

Wrong Person of Interest

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Summary: Consider this fascinating crossover notion: What if John Reese and Joss Carter from *Person of Interest* appeared in Metropolis' *Daily Planet* newsroom to save the machine's latest number, intrepid reporter Lois Lane?

Story Size: 1,480 words (8Kb as text)

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Lois Lane descended with characteristic rapid steps into the newsroom from the ramp and immediately noticed she was getting either chilly stares or nods of approval from her co-workers.

Jimmy came up to her and said grimly. "That was wrong what you said last night on television. Aren't you and the big guy supposed to be close? Never thought I would hear anything bad about Superman from Lois Lane. What were you doing at that protest rally anyway?" Without waiting for an answer, he walked away.

"What protest rally?" she asked to his retreating stiff back.

Lois tried to walk to her desk, but four staffers, all of whom were new to the bullpen, blocked her way. As they drew closer, the tension in the office had increased as others watched the confrontation unfold. There was a background rumble of voices, some pro-Superman, others against him. She was actually beginning to be afraid when she felt a familiar hand at the small of her back. It was with a sense of profound relief that she heard Clark's voice, normally so calm and pleasant, ring with the tone of steel. "If anyone has anything negative to say to Lois, you'll say it in front of me."

The staffers though better of trying to intimidate Lois further. They mumbled something about disrespecting the superhero and moved back to their regular tasks.

Completely bewildered, she turned to her partner. "Clark, what's going on? Suddenly, I'm either hated or beloved! Not only that, Jimmy, thinks I was at some protest rally against Superman last night."

Before he could answer, Perry came out of his office, walked over to the reporters, and said. "Lois, in the future, remember what you say publicly can reflect poorly on the *Daily Planet*. I'm disappointed in you."

At this point, Lois was beyond frustrated with her co-workers behavior towards her. "Chief, has everyone gone crazy? Last night was spent at home reading a good book. I wasn't around any protest! Unfortunately, I have no one to vouch for me except my goldfish."

Lowering his voice so only she and Clark could hear Perry said. "Lois, honey, you've been under a lot of pressure lately. Hell, we all have, what with adjusting to a new building, computer procedures and owner. The suits upstairs hired Dr. Carlin to write the new self-help column. I want you to start seeing her."

Shocked, Lois responded, "What? This is ridiculous! I don't need to see a shrink!"

While they were talking, a tall, handsome middle-aged man in a perfectly tailored dark suit stepped out of the elevator and moved with fluent grace down the ramp. When he approached the trio, he singled out Lois Lane out and spoke in a soft voice with a gentle rasp, that was oddly soothing.

"Excuse me Miss Lane, my name is John Reese. I have it under good authority that your life is in danger."

She looked up at him into the most beautiful blues eyes, eyes that had depths of pain and compassion, the kind of which she had never seen before. Whatever questions came to mind for a second, were caught in her throat. Then she stuttered, "Who ...who wants to kill me?"

The man in the suit shook his head and said, "As yet, we are not certain, but you must come with me."

Clark stepped in between them and said, "Pardon me, but who appointed you Miss Lane's guardian? She is not leaving here with anyone without *me*."

The two men stared at one another, mentally assessing each other, than Mr. Reese spoke, his words were low and menacing. "Mr. Kent, let me assure you, Miss Lane's welfare is my only concern, she is under my protection. Protection you cannot give."

Clark bristled at the older man's words and said, "Believe me, you have no idea who you are dealing with."

With these words the newsroom became deathly quiet, everyone was aware that Lois and Clark were more than partners yet not dating. But mild-mannered Kent exhibited a force of strength none had ever seen before, and it was frightening. What would he do against this stranger?

Suddenly, a petite, black woman dressed in a gray pantsuit, exited the elevator, raced down the ramp, and joined the small group. She drew close to the tall stranger, reached up and laid a gentle hand on his broad shoulder. "John! I just spoke with our mutual friend, we were mistaken. Ms. Lane is not the one in danger. As a matter of fact, we need to leave. Mr. Kent here can take care of her better than our entire team."

A serious expression marred John's features. He tore his gaze away from the younger man and studied the pretty woman's earnest face and said, "Are you certain Joss?"

"Positive."

John Reese, relaxed, smiled down at the dark woman by his side and then turned to a bewildered Lois and her friends. "It appears there has been a mistake. I'm glad my wife, Joss Carter, was able to catch up with me. Sorry to have bothered you." The couple prepared to go when Mr. Reese stopped, and touched his ear, Joss looked up at him, waiting. With a surprised and then humbled look on his face, he turned, stared at Clark and Lois. Finally, he bent down and spoke to his partner, "Finch just provided me with vital intel, Joss. It will save both their lives."

Thanks to his super hearing, Clark stiffened, he knew what the conversation was about. Without giving himself away, he said with a worried voice. "Mr. Reese?"

John walked over to the small group, puzzled by the information he had just received. "Excuse me. Is there someplace we can speak in private?"

"The conference room." Lois said.

As soon as the conference room door closed behind him, Clark said. "Just who are you people? Care to explain where you get your knowledge from?"

John said softly. "Without going into too much detail, all I can say is that your new columnist, Dr. Arianna Carlin is out to get Superman as revenge for him not saving her ex-husband. He's the person who must be protected, not Miss Lane."

"It's no surprise that Superman has a lot of enemies. But why does Dr. Carlin want to kill him?" Lois asked.

"Great shades of Elvis! Since when does Superman need our protection? He's invincible!" Perry barked.

"Not to everything." Joss answered. "Isn't that right Mr. Kent? After all, you and the Man of Steel are good friends."

"He doesn't tell me all of his secrets." Clark said, his voice grew tight with anxiety.

Lois couldn't help but notice how uncomfortable her partner had become. She decided to put a little pressure on the mysterious

couple. “Wait a second. Dr. Carlin was married before? Do you know the name of her late ex-husband?”

“Heh, yeah. It was the recently deceased Lex Luthor.” Joss said.

Mr. Reese smirked and spoke in that velvety smooth voice. “That being said, we are leaving. I have no doubt you and Miss Lane will be able to solve this mystery without further inference from us.” Taking his wife’s hand, the two quietly exited the conference room, went up the ramp and waited for the elevator.

Lois and her friends watched as the couple departed, leaving more questions than answers.

Perry said, “Now, what in Sam Hill was that all about? Who were those two people?”

Clark spoke thoughtfully, “Somehow, I get the definite impression we’ll never know.”

“We might not get any information from them, but here comes Dr. Carlin or should I say, the *former* Mrs. Lex Luthor. Maybe she can shed some light on this situation. Especially why Superman’s life is in danger!”

All three exited the conference room to have a little chat with Arianna Carlin, who was ignorant of the fact that her scheme to destroy Lois Lane and Superman had been uncovered by persons unknown to her.

Meanwhile on the elevator, John Reese gathered Joss into his arms and gave her a warm embrace.

“Oh, I love your hugs! But what is that for?”

“Joss honey, your timing couldn’t have been better. I was about to go toe to toe with Superman!”

Her dark eyes grew wide with shock. “You mean what Finch just told you...?”

“Yeah, Clark Kent is the Man or Steel!”

THE END