

What Is That and Why Do You Have It?

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Rated: G

Submitted: January 2016

Summary: This is just a little self-imposed challenge/writing exercise that I decided to do one night. The idea was basically to start with a single opening line and see what I could spin out of it. The result is these three little snippets.

Story Size: 913 words (5Kb as text)

A/N- Hi, guys! This is just a little self-imposed challenge/writing exercise that I decided to do one night. The idea was basically to start with a single opening line and see what I could spin out of it. The result is these three little snippets. I hope you enjoy.

~1~

“What is that and why do you have it?”

Lane looked away from his father’s gaze. “Um, i-it’s a European Carry-All,” he stammered. “They’re all the rage in Europe, very practical—good for carrying things.”

“Why is it pink?” Clark asked him.

“It’s not pink!” Lane insisted. “It’s just—a very light shade of red.”

“It’s pink,” said Clark.

Lane started to blush. “No! Okay, maybe it’s pink *now*, but that’s just because it got washed with some white things, by accident. It was originally more red.”

Clark turned the “carry-all” over in his hand. “This isn’t something you wash in a machine,” he stated.

Lane smiled in triumph. “And that’s why it turned pink!” he said.

“And the sequins?” Clark asked, raising an eyebrow at his son.

“It makes it easier to see it at night,” Lane answered. “It’s very practical, you see.”

Clark sighed and tossed the object onto the couch. “Lane, stop. Enough of the lies. Do you really think I’m that stupid?”

Lane stared down at the floor. “No,” he said, quietly. “I just... think you wouldn’t understand.”

“What?” Clark pleaded. “What wouldn’t I understand, Son?”

Before Lane could answer, the sound of sirens reached their ears. Whatever was happening sounded pretty big. “I guess we’ll have to continue this later,” Clark muttered, spinning into the costume. He hovered by the window, looking back at his son. “Do you want to come with me?” he asked. “We can put all this aside until afterward,” he offered when Lane seemed to hesitate. He floated over and put a hand on his son’s shoulder. “Come on,” he said. “This sounds like a job for Superman and Powerboy.”

~2~

“What is that and why do you have it?”

Clark cringed as his partner turned to face him. He wasn’t quite sure how she’d gotten into his apartment, much less how she’d found the globe, but here they were. “What’s what, Lois?” he asked, feigning ignorance in a poor attempt to stall.

“This,” she answered, snatching the globe up and stomping

over to hold it under his nose. “Doesn’t this belong to Superman? How do you explain...” She trailed off as the globe began to glow and hum. A white light swept over them both, and then the hologram of Jor-El appeared.

“Kal-El, my son,” the hologram spoke, “that you and a woman you care for are both in such close proximity to this globe means two things: One, that you have found a life-mate, for which I am glad; and two, that you now wish to share your heritage with the woman you love. That is a noble aspiration which your mother and I were only too glad to anticipate...”

~3~

“What is that and why do you have it?”

The acting manager of Haley’s Circus took a puff from his cigar. “Well now, see, Sir, this, Sir,” he said to Bruce, “is what we in the circus business call a sideshow. Different oddities of varying veracity, if you follow. Some *less scrupulous* circus companies might glue fish-bones together and call it a mermaid skeleton; that sort of thing, if you follow?”

“Hoaxes,” said Bruce, his eyes narrowing.

“I wouldn’t dream of using that word, myself, sir,” the man said, grinning and taking another drag on the cigar.

Bruce ran his eyes along the rocket one more time. It was small—barely large enough to contain a child—though it looked sturdy enough to survive a trip through the void of space. A symbol shaped like a stylized letter ‘S’ graced the front of it. He glanced down at his young ward, watching for any signs of recognition, but the boy’s expression had become unreadable, even to him. Bruce rapped his knuckles against the ship’s side.

“Sir—” the manager began to protest.

“If this is a hoax,” Bruce interrupted, “then I would certainly like to meet the craftsman who made it.”

“Perhaps, Mr. Wayne, if you came back while we were actually open—”

Bruce turned to face him. “Look, I know you’re trying to hide something,” he snapped. “But I’m not here on behalf of a government, or scientists, or UFO nuts—I’m here on behalf of a young boy whose parents worked for this circus until their untimely deaths, and who recently discovered that they may have been keeping something from him.”

The man frowned and blew out a puff of smoke. “You’ll have to talk to Mr. Haley, Sir.”

“And where is Mr. Haley?” Bruce asked, his patience wearing thin.

“Florida,” the manager replied, then he turned on his heel and stomped off.

Bruce glared at his retreating back. “Well, then,” he muttered, low enough that only Dick with his special talents could hear, “it looks like we’ll be doing this the hard way.”

THE END