

# While You Sleep...

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Rated: PG

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Summary: Lois experiences the weirdest dream. Extended scene from the episode "The Prankster." Lois's POV. Prequel to "While I Slept."

Author's Note: Although this scene actually takes place *before* "While I Slept", which is Clark's POV, I recommend reading his version first.

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Lois curled up in the crook of Clark's arm, laying her head on his chest. Her eyes focused on Mel Gibson for a moment. Two. Lying in Clark's arms like this, reminded Lois how safe he always made her feel. Since he had held her after rescuing her from Mr. Make-Up last year, she had found any excuse to touch Clark or embrace him... all in the name of friendship, of course. It was as if coming in contact with Clark, allowed some of his inner strength to seep into her, giving her strength too.

True, this feeling had become more pronounced after she had realized that she loved Clark as much as he had told her that he loved her. That day on the park bench in Centennial Park, she had broken the heart of a good man, and she would never forgive herself.

She rested her hand on his stomach as she snuggled closer to his warm body. No matter how many times Superman proved she did, Lois didn't need some man to protect her. Being with Clark didn't feel like protection or safety; it felt as if she had come home. She recalled how Clark felt, or how he had said he felt before he had retracted the words, and wished he still wanted her to love him.

Clark was now solidly her friend.

He was her best friend.

Clark was her partner.

Lois had broken his heart. She knew that she couldn't expect more after doing such a horrendous thing to him. She was lucky even to be able to call him 'friend'. She was lucky she could drop in at eleven o'clock at night after Kyle Griffin called her on the phone and threatened her life. Lucky that Clark never called her bluff... in so many words. He let the façade of two friends getting together for pizza and a *Lethal Weapon* marathon, even an unscheduled one, remain, because he knew she needed him.

She felt safer around Clark than anyone else.

Sure, there was Superman, but Lois didn't have his home number. She couldn't picture Superman wrapping his arm around her shoulders and pulling her against his chest to sleep, like this. Obviously, she had fantasized about Superman doing that, but he never did it in reality. He flew in, saved the day, maybe gave an interview, and left again. On a rare occasion, Superman even let Lois kiss him, but he never made the first move and she knew he never would.

Clark was here, available, when she needed him. She knew that he had liked her when they first met. Maybe he *had* developed a crush on her by the time he admitted as much on that park bench, but whatever had been there, she had quashed. Not only had she turned him down, but she had also asked him to fetch Superman for her to confess her love to the next moment, and then she agreed to marry Lex on the rebound. Clark no longer loved her, and she had no one to blame but herself.

She gazed at Mel Gibson for another moment. Two. Her eyes

drifted shut as the steady rhythm of Clark's heart lulled and relaxed her. She felt Clark rest his head against hers, and she sighed into a smile.

Her mind played images of what their lives could be like if Clark still returned her affections. The glances they could share across the newsroom floor and at meetings. He could assist her with her coat with an extra brush of his fingers at her neck, which could mean more than anyone else knew. The quick kiss they would share in the car before heading up to the office, or the long drawn out kiss at the end of the day, when she dropped him off at his apartment. She would never have to be alone again. There had even been a moment, just now, when she thought Clark was going to kiss her. If they were dating, if she hadn't stepped on Clark's heart and accepted Lex's proposal, that almost kiss would surely have been a reality, instead of a mere hope, a wish.

They could go on a date... a real date...

*Lois and Clark walked into a bar. It was dark and smoky, and reminded her a bit of the Metro Club. She was rambling on about something. Oh, right, the excuses she had used when barging into Clark's apartment the night before.*

*"Wrong number, no problem. That happens all the time in the big city, right?" she said, hanging up her coat and tossing her briefcase under the counter. She was once more wearing that short cocktail waitress uniform she had worn at the Metro Club, black leotard with tights. These were fishnet stockings.*

*"Lois, do you want to tell me what happened?" Clark asked as he sat down at the end of the bar and perused the menu. Clark had grown a goatee, and looked like he had fallen off some boat down at the docks... in a movie. That man just didn't know how to do undercover work.*

*"Nothing happened," she said, picking up her apron and wrapping it around herself. It covered up her uniform, kind of, but it still left her bottom hanging out for all to pinch or swat. "I mean nothing important. Griffin called me."*

*"What?" Clark gasped. "What did he say?"*

*"Oh, the usual," Lois explained, pouring Clark a beer. She started filling another glass with soda. "Lois. Hi. How are you? Long time, no see. I'm going to kill you." She took a sip of the cola, and then set it down in front of Clark with a grimace. Why would she pour herself a cola? Oh, right, they didn't serve cream soda here.*

*"Kill you? What? Did you call the police?" he sputtered, downing his beer and jumping to his feet.*

*"Clark, I'm a professional. This is not the first threat that I've ever received. These things... they... they... they never pan out," she stammered, not believing a word she spoke.*

*"Well, maybe not, but I'd feel much better if you stayed with me tonight," Clark said, sitting back down and picking up the bar menu.*

*"Oh!" Lois said, her heart racing. He had finally said the words she had been longing to hear. Okay, maybe the context wasn't what she was hoping for, but beggars couldn't be choosers. She couldn't let Clark see how much he had made her dreams come true. "Oh... I... well... Oh... if it would make you... you feel better, I guess I..."*

*"Don't make me twist your arm, or anything," Clark said, returning his gaze to the menu as if it were no big whoop.*

*No big whoop.*

*Right.*

*Friends.*

*Lois nodded towards the television in the corner of the bar, where the first 'Lethal Weapon' movie was playing. It looked as if it had just started. "You know Mel Gibson is really funny in these movies."*

*"Mel Gibson plays a great wildman," Clark agreed.*

*"Sometimes, I think, maybe I should be more of a wildman myself. Jimmy even suggested that I wear an earring but..." He*

chuckled. "It's not really me."

She picked up her notepad and noticed it was an order sheet. "You want anything else?"

"I'll take another beer, honey," Clark said, setting down the menu.

Lois jotted down his order. "You want honey beer?" she asked.

"Sure," Clark said with one of his relaxed smiles. "Honey."

She gave him a curt nod, and tagged the order to the wheel over the pass bar to the kitchen. "Ticket up, Uncle Mike!" she called.

"Thanks, darlin'," her uncle Mike responded, spinning the wheel back to her. "Drink orders go to the bartender."

Bartender? Lois glanced around. She saw a man with brown hair, dressed in the same uniform 'Charlie' had used while Clark was undercover at the Metro Club. He reminded her a bit of that cute actor that was on that television show with the character's name she could never remember.

"Lois. Hi. How are you?" the man asked in a stilted tone, sliding behind the bar. "Long time, no see."

Did she know him? Had she interviewed him? Usually she didn't do actor interviews, because they always acted fake. In fact, Lois hated actors. She nodded curtly at him, and handed him Clark's ticket.

"One honey beer, coming up," the man said. "Oh, and Lois, I'm going to kill you."

"What?" Lois said. Well, that was a little blunt to say the least.

"I'm going to take a blender," he said, pulling one up from under the counter and setting it down. "Then I'm going to add some ice..." Taking a scoop from the ice dispenser bucket under the sink, he poured enough ice to fill up half the blender. "And then, I'm going to add you," he announced matter of fact.

"That's ridiculous!" she sputtered. "We don't serve blended drinks here. The noise interrupts the viewing of the movie." She flicked her hand to the television, only now instead of 'Lethal Weapon', she saw that someone had changed the station. A Lenny Stoke music video was blaring from it instead. "Or the music."

"It would be an improvement, believe me," the man said, and suddenly Lois placed a name that went with his face.

"Kyle Griffin!"

"Ding! Ding! Ding! Get that woman a prize. What shall we get her, Victor?" Griffin said, turning to a man sitting two seats down from Clark.

"She has beautiful legs. Can't we just keep her in one piece?" Victor replied.

Lois glanced down at herself and realized that she was now wearing her undercover outfit from the Stoke Club. Her hair was teased, 80s style. Her chest was nudging the stratosphere with a red bra, which was hardly concealed under a black leather vest, and with it, she wore hot pants.

Griffin turned on the blender, grabbed Lois by the scruff of her neck, and tipped her head ever closer to the blender full of ice. "It's payback time!"

"But we don't serve blended drinks here!" Lois insisted as ice chips pelted her. Her gaze caught sight of Clark down the bar. He was reading a newspaper, oblivious to what was happening.

"Clark! I don't want to die."

Clark glanced up, saw that she was in trouble, and held her gaze for a moment. "Lois, I would not let that happen," he reassured her. In a flash Griffin was on the floor, knocked out, and the blender had been flattened, and ice scattered everywhere.

"Clark," she gasped. "How?"

"I love you," he said, pulling her into his arms. "I have always loved you, Lois. I always will." He pressed his lips to hers. Fireworks exploded overhead.

"Oh, Clark! I love you too," she gushed.

What was she doing gushing? Oh, please. This dream was a bust. Although, she must say that having Clark say he loved her was a nice touch.

Lois yawned and blinked her eyes. It was late; after two if Clark had set his VCR clock accurately. The television screen had gone to blue, so the *Lethal Weapon* movie had ended.

She was warm and cozy, here, on the couch. Turning her head, she could see why. She was still snuggled up against Clark. He must have fallen asleep watching the movie too. Actually, she didn't remember seeing more than the opening credits.

Clark's head lulled off to the side of the couch. He was half-lying, half-slouched, with his mouth hanging open.

"Lois?" he murmured.

"Yeah, Clark?" she replied. She must have woken him up when she did.

"I love you."

"Huh?" Lois couldn't possibly have heard him correctly.

"I love you, Lois Lane," Clark repeated, clear as a bell. His eyes were shut, and he was speaking in a soft tired voice. It sounded deeper than his normal timbre.

Was she still dreaming?

"I love you, too, Clark Kent," she said, releasing that heavy weight that had sat on her chest for the last several months. Finally, she had said the words she had wanted to say to Clark since before she walked down the aisle to Luthor all those months ago.

"You do?" he said, his voice changing for a moment to wonder and amazement, sounding again like his normal self. "Oh, good! Will you marry me?"

Was he serious? "Marry you? Clark, we've never even dated," she said with a slight chuckle and, yet, she was tempted to say 'yes'. It was the middle of the night, and her brain wasn't fully functioning. By the light of the day, she knew it probably wasn't the best spur-of-the-moment decision, but it was dark and, for some reason, it made perfect sense.

"Oh, okay," he said softly, almost sadly. Had he been serious? "Will you date me then? A real date?"

"Sounds nice, Clark," Lois said, settling back into his arms and realizing he must have been teasing her before with his proposal. Either way, she was glad she had faced her humility and come over to Clark's apartment.

"Then after we date a while, will you marry me?" Clark asked with all the enthusiasm of a young man asking the girl of his dreams to the prom, and knowing she would already say 'yes'.

"Sure, Clark, after we've dated a while, I'll marry you," she said wryly.

For some reason, she always went sarcastic during emotional moments such as these, even if she was being perfectly honest. The idea of marriage scared the hell out of her, especially after who she almost married the year before. Obviously, she wasn't the best judge of men. Clark, on the other hand, was different. Not only did she truly love him, he was her best friend after all. She already knew all his secrets and all his flaws. She would never find a better man. Well, there was Superman, but he was as unattainable. Setting her hopes on Superman again would be as smart as waiting for Brad Pitt to call; he was every woman's fantasy, but a completely unrealistic option.

"You will?" Clark gushed, his voice still in the dreamy half-wake, half-asleep tone. "Oh, Lois, I love you!" His arms tightened around her and his lips puckered into the air. Then his head rolled back, and his mouth began to open and shut like a fish.

Lois stared at him, an eyebrow raised in disbelief at this action. What was he doing? Clark wasn't the type of man she expected to do anything silly like this. Was he even awake? Oh,

*please, Clark, be awake.*

After a full minute of watching Clark make fishy faces, she hesitantly placed her fingertips to his mouth, and he kissed them. She moved her hand away and he continued to make that fishy face.

Okay, Clark was officially asleep.

Lois's heart sank. There was no tentative engagement. There wasn't even a date. Even his admission of love was off the table. They were back to where they were before she had fallen asleep, partners and friends.

*Well, it was a nice fantasy while it lasted,* she thought, her lip quivering. Why did she always do this to herself? Fall where there was no real hope. She blinked her damp eyes. Damn it! Why couldn't there be a little bit of hope with Clark? He was a farm boy from Kansas for Pete's sake. He should be madly, passionately in love with her. She sighed. Oh, that was right. She had broken his heart. Why would he fall in love with her again?

"Lois?" Clark murmured.

"Yes, Clark," she couldn't help but respond, her voice shaking as she wiped a tear from her cheek. She had to admit that it was cute that he was telling her that he loved her in his dreams. It gave her some kind of hope that maybe someday his subconscious would tip over into his conscious mind, but she wasn't holding her breath.

"I think you should know, now that we're semi-engaged and all..." Clark mumbled, sounding much too adorable.

"Uh-huh," she murmured, snuggling closer.

Actually, now that she had thought it over, why hadn't she kissed him when he was making those silly fish faces? If he had awoken, then he would have realized that she wanted him as much as he had once wanted her. Oh, she could just kick herself for missing that opportunity. If another one came her way, Lois would make sure she didn't stare at it in disbelief, instead she would jump in with both feet with the full knowledge that Clark's still waters ran deep.

"I'm Superman."

THE END

Gratitude: I would once again like to thank my two wonderful Beta readers: IolantheAlias and Mrs. Luthor for their patience, kindness, knowledge of grammar, and honesty. Thank you.

Author's Note: The actor who played the Prankster (Bronson Pinchot) played the character Balki, a Greek farm boy who moves to the big city of NY, in the television show "Perfect Strangers." No wonder he's so upset Lois has moved on to Clark.

This Story was inspired by the old Romantic's song "Talking in Your Sleep" written by The Romantics. (1983)

Disclaimer: I don't own these characters. Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster created the characters as they were portrayed on the *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* television series, developed by Deborah Joy LeVine. I borrow the characters from time to time from Warner Bros, DC Comics, and the heirs to Siegel and Shuster, when they invade my psyche and demand that I write what they tell me. Much of the dialogue from this story came from "The Prankster" episode written by Grant Rosenberg, which I then blended up and let spray over my story.