

Batman vs. Superman:

Dawn of Justice

Reimagined

by

Ray Burton

Ray Burton
1009 Harvard Terr.
Evanston, IL 60202

EXT. METROPOLIS — DAY

The BATTLE OF METROPOLIS is in full swing.

The the streets are equal parts TRAFFIC and FULL-BLOWN PANIC as citizens flee the city.

But one EXPENSIVE CAR is speeding down the streets in the wrong direction.

INT. CAR

The young LEX LUTHOR is on the phone.

LEX

It's a straight-away to the hospital;
I'll be in and out before you even— No!
No, I'm not leaving him! Mercy, listen
to me, I'm not leaving him!

He turns to his DRIVER.

LEX

Can't we go any faster?!

Traffic has started spilling over into the wrong lane, and Lex Luthor's car is quickly cut off.

LEX

Fuck!

He gets out of the car, and tries to run on foot — Not that it does him any good.

Metropolis is a war-zone.

Rubble is everywhere; people are SCREAMING.

He's only gone a couple of steps when he realizes it's impossible; he's never going to get there in time.

There's a MAN caught under a fallen GIRDER. Lex sees him and runs to him.

MAN

I can't— I can't feel my legs...

LEX

Oh god...

He tries to move the GIRDER; no luck.

MAN
I can't feel my legs...!

LEX
Hey, someone help! We need help over here!

But there's no one.

Everyone around is either running for their lives, or too injured to move.

Lex heaves against the GIRDER one more time. It doesn't budge.

LEX
No... No, please... Move, goddamn it...!

High above, hell is raining from the sky.

There are EXPLOSIONS, too many to count.

Is one of them the HOSPITAL? Lex knows it is in his heart, but through the chaos, he honestly can't tell.

Fire. Death. Skyscrapers toppling down on the helpless multitudes below.

And in the center of it all, just barely visible, SUPERMAN is fighting ZOD.

As he's looking up, Lex sees an GIANT PIECE OF RUBBLE, about to collapse.

Standing under it is a LITTLE GIRL. She gazes around blankly, in shock.

The RUBBLE begins to CREAK as it falls.

LEX
No!

Without thinking, he jumps forward, crashing into the girl and pushing her to safety at the last second.

The RUBBLE falls crashing to the ground, barely missing them.

Lex is on top of the girl, shielding her with his body.

He's scratched and bloodied, and his expensive suit is covered in dirt and grime.

All around him, people are SCREAMING.

And help isn't coming. Not from the men around him, and not from the god above him.

Lex Luthor clutches the girl to his chest and begins to SOB.

EXT. GOTHAM ALLEYWAY – NIGHT

TITLE CARD – 18 MONTHS LATER

A GANG OF THUGS waits in the darkness, as a BLACK VAN pulls into the alleyway.

BLACK MASK steps out of the passenger seat.

THUG #1

You got the goods?

BLACK MASK

Of course. Do you have the money?

One of the thugs pulls out a BRIEFCASE.

He opens it, revealing the cash inside.

BLACK MASK

Good.

He snaps, and a couple of MASKED THUGS get out of the van, and start unloading SUSPICIOUS BOXES.

Black Mask reaches for the briefcase.

THUG #1

Hang on. You get to see the money, we get to see the goods.

Black Mask gestures to one of the BOXES.

One of the thugs goes around and cuts it open with a BOXCUTTER.

It's full of DRUGS. The thug takes a BAG out and examines it briefly.

THUG #2

We're good, boss.

BLACK MASK

It's been a pleasure doing business
with you.

He reaches out to take the BRIEFCASE—

But the briefcase is knocked out of his hand by a BATARANG.

Black Mask and the thug whirl around, just in time to see—

BATMAN swings down from a GRAPPLING HOOK, and kicks the one of
the other thugs in the chest.

He flips acrobatically to the ground, catching a punch from one
of the masked thugs mid-recovery.

THUG #1

Oh god— He's here.

Black Mask doesn't think twice: he grabs the BRIEFCASE off of
the ground, and bolts around to the van.

BATMAN

Not so fast.

Batman throws a handful of CALTROPS in front of Black Mask,
slowing him down.

BLACK MASK

Get him!

One of his masked thugs SHOOTS at Batman from behind.

But Batman's SUIT is bulletproof: he takes a serious hit from
the impact, but it's clear that he's basically unharmed.

He turns on the masked thug, who FIRES again, then again.

Batman dodges both times, and before the thug can run, Batman
has disarmed him, and thrown him to the ground.

There's a SCREECH behind him.

Batman whirls around just in time to see the BLACK VAN pulling
out of the alleyway.

He throws a BAT-SHAPED TRACKING DEVICE, which lands on the side
of the car and sticks.

While he's distracted, one of the thugs comes at him from behind with a knife.

Batman decks him, then pulls himself to the rooftops using his GRAPPLING HOOK.

It's a clear night, and he can just make out Black Mask's van making its getaway through the Gotham city streets.

He runs along the rooftops, then jumps down into another alleyway, and into the waiting BATMOBILE.

The top closes, and then the Batmobile is off, in hot pursuit of the van with the tracker.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREET

Black Mask's van speeds down the street, recklessly jostling other drivers out of the way as they make a break for it.

INT. BLACK VAN

In his rearview mirror, Black Mask catches sight of the Batmobile, in hot pursuit.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREET

The van SWERVES wildly, changing directions suddenly to try and throw Batman off its tail.

The Batmobile follows suit.

INT. BATMOBILE

Batman speaks to ALFRED over the radio:

BATMAN

Alfred, did you get the van's registration?

ALFRED

Yes, sir. But unfortunately, it traces back to a shell corporation. He's covered his tracks.

BATMAN

Guess I better not lose him.

INT. BLACK VAN

Black Mask glances out of his window, and sees the TRACKING DEVICE attached to the van.

He swears under his breath, then glances behind at the approaching Batmobile.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREET

As Black Mask's van rounds a corner, it slows just a little—

—Enough for Black Mask to dive out of the vehicle, into a roll.

The door slams shut, and the van pulls away, with the Batmobile still in hot pursuit.

As soon as he hits the ground, Black Mask is running.

He speaks into his SMART-WATCH:

BLACK MASK

I'm at 250 52nd Boulevard.

A BLACK LIMO pulls up around the corner.

The door opens, and Black Mask gets in.

The limo pulls away, and fades into the traffic.

The chase continues.

INT. BATMOBILE

As the Batmobile approaches, Batman carefully aims a SIGHTED PROJECTILE DEVICE at the tire of black van.

He fires, and a SMALL DART punctures the van's back tire.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREET.

The van skids wildly to a stop, the Batmobile right behind it.

The DRIVER, another masked thug, stumbles out.

Batman grabs him before he gets far.

BATMAN

Where do you think you're going?

EXT. ROOFTOP

Batman holds the driver up to the edge.

BATMAN
Who is the Black Mask?

DRIVER
Why the hell should I tell you—

Batman pushes him, so he's dangling off the edge, with nothing but his captor keeping him from falling to his death.

BATMAN
I'll ask again: Who is the Black Mask?

DRIVER
I don't know!

BATMAN
Wrong answer.

He shakes the man a little more over the edge, and his MASK falls off and goes tumbling down to the distant street below.

DRIVER
I don't know! I swear I don't know! We only meet where he says— we deal in cash— he always wears the mask— Oh god please don't, I thought you had rules!

BATMAN
What is he planning next?

DRIVER
What—?

BATMAN
What is he planning next?!

DRIVER
I don't kn—

Batman pushes him off the building.

The man SCREAMS, but then there's a strange WHOOSHING sound...

SUPERMAN appears over the edge of the rooftop, holding the terrified thug.

The man has one of Batman's GRAPPLING LINES tied around his wrist; he was never in any real danger.

There's a moment of silence as the two of them size each other up.

SUPERMAN

So. Is this how the Batman is cleaning up the streets? Pushing helpless enemies off of rooftops?

BATMAN

He was tied; that fall wouldn't have killed him.

SUPERMAN

No, but it probably would have dislocated his shoulder.

BATMAN

Why do you care?

SUPERMAN

How can you not?! I'll tell you, I have half a mind to take you in myself—

Batman cuts him off with a short, bitter laugh.

BATMAN

Of course you do. You're as naive as I always thought you'd be.

SUPERMAN

I understand that you want to make a difference. But this isn't how you do it.

BATMAN

I'm not about to be lectured by someone like you. Get out of my city.

SUPERMAN

Your city?

Pause. The two superheroes stare each other down.

SUPERMAN

Consider this a warning.

Superman flies off, still holding the driver.

From the rooftop, Batman watches as Superman flies him down and turns him in to the police.

INT. DAILY PLANET OFFICE — DAY

PERRY WHITE slams a NEWSPAPER ARTICLE in front of CLARK KENT.

The article is about the confrontation we just witnessed.

The headline reads: 'Superman Stops Wannabe Bat-Vigilante'

PERRY

What the hell is this?

CLARK

You wanted me to do a piece on the Batman—

PERRY

I did! I even sent you to Gotham for it. And yet, somehow, you ended up doing another piece on Superman instead.

CLARK

Superman was there; I got the scoop.

PERRY

We don't *need* another scoop on Superman! ...Jesus, Clark, the last thing we need to do is openly fanboy, especially now.

CLARK

I'm sorry?

PERRY

Look. Superman has done a lot of good. No one would deny it. But ever since that fight over the city... Well, a lot of people lost their lives, that day. He's not really the most popular guy, right now.

CLARK

I'm not sure how popularity has anything to do with good journalism—

PERRY

I'm going to stop you right there. First off: it has everything to do with good journalism, these days. Why? Because print is only barely hanging on, and if we don't report on what's popular, then we're not going to be able to report on what's important when it matters.

CLARK

Right, and then, once we get into the habit of not reporting...

PERRY

I'm not done. That's the cold, hard reality of the publishing industry today, but that's not even why you can't be pulling this crap anymore. Let me spell it out for you: we need to spin this superhero thing as a movement. One guy saves the planet? That's news, alright, same way a natural disaster's news. But it's not a *story*. People all around the country suddenly start answering the call to justice own their own? That's a story.

CLARK

With all due respect, I don't think we can compare Superman to this thug.

PERRY

Really? Then you're one of the few.

CLARK

What he's doing isn't *right*. He has no accountability—

PERRY

And he, and presumably many more to follow, were inspired by an alien who also had no accountability, and still managed to be a hero. Trust me: Superman was just the start.

He heads off, but adds over his shoulder,

PERRY

I'll put someone else on it, if I have to, Clark.

INT. BATCAVE

Bruce Wayne is tending to his injuries from last night's fight.

The Batsuit may be bulletproof, but that doesn't make it impact-proof.

Bruce has some serious bruising on his back and side where he was shot, as well as a number of more minor injuries.

The presses an ICEPACK to the worst of it, wincing.

ALFRED is examining the damaged BATSUIT.

ALFRED

The structural components are all fine, but we'll need to replace the kevlar... I take it last night was productive?

BRUCE

Would have been... if *he* hadn't shown up.

ALFRED

He?

BRUCE

Superman.

ALFRED

...Superman came and stopped you?

BRUCE

He gave me a 'warning'.

ALFRED

A warning.

BRUCE

We're criminals, Alfred. We've always been criminals; nothing's changed.

ALFRED

Oh, yes it has, sir. Everything's changed.

Bruce shrugs, and finishes taping the ICEPACK in place.

Alfred sets the suit aside, and brings Bruce an assortment of OPENED LETTERS.

ALFRED

You have more fan-mail.

Bruce picks through the LETTERS.

They're all harassment, and from the look of them, they're all from the same person:

'Go to hell you child diddling piece of shit'

'If your parents had aborted you, maybe Wayne Enterprises would be worth something'

'I'll enjoy seeing you suffer'

'I'm coming for you'

'Do you bleed?' And on the back: *'You will.'*

Bruce tosses them down in disgust.

ALFRED

Some of these can be construed as actual threats, sir.

BRUCE

It doesn't matter.

ALFRED

I feel like the police would think differently.

BRUCE

My address isn't exactly secret; this could be literally anyone.

ALFRED

That doesn't change the fact that they're making threats against your life.

BRUCE

Not *credible* threats.

Alfred just shakes his head.

ALFRED
Very well, sir.

He collects the LETTERS, depositing them in the trash.

BRUCE
Look, it's obvious what this is about.
It's the merger with LexCorp.

ALFRED
Merger? That's certainly a judicious
way to say hostile takeover.

BRUCE
My point is, they're just trying to
intimidate me. I ignore them and push
the merger through, and this'll all go
away.

Alfred looks like he wants to disagree, but there's a point
where arguing accomplishes nothing.

Instead he says:

ALFRED
Ah, yes. Speaking of LexCorp, I found
where those surplus munitions were
being sent.

BRUCE
Yeah?

ALFRED
Apparently, they're all going to
Nairomi.

BRUCE
Nairomi?

ALFRED
It's a small provence in the Republic
of Qurac.

BRUCE
What the hell is Luthor doing in Qurac?

ALFRED
I couldn't begin to guess.

EXT. NAIROMI TERRORIST CAMP — DAY

A terrorist pulls TWO HOODED JOURNALISTS out of a van, and leads them into a camp.

They are unhooded, revealing LOUIS LANE and fellow reporter CORY RENWALD.

The GENERAL comes forward, with his men surrounding him.

All of them are Quraqi, with the exception of a few western SECURITY CONTRACTORS, including one HANK HENSHAW.

Louis Lane takes out her JOURNAL and PEN.

LOIS
First question—

GENERAL
...They did not tell me the interview was with a lady.

LOIS
I'm not a lady; I'm a journalist. Are you a terrorist, General?

Hank Henshaw starts searching Cory.

GENERAL
What I am is a man with nothing, except a love of my people.

He takes Cory's camera.

CORY
Uh, don't open...

Too late.

CORY
You just exposed—

Henshaw drops the (probably very expensive) camera into the dirt without a second thought.

LOIS
Who's paying for these security contractors?

Henshaw opens one of the film canisters, unreeling the film inside.

There's something small at the end of the roll...

GENERAL

Who pays for the drones that pass over our heads at night? One question begs another. Yes?

Henshaw smashes the object underfoot, revealing a SMALL TRACKER hidden within.

He holds the TRACKER in front Cory, who says nothing.

Then he turns to one of the terrorists.

HENSHAW

C.I.A. They're tracking us.

Instantly, the terrorists are on them.

They strip Cory of his bags and throw him to his knees.

Then they start to drag Lois off.

CORY

(in local language)

Not her!

The terrorists stop.

CORY (CONT'D)

(in local language)

We just used her credentials as cover!
She doesn't know anything.

LOIS

Cory, wait-

CORY

It's okay, Lois.

Hank Henshaw SHOOTs Cory in the head.

INT. TERRORIST BASE

The General slams the door, and turns to face Lois.

LOIS

I... I didn't know.

GENERAL

Ignorance is not the same as innocence,
Miss Lane.

EXT. TERRORIST CAMP

Hank Henshaw glances up at the sky, then covertly signals the other security contractors.

They nod.

The security contractors turn as one and OPEN FIRE on the terrorists.

INT. TERRORIST BASE

Both Lois and the General are startled by SHOTS outside.

EXT. TERRORIST CAMP

There's a full-on firefight, but the terrorists are clearly out-matched by the contractors in both weapons and training.

One of the stray shots hits Lois's abandoned JOURNAL.

INT. TERRORIST BASE

The General grabs Lois, GUN to her head.

GENERAL

Get up! Stand up!

EXT. TERRORIST CAMP

All of the terrorists are dead.

Hank Henshaw pulls some sort of high tech device out of his bag.

He turns it on; it's a POWERFUL LASER.

Carefully, he slashes up the camp, using the burn marks to disguise the bullet damage.

One of the contractors glances up at the sky.

CONTRACTOR

We gotta hurry, Henshaw.

Hank Henshaw surveys his work, quickly, then turns to the other contractors.

HENSHAW

Alright, move out!

The contractors ride out of the camp.

There's a SONIC BOOM as Superman arrives on the scene...

INT. TERRORIST BASE

Superman CRASHES through the roof.

The General has a gun to Lois's head.

GENERAL

Take one step, and you will see the
inside of her head.

Superman makes eye contact with Lois.

The two share a moment of wordless understanding.

Lois lets go of the General's arm, and places her hands at her sides.

She nods, and Superman smiles.

Superman FLIES straight into the General, pushing him through the wall behind them before he even has time to fire his gun.

INT. CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ROOM

A Quraqi woman is on the stand, delivering an account of what she witnessed in Nairomi.

QURAQI WOMAN

The women in the village heard a noise.
Like the sky crack open. He came down,
so many dead. Even worse came after.
The government attacked. No mercy in
the villages. My parents tried to
run...

She stifles a sob.

Senator JUNE FINCH is presiding over the hearing.

She's firm, but nonetheless deeply moved.

FINCH

The world has been so caught up with what Superman can do, that... no one has asked what he should do. Let the record show that this committee holds him responsible.

QURAQI WOMAN

He'll never answer to you. He answers to no one. Not even I think, to god.

INT. DAILY PLANET — DAY

Lois has barely stepped into the building, when Perry White is there.

PERRY

Lois, hey. Look, I meant it when I said you didn't have to come in today—

LOIS

I'm fine.

PERRY

Really?

LOIS

I barely knew Cory. I'm alive and breathing. I'm fine. And you need me here.

There's a part of Perry that wants to object, but there's another part of him that knows she's right.

PERRY

Ok. Yeah, we do need you. Now more than ever. But if you need to take a day—

LOIS

What do you want me on?

PERRY

You were the only one who made it out of the Nairomi massacre, so you're the only witness we have. And, also... Well, you know him better than anyone, Lois.

LOIS

Who?

PERRY

The guy that killed them: Superman.

LOIS

What? Superman didn't kill anyone.

PERRY

Photo evidence suggests otherwise.

He hands Lois a stack of PHOTOS.

They're of the site of the massacre, as Henshaw and his men left it.

It sure looks like the aftermath of an attack by someone with heat-vision.

LOIS

I don't understand... This isn't how it looked before...

PERRY

Before Superman got there?

LOIS

You can't seriously believe that he did this.

PERRY

Look, I'm as surprised as you are, but the evidence is right there. I was hoping you could tell us all what happened, how he snapped—

LOIS

He didn't snap; this wasn't him!

PERRY

Lois—

LOIS

No, I know what I heard, and I heard shots, ok? These men were shot to death, and I don't know what this is, but it wasn't him, because he would *never* do something like this!

Perry's silent for a moment, and then he nods.

PERRY

Ok. Ok, I'll put Ron on it.

LOIS

What?

PERRY

You almost died, you saw Cory get shot, it's your boyfriend, I get it. I'm not holding it against you. I'll give Ron the story, and-

LOIS

This isn't Superman! This is a frame-up - it's someone, I don't know who, trying to make it *look* like Superman, and how are you not seeing that?!

PERRY

Go home, Lois.

Lois throws the PHOTOS to the ground, and storms out of the Daily Planet.

EXT. SECURE GOVERNMENT FACILITY - ESTABLISHING SHOT

This place is run by the US military, but it's not on US soil.

It's not a POW camp either; POWs have rights.

INT. SECURE GOVERNMENT FACILITY

DIANA PRINCE, a government agent, is walking with the current WARDEN of the facility.

WARDEN

Frankly, I'm surprised you even have clearance to be down here.

DIANA

Oh? And why is that?

WARDEN

Well, I mean, pretty little thing like you-

Diana shoots him a withering look.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Uh, that is... Well, usually, white collar government folks like to pretend that places like these don't exist. Plausible deniability, and all that. You coming down in person kinda, uh, ruins the separation.

DIANA

I suppose it does. If I had my way, they'd shut this whole place down.

They come to a SOLITARY CONFINEMENT CELL.

Inside is the General that Superman put through a wall. He's definitely seen better days.

WARDEN

You've got ten minutes, miss, and lord knows what you think you're going to get out of him. Cameras will be rolling the whole time, so if he tries anything-

DIANA

I understand.

Diana enters the cell, and the Warden shuts the door.

As soon as he does so, she places a STEALTH DEVICE one of the walls, such that it's not visible from the security cameras.

INT. SECURITY MONITORING ROOM

The screen monitoring the General's cell flickers once, as the STEALTH DEVICE activates.

INT. SOLITARY CONFINEMENT CELL

DIANA

I've disabled the sound on the cameras. Nothing said here will get back to the government.

GENERAL

You're working for the government.

DIANA

Not right at this moment, no.

GENERAL

Who are you? What do you want?

DIANA

Superman took you in, but he didn't kill your men – we both know that. Who did, and why?

GENERAL

Why do you want to know?

DIANA

I'm very interested in Superman, and others like him. I want to know who his enemy is.

GENERAL

Well, what a pity, then, that I don't know anything.

DIANA

Whoever you were working with betrayed you, General. He put you in here. You have nothing to gain by protecting him.

GENERAL

And nothing to gain by telling you.

DIANA

I'm afraid you don't have a choice.

The General laughs.

GENERAL

Do you have any idea what 'enhanced interrogation' is actually like? I've been down in this pit since Superman captured me, and I've told them *nothing*. Why do you think I'll tell you?

DIANA

I'm very persuasive.

INT. LOIS LANE'S APARTMENT – DAY

Lois is unpacking her things.

She finds her BLOODSTAINED SHIRT, and abruptly stops unpacking.

She shoves it back in the bag, and closes her eyes, breathing deeply.

When she opens them again, her JOURNAL catches her eye.

Specifically, the BULLET embedded in the leather.

She pries the bullet out, and examines it.

INT. LOIS'S BATHROOM

Lois soaks in the tub, still holding the BULLET.

She hears the sound of Clark Kent entering the house, and reaches over to put the BULLET away in her bag.

Clark Kent is carrying a BAG OF GROCERIES when he enters.

CLARK

Hey.

LOIS

Hey.

CLARK

I was going to cook. Surprise you.

Lois smiles, but it fades too quickly.

LOIS

Clark, what happened at Nairomi...
They're saying—

CLARK

I don't care what they're saying. The woman I love could have been blown up or shot. If some senator wants to tell me that I did the wrong thing, that I made the wrong call, then fine. But I'm never going to lose sleep over saving a life, least of all yours.

LOIS

It's not just the hearings. There are... photographs. Perry showed me when I went in to work. It looks like you murdered those men.

CLARK

I... I mean, I didn't do it, if that's what you're thinking—

LOIS

Of course not. Come here.

They kiss, sweetly, but Lois pulls away too soon.

LOIS

This is serious, Clark. Someone's trying to frame you.

Clark leans back and sighs.

CLARK

Yeah. But you know it wasn't me, and the facts will show it wasn't me, too. Once the government investigates—

But Lois is shaking her head.

LOIS

How did they know you'd be there? How did you even know to come?

CLARK

I got a tip-off. Some government agent got cold feet, and told us about Cory.

LOIS

Clark—!

CLARK

It's not what you're thinking. They didn't call *me*, they called the Daily Planet. Whoever's got it out for me, I don't think they were planning for me to actually be there. It was pure bad luck I knew you were in trouble.

He pauses. Smiles; intertwines his fingers with hers.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Or, I guess, good luck?

Lois smiles.

LOIS
I never did thank you, did I?

CLARK
You don't need to thank me for saving
you.

Lois pulls him in close, whispering in his ear.

LOIS
Maybe... But I want to...

They kiss passionately.

INT. LEXCORP GYM

A group of people are playing basketball.

PLAYER
Frank, your D!

Lex Luthor catches a pass, and makes a perfect shot, before turning around and noticing the two SENATORS that have come to see him.

LEX
Ah! Ahoi hoi! I did not know you were
here.

Everything about Lex Luthor oozes confidence, and his smile is huge and incredibly fake.

This smarmy bastard could not be further from the man we saw sobbing in the rubble.

SENATOR O'FALLON reaches out for a handshake.

O'FALLON
Man on the marquee...

LEX
Stop, don't believe it. My father named
the company after himself. He was the
Lex in front of the Corp.

He turns and proffers his hand to the other senator, June Finch.

LEX (CONT'D)
How ya' doing?

FINCH

Really great.

LEX

Really great? Good, good! Uh, follow me.

His assistant, MERCY, hands him his COAT as he leads the senators off of the court.

INT. LEXCORP R&D

LEX

You know, Dad was born in east Germany. He grew up eating stale crackers. And every other Saturday, he had to march in a parade and waved flowers at tyrants.

He keys in a passcode, and leads them into a lab.

LEX (CONT'D)

So, I think it was providence that his son, me, would end up with this.

In the center of the lab is a GLOVEBOX, containing a fist-sized piece of KRYPTONITE.

LEX (CONT'D)

One of my Rebuild Metropolis crews found it. A little souvenir from the Kryptonian World Engine.

Finch eyes the sample curiously.

FINCH

What does a rock have to do with Homeland Security?

LEX

Homeland Security? Mmm. No, no, no... ma'am. Planetary Security. Come this way.

He leads them further into the lab, passed TANKS of various stages of biotech research.

LEX

Now, ever since the lovely General Zod came crashing into our lives, LexCorp has been researching Kryptonian biology.

They've clearly gotten incredibly far: some of these TANKS contain fully grown organs, even limbs.

LEX (CONT'D)

The fragment you just saw is a radioactive xeno-mineral, which, for the time, we're calling Kryptonite. Although trust me, I'm pushing hard for Luthorite, myself. Anyways, originally, we were interested in it because of the profound biodegradation it causes in those of Kryptonian descent. But! Then we found this.

In front of them is a giant KRYPTONIAN HEALING UNIT.

LEX (CONT'D)

Beautiful, isn't it?

O'FALLON

What is it?

LEX

Based on the records from Zod's ship, we believe that this could be the final piece to bringing some of our lovely creations to life. Only problem is—

He knocks on the healing unit.

LEX (CONT'D)

It's Kryptonite powered.

FINCH

Hence, the rock.

LEX

Bingo! See, until recently, that one teeny-tiny bit was the only sample that we had.

He pulls out a PURPLE ROCK from his pocket, and tosses it to the nearest senator.

LEX (CONT'D)

LexCorp had a joint venture with Wayne Enterprises for a while, trying to synthesize an artificial version of the stuff. It's unstable, and anyways, Wayne pulled out. But as it turns out... I don't need him.

He flips on a nearby projector, displaying images of a giant piece of KRYPTONITE, found by a group of Pacific Islanders.

LEX (CONT'D)

All I need... is an import license.

FINCH

Pet project aside, Luthor, I don't see what any of this has to do with us.

LEX

Oh, but surely you see the defense applications, in all of this? Just think: with this tech, we could grow our own weapons, cut from the same cloth as the Kryptonians.

FINCH

Why would we want to weaponize this?

LEX

As a deterrent. A silver bullet. A way of making sure we'd stand a fighting chance against them, if it ever came to that.

O'FALLON

Them? Last I heard, we only had the one.

LEX

Ha. Yes, Superman. Yeah, but, there are... there are more of them.

FINCH

The meta-human thesis.

LEX

Yes, the meta-human thesis. More likely than not, these exceptional beings live

LEX (CONT'D)
among us. The bases of our myths. Gods
among men.

He takes his piece of ARTIFICIAL KRYPTONITE back from the senator, and fiddles with it in his palm.

LEX (CONT'D)
You don't have to use a silver bullet,
senator. But, if you forge one... Well,
then... We don't have to depend upon
the kindness of monsters.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND

The wind whips Diana's hair, as she gazes into the ruins of a once-mighty city.

Sand, carried by the wind runs through her fingers as she holds out her hand.

Carved into the earth before her is a giant OMEGA.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC CITY RUINS

A convoy of ARMED TRUCKS stop in an open area.

Batman, wearing new post-apocalyptic gear, walks to meet them.

A group of similarly armed men and women follows him.

Convoy men climb out of their vehicles, and open the back of one of the trucks.

BATMAN
You got it? The rock?

CONVOY LEADER
Yeah, we got it.

Batman steps inside the truck. There's a BOX, labeled LexCorp.

When it's opened, a GREEN LIGHT spills out...

Batman looks inside, and sees that it's a LIGHTBULB, not the kryptonite he was looking for.

There's a CLICK as the convoy leader cocks his GUN at him.

CONVOY LEADER

I'm sorry.

Military men with SUPERMAN INSIGNIAS on their uniforms pop out of the trucks, and start shooting Batman's people.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND

Diana, from wherever she is out of the fight, is somehow still watching what happens.

DIANA
(whispered)

No...

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC CITY RUINS

BATMAN

NO!

Batman knocks the convoy leader out with a single punch.

He fights his way out to the truck, using the convoy leader's gun as a melee weapon.

He's holding his own, but there are so many of them, and his allies are falling, one after another.

And then from the sky, PARADEMONS descend, picking up the fallen and flying off...

There are too many people for Batman to fight.

They surround him, beating him into the dirt-

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND

Diana reaches out, desperately, but the scene in front of her seems to waiver, retreat...

...and then suddenly disappears in a flash of white.

INT. BUNKER

Batman wakes, chained upright next to two of his allies.

There's a crash as Superman lands at the far end of the hall.

The guards kneel.

Superman walks forwards, killing Batman's two allies with his HEAT-VISION.

He turn to Batman, and, after a moment's pause, tears off his mask, revealing Bruce Wayne.

SUPERMAN

She was my world. And you took her from me.

He touches Batman's chest, and his eyes go hard and cold as he reaches forwards—

Batman SCREAMS—

INT. AIRPLANE — EARLY MORNING

Diana Price startles awake, gasping.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (V.O.)

...thank you for flying with us today,
and welcome to Metropolis.

Diana breathes deeply, and fixes her hair with a shaky hand.

EXT. HERO'S PARK — DAY

This memorial to the Battle of Metropolis consists of a series of STONE SLABS with the names of those who died, and a giant STATUE OF SUPERMAN.

WALLACE KEEFE, the man whose legs were crushed under a girder, runs his fingers over the names of his wife and child.

Keefe sets their photograph down next to the memorial, then turns to the STATUE.

He wheels himself over, and then begins to climb.

A POLICE OFFICER notices.

POLICE OFFICER

Sir, get down.

Keefe ignores him.

He takes a can of SPRAY PAINT out of his pocket.

POLICE OFFICER

Sir, I said get down. Now!

Keefe throws the LID of the spray paint at the officer.

POLICE OFFICER
 (to his radio)
 Can we get some backup, here?

Keefe raises the SPRAY PAINT to the statue.

POLICE OFFICER
 Hey! Hey, don't do it!

Keefe begins to graffiti, in bold red strokes.

INT. LEX LUTHOR'S OFFICE

It's an office befitting a young, self-assured, tech millionaire.

Lex lounges casually in a saucer chair, throwing DARTS at a picture of Superman.

Mercy stands at the ready with her TABLET in hand.

MERCY
 Everything's ready for the gala. But
 I'm still a little hesitant about your
 decision to invite—

LEX
 Mercy, have I ever been wrong?

MERCY
 Very well. We did have one minor
 hiccough with catering, but it's all
 sorted out now...

Luthor is not really paying much attention to Mercy; he knows she's more than competent, and that's all that really matters.

A TV on the wall is showing a news report of Wallace Keefe's arrest.

REPORTER (V.O)
 Emergency responders quickly created a
 precautionary perimeter around Heroes
 Park while they brought the man down
 from this beloved monument. The suspect
 has been identified as Wallace Vernon
 Keefe.

LEX
 (interrupting Mercy)
 Hey! Hey, wait— I know him!

MERCY
 You do?

REPORTER (CONT'D)
 There'll be arraign on charges of vandalism, resisting arrest...

LEX
 Yeah— At the Battle of Metropolis. A girder fell on his legs; I was there, I saw it.

REPORTER (CONT'D)
 ...and a felony charge of making terrorist threats that carries up to forty years in prison.

MERCY
 Poor man.

LEX
 Yeah...

Mercy goes back to explaining gala plans, but Lex is still staring at the screen, darts forgotten.

INT. DAILY PLANET — PERRY WHITE'S OFFICE

Lois Lane comes in without even bothering to knock. She's practically glowing.

In her hand is a PASTIC BAG with the BULLET she recovered.

LOIS
 No match.

PERRY
 Good morning to you too, Miss Lane.

LOIS
 My guys in the crime lab—

PERRY
 -Who should know you're not on a story right now...

LOIS

They say they've never seen one of these before, Perry.

She hands him the BULLET.

He looks it over, and hands it back to her.

PERRY

It's called a bullet. You shoot people with it.

LOIS

Recovered from the scene of the fire fight in the desert. Not sold anywhere commercially in the world, even black market.

PERRY

So?

LOIS

So, who gave prototype military rounds to a group of Quraqi militants? Perry, if the US, while *claiming* to support the Republic of Qurac—

PERRY

The ask, Lois.

LOIS

Flight to DC tonight, a couple of days there.

PERRY

Go. Coach. No extra legroom.

Lois is already halfway out the door.

LOIS

Economy Plus.

PERRY

Coach!

INT. METROPOLIS DINER

Bruce Wayne sits on one end, reading a newspaper.

He's got his eye on one man in particular: Hank Henshaw.

Henshaw pays his bill, setting his PHONE down as he does so.

Bruce walks up to him, and places his PHONE screen down on the table.

BRUCE

Um, excuse me, I'm kind of new in town—

HENSHAW

Yeah? Where are you trying to get to?

BRUCE

Oh, nowhere in particular. Just, you know, wondering if you knew any good restaurants in the area? I've got this date tonight, and I want to make a good impression—

HENSHAW

Date-restaurants aren't really my scene; sorry.

He reaches for his phone, and Bruce quickly adds—

BRUCE

I just got in from Gotham today, so I'm still sort of trying to find my footing.

HENSHAW

Gotham, huh?

BRUCE

Born and raised.

HENSHAW

Well, I think you'll find Metropolis is a lot like Gotham. Except for one thing.

BRUCE

Yeah? What's that?

HENSHAW

Metropolis doesn't have that persistent urine smell.

Henshaw takes his PHONE, and leaves.

Bruce turns his own PHONE over.

The screen reads 'DEVICE CLONING SUCCESSFUL'.

Bruce smiles.

INT. LEX LUTHOR'S MANSION

Mercy leads Senator Finch inside, and then leaves, closing the door behind her.

LEX

Ah, senator. Little bourbon, before lunch?

FINCH

My driver's outside; I can't stay.

LEX

No bourbon? Kentucky girl, like yourself?

He pours himself a glass.

LEX (CONT'D)

My dad always said that Kentucky mash was the secret to health.

He starts to pour her one.

FINCH

I'm blocking the import license for your mineral.

Pause. Luthor's expression noticeably sours. Then he smiles.

LEX

The Red Capes are coming... The Red Capes are coming...!

He starts TAPPING on the table between them.

LEX (CONT'D)

You and your hearings... galloping through the streets to warn us. One, if by land. Two, if by air.

His TAPPING gets louder and faster—

Finch claps his hand down to stopping him.

LEX

Do you what the biggest joke in all of this is, June? Can I call you June?

FINCH

You can call me whatever you like. Take a bucket of piss and call it Granny's peach tea. Take a weapon of assassination and call it deterrence. You won't fool a fly or me. I'm not going to drink it.

Pause. Lex downs his bourbon.

LEX

Pity. I liked you, you know? I... really thought you'd be on the right side.

FINCH

Believe me, I'm still committed to making sure Superman is kept in check—

LEX

That isn't enough!

He hurls the glass to the floor, where it SHATTERS.

Pause.

FINCH

Your father was a good man, Lex.

LEX

My father was a piece of shit. And if the explosion hadn't killed him, the cancer would have.

FINCH

Superman *will* be brought to justice, but I'm not about to take part in—

LEX

Get out.

(pause)

Get out!

Finch nods sharply, and leaves.

INT. BATCAVE

Bruce is pouring over the data he stole from Henshaw's phone.

ALFRED

You're back soon. Didn't take the time to see the Metropolis sights?

BRUCE

Henshaw was right where you said he'd be. I got his phone.

ALFRED

Anything good?

BRUCE

The mother-load. This guy's been doing most of Luthor's dirty work since we split. Quarqi weapons dealings, some less than legal biotech samples, black market stuff, money siphoned off from the Rebuild Metropolis fund-

ALFRED

Sounds like you've got him dead to rights.

BRUCE

Definitely. But it'll take weeks to go through all these leads, and that's time I don't think we have.

ALFRED

Oh?

BRUCE

Luthor's gotten Project Doomsday a lot farther than I thought he would. Apparently, he's finally found a large enough kryptonite sample.

ALFRED

Well. That is bad.

BRUCE

Yeah. I can steal it before it gets to him. But I need to know when it's coming in.

ALFRED

Nothing of Henshaw's?

BRUCE

Nothing I've found so far. Someone else arranged this one – probably Mercy. I've been going through ship inventories, but there's just too much data to process; I might not find it in time.

ALFRED

Wouldn't Luthor know how the mineral is coming in? Have it in his own personal records?

BRUCE

Records of something like this would be offline; I'd need to put a leech in.

ALFRED

So...?

BRUCE

...Well, I'll need the suit, I guess.

ALFRED

Are you sure about that?

BRUCE

I'm not breaking into Luthor's house unarmed, Alfred.

Alfred smiles.

ALFRED

You won't have to. It seems you've been invited.

He proffers an INVITATION.

It's for a benefit gala for Library of Metropolis, held at the personal residence of Alexander Luthor.

EXT. ROAD – NIGHT

Bruce drives passed the ruins of WAYNE MANNOR.

EXT. LEX LUTHOR'S MANSION

Bruce pulls up amid the PRESS.

It's a big, well covered event; there's plenty in the way of paparazzi.

But Bruce is attracting even more attention than he normally would at this sort of event. Nobody thought he would be here.

Clark Kent watches him step out of the car, and smile for the press.

CLARK

Is that who I think it is?

REPORTER

Yeah, looks like. Wayne's got balls,
I'll give him that.

CLARK

What, because of the LexCorp take-over?

The reporter nods.

REPORTER

Let's just say our host can hold a hell
of a grudge.

CLARK

Native Gothamite... Think I could get a
quote from Wayne on the Batman?

REPORTER

Not much else in Gotham people are
talking about at the moment. It's
certainly worth a try.

INT. LEX LUTHOR'S MANSION - BALLROOM

Bruce schmoozes along; easily, but consciously. He's a natural socialite, but he's on a mission.

O'FALLON

Mr. Wayne! I didn't expect to see you
here.

BRUCE

Senator. How are the kids?

O'FALLON

Oh, wonderful. The youngest is just starting high school.

BUSINESS WOMAN

Ah, Mr. Wayne! I have to ask—

BRUCE

I'm sorry, hang on just a moment? I'm no good at socializing until I have a drink in my hand.

BUSINESS WOMAN

Oh, of course.

Bruce moves through the crowd, and BUMPS into Diana Prince, spilling her WINE.

BRUCE

Oh, I'm so sorry, miss.

DIANA

No, it's nothing. It didn't even get on me.

But then she looks up and sees who she's speaking to. And freezes.

For just a moment, the image of Batman chained in Superman's bunker is SUPERIMPOSED over the Bruce Wayne in a suit...

BRUCE

Are sure you're alright?

Diana snaps out of it, and smiles.

DIANA

Yes, sorry. I'm fine. Just surprised, is all.

BRUCE

I'm Bruce Wayne, by the way. I don't think we've met.

DIANA

Diana Prince.

BRUCE

A pleasure.

Diana smiles.

DIANA
I'm sure. Excuse me, Mr. Wayne.

She heads off.

Bruce glances after her for just a moment, then grabs a drink from the bar.

BRUCE
Alright, where am I going, Alfred?

INT. BATCAVE

Alfred is looking at a 3D model of Lex Luthor's mansion.

ALFRED
Approach the elevator, to your left.
That's where it must be.

INT. BALLROOM

ALFRED (V.O.)
It's in the service corridor in the
basement. Go down the stairs.

Bruce casually makes his way over to stairs.

Unbeknownst to him, Diana is watching from across the room.

INT. BASEMENT

ALFRED (V.O.)
Now you've got the kitchens on the
right...

Bruce glances over; everything's right where Alfred says it is.

ALFRED (V.O.)
To the left... Right in front of you;
that's where you want to be.

Bruce steps into a room with a RACK OF SERVERS.

Carefully, he attaches his 'LEECH' DEVICE to the rack.

The DEVICE reads seven minutes, and begins ticking down.

A SERVICE WORKER opens the door.

SERVICE WORKER

Ah, excuse me, sir. You cannot be down here.

BRUCE

Oh, uh, sorry. I thought the mens room was down here...?

SERVICE WORKER

This is maintenance, sir. Mens room is upstairs.

BRUCE

Ah, got it.

SERVICE WORKER

I'll have to ask you to leave, sir.

BRUCE

Sure, no problem. Sorry.

Bruce exits the maintenance room, and the service worker leaves.

BRUCE

(quietly)

I can't stay here, Alfred.

ALFRED (V.O.)

Go upstairs and socialize. Some young lady from Metropolis will make you honest.

INT. BATCAVE

Alfred scoffs to himself.

ALFRED

...In your dreams, Alfred.

He takes a drink.

INT. BALLROOM

Bruce makes his way back into the crowded ballroom.

He sees Diana staring at him from across the room again.

He's just about to make his way over and ask what's up, when he's accosted by Clark Kent.

CLARK

Mr. Wayne... Mr. Wayne...!

Bruce turns, and Clark meets him with a handshake.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Clark Kent, Daily Planet. What's your position on the bat vigilante in Gotham?

BRUCE

Bat vigilante? I'm a CEO, not the mayor; it's a little out of my field.

He glances off, looking for Diana, but she's already gone.

CLARK

Civil liberties have been trampled on in your city. Good people are living in fear. Surely a man as involved in the community as yourself would at least have an opinion—

BRUCE

You want an opinion on the Batman? Don't believe everything you hear. He's a little more than some 'wannabe vigilante', and yes, I read your article.

CLARK

With all due respect, this man thinks he's above the law.

BRUCE

The Daily Planet criticizing those who think they're above the law is... a little hypocritical, wouldn't you say? Considering every time your hero saves a cat out of a tree, you write a puff piece editorial, about an alien who, if he wanted to, could burn the whole place down. There wouldn't be a damn thing we can do to stop him. But, hey, you've got to write what sells, am I right? 'You won't believe these ten Superman-inspired smoothie recipes,' or whatever.

Clark smiles tightly.

CLARK

Is it true that you've been receiving death threats, Mr. Wayne?

BRUCE

I'm not sure I see why that's any of the public's concern.

CLARK

Really? One of the biggest names in Gotham – who's currently attempting a business move that has been criticized as dangerous, egotistical, and, I quote, 'vindictive' – suddenly starts getting death threats, and you can't see why the public's interested?

BRUCE

Wayne Enterprises doesn't need to worry about some asshole with access to the US postal system.

CLARK

Can I quote you on that?

BRUCE

Yeah, and you can quote me on this, too: Idiots like these? They feed off of attention, and if you give it to them, they just get stronger. Ignore the joker, and eventually, he realizes that no one thinks the joke's funny. And then he goes away. It's not my first rodeo, Mr. Kent, and it won't be my last.

Lex Luthor has come up right behind them.

He arrived just in time to hear that last bit, and something in his expression snaps just a little.

He plasters on a smile.

LEX

Boys! Mm, Bruce Wayne meets Clark Kent. Ha, I love it! I love bringing people

LEX (CONT'D)
 together! How are we? Hi, hello. Lex.
 It's a pleasure.

He reaches out to shake hands with Clark.

LEX (CONT'D)
 Ow! Wow, that is a good grip! You
 should not pick a fight with this per-
 son.

Clark forces an awkward smile, and Lex grins back.

LEX (CONT'D)
 I don't suppose you'd mind if I cut in,
 for just a moment? Me and Bruce go way
 back.

CLARK
 Oh, not at all, I'll just—

But Lex is already ushering Bruce away to another part of the
 ballroom.

LEX
 You know, I'll be honest, I'm a little
 surprised you came.

BRUCE
 I'm surprised you invited me.

LEX
 Bruce, you wound me. What, after all
 these years, we have a little —
 minuscule — disagreement, and suddenly
 we can't be friends? Is there a rule,
 or something? Because, I mean, that's
 just tragic. Whoever made that rule,
 should be taken and shot—

BRUCE
 What did you really invite me over for,
 Alex?

Lex's smile looses a few molars.

LEX
 ...We should be on the same side,
 Bruce.

BRUCE

No, we really shouldn't.

LEX

He is *dangerous*. You know that. I mean, first the Battle of Metropolis, now this thing in Quarac—

BRUCE

I agree. He needs to be kept in check. But Project Doomsday is *wrong*, Alex.

LEX

You need monsters to fight monsters—

BRUCE

Not like that. I want to save people, not just stop Superman.

LEX

If we don't have Project Doomsday, we won't be *able* to save anyone. Bruce, with power like his? If there is even a one percent chance he's our enemy, we have to take it as an absolute certainty.

BRUCE

And what about afterwards? What happens when that technology falls into the wrong hands? With all the government contracting you've been doing, it might never even see the right hands.

LEX

I have it under control.

BRUCE

Pretty soon, you won't even have a majority share of LexCorp. That doesn't sound very 'under control' to me.

Pause. Underneath his smile, Lex is seething.

Mercy comes over to the two of them.

MERCY

Your speech is in five, sir. Nikki's about to start her introduction.

LEX
Thank you, Mercy.

As he walks off, he adds:

LEX
I can do this with or without you,
Bruce. And you are *not* taking my
company away from me.

On the other side of the ballroom, Clark Kent is milling about awkwardly.

NIKKI, spokesperson for the Library of Metropolis Foundation, is introducing Lex Luthor.

NIKKI
...Philanthropist. Bibliophile. True
friend of the Library of Metropolis.
Mr. Lex Luthor.

Lex steps forwards amid the applause.

LEX
Nikki, you're embarrassing me. Speech,
speech... Blah blah blah: open bar; the
end. No, just kidding. It's a joke,
haha? But don't worry, I'll keep it
short.

There's warm, slightly awkward socialite laughter.

LEX (CONT'D)
The word 'philanthropist' comes from
the Greek, meaning a lover of humanity.
In that sense, the first philanthropist
was Prometheus, because he gave us fire,
and more importantly, he gave us the
knowledge to create fire. To be our own
masters, not reliant on the gods.

Diana slips past Clark, and heads down the back stairs.

LEX (CONT'D)
It was what we needed to survive. More
than that, it was what we needed to be
human. And for his crime of helping man
— of loving man — Prometheus was
punished. Hm. That seems unfair,

LEX (CONT'D)
 doesn't it? But that's what happens, in
 our society. People are punished for
 teaching others. And why shouldn't they
 be – after all, knowledge is power.

Bruce glances around.

Everyone's pretty distracted by Lex's speech.

BRUCE
 (in an undertone)
 How long do I have left?

ALFRED (V.O.)
 The data transfer should have just
 finished, sir.

Across the room, Clark hears Alfred, and whirls around.

LEX (CONT'D)
 Well, if that's true, then the Library
 of Metropolis is the most powerful
 institution in the world, and I'm so
 glad that I can be a part of that. That
 we all can be a part of something...
 bigger, something greater.

Clark glances through the crowd, all focused on Luthor's speech,
 and sees one person, Bruce Wayne, moving towards the stairwell.

For a moment, he's frozen in shock, trying to make sense of what
 he's just heard.

INT. BASEMENT

Bruce goes to retrieve his LEECH, but...

It's gone.

INT. BALLROOM

LEX (CONT'D)
 Books are knowledge, and knowledge is
 power.

Lex chuckles, at some joke that only he can understand.

LEX (CONT'D)

Heh heh heh, no. No, that's not quite right. The bitter sweet pain among man is having knowledge with no power. Because... Because that is paradoxical—! And Zeus tied Prometheus to a mountain and let an eagle tear out his liver, every day. And no one helped him. No one thought, hey, maybe we should take him down from there— no. He suffered alone. No one came to save him, and no one will.

(pause)

I'm very proud to support the Library of Metropolis; thank you for coming.

There's an awkward pause; no one in the crowd is quite sure how to react to any of that.

INT. BASEMENT

ALFRED (V.O.)

What do you mean, gone?

BRUCE

Exactly what I said! Someone must have found it, or—

He glances around, and just barely sees Diana slipping back upstairs, LEECH in hand.

BRUCE

Her—!

ALFRED (V.O.)

Her?

INT. BALLROOM

LEX

...Please, drink, it's free.

There's some awkward laughter, and then the BAND starts up again, and everything feels a little bit more normal.

Clark makes up his mind, and heads down the stairs after Bruce—

Just in time to bump into Diana.

CLARK

Ah, excuse me, I—

Diana moves passed him without saying a word, and disappears into the crowd.

Almost immediately after, Bruce comes bowling into him.

CLARK

Mr. Wayne?

Bruce glances around: Diana is nowhere in sight.

He swears under his breath.

And then he's disappeared into the crowd too.

Clark is almost about to follow him... but what could he possibly say or do that wouldn't give away who he is?

Instead, he heads downstairs to see if he can find out what they were doing there.

INT. BASEMENT

It's loud and bustling near the kitchen.

With Clark's SUPER-HEARING, it's almost overwhelming.

WAITRESS

-sure, but not until *after* the—

CHEF

I said, plated! God, why do I even—

WAITER

I need a refill for the water tankard—

REPORTER ON TV (V.O.)

(in Spanish)

—A deadly factory fire has interrupted the Day of the Dead celebration in Juarez.

Clark glances around for anything that could have brought Bruce Wayne down here.

There's the area with the SERVER RACK...

But a SERVICE WORKER stops him before he can get near.

SERVICE WORKER

This is off-limits, sir. Please go back upstairs.

INT. BALLROOM

Bruce moves through the sea of people with a purpose.

But Diana's nowhere in sight.

INT. BASEMENT

Clark glances around, still looking for anything that could have brought Bruce down here.

There's a crowd gathering around the KITCHEN TV. Whatever's happening, it's important.

Clark stops and takes a look.

There's a terrible fire raging on the screen, and through the smoke he can just barely see a HELPLESS GIRL trapped inside.

INTERVIEWEE ON TV (V.O.)

(in Spanish)

I can't believe they're going to let that poor girl die.

With new determination, Clark leaves, beginning to remove his tie as he does so.

EXT. LEX LUTHOR'S MANSION

Bruce exits the building, just in time to see Diana climb into a car.

She makes eye contact with him, just for a moment.

And then the car pulls away, and she's off into the night.

EXT. JUAREZ

Superman saves the GIRL from the burning building, just as it collapses.

He carries her back to her mother, like some sort of saving angel.

The girl's mother holds her child to her chest, sobbing.

And the crowd, in awe, cheer for their hero, and reach out to him.

MONTAGE:

Interspersed with television interviews, radio programs, etc., Superman is saving the world, one heroic act at a time.

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER

He's not a man, like you or me. He's something greater. When there's a god among men, why should we expect him to abide by our rules?

1. Superman singlehandedly drags a wrecked ship through the ice.

BESTSELLING AUTHOR

Are there any moral constraints on this person? We have international law. On this Earth, every act is a political act.

2. A TALK SHOW HOST interviews senator June Finch.

TALK SHOW HOST

Is it really surprising, that the most powerful man in the world should be a figure of controversy?

FINCH

Maybe not surprising, but to have an individual engaging in the state level interventions? That should give us all pause.

3. A NASA rocket explodes. Superman catches the cockpit, and carries it to safety.

BLOGGER

We have always created icons in our own image. What we've done is we project ourselves on to him. The fact is, maybe he's not some untouchable force of good or evil. Maybe he's just a guy trying to do the right thing.

4. People huddle atop their houses in the aftermath of a hurricane and flood. Someone has managed to paint his SYMBOL on one of the rooftops.

NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON

We're talking about a being whose very existence challenges our own sense of priority in the universe. It's a paradigm shift on the most basic level, because just like the Copernican revolution, just like Darwinian evolution, we know things now that make our old model fall apart. We can't go back to thinking about our universe in the same way we did. There is just no room for someone like Superman in that worldview.

5. Superman flies above a refugee camp, dropping supplies.

TALK SHOW HOST

Are you, as a United States Senator, personally comfortable saying to a grieving parent, "Superman could've saved your child, but on principle we did not want him to act."

FINCH

I'm not saying he shouldn't act. I'm saying he shouldn't act unilaterally.

6. Clark Kent walks down a Metropolis street.

He looks happier than we've seen him so far.

TEENAGER

I don't care who he is. I don't care that he's acting on his own, and I don't care that sometimes he makes the wrong call. Because we all screw up sometimes, but what matters is that we try to do the right thing. And there is no one trying harder than Superman.

Clark passes a homeless man.

HOMELESS MAN

Spare change?

Clark rustles through his pocket; he doesn't have any.

He pauses, and takes out his wallet. The only bill he has is a TWENTY.

He sticks it in the homeless man's cup without a second thought, and heads off.

END MONTAGE

INT. METROPOLIS JAIL

POLICE OFFICER
Keefe, you made bail.

He opens a holding cell, to a shocked Wallace Keefe.

KEEFE
Who paid?

INT. KEEFE'S APARTMENT

His apartment door is open, and Lex Luthor is sitting inside, on a fancy PROTOTYPE WHEELCHAIR.

KEEFE
Who the hell are you?

LEX
You don't remember me?

KEEFE
No, and I want to know what the hell you're doing in my apartment. Is this some kind of joke?

LEX
I... I'm sorry. In hindsight, this was probably not the best way for me to go about this...

He gets up out of the WHEELCHAIR and gestures to it.

LEX (CONT'D)
Here, try it out.

Keefe isn't even sure how to process this.

KEEFE
I... What?

LEX
It's a prototype... Just something I got my R&D to cook up, last minute. I

LEX (CONT'D)

mean, we're not exactly in the prothesis business, much, but I figure we could always use to expand a bit, and when I saw what you— How after what he did— Well, anyways, it's still super new, so if they haven't worked out all the bugs yet—

KEEFE

...You're Lex Luthor.

LEX

Guilty as charged. Aren't you going to try it out? If it's not your color or style, I can get my guys working on that.

Slowly, Keefe wheels himself over to the PROTOTYPE WHEELCHAIR.

It's gorgeous, and innovative, and probably cost more money to develop than Keefe has ever seen in his life.

LEX

Oh, uh, need a hand?

KEEFE

...Sure.

Lex helps Keefe out of his old wheelchair, and into the beautiful new one.

For a moment, Keefe just sits there.

LEX

Well... Try it out! They told me the controls should be totally intuitive.

Keefe gives the thing a tentative spin.

It handles like a dream.

LEX

It's a little wide for your hall here, I know, but I went ahead and bought the building; I'm already working to make it more accessible.

Realization dawns on Keefe.

KEEFE

You're the one who paid my bail.

LEX

Oh, yeah. Hey, no problem. I went ahead and took care of all your court fees, too. And you've got yourself a hell of a pro bono lawyer, now. Well, not exactly pro bono, but he owes me a few favors, so—

It's too much; Keefe is practically moved to tears.

KEEFE

...Why are you doing all of this?

LEX

I'm sorry?

KEEFE

I... Look, I can't pay for this—

LEX

Nobody's asking you to.

KEEFE

Why are you helping me?

For just a moment, something haunted and very human flashes in Lex's eyes.

LEX

...What sort of person would I be if I didn't?

INT. MEN'S BATHROOM

SECRETARY SWANWICK is washing his hands when Lois Lane walks in.

SWANWICK

Wrong room, miss.

LOIS

Secretary Swanwick, you haven't been returning my phone calls.

SWANWICK

Miss Lane, if you like an interview, Major Farris is just outside that door.

LOIS

You're treating me like a stranger?

SWANWICK

I'm treating you like a reporter.

LOIS

Alright. Is the US providing experimental military arms to rebels in Qurac?

SWANWICK

You know with balls like yours? You belong in here. Who's your source on this? A tin foil hat?

LOIS

No, not tin, but it's metal.

She holds up a bag with the BULLET she recovered in it.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Fired in the Nairomi massacre. Experts at the Pentagon can't ID it. We haven't been told the truth.

SWANWICK

Here's the truth. A reporter got greedy for a scoop and went where she shouldn't have. Superman acted like some rogue combatant to rescue her, and people died. Don't invent a conspiracy theory to put back his halo. Or yours.

He leaves.

INT. FINCH'S OFFICE

Her SECRETARY hands her a manilla envelope as she walks passed.

SECRETARY

Your three-o'clock's here.

Keefe, in his new wheelchair, is waiting for her.

KEEFE

Superman made me half a man. Let me face him.

EXT. METROPOLIS WATERFRONT — DAY

Clark is on the phone with Lois Lane.

INTERCUT — LOIS IN HER HOTEL ROOM

LOIS

I saw you on the news.

CLARK

Yeah?

LOIS

Yeah. Saw you on the news a lot,
actually.

Clark chuckles.

CLARK

Yeah... I've been sort of busy. How are
things going with your investigation?

LOIS

Well, Swanwick not only gave me the
cold shoulder, but basically blamed me
for Cory's death, so that's fun.

CLARK

Jeez. I'm sorry...

LOIS

If they're this determined to keep me
out, that just means they've got some-
thing to hide.

CLARK

That's one way to look at it.

LOIS

Are you going to lecture me about how
I'm putting myself in danger?

CLARK

You know... Not too long ago, I think I
would have.

LOIS

But now?

CLARK

I get it. I mean, sometimes there's something you know you can do, and... you just have to do it. I want you to stay safe, but... You're out there making a difference. There's no way I can be upset at you for that.

LOIS

I miss you.

CLARK

I miss you too.

(pause)

Lois?

LOIS

Yeah?

CLARK

I, uh... When you get back, there's something I'd like to ask you.

LOIS

Ok. Why not just ask me now?

Clark chuckles.

CLARK

I think it'd be better in person.

LOIS

Ok, sure.

CLARK

Alright. And... stay safe, ok?

LOIS

No promises. But I'll try.

CLARK

I love you.

LOIS

I love you too.

Clark puts his phone away, and gazes out at the shore.

In the distance, just barely visible through the fog, is GOTHAM CITY.

DIANA (O.S.)
It's a beautiful view.

Clark turns around.

Diana gestures to the seat next to him.

DIANA
Is this seat...?

CLARK
Oh, no. Go right ahead.

She sits down.

CLARK
...You were at the party.

DIANA
I was.

CLARK
I'm Clark Kent.

DIANA
Diana Prince. It's a pleasure to finally meet you.

CLARK
Finally?

DIANA
I wanted to say hello at the party. But something came up.

CLARK
Yeah, I saw... Can I ask what?

DIANA
You can, but I won't answer that.

CLARK
Fair enough. So, how have you heard of me?

DIANA

I've been following some of your recent work. I'm very fascinated by these... superheroes. Superman, Batman...

CLARK

I wouldn't really put those two in the same category.

DIANA

Yes... I got that impression. May I ask why?

CLARK

Well... Look, I think Batman's trying to do the right thing. I disagree with his methods, but I really do think his heart is in the right place. But... he's ruling through fear, and Gotham doesn't need fear. Gotham needs hope.

DIANA

Spoken by someone who's never spent much time in Gotham.

CLARK

He treats criminals in ways that no one should treat another human being. It doesn't matter where he is; that's not the way to end the conflict. If anything, that's how you breed more hate.

DIANA

You seem very invested in his conduct.

CLARK

I'm just disappointed, I guess. I'm glad that Superman started something, but Batman wasn't what I was hoping for.

Diana chuckles.

DIANA

Superman wasn't the first. And Batman won't be the last.

CLARK

What do you mean by that?

There's a pause. Diana gazes out over the water.

DIANA
Something's coming. I don't know what.
But it's big – bigger than you can
imagine. And these superheroes are at
the heart of it.

Pause; Clark isn't quite sure what to say to that.

DIANA
Do you have someone special in your
life, Mr. Kent?

Clark smiles.

CLARK
Yes, actually. I love her more than
anything.

DIANA
(suddenly serious)
Keep her close.

He pulls a RING out of his pocket, and shows it to Diana.

CLARK
I'm planning on it.

Diana smiles, but there's something about it that's conflicted,
or even sad.

She glances at her watch.

DIANA
I should go. There's an museum gala in
Gotham tonight. I need to be there.

CLARK
Well, it was nice to meet you.

DIANA
Yes. You too.

Diana gets up to leave, but then she hesitates.

DIANA
You know the real difference between
Batman and Superman?

CLARK

Yeah?

DIANA

You smile more.

And before Clark can react, she's gone.

INT. MUSEUM GALA – EVENING

Bruce is schmoozing along, when he catches a glimpse of Diana from across the room.

And just like that, he completely loses interest in the social interaction he was having.

GALA ATTENDEE

...but of course, that's really to be expected. I mean, if you're going to put yourself out there in the first place. Don't you think?

He sets his DRINK down on the nearest table.

BRUCE

Um, yes. Of course. Excuse me.

The CURATOR is showing off a piece to Diana.

CURATOR

It's the sword of Alexander. It's the blade that cut the Gordian Knot. It's a triumph.

DIANA

Yes.

CURATOR

Enjoy.

DIANA

Thank you.

The curator leaves, and Bruce Wayne comes up to take his place, way too casually to actually be casual.

BRUCE

It's a fake. The real was sold in '98 on the black market. Now it hangs...

DIANA

Over the bed of the Sultan of Hajar. I was starting to wonder when you'd notice me.

BRUCE

The night we met, you took something that doesn't belong to you. Stealing's not polite.

DIANA

Is it stealing if you steal from another thief?

BRUCE

Who are you?

DIANA

Someone interested in the same man you are. Although, I think for a different reason.

BRUCE

I'll tell you what. You give me back that drive you stole, and I'll decrypt it for you. Sound fair?

DIANA

That won't be necessary; I already decrypted it.

BRUCE

Last I checked, Luthor was using military grade encryption.

DIANA

Yes, he was.

She moves to leave. Bruce catches her shoulder.

BRUCE

You know, I bet with that dress nine out of ten men would let you get away with anything.

DIANA

But, you're the tenth?

BRUCE

Mmm. You don't know me, but, I've known a few women like you.

DIANA

Oh, I don't think you've ever known a woman like me.

She pauses, and then adjusts Bruce's tie.

DIANA (CONT'D)

You know, it's true what they say about little boys: Born with no inclination to share. I didn't steal your drive. I borrowed it. You'll find it in the glove compartment of your car.

BRUCE

Oh, and I suppose I should thank you?

DIANA

Well, I did decrypt it for you.

She smiles and leaves.

EXT. RAINY STREET — EVENING

Lois Lane meets Secretary Swanwick alone.

LOIS

I don't have a halo over me, Mr. Secretary. I went into the desert; people died. It keeps me awake — it should.

She hands him the BULLET.

LOIS (CONT'D)

If you think Superman is a murderer, then throw it away. But, I don't believe you think that.

Swanwick takes it, and leaves without another word.

INT. PRESS CORPS BRIEFING — DAY

Senator Finch is speaking. At her side is Keefe, in his PROTOTYPE WHEELCHAIR.

FINCH

How do we determine what's good? In a democracy, good is a conversation, not a unilateral decision. So, I urge Superman, to come to this hearth of the people tomorrow. To see those who have suffered. The world needs to know what happened in that desert. And to know what he stands for. How far will he take his power? Does he act by our will, or by his own?

INT. DAILY PLANET

Clark Kent watches the briefing on TV, and says nothing.

INT. BATCAVE

Bruce plugs the 'LEECH' into his computer.

Diana was telling the truth: the data is decrypted.

He quickly skims through the info on the kryptonite import.

But then something else catches his eye.

He opens a folder labeled 'META-HUMAN'.

Inside are a series of folders, with various SYMBOLS.

He clicks the WONDER WOMAN SYMBOL.

Immediately, he's greeted with a flood of images:

Modern photos of Diana Prince. Video taken from security cams. A facial recognition program. A photo of her in full gear, from Belgium, 1918.

BRUCE

Who are you...?

He clicks on the next symbol — THE FLASH:

There's footage from security cameras at a convenience store.

A robbery is in progress.

One COSTUMER notices, and then—

It's almost like the camera glitched, but the next moment, he's standing back where he was in a slightly different position, and the robber is knocked to the ground.

Next symbol – AQUAMAN:

There's footage from a shipwreck excavation.

There's a MAN down in the darkness of the wreck.

He raises his TRIDENT–

Next symbol – CYBORG:

Footage from a lab.

A SCIENTIST is recording record of an experiment in progress on what appears to be a HUMAN TORSO.

SCIENTIST

2400 hours and 2 minutes. Subject declining rapidly. All procedural interventions have failed. Outcome... would be death.

On to the next video: the scientist is pacing around the lab. He throws a piece of equipment to the ground in frustration–

Next video:

SCIENTIST

Dr. Silas Stone suspending all clinical protocol. US Gov object 6–19–82 is successfully activated.

A strange ALIEN DEVICE pulses on his work bench.

It floats towards the torso, bathing him in electricity.

The torso SCREAMS as the device begins to rebuild him.

Bruce shakes his head in horrified fascination, and then presses a COM BUTTON on his desk.

BRUCE

Alfred, I found the transport info. Luthor's bringing it in to a secure facility here in Gotham.

ALFRED (V.O.)

Very good, sir. Do we have a date?

BRUCE

It's waiting on an import license.
We'll need to monitor things, and then,
as soon as...

But something else has caught Bruce's eye. One last folder, labeled with a STYLIZED 'S'.

ALFRED (V.O.)

...As soon as what, sir?

Bruce opens the folder.

There are images of Superman. Fragmentary fingerprints. Facial recognition software matching him against hundreds of suspects. Records of everywhere he's ever been, and everyone he's ever saved.

This is data analysis at a scale that only LexCorp could manage.

And, in the end, after everything is factored in, there's just one likely candidate left.

A certain reporter named CLARK KENT.

BRUCE

No... There's *no* way.

ALFRED (V.O.)

...Sir?

Bruce just shakes his head, and stares at his screen in disbelief.

EXT. WATERFRONT

Lois is sitting on a park bench with Swanwick.

Swanwick has a baseball cap pulled way down; he doesn't want anyone to know he's having this conversation.

SWANWICK

CIA thinks the desert was a setup.
Somebody wanted Superman to look
guilty.

LOIS
The bullet?

Swanwick hands it back to her, glancing quickly around to make sure no one's watching.

SWANWICK
The metal was developed by a private company.

LOIS
What company?

SWANWICK
LexCorp.

LOIS
...Luthor?

SWANWICK
He also had private security contractors in the desert compound. We think they lured him in somehow, and then after he left, camouflaged their work to make it look like he did it.

LOIS
Go on record.

SWANWICK
Not a chance. It's classified. I happen to like my job.

He gets up to go.

LOIS
It doesn't make sense. You said that the ambush was arranged to frame Superman, but how could they know that he'd show up in the... in the middle of the desert.

And then suddenly it hits her: the tip-off to the Daily Planet.

LOIS
Thank you.

She grabs her bag and leaves.

INT. SENATE SECURITY CHECKPOINT

A SECURITY GUARD is using a metal detection wand to check Wallace Keefe. He's clean.

SECURITY GUARD
Alright, come on through.

Right outside security, the media's already reporting.

REPORTER
The Senate hearing is expected to get under way in any minute now. Of course the big unknown in all of this is: Will Superman show up? That is what they're really waiting to see.

Keefe rolls away from the security check-point, and the reporter turns to him.

REPORTER
Mr. Keefe. Mr. Keefe. Soledad O'Brien "In the Moment" Quick question for you. You're heading in to meet with the senators. What would you tell them?

KEEFE
I've come here to tell them to wake up. This is flesh and blood. He's delivered a war here. And this...

He gestures down at his missing legs.

KEEFE (CONT'D)
This is what war looks like. I have nothing.

INT. SENATE HALLWAY

Senator Finch is heading into the hearing, when she's accosted by Lex Luthor.

LEX
Senator! Hi, you. Just the person I was looking for.

FINCH
What are you up to now?

LEX

I'm just here to tell my story. That I was willing to finance a Kryptonian deterrent, but a certain junior Senator from Kentucky decided to block it. Yes, the Chair of the Committee on Superman is soft on security.

FINCH

You can threaten me all you want, Luthor. I won't budge on this.

LEX

You know, I thought as much. And that, senator, is a damn shame.

FINCH

We're done here.

MONTAGE — HEARING NEWS

1. People watch the news of the hearing on TV at a bar.
2. Martha Kent watches from Kent farm.
3. Bruce Wayne watches with Alfred in Wayne manor.

REPORTER

Superman is here. He's actually at the United States capitol. This is really a historic moment. And we expect that Superman would give some kind of a statement to the Senate to the American people, and of course to the world.

INT. OUTSIDE HEARING ROOM

AID

He's here. He came. He's above the Capitol.

Finch pushes passed Lex Luthor.

LEX

Ow... You are going to be on the hot seat in there, June-bug.

FINCH

I grew up on a farm. I know how to
wrestle a pig.

Lex chuckles.

LEX

That's a good one; I'll have to remem-
ber it.

Finch ignores him, and enters the hearing room.

Lex calls after her:

LEX

Good luck, senator!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CAPITOL

Superman flies down and lands on the White House lawn.

Protestors are YELLING as he lands. They crowd around the gates
with SIGNS:

- Superman = Illegal Alien
- This is our world, not yours!
- Earth belongs to humans!
- Go home! Get out!
- God Hates Aliens

Superman says nothing, and walks up the capitol steps.

INT. HEARING ROOM

A hush falls over the room as Superman walks in. He takes his
place at the stand.

Senator Finch is presiding over the hearing.

FINCH

Let me say at the outset that I am
grateful to our witness for coming
before us today.

Superman glances over a Keefe. They make eye-contact for a word-
less moment, and then Keefe turns away, his face hard.

FINCH (CONT'D)

This is how a democracy works. We talk to each other. We act by the consent of the governed, sir. I have sat here before to say that shadow interventions will not tolerate by this committee. Neither will lies. Because today is a day for truth. Because only by speaking—

She sees something on her desk that cuts her short: a JAR of something that looks very much like piss.

The other presiding officials notice her strange pause.

Finch pushes ahead, but her resolve is clearly shaken.

FINCH (CONT'D)

Only by working... together, can we...
c-can we...

Other people in the room have noticed that something's up. Superman seems confused. So does Keefe.

FINCH (CONT'D)

—can we create a free and a...

She turns the jar on her desk to read the label. It says 'Granny's Peach Tea'.

She recoils.

And then she realizes that Lex Luthor is not sitting in the hearing room.

From Keefe's WHEELCHAIR comes a sudden EXPLOSION, engulfing the entire room in flames.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CAPITOL

The explosion is clearly visible from outside.

People are SCREAMING.

All around Metropolis, people watch the news with horror.

REPORTER

Oh, my God!

INT. HEARING ROOM

Superman stands, untouched by the flames.

It's too late to save anyone; those caught in the blast are all already dead.

He bows his head in shame.

INT. LEX LUTHOR'S OFFICE

Lex is watching a news story on the aftermath of the bombing from the safety of his office.

MERCY

I thought you said you wanted to help him.

LEX

Who?

MERCY

Keefe.

Lex pulls a blank.

MERCY (CONT'D)

Wallace Keefe? The man you gave that wheelchair to?

LEX

Oh, right. Did I really say that?

MERCY

Yes, you did.

Lex shrugs, and then offers Mercy a CANDY.

LEX

Jolly Rancher? Come on, it's cherry.

EXT. HOTEL ROOM

Lois is on her PHONE.

LOIS

Clark, it's me again. Please pick up. There's someone behind this, and I'm so close to going public with it, I just need a source... I... Clark, it wasn't

LOIS (CONT'D)
your fault. I know that, and I'm here
for you. Just please... let me in.

EXT. KENT FARM — NIGHT

Martha Kent comes outside at the sound of a SONIC BOOM.

It's Superman, and he looks like he's ready to burst into tears.

CLARK
I... I didn't see it. It was right
there and I didn't see it...

MARTHA
Oh, Clark...

She hugs him, and he cries.

INT. KENT RESIDENCE

The two of them are sitting together on the couch.

Martha's laid out a plate of FRESH COOKIES and MILK, that Clark
has left completely untouched.

MARTHA
It wasn't your fault, Clark.

CLARK
I should have been able to— If I'd just
been faster—!

MARTHA
Clark, listen to me. It wasn't your
fault.

CLARK
So many people have been calling me a
hero, that for a moment, I actually
believed it.

MARTHA
You are a hero.

CLARK
What does that mean, if I can't even
save someone when it counts?

MARTHA

You can't save everyone, sweetie. People die. They always will. This world's too big for you to carry it alone.

CLARK

Why am I always the one who lives?!

Martha rubs a hand soothingly on his back.

MARTHA

Hey... It's ok. It's going to be ok.

They sit in silence for a moment.

MARTHA

It doesn't matter if you can't save everyone. When people see you flying in that cape, what they see is hope, and that's enough. Be their hero, Clark. Be their monument. Be their angel. Be anything they need you to be. Or be none of it. You don't owe this world a thing. You never did. And you've given more than anyone else could.

INT. SENATOR O'FALLON'S OFFICE

There's a KNOCK.

O'FALLON

Come in.

Lex Luthor enters.

O'FALLON

What do you want?

LEX

I need an import license.

O'FALLON

Not this again...

LEX

Open your eyes, senator! My god, count the dead! The hearing bombing alone—

O'FALLON

There's no definitive evidence that the bombing was Superman.

LEX

And yet, we both know the truth.

O'FALLON

He's not our enemy, Luthor!

LEX

Maybe not today. Maybe, the Battle of Metropolis, the Nairoimi massacre, the bombing, and this, and that – maybe those are all coincidences. But we can't fool ourselves forever. One day, he's going to go too far, be too obvious about it. One day, you will have to be the one who says, we could have stopped Superman, but we *just didn't bother*.

O'FALLON

Finch thought you were going to far.

LEX

She did. And now, she's dead, probably at Superman's hands, and isn't that just ironic.

He begins to LAUGH.

O'FALLON

I think now's a pretty inappropriate time to be laughing.

LEX

Is it? Do you know why we laugh, senator?

O'FALLON

Why?

LEX

My father always used to say, that we laugh because we're in pain. Because we're helpless.

He takes his SMALLER KRYPTONITE SAMPLE out of his pocket, and begins to fidget with it.

It SHINES, eery green even in the well-lit room.

LEX (CONT'D)

We laugh, because we're a starving immigrant, dumpster diving for yesterday's newspaper. We laugh because we've finally made it, we've built a company up from the ground, and there's a tumor in our brain, and we finally realize we don't even know our own kid. We laugh because after all those years of riding a goddamn legacy, we're finally out doing something worthwhile with our lives, and our best friend stabs us in the back for it. And we laugh, because when there are people like *him* out there, when a single man could blow it all away in an instant, none of that means a goddamn thing.

He re-pockets the KRYPTONITE.

Then, he places his IMPORT LICENSE FORM in from of the senator, with a pen on the signature line.

LEX (CONT'D)

You know what the right choice is, senator. Don't let June die in vain.

INT. BATCAVE

Bruce is jumping to action, pulling together all his gear.

BRUCE

Green light, Alfred. Transport comes in tonight.

ALFRED

We've got the element of surprise; don't take any unnecessary risks.

BRUCE

When have I ever taken risks?

He gets into the Batmobile and pulls away.

EXT. METROPOLIS DOCKS – NIGHT

A group of DOCK WORKERS unload a giant CRATE, containing Luthor's precious kryptonite.

Henshaw is there, giving orders.

Batman watches from the top of a CRANE.

The dock workers load the CRATE into an ARMORED TRUCK.

Batman aims a SIGHTED DEVICE.

The truck door slams shut, and Batman FIRES.

A TRACKING DEVICE lands on the back of the truck.

The truck heads out, along with a convoy of five cars.

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET

The convoy moves out.

One of the drivers glances behind in the rearview mirror.

There's a car following them, but it's lights are off, and it's black as night.

He radios in to Henshaw.

DRIVER #1

We got something following us, boss.

HENSHAW (V.O)

What do you mean, something?

DRIVER #1

I dunno, lights are off.

HENSHAW (V.O)

Well, lose it.

The convoy turns off onto a side street; the black car follows.

The cars in the convoy signal to each other, and then gun it.

The black car lights up as it roars up to speed, and-

DRIVER #1

Oh my god, it's the Bat.

HENSHAW (V.O.)

What?!

DRIVER #1

The Batman! Shit, we gotta—

His car peels out of the convoy, swerving away from the group.

Four cars.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK

Henshaw sees it happening out the window.

HENSHAW

What the hell are you doing?! Get back
in formation!

He's met with only static: someone's JAMMING the radios.

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET

One of the other cars in the convey gets a flat, and swerves out
wildly.

Three cars.

Then another does the same.

Two cars.

The Batmobile is getting closer...

INT. ARMORED TRUCK

Henshaw turns to his driver.

HENSHAW

Floor it; we're getting out of here.

DRIVER #2

Boss said not to break formation—

HENSHAW

Floor it! Now!

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET

The armored truck pulls ahead of the remaining two convoy cars.

The Batmobile is right behind it.

The remaining two cars start to close behind the armored truck—
Suddenly, one of them is yanked back.

The Batmobile has fired a GRAPPLING LINE, grabbing onto the car's bumper.

The car swerves, into a glancing collision with the other car.

The other car swerves out of the way.

The driver rolls down his window, and yells at the other driver.

DRIVER #3

What the hell are you doing?!

DRIVER #4

I'm caught!

The Batmobile starts to reel itself in towards the car.

In desperation, the car swerves away from the truck, but the instant it moves out of the way, Batman serves the line.

It skids wildly, and crashes into the other car.

And now the armored truck is alone.

The driver's giving it all he's got, but their pursuer was built for a whole 'nother level of speed.

Batman cranks the Batmobile up full-throttle, and cuts the armored truck off.

The driver barely has time to skid to a stop.

Batman gets out of his vehicle, and approaches the armored car.

Suddenly, there's a CRASH between them. Dust flies everywhere, before clearing to reveal... Superman.

BATMAN

What are you doing here?

SUPERMAN

I could ask you the same thing.

BATMAN

Gotham doesn't need—

SUPERMAN

A vigilante who puts an abstract greater good before basic human decency? Yes, I agree.

The armored truck is over the shock; they start to pull away.

Batman moves forwards to stop them—

And Superman holds him back with an iron grip.

SUPERMAN

We're not done.

BATMAN

He's getting away— You have no idea what he's—!

SUPERMAN

It's a weapons import. A *legal* weapons import. I'm not for militarization either, but you change that with your vote, not with some armored tank car—

BATMAN

You have no idea what you're doing!

SUPERMAN

I gave you a warning, Batman, and I meant it. You want to play hero? Fine. But a bunch of fancy toys and martial arts moves don't make you one. You're not a hero; you're just a bully.

The armored truck is long gone.

Batman shoves Superman.

BATMAN

Oh, I'm a bully? Says the magical one-man army. Does whatever he wants, international law be damned—

SUPERMAN

You'd do the same, if you could, and you'd do a worse job at it.

BATMAN

Would I?!

SUPERMAN

Yes!

BATMAN

Well. Maybe I would do a bad job being you. Since an integral part of being you is apparently letting your buddy come by and tear apart an entire city—

SUPERMAN

I fought Zod with *everything* I had—

BATMAN

And everything you had wasn't enough.

SUPERMAN

I *saved* this world.

BATMAN

You let Metropolis burn.

SUPERMAN

What would you have done differently?!
What *could* you even—

BATMAN

I would have cheated!

(pause)

You fought him on his terms. You let him call the shots, and *people died*. So don't you *dare* go lecturing me about the bigger picture.

They stare each other down.

Then Superman flies off without another word.

INT. BATCAVE

Batman climbs out of the Batmobile, and checks his tracking device on his monitor.

It's in a LexCorp secure facility in Gotham.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY

The armored truck arrives, and the crew unloads the CRATE of kryptonite.

The TRACKER is still intact on the truck.

Lex Luthor opens the CRATE himself.

He's bathed in a GREEN GLOW from the sample. He smiles.

INT. HOTEL ROOM – EARLY EVENING

Diana is pouring over the data she's collected meta-humans.

The DESK is covered with info on possible meta-humans, and on deities throughout human culture and history.

And there's one symbol that stands out in her research: OMEGA.

She checks her email.

There's a message from one Bruce Wayne, with the subject line "Boys share too".

It contains two pictures:

The first is her, in 1918.

The second is a picture of the BATSUIT, displayed neatly in its place in the Batcave.

The message reads: *Now you know who I am. Care to tell me who you are?*

Diana smiles.

DIANA

So it was you.

She starts to type a response.

Suddenly, there's a FLASH OF ELECTRICITY.

A PORTAL of crackling energy opens up in the middle of the room.

THE FLASH is reaching out towards her from the center of it.

FLASH

Listen to me now! It's Lois! It's Lois
Lane! She's the key!

His voice echoes strangely, distorted like the energy crackling around him.

Diana stares up in shock.

The Flash makes a pained look, either from whatever is happening to him, or from Diana's lack of a response.

FLASH

Am I too soon?!

DIANA

What do you mean? Who are you?

FLASH

DAMN! I'm too soon!

DIANA

What's going on? I keep having visions—

FLASH

No time! You have to tell Bruce— You
have to tell him—

The PORTAL seems to be closing in on itself.

DIANA

Wait—!

She reaches out like she did in her dream, but something's holding her back.

FLASH

Bruce was right about him! He's always
been right about him! Fear him! Find
us! You have to find us...!

The LIGHT builds, as the PORTAL seems to collapse in on itself.

Diana tries, desperately to reach out, but the world disappears in a sea of white—

Diana startles awake from her desk.

She must have fallen asleep in the middle of her research... and yet—

A couple of LOOSE PAPERS drift down to the ground.

Diana sits stock-still for a moment, trying to collect herself.

Bruce's email is still up on her screen, and her response is still blank.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

Diana quickly shuts her laptop.

DIANA
Just a moment!

She opens the door to reveal Clark Kent.

CLARK
Uh, hi. Can we talk?

Diana lets him in.

DIANA
You found me.

CLARK
I'm a reporter; it's sort of what I do.

DIANA
Fair enough. What do you want to talk about?

Clark hesitates, trying to think of the best way to say it.

CLARK
You're a government agent, right?

DIANA
I am. You're good at your job.

Finally, he just spits it out.

CLARK
The government, do they know?

DIANA
About... you?

CLARK

About any of it. I mean, I'll answer up to whatever they think I've done, but... Well, look, there are people I care about, and—

DIANA

They don't know.

Clark breathes an audible sigh of relief, and sits down heavily.

CLARK

Ok. How much time do I have before you tell them?

DIANA

I won't tell them. Officially, I'm on vacation; this isn't government work.

CLARK

Then why...?

DIANA

Am I investigating you?

Now its Diana's turn to hesitate.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Something big is coming.

CLARK

You keep saying that. What do you mean?

DIANA

I don't know. But I know it involves you. And others.

CLARK

...Other Kryptonians?

DIANA

Other people with abilities.

CLARK

...You promise you won't tell the government? About me?

DIANA

I promise.

CLARK

Thank you.

DIANA

I know what it's like to live two lives.

CLARK

Darling socialite by day, government agent by night?

DIANA

Something like that, yes.

They sit in companionable silence for a moment. Then Clark stands.

CLARK

I should get going. Thank you again.

DIANA

Don't mention it.

He turns to go, and Diana calls over his shoulder.

DIANA

That woman in your life? What's her name?

CLARK

Lois. And I'd better go warn her that the cat's out of the bag.

INT. BATCAVE

Bruce is preparing to steal the kryptonite from LexCorp.

ALFRED

Two warnings from Superman is cutting it a little high, don't you think?

BRUCE

We can't stop now. You know what the stakes are.

ALFRED

I'm beginning to think that's not why you're doing this.

Bruce says nothing, and suits up.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
You're getting reckless, sir.

Bruce gets into the Batmobile, and drives off without another word.

EXT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY – NIGHT

Lex Luthor pulls into the building amidst sirens.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY

There's obviously been a break-in. And it has Batman written all over it.

The police are reviewing the security tapes:

A guard is standing around, when Batman silently drops from the ceiling, and pulls the guard back up with him.

Lex knows what's happened even before he sees it, but he still needs to check...

It's gone.

His precious kryptonite is gone, and in its place is a single BATARANG.

INT. LEX LUTHOR'S OFFICE

MERCY
We have an ID on him.

She holds up a plastic bag, with a piece of broken glass in it. There's a tiny BLOODSTAIN on the glass.

LEX
Well? Who the hell is he?!

Mercy hesitates.

MERCY
...You won't like it, sir.

LEX
Try me.

INT. BATCAVE

The giant piece of KRYPTONITE glows green in Bruce's workshop area.

He and Alfred admire it in silence.

ALFRED

It's worryingly strong stuff. How do you plan on destroying it?

Pause.

ALFRED

Master Wayne—?

BRUCE

I don't.

INT. TAXI

Lois Lane listens to her messages as she rides.

ANSWERING MACHINE (V.O.)

One new message.

CLARK (V.O.)

Hey, Lois. I know I said I wouldn't do this, but... Listen, you need to come back to Metropolis as soon as possible. Things are... I... I really don't want to have this conversation on the phone. Just stay safe and come back as soon as possible. Ok?

ANSWERING MACHINE (V.O.)

No new messages.

Lois hesitates for a moment, before calling Perry White.

LOIS

Perry? I've got a lead on the Senate bombing. Yeah... Headed there now. Just be ready to run the story.

INT. LEX LUTHOR'S OFFICE

Tentatively, Mercy opens the office door.

The entire room has been torn apart.

Sitting in the middle of the rubble is Lex, the rage finally gone out of him.

In one hand, he's holding his small sample of KRYPTONITE. It bathes him in an eery GREEN LIGHT.

MERCY

Sir?

LEX

He played me pretty good, didn't he.
All this time...

Lex LAUGHS: long, and with a hysterical tinge.

MERCY

Sir-

LEX

I think... Our friend in tights has an
announcement to make.

INT. DAILY PLANET

Everyone is crowded around a news broadcast when Clark Kent walks in.

REPORTER #1 (V.O.)

Meanwhile, Superman has issued a direct challenge to the Batman. Quote: "The next time you shine that symbol in the sky, I will personally come stop you. Bury the Bat now, unless you want to start a war."

REPORTER #2 (V.O.)

Well, that's some pretty incendiary language, especially so soon after the bombing...

Clark watches, horrified.

CLARK

Where are they getting this from?
What's their source?

PERRY

God, I wish I knew.

INT. WAYNE MANNOR

Bruce watches the scene on TV, his expression cold.

BRUCE

Well, then. I guess this is war.

INT. BATCAVE

MONTAGE — BATMAN PREPARING FOR WAR

Taking on Superman is an impossible task.

But then, Batman has never let impossibility stop him before.

1. Bruce doing pull-ups with weights chained to his legs.

2. The late design stage for a new suit of POWER ARMOR.

3. Bruce pushing heavy weights.

4. A test of KRYPTONITE GAS.

5. Power armor fabrication.

6. Bruce bench-pressing.

7. A test of the new power armor's GAUNTLET: it punches through concrete like it's plaster.

8. A line-up of KRYPTONITE GAS CANISTERS.

END MONTAGE

EXT. SMALLVILLE CAFE

Martha Kent is just heading home.

A car pulls up behind her, revving its engine.

Martha starts to walk a little faster, then runs.

Another car pulls up in front of her, cutting off her escape.

Men come out of the car and grab her.

She SCREAMS, but her cries are cut off when one of them places a CLOTH to her mouth.

INT. BATCAVE

Bruce is just finishing up his preparations for fighting Superman: the Batcave is an armory.

ALFRED

You need to look at some of these death threats.

BRUCE

I really have other priorities right now, Alfred.

ALFRED

This is serious, sir.

Bruce gestures around his workshop.

BRUCE

More serious than this?

Alfred begins reading one of the letters.

ALFRED

'I thought I could get you on the right side. I trusted you, but you betrayed me. This is the last straw; now you have to die.'

BRUCE

Yeah, more of the same, I got it.

Alfred starts reading another letter.

ALFRED

'You know what's funny. This is all your fault. I didn't want to hurt you.'

BRUCE

Ok, so, we can add 'creepy, inappropriate crush' to the long list of reasons this person is crazy—

He starts reading the third and final letter.

ALFRED

'How about a joke? What do you call a billionaire with parental abandonment issues?'

BRUCE

Alfred—

Alfred turns the letter over to the other side:

ALFRED

'Batman. Ha ha.'

Bruce goes very pale.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY

Lex Luther walks, BRIEFCASE in hand, down the increasingly high security halls of the facility.

He's muttering to himself.

LEX

Ignore the joker and he goes away, huh?
Oh, yes. Ignore him, because the *real*
joke's the one you're pulling on him —
all this time — and god, what a *riot*
that was...

He LAUGHS, bitterly, and it's just on the edge of unhinged.

LEX (CONT'D)

Well, I can do this with... or without
you.

INT. PROJECT DOOMSDAY LAB

The doors swing open, revealing the heart of Project Doomsday.

In the center of the lab is a LARGE CHAMBER.

The glass is darkened, making it impossible to tell what's inside, but it's obviously the culmination of LexCorp's biological experiments.

The CHAMBER is hooked up to an ad-hock assortment of KRYPTONIAN AND EARTH TECH.

Most prominent among the Kryptonian parts is a HEALING UNIT with a large empty SLOT, clearly meant for a piece of kryptonite.

Lex walks into the lab, his admiration clear in his smile.

He stops by the CHAMBER, and strokes the glass.

LEX

Oh yes... You are beautiful...

In front of the CHAMBER a CONTROL PANEL.

Lex keys his passcode, and begins inputting commands.

LEX

I had a gift for you, you know. A perfect gift... And then *he* stole it...

He opens the BRIEFCASE, revealing his small ball of GREEN KRYPTONITE, set in a perfectly shaped piece of ARTIFICIAL KRYPTONITE.

LEX

But... We make due with what we have.

He places the COMBINED KRYPTONITE in the SLOT of the HEALING UNIT.

Then, he pulls a KEY from around his neck.

LEX

This... is for every true human on Earth. Prometheus... taking fire from the gods.

Slowly, he flips a series of switches along the control panel.

Then, finally, he inserts his KEY into the slot and turns, pulling down on a CENTRAL LEVER.

The HEALING UNIT whirls to life, and the COMBINED KRYPTONITE glows a ghastly green and purple.

Lex grins wildly, and then begins to LAUGH.

The KRYPTONITE glows brighter and brighter, and finally engulfs Lex in a BLINDING FLASH of green and purple light.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY

Lois Lane is escorted into the building by a couple of Luthor's thugs.

Mercy is waiting for her.

MERCY

Miss Lane. A pleasure.

LOIS

Do you know why I'm here?

MERCY

I can guess.

LOIS

Who made that tip-off call? Was it Luthor? Or was it you?

MERCY

I handle most of Luthor's calls.

LOIS

That isn't what I asked.

Mercy smiles.

MERCY

Oh, I'm well aware.

LOIS

Let's try something else then, shall we? Did Wallace Keefe know he was going to his death?

That gets a reaction from Mercy, albeit a subdued one.

MERCY

I don't know why you think I would know that.

LOIS

Listen, Mercy. I have everything I need to take LexCorp down, and I can do either do it with your cooperation or without it.

MERCY

You wouldn't have come here if you had everything you needed. Oh, you have pieces, I'm sure; Henshaw's anything but subtle. But nothing substantial. No one willing to go on the record; no invoices that are actually damning instead of just suspicious. You have nothing at all.

LOIS

I have a digitally reconstructed model of Keefe's wheelchair. Same alloy as the bullets used in the Nairomi massacre. LexCorp proprietary pieces all through it. Lead lined, and just thick enough to keep Superman from seeing what was right in front of him.

MERCY

You're bluffing. The blast was designed to leave the wheelchair and un-reconstructable slab.

LOIS

So you *did* know.

(pause)

Who made the call, Mercy? You, or him?

MERCY

No, I think it's my turn to ask questions. You figured all this by yourself — Good for you. But tell me: Why on earth did you come here alone?

A couple of Luthor's thugs start to close in on her.

LOIS

I wouldn't do that, if I were you. This whole conversation is being transmitted to the Daily Planet.

She pulls out her PHONE—

Which is silently flashing "SIGNAL BLOCKED".

Mercy smiles, and holds up a SIGNAL BLOCKER.

MERCY

No, it isn't.

EXT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY ROOF — NIGHT

Lex Luthor stand alone on the roof, his back to the helipad.

A LexCorp HELICOPTER lands.

The door opens, revealing Lois Lane, Mercy, and a couple THUGS.

One of the thugs gestures with his gun for Lois to step out.

She walks towards Lex Luthor, as the HELICOPTER flies away.

LEX

Plain Lo, in the morning... Lola in
slacks... Lois Lane.

He turns around, and Lois draws back in horror.

His face is a GHASTLY WHITE, and his hair is BRIGHT GREEN. And
plastered on his face is a HIDEOUS GRIN.

LEX

...What? Is there something on my face?

He CHUCKLES to himself, and then grabs her by the arm and leads
her to the edge.

LEX

Come see the view. Now, the secret to
the height is the building material.
It's light metals, which... sway a bit
in the wind. And you know something
about LexCorp metals, don't you, Miss
Lane? Or, well, not as much as your
boyfriend, I suppose. Right in the
middle of everything, that one! BOOM!

He LAUGHS.

LOIS

You're psychotic.

LEX

Oh, come now. You're only saying that
because of this!

He gestures to his hideously deformed face, and 'tsks'.

LEX (CONT'D)

Very prejudiced of you, I say. No, no: 'psychotic' is just a three syllable word for any thought too big for little minds. This—

He gestures to his face again—

LEX (CONT'D)

These are battle scars. This is the face of someone who dared to challenge the gods. And lived.

LOIS

What do you want with me?

LEX

With you? Nothing! Oh, no, I would have been content to leave you alone after the massacre, dearest. But you just had to keep poking your head into other people's business...

LOIS

Perry White knew I was going to see you. When I disappear, he'll come digging.

LEX

Oh, who said anything about disappearing? No— no, I should be thanking you! Honestly, you have no idea how much time and trouble this saves me—

LOIS

What are you talking about?

LEX

Let's try a new category: Circles. Round and round and round they go to find Superman. Wrong category, boy. No, triangles! Yes, Euclidean triangle inequality. The shortest distance between any two points is a straight path. And the swiftest path to Superman...

He swipes her PHONE.

LEX (CONT'D)
 ...is a pretty little road... called
 Lois Lane.

He dials, and then holds the PHONE out in front of him.

LEX (CONT'D)
 Tell your boyfriend how much you miss
 him?

CLARK (V.O.)
 Lois?! Lois, what's wrong? Where are
 you—

LOIS
 Clark, don't—!

LEX
 Your princess is at the top of another
 tower!

He LAUGHS, and tosses the PHONE over the edge.

LEX
 ...And now? We wait.

There's a WHOOSHING sound from below them—

LEX (CONT'D)
 But not for long.

Superman arrives at the top of the tower, and hovers in the air
 above them.

SUPERMAN
 Let her go.

Lex just CHUCKLES.

LEX
 Boy, do we have problems up here!

He takes an EGG TIMER out of his pocket, and winds it up.

SUPERMAN
 I said: let her go.

Luthor takes his arm off of Lois, and backs off, hands up, a
 mockery of surrender.

LEX

Let's count them off, shall we? There's the problem of— of evil in the world. The problem of absolute virtue. The problem of one man on top of everything else. And then there are backstabbers, and cowards, and freaks in Bat costumes, "cleaning up the streets"— Gods. Heroes. Figure heads. And it's time for the world to see the fraud you all are.

SUPERMAN

What have you done?

LEX

What have *I* done? Oh, sweetie. No, *my* plan, *my* baby, blew up in *my* face! But *you*— You provided me with such a wonderful backup... And all on your own! Nothing like a pissing contest to bring out the worst in us...

EXT. RUINS OF WAYNE MANOR

Batman, in a NEW SUIT, shines his BAT SIGNAL into the sky. Then he waits, grimly, for the inevitable.

EXT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY ROOF

Distantly, the BAT SIGNAL can be seen in the clouds.

LEX

Bring me Batman's head, Clark Kent. Oh, darn it, I forgot, your secret identity — I am so sorry! What I meant to say was, bring me the head of Bruce Wayne, Superman.

Shocked silence.

LEX (CONT'D)

Oh, what's this? I knew, all along?! All those set-ups for Superman, all those death threats against Bruce Wayne, it was all *me*?!
(mock-gasp)

Well, just try to ignore the Joker, now.

SUPERMAN

...You really think I'd fight him for you?

LEX

Mmm, yes, as a matter of fact, I do.

He holds up a fan of POLAROID PHOTOGRAPHS of Martha Kent, bound and gagged.

LEX (CONT'D)

Isn't she just *lovely*, like that? I'm so glad I took these before Henshaw gets to work on her—

Superman grabs Lex by the collar and lifts him off the ground, eyes GLOWING RED.

SUPERMAN

Where is she?!

LEX

I don't know! I wouldn't let them tell me! So, if you kill me, Martha dies. And if you fly away, Martha also dies. But if you kill the Batman... Martha lives.

Superman drops Luthor.

SUPERMAN

Why are you doing this?!

LEX

Honestly, who cares?

He LAUGHS.

LEX (CONT'D)

No, no, but really. Who would, morally, deserve to win: you, or Batman? You, obviously. But! Who would win in a fight? Also you! But the point is, it doesn't really matter, because if you two fight, whoever wins, you both lose. The people — the real people, like me — the true humans win, because whoever dies, the pedestal is broken. And the

LEX (CONT'D)
 world gets to see that you lot? You're
 nothing special at all.

(pause)

Mother of God, would you look at the
 time.

He holds up the EGG TIMER.

LEX (CONT'D)
 When you came here, you had an hour.
 Now it's less.

EXT. RUINS OF WAYNE MANOR

Batman is waiting for Superman when he arrives.

BATMAN
 You know, even after everything, there
 was a part of me that didn't think
 you'd really come.

SUPERMAN
 Bruce, please—

BATMAN
 So it was you. I didn't want to believe
 it.

SUPERMAN
 It's not what you think. You have to
 listen to me, I'm not—

BATMAN
 Oh, I've heard you loud and clear. Here
 I am. Give me your best shot.

Superman steps forwards.

SUPERMAN
 I'm not here to fight—

SPEAKERS from both sides of him blast him with HIGH-PITCHED
 NOISE.

Superman crumples, wincing against the sound.

Then he grabs a few large pieces of DEBRIS, and throws them at
 the SPEAKERS, destroying them.

He's just in time to meet a punch from Batman's new POWER SUIT.

He meets the impact, and throws Batman a good ten feet.

Superman tries to go to Batman, but when he moves forwards, more SPEAKERS activate, this time paired with STROBES.

Superman squeezes his eyes shut, and desperately feels for more DEBRIS, or anything he can use to destroy them.

Batman comes at him again, punching with intent.

This time, Superman can barely fend him off; the sounds and the light are too much, and he's desperately trying not to hurt him-

Batman punches Superman squarely in the jaw.

Superman ROARS blasting the SPEAKERS and LIGHTS indiscriminately with his HEAT VISION, and lighting the place ablaze.

He grabs Batman, flying him up off the ground, and crashing into the side of WAYNE MANOR, and up to the ROOF.

Batman picks himself up again.

SUPERMAN

Stay down! I don't want to hurt you!

BATMAN

You can't afford to play nice, Clark.

He pulls a SMOKE BOMB out of his UTILITY BELT, and sets it off.

Superman flies through the smoke, but Batman is gone...

But no- Batman is behind him, a PROJECTILE DEVICE aimed at his head-

Batman FIRES.

Superman catches the slug in the air.

And then it EXPLODES in cloud of GREEN GAS.

Superman CHOKES and stumbles.

BATMAN

And I can't afford to fight fair.

Superman runs at Batman with a punch-

And Batman catches it without flinching.

Superman's eyes widen in disbelief.

He punches again, and Batman counters.

And now, they're in a fist fight – probably the first proper fist fight Superman has been in in his entire life.

Clark Kent has always had his strength, but Bruce Wayne relies on skill above all else. The fight isn't even close.

Batman kicks Superman into a SKYLIGHT, and sends them both crashing down to the floor beneath.

Batman has his SUIT to protect him from the fall, but Superman takes the hit barely better than a normal human would.

And Batman is already ready with another blow.

Superman is still trying to fend off Batman's strikes, but he's tiring.

He can't even pretend to keep up, at this point, and Batman throws him like a rag doll.

He moves in with a finishing KICK–

And Superman catches the blow, and throws him through a wall.

They run at each other.

Superman is still weakened, but it's clear that the GAS is wearing off.

With every passing second, Superman's moves are faster, more powerful.

Batman pins him to a wall at PUNCHES his face.

But every punch has less and less effect.

Until finally, Batman's gauntlet RINGS off of Superman's face like it's solid metal.

Batman backs away–

And Superman FLIES him through a wall, tossing him like a child.

Batman fumbles with his GAS CANISTER LAUNCHER, trying to reload.

Superman FLIES at him—

Just as Batman FIRES, and the room fills with GREEN GAS.

Batman is knocked across the room, and his MASK shatters.

But Superman is CHOKING on the GAS.

Batman grabs a PIECE OF DEBRIS, and SHATTERS it over Superman's head.

He throws Superman over the balcony, and all the way down to the ground below.

Then he lowers himself to ground level by grappling line.

EXT. NEAR WAYNE MANOR

A car pulls up, and Lois stumbles out of the drivers seat, sprinting towards the Manor.

INT. WAYNE MANOR

Batman raises one of his fists, and his SUIT GAUNTLET whirs as it CHARGES UP.

Superman GROANS in the rubble, too battered to move.

Batman winds up the punch—

LOIS

No, don't kill him, please!

FLASHBACK:

Bruce sees his PARENTS, held at gunpoint.

His mother, begging for his father's life.

He can't hear what she's saying but it doesn't matter — He's replayed this scene in his head so many times he knows it by heart.

Don't kill him, please!

His mother's PEARLS, falling into the gutter like raindrops.

END FLASHBACK

Bruce pulls back like he's been struck.

He looks at Superman lying there: what he's done, what he was almost about to do—

Then tears off his HELMET and hurls it to the ground.

Lois runs to Superman, holding him.

BRUCE

I didn't want to fight you. I swear I didn't. Why the hell did you force my hand?!

LOIS

He didn't. Luthor's been playing you both.

CLARK

He— He has my mother. He's going to torture her to death. Please— help me save her. I'll do anything.

Bruce helps him to his feet.

BRUCE

Alfred can find them. We can stop Luthor.

CLARK

Thank you.

BRUCE

Don't you dare thank me after all this.

He turns to Lois, and pulls a MEMORY STICK out of his UTILITY BELT.

BRUCE

Records of Luthor's criminal activities. Get it to the Daily Planet. Understood?

Lois nods, and then turn to Clark.

LOIS

Stay safe.

CLARK

That's my line.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS

The Batmobile zips along at break-neck speed.

INT. BATCAVE

ALFRED

I've tracked Henshaw's men, but I don't have eyes inside the building. So once I get you in, you're on your own. Do you understand?

INT. WAREHOUSE

Henshaw holds Martha Kent at gunpoint.

He and all of his men are armed with fancy new LexCorp guns, powered by ARTIFICIAL KRYPTONITE.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREET

The Batmobile comes into sight of the warehouse.

ALFRED (V.O.)

Good luck.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY

Lex is seated in front of the TANK for PROJECT DOOMSDAY.

His egg-timer DINGS, and he smiles to himself.

There's a CRASH as a CAPEd FIGURE comes through the roof, and lands on the ground behind him.

LEX

"Late, late", says the White Rabbit.
Right, wabbit? Out of tricks. Out of time. And one Bat head short.

He spins around in his chair.

But the man facing him is Batman, not Superman.

They regard each other for a moment, shocked. Lex, by Batman. Batman, by Lex's face.

BATMAN

My god. What happened to you, Alex?

LEX
What happened to me?!

Lex LAUGHS: hysterical, disbelieving.

LEX (CONT'D)
You! *You* happened to me! You stabbed me
in the back over, and over, and over,
and over, and over, and over—!

BATMAN
It wasn't—

LEX
Don't tell me what it wasn't! You— *you!*
It wasn't enough for you to leave me;
no—! You had to *destroy* me! Well, guess
what? You did! And isn't that just
hilarious?!

He LAUGHS, and then holds up the EGG-TIMER.

LEX (CONT'D)
Well. Out of time.

He calls Henshaw.

LEX
How's Martha coming, Hank?

No one answers.

LEX
Hello?
(pause)
Henshaw, what's happening over there?!

INT. WAREHOUSE

Henshaw's RADIO is lying abandoned on the ground.

Henshaw, unconscious and tied to a pillar, isn't answering.

The remains of his fancy ARTIFICIAL KRYPTONITE GUN are on the ground beside him: a twisted mass of metal and glowing purple goo.

LEX (V.O.)
Henshaw! Henshaw, do you read me?!

Superman picks up the RADIO.

SUPERMAN
I'm afraid Henshaw's a little tied up
right now.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY

BATMAN
She's ok?

SUPERMAN (V.O.)
Safe and sound. I'm dropping her home
now, and then I'll come meet you.

The radio cuts off. Luthor is shaking.

LEX
No. Not this too. You're not taking
this away from me, too.

BATMAN
If you come quietly--

Lex LAUGHS for a long time at that.

LEX
We could have changed the world
together, you and I. We could have
saved *everyone*.

Lex moves to the Project Doomsday CONTROL PANEL, and keys in his
passcode.

Suddenly, Batman realizes, to his horror, what the GIANT TANK in
front of them must be.

BATMAN
No...

The TANK whirls to life, and Luthor moves to a GIANT LEVER on
its side.

BATMAN
It's over, Alex! I've turned over all
of the records of your criminal
activity. Whatever happens, you're not
walking away a free man. Stop, while

BATMAN (CONT'D)

you still can! You have nothing to gain from this.

LEX

No, I have nothing left to lose.

He reaches for the LEVER.

BATMAN

You don't have to do this. Alex, please—!

He pulls the LEVER.

There's a hideous ROAR as DOOMSDAY AWAKENS.

Lex LAUGHS hysterically.

LEX

Joke's on you, Batman! Joke's on you!

INT. DAILY PLANET

The lights all GO OUT at once.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY — ARIAL VIEW

There's a massive BLACKOUT.

NEWS COVERAGE

REPORTER

We're getting reports, there are total blackouts in the north and to the northwest of the city. Federal authorities are trying to determine if this is part of a larger terrorist attack.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY

The thing is a hideous GREY, SPINEY MONSTER, seven feet tall at least.

It tears it's way out of the TANK, and hurls a punch at Batman.

Superman crashes through the roof just in time to stop the punch, and the force of it pushes him halfway across the room.

Batman moves in, and Doomsday bats him away like a toy, slamming him hard into the wall.

SUPERMAN

No!

He fights Doomsday, but it's like fighting a larger, stronger version of himself.

Doomsday throws him through a wall and out of the secure facility.

In all the commotion, Lex Luthor has slipped away entirely.

Batman runs outside, just in time to see Doomsday going for Superman.

He trips Doomsday with one of his grapple lines, when he goes for Superman, but it barely slows him down.

Superman meets Doomsday head on again, but he's holding himself back – trying to minimize the collateral damage – and it's clear that that isn't going to work here.

SUPERMAN

We need to get him into the open! Away from the city!

BATMAN

No, we need to stop him! You lead him out; I'll get Luthor!

Superman flies off, luring Doomsday away.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY

Patrons are crowded around the TV, which is showing news on the Doomsday situation.

REPORTER

These are live images from the LexCorp branch office on the outskirts of Gotham. Military aircraft are on the scene, but we are unsure of the exact nature of the threat at this time. Superman appears to be luring the monster away from the city–

Diana watches, and then abruptly leaves.

INT. LEXCORP SECURE FACILITY — METAL CATWALK

Batman finds Luthor stumbling away.

He grabs him, and slams him into the rail.

BATMAN
How do I stop it?

LEX
Stop it? Stop Doomsday?

He LAUGHS.

Batman hoists Luthor up over the edge of the catwalk.

BATMAN
Tell me. Now!

LEX
You can't! It won't stop until Superman
is dead.

BATMAN
Then how do I kill it?!

LEX
Uh-uh! I'm sorry to break it to you,
Bruce, but it's un-killable. Cut from
the same cloth as the Kryptonians—

He starts to LAUGH, but it's cut off when Batman chokes him.

Lex struggles, but he's losing strength fast... He starts to go
limp...

Batman releases him, and starts to walk away.

LEX
What? I'm not even worth killing, to
you?!

BATMAN
No. You're really not.

Suddenly he stops.

BATMAN
(to himself)
His cells are Kryptonian...

He turns back to Luthor.

BATMAN

Give me the passcode to your weapons
lab. Now.

EXT. GOTHAM OUTSKIRTS

Superman and Doomsday are fighting for all they're worth, not far from the ruins of Wayne Manor.

It's a no-holds barred brawl of the worst kind: brute strength against brute strength.

Doomsday is just too powerful for Superman to try anything clever, and Doomsday really only has one move: SMASH.

It's not as though Superman's strikes aren't having an effect; they are.

But it's not enough. Doomsday is beating him down faster.

High over head, the BATPLANE flies in towards the action.

INT. BATPLANE

Batman is in the cockpit.

On the seat next to him is one of Luthor's artificial kryptonite powered GUNS.

BATMAN

Alfred, you're going to have to take
control.

INT. BATCAVE

ALFRED

Understood, sir.

He activates a series of CONTROLS at the workstation, and begins to fly the Batplane remotely.

EXT. GOTHAM OUTSKIRTS

The Batplane FIRES on Doomsday.

Doomsday turns on the Batplane, and FIRES on it, with a BEAM of HEAT-VISION.

One on the Batplane's wings is badly clipped, and it dips, dangerously.

INT. BATCAVE

ALFRED

You've lost an engine. I'm going to have to put her down.

EXT. GOTHAM OUTSKIRTS

The Batplane comes down in a bad, but controlled, crash landing.

The cockpit opens.

Doomsday turns towards Batman, and prepares to fire on him with its HEAT-VISION.

BATMAN

Oh, shit.

Doomsday FIRES.

Suddenly WONDER WOMAN jumps in front of the blast, blocking it with her BRACELETS.

They absorb the energy, dissipating it.

Then, Wonder Woman punches back, releasing the stored energy of the blast back at Doomsday.

Doomsday flies back, and Superman takes the opportunity to strike it again.

Wonder Woman turns to Batman.

WONDER WOMAN

What's the plan?

Batman holds up the LEXCORP GUN.

BATMAN

Doomsday's body is Kryptonian. If I can make this thing take real kryptonite, I can kill it.

WONDER WOMAN

Do it. I'll keep it busy.

Batman nods, and moves behind the wrecked Batplane.

He takes a PIECE OF KRYPTONITE and some TOOLS out of his UTILITY BELT, and gets to work on modifying the LEXCORP GUN.

Doomsday gets the upper hand on Superman, and FIRES on him.

But Wonder Woman jumps in front just in time, stopping the blast with her SHIELD.

She jumps at it, SWORD in hand, as Superman flies towards it—

And now it's two-on-one.

The two of them together still aren't quite bringing Doomsday down, but it's a much closer fight.

SUPERMAN

We can't keep this up!

WONDER WOMAN

Batman has a weapon! We just need to stall it!

Superman meets Doomsday's HEAT-VISION with his own, and the two face off.

But Doomsday overpowers him, throwing him backwards.

Wonder Woman slashes at him with her SWORD, but he disarms her, and tosses her back as well.

Then Doomsday DIVES towards the Batplane.

SUPERMAN

No!

Batman sees it coming at the last second, and barely manages to pull himself out of harms way with a GRAPPLING LINE.

Doomsday DIVES at him again, and he does the same, but this time, Doomsday slashes his leg.

He grunts in pain, and doesn't have time to react before Doomsday comes at him a third time—

And is blocked by Superman.

Superman punches it back, desperately.

His SUIT is badly torn, and he's battered and bleeding, but he's still fighting with everything he has.

Wonder Woman suddenly realizes that it's almost sunrise, and turns to Batman.

WONDER WOMAN

You need to hurry! If this sun rises—!

She's cut off by another attack by Doomsday.

BATMAN

I've almost got it...!

He makes the final adjustments to the LEXCORP GUN, which now glows GREEN instead of purple.

Batman FIRES at Doomsday and misses.

He FIRES again, and misses.

BATMAN

He's too fast!

Doomsday tries to CHARGE Batman, and Superman is barely able to knock it back.

Wonder Woman runs at Doomsday, and grabs it with her LASSO.

WONDER WOMAN

Take the shot now! Batman!

Doomsday HOWLS, and twists away, just as Batman FIRES.

It throws Wonder Woman to the ground, dodging the KRYPTONITE SLUG just in time.

Doomsday SMASHES Wonder Woman into the rubble, and this time, she doesn't get back up.

Then it turns, once more, on Batman.

Superman charges forwards, and grabs hold of Doomsday, pinning it in place.

SUPERMAN

Do it!

Batman takes aim again.

But there's too much motion as Doomsday thrashes and tries to throw Superman off.

As Batman starts to line up the shot, he realizes that he can't take it without the risk of hitting Superman.

SUPERMAN

What are you waiting for?!

BATMAN

I can't get a clear shot!

Doomsday thrashes again, almost throwing Superman off.

SUPERMAN

I can't hold him much longer! Hurry!

BATMAN

It's kryptonite; you'll die! Superman, please, I can't—

SUPERMAN

Do it! Do it now!

Batman pulls the trigger.

The SLUG flies like a ray of green light.

It pierces Superman, and continues all the way through Doomsday.

Superman SCREAMS as he falls, and Doomsday falls with him.

There they lie, motionless; broken.

Batman runs to Wonder Woman. He helps her up, supporting her as they stagger over to Superman and Doomsday.

There's no mistake: both Superman and Doomsday are dead.

Batman and Wonder Woman hold each other in solemn silence, as the sun begins to RISE over the battlefield.

INT. PRISON

Lex Luthor, clad in an ORANGE JUMPSUIT, sits in chains, as his head is shaved.

He says nothing when, after they're done shaving his head, the GUARDS lift him out of the chair and escort him down the hall.

But his face is still frozen in a HIDEOUS GRIN.

PULL BACK TO:

EXT. PRISON

Except... It isn't a prison at all.

A sign clearly proclaims that this building is ARKHAM ASYLUM.

INT. DAILY PLANET PRESSES

Perry White lifts a freshly printed issue from the stack.

The headline reads: SUPERMAN DEAD.

Inside there are two smaller articles:

One on Lex Luthor's arrest, and one on the casualties of the battle, including one Daily Planet reporter, Clark Kent.

INT. KENT FARM

Clark Kent's friends and family gather for his funeral.

INT. CLARK'S ROOM

Lois lies on the bed, holding back tears.

There's a KNOCK on the door: Martha Kent.

MARTHA

Hi. Clark had this sent here, so he
could surprise you.

She hands Lois an ENVELOPE.

They hug, and then Martha leaves, before she bursts into tears.

Lois opens the envelope. Inside is a small box, holding an
ENGAGEMENT RING.

She holds it to her heart, and begins to cry.

INTERCUT: TWO FUNERALS

The first, on Kent farm. A small, but solemn affair, attended by
his closest friends and relatives.

The second, in Metropolis.

The entire city has come out in mourning.

The streets are cleared, and the coffin – black, with his symbol inlaid in rosewood – is paraded by a squad in dress uniform.

There's a full salute, and an air show.

In both funerals, men and women are openly in tears.

EXT. SMALLVILLE CEMETERY

Lois stands alone at Clark's grave, long after everyone else has left.

She's wearing the RING that Clark was never able to give her.

Diana comes up to Bruce, who is standing at a distance.

BRUCE

All the circuses back east, burying an empty box.

DIANA

They don't know how to honor him, except as a soldier.

BRUCE

I've failed him, in life. I won't fail him in death. Help me find the others like you.

DIANA

To fight?

BRUCE

If that's what the world needs. We have to stand together.

Pause. Diana sighs.

DIANA

A hundred years ago, I walked away from mankind. From the century of horrors. Man made a world where standing together is impossible.

BRUCE

Men are still good.

EXT. METROPOLIS CITY SQUARE

BRUCE (V.O.)
We fight. We kill. We betray one
another.

Hundreds stand in a candlelight vigil at the monument for
Superman.

BRUCE (V.O.)
But we can rebuild. We can do better.
We will. We have to.

The monument consists of a single PLAQUE in the ground, in the
shape of his symbol.

Flowers surround it, and written beneath it are the words:

If you seek his monument, look around you.

EXT. SMALLVILLE CEMETERY

Bruce is blinking back tears.

BRUCE
...We have to.

He and Diana stand in companionable silence for a time.

Then, suddenly, Diana whispers into his ear:

DIANA (O.S.)
He's not dead, you know.

Bruce freezes in shock.

He whirls around to ask what, why, how...!

But Diana is already gone.

Bruce is standing alone in the graveyard.

Wonder clouds his eyes as the camera PANS OUT, and DRAMATIC
MUSIC RISES—

CUT TO BLACK