

The Superman Effect

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Summary: “Tempus doesn’t know the lasting effects of his decisions. The choices he makes have long-lasting impact on generations to come.”

Author’s Note: “Why Tempus Should Be Thanking His Lucky Stars for Superman, Clark Kent, and Lois Lane Instead of Killing Them Off” — but that was too long of a title. ‘The Superman Effect’ is similar in fashion to ‘The Butterfly Effect’ except that no butterflies are involved. This story can be read alone or as part of the “Wrong Trilogy” (It is not one of the 3 Trilogy stories but an extra vignette.)

Disclaimer: The characters in this story were created by Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster as they were portrayed on the *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* television series, developed by Deborah Joy LeVine. Many thanks to Deborah Joy LeVine, Jack Weinstein, Lee Hutsons, Brad Buckner, Eugenie Ross Leming, Gene Miller, and Karen Kavner — whose plots I mention in my story. These characters do not belong to me; they belong to themselves (although Warner Bros, DC Comics, and the heirs to Siegel and Shuster might disagree). The plot of this theory is all my own.

Back in 2043, in a dark corner of a nice restaurant in Metropolis, a not-so-young couple sat enjoying their dinner. Their waitress noted that they often held hands and caressed each other’s face — physically and sometimes with just a gaze. They were more in love than any couple whom she had ever seen. When they ordered a bottle of champagne, she asked if they were celebrating something.

The man smiled and said, “Fifty years.”

The waitress couldn’t believe that after fifty years of marriage a couple, so in love as they obviously were, would celebrate their anniversary in such a low-key manner. “Oh, will you be having a party?” She needed to know.

The woman gazed at her husband and then chuckled. “No. We haven’t been married fifty years. This is the fiftieth anniversary of the day we met.”

The waitress was so impressed by the couple’s love and devotion after so many years, that when she returned home from her shift, her resolve crumbled, and she called her mother. “Okay, Mom. I’ll go on the blind date.”

For that poor woman, that decision was a mistake and possibly for the rest of us as well. The man, with whom her mother had set her up, had nothing in common with her. It was a boring date. It was a tedious date. It was a date that both of them wished they had never gone on.

It was such a horrible date that the man, with whom the waitress had finally caved and agreed to date, ended up in a bar later that night after said date, drinking himself into oblivion. He did this, not because the date had held any promise or because he was sad or lonely or wishing for love, but because once again he had kowtowed to his mother into doing something that *he* hadn’t wanted to do. It was this night of drinking that caused the young man to end up in the hospital with alcohol poisoning.

It was at this hospital where the other aspect of our story comes in to play. Working at the hospital was a doctor, who wouldn’t exist if it weren’t for the quick actions of one

Superman. She was conceived the night her father returned home after his journey into space on the Prometheus transport shuttle. He hadn’t been a colonist or a scientist, but a pilot for the shuttle. A man, who if it weren’t for Lois Lane cutting the wires to halt the launch, and for Superman arriving to get rid of the bomb, would have died a fiery death in the skies above Metropolis due to the incendiary device planted there by one Dr. Antoinette Baines or her henchman or some minion of Lex Luthor. No one ever knew for sure, but that eventuality didn’t happen. The pilot lived and was able to return to his wife and express his love for her and for life, which resulted in this child. This child grew up to be a doctor, working at the hospital, where this man from the bar and the bad date had ended up.

Now, this doctor said something, her exact wording having been lost, to convince the man that drinking was not the solution to his problems. It was her kindness, understanding, and persuasiveness that made him finally agree to check himself into rehab and become sober.

While in rehab he happened to meet a young woman, also trying to become sober. They fell in love and, as people like to say, the rest is history. Together, this couple helped each other stay on the wagon, and in due course, was married and had two children.

It was this second child, who while she was at college happened, on a whim, to bring her roommate home for Thanksgiving break and introduce her to her older brother’s best friend. This best friend of her brother’s, the oldest child of the man who got drunk after going on that horrible blind date with the waitress, turned out to be Tempus’ great, great grandfather. The college roommate of the younger child was Tempus’ great, great grandmother.

A meeting that would never have happened if Clark Kent hadn’t fallen in love at first sight with Lois Lane on the day they met all those years ago; the day he had been interviewed — for the first time — at the Daily Planet by Perry White. And if, because of that love, Clark hadn’t chosen to stay in Metropolis to be with Lois and hadn’t a short time later, decided to bring a change of clothes to work with him. And if Lois hadn’t ultimately agreed that she loved him in return.

Unfortunately, when Tempus checked his history — as one who thought three steps ahead was apt to do — to see if any member of his family tree had ever been rescued by Superman and saw that none had been directly saved by the Man in Blue (of course, not taking in account Superman’s rescue of Earth from Nightfall, or the second-coming of a great flood, or Metropolis from the giant tsunami, or several deadly viruses, which for some reason, evil time-traveling masterminds never take into account), he erroneously concluded it would be “safe” for him to go back in time and kill Superman as a baby.

Tempus had forgotten that other factors play into the events of history, and some of them might be as innocent as a chance meeting at a restaurant between a couple in love having dinner and their waitress.

THE END

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