

Safe in His Arms

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Rating: PG-13

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Summary: An event in Lois's past throws a wrench into Lois and Clark's wedding night plans.

Story Size: 3,378 words (18Kb as text)

Author's note: This short story has been floating around in my head for a while, but I've always talked myself out of writing it. Then one night, I sat down and just let the words come out (writing as therapy, anyone?); this was the result. The story does have some personal meaning to me, and I realize the content of this story is not for everyone (please see content warning below!). However, I hope I have written it in a way that stays true to our favorite characters.

Comments are appreciated, but please be kind.

Special thanks to KSaraSara for reading this story through for me and encouraging me to share.

This story has been modified from the original version, which was written as Nfic (the Nfic version is available in the Nfic forum on the message boards), and I'd give the story a solid PG-13 rating based on the content (again, see content warning below).

Content warning: This story involves brief descriptions of child sexual abuse. No nonconsensual intercourse or touching is depicted or implied.

Part 1

"Don't worry. Everything is alright. Trust me."

Trust you?

Yeah, sure, mister.

I don't know you. I don't trust you. I don't... I don't...

I hide. Behind the only thing big enough to hide me.

The bed.

And I peek out around the edge. He stands in the doorway, eyes locked on mine. But I don't see his eyes. I'm looking lower. At something my eight-year-old eyes should not be seeing.

And I don't know what is happening. But I know it's not right. He shouldn't be in here while I'm changing my clothes. While I'm undressed. While I'm hiding behind the bed.

And he shouldn't have his bathrobe open in front, showing himself to me.

I hide again, shutting my eyes tightly and holding myself. Trying to cover myself up. Where are my clothes?

"Don't worry. Come on out now. Everything is alright. Trust me."

No, leave me alone. Get out. I'm... I'm trying to change my clothes.

I just want to change my clothes.

And then the door shuts, clicking loudly in the otherwise silent room. And he is gone.

I don't cry. But I'm shaking as I dress myself.

And then I hurry home, just three houses down. And I lock myself in my room. Alone.

"Is everything alright?"

Yes, Mom, Dad, everything is fine. I'm fine. It's all fine. Nothing happened, really. Nothing happened after all. I'm alright.

I'm alright.

Really.

Part 2

Clark kisses me gently, and his hands loop around my waist as he pulls me closer to him. The caress of his lips against mine feels exquisite, and I return the kiss, deepening it and opening my mouth to taste him. Deep in my core, something tugs at me — an aching, a yearning.

Tonight is the night. Finally, after waiting and waiting and waiting. We're finally married. And we'll finally make love. The waiting has gotten harder and harder.

But now that the waiting is over, and we're here, standing next to his bed — him in a sexy pair of black briefs and an unbuttoned black shirt, and me in the tiny little black teddy he'd bought me — I feel a sliver of apprehension flicker in the back of my mind.

And then it happens.

"Don't worry. Everything is alright. Trust me."

The words echo in my head, and I feel a hot breath on my neck, a large hand grasping my shoulder.

"No, no, no, please. Don't, please."

My voice sounds foreign, terrified, high-pitched. I turn around, blinking back tears, and hurry to the other side of the bed, away from the half-naked masculine presence in the room.

And I hide behind the bed, my head buried in my knees, my hands covering my ears. And tears streaming down my face.

I hear my heart pounding in my chest and feel my body shaking. Why am I shaking? I'm alright, after all. I'm fine. I'm...

"Lois?"

My breath catches in my throat.

Clark. That's Clark's voice. What happened? Why am I... ?

I raise my head up, tears still wetting my cheeks, and swallow hard as I turn to look up at him.

Clark kneels on the floor a couple feet away. His face is contorted with concern and worry. I can tell that he wants to reach out to me, but he hesitates.

I shake my head and lower my face back into my knees.

"I-I'm sorry, Clark," I say, my voice hoarse and low.

"I'm sorry, I —"

"Shhh, hon, it's okay. Everything is alright."

Dammit.

My heart nearly jumps out of my chest, and I push myself to my feet and move away from him. There are no blocked doors here in his bedroom, at least. And it's Clark. It's Clark. It's Clark.

I remind myself of this over and over as I pace the room, keeping a good distance from him.

“Everything is not alright. No, no. Don’t say that. No, it’s not alright. It’s not... I’m not... I’m...”

I stop, my back to him, my hands trembling uncontrollably.

“Hon, I-I’m sorry if I did something to upset you, Lois. I... I thought you wanted... I mean, I thought we...” His voice trails off, and I feel him close the distance between us, although he doesn’t touch me.

I spin around and face him, my eyes pleading with him to understand, somehow, without me having to explain anything. Please understand me, Clark.

And somehow, he does. He studies me for a minute, his eyes still filled with concern. And then, he buttons up his shirt and moves away from me a step. And then another. Until he’s back at the bed. He sits down, keeping his eyes on me, but softening himself — his expression, his body language, his mouth. Somehow making himself smaller, less threatening. He purses his lips slightly, but doesn’t say anything.

I turn away from him again and then hurry out into the living room, dig through my luggage, and quickly dress myself in a t-shirt and shorts, pulling the clothes on over the black lingerie.

Immediately, I feel better, calmer, more in control. And I close my eyes as tears fall down my cheeks.

I’m not alright.

Why had this happened? It was twenty years ago. And nothing even really happened then. And yet...

Quiet footsteps from behind me remind me of the man — my husband — who had triggered my strong reaction.

I reach up and wipe the tears from my cheeks as I turn back around to face him.

I can face him now. Now that I’m dressed. Now that his shirt is buttoned up.

Our eyes meet, and I blink back more tears.

“I’m sorry, Clark.”

I don’t know what else to say. How can I explain this to him? Why hadn’t I told him before? Because nothing really happened. And it was twenty years ago. And nothing really happened. I mean, the bastard hadn’t even touched me.

He’d just stood there, looking at me. And exposing himself to me. So, nothing really happened, right? He hadn’t touched me. He hadn’t... he hadn’t raped me.

And Clark is the kindest person I know. He would never hurt me. He wouldn’t dream of hurting anyone.

And now, he stands there, watching me, and I can see his concern, his worry, his pain.

“What did I do wrong, Lois? I’m so sorry if I... Please tell me, hon. I-I love you, and I can’t bear the thought that I hurt you in some way.”

He moves a step closer, and when I don’t back away, then he moves another. Until he is standing only a foot away. I lower my eyes and then reach out my hands to his. His hands are soft, gentle, kind, like he is. I feel myself shaking — even as he holds my hands, they shake.

“Lois?” he asks again. His thumbs rub quiet circles on the backs of my palms, and he leans in carefully, slowly, testing my reaction. And his lips brush against my cheek.

And I’m fine. The terrifying feelings from earlier do not overtake me this time.

But I break down, collapsing into his arms, and I cry.

Part 3

He holds me, quietly, and moves us to the couch. And then, he sits me in his lap, his arms remaining wrapped tightly around me. Occasionally, he kisses my cheek or my neck, and his hand rubs lightly up and down my arm.

And eventually I stop shaking. But I cling to him still, even when the shaking stops.

I cling to him, breathe in his familiar scent, allow his presence to comfort me.

But I dread the moment he asks me again what is wrong and what happened. I can’t hide it from him. He is my husband now, after all. I only got away with not telling him before because I honestly thought it didn’t matter. I’d had no idea this would happen. Nothing like this has ever happened before.

Sure, there’s been a few times when an image has popped into my mind of that man standing in the doorway, watching me as I hid behind the bed, his robe open and his body exposed. And I’d always just pushed it away, not thinking anything of it.

Because after all, nothing had happened.

But God, nothing like *this* had ever happened.

And Clark has a right to know that my reaction has nothing to do with him. Right? I mean, it doesn’t have anything to do with Clark. And the fact that he’s a man. A man who’d been planning to have sex with me. And who had towered over me, his shirt unbuttoned and open to reveal his hard, muscular chest.

I let out a sob and cling to him tighter.

“I’m so sorry, Clark,” I say again, my voice muffled into his shoulder.

“Shhh, hon, it’s okay. I’m here. I’m — I’m here for you, hon.”

I hear the slight waver in his voice. The tiny little dip in his confidence. I did that to him. I put that fear there. He doesn’t deserve that.

“Tonight was supposed to be special, and I ruined it,” I mumble, shaking again.

“I don’t care about that. I just want to know what happened, so I can help you,” he promises, tightening his arms around me again. “I love you, hon.”

“I love you, too, Clark. I love you so much.”

He lets out a long breath and kisses the top of my head.

“Please, tell me what I did wrong. Please, Lois.”

I shake my head. Not because I don’t want to tell him — although I don’t — but because it was not his fault.

“You didn’t do anything wrong,” I explain.

I shift slightly in his embrace so I can look at him. The concern hasn’t left his eyes. He is still worried about me. I reach up and kiss him, like I have hundreds of times. And, like always, the kiss soothes me, comforts me, warms me. I pull away and rest my forehead on his. He rubs my back and kisses my cheek before settling back into the silence of several minutes prior.

I have to tell him. I can’t hide this, like I thought. Like I have for twenty years.

Why now? Why, after everything, do we have yet another hurdle stopping us? And this hurdle — it's all because of me. It's all mine.

I feel him take a deep breath, and I know he's about to ask me again. I grip his shirt and shake my head. He inhales sharply but doesn't say anything.

"It happened when I was eight years old," I start. My voice sounds oddly calm and clear, without any stuttering or stammering or faltering. How, I don't know. My heart jumps in my chest, and I feel nauseous. But I continue. "I had slept over at my friend's house. Just three houses down from ours. Tiffany. Her name was Tiffany. And then, in the morning..."

I stop, and his arms hug me again. A gentle kiss presses into my temple. A soft breath ruffles my hair.

"In the morning, I went into her bedroom to change my clothes. I had closed the door. But it opened, just as I'd... just as I'd undressed. And he stood in the doorway. Her father. Dexter."

His name feels dirty to say out loud. I want to vomit, but I suppress the urge.

"He was naked except for — except for a bathrobe that was open in the front. And he was... he was..."

I feel Clark shaking now. His cheek is pressed into my hair, and his jaw trembles slightly. Although his hands still rub my back, the strength of the caress lessens, becoming tentative and even more gentle.

"Lois —"

"He didn't touch me," I interrupt, feeling the urge to clarify this detail. "He stood in the doorway and watched me. I-I hid behind the bed. And he told me, 'Don't worry. Everything is alright. Trust me.' And he tried to get me to come out from behind the bed so he could see me, naked. But I wouldn't, and I didn't. And then he left. And I got dressed and ran home."

Clark's hot breath shudders on my neck, and I feel his arms again tighten more around me. He shakes his head into me.

"God, Lois, I didn't know. I had no idea. I-I..."

Soft kisses flutter against my neck and chin, and he then kisses my cheek and finally my lips. But he is careful, tentative, tender. He pulls back from the kiss, hugs me to him, and leans back into the couch.

And I settle into him and cry, my tears wetting his shirt.

"I'm sorry, Clark. I didn't mean to ruin our night. I've never — I've never had this kind of flashback before, and it just happened, so suddenly. I love you so much, and I know you'd never do anything to hurt me. I don't know why — I don't know why that happened..."

"Shhh, hon. It's okay. It's... It will be okay. I love you, Lois. I love you so much," he murmurs into my ear. His hands have stopped their caress on my back, but his fingers press into me, holding me to him.

I feel his love so strongly. And I allow myself to cry into him, the fear from that day bubbling up and overflowing. I know I'm safe. Nothing happened, really. But everything could have happened.

That is what terrifies me so much, I realize.

Everything that could have happened.

And so, I cling to Clark. My love. My husband. My

lifeline.

And I allow his soothing murmurs of "I love you" and "I'll never let anyone hurt you" to comfort me. To reassure me.

And then I whisper in his ear, "Make love to me, Clark."

Part 4

He doesn't hesitate, although his hands are somehow even more gentle than normal. He lifts me off the couch and carries me into his bedroom. And he sets me on the bed, fully clothed, crawls in next to me, and pulls the comforter up over us.

His hands touch me. First my face, cupping my cheek lovingly, and then trailing a path down my neck and shoulder and arm. One hand finds my hip and rests there while he leans in and kisses me. His lips are soft and pliant and warm, and I immediately feel all of his love overwhelming me.

A moan escapes my lips, and I feel him smile into me slightly as he deepens the kiss. Deeper and a tiny bit more insistent, but still careful and gentle.

He quietly whispers a question to me, his tone unassuming.

"May I undress you, my love?"

"Yes," I answer.

I feel his hands — his powerful and yet infinitely gentle hands — reach underneath my t-shirt and slide across my abdomen, still covered by the black teddy. Desire pulses through me, a tugging deep in my belly causing me to moan with pleasure. I sit up slightly as he lifts the shirt up and off of me. He then quickly settles us back down underneath the comforter, and I realize he is being careful not to expose me. He is keeping us underneath the blanket to help me feel safe. His hands continue to caress me, now touching my bare arms and then my shoulders.

His lips capture mine, muffling the sound of my cry. He remains cautious and careful as he moves downward with his hands and mouth, kissing my neck and then my chest and abdomen as he slips my shorts off. His hands trace back up my legs, one venturing along my inner thigh for a brief moment before pressing into my hip. I find myself on my back, his warm body straddling me, and he leans over me and kisses my lips again.

Of their own accord, my hands roam up his back and then back down, reaching the hem of his shirt. Then underneath. I want to feel his skin. It is warm and soft, like his lips. My fingers trace along the waistband of his briefs, and I feel his large body shudder. My hands then shift around to his stomach and push up under his shirt to feel his chest. Hard and muscular and warm.

And I want to feel all of him.

The sudden need ravages me. My fingers find the buttons to his shirt and work nimbly and efficiently. Soon, I push the shirt off his shoulders, and my eyes feast on his expansive chest. I push him back a bit so I can see him better.

Gorgeous. He is magnificent and gorgeous.

I press my palms into his abdomen and let them slide up, over his chest, and around his neck, and I pull him back down onto me. His weight feels comforting, and I feel safe.

The thought repeats itself in my head. *I feel safe.*

Tears fall again, and he stills his movement as I stifle a sob into his shoulder, shaking my head. He starts to pull away, but I tighten my arms around him.

“Don’t. Don’t go, Clark. I... I need you here. You make me — this — this makes me... I feel safe right now.”

Trying to explain it is not easy, but I think he understands me, as he always seems to. He settles down on top of me again, although he rests a bit of his weight on his elbows, and he flutters kisses on my jaw, cheek, and lips.

“I will always protect you, Lois. You’re always safe with me. I love you so much,” he murmurs into my ear.

And I know he’s right.

I am safe. Here, with him.

He kisses me and touches me, and together, we bring each other pleasure, filling me with love and an intense sense of belonging. I finally admit to myself that I trust him.

And I need him.

And as we lie there together in the afterglow of our love making, I cling to him, tears falling down my cheeks. And he showers me with kisses and murmurs of “I love you” over and over.

After a moment, he becomes quiet, and his body stills as he rests just a little more weight on me. I feel him start to tremble again. He kisses my cheek one more time, and then, his voice quiet and uncertain, he asks, “Are you... I mean, is that... Was that okay? Are you alright, hon?”

And I realize I am. I am alright.

Maybe more than alright.

I hug him tightly, pulling him down on top of me so that all of his weight rests on me. Safe.

“Yes, my love. That was amazing. I love you,” I tell him. I graze his cheek with my lips and add, “And yes, I’m alright. With you here, I know I’ll always be alright.”

He smiles into me, his trembling fading.

“I love you, my wife.”

“I love you, my husband.”

And he kisses me again and holds me tighter.

THE END