

# The Suitcase

by htbthomas

© 4-Sep-07

Rating: K+

Disclaimer: All publicly recognizable characters, settings, etc. are the property of their respective owners. The original characters and plot are the property of the author. The author is in no way associated with the owners, creators, or producers of any media franchise. No copyright infringement is intended.

---

**Author's Notes:** At the end of writing *Déjà Vu*, I posed the question: "In whose POV would you have liked to see portions of this story?" Jimmy Olsen was a clear winner. This is **not** a direct sequel to *Déjà Vu*... however, there are some similarities between the events presented here and my post-DV universe. (Oh, and I know there has been some sort of Jimmy ficstravaganza lately, but I promise I had this idea months ago... \*grin\*)  
Thanks to mark\_clark for the beta and van\_el and jenn\_1 for advice along the way.

---

Jimmy first saw it when he needed to put a box of old promotional materials - Perry White believed in recycling - in the supply closet. The box hit the closet floor with a thud, and the displaced air disturbed a stack of posters leaning against one wall, as well as that creepy life-size standup of Mr. White. He didn't think he would have noticed it otherwise...

It was a battered brown suitcase, peeking out from behind the posters. The same suitcase that Clark Kent had carried in with him his first day back. Jimmy remembered seeing more than one hapless employee rubbing at a shin or kneecap, scowling faintly. But he'd been too happy to see Clark to really notice the bulky leather reason for their distress.

Curiosity getting the better of him, Jimmy slid the suitcase out from its hiding place and checked the latches. Unlocked. How like Clark - even five years traveling the world hadn't changed his faith in his fellow man.

He began to push in the catch, when he suddenly felt eyes on him. He looked up guiltily... but there was no one. Just the Chief's stern two-dimensional face. "You'd want to know what was in it, too, you old newshound," Jimmy defended. With a short laugh, he gently lowered the case to its side and lifted the lid.

"Huh," he breathed out in a surprised huff.

He didn't know what he expected when he looked inside, but it certainly wasn't a collection of loosely folded items mixed with a couple of a hastily thrown dress shirts on top of the pile. On further examination, almost every article of clothing, even the ties, was thoroughly... wrinkled.

Clucking his tongue lightly, Jimmy closed the case. What was Clark doing with a suitcase full of clothes that looked like they'd spent the night on a bedroom floor - in the storage closet? It had been a couple weeks since he'd returned to work. Certainly he'd found a place to live?

As he pushed the case back into place, Jimmy pondered this possibility. Had the recent earthquakes destroyed where Clark was staying? Why hadn't he said something, even to him? They were friends, right? Clark had to know he could come to Jimmy with something like this. Heck, the floor of his efficiency apartment was better than nothing...

Jimmy frowned and opened the door to return to the bullpen, his eyes seeking out Clark at his desk. He immediately frowned even more deeply. How had he never noticed how ruffled Clark was looking lately? And how tense?

As Clark typed away, his eyes were obviously not focused on the monitor in front of him. Instead, he was looking toward Richard's desk, where Lois and Richard were deep in animated conversation. If Jimmy didn't know it was impossible, he'd think that Clark was trying to figure out what they were saying, never mind that their backs were to Clark.

He shook his head - time to do something about that - Clark had been doing *enough* brooding since he'd returned to the *Planet*. He strode up to Clark, tapping him on the shoulder. "Hey, Clark."

Clark flinched, spinning to face him with wide, startled blue eyes. "Jimmy?"

"I was just thinking..." Jimmy's eyes drifted over to Richard's office unconsciously before he dragged his gaze back to Clark. "...you look hungry." He cocked his head toward the elevators. "Wanna go get some lunch?"

The second time he saw it was in a forgotten corner of the archives. He was carrying another big box, this time *out* of the room - *what does everyone think, I'm an errand boy or something? I took those amazing photos of Superman catching the Planet's globe, didn't I?* - when he noticed the suitcase wedged between two of the stacks.

"What's the point of having an apartment if you aren't going to keep anything there?" he asked the dusty air as he dragged the case into the light again. Just the other night, Jimmy had commented on the sparseness of Clark's decorating. With all that traveling he'd done, one would think Clark would at least be displaying a few souvenirs on the bookshelves!

Still unlocked. The guilt passed even more quickly this time as he opened the case. A pair of well-worn shoes was now gracing the top of the pile - the soles were literally hanging by a thread. "Are you spending the night here, Clark?"

Now that things around here were settling down again, Clark's life should have settled down, too, but that was clearly not the case. Why? He and Lois had recently fallen - well, really had been pushed by Mr. White - into their old partnership again. And their stories were hitting the front page regularly. Circulation was already up; readers had recognized the paper had that 'certain something' again.

And Clark was smiling again, Jimmy thought as he shoved the clothing back in as best he could. Not that goofy smile he used when he was trying to deflect attention from himself, but a real one. One that only brightened every time he saw Lois Lane, or her son, Jason.

He didn't think anyone had noticed yet. Clark was so good at blending into the office furniture that he could have practically come to work in a Halloween costume and no one but Jimmy would have commented on it. That was, until Lois started to work with Clark again.

Lois and Richard had broken up by the end of that same week. Jimmy hadn't immediately jumped to the same conclusion everyone else had - that the return of Superman had come between them. Instead...

He'd caught some of the furtive looks between the two reporters, the secretive smiles. If Clark was out of the office on assignment without her, Jimmy had seen the way she kept glancing up at the clock. If anything, as time went on, she was noticing even less when Superman appeared on the television monitors.

Just a couple days ago, a particularly bad shipwreck in the Pacific had practically the whole newsroom on their feet, mesmerized by the tragedy on the screen. An international

reporter spoke breathlessly to the camera about the dozens of people trapped below the surface, as divers searched for survivors. Only Lois stayed at her desk, chewing on a black ball-point pen, making notes on her yellow pad every so often.

A relieved sigh spread through the room at Superman's appearance at the scene. Jimmy turned slightly to call over to Lois, "Looks like the Man of Steel got there in time... the fire must have..." Jimmy trailed off, walking toward her. "Hey, are you even paying attention?"

Lois didn't even look up. "Not really. I'm sure I'll learn all about it later." She made another note, barely acknowledging him.

No, Jimmy realized as he shut the lid of the suitcase. Whatever reason he was keeping a suitcase here, it was *Clark* who had Lois' attention now. The *Planet's* favorite intrepid reporter was definitely over Superman.

Jimmy started to push the case back between the stacks when the doorknob jiggled behind him. All the guilt he had so easily pushed aside came flooding back and he dived to the side, behind a tall shelving unit.

"Lois, give me just a minute to change my-" The door shut with an overloud click, cutting Clark's words off mid-sentence. There was a muffled thump and gasp, but behind the stacks Jimmy couldn't really make out what was going on. *Damn my curiosity*, he thought as he slowly rose to a kneeling position and peered around the corner...

His mouth dropped open. Lois had Clark pressed against the wall, her arms wrapped around him, lips moving over his. She grunted softly and slipped a stocking-clad leg between his knees. As Jimmy's eyebrows slowly rose to the sky, Lois' hands snaked between them to begin unbuttoning Clark's jacket. Clark's hand came around and under her blouse, slipping below the waistband of her wool skirt-

Jimmy pulled his head back, clamping his eyes shut. He took a deep silent breath.

*Oh. My. God.*

Jimmy's heart started beating frantically, his face flushed with color, and he wished that he were *anywhere* but here...

Lois let out a disappointed grunt. "What is it, Clark? I was just trying to help you out of that jacket..." Jimmy blushed at the purr in her voice.

"Um, I just..." Clark trailed off.

Oh no! Was he caught? He'd tried to be so quiet!

"I don't think this coat smells so bad after all, maybe it just needs to air out or something..." Clark began to explain. The door opened, the sounds of the people in the hallway filtering in.

"Yeah, but I don't understand, where are we-?" The door slammed behind them.

Jimmy couldn't believe his luck. All he had to do is wait a few minutes before going out there, to make sure they were long gone.

As the redness slowly faded and his heartbeat got back to normal, he suddenly realized that Lois and Clark were doing more than just flirting with each other. *A lot* more! How long had it been going on? How serious were they? Was *this* the real reason for Lois and Richard's breakup a month ago?

Jimmy shook his head, he would never in a million years have thought that Clark Kent was a *home wrecker*. Still, at least they weren't flaunting it in front of Richard. He sure *hoped* that Clark had a good explanation for this... he'd never get the nerve to mention it to Lois...

Jimmy checked his wristwatch and decided enough time had passed. Lifting the box he had originally come for, he went to the doorway and peeked out, propping the box against the

doorjamb. The hallway was empty, for now. He made a rapid exit anyway, shutting the door as quietly as possible, and striding as quickly as he could to the stairwell.

Once inside, he leaned against the wall there and breathed a sigh of relief. Now that he was in the clear, he could finally look at this new development in a different light. A mischievous grin spread across his face, and he murmured, "Way to go, Clark!"

Jimmy couldn't smother a grin this time when the suitcase appeared back in the supply closet. A few months had passed since his close call in the archives with the lovebirds, and they had been pretty good at keeping their little secret under wraps. Lois was always cool as a cucumber, hardly acting differently at all. But to tell the truth, Jimmy was pretty impressed with how Clark was handling it - he would never have guessed that Clark was such a fine actor!

Somehow, Clark had surmised that Jimmy was onto them. But no amount of hinting at the pub or making winking remarks over pizza would draw the sordid details out of him. Jimmy would have to make do with a sigh and a simple, "It's a long story."

Still grinning, Jimmy lifted the case again. He knew that Lois and Clark were out on a story, a big one, and weren't likely to return for hours. Perry's stand-up was facing the wall for some reason, so he didn't even have to worry about its disapproval. He popped the latch once more.

And shut it with a swift slam. He wasn't sure what to think about what he was seeing there... Jimmy suddenly felt a wicked urge - if there was only enough time...

About 5:15pm, after many of the staffers had already left, Jimmy walked into the newsroom again, dry cleaning bag over one shoulder. He hoped that Clark hadn't noticed the absence of the clothing from his suitcase.

He looked around for Lois and Clark... they were not at their desks... not in the Chief's office... Richard had probably gone to pick up Jason, since his office was dark...

Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, he saw Clark slipping out of the storage closet, looking even more ruffled, if it were possible. He looked confused and a little alarmed... until he spotted Jimmy coming toward him.

"Looking for these?"

"Um... I..." Clark was obviously searching for the words to say.

Jimmy couldn't help getting in a little good-natured ribbing. "You really ought to take better care of your clothes, Clark," he winked, handing over the bag.

"You're right, thanks," he said with more than a touch of embarrassment, swiveling the bag quickly to hide the lacy camisole Jimmy knew was showing through the clear plastic of the bag.

Before Jimmy could continue, Lois stepped out of the same storage closet. Her hair looked positively wind-blown, her silk blouse was untucked and the buttons weren't even lined up correctly. There was a noticeable tear in one stocking.

The indomitable Lois Lane took one look at the scene before her: dry cleaning bag, looks of embarrassment and shocked amusement between the men, and asked, "Are those our clothes?"

"I thought I'd surprise you two..."

"Thanks," Lois responded with a smile, smoothly lifting the bag from Clark's hand and giving him a peck on the cheek. She mussed Jimmy's hair and sauntered unconcerned toward the ladies room, leaving Clark and Jimmy to watch her retreating form with identical

expressions of bemusement.

Clark tilted his head to look at Jimmy, and gave him a helpless shrug.

"Don't look at me." Jimmy leaned against the desk and shrugged in return. "She's *your* girlfriend."