, then gradually start to melt. It seemed even easier this time. Satisfied, she released her grip again. She looked at the undamaged tennis ball in her right hand then, grinning, tossed it high into the air, catching it moments later. "How was that?," she enquired.

Kara was impressed. Back when she had first arrived on Earth and had started coming to grips with her own newly acquired super-powers under the patient tutelage of her cousin, she had gone through a full gross of tennis balls before she'd mastered this particular exercise. Granted, she was significantly stronger than the beautiful redhead before her, but the difference was not really that great any more. Deciding that a challenge was in order, she reached into her backpack again, this time producing a fragile glass ornament about the same size as the tennis ball. Grinning at her redheaded lover, she handed it to her, saying "Here, try this then. I'm glad I thought to bring it. I didn't think we'd be needing any of these for a few days yet."

Susan immediately realised that she was being challenged by the lovely blonde. "Okay," she said uncertainly. "I'll try. I hope you brought a few more of these along though, love. I've got a feeling I'll be needing them." Gingerly holding the ornament in her right hand she again began to apply pressure to the brass. Concentrating intensely on the ornament, she discovered that by using her tachyonic vision she could easily see the changing stresses in the glass as she gently squeezed it. Reassured, she pumped up the muscles in her other arm and really started bearing down on the brass, at the same time smoothly controlling her grip on the ornament. With nearly all of her attention on the glass orb, she held it out at arms length to keep it well away from the heat of both the brass and her rapidly heating muscles.

To her amazement, she suddenly felt a squishing sensation in her left hand, as if she had been squeezing a tube of toothpaste, followed by a pair of dull thuds. Carefully releasing her grip on the ornament, she stared in amazement at her now empty left hand. She had squeezed all the way through the rod. Open mouthed, she looked up at her blonde lover and saw her own amazement mirrored in Kara's face.

Rapidly regaining her aplomb, she reached down and gathered the remaining fragments of the brass bar, grinned cheekily at Kara and asked "I hope you've got another lump of brass handy?," as she presented her with the remains. "This one is looking a bit the worse for wear."

The two women burst into laughter. Kara shook her head ruefully. "I certainly *didn't* think we'd need that, today! Lover, you are amazing," she admitted. "I'm not going to tell you how many tennis balls I went through before I got the hang of that exercise."

"I've always been stronger than average," Susan confessed, "even as a child. I was a bit of a tomboy and, back then, I preferred to play with the boys, believe it or not. We would sometimes challenge each other with a game very similar to that exercise. We used to call it 'Clay and Eggs'. I *always* won," she finished smugly. "I even tried it a few times, by myself, with soap bubbles instead of eggs. That was *really* hard. What's next, teacher", she continued, winking cheekily. "Same exercise but running, jumping and flying?"

Kara's face coloured slightly. "Er, if you want to, love. I never got that good at it," she admitted. "I was too impatient and probably, truth be known, too old to develop that level of muscular control. I'd love to see you take Kal on with that exercise though. I don't think even *he* is that good."

Now it was Susan's turn to blush. "I'm having trouble believing this, love, that I, a mere earthling, could be better at something than you."

Kara stepped forward and kissed her lover. "Why?," she asked gently. "Everybody has their own areas of special skill. You just happen to have unbelievably good muscular control. Why be embarrassed about it? If I'd played a game like that as a child, I'd probably be just as good. And you, my love, are most certainly *not* a 'mere' anything."

o o o

Susan flicked on the lights as she and Kara walked into the empty Metropolis Police pistol range, locking the door behind themselves. Inspector Maggie Sawyer had organised access to the facility for them and had assured them that they would have the place to themselves. Both women were laden with firearms of various shapes and sizes. Susan looked at her lover, an uncertain expression on her face. "Are you sure I'm ready for this?," she faltered.

"Relax," instructed Kara. "Check it out for yourself. You are almost as opaque to tachyonic vision now as either Kal or myself. That means you should be almost as invulnerable as us now, too. Besides which, you've already stopped one bullet without harm," she reminded.

"Yeah, sure," snapped Susan. "It stung like crazy and knocked me out for at least fifteen minutes, too," she said, her uncertainty reflecting in her voice.

Kara deposited her load of armament onto a convenient bench and relieved Susan of her load. She took her lover into her arms and hugged her reassuringly. "Love, you're far more opaque to tachyons now than you were back then," she murmured. "Sooner or later you're going to get shot at. It's far better for you to become accustomed to the experience now, in a controlled situation, than to have to play it by ear later."

Susan sighed in resignation. She nodded. "You're right, love. I know you are. But I've got thirty years of experience at being vulnerable behind me and only a couple of days of being invulnerable. All of my training and reflexes scream for me to duck in a firefight. It's going to take a while for me to get over that. Oh well," she shrugged. "Might as well get it over with, I guess." She quickly stripped, neatly folding her clothes alongside the pile of firearms. She walked to the far end of the range, turned around, took a quick breath. "Okay, I'm ready, I guess."

Kara selected a .38 police special, checked it quickly, released the safety and pointed it at the naked body of her red-haired lover. Six sharp explosions echoed out as Susan's reflexes took over and she dived for the floor. Six bullets ricocheted from various parts of her body and continued to bounce around the room until they were spent. Susan got to her feet, a sheepish expression on her face. "I'm sorry," she said. "I warned you about my reflexes. But I hardly felt the impacts. It was more of a tingle than anything else."

Kara giggled. "Okay, try and hold still this time," she requested as she picked up a .45 magnum. Susan braced herself as Kara sighted down the barrel at her and pulled the trigger. Six more, much louder, explosions quickly rang out through the range. This time, Susan managed to hold her ground as the six bullets impacted on her shapely breasts, each deeply deforming the soft, feminine flesh until, momentum totally absorbed, they popped back out to land at her feet.

Susan giggled. "Oooh," she exclaimed. "That tickled."

Kara grinned at her, then, selecting a sub-machinegun, she set it to full automatic. She pointed it at Susan and, pressing the trigger, began to hose her down with a hail of copper jacketed lead. This time Susan was thrown backwards by the continuing impacts, yelping in surprise as she wound up flat on her back. Kara continued to fire. With an impish grin she directed the hail of bullets at her lover's pussy, smiling broadly as she heard gasps of intense arousal followed quickly by screams of ecstasy. Moments later, the magazine empty, Kara started laughing as the cries of ecstasy continued. The stimulation of the bullets having stopped, Susan had continued to manipulate her pussy and clit, rapidly attaining a screeching climax. Eventually, Susan stood, blushing slightly. A fleeting expression of annoyance crossed her face and she reached down to spread her nether lips and love channel. Several dozen mangled bullets slid out and fell to the floor. "You stopped too goddamn soon," she accused her laughing companion.

"Sorry," laughed Kara. "I ran out of ammunition." She laid the gun down and gracefully flying down the long room to Susan, took her in her arms and kissed her deeply. Susan returned the kiss, with interest. "Still worried about guns and bullets?," Kara enquired archly as she broke the kiss. Susan tried to retain a stern expression but gave up and let her smile break across her face.

"I guess not," she admitted finally.

"C'mon," said Kara. "Get dressed and we'll return the ironmongery."

o o o

The two women returned to their isolated valley, laden this time with a large assortment of steel bars and tubes, ranging from half an inch to four inches in diameter and in grades from mild to the very hardest of tempered tool steel.

Kara selected a thin rod, handing it to her lover and saying, "Try bending this, love."

Susan accepted the rod, gripped it with both hands and started to bear down, her muscles pumping up slightly as she did so. Rust and scale flaked from the rod as she easily bent it into a 'U'. She straightened it out again and, holding one end firmly in her hand, proceeded to wind it around her arm. She giggled as she unflexed her arm and allowed the coil of steel to drop to the ground. "Next please," she said smugly.

Smirking slightly, Kara handed her another, identical seeming rod. Susan noted the smirk, wondering to herself what trick her lover was playing on her this time. She gripped the rod firmly and applied pressure gradually. "Hmmm. This rod is a lot harder than the first," she mused. "Okay, you sucker, yield." She turned up the wick and her muscles exploded out as the steel began to screech in protest, slowly bending. Then, with a loud "Snap", the bar shattered, ragged pieces of steel flying around and ricocheting from the surrounding rocks.

An hour or so later, surrounded by a miscellaneous collection of warped and twisted steel, Susan raised her eyebrows at her patient instructor. "What's next, love," she said.

Kara sashayed over, an innocent expression on her beautiful face. "What a wonderful collection of steel pretzels," she remarked. "They must be good for something." She paused reflectively. "I know," she said. "Let's try out your heat vision."

Susan looked blankly at her lover. "How do I do that?," she asked, puzzled.

"It's quite simple," began Kara. She picked up two pieces of steel and held them together, peering intently at their junction. The steel rapidly heated to incandescence, flowing like water to form a perfect weld. Susan's jaw dropped at the incredible sight. "You don't have to strain or force anything to make it to happen," she continued. "All it takes is good concentration and imagination."

Susan's puzzlement had not abated in the slightest. "Kara, love, that is as clear to me as a bucket of mud." She reddened slightly, remembering her incredible new powers of vision. "Make that a bucket of lead," she amended. "I don't even know if I'm able to project heat yet."

"I'm certain you can," replied Kara. "After all, you're very good with tachyonic vision already. Here, hold this piece and concentrate on the very end of it."

Confused, Susan accepted the mangled bar and began to concentrate on its end with her tachyonic vision.

"Now," continued Kara, "Imagine that it's getting very hot and starting to melt."

Susan did so. Her vision suddenly became tinted with a violet colouration and she felt copious amounts of energy flowing out of her eyes, almost seeming to be drawn out into the bar as it abruptly flashed into incandescence, sending sparks flying in all directions. She screamed her surprise, her concentration totally disrupted as she snapped her eyes shut and dropped the bar.

"Hey! Careful, love," admonished Kara. "That's a good way to burn out eyelids."

Susan cautiously opened her eyes, peering embarrassedly at the younger woman. "Wha... What happened?," she managed.

Kara smiled. "I think you put a little too much effort into it," she said gently. "No strain or force, remember. Just concentrate and use your imagination to see the bar as you want it to be."

Susan swallowed. "I thought that's what I was doing," she said. "But then everything became tinged with violet and I didn't know what was happening, then there were all those sparks flying everywhere." She gulped again. "It scared me. I'm sorry."

Kara embraced the statuesque redhead and smiled reassuringly. "Well, if nothing else, you now know you *can* do it, love. Now you need to practice until you can do it instinctively, without effort."

Susan suddenly began to sob. Tears flowing freely, she sank to her knees and buried her face in her hands. Aghast at her lover's reaction, Kara knelt and put her hands on her shoulders, gripping them firmly and reassuringly.

"Oh, Kara," she wailed despairingly. "It's all too much. This started out being such a glorious adventure for me, learning to fly and all, but I'm just totally overwhelmed now. So much has happened to me so quickly and there's so much to remember and to practice and no time to get used to anything." The redhead continued to sob wildly as Kara gathered her into her arms, offering what comfort and solace she could, as Susan fought for, and gradually regained, control of her emotions. Finally, wet faced and embarrassed, she looked up and smiled waveringly. "I'm sorry," she said huskily. She took several deep, slow breaths. "I haven't broken down like that since I was a little kid," she admitted falteringly. "After that little outburst you must be regretting ever having set eyes on me."

Kara placed her hands gently on each side of the redhead's wet cheeks and leaned over to kiss her. "Nonsense," she chided gently. "I love you, you silly chook. What sort of a relationship would we have if we couldn't let our hair down and our inner feelings show to each other. If either of us should be apologising, it should be me for pushing you so fast and so hard to master your new powers." She laughed uncertainly. "I guess it's been too damned long s-s-s..." She stopped, appalled, as she felt her own tears start to flow, as her own sobs began to overwhelm her, as the floodgates started to crack open on her own long-repressed aloneness and loss.

Susan watched, stunned, as the beautiful blonde super girl's eyes filled and overflowed, as her sobs began, as the lovely face before her crumpled into a heart-rending expression of despair, as she gave herself over to soul-searing sobs of impossible grief and unbearable loss.

She suddenly knew, with utter certainty, that Kara was crying not just for herself and her lost family and lost love but was grieving for her whole race, an entire race with no known survivors save herself and her cousin. Her grief and loss for which, until now, she had kept so sternly repressed, that had had no possible outlet. Just as she herself had been comforted minutes before, but with a depth of care and compassion which she had never before experienced, Susan gently embraced and began to provide such comfort as she could to the hopelessly crying woman in her arms, who clung to her so desperately in her anguish.

Several times over the next hours, Susan felt Kara's torrent of heartbroken tears begin to slacken as the beautiful Kryptonian struggled unsuccessfully to regain control over her naked emotions, to repress again the anguish she had held within herself for so long, only to topple helplessly back into the depths of her despair, and her heart went out to this lonely representative of lost Krypton who had given her so very much.

Eventually the blonde girl's tears slackened and ceased as, utterly drained by her emotions, she drifted away on the blessed ocean of sleep. Susan gently, lovingly, gathered her into her arms and, with the utmost care, took to the darkening skies of Metropolis, flying gently back to her apartment, where she finally lay down on her bed, herself exhausted by the day and slowly went to sleep, her lover still cradled gently in her arms.

o o o

Kara slowly awoke, feeling utterly calm and at peace with the world, to a degree which she had not experienced since her childhood in the far-away, space-borne, but ultimately doomed Argo City. Becoming aware of the arms still lovingly holding her, she remembered the previous day's emotional outpourings and opened her eyes to gaze at the bright green eyes and slightly careworn face of her red-haired lover. Momentarily uncertain, she experienced an unexpected feeling of relief as Susan's face lit up with joyous welcome and leaned close to kiss her.

"Good morning, love," said Susan happily, her face clearing.

Reassured, Kara stretched deeply then hugged her lover, returning the kiss. "Susan," she said. "I love you." The two women fell into each other's eyes, then kissed deeply.

Eventually, the two women reluctantly broke their kiss. "And I love you," returned Susan.

"Thank you for yesterday," began Kara. "For being there for me. I'm sorry I overloaded like that. It's not something I normally do."

"Hush," replied Susan gently. "That had been building up in you for a long time. You needed to let it go." She grinned momentarily. "For that matter, I seem to remember someone else losing it a while earlier and someone who was there to help her then, too."

"You're right about one thing, love," murmured Kara. "I did need to let go. I feel purged, more at peace than I can remember being since I was a child. As far as someone else losing it goes, I can remember pushing that someone pretty hard and a lot faster than she was really willing or able to go."

"Be that as it may," returned Susan. "I feel much better after my little release of steam yesterday and a good night's sleep, too. If you feel up to it today, I'm ready to try again." She smiled coquettishly at her lover. "Or anything else you might happen to have in mind."

Kara burst out laughing. She reached for the redhead, pulling her close again and began a long, drawn out and very intimate kiss which rapidly led to a much more intimate and very enjoyable activity.

o o o