

Whispers in the Dark

by Kala Lane Kent

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Rating: M

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He hears her crying out, her whimpers thick with terror, and it sets his heart racing. Kal-El flies to her apartment, finds her on the balcony, smoking as if only nicotine can keep her nightmares at bay. Six weeks, and she's still plagued by vivid nightmares she can't explain. He knows what waits for her in sleep; he has his own memories of that day, and they are hellishly clear.

Dull sand baking under the merciless sun.

Her body so light in his arms, her spirit fled.

The way her head fell back as he laid her down so gently.

No, Lois is not the only one being haunted.

At first she's defensive, sharp-tongued, but at a wounded look from him her wrath falls away to reveal the vulnerability beneath. Her voice shakes even as she tries to deny her fears, and he gathers her close, murmuring against her ear, "It's okay, I've got you. I've got you, Lois, I promise."

She's still shivering, the fall of her hair hiding her expression while Lois hides herself in his embrace. Against his shoulder, she whispers in a voice that trembles as well, "It was the end of the world."

It *was* the end of the world for her - and for him. And only one of them knows why. "No," he murmurs, stroking her tousled locks with tenderness born of recent heartbreak. "No, Lois, I'm here, you're safe. I'll never let that happen." *Not again.*

Those stricken hazel eyes look up at him from within the shelter of his arms, pleading for consolation in a way he has never seen before. Words are not enough to reassure her, her expression makes this clear, and he's haunted by the memory of the kiss he gave her - the one she can't remember, because she wasn't alive to feel it...

The decision is made before he can stop himself. He kisses her, his lips firm against hers, telling her without speaking that this is real and her death was only a shadow in a dream. At first Lois is surprised; he can feel her disbelief in the sudden tension in her body, hear it in the small, surprised sound she makes. But then she's kissing him back, slowly and intently, drawing the certainty of her life from his lips against hers.

We are here, we are alive, we are together. Every kiss affirms it, and her hand cups his cheek, bringing him closer. Lois pulls back after a moment when she has to draw a deep breath, her gaze intense but just a bit dreamy. Her wide eyes and racing heart tell him what she's thinking.

He rises to his feet, drawing her up from her chair. And he hesitates; there's so much he

meant to tell her before they got anywhere close to this point. Without words, he's all too aware what has passed between them. This should not be a semi-anonymous night of comfort, not with Lois - she means too much to him. He starts to murmur, "Lois, there's so much you don't know about me," but she silences him after he speaks her name.

Her fingers pressed against his lips, she gives him the most haunted look with those eyes and whispers, "Keep me safe," her voice gone husky with need. When she takes his hand without another word and leads him into the unlighted apartment, he says no more. This is what they both need to banish the horror of the past that should never have been. Not just lust, not just comfort - this is about trust and intimacy, about holding on to love and never letting go. About defying death.

In the bedroom, kisses start out slow and build in urgency. Her own unique scent fills the room, the ghost of her perfume mixed with the delicious clean smell of her skin. She's almost blind in the darkness, but moves with the surety of long habit. He can see her, sees her hands reach for his face, and he grasps them, kissing the palms gently before drawing her into his arms again. Sliding her robe off her shoulders, this is bliss, now only a thin nightgown between them, and he can feel the warmth of her body as she can surely feel the heat of his. It could be a dream, like other fantasies he's had of her, an ordinary encounter turning into rapture.

He runs his hands down her shoulders to gently cup her breasts and Lois gasps softly, her nipples rising to his stroking fingers against the satin. A soft near-purr trickles from her at the touch and she angles her body closer. Gently he caresses her, and her kisses grow urgent. He can taste the cigarette as he deepens the kiss, and it's proof that this is real, this is unmistakably Lois.

Her fingers trace the neckline of his suit; he smiles against her mouth, guides her hands to the hidden closures. She fumbles a bit in the dark, annoyed at the delay, and he chuckles as he helps her. Then the bright fabric is a puddle on the floor, her palms against his bare chest quicken his pulse, and he gathers the satin nightgown at her hips, raising it slowly. This rouses a shudder from her lips, breaking the kiss. Darkened hazel eyes on his like a smoldering fire and Lois takes a step back, helping him lift the gown over her head. Her body bared to him at last, Kal-El closes the distance between them, his lips searing hers with a hungry kiss. Her skin feels intoxicating against his, her soft curves pressed against him.

He lifts her gently and sets her down on the bed, joining her there to trail kisses down her neck and across her shoulder. Lois pulls him down to her, wrapping one leg around his hip. For all the desire in her, she's not as aggressive as he imagined her; Lois craves him, yearns for him, clearly drunk on sensation, but she's trying to lose herself in him. He wonders fleetingly if this is just distraction for her, merely a physical dream-catcher to turn away her recurring night terrors. No matter, he could not stop now if the world was ending, he wants nothing more than this moment between them, and as he bends his head to her breast she all but purrs in delight.

She catches his wrist, nuzzling her cheek against his hair and pressing a kiss there while guiding his hand between her thighs with a murmur of entreaty. That this moment is something she craves as well becomes abundantly clear when his fingertips reach their destination. His breath catches to find her so eager for him already, teasing her lightly, instantly rewarded by the way Lois' head falls back in keen reaction to his slightest touch. Her breath comes in breathy little sobs when he continues to make her body rise to him. She's his now, utterly abandoned to desire, her hands making explorations of her own as their movements begin to synchronize in harmony.

He leads the dance between them, one hand on her thigh lifting her, and the moment

before he slides into the heat of her, their eyes meet. She's adjusted to the darkness, and it's clear she sees him, knows him, wants him. He takes her then, and Lois gives a throaty moan, her entire body drawing him closer. One pale arm slides around his shoulders; he feels the fingers of her other hand sliding through his hair just before she arches her hips strongly in response.

Better than he ever dreamed, moving in time with her, so sweetly perfect. Slowly at first, Lois holding tight to him, her lips catching his mouth with every thrust. The soft sounds she makes are intoxicating, the expressions that flow across her face as they make love only fanning the flames. He breathes her name, eyes slipping closed, and she whispers back huskily, "Please..."

Exaltation in life and love burns away the fear of death, and Lois cries out softly, wordlessly, her expression fraught on the edge of ecstasy, cheek pressed into her own fall of black hair. Kal-El moves against her, quickening the pace, nearing the pinnacle. "Yes, I need you," Lois whimpers, her hips rising to each thrust, her inner muscles tightening to hold him closer, "Yes, please, *please*..."

It's too much for him, that begging note in her voice, and the world shatters around him. Lois' voice spirals up in ecstasy a moment later, her climax echoing his, and then he collapses to the bed, pulling her with him so they are lying on their sides, face to face. Her eyes are lidded, full of warmth, and he knows his own expression echoes her satisfaction. The sleepy smile she gives him now, more even than the act that came before it, makes that day in the desert vanish. He'd gladly give the world and more for that smile. Without a word, he pulls her close and envelopes her in his arms, guarding her against the outside world. Keeping her safe.

There will be time for questions and worries in the morning, time for him to think that he has no right to keep secrets from her now, time for her to wonder what sort of impression she's given her hero with this wanton night. For now, there's only security in each other's arms, and he kisses her brow as they both drift back into interrupted sleep.

A sequel to saavikam77's haunting 'Flicker'.