

Lois Lane Meets Superman

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Rated: PG

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Summary: It's 1993 and Lois Lane has managed to sneak aboard the EPRAD colonization module and is waiting for launch. On the surface everything looks like the story we know so well. But appearances can be deceiving.

Thanks to IolantheAlias and Sara (Lieta) for betaing this short. I sort of drafted them both and they were kind enough to humor me. I did make more changes after their final beta passes so any errors were almost certainly introduced by me at the end.

Disclaimer: This is a fanfic based on the television show, *Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*. I have no claim on the preexisting 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 1, Pilot

It sure was quiet for a place that was about to get incredibly noisy. As Lois looked around the equipment bay of the space transport, she could hardly believe that it had been so easy to sneak on board. All it had taken was a well-forged pass, two well-timed diversions, a bit of luck, and here she was.

After all the problems EPRAD had gone through because of Antoinette Baines and her sabotage, you would think that the security would have been tighter. That hadn't seemed to be the case. If anything, in the aftermath of her death and the subsequent discovery of her activities, the EPRAD center security force had relaxed just a bit.

Lois wasn't convinced that Baines had been the top of the chain for the sabotage. The woman had been both smart and well placed, but Lois had learned to look at everything as a puzzle. In this case, the pieces just didn't seem to fit. For all the evidence that had seemed to point directly at Baines, there were some gaping holes. Lois had been around enough to know when money was involved and all of her instincts were telling her that this was one of those times. She knew in her gut that big money was behind Baines' actions. However clever Baines had been, she didn't command that kind of money. Lois had already verified that part. Furthermore, there had been no apparent motive for her part in all this. Someone expected to get something from the failures of the space program. If Lois could find that, she knew she'd find the real players in this game.

Lois checked her seat restraints again. The countdown seemed to be going in slow motion. As she surveyed the room, her eyes landed on a security camera pointed at the entryway. She knew from her research that it covered most of the room and even had an audio pickup. However, in her present location she was out of its field of view. Once she had made it into the room and gotten to the seat unnoticed, as long as she stayed quiet her presence would go undetected.

Undetected. Yes, the money person in the sabotage had managed to go undetected. At least they had for now. Lois had some ideas but they wouldn't produce results without a considerable investment of time and effort. As she thought about

the magnitude of the task ahead, for just a second Lois wished she had a full time reporting partner. As a woman in a man's world, she'd always been extra careful about her interactions with other reporters. Men were bad enough, but even her fellow women couldn't be trusted when it came to a breaking story. She'd learned a lesson back in college when Linda King had stolen her story to make points with Paul Bender. Linda got the story and the guy, but Lois had learned a good lesson. Work alone and trust no one.

That lesson in distrust had proved especially valuable just after she started at the Planet. Being young and impressionable, she had developed a mild crush on an older reporter named Claude. One day in the course of trying to impress the man, she'd shared some information about an investigation she was pursuing. The next day his whole attitude had changed and suddenly it felt as if he was pursuing her. The suddenness of his change in behavior set off Lois's alarm bells. Instead of falling into his arms, she applied some of her investigative skills to Claude. It had turned out that he had a rather questionable reputation. While some of his work seemed to be top-notch, there had been several instances where reputable reporters were convinced that he had stolen stories.

The situation sent Lois into a panic. She had been convinced that if she didn't act immediately she would see her story with Claude's name on it on the front page of the Planet. Lois had pulled her story together and submitted it that same day. She had gotten the front page and her first Kerth nomination. As for Claude, she never did figure out his true motive. Her distrust of the man had ended any attraction she might have had and within a few days, his interest had waned.

As good as that story had been, Lois remained convinced that it would have been even better if she hadn't rushed. She felt she owed Claude for teaching her a lesson in professional journalism. Don't let fear and panic make you move too quickly to put a story in print. After that incident, she swore that she would never, ever let a relationship with a male reporter be anything but professional. She'd stuck by that over the years, and based on where her life was now, that wasn't ever going to change.

Still, she had to admit that occasionally an extra set of eyes could help. From time to time, she had given in and tried to work with partners. It usually didn't go so well, but sometimes the extra help was necessary. This space program story had been one of those times. When the story had started to come together, she'd realized that it might be too big for her alone and she'd asked Perry to assign another reporter to assist. For good or bad, all of the other staff reporters were tied up on their own projects. Perry had given her their junior staff photographer while complaining that he hadn't seen a worthy staff reporter candidate for over a year. Lois had pressed ahead and if this incident proved anything, it was that Lois Lane didn't need another reporter to break a giant story. In this case a photographer had been good enough. She had to smile at that. Yes, in the right circumstances a photographer made a great partner.

What was taking so long? Lois looked around the room once more. There must be a countdown clock here somewhere. As she continued her visual survey of the room, her eyes landed on a panel that looked out of place. There was something counting down there. As she looked more carefully, she realized that whatever it was, it wasn't supposed to be here. In a flash, she realized that it looked suspiciously like a bomb.

Her first thought was that her feeling about the source of the sabotage was correct. Baines was dead but someone was still trying to turn this launch into a catastrophe. She filed that thought away and realized that she had to act quickly. She freed herself and hurried over to the bomb. She didn't dare risk tampering with it, but she had to do something. One advantage of her new location was that she was now in view of the camera. She turned

to face it and yelled, “Help! There’s a bomb!”

It only took a second for Lois to realize that it was likely that no one was monitoring a camera in an obscure storeroom in the final minutes before launch. Looking around quickly she spotted what looked like an electrical panel. She opened it and sure enough, there were bundles of wires that looked important. Lois remembered that she’d spotted a tool kit by the seat. In only a few seconds, she was cutting bundles of wires with a wire cutter from the kit. As soon as she cut the second bundle of wires, alarms started to sound. Now she figured she would have someone’s attention. Lois turned back to the camera and pointed at the bomb as she again yelled, “Help! There’s a bomb!”

Just to be sure that mission control would have a good chance to hear her, she repeated her plea several times. Only seconds later, she heard a sound of metal tearing at the external entryway to the space transport. The outer door opened and a man dressed in red and blue rushed into the storeroom. Lois stared at him dumbfounded for a second, then pointed at the explosive. “It’s a bomb!” she shouted.

The man stepped over to the device, extracted a small black disk and swallowed it. A second later, there was the muffled rumble of a contained explosion. The man burped and muttered a polite, “Excuse me.”

Lois stared at him for a second then asked in a forceful voice, “What the hell are you?”

The man looked confused for an instant before glancing around the room. His gaze landed on the camera and he concentrated for a second. Then his eyes returned to Lois.

“It’s okay now,” he said. “I’ve disabled the camera and the microphone.”

Lois’s arms flew around him. After only a second she tilted her head and they shared a kiss that spoke of both affection and familiarity. However, Lois quickly pulled back breaking the kiss.

“What’s wrong?” Clark asked.

“You taste like ... bomb,” Lois answered with a strained expression.

“Sorry. I didn’t know what else to do.”

Lois hugged him again. “That’s all right. I’m glad no one was hurt.” Then she stepped back and looked him over once more. “I know we talked about you wearing a disguise so you could help openly, but this is Wow! Where in the world did you get this costume?”

For a second it looked like Clark he was going to turn as red as his cape. “My mother made it for me.”

Lois gave him a skeptical look. “Are you trying to tell me that your mother told you to wear fire engine red underwear on the outside of your suit?” Lois barely got the question finished without laughing.

Now Clark was really blushing. “That’s not underwear. My suit is just a different color there. Mom thought it would ... ”

Clark paused as he turned even redder.

“What?” Lois demanded.

“She said it would keep people from looking at my face,” he offered sheepishly.

Lois laughed softly and shook her head. “Well I expect you to fly me to Smallville for dinner tonight so I can hear Martha’s side of the story.”

Clark smiled at the thought of the two important women in his life discussing his new fashion statement. “It’s a date. I promise that I’ll find some way to get rid of the bomb taste before this evening.”

This evoked a laugh from Lois. “You better. I thought smokers’ breath was bad, but now I know that there’s something much worse.”

Clark’s head jerked around suddenly. “People will be here any minute. Will the disguise hold up? You didn’t seem to have any trouble recognizing me.”

Lois stepped back and gave him a once over. “I think it’ll be fine. The combination of not wearing your glasses and having your hair slicked down make a big difference. As for my recognizing you, how many people have seen you naked in the shower?”

Clark stepped in close and put his arms around her. “You know the answer. Just you, my love.”

“Good,” Lois replied with a smile. “But you need to be sure to act different anyway. Do you have a plan?”

“Yeah. I’ll be stiff and formal when I talk to people. I imagine something like Spock from Star Trek. My character will be friendly, but lacking emotion.”

Lois shook her head. “Clark, I think it’s a good idea but I’m not sure you’ll be able to pull that off. You’re so nice that I think that your natural friendliness will come through. Don’t try to hide your emotions. Just focus on formal and stiff and you’ll be fine.” Lois glanced at the door. “We need to get out there and introduce you to the public. Are you ready?”

Clark squared his shoulders. “Yes.” He seemed to be trying to project a level of confidence that wasn’t quite there. “But I don’t know what to call myself. I never got around to picking out a name.”

Lois studied him for a second. “Well, with that big ‘S’ on your chest, I think Superman is the best answer. With all you can do, I think it’s appropriate.”

“Okay, if you’re sure,” Clark said defensively. “But it sounds ... arrogant.”

“That’s exactly the point. Superman is bigger than life. He can do amazing and unbelievable things.” Lois paused, smiled and lowered her voice to a whisper. “And I’m not talking just about his abilities in the bedroom.”

Clark’s mouth dropped open. He was struggling for a reply, but Lois didn’t let him. Fighting off a giggle she said, “Don’t gape at me. You started it.”

“What did I do?” Clark sputtered.

“You burst in here in a skin-tight suit and wearing red underwear on the outside. Where did you expect my mind to go?”

Clark seemed to be struggling for a reply, but before he could say anything, Lois continued. “Like I was saying, a little arrogance is appropriate for Superman. He’s nothing at all like relaxed and easygoing Clark Kent.” She reached out, straightened his shoulders and turned him around to face the door. “Now get out there and introduce the world to Superman.”

Just to help him along, she gave him a small shove. It was clear to Lois that he was going to need all the help she could provide to pull this off.

THE END