

OVER BLACK

The VOICE OF LESLIE WILLIS fills the air. It's the voice of a tough-talking smart-ass.

LESLIE (V.O.)

Superman. The name alone is enough to make my skin crawl. I mean, who calls themselves "Super-Man"? I won't even go into the tights and the cape. That's a whole other podcast, my friends. Seriously though, can we say "egomaniac?" The guy flies around the city, throwing cars around like they're paper plates. Causing God knows how much damage in your average month. He's a menace. He's the curse of Metropolis. He's a pimple on the face of an otherwise kinda decent city.

(beat)

"Look, up in the sky! Oh my God! Is that Superman?" No! It's my insurance rates going up. It's taxes shooting into the beautiful smoggy sky like a rocket-ship. Oh, and that weird feeling under your feet? Those would be our property values. Yeah. Thanks a whole lot, Soopa-freak. Thank you.

(beat)

And you know what the kicker is? You know the real beauty of this whole story? The guy is considered a hero. There are parades honoring the man who throws cars into buildings! Next thing you know, we'll be building statues, and saluting the new flag of Metropolis. You know, the one with the picture of Superman on it.

(beat)

I like his hair though. He's got great hair. I can just see him waking up in the morning. Whipping out the curling iron for that one little curl in the front. Slicking on enough grease to lubricate the better part of Kahndaq for a month or two.

(beat)

He does have really great hair.

(MORE)

LESLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Sometimes, I just wanna scalp him
and wear it like a wig...

MUSIC AND OPENING CREDITS:

FADE IN:

EXT. CENTENNIAL PARK - DAY

A LARGE CROWD is gathered in the park. Balloons and banners reading "Run For Justice" fill the park as MARATHON RUNNERS prepare to start their run.

JIMMY OLSEN works his way through the crowd, snapping pictures of the entire scene. As he walks, he comes across MAYOR SACKETT, who is talking with a couple of the runners and shaking their hands. He snaps a picture.

A hand taps Jimmy on the shoulder. He turns and finds CLARK KENT standing behind him

JIMMY
Hey, Clark.

CLARK
Get any good pictures yet?

JIMMY
Mostly a bunch of guys in running shorts.

Clark smiles.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
If you're asking if I've seen any sign of you-know-who... no. But when he shows up, I'll bet you anything that he'll stop and let me take a picture. We're tight, y'know? You fall out of a high rise building enough times and you learn to make friends with the guy who keeps on catching you.

CLARK
I can see how that might happen. Just keep an eye out. I'm going to circle the crowd a few more times. There has to be something news-worthy around here, right?

JIMMY
Guess so.

Clark walks off, disappearing into the crowd. Jimmy continues to snap pictures.

Moments pass. Jimmy is starting to get bored with this. He snaps a picture of a nearby hot dog cart, then pauses to look at it with his own eyes.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

And that's lunch, everybody. Good work.

He starts to walk toward the cart, but before he can make it, a shadow crosses the grass in front of him. Jimmy stops walking and slowly turns around, looking upward as he turns.

As his eyes focus on the sky, Jimmy smiles.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Here we go.

Jimmy grabs his camera and begins snapping pictures of the sky as the crowd begins to cheer and make comments like "It's him!" and "He's here!"

SUPERMAN flies over the crowd as they cheer him on. He finally lands not far from Jimmy.

SUPERMAN

Hey, Jimmy.

Jimmy lowers his camera and looks at Superman. He's shocked.

Superman walks past Jimmy, toward the Mayor.

JIMMY

He knows my name.
(beat)
Awesome.

Jimmy then remembers his camera and tries to get a picture of Superman. All he manages to capture is Superman's back.

Superman and Mayor Sackett make their way to the starting line, with the finish line right behind them. As they reach it, Mayor Sackett turns on a microphone and begins to speak.

MAYOR SACKETT

Hello, Metropolis!

The crowd cheers.

MAYOR SACKETT (CONT'D)

Hello, America!
(beat)
(MORE)

MAYOR SACKETT (CONT'D)

Today, we come together, not as a city, but as a people. We come together to celebrate the brave men and women of law enforcement, and the sacrifices made so that the people of this great country can sleep at night. We are joined by such police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and military officers from all over this great nation. From here in Metropolis, to Central City. From Gotham to Gateway and a dozen others, we're here today not just to celebrate those men and women, but to remember those fallen in the line of duty. To help their families overcome the monetary burdens that come from the loss of a parent and the emotional trauma associated with the loss of a mother, a father, husband or wife, son or daughter... We're here to give back to those who put their lives on the line for all of us.

(beat)

Joining me today is an icon of heroism. Battling the most terrible evils of this world and showing us all that humanity is something born from within. Ladies and gentlemen, Superman!

The crowd once again roars as the Mayor hands Superman the microphone.

SUPERMAN

Thank you for your cheers, but that's not why I'm here. I'm not the hero that we're celebrating. We're here to celebrate those heroes without special powers. Without heat vision, or super strength. Those who can be shot at and killed with a single bullet and yet choose to put their lives on the line in spite of that fact. Not because they have been given an edge in the battle, but because they believe in doing what is right. These are the truest of heroes. The people that we should all aspire to be.

(MORE)

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

Please don't cheer for me when they're standing here today. I don't deserve it nearly as much as they do.

The crowd cheers as Superman hands the microphone back to the Mayor.

MAYOR SACKETT

And in that spirit, we want to kick off this run. It's not a race. It's not about who finishes first. This run is about crossing another finish line. The line that brings funds to those in need, and support to those who deserve. That is the point that we have asked Superman to illustrate for us today. To show that this isn't a competition, I have asked Superman to cross the finish line first. So that all who follow do so in the spirit of the event.

(turns to Superman)
Ready to kick this off?

SUPERMAN

Whenever you are.

The Mayor turns to the crowd, raising an air horn. He smiles to the crowd.

MAYOR SACKETT

On your mark. Get set. Go!

As Mayor Sackett sounds the horn, Superman supersedes past the starting line and down the street.

The crowd roars wildly.

Before Mayor Sackett can even lower the horn, Superman crosses the finish line and resumes his place next to the Mayor.

Mayor Sackett looks at Superman in awe.

MAYOR SACKETT (CONT'D)

Wow.

Superman takes the microphone and turns toward the runners.

SUPERMAN

Good luck.

The runners begin their journey.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY

As the runners begin running, he snaps pictures. He turns to take a picture of Superman with the Mayor, but Superman has already left. He shrugs and takes a shot of the Mayor.

From the crowd behind Jimmy, Clark emerges. He straightens his tie and taps Jimmy on the shoulder. Jimmy jumps ever so slightly, but relaxes once he sees Clark.

CLARK

You okay, Jimmy?

JIMMY

Yeah. You just caught be off guard.

(beat)

So, did you see him? Did you see Superman?

CLARK

Hard to miss him.

JIMMY

How awesome was it for him to show up?

CLARK

It's okay, I guess. The whole "crossing the finish line first" thing was a little silly.

JIMMY

But really cool.

CLARK

Mostly just silly. Why not whip out a magician's hat and pull a bunny out of it?

JIMMY

Huh?

CLARK

It was a cheap trick.

JIMMY

Oh.

(beat)

Lois would have liked it. I think she gets Superman more than you do.

CLARK
Maybe, but Lois is too busy being a
big TV star.

JIMMY
Jealous?

CLARK
Believe me when I say that the last
thing I want is to be on an
internationally broadcast cable
news show.

JIMMY
You sound jealous.

CLARK
I'm not jealous.

JIMMY
Don't worry. It's just a one time
thing. You're a good reporter too.

Jimmy puts a hand on Clark's shoulder to comfort him. Clark
starts to walk away.

CLARK
Thanks, Jimmy.

INT. GBS BUILDING - ON THE CLOCK SET - DAY

LOIS LANE is sitting at one end of a news desk. In the center
of the desk is BRIAN LARSON, the host of "On The Clock".
Finally, at the other end of the table is LEX LUTHOR.

BRIAN
(into the camera)
Hero, or threat to humanity? It's a
debate that's been raging on since
Superman appeared in Metropolis
nearly two years ago. Today, I'm
joined by outspoken Superman
opponent, Lex Luthor and Daily
Planet columnist Lois Lane who has
conducted several interviews with
the Man Of Steel. I welcome both of
you to the show.

LOIS
Thank you, Brian.

LEX
Thank you.

BRIAN

Now, let's dig right into the heart of this matter, shall we? Mr. Luthor, you've stated several times that you're no fan of Superman. Could you explain why?

LEX

Sure, Brian. First, I'd like to comment on what you said in your introduction of me. You said that I am an opponent of Superman. I wouldn't really state it in those terms.

BRIAN

Didn't you once state...
(looking at a sheet of
paper on the desk)
"Superman poses the greatest threat that humanity has ever faced..."

LEX

I did say that. However, what I meant by those words was simply that Superman is not of this world. In fact, he has been unwilling to specify exactly where he comes from or why he has come to Earth.

LOIS

That's because he doesn't know where he comes from. He's made it pretty clear that he has no memory of his homeworld.

LEX

That may very well be true, Ms. Lane, but isn't it also possible that he is simply avoiding the question?

LOIS

No.

LEX

Why do you say that?

LOIS

(looking Luthor in the
eyes)
Because I am a very good judge of character.

BRIAN

We'll get back to that in just a moment, Ms. Lane. First, I'd like to hear what Mr. Luthor has to say.

LEX

Sure. What I mean to say is that Superman possesses great powers and abilities that make him invulnerable to nearly every manner of defense available to us. I don't think that it is unfair to question the motivations of such a creature.

Lois holds back responding to that "creature" remark.

BRIAN

From what we've seen so far, Superman has done nothing but good.

LEX

Perhaps. However, he has also endangered the lives of countless civilians during his reckless street fights.

BRIAN

(to Lois)

Would you care to respond to these comments?

LOIS

Damn right, I would. For starters, why don't we talk about these "street fights", as Lex calls them. The first that comes to mind being the fight between Superman and Metallo.

BRIAN

Also known as John Corben.

LOIS

A criminal who died shortly before being turned into Metallo. He was also an incredibly strong "creature", as some like to classify them. It was Metallo who instigated these fights, and he only did so because some "unnamed company" decided to play God and put a criminal's mind into an artificial body. How can you possibly blame Superman for this?

LEX

Who am I supposed to blame when cars are thrown around like childrens' toys?

LOIS

How about the criminals, and the "creatures" that they create in their laboratories?

LEX

Creatures that somehow didn't exist until nearly the exact same time that Superman first appeared.

LOIS

And thank God he did. Otherwise we'd all be bowing down before some shiny-headed dictator right now.

LEX

The fact of the matter is that this city has endured a great deal of destruction in the wake of Superman's arrival. This destruction has been incidental. Merely the result of his battles with his foes. If Superman were to someday decide that he wanted to cause real destruction, what would stop him? If he chose to take control of this city, how would we fight back?

LOIS

Superman has proven himself to us time and time again. If anything, he doesn't take the credit that he should for the job he does here. He is a hero to humanity. For you to belittle that or attempt to make him out to be the next Hitler is just a sign of how small you really are.

LEX

I see no need for personal attacks.

LOIS

That's what this whole discussion is about. Unless you are suggesting that Superman's not a person.

BRIAN

But isn't it fair to question that much power being held by one person? In a society based on the will of the people rather than any one person, isn't it fair to assess the risks of someone holding such power?

LOIS

Superman didn't choose to be who he is.

LEX

He did choose to use his abilities, however. He chose to impose his will--

LOIS

The law. Not his will. There is a difference.

LEX

Is Superman a police officer? A homeland security agent? Does he have any real right to act as he has been?

LOIS

Not only the right, but the responsibility. A person has a responsibility to act when he sees someone in danger, or a crime being committed. We live in a society where a woman can be attacked and brutally beaten as a crowd of people stand by and watch. People ignore the screams of those in need and our entire society suffers because of it. I think it's disgusting that you would criticize someone for doing the things that Superman has done for all of us. If it weren't for him, literally hundreds or thousands of people would be dead today. Myself included.

LEX

I am not questioning the fact that Superman has done some good for this world, Ms. Lane.

(MORE)

LEX (CONT'D)

I'm just trying to make sure that we don't get too comfortable, relying on Superman to take care of us. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

LOIS

Some people, maybe. Until Superman does grow a Hitler-stache though, I'm okay with the idea of him saving us from killer robot men and crazy guys who want to destroy the planet with a giant death ray.

BRIAN

Both interesting arguments. Why don't we take a look at the damage done to the city since the arrival of Superman. The cost of reconstruction after the recent Rudy Jones "Parasite" incident was through the roof and a large part of those repairs will come out of the pockets of our tax payers.

LEX

My point exactly. Superman is simply not trained in the proper method of handling these criminals. He lacks the restraint of a true law enforcement officer.

LOIS

So, you're telling me that if Superman went to the police academy, they'd teach him how to deal with someone like Rudy Jones? Without Superman, it would take an army to take down someone like him, and the damage would be a lot worse than it is now. You can't blame Superman for the crimes of those he fights.

BRIAN

News footage clearly shows Superman throwing cars, hot dog carts, benches, and at one point even a statue of Lex Luthor. These objects hit buildings, vehicles, streets, sidewalks... The list goes on.

LOIS

Can you tell me how you'd have handled the situation?

BRIAN

I'm not claiming to be--

LOIS

You're suggesting that Superman was responsible for extreme damage to the city. You're implying that he's a menace rather than a hero.

BRIAN

That wasn't my intention.

LEX

I think Ms. Lane is avoiding the subject at hand. The fact is that Superman shows little regard for the city which he claims to protect.

LOIS

I'm not avoiding anything. I'm asking you to tell me how you'd handle these situations. We're not talking about petty thugs and bail jumpers here. We're talking about extreme cases where violence resulted from people with strength and abilities beyond those of normal man. So, if you were to take Superman out of the picture, how would you suggest we deal with these situations?

LEX

It is our responsibility to figure out an answer to that question. One which doesn't rely on any one person, much less a being from another world whose motivations could be as alien to us as his genetic makeup.

LOIS

He was raised on Earth.

LEX

So he says.

LOIS

He hasn't done anything to make us doubt him.

BRIAN

Intriguing arguments, both. As we end this discussion, do either of you care to voice any final thoughts?

LOIS

Superman has done nothing but good for this world, alien or not. Leave it to humanity to persecute a man for being genuinely good.

BRIAN

Lex?

LEX

I agree that Superman deserves many thanks for the work that he has done, but we must be careful in this situation. We mustn't allow this man to become the voice of justice for our entire society. We must be careful not to allow our city to be overrun by the brutal vigilantism that has come to plague some of our country's other cities, such as Gotham and Star City.

BRIAN

Those comments should keep us thinking until the next time we have the opportunity to talk.

(turns to the camera)

I'd like to thank both of our guests. Lex Luthor, founder and CEO of LexCorp. Author of the book "The Road To A Better Tomorrow". Thank you very much for being here.

LEX

Thank you for having me.

BRIAN

And the ever lovely Ms. Lois Lane, reporter for the Daily Planet.

LOIS

Thank you.

BRIAN

Coming up after the break: Are our children growing up too fast? From sex on the playground to school shootings, we'll discuss the changing face of childhood in today's culture. Stay tuned. We're "On The Clock."

EXT. CENTENNIAL PARK - DAY

Clark is sitting on a bench next to a woman, BARBARA SMITH. She's a younger woman, holding a BABY in her arms.

Barbara is watching a swarm of reporters who surround the mayor.

BARBARA

Shouldn't you be talking to the mayor, or someone important?

CLARK

I am talking to somebody important. This isn't supposed to be about politics. I don't need to hear what the plans are for his next term. I want to talk about why we're here today.

Barbara looks down at her baby.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Tell me about your husband.

BARBARA

What do you want to know?

CLARK

Why don't you start by telling me how you met?

BARBARA

It was... Well, I guess it was technically our freshman year of college.

CLARK

Technically?

BARBARA

We were in the same dorm, but we didn't really talk or go out.

(MORE)

BARBARA (CONT'D)

We'd see each other in the hall, or at a party. Smile. Say hello. I didn't even really notice him.

CLARK

When did you first notice him?

BARBARA

He noticed me. About a year and a half later, we ran into each other at the library. Turned out, we had a class together. He told me that he missed a day of class, so he wanted to borrow my notes.

(beat)

I found out later, he never missed a class. He just wanted a reason to see me again. We used to talk after class. Get a cup of coffee. Compare thoughts. Eventually, we started talking about other things. Movies. Music. Religion. Politics.

Clark winces.

CLARK

Dangerous topics.

BARBARA

Normally.

(beat)

Not for us. We just clicked. Everything fit. From there, it was downhill. We got married three years later.

CLARK

When did he decide to become a police officer?

BARBARA

About a year after we started dating. His brother was attacked and murdered outside of his apartment. Dennis decided that he couldn't just sit by and let it happen to someone else. He felt this duty to do something about it. To change things.

CLARK

That must have been scary.

BARBARA
For me, or for him?

CLARK
Both.

BARBARA
It was, I guess. The thing is
though, no matter how scared I got,
I was always more proud. I admired
him.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Clark and Jimmy walk out of the elevator, headed for Clark's desk.

JIMMY
Shouldn't we have waited? Y'know...
until the marathon was over?

CLARK
Perry wants the story ready for the
website within the hour.

JIMMY
But we don't know who wins.

CLARK
You heard the Mayor, Jimmy. It's
not a race.
(checks watch)
Besides, we have a while before
anyone finishes. Just enough time
to get ready for the after party.
We'll swing by on the way and catch
the finish.

JIMMY
I guess.

As they walk, they see PERRY WHITE and a GROUP OF REPORTERS huddled around a wall-mounted TV screen. They're watching Lois' sparring session with Lex.

Clark and Jimmy stop to watch with the others.

CLARK
How's she doing?

FEMALE REPORTER
Lois is kicking Luthor's ass.

CLARK
Did we ever doubt her?

PERRY
(eyes on the screen)
You have that story ready for me,
Kent?

CLARK
Not yet, sir. We just got back.

PERRY
Then you shouldn't be watching TV,
now should you?

CLARK
No, sir. I'll be at my desk if you
need me.

The others continue to watch the TV.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Clark is now at his desk, staring at his computer monitor. He is, however, not working on his article. Instead, he is watching Lois' appearance on GBS' website.

He watches with great intensity as the debate goes back and forth.

INT. GBS BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Lois is walking through the hallway, toward the elevators. As she walks, she talks on her cell phone.

LOIS
Thank you, sir. I'll see you back
at the office.

She ends the call and slips her cell phone into her pocket.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
You always did know how to stand
your ground.

Lois stops in her tracks and turns around. She finds herself standing face to face with GENERAL SAM LANE, in uniform.

LOIS
Dad. What are you doing here?

GENERAL LANE

I'm giving an interview in about an hour.

LOIS

I didn't know you were in town.

GENERAL LANE

It was a last minute invitation. I was going to call--

LOIS

--But you're a busy man. I know.

(beat)

Well, don't let me hold you up.

GENERAL LANE

I was going to call you later. After I got out of here.

LOIS

Oh.

There's an awkward silence.

GENERAL LANE

I saw you on that show earlier.

Lois is a little surprised by this. She almost expects him to be proud of her.

LOIS

You did? What did you think?

GENERAL LANE

I think you're a little naive when it comes to this Superman guy.

She deflates.

LOIS

Why is it that I'm always surprised when you do this?

GENERAL LANE

I didn't do anything.

LOIS

Yes, you did. You did the same thing that you always do, which is find something negative to say about me.

GENERAL LANE
Would you rather I lie?

LOIS
I'd rather you didn't have to.
(beat)
I need to go.

Lois starts to walk away, but General Lane grabs her arm to stop her.

GENERAL LANE
Lois...

She stops and turns around. She looks him squarely in the eyes.

LOIS
You should get ready for your
interview, General.

Lois continues toward the elevator. General Lane watches her for a moment and then turns to walk away.

As Lois reaches the elevator and presses the "down" button, she turns in the direction of her father. When she does, she is just in time to see General Lane shake hands with Lex Luthor. The men are talking politely as Lex's assistant, MERCY GRAVES stands nearby.

Lois shakes her head and turns back to the elevator.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Unbelievable.

She continues to wait for the elevator. Eventually, Lex and Mercy join her.

LEX
Your father is quite an
accomplished man, Ms. Lane.

LOIS
Yes, he is.

Mercy steps in front of Lois to press the "down" button. She and Lois share intimidating looks as Mercy moves back to Lex's side.

LEX
Tell me, what does your father
think of the Superman situation?

LOIS
 Why do you care what my father
 thinks?

LEX
 He's a respected military mind.

Lois turns to glare at Lex.

LOIS
 My father has nothing but respect
 for the men and women who protect
 this country.

Lex grins.

LEX
 I imagine he does.

The elevator doors open.

LEX (CONT'D)
 After you, Ms. Lane.

Lois steps into the elevator, with Lex close behind her.
 Mercy is the last to enter, pressing the button for the
 garage.

MERCY
 (to Lois)
 Which floor?

Lois leans past Mercy and presses the button for the ground
 floor. Mercy steps back, resuming her position by Lex's side.

INT. LEX'S CAR - BACKSEAT - DAY

Lex and Mercy get into the backseat. The car begins to drive
 just after they close the door. For a moment, Lex is silent.

MERCY
 I thought that went well.

LEX
 Well? I looked like I was more
 concerned with the bottom line than
 with human lives. Exactly how would
 you interpret that as "well"?

MERCY
 Since when are you so critical of
 yourself, Lex?

LEX

This is a very important time for me. How I come across to the public is critical.

MERCY

You did fine.

Lex doesn't respond.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Clark is sitting at his desk. There is a takeout container open in front of him, with a sandwich and some chips inside.

Clark is busy typing, leaving his sandwich vulnerable. Lois takes advantage of this as she walks past, grabbing half of the sandwich and settling into the chair at her own desk.

She rolls a little closer to Clark.

LOIS

Did you see me on TV?

CLARK

I was in the field, so I only saw part. You looked good though.

Clark realizes what he just said and stops typing. He looks to Lois.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Sounded good, I mean. What you were saying was... good.

Lois smiles.

LOIS

Nice cover, Smallville.

Lois takes a bite of the sandwich.

LOIS (CONT'D)

You know who else saw it? The General.

CLARK

Your father?

LOIS

That's the one. And you want a real shocker? He was once again disappointed in his little girl.

CLARK
That's... I'm sorry.

LOIS
It's nothing new. I'm used to it by now.

Something about that last line doesn't ring entirely true. Clark doesn't press the subject though.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Then, to cap it all off, I see him shaking hands with Lex Luthor in the hallway.

CLARK
Maybe he was just being polite.

LOIS
They looked like golfing buddies, bonding over their mutual distrust of Superman.

CLARK
Your father's not a fan?

LOIS
Just about the only member of America's military who doesn't like the guy. I swear it's just because of my friendship with Superman.

CLARK
I doubt your father tries to work against you.

LOIS
You don't know the General.

Lois notices a fancy invitation on Clark's desk for a fundraiser following the marathon. She picks it up and looks it over.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Yup, my dad can stress me out like nobody else. If only I had some way of unwinding. Some way that involved an open bar.
(beat)
So, do you have a date for this thing?

CLARK
Only if you count Jimmy.

Lois leans across Clark's desk and gives him a coy smile.

LOIS
Some say I take a pretty good
picture, m'self.

CLARK
You have some mustard on your chin.

Clark hands Lois a napkin. She wipes her chin.

CLARK (CONT'D)
You really want to go?

LOIS
Beats sitting around, watching
myself on Tivo all night.
(beat)
What do you say, Clark? Can I be
your date?

Clark swallows hard.

CLARK
Sur-- um-- Sure. Yeah.
(beat)
I mean, if you want to.

Lois sits back and takes another bite of food.

LOIS
Cool. Pick me up at eight. My dress
is blue, so don't wear anything
clashy. I know how much you love
your primary colors, but I swear,
if you show up in a red cummerbund,
I will kill you.
(beat)
Oh, and if you must get me a
corsage, I prefer white.

CLARK
Right.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK

LESLIE (V.O.)
Welcome, ladies and gents, to the
Heroes of America annual marathon.
This year, hosted by my dear home
city of Metropolis.
(MORE)

LESLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Can I get a woop-woop?

(beat)

Now, in honor of all the brave men and women who put their lives on the line for us every day, let us call upon the dude who doesn't even know what it's like to have a paper cut. The man of steel. The guy who can give a nuke a big ol' hug as it goes boom, and live to tell the tale. That's right, folks. Today's honored guest is none other than Superman! Insert pre-recorded cheers here.

(beat)

Does anyone really think that this is the guy who should be standing up before these brave men and women, their families... their children, and give a big speech about how brave they are? What does Superman know about brave? What does he know about pain or sacrifice? What does he know about being human?

(sarcastically)

Oh. I forgot. There was that guy who managed to give Superman a boo-boo that one time. I totally see how it all fits together now. My bad.

(beat)

Right now, I'm standing in Centennial Park. The starting line of the marathon. The finish line of the marathon. The place that was abandoned by the masses about six seconds after the runners started on their truly honorable mission today. These runners are men and women who serve our country. People who deserve to be honored and remembered. Everyone cheered as Superman became the first man to cross the finish line this morning, but the place is now completely empty, unless you count myself and a homeless guy who's eating leftover nachos from a container someone left on a nearby bench. Remind me to give that guy five bucks.

(beat)

But why am I still here?

(MORE)

LESLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Why am I not getting ready for the fancy-ass party tonight? Well, besides the fact that my invitation was somehow lost in the mail, I'm here because the last runner has yet to cross the finish line. He's just now running up the street. The last man in a long line of good people who put in this valiant effort today. Okay, so he's not exactly speedy. Does that make his role in today's marathon any less admirable? Let's ask him.

(beat)

Congratulations, sir! You made it across the finish line. Any words for my listeners out there in podcast-land?

MALE RUNNER (V.O.)

Just that I'm happy to be here today, running for a worthy cause.

LESLIE (V.O.)

I'm sure you are. Now tell me, how does it feel to know that Superman stole your thunder about ten hours ago?

MALE RUNNER (V.O.)

I don't think it's about who finishes first. It's about honoring the heroes of our country.

LESLIE (V.O.)

You sound like a nice guy. It's a shame that nobody will care about your effort today. When the papers come out, the headline will be all about Superman. Mark my words.

MALE RUNNER (V.O.)

Superman is as much a hero to this country as any of us.

LESLIE (V.O.)

You're very charitable. So where are you from, friend? What's your name?

MALE RUNNER (V.O.)

My name's Barry. I work for the Central City forensics department.

LESLIE (V.O.)

Well, thank you for talking with us, Bar. We still love you, even if you are a little slow.

INT. LESLIE'S LOFT - NIGHT

Leslie's loft is one large room with a kitchen section to one side and a sleeping area toward the back. Near the living room area of the loft is a desk, with an impressive computer setup on it. The walls are bare brick, and the large windows give a beautiful view of the wall of a building next door.

LESLIE WILLIS walks through the door, struggling to pull the key out of the deadbolt as she enters.

Leslie is a small woman in her early late 20's or early 30's with a sleek geek-chic look working for her. Her hair is black with streaks of blue, but is styled in a way that makes the look almost professional.

Finally pulling her key free of the lock, Leslie closes the door and makes her way into the room. She leans down to turn on a table lamp. As she touches the lamp's switch, a static shock catches her off guard.

LESLIE

Ouch!

She turns on the lamp and sticks her finger in her mouth to dull the pain of the shock.

She walks to her desk and pulls an audio recorder from her pocket she sets it down, removes her jacket and sits down, turning on her computer monitor. As her monitor comes to life, Leslie plugs her audio recorder into the computer. She also brings a microphone closer to her.

She opens an audio editing program, and clicks the record button, leaning closer to the mic.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

That concludes my marathon coverage, and this week's podcast. I hope you found it as thrilling as I did. Over the next week I'll be scouring the papers for stories that don't involve a man in blue tights. Will I find one?

(beat)

I doubt it.

(MORE)

LESLIE (CONT'D)

That's why I'm also working up a story on the inherent sexism in the Superman madness that has swept our world. Would we be falling all over ourselves if this were a woman? Is it possible for a female to gain this level of adoration, or would we be demanding more revealing costumes and a spread in Maxim?

(beat)

This week, I'll also be meeting with some people about a new job that I can't really talk about yet, but it'd be a big step up for me, so wish me luck. Hopefully I'll be able to spill some beans about that next week. Until then, kiddies, keep your eye on the skies and watch out for presents from the birds that fly overhead. I know I will.

Leslie clicks another button and the recording stops. She leans back in her chair.

INT. METROGRAND HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

The ballroom is an extremely high class ballroom, at the moment filled with 1940's style decorations. A BIG BAND is at the back of the room, playing some WWII-era music.

Fitting the theme, all of the GUESTS are dressed as though they are from the 40's. This includes Clark and Lois who make their way into the ballroom and take a look around.

LOIS

Swanky.

(beat)

You do know how to jitterbug, don't you, Kent?

Clark looks to Lois, troubled.

CLARK

I... You mean...?

LOIS

Relax. I was joking. I could use a drink though. Shall we?

Clark and Lois make their way into the room, walking toward the bar. As they walk, they notice several couples swing dancing in the center of the room.

LOIS (CONT'D)

There was a time when I wanted to learn how to do that.

CLARK

What happened?

LOIS

Took one dance class and still couldn't do it. Turns out I'm not very patient.

CLARK

You don't say.

They reach the bar.

BAR TENDER

What can I get you folks?

LOIS

I don't know. What was good back in the 40's?

BAR TENDER

Martinis seem popular tonight.

LOIS

We'll take two of those then.

As the bar tender gets to work, a flash bulb pops. Clark and Lois turn around and find Jimmy standing behind them, holding an old fashioned camera. He's wearing a less than dressy suit with a bow-tie and a camera bag over his shoulder.

CLARK

Jimmy. Nice camera.

JIMMY

It was my Grandpa's. Cool, right?

CLARK

You think Perry will think so?

JIMMY

That's why I have a digital camera hidden in my bag.

Jimmy removes the used flash bulb and digs a replacement from his bag.

LOIS

You know that this is black tie, right?

JIMMY

Umm... yeah. Right. I couldn't really get one of those in time. But I'm totally in keeping with the period, so it's not like I'm not playing along.

LOIS

Uh-huh. If anyone asks, you're with the Globe.

JIMMY

Yes, ma'am.

The bar tender hands Clark and Lois their drinks. As they sip, they walk toward the center of the room, taking a look around.

Lois notices a "Buy War Bonds" poster near the podium at the side of the stage.

LOIS

I'm guessing the DNC didn't arrange this party.

CLARK

It's just a theme.

LOIS

Nothing is "just" anything in this world. Haven't you learned that by now? There's always an agenda.

The music changes to a slower song. Clark notices this and turns to Lois.

CLARK

Care to dance?

LOIS

With you?

Clark nods. Lois smirks, debating whether or not to make a sarcastic comment. Finally, she decides not to and hands her drink off to Jimmy.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Why not?

Clark hands his drink to Jimmy as well, then takes Lois' hand, escorting her to the dance floor.

Jimmy waits behind, holding the two martinis.

JIMMY
I'll be here.

A WAITER passes with a tray, which Jimmy puts the martinis on, freeing him to take pictures.

Clark and Lois reach the dance floor and begin dancing.

LOIS
Try not to step on my feet.

CLARK
I know how to dance.

LOIS
Just making sure.

They continue to dance for a moment, settling into a comfort zone. Eventually, Lois sets her head on Clark's shoulder. Clark doesn't mind this at all.

As the song nears its finish, Lois looks toward the back of the room. She picks up her head.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Oh, God.

CLARK
What's wrong?

LOIS
My father's here.

Clark immediately assumes a much less intimate dancing distance with Lois.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Cute, Smallville.
(beat)
What is he doing here?

LOIS' POV

General Lane is standing near the back wall, not watching the dance floor. A moment later, Mercy Graves walks up to him (dressed in 1940's style). She whispers something to General Lane.

CLARK
They look cozy.

LOIS
That's Lex Luthor's assistant.

CLARK
Are you sure?

LOIS
I saw her a few hours ago. I'm
pretty sure that's her.

CLARK
Why would Luthor's assistant be
talking with your father?

LOIS
Good question.
(beat)
I'm going to find out the answer.

CLARK
This isn't a story, Lois. You can't
trail your father.

LOIS
Give me a good reason why not.

Clark doesn't respond.

LOIS (CONT'D)
That's what I thought.

The General and Mercy start to walk toward the exit.

LOIS (CONT'D)
You stay here and get your party
story. I'm going after bigger fish.

Lois walks off, following General Lane and Mercy out the
door.

Clark is left, standing alone, watching Lois walk off. Jimmy
soon joins him.

JIMMY
Left on the dance floor. That's
happened to me.

CLARK
She's trailing... a story.

JIMMY
Oh.
(beat)
Hey, they have mini-quiche over
there. Want some?

Clark takes a quick glance toward the door that Lois is leaving through. He then heads toward the quiche with Jimmy.

CLARK

Yeah. Sure.

As Clark and Jimmy walk across the room, Clark spots COMMISSIONER HENDERSON having a drink with his wife, MRS. HENDERSON.

CLARK (CONT'D)

I'll catch up to you in a minute,
Jimmy. I want to ask the
Commissioner for a few comments.

JIMMY

Okay.

Jimmy continues toward the food while Clark walks toward Commissioner Henderson.

CLARK

Commissioner.

Commissioner Henderson looks up and sees Clark.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

Clark Kent, Daily Planet.

The Commissioner extends a hand.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON (CONT'D)

What can I do for you?

Clark shakes the Commissioner's hand.

CLARK

I was hoping to get a few quotes
for my article.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

Sure.

Clark pulls an audio recorder out of his pocket.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON (CONT'D)

That hardly looks 1940's to me.

CLARK

I tried to bring an old tape
recorder, but it wouldn't fit in
the cab.

The Commissioner is just about to reply when his cell phone rings. He pulls it out.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON
My phone booth wouldn't fit in the
cab either.

Henderson looks down at the caller ID and starts to walk off.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON (CONT'D)
Sorry, Kent. I have to take this.

Clark doesn't have time to respond before Commissioner Henderson is gone. He finds himself alone with Mrs. Henderson. They exchange awkward smiles.

CLARK
Excuse me.

Clark walks off. As he walks, he spots Commissioner Henderson on the other end of the room, talking on his cell phone. Clark stops and focuses his hearing.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON (O.S.)
How many?

OFFICER ON PHONE (V.O.)
One gunman, four hostages. All
First Bank employees.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON (O.S.)
I'm on my way.

Commissioner Henderson hangs up and heads for the door. Clark watches the Commissioner leave.

EXT. FIRST BANK OF METROPOLIS - NIGHT

Police cars fill the street outside the bank while OFFICERS tape off the area and keep ONLOOKERS away from the scene.

The windows in the bank are covered by blinds which are closed.

INT. FIRST BANK OF METROPOLIS - LOBBY - NIGHT

DERYLL LORNE is the gunman in the bank. He's a man in his mid-30's, wearing blue jeans and a red shirt. He also has a yellow belt with the Superman logo on it.

Behind him are four bank employees. They are DONNA, MITCHELL, KYLIE, and DAN. All well dressed professional types who are huddled on the floor.

Deryll looks through the blinds.

DERYLL

It's getting kinda busy out there. This'll probably be good press for you guys, right? Having your bank all over the news.

KYLIE

Good press would be us giving out free MP3 players with every account opening. A gunman holding us hostage isn't gonna give people the urge to make a deposit anytime soon.

DERYLL

You don't even get it, do you? This isn't about me or you or money. That's not what people are going to remember when tonight's over. What they're going to remember is him.

DAN

Him?

DERYLL

The man who is going to swoop in to save you.

Deryll squats down to be at eye level with the others. He's very excited.

DERYLL (CONT'D)

Superman. He's coming. He always comes to these things.

DAN

You're doing all of this to meet Superman?

DERYLL

Uh-huh. So don't worry. You're not gonna die or anything like that. He'd never let you die.

KYLIE

You know, before you said that, I thought you were a loser who thought he'd somehow get away with this. Now I'm pretty sure you're just really, really crazy.

Deryll stands up, aiming his gun at Kylie.

DERYLL

Don't call me that! Don't you dare call me that.

(beat)

Is it crazy to admire a man who can melt things with his eyes, or fly without an airplane? Is it crazy to want to meet the man who has saved so many lives?

KYLIE

Actually, the crazy part would be the gun at my head.

DERYLL

I said he wouldn't let you die.

Deryll walks toward Kyle, eventually standing right over her, with the gun nearly touching her head.

DERYLL (CONT'D)

I never said I wouldn't try anyway.

Deryll squeezes the trigger. As the gun fires, everything in the room slows down.

INSIDE THE GUN

The bullet begins to move through the barrel of the gun, making its way toward Kylie's head.

As the bullet reaches the end of the barrel, it suddenly hits something hard.

The gun backfires, exploding out of Deryll's hand.

Normal speed resumes as Deryll clutched his wounded hand, screaming in pain. Finally, he looks up and sees Superman standing in front of him with his hand extended, having blocked the barrel of the gun.

SUPERMAN

Would it kill my cool factor if I said "Stop in the name of love"?

Despite his injuries, Deryll looks up at Superman with wide eyes and a silly grin.

DERYLL
You're him. You're really him.

Superman ignores Deryll and turns toward the hostages.

SUPERMAN
You're free to go now. The police
are expecting you.

KYLIE
(to Superman)
Thank you so much.
(then, to Deryll)
Freak.

The hostages leave the bank. Superman turns toward Deryll.

SUPERMAN
I'd have that hand looked at if I
were you.

DERYLL
You came. Just like I knew you
would.
(beat)
This is... Thank you.

Superman is puzzled by this.

SUPERMAN
You did this just to get me here,
didn't you?

DERYLL
I knew you'd come.

The police rush into the bank and begin the process of arresting Deryll.

Superman simply stands there, not amused by the fact that this crime had been committed in his honor.

INT. METROGRAND HOTEL - LOBBY/BAR - NIGHT

Lois stands in the lobby of the hotel, hidden behind a pillar. She is watching General Lane and Lex Luthor having a discussion in the hotel bar as Mercy stands just outside the bar, keeping watch.

Aside from Luthor and the General, the bar is empty.

LOIS
 (to herself)
 What are you doing here?

Lois' CELL PHONE RINGS. She quickly ducks behind the pillar and presses the "ignore" button. She stays hidden behind the pillar for a moment, hoping that nobody heard her cell phone.

After some time has passed, Lois peeks around the pillar to take another look into the bar. However, her view is blocked by Mercy, who is now standing directly in front of Lois.

MERCY
 You shouldn't be here.

LOIS
 I was invited. I could prove it if you want.

MERCY
 Your invitation was to a party being held forty stories above this one. I suggest you get back to it.

LOIS
 I'm sorry. I didn't see a "reserved" sign posted in the lobby.

Mercy takes a step toward Lois.

MERCY
 Do you really want to do this?

LOIS
 I just want to stand in the lobby of this very lovely hotel. If you want to have your arms broken, that's entirely up to you, sister.

MERCY
 I'm not your sister.

Mercy is about to punch Lois in the face when a voice behind her stops her in her tracks.

GENERAL LANE (O.S.)
 Lois?

LOIS
 (eyes on Mercy)
 Hello, Daddy.

REVEAL Lex and General Lane, now standing behind Mercy.

LEX
We're done here.

Lex turns and starts to walk out of the hotel. Mercy gives Lois an intimidating glare. Lois returns with a smile as Mercy turns and follows Lex out of the hotel.

Lois turns and starts to walk away. The General follows her.

GENERAL LANE
What do you think you're doing?

LOIS
Attending a very swanky theme party. You?

GENERAL LANE
You know damn well that's not what I'm talking about, Lois.

As Lois reaches the elevator, the General steps in front of her.

LOIS
I saw my father. I thought I'd say hi, since I know he'd never be the one to approach me. I didn't know you'd be having a secret meeting with Lex Luthor in a hotel bar.

GENERAL LANE
Don't be dramatic.

LOIS
What were you talking about?

GENERAL LANE
You know I'm not going to tell you that.

LOIS
Then it looks like we don't have anything else to say. Goodnight, Daddy.

Lois pushes past the General and presses the elevator button. The General doesn't move away from the elevators.

LOIS (CONT'D)
If you're going up, you can catch the next ride.

The elevator doors open, revealing an empty elevator.

LOIS (CONT'D)
This one's full.

Lois steps into the elevator and presses the button to close the doors.

INT. METROGRAND HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

Lois walks into the ballroom, obviously distracted, and heads for the bar. When she gets there, she finds Clark and Jimmy with drinks in hand, leaning on the bar.

Clark seems as distracted as Lois.

LOIS
(to bartender)
Give me a scotch and I swear, if I
so much as see an ice cube near my
drink I will hurt you.

Lois turns to Clark and Jimmy as Clark takes a sip.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Is that root beer?

CLARK
Yeah.

LOIS
You can take the boy out of
Smallville...

CLARK
Alcohol doesn't do anything for me.
Sugar does.

Lois takes her drink from the bartender. She leans on the bar next to Clark and Jimmy.

JIMMY
You two look like someone killed
your goldfish.
(beat)
Or puppy. People don't usually mope
about goldfish, I guess.

LOIS
It's been a long day.

JIMMY
We're at a party.

CLARK
It's a fundraiser.

JIMMY
With music and dancing. Where I
come from, that's a party.

CLARK
It's work.

Clark puts his glass down.

CLARK (CONT'D)
Which I think I've about finished.
So, if you'll excuse me...

Clark starts to walk off. Lois gulps down her scotch (without
any girly wincing afterward) and rushes to catch up.

LOIS
Wait up.

Jimmy stands at the bar by himself. He watches them go, then
looks to his drink and finally to the dance floor.

JIMMY
Well, I'm staying.

He takes a sip.

EXT. METROGRAND HOTEL/STREET - NIGHT

Clark and Lois walk out of the hotel together. They start
walking down the street.

LOIS
He knows I hate the guy. He knows
what I think of the man. Does that
stop him from buddying up to him?

CLARK
Do you know what they were talking
about?

LOIS
No. Lex's own private Amazon
threatened to throw down before I
could get any intel.

CLARK
Lex has an Amazon?

LOIS

Actually, I think she's from Metropolis. But if Amazons existed today, she'd totally be one of them.

CLARK

Maybe there's a reason for your father to be meeting with Lex.

LOIS

I didn't see handcuffs or drawn firearms, so what good reason could there be?

CLARK

I really couldn't tell you.

They continue to walk for a moment without talking. Eventually, Lois looks to Clark.

LOIS

So what's with you? Why are you so down all of the sudden?

CLARK

Just thinking.

LOIS

Anything I can help with?

Clark does want to talk to Lois about it, but holds back.

CLARK

No.

They walk in silence once again. Clark keeps his eyes on the sidewalk. Lois looks over to him with a concerned look in her eyes.

INT. LOIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lois walks into her apartment, locking the door behind her. She drops her keys on a nearby table and presses the button on her answering machine on her way to the couch where she flops down.

The ANSWERING MACHINE BEEPS.

ANSWERING MACHINE (V.O.)

You have one new message. First message:

GENERAL LANE (V.O.)
Lois, it's your father...

There's a long pause. Lois looks toward the machine, waiting for whatever comes next.

The MACHINE BEEPS. Lois doesn't know quite what to make of the message.

ANSWERING MACHINE (V.O.)
End of messages.

Lois puts her head back.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Superman is resting on a mound of sand, looking up at the stars. Next to him is PETE ROSS, dressed in desert fatigues. He has a rifle in his arms and is also looking up at the stars.

SUPERMAN
Clark's big, man. I'm not going to lie to you.

PETE
How big?

SUPERMAN
I don't know... Big. And fast. He likes to crawl around on the floor. Looks like he's doing the army crawl. Lana almost cries every time he does it.
(beat)
And he can talk. He's actually very opinionated.

PETE
(smiles)
Yeah?

SUPERMAN
Lana told me that she was out at the store last week and they saw a picture of Superman. Clark kept screaming "Uncle Clark" at the top of his lungs and grabbing for the picture.

Pete starts laughing.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
It's not funny! Lana had to get him out of the store before anyone knew what he was screaming about.

PETE
That's what you get for telling him you're Superman.

SUPERMAN
I didn't tell him. Nobody did. He just figured it out.

PETE
Really? Damn.
(beat)
My kid's smarter than everyone in Metropolis.

SUPERMAN
Must take after Lana.

Pete punches Superman in the arm.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
Should I pretend I felt that?

PETE
If you could.

Pete looks over at Superman.

PETE (CONT'D)
Still nobody coming?

Superman takes a quick look around.

SUPERMAN
Nope.

Pete nods and looks back to the stars.

PETE
So, umm-- As much as I love these late night chats, I have to ask. Why are you here? Why fly to the other side of the world for some small talk?

SUPERMAN
You make it sound like I sat for twelve hours on a plane. I'll be back in Metropolis in time for Letterman.

PETE

Or "On The Clock"? I saw your girl on the show earlier.

SUPERMAN

Yeah? What'd you think?

PETE

I think she's scary. Don't cross that girl, man. With or without super powers.

SUPERMAN

Not what I meant.

PETE

That other stuff? You know what I think of it. It's a bunch of bull. You don't cause these things to happen. You don't ask for them. You stop them. You're the good guy. Don't let these people make you doubt yourself. You're making the world a safer place. You're fighting the bad guys. Don't listen to the crap they put on GBS.

SUPERMAN

(extended beat)

I stopped a guy holding people hostage in a bank tonight.

PETE

Has Lex Luthor found a way to blame you for it yet?

SUPERMAN

The guy in the bank didn't want money. He was holding people hostage so that I'd show up. So I'd stop him. He was a fan.

Pete looks to Superman, a little creeped out.

PETE

Did he have your haircut? 'Cause I saw a movie once--

SUPERMAN

I'm serious, Pete. That guy wouldn't have put lives in danger if it weren't for me.

PETE

I know you like to brood and beat yourself up, man, but this wasn't really about you. The guy was obviously playing in "red ring of death" mode. With or without you, he was going back to the factory.

(beat)

You saved lives tonight. You're the hero.

SUPERMAN

Yeah.

Silence falls once again. The two men continue to look up at the stars.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Lois throws her bag down on her desk and sits down. She looks over to Clark's desk, seeing him staring at a pencil in his hand.

LOIS

Slow news day?

CLARK

Just thinking.

Lois wheels her way over to Clark's desk.

LOIS

You know, if you need someone to talk to, I do have ears.

CLARK

It's just a funk.

Clark drops the pencil onto his desk and looks at Lois.

CLARK (CONT'D)

It'll pass.

Lois is just about to say something when Perry and Jimmy walk up to her desk.

PERRY

Lois. My office.

Perry walks off, toward his office.

LOIS
(to Clark)
I shall return.

Lois gets up and walks to Perry's office. Jimmy sits down in her chair, facing Clark.

JIMMY
Working on anything interesting?

CLARK
Not very.

JIMMY
Same here. Mr. White has me headed to a youth center in the Slums for a story that Rick's writing. Rick, who won't even go down to the place himself. He's doing his interviews over the phone.

CLARK
That's some hard-core reporting right there.

JIMMY
Tell me about it.
(beat)
Wanna grab a burger later?

INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Lois walks into Perry's office just as he's sitting down.

PERRY
I had a phone call from Morgan Edge this morning. About you.

LOIS
Morgan Edge wanted to talk about me?

PERRY
Seems you made quite the impression on his network yesterday.

LOIS
I know I might have come across as a little... harsh...

PERRY

He wants to have a talk with you in person. I told him you'd be at his office in an hour.

LOIS

In person? Sir, what's this about?

PERRY

He'll tell you when you get there. Now, go.

Lois hesitates before finally heading for the door.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Lane.

Lois stops and turns.

PERRY (CONT'D)

I want you to know, I agree with Edge on this matter.

LOIS

Okay.

Lois has absolutely no idea what to make of this. She simply nods and walks out of the office.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Lois walks back to her desk. Jimmy is still in her seat, talking to Clark.

LOIS

Jimmy, out of my chair.

Jimmy gets out of the chair.

JIMMY

Sorry, Ms. Lane.

CLARK

What did Perry want to talk about?

LOIS

I haven't the slightest idea. All I know is that Morgan Edge wants to see me, and I only have an hour to get down to Glenmorgan Square and traffic's backed up to Cain Street.

There's a roar of thunder.

JIMMY
Sounds like it might rain.

LOIS
Of course it's going to rain.
Otherwise I might be able to get a
cab.

Lois grabs her bag.

LOIS (CONT'D)
See ya.

She walks off.

CLARK
Good luck.

Once Lois is gone, Clark looks at his watch.

CLARK (CONT'D)
I should go. I have an appointment
with a jewelry store manager.

JIMMY
Shopping for a necklace that'll
bring out your eyes?

CLARK
Shopping for a story.

Clark gets up.

CLARK (CONT'D)
See you in a little while.

JIMMY
Yeah.

EXT. DAILY PLANET - DAY

Lois walks out of the Daily Planet building, and heads for the curb in order to hail a cab. As she gets to the curb, there is another roar of thunder.

LOIS
C'mon.

She continues to wave her arm, hoping that a cab will stop. None do.

SUPERMAN (O.S.)
Need a lift?

LOIS
 (grins)
 Do you even own a car, Small--

She turns around and sees Superman standing behind her. Other PEOPLE passing by are staring in their direction.

SUPERMAN
 Small?

LOIS
 Not small. I thought you were
 someone else.
 (beat)
 Hi.

SUPERMAN
 Hi.
 (beat)
 So, about that lift.

LOIS
 Right. Actually, I could use one.
 If you're not busy holding up a
 high-rise or something.

SUPERMAN
 It's not in the day planner.

LOIS
 Okay. Then, yes. Sure. I'd love a
 ride... A lift.

She clears her throat and looks away awkwardly. Superman can't help but find this amusing. He holds out a hand.

SUPERMAN
 Where to?

LOIS
 Glenmorgan Square. The GBS
 building.

She takes his hand, and Superman scoops her into his arms. Then, as people continue to watch them, Superman rises into the air.

EXT. THE SKIES ABOVE METROPOLIS - DAY

Superman carries Lois through the air, toward Glenmorgan Square.

LOIS

I have a meeting with Morgan Edge
in less than an hour.

SUPERMAN

You'll be there with time to spare.

LOIS

Thanks. I thought I was going to be
stuck in the rain.

SUPERMAN

It's not going to rain for a while.

LOIS

You can tell?

SUPERMAN

Can't you smell it?

Lois stops to take a smell. She looks back to him, shaking
her head.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

I guess it's an acquired skill.

LOIS

That or super-smell.

Superman chuckles.

SUPERMAN

So... Morgan Edge?

LOIS

The big man himself. No idea why.
Perry's being all cryptic about it.

SUPERMAN

Nervous?

LOIS

I don't do nervous, sweetie. I do
intrigued, curious, and suspicious,
but not nervous.

Lois pauses and looks at the city below.

SUPERMAN

Something wrong?

LOIS

Just thinking how not too long ago,
these trips of ours were something
to write about. Now we make small
talk.

SUPERMAN

Getting bored?

LOIS

No.

She looks into his eyes.

LOIS (CONT'D)

I like small talk.

He looks back into her eyes for a moment before swallowing
hard and looking away. He stops moving forward and hovers in
the air.

SUPERMAN

We're here.

LOIS

And with only fifty minutes to
spare.

(beat)

Wanna hang out on the roof for a
while?

SUPERMAN

I probably shouldn't. I have--

LOIS

High-rises to hold up?

SUPERMAN

Something like that.

LOIS

Y'know, someday we have to sit down
and have a long talk without one of
us running off for work.

SUPERMAN

I'll put it in the day planner.

They share a silent look. After a moment, Lois smiles.

LOIS

Thanks for the ride.

SUPERMAN

Anytime.

INT. LEXCORP BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The blinds are closed on all of the windows, making the room dark. Lex sits at the end of a long table with a desk lamp lighting his face. Mercy stands behind him, against the wall.

On the opposite wall, there are three wall-mounted monitors. The center monitor displays the LexCorp logo. The other monitors show two people, currently holding a video conference with Lex.

On the monitor to the right is SENATOR O'TOOLE, a man in his late 50's, wearing a suit and tie and speaking with a southern accent.

On the monitor to the left is DR. AMANDA WALLER, a sturdy looking woman in her mid-40's, also wearing a tasteful suit and a broach which looks like a White Queen ripped off of a chess board and attacked by a Bedazzler before being pinned to her lapel.

SENATOR O'TOOLE

I've been looking over your most recent reports and I have to say that I'm not convinced, Lex.

LEX

I understand your concerns, Senator, but I assure you that progress is being made. Perhaps not as quickly as we would like, but at a steady pace. The information in the last report hasn't been updated since my conversation with the project's head researcher, just this morning.

SENATOR O'TOOLE

Do you have new information for us?

LEX

My team has been making progress toward confirming some of their theories.

Lex presses a button on a nearby control panel and the monitor which once displayed only a LexCorp logo comes to life with the image of a kryptonite fragment.

LEX (CONT'D)

As you know, this meteor fragment was recovered from the scene of Superman's final confrontation with John Corbin, also known as "Metallo" by some. The meteor was stolen from a museum because the scientist responsible for creating Metallo discovered that a unique form of radiation emanating from the rock could be harnessed and used to power the Metallo body. Once the meteor rock was placed inside Metallo's power source, there was a noticeable change in his ability to fight Superman. Not only did Metallo grow in strength, but there appeared to be a sudden weakening in Superman whenever he was exposed to this power source or came into physical contact with Metallo. It's the only time we've seen this effect on Superman to date.

DR. WALLER

We're all aware of Superman's history, Mr. Luthor. The discovery of the meteor rock is undoubtedly the most significant discovery to date. However, since we're unable to find more of these meteors or a means of reproducing their effects on Superman from a distance, I don't see how it's relevant to this project.

LEX

It's immensely relevant, Doctor. You see, in discovering more about the meteor rock, we discover more about Superman.

Lex hits another button. The image on the center monitor changes to the image of an alien insect fossil within rock.

LEX (CONT'D)

This image shows us a fossil discovered in the rock around the crystalline formations on the meteor. This fossil tells us that this meteor is a fragment from a planet that is capable of supporting life.

SENATOR O'TOOLE

The discovery of life on alien worlds is hardly as astonishing as it once was.

LEX

Given the effects on Superman, it's possible that this meteor originated on the planet of Superman's origin. By running a series of tests on the meteor, we've discovered that it's been exposed to types of radiation similar to those put off by a red dwarf star.

DR. WALLER

So, Superman comes from a planet that orbits a red dwarf.

SENATOR O'TOOLE

How does this help us?

LEX

One theory suggests that the powers exhibited by Superman are the result of his exposure to the light of our yellow sun.

SENATOR O'TOOLE

How do we know this?

Lex hits another button. The image on the center monitor changes, now displaying a magnified blood sample.

DR. WALLER

Blood.

LEX

Superman's blood, to be exact. Recovered along with the meteor rock after Superman's fight with Metallo. My men have been running tests on the sample. Though most of our samples haven't survived the tests we've run, the samples that we exposed to common sunlight have shown astonishing results.

DR. WALLER

Have you run other tests on the blood?

LEX

Of course, though as I said, most of our tests have failed. The blood is completely incompatible with human blood. Any attempts to use this blood to enhance a human subject would result in death. Any wish to create a clone appears to be hopeless as well. It's only use to us appears to be in gaining an understanding of our visitor at the moment.

DR. WALLER

So, we're left to focus on the sunlight angle?

LEX

For the time being. If we could find a way of exposing Superman to the light of his native sun, we may be able to counter the effect that our own sun has on him.

DR. WALLER

Have you run tests in the lab?

LEX

We're still attempting to recreate the red sunlight. Once we do, we'll be ready to begin testing the theory.

SENATOR O'TOOLE

I want to be kept up to date on your progress.

LEX

Of course.

DR. WALLER

And I want a prototype weapon ready by the end of the month.

LEX

That's a bit soon, don't you think?

DR. WALLER

Is it?

(beat)

Superman is a very powerful being. He remains friendly, I know.

(MORE)

DR. WALLER (CONT'D)

For the time being, he is happy to destroy buildings and pick on teenagers committing petty crimes. But the day will come, Lex. Mark my words, the day will come. Eventually, this visitor will realize his power to force his will upon the people of this planet. He will begin to dominate us. Telling us which laws to pass. Which treaties to sign. Which wars will be fought and which will be abandoned. He will do this all in the name of peace and friendship, but we all know that the road to hell is paved with good intentions, don't we?

SENATOR O'TOOLE

Let's not get over dramatic.

DR. WALLER

This one man has the ability to bring about the end of the world if he sees fit. If the apocalypse is upon us, I for one do not want to be caught with our pants down.

(beat)

You have until the end of the month, Luthor.

LEX

Understood.

The monitor displaying Dr. Waller's feed goes black.

SENATOR O'TOOLE

Keep me informed.

Lex nods. After a moment, the Senator's monitor goes blank. Lex continues to look forward.

MERCY

I thought that went well.

LEX

Go to the lab. Tell Dr. Hamilton that I want that prototype by the end of the week. I want time to make sure this thing works before I hand it over.

MERCY

I'm not your secretary, Lex. Let her play messenger.

Lex gets up and looks at Mercy.

LEX

You'll do what I tell you to do.

(beat)

I will not tolerate delays or excuses. I feel that you're the best person to make this point to Dr. Hamilton.

MERCY

You mean, I get to beat him?

LEX

Only as a last resort.

MERCY

Sweet. Consider it done.

Mercy shoots Lex a quick smile and walks out of the room.

Lex leans down and presses a button on a nearby computer, ejecting a CD. He places the CD in a case and closes the case.

INT. GBS BUILDING - MORGAN EDGE'S OFFICE - DAY

Lois is sitting on one of the chairs opposite Edge's desk in this very large, very finely decorated office. She's alone for the moment, still wondering what this is all about.

She glances at her watch, then back to the door before looking forward once again. She notices the sky outside, filling with storm clouds.

After a moment, MORGAN EDGE walks into the office. He's a clean cut man in his 50's, wearing a designer suit.

MORGAN

Sorry I'm late. I was in a meeting that ran over.

As he walks around the desk and smiles at Lois, she stands to greet him. She shakes his hand with a smile.

LOIS

No problem.

MORGAN

I hope you didn't have too much trouble getting down here. I hear the traffic's horrible.

Lois shakes her head slyly.

LOIS

I just flew right past the traffic. No trouble at all.

MORGAN

Good.

Both of them take their seats.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Bet you're wondering why you're here, right?

LOIS

Just a little.

MORGAN

I asked Perry not to say anything. I wanted the offer to be fresh when I put it out there.

LOIS

Offer?

MORGAN

We've been looking for a new contributor for our network. Someone who can handle this new world we find ourselves in with aliens and super powers.

LOIS

And you're asking me?

MORGAN

You're the reporter that Superman himself trusts the most. That makes you qualified in my book. On top of that, the response to your appearance on the network yesterday made has been overwhelmingly positive.

LOIS

Really? And here I thought people enjoyed ripping Superman apart.

MORGAN

Not everyone, it would seem.
(beat)
So, what do you say?

LOIS

I say... I appreciate the offer,
but I'm going to have to think it
over. I have a life down at the
Planet.

MORGAN

Which you wouldn't have to give up.
You could still do your job there
and swing by here when we need you.
This could change your life. From
here you could have book offers,
speaking engagements at colleges.
Who knows? Maybe you'll work your
way into your own show someday.

Lois sits back in the chair, thinking it over.

LOIS

And you've spoken to Perry White
about this?

MORGAN

Nothing formal. Just two friends
talking. He really pushed for you.

Lois doesn't respond. She thinks for a moment, looking back
at Morgan. The looks on her face seems to tell us that she's
leaning toward taking the job.

EXT. GBS BUILDING/GLENMORGAN SQUARE - DAY

Leslie Willis walks up the street, toward the GBS building.
As she walks, she looks around Glenmorgan Square, which is
filled with flashy LCD billboards and buildings that have
scrolling text moving along their walls.

Down the street, there is a giant LCD screen on the side of a
building. This screen is displaying a news broadcast from
GBS. Leslie stops to watch the broadcast for a moment with a
slight grin on her face.

After a deep breath, she starts to walk again. Just as she
nears the GBS building, the doors open and Lois walks out
with Morgan Edge beside her.

MORGAN

Are you sure you don't need a ride?

LOIS
I'm good, but thanks.

Leslie is a little confused. She looks at her watch, and then back to Morgan. She walks toward him.

LESLIE
Excuse me! Mr. Edge.

Morgan turns and sees Leslie.

MORGAN
Can I help you?

LESLIE
I'm Leslie Willis. I'm supposed to meet with you in about ten minutes.

Leslie extends her hand. Morgan goes to shake it, but gets a static shock from Leslie. She pulls back.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
Sorry. I do that... a lot. Sorry.

MORGAN
It's fine.
(beat)
I'm sorry. I thought my assistant called you. I had to cancel.

LESLIE
Oh. So we'll reschedule then?

MORGAN
I'm afraid that won't be necessary. We've already filled the job that you were interested in.

LESLIE
What? But I haven't even--

Leslie looks over at Lois, only now realizing who she is.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
You have to be kidding me. Her?

MORGAN
Ms. Lane is simply more qualified for the job. I'm sorry. We will keep you in mind though for the next time.

LESLIE
Great. Thanks for that.

Leslie turns and starts to walk away. Morgan gives Lois one last handshake.

LOIS
That was awkward.

MORGAN
She'll get over it. I'll see you soon.

Lois gives a quick nod and then starts to walk in the same direction as Leslie. Morgan walks in the other direction.

Leslie walks over to the side of the building and just stands there for a moment. Lois notices, but doesn't say anything as she attempts to pass.

As Lois walks by Leslie, Leslie looks up and sees her.

LESLIE
It must be nice.

Lois stops and looks at Leslie.

LOIS
What's that?

LESLIE
Being a peppy little thing in your short skirts, with your flawless skin and more talent in your chest than in your head.

LOIS
Excuse me?

LESLIE
People like you always get the jobs that people like me deserve. So there you go. Another prime opportunity for you to get in front of the crowd and bat your eyelashes while kissing Superman's cape.

Lois takes a step toward Leslie.

LOIS
Look, I'm very sorry that you didn't get the job that you wanted Ms... Whatever. I understand that you're very upset right now and I can accept that. This is why you're not broken and bleeding right now.
(MORE)

LOIS (CONT'D)

That said, I'd do a little bit more research before you attack someone again. If you did, you'd know that I grew up on military bases, submitting essays to newspapers and magazines while I was still in high school. You'd know that I graduated high school two years early and went on to graduate from an ivy league college before getting a job in the basement of the Daily Planet and crawling my way upstairs while you sat home at night watching "Angel" reruns and crying into your bon-bons.

Leslie doesn't respond.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go buy a short skirt that looks good in high-def.

Lois turns and walks away from Leslie, pulling out her cell phone and putting it to her ear as she walks. Leslie watches Lois go as THUNDER ROARS in the skies.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Clark is sitting at a table, across from HOWARD RUDOLPH, who is a man in his 50's and looks as though he spends as much time grooming himself as he spends breathing.

On the table is an audio recorder, as well as Clark's cell phone.

CLARK

Tell me about your son, Mr. Rudolph. Tell me about Marty.

HOWARD

He was a good kid. An "A" student. Top of his class.

CLARK

Did he have a lot of friends?

HOWARD

He was always running around town with friends. Coming in an hour late for curfew.

(beat)

He was a teenager.

CLARK

Right.

(beat)

Do you know the names of any of these friends? Anyone who might want to say something about him?

HOWARD

(extended beat)

Not off hand.

CLARK

How about kids that weren't friendly with your son? Did he ever mention any fights, or anyone who he didn't get along with?

HOWARD

You think a child killed my son?

CLARK

I'm just trying to establish possible motives.

HOWARD

I own a jewelry store, Mr. Kent. My son worked the counter on weekends. There is your motivation.

CLARK

Of course. I didn't mean to suggest...

(beat)

The police report says that your son was in the store with one other employee. A woman.

HOWARD

Katee. She managed the store on weekends.

CLARK

How long did you know Katee?

HOWARD

Ten years. She started out as a sales clerk while she went to the university.

Clark's CELL PHONE VIBRATES. He looks down at it, and decides to put it in his pocket rather than answer it.

CLARK

Can you tell me what happened that afternoon?

Howard looks down at the table, not responding for several moments.

HOWARD

It was Sunday. We were closing early. I decided to walk down the street and buy lunch for the three of us while Marty and Katee locked up the store.

CLARK

Did they lock up by themselves often?

HOWARD

Katee was a manager. Of course she did. There was nothing unusual about this day. Not until I returned to the store, finding it locked. I rang the bell, but there was no answer, so I opened the door with my own key. When I got inside, there was nobody inside. The display cases were empty, so I thought they were in the back, putting the jewelry in our safe.

(beat)

They weren't. The safe was open, but empty. I didn't know what to think, so I tried calling Katee on her cell phone. I heard it ringing in the front of the store and found it on the ground near the cash register. That's when I noticed...

Howard can't bring himself to continue.

CLARK

(softly)

The ashes.

HOWARD

Two piles.

CLARK

Did you know what they were?

HOWARD

Not right away. I didn't know what to think. I called the police.

(MORE)

HOWARD (CONT'D)

When they came, they realized that the ashes were...

Howard can't finish that thought. He looks out the window, and then back to Clark.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

Is that all you need to know, Mr. Kent?

CLARK

Just one more thing.

(beat)

You said the front door was locked. What about the back door?

HOWARD

It was locked as well. Both doors locked, and the only people with keys were myself and Katee. Her key was found near the register.

Clark takes this in.

CLARK

Thank you for your time.

INT. YOUTH CENTER - DAY

Jimmy walks around the youth center's main room, snapping pictures. The room has several areas set up for studying, watching TV or playing games. It seems like a very nice, well kept place.

Next to him is OLIVIA EDGE, cute 20-something daughter of Morgan Edge.

OLIVIA

I was kinda expecting to have an actual reporter down here when I agreed to this.

JIMMY

Sorry. I'm just doing what they tell me to do.

Jimmy takes the camera away from his eye and looks around the room.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

You run this place?

OLIVIA

Yeah. I told your associate that on the phone.

JIMMY

Oh, I wasn't asking for the article. I was just curious.

OLIVIA

Oh.

JIMMY

It's nice. Seems like you put a lot of work into it.

OLIVIA

I did. I think my father expected me to take his money and dump it into some charity without really thinking about it.

JIMMY

Your father?

OLIVIA

Morgan Edge. I'm his daughter. I thought you knew.

JIMMY

No.

(beat)

So you don't even have to be here. You could be in a penthouse somewhere, throwing parties and going to rehab once a month.

OLIVIA

I could.

JIMMY

Cool.

(beat)

I mean, that you didn't. Do that. It's cool.

Olivia smiles.

OLIVIA

I was inspired.

JIMMY

By what?

Olivia points to a cork board on the wall where there is a picture of Superman, cut from the Daily Planet.

OLIVIA

By him. I figured that if one man can work so hard to help this world, I could at least try to help one neighborhood. So I kissed up to Daddy like any rich girl, and got him to write me a check for this. Which was really unlike him, actually.

Jimmy looks at Olivia, impressed by her.

JIMMY

I took that picture.

OLIVIA

Hmm?

JIMMY

Of Superman. I took that picture.

OLIVIA

Oh.

JIMMY

Yeah. We're tight. You know... friends. Not that we go clubbing together or anything, but we talk every now and then. He'll save my life now and then. You know.

OLIVIA

Neat.

Olivia turns and starts to walk. Jimmy follows her.

JIMMY

So, I heard that you've managed to make money off of this place?

OLIVIA

Not the way it sounds. My kids have managed to make money for this place. To keep it open and maintain it. They've started doing odd jobs around the neighborhood for whatever people can pay, if anything. I think it teaches them a valuable lesson.

JIMMY
I'm impressed.

OLIVIA
Thanks.
(beat)
Some of the older kids are already taking those lessons into the real world. Getting better jobs. Supporting themselves and their families. My father helped set that up. Some of them even work for him.

JIMMY
Doing what?

OLIVIA
I don't know. Probably mopping floors or sorting mail. I know I've seen a couple delivering packages. But it's honest work and it keeps them off the streets and away from the gangs, so I'm happy.

Jimmy doesn't say anything for a few moments. He's too busy watching Olivia walk a couple of steps ahead of him.

After some time, he clears his throat and attempts to speak again.

JIMMY
Umm... Do you want to maybe...

Olivia stops and turns around.

OLIVIA
Hmm?

JIMMY
Oh, I was just asking if you wanted to... umm... Get copies of these pictures when I print them out. Y'know, for a scrapbook, or... insurance purposes.

Olivia smiles at him.

OLIVIA
That'd be nice. Thanks.

A boy in his late teens, TREVOR, walks into the center. He's talking on his cell phone. Olivia spots him.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Do you need anything else?

JIMMY
I think I'm done.

OLIVIA
Great. Thanks for coming by.

Olivia moves off to talk to Trevor. Jimmy watches as she leaves.

JIMMY
No problem. I'll bring you those pictures.

Olivia and Trevor begin what looks like a serious discussion with a lot of head shaking by Olivia and smug attitude from Trevor. Jimmy only watches for a second before turning and heading for the door.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
I think that went well.
(beat)
Yeah.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Clark is looking around the alley around the back door to the jewelry store. He's also studying photos of the area taken just after the place was robbed.

Lois soon enters the alley and heads for Clark.

LOIS
You could answer your cell phone every once in a while.

Clark looks up.

CLARK
Oh. Sorry.
(beat)
How did you find me here?

LOIS
I asked Perry what you were up to. Figured I could find you poking around the scene of the crime that happened two months ago.

CLARK
Actually, I think it's a string of crimes.

LOIS
Huh?

CLARK
Two employees of this store were reduced to ash during the robbery. Both doors were locked by key.

LOIS
So the robbers took the loot, killed the employees and locked the doors on their way out? It's considerate.

CLARK
And unusual.

LOIS
How is this a string?

CLARK
Last week, a pool hall down near the docks was attacked. Fourteen people killed. Members of a street gang called the Knights of Metropolis.

LOIS
Cute name. Did they wear chain mail?

CLARK
The police reports don't mention any chain mail found in their ashes.

LOIS
They were burned too?

CLARK
And just like the store, there's no fire damage to anything else.

LOIS
Spontaneous human combustion?

CLARK
Or someone in town has a new weapon.

LOIS
That's always fun.

Clark looks around the area a little bit more, and then suddenly looks up at Lois as though remembering something important.

CLARK
You were looking for me. Sorry.
What's up?

LOIS
Not much. Just wanted to tell you that Morgan Edge offered me a job with GBS. I'd be their go-to person for all things Superman and beyond.

Clark lights up. He gives her a genuine smile. Not like he's just happy for her and being polite. It's a smile that wouldn't be more real if it were his own good news.

CLARK
That's amazing.

Clark hugs Lois.

CLARK (CONT'D)
I'm so happy for you.

LOIS
Thanks.

They pull back, but remain close, catching each other's eyes and holding the look.

LOIS (CONT'D)
That means a lot to me.

CLARK
So, does this mean you're leaving the Planet?

LOIS
No. I'll be around.

He smiles again.

CLARK
That's good.

LOIS
Yeah.

Clark raises his hand, just about to touch Lois' cheek when a voice calls out to him.

JIMMY (O.S.)

C.K.!

Clark and Lois pull back, annoyed by Jimmy's timing.

Jimmy walks up to them with his normal peppy smile.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

We still on for lunch?

CLARK

Yeah, Jimmy.

JIMMY

Cool.

(to Lois)

Hey, I heard the news. Awesome.

LOIS

Thanks, Jimmy.

JIMMY

You should come to lunch with us.
Make it a celebration.

Clark and Lois exchange a quick look. Clark nods to her, seconding the invitation.

LOIS

I'd love to. Thanks.

JIMMY

Cool.

Jimmy turns and starts to walk out of the alley. Lois follows.

CLARK

I guess I'm done here.

Clark follows the others.

LOIS

You do know that whoever invites a
person to lunch has to pay, right?
It's a rule.

JIMMY

Uhh...

CLARK
Relax. It's on me.

They leave the alley.

ANGLE ON : A GARBAGE CAN

Moments later, a rain drop falls onto the can. It's soon followed by a second, and a third.

EXT. GBS BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

It's raining now. An occasional flash of lighting cuts across the sky.

The door which leads to the roof opens. Leslie makes her way out, into the rain. She is holding a bottle of tequila in the hand and stumbles toward the edge of the roof, looking out at the various over-sized TV screens in Glenmorgan Plaza.

At the moment, one of the screens is showing a GBS news report and the FEMALE ANCHOR who is reporting it. Leslie smirks at it.

LESLIE
Ooh, look at you. Aren't you all important, up there on your giant TV screen, with your giant news hair and your fake and overly whitened smile. Anyone could do your job! You think you're special? You think they care about you? Huh, giant TV lady?

(beat)

No. They don't care about anyone. They care about selling the product. Superman sells, baby. So sell your soul to the alien god of the skies. Pucker up and kiss his "S".

She turns away and walks toward a very tall antenna that is attached to the roof.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
I don't need you to get my word out. I don't need some giant antenna telling me what to do. I don't need respect, or for people to take me seriously.

She starts to tear up now.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

What? I'm not good enough for your little club? My chest doesn't heave quite enough for your taste? My legs are covered up just a little too much?

(beat)

Am I not worthy of your love because I don't have the face of a super model? Or is it because I'm just not good enough?

(beat)

Not good enough for friends. Not good enough for my family. Not good enough for anyone, right? Because I think for myself. Because I don't go with the flow. A girl with thoughts of her own. There's a shocker!

(beat)

Why don't you love me, giant antenna?

Leslie sits the bottle down on the ground and moves closer to the antenna. She's crying by now.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Why am I not good enough for you?

(beat)

Why am I not good enough?

Leslie notices a ladder leading up the antenna. She starts to climb it.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

What do I have to do to work my way to the top? What more do I have to give?

Leslie reaches the top of the antenna and looks out over the city.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

You want my blood? You want my life?

(beat)

Take it!

SUPERMAN (O.S.)

Excuse me...

Leslie turns to see Superman FLY DOWN beside her.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

You really shouldn't be up here.

Leslie sees Superman and can't help but laugh.

LESLIE

Well, look who's here to save me.

SUPERMAN

Let me help you down.

LESLIE

I don't need your help! I don't want your help. Do you really need yet another headline to tell you how great you are?

SUPERMAN

I just want to make sure you're okay.

LESLIE

Yeah, and the publicity's just an unfortunate side effect. That's why you're hanging out around a TV network.

SUPERMAN

I'm hanging around here because there's a woman who's about to do something very wrong.

LESLIE

Yeah well, who are you to judge? Just fly away, little man. Shoo.

Leslie attempts to make an overly exaggerated "shoo" gesture. As she does, she slips on the wet ladder and falls.

Superman quickly swoops down and grabs her. He hovers mid-air with her in his arms.

SUPERMAN

I don't want to say "I told you so."

LESLIE

Just put me down. Please, just put me down. I just want to--

Before she can finish that sentence, a bolt of lightning shoots from the sky, hitting the antenna, then arching over and hitting Superman and Leslie. Both scream in pain.

Superman falls to the roof, hitting it hard. He quickly pulls himself up again.

SUPERMAN
Are you okay?

He looks around the roof.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
Miss?

Leslie is nowhere to be found. Superman doesn't like the look of this.

INT. LOIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lois is sitting on her couch with the balcony doors open, despite the rain outside. A breeze is blowing into the room.

As she sits, Lois is on her laptop, looking over some e-mails.

The sounds of the balcony doors closing cause Lois to turn around. She sees Superman standing near the doors. He's not happy.

LOIS
I thought you might show up tonight. Do you want something? Coffee?

SUPERMAN
No.

Lois stands up and grabs a nearby towel. She hands it to Superman who uses it to dry off.

LOIS
So, I heard what happened. Did she really just disappear?

Superman just nods.

LOIS (CONT'D)
The police are calling it a freak accident. I'm sure you didn't--

SUPERMAN
I tried to save her. She was going to jump. She slipped and I grabbed her. We were hit by lightning and the next thing I know, she was gone.

LOIS
Just like that?

Superman doesn't respond. Lois takes this in. She goes back to the couch and sits down. She turns her laptop so that Superman can see the screen, which has a picture of Leslie on it.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Police have identified her as
Leslie Willis. She's a podcaster.
Not your biggest fan.

SUPERMAN
I've never heard of her.

LOIS
A lot of people have, and a lot of
them are questioning the nature of
what happened tonight.

SUPERMAN
You don't--?

LOIS
Me? Ha. No. You're about as capable
of murder as I am.
(beat)
Scratch that. You're way nicer than
I am.

SUPERMAN
Thanks.

LOIS
I do know why she was in such a
funk though. I happened to run into
Leslie this morning at the GBS
building. She was scheduled to meet
with Morgan Edge about a job
opening at the network. She didn't
get the job.

SUPERMAN
You did. I heard.
(beat)
Congratulations.

LOIS
Yeah, well... You know... I kinda
rock.
(beat)
(MORE)

LOIS (CONT'D)

So, are you okay? This whole mess has to be strange. Even for you.

SUPERMAN

I'm okay.

LOIS

Good.

SUPERMAN

I just want to figure out what happened to her. I looked over the entire area and there was nothing.

LOIS

So she didn't turn into a pile of ash.

(beat)

I'll help you figure this out. Don't worry.

SUPERMAN

You're a good friend.

LOIS

Screw that. This is my job. Jobs.

Superman smiles.

SUPERMAN

You're a good reporter.

Lois looks out the window.

LOIS

It's still raining. You should hang out for a while.

SUPERMAN

I think I will.

LOIS

I'll get that coffee. Don't worry. I make it strong.

Lois gives Superman a warm, comforting look and then heads off toward the kitchen.

Superman watches her go.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Lois is at her desk now. Jimmy is sitting in Clark's chair, facing her.

LOIS

How does a woman disappear like that? If you're struck by lightning, you turn into a smoking corpse, you don't just vanish into thin air. And what kind of moron climbs a giant antenna on top of a high-rise in the middle of a thunder storm? If you ask me, she was asking for it.

JIMMY

I think that was kinda the point. Y'know... going up on the roof and all.

LOIS

Right.

(beat)

Well, she didn't have to drag Superman into it. The guy tries to do a good deed and he ends up being the target of every tabloid in the city.

JIMMY

Vultures.

LOIS

Right? And it gets to him. I could tell by the way he just stared at his coffee cup last night.

JIMMY

You had coffee with Superman?

LOIS

Yeah. He takes cream. Who knew?

JIMMY

Like, in a coffee shop?

LOIS

At my apartment.

JIMMY

Oh.

(beat)

Wow.

LOIS
 Don't "Oh, wow" me. It wasn't like
 that. It was just...
 (beat)
 Y'know, this really isn't any of
 your business.

JIMMY
 I didn't say anything.

LOIS
 Good.

Lois sits back in her chair for a moment, not speaking. She
 then leans in closer to Jimmy and lowers her voice.

LOIS (CONT'D)
 Okay, so it was weird.

JIMMY
 You like him.

LOIS
 No.
 (beat)
 Yes. I mean... I don't know.
 (beat)
 What I do know is that when I got
 offered a job on TV, there was only
 one person I wanted to tell.

JIMMY
 Superman?

LOIS
 You'd think, right? But it wasn't.

Jimmy smiles.

JIMMY
 Clark?

LOIS
 How did you...?

JIMMY
 Everyone knows. Even Mr. White's
 mentioned it a couple times. You
 guys are like the new Ross and
 Rachel around here.

LOIS
 Shut up.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

LOIS (CONT'D)

Listen to me very carefully. I want you to tell the next person that opens their mouth about my private life that I will hurt them. Understood?

Jimmy nods.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Good.

(beat)

So, what do you think I should do?

Just as Lois says this, Perry walks up to her desk.

PERRY

I think you should talk to the police. See if they've found any new evidence.

LOIS

I already called. Nothing.

PERRY

Then you find something. I want to know what happened to this girl. People don't just disappear.

JIMMY

In this town?

PERRY

Don't you have work to do, Olsen?

JIMMY

No, sir.

PERRY

Then find Clark. He's late.

JIMMY

Yessir.

Jimmy gives Lois a quick nod goodbye and rushes off. Perry looks down at Lois.

PERRY

Find Leslie Willis.

Perry walks off. Lois looks back to her computer where Leslie's website is displayed, showing a picture of Leslie biting the head off of a Superman action figure.

EXT. GBS BUILDING - ROOF/SKY ABOVE - DAY

It's a bright and sunny day atop the GBS building. There is not a person to be seen.

CLOSE ON:

An electrical outlet near the door. There's a cover over the actual outlet, but that quickly gets blown off, nearly taking out a pigeon on the other side of the roof.

The outlet begins to spark with electricity. Soon, the sparks begin to take shape, looking almost like a hand made of electricity, reaching out of the outlet.

A flash of energy shoots from the outlet, striking the antenna. The antenna crackles with electricity, arching from one rung of the ladder to the next.

Finally, the electricity shoots up the antenna, into the sky above the GBS building.

The electricity in the sky then takes on a new shape. It's the shape of Leslie Willis, sans clothing.

Leslie opens her crackling blue eyes and takes a look around her. When she sees how high up she is, she gasps. She then notices that she is without clothing, and as she moves to cover herself out of reflex, her clothing appears on her once again.

And then she falls...

She screams as she falls from the sky, but as she hits the GBS antenna, she once again turns into nothing more than a bolt of electricity, riding the antenna to the rooftop below.

Once she is on solid footing, clothed and with hair standing on end, she takes a look at herself.

LESLIE

This isn't normal. This is... so not normal.

Leslie looks down at her hand. Electricity reaches across her fingers, looking almost like spider webs. They begin to extend up her arm.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Also kinda cool.

A flash of light shoots from her hand, into the sky. Leslie smiles.

A moment later, as she focuses on her hand, the flesh begins to dissolve, leaving only a hand-form made of electricity.

Leslie is intrigued. She turns around, facing the far end of the roof. A moment later, she streaks across the roof in a blue bolt, forming herself once again on the other side.

Leslie once again smiles.

INT. LESLIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is nice and quiet. We PAN ACROSS the room, eventually settling on the kitchen area. After a moment, one of the kitchen outlets pops and smokes. A moment later, another outlet does the same.

We MOVE ACROSS the room, following outlet after outlet as they pop and smoke.

INT. LESLIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - BASEMENT - DAY

We now move through the basement until we FIND the circuit breaker. A bolt of blue energy shoots from the breaker, across the room where Leslie forms.

She rolls her eyes.

LESLIE
Okay, so it needs some work.

Leslie walks out of the basement.

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET - DAY

Clark walks down the street with a cup of coffee on one hand and a messenger bag slung over his shoulder.

Jimmy runs up behind him, carrying an envelope in his hand.

JIMMY
Clark!

Jimmy catches up and starts to walk beside Clark.

CLARK
Hey, Jimmy.

JIMMY
Mr. White was looking for you.

CLARK
I'll call him in a while. I'm
trying to track someone down.

JIMMY
Anyone I know?

CLARK
Leslie Willis. She's a podcaster
that went missing.

JIMMY
I'd drop that story if I were you.
Lois is already on it.

CLARK
Has she found anything?

JIMMY
Not that I know of. Just don't ask
me again though, 'cause if I tell
you she might hurt me.

CLARK
Yeah.
(beat)
I have other things to work on, I
guess.

JIMMY
Like the spontaneous human
combustion story?

CLARK
That's not what I'm calling it, but
yeah.

JIMMY
What are you calling it?

CLARK
At the moment, nothing. I have
theories. A weapon of some sort.
Nothing I've seen before.

JIMMY
Hmm.
(beat)
Hey, check these out.

Jimmy opens his envelope and pulls out some pictures from the youth center. Clark takes them and starts to look through them.

CLARK
What are these?

JIMMY
They're from the youth center.

Clark comes across a picture of Olivia. Jimmy smiles.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
That's Olivia. She runs the place.

CLARK
She's pretty.
(beat)
So, did you ask her out?

JIMMY
Me? No. She's... way out of my
league. She's Morgan Edge's
daughter.

CLARK
You underestimate yourself. Women
like a guy with confidence.

JIMMY
(sarcastic)
Like you?

CLARK
You don't want my advice?

JIMMY
Sorry. Go on.

CLARK
I'm just saying, be confident.
You're not "Jimmy Olsen, cub
reporter."

JIMMY
I'm not?

CLARK
The word "cub" makes nobody sound
cool. No. You're "Jimmy Olsen,
professional photographer." You're
an artist.

JIMMY
I am?

CLARK

It sounds more mysterious. Women like that.

JIMMY

They do?

CLARK

Trust me. I've seen every episode of Growing Pains.

Clark smiles.

CLARK (CONT'D)

It's just about being you. You are a professional photographer. You work for the Daily Planet. Just because most people treat you like a kid doesn't make you a kid. Once you get that, Olivia will see it. Edge or not, she'll see you.

Jimmy takes this in as he slips the photos back into the envelope.

JIMMY

You could ask Lois' dad.

CLARK

What?

JIMMY

About the weapon thing. He's a General. He might know something.

CLARK

The General doesn't seem like the type of guy you go to for information.

JIMMY

Just a thought.

Clark's CELL PHONE RINGS. He digs it out of his pocket and answers.

CLARK

Hello?

(beat)

Yeah. I'm on my way.

He turns off his phone.

CLARK (CONT'D)
Let's go. The police just found
another one.

EXT. BIK'S AUTO SHOP - DAY

Clark and Jimmy walk up to the auto shop, located in the middle of a fairly rundown area of town. Graffiti covers the walls of most buildings.

The auto shop has been taped off by the POLICE who are investigating the scene and keeping ONLOOKERS back.

Clark and Jimmy try to get a view of what's going on. Jimmy has his camera in hand, snapping a shot here and there.

JIMMY
See anything?

CLARK
No.

Clark focuses on the office area of the auto shop. Though there is a wall between the office and where Clark is standing, he uses his x-ray vision to see inside.

CLARK'S POV

Inside the office, several officers and DETECTIVES are looking over the scene. There is a pile of ash on the floor, which is the focus of attention. Nothing else appears harmed.

JIMMY
What are you looking at?

Clark looks away from the crime scene.

CLARK
Nothing. Just checking to see if
there's any sign of forced entry on
the office door.

JIMMY
Oh.

Jimmy holds up his camera, aims it at the office and snaps a picture. He then presses a few buttons on the camera, bringing up the image and showing it to Clark.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Check it out. Zoom lens.

Clark looks over the image with Jimmy, looking at the doorway and the locks on the door. There are no signs of forced entry.

CLARK

Nothing.

JIMMY

Then again...

Jimmy points to the large garage doors which are wide open, with a door that plainly leads to the office.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Coulda gone in that way.

CLARK

Oh.

(beat)

Right.

Behind Clark, an SUV pulls up and Commissioner Henderson steps out. Clark and Jimmy turn to see him.

JIMMY

The Commissioner's here? He never comes out to these things unless he has to.

CLARK

This might be bigger than we thought.

Clark walks toward the Commissioner as the Commissioner makes his way toward the shop. Jimmy tries to keep up.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Commissioner Henderson! Clark Kent, Daily Planet...

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

I know who you are, Kent.

CLARK

Could I just ask a couple of questions?

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

There will be an official statement issued once I've been fully briefed on the situation.

CLARK

Are we looking at a serial killer?

The Commissioner stops and turns around. He walks toward Clark and lowers his voice.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

No, we're not. And I don't want you making one up either. The last thing this city needs is large scale panic.

CLARK

But this scene fits the description of several others over the last few months.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

Like I said, there will be an official statement once I've been briefed. I'd appreciate it if you didn't get the public riled up before then.

Jimmy snaps a shot of the Commissioner, who looks Jimmy over before walking away.

JIMMY

Weird.

CLARK

Yeah.

Clark turns around and takes a good look at the area around him.

CLARK (CONT'D)

We need to connect the dots. What ties these crimes together?

JIMMY

Big tobacco?

Clark looks at Jimmy who grins.

CLARK

I have work to do.

JIMMY

Anything I can do to help?

CLARK

Yeah.

(beat)

Go take those pictures to Olivia.

INT. LESLIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Leslie is going through all of her clothes, tossing one article of clothing after another onto her bed.

LESLIE

Let's see... What does one wear for their big debut as America's next top superhero?

She gives up and sits down on the bed.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

There's never any spandex and a cape around when you need them.

She gets up and walks toward a full-length mirror. Checking herself out. She puts a hand on her hair, which is still standing straight up.

She then puts her hands on her hips and looks at the clothes that she is wearing.

She puts finger on the collar of her white shirt.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

You can't destroy energy. You can only alter it.

The shirt turns black. Leslie smiles and puts her hands to her sides.

Soon, her clothes change. She soon finds herself in perfectly tailored black pants. The shirt she is wearing is cut in such a way that the neckline looks like a lightning bolt (but not too low cut).

She checks herself out once again. After a second, her lips turn dark blue. She smiles.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Perfect.

She turns around and walks toward her desk, thinking deeply.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Now all I need is a name. Something catchy. Something sleek and cool. Something having to do with power, or electricity.

(beat)

What conducts electricity?

As she thinks, she sees continues to wander around her apartment.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
Power Girl? Lame.
(beat)
Circuit? No.

She gets to her desk and sees the various cords scattered around.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
Wire?
(beat, then a smile)
Perfect.
(beat)
I am Wire! Defender of the
innocent. Kicker of the ass of
Superman!

Pleased with herself, Leslie places a hand on her computer monitor, which promptly explodes. She frowns.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
Frak.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - NIGHT

Clark and Lois are both at their desks, doing research on their computers.

Clark sits back in his chair and rubs his eyes (being careful not to knock off his glasses of course).

LOIS
Looks like your day's been about as
fruitful as mine.

CLARK
No luck finding... What's her name?

LOIS
Leslie Willis. And no. Seems like
she really did just disappear. I do
have one lead though. I have a
meeting with GBS security. They
might have some security camera
footage for me to look at.

CLARK
Should you be snooping around your
new workplace?

LOIS
I'd snoop here if I thought any one
of you were worth investigating.

Lois wheels her way to Clark's desk and takes a look at the
research he's reading on the screen.

LOIS (CONT'D)
What are we looking at?

CLARK
Police reports for a man named
Anton Pollari.

LOIS
(reading)
Twenty years old. Criminal record
the length of my arm.
(beat)
Reduced to ash? What the hell are
you investigating, Smallville?

CLARK
There's a list of people who all
died the same way. No apparent
connection.

LOIS
Serial killer?

CLARK
Maybe.

LOIS
You don't sound convinced.

CLARK
That's because there's no pattern.
Serial killers usually have a
routine. The only thing that I can
find that links all of these people
together would be how they died.

LOIS
So you're thinking it's not the
who, it's the what. A new weapon?

CLARK
Exactly. I've looked into all of
the local weapons research labs,
Universities, and LexCorp. So far,
I haven't found anything that could
do this to a person.

(MORE)

CLARK (CONT'D)

At least, nothing that could be easily transported without attracting attention.

LOIS

Could be military.

CLARK

Could be.

Clark doesn't want to ask what he's about to ask. He eventually decided to do it anyway.

CLARK (CONT'D)

I was think--

LOIS

You're not seriously asking me to call my father about this.

CLARK

He might know something.

LOIS

And if he does, he still couldn't tell us. This type of weapon would probably fall under the heading of "classified". Even if it's not, he wouldn't want to discuss the type of security breach that would have to take place for this weapon to end up on the streets.

CLARK

So, I'm guessing you won't ask.

LOIS

Sorry. Dead end.

Clark accepts this answer and sits back up, ready for more research.

CLARK

Maybe I could ask someone down at S.T.A.R. Labs if they know anything.

Lois looks at her watch.

LOIS

That'll probably have to wait until tomorrow. It's getting kinda late.

Clark looks at his watch.

CLARK
I didn't even notice.

LOIS
Want to walk me down to the GBS building? You can wait outside while I sneak a peek at that camera footage.

CLARK
Sure. I could use the air.

Lois stands up and grabs her jacket.

LOIS
Then let's go. You can buy me a pretzel on the way.

EXT. GLENMORGAN SQUARE - NIGHT

Clark and Lois walk down the sidewalk in Glenmorgan Square. Around them, the oversized TV screens and the text that scrolls around buildings look like something out of a science fiction movie, lighting up the night.

Clark and Lois each have a pretzel in hand. They're not saying very much at first, but Lois does eventually speak.

LOIS
Y'know, I wanted to talk to you about something.

CLARK
Yeah?

LOIS
It's a little awkward, actually. I mean, I don't normally do things this way, but...

CLARK
Are you okay?

LOIS
I'm good. I'm fine. It's just...
(beat)
Okay. You know how I just got offered that position with the station?

CLARK
Yeah.

LOIS

Well, when I got out of that meeting... I realized something. Something that I didn't see before, but is just insanely obvious now that I've seen it. Has that ever happened to you?

CLARK

A couple of times. Lois, what is this about?

Lois takes a deep breath and throws her pretzel into a nearby garbage can. She stops walking. Clark stops as well.

LOIS

Clark... I think that I might--

Before she can finish that sentence, the street goes dark.

All of the lights, and TV screens go dead. Every traffic signal goes dark.

Other PEOPLE begin to mumble and question what's going on. Clark and Lois just stop and look around.

CLARK

Blackout?

LOIS

Maybe... But something feels wrong here.

Suddenly, the various TV screens come to life. On them is the image of Leslie Willis in full "Wire" mode. She has a big smile on her face.

On the screen, the word "Live" appears in the lower left-hand corner in white text. On the other side of the screen, the word "Wire" appears in blue. Since we all know where this is going, I'll just refer to her as Livewire from this point on.

LIVEWIRE

Hello, Metropolis.

CLARK

Isn't that...?

LOIS

Leslie Willis.

LIVEWIRE

No need to panic. I come to you with a message.

(MORE)

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

(beat)

There's a new hero in town. Someone to look up to that is actually from this planet. You want to know what I can do? Well, you'll just have to wait and see me in action.

(beat)

Oh, what the heck. Here's a little something to hold you over.

All but one of the screens go black. From the remaining screen, Livewire emerges (normal size, not giant TV size). She flies through the air, crackling with electricity as she passes the people below.

Also as she passes, the bulbs in every street light pop. The text that scrolls along the side of the building now reads "New Hero In Town".

Livewire stops moving as she passes over Clark and Lois. She looks down at Lois and shoots her a smile that literally glows.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Tell Superman I send my best.

After she says this, Livewire shoots into the night sky on a bolt of lightning.

Once she is gone, Clark and Lois look at each other. Power returns to Glenmorgan Square. TVs and all of the lights that aren't broken resume their normal functions.

CLARK

I should get back to the Planet.

LOIS

I'll be at the station. Call me if you find anything out.

Clark nods and runs off. Lois rushes off in the opposite direction.

EXT. SKY OVER METROPOLIS - NIGHT

Superman flies across the sky, searching for Livewire. He sees nothing.

Superman pauses mid-air and pulls out a cell phone. He dials and puts it to his ear.

SUPERMAN

Jimmy, it's Clark. I need you to find me an address.

(beat)

Leslie Willis.

(extended beat)

Thanks.

Superman hangs up the phone and shoots off, toward the ground below.

INT. LESLIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Livewire is sitting on her couch, watching A GBS news woman, MARIA SONDAL on the TV. Livewire's holding a bag of microwaveable popcorn in her hand, which begins to pop as she holds it.

MARIA

(on TV)

...a short time ago. Witnesses say that the power in Glenmorgan Square began to go out just before the arrival of this mystery woman. GBS contributor Lois Lane happened to be on the street at the time. She joins us now. Lois, first off, I'd like to welcome you to the GBS family.

The picture on the TV changes to the image of Lois, sitting at the same news desk as the news woman.

LOIS

Thank you, Maria.

MARIA

So, tell us what happened. You were on your way to the GBS building when this happened, right?

LOIS

Correct. I was coming here to investigate the disappearance of Leslie Willis last night and the power in the square just went out. A few seconds later, Leslie appeared on all of the screens in the area.

MARIA

So this is Leslie Willis?

LOIS

Yes.

MARIA

We have a picture taken at the scene by one passer by. Let's take a look at that now.

On the screen, an image of Livewire on one of the TV screens appears.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Apparently, she is now going by the name "Live Wire". Since the appearance of Superman, it seems to be a fad amongst the newsworthy to choose a catchy nickname.

LIVEWIRE

It's not "Live Wire" you ditz! It's Wire! Just Wire! The "Live" was part of the TV shtick. Duh!

Livewire throws some of her now-fully-popped popcorn at the TV.

LOIS

In all fairness to Superman, he didn't actually choose that name. Nor did Metallo. That was actually the name of the material used to construct his body. Livewire seems to have picked the name in an attempt to stand out and compete with Superman.

MARIA

Compete?

LOIS

Leslie Willis was a somewhat well known podcaster who attacked Superman as her gimmick. Now it looks like she wants to show the world how special she is by outshining Superman.

LIVEWIRE

Oh, go fall off a building... again. Boo!

MARIA

Do you think this woman is friend or foe?

LOIS

It's a little early to tell, but from what I know of Leslie, she's not the most stable person in the world. She was actually admitted to a mental institution as a teenager.

LIVEWIRE

Yeah! 'Cause I thought I caused my dad's heart attack... BY SHOCKING HIM!

(beat)

Actually, I probably did do that. Oops.

LOIS

Until we know more about her, it's probably too soon to make a call on her motives.

LIVEWIRE

My motives?

Leslie stands up and takes a step toward the TV.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

I'll show you my motives, you loud-mouthed little stick figure.

Electricity flows over Livewire as she leans toward the TV, about to shoot herself right into it. However, a voice from behind her causes her to pause.

SUPERMAN (O.S.)

Leslie...

Livewire turns around and finds Superman standing behind her.

LIVEWIRE

Actually, it's Livewire... apparently.

SUPERMAN

We should talk.

LIVEWIRE

Talk? About what?

SUPERMAN

I just want to make sure you're not dangerous.

LIVEWIRE

The only person I'm a danger to is you.

SUPERMAN

I don't even know you.

LIVEWIRE

You don't need to. I know you. I know about the damage you've caused this city. I know the threat you pose. You might fool everyone else, Superfreak, but you don't fool me. And now I'm strong enough to stand up to you. Thanks for that, by the way.

SUPERMAN

I don't want to fight you.

LIVEWIRE

Then you better keep your nose clean, kiddo.

Livewire grins and turns into a bolt of electricity, shooting into the TV. On the screen, her face can still be seen.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

I got my eye on you.

Livewire's eyes crackle with energy just before she takes a step backward, onto the GBS set that Lois is reporting from.

On the TV screen, Lois and Maria gasp. Livewire stands between them and looks into the camera.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

I'm so misunderstood.

She blows a quick kiss to the camera just before she bolts into an overhead light (a term I'll use so I don't always have to say "turns into a lightning bolt and shoots..."), and vanishes.

Superman watches this, not liking what he's seeing.

EXT. GBS BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

Superman is now on the roof with Lois. They're looking out over the rest of the city.

LOIS
You and the independent media.
What's with that?

Lois smirks and looks to Superman, but he's not smiling.

LOIS (CONT'D)
You're worried.

SUPERMAN
I don't trust her, if that's what
you mean. She's unstable.
Unpredictable.

LOIS
I think she redefines
unpredictable. How do you stop a
woman who can zap herself through
the TV? She can be anywhere.

SUPERMAN
I wish I had an answer. The best we
can do right now is wait for her to
make a move. On the bright side,
she doesn't seem interested in
hurting anyone.

LOIS
Except you.

SUPERMAN
I don't think that'll be a problem.

LOIS
Just be careful. Don't
underestimate her. We don't know
what she's capable of.

Superman turns to Lois. He smiles now.

SUPERMAN
You worry about me?

LOIS
Not in a girlie way, but yeah. You
are the only guy I know who battles
evil cyborgs and lightning ladies.

SUPERMAN
Don't forget the toy man.

Lois chuckles at the thought.

LOIS

I could never forget the toy man.

(beat)

I hand this to you, Superman. You always manage to keep life interesting.

There's a long silence. Superman turns back toward the city.

SUPERMAN

Maybe we should get together sometime when life's not so chaotic.

Lois is thrown by this. She looks down.

LOIS

You couldn't have asked me this a week ago?

SUPERMAN

Why would it matter?

Lois hesitates and turns her back to him, taking a few steps as she tries to word this correctly.

LOIS

I can't believe I'm about to say this to Superman.

She turns around and looks him in the eyes.

LOIS (CONT'D)

I think there's someone else. I think I have feelings for someone else.

Superman's a little surprised. He doesn't know quite how to react.

SUPERMAN

Oh.

(beat)

It's times like this that I become very aware of the tights and cape.

LOIS

I'm sorry.

SUPERMAN

There's nothing to be sorry about. You deserve to be happy. With someone normal.

LOIS

It's not about that. I usually like a guy who keeps the thrill alive. It's just... I don't know. It happened. I was as surprised as anyone.

SUPERMAN

Do I know him?

LOIS

I think so. I'd tell you who he is, but I think I should probably tell him first.

SUPERMAN

You haven't told him?

LOIS

I'm not so good with the sentimental stuff. Breaking up, I'm good at. Telling a guy that I might, y'know, have feelings for him... That, I suck at.

Superman takes a step closer to Lois and looks her in the eyes warmly.

SUPERMAN

I wouldn't worry if I were you. He'd have to be a little crazy not to feel the same way.

LOIS

Thanks.

There's another awkward silence between them. Neither of them knows where to take the conversation from here.

Lois smiles.

LOIS (CONT'D)

You're a pal.

She punches Superman in the arm in a playful manner, still smiling.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Ow.

Superman can't help but chuckle. Lois is about to say something in response to this chuckle, but Superman's smile quickly drops. He turns his head toward the city below.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 No! My baby's in there! Stop!
 Please, stop!

LOIS
 Something's happening.

SUPERMAN
 I have to go.

Before Lois knows it, Superman shoots into the sky. Lois walks to the edge of the roof.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

A woman, FRAN, is standing near one of the gas pumps, crying. SEVERAL PEOPLE are gathered around her.

Superman lands nearby and walks to her.

SUPERMAN
 What happened?

FRAN
 By baby! He just took my baby.

SUPERMAN
 Who?

One of the men nearby is a GAS STATION ATTENDANT.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT
 A guy just stole her car. Her baby was in the back.

SUPERMAN
 Take care of her. I'll be back.

Before anyone can respond, Superman shoots off.

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET - NIGHT

Superman flies down the street, looking down at each car below as he goes. Finally, he spots a white SUV down below, weaving through traffic. He uses his x-ray vision to look inside and sees a young man, DANNY, with tattoos up and down his arms, driving the car with a gun in one hand.

In the back of the car, a BABY sleeps.

Superman swoops down.

INT. WHITE SUV - NIGHT

Danny is watching the road closely as he weaves in and out of traffic, checking his mirrors to make sure that nobody is following.

As he checks his mirrors, he doesn't notice that the traffic light ahead has turned red. He looks back to the street just in time to see another car cross in front of him.

Danny slams on the breaks and closes his eyes. Nothing happens.

When he opens his eyes, he sees Superman lowering the car onto the side of the road. Danny looks Superman in the eyes as the car is set down.

SUPERMAN

Put the car in park and turn it off. Now.

Danny doesn't move. He's too shocked to respond.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

I have all night.

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET - CONTINUOUS

Superman is holding the SUV up, staring down Danny. As he does this, Livewire bolts her way down from a nearby street lamp and walks up behind Superman. He doesn't see her.

SUPERMAN

Turn off the car.

Livewire crosses in front of Superman, standing under the car that he's holding up.

LIVEWIRE

Car trouble?

SUPERMAN

This isn't a good time.

LIVEWIRE

Gotta disagree.

Livewire looks up at the SUV.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Cars today. All run by computers.

She raises her hand and puts it on the bottom of the car.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

One jolt and I can turn off the car, and the guy inside.

SUPERMAN

No!

The world slows down as Superman shoots underneath the car, diving past Livewire and throwing her to the street behind the car before he catches the bottom of the SUV and lowers it to the street.

Normal time resumes. Livewire is on the ground and not too happy.

LIVEWIRE

Dude!

SUPERMAN

There's a baby in the car.

LIVEWIRE

Oh.

Superman looks through the back window, at Danny.

SUPERMAN

Turn it off!

The car shuts off. Superman turns around and looks at Livewire.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

You can't just go around shocking people.

Livewire bolts up to her feet and looks Superman squarely in the eyes.

LIVEWIRE

No?

She extends a hand and shoots a bolt of electricity from it, catching Danny who is now attempting to run away. Danny is thrown through the air and hits the ground, unconscious?

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

'Cause the way I see it, I just caught our perp.

Superman takes a step closer to Livewire.

SUPERMAN

We need to talk.

LIVEWIRE

Not really.

Livewire turns to walk away. Superman superspeeds in front of her.

SUPERMAN

Yes really.

A police car arrives. TWO OFFICERS get out and spot Danny on the sidewalk. One of the officers goes to Danny while the other goes to the SUV to check on the baby.

LIVEWIRE

I know that you like to think of yourself as the unofficial ruler of this city, but you're not the most powerful person here anymore. You don't get to play king.

SUPERMAN

I'm not trying to rule anyone. I'm trying to keep this city safe.

LIVEWIRE

And Hitler was just trying to cleanse humanity of its impurities. The bad guy never thinks he's the bad guy, Superman.

SUPERMAN

You could have killed someone. Have you stopped to consider that? You're reckless.

LIVEWIRE

I'm not the one who destroys buildings on a semi-regular basis.

SUPERMAN

I was trying to keep this city safe.

LIVEWIRE

The only thing this city needs to be saved from is you.

Livewire holds up a hand and shoots a powerful bolt of electricity at Superman. He doesn't flinch.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

That would have been a lot cooler if you went flying.

Superman is not amused. Livewire shoots him an awkward smile and extends a hand.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Pals?

(extended beat)

No?

Livewire shrugs, and then bolts into the night sky.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Clark and Lois are standing near their desks, with Jimmy and Perry.

PERRY

Superman and Livewire face off, and what do we have to show for it? No explosions. No epic battles in the streets. We don't even have a picture.

JIMMY

It happened really fast. I didn't have time to get there.

PERRY

That's not an excuse.

(to Lois)

Track down the video footage from the cop car that responded to the call. Look for any security or traffic cameras in the area. I want something.

LOIS

On it.

CLARK

The police on the scene said that she tried to shoot Superman with a bolt of lightning.

LOIS

Is he okay?

CLARK

They say he didn't even flinch.

Lois smiles.

PERRY

Could this get more anti-climactic?

CLARK

Just because she doesn't pose a threat to Superman doesn't mean she's not a threat to everyone else.

(to Lois)

If you're going after her, you should be careful.

LOIS

Aren't I always?

CLARK

Do you really want me to answer that?

(beat)

Maybe I should help Lois on this one.

LOIS

The company might be nice.

Clark, Jimmy and Perry are all slightly shocked by Lois' willingness to partner up.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Not that I need the help.

PERRY

As fun as a family outing sounds, we still have an entire paper to fill. I want you to stay on your story. It'd be nice to see some progress on that front.

CLARK

Yes, sir.

PERRY

Okay. Get to it.

Perry walks away. Clark and Lois sit at their desks and start working. Jimmy is left standing, with not much to do.

JIMMY

I'll just... be over there.

Jimmy wanders off in some random direction.

After a moment, Lois stands and grabs her jacket.

LOIS

I'm off to the station.

CLARK

Good luck.

LOIS

Luck has no part in my work, Kent.
You know that.

CLARK

Right. You're just good. I keep
forgetting.

Lois is ready to leave, but she lingers for a few extra seconds, trying to decide if she wants to say something to Clark.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Something up?

LOIS

(beat)

No. I'll see you later.

Clark nods and gets back to work. Lois walks off, cursing her own cowardice.

INT. BELLE MARY HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Clark is walking down the hallways with NANCY WIELDER, the school's counselor. She's carrying a stack of papers, and going about her work. Her discussion with Clark seems less important to her than getting where she was going.

CLARK

If you could just tell me what type
of student Marty was, it might help
me with my story.

NANCY

There's not much to tell, Mr. Kent,
and even less that I'd tell you if
I could.

CLARK

I understand. I was just hoping for
some idea of who he was. What
groups he ran with. What classes he
excelled at.

NANCY

He was a decent student. Mostly
B's. A couple of A's.

(MORE)

NANCY (CONT'D)

Seemed like he lost interest in the last year or so. Nothing unusual for a teenager.

CLARK

You say he got B's in most of his classes? His father told me that he was an A student.

NANCY

I'm sure his father believes that too. Truth is, his father never showed much interest in his son's academic career. I tried to schedule several meetings to discuss his son's declining grades, but he always had a reason to reschedule.

Clark's puzzled by this.

CLARK

What classes did he get A's in?

NANCY

I'm not sure. I don't have his file on hand.

CLARK

Do you know who he was friends with? Who he hung out with?

NANCY

Up until a year or so before his death, I'd mostly see him with Brent Jarvis and Janis Leonard. Smart kids who just keep their heads down and try to make it through the day without trouble.

CLARK

What happened?

NANCY

He just changed. Nothing I don't see a hundred times a year. He got more quiet, more withdrawn.

CLARK

Did he make new friends?

NANCY

I didn't really see him with many kids here in school.

(MORE)

NANCY (CONT'D)

(beat)

Except maybe Vinnie Davis.

CLARK

Who's he?

NANCY

She is- or was- Marty's girlfriend.

The bell rings. STUDENTS pour into the hallway.

CLARK

Any idea where I could find Vinnie?

NANCY

I don't need you harassing my students, Mr. Kent.

CLARK

I just have a couple of questions.

Nancy looks at Clark, trying to decide whether or not to tell him.

EXT. BELLE MARY HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Clark is standing near the steps as VINNIE DAVIS sits on them. She's a teenager, and much more of a "Faith" than a "Buffy" (which you'll have to look up if you don't get it).

She's currently tying one of her boots.

VINNIE

Who are you?

CLARK

Clark Kent. I'm with the Daily Planet.

VINNIE

Right. Leave now.

CLARK

I just wanted to ask you a couple of questions.

VINNIE

And all I ever wanted was a pony. Does it look like I have a pony?

CLARK

You knew Marty Rudolph.

Vinnie stands up and starts to walk away. Clark follows her.

CLARK (CONT'D)
You were his girlfriend.

VINNIE
Do I have to kick you ass to get
you to leave me alone?

CLARK
Best I can tell, you were his only
friend toward the end.

Vinnie doesn't respond. Clark cuts in front of her, blocking her path. She stops walking.

CLARK (CONT'D)
Someone killed him. Someone walked
into his life and took it away.

VINNIE
Is this the part where you tell me
that you really care?

CLARK
I'm not playing games with you.
Marty's not the only one who died.
There have been more just like him
and there will continue to be more
until someone stops whoever's
behind these murders.

VINNIE
Good luck with that. When you get
the Peace Prize, tell Gore I said
hey.

Vinnie pushes past Clark and continues on her way out of there. Clark doesn't follow.

CLARK
If I were murdered, I would hope
that the one friend I had in the
world would at least care.

Vinnie stops walking. She turns around and walks back to Clark, looking him squarely in the eyes.

VINNIE
Don't you ever...

She realizes that she's about to take the bait, and just smiles. She turns and walks away once again. After a few steps, she turns around.

VINNIE (CONT'D)

Marty has more friends than you give him credit for. If I were you, I'd stop poking around in his business.

Vinnie walks away for real now. Clark doesn't follow her.

INT. DAILY PLANET - PERRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Clark walks into Perry's office with a few sheets of papers. He places them in front of Perry and stands back.

CLARK

Gang members. That's the link.

PERRY

What?

CLARK

All of the victims who burned to death had some sort of gang connection.

(beat)

Marty Rudolph fell in with the wrong crowd during the last year of his life. The Knights of Metropolis were also attacked. Bik's auto shop was investigated last year. Police suspected that the shop's owner, a former member of the Wormwood street gang himself, was processing stolen cars for some of his old buddies.

PERRY

How does this explain the mystery weapon, or the locked doors?

CLARK

I'm working on it. I'm also trying to figure out a common enemy for these gangs. Between these three cases and a couple of others that might be connected, it doesn't look like there's any one gang in the city that hasn't been touched. At least none powerful enough to pull this off.

PERRY

Unless we're looking at a new gang.
Someone who wants to get rid of the
competition.

CLARK

Yes, sir.

PERRY

This is a dangerous story you're
working on, Kent. You sure you're
still up to it?

CLARK

Someone has to. Might as well be
me.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Clark is walking back to his desk when Jimmy catches up to
him.

JIMMY

Clark.

CLARK

Hey, Jimmy.

JIMMY

I did it. I asked her out.

(beat)

Actually, I mumbled something that
even I couldn't understand and then
she asked me out. But we're going.

CLARK

That's great.

JIMMY

Yeah. So, I was wondering... What
do I do now?

CLARK

You should probably go out with
her.

JIMMY

No. I know. I just mean, where? I
don't date too much.

Clark stops walking and takes a moment to think.

CLARK

Don't do dinner and a movie.
Sitting in a dark theater is like
being out alone. Do something that
you're comfortable with. It'll help
you relax and have fun.

JIMMY

Great.
(beat)
Like what?

CLARK

I don't know.
(beat)
Do you dance?

JIMMY

No.

CLARK

What do you do?

JIMMY

I take pictures.

CLARK

Anything else?

JIMMY

Play video games.

Clark takes another moment to think.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

She's Morgan Edge's daughter. She's
probably used to fancy restaurants
and really long cars.

CLARK

She also works with underprivileged
kids, so she's probably not caught
up in fancy restaurants and really
long cars.

A thought suddenly occurs to Clark.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Does she work with any gang
members?

JIMMY

I'm not sure. I think a couple of
the guys there used to be in gangs.
(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

I don't think they are anymore though. Some of them even work for Olivia's father.

CLARK

Do you think you could set up a meeting with her? I'd like to ask her a few questions.

JIMMY

I guess so.

CLARK

Thanks, Jimmy.

JIMMY

Yeah. No problem.

Something on the other side of the room catches Clark's eye. He starts to walk toward it, leaving Jimmy behind.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

So... What about my date plans?

Jimmy eventually sees what Clark is walking toward and follows him. They end up near one of the TV monitors, which has a GBS News broadcast playing on it, showing a helicopter's view of a dam.

The graphics on screen read : "Bomb Scare At Reeves Dam"

JIMMY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

Clark turns around.

CLARK

I should get back to work on my story.

JIMMY

But this is big news.

CLARK

Yeah. I'm sure I'll get the gist of it later.

Clark walks off, out of view.

JIMMY

If you say so.

A sonic boom can be heard in the background.

A moment later, Perry walks out of his office and calls out to Jimmy.

PERRY

Olsen! Get down there and take some pictures. Lois is already on her way.

JIMMY

(calling back)

On my way.

Jimmy walks off.

EXT. REEVES DAM - DAY

The dam is set in the middle of a densely wooded area. There is a road across the top of the dam, on which several cars are now stopped in either direction.

Toward the center of this road is a man, SAM WEBBER-HEALIE. He's a middle-aged man with a very worn, dirty look to him. His clothes were probably very nice at one point, but haven't been for a while now.

In his hand, he holds a remote control. He looks around at the PEOPLE around him. Some in their cars. Others have gotten out.

SAM

Nobody leaves! Nobody! If one of you leaves, I swear I will blow this whole damn place up!

(beat, then a chuckle)

Damn... Get it?

There is a gasp in the crowd behind Sam. Then a whisper comes from someone else.

WHISPERED VOICE

Please help us.

Sam smiles.

SAM

I knew you'd come. I knew you couldn't resist. You can try to save them, but you can't. If you try to stop me, my bombs will go off. If my finger moves from this button--

Sam turns around. His smile drops.

SAM (CONT'D)

You?

REVEAL Livewire, standing nearby.

LIVEWIRE

You don't have to sound so happy to see me.

(beat)

Why don't you put that thing down and we can talk?

SAM

I'm not putting it down.

LIVEWIRE

Fine. We can talk anyway. So... You wouldn't happen to have a pacemaker, would you?

Behind Sam, Superman lands. Livewire rolls her eyes.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Got this one covered, Supes.

Sam turns around to look at Superman. He smiles when he sees him.

SAM

I knew you'd come. I knew you couldn't resist--

LIVEWIRE

You're not so good with the improv, are you?

SUPERMAN

Deactivate the bombs.

SAM

No.

SUPERMAN

I don't want to hurt you, but I will if I have to.

LIVEWIRE

I said I have this one covered. Now, shoo. Go away.

SAM

You can't stop it. If you try to, my bombs will explode.

SUPERMAN

Why are you doing this?

Sam chuckles.

SAM

Didn't have anything better to do.
Didn't have any job to go to.
Didn't have a family to go home to.
I don't have anything. I poured my
life into this place and they fired
me three months before I was going
to retire. Do you know what that
feels like?

Livewire yawns and checks her imaginary watch.

SUPERMAN

I know it's hard, but killing
innocent people isn't the way to
make it better.

SAM

There are no innocent people,
Superman. You should know that more
than anyone. You should be happy to
see them die. They're as filthy as
everyone else on this planet. As
hateful. Caring only about
themselves and their small little
lives.

LIVEWIRE

That was redundant.

Sam turns toward Livewire.

SAM

Shut up!

Livewire steps toward Sam.

LIVEWIRE

I am so over this.

She extends a hand, shooting a bolt of lightning from her
palm, at Sam.

SUPERMAN

No!

Superman supersedes toward Sam, moving him out of the way of
the lightning blast, and taking the blast himself. He barely
feels it.

Sam stumbles and falls to the ground, dropping his remote control. He looks up at Superman.

SAM

Uh-oh.

Time slows down as Superman shoots across the dam, attempting to grab the dozen or so explosives that have been placed along the road.

He manages to grab them all, grabbing the final explosive just as it explodes. Superman throws them into the nearby river.

Time resumes as the explosion sends water into the air and shakes the dam.

LIVEWIRE

Totally my bad. Sorry.

Sam gets up and tries to run away.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Hey!

Livewire shoots lightning at Sam once again, striking him down, unconscious.

Superman turns toward her.

SUPERMAN

What do you think you're doing?

LIVEWIRE

Saving lives.

SUPERMAN

You could have gotten everyone killed.

LIVEWIRE

I saved them.

SUPERMAN

You caused the bombs to go off. I'm the one who had to save them from you.

LIVEWIRE

Right. You love taking the credit, don't you?

Livewire looks around at all of the people who are still watching them.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

You'd think they would have run off by now.

SUPERMAN

Listen to me...

LIVEWIRE

Listen? You want me to listen?

(beat)

You're not my boss. You're not the daddy of Metropolis. You're not even human. You don't get to preach to me.

SUPERMAN

You need to learn to control your powers. You need to take time to develop them.

LIVEWIRE

What I need is for you to get off the high horse. You want me to control my powers? How about you? I'm not the one who destroys half the city every time I have an off day. I'm not the one who causes people to live in fear.

SUPERMAN

Look around.

Livewire takes a look around at the people who are watching. Most of them look as though they're waiting for her to explode.

LIVEWIRE

I'm not the bad guy! He is! He's not one of us. Why can't you see that?

Livewire takes a few steps, trying to figure out a way of pushing past the frustration of all these delusional people. She looks at them again, smiling in disbelief and shaking her head.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

They don't even see it. They can't even see how you're taking over. Controlling everything. Forcing people to live according to your laws.

SUPERMAN

That's not what I'm doing.

LIVEWIRE

That's why you're attacking me.
Making me look like the bad guy. I
haven't done anything to hurt
anyone and you're turning everyone
against me.

SUPERMAN

You're dangerous.

LIVEWIRE

To you! That's it! I'm dangerous to
you and your new world order.
There's someone who can stand up to
you and you can't stand that. You
have to put an end to it.

(beat)

Well, I got news for you. I ain't
that easy to take down.

Behind Superman, three cars lift into the air.

A woman screams. Superman turns to see what's happening. When
he looks at the cars, he sees a small child in the back of
one of them. He turns back to Livewire.

SUPERMAN

Put them down! There's a child in
there.

Livewire doesn't hear what he's saying. She's focusing on the
cars.

LIVEWIRE

Catch.

At once, the cars shoot toward Superman. He swats two of them
out of the way, catching the third (the one with the child
inside). He sets it down gently. The child gets out and runs
toward his mother.

SUPERMAN

Clear the dam!

The people begin to flee. Some in their cars. Others by foot.

Superman turns around to face Livewire, but she is nowhere to
be seen. He stands for a moment, waiting for some sign of
where she is.

LIVEWIRE (O.S.)

Psst!

Superman looks up and finds Livewire hovering above him.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Thought you were the only one who
could fly?

She shoots a blast of lightning at Superman. He doesn't feel a thing.

Superman flies into the air, ready to face off with Livewire.

SUPERMAN

It doesn't have to be like this.

LIVEWIRE

It really does.

SUPERMAN

Your powers don't hurt me.

LIVEWIRE

Then I'll have to get creative.

Two more cars rise into the air, on either side of Superman. They then move toward each other, aiming to crush Superman in between.

While the cars do manage to crash into each other, Superman quickly throws them aside, undamaged. One of the cars rips through an electrical line that runs across the dam. The line falls to the ground, jumping with energy.

SUPERMAN

Enough!

Superman flies toward Livewire at superspeed, but when he reaches her, she bolts down to the ground, landing near the electrical line. She grabs into it, and absorbs its power.

She begins to glow and crackle as power surges through her and she tosses the cable aside.

LIVEWIRE

Stop me now.

Livewire bolts into the sky, next to Superman. She grabs him and sends a jolt of electricity through his body with all of the power that she has.

Superman doesn't react at first. After a moment, he grabs Livewire's arm and effortlessly throws her through the air.

She eventually regains control of her flight and turns toward him again. She's growing very impatient.

As her frustration boils over once again, Livewire shoots a blast of energy at Superman. He effortlessly absorbs the energy.

Livewire screams, throwing both hands out and shooting energy from both. One of the blasts hits Superman. The other passes him by, hitting the trees below and setting them ablaze.

Superman sees the fire below, and looks back to Livewire. He's done playing games.

SUPERMAN

This ends now.

Superman shoots toward Livewire and grabs onto her. She quickly bolts her way out of his grip, across the sky. When she regains her form, she waves her hand at another car from below, sending it flying toward Superman. As it nears him, she blasts it with a shot of energy, causing the car to explode.

Superman catches the fiery mess and throws it into the water below.

LIVEWIRE

Never figured you for a litter-bug.

Superman shoots a blast of heat vision at Livewire, catching her squarely in the chest and sending her flying backward through the air and slamming into the road below.

She bolts to her feet, holding a hand over her chest and looking up at Superman. In a flash of lightning, Livewire is once again at Superman's side. She extends her hand and shoots a blast of electricity from it, toward Superman's head.

Superman moves his head out of the way, once again sending the blast into the woods below and setting more trees on fire.

Superman grabs Livewire and attempts to hold onto her, but she once again bolts through his grip and puts some space between the two of them.

Superman looks at the fires below. He knows that this can't go on. He looks around the area for some idea of how to handle the situation. Finally, he spots his answer.

As Livewire shoots a blast of electricity at him, Superman flies downward.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)
You may be faster than a speeding
bullet, Superman!

Livewire bolts through the air, cutting off Superman's path.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)
But you can't outrun me.

She raises her hands, which crackle with electricity.

SUPERMAN
I wasn't trying to.

Superman blasts Livewire with another shot of heat-vision, sending her flying downward through the air. She attempts to bolt her way out of the spin, but she's not quite fast enough.

She splashes into the river before she is able to bolt away.

Electricity spider-webs through the water as Livewire vanishes.

Around the river, dead fish begin to rise to the surface.

Superman takes a moment to catch his breath. He then turns toward the fiery woods.

EXT. REEVES DAM - LATER

Police cars are now parked on the bridge. Sam is being loaded into one of them by two OFFICERS.

Superman is giving a statement to another officer. When he's done, he walks toward Lois and Jimmy who are waiting nearby. Jimmy snaps a photo of him as he nears them.

LOIS
So, rumor has it that Livewire may
no longer be living up to her name.
Is it true?

SUPERMAN
I'm not sure.

LOIS
What does that mean?

SUPERMAN
She hit the water and disappeared.
I looked for her, but I also had to
put out the fires that she started.

LOIS

What does your gut say?

SUPERMAN

My gut says that I wish this whole thing could have been avoided.

JIMMY

Is it true that you didn't even flinch when she blasted you?

LOIS

You can ignore him.

SUPERMAN

No.

(beat)

She didn't hurt me. She tried, but failed.

LOIS

I'll add it to the list of things she sucks at.

SUPERMAN

Don't dismiss her so easily, Lois. I don't agree with her actions, but in her own mind she probably believes that she was trying to do the right thing. She came here to help.

LOIS

The crazy people never know they're crazy. It's how the rest of us can tell that they are.

SUPERMAN

Maybe we're all crazy too.

LOIS

Deep.

(beat)

So, I guess this caps off my Livewire investigation. Death by... drowning?

SUPERMAN

Water and electricity don't mix very well.

JIMMY

That's true.

SUPERMAN
You need anything else?

LOIS
I don't think so.

SUPERMAN
Then I should probably go.

LOIS
Okay.

Superman starts to walk off.

LOIS (CONT'D)
I'll see you later.

He turns and gives her a polite nod before flying into the air.

JIMMY
Is he okay?

LOIS
He just killed a woman.

JIMMY
Right, but she was the bad guy.
(beat)
Girl.
(beat)
Woman.

LOIS
To the rest of us, that fact makes a difference. To him, a life is a life. It's what makes him Superman.

Lois turns toward the river and takes in the view.

INT. LEXCORP BUILDING - LEX'S OFFICE - DAY

Lex is sitting at his desk, looking over some papers. Mercy walks into the office and sits in a nearby chair.

MERCY
Tech department reports steady progress. They should be all set by tonight.

LEX
Good.

MERCY

I have to tell you, I didn't actually expect them to meet your deadline. I figured it'd take them at least a couple more weeks. Maybe months.

LEX

Mm-hmm.

MERCY

I guess those brainy types like to pad the news a little. Make themselves look good when they finish early.

LEX

Can you not see that I'm busy?

MERCY

You're always busy. Now, if you ask me, you could use some down time every so often. Relax a little.

LEX

I'll relax when this project is finished.

Mercy stands up and walks to Lex's desk. She leans down on it.

MERCY

I'll look forward to it.

She turns and walks out of the office, giving him one last glance as she closes the door behind her.

Lex watches her leave.

INT. DAILY PLANET - CITY ROOM - DAY

Clark is at his desk, typing something up. Jimmy is standing nearby, excitedly telling Clark what happened to Livewire.

JIMMY

Zap. Gone. Like, really gone.

Clark is far less excited than Jimmy.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Not that he meant to do it or anything. It's not like he enjoyed it, but still...

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

(beat)
Are you okay?

Clark looks up at him.

CLARK

Hmm?

JIMMY

You seem distracted.

CLARK

Just working.

JIMMY

Right.

(beat)
So, I talked to Olivia about the meeting you wanted. She says that she's there whenever you want to stop by.

CLARK

Thanks, Jimmy. I appreciate it.

JIMMY

Can I come?

(beat)
Y'know... when you go.

CLARK

Sure.

Clark looks at his watch.

CLARK (CONT'D)

It's not too late. Maybe we could head out there in a few minutes.

JIMMY

Yeah. I'll go grab my camera.

CLARK

I don't think I'll need any pictures.

JIMMY

It'll look weird if I go without my camera.

CLARK

Considering that you have a date with her, I'm pretty sure Olivia knows you like her.

JIMMY

I know. I just don't want to seem like a stalker.

CLARK

So you're bringing your camera?

JIMMY

Yeah. Be right back.

Jimmy walks off. As he leaves, Lois arrives at her desk and sits down.

LOIS

I've officially closed the investigation into Leslie Willis. She was surprisingly boring for a supervillain.

CLARK

Is that what we're calling her now?

LOIS

Tends to happen when you hurl cars at Superman.

(beat)

And what's with these people and throwing cars around? Do they realize how expensive those things are?

Lois smiles at her own joke. Clark doesn't. His eyes are on his computer monitor.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Clark?

He looks at her.

CLARK

Sorry. I'm just distracted.

LOIS

Stressful day?

CLARK

Yeah.

LOIS

Then how 'bout dinner tonight? On me. We can, y'know... talk.

CLARK

I'm about to go meet someone about my story.

LOIS

That's okay. We can have dinner later. There's something I wanted to talk to you about.

CLARK

An important something?

LOIS

Not a national security issue, don't worry. We can talk about it later.

Jimmy comes back to Clark's desk. He has a camera in hand.

JIMMY

Ready?

CLARK

Yeah.

Clark stands up and puts on his jacket.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Nine o'clock?

LOIS

Sounds good.

INT. REEVES DAM - DAY

The generators are chugging away inside the dam as DAM WORKERS go about inspecting the machinery.

One of the workers heads over to one of his co-workers, who is carrying a clipboard.

DAM WORKER

Doesn't seem to be any significant damage. Everything's running pretty smoothly.

DAM WORKER 2

Good. The last thing we need is another overhaul on this place.

The first dam worker chuckles at what must be an inside joke.

Before he can actually respond though, the generator begins to make a funny noise. Both workers look over to it.

DAM WORKER
Shoulda knocked on wood.

DAM WORKER 2
Do you see any wood in here?

The generator begins to crackle and spark. Electricity begins to shoot off of it, striking random spots within the dam.

DAM WORKER
Clear out!

Dam workers hurry to leave the area in order to avoid being struck.

The two dam workers that we have been following attempt to make their way to a nearby computer, but the computer is struck and explodes.

DAM WORKER 2
What the hell's going on here?

There is a high-pitched whine, which slowly builds into a more distinct scream.

The two dam workers look at each other. Moments later, a surge of electricity shoots off of the generator, striking them both down.

As the generator continues to go crazy, the electricity shooting off of it begins to focus on one area of the room, striking it constantly. Slowly, these strikes begin to take shape.

As the generator finally calms down and all of the damage that will be done to the room has been done, we see Livewire hovering just above the ground, still crackling with energy. Her eyes are closed.

After she stops crackling, she falls to the ground, weak and gasping for air.

She struggles to her feet and takes a look around, putting her hand on her head as it throbs.

LIVEWIRE
That... sucked.

She stumbles out of the room, stepping over the two limp bodies on the ground.

INT. YOUTH CENTER - DUSK

Clark and Jimmy are sitting down with Olivia.

OLIVIA

They're decent kids, Mr. Kent.
They've cleaned up their acts.

CLARK

I know. I think you've done a
wonderful job with this place. I
was just wondering if any of your
kids still had ties to their old
friends.

OLIVIA

I don't know. I hope not. Frankly,
I wouldn't go around asking them to
call up these old friends even if
they could. Getting them back into
those circles could be dangerous.

CLARK

I understand.

OLIVIA

If you don't mind my asking, why
are you so interested all of the
sudden? It's not like gang violence
is new around here.

CLARK

It's for a story I'm working on. I
really can't elaborate just yet.

OLIVIA

I see. So you want me to give you
all of the information I have
without you returning the favor.

CLARK

I didn't mean--

OLIVIA

If you really do think that one of
my kids is involved with these
gangs, this whole center could be
at risk. I have small children in
this place at times, Mr. Kent.

CLARK

And if I believed that they were in
danger, I would do everything in my
power to stop it.

OLIVIA

By writing a story? What then? What happens when you have your by-line and this is old news? You don't have to live in the mess that you create. We do.

CLARK

I'm not that type of reporter.

OLIVIA

You're a reporter. There's only one kind.

Olivia stands up.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

I should be getting back to work.

Clark and Jimmy stand.

CLARK

I'm sorry if I offended you in any way.

OLIVIA

It's fine. Have a good day, Mr. Kent.

Clark looks over to Jimmy.

CLARK

I'll be outside.

Clark walks off, leaving Jimmy alone with Olivia.

OLIVIA

You brought the camera, but didn't take any pictures.

JIMMY

I just thought... I mean, I wanted to...

OLIVIA

Stalk me?

JIMMY

No. I didn't--

OLIVIA

(grins)
I'm joking.

JIMMY
So we're still on for our date?

OLIVIA
Yeah.

Olivia leans a little closer.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Bring the camera.

Jimmy's eyes widen. Olivia turns and walks toward her office. Jimmy takes a moment to compose himself.

EXT. YOUTH CENTER - DUSK

Clark is standing outside of the youth center. His mind is wandering as he paces back and forth with his eyes on the ground.

Not paying attention to what is right in front of him, Clark accidentally bumps into Trevor, who is walking toward the youth center. Trevor drops his cell phone.

CLARK
I'm sorry. I wasn't--

TREVOR
Whatever. Forget it, man.

Trevor picks up his cell phone. As he does, Clark takes a look at the phone.

After picking up his phone, Trevor walks into the youth center. A moment later, Jimmy walks out and catches up with Clark.

CLARK
Did you see that kid?

JIMMY
What kid?

CLARK
The one who walked into the center just a second ago.

JIMMY
Yeah. What about him? He's one of the local kids.

CLARK

Pretty expensive cell phone for a local kid. I don't even think that model comes out until next month.

JIMMY

I think he works with Olivia's father.

Clark nods, but doesn't respond. He looks toward the youth center, appearing to stare at the wall.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Clark?

(beat)

Clark?

Clark looks away from the wall, a little puzzled.

CLARK

(mumbled)

Lead.

JIMMY

What?

Clark looks to Jimmy, realizing how odd he must look to Jimmy right now.

CLARK

Um...

Clark notices a small diner across the street.

CLARK (CONT'D)

You wanna get something to drink?

JIMMY

Are you okay?

CLARK

Just thinking. It's a reporter thing.

JIMMY

Ah.

CLARK

Drink?

JIMMY

Sure.

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET - NIGHT

Livewire walks down the street, still a little out of it. She now has a long black jacket on and keeps her head down to avoid drawing attention to herself.

As she walks, she keeps a hand up on the nearest wall in order to keep her balance.

Eventually, she comes to an electronics store that has several TVs in the window. She stops and looks at the screens.

While we can't hear what's on the TV, we can see that it is yet another GBS news broadcast. The picture shows Reeves Dam from earlier, and the caption on the screen reads "Villainess 'Livewire' Killed In Battle With Superman"

Livewire takes in the picture on the screen, troubled by it. She places her hand over the word "Villainess" and looks around the area to make sure nobody is watching her.

When she looks back to the screen, it appears as though she is hurt by what she is seeing.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Clark and Jimmy are sitting at a table near the window. Clark has taken off his jacket, which is now slung over the back of his chair. They've been here for a while now.

Jimmy is holding a glass which once held soda, but now only has several cubes of quickly melting ice.

Jimmy looks from the glass, to Clark.

JIMMY

What are we doing here?

CLARK

I don't know. It's just a feeling I have.

JIMMY

A feeling? You think Olivia has something to do with whatever this new weapon is?

CLARK

I'm not sure.

JIMMY
I don't think she's that type of
girl, Clark. She's nice.

CLARK
People aren't always what they
seem.

Clark looks at his watch. It's 8:15.

JIMMY
Gonna be late?

CLARK
No.

JIMMY
Maybe you should call Lois. Tell
her--

CLARK
I'm not going to be late. Just a
few more minutes and we'll head
out.

JIMMY
Okay.

Jimmy holds his glass up as a WAITRESS passes the table.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Could I get another refill please?

CLARK
Jimmy, look.

Jimmy looks to Clark, who is looking toward the youth center
across the street. When Jimmy looks toward the center, he
sees Olivia and Trevor walking out of the youth center.
Olivia seems mad and Trevor is going after her.

Clark angles his head ever so slightly, listening to what
they are saying.

EXT. YOUTH CENTER - NIGHT

As we were watching before, Olivia is walking away from the
center while Trevor follows.

OLIVIA
...this whole time? Is that it?

TREVOR
Give me a break, Liv.

OLIVIA
A break? I've given you a break.
I've given you ton of them. I can't
believe you'd do this.

TREVOR
What do you think your father had
in mind when he let you start this
place?

Olivia stops walking. She turns toward Trevor.

OLIVIA
My father knew about this?

TREVOR
Your father's the one who hired me.
(beat)
Thanks for setting that up, by the
way.

OLIVIA
Oh, God.

Olivia takes a moment to think. She looks around nervously,
then back to Trevor.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
I don't care. I want it out. I want
you out. I'm done being a pawn in
this game.

TREVOR
It's not that simple.

OLIVIA
Make it that simple.

TREVOR
Your father's not gonna let that
happen.

OLIVIA
Let me worry about my father.

Olivia turns to walk away once again. As she turns, she
notices Clark and Jimmy in the diner, watching her. Though
they quickly turn away, it's too late. They've been spotted.

Olivia is disgusted. She continues to walk away.

Trevor looks across the street just in time to see Jimmy run out of the diner, going after Olivia.

JIMMY
Olivia, wait! Please!

A moment later, Clark walks out of the diner. Trevor doesn't give Clark much thought before turning and walking back into the youth center.

Clark follows him.

INT. YOUTH CENTER - NIGHT

The center appears closed now. There are only a few lights on.

Trevor walks toward a door marked "basement".

As Trevor enters the basement, Clark walks into the center. He looks toward the door.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Olivia walks down the street. She's not at all happy.

Jimmy rushes up behind her.

JIMMY
Olivia...

OLIVIA
Just go away, Jimmy. Leave me alone.

JIMMY
I just want to explain.

Olivia stops walking and turns toward Jimmy.

OLIVIA
Explain? What is there to explain? I've been around reporters my whole life. I don't need you to explain how these things work. So tell me, did you get your story? Big headline in tomorrow's paper?

JIMMY
I'm not a reporter.

INT. YOUTH CENTER - BASEMENT/LEAD ROOM - NIGHT

Trevor walks down the basement stairs, through the basement, to a large metal door with a heavy-duty lock on it. He unlocks the door and walks inside.

A moment later, Clark quietly walks down the stairs and toward the door. As he gets close to the door, he stops. He focuses his eyes in an attempt to see into the room beyond the door. He then pulls back a little frustrated. He can't see through the walls.

He moves closer and takes a look into the room, being careful not to be seen.

CLARK'S POV

We can't see much through the door to the lead room. What we can see is a table that is placed against one of the walls.

Trevor walks across the room, holding a metal case, about the size of a briefcase. He places it on the table and reaches into his pocket to find a key, but can't seem to find it.

TREVOR

Shoot.

Trevor looks in his shirt pocket, but it's not there either. He turns and starts to walk toward the door.

Clark ducks out of the way, and superspeeds behind a stack of boxes as Trevor walks through the basement and up the stairs.

Once Trevor is gone, Clark hurries through the door and into the lead room.

The room is full of shelves, most of which are empty. There are a few metal cases which look identical to the case on the table.

Clark walks to the case on the table. He looks back toward the door real quick and sees nothing. He then looks back to the case, removes his glasses and uses his heat-vision to melt through the lock. He opens the case and looks inside.

In the box, there is nothing. All that Clark sees is some protective foam with the vague shape of a gun-like object in it. He's puzzled.

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

Looking for this?

Clark turns just in time to see Trevor standing in the doorway as he pulls the trigger of what looks like an alien gun.

A blast of red energy shoots from the gun, hitting Clark directly in the chest. Clark flies across the room, slamming into the wall and leaving quite an impression and knocking the wind out of him.

Clark does, however, manage to stand up again. This surprises Trevor a great deal. What surprises him even more is that when Clark stands, his shirt is torn open, revealing the "S" shield of Superman.

Trevor's eyes widen.

TREVOR (CONT'D)

Oh, crap.

Clark looks down and sees that his shirt is torn open. He looks up at Trevor, wondering if he's connected Clark Kent to Superman. Trevor seems too distracted by the "S" at the moment.

Trevor begins to back up. As he gets through the door, he turns and runs toward the basement stairs.

Clark rips off what remains of his shirt.

As Trevor attempts to climb the stairs, Superman superspeeds in front of him before he can reach them.

SUPERMAN

It's over.

Trevor turns to run back toward the lead room, but as soon as he turns around, he finds Superman once again in front of him.

Superman grabs Trevor's shirt.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

I said, it's over.

Trevor looks into Superman's eyes, trembling with fear.

Superman hears the sound of something powering up. He looks down and sees that Trevor is holding the weapon to his chest. Before he can even react to this, Trevor pulls the trigger. Superman flies backward, slamming into the basement wall and several pipes that run along it, still holding onto Trevor and taking him along for the ride.

Both men fall to the ground. Superman once again has the wind knocked out of him. As he tries to get up, Trevor grabs the weapon once again and aims it at Superman.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
You killed all of those people.

TREVOR
I didn't kill anything.

SUPERMAN
You just provided the weapon.

TREVOR
I'm just the delivery boy.

SUPERMAN
Is that how you sleep at night?
Telling yourself that you're not
the one who sold this thing to
kids?

Trevor doesn't answer.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
So tell me... Which gang do you
work for?

Trevor smiles.

TREVOR
We don't just work for any one
group or person. We're everywhere.
You can stop me, but you can't stop
Intergang.

SUPERMAN
Is that what you call yourself?
Intergang?

TREVOR
It's what he calls us.

SUPERMAN
He?

Trevor shakes his head.

TREVOR
You've gotten everything you're
gonna get, Superman. You'll find
out the rest soon enough.

Trevor tightens his grip on his weapon, about to pull the trigger once again.

Superman looks past him, to one of the busted pipes. It's leaking gas.

SUPERMAN
I wouldn't do that.

TREVOR
I would.

Trevor pulls the trigger on the weapon. As he does this, the air around him explodes.

Time slows down as the explosion spreads, throwing Trevor's head back.

Superman avoids the blast of the weapon and scoops Trevor into his arms.

EXT. YOUTH CENTER - ROOF - NIGHT

Superman (with Trevor in his arms) flies through the roof and into the sky. Behind him, the youth center explodes.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jimmy and Olivia are still talking when the building explodes. Both are thrown to the ground, but quickly pull themselves up to look at the burning building.

Jimmy looks around the street, toward the diner and then back to the youth center. He doesn't know what to think of this situation.

JIMMY
Clark?

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Superman is talking with Commissioner Henderson, who is holding onto Trevor's alien weapon.

SUPERMAN
Doctors say that he'll probably never see again, but he'll wake up.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON
What the hell is this thing?

SUPERMAN

I can't answer that. Whatever it is, I think there's more of them. A lot more.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

How many is a lot?

SUPERMAN

I think that we might have a war coming, Commissioner. We need to be ready.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

We will be, thanks to you.

Superman doesn't have anything more to say. He starts to walk away. Before he gets too far, he stops and turns back to the Commissioner.

SUPERMAN

Oh... He did mention a name for the group he works for.

(beat)

He called them Intergang.

COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

I'll see what I can find out about them.

Superman nods and then continues on his way out of the hospital.

INT. SPORTS BAR - NIGHT

Lois is sitting at the bar. She takes a look at her watch. It's 9:32. She looks down at her cell phone, which shows no new calls or messages.

She taps her fingers on the bar a few times and then looks toward the door. When she does, she sees a familiar face.

Perry is standing in the doorway, looking at her. He looks down, not wanting to walk to her. This puzzles Lois. Eventually, she gets up and walks to him.

LOIS

Perry?

He doesn't respond. He just looks down again, at something in his hand. Lois looks down to see what he's holding.

ANGLE ON : PERRY'S HAND

Before he has too much time to think about his glasses, he hears a scream.

He turns his head toward the window. There is another scream.

Clark looks toward the clock again and sighs. He then superspeeds through the window once again.

EXT. METROGRAND HOTEL - ROOF - NIGHT

Superman lands on the roof and looks around. He sees nothing, which puzzles him.

SUPERMAN

Hello?

A DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN walks out of the shadows. She's wearing a ski mask to cover her face.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

What's going on here?

As the woman walks closer, she holds up her hand, revealing a remote control. She presses a button, activating several spotlights which cast a brilliant red light over the entire roof and into the sky.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

Who are you?

DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN

You tell me.

Superman focuses on the woman's face, but he can't seem to x-ray her mask. He's a little thrown by this.

SUPERMAN

Lead?

The woman shakes her head.

DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN

It's not lead, sweetheart.

She reaches Superman and puts a hand on his chest. She leans close and whispers in his ear.

DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN (CONT'D)

It's the dawn of a new age.

She knees Superman in the gut. He doubles over in pain, trying to catch his breath.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Lois is walking down the street, almost in a daze, looking down at Clark's ID. As the realization of what's happened starts to come over her, Lois' pace slows and her breath becomes more heavy. Tears start to well up in her eyes as she realizes that she has no idea where she is or where she's headed.

That is, until she notices the bright red lights atop the Metrogrand Hotel in the distance. She looks at them curiously for a moment and then grips the ID tighter, wiping a tear from her eye and walking off toward the hotel with new resolve.

EXT. METROGRAND HOTEL - ROOF

The darkly dressed woman laughs and spin-kicks him in the face, sending him to the ground. She then takes several steps away from him.

Superman struggles, but finally gets to his feet, wiping blood from his lip. He looks at the woman, angrily.

After a moment, he rushes toward her, throwing a punch and hitting her in the face. She recovers before he can get another punch in. She grabs his arm and twists it, throwing him to the ground.

DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN

Not so tough when the odds are
evened out a little, are you?

Superman kicks the woman's feet out from under her. She falls to the ground hard. Superman gets to his feet.

SUPERMAN

I can hold my own.

The woman tries to get up, but Superman puts a foot on her back to keep her down.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

How?

DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN

(struggling)
Not important.

The woman manages to flip herself over and grabs Superman's leg, throwing him off balance. He stumbles back as she gets to her feet.

They rush toward each other. Superman tries to punch her, but she manages to avoid his fist. She throws a punch of her own, which connects with his jaw. She punches him again and again and finally kicks him in the chest, sending him back to the ground.

DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN (CONT'D)

All you need to know is that we
can.

She turns and starts to walk toward the roof door. She pulls out her remote control and presses the button again, turning the lights off. She waves back without turning around.

DARKLY DRESSED WOMAN (CONT'D)

Ciao.

She walks through the door as Superman gets to his feet. He rushes to the door and tries to open it, but it's locked. He pulls on it, but he can't rip it off of its hinges.

He steps back and looks at his hands. They're bleeding. This troubles him a great deal.

INT. METROGRAND HOTEL - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The darkly dressed woman walks down a flight of stairs. Once she's put some space between herself and Superman, she stops and pulls her mask off. It's Mercy. A little bruised, but looking good for someone who just went a round with Superman.

She pulls out her cell phone and dials.

INT. LEXCORP BUILDING - LEX'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lex is standing in his dark office, looking out the window, toward the hotel. His cell phone rings. He pulls it out and puts it to his ear.

MERCY (V.O.)

It works. Superman's helpless until
sunrise.

Lex doesn't respond. He hangs up his phone and puts it into his pocket, keeping his eyes on the hotel.

A slight smile forms on his face.

EXT. METROGRAND HOTEL - ROOF - NIGHT

Superman walks to the edge of the roof and looks down at the city below. He tilts his head to listen, but he can only hear the typical noise of a city. Nothing super about it.

He is starting to look just a little bit worried about this.

Behind him, one of the lights begins to crackle with electricity.

From the shadows, Livewire slowly approaches him from behind.

LIVEWIRE

You know the funny part of all this?

Superman turns around and sees Livewire.

SUPERMAN

Leslie--

LIVEWIRE

(ignoring him)

The funny part is that I don't think I ever really hated you. I hated what you represented.

Her hands crackle and spark as she stops walking, looking Superman in the eyes, apparently oblivious to the fact that he looks like hell.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

I've spent my entire life trying to be someone. Trying to do something. Trying to stand out. I've worked so hard, just to make people see me. Then there's people like you. The people that everyone loves. You make it look so easy. It's not even about the flying or the super strength. People notice you because of who you are and what you try to do. It doesn't matter to anyone that you rip apart buildings or destroy roads. They see you as a beacon of hope.

(beat)

Have you seen the news reports tonight?

Superman is really listening to her by this point. He shakes his head.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)
 "Villainess Livewire killed in
 battle with Superman."

She tries to choke back her tears, but they come anyway,
 shimmering in the corners of her eyes.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)
 I'm the villain.
 (beat)
 I've waited my whole life for the
 chance to show people what I'm
 capable of and when I finally get
 here, I'm the villain. People are
 happy to hear that I died.

SUPERMAN
 I wasn't.

LIVEWIRE
 No!

The electricity that crackles around her hands explodes in a
 flash of light as she gets angrier.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)
 Don't do that. Don't feel sorry for
 me. I don't want your pity. I don't
 want you looking down at me from
 your throne.

Tears roll down her cheeks now. She still struggles to keep
 them back.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)
 I just want to know why it's so
 hard to like me. What is it about
 you that people love so damn much?

SUPERMAN
 I don't know.

LIVEWIRE
 That's not good enough.

She walks to him and places her hand on his chest, over his
 heart.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)
 You're not even human. How can
 people trust you so much? How can
 they put their faith in a person
 that's... Are you even a person?
 (MORE)

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Do you feel the same emotions? Do you love? Hate? Do you feel pain?

Superman wipes some of the blood from his lip. Livewire looks at it on his fingers.

SUPERMAN

I feel everything.

LIVEWIRE

Then why?

SUPERMAN

I don't know.

(beat)

What I do know is that you're not well. You need to see someone. Talk to them. I can help you.

Livewire looks him in the eyes for a moment, and then takes a step back, shaking her head. Her hands once again crackle and spark.

LIVEWIRE

Oh, no. You don't get to do that. You don't get to save me.

SUPERMAN

I just want to help.

LIVEWIRE

I said, no!

Livewire extends her hand toward Superman, shooting a blast of electricity at him.

Superman is struck hard and flies backward, over the edge of the building.

Livewire waits for a moment. Waiting for Superman to fly back up and fight her. After moments pass, she grows confused.

LIVEWIRE (CONT'D)

Superman?

EXT. METROGRAND HOTEL/STREET - NIGHT

Lois approaches the hotel.

As she passes the hotel, there is a sudden BOOM as a car parked near the street is crushed from above.

Lois jumps in shock. When she finally gets around to looking at the car to see what happened, she is only able to see Superman's red cape hanging over the side of the crushed car.

Her confusion turns to complete shock as Lois takes a step toward the car for a closer look. What she sees shakes her to her core. She literally cannot breathe as tears fill her wide eyes.

From her gut, a cry turns into a moan and finally into a scream.

EXT. METROGRAND HOTEL - ROOF - NIGHT

Livewire stands on the edge of the roof, looking down. Her eyes are wide and her mouth is hanging open in terror.

EXT. METROGRAND HOTEL/STREET - NIGHT

Lois continues to cry, turning away from the horrible scene and falling to her knees.

CLOSE ON : SUPERMAN'S "S" SHIELD

The yellow area around the "S" slowly turns black.

NEWS WOMAN (V.O.)

The world mourns today, as a hero is remembered. Superman, beloved guardian of Metropolis died last week under mysterious circumstances. His body fell from high atop the Metrogrand Hotel, ending the life of one of the world's most highly respected figures. Thousands are gathered here at Centennial Park to pay their last respects to our fallen hero...

EXT. CENTENNIAL PARK - DAY

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE are gathered around the park, carrying shirts, pictures, action figures and other Superman memorabilia. Mayor Sackett is at a podium at the front of the crowd, dressed in black.

MAYOR SACKETT

Superman was more than a hero to me and to many others in this city.

(MORE)

MAYOR SACKETT (CONT'D)

Those of us who were privileged enough to know him knew Superman as a close friend. He was a kind man. A man who cared deeply about this city and this world. Despite his alien origins, Superman considered this world and more specifically, this city to be his home. He fought for this city and made it a better place for all of us to live. In his memory, I ask that you all join me in a vow to keep his mission alive. To help your fellow man. To do your part in keeping this city as safe as Superman tried to make it.

(beat)

None of us can live up to the power and physical strength of Superman, but I don't think that's what made him the hero that he was. I believe that his true strength was in his spirit. In his humanity. That is something that I think we should all aspire to.

In the crowd, Perry is watching Mayor Sackett give his speech. As he looks around, he takes in the volume of people united in their mourning.

He looks up to the sky. It's empty.

EXT. SMALLVILLE CEMETERY - DAY

A SMALL CROWD is gathered around an empty coffin. Among those gathered to mourn are MARTHA KENT, LANA LANG and her baby CLARK ROSS, Lois and Jimmy.

Lana has her arm around Martha, both crying. Lois watches them with a distant gaze.

A PASTOR is speaking.

PASTOR

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be
done on earth as it is in
heaven. Give us this day our
daily bread. And forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from
(MORE)

PASTOR (CONT'D)
evil. For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

EXT. SMALLVILLE CEMETERY - LATER

The service is over. Lois and Jimmy are walking toward their car. Lana catches up to them.

LANA
Excuse me.

Lois and Jimmy turn around.

LANA (CONT'D)
You worked with Clark, right?

LOIS
Yeah.

LANA
Well... Thank you for coming.

Lois simply nods.

LANA (CONT'D)
You knew Superman too, right?

Again, Lois nods.

LANA (CONT'D)
Clark told me you two were friends.
Close. With Superman, I mean. He
kinda thought you had a thing for
him. Superman. I don't know why I
just said that.
(beat)
I'm sorry.

Lana turns to start walking away, but stops herself and turns around.

LANA (CONT'D)
Do you know what's going to happen
to him? To his body, I mean?

LOIS
He's going to be poked at and cut
open. Studied like an animal.
Probably by some army doctors or a
third-party lab like LexCorp.

Lana tears up.

LANA
That shouldn't happen.
(beat)
Clark wouldn't want that.

Lana turns and walks away, wiping tears from her eyes. Lois watches her go.

EXT. KENT FARM - DAY

Martha stands outside the Kent house, looking at it as though it is going to swallow her whole. She has a hand over her mouth and tears in her eyes. She just can't bring herself to go inside the family house right now.

After a moment, she turns toward the barn and starts to walk toward it.

INT. KENT BARN - DAY

Martha walks into the barn. She walks through the barn, toward a chair. As she's about to sit down, she notices something strange. A ray of light shining down on the seat.

She looks up at the ceiling of the barn and notices a hole punched right through it.

She then turns and looks toward the floor, in the direction of the door that leads to the hidden cellar below. She sees a hole in the floor.

INT. KENT BARN - CELLAR - DAY

The cellar door opens and Martha walks down the stairs, carrying a flashlight, which she doesn't need because of the large hole in the cellar's ceiling.

As she reaches the bottom of the stairs, she looks into the cellar. What she sees puzzles her.

The cellar is empty.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. LEXCORP BUILDING - LEX'S OFFICE - NIGHT

ONE MONTH LATER

Lex is standing in his dark office, looking out across Metropolis. The city has changed quite a bit. In the distance, burning buildings can be seen and police helicopters fly over the city with spotlights shining.

NEWS WOMAN (V.O.)

In one short month since the passing of Superman, the crime rates in Metropolis have risen to levels never before seen. The increase in the number of violent crimes across the city has been linked to a mysterious new faction, calling themselves Intergang. The Mayor is calling for assistance from the federal government, as local law enforcement has been unable to stand up to the weaponry used by Intergang. In response to this req--

Lex presses a button on his remote control, turning off his unseen TV. He continues to look out at the city. The look on his face is not a look of joy. It is an expression that begs the question, "What have I done?"

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END