

Not Even Chocolate

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Rated: PG

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Summary: Lois inexplicably loses her temper when Clark tries to do something nice for her, and he is at a loss for what he can do to make things better... One-shot. Mid to late season two. Enjoy!

A/N: Just a random bit of silliness I put together after one of my own arguments with my brother.

The quick paced sound of heels clicking furiously across the bullpen was like a siren alert. Everyone who knew what was coming averted their gazes. Everyone who could, moved out of the warpath. Anyone else would be trampled under foot, if they were lucky. And lucky usually meant Clark Kent had to be in the office to take the beating.

Lois Lane came to a halt at her desk, slamming down her bag and not caring that she might have damaged her keyboard. She cast a glare around the office, finally allowing her gaze to settle on her partner's desk.

Correction: her partner's empty desk.

Lois seethed. She could have sworn he'd be here already. His stuff was lying at his desk, proving her thoughts correct- he must have just left. *Swear to God, if that man took off on a lead without even waiting for me to come into work first...* She turned on her heel and stormed off towards Perry White's office.

"Chief! Where's Kent?"

"Lois, I'm in a meeting here," he gestured to Ralph, who went tense in his chair at the mention of her name.

"Come on, Perry, you and I both know he barely qualifies as staff."

"Lois-"

"Unless you're gonna fire the sap- in which case I'll let you get to it. Just make it fast!"

"Lois," Perry spoke calmly with a taut smile. "I'm not firing Ralph. And I don't know where Clark went. So shoo." He gestured for her to leave the room. Lois gave a huff of irritation before stomping out of his office and returning to her desk.

Just as she took a seat, the elevator doors opened and out walked her partner, straightening his tie and holding one hand behind his back. She scowled at him and fiercely returned her gaze to her own computer monitor. Even when she felt his shadow fall across her space and saw him standing just inside her peripheral vision, she refused to acknowledge him with even a sparing glance.

Clark cleared his throat and adjusted his glasses with his free hand. "Um, Lois?"

She still didn't respond, and instead started typing again. He glanced at her screen to find she was typing nonsense — half of the things weren't even real words. He tried again. "Lois, would you please talk to me?"

"What, Clark?" she asked without looking up.

He fidgeted. "Look, I'm really sorry I ran out on you last night at dinner -"

"-And on yesterday's assignment. And today."

"Today? I haven't run out on you today."

"You weren't here when I got here Clark," she finally cast a glance up at him before returning to the safety of her computer screen. "Besides, I know you'll run out again at some point today."

There was a long awkward pause between them. Clark squirmed. Lois continued to type up strings of words. "Well,"

Clark began. "On a not entirely unrelated note, I brought you this."

Clark extended the hand he'd been hiding behind his back this whole time, waiting for Lois to take the proffered gift.

Lois, unable to resist the temptation of knowing what he'd been trying to hide behind his back, finally turned and looked at him. When she saw the object, she blinked. Then she blinked again.

"Chocolates?" she asked hesitantly.

Clark nodded, a small smile creasing his features.

"Chocolates," she repeated flatly.

Now Clark's brow wrinkled in concern. That shouldn't be her reaction...

Suddenly the box was dashed out of his hands and Lois elicited a sound that was somewhere in between a scream and a groan. Clark stood frozen in shock, staring at his now frightfully insane partner. "Lo-"

"Oh, no, Clark. No. You think you can upset me and just come in with chocolates and make it all better?"

"N-no, that's not what I meant at all-"

"Or, no, I know what it is. You're a sick man, Kent! What-you just automatically assume that if I'm angry I must be PMS-ing and therefore you should bring me chocolate to stop the threat? Well, guess what, Clark? Sometimes a girl's just mad because she needs to be! Because she wants to be! It's not all PMS! And you're going to need a hell of a lot more than chocolate to fix this up!"

"Lo-"

"You know, I bet you that's exactly it. You've probably even got it written down on a calendar somewhere — buy Lois chocolate, once a month. That is so typical! I never would have pinned you down as a chauvinist before this, Clark — but I guess you never really know a person, do you?"

Lois looked at the box of chocolates on her desk and, with a frustrated groan, threw it on the floor, stepped on it, and then kicked it across the room. Then she stormed off, taking only her purse and practically running out of the bullpen.

Clark stood there gaping, wondering what on earth he had done to warrant that sort of reaction. Gradually, the bullpen returned to their normal activities, leaving Clark standing there like an idiot.

Perry's voice broke him out of his reverie. "Kent!" Clark slowly made his way to his boss' office, the confused look never departing from his face. "Close the door and have a seat," Perry informed him gruffly.

Clark sunk down into a chair, staring into space, bewildered. "Chief," he finally began. "What did I do wrong?"

Perry chuckled. "Absolutely nothing, son."

"I mean, I apologized for running out on her and I tried to start to make it up to her by getting her favorite snack... and all of the sudden I'm standing in the middle of an anti-chauvinist tirade about me and my problems and PMS and how much she hates me. Why?"

Perry shook his head. "She doesn't hate you."

"Yeah she does. She made that quite clear."

"No, she's just PMS-ing."

Clark looked at his boss as if he were insane. "She just shouted to the bullpen that it wasn't PMS."

"Trust me, it's PMS."

Clark still looked suspicious. Perry sighed. "This never leaves my office, got it?" Clark nodded. "And the only reason I'm allowed to say that is because that girl is like a daughter to me. And even I can't say it to her face. But mark my words — it's PMS."

"How can you be sure? Do you keep track or something?"

Clark looked appropriately offended on behalf of his partner.

"No," Perry immediately responded. "But I don't have to. It's

easy enough to spot.”

There was a pause before Clark finally spoke again. “Maybe I should just go find her and apologize-”

“No!”

“No?”

“No. Believe me, that will only make things worse. Don’t buy her any more chocolates, don’t talk to her if you don’t have to. If she doesn’t come straight out and apologize in the next couple of days, then she hates you. If she tries to make it better within twenty-four hours, then it’s PMS. Okay?”

Clark appeared incredulous. “Lois Lane will come to me and apologize?”

“Haven’t you noticed this pattern before?”

Clark thought about it. “Well, I mean, sometimes I guess. But she gets mad at me so often that it’s difficult to say when she’s really mad at me or not.”

Perry stood and clapped the young reporter on my shoulders. “Mark my words, Kent. And if I’m wrong, I’ll let you beat me at poker one of these days. Now go write me something usable for the evening edition.”

Clark frowned. “What do you mean, let me beat—”

Perry opened the door and gestured for him to leave. “Get.”

Clark stood with a sigh and scurried back over to his desk.

Staying away from Lois was a difficult task to manage. Make that a nearly impossible task to manage. Not because he was forced to see her — they were working on separate stories all day and Superman had enough to keep him busy — but because, for some reason or another, Clark was just pulled towards her. He’d catch himself gravitating her direction multiple times — once he had even stood up, grabbed her empty coffee mug off her desk and was halfway through refilling it before he remembered he was supposed to leave her alone. But by that point it was too late — he had just had to refill the mug and drop it off at her desk, not bothering to try to talk to her. At other times, Clark would just catch her eye, before forcing himself to turn back to his work.

Now it was ten o’clock at night, and he was seriously doubting Perry’s wisdom. He’d just come back in from a Superman rescue that had lasted an hour or so, and decided to type up some notes really quickly before heading home. He took a cursory glance at Lois’ desk. Empty. Like most of the bullpen. He sighed before sitting down and logging back on to his computer.

The elevator doors opened and out stepped Lois Lane. Clark fought the urge to look up at her — he knew it was her without looking. Her heartbeat always gave her away.

Lois’ heels didn’t click furiously this time as she headed towards her desk. Rather, she walked at a subdued pace. She didn’t stop at her desk though, as he’d expected she would. Instead, Clark was surprised to find she was walking to him.

“Clark,” she practically sighed his name. “What are you doing here still? It’s late — isn’t there one of your basketball games on tonight or something?”

Clark turned to face her for what felt like the first time all day, and it was like a breath of fresh air, doing so. “Yeah, there is. But I’m taping it.” His expression turned thoughtful suddenly. “How do you know that?”

“What? You think I can’t pick up a TV guide?” Lois spoke defensively.

Clark shook his head with a small smile and began to turn back to his computer monitor.

“Or that I don’t know my best friend’s TV watching schedule well enough by now?”

Clark stopped and turned back to face her. “And just what are you doing here? Looking for me?” he quipped with a slight smile playing at his lips.

Lois squirmed uncomfortably. “Well, sort of.”

Clark seemed surprised. “Really?”

She nodded. “Yeah. I went by your apartment earlier, but you weren’t there, and I figured this would be the only other place I’d have any luck finding you, so...”

There was a brief pause. Clark cleared his throat. “Yeah, well, I was on my way home and I happened to catch Superman stopping a robbery — since I wasn’t that far, I figured I’d just come back and write up some quick notes.” He gestured to the monitor where he had only managed to write a few sketchy details.

Lois visibly flinched and her pulse went up. “Listen... I, uh, I wanted to come by and talk to you...”

Clark looked at her expectantly, waiting for her to finish in curiosity.

“I... I’m sorry for how I behaved toward you earlier. It... it was stupid and petty and I don’t know what came over me. I just... overreacted I guess and I want to say I’m sorry.”

Clark looked floored. Lois fidgeted and turned to rummage through her bag. “Here.”

She held out a small chocolate bar. Clark blinked and looked up at her. “Wha-”

“You’re not allergic to almonds are you?” She hesitated, pulling back slightly.

Clark smiled. “No. I don’t have any allergies. But I mean, what is this for?”

She shrugged. “A way of saying I’m sorry. I know it’s not the box of chocolates you tried to give me, and I just grabbed it from a newsstand on my way over to your place, but it’ll do.”

Clark grinned and took it. “Thanks, Lois. But I don’t really need this. You can have it, as a replacement.”

“No, I won’t be happy until you eat it. Besides, I got one for myself, too.” She pulled out a second matching bar.

“All right,” he conceded, and unwrapped it. He took a bite out of it and Lois smiled, satisfied with herself.

“You know, Lois, I really only bought you that chocolate because I was trying to apologize.”

She nodded as she broke off a piece of her own candy bar and slipped it into her mouth. “I know. I just overreacted.”

They sat in a comfortable silence again, each eating their chocolates. Clark decided he’d had enough of work for the day, and began to shut down his computer and pack his things. As Clark finished off the remains of his chocolate, he abruptly scoffed. Lois looked at him in mock-suspicion, still smiling. “What?”

“Nothing,” he replied. “Just that I’ll never doubt Perry White again.”

Lois frowned, standing in turn. “What?”

Clark put on his coat and made sure his desk was in order for the morning. “Chief said that if I waited long enough, you’d apologize to me. Guess he won’t be letting me win at poker after all.” He walked off towards the elevator and pressed the down button on the panel before realizing Lois hadn’t followed him. He turned around to see her glowering and he swallowed.

Whoops.

Suddenly she smiled an almost feral grin and walked up to Clark. “Well, let’s go then, Clark. We have work in the morning.”

Clark gulped. “Lois? Everything okay?”

“Oh, yeah. Perfectly fine.”

“You know, I really didn’t mean that to come off as -”

“Of course you didn’t. And by the sounds of things, you seemed to try to defend me. I’ll give you the benefit of the doubt there.”

Clark breathed a sigh of relief as the elevator doors opened and they both stepped in.

“Perry, on the other hand, is a dead man.”

The doors closed.

THE END