

I Spent the Night With...

by htbthomas

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Rating: T

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Author's Notes: Thank you to lastwordslinger for the banner!



Lois stared at the photo on the front page of *The Daily Planet*, unable to do much more than shake her head. In the photo was Clark Kent, ruffled and flustered, held in the arms of a goddess. And she literally was - Diana of Themyscira, sent by the gods to help mankind. Though why she had decided to don a gold bustier and pair of star-spangled briefs to do that was anyone's guess.

Her name and origin were all anyone knew about her since she had arrived in Metropolis last week. The Amazon hadn't deigned to grant any interviews. But maybe that was all going to change after what had happened last night...

"Clark!"

Lois flung herself forward desperately, her fingers skimming the edge of Clark's trouser cuff. But she hadn't been quick enough to grasp it - he tumbled downward from the roof ledge to the street five stories below. Her heart dropped in her chest at the same rate as Clark's fall and tears began to sting her eyes. *Not Clark...! Not now...!*

Jimmy, who had shouted in alarm at the same moment, suddenly gasped. And then Lois could see it, too. A woman, flying through the air, carrying Clark as if he weighed nothing at all.

"Wow, incredible," Jimmy breathed. He lifted his camera, and the shutter started clicking away.

The closer they got, the easier it was to see why Jimmy was smitten. Just about *any* man would be drooling over her - all wavy raven hair, golden-toned skin and perfect physique. Not that Lois really noticed, except with a reporter's trained eye.

"I guess she's okay," Lois murmured back. "If you like girls who show a lot of skin..."

Jimmy removed his eye from the viewfinder to smirk at Lois. But before he could respond, the woman gracefully touched down on the roof. Clark staggered a little when she placed him on his feet - he never had a head for heights. Lois rushed over to him, placing a hand on his back.

"Are you okay, Clark?"

He nodded shakily, then turned to the superheroine. "Th-thank you, miss," he stammered gratefully. "I don't know what I would have done without you."

"I am happy to have helped." The woman smiled enigmatically as she lifted into the air.

"Wait! Diana!" Lois called boldly, taking a step forward. "Will you answer a few questions?"

The woman paused and gave Lois a steady look. "Perhaps later. You are reporters for *The Daily Planet*, yes?" She looked straight at Clark for the answer.

"Yes, Princess," he answered humbly.

"I will remember. But I must go - I believe I am needed some miles distant from here." She kept her searching gaze on Clark. "Please take care in the future."

He blushed.

She was gone a moment later, gliding away to the east.

Jimmy let out a triumphant laugh. "Our stakeout was a bust, but I bet we still got a front page!" Jimmy held his camera aloft and set off for the roof access door. "Wait'll Perry sees these!"

Clark was still staring out over the skyline, breathing heavily. Was he watching her go? Lois couldn't tell - he looked almost shell-shocked.

"Are you sure you're okay, Clark?" Lois asked softly.

"Yeah... that was just a... a close one."

Lois threaded her arm through his and led him toward the door. "Too close." With a nudge, she chided, "I *told* you not to stand near the edge."

Lois set the paper back down on her desk, and looked up toward the coffeemaker, where Clark was surrounded by a dozen eager colleagues - including Richard, Gil, Steve Lombard and Jimmy - all male. No doubt wanting a first-hand account of his meeting with the Princess.

Huffing in disgust, Lois stalked toward them. *Time to chase off the buzzards.*

"So is she really as... impressive... as she looks on TV?" Lombard, the *Planet's* sportswriter, was asking, making an unnecessary gesture to demonstrate what he meant.

"Well, she was rather, uh-"

"Not as impressive as the black eyes she would give you if she could hear you right now, Lombard," Lois sneered. "Now leave the celebrity gossip to Polly and go back to your poor excuse for a sports column."

Lombard chortled, his eyes glittering. "Meow, Lois, put away the claws. Just because Kent here is breaking up your superhero monopoly..."

"My *what*?" Her voice became razor-sharp.

Richard and Jimmy, who had known well enough to stay out of it, took a step back. Gil moved closer to Clark and folded his arms.

"You know what I mean." Lombard smirked, looking between Lois and Clark, who was shifting awkwardly. "Of course, we all know it goes deeper than that..."

Lois got right in his face, and lowered her voice to a dangerous pitch. "You want deep?"

I'll stick my foot so deep up your ass, that you'll be walking funny right up until-"

Lombard stepped back quickly, trying to hide his fear of her with bravado. "Okay, okay, Lois! You don't have to go all *psycho* on me." He beat a hasty retreat back over to his desk, leaving his coffee on the shelf. It could get cold for all Lois cared.

"Good luck," Richard murmured softly and patted Clark on the arm consolingly. He, Gil and Jimmy moved off, giving Lois and Clark some space.

Clark cleared his throat. "I was really going to say that she was *tall*, honest, Lois."

"I know..." Lois growled, still fuming over Lombard. Then she took a deep breath and turned toward Clark. "At least there are a few real gentlemen around here who think with more than their crotch." She walked back to her desk, expecting Clark to follow. They usually had their morning powwow at her desk before tackling their assignments for the day.

"Though in some ways, I don't blame those fellows..."

"What?" Lois glanced up at Clark in alarm.

He shifted uneasily. "Well, those superheroes... they do like to wear very *revealing* clothing, don't they?"

Lois started to blush and worry at the same time. Of course she had noticed how good Superman looked in his costume right away. She would have to be blind not to! But if she admitted that aloud, then she would have to accept that Clark might have noticed the same thing about the Princess.

"I suppose they do," she said, not meeting his eyes.

"Don't you-?" Clark began, but a shout from the conference room interrupted him.

"Morning meeting! Everyone in here *pronto*!" Perry's shout was even more tense than usual. He pivoted on his heel to stalk back to the head of the conference table.

Lois shrugged and stood. "After you?" She gestured for Clark to lead.

They took their spots at the table in their usual places. Now that the two of them were partners again, no one dared separate them at meetings. Even if they had been late, there would have been two empty places near the center of the table.

"So," Perry began with no preamble. "Wonder Woman! What've we got on her?"

"She's from Themyscira," one person said.

"She's invulnerable and can fly - just like Superman," another offered.

Perry leaned on the table with a scowl. "Tell me something I *don't* know, people. Something that hasn't already been said in every other news outlet in Metropolis." He began to pace. "Why is she here? What does she want? How long have her people been living on that island, completely off the radar of modern man?"

"Maybe they have some sort of advanced technology!" Jimmy put in excitedly. "If every satellite in the world missed Themyscira, they'd have to!"

Everyone held their breath to see what Perry would say. "Those are..." He paused, and then looked out the window thoughtfully. "Those are good questions, Olsen. Now we need someone to ask them!"

Lois raised her hand to volunteer. She was the one with the superhero experience, after all. The uh, superhero *interviewing* experience, anyway. It would be better to have a woman-to-woman interview - the Amazons were rumored to shun men. "I could try to-"

Richard interrupted her with, "I think International should handle it. She's an emissary from-"

"Kent!" Perry announced, ignoring both of them. "You try to contact the Princess. Who better to talk to her than the man she saved?" He nodded in satisfaction. "It worked before, it

might work again."

"Ch-Chief, I really don't think I'm qualified to handle this. Lois should..."

"Why not, Clark?" Richard asked with interest, leaning back in his chair. His cocky expression was maddening. "You have just as much experience interviewing Superman as Lois does."

The room went quiet - they didn't often have a ringside seat to the office love triangle.

"Richard, what are you trying to do - live vicariously through Clark? I think the Amazon would appreciate having a female reporter interview her instead of a leering male." Lois lightly touched Clark's sleeve. "Not that I mean you, Clark," she murmured.

"I just think it's a bit of poetic justice."

"I'll give you poetic-"

"Knock it off, both of you," Perry growled. "I said I wanted Kent to get the interview and I meant it." He lifted his gaze to the rest of the room. "Now the rest of you, back to work!"

People filed out, murmuring about what they were going to work on next, or gossiping about what they had just seen. Lois glared at Richard as he stood and left the room slowly, a knowing smirk on his face. Usually he didn't let sour grapes over their failed relationship get in the way of business. What had gotten into him?

Perry had come up to Clark. "I'm counting on you to get this interview, Kent. I think you're the best man for the job."

"Well, th-thank you, Mr. White. I will do my best."

"I know you will." He patted Clark on his large shoulder. "Now get to it!"

Lois and Clark walked out, side by side, and she elbowed him lightly. "So, do you think she'll agree to meet with you?"

"I don't know, Lois... but I guess it wouldn't hurt to ask." He stopped in the middle of the bullpen and rubbed his chin thoughtfully with one hand. "I wonder what kind of food she likes?"

Lois stood in the hallway around the corner from Clark's apartment. She couldn't *believe* Clark had landed the interview so easily, and to make matters worse, had invited Diana for *dinner* to his apartment. When Lois had responded in disbelief, he had simply replied, "But didn't it work for you?"

Of course it had! Clark couldn't think that he was going to recreate Lois' first interview with Superman, did he? But knowing Clark, he just might... He would be dressed in his finest suit, maybe one that didn't hang baggily on his frame. He would wait on his tiny balcony for the Princess to descend...

Crap! Why was she waiting in the hallway when Diana would probably come from outside? Stupid, stupid, stupid! Even more stupid than trying to spy on Clark's interview.

She didn't know why she felt compelled to be here. When she had dropped off Jason with Richard, he had been wearing that smug smile again. She almost throttled him right there, impressionable five-year-old present or not. But as she was leaving, he reached out and touched her sleeve. "You don't have anything to worry about, you know."

She wanted to agree with him, but instead she turned back for a moment and gave him a sad smile. "Don't I?"

Maybe she just didn't want Clark to make the same mistakes that she had. She had been overwhelmed by Superman's charisma and charming smile, half in love before her feet had touched the ground after her rescue.

Suddenly she could hear voices inside Clark's apartment. Clark's baritone and a smooth alto, which she assumed belonged to the Princess.

Lois just had to hear what they were talking about. But she didn't want to put her ear to the door...

A few minutes later, courtesy of her trusty set of lock picks, Lois was in the apartment next door. Luckily, the owner wasn't home - no one to catch her breaking and entering. But just to be safe, she kept the lights off while she crept toward the balcony. She carefully slid open the glass door and pressed herself to the wall behind the partition which separated the two apartments.

She could hear their voices becoming clearer; they must have moved from the living room to the balcony again.

"Must we, Clark?" the Princess was saying.

"I know it's a lot to ask, Diana... but you would really be doing me a favor. My editor insisted that I be the one to interview you."

Lois' eyebrows drew down. '*Clark?*' '*Diana?*' Awfully familiar already, weren't they? Her heart started to beat a little faster. Just how familiar *were* they? He seemed more confident, too, no trace of his usual nervousness.

"Why was I not interviewed by Ms. Lane? She would have been just fine."

That was Lois' question exactly. Why hadn't Perry sent her? He should have *known* that she would have gotten a fantastic article out of it.

"She did try to convince him... but he had some crazy idea that I should try to recreate Lois' famous interview wi-" Clark stopped suddenly.

"What? Do you hear something?"

His nervousness came back in full force. "I-I think I hear the timer on the oven." Clark tripped over his words. "And do you feel cold? Maybe we should eat inside..."

"I feel perfectly-"

There was a sudden wind, and Lois pulled her blazer closer around her.

The Amazon must not have been resistant to cold, because she added, "Perhaps I *will* join you inside."

Lois heard the door slide shut again.

Damn. It was going to be nearly impossible to hear what they were saying now. She moved back into the apartment, out of the cold wind. If Lois only had super-hearing or X-ray vision... But talk about the world's flimsiest excuse for calling on Superman - spying on someone for personal reasons. Especially her partner, for whom she felt...

Felt what?

She'd always cared for Clark, and sometimes she thought she remembered feeling more for him, but her feelings for Superman had always superseded them. Not anymore. After everything with Jason, and her messy break-up with Richard, she felt like she needed to close that chapter in her life. And the more that she and Clark worked together, the more she was starting to feel again. Much more.

Why hadn't she told him that yet?

She could hear the sound of flatware striking plates, and voices murmuring earnestly; every once in a while, a shout of laughter from either Clark or the Princess. It was nothing like she would have imagined between a country bumpkin and royalty. All right, 'country bumpkin' was unfair - he was just as professional as she was in an interview, as much as she hated to admit it.

Had they been seeing each other in secret, outside of the one time Diana had saved him? After all, Lois had often met with Superman off the record. Was he... falling for Diana? Lois swallowed back a lump in her throat.

She had to warn him, tell him that he was making a mistake. She had fallen for her superhero, had committed the ultimate sin of getting too close to a source, and now she had a son, a broken engagement, and no one to cuddle up with at night in the end. Clark would pine after Diana as she went off to save the world, not knowing whether she would ever come back, or whether they could really have a life together...

Lois' hands began to shake with suppressed fear and sadness. She started to dig in her purse for a cigarette, before she remembered there weren't any inside. Clark hated the habit as much as Superman had. And Clark had actually been the one to convince her to quit. She couldn't betray him by starting up now.

She heard chairs scraping across the hardwood floor, sounding like they were being pushed back. She followed the sound of the voices toward the balcony again, and she cracked open the sliding door to hear what was being said.

"Thank you for a lovely evening, Clark. I look forward to reading the interview."

"No, th-thank you for agreeing to talk with me. Have a safe trip home..."

There was a long silence. What were they doing? Was he kissing her? Pulling her close and wrapping her with those solid arms. Lois tried to block out the image but it seemed inscribed into her consciousness.

"Clark," the Princess said a few minutes later in a surprisingly steady voice. "Would you fly with me?"

"You must have read my mind. I would love to."

There was a whoosh of air and then complete silence. Lois had to forcibly restrain herself from going out onto the balcony to watch them fly off. But her hands gripped the edges of the door with greater force than necessary. She closed her eyes and tried to will the memories of her own flights with Superman away. It was no use - they would probably haunt her the rest of the night.

She grabbed up her things and wiped away an angry tear. To hell with it. She might have given up cigarettes, but she hadn't given up alcohol.

I Spent the Night with a Princess: Wonder Woman Tells All was emblazoned across the front page of the next evening edition. The language of the article was very professional, very Clark, not nearly as titillating as the headline would lead the reader to believe. But of course, it wouldn't be, this was *The Daily Planet*, not the *Star*.

But Lois knew that the actual interview had been much more intimate than Clark had described in the article. On one hand, it was nice to know that Clark wasn't the type to kiss and tell, but on the other hand, not knowing if he had kissed Diana was slowly driving Lois mad.

She still had the paper in her hands when Clark appeared by her side. "So what did you think of it, Lois?"

As much as she worried for Clark, she couldn't bring herself to condemn him for the very thing she had fallen into years ago. "Great article. Very informative."

He tilted his head, looking down over the tops of his glasses. "Is that all?"

"Yes, I said it was great, didn't I? Now what's our next assignment?" She folded up the paper haphazardly and shoved it into her top drawer. She gathered up her notepad, not able to look him in the eyes.

"Lois..." He put his hand on her elbow. "It was just an article."

"Of course it was." Just like she had told Richard last year. She gently shrugged off his hand and started to shuffle through the file folders on her desk.

"Really." He put his hands on her shoulders and turned her toward him. When she didn't look up, he placed a finger under her chin and tilted her eyes up to his. "That's *all* it was."

She finally looked into those clear blue eyes, shining with something more than nervous energy or lovelorn longing. She so wanted to believe him. Her eyes drifted down to his full lips, the ones she was sure Miss Diana of Themyscira had tasted...

The elevator dinged behind them, and Lois broke out of her trance, whirling to see who had interrupted them. And there was the Princess herself, dressed in a long, flowing Grecian-style gown, her hair piled on top of her head with careless grace. A long slit up both sides showed off her endless, gorgeous legs, and a golden necklace showed off her perfect cleavage peeking out of the top of the gown. The few people who had been working late in the office stopped their typing and phone conversations to stare in fascination. Superman had never come right into the bullpen like this...

Lois stepped away from Clark, and back, expecting him to take Diana's hand and glide off together. But Diana stopped about five feet away from them, and nodded regally to each of them. "Ms. Lane, Mr. Kent."

"Princess," Clark replied, none of the familiarity of last night in his voice.

"I wish to thank you for a lovely and factual article. I would be pleased to grant more interviews with *The Daily Planet*."

"I'm so glad you liked the article," Clark responded graciously. "You didn't have to come in person, though."

"I did not mind. I knew I would be dining at a restaurant nearby this evening."

Lois looked back and forth between the two of them, confused. So... was she here for a date, or not?

"Dining at a...?" Clark opened his mouth slightly, understanding dawning on his face. Of course, Lois felt as much in the dark as ever.

The elevator dinged again and this time, a tall man stepped out, dressed to the nines in an Armani suit and expensive shoes. "Diana, darling. Are you coming? Alfred has the limo waiting downstairs."

Lois' eyes grew two sizes larger as she realized who the Princess' date was. The legendary playboy millionaire of Gotham City, Bruce Wayne.

"I will be with you in a moment, Bruce," Diana told him, a charming blush rising on her cheeks. Then she turned to Lois and Clark. "I wish the two of you a lovely evening. The constellations are particularly bright tonight, are they not?"

She swiveled on the heel of her golden sandals, took Bruce's arm and they got into the elevator. Bruce gave Clark an enigmatic wink just as the doors closed.