

Afterwards

By Lynn S. M. <lois_and_clark_fan_at_verizon.net
(Replace_at_with@)>

Rated: PG-13 for implied violence

Submitted February 2012

Summary: Shortly after Clark becomes Superman, he has to deal with the aftermath of a particularly disturbing crime.

WHAM Warning: I have tried to keep this story as free of graphic details as possible, but the implications of what took place are clear. It is NOT a cheery story, nor does it have a happy ending.

All recognizable characters belong to DC Comics and Warner Brothers. This story is not-for-profit.

This story was not beta read.

Clark flew toward the alley near the Daily Planet to change back into his civilian clothes. He had only been Superman for a few weeks, and he and his Mom were still trying to fine-tune his uniform. The latest iteration was a two-piece suit; his Mom had made it the night before as a variant on the one-piece outfit he had been wearing. She was visiting him for a few days to do some city shopping and thought she'd use their time together at night to try a different suit style.

A quick scan revealed that the alley wasn't empty. Hidden from the large cross-street by an industrial dumpster was a girl, perhaps eight years old, lying on her side, naked, whimpering, with her arms hugged to her chest. Her torn clothes lay strewn beside her. The blood on her upper thighs and the fingerprint bruises near her neck and on her lower back told their mute story of the grim crime that must have taken place minutes earlier.

Clark zoomed into the alley and landed a little distance away. He walked toward the girl and uttered in his most soothing voice, "You're safe now. No one is going to hurt you anymore." He reached out his hand to touch her shoulder in a comforting gesture.

She hadn't moved a muscle, even to look at him, until his hand made contact with her shoulder. Then she started thrashing wildly and screaming, "NO! Don't touch me! Get away!"

Clark immediately backed off and chastised himself for a fool. Of course the last thing this girl needed was to have another strange man touching her. He stripped off his suit top and handed it to her. "Here, you can wear this."

The girl looked over her shoulder, and her eyes widened a bit when she saw who had been speaking to her and what he was offering her. She sat up, took the proffered garment, and put it on. She stood up so that she could pull the top down as much of her as possible. Its hem came almost down to her knees, and she had to roll up the sleeves.

Clark again used his most soothing Superman voice.

"Hi. I'm Superman and I want to help you. Can you tell me your name?"

The girl said nothing, so Clark continued, "We need to get you to a hospital. May I pick you up to fly you to one?"

The girl shook her head violently and backed up a step.

"OK, then. I'm going to need to go get you some help. I'll bring an ambulance here, and I'll make sure that the people in it are all women. I'll also bring a female police officer to the hospital. But it will take a few minutes for me to make those arrangements. I don't want to leave you alone that long. So I'm first going to get a woman I know who will stay with you and make sure you're safe. OK?"

The girl nodded.

As Clark flew, he thanked whatever powers that be that it was still too early for the department stores to be open. His mom would still be

in the apartment. He knew of no one better than his Mom to provide solace to anyone who was hurting.

As he flew her to the alley, he quickly filled her in on the situation. He left her to care for the girl while he completed the other tasks he had described to the child. When the ambulance was on the scene and a female officer was at the hospital, he went in search of another alley in which to change into his civilian clothing. Although Superman's job was now done, he vowed that Clark Kent would investigate this crime and would see to it that the perpetrator was brought to justice and would never harm another girl like that again.

In his short time being Superman, he had already seen many crimes and tragedies, but he knew that this one would haunt him for a long time to come.

THE END