

Super Polish

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Rated: PG

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Summary: Even Superman can't keep up on everything, especially not his 4-year-old daughter.

Clark stirred slightly in his sleep at the feel of his facial muscles twitching. He groggily waved his hand over his face without opening his eyes, thinking maybe it was a fly and he could just go back to sleep. But then, there it was again. Instead of a buzzing sound though, there was the sound of light giggling.

Clark frowned, and the giggling persisted.

Sighing in defeat, he opened his eyes to come face to face with his four-year-old daughter, hovering over him. She had on several strings of beads around her neck and numerous bracelets. A pink tiara sat on her light brown hair, matching the pink tutu, and her face was practically painted with gobs of lipstick, glitter and eye shadow. Clark moved to sit up on the couch, glancing at her suspiciously. She was wearing an all-too-pleased smile on her face.

"Hi Daddy," she spoke cheerily, rocking anxiously on the balls of her feet.

"Hi," he responded in a forced casual tone, frowning in the slightest. Her grin remained in place. "Watcha doing, sweetheart?"

"Notice anything different?" She was beaming now with pride.

Clark felt himself relax a bit. "You look even more like a princess with that crown and all of that makeup on?"

She started to laugh, unable to control herself any longer. She bolted out of the room as fast as she could, and Clark once again found himself frowning. He called after her in confusion. "Ella?"

Help! Superman!

Clark sighed and quickly spun into his Superman suit, giving a cursory glance at the mirror to make sure everything was alright. Ever since he and Lois had kids, he'd had to be extra careful that he didn't run out with some sort of food, vomit, or other extraneous items caked on him. And lucky he did, too.

At the sight of his face, Clark jumped back and groaned. "Hey! Ella!" Squeals replied, echoing in the distance of the house. Clark scowled as the cries for help became even more insistent. "I don't have time for this," he muttered. Facing the sink, he super speedily washed away the garish makeup — more like face paint — before shouting to Lois that he'd be back and taking off across town.

Luckily, Clark had managed to get to the scene on time and successfully pulled the family's car back to safety before they wound up falling off the edge of the bridge. They were all pretty shaken up, but sustained no major injuries. It could have been a lot worse, for sure, if they had tried to get out or move around. Paramedics were able to help them on site, and Clark finally felt able to let out a sigh of relief before turning away from the action to face the crowds.

An LNN reporter rushed up to him first, cameraman close in tow. "Superman! Superman! Do you have any statement to make about what happened here today?"

"The family will be all right. Bumps and bruises, for the most part. A couple of minor fractures and possibly some future trauma wounds, but little else. As far as I could tell, it was purely an

accident- there didn't seem to be any alcohol or drugs involved, and..." Clark could see he was losing their interest, and cleared his throat pointedly and crossed his arms before wrapping it up. "And they're lucky they aren't any worse off."

She nodded curtly and cut in. "Superman, are you wearing nail polish?"

Clark felt his eyes widen and he looked down at his hands. Every other finger rotated colors — alternating between a thick, sloppy coat of purple glitter and a sparkly, shimmery pink. He felt himself going red and struggled to hide his hands self-consciously. "Um," he stalled. The reporter was staring at him incredulously, mouth agape. "Uh, yes. It would appear that I am."

He made no further explanation. She pressed him for more. "Is there a... particular reason why?"

Clark was between a rock and a hard place here. On the one hand, he could run. Nobody would catch him. But it would leave the media making as many guesses about Superman as they wanted, each assumption more ridiculous- or closer to home- than the last. But on the other hand, what could he say to defend himself? He suddenly realized he had been quiet for just about a whole minute, unresponsive. He had to say something...

"Um... it was my... it must have happened," he struggled to find the right words, feeling himself growing more and more flushed exponentially by the second. "I was... um, I was watching some kids... the girl must have... when I fell asleep... um," he noticed worriedly that their expressions only grew more and more shocked as he spoke and promptly shut up. He stirred nervously, wishing for an emergency, to no avail. Besides, he couldn't run now. He'd just make things worse. The rumor mill would be ruthlessly out of hand.

"You were... babysitting?"

He cringed. "Uh, no. Not exactly. It, uh," he was racking his brain for an explanation, when finally he thought he struck gold. His expression practically lit up. "It was some extended family. You know, from New Krypton? They were around — visiting — and uh..."

"You fell asleep while you were supposed to be watching them," the reporter concluded for him, incredulous.

He folded his arms back across his chest once more, nervously shifting his weight from foot to foot. "The gist of it, I suppose."

The reporter bit her lip, before finally bursting out with uncontrollable laughter.

Clark scowled at her. "I think it's time for me to go now."

"Wait! Superman! One last question." He turned back, exasperated, waiting for her to finish. She grinned. "Do your toes match?"

He shot her an irritated glare before lifting to the skies, her laughter chasing him home.

Clark flew back through the window of his home with a scowl on his face- only to be greeted by the sound of more laughter. He rolled his eyes at his wife, keeled over on the floor — crying, she laughed so hard. Clark spun into his civilian clothes. "Good to be home," he remarked dryly as he switched off the news report.

"I can't believe it," Lois managed to speak breathily, struggling to regain her control. "I mean, the signs have been there all along."

Clark helped his wife to her feet as she brushed her face dry. He sighed. "What signs?"

"Well, all those wild ties, the spandex — now makeup and nail polish!"

He rolled his eyes at her once more. "You're incorrigible."

"I mean, if I didn't know what you were capable of in the bedroom, I'd be having my doubts about Superman right about now." She started laughing again, and to stop her, Clark pressed a

firm kiss to her lips. When they broke apart, Lois still grinned.

“Hey,” Clark began mischievously. “I bet you’ve never made out with a guy with a manicure before.”

She wrinkled her nose. “You’d be surprised.”

Clark laughed for a bit before he realized she was being serious. “You’re kidding me. Who?”

Lois shrugged. “Hey, Lex liked to keep himself looking preened. And Claude was always a well-manicured man. I’m not without my suspicions there.” Clark chuckled lightly, shaking his head. Lois bit her bottom lip seductively. “But, if you’d like, once the kids are in bed, you could spend the entire evening proving to me just how... super-manly you are.”

She moaned and Clark pulled her close to him. He tried to kiss her lips, but she turned her head coyly and got her cheek instead. “Minx,” he murmured and kissed her earlobe, nibbling lightly. She let out a soft little sigh.

“Daddy!”

A small wail started up at the sudden yell. Clark sighed and released his wife who went to tend to their smallest. Ella came bursting into the room, a plethora of makeover supplies in her arms. She dumped it all on to the coffee table, making even more of a din. She perused her choices for a moment or two before selecting a bright red and sparkly blue bottle of nail polish and showing one in each hand. Clark regarded the tiny bottles with no small amount of trepidation.

Ella grinned. “Time for your toes!”

THE END