

FADE IN ON:

1
RED THEATER CURTAINS, drawn shut. The kind found in classic movie houses of yesteryear. They slowly open, but only enough to reveal a small portion of the screen. The film flickers to life, fading in on an old issue of...

ACTION COMICS. A BOY'S HAND reaches into frame and opens it, revealing drawn comic book panels. The boy reads them aloud:

LITTLE BOY (V.O.)

On a distant planet orbiting a red sun, a wise scientist predicted his world's imminent destruction. Despite overwhelming evidence, his pleas to evacuate the planet were ignored, leaving him and his wife no choice...

He turns the page to a panel of JOR-EL and his wife, LARA.

LITTLE BOY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...but to place their only son into a spaceship and launch it to another galaxy, in hopes of finding the child a new home. A child destined to become Earth's greatest protector...

As the boy's voice fades, PUSH IN ON a panel. We once again hear the panel read aloud -- but this time by the voice of:

LARA (V.O.)

But why Earth Jor-El? They're primitives. Thousands of years behind us.

JOR-EL (V.O.)

He will need that advantage. To survive.

THE COMIC BOOK PANEL DISSOLVES TO:

2
INT. KRYPTON -- HOUSE OF JOR-EL

Footage from the 1978 version of SUPERMAN. JOR-EL and LARA place the baby KAL-EL, into a CRYSTAL VESSEL. The footage is treated, almost black and white, save for the child's blue, red, and yellow garments. We're in 1.85:1, standard widescreen format.

LARA

He will be odd. Different.

JOR-EL
He will be fast. Virtually
invulnerable.

LARA
Isolated. Alone.

Jor-El holds up a gleaming WHITE CRYSTAL.

JOR-EL
He will not be alone. He will never
be alone.

He places it into the ship. And as the hatch closes with the
boy in it. We hear:

JOR-EL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You will travel far my little Kal-
el...

Jor-El and Lara stand under a cascading shower of debris, as
the craft rises upward and shatters the ceiling.

JOR-EL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...but we will never leave you.
Even in the face of our death, the
richness of our lives will be
yours.

3 EXT. KRYPTON - CONTINUOUS

The ship flies above Kryptonian cities, away from the planet.

JOR-EL (V.O.)
All that I have learned, everything
I feel, all of this and more I
bequeath you, my son. You will make
my strength your own, see my life
through your eyes, as your life
will be seen through mine. The son
becomes the father. The father...
the son.

As the ship soars into space, KRYPTON'S RED SUN EXPLODES.

Blackness. The familiar notes of John Williams' classic
melody rumble to life. The aspect ratio opens wider to 2.35 --
Cinemascope. MAJESTIC TITLES fill the screen, interspersed
with DAILY PLANET HEADLINES tracing Superman's history, many
written by LOIS LANE:

"METEOR SHOWER BAFFLES SCIENTISTS"
"CAPED WONDER STUNS CITY"
"I SPENT A NIGHT WITH SUPERMAN"
"SUPERMAN FOILS LEX LUTHOR"

"ASTRONOMERS DISCOVER KRYPTON INTACT -- SIGNS OF LIFE FOUND"

And then we see the biggest headline of them all.

"SUPERMAN DISAPPEARS"

More headlines follow as the world is besieged with all manners of trouble: war, famine, crime. Soon, these headlines push Superman to the back pages. Within a matter of years, he's all but faded from public consciousness. Finally, we see one last headline:

"WILL HE EVER RETURN?"

End credits. It is silent. The tapestry of stars stretches into infinity. But ONE STAR seems to move, gliding past the others. It abruptly changes course, now heading towards us.

It swoops by, and we finally see that this isn't a star, but a huge SPACECRAFT. Only there is no metal hull, no thrusters. Nothing to indicate it is manmade. Instead, the ship resembles a CRYSTAL SPORE bathed in light.

4 INT. SPACECRAFT - SAME TIME

Only a soothing throb is heard. The crystalline walls look as if they've been grown instead of built. A fine mist covers everything in a haze. We move through the mist and enter a chamber with A CRYSTAL POD in the center. Through its shell, we see the silhouette of A MAN laying inside. Asleep.

A CONSOLE illuminates, and a series of CRYSTALS emerge, projecting a HOLOGRAPHIC STAR CHART. A gentle ALARM sounds.

INSIDE THE POD, the man stirs. With a brief HISS, it opens.

EYES open. Bright blue. Striking. The man sits up, cloaked in shadow. He breathes deep, now fully awake, and steps out of the pod. Light washes over him, revealing a powerful body and raven black hair. Handsome. Every feature chiseled.

Finally, the light reveals his face. To some, he is known as KAL-EL, but to almost everyone in the world, he is SUPERMAN.

He is dressed completely in white -- a strange, unearthly material that blends with his ship's environment.

AT THE CONSOLE, Superman touches a crystal and the alarm stops. Looking at the charts, he seems anxious. Hopeful. He touches the console, and THE ENTIRE WALL IN FRONT OF HIM changes from solid and opaque, to completely transparent.

Superman gazes at the heavens when something catches his eye: A MASSIVE DARK SPOT, blocking the stars. He touches another crystal. The lights inside the ship fade, while outside...

5 EXT. DEEP SPACE - SAME TIME 5

A MASSIVE BEAM OF LIGHT illuminates THE PLANET KRYPTON. It floats silently in the darkness, without its red sun to provide heat or light.

6 INT. SPACECRAFT - SAME TIME 6

Upon seeing his homeworld, Superman's expression is one of wonder, hope and fulfillment. Did Krypton somehow survive?

7 EXT. KRYPTON - SAME TIME 7

The ship glides over the surface, and the remnants of this great civilization come into view: cities, monuments, and canyons. Like his ship, they're all born from the same crystal technology, but while the ship glows bright, these structures are dark and quiet.

As the craft flies by, we linger on a cluster of ruins. Through fine cracks, a faint GREEN GLOW becomes visible.

8 INT. SPACECRAFT - SAME TIME 8

Superman scans the terrain, looking for anything that connects him to this place. But something else is happening. He seems nauseous. His hand trembles. A single bead of sweat drips down his brow. He tries to fight it off.

9 EXT. KRYPTON 9

The ship moves through the ruins of a huge DOME, descending into a VAST CANYON of CRYSTAL MONOLITHS arranged in a circle.

10 EXT. KRYPTON - VALLEY OF ELDERS - SAME TIME 10

The ship moves past one of the structures, and illuminates a large HIEROGLYPHIC SYMBOL. Similar crests are carved into surrounding monoliths. The ship moves past them, then stops.

PULL BACK from the cracked crystal relief, revealing it to be THE SUPERMAN CREST. The symbol of his Kryptonian heritage.

11 INT. SPACECRAFT - SAME TIME 11

Superman is astonished. Never before has he seen evidence of his family's fate. Suddenly, the nausea becomes a crippling pain throughout his body. He leans forward, bracing himself.

Through the window, he sees a strange SHIMMER around the crest. It becomes stronger. A FAINT GREEN LIGHT becomes visible, radiating from cracks in the S. It's the ominous green glow of KRYPTONITE.

Alarmed, Superman pulls the ship away, toward the edge of a cliff. But instead of finding more land on the other side of the cliff, the surface of the planet abruptly STOPS. There is only a steep drop-off plunging into darkness.

12

EXT. KRYPTON - SAME TIME

12

PULL BACK to reveal that this isn't the planet in its entirety, but A HUGE BROKEN SHARD. And on the underside is a layer of Krypton's mantel. It has been irradiated, glowing a pale, sickly green -- KRYPTONITE. More than we have ever seen. GIANT SLABS tumble and whiz by. IT'S AN ASTEROID FIELD entirely composed of the deadly substance -- and his ship is floating right into the middle of it.

13

INT. SPACECRAFT - SAME TIME

13

The effect intensifies. Superman gasps in pain. He tries to punch commands into the console, but his hands are trembling. Outside, thousands of pieces of glowing Kryptonite are hurtling towards him. WHAM! THE SHIP IS HIT. Superman falls.

14

EXT. KRYPTONITE ASTEROID FIELD - SAME TIME

14

The craft tumbles and spins out of control. Parts shatter and break off. But something strange happens. The crystal immediately GROWS BACK where it was shattered, repaired.

15

INT. SPACECRAFT - SAME TIME

15

Superman struggles to his feet. Outside, more kryptonite smashes against the window, cracking it. Crystals work quickly to repair the damages, but it keeps coming. He punches in a series of commands, and weakly utters one word:

SUPERMAN

...home.

Superman takes one last look at Krypton. Now filled with nothing but danger and despair. Above the console, an image of EARTH appears. As Superman SLUMPS to the ground, he looks back at the sleeping pod and painfully crawls towards it.

16

EXT. DEEP SPACE - SAME TIME

16

The ship ROCKETS out of the asteroid field, narrowly avoiding MORE DEBRIS from the shattered planet. It pulls back, faster and faster, past another piece of the planet, and another and another. The ship speeds into the distance, and once again becomes a small glowing speck among the sea of stars.

DISSOLVE TO:

MORE STARS. But instead of the eerie silence of space, we hear the familiar sound of CRICKETS, followed by quiet MUSIC.

17

EXT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

17

We swoop downward, past a crescent moon, to A FARM HOUSE.

CUT TO:

A SCRABBLE BOARD, displaying the word ALIEN. A WOMAN'S HAND adds letters, creating the word ALIENATION.

MARTHA (O.S.)

That's... Seventy four points.

BEN (O.S.)

You're not doing a very good job of letting me win.

18

INT. FARM HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

18

BEN and MARTHA, both in their sixties, sit at the table finishing up a game of Scrabble. The kitchen is cozy, filled with old mementos. A DOG sleeps nearby. Ben tallies the score. Martha has 409 points, he has 70. Game over.

MARTHA

I like my kitchen table and I want to keep it, Ben. I'll let you win when we're playing for a new bed.

She stands up and kisses him on the head, passing by a FURNITURE CATALOG, many pages of which are dog-eared. Ben looks at the open page, which describes a 'NEW WEATHERED MAHOGANY KITCHEN TABLE'.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Plus, explain to me how a table can be both weathered and... new.

BEN

There's nothing wrong with new.

MARTHA

Nothing wrong with old, either. And this table's already weathered.

BEN

Okay, okay. What's with the attachment to a table anyway?

Her eyes move to the edge of the table, where a child-like name is CARVED into it: CLARK.

MARTHA

I just like it, Ben. It has history...

She trails off, and turns to the window. It's as if she hears something outside.

BEN

Martha?

Now Ben hears it: A RUMBLING. It builds. Plates, glasses, and lights start to rattle and shake. The dog perks up, whining.

BEN (CONT'D)

What in...

The rumbling becomes A DEAFENING ROAR, and through the window, they see the clouds glowing a brilliant RED. It grows brighter, until A METEOR STREAKS ACROSS THE NIGHT SKY. It heads toward the horizon, and with a thunderous BOOM and blinding flash of light -- CRASHES INTO A DISTANT FIELD.

Ben immediately heads across the kitchen and grabs a PHONE. Martha stands in the window, still stunned.

Ben starts to dial, but can't get a signal. He looks up to see that Martha has her finger on the hook.

BEN (CONT'D)

Martha, what are you doing?

MARTHA

It's alright, Ben.

BEN

But you saw that --

MARTHA

It's just a meteorite. Sometimes they burn up in the atmosphere and sometimes they make it all the way down. No need to trouble the Sheriff or anyone else about a little hunk of rock.

He looks at her skeptically. She checks her watch.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Listen, it's late. I had a nice dinner, and...

BEN

But--

MARTHA

I'll see you on Wednesday, Ben. For Bingo.

Martha

BEN

MARTHA

(firm)

Wednesday. For Bingo.

She looks at him, stonefaced. He takes another look outside --
and at her, and realizes what's happening.

BEN

(still skeptical)

A little hunk of rock, huh?

She smiles. He sighs and shakes his head.

BEN (CONT'D)

Martha Kent, I knew you'd be
trouble.

19 EXT. FARM HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER 19

Martha grins, waving goodbye as Ben pulls out of the
driveway. She watches him drive off, and her smile fades.

20 EXT. DIRT ROAD - MOMENTS LATER 20

A weathered pick-up truck speeds down a quiet road.

21 INT. TRUCK - SAME TIME 21

Martha anxiously stares out the windshield as she drives.

22 EXT. CORNFIELD - MOMENTS LATER 22

The truck pulls up next to a large cornfield. Martha gets
out, gawking at A LONG, CHARRED TRENCH in the middle of the
field scorching the earth for hundreds of feet.

23 EXT. CORNFIELD - CRATER - MOMENTS LATER 23

Martha rushes along the trench, following SHARDS OF CRYSTAL
DEBRIS, until she comes upon A SMOKING CRATER. The smoke
clears, and she sees it:

SUPERMAN'S SHIP, or what's left: small, charred pieces of
broken fuselage. A similar sight to the day he first arrived.

Horried, Martha is about to climb down into the crater when
A HAND grabs her shoulder. She screams and turns just as...

SUPERMAN COLLAPSES INTO HER ARMS. They both fall to the
ground. His white suit is torn and tattered -- barely
revealing the blue fabric of another suit beneath it. He
stares up at her, weak and injured, uttering one word...

SUPERMAN

Mom...

With tears streaming down her face, Martha Kent gently cradles her son as he slips into unconsciousness.

Then we hear the voice of a very different OLD WOMAN:

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

In spite of your past, I know
you're a good man...

24

EXT. VANDERWORTH MANSION - DAY

24

A STATELY MANSION rests on a riverbank with a line of beautiful cars in the driveway. THUNDER echoes. RAIN pours.

*

*

25

INT. VANDERWORTH MANSION - GERTRUDE'S ROOM - DAY

25

Two hands wearing matching WEDDING BANDS hold each other. The elderly, wrinkled hand belongs to A WOMAN, while the other hand belongs to an UNSEEN MAN. She coughs. Her voice is weak:

GERTRUDE (O.S.)

...and all good men deserve a
second chance. Like my dear
Stephen, taken before his time.

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING illuminates a portrait of the distinguished STEPHEN VANDERWORTH above the fireplace.

*

*

GERTRUDE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

From the moment I received your
first letter, I knew you weren't
like the rest.

WIDER to reveal we're in the lavish bedroom of GERTRUDE VANDERWORTH, heir to the Vanderworth shipping dynasty. She's in bed, hooked up to a dozen medical devices. Two TINY DOGS wearing DIAMONDS jump up and down, wanting attention.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

You came from nothing, and worked
hard to get where you are, even if
you made a few mistakes along the
way. Not like those VULTURES
outside, who never had to work a
day in their lives.

She spits the line out like vinegar. Outside, A GROUP OF PEOPLE POUND on the door.

RELATIVES (O.S.)

MOM! GRANDMA! OPEN THE DOOR! YOU
BASTARD! OPEN THE DOOR!!!

The man gives her a hard pat on the back. Once again, he knows exactly what she needs. He gently strokes her hand and pushes 'LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT' papers towards her.

GERTRUDE

You said that if I helped you get out of prison, that you'd take care of me. And you have. All of this medicine, all of these machines...

Her bony finger points to a RADIATION MACHINE near her bed.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

They're worthless. Sometimes I think it's the machines that killed me... but you-- you've done so much for me... shown me pleasures I never thought were possible...

ANGLE ON: The man's other hand, fist clenching. Clearly, he put up with a lot in this relationship. She coughs, god-knows-what into her hand, then grasps his. He almost pulls away but thinks the better of it. Gertrude takes the papers in a painkiller-induced daze.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

And that's why you deserve what Stephen left for me.

(beat)

That's why you deserve everything.

She starts to sign the will: Gertrude Vander-- but stops abruptly, coughing. The relatives pound harder on the door. She continues signing, but stops again, coughing and hacking.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

I love you... Lex Luthor.

She smiles, and her heart monitor FLATLINES. SHE SLUMPS OVER. DEAD. The man panics, grabs her hand, 'helping' Gertrude finish her signature. THUNDER rumbles outside.

He snatches the will and KICKS the dogs out of his way. He stands up, majestic underneath the portrait of her dead husband. CLINK! His wedding band drops into her false teeth glass and sinks.

26

INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

26

The door opens. Relatives stand back, aghast, as the man steps into the hall. He solemnly bows his head, almost in regret. Instead, he pulls off A WIG, revealing a slick bald head. LIGHTNING FLASHES, giving us our first good look at:

LEX LUTHOR. Just as suave and sinister as ever. Lex hands the Will to a man, and tosses the wig to a little girl.

LEX
You can keep that.
(to the others)
The rest is mine.

With a skip in his step, Lex makes his way down the hall and signals to A BEAUTIFUL MAID dusting a large display case containing A MODEL SHIP. The woman smiles, then drops her feather duster and joins him. This is KITTIE KOWALSKI.

Lex starts to whistle "SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL" as the stunned relatives watch them walk away. The little girl looks down at the wig in her hands and SCREAMS.

CUT TO:

27

INT. KENT HOUSE - CLARK'S ROOM - PRE-DAWN

27

CLARK KENT'S EYES open, looking up at SMALL STARS glued to the ceiling -- stuck there since he was a kid. THE DOG stares at him, wagging its tail.

CLARK
Hey boy.

Clark reaches for some clothes and painfully tries to sit up.

28

INT. KENT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

28

Clark descends the staircase and approaches some FAMILY PHOTOS on a piano: taking a bath as a baby, a birthday party, working on the farm, high school graduation. Nothing out of the ordinary. Just the life of an all-American kid.

29

EXT. KENT FARM - MOMENTS LATER

29

Clark approaches the cornfield and looks around. The farm has fallen into disrepair -- machinery has rusted, and the field is overgrown. He breathes in the morning air and kneels down, running his fingers through the soil... remembering.

30

FLASHBACK - EXT. KENT FARM - DAY

30

Clark stands up, but now the field is full of tall ripe corn stalks. We're back in his childhood; Clark is 15 years old. He looks out over the field, surveying the land, then smiles wide and starts to RUN. He picks up speed, SPRINTING through the corn until he's just a blur among the stalks.

Clark yells and LEAPS. He sails over the stalks for a few feet and lands, still sprinting.

He leaps again, higher and farther this time, landing twenty feet from where he left the ground. He runs even faster, closes his eyes, and LEAPS AGAIN -- launching through the air, impossibly high, THEN LANDS.

Beat. Clark looks around. He's not on the ground. He's landed ON TOP OF AN OLD GRAIN BIN. He turns, astonished, realizing he's a half mile from the farm.

CLARK

Wow.

WOOSH! Clark leaps back into the field, now running so fast he can barely be seen. He leaps once -- twice -- and using the house as a springboard, Clark SOARS A HUNDRED FEET INTO THE AIR, ROCKETING TOWARDS THE BARN.

But it's coming up too fast. He covers his face and SMASHES through the barn roof.

31

FLASHBACK - INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

31

Clark falls, bracing for impact. But there is no impact. He opens his eyes, totally fine, except he's HOVERING horizontally, six inches above the ground. Amazed, Clark stands and DROPS AGAIN -- but still doesn't hit the ground. Noticing that his glasses fell off, he squints and looks at the ground, and his vision CHANGES. Clark suddenly realizes he's not looking AT the ground, but THROUGH it.

X-RAY POV: Through layers of soil, he sees a small, underground STORAGE AREA, and inside is a strange egg-shaped object the size of a crib, covered by a tarp.

32

FLASHBACK - INT. BARN - UNDERGROUND STORAGE AREA

32

Light pours into the storage area as Clark opens the doors. He climbs down a ladder and pulls back the tarp, revealing a charred CRYSTAL POD -- the ship he arrived in as a baby.

A STRANGE GLOW emanates from the pod. Drawn to it, Clark reaches inside, and removes an object: A WHITE CRYSTAL, the same one that Jor-El placed in the ship long ago. It reacts to his touch, glowing brighter. The light fills his face. He stands up, and as he does...

33

EXT. KENT FARM - CORNFIELD - PRESENT DAY

33

...we're back in present day. Clark lets the dirt fall from his fingers and pats his hands. Dawn breaks, and the GLOW OF THE MORNING SUN washes over his face.

THUD. An old baseball rolls to Clark's feet. He looks down to see THE DOG wagging its tail, ready to play. Clark picks up the ball, reaches back, and THROWS IT.

The dog starts to follow, then stops, realizing the ball is sailing through the air -- and not stopping. The dog looks at Clark, confused. *

CLARK

Sorry, boy. I'll get you a new one.

34 - 36 OMITTED

34 - 36 *

37 INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

37

The barn doors open. Clark enters and approaches the underground storage area. He pulls open the doors. *

37A INT. BARN - UNDERGROUND STORAGE AREA - CONTINUOUS

37A *

...and walks down the small staircase. He pulls back the tarp. His childhood ship is still there, though the crystal is no longer inside. He gazes at the ship, when something nearby catches his attention:

STACKS OF DAILY PLANET NEWSPAPERS. Years worth, all addressed to Martha Kent. Clark sits on the pod and picks up a recent copy. He scans the front page -- no mention of him, just typical world news. He grabs an older copy from another stack, then sits on the edge of the pod and starts to read. We catch glimpses of the articles. Stories about war, crime, terrorism. He reads through them incredibly fast.

DISSOLVE TO:

Most of the stack has been read. Clark speed-reads another copy until something catches his eye:

'WHY THE WORLD DOESN'T NEED SUPERMAN'

This article stops Clark immediately, as his eyes dart to:

"...by Lois Lane"

He inhales sharply, and as he reads, we hear the voice of:

LOIS LANE (V.O.)

For five long years, the world has stared into the sky, waiting, hoping, and praying for his return. We have spent our days asking where he went, debated why he left, and wondered if he's even alive...

DISSOLVE TO:

MOMENTS LATER - Clark takes the newspaper, dismayed. He closes the storage area and walks away.

LOIS (V.O.)

People have always longed for gods,
messiahs, and saviors to swoop down
from the sky and deliver them from
their troubles. But in the end,
these saviors always leave, and we
are faced with the same troubles
that were there from the beginning.

DISSOLVE TO:

38

EXT. KENT FARM - BARN - MOMENTS LATER

38

Troubled, Clark locks the barn and walks to the house, with
the dog following close behind.

LOIS (V.O.)

So, instead of facing them
ourselves, we wait for the savior
to return. But the savior never
does, and we realize it was better
had he never come at all.

39

INT. KENT HOME - KITCHEN - THAT EVENING

39

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)

In another night raid of a city
bank, three police officers were
killed and two injured when armed
men--

The channel changes to other news reports: tropical storms, a
drought, a high-rise fire. Clark turns it off and puts down
the remote. He's sitting at the table, eating a bowl of
cereal. The newspaper with LOIS'S ARTICLE sits folded nearby.
Things are weighing heavily on his mind.

MARTHA (O.S.)

Feeling better?

He snaps out of a daze to see his mother standing above him,
carrying a laundry basket -- a familiar blue and red bundle
inside. Clark just shrugs.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

You just needed a good night's
sleep, that's all.

She places the laundry basket down and smiles.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

I washed it for you.

CLARK

Thanks, mom.

MARTHA

You were gone for so long, I was afraid that... did you find what you were looking for?

CLARK

(shakes his head)

I thought -- hoped -- it might still be...

MARTHA

Your home?

CLARK

This is my home. That place... was a graveyard.

She kisses him on the forehead, then moves to a small mirror and starts putting on earrings.

MARTHA

Well I'm glad you're back. Everyone will be. When are you planning on heading to Metropolis?

CLARK

Actually, I was thinking about sticking around the farm. It wouldn't take much time for me to repaint the barn, plant the fields...

Martha continues getting herself ready -- puts lipstick on.

MARTHA

What about the girl you used to like? That reporter, Lois Lane? The one you had me send all those postcards to? I have to admit, I got pretty good at signing your name--

CLARK

All we need is a new belt in the wheat thrasher and she's as good as new.

Martha sighs. This isn't going to be easy. She sits across from him, glancing at the NEWSPAPER next to his cereal bowl. Time for some motherly advice.

MARTHA

You know, its gotten hard reading the news lately. There's still so much suffering.

(hinting)

(MORE)

MARTHA (CONT'D)

But the world still needs... good reporters.

A long beat. Clark knows what she's getting at.

CLARK

Mom, its hard for me to live my life... keeping secrets.

She gently takes Clark's hand.

MARTHA

Clark, your father and I wanted a son so much, and our prayers were answered when you landed on our doorstep. But we knew that if anyone found out about... the things you could do, they might take you away...or worse. It was a secret your father and I gladly lived with our whole lives.

CLARK

I just don't know if I'm that guy anymore. I don't even know if I'd be welcomed back.

MARTHA

Clark. Your father used to say that you were put here for a reason. And we all know, it's not to work on a farm.

He sighs. He knows she's right. But before Clark can say a word, there's a KNOCK at the door.

BEN (O.S.)

Martha?

MARTHA

In here!

BEN HUBBARD enters with a bouquet of flowers, kisses Martha on the cheek.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Ben, you remember my son, Clark.

Clark is speechless. He awkwardly shakes Ben's hand.

BEN

My, my. The last time I saw you, you were packin' up for the big city. A lot skinnier too. Fly in the other night?

*
*

Clark glances at Martha. What do I say? She nods, as if to say 'It's okay'.

CLARK

Yeah.

Still staring at her, Clark notices her dress and earrings.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

MARTHA

It's Wednesday night. Bingo night.

CLARK

(realizing)

You two... you're... dating?

MARTHA

Clark, dear... No one will ever replace your father. But, Ben and I have found something special. Together. And, well, this might all come as a shock...

Clark gives her a look: just level with me. Beat.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

I'm selling the farm. We're moving to Montana.

CLARK

Montana?

BEN

The lakes are great, and your mother sure loves fishing.

CLARK

She does?

(to her)

You do?

Beat. Clark sits down at the table, trying to take in the news, absentmindedly touching his name carved in the wood.

MARTHA

You've been gone for a while, Clark, and not even you can keep the world from spinning.

She kisses him on the forehead and leaves with Ben.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

We'll talk more tomorrow. Don't
wait up.

40

EXT. ARCTIC OCEAN - DAY

40

WIND SHRIEKS. The air is thick with snow and sleet. It's a
raging ARCTIC STORM.

THE BOW OF A SHIP crashes into frame, barreling through icy
waves. It rumbles by, and A NAME on the hull comes into view:
THE GERTRUDE. It's the huge VANDERWORTH YACHT, complete with
a HELICOPTER chained to the top deck. OPERA MUSIC echoes.

41

INT. YACHT - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

41

A HUGE WAVE crashes against the window. We're on a sleek,
high-tech BRIDGE. It leans from side to side, rocked by the
waves. A pudgy man named GRANT is using binoculars, staring
out the window, searching for something.

WIDER. Revealing two more men: BRUTUS and STANFORD. Stanford
is at the ship's controls. Brutus, the largest and meanest of
them, is puking into a bucket. Spotting something outside,
Grant presses an INTERCOM button.

GRANT (INTO INTERCOM)

Mr. Luthor?

No answer. All he can hear is the OPERA MUSIC blaring. Grant
looks at the other men. They just shrug.

42

EXT. YACHT - STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

42

WIND AND RAIN batter Grant as he exits the bridge and heads
down the stairs, holding onto a railing. He opens a door.

43

INT. YACHT - VARIOUS CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

43

CAMCORDER POV: FOLLOWING GRANT through the opulent ship,
trying to keep his balance while it rocks back and forth. THE
MUSIC gets louder as he descends into the lower decks.

THE PERSON BEHIND THE CAMERA is covering everything Grant is
doing. Annoyed, Grant swipes at the camera lens.

GRANT

Get that thing out of my face.

REVEAL: Another "crew member". A skinny, weasel of a man
named RILEY. He checks to make sure the camera is okay, and
continues walking through the ship, videotaping everything.

44

INT. YACHT - MAIN CABIN - SAME TIME

44

AN EXPENSIVE ~~TOUPEE~~ is placed atop a bald head. The MUSIC is coming from inside this room.

WIDER. Lex hums to the opera and settles into his chair to read a book. Beside him are more books, half read, with notes and pages tagged, all on CRYSTALS or MINERALS. His desk is littered with dozens of articles pertaining to SUPERMAN and the 'discovery' of life on Krypton. The cabin is SPRAWLING: High ceilings, library, grand piano, even a GLASS BOTTOM.

KITTY is at the bar, pouring drinks. The yacht leans to the side, and the martini glass slides off and shatters. She grabs another, then hears the CLOMP of footsteps above.

KITTY

Your "friends" give me the creeps.

LEX

Prison is a creepy place, Kitty, and one needs creepy "friends" in order to survive.

She sets a martini down. Lex looks at it, annoyed.

KITTY

What?

LEX

Is this the reward for the greatest criminal mind of our time? For the man who patiently waited by Gertrude Vanderworth's bedside, feeding her prunes, reading her Dickens...

(disgusted)
washing her...

He pauses. A memory crosses his mind that can't be vocalized.

LEX (CONT'D)

...all so we could live in the kind of opulence a girl like you only reads about in magazines? Is this the reward, Kitty?

(picks up the drink)
A martini with one, withered, olive?

Kitty snatches the martini back.

KITTY

My name is Katherine. And that wig makes you look old.

LEX

So does yours. Kitty.

Kitty clutches her hair, embarrassed. She walks ~~back to~~ the bar, almost knocked off her feet by the rocking of the ship.

KITTY

So now that we're out in the middle of nowhere, away from prying eyes, ~~does the oldest criminal mind of~~ our time think I'm worthy of hearing his plan?

LEX

Small doses for small minds.

Kitty slams another martini down -- FILLED with olives.

LEX (CONT'D)

Thank you, Kitty.

KITTY

Let me guess. Clubbing baby seals?
Selling ice to Eskimos?

Lex laughs a little, obviously used to her sass. He sorts through files his desk. Holds up A PHOTO.

LEX

This is a satellite photo. What do you see here?

KITTY

A palm tree?

LEX

A palm tree? NO. This is a satellite photo of an island. Palm Island off the coast of Dubai. It's over 1600 square miles. The people WHO BUILT IT call it the eighth wonder of the world. That's right. I said, BUILT IT. They're in the middle of building Palm II as we speak. It will take nine years and be twice the size, and they've already pre-sold the real estate at over five million an acre.

(beat)

But what if I told you I could build a new island five hundred times the size... IN FIVE DAYS -- which, I might add, is one day less than the greatest architect of all time.

KITTY
Frank Lloyd Wright!

LEX
No. GOD.

KITTY
Sounds great, Lex. But you're not
God.

LEX
Not yet.

GRANT descends the spiral staircase, dripping wet.

GRANT
We found something.

45 EXT. YACHT - REAR DECK - MOMENTS LATER

45

Lex walks onto the deck and looks into the distance. Grins.

LEX
THAT'S IT! DROP ANCHOR!

46 EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - LATER

46

THE YACHT is docked near an icy shore. Lex and his crew
trudge across the landscape. RILEY has his camcorder,
documenting the journey. Stanford has a GEIGER COUNTER,
taking a radiation reading of the area.

STANFORD
Non-ionizing atmospheric radiation
is reading around three hundred
millirems.

Lex nods, happy. They continue onward.

16A MOMENTS LATER...

46A

They're surrounded by icy structures. Grant suddenly trips
and falls, landing hard in the snow. The others can barely
contain their laughter. Grant stands up, bracing himself
against one of the ice columns. He suddenly draws his hand
away, surprised. The column is different. Taller, smoother.

GRANT
This ice... it's warm.

LEX
It's not ice. It's crystal.

They climb a crest and stop, staring at an unearthly
STRUCTURE on the horizon.

47

EXT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE - LATER

47

Through streaks of wind and snow, THE STRUCTURE becomes clearer. It's the size of a cathedral, with crystal architecture reminiscent of Krypton. It is Superman's FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE. Stanford approaches with the Geiger counter. Riley lowers his camcorder, awestruck.

RILEY

Was this... his house?

Lex removes his goggles. He snaps his fingers and Riley raises his camera.

LEX

You might think that. Most would. But, no. He lived among us. This is more of a monument... to a long dead and extremely powerful civilization. It's where he learned who he was... and where he came for guidance.

*
*

48

INT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE - MOMENTS LATER

48

They cautiously enter the fortress, gawking. It's composed of a large central chamber, with smaller adjoining rooms. While Riley continues taping, Lex approaches a CRYSTAL CONSOLE in the middle of the room, similar to the one in Superman's ship. He runs his hands over the console like a concert pianist. It glows, and SHAFTS OF LIGHT illuminate the entire fortress, as if the crystal columns were lit from within.

A TALL, ADJOINING CHAMBER lights up, and its crystal roof retracts, revealing the sky above. Oddly, a large section of the floor is missing, like something grew and broke off.

KITTY

What's that, his garage?

LEX

You're not so far off, Kitty. The leading theory is that he took off in a futile attempt to find his homeworld.

Stanford stifles a LAUGH. Lex looks at him, cross. Kitty suspiciously looks at Stanford, then at Lex.

LEX (CONT'D)

If so, even he would have to rely on a craft of some kind, and I'll bet Gertrude's last dollar that's exactly what used to be there.

KITTY
So, did he?

LEX
Did he what?

KITTY
Take off for his homeworld?

LEX
(looking at Stanford)
Well... we gave him a little push.

Lex turns away, annoyed, and starts walking deliberately towards an open area of the room, counting his steps.

KITTY
Lex, what are you doing?

Lex raises a hand to shush her. He takes two more steps and stops, turns. A CRYSTAL CONSOLE RISES from the ground; in the center is the same WHITE CRYSTAL JOR-EL left with his son in the beginning.

He turns to Kitty and grins: told you I knew what I was doing. Lex turns back and waves his hand over the white crystal. The light shifts again, and a familiar, deep voice fills the chamber, echoing:

JOR-EL
Welcome, my son...

Jor-El's ghostly image appears, bathed in a shaft of light. Kitty and the ex-cons step back in fear -- Lex snaps.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
Over the years I have instructed you in all the languages, arts, and sciences of Earth, as well as of your home world, Krypton. There are no doubt more questions to be asked...

KITTY
Can he see us?

LEX
No, it's just a recording.
(amused)
It thinks I'm him.

Lex WAVES his hand through the image, distorting the light.

JOR-EL

Here in this fortress of solitude,
we shall try to find the answers
together.

KITTY (O.S.)

Jamaica. Malibu. Honolulu. Sydney.
Mmmmm--miami...

The sound of Kitty mumbling to herself catches Lex's
attention. He looks at her, glaring. She's shivering.

KITTY (CONT'D)

Lex, I'm cold.

LEX

Kitty, shut up and get comfortable.
We're going to be here for a while.

JOR-EL

So, my son. Speak.

He eagerly turns his attention back to the hologram.

LEX

Tell me everything.

Lex gently taps the large crystal that just emerged -- it is
the SAME CRYSTAL we saw Jor-El place in Superman's pod, and
the same one Clark found in the barn as a teenager.

LEX (CONT'D)

Starting with crystals.

49

EXT. METROPOLIS - ESTABLISHING - DAY

49

Majestic skyscrapers fill the skyline. Cars and sirens echo
in the concrete canyons. Welcome to Metropolis. We track
along the buildings, until one finally comes into view. With
its trademark globe on the roof, it is none other than THE
DAILY PLANET.

50

INT. CAB - DAY

50

We ride in the back seat of A TAXI CAB with an UNSEEN
PASSENGER. The cab pulls to the curb.

CAB DRIVER

That'll be thirty-four fifty, bud.

The passenger hands money to the driver and opens the door.

50A

EXT. CAB - MOMENTS LATER

50A

THE TRUNK opens, revealing TWO LARGE SUITCASES.

50B

INT. DAILY PLANET - ELEVATOR BANK - MOMENTS LATER

50B

WE FOLLOW THE SUITCASES over a large emblem on the floor: THE DAILY PLANET.

51

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

51

Reporters, assistants, and copy boys scurry about. Ringing phones. Televisions tuned to news channels. A DEEP, BURLY VOICE is heard above the newsroom chatter:

VOICE (O.S.)

This is about tradition! We have standards to uphold! A reputation to live up to!

WE FOLLOW THE SUITCASES THROUGH THE BULLPEN, clumsily knocking into a wall, then a desk. People try to avoid them.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

This is the Daily Planet and we do not push rinky-dink tabloid crap. Nor will we cater to the lowest common denominator for the sake of making a buck!

THE SUITCASES hit a desk and a CAMERA falls toward the ground. IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, the camera is caught with one hand by:

CLARK KENT. Now wearing glasses and a suit. He apologetically puts the camera back on the desk, which belongs to:

JIMMY

Careful, carefu--

JIMMY OLSEN (early 20s, clean-cut and conservative). He looks up at Clark, beaming.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Mister Clark!

(realizes)

I mean, Kent! Mister Kent!

CLARK

Hi Jimm--

JIMMY

OH WOW! Oh my God. Welcome back! Hey, come with me! No, wait. Don't move! Stay here!

Jimmy bolts off, leaving Clark standing there, bewildered. Clark steps a little further into the bullpen and looks around, as if trying to find someone in particular. Two reporters nearly trip over his suitcases.

CLARK

Sorry guys.

(re: suitcase)

Still looking for a place to live.

If you know of anything reasonable...

They walk away, annoyed. It's as if Clark isn't even there. He glances around. Everything is familiar, yet different. A nostalgic smile creeps across his face.

JIMMY

Behind you, Mister Kent!

Jimmy hands Clark a plate covered in foil.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Here. I made it myself.

Clark peels back the foil, revealing A CAKE. But the frosting has been smeared by grubby fingers. Slices dug out. Icing letters now read "WE OM ACK LARK".

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Oh. I guess the other guys got hungry.

CLARK

It looks... delicious.

PERRY (O.S.)

OLSEN!

The BURLY VOICE is revealed to be PERRY WHITE. White-haired, early sixties, and clearly not happy.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Where are those photos from the 66th Street birthday clown massacre?

JIMMY

Right away, Chief.

(points to Clark)

Hey, look who it is!

PERRY

Kent?

*
*
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CLARK

Hey, Chief. Thanks for giving me my
job back...

PERRY

Don't thank me. Thank Blaine Howard
for dying!

JIMMY

It was his time...

CLARK

Well I do appreciate it, Ch--

PERRY

(slamming his door)
And don't call me Chief!

Jimmy reaches for one of Clark's suitcase.

JIMMY

Come on, let's get you set up.

THUD! Jimmy is nearly yanked to the floor by the suitcase's weight. He has to drag it using both arms. Clark starts to walk toward the cluster of reporter desks.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Mister Kent?

Clark turns. Jimmy is motioning toward the other end of the room. Confused, Clark follows.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

So wow, you sure are lucky. Hitting
the open road, hitchhiking around
the world like that. I can't wait
to hear all about the Peruvian
llama rodeo.

CLARK

Llama rodeo?

They come to a small desk. Jimmy sets the suitcase down.

JIMMY

Yeah, the one you wrote about in
your postcard. I read all of them.

CLARK

Oh, right.

JIMMY

Hey, gotta run. I'll check on you
in a bit, okay?

CLARK
Oh hey, do you know where I can
find...

But Jimmy is already gone.

CLARK (CONT'D)
...Lois?

Clark sighs, looks at his desk. It's covered by a stack of newspapers that have fallen from a pile on the opposite desk.

He picks up the papers, and leans over to place them back on the stack. That's when he notices A WOMAN on the phone, almost completely obscured by piles of papers, books, and other strange items. This is POLLY. He smiles. She doesn't.

He opens one of his suitcases, then immediately slams it shut. Looking around, he spots a JANITOR'S CLOSET nearby.

52

INT. DAILY PLANET - JANITOR'S CLOSET

52

Clark steps inside and shuts the door. He sets one suitcase on the floor, and the other on a small table. Flips it open. Inside are several business suits. He removes books and other items resting on BLUE FABRIC, then picks up the last item -- A PHOTO of his mother and father, the Kents -- finally revealing what was underneath:

A LARGE RED S, embossed against a yellow diamond. The SUPERMAN UNIFORM, cleaned and neatly folded by his mother. He gently touches the symbol, now just a reminder of his shattered home. Discouraged, Clark shuts the suitcase.

PERRY (O.S.)
Olsen, where's Lois?

JIMMY (O.S.)
She's right there, Chief.

Clark's eyes widen. She's here. He takes a deep breath. Composes himself. Beat. He walks back into the office.

53

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

53

Clark walks briskly into the bullpen, but Lois is still nowhere to be seen. Confused, he notices Jimmy and Perry are watching something on a TV screen.

JIMMY
See? She's in front of the guy from
the Post.

ON THE TV is A LIVE VIDEO FEED of a press conference taking place on-board a Boeing 777 in mid-flight. Spunky NASA REPRESENTATIVE, BOBBIE-FAYE is at the front of the plane.

BOBBIE-FAYE (ON TV)
...in the past, the space shuttle needed twelve million pounds of thrust just in its initial launch phase. By piggy-backing The Explorer on this Boeing 777--

A HAND shoots up, nearly blocking the screen.

BOBBIE-FAYE (CONT'D)
Yes?

A WOMAN stands up. A little more mature than the last time we saw her, but just as beautiful and spunky as ever. Clark stares at her, transfixed:

LOIS (ON TV)
Lois Lane, Daily Planet. Is 'piggy-backing' official NASA terminology?

BOBBIE-FAYE (ON TV)
(annoyed)
Yes, Miss Lane. It is.

LOIS (ON TV)
(rapid-fire)
You also stated that the Explorer will save taxpayers millions, but isn't it true that the cost of its development was nine-hundred million dollars overbudget, and that the per-unit cost of each craft is almost double that of the original shuttle?

BOBBIE-FAYE (ON TV)
Why don't we save those questions for our post-launch briefing? How about that, Miss Lane?

Perry smiles proudly.

PERRY
That's my girl.

CLARK
Jimmy, what is this?

JIMMY

It's the first dual-craft launch of a space shuttle using on-board SRBs instead of external fuel tanks.

(off Clark's look)

They're going to launch it off the back of a jet.

CLARK

Sounds dangerous.

PERRY

Olsen, I can't hear her. Turn it up!

Jimmy grabs the remote and tries to turn it up, but accidentally changes the channel to a live BASEBALL GAME.

JIMMY

Sorry, sorry!

As he tries to switch it back, Clark spots LOIS' DESK. He wanders over. Jimmy notices.

54

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - LOIS' DESK - CONTINUOUS

54

Her desk is cluttered with books, files, and nicotine patches. On top of the mess, Clark finds AN INVITATION:

LOIS LANE, AS A RECIPIENT OF THIS YEAR'S PULITZER PRIZE
YOU ARE FORMALLY INVITED TO THE AWARD CEREMONY...

Clark beams with happiness for her. She's finally getting one. He looks up to notice some framed photos: Lois with her parents; her sister; Lois with a HANDSOME YOUNG MAN; Lois with a LITTLE BOY; Lois with the handsome young man AND the little boy. Clark pauses. Who are they?

Then Clark notices something on the walls: a child's crayon drawings. All addressed "To Mom". Confused, he grabs the photo, looking closer at Lois and these two strangers.

JIMMY

He looks a lot older now. Kids grow up so fast.

Jimmy appears over Clark's shoulder.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

He's even starting to look like his mother. Already takes after her too, especially when it comes to getting into trouble.

CLARK

His mother?

Beat. Jimmy sees Clark's confused look, and realizes...

JIMMY

Oh gee. Oh no. You've been gone.
You didn't hear the news--

Clark shakes his head.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Fearless reporter Lois Lane is a
mommy.

Every muscle in Clark's body stiffens. He CRACKS THE FRAME.

CLARK

Sorry.

JIMMY

Don't worry, she has plenty. But
I'm surprised she never told you.

CLARK

I haven't really been reachable.
Wait. She's married?

JIMMY

Yup. Well, no. Not really. More
like a prolonged engagement. But
don't ask Miss Lane when they're
tying the knot.

(whispers)

She hates that question.

LOIS (O.S., ON TV)

If this launch is as pivotal as you
claim, why is it only being covered
by one news network?

Clark sets the photo down, obviously bothered.

JIMMY

You alright? You look like you
could use a drink.

CLARK

It's almost noon, Jimmy.

JIMMY
You're right.
(beat)
Almost lunch hour. We better hurry.

CUT TO:

THE SPACE SHUTTLE, Roaring through a bright blue sky,
attached to the back of a BOEING 777 JET.

BOBBIE-FAYE (V.O.)
Now, when we hit forty-thousand
feet, the shuttle will detach,
ascend, and then fire the first of
two propellant systems: the liquid
fuel boosters.

The shuttle does exactly as described, but the movement and
detail seem odd. Fuzzy. Almost like a bad visual effect.

A WOMAN suddenly steps in front the image, and we PULL BACK
to reveal that we're actually in:

55 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME

55

...and this is just AN ANIMATED VERSION OF THE JET, shown on
a large screen behind spunky NASA Representative, Bobbie
Faye. The demonstration continues as she excitedly explains:

BOBBIE-FAYE
Then, when the shuttle reaches the
stratosphere, the orbital insertion
boosters will fire, rocketing the
craft into orbit and leaving behind
a sort of 'magical rainbow' trail.

LOIS
(calls out)
A magical rainbow?

BOBBIE-FAYE
It's a euphemism, Miss Lane.

LOIS
Right. Of course.

Lois tries not to laugh, then sits back and looks out the
window, staring at the passing clouds. We half expect
Superman to come flying by. But not this time. PULL BACK from
Lois' window, finally revealing...

56

EXT. SKY - SAME TIME

56

...THE REAL JET roaring through the clouds, and THE SLEEK
SHUTTLE perched on top. TWO F-22 FIGHTER JETS follow.

57

INT. METROPOLIS BAR, ACE O'CLUBS - LATER

57

Clark and Jimmy step into a spacious mid-town bar. It's empty, except for a Japanese business man passed out on a stool and BO THE BARTENDER reading the paper. They sit.

CLARK

Just water, please. Flat.

Jimmy gives him a strange look. So does the bartender. He knows heartache when he sees it.

BO

You sure?

Clark nods. While Bo pours, Clark notices the TV. It's tuned to the shuttle launch.

CLARK

Actually... make that a beer.

Please.

BO

Anything else?

CLARK

(looks at the TV)

Yeah. Isn't there a game on?

Bo grabs a remote, changes the channel to the BASEBALL GAME.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Thanks.

BO

No problem.

(then)

The usual Jimmy?

Jimmy eagerly nods and Bo pours a shot of whiskey.

58

INT. VANDERWORTH MANSION - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

58

ONE OF GERTRUDE'S DOGS is curled in a corner, sleeping stripped of its diamonds and gaunt. It suddenly perks up, hearing something.

ANGLE ON: THE FRONT DOORS. AN ALARM PANEL beeps off. Locks and deadbolts click. The dog growls. THE DOORS SWING OPEN. Lex marches through the hall, flanked by Kitty and his men. She's adorned with a huge fur coat and layers of jewelry.

KITTY

Ack. This place is so tacky. Lex, why are we back here?

LEX

Kitty, while you were doing your
pails, I was unlocking the secrets
of one of the most advanced
civilizations to ever exist.

Kitty spots Gertrude's dog, chewing on a small bone.

KITTY

Hey, weren't there two of those?

Lex slams the bedroom doors open.

59

INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - GERTRUDE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

59

Lex snaps and points to Gertrude's RADIATION THERAPY MACHINE.
His men rush to dismantle it. Lex and Kitty walk out.

60

INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

60

LEX

You see, unlike our clunky and
primitive methods, the technology
of Krypton -- Superman's homeworld,
was based on manipulating the
growth of crystals.

KITTY

Sounds like hocus-pocus to me.

LEX

Of course. To a primitive mind, any
sufficiently advanced technology is
indistinguishable from magic.

BOOM. Lex opens a BASEMENT door and descends the staircase.

61

INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

61

LEX

Cities. Vehicles. Weapons. Entire
continents! All grown.

They reach the bottom of the stairs. We can't see the room,
but the echo indicates that it's large.

LEX (CONT'D)

To think, one could create a new
world with such a simple, little,
object.

Lex removes the CRYSTAL from his pocket -- the same LONG
WHITE crystal we saw in the beginning, and in the fortress.

LEX (CONT'D)

It's like a seed. All it needs is
water... and maybe a little
radiation.

KITTY

Like Sea Monkeys.

LEX

(sighs)

Exactly, Kitty. Like sea Monkeys.

Lex turns the LIGHTS on, revealing a sprawling MODEL TRAIN
SET dotted with tiny people and cities. Even planes and jets
circle above, suspended by wires. Kitty SQUEALS.

62

INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - BASEMENT - LATER

62

CLOSE ON: A SMALL CHURCH on the train set. Kitty's long,
manicured nails reach into frame, positioning small people on
the church steps, creating a small WEDDING PARTY.

KITTY

(mumbling)

...Lex Luthor... give you...
Katherine Kowalski... everything...

*
*
*

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM

GRANT is hunched over a workbench, with a stone-cutter's tool
positioned over the CRYSTAL. Lex supervises closely.

LEX

Careful...

WHACK! Grant CHIPS OFF a tiny SLIVER of the crystal. Lex
carefully picks it up and turns to the rest of the men. The
radiation machine is awkwardly positioned over a SMALL LAKE.

STANFORD

She's ready. How hot you want it?

LEX

What was the level of radiation in
the arctic?

STANFORD

Three hundred millirems.

LEX

Well, we don't really have very
much room here, do we? Set it to
three.

Stanford adjusts the controls. The machine emits a DEEP HUM.

KITTY
And how many millirems did you use
on Mrs. Vanderworth?

LEX
Bad Kitty.

He turns away.

LEX (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
There are many different kinds of
radiation, like the kind in the
Arctic, where Superman built his
Fortress. And thanks to Stanford's
tinkering, we're going to reproduce
a little of it, right here.

Lex holds the SLIVER of crystal over the lake.

KITTY
But it's so small.

LEX
It's not the size that matters.
It's how you use it.

KITTY
Still using that line?

LEX
Funny.
(to Riley)
Are you getting this?

Riley aims his camera, gives the thumbs up. The radiation
machine BEEPS. Stanford nods to Lex. Lex drops the sliver
into the lake and steps back as if something huge is about to
happen. A long beat.

KITTY
Wow. That's somethin', Lex.

LEX
Wait for it...

Still nothing. Bored, Kitty sighs and wanders back over to
the model church and her miniature wedding. Lex grimaces.

LEX (CONT'D)
Alright. Riley, shut off the
camera.

RILEY
But I'm getting it!

LEX

I said shut off the damn camera!

KITTY

(playing with model)

For richer, for poorer, to love and
to cherish... Til death do us part--Riley turns the camera off, and the train set lights suddenly
FLICKER and DIE. So do the lights above. Everyone freezes.

RILEY

I think I did something wrong.

LEX

No... that wasn't you.

IN THE MODEL LAKE, a REACTION BEGINS: the crystal starts to
GLOW. The water BUBBLES, covered by a thin layer of fog.

63

INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - HALLWAY

63

The hallway lights DIE.

64

INT. METROPOLIS BAR, ACE O'CLUBS - SAME TIME

64

Clark sits in front of twelve empty beer bottles, barely
buzzed. Jimmy, however, has two bottles in front of him and
can barely hold his head up.

JIMMY

Clark's been on vacation for a few
years. Traveled the world. He saw
llamas.

BO

Oh yeah? Coming back must be tough.

CLARK

Coming back?

BO

To work.

CLARK

Yeah. Well, you know. Things
change, I mean, of course things
change, but... sometimes things
that you never thought could
change. Look at Lois! I never
thought she'd... settle down...*
*

JIMMY

If you ask me -- 'cause she'll
~~never~~ say it -- but I think she's
still in love with you-know-who...

CLARK

Who?

Before Jimmy can answer, THE POWER DIES. Bo picks up the
phone. Dead. He looks at his ~~CELL PHONE. It's dead too.~~

BO

That's weird. Must be a blackout.

Clark lowers his glasses and turns around. He concentrates.

X-RAY POV: outside, cars slow to a stop, some bump into each
other.

BO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Want another?

Clark blinks, rubs his eyes, gets his vision back to normal.

CLARK

Sure.

65 EXT. METROPOLIS STREETS - SAME TIME 65

Skyscrapers and traffic lights flicker off. THE DAILY PLANET
GLOBE stops spinning.

66 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER 66

The blackout hits. A collective groan echoes.

68 INT. SHUTTLE - COCKPIT - SAME TIME 68

A crew of FOUR ASTRONAUTS are strapped into seats. A MONITOR
displays the countdown until BOOSTER IGNITION: one minute.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER

Mission Control, booster ignition
is at T-Minus one minute and we are
prepping to disengage couplings.

MISSION CONTROL (ON RADIO)

Copy that, Explorer. All other
indications for your hydraulic
system are--

THE RADIO GOES TO STATIC.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER

Mission Control? Come in, over.

Just more static. The astronauts exchange confused glances.

69

INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME

69

BOBBIE-FAYE

...including the possibility of
commercial space travel--

THE LIGHTS FLICKER AND GO OUT. The engine dies. The plane
DROPS. SUDDENLY, POWER IS RESTORED just as quickly as it
faded. The plane levels. Bobbie Faye's animated demonstration
continues. Lois and the others exchange nervous glances.

70

INT. SHUTTLE - COCKPIT - SAME TIME

70

The astronauts breathe a sigh of relief.

71

INT. JET - COCKPIT - SAME TIME

71

The pilots check their readings, baffled but relieved.

72

OMITTED

72

73

INT. METROPOLIS BAR, ACE O'CLUBS - SAME TIME

73

THE TV turns on. Power is restored. Fifteen empty beers sit
in front of Clark, but it's not even showing. Jimmy nurses a
third shot through a straw.

CLARK

When you said Lois was still in
love with you-know-who, who did you
mean?

Jimmy turns to him and smiles wide, as if he knows who Clark
really is... but then we realize he's maybe just a bit drunk:

JIMMY

Did you know I haven't had a
picture published in two months?

CLARK

No, I didn't. Did you mean that
Lois is still in love with
Superman?

A long beat. Jimmy stares at Clark, bleary-eyed, confused.

JIMMY

I don't remember saying that. You
must be drunk, Clark.

CLARK

Actually, I've always had a pretty
high tolerance.

74

INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

74

Riley's camera turns back on. Power is restored to the train set. Everyone looks around, confused, but Lex continues staring at the small lake, waiting...

KITTY

That's it?

LEX

Nope. Are you getting this?

With shaky hands, Riley aims the camera, as the ENTIRE TABLE starts to RUMBLE. It begins small, but quickly GROWS in intensity. Everyone steps back as CRACKS begin to form in the model LANDSCAPE.

Throughout the train set, model cities and buildings break apart. A bridge collapses. Kitty's wedding party is crushed by the church steeple. Trains crash. The cracks grow, tearing through the landscape. Buildings shatter like glass. Overhead lights explode. A PIPE bursts, spraying water.

BOOM! The sound of something smashing into the ground is quickly followed by a CRACK in the floor that travels up the wall and through the ceiling. Lex watches, amazed.

75

INT. SHUTTLE COCKPIT - SAME TIME

75

MISSION CONTROL (ON RADIO)

Explorer, not sure what just happened, but it looks like we're going to have to scrub the launch.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER

Roger that. Resetting couplings and aborting booster ignition.

Astronaut #2 opens a panel, flips switches.

ASTRONAUT #2

Sir, couplings are not responding.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER

Booster ignition?

ASTRONAUT #3

No response.

CLOSE ON: the countdown. The boosters are only seconds from firing. The astronauts are horrified.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER

Mission Control, can you do a remote override?

79 INT. MISSION CONTROL

A technician tries. Shakes his head, concerned.

FLIGHT DIRECTOR
Negative, Explorer. Override not responding.

80 EXT. SHUTTLE - SAME TIME

THE BOOSTERS rumble and shake, emitting smoke.

81 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME

Bobbie-Faye continues, trying to stay as upbeat and calm as possible, but her voice is tinged with a hint of anxiety.

BOBBIE-FAYE
Now, if you look out the right side you'll be able to see the shuttle climb into the stratosphere. And if you're lucky, you may hear the faint pop of the sonic boom--

BOOM! The cabin is rattled by a deafening explosion. Thinking it's the sonic boom, all the reporters applaud. All but LOIS.

82 EXT. SHUTTLE - SAME TIME

THE PRIMARY BOOSTERS HAVE FIRED. The blast starts to melt the jet's tail. BOTH CRAFTS begin to rocket through the sky. *

83 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME

Lois and the others feel the jet rattle and lurch forward. Bobbie-Faye is thrown to the floor. People scream, pinned to their seats as they're hit by pounding g-forces. THE ROAR of the boosters and the sound of buckling metal are deafening.

84 INT. JET - COCKPIT - SAME TIME

THE AIRSPEED-INDICATOR rockets.

PILOT (INTO RADIO)
May day, may day... boosters have fired and we are not disengaged! I repeat, we are not disengaged!

85 INT. MISSION CONTROL - SAME TIME

The staff scrambles. It's mayhem. Behind them, TV-REPORTERS don't waste a single second:

TV REPORTER
We're coming to you live from Cape
Canaveral...

86 INT. METROPOLIS BAR, ACE O'CLUBS - SAME TIME 86

On the TV, the game is suddenly interrupted by a NEWS FLASH.
Clark and Jimmy perk to attention.

87 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - SAME TIME 87

ONE BY ONE, TVs all around the bullpen are interrupted:

TV #1
...interrupt the regularly
scheduled program--

TV #2
This just in...

TV #3
...the inaugural flight of the
Shuttle Explorer appears to be
experiencing extremely serious
technical difficulties...

All across the bullpen, people approach the televisions.

88 INT. METROPOLIS BAR, ACE O'CLUBS - SAME TIME 88

REPORTER (ON TV)
...it appears that the shuttle's
boosters have fired before
detaching from the jet, veering
both craft dramatically off course
and out of control...

PUSH IN ON CLARK: The moment of decision...

JIMMY
Lois is on that plane.

Jimmy turns back to Clark, but only finds a WAD of money.

89 EXT. METROPOLIS STREET - MOMENTS LATER 89

People on the street are all walking in the same direction --
gathering at a store window full of TVs playing the disaster.
Clark walks in the opposite direction, towards AN ALLEY.

90 EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS 90

In the classic tradition, Clark runs toward camera, ripping
open his shirt to reveal -- NOTHING. Just a bare chest.
Where's his suit?! He panics, but quickly remembers.

91 EXT. SKIES - SAME TIME 91

The jet is dragged upward, carried by the momentum of the shuttle's thrusters, leaving behind A LONG TRAIL OF SMOKE.

92 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME 92

OXYGEN MASKS drop from the ceiling. All of the reporters are buckled in, but Bobbie Faye crawls on the floor, struggling toward a seat. The g-forces are making it nearly impossible.

93 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - SAME TIME 93

The staff is so engrossed with the TV, that no one notices Clark enter behind them and step into the janitor's closet.

94 INT. DAILY PLANET - BROOM CLOSET - MOMENTS LATER 94

Clark flips open his suitcase, revealing the neatly folded suit. He stares at it for a moment, almost hesitating.

95 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER 95

The door opens again, and a familiar figure steps out: RED BOOTS. Blue suit. Flowing cape.

SUPERMAN.

He stands behind the staff, but everyone is so focused on the TV that no one notices he's there. Superman catches a glimpse of his reflection in a window -- he's still wearing GLASSES. Oops. He yanks them off, tosses them into the closet, and steps to an open window. VWOOSH! Superman drops out.

Perry feels a breeze. He turns to find blinds flapping in the wind. Thinking nothing of it, he turns back to the TV. A second later, VWOOSH! Superman flies straight up past the window.

96 EXT. SKY 96

The shuttle and jet climb higher into the stratosphere. The two FIGHTER JETS try to follow but can't keep up.

97 INT. SHUTTLE - COCKPIT - MOMENTS LATER 97

The astronauts flip switches and controls, doing everything possible to detach the shuttle but nothing's working.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER
Entering Mesosphere in sixteen
seconds...

98 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME 98

Bobbie-Faye tries to stand, but is immediately knocked off her feet again. Lois unbuckles herself, trying to reach her.

99 INT. MISSION CONTROL - SAME TIME 99

Mission Control hears nothing but static.

FLIGHT DIRECTOR
Explorer, Houston, UHF comm check.
Do you read?

A NAVIGATIONS OFFICER sees something else on the radar.

NAVIGATIONS OFFICER
Sir!

The flight director looks over the officer's shoulder.

FLIGHT DIRECTOR
What is that?

100 EXT. STRATOSPHERE - MOMENTS LATER 100

The fighter jets do their best to follow, but they can't fly this high. Suddenly, what seems like a THIRD JET appears behind them. It gets closer, and we realize it's not a jet-- IT'S SUPERMAN. He rockets past them, heading for the shuttle.

101 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME 101

Lois reaches Bobbie-Faye and picks her up, grabbing hold of a seat with one arm, and Bobbie Faye with the other.

102 EXT. SHUTTLE/JET - SAME TIME 102

Superman is getting closer to the jet. Almost there...

103 INT. SHUTTLE COCKPIT - SAME TIME 103

One astronaut looks at the other, then at the console. The SECONDARY BOOSTER is counting down: 5-4-3-2--

104 EXT. SHUTTLE - SAME TIME 104

SECONDARY BOOSTERS FIRE, blowing off the jet's tail. BOTH CRAFTS ROCKET FORWARD while Superman is knocked backwards.

106 EXT. MESOSPHERE - SAME TIME 106

The shuttle is climbing toward outer space, dragging the jet with it. The vast curvature of the Earth is visible below, as is the blackness of outer space above.

Superman tumbles, spins, then re-orientes himself. He takes a breath and ~~ROCKETS BACK TOWARDS THE JET~~ faster than we've ever seen him fly. Suddenly -- BOOM -- he breaks the sound barrier -- BOOM -- he does it again, closing in on the jet.

107 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME

107

Bobbie-Faye and Lois buckle themselves in. Lois straps an oxygen mask on Bobbie, then one on herself. She breathes deep, trying to stay calm. Outside, she sees the blue sky fading into BLACK... then stars. Suddenly, SUPERMAN zips past the window. She does a doubletake. Did she just see that?

108 EXT. SHUTTLE/JET - MOMENTS LATER

108

ANGLE ON: The couplings, still secured.

WHAM! a BOOT SLAMS HARD on the roof of the jet -- then ANOTHER. SUPERMAN'S HEAD rises into frame. HIS HANDS press against the belly of the shuttle.

Fighting wind and gravity, Superman uses all of his strength to PUSH it upward. THE COUPLINGS strain and finally SNAP, detaching the two crafts. Superman lifts with all his might, sending the shuttle into the sky and away from the jet.

109 EXT. OUTER SPACE - SAME TIME

109

With a boost from Superman, the shuttle soars into space.

110 INT. SHUTTLE - COCKPIT - MOMENTS LATER

110

MISSION CONTROL (ON RADIO)

Explorer, UHF comm check. Do you read? Over.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER

We have... lift-off? I mean, we're in orbit. Everything is... okay.

111 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME

111

The passengers experience a brief moment of calm. Pens, glasses, and more loose items start to float. For a second we think we're in zero gravity, then the oxygen masks SLAM against the ceiling, and THE JET BEGINS TO PLUMMET.

112 EXT. OUTER SPACE - SAME TIME

112

Superman watches the shuttle in orbit, then turns to see the jet spiraling downward. He dives after it.

113

EXT. SKY - SAME TIME

113

The jet free-falls like a bomb, spinning uncontrollably. Smoke trails behind it.

Flying as fast as he can, Superman swoops behind the jet and GRABS ONTO THE EDGE OF THE RIGHT WING. Fighting the gravity, he pulls at the wing, straining to stop the spin.

He pulls harder but can't slow the jet down. It's spinning too fast and hard. The wing strains, bends, and finally BREAKS OFF. Superman tumbles with the debris, then hovers for a moment, trying to re-orient himself.

The jet continues plummeting, arcing downward into a nosedive. Superman races after it.

THE LEFT WING breaks off, tumbling behind the jet on a collision course for Superman -- WHAM! He breaks through it without stopping, shattering the wing into pieces.

The horizon spins as the jet careens towards the ground. Superman races alongside the hull, shooting past the windows toward the nose. Astonished passengers gawk from inside.

114

INT. JET - COCKPIT

114

THE ALTIMETER is at fifteen hundred feet... twelve hundred...

115

EXT. SKY - SAME TIME

115

Superman grabs onto the front of the nose, pushing against the jet, trying to slow and control its descent.

116

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - SAME TIME

116

POP! A BATTER hits a fly-ball. It shoots straight up into the air. Spectators follow it, pointing at the sky, but their attention is drawn to SUPERMAN AND THE PLUMMETING JET.

117

EXT. JET - SAME TIME

117

Superman pushes against the nose, using every ounce of strength he has. It finally starts to slow. THEY FALL PAST THE STADIUM LIGHTS, past the jumbotron screen.

118

INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME

118

Lois closes her eyes. Passengers scream.

119

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - SAME TIME

119

Players scatter to get out of the way.

HIGH ABOVE

Superman looks over his shoulder -- they're directly over the baseball diamond and still falling fast. He braces himself and gives the plane one last massive PUSH.

WHAM! Metal groans as A WAVE OF KINETIC ENERGY ripples through the hull, travelling the length of the jet until it FINALLY slows to a stop -- only a few feet above the ground.

120 INT. JET - SAME TIME 120

The cabin jolts. People shriek, not sure what just happened.

121 EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - SAME TIME 121

SUPERMAN hovers over home base, holding the jet straight up. Strained, he lowers it as slowly and gently as possible.

122 INT. JET - SAME TIME 122

Lois and the passengers brace themselves just as --

123 EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - SAME TIME 123

THUD! The jet hits the ground, kicking up clouds of dirt. Superman steps back and takes a deep breath. Exhausted. Spectators and players stare at him in shocked silence.

124 INT. JET - PRESS CABIN - SAME TIME 124

Stunned passengers slowly look up from their seats. They hear the sound of groaning metal as THE DOOR IS RIPPED FROM ITS HINGES and tossed aside. The yellow rescue slide inflates, and Superman steps inside.

SUPERMAN
Is everyone alright?

They nod, dumfounded.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
I suggest you all stay in your seats until medical attention arrives--

He notices LOIS peeking out from behind a seat. She looks frazzled, but beautiful. Superman starts to walk towards her. Reporters step aside. She nervously stands, coming face to face with the Man of Steel for the first time in years.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

Lois opens her mouth, and for once, nothing comes out but a small squeak. Superman smiles, and gently brushes aside some of her hair, lightly caressing her cheek.

Other reporters watch them together. A few whisper. Suddenly realizing that everyone is staring, he gathers himself and addresses the other passengers:

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

Well, I hope this little incident hasn't put any of you off flying. Statistically speaking, it's still the safest way to travel.

Lois just silently stares. With that, Superman turns and walks back up the aisle. He glances back at Lois then...

125 EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 125

Superman steps to the doorway, gazing out over the audience. Cameras are all trained on him. A CLOSE-UP of his face dominates the stadium's jumbotron screen. People are still too stunned to react, then... THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

126 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - SAME TIME 126

THE DAILY PLANET erupts into cheers. Especially PERRY.

127 INT. MISSION CONTROL - SAME TIME 127

SUPERMAN'S IMAGE is projected onto the screens. The Mission Control staff hoots and hollers.

128 EXT. METROPOLIS STREET - ELECTRONICS STORE - SAME TIME 128

THREE DOZEN PEOPLE cheer in front of the store. ALL OF THE TVs show Superman from various angles.

129 INT. METROPOLIS BAR, ACE O'CLUBS - SAME TIME 129

Jimmy stares at the TV, wide-eyed and grinning.

130 EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - SAME TIME 130

Superman smiles. Then, VWOOSH! He soars into the sky.

A second later, Lois makes her way to the door and spots Superman disappearing into the clouds. Beat. She manages a weak, confused smile, then FAINTS, slips down the inflatable yellow slide, and lands at the bottom.

131 INT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER 131

THE MODEL CITIES AND TOWNS are in ruins. Tiny cars and people lay crushed in the rubble. Almost everything on the train set has been destroyed, riddled with cracks and chasms.

SMOKE dissipates to reveal the stunned faces of Lex's crew. THE ENTIRE ROOM is in shambles.

Water drips from broken pipes. Cracks have spread through the walls and ceiling. Lex smiles, looking down at something we can't see.

LEX
Did you get that?

Riley is trembling, but still holding the video camera.

RILEY
Yeah. I got the whole... scary... thing.

WIDER to reveal A HUGE CRYSTAL STRUCTURE has grown up through the train set. It has spread over the landscape, towering over the destroyed buildings. It's almost identical to the Fortress of Solitude and Krypton's ruins, just smaller.

Kitty bends down, looking UNDER the train set. The crystal structure has grown through the bottom too, with crystal tendrils piercing the ground below.

KITTY
Lex, your little crystal broke everything.

Lex looks closer at the devastation, amazed. Intrigued.

LEX
So it did.

132

INT. DAILY PLANET - CONFERENCE ROOM - THAT NIGHT

132

PERRY
I WANT TO KNOW IT ALL! EVERYTHING!
Olsen: I wanna see photos of him bathed in stadium lights, flying into the sunset. Sports: how will this event change baseball? How will they get the plane out of there? Travel: Where did he go? Was he on vacation? If so, where?

The staff is packed into the room, writing down every word.

A chewed pen hangs from Lois's mouth like a cigarette. Clark stares at her, but she hasn't looked up yet. Perry opens the door. The staff streams into the bullpen.

133

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

133

LOIS
Perry, how many F's are there in catastrophic?

PERRY
None. And what's the usage?

LOIS
(reading)
This mysterious electromagnetic pulse set a catastrophic event into motion, knocking out power during NASA's highly touted--

PERRY
(interrupts)
Lois?

LOIS
Yes?

PERRY
In my office.
(then)
This goes for everybody. The story isn't the blackout, it's Superman!

Perry and Lois step into his office and close the door.

Clark sits at his desk, and smiles at Polly. Her grim expression doesn't change. After a moment, he turns and looks at Lois through the glass walls, and concentrates. Every sound in the office suddenly becomes LOUDER, until certain noises are filtered out, everything but Lois and Perry's voices:

LOIS (V.O.)
The story is the EMP, Chief. Every electronic device on the east coast goes dark, nearly killing me in the process, I might add--

134

INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

134

PERRY
Lois, there are three things that sell papers in this world: Tragedies, sex, and Superman. I'm tired of tragedies, and you can't write worth a damn about sex, so that leaves one thing.
(points to a photo)

HIM.

135

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - SAME TIME

135

Hi.

JASON

CLARK SNAPS OUT OF IT, and finds a FIVE-YEAR OLD BOY with coke-bottle-thick glasses standing next to his desk.

CLARK
Hello.

WHOO! The boy takes a hit off an INHALER. Clark realizes that this boy is Lois' son, JASON.

JASON
Who are you?

CLARK
I'm Clark. Kent. An old friend...
of your mom's. From before you were
born.

JASON
Really? She's never mentioned you.

CLARK
Never?

The boy shakes his head.

LOIS
Jason!

Lois arrives and wraps her arms around Jason.

LOIS (CONT'D)
(cute)
Stop bothering people, kid!

Clark looks up at Lois, suddenly flustered. He stammers, unsure if he should stand, offer a handshake, or a hug. She finally bends down and kisses him lightly on the cheek. He nearly faints.

LOIS (CONT'D)
So, welcome back. I see you've
already met the munchkin.

CLARK
Yeah, we were just talk--

LOIS
(to Jason)
Did you take your Vitamins?
Echinacea? Eye drops? Preventil?
Poly-Vi-Flor?

JASON
Yes, mom...

LOIS

He's a little fragile, but he'll
grow up to be big and strong like
his dad, won't you?

Jason nods.

LOIS (CONT'D)

(turning)

RICHARD?!

CLARK

I saw you on TV, in that...

(makes a flying motion
with his hand)

You're okay?

LOIS

Oh yeah, it was nothing. Hey, can I
borrow your stapler?

She reaches past him and grabs the stapler.

CLARK

Sure. Oh, and congratulations on
your award. When's the ceremony?

LOIS

Two days, can you believe it?
(turns again)

RICHARD!

(back to Clark)

So, I wanna hear all about your
trip! Where'd you go? What'd you
see? Meet anyone special?

CLARK

Well, there's just so much. Where
to begin really--

RICHARD

You screamed for me?

This is RICHARD WHITE, Lois' long-time boyfriend. He picks
Jason up into his arms.

JASON

Hi daddy.

LOIS

I've got to run out. Can you take
Jason to get his flu shot? And work
some family magic to get your dad
to stop giving me a hard time about
my article -- please?

RICHARD

Again?

Clark gently clears his throat.

LOIS

Oh! This is Clark. Richard, Clark.
Clark, Richard.

(to Clark)

Richard's our assistant editor.
He's also a pilot, and he likes
horror movies and volleyball.

(to Richard)

Clark is... well, Clark.

Clark extends his hand to Richard. They shake.

CLARK

Clark Kent. Nice to meet you.

RICHARD

Richard White. Great to finally
meet you too. I've heard so much.

CLARK

(eyes Lois)

You have?

RICHARD

Yeah, Jimmy just won't shut up
about you.

Clark lingers at the sight of Richard, who he suddenly
realizes looks so much like... him. Or Superman. Or both.
Lois gives Richard and Jason each a quick kiss.

LOIS

Gotta run.

RICHARD

Where?

LOIS

You heard your dad. Superman's back
and he thinks I'm the only one
equipped to give him a... he used
the words 'intimate story'.

RICHARD

So you're listening to him?

LOIS

Nope. I'm going to the power plant
to look into the blackout. Seeya!*
*
*
*
*
*
*

RICHARD

When will you be home?

But she's already out the door. Richard and Clark both stare as she leaves. Both obviously sharing feelings for her.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

No matter how close we are, that woman will always be a mystery to me.

(turns to Clark)

Well, I'm sure I'll be seeing you around the office. If you ever need me, I'm right over there.

He points to a large office next to Perry's. Richard takes a glance at Clark's screen.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

What's that you're working on?

CLARK

Obituaries.

RICHARD

But those people aren't dead yet.

CLARK

I think that's what your dad -- um, Mr. White had in mind. He said...

RICHARD

One way or another, we have to be prepared.

CLARK

One way or another, we have to be prepared.

RICHARD

Right.

(nudges Jason)

C'mon, kid. Say goodbye to Clark.

JASON

Bye, Clark.

CLARK

Bye, Jason.

As Jason walks away, he looks back at Clark. Clark sighs. So much has changed. He can hear the faint voice of:

POLLY (ON THE PHONE)

...no, he used to work here. I dunno -- he IS handsome though, but totally dull. A make-over? Maybe.

CUT TO:

136

137

大

★

2

5

1

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2

LEX

I know!

OMITTED

EXT. VANDERWORTH MANSION - DOCK - CONTINUOUS

They approach the yacht, hull battered from arctic ice.

STANFORD

...but I never would have done it
if I knew he was gonna-- you know,
a guy travels that far, he's not
supposed to come back!! What if he
finds out it was me?! He'll tear me
apart--

LEX

Look. It worked perfectly. I just
needed him out of my hair for
awhile.

Stanford glances up at Lex's NEW TOUPEE.

LEX (CONT'D)

What are you looking at?

STANFORD

Nothing.

LEX

So don't worry about it. It's under
control, and like any real estate
deal, we just need some insurance.

(then)

How long until we sail?

INT. YACHT - CONTINUOUS

They walk down the stairs and into a corridor.

STANFORD

Three days. The ice beat us up
pretty good you know, it's not--

LEX

You have two.

As Stanford is about to argue, Lex just holds up two fingers.
They stop at a door leading to an UNSEEN-ROOM. Lex looks at
the others, almost suspicious, then quickly pushes it open.

STANFORD

Fine. But we hit one other little
snag.

(MORE)

STANFORD (CONT'D)

We need radioactive material that
measures around four thousand
millirems.

Lex enters the mysterious room and shuts the door behind him.
The conversation continues from behind the door.

LEX

Yes.

STANFORD

I checked. There isn't anything on
Earth that produces that much non-
ionizing radiation.

LEX

I know.

STANFORD

But--

LEX

Stanford. You worry too much.

GRANT

What's your beef with the guy
anyway?

LEX

Grant, every man who strives for
greatness encounters certain
personal obstacles which prevent
him from achieving that greatness.
I have succeeded in crushing them
all, except for one.

Lex comes out of the room -- now wearing a new toupee. The
others stare at it, trying not to laugh.

GRANT

Um... what?

KITTY

Superman is Lex's Great White
Whale.

(to Lex)

Ain't he, Captain Ahab?

Grant doesn't understand.

KITTY (CONT'D)

Ahab. Captain Ahab... Moby Dick?

Grant still doesn't understand. Kitty rolls her eyes.

KITTY (CONT'D)

Forget it.

(turning to Lex)

Lex, answer me one question. Why do you surround yourself with such... idiots?

LEX

Why, Ms. Kowalski? Why do beautiful women carry around ugly dogs? Why do people volunteer with the mentally challenged? Why do they work in hospitals?

(beat)

It's obvious. To feel better about themselves.

Beat. Lex turns to Stanford, suddenly determined.

LEX (CONT'D)

Stanford, I need you and Grant to get blueprints for the Metropolis Museum of Natural History.

141

INT. DAILY PLANET - ELEVATOR - EVENING

141

The elevator is packed with passengers, all reading the Daily Planet with Superman's photo on the front.

CLARK is crammed into a corner, staring at LOIS on the opposite side. Wherever Lois looks, the photo of Superman is staring back. Annoyed, she watches the floors count down.

142

EXT. DAILY PLANET - STREET - MOMENTS LATER

142

Lois walks out of the building. Clark finally approaches.

CLARK

Uh, Lois?

LOIS

Hey Clark. How's your first week back at work?

CLARK

It's okay. Kind of like riding a bike, I guess.

LOIS

A bike?

CLARK

Yeah, you know-- nevermind.

Lois spots more people reading about Superman.

CLARK (CONT'D)

But I was thinking... since I've
gotten back we haven't really had a
chance to catch up. Would you want
to--

LOIS

(interrupts)

Hey, can I ask you something?

CLARK

Sure.

LOIS

Have you ever been in love?

Clark almost starts to answer:

LOIS (CONT'D)

Or at least... have you ever met
someone and it's almost like you
were from totally different worlds,
but you share such a strong
connection that you knew you were
destined to be with each other? But
then he takes off without
explaining why, or without even
saying goodbye?

(beat)

Sounds cheesy, I know.

She steps to the corner, tries catching a cab. It's futile.

LOIS (CONT'D)

TAXI!

ANGLE ON: Clark, thinking.

CLARK

Well... maybe saying goodbye was so
hard because he didn't know whether
it would be goodbye for a little
while... or goodbye forever.

Lois doesn't seem to be listening.

CLARK (CONT'D)

And maybe he had to go and he
wanted to say goodbye, but he
couldn't find the guts to do it,
because maybe if he saw you, even
one last time... Well, maybe he was
afraid that if he even looked at
you just... once... he would never
be able to... leave.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

(beat)

Maybe it was too difficult for him.

Lois suddenly looks up at him like he hit a nerve.

LOIS

Difficult?

(her eyes narrow)

Difficult?! What's so difficult about it? Bye! See ya later! Back in a while. It's easy. What's so hard about saying goodbye?

CLARK

Who are we talking about?

LOIS

Nobody. Forget I said anything.
TAXI!

She whistles and waves for a cab, while Clark looks around, awkwardly. He knows exactly who she's talking about.

CLARK

So... do you want to grab a quick bite? Catch up? My treat.

LOIS

Oh I'd love to, but Daddy took the car and it's my turn to "cook" the family dinner, which means I've got just enough time to get home and order the Chinese food.

CLARK

Family dinner. Right.

LOIS

Yup. Believe it or not. Lois Lane's gone suburban! White house. Picket fence. Mortgage. The works.

Lois tries one more time to get a cab. Clark notices, and WHISTLES. The sound is loud and piercing. A small dog WHIMPERS. A CAB immediately screeches to the corner. Lois is impressed.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Wow, thanks.

She climbs in.

LOIS (CONT'D)

(to the cab driver)
312 Riverside Drive.

She turns and looks out the open window at Clark.

LOIS (CONT'D)

But let's shoot for lunch or something next week, okay?

CLARK

Next week. Sure.

Clark watches the cab drive off. He sighs.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Lois.

143

EXT. METROPOLIS STREETS - VARIOUS - MOMENTS LATER

143

*

Sidewalks are crammed with people heading home. A breeze picks up. A strange wind echoes between the buildings. People look up, trying to find the source of the sound.

A FIGURE appears on the horizon, cruising through the air, darting between and over the skyscrapers: SUPERMAN.

All over the city, the people of Metropolis see him soaring overhead: a hot dog vendor, a traffic cop, people at a bus stop. A mother points him out to her young daughter.

*

IN THE AIR

Superman looks down at the people and smiles, then makes a sharp right and heads out of Metropolis.

144

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

144

The noise of the city fades as Superman flies along the river. He looks down, gazing at rows of houses on the shore. Spotting one, he slows down.

145

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

145

It's a large suburban home nestled near the riverbank. A SEAPLANE floats next to a small dock, which leads to a yard and swingset. Lights are on. Superman quietly descends past the trees, and hovers outside.

Inside, he can hear the first few notes of "Heart & Soul" being played over and over again. He stares for a moment, then focuses.

X-RAY VISION POV: A child's bedroom on the second floor. The parents' bedroom across the hall. Both are messy.

Superman goes in for a closer look...

*

145A

INT. LOIS LANE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

145A

Lois is setting down boxes of Chinese takeout while Richard fumbles with chop sticks. Jason plays "heart and soul" on a small electronic keyboard.

LOIS
Kung Pao shrimp.

JASON

Mine!

LOIS
Nice try, kiddo. No peanuts, no seafood, and definitely no wontons.

(opens boxes for him)
Just rice and snowpeas for you.

Jason sneers, goes back to playing on the keyboard.

RICHARD
Why do we get Chinese food if he's allergic?

LOIS
Because he loves the peas. And I think we all prefer egg rolls over macrobiotic shakes.

JASON
Macrobiot-ICK.

RICHARD
Good point.

Beat. There's an awkward moment of silence. Richard looks over to see Lois scooping out food for everyone but giving herself a small portion. Something is on his mind. Beat.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
I've noticed you've been acting a little different lately...

LOIS
Have I?

RICHARD
And I promised myself I'd never ask you about this -- but now that he's back...

(beat)
Your article: 'I spent the night with Superman'...

Lois suppresses a laugh.

LOIS
That was just the title of the
article! It was your dad's idea!

RICHARD
No, no, no... it's okay, I was...

LOIS
Richard, that was a long time ago.

Clearly you can tell by the trepidation in her voice, it was
not long enough. Beat.

RICHARD
Were you in love with him?

LOIS
He was Superman. Everyone was in
love with him.

RICHARD
But were you?

Lois turns -- stares directly at him.

LOIS
No.

145B EXT. LOIS LANE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

145B

Superman watches Lois and Richard, having listened to the
whole conversation. He sighs, then rises into the sky.

146 INT. LOIS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME TIME

146

Lois picks at some food, then suddenly stops and turns to the
window, staring into their backyard. Beat.

RICHARD
Lois? You okay?

Lois snaps out of it, turns back to the table.

LOIS
Yeah. Sorry. Hey, didn't I have
four won-tons?

She sees Jason stuffing a won-ton into his mouth. She panics.

LOIS (CONT'D)
JASON!

Lois and Richard dive, trying to snatch it from his mouth.

147

EXT. SKIES OVER LOIS' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

147

Obviously bothered, Superman flies STRAIGHT UP, rising above the city, passing through a cloud layer. Music swells as we hear the familiar voice of:

JOR-EL (V.O.)

They can be a great people Kal-El.
They wish to be...

Superman rockets through another cloud layer. He doesn't cry, but his eyes are welling up -- and it isn't the wind.

JOR-EL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They only lack the light to show
them the way...

VWOOSH! He passes through another cloud bank.

148

EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SUPERMAN'S PERCH - CONTINUOUS

148

JOR-EL (V.O.)

For this reason above all, I have
sent them you... my only son.

Superman settles at the edge of space, hovering. It is truly majestic. He closes his eyes and bows his head, almost as if meditating. Then we realize he is actually LISTENING. WE HEAR WHAT SUPERMAN HEARS: layers of voices, radio chatter, television signals, thunderstorms, EVERYTHING. The sounds come quickly, overlapping -- building to a chorus.

He focuses to filter out the more chaotic sounds, then hears it: A RINGING ALARM. He opens his eyes, and with a powerful SONIC BOOM, Superman is off...

149-171 OMITTED

149-171

A173

A NEWS REPORT FILLS THE SCREEN

A173

A GERMAN ANCHOR delivers the news underneath AMATEUR VIDEO FOOTAGE of two WINDOW WASHERS falling from a skyscraper. A crowd behind the camera screams, when suddenly a RED STREAK zips across the sky and the window washers seem to disappear.

GERMAN ANCHOR

Hallo sanken zwei Fensterunter
legscheiben zu ihren todesfällen
heute abend ab, bevor sie vom Mann
des Stahls gerettet wurden.

The video cuts to the window washers, now being interviewed on the ground, their faces stained with tears.

GERMAN WINDOW WASHER

Er speicherte mein Leben. Ich
verdanke alles Superman!

173

INT. DAILY PLANET - DAY

173

Polly and Gil stare up at the television.

POLLY

It's like this on every channel.

She flips channels to prove her point. CLICK!

ON TELEVISION: We see SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE:

IN A BANK LOBBY, FOUR ROBBERS fire their weapons at something
offscreen. The clip changes to a different angle and we see
SUPERMAN hovering above them -- bullets bouncing off of his
chest... He rushes towards them.

ANCHOR (V.O.)

...Reports flooding in from
Metropolis, Houston, Gotham, and as
far away as Cairo and Shanghai.
This is just the latest in a series
of overnight appearances by the Man
of Steel...

CLICK! The channel changes and we see a home-video-camera-
shot WHIP PAN to a shot of the Eiffel Tower -- WHOOSH! A RED
STREAK tears across the sky -- tourists scream and take
excited pictures of the empty sky.

BRITISH EXPERT (V.O.)

Satellites have proven most
ineffective at tracking him, with
scientists telling us he is
literally moving...

CLICK! In suburban Japan, a TANKER is on fire. Superman
swoops in, easily blows it out, waves to the camera and
flies off.

JAPANESE REPORTER (SUBTITLED)

...faster than speeding bullets and
more powerful than a locomotive.

WIDER: Reveal that all of the televisions in the office are
displaying footage of Superman's feats from the night before.

CLARK enters to see that the office is transfixed by the
broadcasts. He glances up at one.

ON TELEVISION: OUTSIDE OF A DELI, TWO MEN are being lead away
by COPS while a reporter questions the DELI OWNER:

MONTAGE REPORTER #3

Sir, after he captured the men
trying to rob your deli, did he do
or say anything?

DELI OWNER

He tried the hummus. He liked it!

Clark suppresses a smile and makes his way to Perry's office.
He passes by another broadcast:

ON TELEVISION: A HANDHELD CAMERA catches Superman holding A
CAR over his shoulders, while people scramble away for
safety. It's the classic pose of ACTION COMICS #1

174

INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - DAY

174

CLOSE ON: The SAME IMAGE, only this one is a photograph that
Lois is holding. She flips to another, moments later, of
Superman holding a beautiful woman in his arms. We realize
that it is KITTY KOWALSKI. Lois doesn't. She seems jealous,
but feigns boredom.

LOIS

Eh.

PERRY

Eh? EH!? That's iconic! And they
were taken by a twelve year-old
with a camera phone. Olsen, what've
you got?

Jimmy hands him A PHOTO OF A LANDSCAPE. Jimmy points to a
small blur in the clouds.

JIMMY

He's right there, Chief. Look in
the sky.

LOIS

It's a bird.

PERRY

It's a plane.

JIMMY

No look, it's--

CLARK

You wanted to see me?

Clark stands in the doorway, holding a pad and pencil.

PERRY

Sit down, Kent. It's time for some
half-time strategy.

Lois knows where this is going. Clark watches her every move.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Not long ago, Superman and the
Daily Planet went together like
bacon and eggs. Death and taxes.
Now I want that bond back!

(beat)

Lois, I don't know what you've been
sneaking around doing, but every
other paper in town has their best
looking female reporters on
rooftops waiting to interview
Superman, and none of them have the
history you two do.

LOIS

What? No! Chief, listen to me. I've
done Superman.

(correcting herself)

Covered him-- you know what I mean.

PERRY

Exactly! That makes you the expert,
so you're going to do him again.

Clark tries to speak up, it's futile.

LOIS

But there are a dozen other stories
out there.

PERRY

Name one!

LOIS

Well... there was a museum robbery
this morning. Even Superman missed
that one. He was too busy with
this... stripper!

She slaps the photos down. Clark seems surprised -- I did?

PERRY

What'd they steal?

LOIS

A meteorite.

PERRY

Boring! Gil can handle it.

LOIS
How about Lex Luthor?
Everyone turns.

LOIS (CONT'D)
He finally wins his fifteenth
appeal; now no one knows where he
is! He's the one guy who was crazy
enough to go up against Superman,
so I'm sure he has something to
say. Why don't we track him down?

PERRY
Luthor is yesterday's news.

LOIS
Then give Superman to someone else!
(thinks)
Polly! Give him to Polly!
They look out at the bullpen. Polly just glares at them.

CLARK
(whispers)
Jimmy, Lex Luthor's out of prison?

JIMMY
(whispers)
Yeah, how much do you think that'd
bother Superman if he knew?

CLARK
(whispers)
A lot.

Perry draws the blinds. Sits at his desk. Speaks softly. They
can all tell he's serious. The discussion is over.

PERRY
(quietly)
Lois? Super. Man.

LOIS
What about the blackout?

PERRY
Kent? Blackout.

LOIS
Great. Thanks, Chief.
She storms out. Clark goes after her. Only Jimmy is left.

PERRY

What are you standing around for?!
You're a copy boy again if you
don't bring me one decent picture
of him this week.

JIMMY

But Ch--

Perry holds up a finger.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

I wasn't gonna say it.

175

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN

175

Clark follows Lois to her desk. She has her back to him.

CLARK

Lois? I'm sorry, I didn't know--

LOIS

Here.

She turns around, holding up a thick stack of FILES -- her
blackout research.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Take it! You wanted a way out of
the obits? Here you go.

CLARK

No, not really. Not if it's going
to bother--

LOIS

Bother me? Of course not!

CLARK

(takes the files)

Oh good, because I'd hate it if
this damaged our relation--

LOIS

Relationship!? Keep it up and we
won't have a relationship.

She slips a pack of cigarettes into her purse. Clark notices.

CLARK

Well, maybe this is something we
could work on togeth--

Lois sees a TV displaying an image of SUPERMAN holding up a chain of TWELVE MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS. She rolls her eyes and turns back to Clark.

LOIS
Together, like old times? Bacon and eggs? Death and Taxes? Lois and Clark?

(he nods)
You're sweet. You always have been.
But you're just so... So...

JASON

Mommy!

JASON runs into her arms. She sighs, smiles. Rubs his hair.

RICHARD
(holds up a report card)
He got an A in science, but a D in gym, so we're doing something right.

LOIS
At least one of us is.

Richard notices Clark is holding Lois' research

LOIS (CONT'D)
It's your father. He just shoved Superman back into my life.

RICHARD
Honey, you know Dad. I'm sure you can find a way to interview Superman without bringing him back into your life.

ON TV, a reporter is surrounded by people with binoculars and telescopes, waiting for Superman to pass overhead.

REPORTER (ON TV)
There's really no way around it, folks. Superman is back in all of our lives!

Richard sighs and tries a different approach:

RICHARD
How about this -- We'll stay late, get dinner -- I'll help with Superman, and you and Clark can work on the blackout... together.

Jason's inhaler wheezes, nearly empty. Lois instinctively pulls a new one out of her purse and hands it to him. She exhales and calms down.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Is that good for you, Clark?

CLARK
Sounds swell!

Beat. Lois and Richard look at him. Did he just say swell?

JASON
Look, mom, I got my flu shot!

LOIS
Did it hurt?

JASON
Not a bit!

LOIS
That's my boy.

176

OMITTED

176

177

INT. YACHT - MAIN CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

177

Classical music blares. A MAP OF THE WORLD fills the frame. Lex stares at it, then places a PIN at the intersection of some LINES -- not far from the coast of METROPOLIS. He turns just as WHACK! KITTY enters and SLAPS HIM. Hard.

KITTY
I was gonna pretend my brakes were out! Like we talked about! Pretend! You didn't have to actually cut them!

LEX
Of course I did. A man can always tell when a woman is pretending. Especially Superman.

She tries to slap him again, but Lex catches her arm. She tries to pull away but he won't let go. Lex casts her a stern glare. She backs down.

KITTY
Did you get your dumb rock?

Lex nods and smiles. Seductive. They move closer, like this is some twisted flirtation.

KITTY (CONT'D)

What are those lines?

LEX

Those lines?

KITTY

Yeah...

LEX

These lines are the intersection of three of the world's largest tectonic plates. Ask me about the pin.

KITTY

Mmmmmmm...

LEX

The pin is where we're going.

GRANT (O.S.)

Mr. Luthor, they're about to start!

Lex is clearly annoyed by the intrusion.

LEX

Thank you, Grant.

(then)

Duty calls, Ms. Kowalski. We'll talk more about this later.

Lex leaves. Kitty leans against the wall, winded.

178

INT. YACHT - BRIDGE

178

CLOSE ON: THE METEORITE sitting on a countertop. It's unremarkable. Brown, rocky, about the size of a football. WHACK! a large piece of the outer shell is chipped off.

Reveal STANFORD holding the wedge and hammer. Lex peers down at the cracked meteorite's inner layer. A FAINT GREEN GLOW appears inside: KRYPTONITE.

Amazed, Stanford reaches for his Geiger counter and takes a reading. It SQUEALS loudly.

STANFORD

(stunned)

Four thousand millirems...

Lex smiles.

CUT TO:

179

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - THAT NIGHT

179

The office is quieter and mostly empty. Just a few stragglers. JIMMY is at a computer, going through various photos. All of them show blurry shapes and streaks.

JIMMY

Crap.

CLARK

What's wrong?

Clark is at the nearby water cooler.

JIMMY

The guy just moves too fast. I haven't gotten one decent shot.

CLARK

Keep at it. He's got to slow down eventually.

CLANG! Clark turns, sees JASON wearing a trashcan on his head, rampaging around the office like a giant monster. He slams into a pole but keeps on going.

JASON

RAAAAAAAAAARRRRR!

CLARK

Jimmy, is he... okay?

JIMMY

Yeah, he's fine. A few weird allergies, asthma-- but the kid's come a long way since he was born.

CLARK

What do you mean?

JIMMY

Well...

(quieter)

Miss Dane doesn't like to talk about it, but Jason was born a little premature. They weren't sure if he was even going to make it. He really brought her and Mister White together though. Don't get me wrong. It was totally love at first sight, but Jason sealed the deal -- GOT HIM!

Jimmy excitedly zooms into a photo of a skyscraper. Sighs.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Nevermind. Just a window washer.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BULLPEN

A WORLD MAP is sprawled on Lois' desk. She's noting the TIMES and places that the blackout was recorded. Using these times, she's drawn a series of concentric circles, getting closer to the origin point of the blackout.

LOIS

Weird. If these times are right, it looks like the blackout spread from a specific origin point.

RICHARD

Where?

LOIS

I'm not sure yet.

Richard sits across from her, flipping through piles of old articles and research about Superman.

RICHARD

So with the superhearing, does he hear each sound by itself, or everything all at once?

LOIS

(focused on work)

Both.

Across the room, Clark PERKS UP, listening to them...

RICHARD

He's certainly a lot taller than I thought.

LOIS

Six-two and three quarters.

RICHARD

I love that he can see through anything. I'd have fun with that.

LOIS

(smirks; under her breath)
Anything but lead.

RICHARD

I bet he's--

LOIS
(miss know-it-all)
Two hundred and twenty five pounds,
faster than a speeding bullet,
invulnerable to anything but
Kryptonite, and he never lies.

RICHARD
Kryptonite?

LOIS
Radioactive pieces of his
homeworld. It's deadly... to him.

RICHARD
Wow. Sounds like the perfect guy.

Richard looks at Clark, then at a photo of Superman.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Hey, how tall would you say Clark
is?

LOIS
I don't know, maybe six-two, six-
three.

RICHARD
Around two hundred pounds?

LOIS
Sure, why?

She looks at Richard. Richard looks at Clark. Lois and
Richard BOTH look at Clark. Wondering..

IN THE BACKGROUND: Clark looks up, smiles nervously. Richard
starts laughing.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Cute.

He stands up. Kisses her on the head. Smiles.

RICHARD
Jimmy, Jason -- let's go get these
intrepid reporters something to
keep them going, okay?

JASON
Burrerritos! RAAARRR!

Jimmy and Jason join him and they leave the room. Their
absence creates an uncomfortable silence.

Just Lois and Clark. Alone. He keeps stealing glances, trying to come up with something to say. Surprisingly, she beats him to it:

LOIS
So. Have you found a place to live yet?

CLARK
No. I'm still looking.

LOIS
Where've you been spending your nights?

CLARK
Oh... here and there.

Clark looks at his notepad. It's just scribblings. "Lois, I've been meaning to tell you something... I have something important to say..." He stares, wanting so much to tell her everything. He stands up and walks toward her desk.

She doesn't look up. Clark takes off his glasses and straightens up, taking on his Superman persona.

CLARK (CONT'D)
Lois, there's something I've been wanting to tell--

LOIS
(not looking up)
Hey, I'm gonna run downstairs for some fresh air.

She grabs her purse, spilling things all over the floor: MAKE-UP, a small tape recorder, and a PACK OF CIGARETTES.

CLARK
Well it was kind of important--

She gathers everything up, absentmindedly stuffing the tape recorder into a coat pocket, and when she looks up, Clark's glasses are back on.

LOIS
Oh. Well, you can tell me when I get back, okay?

She darts for the door. Clark watches her get into an elevator, and lowers his glasses.

X-RAY POV: Lois in the elevator, but it's going UP, not DOWN. He smiles, then looks at an open window.

180

EXT. DAILY PLANET ROOF - NIGHT

180

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW of the Daily Planet roof. The large illuminated GLOBE seems to light up the sky.

CAMERA DESCENDS onto LOIS, standing against a ledge. She looks over her shoulder, making sure she's alone, then removes a cigarette from her purse and smiles. It's been a long time. She flicks a lighter, but just as she touches it to the cigarette, VWOOSH! the flame is blown out.

Lois tries again. It goes out again. Annoyed, she flicks the lighter harder and it drops out of her hand. She kneels down, looking for it.

SUPERMAN (O.S.)

You know, you really shouldn't smoke, Miss Lane.

SHE YELPS and looks up. SUPERMAN is landing on the ledge.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to--

LOIS

I'm fine. Really. I just wasn't expecting... you.

She straightens up, composes herself. He hops down, steps closer. She steps back. It's awkward. Both seem as if they want to say so much to each other.

LOIS

So, where--

SUPERMAN

I'm--

Beat.

LOIS (CONT'D)

You first.

SUPERMAN

I'm sorry. For leaving like that.

(beat)

With all the press on the plane I wasn't sure if it was the best time for us to talk.

Beat. Lois is confused, then realizes:

LOIS

Oh right. The plane. Well, there's no press around now -- except for me, of course.

SUPERMAN

I know some people are asking a lot of questions, now that I'm back, and I think it's only fair that I answer... those people.

LOIS

(disbelief)

So you're here for... an interview?

He nods.

LOIS (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Okay then. An interview it is.

She reaches into her purse, looking for the TAPE RECORDER. He looks her over.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Where did I put that thing...

SUPERMAN

Coat pocket.

LOIS

Huh?

SUPERMAN

The tape recorder. It's in your left coat pocket.

Lois just smiles. She turns the tape recorder on.

LOIS

Let's start with the big question. Where did you go?

SUPERMAN

To Krypton.

LOIS

But you told me it was destroyed. Ages ago.

SUPERMAN

I did. It was. But when they thought they might have found it... I just had to be sure.

LOIS

(almost sarcastic)

So what, you just built a spaceship and took off?

SUPERMAN
Actually I grew it.

LOIS
Oh. Naturally. Well what did you find?

SUPERMAN
Nothing -- the newspapers were wrong. The fragments of the planet had been irradiated by the explosion of Krypton's sun. The closer I got, the weaker it made me.

LOIS
(concerned)
Kryptonite...

SUPERMAN
(nods)
I almost didn't make it back.

Beat. Lois seems genuinely affected by that.

LOIS
And now that you are back, do you expect things to return to the way they were? For everyone to welcome you--

SUPERMAN
(cuts her off)
I read the article, Lois. 'Why the World Doesn't Need Superman'.

LOIS
So did a lot of people. Tomorrow night they're giving me the Pulitzer for it.

SUPERMAN
Why did you write it?

Lois clicks the tape recorder OFF.

LOIS
How could you leave me like that?

Beat. He's caught off guard.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Clark says the reason you left without saying goodbye is because it was too unbearable for you.
(MORE)

LOIS (CONT'D)

(beat)
Personally, I think that's a load
of crap.

SUPERMAN

Clark?

LOIS

No one. Just a guy I work with.

SUPERMAN

Maybe Clark's right.
(a long beat)
I'm sorry I hurt you, Lois.

LOIS

You didn't hurt me -- you didn't
hurt any of us. You just helped us
find the strength to take care of
ourselves. That's why I wrote the
article. The world doesn't need a
savior.

Beat. He reaches out for her. Clearly Lois is not talking
about the world; she is talking about herself.

SUPERMAN

Lois, will you come with me?

LOIS

Why?

SUPERMAN

There's something I want to show
you. Please.

Lois sighs. Curiosity now piqued, she steps closer.

LOIS

I can't be gone long.

SUPERMAN

You won't be.

Lois kicks off her heels and places her feet on top of his.
She stares at him, trying to remain strong.

LOIS

You know, my... um... Richard, is a
pilot. He takes me up all the time.

SUPERMAN

Not like this.

Lois looks down and GASPS. They're already fifty feet above
the rooftop. She grabs on tighter. So does he.

They rise higher, past the clouds, until the city becomes a cluster of lights. Lois closes her eyes, memories flooding back.

LOIS

I forgot how... warm... you are.

He smiles, and they finally stop high above the ground.

181 EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS

It's totally silent and still. Lois looks around, in awe.

SUPERMAN

What do you hear?

LOIS

Nothing. It's quiet.

SUPERMAN

Do you know what I hear, Lois?

I hear everything. All the good and all the bad in this world.

(beat)

You said that the world doesn't need a savior -- but every day I hear people crying for one.

DISSOLVE TO:

182 EXT. SKIES - MOMENTS LATER

SUPERMAN AND LOIS appear over a blanket of stars. But then something strange happens -- Superman reaches out and seems to TOUCH the starfield. It RIPPLES under his touch, and we realize it was just a reflection. They're flying only a few inches over the RIVER.

They glide into a misty FOG BANK, and we

DISSOLVE TO:

183 EXT. SKIES OVER LOIS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Superman and Lois descend from the clouds, floating gracefully over her house. It's dark, lit only by moonlight. He turns to her and smiles -- she smiles back.

184 EXT. SKIES OVER METROPOLIS - MOMENTS LATER

Even at night, Metropolis' majestic towers are bathed in golden light. Superman and Lois soar over and between them, lights shimmering on their faces.

He takes her down, flying just over the lights of the street. On the ground, a few people notice and look up. Lois meekly waves to them.

Superman pulls to the right and takes her straight towards a tall building. Lois braces in fear, but they quickly jet upwards. He pulls her close, and they slowly turn and spin, wrapped in each other's arms as they rise upward. It's like a slowdance in the middle of the air.

They rise past the BULLPEN window, and we see RICHARD, JASON, and JIMMY entering with food. Superman and Lois reach the top of the building. THE DAILY PLANET globe appears behind them.

185

EXT. DAILY PLANET - ROOFTOP

185

THEY LAND gently on the roof. Lois looks deeply into his eyes, faces just inches apart. They both can see it coming. This is the moment. Lois begins to MOVE CLOSER and just as her lips are about to touch his... Lois abruptly pulls away.

LOIS

Oh God. I shouldn't have. I'm-- I--
(almost to herself)

I have a family. I'm a mother.

SUPERMAN

I know.

LOIS

So you realize, that you and me.
We're, I mean... We can't--

SUPERMAN

I know.

He smiles, and it breaks her heart. Beat.

LOIS

So will I still see you? Around?

SUPERMAN

I'm always around. Goodnight, Lois.

He turns, about to take off again...

LOIS

Wait...

Beat. She looks as if she wants to say something else. Something important.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Nevermind. Goodnight.

And with that, Superman rises into the air and flies off. Lois watches until he's gone, then takes a deep breath. She almost faints again, but manages to stay on her feet and stumble to the rooftop door. Shoeless.

186 INT. ELEVATOR - MINUTES LATER

186

Lois stands in the elevator, her hair blown by the wind -- her outfit rumpled. She's beyond frazzled. The return of Superman put her on edge, but this experience has absolutely pushed her over. DING! The door opens to the BULLPEN.

187 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

187

Lois walks into the room in a daze. Richard, Jason, and Jimmy are setting out food. Unnoticed, Clark appears from behind a desk, stealing awkward glances at Lois.

RICHARD

I got beef for Clark. Do you want the veggie wrap or the tofu, honey?

LOIS

Honey beef.

RICHARD

What?

She snaps out of it.

LOIS

Sorry. Veggie. I'll have the veggie wrap.

Richard stares, sees her wind-blown hair. Clark looks up from his burrito, watching their exchange.

RICHARD

Lois, where have you been?

LOIS

I was just on the roof, getting some air.

She smiles, trying to finesse the interaction. He looks at her, even more suspicious than before.

RICHARD

Tell me the truth, Lois.

She trembles, nervous.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Have you been smoking?

187A

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - THE NEXT DAY

187A

WHOOSH! PAGES come out of a printer and are immediately grabbed by a female hand. We get a glimpse of the ARTICLE as the pages move through the Daily Planet -- it's an INTERVIEW with SUPERMAN.

We FOLLOW the pages...

188

INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

188

...as they LAND on a DESK. Perry's desk. He picks it up and takes a single glance at it -- and up at Lois.

PERRY

Is this real?

Lois just stares at him. It's real.

PERRY (CONT'D)

How'd you find him?

LOIS

He found me.

PERRY

Great. I can't wait to read--

LOIS

(sweetly)

So, Mr. White. About that blackout...

PERRY

Lois, this is the biggest night of your life, have you picked out a dress. Something snazzy I...

LOIS

It just feels a little weird, winning for that article. It doesn't seem right anymore.

PERRY

What doesn't seem right?

LOIS

Getting an award for an article called 'Why the world doesn't need Superman.'

(holds up the newspaper)
When according to this paper, they do!

PERRY

Lois, Pulitzer Prizes are like Academy Awards. Nobody remembers what you got one for. Just that you got one.

LOIS

But--

PERRY

This night's for you, Lois. Just enjoy it. I'm sure Kent's on the blackout.

189 EXT. ARCTIC SKIES - SAME TIME

189

NORTHERN LIGHTS shimmer in the grey sky. Superman soars through them...

*
*

190 EXT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE - SAME TIME

190

...towards the fortress on the ice below.

191 INT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE - SAME TIME

191

Superman lands inside his fortress.

SUPERMAN

Father. I know it's been a long time since I've come to you...

(beat)

I've never felt so alone.

*

His voice echoes in the vast chamber, but there is no answer.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

Father?

He approaches the console. The crystal has been taken. WITH A VOICE ECHOING THROUGH THE ARCTIC LIKE THUNDER:

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

FATHER?!

192 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - LATER

192

Jimmy darts across the office, carrying TWO GOWNS on hangers. He rushes to Lois, who is on the phone.

LOIS (ON PHONE)

Department of Water & Power please.

Jimmy holds up the two gowns. She points to the blue one. He hangs it on a coat rack behind her desk.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Hi, this is Lois Lane from the Daily Planet, I was wondering if--
 (beat; rolls her eyes)
 Yes, he is a very nice man-- But I was wondering if I could ask you a few more questions about the blackout...

Jimmy re-appears holding a DRY ERASE BOARD that reads:

RICHARD'S LATE -- TUX NOT READY AT CLEANERS.
 CAN YOU PICK UP JASON FROM SCHOOL?

Lois looks at it, nods, and waves Jimmy away.

MOMENTS LATER:

Still on the phone, Lois has the gown on, and is putting on a pair of earrings.

LOIS (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

So the uptown grid went dark at 12:36, and mid-town ten seconds before. So which grid was hit first?

(pauses)

You're sure. Nothing before that?
 Thank you very much.

She hangs up. Staring at the map of METROPOLIS, she draws one last circle over: a DOWNTOWN RIVERSIDE PROPERTY.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Hmmm...

She pulls the map off of the bulletin board. Lois looks at the clock on the wall -- and panics. It's 4:30. She gasps.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Jason!

193

EXT. SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON

193

Jason stands outside with a TEACHER. A CAR pulls up. It's Lois. She honks and waves.

LOIS

Get in!

Jason toddles over and jumps into the car. The teacher bends down, waving at Lois through the window.

TEACHER
Congratulations, Miss Lane. Say hi
to Superman for me!

LOIS
(smiling politely)
Thanks.

194

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

194

Lois drives while checking the map.

JASON
You were late.

LOIS
Sorry honey, I know. Daddy's
waiting for us at the office with
your suit. We're just going to make
a quick stop first.

JASON
I have to wear a suit?

195

INT. CAR - LATER

195

Jason looks out the car window at the Vanderworth mansion.

JASON
Where are we? Is this the Pulitzer?

Lois' cell phone rings. The CALLER ID says DAILY PLANET. She
silences it.

LOIS
Nope. Mommy just needs to ask these
people some questions, then we'll
go.

It rings again, this time displaying RICHARD. She looks at
it, then tosses the phone in the glove box.

JASON
Can I stay in the car?

LOIS
Not on your life.

196

EXT. VANDERWORTH ESTATE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

196

JASON
Mommy, who lives here?

LOIS
We're about to find out.

Lois RINGS the bell. No one answers. She sighs, frustrated, then ~~hears something~~ -- MUSIC. Coming from behind them. She turns and sees ~~THE~~ YACHT docked near the house -- and the music is definitely coming from it.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Come on.

198

INT. YACHT - ENTRANCE

198

Lois and Jason quietly walk on board, stepping over empty beer bottles and pizza boxes. They hear ~~OPERA~~ MUSIC but no one seems to be around.

JASON

Are we trespassing?

LOIS

Yes. No. I mean 'shh'.

199

INT. YACHT - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

199

Following the music, Lois and Jason descend a staircase and enter a long corridor. The music abruptly stops. She spots a doorway ahead, slightly ajar.

199A

INT. YACHT - WARDROBE ROOM

199A

They enter a room filled with fine suits, shoes, jewelry and other expensive items. Lois looks at everything, perplexed.

JASON (O.S.)

I like the curly one.

Jason is pointing at something on a shelf. Lois looks at it, and her eyes suddenly WIDEN in fear:

IT'S A MANNEQUIN'S HEAD. Wearing a TOUPEE. It's just one of many, all neatly lined up in rows.

LOIS

(quietly)

Oh no.

She backs away, staring at the wigs. Terrified.

JASON

Mommy, what's wrong?

LOIS

Oh no. No no no...

THE ENTIRE ROOM suddenly jolts. We hear the ship's engine rumble. Lois runs to a small window and looks outside.

THROUGH THE WINDOW, we see the ship pulling away from shore.

LOIS (CONT'D)

I should've known this was a bad idea. Come on, we've got to get out of here.

Lois grabs Jason and rushes to the door, but just as she opens it, she SHRIEKS. She's face to face with LEX LUTHOR: BALD, wearing a bathrobe, with a TOOTHBRUSH in his mouth.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Lex Luthor?

LEX

(toothbrush in mouth)

Lois Lane...

200

INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

200

Lois and Jason sit in the middle of the lavish room, surrounded by the thugs and Kitty. Lex is pacing around them, staring at her son....

LEX

And what's your name?

JASON

I'm not supposed to talk to strangers.

LEX

Cute kid. Smart too.

LOIS

Thanks.

LEX

But I'm not really a stranger, am I? I mean, this is like a little reunion. Heck, I'm a fan, Miss Lane! I love your writing!
(looking her over)
And your dress.

LOIS

I love your ship. How'd you get it? Swindle some old widow out of her money?

Kitty laughs. Lex's eyes narrow.

LEX

Are you fishing for an interview, Miss Lane?

LOIS

It's been a while since you were a headline. Maybe it's time people knew your name again.

LEX

Oh, they will. Hey, didn't you win the Pulitzer for my favorite article? "Why the World Doesn't Need Superman?"

LOIS

(glances at her watch)

Not yet.

Beat. Lex considers his options. Lois looks around the room: A METAL BOX on the fireplace mantel. A pad and pencil near A FAX MACHINE. Finally:

LEX

We do have some time to kill. Among other things.

He hands her the pad and pencil.

LEX (CONT'D)

Your tools?

Lois takes the items, sits down.

LEX (CONT'D)

Do you know what posthumous means?

JASON

No.

LEX

Good.

(to Lois)

What do you know about crystals?

LOIS

They make great chandeliers.

Lex drops a book in her lap.

LEX

See, crystals are like beautiful viruses... absorbing from their environment in order to grow.

Lois flips through the book. The images correspond to what he's saying. She looks up to see Lex holding the WHITE CRYSTAL stolen from the Fortress of Solitude.

LEX (CONT'D)

This crystal may seem unremarkable, but so is the seed of a redwood tree. In the case of a redwood seed, the energy needed to grow comes from sunlight. In the case of crystals like this one, it's radiation.

LOIS

Radiation? Crystals? Alrighty.

LEX

Drawing from Earth's radiation, it might grow to a certain extent, but never really reach it's full potential. That's how our mutual friend in tights made his Arctic getaway spot. Cute, but small. Perhaps you've been there?

Lois doesn't answer. Lex smiles. Back to subject.

LEX (CONT'D)

No. To really prosper, this crystal needs to be nurtured by material from its natural environment-- material with a specific level of radiation from a very specific source-- Krypton.

LOIS

But Krypton doesn't exist anymore.

LEX

Actually, it does. Sort of. In teeny tiny pieces scattered throughout the galaxy.

LOIS

Kryptonite? That's lethal to Super--
She stops herself.

LEX

To Superman? It is?! Well, gosh. Thanks for that little tip!

Lex winks, then points to a spot on the map.

LEX (CONT'D (CONT'D)

Just kidding. I already knew. Now, ask me about the pin.

KITTY

Lex!?

LEX

That pin is where I'm going to plant it!

Lois gets up for a closer look, just as Lex pulls down A NEW MAP that shows A HUGE LAND MASS not far from the coast of Metropolis.

LOIS

(stunned)

You're building... an island?

LEX

Growing it, actually. And it's not just an island. It's an entirely new continent. Virtually indestructible, self-sustaining, and already imbued with technology lightyears beyond our own. For lack of a better name, it's Krypton. An extinct world, reborn on our own. Are you getting all this?

Lois eyes the map, noticing a series of FAULT LINES. Some of which run under Metropolis.

As Lex is talking, Jason and Brutus are making faces at each other (Think: Brody and his son in JAWS, but not as cute)

LOIS

But that's the intersection of over a dozen fault lines. If you built something there, you could cause an earthquake in Metropolis!

Lex is laughing so hard he can't control himself -- until he suddenly stops.

LEX

You're not seeing the big picture. Here. Let me enlarge it for you.

Lex pulls a SECOND MAP down that shows WAVES radiating outward from the intersection. Lois blanches.

LEX (CONT'D)

It won't just be an earthquake in Metropolis.

(MORE)

LEX (CONT'D)

It will be a chain of Earthquakes that will eventually radiate outward throughout North and South America and shift the mid Atlantic ridge sending 500 foot waves from the tip of Europe to the Horn of Africa.

(beat)

I know. I'm a sucker for the classics.

Lex pulls down ANOTHER MAP that shows the land mass even larger than before, with Earth's continents broken and almost completely covered by water. Lois is horrified.

LEX (CONT'D)

The crystal will eventually transform the planet, making every continent virtually unlivable. Everywhere except for... well...

(points to the new island)

Here!

LOIS

But millions of people could die.

LEX

Billions! Once again, the press underestimates me. This is front page news, Miss Lane!

(beat)

But I know what you're thinking. I have learned to share my good fortune.

(almost sympathetic)

Once the rest of the world is reduced to rubble, people will need somewhere to live. Give me your tired, your poor -- well, maybe not your poor -- but give me your huddled masses yearning to breathe free... and their VISA or Mastercard numbers.

LOIS

...money?

LEX

It's the American Way.

Lois' expression changes, suddenly realizing the true threat.

LEX (CONT'D)

Come on, say it.

No response.

LEX (CONT'D)

Come on! I know you want to! It's just dangling off the tip of your tongue. SAY IT!

LOIS

Superman will never let you--

LEX

WRONG!

Lex picks up the METAL BOX on the mantel. Opens it. A green glow washes over his face.

LOIS

What is that?

LEX

I think you know exactly what this is.

He walks closer, shows it to her: THE KRYPTONITE. It has been sheared to a sleek arrow-dynamic form, with a hole in the center. Beat. She reaches for it but Lex snaps the box shut.

LEX (CONT'D)

Mind over muscle, Miss Lane. Mind over muscle.

CUT TO:

A PHOTOGRAPH OF LOIS AND JASON.

201

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - EVENING

201

Jimmy is in a forlorn daze, staring at the photo. Behind him, Clark walks in, UNNERVED.

CLARK

Jimmy, can I take a look at any other information Lois collected on the blackout?

He sees Jimmy's expression.

CLARK (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

JIMMY

Lois never showed up for the ceremony. She and Jason are missing.

Jimmy turns to Perry's office, where he and Richard, both wearing tuxedos, are pacing, upset and nervous.

202

INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

202

PERRY

So what'd the school say?

RICHARD

She picked Jason up at 4:40.

Clark enters.

CLARK

I heard the news. What can I do?

RICHARD

Thanks, Clark, but--

PERRY

We're trying her cell, but I want you both to check her schedule, her computer, email and voicemail. Call every person in her address book.

ANGLE ON: Richard and Clark looking at each other, perplexed.

203

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

203

GREY, OVERCAST CLOUDS hang in the sky. Below, Luthor's yacht sails through the water, over the echo of piano chords.

204

INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

204

Lois sits on a couch across from Lex. Jason sits at the piano, playing HEART AND SOUL very slowly... and badly. Lex looks at his watch, then at Jason-- and has a thought:

LEX

You know, in your article you always refer to "Superman" as a savior.

Seemingly annoyed by Jason's music, Lex gets up. Lois watches as he sits next to Jason at the piano. In tune, Lex starts to PLAY the accompaniment to 'Heart and Soul.' It's eerie.

LEX (CONT'D)

But you know what I think he is? I think he's a lost, lonely little boy looking for a home. That's why he ran off looking for Krypton. And that's why he came back... to you.

(beat)

I think he needs us -- more than we need him.

LOIS

How would you know he went back to find Krypton? He only told me and that hasn't been published yet.

LEX

Well, how else do you get a stray dog out of your yard? You throw him a bone.

Beat. It dawns on Lois.

LOIS

It was... you. You faked those photos. All of that Hubble Telescope crap. You tricked him. Made him leave--

LEX

(looks to Stanford)

I admit it was difficult finding someone with the right skills and connections to plant the story that "scientists discovered Krypton". Luckily, the press doesn't check facts like they used to.

(beat)

And by the way, nobody made him do anything he didn't already want to do.

Lois watches them, petrified, as Jason and Lex play a DUET. Lex starts to get into it. Jason is shaky at first, but starts to fall into a groove.

LEX (CONT'D)

Don't you agree?

Lois ~~stares at~~ Lex and her son in a daze.

LEX (CONT'D)

Miss Lane... don't you agree?

Jason now plays with BOTH HANDS, in perfect sync with Lex. Lois NODS.

LEX (CONT'D)

Good.

The music RISES. Kitty does her nails. Brutus opens a beer.

Lex turns and smiles at Lois, but when he looks back, he sees Jason playing with BOTH HANDS, expertly following along and now copying Lex's distinct flourishes.

Lex starts to STUDY Jason's movements. He looks at Jason's face. At the keys. Jason is getting better and better. The song is building, getting stronger and more complex. Lex is in awe of how fast this kid has learned.

Suddenly, LEX SLAMS DOWN HARD ON THE KEYS. Everyone jumps, startled. Lex turns to Lois.

LEX (CONT'D)

Who's his father?

Lex gets up and walks towards Lois, staring her down. Beat.

LOIS

(quiet, under her breath)

Richard.

The INTERCOM CRACKLES:

GRANT (ON INTERCOM)

Mr. Luthor, we're approaching the coordinates.

LEX

(to Lois)

You're sure?

GRANT (ON INTERCOM)

Yes, sir. Latitude thirty-nine degrees north, and longitude seventy-one degrees west.

Without taking his eyes off of Lois, Lex walks to the mantle, and picks up the KRYPTONITE BOX. Jason nervously touches the keys. Lex comes back, stands next to him. He looks from Jason to the Kryptonite... wondering. But Jason doesn't react at all. Bothered, Lex walks to the stairs, looks back at Lois.

LEX

(to Brutus)

Don't let them out of this room.

Brutus nods. Just after Lex exits, Lois scribbles something down on her notepad: 39°N, 71°W.

205

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

205

Under an overcast sky, the yacht slows to a stop. FAR IN THE DISTANCE, Metropolis is just a speck on the horizon.

*
*

206

EXT. YACHT - DECK - SAME TIME

206

Lex and Kitty walk onto the deck and approach Grant, who is setting up the modified ROCKET LAUNCHER. Riley is taping.

Lex removes the KRYPTONITE from one box, then the CRYSTAL from another. Carefully, he inserts the crystal into the kryptonite enclosure. There's a brief PULSE OF LIGHT, as the two objects from Krypton are brought together. STANFORD'S GEIGER COUNTER whines louder than we've heard it. Lex smiles.

*
*
*
*
*

LEX
This is gonna be good.

207

INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME

207

Lois stands in the middle of the room, nervous and upset. Jason sits quietly at the piano, and after an awkward moment of silence, starts to play HEART AND SOUL again.

Curious, Brutus approaches and sits down next to Jason. He watches the boy play, and just as Lex did earlier, starts to play along. Only he's terrible at piano.

Realizing Brutus is distracted, Lois slowly makes her way toward the fax machine near Lex's desk.

BRUTUS continues playing. He doesn't notice as Lois scrawls a message on the notepad, underneath the coordinates: HELP US!
LOIS LANE.

With her hands behind her back, she slides the paper into the fax machine, then presses a button on the dial pad. IT BEEPS. Worried, she glances over to Brutus. He didn't hear it.

Carefully using the music to drown out the BEEPS, she dials the number and presses SEND. It starts to CONNECT.

208

INT. YACHT - DECK - SAME TIME

208

Lex finishes securing the crystal/kryptonite into the rocket launcher's compartment and steps back.

STANFORD
Ready, boss?

Lex just quietly nods -- obviously something is on his mind. BOOM! STANFORD FIRES, blasting the rocket through the air.

209

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - SAME TIME

209

VWOOSH! The rocket sails through the sky before arcing downward and smashing into the water. It disappears under the surface with a slight GLOW.

210 INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME 210

THE LIGHTS FLICKER. ZAP! THE FAX MACHINE DIES before the message goes through. Lois almost screams with frustration. Jason and Brutus stop playing. They look around, confused.

211 EXT. YACHT - DECK - SAME TIME 211

The power on the ship dies. Lex and his men put on binoculars. Kitty puts on designer sun glasses. Using binoculars, Lex watches the ocean and smiles, thrilled.

212 OMITTED 212

213 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - LOIS' DESK - SAME TIME 213

Clark is sitting at Lois' desk, absentmindedly staring at her photo. Richard is at her computer.

CLARK

Maybe she's at the burger shop on Mercer Street.

RICHARD

She's a vegetarian.

CLARK

She is? Well, maybe the vegan sandwich shop on--

RICHARD

That place gave her food poisoning last month.

(types on computer)

Damn.

CLARK

What?

RICHARD

She has a password.

Richard tries different things: Jason, Richard, etc... but nothing works. Clark reluctantly sighs.

CLARK

Try 'Superman'.

Richard types it in. The computer unlocks, just as ZAP! THE POWER GOES OUT.

214 EXT. EARTH FROM SPACE - SAME TIME 214

The Earth rotates as the blackout spreads across the planet... when the lights suddenly COME BACK ON.

214A INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - LOIS' DESK 214A *

The Daily Planet lights come back on. Everyone breathes a sigh of relief. Everyone but Clark.

215 INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM 215

Lois looks up as the power is restored -- and the fax machine starts up again.

216 EXT. UNDER THE OCEAN 216

As the crystal plunges deeper into the dark waters, the glow within the rocket's compartment intensifies.

CLOSE ON THE CRYSTAL: it begins to GROW. NEW BRANCHES appear on its surface, MELDING with the kryptonite. BOOM! The crystal grows so large that it SHATTERS the rocket, then continues on its descent. It finally hits the ocean floor, and a BLAST OF LIGHT illuminates the sea for miles.

217 EXT. YACHT - DECK 217

Everyone averts their eyes. Lex seems to bask in the light.

218 INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM 218

THE LIGHT blasts through the glass-bottom, filling the room. Startled, Brutus stands up just as the light fades. Beat. Lois nervously waits to see what he'll do. Suddenly, Jason starts playing the piano again. Brutus looks at Lois, then at Jason, then sits back down and plays again.

219 EXT. YACHT - DECK - CONTINUOUS 219

BOOM! THUNDER CRACKS. Lightning flashes. Kitty and Lex look up at thick, rumbling clouds overhead. It's beginning.

KITTY

Lex, this isn't like the train set.

LEX

(confident)

I know.

220 INT. OCEAN FLOOR - SAME TIME 220

The crystal is growing at an alarming rate. Crystal tendrils dig into the ground.

BOOM! A FLASH OF LIGHT and a SEA OF BUBBLES, as HUGE CRACKS FORM ALONG THE OCEAN FLOOR, spreading for miles. They grow deeper, turning into vast chasms.

The crystal drops into one, and MORE LIGHT explodes -- tinted the same eerie green as kryptonite. The ground RUMBLES, and MASSIVE CRYSTAL COLUMNS begin to rise out of the chasms.

221 INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM 221

THROUGH THE GLASS BOTTOM, we see THOUSANDS of fish swim away.

222 EXT. METROPOLIS BEACH - MOMENTS LATER 222

A BOY is building a sandcastle, when he suddenly notices a single fish FLOPPING next to him. HIS MOTHER looks up to see hundreds of people RUNNING from the water. Alarmed, she sits up to see what's happening:

THOUSANDS OF FISH are beached. The ground is rumbling. The sand castle collapses. A GUST OF WIND picks up, coming from the ocean....

224 EXT. OCEAN - OFFSHORE OIL RIGS - SAME TIME 224

Heavy waves slam against THREE OFFSHORE OIL RIGS. They shake and rattle, reeling from the shockwaves. Workmen look around, worried. There's a loud metallic GROAN when all three towers suddenly EXPLODE. Flames shoot hundreds of feet into the air.

224A OMITTED 224A

226 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN 226 *

Clark and Richard are going through Lois' computer when Clark suddenly jolts, clutching his ears. The office noise around him fades, until we hear what he hears: the sound of DISTANT RUMBLING. *

RICHARD
Clark, you okay?

Clark shakes it off, straightens up.

CLARK
Yeah... I'm fine.

RICHARD
There's nothing on her calendar...
I don't have a clue where --

Richard looks up, but Clark is gone. *

Suddenly, Richard feels a faint vibration. THE FRAMED PHOTO of him with Lois and Jason is shaking. So is everything else on Lois' desk. The photo falls from the desk and SHATTERS. *

Other people in the office feel it: A TREMOR. It suddenly stops. Everyone looks around, wary. *

227 INT. DAILY PLANET - ELEVATOR BANK - SAME TIME 227

Clark steps into an elevator. The doors shut.

228 INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - CONTINUOUS 228

Music builds as the elevator climbs higher and higher. Suddenly, DING! It stops at another floor.

229 INT. ELEVATOR - SAME TIME 229

The doors open. POLLY steps in. Clark is gone. Glancing down, she finds A PILE OF CLOTHES, including CLARK'S GLASSES. She feels A RUSH OF AIR and LOOKS UP. The elevator hatch is OPEN. *

230 INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - SAME TIME 230

VWOOSH! SUPERMAN flies straight up the elevator shaft.

231 EXT. DAILY PLANET - ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER 231

...BLASTING OUT OF THE ROOFTOP DOOR and into the sky.

233 INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME 233

Brutus and Jason are still playing a bad duet on the piano, so Lois takes the opportunity and hits REDIAL on the fax machine. It CONNECTS and starts to send. The paper moves through the machine -- past 'HELP ME' -- past the coordinates -- and just as Lois' name is about to go through...

THE POWER DIES AGAIN. But only the fax machine seems to be affected. Then Lois looks up to see BRUTUS, holding the power cord. Pissed, Lois smiles. BRUTUS GRABS HER and throws her across the room, SLAMMING her against a bannister. Jason stops playing, watching as Brutus storms towards her.

234 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN 234

Jimmy stares at the television, when he hears a BEEP. The fax machine SPITS out a fax. It's Lois' message: HELP US! 39°N, 71°W. but the rest is cut off before getting to her name. *

235 INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 235

WHAM! Richard and Perry look up. Jimmy is pressing the fax against the window. Richard opens the door:

RICHARD
Where did you get that?

JIMMY

It came through the fax. It's her handwriting -- I'd recognize it anywhere, but I don't know what it means...

Richard stares at the numbers, thinking. He grabs a pen from Perry's desk and writes them down.

PERRY

39N71W? What are these, lottery numbers?

But when Perry and Jimmy look up, Richard is gone.

236

INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM

236

Lois darts to the POOL TABLE with Brutus right on her heels. She grabs a POOL CUE and swings, SMASHING it against him. Once. Twice. On the third swipe, he CATCHES it with one hand, and grabs HER NECK with the other. Brutus squeezes, choking her, then hurls her against the wall and into a shelf. Lois collapses to the ground, barely conscious. He stands over her, ready to STRIKE HER WITH THE POOL CUE, when

THE ENTIRE PIANO COMES FLYING TOWARDS HIM. SMASH! It collides and shatters. Broken piano keys scatter across the floor.

Lois looks up to see JASON standing with arms outstretched. Paralyzed with fear. Did I just do that? He takes a hit off his inhaler, then rushes to his mother, terrified. She's just as shaken, trying to calm both Jason and herself down.

LOIS

It's... okay.

She painfully stands and takes him by the hand. They start to make their way to the stairs when RILEY AND GRANT come down the spiral staircase. They see Brutus' feet poking out from under the piano, and stare at Lois and Jason, stunned.

237

INT. YACHT - PANTRY - MOMENTS LATER

237

The men toss Lois and Jason into a long, narrow pantry. WHAM! The door is slammed. Locked. Lois ferociously pounds on it.

LOIS (BEHIND DOOR)

OPEN THIS DOOR! OPEN IT!

She turns to Jason -- as if looking for help. But he just puts his arms around her and hugs her tightly.

237A

OMITTED

237A *

239

EXT. YACHT - DECK - SAME TIME

239

The storm rages overhead, filled with crackling green lightning. Grant, and Riley emerge onto the deck.

RILEY

We had a little problem downstairs.
Brutus won't be joining us.

LEX

Where are they?

RILEY

Locked up. In the pantry.

Beat. Lex thinks about that for a moment.

LEX

Get the helicopter ready.

240

INT. LEX'S HELICOPTER - MINUTES LATER

240

Lex settles into the helicopter, looking for something.

LEX

Grant, where's my case?

GRANT

What case?

LEX

THE case!

Beat. Grant apologetically shrugs.

241

INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

241

ANGLE ON: A BRIEFCASE filled with toupees. It slams shut. LEX picks it up and starts walking away, when he spots BRUTUS' LEGS under the destroyed piano wreckage. Beat.

242

INT. YACHT - PANTRY

242

Lois ferociously pounds on the door. She kicks it, slams it with her shoulder over and over again. No use.

LOIS

DAMMIT!

Suddenly, LEX'S FACE appears in the small window. LOIS YELPS, then becomes quickly infuriated:

LOIS (CONT'D)

LUTHOR! LET US OUT OF HERE!

Beat. He glances once more at Jason, then winks and leaves.

243 EXT. YACHT - HELIPAD - MOMENTS LATER 243

Blades spin. The helicopter lifts off with Lex and his crew safely inside.

244 EXT. SOUTH CAROLINA - OFFSHORE OIL RIGS 244

Terrified workmen are gathered at the edge of the rigs, trying to escape heat and flame. One crew member suddenly POINTS AT THE SKY. SUPERMAN SWOOPS FROM THE CLOUDS and flies over the first rig -- VWOOSH! Without stopping, he effortlessly uses his breath to blow out the flames, then extinguishes the other two rigs one after another.

244A OMITTED 244A *

250 INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE 250 *

Perry and Jimmy watch a TV NEWS REPORT about tremors hitting Metropolis. The TVs across the bullpen are all broadcasting accounts of Superman rescuing people from different places around Metropolis. STATIC suddenly fills the screens. Lights flicker. *

PERRY

Christ, not another blackout.

The flickering lights are accompanied by a DEEP RUMBLE. Awards on Perry's wall SHAKE. Outside, CAR ALARMS go off.

JIMMY

I don't think it's a blackout.

The rumbling builds. EVERYTHING shakes -- even the windows.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Chief, get down!

Jimmy pulls Perry to the ground just as the WINDOWS SHATTER.

251 INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - SAME TIME 251

People are thrown to the ground. Walls and ceilings crack open. TVs and lights crackle and spark.

PERRY

EVERYBODY OUT! MOVE!

People rush to the stairs, trying to avoid falling debris.

252

EXT. DAILY PLANET - STREET LEVEL - SAME TIME

252

The Daily Planet staff streams out of the building. The street is packed with cars and people clamoring for safety. ANOTHER TREMOR HITS. Chasms open. Streetlamps topple. SNAP! SNAP! SNAP! Jimmy takes photos of EVERYTHING.

The shockwave travels up the building, SHATTERING WINDOWS, making its way towards the roof...

253

EXT. DAILY PLANET - ROOFTOP - SAME TIME

253

CRACK! The base of the DAILY PLANET GLOBE shatters. SPARKS FLY. The globe teeters back and forth, then BREAKS OFF. It crashes onto the rooftop, SMASHING into the water tower, rolling off the edge...

254

EXT. DAILY PLANET - CONTINUOUS

254

...plunging toward the crowd below.

255

EXT. DAILY PLANET - STREET LEVEL - CONTINUOUS

255

PEOPLE SCREAM AND SCATTER, but the street is too crowded to move. They're covered with falling water just as the globe is seconds from crushing them. Perry stares upward, stunned.

PERRY
(quietly to himself)
Great Caesar's ghost.

Jimmy looks up and SNAP! SNAP! SNAP! takes MORE PHOTOS: THE GLOBE a hundred feet above -- fifty feet -- twenty -- then...

SUPERMAN SWOOPING UNDER THE GLOBE -- LOWERING IT TO THE GROUND, holding it on his shoulders like ATLAS. The perfect photograph.

They clear out of the way, giving him room to safely set it on the ground. THUD! Superman steps back, resting. He's exhausted. Just as he turns to take off--

PERRY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Superman, wait!

Perry emerges from the crowd.

PERRY (CONT'D)
Perry White, Daily Planet. Great to finally meet you.

SUPERMAN
I'm sorry, Mr. White, but I'm a little busy--

PERRY

It's Lois.

Superman stops. Perry is holding out THE FAX.

256 INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM - SAME TIME 256

Camera creeps along the floor, past the destroyed piano. Through the glass bottom: it's dark and murky, but then huge GLEAMING WHITE CRYSTALS appear, snaking through the water.

257 INT. LEX'S HELICOPTER 257

Lex stares out the window, at a field of giant crystals rising from the water below.

258 EXT. OCEAN - SAME TIME 258

In the distance, a crystal SUPERSTRUCTURE breaks the surface, creating a TIDAL WAVE that rolls across the ocean. As Lex's helicopter flies over the wave, we follow it towards THE YACHT.

259 INT. LEX'S HELICOPTER 259

Lex watches the wave pass underneath, realizing that it's about to hit the yacht. He smiles.

260 EXT. OCEAN - SAME TIME 260

ANGLE ON: The ship, as the wave rises up behind it. WHAM! The wave COLLIDES with the yacht, SWALLOWING IT WHOLE.

261 INT. YACHT - PANTRY - SAME TIME 261

Cans of food fall as the room is thrown onto its side. Lois tries to shield Jason. Water leaks from the ceiling.

262 EXT. YACHT - SAME TIME 262

The wave passes. The ship rises back to the surface but is half-submerged. ZAP! the ship's lights go out. *

263 INT. YACHT - PANTRY 263

Half of the room is tipped upward. Water is streaming in. Lois tumbles backwards into the water, struggling to reach Jason, who is clutching to a shelf, but she's STUCK.

ANGLE UNDERWATER: Lois's leg, ironically tangled in the ropes of a LIFE PRESERVER.

LOIS
HELP ME! Oh God...

Jason starts to hyperventilate. HE'S HAVING AN ASTHMA ATTACK, but ~~can't find his~~ inhaler. He stares in horror as Lois fights to stay above water, screaming:

LOIS (CONT'D)

HELP!

Water floods into her mouth. She disappears under the surface when the DOOR is suddenly RIPPED OPEN, AND THE SILHOUETTE OF A MAN STEPS INTO THE ROOM. He ~~dives underwater.~~

UNDERWATER: The man rips Lois' leg free from the cables.

ABOVE WATER: He pulls her to safety -- to the dry side of the room. Lois finally opens her eyes and comes face to face with... RICHARD. She and Jason are both stunned.

LOIS (CONT'D)

How -- How did you get here?

RICHARD

(obviously...)

I flew.

She spots his INHALER floating in the water. She snatches it and gives it to him.

264 EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - SAME TIME

264

RICHARD'S SEA PLANE rests on the water nearby.

We hear a RUMBLE. The water under the yacht begins to churn and BUBBLE, like something is about to break the surface...

265 INT. YACHT - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

265

They exit the pantry and slosh their way through knee-high water, heading for a DOORWAY.

RICHARD

Lois, what have you gotten yourself into?

LOIS

Don't blame me! This is Lex Luthor's mess.

They hear a metallic GROAN and feel THE SHIP lurching.

RICHARD

What is that...

LOIS

GRAB ONTO SOMETHING!

265A EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - SAME TIME

A HUGE CRYSTAL COLUMN rises out of the water. It hits the bottom of the yacht, PIERCING THE HULL.

265B INT. YACHT - MAIN ROOM

THE CRYSTAL shatters the glass bottom, rising to the ceiling.

265C INT. YACHT - CORRIDOR

Lois, Jason, and Richard cling to a railing and to each other while the entire corridor tips upwards.

266 EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - SAME TIME

THE CRYSTAL HAS PIERCED THE MIDDLE OF THE YACHT, lifting it out of the water, before finally BREAKING IT IN HALF.

THE FRONT PORTION of the ship breaks away and falls into the water, sinking quickly.

THE REAR HALF crashes back down into the water, barely afloat. Water bubbles. It too starts sinking. The different levels of the ship are visible, as is THE CORRIDOR IN WHICH LOIS, RICHARD AND JASON ARE TRAPPED.

267 OMITTED

268 INT. YACHT - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The corridor is tipping backwards. Seawater rushes in.

LOIS SEES THE SKY through the open doorway. It's only a few feet away. She can also see that THE DOOR is creaking back and forth, ABOUT TO SLAM SHUT. She desperately climbs her way towards it.

LOIS

NO!!!

RICHARD

Lois, wait!

WHAM! THE METAL DOOR slams shut, right against her head! She tumbles back, landing in the water next to Richard and Jason, unconscious.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Lois!!!

Richard grabs her with one arm and holds Jason with the other. Water is pouring in all around them. Richard makes one final effort to get to the door's porthole, but there isn't time. Within seconds, they are submerged.

It seems hopeless. Just then: BOOM! TWO RED BOOTS LAND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PORTHOLE. SMASH! THE ENTIRE DOOR AND PARTS OF THE SURROUNDING WALL are torn away like paper, revealing SUPERMAN silhouetted against the sky.

269 EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS

269

He effortlessly lifts them straight up into the air, then down to the SEA PLANE.

270 EXT. SEA PLANE - MOMENTS LATER

270

Superman gently lands them onto the pontoons. Richard sets Jason down. Superman is still cradling Lois. Beat. Realizing he's holding onto her a bit too long, he lays her down.

USING HIS X-RAY VISION, Superman looks her over. Richard stares at the Man of Steel, dumbfounded and panicked.

RICHARD

You... you're-- him.

SUPERMAN

(still focused on Lois)

You must be Richard. I've heard so much about you.

RICHARD

You have?

Superman listens to Lois's breathing, to her heartbeat. He sighs, relieved. She's just unconscious.

JASON

Is she okay?

SUPERMAN

She'll be fine.

BOOM! A BLAST OF WIND HITS THEM. THE WATER RAGES. Crystal columns are emerging everywhere. They stare, awestruck.

RICHARD

Lois said it was Lex Luthor. But how could one guy do all of this?

SUPERMAN

I think I know.

Jason curiously looks up at Superman.

JASON

Hey, you look just like--

SUPERMAN
(cutting him off)
Can you fly?

RICHARD
What?

SUPERMAN
Can you fly out of here?

RICHARD
I can't take off in this.

SUPERMAN
Alright, get in. I'll push.
(firm)
Just promise you'll take care of
them-- and won't come back.

RICHARD
I promise.

271

EXT. NEW KRYPTON - MOMENTS LATER

271

The seaplane safely soars away.

CAMERA DROPS DOWN TO Superman, soaring over the landscape, when it suddenly dawns on him -- it's all eerily familiar, almost identical to the shattered remains of Krypton.

Confused and awestruck, he swoops towards the center of the structure. It too is familiar. It's the size of an arena, with CRYSTAL MONOLITHS arranged in a circle. In the center, rests a structure resembling the FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE. Next to it is LEX'S HELICOPTER. Empty.

272

EXT. NEW KRYPTON - VALLEY OF ELDERS - CONTINUOUS

272

BOOM: Superman lands hard, staring upward. This place too is familiar. It's an exact reproduction of the Kryptonian VALLEY OF ELDERS. Only the family crests are missing.

But unlike the ruins, this place feels like it could be full of life -- what he hoped to find when he went to Krypton. A ghostly wind makes it even more unnerving. Then, from behind:

LEX (O.S.)
See anything familiar?

Lex is exiting the fortress, followed by Kitty.

SUPERMAN
I see an old man's sick joke.

LEX

Really? Because I see my new apartment.

(gestures around)

And a place for Kitty, and my friends, and one there that I'll rent out, and...

(on the other hand)

No, you're right. It's a little cold. A little... alien. It needs that human touch.

Superman storms towards Lex, strong and determined.

SUPERMAN

I don't have time for this.

LEX

Oh right, you probably want your crystal back. Well it's around here somewhere.

(turns to the fortress)

I'm sure it'll pop up once it's finished.

As Superman approaches, LEX PUNCHES HIM ACROSS THE FACE. WHAM! The Man of Steel falls, reeling in PAIN. He touches his jaw, shocked, and sees it: BLOOD.

LEX (CONT'D)

You are a hard man to kill. But if you won't die out there like you're supposed to...

(pointing at the sky)

...then I guess you'll just have to die down here.

273

INT. SEA PLANE - SAME TIME

273

Richard is at the controls. Lois lays in a seat next to Jason. He caresses her gently.

JASON

Wake up, mommy. Wake up...

HER EYES SPRING OPEN. She gasps, looks around, startled.

RICHARD

Hey. It's alright. We're safe.

Lois looks out the window, realizes they're flying.

LOIS

How...

RICHARD
Superman.

LOIS
Where is he?!

RICHARD
He went back to stop Luthor.

Lois' eyes widen in horror, remembering the kryptonite.

LOIS
Richard, turn the plane around.

RICHARD
What?!

LOIS
You heard me, TURN AROUND!

274

EXT. NEW KRYPTON - VALLEY OF ELDERS

274

Superman stares at the ground, as a drop of blood falls out of his nose. He turns and looks up at Lex, his vision blurring as he becomes SICKER and SICKER.

LEX
You're asking yourself "how?".
(looks around)
Didn't your mother ever tell you to
look before you leap?

Superman focuses, and using his x-ray vision, sees what Lex is talking about.

X-RAY VISION POV: IN THE GROUND AND WALLS are pockets and veins of kryptonite, growths that occurred when the crystal grew through the kryptonite shard. Superman groans in agony as radiation seeps into his body.

LEX (CONT'D)
Kryptonite. Amazing isn't it? You see, I discovered that when crystals grow, they take on the traits of the minerals in the environment around them.
(beat)
Sort of like a son taking on the traits of his father.

Lex's men emerge from various hiding spots in the structure, encircling Superman like a pack of hungry wolves.

Lex looks down at the Man of Steel and shakes his head.
Pathetic. CRACK! He kicks Superman in the gut.

LEX (CONT'D)

Fly.

Lex kicks him again.

LEX (CONT'D)

COME ON! FLY!

Lex kicks again. Again. Again. Angrier and angrier.

LEX (CONT'D)

FLY!!!

STANFORD leans back and KICKS SUPERMAN ACROSS HIS FACE. CRACK! GRANT delivers a swift punch to his jaw. Superman lunges, struggling to fight back, but it's futile, and they proceed to beat him like a normal man.

LEX (CONT'D)

Can't go back home, and soon you won't be able to live here either. There's no place for you anymore, Superman.

Kitty flinches, covers her eyes. It's brutal.

CRACK! Superman is knocked against a wall. It shatters.

A SMALL PIECE OF CRYSTAL breaks off and slides to Lex's feet. He bends down and picks up the glistening shard. It's the size of a dagger, layered with GREEN VEINS OF KRYPTONITE.

Superman crawls to the edge of a steep cliff.

FROM OVERHEAD, we see the drop is steep, almost endless. Superman peers over the edge. He suddenly SCREAMS IN PAIN, ARCHING BACKWARDS, clawing at his back. His cry echoes through the canyon.

BEHIND SUPERMAN

Lex has stabbed the kryptonite shard deep into Superman's back. A strange pulse of green light flows into his body.

Lex steps back, watching Superman die at his feet.

Superman looks up at Lex, then at the cliff behind him. This is the moment. Then--

SUPERMAN LEAPS OFF THE EDGE.

EXT. NEW KRYPTON - CLIFFSIDE - CONTINUOUS

He tumbles head over heel, dropping hundreds of feet.

276 EXT. NEW KRYPTON -- VALLEY OF ELDERS 276

Lex stands at the edge of the cliff, staring down.

LEX

So long, Superman.

277 EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS 277

SPLASH! Superman plunges into the water, sinking deep. Tumbling and spinning, Superman opens his eyes, disoriented. Crystals are growing towards him from every direction. All GLOWING GREEN, tainted by Kryptonite. He tries to swim to the surface, but he's too weak. He's trapped.

ANGLE ON: the shard embedded in his back. He tries to reach it, but can't.

He opens his mouth in a silent scream. He's struggling to stay alive. A mesh of crystal walls are closing in around him, over him. It's like a tomb.

Suddenly -- VWOOSH -- from above, we hear the sound of something tearing across the surface of the water.

278 EXT. WATER SURFACE - SAME TIME 278

The sea plane slows to a stop.

279 INT. SEA PLANE - SAME TIME 279

Jason looks out the window, pointing down at the water.

JASON

There.

He turns to Lois. Beat.

LOIS

You're sure?

Jason nods. Certain. She throws open the door.

RICHARD

Lois, what are you doing?!

Lois leaps into the water.

280 EXT. UNDERWATER - SAME TIME 280

ONE LAST BUBBLE escapes from Superman's mouth. He stops moving. Lifeless. Sinking. Disappearing into the darkness.

CLOSE ON: SUPERMAN'S HAND, listlessly reaching upwards as if trying to grab hold of something. It slowly sinks, descending out of frame, his RED CAPE trailing behind. Suddenly--

ANOTHER HAND GRABS THE CAPE. Pulls tight. IT'S LOIS.

281 EXT. SEA PLANE - CONTINUOUS

281

The plane rests on the surface. Richard and Jason anxiously stare at the water. Beat. LOIS SURFACES, gasping for air. She has Superman wrapped in her arms.

282 EXT. NEW KRYPTON - CANYONS - MOMENTS LATER

282

The plane flies through a canyon, crystals growing around it.

283 INT. SEA PLANE - SAME TIME

283

Lois cradles Superman. She slaps him, trying to wake him up, His eyes are rolled back. He's dying.

LOIS

Wake up! Come on! Wake up!

She tries everything, but it's no use. Suddenly, she feels something in his back and looks down:

IT'S THE KRYPTONITE SHARD, still embedded into his back. Horrified, Lois grabs it and PULLS IT OUT. There is no blood -- it's less like a wound, more like a burn. Without hesitating, she opens the door and throws it from the plane.

284 OMITTED

284

*

285 INT. SEA PLANE - SAME TIME

285

*

Superman slowly starts to awaken, rambling..

SUPERMAN

Kryptonite... there's Kryptonite in the crystals.

LOIS

We have to get him away from here!

RICHARD

(annoyed smile)

I'm trying!

286 EXT. NEW KRYPTON - CANYONS

286

The plane veers around more columns closing in around them. They can only fly FORWARD, racing for a narrow escape passage ahead.

287 INT. SEA PLANE

287

Through the windshield, we see the passage becoming smaller and smaller, only seconds from being closed off.

RICHARD
SEATBELTS!

288 EXT. NEW KRYPTON - CANYONS

288

THE PLANE TURNS ON ITS SIDE to avoid a sharp row of growing crystals and flies out of the passage. It soars into the sky.

289 INT. SEA PLANE - MOMENTS LATER

289

Richard lets out a huge sigh. Jason smiles, loving every moment of it. Superman slowly regains his strength. He fully opens his eyes to see everyone staring.

SUPERMAN
How did you find me?

LOIS
You're hurt.

SUPERMAN
I'll be alright.
(to Richard)
You promised you wouldn't come back. You lied.

RICHARD
I'm not you. I can do that.
Superman OPENS THE DOOR. WIND pours into the plane.

SUPERMAN
I have to go back.

LOIS
No! You'll die if you go back!
They lock eyes. Longing. Uncertain. Frightened.

SUPERMAN
Goodbye, Lois.

And with that, Superman leans back, and VWOOSH-- he's gone.

290 EXT. SKIES OVER THE ATLANTIC - MOMENTS LATER

290

Superman flies high into the air, hovering just under the storm clouds, regaining more of his strength. The island seems to stretch for miles.

FROM OVERHEAD, he fully sees the extent of the damage. New Krypton is huge and still expanding. He looks straight down and DIVES, ROCKETING DOWNWARD...

291-292 OMITTED

291-292

293 EXT. UNDER THE OCEAN - MOMENTS LATER

293

...PLUNGING into the sea. He rockets through murky water, towards the structure's base. But as he gets closer, the green glow of kryptonite becomes more intense. The exposure is agonizing, but Superman continues on, towards the OCEAN FLOOR. BOOM! He continues, blasting into the ground.

294 EXT. OCEAN FLOOR - SAME TIME

294

CRACK! Massive RIFTS appear in the ground around the crystal structure. Geysers of bubbles and gas explode from the crevices as the ocean floor is literally SPLIT OPEN.

295 EXT. NEW KRYPTON - SAME TIME

295

Lex and his men feel the ground rumbling. He looks around to see the horizon moving... and realizes the entire land mass is rising into the air. ONE OF THE MONOLITHS starts to crack.

LEX

No....

KITTY

Lex, what's happening?!

THE MONOLITH cracks and tips over. Lex and the others scramble out of the way just as it CRASHES down onto the fortress. A second monolith wavers and CRACKS -- SMASHING directly onto the thugs. THEY'RE GONE.

LEX

Get to the helicopter! Now!

296 INT. LEX'S HELICOPTER - SAME TIME

296

In a panic, Lex starts the engine. The blades spin. He stares out the window and sees CRACKS AND FISSURES forming under the chopper, threatening to swallow them at any moment. Kitty feels the helicopter suddenly LURCH and DROP. Too late.

297 EXT. NEW KRYPTON - CANYON

297

The ground under the chopper crumbles away, and it disappears into the gaping chasm. Beat. VWROOOOM! A second later, the helicopter comes flying out, safely soaring into the sky.

298 INT. LEX'S HELICOPTER

Lex is staring out the window in a forlorn daze. Below, he watches in horror as New Krypton rises out of the water.

299 EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - SAME TIME

Huge waves ripple outward as the land mass rises higher. Its base finally breaks the surface, encased in a massive chunk of brown, rocky, earth. We track along this story "root", until we find SUPERMAN -- a mere speck under the massive structure, but managing to hold the entire thing aloft.

300 INT. SEA PLANE - SAME TIME

LOIS, RICHARD, and JASON watch from the plane, stunned.

301 EXT. UNDER NEW KRYPTON - SAME TIME

CLOSE ON: SUPERMAN, pushing it into the sky, summoning all of his strength. This is the hardest thing he's ever done.

WIDER

Water cascades. Giant chunks of earth start to break off, splashing into the ocean. As they do, something strange becomes visible -- the faint glow of KRYPTONITE.

More rocks fall away, revealing deeper layers of kryptonite. The glow becomes more intense, as bright as what Superman saw in the remains of Krypton.

CLOSE ON SUPERMAN. He cringes, crying out in agony, almost losing his grip, but he pushes higher into the storm clouds.

302 EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS

Despite the massive exposure to kryptonite, Superman lifts New Krypton through the clouds and into the upper atmosphere. The sound of wind and thunder give way to eerie silence.

303 EXT. SPACE - OVER EARTH - CONTINUOUS

MILES above Earth, Superman enters space, and with every last bit of strength left, he lets out a PRIMAL SCREAM and hurls New Krypton into space.

After a moment, Superman closes his eyes, and leans back. But instead of flying back to Earth, we realize that he's FALLING. Unconscious. Picking up speed, plummeting faster and faster. VWOOSH! The air around him ignites BRIGHT ORANGE.

304

EXT. METROPOLIS, STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

304

THE LIGHT illuminates the sky over the city. People point and stare, terrified. A GLOWING STREAK tears through the clouds.

305

EXT. METROPOLIS PARK - CONTINUOUS

305

...and CRASHES into a park. THE MASSIVE EXPLOSION knocks over trees, and sends debris hundreds of feet into the air.

306

OMITTED

306

307

EXT. METROPOLIS PARK - MOMENTS LATER

307

It's quiet. Smoke and steam rise from the scorched crater.

308

EXT. CRATER - MOMENTS LATER

308

FROM WITHIN THE CRATER, we look up at its edge. Through the smoke, we see A COP peering down. Another person joins him. Then another. Soon the entire edge is filled with people.

COP

Oh my God...

FROM ABOVE

We see the crater in its entirety, and laying in its center is SUPERMAN. Sprawled on his back. Uniform tattered. Body bruised. Not moving. More people gather, staring down at their fallen savior. A long, quiet beat before

DOUBLE DOORS BURST OPEN.

309

INT. METROPOLIS GENERAL - CORRIDOR - LATER

309

NURSES, DOCTORS, AND COPS frantically push a gurney. Like any man, Superman is rushed into a hospital.

NURSE

Pulse is weak.

DOCTOR

Get him to trauma!

310

INT. METROPOLIS GENERAL - TRAUMA ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

310

A nurse tries to insert an IV NEEDLE. It breaks. She's stunned. Another nurse yanks down Superman's shirt, revealing his chest.

DOCTOR

Shock at two-hundred!

THE DOCTOR places defibrillator paddles on Superman's chest.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Clear!

ZAP! THE PADDLES CRACKLE WITH ELECTRICITY. The doctor drops them. The defibrillator sparks and smokes, destroyed.

SMASH CUT TO:

SUPERMAN IS DEAD.

The Daily Planet headline fills the frame. Beneath it is Jimmy's photo of Superman holding up the Daily Planet globe.

INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY

But it's just a printed mock-up. Perry looks it over. In his other hand is ANOTHER MOCK-UP! It reads "SUPERMAN LIVES". Richard looks at the headline, uneasy...

RICHARD

It's kind of morbid, dad.

PERRY

(solemn)

One way or another, we have to be prepared.

THUNDER rumbles. Rain spatters against the window.

PERRY (CONT'D)

How is she?

INT. DAILY PLANET - BULLPEN - SAME TIME

Work crews are cleaning up debris. Other than TVs and phones, there's little noise. Jason sits in a chair across from Lois' desk. Her face is blank, emotionless. A DOCUMENT is open on her screen, but it's blank. She looks up, catches some of the staff staring. TVs are blaring:

TV #1

...still reeling from the shock of a geologic disturbance in the mid-Atlantic...

TV #2

...the world waits as Superman remains in critical condition at Metropolis General...

Lois closes her eyes, trying to shut out the noise and hold back tears. A HAND gently touches her arm. It's Jason. Lois smiles and tenderly hugs him.

LOIS
Hey, I want you to come with me for
a little while, okay?

JASON
Where are we going?

LOIS
To see a friend.

Perry walks out of his office.

PERRY
Gil, what's the story on that big
chunk of whatever-it-was Superman
pulled out of the ocean?

GIL
Well, NASA says it settled into
orbit somewhere between Mars and
Jupiter. Supposedly, it's laced
with kryptonite.

PERRY
But what are they calling it?

GIL
Planet Ten...?

PERRY
Well that's boring.
(spots Lois)

Lois, what do you think?

She's putting on her coat, in no mood for this.

LOIS
I don't know, Perry. Call it
Krypton.

Beat. Perry considers it.

PERRY
Krypton... Gil, run with it.

GIL
Is that Krypton with a C-R-I?

Richard sees Lois getting ready to leave.

RICHARD
Lois?

LOIS
I'm going to the hospital.

5011220050015
RS

JIMMY

I'd be careful down there, Miss Lane. It's a mad house.

RICHARD

I'll drive you.

Lois looks at Richard for a moment. Deep inside ~~this is~~ something she wants to do alone, then:

LOIS

Okay.

314 EXT. METROPOLIS GENERAL - DAY

314

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE surround the hospital, overflowing into the street. Despite the rain, they've gathered from all walks of life: fans, mourners, press, and cults of people DRESSED IN THE S. Candles have been lit. Prayers whispered. Cops try to keep things under control.

314A INT. CAR - SAME TIME

314A

Lois, Richard, and Jason stare out at the throngs of people. The hospital is just ahead, but they're not moving.

RICHARD

So much for parking.

LOIS

It's okay. I can walk.

JASON

I want to go with Mommy.

Beat. Lois looks to Richard. He nods. Richard can tell this isn't going to be easy for Lois, and hugs her tight.

RICHARD

(whispers)

We did everything we could.

A tear falls from her eye.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I'll be right here.

314B EXT. METROPOLIS GENERAL - MOMENTS LATER

314B

LOIS and JASON work their way through the crowd. People stare and whisper as they pass. Lois wonders if this was a bad idea. At the front door, she shows a cop her press badge.

COP

No press.

Lois turns away, when a SERGEANT notices her. He leans to the other cop and whispers something we don't hear.

SERGEANT

Miss Lane?

The cops wave her in, opening the doors for them.

LOIS (V.O.)

What's the latest on his condition?

315

INT. METROPOLIS GENERAL - CORRIDOR

315

Lois and Jason walk down a busy corridor with A DOCTOR. More people stare as she passes. She's quite the celebrity.

DOCTOR

Honestly, we have no idea. None of our equipment has had any effect on him. We can hear a heartbeat... but it's faint.

They enter a corridor lined with cops, and approach a door guarded by two officers. The doctor nods and the cops open the door. Lois pauses for a moment, uncertain.

316

INT. METROPOLIS GENERAL - SUPERMAN'S ROOM

316

They nervously step inside. She stares at the floor for a moment, then looks up and almost gasps when she sees SUPERMAN, laying in a hospital bed. Unconscious. Hooked up only to a heart monitor. Lois tries to hold it together.

LOIS

Could we have a minute, alone?

DOCTOR

Of course.

He leaves. The door closes. Rain echoes outside. Lois and Jason stand quietly across from the bed, staring at him.

JASON

Is he going to get better?

LOIS

I don't know.

JASON

I want him to. I like him.

LOIS

Me too.

She steps closer, trying to find words. It's not easy.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Can... can you hear me? They say
sometimes when people are in...
Nevermind.

No answer. Just the beep of the heart monitor. Eyes brimming
with tears, Lois finally approaches his bedside.

LOIS (CONT'D)

There's something... something I
need to tell you.

She looks back at Jason, then reaches up and draws the
curtain around the bed, blocking his view.

VIA SILHOUETTE, Jason watches as Lois bends down and WHISPERS
something into Superman's ear that we cannot hear.

PUSH IN ON: Jason, watching his mother divulge the biggest
secret of their lives. He doesn't know what she's saying, but
knows it is important.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CURTAIN

Lois finishes whispering. Leans closer. Closer. Shuts her
eyes and kisses him. It's tender. Everything she remembered.

She pulls away, tears streaming. She looks at the heart
monitor, maybe hoping the kiss would bring him back. But
there's no change. No magic awakening. Overwhelmed, Lois
wipes away her tears and stands up. She opens the curtains,
then gently takes Jason's hand.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Come on, honey.

They start for the door, when Jason breaks free, toddles back
to the bed, and kisses Superman on the forehead. Lois' heart
breaks. Jason runs back, and they walk out the door.

317

EXT. METROPOLIS GENERAL - MOMENTS LATER

317

Lois and Jason walk out of the hospital and look over the sea
of people-- all staring at HER. FLASH! A camera snaps their
photo. MICROPHONES are shoved in her face. Reporters swarm.

REPORTER #1

Miss Lane, what did he look like?

REPORTER #2

Did he say anything? Is he going to
make it?

A HAND GRABS LOIS' ARM. Lois looks down, and surprisingly
comes face to face with:

MARTHA KENT

Don't worry. He'll be okay.

Beat. Lois gazes at Martha -- who is this woman? Before Lois can answer:

COP

This way, Miss Lane.

The cop guides her away. As they leave, Martha looks down at Jason. He smiles. Through the crowd, Lois spots RICHARD at the curb. She and Jason make their way towards him.

318

EXT. TROPICAL ISLAND - SUNSET

318

Waves wash over TWO PEDICURED FEET standing on a beach. They belong to KITTY KOWALSKI. She stares out at the ocean. It's almost peaceful. Almost. A FURIOUS SHRIEK pierces the calm. It's Lex, angrily hurling a coconut into the water.

KITTY

Lex, we only have six of those.

LEX

Six? SIX?! I'd trade three hundred thousand coconuts and every drop of your blood for ONE QUART-- OF GASOLINE!

RACK FOCUS to the helicopter on the beach. It's not be much, but Lex finally has his island. A bird walks by with one of Lex's toupees in its beak. Kitty rolls her eyes, looks down at her feet. The water is now up to her knees.

KITTY

Lex?

LEX

What, Kitty?

Lex turns, sees a worried look on her face.

KITTY

I think the tide's coming in.

Lex closes his eyes, simmers with rage. Can it get any worse?

319

INT. METROPOLIS HOSPITAL, CORRIDOR - THAT NIGHT

319

A NURSE doing her rounds walks down the guarded hallway. She approaches the door to Superman's room. A cop opens it.

320 INT. METROPOLIS HOSPITAL, SUPERMAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 320

The nurse enters, glancing over a chart. She approaches Superman's bed, finally looks up, and freezes in her tracks. The bed is empty. THE MAN OF STEEL IS GONE. The nurse feels a breeze, and looks over to find an OPEN WINDOW.

321 INT. LOIS LANE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 321

A BEDSIDE CLOCK reads 3AM. Richard sleeps soundly, but the other side of the bed is empty.

322 INT. LOIS LANE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME TIME 322

Lois types on her laptop. Only the title can be seen:

"WHY THE WORLD NEEDS SUPERMAN, by Lois Lane"

Overcome, Lois stops. She stares at A FRAMED PHOTO of her with Richard and Jason. Beat. Frustrated, she gets up.

323 EXT. LOIS LANE'S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - MOMENTS LATER 323

Lois leans against the railing. She puts a cigarette to her lips, flicks the lighter -- but the flame dies. She looks around, puzzled. Nothing. She's alone. She flicks the lighter again and the flame holds, but she stops -- thinks twice. Beat. She drops the cigarette, stomps it out, then hears a faint noise upstairs, and looks up at Jason's window...

324 INT. LOIS LANE'S HOUSE - JASON'S ROOM - NIGHT 324

JASON sleeps quietly in his room. There is a soft breeze, and we can barely make out A FIGURE standing in the shadows. It's almost ominous, until the figure steps into the moonlight:

Superman. Healed. Standing tall. He looks down at Jason for a long moment, maybe thinking about what to say. Then, he quietly approaches and kneels by the bed, watching the boy sleeping soundly. Finally, the words come to him:

SUPERMAN:

You will be different. You will sometimes feel like an outcast. But you will not be alone. You will never be alone.

They're the same words his father once said to him, long ago.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

You will make my strength your own, see my life through your eyes, as your life will be seen through mine. The son becomes the father, and the father... becomes the son.

Beat. Superman gently touches Jason's head, and the boy starts to waken. His eyes flutter open, and he looks up.

Superman is gone. Jason sits up and turns to the window, but only finds curtains blowing in the wind.

325

EXT. LOIS LANE'S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - SAME TIME

325

Lois stands on the porch, teary-eyed. She hears something and looks up to see JASON standing in the window. They make eye contact, and Lois turns around to see SUPERMAN, hovering in the sky, moving away from the house.

They stare at each other. In a moment, so much is said without saying a word. Then, Superman turns and disappears into the clouds.

326

EXT. SPACE - DAWN

326

In the tradition of films past, Superman flies into the heavens. He smiles at us, then turns and soars toward the sunrise. A magnificent dawn breaks, casting a warm glow over the planet.

Our greatest protector is finally home.

THE END

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