

Lois & Clark: The New Adventures in the Twilight Zone: Summer Ficathon

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Rated: G

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Summary: Lois Lane receives a package that will change Clark Kent's life forever... Or does she?

Clark flew through his window and landed with a thump. He couldn't remember having been this exhausted for a very long time. The tsunami and its after-effects had demanded Superman's services for three days. He still had one day left of the spur-of-the-moment "vacation" which Perry had approved for Clark. His body was telling him he could spend the entire time asleep. His mind, however, was too full of the victims' faces and cries to let him find the succor of Morpheus so soon.

After wearily showering and changing into his pajamas, Clark turned on the television and started channel surfing. When he came to the Twilight Zone marathon playing on the science fiction channel, he put down the remote and settled further into his sofa. Somewhere about the third episode, he felt himself nodding off...

Sometime later, he awakened abruptly to the sound of his phone ringing. He mumbled, "lo?"

Lois' voice on the other end of the phone helped dispel his grogginess. "I know you're on vacation now, but can you get your cute butt back into the newsroom as soon as possible?"

"And a pleasant good morning to you, too. What's up?"

"A mysterious package arrived addressed to the two of us. When I tried to open it up, some writing suddenly appeared on it saying that it could only be opened when both of us were present. And for some reason, I can't seem to break the seal on the package; neither could Jimmy or Perry. I'm dying to know what's inside."

"Hmmm... That is odd. I'll be there in 15 minutes."

His weariness in abeyance, Clark entered the newsroom and walked up to Lois' desk. He accepted the package Lois handed him and was able to break the seal effortlessly; he did not even need to apply any superhuman strength.

Lois' eyebrows shot upward. "It wasn't opening for any of us!" and then, at Clark's skeptical look, "Really! So what's inside?"

Clark removed the packaging and lifted out a videotape. The label simply said, "For the eyes of Lois Lane and Clark Kent only. Watch this together."

As one, they moved to the conference room and closed the door. While Lois drew the blinds, Clark put the tape into the player and turned on the TV. After a few seconds of static, they saw a scene of someone in a business suit flying at night. Clark was relieved that the lighting was too dim in the shot for Lois to be able to see him flying in his civvies. A montage followed depicting Lois, Clark, and even Luthor. Then came an image of Superman's cape superimposed with the words, "Lois & Clark The New Adventures of Superman," followed by additional clips labeling with strange names the most important people in his life.

Clark's uneasiness increased with each passing second. He looked over to Lois and saw her muscles tense and heard her much-increased heart rate. Finally, she hit the "pause" button. "Jimmy was the only one who could have taken those videos. I'm gonna kill him! Right after I make him give me all of the clips he has of me, I'm gonna tear him limb from limb. Better yet, I'm going to tear apart every camera and computer he owns, right in front of his eyes. That'll hurt him more."

Clark sensed he might regret what he was about to say, but for a change he was the one consumed by curiosity. "Don't you want to see what else is on there? We haven't really learned anything worthwhile yet. And why would he go to all the effort to put this tape together and add a musical score and even credits? Why make it look as if our lives were a movie or a TV show?"

Lois' only answer was to shrug and to hit the play button.

A very bright looking sun appeared, accompanied by mildly ominous music. Before either Lois or Clark had time to wonder at its significance, it dissolved into an image of the Daily Planet globe. The view panned down so that they could see a man hosing down the trees in front of the globe. Then, to both viewers' surprise, they saw themselves coming out of the building discussing the heat wave from the prior fall.

Lois' face turned quizzical. "Jimmy wasn't with us then. Perry had had him trying to fix his air conditioner at the time. So how could he have taped us?"

Clark voiced some thoughts that had been troubling him. "And if it was him, how did he rig the package so that you couldn't open it? And why would he do all of this?"

Just then, video-Clark blew a super breath of air onto an overheated cab. The smoke ceased billowing from the suddenly-cooled engine. Lois' eyes narrowed and her brows lowered. She growled, "You! You lying, two-faced, donkey's behind! I don't ever want to see you — either of you — again!"

Lois started to stomp out of the conference room, then turned to face him. The look on her face sent chills up Clark's spine. She said in a voice equally mixed with frigidity and syrupy politeness, "Thank you for my first Pulitzer." She then marched to her computer, and after about 10 minutes, hit the "send" button.

As soon as she had submitted her story to Perry, she stood up on her chair and spoke in a voice sure to be heard throughout the room. "Attention, everyone! I have an announcement to make! As you all know, Superman has been a major news story for slightly over a year. I have just given Perry an article containing information you all should know. It turns out that the man in blue is just the hick from Smallville in a gaudy outfit. Superman is only Clark Kent."

The room fell deathly quiet.

Cat was the first to recover. (Clark wondered what she was doing there; she had left for a job in Paris a few months ago.) "Mmmm... So that's how Clark manages to have such a yummy bod."

Jimmy walked up to Clark and whispered, "Is it true?" Clark could barely nod his affirmation. Jimmy took off his signal watch and threw it at Clark. "I had thought we were friends, and that I was, maybe, even, Superman's pal. But I guess you didn't trust me, and I didn't know you at all." He turned and slumped out of the bullpen.

Just then, Perry stepped out of his office and called as gently as was possible for him, "Uh, Clark, could I see you in my office?"

Perry began speaking as soon as Clark had closed the office door and sat down. "Now, uh, son, you know that I can keep quiet about anything I don't officially know, but now that I know, officially, I have to print Lois' story. I'm sorry."

Clark again nodded wordlessly.

Perry continued, "I'm sure you've thought a lot about what

would happen if the word got out. If you need a friend, I am here for you. But as your editor, I have to do something neither of us will like. I'll give you your choice: classifieds or obits."

At Clark's confused stare, Perry continued, "Now you know you're one of my best reporters. I hate taking you off the city beat, but there's no way you'll be able to conduct undercover investigations anymore; you'll be too famous. I hate having to do this to you, but I'm going to have to give you another beat. And the only places we have openings right now where you could still do your job despite your fame and your extracurricular activities are classifieds and obits. Which will it be?"

As Clark pondered the dismal question, Ralph stuck his head in the door and gave him a loud raspberry. As Ralph began to give him a second one, the short man faded away. Clark shook his head and realized that what he was hearing was the phone ringing. Thank God, it had all been a dream. His secret was safe!

He picked up the phone and gave a greeting. Lois began without preamble, "I know you're on vacation now, but can you get your cute butt back into the newsroom as soon as possible? A mysterious package arrived addressed to the two of us."

Clark groaned.

Consider, if you will, the case of Clark Kent. Born on Krypton and raised in Kansas, he is currently a resident of Metropolis and the Twilight Zone.

THE END

Disclaimers: I do not own Lois & Clark or the Twilight Zone. Both worlds were borrowed for a little non-profit fun. The sidewalk scene was taken from the L&C episode "Man of Steel Bars," written by Paris Qualles. For the purposes of the story, I put the opening theme song before the teaser; whoever sent the tape in Clark's dream must have done a little rearranging of the parts of the show.

This story was written for the Summer Fanfic challenge on lcficmbs.com. My prompt was "rerun." I figure that between the Twilight Zone marathon and the Man of Steel bars episode which L&C managed to procure in Clark's dream, there were plenty of reruns in this story. Not to mention that Clark's life looks like it might become a rerun of his nightmare.

This bit of fluff was unbeta-ed.