

Revelations on a Dropping Ball

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Rated: PG

Submitted: 12/2011

Summary: After a bizarre “revelation” on Christmas Eve, there’s more to come on New Years. (Follows Revelations on the Lake)

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(Follows ‘Revelations on the Lake’.)

“Lois, I repeat, I am not gay,” Clark stated as he and Lois were driving back to Metropolis late Christmas Eve. They had spent the evening with Lois’s father and sister, and lake-cabin-neighbor Bruce Wayne. “However, I *am* Superman,” he added.

“Sure you are, Clark,” Lois retorted. “And Bruce Wayne is the Batman?”

“Uh...”

“Nice try, Farm Boy. So, how long have Superman and Batman been lovers?”

Lois had spent the week in a funk. First she had found out that her father had gone to school with the late Thomas Wayne, billionaire and savior of Gotham, and Thomas’s son Bruce had a lake cabin next door. Then her erstwhile partner admitted to knowing Bruce Wayne. They were friends, and Clark hadn’t bothered to tell her he had an in with the fourth richest man in the world.

Then Clark had tried to tell her *he* was Superman. Like that was even possible. Granted there was some vague physical similarity — both Clark and Superman had brown eyes and black hair and both had excellent physiques, but that’s where the resemblance ended. There was no way Clark was Superman, and she told him so.

Now Clark was barely speaking to her, when he was in the newsroom at all.

And to add insult to injury, Lois had no one to ring in the New Year with. Lucy was off with her boy friend. Dad was off to Vegas to meet up with some old friends.

Lois knew she had been unconscionably mean to Clark over not letting her know he knew the Prince of Gotham. And her accusations concerning his sexual preferences had been completely unfounded — at least she was ninety-five percent sure they were unfounded. The other five percent doubt still lingered, based on Wayne’s snide question to Clark. ‘So, when were you planning on telling her?’

‘Telling her what?’ Clark had asked.

‘About us and what you do in your free time,’ Wayne had answered.

Lois had naturally jumped to the conclusion that ‘about us’ meant that Clark and Bruce were more than just friends.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,

And never brought to mind?

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,

And auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,

For auld lang syne,

We’ll take a cup of kindness yet,

For auld lang syne!

“Oh God save me from drunken partiers,” Lois groaned under her breath. Ralph was starting early. Ralph *always* started early.

Lois quickly finished off the story she was working on and printed it off for Perry. It was a story on another Superman rescue. Lois had made it to the scene before Superman flew off, but he had ignored her calls to him to stop for an interview. She wondered if he knew about her problem with Clark and Clark’s wild claims.

Clark hurried in without even giving her a nod of greeting. He sat at his desk and made a call while he waited for his workstation to boot up. Lois tried to look innocent as she listened in.

“So, the threat’s confirmed?” Clark asked the person on the other end of the line. He jotted down some notes — ball drop, midnight.

There was a threat of some kind against the New Year’s revelers at the Centennial Plaza ball drop? Who was he talking to?

Clark listened a few more moments, but Lois couldn’t hear what he was being told.

She tried to look busy as Clark said thanks and hung up his phone.

“So, interesting lead?” she asked, trying to sound nonchalant.

“Maybe,” Clark said.

“Want to tell me about it?”

“Not especially.” He gave her a cheeky grin, grabbed his coat and walked away.

Ball drop, midnight.

It didn’t take a genius to figure that one out. Lois had tried to follow Clark out of the newsroom, but she lost him almost immediately. It was almost as if he’d flown away. ‘I *am* Superman’ he had told her on the drive home on Christmas Eve. She knew he’d been lying but... what if he hadn’t been? What if all Clark’s lame excuses for leaving her in the lurch had been to cover the fact that he was needed elsewhere in a hurry? What if the reason Clark knew so much about Superman’s activities was that he was simply reporting on *himself*?

No... Superman was a near god and Clark Kent was a rat. That was it, pure and simple.

Ball drop, midnight.

She spent some time getting in touch with her sources to see if she could find out more about the threat against the New Year’s revelers at Centennial Plaza. Unfortunately, no one seemed to know anything, or if they did know, they weren’t telling her.

There was only one thing left she could do. She headed to Centennial Plaza to see for herself. If there was something going down tonight, she would find it out.

Security was tight around the ball tower, but Lois knew one of the guards and he let her within the security perimeter and into the Centennial Plaza building. The elevators were shut down to the top five floors, so she took the elevators as high as she could and took the stairs to the roof. The access door to the roof was locked, naturally, but she made quick work of it.

Five minutes to the ball drop. The crowd below was noisy, singing *Auld Lang Syne*.

And surely ye’ll be your pint-stowp,

And surely I’ll be mine,

And we’ll take a cup o’ kindness yet,

For auld lang syne!

For auld lang syne, my dear,

For auld lang syne,

We’ll take a cup of kindness yet,

For auld lang syne!

Except for the brightly lit New Years' ball hanging off the side of the building on its derrick, the roof was mostly dark. The ball shed eerie shadows among the vent pipes and the multi-ton AC units.

Lois heard voices and approached them, stepping carefully across the roof.

"Is she still on that 'gay' thing she started?" a man's deep voice said. He sounded amused.

"Yes... no... I don't know," she heard Clark say.

"Did you tell her?" a woman said.

"Yes." Clark sounded exasperated. "She didn't believe me."

"Did you offer any proof?"

A long silence, then the other man started laughing. "You expected her to just believe you? Mad Dog Lane?"

"I was hoping..."

Another long silence. "I see. And you said *I* was batty?"

"Shh... I see four armed men in the crowd. They're not cops."

How could Clark see that unless...

She stepped out from the shadows to confront the two men.

Only it wasn't Clark Kent and an unknown man and woman standing by the AC units. It simply couldn't be, but the Batman and Catwoman were there with Superman. She'd mistaken Superman's voice for Clark's? 'I *am* Superman' he had told her. It couldn't be. She couldn't have been that wrong.

Lois stared at them.

Superman just gave her a bemused look. She couldn't see enough of Batman's face to read his expression, but she had the impression he was laughing at her. Catwoman looked sleek and smug as only a cat could.

"I... I had a tip there was going to be a problem here tonight," Lois managed to stammer.

"*Clark Kent* had a tip," Batman said. Now Lois knew he was smirking.

The crowd started chanting. *Ten... nine... eight... seven... six... five... four... three... two... one...*

The lit ball dropped amid a shower of fireworks.

Happy New Years!

Lois felt a whoosh of air and Superman was gone. Batman was checking some sort of device in his hand. Below, the crowd cheered as they watched the fireworks exploding in the air above the building.

Batman said a series of coordinates to the air. Below, Lois saw Superman drop four men off to the nearest uniformed police officers. Then he disappeared.

"Want to tell me what's going on?" Lois asked.

"Not especially," Catwoman said with a smug grin. Lois followed her gaze and looked down at the crowd. When she looked back, she was alone on the roof.

She made her way back to the access door. And discovered it had locked behind her. She grabbed her purse and pulled out her lock pick set. She hadn't had any problems opening it from the inside, but it was cold on the roof and her hands just didn't seem to work. After several minutes of trying, she dropped the picks and couldn't find them in the dark.

"Uh, Superman?" she said to the darkness.

"Right here, Lois," Superman said from somewhere close. How could she have possibly imagined she had heard *Clark* on the roof earlier?

"I can't get the door back open," she explained, hoping he wouldn't outright laugh at her.

"I'll take you down," he offered. He pulled her close and she felt them lift off the roof and slowly fall down the side of the building. Only, it wasn't Superman's suit under her hands as she held onto him. She felt the soft fabric of a sweatshirt instead.

"Lois, are you okay?" he asked.

"Yeah," she said. She caught sight of her reflection in one of the darkened windows as they floated toward the ground. Even through the distortion of the window and the dimness of the light, she knew it was Clark.

"Uh, Clark, exactly what was Bruce Wayne talking about at the lake last week?" She felt him go very still.

"Um, he was pulling your leg," Clark said. "He's a big jokester. But he's been trying to get me to tell you about... me."

"And why would he be interested in that?"

"Lois, Clark!" a voice called out. Lois looked over to see Bruce Wayne and a tall woman sauntering over to them. Maybe saunter wasn't the right word — Bruce was barely on his feet and Lois could have sworn the billionaire was leering down his date's front. The woman wore a patiently bemused expression.

"Hey guys, the party's just starting," Bruce went on, waving a champagne bottle. "Let's paint this berg red."

Lois turned to Clark. "Don't think I'm not going to be angry that you hid that from me, but exactly why would he want me to know about you?"

"So we can double date?" Clark answered.

THE END