

# Fade Into You

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Rated: PG-13

Summary: Set during the episode “Contact” from Season 3. Lois Lane isn’t as easily deterred from having a long-overdue conversation when she shows up on Clark’s doorstep after a nightmare of her abduction. Can she make Clark see past his insecurities and move toward a future together?

Story Size: 4,353 words (24Kb as text)

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A million thoughts ran through Clark Kent’s mind as he held the phone to his ear, staring at the blue spandex of his alter-ego’s suit. Everything seemed to be spiraling further and further away. After nearly three years he finally had what he wanted. He should be ecstatic. There was no more hiding who he was from Lois. There was no more having to lie to her day in and day out.

He had been in love with Lois Lane for a long time—even before he realized it himself. It seemed he was the only one oblivious to his feelings. Both his parents and he suspected Jimmy and Perry knew. He could recall the early days of his, and Lois’ partnership when Perry had continued to push the two of them together.

Now, here he sat, contemplating the unforgivable. Could he really do this? Could he really give up on everything?

“How’s Lois?” his father’s voice echoed from the earpiece, pulling Clark back to the conversation he was having with his parents.

Clark let out a long breath, “That’s what I wanted to talk to you about.”

His mom’s voice interrupted, concerned, “Is this one of those father-son talks you want me to butt out of?”

Clark felt a blush cross his cheeks, realizing what his mom was insinuating and shook his head, “No, it’s not that kind of conversation, Mom. It’s just that... sometimes I think Lois and I shouldn’t even be together.”

The words were finally out there. The scary thoughts and nightmares that continued to keep him up at night. His inner fears that were slowly becoming a reality.

“Oh, Clark,” came his mom’s response, “did you two have a fight?”

“No, nothing like that,” Clark sighed, uncertain how to explain. “Sometimes I worry that I’m a jinx.”

“A jinx?” his father asked.

Clark nodded, “Well, yeah, let’s face it, ever since she’s known me, Lois’ been kidnapped, frozen, pushed off buildings, almost stabbed, and it’s all because of me.”

“Have you talked to Lois about this?” his mom asked cautiously.

He could hear the disappointment in her voice, but couldn’t bring himself to defend the theory that had been swimming in his mind. After the day he’d had of rescuing Lois again and again from blackouts and not being able to do anything to stop them, he found himself drawn further and further into the jinx theory that had formed.

His dad cleared his throat and sighed, “Son, no matter how much you love somebody, you can’t protect them from all the evil in the world all the time. Even if you *are* Superman.”

Clark heard the words, but in his head, he knew there was at least some truth to the theory of him being a jinx. Ever since Superman had arrived on the scene three years ago, Lois had been put in danger more and more in order to draw his alter-ego out. He just wasn’t sure he could justify continuing to put her at risk.

Clark let out an unconvinced sigh, “Yeah, I guess.”

His mom piped in eagerly, “And don’t forget, Lois knows what being involved with you means. It’s her choice, too. She’s not a six-year-old, you know.”

Clark let out a snort, “That’s what *she* said,”

“See?” His dad cheered, “She’s smart, just like your mom.”

Clark allowed a small smile to cross his face just before his conversation with his parents was interrupted by the pounding on his front door.

“Clark?! Clark?! Wake up, it’s me! Clark?!” Lois’ frantic voice came from the other side of the door.

“Mom, Dad, I’ve gotta go. Lois is here,” Clark said quickly hanging up the phone and then running to the door to answer his girlfriend’s frantic pleas. He opened the door and saw a tearful Lois standing outside with a comforter wrapped around her plaid pajamas. Before he could ask her to come in, she sprinted past him, pacing around the foyer in frantic babble-mode.

“Clark!” Lois’ tearful voice came in shaky as she held the comforter around her while pacing. “I remember being kidnapped by the aliens! I had a flashback! I could see them!” Her cheeks were stained from tears as she held up her arms to emphasize the description. “They had big, bulging heads, and they’d snatched these other people, and they had, had these *thingamajiggies* over their mouths, so they sounded like...”

Unable to stand the sight of her in tears like this any longer her wrapped her in his arms and murmured, “Lois, it’s okay. You’re here now. Everything’s all right.”

“... then this big mechanical arm came over me with a needle pointed at my neck and I was screaming and screaming and screaming, and you weren’t there...” her voice cracked from the strain of the tears that were now flowing freely down her cheeks as he held her close, running his hands up and down her back. He silently cursed himself for allowing anything to happen to her.

“I never should’ve let you go home alone that night,” he said more to himself than to her.

“It’s not your fault,” Lois insisted, shaking her head.

“But I *feel* responsible.” He wanted so badly to tell her how badly he blamed himself each time she found herself in danger. He looked down, unwilling to look into her dark brown eyes filled with tears.

“But you shouldn’t,” she argued with him.

“Of course I should.” Clark felt a lump in his throat as he attempted to tell her what had been troubling him for so long. He still couldn’t bring himself to look her in the eye, choosing instead to look down at his lap as he held her against him, “I love you. That’s what makes it so difficult. When I’m catching some bad guy, I’m thinking, is Lois okay? Or is she slowly boiling alive in hot oil?”

Lois ran a hand across his cheek. Her voice was tender as she forced him to look at her, “Really?”

Why was this so hard?

Why couldn’t he just have what everyone else had?

For the longest time, all he ever wanted was to be normal and have someone to love, and now here he was facing the possibility of losing everything. He swallowed hard and looked up, meeting her gaze as he stroked her cheek, “Yes. And what I can’t stand is the idea that the closer we get, the more at risk you are.”

Lois immediately relented, shaking her head adamantly, “That’s not true!”

“Lois, for the sake of argument, let’s just say you were kidnapped by aliens.” He didn’t believe it, but he needed to get her to see things from his point of view. Just once he needed her to stop insisting on being right and jumping into the deep end without checking the water level first. It was something he both loved and hated about her. Her tenacious nature was great at getting stories and righting wrongs, but it was what caused her to become bait for Superman on so many occasions as well.

“In a way, you were lucky, because what if it had been your

average earthbound criminal and when you were drugged, you'd let slip that Clark Kent is Superman? Everyone knows that you and I are an item, and to get to Superman, they would do *anything* to you."

Lois slumped her shoulders, and he could see the tears in her eyes as the words hit her, "So what do you want me to do, run away and hide? Join a nunnery?"

"No! It's just, hard, that's all. Harder than I ever thought it would be." Clark admitted ruefully. He could feel the dread in his own voice and wondered momentarily how true his father's words really were. Was this something his dad really felt with his mom or was this just another situation that made him different?

Lois' arms wrapped around him and she whispered, "But we can make it work, I know we can." He wasn't so sure, but he knew it couldn't hurt to at least try to figure this out together. Given that he'd at least been able to voice his concern to her he hoped that would help them address the inner battle he was having regarding their relationship.

Lois smoothed her hands across his face and leaned in to kiss him, putting to rest the fears his mind continued to focus on as he found himself slowly forgetting what they had been talking about in the first place. They slowly pulled apart, and a satisfied grin crossed her face, "In fact, I want you to know. I mean, I think I'm ready to..." She let out a sheepish giggle as she looked back up at him. "I am sucking the romance out of this like a vacuum."

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Lois could see the pain written on Clark's face as she leaned against him. She wanted more than anything to take away the fears and anxiety that haunted him just as he always found a way to calm her worries. She held his gaze and smoothed her hands across his face. His eyes closed for a moment, seeming to hold onto the feeling of her hand against him. Like polar opposite magnets drawing toward one another with an uncontrollable pull, she found herself unable to stop herself as she leaned in to capture his mouth with hers. Her hand slid up the side of his face, feeling him relax against her. It thrilled her to no end to know how affected he was by a simple touch or caress. Here he was the strongest man in the world able to bend steel bars over his head and yet he became just as weak in the knees from a simple caress. It amazed her to know she had so much power over him, and at the same time, she knew he held the same power over her.

That knowledge scared her more than anything but at the same time put her at ease. She felt safe with Clark, knowing it wasn't just her heart at risk in all of this but his as well. He loved her in a way she had never felt before. There was still the fear of not being enough like she had experienced before, but she knew it was unfounded with Clark. He had trusted her with his greatest secret and his heart, letting her see the side of him no one ever saw. She knew there would be ups and downs, but this was worth the risk. She knew that.

She felt a sigh of satisfaction as they slowly pulled apart and a sigh of satisfaction escaped her lips as she grinned back at him. She was hopelessly in love with him. She had been for almost three years she was just too stubborn to admit it until now. The corners of her mouth twitched into a full grin, and she whispered coyly, "In fact, I want you to know. I mean, I think I'm ready to..." She let out a sheepish giggle as she looked back up at him. "I am sucking the romance out of this like a vacuum."

"What?" he looked back at her in confusion.

She sighed, leaning into him and capturing his mouth with hers, running her hands up and down the sides of his face. "Yes," she whispered her lips against his and added, "My answer is yes,"

He stopped, pulling away to look at her. His eyes seeming to register what she was saying. But instead of elation, there was sorrow and fear in his eyes as his thumb brushed down the curve of her neck. She felt her heart hammering in her chest as she waited for him to respond. What was so fascinating about her neck that he couldn't...

"Lois, what is this?" Clark leaned closer, pointing at a spot on her neck.

"What is what?" she asked exasperatedly.

"It looks like a puncture mark," he frowned.

Recalling the nightmare flashback and the needle that had been headed for her she pulled herself back, leaning against the comfortable cushions of his couch. She tightened her grip on the comforter around her, feeling self-conscious as she watched Clark lean over and bury his face in his hands. She tried not to focus on the fact that she had just put herself out there and he still hadn't acknowledged it.

She let out a breath, trying to pull his attention back to what she was trying to say, "Clark? Did you hear what I just said?"

He seemed lost in thought as he began listing ideas off, "You need to go to STAR Labs in the morning and have them check for any drugs that might be in your system."

She closed her eyes, trying to practice the little amount of patience she had and not snap at him. He hadn't heard her. He saw the mark on her neck, and now he was trying to plan how to handle it just like he always did. Any other time she would be right there with him wanting to get to the bottom of who was behind this, but this wasn't any other time. She had taken the plunge and put herself out there, and he had said...nothing.

"Lois?" he tapped her shoulder, "Did you hear what I said?"

Her eyes fluttered open, and she looked back at Clark who was staring at her expectantly, "I'm sorry, what?" She heard the bite in her tone and yet still couldn't bring herself to feel bad when she saw the surprised expression on Clark's face.

His eyes shifted slightly as he stared back at her, "I said you should probably stay here tonight. We can head over to STAR Labs first thing and..."

"Fine," Lois crossed her arms over her chest, feeling more irritated than before as he continued to stare back at her. "Maybe you can have them check your hearing while you're at it."

"What?" he looked back at her in surprise.

"Are you *seriously* trying to pretend you didn't hear me?" Lois snapped angrily. "I mean, selective hearing might be a stretch when you can hear cries for help from across town." She huffed angrily.

"Selective hearing?" he choked out in an almost laugh. The idea seemed preposterous, but given the facts, in front of her, the only other option was he was deliberately not answering her. The more she thought about why he wouldn't at least acknowledge her acceptance of his proposal the angrier and more hurt she got.

"Lois, what are you talking about?"

"No, no, no," she shook her head and looked down, "I've said it once, and obviously it's not that important to you..."

"Lois, I'm sorry I wasn't paying attention," Clark apologized, turning toward her. He placed a hand on her shoulder, "I'm listening now."

She lifted her head up, uncertain if she wanted to repeat it given his attention span seemed to be that of a dog chasing its tail. "Sure you don't have an errand to run? Maybe there's a book that needs to be returned or a shipment of cheese of the month to look for?"

"Ha, ha," he cracked a smile at her. "I've already done the patrol for the night, and those excuses were buried months ago," he retorted, running his hand across her cheek. She knew what he was trying to do and it wasn't going to work.

"I'm still mad at you," she sniffed, turning her head away from him.

"I'm sorry," he leaned in to kiss her cheek.

"I know what you're trying to do," she accused as a smile crossed her face.

"What am I trying to do?" he murmured, brushing a featherlight kiss on her other cheek.

"You're trying to distract me from being mad," she accused as his lips moved to her jawline.

"I have no idea what you're talking about," he whispered, leaning in to press his lips against hers.

"It's not going to work," she argued half-heartedly as his lips trailed against the curve of her neck. "I'm still mad at you."

"Why?" he asked, leaning closer. The bridge of his nose teased her ear, and she could feel the heat of his breath against her. He was not making this easy.

"You were ignoring me," she let out a heavy breath as he moved closer.

"But I'm not ignoring you now," he pointed out.

"No, but I don't like being ignored," she reminded him, feeling a pulsing sensation run down her spine as his hand traced the curve of her throat.

"I'm sorry," his lips pressed into hers. "I got distracted. It's been a long day of non-stop rescues."

Something in his tone felt off as his hands moved through her hair. She let out a sigh, setting aside her irritation with him for a moment to address whatever was bothering him. Earlier he'd been blaming himself for her being put in danger again. The truth was if anyone was at fault it was her. She was the one that had turned down the escort home. The long list of criminals she's put away rivaled the ones Superman had against him. She had made a lot of enemies over the years and had had plenty of close calls. Though to listen to Clark you'd think she was never in danger before he put on the cape, and 'S.'

She placed a hand on his cheek, forcing him to look at her. "This isn't your fault you know."

He pulled back, looking at her for a long moment before he responded, "We don't know that."

"I'm an adult, Clark," she reminded him of the obvious. "Sometimes I'm going to make rash decisions that end with less than ideal circumstances." She gestured to the puncture mark on her neck, "Like getting abducted and possibly drugged."

"To get to me," he pointed out the obvious.

"Or to get back at me for putting them or someone they know behind bars." Lois rolled her eyes as she let out a sigh. "You're not the only one that's helped put criminals behind bars."

"I'm a *jinx*," he said with a grunt, pulling away.

"A what?" she almost laughed but thankfully was able to cover it with a cough.

"I'm serious," he retorted, shaking his head. "You've been in danger since our first assignment together. Kidnappings, drugged, pushed off of buildings, and probably a lot more..."

Lois did her best not to give in to her instinct to laugh at his impossible to follow train of thought. "Thinking pretty high of yourself there, aren't you? I mean, really *every* situation is your fault?"

"People keep using you as bait for Superman," he pointed out.

"And Perry, and Jimmy, and most of Metropolis..." Lois listed off the names on her hand with a smirk.

"Lois, this is serious," Clark argued.

"Well, you know if you are a jinx you're doing a horrible job of it." She retorted with a grin. "I mean, jinxes typically cause the bad situations, right?" She leaned in to kiss him. "If memory serves me right you're typically the one doing the rescuing."

"You wouldn't be in danger in the first place if it weren't for your connection to me," Clark argued.

"Well, it's a little late for that," Lois teased him. "I mean unless you plan on just retiring to the Alps and becoming a monk. Then again it would be hard to explain that to the criminals that showed up. 'Oh, sorry Mr. Bad Guy I can't call him. See, Superman retired because he thinks he's a jinx.'"

"Laugh all you want it's still true," Clark retorted.

"You give yourself *way* too much credit," Lois groaned, shaking her head. "I was getting into dangerous situations well before I even graduated from high school. Most of them were self-created disasters that required some quick thinking and a lot of speed. Why do you think I take Tae Kwon Do three times a

week?"

"You were?" Clark looked over at her with a curious expression.

"If anyone's the jinx, it's me," Lois let out a sigh. "No matter which story I try to cover it always ends in a big front-page piece with at least one person threatening to kill me."

"You seem pretty proud of your jinx status," Clark observed aloud with an amused expression.

"Well, you don't get to have three Kerths by playing it safe," she smirked back at him proudly.

"So what you're saying is I should be running for the hills," he responded with a half-smile.

She gave him a playful grin, "I wouldn't recommend it. Gets kinda boring with only yourself to talk to."

"Is that so?" he leaned closer, and she felt her insides flutter. It really wasn't fair that he had that effect on her. "I think you're only in trouble if you start answering yourself."

She swatted his chest playfully, "Lame."

"But see now you're not mad at me," he boasted proudly.

"I'm still mad," she retorted.

"You don't seem mad," he leaned closer in, and she took a shaky breath leaning in. "Maybe a little skittish."

"I am not skittish," she let out a low moan as his lips brushed against her throat, grazing against the sensitive flesh with the edge of his teeth. "That's not fair."

"I love you," his mouth captured hers, more intense than his previous kisses had been. She felt her insides flurry with excitement as the gap between them closed and his arms wrapped around her.

"I love you too, but..." she let out a short gasp as his lips moved to her jaw, creating a rain of featherlight kisses along the frame of her face.

"But what?" he murmured in between heated kisses that continued to make it difficult to concentrate. "What were you trying to say?"

"You still feel like a jinx?" she asked cautiously, running her palms up and down the front of his chest.

"No, quite the opposite," he responded, stroking her cheek as he held her close, continuing the rain of featherlight kisses down the curve of her neck.

"Good," she sighed against him.

"You're still not going to tell me?" he wondered curiously.

"It was nothing," she sighed happily as she leaned into him. "I just made a decision."

"What decision?" he asked as his hands moved up the lower part of her back and she let out a moan as the intensity of his kisses grew.

"Your proposal," she let out a low moan as he pulled her closer, allowing her legs to move across his lap, so she was hovering over him. His hand moved to cup her cheek as his mouth captured hers.

"Your decision being?" he murmured against her lips.

"Yes," she sighed happily against him, deepening the kiss. "Even if you *do* have selective hearing."

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"Yes," she sighed happily against him, deepening the kiss. "Even if you *do* have selective hearing."

He let out a light chuckle as he pulled her closer, intensifying his caresses as his mouth sought hers with a newly ignited passion with the knowledge that he was no longer just holding his girlfriend in his arms but his fiancée. "I love you, Lois Lane,"

An elated grin crossed her face as she ran her hands up and down the sides of his face, pressing her body into his, "See, this

was the reaction I was expecting.”

“I’m sorry,” he murmured against her, letting out a low moan as he felt the heat of her body pressed against him. He could feel his body responding to her heated caresses. “You have my undivided attention from now until eternity.”

“Eternity, huh?” she teased leaning against him, running her palms over his shoulders. “Don’t make promises you can’t deliver on.”

He let out a low moan as he felt the soft flesh from beneath her pajama top press into him. They needed to slow down, or neither of them would be focused on the conversation they were having. He let out a low moan as he felt her hands move up down his chest. “Nightstand,” he blurted out, recalling where he had her ring as he pushed her off his lap.

“Nightstand?” she looked at him curiously.

In a flash he moved at super-speed, retrieving the black velvet box he’d kept in his nightstand, hoping and waiting for the moment when he could finally place the princess cut diamond on Lois Lane’s hand.

“Oh, nightstand,” she nodded, recognizing the velvet box in his hand.

He smiled and popped the box open, revealing the diamond ring he’d presented her with a few months ago. A smile crossed his face as he held the ring out for her. A huge grin spread across her face as he slipped the ring on her hand, bringing her hand to his mouth and pressing his lips to the hand that now donned the engagement ring.

“Now it’s official,” he smiled back at her.

She leaned in to kiss him, stroking his cheek, “I love you Clark Kent.” He met her gaze as they pulled apart, feeling the intensity of the emotional rollercoaster that had been riding inside him for the last hour.

“I love you, Lois Lane,” he responded in turn, wrapping his arms around her as he pulled her toward him and captured her mouth with his.

THE END