

# Dream a Little Dream

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Rated: G

Submitted: June, 2009

Summary: This was written for the 2006 fundraiser and is a little scene in between the episodes “And the Answer Is” and “We Have a Lot to Talk About.”

Story Size: 4,507 words (24Kb as text)

All standard disclaimers apply.

This was written for the 2006 fundraiser and is a little scene in between the episodes “And the Answer Is” and “We Have a Lot to Talk About.” I hope you enjoy!

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“You know I can’t fly!”

The echoes lingered in the dark alleyway as Lois stared after Superman — Clark — as he flew away in a huff.

What right did he have to be ticked off? She was the one who’d been lied to. She was the one who’d been tricked! He had no right to be upset. That was her territory.

She sighed and made her sodden way home.

Sleep was going to be a long time coming; her emotions were too unsettled.

The night before had been a bad night, too. Thankfully, she’d survived being frozen, but even so, the ordeal had taken its toll on her both physically and emotionally. She’d been exhausted, but she hadn’t been able to properly rest — not after realising that Clark liked to fly around wearing tights and a cape!

She’d spent the whole night tossing and turning, with images of her boyfriend/best friend/partner juxtaposed over pictures of the stoic superhero she’d admired so much.

So much made sense after the fact, and yet so much didn’t at the same time.

Clark, her best friend in the whole world, the man who seemed to worship her — why, she had no idea — was the most powerful man in the world. He could fly!

He acted as though a smile from her — Lois Lane, a humble, well, sometimes humble, earthbound reporter — was more than enough to brighten his whole day. Professionally, he acted as though it was a privilege to work with her, which normally she would agree with, but for heaven’s sake! The man was Superman! What did he need with an admittedly brilliant, yet still quite ordinary reporter?

And yet...

Tonight he’d been so hurt when she’d said no. He had gazed at her so plaintively, his puppy-dog eyes alight with hope, and then she’d said what she’d said and watched his face drop and his shoulders slump.

But she hadn’t had a choice. How arrogant it had been for him to ask her to marry him without telling her about his alter ego.

Arrogance, though, was the last thing she associated with either Clark Kent or Superman. So why had he pulled such a bonehead move?

Lois sighed and shifted in her bed, the warmth of her quilt welcome as it seeped into the marrow of her very bones. Last night she’d thought she would never warm up.

Knowing Clark had lied to her — if only by omission — was more than enough to chill her soul.

She yawned, a great jaw-cracking gape, and snuggled deeper into the cozy cocoon of her bed. She was so tired. She needed to sleep. But how could she sleep when there was so much she had to figure out? How in the world could she expect to close her eyes and drift off?

There was so much she needed to know...

She needed to think about Clark...

She needed to think about Superman...

Clark...

Superman...

Her breathing was soft and even as she surrendered to oblivion.

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“Run, run, as fast as you can! You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!”

The little brown man with glasses trotted circles around Lois as she strolled through the meadow.

“What do you want?” she demanded.

“You can’t catch me!” the man said with a smirk. “You can try all you want, but you can’t. See?”

He took off down the dirt road in a flash, leaving a trail of dust in his wake. Funny, he didn’t look like he could move that fast.

She shook her head and waited as the dust-cloud zoomed back to stop in front of her.

He grinned, adjusted his glasses and ran his hand over his wildly coloured tie. “See! You can’t catch me. I’m the Gingerbread Man!”

“But I don’t want to catch you.”

The grin faded and his shoulders slumped. “You don’t want me?”

“Maybe,” she said begrudgingly. “I might. But you’re not giving me a choice — you keep running away.”

“I don’t want to run away; it’s just what I do. I’m the Gingerbread Man,” he said sadly.

“So why should I bother?” she asked reasonably.

He thought hard. “Because I’m the Gingerbread Man! Everyone wants a piece of the Gingerbread Man.”

“But if I can’t catch you, what does that matter?”

“I’ll tell you what. If you can catch me, I’m yours. Okay?”

She thought hard. “Maybe.”

He grinned, his good humour back again. “Run, run, as fast as you can! You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!”

“I can, too. I’ll run as fast as I can, and I’ll catch you. I will!”

He took off and she followed, her legs pumping like pistons.

At first, he had a good lead, but she kept running and soon she noticed that she was getting a lot closer. But then she started to think. Why did she want him? Why was she trying so hard to catch him? What was the point when all he wanted to do was run away from her? She didn’t even know if she liked gingerbread. It wasn’t as if he was a Double Fudge Crunch bar.

Soon she was ambling down the road, going in his general direction only because she hadn’t quite made a decision yet.

She didn’t want to get hurt. He could hurt her. Everyone told her gingerbread was good for her stomach, but in the past, it had actually made her feel awful. Maybe it was better to choose to live without all that pain, without all that uncertainty, without all that gas rumbling around in her belly.

The Gingerbread Man ran in a tight circle in front of her. “What are you doing?” he called to her. “You’re not even trying.”

“Maybe I don’t want to try,” she yelled back. “Not yet.”

He stopped dead and stared at her, his face sulky.

“Don’t get petulant with me,” she said defensively. “I’m the one who was lied to.”

He didn’t answer. Instead he turned and shuffled away, his exuberance gone. Suddenly he looked like a cardboard cutout. He didn’t look real at all.

Lois gasped as the Gingerbread Man slipped on the edge of a creek. His arms windmilled as he lost his balance and disappeared from sight. She heard a scream and ran as fast as she could to the water's edge.

The Gingerbread Man was melting. Lois gasped when she saw he wasn't completely made of gingerbread. He had a core of ooey gooey chocolate. Why hadn't he told her? She would have chased him if she'd known. She loved chocolate.

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Lois bolted upright in her bed, her heart pounding, and sweat dripping from her slight form. It took her a long moment to catch her breath.

Wow! That had been weird and intense and strange...  
... and completely heart-breaking.

It had seemed so real. For a moment, she thought that she had truly lost Clark.

She lay back down and stared at the ceiling. She was so tired, but the potent aftermath of the dream remained with her, causing her to feel a bone-deep despair. She couldn't lose Clark.

Clark was confusing, yes, but he was wonderful and handsome and smart and — she paused to yawn — he loved her, and she loved him, she really did...

Her eyelids closed and Lois drifted back to sleep.

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"Hurry up! CinderClark is scrubbing the floor. We don't want to miss that."

Lady Lucy pushed past her sister, Lady Lois, and ran for the kitchen.

Lady Lois ran after her and grabbed Lady Lucy by the arm. "What are you doing in my dream?"

"Lusting after a super guy, of course," Lady Lucy replied, grinning happily.

"Find your own dream, why don't you?" Lady Lois snarled as she snapped her fingers.

Lady Lucy vanished in a puff of smoke.

"Hah! Serves you right ogling CinderClark like that. He's not yours to ogle. He's mine. I don't care if there are two ugly stepsisters in this story normally. In this dream, I'm the only one that matters!" Lady Lois stomped into the kitchen. "And I'm not ugly!"

CinderClark really did look impressive scrubbing the floor. And because it was her dream and she was in nominal control of it, he had taken off his shirt. His muscles bulged and flexed before her eyes. Lady Lois fanned herself. It really was awfully hot in here.

"There you are, CinderClark," she snapped. "I've been looking for you. I need my burgundy dress ironed, my notes typed up and my jeep washed. I have an important meeting with my source tonight. I'm meeting him at the Press Club at midnight."

"Right away, Lady Lois," CinderClark replied, bowing his head slightly. "But, uh, there's, um..."

"Spit it out!"

"You said last time that I could come with you to meet your source."

Lady Lois swore under her breath and then counted to ten. Twice. "Not this time, CinderClark. You're filthy dirty, you'll never be ready in time and you're not my partner. I work alone. You are low man, I am top banana. Got it?"

CinderClark nodded sadly, his eyes downcast behind his glasses. As Lady Lois turned to leave the room, she thought she heard him mutter 'You like to be on top. Got it,' but when she turned back, he was scrubbing the floor once again and not looking at her. She must have imagined it.

Lady Lois opened the scullery door and gasped. An older man with sequins and sideburns stood in front of her. "Howdy, ma'am. I'm CinderClark's fairy Perry and I'm here to make his

fondlest wishes come true. Perhaps he wants a thing called love or some blue suede shoes."

Lady Lois glared at him. "I hate to break it to you, but boy, are you ever in the wrong place. CinderClark's happy here. He'd walk on water for me, or die trying. So shoo!"

Fairy Perry looked over Lady Lois's shoulder at CinderClark. "Well, son, I tried to turn you into a Hunka Hunka Burning Love, but it just isn't going to happen today."

"That's all right, Fairy Perry. I don't need your help," CinderClark said firmly.

Lady Lois turned and regarded CinderClark in surprise. He was standing straight and tall, and his voice had been resolute and strong. Suddenly, he seemed stronger and more self-confident than ever before.

She didn't like it.

But then, under her gaze, his eyes dropped away from hers and he relaxed his shoulders. That was better. That was the CinderClark she'd always known. And taken for granted.

By midnight, Lady Lois had forgotten all about Fairy Perry and CinderClark. She stood in the middle of the Press Club keeping her eyes peeled for her source, the Prince of Capes himself. Suddenly she saw him on the other side of the room near the bar. Oh no! He was being stalked by Princess Linda, daughter of the King and, of old, a rival of Lady Lois. Lady Lois pushed through the crowd and arrived at the Prince's side just as the King's Linda grabbed his sleeve.

"No, he's mine," Lady Lois snarled as she grabbed his other sleeve.

Princess Linda King shoved Lady Lois hard. Lady Lois dropped her grip on the Prince and shoved right back. Without a second thought, the two women started hair-pulling and screaming.

"Cat-fight! Cat-fight!" the crowd shouted gleefully.

The Prince grabbed both women and without effort, held them apart, giving them each a little shake. Ashamed, Lady Lois gazed apologetically at the Prince. He was really magnificent, the tight blue hose accentuating the muscles in his legs.

"Cat-fight!" the crowd murmured half-heartedly, obviously unhappy that their spectator sport was curtailed.

"I think I heard my name," a sultry voice purred. Lady Lois looked up to see a curvaceous serving maid, her bodice cut extremely low.

"My Lord," the serving maid cooed as she curtsied, displaying her bosom to its best advantage. "I am Cat from the county of Grant and I'm here to serve you."

"Hey!" Princess Linda protested.

"No fair!" Lady Lois said indignantly.

The Prince of Capes smiled sardonically at the two women before pulling Lady Lois to one side. He pulled a pair of glasses from his cape and put them on.

"CinderClark!" Lady Lois gasped.

"Yes, it's me. I need to know if we have a future."

Lady Lois ignored him. "What are you doing here? Why aren't you at home scrubbing the floor? Why are you dressed up as the Prince?"

"Because I am the Prince. But I wanted to know if you could love me for me, so I pretended to be CinderClark. Do you love CinderClark?"

"I... I... I need time."

The Prince let go of Lady Lois, pushing her away. "I understand. No means no."

"Hey, wait a minute! I didn't say no; I said not yet!"

"If you don't want him, I do," Cat purred.

"And me, too," the odious Princess Linda King declared.

"And me," said the Lady Toni of Taylor.

"Don't forget me," said Lady Mayson of Drake.

"I'd like to," Lady Lois muttered under her breath. She really

didn't like Lady Mayson at all. What was she doing here in this dream?

And before Lady Lois even knew what had happened, she had lost sight of the Prince as a sea of blonde, blue-eyed women swarmed him, hiding him from her view.

"Wait... wait... I haven't made up my mind yet... I need more time!"

"Too late! Too late!" the women sang in chorus.

"Lois!" CinderClark yelled frantically, emerging from the blanket of women. His hand reached out to hers imploringly. "I'll wait if you ask me to! I'll wait!"

"Too late! Too late!" the women shouted as they pulled Prince Clark back into their midst, blocking Lady Lois's view. "Too late!"

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"Too late, too late," Lois mumbled as she rolled over to find a more comfortable position.

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Lois pulled the red hood further forward to shade her eyes as she scowled at the world around her. She hated going to Grandma's house in the forest. It was too dirty and there were bugs and weird noises and wild animals. Where was the art? The music? The theatre? Plus, it looked like it was going to rain!

"Well, hello there!"

Lois pushed her hood back and looked around. To the side of the path, there was a man leaning nonchalantly against a tree, his arms folded in front of his chest. His face was in shadow. As he pushed himself upright and took a step forward, a bolt of lightning struck near him, its light revealing his face. Wow! He sure was handsome, debonair and mysterious!

"Hello!" Lois said enthusiastically. But then her mother's words echoed in her head. Be a lady, Lois. Don't be too forward, Lois. You're only a girl, Lois. "I beg your pardon, sir," Lois said softly. "I'm afraid I was too bold."

"Boldness is a trait that I find very attractive in a woman," the stranger assured her, a sardonic smile on his face. "I am Lex, a handsome, debonair and mysterious stranger. I am completely respectable and trustworthy."

Lois smiled, held out her hand and introduced herself, and the conversation began. It certainly made the trip to Grandma's house much more interesting.

Lex took great pleasure in trying to cajole Lois into letting him delve into her basket of goodies. It was hard to remain resolute, but so far she'd managed. She didn't share her goodies with just anybody, after all.

She found herself starting to waver when suddenly, she and Lex heard a great rustling and banging in the undergrowth. A tree landed behind them, a near miss.

"Sorry!" a cheerful voice sang out. As Lois and Lex watched, the figure of a local woodsman pushed his way out of the forest. "Oops! Hey, Lois! Good to see you."

Lois groaned. "Lex, this is Clark. Clark, Lex."

"A pleasure, Clark."

"Likewise, I'm sure. Lois, how about I walk you to your Grandma's house?"

Clark strode over, grabbed Lois's hand and started marching her down the path before she could even say a word. As she looked back over her shoulder at him, Lex waved. "Later. I'll call you," he shouted.

"Clark, you idiot!" she snarled as Lois pulled her hand free. "Did you see who I was talking to? Only the most trustworthy man I've ever met!"

"You don't know him like I do, Lois!"

"What's that supposed to mean? You don't know him either."

"Fine. Then get in bed with the devil for all I care!" And Clark disappeared suddenly in a whoosh of wind.

"Who said anything about getting in bed?" Lois shouted into

the sky. "Not me! I have three rules! I've broken all three of them, but I have them anyway!"

Grumbling and complaining, Lois continued on to Grandma's house. What a lousy day this was. What had got into Clark, her best friend? Would she see Lex again? He might be a bit of a wolf, but he was definitely intriguing and fun. And powerful, too, she thought. He oozed power.

When Lois got to the door of Grandma's house, she knocked dutifully and waited.

"Who's there?" a quavering voice asked.

"It's I or me or whatever," Lois replied, hating that Perry was going to have to edit her grammar — again. "It's Lois, Grandma."

"Come in, my dear."

Lois pushed open the door. It was dark in Grandma's house, the flashes of lightning outside the only illumination.

"Grandma, are you sitting alone in the dark brooding about Granddaddy again? I told you. You need to forget about Mrs. Belcanto once and for all." Lois turned on a light.

"Thank you, my dear. All the better to see you with."

"I brought you food, but don't go looking for a bottle. I'm not going to bring those to you anymore. I've decided. They're not good for you."

"That's all right. Oops!"

The television started to blare, Grandma having hit a button on the remote control by accident.

Lois marched over to the TV set and pushed a button, turning off LNN's anchorwoman in mid-sentence.

"Thank you, my dear. All the better to hear you with."

"Grandma, you don't sound like yourself. I think I should help you back to bed."

Grandma laughed, an odd rumbling, somehow masculine sound. When Lois took her arm, she was surprised by the wiry strength she could feel under her fingers. "Grandma, you've been working out! You've got great muscles!"

"All the better to have my way with you, my dear!" And as Grandma threw Lois down upon the bed, she threw off her shawl and removed a wig, revealing herself as Lex, the handsome, debonair and mysterious stranger!

"Grandma... I mean Lex! Where's my grandmother? What are you going to do to me? How did you get here so fast? How did you know this was my grandmother's house? How did you get so handsome? You didn't have plastic surgery, did you? And where did you learn to be so debonair? Why are you so mysterious? Just what are you hiding? Why are you so arrogant? Why am I the first reporter to get an interview with... mmph."

Lex removed his hand from her mouth. "You talk too much, my dear. And you ask far too many questions. You're too independent, but I can cure that. As for what I'm going to do with you... I want your goodies! All you have to do is lie still." He whipped a cord out of his pocket and tied her hands to the brass railing at the head of the bed, which conveniently appeared out of thin air a split-second before Lex needed it. Traitorous dream!!

And then he picked up her basket of goodies and started pawing through it. Typical man. Couldn't be gentle with something like that. There. He'd broken the Double Fudge Crunch bars! Pig!

"Macaroni salad? I hate macaroni salad!" Lex dumped the pasta out of its container. It landed on the floor with a sodden plop, and a horrible smell filled the room. Lois's eyes filled with tears. She'd ruined the pasta salad. Lex had only given it a burial. She couldn't even cook something as simple as macaroni salad! She was a failure. Great howls of anguish emerged from her throat. She couldn't stop crying. She didn't want to stop crying. It was her dream and she'd cry if she wanted to!

Lex was looking around frantically for a gag when suddenly a colourful blur swooped through an open window into the room,

taking Lex down by landing on him. In the blink of an eye, Lex was tied to a chair, Lois was freed, and the malodorous pasta salad was cleaned up.

Lois ran over to the damp spot on the floor and touched it lightly. “You even deodorized it!”

“I’m a full-service hero!”

Lois looked hard at the man standing in the suddenly empty room. Lex, the bed and all the other paraphernalia had vanished as if they had never existed. There was only an empty room left with Lois at one end and a figure in shadows at the other.

Lois took a tentative step towards him. “You were there for me.”

“I will always be there for you.”

She took another step. “You love me.”

“Yes.”

And another step. It was like walking on a tightrope. “I love you.”

“You don’t know me.” His voice was bleak.

“Yes, I do.”

“You think all I am is some superhero in tights. You think I’m perfect and I’m not.”

Lois took a deep breath and blew it out slowly before taking one more careful step. “No, I don’t. And I know you’re not perfect. I love you anyway.”

“You don’t even know who I am.”

“Yes, I do.” Lois smiled. “You’re Clark. You’re Superman, too, but as Clark, you’re so much more than a superhero in tights.”

“You know?” He stepped out of the shadows into the light, his eyes hidden behind his glasses.

“You’re Clark. You’re my best friend who brings me coffee all the time, who has a quirky sense of humour and wears the weirdest ties I’ve ever seen. You’re the man I dream of being with. You’re the man who saved me from Lex because I couldn’t stop thinking of you when I was supposed to be marrying him. You’re not some perfect hero in tights, although I will say you do look pretty darn good in them!”

“Lois!” He laughed and blushed as he took a few more steps towards her.

“You’re a real man with real problems and real insecurities.”

“What problems?” He moved closer.

She stepped forward and wrapped her arms around his neck.

“Well, you’re in love with me; that’s got to be one of the biggest!”

“Lois!” was all he managed to say before she latched her lips onto his. He relaxed into her embrace, his lips soft and pillowy. Her fingers sank into his skin almost disappearing within his flesh as she continued the embrace. Her fingers sank into his flesh? What the...

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Lois awoke with a start, her arms wrapped tenderly around her pillow and the taste of wet cotton in her mouth. Yuck! That was embarrassing.

Even though she was still tired, she knew she needed to think about her dreams before they vanished into the mist of her memories so she got up and headed to the kitchen to get a glass of water. She didn’t want to attempt anything more difficult than that after her macaroni salad fiasco in the dream.

Her three dreams all seemed to have one common theme. Clark didn’t really believe that she loved him. And answering ‘no, not yet’ to his proposal hadn’t done anything to bolster his confidence. The lunkhead. He just needed to understand that she needed time to get to know both sides of him.

In her last dream, before she’d regrettably started making out with her pillow, she’d hit the nail on the head. He was a real man with real insecurities. He didn’t believe she loved Clark and was afraid that she really loved Superman instead. And he couldn’t

tell the difference between love and hero-worship because she hadn’t known the difference for a long time!

She would just bet that if she had answered yes instead, he would have thought that she only wanted to be with Superman and not Clark. Stupid lunkhead. Stupid Lois for making him think she was shallow. Stupid! Stupid! Stupid! Lois slammed her glass down onto the counter. Water fountained up out of it, all over her pyjamas.

Lois gaped at the glass for a long moment. She couldn’t even drink water anymore? What kind of idiot couldn’t even drink a glass of water without having an accident?

Oh, to heck with it. She was going to change her pjs and go back to bed. In the morning, she’d get up, get dressed, go to work and talk to Clark. She loved him, he loved her, they’d talk, he’d understand that she needed time and by lunchtime, she’d be kissing him instead of some soggy pillow. Grateful that she had a plan, Lois headed back to her room to change and go back to bed.

Behind her, on the countertop, the forgotten glass half-shuddered and then split evenly lengthwise along the seam. The two halves came to rest, rocking gently and gleaming wetly in the half-light of the kitchen.

In the bedroom, Lois was trying to save Clark the marionette from the Wicked Witch of the West, who wanted to burn him alive.

“I want to be a real boy!” Clark cried plaintively.

“I’ll settle for a real man,” she purred and suddenly the dream changed, becoming so much more than she’d bargained for. “Mmm, this is more like it,” she thought, wrapping her arms around her soggy pillow once again. “This is my kind of dream!”

THE END