

# Damages

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Summary: Set at the end of the episode "The Eyes Have It," what does Clark say to Lois to explain his absence for three days?

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An eternity felt like it had flashed by as Lois stared into Clark Kent's eyes, waiting for an explanation for his disappearance. She had spent the entire weekend struggling through the trials of helping Superman with his sudden blindness and coming to terms with the fact that her best friend had abandoned her for the ADA that had been throwing herself at him for the last few months. The news had only amplified her frustration at an already tense situation, but now she had discovered that story had been inaccurate, and he had actually stood Mayson up.

So many emotions ran through her, but she couldn't seem to focus on just one.

Relief.

Anguish.

Elation.

He hadn't abandoned her.

He hadn't pushed her to the side for a short skirt and heels.

But that didn't explain away the fact that he had not been there this weekend.

His parents hadn't even known where he was.

Where was he?

"Well, what?" Lois shrugged her shoulders as she stared at him with her arms folded across her chest, awaiting the explanation that would justify his absence for the last seventy-two hours.

Clark was quiet. His smile still spread across his face as if that would save him from having to explain his absence for the length of the entire weekend. "I..." Something flashed across his face as he grew contemplative and then pointed to the conference room, "Just hold that thought..."

"Excuse me?" she practically pounced on him as he helped guide her toward the conference room. A split second later, he had closed the door behind himself, leaving her practically seething as she awaited his response. "Oh, my God, it's worse than being in the mountains with Mayson, isn't it?" Worst-case scenarios began running through her mind as the wheels began to turn. "Oh, God, what is it? You've got a gambling problem? No, you've got a secret family...but no, that doesn't explain your parents not knowing where you were....Drugs? Gambling? Secretly a crime boss..."

"What?" Clark practically choked out in laughter.

"It's happened before." Lois shrugged her shoulders, stealing a glance at him from the corner of her eyes.

"No, Lois, it's nothing like that." Clark let out a heavy sigh.

"Then, what is it?" Lois asked. "Where were you?"

"I..." he looked down for a moment and let out a heavy sigh and then met her gaze. "I took a few days to help out a friend."

"A friend?" Lois echoed, clinging onto the words with a scowl. "A better friend than me or Superman who really needed you, by the way?"

"I didn't realize either of you were in trouble; otherwise, I'd have come back." He grew quiet. "This friend was going through something."

"And you didn't tell your parents?" she cocked an eyebrow at him in surprise.

"It was a last-minute thing," he answered nonchalantly.

She still wasn't sure if she believed him, but the explanation could be plausible, and it was much better than her worst-case scenarios. "You agreed to go to the mountains with Mayson." She accused quietly.

"I never agreed to anything of the sort," Clark corrected, stepping closer.

"Then why did she...?" She pointed toward the newsroom.

"It was a miscommunication." Clark cut in before she could finish asking her question. "That's all." His gaze met hers as he moved closer. "I'm not really interested in Mayson like that."

"Oh," Lois bit her lower lip, wondering just what he meant by that. She felt an unbelievable wave of relief wash over her as she stared into his dark eyes, wondering just when she had become so invested in the company her partner kept. For a moment, she questioned whether there was something more to the look he was giving her, but just as quickly as it appeared, it disappeared. "Well, I hope your friend is okay."

"She's fine," he responded with a smile.

"She?" her eyes widened as Clark turned to leave.

He pointed to the newsroom behind him, "I've got to go ...uh, return a, um cat. We'll catch up later."

"But..." her eyes narrowed as she stared at the closed door, harrumphing at the wood frame as she watched Clark disappear toward the stairwell. She rolled her eyes, shaking her head, "Return a cat?"

THE END