

The Egg

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Rated: PG-13

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Summary: Lois gets a Superman exclusive. Or does she? A response to the April 2013 Comedy Challenge. Set in the middle of Season 1.

Superman wiped his dirty brow. This had been a very busy night, starting with an attempted burglary of a jeweler's shop, two car crashes, and finally this – a fire at the Metropolis Zoo. Superman helped the fire department put out the fire, but the damage had been extensive and the surviving animals had to be evacuated. As the zoo staff was loading the last of them on the trucks taking them to temporary shelter at the Gotham City zoo, Superman ran a quick scan of the area, looking for any living animal left behind.

The sight was atrocious, burnt-out carcasses lying around everywhere. It was just as bad as the sight of dead human bodies, Superman thought, just as he noticed the body of an ostrich lying protectively over a nest of eggs. He carefully moved the dead bird and looked at the eggs. Some of them were badly scorched, but one of them looked intact. Superman thought the egg should be saved, as the mother gave her life to protect it. He carefully wrapped the egg in his cape and went in search of one of the zoo workers, just as he heard the last of the trucks pulling away.

He thought of stopping one of the trucks but he didn't want to scare the loaded animals any more than they already were. It was dangerous enough for both animals and humans in the truck as it were. He was sure the egg could wait till morning and decided it was time to go home and hit the shower.

Superman landed on the balcony and stopped there. Something wasn't quite right. He cocked his head and listened. Yes, there it was – a steady heartbeat coming from inside his apartment.

Lois! It was Lois' heartbeat. What was she doing in his apartment? He couldn't come in from the balcony now. It would raise all kinds of questions he didn't want her to dwell on.

He was mulling over this problem as he heard another fire alarm. Would this night never end? Tiredly, he took off again.

Lois Lane stirred. Something – some noise, maybe? – woke her up. She sat up and looked around her. Where was she? Oh, yeah. Clark's place. She came over bearing pizza as a token of apology for their earlier argument, but Clark wasn't home. She easily broke in and settled on the sofa to wait, but he hadn't come home in a long time and she must have fallen asleep.

What was it that woke her up? It was still dark outside. She looked to the balcony, a source of light from the streetlight below. A large figure was shadowed on the balcony's rail. It looked like a man, a big man, head cocked to the side like some giant bird. Maybe she was hallucinating? Just as she decided to go investigate, the man raised his head sharply, then with a flutter of cape he was gone. A soft thud sounded just as he took off.

Superman! The shadow was Superman! What was he doing on Clark's balcony? And what was the thud she heard as he took off? Lois rushed to the balcony. On its floor was a large... egg. Well, it *looked* like an egg but was very large, maybe five by six inches. Could it be an egg? What was it doing on Clark's balcony?

Then it hit her – the thud she heard was the egg falling to the floor as Superman took off. Did Superman bring Clark an egg? Why would he do that? What kind of egg was it, anyway? She carefully slid her hands under the egg and lifted it. It was heavy, maybe three pounds. And it was warm. Fresh?

Could... could Superman have *laid* the egg? He was an alien. Maybe his kind reproduced by laying eggs? But Superman was a *man* ("all the parts of a man" her mind whispered)! Did Kryptonian *men* lay eggs? So much was unknown about the powerful alien. He was very secretive about his heritage.

Now that she'd had some time to think about it she was certain – Superman laid his egg on Clark's balcony. He must have expected her partner to look after the egg until it hatched. Would it hatch a little Superman, a superbaby? Suddenly she had another thought – this was her chance to get close to Superman. She would look after the egg and when it hatched, she would be the super... something's mom. Superman would appreciate what she did for his hatchling and it would draw them closer.

One thing was clear – once Clark finally got home he would lay claim to the egg. If she wanted to implement her plan she needed to get out of here, fast.

She rummaged through Clark's closet for the oldest, rattiest sweatshirt she could find. Hopefully he wouldn't miss it too soon. She carefully wrapped the egg in the sweatshirt and left the apartment. In the very last second she darted back in to grab the incriminating pizza box. She tossed it in the dumpster down the street and hurried home.

When she got home she dumped the contents of her laundry basket on the bathroom floor. She padded the bottom of the basket with some soft towels and the throw from the living room sofa and carefully laid the egg in its warm and soft new home. She placed the basket on the bedroom floor, where she could see it from the bed, and then she went to sleep.

Lois dreamt of holding a blue-and-cape-clad infant, while Superman looked at both of them lovingly. It was a very pleasant dream. Unfortunately, the alarm clock woke her up before Superman could ask her to marry him.

She was late getting up and late getting to the Planet. Annoyingly, Clark was already there. Even more annoyingly, she found that he had filed a Superman exclusive – an interview and report of a fire at the Metropolis zoo. She'd always hated it when Clark got to Superman before she did, but now she also feared Superman had said something to Clark about the egg. Fortunately, Clark hadn't said anything about it and didn't look as if he was hiding anything from her. Maybe Superman hadn't asked about the egg.

She left work on time, for the first time in months, and rushed home to look over the egg. It hadn't hatched. She felt its surface and it was cool. Maybe the throw wasn't doing a good job keeping the egg warm. What could she do?

She went online to search for the care of eggs. She learned that she needed to keep the egg warm to about body temperature, that she had to rotate the egg every few hours and that she could buy special lamps to warm the egg. She didn't want to do that – it was so... impersonal. Superman's baby deserved more, but what could she do?

Finally she decided to do what any good mother would do: she wrapped up the egg from all sides to give it a good support and then gingerly sat on it. The egg didn't crack and she breathed a sigh of relief. She sat like that for over an hour, thinking about Superman's face when he learned how she took care of his egg, until she figured the egg was warm enough. She carefully turned it, then wrapped it up again and went about her normal business.

Before turning in she sat on the egg again for another hour, then got up in the middle of the night to turn it. She set her alarm clock to an earlier hour and sat on the egg some more before

going to work.

Lois kept the same routine with the egg for over a week. She was crabby from missing sleep and growing more and more annoyed with Superman for not inquiring about the egg. What was he, some kind of a cuckoo bird? She snapped at everybody, most especially Clark, but no one found it out of the ordinary. Just Mad Dog Lane in normal mode of operation.

One morning she found Jimmy and Ralph, of all people, huddled together over the front page of some supermarket rag and snickering. She already had a blazing headache and the sight and sound of them caused her to snap. She reached down between the two of them, whisked the paper and threw it in the trash can.

“What are you doing, bringing this garbage to the Planet?!” she snarled at Jimmy. Ralph she didn’t even acknowledge. *The Inquisitor* was just the sort of thing she expected him to read.

“But, Lois,” Jimmy pleaded, “this is about Superman’s baby!”

The words stopped her cold. She reached down with shaky hands and pulled the paper out of the trash can. A trashy brunette smiled broadly from the front page, the headline screaming “I had Superman’s Love Child!!!” Words in smaller font informed her that this was one Leigh-Anne Stipanovic, whose son, Jesse, a blond little angel wearing a blue T-shirt with a little red cape in the smaller picture, was allegedly showing signs of superpowers.

Lois breathed a sigh of relief. “Huh!” she snorted, “The sort of thing that only *The Inquisitor* would print! There’s *nothing* in that woman’s claim!”

“What? How do you know that?” Ralph objected, “The kid’s got superpowers!”

“Superpowers, my ass. The kid is at least two years old. How long has Superman *been* on this planet?” Lois exasperatedly explained. “Plus, the kid is blond while both this Leigh-Anne person and Superman have dark hair! Besides —” she stopped cold. Maybe she’d gone far enough.

By now a small crowd gathered around, everyone showing great interest in the subject matter.

“Besides... what, Lois?” Cat sashayed her way into the middle of the pack.

“Besides — Superman doesn’t... he doesn’t *do that*, you know...”

“Doesn’t do... what?” Cat taunted. “The old... rumba?”

“Doesn’t reproduce this way.” Lois was flushed and getting more agitated by the second.

“Oh, really?” Cat practically purred. “Did you fail to seduce him, again?”

“I didn’t... I wouldn’t... I just know, okay?” sputtered Lois.

“Did he tell you?” Cat kept pushing. “In one of your interviews, maybe? Something you neglected to tell the world? Don’t you think the people, the *women* of Earth, deserve to know?”

“He didn’t have to tell me; I saw it with my own eyes!” the words barely left Lois’ mouth before she regretted ever opening it in the first place. Everyone leaned in, not to miss a word.

“*Saw it?*” It had to be Ralph. “What did you see?”

In for a penny, Lois thought, and said, “I saw Superman... laying an egg.”

From the corner of her eye she saw Clark’s head snap up. “An egg?” he asked in an incredulous tone. So Superman *hadn’t* told him.

“An egg,” she confirmed. “I have it in my apartment. I’ve been taking care of it for him. So if *anyone* is having Superman’s love child, I guess *I* am.” Everyone guffawed. “What are you all laughing about?” she snapped. “It’s true!”

“Weeelll,” drawled Cat, “if it’s all true, why don’t you show us this egg of Superman’s?”

Lois felt all eyes in the room on her. She had painted herself into a corner and she knew it. “Okay, I will. But not everyone can come to my apartment, only a few of you.”

It was decided that Lois, Cat, Clark, Jimmy, Ralph and Eduardo would go. As they were leaving the newsroom Perry White came out of his office.

“Hey, hey! Where are y’all going? Does this look like a social club?”

“Big scoop, chief!” Jimmy yelled back as the elevator doors dinged open. “A Superman exclusive!” The doors closed.

They all went down and found two cabs to take them to Lois’ place. Lois found herself stuck between the gleeful Cat and Clark, who kept giving her odd looks.

They got to her brownstone and she led them through the front door. “It’s in my bedroom,” she whispered without really knowing why.

“Of course it is,” scoffed Cat and led the charge to Lois’ bedroom. The basket with the egg neatly wrapped in the throw was easily detected.

“See? See how big it is, how shiny? That’s Superman’s egg!” Lois was triumphant.

Cat was stunned. Jimmy and Ralph’s eyes nearly popped out of their heads. Clark had a very odd look on his face.

At that moment a small crack appeared on the top of the egg. Then another crack and another.

“It’s hatching!” Jimmy squeaked and reached for his camera. Everyone held their breath as the egg gave way to... the ugliest bird Lois had ever seen.

“Well,” Cat smirked after she managed to catch her breath. “That is certainly one Super-chick!”

THE END

No eggs were harmed in the process of writing this story.

This bit of silliness was inspired by my daughter’s favorite cartoon show — Phineas & Ferb, specifically this episode: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9XX7sYHWTo>