

Rating: G

Improv: #5 - frost - stand - violet - pity

Ship: slightly Clark/Lex

Summary: A little Clark introspection on the events of Leech; kind of a companion piece to ['Traditions'](#)

Being Normal

by Penemuel

Overnight the temperature has dropped. Clark realizes he should have expected it -- the out-of-season thunder storms were evidence of a cold front coming through. Delicate traceries of frost decorate the windows like some art nouveau filligree and remind Clark of his mother's favourite part of Disney's 'Fantasia'. He can easily imagine little blue faeries ice skating around on the glass.

Shivering in the chill room, he leaps out of bed and uses his super-speed to dress; only realizing once he's finished that the day before he had had to dress the 'normal' way. The way everyone else did.

But, he reluctantly admits as he sits back down on the bed to tie his shoes, for him the super-speed method *is* normal. He sighs and grabs up his coat, hurries downstairs for a couple of bites of breakfast.

He drops onto a chair and smiles up at his mother as she places a plate in front of him. "How do you feel, Clark?" she asks softly, brushing a stray lock of his hair back where it belongs.

He glances over to see his father watching him, then ducks his gaze to his pancakes for a moment. When he finally looks up again, he says, "I'm not really sure. I liked being just... normal, but..." He drifts off and looks back at his father, then continues, "I guess it wasn't normal for *me*."

His father nods and says, "You've grown up getting used to your abilities, Clark. Suddenly losing them would be like suddenly going blind or deaf..."

"Yeah, that's -- that makes sense. I kept expecting to be able to do things and *couldn't* do them." He sighs and bolts the rest of his breakfast, hearing the bus nearing the stop. "It's a pity I didn't have a little time to play a few more lunchtime basketball games, though..." Stands up and kisses his mother on the cheek, then hurries to the door. "Gotta run, or I'll miss the bus. At least this time I can run to school if I do..."

And then he's jogging to the stop and getting on the bus; slouching into the first seat he can find since there isn't an empty one near Pete and Chloe. Wonders if what Lana said is really true, that he actually carries himself differently now that he's back to 'normal'. Wonders if anyone else can see it.

And then the thoughts that he's been trying to ignore come to the fore. Lana, and her meteor rock pendant -- and Lex's lead box.

He knows Lex originally gave him the pendant in it -- and still wonders if Lex had been testing some theory of his own, the way he so casually opened it near Clark and caught the flinch of reaction...

But, Clark forces his mind back to the subject at hand, Lex had given it to him to *give* to Lana. Clark knows Lex didn't have to give him the pendant back in a lead box. He's glad Lex did, though, because he had to give it to her that way. Unless he wanted her to see him all grey/green and --ugh!-- veiny.

So Clark wonders why, after all of his rationalizing and logical thinking, he *still* feels guilty for giving it to her.

Because it was something Lex's mother gave to him. Something from the one person who obviously meant a great deal to Lex. And he gave it away to the girl he has a teenage crush on.

For a moment, he's not sure which one upsets him more, the fact that he *gave* the box to Lana, or the fact that he's started thinking of her in those terms... Terms Lex would use -- has used, although not specifically about him and Lana. He thinks.

And after his speech about putting the past away, it's not like he can go to Lana and ask for the box back -- he all but told her to lock the pendant away *in* it.

So now, he realizes, this afternoon he has to visit Lex and not just apologize for being a jerk to him and taking his frustrations out on him, he also has to apologize for giving away the box Lex gave to him. An heirloom from his mother. Something, he suspects, Lex will try to brush off just like he did with the watch when he realized he was letting Clark see too much sentimentality. And Clark doesn't want him to just brush it off, because Clark doesn't want Lex hurting and not letting him know it.

Clark realizes Lex's feelings have become very important to him, and he's a little nervous about what that might say about him. That, and how good he thought Lex looked in dark charcoal slacks and a muted violet cashmere turtleneck a few days earlier. Things that he *really* shouldn't be thinking about, especially not on the bus on the way to school...

As the bus pulls up to let them out, Clark sighs. He's starting to think that 'normal' won't work, powers or no powers; and he's glad he's got his backpack to fumble with until most of the other students are off the bus and his unruly body is behaving itself again.

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