

Lights, Camera... Boo!

By Tank Wilson <tankw1@aol.com>

Rated: PG

Submitted: October 2011

Description: What would it take to scare Lois Lane? Jimmy decides to find out.

Jimmy Olsen watched his friend, and sometime mentor, Lois Lane, as she busied herself with the daily grind of being the best investigative reporter at the Planet, and probably on the planet. He considered her a good friend, but sometimes she drove him up a wall. She was unbelievable. She was like a pit bull once she'd sunk her teeth into a story. She would do whatever it would take, dare whatever had to be faced; she had ice in her veins. Jimmy had never seen her afraid of anything.

He walked over to her desk. "Hey Lois, any big plans for Halloween?"

She looked up at the young man, rolling her eyes as she did so. "Halloween? Really, Jimmy? I thought you were an adult. Halloween is for kids."

Jimmy grinned. "Yeah, but I've been to some pretty awesome Halloween parties. Come on, Lois, I know you like to party once in a while."

Lois pulled her hands from her keyboard, turned, and fixed Jimmy with a hard stare. "Once in a while? Jimmy, I like to party as much as the next gal, but Halloween is not my idea of a good time."

Jimmy seemed surprised. "Why? I think Halloween is cool."

Lois shook her head a sighed. "Oh yeah, such fun; dressing up in ridiculous costumes and drinking until you actually take the idea of vampires and werewolves seriously."

"Welllll..." Jimmy shuffled his feet. "But you have to admit that those scary movies can be fun."

Lois raised her brow. "Do I? Jimmy those movies have no plot, no story, are transparently predictable, and generally poorly acted. The only thing scary about them is thinking how much money was wasted making the things in the first place."

"Don't you get scared by things that go 'bump in the night'?"

"You mean, when the water in my pipes gurgles in the middle of the night? Or when the wind or the cold causes my building to creak?"

Jimmy nodded. "Yeah."

"No."

He frowned. "Well, what does scare you, Lois?"

"You want to know what scares me, Jimmy?" She thumped him on the chest. "Real life scares me. I worry each morning that I might not be up to the task that the new day has in store for me. I'm afraid that my words won't get through to the people who need to hear what I have to say. I'm terrified that my investigation won't get that serial killer off the street in time to save one more life." Lois swung back to face her computer. "And I'm really afraid of what Perry is going to say if I don't have this story finished by today's deadline, so go and trick or treat somewhere else. I'm too busy right now."

Jimmy wandered off, all the while staring at Lois as he did so.

"Hey, Jimmy, what's up? Why are you giving Lois the evil eye?"

Jimmy glanced over and noticed that Jack had come up behind him. "It's not the evil eye. It's that I just don't understand Lois. I sometimes think that maybe she's the alien instead of

Superman."

"You lost me, bud."

Jimmy shrugged. "We were talking about Halloween..."

Jack laughed. "Let me guess, not her favorite holiday."

"That's putting it lightly. She takes everything too literally. She just doesn't get Halloween."

Jack shrugged. "So?"

Jimmy got a determined look on his face. "So, I'm going to teach the fearless Ms. Lois Lane a lesson about Halloween."

"Really. And how do you propose to do that?"

Jimmy scrunched up his face in thought. After several moments a smile suddenly appeared. "I know just the way." He turned excitedly to his friend and dragged him into a nearby conference room.

"Do you know the show 'Scaredy Cats'?"

"Yeeaaaah." Jack backed up a step. "It's that lame show where friends set up one of their friends to be scared."

Jimmy frowned. "It's not lame. I kind of like it. Anyway, I know a guy who is an assistant on the show. I'll bet they'd love to get someone like Lois Lane on their show."

"You can't be serious, dude. They scare people on that show by putting them in unbelievable situations that have monsters or creatures jumping out at them. Lois would never fall for that. She doesn't believe in that stuff."

Jimmy shook his head, but a big smile was on his face. "No, she doesn't, but she does believe in real life monsters." Jimmy clapped his hands together. "I've got a great idea... and you are going to help me."

Jack's shoulders slumped in resigned defeat. "We are so dead."

It took Jimmy three days to set up his plan, but now everything was poised and ready. All he had to do was set the trap.

The producers of the show had jumped at the chance to have such a high profile reporter as Lois Lane under their jaundiced lens. They were more than willing to help Jimmy set up his friend. He'd given them his idea, and they had run with it. They had their writers tweak his initial idea, and after a couple of sessions they had a final draft of what they intended to do.

Jimmy stopped to take a breath. He couldn't blow things now by acting out of character. It was going to be too perfect. Jimmy took another deep breath. He couldn't stop shaking. He was just about to walk toward Lois' desk when he had to stop again to gather himself. He didn't want Lois to think something was up.

"Pathetic." Jim glanced over and saw Jack approach.

Jack grabbed the small envelope out of Jimmy's hand. "I'll deliver it. If we wait for you to compose yourself enough to give it to her, the show will be on hiatus."

Jack strode purposely toward Lois. He flipped the small envelope onto her desk as he came up next to her.

"Hey, Lois, some dude down in the lobby handed me this to give to you."

Lois snatched up the envelope and stared at it. "What's this?"

Jack gave her a smirk. "Looks like an envelope to me. Jack leaned closer. "Maybe it's a love note from a secret admirer?"

Lois scowled at him. He shrugged. "Or maybe it's from Clark."

Lois intensified her scowl until Jack left, laughing. Once he was far enough away, Lois ripped open the envelope and pulled out the note card that was inside. There weren't many words on the card, but they were potential dynamite. A smile slowly spread across Lois' face. Too bad Clark was home helping his folks with whatever it was he helped his folks with this time of the year. She guessed she'd just have to follow this lead, and crack a big story all by herself. *Timing is everything, Kent.*

She jumped up from her desk, grabbed her bag, and headed for the elevator. She needed to get home... and plan.

Lois approached the darkened old warehouse on foot, having left her Jeep several blocks back. The slight wind ruffled her hair and had a chill in it that hinted at an early winter. She shook her head. Could this 'secret source' have picked a place more stereotypical for their meet? She was well aware that she should be more anxious than normal moving about in the deep darkness that surrounded the silent, abandoned edifice. After all, it was Halloween night, and the eeriness of the place was ratcheted up several notches because of it. That is, for most people. To Lois, Halloween was just a date on the calendar. It held no special meaning for her.

Lois ignored the front entrance and moved in the shadows around the building to the back. There was a large dock door and a single entrance door, but both were securely locked. She moved away from the dock area and came across a small, rusty coal chute. It was an old warehouse and probably at sometime in its past it had had a coal fired boiler for heat.

Lois clenched as she lifted the rusty door, and it complained rather noisily. She stopped and held her breath, straining her ears, listening to the quiet night around her. Apparently her actions hadn't aroused anyone, so she eased herself onto the chute's slide and carefully lowered the lid.

Luckily the chute hadn't been used in many years, so there was no residual coal dust still clinging to the slide, but it was rusted and corroded, and she had to ease herself down the metal ramp since it no longer was smooth enough for her to slide.

Once at the bottom she waited and allowed her eyes to adjust to the darkness. Her surroundings were bathed in various shades of gray and black. The bank of high windows along the north side of the building provided a small amount of ambient light filtering in and creating pools of lighter gray. It was enough, barely, for her to see to maneuver so she didn't bump into things.

Up near the front of the main floor she could see a weak pool of light being provided by a small lantern sitting on a small table. Sitting next to the table she could see the silhouette of a man in a chair. There was another chair across from him, but it was empty.

There were large boxes and long abandoned crates strewn carelessly across the floor. Lois used those to keep her in the darker shadows as she approached the dark figure from behind.

She spent several nerve-racking minutes carefully moving toward the seated figure she assumed was her contact. Most people would think that Lois was being foolish; that she was most likely walking into a trap of some sort. But this wasn't Lois' first rodeo. She knew that sometimes you had to take risks to get the big story. The key was to minimize those risks with intelligence and preparation.

Now that Lois was really close to the figure she could tell that something was wrong. The man, for it definitely was a man's silhouette that she'd been seeing, was strangely immobile. She knew that she'd been quiet but he should have sensed her presence by now.

She quickly moved around from behind him to the front, expecting to at least startle the man. There was no reaction.

"Oh god." Lois' hand flew to her mouth.

The reason that the man hadn't reacted to Lois as she approached was because he was dead. His throat had been cut. This was not good. Lois knew she had to get out of there.

Suddenly a couple of things happened simultaneously. A harsh light was shone into her eyes, and a pair of large strong hands seized her shoulders.

A calm, yet eerie voice came out of the darkness. "I hope you hadn't planned on leaving, Ms. Lane. After all, our unfortunate comrade here gave his life to get you here. It would be extremely bad form for you to leave before we had a chance to chat."

Lois bit back a smart-mouthed retort as she saw a tall, thin man step out of the shadows. No sense in angering her 'host' until

she was sure what she had gotten into.

Jimmy sat back in the make shift control room that had been set up in the back corner of the warehouse. It was an old office, and the production team had blackened the windows so no light would be able to be seen by someone on the warehouse floor.

Several low light cameras had been set up in various places in the warehouse and around the outside of the building. Jimmy had been excited when the cameras had first picked up Lois and had watched with growing anticipation as he followed her progress up to the victimized secret source.

"Wow, is she great, or what?"

The director sitting next to the antsy researcher put his finger to his lips. Jimmy nodded and eagerly looked back to the monitor. Knowing what was going to happen next had him on the edge of his seat. There was no way Ms. Nerves of Steel was going to be able to face what was coming without giving into extreme fear... even terror.

Lois had been 'escorted' to a large storage room that stood in one corner of the warehouse. The dusty shelves were empty, many of them missing. She sat on a heavy, hard metal chair, in front of a simple metal table with a wooden top. She was tightly duct taped to the chair.

There had been clamps bolted to the top of the table, which had confused her at first. Their purpose had become crystal clear when her arms were stretched out onto the table top and secured by those clamps just above her wrists.

The goon who had man-handled her stood back, adjacent to the small entry door. The fellow who had spoken to her, the one she considered the leader, stood next to the table with a feral grin on his face.

Lois glared up at him. "Who are you? What do you want?" Lois gave a sad shake to her head. "Who was that guy out there?"

The grin got wider. "Bait."

Lois hid the nausea she felt. "Did you hire him to contact me and set up this meet?"

The thin man shook his head. "No, I wrote you that note. I knew your boundless curiosity wouldn't allow you to pass up what was implied. The gentleman out on the warehouse floor has no idea who you are, or what this is."

"I don't understand."

There was an almost imperceptible shrug of the man's shoulders. "Consider him set dressing."

"What?"

"Never mind." He walked up and cradled Lois' chin in his hand. She tried to pull away but was bound too tightly. "You have questions?"

Lois rolled her eyes. "Who, what, where, and why? Those will do for starters."

The thin man laughed. "You can call me... Mr. Smith; and as to who I work for, you have no need to know that. Let's just say that he's not a fan of your work." He smiled at Lois' snort of exasperation. "The 'what' will become clear shortly. The where is right here, of course; and the why is because I wish to give my employer a gift."

"What?"

Mr. Smith continued as if Lois hadn't spoken. "What do you give a person who, literally, has everything? Obviously not something that money can buy. He already has all of that." Smith strolled casually around the room leaving Lois' sight for a few moments. "So, I decided on a gift that would be unique. Something that he could gaze upon and know that one of his enemies had been neutralized."

"Not likely," Lois murmured between clenched teeth.

Suddenly Lois felt a hand come from behind her and grasp a thick lock of her hair. A sharp pair of scissors quickly snipped it

off close to her scalp. The dark tress was dropped onto the table in front of her.

"I had thought of giving him a box containing your lovely hair, that he would know your humiliation." Lois glanced at the severed hair and glared at him. "But then I thought, no. A bad haircut would hardly stop Lois Lane from being the crusading reporter that she is and a thorn in my employer's side."

"Bet on it."

He came back into view and ran his finger along her jaw line. "Then I thought; I could lop off your head and send it to him for his trophy case." Lois swallowed a large lump in her throat. "But then I decided... too medieval, but I was on the right track."

He stepped back and gave her a smile that was absolutely chilling. "Definitely something for his trophy case, but what? Then I hit on it. What was it about Lois Lane that so infuriated my employer? Was it her dogged determination to ferret out the truth?" He shrugged. "Partly, but mostly it was her irritating habit of writing up the stories of those truths and having them printed in that damnable newspaper."

"So, you're going to kill me?"

Smith stared at her for a few moments. "No, that would be too merciful."

He walked to someplace out of Lois' vision. When he came back he was holding a large, powerful looking, circular saw. "I'm going to make sure you can't write any more of those stories Ms. Lane."

He reached over and ran his fingers over that back of her hands. "Such lovely hands. They'll make wonderful trophies... don't you think?"

The big goon reached down and plugged the power cord of the construction saw into a long extension cord that Lois hadn't noticed before. Smith moved toward her. Lois began to thrash around trying to get loose. It was no use, she was secured too tightly.

Mr. Smith hovered over Lois, his grin becoming more feral by the moment. He squeezed the saw's trigger and the tool of destruction sprang to life with a high pitched whine. He laughed as he leaned toward her.

Lois screamed.

Jimmy was amazed at how fiercely Lois fought the big guy who had grabbed her by the shoulders, but it was no use. He was just too big and strong. He watched as they took her toward the storage room. He soon lost sight of them. There were no cameras focused on the storage room, and he would have to wait until they were settled inside where more cameras were situated.

It was only few minutes until they had a picture back. Jimmy watched, fascinated, as the main actor went through his threats to Lois.

Jimmy's eyes went wide. "Omgod, he cut her hair! She's going to kill me when this is over."

The director chuckled. "I wouldn't worry about it. You'd be surprised how forgiving people can be once they find out they are going to be on television."

Jimmy shook his head. "You don't know Lois. I'm beginning to think this isn't such a good idea." Jimmy began to frown. "Say, aren't these guys going off script? I don't remember any saw threats in the writers meetings."

The director shrugged. "These aren't the guys we originally hired either. They came in this morning saying that there had been a scheduling mix up and they'd been sent over by central casting."

"And didn't that seem weird?"

"I've seen weirder. They also came with script change pages and the necessary props."

Lois' scream brought Jimmy's attention back to the monitor screen. "Lois!" He jumped up from his seat and bolted out the

door.

Jimmy crashed through the storeroom door only to be greeted by a scenario so horrific that he nearly lost his lunch. Lois was slumped in the chair, her head resting on her blood covered forearms which ended in jagged stumps. Blood pooled deeply on the table top. His gaze shifted to the ubiquitous Mr. Smith. He was covered with blood splatters; a satisfied grin on his face.

"Is she...?" Jimmy had trouble speaking.

"Dead? Not yet. She's just passed out from the shock; but I'd say that she'll bleed out shortly if she doesn't get help soon... real soon."

"Omgod." Jimmy ran over to Lois, tearing his shirt off as he came around the table. Somehow he had the strength to rip his shirt into strips. He quickly tried to tie make shift tourniquets above the jagged and torn ruin that was the ends of her arms.

"Lois, please don't die. I'm so sorry. If you live I'll spend my life making this up to you. I'll be your servant forever."

"Really?"

Jimmy fell back and landed on his backside. He stared up in dumbfounded disbelief at the grinning face of Lois Lane.

"Boo," she said.

"...and then she opened her eyes and said, 'Boo!' I thought I was going to pee my pants."

Jimmy gestured wildly while telling his story. Clark Kent sat back in his chair, giving the animated young his undivided attention. Lois Lane sat on the corner of Kent's desk, an indulgent smile on her face. Clark turned to Lois.

"So, you knew all along?"

Lois gave Jimmy a look before turning to answer Clark. "Well, I may have a reputation for leaping into danger without looking, but I'm not stupid. If something seems too good to be true it probably is, so I did some checking. There was no way I was going to walk into such an obvious trap without knowing everything I could."

"I'm proud of you, Lois."

"Shut up, Clark." Lois grinned to take the sting out of her words. "I was able to find out that the abandoned warehouse that I'd been directed to had been leased just the day before by Scaredy Cat Productions. Remembering Jimmy's questioning about Halloween and what would make me scared, it wasn't too hard to put two and two together." She turned her gaze toward the young man. "Our prankster researcher is not the only one who knows people in television. It was simple to contact the producers of the show, find out what was going on and arrange to turn the tables on Jimmy here."

Jimmy pointed at Lois' head. "I hope you're not too angry about the lock of hair that guy cut. Was that part of the plan?"

Lois' hand involuntarily went to her head. "Well, he took a bit more liberty than we'd planned, but I think I can cover it well enough with a simple change of my part." She shrugged. "Who knows, maybe I'll just surprise you and cut it all off just for the heck of it."

Jimmy nodded. "Sure you will." He grinned. "At least I'm relieved that you weren't really injured and that the horror I witnessed was actually just film special effects." Jimmy breathed in a huge sigh. "And I'm really glad that you aren't still mad at me and have forgiven me my foolishness."

Lois cocked her brow. "Who says I've forgiven you? If I remember correctly, if I lived, you promised to be my servant... forever."

"Lois?"

She reached over and patted him on the cheek. "I'm alive, and I need my jeep washed this afternoon."

"Lois?"

"I'll let you know when I come up with some more tasks for you."

“Lois?”

She hopped off the corner of Kent’s desk and tapped Clark on the shoulder. “Come on, Clark, we’ve got to go meet Bobby. He says he has some juicy stuff for us.”

The intrepid reporting duo moved up the ramp toward the bank of elevators. Jimmy looked helplessly after them.

“Lois?”

Fin.

THE END