

The Naming of Cats

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Rated: G

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Summary: Why is it so important to Clark that he name Lois's new cat? An expansion and continuation of the Lois & Clark episode "Lucky Leon."

Story Size: 1,062 words (6Kb as text)

Disclaimer: Superman, Lois, and Clark belong to Warner Bros and DC Comics. Parts of this story are based on the *Lois & Clark* episode *Lucky Leon* which was written by Chris Ruppenthal. The title of this story was borrowed from a poem of the same name written by T.S. Eliot. This story was written purely for fun and not for profit.

No cats or beta readers were harmed in the making of this story.

Lois noshed on a breadstick while waiting for the appetizers during Clark's and her official first date. "...And when Elroy died, I was heartbroken. That cat and Lucy were all that kept me sane during those rough years. I took him with me when I moved out on my own."

Clark asked, "Have you thought about getting another cat?"

Lois paused with her breadstick halfway to her mouth as she contemplated the suggestion. "When I lost Elroy, I was just starting out in my career. I had been so focused on proving I was the best that I didn't have time for another cat. But I'm not so driven anymore."

Clark raised his eyebrows and smirked.

"I'm not. Really. I know you think you've seen 'Mad Dog Lane,' but I was ten times worse then."

Clark leaned back and crossed his arms — his posture and face revealing his amused skepticism. "If you say so, Lois."

Lois was having such a good time she chose to ignore the bait. "Anyway, yeah, I think I might like another cat, if the right one came along."

The conversation drifted to other topics, and Lois had a perfect evening, right up to the time she slammed the door in Clark's face.

The next evening, there was a knock on her window. She opened it, and Superman glided in and gently alighted. Crooked in one arm was a golden tabby that was purring as the Man of Steel absentmindedly alternated between stroking its back and rubbing it underneath one ear.

"Lois, Clark told me you might be interested in a cat. I rescued this fellow a while back — he must have fallen through an open manhole and was barely keeping his head above water. I couldn't find his owner, and took him to a shelter. No one claimed him, and the shelter was going to put him down in a few days. I thought you might want to rescue him more permanently than I could."

While Superman spoke, the cat reached out a paw and tentatively touched Lois' arm. She reached for the feline, and Superman gladly surrendered him to Lois. Lois nuzzled the cat's nose and said to it, "You don't fight fair, do you? How could I refuse you?"

Superman smiled and said, "Then I'll leave you two to get to know each other better."

A short time later, there was a knock on the door. Lois looked

through the peephole to see Clark, who was holding a box in his outstretched arms and had a large bag dangling from one hand. The cat rubbed against her legs as she quickly undid the locks and cracked the door open.

"Hi Lois. Superman told me about the cat, and I figured you'd need some supplies." He hefted the box. "I brought some cat food, a litter box and kitty litter, a couple of bowls, and a few cat toys. Mind if I come in?"

"Um, OK. But only for the cat. Thank you for the supplies."

Clark nodded toward the feline. "You haven't named him yet, have you?"

"No, but I was thinking of calling him 'Goldie.' Why?"

Clark put down the pet supplies. "Because I'd like to name him."

"Why should you get to name my cat?"

"It's important to me, Lois. I want to call him, 'Schrödinger.'"

Lois laughed. "What kind of name is that for a cat?"

Clark's answer began with an apparent non-sequitur. "Last night, when you slammed the door on me, I wasn't only hurt. I was also confused. I know I had a fantastic time up until then, and you seemed to be having one, too. So why would you then shut me out like you did?"

Lois started to speak, but Clark held up a hand. "Lois, please hear me out. It took me a few hours of pondering before I came up with an answer. Schrödinger's cat."

"What? Who?"

"Schrödinger's cat. Schrödinger came up with a thought experiment. The specifics aren't important. What is important is that he imagined a cat placed in a sealed box. In the experiment, the cat was in a state that was both alive and dead at the same time. Only when the box is opened does the cat become either alive or dead, but not both."

"Huh? How can anything be both alive and dead at the same time? And don't you dare say a word about zombies!"

Clark laughed. "The quantum physics behind it isn't the point. The point is that if someone were afraid the cat might die, they might never open the box. By keeping the box closed, the cat would remain alive, after a fashion. But it would never get a chance to enjoy a full life. And eventually, the air would run out. If someone were afraid a relationship might die, they might choose never to give it a chance, either."

"Now do you see why I want to call the cat, 'Schrödinger'? Lois, he's very much alive, and it's because of you. You opened your heart to him and because of that, he will stay alive."

"Lois, I don't know what the future holds; no one does, not even Superman. But one thing I can promise you — if you keep your door open, you won't lose me. Whatever else we may or may not be to each other, I will always be your friend."

How could Clark know her better than she knew herself? How could he put into words so clearly exactly what she was feeling, but could not, herself, articulate?

Before she knew it, she was in his arms, happily ignoring Schrödinger's mews for attention.

THE END