

# That Forgotten Journal

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Summary: On the eve of their fifth wedding anniversary, Lois finds an old journal that Clark kept when he was a kid.

Story Size: 1,894 words (10Kb as text)

*Author's note:* This short fic is a gift from me and KSaraSara to CarrieRene! Hope you like it! Thank you, as always, to KSaraSara for your awesome BR, particularly your help with finding the perfect ending and with providing your list of randomly generated titles for me to choose from.

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Sometimes I think I couldn't possibly learn anything new about Clark Kent. After all, we've been married now for five years. And there are a lot — and I do mean A LOT — of little things that have surprised me along the way. Like how he floats in his sleep, especially when he's got a lot on his mind. And how he'd been secretly warming up my coffee for years before he'd told me.

But then, something happens, and I'm surprised all over again.

The journal I hold in my hands now is one of those things.

It's old, covered in a thin layer of dust. I'd found it, hiding at the bottom of a box in the back of his closet here in his childhood bedroom. I hadn't been snooping — not really, that is. I'd just been looking for an old sweater or something to wear because I'd gotten cold. And then I'd gotten curious. A box marked "High School Stuff" will do that.

The box had mostly been filled with pictures and schoolwork and other keepsakes and memorabilia. And then, this journal. Simple black leather, creased and wrinkled at the spine, with one of those little metal snaps to hold it shut.

And then I'd gotten more curious.

What had my boy-scout husband written about during his no-doubt tumultuous high school years? And...should I look?

Well, I did hesitate for — okay, a few seconds maybe. I probably should have held off longer. I mean, even though I'd like to think he tells me everything, I know I certainly wouldn't like him reading what I wrote in *my* journal when I was in high school. I cringe to even think

about it.

But he knows me, and so I know that even if he gets mad, it will only be...for a moment. Right?

And so, I'd sat on his bed and opened up the journal. And my heart had nearly burst.

It wasn't a journal of "Clark Kent's Daily Musings About High School and Life." No, it was more than that. And if I had to give it a title, it would probably be "How I Became Superman."

Ten-year-old Clark Kent saved a three-week-old kitten, nursing him back to health.

Twelve-year-old Clark Kent defended his friend Pete against the school bully and managed to mitigate the conflict without violence.

Thirteen-year-old Clark Kent spent six hours across two afternoons practicing with his newly acquired heat vision until he could adjust the intensity of the heat easily. The very next week, his new ability came in handy when he had to rescue a cow stuck in some wire fencing.

Fifteen-year-old Clark Kent prevented a car accident while walking home from school. His dad lectured him about being careful not to be seen.

Fifteen-year-old Clark Kent also locked himself in his room one evening, horrified after having been involved in an incident at school that left another student with several broken fingers when he'd failed to dodge a punch quick enough. The very next entry detailed the rigorous practice he'd undertaken the next day to make sure his senses were honed and focused and that he had complete control over his powers.

And the list went on.

I'd read through the whole thing. Maybe I'd sort of tangentially known all of it already. His heart of gold. His caring and compassionate nature. The long hours he'd spent practicing to control his powers.

But the fact that he'd kept a journal of everything — starting with a tiny orange kitten he'd found when he was ten...

He hadn't known everything that he'd be capable of. He hadn't known he'd grow up to be the world's defender and greatest hero.

He'd just been a boy who wanted to do right.

And that's what's so extraordinary about him.

I hug the journal to my chest as I stand up from his bed and pad out into the living room. The room is still quiet and empty. Martha is in town shopping, and Clark and his dad are out...I'm not sure where. Doing farm chores, I'm sure.

But it's late, and they'll all be back soon. I still can't really cook, even after all of these years of him trying to teach me, but there are a handful of things I can make. And one of them happens to be his favorite — his mom's

homemade chocolate chip cookies.

So, I set the journal down on the kitchen table and get started baking.

Thirty minutes later, just as I'm pulling the last batch of cookies from the oven, the front door opens, and he comes inside, grinning broadly.

"Dad is heading over to the Irig's for a bit to help Wayne with something," he explains, kicking off his shoes and then making his way toward me while eyeing the cookies with interest.

He stops midway between the front door and the kitchen, however, as his eyes land on the journal. A soft smile plays on his lips, and he steps over to the table and picks it up as though it is fragile. He flips it open — maybe to a random page or maybe not — and then chuckles quietly and shakes his head.

"Where did you find this? I'd forgotten all about it," he says, his tone amused.

"In a box in your closet with a bunch of your high school stuff," I explain. I pick up a cookie — one that had cooled enough to eat but was still warm — and move around the edge of the table to stand next to him. He leans down and presses his lips to mine in a brief greeting and then eyes the cookie with a crooked smile.

"For me?"

"Of course."

He takes a seat at the table and quickly pulls me into his lap as I feed him a bite of the cookie. And then he kisses me again, his tongue darting into my mouth. I taste a hint of chocolate as warmth spreads all the way down into my toes.

"Mmm, so..." I pull away, and he whimpers a protest, which I cut off by offering him another bite of the cookie. With a laugh, he nods and takes it from me. "So, you never told me your first rescue was a little orange kitten when you were just ten years old."

"Oh, you read all of that, huh...?"

His voice trails off for a moment as he chews, and he seems to be deep in thought, then he blinks and shifts me in his lap a bit, one arm coming to rest on my waist. He stuffs the last bite of the cookie into his mouth and flips the journal open again to the first entry, his eyes skimming the page. His smile flickers as he shakes his head a bit.

"You know, the way Mom tells it, that little kitten rescued me, not the other way around."

He doesn't elaborate right away, so I slip an arm around his shoulders and prompt him with a curious, "Oh?"

"I started to develop my powers that same year, when I was ten. My vision and hearing came first. I spent a lot of time in my room...scared, trying to figure out who I was and what was happening to me. And trying to learn to

control everything," he explains. As I press a kiss against his cheek, he adds, "Little Finn, he was there for me when I just really needed a friend. He also purred *really* loudly. Came in handy when I was trying to learn how to focus my hearing."

I reach out and pick up the journal again, flipping through the pages slowly.

"Why did you write all of this down?" I ask as I stop on a page where he'd detailed how he'd used his speed and strength to get his parents to safety when a tornado had touched down near the farm when he was seventeen.

He takes a deep breath, removes the journal from my hands, and sets it on the table, then floats us up until we're both standing.

"It started out just as a way for me to track Finn's health. My mom suggested I write everything down to show the vet because he was so young when we found him. And then...I guess it sort of morphed from there." His arms tighten around me, and he offers me another small smile. "It helped remind me...when things would get difficult...that I'd struggled before and always found my way."

A wave of love for this man — my husband — courses through me, and I stretch up and kiss him again, lingering just a bit longer this time. He still tastes like chocolate.

"Mmm, and now...when things get difficult? You don't need the journal anymore?"

He brushes a kiss against the top of my head and murmurs, "No. I haven't needed it for a long time. But it's sort of fun to look back through it. Ah, well, maybe fun is the wrong word... Enlightening, I suppose."

"I agree. I mean, I would have guessed your heat vision was the most difficult of your superpowers to deal with. But, after reading everything you wrote, I think, maybe it was your strength and invulnerability?"

He nods and then steps away from me to pick up the journal again. His expression is thoughtful, and after running a hand over the cover, he sets it back down without opening it.

"The heat vision was maybe a bit...scary. But when I learned to switch it on and off at will, it wasn't difficult anymore. My strength, however..." He opens both palms and stares down at them for a moment, then closes his fists and lifts his eyes to mine, forcing a smile. "I can't just turn it off. I have to constantly be in control, constantly hold back, constantly keep myself in check. Even now, sometimes, it can be...exhausting. And my invulnerability...well, you probably read about how that can backfire."

I see from the tightness in his shoulders and tension in his jaw that the memory still bothers him, so I step up to him and wrap my arms around his waist, and he

immediately relaxes into me with a sigh.

“So, if your strength and invulnerability were the most difficult to deal with, what’s your favorite superpower? It has to be flying, right?”

He laughs and plants another kiss on the top of my head.

“No, actually...it’s you.”

“Me?” I lean back enough to look up into his eyes, which shine down at me with such adoration that I feel my cheeks heat up.

“Yes, you. You’re my favorite superpower. You’re my hope. My refuge. My comfort. My strength — my *real* strength. Without you, I wouldn’t be half the hero everyone says I am. So...you’re my favorite superpower.”

And just like that, he surprises me again.

THE END