

First Kiss

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Rated PG

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Summary: A continuation of Season 2's *Wall of Sound* after the Kerth Ceremony. Romance.

Perry chuckled as he, Lois, and Clark walked out of the Awards banquet.

In his arms, Clark cradled the Kerth award for his story on the nursing home scandal.

"Oh, boy, what an evening," his boss gushed. "I tell ya, now I know exactly how the Colonel felt when Elvis brought home that first gold record. Clark! I'm so proud of you, I can't see straight."

He felt satisfaction at Perry's words; the Chief must mean them if he compared his reporter to Elvis. It was rewarding to have recognition for his merits as an investigative reporter for a change.

Lois tucked her arm in Clark's. "Not as proud as I am. That was a great speech."

Clark smiled. He was at a loss for words whenever she looked at him like that. Actually, he had been at a loss for words for much of the evening. Since the moment he had picked Lois up and had seen her with her hair swept up off her neck, that black-as-the-night's-sky evening gown, and that pendant on her décolleté. His eyes had been fixed on her all evening and his tongue was still tied. Luckily for him, Lois was good at filling silences.

"Now, that's quite an attitude change. What brought that about?" Perry asked Lois as she returned Clark's smile.

"I'm just glad to have such a good partner," she responded, looking deep into Clark's eyes. Her words seemed almost tongue in cheek, teasing him.

A car horn honked and their boss waved his fingers at the waiting car. The Chief lowered his voice conspiratorially as he leaned towards Lois. "Every time Alice sees me in one of these monkey suits, she says she can't wait to get me home and tear it off." He bounced his eyebrows at his reporters. "I'll see you two later."

Lois and Clark laughed as they watched him head towards his car.

She tucked her hand around Clark's arm again. "So, how did I rate as a date?" she asked as they headed down the street.

"Oh, A plus," he commended her. *His favorite date of all time.*

"I hung on your arm decoratively?"

"You did." *Nothing could be more exquisite.*

"Fawned appropriately?" she inquired.

"Absolutely." *Like she had never done before and will probably never do again.*

"And just faded into the background during your big moment?" she asked.

"You were beautiful, yet invisible," he agreed. *For the first and last time in her life.*

"Hmmm," Lois responded as she leaned her head against his shoulder, not saying another word. Where was the threat of ripping out his spleen should he ever make her live through another night like that again? Had she really enjoyed the evening as she had said she had? As he had?

What should he say now? He was nervous in a way he had never been with Lois before. He lifted up his award. "It's smaller

than I thought."

"Not quite as shiny, close-up." Lois nodded, lifting her head from his shoulder and glancing at the award. "You know, you win a few of these and you find out that they don't mean as much. A quick rush. A few pats on the back. Then you're back on the beat, only as good as your last story," she warned, letting some of the shine of the evening fade.

But with her head back on his shoulder, he wasn't going to let thoughts of tomorrow spoil tonight. In fact, Clark hoped the evening would never end. He could walk the entire city and never get tired. Okay, he could do that anyway, but that wasn't what he had meant. Walking and talking with Lois was a close second to kissing her. A close second because he had only kissed her five times. Three times as Clark, twice as Superman. But walking with her and talking with her happened almost on a daily basis.

"Where to now?" he inquired.

A cab pulled up and she turned to him, her face next to his as she whispered, her hand sliding into his, "Take me home, Clark. I've got to get out of these shoes."

"Okay," Clark replied, following her into the cab. Who was he to argue if she wanted to spend more time with him? He could ride in the cab with her to her apartment and then float on home.

Lois placed her hand around his arm again after giving the driver her address.

"Are you cold?" he asked, lifting his arm and wrapping it around her shoulders. It was still warm for an early autumn evening, but she hadn't brought a wrap.

She shook her head and then returned it on his shoulder.

"Tired?"

"Not so much," she said quietly. "I had a good time."

They talked about the food, the speeches, and the other reporters they had met. Filling the silence, but not really saying anything of importance. Clark still had his glass award tucked into the curve of his arm. It felt good there, but not as good as who he had tucked against his other side.

"Thank you, Lois. Without you, this night would have meant half as much," he murmured, placing a kiss on the top of her head and squeezing her shoulders. It was as close as he knew he would get to the real thing tonight.

Glancing up at him so her face was a mere inch or two from his, she raised an eyebrow. "Don't you mean, without me you wouldn't have your shiny new dust collector?"

Clark smiled in agreement. *Of course*, he wanted to say, but the words got lost in his throat as his gaze flitted to her lips.

How easy it would be to kiss her at this moment. He knew better, of course, but that didn't stop the desire she caused in him. But he knew the moment wasn't right. Lois wasn't ready to change their relationship. Lois didn't see him as more than her partner. He was just reading between the lines of her body language. A language he had spent months — and could spend years — studying.

Quicker than he expected, the cab pulled up outside her building.

"Well, goodnight, Lois," he said, reluctantly taking his arm off from around her shoulder.

She pulled her body away from his as her hand reached for the door handle. "Didn't your mother teach you better than to drop a woman off on her doorstep after a date?"

Clark flushed, wondering at his absence of manners. "I'll walk you up."

Lois stepped out of the cab. "If you want..."

He wanted. So, he handed the cabbie the fare and followed Lois up her front stoop.

Soon they were walking down the short, yet long, hallway to her apartment. It really was more short than long, but it could seem long to Clark. When he was going to visit her or pick her up, knowing that her door was at the end of the hall made the

walk there seem to take twice as long as it should. And short, because whenever he walked her home, knowing they were about to part, whether he was in a hurry to fly off as Superman or dreading the return to his own empty Loisless apartment, the time to walk down this hall seemed to pass in the blink of an eye.

“Where do you think I should keep it?” Clark asked, shifting his award to the side away from her, and trying to think of something better to say. The ride up in the elevator had been in silence and it had made him uncomfortable. Lois was never silent and he wondered where her thoughts had gone.

“I’m the wrong person to ask. I keep mine at the back of a closet,” Lois replied too casually as they walked down the hall to her door, her shoes dangling from her fingers. She had taken off the offensive beasts in the elevator.

Like hell! Clark thought with a chuckle. He’d have to look for her secret hiding place the next time he came over.

At her door, Lois smiled at him with a seductive pout, slightly biting her bottom lip.

“Didn’t your father teach you that if you want a second date you need to give a goodnight kiss on the first date?” she whispered, leaning towards him and batting her eyelashes. She was lower without her heels on and he had to look down to catch her full expression. He gazed into her eyes, but they weren’t dilated like she was drunk.

“Good night, Lois,” Clark said, not appreciating her joke.

Caught, Lois grinned with humor and shrugged as if to say, “Oh, well.” Between holding her shoes and keys, she fumbled, accidentally dropping her keys. They both bent down to retrieve them and ended up bumping heads. Clark swooped quickly to pick up her keys.

As he handed them to her, he noticed she was blinking her eyes a couple of times like she was trying to focus.

“Lois?! Are you okay?” he asked, setting down his award on the floor to examine her head with both hands.

“Yeah,” she mumbled. “You’ve got one hard head, Clark Kent.”

He shrugged sheepishly, knowing that was an understatement. He quickly pulled down his glasses to x-ray her skull. Her head looked fine, but he wouldn’t be surprised if she ended up with one nasty goose-egg by the morning. He ran his fingers gently over her forehead before lightly — feather lightly — kissing her head better. “Be sure to ice that,” he suggested, tempted to blow a little ice on it himself, but knowing that would bring up more questions than he was ready to answer.

Lois stared up at him, deep into his eyes — it wasn’t a deer in the headlights stare, but more as if she were searching for something in the darkness of his eyes. Something she had caught a glimpse of, which surprised her, so she continued to look to see if it were still there and what exactly it was that she had seen. Shifting her keys into the hand with her shoes, she reached up and caressed his face, running a couple of fingers along his hairline by his eyes and down to his jaw.

It was an intimate gesture, more intimate than Lois usually gave him.

Clark thought she might be teasing him again, but the mischievous glint was gone from her eyes. She appeared sincere. He could even hear a minor increase in her heart rate, which was strange because he was sure his heart was soon to burst through his chest from beating so fast and strong.

Her fingers returned to his forehead and pushed a lock of hair back and then continued over and through his hair. She went onto her tiptoes to reach to the back of his head. Without her heels on, it caused her head to tilt back a little bit. Her mouth opened a crack and he could feel her warm breath on his skin.

Clark’s own breath was caught in his chest as she remained in this position, contemplating his face. He wondered what new facet of it had attracted her attention, but he couldn’t speak.

Speaking required breathing and currently, he still held his breath, unable to move even that tiny bit.

Lois wavered as she lost her balance and Clark’s arms automatically caught her, wrapping around her waist and pulling her against him. Her slow burning stare hadn’t faltered. The arm around his neck tightened, moving her face within inches of his. She closed her eyes and exhaled in a manner that it actually sounded like she had breathed his name.

It was her lips that touched his first as Clark was too in shock to move. As soon as he felt their warmth, he was sure every muscle in his body would tense. Yet, the only muscle to do so was that of the arm wrapped around her waist, bringing her closer as the rest of him relaxed into her embrace. He felt her other arm join the first around his neck and he heard the thud and jingle of her shoes and keys hitting the floor behind him.

Her heart rate had doubled, trying to outrace his. Just like Lois — always having to win. He sensed and then felt her mouth open wider. Her tongue darted to his lips, but then retreated. He heard her moan, pulling herself closer to his face, wanting the kiss to deepen.

Lois also heard the sound and he could feel her pulling back, almost with embarrassment at her brazenness. He followed her, keeping their lips together. She became stiff for a flash of a moment and he considered withdrawing, but then she relaxed again as if accepting fully this decision she had made to change their lives completely. He playfully licked her lips, teasing her mouth to reopen, which it did. No hesitation this time as her tongue danced with his between them.

Eventually, Lois pulled back again, continuing the kisses, but making them softer, gentler, less passionate until she removed her mouth from his entirely. She placed her head against his chest, trying to catch her breath. He rested his head on hers and did the same.

They had kissed before, but never like this.

The first time, Lois had kissed him it had been a diversion on Trask’s plane. He had thought at the time, it was a fantastic first kiss... until he realized she hadn’t meant it.

The second time, Clark had kissed her to say goodbye when he had decided to leave Metropolis for good due to the heat wave. This had been a soft farewell, full of longing and unfulfilled promises.

The third time, he also had kissed her — another diversionary tactic as they pretended to be honeymooners at the Lexor. Again, like their first kiss, it had heat and passion, but it was just as fake.

There had also been the two kisses he had shared with her as Superman.

The kiss Lois had initiated when she thought he was under the influence of the Revenge perfume. That kiss was all heat, all passion, but it was based on a lie... several lies in fact.

And then there was the kiss goodbye he had given to her before flying off from EPRAD to deal with Nightfall. Again, it was a farewell kiss full of longing, promises, and hope.

But none of those kisses compared to the kiss they just shared. There was no reason to fake a kiss this time. No one to hide their true reason for being together. No secret plans to communicate. And although, Clark was sure a “goodnight” was soon to follow, this kiss had felt more like a “hello” than a “goodbye”.

“Super,” he heard Lois murmur and he stiffened. Had she recognized him from the kiss?

“No,” she instantly apologized, gazing up into his face. “Not that, Clark. I mean...” She glanced away, blushing. “I meant... Has anyone ever told you that you kiss better than Superman?”

A slow hint of smile tugged at the edge of his mouth. It grew and grew until he grinned at her, beaming at the idea that Lois thought Clark — this ordinary man — was better than Superman at something as important as this. Ludicrous as the idea was, he

knew the only way he could *seem* to kiss better than Superman was if Lois felt more for him at this moment than she had for Superman way back when she had last kissed him. For some reason, he was okay with that.

Clark didn't know how this evening could get any better. He had won a prestigious award for his reporting (over Lois, he added silently). Lois had agreed to share the evening with him as his date. And at the end of the evening, she had given him a goodnight kiss that held promise that tomorrow would also be a good morning. He kissed her cheek. "Goodnight, Lois," he said, before skipping down her hall towards the elevator.

He got about halfway down the hall when she called to him, "Clark, your award!"

Clark laughed and jogged back to retrieve his award. His head so full of their kiss, he had forgotten it completely.

"Goodnight, Clark," Lois said, gently touching his cheek once more, and smiling.

He saw no regret in her expression and that broadened his smile again.

"I'll see you in the morning," she said, retrieving her shoes and her keys from the floor and opening the locks to her apartment.

He backed down the hallway, not wanting to take his eyes off her. "First thing," he called, stepping into the elevator with a wave. "I'll bring the croissants."

The doors closed and the elevator began to descend. Clark bumped his head on the top of the car, because his feet no longer touched the floor.

THE END

Gratitude: I would like to thank Sue S. for inspiring me to get my WAFF on with her wonderful WAFFy story *All I Want (For Christmas)*. But I also need to thank my WAFF instructors: Bob B., Mrs. Luthor, Deadly Chakram, Tank, Artemis, and Mouserocks. I hope I did everything you told me. Once again, this story probably would have ended up on the cutting room floor if it hadn't been for my wonderful and talented Beta, IolantheAlias. Thank you all.

Disclaimer: The characters in this story were created by Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster as they were portrayed on the *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* television series, developed by Deborah Joy LeVine. Many thanks to John McNamara whose wonderful dialogue I have borrowed from *Wall of Sound*. These characters do not belong to me; they belong to themselves (although Warner Bros, DC Comics, and the heirs to Siegel and Shuster might disagree). These characters have invaded my psyche and forced me to write the following reenactment of their lives; although if you asked them, they might tell you that the plot is all my own.