

# Falling for You

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Rated: PG

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Summary: Lois has been doing a lot of falling lately. Mostly off buildings. But after her former finacé's fall from grace—and his building—she's also spent the last six months falling for her best friend and partner. Both Lois's and Clark's nerves are frayed, and Lois has been catching feelings while Superman's been catching her. Now the only question left to answer, aside from Lois's new falling habit, is if cupid's arrow will fall true.

Story Size: 3,573 words (20 kB as text)

**Author's Note:** This was written for the 2025 Summer Ficathon on the L&C Fanfic Message Boards. A huge thank you to Verity/PuffyTiger for being the super organizer, and thanks to Michael for the help wrangling the blurb.

This worked like a fic exchange, in which I submitted a list of three wants and three don't wants in a single fic. Then I received someone else's prompts of wants and don't wants—I got JadedEvie's! The prompts are at the end of the story. I'm totally going to pull a Sue S here. In fact, I'm going to repurpose part of her author's note for Evasive Action (only found on the nfc side of things). My additions are in italics. The rest is Sue's:

"Here's all the A plot you're going to get: Lois is staking out a warehouse or some such dark and dangerous place. What is she looking for? *keeps following juicy leads that only lead her into being pushed off the top of skyscrapers. Who's behind it all?* I don't know. Frankly, it won't matter and I couldn't be bothered to come up with anything anyway. Feel free to supply your own details. It probably has something to do with a major crime ring and blah, blah, blah . . . Let's just go from there, shall we?"

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"All I'm saying is, it's the third time this week, Lois," Clark said, having to pick up the pace when she stormed off, pushing her way right through the lunchtime throng of pedestrians. After waiting two seconds to let her think he'd had to work to catch up, he continued. "Maybe stop going up to the top of tall buildings?"

Oh, why'd he say that? Sure, he was irritated, especially since he had the sinking suspicion she was up to something, but he didn't want to be a dead man.

She stopped short and turned, a fierce glare on her face, not even caring about all the pedestrians she'd just rerouted with her move. "I live in Metropolis," she said tightly, and then she gestured widely at all the tall buildings around them. "That's all there is here."

Okay, so maybe she had a point. But still . . . "That's a lot of perilous falls, even for you."

"It's been a busy week." She crossed her arms in front of her, still glaring. Then she raised an eyebrow in silent challenge.

"If I didn't know better, I'd say you were trying to get Superman's attention," he said, the words out of his mouth before he could stop them. All her brushes with death this week had been fraying his nerves.

"I was," she fumed, and he was surprised there wasn't steam billowing off her.

Clark bit back his reply. He'd known it! She'd been trying to bait him somehow, and he didn't know why, not to mention—

"*Of course* I was trying to get his attention." She narrowed her eyes like she was readying her aim. "That's what I tend to do when I'm falling from a mile-high skyscraper!"

"Doesn't it worry you that you fall frequently enough that you actually *have* a tendency?"

She huffed. "What exactly is that supposed to mean, Clark?"

"It means it *terrifies* me seeing you in danger so often!" he yelled, his voice breaking a little.

Clark watched as her eyes went wide, then darted to her left and right at the people he'd startled around them. He was frozen for a moment, half afraid she might explode, and he held his breath when her gaze landed back on him. She narrowed her eyes again, but this time it looked more like curiosity, not fury, fueling her.

He felt exposed somehow, and his pulse was racing faster than normal, even though time seemed to be doing the opposite. Just as he was about to get twitchy, Lois schooled her expression, and time jumped back into place.

Her hackles seemed to go down, though her heart rate indicated she wasn't as calm as she looked. But she had that trademark Lois Lane "I don't have the time for this" expression on her face, all false bravado and disinterest.

"Maybe you're not cut out for the city after all, farmboy," she said with a dismissive shrug as she turned and started walking again toward the Planet.

The moment stunned him enough that he didn't move for several long seconds, then he really did have to work to catch up with her, weaving carefully through the crowd so as not to hurt anyone.

What the heck had just happened?

\* \* \*

Lois needed to focus. She typed furiously, on autopilot as she wrote up her notes from yesterday's interview with the mayor. Just focus on work and ignore her partner and all his stupid opinions and thoughts and the stupid look on his face and the strain in his tone when he'd yelled at her for being in danger all the time. She'd spent plenty of time *not* ignoring all those things last night over a pint of Choco-Chocolate Monster Chip ice cream.

But that was last night, and today she was going to focus. On work. And definitely not on the remorseful look he'd tried to give her when she'd accidentally looked his way two minutes ago.

So what if he cared? He only cared in so far as he was jealous. If he was so worried about her, he shouldn't devote so much energy to obsessing about how much time she did or didn't spend with Superman. As if she would really throw herself off a building purposefully just to ask him out on a date, which was what Clark seemed to be implying.

Besides, that wouldn't work anyway, because she knew in her gut that Superman was trying to keep her at arm's length. No more flirty superhero. He'd been curbing his attentions toward her for at least half a year now, even though she could tell he still had feelings, was still attracted to her.

"Lois?"

She startled, caught up enough in her thoughts that she hadn't heard Clark approach.

"Yes?" she said, hoping she sounded nonchalant enough.

"Were you, uh, planning on—"

"I wasn't planning anything, Clark! I thought we agreed to not discuss yesterday's argument again."

It looked like he was biting back a grin, and she wanted to kick him in the shins for it. He gestured toward the

conference room with a yellow legal pad in his hand. "Staff meeting? Starts in two minutes?"

"Right. Yep," she said, adjusting herself in front of her keyboard again. "I was just finishing this up first. Be there in a minute."

Clark dipped his head in acknowledgement and walked off toward the conference room.

Get it together, Lane.

Lois took a few deep breaths, saved her story draft, and then took three more breaths. She was more rattled than she wanted to admit after all the almost-dying this week. It was one thing to be in life-threatening situations a couple times a month. That was just par for the course for investigative journalism, at least for the *good* journalists, like her. How else was she supposed to know she was on the right track or get the lead she needed to scoop every reporter in the city?

But three times? In a week? She'd never tell him, but Clark was right that it was a lot, even for her. And she'd wanted to ask Superman for his help this last time, to see if he could find the creep who was doing this, or like, give her a way to contact him for protection *before* she was plummeting at terminal velocity. But he'd simply caught her, set her on the ground, did a quick scan of the building for the long-gone perpetrator, and wished her a good day.

Like it was routine. Save a spaceship, stop a car accident, stop a robbery, help an old lady cross the road, save Lois. All in a day's work for Superman.

Couldn't he have at least acted concerned? He didn't even bother to ask *why* the frequency of her need for rescuing had skyrocketed.

After a heavy sigh and locking her computer screen, she pushed away from her desk and headed to the conference room, sparing a wistful look for the coffee station before entering. Today had been unbearably long, and it wasn't even 10 a.m. yet.

When she surveyed the room, she was disappointed but not surprised that the only open chair was smack dab next to her partner. Which was logical. Expected. Everyone wanted her to have that seat so as to be spared her wrath when she wasn't able to sit next to her partner. It was far easier to brief Perry on their joint investigations and jot down notes and ideas for their stories when they were side by side.

Today, she wasn't ready to be sitting so close to Clark, and she really couldn't even pinpoint the exact reason for it. She bit back a sigh and took her seat before Perry could bark at her for being late. As she settled, a dark-blue coffee mug emblazoned with a gold Daily Planet globe moved into

her line of sight. Tendrils of steam rose from the mug, and her heart made some fluttery leap.

“Here,” Clark murmured. “I noticed you hadn’t had any coffee yet.”

“Thank you.” She granted him a smile of gratitude for his thoughtfulness, and tried to push aside the snarky voice in her head complaining that she hadn’t had coffee because she’d been avoiding Clark and he’d been at the coffee station when she’d come in.

He smiled softly and gave her a slight nod before grabbing his pen and lifting his gaze just as Perry started talking.

“Now that we’re all here, what’ve you got for me?”

Lois was about to go first and update everyone on her story about the mayor and his upcoming campaign, hoping she could just be done and zone out the rest of the meeting.

But Jimmy jumped in, raising a finger in the air. “Lois fell off a building yesterday!”

“Jimmy! You weren’t supposed to say anything!” she scolded.

“Again, Lois?” Perry said, giving her his “what am I gonna do with you” look.

“*Pushed*,” she insisted with a glare in Jimmy’s direction before looking at Perry. “I was pushed off a building. And no, I don’t know by who or why yet, but I will.”

“Kent, starting now, you’re with Lois for every trip outside the office. *Every* trip.”

“Chief! You can’t exactly assign Clark to be a bodyguard when he has a job to do too.”

“The hell I can’t, darlin’. You’re the Planet’s most valuable asset!” He leveled another look at her as though he was conceding a little. “Just until you catch the creep.”

She turned to her partner. “Clark, tell him. Tell him I’ll be fine and that I don’t need a babysitter.” She wasn’t a hundred percent certain that was true, but if she could get Clark to confirm it, that would make it feel a lot more true.

But Clark hesitated far too long. Clearly the coffee hadn’t been an apology.

“Fine!” She crossed her arms in front of her and sunk down slightly in her chair. “Seems like Superman’s getting sick of catching me anyway,” she mumbled under her breath so no one else could hear.

“Lois!” Clark said, sounding alarmed.

“What? You and Perry got your way.” She didn’t care how cutting her tone was, she was pissed. And feeling very, very unsettled. “What else do you want?”

“Lois, Clark, my office! The rest of you, get to work and I’ll check in with you later.” Perry seemed disgruntled. Or worried. Or both. He stalked out of the conference room, only pausing to bark over his shoulder, “Jimmy, you too!”

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Clark tried to keep himself from listening to Lois’s vital signs while Perry was lecturing, but he couldn’t help it. He was worried sick—multiple attempts on her life this week, and now she felt like Superman was tired of rescuing her? That cut him right to the quick. He could never . . .

“—back to the hotel after one of the last concerts he’d ever perform, and the limo just happened to stop at this intersection where two guys were beating up a teenager at a gas station. The King, still wearing his rhinestone jumpsuit, flings open the door and runs up to them, taking his karate stance and showing them a few moves”—Perry held his hands up and punched his hands in the air—“and he says ‘I’ll take you on!’ It wasn’t more than a few seconds before they recognized him and stopped to apologize. Then he spent a few minutes taking pictures and signing autographs for bystanders before he got back in the limo and left.”

“Seriously? Right on!” Jimmy cheered. “Good thing he still had his flashy stage getup on, or the guys might not have recognized him and tried to fight him.”

“Now, Jimmy, there’s no way they wouldn’t have recognized him! The King, he had a *presence* about him. He got noticed all the time, in and out of his costumes, and was known to be very gracious with his fans.”

“Rescuing people in a flashy costume,” Lois said wryly. “A regular Superman, Elvis was.”

Perry, Jimmy, and Lois all chuckled at that, and Clark pretended to laugh along, but he was shifting nervously in his seat and wishing desperately for a reason to escape this conversation. Supremely uncomfortable didn’t even come close to describing how Clark was feeling right now, especially since he could tell Lois was watching him.

“All that said, I’m not sure I’d recognize Superman without the suit and cape,” Jimmy said.

“Could be, Jimmy,” Perry agreed, letting his hands fall back to his sides from their Elvis-like pose. “His features aren’t quite as distinctive as Elvis’s were.”

“I’d know.” Lois crossed her arms over her chest and leaned back in her chair, and it was nerve wracking how definitive it made her statement seem. “Just like Perry says about Elvis, Superman has a *presence* about him.”

“Well, that might be true for *you*, Lois,” Jimmy conceded, “since you’ve had more up close and personal time with him than pretty much anyone in the world.”

Clark thought he might have let out a squeak because Lois looked over at him questioningly. It was categorically false that she'd know, but that didn't stop him from wanting to squirm.

"Except maybe for Clark," she said, raising an eyebrow at him. "You're friends with him. What's your take—do you think you'd recognize him? Or heck, maybe you've even seen him wearing something normal?"

God, was she scrutinizing him? Had she figured it out and was throwing down a gauntlet to taunt him? This had to be a nightmare. It was a nightmare, right?

"Maybe we should just get back to the reason we're all in here," Clark offered nervously, hoping he was coming across as more responsible than evasive. When everyone just stared at him blankly, he added, "Who's threatening Lois, and what do we plan to do about it?"

Clark avoided looking directly at Lois, but he could see enough that he knew she was narrowing her eyes at him, her arms still crossed.

"Yes, Clark, thank you." Perry pointed a finger at him. "So, do you two have any idea who this might be or what it's about?"

"No idea, Chief," he said, feeling only a modicum of relief from the change in topic. "Lois has been following the leads alone."

"As I've done for nearly every lead I've ever gotten in my life." Lois scowled at Clark.

Clark put his hands up. "I didn't mean it like that. Just that I don't even know what the tips have been about."

"Because they haven't panned out. There's no story there yet, there's nothing to tell."

"Lois, darlin', three attempts on your life isn't nothing," Perry warned, and Clark saw her shrink back just a little. "Have these all been from the same source?"

Lois shook her head. "Different voice, different tip each time. The only thing they have in common is me being pushed off a building. The buildings have all been different, too, but they're all in the Financial District. But they *feel* similar."

"Jimmy, you find everything you can—blueprints, deeds, property tax documents, the works—for all three buildings and we'll hunker down here and get to the bottom of this. And when we have a lead"—Perry gave Lois a warning look—"you and Clark will follow it *together*."

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This was ridiculous. Right now, she was fuming because it was the only way to fuel her strength. It was much easier

to focus on plotting her partner's murder than on the sheer drop below or the chilling wind. Of all the times to pull one of his disappearing acts, he'd thought tonight was a good idea?

"*Just stay here, Lois. Don't move. I heard something.*"

Well, there hadn't been anyone to push her this time, yet she'd still found herself hanging from the window ledge of a fifty-story deserted office building on Water Street. The scene was right out of a horror movie: scattered scraps of lumber, broken glass and other debris, and large sheets of plastic flapping frantically in the wind.

And right now, she couldn't even remember the series of missteps—literal missteps—that had led to her setting foot on a crumbling ledge and nearly plummeting to her death.

Nope, right now, she needed to strangle her partner, her partner who was supposed to be there *protecting her*. No, first, she needed him to materialize and pull her back in to safety instead of having run off to play hero like Elvis and Superman. Right now, she needed to not be hesitating to call for Superman.

But her grip was slipping, and Clark was nowhere in sight.

She inhaled deeply and then let out a scream. "Help! Super—"

Before she even finished calling his name, she felt his arms surrounding her, his warm body a solid reassurance as he floated them back to the top of the building.

Their feet hit the hard surface of the roof, but Superman was still holding her. No, now it was more of an embrace, solid and almost frantic, and his voice came warm against the side of her hair and her temple. "Lois, I'm so sorry! I don't know what I was thinking, but you're safe now. I got him."

"S-Superman?" Lois let out on a shaky breath, the adrenaline still pumping through her veins hard enough that her thoughts were racing too fast for her to catch.

He gave her a gentle squeeze, a murmured apology or something, and then she was alone again on a rooftop, hundreds of feet in the air with the chill of the wind nipping at her.

Lois felt wobbly and disoriented, and not just because she was still finding her balance. Superman had left her. Again. But he'd sounded so . . . worried. So different from his normal self, but she couldn't be sure she hadn't hallucinated that out of sheer want and longing, wishing he'd treat her like she mattered still.

But before she could despair any longer, he was back. Maybe to lecture her on being more careful. At this point,

she'd welcome it because at least then she'd know he still cared.

"Lois?"

She lifted her gaze to find him standing just a few feet in front of her. At a distance but still here. He seemed to be waiting for her to say something, but she didn't know what.

"Lois," he stepped closer, his kind eyes filled with concern, "do you really think I'm sick of saving you?"

"What?" She couldn't have heard him correctly. She hadn't even said that aloud, right?

Superman took another step closer, only mere inches away now. Lois was trembling as Superman reached up to cup her cheek in his hand. God, it felt so warm and magical.

His solid frame seemed to block more of the wind than she'd thought possible, and despite the warmth of his nearness, she still shivered. The look in his eyes was filled with so many different emotions, all vying to be the most prominent. Affection and concern seemed to be winning, though.

Superman just searched her eyes for a long moment, stroking his thumb gently across her cheek. "It *terrifies* me seeing you in danger so often."

Lois inhaled sharply, her mind reeling with the truth just out of grasp. Only a sense of it was there, but none of the pieces had had time to slot into place. As she took in his expression, that affection and tenderness and something else that reminded her so strongly of her best friend, suddenly all she could see was Clark.

Her eyes widened, and she dared to lift her hand and place her flattened palm against the S on his chest. "You're . . . really not as recognizable out of your suit," she said softly, a mixture of awe and fondness in her voice.

"It's the glasses." He let out a nervous huff of laughter.

She chuckled too, smiling and catching his gaze. "You don't think it's the flying? Maybe?"

Superman's face broke into a wide, unfettered grin that was all Clark.

"I'm sorry for all the falling this week," she said softly.

"No, it's okay." He shook his head gently and leaned in almost hesitantly, placing a soft kiss on her forehead. "I'll always catch you."

"Clark?"

"Yeah, Lois?"

"Even if I fell one more time this week?"

"Lois?" he asked, his brow furrowing.

"Because I think I'm falling for *you*."

The end

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Ficathon Prompts for JadedEvie

**Want:**

\* *An Elvis story/anecdote that is just a little bit meaningful to the main story*

\* *A classic 'Superman Saves Lois Lane' style rescue*

\* *One real glimmer of recognition from Lois*

**Don't want:**

\* *Clones*

\* *Pregnancy*

\* *Tempus*