

# To All A Good Night

by repmetsyrrah

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Rating: K+

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*A/N:* Set about a year after *Place Your Bets*. Written via request for d\_scarlet6 who wanted another fic in this verse. The prompt 'Bonus' was used to inspire this but it kinda got away from me a bit. If you squint it still fits though.

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Gemma Out was currently the only sober person in the *Daily Planet* bullpen. This had both its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages being she had procured enough blackmail material to last the whole year and would actually *remember* it. The disadvantage being she was the only reporter left who was capable of stringing a story together and, since the news never takes a holiday, she was busy seeking out her husband to tell him she had to leave.

"Gem-gem," Ryan yelled when he spotted her, jumping up to hug her in front of all the IT guys. Something he never would have done in front of people when sober.

Gemma laughed and pushed him off. "Ryan, no," she said firmly when he tried to kiss her, "your breath stinks." He looked so put down that she relented to kissing him on the cheek before telling him what the Chief had ordered her to do.

"On Christmas Eve?" he asked in confusion.

Gemma shrugged. "It *is* sporting related," she pointed out, "and I'm probably the only sober person here now that Kent's disappeared again."

"Did they not celebrate Christmas on Krypton then?" one of the other IT guys asked, Phil if Gemma remembered correctly.

Gemma sighed, "It's not even that late," she pointed out, "and they've been moaning about that damn 777 in the stadium for a *year*. It would have taken months to move it by any other means. I suppose if Superman says he's got time to do it they're going on his schedule."

"No one uses that stadium anymore anyway," Ryan protested. "All the good games are over at Highlands now."

"Maybe that's 'cause there's a *plane* in the other," Gemma suggested, whacking him lightly on the head. "That stupid committee finally agreed it had outlived its usefulness as a tourist attraction and they announced they were moving it last month. Although, if you ask me that's because they only just got a proper chairman."

"Well," Ryan sighed, "be careful, both of you," he added, kneeling down to kiss her slightly bulging stomach holding his child and the reason Gemma was sober.

"I'll probably be back soon," she promised him, "enjoy the party, you won't even miss me."

"*I'll* miss you Gemma," Phil cried drunkenly only to be hit by three of Ryan friends and

collapse in a heap on the floor.

Gemma just shook her head as she headed to the elevator. Maybe leaving the party was a good idea anyway, the other two women in the bullpen who were pregnant hadn't even bothered showing up. Although in Lois's case it was because she had left early babbling about some lead on the corruption in some of the many Christmas charities operating in Metropolis in the holiday season.

Gemma wasn't a big drinker herself but she couldn't even act silly this year because everyone knew she wasn't drinking at all.

She decided to take a cab to the stadium as she didn't want to use the subway on a night when most people were less than sober. Especially when she was looking after two people.

The ride to the stadium was short and she turned down the cab driver's offer to wait for her. There wasn't much of a crowd in the stadium, she supposed even the allure of seeing Metropolis' superhero in person wasn't enough to coax people out of their homes on a chilly Christmas Eve.

She flashed her press pass at the security guard who looked like he wanted nothing more than to be home with his family and gave her a scowl in response.

In the stadium the same 777 that had rested in the diamond for the past year looked smaller than it used to be and almost immediately Gemma saw why. A blue and red figure rose from the end carrying a large part of the plane and flew out of the stadium only to return moments later empty handed and begin again.

She spotted a gathering of journalists by the side of the plane listening to a man who seemed to be explaining what was going on. Gemma hurried to join them.

"-the technicians are instructing him of the safest way to disassemble the aircraft. Superman is then taking the deconstructed pieces to trucks waiting outside the stadium to take it back to our factory. Even though many parts are damaged beyond repair we remain hopeful that we can salvage at least some components."

Gemma frowned in annoyance as she took notes. It seemed this was just some guy from the aircraft company, probably trying to spin the story in such a way that it would show Superman was doing them a personal favour or something.

It would give her a story but she wanted to ask what the impact of a year out of commission would have on the stadium's function as an actual sports stadium. This man wouldn't know if the Monarchs be moving back next season or what measures were going to be taken to make the field *playable* again.

"Unfortunately, Superman has informed us he will most likely not be able to move the whole aircraft before he is called away again but this is a good first step toward removing it from the stadium."

"Did Superman contact you or did you ask him to move it?" one of the other journalists asked as the Man of Steel flew overhead carrying something that looked like a giant bath tub.

The representative of the airline seemed happy to answer that question. "He contacted us," he said with an air of satisfaction, "we had devised several methods to remove it but Superman said he did feel a certain responsibility having put it there in the first place. Although we told him it was a small price to pay for the lives of over fifty people."

"I'll bet you did," Gemma muttered under her breath with an eye roll as she remembered half the reason the plane had remained in the stadium for so long was that the stadium owners and the airline kept trying to say the responsibility of moving it belonged to the other side. It would have been terrible PR to openly blame Superman when he had been saving dozens

of lives in the process but clearly the spokesman seemed happy the Kryptonian had taken part of the blame.

The man moved on to talking about the plane itself and the specifications, most of which wouldn't make engrossing reading at all and Gemma decided she'd just download off the internet anyway. "Hey, Out," a voice behind her said, making her jump slightly.

"What do you want, Harrison?" she asked with a sigh, finding her arch-rival from the *Daily Star* standing behind her with a grin.

"Oh, nothing," he replied with a shrug, "just wondering where Lane was, doesn't she want to see her boyfriend anymore?"

"Lois is married, Harrison," she informed him politely, "in September this year, remember- on no wait," she added, snapping her fingers, "you weren't invited. Not even to the reception, not still bitter are we?" she asked sweetly. For a wedding of two of the most respected journalists in the city with a guest list of hundreds- including former President Ross and the mayor it had been a sore point for those few journalists not invited to the large reception. Although Gemma was proud to be one of the few people invited to the much smaller ceremony beforehand as well.

Before Harrison could retort there was a stir in the crowd and Gemma turned to see Superman heading towards them. All the reporters started shouting at once but quickly feel quite when the hero raised his hand for silence.

"We have done all we can tonight," he told them, not even needing to raise his voice to be heard as the reports hung on his every word. "It's becoming unsafe for the trucks to drive on the roads. The mechanics have helped me to make much of the tail end of the plane easier to remove without my assistance so they can continue taking it away when I'm not able to be here."

"Couldn't you just fly the parts directly to the factory?" one the reporters up the front asked before he could leave.

"I could," Superman agreed, "but I have the feeling many of the workers would like to return to their families tonight. They were very helpful in accommodating my availability but I do not wish to keep them longer than they are need, especially on Christmas Eve. Thank you." And he was gone before they could blink.

The company representative was trying to say something else but with Superman had also gone the reporter's interest in remaining at the stadium. Most were already heading towards the exit and Gemma was looking forward to getting back to the warmth of the bullpen. Ryan had promised to come home early but she would see how much he was enjoying himself before deciding weather to write the story up at the *Planet* or at home.

She was looking forward to spending her first Christmas morning waking up next to the man she could finally call her husband and having the whole day to themselves before dinner at his parents' house. She looked up at the sky and wondered if Superman had anywhere to go for Christmas dinner.

Of course he would, she told herself, he was Superman, he could probably go to Christmas at the White House if he wanted to. But it was different with people you loved, and if anyone deserved a Christmas surrounded by loved ones it was the man who sacrificed so much every day for people he didn't even know.

Gemma cursed as she stepped out of the stadium gates and all thoughts of superheros vanished as she saw that all the cabs had been taken. It didn't look like any would be coming soon either, the roads were icing up fast and the stadium was hardly ever used anymore, the

regular cabs had long gone elsewhere.

She pulled out her cell phone and was dialling her friend Polly's number when a deep voice behind her asked, "Are you alright, Mrs Sandler?"

It took her a second to remember that was her, she still used Out as a writing name but ever since she had surprised everyone by going traditional and taking Ryan's name she had been needing a few moments to remember it herself. She turned around and felt her jaw drop as she saw Superman himself standing behind her.

But she quickly recovered and shrugged. "I'll be fine," she told him, "I'm calling my friend at work and I wouldn't want to bother you."

"I wouldn't inconvenience me at all to take you back to the *Planet*," he informed her politely. "And if what I've heard about the *Daily Planet* Christmas parties is true then your friend might not be in a fit state to come get you."

"Probably not," Gemma agreed with a laugh.

"I wouldn't feel right leaving you here in your condition either," Superman continued, nodding to her stomach and once again Gemma had to agree.

"Okay," she relented, "I suppose it would be safer than a cab anyway," she joked and was pleased to see him smile back.

The flight was exhilarating and over far too soon. While most women would be swooning at being in Superman's arms all Gemma felt was a sense of awe at looking over the city from such a great height. "It must be amazing," she blurted out when they landed, "to see things like that all the time."

Superman looked surprised at the remark but nodded. "It is a nice view isn't it?" he agreed, looking out over the city.

Gemma remembered her previous thought and before she lost her nerve or before Superman could leave again she quickly asked, "Do you have somewhere to go?"

"Pardon?"

Gemma took a certain bit of pride in seeing she had caught *Superman* of all people off guard but still blushed as she continued. "For Christmas, you have somewhere to go don't you?"

He looked out over the city again for a moment before turning back to her with a smile. "Yes," he told her, "I do have a place to go." And from the way he said it Gemma knew that the place he had to go was somewhere with loved ones who would see him as more than simply Metropolis' caped saviour.

"Oh," she said, feeling a bit silly but she just smiled. "Merry Christmas, Superman, thanks for the lift."

"Merry Christmas, Mrs Sandler, you're welcome" he replied before shooting off into the darkness.

"You got back quickly." Ryan had been waiting at her desk and seemed surprised.

Gemma shrugged casually. "I got a lift from Superman," she said as if it was nothing. But she couldn't keep a straight face when she saw how her husband's jaw hit the floor at that information.

"I would accuse anyone else of lying," he said once he had regained his composure, "but seen as it's you I guess I'll have to believe it. What was it like?"

"Awesome," Gemma replied, unable to stop the huge grin that spread across her face at the memory of the flight.

"Do I need to be getting jealous now?" Ryan asked teasingly. "I can compete with a lot of

things but I think bench-pressing aeroplanes and night time flights over the city are out of my range."

Gemma laughed. "Not at all," she assured him, "I've only got room in my heart for one super-man and that's taken." And because she meant it and because it was Christmas she kissed him, beer breath and all.