

Family Picnic

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Rating: K+

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A/N: Written for a visual prompt for the 12daysofclois. I interpreted it as a picnic on the beach and this fic is what happened. This is set six years before *Revelations*.

"Don't go too far! Sophie, can you watch them?" Lois Lane ordered her fifteen year old daughter as her other daughters, ten year old twins Lucy and Ella, burst out of the family car and ran towards the beach.

"On it, Mom." Sophie set off after her sisters, calling them back as Lois fumbled with the car-seat her youngest, Chris, was in. At nine months old Lois and Clark were only just starting to get used to their latest little surprise. They'd both thought they were done after the twins had been born, five kids were more than enough, Lois had said firmly as they'd left the hospital ten years ago, trying to quiet two screaming infants and keep control of an impatient eleven year old, a confused five year old and a screaming three year old.

So last year when Lois had found out she was pregnant yet again it had come as a complete surprise. The twins had been incredibly excited by the news while a now thirteen year old Dean was old enough to be embarrassed his parents still did *that* and Sophie was wise enough to remember the sleepless nights brought on by her sisters. Jason had even moved out after she'd announced it- of course he'd been planning that for months but she couldn't help but think the memory of his four other siblings' infant days help speed the process up.

Speaking of her other boys... "Hey, Mom, did you miss us?" Jason asked, appearing suddenly behind her with Dean on his back, the younger covered in paint having come straight from his art lessons. "You can get off now," he told his younger brother, who politely obliged.

Lois allowed herself a small smile at that, had Jason taken any of the girls flying they'd demand another turn until he got tired of it and dropped them in the ocean somewhere. "Go help your sister round up Lucy and Ella," she told Dean before turning back to Jason. "Believe me, I barely noticed you were gone with how hectic today's been." She shook her head. "This damn picnic on the beach thing was your father's idea and he doesn't even have the decency to show up," she grumbled, settling a blissfully quiet Chris on her hip and grabbing one of the coolers Clark had packed for them.

"Last I heard he was over in California helping with some earthquake or something," Jason told her, immediately regretting it as he heard his mother's heart rate go up and saw her mouth tighten.

"Well, of course there's always an excuse," she muttered as Jason wisely kept quiet and helped get the other cooler and two bags of food out of the car.

Jason watched his mother carefully as she tried to lock the car while balancing the baby

and the food. His hands were already full but he gave a high-pitched whistle beyond human hearing range before glaring pointedly at his eldest sister when she whipped around to locate the noise.

She raised an eyebrow in his direction prompting another glare before he nodded downwards towards the heavy cooler Lois was holding. Understanding dawned on Sophie's face and she was there in an instant. "Can I help you with that, Mom?" she asked sweetly as if it had been her idea, effortlessly taking the heavy load and swinging it from her fingertips.

"Thanks, dear." Lois smiled gratefully as she locked the car and they went to join the others on the beach.

Lucy and Ella had managed, under Dean's instruction, to find a place that could fit a family of eight and set up the blankets. Lois dodged her way towards them, weaving through the other blankets and families. She felt her mood worsening, a family picnic on the beach hadn't sounded too bad when Clark had suggested it but the day had dawned bright and hot with not a cloud in the sky and it seemed half of Metropolis had had the same idea.

Just as the group reached their space an excited ripple ran through the crowd and several people pointed upwards where a blue and red blur had just shot overhead. "He'd better be on his way here," Lois muttered under her breath.

"He is," Jason assured her, his ears catching her phrase thanks to his father's genetics, "he's coming down just behind the changing sheds where me and Dean landed."

No sooner had he finished the sentence than Clark Kent, looking very awkward and rather out of place in jeans and a T-shirt, was weaving his way towards his family.

"Dad!" Lucy and Ella both gave piercing screams as they bolted towards their father, they'd slept in that morning and hadn't seen him since yesterday evening.

"Hey, girls," Clark laughed, grinning as he swept both of them up into a hug.

Alright for him, Lois thought bitterly, he didn't have to put up with Ella's screaming when Lucy broke her favorite mug, and he didn't have Lucy screaming that she hated him all night for appearing to 'take sides'. Lois turned away, tending to Chris so she didn't have to see how happy the kids were to see their father after they'd all been annoyed at her for telling them off last night. *It's easy to be the good guy when you're never there.*

"Morning, Lois," Clark greeted her when he finally got there.

"Morning, Clark," Lois said, her tone the only thing cold on the sweltering beach.

"Hey, Dad, will you come play Frisbee with us?" Lucy asked.

"Yeah, will you? Will you?" Ella joined in with Sophie. Dean grabbed the Frisbee and in moments it was only Lois, Jason and Chris on the blanket.

Clark threw an apologetic look back at them but Lois refused to acknowledge it, making sure Chris was sleeping comfortably against her chest before staring to open the food one handed for lunch.

"What was that?" Jason asked, getting up to take Chris from her so she could organize the food. He grinned as the baby woke up and gurgled happily at his big brother before raising an eyebrow at Lois when she failed to respond. "Mom?"

"That was your father doing what he's been doing since Chris was born and playing the hero before flying away when things get tough," she told him, her eyes burning a hole in the back of her husband's head. She half-hoped he was listening so he knew how she felt.

"Oh." Jason didn't seem to know what to say to that. "I guess the kids have been keeping you kinda busy?" he asked.

That made Lois laugh. "That sounds odd coming from you, you still are one of the kids to

me."

"I know." Jason grinned, rocking his baby brother gently, he'd had more practice with infants than most college students. Most men really, Lois supposed, finding herself smiling again.

"Is that why you're angry with Dad?" he asked, lowering his voice. "Because you haven't had any time together since Chris was born?"

Lois sighed, she could hide her real feelings from everyone else, even Clark it seemed, but Jason had always managed to see straight through her. "He always seems to be saving lives or playing with the kids. I should be thankful he's such a great father to them, that's more than most men. But we haven't really been, you know, *together* since before Chris was born."

"You haven't..." Jason trailed off before turning an amusing shade of red as he realized what Lois had meant. "Oh, you mean together like that, I just meant like time to talk and stuff."

"Well, that too," Lois agreed, taking pity on her poor son. But the real truth was she needed Clark *physically*. Screw talking, she didn't know if she could handle one more day of turning on the TV to watch the most handsome and sexy man in the world save lives if she didn't know he was coming straight home to her and their bed. Lois had always heard women had more control than men but whoever said that clearly hadn't been married to Superman.

There was also the fact that deep down Lois needed to know someone found her beautiful enough to touch like that. She was generally secure in her body but after six kids she was starting to get a niggling feeling in the back of her mind that Clark's seeming rejection had a little more to it than just being swamped by the kids.

"I'll just be a moment," Jason said suddenly, pulling her from her thoughts.

"What-" she started to ask but Jason had set off towards the rest of the family with Chris before she could complete the sentence. "Great, now no one wants to be with me," she muttered bitterly.

Five minutes later and Lois had just about worked herself into a mood so cloudy it would take more than the boiling beach sun to burn it away when a shadow fell over her. She looked up and was surprised to find her husband grinning like a high school kid caught with his girlfriend.

"Come with me," he said, holding out his hand.

"Clark, what-" she started but once again she wasn't given the chance to complete her question before Clark pulled her up and was leading her back towards the changing rooms.

"Come on, we might not have much time," Clark urged her, still grinning like an idiot.

"Clark, what are we doing?" Lois giggled, completely forgetting she was supposed to be mad at him as he led her out of sight behind the large concrete changing rooms.

He quickly silenced her with his mouth, stopping only when Lois tried to say something. "Pardon?"

"I'm still angry at you," she muttered, pushing him away, "and a few stolen kisses behind the changing rooms aren't enough to fix it, this isn't high school anymore, Kent."

"I know," Clark sighed, "and I'll try to be better, in fact I've organized Jason to fly them all out to see Mom and Ben next weekend, so we'll have it all to ourselves."

Lois felt her anger draining away leaving a rather pleasant warm feeling running through her. "But why the sudden escape from the beach, Mr. Kent?" she asked, feigning innocence.

"Well," Clark was slowing turning an adorable shade of red, "Jason said that he could keep the kids entertained for a few minutes and I was thinking, maybe..." he was staring to get

redder but Lois refused to take pity.

"Yes?"

"We could, you know?" he flicked his eyes upwards once and turned so red Lois was sure she could find a tomato with the same coloring in their cupboard.

"And here I was thinking men just might have the better control after all." She leapt up into his arms and they were airborne faster than she could blink.

"Those men," she heard Clark say as they burst through the clouds, "clearly weren't married to Lois Lane."