

THE GREAT AMERICAN ICON ... REIMAGINED AS A SOVIET HERO!

MARK MILLAR
DAVE JOHNSON
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ANDREW ROBINSON
WALDEN WONG



SUPERMAN



RE

CO



RE

TURN

MARK MILLAR
WRITER

DAVE JOHNSON & KILIAN PLUNKETT
PENCILLERS

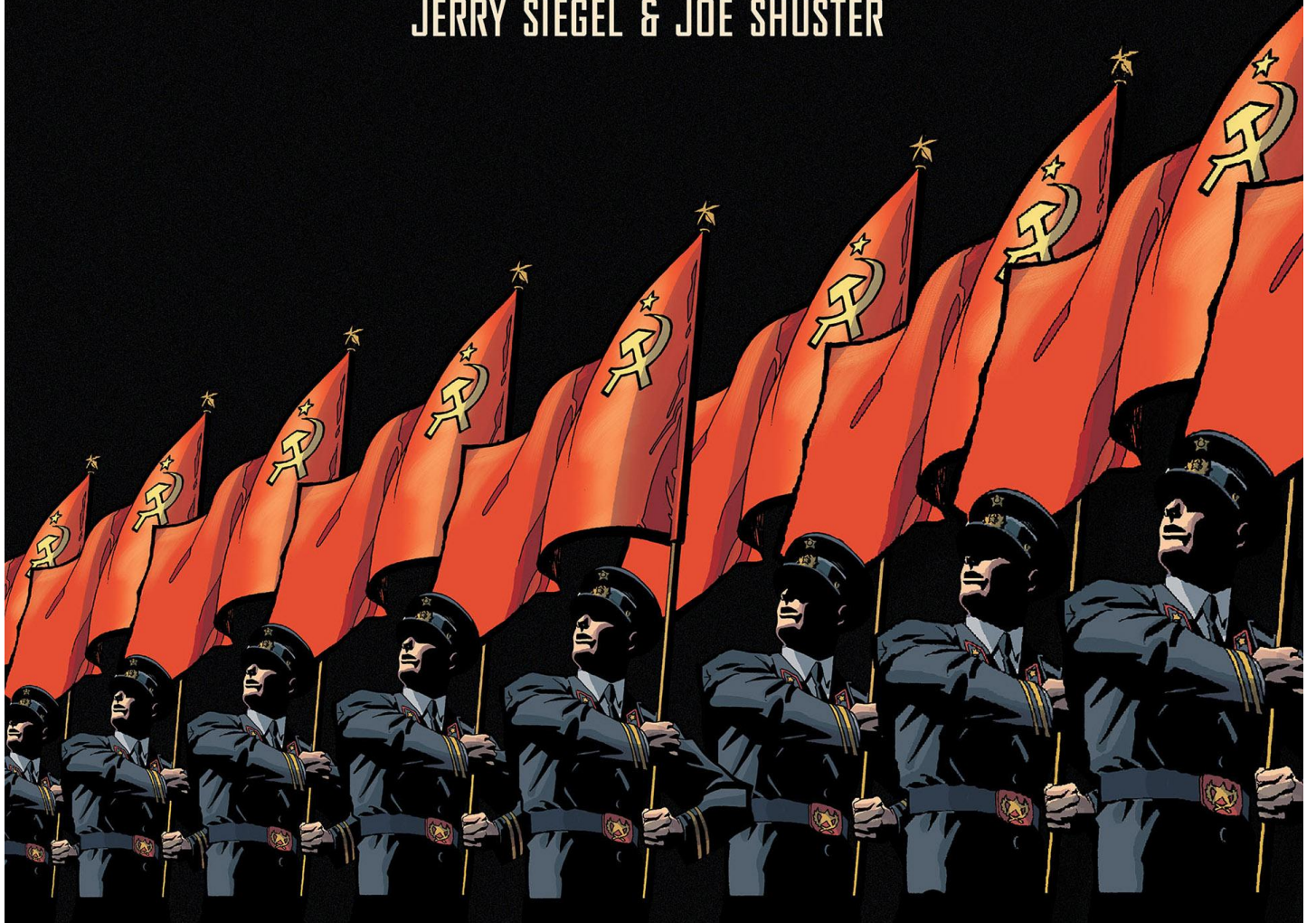
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PAUL MOUNTS **COLORIST**

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DAVE JOHNSON **COVER PAINTER**

SUPERMAN CREATED BY
JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER



SUPERMAN

REED

SOUL



In Elseworlds, heroes are taken from their usual settings and put into strange times and places — some that have existed and others that can't, couldn't or shouldn't exist. The result is stories that make characters who are as familiar as yesterday seem as fresh as tomorrow.



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SUPERMAN: RED SON

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Mom, apple pie, Chevrolet, and SUPERMAN.

INTRODUCTION BY TOM DESANTO



With all due respect to Mickey Mouse, there is perhaps no greater American icon than the Man of Steel. When Mark Millar first told me the premise of RED SON — of taking the American icon of Superman and putting him in the ultimate what-if scenario — I was shocked. Imagine Superman wasn't red, white, and blue ...imagine Superman was red... Communist red? Instead of baby Kal-El landing in the loving arms of Ma and Pa Kent in the good ol' U.S. of A., he lands in the loving arms of Josef

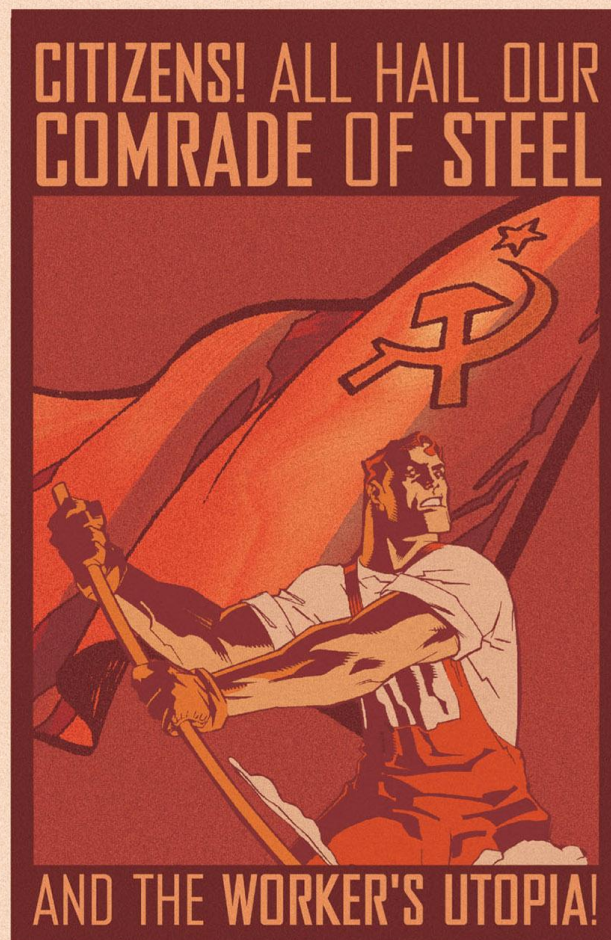
Stalin back in the U.S.S.R. No longer Superman American icon, but Superman Soviet comrade — needless to say, the premise is more than intriguing. In the hands of a lesser writer the story would have fallen into cookie cutter, black and white, America good, Soviets bad, feel-good propaganda. Thank God Mark Millar is not a lesser writer. And thank God his favorite color seems to be gray.

All that morally questionable gray is captured in what seems to be 1950s Technicolor glory. Fortunately the artistic palette of Dave Johnson's

and Kilian Plunkett's pencils, Andrew Robinson's and Walden Wong's inks, and Paul Mount's colors combine to create a Kafkaesque, Max Fleischer cartoon that collides with the best of propaganda art. It is not like you are reading a graphic novel but watching a movie. This book is everything I love about comics — a great morality tale with art that leaps off the page and into your mind's eye.

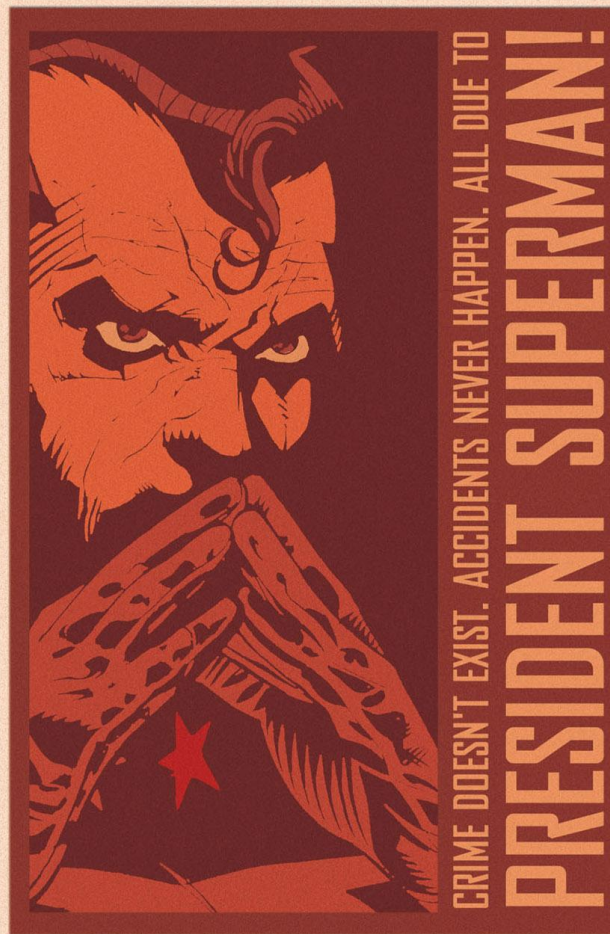
Even if you have never read a comic before, you can pick up RED SON and follow the story and enjoy a great ride. But don't be fooled; it is much more than that. RED SON is a sharp social commentary on capitalism vs. communism and current American foreign policy. Not bad for a funny book. If you are a comic fan, then you will notice the detail to the Superman mythology. Having read the book three times, I find such an attention to detail that I am still discovering something new in the words or art that I somehow had missed

before. All the elements that make Superman great are there: Lex Luthor, Lois Lane (oops, I mean Lois *Luthor*), Jimmy Olsen, even Batman, Wonder Woman, and the greatest Green Lantern of them all, Hal Jordan. All of them the same, yet different — all reinvented. Even though the traditional "S" on his chest has been replaced by the hammer and sickle, one thing is still the same — Superman believes he is doing the right thing. He has the best of intentions, but we all know what the road to hell is paved with. Yet Superman still wants to



make the world safe, except this time he is willing to force us to see that his way is the best way.

Ben Franklin once wrote, “Those who would sacrifice their freedom for safety will find they inherit neither.” That line, written over two hundred years ago, may have more meaning now than ever before. Good writing challenges the way you think. Great writing *changes* the way you think. RED SON is great writing. Mark actually started writing RED SON around 1995, and we all know it is a much



different world than those days. Millar was able to gaze into his Orwellian crystal ball and see Superman as the poster child for Big Brother. The all X-ray vision seeing, all super-hearing listening, all-knowing, all-powerful Big Brother. All-encompassing security, like a baby in a super blanket — just one thing...don't think for yourself and don't challenge the system. Free will or freedom in exchange for absolute security — I don't think Ben Franklin would have liked that idea. Just remember Superman

is watching you. But who's watching the watchmen? Mark Millar is, that's who.

Be good,

Tom DeSanto

OCTOBER 9, 2003

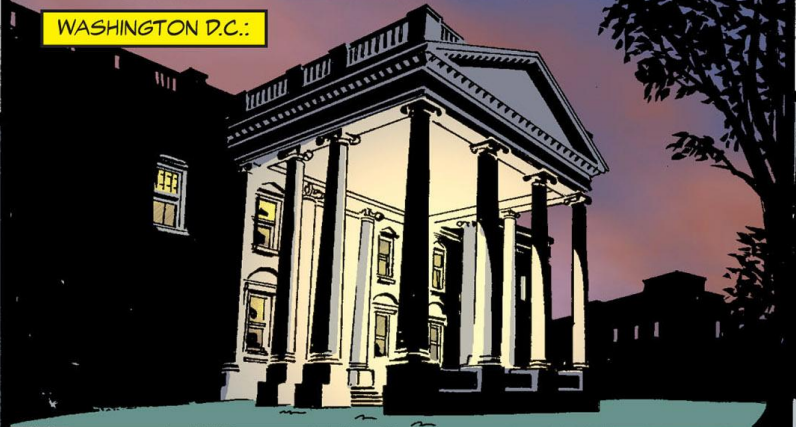
A self-described pop culture junkie and longtime comic book fan, Tom DeSanto is a writer/producer who has worked on various films such as Apt Pupil, X-Men and X2: X-Men United, among other projects. He currently lives in Los Angeles.



SUPERMAN
RED
SON
RED SON RISING

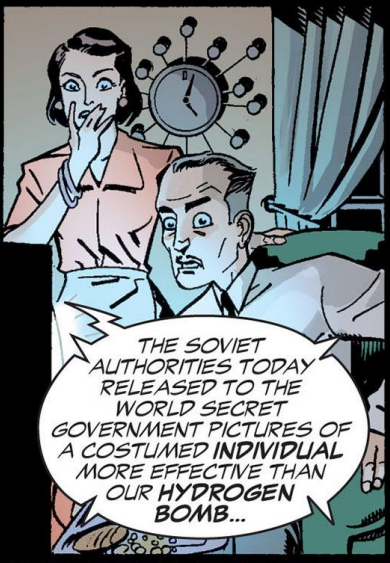


WASHINGTON D.C.:



MY FELLOW AMERICANS. IT HAS LONG BEEN THE DUTY OF THIS GREAT OFFICE TO MAKE PUBLIC THOSE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MAY AFFECT OUR STANDING AS A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC NATION.

I REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT TOOK PLACE THIS MORNING.



THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TODAY RELEASED TO THE WORLD SECRET GOVERNMENT PICTURES OF A COSTUMED INDIVIDUAL MORE EFFECTIVE THAN OUR HYDROGEN BOMB...

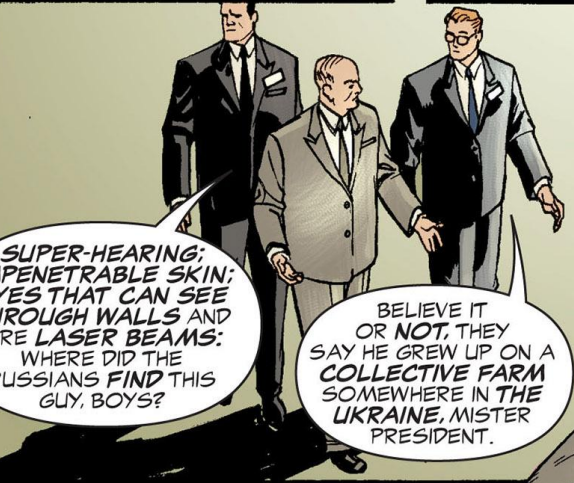


...AN ALIEN SUPERMAN COMMITTED TO COMMUNIST IDEALS WHOSE VERY EXISTENCE THREATENS TO ALTER OUR POSITION AS A WORLD SUPERPOWER FOREVER...



THIS AFTERNOON, I SHALL FLY TO HELSINKI TO DISCUSS THIS CRISIS WITH MY FELLOW NATO LEADERS AND DECIDE UPON A MEASURED RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION.

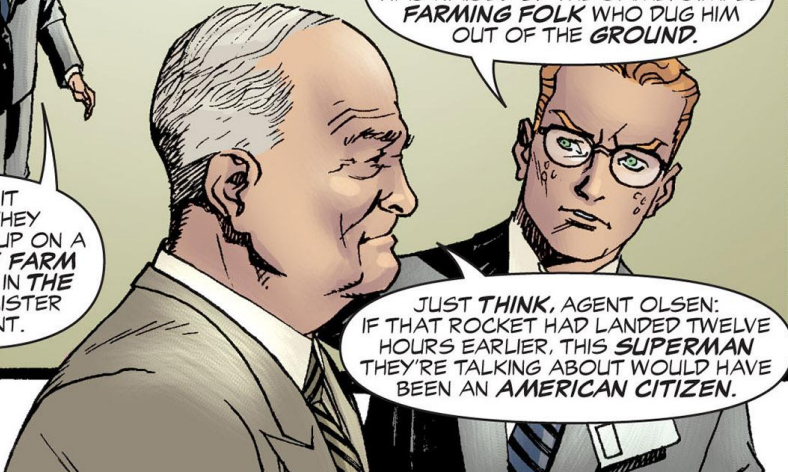
IN THE MEANTIME, I WOULD LIKE TO ISSUE A REQUEST FOR CALM AND A HOPE THAT YOU MIGHT JOIN ME IN A PRAYER THAT OUR PREDICAMENT IS NOT AS TERRIBLE AS IT SEEMS.



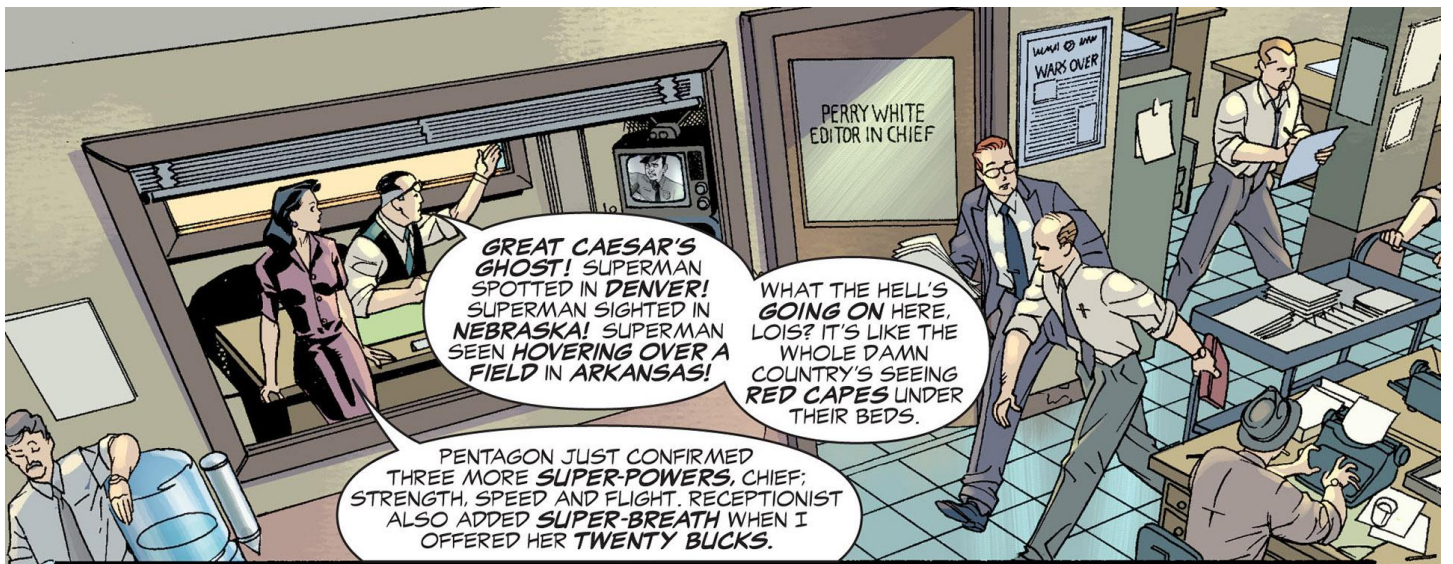
SUPER-HEARING; IMPENETRABLE SKIN; EYES THAT CAN SEE THROUGH WALLS AND FIRE LASER BEAMS: WHERE DID THE RUSSIANS FIND THIS GUY, BOYS?

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THEY SAY HE GREW UP ON A COLLECTIVE FARM SOMEWHERE IN THE UKRAINE, MISTER PRESIDENT.

OUR SOURCES SAY HIS ROCKET SHIP CRASHED THERE THIRTY YEARS AGO AND THAT HE WAS RAISED BY THE SAME, SIMPLE FARMING FOLK WHO DUG HIM OUT OF THE GROUND.



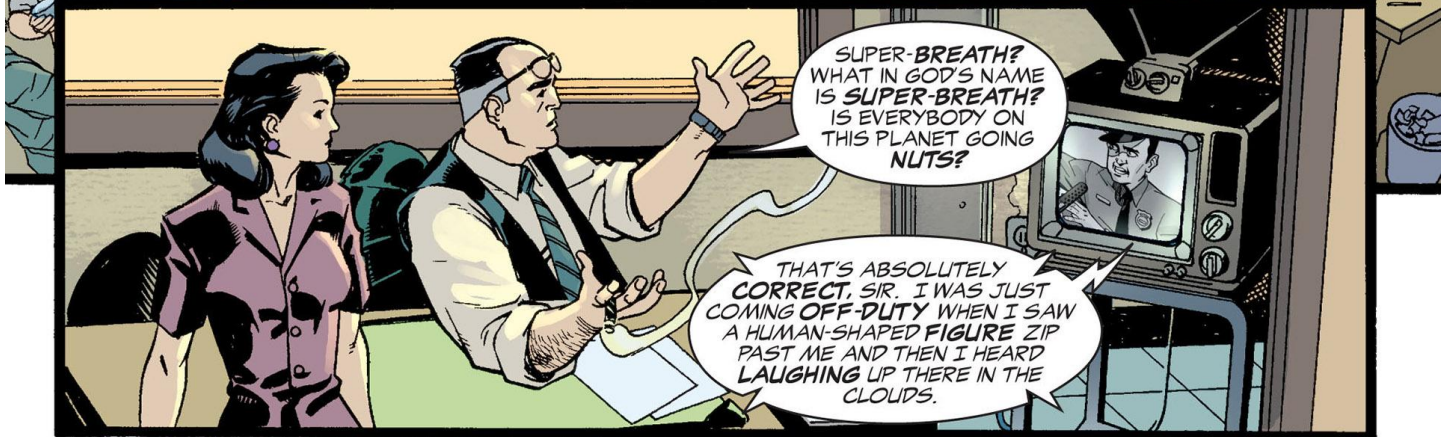
JUST THINK, AGENT OLSEN: IF THAT ROCKET HAD LANDED TWELVE HOURS EARLIER, THIS SUPERMAN THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT WOULD HAVE BEEN AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.



GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST! SUPERMAN SPOTTED IN DENVER! SUPERMAN SIGHTED IN NEBRASKA! SUPERMAN SEEN HOVERING OVER A FIELD IN ARKANSAS!

WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE, LOIS? IT'S LIKE THE WHOLE DAMN COUNTRY'S SEEING RED CAPES UNDER THEIR BEDS.

PENTAGON JUST CONFIRMED THREE MORE SUPER-POWERS, CHIEF: STRENGTH, SPEED AND FLIGHT. RECEPTIONIST ALSO ADDED SUPER-BREATH WHEN I OFFERED HER TWENTY BUCKS.



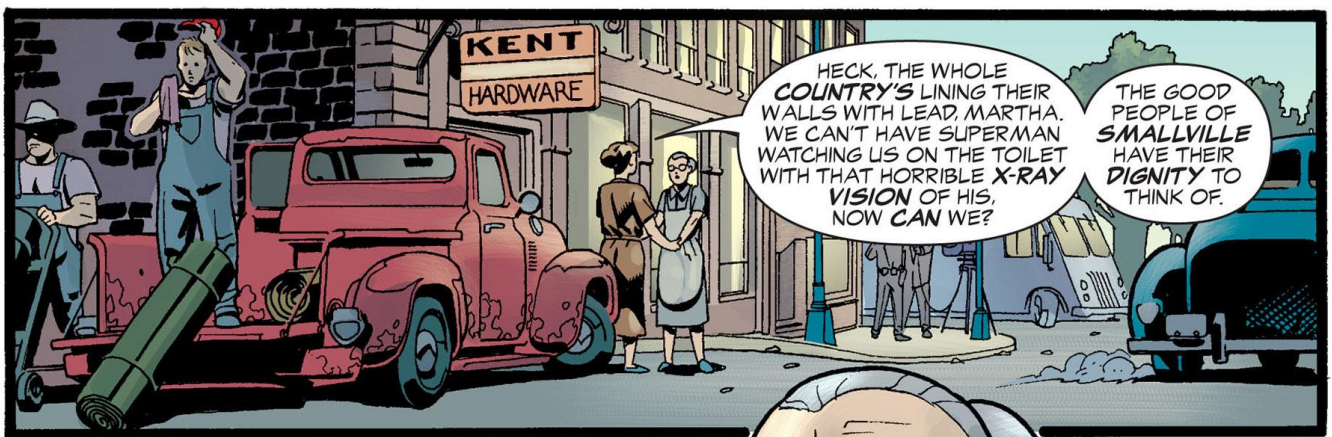
SUPER-BREATH? WHAT IN GOD'S NAME IS SUPER-BREATH? IS EVERYBODY ON THIS PLANET GOING NUTS?

THAT'S ABSOLUTELY CORRECT, SIR. I WAS JUST COMING OFF-DUTY WHEN I SAW A HUMAN-SHAPED FIGURE ZIP PAST ME AND THEN I HEARD LAUGHING UP THERE IN THE CLOUDS.



THEY SAY HE CAN SEE US FROM SPACE WITH THOSE SUPER-EYES OF HIS AND THAT HE'S WATCHING OUR EVERY MOVE, JUST BIDDING HIS TIME FOR THE PERFECT MOMENT TO STRIKE.

RUMOR HAS IT HIS BOSSES BACK IN MOSCOW ARE PUSHING FOR A FULL-BLOWN INVASION IN A MATTER OF WEEKS NOW.



HECK, THE WHOLE COUNTRY'S LINING THEIR WALLS WITH LEAD, MARTHA. WE CAN'T HAVE SUPERMAN WATCHING US ON THE TOILET WITH THAT HORRIBLE X-RAY VISION OF HIS, NOW CAN WE?

THE GOOD PEOPLE OF SMALLVILLE HAVE THEIR DIGNITY TO THINK OF.

OH MY LORD. AIN'T IT ENOUGH THEY GOT THEIR SATELLITES AND ENOUGH NUCLEAR BOMBS TO BLOW US ALL UP TEN TIMES OVER WITHOUT STALIN'S SUPER-SPACEMAN TOO?

I JUST THANK MY LUCKY STARS DEAR, SWEET JONATHAN NEVER LIVED TO SEE THE DAY THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE BROUGHT TO ITS KNEES LIKE THIS.



LOOK! UP IN THE SKY! IT'S A BIRD!
IT'S A PLANE! IT'S SUPERMAN!

SUPERMAN:
STRANGE VISITOR FROM ANOTHER WORLD! WHO CAN CHANGE THE COURSE OF MIGHTY RIVERS, BEND STEEL IN HIS BARE HANDS...

AND WHO, AS THE CHAMPION OF THE COMMON WORKER, FIGHTS A NEVER-ENDING BATTLE FOR STALIN, SOCIALISM AND THE INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION OF THE WARSAW PACT.

SUPERMAN:
PRIDE OF THE SOVIET STATE, SYMBOL OF OUR MILITARY MIGHT--

AW, GIMME A BREAK. WHO WRITES THIS STUFF?

LET OUR ENEMIES BEWARE:
THERE IS ONLY ONE SUPER-POWER NOW.

THE FEDS, THE ARMY AND THE C.I.A. ARE ALL OFFICIALLY OBSOLETE, BOYS AND GIRLS. CALL S.T.A.R. LABS AND GET ME DOCTOR LEX LUTHOR ON THE PHONE.

THE COLD WAR JUST EVOLVED INTO A WHOLE NEW ANIMAL.

**S.T.A.R. LABS,
METROPOLIS:**

**BOARD ELEVEN: KNIGHT
TO F7. CHECKMATE.
BOARD TWELVE: ROOK TO
B3. CHECKMATE. BOARD
FOURTEEN: QUEEN TO
F4. CHECKMATE.**

THANK YOU
FOR A HIGHLY
STIMULATING
**COFFEE
BREAK,**
GENTLEMEN...

**BOARD SEVEN PLAYED
PARTICULARLY WELL THIS
AFTERNOON. I WAS SO
DISTRACTED FROM MACHIAVELLI'S
IL PRINCIPE FOR A MOMENT THAT
I ALMOST TURNED TWO PAGES AT
ONCE BY MISTAKE.**

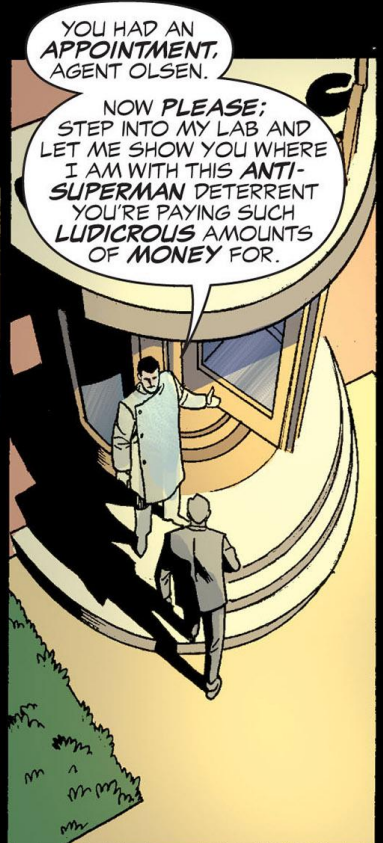


ONE MOMENT,
YOUNG MAN. JUST LET
ME SWITCH OFF THIS
**PORTABLE TAPE
RECORDER** I DESIGNED
IN THE **WASHROOM**
THIS MORNING.



I'M TEACHING MYSELF **URDU**
TO KEEP MY MIND BUSY WHILE I'M
READING AND PLAYING CHESS WITH THE
MONKEYS. I ASSUME YOU'RE **AGENT
JAMES OLSEN**, OF COURSE?

HECK, I **HEARD** YOU WERE
THE **SMARTEST** MAN ALIVE,
DOCTOR LUTHOR, BUT YOU'VE
GOTTA TELL ME, SIR: HOW THE
BLAZES DID YOU FIGURE THAT
ONE OUT?



YOU HAD AN
APPOINTMENT,
AGENT OLSEN.

NOW PLEASE;
STEP INTO MY LAB AND
LET ME SHOW YOU WHERE
I AM WITH THIS **ANTI-
SUPERMAN** DETERRENT
YOU'RE PAYING SUCH
LUDICROUS AMOUNTS
OF **MONEY** FOR.

HOLY SMOKES!
THIS IS EVEN WORSE
THAN I THOUGHT!

THE GREATEST
MINDS IN AMERICA AND
YOU WON'T EVEN LET THEM
IN THE BUILDING? AND ALL
THIS GARBAGE YOU KEEP
ORDERING: ALL THESE
PUZZLES AND GAMES?

WHEN ARE YOU
ACTUALLY GOING TO
START WORKING ON
THIS THING, DOCTOR,
BECAUSE IT DOESN'T
LOOK LIKE YOU'VE DONE
A THING HERE IN
THREE DAMN
MONTHS!

MY SUBCONSCIOUS
IS WORKING, AGENT OLSEN.
ISN'T THAT ENOUGH? AND
THE PUZZLES LUBRICATE
THE COGS OF MY
BRAIN.

GENIUS DOESN'T WORK TO
SOME TIMETABLE, YOU KNOW.
SCIENCE AND NECESSITY
DICTATE MY EVERY ACTION;
NOT SOME DREARY LITTLE
WASHINGTON
ACCOUNTANT.

THE PRESIDENT ISN'T
GOING TO BE HAPPY ABOUT THIS,
DOCTOR LUTHOR. TO TELL YOU
THE TRUTH, I DON'T EVEN KNOW
HOW I'M GOING TO BREAK IT TO
HIM WITHOUT LOSING MY JOB.

JUST TELL HIM HE CAN USE
THIS FORMULA I SCRIBBLED
TOGETHER TO BALANCE THE
FEDERAL BUDGET. IF HE
LEAVES ME ALONE, I'LL GIVE
HIM A PERMANENT CURE
FOR INFLATION TOO.

WHAT?
YOU
BALANCED THE
BUDGET? JUST
LIKE THAT? YOU
BALANCED THE
BUDGET? JUST
LIKE THAT?

NO, I GAVE HIM THE
FORMULA TO BALANCE
THE BUDGET, YOUNG MAN.
THE TREASURY WILL
HAVE TO PUNCH IN THE
NUMBERS.

SOLVING PROBLEMS
IS JUST LIKE EATING OR
BREATHING FOR ME AND THIS
SUPERMAN YOU'RE ALL SO
WORRIED ABOUT IS JUST
ANOTHER PROBLEM.

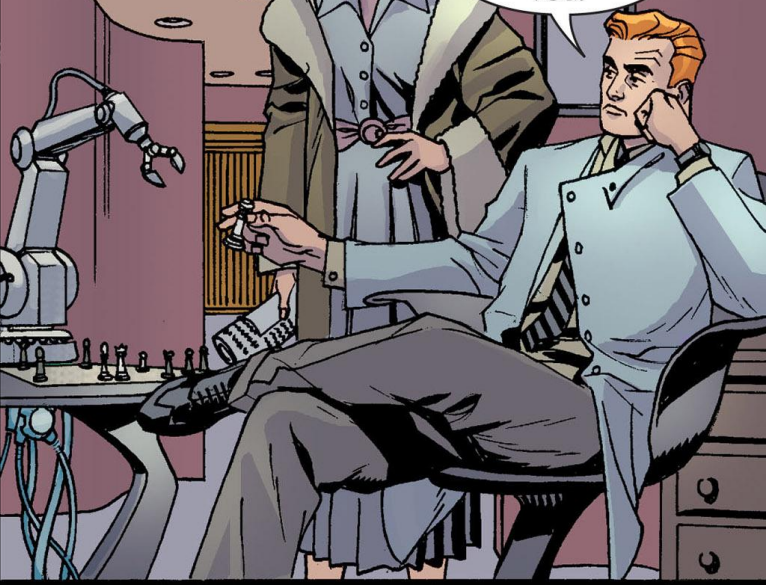
REST ASSURED,
I'LL BE IN TOUCH
WHEN I'VE
CRACKED IT.

DR. LUTHOR'S APARTMENT.



WHY'S THE VOLUME TURNED DOWN SO LOW, HONEY? IT'S A QUIZ SHOW. YOU LOVE QUIZ SHOWS.

I'M TEACHING MYSELF HOW TO LIP-READ, LOIS. IT ONLY JUST OCCURRED TO ME THIS AFTERNOON THAT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW YOU CAN TURN IT BACK UP AGAIN IF IT'S BOTHERING YOU.



WHAT BOTHERS ME IS TALKING TO SOMEONE BETWEEN CHESS MOVES. DON'T TELL ME: ANOTHER COMPUTER SYSTEM YOU DESIGNED ON THE WAY HOME FROM WORK?

I CAN'T HELP IT, DARLING. PEOPLE ARE JUST TOO EASY TO BEAT. IS THAT THE FIRST EDITION OF THE MORNING PAPER?



ONLY TECHNICALLY:

RUSSIA WINNING THE COLD WAR. RUSSIA WINNING THE SPACE RACE. STALIN'S RUSSIAN SUPERMAN IS WATCHING YOUR EVERY MOVE FROM THE SKIES.

I FEEL LIKE WE'VE BEEN PRINTING THE SAME DEPRESSING STORY FOR MONTHS NOW.

WELL, NOT FOR MUCH LONGER, SWEETIE. ANY DAY NOW YOU'LL HAVE YOUR LOVELY DEATH OF SUPERMAN HEADLINE.

AN AWARD-WINNING STORY BY THE GORGEOUS LOIS LUTHOR AND AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE HANDSOME DOCTOR LEX.



Angry clashes between police at Metrop

Union and Police Officers clashed today at Metropolis Harbor after...

pasdpa sfu ppsadf pfs fjdjalkj fsjla fjkij fjskij ldsdij...

DAILY PLANET. SPUTNIK. METROPOLIS. SUPERMAN. SPACE RACE. SPUTNIK. GLOBE. SPUTNIK. GLOBE. SPUTNIK. GLOBE. METROPOLIS...



SUPERMAN SIGHTED NEAR SAN DIEGO NAVAL BASE

GOOD GRIEF! HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SUCH AN IDIOT?

WHAT IS IT, LEX? WHAT'S WRONG?



THIS IS LEX LUTHOR, S.T.A.R. LABS CLEARANCE CODE ONE-THREE-FIVE-ZERO-BRAVO. I WANT TO SPEAK TO THE PRESIDENT AND I DON'T CARE IF HE'S IN A MEETING.

THIS IS INDESCRIBABLY MORE IMPORTANT, YOUNG LADY.



Mayor of Daily Planet Globe Dies, age 86

pjpio jsd asdfij jfwkij pasdfipo jf pfrpaso pasd pasfjap jastp pasfj...

fjdjalkj fsjla fjkij fjskij ldsdij...

WHAT'S GOING ON, LEX? WHAT'S HAPPENED? HAVE YOU FIGURED OUT A WAY TO BEAT SUPERMAN OR SOMETHING?



I'M SORRY, DARLING, BUT I'M AFRAID THAT IS OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION ON A NEED-TO-KNOW CAPACITY NOW.



IKE? LEX HERE, SIR. I NEED A HUNDRED TECHNICIANS, TEN MILLION DOLLARS AND PERMISSION TO CRASH A SOVIET SATELLITE IN A HIGHLY POPULATED AREA.

OF COURSE YOU CAN THINK FOR A MINUTE...



I HAD MADE QUITE AN IMPRESSION IN THE FOURTEEN WEEKS SINCE I'D MADE MY JOURNEY FROM THE FARM LANDS TO MOSCOW.



SOME STILL THOUGHT ME A TRICK OF THE LIGHT OR AN URBAN MYTH, BUT EACH NEW DAY SAW ANOTHER SUPER-FEAT OR SOME DEATH-DEFYING RESCUE.



IN MY MORE INTROSPECTIVE MOMENTS, I EVEN WONDERED IF PEOPLE WERE BEHAVING MORE CARELESSLY IN THE HOPE THAT THEY MIGHT CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THEIR GAUDY CIRCUS CLOWN.

COMRADE SECRETARY, THIS IS A PRIORITY ALERT! WE HAVE LOST CONTROL OF SPUTNIK TWO AND THE SATELLITE IS PLUMMETING TOWARDS EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE!

THE AMERICANS! THEY MUST HAVE SABOTAGED US! HOW ELSE COULD A SATELLITE JUST CHANGE COURSE LIKE THAT?

FLIGHT TRAJECTORY LOOKS LIKE IT'S HEADING FOR A POPULATED AREA SOMEWHERE IN THE UPPER HEMISPHERE, SIR. NORTH OF PERU, NORTH OF CUBA--

OH MY GOD! IT'S COMING DOWN IN AMERICA!

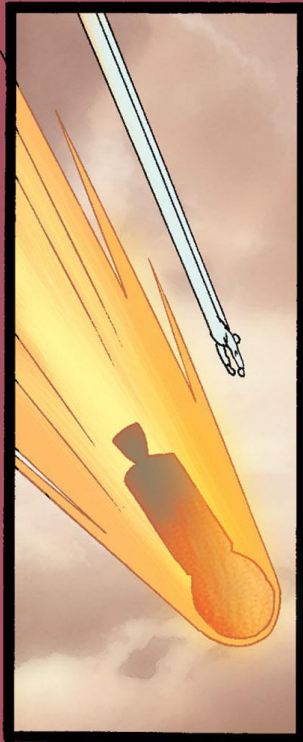


THEY CALLED ME A SOLDIER, BUT THAT JUST WASN'T TRUE.

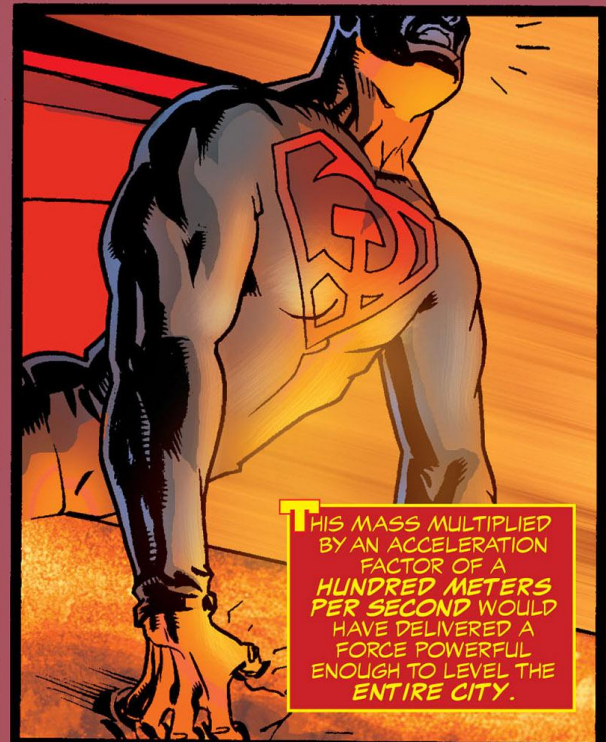
I WAS NEVER A SOLDIER.

A SOLDIER ALWAYS FOLLOWS ORDERS. A SOLDIER KNOWS AND HATES HIS ENEMY. A SOLDIER ONLY FIGHTS AND DIES FOR HIS OWN PEOPLE...

I JUST FOUGHT FOR WHAT WAS RIGHT.



SPUTNIK TWO WEIGHED FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS.



THIS MASS MULTIPLIED BY AN ACCELERATION FACTOR OF A HUNDRED METERS PER SECOND WOULD HAVE DELIVERED A FORCE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO LEVEL THE ENTIRE CITY.

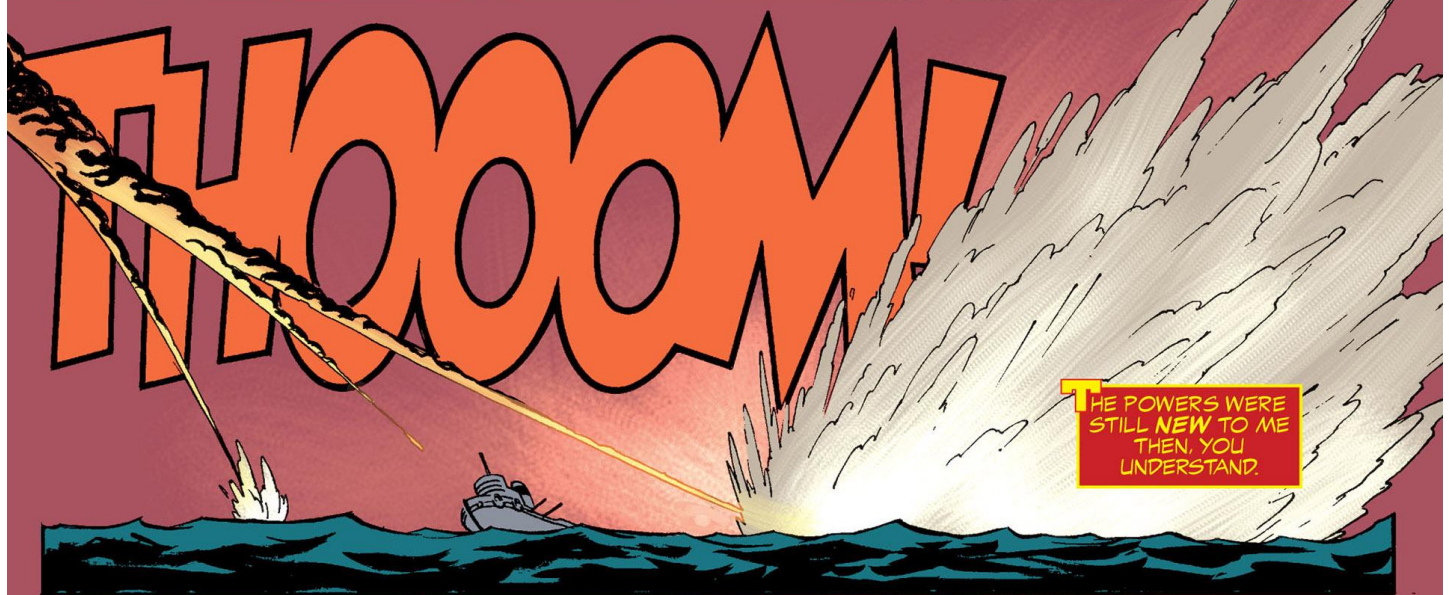


IN HINDSIGHT, THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS THIS PREDICAMENT MIGHT HAVE BEEN SOLVED.

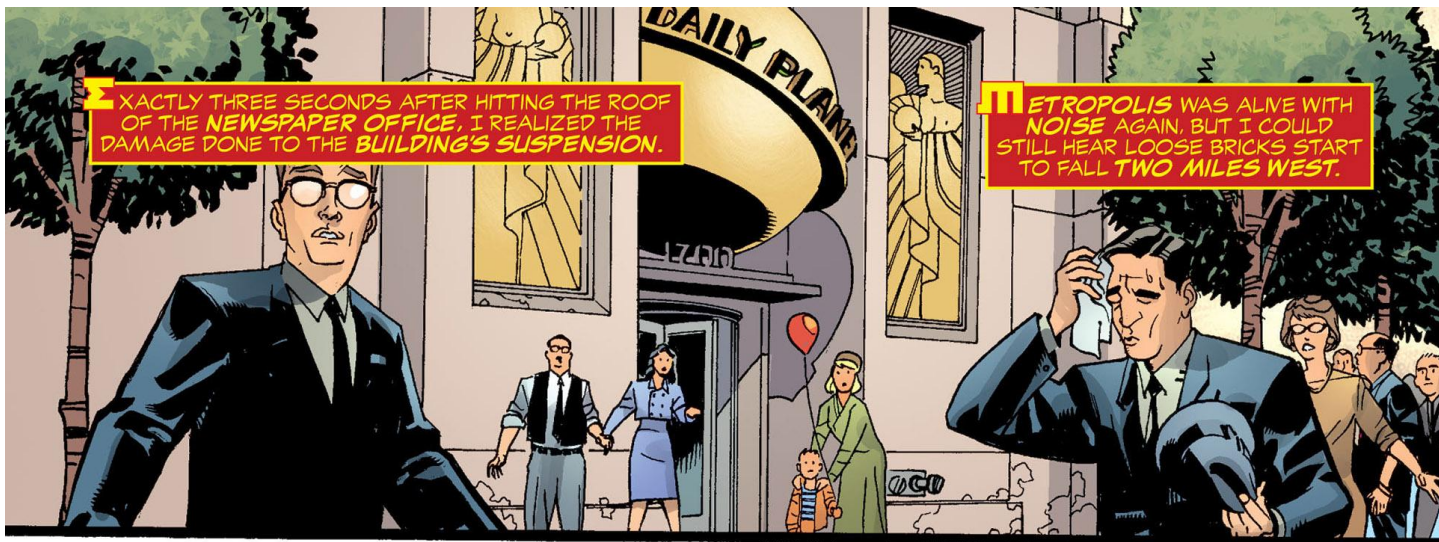


I COULD HAVE VAPORIZED IT WITH MY HEAT VISION, SLOWED ITS DESCENT WITH MY SUPER-BREATH OR EVEN ATOMIZED THE CRAFT WITH A CALCULATED BLOW.

INSTEAD, I CHOSE THE MOST EXCITING ACTION.

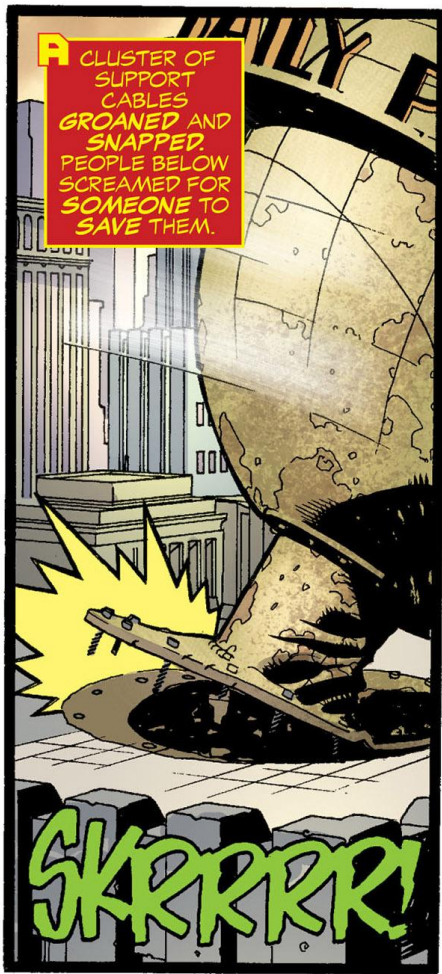


THE POWERS WERE STILL NEW TO ME THEN, YOU UNDERSTAND.

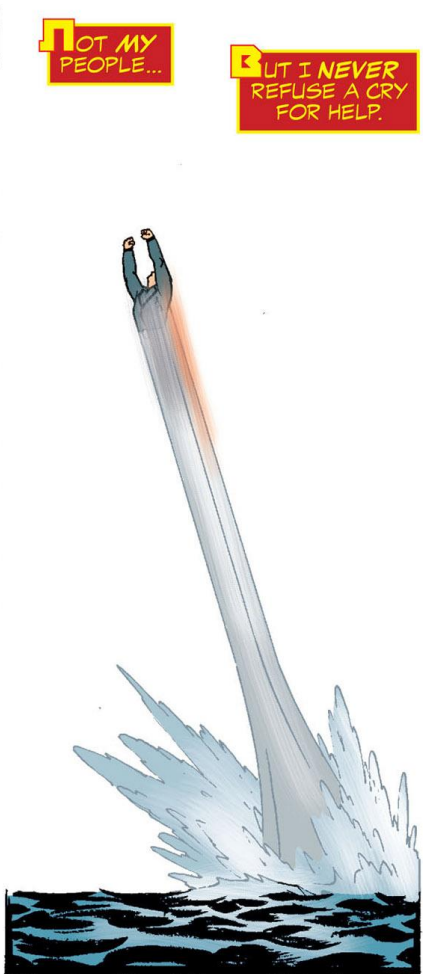


EXACTLY THREE SECONDS AFTER HITTING THE ROOF OF THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE, I REALIZED THE DAMAGE DONE TO THE BUILDING'S SUSPENSION.

METROPOLIS WAS ALIVE WITH NOISE AGAIN, BUT I COULD STILL HEAR LOOSE BRICKS START TO FALL TWO MILES WEST.

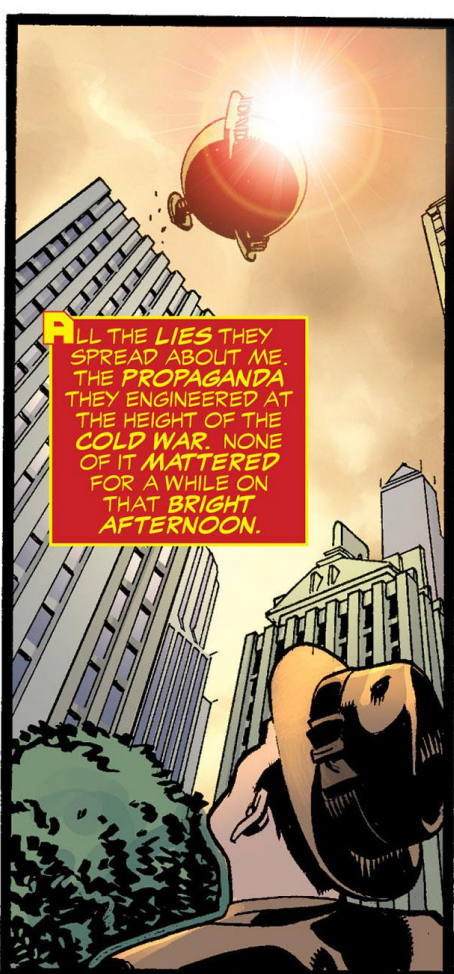


A CLUSTER OF SUPPORT CABLES GROANED AND SNAPPED. PEOPLE BELOW SCREAMED FOR SOMEONE TO SAVE THEM.

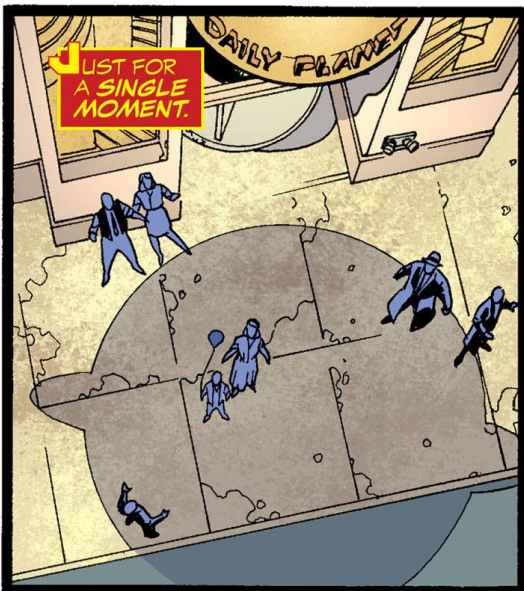


NOT MY PEOPLE...

BUT I NEVER REFUSE A CRY FOR HELP.



ALL THE LIES THEY SPREAD ABOUT ME. THE PROPAGANDA THEY ENGINEERED AT THE HEIGHT OF THE COLD WAR. NONE OF IT MATTERED FOR A WHILE ON THAT BRIGHT AFTERNOON.



JUST FOR A SINGLE MOMENT.



THEY REALIZED
I WAS HERE TO
SAVE THEM.



OH, MY GOD.

SIX MILLION LIVES SPARED AND AN INCIDENT THAT MIGHT HAVE SPARKED A WAR **AVERTED** AND MY MOST POTENT MEMORY OF THAT DAY WAS FIVE AND A HALF FEET TALL AND WEARING CHANEL NO 5.

SHE FELT IT TOO. I KNOW SHE DID; FROM THE INCREASE IN HER **PULSE RATE** TO THE MICRON OF EXTRA **PERSPIRATION** ON HER SKIN, BUT NEITHER OF US COULD ACT ON THIS IMPULSE.

NOT WHILE SHE HAD A **GOLD RING** ON HER **THIRD FINGER** AND A **CREASED PHOTOGRAPH** OF A **SOMBRE, RED-HEADED SCIENTIST** IN HER PURSE.

CENTURIES LATER, AFTER A **THOUSAND INTERPRETATIONS** OF THIS MEETING, A FAMOUS POET WOULD WRITE AN ALTERNATE HISTORY OF THE WORLD WHERE **LOIS LUTHOR** AND I BECAME **LOVERS**.

HIS STORY WOULD GO ON TO WIN THE **PULITZER PRIZE** AND BECOME THE **BIGGEST-SELLING FICTIONAL BOOK** OF ALL TIME.

EVEN NOW, I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT APPEALS TO PEOPLE ABOUT THIS NOTION. WHAT **CHORD** IT STRUCK WITH THE **PUBLIC IMAGINATION**...

...AND I DON'T SUPPOSE WE EVER WILL IN THIS LIFETIME.

MAGNIFICENT, ISN'T HE? ABSOLUTELY MAGNIFICENT. I KNEW THESE RANDOM ACTS OF HEROISM WOULDN'T BE CONFINED TO THE PARAMETERS OF MOTHER RUSSIA.

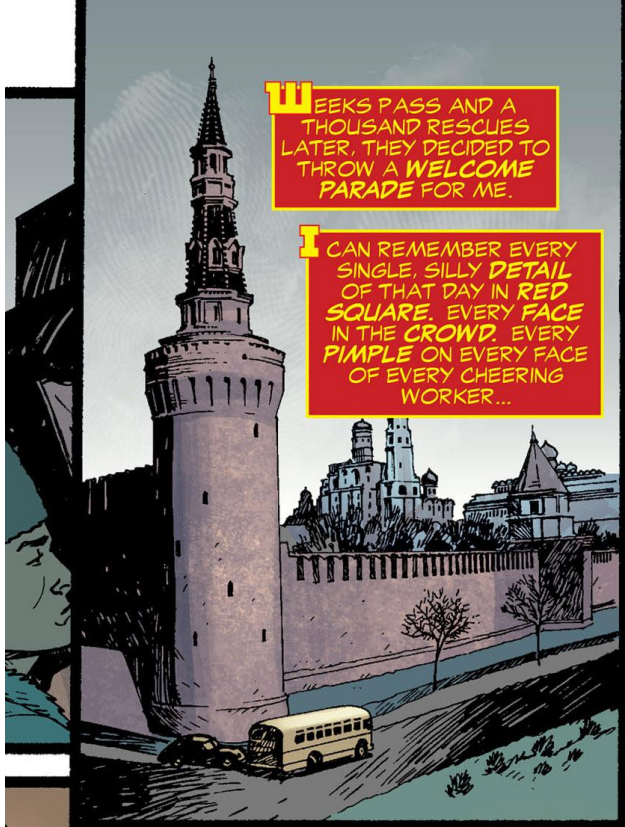
IT'S SUCH A SHAME HE WORKS FOR THE OTHER SIDE. I HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT SUPERMAN AND I WOULD HAVE BEEN THE BEST OF FRIENDS IF HE'D POPPED UP IN AMERICA.

WHAT MADE YOU SO SURE HE'D ACTUALLY BE ABLE TO SAVE US, DOCTOR LUTHOR?

MATHEMATICS, OLSEN. PURE MATHEMATICS.

NOW MAKE SURE THEY RAISE THAT SATELLITE FROM THE WATER PRECISELY AS I DESCRIBED. THE INFORMATION HE LEFT ON THAT HULL IS ESSENTIAL...

ESPECIALLY IF OUR DEAR FRIEND IN THE WHITE HOUSE EXPECTS ME TO BUILD HIM A SUPERMAN OF OUR OWN.

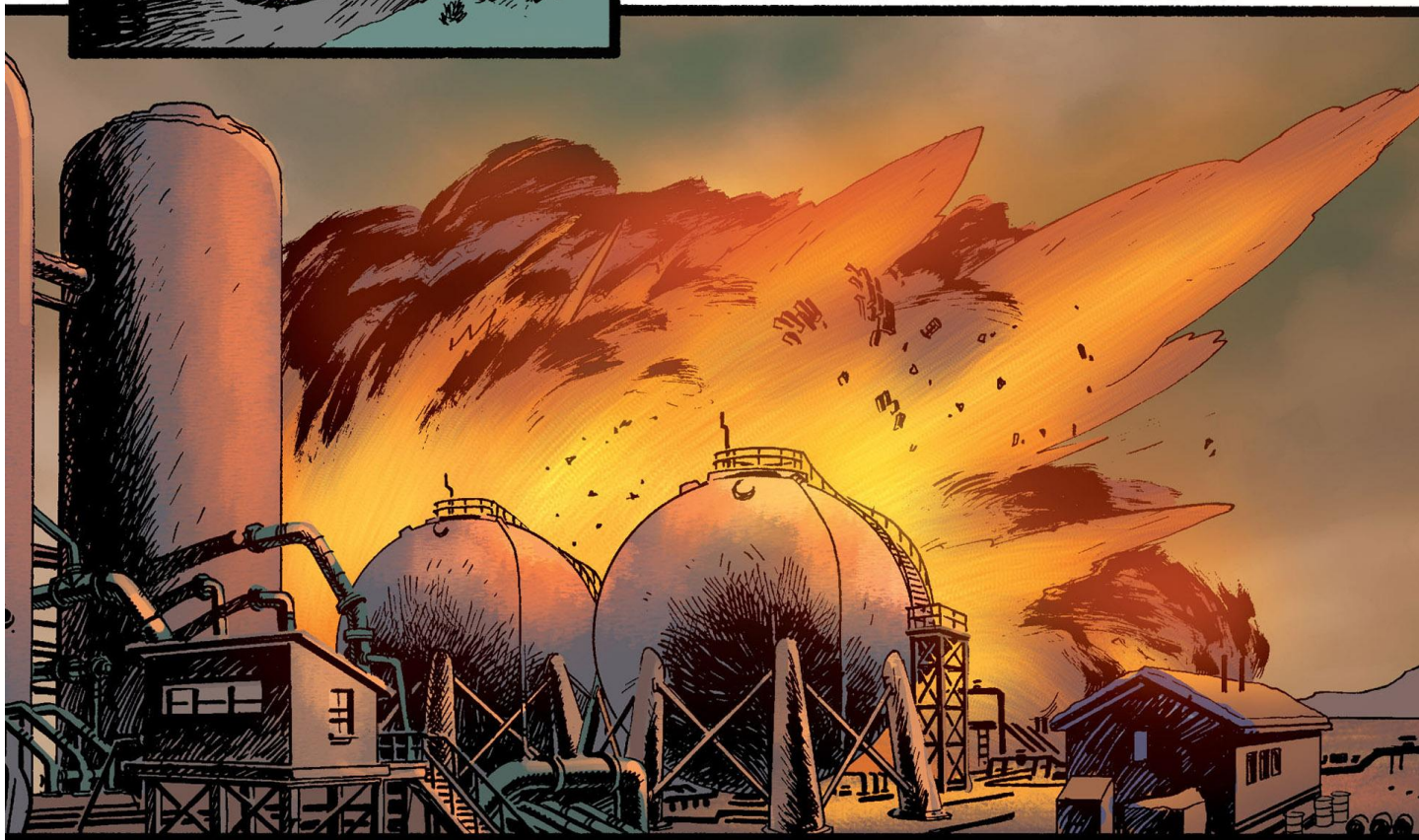


WEEEKS PASS AND A THOUSAND RESCUES LATER, THEY DECIDED TO THROW A **WELCOME PARADE** FOR ME.

I CAN REMEMBER EVERY SINGLE, SILLY **DETAIL** OF THAT DAY IN **RED SQUARE**. EVERY **FACE** IN THE **CROWD**. EVERY **PIMPLE** ON EVERY **FACE** OF EVERY **CHEERING WORKER**...



THEIR POOR, CONFUSED **EXPRESSIONS** AT THIS **CHAMPION** FROM THE **FARM LANDS** WHO **COULDN'T STAND STILL** FOR MORE THAN **TEN SECONDS** AT A TIME.



DON'T TELL ME THERE'S **ANOTHER** EMERGENCY, SUPERMAN...

A **CHEMICAL PLANT** ON FIRE **THREE THOUSAND MILES** WEST OF **VLADIVOSTOK**, COMRADE **STALIN**. JUST GIVE ME **TEN OR FIFTEEN MINUTES**.



BECAUSE THEY LOVE HIM, MY BOY. HE WAS RAISED TO BELIEVE IN EVERYTHING I STAND FOR AND HE MAKES RUSSIA FEEL AS INDESTRUCTIBLE AS HE IS.

HE'S GOT THE ATTENTION SPAN OF A SPASTIC TWO-YEAR-OLD. HASN'T HE? IMAGINE NOT EVEN BEING ABLE TO SIT THROUGH YOUR OWN DAMN PARADE.

WELL, WHAT'S HE SUPPOSED TO DO, CAPTAIN? STAND THERE AND GRIN LIKE AN IDIOT WHEN HE CAN HEAR PEOPLE SCREAMING FOR THEIR LIVES?



BUT I'M THE ONE YOU'VE BEEN GROOMING FOR THE TOP. I'VE BEEN PREPARING FOR THIS SINCE I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD.

IF SUPERMAN SUCCEEDS YOU HE COULD BE THERE FOR A MILLION YEARS FOR ALL WE KNOW.

WHO CARES IF HE SUCCEEDS ME? YOU MADE CHIEF OF THE N.K.V.D. BY TWENTY-FIVE, PYOTR. I'D HARDLY DESCRIBE THAT AS AN UNDERACHIEVEMENT.



SO WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? THAT IT ALL ENDS HERE? THAT I'VE PEAKED BEFORE THIRTY?

NO, I'M SAYING YOU SHOULD WATCH YOUR TONGUE AND REMEMBER WHO YOU'RE SPEAKING TO, MY JEALOUS LITTLE CAPTAIN.

BEAR IN MIND YOU'RE ONLY ONE OF A NUMBER OF ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN I HAVE OUT THERE, YOU KNOW.





AN EARTHQUAKE IN STALINGRAD AND A TIDAL WAVE NEAR THE PORT OF ODESSA? MY GOD, NO WONDER SUPERMAN MISSED THE FIRST TWO COURSES.

OF COURSE HUNGARY WANTS TO JOIN US NOW, HIPPOLYTA. THE WARSAW PACT IS ATTRACTIVE BEYOND WORDS NOW THAT WE BOAST **SUPERMAN** AS OUR ALTERNATIVE TO A NUCLEAR STRATEGY.

BELIEVE ME, PARADISE ISLAND WOULD BE FAR MORE SUITED TO AN ALLIANCE WITH US THAN THOSE **DESPERATE** AND **GREEDY** LITTLE MEN IN THOSE HORRIBLE NATO BACKWATERS.

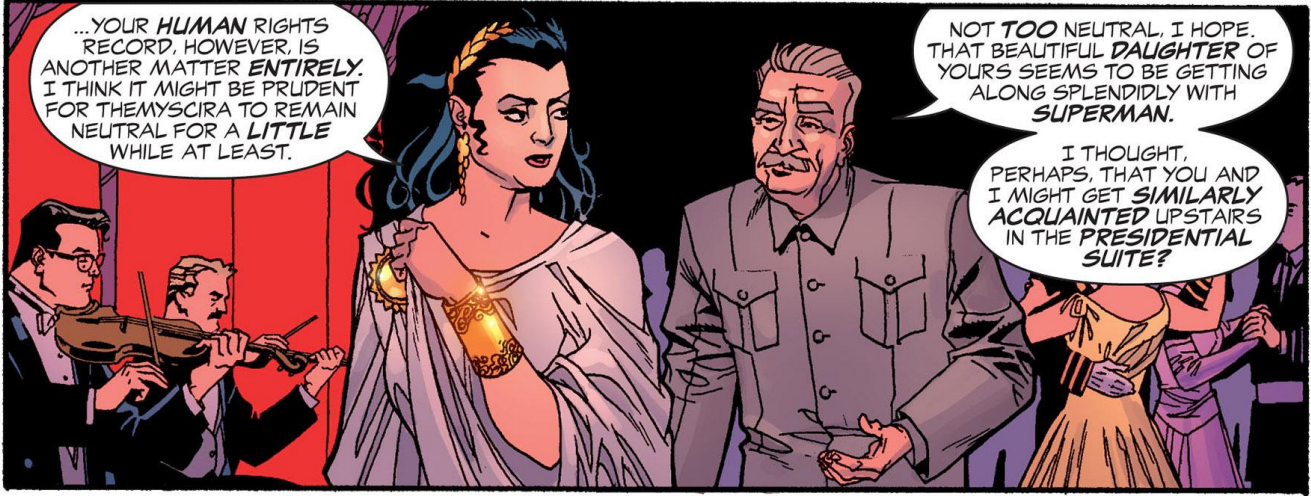
WELL, I MUST ADMIT, THE SOVIET RECORD ON **WOMEN'S RIGHTS** IS MOST IMPRESSIVE, COMRADE STALIN...



...YOUR **HUMAN RIGHTS** RECORD, HOWEVER, IS ANOTHER MATTER **ENTIRELY**. I THINK IT MIGHT BE PRUDENT FOR THEMYSKIRA TO REMAIN NEUTRAL FOR A **LITTLE** WHILE AT LEAST.

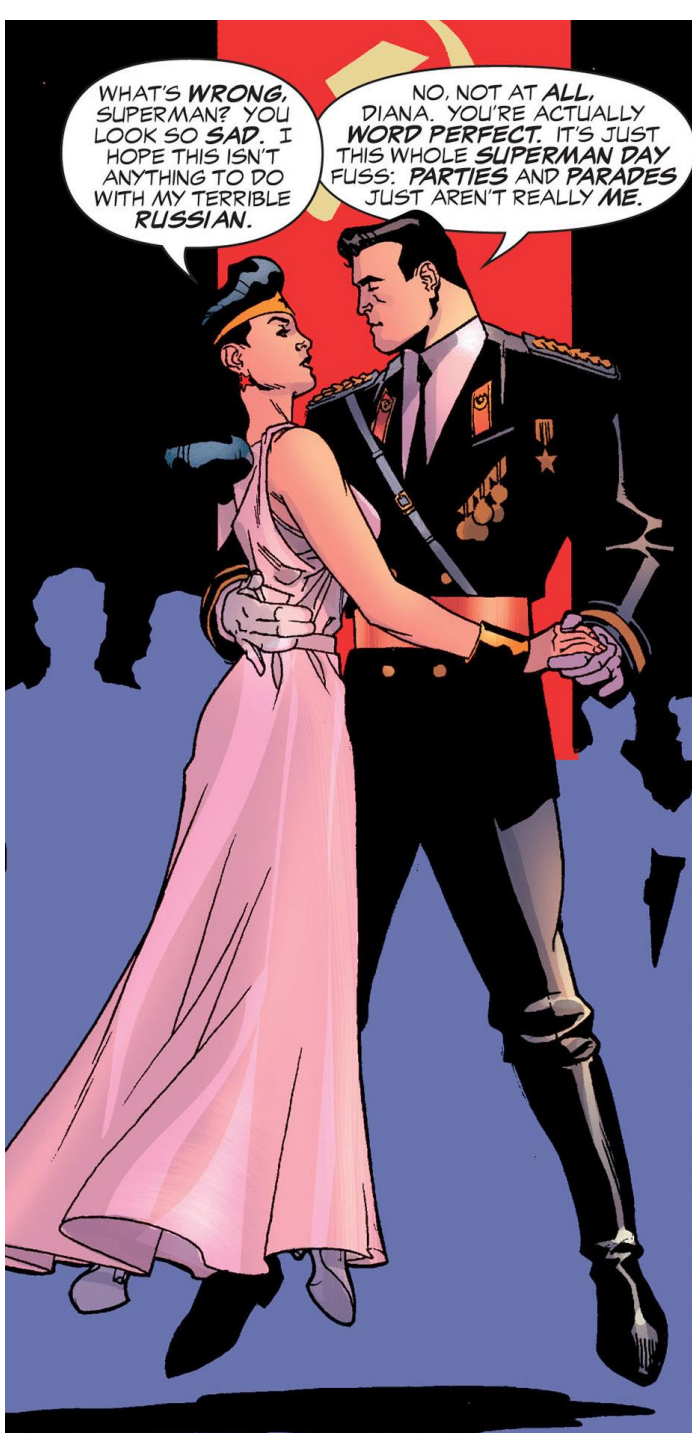
NOT **TOO** NEUTRAL, I HOPE. THAT BEAUTIFUL **DAUGHTER** OF YOURS SEEMS TO BE GETTING ALONG SPLENDIDLY WITH **SUPERMAN**.

I THOUGHT, PERHAPS, THAT YOU AND I MIGHT GET **SIMILARLY** ACQUAINTED UPSTAIRS IN THE **PRESIDENTIAL SUITE**?



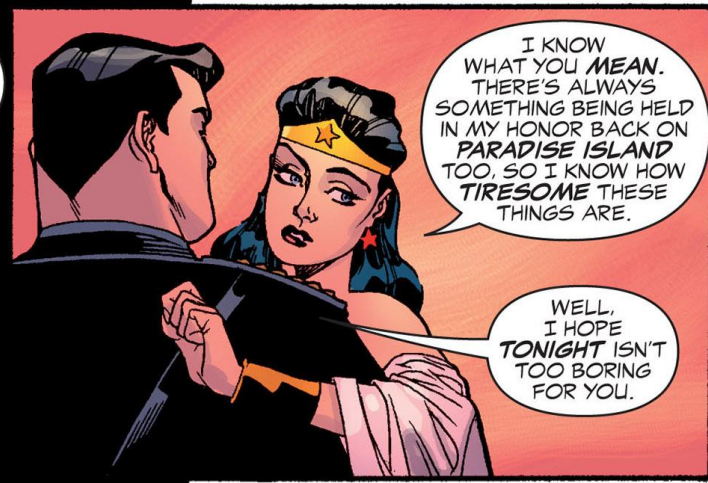
PLEASE. DON'T **EMBARRASS** YOURSELF, JOSEPH.
MAYBE IF YOU WERE **FIVE THOUSAND** YEARS OLDER...





WHAT'S **WRONG**, SUPERMAN? YOU LOOK SO **SAD**. I HOPE THIS ISN'T ANYTHING TO DO WITH MY **TERRIBLE RUSSIAN**.

NO. NOT AT ALL, DIANA. YOU'RE ACTUALLY **WORD PERFECT**. IT'S JUST THIS WHOLE **SUPERMAN DAY FUSS**: **PARTIES AND PARADES** JUST AREN'T REALLY **ME**.



I KNOW WHAT YOU **MEAN**. THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING BEING HELD IN MY HONOR BACK ON **PARADISE ISLAND** TOO, SO I KNOW HOW **TIRESOME** THESE THINGS ARE.

WELL, I HOPE **TONIGHT** ISN'T TOO BORING FOR YOU.



GREAT HERA, NO! NOT IN THE **SLIGHTEST**. I'M ACTUALLY HAVING A **WONDERFUL** TIME. I MEAN, **THINK ABOUT IT**: HOW OFTEN DO I GET TO MEET **SOMEONE** LIKE **ME**?



I SEE **SOMEONE'S** ENJOYING HERSELF, EH? BUILDING BRIDGES WITH THE **FUTURE LEADER**, ARE YOU?

OH, SUPERMAN'S REALLY **NICE**, MOTHER. YOU SHOULD **TALK** TO HIM. HE'S REALLY NOT LIKE OTHER MEN **AT ALL**, YOU KNOW. HE SEEMS A FEW **INCHES TALLER**.



THAT **DIANA** WOULD MAKE A FINE WIFE WHEN SHE MAKES HER VOYAGE TO THE **MAN'S WORLD**, SUPERMAN. JUST IMAGINE WHAT KIND OF **CHILDREN** YOU COULD RAISE, EH?

HAVEN'T WE BEEN HERE **ALREADY**, COMRADE **STALIN**? I DIDN'T **COME** HERE TO **BREED**.



BUT THINK ABOUT THE **FUTURE**, MY BOY. THE DYNASTY OF **SUPERMEN** THAT COULD PRESERVE OUR IDEALS **FOREVER**.

BESIDES, IS THERE ANOTHER WOMAN IN ALL THE WORLD WHO COULD... AH... **KEEP UP** WITH OUR **WONDERFUL MAN OF STEEL**?



I'D PREFER TO CHOOSE MY **OWN WIFE**, COMRADE **STALIN**. BESIDES, THIS NOTION YOU HAVE THAT I'D EVER WANT TO LEAD THE PARTY IS REALLY QUITE A **MISCONCEPTION**.

POLITICS BORES ME **RIGID**. I ONLY CAME TO THE **BIG CITY** SO THAT I COULD USE MY POWERS TO **HELP** PEOPLE.



UH, WHY ARE YOU STARING AT THE **WALL**, SUPERMAN?

I'M SCANNING MOSCOW FOR YOUR **CHIEF OF POLICE**, SIR. I NOTICED HE ISN'T AT THE PARTY AND I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE HE'S **OKAY**. THERE'S NO SIGN OF HIM **ANYWHERE**.



OH, FOR GOD'S SAKE. WHO CARES ABOUT **PYOTR ROSLOV**?

I CARE ABOUT **EVERYBODY**, SIR.

AH, **THERE HE IS**; TWO HUNDRED MILES AWAY ON THE PEASANT LAND WHERE **HE** GREW UP. YOU'LL HAVE TO **EXCLUDE** ME FOR A MOMENT, COMRADE...



CATCH.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, "SUPERMAN"? I THOUGHT THEY WERE SETTING YOU UP WITH THE AMAZON PRINCESS TONIGHT? OR AM I **WRONG** AS USUAL?



YOU WEREN'T AT THE PARTY AND I JUST WONDERED WHAT HAD **HAPPENED** TO YOU, PYOTR. YOU'VE BEEN ACTING QUITE **IRRATIONAL** LATELY AND I'M GENUINELY **CONCERNED**.

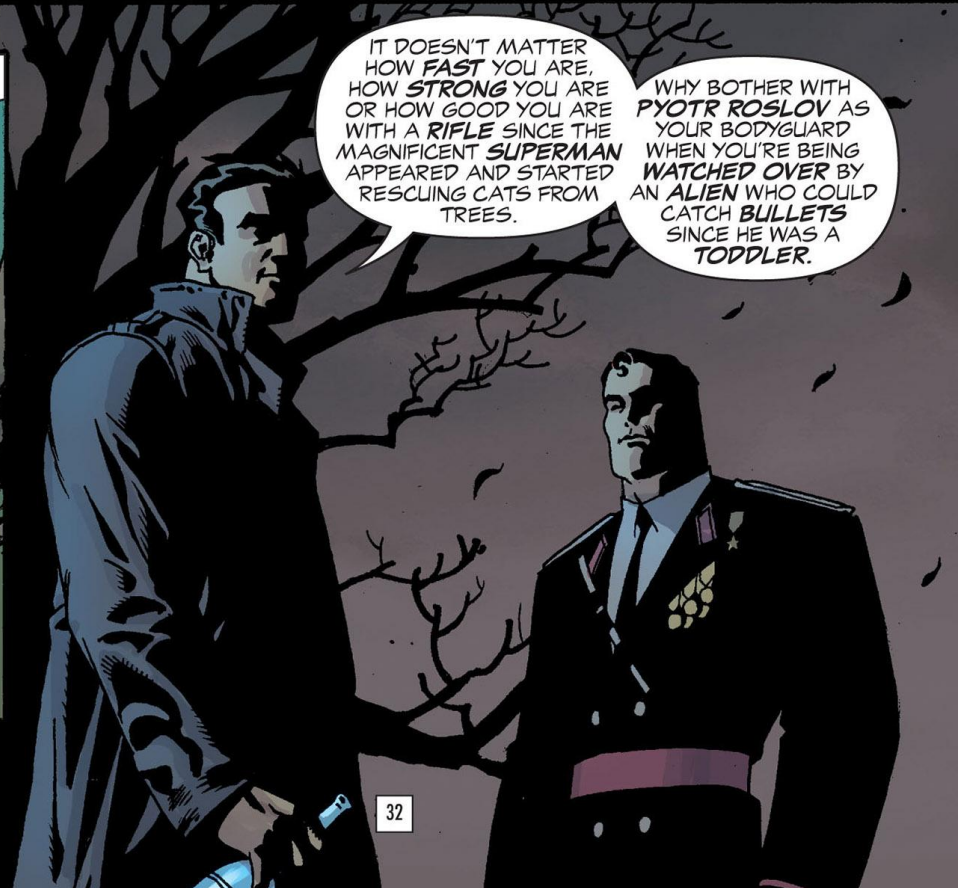


WHAT ARE YOU **TALKING** ABOUT, YOU IDIOT? YOU DON'T EVEN **KNOW** ME, AND WOULD YOU PLEASE STOP **FIXING** THINGS? YOU'RE **DRIVING** ME OUT OF MY MIND!

I ONLY **FIX** THINGS THAT ARE **BROKEN**, PYOTR. NOW **PLEASE**; TAKE A SEAT. LET'S JUST SIT DOWN AND **TALK** ABOUT WHATEVER'S GETTING YOU SO **UPSET** HERE.



YOU MEAN **BESIDES** THE TOTAL STRANGER **MEDDLING** IN MY AFFAIRS? **BELIEVE** ME, SUPERMAN, YOU'RE THE **LAST** GUY I CAN TALK ABOUT MY PROBLEMS WITH...





ACTUALLY, THE POWERS DIDN'T START UNTIL A FEW WEEKS AFTER MY TWELFTH BIRTHDAY, CAPTAIN ROSLOV.

MY SUPER-HEARING WAS THE FIRST TO DEVELOP. I HEARD WHAT I THOUGHT WERE VOICES IN MY HEAD UNTIL I REALIZED I WAS JUST LISTENING TO CHILDREN IN THE NEXT COLLECTIVE.

UP UNTIL THAT POINT, I WAS JUST AN ORDINARY LITTLE BOY WITH BRUISED KNEES AND A WHEEZY COUGH AND A CRUSH ON MY CLITE, RED-HEADED NEIGHBOR JUST LIKE ANYONE ELSE.



IF I'D HAD THE POWERS I'D HAVE LEFT THE FARM YEARS BEFORE NOW, BUT I DIDN'T. YOU KNOW WHY?

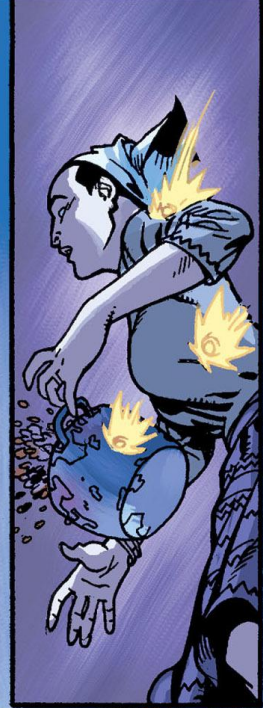
BECAUSE MY PARENTS WANTED ME TO BE READY WHEN I WENT TO THE BIG CITY. I BELIEVE IN THIS JUST AS MUCH AS YOU DO, PYOTR. THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A COMPETITION.



THAT'S EASY TO SAY WHEN YOU'RE STREAKING THROUGH THE SKIES, SUPERMAN. NOT SO MUCH FUN WHEN YOU'RE DOWN HERE WORKING IN THE GUTTERS LIKE THE REST OF US.

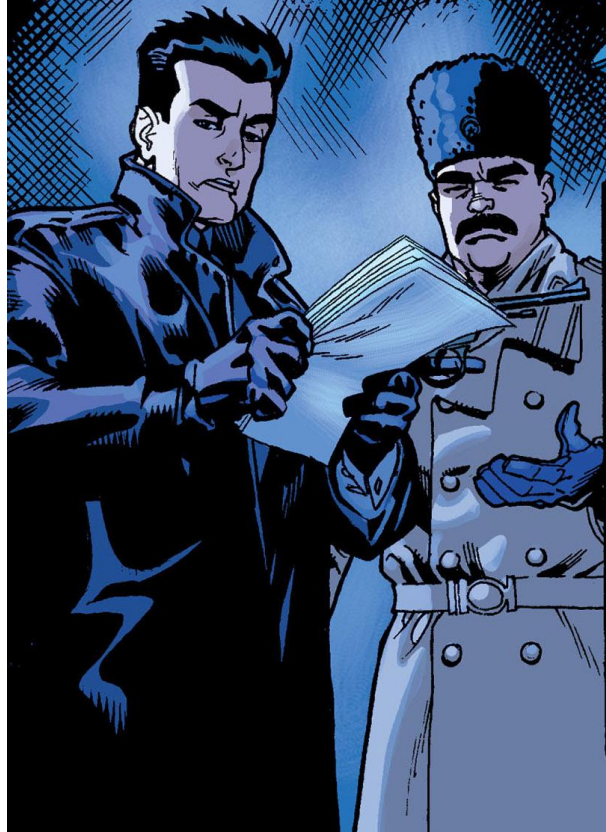
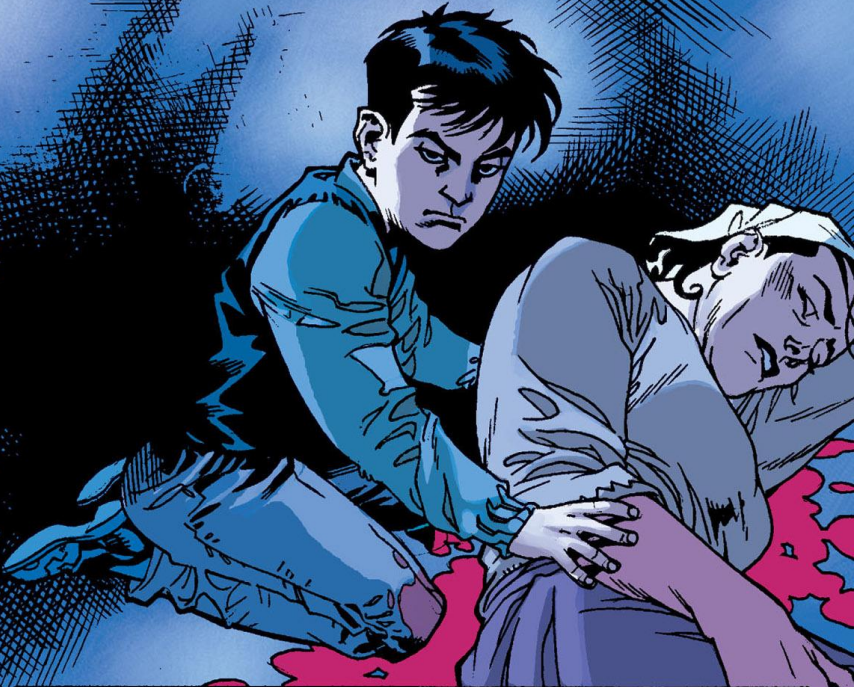


"DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PURGE LAST WEEK, SUPERMAN? TWO DISSIDENTS PRINTING ANTI-SUPERMAN DAY LEAFLETS OR SOMETHING. I FORGET THE DETAILS."



"ALL I REMEMBER IS THE BOY."

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT, BOY? DON'T YOU KNOW IT'S AGAINST THE LAW TO STARE AT THE CHIEF OF POLICE? BULLETS KILL LITTLE BOYS TOO, YOU KNOW.



GO ON! GET OUT OF MY SIGHT! YOUR PARENTS ARE DEAD!



DON'T WALK.
RUN!



CRUNT!



WEIRD LITTLE RUNT.
PROBABLY GROW UP JUST LIKE HIS IDIOT FATHER.




THE KID COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE THAN NINE YEARS OLD, BUT HIS GLARE WOULD HAVE STOPPED A CLOCK TICKING. THOSE WEREN'T A CHILD'S EYES. THEY LOOKED TOO PATIENT.

I WILL NEVER, EVER FORGET THE WAY THAT BOY STARED AT ME.

SOMEBODY SAID HE THREW HIMSELF IN THE MOSCOW RIVER. OTHERS SAID HE DISAPPEARED INTO THE SEWERS TO LICK HIS WOUNDS AND SWEAR REVENGE.

I SHOT HIS PARENTS. WHAT DOES THAT DO TO A BOY, SUPERMAN? IS THERE ANYBODY WHO CAN ANSWER THAT ONE?



IT WASN'T UNTIL *YOU* APPEARED THAT I REALIZED JUST HOW HORRIBLE AND VILE MY JOB REALLY *IS* AND I'M *SICK* OF IT, SUPERMAN.

SICK OF WORKING IN A *SYSTEM* WHERE, NO MATTER HOW *HARD* I TRY, I'M NEVER GOING TO MAKE IT TO THE *TOP* OF THE *PARTY* NOW THAT *YOU'RE* HERE.



SICK OF GETTING MY *HANDS* DIRTY FOR A MAN WHO WON'T EVEN ADMIT I'M HIS OWN *FLESH AND BLOOD*.

click



CHUNT

NO!



YOU KNOW, YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO HURT YOURSELF SOON IF YOU DON'T CUT OUT ALL THIS HEAVY DRINKING, PYOTR.

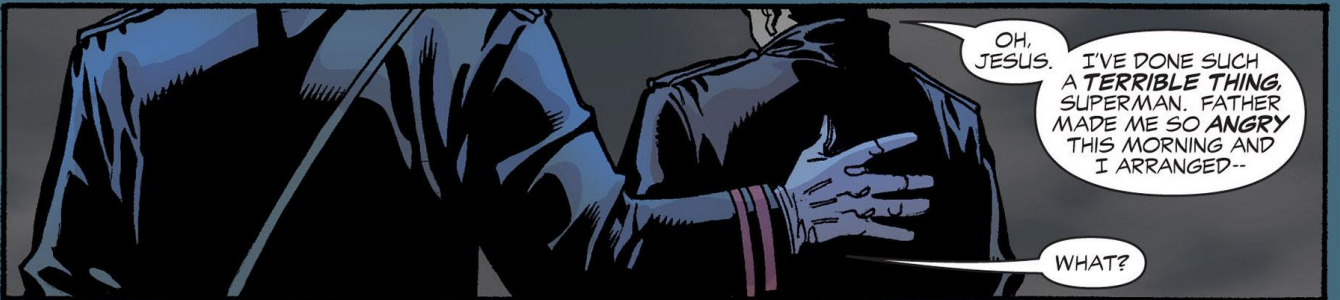


DAMN YOU!



THEY ALL MIGHT THINK YOU'RE WONDERFUL NOW, BUT I KNOW WHERE THIS IS GOING, ALIEN! YOUR INTERFERENCE IS GOING TO BE THE WORST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO US.

YOU MARK MY WORDS!



OH, JESUS.

I'VE DONE SUCH A TERRIBLE THING, SUPERMAN. FATHER MADE ME SO ANGRY THIS MORNING AND I ARRANGED--

WHAT?!



I SAID...

NO, NOT YOU. TWO MILES AWAY, THERE'S SOMEONE SHOUTING FOR HELP IN MOSCOW.

WAIT HERE.



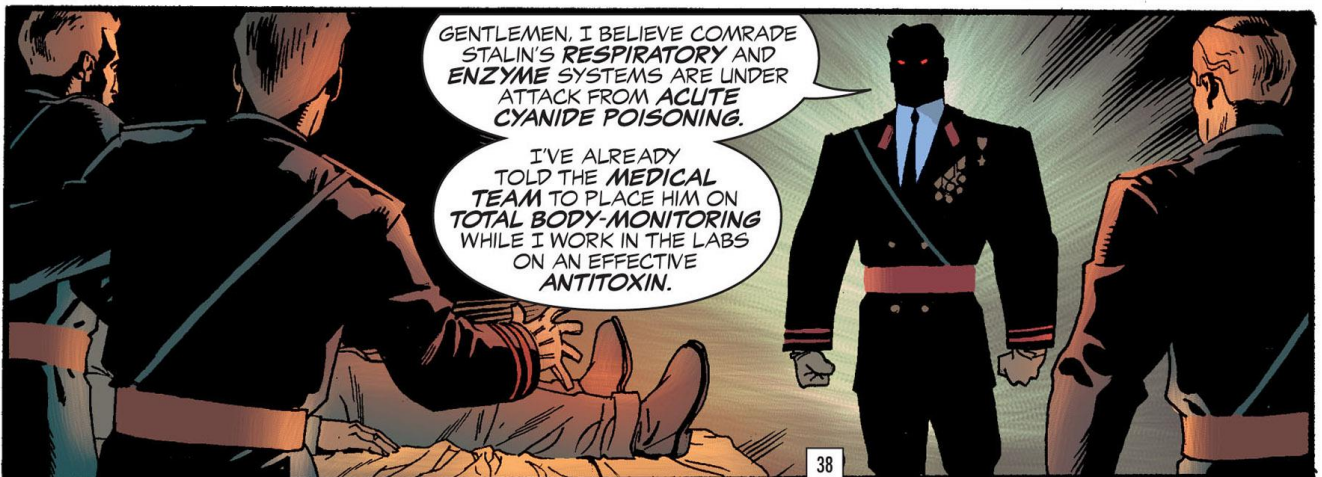
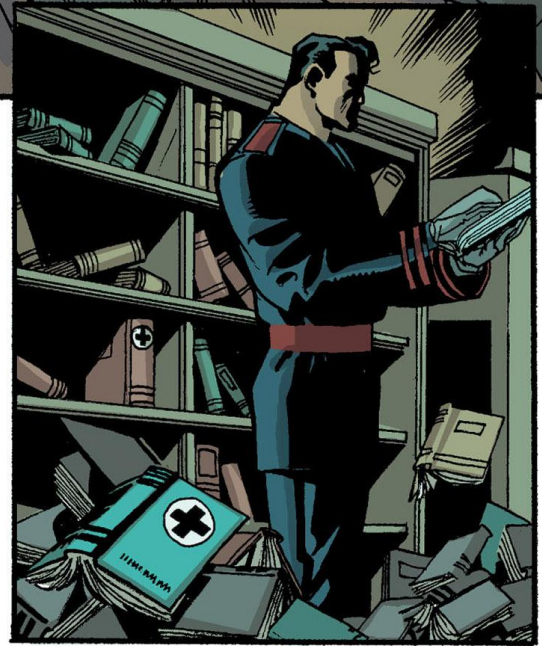


SUPERMAN!
HELP US!

YOU'RE WASTING
YOUR TIME! JUST
GET A DOCTOR!
WHAT THE HELL DOES
SUPERMAN KNOW
ABOUT MEDICINE?



WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT? HE'S
SUPERMAN, YOU IDIOT!
HE CAN DO ANYTHING!



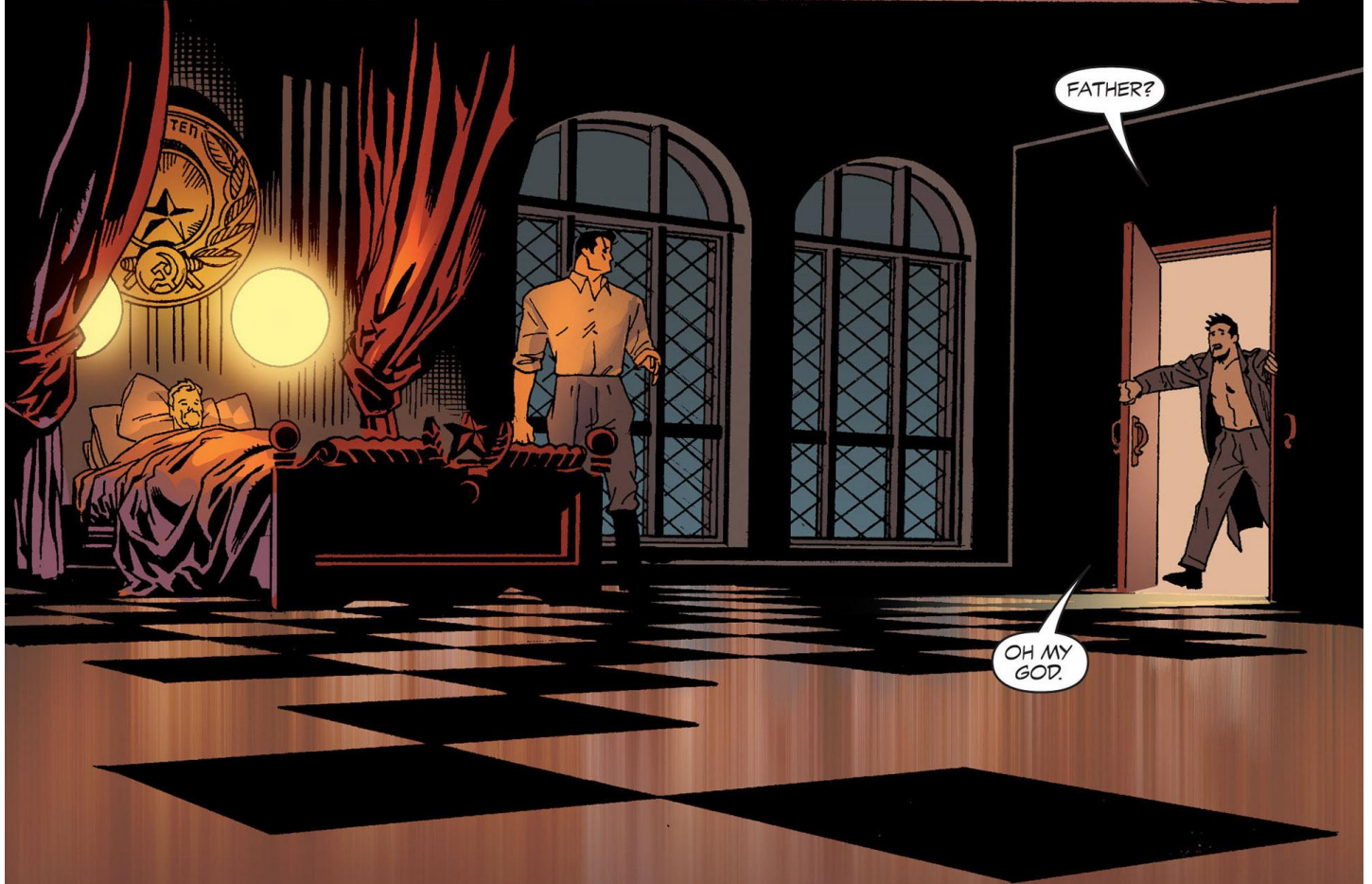
GENTLEMEN, I BELIEVE COMRADE
STALIN'S RESPIRATORY AND
ENZYME SYSTEMS ARE UNDER
ATTACK FROM ACUTE
CYANIDE POISONING.

I'VE ALREADY
TOLD THE MEDICAL
TEAM TO PLACE HIM ON
TOTAL BODY-MONITORING
WHILE I WORK IN THE LABS
ON AN EFFECTIVE
ANTITOXIN.



I'M SORRY, CAPTAIN. YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE.

WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TELLING ME WHERE I CAN GO, YOU LITTLE SNOT? GET OUT OF MY WAY BEFORE I HAVE YOU COUNTING SNOWFLAKES IN SIBERIA!



FATHER?

OH MY GOD.



YOU KNOW... I'VE ONLY EVER SEEN HIM **STANDING UP** BEFORE, SUPERMAN. IT'S SO HORRIBLE SEEING HIM LOOK THIS SMALL AND VULNERABLE...



HE LOOKS JUST LIKE A LITTLE RAG DOLL.

CAPTAIN ROSLOV WAS DEVASTATED BY THE OLD MAN'S DEATH. WE ALL WERE.



HE DIDN'T REST UNTIL HE FOUND THE MAN WHO POISONED HIM AND HAD HIM SHOT IN RED SQUARE IN FULL PUBLIC VIEW.

I WAS SO DISTRACTED BY THE WHOLE THING I WAS BARELY PAYING ATTENTION TO EVENTS ABROAD...

THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE. I FEEL LIKE I'M ON THE SET OF A SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE OR SOMETHING.

HOW IS THIS STUFF YOU'VE BEEN BUILDING HERE EVEN POSSIBLE, FOR GOD'S SAKE?

BECAUSE THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT BECOMES A LITTLE MORE IMPOSSIBLE EVERY DAY, AGENT OLSEN.

TECHNOLOGY CURVES STIPULATED THAT NONE OF THIS EQUIPMENT WOULD EVEN BE INVENTED FOR ANOTHER FIVE DECADES AND YET HERE WE ARE WITH SCIENCE STRAIGHT OUT OF RAY BRADBURY HIMSELF.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THIS MAN OF STEEL THAT MAKES MY HEAD WORK SO MUCH FASTER, EH?

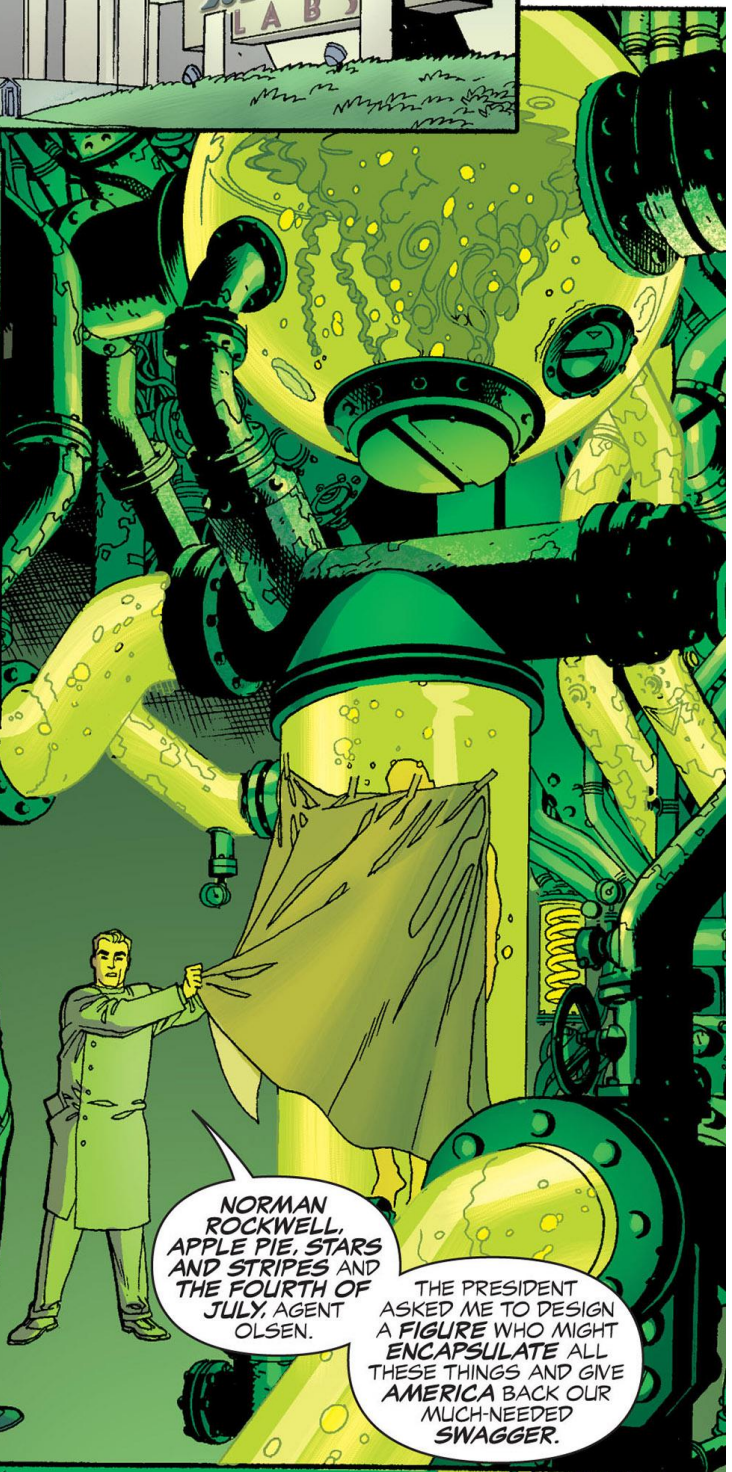
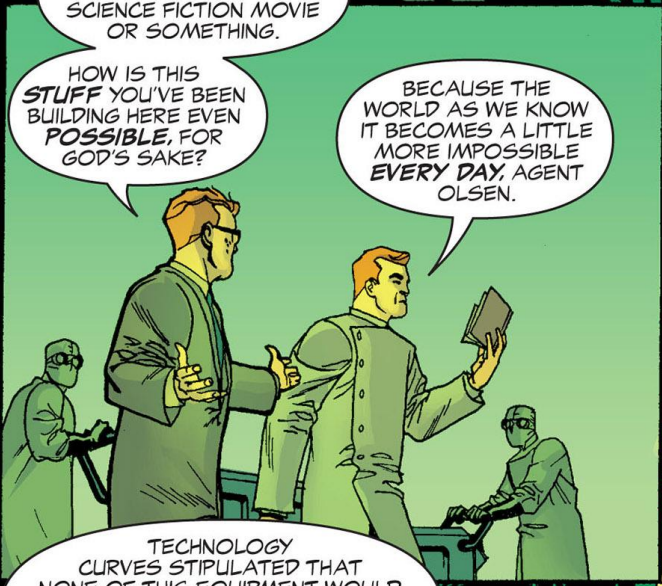
I DON'T KNOW, SIR, BUT WE'RE NOT COMPLAINING.

NORMAN ROCKWELL, APPLE PIE, STARS AND STRIPES AND THE FOURTH OF JULY, AGENT OLSEN.

THE PRESIDENT ASKED ME TO DESIGN A FIGURE WHO MIGHT ENCAPSULATE ALL THESE THINGS AND GIVE AMERICA BACK OUR MUCH-NEEDED SWAGGER.

HOLY SMOKES!

YOUNG MAN, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET SUPERMAN TWO...



THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED SAW AMERICA RUTHLESSLY EXPLOIT OUR POLITICAL CONFUSION.

I LISTENED TO THEM AS THEY PLOTTED IN THEIR BUNKERS AND RECOGNIZED TO MY HORROR THAT THE COLD WAR HAD JUST DIPPED BELOW FREEZING POINT.

THEIR FIRST ACT WAS A PROMISE TO CONTAIN THE COMMUNIST THREAT BY INCREASING THEIR NUCLEAR STOCKPILES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND OUR VARIOUS SATELLITE COUNTRIES.

THIS PROMISE WAS LATER ENFORCED BY OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION THAT THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAD DEVELOPED A DUPLICATE SUPERMAN OF THEIR OWN.

STALIN'S DEATH HAD LEFT AN ENORMOUS VOID IN OUR GREAT NATION THAT THE PARTY HIERARCHY BEGGED ME TO FILL. HOWEVER, THIS WAS A RESCUE I WAS RELUCTANT TO UNDERTAKE...

WHY SHOULD THE FACT THAT I WAS BORN WITH PRIVILEGES QUALIFY ME AS LEADER OF A SOCIALIST REPUBLIC?

I'M SORRY, COMRADES, BUT THE VERY IDEA OF THIS IS IN COMPLETE CONTRADICTION TO EVERYTHING WE WERE EVER RAISED TO BELIEVE IN.

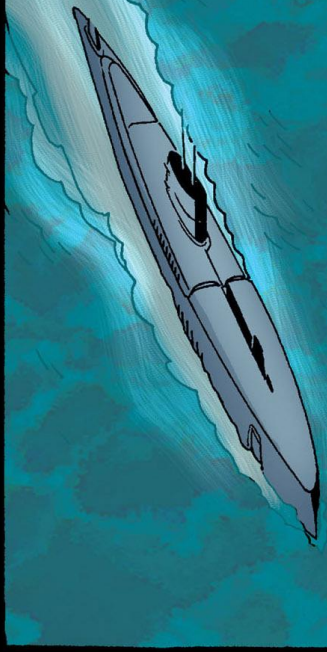
DEALING WITH THE DUPLICATE, OF COURSE, WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. THIS HAD BECOME SOMETHING OF A PERSONAL MATTER...

DID YOU HEAR WHY WE'RE BEHIND SCHEDULE?

APPARENTLY, SOME SCIENTIST NOBODY'S EVER HEARD OF WAS PLAYING CHESS ALL NIGHT WITH THAT STUPID BIZARRO THING UP THERE. CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?

HECK, NO WONDER IKE WON'T LET THE CAMERAS WITHIN A HUNDRED YARDS OF THE FREAK. OUR SUPERMAN LOOKS JUST LIKE I FEEL.

HEY! YOU WANT TO KEEP IT DOWN A LITTLE, GLYS? HE MIGHT BE A FREAK, BUT HE ALSO HAPPENS TO BE JUST ABOUT THE LAST GUY IN THE WORLD I'D WANT TO TICK OFF, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING?



BUDDY, OUR GUY COULD HEAR A GNAT TAKE A LEAK IN INDOCHINA, MY FRIEND. BELIEVE ME; HE'S LISTENING TO EVERY DAMN WORD.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, MORON? WE'RE ONE MILE BELOW THE THING.

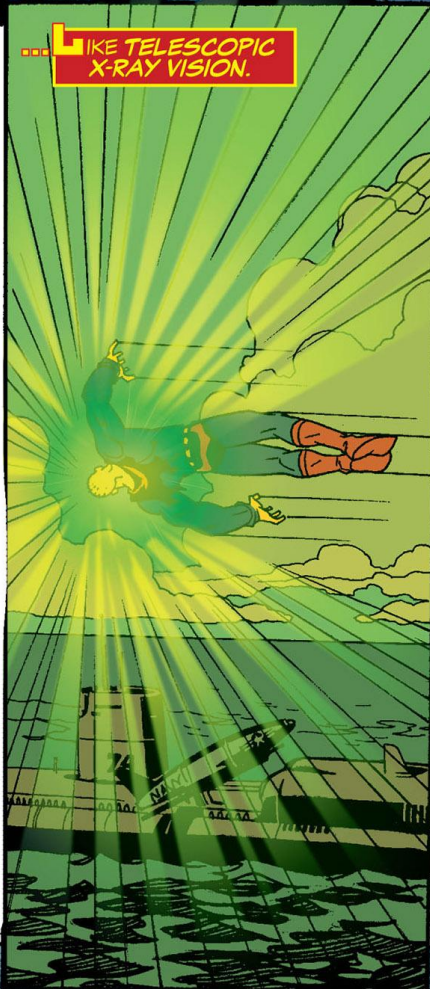




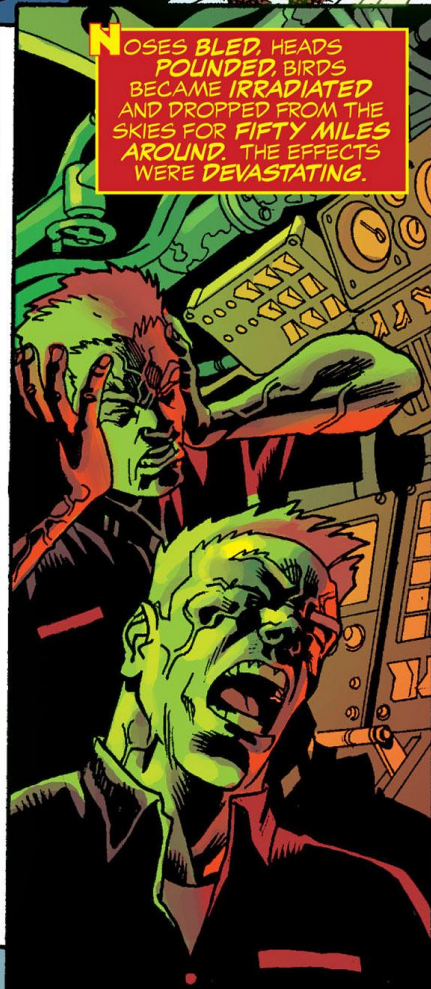
THE DUPLICATE WAS *IMPERFECT*, A CRUDE EFFORT COMPARED TO LEX'S LATER WORK WITH ABILITIES LITTLE MORE THAN A *WARPED AGGREGATE* OF MY *OWN* REPERTOIRE...



...**L**IKE TELESCOPIC X-RAY VISION.



NOSES BLEED, HEADS POUNDED, BIRDS BECAME IRRADIATED AND DROPPED FROM THE SKIES FOR FIFTY MILES AROUND. THE EFFECTS WERE DEVASTATING.

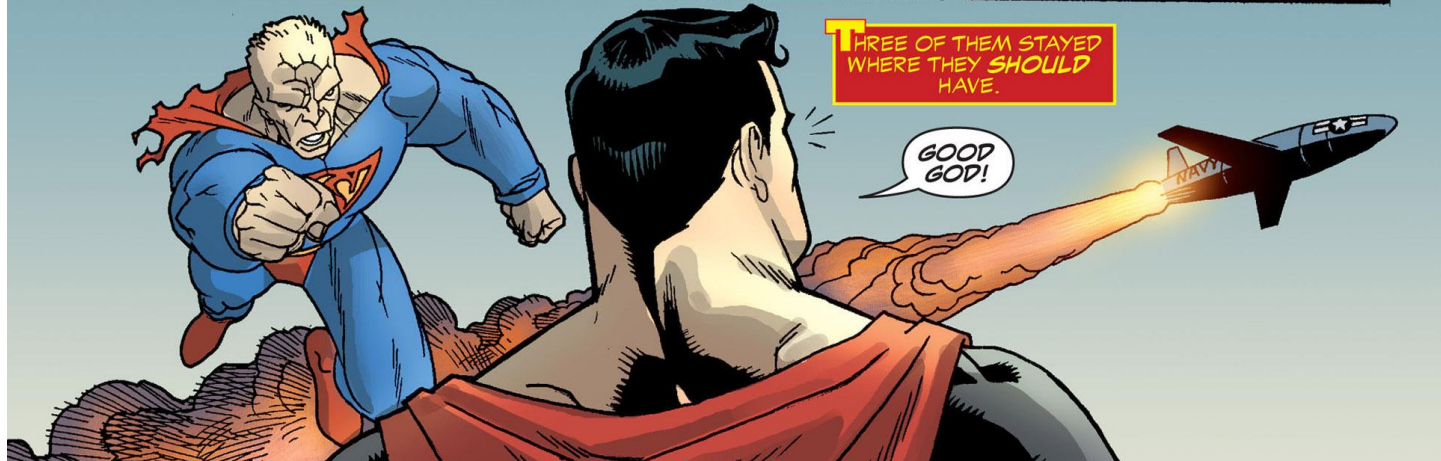


ABSOLUTELY DEVASTATING.



THE SUBMARINE WAS A GRAYBACK CLASS SSG 574 CARRYING FOUR REGULUS ONE MISSILES.

THREE OF THEM STAYED WHERE THEY SHOULD HAVE.





ENGLAND, LONDON, OXFORD STREET AND TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHT INNOCENT BY-STANDERS ARE DEAD BEFORE I EVEN HIT THE GROUND.

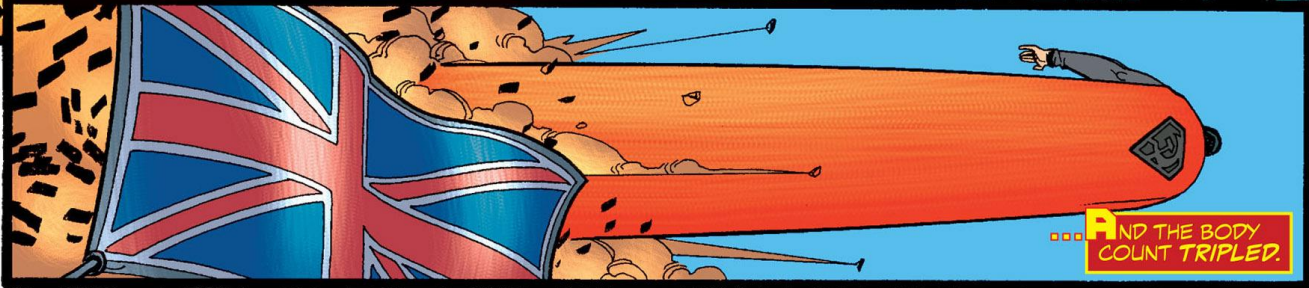


EVEN NOW, EVEN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, I CAN STILL HEAR THE SOUND OF THEM SNAP.



A SECOND LATER.

NONE SINGLE SECOND...



... **A**ND THE BODY COUNT TRIPLED.



PERHAPS YOU MISUNDERSTAND...



YOUR PRESENCE HERE IS AN AGGRESSIVE ACT. THIS COUNTRY DOESN'T NEED AMERICAN PROTECTION. THE SOVIET UNION POSES NO THREAT TO THE FUTURE OF GREAT BRITAIN.



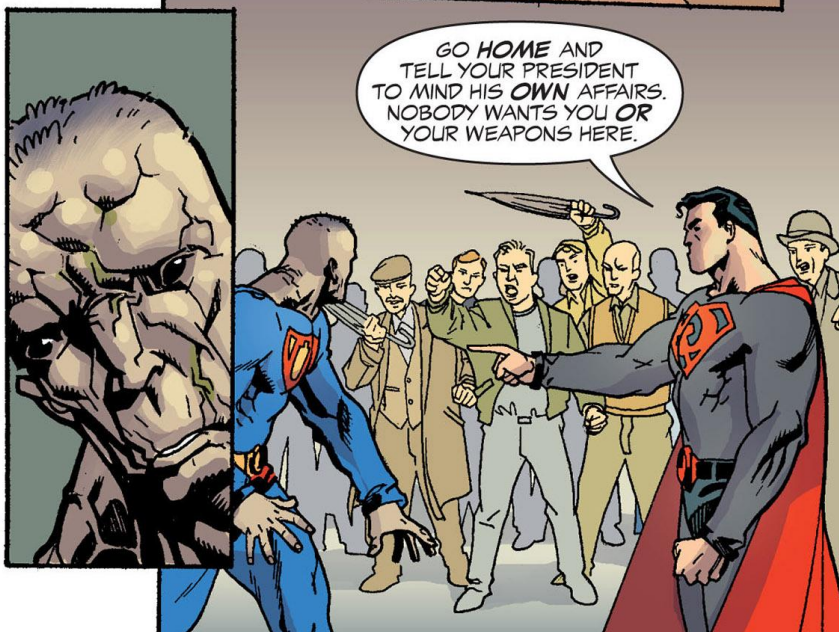
YOU ARE THE MONSTER HERE.



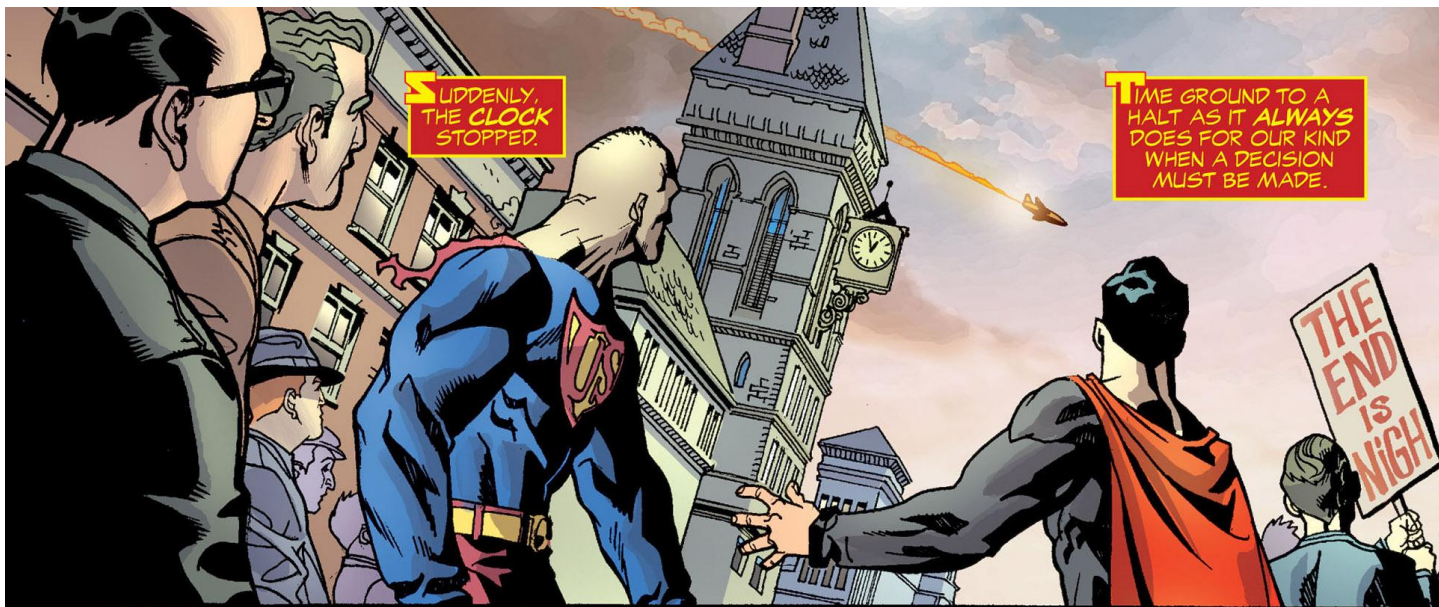
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO BE CONTAINED.



IT'S GETTING UP! KILL IT, SUPERMAN! FOR GOD'S SAKE, FINISH IT OFF!

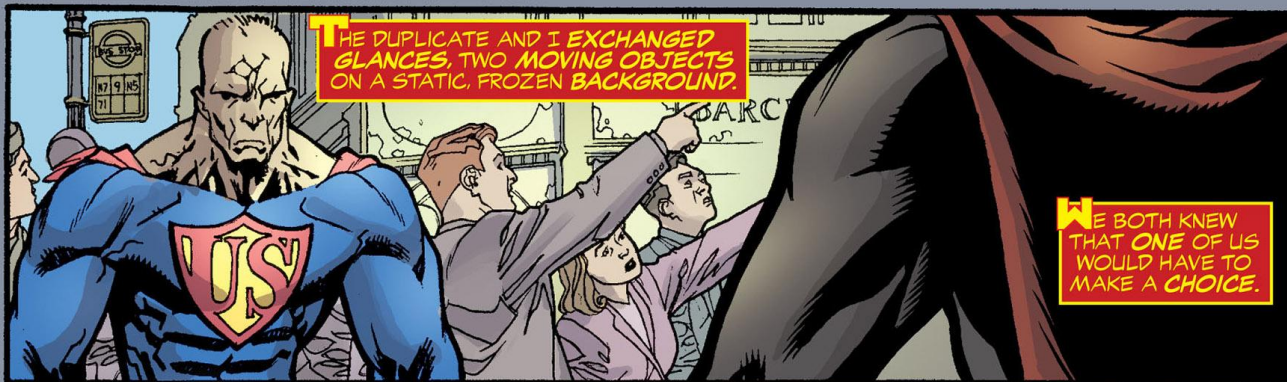


GO HOME AND TELL YOUR PRESIDENT TO MIND HIS OWN AFFAIRS. NOBODY WANTS YOU OR YOUR WEAPONS HERE.



SUDDENLY, THE CLOCK STOPPED.

TIME GROUND TO A HALT AS IT ALWAYS DOES FOR OUR KIND WHEN A DECISION MUST BE MADE.

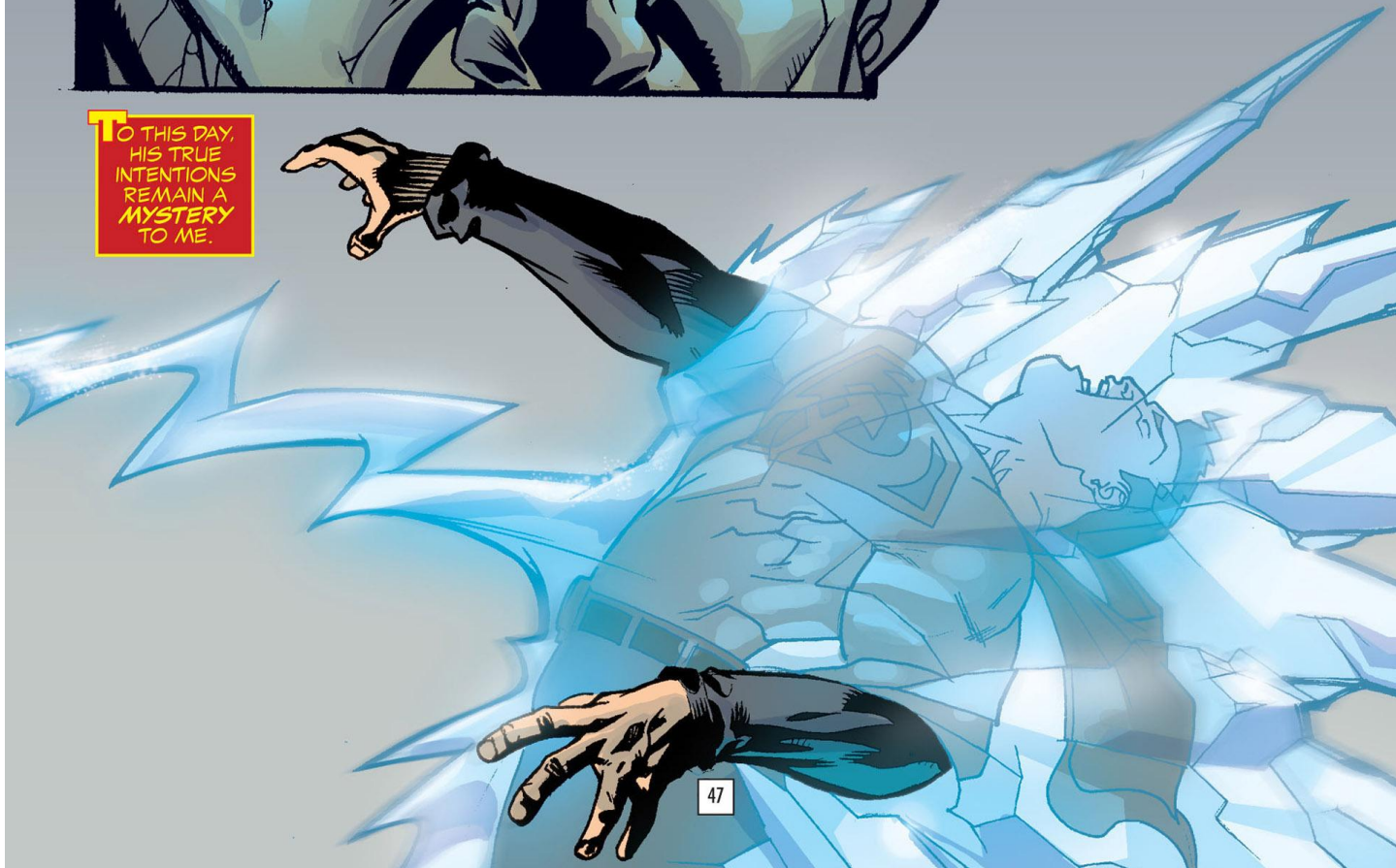


THE DUPLICATE AND I EXCHANGED GLANCES, TWO MOVING OBJECTS ON A STATIC, FROZEN BACKGROUND.

WE BOTH KNEW THAT ONE OF US WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE.



TO THIS DAY, HIS TRUE INTENTIONS REMAIN A MYSTERY TO ME.





OFTEN WONDER IF HE REALLY KNEW WHAT HE WAS **DOING** WHEN HE KICKED BACK INTO THE SKY...

...OR IF HE UNDERSTOOD PERFECTLY AND **SACRIFICED** HIMSELF, INHERITING MY PROMISE TO PRESERVE **EVERY** FORM OF LIFE.

HELLO, EVERYBODY.
ME VERY PLEASUED TO MEET YOU.

PERHAPS HE LOOKED INTO MY EYES AND GLIMPSED A FUTURE THAT HE COULDN'T **BEAR** TO SEE, CHOOSING INSTEAD TO SPARE HIMSELF THE **SUFFERING**.



I'M AFRAID WE'LL NEVER **KNOW** FOR SURE.



THE MAN OF STEEL IS DEAD.

ALL RISE FOR THE NATIONAL ANTHEM.

JOSEPH STALIN'S FUNERAL TOOK PLACE ON THE THIRD TUESDAY IN NOVEMBER, NINETEEN FIFTY THREE.

ЛЕНИН
СТАЛИН



FIVE MILLION MOURNERS HAD COME FROM ALL OVER RUSSIA TO PAY THEIR RESPECTS AS THE MOST FAMOUS MAN I HAD EVER KNOWN WAS LAID TO REST IN LENIN'S TOMB.



FIVE MILLION VOICES BOOMED OUR GLORIOUS NATIONAL ANTHEM BUT, BETWEEN THE COUGHS AND THE PRAYERS AND THE SHUFFLING, I COULD STILL HEAR HER...



...A UNIQUE, SOLITARY VOICE PATTERN FROM THE RURAL COLLECTIVE WHERE I WAS RAISED.

THE SWEET RED-HEADED GIRL FROM MY PAST.



THE CORN-FIELDS IN THE UKRAINE AND MY DEAR, SWEET PARENTS SEEMED SO FAR AWAY EVEN THEN, I REMEMBER.



PLING-MAKERS IN THE PARTY WERE ALREADY CIRCLING, EAGER TO ANOINT THIS RELUCTANT SUCCESSOR...



YOU KNOW, IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE WHICH OF OUR TWO **MEN OF STEEL** WOULD HAVE ENJOYED THE **BIGGEST STATE FUNERAL**, SUPERMAN.

IN ALL **SERIOUSNESS**, I HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT **YOURS** MIGHT HAVE PUT EVEN **COMRADE STALIN'S** IN THE SHADE.

WITH THE **GREATEST RESPECT**, PYOTR, I HARDLY THINK THAT'S AN APPROPRIATE **TOPIC OF CONVERSATION** RIGHT NOW.

ON THE **CONTRARY**, SUPERMAN. ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ALL THOSE WHISPERS ABOUT **THE SUCCESSION?** EVEN WITH THOSE **SUPER-EARS** OF YOURS?



HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU? I'M NOT INTERESTED IN **POLITICS** OR **LEADING THE PARTY** OR ANY OF THAT **BEHIND-THE-SCENES** STUFF.

I CAME TO MOSCOW TO HELP THE **COMMON MAN**. I'M A **WORKER**, NOT A **PUBLIC SPEAKER**.



I'M GLAD TO HEAR IT, BUT TELL THAT TO A PARTY MACHINE WHO'S SERVED A **LIVING LEGEND** FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS.

THEY THINK COMMUNISM IS GOING TO DIE WITHOUT THE **OLD MAN** NOW, ESPECIALLY IN THE FACE OF A **UNITED STATES** WHO HAVE JOINED THE **SUPERHUMAN ARMS RACE**.



THOSE POOR, DELUDED FOOLS SEEM TO THINK THAT **YOU'RE** THE ONLY ONE BIG ENOUGH TO CARRY THE TORCH NOW, SUPERMAN. CAN YOU BELIEVE THE **IDIOCY** OF THAT?

METROPOLIS:

YOU KNOW SOMETHING WEIRD? I'VE HAD THE SAME DREAM ALMOST EVERY NIGHT EVER SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.

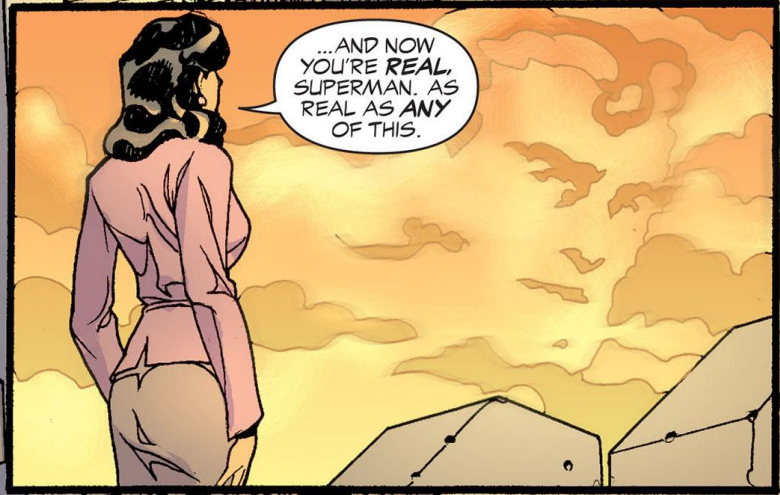
I DREAM I'M FALLING THROUGH THE CLOUDS AND THE EARTH'S GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER, BUT I'M NEVER AFRAID BECAUSE I KNOW THAT YOU'RE THERE TO CATCH ME.

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT? YOU CATCH ME ALMOST EVERY NIGHT. ALWAYS IN THE NICK OF TIME...



AVON VARRO

...AND NOW YOU'RE REAL, SUPERMAN. AS REAL AS ANY OF THIS.



LOIS?



YOUR HUSBAND'S ON THE TELEPHONE, SWEETHEART.



DON'T INTERRUPT, LOIS. THIS CONVERSATION HAS ONLY BEEN CALCULATED TO LAST THIRTY-EIGHT SECONDS: OUR MARRIAGE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN AN INDEFINITE SABBATICAL EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

THIS TIME WILL BE SPENT DEVISING A PLAN TO HUMILIATE AND DEFEAT SUPERMAN JUST AS HE HAS HUMILIATED AND DEFEATED ME.

I HAVE RESIGNED FROM S.T.A.R. LABS, DESTROYED MY NOTES AND TERMINATED THE CONTRACTS OF ANYONE WHO UNDERSTOOD MY PROCEDURES.

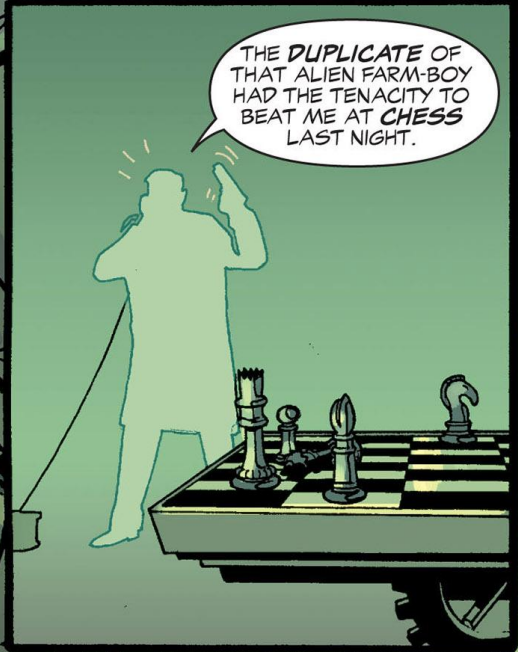
THE SUPERMAN DUPLICATE IS A MISTAKE THAT MUST NOT BE REPEATED. SAY YOU UNDERSTAND, DARLING. SAY YOU DON'T TAKE THIS AS A PERSONAL INSULT.



ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT OUR MARRIAGE IS OVER BECAUSE SUPERMAN BEAT YOUR MONSTER IN A FIGHT?

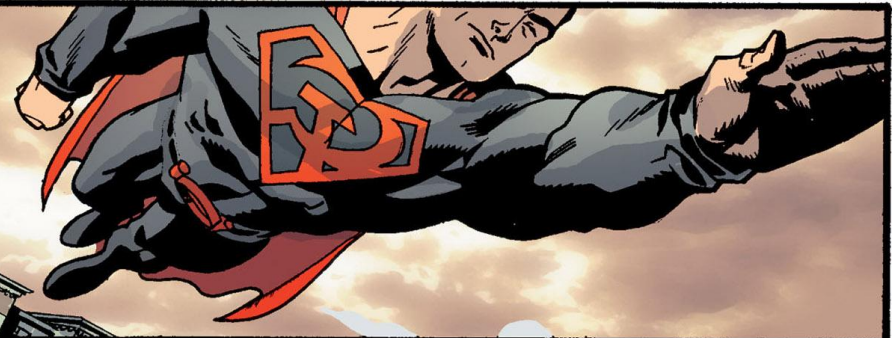
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE FIGHT. I'M DEVOTING MY LIFE TO SUPERMAN FOR ANOTHER REASON ENTIRELY, LOIS...

THE DUPLICATE OF THAT ALIEN FARM-BOY HAD THE TENACITY TO BEAT ME AT CHESS LAST NIGHT.



I CIRCLED THE WORLD AS I OFTEN DID WHEN TROUBLED; THE LAND, THE SEA AND THE MOUNTAINS BLURRING INTO A SINGLE STRETCH OF *ENDLESS GREY* BENEATH ME.

I ALWAYS FOUND IT EASIEST TO THINK WHEN APPROACHING *TRANS-LIGHT VELOCITIES*.



MY HEART TOLD ME TO LEAD THEM, BUT MY HEAD TOLD ME THAT THIS *COMPLETELY CONTRADICTED* EVERYTHING MY PARENTS HAD EVER RAISED ME TO *BELIEVE* IN.

I'S STRANGE HOW *DIFFERENT* THINGS COULD HAVE BEEN, THE PATH HISTORY MIGHT HAVE TAKEN IF I'D ONLY ENTERED MOSCOW FROM THE *NORTH SIDE* OF THE CITY...



SUPERMAN?



LANA? LANA LAZARENKO?



I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU IN THE CROWDS EARLIER, BUT I COULDN'T BE SURE WITH ALL THE CHATTERING GOING ON.



MY GOD. LOOK AT YOU. YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT SINCE WE USED TO CAUSE ALL THAT TROUBLE ON THE FARM.

ME? WHAT ABOUT YOU? I NEARLY DIED WHEN THE CHILDREN SHOWED ME YOUR PICTURE IN THE PAPER. YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE HOW HARD IT'S BEEN NOT TO TELL EVERYONE WHO YOU REALLY ARE.



CHILDREN?

YES, JORDAN AND MEHRI. WE SPENT ALL OUR MONEY TRAVELING FROM SAINT PETERSBURG FOR THE FUNERAL AND NOW WE HAVE TO QUEUE HERE FOR SCRAPS WITH EVERYONE ELSE.

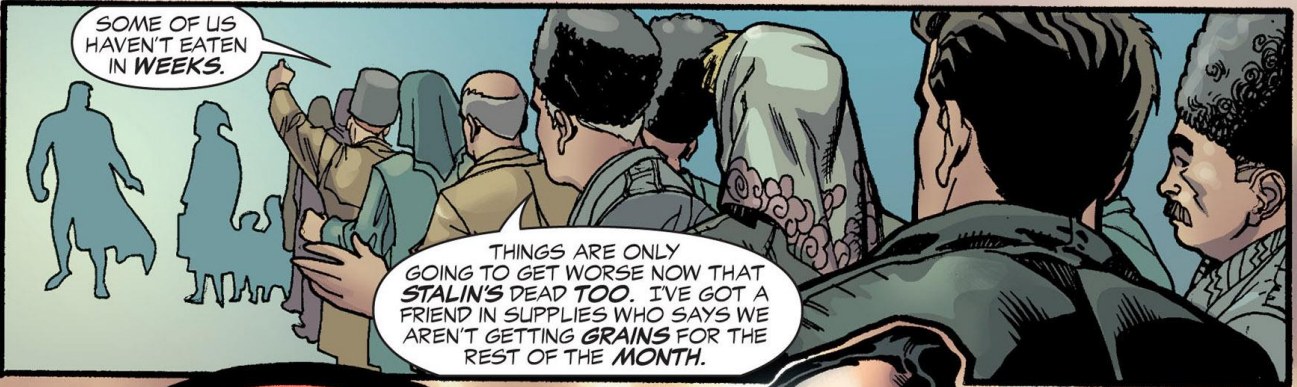


THIS ISN'T *RIGHT*, LANA. THESE CHILDREN SHOULDN'T HAVE TO STAND IN LINE AND BEG FOR FOOD LIKE THEY'RE SOME KIND OF *ANIMALS*.



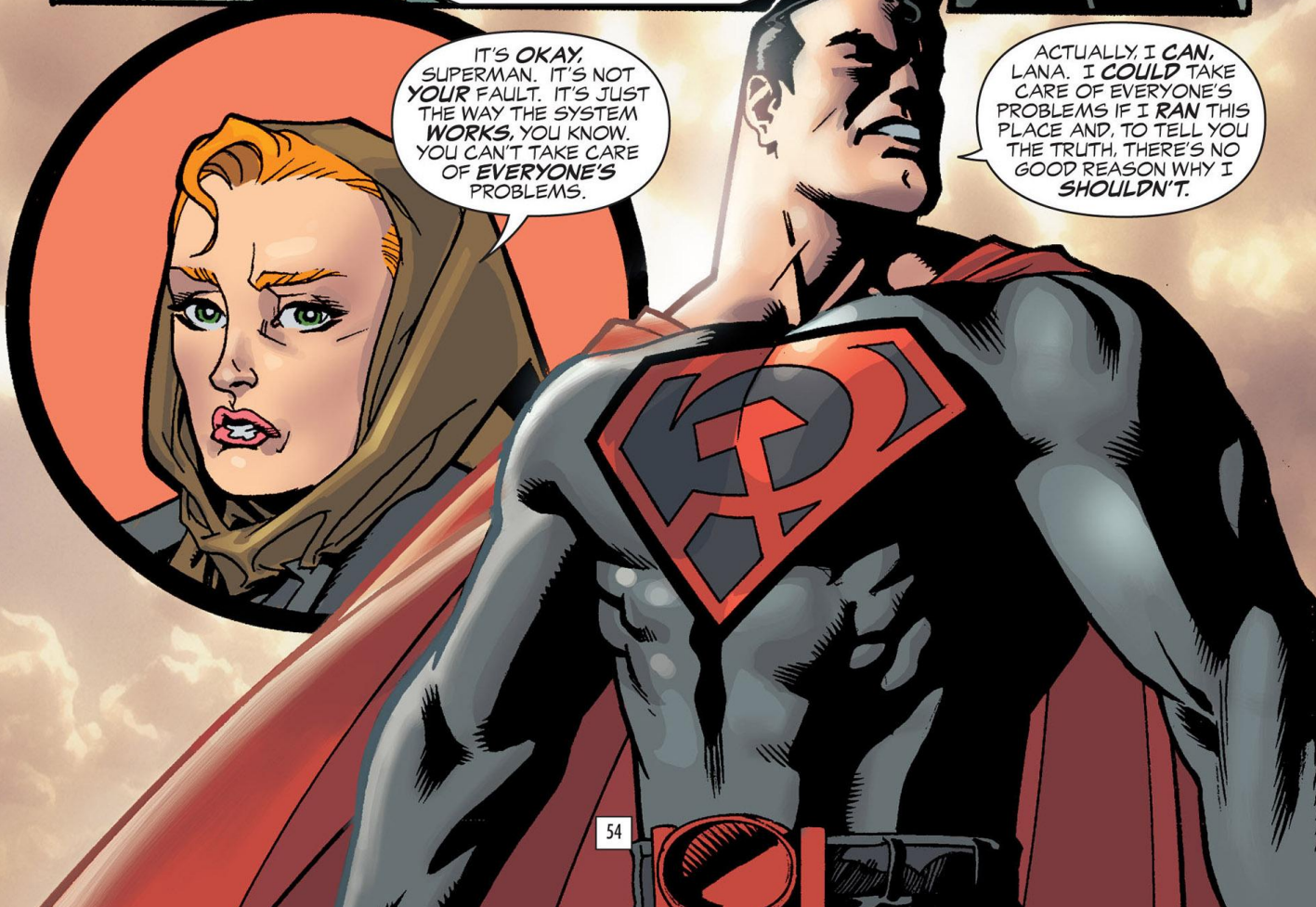
GIVE THIS WOMAN SOMETHING TO *EAT*, COMRADE. HER BOY AND GIRL HAVEN'T EATEN SINCE THEY *GOT* HERE, FOR GOD'S SAKE.

BUT WHAT ABOUT *US*, SUPERMAN? WE'RE *ALL* HUNGRY AND MY OWN CHILDREN HERE HAVEN'T EATEN ALL DAY *EITHER*.



SOME OF US HAVEN'T EATEN IN *WEEKS*.

THINGS ARE ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE NOW THAT *STALIN'S* DEAD TOO. I'VE GOT A FRIEND IN SUPPLIES WHO SAYS WE AREN'T GETTING *GRAINS* FOR THE REST OF THE *MONTH*.



IT'S *OKAY*, SUPERMAN. IT'S NOT *YOUR* FAULT. IT'S JUST THE WAY THE *SYSTEM WORKS*, YOU KNOW. YOU CAN'T TAKE CARE OF *EVERYONE'S* PROBLEMS.

ACTUALLY, I *CAN*, LANA. I *COULD* TAKE CARE OF EVERYONE'S PROBLEMS IF I *RAN* THIS PLACE AND, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THERE'S NO GOOD REASON WHY I *SHOULDN'T*.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE SCARED OR HUNGRY ANYMORE, COMRADES.

SUPERMAN IS HERE TO RESCUE THEM.



