

Camembert

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Rated G

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Summary: A slight reimagining of a certain scene from the episode “Ordinary People.”

Disclaimer: This is a fanfic based on the TV show “Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman.” None of the characters or the recognizable lines in this story belong to me, and no copyright infringement is intended. I am simply borrowing them for a bit of fun, and for no profit.

Lois paused in her purposeful stride across the bullpen as she spotted her partner and maybe-future-fiance across the room by the soda machine. He was feeding it quarters for yet another soft drink. Well, at least now (after that whole Jason Mazik debacle) Lois knew how he managed to eat like an eight-year old and still look like Mr. Hardbody. Solving that mystery might be great, but this thought shot her straight back onto the self-flagellating loop she had traversed so much in the weeks since knowing the truth about her partner’s alter ego. She could almost feel the knee-deep rut she was wearing into her brain cells.

How could she not have noticed before? she wondered despairingly. She had seen them both so often. She had thought she knew them both so well. It turned out, she hadn’t known either of them at all, not really.

The evidence had been right under her nose from the very beginning. They were never in the same place at the same time; Clark always ducking away with some lame excuse right before Superman magically showed up to save the day. Those excuses really should have clued her in from the first. How in the names of Woodward and Bernstein could she have actually accepted that rattle about his cheese of the month shipment?

It made her feel stupid. Almost galactically so.

Lois took a deep, calming breath, trying to distract herself. She began to walk toward her partner, jogging up the stairs toward the lunch area where the vending machines resided.

Her partner straightened, soda in hand, as she came up behind him. Before he had a chance to voice so much as a ‘hello,’ she quickly said, “I know you think I’m not thinking about it. But just because I’m not talking about it doesn’t mean I’m not thinking about it.”

Clark smiled at her. To distract herself, she grabbed some quarters out of her partner’s upraised hand and inserted them into the sandwich machine.

“Lois, marriage is a very big step,” her partner said, refusing to allow her to shut him out. “I said I would wait, and I *will* wait.”

“I’m glad you understand,” she replied, avoiding his gaze as she continued to insert coins into the vending machine.

Clark leaned back against the machine, facing her. “Of course, if I was the paranoid type,” he began, “I might think that you were trying to avoid the whole thing.”

Lois chuckled. Despite her best efforts, the sound came out rather too high and strained to sound genuine. “Of course not,” she averred, unconvincing even to her own ears. “Avoid it? No, not trying to avoid it --”

Oh! Good! Here came her sandwich. Lois stared fixedly at saran-wrapped bundle as if it, rather than the man standing beside

her, was the most important thing in her world. “-- Have you ever noticed how lousy the cheese sandwiches are in this machine?” she babbled, not even pausing to take a breath.

Anything to change the subject.

“What?” Clark responded, totally lost at this lightning-fast non sequitur.

“Oh, I’m just saying,” she went on, praying that this topic didn’t sound nearly as dumb to her partner as it did to herself at this moment, “you can’t get a good cheese sandwich.” Lois began to remove the wrapping from the rather sad, soggy pieces of white bread stuck together with a small squirt of Velveeta cheese. After one glance, she simply tucked the covering back over this obvious plea for food poisoning. She had learned a thing or two after her experience with Ralph’s Pagoda.

“I would *kill* for a piece of Camembert,” she continued, glancing up at him and then quickly away again as she fingered the noxious mess in her hands. “The really good kind, from France? You notice it’s tough to get good Camembert outside of France?”

“Lois,” Clark began, the corner of his mouth twitching ever so slightly, “you know, I am so glad you’re not avoiding this whole thing. I’m very, very *happy* about that.” He grinned at the slightly embarrassed smile she sent him. Then he sobered. There was something he really needed to know. “Seriously, though, Lois,” he said, catching her gaze. “Why all of the lame excuses? Why are you using *cheese* of all things as a diversion tactic to avoid talking to me?”

Lois gave him a strange look that he wasn’t quite able to interpret. The closest he could come was total exasperation mixed with a heavy dose of irony. “Really, Clark??” she asked disbelievingly. “I mean, *REALLY??*”

Clark watched the tirade roil forth toward the tip of her tongue before she almost literally bit it off and swallowed it (without chewing, too! That couldn’t be good for her digestion). The next moment she relaxed and widened her eyes innocently. This sudden change in tactics instantly put Clark on his guard. What was she up to?

“Don’t you already know?” Lois asked him sweetly. “Camembert is September’s Cheese of the Month!”

THE END