

Not Given Lightly

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Rating: K+

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A/N: Written for the *Planet* October FicGrab, prompt: Chill. This takes place a year before the events in my story *Revelations* but it is not necessary to have read any stories in the series.

"Any tomatoes?" the skinny teenager behind the counter asked.

"Yes for mine, no on hers," Jason replied, slipping his arms around his girlfriend, Evelyn as she shivered and watched her breath rise in front of her.

"Yeah, sorry about that," the boy apologized with a frown, "heating broke this morning the guy can't fix it until tomorrow. Any sauce?"

"Honey mustard on both. And it's alright," Jason said with a grin, "we live just upstairs anyway. We just moved in together."

"Oh congratulations," the server replied, sounding surprisingly genuine for someone who'd been making sandwiches for disgruntled and cold customers for the whole day.

"Thanks." Jason's grin just got wider, even as he handed over his card for the ridiculously large bill.

"Jase," Evelyn groaned, feeling her face heat up as she elbowed him gently in the ribs. "You do not need to go telling that to everyone we meet."

"We'll excuse me if I think the fact that an extremely beautiful girl has deemed me worthy of sharing an apartment with her is something to be happy about. Thanks." He nodded politely as he took their subs and they left the shop.

"Oh, stop that." Evelyn glared at him but couldn't stop a small giggle escaping as she snuggled closer to her lovely warm boyfriend, "you already got me, didn't you?"

"Well I can't help it." Jason gave her a small hurt-puppy look as he pushed the button for the lift. "Getting the girl might be enough for most but I'd rather work on keeping the one I have thank you very much. I have to convince you to stay somehow."

"I'm not planning on going anytime soon," Evelyn assured him, "else who'd I get to eat all my tomatoes for me?"

Jason laughed and shook his head. "I still can't believe you don't like tomatoes," he said with a sigh.

It was an old joke between them. At the dinner they had meet at Evelyn hadn't known anyone else so when the rather good-looking man next to her had mentioned he loved tomatoes she'd offered him hers, telling him she couldn't stand them. He'd been shocked and they'd struck up a conversation. And now a year later here they were moving in together.

Her mother had been horrified that Evelyn would agree to move in with a man she wasn't

married to but Evelyn had to fight not to laugh at the notion Jason would ever try to 'take advantage of her' as her mother feared. In fact for the first six months of their relationship Evelyn had just waited for Jason to slip up because she'd been completely and utterly sure he was far too good to be true.

"Penny for your thoughts?" Jason asked, slipping his arms around her as they looked out the window. The city of New York glittered below them, the streets relatively empty as most people fled inside from the cold.

"Just thinking about us," Evelyn admitted, leaning back on his chest. She felt it rise and fall suddenly as he sighed and she turned with a frown. "Something wrong?"

"Well," Jason started with a nervous frown, "I actually wanted to talk to you about that..."

"About us?"

"Kinda, yeah." He nodded then pulled her gently towards the couch. "You might want to sit down for this."

Evelyn frowned at his tone and a strange feeling curled in her stomach. "Why?" she asked warily.

"Please just sit, Evie" Jason asked, "this is important." Evelyn looked closely at his face for a moment. No, she decided, he wasn't going to break up with her or anything like that but she was still concerned as to how nervous he was looking. She sat down on the couch but she still didn't relax.

"What's this about?"

"I love you," Jason started, "I really love you a lot, sometimes so much it scares me."

Evelyn was glad she was sitting down then because if she hadn't been she might have collapsed with relief. "You don't have to sit me down to tell me that," she said with a relieved sigh. "I love you too, it's hardly the first time we've said that to each other and even if it was, we're not in high school anymore," she added with a laugh.

But her smile quickly faded when she noticed Jason wasn't joining in. "That wasn't what I wanted to tell you," he said seriously, "well, not that I don't want to tell you that every moment I'm with you," he added with a smile.

Evelyn rolled her eyes but she still felt her face grow slightly warmer. She now had no doubt that Jason wasn't going to leave her or break her heart but that still left the question of what could be so important as to leave him looking so nervous in front of her. "Oh, God, you're not dying are you?" she asked, stiffening as the horrible thought occurred to her.

"What?" Jason asked, looking confused, "No, no, I'm perfectly healthy," he assured her, "and I guess that's actually part of what I want to tell you."

"Well can you just say it then? This is making me nervous."

"Sorry," Jason said, "but I've been thinking of how to tell you this for so long that now I've actually decided to I'm not sure how. You know, maybe it'd be better if I just showed you."

"Showed me what?" Evelyn asked, starting to get a bit impatient. "Jason, if you don't tell me wha..." she trailed off and gaped at him. At his feet, to be more exact, which were hovering two inches above the carpet.

Evelyn got up and knelt on the floor, starting in shock as her boyfriend casually defied the laws of gravity. She looked carefully under his shoes to make sure it wasn't a trick before standing back up. "How are you doing that?" she demanded, trying to keep control of her voice.

Jason just shrugged. "I've been able to do this since I was about sixteen," he told her, "and I've been able to run faster than the speed of sound since I was thirteen, at ten I could lift a car above my head, when I was nine I fell out of a tree without a scratch, at twelve-"

"Stop," Evelyn cut across him, holding up one hand while the other went to her temple in an attempt to still the cacophony of thoughts whirling around. "Just stop for a second."

Jason's feet returned to the ground but he still didn't take his eyes off her. "I know this will come as a shock-"

"Well, you're too young to *be* Superman, so who, Richard?" Evelyn crossed her arms and waited while Jason continued to watch her nervously.

"No..." then his mouth tightened as if he was angry at someone - but not her. "I can't tell you *that*," he said slowly and clearly, "because if one of my parents was Superman that would be *their* secret," he explained, staring intently at her as if he was trying to talk with his eyes as well as his mouth. "All I can tell you is what *I* can do and if you figure out the rest for yourself I can't really be held accountable for that, can I?"

Evelyn frowned, understanding what he meant but his words had reminded her of what had happened that morning. "Is that why you were fighting with your parents earlier?" she asked, still not giving any sign of how she was feeling about his revelation. "If it's not Richard it's Clark - which makes some sense as to how he's survived being married to Lois Lane," she added with a slight smile that vanished almost as soon as it came. "Is this what they didn't want you to do?"

"Yes," Jason confirmed, looking slightly less nervous now that she hadn't yelled at him straight away. Although now he was standing on firm ground Evelyn wasn't even sure what she'd seen had been right. "I told them I wanted to tell you and they said I wasn't allowed. That it wasn't mine to tell."

Evelyn nodded. "Right," she said, "I can see that. But you didn't tell me that did you?" She tilted her head. "You just told me what *you* could do, knowing full well I'd draw the very obvious conclusion myself. Which makes it a fine line you didn't cross there."

"So you're okay with this?" Jason asked hopefully and a tad disbelievingly, looking like her answer was the most important thing to him at that moment.

"Okay?" Evelyn asked, raising an eyebrow.

"You're not angry?"

"Angry?" she repeated dully, her voice sounding far away, like it was someone else's.

"No," she told him, coming back to herself as emotion raced through her. "I'm not angry." Jason looked relieved for a second before Evelyn continued, "I'm furious," she stated bluntly.

"Pardon?"

"How could you not tell me this?" she demanded, whirling back to face him and feeling oddly satisfied when he took a step back. "How could you not tell me you were *Superman's* son?"

"Evie-" Jason started but Evelyn didn't want to hear his explanations, not yet anyway.

"Don't," she warned, glaring at him as she put on her jacket. "I'm going out."

"Where?"

"*Outside*," she snapped back at him, not really sure where she intended to go but she couldn't think right in the apartment. "I need to think about this, okay?"

"Evie-" Jason started again but he hesitated when she shot another glare at him. "Evelyn," he began again, "I'm not going to stop you from leaving but-"

"I'll come back," she assured him, hearing the worry in his voice but still not softening her

gaze. "I'll promise that much. As for whether or not I'll stay..." she trailed off and just gave a shrug before leaving him standing in the living room looking like the world had just turned inside out on him.

She hurried downstairs, trying to sort everything out in her head. She'd known Jason's life growing up had been far from what most would consider normal. Having a mother like Lois Lane practically guaranteed that. Evelyn had thought by now he would have run out of ways to surprise her. After she'd found out he'd been kidnapped by Lex Luthor when he was five it had seemed like anything else would pale in comparison. Even the time he'd mentioned his brother and sister had been held hostage by a mad gunman when they were four and six. Or when he'd casually admitted he'd been to over twenty different countries before he was nineteen. At least that part made sense now.

She wrapped her arms tighter around her, wishing she'd thought to bring a better jacket. She'd just walk around the block she decided, then she'd go back up to the apartment and have a long discussion with Jason. Her fury had been all but extinguished by the cold, icy air which had been half the point of the walk in the first place. But she really did need to clear her head before trying to listen to his explanation, she'd tried talking to people when she was angry before and had found that it hardly ever got them anywhere useful. Things would be much better for the both of them if her emotions were calmer and her head was clearer.

Unfortunately, although Evelyn was New York born and bred, she'd only moved into their new apartment a week ago and still hadn't learnt the whole area. It was a full ten minutes of wandering about in the cold before she admitted she was lost. The chill had deepened and the air held the faint possibility of snow which would have excited her was she not so cold her fingers were going numb. And she'd left her cellphone behind as well. "Nice going," she muttered to herself bitterly.

She decided to re-trace her steps and turned around to go back the way she came. She was almost eighty percent sure she'd passed two streets since she'd last turned so she set off in the opposite direction hoping like hell she'd remember which way she'd turned when she got there. She'd just passed the first street when she realized the cold had all but disappeared, briefly she remembered the horror stories her older sister would tell her about people who go lost on the streets and froze to death, and the moment they felt warm was always just before they died.

However she was older now and quickly realized that if she was anywhere close to freezing she'd hardly be able to stand, let alone walk. Yet even though the pace she was keeping was brisk it was hardly enough to fight off the cold completely. Then she sighed and came to a halt- the only probable explanation coming to her in a flash. "I said I wanted to be alone," she sighed, turning around.

Jason didn't even try to hide, floating a few meters above the pavement on the deserted street and giving her a sheepish look, the faint red glow in his eyes vanishing quickly. "I'm sorry," he apologized, descending slowly to the ground, "but it's freezing out here and you didn't even take your scarf, I just wanted to make sure you were okay."

"You're not even wearing a jacket," she noted, surprised to find her anger was now mostly gone and she could talk to him without yelling. "Although I've never seen Superman wear a jacket either," she continued, "but Clark does... it's his glasses isn't it?" she said almost to herself.

Jason frowned. "Not just his glasses, I mean it's the way he acts as well," he explained, stopping just before he reached her, as if he was still afraid of what she would say.

"We're going to come back to that," Evelyn promised, "but for now you can relax," she told him, taking some pity on his nerves, "I'm not that angry anymore but I am still needing an explanation of why you didn't tell me earlier." She shook her head and stared upwards as she tried to explain to him. "I mean, can you imagine if I'd been in a wheelchair or something the whole time we'd been together then one day I'd just stood up and said, 'Hey guess what, I've actually been able to walk this whole time'?"

Jason nodded. "Well, yeah," he agreed, "I guess I'd feel pretty hurt. But it's not entirely the same."

"How is you keeping your ability to fly and bench press cars a secret any different?" Evelyn challenged him.

"My secret can hurt people," Jason responded immediately. "Well, maybe not directly," he admitted, seeing his girlfriend's skeptical look, "but you figured out pretty fast that my Dad was actually Superman and Superman, well he has a lot of enemies. Right now the only thing those guys can use to hurt him is kryptonite but if they found out about me..."

"I guess I can see that," Evelyn agreed, "but if you've got all his powers already then wouldn't kryptonite be the only thing to work on you as well... oh," she gave a small gasp as she realized the other obvious conclusion to be drawn from this information. "It's not just you."

"No, it's not." Jason nodded seriously. "If someone did want to really get even with my Dad he'd have six of us to choose from, and the younger ones haven't got their powers yet. They'd be considerably easier to hurt without kryptonite."

Evelyn thought about that for a moment but didn't dwell, she liked all of her boyfriend's siblings and the thought of any of them coming to harm was not a pleasant one. "I guess I have a new question then," she said after a long moment. "Why *did* you tell me?"

"Pardon?" Jason asked, looking taken aback at the sudden turn in the conversation.

"I guess I can see why you wouldn't tell me right away," she said slowly, her mind once again a whirl of thoughts but these ones were making sense, "but I'm not stupid, I know the type of enemies Superman has. If telling me this could endanger them then why tell me at all?"

"Because I love you," Jason said as if it was the most obvious thing in the world. "In fact, you're the only girl I've ever truly loved and it wasn't easy for me to admit that. After what happened with my parents I don't take things like that lightly. I love you and I don't want that love to rest on lies and secrets."

Evelyn nodded, biting her lip to stop herself smiling. He wasn't getting off that easy. "So your parents didn't want you to tell me then?"

"No," Jason sighed, "And before you ask, as far as they're aware they won, they don't know I'm telling you."

"Hmmm, defying your parents' orders for the sake of love." She let herself smile this time. "I guess that is kind of sweet." Jason didn't say anything, but just kept watching her, a hopeful look on his face. Evelyn sighed and finally took pity, she closed the distance between them and kissed him, pulling away with a grin. "I still want a *full* explanation," she informed him.

"Fair enough," Jason agreed.

"Including all about you Dad. Which I did guess by myself," she added.

"You did."

"And you have to promise not to be mad about my secret."

"I- what?" Jason gave her a confused look but nodded.

"You said you wanted this relationship to be built on truth," Evelyn told him, biting her lip, "so I've got to come clean about something."

"Okay." Jason nodded but looked at her apprehensively.

"Promise you won't be mad?"

"I don't really see how I'd have any right after what I just told you," Jason pointed out.

"I like tomatoes," she blurted out suddenly.

Jason blinked. "You do? But you said-"

"I know I said I hated them," she said, before hurrying to explain, her words getting faster and faster, "but I didn't know anyone at our table and then you said you really loved them so I just wanted a good conversation opener and offering you mine seemed like a good idea at the time then suddenly we were going out and unlike every other man I've dated you actually *remembered* stuff about me like my dislike of tomatoes and I really missed them this last year but-"

"Evie breathe!" Jason ordered her, looking both startled at her outburst and amazed at how much she could apparently fit into a single breath.

Evelyn took a huge gasp of air before sighing. "I like tomatoes," she repeated.

"My Dad's Superman," Jason replied with a shrug.

They stared at each other for a moment before bursting out into simultaneous bouts of laughter. "We really should get home," Evelyn managed to gasp between giggles.

Jason grinned, "I can get us there faster," he said, his tone and quick glance upwards implying exactly what he meant. "We've got dinner waiting for us, and-" his grin widened, "You can have some of my tomatoes this time."

"I'd like that," Evelyn replied, taking his outstretched arm and trying to calm her excitement as they started to rise above the pavement. "C'mon then, Superboy," she said with a grin, "show me what you got."

*'Cause it's you that I love
and it's true that I love
It's love not given lightly
But I knew this was love
And it's you that I love
And it's more than what it might be
-Chris Knox, Not Given Lightly*