

# Prank You Very Much

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Rated PG

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Summary: When Lois drags Clark in on her April Fools Day plans, Clark may finally have bitten off more than he can chew. What will happen when the jokes go too far? Set late season two.

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The sound of her name coming from his lips made Lois jump, and she promptly minimized the document on her screen and spun around in her chair with a forced smile. “Yes?”

Clark frowned in confusion. “Uh, what are you up to?”

Lois’ facade slipped for a moment as panic flashed through her eyes.

Clark suddenly grew very nervous. “Lois? Lois, is everything all right?”

She merely brushed it off. “Fine, Clark. Everything’s fine. Geez, why has everyone been so darn curious today?”

His brow furrowed more. “Everyone?” She hummed a noncommittal response and turned back to her computer monitor, being careful to open up a different window than the one she had just been working in. “Come on, Lois. What gives? What’s going on?”

Lois bit her lip nervously. “Promise you won’t tell anyone? Anyone at all? Not Perry or Jimmy or even Superman?”

Good grief, could the woman be more frustrating? Her demands were only serving to concern him more. “O-kay,” he dragged out the syllables. “But only if it’s not something terrible I’m going to need to actually go to Superman or the police about.”

“Oh! It’s not. It’s really not, I swear.”

“Okay, then. What’s your big secret?” Clark sat on the corner of her desk with a slightly smug expression on his features. He couldn’t help it — he loved that he and Lois were getting close enough now that she could trust him with any of her secrets. Of course, he was not oblivious to the irony of that statement, and knew just how hypocritical he was. He had to tell her, and soon, but timing was everything, and Clark just didn’t know when it—

“Clark, what’s today’s date?”

He frowned once more. “The 31st of March. Why?”

“So the date tomorrow will be...”

“April 1st... Oh.”

“Not as dumb as he looks, folks,” Lois spoke with a teasing grin before returning to her computer screen and reloading the minimized document. Clark leaned in and skimmed over it from his position above her shoulder. She pulled her lower lip between her teeth in anticipation of his reaction.

“They’re... prank ideas? That’s what all of the fuss is about?”

“Yes, but they’re for everybody. See — Perry, Jimmy, Ralph...”

“Okay, yes, I have to admit Ralph’s is pure genius. And Perry will both fire and kill you if you mess with any of his Elvis memorabilia, so you might want to come up with something else there. But still...”

“What? It’s some harmless fun for everyone.”

“Then why am I not on the list?”

“Because!” She threw up her arms in frustration, rolling her eyes at his dogmatic ways. “First of all, the suspense is *killing* me and I know I won’t be able to keep my plans to myself for long.

And secondly, I figured you’d get it out of me anyway. Not to mention,” suddenly her expression turned devious. “Now that you know all of this stuff, you get to be my minion!”

Clark rolled his eyes, acting appropriately offended. “Minion? Come on, Lois. You and I both know I at least rank “partner in crime” for all that you’re liable to put me through.”

“Fine. How about cohort? Jeesh. I’m not making name tags,” she muttered under her breath. Clark chuckled and shook his head.

“So, what problem is so important that you needed to bring a *cohort* on board?”

“I don’t have a problem.”

“Uh-huh.”

“Okay, fine. But I know you’re not going to like it.” She squirmed uncomfortably in her seat.

“Try me.”

Lois let out a heavy sigh and finally scrolled down to the last page of the document — predominantly blank, except for one name.

*SUPERMAN*

Clark felt himself pale drastically before pulling it back under wraps. He struggled to find something to say in response. “Uh, Lois... you know, um... pranking Superman... wouldn’t that be... uh, challenging?”

Clark could have smacked himself for even asking that of her, especially at her bright grin. “Of course! Think about it! To be able to pull one over on the Man of Steel? That has the makings of brilliance — and of genius! — all over it!”

“Unfortunately, it also has the makings of an *evil* genius all over it. Is it your goal in life to become a criminal mastermind?”

Lois rolled her eyes at him and gave his arm a light swat.

“No, you lunkhead. But it would be fun, right?”

Clark tried to keep his tone admonishing and not nervous. “Lois, no! You can’t pull a prank on Superman. What if you distract him from a real rescue?”

“What if I need a real rescue?”

“What if you get hurt accidentally?”

“Clark, I’m not going to do anything stupid. That’s what I have you for. See? All thought out.”

“Lois, I’m actually being serious, here.”

Lois’ expression softened slightly. “I know. I am too, though. I need your help. Otherwise you never know how foolish I’ll get. Please?”

Clark sighed in resignation. How could he help her to prank himself? It was not only completely ridiculous to try to pull a fast one over on a man with x-ray vision and super hearing, but nearly impossible. And she was telling him outright how she was going to do it... Suddenly, the wheels in Clark’s brain began turning, and he had to fight to keep his grin hidden away and keep up his scathing tone. “Right, Lois. How exactly do you even plan on doing that? Or even getting his attention? I hope it doesn’t involve you jumping off of anything precariously high?”

“Of course not,” she snapped and rolled her eyes at him. “I figured I could get you to find him for me.”

Clark squirmed uncomfortably. “Look, Lois. You want help pranking anybody else in the world, and I’m in. Perry, Jimmy, Ralph — whoever. Even my parents. But I’m not going to help you with Superman.” With that Clark slid off her desk and walked back over to his own seat, sipping at his coffee in order to hide his smile.

“Fine! Stick in the mud,” Lois huffed in indignation. “Just stay out of my way. I never even needed your help. I can handle it myself,” she ended up muttering under her breath.

Clark finally allowed himself to chuckle at her behavior as he booted up his computer and thought about just what he could do to turn the tables on his girlfriend.

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Lois paced back and forth in her apartment, psyching herself up, letting some of her worry best her and show through in her mannerisms. The more nervous she seemed, the better chance of him listening to her, and the better the chance he'd actually show up to help. Speaking of which...

"Help! Superman!"

Lois waited a few moments, worry increasing when he didn't show up right away. Maybe Clark was right after all, maybe it was wrong to try to put Superman through this when he might be genuinely helping other people... But she couldn't tell Clark that. Not when she'd so adamantly and vehemently argued her case just the day before.

Stupid Clark. If only he'd agreed to help her. Surely Superman would have responded to the both of them. After all, they were well respected by the Man of Steel and he'd even said he considered them as friends. This was a risky operation, after all — but she couldn't back out. Not now.

"Superman? Help me, please! Superman!"

She was another minute from taking Clark's precariously-high-place suggestion and running with it when there was a whoosh of air and Superman stood before her.

"Superman," she breathed with relief.

His look was that of concern, but there was something else underneath it, something off that was bothering Lois. Was it confusion? Irritation? Just all around nervousness? It wasn't until he spoke that Lois collected herself and slipped her concerned mask back in place. "Is something the matter, Miss Lane?"

"Yes, actually, Superman. It's... well, it's about Clark actually. I'm really worried about him Superman. We had a spat at work yesterday, and then he went off on some investigation by himself, and he was supposed to check back with me but then he didn't even make it in to work this morning and I haven't seen him since and I'm really scared that something might have happened to him and I can't find him and I don't know what to do!"

Undoubtedly, babbling was a gift to Lois.

Superman looked surprised a moment, then flustered by the long string of patented Lane babble before finally settling on what appeared to be relief. Clark thought a brief moment about his options here before finally choosing his course of action.

"God, Lois. You haven't heard from him, either?"

Lois suddenly paled at the superhero's admission. She managed to croak out a small, "What?"

Superman nodded eagerly, crossing his arms across his chest to avoid any gestures that might be similar to those of his secret identity. "He came to me yesterday, told me he was working on a story and that there were some risks involved. He asked that I keep an eye on him. I had to go stop a train collision for one minute, and the next thing I know, he's gone."

"Gone?" Lois repeated brokenly, still in shock.

Superman nodded again, pretending to ignore her obvious state of surprise. "Yes. I've been searching for him pretty much all morning, Lois. If you might have any idea where he is, believe me, it would be a great help."

"I, uh, I don't-"

"Maybe you can get some of the story notes he was working on and send me in the right direction? Please, Lois. Anything — I feel awful for letting him down..."

Lois finally collected herself as she realized just what it was Superman was telling her — what he was pleading with her to do. That alone was enough to throw her off. "I-I'm sorry, Superman. I-I really don't know where he is. In fact, I um, didn't really know he was missing until you told me about it just now."

Clark allowed some confusion to cross his features. "But you just said..."

"I lied. I didn't really... I was just trying to pull a prank on you! You know, April Fools... Oh, Clark! Clark, Clark, Clark!"

What's happened to you?" Lois collapsed onto her couch and cradled her head in her hands.

Superman stood awkwardly in the middle of her apartment, wondering what he could do, and for the first time realizing he possibly went too far with the joke. Lois respected Superman, believed in him — believed he wouldn't lie to her. He was possibly her most trustworthy source — well, as far as she was aware. Clark would venture a guess and say that title went to Bobby Bigmouth, considering how much he (as both Clark and Superman) had lied to her. His shoulders slumped in the slightest. She seemed so distraught... in a way, it was sweet. She was truly broken up over the thought of him missing, and it did wonders for his faith in their relationship.

He should probably call off the joke now.

Superman extended a hand out to her, touching her shoulder for the briefest of instants. "Lois —"

Suddenly she was up, on her feet and in motion. "No. I can't be this way. Not right now. I'm sorry, Superman. I've gotta go. You can let yourself out." She grabbed her purse and keys and rushed towards the door.

"Lois?" He tried once more. Instead of responding though, she raced out the door, letting it slam, not even bothering to lock it behind her.

Clark gave a heavy sigh. He'd screwed up royally this time, he knew. Slowly, he went to her door and fastened every other lock. Suddenly a cry for help demanded his attention before he was able to follow her, and he was forced to take off outside her window without even a moment's hesitation.

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Lois was frantic. What had started as a harmless joke had quickly spiraled out of control into a very real situation. She tore down the road blindly, tears swimming, thankful that she had the drive to Clark's apartment committed to autopilot and that she knew where the spare key was. Her hands were far too shaky to even try and pick the lock.

"Clark Kent, you'd better be in there," she muttered to herself as she burst through the front door of his apartment. It was disturbingly empty. "Clark? Clark?!" She raced from room to room in search of him, but came up empty. A sob escaped from the walls of her throat and she slumped down onto Clark's couch, a few tears leaking from the corners of her eyes.

She shot upright, brushing away her tears forcefully as a thought struck her. "Perry," she mumbled and was suddenly scrambling for the phone on the other end of the couch. Lois chewed her bottom lip as the phone rang on and on until she could barely handle anymore waiting — and then she heard the rough, Southern voice and let out a sigh of relief.

"White here."

"Perry," Lois couldn't help sniffing into the receiver.

"Lois, hon? What's the matter?"

"Nothing, Perry. Well, it's not nothing. It's something. It's a big something, and I'm really scared —"

"Darlin', you're gonna have to cut to the chase here. What's going on?"

"Um, has Clark shown up at the office yet?"

She could practically hear the frown in his voice as he responded, though it spoke less of concern than it did of confusion. "Um, no. But I'm sure he has a good enough reason. And besides, it's not yet eleven am, even. He'll show up. Have you tried Superman? Maybe he can find him."

"Superman's the one who told me Clark was missing, Perry. He came to me for help."

"What?!"

His tone was a bit harsher than Lois had expected, and she had to pull the phone away from her ear slightly. Perry paused for a moment, probably collecting himself before speaking again.

"Lois. Find Superman. He can help you. You can't find him

alone.”

“But Perry-”

“Lois?” A voice rang out from the balcony. A thrill of excitement ran through Lois at the thought that it might be Clark — but then she spun around and saw only Superman standing there.

“Lois, d’you hear me?”

“I’m sorry, Perry. Superman just got here.”

“Good. Tell him if it takes him any longer to find Clark, I will personally be dealing with him, you got that?” Then he hung up on her.

Lois frowned in confusion and glanced at the superhero, whose expression had paled drastically and his eyes were almost comically wide. Lois couldn’t think of a time when she’d seen Superman so shocked. She put the phone down and shifted on her feet. “You heard Perry?”

Clark swallowed, his features not changing in the least. “Yeah.”

“Then you know we need to go find Clark now.” She turned and grabbed her bag once more.

Suddenly Superman sped in front of her and blocked her path to the door. He placed a hand on her shoulder staying her. “Uh, Lois, no.”

Lois frowned at him. “What do you mean, ‘no’?”

“Um, I mean no, you can’t go find him.”

She shifted the weight on her feet, crossing her arms and giving the superhero her best glare. “And why can’t I? He’s my partner, my best friend, my... my boyfriend — and you’re saying I can’t go searching for him? Why the hell can’t I?”

Superman steeled himself and spit out the confession all in a rush. “Because I lied and told you he was missing when he really wasn’t!”

Lois blinked. “Run that by me again?”

Superman sighed and ran a hand through his hair, unconsciously loosening it from its usual look. “I lied. Um... Clark told me about your plan to pull a prank on me today, and I got the stupid idea to try and turn the tables on you and then you started in with your plan and... I just went with it.”

Lois looked floored, her mouth hanging open in surprise at his confession. She struggled for words a moment, searching for something to say to the man before her. “You... you lied to me?”

At that Superman looked pained. “I’m so sorry, Lois. I didn’t mean to cause you so much pain. I didn’t think — I mean, I didn’t know-”

“I didn’t think, Superman, that you were even capable of lying.”

He winced at her words. There was so much more truth to them than he was as of yet ready to admit. “I... I, uh, try not to...”

Suddenly a thought struck Lois, something that they hadn’t yet addressed. “I still don’t understand. If I was lying, and you were lying... then where in the world is Clark?”

Superman paled drastically once more and sat on Clark’s couch heavily. “Wh-what?”

“Come on, we really do have to find him.”

“Lois, Clark’s not missing.”

“I don’t see him anywhere,” she snapped back at him. Today had been enough of an emotional roller coaster as it was. She didn’t need him making things worse.

“Yeah, but I know where he is.”

Suddenly she snapped her gaze up to his face, anger written clearly in her features. “Well then, take me to him, *Superman*. I’m not going to let you out of my sight until I find Clark again. It’s been a terrible enough day as it is.” She fought to choke back a small sob.

Never had Clark learned the definition of a word more clearly and concisely than he did the word “backfire” in that moment. He

swallowed. This was it. He couldn’t hold out any longer. “Um, Lois, I think there are a couple of other things we need to discuss...”

“No! No more discussions! Not until I can see Clark Kent with my own two eyes and be sure he’s safe.”

Superman squirmed. Lois noticed and narrowed her eyes.

She was gonna kill him.

“Superman. Where. Is. Clark?”

He took a deep breath before making his way to Clark’s bedroom, trudging slowly, dragging his feet. Lois followed him in curiosity, watching as he pulled out a pair of Clark Kent’s glasses from a drawer in his night table. He turned back to face Lois sheepishly and eventually slipped the glasses on his face.

Lois didn’t understand why he was doing this at first. Why would he want to wear Clark’s glasses? How did he even know where Clark kept his spare glasses? Then it dawned on her — Superman looked a lot like Clark with those glasses on. Especially with his dark hair all ruffled and unkempt now — not at all like Superman’s typical slicked-back look. In fact, one could almost say...

Her eyes widened and her jaw came unhinged as all of the pieces finally fell into place. “Cla— Wha—?”

He looked to his feet ashamedly, before glancing back up at her fury-filled face. “Um, hi Lois.”

She folded her arms tightly across her chest, squared her jaw and set her most fear-inspiring glare upon him. Clark-slash-Superman squirmed appropriately. “Do you have something you’d like to say for yourself, *Clark*?”

“Uh, April Fools?”

THE END