

Hindsight

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Rated: G

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Summary: A tiny episode addition to “Tempus Anyone?”

Story Size: 468 words (3Kb as text)

Lois Lane sighed again, took another deep breath and let it out as she looked down at her coffee.

Clark Kent was worried. A quiet Lois Lane was almost a contradiction in terms. But, in the last two days, ever since her return from the alternate universe and that other Clark Kent, she'd been quiet.

Oh, at first she'd talked and talked and talked and at such a rate that you HAD to be Superman just to keep up.

The next day, he'd caught her staring at her computer screen, looking through old files, and sighing, lots of sighing.

This was a Lois Lane in an unusually introspective state. It seemed to Clark that her feelings for that other Clark, that alternate Clark Kent, had gone much deeper than she had admitted.

Was she regretting her decision to return to this universe? Had her feelings for that Clark been far stronger than she'd admitted? He felt like his heart was being ripped out.

He placed the dessert on the table in front of her. “Double-chocolate cheesecake.”

“Oh, that looks good. What's the occasion, Farmboy? Hoping to get lucky?”

Clark reddened.

“No, Lois, I just thought you could use a little mood elevator.”

“I'm sorry, I'm just rethinking so many things I thought I was certain of in my life. Being wrong about something, horribly disastrously wrong, that you've been so sure of for so long...”

“Lois, I...” Clark trailed off.

Lois stood and stepped towards him. Placing a hand on his chest, she shook her head and said, “Claude.”

“Claude,” echoed Clark. “Claude, as in Claude who stole your story, Claude?”

“That Claude, as in I was only twenty-one, working on my first big scoop: this perfectly ordinary middle-age couple — gun runners. One night, I told him about it and when I woke up the next morning he was gone. Ever since then I've blamed myself as much as or even more than I've blamed Claude. With perfect 20-20 hindsight I've known that if I had just done things differently I'd have written the story and I would have won that award.”

“Lois, I understand, but I —”

“NO, Clark, you don't. If I had not slept with Claude, if he hadn't stolen my story, I would not have published it when he did. I wouldn't have won any awards; I would have kept digging, and digging and digging. I would have followed that story all the way to the Congo, and died there, just like she did, the other Lois Lane. Clark, if Claude hadn't stolen my story, I'd be dead now.

THE END