

A Neoteric Sobriquet

by repmetsyrrah

© 25-Sep-09

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.

A/N: Written for the September FicGrab on the *Planet*, prompt: Sobriquet. This takes place in my *Poison*-verse shortly after the events of *SR*- around seven years before *Poison*.

Man Of Steel the papers called him, even her own. But that was a load of garbage. Oh, sure maybe sometimes it was right, when he caught bullets in his bare hands or when he walked through fire to save a family from certain death. But most of the time, Lois knew, Superman was really the man of secrets and flimsy disguises.

She glared at Clark across the bullpen, he finished the conversation he was having and turned away, somehow managing knock over a large pile of papers and spill his coffee all over himself. Man Of Steel, yeah right. Man Of Broken Coffee Mugs, more like, or perhaps: Man Who Leaves A Trail of Hopelessly Muddled Paperwork In His Wake. Although she had her doubts either of those would have caught on as well as Man Of Steel.

Man Who Was Too Much Of A Coward To Tell The Mother Of His Child Who He Was. Oh, now *that* was the right one. A bit of a mouthful but it fit perfectly.

But what did that make her then? Woman Who Can Bring Down A Corrupt Senator In A Thousand Words But Can't See Through A Pair Of Glasses? Woman Who's Blinder Than Her Five Year Old Son?

She couldn't believe she had missed it. Her partner, the man she worked beside everyday was secretly Superman, the Man of Steel, father of her child. And he'd fooled the whole world with a stutter and a pair of glasses.

"L- Lois?"

Speak of the devil. "Yes, *Clark*?" she asked with forced politeness.

"Um, is everything alright?" he asked, pushing up his completely unnecessary glasses with his finger as he gave a goofy farmboy grin.

"Of course it is, *Clark*," she replied, *if that is in fact your real name* she added silently. "Why do you ask?"

"Well, it's j- just that you've sort of been staring at me for about a five minutes without saying anything." Clark's grin turned slightly nervous as Lois continued to stare at him.

"I'm fine, *Clark*, everything's alright," she repeated. Clark looked a bit unnerved at her constant repeating of his name but he just continued to grin at her. "How are you?" she asked, her eyes flicking to the TV which showed a picture of Superman from earlier that day, with the caption *Man Of Steel averts disaster once again*.

"Oh," Clark followed her gaze and gave a confused frown before shrugging. "I'm just swell, Lois, thanks for asking."

"That's good, *Clark*," she replied, to her now truly baffled partner. "I need to get back to work now," she said pointedly.

At least the man could take *some* hints. He nodded and returned to his own desk, throwing a confused glance over his shoulder as Lois continued to stare at him. Finally she ripped her eyes of his back and returned her gaze to her screen.

Lois shook her head, she probably should tell Clark she knew, even if he didn't have the guts to tell her himself. Jason deserved to have his parents on speaking terms. But even if she knew the secret now it still left too many questions in her mind. Who was he anyway?

Superman to the world, Clark Kent to most, then there was the Man Of Steel, Farmboy, Klutz, Kal-El, Smallville, CK - the list went on. Lois may have known they were all the same person but she still had to figure out which one was the real one.

Across the bullpen Clark knocked over yet another pile of paper. On the TV Superman pulled a woman from a raging river. In her memories Kal-El whispered softly in her ear as they lay on silver sheets.

Lois sighed, this was going to be harder than she thought.