

Full Partners

By Lynn S. M. [[lois_and_clark_fan_at_verizon.net](#)] (Replace [_at_](#) with the appropriate symbol.)

Rated G

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Summary: Lois wonders how much she could really contribute to a partnership and possible marriage with Clark "Superman" Kent. An adaptation of the episode "We Have a Lot To Talk About."

Most of the A plot and much of the dialogue in this story were taken from the Lois & Clark episode "We Have a lot to Talk About," which was written by John McNamara. I have taken the liberty of veering from the show's plotline a bit, deleting some scenes, adding others, and rearranging the order of still others to better fit my story. This story is strictly not-for-profit and was written for entertainment purposes only. All characters in this story belong to D.C. Comics and Warner Brothers.

Thank you, Corrina (Female Hawk), for your tireless beta reading (and re-reading, and re-re-reading, and...) of this story. As is the case with all of my fiction you have BR-ed, your suggestions have made this story very much stronger than it otherwise would have been.

When Bobby Bigmouth had given her the tip about the explosives expert Joe the Blow, Lois' first instinct was to search his hotel room solo. After all, Clark hadn't exactly been easy to be around since she had told him that she wasn't yet ready to accept his marriage proposal. She'd be more comfortable looking about the hotel room on her own. But then she reconsidered. Perhaps an invitation to spend some time together would help Clark to realize that she wasn't rejecting him outright; and since this was work-related, it would be harder for him to decline her offer.

And so she found herself standing with Clark outside the bomber's hotel room, poised to pick the lock. "Ready, partner?" "Ready."

Within seconds, Lois had the door open, but as she glanced at Clark, she saw him suddenly tilt his head and then lower his glasses to stare intently in the direction of the elevator in the next hallway. He then gestured that they needed to leave immediately while at the same time, mouthing, "He's back." Lois grabbed his hand and tried to pull him inside so that they could find a hiding place, but Clark simply shook his head and gestured again that they should leave. Although Lois wasn't happy about his request, she acquiesced. The two retreated into the hallway with Lois carefully closing the door after them.

Lois waited until they were seated in the privacy of her Jeep to confront him. "What gives? Why did you insist we leave? We could have hidden in the hotel room, and we might have overheard an incriminating conversation."

"There was no need. When I saw him coming, I quickly scanned the room and saw - locked in his toolbox -- a diagram of the Museum of Art. There was nothing else of interest in the room. And remember -- I don't need to be in the room to eavesdrop." Clark tapped his ear, then held up a finger for silence. "He's taking a shower now and singing a rousing off-key chorus of Rubber Ducky -- trust me, you don't want to hear him singing. I don't think I'll hear much we can use in our investigation."

Lois nodded her agreement and started her Jeep. They drove to the Planet building in silence. Lois used the time to reflect on

the events of the past hour. This was the first time that she and Clark were conducting an investigation since she had realized that he was also Superman. His super abilities were proving very handy. His ability to keep lookout could save them from many sticky situations in the future. And he had already shown that he could eavesdrop and scan a room without even having to enter it. She recalled a time when Superman had cleaned her living room and organized her Rolodex so quickly that he had just been a blur. If he could read that fast, she could only imagine how rapidly he'd be able to go through the mounds of paperwork they often had to trudge through while trying to chase down leads. And then, too, he'd be able to write a complete story in the time it would take most people to type a headline.

And to think that when he had first been foisted upon her, she had thought he'd never be able to hold his own as a partner. No fear of that now! What a team they would make! His abilities would make him unsurpassed at finding out information. He could be in and out of a place before anyone even blinked. He could conduct surveillance without the need of equipment.

He could contribute so much to their partnership! And she could... She could... Just what *could* she contribute? After all, anything she could do, he could do better and faster. At least when they were first partners, she had all the contacts and was the better writer. But now, Clark knew everyone she did, and his writing, she had to admit to herself, was just as good as hers, even if it was still a bit too touchy-feely for her own tastes.

How ironic! Two years ago, she had feared that he would be a drag to her investigations, when all along, she must have been slowing him down. Why did he put up with having her as a partner? She might have been helpful to him when he was first learning the ropes at the Planet, but she was surely useless to him now. Worse than useless, in fact. Probably more of a hindrance.

For that matter, why did he want her to marry him? Why would he want to spend his free time with someone who would just slow him down? She was his inferior in every way -- she was slower than him, both mentally and physically. She was weaker than him, too. And compared to him, she was all but blind and deaf. He must have to watch his every move around her, lest he accidentally injure her. He would constantly have to slow down intolerably just so that she could keep up. Of course he did all of those things whenever he was around any human -- he had to in order to blend in and to keep those around him safe -- but how could he possibly consider marrying someone so much his inferior? Didn't he realize that such a marriage would sentence him to constant vigilance even during what little leisure time he would have at home? Why would he choose to live like that?

And what sort of person would she be to condemn him to that kind of a life? It must have been hard enough for him to be stuck with a useless partner. How could she possibly agree to saddle him with a worthless wife, as well? She couldn't. When they next had some time together outside of work, she would have to tell him that her "not yet" answer to his proposal was now a definite "no."

She was in a morose mood by the time they arrived at the Planet, but she managed to put on a facade of professional detachment during their conversation with Perry. It appeared that all three of them had received invitations to the Museum of Art's gala to be held on Saturday afternoon. Perry concluded that they should all attend, but that, since the diagram of the Museum of Art had been in Joe the Blow's toolbox, he would also invite the city's bomb squad.

Clark didn't think he would ever understand Lois. He had been sure that she would be thrilled about his discovery at the hotel -- and at first, she appeared to be pleased about it. But even though the journey was spent in silence, he could tell by her visage that her mood had deteriorated rapidly. By the time they

arrived at the Planet, she looked positively grim. He had considered asking her about it, but decided that, with the way things were between them recently, such an inquiry would probably just lead to a fight. And he knew that when Lois was ready to talk, nothing would keep her quiet. So when she had silently stepped out of the car and proceeded to Perry's office, he thought it best to follow her lead.

As soon as he got back to his apartment that evening, Clark called his parents to discuss his troubles.

"It's like we both... all of a sudden... aren't even sure that we like each other. And even working together is hard. I thought she would jump at the chance to have 'Superman' as her partner. I even made a point of using my abilities in front of her while we were conducting an investigation today. But instead of being happy about it, she just clammed up in the car afterwards and became increasingly glum."

His Mom replied, "Oh well, you have to remember that she has a lot to think about..."

And his Dad chimed in, "Yeah. You both do. You're taking some big steps. It's bound to be scary."

"I guess."

"Oh, honey, you sound so sad..."

They talked for a few minutes more. His parents commiserated with him and volunteered to come to Metropolis for a visit. He gladly accepted their offer.

Lois had just dried off from taking a shower and was donning a bathrobe when she heard a knock at her door. She was surprised to see Clark's mother on her doorstep.

"Martha!"

"I know it's rude to stop by without calling first and even ruder to stick my nose in where it doesn't belong, but..."

Lois interrupted, "Clark told you? Everything?"

Martha nodded and traced an "S" on her chest.

Lois invited her to come in and got them both some tea.

Although she liked Martha, she was surprised to see her and a little uncomfortable, given that Martha was, after all, the mother of the man whose proposal she planned to decline. She didn't know what to say and so, uncharacteristically, she decided to remain silent and let Martha take the lead.

Martha took a sip of tea and then opened the conversation. "Clark called us last night and was pretty upset. He needed someone to speak to. As he talked, I realized that you could probably use someone, too. And since I knew you'd keep his secret, I also knew there was no one here you could speak freely to about your relationship with him. I know what that's like. Almost thirty years, and you're the first woman I have ever been able to talk to about my boy."

The uneasiness Lois had been feeling dissipated with Martha's words, and she soon found herself hugging the older woman. "Thank you. Did Clark tell you that I hadn't actually declined his proposal? He had asked me less than a day after I discovered that he is Superman. And he didn't even tell me about his alter ego before he proposed; I figured it out on my own. I have a lot to think about. I thought then that I just needed time to think it over, to get to know him for who he really is before I gave him an answer. That's not unreasonable, is it?"

"Oh, not at all. But you said that you thought then that you needed time. What do you think now? Have you made up your mind?"

"Yesterday, Clark used his super-hearing and x-ray vision to determine when we needed to leave the scene of an investigation. Before I could even close the door, he had looked over the entire contents of the room and found the one scrap of paper with the information we needed -- and that paper was locked inside a toolbox. It would have taken me several minutes to search that room as thoroughly.

"That made me realize something. He doesn't need me. What could I possibly do that he couldn't do better and faster? I'm worthless to him as a partner. And if I were to marry him, I'd be just as worthless to him at home as at work. I used to fantasize about Superman loving me; but the reality is nothing like the fantasy. Clark says he loves me, but how could he possibly love someone who is so inferior to him in every way? It would be cruel of me to agree to marry him. If we were to wed, the scales would fall from his eyes sooner or later, and then he would regret being stuck with me."

"Oh, honey, let me tell you about my boy. You need to understand that Clark has always been alone. When he was thirteen and just beginning to be really strong -- really, really strong -- he made the decision on his own never to tell anybody. He said he wanted to fit in... But of course, he couldn't, not really. It broke my heart watching him having to hide so many things; afraid he was always going to be alone... Lois, for years his dearest dream has been to get married and possibly have a family -- to have a wife who knew all about him and still loved him. And from the first time he mentioned you to us, on his first visit home from Metropolis, I knew that he had fallen head over heels in love with you."

Lois fought back her tears. "Oh, Martha, you know I love him, too. I love him so much. But how could he possibly love me ... or any mere human, for that matter?"

Martha paused before asking a seemingly unrelated question. "Lois, have you ever cared for a toddler?"

Lois was slightly taken aback by the apparent non sequitur, but answered automatically. "Sure. I took care of my baby sister, Lucy, for most of our childhoods."

"You were bigger than her, and stronger, weren't you?"

"Yes. I am several years older than her."

"And you could do a lot of things she couldn't? Did you have to help her do things she couldn't do on her own?"

"Yes. I bathed her, and dressed her, and prepared her food."

"When you walked with her, did you have to slow your pace so that she could keep up?"

"Of course. Her legs were much smaller than mine."

"Did you love her?"

"Of course! More than anyone else in the whole world!"

Martha simply sat quietly and sipped her tea, giving Lois time to contemplate their conversation and discern her meaning.

Finally, when both women had finished their drinks, Lois spoke. "Thanks, Martha. You've given me a lot to think about. But I have to be at the Museum of Art soon for an assignment, and I really do have to start getting ready now."

"I'll be going, then. But if ever you want to talk, about Clark or anything else, you call me up. OK?"

"Sure. And thanks again."

Martha gave Lois a quick hug before heading out.

As Lois dressed and then drove to the museum, she contemplated her conversation with Martha. She now understood how Clark could love her, but did she want to marry him? She always realized that Lucy would grow up and become her physical and mental equal, but Lois knew that she herself would always remain like a toddler compared to Clark. Even if Clark really did love her, would such an unequal partnership be fair to either of them? Could it possibly last?

She put these thoughts aside as she approached Clark on the sidewalk. After they greeted each other, she asked him whether he was "looking into things." When he indicated that he was, she said, "So that's what you've been doing all these years when you pulled your glasses down. I thought you had an astigmatism." The smile that that elicited from Clark emboldened her to tell him, "Look, I have something I wanted to say..."

Clark interrupted her. "Me, too."

Perry cut in on their conversation to inform them that the

bomb squad was sweeping the museum. When he left, Lois had expressed a desire for them to talk after they finished up at the museum; but as she was speaking, Clark stared over his glasses at a covered table, then suddenly looked concerned.

“Uh oh. Just found a job for Superman.” He then became as still as a statue. He appeared to be listening to something which she couldn’t hear.

“Clark, what’s wrong?”

“Lois, I can’t move or I’ll set off the bomb. The bomb is underneath the table, but the sensors are locked onto me. I can’t move.”

“I have an idea.” Lois crawled underneath the table and, following Clark’s directions, diffused the bomb.

As Lois crawled out from beneath the table, Clark came over to her and put a hand on her side, while asking, “You OK?”

“Yeah. A little shaky.”

“You did great.”

“We did great.”

Clark took her in his arms and hugged her close. “I don’t know what I would have done without you. Thanks, partner.”

As Lois hugged him back, she realized that he spoke the truth. He had indeed needed her help. She commented wryly, “*I helped you?* I guess there’s always a first for everything.”

Puzzled, he leaned back to look at her face. “What are you talking about? You help me a lot!”

“Really? When?”

“Are you kidding? If it weren’t for you, Mazik would have killed my parents. And before that, I would have died of a bullet wound to my shoulder, assuming Trask didn’t kill me first. Not to mention all the times your intuitive leaps of logic helped us land a story. Have I told you lately that you’re amazing?”

As she reveled in his hug, she reflected that perhaps their partnership was more equal than she had originally thought. She was glad that she had not yet given Clark a negative answer to his proposal. She was now leaning toward agreeing to it. And then he kissed her and all thoughts disappeared.

She loved floating in Clark’s arms with the clouds below them and the panoply of stars above. “It’s so beautiful.”

Clark ruminated, “I used to come up here a lot by myself and just... drift. Not part of the stars, not part of the Earth. Not really knowing where I fit in... until I met you.”

Lois’ heart melted. “Oh, Clark...”

Clark continued. “Lois, I’ll wait for you. I’ll wait for you as long as you need.”

Clark’s intensity while saying that brought Martha’s comments back to Lois’ mind. He truly did love her and, amazingly enough, he needed her. His devotion to her gave her encouragement and hope for their future together.

She gazed into his eyes and said, “I want you to know I love you. And you’re not alone anymore.”

The tenderness and respect evident in Clark’s kiss affirmed to Lois that he considered her to be his full partner -- his equal -- in every way. He, who could do almost everything, needed her to complete him.

THE END