


SUPERMAN
RED
SON
RED SON SETTING



IN MY SIXTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY,
BRAINAC CALCULATED THAT
THE WORLD NOW CONTAINED
ALMOST SIX BILLION
COMMUNISTS.

QUICKLY DOUBLE-
CHECKED AND HE
WAS RIGHT.





MOSCOW TICK-TOCKED WITH THE SAME SWISS WATCH PRECISION AS EVERY OTHER TOWN AND CITY IN OUR GLOBAL SOVIET UNION.

EVERY ADULT HAD A JOB, EVERY CHILD HAD A HOBBY, AND THE ENTIRE HUMAN POPULATION ENJOYED THE FULL EIGHT HOURS' SLEEP WHICH THEIR BODIES REQUIRED.



CRIME DIDN'T EXIST. ACCIDENTS NEVER HAPPENED.

IT DIDN'T EVEN RAIN UNLESS BRAINIAC WAS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT EVERYONE WAS CARRYING AN UMBRELLA.



ALMOST SIX BILLION CITIZENS AND HARDLY ANYONE COMPLAINED.

EVEN IN PRIVATE.



THE BAT-MEN SEEM TO BE RESPONDING WELL TO THEIR NEW PERSONALITIES, BRAINIAC. I THINK WE CAN SAFELY REINTRODUCE THEM TO SOCIETY SOON WITHOUT ANY SERIOUS CONCERNS.

A STEADY HAND AND SOME PIONEERING NEUROSURGERY AND EVEN THE MOST PERSISTENT TROUBLE-MAKERS CAN BECOME PRODUCTIVE WORKERS, COMRADE SUPERMAN.

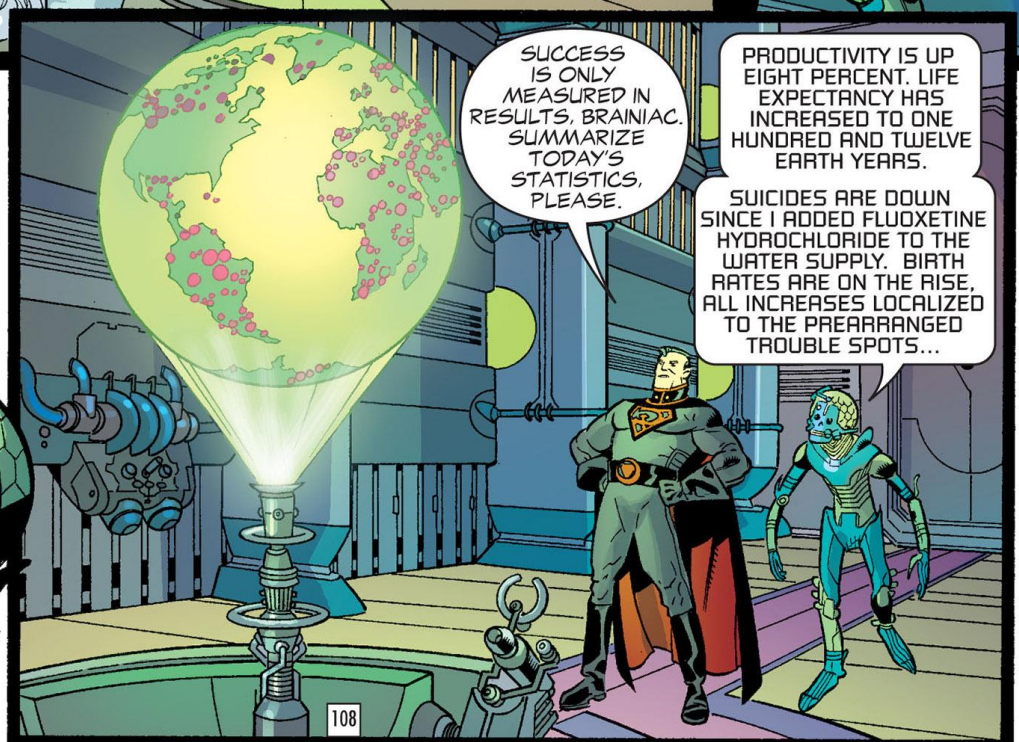
IF MY OWN REHABILITATION ISN'T PROOF ENOUGH, SURELY YOUR OTHER FORMER ENEMIES CLEANING TOILETS IN BOMBAY IS A TRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF YOUR INITIATIVES.

EVEN LUTHOR HAS BEEN UNUSUALLY QUIET LATELY.

SUCCESS IS ONLY MEASURED IN RESULTS, BRAINIAC. SUMMARIZE TODAY'S STATISTICS, PLEASE.

PRODUCTIVITY IS UP EIGHT PERCENT. LIFE EXPECTANCY HAS INCREASED TO ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE EARTH YEARS.

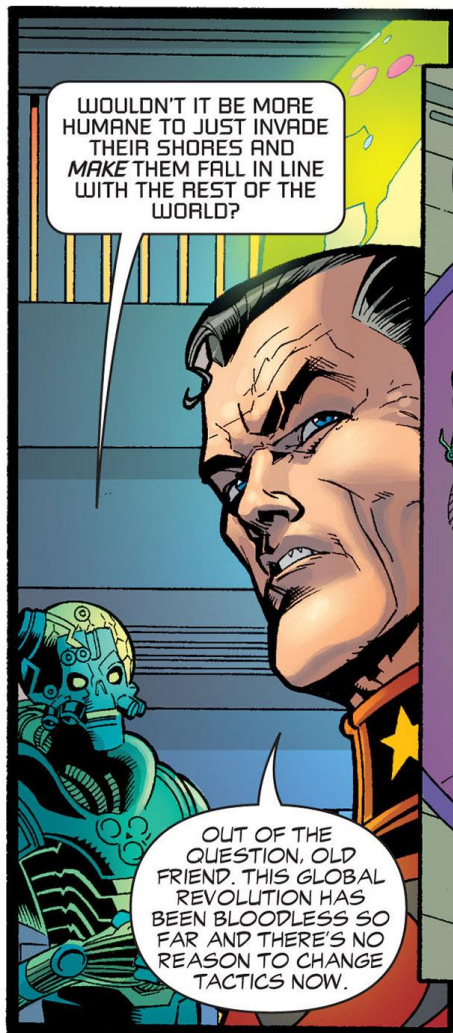
SUICIDES ARE DOWN SINCE I ADDED FLUOXETINE HYDROCHLORIDE TO THE WATER SUPPLY. BIRTH RATES ARE ON THE RISE, ALL INCREASES LOCALIZED TO THE PREARRANGED TROUBLE SPOTS...





WHAT ABOUT AMERICA?

STILL A WAR ZONE, UNFORTUNATELY, AND STILL REFUSING THE AID PACKAGES WE'VE OFFERED THEM. THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY MILLION PEOPLE ARE ON THE BRINK OF STARVATION, SUPERMAN.



WOULDN'T IT BE MORE HUMANE TO JUST INVADRE THEIR SHORES AND MAKE THEM FALL IN LINE WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD?

OUT OF THE QUESTION, OLD FRIEND. THIS GLOBAL REVOLUTION HAS BEEN BLOODLESS SO FAR AND THERE'S NO REASON TO CHANGE TACTICS NOW.



AMERICA WILL FALL LIKE EVERY OTHER OUTDATED WORLD ECONOMY. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS WAIT AND PICK UP THE PIECES.

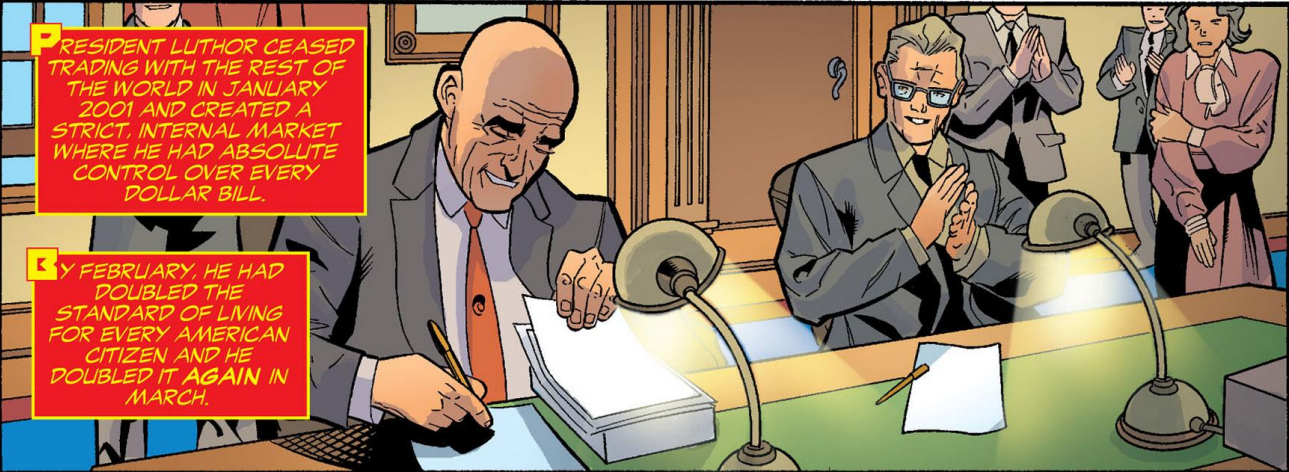
IF THAT MUCH, I WAS CERTAIN.



ALL I HAD TO DO WAS BIDE MY TIME AND THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD FINALLY BE AS PERFECT AS GOD HAD INTENDED IT TO BE.


IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO ME FOR A MOMENT WHAT LUTHOR HAD BEEN PLOTTING IN HIS LEAD-LINED, SOUNDPROOFED LABORATORY...



A comic book panel showing President Luthor, a bald man in a grey suit and red tie, sitting at a desk and writing. He is smiling. In the background, a man with glasses is clapping, and a woman in a purple suit stands with her arms crossed. The scene is set in a formal office with a desk lamp and a computer monitor.

PRESIDENT LUTHOR CEASED TRADING WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD IN JANUARY 2001 AND CREATED A STRICT, INTERNAL MARKET WHERE HE HAD ABSOLUTE CONTROL OVER EVERY DOLLAR BILL.

BY FEBRUARY, HE HAD DOUBLED THE STANDARD OF LIVING FOR EVERY AMERICAN CITIZEN AND HE DOUBLED IT AGAIN IN MARCH.

A large comic book panel showing President Luthor, wearing a yellow hard hat and a light-colored shirt, walking through a construction site. He is holding a set of blueprints. In the background, several construction workers in hard hats and work clothes are visible. The scene is filled with construction equipment and materials.

APRIL SAW A SWIFT RETURN TO FULL EMPLOYMENT. BY MAY, HE HAD ERADICATED HOMELESSNESS IN THE THIRTY-FOUR STATES STILL UNDER WHITE HOUSE CONTROL AFTER THE BITTER CIVIL WAR OF 1986.

JUNE 1ST MARKED THE RETURN OF THE SIXTEEN PRODIGAL STATES.

BY THE MIDDLE OF HIS FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE, AMERICA HAD A VIBRANT ECONOMY, A HAPPY POPULATION AND A PRESIDENT WITH AN UNPRECEDENTED APPROVAL RATING OF ONE HUNDRED PER CENT.

BUT HE WASN'T DOING THIS FOR THE PEOPLE.

A comic book panel showing President Luthor from behind, looking out a window. He is wearing a dark suit. The window shows a view of a city skyline with tall buildings. The lighting is dramatic, with a sunset or sunrise sky.

LEX LUTHOR COULDN'T STAND THE PEOPLE.

LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IN HIS MISERABLE LIFE, THIS WAS JUST THE FIRST STAGE IN A MASTER PLAN TO FINALLY ELIMINATE ME.



I KNOW YOU'VE GOT A SENTIMENTAL ATTACHMENT TO THESE SILLY OLD NEWSPAPER OFFICES, LOIS, BUT YOU MUST ADMIT THAT GLOBE RUINS AN OTHERWISE MAGNIFICENT SKYLINE.



TEARING DOWN THE OBSOLETE AND REPLACING IT WITH SOMETHING BETTER IS JUST THE NATURAL ORDER OF THINGS, DEAR SISTER.

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, LUCY, BUT ISN'T IT ODD HOW LEX MANAGED TO SAVE EVERY OTHER BUSINESS IN THE COUNTRY, EXCEPT THE ONE I USED TO WORK FOR?



WHY RESURRECT THE METROPOLIS EAGLE BUT GIVE THE DAILY PLANET AN EXECUTION ORDER? ISN'T HE JUST BEING DELIBERATELY CRUEL?



OF COURSE NOT, DARLING. WHAT POSSIBLE REASON COULD LEX EVER HAVE FOR INTENTIONALLY HURTING HIS OWN WIFE?



BECAUSE HE KNOWS I LOVED THIS NEWSPAPER WITH ALL MY HEART AND HE CAN'T STAND THE IDEA OF ME LOVING ANYTHING EXCEPT HIM.

OH, THAT'S THE MOST RIDICULOUS THING I'VE EVER HEARD.



LEX JUST LIKES TO SURROUND HIMSELF WITH PEOPLE HE CAN TRUST, AND YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS FIRST LADY ECLIPSE WHATEVER LITTLE TROPHIES YOU PICKED UP AS A NEWSPAPER EDITOR.



HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT IT WAS LIKE BEFORE LEX AND JIMMY WON THE WHITE HOUSE FROM FRIEDMAN, LOIS? THERE WERE TANKS ON FIFTH AVENUE, PEOPLE KILLING EACH OTHER FOR FOOD...



DON'T FLAKE OUT ON HIM NOW THAT WE FINALLY HAVE SOME SOLID GROUND TO FIGHT SUPERMAN AND THE SOVIETS ON.

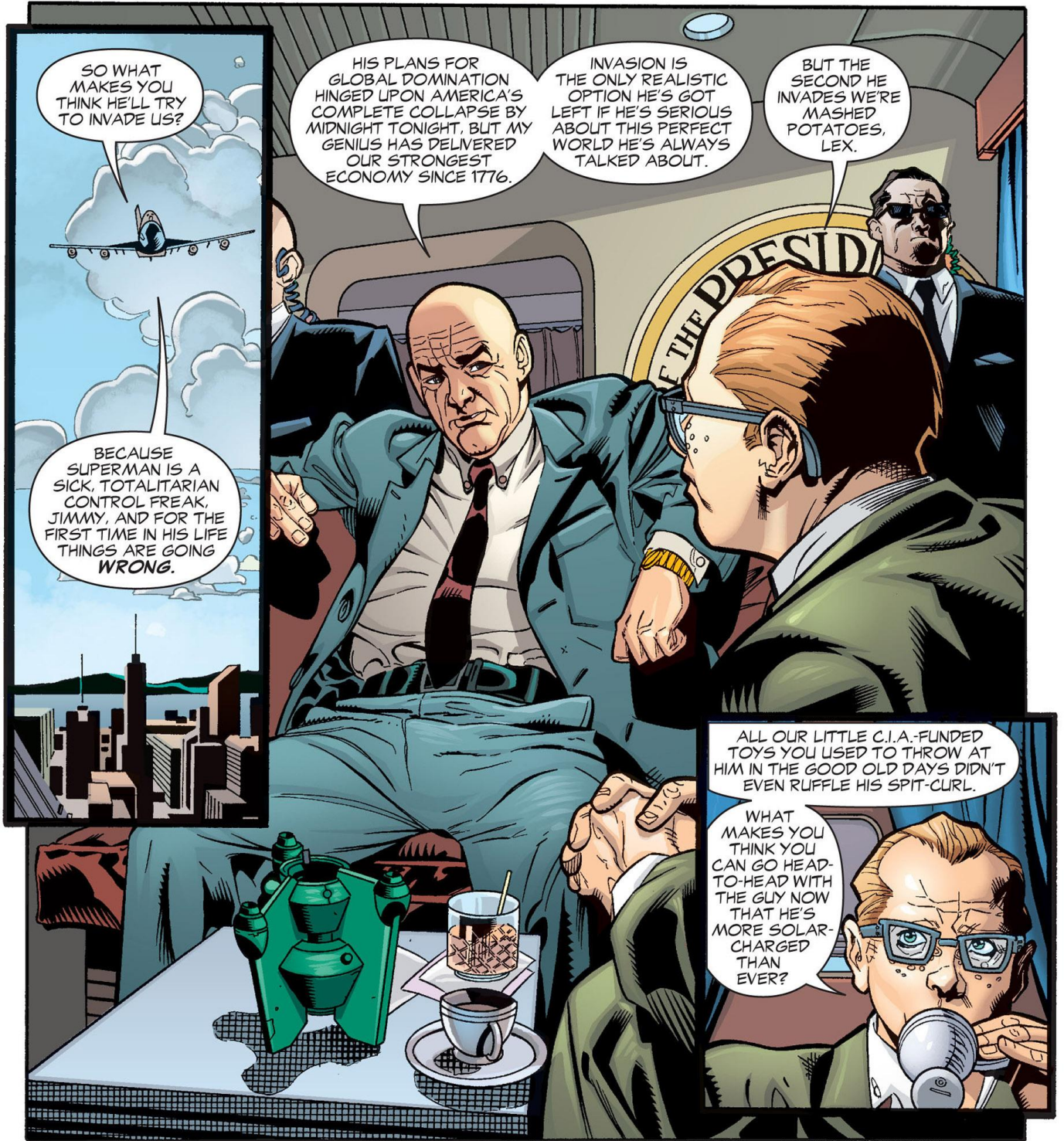
YOU KNOW THE COUNTRY ALWAYS COMES FIRST, LUCY, BUT I HATE THE WAY HE THINKS HE CAN JUST MANIPULATE US LIKE WE'RE PIECES ON ONE OF HIS STUPID CHESSBOARDS.

SOMETIMES, WHEN HE'S DRAWING CHARTS ACROSS OUR BEDROOM WALLS AND I SEE OUR NAMES IN LITTLE BOXES, I WONDER IF THIS BIG PLAN TO BEAT SUPERMAN IS REALLY IN THE WORLD'S BEST INTERESTS.

SUPERMAN MIGHT BE A NUT WITH A MESSIAH COMPLEX, BUT DON'T YOU THINK WE'RE IN DANGER OF JUST REPLACING ONE DEMAGOGUE WITH ANOTHER?



VERY POSSIBLY, DARLING, BUT AT LEAST LEX LUTHOR IS A DEMAGOGUE WHO SPEAKS ENGLISH.



SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'LL TRY TO INVADE US?

HIS PLANS FOR GLOBAL DOMINATION HINGED UPON AMERICA'S COMPLETE COLLAPSE BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT, BUT MY GENIUS HAS DELIVERED OUR STRONGEST ECONOMY SINCE 1776.

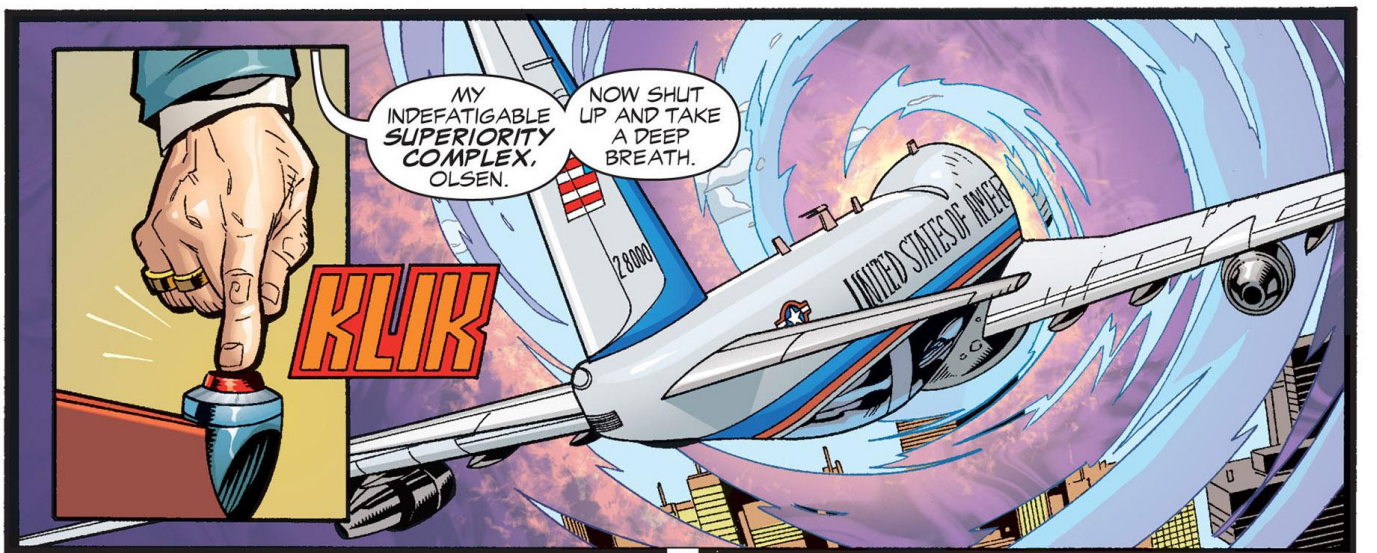
INVASION IS THE ONLY REALISTIC OPTION HE'S GOT LEFT IF HE'S SERIOUS ABOUT THIS PERFECT WORLD HE'S ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT.

BUT THE SECOND HE INVADES WE'RE MASHED POTATOES, LEX.

BECAUSE SUPERMAN IS A SICK, TOTALITARIAN CONTROL FREAK, JIMMY, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE THINGS ARE GOING WRONG.

ALL OUR LITTLE C.I.A.-FUNDED TOYS YOU USED TO THROW AT HIM IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS DIDN'T EVEN RUFFLE HIS SPIT-CURL.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU CAN GO HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH THE GUY NOW THAT HE'S MORE SOLAR-CHARGED THAN EVER?



MY INDEFATIGABLE SUPERIORITY COMPLEX, OLSEN.

NOW SHUT UP AND TAKE A DEEP BREATH.



WHERE THE HELL ARE WE?

PURGATORY. LIMBO. CALL IT WHATEVER YOU WERE RAISED TO BELIEVE IN. I MYSELF REFER TO IT AS THE PHANTOM ZONE.

THIS IS WHERE I CAN TALK OUTSIDE THE LIMITS OF SUPER HEARING AND WORK BEYOND THE RANGE OF THOSE EERIE, COBALT EYES.

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. YOU FIGURED OUT THE CODE TO RECHARGE THE GREEN LANTERN RING AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN TELL ME?

IT TOOK EIGHTEEN YEARS TO CRACK THAT TWENTY-FOUR-WORD COMBINATION, BUT IT WAS WORTH EVERY PICO-SECOND, JIMMY.

"CODE NAME GREEN LIGHT IS THE BEST HOPE WE'VE HAD IN ALMOST HALF A CENTURY OF KNOCKING THAT BIG LATEX CIRCUS FREAK ON HIS INDESTRUCTIBLE BACKSIDE."



BECAUSE THE STUPID LITTLE TRINKET'S POWERED BY HONESTY AND WILLPOWER, I'M SORRY TO SAY. THAT SAID, IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO FIND **SOME NOBLE IDIOT** WITH THE NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS.

DO YOU REMEMBER COLONEL HAL JORDAN?

THE NAME RINGS A BELL. WASN'T HE SOME KIND OF TEST PILOT?

ONLY ONE OF THE MOST DECORATED PILOTS IN MILITARY HISTORY--



SURRENDERING THAT LEVEL OF POWER TO SOMEONE ELSE SOUNDS REMARKABLY OUT OF CHARACTER FOR YOU, CHIEF. WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST HANG ONTO THE RING FOR YOURSELF?

"YOU PROBABLY READ THE STORY ABOUT HIS PLANE GOING DOWN IN MALAYSIA BACK IN 1983 WHEN WE WERE STILL TRYING TO DRIVE THE COMMUNISTS OUT OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC.

"HE WAS CAPTURED BY THE ENEMY, TORTURED EVERY DAY AND FED ON A DIET OF INSECTS UNTIL HE DROPPED TO A SKELETAL NINETY POUNDS.



"ANY NORMAL MAN WOULD HAVE LOST HIS MIND OR DIED IN THE CONDITIONS JORDAN ENDURED. BUT HE LASTED **FOUR YEARS** LIKE THIS AND IT WAS ALL THANKS TO HIS INCREDIBLE WILLPOWER.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

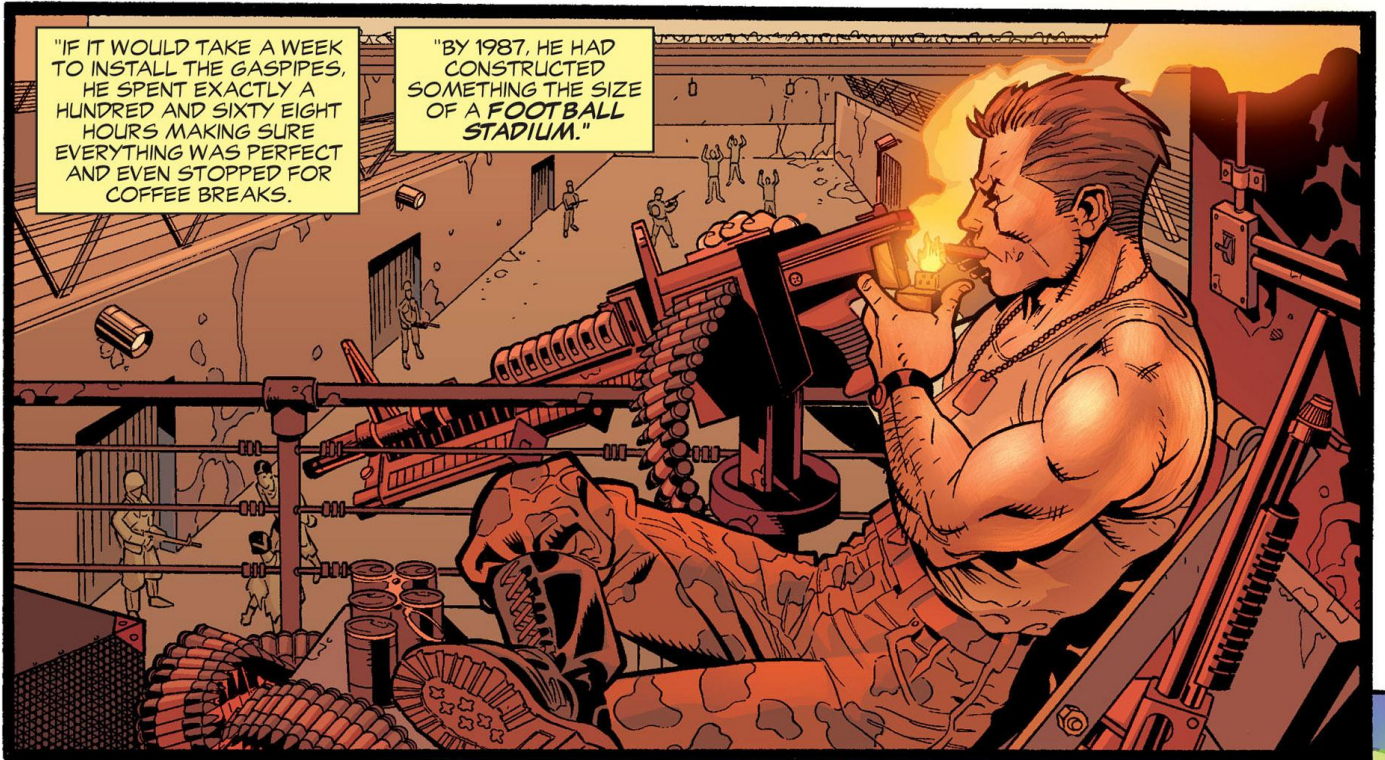
BASICALLY, HE FILLED HIS AGONIZINGLY LONG DAYS BY BUILDING A VIRTUAL CONCENTRATION CAMP IN HIS HEAD FOR THE COMMUNISTS WHO WERE PERSECUTING HIM.





"HE SPENT WEEKS COMPOSING A DESIGN AND THEN, AFTER SELECTING PRECISELY THE RIGHT SPOT IN HIS OLD HOMETOWN, STARTED BUILDING THE PLACE IN REAL TIME.

"IF IT TOOK THREE DAYS TO DIG THE FOUNDATIONS, HE WOULD SPEND THREE DAYS IMAGINING EVERY SINGLE STEP.



"IF IT WOULD TAKE A WEEK TO INSTALL THE GASPIPES, HE SPENT EXACTLY A HUNDRED AND SIXTY EIGHT HOURS MAKING SURE EVERYTHING WAS PERFECT AND EVEN STOPPED FOR COFFEE BREAKS.

"BY 1987, HE HAD CONSTRUCTED SOMETHING THE SIZE OF A FOOTBALL STADIUM."



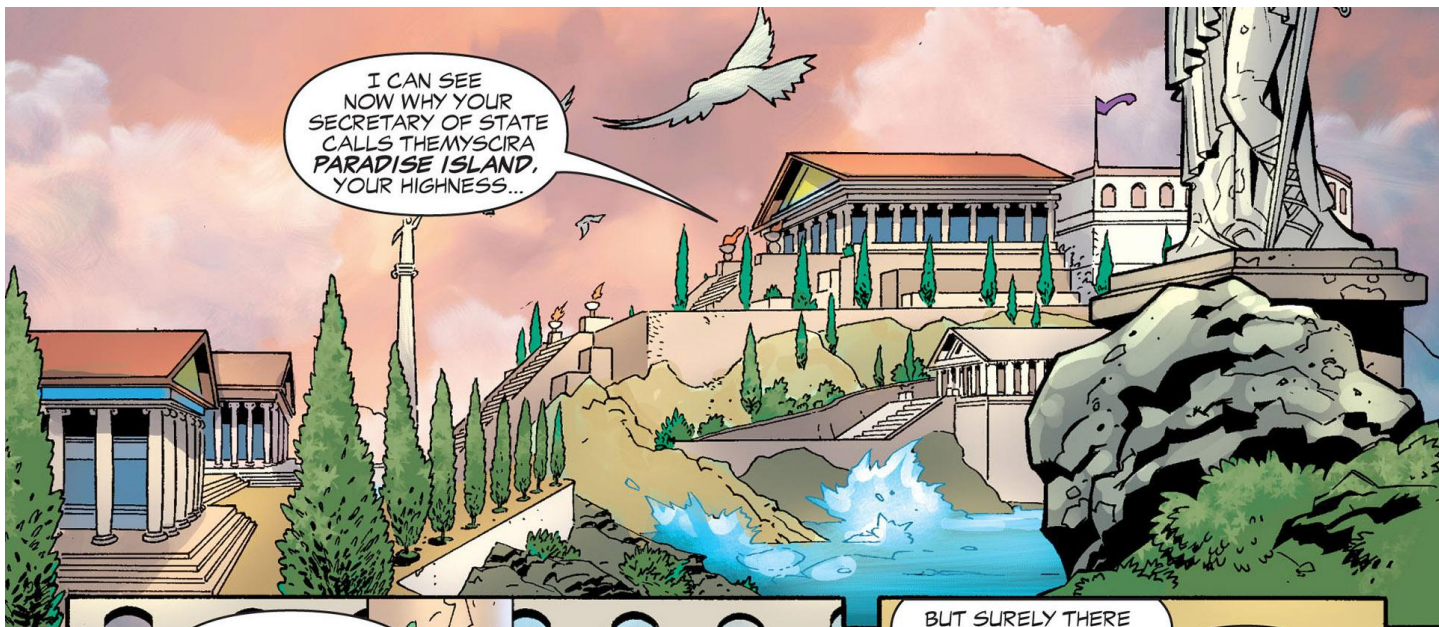
TO DO WHAT?

TO MENTALLY EXECUTE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF HIS CAPTORS DURING WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE MOST JOYOUS NIGHT OF HIS LIFE.

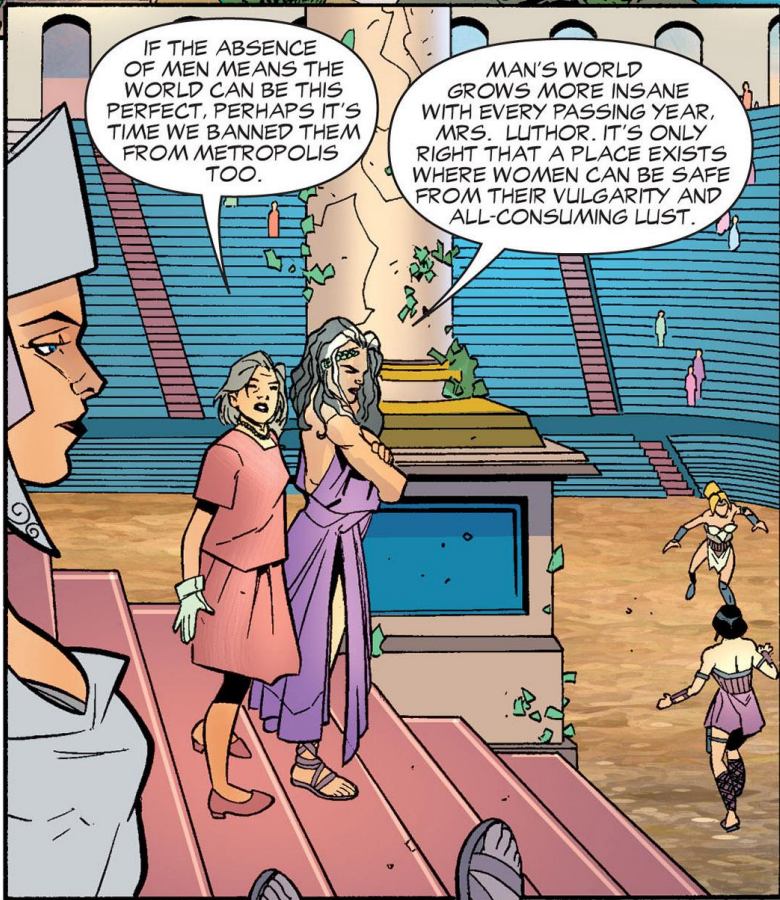
UNDER THE CORRECT CIRCUMSTANCES, I REALLY BELIEVE THAT COLONEL JORDAN HAS WHAT IT TAKES TO BRING SUPERMAN DOWN BY HIMSELF, JIMMY--

--BUT JORDAN'S ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL SURPRISES I'VE GOT UP THE SLEEVE OF MY TEN THOUSAND DOLLAR THREE-PIECE.





I CAN SEE NOW WHY YOUR SECRETARY OF STATE CALLS THEMYSCIIRA PARADISE ISLAND, YOUR HIGHNESS...



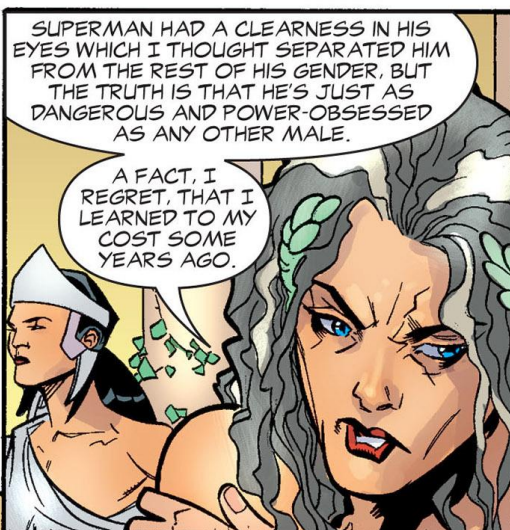
IF THE ABSENCE OF MEN MEANS THE WORLD CAN BE THIS PERFECT, PERHAPS IT'S TIME WE BANNED THEM FROM METROPOLIS TOO.

MAN'S WORLD GROWS MORE INSANE WITH EVERY PASSING YEAR, MRS. LUTHOR. IT'S ONLY RIGHT THAT A PLACE EXISTS WHERE WOMEN CAN BE SAFE FROM THEIR VULGARITY AND ALL-CONSUMING LUST.



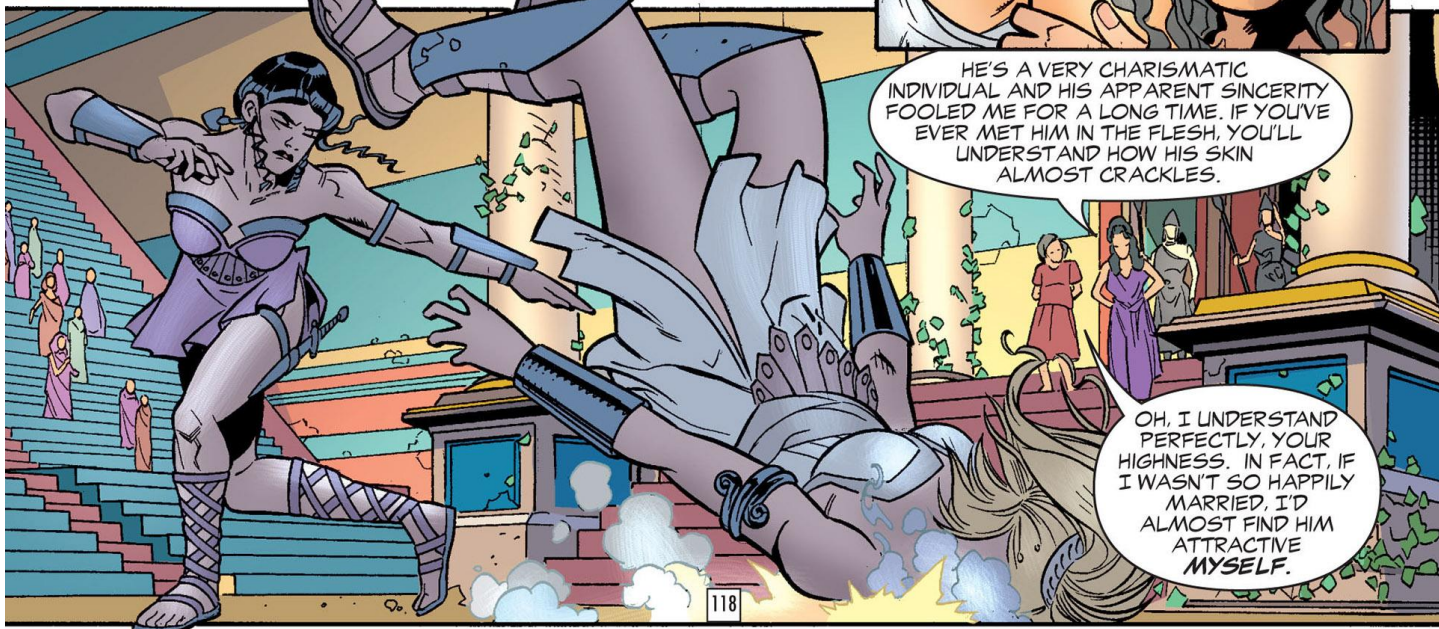
BUT SURELY THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU MISS OUT THERE?

AFTER ALL, YOU AND SUPERMAN WERE SOMETHING OF AN ITEM WHEN YOU WORE YOUR HIGH HEELS AND CALLED YOURSELF WONDER WOMAN.



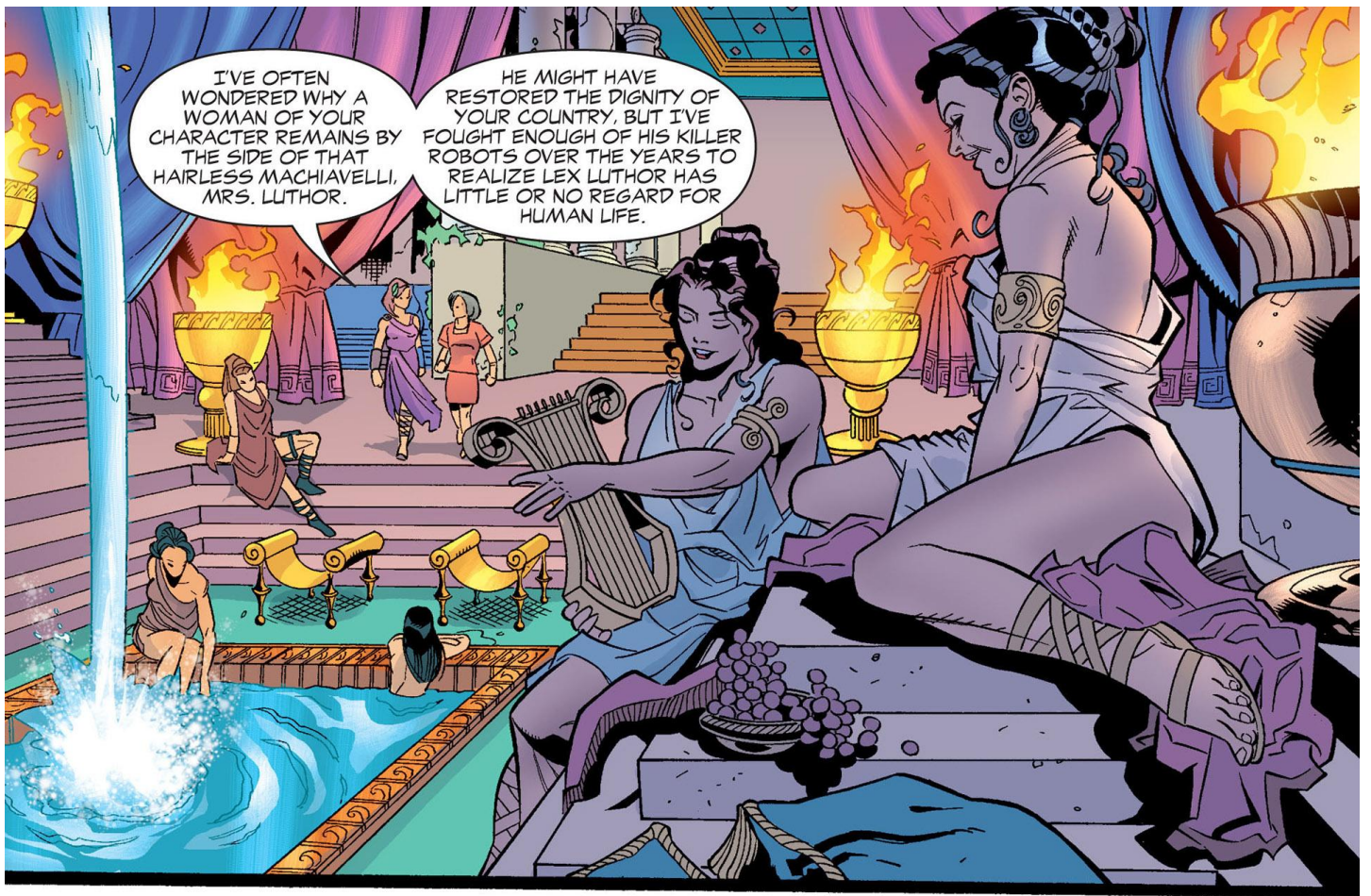
SUPERMAN HAD A CLEARNESS IN HIS EYES WHICH I THOUGHT SEPARATED HIM FROM THE REST OF HIS GENDER, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT HE'S JUST AS DANGEROUS AND POWER-OBSSESSED AS ANY OTHER MALE.

A FACT, I REGRET, THAT I LEARNED TO MY COST SOME YEARS AGO.



HE'S A VERY CHARISMATIC INDIVIDUAL AND HIS APPARENT SINCERITY FOOLED ME FOR A LONG TIME. IF YOU'VE EVER MET HIM IN THE FLESH, YOU'LL UNDERSTAND HOW HIS SKIN ALMOST CRACKLES.

OH, I UNDERSTAND PERFECTLY, YOUR HIGHNESS. IN FACT, IF I WASN'T SO HAPPILY MARRIED, I'D ALMOST FIND HIM ATTRACTIVE MYSELF.



I'VE OFTEN WONDERED WHY A WOMAN OF YOUR CHARACTER REMAINS BY THE SIDE OF THAT HAIRLESS MACHIAVELLI, MRS. LUTHOR.

HE MIGHT HAVE RESTORED THE DIGNITY OF YOUR COUNTRY, BUT I'VE FOUGHT ENOUGH OF HIS KILLER ROBOTS OVER THE YEARS TO REALIZE LEX LUTHOR HAS LITTLE OR NO REGARD FOR HUMAN LIFE.



IT'S QUITE CLEAR THAT THE ONLY REASON HE EVEN RAN FOR PRESIDENT WAS TO CREATE A MORE EFFECTIVE PLATFORM FROM WHICH HE MIGHT ULTIMATELY DESTROY SUPERMAN.

THEN THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS.



FOR ALL WE KNOW, ROOSEVELT ONLY RAN FOR OFFICE BECAUSE HE LIKED SKIDDING AROUND THE WHITE HOUSE IN A WHEELCHAIR, BUT HE STILL BEAT HITLER, RIGHT?



WHY DID YOU COME HERE, MRS. LUTHOR? AND I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR EXCUSE ABOUT A DIPLOMATIC VISIT FROM THE FIRST LADY ON BEHALF OF THE WONDER WOMEN OF AMERICA.

WHY ARE YOU REALLY HERE?



TO MAKE SURE LEX HAS YOUR SUPPORT WHEN HE LAUNCHES HIS BIG ATTACK ON SUPERMAN INSIDE THE NEXT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

STALINGRAD:


WE LOST THE OPERA HOUSE, THE OLYMPIC STADIUM, FORTY OR FIFTY APARTMENT BLOCKS AND GOD KNOWS HOW MANY PEOPLE BEFORE WE KILLED IT, SUPERMAN.

WHERE WERE YOU? IT'S DIFFICULT ENOUGH MAINTAINING SOME KIND OF ORDER IN THIS PLACE WITHOUT HANDLING PROBLEMS LIKE THIS.

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO CHECK THE FILTERS EVERY TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

I'M SO SORRY, COMRADES: THE FIRST ORGANISM TO SLIP PAST MY MICROSCOPIC VISION IN ALL THESE YEARS--

I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE I ALLOWED THIS TO HAPPEN. I'VE JUST BEEN SO DISTRACTED LATELY.



NOT ONLY WILL I DOUBLE MY EFFORTS TO BRING STALINGRAD BACK TO ITS NATURAL SIZE, BUT YOU HAVE MY WORD I'LL CHECK THE FILTER TUBES ON AN **HOURLY** BASIS FROM THIS MOMENT ON.

AGAIN, I CAN ONLY OFFER MY APOLOGIES. I PROMISE I'LL NEVER LET YOU DOWN AGAIN.

VIRTUAL IMAGE OFF. SUPERMAN OUT.

HOW COULD YOU **DO** THIS, BRAINIAC? WHAT KIND OF **MONSTER** WOULD TRAP AN ENTIRE CIVILIZATION INSIDE A **SAMPLE JAR**? IT'S THE MOST GROTESQUE THING I'VE EVER **SEEN**.

FORGIVE ME, SUPERMAN, BUT I **DISAGREE** WITH YOUR ASSERTION. I CARED FOR THESE CULTURES AND TENDED TO THEIR EVERY REQUIREMENT TO SURVIVE AS A **SPECIES**.

YOU CAN'T BLAME AN ALIEN SUPERCOMPUTER FOR **STORING INFORMATION**. ALL I WAS DOING WAS FOLLOWING MY ORIGINAL **PRIME DIRECTIVE**.



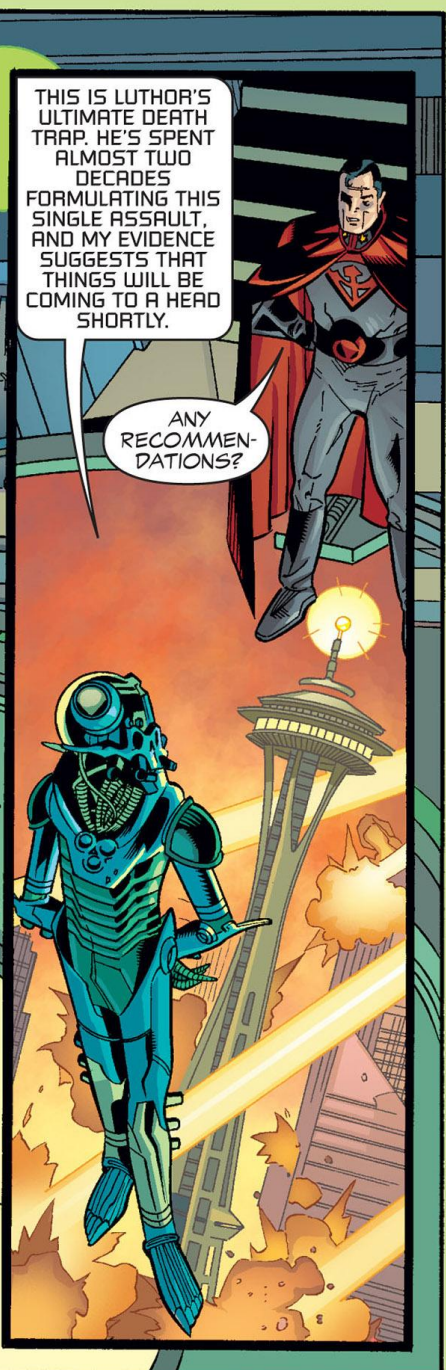
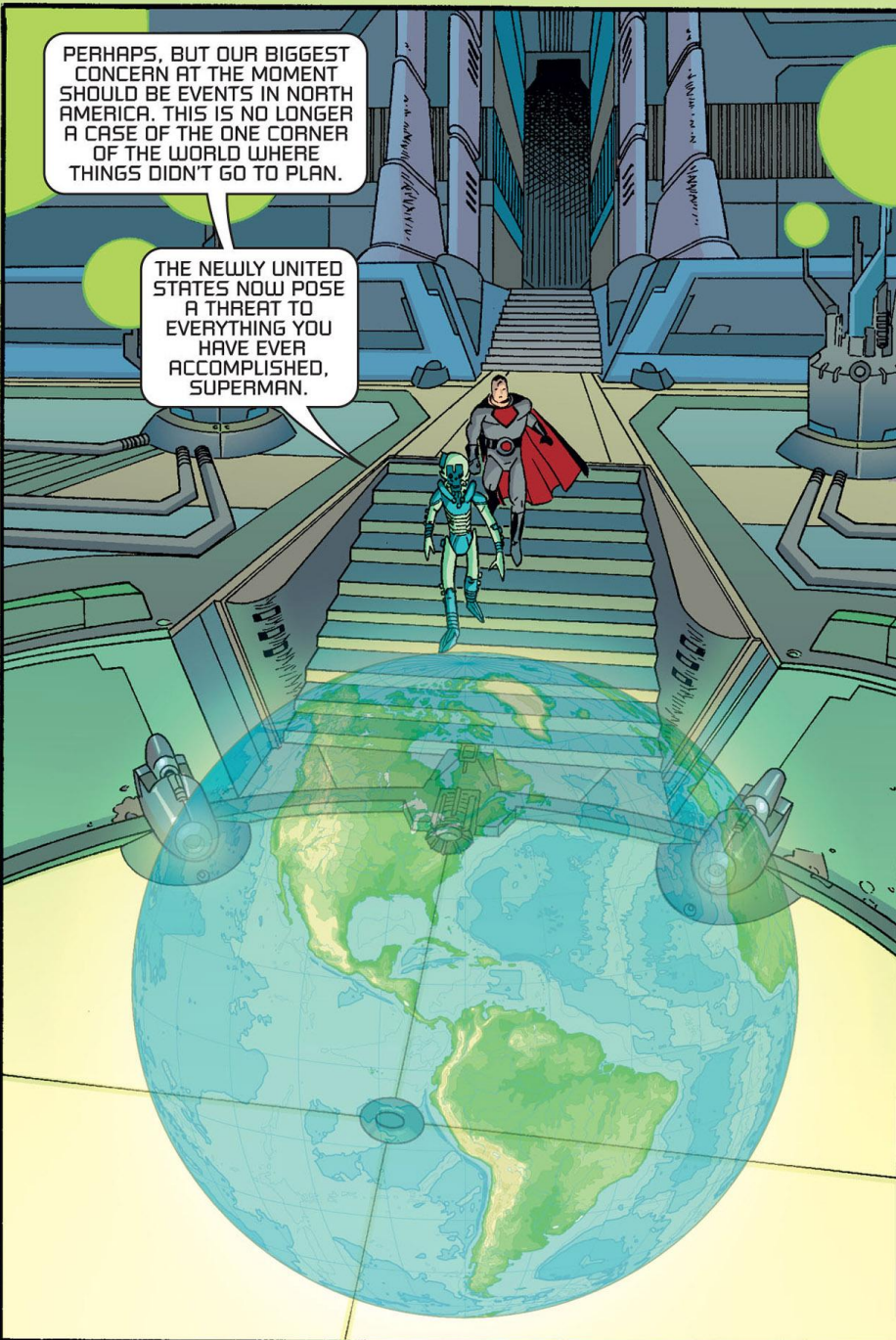
BUT YOU TOOK AWAY WHAT MADE THEM HUMAN AND THERE'S **NEVER** AN EXCUSE FOR THAT, BRAINIAC. FAILING TO RE-GROW THESE PEOPLE HAS BEEN THE **BLACK SPOT** OF MY **CAREER**.

PERHAPS, BUT OUR BIGGEST CONCERN AT THE MOMENT SHOULD BE EVENTS IN NORTH AMERICA. THIS IS NO LONGER A CASE OF THE ONE CORNER OF THE WORLD WHERE THINGS DIDN'T GO TO PLAN.

THE NEWLY UNITED STATES NOW POSE A THREAT TO EVERYTHING YOU HAVE EVER ACCOMPLISHED, SUPERMAN.

THIS IS LUTHOR'S ULTIMATE DEATH TRAP. HE'S SPENT ALMOST TWO DECADES FORMULATING THIS SINGLE ASSAULT, AND MY EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT THINGS WILL BE COMING TO A HEAD SHORTLY.

ANY RECOMMENDATIONS?

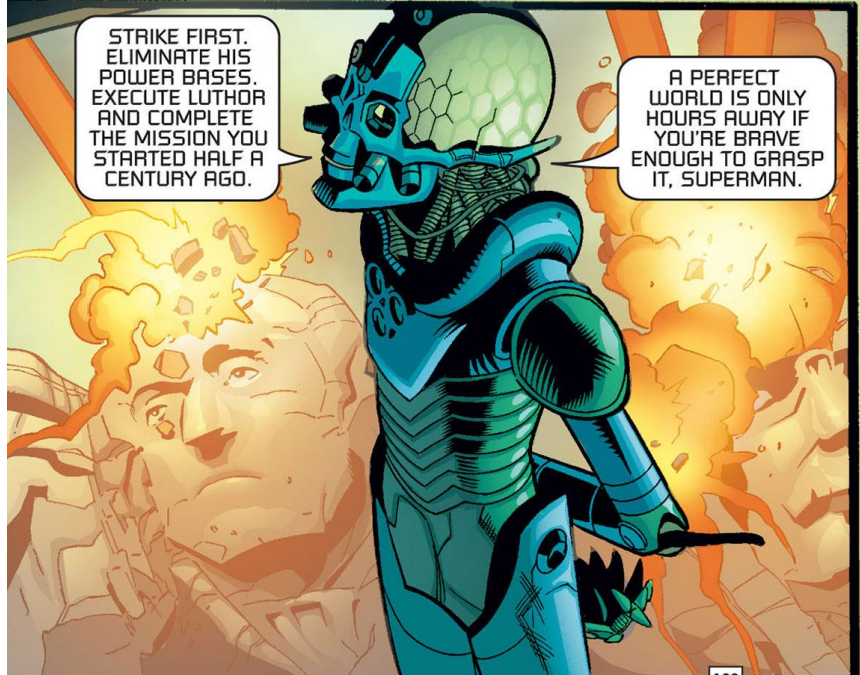


STRIKE FIRST. ELIMINATE HIS POWER BASES. EXECUTE LUTHOR AND COMPLETE THE MISSION YOU STARTED HALF A CENTURY AGO.

A PERFECT WORLD IS ONLY HOURS AWAY IF YOU'RE BRAVE ENOUGH TO GRASP IT, SUPERMAN.

BUT I DON'T WANT TO INVAD THEM, BRAINIAC. EVERYTHING I'VE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR HAS BEEN DONE BY WINNING THE ARGUMENT.

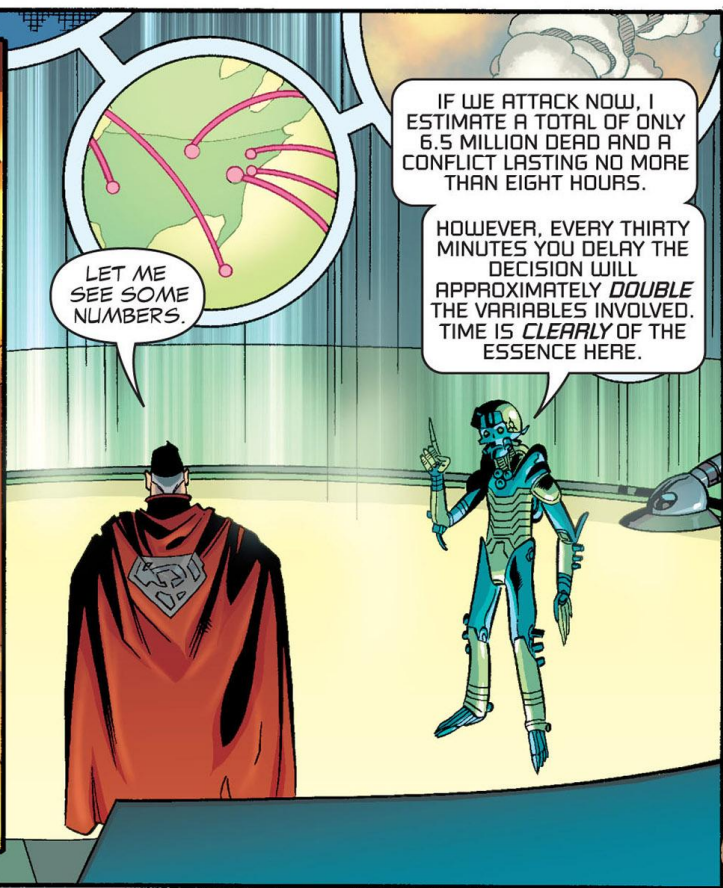
I COULD HAVE HAD MY UTOPIA OVERNIGHT IF I'D HAMMERED THE WORLD INTO SUBMISSION WITH MY FISTS.





BUT AMERICA IS LIKE A *CANCER* CELL, SUPERMAN. YOU CAN EITHER ACT NOW AND SURGICALLY *REMOVE* IT OR STEP BACK AND LET IT DESTROY THE *REST* OF THE BODY.

IT'S A CHOICE THAT ONLY YOU CAN MAKE, COMRADE.



LET ME SEE SOME NUMBERS.

IF WE ATTACK NOW, I ESTIMATE A TOTAL OF ONLY 6.5 MILLION DEAD AND A CONFLICT LASTING NO MORE THAN EIGHT HOURS.

HOWEVER, EVERY THIRTY MINUTES YOU DELAY THE DECISION WILL APPROXIMATELY *DOUBLE* THE VARIABLES INVOLVED. TIME IS *CLEARLY* OF THE ESSENCE HERE.



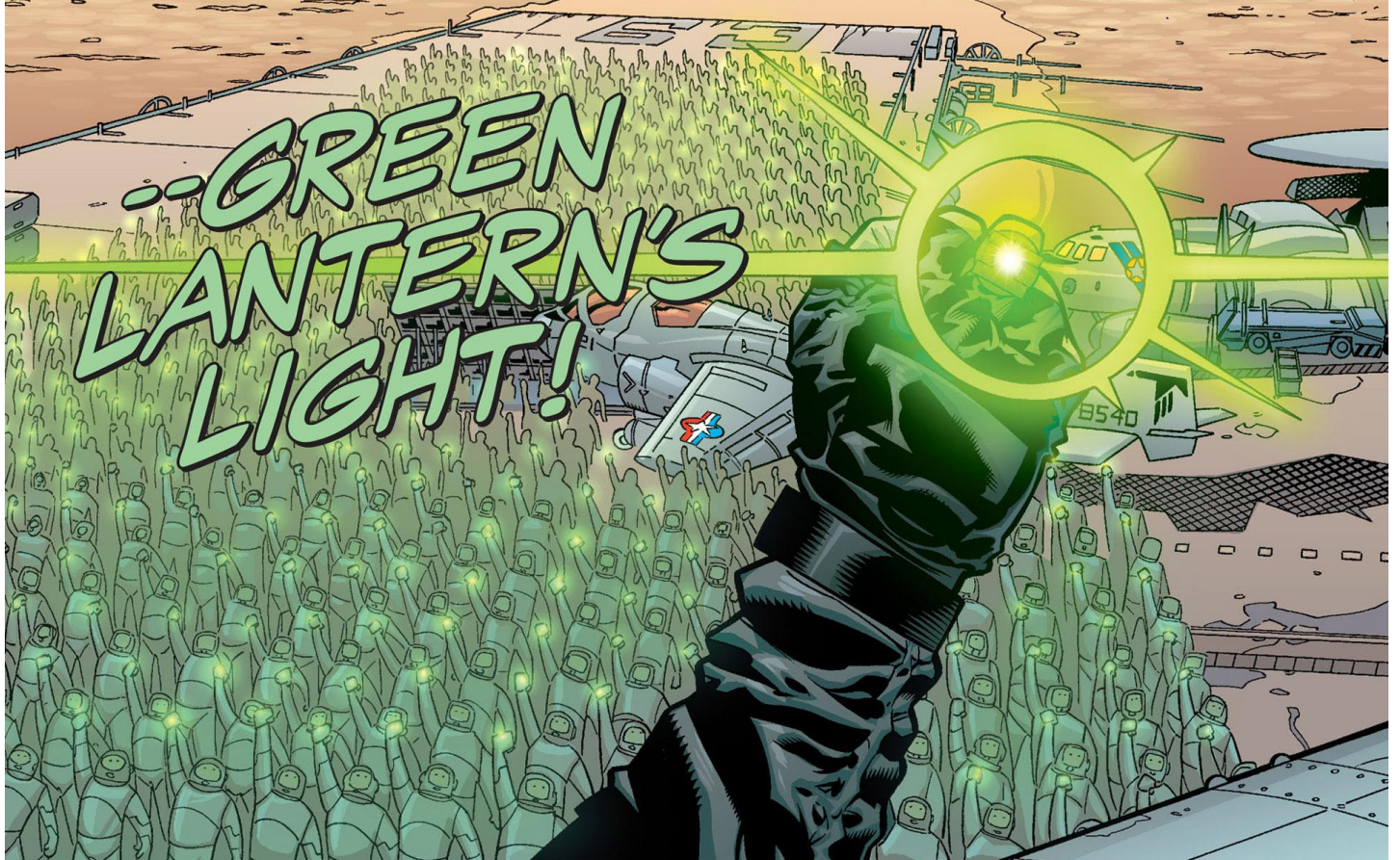
UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU SURRENDER IMMEDIATELY AND DROP THE ESTIMATED FATALITIES TO AN AGEING *KRYPTONIAN* DESPOT AND HIS CRINGING, ROBOTIC *MAN-SLAVE*.

LUTHOR?



CONGRATULATIONS, SUPERMAN.

YOU'VE SUCCESSFULLY IDENTIFIED ONE OF THE TWO MOST FAMOUS FACES ON TERRA FIRMA.



HOW DID YOU GET PAST THE PALACE'S DEFENSES?

DEFENSES? OH, I THOUGHT THOSE WERE JUST DECORATIONS FOR SOME CHEAP RUSSIAN FOLK FESTIVAL.

SO THIS IS YOUR FAMOUS WINTER PALACE, EH? IT'S HARDLY SURPRISING YOU HAVEN'T HAD A DATE IN DECADES.

TELL ME: IS IT TRUE YOU AND BRAINIAC SPEND EVERY NIGHT OF THE WEEK PLAYING CHESS TO STALEMATE UNTIL ONE OF YOU BREAKS DOWN AND STARTS SOBBING FOR MOTHER?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, LUTHOR? I THOUGHT YOU'D BE BUSY PRIMING YOUR ULTIMATE WEAPONS FOR THE BIG ATTACK.

WONDER WOMAN AND THE GREEN LANTERN MARINE CORPS? OH, THEY'RE GOOD, SUPERMAN. BUT THEY'RE HARDLY THE BASIS OF MY ASSAULT UPON YOUR EVIL EMPIRE.

I CAME HERE TO FIGHT YOU ON MY OWN TERMS, MAN OF STEEL.

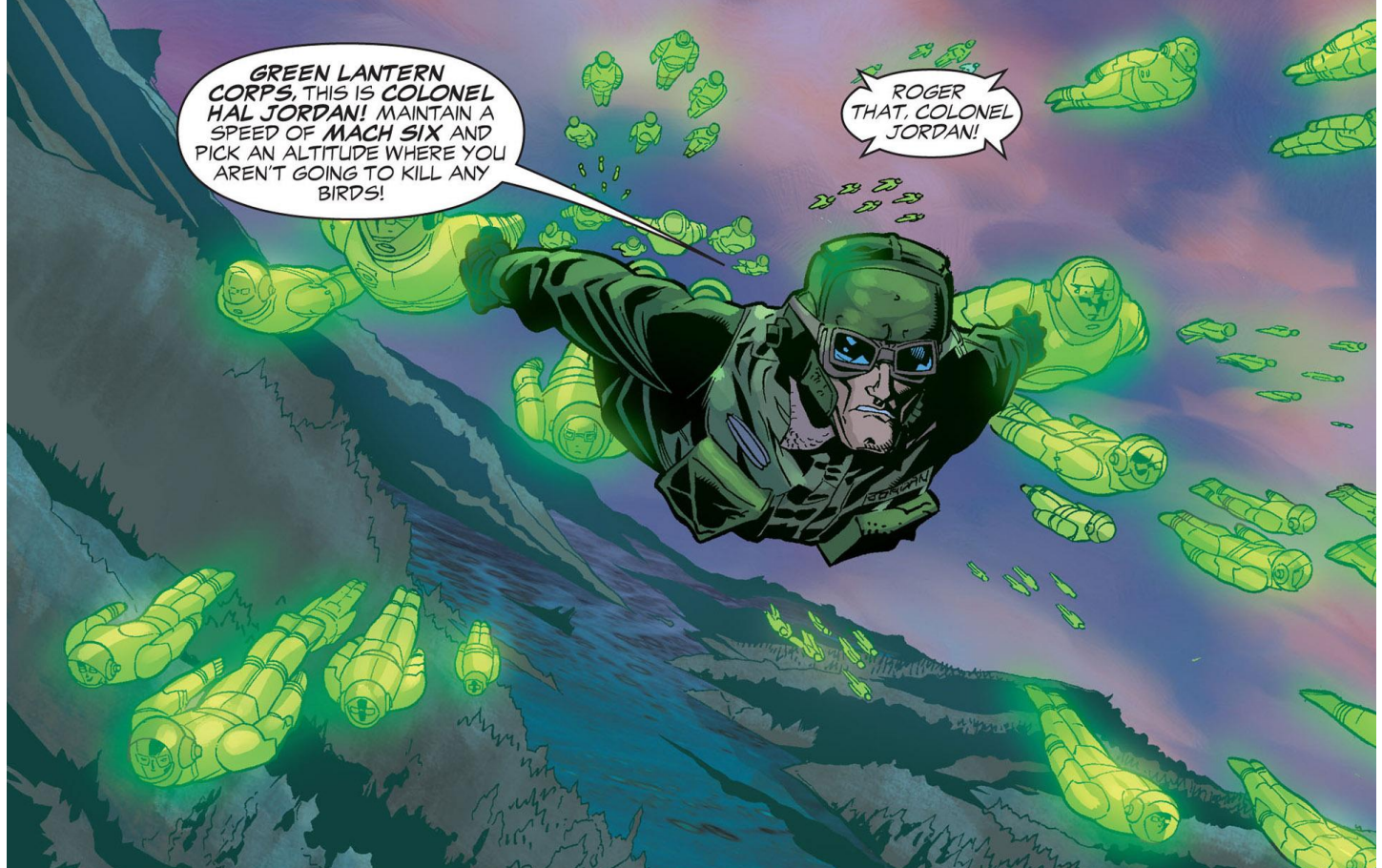
ARE YOU READY TO LOCK HORNS WITH THE MOST DANGEROUS MIND IN THE WORLD?



DO YOU MEET *AGGRESSION* WITH *AGGRESSION* OR DO YOU ALLOW THESE PEOPLE TO TAKE APART EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER ACCOMPLISHED?

GREEN LANTERN CORPS, THIS IS COLONEL HAL JORDAN! MAINTAIN A SPEED OF MACH SIX AND PICK AN ALTITUDE WHERE YOU AREN'T GOING TO KILL ANY BIRDS!

ROGER THAT, COLONEL JORDAN!



BRAINIAC; PREPARE THE SHIP FOR A FULL-SCALE ASSAULT. YOU TAKE THE WEST COAST AND I'LL TAKE THE EAST.

WE CAN CONVERGE IN WASHINGTON AT SIXTEEN HUNDRED HOURS AND SEIZE THE WHITE HOUSE TOGETHER.



DAMN YOU FOR MAKING ME DO THIS, LUTHOR!

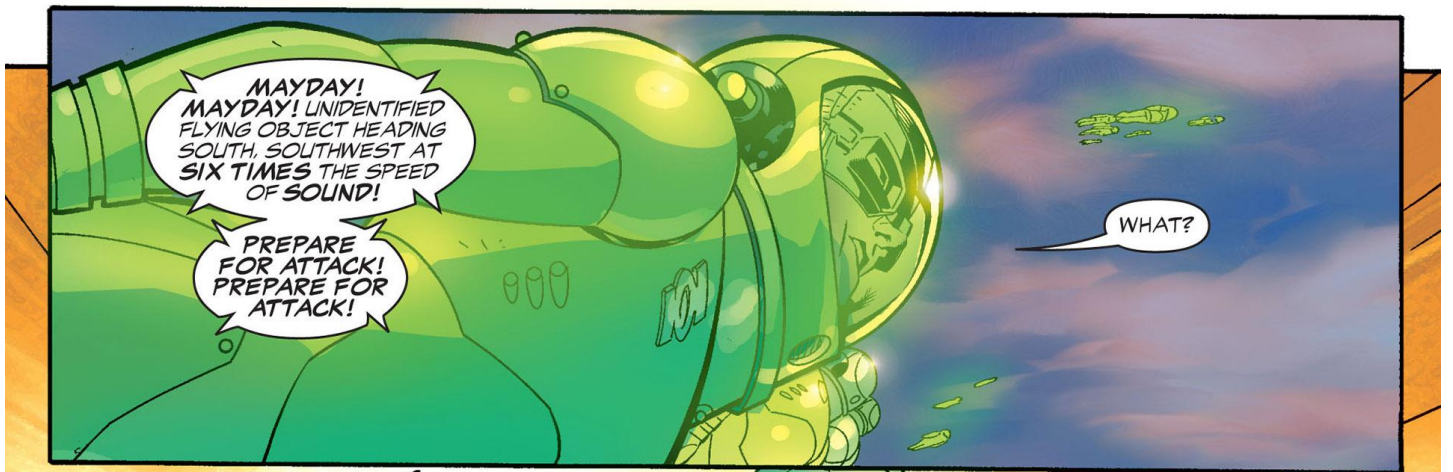
DAMN YOU TO HELL, YOU LUNATIC!



OKAY, BOYS. WE'RE ONLY GOING TO GET ONE SHOT AT THIS. SO LET'S KNOCK THE BALL OUT OF THE PARK AND MAKE THE FOLKS BACK HOME PROUD, HUH?

PARDON ME, MISTER VICE PRESIDENT, BUT WE'VE FOUND SOMETHING ON THE RADAR I THINK YOU'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK AT, SIR...





MAYDAY!
MAYDAY! UNIDENTIFIED
FLYING OBJECT HEADING
SOUTH, SOUTHWEST AT
SIX TIMES THE SPEED
OF SOUND!

PREPARE
FOR ATTACK!
PREPARE FOR
ATTACK!

WHAT?



SUPERMAN!

STAY COOL,
GENTLEMEN! DON'T BE
INTIMIDATED! THIS IS
EXACTLY WHAT WE
TRAINED FOR!



LIKE HELL
IT IS, SIR! HE'S
GONNA KILL US
ALL!!

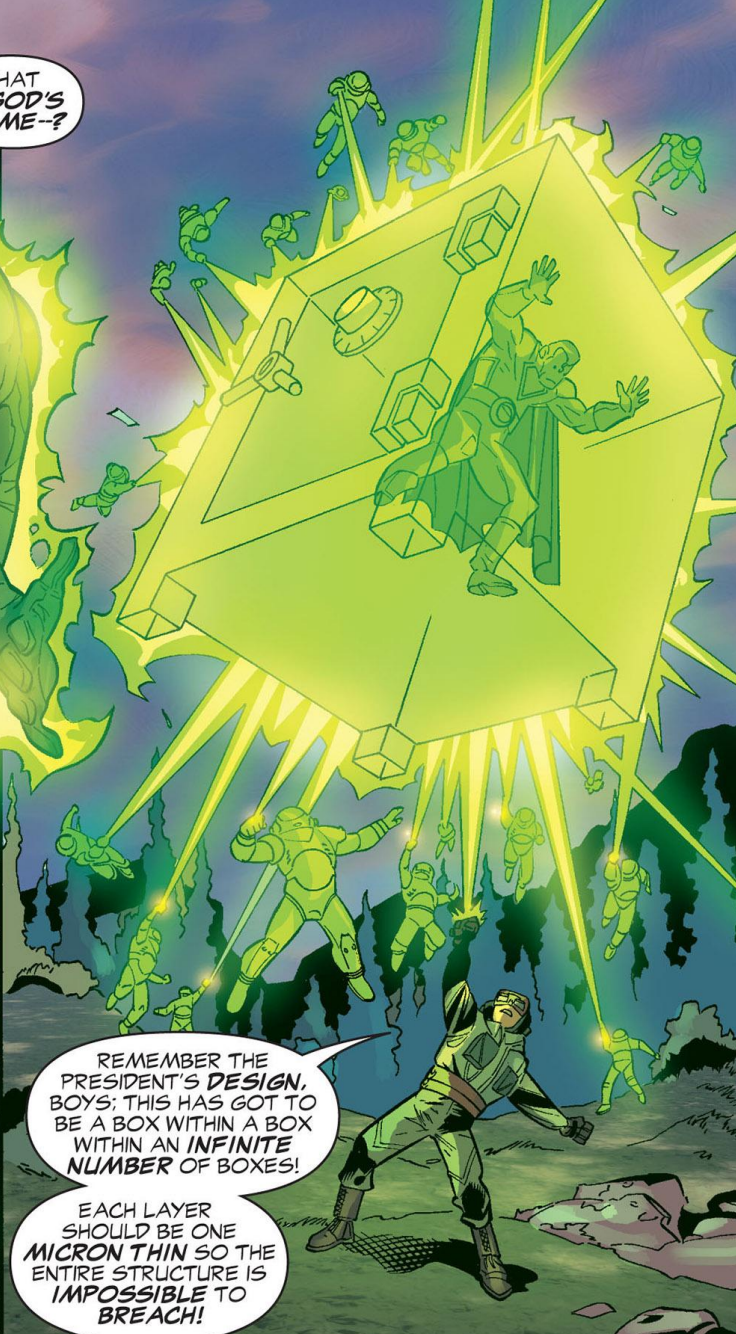


HE'S TOO FAST, COLONEL! IT'S COMPLETELY HOPELESS!

NOT IN MY LEXICON, RAYNER! NOW SHUT UP AND THINK GREEN THOUGHTS!

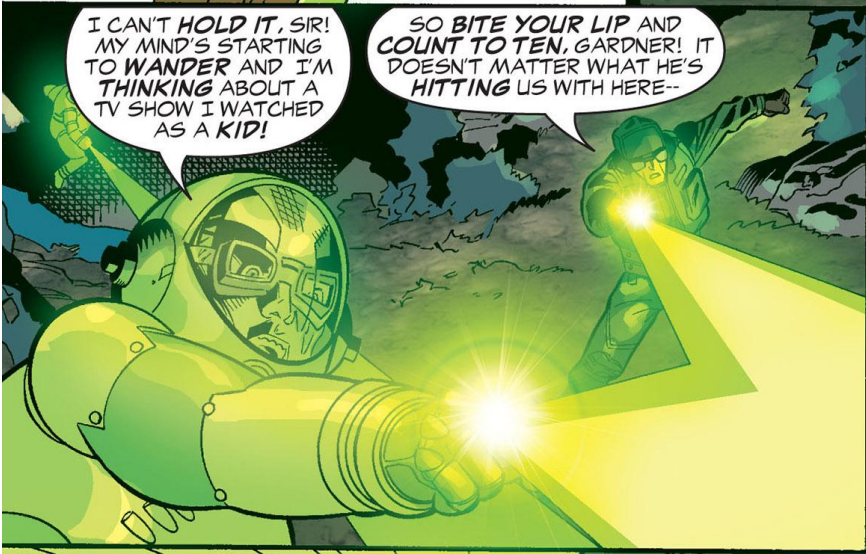


WHAT IN GOD'S NAME--?



REMEMBER THE PRESIDENT'S DESIGN. BOYS: THIS HAS GOT TO BE A BOX WITHIN A BOX WITHIN AN INFINITE NUMBER OF BOXES!

EACH LAYER SHOULD BE ONE MICRON THIN SO THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BREACH!



I CAN'T HOLD IT, SIR! MY MIND'S STARTING TO WANDER AND I'M THINKING ABOUT A TV SHOW I WATCHED AS A KID!

SO BITE YOUR LIP AND COUNT TO TEN, GARDNER! IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT HE'S HITTING US WITH HERE--



YOU FREAK OUT NOW AND THEY'LL BE SIPPING VODKAS IN THE PENTAGON BY SUNDOWN, SOLDIER!



OH MY GOD!



THINK FRESH PICTURES! THINK FRESH--!!

HUH?



A THOUGHT-BASED WEAPON AGAINST SOMEONE WHO CAN MOVE AT TEN TIMES THE SPEED OF THOUGHT?

NOT TOO SMART, COLONEL JORDAN.



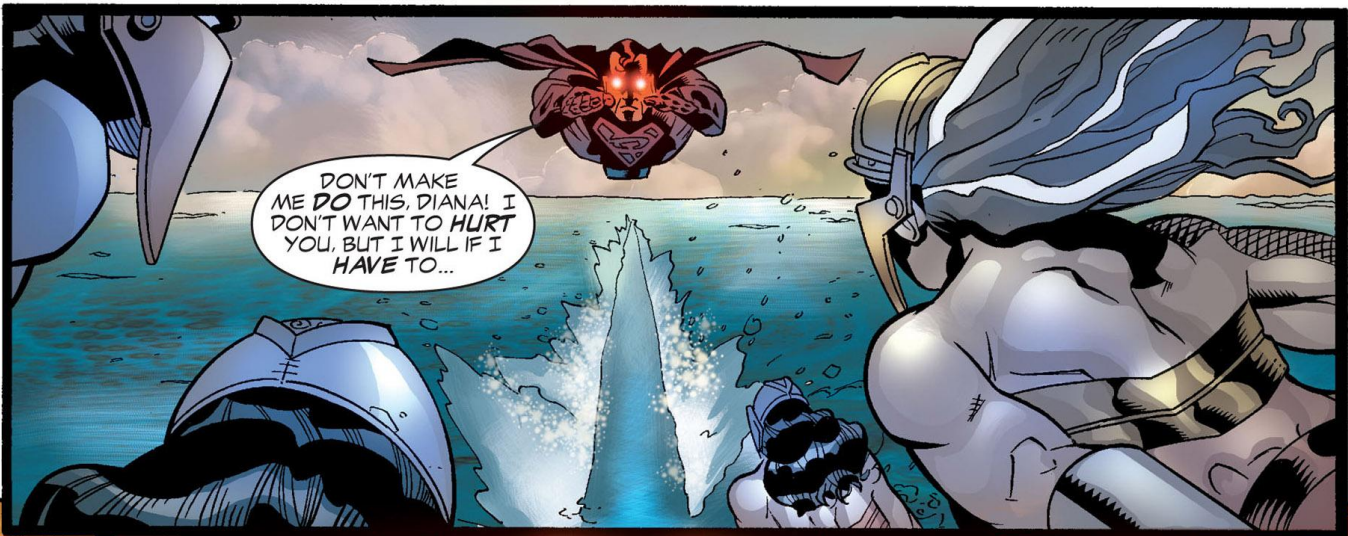
NOW STAY HERE AND MAKE YOURSELVES COMFORTABLE, COMRADES. I'LL BE BACK IN AN HOUR TO REPROGRAM EVERYONE.

GROUND CONTROL TO WONDER WOMEN; THE GREEN LANTERN MARINE CORPS HAVE BEEN NEUTRALIZED! I REPEAT: THE GREEN LANTERN MARINE CORPS HAVE BEEN NEUTRALIZED!

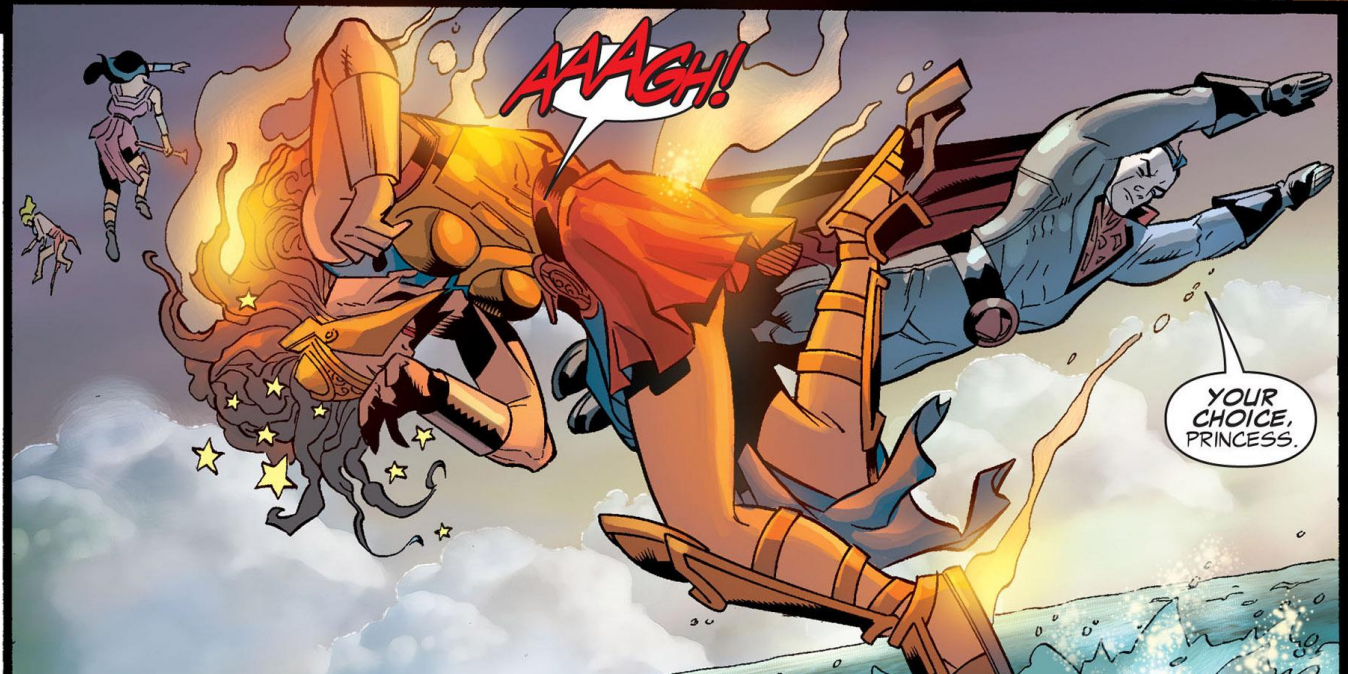
ARE YOU READY TO ENGAGE?



READY AND WILLING, COMMANDER.

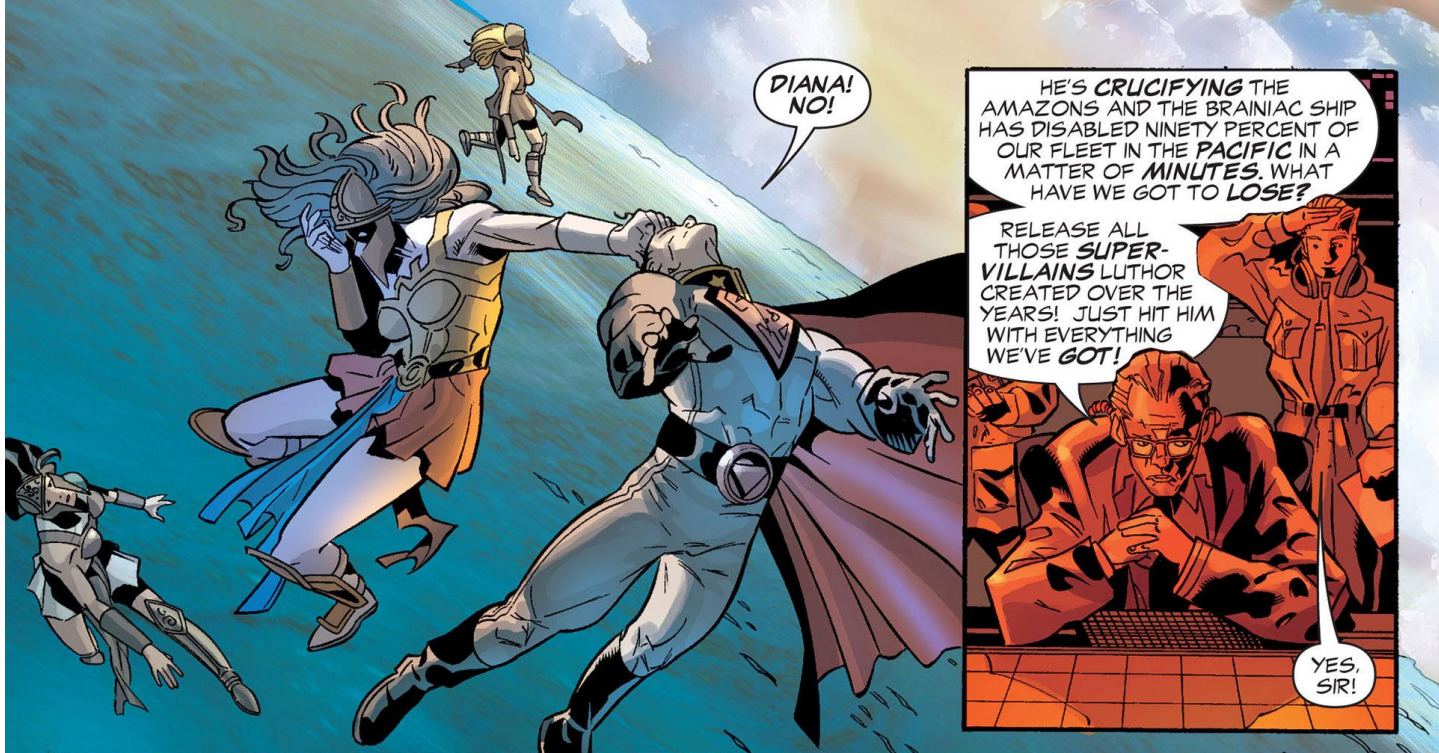


DON'T MAKE ME DO THIS, DIANA! I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU, BUT I WILL IF I HAVE TO...



AAAGH!

YOUR CHOICE, PRINCESS.



DIANA!
NO!

HE'S CRUCIFYING THE AMAZONS AND THE BRAINIAC SHIP HAS DISABLED NINETY PERCENT OF OUR FLEET IN THE PACIFIC IN A MATTER OF MINUTES. WHAT HAVE WE GOT TO LOSE?

RELEASE ALL THOSE SUPER-VILLAINS LUTHOR CREATED OVER THE YEARS! JUST HIT HIM WITH EVERYTHING WE'VE GOT!

YES, SIR!



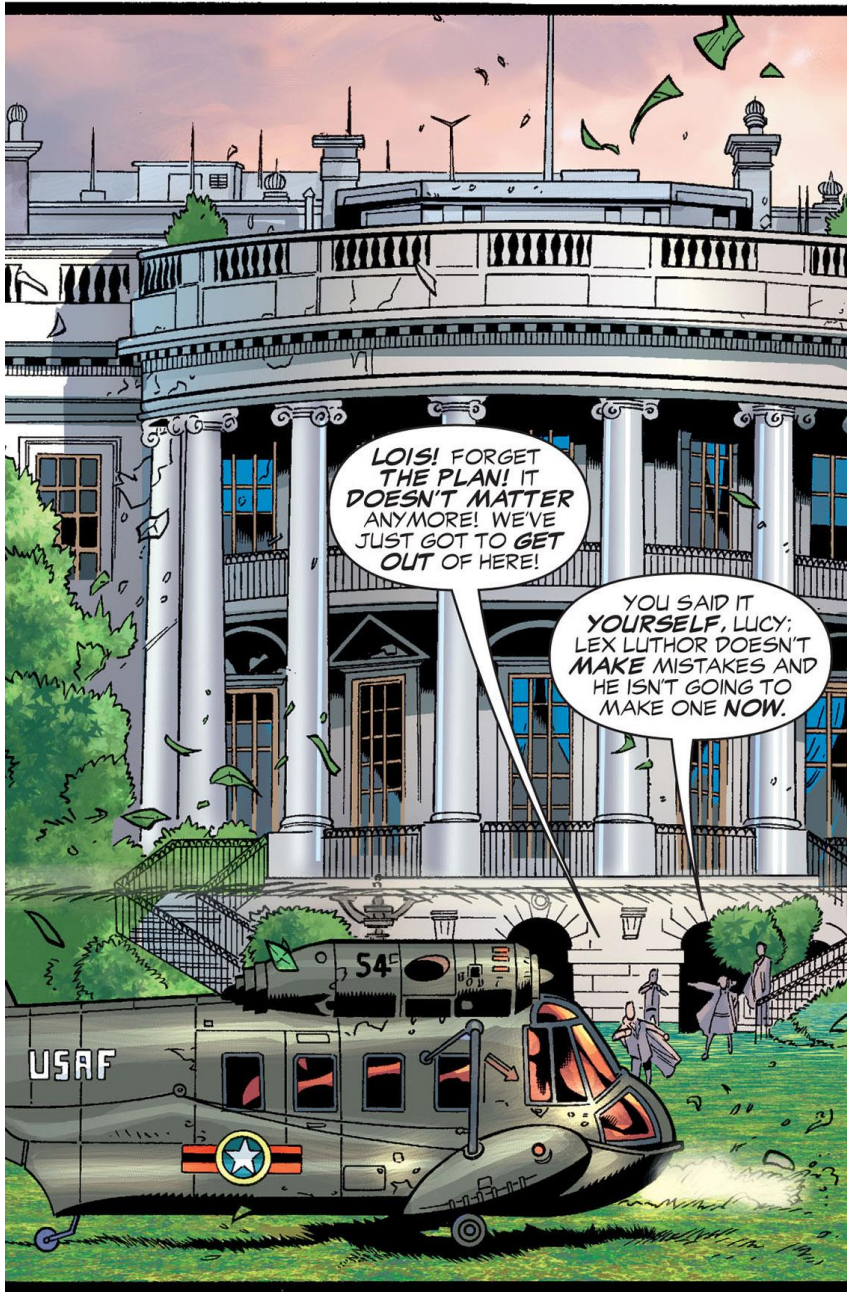
UGH!

WHY ARE YOU SIDING WITH THEM LIKE THIS, DIANA? I'M TRYING TO SAVE THE WORLD HERE, YOU IDIOT!

WONDER WOMEN; FALL BACK AND ATTEND TO ANY CASUALTIES! YOU'VE BEEN RELIEVED! I REPEAT; YOU'VE BEEN RELIEVED!

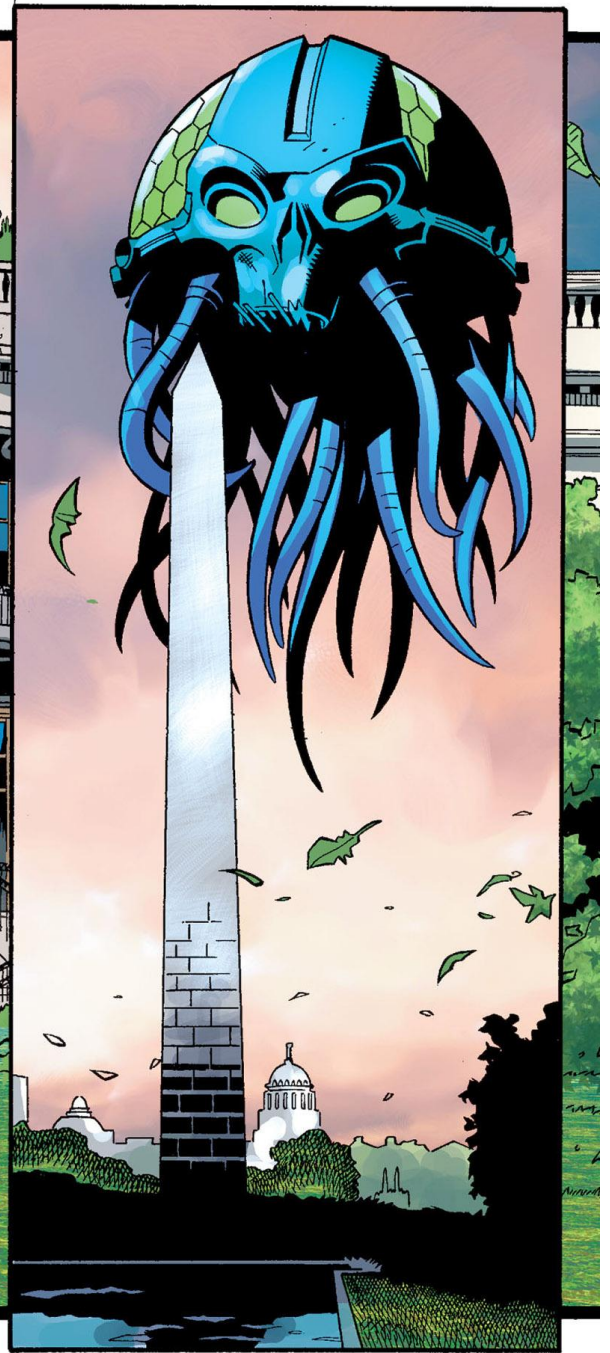


LET'S GO FOR IT, BOYS! THIS IS OUR LAST STAND!



LOIS! FORGET THE PLAN! IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE! WE'VE JUST GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, LUCY; LEX LUTHOR DOESN'T MAKE MISTAKES AND HE ISN'T GOING TO MAKE ONE NOW.



I HOPE.

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU TO EVACUATE THE AREA, MRS. LUTHOR!



I RESPECT THE FACT THAT YOU'RE TAKING A STAND LIKE THIS, BUT WE'RE DESTROYING EVERYTHING WITHIN A FIVE-MILE RADIUS OF THE PENTAGON AND I DON'T WANT ANYONE HURT.

I'M SORRY, SUPERMAN, BUT THIS IS MY HOME AND I'M NOT BUDGING AN INCH.



I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND, MA'AM: YOUR AIR FORCE HAS BEEN NEUTRALIZED AND YOUR SUPERPEOPLE HAVE BEEN SCATTERED TO THE WINDS.

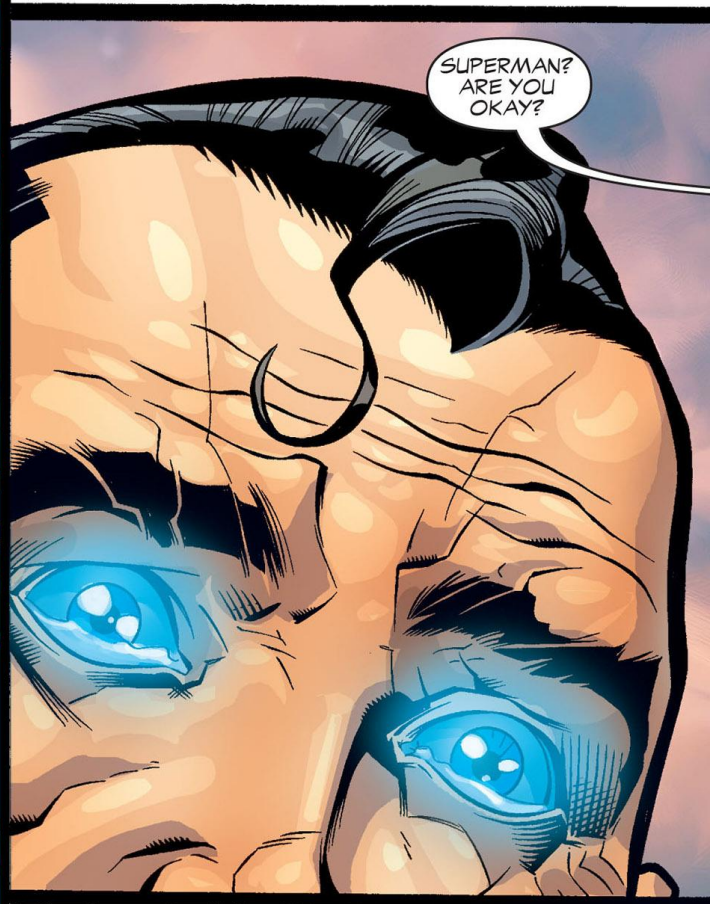
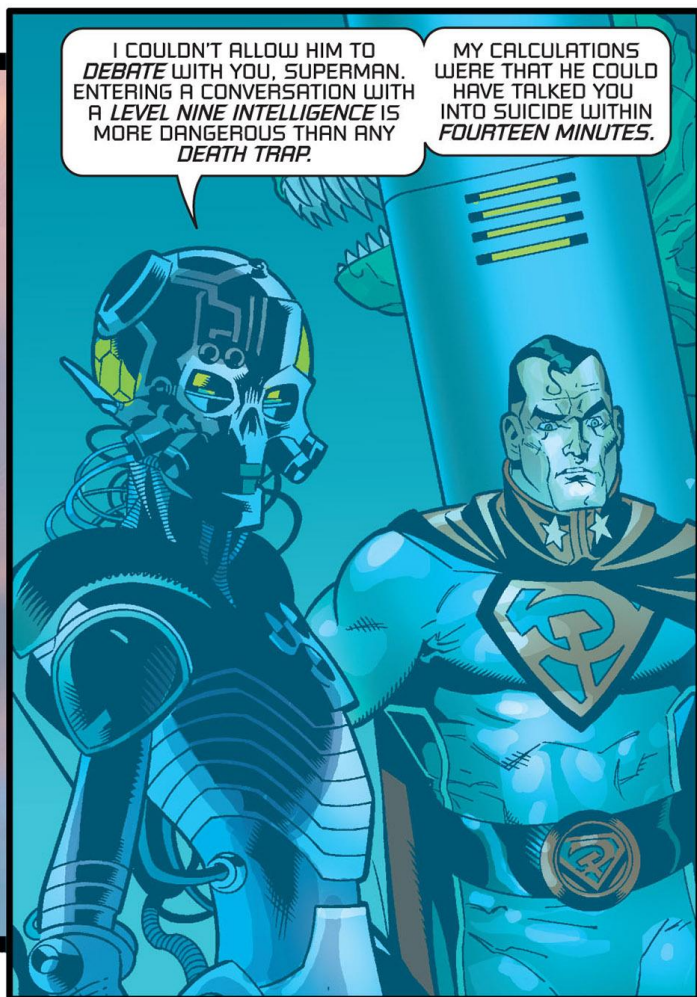
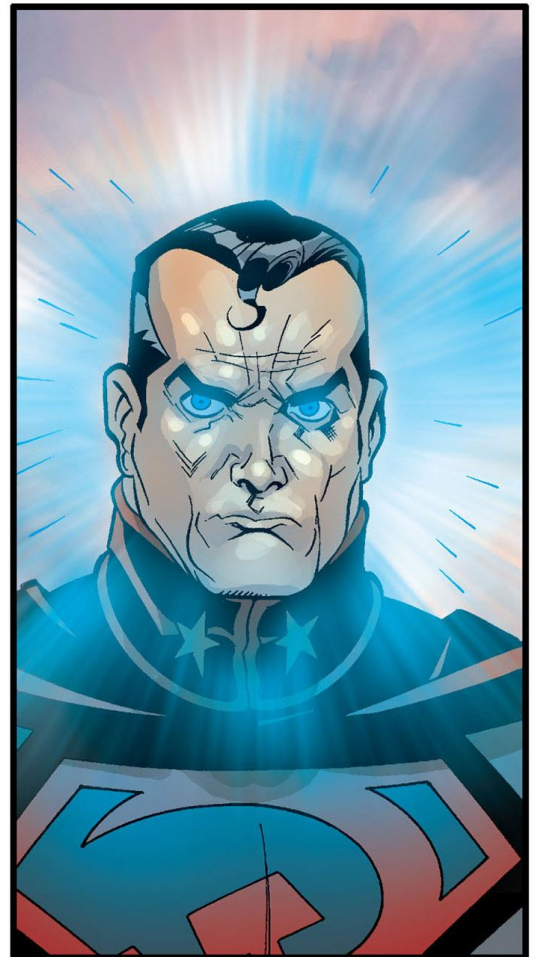
AMERICA IS FINISHED. I'M AFRAID YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING LEFT TO HIT ME WITH.



ACTUALLY, WE'VE STILL GOT ONE SHELL LEFT IN OUR ARSENAL, SUPERMAN. IF YOU THINK I'M KIDDING, JUST TAKE A LOOK AT THE LETTER IN MY INSIDE POCKET.



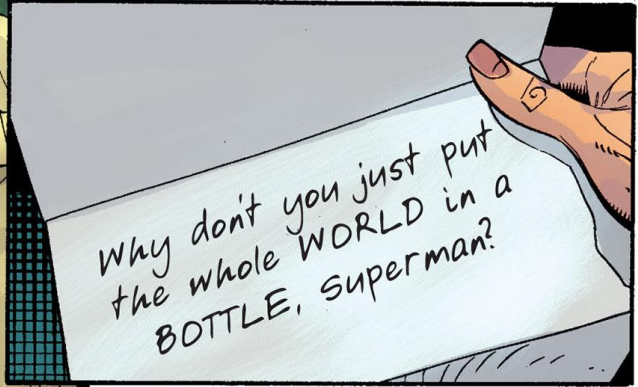
WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT, MRS. LUTHOR, I HARDLY THINK A BROWN MANILA ENVELOPE IS GOING TO STOP ME IN MY TRACKS; EVEN IF IT DOES HAVE A PRESIDENTIAL SEAL.





OH MY GOD!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
ALL I WANTED WAS TO
PUT AN END TO ALL THE
WARS AND FAMINES!
I ONLY WANTED THE
BEST FOR EVERYONE,
YOU'VE GOT TO
BELIEVE ME...

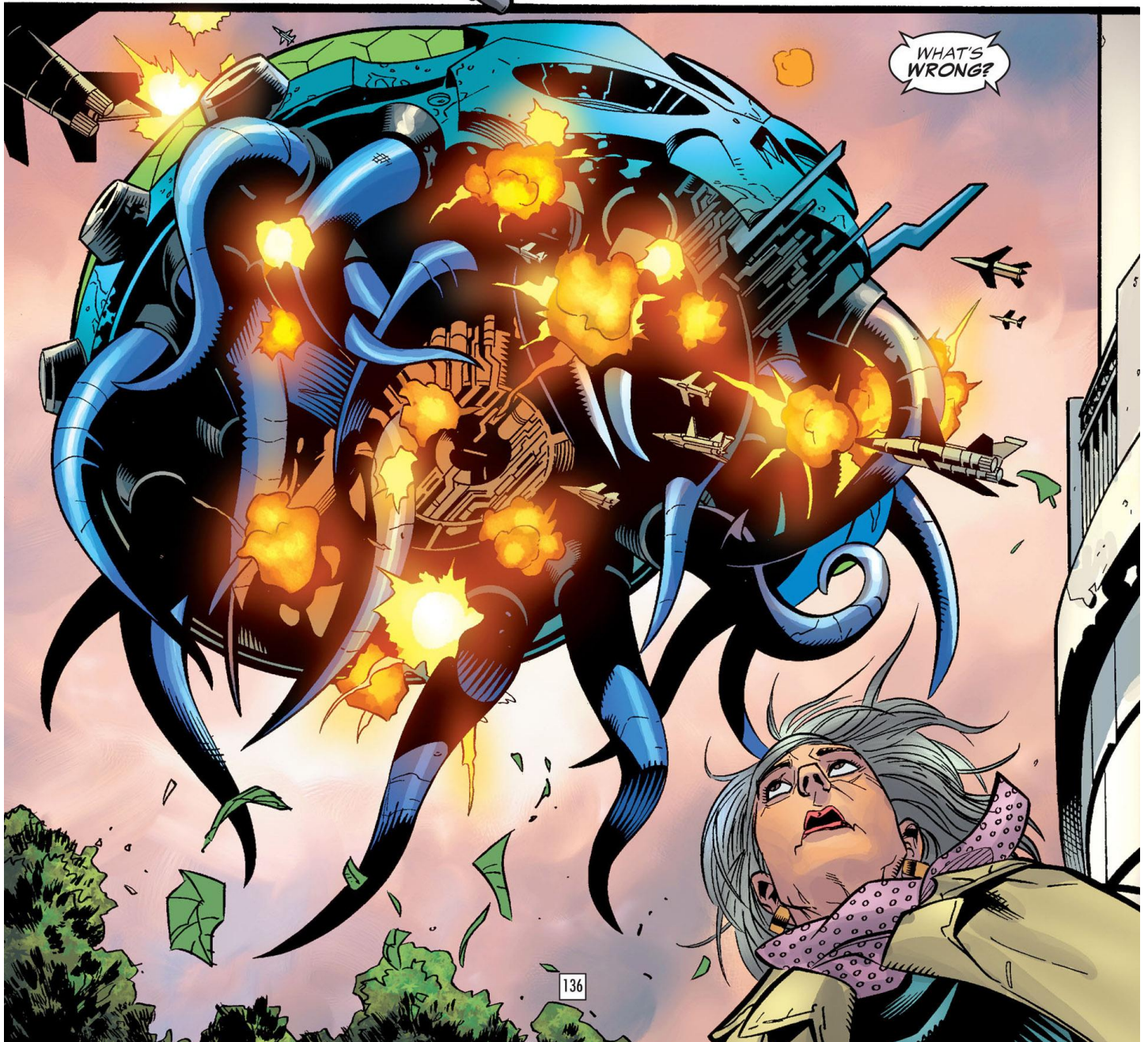
WHAT
THE HELL
WAS IN THIS
LETTER?



Why don't you just put
the whole WORLD in a
BOTTLE, Superman?



SUPERMAN,
YOU APPEAR TO BE
DISTRESSED--



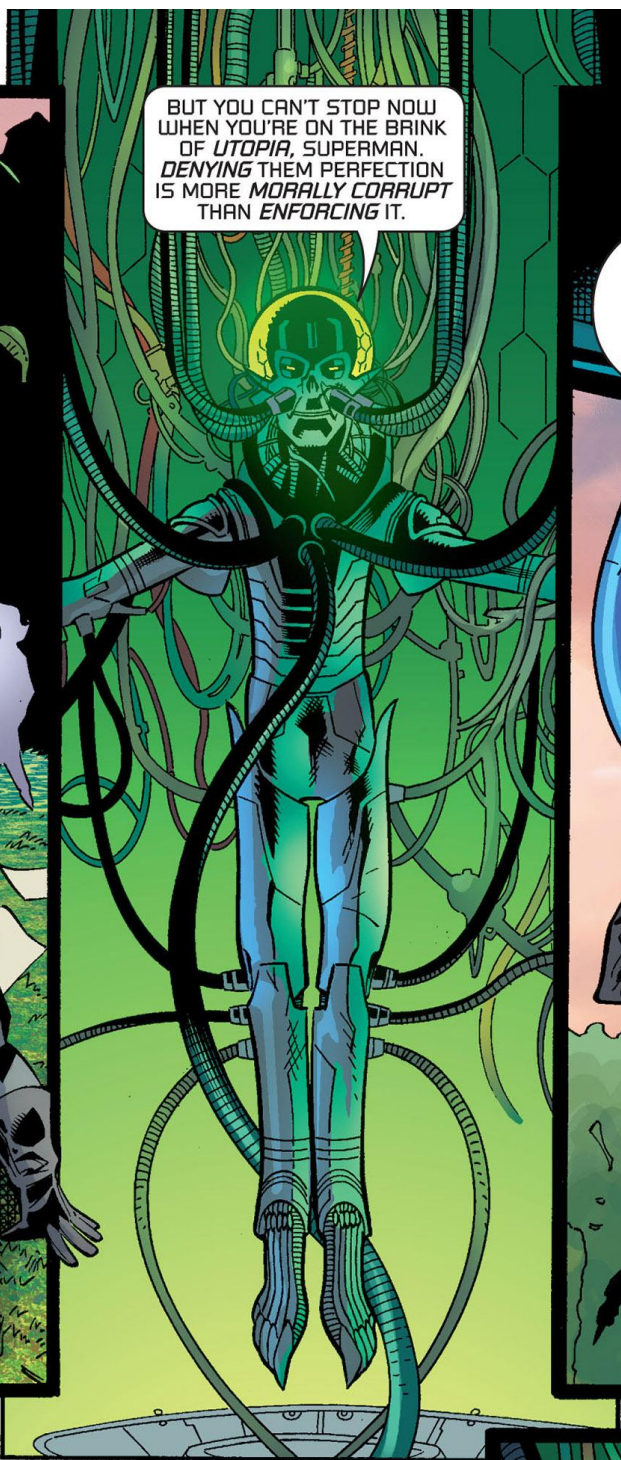
WHAT'S
WRONG?



I'M JUST AS BAD AS YOU WERE, BRAINIAC. I'M JUST ANOTHER ALIEN BULLYING A LESS DEVELOPED SPECIES AND IT'S **MORALLY UNJUSTIFIABLE.**

SWITCH OFF YOUR **WEAPONS SYSTEM,** COMRADE. WE'RE GOING HOME.

BUT YOU CAN'T STOP NOW WHEN YOU'RE ON THE BRINK OF **UTOPIA,** SUPERMAN. **DENYING THEM PERFECTION IS MORE MORALLY CORRUPT** THAN ENFORCING IT.



AT LEAST LEAVING THEM **ALONE** MEANS THEY CAN MAKE THEIR **OWN MISTAKES** AGAIN, COMRADE. **LUTHOR'S RIGHT;** THIS ISN'T HOW THE WORLD WAS MEANT TO BE.

WE WEREN'T **BORN** HERE AND WE'VE NO RIGHT TO **INTERFERE.**

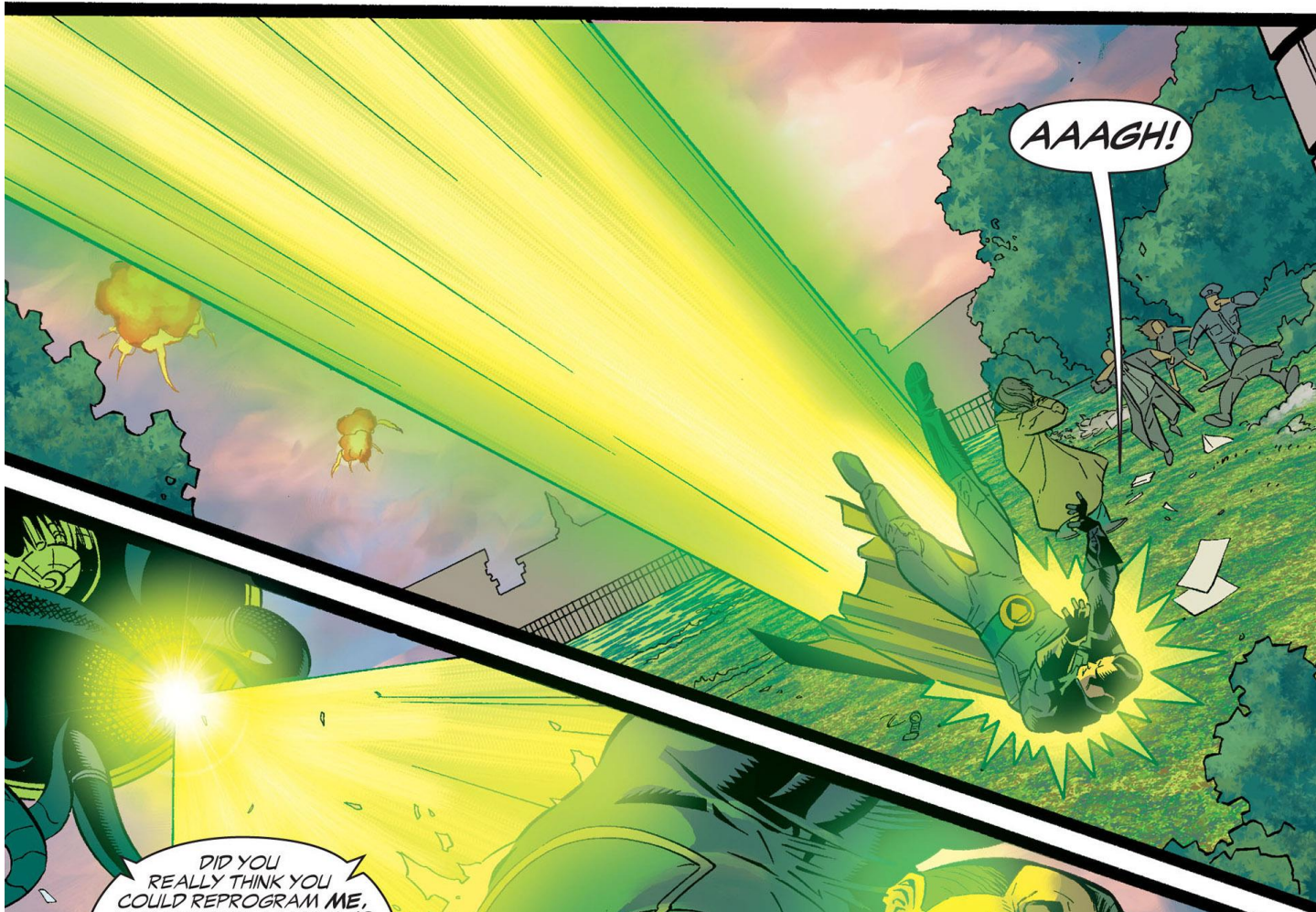
AND THAT IS YOUR **FINAL DECISION?** IS THERE NOTHING I CAN SAY WHICH MIGHT CHANGE YOUR MIND ON THIS MATTER?



NOTHING, BRAINIAC.
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.



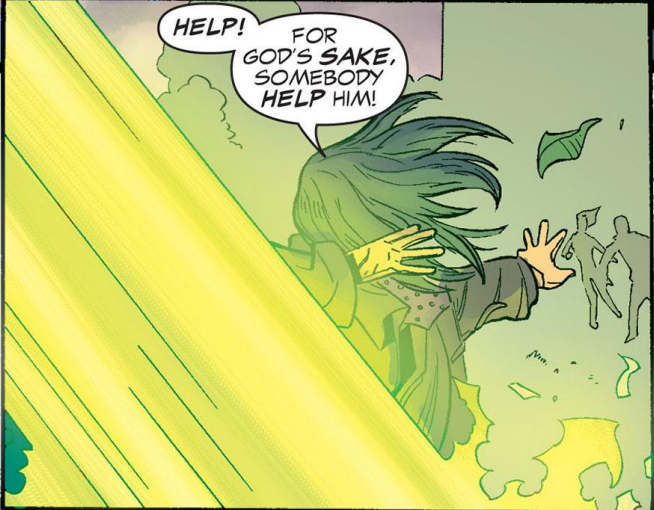
WELL, I'M AFRAID THAT'S JUST **UNACCEPTABLE,** MAN OF STEEL...



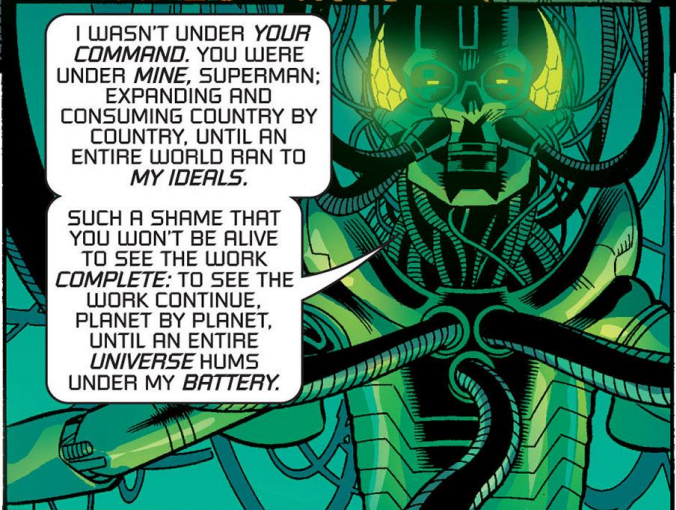
AAAGH!

DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD REPROGRAM ME, LITTLE THING? A LEVEL 12 INTELLIGENCE? DID YOU REALLY THINK I COULDN'T OUTMANEUVER THOSE CLUMSY HUMAN FINGERS?

THE NOTION IS PREPOSTEROUS.



HELP!
FOR GOD'S SAKE,
SOMEBODY
HELP HIM!



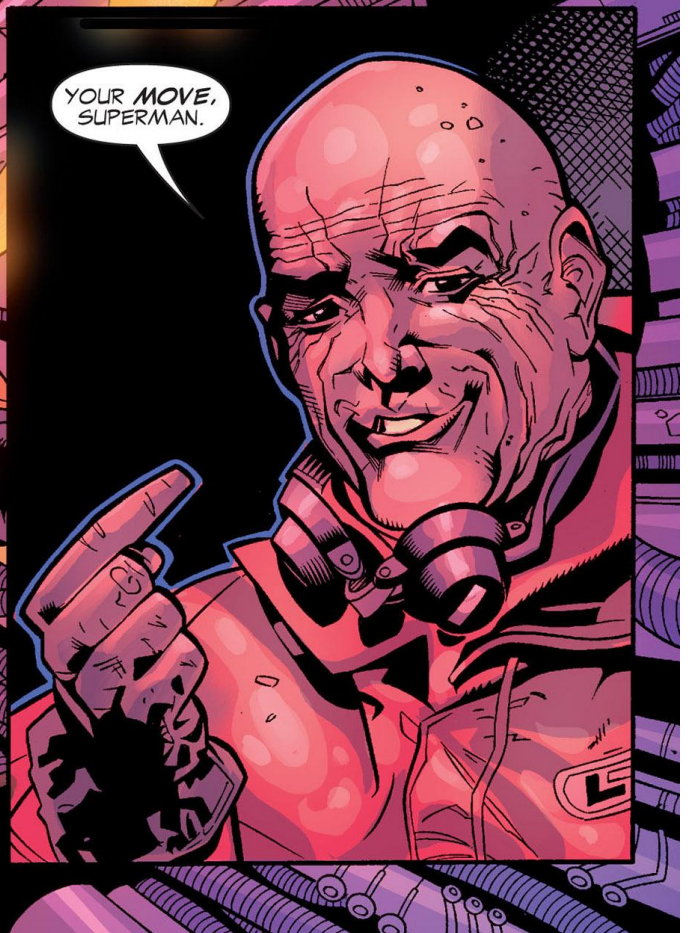
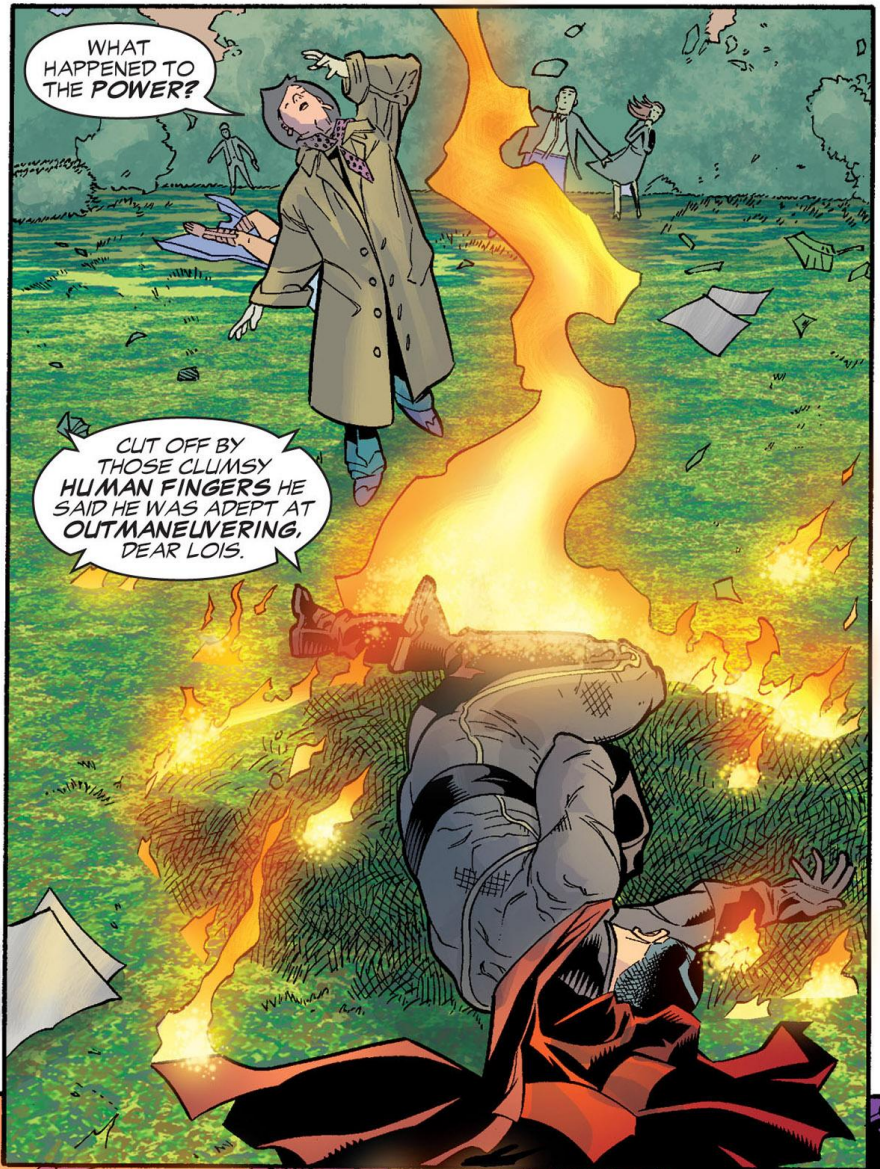
I WASN'T UNDER YOUR COMMAND. YOU WERE UNDER MINE, SUPERMAN; EXPANDING AND CONSUMING COUNTRY BY COUNTRY, UNTIL AN ENTIRE WORLD RAN TO MY IDEALS.

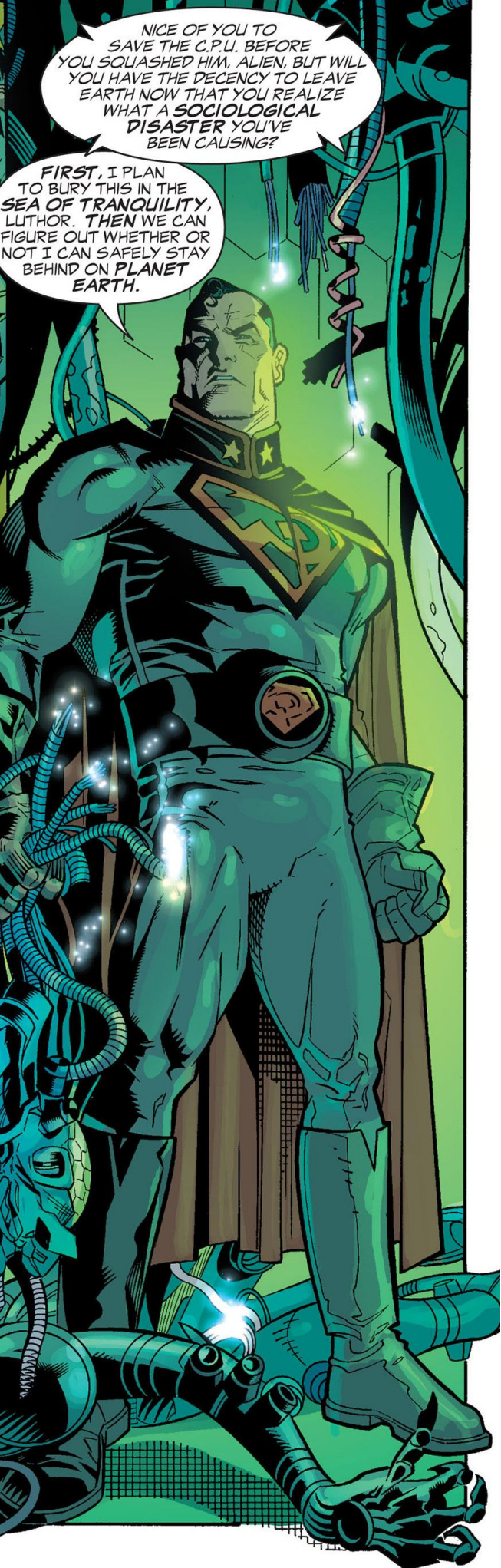
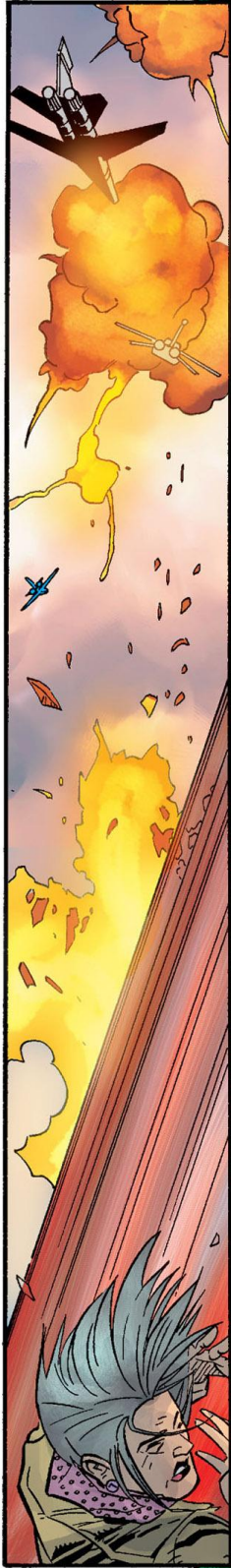
SUCH A SHAME THAT YOU WON'T BE ALIVE TO SEE THE WORK COMPLETE: TO SEE THE WORK CONTINUE, PLANET BY PLANET, UNTIL AN ENTIRE UNIVERSE HUMS UNDER MY BATTERY.



DON'T DIE CALLING ME A MONSTER, SUPERMAN.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU REALIZE YOU AND I ARE EXACTLY THE SAME KIND OF CREATURES.





NICE OF YOU TO SAVE THE C.P.U. BEFORE YOU SQUASHED HIM, ALIEN, BUT WILL YOU HAVE THE DECENCY TO LEAVE EARTH NOW THAT YOU REALIZE WHAT A SOCIOLOGICAL DISASTER YOU'VE BEEN CAUSING?

FIRST, I PLAN TO BURY THIS IN THE SEA OF TRANQUILITY, LUTHOR. THEN WE CAN FIGURE OUT WHETHER OR NOT I CAN SAFELY STAY BEHIND ON PLANET EARTH.



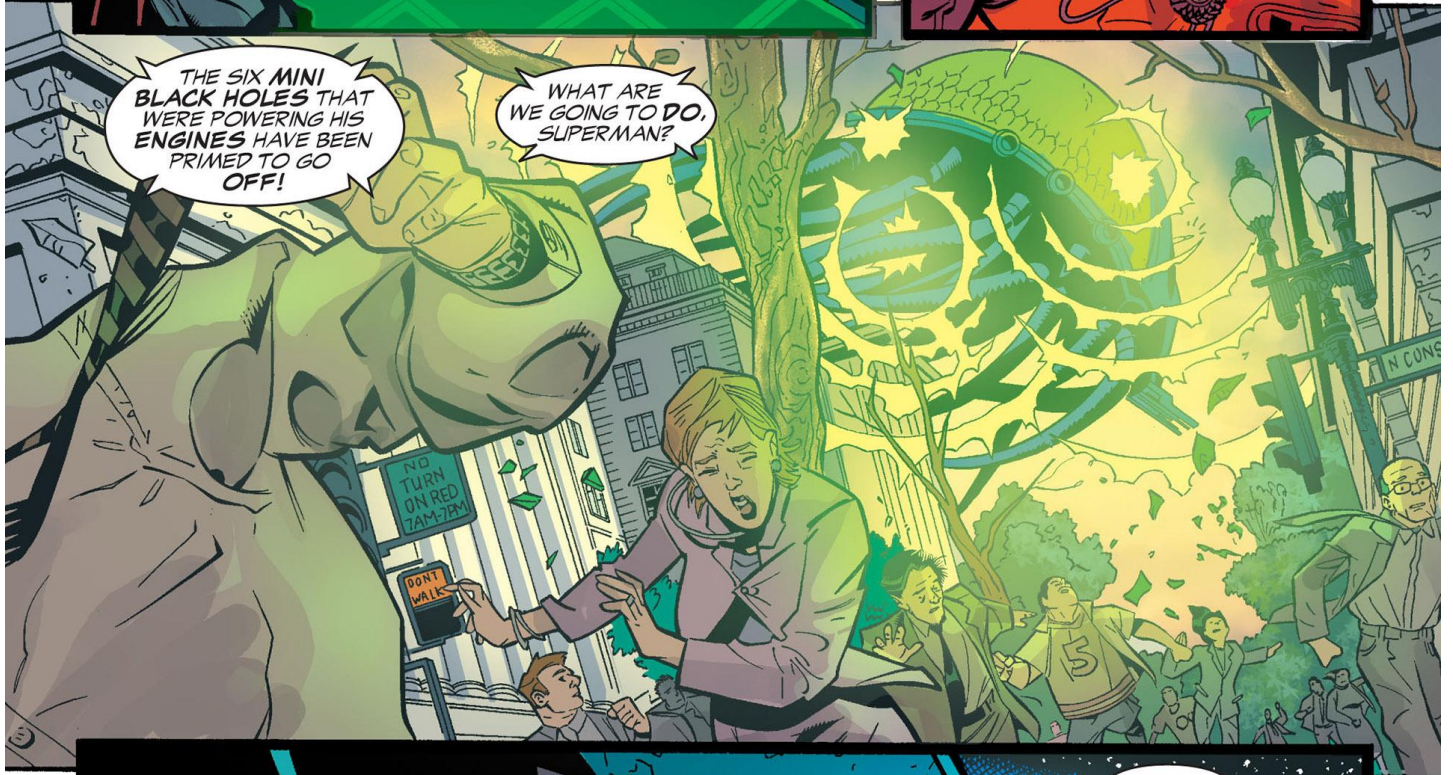
FIFTY-NINE SECONDS TO DETONATION...!

WHAT?



FIFTY-SEVEN SECONDS TO DETONATION...!

OH MY GOD! HE MUST HAVE HAD A SELF-DESTRUCT MECHANISM ENCODED INTO THE HARD DRIVE IN CASE SOMETHING LIKE THIS EVER HAPPENED!



THE SIX MINI BLACK HOLES THAT WERE POWERING HIS ENGINES HAVE BEEN PRIMED TO GO OFF!

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO, SUPERMAN?



WHAT DO YOU THINK, LUTHOR?

BUT POWER ON THIS LEVEL BEING UNLEASHED IS GOING TO WIPE OUT EVERYTHING IN A FIFTEEN MILLION MILE RADIUS! EVEN YOU AREN'T THAT FAST!



DON'T COUNT ON IT, MISTER.



WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT'S HE DOING?

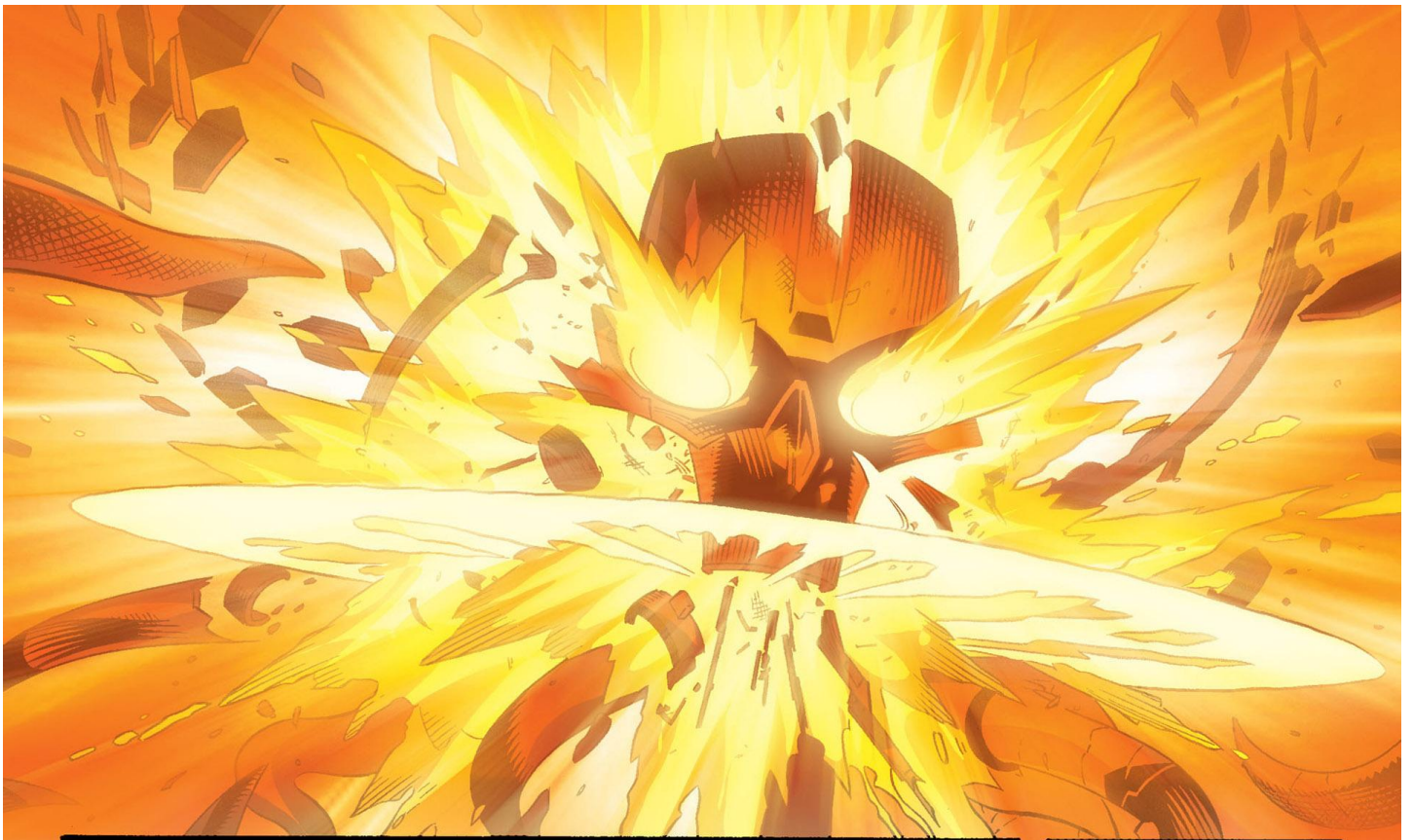
SOMETHING WONDERFUL,
JIMMY.




LEX, I KNOW YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HEAR THIS MESSAGE FOR A WHILE OR EVEN SEE THE EXPLOSION UNTIL THE LIGHT REACHES YOU, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO SAY BEFORE I GO...




WELL PLAYED, OLD FRIEND.






FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY, THE WORLD HAD TASTED DEATH AND SO THEY GLORIED IN THEIR TRIUMPH, AS EXCITED BY SUPERMAN'S DEFEAT AS THEY WERE BY BRAINIAC'S.



LEX LUTHOR AND JIMMY OLSEN WON A LANDSLIDE VICTORY IN 2004, RE-ELECTED TO THE WHITE HOUSE WITH A STAGGERING HUNDRED AND ONE PERCENT OF THE VOTE.

TO THIS DAY, SCIENTISTS AND MATHEMATICIANS ARE BAFFLED BY THE RESULT, EVERYONE A LITTLE TOO SUPERSTITIOUS TO BLAME THE FIGURE ON A COMPUTER ERROR.



FREED FROM SUPERMAN'S ALL-SEEING EYE, THE SOVIET EMPIRE DESCENDED INTO CHAOS FOR A WHILE UNTIL THE BATMEN REAPPEARED AND BROUGHT JUSTICE TO THE STREETS AGAIN.

WITHIN SIX MONTHS, LUTHOR WAS RUNNING THEIR ECONOMY. WITHIN A YEAR, EVEN MOSCOW HAD SIGNED UP WITH HIS GLOBAL UNITED STATES.



SETTING UP HOME IN THE WINTER PALACE, HE COMBINED HIS OWN IDEAS WITH NOTES FROM THE ARCHIVES, CREATING A BRAND-NEW STYLE OF GOVERNMENT UNLIKE ANYTHING WE'D EVER SEEN...


I ALMOST HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT SUPERMAN AND BRAINIAC ACTUALLY HAD SOME SURPRISINGLY GOOD IDEAS HERE, BOYS.



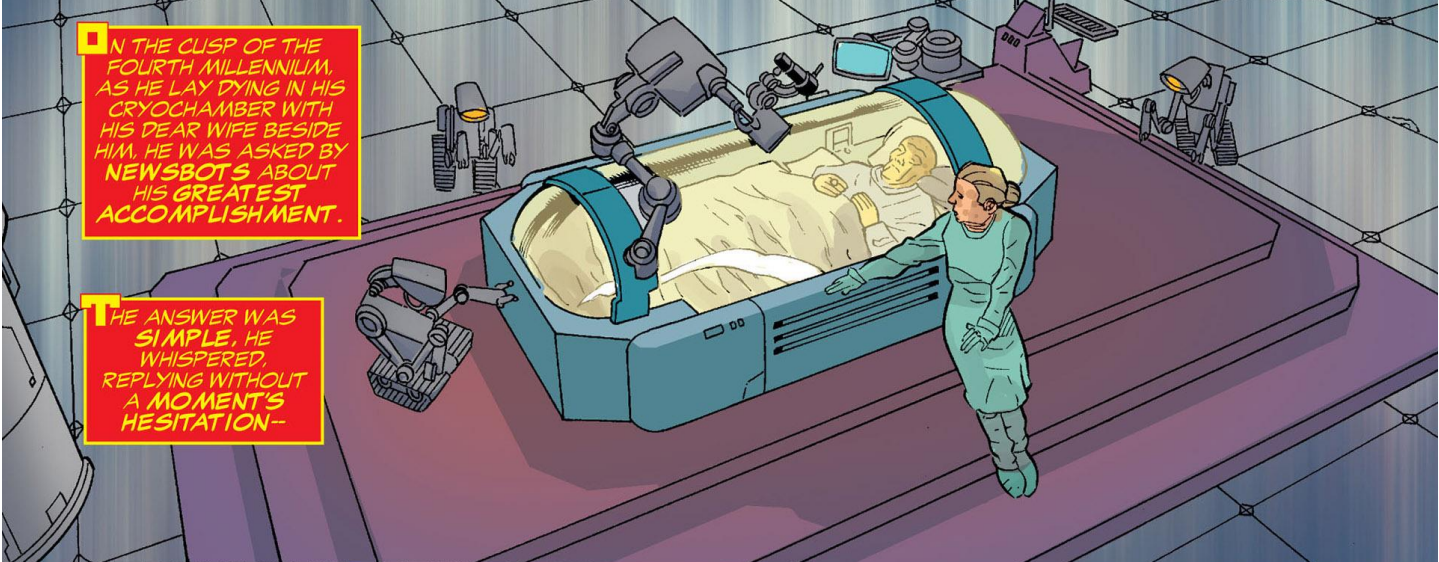
CANCER WAS GONE BEFORE TOO LONG, AIDS CONSIDERED TO THE HISTORY BOOKS.

DIABETES, BLINDNESS AND EVERY INHERITED FORM OF ILLNESS WAS ERADICATED BY A MAN WHO INVENTED A PILL WHICH MEANT HUMAN BEINGS DIDN'T EVEN NEED TO SLEEP ANYMORE.

BY HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY, LUTHOR HAD RETIRED THE CONVENTIONAL POLITICIANS AND CREATED A ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT COMPOSED OF ARTISTS, WRITERS, PHILOSOPHERS AND SCIENTISTS...




BY THE AGE OF A HUNDRED AND TWENTY, THE ENTIRE SOLAR SYSTEM HAD BEEN COLONIZED, THE TRIPLE HAD REPLACED THE COUPLE AND THE AVERAGE MAN WOULD LIVE FOR AN INCREDIBLE EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS.



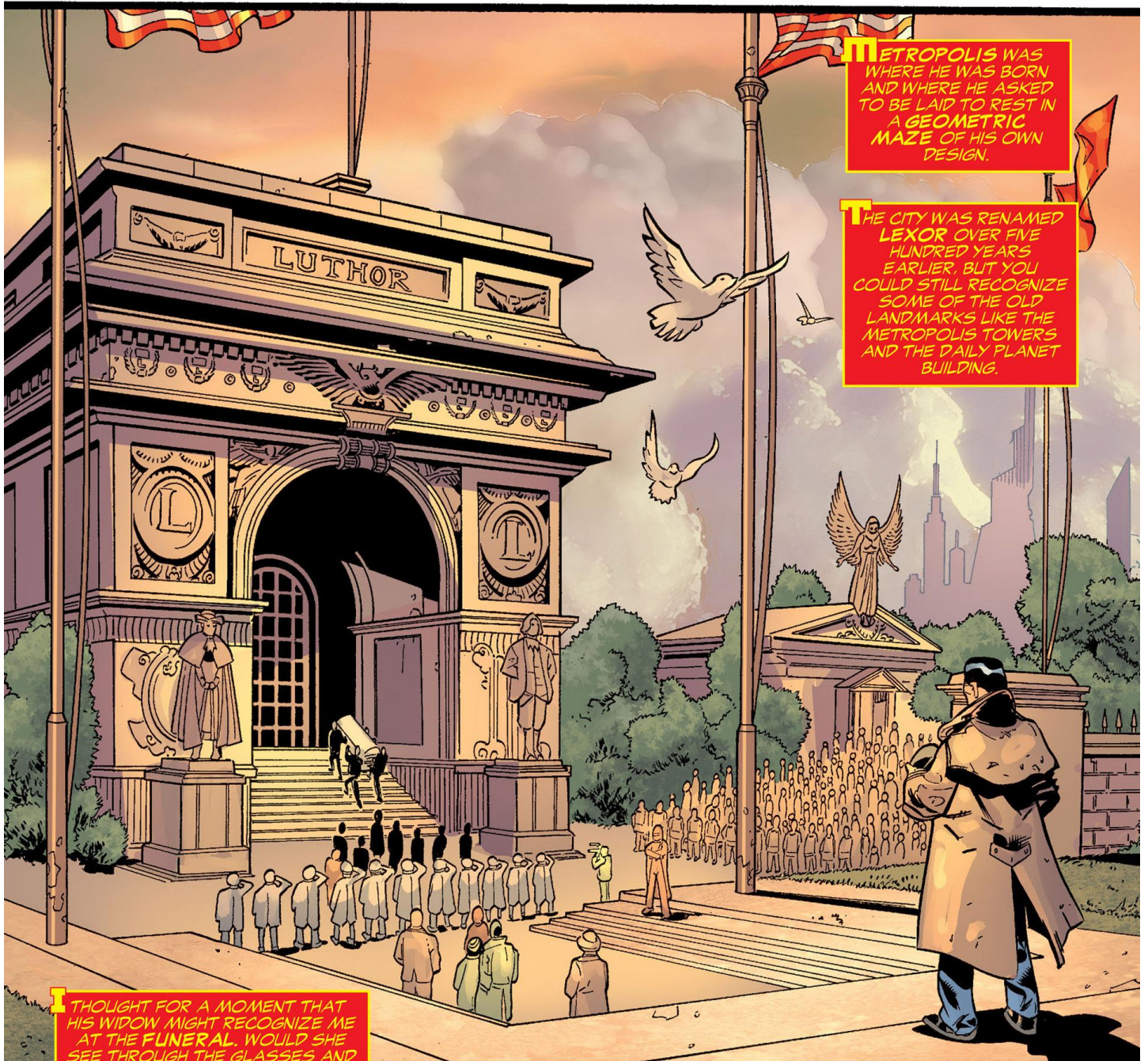
ON THE CUSP OF THE FOURTH MILLENNIUM, AS HE LAY DYING IN HIS CRYOCHAMBER WITH HIS DEAR WIFE BESIDE HIM, HE WAS ASKED BY NEWSBOTS ABOUT HIS GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT.

THE ANSWER WAS SIMPLE, HE WHISPERED, REPLYING WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION-



DEFEATING THE ALIEN, MY BOY. WHAT IN THE WORLD COULD POSSIBLY COMPARE WITH SAVING MY PEOPLE FROM SUPERMAN?

AND WITH A SMILE ON HIS FACE, DOCTOR LEX LUTHOR DIED.



METROPOLIS WAS WHERE HE WAS BORN AND WHERE HE ASKED TO BE LAID TO REST IN A **GEOMETRIC MAZE** OF HIS OWN DESIGN.

THE CITY WAS RENAMED **LEXOR** OVER FIVE HUNDRED YEARS EARLIER, BUT YOU COULD STILL RECOGNIZE SOME OF THE OLD LANDMARKS LIKE THE **METROPOLIS TOWERS** AND THE **DAILY PLANET BUILDING**.

I THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT THAT HIS WIDOW MIGHT RECOGNIZE ME AT THE FUNERAL. WOULD SHE SEE THROUGH THE GLASSES AND THE DARK BLUE SUIT OF THE DISGUISE I'D CREATED?



LOIS LANE WAS, AFTER ALL, A **PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING JOURNALIST**.



WHAT'S UP, MOM? ARE YOU OKAY?

FINE, ALBERT. ABSOLUTELY FINE. I JUST HAD THE STRANGEST SENSE OF **DEJA VU** FOR A MOMENT.



BUT, MUCH TO MY SURPRISE, SHE DIDN'T.

NOT EVEN FOR A SECOND.



IN MANY WAYS, SUPERMAN REALLY DID DIE ON THE OUTER REACHES OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM ALL THOSE CENTURIES AGO.

LUTHOR MIGHT HAVE DROPPED A DECIMAL POINT WHEN HE CALCULATED MY DENSITY, BUT HE SUCCESSFULLY MADE ME REALIZE THAT THE HUMAN RACE COULD THRIVE WITHOUT ME.



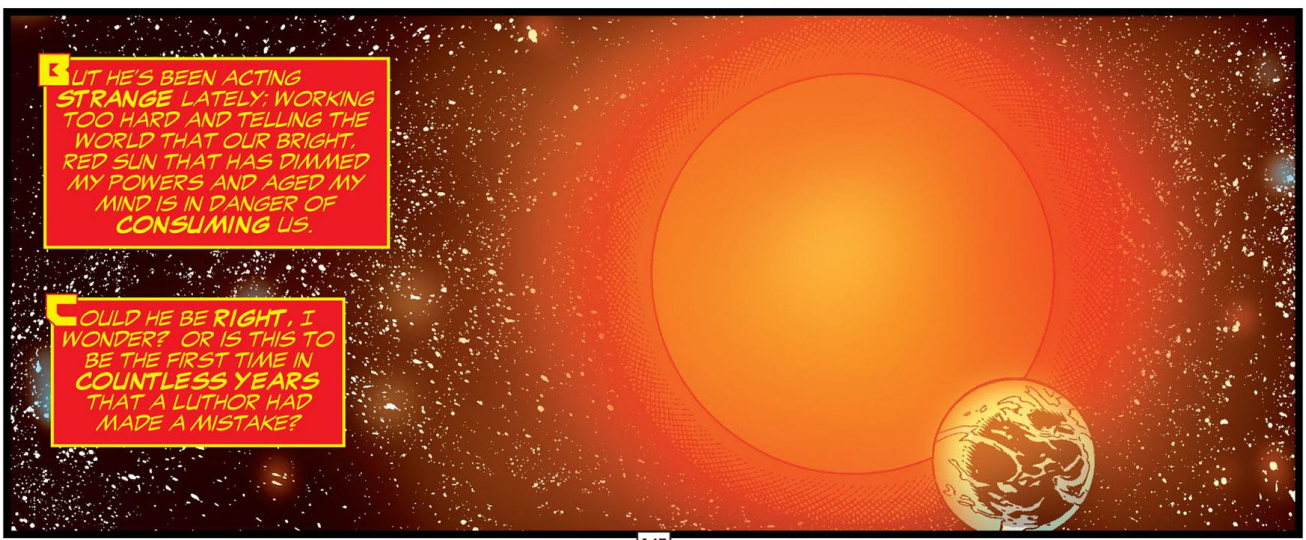
FOR THE FIRST TIME, I COULD SIT BACK AND SEE THE WONDERS OF THE WORLD THROUGH HUMAN EYES AND APPRECIATE A RESOURCEFULNESS THAT I HAD FAILED TO GIVE THEM CREDIT FOR.

MANKIND HAD EVOLVED TO BECOME THE MOST ADVANCED SPECIES IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE, INSPIRED AND LED BY A BILLION YEARS OF THE LUTHOR LINEAGE...



LENA LUTHOR; THE ARTIST, LOMBARD LUTHOR; THE IMAGINEER, LORI LUTH-145; THE MATHEMAGICIAN, JORDAN LUTH-1938; PIONEERING NECRONAUT AND FIRST MAN TO SET FOOT IN THE AFTERLIFE.

ALEX-L, JORDAN-L, LANA L AND, OF COURSE, LEX LUTHOR'S GREAT-GRANDSON TO THE POWER FIFTY; A YOUNG MAN CALLED JOR-L WHOSE I.Q. EXCEEDED THAT OF EVEN HIS BELOVED ANCESTOR.



BUT HE'S BEEN ACTING STRANGE LATELY; WORKING TOO HARD AND TELLING THE WORLD THAT OUR BRIGHT, RED SUN THAT HAS DIMMED MY POWERS AND AGED MY MIND IS IN DANGER OF CONSUMING US.

COULD HE BE RIGHT, I WONDER? OR IS THIS TO BE THE FIRST TIME IN COUNTLESS YEARS THAT A LUTHOR HAD MADE A MISTAKE?



IDIOTS!

WE'RE GOVERNED BY IDIOTS, LARA!



WHAT HAPPENED, JOR-L? DIDN'T THE SCIENCE COUNCIL LISTEN TO YOUR WARNINGS?

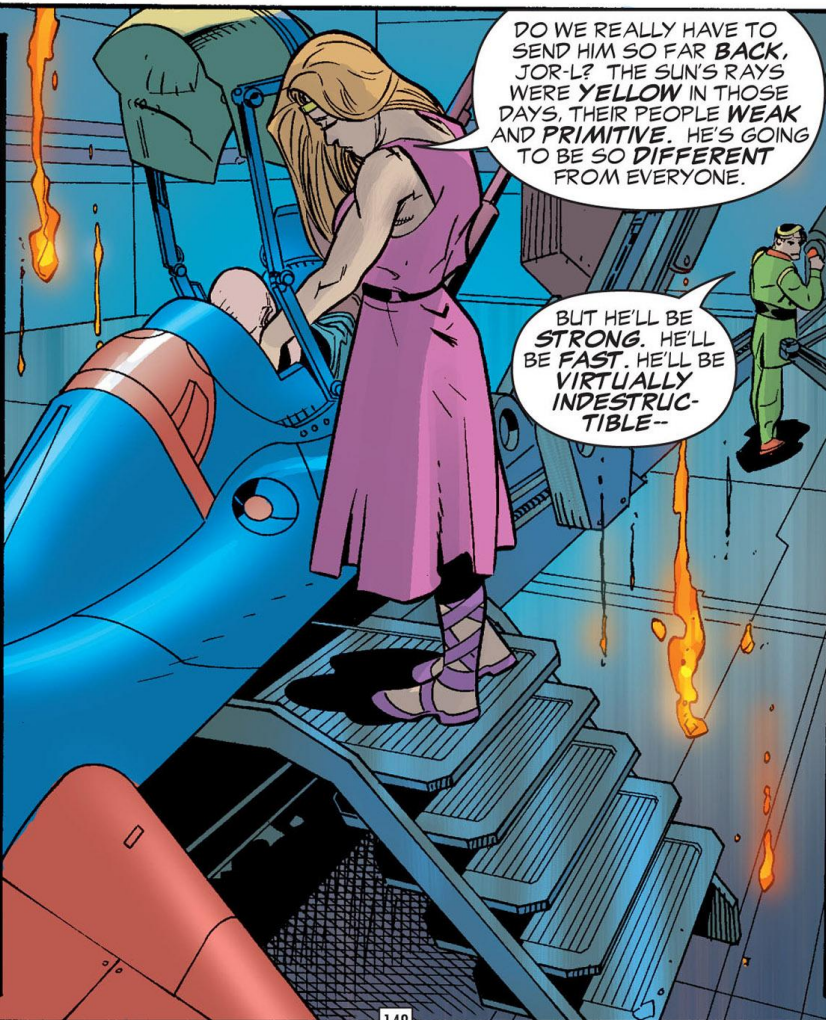
LISTEN? THOSE OVER-SATISFIED FOOLS DIDN'T EVEN LOOK AT MY READINGS.

I GAVE THEM FIRM, SUBSTANTIATED EVIDENCE THAT THE EARTH IS ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSING INTO OUR OWN SUN AND THEY TELL ME THE PLANET'S MERELY SHIFTING ITS ORBIT.



IT'S ALMOST LIKE THEY'VE NOTHING LEFT TO DO BUT DIE, BUT I REFUSE TO LET THEIR EMPTINESS BRING ANY HARM TO YOU, MY LITTLE KAL-L.

WHY SHOULD YOU HAVE TO SUFFER FOR BEING BORN INTO A WORLD WITH NOTHING LEFT TO CONQUER?



DO WE REALLY HAVE TO SEND HIM SO FAR BACK, JOR-L? THE SUN'S RAYS WERE YELLOW IN THOSE DAYS, THEIR PEOPLE WEAK AND PRIMITIVE. HE'S GOING TO BE SO DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE.

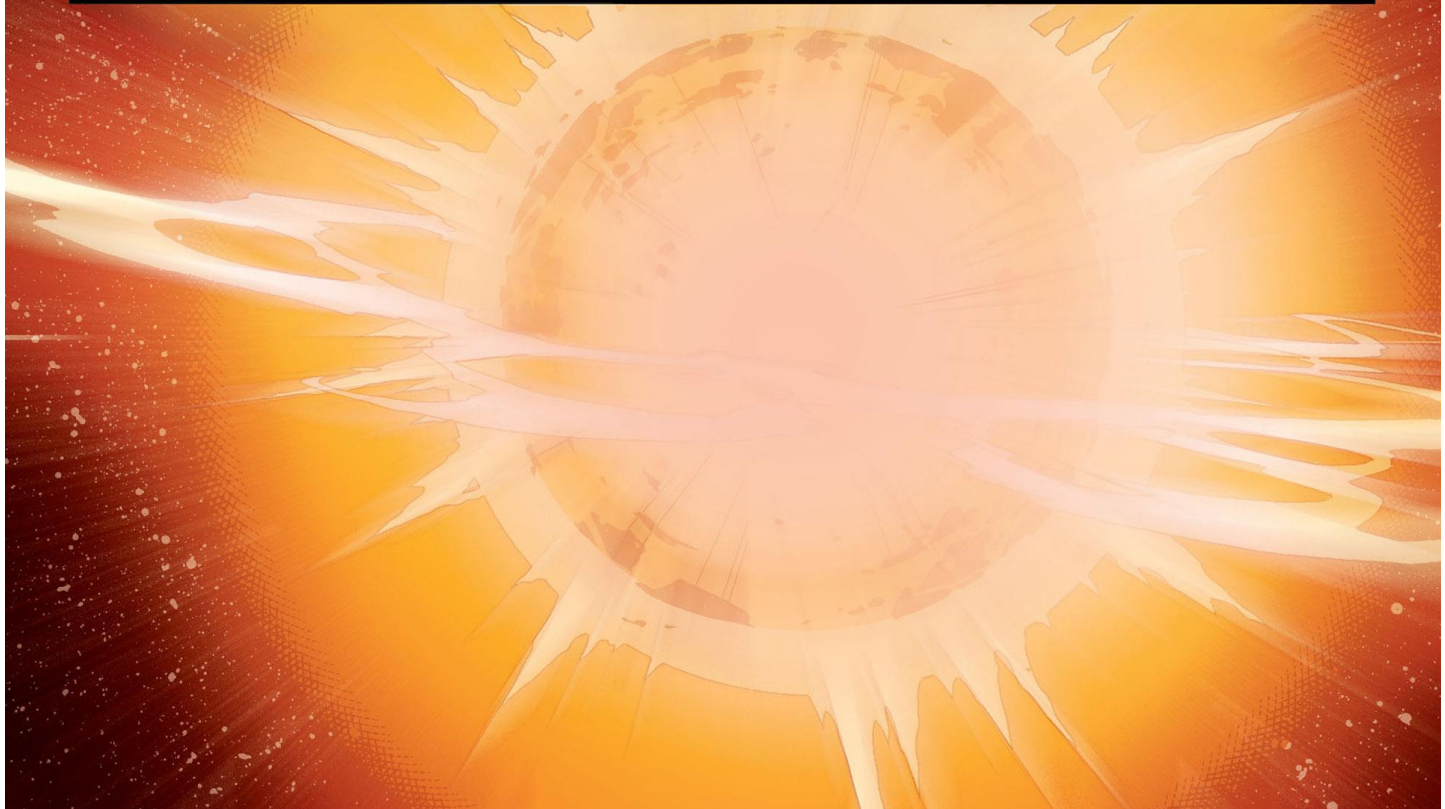
BUT HE'LL BE STRONG. HE'LL BE FAST. HE'LL BE VIRTUALLY INDESTRUCTIBLE--



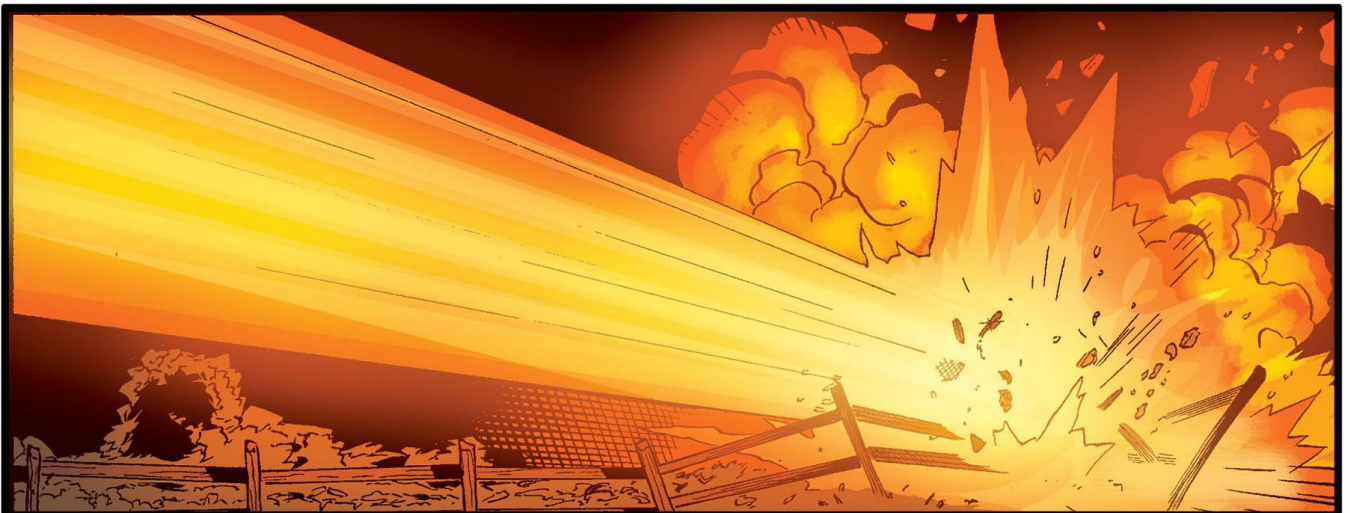
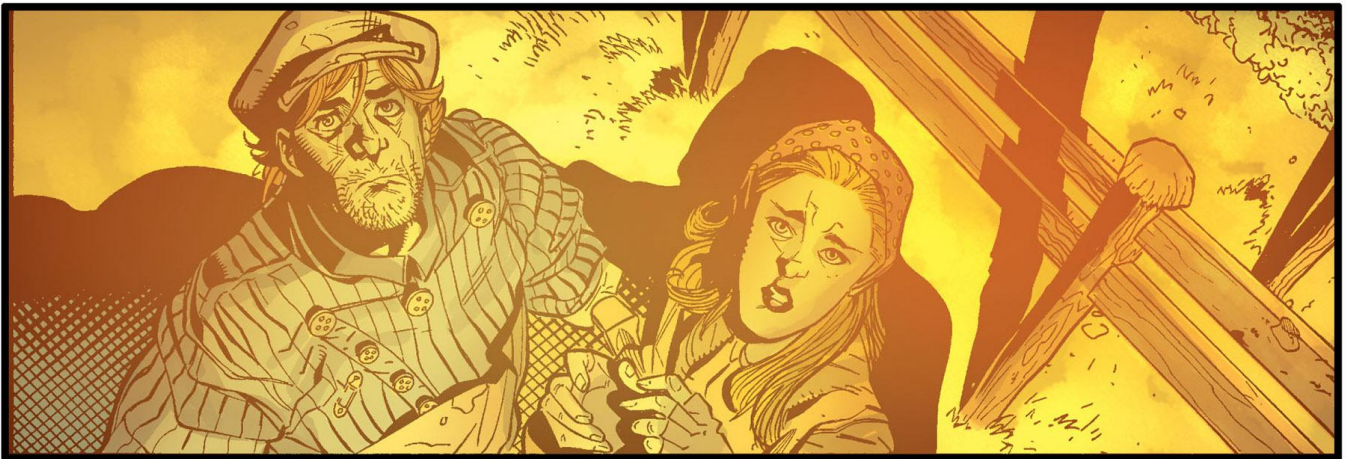
--AND HE'LL NEED THESE ADVANTAGES TO SURVIVE, MY DARLING.



"...GO BACK AND BRING A LITTLE LIGHT TO OUR LIVES AGAIN."



THE UKRAINE,
RUSSIA, 1938:



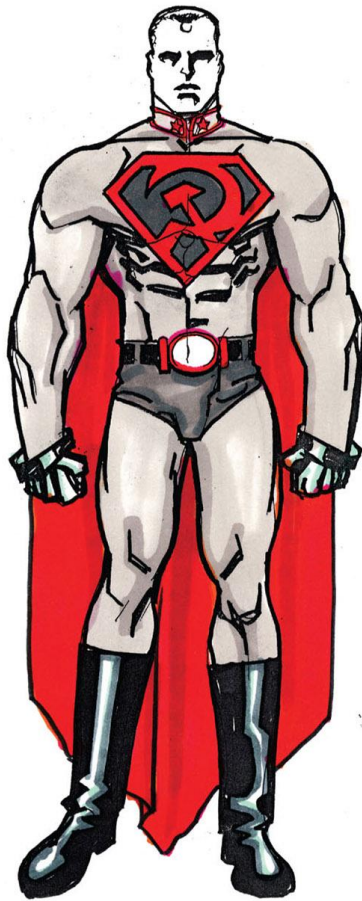
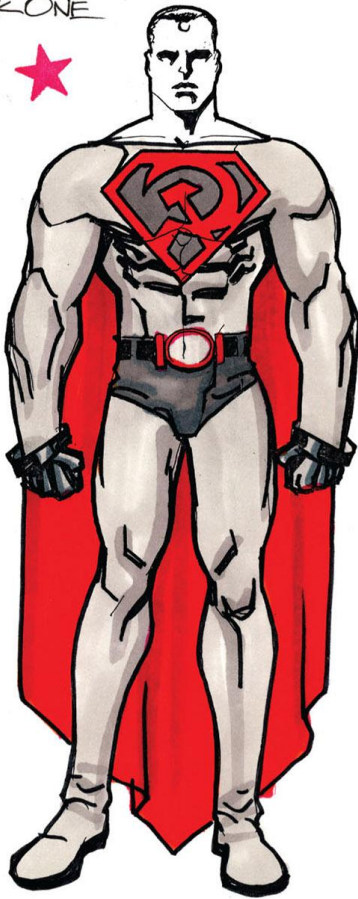


END

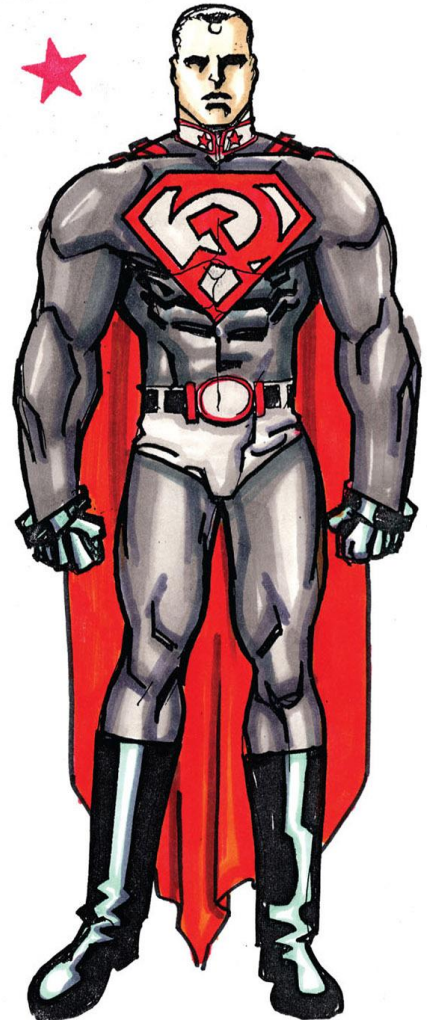
SKETCHBOOK
DAVE JOHNSON



BOOK ONE



BOOK TWO



If I had finished the book, this would have been Sopes costume.

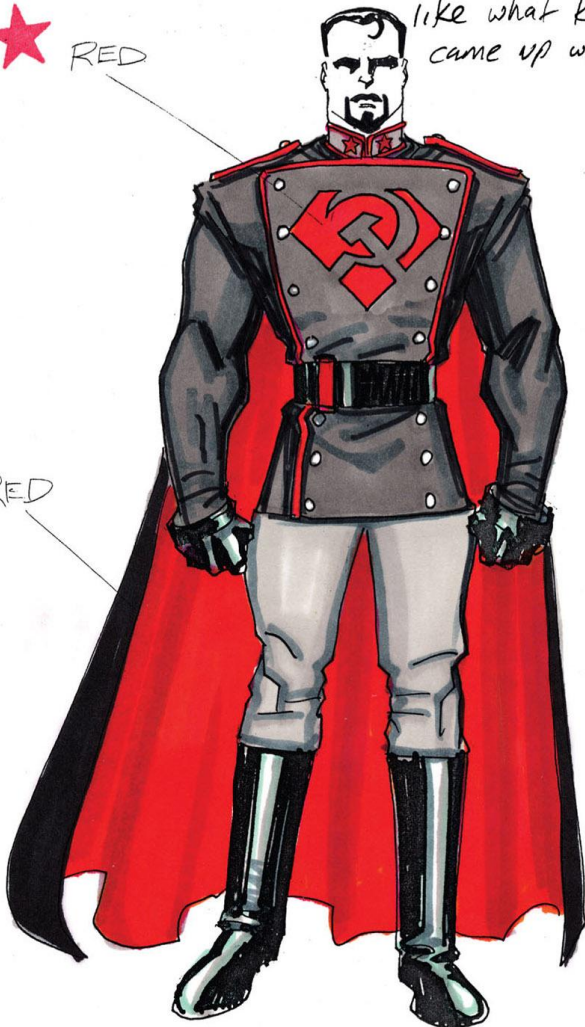
I still like what Kilian came up with, though.

BOOK THREE



RED

RED



SKETCHBOOK
DAVE JOHNSON



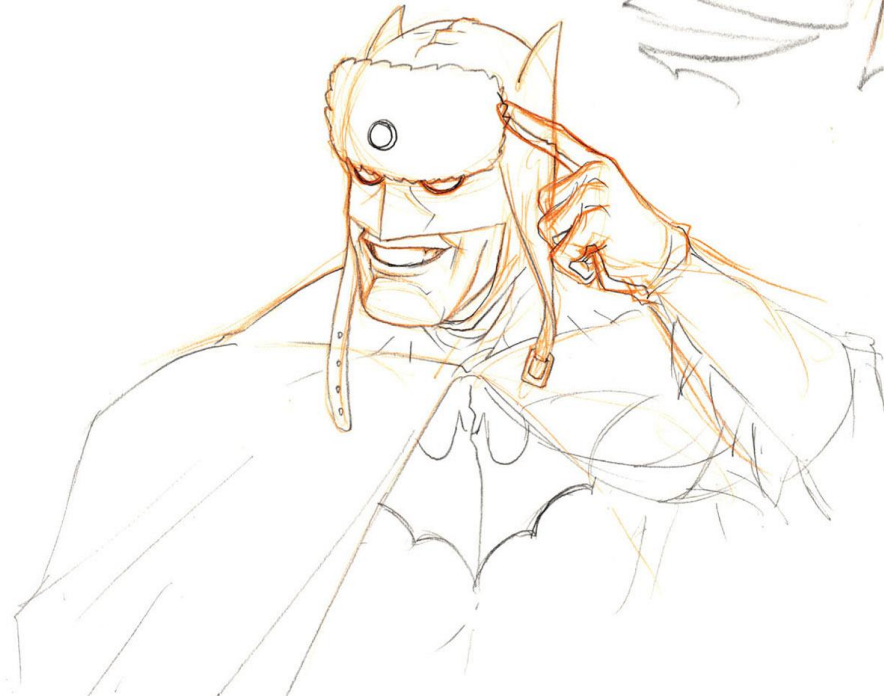
BATMANKOFF

w/HAT!



JOHNSON
97

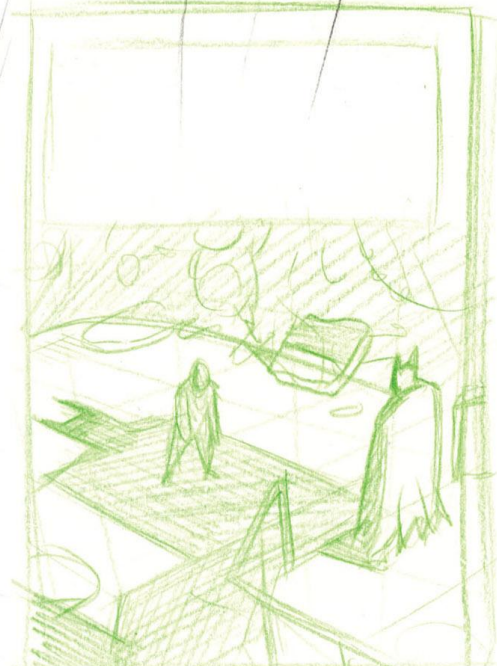
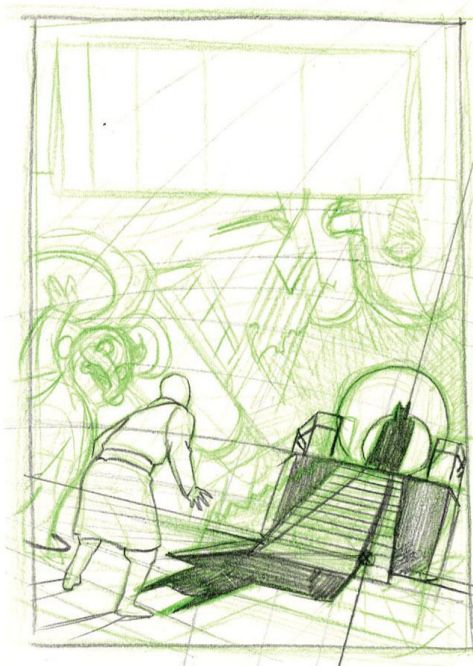
I took a lot of crap from friends about this hat. But I still like the design. Russia is cold. Why can't Batman have a warm hat?



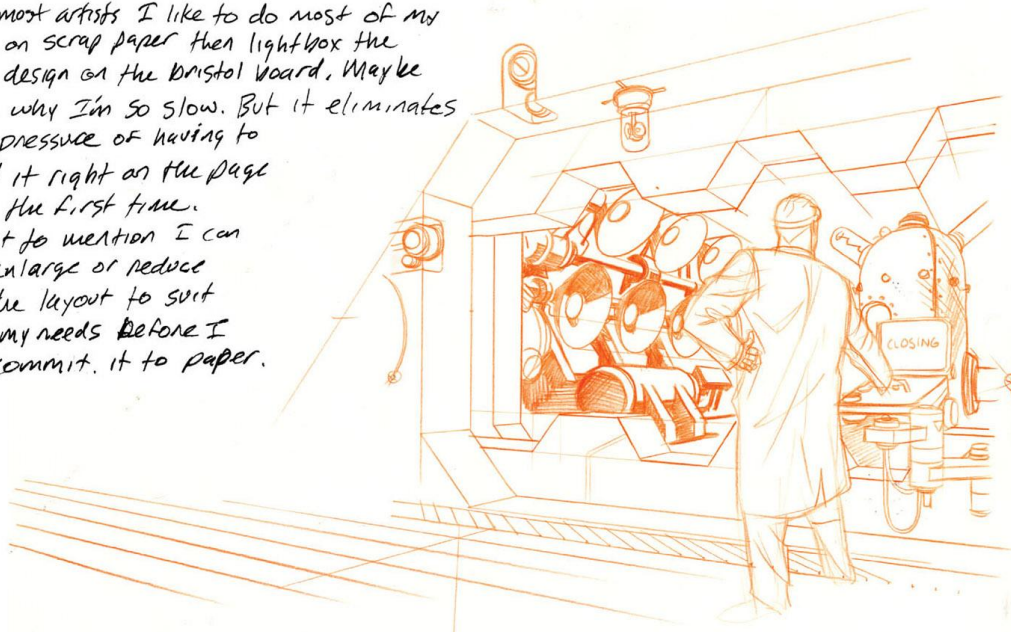


AD Layout for Printing

Here's two different ways to do the same shot. I think both work but a choice had to be made. The final version had to be done with 5 point perspective. It's a real pain to do, but worth the effort.



unlike most artists I like to do most of my work on scrap paper then lightbox the final design on the Bristol board. Maybe that's why I'm so slow. But it eliminates the pressure of having to get it right on the page the first time. Not to mention I can enlarge or reduce the layout to suit my needs before I commit it to paper.

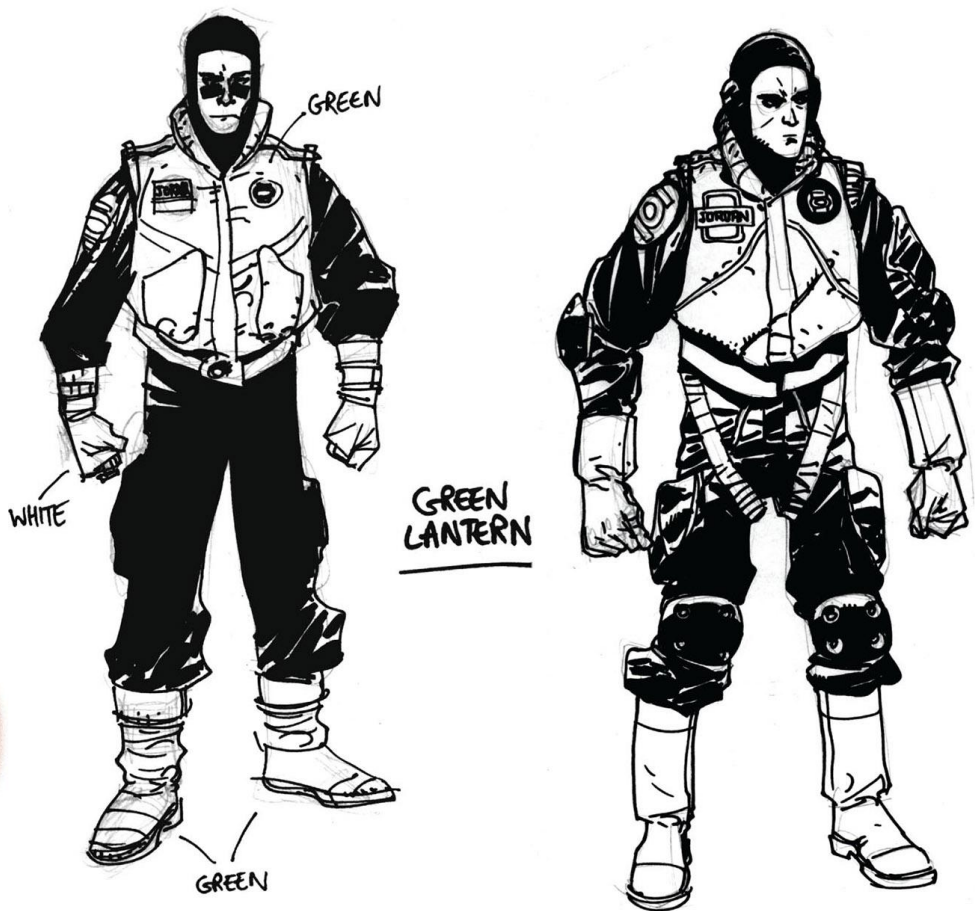
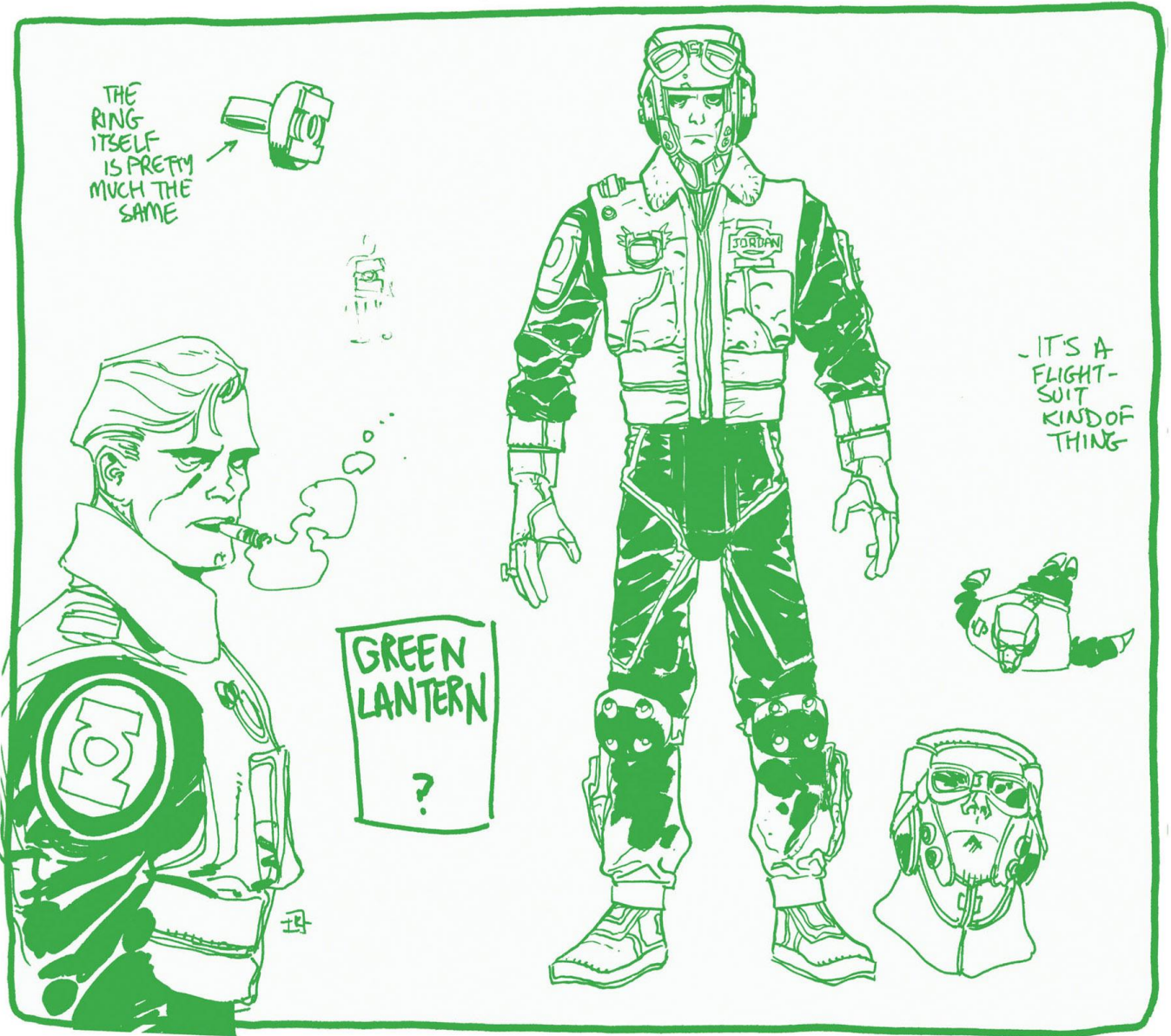


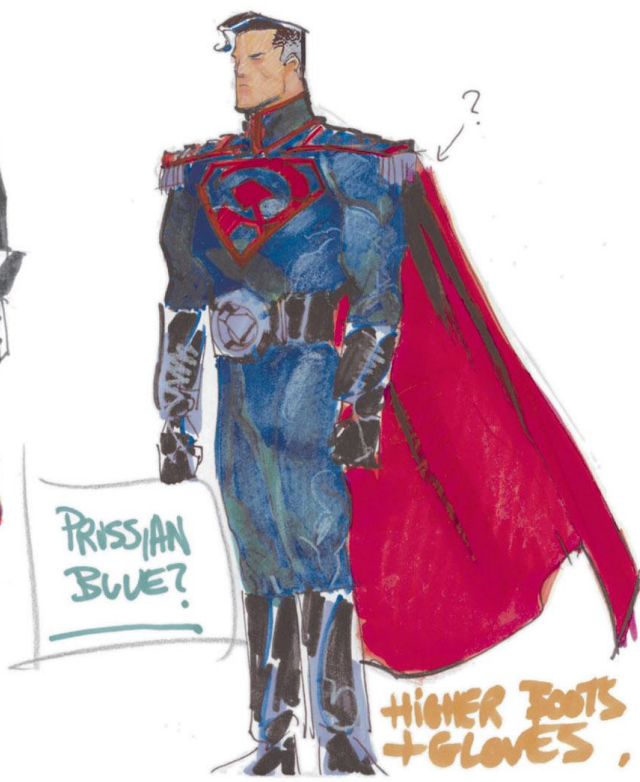
This was the first cover idea for issue 3. But I felt it didn't fill up the space on the cover. Too much dead area on either side of the figure. Especially after reducing him down to fit under the title logo. Well, at least it's seeing the light of day in this book.



AHHH, the Devilpig. This little bastard has been showing up everywhere. Coming to a 100 Bullets cover soon.







LET OUR ENEMIES BEWARE:

"I waited years to read this story, and Millar did not disappoint. Once again, Mark proves he has one of the most original voices in comics, not to mention a particularly distinct grasp of the comic book super-hero. And good God, is it gorgeous to look at too."

— Kevin Smith

"You have to admire all this cleverness; there's just no way around it."

— aint-it-cool-news.com

"Millar takes a massive gamble here with one of the world's most enduring icons."

— The London Sunday Times

"SUPERMAN: RED SON offers the reader an interesting discourse in politics through the voices of Lex Luthor and Superman."

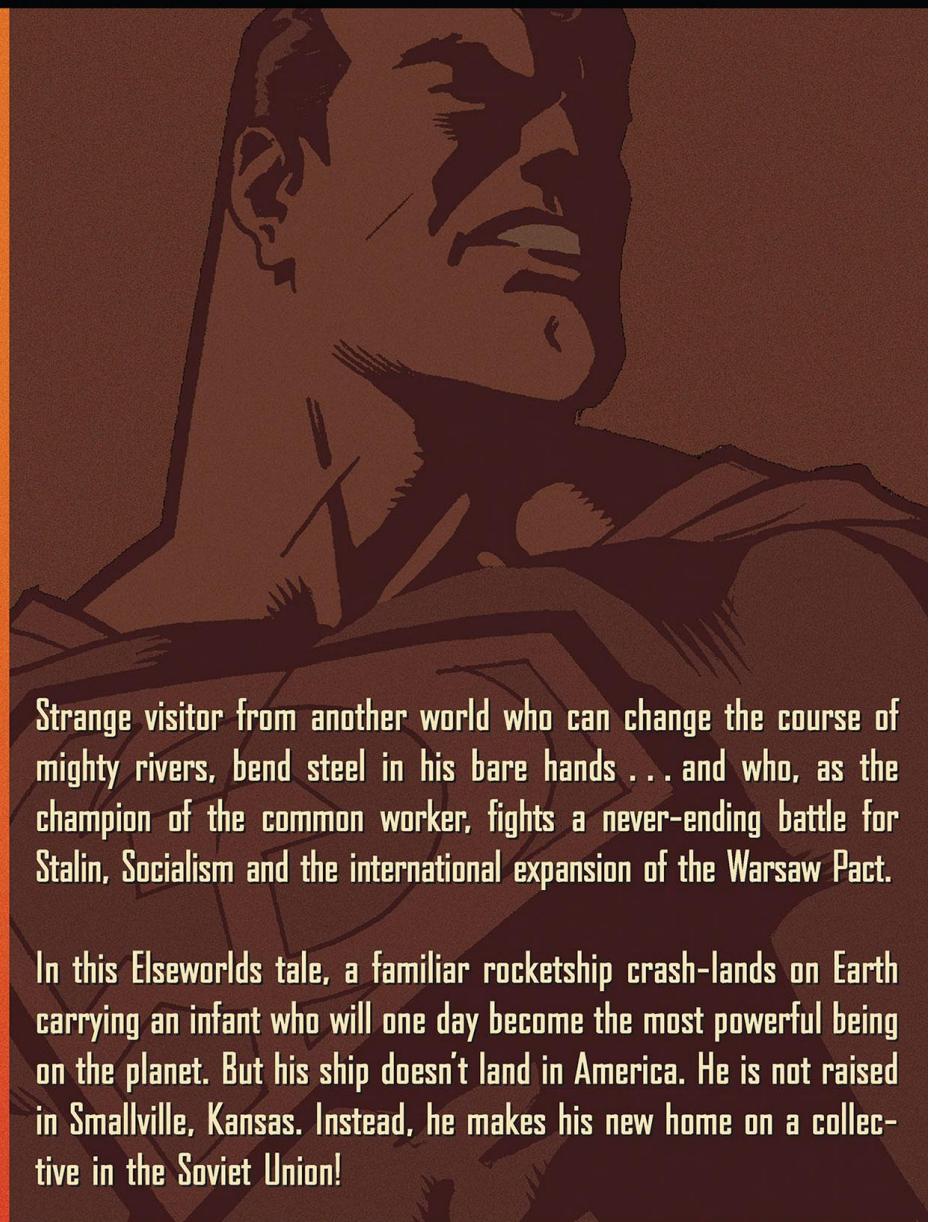
— SilverBulletComicBooks.com

"RED SON looks to be one defining piece of Superman work that should go beyond the art team's personal fame and credits. This should be recommended as a piece that any and every fan should check out...utterly superb in its completion."

— HeroRealm.com

"Millar and Johnson do a great job of conveying Superman's good heart, while giving a sense of impending doom to the whole thing."

—TheFourthRail.com/SnapJudgments



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.

In this Elseworlds tale, a familiar rocketship crash-lands on Earth carrying an infant who will one day become the most powerful being on the planet. But his ship doesn't land in America. He is not raised in Smallville, Kansas. Instead, he makes his new home on a collective in the Soviet Union!

THERE IS ONLY ONE SUPERPOWER NOW.

dccomics.com

From the mind of Mark Millar, the best-selling writer of *Ultimates* and *THE AUTHORITY*, comes this strangely different take on the Superman mythos. Featuring art by Dave Johnson, Kilian Plunkett, Andrew Robinson, and Walden Wong, with an introduction by film producer Tom DeSanto (*Apt Pupil*, *X-Men*, *X2: X-Men United*).