

It Can't Be Unseen

By Deadly Chakram <dwell82@yahoo.com>

Rated: PG

Submitted: May 2017

Summary: Sometimes, a hero can see more than he wishes to. And sometimes, it can be more than he can bear.

Story Size: 918 words (5Kb as text)

Disclaimer: I own nothing. I make nothing. All characters, plot points, and recognizable dialogue belong to DC comics, Warner Bros., December 3rd Productions and anyone else with a stake in the Superman franchise.

“What is it?” Lois asked, concerned, as her husband cocked his head to one side, his gaze shifting to someplace a million miles away as he listened with his super hearing.

“Not sure yet,” he answered distractedly, putting down the dice he’d been shaking in his hand not a moment before. “Sounds bad though.”

“Go,” Lois urged with a nod. “We can finish our game of Monopoly later.”

Clark blinked as he snapped out of his super hearing and back to his immediate surroundings. “I’m sorry, Lois. I’d hoped tonight would be nice and quiet so we could just relax for a change.” He stood from the couch.

“A hero’s work is never done,” she mused with a small smile as he spun into his Superman uniform.

He bent down and captured her lips in a quick, chaste kiss. “I’ll be back as soon as I can. I promise.”

“I know. Be careful,” Lois said gently, her usual warning to him. Then, even softer, “Love you.”

“Love you too,” he replied with a tender smile as he gently cupped her cheek with his palm.

Lois basked in the warmth of his flesh for half a second before he was gone, zooming out of one of their large living room windows, faster than any human eye could hope to follow. Her heart sank, as it usually did, wishing she could do something to help him as he went about making his rescue. Sometimes, it was hard watch him go, she admitted to herself. She missed him and felt useless as she stood and looked around helplessly at their living room.

For a few heartbeats, she considered turning on the television to see if the news had any word of what he was up to. She frowned. She just wasn’t in the mood to watch the images on screen, and besides, it was unlikely any reporters were on the scene yet. She decided on a quick shower instead. For a good ten minutes, she let the hot water roll over her body, working some of the kinks out of her muscles and rinsing away some of the stresses of the day. Then she towed off, dried her hair, and slipped into a soft pair of pajamas.

She padded down to the kitchen and began pulling out baking pans and some boxed brownie mix. She still wasn’t a great cook by any means, but Clark had at least helped her refine her skills enough to bake a few goodies without charring them into nonexistence. Swiftly, she got together the water, oil, and eggs she needed, mixed everything together with the powder from the package, and popped two trays of brownies into the oven to cook. While they cooked and the kitchen filled with mouthwatering smells, she picked up the book she was in the middle of reading and finished a couple of chapters. She removed the brownies

within seconds of the timer’s loud *ding!* and set everything aside to cool. Then she headed back to the living room.

Clark was just returning home as she stepped foot into the room. She tossed the book onto the couch and made a beeline for the window.

“How was it?” she asked once he was completely inside.

“I...uh...” he stammered, wide-eyed.

“Clark?” she asked, concerned for him, stopping short of the hug she’d intended on giving him.

It didn’t take much to see that the rescue had deeply affected him in some way. His features were drawn tight. He’d gone pale. His eyes were wide and staring. His expression was haunted, like a man who’d seen a ghost.

“Honey?” she asked, more forcefully this time, putting her hands on his shoulders. “What’s wrong? What happened?”

“A fire,” he said, his voice sounding far away, his eyes looking straight ahead, unblinking. “A grease fire,” he elaborated after a couple of seconds. “In a kitchen up at one of the campsites north of the city. You know the ones...they have all the little cabins and one big mess hall. I just...I can’t unsee it, no matter how hard I try.”

“Why? What happened? Was it that bad?” Lois knew she had to get him to talk it out, so he could start to feel better. It was the only thing that helped when he came back from rescues looking like this.

“Yes...no...no one was killed,” he answered, still not meeting her gaze. “Minor injuries, for the most part. The cook was badly burnt. I had to fly him out of state to a better burn unit than Metropolis General has.”

“Is that why do you look so distraught?” she finally asked. “Because of the man’s injuries?”

“No,” he said, shaking his head slightly, as if it might clear away the images in his mind’s eye. “It wasn’t that. It was...where it was...I’ll never be able to unsee it,” he repeated.

“Where, Clark? Where was it?” Lois pressed, still not understanding why her husband looked so traumatized.

Clark finally turned to look at her. He took a deep, steadying breath and gulped hard.

“A geriatric nudist camp.”

THE END