

The Red Bikini

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Rated: PG

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Summary: Summer is a time for sun, sand, and surf. But a bikini has the Man of Steel seeing red.

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Author's Note: This story was inspired by the Summer 2012 ficathon challenge issued by MrsMosley on the Lois and Clark FanFic Message Boards. The idea was to take one prompt and turn it into a fanfic. My prompt was bikini.

"No. No, no, no. Not in a million years."

Clark Kent paced the living room of his home. His hand raked through his hair. He pulled off his glasses and tossed them onto the couch cushions. On the other couch Lois sat, her arms crossed in front of her chest.

"Now, Clark," she started.

"No. No way."

"It's *just* a bathing suit," Lois tried to reason with him.

"It's barely big enough to be a handkerchief!" Clark said, shaking his head.

"Clark, it's a perfectly acceptable..."

"Not in my house, it isn't," Clark said, cutting her off.

"But, Dad!" sputtered their daughter, Rebecca. "I'm sixteen years old!"

"Exactly my point!" Clark said, stilling his pacing. "You're sixteen! There's no need to rush off and dress like...like..."

"A woman?" Lois supplied.

"Yes," Clark said, failing to come up with a more politically correct term than that. "Becca, you have to understand."

"I hate you!" the young woman exploded, tears pooling in her deep brown eyes. "You're ruining my life!"

"Becca, wait," Clark pleaded.

"No. You know, you have some nerve," Rebecca shot back. "*You're* the one who dresses like a freak in a skin tight outfit! Do you have *any* idea how embarrassing that is? Do you *know* the kinds of things the girls at my school say about Superman? And I have to act like it doesn't bother me that they're making all sorts of crude comments about my own *father*! So don't you *dare* sit here and tell me that what I'm wearing is inappropriate!"

"Rebecca Lynn Kent! Don't you dare speak to your father that way!" Lois warned, her voice hard and serious.

"You're *defending* him?" Rebecca sputtered in disbelief. "I thought you were on my side! You're *both* ruining my life!"

She uncrossed her arms, revealing more of the tiny red bikini she was wearing. With a burst of speed, she was gone, up the stairs, nothing more than a red and flesh colored streak. Clark heard the door to her bedroom slam shut, even without his super hearing. He sighed and shook his head.

"Kids," he muttered.

"Clark, that was uncalled for."

"Uncalled for? Lois, Becca's only sixteen. And she'll be around boys who are sixteen."

"And your point is...?"

"I've *been* a sixteen year old boy, Lois. I know what sort of

thoughts run through their heads."

"Clark, it's only going to be her friends there at Nick's pool party."

Clark shook his head. "It doesn't matter, Lois. I've been in the same position, around that age. Seeing my friends...my *girl* friends...in skimpy bathing suits. Why do you think I ever dated Lana? Her winning personality? No, I saw her in this tight little yellow bathing suit and...well...the rest is history."

"So you think...what, exactly? That our daughter is going to wind up dating one of her friends, someone who isn't good for her, because of how she's dressed?"

Clark sighed. How to put this delicately?

"No," he said, after a moment, his voice softening. "It's just...like I said. I know how the minds of teenage boys work. They'll be sexualizing Becca in their heads. I may be from Krypton, but even I had those passing thoughts when I was sixteen."

Lois' face hardened. "So you think she'll do something stupid?"

"No," Clark said, shaking his head and trying again. "We raised her to be smarter than that."

"So, what's the problem then?"

"It's just...seeing her in that red bikini...it just reminds me of how grown up she's getting."

"Yes, she is," Lois said quietly, softening towards Clark again. She took his hand in hers and he sat next to her on the couch.

"When did she get so mature?" Clark sighed. "Seems like only yesterday we were bringing her home from the hospital."

Lois sighed as well. "I know."

"The boys are in college already. Pretty soon Rebecca will be out of the house as well. I don't think I ever prepared myself for this."

Lois smiled at him gently. "Me neither. But you know, there is an upside to this."

"What's that?"

"More alone time for the two of us," she whispered seductively in his ear.

Clark moaned a little, his wife's breath tickling his ear and sending an electric shock coursing through his entire body.

"You've got a point there," he said, his eyes sliding shut as he moved to capture Lois' lips in a kiss.

"Good," Lois said, pulling reluctantly out of the kiss. "Now go apologize to your daughter."

"Lo-is!"

Lois crossed her arms. "Clark." Her voice was a soft warning.

"Can't she wear something else?" Lois' eyes narrowed.

"Okay, okay. Fine. You win. But this doesn't mean that I'm happy about it. And I'm still not thrilled about Becca's attitude."

"We'll talk to her," Lois said, nodding. "Together."

"All right," Clark said, nodding in turn. "We do make a pretty good team."

Lois grinned. "Always have."

"Always will," Clark finished for her. "Come on. Let's see if she's cooled down any."

Clark took Lois by the hand. Together, they made for the steps, towards their daughter's room. They had always faced their toughest challenges together, side by side, but parenting was perhaps the hardest challenge of all.

THE END