

Clark Gets Some Visitors

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Summary: While Lois is waiting for Clark at his apartment, she is surprised by who visits Clark.

Lois frowned when no one answered her knock. Where was he? It wasn't that late, he shouldn't be in bed already. Heck, they just left the Planet a couple of hours ago. She looked around and lifted the welcome mat. Nope, no key there. Apparently he wised up when she scolded him for leaving his extra key there. Could he have actually taken her advice and not have left a key outside where anyone could eventually find it? She shook her head.

No, this was Clark. Naïve, trusting, friend to the world. He would have one just in case his parents stopped by or his partner needed to get in so she could wait for him while he was out getting groceries, or another video.

Suddenly her eye fell on the hanging plant suspended on a hook to the left of his door. It couldn't be that obvious... could it? She had to stand on her tip-toes, but she was just able to reach inside the pot and there it was. She pulled the key out of the dirt and inserted it into the lock. Shaking her head in bemusement, she let herself into Clark's apartment.

She closed the door behind her and quickly made her way into the kitchen. She flipped on the light and looked around the empty apartment. "Clark?" She called out. "Are you home?"

She moved quickly to the partition that separated the bedroom from the rest of the place. With only the slightest hesitation she peeked into the room. The bed was still made, there was no one there. She nibbled on her lip. He must be out getting ice cream or something. That was what usually got Lois out of her apartment late in the evening.

She went back into the kitchen to look for something to eat while she waited. Now that Kyle Griffin, the Prankster, was back in jail... for the second time, she knew it was time for them to find their next big story. Bobby Bigmouth had called her earlier and had mentioned that he had some juicy information for her. She immediately set up a meeting for later, and she wanted Clark to come along. That way he could pay for half the food this was going to cost them.

Finding a small tub of choco-chocolate swirl ice cream in his freezer, Lois grabbed a spoon out of the drawer and headed for the living room to wait.

A noise on the balcony caused her to stop in her tracks. Someone was out there! She glanced toward the light switch, but it was too far away. The door was already opening.

Lois nearly dropped the tub of ice cream as a tall shapely figure slipped through the sliding door.

"Kal?"

Lois' gasp must have been heard because the figure turned and locked eyes with her.

"You're Lois, aren't you?"

The spoon did fall from her nerveless fingers.

"Omigod... you're... you're..."

"Diana."

"Wonder Woman!"

The statuesque beauty smiled, pushed some long brunette curls off her shoulder, and strode purposely toward the stunned reporter. She extended her hand. "I'm so happy

to finally meet you. Kal never stops talking about you."

Lois shook hands with the Amazon, but it wasn't certain that she even knew that she was doing it. "Kal?"

A small giggle snuck past Wonder Woman's lips. It seemed so out of character coming from the six foot super heroine. "That's right; he prefers to be called Clark. I forget that sometimes." She gave Lois a wink. "After all, he's usually dressed differently when I'm with him then when you are."

Lois' mind was awl. Why was this... this, amazing woman at Clark's apartment? She acted as if she knew him. She acted like she knew him quite well. She was sure that Clark had never mentioned being friends with Wonder Woman. She would have remembered that. She set the ice cream container in the sink.

"I take it Ka-, er, Clark is not home?"

It took Lois a moment to realize that the woman had spoken. "Ah, no, he's not. I'm guessing he might have gone out to pick a few groceries up from the corner market or something."

The striking hero smiled. "Or something."

Lois felt like she was missing something. A fleeting thought nibbled at the back of her brain. There was something that should be obvious about this situation, but she wasn't seeing it.

"So, Wonder Woman, how long have you known Clark?"

"Please, Lois, call me Diana. I consider myself a good friend of Clarks and I truly hope that we can become good friends too." The woman moved with the power and grace of a hunting cat as she made her way into living room and sat on the couch. Lois followed.

"Really? I don't mean to sound flip, but why would you wish to be my friend?"

Diana gave Lois a look of surprise. "I would think it would be obvious? You are very special to Clark and are an important part of his life, and who he is. So it's important to me to get to know you also." She grinned. "Besides, I'm curious to see if anyone can be as perfect as Clark thinks you are."

Lois' mouth opened, but no sound issued forth. Clark thought she was perfect? Her jaw snapped shut. Just what was Clark doing telling this woman about her anyway? And why had she called him Kal? Why did that name sound so familiar to her? She didn't remember Clark ever mentioning the name Kal... did she?

"As for how long I've known Clark? Really, just since the League has been in existence." Diana continued. "I'd only heard of him before then."

"You'd heard of Clark?" Lois was more confused than ever.

Diana smiled. "Well those Daily Planet Superman articles didn't just stay in Metropolis you know. Those stories were picked up and splashed all across the world."

Lois nodded to herself. It was true; when Superman first appeared she and Clark had most of the exclusives on the hero. She was aware of how often their stories had been picked up and reprinted by other papers around the world. A fact that the Planet was very pleased about since they were compensated for that. Still, how would someone like Wonder Woman have paid any attention to the two lowly scribes who reported on Superman's activities? Now, if she were talking about the hero himself; that she could understand.

Diana gave Lois another smile and stood up. "I'm thirsty." She headed toward the kitchen. "I think I'll make

some tea while we are waiting, would you like some, Lois?"

"No thanks, I'm not a big tea drinker." Lois marveled at how familiar Wonder Woman seemed moving around Clark's kitchen. Had she been there before? Lois watched as Diana filled the kettle with water and set it on the stove. The Amazon then turned her attention to the cupboards.

"Do you remember which cupboard Kal keeps the tea in?" She asked.

Lois was a bit surprised that the woman simply expected her to know where Clark kept his foodstuffs. The fact that she'd been there enough to know where he kept a lot of it didn't change her puzzlement. Why would Wonder Woman just assume she knew?

"I think he keeps it in the middle cupboard on the bottom shelf."

"Thanks." Diana pulled open the door and quickly located the box in question. Not paying close attention to what she was doing, as she reached for the box of tea, Diana banged her head against the corner of the cupboard door which was hanging open. "Ouch!" She rubbed her temple with one hand as she pulled the box from the shelf.

"Ouch?" Lois blinked in surprise. "Aren't you super hero types supposed to be nearly indestructible?"

Wonder Woman laughed. "Well, I'm pretty tough, but I'm not invulnerable like Kal is. He's pretty unique in that way."

Invulnerable? Suddenly it was like someone had turned on the lights in a darkened room. Kal was invulnerable... Kal El! Now Lois remembered where she'd heard the name before. Kal El was Superman's Kryptonian name. He'd never really used it around her, but she'd heard it mentioned during that whole Superman's globe burglary situation not so long ago. So Kal was Superman... but Kal was Clark. That meant Clark... was... Superman. It took all the will power Lois had not to gasp out loud.

Obviously Diana knew that Clark and Superman were one and the same and she, for some reason, assumed that Lois knew also. Lois had to clench her fists to keep her hands from shaking as a thousand conflicting emotions raced through her body, each fighting to gain supremacy. She took a couple of deep breaths in an effort to calm herself. She didn't want to let Wonder Woman know that she'd let the cat out of the bag... so to speak. Instead, Lois decided to find out more about what her partner Clark, as Superman, was telling his superhero friends about her.

Trying her best to act nonchalant, Lois wandered into the kitchen and leaned against the counter. "So, Wonder Woman..."

"Please, call me Diana." The six foot Amazon gave Lois a friendly smile.

"Okay, Diana." Lois returned the smile. "So, what exactly has Kal, er, Clark, been telling you about me?"

Diana moved over to the table with her tea cup and took a chair. She gave Lois a look of puzzlement. "I'm not sure I understand. Surely you know how Kal feels about you."

Apparently not that well, she thought. "Well, you know what it's like. A gal likes to hear it from a different source sometimes."

Wonder Woman grinned. "Well, he is constantly going on about how beautiful you are."

Lois goggled at the statuesque beauty. "He tells *you* that I'm beautiful? Is he looking at you at the time?"

Diana laughed. "Oh, Lois, you are a beautiful woman. Surely you know that."

"Yeah, I may be okay-looking, but you... you're..."

"Just a friend and colleague, not the woman who has captured the man's heart." Wonder Woman leaned back in her chair and gave Lois a hard stare. "You know, as much as Kal appreciates your beauty, I think he's more impressed with your mind. He is always telling Batman how brilliant you are. He likes to tell him how you were able to connect the few facts you had and come up with the crucial lead that breaks a big story, or solves the case you're on. I think he does it just to annoy Bruce."

Bruce? Lois was about to ask more questions when both their attentions were drawn to a disturbance on the balcony. The curtains parted and a figure clad in crimson and blue stepped into the room.

"Kal."

"Clark."

"Diana... Lois?"

Lois had to bite her lip to keep from laughing out loud. The look on Superman's face was priceless. She knew that it wasn't just surprise on his face, but it was sheer panic. Letting Diana take the lead, Lois followed the female hero as she greeted her friend 'Kal' with a hug. He looked over Wonder Woman's shoulder and captured Lois' gaze. She just raised a brow and kept her face as an unreadable mask. Let him wonder... and worry for a while.

The meet with Bobby Bigmouth long forgotten, the next couple of hours passed by quickly for Lois, but she was sure that they dragged on and on for Clark. No doubt, seeing no reason not to, he'd changed out of his Superman costume and invited his guests to sit.

Lois mostly listened as the two heroes talked 'shop' and discussed several major incidents that she had only been peripherally aware of. It was actually quite fascinating, but the most fun was continually sneaking glances at Clark only to find him checking her out on the sly as well. She knew he was confused by her reactions, or more accurately, her non-reactions and he didn't know what to make of it.

So, just to mess with his mind a bit, Lois would give him a wink, or a coy smile, every time she caught him looking at her.

Finally the conversation died out and Diana rose from the couch to excuse herself. Like any self-respecting super hero, she exited via the balcony rather than something as mundane as the front door. After Wonder Woman's departure, Lois being only a mere mortal, made her own way toward the door.

"Lois?" She turned. He looked at her expectantly. "I thought you might stay a while... so we could... talk?"

Lois shook her head. "It's been a long day, Clark, and I'm really tired. I think I'll just go home and go right to bed. We both have to be at the office early tomorrow for Perry's staff meeting."

She reached out and pulled open the front door. His hand on her shoulder stopped her. She turned and saw the worry written on his face.

"Just tell me this. Are you mad?"

"Do you mean crazy?"

She was rewarded by the rolling of his eyes. "Lo-is."

"Oh, you mean am I angry?" Her smile was a bit sad.

"Maybe a little. It's kind of hard to be too angry with a guy who tells Wonder Woman that I'm beautiful, and tells Batman how brilliant I am." She shook her head. "No, I'm not really mad, what I am is hurt." She held up her hand to forestall his protest. "You know I have trust issues. I'm sure you felt you had good reasons for keeping this secret from me, and I'm sure we'll be able to get through this... we will."

I just need a little time to work through it in my own mind.
We'll talk... tomorrow, we'll talk. I promise." She stepped
onto the outer stoop.

"Lois?" She stopped. "I love you."

She smiled. "I know."

The door closed behind her and she moved quickly
down the steps to the sidewalk outside Clark's apartment.
She turned back and looked at his door. A wry smile spread
across her face. "I love you too, Clark."

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