

My Wife, the Mother of Utopia

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Rated PG

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Summary: A sequel to the author's "Tale of Two Marthas."

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This is the sequel to A Tale of Two Marthas. I don't think you necessarily need to read that for this to make sense, but I think it will help.

A huge thank you to Carol who beta'ed an early (and truly awful) version of this.

Thank you also to Erin Klingler for GEing this for me.

~Smallville, 2009~

"Jonathan, Clark's here," Martha called up the stairs. I finished washing up before heading downstairs.

"It's nice to meet you, Mrs. Kent," I heard someone say as I came down the stairs.

I laughed. "I don't remember the last time Martha let someone call her Mrs. Kent," I said.

"That's right," Martha added, speaking unusually softly. "Please call me ... Martha." She faltered as she spoke, and I looked towards her to make sure she was okay, but her back was to me as she faced the man in our door. He looked familiar, almost a little like Bruce Wayne.

Clark had let Bruce Wayne know his secret? I wasn't at all sure he could be trusted. Not that I had heard Bruce Wayne give away someone else's secret or anything, but from what I knew of him, he wasn't the most scrupulous man alive. I shook my head slightly. I had to remember that Clark was an adult now. If he had shared his secret with Bruce Wayne, he must have thought it was safe. And maybe it wasn't Bruce after all. Although that didn't change the fact that Clark had apparently told this man his secret — how else would they have gotten here?

"And I'm Jonathan," I said, shaking Bruce's hand.

"Jonathan," Bruce nodded. "I'm Bruce. Bruce Wayne." Well, that cleared that up. I took a deep breath to remember to trust Clark's judgment.

Clark led us into the kitchen. "I smell chocolate chip cookies," he announced.

"You said Lois was still not feeling well," Martha reminded him as she moved to put some on a plate.

"Is this some sort of Kent family secret?" Bruce asked, confused. "Cookies for illness?"

Clark laughed, "No, it's a Lois thing. Chocolate cures all."

Bruce chuckled, and I smiled as Martha came over to join us at the table.

"So, Mom, Dad, there's a reason I brought Bruce here," Clark said.

"We could have assumed that," I pointed out. After all, he had flown Bruce here.

"You did fly him here," Martha echoed my thoughts.

Clark nodded. "Bruce knows my secret."

"I didn't realize anyone besides Lois knew," I said and was proud of how calm I sounded.

"Well ..." Bruce hesitated before finally saying, "I have one of my own. Clark discovered mine and sort of shared his as an act of goodwill."

I was surprised, but I think I managed not to look too curious.

"Bruce is Batman," Clark explained.

Batman!? Well that changed everything. Apparently my impression of Bruce Wayne was completely off. "The Caped Crusader!" I exclaimed. "In our kitchen! Can you believe it, Martha?"

"No," she replied, but her tone was flat. What was up with her? I noticed Clark looking at her strangely, too, so at least I knew I wasn't imagining it, but I wasn't sure what to make of her strange behavior.

"We're here because Bruce needs a favor," Clark continued.

Bruce smiled at Martha now, a warm, engaging smile. "These cookies are wonderful, Mrs. Kent." He was quite the charmer.

"Thank you, Bruce," Martha answered quietly, and again I thought she sounded off. "But please call me Martha," she repeated, ignoring the look I was giving her. "What is it you need?"

"I need to ..." Bruce paused for a moment before seeming to decide to trust us. "I need to pretend to be dead for awhile. I need a place to hide out."

"It's a long story," Clark said, answering my unasked question. "But I thought the farm would be the perfect place. While there is some speculation that Superman and Batman are friendly, no one knows that Clark Kent and Bruce Wayne even know each other. So no one would look for him here."

I looked over at Martha. I was fine with this, but would she be? Normally I would have been sure that the answer was yes, but her behavior tonight wasn't like her.

"So, what do you think, Martha?" I finally asked her when she didn't speak.

"I think it's a wonderful idea," she said. Was she blinking tears back from her eyes?

"Thank you, Mrs. Kent ... I mean, Martha," Bruce said, his voice soft and the gratitude clear. "I'll try not to be in the way. It will be like I'm not here at all."

"I hope not," Martha told him. "I hope to get to know you. We get to meet so few of Clark's friends," she said, her voice breaking slightly. What was with her?

"Thank you," he said. And then to my surprise, given what I had read of Bruce Wayne, he got up and walked over to where Martha was standing near the stove, placing cookies in a care package for Lois. He wrapped his arms around her tightly. "Thank you," he said again.

Martha sighed, leaning against him, and holding the man who had been a stranger to us just a few minutes ago as tightly as she held Clark. I shook my head. My son wasn't the only investigator in the family. Something was going on with Martha, and while I wasn't sure what it was, I was going to find out.

~Smallville, 1962~

I heard of her before I saw her. She was all anyone could talk about, really. Smallville was a ... well, a small town, as its name implied, and its population fell a little every year. No one moved here, people moved away.

No one until now, anyway. That made Martha Clark a bit of a celebrity. The fact that she was private and shy didn't hurt the cause any either. And when I saw her in the grocery store, I realized that these weren't the only reasons why she was the talk of the town. She was also the most stunning woman I had ever seen.

So stunning, I almost decided not to talk to her. Almost. But I knew Brian would never let me live it down if he heard I had bumped into Miss Clark and hadn't said anything. He'd know

why immediately, too. There was no hiding things from Brian.

So, with a pounding heart and sweaty palms, I approached her. “Miss Clark?” I asked. My voice was all off. I sounded like a pre-pubescent boy. She was going to think I was some high school kid rather than a grown man. Well, almost grown. I still felt a bit like a kid. But I had finished high school and even two years of community college eight years ago. And I’d been working my own farm since then. It wasn’t really self-sustaining yet, but it was a farm. That took time.

“Good afternoon,” she said as she turned to me. Her East coast accent was clear and somewhat endearing.

“Good afternoon,” I said, holding my hand out to her. “My name is Jonathan Kent. I just wanted to welcome you to Smallville.”

Something passed in front of her eyes when I said my name, but whatever it was, it had passed in a second and she had her small hand in mine, giving it a firm shake. “It’s nice to meet you, Mr. Kent.”

Still feeling a bit shell-shocked, I smiled at her and started to turn away. Then, as if I had no will of my own, I turned back toward her. “Miss Clark?” I asked again.

“Martha,” she corrected absently, and I had the feeling she knew what was coming. Then again, she probably did. Someone like her was probably asked out on dates all the time. And usually by someone with more to offer than a small town farmer.

“Nothing,” I mumbled, hating that I sounded like a kid, but knowing I was being silly to think I stood a chance.

“Mr. Kent?” she asked.

“Jonathan,” I corrected her. “Have a good day, Miss ... Martha.”

She placed a hand on my arm, and it felt warm. I turned back around to see her staring at the place where her hand touched my arm in bewilderment. “Martha?” I asked, a bit concerned.

She shook her head and when she looked up at me, she was herself again. “You wanted to ask me something,” she pointed out. “So, ask.”

Oh. I wasn’t sure I had the nerve to anymore. But I could hardly tell her that. “It was nothing ...” my voice faded off as I looked in her eyes. There was something there. I wasn’t sure what, but something. Some mix of curiosity and fear. But more than that, because I felt both of those, too. Before I could think about it any further, I blurted out, “Do you want to have dinner with me?”

“Sorry,” I said as I took in our surroundings. I had taken her to the nicest place in town, but Maisie’s was hardly a fancy restaurant. “This is ...”

“The best place in Smallville,” she said with a smile. “I’ve been told that before, but hadn’t come here yet. Thank you for taking me, Jonathan.”

“You’re welcome.” I smiled. She was so gracious, so easy to talk to. But beneath that, there was something about her. Something sad. I wasn’t sure what it was, but more than once tonight she had stared off into space with a look of utter devastation on her face. I didn’t ask her what was wrong though. That was hardly polite. We barely knew each other.

~Smallville, 1962 (later)~

I could feel my palms sweat while we were watching the movie. This was ridiculous. Martha and I had been out three times already. I knew I liked her. I knew she liked me. So why was this so hard? Why was I so nervous?

Martha would not be the first girl I had kissed. To be fair, I wasn’t sure any of my first kisses had had quite this much build-up before. But with Martha staying at the boarding house run by the Lewises, and the Lewises being my parent’s closest friends, I hadn’t yet had the nerve to kiss her good night.

Not that I thought my parents didn’t realize I had ever kissed

a girl before. I mean, I presumed they had figured that out long before now. But it’s one thing to know that, and quite another to hear it a bird’s eye account from your friends.

So, what I really needed to do was kiss her sometime before I dropped her off. So far, I hadn’t been able to find the right time to do that. I was going to tonight, though. I was determined.

“Jonathan?” she asked me with a smile, and I realized I had missed the end of the movie. The credits were rolling, and all around us people were getting up now.

“Sorry,” I mumbled, feeling myself flush as I got up. I took her hand as we walked out of the theater.

“What had you so distracted?” she asked as we walked, clearly still amused by my behavior.

“Nothing,” I said, embarrassed, before I realized this was the perfect opening. Stopping, I said, “Actually, not nothing. I was thinking ...” I paused, not sure I was brave enough to just say it. Somehow it seemed like it would take more courage to tell her what I was thinking than just to kiss her. But this was Smallville. I wasn’t about to kiss her on Main Street unless I wanted it to be the talk of the town. And I definitely did not want that.

“About what?” she asked, looking concerned now.

“About our first kiss,” I mumbled.

Now she was the one who blushed. “Our first kiss?” she confirmed softly.

I nodded. Something about her reddened cheeks gave me the confidence I’d been lacking. “We haven’t had it yet,” I said – in case she hadn’t noticed? How stupid was I? “And I ... well, I didn’t want you to think it was because I didn’t want to. I just ... it hasn’t felt like the right time yet.”

“Oh,” she said softly, still blushing.

“But I kind of ... I guess ...” I fumbled for the right words. “I’d like tonight to be the right time,” I finally finished, hating that I still sounded like a school boy. She didn’t say anything, so I hastened to add, “As long as that’s okay with you.”

When she looked up at me now, it was with that same look of quiet desperation I had seen on our first date. Only when she was looking directly at me, rather than off somewhere else, it was harder to take. I wanted to wipe that look off her face. “Can we go somewhere and talk first?” she asked.

I nodded, feeling a little worried about what she had to say. Did it mean she didn’t care about me the way I thought she did?

We walked back to my truck in silence, hand in hand. I drove over to Shuster’s Field, guessing from her tone that she wanted privacy. Here in Smallville there weren’t too many public places where privacy was an option.

“Is this all right?” I asked when I had parked.

She nodded, her hands folded in her lap now and her gaze fixed on them. “I have something to tell you,” she said. “And ... well, I guess I should start by saying that I’d like to kiss you. But you should know this before you decide if you want to kiss me.”

I nodded, quietly thinking that unless she was about to tell me she was covered with green scales beneath her clothes, it was unlikely she’d have anything to say that would change my mind. Maybe not even that.

“I know everyone here thinks I’m too shy to talk about my past,” she said, and I straightened up at this. I had gotten the impression before now that her past was off limits. “I’m not shy,” she continued. “It’s more that ... well, I don’t have a past, I guess.”

“You don’t have a past?” I asked, confused.

“I ...” She looked anguished, and I realized this was hard for her to tell me, although I still wasn’t sure why. “About three months before I came here, I woke up in a hospital bed in Gotham with no memories. And the hospital staff had no record of who I was or how I had gotten there.”

“What?” I asked. I had never imagined anything like this. And I had spent a lot of time trying to figure out Martha Clark.

"I had been transferred from another hospital, and in the transfer the files were lost. Someone thought my first name might have been Martha, but that was all they knew."

"Wasn't anyone looking for you? How could your files get lost like that?"

"No, no one was looking for me, and I have no idea about the files. But after I was well enough to be released, I spent some time wandering around Gotham, hoping something would jog my memory. When nothing did, though, I found it depressing to be there, hoping someone would recognize me. I wanted to get as far away from there as I could."

"So you ended up here?"

"After I got out of the hospital, I got a job as a secretary at a law firm. I was there for a few months and saved up some money. One day, I decided I needed a change of scenery. I used the money I had saved to buy a ticket on the first flight out of Gotham I could find. It came to Kansas. Once I got to Wichita, I bought the cheapest car I could find and drove around. When I came across Smallville, I knew that was where I wanted to be. It was as different from Gotham as I could get."

"And Clark?" I asked.

"Made up. I have no idea what my last name is," she told me. "Do you hate me?"

"For what?" I asked her confused.

"For not telling you before now," she whispered.

Not wanting there to be any mistake, in answer, I leaned over and kissed her. As far as first kisses go, it was spectacular.

~Smallville, 1963~

"I love you," I whispered as we lay next to each other on the bed of the truck. It was the middle of August and we were looking for shooting stars. Tonight was supposed to be one of the best nights for viewing them.

I hadn't meant to say it tonight, although I knew it was true. I wasn't sure what I was waiting for exactly, but I worried I was rushing things. I wanted ... I guess I wanted to be sure. And sometimes I was. Sometimes I was very sure.

But other times ... well, she still did that thing of staring off into space. I wished I could help her with it. I suspected she was remembering something, even if it was vague, that was part of her past. But she never spoke about it. Maybe there was nothing to speak of. Maybe what she was remembering wasn't formed enough for her to have anything to tell me except that she was depressed.

Although, sometimes ... well, sometimes I thought she was about to speak. But she never did.

I guess I wanted to be sure that those moments weren't of regret. Not that it mattered. It was too late now.

Martha sat up at my words, looking me over carefully in a way that made me squirm. Then her face lit up in her familiar smile. "I love you, too," she said in surprise.

"Surprised?" I asked. I hope it sounded like I was teasing, although I wasn't really.

She looked up at the sky, absently pointing out a shooting star as she did so. "Sort of." Then she seemed to realize what she had said, and she grabbed my hand. "I just ... I never thought I'd really stay here in Smallville. Or at least not happily," she told me. "But now ... I like it here. And not because it's a nice place and I sort of like the community feel of being somewhere where everyone knows me. I mean because of you. Smallville feels like my home now."

"I hope that someday where ever I am feels like home to you," I said softly. It was too soon, and I knew that. But I also knew it was only a matter of time before I asked. And now that it sounded like she maybe felt the same way, it was hard to contain my joy.

Martha smiled at me, before she leaned in to kiss me.

~Smallville, 1964~

I looked across the lawn to see her laughing with Maisie. It was hard to believe it had only been two years since I met her. Two years since she had moved here from ... well, she guessed Gotham, but we couldn't be sure. She looked up and caught my eye and her smile broadened. I was so lucky to have her.

I had pledged not two hours ago, in front of Reverend Manders and everyone here, to love her in sickness and health for as long as we both lived. I made a silent promise to myself right now, though, that I would do better than that. I would give her a good life. I would make up for whatever bad things had happened in her past. I wasn't even sure what those were – how could I be when she didn't know? – but I knew there was something. There were too many times when she got depressed for no reason. And of course, there were the rejections. The ploughed fields in the middle of winter.

And, yes, that last one was my fault – she certainly didn't ask me to plough the snow covered field – but I'd needed something to do after she said no. After, worse than saying no, she'd seemed so unsure. Particularly the last time when I had asked and she had burst into tears and mumbled something about loving me and wanting to say yes, but knowing it was wrong, but knowing she had to. Not that I understood what she meant at all – why would it be wrong to marry me? And why would she feel like she had to do so? But of course when I asked, she hadn't been able to explain

That one had required a lot of ploughing. Because I started to think she didn't love me. And even if she did, she was keeping something from me.

It was hard to imagine. Martha was the most open, truthful person I knew. But what other explanation was there?

It didn't matter now, though. I'd forgiven her when she came and found me on the field. If she was keeping something from me, it must have been for a good reason. I knew that. Because I knew Martha and when I wasn't feeling hurt, I knew that she loved me and I knew that she didn't like to keep secrets.

Still, it was hard not to suspect that all that confusion wasn't related to her past. Even if she wasn't keeping something from me and it was all subconscious. It just isn't normal to turn down a proposal from someone you want to spend the rest of your life with. And certainly not to turn it down multiple times.

I saw Brian talking with Alice over by where Mark had set up a bar area. He had taken my marriage hard – he was the only one of us to still be a bachelor. Well, that and he had had a small crush on Martha since she moved to Smallville. He gave me a big smile now and I thought things must have been going well with Alice, but then realized his smile was unrelated to Alice. Two thin arms wove around my waist from behind. I spun around to face her and murmurings started throughout the lawn. A few people clicked their knives against their wine glasses and I bent to give her a kiss.

She smiled at me as I pulled away, laying her head on my chest. "I don't deserve you," she whispered.

"What?" I asked. Was she crazy? *She* didn't deserve *me*?

"I don't deserve you," she repeated. "I can't believe this happened. After all the times I stupidly told you no ..."

"You were worth it," I told her, meaning every word.

"I'm not," she whispered, reddening slightly. "But I'm so lucky you think so."

I bent to kiss her without the prompting of our party guests. My promise to make her happier than she'd ever been started right then.

~Smallville, 1966~

"Jonathan, what's that?" she asked me, and I almost stopped the car at the excitement in her voice. It had been a week since that conversation with the doctor. A week since he had told us there wasn't anything to be done, it was unlikely we'd have a child, and neither of us had been able to get excited about

anything.

I still wasn't sure we shouldn't get tested. Maybe go to the East coast to see a specialist. Maybe Gotham – maybe there we could see a specialist and Martha would see something that would jog her memory. I wasn't sure, but it felt like her bouts of depression had gotten worse again.

For a long time, they were better. So much better. Since the wedding, she seemed happy. Well, she always seemed happy. But since the wedding she had seemed to mean it, to not have some underlying anxiety or depression or whatever it was that would crop up from time to time.

But for the past few months, ever since I had brought up the idea of having a baby, it had come back. I didn't understand it. I had told her I'd be okay if she didn't want children, but she insisted that she did. And I believed her. I knew my Martha, and she meant it.

Still, ever since then, the moments where she would seem to be somewhere else, lost in some long ago memory, were more frequent. Maybe a trip to Gotham would help with that.

"What's what?" I asked her.

"A shooting star or ... something," she said. "It landed in Shuster's Field."

"It landed?" I asked. "We should go make sure it didn't do any damage."

We pulled up to the gate and then got out of the truck. Martha was running now, and I found myself breaking into a jog to catch up with her. She still reached it a few seconds before me and I nearly bumped into her when she stopped short.

"What is it?" I asked her, but she was staring at it in a way that made me think she wasn't in the present anymore.

"Found," she mumbled. "Super ..."

"Martha?" I asked her.

"The baby. We need to take it," she said, determined and a little awed.

"What baby?" I asked, and she pointed straight ahead. I followed her finger and gasped. It was ... well, it looked like a space ship. But where was the baby?

"What is it?" I asked, although I didn't really expect her to have an answer.

"Our son is in there," she said, sounding sure of herself now.

"In there?" I asked her. "In that ... spaceship?" I asked. Had she taken leave of her senses?

Without answering me, she walked up to it and touched the glass domed top. "Be careful!" I called out, but she wasn't listening to me. The top opened up on a smooth hinge. I took a cautious step closer just in time to see Martha lifting a baby out of it.

"It's our son, Jonathan," she said, smiling up at me.

I felt myself gaping and wondered at her composure. "But he could belong to someone," I found myself saying, struggling for a reasonable explanation. "And how do we know he's a he anyway?"

She shook her head at me, sure of herself now, although I had no idea how. "This is a boy. And he's ours."

~Smallville, 2009~

I wasn't sure what to do. I'd been watching Martha with Bruce the last few days and it was hard to pinpoint anything in particular that was off about the exchanges. Whatever it was, it was subtle. Subtle enough that Bruce, who had never met her before, had no idea there was anything going on. I wished Clark would visit. Not that I would ask him about it, but I thought I'd be able to tell if he noticed it, too.

It wasn't until Bruce had been with us for a week and a half that I decided something had to be done. He was a wonderful guest. Despite all the talk about Bruce Wayne being a bit of a spoiled brat, he was incredibly gracious. And when he tripped and dropped the pitcher of lemonade, he rushed to clean it up

while he apologized.

"Don't worry about it, hon ..." Martha started and then stopped, seeming to be choking on the word. "Honey," she finished quietly. Bruce flushed, probably as confused by her reaction as I was. Of course, he didn't know it was perfectly natural for Martha to call Clark and Lois "honey." And Bruce had been with us long enough now that the endearment didn't strike me as odd for Bruce either. It was the way she had stumbled over the word that concerned me.

Still, I wasn't sure what to do. I wanted to do something, but I was hesitant to just ask her. It felt like years since I had felt like Martha was keeping something from me, since right after we met. Once she had told me about her amnesia, I had always chalked her strange depression up to some vague memory. Now I wasn't so sure. Bruce was reminding her of something, but it couldn't be vague. This was too persistent for that. It had been years since Martha's depressed periods came up quite this frequently. And I'd never seen her this uneasy before.

So, I sat on it for another two days. Until I couldn't do it anymore.

I opened my eyes, unsure what had awoken me. I lay in the darkness for a few minutes, before I could place the sound. I placed a hand on her back. "Martha?" I asked.

She sniffled in response. I sat up, drawing her into my arms. "It's okay, Martha. Whatever it is, it's okay now," I said softly, trying to be soothing. Martha didn't cry often, and I had never seen her cry like this before. Huge, wracking sobs shook her body. I rocked with her back and forth until they slowed and I could feel her sag against me.

This wasn't a nightmare. I mean, sure, it could have been. But I was sure it wasn't. I was sure it was related to her recent strange behavior. So, I held her in silence for a few minutes more before I finally suggested, "Tell me what it is."

She didn't say anything, and for a moment, I thought she wasn't going to answer me. But then I heard her take in a deep breath. "There's something I've never told you," she whispered. "I wanted to, so many times, but ..." Her voice trailed off.

I shook my head. "Martha, don't you know how much I love you?" I asked her, keeping my voice low for the benefit of the guest in the next room. "Nothing you say can change how I feel about you."

"It's about who I was before you met me," she added haltingly.

"I want to hear it, Martha. But only because I can see it's tearing you up inside. Who you were years ago means nothing. I know who you are now."

"A liar," she said, looking up at me with clear eyes. "I've lied to you for years. I never had amnesia. I made that up. I made it all up."

It would be a lie to say that this wasn't surprising to me. And it would be a lie to say it didn't hurt me to hear that she had been lying to me for years. And yet somehow ... well, I meant what I said. I knew the woman she was now. And I knew that if she was lying to me, she must have had a reason.

"So tell me now," I said, trying to keep all the disappointment out of my voice. "Tell me who you were."

Martha gave a slight laugh and a snuffle. "That's it. You're not angry?"

I shook my head again. "No. I'm ..." I hesitated – my normal behavior of being honest warring with my fear that that was the wrong thing to do this time. Finally, honesty won out. Lying was not the answer now. Martha would come clean with me on this one thing, and there would be no more lies between us. "I'm disappointed," I admitted, hating it when I saw the tear leak out of her eye. "But I trust that you had your reasons. And I want to know what they were."

“You’ll never believe them,” she whispered.

“Try me,” I smiled at her.

“My maiden name isn’t Martha Clark,” she began. “It’s Martha Carlin. I was born in Gotham. In one of the more affluent areas. My parents weren’t rich, but they were pretty well off. My childhood was pretty standard, and I finished high school and did what all the girls in that area of Gotham did. I went for two more years of school. Not college per se, but like a trade school for being a secretary.”

I nodded my head, trying not to show too much surprise.

“I met Thomas a year before I graduated, and fell head over heels in love,” she said, her face pained, and I schooled my face so she couldn’t see my reaction. I wasn’t sure what it was anyway. Hurt, I guess. Martha was the first and only woman I had ever loved. And I had deluded myself that the same was true for her. It was foolish given that I thought even she didn’t know her history, but still ...

“We got married right after I finished school.”

“You were married before?” I asked, failing completely to keep the shock out of my voice.

Martha nodded without saying anything, and even in the dark I could see her scrutinizing my eyes, looking for signs of disappointment or disapproval. I did my best to make sure she saw neither.

“Thomas and I were married for a year when Bruce was born,” she started and I began to interrupt her. I started to ask who Bruce was when all the pieces started to click into place. She had had a child before she met me. Was that child sleeping in the next room? It didn’t seem possible that Martha would leave a child. Not the woman I knew. And maybe she was only upset as Bruce Wayne reminded her of her own Bruce whom she had never seen grow up. Maybe her Bruce had passed away.

I willed myself to stop speculating and listen to her speak. My eyes got wide as she told me about meeting with the man claiming to be H.G. Wells when Bruce was five. And as she continued and told me about the things she’d seen – our boy, only not really our boy as he was from a different universe, as a superhero, and then her Bruce as a somewhat darker character, but no less important, it all started to make sense.

“You had to leave him for that to happen?” I asked, gripping her hands tightly. Even if I hadn’t been able to imagine what it would have felt like to leave Clark for the greater good, I could hear it in her voice. How much it cost her, how much guilt she still carried around despite the fact that all the things she had been told were coming true. I knew it was too late to do anything to ease that pain, but I held on to her hands tightly anyway, wanting to do whatever I could so I didn’t add to it with her worrying about what I thought.

She nodded. “According to Herb, in other universes, the shot was more damaging than what I sustained. The other Marthas did lose their memories, they were lost in the hospital system, and they did decide to move to Smallville and married their Jonathan Kents. I came here trying to replicate their lives as much as possible.”

“It can’t be the same, though, remembering Thomas and Bruce,” I whispered.

She shrugged, “Probably not. But it hasn’t been all bad.” She smiled at me. “I saw moving to Smallville as the ultimate sacrifice – signing away my life and living one I was sure to hate. I couldn’t imagine loving anyone as much as I loved Thomas and certainly not in Smallville.

“But I hadn’t met you yet. I knew almost the instant I met you that the other Marthas didn’t fall in love with their Jonathans because the shot changed their personalities. You are my other half.”

“And you’re mine,” I whispered, pulling her closer to cradle her against me. “You need to tell Bruce,” I whispered even more

softly.

“I can’t,” she said. “I want to, but ... how could he ever believe me? And if he did, how much would it hurt him?”

“If he knew the truth ...” I started, but she cut me off.

“I left him as a five year old, Jonathan. I left him to be raised as an orphan. And for a silly, barely believable story.”

“Clark flies,” I said in response. “Nothing is unbelievable.”

“Not to us,” she admitted. “But to Bruce?”

I could see her point. The fact that there was intelligent life on other planets, even the fact that he was friends with the example we knew of, probably wouldn’t be enough for a man whose life was built on a hurt he had suffered as a little boy. “What if you could convince him Herb existed in some way? That you weren’t crazy?”

“How?” she asked me. “Who could possibly testify to that?”

She had a point. A second later, though, she pulled away.

“Clark,” she said.

“What?”

“When he approached me, Herb I mean, he told me he had just seen my son, Clark, and his wife, Lois. I don’t know when he saw them, but maybe he’s done so already? Herb said Lois and Clark were doing well, but he hadn’t made any mention of Samantha and E.J. Maybe they weren’t even born yet. Maybe Clark met Herb years ago?” She speculated.

“It’s worth a shot,” I told her. Of course, Clark might think we were insane if he hadn’t, but still. I reached for the phone.

“What are you doing? You can’t call them now,” Martha said. “It’s four in the morning in Metropolis.”

“This is important,” I told her.

“It’s waited forty-seven years,” Martha pointed out. “It can wait until morning.”

I shook my head. I knew it was unreasonable, but I also knew how much this meant to her. Clark didn’t need the sleep anyway, and Lois would happily get up for this.

~Smallville, sometime in the future~

It took all of a ten minute phone call and only that long because Lois and Clark were so surprised to hear that Martha had met H.G. Wells before they did. We needed to wait until after the kids went off to school in the morning, but then Clark and Lois came out for a visit.

They told a shocked Bruce Wayne about their visits from H.G. Wells and their role in the shaping of the future. And then slowly, haltingly, Martha told him about his role. And about hers.

To say it all went smoothly would be a lie. But Bruce was an adult, and after he got over his shock, the anger Martha feared never materialized. Instead, his surprise morphed into joy at getting to know one of his parents. It changed the entire tenure of his visit.

Mostly it changed Martha. She was more lighthearted and happy than I had ever seen her. And I had always considered her a happy person.

Watching her build her relationship with Bruce was a joy. And as an added bonus, it made me feel like I had done my part in building Utopia.

When Bruce finally was able to be resurrected from the dead, he left us with a promise to return frequently. He left here as our son rather than a houseguest. I watched his goodbye with Martha with tears in my eyes.

My mother was distrustful of other women, and growing up she had always warned me to never marry a woman who kept secrets. But what did she know? I had unintentionally ignored her advice and had ended up marrying the mother of Utopia. From the moment Martha agreed to marry me, I knew I was the luckiest man alive. I just hadn’t realized how lucky I was.

THE END