

The Worst April Fools' Prank

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Rated: G

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Summary: Lois' practical joke on Lucy goes horribly awry.

Standard disclaimer: Lois & Clark (and all other characters mentioned herein) belong to Warner Brothers and DC Comics. A very brief phrase was taken from the Lois & Clark episode "Pheromone My Lovely," which was written by Deborah Joy Levine. This story was written for fun, not profit.

Clark knocked on Lois' door again and waited. When she neither came to the door nor called for him to enter, he became worried. Was she off chasing after a story so early in the morning? No, that probably wasn't it; they had both had yesterday off and had spent most of the day and evening together. Surely she would have mentioned if she had planned to get an early start today. He extended his hearing and was relieved to find her heart beating steadily inside. Using the keys she had given him, he let himself into her apartment.

His relief was short-lived. Lois was sitting on her sofa, forehead cupped in both hands, elbows resting on thighs, shoulders slumped. He tentatively ventured, "Hey, honey. What's wrong?"

Lois just mumbled, "How could I DO that? How could I have been such a fool?"

Clark was glad she already knew about his alter ego; if she hadn't, her questions would have scared him more than a kryptonite-wielding Luthor. But as it was, he had no idea what she was talking about. "Lois, what happened? Can I help?"

Lois' looked at him with puffy eyes. "It was just an April Fools' prank. Nothing was supposed to come of it!"

Clark sat down beside her and draped an arm over her shoulders. "Why don't you start at the beginning and tell me all about it?"

Lois took a calming breath and nodded. "Every year, Lucy and I spend the week leading up to April first trying to outdo each with our April Fools' pranks. This year I thought I had the perfect, untoppable idea. A few days ago, Lucy had been complaining about how immature her boyfriends were. So I arranged a blind date for her. I told her that he was in his early thirties and, unlike her usual boyfriends, actually had a steady job. They went out for the first time two nights ago.

"I figured the date wouldn't last five minutes. But instead, when I got home from your place last night, there was a message from Lucy on my answering machine. She had called from Las Vegas. They liked each other so much that they hopped a plane there to get married. Only those two could be so impetuous. I never should have introduced them."

Who could Lois possibly mean? Clark's first thought was Jimmy, but Jimmy was too young. Who else did Lois know who was available? Finally, he could stand the suspense no longer. "Who? Who was the blind date?"

"Ralph."

Lois never ceased to be amazed by Clark. One of his lesser-known super skills was his ability to calm her down and to help

her focus. Somehow, thanks to him, she had managed to piece herself together enough to come to work. She even thought that she would be able to tackle the workday ahead of her; or, at least, she could do so if the grapevine hadn't yet found out the news. She shuddered at the thought of what others would say when they found out that Ralph was her brother-in-law. She was just grateful that Cat no longer worked there.

When the elevator doors parted, she glanced around the room to take stock of who was there. Jimmy was concentrating on his computer. Perry was in his office speaking on the phone. The folks by the coffee machine glanced her way and then resumed their conversation. Good. No one was staring at her or coming over to congratulate or tease her about the new addition to her family.

A few minutes later, Clark had taken two cups of coffee over to her desk and was sitting on the edge of it as they discussed their game plan to tackle their investigations into the senate bribery scandal. When the elevator doors opened, Lois glanced up and then did a double-take. She got up so abruptly that only Clark's super-fast reflexes kept him from spilling his coffee when she jostled him.

Lois stormed up to the short balding man who had entered the room. "How dare you do that to my sister? You couldn't even have waited to get to know each other at all? You were only on your first date. The least you..."

Ralph interrupted her. "Whoa! We didn't do the dirty. Not that I hadn't thought about it — your sister is a hotty. But ten minutes together was enough for me to realize that she wasn't mature enough to handle a man of my sophistication. So I dumped her."

"You didn't...? But she said... But you two didn't? Not even a full date? No Vegas? Oh, thank God!" Emotions kaleidoscoped within Lois: Relief that she was *not* related in any way to the sorry specimen before her; anger that her sister would put her through this; gratitude that Lucy hadn't been quite so foolish as to marry this slimeball; an eensy weensy, microcosmic amount of admiration toward Lucy that she had been able to best Lois' prank; thankfulness that the dirtbag she was looking at was not a member of her family; and, finally, a thirst for vengeance.

Lois walked over to her desk, sat quietly for several minutes while she mentally composed her message to Lucy, and then picked up the phone to dial her sister's number. She figured that Lucy would be busy on her shift at the diner now. She left her message at the tone. "Hey, Lucy. Congratulations! That is terrific news. I knew the two of you were meant for each other. I'm so excited for you both. But I have to apologize for stealing your thunder. When I made my weekly call to Mom, I had just assumed that you had told her already. When she indicated that she hadn't heard, I filled her in. Told her all about your marriage. But I have to warn you, she wasn't too happy. She had met Ralph on several occasions when she had come to the office to meet me for lunch. She had not been impressed with him. I don't envy you your next conversation with her."

Lois hung up the phone and smirked. She only wished she could be there when Lucy heard *that* answering machine message. Not to mention when Lucy called their mother to try to get back into her good graces.

The score this year was Lois: 2 and Lucy: 1. Based on both quality and quantity, Lois declared herself the winner of this year's pranks.

There was only one problem.

She only had a year to come up with an even better prank.

THE END