

# Hoedown Throwdown

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Rating: K

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A/N: written for the *Planet's* Summer FicGrab prompt: Birthday.

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Martha Kent smiled softly as she heard the familiar *thump* on the front porch. It was followed by another familiar whooshing sound as her son took off and the front door creaked open.

"It's not fair!" a loud voice belonging to her only granddaughter protested, clearly carrying on an argument that was in progress.

"Jeez, Skye get over it, it's only a school dance, trust me- they're not all they're cracked up to be," the voice of her brother, Jason, replied.

"Well, maybe not for you, you're a loser, I, on the other hand, have a reputation to uphold."

"What for being a stuck-up snob?" Jason's voice and tone clearly said he'd had enough of his sister's complaining and Martha decided now would be a good time to intervene.

"I thought I heard your father land," she said, pretending not to have heard the argument, "my goodness, you two have grown!" she exclaimed. Jason had been shooting up like a weed, now almost six feet tall at seventeen years old and Skye seemed to have hit a growth spurt too, at just twelve Martha was sure she'd at least be as tall as her mother.

Jason grinned. "I think you're just shrinking, grandma," he joked, leaning down to wrap her in a hug. "Happy Birthday."

"Thank you," Martha replied, stretching up to give her grandson a proper hug even if he did tower over her. "And what's the matter here?" she asked Skye as Jason stepped back, even if she hadn't heard the argument she knew something was bothering the girl from the look in her face.

"On, nothing really," Skye muttered, she seemed embarrassed that Martha had noticed. She probably didn't want to complain to the person who'd invited them out there.

Martha wanted to try again but there was another *thump* on the porch and three voices yelled, "Thanks, Dad." as the sound of Clark taking off again followed. The door was flung open and three five year olds burst into the house. "Grandma!" they cried as one when they spotted her, rushing over to envelop her in hugs.

"Careful, dears," Martha laughed as she bent down to return the hugs, "I'm not as young as I used to be."

"Dad says you're turning *ninety* today," the tallest one, Jonathan, said with wide eyes, "is that old?"

"Duh," one of his brothers replied, "it's twice as old as Mom and Dad."

Jonny's forehead crinkled in confusion. "No, it would be like three times as much," he protested. Martha raised her eyebrows, she wondered how Lois would feel to find out her youngest children thought she was still thirty.

Nathan held up his fingers and frowned. "Mom and Dad are... How old are Mom and Dad?" he turned to ask his older siblings. "Hey, where did Skye go?" he asked, noticing she'd disappeared.

"She said something about trying to find somewhere her cellphone got reception," Jason told them with a shrug.

"I'll go find her," Toby, the smallest and quietest triplet announced, running off before anyone could argue. Not that they wanted to with the mood she'd been in.

There was a third *thump* and whoosh, this one followed by Lois entering the house.

"Clark's just gone back for our bags," she said by way of a greeting.

"You mean Skye's bags." Nathan grinned and Jonathan snickered.

"Yeah, me, Nate and Toby only got one for all of us and Skye's got *three*."

Nathan nodded vigorously. "And they're all this big too," he told his grandmother, holding his arms out wide as far as they would go.

"Three?" Martha didn't want to encourage bickering between her grandkids but she could help raising her eyebrows at the information. "That is a lot but I'm sure she has a good reason," she added before the kids thought she was taking sides.

There was a fourth and final *thump* on the porch and Clark came in looking like a pack mule with six bags of varying sizes hanging off him. "Hey, Ma." he grinned, piling the bags in a corner and coming over to embrace her in a hug.

Martha smiled as she leaned up on tip-toes to try and return the hug properly. She never felt more complete than when her family was with her in the old farmhouse. Clark had been worried for some time about his elderly mother still living there with Ben but Martha claimed she barely felt seventy let alone the ninety her birthday cake would proclaim tonight.

"Come into the kitchen," she invited them, "I must be getting a bit forgetful in my old age, I accidentally made too many cookies and I need some help getting rid of them all."

"MINE!" two voices yelled as Jonny and Nathan shot into the kitchen followed by Jason who was trying not to look as eager as the five-year-olds but couldn't hide his love of his grandmothers home baking. Martha ignored the looks Clark was giving her, most likely about feeding his already hyperactive children sugar but she just chuckled as she joined them, what was a grandmother to do but spoil her grandchildren?

"Skye?" Toby called hesitantly as he pushed open the door to the barn. He knew Skye had just started being able to run faster like his Dad but he didn't think she would have gone much further than here.

He strained his ears for any sound of a song, whenever she was upset Skye liked to go somewhere quiet and pretend she was on stage. Toby knew more often than not she pretended she was Hannah Montana but Skye never admitted that.

*"Life is just a party so come as you are.*

*Dress it up or dress it down, never forget your guitar"*

He followed the sound of the singing, if there was one thing Skye did do well it was sing. Then again she spent four days a week after school at lessons, even though she complained all the time about it.

*"Just be courageous, this style's contagious*

*Everyone can rock out like a superstar."*

He follows his ear up to the loft and found his sister holding a hammer and standing on a hay bale. No doubt she would soon be complaining about getting in her hair or something. It seemed lately she complained about *everything*.

*"Let's get crazy.*

*Get up and dance-* What are *you* looking at?" she snapped suddenly, noticing Toby on the stairs.

"I came looking for you," he explained, wondering what he'd done to get her so annoyed. Probably just being there, that's all it seemed to take now.

Fortunately Skye pulled another one of her strange mood-changes and just shrugged. "Whatever," she said, throwing the hammer back on the table with a loud *thunk* that made him jump.

"So do you get reception out here?" Toby asked, moving onto what he hoped was a safer topic.

"No," Skye grumbled, glaring at her phone, "I doubt this crappy thing would get more than one bar anywhere in this crappy town."

Toby didn't think Smallville was crappy at all but he wisely refrained from telling his sister that. "Are you coming back down?" he asked, "Grandma probably baked cookies for us."

"Nah, can't be bothered." Skye shrugged. "I don't even want to *be* here, I'd rather be getting ready for the dance, and Dad'll get angry if I act like it in front of Grandma."

"Jason said school dances weren't that much fun anyway," Toby reminded her, knowing the second he'd said it it'd been a mistake.

"Well of course they aren't; for him," Skye snapped, "I bet he was always one of those freaks hanging out near the back of the hall, watching everyone else have fun. This dance has an open mic and if I'm not there everyone's going to think that bitch, Haley, is a better singer than me."

"Skye!" Toby felt his jaw drop at his sister's language.

"What?" Skye shrugged, "Mom says it all the time."

"But she's a Mom," Toby said as if it were the most obvious thing in the world, "Moms are allowed to swear." By the time he and his brothers were three, Toby had known more swearwords than most sailors, but he was never, ever allowed to use them.

Skye rolled her eyes again. "Go away, Tobbit," she muttered, but her words lacked sting as she slipped into using her nickname for her brother.

Toby didn't really think he'd helped but at least he'd tried and he really did want cookies.

"How's Miley?" Jason asked as he joined them in the kitchen, pushing a plate of cookies towards him.

Toby took a huge bite before trying to answer. "Don't talk with your mouth full, dear," Martha called from the sink, not even looking up.

Toby chewed quickly and swallowed before answering his brother. "She's annoyed she doesn't get to sing at her dance tonight."

"She's still going on about that?" Nathan asked, rolling his eyes. "She's not even that good."

"Nathan, don't say that, your sister is a very good singer," his father chastised him lightly.

"She'd better be," Lois muttered, "after all that money we've forked out on lessons."

"Yeah," Toby nodded, "she really is, and she was going to beat some girl called Haley at

singing tonight and now she's worried everyone will think she's a better singer than her."

"Oh, is that what she was upset about?" Martha asked, looking out towards the barn, "I thought it was a bit more than just missing a dance."

"Ma, she really was excited to come," Clark assured her.

"Don't worry, son," Martha chuckled, "I can understand that, I was a young girl too. A long time ago."

"Well, it's a good thing she has singing, she sucks at everything else, did you see her last report card?" Jonny asked.

"Enough you two, Jonathan, Nathaniel," Clark warned, making the boys snap to attention at the use of their full names. "I know your sister has been difficult to live with these past few months but I don't want you saying things like that, okay?"

"Okay, Dad," the two chorused, sounding sincere but Toby knew they were really just thinking they'd be more careful from now on. It was clear at times like these his Dad had been an only child, Toby thought, insulting each other was just what brothers and sisters did. But if anyone outside the family said anything bad about Skye, Toby knew he could bet all his pocket money that every one of her brothers would stand up for her.

He bit into another cookie as the adults began discussing the party tonight. They'd been planning it for months, they'd hired out the town hall and it seemed as if everyone in Smallville had been invited, Ben had already gone in to direct the set up. Toby knew his grandmother was well liked in the town, all he had to do was say he was a Kent and people would give him free sweets and reminisce about how they knew his grandparents or father.

The cookies were gone and the triplets had moved into the living room to watch cartoons by the time Skye returned from the barn.

"Hello again, dear," Martha greeted her.

"Hey, princess," Clark smiled, hoping she was feeling better.

"Hmph," Skye replied, not bothering to look up at either of them as she grabbed her three bags and stalked upstairs to the guest room. Martha looked slightly upset about the reception but tried to hide it.

She wasn't fast enough for Superman though. "That's it, I'm going to talk to her," he got up and started towards the stairs.

"Oh no, Clark, don't worry about it-" Martha protested.

"Be careful, Dad," Jason called as Clark continued on his way, ignoring his mother's protests.

"They'll be okay Martha," Lois assured her mother-in-law, "Skye's just being a normal kid, she's trying to push us and Clark just needs to let her know where the boundaries are," she explained, sounding like she was reciting directly from a book.

"Oh, I know dear, I was a mother too," Martha reminded her, returning her attention to the table plan in front of them, "I just hate it when he feels like he needs to protect my feelings. I can take a few blows."

"So, what?" Skye asked, glaring at her Dad, "you just want me to go down and apologize?"

"I would rather you hadn't hurt her in the first place," Clark replied, standing in the classic Superman pose with his feet apart and arms crossed. The look contrasted oddly with his jeans and T-shirt but it was having the intended effect.

"I didn't mean to hurt her feelings," Skye admitted, looking down, "I just-" she sighed

angrily, "I just really wanted to go to the dance!" she exclaimed, stamping her foot.

"Skye," her father warned softly.

"Sorry," Skye apologized again, "but I don't see why you can't just fly me out there for an hour or two, the whole town's going tonight, they won't miss me for an hour or so!"

"And how exactly would you explain that you were in two different states in the same night if someone asked?"

Skye's shoulders slumped and she sat down on the bed. "I don't know."

"We've been through this, Skye," Clark reminded her, sitting down beside her and pulling her in for a one-armed hug. "You know how much your grandmother loves seeing you. Missing this dance is not the end of the world," he repeated, "you're only twelve, you'll have plenty more chances to out-sing this Haley girl."

"It's not just that," Skye sighed, "Ashley and I were going to do *Ebony and Ivory*."

"You and Ashley have been inseparable since you were five, she's hardly going to hate you for this," Clark assured her.

"But it would have been awesome." Skye seemed to have calmed down now and her word lacked any of the force they'd held previously.

"Why don't you ask your singing teacher if you can do it at the next showcase?" Clark suggested, trying to show his little girl there would always be another chance.

"She thinks it's racist," Skye giggled, her mood improving at the suggestion, "but Ash wants to do it anyway, if we go over her and straight to the principal he'd probably be okay." Skye rolled her eyes as the pair made their way downstairs, "I don't even get why she thinks *I'm* racist, Ash was the one who suggested it."

"It's because you're blonde," Jason reminded her as they entered the kitchen.

"Do you even know what we were talking about?" Skye asked, rolling her eyes again.

"Nope," Jason shrugged, "don't care either."

"Gee, thanks," his sister muttered before turning to Martha. "I'm sorry about before, Grandma," she apologized.

"Oh, don't worry, dear, I was a twelve year old girl once, I know what it's like."

Skye raised her eyebrows at that but just shrugged. "Yeah, I guess it's not the end of the world."

"Alright, we leave in half an hour," Lois called, her voice reaching all parts of the house, from Jason in the bathroom to Martha and Clark in the kitchen, checking once more that everyone would have a place to sit. "Did everyone get that?" she called, "Sound off if you did."

"One," Jason called, trying to straighten his bow tie.

"Three!" Jonny yelled from the living room.

"Four," Nathan responded from right behind her, making her jump.

"Five!" Toby's voice floated down from somewhere upstairs.

She waited a few moments before calling again, "I didn't hear a two!" there was a long silence.

"She's in the barn," Jason called back finally.

Clark sighed and got up but Martha stopped him, "No, it's my turn," she said decisively, marching out across the lawn before anyone could protest.

"I've got something to tell you," Martha called as she entered the barn, coming up the steps to find her granddaughter looking out the window across the fields. No doubt wondering

how the dance was going and if this mysterious Haley was stealing all her friends.

"What?" Skye asked curiously, turning around.

"Well, I was going to surprise you when we got there but you look like you could use it now. The whole of Smallville's coming tonight and I *know* you were upset you didn't get to go to your school dance," Martha began, "I think Ben was planning on just putting on a CD or something but I've made a few calls to get a proper stage set up with a band and all."

"Why's that?" Skye looked confused but there was a hint of hope in her eyes.

"Because I felt like live music tonight, and in fact dear, I would be honored if *you* would sing at my party."

Skye's face lit up as she stared at her grandmother in shock. "Really?" she asked.

"Of course you'll be paid for your time and-"

"Really?" Skye's voice was so high if it had been louder only dogs would have heard her. "You'll actually *pay* me? And I can sing whatever I want?"

"Well, all professional singers get paid, don't they? And so long as you know some songs other than that Hannah girl," Martha warned her, "she might be all that in Metropolis but out here we like our traditional country music."

Skye didn't seem phased. "Something like a hoedown?" she asked, grinning from ear to ear.

"I suppose," Martha said slowly, wondering what she was missing.

"Something like the Hoedown Throwdown?" Skye asked, running off before Martha could reply singing loudly about popping it and locking it.

"The what?" Martha called after her but there was no reply.

She waited until the young girl was in the house before chuckling softly under her breath, "*Pop it, lock it, Polka dot it, countrify then hip hop it,*" she sang softly as she descended the ladder.

Skye was getting a surprise if she thought Martha Kent couldn't keep up with her granddaughter.