

# Spare a Smile for Me

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Rated: PG

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Summary: Lois thinks this staff trip to the bowling alley is a waste of time, on top of already being in a bad mood. But when Clark delivers a little magic, it might just be enough to cheer her up. Story 1 in the author's When He Cheats... At Bowling series.

Story Size: 1,240 words (7Kb as text)

**Author's Note:** This is Toomi's fault. And AnnaBtG's. And, since it was her plot bunny, I suppose it's AnnieM's fault too. I was feeling jealous of Toomi's recent, wonderfully written SHORT fics...but while whinging a bit in Discord, I managed to find myself with an assignment from AnnaBtG to write something with no more than 824 words. I failed and think I have to try again now. But y'all win more fic!

Anyhoo... AnnieM's plot bunny was inspired by an outing with her kids, during which they argued whether or not it would be cheating to use super powers when bowling. And she said, "Now I want a fluffy one shot where a bunch of DP staff go bowling for some sort of team-building activity and Clark uses his powers to help Lois win."

Thanks to AnnaBtG and lovetvfan for the quick BR and feedback! And AnnieM for the plot bunny and feedback! And super thanks to SuperBek for a speedy and thorough GE job!

Stories in the "Bowling" series:

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

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It'd been three days since she'd even talked to Clark, let alone seen him, and the very last thing she wanted to be doing was bowling. Worse, mandatory bowling. With coworkers. She'd tried arguing with Perry that this was a waste of *everyone's* time. Especially hers. But the Planet's new owner had insisted on team-building activities while they waited for the Planet to be rebuilt.

How rolling heavy, dirty balls at pins was good for team building, she didn't know. What she did know was that Lois Lane was not a team player. On or off the lanes.

Unless it was with Clark. Lane and Kent.

Eduardo, Jimmy, Cat, and Lois? Against Clark, Perry, Sally, and Carl? It hardly seemed fair, given that Carl and Sally were in a bowling league together, according to Clark. And Clark, unsurprisingly, seemed to excel at knocking down the pins.

Earlier, when she'd complained about fairness, Clark had reminded her that it was a team-building activity, not a competition — the idea being to socialize and bond with coworkers to create a more cohesive work environment.

There were points. Scores. Teams. It was a competition.

And she was losing.

The only person she really wanted to bond with was Clark. After the disaster of her almost-wedding, she was terrified of losing Clark.

"Hello," Jimmy said, waving a hand in front of her face. "Your turn, Lois!"

She shook herself mentally and stood, sneaking a peek at Clark across the aisle as she went to grab her ball. He gave her a brief, warm smile, and her heart fluttered. And just like every other time her heart had done it in the past five weeks, she told it to stop. He wasn't in love with her after all, so all the fluttering and tingling was nonsense. Bother some.

"He's not in love with you," Lois muttered under her breath as she lined up her feet and took her turn. Her ball curved more than she wanted it to, and she only clipped three pins on the corner. Dammit.

She bit back a heavy sigh before turning around to gather her ball, not wanting to let anyone see she was upset. Couldn't they have done climbing or golf or tae kwon do? Something she was good at?

Her life had been so full of failure and loss lately. She needed a win.

Her second ball only picked up three more pins. Her 'team' gave her some half-hearted encouragement as she sat down, trying to reassure her that she'd 'get the next one.' Somehow even Cat was a better bowler than Lois was. Insult to injury.

On the next lane over, Perry was far too into the game and pretty good at it, too. A glance up at the scoreboard showed that pretty much only Lois was putting in an abysmal performance.

She hated this. She hated losing. She hated being so close yet so far away from Clark.

As if her eyes and her heart were plotting against her, they kept stealing glances at him. Watching his movements, graceful and sure, as he bowled. Wondering how it was so easy for him to make small talk and laugh with coworkers. Waiting, secretly, for that moment where she'd catch his eye and he'd smile just for her. Even though it didn't mean what she wanted it to mean.

Standing again for her next turn, Lois sighed and grabbed her ball. “Get it together, Lane,” she whispered to herself. She needed to concentrate.

“C’mon, Lois! You can do it!” she heard Clark shout from behind her.

Her heart fluttered all over again as she lined up and took her shot. She watched with hope and hesitation as the ball rolled down the lane, not as fast as she’d meant. But it kept going and maybe even picked up a little speed — from hitting some slope or imperfection, she was sure. And strike!

“Yes!” She smiled wide and turned, searching for Clark’s face. His smile was just as wide, and he held up a congratulatory fist.

Sally and Carl groused at him for cheering on the competition, but he just winked at Lois and then proceeded to remind them, too, that this was a team-building activity.

Her luck seemed to hold out her next few turns too — getting some spares and another strike — as long as she got a smile and encouragement from Clark first. It seemed silly, maybe, but superstition and romance shared the same place in her heart, and part of her wanted to believe it was the magic of love turning her luck.

On her last frame, things were still looking up. The ball sailed down the lane straight for the center pin, aaaand.... Seven-ten split. Shoot. It would be all but impossible to pick up the spare. Her lips held a tight line as she grabbed her ball again. She could at least get one more pin if she lined things up just right.

“Aim for the ten!” Clark called to her, and she looked up at him, holding her ball to her chest. He gave her a smile and a sort of shrug that said, ‘Hey, you never know!’

She gave him a quick nod and turned to face the lane, determined. After a deep breath to steady herself, she lined up and let the ball fly. Right towards the ten; she’d at least get that one.

And then, somehow, some way, the ten pin fell to the side instead of back, and it spun...just far enough to bump into the seven pin and knock it over.

Her eyes went wide, and she spun around to look at Clark. “Are you serious? Did you *see* that?!”

He nodded, his grin lighting up the entire bowling alley. Around her, all her coworkers were on their feet and congratulating her, but all she could see was Clark. Smiling. Just for her.

And this time, she thought that, just maybe, it *did* mean what she wanted it to mean.

THE END