

Just Hold Me

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Summary: Rewrite of Season 3's "Ultrawoman." What if Clark had run into Lois on his walk over to Lois'? He never would have run into Lucille and Nell ... Lois and he may have been able to talk about their relationship a little sooner.

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Superman. The powers, the persona; they seemed to be a distant memory now. Clark had spent his entire life wishing he was normal; now he was. The powers he had once cursed for their burden were now something he missed. The ease in which he had used his powers in everyday things was now evident as he tried to adjust to his new routine—without Superman. He no longer had the help of super-speed to rush him through his morning rituals when he was running late; or his power of flight to avoid taking taxicabs. It was a new experience. He was normal yet different.

He turned the corner as he strode towards Lois' apartment. Lois. That was a whole other issue. She was uncomfortable masquerading as Ultrawoman. She was doing an excellent job in filling his shoes as the local superhero, but he knew she wasn't happy in the role. Lois enjoyed writing the story; getting the exclusive. Being the story wasn't a comfortable role for her.

Clark sighed as he turned the last corner towards her apartment. Ever since that fateful day in the Metropolis Park with that laser, his and Lois' lives had been turned upside down. "Oh, I'm sorry," Clark apologized when he bumped into a slim figure on the sidewalk. She looked up at him with tears in her eyes.

"Lois?"

"Hi." She sniffed. "Nice night for a walk, huh?"

He placed an arm around her shoulders, pulling her closer to him. "What's wrong?"

She avoided his gaze. "What are you doing out this late?"

Clark smiled shyly. "I was going to wait for you to get home. I thought you might need someone to talk to."

Lois was quiet, but her expression spoke volumes. Even if she wouldn't admit it, he knew she needed him—even if it was only to hold her. They made their way to her apartment in a comfortable silence. Once at her apartment, they made themselves comfortable on her couch.

Clark glanced hesitantly towards her. "Lois? Do you want to talk about it?"

"No." She shook her head.

Clark wrapped around an arm around her, pulling her towards his solid frame. "How bad was it? Sometimes... it used to help when I talked to my folks about it."

Lois let out a shuddered breath against his chest. He could feel the moisture from her tears dampen his shirt. She was fighting to remain in control. He wrapped his arms around her, kissing the top of her head. "Clark..." She let out a muffled cry.

"I'm right here, Lois," Clark reassured her.

"Oh, Clark... It was horrible." She began to cry, "I was landing this plane in Paris and I heard about this mudslide in Brazil. And I tried to get there as fast as I could and I wasn't fast enough. And what did I do wrong? Why did all those people have to...?" She buried her head into his chest and sobbed.

All the failed rescues from his time as Superman came flooding back to the forefront of his mind. He had always tried to

protect her from everything. He never wanted her to feel the pain of a rescue gone wrong. Her words spoken so long ago had helped him through many tormenting nights. *'It's the idea of Superman; someone to believe in. Bring a few hopes around. Whatever he can do that's enough.'* Now he needed to help her realize the same thing about herself.

Clark stroked her back and soothed her. "Lois, listen to me." He cupped her face with his hand and brought her head up to look at him. "No matter how strong you are. No matter how fast... Sometimes it just isn't enough. You have to accept that."

Accept what? Accept that she'd be masquerading in tights for the rest of her life? No. This was Clark's dream; not hers. She held his hand, playing with his fingers nervously as she tried to compose her thoughts into words. "But, Clark, what makes me such a good reporter is that I don't accept things. I'm always questioning and I'm never satisfied and I'm never going to be satisfied with getting there five seconds too late." She looked down quietly through her tears. "And I don't care what you say; I know it doesn't feel good to watch me do what you were born to do."

His face fell as understanding hit him. He offered her a light smile as he brushed away a few of her tears. "I admit, I do miss the cape and the 'S' and this whole bleeding thing is no fun..."

Lois smiled up at him remembering his mishap with shaving this morning. She smiled impishly up at him. "Yeah, but it does have some benefits..." she winked at him.

Clark smiled down at her, recognizing she was trying to distance herself from what had happened earlier by changing the subject. He smiled wryly. He did the same thing whenever a rescue had gone wrong. "What's that?"

Lois pulled him closer to her, arms intertwined behind his neck. "You can't run away from me by going off to save someone every time things get tough. You actually have to stick around and talk to me."

She was accusing him of running away? The irony in that statement was laughable. She had run scared from him every time he tried to move their relationship forward. Their relationship had been rocky over the last few weeks; Ever since he had proposed and she'd discovered his alter ego. He had made the mistake of letting his fears get the best of him and broke up with Lois for what he thought was for her own good. That had been the biggest mistake of his life.

"Lois, I do not run away from you..."

"Oh, really? You flew off so many times when I tried to talk to you during that Church Group mess... and before that let's see; does *'Cheese of the Month'* sound familiar to you?" Lois retorted lightly.

"Okay," he relented. "You got me there. But I haven't run away without a good reason and besides I always come back." He leaned down to kiss her lightly.

Why did he always do that when he was trying to avoid a conversation? She pushed him away from her and stood up. "I'm still mad." She said, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Mad? Why?" Clark asked confused.

"Why? Oh, I don't know." She paced in front of him. "Why on Earth would I be mad? Maybe it has something to do with how every time we seem to be moving forward in our relationship you make a boneheaded decision to throw us through another loop."

"Me?? You're the one that couldn't make up your mind for over two years." Clark pointed out.

"I couldn't make up my mind because you weren't being honest. You kept leading me on as Superman."

"Okay," Clark relented. He seemed to know when he'd lost an argument with her. "But I was also..."

She cut him off, “I know I was stupid for not believing you about Lex, but you lied to me after the wedding and told me you weren’t in love with me... Right, when I was beginning to think I was beginning to think of you as more than a friend. Then when we finally did start dating you continued to lie to me rather than tell me the truth... Never mind the fact that you were pushing me away... Then when I finally did figure out your secret, you acted like a child when I said I couldn’t give you an answer to your proposal right then, oh, and last but not least, when I finally decided I would marry you, you decided to ‘*break up with me for my own good.*’ You are the biggest lunkhead I have ever met!” Lois fumed. Her insecurities and anger over the last few weeks had boiled over.

She was still angry at Clark for breaking up with her right when she had just opened her heart enough to accept his proposal. He had been the only one to be able to break down the barriers she had built around herself. After her parents’ divorce, she had been scared to let anyone close; until Clark had wormed his way into her heart. He had broken her heart so completely. The few weeks before; when they had barely been on speaking terms, her heart had been breaking. She had grown so accustomed to having him in her life; she was miserable without him.

They had worked past most of their insecurities with one another over the last two weeks, but still had yet to have discussed what he had done. She’d never told him she’d been ready to accept his proposal when he’d lost his mind and broken up with her. That would have been rubbing salt in an open wound.

“What did you just say?” Clark’s voice penetrated through her thoughts.

Hadn’t he been listening? “You’re a lunkhead?” She looked over at him wryly.

Clark shook his head. “Before that.” He pressed.

Before that? She said he had broken up with her right when... “Oh, that. Well, if you weren’t so insistent on speaking first all the time...” She shrugged her shoulders.

Clark was in shock... Did she say what he thought she just said? That she *had* decided to marry him and then he’d... Oh, my God! He *was* a lunkhead... No wonder it had been so hard on her to forgive him... Clark buried his head in his hands. “Lois, I am SO sorry. I know I have been a jerk lately...”

“Mmmm... Try an ass...” she interjected.

Clark nodded his head in agreement at the insult and sighed, “I didn’t realize how much of a jerk I had been until now... I still don’t even know why you put up with me.”

Lois shrugged lightly. “You’re kinda nice to have around.” She sat back on the couch and leaned into his side and sighed lightly. “I didn’t mean to blow up at you. I just needed to vent. With everything going on the past few weeks and everything tonight... I guess I just needed it.”

Clark kissed her head lightly and buried his head in his hands. “You’re more than entitled. I cannot believe I did that to you, Lois. I am *so* sorry.”

Lois sighed, “I’ve already forgiven you, Clark. Besides, you didn’t know that’s what I was going to say. We’re quite a pair huh?”

Clark smiled. “I swear our lives get weirder and weirder every week.”

“Tell me about it. Has Dr. Klein been able to fix that laser yet?” Lois asked looking up at him.

“Not yet, I really hope he’s able to fix it soon... This is just getting too weird,” Clark murmured.

Lois nodded in agreement. “Well, I suggest we do something to keep our minds off mudslides and crazy people with lasers and red kryptonite and I mean, we could go out and ...” Lois was cut off by Clark capturing her mouth with his as he pulled her into an embrace on his lap.

Clark broke off the kiss slowly. “What were you saying?”

“Huh?” she was slightly dazed by the intensity of his kiss.

Ignoring his earlier question she captured his mouth once more and made herself more comfortable as she straddled him while tightening their embrace.

“Oh, God, Lois...” he moaned in between kisses as she rubbed against him. He wasn’t sure how far she was willing to take this but he was enjoying whatever she had in store for them.

Jimmy Olsen walked down the street silently cursing his luck. He had just fixed his car a week ago now the transmission was out. He didn’t think his car would be towed or anything it was just more an inconvenience than anything. He was shoveling money out left and right on that car. He loved it. It was a classic, but it was sometimes more trouble than it was worth. Oh, well, he’d head to Lois’. He could get a ride home it was only a few blocks away.

Meanwhile, at Lois’ apartment things were getting pretty hot and heavy. Lois, having discarded her and Clark’s jackets on the floor, was in the middle of pushing Clark over the edge as she began to pull Clark’s shirt out of his jeans. She giggled in approval as she felt his hands make contact with her lower back, as Clark worked on removing her blouse from her dress pants.

“Mmmm.” Lois moaned in approval.

“Maybe...” Clark tried to pull away a bit... They were moving *way* too fast. He knew Lois was still upset and he didn’t want to pressure her or do anything they weren’t ready for. He still wasn’t sure how the lack of powers would affect his body. He was still an alien after all. “... We ... should ... slow down ... just a bit...” he said in between kisses.

Lois pulled away slightly, confused. “You *want* to stop?” she asked breathlessly.

“No, I just don’t want us to cross that ... threshold in the heat of the moment...” Clark said as he cupped her cheek. “Lois, I would love more than anything to make love to you... But not like this... on your couch... right after an argument...” Lois smiled at him. He was right. She knew he was right. “Besides there is still something I need to tell you about myself.” Clark continued.

“What? There’s more? Let’s see, you can fly around the world in under a minute. I don’t think you can get any bigger than that.”

Lois joked then she sobered when she saw the expression on Clark’s face. “Clark, I’m sorry. I... I wasn’t thinking.”

Clark smiled lightly. “Hey, it’s okay.”

Lois sighed as she moved her other leg so that she was sitting on his lap. She could still feel the heat from where his body had been pressed against her moments ago. This was not helping in convincing her to cool things off. She wanted him. Bad. “So, what did you want to tell me?” She looped her arms around his neck once more so that he was looking directly at her.

Clark smiled at her direct approach. He was really nervous about telling her. Most guys had had at least some experience by his age but because of his differences he had decided to wait. He had never had a problem with this decision until he had met Lois. Even Lana had never been able to push him so close to crossing the line the way Lois had. He wanted nothing more than to take Lois to bed and make sweet love to her into the night, but he knew they weren’t ready. “Lois, you know how I’m ... *different*?”

Lois smiled and nodded. “Yeah, it’s your differences that make you the man that I love.” She kissed him lightly.

“Mmmm. Yes, but being different has made me make some decisions... personally... that may have been ... different than most guys.” Clark looked at Lois who was nodding in understanding.

“If you’ve noticed I’ve always cooled things off between us when things got to be too ... intense between us?” Lois nodded again, curious as to where this was going. “Well, there’s a reason for that. I’ve never really had a lot of serious relationships. You are

the only woman that has made me even come close to losing control like that. I've never really ...*been* with anyone...like *that*."
 "Oh. So, that's why when I...Oh! Clark, it's nothing to be ashamed of..." Lois leaned up and kissed him lightly. "I love you, Clark Kent." She whispered.

"Lucille, I don't understand why we are following him. We don't even know if he even knows Ultrawoman!" Nell whined as she and Lucille followed Jimmy Olsen from a distance.

"Nell, you said you think Ultrawoman is Lois Lane. He works at the Daily Planet. He must know her somehow." Lucille sniffed as if her theory explained itself.

"I still don't know why—" Nell whined.

"Shh!" Lucille ordered. "Now's our chance!"

Jimmy Olsen turned around once more. He had the eeriest feeling that he was being watched. He didn't realize how far Lois' apartment was from the Planet. How DID CK and Lois walk to work so much? It was really far!

"Shhh!" a female voice could be heard from behind him. He turned around on his heel. He knew he hadn't imagined it. There was nobody there. Was he going crazy or what?

"That's it. I'm losing it," Jimmy muttered to himself. "I'm hearing things now. I think I've been spending too much time in that darkroom."

"Well, it certainly hasn't hurt you any, Mr. Olsen," Lucille said from behind him. She cocked a pistol from behind him and he heard a click. "Don't even think about moving without my say-so.

We wouldn't want to have any...accidents out here in the dark...No street lights...No witnesses."

"What do you want?" Jimmy asked he held his hands high. Where was Superman when you needed him? Even Ultrawoman would do...Though it might be kinda embarrassing having her rescue him...

"Follow us," Nell replied.

Jimmy followed Nell while Lucille held a gun on him from behind. This was not good.

"What's wrong?" Clark asked as he noticed a faraway look on Lois' face.

"I don't know. I just got this weird feeling that something isn't right. Do you know what I mean?" Lois asked.

Clark nodded. "I usually get those whenever you or someone close to me is in trouble. What do you think it could be?"

Lois sighed, "I don't know. I think we need to look into it though. Do you want to come with me? I'm gonna search the city."

Lois looked at him shyly. "I know you're used to flying on your own and it's okay if you don't want to, it's just I don't really want to be alone right now. If it is someone close to us that's in trouble I might need your help too."

Clark leaned in and kissed Lois soundly. "Let's go."

"I don't know what you're talking about. I have only met Ultrawoman once. Lois and CK are the ones that are close to Superman, not me!" Jimmy protested. He was tied to a chair with a bomb connected to it. This was not good.

"It's really simple, Mr. Olsen, you yell 'Help Ultrawoman!' I will then use this red kryptonite to take her powers. I will then be... Ultra Lucille..." Lucille laughed at her own private joke.

"I am not calling Ultrawoman or Superman so that you can take their powers. They are good people and don't deserve THIS!" Jimmy argued. He'd seen Lois banter with villains without showing any fear in situations like this. He just hoped he was acting half as well as she did.

"You would know wouldn't you, Mr. Olsen?" Lucille asked.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Jimmy asked.

"It means Superman and Lois Lane were hit with this Red Kryptonite laser. Then all of a sudden 'Ultrawoman' shows up. Hello? Ultrawoman is Lois Lane!" Nell cried out. "How dumb can you be?"

Jimmy was baffled. That was ridiculous. Lois was Ultrawoman? Yeah right. Next, they were gonna tell him CK was really Superman. "You're nuts."

"Maybe so, but you have 15 minutes to decide or BOOM!" Lucille said as she and Nell walked out. "We'll be watching."

"Oh, man!" Jimmy cried. "This is not my day at all." Where were CK and Lois when you needed them?

Clark was dressed in his Superman suit and Lois in her Ultrawoman suit as they flew together in the Metropolis night sky. Clark held Lois' hand to maintain the illusion they were both flying should any plane or aircraft see them. "Do you see anything?" Clark asked.

"Jimmy," Lois replied.

"What?" Clark asked surprised, "I guess he's inherited your sense of adventure."

"You're not funny, Clark. No, there are two women down there; one of them is calling herself Lucille. They're trying to lure us down there to take my powers. Clark! Oh, my God! She just told Jimmy I'm Ultrawoman! Oh, my God!" Lois was panicking.

"Lois, calm down," Clark reassured her.

"Wait a minute," Lois continued.

"What?" he asked

Lois smiled. "He just told them they were nuts. But we still have to figure out a way to rescue him without getting hit by that awful laser again."

"Hmm...Maybe this is a job for Lane and Kent rather than Ultrawoman and Superman." Clark suggested.

Lois spun into her work clothes as Clark finished buttoning up his shirt.

"You know that is one thing I definitely do miss; being able to change clothes within a few seconds," Clark said as they exited the alley.

"Tell me about it. I'm going to miss it when things get back to normal, but I've ripped so many pairs of pantyhose in the last 24 hours...I don't think I'll miss it as much as you. I keep destroying my clothes." Lois grinned.

"Maybe women's clothing is more delicate than men's," Clark replied. "All right, what's the plan of action?"

"She has him hooked up to some bomb that's set to electrify Jimmy. You still remember how to disable a bomb?" Lois asked.

"Ah, how could I forget?" Clark muttered. "Where is Lucille?"

Lois used her x-ray vision again. "It looks like they are near the front entrance with some other woman...Nell."

"The Newtriches?" Clark asked.

"Yeah. I guess we were on the right trail, to begin with. I suggest we break in from behind. There's a back door over there."

Lois pointed to the wooded area behind the cabin. She and Clark headed towards the woods and approached the back door.

"After you." Clark gestured.

"Lucille, we're not really gonna...Are we?" Nell whined to her sister.

"Nell, it's his choice. If he fails to call for help then it's suicide not murder," Lucille responded as she reapplied her lipstick.

Clark worked with the timer on the setup Nell had rigged for Jimmy. He had to make sure it didn't go off when they got Jimmy out of his restraints or either one of them could be seriously hurt or risk revealing Lois and possibly him as super powered beings.

Lois crawled beside him and mouthed. "All set?"

He nodded and they crawled over to Jimmy to help him out. Jimmy struggled against the plastic binds that held his hands behind his back. “This is insane! How the hell did CK do this?”

“Psst...” he heard a female voice behind him

Jimmy turned around in the chair and saw Lois and Clark crouched down behind him. “You have no idea how glad I am to see you guys. How did you know?”

Lois smiled as she helped Jimmy take the restraints off his hands. “I’ll explain later. Are you okay?”

Clark was working on stopping the timing mechanism on the bomb while Lois freed Jimmy of his restraints.

“I think so,” Jimmy replied.

Clark joined Lois and Jimmy and asked, “What did they want?” Even though he already knew the answer.

“Ultrawoman. They think they can take her and Superman’s powers by using this laser beam with red Kryptonite. That stuff doesn’t have that effect on Superman. It makes him apathetic! I still wasn’t going to call either one of them and take a chance. Superman’s saved my butt thousands of times. I figured I could figure a way out of here,” Jimmy whispered as they crawled out the back door.

Clark grimaced. He hated the fact that Jimmy had been put into that type of situation because of Lois and him.

“Keep your voice down. We want to hear them if they come back. That timer was set for 10 more minutes. Clark tricked it into freezing long enough to get you out of there but it’ll still go off and we want to be as far away as possible when they find out their plan didn’t go off as planned,” Lois explained quietly.

“This way.” Clark gestured to the dark alleyway he and Lois had landed in moments ago.

“Great. An abandoned alleyway. So, now what guys?” Jimmy asked sarcastically. He was not in a good mood.

Lois smiled. “There’s an entry way through this abandoned house. It cuts out onto the main road. It’s just a few blocks from the police station, which is where YOU need to go.”

“Great,” Jimmy muttered. “It’s times like this. I wish I could fly.”

Lois and Clark exchanged a look as they walked Jimmy to the Metropolis P.D.

It was several hours later they were finally able to go home. Lois discreetly snuck out to go retrieve her Jeep so they could drive home at least instead of walking. She didn’t like having to walk any more than Jimmy did. The last 24-hours she had been flying to all her destinations and had spoiled herself in that luxury. After they were finally done, Lois dropped Jimmy off at his place and she and Clark headed back to her place.

Lois threw her coat to the floor as they walked in and headed to the kitchen. “I am so hungry! I can’t believe I’ve hardly been able to eat all day. How in the world do you do it, Clark?”

Clark smiled. “I usually get yelled at by my mom for inhaling my food but it works.”

Lois groaned as she looked in the refrigerator. “There’s nothing here. And I don’t feel like going anywhere to get anything.” She turned around and crossed her arms across her chest.

“Here. I’ll whip us up something,” Clark said as he moved Lois out of the way of the refrigerator.

“How?” she asked. “There is no food.”

Clark smiled. “Lois, you do have food. You just aren’t used to having to put it together to make it into something appetizing.” He teased.

Clark took out some tomatoes, chicken, milk, various spices, and pasta noodles; then whipped up Alfredo pasta for them. Lois took the opportunity to get changed into something more comfortable. She came out in a light tank top and faded blue jeans. Clark was stirring the sauce when Lois approached him from

behind, looping her arms around his neck.

“I don’t know how you do it, Clark,” Lois murmured.

“It’s actually pretty simple. My mom taught me how to make it when I was a teenager,” Clark replied.

Lois smiled down at him and shook her head. “Not that. I meant the whole double life plus find time to cook. I hate the suit. I hate having to be one step ahead of everyone else in case I have an emergency to go to. I never realized what a burden you carry....I’m sorry. I know I’ve given you a really hard time these past few years. I didn’t think and I got myself into situations all the time....”

Clark took the sauce off the stove and carried it to the table with Lois in tow. He turned around and pulled her into his lap as he began to speak. “Lois, listen to me. You have nothing to apologize for. I admit I wish you were a bit more careful, but a lot of the time we’ve gotten into those situations together. I know it’s hard. Now, you don’t have to be Ultrawoman if you don’t want to be...I chose to become Superman to help people. That was my choice. If you don’t want to carry that same burden you don’t have to. You didn’t exactly get your powers naturally. I had 18 years to learn and develop my powers. You had a few hours.”

“Oh, Clark.” Lois murmured, “It’s not that I don’t want to help. I do. I’m just saying ...it’s hard. It’s harder than anything I’ve ever done or thought about doing... And you know what?”

“What?” he asked

“It made me realize something about you,” Lois replied.

“What’s that?” Clark asked curiously.

“I love you more. I mean, I think I really understand you a lot better than I did before. You’re a lot stronger than what people give you credit for... Not the physical aspect but emotionally, Clark... I mean, all those cries for help you can’t answer; how it slowly tears you apart inside...I don’t know how you do it.” Lois stroked away a few of her escaping tears.

“I have you, Lois. That’s how I deal with it. I know no matter what. You’re there for me,” Clark responded.

“Oh, Clark...” she leaned down and kissed him passionately. Clark groaned in pleasure as she pressed up against him.

“Mmmm...”

“Clark, I need to tell you something.” Lois began but was interrupted by the ringing of the telephone.

Clark groaned. “What now?”

“We should probably get that,” Lois said and got up to answer the phone.

Clark groaned as Lois got up. Mentally, he knew they weren’t ready to make love yet. She hadn’t even accepted his proposal and they were still dealing with the emotions of the latest villain in Metropolis’ plans for not only Superman but Lois as well.... He was just having a very hard time in convincing the rest of his body of this fact.

Lois grudgingly got up from Clark’s lap. The truth was she was ready to accept Clark’s proposal. She just wasn’t sure how to tell him. She was a bit gun-shy after the last time she got the courage to tell him. He had broken up with her and that had hurt. After their talk last week at the Lake’s she knew they understood each other a lot better and their talk earlier tonight had helped to explain why he was so skittish about their relationship as well. She couldn’t believe he had waited... He was gorgeous. He had women falling all over him but he didn’t care about any of that. It was kinda a turn-on that she would be the only woman to...

‘Whoa, girl...slow down...’

Lois answered the phone. “Hello?”

Dr. Klein was on the other end of the phone. “Yes, Ms. Lane, this is Dr. Klein. I was trying to get a hold of Superman. I tried Mr. Kent’s apartment but got no answer. I thought maybe he would be ...with you.”

“Clark’s right here. What did you need Superman for?” Lois

inquired.

“I have perfected the laser Superman asked me to fix...” Dr. Klein was cut off by Lois’ interruption.

“You fixed it? Are you sure?” Lois was ecstatic. “We’ll be right there.”

“Wait...! Ms. Lane, I’m not sure...if...!” Dr. Klein was talking to dead air.

“Clark, we have to go. Dr. Klein has fixed that laser and we can get everything back to normal! Let’s go!” Lois was in a hurry.

“Lois, calm down. What exactly did Dr. Klein say?”

“The laser was fixed.”

“Well, then Superman and Ultrawoman need to make an appearance,” he said as he took off his glasses.

“Don’t you ever get tired of talking about yourself in the third person?” Lois frowned. Clark just chuckled.

Lois and Clark were dressed in their superhero personas as they walked in STAR Labs. Clark was still unsure as to how he would explain Ultrawoman and his relationship when he wasn’t so sure himself.

Lois smiled to herself. She had figured Clark wouldn’t know how to explain the relationship between Superman and Ultrawoman very well. Given his history with excuses they’d be lucky if Dr. Klein didn’t try to check Superman into the funny farm when they were through. Since she had decided where she wanted their relationship to be she had ‘borrowed’ her engagement ring from Clark unbeknownst to him. He always carried it with him wherever he went except when he was in the suit. Maybe this would hint to Clark she was ready for the next step. She had stepped up and said the scary words the last time. It was his turn.

“Superman! Ah, you must be Ultrawoman. It’s a pleasure to make your acquaintance.” Dr. Klein offered his hand out to Lois. She took it and made sure to watch the pressure she used when shaking the doctor’s hand.

“I’ve heard a lot about you, Dr. Klein,” Lois replied.

“So, Superman, if you don’t mind me asking, this is under doctor-patient privilege... What exactly has happened that has made you... ‘not yourself’?” Dr. Klein asked.

Clark looked at Lois for help. Lois intervened in the conversation, understanding Clark’s silent plea for help. “His powers were transferred to me making me twice as powerful.”

“Ah...” Dr. Klein replied. “Well, I can see how that might be a problem. So, what exactly happened?”

“Ummm...” Clark wasn’t sure of what to say to that at all.

“That’s not really important, Dr. Klein. We need to fix this problem as soon as possible,” Lois said as she placed her left hand down on the desk Dr. Klein was working at. Clark’s eyes widened when he recognized the ring Lois was wearing. What was she doing? Did this mean she wanted to...? There was no telling with her. He tried to keep his facial features as calm and relaxed as he could so as not to arouse suspicion from Dr. Klein.

Fortunately, Dr. Klein was not looking at Superman’s face at that moment. He too had recognized the ring on a very important finger. “Oh! I see... You two are... OH! I’m sorry obviously this is personal, Superman... My apologies. Let’s get started, shall we?” They walked down to the east wing of STAR Labs where all the laser research was tested so as to keep from any accidents.

Clark was still baffled. He really needed to talk to Lois. Maybe this would be a good time to ask her again. Only this time he wanted to plan a lot better. Proposing in the rain wasn’t exactly what he called romantic. Especially right after being frozen to death... He realized now how selfish he had been before. All he had been thinking of was his feelings. He hadn’t thought of Lois’ feelings at all. All he knew was that she was alive and they were in love and he was afraid to lose her again. He had acted childishly when she had turned his proposal and even more childishly by

breaking up with her instead of talking to her about his insecurities.

What did Lois wearing his ring as Ultrawoman mean? Was it just a ruse to fool Dr. Klein or was there more to it than that?

Meanwhile, Lucille and Nell Newtrich were plotting again. “I cannot believe you messed up again! Don’t you know how to do anything right?” Lucille asked.

“It’s not my fault, Lucille. I didn’t know he was going to be able to escape,” Nell whined.

“Well, we may not be able to pull this job off the way we planned but we can still pull it off. Let’s go. And try to clean up properly. I don’t want any clues left behind for any busy body Superheroes or Reporters to blow our plan before we are able to act on it,” Lucille ordered in a huff.

“Are you sure about this?” Lois asked

“Positive,” Dr. Klein replied. “All you have to do is ...well, do what you do...and I’ll shoot the laser and presto... Everything’s back to normal.”

Clark put his arm around Lois’ shoulders and squeezed lightly. Dr. Klein pulled his goggles down and aimed... An electronic beam fired from the laser and hit both Superman and Ultrawoman.

Dr. Klein lifted his goggles up and looked at the couple. “Well, Superman, how do you feel?”

Superman checked his hearing, x-ray vision, heat vision, and floating abilities. “Everything seems to be in working order, but I still haven’t checked everything yet.”

“Well, let’s go back into my office and we’ll check you out,” Dr. Klein said as he gestured down the hallway to his office.

Clark sighed heavily as he landed on the balcony to his apartment. He had just dropped Lois off at her apartment. Once he had gotten changed he noticed the ‘missing’ ring was back where it had been before, in the small black velvet box that he had in his jacket pocket. He had thought about bringing it up to Lois but thought better of it. He was just glad things seemed to be getting back to normal. He was Superman again and he was in love with Lois Lane... That should be enough, shouldn’t it?

The only problem was it wasn’t enough. It was never going to be enough. He wanted to be with her. He wanted her as his wife and partner in all aspects of life. The question was, did Lois want those same things? Clark was too tired to think. His head hit the pillow and he fell into a restless night of sleep.

On the other side of Metropolis Lois was having an equally hard time falling to sleep as well. She didn’t know if Clark had seen the ring on her finger. She figured he had, but he hadn’t mentioned it at all. She had put the ring back when they had arrived back at her apartment. Clark hadn’t even noticed! What did all this mean? Maybe he wasn’t ready to bring up the whole idea of marriage again? What if he had doubts? She had put him through a lot over the past few years... What if he decided he couldn’t handle it anymore? It wouldn’t be the first time a man had decided Lois Lane was too much to handle... What was she thinking? This was Clark... He wouldn’t do that. She just needed to get some sleep. Hopefully, they could figure out the situation with the Newtriches and get things back to normal... Well, as normal as things ever got for them.

The next day Superman was very busy. Many robberies were taking place all around Metropolis and Clark wasn’t sure how he seemed to keep missing the thieves. He had searched all over Metropolis and still no sign. He headed back to the Planet and decided to consult Lois about the robberies. Maybe she had a better idea.

“Hey, what’s up? You’ve been pretty busy today,” Lois

commented, as she noticed Clark walking past her desk.

“Yeah, the weirdest thing has been going on all day. I haven’t been able to find the robbers that keep hitting all these banks today. I’m not sure what is going on.” Clark sighed and sat down next to Lois.

Lois’ ears quirked up at this. Something was going on here. “What exactly happened at these robberies?”

“It’s really weird. There’s no holdup. It’s just the money in the banks is disappearing all over Metropolis. I can’t explain it.” Clark was frustrated.

“So, no holdup?” Lois asked.

“No, I’ve just been picking up the alarm that they set off whenever they realize over half the money in the bank is gone...” Clark drummed his fingers lightly on Lois’ desk.

“How is that even possible?” Lois inquired.

“Beats me.” He shrugged in defeat.

Jimmy came bouncing by with a folder of research just then. “Hey, guys, I wanted to thank you once more for saving my butt last night. I don’t know what I would have done if you two hadn’t of shown up.”

“Hey, you’ve helped us out several times, Jimmy. We’re just returning the favor,” Clark replied.

“So, what have you got, Jimmy?” Lois pointed at the folder in his hands.

“Oh, this just came in. It’s the research you wanted on the Newtriches.” Jimmy handed the folder to them and walked off. “Have fun.”

Lois and Clark opened the folder and started pouring over the information.

“Oh, my God, Clark, look.” Lois pointed to the paper in front of her. “These two aren’t just some random criminals. Newtrich? Why didn’t we think of this before? They are ...”

“Gene Newtrich’s sisters.” Clark finished for her. “So, he’s the one who told them about the red kryptonite. But what do they want?”

“My guess... Money. Isn’t that what every criminal wants? Money? Power?” Lois observed.

“This says Lucille used to work at First International Metropolis Bank.... Wait a minute... That’s it.”

“What’s it?”

“Don’t you see? They’re probably the ones behind these robberies.”

“Okay, I’ll bite. But how are they doing this?”

“I don’t know. But I do know where they’re going.”

“How?”

“They’ve hit all but one bank.”

“Which one?”

“New Troy International,” Clark said as he and Lois dropped down behind the bank. “We’re here.”

“All I see is a bunch of bankers. A truck reloading the ATM...” Lois looked around unimpressed.

“Wait a minute! They’re not loading the ATM. They’re unloading it!”

“Are you sure?”

“Lois, since when do truck drivers wear ski masks when unloading merchandise?”

“Let’s go. Just be careful. The last thing I want is for you to lose your powers to the likes of them.”

“Tell me about it.”

Lois and Clark approached from a distance listening to the conversation going on between Lucille and Nell as they unloaded the ATM. Nell had a strange device hooked to the ATM that opened the machine and Lucille was frantically pouring the money into a bag, as she scolded Nell for not moving fast enough.

“You idiot! Hurry up! You can’t do anything right! If you had

just gotten Ultrawoman’s powers for me we wouldn’t have this problem!” Lucille hissed.

“That’s not my fault,” Nell whined. “I’m moving as fast as I can. Besides, I didn’t know that he would have figured a way out of those restraints. I had them as tight as I could get them.”

“Well, obviously not fast enough because he escaped didn’t he?” A stern voice was heard from behind them.

“Ladies.” Superman approached them. “Somehow I don’t think this is your average trip to the bank. Drop the bag.”

Nell pulled out a laser on Superman. “Not so fast. One move and you’re toast! We know you don’t have any superpowers, Superman! Ultrawoman has them now! Where is she?”

Nell being overly confident didn’t even keep the laser gun aimed correctly at Superman and she was nervous as well which added to Superman’s ability to keep the upper hand.

Superman aimed his heat vision on the laser gun in Nell’s hand until it had been dropped by her and turned into goo.

“OW! That hurt!” Nell complained.

“You were saying?” Superman grabbed them from behind and escorted them to the policemen who were coming out of their patrol cars to see what was going on. “Officers, these two are the culprits responsible for the robberies that have been occurring throughout Metropolis all day. I’m sure if you search their van you will find all of the missing money.”

“Thanks, Superman,” the officer said, as he began to read the rights to the two and lead them away in handcuffs.

Lois approached with a smile. “See? I can stay out of trouble,” she said simply.

“Yes, you can. But the question is for how long?” He grinned back at her and she glared at him. Things were definitely looking up for them.

“Great job, you two. Did you ever find out where Ultrawoman came from?” Perry asked.

“Umm,” Lois began.

“All both she and Superman were willing to say was that she was a close friend of his,” Clark interjected. “I think it must be pretty personal because we couldn’t get either one of them to talk about it.”

“Well, I guess even Superman’s allowed to have a personal life. You know, someone to love.... I guess it was pretty stupid of me to think Ultrawoman would notice me when she has Superman hanging around,” Jimmy said dejectedly, but then he smiled. “I’m happy for him, though. I’m glad he has someone. Superman does a lot of good. He should be allowed to have a normal life too. Well, as normal as you can for him.”

“Son, I couldn’t agree more.” Perry sighed, “I want to apologize to y’all. I know things have been a bit tense these last few days... I finally found Alice. She wants a divorce.”

“Perry, I’m sorry,” Lois said.

“I’m really sorry, Chief,” Clark said.

“Well, the thing is I’ve lived and breathed the Daily Planet for over 30 years and Alice says she wants to be first priority and refuses to play second fiddle any longer. I can’t say I blame her.” Perry sighed and walked away. “Oh, are you two going to have the follow ups on this anytime soon?” Lois and Clark gave blank stares. “Well, don’t just stand there. Follow up. I want to know what the mayor plans to do to protect Superman from exposure to Red Kryptonite again. Hell, he saves everyone’s lives all the time. Our government should be working to protect him as well.”

Perry walked away and Clark walked over to his desk leaving Lois to talk to Jimmy. Jimmy was just getting up to leave when Lois grabbed his arm.

“Jimmy, Ultrawoman did say one thing before she flew off.”

“What?”

“You’re cute.”

“I’m cute? She said that? Really?”

“Her exact words.”

Jimmy grabbed the mail clerk walking by. “I’m cute!” Lois smiled and looked over at Clark who had a look of admiration on his face. They definitely needed to talk.

Clark saw Jimmy leave and approached Lois’ desk a bit nervously. “How about dinner tonight? We didn’t get to have dinner the other night thanks to the Newtriches.”

“Sounds good. Promise, no Chinese.”

“Scout’s honor.” Clark held up his hand in the familiar Boy Scout symbol.

Lois laughed. “What time are you going to pick me up?”

“Is 8 o’clock okay?”

“Sounds good.” Lois kissed him lightly on the cheek. “Now, Perry did bring up an interesting point...”

The two of them dug into their research and continued their follow ups with the Mayor’s office all the while both of them wondered in the back of their minds what their date tonight would bring.

Clark paced across his apartment anxiously trying to figure out what to wear. He was nervous as hell. He had tried on everything in his closet and nothing seemed to be *right*. Part of it was he was nervous about tonight. He was going to ask Lois to marry him again... The right way. This time there would be no rainstorm to interfere and no secrets between them.

He had been stupid to think he could ask her to marry him before he told her his secret, but he had been so desperate to hold onto her after the fiasco with Jason Mazik that he hadn’t been thinking clearly. He hadn’t even planned a proper evening to propose to her. He had just purchased the ring and taken her to the park and asked her.

He was actually surprised Lois hadn’t been angrier with him than she was that night. He had been so selfish that night and then taken it out on her. Sure he had been hurt to hear her say, ‘no’, but it still didn’t give him the right to act the way he did. He had pushed her away rather than giving her what she asked for... *Time*.

He shook his head as he sat on his bed in disgust. He may be Superman, but when it came to Lois Lane he was putty in her hands. Ever since they had begun dating he seemed to be screwing up one way or another. He had pushed her away after Mayson’s death. Then instead of telling her how he felt he waited until he had practically pushed her into the arms of Dan Scardino before he told her how he opened up to her.

Then after she had chosen him over Scardino he still continued to lie to her about his other identity. He had almost lost her and he still couldn’t tell her. She had to figure it out for herself. He had pushed her away again after she refused his proposal. Then he had decided he was a jinx and broke up with her for her own good. He still wasn’t sure Lois had completely forgiven him for that one.

What was going to happen when he proposed tonight? Would she say yes? Would he be able to handle it if she said, ‘no’ again? He certainly couldn’t blame her if she refused him again. He hadn’t exactly been the perfect boyfriend lately. Clark sighed in frustration again and decided to take a third look at his wardrobe and see if he could find *something* to wear tonight.

Lois paced her bedroom as she tried on yet another dress. She had left work early to try and find the perfect dress. She had purchased red, burgundy and black. She had gotten home and had a déjà vu feeling of her first date with Clark. Trying on all the dresses in front of the mirror, nothing seemed to look right. She pulled out a long burgundy dress that had a sheer outer layer with a bow in the back. It was sleeveless and had a v-neck. She had a sheer burgundy shawl that went with it as well, in case it was cold out. She wasn’t sure where Clark was planning on taking her so she had no way of knowing what to expect of the weather

conditions.

She knew he probably had seen her ring on earlier. Even without his powers Clark was very observant. She hoped he had gotten the hint. She was tired of this back and forth with her and Clark’s relationship. They were in a better place than they had been in quite some time, but she still felt like they were in limbo. In the back of both her and his mind was always the proposal. It would have been better if he had never brought it up until after he had told her about Superman, but he had and now they had to deal with it. She loved him. She trusted him. She knew he would never do anything like what her father had done to her mother. It was still scary though.

Lois eyed herself up and down in the mirror. “Perfect.”

Clark knocked nervously at her door and waited.

“Just a minute!” Lois called through the door. He had a sense of déjà vu as he heard those words. They were both acting like this was their first date all over again. Maybe in a way it was.

Lois opened the door slightly out of breath. “Come on in. I’m almost ready. Just let me grab my purse.”

Clark stepped inside and took a moment to admire her beauty. She looked ravishing from head to toe. The burgundy gown she wore was exquisite. She wore matching heels along with a shawl and a set of sterling silver teardrop earrings with matching necklace.

He tried to find the words to express how beautiful she was to him. “Lois... Wow... You look...”

“Not so bad yourself, farmboy.” She looked him over as she picked up her purse and headed toward the door. Lois leaned up and kissed him lightly. “So, where are you taking me tonight?”

“Um...it’s a surprise.” Clark was still fumbling over his words trying to maintain coherent speech. She was wearing burgundy. She looked ravishing. In all of his fantasies... she had been wearing burgundy.

Lois smiled when she got no further explanation. She knew exactly what she was doing and she was extremely satisfied with Clark’s reaction to the dress.

Clark took her arm and hooked it with his. “Shall we?”

“Clark? How did you...? When did you..?” Lois stared at him in wonder. They were sitting at the same table they had had their first date at so many months ago.

“I figured we needed a change of pace. You said you were in a rut the other day with all of the Chinese food... And if you remember last time our date didn’t end very well. I thought maybe we could get it right this time.” He explained.

Lois smiled at him over her menu. “You are full of surprises.”

Their waiter came with their food. “*Signore Kent, Signora Lane,*” the waiter announced in his Italian accent. “Your dinner is served.” Steaming plates of pasta were placed in front of them. “*Piacere il suo cibo.*”

Lois smiled at Clark conspiratorially as the desert plate was placed in front of them. “Well, this is a first in a while.”

“What is?” Clark asked.

“Having dinner without any interruptions...” Lois explained, “Between Jimmy and Perry and Superman and evil villains trying to take over Metropolis we haven’t really had much of a break.”

“Yeah, I think the last time we had a meal uninterrupted was our first date.”

Lois smiled. “I’m sorry.”

“For what?”

“Slamming the door in your face.”

“That’s in the past. Besides you promised you wouldn’t do it again.”

“Yeah.”

“As long as we’re whipping out apologies... Lois I’m really

sorry about the way I've been acting these past few weeks... I mean right after Mayson's death I pushed you away instead of telling you what I was going through... I almost destroyed 'us'. Can you forgive me?"

Lois took Clark's hand in hers and smiled at him. "Clark, I think we've both done practically everything possible to sabotage our relationship. We've moved past all those things and now we're in a better place."

"Are we?"

"Yeah, I think so. I mean, after our talk the other day I feel a lot better."

"Yeah, me too." Clark let out a breath he had been holding. "Lois, I am lost without you, but I don't know why you put up with me."

"You're pretty handy to have around." She leaned over to kiss him. "I love you." Another kiss. "And that's all that matters to me."

"Really? So, you can live with having conversations, dinners, and stories interrupted because someone has to be rescued?"

"Yeah, as long as you can deal with the fact that you can't be everywhere at once and you can't protect me from everything either."

"I love you, Lois Lane."

"And I love you, Clark Kent." She stroked the side of his face as she kissed him deeply. Clark groaned against her lips.

"Mmmm... We haven't even started the desert yet."

"Oh, the chocolate!"

Clark laughed and picked up his fork to take a bite. He fed Lois a piece and watched in agony as she proceeded to enjoy every tantalizing bite of the chocolate cake. They finished the desert and left the restaurant happily holding hands.

Clark led the way towards the park that held so many memories for both of them.

Lois smiled as they walked through the park hand in hand. "Ah, the fountain again... So, you're either going to propose or confess your love for me again?"

Clark smiled at her joke. They had been through a lot. "No, I just thought it would be a nice night for a walk... or a flight."

"A flight, huh?"

"Yes." Clark spun into his Superman suit and scooped her in his arms.

"Where are we going?"

"You'll see."

Clark flew them up above the clouds and they drifted above the clouds. Lois shivered from the cold and he wrapped his cape around her.

"It's still just as beautiful," Lois murmured looking at the stars around them.

"Not as beautiful as you." Clark leaned in and kissed her.

"Lois, I've been doing a lot of thinking these past few days... Ever since you kinda blew up at me the other day." At Lois' nod he continued, "I've been... an idiot."

"I think we both wore that title for the past few months." Lois reasoned aloud.

"I love you with every fiber of my being, Lois. I almost lost you because of my own unfounded fears." He whispered, running his hands through her hair, "I know you said you '*forgive me*' and I love you for that but I haven't forgiven myself."

"Clark..." She whispered hesitantly.

"I am so sorry, Lois. I completely destroyed your faith in me. I swear, I will never do anything like that to us again... and even if it takes a lifetime to earn your trust back I'll do it." He hung his head in despair and Lois lifted his chin to look her in the eyes.

Lois reached up to stroke his cheek, "Oh, Clark," He rested his head against hers, placing a kiss on her forehead. "I love you so much. We've both made some mistakes, but things are different

now."

"I can't believe I came so close to..." He stopped, mid-sentence, "I love you, Lois."

"I love you too," She whispered back, "bad decisions and all. I told you I forgive you and I meant it. So, stop beating yourself up about it and let's move on."

He gave her half-smile, taking her hand in his, "I love you."

"I love you too," She whispered, "more than I ever thought I could." She leaned her head against him.

"I've been in love with you from the second you walked into Perry's office interrupting my interview with him. I never stopped." She looked at him tenderly and he continued, "I want to be there for you when you're happy, sad, mad, or angry... I want to be your husband. I can't promise I won't make some mistakes along the way, but I will do everything in my power to protect you. Will you marry me?"

Lois smiled through her unshed tears; she reached up and kissed him thoroughly before pulling back long enough to give a simple, "yes."

Upon hearing her answer, Clark placed the ring on her finger and pulled her in a tighter embrace and continued their kiss again with more enthusiasm. Tongues were dancing around seeking out one another as arms caressed one another enthusiastically as well.

Clark groaned in approval as Lois began stroking his back. He broke off the kiss, meeting her gaze.

"Lois..."

"Clark..."

He could see the desire burning in her eyes. He knew what she wanted. Right now he couldn't think of a single reason why they shouldn't... The only thing was, he didn't want to take advantage of the situation either. He had just proposed and she had accepted, but she didn't have a way of leaving if she wanted either. He wanted to make sure she felt in full control. "Why don't we head back? It's a bit cold up here. You're probably freezing."

Clark closed the window quietly and spun back into the suit he had been wearing earlier that evening. Just as he had turned around; Lois flung herself into his arms, knocking him back a couple of feet... more from surprise than force. Lois laughed as he tried to maintain his balance in between kisses. Hands roamed aimlessly on each other's body. Clark finally gave up the struggle to keep his balance and slowly allowed them to just fall to the floor.

"You learn quickly." Lois giggled as she sought out his mouth once more.

Clark groaned his appreciation as he began to draw imaginary circles on her back. "Mmmm... Are... you... sure... we're... not... moving too... fast?" He asked in between kisses.

Lois looked up at his questioning look. "Am I sure? Aren't you forgetting who started this?" She then captured his mouth once more and began rubbing her hands up and down his chest.

Clark groaned in appreciation. His body was on fire. He could feel the tightness in his pants at Lois' ministrations. She had barely touched him and he already felt like he was going to lose his mind if he didn't touch every inch of her... kiss every layer of skin. The passion between them escalated as they began an exploration of uncharted territory...

He moved his hands under the hem of her dress and rubbed up and down her inner thigh, feeling the soft smoothness of her creamy skin. He kept one hand on her inner thigh massaging it as his other hand slid higher until he came in contact with...

"Lois! CK! Is anyone home!?!?" Jimmy's voice echoed from the other side of the door and they both groaned at the intrusion.

Clark groaned in agony. "I swear he must have a death wish..."

"Think he'll go away if we pretend we're not home?" Lois

asked breathlessly as she moved to straddle him.

“Come on, guys, its important!” Jimmy’s voice echoed through Lois’ front door.

Clark laughed. “I’m sorry, Lois, I can’t... Not with Jimmy in the background...” He sat up and moved Lois off him as he tried to regain control of his body.

Jimmy continued to bang on the door insistently.

“We’re coming!” Lois called as she straightened her dress and made sure everything was covered, checking her reflection in the mirror once more before opening the door. “Yes, Jimmy, what can I do for you?”

Jimmy entered the apartment in his usual excited manner. “You guys, I have got *big* news for you.”

“What is it?” Clark asked from behind Lois.

“Check this out!” Jimmy handed them a copy of the National Inquisitor with an edited picture of Superman and Ultrawoman holding a baby. ‘*Super Family Hidden!*’ splashed all over the cover.

“Oh, my God!” Lois groaned.

“Can you believe this?” Jimmy asked. “There’re super-kids flying around and we don’t even know about it.”

It was Clark’s turn to groan. “Jimmy, don’t believe everything you read. You can tell this picture is obviously a fake.”

“Yeah, CK, but Superman himself said that Ultrawoman was a *close* friend... We all know what that means.”

“It means, she’s a friend and it’s none of our business... Jimmy, I’m surprised at you. You’re willing to believe this rag when they talk so tawdry of Superman and you’re supposed to be his friend!” Lois interjected.

Jimmy sobered immediately. “I’m sorry, Lois, I just saw this and...”

“We appreciate you bringing this to our attention, Jimmy, but Lois is right. You shouldn’t be taking the tabloid’s word as gold in regards to your friends,” Clark said trying to comfort his friend’s obvious hurt ego.

“Is this all you wanted to show us?” Lois asked.

“No. I just saw this article on the news stand on my way over.” Jimmy pulled out a file folder he had been carrying. “I think there’s more to the Newtriches than what meets the eye.”

“What do you mean?” Lois asked, wondering what she and Clark could have missed.

“Okay, just go with me, all right.” Jimmy sat on the couch in between Lois and Clark. “Gene Newtrich was the first one to discover Red Kryptonite, right? He was hired by Intergang.”

“Yeah, so, Intergang has been dismantled for a few months now,” Lois replied dryly.

“What if it’s not? Someone new could be running it,” Clark replied.

“That’s what I’m thinking. Look at the amounts pulled out of the ATMs- 7 hundred, 7 thousand, 7 thousand 7 hundred, seventy dollars... All of them are in 7’s. The seventh day is the holy day.

The day everyone goes to...”

“Church,” Lois and Clark replied in unison.

“Exactly. You guys catch on quick. Anyway, I did some digging... And it turns out Newtrich was also getting deposits from another familiar name as well.” Jimmy pointed to the name on the deposit record.

“Nigel St. John,” Clark read the name aloud. He shook his head in amusement. “He’s been paying Newtrich since 1994! I guess Luthor’s rise from the dead didn’t impress him enough to stay loyal.”

“Well, he did say it was ‘Intergang’s Turn’, when the big scuffle happened between Vale and Lex,” Lois replied.

“But isn’t Nigel dead?” Clark asked.

“He could have others working for him.... Anyway, we can investigate this tomorrow. Thanks for bringing this by Jimmy.” She stood up and opened the door.

“I get it. I can take a hint. I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to interrupt your evening.” Jimmy laughed good-naturedly as he gathered his things and headed towards the door. “I’ll see you guys later.”

“Good bye, Jimmy,” Lois said hurriedly as she shut the door behind him.

“Alone at last,” Clark sighed as he pulled Lois down on the couch. She shrieked into a fit of giggles before his mouth came crashing down on hers.

Clark pulled away slowly. “Hold that thought.” Lois watched as he sped around the apartment at super speed and then reappeared in front of her.

“What was that about?” Lois asked as Clark locked all of Lois’ many deadbolts to her front door.

Clark scooped her into his arms and strode purposefully towards her bedroom. He laid her down on the bed and laid himself beside her. “I didn’t want to tempt fate anymore tonight so I unplugged all the phones...”

Lois laughed, “There have been quite a few interruptions...”

“Too many,” he murmured as he nudged at her neck with his nose.

“*Way* too many...” Lois agreed as she began pulling his arms out of the sleeves of his sports jacket. Clark captured her mouth once more, his tongue demanding entry, which she gave him enthusiastically. Now free of his jacket, his hands picked up where they had so rudely been interrupted from earlier. “Yes,” she murmured against his lips as both hands moved up her thighs, bunching the hem of her dress up on both sides.

He let out a soft moan as he stared at the silk stockings he’d uncovered. The knot to his tie came undone, hanging loosely through his collar. She began working on the buttons to his dress shirt, revealing the smooth solid skin of his chest when she stopped.

“Where’s the suit?” she asked, between open-mouthed kisses.

“I dropped it off at home when I changed.” He whispered. “Superman’s taking the night off.”

“When you changed?” She giggled. “You spun out of the suit in like two seconds.”

“I was *very* motivated.” He whispered back, nibbling at the sensitive skin of her throat. She let out a soft moan, sliding closer to him on his lap.

“I love you,” She whispered, running her hands up and down his chest after the last button came undone. He moved his hands up her back, fingering the zipper to her dress.

He drank in the sight before him of his fiancée looking at him with desire in her eyes... A man couldn’t wish for anything more, right? “What do you want, baby?”

“I want you.” She whispered, leaning in to kiss him.

To his surprise, Lois pulled away, standing up and reaching behind her. It took him all of two seconds to realize she was undressing for him. The dress hung loosely off her shoulders and she shrugged it off, allowing it to pool at her feet. He stared in awe at the sheer silk and lace that covered her body.

He felt his breath catch in his throat as he watched her run her hands up and down her body. “God, you’re beautiful.”

“Make love to me, Clark,” she whispered.

Without a word, he stood up, walking toward her and closing the distance between them. His mouth found hers and he carried her into the bedroom at super-speed.

Lois and Clark remained ‘*business as usual*’ when they went into the office the next day. From the outside observer everything looked ‘professional’. However to the trained eye of Perry White things could be nothing further from the truth. He caught the heated glimpses that crossed between the two of them and he had definitely noticed the ring on Lois’ finger as well. He wasn’t going to say anything though. Yes, things were definitely going to be interesting around the newsroom from now on.

Lois struggled to focus on the investigation into the Newtriches and Nigel St. John. All she could think about was Clark. She had never desired any man the way she had him. She smiled at the memory.

She had caught his gaze several times throughout the day and could feel herself getting warm from his heated gaze. She was having the hardest time just concentrating on tying two sentences together let alone writing up a full story. Boy, she was in trouble.

“Hey,” Clark placed a cup of coffee in front of her as he pulled up a chair next to her. “You looked like you could use this.”

“Thanks.” Lois sipped at the coffee grateful for a distraction from her non-existent story.

“I guess we didn’t get that much sleep last night.” Clark said regretfully.

Lois smiled and blushed at the memory. She patted his leg suggestively, “I’m not complaining.”

Clark smiled and leaned in closer to read over her shoulder, “So, what have you found on Nigel?”

Lois sighed in frustration. Nigel St. John was the last thing on her mind right now. All she could think about was how she wanted to drag her fiancé to the storage closet and have her way with him. Every time she tried to think of work her mind kept drifting to last night. Clark may have been a virgin last night but by the end of the night he proved himself to be more aggressive and confident than any man she had been with before The difference of course was that none of those men had captured her heart the way Clark had.

“I’m really not having any luck.” Lois said as she stroked his arm lightly.

Clark smiled at the small gesture of affection. He gently took her hand into his and stroked it lightly. “Well, have you even started looking?” he teased.

“Yes.” Lois replied indignantly. At Clark’s knowing look she caved. “No. Sort of ...I’ve been a bit distracted....”

Clark kissed the side of her palm seductively with a knowing smile.

“Hey Hey Hey, enough of that! Lane Kent Get back to work!” Perry bellowed from behind them.

Clark stood up at the approach of his editor. “Hey, Perry, how are you doing?”

“I think I should be asking you two the same question.” Perry replied with a twinkle in his eyes.

“Yes, Perry. We’re engaged. You can go spread the word now and let us get back to work.” Lois replied sarcastically as she pulled her chair up to her desk and began shuffling random papers on her desk.

Perry knew better but decided to not push the issue. “Congratulations, you two.” He took Clark’s hand and shook it firmly. “I assume this means you two will be permanent partners.” He eyed Lois and Clark conspiratorially.

“Thank you, Perry.” Clark replied jovially, “You’d have to ask Lois.”

“Ha ha. I am not that bad.” Lois said sarcastically, “Yes, that is the plan. We can still work with others but I prefer not to.”

“What else is new?” Perry replied dryly and walked away. Lois shook her head in amusement as Perry began to yodel on his way back to his office.

Later than evening Lois and Clark were in his kitchen cooking dinner. Or rather, Clark was cooking and Lois was watching. Lois linked her arms around his neck from behind and tasted the sauce he had so expertly prepared for dinner. “Mmmm... It’ll be like this forever. You cooking. Me Watching.”

Clark laughed, “What you’re never cooking?”

“Not really my thing.”

“I just thought it was a lack of time.”

“No, no. Lack of talent.”

“I guess there are still a lot of things I have to find out about you.”

“And me about you. You don’t have any really big secrets do you?”

“Did I mention the flying?”

“I only marry men who fly.” Lois leaned in and kissed him soundly, a huge grin on her face.

The phone rang in the background but Lois was not about to let go of Clark just yet. She continued caressing his neck and earlobe with her tongue, as he struggled to hold up a conversation with Jimmy.

“Hello? Oh, hi, Jimmy... Yeah. I’m kinda busy right now....What? Okay, fine, fine, fine.” Clark hung up the phone and pulled away.

“Jimmy says we have to turn on Channel 5 right now.”

“Too bad.” Lois captured his mouth once more and Clark couldn’t even remember what Jimmy’s name was. Oh, well, whatever was on TV they could deal with another day. They had each other and that’s all that mattered right now.

THE END