Doe for President?

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Summary: Tempus has the world under mind control in his quest to become the president of the United States. Will Superman be able to expose Tempus for the fraud he is when his powers are still not at full capacity? How will Lois's pregnancy be affected?

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"How does the defendant plead?"

"Guilty, your honor."

Lois watched in disbelief as the woman she and Clark had come to know as Samantha Roberts entered her plea for attempted murder. Samantha had made both her and Clark's lives a living hell several weeks earlier. She had worked with Randy Goode in trying to slander Superman's reputation by fabricating a smear campaign accusing Lois of having an affair with Superman.

The desperation with which Randy Goode and Samantha had pursued the campaign was what had landed them here in this courtroom today. Samantha had pulled a gun on both her and Clark and attempted to kill a potential witness against her. Jimmy had luckily intervened, stopping the situation from escalating out of control.

"Do you think he'll decide on the verdict now?" Jimmy whispered in her ear.

Lois shrugged, looking back at her young friend. She was no wiser to what the judge's decision would be than he was.

"Samantha Roberts, do you understand that by pleading guilty you are waiving your right to a speedy trial by a jury of your peers?"

"Yes, your honor," Samantha nodded.

The judge glanced at the file in front of him, then looked back up. "I'm ready to give my ruling."

Lois looked at Jimmy with a half smile. 'That was fast,' she mouthed.

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Dr. Klein placed ten paper clips in various positions on the counter of his lab. After assuring himself that the paper clips were secure, he nodded at Superman. "Melt the paperclips." He watched in anticipation, but nothing happened. "Uh, I meant you can start now."

"I am starting," Clark replied through gritted teeth.

"Oh," Dr. Klein sighed, realizing Superman was attempting to melt the paperclips but didn't appear to be having any effect on any of the paperclips.

"Forget it," Superman shook his head, pacing around the lab. "It's useless. They're never coming back."

"Superman, don't get frustrated. You've never had this kind of exposure to Kryptonite before. It's going to take some time."

"How much time?" he asked. "Everyone is asking questions! I've been out of commission now for almost two months!"

"I don't know," Dr. Klein shrugged his shoulders. "Are you able to do anything right now?"

"I can do this," he said, floating about an inch off the ground. "Pretty pathetic, huh?"

"No, no," Dr. Klein soothed. "It's a start."

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Angela Cross made her way through the smoke-filled bar, looking for Mr. Smith. They were supposed to meet regarding their plan to destroy the Daily Planet's famous reporting duo, Lois Lane and Clark Kent. Unfortunately, it seemed Mr. Smith was nowhere to be found. "Ms. Cross?" An unfamiliar voice called out from behind her.

She turned around looking for whoever had called her name. "Yes?"

A tall man with curly brown hair and a crisp blue suit approached her with his hand extended towards her. "Pleased to meet you, I'm Leslie Luckabee."

She scrunched her nose at him, uncertain who he was and how he had recognized her. "Who are you?"

"I'm sorry," Leslie apologized. "I'm Mr. Smith's partner." He motioned to the table behind him, "Shall we?"

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"Probation?! Time served at Shady Brook? " Lois shrieked as she stomped down the stairs of the court house. "Are you kidding me?"

"The judge said—" Jimmy began.

"I know what the judge said!" she snapped. "Of all the pea-brained, ignorant, feeble-minded…" she muttered. "The woman almost killed us, and they let her off with probation?"

"Hey, she had to go to Shady Brook," Jimmy chipped in. "That's something. She's obviously disturbed."

"Yeah, right, so what happens when they discharge her?" Lois asked.

"I…"

"Exactly," Lois said, "She gets off scott-free."

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Echoes of maniacal laughter could be heard through the halls of the Metropolis Sanitarium. Some laughed with the voices while others were frightened. Samantha scanned the hallway she was led down. Her attorney had urged her to take the insanity plea and serve her sentence in the Metropolis Sanitarium rather than the Penitentiary. He had promised she'd be released whenever the doctors found her mentally fit to rejoin society.

Another echo of laughter filled the hall. She just wasn't sure if she could remain sane in a place like this.

The guard behind her laughed, "You think this is bad? You should see Arkham in Gotham City."

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Across the hall, Tempus yawned in boredom as he listened to the laughter-filled halls. "Doesn't this bother you?" his cellmate asked, agitated.

"He'll be out in a few minutes," Tempus remarked dryly.

"How do you know?" His cellmate then rolled his eyes and snapped sarcastically, "Oh, I forgot. You're from the future."

"Not 'from'…I'm a part of the future. Your present is my history. I always loved history…I'm going to miss it when I'm gone."

"Gone?"

"Yes, I have to return to my time to face the penalty for my crimes."

"Like robbing that bank?"

"That, and kidnapping, attempted murder… I tried to kill Superman as a baby, you know?" He stood up, ignoring the man's doubtful look, and glanced at the wall of his cell. "The Peacekeeper should be showing up any moment now."

"If this is all true, then why are you telling me?"

"Because you are, in a word, Looney Tunes," Tempus replied with a smile.

"Looney Tunes is two words," the man said.

"Not if you say it fast."

"How do you know this peacekeeper guy is going to show up?"

A window appeared in the cell, revealing a man in his early 60s dressed in a dark red robe. He had white hair, pale skin, and piercing blue eyes. "Citizen Tempus, I am Andrus, peacekeeper of the future Utopia. I have a warrant for your extradition. I will

Tempus remarked after listening to the tapes—both visual and audio—that Samantha had acquired.

"You see, Superman is like a boomerang: he always comes back. That's just a law of nature. However, we can always change the conditions he comes back to."

"What do you mean, Mr. Doe?"

"You'll see. Just trust me."

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The next day, CK awoke with most of his powers back at full force. He felt a slight dizziness when he went at super-speed for too long, but that was normal considering his bout with Kryptonite from the day before.

He began searching the phone lines in the brownstone, trying to zero in on the source of the messages that were pulsing through. As he scanned the walls, he found not only were the phone lines affected, but the electrical wiring was acting as a conductor for Tempus's messages as well. He sighed—it looked like he had a long day ahead of him.

H.G. Wells, in the meantime, was trying to track down the precise second the time window had exploded so that he could rescue Lois, Clark, and Andrus.

"Have you had any luck?" CK asked as he watched the elderly man look back and forth from his notes to the many watches and clocks he had about the office.

"I have the approximate hour and minutes calculated, but I need to narrow it down to the second Tempus touched the window," H.G. Wells murmured. "I'm going on my own recollection."

"Can't you just guess?"

"No, my boy, that would take years to go from nanosecond to nanosecond. I need the exact time."

"I have no idea," CK sighed to himself.

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Clark continued hitting the walls that confined them in the time vortex. Each blow seemed to make the wall weaker, but he still was unable to create an opening for them to escape. Lois and Andrus watched in anticipation as Clark continued to strike the wall. Andrus had long given up his argument of staying put.

Clark struck the wall again. A crack began to form. "We're getting somewhere."

He struck the wall once more.

CRACK!

The time vortex shattered all around them. Clark moved to shield Lois and Andrus from the giant force pulling at them in all directions. He held onto them as they flew into the atmosphere, which seemed to have oxygen. He breathed a sigh of relief. At least, that was one less thing he had to worry about. He carried his passengers with him as he headed north, looking for any signs of Metropolis or his and Lois' own time period. He wasn't sure what he should be looking for, but he hoped he would find it.

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CK landed on the balcony of Lois and Clark's townhome and entered with a grim look on his face.

"What's wrong?" H.G. Wells asked.

"This." CK laid a copy of the *Metropolis Star* down in front of him. The front page read, "CLARK KENT IS SUPERMAN!!!"

"Oh, my! Tempus has obviously raised the stakes."

"What are we supposed to do? I can't show up to any rescues without being mobbed."

"I…I don't know." H.G. Wells shook his head.

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"Where are we?" Lois asked, looking around.

"Metropolis….I think."

"Yes. Metropolis," Andrus said thoughtfully. He pulled out a device in his pocket and began dialing digits.

"I think the better question is, what time period are we in?"

"Ah, it's not working. The explosion must have fried the circuitry," Andrus complained. "I was trying to see if I could request another transport."

"How?"

"It's really quite simple. You see in the 30th century…." Andrus began.

"I really don't want to know the whole lesson. I just want to know if someone has to bring it to you or not." Lois replied.

"Oh, no. It would appear in my possession within the requested twelve-hour time period," Andrus replied.

"Uh-huh." Clark looked at Andrus, somewhat unsure of the man's sanity. "How about we find out what time period this is and if this is even the right dimension?"

"Sounds like a plan to me."

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Dr. Sam Lane angrily pounded on Lois and Clark's door. "Lois? Clark? Open up! You have a lot of explaining to do!"

H.G. Wells looked at the front door, eyebrows raised. "Oh, dear."

CK raked a hand through his hair. "Great. Now what?"

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"This is really weird." Lois remarked, looking at the statue commemorating President John Doe in the middle of the Metropolis Park.

"No. No. This isn't right. This isn't right at all."

"Andrus, what are you talking about? Of course, this isn't right; nothing has been right since Tempus broke free. We need to figure out where we are."

"No, Ms. Lane, you don't understand. This is Utopia. Or it was." Andrus shook his head miserably.

"Utopia? You're kidding. This place looks so….dark…"

"Where are all the people?" Clark asked.

Lois moved towards the statue to read the plaque. "On this day, we celebrate the great President John Doe who will always be remembered for erasing all democracy in the world and creating a regime of dictatorship once more. The famous Nuclear War of '97 was the turning point in this nation's history and will always be remembered."

"Nuclear War?" Clark shook his head. "We have got to get back."

"But how?"

"If this is Utopia, then there has to be some form of time travel here." Andrus reasoned. "Oh, my." Andrus' hand began to glow a bright blue as a solid rectangular shape began to form there. "I guess they got my message."

"What is that?" Clark asked.

"My time-window replacement."

"How is that even possible? We're in Utopia, and it's been destroyed." Clark stated.

"No, we're in one version of Utopia. There are many alternate universes. Every Utopia is linked with the others. This allows us to see when there is a problem in the time ripple." Andrus opened the window and stepped in. "Shall we?"

"You sure it won't be exploding again?" Lois asked hesitantly.

"No, Ms. Lane. I assure you, you are perfectly safe."

Lois still looked skeptical but stepped inside the time window with Clark. "Just another day in the lives of Lois and Clark," she muttered. Clark smiled and kissed her lightly on the head as the time window disappeared.

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Tempus sat in the fallout shelter he was using as a hideout while he carried out his plan of blowing up the earth. President Garner sat across from him as they played chess. "This is fun. We should do this more often."

"Yes, President Garner. It's not every day I get to associate with someone as simple-minded as you."