# **Files of Lois Lane:** *The Mad Scientist*

Based off of this episode of Superman: [https://www.youtube.com /watch?v=9UJphNPwDfk&t=175s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9UJphNPwDfk&t=175s)

“Metropolis is one of the largest hubs of the nation. It is known for its busy go-go-go atmosphere, hard working people and rich rewards. And when the people say rich, they mean ***RICH***. Metropolis is where millionaires and the like went to become billionaires. It is said, “Start a business in Metropolis and you’ll find one on every corner in the nation a year later.” When foreigners visit they comment how the poor of Metropolis seem to be living like kings.

In such a rich city however, it is only inevitable that such good fortune should wrongly be taken advantage of. Needless to say, the police and law enforcement often have their hands full chasing the tails of robbers, crooks, and mad men. That is where Superman enters the scene. Not much is known about him, only small reports so far of a vigilante in blue and red gymnast spandex stopping criminals with inhuman strength. It is said he can run faster than a bullet, jump over tall buildings and fly, often being mistaken for a bird or a plane. No one truly knows who this solitary man is, all they know is that when trouble is afoot, Superman is there to save the day.”

 Ugh, what a complete waste of her time, Lois thought as put down the article she was reading from this new competitor. She worked for the Daily Planet, the biggest news station in Metropolis and this new magazine from KMCP News was a complete eye-roller. Had they hired reporters from the 40s? Seriously, what kind of hack writers still say “trouble is afoot” let alone “save the day.” It was bad enough that people already thought a man saving the day was some kind of great achievement, as if men hadn’t been overbearing screw ups for thousands of years of history. Now there’s a “super” man to save the day? Heaven help us all. How often was it that women had to step in and clean up the messes made by men. Women’s suffrage movement, case and point. Lois would love to meet this Superman character and give the public her take on who this guy really was. Some attention seeking superhero wannabe.

 Lois looked at the author of the article; Marge Fatton and Clark Kent. Clark Kent, that was the new hire the Chief was bringing in. Chief said he was extremely talented and very impressed with his work. Probably his “other” work because this piece was extremely disappointing. Lois smiled to herself. She had to give the KMCP a little credit though, they had started out of nowhere and suddenly risen to some fame. She had especially enjoyed their take on the economics of Metropolis. Many of their articles had been painfully realistic yet hopeful and inspired business owners to do the community better. She’d even quoted some to a few of her friends and now wondered if Clark Kent's name had been associated with any of those articles. Whatever, it didn’t matter now. Break’s over.

 Lois took another look at her research. Before she took her break she had just gotten back from collecting intel from the bigger city buildings. She had pictures of threatening notes from City Hall, the Police and Fire stations, and the Courthouse all telling about a soon doomed destruction if they didn't stop laughing at me (whoever “me” was). Even the Metropolis Library had a note, though Lois had a hunch the note from the library was unconnected even though it was done in the same style. It mentioned a specific name in the note, Susan, and after some more digging, Lois found out that Susan the librarian had recently broken up with her toxic ex who was just the type of guy who would try to scare her by threatening notes. That being said, did the toxic ex have the ability or motive to threaten the other major city buildings? No, he did not. The police seemed to think he did so they were chasing that angle but Lois was considering other possibilities. There was the shifty first deputy mayor who had recently “resigned” as well as some major flat-earther university professor who used to work closely with the city. The deputy mayor had been filing for retirement while the professor had gone off grid for the past few weeks. Retirement? Yah, that man had no plans for doom or destruction, someone in office probably just found out his son was dealing drugs and so he resigned before he could be blamed for any part he played in it. That could make great news but it would have to be saved for later, she was finding the city’s mad man first.

After doing some more digging Lois found coordinates to some old university observatory on a remote island just outside of Metropolis. If the professor was going off grid, that was the place to do it. It sounded like a promising lead. Lois sat back in her chair smug. She was just too good at her job.

Chief then called everyone into the main meeting room for the weekly debriefing where they went over assignments, deadlines and roastings on whose article was the worst. When Lois was first a new hire at this male dominated company she had gotten roasted fiercely, but those days ended and now she’d get a “good job” with a nod from the chief about her front page headliners.

The chief stood at the head of this patriarchy as everyone gathered into the meeting room. Standing next to Chief was some guy with greasy jet black hair. He was obviously a skinny man and it didn’t help that he wore an overly big overcoat and pants that looked like they were 3 sizes bigger than what he would need. He had on his face giant round rim glasses that made his eyes shrink as if they were pebbles in his face. He was wearing a medical face-mask like he was sick or something.

Chief spoke, “Crew, meet Clark Kent, our new hire. I’ve had the chance to work with Clark when I was chasing a story in Smallville some years back. Clark has good intuition and an excellent talent for writing. I’m excited to have him with us.”

Lois had never heard so many compliments come out of Chief’s mouth. She wished she could have said that it spoke volumes about this new guy’s skills and less about the Chief’s lack of spotting talent.

“Clark, this is Chad, Denis, Jeremy, Cynthia, Robert, and Louis, not to be confused with our very own Lois Lane.” Chief said, gesturing to each person.

Chad spoke up in his loud and obnoxious way, “Just try confusing them, Clark. Lois will bite your head off if you do.” Classic Chad.

Lois said, “It’s funny how much you spout your head off when you have no idea what you’re talking about. Maybe someone should bite it off Chad.”

Chad shrugged as if what Lois had said just proved his point.

“Enough flirting you too,” Chief said.

*Flirting*, are you serious? It’s always funny banter until someone’s pride actually gets hurt. Sometimes work was a bit much for Lois.

“Clark, introduce yourself. Say something about where you're from and what you like to do and all that.”

That was when Clark spoke. Lois was expecting either a really annoying high pitched voice or some throaty trying-too-hard nerd’s manner of speech but Clark did not provide either option. When he spoke he spoke straight, with a calming confidence and a clear tone. He had a deep voice, like that of a jazz singer.

“Hello everyone. I’m Clark, as you might’ve heard I come from Smallville which is exactly how it sounds, a small town, but I’ve been living in Metropolis for a little over a year. Sorry about the mask, there’s an older couple in the hospital, they’re kind of like my grandparents, I go visit them almost every day and I don’t want to risk getting them sick or contracting sickness from anyone else which I might pass onto them. You could say I’m a little paranoid about such things.” He said shrugging.

Well, At least he recognizes his weirdness Lois thought. Giving him a second look over Lois realized that she couldn’t tell exactly what Clark actually looked like. The mask covered the lower half of his face and those huge glasses covered the upper, shrinking whatever physical features that might be placed upon it. In that big jacket of his you really couldn’t tell where the man stopped and the jacket started. Same went for the pants. Exactly who was this Clark guy and was he really just a small town hick or was he hiding something? Judging by that sob story about his grandparents, he probably was just some small town hick.

From then on the meeting went on as normal and nothing was presented that Lois didn’t already know. Except that Robert’s dog had puppies but who really cares about that. Except Clark. Clark cared and the rest of the office just moved on and finished the meeting. As everyone was walking away, Chief pulled Lois and Clark aside.

“I want to see you both in my office in 5 minutes.” Chief said.

Great, he’s going to try assigning Clark to her story. Sorry Chief, this one is hers. Lois went to her desk and collected a few papers.

“You’re Lois Lane, it’s great to get to meet you,” said a deep jazzy voice from behind.

Lois turned and met Clark.

“I’ve been a real fan of your work. That article you published about the bullet thieves, phenomenal writing. How you found their hideout must have taken a lot of bravery.”

Lois brushed her hair back behind her shoulder, “It’s true this isn’t easy work but I’ve always seemed to have a knack for it. It’ll be nice to have someone in the office who can actually appreciate talent.”

Clark laughed. Ah, so he understood her mightier-than-thou sense of humor. Lois liked to act stuck up as a joke mostly, but way too often people took her seriously.

Lois smiled sincerely, “Welcome to the team.”

“He has conquered the black widow!” Chad whispered to Denis, as if Lois was something to be concurred. Could these men stop objectifying her for one second at least.

“We should go meet the Chief.” Clark said awkwardly.

Lois agreed and they entered Chief’s office, shutting the door behind them. Chief was standing against the wall when he placed a paper on his desk in front of Lois and Clark.

“Another note from the mad man. Now read this warning,” Chief said.

Clark stepped forward and began to read, “Beware- you fools! My Electrothanasia-Ray strikes tonight at 12. Total destruction will come to those who laughed at me and failed to heed my warnings. Beware– I strike at midnight!”

Chief had his hand resting thoughtfully on his chin, “This nut may prove dangerous. Kent you help Lois follow up her lead, she may have an angle on this thing that the police aren’t considering.”

“Chief, I’d like the chance to crack this story on my own,” Lois said. She didn’t want this new guy getting in her way or worse, trying to take the credit for himself.

Chief tapped his head, “I… Mm-Well alri-”

“Thanks Chief.” Lois was already out the door.

“But Lois–” Clark was heard calling after her. Seeing that she was already gone, Clark turned to Chief.

“Chief, don’t you think that’s a dangerous mission?”

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Lois slowed down the motor boat she was driving as she approached the island outpost of the university’s old observatory. It was her neighbor’s boat that they let her borrow. They didn’t have any qualms about her using it since they had seen her handle it before and knew that she was one of the finest sailors they’d ever seen. It’s a shame they never got to see her cuss like a sailor too.

She reached an old dock where she tied up the rig and began the trek up to the observatory. She hadn’t expected this abandoned place to be so completely cut off from civilization. Not a soul in sight and the cell service was spotty. The trees around were growing mold on them and the only animals were vultures and crows. It was kind of creepy. Maybe she should have let Clark come. Well it was too late now and Lois could handle herself in a fight, not to be underestimated. She had taken 3 years of self defense. Nonetheless, the hand that she had planted in her purse gripped her pepper spray a bit tighter as she approached the door to the observatory. She knocked.

Lois heard the noise of shoes on clanking metal as she waited, ready to pepper spray whatever creepy fool decided to show their face. She knocked again.

“Hello? I’m a reporter for the-”

The door opened as she was shot by a taser.

As she fell to the ground she reasoned to herself that she should have brought Clark. Hindsight 20/20. Then again, what would that scrawny man be able to do in this situation? He would have been captured right along with her. Maybe he could have acted as a decoy. Then at least she could have gotten away and called for help. By the time Lois regained feeling she was tied up to a chair by this very weird and uncomfortable professor man.

He was definitely the science professor from the university, Lois could tell by the balding head. Though the man in front of her had a much more crazed look in his eye than the man she had seen in the photos. Not to mention his unwashed lab coat, the man needed a shower badly. He was continually muttering to himself about revenge, respect, and human decency. Lois might have said something about the decency to bath regularly but her mouth was tied up and also she was afraid she was going to be murdered. It helped to pretend to make jokes.

Lois decided to take more of an interest in her surroundings than the man’s gibberish. She was tied up in the middle of a large room. In front of her the man was operating a giant machine that reminded her of an organ with giant pipes escalating into the ceiling. Directly in front of the man were monitors, dials and buttons that the man kept twitching and fiddling with.

Muttering muttering until around midnight the professor turned and directly approached Lois saying, “So you want a story? I’ll give you the greatest story of destruction the world has ever known.”

Then he turned up a dial and pressed a few buttons. On one of the monitors you could see the tower bridge, a famous landmark to get into Metropolis from the North side. Target locked. The man turned up the largest dial and a laser blast came bursting out of the observatory. Within seconds, the bridge was split in two, melted away by the laser. A few unlucky cars traveling the bridge fell into the ocean below.

The mad scientist laughed, “How is that for a story, Miss Lane?”

Lois tried not to wonder about the people driving those cars as she began wiggling her knots. They were tight and not budging. She kept wiggling them as if somehow they would magically loosen if she were to just try hard enough. She had to do something and this was all she could do. Someone had to do something and if she couldn’t, then who.

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A city wide alert was sent out.

“True to his threats, the mad scientist whose wanting to hold the city in a grip of terror went on his ranpage of destruction at the stroke of midnight. The deadly impact of his mysterious ray smashed the famous tower bridge hurling cars and pedestrians into the water below. The police have warned everyone to remain in their homes.”

Clark left the newsroom, “This looks like a job for Superman.”

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Lois watched as the mad scientist locked in his next target. The Daily Planet building. He aimed for the top.

“I’ll start from the top down.” He laughed. “And it’ll be gone in seconds.”

As he cranked up the power on his laser a bird got in the way. A bird? Not likely, the laser would have just burnt through the bird making fried chicken. Was it a plane? No it couldn’t have been that either. The scientist zoomed in his visuals on this impossible thing that was blocking his laserbeam. It… was a man. In red and blue spandex with a ridiculous S on his chest. Was **that** the famous Superman? He really needed a new fashion designer.

Superman began flying towards the source of the beam, pushing it back as he did, as if he were using his hand to cover a child’s water hose. The mad scientist growled and turned up the laser's power. Shots of electric bolts pulsed through the beam. Superman hadn’t been expecting those as they shot him backwards, pelting him again and again. They pinned him to the ground as the mad scientist laughed at watching this man die. Except he got back up. He faced the beam and when a lighting bolt pulsed he punched it.

… What… did Lois really just see that with her eyes correctly? But then he punched another bolt. The mad scientist increased the ray. Superman just punched another bolt. And another. And another. Who was this guy! How? What! It didn’t matter how many times the scientist increased his laser, Superman just kept punching the bolts. Then he flew towards the source of the laser, and then the tower, punching the pulsing bolts of lighting over and over again.

It took a lot to impress Lois but this? It was honestly incredible and she was leaning forward trying to understand what she was seeing. That’s when she fell over in her chair. She strained her neck but because she was tied up she couldn’t hardly see the screen. But in her new position on the floor she was able to get a better angle of the cannon that held the laser. Outside Superman had just tied the end of the cannon as if he was tying the end of a balloon full of air. The power from the cannon began to create a huge back surge. This was leading to an explosion. Would this Superman even know she was here?

She began trying to yell but there was no way anyone would be able to hear her over the sound of the erupting laser cannon. Unless they had super hearing which Superman probably did because immediately Superman was by her side, snapping her ropes like snapping thread. He picked her up and then went after the scientist who was fleeing the scene. As soon as he had both people in tow he flew off and the observatory exploded, rocking the earth for miles away.

With just one leap of his great strength, Superman brought the two back to Metropolis. He delivered the mad scientist to the feet of the police and they promptly put him in jail. Then Superman turned to Lois.

“And where would you like to be dropped off ma’am?” He said in a deep voice which sounded vaguely familiar but had too much of a nerdy throat accent to identify. Definitely not something she’d want to listen to all day.

“Are you Superman?” Lois asked. He smiled and nodded. He had a very sharp jaw, quite attractive. But not so distracting as to forget her job.

“How did you know I was there?” Lois asked, already guessing the answer was super hearing. She wanted to get him talking. Start with easy questions, then she’d build up to the “where are you from, why are you here?”

Lois could sense that he just wanted to drop her off somewhere and zip off. She grabbed his arm, which happened to be extremely muscular. “Please,” She said. She couldn’t let him fly off, the public needed more about him than just your “hero of justice” cliche. They needed to know who this man was and Lois was going to find out. Quickly, but politely, he took her hand off of his arm then let go. From there he just flew away.

“Wait–” Lois said but he was already gone, “I was getting too personal I guess.”

From the police station where Superman had left, Lois called for a cab and immediately went to the Daily Planet building where she began writing her article which was published the following morning.

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Lois sat back in her chair, tired from the all nighter she'd just pulled. The screen in front of her was pulled up to her article on the first page of the company website.

“Superman Captures Mad Scientist: Saves the Day then Vanishes, Public Mystified”

Saves the day. Had she really used that phrase? She must be too tired to think straight. But how else could she describe it? She certainly didn’t contribute any heroism. There wasn’t anything more she could have done. No one in her shoes, tied up as she was, could, unless they themselves had some unordinary abilities. In all truth, he'd saved her. But she wasn't ready to start touting that little nugget around the office.

Chief came strolling through the floor on his way to his office. He stopped by Lois’s desk and extended his hand. She took it and Chief gave her the coveted job-well-done handshake.

“Congratulations Lois. That was a great article!” Chief said. How many times had Lois unwillingly hoped of getting this kind of praise from Chief.

“Yes Chief, thanks to Superman.” Lois said sarcastically.

“Keep up the good work,” Chief said as he left the floor and entered his office.

Chad rolled his way over to Lois’s desk on his dumb rolly chair. "So Lois, front page again huh?"

"Well someone in this office needs to have something worth saying."

"Aaand you got to meet the superman too. Came in and saved the day didn't he."

He was baiting her and she knew it. "Yes, he did. And I was very grateful for it."

"I guess all men aren't dirt bags huh."

"Just because one man does the right thing one time doesn't speak much to the rest of his sex."

"Yah, but this wasn't just any man, he's a *supe*r man. The most manliest man of all men. Type A alpha male. He's the peak of what men aspire to be."

"Then they have a long way to go from what I can tell." Lois said scoffing. "I'd like to see you try and stop a laser beam with your bare fists."

"You really demand perfection, you know that." Chad said, pulling his chair away frustrated.

"Only the best for the best," Lois said, tossing her hair back.

A laugh entered the room as Clark joined the conversation.

"Good morning everyone. How are you doing, Lois? That must have been an extremely frightening encounter."

"Frightening for you maybe, I was too busy thinking about the story I needed to write."

Clark laughed again. It was such a cheery sound. Was he making fun of her or…?

"And Superman, what did you think of him? You got to meet him in person didn't you?" Clark asked. Everyone's ears perked at that question.

"Yes I met him," Lois said. She tapped thoughtfully. "He was… exactly what I would expect from a superman."

"Is that a good thing or a bad thing?" Clark asked.

"I don't know yet." Lois said. “I think this article says it best,” Lois pulled out the printed KMCP news magazine and opened to the article she had been reading the other day. She quoted, “‘a vigilante in blue and red gymnast spandex stopping criminals with inhuman strength… Can run faster than a bullet, jump over tall buildings and fly, often being mistaken for a bird or a plane.’”

“What is that you’re reading from?” Clark asked.

“Just some cheesy article from a competitor. Oh, is that your name on there?” Lois said.

Clark came over and looked at the article. “Oh,” he said, recognizing the piece, “I never got a chance to finish that one before I left so Marge took it over. It was supposed to be a piece on economics, but apparently she took it in an entirely different direction.”

“Is that so? Listen to this last part, ‘No one truly knows who this solitary man is.’” Lois turned to Clark, “Seems to me that he intends to keep it that way.”

Clark shrugged. “Pity.”

“Pity? I call that a mystery to be cracked. And I intend to be the one to crack it,” Lois said. She wanted competition but Clark wasn’t giving in.

Clark nodded, “I hope you do. And all the best of luck to you.”

“What, no interest?” Lois asked.

Clark shrugged, “Sounds like just another type A alpha male to me.”

Lois shrugged in response, “Who knows maybe he’s different.” Clark was definitely winning brownie points.

“Maybe, we’ll see.” Clark said smiling.

“I suppose we will,” Lois said.

*\*\*\*Author’s Note: When writing this story I was not sure if I would just write one chapter or go through a whole story arch with 5 parts. I planned for both. This is the reason each chapter, in essence, works as its own one shot story. Please feel free to leave reviews or to contact me about any questions or comments you may have. I had a lot of fun writing this story and I hope that people enjoy reading it. Try not to take it too seriously. It really is just a silly little tale that helped me to process some emotions in my own life. My greatest wish is for my audience to have fun with it, so please ENJOY!\*\*\**

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# **Files of Lois Lane:** *Billion Dollar Limited*

Based off of this episode of Superman: [https:// www . youtube . com /watch?v=WCE9mevDQgI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCE9mevDQgI)

Superman gently put the train down on the floor of the mountain ravine. That had been one of the closest calls he’d ever had in a long long time. When he was flying towards the train there had been plenty of time to get Lois to safety and stop the train before it came to the windy mountain passage. When he landed however, he had not expected there to be kryptonite on the train car.

Superman knew about kryptonite since it was one of the only things that followed him from his planet. He used to think it would drain him of all his strength until he would eventually die after being exposed for too long. After some experimentation however, Superman had learned it wasn’t true. All kryptonite did was weaken his powers and make him as normal as any human. One time Superman brought some kryptonite to the gym with him to see how much he could lift as just a normal man. He had lifted over 300 pounds. He had left feeling really good about himself but still wondered if there was someway he could lift even more.

Anyway, with kryptonite on the train, that meant that he was in as much danger as if he were a normal human. After checking a few of the packaged boxes he was able to find the case that housed a kryptonite gold necklace and chucked it off the train just in time to regain his powers, save Lois and stop the train. Now that the train was secured it was time to take Lois home. Superman flew up to the top of the mountain ravine where the train had initially started its fall.

He found Lois where he had set her down on the mountain track. She was shaking and pale. She didn’t look like she was doing very well.

Superman reached a hand to her, “Are you okay?”

Lois cleared her throat and folded her arms, hiding her hands, “Fine. I’m fine.”

“That’s not true, you don’t look fine.”

“You don’t get to tell me what I am and what I’m not.” Lois said. Sometimes Lois could be so mean. Well, she was probably just emotional from an extremely scary encounter, her reaction was justified.

“You're safe now. I’ll take you home and as soon as I take you home I’ll come back and deliver the train to its destination. You’ve got nothing to worry about, so for now, just focus on taking care of yourself.” Superman said.

“Excuse me?” Lois said incredulously, “There were men with guns pointed at me so I took their guns and shot at them. I can take care of myself. It's just… I could have been killed. I could have killed one of them. I just…” Lois stopped talking as if there was something too difficult to admit. Superman could guess that she was having a hard time with the possibility of almost having hurt someone, even if they were robbers.

“Where are they now?” Superman asked.

“I don’t know. Back a few miles.”

“I’ll get them to a hospital, don’t worry. I’ll take care of it.”

“You’ll take care of it. You’ll fix it. Of course you will, you’re Superman. You can do anything while I’m just some reporter who can’t do anything.”

Superman was very confused. Why was she angry? He had never said that. He never would say that. He said, “That’s not true. Given the situation you handled yourself amazingly. You took back the train from hijackers. That’s amazing.”

“Yes. I have an above average ability to handle situations. Thank you for noticing,” Lois rolled her eyes.

Superman had no idea why she was acting this way. This was more than some post-trauma emotion. “I don’t understand,” Superman said. “What are you talking about?”

“So what, I stopped the hijackers, it still wasn’t enough. It turned into a runaway train. I had no way of stopping it.” Lois said, “And I was saved yet again by a man in tights. It doesn’t matter what I do, I could never compare to that.”

“I’m sorry, I still don’t understand,” Superman said.

“I could never run faster than a bullet or stop a speeding train. I can’t fly and I’ll never have super strength,” Lois said.

“Well you don’t need to feel frustrated by it. Nobody can do what I do.”

“It’s more than just that!” Lois said, raising her voice, “There are so many men that think that they’re better than women. They prove it with their massive muscles, with their acts of heroism and bravery and what not. They brag about how many hundreds of pounds they can lift at the gym while I’m lucky if I can lift even one hundred! There are so many men, military, police, heck, even doctors, they go into extreme situations without batting an eye and here I am about ready to cry. I’m scared! I might have killed someone! I could have been killed! I’m not supposed to be scared like this. I’m not supposed to be feeling this way, feeling like… scared like… like a scared little girl. I’m better than that.”

It took a minute for Superman to digest what Lois had just said. Every little girl he had met was incredibly tough and Lois made it sound like being a little girl was a bad thing. That wasn’t true. Was she trying to say that it's bad that men and women are different? Because that wasn't true either.

“Men and women are not equal. We’re not the same, we don’t have the same body parts, we don’t have the same thought processes. Just because we physically and mentally are not the same does not make either less important. And we need each other. The world wouldn’t be complete without women and it wouldn’t be complete without men," Superman said, not realizing that to Lois, "not equal" meant, "you're not my equal" which was another way of saying "I'm better than you" which was the possible worst thing he could have said at that time. At this point Lois realized that no matter what she said, this man in front of her would not understand so it was useless to try and talk to him.

"Take me home. Take me home now Superman. Go, deliver the train, get the crooks to the hospital and take me home."

And then Superman did exactly what Lois had told him to.

Though when it came time to take her home she ended up wanting to go to the Daily Planet building to start on her article. After all that had happened and she still wanted to get work done, the woman was incredible. But she probably wouldn't have wanted to hear that from Superman. He decided to try coming back a little later as Clark to check on her. Not that she would appreciate it or need it of course, but just cause he wanted to.

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Lois stared at her screen, hands frozen above the keyboard. The words weren't coming. The words always came, why weren't they coming. She looked down to her hands and noticed they were shaking. Just like how they were shaking when she threw down the automatic rifle after shooting at the thief's car. She had done that, hadn't she. She had shot at another human being. They were wounded in the hospital, not seriously, they weren't going to die. At least, she hoped they weren't going to die.

She didn't have time for this. She had to write a follow up story to the largest shipment of gold ever exported from Metropolis. It was Clark who had dropped her off at the station as the shipment was being loaded, armed guards were everywhere. She was on board the train as it began its journey. They were traveling about 20 miles per hour when the hijackers mounted their attack. She'd jumped into action and fought the hijackers in the engine room. She'd managed to gain control of the weapons but unfortunately they had done something to the train and she wasn't able to slow it down, useless as she often seemed to be. Then she was on a runaway train. Some of their goons had tried chasing the train in a car but she had taken the rifle and blown out their car. Those were the men in the hospital now. She had been so calm then, that sort of unnatural calm when you know you should be panicking but instead you just do what needs done.

Well what she needed to get done now was words, she needed words. But where were they. What was wrong with her? She didn't need to dress up the story in any fancy way, the story would sell itself. What she needed was just to tell it. To write it. To put words down. But her hands wouldn’t stop shaking and the flashbacks of the car she had pelted with bullets kept crossing her mind. She had almost died.

She remembered how the train had come to a mountain pass with winding tracks, the recommended speed limit, 5 miles per hour. Judging by the train's increasing speed and the sharpness of the curbs it didn't take a genius to realize the train was going to derail off the side of the cliff. Lois planned to jump off and hope she wouldn't fall off the cliff herself or get run over by the narrowness of the track and the remaining train cars. But then she saw that blue and red of Superman's dumb spandex jumping onto her engine car. It didn't look so dumb at that point. First he had taken her out of the car just as it was falling off the cliff. As soon as Lois was on solid ground Superman rushed to the train and stopped it before it hit the ground. Then he set it down gently as if he were playing catch with toy blocks. The ordeal had ended. It was over but Lois was somehow still living it. Still living that moment when she was about to fall to her death.

She remembered she had had a conversation with Superman but she had been in such a shock that she didn't remember most of it. From what she did remember he had basically told her she was useless and that men can handle things that women can't. It had infuriated her, but now that she was sitting in the office, in a safe place, she couldn't help thinking that maybe he was right. Maybe that's why she was having such a hard time trying to process the events of the night. Because she just can't compare.

Someone entered the office.

“Lois?” Came Clark’s voice.

“Clark?” Came Lois’s reply. She had been in the office alone. Everyone else was either finishing their work from home or off hours.

"I heard about the train incident, how's the article coming? Almost finished?” Clark asked in his smooth way.

“Just starting it would be more accurate,” Lois said hopelessly.

"Really? That's not quite what I was expecting." Clark said.

"Me either, it's just…" Lois sighed, “I’m not sure what it is. I just can’t seem to get any words down. On the train, as the hijackers were racing towards us I took their guns and I shot at them Clark. I could have killed one of them…” Lois felt a lump rising in her throat. She could have murdered someone and it haunted her. "I'm just not good enough. Even after all I did, I was useless on that train. I'm not as strong as men who go into battle on a daily basis. They don't struggle with these same emotions like I do. I know I shouldn't be feeling this way but I am. I have to face it, I just can't compare."

Clark blinked a few times with understanding then took a deep breath, "Lois, I have a weakness and sometimes it makes me vulnerable to the point that I can't help people and I can barely even help myself. It's scary. You're not the only one who feels that way. You're not alone. Many people, men included, go to therapy for PTSD. Many don't and try to deal with it on their own. To some it turns them violent or depressed. You're not weak because you have a hard time dealing with traumatic situations. I think you're actually extremely strong for having faced it the way you did. And strong for continuing to facing it even now."

Lois was strong? She had done something anyone would have found hard to do. Yes, she had been brave. And of course it was a scary situation to have to deal with. She had done her best and she was enough.

She would have thanked Clark but she couldn't. She wasn't ready to admit that he was exactly what she needed at that time. Instead, she smiled softly and the tension in her body seemed to dissipate. Clark too seemed to release tension in his oversized coat and the room became more relaxed.

"Anxiety?" Lois asked.

"What?" Clark said.

"Is your weakness anxiety?" Lois asked again. She noticed how he always seemed to shy away and hide whenever disaster struck. Even talking about dangerous encounters like the ones she had had with Superman seemed to make him uncomfortable. Only after all the drama was over did he ever come out of hiding.

Clark looked unsure as if he didn't want to answer the question. It was so adorable how he'd try to hide his true feelings, "Um…"

"You don't have to answer, your secret's safe with me," Lois said.

Clark still looked unsure.

"But what're you doing here at the office this late?" Lois asked.

Clark shrugged, “I guess I just felt like I should come in. Reporter’s intuition?”

"Well it’s been good to talk with you but I can't chat any longer Clark, I've got an article to write," and immediately Lois turned to start typing. The words came fast and furious.

Clark stood up, “I’ll just head home. I'm hoping to catch some sleep before work starts.”

Lois nodded, not hearing anything. She'd be finished before the morning newsletters were sent.

…

Lois was packing up for the day to get home for some well-deserved rest. As she passed by Clark's desk on her way out she noticed he was reading the article she had finished.

Clark turned to her and said, “I hadn't realized it was Superman that had saved you and stopped the train. Uncanny how he turns up just when you need him.”

Lois thought about all that Superman had done for her, saving her life and everything. Maybe she had been a little quick to judge. She had been feeling very emotional when she had chewed him out, even if she was justified…

She stopped for a moment. “I didn’t take the chance to thank him," she realized out loud.

Clark said, "I bet he knows."

Lois looked out the window, "I doubt it. See you tomorrow Clark. I'm taking the day off. I need a mental health break."

Clark nodded in agreement. He would understand about needing mental health breaks, wouldn't he. Having to a deal with his anxiety and all. It comforted Lois to know that she wasn't alone.

#

# **Files of Lois Lane:** *The Arctic Giant*

Based off of this episode of Superman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNH3lLEQoY0>

She had met him at some big fancy party that she attended for an article she’d finished for the Daily Planet. He had been charming and suave and, for a bald man, he was quite attractive. Not that Lois was trying to knock bald men, her father had been bald and he always seemed very distraught about his loss of hair. That man did enough body shaming for the whole family. He really didn’t understand the difference men versus women put in their appearance. But this man in front of her seemed to put more effort than most men in keeping a clean, professional appearance.

 They were seated at Luminarias, one of the most prestigious restaurants in Metropolis. Right off the bat Lois could tell he was one of those billionaires that liked to flaunt their wealth. If the date went well, maybe Lois would let him take her shopping.

“So what’s the current story you’re working on?” he asked.

 Lois flipped her hair back and with a sass in her smile said, “I thought I might do some coverage on you; the newest bachelor billionaire in town.”

“Me? I’m afraid I’m not that interesting.”

“That’s what you’d like us to believe isn’t it. You and Mark Freichman started your company right out of highschool. About 3 years later it took off and Mark moved to Metropolis to hold down the home base while you handled all the foreign affairs. Spent some time in Gotham too, didn't you? City's full of crime.”

“You’ve done your research,” he said, smirking.

Lois sighed, “I’m sorry about Mark. He had a wife and kid didn’t he?”

“He did. Since taking over the company I make sure that they’re taken care of. It’s all I can do for Mark now that he’s gone.”

“Were you two close?” Lois asked.

“We were when we were younger but as we grew up we started to differ in our ideas and priorities. Since coming back to the main office here in Metropolis, I’m finally starting to see exactly what he was trying to do but I’m afraid I’m learning all these things too late. Mark was a good man and I never really took the time to appreciate him.”

Lois didn’t really buy that story. Family man CEO killed in a car accident and then his mysterious business partner steps in to take over the entire company (and its profits.) Lois had a hunch foul play might have occured but she didn’t have enough dirt to really uncover anything. And it was possible that this was one of those rare cases where she was wrong.

“How long have you two known each other?"

"Since we were young. We grew up in the same orphanage."

“I didn’t know you were an orphan,” Lois said.

“I’m allowed to have some secrets aren’t I?”

Lois felt a pang of guilt. She knew she had a tendency to get nosy into people’s pasts. It’s one of the reasons why she was such a great reporter. But as a reporter no sob story was allowed to shake her. She couldn’t allow emotions to rule her life. She always had to look for the next best thing.

“You know, if you want,” Lois said nonchalantly, “I *could* write a piece on you. The humble story of Alexander Joseph Luther. It would give your company some great publicity. What do you think Alex?”

“Call me Lex please. And, perhaps I wouldn’t mind a formal introduction into Metropolis limelight. Especially if it meant we could have some more one-on-one interviews. But I didn’t ask you here for a business opportunity, I wanted to get to know Lois Lane the old fashion way.”

“And how’s that?” Lois asked.

“A method older than time really; interrogation,” Lex shrugged and Lois laughed.

“Shoot away, what’s your first question?”

Lex thought for a second then said, “Tell me about yourself. Who is Lois Lane?”

“For one she’s among the most attractive women around and you should feel honored to be in her presence.”

Lex laughed and Lois dropped the facade.

“Well, in all truth I’m just a city girl who's absolutely dedicated to her job. It can be a real obsession sometimes but I love it.”

“When did that start? And, have you always lived in the city?”

“Born and raised; Metropolis has always been home. And I’ve always wanted to be a reporter. I remember, I think I was around 4 or so, my mother, she was watching the news. She was always reading and watching the news, keeping up to date on the latest happenings. Anyway, I was sitting in front of the TV and this woman came on and I was just mesmerized. She had just this way about her. I don’t even remember what she was talking about but I remember my mom saying, ‘now there’s a reporter who speaks the truth.’ That was it. From that moment on I wanted to be a reporter.”

“Then are you on the news broadcasts as well?”

“No, those people just sit and relate what they’re told to say mostly. I’ll occasionally hop on an interview or a discussion but I don’t overly enjoy idle chatter when the happenings are out in the streets among the people. Sitting by doing nothing drives me crazy.” Lois was enjoying herself. Lex was easy to talk to and a good listener. This was kind of how she imagined a date with Clark would go, if she were to ever want to go on a date with that nerd.

“And what do you do for fun?” Lex asked. Lois wanted to get a question of her own in but Lex was too fast with his barrage of questions.

“I read a lot. You could say that I read about as much as I write. And you?” Lois said.

“Me? I happen to read a lot too.”
 “Like what?” Lois asked, glad that the tables had turned.

“I read a lot of scientific journals,” Lex said. “I love having new ideas presented to me with applications and discovery. It’s how the human race evolves.”

“Really? I happened to read an article recently that gave me some thought. Apparently studies show that the amygdala, a part of the brain that helps to produce violence, is larger in men than it is in women. The speaker was using this research to argue that women are superior to men, relating that committing violent and atrocious acts are characteristic of the male species. They concluded that maleness is a ‘birth defect.’”

“Oh? I happened to read a contrary article suggesting that gender between male and female is fluid and merely a social construct that we accentuate at birth and throughout a child’s life. The author said, and I quote, ‘most of us remain strapped in the “biosocial straitjackets” that divert a basically unisex brain down one culturally gendered pathway,” Lex said.

Lois couldn’t help but be impressed by his knowledge, “Did you memorize that?”

Lex held up his hands defensively, “It struck a chord with me. I can’t say I agree with everything I read but I do find truth in many concepts.”

Lois shrugged, “I’d say that’s one of the hardest parts about doing research. Finding out what is true. People say things, but they don’t always believe it or realize how untrue what they’ve said is.”

Lex nodded in agreement, “Would you send me a link to that article you mentioned. I’d love to read it myself. I feel that I must look at both sides in order to really get a full understanding of something,” Lex said.

Lois couldn’t agree more and made a note to send Lex the article. The rest of the date went on splendidly. They talked about his business and her work. She told him about the most recent story she was working on, a piece about the recent rise of a new crime circle. He asked her if she knew anything about the new exhibit at the museum. It hadn’t been the first time she’d heard about it. Chief had mentioned they had a new exhibit going up and he’d debated on sending in a reporter to check it out. Now Lois wondered if it was actually something worth investigating. After their meal Lois and Lex went shopping for a bit where Lex bought her a new bag, top of the fashion industry. Then Lex took Lois home and they parted ways, hopeful to see eachother again soon.

…

The following morning, as Lois waited in line for her morning coffee she began reading some news from the Museum website off her phone. Having her interest peaked by Lex the previous day Lois decided to scope out the intel to see if it was a story she’d be interested in taking.

The museum website said, “Penetrating deep into the frozen waste of the great arctic plains, an archaeological expedition searching for prehistoric fossils made an amazing discovery! A huge monster, as lifelike in appearance as when it roamed the Earth millions of years ago in the Mesozoic age, was found Frozen in the ice in a state of perfect preservation. Constantly handicapped by the hazardous Sub-Zero elements, the scientists and their band of tireless workers succeeded in removing the monster creature from the frozen pit. The ice-in-cased monster was loaded into the hull of a huge crater equipped with special refrigeration and brought to Metropolis. Here in a specially constructed wing of the museum of natural science, this awe-inspiring creature will be displayed to the public for the first time!”

While Lois thought the blurb was a bit wordy, the concept seemed interesting enough. She’d talk to Chief about it.

At the office Lois passed by Cynthia’s desk which had a few listings for apartments. So she was planning on moving soon. Lois had a few places she could recommend to her. Chad’s desk was empty which was no surprise this early however Lois doubted he’d come to the office at all since today was the big game. Likely he’d be at the stadium doing special interviews before covering the big event. Clark was in office and he was staring intently at his screen. Deep in thought. Deep in analysis. Probably looking over stock numbers or economic trends. Lois noticed he had something on his shoulder…

“Clark, there’s a spider on your shoulder,” Lois said.

Clark was so completely entranced in his work that he hardly heard her.

“Mmm.” Clark said as a reply.

“Clark,” Lois said.

Clark peeled his eyes off of his screen to look at Lois.

“Your shoulder,” Lois said pointing to his right shoulder.

Clark looked down and then spazzed out completely. His arms flailed at the spider in such alarm that it knocked his seat off balance and he fell down completely on the floor. Lois burst out laughing. It was such an unexpected response to such a tiny spider. Clark sat for a moment on the floor trying to process what had just happened. He’d been so completely in the zone and now he was on the ground. He picked himself up and noticed Lois laughing. It was kind of funny. Lois’s laughter was contagious and Clark started laughing too.

When Lois had calmed down enough she asked, still chuckling, “I didn’t know you were that afraid of spiders!”

“Neither did I,” Clark said laughing.

Just at that moment Chief came in and both Lois and Clark stifled their laughs as much as possible. Chief gave them a very stern look which made them both want to start laughing even more. Clark cleared his throat and began busying himself with the pencils on his desk as a distraction, which just seemed all the more funny to Lois.

“Lois, come take a look at this for just a second.”

“Yes Chief.”

The Chief started into his office and Lois breathed enough to calm down.

“No you want the door closed Chief?” Lois asked.

“No, it’s fine,” Chief swirled his screen around to show Lois an email train, “This was between myself and the Head Science Professor who was on the archeological team, you know, from that arctic dig or whatnot. Professor Jack… Jack… “

“Jack Sulivan, yes I’m familiar.”

“Of course you are. Here, just take a look:”

Lois read but there was a lot of science jargon that Lois would have to decipher to understand. Skimming through, her eyes caught on the last few lines:

Chief: And you mean to say that if the ice were permitted to thaw there's a possibility the monster might still be alive!

Professor: That’s exactly right.

Chief: Thank you Professor.

“It might still be alive!” Lois said.

“Exactly. Here’s a new angle on that frozen monster story. Get over to the museum and see what they’re doing about what they've got in their special refrigerator.”

Lois nodded then started out of the office.

Clark stood up as she passed and said, “Lois, want me to go over there with you?”

Lois couldn’t help thinking about the spider incident and smiled, “No thanks, you’d probably faint if you saw the monster. You scare so easy.”

Then she was off.

…

 Lois got there early and was met by one of the museum heads. She had called on her way over so that she could get a quick private tour before the museum opened for the rest of the crowds. Together they went inside. Lois asked all kinds of questions about the expedition and the arctic monster they brought back. The creature was a Tyrannosaurus from the habitat of Siberia. They guessed the age was around 2,400 BC and was donated by Alfred R. Let, the man in charge of the expedition. Finally they were brought before the doors leading into the room that held the creature.

 “It’s cold in here,” the tour guide said, “So prepare yourself. We have to keep the temperatures below freezing.”

 Lois nodded and they went in. Lois made two big observations. First was the temperature. It was not below freezing and in fact, it was actually quite hot. Second, the monster encased in ice was dethawing. It was at least seven stories high. Bright green. Its eyes were bulging and blood shot. Its claws were extending and extracting, as if the creature were testing out its mobility. With each second passing, water dripped from the ice freeing the monster from its entrapment.

 The tour guide clicked his radio, “What do you mean the monitors read temperatures normal!?! It’s a sauna in here!” The monster was beginning to move its feet as loud cracking signaled the breaking of ice. “It’s alive! Call the police, we’re in trouble.” Then the tour guide turned to Lois, “Please use the nearest exit Lois and step lively. We have to clear this room at once.”

 Lois started towards the exit but quickly backtracked as soon as the tour guide was out of sight, “That’s what he thinks.” Lois said to herself as she hid behind a pillar. There was no way she was about to miss even a detail of this story. She quickly started texting Chief, letting him know what was going on.

 Then the monster broke free. It began by barging its way through the wall in front of it. In all the chaos it knocked over the pillar Lois was standing by, trapping her under debris and rubble. Then the monster escaped and began to go on a rampage around the city.

…

Chief pulled out his phone and read the message Lois had texted him to the team: “ARCTIC MONSTER RUNS AMUCK IN CITY”. She apparently didn’t realize she had the caps on when she was typing the message. Or if she did she was in such a rush to type that she couldn’t hit the caps button. Either way, it was bad form the Chief thought.

 Clark pushed past his desk, obviously worried, “Lois is in the museum!”

 Chief answered, “Better get over there Kent.”

 “Right.” Clark said.

 “The rest of you, either get to safety or get somewhere you can film this thing. Your choice but I want footage.”

…

 After realizing this was a job for Superman, it was Superman, not Clark, that was flying through the air on his way to rescue Lois. From the air he saw that the museum was in shambles, having an entire wall utterly destroyed. Please let Lois be okay. Superman may be indestructible, but the people he cared about were not. In seconds he had landed.

 “Lois!?” Superman called out.

 He heard a “Superman?!” from below a pillar of debris and rubble. In moments Superman had the area cleared, moving debris away as if he were picking up laundry from the floor.

 “You better get back to your office where you’ll be safe. I’ve got some work to do,” Superman said.

 “Yes sir,” Lois said then Superman flew off. Lois brushed herself off, “And miss the best story in years? Fat chance.”

…

The monster continued making its way through the city leaving behind a trail of destruction. It walked through a dam, which Superman plugged with a giant rock. It walked through a bridge which superman saved and quickly tied together with hanging bridge cables. No missiles or bullets could stop it. It came to a large building and was clawing at the cement.

Towards the top of the building Clark could see a person with a camera filming… was that Lois!?! You’ve got to be kidding me, Superman thought. For a woman as smart as she was, she really needed to stop doing dumb things. The monster was face to face with Lois and her camera. Angered, he took a bite at the building where Lois was currently standing. Screaming, Lois fell into the monster’s mouth. Superman flew up, pried open its jaw and grabbed Lois. Then he flew out and took her somewhere safe.

“Now this time, stay put!” Superman said fairly annoyed.

“Yes and thanks,” Lois said.

Then Superman wrestled the monster and bent over lamp posts to tie it down. Finally the monster was subdued. The crowds cheered and Superman just waved. He saw Lois at the spot where he had put her. She was looking on curiously. So, Superman thought he’d be funny and blew her a kiss. She rolled her eyes. Laughing, Superman flew off.

Lois was undoubtedly one of Superman’s favorite people. As much as she gave him trouble, when it came to uncharted territory, Lois was always the first to jump in. Though sometimes that enthusiasm didn’t quite catch up with rationality. She always seemed to feel like she needed to prove herself. He kind of wished she would just calm down and let him protect her. That wasn’t her way though. She wasn’t about the type of person to get pushed around by anybody and that was something he admired. Something he felt like he lacked.

…

Lois was currently working on her story and just finishing up details about the resolution. Superman had saved the city from destruction and the monster was currently being displayed to the public at the park zoo. She had a date with Lex later to go and see it.

“You showed plenty of courage getting that monster story Lois,” Clark said.

“Thanks, but where were you?” Lois asked.

“Me? Oh, I must have fainted,” Clark joked and Lois smiled, “Are you planning on going to see the monster at the zoo anytime soon?” Clark asked.

Lois said, “Yes, tonight actually. I’m going there on a date.”

“A date?” Clark said surprised, “With who, since when?”

“Just one of the newest CEOs in town, Alexander Luther."

"...Lex?" Clark said, "Lex Luther?"

"You know him?" Lois said. Clark must know him personally if he knew Lex's nickname.

"It's been a long time since I've heard that name," Clark said, "I wouldn't say he knows me though but I know of him."

"And what kind of a reputation would you give him, Clark?" Lois asked.

"I can't say it's favorable from past experiences. It's been years though."

“So you knew him from when you were younger?” Lois asked.

Clark said, “You could say that…”

“What’s with these cryptic answers, Clark? Do you know him or not?” Lois asked.

Clark signed, “This much is true. Clark Kent has never met Lex Luther and Lex Luther has never met Clark Kent.”

“Maybe that’ll change. I feel like you two would really get along,” Lois said.

Clark wasn’t so sure.

…

Later that same evening Clark sat in his apartment wishing that he had been the one to ask Lois on a date. He could probably use super hearing to eavesdrop on their conversations. Or maybe he could “accidentally” free the monster from its enclosure and ruin their date. Unfortunately Clark wasn’t that petty. But Lex would have been that petty.

Did Clark know Lex? Yes he knew him. They grew up together in the same orphanage just outside of Smallville. Lex was a grade older than Clark and his childhood "friend" who ended up turning his back on him freshman year. It took a long time for Clark to realize how manipulative their relationship was. But that was years ago and maybe Lex had changed.

Back then Clark didn’t use the name Clark. He didn’t even have a name. It wasn’t until he graduated from Highschool that Clark got a name. As a depressed and lonely high schooler Clark had met an elderly couple, the Kents, who became his mentors. They were among the only people who had ever truly been nice to him and their example completely changed the way Clark lived and viewed the world. They became like his adopted grandparents.

Clark still remembered working in Martha’s giant garden with her husband Jonathan Kent.

“That plant is as much alive as you or I,” Martha had said, arguing with Jonathan.

“Alive or not, it’s food. And food is food whether I throw it in the basket or gently place it down like a little baby. It’s all going to the same place, Martha. How I treat it doesn’t matter.”

“You won’t be saying the same thing when you're eating apple pies that taste like a bitter worm.”

“Martha, you couldn’t make a worm tasting apple pie if you tried,” Jon would say and it was true. Martha’s cooking was out of this world. Then Martha would huff away saying something about something she’d need to clean. She always brought a smile to Clark’s day.

“Hey Billy, are you almost done over there?” Jon would ask. Billy was what Jon called him at the current time. Clark had gone through cycles since he didn’t have a name. He’d gone by Billy, Kaleb, Eliot, Sue even. And whatever name he called himself, Jon was always on the same trend. If he went by Freddy today and Sam tomorrow, then Jon called him Freddy today and Sam the next.

“Tell me about your day,” Jon would say as they worked and Clark would tell Jon everything. Then Clark would listen as Jon would share his stories and life lessons.

Finally, some time after graduation as they were sitting around eating one of Martha’s pies Clark was fidgeting more than usual.

“Got something on your mind?” Jon asked.

Clark nodded, “I… I’m thinking about changing my name. Not just a nickname this time but get it done right and legally. Have it be my identity.”

“That sounds official.” Jon said.

“Have you picked a name?” Martha asked.

“Clark.”

Jon and Martha shared a smiling look.

“A fine name. That was my grandfather’s name.” Jon said.

“I’d like your permission first. I’d… I’d like my name to be Clark Kent.”

Martha took Jon’s hands as tears came to Jon’s eyes.

Jon cleared his throat and said in a wavering voice, “Sounds fine. Sounds fine.”

“Thank you,” Clark said and from that moment on, he became Clark Kent. After that he went to a community college where he found his love for journalism. He got a job working for the Smallville paper. Then he moved onto other jobs till he finally landed his first big job with the KMCP in Metropolis. As he worked with them for a year or so Martha and Jonathan back in smallville were struggling with some severe illnesses.

 Clark suggested they move to Metropolis where he knew of a great hospital nursing program for the elderly and Clark was willing to help pay for them to live there. Because of their health situations, they consented and Clark went to visit them regularly. More so now since Martha was in an especially bad condition.

With all that had passed, Clark had never expected to cross paths with Lex Luther again nor had he ever wanted to. He couldn't say he was looking forward to any type of reunion.

#

# **Files of Lois Lane:** *Showdown*

Based off of this episode of Superman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QW1JQhLfyqc>

Lois was on a date with Lex, simply stated. Was she enjoying herself? Yes, yes she was. She absolutely loved how he just had this ability to respect her. He wasn’t threatened by her and he was always careful to take her opinions into consideration. He was able to carry on interesting conversations without being dominating or overbearing. It was so rare to find such a new age man who respected her desire for her own career.

They were currently walking around the park zoo and finally made their way to the arctic beast they had on display. They had the creature locked up in chains. Lois thought that she might have felt pity for it if she hadn’t once been dangling in its jaws.

“So what really happened?” Lex asked, “You were there when the monster broke out, did you suspect any foul play?”

“Perhaps,” Lois said, shaking her head, “But I haven’t found any evidence. From my research I learned that there were some faulty instruments that gave the wrong readings. The man in charge of the refrigeration wasn’t doing his job right. After the incident he tried to save his job by blaming it all on his team. The museum just ended up firing the whole department.”

“I can’t say I would have done differently,” Lex said and Lois nodded. “And you got to meet the man of steel himself. Seems like you’ve had a couple encounters from what I’ve read.”

Lois couldn’t help but smile thinking about Superman. “He’s not quite what I expected him to be.”

Lex waited for Lois to continue.

“Naturally I thought he’d be some overstated wannabe. Whenever I’ve met him though, he just seems to want to do the right thing.”

Lex leaned on the bars that border the monster’s enclosure. “The right thing…” he said melancholy. Then he turned to Lois, “There was a boy in the orphanage when I was growing up. He was a year younger than me and we were friends. I was always trying to look out for him but he was… an unusual kid.”

“Oh? How so?” Lois asked intrigued.

“He had abilities… he was a lot stronger than the other kids, unnaturally strong. He never got hurt either, never a scratch or a bruise. There were times when he’d jump and it almost seemed like he could float. His abilities scared the other kids so I had to do what I could to keep him from hurting anyone. I had to help him know how to do the right things you could say.”

“What was the boy’s name?” Lois asked. Could this story be true? She’d have to do some digging.

“He didn’t have one,” Lex said, “No name, no identity, and no one knew where he came from. He was like an alien child. At the orphanage we all called him ‘Boy’. Oh, he tried to give himself a name but it never stuck and no one would use it. No one was allowed to give him a name by the orphanage director. We called him Boy and that was it.”

Lois took a look at the chained monster again. “That sounds very sad.” To be seen as a monster and asked to stay that way so they could justify cruel treatment.

Then she voiced the obvious implication, “Do you think that boy is Superman?”

“I’ve wondered that,” Lex said, “But the idea makes me uneasy. Boy was always such an obedient kid and would do exactly what anyone asked him to. He tried so hard to be unobtrusive and to never burden anyone. Yet here is Superman, taking initiative and jumping right into the center of action. Boy was never like that.”

“He’s fighting back his oppressed past. He needs to,” Lois shrugged. “I mean, look at all the good that Superman has done.”

“I worry about a man with so much power. It’s all fair and good if he always does the right thing, but if he makes a mistake, if he takes the wrong side even once. A man like that isn’t allowed to have a margin of error. Not with abilities like those.”

“That is an interesting take,” Lois said. He had met Superman personally and she knew that while he was super, he was still a person, “It’s true that he might be wrong sometimes but that doesn’t mean that he still can’t think and feel. He’s just trying to do what he knows to be right. And he’s done a pretty good job so far.”

“If he’s so set on doing the right thing then why does he only limit his efforts to Metropolis? There is crime and catastrophes and war all over the world yet he stays here, hidden away. In Krimaria, there are refugees who struggle everyday wondering if this is the day the bombs will breach their bomb shelters.” Lex put his face in his hands and took a deep breath. Then he looked up and met eyes with Lois. "I'm sorry. The people of Krimaria, they just mean a lot to me. Sometimes I get carried away wishing that more could be done than what I'm able to do. And I'm sure many other people feel like that."

Lois put her hand on Lex’s forewarn. “Tell me about it,” she said.

Lex smiled sadly, “I went to Krimaria for business and immediately fell in love with it. I was befriended on all sides and loved to participate in the culture. They could see potential in me that I wasn’t able to see in myself and they invited me to contribute to their community. I’ve visited Krimaria frequently ever since but within the last few years a war has started between Krimaria and its neighboring country Tixta. Much of Krimaria has become ravaged and war torn. I try to send money, supplies, help anyway I can, as much as I can, but I know it's not enough.”

Lois had heard mention of wars in foreign countries but she didn’t know much. All her research and efforts went to finding out everything she could in regards to Metropolis and its inner workings. If one of the top players even sneezed, she’d likely hear about it, but if some city half way around the world was bombed, it would pass right by her and she’d hardly catch a glimps. She realized now that there may be a lot of things that she missed by directing all her attention the way she did.

At this moment, seeing Lex in such pain on behalf of his Krimarian friends, Lois just wanted to comfort him. “Doing something will always make an impact even if we don’t think it will. Even if the impact is small. In all reality, it’s the small things that make big things happen. Don’t give up hope Lex.”

“Thank you Lois,” Lex said and he meant it.

For the rest of the evening they talked about the people in their lives that have helped inspire them and about good books they both enjoyed. All in all, it was a lovely evening for both.

Before Lois finally went into her apartment at the end of the night she stopped and turned to Lex. She said, “I forgot to ask, but where did you say that orphanage where you grew up was?”

Lex said, “Oh, it’s outside a town called Smallville. Truly in the middle of nowhere. It’s the ‘Home for Boys’ about a mile off the main road.”

“… Really?” Lois said remembering that Clark said he was from Smallville, “Did you ever know a Clark Kent?”

Lex said, “Kent? I believe there were some Kents in that area but I don’t remember their names. Someone you know?”

“Clark’s a coworker, I was just thinking he might have some relatives in that area,” Lois said.

Lex shrugged, “Possible. It’s been years since I’ve been back to the area though.”

Then they parted ways and Lois immediately went to research.

She looked up everything she could about the Home for Boys.

…

Her research took up the following week while finding out very little. She had gone to the extremes. Looked into every document submitted by the Home for Boys, looked into every picture taken of the group. She’s called the place multiple times and was waiting for them to call back. So far, all she had found was very shaky info.

She had confirmed that it was true Lex had grown up there with Mark and a few others. There were many unusual incident reports about things involving Lex and some other boys but that was just it. Boy this and boy that. Which boys were involved? The convoluted documents were purposefully toyed with. Lois suspected that there was a reason they never gave Boy a name, and it was to make these documents as vague as possible and cover up proof that he had ever existed.

Lois printed out the only picture of the group of boys where in was a nameless dark haired boy. Lois had found out and could name every kid in that picture except that one, the one on the end, standing submissively behind who she knew to be Lex. She wanted to believe it was Boy, so unless some neighborhood boy from 2 miles away was visiting, it had to be him and this was the only proof she had found that he existed.

Lois had searched for birth records, school records, anything. She found out that many of the boys had been homeschooled, Lex and a few others had been exceptions. It was the perfect place to hide a child away from the world, especially one who might have been overly gifted. Either hide, or protect, Lois wasn’t certain. She had found a few records about visits of government officials scoping out certain incidents. They were the kind of officials who would take a kid and grow them to become a government weapon. One of the incidents which was particularly interesting involved a boy getting hit by a train then falling off the bridge into the water beheath. Which boy was it that got hit? She didn’t know. No body was found and all of the named boys at the home were accounted for. If any boy had gotten hit like the train conductor claimed, it would have Boy, the one Lex talked about. However, the documents had been too well disguised.

Finally, when she got a call returned from the Home for Boys she found out that management had been changed for a few years now. New management knew nothing about the boy and the old orphanage director had moved out of state with no forwarding address. Lois wanted to chase that lead but the director’s name had been John Smith which was the worst possible name to try and track someone down. She was at a point where if she wanted more information, she would have to go to Smallville itself. She went to bed that night frustrated and discouraged.

…

The morning later Lois had several tabs open on her computer. She was frantically searching through the headlines of local news stations trying to understand what she was seeing.

The Bulletin, a competing news station’s top headliner, read, “Superman Commits Series of Crimes”

The Morning star read, “Dragnet Spread For Superman”

Even the Daily Planet had a headline that said, “Friend Turns Foe.” A headline she did not write, mind you.

 Of course she had heard of the incidents but had chalked them up to some punk kids pulling pranks. This seemed a few tiers up than just punk kids. According to these articles, Superman had turned bad and was stealing jewelry and robbing banks.

 Clark was sitting at his desk and he immediately turned to face her as soon as Lois showed that her attention was directed towards him. He looked tired, as if he hadn’t had much sleep the last few days, probably busy worrying about that old couple he tends to. Lois had overheard him talking to their coworkers about how the old woman was going into surgery soon.

“Have you seen this?” Lois said gesturing to the screen in front of her, “Friend turns foe. Well that’s ridiculous. It couldn’t be superman. What do you make of it Clark?”

Just then Louis Murphy stood up and commented, “Are yous talk’in ‘bout me article? Yalls see it, Louis Murphy top headliner. That’s me name on that article.”

Louis Murphy was his own type of breed. He was short, skinny and had a big forehead with buck teeth. Everyone at the office called him Murph behind his back. The truth was that nobody around the office liked him, probably for his inconsiderate way of barging into conversations. Not only that but he seemed to think the world was completely shaped to his own understanding, which was lacking in almost every area. He was a good enough reporter, Lois would give him that, but he talked and acted like he was dumb and not on purpose.

“Ain’t yous so impressed wit me work, Lois? Me writing makes me attractive qualities speak for themselves.”

Oh, and he was a flirt. An extremely aggressive, awkward, uncomfortable flirt.

Lois avoided his eye contact so as not to give away her utter disgust, “You say here Superman came out of the bank he just robbed, got in a car and drove away.”

“Oh he did. I seen it myself. I was cross the street at the time when I sees his red cape and costume. It was Superman alright, I knows it.” All ears were pitched on Murph and he was eating up the attention. It wasn’t very often he got noticed so largely.

“So he got in a car and drove away,” Lois reviewed, “Superman can fly, so if it was Superman then why didn’t he just fly away?”

“Maybe he has accomplishes. Not a solo job. He could be workin for someone’s. Blackmail even. I’ll be diggin it up reals soon, don’t you worries.” Murph said, proud of the work he had yet to accomplish.

Lois rolled her eyes, “I think you’re forgetting what Superman is capable of. He single handedly stopped a laser beam from destroying Metropolis. Bullets don’t affect him. He wouldn’t need accomplices.”

Then Chad joined the conversation, “Are you just mad that Louis Murphy got to the story before you?”

Lois raised an eyebrow. Then she said, “Not at all. It’s great that Louis Murphy was able to get the story. I do wonder however about how complete the story is. There’s a lot of unanswered questions and we don’t know if this thief really is Superman.”

Then Clark finally joined the conversation and said, “Lois is right, until the thief has been apprehended, whoever the thief may be, we really don’t know anything.”

Murph sighed, “A beauty as bright as she’s clever. Don’t yous worry ‘bout it miss Lane. I’ll be sure to dos a follow up with the missing details surely.”

And with that, Murph went into the Chief office and shut the door. Lois tried to shake off the unwarranted affection directed towards her. She had won the conversation but as much as she hated to admit it, Murph had made a fair point. If it was Superman, blackmail was likely the answer. If anyone found out about Superman’s personal life they could use it against him. With her powers of reporting, Lois could easily twist any story to say what she wanted and help protect Superman. However, she had to be careful because the more she knew the more valuable she would become to Superman’s enemies. Would that stop her though? Not in the slightest, bring on the challenge, Lois was here for it.

A little while later Murph came out of the office and set two papers on Lois and Clark’s desk. He said, “Hey you two, the editor wants you to cover the opera tonight. And don’t forget. It’s formal.” Then he went downstairs to flirt with the secretary. She at least thought Murph was funny.

Lois looked at the papers on her desk, “Oh good,” she said, “I’ll be able to wear my new evening gown.” Then she turned to Clark as if she just remembered something, “Oh, Clark?”

“Yes?”

“I found out that Lex grew up in an orphanage just outside of Smallville. It’s such a small town, how did you two not run into each other?” Lois asked.

Clark opened his mouth. Then he closed his mouth. Then he walked away.

“Wait, Clark? Wait. Are you walking away?” Lois asked.

Truthfully, Clark had no idea how to answer that question and he didn’t want to lie to Lois, so instead he just decided to not engage in the situation. He decided now was the perfect time to go do those boring accounting interviews he had been putting off for weeks.

“You’re doing this to avoid my question Clark,” Lois said.

“Yes I am,” Clark said as he picked up his stuff, “Tell Chief I’m going to get some interviews. See you tonight Lois.”

See you tonight is right. Lois suddenly had a great idea to get the answers she wanted and get back at Clark.

…

Clark looked very stiff in his tux. It was unusual to see him in anything other than his unremarkable oversized coat jacket. While his coat always looked too big for him, this tux looked too small. Lois had to wonder if the reason for that was buffness or just general largeness. This new outfit made him look fit, which was not something Lois had quite considered. Now that she was thinking about it, Clark was from a small town making him a farm boy. It would actually make sense for him to be well defined if he was working on a farm all growing up.

“I hope you don’t mind,” Lois remembered, “I invited Lex to come join us in the balcony box.”

Clark about tripped over himself walking into their booth at the opera. “You what?!”

“Of course I don’t know if he was able to get a ticket, Opening night has been sold out for weeks, but he seemed hopeful they’d make an exception for his case.”

“Lois!” Lex said, standing up from his seat. Apparently, Lex was able to get a ticket and arrive before either of them got there. Lex said, “This must be that work companion. He’s different from how you’ve described him.”

Lois nugged Clark, “He cleans up nicer than I would have thought.”

Clark, who looked like a deer caught in headlights, tried to do a smirky laugh but it was obvious how uncomfortable he was.

“Come in, the show’s about to start,” Lex said, walking over to them. He held out his hand for Clark to shake.

“I, actually, I need to go,” Clark said.

“Clark, that’s nonsense. This is a work assignment,” Lois said. She was enjoying herself watching Clark squirm. It wouldn’t take long before she would figure out why Clark hated Lex, if he didn’t run out again.

For a moment Clark and Lex’s eyes met. Clark looked as if he were challenging Lex, then Lex burst into a smile.

“Is there something in my teeth?” Lex asked.

Clark suddenly smiled as well, “Not at all.” Then he extended his hand and Lex shook. Lex had not recognized Clark.

“It’s nice to meet you, I’m Clark Kent.”

“I’m Lex Luther. Short for Alexander but I go by Lex.”

Lois wasn’t sure who had won the staring contest. Not only that but she was disappointed that it was apparently true they didn’t know each other. But she had to be sure.

“So you two don’t know each other?”

Lex looked surprised then said, “Not that I have a recollection of. I apologize if we have met. You do not look familiar to me but I do meet lots of people.” Clark’s face with his big glasses was so unassumingly plain that Lex wasn’t sure if he had or had not met the man.

Clark patted Lex on the back good naturedly, “No, we haven’t met. Lois seems to think we’d be good friends though.”

Lex said, “I hope that’s true.”

“Me too.” Clark said and the group sat down in their seats.

…

Lois sat on the end with Lex in the middle and Clark on the other side. While it wouldn’t be the scoop of the century, Lois loved the opera and she was glad to be covering it that night. The singing was beautiful and the costumes magnificent. Lois looked over and saw that Clark was fast asleep. He probably would have preferred a monster truck rally or some boxing match compared to this artful masterpiece. Lex seemed quite engaged though and she was glad she invited him, even if she wasn’t able to uncover motives behind Clark’s secret hatred.

Suddenly there was a stifled scream from one of the neighboring booths. Immediately Lois had her attentioned peaked. She quietly got up and went into the hall where she ran into a man with a blue spandex suite and a red cape. He was holding jewelry. Lois tried to stop him and wrestled with him for a moment. She grabbed the big S on his chest. He was quick and strong but Lois had a good grip. The S on his chest ripped off and he finally escaped. Lois had watched him make his way going upstairs. Lex came out of the booth.

“What happened?” Lex asked.

“Apparently it was Superman,” Lois said looking down at the unmistakable fabric in her hand.

A woman came out of her booth, “That thief just stole my necklace!”

Lois turned to Lex, “He’s heading for the roof. Did you bring your car? If he flies off we’ll need to chase after him.”

Lex started towards the stairs, “My car’s downstairs, let’s go.”

Outside Lex’s car just pulled up. Lois and a small crowd of policemen and bystanders were scanning the building's roof looking for any signs of Superman. They heard gunshots. One. Two. Three. Four. Five total, Lois wrote in her notepad. Then a man in a red cape was falling from off the roof. It was Superman. Wait, no. Another Superman flew down and caught the man in midair. There were two Supermans. One had been an imposter.

“I knew there was more to the story,” Lois said.

The crowd watched as Superman carried the imposter flying through the air.

“That’s our cue,” Lois said, getting in the car with Lex. They were going to chase after those men and catch the criminals behind this scheme.

Moments later Lois caught sight of Superman flying towards the mountain trail.

“We’ve got them,” Lois said, “There’s only one road up there and it’s the same road down.” The car zoomed along the narrow mountain trail.

Lois hated this long journey up the mountain path. She felt like she was missing out on all the action. Superman could be confronting the villains right now and she wouldn’t be there to witness it. She tapped her finger impatiently on her purse.

As their car was rounding a corner, a red caped figure jumped in front and halted their path. Then, rounding the corner from the other direction came another car which Superman manhandled into a stop. If Superman hadn’t been there, the two cars would have met in a head first collision. The men from the opposite car climbed out and began running back up the mountain. Seeing that both cars were secure, Superman flew after the men and caught them.

Lois and Lex climbed out of the car. Superman was carrying two men back to the path, the sound of sirens were only seconds behind.

“That is you, isn’t it Boy,” Lex said.

Superman glared at Lex, “Do I look like a boy to you.”

There was tension between the two men that could cut metal like butter.

“You’ve changed,” Lex said, “Yet you're still as dangerous as ever.”

“*Being* dangerous is not a bad thing Lex. It never was,” Superman said. Superman knew it was how you used your power, not how much power you have that made someone a threat or not.

Just then the police rolled up and came out of their cars. They apprehended the criminals and asked Superman a few questions. Superman answered curtly then just before he turned to leave he stopped in front of Lois.

“Are you alright Miss Lane?” He said.

“Fine thank you,” Lois said, “You wouldn’t happen to have time for a few questions perhaps?” She doubted he would but she still had to ask.

Superman considered it for a moment. “Sure. But I’ll have to take you somewhere more private if that’s alright.”

“Fine by me,” Lois said.

Superman turned to Lex and said, “Don’t worry about the young lady Lex, I’ll make sure she gets home safe.”

“I’m sure you will,” Lex said, grinding his teeth.

Then Superman picked up Lois and they flew off. Superman took Lois to the top of the mountain where the stars were brightest.

They sat down on soft patches of grass.

 “So Superman, what kind of questions am I allowed to ask you?” Lois asked.

 “Ask and find out. If it’s a question I won’t answer, I’ll let you know.” Superman said with a charming smile.

 Lois reached into her purse and pulled out the group picture of the Home for Boys. She pointed at the dark haired boy standing beside Lex at the end.

 "Is this you?" Lois asked.

 Superman stared at the picture for a long time.

 "Yes." He said, though it was hard to admit. He handed her back the picture.

 It was rare to see a photo like that since Boy wasn't allowed to be in pictures. There were a lot of things Boy wasn't allowed to do or be. There were a lot of things during that time that Clark wished would stop hurting and haunting him.

 "The boy next to you is Alexander Luther, also known as Lex. Lex told me that you two grew up together and that you were friends. Is that true?" Lois asked.

 “It’s true that we grew up together but were we friends? I was more like his puppet than his friend. He used me to become the most popular and well liked kid around while I became the outcast monster that only *he* knew how to control.”

 Well that was a side of Lex Lois hadn’t seen before.

“And you really never had a name. They only called you Boy?” Lois asked.

 “Yes.”

 "Do you go by any other names?" Lois asked.

 Superman nodded his head, "You could say I finally got a real identity."

 “So aside from Superman, what name or names do you go by?”

 "I won't answer that," Superman laughed, "I'm not about to ruin my perfectly normal life."

 "Does anyone else know about your secret identity?"

 "Not that I'm aware of," Superman said.

 “Some people worry about a man as powerful as you using that power to do bad things. What would you say to those people?”

 “Well, I’d say their worry stems from a lack of trust that I haven’t earned yet. I’d tell them to give me time to earn their trust and show them my intentions to do what’s right. What I do with my abilities matters more than how great my abilities are. I intend to only use my abilities in dire need to help this city.”

 “Why do you only limit your efforts to Metropolis?” Lois asked, “Why not go and help in foreign conflicts?”

 “This is my home. I have a life here and people I love and care about,” Superman met Lois’s eyes, “I want to be here to protect that. I’m just one man and I only have one life. I want to live it as myself, not as the world’s saving grace. I’ll help where I can when I can, but if we really want to solve the world’s problems, then we need the world’s help. The solution is not to put it on the shoulders of one man.”

 “How do you feel when people make you out to be some God-like being? Do you disagree or agree with them?” Lois asked.

 Superman laughed, “Disagree wholeheartedly. If God exists then I believe the man who does the right thing in the face of hard decisions is more Godlike than any powerful entity. And I have my moments of humanness too so calling *me* a God is just… well it's silly.”

 “How do you decide what ‘the right thing’ is?” Lois asked.

 “That’s a loaded question isn’t it? Is this for all those politicians who think my version of ‘the right thing’ will somehow hurt their agenda?” Superman asked.

 Lois shook her head, “No, this is for that middle schooler who looks up to Superman and wants to be as self righteous as he is.”

Superman laughed, a sound which Lois thought was a bit familiar. Then he said, “To that middle schooler I’d say that they already know what it is, they just have to follow it. If they have a desire to do what’s right, they’ll see opportunities to act on what they think might be considered right. Things like kindness, honesty, compassion, justice. When they act on it, over time, they’ll be able to discover their own answers for what ‘the right thing’ is.”

“And how will they find out what the wrong thing is?” Lois asked.

“Oh it’ll confront them in the most painful way again and again until they finally learn the lesson,” Superman said.

“And were you born this naturally all-knowing and wise?” Lois asked, rolling her eyes.

“No,” Superman said with a smile, “Not at all.”

Then Lois began asking specific questions regarding the night. She asked about the men’s secret hideout and what had happened when he captured them. When Superman had finished telling the story the two sat and stared at the sky for a moment.

“Any more questions?” Superman asked.

“What’s your plans for Metropolis?” Lois asked.

“I have no plans for Metropolis. I just live here, I don’t own it.” Superman said.

“What about weaknesses? Do you have any achilles heels?”

“I'll pass on that. So what are you planning on doing with all this information?” Superman asked, “Are you acting as Delilah trying to cut Samson’s hair?”

"No, if possible, I want to help you Superman,” Lois said, “But I’m limited by how much I know about you.”

"I appreciate the sentiment but I don't have many things that can hurt me," Superman said, "I'm kind of the apex predator."

"But even you must have things that you can't do alone," Lois said.

"That's true," Superman said. "But your knack for getting into trouble seems to come in handy for helping me save the city."

Lois was not amused.

"I want to know about you Lois," Superman said, "I told you about my past, now you tell me about yours."

And then they talked. Lois told Superman a bit about her history. She told him about her parents and her love for journalism, her obsession with finding the story. It was so easy, talking like that. Superman was a really good listener and he didn't try to challenge her on anything she said. It was so different than when she was with Lex. It just felt comfortable and caring being with Superman. While he wasn't a “new age” man by any means, he was a classic gentleman, something she didn’t know still existed. Surprisingly, it didn’t feel like he was treating her kindly just to put her in her place as a woman, it felt like he just wanted to be kind for the sake of being kind. How unusual. They talked late into the night, then finally, it was time to separate ways.

As their time was drawing to a close, Superman picked Lois up and they flew towards the Daily Planet building where Lois would be going to work on her article. Once they hit the ground Superman turned to leave but Lois stopped him and gestured for him to come closer, like she was going to tell him a secret. As he leaned in, Lois kissed him. And he kissed her back. Then they broke apart.

“Good night Superman,” she said.

“Good night Lois,” he said and he flew off.

Lois watched him leave then she went into the Daily Planet building and wrote an article. As tempting as it was to do a piece devoted to Superman’s backstory, Lois honored Superman by explaining to the public his intentions to help and serve the city. She set the public’s mind at ease by exposing the crimes done by the fraud Superman.

Lois had done it, she had gotten her interview with Superman and it was wonderful. Somehow though, she felt like she was missing something. Like it was right under her nose and just a small spark of recognition would enlighten some giant mystery. But what that something was, she didn’t know. She was feeling uneasy about the whole thing and it frustrated her. She checked her phone and saw multiple messages from Lex. She ignored them, promising to get to them tomorrow morning. If she wasn’t careful she’d pull an all-nighter again but if she left now she could still catch a few hours of sleep before work started. They should really just keep a bed at the office, Lois spent all her time there anyway, she thought as she finally went home.

…

 Lois met Clark on the doorstep going into the Daily Planet building. He was sitting on the steps and he looked dog tired. Very similar to how she felt. She hadn’t seen him since the Opera that previous night. He must have been asleep through all the action and missed the whole story.

 Lois stood directly in front of him, “What’s the matter, opera got you down?”

 Clark looked up and smiled, “Oh I’m just dreaming I was superman.”

 Lois laughed and said sarcastically, “Fine superman you’d make.”

 Clark shrugged, “Well I can dream can’t I?”

 “Are you heading in?” Lois asked.

 “In just a moment,” Clark said.

 Lois debated on sticking around but thought against it and went inside.

 Clark had had a lot on his mind the past couple of weeks. He wanted to tell her. She’d figure it out soon anyway, he was sure about that. Honestly, he wanted her to know. He wanted to trust her. But he was scared. And if he did tell her, would she become a target? When it came to things like gunshots, she was more vulnerable than he was. These thoughts were stressing him out as he sat on the steps going into the Daily Planet.

 Not too many minutes later Lex Luther came by.

 “Good morning, Clark, was it?” Lex said, “Has Lois come by already? I’d like to talk to her.”

 “She’s already inside,” Clark said, “What’s the message, maybe I can pass it on to her.”

 “No, that’s alright. I’ll try to meet up with her for lunch later,” Lex said. “Say Clark, you’ve known Lois for a while now. Would you say she’s close to Superman?”

 “Yah, I’d say they’re pretty close,” Clark said, “Why?”

 “I just worry about her being so close to a man who’s so dangerous,” Lex said.

 “He’s only dangerous to criminals.”

 “For all we know he could turn any moment. Clark, I believe I knew him growing up,” Lex said, “He’s not the hero we’d all like him to be.”

 “So you think it’s all an act?” Clark asked amused, “This whole, hero thing?”

 “It is hard to say. I do, however, think we are all acting a little naive if we think we can trust him unconditionally,” Lex said.

 “Mmmm, I see,” Clark said, “Say Lex, you’re close with the Freichman family right? How are they doing? You know, after Mark’s passing and all.”

 “The widow? She’s fine,” Lex said, turning his full attention to Clark.

 “Sure was odd how Mark died wasn’t it? Man had everything going for him then smashed by a hit and run. Almost seemed planned.” Clark said.

 “It was a terrible accident, but you think there was foul play,” Lex asked.

“I think there’s a chance,” Clark said.

“Let me know if there’s anything I can do to help out,” Lex said, “If someone wronged that family, I’d like to bring them to justice.”

“I’m sure I’ll be able to think of something you can do to help,” Clark said.

Lex nodded then walked away, pulling out his phone again and giving Lois another call.

That’s when a car pulled up and asked, “Are you Clark?”

Finally, Clark’s door dash arrived at the Daily Planet steps. It was the reason he had been waiting on the steps of the building for so long since he didn’t want the door dasher to have to come inside past all the security and up the many flights of stairs to drop off his food. With breakfast in toe, he went inside.

On his way to the office, Clark was remembering sometime back that Lois had articles about Mark Freichman’s death on her desk. At the time he wanted nothing to do with them as they might lead to a connection to his past. Now he saw that she might have been using them to uncover a little more about Lex Luther’s true intentions for coming to Metropolis. He’d have to ask her about them and see if there was anything he could dig up. Maybe Clark would be able to pick up where Lois had left off.

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# **Files of Lois Lane:** *Destruction Inc.*

Based off of this episode of Superman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ik-r0xxOxSE>

Lois and Clark were waiting in lane for the sandwich food truck that had parked just outside the Daily Planet building. The street was busy around lunch time and a speaker on the truck was playing radio music. She noticed that a couple at the front were discussing who would pay for the meal. The woman kept insisting that she would pay for her own food. She didn’t want to inconvenience him, or be a burden, or blah blah blah. Of course the woman could pay for her own meal, it’s not like she was some weak little bug. But then the man took his girlfriend’s hand and said, “If that’s what will make you the most happy then you do that, but if I can help make your life easier by doing this service for you. By paying for your meal, I’d love to have the opportunity to do so.” The man ended up paying for both of them. Lois couldn’t decide if the man had used manipulation or if he had just felt that way in earnest. She wondered if she’d have to fight Clark overpaying for her own food. Clark wasn’t the type to overstep boundaries though, so she really didn’t need to wonder.

The speaker on the truck changed from music to news as a newscaster announced, “Flash update, following closely in the wake of a series of baffling crimes, the body of an elderly man has just been found in the marsh flats outside the city. He has been identified as the watchman at the Metropolis Munitions plant.”

“There’s a story or I’m no reporter,” Lois mumbled to herself. Lois decided lunch could wait, she had a story to go uncover. She immediately left Clark and headed towards the munitions plant. She passed by Murph who was heading towards the food truck. Murph tipped his head and gave her a sly wink which made Lois feel gross.

Meanwhile, the newcaster continued as Clark listened patiently, “He is believed to be a victim of an organized ring of saboteurs. More news, later.”

Clark was lost in his own mind for a moment, “Huh, sounds like it might be a story at the plant Lois.”

Clark turned only to see that Lois had left down the street. In her place stood Louis Murphy.

Murph said, “Lois!?! Me name is Louis, not Lois. Gee wiz, everybody interpellates me name wrong. It’s Louis. L-O-U-I-S. Lois, er, uh, Louise, Lucy. Now I’m so mixed up I don’t know who I am!”

Clark gave Murph a polite smile then began heading towards the munitions plant. Clark had read somewhere that Mark Freichman had been involved with the ownership of the munitions plant. Maybe it was time Clark gave Mark’s widow a visit because if the intel was true, then it might be time to go undercover.

…

Lois was in the munitions uniform painting numbers onto torpedos. When she had arrived they had thought that she was one of the new hires they had brought on, and Lois had decided it would be in her best interest to go along with their mistake. Along with a few other employees the company had also recently hired a new watchman. He was an older man with white hair and a medical grade face mask, but the way he walked… It was a bit familiar. She stopped him as he passed by her.

“Excuse me sir, do you know the way to the bathroom?” Lois asked.

“Oh, well I’m new myself so I don’t really know but I think it’s down that hall there.” The man gestured.

“When did you start?” Lois asked.

“Today actually.”

So then he couldn’t have been involved with the incident. Lois asked, “So then you didn’t know the previous watchman.”

“No. It’s a tragedy what happened. The other watchmen say he was the nicest man, never did anything to harm anyone. They can’t understand why anyone would want to kill him.”

Lois sighed, “Sounds like he was in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

“That’s what I was thinking,” the watchman said.

Lois took closer note of the watchman. He was just so familiar, she was sure she had met him before.

“I’m sorry, but I’ve met you before haven’t I?” she finally asked.

The man nodded, then brushed back some of his white hairs to show that beneath was a mess of jet black. He was wearing a wig. Jet black hair, facemask, and those eyes. They were a lot bigger when he wasn’t wearing his glasses. she finally connected it.

“Clark?!”

“We should go somewhere more private,” Clark said and the two went to the company break room. No one was there, so the two were safe to converse freely.

 “Are you here to take my story?” Lois asked. She always suspected Clark secretly envied her and saw her as competition.

“I’m here to get my own story actually. Ever heard of Mark Freichman? and I’m chasing a lead to his possible murder. Mark was one of this plant’s major investors.”

“Mark Freichman? Lex Luther’s old partner? You think Lex might be involved.”

“I do,” Clark said.

“And are you going to tell me?” Lois asked.

“How about I tell you about it over dinner tonight?” Clark asked.

“Can’t, I’m going out with Lex,” Lois said.

“Lex?” Clark’s eyes went wide. His eyes reminded her of… someone else.

Clark’s voice turned urgent and serious, “Lois, you need to stay as far away from Lex as possible. He’s not what he appears to be.”

Lois took a step back, “Excuse you. I can judge a man for myself.”

“Then you should have all the facts. He’s a criminal mastermind who has killed multiple people and is plotting to take over an entire country…”

Lois stared at Clark blankly. There’s no way that was true. “That’s a large claim, Clark. Can you back it up?”

“I… I can. But for now you need to stay away from him.”

“And if I refuse?” Lois asked. Clark was acting completely irrational. He didn’t know Lex like she did. Why was Clark saying these things?

“I can’t stop you but I care about your safety and I don’t want you to make a decision that could end up with you getting hurt,” Clark said.

Finally, it dawned on Lois.

“You’re jealous.” Lois said.

Clark’s brain took a mental tick back.

“I’m sorry, what?”

Exasperated, Lois rolled her eyes, “Men are ridiculous. You’re just jealous of Lex and I. You’re so jealous you’re willing to make up stuff about Lex. Maybe the real one who has things to hide is you.”

Clark felt like he was trying to reason with a monkey.

“You… Lois, that's crazy. That’s not what I’m trying to do. I’m trying to tell you the truth.” Clark said.

“And now you’re trying to make it seem like I’m crazy. Like my feelings don’t matter,” Lois said.

“Lois, I never said your feelings don’t matter,” Clark said.

“You didn’t have to.” Clearly Clark was trying to invalidate Lois’s feelings towards Lex. He was the crazy one for taking such a tactic as far as claiming Lex was a murderer. Lois said, “No, you’re jealous and you want me to believe that he’s a murderer. You’re the crazy one and you’re jealous, that’s why you're saying the things you're saying. Clark, your jealousy is blinding you.”

“My jealousy is not the problem. Lex Luther is the problem. And you’re blind if you can’t see that.”

“Now you’re trying to change the subject. Classic man tactics.”

Finally, Clark snapped. His being a man had nothing to do with this conversation and he wasn’t about to let Lois use it as an excuse, “Will you stop assuming what I’m doing for five seconds and listen to me honestly? Maybe what I’m saying actually has some merit and should be given a chance. I’m a person too and not everything I do is an unconscious attack on you as a woman. Yes, I’m a man, but maybe that inspires me to try to protect you, not hurt you.”

Lois turned her back on Clark, “I’m done here. I’ve got work to do. Bye Clark.”

Then Lois went back to her work on the torpedoes.

…

In her attempt to forget her emotions she dove herself into her work but she was still in a bad mood when the bell rang. That signaled the end of the work day today as the company was preparing for a trial run of the torpedosShe had been keeping a special eye on one of the bosses, he had bushy eyebrows and a nasty look in his eyes. As the bushy-browed boss passed an employee with large ears, Lois had to crane to hear him say, “Towards upstairs 12 o’clock. Very important.”

As the men all scattered, Big Ears met up with another man with a big nose and said, “I wonder what the big shot wants.”

Lois followed the men upstairs. She watched them go into one of the boss’s offices. As she came closer she heard the voices of the men talking inside the office.

“That was a good job you did on the watchman last night. Now, how about that dynamite charge under the shops?” That tone of voice… was that Lex? No. Lois was just paranoid based on what Clark had told her earlier. Lois leaned in closer to hear.

“It’s wired to the switch on the plant floor below. When the new watchman pulls that switch tonight the whole-”

It got quiet. Then the blinds opened up and Lois stood a glass plane apart from Lex Luther.

She ran.

The men from the office started chasing her. They blocked the exits so she used the surroundings to try climbing to one of the windows. They followed her onto the ceiling rafters. Lois was surrounded until she slid down a metal rafter beam and caught hold of a rope used for a pulley. She swung herself down and raced for the door. Just as she was almost there, a strong arm caught hold of her and a gun was pointed at her head.

“Nice of you to drop by Lois,” Lex said.

“Lex, what’re you doing?”

Just then the white haired watchman entered the room. Clark was here to help. He pulled out his own gun and pointed it at Lex, “Freeze!”

Lex walked slowly to the middle of the room and the watchman took a few steps closer. Then Lex nodded to Big Ears. Too late, Lois noticed the giant metal collector overhead, stacked with beams of all kinds. Big Ears switched the metal collector off and a giant load of metal fell on top of Clark, crushing him. Lois cried out but she was knocked unconscious.

When Lois woke up a little while later. She looked around and found that she was tied up against the wall in the boss’s room.

A message came to the desk and over a radio Lois heard the henchmen yelling, “Sir, we’ve got a problem, that old watchman. He’s coming out from the beams. He’s Superman.”

“What!” Lex grabbed Lois’s arm pulling to her feet and dragged her over to the door, flinging it open. With a gun to her head, she watched as a man emerged from the metal beams, but it wasn’t Clark. He was wearing red and blue. No mask. No glasses. No wigs. It was Superman. He had waited till the shop closed down before emerging from the metal.

“Take another step and Lois will die,” Lex yelled down, “Men get the kryptonite.”

Superman stopped moving. “Let her go Lex.”

There was a long standoff between Lex and Superman. Lois was trying to process everything. Clark had fallen under the pile of metal dressed as an old man. Superman emerged. Clark was Superman. Lois was an idiot for not putting it together until just now. Not only that but Lex was a murderer, or at least he was threatening murder. Clark was right and she had been so emotional that she hadn’t listened. Classic female.

Finally Lex’s men came back with a mysterious green rock, the size of a baseball. The closer the rock got to Superman, the more he started to drop, until he was lying on the floor, unable to move.

“What’s happening, what’s happening to him?” Lois asked. She couldn’t believe her eyes. Superman was losing and they weren’t even doing anything.

“Kryptonite is the Boy’s only weakness. It drains him of all his power and leaves him to his own demise,” Lex said smugly, “Tie him up and bring him here!”

Big Ears, Bushy-Brow and Big Nose tied up a completely deadweight Superman. Their ties were extremely pathetic and even with the smallest amount of effort Superman would have been able to break out of them. Unfortunately Superman wouldn’t be able to break out of them in his weakened state. The irony made Lex smile. Then, it took all three of them to move him over to the boss’s office.

“So long as this rock is near him, he’ll slowly be drained of all his energy until he’s dead,” Lex said. Lex clipped the rock to a chain necklace and put it around Superman’s neck. “Just a simple rock like this; it’s all it takes to kill you. Just like old times. Isn’t that right Boy?”

Superman could barely lift his head. But he remembered. He remembered how Lex and a group of the boys had tortured him with Kryptonite. Tied him up, beat him and left him for dead.

“Please don’t do this. I’ll die. Please!” Boy had pleaded. Lex had just laughed as if it were all some big game showing who was the most macho of them all. Boy truly believed he would have died if he’d been left there.

The orphanage director had found him and brought him back to the orphanage. He nursed him back to health.

 “You must never retaliate,” the director had said, “If you do, you will be as monstrous as they expect you are.”

The director was always afraid that Boy would attract some big government officials who would take Boy and turn him into a weapon. He did what he could for Boy, but he was constantly acting out of fear for the boy’s welfare, not care. If he had truly cared he might have seen how isolated the boy was. Maybe the director did see. Maybe he thought that isolation was better than being treated like an object. Either way, it wasn’t an ideal childhood.

“With a kryptonite rock that big, he’ll be dead in minutes. Now, I have to meet up with the other executives to watch the trial experiment. On my signal, load Lois into the torpedo and fill it with real explosives. There will be no body left for anyone to find after the torpedo is launched for the experiment. Got that?” Lex told his men.

The men nodded.

“Last thing,” Lex said heading out, “When the Boy finally stops breathing, do me a favor and let me know the job’s been taken care of. Just a message will suffice.”

The men nodded and Lex left. The men took stations, Big Nose watched over the prisoners, Bushy-Brow watched the warehouse floor and Big Ears prepped the torpedo.

“Superman… please be okay.” Lois said. “Clark please…”

“No secrets now huh?” Superman said. Then his effort gave out and he stopped moving.

“Ha! No use sweetheart. The man’s dying.” Big Nose said. Then he sat down. Wow, he was obviously taking his job very seriously. Could Lois use it to her advantage and try to free Superman?

Lois’s planning was cut short when suddenly Superman broke his weak bands and slugged Big Nose in the face, knocking him unconscious.

“Superman! You’re okay!”

“How was my acting?” Superman smirked. “Being deadweight is kind of fun.”

Then he threw off his kryptonite necklace and came over to Lois to break her ties.

“Lois, are you alright?”

Lois didn’t have the mental space to answer his question. Her only thought turned audible when she asked, “How?”

“Truth is kryptonite only takes away my superhuman powers, it really doesn’t kill me though. Of course I didn’t discover that until after I was older and thus, Lex apparently never found out… Now if someone really wanted to kill me all they’d have to do is hand me some kryptonite and shoot me. You’re… not going to kill me right?”

Lois slapped Superman. Then she kissed him. Then she remembered the unconscious man on the floor. Superman might have broken his nose…

“But what about him? You had superhuman strength when you took him down.”

“No, that’s just what a good right hook will do for those who have it. You think all these muscles are just for show?” Superman said, gesturing to the results of many gym visits.

“We have to stop Lex,” Lois said, “Do you know what he’s planning?”

“Put simply. You know Krimaria?”

Lois nodded.

“It’s in a civil war right now and Lex plans on becoming king once the tyranny takes back control.”

“Lex said Krimaria and Tixta were at war.”

“No, Tixta is the rebel’s allies and this munitions factory supplies weapons to the rebels. That’s why he wants it blown up.” Superman said.

“Where did you get this intell?” Lois asked.

“Mark’s widow. Long story and I can’t explain it right now.”

“We have to report this,” Lois said.

“It would do no good. There’s not enough evidence for Lex to get convicted. He’s too good at covering his tracks.” Superman said.

Superman was right. How could they collect evidence of what Lex had done? Maybe that was just it. They didn’t have any evidence now but they could collect evidence based on the actions they knew Lex would take now that he’s shown his true colors.

“Superman, I think I have a plan. But…” Lois said.

“But what?” Superman said.

“But I’m going to need your help,” Lois admitted, “And I’ll need you to save me.”

“I can do that,” Superman said.

…

Lois was being put into the hollow part of the torpedo that would be used for the trial of the artillery. Military officials had come to see the launch of a torpedo. There wasn’t supposed to be an explosion, it was just a distance test, using an abandoned ship as a target, but Lex’s men had filled the torpedo with C-4, ensuring Lois’s death.

On command, the torpedo launched into the water. Lex was with the other military officials watching the trial. They saw the torpedo hurling towards the ship, then, out of the sky Superman plunged into the water and lifted the torpedo from the bottom out of the water. He flew through the air, carrying the torpedo on his shoulder as he landed safely on the ground. Superman unscrewed the torpedo and pulled Lois out for all the executives to see.

“The factory!” Lois said loud enough for all the men to hear, “They’re trying to blow up the factory!”

Superman flew away to go catch Lex’s henchmen.

Lois immediately began running towards the factory. She hoped Lex would take the bait. He did as she saw him sneak into the warehouse just after she entered. She pulled out her phone and started to record audio. Then she went to one of the main computers to pretend like she was breaking into it.

“That’s enough,” Lex said and Lois stopped what she was doing. She looked around. Lex stood at the doorway pointing a gun at her. She checked her surroundings again, had Superman arrived yet?

“Why Lex? For power, for fame? What about the people of Krimaria?” Lois said.

“How much do you know?” Lex asked.

Lois actually didn’t know much, but she could bluff it fairly decently, “The Krimaria conflict is one of internal conflict, unlike the lie you tried to tell me. And it’s all a ruse that’ll put you on the Krimaria throne.”

“I knew you were too smart. Yes, I am the heir of Krimaria but don’t you see that I’m doing this for them. I will lead them to become the greatest nation on earth. They need me,” Lex said.

Lois said, “And you’re going to kill to make sure you rise to power.”

“These few casualties are a small sacrifice for the future that is to come,” Lex said.

“And am I one of these casualties? You tried to kill me by putting me in that torpedo Lex,” Lois said. She wanted to make sure the recording knew who this man was that she was talking to.

“I only did what I had to. But I don’t have to if you’re willing to work with me. Lois, can you imagine the future I could provide you with? No woman on earth would have more power and position than you.”

“Absolutely not Lex, I’m not a murderer,” Lois said. Lois saw a small flash of red and blue behind Lex.

Lex shrugged, “I tried to give you an option. I really do like you Lois. But you’ve made your choice.”

Then Lex shot the gun, pointed directly at Lois’s head.

Faster than a bullet, Superman stood between Lois and Lex. He faced Lois with an outstretched fist held just in front of Lois’s head. He opened his clenched fist and let the bullet drop to the ground.

“It’s over Lex,” Superman said.

Lois held up her phone to show that she had recorded the whole conversation.

…

Lois was reading her newest article before her date with Clark. It was her complete expose exposing Lex Luther. Lex Luther was arrested for the manslaughter of Mark Freichman among a long list of other crimes. After the warehouse incident Lois was able to talk to Mark’s widow and collect more data and evidence convicting Lex. The police too, collected search warrants and found evidence of terrorist activity and crime ring association. Lex would be going to jail for a long long time.

Finally Clark arrived, big glasses, facemasks and all. Everyone else had already gone home. It was only just Clark and Lois left alone.

“Is that your newest article?” Clark asked, looking over Lois’s shoulder.

Lois nodded, “The police put an end to Lex’s little act.” Then she reached up and pulled off his glasses and facemask. “And this puts an end to yours, Superman.”

Lois kissed him and they left together.

“Where are we going?” Lois asked.

“To visit the most influential people in my life,” Clark said.

Soon Lois and Clark entered a retirement home where Martha and Johnathan Kent resided. They visited for a while, the elderly couple being the most warm and kind people Lois had ever met. Then Martha, who had been recovering from surgery, asked for a moment to be alone with Lois. The men left.

“Tell me about what you think of our Clark,” Martha said.

“Well,” Lois started. She wanted to be honest. “He’s every cliche I expected a man to be. In all reality, I should hate him. But the way he treats me is so different. He treats me really well and he supports me in a way I don’t think I’ve ever had.”

“My dear,” Martha said, grabbing Lois’s hand, “That’s what men do. My Jonathan has given me the ability to do any and everything that I’ve ever wanted to do and be. He’s my superman. Now I’m no career woman like you but I’ve had my fair share of work in a garden, on a sewing machine and in the kitchen. I know that everyday I was able to do those things because my Jonathan worked hard to support me. It has meant the world to me. Clark is a fragile boy, make sure he knows how you feel about the things he does for you.” Martha said.

Lois thought about how often she was able to get the story (and not die) because Superman had been there. If not for him, she would never have been able to become what she is. He could have easily taken the story for himself but he always let her have it. He didn’t want the fame as Clark Kent, he just wanted her to be happy.

Lois and Martha continued their conversation, just talking about life. They were two completely different people but they were bonded by a force of simple love and appreciation. It was then, for the first time, that Lois truly found herself being grateful for the men in life.

#

# Notes

Feminist Jargon:

Asserting the patriarchy and gas lighting

Men are weak, women are superior

Feminism is just for woman. Fit in the box

Push men out of jobs that they rightfully have

Men want to control us, they’re all the same, they all think the same, we need to get back at what happened generations ago

Male dominance

Misogyny

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hN8IMnLdw04>

Gaslighting, questioning your reality.

Not a big deal. To the kid it might be the biggest pain in the world.

Not validating someone’s feelings. Saying that they shouldn’t be feeling the way that they’re feeling.

Is gaslighting really that bad? Making things not a big deal.

Gaslighting used to get emotions under control.

I know what I’m seeing, why are you telling me that I’m wrong?

If your partner is being mean, they’re using emotional abuse, they’re not gaslighting, they’re just being flat rude.

“As a guy in the STEM field, we need more women unblocking our municipal sewers/ manholes and digging underground tunnels.. now that is Equality.”

Everyone is NOT equal, however every person does have their own emotions/feelings, memories, past, present, future, etc. Therefore everyone deserves to be TREATED equal. Just because we aren't all equal to each other doesn't mean we should treat each other like that.

~ Shay B.P. a.k.a floxy plays

Yes, its vengeance for a perceived past wrong, and all it does is create more wrongs, which is why forgiveness is the only solution

“Got my license to practice and landed my first job after grad school, starting pay was 25k higher than the highest female classmate's starting pay. When we compared results, I was told that the pay discrepancy was because I was a man. I explained that my employer's starting offer was equal to what the women in my class had accepted, and I had counter-offered during salary negotiations for 10k more than I ended up with. They were stunned and either didn't even realize that salary could be negotiated at all or were too afraid to ask for more money. Of course, I was told by most that it only worked because I was a man, but several of them since have jumped from their old jobs and did the same as I did and are now making as much as I was if not more.

Here's my advice to everyone: don't be afraid to lose a job you don't have by asking for what you think you're worth with a little on top. They can only say no, or counter. They won't eat you or come to your house and burn it down at night or slander you on social media if you highball a counteroffer (within reason). The job market is called a market for a reason.”

Konner, even while affirming that not all men are violent and not all women are nurturing, fearlessly advances his women's superiority thesis. Maleness is "a birth defect," he declares.

As a woman and a feminist, I winced when reading your equating "maleness" with "a birth defect," "a disorder" and "androgen poisoning." Doesn't this language do more harm than good, in that it describes negatively an entire group of people in an unnuanced, stereotyped way?

"You are not the first person to wince at that, but many others, mainly but not only women, have smiled. Would you object if I said 'whites are bad because they oppress blacks,' or 'Anglos are bad because they oppress Latinos,' or 'rich people are bad because they oppress the poor'? How come after 12 millennia of oppression of women by men, I can't say men are bad for doing that?

"In my view, we are living in a time when a corrective is sorely needed. Although in the article and the book I am careful to say 'not all men' are bad, it is still true that 'yes all women' have to fear the many, many bad ones. And unlike the racial, ethnic, or class categories, the difference between men and women is substantial and biological. I'm sorry if some people don't like that, but it's true.

"As Elizabeth Cady Stanton said in 1869, 'the difference in man and woman' is the most important reason why women must fully participate in public life. That speech, which I quote extensively from in Women After All, is a stunning indictment of men and their egregious impact on history, far stronger than anything I say against men myself. And her statements led directly to women's suffrage."

"Paradoxically, the small minority of men in ISIS, Boko Haram, and the like actually tell us more than all the books in the world about what men are like and what they have done to women (and by the way, to each other) through most of history. They are throwbacks, but instructive ones. They are part of a terrified lashing out by men against the inevitability of women's rights. They are representatives of the dominant men of the past who could not stand the idea of women being equal.

"The major trends in the developing world are against them, and they know it. Some men can't adjust. Look at Afghanistan, where almost no girls went to school 15 years ago under the Taliban, another throwback. Today the vast majority of Afghan girls are in school. The youngest person ever to win the Nobel Prize was Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani girl who promoted girls' education. Men like that tried to kill her, but they only strengthened her and her cause."

“Every building you see was built by a man.” vs “Every person you see was birthed by a woman.”

Adding an anti-feminist spin assuming that’s what they wanted to say but didn’t.

Women lying about being abused. It’s all a scam. We don’t need shelters for woman. (When talking about also needing shelters for man.) Not trying to defund woman’s shelters, just trying to say that men can be abused too.

Where is the justice for a man who was accused of doing something they did not do? (The woman only hears that they did the thing they were accused of. Not hearing the falsely accused.)

Acknowledge the issues but insist they are woman’s issues.Men loose custody of kids, women expected to be the caretaker it’s discrimination. 78% of suicides are men but woman attempt more often… Making it a contest. Have compassion for male victims without jumping to conclusions that women are the real victims.

Paternity Fraud. Draft. Workplace, war, suicide deaths overwhelmingly men. Can’t name men’s issues because, “Men have all their rights; they have all the power and privilege.”

Humanize your enemy you may in turn be dehumanized by your community. Peeling back the layers of my own bias. I was right, and they were subhuman.

Invite all groups to the table, men and women.

Stop expecting to be offended.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/13.7/2015/04/16/400075715/is-it-sexist-to-say-that-women-are-superior-to-men>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-00677-x>

More powerful than a locamotive, man of steal, amazing stranger from the planet Krypton

Mild mannered new reporter

“Will you stop assuming what I’m doing for five seconds and listen to me honestly? I’m a person too and not everything I do is an unconscious attack on you as a woman. Maybe I actually have something worthwhile to contribute, even though I’m a man.”

“You’re jealous.”

“Bah! Maybe that’s true but that doesn’t change the fact that Lex is not a good man.”

“No, you’re jealous and you want me to believe that he’s not a good man. You’re jealous, that’s why you're saying the things you're saying. Clark, your jealousy is blinding you.”

“No, it’s not, that’s not the problem. Lex Luther is the problem.”

“Now you’re trying to change the subject.”

“I’m not, that’s not what I’m trying to do. That’s crazy. I’m trying to tell you the truth.”

“You’re trying to make it seem like I’m crazy. Like my feelings don’t matter.”

“Lois, I never said your feelings don’t matter.”

“You didn’t have to.”

“Will you stop assuming what I think and feel for five seconds? I’m a person too and not everything I do is an unconscious attack on you as a woman. Maybe I actually have something worthwhile to contribute, even though I’m a man.”

Orphan

Infant of Krypton

Superman disguised as Clark Kent

Daily Planet

Metropolitan newspaper

Threatening note

“Beware you fools.”

Chief is going to send clark with her, she wants to go alone. Follow her lead.

Wants to crack the story on her own.

“I’m a reporter” ties her up. Daily Planet

<https://youtu.be/XG0BhElVt8U>

Comet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9UJphNPwDfk>

Kent lies to Louis about a case

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZF7bb9CKigg>

Kick Butt Lois!!!

“Uncanny that SuperMan turns up just when you need him.”

“I didn’t even get a chance to thank him.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgLMH0NGvhg> 24:43

Has her own office. He offers to come with her. She rejects.

“No thanks, you’ll probably faint if you saw the monster, you scare so easily.”

Someone to keep a reporter safe as she journeys into extremely unsafe territory.

Lois is in the museum.

“You better get back to the office.”

“Yes Dear… And miss the best story in years? Small chance.”

“Now this time, stay put.”

“Yes milord, and thanks.”

“You showed plenty of courage getting that story Lois.”

“Yes but where were you?”

“Oh me? I must have fainted.”

Always sending in Lois Lane and Clark Kent. Especially to compete against eachother.

She drives off without letting Clark get into the vehicle.

He got beat but when it comes to saving Lois he suddenly gets stronger.

Saves another lady.

Hear a notice over an announcement. “There’s a story or I’m no reporter.”

Lois leaves

“Sounds it might be story Lois.”

Louis enters.

“Me names Louis, not Lois.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OT2LUNk37nY>

Acrobatic, brave, insane, almost got away.

He goes under disguise too to catch the criminals.

Takes her out of her cell (which was a bullet about to blow up.) SHe’s unconsious.

“Ms. Lane, Lane, are you alright?”

“Superman, they’re about to blow up the plant.”

“Superman! Look out!”

She catches his disguise!!! “That puts an end to their little act. And this puts an end to yours, Clark Kent.”

She’s got hunches and she’s usually right. Goes to Clark to ask his opinion only to really express hers.

“It is superman. I just saw him. Swell chance they have of catching him.”

“Warning superman. One more savatogue and the girl reporter will be executed.”

“What about Clark Kent, did he get away.”

“No, he’s still over there. But don’t worry. Superman promised to look after him.”

“Friend turns foe. Well that’s ridiculous. It couldn’t be superman. What do you make of it Clark?”

Louis, “Her you too, the editor wants you to cover the opera tonight. And don’t forget. It’s formal.”

Clark falls asleep, Lois catches a thief. She sees he’s asleep and takes it into her own hands.

She sees Superman fly away with bad guy, “I knew there was more to the story.”

“What’s the matter, opera got you down.”

“Oh I’m just dreaming I was superman.”

“Fine superman you’d make.”

“Well I can dream can’t I.”

“Lois, what’re you doing here.”

“just getting a woman’s angle on this story.”

She gets captured, threatened, torchered and still won’t give it up. She phones backup while superman keeps her safe.

“I’d feel much safer is superman were here.”

Gaslighting, when people make little of the emotions you’re feeling.

Mad Scientist

* Superman is famous in Metropolis
* Lois works at the Daily Planet
	+ Clark and Lois’s relationship
* The men don't respect Lois
* A threatening note is sent to the Daily Planet and other major buildings
* Chief has brings in both Clark and Lois
* Lois wants to follow up the story solo, she leaves, takes a helicopter
* Lois gets captured by the scientist
* The scientist strikes
* Next day scientist striking again, Superman jumps into action
* Lois writes a great article

Railroad Trail

* Clark gets left behind, missing the train
* The train gets attacked by train robbers
* The train has Kryptonite on it
	+ Kryptonite makes Superman human, does not drain his power
* Superman stops the train
* Lois wishes she could thank Superman

Dinosaur

* Clark has basically fallen in love with Lois
* Lois takes the story
* The dinosaur breaks out
* Superman saves Lois
* Lois puts herself in danger one more time, saved by Superman
* Superman puts the dinosaur in the zoo

Fake Superman

* A fake superman steals stuff
* Lois and Clark go to the opera
* Fake is at the opera and has a confrontation with Lois
	+ Lois defends Superman but is slandered by her friends???
* Superman finds the fake and goes to his boss
* Lois catches up and finds the truth
* Lois gets an interview with Superman
* Clark dreaming that he was Superman

Swamp

* Starts in swamp, a body was found, a car drove away
* Clark and Lois walking together,
	+ Announcer, “Flash, following closely in the wake of series of blafling crimes, the body of an elderly man has just been found in the marsh flats outside the city. He has been identified as the watchman at the Metropolis Munitions plant.
	+ Lois, “There’s a story, or I’m no reporter.” Lois slips away and Louis takes her place, winking as she leaves.
	+ Announcer, “He is believed to be a victim of an organized ring of saboteurs. More news, later.” Clark still looking at the screen, “huh, sounds like it might be a story to plant Lois.”
	+ “Lois!?! Me name is Louis, not Lois. Gee wiz, everybody interpellates me name wrong. It’s Louis. L-O-U-I-S. Lois, er, uh, Louise, Lucy. Now I’m so mixed up I don’t know who I am!”
	+ Clark leaves smiling.
* Metropolis Munitions Works
	+ Guards everywhere.
	+ A watchman comes out, an old guy with white hair and mustache. Lois applies for a job. “Oh, Pardon me.”
	+ Lois does work, painting numbers on bombs.
	+ Boss “Go upstairs 12 o’clock. Very important.” Lois listens in. “I wonder what the big man wants.”
	+ “That was a good job you did on the watchman last night. Now uh, how about that dynamite charge under the shops?”
	+ “It’s wired to the switch on the plant floor below. When the new watchman pulls that switch tonight, the whole place will…”
	+ “Shhh…” pulls up the certain to reveal Lois.
	+ “Get that girl.”
	+ Intense chase scene. She almost gets away, both coming at her from two directions. Get’s away but caught at the last second. They tie her up and put her inside of a bomb.
	+ “Alright men, now load in the dynamite.”
	+ The old man watchman comes in and gets captured. (Looks like he got killed.)
	+ Ring, “Jones speaking.” “Hello Jones, we’re ready for the test. Send out the torpedo immediately.” “Immediately.”
	+ At the test site, a group of men, military all watching, “Here comes the torpedo now. And that old hulk out there is the target. Naturally for experimental purposes there is no explosive in the torpedo.
	+ Superman immurges. They fire, Superman lifts the torpedo up from the water and get’s Lois out.
	+ “Ms. Lane, Ms. Lane, are you alright?” Lois, “Superman, they’re about to blow up the plant.
	+ “Throw that switch.” Superman stops them.
	+ Man gets in explosive car and starts speeding down the hill to blow up the plant. Lois was watching, “Superman!” Lois, superman, look out. He get’s in the car and drives it off a cliff.
* “Well pop, Superman put an end to their little act. And this is an end to yours, Clark Kent.”

Lex Luther

* Lex comes and visits
	+ Lex is Lois’s ex
	+ Lex lived at the orphanage with Clark
* Lois taken hostage put in cell with Clark and Kryptonite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WMuzhQXJoY>

Louis uses the wrong words for things

You was jellyious.

It’s not the things you do, its the thinks you think.