

Bowled Over

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Rated: PG

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Summary: Lois always claims that bowling isn't her game, but somehow, she always manages to win when Clark is around. Of course, Clark would probably say the same about himself. Story 2 in the author's When He Cheats...At Bowling series.

Story Size: 1,233 words (7Kb as text)

Author's Note: Well, well...here we are again, less than 24 hours after posting the first story. Yep. Apparently, there is another story already. About bowling. BOWLING. Stories about bowling have no right to be this adorable — not to mention the interrupting of other WIPs that are most definitely not about bowling. I'm pretty sure EVERYONE asked for a sequel. And AnnieM has said SorryNotSorry. I did not stay within 824 words. Again. In fact, I went over 1000...so I had to edit it down to be exact.

I have to thank lovetvfan, AnnieM, and KathyB for their enthusiastic feedback! And very special thanks to KathyB, who not only BR for me but also straight up wrote the last three paragraphs, tbh. (If co-writing with AnnieM and authoring bits and pieces here and there for others is as close as we can get to getting KathyB to writing fic again, we'll take it, amiright?) Thank you for your help and contributions, Kathy! And as (almost) always, thanks for the fantastic summary!

And a big thank you to SuperBek for her fabulous GE skills!

Stories in the "Bowling" series:

1. [Spare a Smile for Me](#)
2. Bowled Over
3. [A Lucky Strike](#)
4. [A Striking Revelation](#)

“You'd think Franklin Stern owns the bowling alley or something with all the bowling events he makes us do!” Lois griped as they got out of the Jeep in the parking lot of the bowling alley.

“Lois, he *does* own the bowling alley,” Clark said as he fell into step beside her.

“Okay, but do we really *have* to do this? Another event already — we just had the Christmas party last month. I don't like my coworkers this much...well, with a few

exceptions.” She smiled over at him, bumping his hip with hers. “...What even is this thing?”

“It's the Employee Appreciation Party.”

She rolled her eyes. “I'll bet he'd appreciate me much more if I *didn't* go,” she muttered.

“Lo-is!”

“What? It's boring, Clark, and you know I don't like bowling.”

“What if we make things a little more exciting?”

“Oh?”

“Yeah...whoever gets the highest score wins.”

“What do I win?”

“I said *whoever* wins!” he laughed, shaking his head at her. “So when *I* win, you have to cover my Saturday next time the Mets play the Bills.”

“Okay, fine. And when *I* win...” she said as he opened the door for her, his hand sliding down to her lower back, “...you have to...cook me a fancy dinner.”

“W-what?”

“Yeah,” she said, pausing to turn and put a hand on his chest briefly. “I just cooked you a fancy dinner for Christmas! It's only fair you return the favor.”

His breath seemed to catch a bit at the contact, but it wasn't long before he broke into one of his 1000-watt smiles. “Deal.”

She shook his hand, and they both lingered there, the tingling and fluttering she'd felt throughout her body that Christmas Eve when they'd held hands and watched the snow fall outside her window coming back in full force. She found herself mesmerized by the way he was staring into her eyes, and it wasn't until she felt the blush rising in her cheeks that she ducked her head and reclaimed her hand.

As they got set up with their bowling shoes, picked out balls, and headed for the Daily Planet's assigned lanes, her mind was racing right along with her heart. What was happening? And was he feeling it too?

She honestly couldn't tell. Half the time, he seemed flighty and the epitome of Best Friend and nothing more, and the other half...well...

The man had purposely missed his flight to see his parents on Christmas. She'd thought...no, hoped that she hadn't been the only one feeling something more that night. She would have bet on the fact that he'd wanted to kiss her, if she were the betting kind...

She was. She was exactly the betting kind, and usually, she was fiercely determined to be the winner of said bet. And right now in this moment, as Clark seemed to be stealing glances at her and smiling that illegal smile...she had never wanted to win so badly.

She hadn't meant it at the time, but Clark cooking her dinner sounded awfully date-like. With the natural skill

Clark had shown at their last event, she was suddenly worried she wouldn't be able to pull off a win this time.

Clark touched her arm to get her attention. "Good luck, partner."

The tingling in her arm, the fluttering in her chest. How was she going to concentrate? She swallowed, schooling her expression into a teasing one. "I'd wish you luck, but I don't really want you to win." She grinned at him.

He held her gaze for a moment longer than usual before grinning again and heading off to take his first turn. As she watched him...she had a horrible realization. The close-up view of his muscles as he picked up the heavy ball...the fit of his jeans as he bent over — hell, and when he was standing — the man had a seriously unfair advantage over her when she had this...vantage point, directly behind him.

She wanted to sigh with relief when he finally turned back around, but then he disarmed her with another of his dazzling smiles. Why was he smiling? Her eyes darted up to the scoreboard. Five? Not a terribly strong start, not one to be smiling like that for.

"Your turn," he said gently, touching her shoulder as he sat down next to her.

She got up quickly without a word or glance in his direction and grabbed her ball. Took a few deep breaths to try and calm herself. And tried her best. The ball rolled towards the pins with decent speed, but the direction was slightly more off-center than it should have been.

Sure enough, only eight pins fell down; the last two were tottering very slightly, though not quite enough to hope they'd fall, at least from what she'd experienced before. But then one of the downed pins, which had been lolling back and forth close by, lolled right into one of the remaining pins, dominoing them both. A strike!

The next few frames also went better than expected, and Lois started to believe that maybe she had a chance to win after all. She wasn't hitting all strikes, but luck was definitely helping her out as wobbling pins that didn't seem to have a chance of falling fell and even her off-center balls took down more pins than she expected.

Clark, on the other hand, wasn't having his best night; but to his credit, he didn't seem to be too upset about it. Then again, he never had been a sore loser. "Well, farmboy," she said with a triumphant grin as they entered the tenth frame, her lead solid enough to ensure her victory, "I guess you need to start picking out a recipe and buying ingredients."

Clark just grinned back, happier and more relaxed than she'd ever seen him after losing a contest to her. "Believe it or not, Lois, I've been planning my menu this entire game."

THE END