

# Autographs

By Ultra Lucille <ullucille\_at\_gmail.com (replace “\_at\_” with “@”)>

Rated G

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Summary: The famous author LL Kent has, perforce, incredible practice with signing her John Hancock. But she has an impetus for this skill that many authors lack!

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“Hi, Rob.” Lois Lane-Kent looked up and smiled resignedly at the slightly grizzled but athletic older man who had strode without question or hesitation to her desk upon entering the newsroom. She eyed the well-stuffed manila envelope he carried in his hand with a spark of humor in her eyes. “Is that them?”

An answering spark flared to life in his usually deadpan gaze. “Yup,” he replied succinctly. He pulled a thick sheaf of papers out of the envelope and handed them to her, smiling a little bit at her reaction.

Lois’s eyes were wide with disbelief. “Really? That’s all?” she asked incredulously.

Rob nodded. “Yeah. I double checked at the front desk, but Deb said that this was all we had for you this week.”

Lois considered for a moment. “I guess that makes sense. It *has* been a bit slow.” Since she was looking down at the stack of papers, Lois missed Rob’s irony-laden glance.

“So, the procedure’s same as always,” Rob said. “Just look them each over for mistakes and then sign each page.” He reached into the messenger bag at his side and brought out a pen. Rob had started bringing his own pens when Lois received a complaint from the Daily Planet management about the number of writing implements she went through each week for this task.

“So, how is Mike doing?” Lois asked, not even looking up as she glanced through each document, making occasional notes and then scrawling her loopy signature. “Did his play go well?”

Rob wasn’t fooled by Lois’s seeming absorption with the pages in front of her. Despite the task, he knew she was fully capable of carrying out a conversation. She could probably check over and sign these pages in her sleep by now. So he responded, “Yup. Mike really enjoyed it. He got a real kick of playing a bullfrog and belching out a ‘rrribit’ whenever he thought the audience was least expecting it.” Rob smiled over the antics of his 6-year old grandson.

Lois laughed softly as well. “Yes, I can just imagine it,” she said, her pen still scribbling industriously. “You wouldn’t believe what my son Jon did the other day...”

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Across the newsroom floor, Chip Granger (the new featherbrained, pimply-faced cow ‘chip’ of a copy boy) eyed Lois furtively from behind the cover of a large potted plant. He couldn’t get any closer to her while retaining even this partial cover because every member of the newsroom’s plant life was strategically placed at least 30 feet from Lois’s desk (thereby significantly decreasing the Planet’s plant budget, according to Mr. White). He knew that the glamorous author LL Kent had

started her writing career as an investigative reporter, but he had had no idea that she continued in that role. It seemed so... plebian. Not suitable for the number one bestselling author of the Wanda Detroit mystery series.

Chip saw that Jimmy Olsen, the head researcher for the Planet, was about to pass his hidey-hole. He was best friends with LL Kent—he’d know! Chip grabbed the man’s arm as he strode by with a stack of research. “Hey Olsen,” he hissed. “Who’s that over there with Mrs. Ke — ah, Ms. Lane?”

Jimmy glanced at the man standing by Lois’s desk. “Robert O’Reilly,” he said, shooting the awkward new Planet employee a friendly smile as he made to move past him. He was halted by the young man’s continued grasp on his sleeve.

“Is he from her publisher?” Chip asked, stars in his eyes. He was a rabid LL Kent fan. It was actually her bestseller novel *The Lives and Lies of Wanda Detroit* that had made him first decide to get into the news business. “Are those cover pages she’s signing? Does that mean she has a new book coming out soon?”

Jimmy looked at Chris as though he were crazy. “Are you kidding?” he asked. “Lois doesn’t have *time* to...” Then Jimmy remembered. “Oh, that’s right. You’ve only been here a couple of days.”

“Well,” he continued, a small imp of mischief dancing in his eyes, “I guess you *could* say that she is signing autographs for her most dedicated...ah...fans’.” Jimmy didn’t quite manage to swallow the chuckle bubbling up in his throat. Then, taking pity on the callow youth, he explained, “They’re police witness and victim statements. Lois signs ‘em in bulk!”

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