

# Valentine's Cards

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Rated: G

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Summary: The Lane sisters have a tradition of shopping for Valentine's Day cards. This year Lois has a story to tell about buying a card the year she dated Lex. Telling that story may lead to progress in a relationship with much more potential.

Disclaimer: This is a fanfic based on the television show, Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman. I have no claim on the pre-existing characters whatsoever, nor am I profiting by their use. The new story elements are mine. No infringement is intended by this work.

Time frame: Season 2 at Valentine's Day: Not exactly continuity

This is for Beverly.

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"Lois, look at this one."

I put down the card that I'm looking at and move down the aisle filled with red cards to where Lucy is standing. As I approach, she offers me a one with a glossy photograph on the front. There is picture of a man and woman that I guess are supposed to be in love. At least, the way she's looking up at him that must be what you're supposed to think. She looks delusional to me.

I offer the card back to Lucy. "You've got to be kidding."

She giggles at this. "I know that isn't your style. But they look so in love. Doesn't it make you wish you felt that way about someone?"

I give her my most glaring, 'get real' look and turn away. I'm happy with my life the way it is.

I am.

It figures that Lucy would pick the middle of February to visit Metropolis. While we were growing up, this shopping trip was an annual ritual. Every Valentine's Day she would drag me off to a card store to help her pick out a card for her current boyfriend. Every once in a while, I even had a reason to get a card for someone. Usually, I just came along and offered opinions on Lucy's choices. This year we were mostly browsing stores since Lucy's not seeing anyone right now. Even so, Lucy had still found a reason to make a few purchases earlier in the day.

A few minutes later, she gives up and we leave the store. We head down the street until reaching a nearby coffee shop where we stop for something to drink. I'm sipping my coffee when I find her staring at me.

"What?"

"Lois, what's bothering you?" She actually sounds worried.

"You know I've never liked Valentine's Day."

"I know, Sis. But usually you're a lot more fun than this. This year it's like... I don't know. You actually seem upset by the whole thing. Most years you have a kind of disinterested dislike for Valentine's Day. This year there's something else. It's like it's more... I don't know... personal."

I'm tempted to tell her that she's imagining things. But this is Lucy. She's the one person that I can talk to. Maybe it will help me to talk. I set my coffee down with a huge sigh.

"Last year I was excited about Valentine's Day for the first time in years."

She makes the connection quickly. "Oh... Lex. I'm sorry

Lois, I didn't think... Well, I thought you were all over that."

"I did too. I was actually looking forward to it as Valentine's Day approached. You know better than anyone that I never seem to be in a relationship when this time of year rolls around. It's almost funny. Even though I planned to do the whole 'card thing' it still didn't work out. Despite the fact that I tried to be part of it all... well, I never did give Lex a card."

She looks surprised at this. "Why didn't you get him a card?"

"Sis, you aren't going to believe this, but I bought him three different cards."

Now she's really confused. "How did you buy him three cards but not give him any?"

"It was kind of a strange adventure. First of all, I had a hard time picking out the right card. I wanted to acknowledge that we had a relationship, but at that time I certainly wasn't head-over-heels in love with him or anything like that. I spent a lot of time looking for a card with just the right tone."

"Lois, you said you bought three cards."

"I'm getting to that part. When I finally found a card, I thought I was all done. I was barely outside of the card store when a gust of air from a passing truck seemed to snatch the card right out of my hand. It landed right in a puddle of dirty water.

"I mean, there was a symbol of how I felt about Lex and it was destroyed instantly. I guess I should have taken that as a sign. Anyway, I was lucky enough that the store had another copy of the same card. The woman in the store was kind enough to replace it and I figured that would be the end of it."

Now I have Lucy's attention. "I guess there's more to tell," she says.

"Yeah. I got that card home and was trying to think of what to write as my personal note to Lex. When I finally decided on what to say and put the pen to the paper, the whole end of the pen just snapped off. Black ink seemed to shoot out, and before I knew what happened the card was a gooey mess of sticky ink."

She looked surprised. "I've never had a pen do that."

"Neither have I, and I go through pens by the hundreds.

That's the only time I've ever had a pen break like that and so totally destroy what I was working on. Anyway, at that point I felt like I was ready to cry. The next day was Valentine's Day and I just didn't have the energy to do another search. The next morning I picked up a 'friendship' card and just signed it at the store. I put it way down into the bottom of my handbag and figured I was all set."

I pause just long enough to sip my coffee and Lucy jumps right in. "So, what happened to this card?"

"I don't know."

"What does that mean?"

"A few hours later, when I went to retrieve the card, it was gone."

"Did it fall out of your bag?"

"I don't see how. I put it way down in the bottom just to make sure I couldn't lose this one. I don't even remember setting my bag down during that time and nothing else was missing. It was as if that card just disappeared."

"Wow, Sis. I've never had that kind of problem giving a card to anyone ever."

"I know what you mean. It's as if the universe was trying to tell me that Lex and I did *not* belong together. I just wish I would have gotten the message."

She reaches over and puts her hand on my arm. "Is that what's bothering you this year? You don't sound that upset when you tell the story."

Sometimes it's nice to have a sister. I give her a half-smile. "Not really. It's just the whole idea that last year I had hope for a relationship and... It's not Lex that I miss, it's the hope."

Now she looks surprised. "How can you not have hope? You have the best prospect I know just waiting for you to let him in."

It's my turn to be confused. "What are you talking about?"

"Lois! You can't be that blind."

"Lucy, I have no idea what you're talking about."

"Good grief, Sis! Clark."

As she says that I feel a pang of regret. "Clark doesn't feel that way about me."

"Who told you that?"

"He did."

She gets a look of disbelief at this. "I don't know why he said that, but if he did, he lied."

"Clark doesn't lie."

"He did about this! I've seen how he looks at you when you can't see him. I just wish I had someone half as great as Clark looking at me the way he looks at you. I've seen that kind of look before and he has it as bad as anyone I've ever met. Sis, he's crazy about you!"

How can this be? I mean, I know Clark likes me but...

"Lucy, are you sure?"

"I'm positive. He's been looking at you pretty much like that ever since very first time I saw the two of you together."

"But he doesn't feel like that anymore."

"Ha! Not based on what I saw yesterday at your office. He must work really hard to hide it from you. But, when he thinks no one is looking... Like I said, I wish I had a guy looking at me like that."

I don't know what to think. Could he really feel that way? He said that he didn't love me.

"Earth to Lois?"

"What?"

"You seem to have tuned out. So, you didn't know how he felt. I guess the important question is 'How do you feel about him?'"

This is all too fast. "I... I don't know."

"You've been working with him for almost two years. You must have some idea."

"At one time I thought... I haven't given much thought to Clark when it comes to a relationship. He's just-Clark."

Lucy grabs at the shopping bag next to her and says, "I have just the thing." She pulls out a card that she had purchased earlier in the day and hands it to me. "I get one of these almost every year. Does this apply to Clark?"

She hands me a card. The picture is of two children dressed in grown-up looking clothes. They're holding hands and smiling at each other. Even I have to admit that this is cute. I open the card to read the interior.

"You make me happy."

Lucy's voice breaks through the fog that has descended on my brain. "Does he?"

"Does he what?"

My little sister is looking at me like I don't have a clue. "You really aren't ready for this are you? Does Clark make you happy? That's the real test for someone that you've known for a while."

Clark? Make me happy? My mind flashes back over the last year. All those times he's brought me coffee or doughnuts in the office. Then he helped so much after Lex. Finally, there was Christmas. Clark spends a lot of time making me happy, even when he's not trying. I enjoy just being around him more than any other man I've ever known.

I stand up. "I need to go. Can I have this? Please?"

The smile from my sister is telling. "Sure, take it."

I gather up my stuff and start to turn away. At the last second, I look back at my little sister sitting there smiling up knowingly. I step around the table and lean down to hug her. "Thanks, Lucy. I think I owe you."

"Don't think I won't collect. Now, go find Clark."

I can feel the blush in my cheeks as I turn away.

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I see the light on in his apartment. Somehow, I just knew he would be here. It seems that the closer I got to his apartment, the more nervous I became. I actually had to take out that card and look at it to remind me to keep going. Finally, I decide that I just need to do this and knock on the door.

The door opens and there he is. He really does make jeans and a sweatshirt look good.

"Lois."

"Hi, Clark. Are you busy?"

"No. Would you like to come in?"

"Yes. Thanks." I go in and stop in his entryway while he closes the door behind me.

I look around briefly to convince myself that he doesn't have something going on. "I'm not interrupting your plans am I?"

"No, I was just going to have dinner and watch a movie. Would you like to stay? I'd love to have your company this evening."

I notice something about his tone of voice. He really would like to have *me* over this evening. That thought gives me the confidence boost I need to go through with this crazy plan.

I have to force myself to talk slow. "Maybe. But first, there was a reason that I came over." I hold out the card for him. "This is for you. Happy Valentine's Day." It's not signed and I didn't even take the time to put it in the envelope.

He takes it from me and looks at the simple picture for a longer time than I had expected. After many seconds he opens the card and reads the simple declaration inside. He looks... touched. Finally his gaze shifts from the card to me. "Lois, I'm..."

"Surprised?" I finish for him.

"Yeah. And-well, I didn't get anything for you. I... I didn't think..."

I've almost never seen him this much at a loss for words. I can see that he's trying to figure out what this means.

"That's okay. This was kind of spur-of-the-moment on my part. There is something you can do for me."

His smile gets even brighter. "Just name it."

"I want a Valentine's Day kiss."

The shock of that request is evident on his face. Now he's confused. "I don't understand. A kiss?"

"That's right."

"But Lois..."

He looks scared. Of course, so am I. But, I need to make this happen! "Is there some reason that you don't want to kiss me?"

"Of course not," he replies.

I move in close, put my hands on his hips and say a bit more softly, "Then I want a kiss for Valentine's Day."

He seems to get over this confusion and slowly starts to bend down for the kiss. I feel his arms go around me at the same time that his lips first brush against mine. I sense some hesitancy on his part. He's not sure what I really want. I'm the one that set this up, so I guess it's time to send a clear signal. I shift my hands to his back and pull myself into him. He feels so good. I want so much for Lucy to have been right.

The gentle touch of his lips has now become an urgent pressure. Almost without realizing it, my lips part and I can taste his breath. Touching him... tasting him... holding him... is exquisite. For some time I just lose myself in the sensation. Finally, I realize that I'm holding my partner in a stronger, more desperate embrace than any man before. When our lips finally separate, I feel a sense of loss. That was a feeling I would want to go on forever.

As I return to the reality of the here and now, I find Clark's eyes fixed on me. That expression! I don't remember noticing anything like that before. That's the look that Lucy was talking about. It's as if shades that had been closed were suddenly thrown open and the light is shining through. Now I can see what he's been hiding from me. I know I'm beaming a smile back up at

him. I can't help it. I feel... I don't know exactly, but it's wonderful. I have a flash of memory back to the woman on that card that Lucy showed me. I have a feeling that I look just like that right now. Maybe delusional isn't such a bad thing.

Finally, I find my voice. "I think I'd like to stay for dinner. We should talk."

"I'd like that very much Lois."

As we turn to head for the living area, I realize that we're holding hands. Even that simple touch has new meaning. As we reach the center of the room, I feel his arms go around me once more.

"Thanks for the best Valentine's Day gift ever."

His touch feels so good! Looking up into those eyes that now show so much, I just want to be lost in his arms. "Thank *you* for the best Valentine's Day ever."

THE END