

Unfaithful

By Mary Potts AKA Queen of the Capes
<queenofthecapes@gmail.com>

Rated PG

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Summary: Clark is about to share his secret with Lois... but, first, she has to confess a secret to him!

Clark was nervous as he reached up to knock on Lois's door. They'd agreed to meet at seven, and today was definitely not a good day to be late, given what they needed to discuss. He straightened his tie, hoping that he didn't still smell like smoke.

He heard her footsteps, and then came the long series of clicks and clacks as she undid her locks and slid back the chain. Finally, she held the door open. "Come on in, Clark."

He tried to smile casually at her, even though his heart was racing a mile a minute. "Hi, Lois," he said. "Um, sorry I'm a bit late..."

"You said you had something you wanted to talk to me about," Lois reminded him.

"Y-yes," he stammered. After five seconds of standing in the middle of her living room like a lost puppy, he took a seat on the couch. "Lois, there's something I need to talk to you about."

"I know that, Clark," she said, barely keeping the amusement out of her voice. She sat down next to him. "What is it? Is something wrong?"

Clark swallowed. It was now or never. He had to do this—just get it out and get it over with, and if she got mad, then she got mad. "Lois," he began, "I—uh..." He cleared his throat and tried to start again. "I know you must be upset..."

"Why would I be upset?" she asked, one eyebrow raised.

Crap. He had skipped to the middle. He tried again. "Sorry. What I mean is...Lois, about Superman..."

She went pale. "Oh my God."

He looked at her in confusion. "Lois?"

Lois reached out and put a hand over his. "Clark," she said, "before you say anything, I've got something to tell you. It's important," she continued when he opened his mouth to interrupt, "so please listen and...and...please try not to hate me."

"What is it, Lois?" he asked.

She looked away from him and wrung her hands. "Clark," she began, "I have a...a...disorder."

"Disorder?" he echoed.

"Compulsive infidelity."

Clark stared at her blankly for a moment. "What?"

She buried her face in her hands. "I know that sounds like a load of crap, but it's true. I've been seeing a therapist for it, and she says I've been making good progress, but I still have issues. We think the stuff I went through while my parents were married is probably to blame."

"What?" Clark repeated.

"I'm sorry," Lois choked out. "I'd meant to tell you all this before we got too deeply involved, but basically, I just can't have a stable relationship unless I'm seeing someone else on the side. So yes, I was flirting with Superman. I'm sorry, Clark! You're a great guy, and I never meant to hurt you."

Clark was stunned. "What?" he said at last.

"I'll understand if you don't want to be with me any more." Lois sniffled.

"Uh..." Clark thought for a bit, trying to process everything he'd just heard. "So...is it just that you need to have a second

boyfriend, or do you actually need to keep playing the field?"

Lois shrugged. "I do okay with two relationships," she said, "not that it makes much difference to you, I suppose."

"Actually, Lois," Clark began, the cogs in his head turning, "I think I might be able to live with that."

She looked up at him in surprise. "Really, Clark?" At his nod, her face lit up. She threw her arms around him and hugged him tight. "Oh, Clark! You're the first man who's ever been able to deal with this. I promise, I'll keep working at the therapy and try hard to be the kind of woman you deserve."

"It's okay, Lois, really," said Clark, hugging her back.

After a while, she pulled away. "Was there something else you wanted to talk about?" she asked.

Clark blinked. "Nope. Nothing at all."

THE END