

I Know a Secret

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Summary: Teenaged Rachel Harris learns about Clark's powers – but handles the knowledge with grace and maturity. Not quite canon, but no toys are damaged.

Story Size: 1,911 words (10Kb as text)

I knew that Clark and I didn't have a future together. I knew that his senior prom was the closest we were ever going to be. I knew that I had another year of high school and would get a B.A. in law enforcement at the University of Oklahoma – a traitor, I know, and more expensive being an out-of-state student – and I knew I'd come back to Smallville and work in law enforcement. I knew that he'd go to Kansas State, play football on a full scholarship, major in journalism, and go on to change the world with his words.

Both of those profiles were common knowledge in and around town. Nothing about that was secret. It was also not a secret that a lot of people expected him to come back home and marry me. Wasn't going to happen, but that didn't stop the back fence telegraph.

But I learned a secret about Clark last night, something almost no one else in the state knew.

Clark wasn't human.

Oh, I knew him well enough to know that he'd never use those special abilities I'd seen – or anything else he could do that I didn't know about – for nefarious purposes. (I first heard that phrase in a speech Pete Ross gave in my sophomore year. It immediately became one of my favorites, especially after I found out Clark gave it to him.) I knew he'd use those skills to help people in trouble, saving lives, preventing accidents and other tragedies, and generally being a wonderful person.

At least I hope I knew that. Still, I'd already decided to take him on faith.

Because whether he knew it or not – and I'll never tell him this – I love him. And I hope all of his dreams about his life come true.

But it was a sure bet he wouldn't be able to do any of those wonderful things if Lana Lang didn't keep her rich, privileged, fat little mouth shut.

She came to see me this morning, wringing her hands and looking anywhere but at me. I offered her something to drink but she shook her head and plopped herself down at our dining room table.

She silently rocked back and forth for almost half a minute, then finally looked at me with bright eyes. “Do you know about Clark?”

I did my best to look baffled. “Sure. He's a great guy, and you shouldn't have broken up with him last month.”

She did her best statue impersonation, then said, “Then you don't know.”

“Don't know what?”

She looked around. “Who else is here?”

I sighed dramatically. “My dad's at the sheriff's office for the day and my mom is spending the morning doing payroll for a couple of her clients. Why?”

“I – I have to tell you something. Something about Clark.”

“I suppose you're going to ask me to leave him alone so you can get him back.”

She looked horrified and jumped up to pace. “No! I – I don't want him back! I don't want to see him again! I – I can't believe I – I actually kissed him!”

She actually retched and almost barfed on the floor. I guess I was being a little cruel when I asked, “Do you want something to drink now?”

“No! You stupid – Clark's an alien!”

I gave her my best blonde impersonation. “You mean, like, he's really from, you know, New Jersey?”

She must have believed me. Her next words came out like she was talking to a slow third-grader. “Clark was not born in Kansas or Idaho or even in the United States. He wasn't born anywhere on Earth. He was born on a planet in another solar system.”

That explains a lot, I thought, but I said, “Girl, you've been sniffing your dad's commercial glue again.”

Her eyes slammed shut for a few seconds and I could see her mouth move as she silently counted to ten. “I'm not drunk or high or hallucinating. He is not a human being. He looks like a human being, but he's not. He can lift a car completely off the ground with one hand. He can run so fast he looks like a dark blur whipping past you.” She reached out and grabbed my wrist. “Do you understand what I'm telling you? He's not human! He's – he's something else altogether and he terrifies me!”

I knew Clark would never hurt her physically. “Why? Has he threatened you with his ray gun? Did he point a disintegrator at you and cackle demonically? Did he say he was going to tie you to the front of his spaceship as his new hood ornament?”

“No! He's just – he isn't human! And if you try to have a relationship of any kind with him it'll be a disaster for you!”

“I see.” I got up and wandered around the kitchen like I was thinking about what she'd said. “Have you told anyone else about this?”

“No. I came here because I didn't want you to fall into his trap.”

“What trap? Lana, all you've told me is that Clark is different. You have no proof, no pictures, no corroborating witnesses, no physical evidence, nothing. When did he tell you about himself? What did he say? For that matter, *how* did he tell you?”

“He didn't tell me! I figured it out on my own!”

“No, you didn't.”

“What are you – are you calling me a liar?!”

“No, I'm not. It's just that you don't think like a cop. I do, and you haven't given me enough to take to a grand jury or the district attorney. All you've got is accusations and hysteria.”

She paled and stood abruptly. “Fine! If you won't believe me I'll find someone who will!”

I crossed my arms in front of me. That pose always made her flinch before, and it did this time. “No you won't.”

“You – you think I can't convince anyone that I'm telling the truth?”

“Oh, I think you might be able to do that. But you're not going to try.”

“Really? Just watch me! Just see who—”

“I'll tell Clark.”

She stumbled and grabbed the back of her chair to stay upright. “What? No! You – you can't do that! He might – there's no way to know what he might do to me!”

“You've already said that he hasn't threatened you. Why are you scared of him?”

“Because he's an alien! Because – because he's dangerous!”

“I don't know how dangerous Clark is, but I know someone else who really is dangerous. To you, anyway.”

“Oh, yeah? Who's that?”

I stepped closer, her straight in the eyes, and made my voice as flat and hard as I could. “Me.”

She stopped breathing for a moment, then coughed twice. “What – what do you mean?”

“I mean that if you tell this wild tale about Clark, it’ll damage his reputation. And if I find out you’ve been blabbing this idiocy down at Maisie’s or at church or downtown or anywhere to anybody I’m going to come and find you and shut you up.” I leaned down and lifted my right hand, then closed it into a fist. “Permanently, if I have to.”

“You wouldn’t,” she whispered.

“Don’t try me.”

“But – but you’re – you’re a person! You’re human! You’re from Earth!”

“Yep. But even if Clark was born on some other planet, you’re the one who scares me.”

“Me? But I—”

“You’ve decided that Clark is dangerous just because of where you think he came from. You’re planning on spreading rumors about him with no evidence. You’re running on emotion and fear and bigotry, not facts.” I stepped back and didn’t have to fake my next words. “You make me sick.”

She stared at me for a long breath, then her eyes brightened like she’d just realized some deep truth. “You did it.”

“Huh?”

“You had sex with him.”

I think I laughed. I know I snorted. “You really are nuts.”

“Am I? Why would you defend him if you weren’t under his spell?”

“What, he’s a warlock now? Where’s his spell book, in his spaceship?”

She slammed her fist on the table. “Be serious! You spent last night with him, didn’t you? Whose bed did you use? Or did you just go out to his parents’ barn?”

I wasn’t about to let her start that rumor, so I slapped her across the face with my palm.

She fell back and hit the floor with her well-padded butt, then sat there at stared at me like I’d grown antlers and hooves. I wasn’t going to listen to that. “You tell anyone what you just said and I’ll take you apart. You understand me, Barbie?”

Now she looked scared. “He’s got you! He’s got you under his spell.”

“You’re repeating yourself, Lana. None of what you’ve accused me of is anywhere near true.”

She struggled to her feet. “Then tell me where you were last night! You and Clark left early. Where did you go?”

“None of your business. Just be sure that I’m still a virgin, and unless you got Clark into bed with you so is he.” Then a great idea hit me. “And if you spread your lies about Clark and me, I’ll tell people you’re just jealous because he wouldn’t sleep with you.”

Her eyes got wide and she stuttered, “Y-you – you wouldn’t!”

“You doubt me?” I grabbed the front of her dress and pulled her toward me. “Listen very carefully. As far as you’re concerned, Clark’s not an alien, he’s not a magician or a warlock, and you don’t know that he’s sleeping with anyone.”

“B-b-but you—”

“If I hear any of those rumors I’m going to find you and beat you until you bleed just about everywhere.” I put my nose about two inches from hers. “Tell me you believe me.”

She stared into my eyes for several seconds, then gasped and nodded hard enough to break a board with her head. “Good,” I growled. I let her go and she stumbled back. “Now get out of here!”

She kept her eyes on me and felt her way to the kitchen door, then jumped through it. A moment later I heard her tires throwing gravel as she zipped toward the highway.

Mission accomplished. She was too scared to say anything about Clark now.

He was safe, and hopefully he’d never know how much danger he’d been in.

He’d also never know he could have my heart any time he

asked for it.

But he never would. I was too Kansas for him, and he was too everywhere else for me. He’d eventually do something wonderful with his special abilities, but I knew I wouldn’t be part of that. I decided I wouldn’t even tell his folks what I knew, or that Lana had gotten part of it before I had.

He was going to help people. He might even save the world before he was through.

And if all I could contribute to his efforts was to help him keep his secret, then I’d do that little bit.

When my mom got home, she got frustrated because I wouldn’t tell her why I was crying.

THE END