

Supergirl: Home - Ep. 7 - Family ties

by

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NOTE: the "present time" in this episode takes place with Supergirl at age 15.

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DANVERS' HOME - DAY

KAREN STARR talks on the phone with her mother. She looks happy.

KAREN

Hi, mom.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

Hi, Karen, how're you doing?

KAREN

Great, mom. Best vacation ever.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

Really? I'm so happy. So you're getting alone well with Linda?

KAREN

Sure, we're best friends. We hang around all the time. I'm doing my best to knock some of the dorkness out of her.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

Don't say that! Linda's a great girl.

KAREN

I'm just kidding, mom. Chill out.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

And how're you getting along with Linda's parents?

KAREN

Oh, Mr. F and Mrs. S are so cool. They treat me so well. I mean they always listen to me.

(mouths "hint")

They treat me like an adult and respect my decisions.

(mouths "hint hint")

I really love it here, mom. I'm glad you let me stay.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

And you're obeying them, right.

KAREN

(slightly upset)

Yes, mom. I obey them every time they give me an order, which hasn't happened yet, 'cos they're not bossy like some other people I know.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

(warningly)

Karen. Don't use that tone with me. Anyway, you remember to brush your teeth, don't you?

KAREN

(mildly angry)

Yes, mother, I brush my teeth three times a day. Though I'd like to meet the bacteria that can put a cavity in my teeth.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

It's not about that and you know it.

KAREN

(angry)

I know, it's about having clean-looking teeth and minty-fresh breath. Because if I don't, no one will ever ever love me.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

(upset)

Karen, I warn you. Don't take that tone with me.

KAREN

(very angry)

What tone mom? The tone that says "I'm not a drooling idiot so you should stop treating me like one"? Is that the tone you're talking about?

SYLVIA walks into the living room and looks at Karen.

MRS STARR (O.S.)

(very angry)

Yes, exactly that tone, young lady. And you better learn some respect in a hurry or else --

KAREN

(fuming mad)

Or else what, mom?! You're going to hit you with the belt?! You're going to lock me in my room and never let me out again?! What are you going to do to me, eh? What?!

MRS STARR (O.S.)

(very angry)

Bah, there's no point in talking to you when you act like this! You think you're such a grown up but you keep acting like a little baby!

KAREN

(flaming from the nostrils)

I don't know why I bother trying to talk to you! All you ever do is criticize me and make me feel like I'm an idiot! I'm an adult, get that! And someday I'm going to get really tired of you treating me like a baby, and then you'll see!

MRS STARR (O.S.)

Are you threatening me, Karen? Because if you are --

KAREN

Oh, go to hell!!

Karen angrily hangs up the phone.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Damn!

SYLVIA

Karen, please be careful with the phone.

Karen turns to Sylvia, still mad as hell.

KAREN

Why don't you mind your own goddamn business!

LINDA instantly appears out of nowhere and stands threateningly in front of Karen.

LINDA

Don't you ever talk to my mom like that!

Karen didn't hear Linda. The very second she finished talking, all the anger dropped out of her body. She stares at Sylvia with a mix of intense fear and regret in her eyes. When she speaks, it's in a monotonous, almost inaudible whine.

KAREN

I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry I
didn't mean to I'm sorry please
don't throw me out of your house
I'm sorry I didn't meant to I'm
sorry...

Linda's expression changes. She can't believe what she's seeing in Karen's eyes.

Sylvia takes a few steps forward and holds Karen by her shoulders reassuringly.

SYLVIA

Karen, don't worry.

KAREN

I'm sorry I'm sorry I didn't mean
to please don't throw me out...

SYLVIA

Karen, listen to me: this is your
house.

Tears cascade down Karen's cheeks.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

And no matter what you say or
what you do, it will ALWAYS be
your house, do you understand me?
My door will always be open for
you. That bed upstairs will
always be ready for you whenever
you need it.

Karen hugs Sylvia.

KAREN

Thank you thank you thank you...

SYLVIA

Don't worry, Karen. I know how
you feel. I never got along with
my own mother either. I know she
drives you crazy. But you're here
now. Think about that. And you
can stay with us for as long as
you need to.

Linda just stands there, slack-jawed, without a clue as to what is going on.

Sylvia motions Linda to come close. Linda approaches and hugs Karen and her mother.

LINDA

I'm sorry I yelled at you, Karen.

Karen turns to Linda, and glares at her.

KAREN

Don't be sorry, you knucklehead!
If you ever yell at her like I
did, I'll knock your teeth out!

Linda is taken aback by this reaction. She's even more clueless now.

Karen hugs Sylvia for another moment, then pulls back. She wipes the tears off her face.

KAREN (CONT'D)

(to Sylvia)

Thank you. I wish so much you
were my mom.

SYLVIA

Well, I'm not your mom, but if
you ever need A mom, I'm here for
you.

KAREN

Thanks. Now I... I sort of need
to clear my head... so I...

SYLVIA

Yeah, go fly around for a while.
Smash a few giant rocks. Just
remember that dinner's at seven-
thirty.

Karen smiles, and goes out the back door.

Linda stares at Karen with a dumbfound expression. She waits a moment before turning to Sylvia.

LINDA

Okay, who was that girl and what
did she do with Power Girl?

SYLVIA

Linda, don't say that.

LINDA

I mean it. What happened to her?
One moment she's the toughest
girl I know, then she's blubbering
like a baby. I don't get it.

SYLVIA

Come, honey, let's sit. I think
it's time we have a little chat.

They walk to the couch and sit down.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

Linda, your friend Karen has lots
of problems, you know that.

LINDA

Yeah. Oracle said she's too
aggressive and violent.

SYLVIA

Well, most of Karen's problems
are the result of her relationship
with her parents. She loves them,
but she can't stand them. They
can't talk anymore, they just
yell at each other.

LINDA

What do you mean they can't talk?

SYLVIA

(sighs)

Honey, I love you, but the truth
is, when Karen calls you a dork,
she's not really kidding. Well,
you're not a dork, but you're as
naive as they come, and your
father and I are to blame for
that. You see, Fred and I had a
miserable childhood so we went
out of our way to make sure you
had a good one. And we did WAY
too good a job on that. So let's
see if I can snap you out of it
with a little shock therapy.

LINDA

What do you mean?

SYLVIA

I think it's time you heard about
your grandparents.

EXT. JOHN DANVERS' HOUSE - 25 YEARS EARLIER - AFTERNOON

SUPER: 25 years earlier.

The house of John Danvers, Fred's father. A rural home
somewhere at the outskirts of the town.

Twelve-year-old LITTLE FRED plays with a baseball outside the house.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Fred's parents were John and Aileen Danvers. John Danvers was a college football hero who had a promising career in the NFL until a car accident cut it short. Most people say that this is why he became such a violent, bitter man.

We hear voices coming from the house. An argument between Aileen and John.

JOHN (O.S.)

(angry)

You call this meatloaf!

AILEEN (O.S.)

John, I'm sorry. I don't know what happened.

Fred's expression changes instantly. His face now shows equal parts of anger and frustration well beyond what you'd imagine a 12-year-old could do. He drops the ball and stares at the door as if trying to decide if he should go in or not.

JOHN (O.S.)

You don't know what happened! Are you stupid or something?!

AILEEN (O.S.)

John, I'm sorry. I don't -- no, John, please, no!

We hear a fight inside. John is beating Aileen.

JOHN (O.S.)

I'll teach you to be sorry, you bitch!

Aileen screams in pain. Fred begins to pace back and forth, breathing heavily.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

John would beat Aileen almost on a daily basis. Nothing she did was good enough for him. And every little mistake deserved a punishment.

Fred stops pacing. His expression intensifies. A moment later, he walks into the house, slamming the door behind him.

We stay on the outside.

SYLVIA (V.O.)(CONT'D)
 Sometimes Fred would walk into
 the fight, trying to defend his
 mother.

LITTLE FRED (O.S.)
 Leave my mom alone, you sonofabitch!

SYLVIA (V.O.)
 It wasn't so much that Fred
 thought he could stand up to John
 Danvers.

JOHN (O.S.)
 You want some of this too, you
 little prick?

John begins to hit Fred. Fred screams in pain.

AILEEN (O.S.)
 No, John, don't hurt the boy!

SYLVIA (V.O.)
 It was that he knew that while
 his father was beating him, he
 wasn't beating his mother.

The fight inside continues.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DANVERS' HOME - PRESENT TIME

Linda seems about to burst into tears.

SYLVIA
 Shocked enough, honey?

Linda is speechless.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)
 I wasn't much better off back
 then. I was the only daughter of
 Norman and Isabelle Holden. My
 father was a drunk. A neighbor
 described him once by saying:
 "Norman is the kind of man who
 tries to drown his sorrows in
 alcohol, and apparently his
 sorrows are really good swimmers
 because it takes a whole lot of
 alcohol to drown them." Mother
 didn't like that and she let
 father know about it.

INT. SYLVIA'S ROOM - HOLDEN'S HOUSE - 25 YEARS EARLIER -
AFTERNOON

Ten-year-old LITTLE SYLVIA sits at her desk. There's a small porcelain ballerina on it. She stares at it.

NORMAN (O.S.)

(slurred)

And what's wrong with a little whiskey now and then, eh?

ISABELLE (O.S.)

A LITTLE whiskey!? What is that, your third bottle TODAY!?

NORMAN (O.S.)

I make my own money. I can spend it any way I want to.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

I had a porcelain ballerina that my grandmother gave me for my fifth birthday. She was my most prized possession in the whole world. Every time my parents would fight, I would stare at the ballerina and imagine her dancing.

FOCUS ON the ballerina. We hear "The Blue Danube" playing in Little Sylvia's mind and we see the Ballerina dancing around the desk.

Slowly the music grows louder and it drowns the screams outside the bedroom.

Little Sylvia smiles.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DANVERS' HOME - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

My parents would scream at each other for hours and hours. They yelled at each other every single four-letter word you can think of and quite a few you can't. They insulted their whole ancestry. But they never laid a finger on each other. No matter how angry they were, they never, ever physically hurt each other.

(beat)

That's why they had me.

INT. SYLVIA'S ROOM - HOLDEN'S HOUSE - 25 YEARS EARLIER

Little Sylvia smiles as The Blue Danube plays in her mind and the ballerina dances on her desk.

Isabelle and Norman still argue, but we can barely hear what they say.

Then the argument stops.

Little Sylvia notices it, and her imagination fades. The Blue Danube screeches to a halt. The ballerina returns to her porcelain self. Her expression changes into sheer horror. She quickly turns off the light in her room and jumps into her bed, pretending to be asleep.

A moment later the door bursts open with so much force that one of the stuffed animals on a shelf falls to the floor.

We see Isabelle's silhouette at the door. She has a large belt on her hand. She turns on the light. She has an expression of anger beyond all normal parameters.

She slowly turns to the floor, and sees the stuffed dog lying there.

ISABELLE

What have I told you about your toys!

Little Sylvia pretends to wake up.

LITTLE SYLVIA

Mom, I...

Isabelle turns to Little Sylvia.

ISABELLE

You ungrateful little beast!

EXT. HOLDEN'S HOUSE - 25 YEARS EARLIER

We see Little Sylvia's window. The shades are closed. We see Isabelle's shadow on them.

ISABELLE (O.S.)

I'll teach you how to obey, you little beast!

LITTLE SYLVIA (O.S.)

No, mommy, please!

Isabelle beats Little Sylvia with the belt.

EXT. PARK - 25 YEARS EARLIER - HOURS LATER

Little Sylvia sits on the grass next to a large tree. She's crying and caressing her arms. She has quite a few belt marks on her arms and neck.

The sunset is approaching. Little Sylvia stares at it.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

There was a park a few blocks away from where we lived. I used to go there and cry every time my mother beat me. That's where I met Fred.

Little Fred walks from behind some bushes, he has a black eye, a swollen lip and many bruises.

The two children eye each other for several seconds, noticing each other's wounds.

SYLVIA (V.O.)(CONT'D)

We became best friends before we had said a word to each other.

LITTLE FRED

Are you okay?

LITTLE SYLVIA

No.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

He was twelve at the time. I was ten. We became inseparable. He'd tend to my wounds. He had become pretty good at it after so many years helping his own mother.

(beat)

Things stayed pretty much the same for four years until Fred turned sixteen. By then, he'd turned into a huge teenager.

EXT. JOHN DANVERS' HOUSE - 21 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

The front door bursts open as Teenage Fred pushes John out of the house. Teenage Fred is almost six feet tall by now and weighs close to 200 pounds. John Danvers is six-five, 270 pounds, but badly out of shape.

John shoves Fred back with all his strength, but only manages to send him back a couple of feet.

TEENAGE FRED

(angry)

Get the hell out of my sight, and
don't you ever come back!

JOHN

(scoffs)

You're throwing me out of my own
house, you little punk? I'll show
you.

John attacks Fred, but Fred dodges the punch and lands a couple of his own, sending John to the ground, bleeding from the nose.

Aileen appears at the doorstep, looking concerned but somehow relieved.

John stands up slowly. He wipes the blood off his nose.

JOHN

I'm going to get you for this,
you little piece of crap.

TEENAGE FRED

I'd love to see you try, you
sonofabitch.

John glares at Teenage Fred for a moment, then heads for his car. He climbs in and drives away.

Aileen walks to Teenage Fred and hugs him. He hugs her back, but never takes his eyes off John's car.

TEENAGE FRED (CONT'D)

Don't worry, mom. He's gone for good.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Without the monster, the house
felt like heaven.

INT. LIVING ROOM - JOHN DANVERS' HOUSE - 21 YEARS EARLIER -
HOURS LATER

Teenage Sylvia, fourteen now, sits on the couch, watching TV with Aileen and Fred, who looks as proud as can be.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

I stayed with Fred that night. It
felt so good to be in a place
where no one was screaming at
each other, and no one was going
to hit me. I just couldn't force
myself to leave.

(MORE)

SYLVIA (V.O.; CONT'D)

(beat)

Fred and I were just friends back then. I slept on his bed. He slept on the couch. Nothing happened that night between us, if you know what I mean.

(beat)

But my mother never believed that.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOLDEN'S HOUSE - 21 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

NORMAN sits on the couch, sipping at his whiskey.

Isabelle and Teenage Sylvia are in the kitchen. We can't see them, but we hear them and we see their shadows projected on a wall behind Norman.

TEENAGE SYLVIA

We didn't do anything, mom, I swear.

ISABELLE

You think I'm going to believe you just like that! Tell me that at least you wore protection!

TEENAGE SYLVIA

Nothing happened, I swear!

ISABELLE

So you didn't even wear anything?

TEENAGE SYLVIA

Are you listening to me? Nothing happened! Can you get it through that thick skull of yours!

ISABELLE

Oh, you stupid little beast! You're trying to turn me into a grandmother before I'm forty!

SYLVIA (V.O.)

My mother believed that I'd had sex with Fred and nothing I said would convince her otherwise. Worst, she thought I was pregnant. That was her greatest fear: the shame of having her fourteen-year-old daughter with a belly. She was already the wife of the town drunk. There was no way she was going to let me get pregnant.

We see Isabelle's shadow turn around and grab a knife.

TEENAGE SYLVIA

Mom, what the hell are you doing
with that thing?!

SYLVIA (V.O.)

My mother was a registered nurse.
She knew where to aim the knife.

Isabelle's shadow stabs Teenage Sylvia in the lower abdomen.
Teenage Sylvia screams and falls to the ground.

Norman stands up and peeks into the kitchen.

NORMAN

(slurred)

What did you just do, you crazy
woman?

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - 21 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Teenage Fred walks toward the room where Teenage Sylvia is.
Outside, a DOCTOR talks to Isabelle and Norman.

DOCTOR

She's stable now, but the knife
did a great deal of damage to her
uterus. In my opinion, I don't
think the damage can be repaired.
It's almost certain that Sylvia
will never be able to have children.

Teenage Fred hears this and stops dead on his tracks.

NORMAN

(slightly slurred)

Ah, these kids today... she
probably had a fight with her
boyfriend, maybe found her way to
my liquor cabinet... and you know.

Teenage Fred's expression changes into the one we saw when
he was twelve: anger and frustration to an inhuman degree.

TEENAGE FRED

You did this to her!

He rushes to Norman and Isabelle but the doctor stops him.

TEENAGE FRED (CONT'D)

Don't you ever touch her again,
you hear me! If you hurt her
again I'll kill both of you!

NORMAN

Please, someone call the police
and arrest this punk.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

I cannot have children of my own because of my mother. Can you even fathom the concept, Linda?

(beat)

Well, after that incident my mother never hit me again. Maybe because she felt guilty for almost killing me. Maybe because she was afraid of what Fred would do to her. So my life for the next four years was tense, but relatively painless.

(beat)

Then I turned eighteen.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOLDEN'S HOUSE - 17 YEARS EARLIER - MORNING

Norman sits on the couch, reading the newspaper.

A moment later, Teenage Sylvia, now eighteen, walks out of her room, dragging a large suitcase.

NORMAN

Happy birthday, honey.

(beat)

Hey, what's up with the suitcase?

Isabelle comes out of the kitchen and sees Teenage Sylvia.

Teenage Sylvia regards her parents with a determined look on her face.

TEENAGE SYLVIA

I'm eighteen today. I'm marrying Fred Danvers. I never want to see you two again.

Without looking back, Teenage Sylvia storms out of the house.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Those were the last words I ever said to my parents.

INT. LIVING ROOM - JOHN DANVERS' HOUSE - 17 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Aileen sits on the couch, watching TV. Teenage Fred dusts, while Teenage Sylvia sweeps the floor.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

I married Fred two hours later and I moved in with him and his mother.

(MORE)

SYLVIA (V.O.; CONT'D)
 That was the first moment of true
 freedom I had ever felt in my life.

Aileen tries to change the channel with the remote control,
 but nothing happens.

SYLVIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Fred's mother was a very nice,
 caring woman. I got to know her a
 lot better in the years we lived
 together. She was a good person,
 but a extremely weak woman.

Teenage Fred notices Aileen. She looks at him pleadingly.

AILEEN
 (re: the remote)
 I think it's broken, honey.

TEENAGE FRED
 Let me see it, mom.

He grabs the remote and tries it. Nothing happens. He walks
 to the TV.

TEENAGE FRED (CONT'D)
 Just tell me what channel you
 want to see.

He begins to change the channel manually. Three channels go by.

AILEEN
 Yeah, leave it there, Freddy.
 Thank you.

TEENAGE FRED
 Is the volume all right?

AILEEN
 (smiles)
 Sure honey, don't worry.

TEENAGE FRED
 Just let me know when you want me
 to change it again, okay?

SYLVIA (V.O.)
 Fred would take care of his
 mother like she was made of
 crystal. He would go out of his
 way to make sure that nothing
 bothered her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

All three of us hated that house. Even though John Danvers was gone, his presence was still there. And I never left the house because I was afraid of meeting my parents. So we decided to move to another town. And Leesburg seemed so friendly and lovely we decided to buy a house here. We couldn't sell the old house because it was John's, so we couldn't really afford one. Luckily, the owner of this house felt so sorry for us that he sold it for next to nothing.

(beat)

Everything looked bright for a while. Fred became a cop. Aileen and I got along very well. My parents were far away from me.

(beat)

And then, two years later, Aileen crashed her car into a tree.

EXT. CEMETERY - 15 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Young Fred, dressed in his police uniform, stands mournfully in front of his mother's coffin, ready to be lowered into the ground.

YOUNG DOUGLAS PORTER, twenty-one at the time, stands next to him, also in his uniform.

Young Sylvia is nearby, wearing a black dress. She's looking at Young Fred.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Fred never believed it was an accident. Aileen never drove the car faster than thirty, and she always wore her seatbelt.

(beat)

He still believes John Danvers killed Aileen, though he could never prove it.

Young Sylvia turns around and sees John Danvers walking straight to them. She tries to remain calm. She walks to Young Douglas and pulls him aside.

YOUNG SYLVIA

(points)

That man is John Danvers. I'll
hold Fred -- you take his gun.

She walks around the grave, pulling Young Fred's eyes in the opposite direction of John. She hugs Fred and he hugs her.

Then Young Douglas pulls Young Fred's gun from its holster. Young Fred feels this and turns around to face Young Douglas. Young Sylvia holds on to him.

YOUNG FRED

What the hell?

He sees John walking toward them. His face turns to the anger/frustration face again.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)

(to John)

You killed her, you sonofabitch!
I'm going to get you for this!

John approaches the grave. He reads the gravestone. It reads: Aileen McAllister.

JOHN

(calm)

Her name was Aileen Danvers. We
never got divorced.

Young Fred is fuming mad, but Young Sylvia holds him in place, even though he's 120 pounds heavier.

Young Fred tries to advance toward John, but doesn't break Young Sylvia's grip.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

That's one of the things I love
the most about your father: he
was stark raving mad --
literally -- and he was a
extremely strong man. If I had
let him go, he would've crushed
John with his bare hands. And I'm
just a little squirt. But for
Fred, the very idea of using any
kind of force or violence against
a woman is so appalling that I
could have held him back with one
finger.

(beat, smiles)

That's your father.

EXT. CEMETERY - 15 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Young Fred still screams at John while Sylvia holds him.

YOUNG DOUGLAS

(to John)

Get the hell out of here!

JOHN

And what are you going to do if I don't, shorty? Arrest me for visiting my wife's grave?

YOUNG DOUGLAS

No, I'm going to give Fred his gun back.

John seems to think about it, then turns around and walks away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

I'm sure you've noticed that every mother's day, every August twenty-third -- Aileen's death -- and every December eighteen -- Aileen's birthday -- your father leaves the house at five o'clock in the morning and returns at six. He never says where he's going but I know he goes to his mother's grave to talk to her.

(beat)

He was always such a good son.

(beat)

Without Aileen, the house felt empty. At least for Fred. He had taken care of her for as long as he could remember and now he had no one to take care of. I couldn't have children. So at some point we thought about adopting. We weren't sure about it, until we met a certain blond three-year-old girl who stole our hearts.

INT. FRED AND SYLVIA'S ROOM - DANVERS' HOME - 12 YEARS EARLIER - NIGHT

Young Sylvia and Young Fred lie in bed.

YOUNG FRED

She's such a lovely little girl, isn't she?

YOUNG SYLVIA

Yes. Such a bright smile. And those cute little eyes.

A beat.

YOUNG SYLVIA (CONT'D)

Are we ready to take care of a child? Really, Fred, are we ready?

YOUNG FRED

I love that little girl, Syl.

YOUNG SYLVIA

Yeah, I love her too. But how can WE raise a child. After the childhood we had. Can we really be good parents?

YOUNG FRED

Of course, we know exactly what not to do.

YOUNG SYLVIA

Don't joke about it, Fred.

YOUNG FRED

I'm not really joking. Syl, we've been through hell and back. We know the road better than anyone else. We just have to do one thing -- we have to promise ourselves that we will never become our parents.

Young Sylvia thinks about it. She's not too sure.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

So we adopted you. Clearly the best decision we ever made.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

I have to admit you were a handful. You had so much energy. And Fred was working most of the day, so he wasn't very helpful. And Fred and I were so busy trying to keep anything wrong away from you that we started bottling up everything inside of us. We were getting on each other's nerves but we couldn't talk it out for fear that it might upset you.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DANVERS HOME - 11 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Linda, four-years-old at this point, sits at the dinner table, drawing with some crayons on a piece of paper.

Young Fred sits on the couch, reading the newspaper.

Young Sylvia sweeps the floor. She approaches Fred, expecting him to move or at least lift his feet, but he doesn't move a muscle.

SYLVIA (V.O.)
One day, I just snapped.

YOUNG SYLVIA
(angry)
Do you mind! If you're not helping, at least don't get in the way!

Young Fred stares at her for a moment.

YOUNG FRED
What's wrong with you?

YOUNG SYLVIA
What's wrong with me? What's WRONG with me?! I have to take care of this whole house, an overactive four-year-old, and a husband who won't move a muscle to help, all by myself. That's what's wrong with me!

YOUNG FRED
(motions to Linda)
Honey, you know.

YOUNG SYLVIA
Oh yes! The poor little girl! We can't talk about anything! We have to swallow all our problems and pretend they don't exist just because we don't want to upset Linda!

Linda looks up, scared.

YOUNG FRED
(to Linda)
Honey, would you mind leaving your mom and I alone for a moment?

Linda nods and leaves the living room.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)
 (to Young Sylvia)
 What? You're going to start
 screaming in front of the child now?

YOUNG SYLVIA
 Yes, I'm going to start screaming
 until you get your butt off the
 couch and start giving me a hand!

YOUNG FRED
 You know what, there's no talking
 to you when you get like that.
 You want me to get my butt off
 the couch -- I'll get my butt off
 the couch.

Young Fred stands up and leaves through the front door.

YOUNG SYLVIA
 Goddammit, Fred.

Young Sylvia slams the broom against the wall and leaves.

SYLVIA (V.O.)
 I was so angry with Fred. I
 really wanted to scream at him
 but I decided to storm to my room
 instead.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA (CONT'D)
 And what do you know -- I found
 you in my room, playing with a
 certain porcelain ballerina I
 loved so much. Remember the
 ballerina? The one my grandmother
 gave me? The ballerina that was
 the one and only piece of
 happiness through my whole
 childhood? That's the one my
 lovely adopted four-year-old
 daughter was playing with.

Linda's expression turns to horror.

LINDA
 Please, mom, tell me I didn't
 break the ballerina. Please. Even
 if I did, please tell me I didn't.

SYLVIA

(smiles)

When I saw you, I yelled: "Linda, don't touch that!" And like every four-year-old child when she gets yelled at, you dropped everything you had on your hands.

INT. FRED AND SYLVIA'S ROOM - 11 YEARS EARLIER

Young Sylvia stands near the door and watches as the Ballerina falls from Linda's hand.

In slow motion, the ballerina falls to the floor and shatters into a hundred pieces.

Young Sylvia's expression turns to the same expression her mother had when she beat Little Sylvia.

YOUNG SYLVIA

You ungrateful little beast!

Young Sylvia goes for the closet, opens it and grabs a large belt. She lifts Linda and bends her over her lap and hits her with the belt. Linda cries.

FOCUS ON Young Sylvia's face. She hits Linda again. And again. Then something stops her hand.

Young Fred stands next to her, holding the belt. He has the same expression Little Fred had when John hit Aileen.

Young Sylvia turns to Young Fred.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

I hated Fred at that moment like I hadn't hated anyone in my whole life. I was looking at him with the same eyes my mother looked at me whenever she beat me. He was looking back at me with the same expression he had whenever his father beat his mother.

(beat)

We stayed like that for an eternity. Hating each other more than two people have ever hated each other.

(beat)

Then a voice came from somewhere inside Fred.

YOUNG FRED

We promised we would never become our parents.

Young Sylvia turns to the vanity mirror and sees her own expression.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

To my horror, I had become my own mother.

Young Sylvia's expression turns to horror, then regret. She releases the belt and hugs Linda.

YOUNG SYLVIA

I'm sorry, honey. I'm sorry. I promise, I'll never hit you again.

Young Fred's expression returns to normal. He hugs Young Sylvia and Linda.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

LINDA

I remember that day. I'm sorry I broke your ballerina.

SYLVIA

Oh, never mind the ballerina.

LINDA

I promise I'll get you a new one. I don't care if I have to search the entire world.

SYLVIA

Linda, forget about it. The ballerina was my escape from a life I hated. I don't hate my life anymore. I don't need a ballerina. I have something better.

Sylvia caresses Linda's hair.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I hit you, honey.

LINDA

It's okay. I deserved it.

SYLVIA

No, you didn't. Don't say that.

(beat)

That day was the lowest point in my life. The lowest point in your father's life came two years later.

INT. KITCHEN - 9 YEARS EARLIER - AFTERNOON

Linda, six-years-old at this time, stands next to the counter. There's a jar of cookies on one of the shelves and Linda is reaching for it, but she's a foot short.

Linda jumps a couple of times, but the jar is still too high for her.

She looks out to the living room, where Young Fred watches TV.

LINDA

Dad --?

YOUNG FRED

(turns to Linda)

Yeah, honey?

She points to the jar. He smiles, stands up and walks to the kitchen.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)

Do you want a cookie?

She smiles and nods.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)

Did you clean your room?

She nods again.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)

Not a toy out of place?

She shakes her head.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)

Then you deserve a cookie.

He opens the jar, fishes a cookie and gives it to her.

LINDA

Thanks dad!

She walks out of the kitchen, skipping happily.

The phone rings. He picks it up.

YOUNG FRED

Hello.

YOUNG DOUGLAS (O.S.)

Ready to work, buddy?

YOUNG FRED
 Don't I have like fifteen minutes
 before I start?

YOUNG DOUGLAS (O.S.)
 We got a call -- domestic
 disturbance.

EXT. DON'S APARTMENT - 9 YEARS EARLIER - NIGHT

The corridor outside Don Harries' apartment. We can hear
 sounds of fighting inside.

Young Fred and Young Douglas arrive, and knock on the door.

The sounds stop inside the apartment.

A moment later, DON HARRIES, stout, mean looking, opens the
 door.

DON
 (smiles)
 May I help you?

Young Fred peeks over Don and sees SUSAN, Don's wife,
 sitting at the kitchen table, with bruises all over her face.

INT. DON'S APARTMENT - 9 YEARS EARLIER

Young Fred pushes Don into the apartment and cuffs him
 behind his back.

YOUNG FRED
 You have the right to remain
 silent...

DON
 Hey, what the hell's wrong with
 you! I've done nothing.

Young Douglas enters.

YOUNG DOUGLAS
 (to Susan)
 Are you okay, madam?

YOUNG FRED
 ...Everything you say can and
 will be used against you in a
 court of law...

DON
 What the hell are you arresting
 me for, you pig?

YOUNG DOUGLAS
Assault and battery.

DON
Why? I didn't touch her. She felt
down the stairs.

Young Fred turns to Susan.

YOUNG FRED
Is that right, madam?

Susan looks scared. She glances at Don before answering.

SUSAN
Well... yes, of course.

YOUNG FRED
Oh, don't give me that crap. Lady,
I know what you're going through,
okay. My father beat my mother
senseless for twenty years, so I
know exactly how you feel right
now. And believe me, you just
have to say the word and I'll
personally make sure this a-hole
won't ever again lay a finger on you.

SUSAN
(doubtful)
Er... I... I don't know what
you're talking about. I just felt
down the stairs.

DON
Lose the cuffs, pig.

Young Fred growls in frustration. He uncuffs Don.

Don smiles.

YOUNG FRED
Don't dream this is the last
you'll see of me.

DON
I'm looking forward to your next
visit, pig.

EXT. DON'S APARTMENT - 9 YEARS EARLIER - MORNING

The following day. Focus on the apartment door for a moment.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Seeing Susan Harries like that brought Fred so many memories about his mother. He had to help her. But he couldn't help her unless she decided to help herself.

Don opens the door and leaves the apartment, going for his work.

SYLVIA (V.O.)(CONT'D)

You know your dad. He always prided himself that he could talk the legs off a donkey.

A moment later, Young Fred appears at the door, wearing plain clothes. He knocks.

Susan opens. Her face still has some bruises.

YOUNG FRED

May we speak for a moment?

SUSAN

(nervous)

About what?

YOUNG FRED

Just a friendly talk, okay?

INT. DON'S APARTMENT - 9 YEARS EARLIER - MOMENTS LATER

Young Fred and Susan sit at the table.

YOUNG FRED

...Every memory I have of my early childhood is about my father beating my mother. He used to snap at her for just about anything. Nothing she did was good enough for him. And she'd always come up with an excuse to explain the neighbors all her bruises. You have no idea how much it hurt me to see her like that --

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Fred must have talked to her for at least two hours. But he couldn't get through to her.

SUSAN

Officer Danvers I feel really bad for you, but I assure you my Don is nothing like your father.

(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

He loves me. He really loves me.
I just happen to be very clumsy
and I hurt myself all the time --

SYLVIA (V.O.)

After all the pain her husband
had caused her over the years,
she'd still defend him.

EXT. DON'S APARTMENT - 9 YEARS EARLIER - HOURS LATER

Young Fred leaves the apartment. He looks in pain. He feels
like he failed.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Your father felt so bad. He had
failed.

(beat)

But that wasn't the worst part.

Young Fred walks to the staircase.

PAN to the next apartment. The NEIGHBOR watches Young Fred
as he leaves.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)(V.O.)

A neighbor saw him leave.

SIX HOURS LATER

Don returns from work. The Neighbor sees him and motions him
to come.

NEIGHBOR

Hey, Harries, I got something for
you. But it's gonna cost you a
hundred.

DON

Is it worth it?

NEIGHBOR

You bet.

Don fishes a hundred-dollar bill from his pocket and hands
it to the neighbor.

NEIGHBOR

(smiles)

It's so good to do business with you.

DON

So, what is it?

NEIGHBOR

You know that cop who was here yesterday? He came this morning after you left and spent a few hours talking to your wife.

Don's expression changes into anger. He heads for his apartment.

INT. KITCHEN - DANVERS' HOME - 9 YEARS EARLIER - AFTERNOON

Young Fred is upset, pacing around the kitchen. Young Sylvia is cooking. Linda sits at the table.

YOUNG FRED

I can't believe that woman. She still defended that a-hole. After all he did to her. Goddammit! What else can I do!

YOUNG SYLVIA

Fred, calm down.

YOUNG FRED

How do you expect me to calm down, eh?! Dammit, I just can't believe it!

YOUNG SYLVIA

You're scaring Linda.

Young Fred notices Linda. She looks scared by all his yelling. His anger instantly fades. He goes to Linda and gives her a kiss on the head and a hug.

YOUNG FRED

I'm sorry, honey. Daddy isn't angry with you. It's just that... I -- I promise not to yell again in front of you, okay?

LINDA

Did I do something wrong?

YOUNG FRED

No, no honey, of course not. You're a good girl, and daddy loves you very much.

Linda smiles. Young Fred heads for the living room. A moment later the phone rings. He picks it up.

YOUNG FRED

Hello.

NURSE (O.S.)

Hi, Fred, it's me.

YOUNG FRED
Hey, Sal. What's up?

NURSE (O.S.)
You asked me to call you if
anything else happened to the
Harries woman. Well, she just
came in -- with three broken fingers.

Young Fred's expression changes to the anger/frustration
that we've seen a few times before.

YOUNG FRED
Thanks, Sal.

He hangs up and heads for the door. Young Sylvia walks out
of the kitchen.

YOUNG SYLVIA
Who was it?

She notices the expression on his face. She knows that face.

YOUNG SYLVIA (CONT'D)
(sternly)
Fred, what happened?

Young Fred leaves the house without answering.

YOUNG SYLVIA (CONT'D)
Fred!
(to herself)
Damn.

She goes for the phone and quickly dials.

YOUNG DOUGLAS (O.S.)
Porter here.

YOUNG SYLVIA
Doug, Fred just left the house in
a hurry. I don't know what
happened but he's about to hurt
someone.

YOUNG DOUGLAS (O.S.)
Damn. He must've heard about the
Harries woman.

YOUNG SYLVIA
You have to stop him before he
does something stupid.

YOUNG DOUGLAS (O.S.)
No kidding. Bye.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING - 9 YEARS EARLIER - MINUTES LATER

Young Douglas arrives in his police car and parks it. Fred's pickup truck is parked there.

He jumps out of the car and enters the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - 9 YEARS EARLIER

Young Douglas rushes to the front desk.

A MALE NURSE is there.

YOUNG DOUGLAS
Have you seen Fred?

MALE NURSE
He asked me about the Harries woman. She's in room 202.

Young Douglas rushes down the corridor. We follow him.

He turns around the corner of the corridor to another corridor lined with doors.

A second later one of the doors bursts open and Don flies out of it. Young Fred follows quickly. He lifts Don off the floor and starts punching him.

YOUNG DOUGLAS
Fred, stop!

Young Douglas grabs Young Fred and tries to pull him away from Don, but Young Fred is too strong and keeps kicking Don.

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE - POLICE PRECINCT - 9 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Young Fred stands in front of the desk of the Chief of police. He puts his badge and gun on the desk.

SYLVIA (V.O.)
Fred got suspended for attacking Don Harries, pending an investigation. The only reason they didn't put him in jail was that everyone knew who Don Harries was and most of them wanted to build Fred a statue.

CHIEF
I'm sorry about that, Fred. But it's your fault.

YOUNG FRED
I know.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

But you know your father. He's
not one to give up easily.

INT. MRS. ATKINS' APARTMENT - 9 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Mrs. Atkins' apartment is the one right in front of Don's.

Mrs. Atkins is an eighty-two-year-old woman. She sits at her
table. Pouring tea for herself and for Young Fred.

YOUNG FRED

Oh yes, I remember all the news
about it.

MRS ATKINS

Oh, it was horrible. The worst
fire I've ever seen. It's a
miracle no one got hurt.

YOUNG FRED

A miracle. We could use so many
of those around here.

MRS ATKINS

Well... sometimes you have to
make your own miracles.

YOUNG FRED

You know, I couldn't agree with
you more.

We hear argument noises coming from the next apartment. We
can't make out what they're saying, but it's clear the
voices come from Susan and Don.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)

Oh, what do you know? I think
we're running low on sugar.
Perhaps I should go to our
friendly neighbor's apartment and
ask him for some.

MRS ATKINS

Yes. PLEASE do that.

EXT. DON'S APARTMENT - 9 YEARS EARLIER - MOMENTS LATER

We can hear the shouting more clearly now.

Young Fred knocks on the door. The shouting stops. A moment
later the door opens.

Don glares at Young Fred, who smiles warmly.

YOUNG FRED

You know, I was having a wonderful cup of tea with my very good friend Mrs. Atkins -- you remember her -- she's your next-door neighbor. So anyway, we were having tea -- like we do most afternoons -- and we seem to have run out of sugar. And I was wondering if you'd be so kind as to give us a bit of it, you know, so we can continue talking for hours and hours about Leesburg's history.

DON

You think you can scare me?

YOUNG FRED

Oh, I don't want to scare anyone, I just want to have some more tea with my good friend Mrs. Atkins, whom I visit every day for hours and hours.

Don slams the door in Young Fred's face.

Young Fred continues to smile as he heads back to Mrs. Atkins' apartment.

EXT. STREET - 9 YEARS EARLIER - NIGHT

A deserted street. Don walks lazily back to his apartment. Young Fred follows some twenty yards behind. Don hasn't notice him yet.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Fred continued to annoy Harries day in and day out. He was suspended so he had nothing better to do with his time and he made sure Harries knew it.

Don notices Young Fred and hurries his step.

SYLVIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Fred was hoping that Harries would make a mistake.

(beat)

One night he did.

Don starts running now. Young Fred runs after him.

EXT. ALLEY - 9 YEARS EARLIER

A Punk robs a teenager at gunpoint in the alley.

Don darts into the alley. The Punk reacts instinctively by firing his gun at Don. The bullet hits Don in the abdomen. He goes down, clutching the wound.

The teenager runs one way. The Punk runs the other, toward the entrance where Don came from.

The Punk runs into Young Fred who cloth-lines him, knocking him out.

Young Fred stares at the Punk, then turns to Don, lying on the ground, bleeding.

DON
(weakly)
Help... me...

YOUNG FRED
(chuckles)
Really? You want MY help?

Young Fred turns back to the Punk. He pulls a hanky out of his pocket and grabs the Punk's gun, making sure he leaves no fingerprints on it.

He points the gun at Don's head.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)
Do you know how easy it'd be for
me to blow your head off and
blame it on that kid?

Don stares at Young Fred in horror, panting heavily.

DON
Please... don't...

YOUNG FRED
But I'm not going to do that. You
want to know why, Donny?
(beat)
Because if I do it, the kid gets
the gas chamber. Do you understand
my reasoning here, Donny? I want
you to die, Don. Believe me, I do.
And I could easily kill you. And
not only I'd get away with it,
I'd be a hero for catching your
murderer. But I can't do that to
that stupid little punk back
there. Yeah, I know, that kid
wouldn't think it twice to blow
my head off for ten bucks. But
still, I can't do it. It's just
my nature.

DON
Please... help...

YOUNG FRED
I could just turn around and walk
away and let you bleed to death
here. But I'm not going to do
that either.
(beat)
Consider yourself lucky.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - 9 YEARS EARLIER - HOURS LATER

Young Fred stands next to the door to the emergency room
where doctors operate on Don.

Young Douglas arrives.

YOUNG DOUGLAS
Fred, what did you --

YOUNG FRED
Hey, it wasn't me. I didn't shoot
the bastard. I'm not saying I
didn't enjoy it. But I didn't do it.

YOUNG DOUGLAS
Fred...

YOUNG FRED
I'm not lying to you. Evans just
booked the punk who did it. Ask
him if you don't believe me.

Susan Harries arrives. Her hand still on a cast.

SUSAN
Thank you, Mr. Danvers, for
saving my husband's life --

Young Fred's expression turns to anger, he drags Susan into
an empty room.

INT. EMPTY ROOM - HOSPITAL - 9 YEARS EARLIER

YOUNG FRED
What are you doing here?

SUSAN
I... I came to see my husband of
course.

YOUNG FRED
Why don't you get away from him?
He's alive, but he's going to be
out of it for a couple of months.

SUSAN

Why would I want to get away from him?

YOUNG FRED

Dammit! Are you still going to protect him?! After what he did to you?!

Young Fred grabs Susan hand, the one with the cast.

YOUNG FRED (CONT'D)

He did this because we talked, didn't he?

SUSAN

I don't know what you're talking about. I just fell down --

YOUNG FRED

Don't give me that crap again! He broke your fingers! Stop protecting him! Come on, Susan, snap out of it!

SUSAN

I don't know what --

YOUNG FRED

Please, Susan! I swear to you, on my mother's grave that all you have to do is say the word and he'll never, ever lay a finger on you again. Why don't you believe me?!

SUSAN

(beat, almost crying)
I do. I do believe you.

YOUNG FRED

Then why don't you do it!?

SUSAN

You think Don's a monster, but he isn't. He loves me. He takes good care of me.

YOUNG FRED

He doesn't love you. He just loves the fact that he can beat the crap out of you and you won't fight back. You have to leave him, or he'll end up killing you.

SUSAN

But if I leave him -- then what?
What would I do? I have no
education. I can't do anything.
Your mother had you to take care
of her, but who do I have to take
care of me?

Something happens inside Young Fred's head. An epiphany of sorts. All the anger flushes out of his body. He stares at her for a long moment.

YOUNG FRED

How about yourself?
(beat)

Look, Susan, I'm tired of this.
I've done everything I can to
protect you. I got suspended and
might even end up in jail because
of you. And you won't move a
finger to help yourself. That's
fine with me. But I'm not going
to help you anymore. If you want
to stay with that husband of
yours; that's your choice. I'm
not going to interfere anymore.
But if you ever decide to stand
on your own two feet. If you ever
decide that your life should be
more than an endless string of
tense moments waiting for the
next time he decides to turn you
into a punching bag. If you ever
decide to live, not just exist.
Then give me a call and he'll be
out of your life forever. But
until that moment, you're on your
own.

Young Fred walks out of the room.

Susan watches him helplessly as he goes away. She looks like she wants to say something, but can't.

INT. KITCHEN - DANVERS' HOME - 9 YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Linda stands in front of the counter, again trying to get the cookie jar which is just inches out of her reach.

Young Fred watches TV at the living room.

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Susan decided to take care of Don during his convalescence. A week later Don needed to go to the bathroom, and apparently Susan didn't help him fast enough, so he -- well, let's say he was very impolite about it. So Susan stabbed him with a knife in the wound. He would live. And Susan decided that so should she. She called Fred and in less than a week, she was already moving to another city with a job and new name thanks to the Witness Protection Program.

Linda keeps trying to reach the cookie jar.

LINDA

Dad --?

SYLVIA (V.O.)

Every Christmas Fred receives a letter. It has no name or return address on it. But we know it's from Susan. The letter has only six words written on it. It says: thank you Fred, I love living.

Young Fred enters the kitchen.

YOUNG FRED

Do you want a cookie?

LINDA

Uh-huh.

YOUNG FRED

Is your room clean? All toys in their place?

LINDA

(smiling)

Uh-huh.

YOUNG FRED

Then you get a cookie.

He goes for the jar and freezes.

SUSAN (V.O.)

...but who do I have to take care of me?

He slowly releases the jar, turns to Linda and stares at her for a long moment.

YOUNG FRED

What am I doing, honey? You're a big girl now. You don't need your big old daddy to get the cookie for you. You can get it yourself.

LINDA

(doubtful)

It's too high. Can't reach the jar.

YOUNG FRED

And what do we do when something is out of reach?

LINDA

(smiling)

We call daddy?

YOUNG FRED

Try again.

She thinks about it, then drags a chair next to the counter. She climbs the chair, opens the jar and grabs a cookie.

He hugs her. He looks as if about to cry.

She hugs him back. She leans her head on Young Fred's shoulder while she nibbles at her cookie.

A moment later, he pulls back, looking as proud as can be.

She grabs another cookie and offers it to him.

LINDA

Wanna cookie?

YOUNG FRED

No, you eat that one too, honey. You've earned it.

LINDA

Why?

YOUNG FRED

Because you're a big girl now.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

SYLVIA

Susan changed Fred almost as much as he had changed her. Before that whole incident.

(MORE)

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

Your father thought the goal of his life was to protect you. He did everything for you. He treated you like you were made of crystal.

(beat)

He treated you like he had treated his mother. After he met Susan, he realized that maybe the best way to protect someone is to teach her how to protect herself.

LINDA

Yeah, I remember dad was always teaching me to do things by myself.

SYLVIA

(chuckles)

He was so happy the day we discovered you had powers. But that's nothing compared to how happy he was when you returned from your debut as Supergirl.

INT. FRED AND SYLVIA'S ROOM - THREE MONTHS EARLIER - NIGHT

Fred and Sylvia lying on their bed. Fred is smiling ear to ear.

FRED

You should've seen her, Syl. She's a natural. She handled those kids like she's done it a million times. She let her guard down for a moment -- that was a mistake -- but she recovered so well...

Sylvia chuckles.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT TIME

LINDA

Yeah, I know. I heard you guys talking. Sorry. I keep forgetting not to do that.

SYLVIA

Never mind that.

Sylvia chuckles.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

(beat)

So are you okay, honey?

LINDA

Er... I... I always thought grandparents were these really cool old people who always gave you money and cookies. I never really... you know...

SYLVIA

Your grandparents weren't exactly typical. And neither are your parents, for that matter. And neither are you, of course. Now tell me, do you understand what happened to Karen this afternoon?

LINDA

Not really. I'm still in shock. I'm not really thinking clearly right now.

Sylvia chuckles.

SYLVIA

Oh, honey. Well, Karen had a huge fight with her mother. She was so angry with her. She hated her mother at that moment. Then I made a harmless comment and she turned all that anger toward me. But at the very instant the words flew out of her mouth, she realized what she had done. She thought I was going to kick her out of the house.

(beat)

I know exactly how Karen feels when she's here. At her home, she feels constrained -- like she's trapped inside a very small box. She can't move. She can't even think. Because everything she does is wrong. No matter how hard she tries. No matter how good her intentions are, her mother will always find something wrong with everything she does. Here she feels free. She can move. She can talk. She can think. She feels exactly how I felt at Fred's house the night he kicked John out. So when Karen yelled at me, she felt that her whole world was about to collapse.

(MORE)

SYLVIA (CONT'D)

Not only did it mean that she was going to lose this little paradise because of what she did. Not only did it mean that she was going to be forced to return to her home, begging her mother to take her in even after she told her to go to hell. But worst of all, it meant that her mother had been right all along -- that she can never do anything right.

LINDA

I didn't know Karen felt like that.

SYLVIA

Yes. And that's part of the problem. You're her best friend and she can't talk about it -- not even with you.

LINDA

Oracle said she needs to learn how to deal with her problems.

SYLVIA

She does. You need to talk to her. Only you can help her.

LINDA

Could you...

SYLVIA

It has to be you. She won't talk to me either.

LINDA

But she loves you.

SYLVIA

Exactly. She's too afraid of saying something I won't like. But with you, she doesn't mind saying anything. Well, at least she doesn't mind telling you something you might not like.

LINDA

Like calling me dork, or knucklehead...

SYLVIA

Uh-huh.

Linda smiles.

LINDA
I'll try to talk to her.

INT. LINDA'S ROOM/KAREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

SPLIT SCREEN. One half shows Linda on her bed. The other half shows Karen on hers. They both look about ready to sleep. Karen's room is almost identical to Linda's only the furniture is sparse (it's a guest room).

They talk to each other in hushed tones. (They can hear each other quite well, of course.)

LINDA
Karen...?

KAREN
What?

LINDA
Can we talk?

KAREN
We ARE talking, Einstein.

LINDA
You know what I mean.

A beat. Karen turns around, facing away from Linda's room. She looks sullen.

KAREN
I don't wanna talk.

LINDA
Karen...?

KAREN
Leave me alone.

LINDA
Okay. If that's what you want.

Linda turns to her side and closes her eyes.

A beat.

KAREN
You wouldn't understand.

Linda opens here eyes again.

LINDA
Then explain.

KAREN

(beat)

You have the coolest parents in the world. I wish so much they were my parents. I'm so jealous of you.

LINDA

You should hear about my grandparents some time. That'll knock the jealousy right out of your mind.

KAREN

What the hell's that supposed to mean?

LINDA

Well, mom can't have children of her own because my grandmother stabbed her with a knife because she thought mom was pregnant when she was fourteen.

KAREN

(beat)

You're kidding me, right?

LINDA

No.

KAREN

Wow.

LINDA

But that's not the worst part.

KAREN

It isn't?

LINDA

No. But if you don't want to hear about it, I'll understand.

KAREN

No, no, I wanna hear -- I mean, it's not like I wanna hear about, you know, bad things, but if you wanna talk about it...

LINDA

Yeah, but it's kinda hard to talk about it.

KAREN

(beat)

Yeah. I know.

LINDA

Tell you what. Why don't you tell me something about your parents and then I'll tell you something about my grandparents?

KAREN

(beat)

Okay.

Karen takes a deep breath. She tries to talk, but can't find the words. It's too painful.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Mom hates everything about me. Everything I do is wrong. I'm nothing but a drooling idiot who can't do anything right...

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

CLOSE ON Fred standing in front of his mother's grave. He places flowers on it.

FRED

Hi, mom. I know this isn't one of our dates but this is sort of a special occasion. I want to introduce you to your granddaughter.

PAN BACK. Linda stands next to Fred.

FRED (CONT'D)

I hadn't brought her here before because I thought she was too young and I didn't want her to -- you know -- get mixed up with all the mess that was our lives. But I think it's time for you two to meet each other. Her name is Linda. I'm so incredibly proud of her I just can't put it into words.

(as an aside)

She's Supergirl, you know.

LINDA

(smiles)

Dad!

FRED

Well, she's your grandmother. You shouldn't keep your secrets from her.

Linda chuckles.

FRED (CONT'D)

But seriously, mom. She's the greatest girl I know. I'm sure you would've been so proud of her.

LINDA

I'm proud of you too, dad.

FRED

Of course, you are. I'm the greatest dad in the planet. There are like a hundred songs written about me. There are websites and everything.

LINDA

Dad, don't joke. I'm still a bit queasy about the whole family history. And being in a cemetery doesn't help.

FRED

This place makes you nervous? Remind you to take you to the morgue some day.

LINDA

Dad!

FRED

C'mon. Relax. Geez, if I'd known you'd get like that I would've asked you to wear your little outfit or something.

Linda chuckles.

FRED (CONT'D)

Now, say something to your grandma.

Linda turns to the grave. She tries to say something, but doesn't know what to say. She turns to Fred.

LINDA

I don't really know what to say to her.

FRED

It's symbolic, honey. That's not
your grandmother. It's just her
tomb. Just say what you feel.

Linda turns to the tomb again. She tries to find the right
words for a moment before speaking.

SLOWLY PAN away from them.

LINDA

Hi, grandma. It's a pleasure to
meet you. Or at least I'm sure it
would've been a pleasure to meet
you. I know dad loved you a lot
and mom told me she loved you too...

FADE OUT.

THE END