

Anything for You (1/1)

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Rated G

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Summary: What happens when college students would do anything for Superman? (This really is rated G.)

The characters mentioned herein belong to Warner Bros. and DC Comics. They are being borrowed for some not-for-profit fun.

I am grateful to my GE Marcelle for her rapid and thorough editing of this story. It is much the better for her eagle eye.

Asabi permitted himself the barest hint of a smile as he drove off of the campus. That had gone even more easily than he had anticipated. Mr. Luthor had, as always, been correct; all the students needed was a little encouragement to do what they had wished to do anyway.

Clark was enjoying just sitting on his sofa, his arm draped over Lois's shoulders, while they took in the adventures of Maria and the family von Trapp. Just as Maria was trying to calm the children with a litany of her favourite things, Clark heard the alarm of a jewelry store a few miles away. He stifled a groan.

"Uh, Lois, I just remembered that we're out of double-chocolate-mocha-fudge ice cream. I'll be back with some before the captain sings 'Edelweiss.'"

Before Lois could protest, he had grabbed his wallet and keys and headed out the door.

Fortunately, Clark used his x-ray vision as he approached the scene, needing that extra moment to process what he saw. He had anticipated the usual jewelry-store-robbing scenario: an armed perp or two in ski masks rapidly helping themselves to the store's most expensive baubles. He definitely had not expected to see a lone teenage girl sitting on the floor and — munching a cookie?!

By the time he alighted beside her, he had regained his composure. "The store is closed, miss. What are you doing here?"

The look she turned on him made Lois's most puppy-dog mooning appear a contemptuous sneer by comparison. "Oh, Superman! I just had to meet you. I would do anything for you." She held up a laden plate. "Have a cookie? I made these just for you."

"Perhaps you could share them with the police when we go down to the station."

The girl sighed ecstatically. "Will you be flying me there?"

"There's no need for that. In another few seconds, you'll be able to hear the sirens of the car that will be your transport."

The girl pouted for just a moment before resuming her adoring expression. She threw her arms around Clark and exclaimed, "I love you, Superman! I'd do *anything* for you!"

As Clark extracted himself from her embrace, he admonished, "The only thing I want you to do for me is to promise me that you won't ever break the law again, and that you will instead put your life to good use."

"Oh, yes. I promise."

Clark was relieved when a woman in blue entered the store. He quickly filled her in on the situation, promised to be waiting for her at the station where he would give a more formal statement, and left as quickly as superhumanly possible.

After giving his statement, he made sure to swing by the grocery

store (in his civvies, of course) before heading back to his apartment.

A few days later, Clark had a sense of *déjà vu* when he flew into the Metropolis branch of Tiffany's. Instead of seeing the expected looting, he saw a young woman standing in the middle of the atrium. She was staring at a newspaper photograph she was holding of him in flight; it looked like one of Jimmy's. When she heard him enter, her eyes lit up.

"Oh good! I was hoping you'd come. That's why I'm here, you know: to see you." She proffered his picture to him. "Would you sign this?"

Clark said in his sternest voice, "Miss, do you realize that you have committed a crime by breaking into this establishment, even if you haven't stolen anything?"

"Oh, but Superman, I would do anything for you. Anything! I just had to see you."

Clark was spared having to reply by the timely entrance of a police officer.

Clark wanted Lois's help on this case; he knew he was too close to it to think completely clearly about it. What he didn't know was how to get it. Should he show up outside her window to fill her in, or should Clark tell her that Superman had spoken to him? He decided that of late he had had more than enough of women swooning over his caped persona; Superman's words would be funneled through Clark.

Clark was not at all surprised by Lois's reaction. "Well, what are we waiting for?" she demanded as soon as Clark had told her of his 'conversation with Superman.' He flinched when she yelled, "Jimmy!"

As soon as the redhead was within sight, she started bombarding him with orders. "Jimmy, we need you to work your magic on the computers. Find out what two teenagers — a 'Jasmine Brennen' and an 'Ashley Bogdanove' — have in common."

"You mean besides both having hot-sounding first names?"

"Jimmy!"

The young man held up his hands in mock surrender. "Just saying! I'm on it."

Before Jimmy had walked ten paces, Lois was already on the phone calling the second arresting officer for more information.

A short while later, Clark looked up when he heard Lois utter a triumphant, "Hah!" She made eye contact with him and said, "Get this. When I spoke to Officer Janke, he said that he had made three other arrests of young women who had just been standing in stores and clinging to some Superman memorabilia."

"Officer Swan told me just now that she had arrested two others," Clark said, leaving out the two arrests. Officer Swan had told him about had happened when he was visiting his folks. He wondered where he had been for the remaining three.

Lois interrupted his thoughts. "But that's not all. During the same times that Superman was involved in the two arrests he mentioned to you, there were major bank robberies across town from him."

Clark's jaw clenched. "So you think that the girls were a distraction to keep Superman busy? What would make the girls agree to do that? And why now? Why all at once?"

Lois shrugged. "Didn't Superman say that both of them would, and I quote, 'do anything for him?'"

Clark nodded. "And that was the odd thing. Both of the young women had used that phrasing, and they both had the same odd inflection when they said it." Clark quickly added, "At least, that's what Superman told me." He hoped Lois hadn't noticed his slip. This thing must have been getting to him even more than he had realized; that had been was a rookie mistake. Fortunately for him, before Lois had a chance to ponder the implications of what he had said, Jimmy came running up, waving two papers in front of him.

"Jasmine is a junior at Met U. Ashley's a freshman there. Here are their addresses." He handed a copy of the addresses to each of the two

reporters.

Lois glanced down at her paper. “Ashley lives in the dorms. Shall we start with her place? Maybe her roommates or dormmates might be able to tell us something.”

“Come on in. The door’s open!”

Clark, always the gentleman, let Lois proceed first. He took in the bright yellow dorm room. Half of it was plastered in Superman memorabilia; it didn’t take much of a leap to figure out which half of the room was Ashley’s.

The girls looked surprised to see the two reporters; they had clearly been expecting one of their peers to be joining them for their pizza party.

Lois told them who she and Clark were before any of them had a chance to ask.

“We were wondering if we could speak with Ashley.”

“She’s not here. She said she was going to stay late at the lab.”

“Well then, perhaps you could help us. Do you know anything about what happened to her last Tuesday evening?”

A girl with short blonde hair swallowed a bite of pizza and said, “Yeah. It was the strangest thing. We were both studying for a major English test we had on Wednesday. Then the phone rang, and I answered it. A man who spoke funny wanted to speak with Ashley.”

Clark asked, “He spoke funny? How? Did he have a lisp or stutter?”

“No. He sounded foreign. Like he was from India, maybe. Or Pakistan. Somewhere like that. Anyway, when I gave Ashley the phone, she just listened for a second. Then she said, ‘I would do anything for him.’ But she didn’t sound like herself, you know? Her voice was wooden. Then she hung up the phone, grabbed one of her Superman pictures, and left the room. She had the oddest look on her face when she left; like she was sleepwalking. She didn’t even say goodbye or anything. Next thing I heard from her was when she called me at the station to give her a lift back to the dorm. She wouldn’t tell me anything that happened that night; she said she couldn’t remember. Weird, huh?”

“You said she had had an odd expression on her face. Have you ever seen her with that look before?”

“Yeah. About a week ago. She looked dazed for about half an hour after coming back from her SFC meeting.”

“SFC?”

“Superman Fan Club.”

As soon as they returned to Lois’s vehicle, Clark said, “It sounds to me like Ashley was hypnotized. Are you thinking what I’m thinking?”

“Let’s see... Indian or Pakistani fellow. Knows hypnosis. Hypnotized girl serves as a distraction for a major crime. Sounds like Lex’s wiliness and Asabi’s hocus-pocus to me.”

Clark concurred. “My thoughts exactly. Next stop: Jasmine’s. She certainly seemed to be a fan of Superman’s. Let’s see if she had attended the SFC meeting last week.”

“And let’s find out who the club’s secretary is.”

“Compare the list of attendees with the recent arrests. See if they had all been there—”

“And how many others were at the meeting.”

Clark continued their back-and-forth. “Get word to the police about what might be expected. If they could get word to Superman, maybe he could whisk the next hypnotized fan to the police station and immediately start patrolling on the opposite side of town.”

“And if the bank flunkies are caught, maybe we could get them to testify against Lex.”

“Or perhaps one of the fan club members would be able to remember Asabi, maybe with a little counter-hypnosis.”

“That wouldn’t stand up in court.”

“True, but it would be enough to be able to get bugs put in the other kids’ phones and to have incoming calls traced.”

Lois beamed. “And between the traces and the recorded voice prints, we’ve got him.”

A few days later, Lois and Clark clinked together their glasses of “champagne” (non-alcoholic — they were still at work, after all). Perry rallied everyone else in the bull pen to their side with a bellow. “Attention everyone! Lois and Clark have finally done it. They’ve brought down the penthouse of Luthor! Thanks to their diligent work, Asabi Gupta has been arrested for his part in the recent bank robberies. And he agreed to testify against Luthor in exchange for a lighter sentence. It seems many of Metropolis’ hitherto unsolved crimes can be traced back to the billionaire. Right now, I think Asabi’s singing is as sweet as Elvis’s — well, almost as sweet.

“Good work, you two. Now go out and get me another front-page headline. Everyone else — back to work. The stories don’t write themselves, people.”

Jimmy approached them. “Man, I can’t believe Superman actually helped to put an end to it all. Can you imagine having lots of college babes willing to do *anything* for you, and you putting a stop to it? What I wouldn’t give to have been in his place!”

Before Lois had a chance to retort, Clark said, “Those girls didn’t know what they were doing. It was like when Miranda struck.”

Jimmy disagreed. “No it wasn’t. They were in the SFC. They already wanted to throw themselves at Superman. Asabi just gave them the freedom to do what they wanted. And even if he hadn’t, I’ll bet Superman has all kinds of women begging him to be with them.”

Clark knew he should have kept quiet. He really should have. But the temptation to get under Lois’s skin was just too great. “Well, when you put it that way...”

Lois rolled her eyes and threw her hands in the air. “Men! It’s a good thing neither of you is Superman.”

Clark tried not to let his smile be too enigmatic.

THE END