

110 Kisses: This Isn't Fair!

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Rated: PG-13

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Summary: After Dr. Klein's devastating news about fertility and with Clark half a world away, taking care of a natural disaster, Lois lets herself feel the weight of the news and wonders if there's any hope to be found. A sad but poignant vignette in-between scene for "The Family Hour" and also part of a self-imposed challenge to write 110 ficlets with kisses based on a list of 110 prompts on tumblr.

Story Size: 1,505 words (8 kB as text)

Author's Note: So, I saw 90sfangirl79 on AO3 post an awesome one shot based on a prompt from [this list](#), and she has a whole collection of them (and I'm way behind on my fic reading). And then I had this idea that I should write a kiss for every dang 110 prompts on this list. So . . . we'll see if that works out. Here's number 6. "This isn't fair!"

I've been fighting this one for at least six months, avoiding writing it because the only thing my muse would let me see with that prompt is the SAD SCENE from "The Family Hour." And while seventeen-year-old me was low-key traumatized by the abrupt and unsatisfying end to the series that had brought so much joy and so many friends to my life . . . forty-something me has some not-low-key trauma with fertility stuff. So it's harder to watch now, hits a lot closer to home. But here's hoping it's been a bit cathartic for me!

Thanks to SuperBek for assuring me it sounds good and that I got the ending right. And thanks to the FoLCs in Discord who are so kind as to encourage me to write more fic even when I've been a bit absent lately.

Content warning: Sad and heavy feelings surrounding infertility (no specifics).

The weight of Dr. Klein's news still sits heavy in my stomach, as though the dumplings we had for dinner from our favorite local Chinese food place were made of lead. Clark left ten minutes ago, or maybe it was twenty. However long, I'm glad for the natural disaster halfway across the world that called him away. I shouldn't be glad for it, I really shouldn't. But the guilt of it doesn't feel as bad as the lead dumplings do, especially knowing the mudslide in Indonesia will keep Clark's mind half-occupied for the next few hours.

There's nothing to distract my own mind, however, not even our latest investigation. When Clark and I tried to get any leads on Carter Clavin's death by plummeting exercise, we were met with roadblock after roadblock. And we spent the rest of the workday brainstorming what angles to approach next. So, yeah, there's nothing to distract me right now.

I manage to make myself stand and then set about clearing the table, starting with tucking the tabs on the takeout containers closed and putting them in the fridge. As I gather the dirty dishes and put them in the sink, my mind replays those fateful minutes in the conference room earlier today—seeing the silent devastation in Clark's eyes, hearing the quiet pain in his voice, and feeling the brutal, crushing weight of unfairness he tried his best to hide so he could be

strong for me. I know how much I'm hurting, and I know it's a million times worse for him. My stomach lurches, the lead dumplings jostling and resettling painfully.

Incompatible.

Incompatible biology. Because no matter how much he looks like an ordinary man nor how utterly human his heart is, Clark is an alien.

I cringe, hating to even think the word because it gives life to one of his greatest insecurities. And it's something we somehow neglected to talk about all this time, being so cavalierly naive about our biological compatibility. Not until a few months ago, but even then, we just . . . assumed that typical methods of birth control would be enough for us. How gutting to know that it didn't even matter anyway.

Tears burn at the backs of my eyes again as I sink down into one corner of the couch and pull my legs to my chest. My every instinct is to push the tears away, but I think I need to let them come. Especially since Clark isn't here. The very last thing I want is to hurt him more, and I know it kills him to see me cry.

My stomach clenches this time, screwing itself into a tight knot and pulling painfully, making me almost double over. God, I can't even breathe for a moment, until the

floodgates break open and I let the sobs wrack my body for long seconds, or maybe minutes.

A low wail escapes me, and I clap my hand over my mouth, hoping desperately he didn't hear it somehow. I tense for a moment, anticipating the sharp whoosh of his arrival, but it doesn't come. Thankfully. He doesn't need to see this, because I don't think he'll understand that half of this pain is for him, for all the things he lost today. I know how much he wants kids.

I'm feeling so unmoored. The very idea of having children was something . . . well, it never *was* an idea, not until more than a year of dating Clark. Even then, the thoughts were abstract, some nebulous thing that would be nice in the future. It was only Clark's buoyant optimism, his selflessness, and unwavering love that made me want to have children. Imagining that sort of future for us was so much easier than I expected—an idyllic childhood and a house filled with love?—with Clark, it all seemed possible. We'd already proven every fear I had about marriage wrong. I'm not doomed to repeat my parents' mistakes—together, we were stronger than every other challenge that life throws at us. Why not this one too?

I'm pretty sure I'm all cried out, and now I'm just feeling cold. And maybe a little . . . empty, I guess. Which doesn't quite make sense, this emptiness that has a weight and an ache of yearning for something that was never actually there but still missing. Possibility.

Dragging the handmade quilt from the back of the couch, I sigh and then settle a little deeper into the corner cushions as I pull the quilt around me. Clark will probably admonish me for not just heading up to bed; he'd never ask it of me, but I know he needs me to, especially when the rescue was rough. It's that gift of certainty, that he'll *know* I waited up. Maybe that's a silly notion, since I'm *always* waiting for him whether I'm on the bed or couch, but it makes my heart feel better and makes it easier to drift off to sleep.

I don't know how much later it is when the feel of his lips on my forehead rouses me, but I don't open my eyes yet, as though everything will be too real again the second I do. "This isn't fair," I say in a hoarse whisper, my throat raw from the crying earlier.

There's just silence for a moment, then another kiss at my temple and his fingers delicately brushing hair from my face. "It's not," he agrees quietly.

Eyes still closed, not ready yet, I reach toward him, and he scoops me up from the couch in a single motion, keeping the blanket around me. I tuck my face into the crook of his neck, taking comfort from his warmth and his scent.

My hand finds its way up his chest to settle on his shoulder, and I notice he's already in a T-shirt. The suit was either dirty or he's upset with Superman, maybe both. We're upstairs and tucked into bed in no time at all, and I'm snuggled up next to Clark, my head on his chest and my arm draped over his stomach.

He still feels tense, and I know it sometimes takes a while for his nervous system to calm after hours-long rescues, especially ones with casualties. I hold him tighter and press a soft kiss to his collarbone, and he squeezes me gently.

"I love you," he says quietly, his voice a little strained.

I suspect he's afraid to let himself relax, because even though he just flew away from devastation and loss, a more heart-wrenching devastation is waiting for him here at home when he does.

"I love you too." For a moment, I'm at a loss for what else I can say, and we lie there in silence. Clark's hand is running up and down my arm, and I wonder if he's doing it to comfort me, or himself. Maybe both. When I speak again, my voice is barely a whisper because maybe it's just a wish that I don't want to jinx by saying it aloud. But I know he can hear me. "We've done impossible things before . . ."

Clark inhales sharply and seems to hold his breath for a moment. Finally, he lets out a shuddering breath, and I can feel the tension melt away. As he brushes a kiss on the top of my head, my own body relaxes too.

I don't even know if my sentence had an ending—just half a wish hanging in the air—but I feel Clark nod in agreement. And then something settles, a tendril of hope weaving its way into my heart, and somehow, I can sense Clark feels it too.

We've done impossible things before.

The end