

# Superman and The Shadow - Matchmaker Chronicles Volume 0.5

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Rated PG-13 for violence

Submitted: 2017

Summary: Once again Tempus kidnaps Lois, only this time there is an accident, and she actually exchanges places with her doppelganger from the other universe. Her double happens to be Margot Lane, the girlfriend of the mysterious crime fighter known to the underworld as “The Shadow.”

Story Size: 93,673 words (503Kb as text)

Disclaimers: Some of the characters in this story are property of DC, December 3rd productions and Warner Bros. Others are Street & Smith Publications. No Copyright infringement is intended. I have just borrowed the characters for a short time. The rest are mine.

The Shadow stories that inspired this one were “Murder by The Dead,” 1937, and “The Silent Avenger,” 1938 although they have been adapted rather heavily.

In memoriam – William Christopher - Father Francis Mulcahy / Andrus - 10/20/1932 – 12/31/2016

I wish to express my thanks to my Beta readers Artemis (Welcome back, Artemis!), Ray Reynolds (Welcome back Ray!) and Morgana for their invaluable help. This was a VERY rough draft when it first landed in their collective hands.

/ “text”/ indicates telepathic communication

\*text\* indicates bold

<text> indicates thoughts

{text} indicates over the telephone

Universal Locator designation Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

Universal Locator designation Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Alt 25 Shadow

Author’s note:

I have been a fan of Superman, Batman, Flash, Green Lantern, Green Arrow, Fantastic Four, Iron Man, Spidey, The Shadow, Doc Savage, The Avenger and the other comic book and pulp heroes almost all of my life. When the Shadow series came out in paperback in the sixties I collected and read them. (*Yes, I am almost old enough to have read them when first published, almost, but not quite.*)

In recent years I have become an aficionado of Old Time Radio, with The Shadow being one of the shows I have collected. That being said, I believe that I am well steeped in the traditions of The Shadow as well as Lois and Clark.

I now offer for your enjoyment my tribute to both Superman and a superhero from the thirties, The Shadow. I hope to give you the

flavor of the times by adding musical clips that you can play in the background as you read. Frankly, some of the comments the characters make will be more understandable if you do.

As much as possible I have stayed true to The Shadow canon combining the early pulp stories with the later radio dramas. In this particular story I do take some license.

In my Matchmaker series canon, this story should be volume 0.5 would fit in as a prelude to Volume 1.

*And now, without further ado, we go back in time to a period before television, when radio was king, the time of - The Shadow*

This story starts immediately after Ultra Woman.

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## Chapter 1 – Metropolis November 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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They say that it is in Spring that a young man’s fancy turns to thoughts of love, but it was November in Metropolis and the day had dawned a clear crisp early autumn morning...

Clark Kent was whistling softly as he walked down the street.

He was about to pick up the love of his life and that thought brought an end to the whistling because it is very difficult to whistle when you are smiling. Barely keeping from floating, he skipped up the steps to her front door and let himself in. He took the elevator to the fifth floor and approached her door. He had barely knocked when he heard the locks being disengaged. As the door opened, he said, “You must have been waiting for me.”

Lois was dressed in a gray business suit and had the strap of her bag over her shoulder. The skirt came to mid-thigh and so did her jacket as she exited her apartment. “Actually, I was just leaving. I didn’t want to be late and if you had been any later, and I had been waiting for you, I would have been.”

Crestfallen, he stammered, “What ... but ... Wait a minute! I’m not late!”

Smiling, she replied, “I know, but that doesn’t keep me from ribbing you, now does it?”

“Oh, so you were waiting for me?”

“Of course, I was. Besides, if we were too late there’s always...” She gave the wavy hand signal that had come to symbolize flying, “the air taxi.” She snickered.

He smiled and took her hand in his as they turned toward the elevator.

Once they were on the sidewalk, Lois asked, “How soon do you want to get married?”

With a smile, he asked, “How long will it take to plan?”

Smiling, she replied, “That all depends on how big it is going to be. If we have it in Smallville, then it won’t take long. If we have it here in Metropolis, it won’t be as big as that fiasco that Luthor had set up, but it will be larger. I’m sure mother will want to have a hand in the planning and she will want something grandiose.”

That brought Luthor to mind and all of the manipulation, he had used to get her to marry him. She was relieved that she had recovered her senses in time to say ‘No’ at the altar. That day she had thought there had been an end to his manipulation, but then he had returned from the very dead and tried again. Would there be no end to his scheming?

She compared Luthor to Clark and there simply was no comparison. She really had never loved Luthor ... it was a dependence which he had created. Clark ... now there was a person to love. He was sweet, kind, gentle ... the direct opposite

of Luthor. Her grip on his hand tightened.

He noticed it and asked, "Problem?"

"No ... I was just thinking ... about how much I love you ... and how different you are from Luthor."

"I would hope so."

They walked on hand-in-hand.

When they neared the Planet building they stopped in a small bakery that they liked and Clark picked up a powdered sugar coated cake donut while Lois selected some croissants. Next, they picked up their coffees at Daryl's. As they approached, Frank, the vendor, spotted them and started making up their usual orders. He noticed something different, they were holding hands. As they approached the cart, he said, "Well, I see that something has changed."

Smiling, Lois brought up her left hand and replied, "We are engaged!"

"Well, congratulations. Here you go. They're on the house ... to celebrate."

"Thanks, Frank. That's very kind of you."

"If you weren't regular customers it might have been a different story. Enjoy!"

When they entered the Planet building, Lois was able to hold both her pastry bag and coffee in one hand and push the button with a finger on the other to summon the elevator.

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They were alone in the elevator. As the doors started to close, Clark took a bite of his donut. As soon as the doors were closed, Lois was in his arms, they were kissing and they didn't stop until they felt the elevator stopping.

As they stepped out, Jimmy spotted them and snickering, asked, "Sharing Clark's donut, Lois?"

Mystified, Lois replied with a grunt, "Huh?"

Clark looked at her face, smiled, placed his donut on top of his coffee cup, pulled out his handkerchief and wiped the powdered sugar from her mouth as Jimmy laughed and walked off.

Feeling like a couple of kids caught with their hands in the cookie jar, they moved to their desks and got to work.

After settling in, Lois nibbled on her croissants as she finished typing up a small article. Once she had finished it and e-mailed it to Perry she looked over at Clark, her partner, her fiancé. Sometimes she still had a hard time wrapping her mind around that. Clark was her fiancé ... they were going to be married soon. How did she ever get so lucky? He was busily researching something on the computer so rather than bother him she pulled out her calendar and started looking at dates. After five minutes of this, she gave up. She needed to make a lot of other decisions before she could pick a date so she put the calendar away.

As she did she again looked over at her fiancé. As she did, he sat up and looked around. He looked over at her and gave the little wavy hand signal and she knew that Superman was needed. She nodded her understanding and watched as he stood and headed for the stairwell, loosening his tie as he went. She was surprised that she had never noticed that before.

She turned back to her computer because she would have to wait for his return to find out what the emergency had been.

Other than that, it was a slow day in the newsroom and Lois was idly hitting random keys on her computer keyboard. She was actually thinking about her partner and was typing as she daydreamed about him. The keys weren't actually so random because they spelled out,

"Lois Lane,

Lois Kent,

Lois Lane-Kent,

Lois Olive Kent,

Lois Olive Lane-Kent,

Lois Kent,

Lois Lane,

Lois Kent,

Lois Lane-Kent,

Lois Lane-Kent."

Clark had left, probably to keep a plane from crashing or a ship from sinking or, heaven forbid, prevent another asteroid from crashing into the Earth or perhaps something as mundane as getting a cat out of a tree.

She stopped her typing and looking over at his empty desk, she thought about what she had recently learned about him. She still wasn't sure if she should be mad at him or not. It still stung that he hadn't told her and she'd had to figure it out for herself. The nerve of him, hiding just who he was for all that time.

She sighed as she thought back on what had happened even more recently. In that incident at the wishing well, which had been a trap, Clark's powers had been transferred to her by the red Kryptonite laser that the Newtrich sisters had used on Superman.

Her time as Ultra Woman had been quite a learning experience. Talk about walking a mile in someone's shoes.

It hadn't taken long before Lois understood just what it was like to be Superman and how hard it was to be him. She now had a new appreciation and fresh understanding of what he went through each day.

She had had his powers for almost a week, but that time spent as Ultra Woman had really been eye-opening. As a result, as soon as the situation had been resolved and Clark had his powers back, Lois had decided to take the bull by the horns and she had proposed to Clark. She looked down at her left hand and smiled at the diamond that glittered there. It had only been fitting since she had been the one to turn him down initially.

Right then and there she decided that she really had forgiven him.

Looking at what she had idly typed, she was surprised at what was there. She read the lines over and went back and struck out both of the names that included her middle name. She had never liked Olive even though she had been named after one of her favorite aunts. She decided that once they were married, professionally, she would remain, Lois Lane, but that in private she would be Lois Lane-Kent or Lois Kent, probably Lois Kent. It was traditional, after all, and she really didn't have a strong enough family tie to make her desire to hyphenate.

She looked at the clock and saw that it was getting close to lunchtime. Since she couldn't be sure just how long he would be gone, she decided to go to lunch and maybe he would be back before she returned.

Standing up and spotting Jimmy, she shouted, "Jimmy!"

Popping up from his chair and reaching for his camera in anticipation of an assignment, he eagerly replied, "Yeah, Lois?"

"Clark went out to check with one of his sources. If he gets back before I do, tell him I went to Travaglini's." Her new bag was in her bottom drawer. She'd had it custom made to be reversible, two tone, tan/black. Pulling her drawer open she reached in and grabbed the bag. She slung the strap over her shoulder, kicked the drawer closed and headed for the elevator.

As she did, Jimmy, disappointed that it wasn't some juicy assignment, replied, "Sure thing, Lois. I'll let him know," and gently placed his camera back on the desktop.

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When she got into the elevator she pushed the button for the ground floor and sighed as the ancient device closed its doors and rattled as it descended, something she never noticed when she had Clark there to distract her. Reaching its destination, the doors groaned as they opened and she stepped out, relieved that it had not dropped her to the basement and actually released her where she wanted to be.

Exiting the lobby of the Planet building, she passed out through the revolving door. Once on the sidewalk she paused and

shielding her eyes with one hand against the glare of the bright cloudless sky, she looked up hoping to see a red and blue clad figure in the clear sky. Disappointed in her quest, Lois sighed, turned left, and headed for Travaglini's cafe. After covering another half a block, she repeated her sky watching.

It was still a little before lunchtime, so the crowds on the sidewalk were light and she was pretty much alone with her thoughts. She knew that Clark really didn't want to wait too long for the wedding so she was starting to make mental lists. She was working on one of these lists as she was passing an alleyway, when her thoughts were interrupted, "Psssst. Hey you. Come here."

Lois stopped and peered into the gloom. Her eyes were still somewhat dazzled by having stared into the bright, sunlit sky so she couldn't see anything except shadows, but the voice was unmistakable. There was a nagging feeling in the back of her mind that she had heard that voice somewhere before. She stood there, undecided, reluctant to move from the sidewalk. Suddenly the snout of a chrome-plated automatic glittering in a beam of sunlight appeared as the voice, in a commanding tone, said, "In here, Miss Lane."

Seeing the automatic coupled with the voice caused instant recognition. She blurted out, "Tempus! You again?"

She tensed, preparing to flee when she was stopped by a wave of the gun and the voice saying, "Now, now, none of that. Step in here ... now. I could kill you where you stand, but where would be the adventure ... the irony in that. God, how I love irony. That would accomplish my ends, but it would be more ... messy, now wouldn't it?"

Hesitantly, moving as slowly as she dared, hoping that Clark would swoop in and save her, Lois stepped into the alleyway.

"Much better. Now just stand still and everything will be okay." He pulled a small device from his pocket and said, "This time I'm not taking any chances. I'm taking you and dropping you off where he will never find you." He pushed a few buttons and a doorway popped into existence in front of her. She was standing there, transfixed as he shoved her from behind.

As soon as he shoved her, he turned and hurried away not waiting to see the outcome. As far as he was concerned, there could be only one outcome. Exit Lois Lane ... exit Utopia. He had made sure that there was no Superman where he had sent her to help her get back. He had checked the records and there wasn't even a Clark Kent, no one that she could make into Superman. As he hurried away, he thought, <I'll need someplace to hide out for a while to make sure that Herb doesn't step in and correct things.>

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 - Alt 25

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As she stumbled through the portal she felt someone bump into her, then she was frantically trying to regain her footing. As she did, she spun around only to see the portal close in upon itself. Having traveled in time before, she was less disoriented than she had been on previous occasions. Looking around, trying to get her bearings, she found herself on a relatively busy city street. She received a couple of strange looks, but no one accosted her on her sudden appearance. She was thanking her lucky stars that most city dwellers kept to themselves. That was working in her favor.

As she was standing there, she was looking around, trying to figure out just where Tempus had dumped her.

She could see that it was a large city, but which one was it? Finally, as she scanned the cityscape, from where she stood she could see a rather large edifice dominating the skyline which she recognized as the Empire State Building. <Okay, so I'm in New York City. At least I'm not in the middle of a Kansas cornfield. Why? What is Tempus's plan this time?>

While she was musing on this revelation she heard a shout

from behind her, "Miss Lane? Miss Lane?"

She turned slowly at the name only to see a man in a taxi driver uniform, including a chauffeur's cap approaching. This was not the usual attire for a cabbie in Metropolis or New York for that matter. Incredulously, as he neared, she asked, "You know me?"

He stopped and looked her over. He stared at her legs for an extraordinarily long time before he shook himself and said, "Sure, I'd recognize youz anywhere. Burbank called and said the Boss wanted youz picked up. He wants I should bring youz to him. He's uptown, at de apartment. Uh, Miss Lane, if youz don't mind ... dat outfit ... uh ... it is a bit ... revealin', ain't it? I mean, The Boss prefers it if we ain't too splashy. Youz know what I mean?"

As he was saying all of this, Lois was trying desperately to understand. He had said 'The Boss'. Could that be Luthor? Maybe if she played along she could get more information. Thinking fast, she said, "Oh, this little thing, it's the latest thing from Paris. Don't you like it?"

As he stared at her legs, he said, in an appreciative tone, "Sure, Miss Lane, what's not to like? Youz got nice gams."

For some strange reason, his stare made her feel uncomfortable. She needed to move this encounter along. "Well, we don't want to keep The Boss waiting, now do we?"

Turning, he headed for the hack and she followed. When they got to it, Lois noted the style of the vehicle and decided that it wasn't anything from the nineties, it was black, large, boxy and it had running boards for heaven's sake. If she had needed to guess, she would have guessed the thirties or forties. He opened the back door for her to enter. As she did, her skirt, which was already short, hiked up a bit more and she caught the driver staring again.

When he closed the door, she was relieved when the locks didn't automatically engage. She looked around the interior of the hack and noted another discrepancy; there was no Plexiglas partition between her and the driver. She also found the driver's ID. When she spotted it she read, 'Moses Shrevnitz.' Just who was Moses Shrevnitz? He had mentioned another name, Burbank. She didn't remember any of Luthor's henchmen by those names. She decided that she would have to wait and face the issues as they came so she sat back and relaxed, but that only lasted for a second. The urge to acquire information was overwhelming. Since he was apparently known to her, using his surname wouldn't do. She'd have to be more familiar. She asked, "Moses, do you know why The Boss wants me?"

"Are you sure you are feelin' okay? Why are youz callin' me dat, Miss Lane. Youz know dat everybody calls me Shrevvy. Anyhow, no, I don't know. Mr. Cranston just said I was to pick youz up."

Her relief was palpable. At least, it wasn't Luthor, but just who was this Mr. Cranston? Well, she had gotten what she wanted – information, but this was information overload. Apparently, she was a lookalike for a Miss Lane in this world and she was an associate of a Mr. Cranston ... whoever that was and she was now in New York City. What was she exactly, secretary, girlfriend, sex partner? She'd have to be cautious.

Shrevvy's driving was smooth and he didn't switch lanes very often. A big difference between here in this New York and her Metropolis that was obvious was the noise level. It was a lot quieter here. In Metropolis there would have been horns blaring constantly.

Another thing she noticed was the absence of air conditioning in the cab. It felt like summer and she was dressed for Metropolis in the fall. Even with the windows rolled down it was stifling in the cab.

She unbuttoned her jacket and shrugged out of it, but that wasn't enough so she unbuttoned a couple of the buttons of her blouse and held it open to the breeze coming in the window. When she did, she noted Shrevvy looking at her in the mirror. She was just about to say something when her attention was drawn outside

of the confines of the cab because she heard a youthful voice shouting, “Extree! Extree! Read all about it! Japan invades China! Read all about it!”

Lois searched her memory. She remembered that Japan had invaded China before World War II. That had to be what he was shouting about. Okay, she was right about the time period. It was the thirties or forties, more likely the thirties.

Now that her attention had been drawn to the environment, she looked at the busy sidewalks and the numerous pedestrians as they drove and she found out just why Shrevvy had been staring at her legs. The current fashion had skirt lengths at mid-calf, not mid-thigh, which was the length of her skirt and most of the women wore hats. The men mostly wore business suits and almost all wore hats, fedoras like she had seen Indiana Jones wear in *Raiders* or derbies similar to that which Herb habitually wore. If she was going to fit in, she would have to change her wardrobe.

Deciding that she had enough information to mull over she sat back, fanned herself and contemplated while Shrevvy drove the cab. It wasn’t the kind of wild ride she was used to with Metropolis cabbies. It was rather pleasant, actually. Shrevvy was an excellent driver.

After a pleasant drive uptown, Shrevvy deposited Lois in front of a tall building. He held the door for her as she exited and she couldn’t get over the feeling that he was trying to look down her blouse and at her legs at the same time. Since she had no idea as to just what their relationship was she decided not to make anything of it. As she exited the cab she was carrying her jacket over her forearm and was wondering how she would negotiate the next hurdle.

Standing on the sidewalk she looked up and saw that the building they had stopped in front of was of Gothic architecture and topped twenty-five stories, had a gray stone façade and gargoyles at the roof corners. It reminded her of the ghost central building from *Ghostbusters*.

She couldn’t stand there forever, so with a shrug of her shoulders and thinking, <Well, here goes nothing.>, she headed through the doors into the lobby. As she did, the quandary about her next step was settled when the elevator starter said, “Good morning, Miss Lane.” She caught him staring at her legs and decided that the sooner she changed clothes the better.

He turned to the elevator operator, who was also staring at her legs, and said, “Penthouse.” Then he said to her, as she entered the car, “Watch your step, please.”

Well, that solved that problem. Mr. Cranston was in the penthouse and she apparently was a frequent visitor.

She entered the elevator, and it was a good thing she had heeded his advice because the floor of the car was a couple of inches below the floor level. Once she was in and the door closed, the operator threw over his lever, the car started to move and she was whisked to the top floor. Before he allowed her to exit, he operated his lever several times, lifting and dropping the car inches at a time until he was satisfied it was close enough.

As she exited the elevator, the operator said, “Watch your step, please.” Again it was a good thing that she heeded the admonition since the car floor was an inch above the landing. She wondered how much of his need to adjust the elevator’s position was caused by his distraction staring at her legs. Once out of the car she was greeted by a single door. As she approached the door she thought of the ‘ancient’ elevator at the Planet and was glad that it was self-service. Before she reached that door, the doors of the elevator closed and it dropped out of sight, even before she knocked.

From within, she heard, “Come in.”

She turned the knob and opened the door. As she did, through an entryway, she could see an opulent, although what she would have called old fashioned, apartment and a man in a housecoat, at a side table, with his back to her, pouring a cup of coffee. Without

turning around, he asked, “Would you like a cup, Margot?” Lois gasped because from the back, he looked like Clark and the voice was Clark’s.

Okay, so her name was Margot, Margot Lane. “Yes, I think I will,” She replied.

He stopped pouring and spun around, instantly on guard. His right hand started to move toward his left armpit but stopped when he saw her, and he dropped it back to his side. His piercing eyes drove into her very soul as he challenged, “Well, you look like Margot, but you are not her. Who are you? Why are you impersonating her?”

He looked like Clark, all except for the hairdo, it was slicked back the same as when he was in his Superman persona and no glasses. Gathering from what she had been told by Shrevvy, she knew that this must be The Boss. She needed an ally so she decided that honesty was the best policy, besides, if he looked this much like Clark, maybe he would have the same personality. “It wasn’t by choice. Shrevvy apparently mistook me for Margot. Yes, my name is Lane, but it is Lois, Lois Lane ... and I’m not from around here. This looks like New York. It has to be because I saw the Empire State Building, but it’s not the New York that I know. There’s just something ... different about it. I know ... where are the twin towers?”

Mystified, he asked, “What twin towers?”

“The World Trade Center, the tallest buildings in the world.”

“The Empire State Building is the tallest building in the world. Now, what have you done with Margot?”

His lack of knowledge of the World Trade Center confirmed her supposition of the time she was in. It seemed so strange to be standing here, being questioned by Clark, especially a Clark in his Superman persona. On firmer ground now, Lois replied, “I haven’t done anything with Margot. It would appear as though we have accidentally switched places. I’m here, in your New York and I suppose that she is where I came from, Metropolis.”

“Metropolis? Where is that? Is it somewhere in North America?”

“As a matter of fact, yes. It’s in New Troy. It’s on the east coast, south of Virginia and North of North Carolina.”

“I’ve never heard of it. Why did you exchange places?”

“It was none of my doing, I assure you. There’s this man, his name is Tempus. You wouldn’t by any chance have heard of him, would you?”

“I don’t believe so. Please continue.”

“Okay, well, there’s this guy, Tempus, and he has a pet project, which is keeping me and my fiancé apart. He’s from the future and that future is a utopia, which he hates and he thinks that by keeping us apart he can prevent that utopia from forming.”

“A man from the future. I recently read a fascinating story about time travel. I believe the title was ‘The Time Machine...’”

Lois interrupted and finished for him, “By H. G. Wells. Yeah, Herb and I are old friends. I hope that he is looking for me even now.”

“How could that be? He lives in England, doesn’t he?”

With a rueful expression on her face, she thought, <He’s still alive? Right, he died in 1946.> Lois replied, “Yeah, well, the truth is that he not only wrote about building a time machine, but he also actually built it. That’s how this whole mess started. He traveled to the future and met Tempus. He asked him to come back with him as proof of a future society. He didn’t know that the man was a homicidal maniac that wanted to destroy the family that was the basis for the utopia he lived in. He broke loose, got a time travel device of his own and has run amok ever since. This is just his latest attempt at keeping us apart.”

Mr. Cranston was thoughtful for several moments, mulling over this information before he asked, “What makes you and your fiancé so special that your family founds this utopia?”

Lois wondered briefly just how much she should reveal and

decided that if she wanted to return home she would need his help. The Clark in that other alternate universe had Clark's powers, maybe this one did too. He was so much like her Clark she felt that she could trust this man. "If I tried to describe him, you wouldn't believe it. My fiancé is kinda special. He has these ... abilities. He uses them to help people and fight crime."

A slow smile appeared on Lamont Cranston's face. Then he asked, "Does he use a secret identity?"

"Well, yeah, how'd you know?"

"Well, you see, I know because I too have certain ... abilities ... that I use to help people and fight crime."

This appeared to confirm Lois's supposition. She rolled her eyes and said, "Figures."

Lamont started to laugh. It was a rather sinister laugh that sent chills up Lois's spine. He asked, "Why do you say that?"

"According to Herb, that's Herb Wells, there are Lois and Clark or in this case, Margot and Lamont, couples in each universe. Somehow we are focal points in each universe's development. I've met another Clark. Unfortunately, he had lost his Lois. Even though he has all of my Clark's powers, he hasn't been able to find her."

"What does he call himself?"

"I was the one that named his super persona. I dubbed him 'Superman'. What name do you use?"

"Criminals call me 'The Shadow.' Why Superman?"

"It's because of all that he can do."

"Which is?"

"Well, he's faster than a speeding bullet, stronger than a locomotive and can leap tall buildings in a single bound, or so they say. Actually, he can fly under his own power and fast ... he's so fast all you see is a blur. Strong ... he picked up and lifted a spaceship into orbit. He can see through solid objects and start fires with beams from his eyes. Oh, and he used his super-cold breath to chill the wine several times."

In a musing tone, he responded, "He sounds like a physical marvel. You mentioned the Empire State Building a bit ago. There is a physical marvel here in the city. He makes his headquarters on the eighty-sixth floor of that building. His name is Doc. Savage. He has a team of associates that go with him on his adventures. Each is a specialist in his field. He has an Archeologist/Geologist, William Harper 'Johnny' Littlejohn, an Engineer, Colonel John 'Renny' Renwick, a Chemist, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Blodgett 'Monk' Mayfair, an electrical genius, Colonel Thomas J. 'Long Tom' Roberts, and a lawyer, Brigadier General Theodore Marley 'Ham' Brooks."

Lamont continued, "Doc himself was trained from babyhood, using scientific techniques to be stronger and faster than a normal man, able to see in the dark, climb with great agility and many other fantastic things. He has this vest with myriad pockets. Each one contains devices that range from glass-walled anesthetic balls to super-magnifying glasses. His associates use super-machine pistols that shoot anesthetic bullets."

Lois was amazed. She had never heard of anyone like that. "It almost sounds like a military organization, all those officers, and high ranking to boot!"

"They all became friends during the Great War." He paused for a second; thinking of what she had said, before asking, "Spaceship? What year do you come from that you have spaceships? We only have them in science fiction. Are they that common in your time?"

"It was 1995 when I got up this morning and no, they are not that common. What year is it here?"

"It is 1937."

Lois nodded her head and said, "I was right then. I heard a newsboy shouting a headline about Japan invading China. You are right on the cusp of World War II. In a couple of years, Adolph Hitler will start his world domination campaign."

Lamont nodded, "I have been afraid of that. Hitler has been Chancellor of Germany since the death of Hindenburg in August of 1934. He has been doing a lot of things that make me believe that he is preparing for war even though the Treaty of Versailles prohibited Germany from creating an army, navy, or air force. I've been following the newspapers. Anyone with eyes can see that there is trouble coming."

Lamont shook his head in doubt. "Roosevelt says he will try to keep us out of the fight. He is supposed to give a speech in a few days. I have sources that have gotten some of the content. He's going to be calling for an international quarantine against the epidemic of world lawlessness. Read for that Hitler's aggressions against his neighbors."

Continuing, Lamont said, "Hitler's agents have been stirring up trouble in areas, like the Rhineland, bordering on Germany. My thought is that they will 'ask' for help from Germany which will give Hitler an excuse to act."

"Roosevelt's speech will actually be opposed to the current political climate which is all for neutrality. He thinks that we can use economic pressure to cause him to stop."

Lois replied with certainty, "He will fail. Japan and Italy will ally with Germany in the Axis."

German U-Boats will sink a couple of American Destroyers on convoy duty, but the people won't start calling for blood until December 7, 1941. That will be when, in an unprovoked surprise attack, Japan will bomb Pearl Harbor. A couple of hours after the attack the declaration of war will be delivered to Cordell Hull by the Japanese ambassador. It was supposed to be delivered earlier. They had difficulty decoding and transcribing it, but that's no excuse.

That is what will bring the U.S. into the war. It will be a war on two fronts, Europe, which will spill over into North Africa, and the Pacific."

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## Chapter 2 – New York 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 - Shadow

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It was 8:30 in the morning and Margot Lane had overslept. She realized that when she saw the clock on her bedside table. The alarm hadn't awakened her, it had been the telephone bell and it was still ringing. She sat up, stretched, and swung her feet over the side of the bed. She slipped into a pair of mules, grabbed a silken robe, and donned it as she moved into the sitting room to answer the phone. Picking it up, she lifted the earpiece and held it near her ear as she spoke into the horn in her pleasant contralto, "Hello."

{Good morning, Margot. Did I awaken you?}

"Good morning, Lamont. Yes, but it's okay, I needed to get up anyhow. I was out late for the museum benefit. We had some very wealthy and generous guests. Our ladies' club raised \$25,000. You should have been there. I missed you."

{"Unfortunately, I had other commitments to fulfill."}

"I understand. How did it go last night?"

{It went well. The counterfeiters have been caught.}

"That's good news. What about Mary Sullivan?"

{Safe. Michael Sullivan will be released today and she will pick him up. He will be returning to his family and his store.}

"Why are you calling?"

{I wanted to remind you of our dinner tonight at The Savoy with Commissioner Weston and his wife. I have planned for Shrevvy to pick you up. He'll be at his usual spot in three hours.}

Smiling, she replied, "I hadn't forgotten, in fact, I'm looking forward to it. I always love the band at The Savoy. We are going to dance, aren't we?"

She could just imagine his smile as he said, {I feel certain that I would not be able to keep you off the dance floor and that I

will be accompanying you.)

Laughing, she replied, "I'm looking forward to it. I'll meet Shrevvy at the appointed time."

{I'll see you in a little while then.}

"In a little while. Bye."

{Bye, Margot.}

She decided that she would have to ask Lamont for the details later as she hung up the phone.

Margot thought about the previous day and the adventure it had brought their way.

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They had been in the courtroom when Michael Sullivan had been called to the stand.

The DA had been questioning him and for some reason, he had been evasive in his answers. The DA in frustration said, "With the court's permission, I'll rephrase that question." Directing his question to the witness, he asked, "Mr. Sullivan, do you know how these counterfeit five and ten dollar bills came to be in the cash register in your grocery store?"

"I ... uh ... I got them from customers, I guess."

"Michael Sullivan, you are a witness in a federal trial, under oath, to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing, but the truth. Do you know you can be sent to prison for perjury?"

Sullenly, he answered, "Yes, I know it well enough."

"Before this trial began you testified that the defendants, in this case, Slader and Murino, entered your store and forced you to buy counterfeit five and ten dollar bills to be passed out as change to your unsuspecting customers. Why have you changed your testimony? Why?"

"I was mistaken, that's all," was his sullen answer.

"That's a lie, Michael Sullivan, a lie."

At the DA's direct accusation there was a stir in the courtroom and the judge had to bang his gavel and shout, "Order. Order in the court!" He then directed his next statement, "Mr. Prosecutor?"

"Yes, your honor."

"It is quite apparent that your witness has received a threat, either to himself or his family if he testified against the defendants in this case. If he will not repeat his sworn testimony against these defendants I have no alternative, but to dismiss the charges." He banged his gavel and said, "Case dismissed."

This created another stir in the courtroom. He banged his gavel several times as he said, "Order. Order in the court!"

The prosecutor said, "Your honor, I demand that Michael Sullivan be, held on a charge of perjury."

In reply, the judge declared, "Michael Sullivan, much as the court might sympathize with your reasons and motives for shielding these criminals who prey on the unsuspecting public in the wholesale commerce of worthless counterfeit money, I have no alternative, but to sentence you to one year in prison."

Michael Sullivan was stunned and stammered, "One ... one year in prison... But your honor, there's my wife and my daughter, Mary. I'm afraid of what they will do to them if I tell the truth."

"I'm sorry, Michael Sullivan, but unless you testify..."

Desperation was in his voice as he cried, "I can't. I tell you. I can't."

"Then the sentence of one year in prison must stand. Court's adjourned."

"It ain't fair! It ain't right! I get a year in prison for tryin' to protect my family and the real crooks go free! Look at 'em walkin' outta the courtroom, free as the air to go on with their dirty business."

With the courtroom astir around them, Lamont Cranston and Margot Lane had a private conversation in low tones.

"Lamont, of all the unfair, unjust sentences..."

"I know, Margot. It seems cruel and harsh, but our whole legal system is being undermined by threats and intimidation of

witnesses."

"Isn't there something we could do, Lamont? Some way of helping Michael Sullivan?"

Lamont replied, "Michael Sullivan isn't the only one who is suffering from the operation of this counterfeit ring. Small businessmen, shopkeepers, poor people who can't afford to get bad money..."

"A counterfeit five-dollar bill probably means the difference between eating and not eating to a lot of those people over in Sullivan's neighborhood."

"Exactly, Margot. They are preying on poor people who can't defend themselves."

"Lamont, are you going to take up the case as the Shadow?"

"Well, perhaps, but right now, Margot, Lamont Cranston and Margot Lane can help by doing a little shopping in Michael Sullivan's grocery store."

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They arrived just as a poor woman was leaving, counting the five one dollar bills she had received in exchange for the counterfeit five dollar bill she had received in change the day before.

As they approached the shop, Margot noted a man watching the shop from across the street.

As they entered the shop, Lamont said, "Ah, here we are, Margot."

Mary said, "I'll be with you in just a moment."

Lamont replied, "Thank you."

And then Mary addressed Mrs. Jovani, "If you hear of anyone else who has any of these bad bills that father had to give out, let me know, Mrs. Jovani. I'll make them good if it takes every cent we've got.

"I will. Well, good-a-bye."

"Goodbye, Mrs. Jovani."

Turning to Lamont, she said, suspiciously, "Good evening. What do you want?"

Margot replied, "A couple cans of corn and perhaps some string beans."

Lamont added, "A loaf of bread ... perhaps with some butter."

Mary asked, "You're strangers in this neighborhood?"

Lamont added, "Ah ... yes, and get some peaches."

Margot said, "Yes, two large cans of peaches."

Mary challenged, "Strangers don't come way over here to this section to buy groceries." She reached for the gun under the counter and challenged, "Who are ya, and whaddya want?"

Lamont ordered, "Miss Sullivan, put away that gun. You're a courageous, but a rather foolish young woman."

"Maybe so, but I don't have anyone to think of beside myself. I'm not like my dad who was afraid because he had a family."

Margot injected herself into the conversation, "Please Miss Sullivan, we're not members of the counterfeit ring that's been terrorizing your father."

"How do I know that?" she challenged.

Lamont answered, "If we were members of that ring, Miss Sullivan, you would have been shot long before you could have pulled out that gun. It's very obvious."

"Well, what do ya want?"

"For appearances sake because this door is being watched. I suggest that you give us the groceries we ordered."

"All right. What was it now?"

Margot replied, "Corn, string beans and peaches."

As she set the cans on the counter, Mary said, "Here's the corn. Who are you, newspaper reporters or the police?"

Lamont challenged, "Would you like to save your father from that year in prison?"

"Yes, anything. It's killing my mother. Who are you? How can you save my father?"

Lamont turned to Mary and said, “Now, the other things. Keep moving ... listen to me.”

“Yes, sir?”

“You’re a brave girl, Miss Sullivan, but your life won’t be worth one of those counterfeit bills unless you use your head.”

“Whaddya mean?”

“Do you know enough about this counterfeit ring ... how they operate and who they are to make them fear you would talk?”

“I know how they operate, but Slader and Murino were the only ones that came here.”

“Slader and Murino will be out of the picture for the present. Get me anything, anything at all. Make a package.”

“My father never saw anyone else, at least none of the big shots. I’ll put this stuff in a paper bag.”

Margot had been acting as lookout and said, “There are two men now in that doorway across the street.

“Now, Miss Sullivan, I can’t tell you who I am or exactly why I’m here except that I was in court today. I want to help you. I can, if you are willing to take a great risk to help your father.”

“I’ll do anything for Dad. If I don’t get him out, I’m afraid my mother will die. If I only knew who was behind Slader and Murino. Who was their boss?”

“You can find out, but you know what happens to those who know too much.”

“I’ll take that risk. How can I find out who they are?”

“By pretending to know more than you do.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Those men across the street will undoubtedly come in her the minute we leave. They’ll question you. Pretend you know how they operate.”

“Yes?”

“But you want to be paid to keep quiet.”

“Yes?”

“They’ll take you to a higher up. Maybe not the ringleader, but someone who knows the real leader.”

Margot interjected, “But they’ll kill her.”

“Not until they find out how much she knows and who else shares that knowledge.”

“It’s all right. I don’t care.”

“It’s only fair to warn you ... you’re taking a desperate chance.”

“What’ve I got to lose? They’ll probably try to put me out of the way anyhow. They all know how I feel about ‘em. I said I’d kill ‘em for what they did to my father if I ever found out who they were.”

Margot pointed out, “Those men ... they’ve started across the street.”

“We have to go, Miss Sullivan ... better think over what I said before you act.”

“I’ll do it. My mind’s made up.”

“Come on, Margot.” Lamont and Margot exited the store to the accompaniment of the bell on the door.

Once they were in the car, Margot accosted Lamont, “Lamont, aren’t you letting that girl take a terrible risk?”

“Margot, that girl was marked for death before we came here.”

“What are we going to do? Look, those men, they’re going into the store.”

At that point, Lamont directed her, “Margot, get a taxi and get out of this district. Make sure you are not followed. I believe you have a benefit to attend, unfortunately, I will not be able to be there with you. Make your way there. If I need assistance, I’ll use a radio to call Burbank.”

“But won’t you tell me what you’re going to do?”

“There’s no time, Margot. I have to see where they take her. From now on, the fate of Mary Sullivan ... is in the hands of ... The Shadow.”

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Even though she was worried about Lamont going up against the counterfeiter gang alone, Margot had followed his instructions to the letter. She had hailed a cab and given an address. Just in case she was being followed, she had paid the fare and left the cab when it had been stopped in traffic. She had gone around a corner and taken another cab. She repeated this once more and being fairly certain that she could not have been followed, she had finally given the address of her apartment. After changing clothes, she had contacted Burbank and asked that Shrevvy pick her up to take her to the benefit.

When she got home she called Burbank and he had not heard from Lamont and that only served to increase her worry.

Eventually she went to bed for a fitful night’s sleep only to be awakened by Lamont’s phone call and him acting like nothing out of the ordinary had occurred. As if she shouldn’t have been worried about him.

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After the call, she had spent a leisurely couple of hours in her apartment. She had the **radio** on in the background playing swing. She liked classical, some of it anyhow, but swing was her passion. Whenever she and Lamont went out to a club, they spent time on the dance floor and that was exactly what she was looking forward to because tonight they were going to The Savoy, and they always had a hot swing band playing. She had ordered her breakfast and eaten it while she had scanned the newspaper. She noted an article about the capture of the counterfeiting ring. The Harbor Patrol had been called and they had found two dead mobsters, the leader of the gang and the presses on a yacht. Ballistics reports said that one of the mobsters had been killed by the gang leader. Inspector Cardona admitted that the tip-off had been received by radio from The Shadow. Lamont had been very busy last night. After finishing breakfast and the paper she had taken her time getting dressed for the day.

She was humming along with a song as she was going through her closet, she thought, <I really need to pick up a few new things. Lamont has seen all of these things so often, I’m sure he’s growing tired of seeing me in them.>

She finally decided on what to wear and after dressing, headed out to meet Shrevvy. When she stepped out of the apartment building, she was dressed in morning attire, a lightweight mid-calf length beige, floral print, crepe skirt, short sleeve rust colored silk blouse, and brown pumps. On her head rested a beige pillbox hat and over her shoulder was the strap of her bag. Since Shrevvy didn’t take regular fares he couldn’t park at the regular cab stand in front of her apartment building, so he would be parked just around the corner.

She had taken too long dressing and was now a few minutes late, so she was rushing down the street. She would be changing at the penthouse later, because they were going to be having dinner with Commissioner Ralph Weston and his wife. Also present would be Inspector Cardona, another one of the highest-ranking police officials in the city.

Afterward Lamont might be going to visit the state penitentiary. An inmate had been executed and Lamont wanted to follow up on it.

She had realized that she was late and was looking at her watch to see just how late as she rushed on and didn’t see the doorway that opened in front of her and she stumbled through. As she did she bumped into someone moving in the other direction. Once the universe stopped moving and she had her bearings again, she started to mutter an apology to the person she had bumped, but there was no one there, just a shadow filled alley. Turning around she saw the back of a man as he was hurrying away.

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Metropolis November 1995

Margot was shocked and dazed from the unexpected time travel, although she didn't know that was what it was, and the unfamiliar sights and sounds. There was a constant roar of traffic and car horns. To top it all off, the horns all sounded strange. She found herself spinning slightly, trying to stabilize herself because she was still somewhat dazed, she stumbled backwards, into the street. When she finally stopped she looked up to see a yellow painted vehicle with its horn blaring, bearing down on her at a rapid speed. An involuntary scream was torn from her throat, "HELP!"

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When Clark had left the bullpen a short time before lunch, it was because Superman had been called away to respond to a traffic accident. When he had arrived, he had found a middle aged black woman trapped in the damaged car. He had swooped down and landed next to the car just as the Fire/Rescue arrived. He evaluated the wreck and decided that because of the crumpled quarter panel, the driver's door would have to be removed to get her out so stepping forward, he grasped the door frame where the window was down and yanked. The door came off cleanly in his hand.

Once the door had been removed, he reached in and unclasped her seatbelt. He offered his hand to assist the woman to exit the vehicle. She was crying too hard to notice. He did a quick x-ray and determined that there were no broken bones. Faced with this unknown situation he asked, "Is there anything I can do?"

She answered, "No ... yes, you can get me away from here to some safe place."

"Why is that?"

"We just got this car! We had to replace our last one when I had a wreck and Ultra Woman had to rip the door off that one. My husband threatened to sue Ultra Woman, he's going to kill me."

Just then an ambulance pulled up and Superman led her over to it. As he assisted her inside he said to the attendant, "No broken bones, but she is emotionally upset, very upset. Perhaps observation."

"Sure thing, Superman. Thanks. For your help."

As he stepped back preparatory to taking off he said, "Don't mention it."

The woman he had just rescued had mentioned Ultra Woman so as he soared into the air, Clark was thinking of Lois and the time she had spent as Ultra Woman. It had been a difficult time on both of them, but especially on Lois. She had needed to learn how to control her powers and also make decisions about who to help, but more importantly, who not to help. A smile came to his lips as he thought about the outcome. After Lois had seen just what it was like to be him, she had rescinded her refusal to his proposal by proposing to him. Now they were engaged to be married and he was the happiest man on this or any planet.

He spotted a clock on the outside of a building and realized that it was almost lunchtime. If he hurried, he might make it back to the Planet before Lois left for lunch and they could go together. Thus thinking, Clark changed his heading and started for the Planet.

As he approached the Planet he was using his telescopic vision to check the roof to make sure that there was no one there to see him change, but as he neared the roof his hearing picked up Lois's voice shouting for help. A quick scan found her. He was confused for an instant because she apparently had changed clothes. He quickly overcame his confusion because she was in the middle of the street with a Metrocab bearing down on her. Putting on a burst of speed, he landed right behind her. He was only on the ground for an instant, but in that time he placed his arms around her and took off again, his precious cargo wrapped up in them.

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Margot had been frozen to the spot and it seemed inevitable that the vehicle would hit her when suddenly, she was snatched from the jaws of death and whisked skyward. That tore another scream from her throat, "What?!" just before she passed out.

When she came back to her senses she could feel a cool breeze on her cheek. She felt herself being carried and looking around saw that she was up in the air. She started to scream again, but a very familiar voice stopped her when she heard, "Don't worry, I've got you."

Sill panicky, her eyes wide in shock, she screamed in terror, "You've got me!?! But Lamont, who's got you???"

In a soothing tone, he asked "Lois, are you okay?"

Still panicked, but puzzled, she asked, "Lois? Who's Lois?"

Now he was puzzled. "Aren't you Lois Lane?"

Calming somewhat, she replied, "You got the Lane part right, but the name's Margot, Margot Lane. Do you mean to tell me that you're not Lamont?"

"Lamont? Who's Lamont?"

"Lamont Cranston, my boyfriend." She looked around and said, "I don't see the Empire State Building. I was in New York. This is a strange city. Where am I?"

"This is Metropolis."

"Metropolis, where's that?"

"New Troy."

"New Troy? Never heard of it. How did I get here? The last thing I remember; I was going to meet Shrevvy. Lamont was supposed to be taking me to dinner. I remember, I was looking at my watch. The next thing I knew I was on a strange sidewalk. If you're not Lamont, who are you?"

"I'm Superman."

"Seems a bit ostentatious."

Shrugging off her comment, Clark said, "I think we have to talk. You need to tell me what happened to Lois."

"I don't know any Lois."

"You'll have to pardon me if I don't believe you." At this point he was starting to think that something strange had happened. Using his x-ray vision, he scanned the Planet building and didn't spot Lois. Then he used his super-hearing. When he did, the heartbeat of the woman in his arms was that of his fiancée. An explanation for what had happened was forming in his mind so he shaped his course for his apartment.

When they landed on the balcony, Margot broke free of him and challenged, "Why have you brought me here, wherever here is?"

"Sorry, but this is the first place I thought of. We need privacy and we will have it here." He decided to test his theory, "Now, why don't you tell me just who you are and what you have done with Lois."

Confusion evident on her face, she squeaked out, "What have I done with Lois? What have you done with me?" Her voice firmed on the final question. "Why did you bring me here?"

"I told you, this is my apartment."

"I don't mean that. Why did you bring me here ... to Metropolis?"

"I didn't bring you to Metropolis."

Margot was becoming exasperated and her tone began to rise. "If you didn't bring me here, then how did I get here?"

Trying to calm her, Superman asked, "What's the last thing you remember?"

With asperity in her tone, she replied, "I told you, I was hurrying down a sidewalk in New York City and then I looked up and I was here, in Metropolis, wherever that is and something, I guess it was a car, was trying to run me down. That was a car, wasn't it? It looked very strange and ... yellow. Look, I need you to send me back. Lamont needs me and I need him."

This was all confirming his hypothesis. There was one sure way to be confirm his suspicion, he said, "I think I have an idea as

to what has happened. Why don't we go inside, sit down and discuss this situation?"

Margot shivered because she was dressed for New York in the late summer and it was now November in Metropolis. She wrapped her arms around herself and said, "That sounds like a good idea. It's chilly out here."

They stepped in through the French doors into Clark's bedroom, passed through that into his living room.

Margot looked around and gasped.

That was what Clark had been waiting for, he asked, "What's wrong?"

She turned on him and in an indignant tone, she accused, "How dare you ... you ... thief!" She flung out an arm and pointed at Clark's African tribal mask and said, "Why did you steal Lamont's mask? That was a souvenir of his travels. Then she caught a glimpse of his fertility idol and shifting her pointing finger added, "And his fertility idol!"

Clark nodded in understanding at this confirmation and then said, "I think I know what has happened and I think I can explain to your satisfaction. Won't you please have a seat? Would you like a cup of coffee?" In an encouraging tone, he added, "It'll warm you up."

Looking around for other items, several caught her eye and distractedly she dropped onto the couch and said, "Coffee? Sure. Two sugars and milk, please."

"Sugar or artificial sweetener?"

"Artificial sweetener? What's that?"

"Never mind. Coffee with two sugars coming right up." Clark quickly fixed two cups of coffee and bringing them in, set them on the coffee table.

As he seated himself, he indicated his souvenirs and began, "Believe it or not, those are mine and I gathered them on my world travels."

"But they're the same as the ones Lamont has."

"I don't doubt that in the slightest. Look at it this way; I mistook you for Lois Lane. You mistook me for Lamont Cranston. You look like her and I must look like him. What I propose is this, a swap has been made. Lois, my Lois is now in your New York and you, Margot Lane are now in her Metropolis. An old nemesis of mine, Tempus, has to be the one that did this."

"With what you can do, the flying thing, why don't you just take me to New York and pick her up? Another thing, since you can fly, why have I never heard of you?"

"I'd love to if it was that simple, but it isn't. This is the hard part, Tempus didn't just move you from one city to another. He has moved you from one reality, one universe, to another. Think of an onion, many thin layers side-by-side making up the whole. The universes are like that, many of them side-by-side. What Tempus has done is move you from one layer to another. You haven't heard of me because ... I apparently don't exist in your reality. This is one of his most nefarious schemes."

As she listened, she had picked up her cup and sipped and when he had finished, asked, "Tempus?"

"A man from the future. The future of this planet is a utopia, a utopia that he is disgusted with and wants to destroy. Tempus has made many attempts to do just that. He is able to do this because he has a time travel device that he stole from Herb Wells." Clark smiled and continued, "I don't think he planned on this switch and that may just be our ace in the hole. It is just possible that the way I found you, your Lamont may find Lois. If that's the case, one or the other team might just find a way to correct the situation."

Margot seemed out of her depth as she asked, "But how can we do that? I don't even know how I got here. If we don't know how I got here, how can we reverse it?"

"Ah, you see, we don't have to know how you got here. All we need to know is who brought you here. I'm pretty sure that would be Tempus. The easiest way to find him is to let him find

us."

Mystified, she asked, "What do you mean?"

"Tempus's main motivation is to keep me and my fiancée apart because he believes that will prevent utopia from being formed. I think the easiest way to make him come to us is if we make him believe that he failed and we are still together."

Margot looked confused, but then admitted, "Sounds reasonable. I guess."

"Do you think you could pretend to be my fiancée?"

"Now, wait just a dog gone minute. If you think we are going to play patty cake just to convince this guy that he failed, well, you need to think again."

Mystified, Clark asked, "What did you think I meant?"

"Look, we're grown-ups, but I draw the line at..."

Clark was mystified as to just what she was implying, but then he got it and slapping his forehead, said, "Oh, I see, well, we don't ... that is to say we aren't having ... we are engaged, but we haven't consummated our relationship. We decided to wait until we are married for that."

Relief was obvious in her voice as she replied, "Well, all right. Lamont and I aren't engaged yet and we haven't... If you were going to ask that, I'd have had to say ... no."

"I understand completely. I need to make a call. I'm going to call my editor and tell him that Lois isn't feeling well and we will be working from home for a couple of days."

"What do you do?"

"Lois and I are investigative reporters for a major metropolitan newspaper. I couldn't just take you in there and introduce you as Lois. You wouldn't know the people we work with. Your cover would be blown right away. I'll have to coach you."

"You work as a reporter? Dressed like that?"

He looked down at himself and realized that he had forgotten to change. He smiled and said, "Uh, well, no. I wear civilian clothes for that. This is a costume I use to protect my secret identity."

Margot relaxed some more. "That I can relate to."

Hearing her comment, Clark decided that he would need to follow up on it. "Be back in a second." He stepped into the bedroom and did a spin change and reappeared in his business suit.

She let out an "Ah" and then said, "I like the cut of that suit. Is that a new style?"

"No, this style has been around for a few years."

"I'm used to double-breasted suits. I might just suggest glasses to Lamont."

"Double breasted suits went out of fashion some time ago. This may seem like a foolish question, but please bear with me, what year was it before you found yourself here?"

"It was September 25, 1937, when I got up this morning."

"That confirms it. Today is November 15, 1995. Tempus not only moved you from your city, New York and presumably your world, he also moved you ahead about fifty-eight years."

She gasped and dropped back onto the sofa. "Fifty-eight years? How did that happen?"

"Tempus is a time traveler. He has a device that facilitates his movement through time and space."

"Well, how does all of this get me home?"

"By convincing him that he made a mistake. That should draw him out. In order to do that, I will need to coach you on how to be Lois Lane."

"Sounds like you've got your work cut out for you. How long has she known these people?"

In a deflated tone he said, "Years. She was an intern with the paper before she made the promotion to reporter."

Her eyes went wide in disbelief, "You expect me to develop years of familiarity with these people in just a few days?"

Snapping his fingers, Clark said, “I know, the almost accident you just had. We can say that Superman saved you, but because of the closeness of the incident, you have hysterical amnesia and that your memory is hazy but should return eventually.”

She replied, “That might get us by. I guess we have no other option. We have to try it.”

“First thing I need to do is use the keys that Lois gave me to her apartment so that you can change your clothes. Right now fashion is all over the place, but predominately, skirt lengths are a lot shorter than what you have on.”

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### Chapter 3 – New York 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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Lamont shook his head at this revelation and said, “Another world war. I suppose it is inevitable. Ah, well, in the meantime there are still crimes to prevent and people to help.” He stopped himself and rhetorically asked, “Where are my manners, would you like a seat?” He guided her over to a chair and then sat across from her. “Would you like that cup of coffee now?”

She nodded and arising, he crossed to the side table and prepared two coffees, “Sugar and cream?”

“I don’t suppose you have any artificial sweetener, do you?”

“I’m afraid not.”

“Sugar then, two spoons.”

He fixed her coffee and then set it on a table beside her chair.

She sipped it gratefully as he continued to speak.

“Your fiancée, Clark, I could wish that there was someone like him here. I guess that Doc. Savage is the closest we can come. What must it be like to have those powers?”

“I can tell you, it’s incredible. Recently his powers were transferred to me for a short time. The things he can do are almost beyond comprehension. There was a car wreck and I was able to pull the door completely off the car so that emergency personnel could get an injured woman out of the wreck.”

He whistled in amazement and asked, “How did he acquire these miraculous powers? Was he the subject of a secret government experiment or the product of scientifically designed training like Doc. Savage? Perhaps, a scientist experimenting on himself? You say that you have spaceships, did he fly off in one and become exposed to unknown quantities of radiation?”

“Actually, he was born with them, but he wasn’t born on Earth. His parents sent him to Earth when their planet, Krypton, was destroying itself. Krypton was a massive planet circling a red sun. Under Earth’s lighter gravity and yellow sun, he has his powers. Saving him was their last act of love. They didn’t have time to build a larger craft to save themselves so they converted an experimental ship into a life pod to save their son. When he arrived here, he was a special gift to a lovely childless couple in Kansas and then he became my special gift.” She finished in a wistful tone. Coming back from where the thoughts had taken her, she asked, “The Shadow, what is that supposed to mean?”

As he began to speak he arose and moved across the room. As he did he started removing his dressing gown and stepped to a closet. As he removed the dressing gown, Lois noticed a ring that he wore. It was a magnificent ring that seemed to glow from within with a mystic/hypnotic light. It was the largest girasol opal she had ever seen. The light from within seemed to be aimed at her no matter what position his hand was in.

Opening the door of the closet partially obscured him, but he continued to speak, “Miss Lane, I have spent many years in the near and far east studying the forgotten sciences of the mind under mystics and holy men. After years of study, I am able to use my mind to influence people.” As he pulled off the dressing gown, she saw a harness of some sort across his shoulders.

Lois saw him reach into the closet and pull out a black slouch hat and put it on. “The weaker the will, such as you find in the majority of the criminal elements, the greater the influence.”

Lois saw him grab a cloak the outside of which was a rich profound black with a scarlet lining. Lois couldn’t help thinking that it was the same color as Superman’s cape.

He stepped past the door as he put on the cloak. She saw it swish around as he threw it around his shoulders.

“I am able to prevent people from seeing me as I blend into the ... shadows.”

He stopped speaking and Lois’s curiosity was piqued. She stood and approached the closet. She moved into a position where she could look into the closet.

She was astonished when she saw nothing there other than the dressing gown hanging on a hanger. She was sure she had seen him there just seconds prior. She stepped forward and started sweeping the space with her hands only to find empty air.

Suddenly his voice was behind her, “As you can see. There is nothing there, simply a ... shadow.”

She whirled around and still saw nothing.

The voice appeared to emanate from the very air in front of her. “By preventing evildoers from seeing me I can spy on them and disrupt their plans.”

Suddenly, as if by magic, the girasol appeared, then his outline shimmered into existence and he quickly solidified.

She muttered, “That’s one power Clark doesn’t have.”

As he finished materializing, he lifted the sides of his cloak to disclose twin shoulder holsters, each holding an M1911, government model .45 Cal automatic. Nodding to herself she realized that that was the harness she had seen. “There are times when invisibility is not enough. Occasionally, I have to resort to fighting my way to freedom and it is best to be prepared. What about Clark?”

“Sometimes I wish he had some means of defense. He is invulnerable to everything except this radioactive greed rock called Kryptonite. That stuff takes away his powers and can make him weak as a kitten. Generally, he doesn’t need a weapon. When you aren’t being The Shadow, what do you do?”

With a laugh, he replied, “Most people think I’m a rich ne’er do well. Sometimes I play at being an amateur detective. Actually, I do that so that I can get information from the police on cases. What do you and Clark do?”

“Clark Kent and I are investigative reporters for the Planet. We are reporting partners.”

As she spoke Clark’s name, Lamont had gasped. He challenged, “Did you say Kent?”

“Yes, Clark Kent.”

“Even my closest associates do not know this secret, so please do not divulge it to anyone.”

“I’m pretty good at keeping secrets.”

“The person you see before you, Lamont Cranston is yet another ‘secret identity’ that I use. My real name is Kent, Kent Allard. Before I became The Shadow, I was a military man, an aviator, a spy, and an adventurer. Odd ... the name similarity.”

“Clark was his mother’s maiden name. She married Jonathan Kent.”

Again, he was startled. “I was named after my grandfather’s line on my mother’s side, Jonathan Kent.”

There was wonder in her tone as she said, “So, you are a Kent too. There’s more to it than that, as I already said, you look like my Clark Kent.”

“My word, and we both fight crime. But enough about him, what about you. So, you also are an investigator?”

“Yes, we work for a world renowned newspaper, The Daily Planet. We investigate crime and corruption and bring the perpetrators to justice.”

“Miss Lane, it would appear as though we have the same

motivations. My girlfriend, Margot Lane, and I also investigate crimes and corruption and bring the perpetrators to justice. If at all possible we prevent crimes from even happening.”

Suddenly the phone rang. To Lois’ ear, it sounded odd ... old fashioned, a bell. With a whisper of cloth, Lamont moved to the side and picked up the phone. It looked a lot like a tall candlestick with a large ball and a funnel attached to the top while the base had a dial attached. The earpiece was hanging in a hook on the side. Lamont picked the device up, lifted the earpiece from the hook and held it close to his ear. He listened for a second, heard, {Burbank.} and then, speaking into the funnel, he said, “Report.”

He listened some more and then in a hushed tone said, “Orders. Call Harry Vincent. Have him find a room overlooking the entrance to the rooming house. He is to watch who enters and leaves. He is looking for the tall stranger with brown hair, possibly a beard. His clothing may be somewhat out of step with the time, odd. That is all.” He hung up the phone.

As he turned, Lois asked, “Who was that on the phone? Who’s Harry Vincent?”

“That was Burbank. He handles my communications. Harry is one of my agents. Shrevvy is another one. They all help with information gathering.”

“Wow, so like Doc. Savage, you have a team. Clark has always had to act alone until now that is. Now I help him, mostly by covering for him, to protect the secret. There are times I wish I could do more, but without powers similar to his, what could I do?”

“I’m sure that you do all that you can to help. Speaking of which, perhaps, if you were willing since Margot is away, you could help me. A few months ago there was a trial. At the conclusion of the trial, a man was convicted of murder and sentenced to be executed...”

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The Bailiff announced, “Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye, the court will now come to order. The honorable judge Theodore Hanks presiding. All rise.”

Everyone in the courtroom rose as the judge entered from a door behind and to the side of the bench. When he sat down behind the bench everyone else sat.

Immediately there was a hub-bub from the audience.

The judge pounded his gavel several times and said, “The court will come to order. The court will come to order. Bailiff.”

The Bailiff announced, “The prisoner will stand.”

The prisoner stood up, standing next to his lawyer.

The Bailiff read, “Carlton Powers, you have been found guilty of willful and deliberate murder after a fair and impartial trial.”

The judge addressed the defendant and said, “Have you anything to say before sentence is passed upon you?”

Sneeringly, the prisoner replied, “Yes, Yes I do! You think that you’ve got me. But before you pass sentence on me, I’m gonna pass sentence on you. You judge Hanks,” he looked around and addressed the D.A., “And you D. A. Jeffers and the twelve good and true saps on the jury, finishing with the foreman. The jury that found me guilty.”

The judge started banging his gavel and shouting, “Order in the court! Order in the court!”

“That’ll do, Carlton Powers. Do you have anything to say on your own behalf?”

“This is on my own behalf, and you’d better listen, all o ya. Ya think you’re gonna execute me, you ol’ fool. Well, when I’m on my way to the death house ... to the chair. I’ll get ya. I’m warnin’ you, for every day I sit in the death house, one o’ you will be killed, startin’ with you Mr. D. A. And if the governor doesn’t commute my sentence to life, he will die. And maybe one more. The only man that could ever catch me ... The Shadow. If I can’t do it while I’m alive then I’ll do it after I’m dead.”

The judge rapped his gavel and said, “That’ll be enough out of you. Your threats will be of no avail because it is the sentence of this court that when you leave here, you will be taken directly to the prison. After the stipulated period you will be executed in the manner prescribed by the law and may God have mercy on your soul.”

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“Margot and I were there for obvious reasons. As the court was clearing we overheard random bits of conversation. They went something like this:

‘It’s a sheer bluff, I tell you. How could he kill an entire jury in twenty days, Judge Hanks, D. A. Jeffers, even the governor? I tell you he’s crazy.’

‘Maybe he has someone on the outside.’

‘No, all of the members of his gang are either dead or in jail.’

‘I’m glad I wasn’t on that jury.’

‘How can he kill the Shadow? Nobody even knows what he looks like. He could have been right here in this courtroom and no one would ever know. Nobody’s ever seen him.’”

Lamont paused for a second before he continued, “In an aside, Margot said to me, ‘It must be very flattering to inspire so much awe and fear, Lamont.’”

“My reply wasn’t all that she had hoped for, I must say, ‘Truthfully, it has its disadvantages. Unfortunately, the awe and mystery that surrounds the Shadow instills fear in the innocent as well as the criminals that we fight. The unknown is often associated with evil. There’s no help for it. The Shadow must remain The Shadow.’”

“Carlton Powers was executed three weeks ago.”

Lois said, “Hah, so much for his threats of revenge.”

In a sinister voice, Lamont replied, “On the contrary, the day he was moved to death row, the D. A., Jeffers, was killed. A member of the jury died every other day. Last week, Judge Hanks was murdered. He was shot as he was reading in his study.”

Lois gasped and asked, “Do you think Powers managed to do it?”

“It is possible. That’s what I plan to investigate. He was shot from long range, by someone with a rifle. There are three more individuals that were threatened. There are two members of the jury remaining and then there is the governor. I believe that the final individual to die will be the foreman of the jury that convicted him, that is the individual that he held the greatest enmity for. He is a skilled surgeon by trade and his name is Samuel Lane. He is Margot’s father.”

Lois gasped upon hearing the name and with a look of determination asked, “My father’s name is Sam. I’m in. What do you want me to do?”

Lamont smiled and replied, “This will be right up your alley. I need you to go to the prison as a reporter and interview the staff. You need to find out how the remains of executed prisoners are handled.”

Jumping to her feet, Lois snapped her fingers, started pacing and said, “You know, Clark and I worked on a case some time ago. A chemist had developed a drug that simulated death.” Turning toward him she poked her palm with her finger as she continued, “The funeral director was in on the plot. There were underground tunnels from the cemetery to the funeral home. After the burial, they winched in the coffin and allowed the escapee to sleep off the effects of the drug. You think something like that is happening here?” She stopped her pacing and assumed a posture as she said, “Let me think. The state of medicine at this time is still primitive.” She waved her hands to emphasize what she was saying as she continued, “I think that Penicillin was just discovered.” Looking at Lamont, she saw him nod in confirmation. “You do have sulfa drugs. That means that the chances of this drug being developed are remote.” She stopped pacing and faced him.

“You do bring up a very interesting possibility that I hadn’t

even considered.”

“In that case, we worked on; the drug was called ‘Resurrection’. One of the gang members turned a sample over to the A.D.A. They killed her, the A.D.A. when they found out that she had it. That was what broke the case,” her expressions turned rueful as she continued, “that and me getting trapped in the coffin with one of the escapees. Fortunately for me, he was a dwarf so there was plenty of room in the coffin. There for a few minutes, I thought I had been wrong and was being buried alive. It was a relief when I felt the coffin start to move, but when it was opened, they caught me.”

“We will need to see if something like that is being done here. If he faked his death somehow, then he could, in fact, be the murderer.”

Lamont said, “I have some other things to check on, so I will ask you to take care of this part of the investigation. The Shadow has to contact Commissioner Weston to see how much he knows.”

“No problem, as you said, this will be right up my alley.”

Looking her up and down, Lamont said, “Your attire is a little out of step with the times. What is that material, anyhow?”

“It’s a polyester blend. I like it because it is wash and wear.”

“It is also a bit short compared to the current style.” He pointed at a door and said, “Margot keeps changes of clothes in the spare bedroom.”

Before Lois had a chance to change, Lamont called Burbank and asked that he have Shrevvy pick her up at the door. “Shrevvy should be here in about ten minutes.” He reached into a drawer in the side table and produced a couple of items, a key, and a card. On the card, he wrote a phone number. As he handed these items to Lois he said, “This is a key to this apartment. Please make yourself at home. On the card is the phone number for Burbank. If you need anything, call him. He can reach me whenever he needs to. When you are here, in the apartment, if the phone rings; answer it. Use your last name. If I have a message for you it will come through Burbank.”

Lois put the key and card into a pocket, that way if she lost her bag somehow, she would still have those items. “Thank you. Once I have something, I’ll be back.” Lois disappeared into the bedroom, only to reappear five minutes later dressed in a Floral Crepe de Chine skirt that terminated at mid-calf and turquoise, short sleeve silk blouse. The crowning touch was a turquoise pillbox hat. She grabbed her bag where she had dropped it. Before she left she asked, “Well, what do you think?”

With a smile of approval, Lamont replied, “Now you look like Margot. I’d have a hard time telling the two of you apart.”

“I guess if I pass your inspection I should be able to get by. Once I finish at the prison, I’ll return here, that is unless I get a lead to something.”

“So, like Margot. Follow your instincts. I’ll see you later.”

“Shrevvy’s gonna be waiting. I’d better go.” So, saying she headed out the door. She was thinking, <Maybe the elevator operator won’t be quite so distracted with me dressed this way.>

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#### Chapter 4 – Metropolis 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Clark went to the kitchen and picked up his phone. He carried it into the living room so that Margot could hear the conversation and dialed Perry’s number. Margot was looking strangely at his phone as he dialed. When the chief picked up, he said, “Hello, Chief? Clark.”

{“What’s going on, Kent?”}

“Listen, Chief. Lois has had an accident.”

Perry’s concern was in his voice as he asked, {“What? Was she hurt? Where is she? How is she?”}

Calmly, Clark answered, “Well, that’s just it. Physically, she’s fine. She stumbled into traffic and was almost hit by a Metrocab. Superman saved her, but it seems like she has hysterical amnesia as a result. It’s like what happened to me around the time of Nightfall. I think it might be best if we worked from home for a few days and I’ll try to help her recover her memory.”

{“Well, the two of you are engaged now, so I guess she is your responsibility. You take good care of her, you hear me?”}

With a chuckle, Clark replied, “Loud and clear, Chief. You know that no one could take better care of her than me.”

{“Okay, I guess we’ll look for you in a couple of days. Did you write up her rescue yet?”}

“I’ll do that as soon as I hang up and e-mail it to you.”

{“You do that.”} There was a click as Perry hung up his phone. Perry’s voice had been gruff, but Clark could hear the overtones of concern which told him that his boss was worried about Lois. He set the phone down on the coffee table.

Curiously, Margot picked it up and examined it. She looked at Clark and asked, “No wire? Is it like a shortwave radio? Very compact. I wish we had something like this.”

Clark smiled as she asked her questions and made her observations. She obviously had a keen inquisitive mind, just like Lois. “You are right. It’s a wireless phone. There is a small radio in the handset that communicates with the base station on a paired radio frequency,” he pointed at the module on the wall, “they are both two-way radios, but with a very short range.”

“Lamont has shortwave radios in his cars and Burbank monitors the frequencies we use. Lamont uses them to keep in contact with Burbank and if he needs to call the police. The radios we have are much larger.” As she turned it over and over in her hands, examining it, she asked, “How do you replace the tubes in this?”

“Tubes? On, yeah, I remember. We don’t use tubes anymore. Everything is solid state.”

Quizzically, she repeated the unfamiliar term, “Solid state?”

“Yeah, somebody found some things that could replace vacuum tubes called transistors and resistors. They are a lot smaller and don’t burn out so often. There’s no need to allow them to warm up. Everything is instant on now. You make it sound like Lamont has to call the police frequently. Why does he have to call the police?”

Being somewhat mysterious, she replied, “He helps them out ... occasionally.”

“Okay, we can discuss this more, later. Right now I have to type up your rescue and send it to the chief.”

Crossing to his laptop he booted it up and started typing as Margot looked on in bewilderment. She asked, “That’s a typewriter? Where’s the ribbon and the paper? Why aren’t there arms striking the paper to make the impression?”

“This is going to be a little harder to explain. This is a portable computer. In some ways it is like a typewriter in that it produces letters on a page and like a radio, it can transmit data. With it I can create documents, like on a typewriter, but I can send them through the telephone wire to a similar device at the other end.

“This time of yours is going to take some getting used to.”

Clark quickly typed up the incident and sent it to Perry, then said, “Let me go change and I’ll take you to Lois’s apartment.”

She placed a hand on his arm and stopped him. “What can you do? I’ve seen some of the marvelous devices that you now have, devices such as I never would have dreamed possible, but what can you do?”

“What do you mean?”

“When you put on that suit, what can you do?”

“Oh, well, as you’ve seen, I can fly. I am pretty strong and fast. I can see through solid objects. I can start fires with my eyes.”

“Wow, all of that? Does the suit give you all those powers?”

“No, it doesn’t. I was born with them. What about Lamont? From some of the comments you’ve made, I get the feeling that he too has powers that he likes to keep secret.”

Reluctantly, she nodded and said, “When he puts on his hat and cloak, he is able to cloud the minds of criminals so that they don’t see him. Criminals call him The Shadow. He uses his invisibility to spy on criminal organizations and learn their plans so that he can then thwart them. What do you do with your powers?”

“I help the police by stopping criminal acts and emergency responders by preventing injuries. How did he get his powers?”

“He studied the forgotten science of the mind by traveling around the world and learning from holy men and mystics. Sometimes, I wish he would give it up. I can’t tell you the number of times he has been shot or injured in some way.”

“If he is invisible, how does that happen?”

In an exasperated tone, she replied, “As the Shadow he is invisible, not incorporeal. Sometimes his presence is revealed accidentally, but sometimes he does it deliberately. I think that he’s tempting fate, but he says that he does it to unnerve his opponents. Most of the time it works, but there are times when the bad guys just start shooting, indiscriminately. When that happens, sometimes he is hit.”

“How long has he been doing this?”

Margot was close to tears as she explained, “Sometimes it seems like forever. Other times, like when he’s been shot, it seems like too long. But the good he does cannot be argued. The number of bank robberies and other criminal enterprises he has disrupted is uncountable.” She paused for a second before she continued, “That’s why I have to get back. My father is in danger and Lamont promised to help. He needs me if he is going to be able to succeed.” She was openly crying as she finished.

“Your father is in danger?”

She nodded emphatically. “Yes. He was foreman of the jury that sentenced a man to death. Before that man was executed, he promised that all of the members of the jury along with the D. A., the judge and the governor would die.”

“But he was executed?”

“Yes, but that didn’t stop the killings. There are only a few more and my father is one of them.”

“Well, all I can say is that if you and Lois have actually switched places, I am sure she will do everything she can to help Lamont in your place. What’s your father’s name?”

Tearfully, she replied, “Sam, Samuel Lane. He’s a surgeon.”

Clark reached out and placed a comforting hand on Margot’s shoulder before he said, “Now, I am doubly certain that Lois will do everything she can to help. You see, Sam is her father’s name also.”

Margot gasped at his statement and nodding replied, “I believe that she will. Thank you. At least Lamont won’t be alone. I feel a little better, but how will she be able to help?”

“Lois is an excellent investigative reporter. She has these flashes of intuition. She can take a set of disparate facts and draw a conclusion and be amazingly accurate. Also, in a fight, she had a brown belt in Tae Kwan Do.”

“What’s Tae Kwan Do and what does it matter what color belt you wear?”

“Tae Kwan Do is a form of martial arts, similar to boxing, only more so. The color of her belt indicated her level of mastery. Black is the highest. Brown is right below that.”

“How much good will that be against a gun?”

“If she can get in close, he won’t have the gun for very long. She will disarm him.”

Somewhat awed, she asked, “Wow, she’s that good?”

Nodding his head, he replied with conviction, “She’s that good!”

She sniffed and then said, “In that case, maybe it’s good that she’s there. She might be able to do more than I could.”

In an attempt to distract her, Clark asked, “Would you like to change clothes now?”

She looked down at herself and said, “Yes, I guess I’m a little out of step with the times.”

“Actually, believe it or not, you might just pass. Fashion has a wide range of accepted styles nowadays. I think that the people that know Lois best would expect something else, though.”

“I guess I need to go see what the current styles are.”

“We could get a cab or walk. It isn’t all that far.”

“I wish Shrevvy was here.”

“Who’s Shrevvy?”

“Oh, that would be Moses Schreivnetz, he’s just about the best cab driver in New York City, but he works for Lamont. He has a shortwave radio in his cab also.”

“Let’s walk. As we do you can be observing the current fashions. That should help you to pick out something. After you do, I think I’ll take you somewhere. I have some people to introduce you to.”

“Won’t they wonder why I don’t know them?”

“With them it won’t matter.”

“I guess I’ll have to trust your judgment. Let’s go

“Just a minute. Lois keeps some clothes here. I think there’s a light jacket. You should put that on before we leave.” Clark retrieved the jacket and Margot donned it and they left.

Exiting the apartment, since it was somewhat chilly, they headed at a brisk pace for Lois’s apartment. As they walked, Margot observed what the women were wearing and was surprised at how short the dresses were. She thought, <I haven’t seen skirts that short since the twenties, when I was just a kid. Oh well, when in Rome... The cars, they’re so small and sleek.> It wasn’t long until they reached Lois’s apartment building and going up to the fifth floor, Clark used his keys to allow them to enter.

Pointing down the hall, he said, “The first bedroom on the right. Pick out whatever you feel comfortable with. I’m sure Lois won’t mind.”

“Okay. I hope her clothes fit.”

Looking at her with a critical eye, he said, “It is my considered opinion that they will.”

As she moved down the hall, she said, “We’ll see.”

As she disappeared into the bedroom, Clark picked up Lois’s red phone and dialed a number. When the phone was answered, he said, “Hi, Mom! What’s for lunch?”

“Oh, hi Honey! Are you coming for lunch?”

“I was thinking about it. Could you set two extra places?”

“You’re going to bring Lois with you? Good, I’ve been wanting some time with her. Sure, I’ll set two extra places. See you in a little while.” She hung up before Clark had the chance to explain that it wouldn’t be Lois.

As he hung the phone up. He muttered, “Oh well, I guess it’ll be a surprise.”

While he waited for Margot to change, Clark picked up the remote and clicked on the TV. He changed the channel from the one that Lois watched "The Ivory Tower" on to LNN. He was satisfied that there were no major news items that they were covering; therefore Superman would not be needed.

When Margot came out, the first thing she saw was the TV. She stopped and stared at the person on the screen as she related the news. She asked, "What do you call that talking box?"

"We call it a television."

"Well, at least some things work out. Doc Savage has been working on that for a couple of years. He hasn't perfected it yet. I mean, back when I am from ... obviously he finally did, didn't he? It was Doc, wasn't it? I'm happy to see that he succeeded at last."

Clark was mystified, "Doc Savage? Who's Doc Savage?"

"I'm surprised that you never heard of him. Actually, you

remind me of him. He is, uh, was a physical and mental marvel. He was trained, by scientifically designed methods from babyhood. He is ... was extra strong and fast, very agile and smart. He also helps ... helped people and the police. It's so weird, I have to start thinking in the past tense." Striking a pose, she asked, "Well, what do you think?"

She was wearing a gray wrap skirt that fell all the way to her ankles, a silk blouse, a light jacket and pumps. As she walked toward him, the skirt opened at the overlap to reveal most of her leg. "Looks like you were right. They fit."

"I knew that they would. Okay, now, are you hungry? It is lunchtime."

She thought for a second and then nodded, "Yes, I could stand to have a meal. Where will we go?"

"I know this little place, off the beaten track. The cooking is excellent and the atmosphere is casual."

"Okay. Sounds good to me. How do we get there, taxi?"

"Actually, I had another mode of travel in mind." As she watched he started to spin in place. As he did, the charcoal gray of his suit changed into the primary colors of his uniform.

She watched in stunned disbelief and when he stopped and stood before her in uniform, she said, "Wow, that's surely something. Is that what you did when you went into the other room?"

"Yes. I didn't want to shock you too much. It was too soon. Okay, shall we go?"

She looked around and not seeing a balcony, asked, "Where do we leave from?"

He smiled and replied, "It is well known that Superman visits Lois Lane on occasion." He stepped over to a window and with a gentle push, opened it. "She leaves this window unlocked so that I can come in whenever I want to." He stepped over to her and scooped her up in his cradle carry and lifted her effortlessly. When he did, she skirt opened at the slit to reveal her shapely leg, almost all the way to the hip.

She yelped in surprise and then her arms automatically went around his neck the same way that Lois's did and he smiled at the familiar gesture.

Stepping to the window he said, "Here we go."

"Won't I be cold? It usually is when I fly with Miles."

"Fly with Miles?"

"Yes, Miles, Miles Crofton. He's a pilot that works for Lamont and flies his autogyro. It has an open cockpit."

With a chuckle, Clark replied, "No, you won't be cold. My aura will protect you."

"Aura?"

"Like a protective barrier. It covers whoever I am carrying. Don't worry. You will be as safe as if you were a baby in your mother's arms."

"Easy for you to say."

Even though she had already flown with him, as they lifted off, he could feel her arms tighten around his neck and he could see that her eyes were closed. He floated them out the window and then reached back to push it closed before zooming away.

After very few seconds, she started to relax and he could feel her loosen her grip around his neck. A few seconds later her eyes were open and she was looking around, interestedly.

He asked, "Isn't this better than an autogyro?"

"Golly, yes! There's no engine noise, no vibration ... I don't even have to shout to make myself heard. This is wonderful! Do you take Lois flying, often?"

"As often as I can, she loves to fly."

With a broad smile, she replied, "I can see why!"

A few minutes later, Clark started his descent to a landing.

Margot saw a neatly maintained old-fashioned farm house and neatly laid out fields. She didn't see any crops, but that just meant that the harvest had been done recently. As they landed in

the front yard, she saw a woman, who had apparently been watching for them, come bustling out of the house. Margot was embarrassed when without preamble, the woman threw her arms around her and gave her a motherly hug.

When 'Lois' didn't respond as expected, Martha stepped back slightly, slid her hands down 'Lois's' arms, grasped her hands and looked her over. As her hands touched 'Lois's', she lifted Lois's left hand and examined it. Then she looked accusingly at Clark and in a no nonsense tone, challenged, "Clark Jerome Kent, what have you done? Where is Lois's ring?" She changed the object of her discourse and seeing the uncomfortable look on 'Lois's' face, asked, "Lois, has this lunkhead of a son of mine done something? What did he do?"

Martha stopped when she heard Clark chuckle and looked at him. He turned to 'Lois' and said, "I told you ... you look just like her." Then he addressed his mom, "Mom, please allow me to introduce, Margot Lane. She is visiting our world temporarily while Lois is in her world. Margot, this is my mom, Martha Kent."

Martha looked at her again and asked, "Margot? Margot Lane? How did this happen?"

"Clark said that someone named Tempus was responsible."

At the name, Martha gasped and said, "Oh, no, not him again!"

In a resigned tone, Clark replied, "I'm afraid so."

Martha slapped his arm and said, "Why didn't you tell me while we were on the phone?"

Defensively, he replied, "I was going to, but you hung up before I could."

Turning back to Margot, Martha said, "Oh, okay, well, anyway, welcome to Chez Kent. I guess you're hungry otherwise you wouldn't be here for lunch." She hooked her arm with hers and headed for the door, "Let's go in and get acquainted. I need to introduce you to my husband, Jonathan, Clark's father..."

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### Chapter 5 – New York 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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When Lois, faux Margot, stepped from the building Shrevvy was there waiting for her, a testament to the planning and execution of the jobs assigned within Lamont's organization. Shrevvy was standing by the back door of the cab as she came out and he opened it for her and handed her in. When he was in his seat he turned and looked over the front bench seat to ask, "Where to Miss Lane?"

"The prison, please Shrevvy. Lamont wants me to get some information for him."

"Sure teng, Miss Lane. I'll have you dere in a jiff." Starting the cab he pulled out into traffic.

As they started the drive, Lois heard a newsboy crying the headlines, "Extree! Extree! Read all about it! Another death from the Powers curse! Read all about it!"

Lois addressed her driver, "Shrevvy, could you get a paper for me, please?"

"Sure teng, Miss Lane." When he stopped for traffic, he leaned from his window and shouted, "Hey! Boy! Poiper?"

The newsboy ran into the stalled traffic and handed Shrevvy the paper in exchange for the nickel Shrevvy handed him. Shrevvy said, "Don't spend it all in one place," and laughed.

The boy gave him an annoyed look and stuck the nickel in his pocket as he ran back to the sidewalk.

Shrevvy handed the paper back to Lois as the traffic started to move again.

Lois looked at the front page. The main headline was of the Japanese invasion of China, but still on the front page, below the fold, was the story she was interested in. She started to read:

”The Powers Curse still working.

Since the day that Carlton Powers was moved from his cell to the death house the members of the jury, the D.A. and the judge have lived under the threat of death. On that day one of the members of the jury was murdered. For the following three weeks one of them has been murdered every other day and the police are no closer to catching the perpetrator now than they were on the first day. The day that Carlton Power was executed, the D. A. was murdered and last night it was the judge’s turn. At this point there are only two members of the jury, the Governor and The Shadow left on the list. The police have been proven completely ineffective in protecting any of them. The mayor has threatened to have Commissioner Weston’s job if an arrest is not made, and soon!  
Continued on A2”

Lois glanced over the remainder of the article and some of the issues on national news before folding the paper and setting it aside. She simply contemplated what she had read and knew of the situation.

A short time later, she was shaken from her reverie when Shrevvy pulled up to the prison. As he held the door for ‘Margo’ he said, “I’ll be here to take you back when you finish.”

“Thanks, Shrevvy. I don’t know how long this will take. I hope not long.” She threw the strap of her bag over her shoulder and headed for the door.

The guard at the door asked, “Who are you and what is the purpose of your visit?”

Lois’s response was automatic; she flashed her press pass, too quickly for the guard to get more than an impression of what it was and said, “Lane with the Planet. I’m here to get information on the Carlton Powers execution.”

“Wait a minute. I never heard of the Planet.”

“Oh, well, we’re a new paper. We’ll be on the newsstands soon. Now, if you don’t mind, I’ve got an editor I have to satisfy.”

He looked her up and down and decided that she didn’t pose any threat so he opened the door and allowed her to enter. She approached the desk and announced her intention, “I need to speak with someone that knows what disposition is made of the bodies, once a prisoner is executed.”

“That would be old Hank. He works that area. He isn’t usually too busy. I’ll call him up. You can wait in that room over there.”

Lois entered the indicated room and sat down. Opening her bag she pulled out a notepad and a sharp number two pencil. Through force of habit, she started to bring out her mini-recorder, but thought better of it. That modern technology might raise a few eyebrows. While she thought of it, without bringing it out of the bag, she turned off her cell phone. It wasn’t going to be responding to any calls since the cellular system had not been invented as yet, but there was no sense wasting the battery power. It might just come in handy later.

A few minutes later, Hank came in. Hank was an older guard, older, but not old. He was probably in his forties and he started to smile as soon as he spotted Lois. He sat down close to her and asked, “What can I do for you, girlie?” Acting like he thought of himself as a ladies’ man.

Playing to that, Lois crossed her legs and hiked her skirt up a couple of notches, showing more of her calf. Her ploy was successful; she could see his eyes divert as she did. She picked up her pad and asked, “I was wondering what you could tell me about the disposal of the bodies after an execution.”

Apparently it wasn’t often that Hank was asked about his job and he wanted to impress this young woman with his knowledge. “I’ve handled the disposal of every stiff since I started here over twenty years ago. I seed it all. I remember one time, we fried Jack Duggins, Jack was unusual, when they unclamped him from the chair, he was really a stiff, he was frozen in position. We had to pick him up and lay him on his side on a stretcher just to get him

out of the execution chamber. That was the way we loaded him into the hearse, laying on his side. I bet that undertaker had to break all ‘o his joints to get him flat. Then there was the time ...”

Lois interrupted his flow of words and reminiscences by asking, “I’m particularly interested in Carlton Powers. He was executed just a couple of week ago. What can you tell me about him?”

“Ah, there ain’t nothin’ special about him. He was fried and when we went to get him outta the chair he was limp as a wet dishrag. We wheeled him from the chamber and turned him right over to the mortician. We have a contract with Happy Hollows Cemetery. If the family don’t claim the body, that is. If’n there’s a relative, they get first dibs. Anyhow, Powers didn’t have no relatives so he was turned over to Happy Hollows.”

“Where is Happy Hollows located?”

“I’m pretty sure that they have that information at the desk.”

As Lois stood, she offered her hand and said, “You’ve been a big help, Hank. Thank you.”

As Hank took her hand, he smiled and asked, “If you’re free later, I could tell you more stories, maybe, over dinner?”

Lois smiled and said, “My boyfriend might have something to say about that.”

“He don’ need ta know.” He gave her what he thought of as a sly wink.

“I’m afraid I’d have to tell him.” She flashed her engagement ring. “You see, I don’t step out on him.” As she released her hand from his grip, Lois repeated, “Thanks for your help.”

Exiting the room, she went to the desk and asked for the information on Happy Hollows. She wrote it down in her pad and then placing it and her pencil back in her bag, headed for the door.

Exiting the building, she spotted Shrevvy standing next to the cab a short distance off and headed in his direction.

Once in the cab, she said, “Shrevvy, we need to go to Happy Hollows.” She tore out the address and handed it to him.

“Sure teng, Miss Lane. I’ll have you dere in a jiff.”

Lois sat back and picked up the paper again. Turning to the back she found the comic section. She was amazed at what she saw because she didn’t recognize any of them. Buck Rodgers was involved in an interplanetary war with Venus. Barney Google was there. The Katzenjammer Kids were up to some ridiculous hijinks. None of the cartoons that she was familiar with were there except Snuffy Smith. She thought, <Wow, I hadn’t realized that this strip was this old.> Doonsberry, Dilbert, Garfield, none of them were around.

She turned to the movie listings and saw a familiar title, “A Star is Born”, but she didn’t recognize the stars, Janet Gaynor and Fredrick March. <Oh well, that must have been the original.> She recognized the name Hopalong Cassidy as a famous western star. Then there was everyone’s favorite detective, Dick Tracy.

She stopped reading when she saw the name Shirley Temple. That really brought it home to her just how far back in time she was. Shirley Temple was still a child star here. In her time, she was a grown woman and an ambassador. She folded the paper and put it aside.

From that point on she enjoyed the ride occasionally exchanging comments with Shrevvy. When they arrived, Shrevvy opened the door for her and said, “I’ll be right here when you come out, Miss Lane.”

Lois smiled and said, “Thanks, Shrevvy. This shouldn’t take long.” She started thinking, <This girl Margot sure has it soft. A personal cab, her own Clark, uh, Lamont. Things just seem easier in this time period, somehow.>

Lois’s interview with the mortician was profitable. He gave her the location of Carlton Powers burial plot. Everything seemed normal; nothing was raising any red flags.

Returning to the car, Lois said, “Back to the apartment, Shrevvy.”

“Sure teng, Miss Lane. I’ll have you dere in a jiff.”

Lois mused that Shrevvy seemed to have certain favorite phrases, but that didn’t detract from his work.

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Once back at the building, she was whisked to the top floor where she used her key to enter. Earlier, things had been happening so quickly that she had not had a chance to take in her surroundings. She took a few minutes to coordinate her notes and then she decided to explore. She started in the main room.

First she noticed the plush oriental carpets that covered the floors. In a corner of the room stood a large radio and next to it was a record player. The furniture consisted of the side table where Lamont had prepared the coffee, a sofa and a couple of chairs. The sofa and chairs were upholstered in rich fabrics with a Chinese design. Several end tables were scattered around, mostly convenient to the chairs and sofa. A large fireplace dominated one wall and over the mantle was mounted an African tribal mask. She recognized it as being the same as one that Clark had. There were several shelves on the walls. One of them held another familiar objet d’art, the fertility idol that Clark had picked up on his travels. There were several other items that she recognized. The one thing, conspicuous in its absence, was the picture of Clark, uh, Lamont and his family. Maybe that was the main difference.

Through an archway there was a small kitchen. Both of the bedrooms opened off of the living room, on opposite sides of the entryway.

Moving into Margot’s room she found it to be a typical woman’s bedroom. There were personal items scattered around, items ranging from hairbrush and comb to cosmetics, a closet full of clothes and several pairs of shoes. There was a group shot of Margot with her father, her mother and her sister. As anticipated, it was also her father, mother and sister in the picture. <Well, if I wind up being stuck here, at least I’ll have my family.>

Not knowing how long she would have to wait for either Lamont to return or for the phone to ring, she decided to lie down and take a nap. After removing her clothes, she laid down in her underwear and pulled the covers over herself. There was no telling what the evening would bring.

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After Lois had left on her errand, Lamont had changed into a nondescript outfit and taken the elevator down to the ground floor. He had taken a taxi to a spot near police headquarters and exited. Making his way to a back entrance, he entered and ducked into a closet. From a compartment behind a panel, he pulled out a workman’s coverall, a wig, a mirror, makeup putty and some grease paint. After slipping on the coverall he propped the mirror up and applied the wig, used the putty to change the shape of his nose and grease paint. A pair of glasses completed his disguise. A few seconds later, Lamont was disguised as Fritz, the doddering, apparently slow-witted janitor, stepped from the closet and made his appearance, carrying a bucket, with water in it, and a mop over his shoulder. He made his way to the precinct office area and began mopping. As he mopped, he listened with keen ears. He made his way into Commissioner Weston’s office and there he overheard a telephone conversation between him and the mayor.

Fritz was almost a fixture around the precinct and was basically ignored, like a piece of furniture so the commissioner carried on as if no one were there.

“I’m very well aware of that Mr. Mayor.” He listened and then replied, “You know we haven’t a clue. All of members of his gang are accounted for; either dead or in prison and none of them has escaped.” He listened again.

He replied to an apparent question, “We’ve checked the register and the only visitor he had in prison was his brother. Do you think it could be him?” He listened again.

Finally, he replied, “No, we don’t think so. He came back from the war with some mental and emotional problems. He can’t

even hold a job. He’s living with another relative part-time, the rest of the time he is in the hospital. He shouldn’t be a factor.” Once more he listened.

He was becoming irritated as he answered, “I have already given the remaining jurors a police guard and the state police are guarding the governor. So far all of the killings have been here in the city. That shouldn’t be construed to mean that the governor is safe because he is in Albany. So far twelve have died here in the city.” He listened again.

Now he was becoming defensive, “I realize that Your Honor and I am doing the best I can, but how do you defend against a ghost?” He listened some more.

In incredulity, he burst out, “You can’t be serious! I don’t even know how to contact him...” He apparently was cut off so he listened again.

In a defeated tone, he replied, “All right, I’ll do the best I can.”

As Weston hung up the phone, ‘Fritz’ heard him mutter, “The mayor must be crazy.” Then he called out, “Stephens, get in here.” When a uniformed officer stuck his head in the door, Weston ordered, “Contact the radio station that we hear The Shadow over and ask them to make a broadcast. Tell them that we need The Shadow to contact us. When I asked how we could defend against a ghost, the mayor suggested that we enlist The Shadow’s aid. ‘Use a shadow to fight a ghost’ was what he said. It was The Shadow that brought him in initially so it might be worth a try.”

‘Fritz’ continued his work. Eventually he was out of sight and he returned to the closet. After removing his disguise, he exited the building and entered a corner drug store. Moving to the phone booth in the back he dropped a nickel in the slot and dialed police headquarters.

When the phone was answered, in a sepulchral tone, that The Shadow used to instill fear in evildoers, he asked for Commissioner Weston. The operator, having heard that voice numerous times on the radio, instantly recognized it and immediately said, “Just a second,” and plugged in the cable that would direct the call to the commissioner’s office.

Picking up the phone before it had even stopped ringing, Weston said, “Commissioner Weston here.”

“Commissioner, it’s The Shadow.”

In an irritated tone, he challenged, “What are you blathering on about?”

“The Shadow! The Shadow is on the line for you.”

“Well ... put him through!”

As she did, the sinister tones of The Shadow came from the receiver, {“HAhahahahahahaha Commissioner, I understand you wish to contact me.”}

Recognizing the voice, he spluttered out, “How ... how did you know? I just issued orders to contact the radio station.”

{“I have methods of information gathering that are beyond the ordinary. You want my help. I believe the idea was ‘Use a shadow to catch a ghost.’ Rest assured, Commissioner, that I will do all in my power to protect the remaining people on Carlton Powers’ list. Earlier there were simply too many for me to protect. Now we can make an educated guess as to just who will be next. I will do my best to prevent any more deaths. You have the promise of The Shadow.”}

The line went dead in Weston’s hand as the Shadow hung up. He muttered, “Thank goodness, the Shadow is on the job.”

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Lamont returned to the apartment. When he did, he noted that the door to Margot’s bedroom was closed. He approached and knocked softly.

A groggy, “Yes,” was the reply he got back.

“Please join me in the living room.”

“Okay, just give me a minute to dress.”

“Take as much time as you need. Please dress in something

suitable for a rather formal dinner. I will be wearing evening clothes.”

“All right. I’ll see what’s here.”

Half an hour later, Lois was attired in a curve-hugging amber floor-length silk gown that had a small train, with little cap sleeves, a low cut bodice and a non-existent back. Evening gloves the color of the dress that reached above her elbows and some of Margot’s jewelry, most of the diamond variety; a choker and bracelet (worn over the glove) completed the outfit. Margo’s makeup was not the brand that she used, but the colors were comparable so she had made her face up for the evening. She carried a fur stole and a hat with some feathers crowning it. These she placed on a chair so that they would be handy as they left.

When she entered, she was stunned to see Lamont in evening clothes. He looked every bit as delicious as Clark.

When he heard the door to the bedroom open, Lamont turned to see Lois enter and his mouth almost dropped open at the vision of loveliness. If he hadn’t known better, he could have sworn that it was Margot standing there. “You are very lovely, my dear.”

“Thank you. I know I’m not Margot, but apparently we are the same size. Her clothes fit perfectly.”

“And you do them justice, I must say. Would you like a drink before we go?”

“No thanks, I’d rather have a clear head.”

Lamont smiled in appreciation as he replied, “So like Margot. She too would eschew a libation as we may be called upon to work tonight. All right, what did you find out today?”

“Right - down to business.” She pulled out her notes and read, “Okay, the prison has a contract with Happy Hollows Cemetery. If a body is not claimed by a relative it is sent there. Powers’ body was not claimed by a relative so...”

“That is odd. I learned that he had a brother and that his brother visited him several times while he was in prison.”

“Maybe he didn’t have the means to provide a decent burial.”

“Anything would be better than what is provided by the state. We need to look into that.”

“I went to the cemetery and checked. Apparently the body was prepared in accordance with the laws of the state, so I don’t think that it is him. I believe that he’s in that grave.”

“It would be best for us to make sure.” He moved to the phone and picking it up dialed. When it was answered, {Burbank,} he said, “Orders. Have ‘Cliff’ Marsland and Jericho Druke meet Margot and me at Happy Hollows Cemetery at ten PM. They should have shovels and other digging equipment. We are going to exhume a body.”

After hanging up the phone, he turned to Lois and said, “This evening we will be dining with Commissioner Weston, his wife and Inspector Cardona. Commissioner Weston believes me to be a simple playboy although I have helped Cardona on numerous occasions. The purpose of the dinner is to find out as much about these killings as I can, without raising his suspicions. Please pay close attention to the conversation. If there is something I miss, you may pick up on it.”

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## Chapter 6 – Metropolis 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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After Margot had lunch with and spent some time getting to know Clark and his parents, Clark flew them back to Metropolis.

As they were passing over the Appalachians, Margot said, “I really like your parents. They are so friendly and welcoming. Lamont doesn’t say much about his parents. They died when he was very young. He was about ten, I guess, when they were killed in a storm.”

“What kind of storm?”

“I think it was a tornado, but I’m not sure.”

“Where were they?”

“I’m not sure. Kansas I think.”

“That’s where we just were.”

Startled, she replied, “That was Kansas? Flying with you, I didn’t know. It would have taken a lot longer in Lamont’s autogyro to get there.”

“If he was from Kansas, that is yet another similarity and there’s another Clark that lost his parents when he was ten years old.”

The rest of the trip was flown in silence as they each mulled over this information.

Once they were inside Lois’s apartment, Clark said, “We need to start your education. First off, you are an investigative reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper, the Daily Planet.”

“I’ve never been a reporter in all my life. I help Lamont with investigations, I guess that might help.”

“Yes, it should. That being the case, we need to equip you for your role. I think Lois’s old bag is in her room someplace. Be right back.” He disappeared down the hall returning shortly carrying a tan bag. It looked like an oversized purse, but it was so much more.

He laid it on the table and started pulling items out. As he did so, he narrated, “This was Lois’s gadget bag until she had a new one made. She still keeps this one stocked as a back-up. Let’s see what she has in here.” He named the items as he pulled them out, “Pad and pencil, binoculars, camera, mini-recorder, telescoping baton...”

As he laid the items out Margot picked them up and examined them. As she started to examine the camera, she was startled when the lens extended by itself when she touched a button. She almost dropped it, almost but not quite. That called for a closer inspection and Clark instructed her until he was satisfied that she understood its functions.

She picked up the mini-recorder from where he had placed it and asked, “How does this work?”

Taking it from her, he clicked the record button and said, “Say your name.”

“My name is Margot Lane.”

He clicked off the recorder and rewound it. Hitting play, she heard her own voice as she said, “My name is Margot Lane.”

Taking it from him, she exclaimed, “That’s amazing. This little thing...”

“Mini recorder.”

“This mini-recorder reproduced my voice like a record player or a wire recorder, but it’s so small!” Clark showed her what all of the buttons did and the more-or-less universal symbols that had come into common usage, play, stop, rewind and fast forward. Once she was satisfied that she could operate it easily, she set it on the table and Clark continued the inventory.

The binoculars required no explanation. She picked up the baton and asked, “What is this for?”

“Lois uses that if she has to fight.”

Taking it from her he snapped his wrist causing the baton to extend.

“Oh, it’s like a policeman’s nightstick.”

“Actually, it’s a martial arts weapon called an escrima.

Remember, I told you that Lois is good in a fight. That’s one of the things she uses.”

Eagerly, Margot asked, “Would it be possible for me to learn some of those things, while I’m here? I’ve never heard of this style of fighting before.”

“I don’t see why not. I won’t take you to her usual dojo because they would expect a lot more out of you. We’ll find a school where she isn’t known and get you into a beginner’s class. We can start tonight. It might be best if we do what’s called total immersion. We’ll have you do everything that Lois does routinely.

When you are not involved in other activities, I'll coach you in the people that we work with."

"Do you have any pictures?"

"I think I can find some. Do you drive?"

"Sure I do. I'm probably rusty, Shrevvy does most of my driving for me."

"I'll have to take you out to see how well you do."

"Does Lois own a car?"

"Yes, and she is very attached to it. Before I turn you loose in it, in city traffic, I want to see how well you handle it."

"Well, I'm no Barney Oldfield, but I get by. Is it a three speed or four?"

"Barney Oldfield?"

"He's a famous race car driver. What kind of car is it?"

"It's an automatic."

"Automatic what? Like a .45? I thought you were talking about a car."

"I was. It's an automatic shift. You place it in drive and let the car handle the gear changes for you."

"Wow, what won't they think of next, telephones without wires, typewriters without ribbons or paper and now cars that shift their own gears?"

While she was marveling at this, Clark booted up Lois's laptop. He called up the picture folder and scrolled through what was there. Satisfied, he started a slideshow and called Margot over.

As he started the slideshow, he narrated, "I'm going to run through these quickly, then go back over them slowly."

She looked confused. "I thought this thing was your typewriter. It also shows pictures? What won't they think of next? Okay. Let's go."

As he started to scroll through the pictures, he narrated, "This is Perry White. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper, our boss. Jimmy Olsen, photographer and gopher, this is Eduardo Fraiz, International Correspondent, Steve, the sportswriter..." He ran through the entire roster and finished up with, "And last, but not least, or maybe he is least, Skip. He's a new hire and Perry has him in classifieds."

Clark went through the pictures a couple of times, slowly and then called for a break. Margot asked, "So far, all I've seen so far are coworkers. Doesn't Lois have a family?"

Clark nodded and disappeared into Lois's bedroom and returned with a framed photograph. As he handed it to Margot, he said, "This is a group photo of Lois and her family."

Margot gasped and then nodded before she spoke, "I really don't know what I was expecting. I should have realized ... that's my family. What's my sister's name?"

"Lucy."

"In my world it is Amanda. I hope that doesn't trip Lois up if she meets my family."

"That may be a problem there, but I don't think that will be a problem here. Lois's father is off somewhere working on inventing medical devices. Lois's mother is in rehab and her sister is away in school."

Clark turned back to the laptop and called up a folder with articles that Lois had written. "These are Lois's stories. You should read through them and become familiar with her style." He had her sit down and showed her how to use the touchpad and mouse buttons to scroll through and read the documents. "It has been several hours, so while you read, I'll prepare dinner. Afterward we can find a dojo and start your karate training."

As she sat down and started practicing the computer skills she had just been taught, she said, "Sounds like fun."

Clark worked on dinner while Margot worked at the computer. Occasionally she would ask a question, but she was a quick study and before dinner was prepared had mastered the intricacies of the laptop and had read quite a few of Lois's articles.

When Clark called her for dinner, she stood up and stretched.

Clark asked, "What do you think of Lois as a writer?"

She replied, "I like her style. She is straight to the point and no-nonsense."

"Do you think you could imitate it?"

"I'm not sure, maybe."

"Those are her earlier work. Perry says..."

She interrupted, "Your editor."

Clark smiled and said, "Quite right, the editor. Anyway, Perry said that it wasn't until we teamed up that the stories really became outstanding. Don't get me wrong, we are each good in our own right, but there's just something about the combination ... I soften her sharp edges and she brings a critical eye to my human interest pieces." He paused for a second for her to take that in before he continued, "We've each won awards for our writing, individually, but we have also won as a team."

"What kind of award?"

As Clark stepped over to Lois's cabinet and opened it, he said, "It's called a Kerth." He pulled out one of the awards and handed it to her.

She looked at it and asked, "What's it made of? How did they do the lettering? What kind of etching machine did they use? It looks expensive."

"It is and artificial crystal and they etch it with a laser."

"Laser? What's that?"

Crossing to the computer he brought up a picture taken fairly recently by Jimmy Olsen. It showed Ultra Woman being hit by a laser beam.

"That is a laser. It's a device that produces a concentrated beam of light. They can do lots of things with it. In this case, my powers were transferred to Lois, then to Lucille and then back to me."

"Wow, you mean that Lois had your powers? What must that have been like? Could I try it?"

"Lois was glad to give them back and no, the laser was destroyed."

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After dinner, Clark picked out Lois's workout gear and asked Margot to put it on.

She disappeared into the bedroom and a few minutes later reappeared clad in spandex mini-shorts and a spandex sports bra which covered little more than a bikini would. She felt more than a little self-conscious when she stepped into the living room. She said, "I feel like a Radio City Rockette dressed for rehearsal." When Clark didn't ogle her in this state of what to her was undress, she started to relax. He treated it as nothing out of the norm as he said, "No one seeing you would know that you weren't Lois. Let's see, I think she still has her white belt in the back of the closet." He rummaged around and found it along with Lois's gi.

As he held up the gi, she asked, "What is that?"

"This is a karate training uniform. You wear it over the spandex. Here, I'll help you." He had her step into the pants and tied the waist cord. Then she put on the top and he showed her how to tie the belt.

Once she had it on, she felt a lot more comfortable because now she was covered up. She commented, "It seems awfully loose."

"That's to give freedom of movement." He retrieved a pair of Lois's sneakers and she put them on. "Now we are ready to find you a school."

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Several hours later, they arrived back at the apartment.

As soon as they entered, Margot flopped down on the sofa and said, "Whew, that was some workout. I hurt in places that never hurt before. Is it always like that?"

Clark chuckled and replied, "That was just the beginning lesson. You've just used muscles that don't usually get that much

work. As you use them they will get used to it. In the meantime, you are starting to learn the fundamentals. Once you have them mastered they will add more techniques.”

“I think that the more of this I know, the better off I will be when I get back. How often can I have a class?”

“We want you to progress as quickly as possible. I think a class each night would be good. I think you should take a hot shower and get some sleep. The hot water will feel good on those stressed muscles. I’ll be over in the morning and we can continue your studies.”

She covered a yawn and replied, “Yes, it has been a long and eventful day. The shower will feel good and so will the bed.”

“Everything you should need will be around, somewhere. You may have to look through some drawers to find things. One thing...” He ran off and came back with a new toothbrush. “Lois had this in the medicine cabinet. You’ll need it.”

She smiled and said, “Thanks.”

“Goodnight, Margot.”

“Goodnight, Clark. See you in the morning.” In more ways than one, she was disappointed that he was leaving. She did have her own bedroom in Lamont’s apartment and that kept them close. She was already missing that closeness.

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The following week was a whirlwind of activity, between studying people, journalistic writing and karate. Clark took Margot to the DMV office to get a replacement license and the bank to get checks and order a replacement credit card.

Clark was trying to compress four years of journalism school into a week and at times Margot felt like her head would explode.

Finally, Clark decided that he couldn’t keep her secluded any longer and addressed the subject with her. As he was starting to cook dinner, he addressed faux Lois. “I think I need to get you into The Planet.”

Worried, she replied, “Do you really think I’m ready?”

“I think you’re about as ready as you will ever be.”

“I’ve been thinking, just so there aren’t any slip-ups, maybe you should call me Lois from now on.”

Clark replied as he reached into his pocket, “I think that would be a good idea as well. There’s one more thing.” He opened the little box and displayed an engagement ring, “Lois wouldn’t be without this.”

Trembling, Margot held out her left hand for him to slip the ring on. “I’ve been waiting for and hoping that Lamont would be proposing. This is almost as good.”

“I have a feeling that after this time he has spent with Lois, you won’t have to wait much longer. Okay, well, tomorrow is the big day. Your first day in the bullpen. Oh, before I forget, Lois and I are rather ... affectionate. By that I mean, little touches, the occasional kiss. Would you mind terribly if we did that?”

“No, I wouldn’t mind, in fact, I think I might enjoy it. I’ll pretend you’re Lamont.”

“And I will pretend that you are Lois.”

“And if something happens and this never gets straightened out?”

“I guess that you could actually become Lois. Would you mind that ... terribly?”

“I don’t know. I need to see how things go.” After saying that faux Lois lifted her left hand and admired the ring newly placed upon her finger. She started smiling as she did. She was imagining, in her mind’s eye, being engaged to Lamont and with Clark there, it wasn’t very hard to imagine. She let her imagination run wild and in a state of confusion started acting like it was Clark that she was engaged to. Absently she said, “Funny about this thing ... I look down at it ... I’m surprised to see it there ... and I think about what it means ... and about you...”

Clark replied, “Don’t you mean, Lamont?”

Coming out of her fog, somewhat she replied, “Uh, well,

yeah. And I wonder if he will actually propose ... when I get back, if I get back. I guess, I’m just being silly, but I want to pretend that it is actually you that I’m engaged to.”

Clark thought for a second, before he replied, “That would probably be the best thing to do. We have to look and act like a happily engaged couple. I’ve told you about some of the things that got in the way of our engagement so you can think of how long it took you to finally put it on.”

Getting into the spirit of the thing, faux Lois replied, “That, too ... We’ve been through a lot.”

In the spirit of humorous banter, Clark replied, “A lot?” Lois, salmon swimming upstream don’t have the mating trouble we’ve had.”

Faux Lois was watching him and smiling as he cooked. She settled into a chair and said, “Yeah, but now we’re just this old, almost-married couple... And we’ll be like this forever. You cooking, me watching.”

Clark teased, “You’re never cooking?”

Faux Lois replied, “It’s not really something I do.”

Clark replied, “It really isn’t something that the other Lois does either. I always thought it was lack of time.”

“We are so alike in so many ways. In my case it’s lack of talent. Who needs to cook as long as room service is available?”

“I’ve learned a lot this week, but I guess there’s all kinds of things I still have to find out about you.”

Faux Lois smiled and replied, “And me about you. There’s no really big surprises, right?”

Teasingly, he asked, “Did I mention the flying?”

Standing up, she put her arms around his neck and said, “Yes, you did. I only marry men who fly.” She stopped herself, and said, “Maybe I shouldn’t say that. Maybe it should be ... I only marry men who fly or who become invisible. What else is there to learn about you?”

Reaching over his shoulder, she swiped her finger across the spoon he had been stirring the spaghetti sauce with and then stuck said finger in her mouth to taste it. She let out an “Ooooooo,” sound and then said in a rapturous tone, “Delicious.” Impulsively she kissed him. Caught up in the instant, forgetting for the time that this was faux Lois, Clark responded and kissed her back.

Just then the phone started to ring and it broke the spell. Both realized just what they were doing and separated. As they did, Clark picked up the phone and answered, “Hello? Hi, Jimmy. Yeah, a little busy ... What? Yeah ... okay...” He hung up the phone and said, “Jimmy says we have to turn on channel six...”

As Clark moved to the living room she followed and as he grabbed the remote she said, “Wait, I was just gonna find out all this juicy stuff about you...”

Clark smiled an enigmatic smile as he clicked on the TV. As he did, centered in the frame was a run-down suburban home. The voice over was that of the sleazy Australian Top Copy Anchor, “Tonight, ‘Top Copy’ takes you live to the home of Miss Leigh-Anne Stipanovic...”

The picture of the house dissolved to be replaced by a shot of a marginally pretty, in a trailer trash sort of way, a woman in her late twenties. The Chiron across the bottom of the screen gave her name, Leigh-Anne Stipanovic. She had a slight, but pronounced southern accent.

The reporter shoved a microphone in her face and she apparently answered a question that had been asked off microphone. Tearfully, she said, “Yes, it’s true... I can remain silent no more.” She paused for a second before she continued, “I ... had Superman’s love child.”

Clark’s mouth dropped open and faux Lois stared at him. In a sarcastic tone, she asked, “Is this one of the big things I was going to find out. What would Lois have said to this? At least I know that Lamont doesn’t run around on me.”

“Wait, I have no idea what this is all about. I’ve never seen

that woman before in my life.”

“Why would she be claiming that if it wasn’t true?”

“It could be an extortion racket. She may just want money.”

“I guess we’ll have to see about that.”

*(The links will take you to YouTube videos of the music.*

*Listen in the background. It will give you the flavor of the period.)*

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### Chapter 7 – New York 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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A swing band was playing Glenn Miller’s [Moonlight Serenade](#) when Lamont Cranston and his girlfriend ‘Margot Lane’ entered The Savoy. When they did, they made quite a stir. The Maître de cérémonie recognized them and immediately conducted them to Commissioner Weston’s table. Lamont held Margo’s chair as she sat next to Inspector Cardona and then sat between her and Commissioner Weston. The commissioner’s wife sat on his other side, between her husband and Cardona, sipping a cocktail. She paused to salute with the cocktail glass as he sat.

As they sat, cocktails were delivered automatically.

The commissioner said, “Nice of you to join us. Margot, you are very lovely this evening.”

Faux Margot blushed prettily and replied, “You say the sweetest things.”

“It takes an older man to appreciate the beauties in the world. What I can’t understand is why you stay with a mug like Cranston; a dilettante that doesn’t do anything of consequence.”

“Ah, but he’s so sweet to me, aren’t you, Lamont?”

Lamont took a sip of his cocktail and said, “Ah, there, you see commissioner. Now, you must admit, that is a worthwhile endeavor. And you must admit, I have helped the Inspector out occasionally, Haven’t I, Inspector.”

The inspector spoke up for the first time, “Yes, I have to admit, you have helped.”

The commissioner replied, “As an amateur detective, bah. You should find something good to do with your time and leave detecting to the professionals.”

“But commissioner, acting like a detective is so thrilling.” He turned to the inspector and asked, “What is the department working on now? Is it that string of murders? Do you believe that it is a result of Powers’ threat? I might be able to help.”

“That’s what I mean; leave the detecting to the professionals. Carlton Powers is dead, dead and buried. He can’t be committing these murders.”

Lamont challenged, “But what have you done to protect the ones on his list?”

The inspector replied, “I’ve done everything I can. I’ve added extra security.”

“It hasn’t been very effective.”

This barb struck home because any failure on the part of the police reflected on his office and Weston ‘harumphed’, fiddled nervously with his cigar and took a long swallow of his highball before answering. “You don’t need to be insulting. I know that. Cardona is operating under a handicap, It isn’t easy to protect individuals from a rifle bullet from long range. That is how each of these people has been killed. After the fact we have been able to find the location that the shot was taken from. Whoever it is doing the shooting, he is well trained, either that or he is using a telescoped rifle.”

“That would seem to narrow the field somewhat. It would need to be either a military man or a hunter of some note.”

Inspector Cardona replied, “We’ve thought of that. None of Powers; associates are known to be hunters. His brother was in the Army, but he was discharged because of mental health problems resulting from combat.”

“Have you checked on the brother?”

Cardona answered again, “He splits his time between a distant relative and a hospital. He has a more or less permanent room at the hospital.”

“Have you checked his military record?”

Cardona was ready with his answer, “Yes, he served honorably in the infantry. He was classed as an expert marksman with the Springfield.”

“Have you checked on his movements?”

Cardona replied assuredly, “It appears as though he is in the hospital every other day.”

“Where is the hospital located?”

Commissioner Weston replied, “Memorial Rehab, it is here in the city. That’s a dead end. To top it all off, I had a call from the mayor today. He was insistent that the department call in The Shadow to assist.”

Lamont laughed, “You don’t seriously believe that there is actually someone out there calling himself The Shadow taking on criminals by himself? He’s just a voice on the radio.”

Weston became serious, “Yes, I believe he is a man, not just a voice on the radio.” He looked around to assure himself that he wouldn’t be overheard before he continued, “I’ve spoken to him, personally. He called me today. I don’t know how he knew about it, but somehow he knew about the Mayor’s call. He offered to help.”

“What can one man do, even if he does exist? If he is going to take a hand now, why not earlier?”

“He explained that. He said there were just too many to protect.”

“So, he is not superhuman. He can only be in one place at a time.”

Just then, the band started playing [Mood Indigo](#) and Lamont said, “Pardon me, Commissioner,” turned to faux Margot and asked, “Would you like to dance, my dear?”

Nodding her approval, faux Margot again found the loop on the train on her gown and gracefully rose from the chair Lamont pulled back. She had marveled at the idea of the loop so her train wouldn’t get dirty from the floor. She took his hand as he led her to the dance floor.

As they swung into the step, Lamont said, “You are performing your part, excellently, but I needed to ask, would I be out of line to ask if I could kiss you? Margot and I are ... attached and it would seem out of place if we did not.”

Lois had been undercover on numerous occasions. Usually she didn’t have to play the part of someone’s girlfriend, but in this case, in order to stay in character, she and Lamont might have to kiss. She felt sure that Clark would understand and approve. She put her lips close to his ear, apparently whispering endearments as she replied, “I think my fiancé would approve. I need to stay in character and if that’s what is called for then so be it. If it is any consolation, I will be pretending it is Clark.”

“And I will be pretending it is Margot.”

When the band finished Mood Indigo they moved into a rendition of the club’s signature song, Benny Goodman’s [Stompin’ at the Savoy](#). When the song finished there was applause for the band and some couples started to move from the floor. When Lamont stopped dancing and asked, “Shall we return to the table?”

She nodded and they moved toward Weston’s table.

Lois had enjoyed the dancing, but she realized that they needed to return to the table so they moved from the floor. As they were approaching the table, the band swung into a spirited rendition of Glenn Miller’s [In the Mood](#).

When they were next to the table, Lois put her arms around Lamont’s neck and kissed him. After a reasonable time, she pulled back and said, “Thank you for the dance.”

Smiling he replied, “My pleasure.”

Weston watched this public display and snorted, “Kids.”

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Around 9 p.m. the band swung into Benny Goodman's [Let's Dance](#) and as they did, Lamont made their excuses and they left the Savoy. Shrevvy was there to pick them up. This time Shrevvy wasn't driving his hack, he was driving Lamont's limousine.

As they entered, Lamont said, "Happy Hollows, Shrevvy."  
"Sure teng, boss. I'll have you dere in a jiff."

When they arrived, Cliff and Jericho were waiting for them. Never having met them, faux Margot was surprised at what she saw. Cliff and Jericho made an odd pair. Cliff was an average sized white man while Jericho, standing a head taller than Cliff, was a minor giant of a black man possessed of enormous strength. After they exited the car, faux Margot once again pulled up her train.

Lamont said, "Please lead the way, Margot."

Faux Margot, taking the lead, headed for the grave with the rest following in her wake, with Cliff and Jericho carrying their tools over their shoulders. Faux Margot was glad of the stole she had chosen because it covered a goodly portion of her back which was naked to the waist, protecting it from the slight early autumn nip in the air. Once she had found the correct grave, she pointed and said, "That's the one."

Lamont directed, "Cliff, Jericho, we need this coffin dug up."

Without a word, the two men began to dig. The pick-ax that Jericho had brought was laid aside. It had only been a couple of weeks since this grave had been closed so the earth was fairly loose. That being the case, it wasn't very long until there was the sound of metal hitting wood. Lamont said, "There it is. Clear out around it. We need to get it open."

A very few minutes of additional work was required to completely reveal the lid of the coffin. They also dug around it somewhat so that when the lid was opened the dirt would not fall in.

Cliff took a chisel and used it to pry up one side of the coffin lid. Once the nails had been loosened, Jericho stopped Cliff and said, "Stand aside, pipsqueak, let a man do that." The fact that they had worked together for some time and that consequently they were friends was evident by the fact that Cliff didn't take offense. He joked back, "Yeah, the brains have done their part, now it's time for the brawn," as he stepped aside. Jericho hooked his fingers in the gap and with a wrench, used his extraordinary strength to lift the lid.

Lamont produced a flashlight and shined it into the coffin. What was revealed in the light was a pile of bricks.

Faux Margot gasped and said, "Bricks! He's not in there. He could be the one killing those people."

Lamont agreed, "Yes, suddenly it becomes possible, but not a sure thing."

"How could it be anyone else? He must have had help. Somehow he faked his death."

Lamont turned toward his assistants and said, "Cliff, Jericho, leave the coffin exposed. We have seen what we needed to see, but the police need to be made aware of this situation. You may return to your other activities, but remain available. Burbank may contact you."

As Jericho and Cliff shouldered their tools, Jericho said, "Sure thing, Boss."

Once they were back in the car, Lamont turned to faux Margot and said, "This puts things in a different light. It is possible that Powers is still alive, however, even though the coffin was empty, he could still be dead. This will require some thought. Shrevvy, the apartment, please."

"Sure teng, boss. I'll have you dere in a jiff."

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As soon as they entered the apartment, Lamont crossed to the phone and dialed. When it was answered, {Burbank.}, he said, "Orders. Contact Clyde Burke. I need the reports of all of the

killings related to the Powers conviction. That is all." He hung up.

Turning to faux Margot he said, "You have been a great help in this. If you wish, you may retire for the night. I have some thinking to do and I may go out for a while."

Faux Margot placed a hand on Lamont's arm as she said, "I had a wonderful evening. If you're sure you won't be needing me, I think I will go to bed."

He smiled as he said, "Margot could not have done better. It has been an eventful day. One thing we have not done is try to find a way home for you."

"I don't think there is anything I can do to find a way home. I think I just have to wait for Herb or," shudder, "Andrus to find me."

"You have mentioned Herb Wells before, but just who is this Andrus?"

"Andrus is a TTEMPO agent. In the future there is this organization, TTEMPO, that was, uh, will be founded by Herb. They are tasked with keeping things like this from happening. As soon as I was taken from my home, I'm sure some kind of bells or whistles or something should have started going off and they would have started a search. The problem is it's like looking for a very small needle in a very large haystack. The fact that Margot and I have apparently swapped places could complicate matters. It could look like I never left. That could be good or bad. Bad in that Herb might not be looking for me. Good in that Tempus might think he failed and he will come looking for me."

"Perhaps if we contacted the Herb Wells of this world..."

"I doubt that would do any good. The local Herb may not have built the time machine. There is another possibility, if Tempus decided that this would be a good world to hide out on. He might think so because I'm sure he knows that there is no Superman here. If he did, then maybe, just maybe, I could get his time window device and find my own way home."

Lamont tried to be supportive, as he said, "I'm hoping that everything will work out and you'll be back in your fiancé's arms before you know it and I'll have Margot back. But what if it doesn't? Are you prepared to remain here ... as Margot?"

Faux Margot yawned, demurely, and replied, "I hope it works out, but I guess I have to be prepared for that eventuality. Well, I'm going to go to bed. Goodnight!"

"Goodnight, Miss Lane."

She turned and headed for the bedroom. As she closed the door behind her, the tears that she had been holding back could be held no longer. That kiss she had shared with Lamont had reminded her strongly of Clark and the fact that he wasn't here had been a trial from that point on. She sank down on the bed and was as silent as possible in her grief. She and Clark had literally just gotten engaged. They were finally starting to plan their lives together and Tempus had to step in and rip her away from that. After all that they had been through, to have that happen - just who did Tempus think he was anyway? Who made him the judge and jury over them? Mixed with all of her grief was a fair amount of anger, mostly at Tempus.

After a time, Lois shook herself and said to herself, "That's enough of this self-pity. There is a job to do. He might not be your actual father, but there is a Samuel Lane here and he is in danger. If you're going to help Lamont and save this Sam, you need some sleep." So saying, she got up and looking through the dresser, found some silk nightgowns. Selecting one in a pastel turquoise she removed her clothing and slipped it on over her head. Margot must have had a sachet in the drawer with her lingerie because the delicate scent of jasmine floated around her head. The feel of the silk against her skin was distinctly sensual and she reveled in the feel. It felt like Clark caressing her and that brought another tear to her eye. Again she shook herself and chastising herself, muttered, "Enough of that. Go to bed."

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If Lamont had been there, he might have heard Lois's self-dialogue, however, as soon as her door had closed, he had been in motion.

Moving to the cabinet, he had donned his slouch hat and taking the cloak from its hanger had swept it around his shoulders. Moving to the other side of the apartment, he opened a concealed door to reveal an elevator which he took down below the lobby level to a secret garage. Entering the dark sedan that awaited him there, he started the powerful motor and began to drive up the ramp. As he did, he broke an electronic beam which actuated an automatic garage door that was camouflaged on the outside to look like a blank brick wall.

He drove to a spot near Police Headquarters and parked. The car door opened, apparently of its own accord because there was no human presence detectable. In a few seconds, a little-used side door opened and closed.

The Shadow passed through the duty room and none of the uniformed officers there were any the wiser. He made his way to Commissioner Weston's office. Once he was in the office, he took a sheet of paper from a drawer and wrote, in large block letters, "CHECK HAPPY HOLLOWES CEMETERY, CARLETON POWERS IS NOT IN HIS COFFIN. HE MAY HAVE FAKED HIS OWN DEATH AND MAY BE THE MURDERER."

The signature was a single stylized 'S' written in a long sweeping stroke.

He positioned his missive in the center of the desk so that it wouldn't be missed and left as silently as he had arrived.

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#### Chapter 8 – 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Clark called for faux Lois early the next morning. He had picked up coffee on the way to her apartment. When he knocked, she was dressed and ready to go. She had picked out one of Lois's dress pantsuits. The blouse had a high neck with extensions on the collar that were tied into a big floppy bow under her chin. She had her bag over her shoulder and accepting the coffee, said, "Okay, here we go."

Descending to street level, they entered the Jeep and faux Lois got into the driver's seat. Once they were both belted in, she started the engine and with her foot on the brake, put it into drive. She checked her mirrors and pulled into traffic. She was a careful driver and they made it to the underground parking lot of The Planet without incident. They chatted as they approached the elevator. Clark said, "Don't worry, you'll do just fine. Remember, we can excuse any faux pas by attributing it to the amnesia. The people in the bullpen are just going to be happy to see you back."

As the elevator opened onto the bullpen, the first to see faux Lois emerge was Perry. He had been at Jimmy's desk looking at some photos. Seeing her step off the elevator, he smiled so wide it threatened to split his face. He dropped the pictures on Jimmy's desk and moved to intercept Lois as she descended the ramp. He was there, at the foot of the ramp when she arrived. He threw his arms around her and asked, "It's good to see ya'. How are you Darlin'?"

Glancing at Clark for encouragement, faux Lois replied, "Oh, I'm fine Perry. I still have some gaps in my memory, but we hope that they will close up. Right now, I think I just need to get back to work. One thing, though, I think I should stick with Clark if you don't mind. What do you have for us?"

"We'll ease you back into things. There's a press conference this afternoon. Be ready if they open it up for questions."

Clark replied, "We'll be ready, Perry."

Just as he said that, someone clicked on the newsroom TV and a tape of the "Top Copy" broadcast was playing. On TV was

Leigh-Anne. Sitting next to her on the ratty couch was her son, Jesse, who appeared to be about 3 ½ years old.

Everyone in the newsroom, and especially, Jimmy were watching in rapt attention as Leigh-Anne talked about her son, "Course, he's got my nose and my ears. But the eyes and the cheekbones, they're his daddy's alright."

The Top Copy reporter on the scene fed her the next question, "And Leigh-Anne, Superman never visits the child? Is that right?"

Obviously going for the emotional appeal, Leigh-Anne started tearing up as she replied, "Only in our dreams. I'm constantly showing Jesse pictures of his daddy, so he won't forget. But it breaks my heart, you know. A boy needs a father."

Demonstrating that this was a recording that they had made earlier, a staffer grabbed the remote and fast forwarded to the next section. Again, Leigh-Anne was laying it on rather thick, going all out on the emotional angle.

"... These years have been so hard. Sure, I've always hoped that Superman might give us a little loan or something to get on our feet. But mostly I just want him to..." She openly sobbed before she continued, "See his boy." As she finished, she broke down weeping.

Perry had finally had enough, and shouted, gruffly, "Turn that trash off!"

There was a scramble for the remote and then the TV was off and everyone rapidly returned to their desks.

Jimmy wasn't deterred, however. He approached, Perry and asked, "So Chief, you don't think there's a story here?"

Taking pity on Jimmy, partly because of his youth and partly because he was a pet, Perry answered, "The story, Jimmy, is the crazy times we live in when anyone can get media coverage with a cock and bull story like that. We, by the way, won't be wasting ink on it."

Faux Lois and Clark had gone over to her desk and Jimmy approached, "What do you think, C.K.? I mean if I was Superman and had, you know, his looks ... his muscles ... tight pants ... women fallin' all over me ... I sure might be tempted to..." He stopped speaking when he noticed that Clark was simply staring into space and not paying the slightest bit of attention to him. As he walked away, he muttered, "... Or not. Probably not. Wouldn't be a thing I'd think about."

Perry was frustrated and it showed in his voice, "Could we get back to the real news, here? Clark, the President of Tanzor is in town for the signing of a peace treaty with Fostonia. That is the press conference I was talking about."

Snapping out of his funk, Clark replied, "Yeah, they've been enemies for a century. There are die-hards in both countries who don't want the treaty."

Perry nodded, acknowledging that Clark was on top of the story and said, "You and Lois get on it." Sotto voce, he asked Clark, "How is this engagement thing, anyway? You two must be happier'n pigs in slop."

Just then faux Lois approached and her expression was anything, but happy. The thought that this could be Clark's child was getting to her. She nodded to Perry and said, "What's going on?" before she exchanged a look with Clark.

Perry didn't seem to notice and he continued, "I was just sayin' how happy you two must be..."

Faux Lois seemed distracted as she replied, "What? Sorry, Chief ... I ... didn't sleep much last night."

Clark chimed in, "Me, either."

Jimmy and Perry shared a knowing look. They must have had a squabble.

Turning to faux Lois, Clark said, "Perry wants us to cover the President of Tanzor's arrival."

Lois was less than enthusiastic as she replied, "Fine."

As they turned away and picked up their things suddenly, Clark started to smile.

Jimmy interrupted their preparations. “Hey, Lois, what'd you think of that babe who says she had Superman's...”

Clark interrupted, preemptively, “Jimmy.”

Faux Lois was stiff and over cordial as she replied, “Oh? 'Babe?' Is she a 'babe?' Clark, do you think she's a 'babe?’”

Clark was on the defensive as he replied, “Uh, I ... didn't really notice.” He crossed to faux Lois and taking her arm started to guide her toward the elevators.

Not to be deterred, Jimmy called after him, “Not notice?! How could you possibly not no...”

Clark silenced him with a glare.

Turning to Perry, he asked, “Is he okay?”

Perry replied, thoughtfully, “Aw, people in love always act screwy, Jimmy. Alice and me may be on the rocks just now... But I remember a time when we didn't get much sleep, either.”

As they were waiting for the elevator, Clark asked, in a low tone, “You alright? Lois, we talked about this last night...”

Barely above a whisper, faux Lois replied, “I know.”

Clark tried to divert her, “So we'll just go to the President's arrival and try to forget all about...”

Stepping closer, she said, “Look, the story's as good as written. The guy arrives, waves, says peace is good, surprise, surprise. Not a good use of our time.”

The elevator doors slid open and they stepped inside. As the doors slid closed he could see Perry and Jimmy watching, so he put an arm around faux Lois's shoulders.

When the doors were closed and they were alone, he said, “I got a good look at the boy she claims is my son. He looks to be about three and a half. For one thing, Superman was created less than three years ago and at the time he would have been conceived, I was on the other side of the globe.”

With a determined look, faux Lois said, “Yeah, but with your flight ability, that can be discounted.”

“But, don't you see, it would have been me, Clark Kent, me, not Superman.

“Since the press conference is going to be so predictable, there is a better use for our time.”

Responding, Clark asked, “Oh? And what might be a better use of our time?”

Looking up, into his face, faux Lois said, “We could ... you know ... check out this Leigh-Anne person...”

Clark chuckled, “You know, you are really starting to sound like Lois.”

“Is that good or bad?”

“No, don't get me wrong. It's good. Keep it up and you might even fool me eventually. But no. Perry's right. Covering it just gives her credibility! This'll be over tomorrow...”

She gripped his lapels and said, “Well, I think that's naive. Our job is to expose this hoax! Prove to the world that...” She started to shake with emotion as she continued, “My fiancé ... The man I love... Never... would never... Do what this woman says he did.” As she released his crumpled lapels, she said, “I'm sorry. Look, I'm not Lois, but I can't help it. You're so like Lamont, it's like you are him and this is happening to him and me.”

“I don't mind. It's the situation. Of course he didn't! Uh, I didn't... Trust me, this story's gonna die!”

Faux Lois spoke with resolve, “And I'll be the one to kill it. Look, all we have to do is walk in there and if she doesn't recognize you, there's our proof.”

“Proof for us maybe, but if we say anything it could expose my secret identity.”

There was a ding and the elevator doors slid open to reveal the underground parking garage where the Jeep was parked.

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As faux Lois drove up to the house, they couldn't get any closer than the end of the block because of all of the TV vans, equipment and reporters that jammed the street and yard of Leigh-

Anne's house.

As faux Lois and Clark approached, there was a stir as she was recognized. Everyone knew how close Lois Lane was to Superman and they could see the look of determination in her eyes. It was as if storm clouds were gathering. A major confrontation was in the offing and they all wanted to see the fireworks. The crowd parted like they were the Red Sea and faux Lois was Moses.

As they approached the porch that led up to the front door, it opened and Geraldo Rivera emerged, dabbing his eyes with a handkerchief.

Clark recognized him. “Geraldo?”

Geraldo looked up and saw faux Lois and Clark. When he did, he addressed faux Lois, “Hi, Lois. Boy, I've covered some tragic stories before... But this...” Unable to go on, he simply waved his hand and left. Clark stared after him.

As he did, the door reopened and Leigh-Anne stepped onto the porch. She was dressed shabbily, but neatly. She wanted to look good, but she was going for the sympathy factor.

Addressing the crowd, she said, “I forget. Which of you kind people did I say was next?”

The other reporters started shouting and waving their arms attempting to get her attention. Faux Lois was standing in the front of the crowd and simply said, “Hello, I'm Lois Lane...”

It was obvious that Leigh-Anne recognized the name and was both shocked and pleased. She played up her southern drawl as she said, “Lois Lane... From the Daily Planet? Come on in!” Using a scarf around her neck, she started dabbing at her eyes. Then she said, “I feel a woman should tell my Story.”

Remembering the conversation that she and Clark had had, when Leigh-Anne didn't recognize Clark, faux Lois released a silent sigh of relief. She could now be fairly certain that Clark was innocent.

As they followed Leigh-Anne inside, Clark leaned in close to faux Lois and whispered, “Just repeat to yourself, hoax, hoax, hoax.”

Faux Lois nodded and whispered, “Hoax, hoax, hoax.”

As they passed through the door, faux Lois was still whispering to herself, “Hoax, hoax, hoax,” but the sight that greeted her eyes stopped her in her tracks. Clark, who had been close behind her actually bumped into her and they both stared, stunned by what they saw.

Jesse, the three and a half-year-old son of Leigh-Anne was carrying a full sized sofa across the room, balanced on one hand. A feat fit for a Superman.

In a reproving tone, Leigh-Anne addressed Jesse, “Jesse, Honey, we have guests.”

Faux Lois and Clark were both shaken. Faux Lois pasted on a feeble smile and said, “Excuse us a second.”

They stepped back outside and leaned against the wall for support. Faux Lois hissed, “Well? Well?”

Clark hissed back, “I don't know! It ... It's impossible!”

She hissed back, “Impossible?! Impossible?!”

Clark, still mystified by what he had seen, challenged, “Why do you keep saying everything twice?”

Once they had finally gotten themselves somewhat together, they both peered around the doorframe. When they did, they saw Leigh-Anne point to where she wanted Jesse to put the sofa. He set it down gently and patted it before he left the room.

They finally stepped back into the room and looked around. The room was a shambles from a long period of abuse: Cracked plaster, boy-shaped holes in the walls, splintered furniture.

Faux Lois, apparently a bit awkward with children, approached Jesse. She tried to sound friendly as she said, “Hi, Jesse. I'm Lois. I'm here to be your mommy's friend so she'll tell me the real, true story of your life.”

Jesse, with childlike directness, replied, “I don't like you.”

Faux Lois had a frozen smile on her face as she replied, “I see.”

Jesse pointed at Clark and said, “I like him.” As he said this, Jesse ran and grabbed onto Clark’s leg. There was a soft thud as they collided.

Clark looked up from Jesse, where he was clinging to Clark’s leg and smiled weakly at Lois.

Leigh-Anne had been only half watching, her mind on how to craft the interview to her benefit, but seeing this, commented, “Wow, he’s usually shy with strangers. Shall we get started?” Tentatively, she touched faux Lois’s arm and indicated the sofa. Uncomfortably, she glanced at Clark and saw that he was with Jesse. She thought <I guess if we split up we can cover more ground. I’ll talk to Leigh-Anne and he can talk to Jesse,> and moved to sit next to Leigh-Anne on the sofa.

Clark had always been good with children so he felt comfortable with having Jesse follow him around as he checked on the damage that had been done to the house. He examined the edges of a boy-shaped hole in one wall. As he did, he asked Jesse, “So. Jesse. You’re a pretty strong boy. How’d you get so strong?”

Jesse just shrugged his shoulders in response.

Spotting a small football, Clark picked it up and asked, “Ever play catch?”

Smiling, Jesse supersped into the dining area and held up his hands to accept Clark’s throw.

Clark was stunned and said, in a weak tone, “Gee. And you’re really, really ... fast.”

Leigh-Anne was tracking how much interest her story was generating and had her TV on, tuned to LNN.

The scene shifted to the outside of the building where the peace conference was to be held. In a voice-over, the anchorperson said, “We now bring you live coverage of the Metropolis Peace Conference.”

As Clark looked on, he slowly sank into a sitting position on the floor in front of the TV, the anchorperson said, “We’re at the Tanzorian Consulate Building where President Florio has just arrived. Tomorrow he signs the peace treaty with Fostonia, with whom his country has a long history of hostile relations.

Suddenly, a movement out of the corner of his eye attracted his attention and looking n that direction he saw Jesse floating cross-legged in mid-air next to him.

Faux Lois was distracted from her conversation with Leigh-Anne by seeing Jesse floating. The more she saw the harder it was for her to believe Clark’s protestations of innocence.

As they watched, the limousine pulled up to the Consulate. There were crowds of spectators and reporters, constrained to remain behind barriers that had been erected by the police.

The voice-over continued, “Today’s ceremonies include a welcome from federal and local government officials that...”

As they watched the limo approach, a squad of several dark-suited Secret Service types, in reflective sunglasses and earpieces, trotted to the limo and one opened the door.

Unknown to anyone, an international terrorist, who was a master of disguise, called simply Anonymous had infiltrated the ranks of the security squad. While the other men scanned the crowd, he let a small silver transmitter with tiny antenna slip down one side of his leg until it rested on the curb. He stepped back into the squad as the President, in formal military-like garb, emerged from the car. He waved to the crowd then started moving slowly toward the building, surrounded by Secret Service guys.

A light was visible on the side of the transmitter and after a preprogrammed delay it started to transmit a high pitched hum

The hum gained in strength and increased in pitch until it was beyond normal human hearing.

Jesse put his hands over his ears and said, “Bad noise.”

Clark started to reach for his ears also but then fearing that he would reveal something, refrained.

Leigh-Anne responded to Jesse, “What noise? I don’t hear anything.”

Clark knew that there was something afoot, so he said to faux Lois, “Uh, Lois ... I’ll be right back,” and made a hasty exit. As quickly as he could he made his way back to the car. Opening the rear door, he entered, did a spin change and exited the other door at super-speed so that no one would see him.

The hum continued to grow more shrill and it was apparent that the audible noise coming from the transmitter was incidental. It was broadcasting on the frequency used by the security squad. The Secret Service types all began reaching for their earpieces. All but Anonymous. Suddenly the noise became a SHRIEK and all the guards grabbed their ears and crumpled to the ground. Anonymous thrust a hand into a pocket, which was clearly holding a gun, moved swiftly to the bewildered President. “Right this way, Mr. President.”

He started to hustle the President toward the side of the building, rather than the main entrance when he was interrupted by the arrival of Superman.

Superman zeroed in on the transmitter and crushed it. Immediately the secret service types started to recover and stand while Superman went to the President who was now standing by himself, somewhat dazed.

Superman asked, “Are you all right, Mr. President?”

The President was shaking his head, as he replied, “Yes, yes ... One of my men acted very quickly and...” He looked around. “Where did he go?”

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Meanwhile, faux Lois had been conducting the interview, or more accurately, since she was not as experienced as the real Lois, allowed Leigh-Anne to talk.

“Oh, he spoiled me somethin’ awful. Cheese from France, chocolate from Switzerland ... ‘Course he can get to all those places in two shakes.”

Faux Lois had already experienced some of that so she was able to reply, “I’m familiar with that, yes.”

Leigh-Anne continued as if faux Lois hadn’t even spoken, “But I would just keep sayin’ to him, ‘Super,’ I’d say... I called him Super ... ‘Super, the gifts are nice, but I want you to love me like an ordinary man.”

Faux Lois muttered, “Uh-huh.”

Leigh-Anne gushed, “And you know what he would do? He’d ... cook for me.”

Faux Lois, choked out, “He’d cook for you?” The more she heard the more the doubts crowded into her mind. She reached for a glass and took a sip of water.

Leigh-Anne really started to lay it on thick as she said, “Please, I beg you, don’t ask about our ... intimate ... relations. Suffice it to say, they don’t call him ‘Super’ man for nothin’.”

At that one faux Lois almost choked on her water.

Leigh-Anne asked, “You all right, sugar?”

Faux Lois replied, “Yes. Yes, I’m okay.”

Leigh-Anne gushed, “I can understand if he’s no longer in love with me. The flame that burns so bright, only burns so long.” She continued to go for the emotional impact and turned on the waterworks, “But I have my little boy to think about!”

Faux Lois had worked enough with Lamont and had read enough of the real Lois’s articles to spot a possible flaw. She decided that she needed to see some hard evidence. “You know, in all fairness to Superman, you haven’t really offered any hard proof that ... well ... he even knows you.”

As if she was a lawyer in a court of law presenting evidence, Leigh-Anne produced a framed photo of herself and Superman outside a cheap motel. She had her arms around him in a quasi-romantic pose and showed it to Lois. “No? How ‘bout this?”

Instead of increasing her doubts, the picture shored up faux Lois’s confidence in Clark. She knew Clark and Lamont better

than this woman ever could. She had seen Lamont in various guises and Clark with and without his glasses. The man in the photo was probably NOT Clark. He had been telling the truth and a feeling of relief swept over her.

She almost missed what Leigh-Anne was saying. "Now don't go printing that. 'National Inquisitor' and 'Tattle Tale Weekly' are fighting for the rights."

Faux Lois thought, <And there's the motive for her lies. We'll have to see about this.>

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Meanwhile, Anonymous had to report his failure.

Once he had, the rebel leader, a fiery zealot in his thirties, replied, "It's unthinkable you failed today. We're not paying you for failure! Now the old fool's canceled most of his public appearances."

Anonymous replied, "But not all. He has a soft spot for kids, which means he is a fool, and he's attending charity events for the little creatures."

The rebel leader pounded the desk in front of him as he replied, "Fostonia is the historic enemy of my country. There must be no peace treaty."

Anonymous snickered and said, "A nuclear missile's going to be launched from your country which'll destroy the capital of Fostonia. Who's going to sign a peace treaty?"

The leader said, "But you need the launch codes. And only the president has them."

Anonymous picked up a tabloid and said, "I'll get the damn launch codes. But I'm going to need a little help."

He turned the tabloid so that the leader could see the picture of Jesse floating next to Leigh-Anne. The headline read: "Flybaby Needs SuperDad."

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### Chapter 9 – 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

%%%%%%%%%

Lois awoke to the welcome aroma of coffee. Finding a silken wrap she pulled it on and slipping her feet into a pair of mules, headed for the living room.

"Good morning, Miss Lane."

Lois smiled and said, "After that kiss last night, I think you can call me Lois."

Smiling, he nodded as he replied, "Ah, yes, I suppose so, and please, call me Lamont. Coffee?"

"Yes, please, Lamont." She giggled at the use of his first name. As he poured, she asked, "So, how far have we gotten?"

As he handed her the coffee, he said, "Last night I left a missive for the commissioner, alerting him to the fact that Powers' coffin was empty. I presume that he will follow up on that this morning."

Lois sat on one of the chairs and crossed her legs. She was thoughtful as she handled her coffee cup. Finally, as she sipped her coffee, she said, "I've been thinking about the things that the Commissioner said last night. Powers had a brother and that brother splits his time between a relative and a hospital. The hospital is here in the city. Could we check on the dates of the killings and the days that the brother is at the relative's and the hospital? I'd like to see if there is a correlation of the dates, one way or the other."

"That is a very good question." Lamont moved to the phone, picked it up and dialed. {Burbank.} "Orders. Have Clyde Burke obtain the sign-in register for the Memorial Rehabilitation Hospital. Have him check the dates that Dwayne Powers was signed in. He should send the list to me by Rutledge Mann. That is all."

While he was on the phone, Lois had picked up the paper she

had purchased the day before and turned to the article about the murders. She folded the paper to the article and as Lamont hung up the phone, she said, "I have the dates of the killings so far. They were published in the paper." She looked at the list and said, in an urgent tone, "According to this, if Powers keeps to his schedule, the next victim will be killed tonight. Oh, Lamont, we have to try and prevent that."

"That is my intent, but the problem is, there are at this time two possibilities, the remaining juror and the governor." Making a decision, Lamont crossed to the phone again and dialed, {Burbank.} "Orders. Have Miles Croftin preflight the autogyro. I may be making a flight to Albany this evening." {Will do.} Thoughtfully, Lamont hung up the phone. Turning to Lois he said, "It will all depend on what we find on the lists. It always pays to be prepared."

Concerned, Lois challenged, "In the paper, I read the list of the people that were threatened. Why didn't you tell me that you were on that list?"

In a serious tone, Lamont replied, "No one has ever seen The Shadow. What does a shadow have to fear?"

He moved over to the phonograph in the corner, pulled a blank record from a stack in the cabinet underneath and placed it on the platform. As he did, Lois moved over to observe. Pulling out a microphone and plugging it in he prepared to make a recording. Before turning on the phonograph, he said to Lois. "Even the Shadow cannot be in two places at the same time. Tonight I am scheduled to make my weekly broadcast. Since I may be on my way to Albany, I will record my message and have Burbank play it over the remote connection to the radio station. No one will ever know the difference. I always do the broadcast from a remote location, but everyone thinks that I am in the closed and curtained studio doing it live."

"What are you planning for this broadcast?"

"Why don't you listen and see. Quiet please."

Lois sat back down and listened. What she heard sent chills up and down her spine.

The chilling tones of The Shadow's laugh preceded his speech. "HAhahahahahahah. Who knows what evil luuurrrkkks in the heart of man? The Shadow Knows! HAhahahahahahah.

There are those that think that Carlton Powers is carrying out his threat and killing those that convicted him. The Shadow knows differently. Twelve murders have been committed in the name of Carlton Powers, a convicted murderer in his own right, but this reign of terror is about to cease. The Shadow brought Carlton Powers to justice, now The Shadow is on the case once again. Tonight The Shadow will protect the remaining jurors. Death will not strike tonight. Many believe that it is the ghost of Carlton Powers that is striking down those that convicted him. Who better to catch a ghost than a ... Shadow?"

He went on to describe the murders and what steps the police had taken. The things that were already in the paper, so he was not revealing anything new. "The weed of crime bears bitter fruit. Crime does not pay! The Shadow knows!" and concluded with his signature laugh, "HAhahahahahahah." Altogether it was a fifteen-minute recording.

Lamont lifted the arm of the record player and stopped it. He then picked up the record, marked side one and slipped it into a paper sleeve. Turning to Lois he said, "When Rutledge Mann delivers the list, I will have him take this record to Burbank."

"That was something. That laugh sent chills up my spine."

With a chuckle, he replied, "It may have more to do with the way you are dressed than the quality of the laugh itself."

She looked down at herself and smiled, "You may have something there. I think I will get dressed. What are we planning for today?"

"Once we have the list from the hospital, I may ask you to follow up on it. Make sure that it is accurate. Speak with some of

the employees. Make sure that they have actually seen Dwayne Powers.”

“I’ll find something appropriate to wear.”

“While you dress, I’ll order breakfast. Would you like anything in particular?”

“My breakfast usually consists of coffee and a stale donut from the break area on the way out to cover a story, so anything would be an improvement.”

With a chuckle, Lamont said, “Homestyle breakfast it is.”

“You’re spoiling me terribly. When I get home, I’m going to be demanding similar treatment from Clark.”

He replied in a thoughtful tone, “I hope he is treating Margot well.”

Lois stopped and faced him. She replied, “Don’t get me wrong. Clark is a perfect gentleman. What I said about breakfast is because of our lifestyle, and no reflection on him. He will treat her like a princess because that is the way he treats me. I may have given you the wrong impression, but Clark is a sweetheart. My breakfast isn’t always stale donuts. Sometimes he flies all the way to Paris and brings me fresh, still hot from the oven, melt in your mouth, delicious, croissants. When we work late on a story sometimes he goes to Italy for pizza or Hong Kong for the most incredible Chinese food. He’s wonderful to me. Sometimes I feel like I don’t deserve him, but when that happens, he knows just the right thing to say and I love him that much more.”

“You miss him, don’t you?”

“How could I help it? He’s the love of my life.”

“As soon as we finish with this problem, we will do all that we can to get you home...”

“And Margot back where she belongs ... in your arms.”

“Amen to that. You know, listening to you, hearing about your relationship with Clark, I begin to think that I should propose to Margot.”

“If you’re asking my advice, do it. Clark and I had a lot of things that came between us. We were in love with each other for a long time and I was afraid and denied it until it was almost too late. Don’t wait until it is too late for you and Margot. I’ve never been happier than now, ever since we became engaged and we know we are getting married. We can’t wait for the day. That’s why I need to get home so desperately. We’ve waited so long; I don’t want to wait any longer.” She paused, thinking if there was more to say on the subject. When she didn’t come up with anything, she said, “Well, I guess I’ll go get dressed.”

“And I shall order breakfast.”

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Lois returned in one of Margot’s more modest dresses and sat to eat across from Lamont and as she picked up her fork, said, “It looks delicious as usual, Lamont.” Before she actually ate anything, she looked at Lamont, with a serious expression and said, “You know, I’ve been thinking. Remember what I said last night, about staying in character?”

“Of course.”

“Well, it occurred to me, after our conversation a while ago, if I am going to stay in character, it actually might be best if you called me Margot. We can’t afford any slip-ups. I need to get used to responding to that name and you shouldn’t use Lois, because then you might slip.”

“You’re probably right. Okay, I shall call you Margot from now on.”

As they were finishing breakfast, there was a knock on the door. Lamont arose, crossed the floor to the door and opened it. Rutledge Mann, a tall man in a grey flannel, double-breasted suit entered. As he did, he spotted Lois at the table and greeted her, “Good morning, Miss Lane. Good to see you.”

Lois had her coffee cup in hand and used that to salute him as she had seen the commissioner’s wife do.

When she did, Rutledge man saw her engagement ring and

turned on Lamont. “Were you trying to keep it a secret?”

Mystified, Lamont replied, “Keep what a secret?”

“You and Miss Lane ... the engagement.”

As he said that, Lois looked at her hand and realized that she had forgotten to remove her engagement ring. She gave Lamont an ‘I’m sorry’ look.

He turned back to Rutledge and said, “We were going to be announcing it shortly. Please don’t let on that you have discovered our little secret.”

Rutledge winked and said, “My lips are sealed.” Reaching inside his jacket, he pulled out a thick envelope and handed it over, “This is from Clyde Burke. I think you were expecting it.”

“Yes, we were. Thank you.” He picked up the record from a side table and handed it to him. “Please deliver this to Burbank. He will know what to do with it.”

“Right away.” As he was about to depart, he turned to Lois and said, “Good to see you and congratulations.”

She blushed prettily and said, “Thank you.” As he turned and headed out the door.

Once the door was closed, she said, “I’m sorry. It’s just so much a part of me, I forgot to remove it.”

As he returned to the table, in a soothing tone, he replied, “Don’t worry about it. After our earlier discussion, I had already made up my mind to propose to Margot. I say, it may come as a surprise to her, but it is something I should have done long before now.”

Smiling, Lois replied, “I think she’ll get over her surprise quickly enough. You have an advantage. She knows that you are The Shadow. I didn’t know that Clark was Superman until recently. He kept it a secret, even from me. That was one of the things that came between us, but I got over it.”

“Thanks for that encouragement. Well, things are proceeding.”

“Are you planning to fly to Albany tonight?”

“No, actually, I have thought better of that. I will use the recording to lull the shooter into a false sense of security. He will think that I have gone to Albany when in reality; I plan to visit the final jury member, disguised as a police officer. I will use a subterfuge to have him leave his apartment then I will return to it.”

“But by taking his place, you will be risking being shot.”

“Actually, I had other things in mind. If the shooter takes a shot, no one will die, tonight. I plan to set up a decoy and if he takes a shot, all he will kill is some plaster.”

“Lamont, could I borrow some money? If I tried to pass the currency I had with me, they would think it is counterfeit and I don’t think that the credit card system has been invented yet.”

“Of course.” Reaching into his pocket he pulled out a billfold and extracted several \$100 bills. As he handed them to her he inquired, “What is it that you need?”

“I only had the clothes I was dressed in when I arrived. I have Margot’s clothes, but there are some items that I use routinely, I call them my snooping clothes, dark slacks or jeans, a dark roll-neck sweater and sneakers, maybe a ski mask, if they’ve been invented. I’ve got a funny feeling I’ll need them. Like you, I try to blend into the darkness when I am snooping around someone’s office after hours. I’m not as effective at being invisible as you, but I try.”

Lamont picked up the phone and dialed. “Orders. Have Shrevvy pick up Miss Lane at the penthouse. As he hung the phone up he smiled and said, “Shrevvy will be here to pick you up shortly. Just tell him what you want. I’m sure he knows all about the stores in the city. He will take you to the best places for what you need.”

“While I’m out, what will you be doing?”

“I need to prepare for tonight.”

“Can you give me the address of the next victim?”

“It is 348 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, apartment 507. Why do you need

that information?"

"I want to see what's in the area."

"Ah, you want to 'case the joint' as they say."

She smiled and replied, "Something like that."

"Tonight will be a busy one. Shall we plan on dinner at six PM?"

As she tucked the money into her bag, she smiled and said, "Six it is." As she turned the knob on the door, she said, "See you then."

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After her shopping trip, as Lois climbed into the back of the cab with her shopping bags, she said, "Shrevvy, I want you to take me to West 42<sup>nd</sup> street. We're looking for 348. Once we get there I need you to find a place to park."

"Sure teng, Miss Lane. Dats over near da Garment District, just west of Times Square. I'll have you dere in a jiff."

Shrevvy was as good as his word. As he pulled into a parking space, he said, "Here we are. 348 is just up de block."

Lois sat there and observed for a time. She didn't note any enhanced police presence. She reasoned that since all of the shootings had been done after dark, that the extra police protection would start at that time. As it was, it should be easy to do what she needed to do.

As Lois opened the door to exit, Shrevvy did the same. She was surprised, but accepted it when he fell in step just behind her. He followed her as far as the doors to 348 where he took up a station next to the door. He called over a newsboy and purchased a paper which he proceeded to open and pretend to read as Lois went inside.

She approached the desk and asked, "Apartment 507, which way does it face?"

The clerk thought for a second and then replied, "That would be on the north side."

Lois thanked him and exited. Back on the sidewalk, Lois turned left and headed up the block. As she exited the building, Shrevvy fell in step behind her. Once she reached the corner, she looked up and counted five floors. She then looked around at the buildings facing it. It so happened that the building next to it was short, only three stories. She muttered to herself, "He will either be on the roof of that building or the apartment building beyond it." She glanced at her watch and decided that she needed to head back if she was going to be ready for dinner at six, but she had one more chore. Turning back, she said, "Shrevvy, we need to go to Memorial Rehab."

"No prob. I know just where it is.. I'll have you dere in a jiff."

True to his word, Shrevvy had her there in short order. After they parked, faux Margot headed inside and again, Shrevvy took up station at the doors.

She checked with the staff and was assured that Dwayne Powers was with them every other night, safely tucked into a bed.

Returning to the outside, she said, "Let's go back to the apartment, Shrevvy."

"Sure teng, Miss Lane. I'll have you dere in a jiff."

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Shrevvy helped Lois carry her purchases into the apartment. She said, "Thank you, Shrevvy."

He replied, "Any time, Miss Lane, any time," as he left.

Lamont was there, listening to a news broadcast on the radio as she entered. "Well, did you get everything you needed, my dear?"

"You were right. Shrevvy knew exactly where to go. Yes, I got everything. I should be ready for tonight. Oh, and I checked at Memorial, Dwayne Powers is there every other night."

"What do you intend to be doing tonight?"

"While you are playing decoy, I'm going to be watching. Hopefully I'll see where the shot comes from and I can see who

the shooter is."

"I must say, that isn't what Margot would be doing. Usually I would have her monitoring the radio."

"I'm not Margot and I think that I can be more useful spotting than sitting there monitoring the radio. Besides, this is what I do. I can't tell you the number of all-night stakeouts I've done."

"This is what you do as an investigator?"

"You bet your sweet, uh ... next week's pay, that's what I do."

"Well, all right. You seem to have assigned your own job on this stakeout. Please, just stay out of trouble."

With a snicker she replied, "No promises. Trouble and I are old friends."

"I can't promise that I will be there to get you out."

"Just like Clark. Look, I was getting myself into and out of trouble long before I met either of you."

"Okay, I was just saying..."

"Trust me. I can take care of myself."

"If you say so."

"I say so. Let's eat. I'm starved."

He chuckled and said, "It should be on the way up. I hope you like fillet of sole."

"Love it. Let me put these things away and I'll be ready to eat."

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## Chapter10 – Metropolis 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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After Clark returned from his mission, he found a secluded place to change out of his uniform so that he could return to faux Lois. Just as he was approaching the steps, faux Lois came out. She joined him and they returned to the Jeep.

Once inside, she said to him, "You can rest easy. I'm pretty sure that you aren't the father."

"Oh, how?"

"She showed me a picture of herself and 'Superman' and I don't think it was you."

"Okay, so how do we handle this? Jesse clearly has my powers. We have to find out how he got them."

"One thing at a time. First we clear your good name then we find out how he got the powers."

He sat back and marveled and said, "You know, you are acting more and more like Lois all the time."

"I presume that is a good thing."

"Unquestionably."

"Okay, so what happened with the President?"

"I'm not sure, but I think it was a kidnapping attempt. It was foiled by my appearance."

"Good, so we have something to write up to keep Perry happy."

He chuckled and said, "That is exactly what Lois would have said."

She started reaching with her foot for the starter button before she remembered the key. She gave him a sheepish grin as she said, "Old habits die hard," and reached for the key. As she started the car, she said, "Well, here we go." She checked her mirrors and pulled into traffic.

On the way back to The Planet, they stopped for lunch. After lunch they wrote up both, the incident with the President and the interview with Leigh-Anne and Jesse. They gave the write-up on the incident with the President to Perry, but the other they held back.

The remainder of the day was fairly quiet. After quitting time, Clark took faux Lois to his apartment for dinner and then to her

karate class. After the karate class, they spent some time together at her apartment before he went home. While they were together Clark told her more stories of his life and his life with Lois.

When he finished with one of his stories, suddenly, faux Lois broke down and started crying.

Dismayed, Clark said, "I know it was somewhat of a sad story, but it turned out well. Why the tears?"

"Oh, it's not that. I've been here almost two weeks ... and ... and I don't know what happened with my father! Was Lamont able to save him? Did Lois help out? I hate this ... this, not knowing!"

"Well, all I can say is, if Lois had a say in it, he's safe. I'm sure she wouldn't allow anything to happen to him. Comfort yourself with that ... that she won't allow anything to happen to him and stop worrying."

"Easy for you to say, it's not your father ... and it's not hers either!"

"Yes, you are right. It isn't her father, but she will behave as if he is, rest assured that she will and she will do everything within her power to keep him safe."

"I guess there's really nothing I can do, what's done is done. By now he's either dead or alive and there's nothing I can do, either way."

Thinking about the stories he had told her of his life with Lois, Margot started to yearn for that life. Even with the worry about her father, it sounded, not necessarily, more interesting, than her life with Lamont, but, with all of the advances that had been made, easier in a lot of ways and something to be desired.

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The next morning, before faux Lois and Clark got there, Perry arrived in the bullpen. As he exited the elevator and headed for the ramp, he was joined by Jimmy. Jimmy was carrying a large flat of artwork covered with tissue paper. He said, "Morning, Chief."

Perry was somewhat distracted and started, without even being asked, to share, "I met Alice for dinner last night. She said she was up all night re-thinking our situation..."

Trying to be an encourager, Jimmy prompted, "And..."

Disheartened, Perry replied, "And she decided I could keep the spoon collection. I said I had to get back to the paper. She said she had to get back to 'her life.' Whatever that means."

Trying to be conciliatory, Jimmy said, "Chief, I'm sorry."

Perry huffed and said, "Well, if she thinks I'm gonna mope, she's dead wrong! Maybe I'll just get back to my life, too!" He paused for a second before he finished, "Whatever that means."

As they continued on their way, they were distracted by the TV monitors. It was a continuation of the story from the previous day. The anchorperson was asking someone off screen a question. "And you felt you just couldn't keep your heartbreak to yourself."

They shifted focus to Leigh-Anne as she replied, "Yes. My personal code of morality would let me cover for Superman no longer. You may quote me."

Perry was disgusted and huffed as he turned away and headed for his office. As he did, he commented, disconsolately, "The whole darn country's runnin' with this thing. We can't just keep our heads in the sand..."

As they finally made it to Perry's office, and as Jimmy unveiled what he had been carrying, he said, "Del Duca in editorial wants to get your okay on this."

What he unveiled was a picture of Superman flying over a baby carriage, covering his eyes with one hand. The caption read "Super Deadbeat."

Seeing that, Perry just shook his head. He thought for a second and then said, "At least have him add a question mark. Makes me feel a little less like a vulture."

He spotted faux Lois at her desk and shouted, "Lois! Got that Superman story?"

Faux Lois and Clark had spent a goodly amount of time

discussing how to handle the story the previous night and had not been able to come up with a way to debunk it without revealing too much information and giving away his secret identity. They had decided to play along with the story, as if it were true, and see how it shook out. To remain in character, she would have to act as if her best friend had betrayed her. They had arrived in the bullpen a short time before Perry and she was practicing her typing skills while they waited for something to break. She had the bare bones of a story that they had concocted the previous afternoon, but the way it was written, it supported Leigh-Anne's claim. A little disheartedly, she replied, "I guess."

Perry mistook faux Lois's attitude for disappointment that her hero had been unfaithful to her and said, "I know, Honey. It's always demoralizing when one of our heroes falls."

Disconsolately, yet carefully, she replied, "You don't know the half of it." She paused as she considered what to say next, "You're aware there's always the chance Superman didn't do this..."

Perry tried an old country aphorism, "Lois, you and I have been newsmen long enough to know if it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck and tastes good with plum sauce ... It's a duck!"

Clark caught the tail end of Perry's statement as he came up and asked, "What's a duck?"

Perry explained, "I was just tellin' Lois she couldn't let her friendship with Superman cloud her professional objectivity."

"Why? Did she judge him and find him innocent?"

True to their decision, faux Lois replied, "Not exactly. The jury's deadlocked."

Perry tried to cushion the blow, "Well, kids, I guess we can't put people on pedestals. Even Superman's entitled to a checkered past."

Faux Lois wanted so much to tell Perry what they knew about the case and that Superman was innocent that she could hardly stand it, but instead she went back to her typing practice.

Clark interrupted her, "Lois?"

Eager to be doing something to distract herself, she asked, "What did you dig up on the kidnap attempt?"

Sitting down in her visitor chair, he opened his notes and read, "The Tanzorians think it's the work of a radical group inside their own country." He finished in a more subdued tone, "And I don't have a checkered past!"

Faux Lois replied, "Perry's right; people shouldn't expect more from Superman, or The Shadow for that matter, than any other guy." Changing topics, she continued, "About that attempted kidnapping, pretty sophisticated work for a radical group."

Clark hadn't been wasting his time, he realized that he should be training faux Lois, but that would have slowed him down. He reported, "Word is, they may have hired that terrorist, 'Anonymous.'" Replying to her comment about Superman he said, "Look, I thought this whole thing was behind us."

Faux Lois smiled and replied with some personal wit, "Yeah, well, a shadow's behind you, but you can't shake it."

Clark smiled at her reply and continued, "I thought Anonymous was kicked outta the country, but he may have kicked himself back in. Easy to do. No one's ever seen his face... They say he's like Mr. Make-up only more so."

"Who's Mr. Make-up?"

"He was a paid assassin that tried to kill you, remember?"

She took the hint and replied, "Oh, that Mr. Make-up." Lois picked up the photo of Leigh-Anne with Superman and said, "The guys in the photo lab assure me that it is authentic."

"There are two possibilities," he looked around to make sure they were not being overheard, "the first is that it is me, but you can't count the number of people I've had my picture taken with. The second is that it is a Superman impersonator." He picked up the photo and took a close look at it. As he did, he pulled his

glasses down his nose slightly.

It was a move that faux Lois had started to recognize. She asked, "What do you see?"

He replied, "In the corner, there's a maid's cart holding a stack of towels." Clark zoomed in closer and closer until he could read them. He read aloud, "Ding Dong Motel." Picking up a magnifying glass he pretended to examine the picture then looking around and spotting Jimmy, he shouted, "Jimmy!"

When Jimmy appeared next to him, Clark laid down the magnifier, wrote down the name of the motel and gave it to Jimmy. "Find this motel for me, please."

"Sure. I'll get right on it. Does it have anything to do with Superman and his son?"

"Possibly everything. Get right on it."

Once Jimmy had left on his errand, faux Lois said, "Oh, I'm pretty sure it isn't you, so it must be an impersonator. Besides, she didn't recognize you and then the fact that the costume wasn't created back when Jesse was conceived. The problem is the powers. You have any idea how many toddlers there are who can balance sofas on their pinkie fingers?" She picked up her purse and said, "I think it's time we got out of here. We need to eat and I have a class to get to."

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After dinner and faux Lois's class, Clark dropped her off and returned to his apartment. As soon as he opened the door, he sensed a change and stopped, surprised.

He said, "Boy, I must be in trouble. The cavalry's here."

Standing in the middle of his living room were Jonathan and Martha. Martha said, "Hi, Sweetie. Are you okay?"

Jonathan addressed the issue, "We never watch those tabloid shows, but the Smallville Press turned its whole front page over to Superman's love child."

Clark replied, matter-of-factly, "I don't have a love child."

Martha was quick to reply, "Of course you don't, honey."

Lending his support, Jonathan said, "It's an impossibility!"

Martha chimed in, "Laughable, really!"

Clark started becoming defensive, "Well, you know, c'mon, I wouldn't say 'laughable' I mean, I have dated..."

Jonathan put a hand on his son's shoulder as he said, "We just mean we raised you to be responsible. If something like this did occur, you'd live up to your obligations."

Martha said, "So if you say this woman's not the mother of your child, then she's not. Like I said, 'laughable!'"

Jonathan asked, "How's Margot with all of this?"

Clark replied, "We are calling her Lois. I have to be honest, there are times that I forget that she isn't Lois, but she's okay with it. We are convinced that we have enough evidence to prove that I'm not the father. The problem is, we can't present it without compromising my secret identity."

"What's your evidence?"

"Well, for one thing, the timing is all wrong. Mom, when did I lift my first couch?"

Martha thought back before she replied, "Gosh honey, I think you were in junior high before you did any serious lifting. And it was rarely furniture. You leaned more toward kitchen appliances. It was the freezer, I think."

"That is the one thing we haven't been able to figure out - how did he get his powers? If he were my child, wouldn't his power have started to manifest at the same time as mine did? Yet Jesse is only three and a half. There is one possibility that we haven't considered. Maybe this kid's not from Earth! Are you sure I'm the only one from Krypton? Help me out here!"

Jonathan tried to comfort his son, "Clark, don't make yourself crazy. We believe you when you say that there's no truth to this."

Clark challenged, "So you're saying I should just sit back and do nothing?!"

Martha replied, "Not at all, sweetheart. We're here to stand by

you and fight this little hussy with everything we've got."

Clark was shocked at the language his mother had used and said, "Mom! Wow."

Ever practical, Jonathan offered, "Science is on your side, Clark. The answer's as simple as three letters, DNA." Jonathan poked his finger at Clark's chest for emphasis while saying each letter.

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The next morning, Anonymous, disguise as 'Donald Rafferty, Attorney At Law' appeared at Leigh-Anne's home and presented her with a legal looking paper.

It started off, "You are hereby required to appear..." She read enough to know what it said, then she crumpled it up and threw it across the room in a fit of temper. Then she complained, "A DNA test! They're ordering Jesse to have a DNA test!"

While Leigh-Anne had been occupied with reading the document, Anonymous had tried to ingratiate himself to Jesse by taking him on his knee, a distasteful task because he most definitely did not like children. He replied, "Which is why you need me and my law firm, Ms. Stipanovic." He turned his attention to Jesse as he continued, "Son, if you could possibly loosen your little grip on Uncle Donald's leg... Son..." His plea became more strident. "Son." He returned his attention to Leigh-Anne. "Spunky, isn't he? Ow! Ho, ho, ho. Hi-yo."

Leigh-Anne mulled it over for a few seconds before she replied, "Well, maybe I should hire you, Mr. Rafferty. Up 'til now my cousin Billy Bob's been handlin' my legal affairs. But he's still in correspondence law school and they haven't mailed him the chapter on blood stuff, yet." She noticed where Jesse was and said, "Jesse does seem to have taken a shine to you. The test is for later today. Isn't there some writ or judge-type thing that can delay it?"

Anonymous replied, "You have nothin' to fear. Son, the grip; I've lost all feeling. Ms. Stipanovic, the test will either show Superman to be the father or that he is not."

Having it put that way, Leigh-Anne started to worry that her hoax could be discovered and asked, "And how's that last one a good thing?"

Anonymous replied, "That's where I come in. If that happens, I'll get opposing experts to argue the DNA tests are inconclusive, contaminated, or the result of tampering."

Leigh-Anne was starting to see a positive outcome and asked, "Is that legal?"

Anonymous replied, with confidence, "My dear, it's the backbone of the entire system! But we don't have to worry, because the little tyke is the son of Superman, isn't he?"

Leigh-Anne tried to cover herself, "Of course. It's just my family doesn't do well on tests."

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The news of the DNA test request couldn't be kept a secret and as a result there was a mob scene in front of S.T.A.R. Labs where the test was to be conducted. Vendors were hawking "Super Stud" t-shirts, Superman diapers, rattles, etc. Angry women were waving signs reading "SUPER DEADBEAT." Reporters and video crews were fighting for curb space. Among them was faux Lois. Suddenly Superman blurred into their midst and the mob went wild. Reporters were shouting questions, some good and some nonsense, "Superman! If the boy is yours, will you seek custody?! Are there other 'Super Kids' around the country?! Is it true you have a wife in Red Bluff, Montana?! What do you say to teens who wanna be just like Superman?!"

Superman raised his hands for silence before speaking, "You people all know me and what I stand for. And what I won't stand for. I've always tried to protect the weak and the helpless. And that's why I'm here today. To protect this little boy from any more of this."

The reporters and crowd were all distracted by the limousine as it pulled to the curb. After it did, Leigh-Anne, Jesse and

Anonymous all stepped out. Anonymous had procured a miniature Superman suit for Jesse. Jesse looked scared as the cameras flashed and the reporters crowded in.

This was just what Leigh-Anne wanted, so she waved and said to Jesse, "Hello! Hello, everyone!" Then to Jesse, "-Wave to the nice people, Jesse."

Faux Lois said in an aside to Superman, "Perry told me to cover this. I hate it as much as you do."

Superman replied, "The irony is, there's really only been one woman in my life. She's wearing a ring."

Suddenly, Leigh-Anne spotted Superman and as she rushed him, she shouted, "Honn--ney!" When she got to him, she threw her arms around his neck and gave him a passionate kiss, as the cameras flashed. As she pulled back, she continued, "I cannot stop myself! As much as you've shunned me, I still have love in my heart for you." Turning, she called to Jesse, "Look, Angel ... It's Daddy!"

As Superman tried to extricate himself from her arm without hurting her, he said, "Ms. Stipanovic..."

Leigh-Anne continued to play the part she had mapped out for herself, "Oh darlin', don't be so formal. You certainly weren't in your love letters!" She turned to the reporters and said, "Which I'll be readin' from tonight on 'Nightline.'"

Faux Lois just stared at her in disbelief. She couldn't believe the extent that this woman was willing to go to in her hoax.

Suddenly there was a commotion in the ranks of the reporters. There was the sound of super-breath in action and a couple of individuals went airborne. Superman rushed over and separated the crowd and found Jesse in the middle. He was angry and blowing people around.

Superman commanded, "Jesse, stop that."

Jesse stamped his foot petulantly, and replied, "But I don't like them."

Superman picked Jesse up. Jesse struggled against him, but in vain against his superior super-strength. Superman carried him into STAR Labs and that ended the confrontation.

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A little later, Superman and Jesse were sitting side-by-side on an examination table in a bare room. Superman asked, "Are you okay? It's tough sometimes, isn't it, being different? Sometimes it's scary. And sometimes you get mad, and it'd be easy to hurt people because you're so strong. But the cool thing is, we can do good for people. And most people are good, Jesse, even those crazy ones outside. So ... any questions?"

Jesse, in the innocence of youth, asked, "Are you my daddy?"

Before he had a chance to answer, Dr. Klein bustled into the room and said, "Hello, Superman, Jesse. We obviously won't be drawing blood from you. I take it Jesse's skin is also impervious to puncture?"

Superman answered the question, "Yeah, I'm afraid so. Though why that is, I don't know."

Dr. Klein smiled an indulgent smile and said, "Yes, of course." The only reason that Dr. Klein could believe that this child could have Superman's powers would be if Superman was in reality his father. Any other explanation escaped him.

Superman replied, "Look, I really don't know." Reaching up he plucked a hair from his head. Handing it to Dr. Klein he said, "Here. You can trace DNA from hair follicles, right?"

Dr. Klein brightened up and replied, "That's right!"

Superman said, "I talked to Jesse, Dr. Klein, he'll be glad to do the same."

After Jesse had handed a hair to Dr. Klein, the doctor said, "Excellent. We'll do our best to rush the tests along, Superman. The results will be quite definitive ... Incontrovertible, really."

"That's great, Doc. When will you have the results?"

"Well, based on what I suspect about the complexity of your cell structure. Four to five months. A year, tops."

"What?"

"I'll have a better time estimate once I start the work. Give me a call tonight."

"I will."

"But not late... I don't want to miss Nightline."

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Anonymous, wearing a disguise, picked up a phone and dialed. The phone at the other end rang four times and the answering machine picked up. Clark's voice came from the earpiece, "This is Clark Kent. I'm not here, but leave a message and I'll get back to you." <BEEP>

In a perfect imitation of Leigh-Anne's voice, Anonymous said, "Mr. Kent? This is Leigh-Anne Stipanovic. I know you're a friend of Superman's... Please tell him it's urgent I meet him at Shepherd's Glen ... in the park ... at 3:00. Thanks so much."

As he hung up the phone he muttered, "Step one complete. Now for step two." Picking up the phone he dialed another number

This time, when Leigh-Anne answered, he imitated Superman's voice. "Miss Stipanovic? This is Superman. I feel badly about today and would really like to clear some things up. Could you meet me at Shepherd's Glen at 3:00? I appreciate it.

As he hung up, he muttered, "Step two complete. Now for step three."

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Superman had arrived a few minutes early and was pacing when Leigh-Anne arrived. He said, "I'm glad we're finally going to talk about this."

Leigh-Anne demurred, "Uh, yes ... you first."

Going straight to the point, Superman asked, "Miss Stipanovic, what is it, exactly, that you want?"

Halfway indignantly, she replied, "What every mother wants. A future for her son."

His reply was succinct, "That's commendable, but he's your son ... not mine."

All of the bitterness of a life unfulfilled came out as she replied, "Do you have any idea what raising Jesse's been like? Before I got pregnant, I had prospects. You probably don't know I was runner-up in the Junior Stenographer Pageant."

"No, I didn't know that."

"I had my sights set on being a Star Search Spokesmodel. But now, that's just a dream."

"But many single mothers work and raise a child."

"Jesse's not just any child. And since he got ... the way he is... I can't keep him in clothes, 'cause he grows so fast... Can't keep a roof over our heads, 'cause he wrecks every place... Can't keep a job 'cause no daycare center'll have him..."

"I'd help if I could, but how? I don't have money, or credit cards, or a shoebox full of cash. Does this look like a rich man's wardrobe?"

"I don't want your money. At first I did, but this has gotten so big! I have a book offer... A Movie of the Week Deal... A kid's clothing company wants to do a 'Jesse' line.... Superman, I can give him the kind of life I never coulda dreamed of. And, of course, I won't be doin' so bad, myself."

"But it's based on a lie! And that's going to do nothing but hurt Jesse."

"Maybe, maybe not. But I see the way people are makin' money out there. Who am I? The last Girl Scout? I don't think so."

"Then I'll keep fighting any way I can. I'm sorry you feel this way. I thought you called me to say you'd changed your mind."

"Me call you? You called me!"

"No, I didn't. You left a message for me with Clark Kent."

"No, I didn't." there was a moment of confusion before she asked, "What's going on?"

"Where's Jesse?"

"I left him with that lawyer fella."

Grabbing Leigh-Anne, Superman flew them to her house. When they rushed in they found the house to be empty.

Leigh-Anne started shouting, "Jesse! Jesse!"  
 "He was with that attorney ... Rafferty when you left?"  
 "Yes! Mr. Rafferty said he'd babysit! And they're gone!!"

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**Chapter 11 – New York 1937**

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Universal Locator designation  
 Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow  
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Shortly before 6:30 Lamont turned on the radio and allowed it to warm up. At 6:30 he tuned in to the station he broadcast from and they listened to his message.

"That should convince him that I will be on my way to Albany to protect the governor. I have the decoy prepared. We will leave shortly for 42<sup>nd</sup> street."

Faux Margot smiled then and replied, "I guess I need to change clothes, but first, I need to check my tools."

"Tools?"

Grabbing her bag, she reached in and pulled out her compact binoculars. They were more powerful than opera glasses, but almost as compact. Removing the lens caps she used them to look around the room, checking the focus. Then she pulled out her camera. As she switched it on, she muttered, "Oh, what was I thinking? They won't be able to develop this film. It is a modern emulsion."

When she had pulled out the binoculars it hadn't been anything too strange to Lamont. Binoculars were nothing new, but when she pulled out her camera and turned it on, that caused a stir. Seeing the compactness of the camera, and the lens extends at the press of a switch, his curiosity was aroused. "That's a camera?"

Faux Margot knew that she would have to explain, "Yes, auto-wind, auto-focus, and auto f-stop, built-in flash with color film."

"Amazing, it is like something Doc. Savage would have. He has many advanced devices like that."

Reaching into her bag again, she pulled out her mini-recorder. Clicking on the record button, she said, "Please do your laugh." He complied, "HAhahahahahahah."

She hit stop, rewind and play. From the speaker, he heard, "HAhahahahahahah," in perfect tonal reproduction.

He was shocked, "Amazing!"

"It's a miniature tape recorder."

"We use records or wire recorders, but they are rather larger."

"The principle is the same as the wire recorder. It produces magnetic impressions, but on a tape rather than a wire."

"The wire in a wire recorder is often subject to tangling. You can get what appears to be miles of wire all tangled up and it will represent perhaps ten minutes of the recording."

"Not a problem with a tape like this." She handed it to him to inspect.

As he turned it over and over in his hands examining all of the meters and buttons, he muttered, "Amazing device," before handing it back to her.

Faux Margot put it back in her bag and finished checking her 'tools.' As she headed for the bedroom, she said, "I guess it's time to change clothes."

"I need to change also. I must put on my own disguise. We shall meet here in the living room when we are both prepared."

Once in the bedroom, faux Margot picked up the first bag and pulled out her new black slacks and laid them out on the bed. Next, she pulled out a lightweight, black turtleneck top and laid it next to the slacks. From a third bag, she pulled black socks, gloves and a ski mask. This she shoved into her bag along with her 'tools' and laid the socks on the bed. The shoes she placed on the floor. After removing her skirt and top she donned the new clothes. She

selected a black skirt and put that on over the slacks. Then she rolled up the legs of the slacks so that no one would even know that she had them on. She emptied her bag and turned it inside out. She'd had the bag custom made. It was bi-color and had two straps. The straps could be kept inside the bag or used over the shoulder. Once the bag was inside out, she had a black bag with a black strap which she loaded almost all of her tools back into. She didn't replace the camera, the cell phone or the recorder. She placed the ski mask and gloves in the bag. All of the rest of the items could be explained, but that advanced technology would be impossible to explain if she were to be stopped by the police. Throwing the strap of her bag over her shoulder, she said to herself, "All set to go," moved to the door and crossed into the living room.

Seeing that Lamont wasn't there as yet, she crossed to the radio and turned it on. Once the tubes had a chance to heat up she heard some music. The piano had a heavy, rhythmic left hand while the right tickled the keys. That alternated with the rest of the band following the same theme. At the end, the announcer identified the piece as Tommy Dorsey's '[Boogie Woogie](#)'. That was followed by a very up-tempo swing number by Count Basie, "[Jumpin at the Woodside](#)." Just as a sax solo was finishing, Lamont came out dressed in a policeman's uniform. His face was made up so well that if faux Margot hadn't known it was Lamont, she wouldn't have recognized him.

Lamont, who was something of an authority on the effectiveness of black clothing helping to conceal one in the darkness, when he saw her attire he said, "That outfit should do nicely. I'll need to recommend something like that to Margot when she returns ..." his voice fell in volume as he finished, "if she returns." As he was speaking, he crossed to the cabinet and removed his cloak and hat. These he placed in a satchel and closed it. "I have made arrangements for Shrevvy to pick you up. I need to transport certain items. I have already placed them in my car. I will meet you there."

"This afternoon, Shrevvy shadowed me whenever I was out of the car. If he does that tonight, it could cramp my style. It would be better if he stayed with the car."

Lamont crossed to, picked up the phone and dialed. He heard, {Burbank}

"Orders, relay to Shrevvy that he is to obey Miss Lane's orders to the letter even though they may seem unusual."

{Will do.}

He turned to faux Margot and said, "Done."

"Okay, I guess I'm ready to go then. Where shall we meet after?"

"We can meet back here. If there is any change, have Shrevvy use the radio to call in to Burbank. He can then contact me."

As she headed for the door, she said, "Okay. See you later."

When she exited the building, Shrevvy was there waiting for her. He opened the back door for her and then climbed into the front.

"Shrevvy, we need to go back to West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, where we were before."

"Sure teng, Miss Lane. I'll have you dere in a jiff." Starting the cab he pulled out into traffic.

Faux Margot was thanking her lucky stars that it was an overcast evening and also that it wasn't high summer when it didn't get dark until around 9 PM. It meant that by the time they got to their destination she should be able to find some shadows to hide in.

After a time, Shrevvy pulled into a parking space and parked. Before getting out, faux Margot surveyed the area. The heightened police presence was evident. There were guards at the door, in a car across the street and at each corner. She thought to herself, <Hopefully they won't even look twice at me since they are looking for Powers.>

When she finished her survey, she made to get out of the cab and Shrevvy prepared to do the same and follow her. She forestalled that by saying, “Thanks, Shrevvy, but this time I want you to stay with the car. This is a one person job.” She opened her own door and exited the vehicle.

As she passed his door, she heard him say, “Good luck, Miss Lane. If you need me, just holler.”

She paused and said, “Thanks, Shrevvy, I’ll keep that in mind.” She quickly crossed the street and made her way to go past 348.

Shrevvy watched her as she went, but quickly lost sight of her in the gloom. He muttered, “I hope she’s okay. The Boss won’t like it if she gets hoit.”

As faux Margot was crossing the street, she saw a black sedan pull up to the doors of 348 and a policeman climb out. She realized that it must be Lamont. He was stopped by the police at the door, but he showed them something. Whatever it was that he showed them, must have convinced them because he was allowed past. She paused until he was inside, then she crossed by the doors greeting the guards as she passed and continued on to the corner of the building. She pulled out and donned the ski mask and gloves, rolled down her pants legs, found a dark corner with a vantage of both the short building and the taller apartment building beyond and took up her station. She thought to herself, <I wonder how long this will take. If it will be a long time I might regret not bringing some coffee with me. It would have been a lot better if I’d had Clark here to talk to.>

Things were very quiet. The traffic on 48<sup>th</sup> lessened until there was only a car every minute or so. It was as black as pitch, but with her binoculars, she could see the windows of the apartment building clearly.

After what seemed like half the night, but which was actually only an hour and a half she saw the lights suddenly go off in an apartment on the sixth floor of the apartment building. She swung her binoculars in that direction. Just as she centered her glasses on the window, she saw what had to be the barrel of a rifle come out of the window. She noted where on the sixth floor so that she could find it after the fact. While she was watching, suddenly there was the flash of a rifle shot. The sound reached her a second later, but in the flash, she had seen what she had needed to see, a man’s face. It was hard to tell, but the face looked somewhat pale.

She hoped that Lamont had been able to set up his decoy in time and that he was uninjured. Stuffing her binoculars back into her bag, she ripped off her ski mask and gloves, stuffed them in the bag and ran for the doors of the apartment building. As she ran, she shifted the strap of her bag so that it was across her body. She knew that it wouldn’t be long until the police arrived at this building and that she would have to hurry. All appeared to be quiet when she got to the doors. She looked around and noted that the police that had been on the corners had deserted their posts and run for 348. Nodding to herself, she let herself in. Taking the self-service elevator to the sixth floor, she checked on the alignment of the doors on that side of the building.

Finding the apartment that she believed to have been used, she knocked and received no answer. She knocked again with the same result. She tried the doorknob and was rewarded by it turning in her hand. She pushed the door open slightly and shouted, “Hello! Hello! Anybody at home?”

She heard a thumping sound and opening the door wide, stepped in, clicked on the light switch and listened. The thumping was repeated so she followed the sound to a bedroom. She knocked on the door and repeated her earlier hail, “Hello! Anybody here?”

She was rewarded by a more frantic thumping sound in reply. Opening the door, she saw a body writhing on the floor. She flipped on the light switch and made out that it was a woman, bound and gagged with a pillowcase over her head. She crossed to

her and removed the pillowcase. At first there was fear in her eyes, but when she saw faux Margot, she settled down.

Faux Margot said, “Let me get you out of these ropes.” The first thing she did was to remove the gag. As soon as she had, she asked, “What’s your name?”

“Mrs. Lake, Mrs. Frank Lake.”

Delving into her bag, she pulled out her Swiss Army knife. She opened the main blade and as she went to work on the cords, she asked, “Who did this to you?”

“I don’t know, but he looked weird. He was deathly pale, like he hadn’t been in the sun, for a long time.”

“How did he do this to you? What happened?”

“I was expecting my husband and when there was a knock on the door, I answered it. When I opened the door, he was standing there. It scared me so much, I must have fainted. The next thing I knew, I was bound and gagged. I heard what sounded like a gunshot then the door slammed. The next thing I knew, you showed up.”

Faux Margot muttered to herself, “He must have gone out the back way because I came in the front and I didn’t see him.”

Addressing the woman she asked, “Do you think you could describe this man to the police?”

“I sure can. I could never forget that face. It’s going to haunt my nightmares for months.”

“What’d he look like?”

“He was about medium height with brown hair. He had wide-set eyes and pretty large ears, but the main thing was his pallor. He was almost as white as a sheet.” As she was speaking, she was rubbing her chaffed wrists and followed faux Margot back into the living room.

Faux Margot moved to the window that the shot had been taken from and examined the area. There was a table that had obviously been moved in front of it to be used as a shooting rest. On it she saw some white powder. Bending down close she sniffed, gently. She picked up a distinctive odor. She said to the woman, “Don’t move or disturb anything. Tell the police what you told me.”

The woman asked, “Do you think it was Powers? I’ve been reading the papers and from what they have said, it sure sounds like him. Dead, but walkin’ around like that.”

“I don’t know. Like I said, the police should be here shortly, report it.”

“Just who are you, anyway?”

“Oh, I’m just someone that was passing by and heard you thumping on the floor.”

“You aren’t from this building. Why were you here? You act more like a cop than an innocent bystander.”

Knowing that the police should be getting over their shock and be starting to check for the shooter’s crow’s nest, faux Margot decided that it was past time to leave. She turned and said, “I really need to be going. Don’t forget to tell the police everything.” She heard the elevator grind into motion. Mrs. Lake stared after her as she fled down the corridor and entered the stairwell.

She took the stairs to the ground floor and as she was exiting the building she was stopped by an officer who asked, “Where do you think you’re going?”

Thinking quickly, she replied, “I had called for a cab. I’m supposed to be meeting my boyfriend.” She pointed down the street at Shrevvy’s cab and said, “There he is.”

He asked suspiciously, “What’s in the bag?”

“Not much.”

“Let’s see.”

Faux Margot offered the bag to him. He opened it and rummaged around for a second. He was satisfied when he didn’t find a firearm and handed the bag back. As he did, he apologized, “Sorry, we can’t be too careful. There has been another shooting.”

Hoping for a negative answer, she asked, “Oh? Anyone

hurt?”

“No! That’s the strangest thing. Someone got the target out and set up a decoy. It was the decoy that was shot. Okay, you can go.”

She said, “Thanks, officer,” and quickly crossed the street. Once on the opposite sidewalk, she made her way back to the cab. She startled Shrevvy when she opened the door because he had been looking for her on the opposite sidewalk.

“Geeze, Miss Lane, you startled me. How’d it go?”

“It went fine, Shrevvy, just fine. Let’s go back to the apartment.”

“Sure teng, Miss Lane. I’ll have you dere in a jiff.” Starting the cab he pulled out into the street. As he did, he said, “Did you find what youz was lookin’ for?”

She smiled and said, “Sort of. I missed him. He must have gone down the fire stairs while I was going up in the elevator.”

“Who went down the stairs?”

“The shooter.”

“I’m sure glad youz wasn’t hoit. The Boss wouldn’t have liked it if I had let that happen.”

“So am I, Shrevvy, so am I and you don’t need to worry. You were following my orders. It was my responsibility.”

“Still, I feel like I wasn’t doin’ my job.”

“You did just fine, Shrevvy. No harm to anyone.” While Shrevvy drove, faux Margot took a few minutes to write up the description she had been given by Mrs. Lake. She also wrote down what she had observed.

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In a short time they were back at the apartment. Faux Margot took a few minutes to dump her bag, turn it right side out and refill it and then she went into the living room to wait. Crossing to the side table she discovered that all of the fixings for coffee were already there, so she prepared a pot.

It was almost half an hour before Lamont made his appearance. When he did, it wasn’t in the disguise he had left in, but as Lamont. As soon as he was in the door, he crossed to the cabinet and removing his hat and cloak from the satchel, returned them to it then he went to the side table and poured himself a cup of coffee.

Carrying it over to a chair, he sat and sipped before asking, “How did your mission go?”

Faux Margot pulled out her notes and read them. She had the name, the apartment number, the description of the shooter, how he had used a table as a shooting stand and one final piece of information, “I don’t know how thorough the police are so they might miss this clue. On the table I discovered some white powder. I smelled it and detected a distinctive odor - baby powder. Whoever he is, he’s using talcum to give himself the pallor you would expect on a dead body. That tells me that it was a person that is very much alive doing the shooting.”

“I agree with you, Lo, uh, Margot. Yes, we are not dealing with a ghost at all. Now we just have to discover who it is. I do have a possibility.”

“Oh, who?”

“While you were shopping yesterday, I had an opportunity to compare the sign-in sheets for the hospital to the dates of the killings.”

“And?”

“And, the killings correspond to the dates that Dwayne Powers was in the hospital. Most people would think that being in the hospital would be an alibi.”

“It would all depend on what kind of check the staff makes during the night. They indicated that they do check up on him.”

“It might be a good idea for The Shadow to pay Dwayne Powers a visit in his hospital room tomorrow night. By the sign-in sheets he checks himself in at around 6 PM. The Shadow should be there at 7 PM.”

“While you do that, I’ll try to get ‘my father’ to safety.”

“How will you do that? You don’t know this Sam Lane; he’s a perfect stranger to you.”

“I’ll just have to try and bluff my way through. He can’t be there if the shooter tries his luck again. He missed his last target so he’ll be doubly anxious to make the hit.”

“I’ll have to trust your instincts. That paid off tonight. That was good work, interviewing Mrs. Lake and investigating the scene.”

Faux Margot shrugged it off by saying, “All in a day’s work. Nothing unusual.”

“I don’t know if Margot could have done as well.”

“If she’s anything like me, all she needs is for you to give her some direction. Let her know what you want and see how she handles it.”

“I might just try that, once she is back.”

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## Chapter 12 – 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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There was nothing else to do, but report the kidnapping to the police. As soon as that was done, Superman departed, supposedly to look for Jesse. Within minutes, the police were there, dusting for prints and looking for other evidence, while a detective took Leigh-Anne’s statement.

As she talked to the detective, she was sobbing, “I was only gone a few minutes... My God, if anything happens to Jesse...”

Just then, Clark arrived, adjusting his tie as he walked. He asked, “Any clues?”

The detective that had been taking the statement closed the pad and shook his head.

Clark lowered his glasses slightly and looked over the top as he scanned with his microscopic vision. He spotted a few tiny fragments of putty-like substance lying in the crevice between the carpet and the wall. Clark picked them up, sniffed, reacted to the distinctive odor, pocketed one, and took the other to the Detective. As he did, he said, “You might want to check this out. I’m not sure what it is.”

The detective looked at it and stepped away, placing it in an evidence bag as he did.

Just then faux Lois entered. Clark had picked her up and brought her back with him, asking her to check around outside while he went inside. She said, “Some guys in a news van saw the lawyer, Rafferty, drive out of here about two hours ago. No one thought anything of it.”

Leigh-Anne overheard faux Lois and asked, “Why would he do that?”

Faux Lois replied, “Extortion, probably. Look, Leigh-Anne, I know you love your little boy. We’re going to get him back.”

Faced with this situation, Leigh-Anne started to break down. She started crying as she said, “This is all my fault. All my fault.”

Clark watched, sympathetically and then glancing into the dining area, he saw one of Jesse’s little capes. Clark moved over and picked it up, looking at it, sadly.

Faux Lois watched as he did and moved over next to him.

Clark, in a subdued tone, said, “Strange... I mean, he’s not my son... But I do feel close to him. In a way I can’t explain.”

Faux Lois placed a comforting hand on his arm and said, “Maybe because you’ve lived what’s he’s living. Maybe because you’re the most caring person I ever met. And the most honest.”

Clark turned to look at her as she continued.

“I amaze myself sometimes. I’m so used to tracking down the truth with Lamont... Always so sure things aren’t what they appear to be... I forget that sometimes truth is just staring me in the face.”

He asked, “And the truth is?”

"I don't know how it is between you and her, but the truth is what you tell me. And what I tell you. Because that's the kind of relationship Lamont and have to have. That's what we should have as well."

"Lois, the best day of my life was the day you, uh, she found out I was you know who. It meant no more secrets. I'm done with hiding things from you, uh, her."

Faux Lois was struggling with her emotions. She was in love with Lamont, but she was rapidly falling in love with this man and she was putting herself in that position. Her emotions were in her voice as she said, "I know. I'm still getting used to that. So if any part of me doubted you in all this... I can only say... I'm sorry. And that I love you."

Clark reached out and took her hand. Looked into her eyes and gently said, "You need to remember Lamont. I think you are imprinting on me. Perhaps this is too much."

She nodded and said, "No, I'll be okay. I was just identifying with her."

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Anonymous had lied to Jesse and transported him to his hideout. When they arrived, the hacker that he had hired was busily trying to hack into the Tanzorian's missile control system. Anonymous was looking over the hacker's shoulder when there was a sudden crash across the room. Jesse was throwing a temper tantrum, destroying articles of furniture.

The hacker had to raise his voice to be heard over the racket, "We're almost in. Tanzor's missile system has a highly sophisticated web of alarms and shunts that must be handled with the utmost care..."

Glancing across the room at what Jesse was doing, Anonymous shouted, "Put that down!"

In reply, there was a sudden crash as Jesse destroyed the article which caused the hacker to jump.

In a whiny tone, Jesse said, "I want mommy."

In an attempt to placate Jesse, Anonymous said, sweetly, "Mommy is still at the toy store buying you lots of surprises. So we have to wait just a few 'more minutes, okay? Why don't you throw me the ball."

While this was all going on the hacker continued to type.

He looked up when he heard Anonymous shout, "Noooooo!" When he did, he saw him fly across the room and slam into the wall. As Anonymous relaxed, he saw the ball that had hit him in the gut.

A few keystrokes later and the hacker said, "I'm in."

Dragging himself to his feet, Anonymous said, "What? That's wonderful!"

With a satisfied smile on his face, the hacker said, "Now all you need are the launch codes."

As Anonymous was walking the hacker to the door, he said, "And we'll have them. You've done excellent work. Just excellent."

"Don't bother thanking me, just send the cash." He looked back and said, "Good luck with the kid. He was starting to give me a headache."

Unwilling to leave any loose ends, or pay for the services that had been rendered, Anonymous pulled a silenced automatic from under his coat and as he shot the hacker, said, "Then by all means, take two of these." As the hacker's dead body fell to the floor, Anonymous said, "The check's in the mail."

As Anonymous returned to the main room he smelled smoke and saw Jesse burning a drawing on the wall with his heat vision. He shouted, "Stop that, you little..."

Jesse was startled and looked at Anonymous, but he didn't turn off his heat vision until he had given Anonymous a hot foot.

Anonymous was hopping on one foot as he said, "I mean... We have lots of other fun games to play. Oh, let's see... How about... I know! 'Grab the President!'

Jesse moped, "No. I don't feel good."

Anonymous was holding in his anger as he said, "Oh, I'm sure you have one more little game in you. Don't you?"

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Faux Lois and Clark had gone back to The Planet where they had the resources that they needed to investigate after leaving Leigh-Anne's. Clark had just finished an unfruitful call and slammed down the phone, almost breaking it, in frustration as faux Lois approached holding some items.

He said, "Well, that's it. There's no 'Donald Rafferty' at any law firm in Metropolis."

Flipping open her pad, faux Lois added, "He may be faking more than his law degree."

"What do you mean?"

She held up a baggie and said, "The forensic report just came back on this stuff you found at Leigh-Anne's. It's amazing what your police labs can do with so little material."

He sniffed and said, "It has a distinctive odor."

She sniffed and shook her head and whispered, "Your sense of smell is a lot more acute than mine. Another power you haven't mentioned yet? Okay, a super nose. Anyway, it's a kind of putty used by professional make-up artists."

"Unless Mr. Make-up has reappeared, then there is only one other person it could be ... Anonymous, the master of disguise rumored to be here to disrupt the peace conference."

Faux Lois gasped out, "Anonymous? You think Jesse's with Anonymous? Oh God, I hope not..."

They heard the ding of the elevator arriving and looking up they saw Leigh-Anne exiting. As she approached them she said, "I didn't know where else to go. I'm sorry to be a bother, but I just can't sit home... Is there any news?" Faux Lois reached for and took her hand because she could see that her eyes were red from crying.

Faux Lois looked to Clark then said, "Nothing ... that we can confirm."

Clark placed a comforting hand on her shoulder and said, "Everyone's looking for him, Leigh-Anne. Especially Superman."

As Clark turned away Faux Lois knew that he was planning to follow up on that promise, but before he had gone more than a few feet, he bumped into Jimmy who joined him as he walked away.

"C.K., I got news. There are three listings for a 'Ding Dong Motel.' One in Joplin, Missouri."

Clark muttered to himself, "Never been there."

"What?"

"Nothing. Go ahead, Jimmy. You said there were three."

"There's one in Lincoln, Nebraska and one in Traverse City, Michigan."

It was as if a light had lit in his head. He challenged, "Traverse City? Isn't that where an airliner nearly went down a year ago?"

"Yeah, a big electrical storm. Superman kept it from..."

Before he had finished talking, Clark turned around and hurried back to faux Lois and Leigh-Anne.

Behind his back, Jimmy finished his sentence, "crashing." Shrugging it off as more or less normal behavior for Clark when he was on a story, Jimmy turned and headed for his desk.

When he got to where the two women were standing, he asked, "Leigh-Anne... Let me ask you. Were you and Jesse on a plane about a year ago over Michigan?"

Leigh-Anne hadn't expected such a question, but knowing the reputation of Lois Lane and Clark Kent as investigators, all she could do was answer honestly, "I already told the airline, I'll pay 'em when I can! I was sure I had tickets when I got on, but..."

Seeing how upset she was, Clark softened his tone as he continued, "That plane nearly crashed, right?"

Now Leigh-Anne was confused. They were looking for Jesse

and suddenly he's asking about a plane flight about a year ago.  
 "What? Well, yeah..."

Clark pressed ahead, "And you were sitting over the left wing? Window seat?"

"Jesse had the window. It was his first time on a plane."

Clark pressed on, "And Superman rescued the plane. Then he posed for pictures with some of the passengers..."

Faux Lois picked up the thread, "Outside a motel."

The realization that they knew ... that all of her lies were now out in the open came crashing down on her. Tears welled up in her eyes as she collapsed into a chair and turned away from them. "I really ain't good for much, am I?"

Faux Lois tried to comfort her. "You love your son, Leigh-Anne. That counts for a lot."

Clark smiled sympathetically and turned away. Knowing that Anonymous had Jesse and what his goal was gave him a lead that he wanted to follow up on. Faux Lois hurried after him. The mention of the electrical storm had triggered the memory of one of the stories Clark had told her over the last week or so; the story about Resplendent Man and how he had acquired his powers.

She caught up to him near the stairwell and said, "That electrical storm. A lightning bolt must have..."

Nodding his head in agreement he finished for her, "hit me and transferred part of my power through the plane to Jesse. I've only known it to work when I was touching someone, but it obviously..." He stopped as he welled up, emotionally. "So, it was me in the photograph. I couldn't understand why I felt close to him, Lois, and now I know. I'm responsible for the way he is." He entered the stairwell and disappeared.

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One of the very few appearances that the President of Tanzor hadn't cancelled was one in which he was to greet children from a daycare center. Security was enhanced with barricades and additional security personnel. The President, who was very fond of children, was bouncing a toddler on his knee and there was a line of toddlers, each with an adult. There had been a vetting process and each adult and child had an ID tag.

In the line were Anonymous, disguised as a grandfatherly figure and Jesse in scruffy clothes and a baseball cap and glasses. Jesse whined, "I'm tired."

Anonymous was really getting fed up with this kid and it came out as he spoke, "Quit your incessant complain..." Then he caught himself, calmed down and used bribery, "You can take a nap when we get home, okie-dokie? After our game, we'll have ice cream, and cotton candy, and jellybeans..."

Visions of these toothsome sweets overcame his tiredness and he said, "Okay."

"You're next. Remember how we play this game?"

The child that the President had been bouncing on his knee jumped down and Jesse moved up. Holding up his arms, he said, "Hug?"

Standing up, the President bent down and Jesse put his arms around him. Suddenly, with a whoosh, Jesse took off, carrying the President with him.

Confusion erupted, the Secret Service started shooting, people were screaming and they hit the dirt.

Anonymous strolled away humming a little tune.

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### Chapter 13 – New York 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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The next morning, after breakfast faux Margot and Lamont discussed their plans for the day.

Faux Margot asked, "Where do Margot's parents live?"

"346, East 52<sup>nd</sup>, just a few blocks from St. Patrick's,

apartment 705. Do you plan to scout the area again?"

"Unless you have some objection, yes. I like to know what I'm getting into. Also, I might get an idea as to where the shooter would hide."

Lamont chuckled a low sound and replied, "I learned yesterday that I should allow you to trust your own instincts. Shrevvy will be at your service. In the meantime, I have to check on Harry Vincent."

"What is he working on?"

"There is a new individual in town. He calls himself Fugit, T. Fugit. I think he is a fugitive and has taken an abbreviation of that as his name. It appears as though he is trying to build a gang. I'm not sure exactly what criminal enterprise they plan, but I intend to disrupt it before it can be brought to fruition. Let's meet back here at 5 p.m. for dinner before we go to our respective assignments."

As she picked up her bag, threw the strap over her shoulder and headed for the door, she said, "Sounds like a plan. See you at five."

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As faux Margot exited the building, she spotted Shrevvy and headed in his direction. He held the door for her as she entered the cab and then move to the driver's seat. "Where to Miss Lane?"

"346, East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street."

"Your folks place?"

"Yeah, Shrevvy, my folks' place."

"Sure teng, Miss Lane. I'll have you dere in a jiff." Starting the cab, he pulled out into traffic. As he did, he said, over his shoulder, "I picked up a poiper for youz. It's dere on da seat next to youz."

As she picked it up, she said, "Thanks, Shrevvy. That was very thoughtful." As Shrevvy drove she perused the main headlines. The main topic still seemed to be the Powers Curse and the related deaths. The fact that the curse had been foiled at least once was being played to the hilt. There were additional facts presented of which she had not been aware. It seemed as though the target of the last attempt had disappeared. An investigation was being conducted by the police, however, he had not been found. Faux Margot thought, <Well, that explains why it took Lamont so long to get back to the penthouse. Lamont took him to a safe house.>

There was another article which stated that LTC Claire L. Chennault of the United States Army Air Corps was on his way to China, to advise the Chinese on the use of air power in their resistance to Japan. He was going to be the first military aviation advisor to Generalissimo Chang Kai Shek. That name rang a bell for faux Margot, Claire Chennault – the force behind The First American Volunteer Group, AKA The Flying Tigers. The group that included Greg 'Pappy' Boyington and gave the Japanese so much trouble in China. Pappy later commanded the legendary 'Black Sheep Squadron' in the Pacific before being shot down, captured and interred as a prisoner of war for over a year by the Japanese.

She mused, <They have some hard times ahead. There will be a lot of self-sacrifice for the war effort. There will be a lot of lives lost ... on both sides. Such a useless conflict. I wish there was something I could do to prevent it. ... I had better not think along those lines. It's bad enough that I told Lamont what I have. I can't take a chance on changing this world's history.>

Setting the paper aside, she decided to see what information she might be able to get from Shrevvy, "So, Shrevvy, what's going on around my folk's place?"

"Golly, Miss Lane, don't you know?"

"It has been a few days, Shrevvy."

"Oh, okay, well, they's still workin' on that new building. Oh, and they's starting woik on that new drive along da waterfront. We're almost dere. I'll be parkin' soon."

"Thanks, Shrevvy." After Shrevvy parked, faux Margot sat in

the cab and looked around. She spotted a steel skeleton up the block. When she exited the cab, Shrevvy did the same and followed her as she made her way up the block. She decided to be bold and try to bluff her way through a meeting with her 'family'. As she entered the building, Shrevvy bought a paper and took up his station, near the doors.

The elevator starter recognized her as she approached he greeted her, "Good morning, Miss Lane," and told the operator, "Seven."

She entered the car and was whisked to the seventh floor. Exiting the elevator, she looked up and down the corridor and saw 705 on her right hand. She approached the door and taking a fortifying breath, she reached out and knocked.

From within, she heard a very familiar male voice call, "Come in."

As she stepped through the doorway, Sam said, "Margot, what brings you around at this time?"

"Daddy, have you heard what happened the night before last?"

He looked at her strangely, but asked, "What happened?"

"The other remaining jury member was shot at."

"Oh, that. Yes, I was aware of that."

"I'm worried that he may try to shoot you tonight."

"Why are you worried about that?"

"I don't want to lose you."

"Why should you care? After all, you aren't Margot. You look like her, but you are not her."

Instantly, Lois decided that in order to have his cooperation, she would need to explain what had happened. He was a very intelligent man and she felt that she could convince him.

"All right, I'm not Margot, but I might as well be. You see, it's this way, I'm ... I'm her ... twin."

"My dear young lady, I am a physician, I was there when my wife delivered, and Margot did not have a twin."

"It's a long story, but trust me, I am Margot's twin. My name is Lois Lane and Margot and I have exchanged places, not voluntarily, I might add. This is going to sound like a comic strip. Do you follow 'Buck Rodgers in the 25<sup>th</sup> Century'?"

"Occasionally. It amuses me how farfetched it is."

"It is less farfetched than you think. I am actually from 1995, which incidentally is where Margot is at this point. In my time, I too have a family. My father's name is Sam. He is a physician. My mother's name is Ellen. She was his assistant until I was born and then she became a stay-at-home mom. I have a sister. Her name is Lucy. She's a college student in California."

"I must say, you have done your homework, but you got the name of your sister wrong, it's Amanda."

"I wasn't speaking of Margot's sister. I was speaking of mine, in 1995. When I arrived, I was found by Lamont. I've been with him since Margot is away. I don't know what I would have done if not for him. He's been a Godsend."

"Lamont Cranston is a good man, although, I'd feel better if he would do something constructive with his life. He is a dilettante. Now, just where is my daughter, how did she get there and how is she?"

"It is only a guess, but an educated one. I was being kidnapped and it looks like we exchanged places, accidentally." She went on to explain about Tempus and Clark, but not Superman.

"Well, I must say, that is some story. You do have a vivid imagination."

"I do have some proof if you are willing to have an open mind."

"What is your proof?"

Reaching into her bag, she produced her wallet. Opening the wallet, she flipped to the section that held her pictures. Selecting one of herself with her family, she held it out to him to examine.

"As you can see, this was taken some years ago, before the divorce. Those are my father, Sam, my mother, Ellen, and my sister, Lucy."

He examined the picture, but he also examined the plastic sleeve that it was in. Before he handed it back to her he flipped through a few more pictures and asked, "I take it that this young man is, Clark?"

She nodded.

"He does bear a striking resemblance to Lamont Cranston." Shaking his head in disbelief, he continued. "All right, you have convinced me. The pictures could have been faked, but the material that the holder is made of is something beyond anything I have ever seen. I'm sorry to have kept you standing here all of this time, but, well, it always pays to be cautious. Won't you please come in and have a seat?"

He led Lois into the sitting room. It was expensively, although not lavishly decorated, as befitted a well-known and respected and highly paid surgeon. This went a long way in explaining how Margot could be on her own and not have a regular job. In this time period she was what would be called a debutante. Her parents were well to do and provided for her which allowed her time to devote to charitable activities and also to helping Lamont.

On a sideboard was a tray with decanters of liquor and glasses. He asked, "Would you like a drink?"

"No thanks, I'm not much of a drinker, just the occasional glass of wine."

"Well, there's another way that you and Margot are alike, aside from your appearance. If you don't mind, I'll have one. This has been something of a shock." He poured three fingers of scotch, added some water and tossed it off in a couple of swallows. When he had finished, he crossed to a chair near hers and sat down.

"That's better. Just enough to calm the nerves. Now, you were saying. You said you were here to help me?"

"Yes, I did. As you may know, Lamont helps out the police occasionally. He's doing that now, with the Powers killings. He suspects that whoever is doing this will try to kill you tonight. It is my job to protect you."

"Just how do you propose to do that?"

"By using a decoy. First I have to determine the most likely point he will shoot from." She crossed the room to the window. She noted that rather than venetian blinds, the apartment was equipped with paper shades. As befitted the rest of the furniture, the shades had an ornate oriental design printed on them. She let up the paper shade and looked out. She was confronted with the steel skeleton of the building under construction. There were two windows facing it and she decided that it was the most likely spot for his crow's nest. She called 'her father' over and pointing said, "I think he'll be there. We need to make sure that you are not in line of sight of that structure this evening."

"But, how can we decoy him into firing?"

She smiled and said, "Leave that to me. We need to make sure that 'mom' isn't here."

"That will not be a problem. She is away visiting Amanda at her college. It is parent's week. I had a surgery scheduled so, I couldn't make it."

As she pulled the shade back down, she said, "Okay. Please ... keep a low profile until I return and ... stay away from the windows."

He stopped her and said, "You seem a very competent young woman. A bit more self-confident than my Margot."

She smiled and replied, "You may see some changes in her when she returns. If she has been with my fiancée in my absence, she may have to learn to act more like me, the same way I have learned to, in some respects, act like Margot. Maybe not completely. My natural inclinations come through."

"What do you do, in your world?"

"I'm an investigative reporter for a major metropolitan newspaper. I investigate crime and corruption, expose it and bring the perps to justice."

"And you are engaged."

"Yes, we just became engaged. We've been together for a couple of years now as work partners. We've had our problems, like any couple, but we are past that. I expect, with this happening, we will be getting married sooner than we had planned."

"I actually hope that when Margot returns, she is more like you. She had grown too dependent upon Lamont Cranston."

Lois didn't want to say too much, but she felt that she had to say something in Lamont's defense, "Don't dismiss Lamont out of hand. Appearances can be deceiving, you know. There's a lot more to Lamont Cranston than what he lets the public see."

Derisively he said with a dismissive shake of his head, "There would have to be."

"I'm serious. You know the old saying, 'Still waters run deep.' Well, that's how it is with Lamont. He does help the police, you know. He's a friend of Commissioner Weston. We had dinner with him and his wife the other night. They are a lovely couple."

"Well, I see that you are a skilled conversationalist. You steered us onto a new topic, very tactfully. Okay, I won't pry and I will take your advice about Lamont. Now, about tonight. When should I expect you?"

"I should be here by 6:30."

"Fine. I'll look for you then."

In a quizzical tone, she asked, "By the way, what gave me away?"

Smiling, he replied, "Margot hasn't called me Daddy for years. Not sophisticated enough for her. She always calls me 'Father.'"

Faux Margot, smiled and said, "I will see you later, Father." Nodding, he smiled and said, "I would almost have been fooled."

Faux Margot made her way out of the building and as she emerged, Shrevvy folded his paper and fell into step behind her. As they approached the cab, he stepped ahead so that he could open her door. When he was in the driver's seat she said, "I need to go to a toy store, please, Shrevvy."

"Sure ting, Miss Lane. I know just de place, I'll have you dere in a jiff. How was yer folks?"

"Only my father was at home. He's fine. We'll be coming back later tonight."

"Sure ting." True to his word, a very few minutes later, he parked in front of a department store. "You can wait for me here in the car, Shrevvy. Not much chance of me being injured between here and the door."

"Whatever you say, Miss Lane." He picked up his paper and actually began reading it as she exited the hack.

What she had seen in the Lane apartment had given Faux Margot an idea. She found the toy department quickly, made her selection paid for it and left.

She was carrying a medium sized package as she returned to the cab and said, "Back to the penthouse, please, Shrevvy."

Pressing on the starter, Shrevvy said, "Sure ting, Miss Lane. I'll have you dere in a jiff."

When faux Margot arrived back at the penthouse, Lamont was not there so she settled down on the couch and pulled out her purchase. It would require some modifications if it were to serve its purpose. Getting up from the couch, she entered Margot's room and after a short search she found a pair of scissors and went to work. Once she was finished with the scissors, she started removing some of the stuffing.

Once she was finished she had a doll with an almost bald head that was on the lean side rather than 'baby chubby.' Holding up her handiwork she checked it from various angles. She applied the scissors again and removed some more of the stuffing before

she was satisfied. She cleaned up the residue, then placed the finished product into its bag and moved it to her room.

Returning to the living room, she turned on the radio and allowed it to warm up. Once the tubes were warm, she started turning the tuning dial. Suddenly she heard some familiar music and feeling in the mood for some classical music she stopped and listened. To her surprise the music was simply the theme song for a radio drama, one that had survived through the years, moving to television. The radio program was [The Lone Ranger](#). She sat down and listened to the program. She enjoyed a leisurely half hour reminiscing on the TV programs she had watched as a kid starring Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels.

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#### Chapter 14 – 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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In the conference room at The Daily Planet, faux Lois and Clark were watching the videotape of the kidnapping. As it finished, Lois used the remote that Clark had taught her to use, to rewind the tape and play it again.

As they watch, Clark commented, "Anonymous obviously has Jesse completely in his control."

As it finished playing, she rewound it and played it again. She asked, "Which of your powers haven't you used yet?"

"What have I been thinking? Let me use my supervision. Play it again."

She played it, but the results were no different.

Shaking his head he said, "Rewind it and play it again."

As she hit play he said, "This time I'll use my super-hearing." As it played, he put his finger to his lips and said, "Shhh. Listen."

"I don't hear anything."

With a smile, he said, "You would if we could have turned it up enough. Just before Jesse flew off with the President, he said something. It sounded like 'Red Choo Choo.'"

"Red Choo Choo?" I don't speak 'kid' very well, but wouldn't you think that means 'train'?"

Nodding, Clark said, "Red train? Maybe they're leaving by train?"

"Maybe Anonymous has him stashed at a train yard?"

He started to loosen his tie as he said, "It's a long shot. I'll check out every train and train yard on the coast. Don't go away." He dashed off and disappeared into the stairwell just as Dr. Klein and Leigh-Anne exited the elevator.

Spotting faux Lois in the doorway to the conference room, she shouted, "Miss Lane! Dr. Klein here has news. Where's Mr. Kent?"

"He's helping Superman look for Jesse. We think we may have a lead."

Leigh-Anne huffed in relief as she said, "Oh, thank God."

Faux Lois turned to Dr. Klein and said, "Sorry, Doctor. But the D.N.A. results will have to wait... Right now we have to..."

Dr. Klein interrupted her, "I don't have the results. This is much more serious. As I was analyzing Jesse's hair sample, I noticed that its molecular structure varied throughout the strand. It seems there's been a gradual, yet steady..." His frustration at being unable to express what he needed to in words caused him to say, "it's easier if I show you." As he said this he pulled out a plastic bag with a strand of hair. He removed the hair from the bag and then pulled out a pair of scissors. He directed her attention to the hair, "This end is about a year old." Bringing up the scissors, he tried to cut the hair. When he did, the scissors broke. He gave that a second to sink in then pulled out another pair of scissors. "And now, the other end, nearer the follicle." He cut the hair easily with the scissors.

Faux Lois was stunned, she blurted out, "What are you

saying? Jesse's losing his super-powers?"

Nodding his head, Dr. Klein, replied, "I'm afraid so."

Faux Lois commented, "Once he found out how Jesse got his powers, we passed the information on to Superman. He said that the transfer was imperfect. So the results most likely would be temporary. He had no idea as to how long they would last because of that."

Dr. Klein shook his head and said, "And after this recent exertion... Miss Lane, Jesse is no safer right now than any ordinary child."

This hit home to Leigh-Anne and clasping her hands to her mouth she gasped out, "Oh!"

In an attempt to calm her, faux Lois said, "Okay. Okay. Listen. Leigh-Anne. we think we know where Jesse might be. Jesse said 'red choo-choo' just before he left with the President. Superman is checking out the train yards as we speak."

Leigh-Anne became frantic, as she explained, "But that may not be the right place at all! 'Choo choo' is Jesse's word for trains. But also for big smokestacks."

Faux Lois gasped out, "Smokestacks?"

"Yes, they remind him of those old-fashioned steam engines. So he uses the same word for both."

Turning to Dr. Klein, faux Lois demanded, "Help me out here, Dr. Klein, Where would I find some red smokestacks?"

He thought for a second and then said, "The Metro-Chem plant on the west side."

As faux Lois grabbed her coat, she said, "If Clark comes back, tell him I went to the old Metro-Chem plant."

Leigh-Anne, blurted out, "What?"

"Tell him to look for the tall red smokestacks."

\*\*\*

The President had been dazed and shocked at the kidnapping. He didn't have any idea as to just where he was and the doors had locked automatically once he and Jesse had entered. Anonymous had shown up shortly thereafter and using a gun to threaten him, had forced the President to sit in a chair to which he very shortly was bound. In front of him was a computer terminal. It wasn't a display he was used to seeing, but he gathered the import quickly enough.

Anonymous asked, "I'd like the launch codes for your nuclear missiles. Will you give them to me or do I have to beat them out of you?"

"I will never give you the launch codes."

"Why not? We just want to destroy your enemy's capital city."

"That would bring about a war. I will not have it. You may kill me, I will never give you the codes."

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Sometime later, some of his bravado was gone, he looked more terrified and much the worse for wear.

Anonymous, taking a break from beating on the President, asked, "One more time, Mr. President. I insist you give me your nation's nuclear launch codes." He demonstrated his sadistic nature by slapping the President, hard, before he asked, "Pretty please?"

Persevering, even after the beating he had received and determined to resist more, the President replied, "You are a crazy person! Do what you want to me! But there will be peace between Tanzor and Fostonia!"

Anonymous, to display his complete lack of morals, said, "Don't get me wrong, I couldn't care less about your little peace treaty. However, I am being paid handsomely to level your opposition."

The president demonstrated his commitment to resistance by giving Anonymous and icy stare.

Anonymous, realizing that he might have met his match in this type of game; decided on taking a different track. "Well, sir.

As much as I enjoy doing this the hard way, perhaps I'll have better luck doing this the easy way." Picking up a small leather case he zipped it open and displayed the contents, a vial and a syringe. As he did, he said, "Truth serum." He loaded the syringe and squirted some into the air, making sure that all of the air was out.

Seeing this, the President, his eyes wide in terror, wailed in despair, "No! Nooooooo!" because he realized that though he could resist any beating, he couldn't defend himself against this drug.

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Faux Lois had been in the city long enough to know the layout of the streets and after leaving the parking garage had picked up a one way heading west. She hoped that once she left center city she'd be able to see the smokestacks that had been mentioned. She had a fair amount of traffic to deal with so it took time to reach the outskirts. Once she did, she spotted the red smokestacks standing far above the adjoining structures. She headed for them.

Finally, she pulled up near a door. Most of the building had fallen into disrepair with crumbling walls and broken windows, but this door had recently been repaired, an obvious giveaway. It was almost like having a sign painted saying, "Enter here."

She wished that she had Lamont's power of invisibility. As she approached the door, she mentally reviewed what she had been learning in karate and hoped that Clark would get her message.

The door swung open silently on well-oiled hinges and she slipped in.

\*\*\*

The President had obviously had the injection and was babbling. As he babbled, Anonymous typed.

"Fifteen alpha... twenty-six omega..."

"Forty-two sigma... He stopped rambling and started to sing, "Oh, my papa.... To me he was so wonderful..."

\*\*\*

After faux Lois entered she started to tip-toe down the corridor she found herself in. Jesse, who was treating this time away from his mom as playtime, had been hiding around a corner, snuck up behind her and slapping her announced, "Tag, you're it!" He then ran off down the corridor.

Faux Lois, afraid to raise her voice too high, called, barely above a whisper, "Jesse? Jesse, come back here."

Cautiously, she followed the way that Jesse had gone. Coming to a doorway, she cautiously poked her head around the jam. She saw the President, strapped into a chair and Anonymous, still disguised as the lawyer, was at a computer terminal, typing as the President spoke.

As she watched, Jesse walked up toward Anonymous. As he did, the President dictated another sequence. "Sixty-one epsilon."

Wishing that she was farther along in her karate lessons and disappointed that she didn't have a gun, faux Lois wracked her brain as to what she could use to fool Anonymous into thinking that that was exactly what she had. Reaching into her bag, she felt around. She felt the escrima but rejected that since she hadn't learned how to handle it. Her hand encountered a tube that felt like it would be the right diameter. Pulling her hand out, she saw that she had a tube of lipstick in it. Shrugging, she thought, <Better than nothing. Maybe I can fool him into thinking I'm armed.>

Jesse had made his way to Anonymous and patting his leg, said, "Un-cle Don-aaald..."

Anonymous brushed his hand away and said, "Not now, I'm busy."

Jesse had his eyes on faux Lois as she crept silently from the doorway. She lifted her hand and placed a finger across her lips in s "Shh!" gesture.

Just then, the President said, "Nine delta... I'll take Bleu

Cheese on that salad, Miss...”

Looking directly at faux Lois and smiling, Jesse patted Anonymous’s leg again and said, “Un-cle Don-aaald...”

Fear in her eyes, faux Lois shook her head ‘no’.

Jesse giggled at the game he was playing.

Faux Lois continued to inch closer.

She was almost within arm’s reach when the computer beeped. Anonymous straightened abruptly and he chortled, “Jackpot! System armed, missiles ready to go.”

Straightening as he did, brought him within arm’s reach and faux Lois jabbed the lipstick tube into his back. As she did, she commanded, “Back away from the computer.”

Professional that he was, he didn’t make any sudden moves. He slowly raised his hands and backed away as commanded. Once he was a few feet away, he asked, “Now what?”

Unsure as to just where to go from there, she tried to put herself in Lamont’s place and imagine what he’d do. She commanded, “Uh, get down on your stomach. And don’t move, or so help me, I’ll ... get very mad. What’s going on here?”

One of the side effects of the drug that had been used was to place the subject into a state like drunkenness. As a result, the President, slurred out, “Fostonia goes boom!”

Jesse giggled and mimicked, “Boom!”

Anonymous, from his position on the floor, asked, “That’s right, Jesse. Wouldn’t you like to see some fireworks?”

Jesse nodded eagerly.

Trying to forestall what Anonymous was trying to do, faux Lois said, “Jesse, come here, honey.”

Anonymous, encouraged him, “Just hit the red button. For the big ‘boom!’”

Jesse approached the computer.

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### Chapter 15 – 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Shortly after the Lone Ranger radio program finished, Lamont returned.

“Well, did you ‘case the joint’ as you had planned?”

“Yes, and I met my ‘father.’”

Lamont quirked an eyebrow as he asked, “Oh, how did that go? Did you fool him?”

In a self-deprecating tone, she replied, “Yeah, for all of about three seconds. As soon as I opened my mouth I gave myself away. I called him Daddy, which is what I call my father, but apparently that isn’t sophisticated enough for Margot. She calls him ‘Father.’”

“Did you convince him of your bona fides? How much of your story did you have to tell him.”

“I told him some of it, but that wasn’t what convinced him.”

“Oh, what did?”

“Would you believe, the pictures in my wallet.”

“Oh, what pictures. You haven’t shown them to me.”

Crossing to her bag, she delved into it and pulled out her wallet. Opening it to her pictures, she handed it to Lamont.

He examined them closely and musingly said, “Hmmm, color pictures, and not colorized black and whites. That must be the modern emulsion you mentioned. Another thing ... the plastic sleeves that they are in. We don’t have plastics of this fineness of quality. I can see why he was convinced. This would convince anyone. It is obviously from a more technologically advanced culture.” He handed the wallet back and she replaced it in her bag.

“Have you decided what you are going to do to protect your father?”

She nodded and said, “Wait right here. I’ll show you.” She disappeared into her room and returned bearing the bag from the store. Pulling the doll out, she asked, “What do you think?”

Looking at it skeptically, he said, “It is too small to fool the shooter.”

She smirked and replied, “Not if it is used the proper way.”

“All right, your father and I will have to trust you.”

“What are your plans for this evening?”

Looking at the time, Lamont strode to the phone and looking back at her said, “Time for dinner. Any preferences?”

“Do you have pizza?”

“My dear girl, you are not so far back in time that your arrival predates that of pizza. What would you like on it?”

With a delighted smile on her face, she replied, “Pepperoni, mushrooms, green pepper and olives.”

As he dialed a number, he said, “Coming right up.” When he was finished ordering, he hung up and turned to her. “Any idea as to where he will shoot from?”

Remembering the layout, faux Margot reported, “Both of the living room windows face on the building that is under construction. My best guess is that he will be there. It will be tricky because they haven’t filled in the flooring that high up yet. It’s just bare girders.”

Shaking his head, Lamont said, “Not ideal for sure. Depending on how my interview with Dwayne Power goes, I will try to be there to help prevent another murder.”

“Oh, Lamont, it’s going to be dangerous up there on the bare steel. You won’t be able to duck and cover if he starts shooting. You could get shot.”

He shrugged and replied, “It won’t be the first time and I hope it isn’t the last. If you know what I mean.”

In a heartfelt tone, she replied, “Oh, I know all right. Let’s hope it isn’t the last time, not that I want you to be shot.”

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After dinner they each left on their respective missions.

When faux Margot arrived she was greeted at the door by Sam Lane. “Good evening, Lois or should I call you Margot?”

“Father, by now you should know your own daughter’s name.”

Startled, he blurted out, “Margot? Is that you? When did you return?”

She laughed and replied, “Actually, it is Lois, but you should call me Margot.”

“Incredible, you actually had me fooled. The resemblance is uncanny.”

“I hope that Margot is doing as well in my place. She has a lot more people to fool than I do.”

“How so?”

“I work for a newspaper. I worked there as an intern before I became a reporter. I’ve known those people for many years. They will be hard to fool. If I know Clark, he’ll come up with something to explain any memory gaps. Amnesia possibly, I don’t know.”

Looking around, she said, “We’re going to have to move a few things to get ready. Do you mind?”

Shrugging, he replied, “Whatever you want to do is fine with me.”

Faux Margot moved a lamp and a chair so that the light from the lamp illuminated the chair and threw a shadow on the window shade. The first thing she did was to roll down her pants legs and remove the skirt so that she would have freedom of movement. Then she pulled the doll out of its bag and squatting down, moved it side to side, as if Sam were pacing and throwing a shadow on the shade. With some practice, she made it look very realistic. By controlling the distance the doll was from the lamp, she controlled the size of the shadow. Before she was done, she knew just where to place it so that the shadow looked like it was being thrown by someone standing close to the shade, while she was several feet away and off to one side. The next thing they had to do was to wait.

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Lamont arrived at the hospital at 7:00 and entered stealthily. He had on his hat and cloak and was exercising his powers so that he would not be seen. Hospital staff moved around him, unaware as he checked the sign-in sheet and saw Dwayne Powers signature and the room number. He moved down the corridor to the side wing where the room was located. Since it was a recovery hospital and not acute care the staffing was light. He let himself into the room and saw someone in the bed.

Moving over next to the bed, he said, "Dwayne Powers." He waited a second and repeated, "Dwayne Powers."

When he didn't stir, he reached out and shook the arm. Through the sheet he felt cold flesh. He pulled back the covers and used a flashlight, hooded by holding his fingers over the lens to limit the light. What he saw didn't really surprise him. It was the corpse of Carlton Powers in the bed. "That is how he has been able to be in two places at the same time. If they check his bed, it is occupied and the similarity in appearance would convince anyone, especially in the subdued lighting. This means that Dwayne Powers is the killer and he is on his way to kill Sam Lane." Dousing his light, he left the way he had come and entering his car, drove at break-neck speed to the vicinity of the Lane residence.

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Darkness had fallen outside and before faux Margot went into her act she turned on the lamp. By making the shadow on the shade move around, she gave the illusion of a living person moving around the apartment. When her arms got tired, she made the shadow appear to leave the room. Occasionally she would have it sit in the chair. It was nearing the time of the previous shooting and she decided to give the shooter a tempting target. As she had practiced previously, she moved the doll until the shadow on the shade was close to the size it would be if a man were standing right in front of it. She moved it slightly, as if the person were rocking on their heels.

Suddenly, there was a shattering of glass, the window shade puffed into the room and a hole appeared in the center of the shadow. The bullet buried itself in the wall opposite the window.

Faux Margo was startled by the shot and dropped the doll, which it turned out was just the right thing to do since it looked like the subject had been hit and fallen to the floor.

Thinking quickly, faux Margot doused the light, avoiding placing herself between the light and the shade. She ordered, "Stay here and stay away from the windows," as she ran out the door. She knew that Lamont was planning to be there to try to catch the shooter, whoever it might be.

There was a guard immediately outside the door whom she passed. She ran down the stairs because she would have had to wait for the elevator. She was exiting the main doors as the police were entering. Recognizing her as Doctor Lane's daughter, they didn't stop her.

More police were converging on the apartment building as faux Margot ran for the construction site. As she did, she heard a second shots ring out. It just so happened that she had been looking up at the time of the second shot and saw that the flash was pointed away from the apartment building. A feeling of dread overcame her. There could be only one reason for that shot being pointed away from the Lane apartment, Lamont was up there and he had been detected.

When she arrived at the base of the construction site there were numerous and various pieces of equipment. She decided that her best course of action was to wait for the shooter to descend and try to disarm and subdue him.

She found a series of ladders that she was able to take up several floors, but then they stopped. When she had gone as far up as she could, she stopped and listened. She could hear movement above and to one side. Deciding that the shooter would be heading for the ladders to descend to ground level, she found a corner to

hide in. Delving into her bag, she pulled out and donned her ski mask and gloves. Delving into her bag once again, she grasped and withdrew her collapsing baton. She extended it and grasped it by the small end while she waited.

Her wait wasn't very long before it was rewarded by someone sliding down a girder near her. Her unsuspecting quarry started to pass near her when with a flick of her wrist she struck! Even in the dark, the pale, pale skin of the talcum covered face stood out giving her a perfect target. When she swung, she aimed her blow for the side of the head, just above the ear. The heavy end of the baton did its duty.

Her foe dropped to the temporary flooring, stunned. She quickly took advantage of his stunned condition and pulling a length of sash cord from her bag, tied his hands behind his back. She didn't know how dexterous he was so she crossed his wrists and took two turns around them before taking two loops between the forearms and hands, tying the cord where he couldn't reach. Complicating this was the fact that he had a rifle, slung over his shoulder. She was careful not to touch the rifle because she didn't want to leave any fingerprints on it. Taking another length of cord from her bag, she bound his ankles together. The last thing she did was to gag him with a rolled up handkerchief in his mouth, held in place by one tied behind his head.

Fairly certain that her captive wouldn't be going anywhere anytime soon, she decided that she needed to search for Lamont. She had been away from the artificial lighting of the apartment long enough for her eyes to become dark adapted and the moonlight was enough for her to see clearly. The use of a flashlight would counteract that adaptation and besides, she had a feeling that she would need both hands. Looking around and up, getting her bearings, she decided that she needed to move almost all the way to the opposite side of the structure and several floors up because that was where the shooter's additional shots had been directed. Faux Margot, Lois, was happy that she had spent so much time at the dojo and the gym working on her upper body strength, she had a feeling that she was going to need it. Staying on the temporary flooring until she was in the area that she believed that the shooter had been targeting, she picked a girder and started to climb. Fortunately there were many cross braces that she could use as foot and handholds and as places to stop if she started to tire.

She had ascended three floors when she saw a dark mass about twenty feet away, it was only visible as a more profound black against a black background. She made her way, crab-wise, to the side and called softly, "Lamont?"

She was rewarded by hearing a groan. She was relieved, at least he wasn't dead. If she had to she could get help getting him down, first she had to determine the extent of his injuries. She completed her trip a finally was within arm's reach. She reached out and touched his arm. When she did, he groaned again. She closed the distance and asked, "Lamont, can you hear me?"

All he did in reply was groan again.

First she secured her position, bracing herself in a corner between two girders so that she could use both hands freely, then she started to examine him, by feel. She felt a wet patch of clothing near his shoulder. When she found that he groaned again, more loudly as she pressed on it. She realized that they were probably one or two floors below where he had probably been when he was shot. That meant that he had fallen a story or two before ending up where he was. That meant the possibility of internal injuries.

While she was mulling this information over, he suddenly spoke, "Margot ... must ... get ... down. Doctor."

"Lamont, you need a hospital!"

Weakly, but emphatically he replied, "No! Doctor. Shadow's ... doctor. Contact ... Burbank. Need .. oooohhhh ... need ... Jericho and ... Cliff ... to get down. Too much ... too much ... for

... for you ... you alone.”

“Let me try.”

He gasped out, “No. Ribs ... ribs broken. More ... more ... more than ... than you can ... handle.”

“Okay, I’ll call Burbank, but I’ll be right back. What do I do with Powers?”

The tone of surprise was evident in his voice, even though he was in pain, “Powers? You caught him?”

“Yes, I have him trussed up like a Christmas turkey. He’s not going anywhere.”

“Leave him ... leave him there ... until ... until you make the call. Oooooohhhh.”

“Lamont?” She shook him. “Lamont?” He had obviously passed out again. “I’ll be back as quickly as I can.” She bent close and kissed him before she moved from her secure position. “Don’t you die on me.” She commanded.

As quickly as she could, she slid down girders and inched across horizontal braces until she finally was standing on the temporary flooring once again. Before she started down the ladders to the ground, she checked on her prisoner. He had come to and was struggling with his bonds. She pulled out her baton and touched the side of his head with it; in the same spot she had used to K.O. him, then bent close and asked, “Do you want me to knock you out again? I will if you don’t stop struggling.”

Her words had an immediate effect in that he stopped moving.

She unhooked the sling from the rifle stock and removed his rifle and set it aside, out of reach.

She said, “Behave and I’ll go easy on you. Try anything and you’ll be sorry. I’ll be watching.”

She dragged him into the shadows and positioned him so that he couldn’t see the top of the ladder. Then as silently as a wraith, faux Margot descended the ladders to the ground. She pulled off the ski mask and gloves and stuffing them into her bag ran for the Lane apartment.

The police were swarming all over the apartment looking for evidence. When she appeared she was detained by the cop at the door, but Doctor Lane said, “That’s my daughter, you can let her in.”

“Okay, doctor. Sorry, Miss I didn’t know. You can go in.”

Since she had been concerned with other things on her previous visits, she hadn’t particularly noted all of the furnishings, so she pulled her ‘father’ aside and asked, “I need to use the phone. Where is it?”

He led her over to the device and making sure that she wouldn’t be overheard, dialed the number and heard, {Burbank} In a hushed tone, she commanded, “Orders, Have Jericho and Cliff meet me at 346, East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street. The Shadow is hurt. They will need ropes and pulleys to get him down. Alert his doctor. He’s been shot and has internal injuries. Hurry.”

{Orders received. They will be there shortly.}

“I’ll meet them outside.”

{Understood.}

With a sigh, she hung the phone back up.

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Descending to street level, faux Margot found Shrevvy and said, “Jericho and Cliff are on their way. Come with me.”

Shrevvy was quick to comply and followed her to the structure. Together they ascended the ladders. Faux Margot pulled a handkerchief from her bag and staying behind him used it to blindfold Powers. Previously she had worn her ski mask, but she wasn’t now and Shrevvy was not so equipped and she didn’t want Powers to be able to identify either of them.

Once this was done, pulling Shrevvy aside she said, “We need to get Powers into your hack. Can you do it?”

“Sure ting. Just help me get him up on my shoulders.”

She helped get Powers into a fireman’s carry and Shrevvy

started down the ladders.

Faux Margot waited impatiently until finally, Shrevvy returned with Jericho and Cliff following him. He explained, “Dey drove up just as I was finishing up, so dey came wid me.”

She breathed a sigh of relief and explained the situation. “We have to climb a few stories. The Shadow is wedged up there in an angle formed by the girders. We will need to sling a pulley above him and get a rope around him to lower him, without aggravating his injuries.”

Cliff acted as spokesman and acknowledged her leadership. “Lead on Miss Lane. We’ll do whatever you say.”

Faux Margot led them in the climb. Once they were in position, Cliff, being the most agile, went above to tie off the pulley. He threaded the rope through and lowered it to Jericho. The other end Shrevvy and faux Margot fixed around The Shadow using three bowlines. Two to form a seat and one under his armpits to keep him upright.

Then Jericho’s great strength came into play. He first raised The Shadow to get him from that notch and then started to slowly lower him with Shrevvy and faux Margot guiding his body. Jericho had his legs wrapped around the girder he was sitting on so that he wouldn’t be lifted by the weight of The Shadow.

They were able to lower him two floors before they had to reposition the pulley and repeat the process. Finally they were on the ground.

As they had passed the area where she had captured Powers, she picked up the rifle.

Jericho and Cliff carried The Shadow as gently as they could and placed him in the back seat of the cab. Faux Margot looked at the pair and said, “Thank you. I couldn’t have gotten him down alone.”

Cliff, as usual, acted as spokesperson, “No thanks are necessary. We’d do anything, for him.”

“I guess we are done here. You can go back to what you were doing.”

As they turned to go, Cliff said, “If you need us again, just call Burbank.”

“I will.” Faux Margot, looked quizzically at Shrevvy and asked, “Where’s Powers?”

“I figured dat he didn’t need a soft seat so I put him in da trunk. Dere’s plenty o’ room in dere.”

Faux Margot said, “The Shadow said something about his doctor.”

“Dat would be Doc. Sayre. Hop in. I’ll have you dere in a jiff.”

She climbed into the back, placed the rifle on the floor and pulled Lamont into a loose cuddle to help keep him upright.

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When they arrived at Dr. Sayre’s office, faux Margot and Shrevvy managed, by each taking one side, to get The Shadow into the small surgery.

Seeing who his patient was, he directed, “Place him on the operating table. Miss Lane, I’ll need your assistance.”

“Anything, doctor. Just tell me what to do.”

“How was he injured?”

“He was shot then he fell a story or two before he hit and was wedged into a notch in some steel girders. I believe he was hit in the shoulder.”

“Okay, let us see, shall we. Help me remove the cloak and his clothes. I need to examine him and they are in the way.”

Between them they removed his cloak, jacket, twin shoulder holsters and shirts.

Lois was struck by his physique. He was a match for Clark in every aspect save one. Lamont had a number of scars from previous bullet wounds.

The doctor, before proceeding any further washed his hands and then picked up a sterilized probe, but stopped before probing,

he examined Lamont's back and saw an exit wound, the bullet having passed completely through. Taking a quantity of sterile gauze, he packed the wound and said, "This should slow the loss of blood. We can deal with this wound later, it is not life-threatening." His hands moved down The Shadow's sides until he winced from pain. He stopped and looked closer, noting some discoloration. He pointed this out and said, "He's starting to bruise." Using his fingers he started putting pressure on various spots around his chest and abdomen. At some points his probing elicited a groan of pain. After a few minutes, he pronounced, "I think there are some broken ribs, but they have not pierced the lung. The spleen may be bruised, but not seriously. He's been very lucky, this time. I've seen him in worse shape. I think we can close those bullet wounds, strap up his ribs and send him home to recuperate."

He removed the gauze and saw that the wound had stopped bleeding. He said, "Good, no major vessels were hit."

Pulling out a surgical set, he prepped a needle and suture thread. Then to make sure that Lamont didn't suffer any more than necessary pulled out a can of ether. He prepared a sieve with a gauze liner. Handing that to faux Margot, he said, "Hold this so that it covers his face. A few drops each minute. Don't get too close and breathe it in. I don't need a second patient, I need an assistant."

Faux Margot smiled and said, "Don't worry. I'll stay clear."

Once he was sure that Lamont was unconscious, the doctor swabbed the area with alcohol and after pouring in some sulfa powder, started sewing up the wounds. When he finished, he covered each with a sterile dressing.

Once he was finished with that, faux Margot was relieved of her duties as anesthetist and she helped get Lamont into a sitting position. Kneeling on the bed behind him, she held him stable while the doctor took a large quantity of roller gauze and circled his body, at chest level numerous times and followed that up with yards of adhesive tape.

As he was finishing up with this, Lamont started showing the signs of returning consciousness.

The doctor stood back to evaluate his handiwork. Satisfied, he said, "He'll do. It may take a couple of weeks for him to heal and it will be your job to see to it that he behaves himself and rests."

"Whatever you say, doctor."

"Okay, get him out of here. If he needs me again, call Burbank. I'll come to him."

Shrevvy, who had been standing near the door the entire time, came over and gathered up Lamont's clothing. Faux Margot rescued his cloak and swept it around his shoulders then she and Shrevvy assisted him from the office.

Once they were at the cab, they could hear a thumping coming from the vicinity of the trunk. Shrevvy asked, "Wha youz want done wid da passenger?"

Lamont answered, "Normally we would do one of two things, I'd turn him over to Slade Farrow for rehabilitation or the police for incarceration, but in this case I feel that we need more information. Take him to Slade, but there is to be no attempt at rehabilitation. Slade is to simply keep him in custody. In a few days I will question him. Let's go to the apartment, Shrevvy."

"Sure ting, boss. I'll have youz dere in a jiff."

"Use the basement garage. That way I can return to the apartment without going through the lobby."

"Got'cha."

Shrevvy drove to the apartment building and passed the main entrance. As he entered an alley he turned on his shortwave and broadcast on a certain frequency. That triggered the hidden garage door and he drove into the underground garage.

After he had helped faux Margot get Lamont into bed, he left on his other errand.

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## Chapter 16 – 1995

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

Faux Lois found herself between a rock and a hard place. She couldn't afford to leave her position with her lipstick in Anonymous's back, yet she HAD to prevent Jesse from pressing that button.

As calmly as she could, she tried to be ingratiating, "No, Jesse. That's not fireworks. That's a bad thing. Auntie Lois will buy you candy if you don't push it."

Anonymous, from his position on the floor, was trying to get Jesse to do his bidding, "A big boom is better than candy, kid. Push it."

Pulling out all the stops, faux Lois said, "Auntie will buy you a bigger sofa to lift, a sectional. You don't want to push the nasty ol' button do you?"

Looking at Anonymous, Jesse said, "Okay."

As he reached out, faux Lois realized that it would do no good keeping Anonymous subdued if Jesse pushed that button, so she lunged for him, but before she reached him, he had pushed it.

Anonymous commented on faux Lois's technique, "Gee, you're a regular Mr. Rogers."

As he said that the message on the computer screen changed and read, "MISSILE LAUNCHED." Across the bottom of the screen a countdown clock came into existence. It read 12 minutes 00 seconds and started to count down. A graphic on the screen showed a blinking dot that was leaving an electronic diagram of Tanzor.

Now that faux Lois was no longer pressing her 'gun' into his back, Anonymous had regained his feet and pulled his silenced automatic from his waistband and pointed it at faux Lois and Jesse.

The shock of what was happening had to some degree snapped the President from his drug-induced stupor and he said, "It's no use. It can't be stopped."

Anonymous plucked the lipstick tube from faux Lois's hand as he said, "Lipstick. Very creative. What were you going to do, give me a makeover?"

With a downcast expression, she replied, "I know. Clichéd, but effective."

As Anonymous backed away, he took Jesse by the hand. Looking up at him, Jesse asked, "Where's the boom? I want the boom!"

He growled at Jesse, "Shut up," and started to drag him away.

Faux Lois was standing next to the President, helplessly and shouted, "Jesse! Auntie Lois needs help!"

Looking up at Anonymous, Jesse accused, "You're bad!"

"Yeah, so?"

In response, Jesse punched him. Anonymous was surprised when it didn't hurt and said, "Well. Suddenly super-kid isn't so super after all. Pity. Now I can't use him anymore." He shoved Jesse toward faux Lois, quickly passed through the door and slammed it. On the wall, next to the door, there was a box with a handle inside, behind a glass cover. Over the box was a sign, "EMERGENCY FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM,

Break glass to open."

With a smile on his lips, Anonymous broke the glass and pulled down on the handle inside. As he did, a thick purple vapor was released from vents near the floor. After pulling the handle, Anonymous moved back to the door and watched as the vapor poured into the room and mounted slowly higher and higher.

Faux Lois, as soon as Anonymous had left, had delved into her bag and pulled out her Swiss Army knife. After opening the blade she used it to cut away the President's restraints. It was as

she was completing this that the vapor was released.

Anonymous, desiring to taunt his victims, shouted, “Balorium phosphide. It devours oxygen as it rises. They designed it to suffocate laboratory fires, or in this case, you.”

Ever since Leigh-Anne had discovered Jesse’s powers, had been telling him about Superman and all of the good things he did, so the first thing that came to his mind was to shout, “SUPERMAN!

Anonymous laughed and taunted some more, “Don’t hold your breath. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I’ve got a fee to collect.” As soon as he finished speaking he rushed down the corridor and out of the building.

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Unknown to Anonymous, faux Lois or Jesse, Superman was passing near the plant when Jesse cried out. It was so sudden and so indistinct, that he had to guess what direction it had come from. He had not returned to the Planet as yet, so he didn’t know about Metro-Chem so he headed for a nearby rail yard.

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The gas continued to accumulate and the level continued to rise. Faux Lois had picked Jesse up and held him in her arms to keep him above the gas for as long as she could. She had already released the President, but she had to continually encourage him to stand because he was still groggy from the drug and the gas he had already inhaled.

In his groggy state, he was still acting somewhat drunk and between intermittent bouts of coughing, started singing, “When-a the moon hits-a your eye like a bigga pizza pie, that’s amore...”

Faux Lois was doing her best to reassure the child. She hugged him and said, “It’s okay, Jesse. Everything’s gonna be fine.”

As luck would have it, the President chose that minute to have one of his more lucid moments and said, “No, it’s not. Believe me, kid. We’re doomed.”

Faux Lois looked at the President, prepared to give him a reprimand when what she saw took away that concern and replaced it with another. She saw the computer screen and the graphic of the countdown caught her eye. It read, “Time to impact 2 minutes 46 seconds.”

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Superman didn’t hear any more yells so he stopped where he was and hovered, listening, but hearing nothing. Looking around, he spotted several elderly ladies waiting at a bus stop. Deciding that it wouldn’t hurt to ask for help, he landed near them and asked, “Have any of you seen a young boy or a European gentleman? They’d have been with another man.”

Anonymous used his talent for imitating voices to reply in an old lady tone, “I think they just got on the last bus. It was heading downtown...”

Superman replied, “Thanks,” and just as he was about to fly off, his super sense of smell picked up a characteristic odor. Instead of flying off, he turned on his heat vision and used it on the ‘old lady’ that had just spoken.

As he did, the other ladies were horrified to witness the face of their companion seem to melt and flow. They started to scream and try to get away, but they stopped when they realized that it was only make-up that was sloughing off revealing a man’s face underneath. The face of ... Anonymous.

Stepping forward, Superman put his hand on his shoulder and said, “Anonymous, I presume.”

Smirking, Anonymous said, “Superman. Finally we meet face-to-face. So to speak.”

Getting right to the point, Superman demanded, “Where are they?”

Before Anonymous had a chance to bargain, Superman heard faux Lois yelling, “Superman!”

Moving so quickly that Anonymous didn’t have any chance

to escape, Superman ripped up the ‘bus stop’ sign and wrapped the pole around Anonymous. As he did, he said, “I’ll deal with you later.”

As he took off on his rescue, Anonymous smirked and muttered, “By all means. Rescue them. You can’t save them and Fostonia, too. I’ll still get my commission.”

\*\*\*

Faux Lois was holding Jesse as high as she could, but the purple vapor was up to her chin and it wouldn’t be long until she was submerged in it and not long after that, the President and as she collapsed, Jesse would suffer the same fate.

Faux Lois was taking what could have been her last breath when suddenly the door was wrenched off of its hinges. Instantly assessing the situation, Superman used his super lungs to inhale the deadly vapor. As he did, faux Lois with Jesse in her arms and the President all collapsed to the floor. If the vapor had still been present, it would have been their death knell.

Superman supersped out of the building and blew the vapor into the air where it would do no further harm and then returned to the room. As he bent over faux Lois, preparatory to picking her up, he said, “Let’s get you out of here.”

Faux Lois forestalled him by pointing at the computer display and saying, “There’s no time. A nuclear warhead is headed for Fostonia. Look!”

When he looked, the display read, “Time to impact 16 seconds.”

Faux Lois in despair, said, “Even you can’t get around the world in time!”

What she said gave him an idea. He agreed, “‘Around’ the world? You’re right. Stand back!”

As they jumped back, Superman hopped into the air, did a somersault and straightening out like a diver, dove for the floor. He crashed through in a cloud of concrete and rock dust.

Faux Lois, Jesse and the President were all choking on the dust after he left, so they headed outside.

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Realizing that he didn’t have enough time to go ‘around’ the world in an arc, Superman had decided that the shortest distance between two points is always a straight line, so using his super vision to guide him and spinning like a drill, Superman drilled his way through the ground, into the mantle and out again, breaking through the surface on a city street in Fastinia’s capitol.

When he emerged, it was near a sidewalk dining area where the patrons were being entertained by an accordion player. They had all been looking up when they had heard the roar of the rocket engine.

Superman’s sudden appearance was too much and the diners started to scatter, toppling chairs and tables in their wake as they did.

Superman was moving like a rocket himself as he emerged and flew into the air, intercepting the rocket some hundreds of yards in the air above the city. Using his super strength, he turned the missile and used its own rocket propulsion to propel it higher and higher. Giving it a final shove, he sent it out of the atmosphere.

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As soon as he let the missile go, he headed back to Metropolis, the normal way. He was thankful that he had thought to use the debris he generated to plug the hole that he created, preventing the possibility of a new volcano in both Metropolis and Fostonia.

He found Anonymous just where he had left him and as he unwound the sign pole from his body, he saw Faux Lois in her Jeep with Jesse and the President leave the parking area of the Metro-Chem plant. Once he had him free, he picked him up and flew him to the MPD.

\*\*\*

The first place that faux Lois could think to go was the Daily Planet. While she was parking in the underground garage, she said, "Mr. President, now that Superman has captured Anonymous, you should be safe. Jesse, your mother was here when I left so you should be seeing her in a couple of minutes."

When the trio stepped out of the elevator there was a joyous reunion between mother and son while faux Lois and the President as well as the rest of the newsroom staff looked on.

After the first few seconds, Leigh-Anne looked at faux Lois and said, "Thank you. If you want, I'll give you the true story now."

Faux Lois said, "That would be appreciated." Turning to the President, she said, "Mr. President, if you don't mind, I'd like to interview you."

He smiled and replied, "It would appear that I owe my life and the safety of the peace process to you and Superman. How could I refuse?"

\*\*\*

The next morning faux Lois and Clark were in the newsroom. Faux Lois was admiring the latest edition of the paper. There were multiple headlines and she was inordinately pleased with herself. She had learned enough by studying Lois's writing to do justice to the stories that she had been involved in. It had still needed some touching up by Clark but wasn't too bad.

"Superman Nabs Anonymous!"

By Lois Lane

The mysterious terrorist for hire known as Anonymous was apprehended as he attempted to initiate a nuclear war between Fostonia and Tanzor. Story on A2.

Sharing the front page, above the fold was:

Nuclear Disaster Averted.

By Lois Lane and Clark Kent

In a brilliant display of his superpowers, Superman drilled his way through the earth so that he could reach Fostonia in time to prevent a nuclear disaster. Story on A3"

Clark was looking through the paper, not for those articles, but the story that Leigh-Anne had given Lois after she had returned Jesse to her.

Faux Lois said, in a tone of irony, "We outta send a copy to Anonymous. Give him some meaty jail time reading. Clark, we nailed the biggest story of the year. Gloat." In a quiet aside, she said, "My first byline."

Clark was sincere in his praise as he said, "It's great. Really great," but he kept leafing through the paper.

"But...?"

"I can't seem to find the big story that completely exonerates Superman. You know, that interview that Leigh-Anne gave you."

Nodding, faux Lois said, "Oh, it's there. On page D three."

She watched as he searched and encouraged him, "No, keep looking. There ... between the obituaries and the auction notices."

Disheartened, Clark said, "That's just great. I guess it's true what they say in journalism school, 'Exoneration doesn't sell papers.'"

While Clark was reading the article, Leigh-Anne and Jesse exited the elevator and approached. Leigh-Anne said, "Jesse and I just came by to say thanks. And ask you to say thanks to Superman, too. And ... you know ... that I'm sorry."

Jimmy had spotted Leigh-Anne and Jesse as they had exited the elevator and had grabbed a camera. As he approached, he said, "C'mon, you two, one more smile for the camera."

Leigh-Anne held up her hand in a stop gesture and said, "Oh no. We are one hundred percent through with fame and fortune. Jesse's going back to kindergarten, and I'm enrolling in beauty college. He's back to normal, and that's all I want for us. Until I win the lottery." As she finished speaking she turned to faux Lois and hugged her. Then as Clark lowered the paper, she hugged him. "Thank you both again."

Jesse waved and said, "Bye bye."

Clark patted him on the head and said, "Bye, Pal. Don't be surprised if Superman drops by for a visit."

Jesse smiled up at him and the Leigh-Anne turned to go, taking him with her.

Faux Lois turned to Clark and asked, "So what about us? Are we going back to being normal?"

"Whatever normal is for us. This adventure proved that you could successfully pass yourself off as Lois. You even got a solo by line out of it. You did great."

"Well, let's see... Before we were interrupted, I was just starting to really enjoy being engaged..."

"Yeah. Me too."

"So what's 'normal' for a woman happily engaged to a really cute guy? Oh, I know." She put her arms around his neck and kissed him. To his surprise, he found that he was kissing her back.

As they broke from the kiss, Clark looked around and somewhat embarrassed, said, "Everyone's watching."

Faux Lois was enjoying herself and replied, "Yeah? Who cares?" As she closed the distance, she whispered, "Stay in character," and kissed him again.

\*\*\*

Later, back at Lois's apartment, Clark challenged, "You were taking advantage of the situation back there in the newsroom."

"You are the one that said that you and Lois are affectionate. Because of this situation with Leigh-Anne and Jesse, our relationship was strained and I'm sure it was obvious to everyone in the newsroom. I felt that we needed to reestablish our bona fides. Besides ... I was enjoying it."

"The problem is that ... I was enjoying it too. Perhaps a little too much. Sometimes, I find it hard to separate you from Lois and I am afraid that the longer this goes on, the harder it is going to be."

"It has been a couple of weeks. How long will it take for this Tempus character to think he made a mistake?"

"Who knows. Another week, a month, a year..."

"In that case, I suggest that we simply let things happen naturally. I'm going to go change for my class." She smiled to belie her words as she moved down the hall, "No peeking."

Clark blushed at the thought that she actually wanted him to peek.

A few minutes later, she came out in just the spandex mini shorts and top. She struck a pose and asked, "Do you like what you see?"

Clark flushed and replied, "What's not to like. You're beautiful. Every bit as beautiful as Lois."

She crossed to him and throwing her arms around his neck started a deep soulful kiss. As he wrapped his arms around her, all he could feel was the flesh of her naked back. His hands drifted down until he was cupping the cheeks of her buttocks.

She moaned into his mouth and she deepened the kiss even farther.

Coming to himself, Clark released her and backing away, said, "This is too fast. We need to give Lois time to get back."

Striking another pose, right there in the very brief workout gear, Margot said, "Aren't I pretty enough for you?"

He stepped back and said, "Oh, yes. Yes, you are, but so is Lois and Lois is my fiancée. I think it's time for your class."

Dejectedly, she said, "Yeah, my class," as she turned away to get her gi.

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Chapter 17 – 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Faux Margot had spent an almost sleepless night watching

over Lamont. She kept a basin of water near the bed which she had used to dampen a cloth which she used to lave his brow. It was very apparent that he was in a good deal of pain.

The laving of his forehead helped to stave off the fever that was threatening to take hold.

She continued to minister to him in this way until the sky outside began to lighten when her physical reserves finally gave out.

Sometime later, Lamont awoke and found faux Margot asleep, sitting in a chair at the side of his bed, with her head pillowed on his chest. His left arm was in a sling so he used his free hand to stroke her hair. At his touch, she sighed and snuggled closer, but only for a few seconds. She awoke and realizing where she was and what was happening, her eyes snapped open and she jerked upright. She looked at him horrified and asked, "Was I hurting you?"

He tried to laugh and winced in pain. "Not until you moved." He used his free hand to pat his chest, where her head had so recently rested, and said, "Please, resume your slumber. I don't imagine you got very much sleep last night."

She covered a yawn with the back of her hand and asked, "What makes you think that?"

He indicated the basin and cloths and said, "It's obvious. If you do not wish to avail yourself of my chest as a pillow, I might suggest the bed in the other bedroom. I think the crisis has passed and I will, in all probability, be asleep again, shortly. I'm sure that a few hours of restful sleep will do both of us a lot of good. He reached for her hand and said, "Thank you. You have been a ministering angel and I appreciate it." He pulled her hand up and pressed it to his lips.

She slowly extracted her hand from his grasp and did that which she had not taken the time to do before. She loosened the ties of his shoes and removed them. Rather than disturb his position in trying to pull down the bedclothes, she went to a cabinet on the side and pulled out additional blankets. She placed them on the foot of the bed and made up her mind. She moved up, loosened his belt and opened his trousers. As she did, he gasped. She reassured him, "I've seen Clark in his boxers before. You'll sleep more comfortably if you aren't dressed." As she spoke, she pulled his pants down his legs and off. Once this was done, she spread the blankets over him.

Once she was satisfied that he was tucked in and comfortable, she left the room, leaving the door ajar and entered her room, also leaving that door open so that she would hear him if he called.

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Four hours later, faux Margot was up. She looked in on Lamont and assured herself that he was still asleep, then she made some coffee and called for room service. She remembered the breakfast that he had ordered the previous day and duplicated it with the addition of two soft boiled eggs and a newspaper. While she waited, she dressed for the day.

When the cart was delivered, she made up a plate and took it in for Lamont.

As she did, perhaps because of the aromas of the food, he was starting to stir. Setting the plate down, she helped him to a sitting position, piling pillows behind him. Once he was situated, she started to feed him.

As she did, he demurred, saying, "I can really feed myself."

"Oh, really? You have one arm in a sling. What are you going to do, hold your plate with your free hand and lick the food from the plate? I think you would get more down the front of you than you would get in you. Now, just be a good boy and let me feed you."

"What about you?"

Setting his plate down, she went into the other room and wheeled the cart into the bedroom. She prepared her own plate and had it on the side of the cart. She took a forkful and picked up his

plate. As she swallowed, she said, "There, are you happy now? This way we can eat together. We'll take turns. I'll feed you, then I'll feed myself."

"You know, you're one tough lady."

She smiled and replied, "You ain't seen nothin' yet."

\*\*\*

After breakfast, Lamont had fallen asleep again and faux Margot had wheeled the cart back into the sitting room and called room service to pick it up. She had taken her time reading through the newspaper while listening to some music, played low, on the radio.

After a while, she looked in on Lamont. He had still been sleeping but checking the time, she had realized that it was nearing lunchtime so she had called room service and placed a luncheon order.

While she waited for the lunch cart she found that Lamont was restless. With his good arm he threw off the covers and started to get out of bed. He stopped abruptly when he remembered that he didn't have any pants on.

Faux Margot had heard him moving around and stepped into the room. She asked, "Just where do you think you're going?"

He grumbled, "Anywhere, but in this bed."

She reproved him, "You know what the doctor said. It could be a couple of weeks before you are able to be out and about."

"I can't wait that long. Slade can't keep Powers indefinitely. I need to question him."

"Let's see how you are doing later. Right now it's lunchtime. The cart should be here shortly." Just then there was a knock on the door and she said, "And there it is. Be right back."

A minute later she wheeled the cart into his room. She prepared his plate and started feeding him."

He interrupted her and said, "You know, if you were to simply cut the meat, I just might manage to use my fork with my good hand."

She stopped what she was doing and blushed. She had been enjoying taking care of him, but she complied. She cut up his meat and moved the cart so that it was close to the bed. Since he was sitting on the side, it was almost like he was sitting at a table. In that position, he was able to feed himself while faux Margot ate her lunch. Lunch was washed down with copious amounts of coffee that she had prepared.

When they were both finished, faux Margot wheeled the cart out of his room. When she returned, she asked, "Well, how do you feel?"

"I have to admit that I've felt better, but I think I can do what I need to do."

"Okay, as long as you let me help you. You won't be able to drive the way you are, so I'll have to."

"You drive?"

"Almost everyone drives nowadays, uh, when I come from. Most people even have their own cars. Mine is a Jeep Grand Cherokee."

"It's named after a character in a comic strip?"

"No! The Cherokee were an Indian Tribe."

"No, I mean - Jeep. The Jeep from the Popeye comic."

"Oh, that, well, it's this way. During the coming war, a new vehicle will come into use by the military and because of what it can do, and its versatility, it will be nicknamed the Jeep, after that character, and well, the name stuck. Mine is something like what you would call a station wagon."

"Okay, you can drive. I could call Shrevvy."

"Why bother him? It would be just as easy for me to drive you."

"Well, okay, you can drive. I'll give you the directions to Slade Farrow's."

Faux Margot helped Lamont dress, pulling his pants on, doing them up and adding his belt. She removed his sling long

enough to work his shirt on and then reapplied it. Finally she put his shoes and socks on him and assisted him to a standing posture. He groaned somewhat because of his ribs but soldiered on. She threw a coat across his shoulders. As she finished this, he said, “Margot, I need you to bring my cloak and hat. I will need them if I am going to interrogate Powers.”

She packed those items in a small bag and with that in one hand and assisting Lamont with the other, they made their way to the hidden elevator. They took that to the basement garage. As they descended, faux Margot asked, “How is it that you have a garage under the building? Wouldn’t the owners have complained at the construction while it was being done?”

“They might have if I hadn’t been the owner.”

“That explains a lot.”

“I have a management company run the building for me. Not very many actually know that I am the owner.”

The elevator doors opened and she said, “Okay, here we are.” She helped him to a seat in the sedan that was parked there. She moved around to the driver’s seat. He handed her the key. She inserted it and turned it, but the starter didn’t engage. She turned it again with the same result. She slapped the steering wheel in frustration and exclaimed, “Why won’t this stupid thing start?”

Lamont started to chuckle, but the pain in his ribs stopped him quickly. He asked, “How do you start your car?”

“I turn the key and the starter engages. Where’s the shifter?”

“The what?”

“The shifter, the lever you use to put it in drive or reverse.”

Twisting slightly so that he could reach it, he placed his hand on the gear shift and said, “This is the gear shift. It is a four-speed.”

She squealed in delight, “OH, like a four by four.”

He was mystified, “Four by four?”

“Four speed and four-wheel drive.”

Still mystified, he asked, “Four-wheel drive?”

She smiled and replied, “Yeah, that’s one of the things that the GIs liked about the Jeep. It could drive all four wheels. Because of that it could go almost anywhere without getting stuck.”

“I see. Well, this car is not equipped with four-wheel drive, but it has four forward speeds.”

“How do I start it?”

“Depress the clutch...”

She interrupted, “Clutch? What’s that?”

Lamont looked up toward heaven and muttered a small prayer, “Heaven help us.” Then he addressed her, “I thought you said you could drive.”

“Well, yeah, I’ve been driving almost my entire life.”

“Yet, you don’t know what a clutch is?”

“Not a clue.”

“You see those pedals on the floor?”

“Sure, the accelerator and brake. What’s that other one? Is that the clutch?”

“Yes, that’s the clutch. You have to depress that to shift gears. Also, when you depress it, you will feel a button with your toe. That’s the starter. You have to hold down the clutch and press that button.”

As he was directing, she was doing and still the engine didn’t turn over.

He said, “Try it again, this time after turning the key.”

Contrarily, she turned the key, depressed the clutch and toed the starter button. This time she was rewarded with the engine starting.

Smiling at her success, she listened as Lamont explained, “The four forward gears are in an ‘H’ pattern. First is the top of the ‘H’ nearest you. Second is straight back from there etc. with the reverse being far right and back.”

Grasping the shifter, faux Margot pulled it toward herself and

tried to push it forward. She was rewarded by a loud grinding sound which startled her. She jumped, screamed, “Gaaaaa,” released the shifter and sat back.

Sounding more calm than he actually was, Lamont said, “You have to engage the clutch – before you try to put it into gear. Push in on the clutch, then move the shifter.”

“Oh, like this.” She pressed down on the clutch and tentatively moved the shifter to first.

“Yes, that’s it. Now, you release the clutch to move.”

She released the clutch abruptly, the car jerked and stalled. She gasped, and wailed, “I’m a good driver! Why is this happening to me?”

“What kind of car do you drive?”

“I told you, my Jeep.”

“But you don’t know how to shift gears!”

“The car does that for me. It’s an automatic.”

“Automatic – what?”

“Automatic transmission. It changes the gears automatically.”

“Then I guess this would be a manual transmission since you have to change the gears manually. Haven’t you ever driven a manual transmission car?”

“No, never.”

“That explains a lot. Perhaps we should call Shrevvy.”

With determination in her voice, she said, “No! I can do this, just give me a chance. How do I make this thing work?”

“Okay, you have to ease up on the clutch and feed it some gas at the same time. It’s a balancing act between the gas and the clutch. Once you are rolling it gets easier. Try again.”

She pressed down on the clutch and pushed on the starter. Seconds later the engine was running. This time she fed it some gas as she lifted her foot off the clutch. The car lurched forward and then jerkily chugged as it climbed the ramp. Once through the door she approached the street. She was cautioned as she turned onto the thoroughfare. When the engine started to whine, Lamont said, “Time to switch to second.”

She pushed on the clutch, shifted to second and smoothly let out the clutch again. The car gave a little lurch as the speed equalized and he said, “You’re improving.”

“I told you I was a good driver. I just needed to learn a few things.” At each traffic light she improved.

“At this rate, we might make it to Slade’s before dark.”

She was indignant, “Look, Lamont, I’m not that bad a driver.”

He smiled and replied, “I know. I was just teasing you. You are a fast learner. It was just interesting to find something you didn’t know.”

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They made it safely and without garnering any tickets to Slade Farrow’s institution. It was more like a hospital than a house. She asked, “What is this place?”

“As far as the public knows, Slade operates a mental hospital. Some of the inmates are actually troubled. The others are criminals that I have sent here for rehabilitation. Those that can be rehabilitated are returned to society as productive citizens. Those that can’t are turned over to the police. Powers will be here, in restraints, to prevent him from leaving.”

“What happens to those you release?”

“Some of them become my agents.”

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Dwayne was moved to another room and strapped to a chair. Out of his sight a wire recorder was in operation, recording everything said in the room.

The door opened and closed and even though Dwayne twisted around, he couldn’t see anyone. Suddenly, apparently emanating from the very air in front of him, a weird voice asked, “Dwayne Powers, can you hear me?”

Fearfully, he responded, “Who said dat? I don see nobody.”

"You are correct, Dwayne Powers. There's nobody here. Just a shadow."

"Oh, you're dat guy dat my brodder warned me about. He said I was to kill you if I could. You're one o' dem."

"One of who?"

"One o' dem. One o' de ones dat sent me away ... to da war."

"What exactly did your brother tell you?"

"I ain't gonna tell you an you can't make me."

"Dwayne Powers, The Shadow can read your mind."

"No! No, ya can't!"

"Yes, I can. I see a conversation that you had with your brother. Shortly before he was sent to the death house. Everything you said or heard is in your memory and I can read it like a book. The guard ushered you to his cell and said, 'Your brother's here to see you Powers.'"

"Then your brother greeted you, 'Okay. Good to see you, Dwayne.'"

Almost as if he was reliving this conversation and the shadow was his brother he responded, "Hi Carl."

Then the guard admonished, "You've got five minutes. Better make the most of it. The deputies are here from the state pen to take you bye bye to the big house. I'll be back," and he walked away.

Playing the part of Carl, the Shadow said, "Come on in Dwayne, sit on the bunk. I got a lot to talk to you about and there ain't much time."

His head moved around as if he were looking at the enclosure. "It's like a cage where they keep animals ain't it Carl?"

"Lay off that, Dwayne."

"Okay, don't get sore."

"Sit down here and listen to what I gotta say."

"Are dey gonna kill ya, Carl?"

"Yeah, but dey're gna pay for it, every last one o' dem. You know who dey are, don't'cha? I told ya, over n over again."

"Yeah, Carl, you tole me."

"You know what I want you to do? You remember everything I tole ya, don't ya, Dwayne?"

"Yeah, Carl, I remember. I won't forget. When the newspapers say that they have put you in the death house, I kill one o dem."

"That's right, Dwayne, and don't forget, these people that I told you about ... the judge, the jury, the prosecuting attorney, the governor are the same ones that drafted you into the Army, sent you over to France, let you get shell-shocked so it's hard for you to remember things."

"Sure, I won't forget. Say, will it hurt much when dey kill ya, Carl?"

"Oh, stop dat, will ya?"

"Okay, okay. I just wanna know."

"You just keep your mind on the judge and the jury. You'll get 'em all, won't ya, Dwayne?"

"Yeah, yeah, Carl. Dey won't know what hit 'em."

"Dats de stuff, Dwayne. Deres just one more thing. There's a guy that may get after ya. He's smarter dan de cops. He's de one dat really got me. Stay away from him. Don't give him a chance to find ya."

"How can I do dat?"

"Ya gotta keep away from him. Don't go near the flat or de old ladies place."

"But Ma will worry if I don't come home."

"Ah, no she won't Dwayne. She'll know ya got things ta do. Go to Sue's instead. Dey won't tink to look for youz dare."

"All right, Carl. What about the fella I can't see? Is he dead, like all my buddies in de war, de ones dat talk to me in de dark?"

"No, Dwayne, dis guy's different. He ain't dead, he's alive. Ya can hear his voice, only ya can't see him. But if ya ever hear his voice, you'll know he's near ya. Somewhere in da shadows."

Dwayne snickered and said, skeptically, "Yeah? If he talks to me, I'll fix 'em, Carl."

"Sure, but not the way you're going to get the others, Dwayne, cause ya can't see 'im, see? Now look, you won't be able to aim at something, so just spray the shadows wi' lead. You might get lucky."

"All right, Carl, but how will I know when it's him?"

"You'll know all right, he has a strange kina laugh and he calls himself, The Shadow."

Just then the guard returned and said, "All right, Powers. Time's up. Come on, you."

"Okay, okay. So long, Dwayne. Don't you forget anything."

"So long, Carl. I wouldn't forget. I wouldn't forget nuttin you tole me."

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That was all that was in Dwayne's mind as to this interaction.

What Dwayne didn't know was that his brother was only using him. After Dwayne and the guard had walked away, Carl had chuckled, malevolently, and said, "That poor dope. He'll do it all right. He'll fix 'em. Every last one o dem if I fry. Da'll probably get him, but he won't know no better right up to de day dat dey fry him too."

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When Lamont had finished, he exited the room and said to Slade, "Sedate him and deliver him, anonymously, along with the wire recording and the rifle to the police."

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#### Chapter 18 – 1995

%%%%%%%%%

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Flashback 1993

Deep under the city of Metropolis there were some long-abandoned coal mines so old that didn't even appear on subsurface maps. The rails of the coal trolleys created paths down the center of each tunnel. The signs of age were everywhere from the rusted rails to stalactites and stalagmites that had been formed by dripping water.

A discordant note was struck by the quiet hum of modern machinery. The hum was coming from an alcove off to one side of the main tunnel. This alcove had been specially reinforced and braced to withstand any possible earth tremor or quake.

A close examination by a mythical observer of the equipment wouldn't reveal very much. Most of the equipment was in sealed containers of a bright, non-rusted metal. There were three boxes shaped eerily like coffins, seven feet long and three feet wide and deep. Pipes ran to each of them from a central device that filled most of the rest of the alcove. On the face of the larger unit was a very sophisticated clock that registered, not hours and minutes, but days, months and years.

As the clock turned over to May 07, 1993 there was a change in the sound within the room. The sound of pumps could be heard if anyone had been there to hear it as well as the sound of liquid moving through pipes. Suddenly, a series of lights blazed into existence along the sides of the three boxes.

The next thing our mythical observer would have seen was the lids on the three boxes lever themselves open. As they did clouds of vapor escaped. If our mythical observer had been there he would have observed the contents. He would have been amazed to see three naked, apparently lifeless bodies, two men and a woman. Our mythical observer would then have noticed that each was in their mid-twenties, blond and athletic. The woman was well proportioned and endowed and could have been a winning contestant in any beauty pageant. Slowly, as the vapor escaped, the temperature within the boxes increased and signs of respiration would have been noted. The three were alive!

The final item of note would have been the symbol emblazoned on the inside of each of the lids - the Nazi eagle clutching a swastika.

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Sometime later, the door of an old apparently abandoned garage opened and three individual, two men and a woman, dressed in clothes that were slightly out of style stepped into the daylight. At first they were dazzled by the bright sunlight, but their eyes adapted quickly. Across the street they saw a large crane lifting a billboard into place. The billboard was an advertisement for the Daily Planet.

Looking around in wonder, the woman threw out her arms and said, "We made it."

One of the men crossed to a newspaper dispenser and read the directions. Digging into his pocket, he pulled out a quarter and dropped it into the slot. When he tried to open the cover, however; it resisted his efforts. In his frustration he jiggled the handle, but it still would not open. He muttered, "Some things never change."

In a show of extraordinary strength, the second man approached and with a wrench, opened the cover and said, "There you go, Hank."

"Thanks, Steve."

Suddenly, the woman coughed, attracting their attention. With her eyes, she indicated a man watching them interestedly. Turning to the man, Steve asked, "What're you staring at, bub?" Thus accosted the man slunk away.

Hank divided up the paper and as he handed it out said, "Here you go Lisa. Some for you, Steve. Let's see what's happening, shall we?"

Hank read the headlines aloud, "Democrats and Republicans Deadlocked over Budget." Here's another one, "Congress votes new pay raise."

Disheartened, Lisa dropped her arms to her sides and said, "We lost."

Hank nodded and added, "And America won."

Steve was the obvious leader of the trio. He declared, "But we will correct that. Nothing can stop us."

Suddenly there was a commotion and they became witnesses to one of Superman's early rescues. One of the ropes on the billboard separated. There had been numerous passers-by among them a grandmother with her granddaughter. Unfortunately at the first shout, the little girl had dropped her teddy as her grandmother tried to pull her away from the danger, but she broke away and went back for her teddy. As she picked it up, she was directly beneath the falling billboard. Just then, Superman landed next to her and caught the falling billboard. As the little girl started up at Superman in awe, the crowd of spectators started to clap and cheer at the rescue as the grandmother came out to claim her charge.

Most of the spectators had seen, at least on TV, Superman perform rescues before, but not the trio across the street. The three stared in amazement and Steve muttered, "Gott im Himmel. Ein Super Mann."

Hank nudged him and in an undertone said, "Speak English."

The three watched, unmoving until Superman flew off.

As he was disappearing from view, Steve repeated, "Super Man."

The three are astonished at what they see – the crowd, most of them smiling, go right about their business, as if this were an everyday occurrence.

Hank asked, "What if there are more like him in America?"

Steve, set his jaw and replied, "Then that is just one more obstacle we must overcome."

Lisa found herself strangely attracted to the flying man, but curiously, asked, "Why are his undergarments on the outside?"

All three tensed as a sleek black limo pulled to a stop in front of them. The rear door opened and a vibrant, tanned 64 year old man stepped out. As he did, he said, "Hail the New Reich. I'm

Senator Truman Black. We've been waiting a long time. Won't you get in?"

They only hesitated a few seconds and then they entered the limo.

End flashback

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It had been over a month since the adventure with Leigh-Anne and Jesse and faux Margot was beginning to think that this switch was never going to be straightened out. She continued with daily karate lessons and had progressed three levels and was now wearing a blue belt. She felt a tremendous sense of accomplishment in achieving this level of competency. The school that she was attending was different from the one Lois attended and in place of the brown belt they awarded a red one. It would be several weeks before she tested for her red belt. Because of the daily classes, she had progressed rapidly.

One evening, Faux Lois and Clark were in Lois's apartment talking and she said, "My hair is starting to get a little too long. I like to keep it short so that it is easy and quick to deal with. Where does Lois have her hair done?"

"We'll check Lois's roll-a-dex when we get to work tomorrow. Have you been practicing her signature?"

"Yes. I think I can sign her name as well as she can."

"Good." He crossed to Lois's desk and pulled out her checkbook. "This is the next step. We cancelled all of her credit cards and had new ones issued. We got you a replacement driver's license. Now the credit card bills are coming due. You need to write checks to cover the bills."

She smirked and said, "Oh, you mean that all that stuff wasn't free?"

"No, the credit card system allows you to pay for goods and services with credit. The bank fronts the money, but you have to reimburse the bank." He picked up a stack of bills that had accumulated on the desk. "These represent your expenditures this month. Now you have to sit down and write checks to pay off these accounts. Your paycheck is automatically deposited in the bank, so the money is already there."

"I guess I had better do that now, huh?"

"Yes, it would be recommended. If you don't you could ruin Lois's credit."

As she wrote out the checks, she contemplated the situation. It had now been over a month since the switch had occurred and personally, she felt that perhaps she was the beneficiary in the switch, after all, Clark was soooooo much better than Lamont. He couldn't be hurt the way Lamont could. He treated her so well, bringing her treats from Europe, dinner from China or Thailand and ... the flying! She couldn't get enough of flying with him. It didn't matter where or why, she just loved being up there with him, alone, just the two of them, in the sky, without a care in the world.

\*\*\*

The next morning, Clark had picked up faux Lois a few minutes early and they had decided to walk to work. Faux Lois was adapting to her role as Lois Lane nicely and they were holding hands as they strolled along. They were approaching a music store and they were playing music [Sing, Sing, Sing](#) over speakers at the front of the store. Faux Lois said, "Hear that? No, that's my kind of music. Lamont and I dance to swing all the time. That's Benny Goodman!" They say that he'll be playing Carnegie Hall next year! Uh, I mean, he played there in 1938. As that song finished they started playing a current country favorite Hank West's Big as the USA. They caught a line or two,

"My love for you is as big as the U.S.A.,

And I love you both in the same ol' fashioned wayyy,

I'll fight for my country and I'll,

fight for you."

Our mythical observer from almost three years ago would

have recognized the picture on the poster outside the music store as that of Hank, one of the trio that had emerged from underground in 1993.

As they walked, Clark read the headline from the morning edition, “Four Indicted in National Intelligence Agency Scandal. By Lois Lane and Clark Kent.” He squeezed her hand and added, “You’re picking up on this reporting job amazingly quickly. You’ve only been doing it for a few weeks and Perry is already sending you out solo.”

“I prefer to work with you, though.”

Faux Lois demonstrated just how much she was adapting to her new situation as they were passing a bridal salon. She spotted a dress in the window, she pointed first at one and then another and said, “Oh, look. Look. Isn’t that adorable? Oh, and that one, I really like that one.”

Clark still had his mind on the story and simply agreed out of habit before he actually said what he was thinking, “That’s nice. Yep, I bet they’re not too happy with us over at the NIA right now. Probably kinda ticked.”

As the weeks had passed, faux Lois had become more reconciled to her new position and was actually liking it. She couldn’t be sure that she would ever get back to Lamont and a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush, so she had decided to make the best of the situation. She said, “You know, Clark, we should be booking a church now. I mean, if you want to get married in a church. Or, we could go non-traditional; do it someplace else, but not too weird because I always kinda felt that really wasn’t me.” She looked at him hopefully before she finished, “Unless it was you.”

Clark snapped out of his musings about the story and realized what she had been saying. He stopped and faced her, “You know that we haven’t given it enough time yet. You may still be going home, to Lamont and Lois may be returning. I haven’t given up hope yet.”

She pleaded, “Look at it this way. If I get a dress and we make the arrangements, then they are done when she returns. If she doesn’t then we go through with the plans. If she returns ... well ... maybe we won’t exchange places or maybe we will. Maybe she will marry Lamont. Did you think about that?”

Shaking his head, Clark replied, “She would never marry Lamont, at least as long as there is any hope of returning.”

“But there are so many things to do...”

“Invitations...”

“Catering...”

“The band.”

“I want a swing band. Oh, my God, we are so far behind.”

“On the bright side, we haven’t set a date and we aren’t going to, just yet.”

Faux Lois tried one more time, “We’re late on that too.”

Clark started to object, “Actually, I think it would still be a bit...” He was interrupted by the crunch of metal and the sound of a car horn going off. Looking around, he saw a car that had plowed into a parked car. The driver was slumped over the wheel. He looked at faux Lois and then both of them ran to the car.

Clark was the first one there. Gently he reached in and placed his palm against the man’s chest and pushed him upright away from the steering wheel. As he did, the horn stopped sounding. “Sir? Sir, are you all right?” Seeing that he was remaining upright, Clark removed his hand and when he withdrew it, noticed that there was blood on his palm. He noticed that the man was drifting in and out of consciousness. He said, “Lois, call for help.”

He could hear faux Lois drawing in a deep breath to shout and stopped her, “Use the phone ... in your bag.”

That stopped her and reaching into her bag, pulled out the cell phone. As she opened it, she said, “I’ll call an ambulance.”

Even before she was able to finish dialing, they heard a siren and saw an ambulance approaching.

The injured man protested, “Police. Call ... police.” Clark tried to reassure him, “Don’t worry, sir. Help is on its way.”

As it pulled to a stop, Clark noted that it wasn’t a municipal ambulance. Emblazoned on the side was “SPEEDY AMBULANCE SERVICE”.

The man, even though he was in pain, was urgent as he said, “No! A bomb in the basement...”

Faux Lois asked, “The basement? Basement of what?”

As two ambulance attendants leaped from the ambulance and dragged out the stretcher, he managed to say, “Metropolis ... Trade Tower.”

The attendants finally reach the car and open the door to remove the occupant. As they do, he recognizes them and in an agitated state shouts, “No! Help!”

The female attendant slapped a bandage on the apparent chest wound while the male takes his blood pressure.

The female attendant said, “It’s going to be all right, sir.” Then to the male she said, “Ned, we have a single GSW to the chest.”

Ned replied, “Karen, his BP is dropping ... ninety over sixty. Pulse 120.” He applied the stethoscope to his chest and listened for a few seconds. “No rales.”

The man shouted, “No, don’t let them take me. They’re...”

Whatever he was going to say was muffled by the oxygen mask that Karen placed over his face. He continued to try to struggle against them, but eventually his eyes closed and they moved him to the stretcher.

Faux Lois tried to reassure him, “They’ll take good care of you. They’re taking you to the hospital.”

Hearing faux Lois, Karen added, “And we’ll have you there in no time.”

Ned added, “That’s right! Don’t try to speak right now. Save your strength.”

As the man passed out, Karen and Ned loaded him into the back of the ambulance.

Clark looked at faux Lois and they exchanged a silent communication. He said, “Lois...”

And she replied, simply, “Go.”

No sooner had she said this than he ran off, loosening is tie as he did. She watched the ambulance as it pulled away and then she put up her arm and shouted, “Taxi!”

Almost immediately one screeched to a halt next to her, she climbed in and said, “Metropolis Trade Tower.”

Five minutes later, she had paid off the cab and made her way to the basement of the Trade Tower. She was picking her way around large pieces of equipment as she shouted, “Superman?”

She was rewarded by hearing, “Over here.”

She followed the sound of his voice and found him squatting on the floor in an open area examining something on the floor. “Find anything?”

Shaking his heads, he replied, “Nothing. I x-rayed the whole place. Nothing... except this.”

Faux Lois knelt down next to him and said, “I recognize that. It’s coal dust, Very common in my time for heating houses and large buildings. What would it be doing here? This is a modern building. I’m sure it never saw a coal furnace.”

“Exactly.”

They looked at one another and then both headed out.

\*\*\*

When they return to the bullpen, Steve, the sports writer was reviewing a tape of an interview that the sportscaster of LSPN had done the previous weekend. The interview had been done in the locker room immediately after the Metropolis Tigers latest win. There was a lot of exuberant hollering and waving of fingers in the No. one sign as they zoomed in on the interviewer and the quarterback of the Tigers, Steve Law. He was responding to a

question, “All I can say is, look out 49'ers! We're going to clean your socks!”

There were even more boisterous cheers in the background as Steve turned away. The camera centered on the sportscaster ad he said, “Well, whether Steve Law means 'socks' or 'clocks', the 49'ers had better look out because the long arm of the Law is going to the Superbowl!”

Jimmy and a newbie, Skip Wallace had been interested observers along with Steve. As the clip finished, Steve turned away and said, sarcastically “Nice speech, Steve...”

Jimmy reprimanded him, “Hey, don't make fun of him, he's my man. Steve can do no wrong.”

Skip loaded on, “He's going all the way.”

Steve was unimpressed and replied, “In an alternate universe,” and walked away.

Skip, said, snidely, “What a dip.”

Changing the subject, Jimmy asked, “So, Skip-meister, how's Classifieds?”

“Ads are up six percent.”

“Whoa, be still my beating heart.”

“Did you get a chance to talk to Perry?”

“Yeah. He says there aren't any openings now, but as soon as there is, you're the man.”

Skip was exasperated, in his opinion he was qualified to be a reporter and wanted to move up He exclaimed, “But he hired two new reporters last week!”

Jimmy tried to mollify, him, but it was a losing cause, “I know, but they had lots of experience. Both of them.”

Sarcastically, Skip replied, “One of them used to work for 'Welding News'.”

Skip had Jimmy there and Jimmy started to almost physically squirm, however, his salvation was just around the corner. Perry poked his head out of his office and looking around spotted them. He shouted, “Wallace! You lookin' for a pay cut?! Get back down to your cubbyhole! And Jimmy, where're those shots of Lisa Rockford for the Supermodel article?! And the ones for the gourmet pet food piece?”

Jimmy jumped and shouted, “On my way!”

Perry shut his door and before Jimmy could escape, Skip said, “One of these days, he's going to be very sorry.”

Jimmy smiled in reply and said, “I hear ya.”

Before Jimmy could leave, Skip said, “You know that Hank West song: 'Just 'cause you got a bigger salary, don't make you a bigger man?' Think about it. And why are we 'doing stories on pet food when people are starving in Texas? It's un-American. And he knows it! “

Jimmy didn't know Skip very well, but this outburst was strange and somewhat confusing. As he started to move away, he replied, “Uh... yeah. Well... I gotta put my smaller salary butt in gear. See ya.”

As Jimmy left, Skip stared at Perry's door with hatred in his eyes.

A few minutes later, Perry and Senator Black emerged from the office and head for the elevators. As they walked, they both laughed, apparently at a joke that had been told before exiting. It was common knowledge that they were old friends. Perry pushed the button to summon the elevator and while they waited, Senator Black asked, “Now Perry, you sure I can't persuade you to skip school and play a little golf this afternoon?”

Perry laughed as he replied, “No can do, Truman. I've got this rabble to keep in line.”

“I think you're just afraid to lose to an old man.”

“Would I lie to a U.S. Senator?”

The doors opened and as the senator stepped inside, he said, “You can't hide forever. See ya.”

As the doors closed on the senator, the other set opened to reveal Lois and Clark inside the car. They exited the car and

headed down the ramp. Perry kept pace with them as they walked.

Deciding to tease them a little, he announced, “Listen up, everybody. Look who's decided to join us this morning.”

Trying to forestall him, faux Lois said, “Perry...”

But Perry persisted, “How 'bout a big round of applause for Lois and Clark! Let's give it up, people!”

Playing along there was cheering and applause throughout the newsroom.

Clark tried to mollify Perry, “Chief, we were on a story.”

Thinking that this was simply a ploy to cover a romantic tryst, Perry persisted, “I'll bet you were. You know, son, I was engaged once, too. We used to call it something different.”

At this implication, both faux Lois and Clark blushed which cause a renewal of the cheers and some wolf whistles.

In an attempt to mollify the crowd, faux Lois announced to the entire newsroom, “Someone said there was a bomb in the basement of the Metropolis Trade Tower, okay? Ask the police. Ask Superman. We're late because we checked it out.”

Serious now, Perry asked, “So, was there?”

Shamefacedly, Clark replied, “Well, no.”

Returning to his teasing mode, Perry said, “Well, that oughta be an easy story to write up. Short and sweet. Why, heck, I'll write it myself. You both probably have more important stuff to do, like ... plan a wedding, huh? Have you decided on what kind of music you're gonna have, yet?”

“Yes, Perry, I have ... Swing. I want to get Glenn Miller. I can't believe he's still around after all these years.”

In an aside, Clark said, sotto voce, “He isn't. The band is, but he died in World War II.”

She gasped and replied, “Oh, no.”

Perry was disappointed and said, “Whoever you get, they gotta be able to play the King. The King puts people on the dance floor.”

Archly, faux Lois replied, “Not the way Swing does.”

Fortunately for faux Lois, Jimmy walked up just then with some glamor shots of Lisa.

Faux Lois plopped down at her desk and picked up the roll-a-dex. She started flipping through it until she found the hair dresser's number and made the call. She made an appointment for the following day.

As she hung the phone up, Clark came over and sat in the guest chair.

Jimmy showed them the pictures as he said, “One supermodel, coming up.”

Faux Lois glanced at the photos and noting Clark's interest, sagged in her chair. “Where do they make these people?”

Trying to mollify her, Clark said, “Lois, you are far better looking than Lisa Rockford.”

She looked at Jimmy and said, “See how well trained he is already?” Then she fingered her hair and said, “But, no, not right now! I need a haircut.”

Turning to Perry, Clark asked, “Chief, does Alice ever say things like that to you? I mean ...” He stopped abruptly when he remembered that he and Alice were separated. “Oh, I'm sorry Perry.”

Perry dropped his teasing tone and gave him a warm smile. “That's okay, Clark. Things between Alice and me may not be so great right now...” He started to get angry as he continued, “... particularly since I got my first call from her divorce lawyer last night!”

Faux Lois, in an attempt to bring Perry back on topic, cleared her throat.

When she did, Perry returned to the topic and said, “But when we were engaged...” He actually smiled at the memory. “I couldn't remember a single story I wrote for six months. My feet never touched the ground. And I've never regretted getting married...” A regretful tone entered his voice, “I just regret that I

haven't been a better husband.” He sighed and finished, “But you two'll do fine.” When he finished speaking, he turned and headed for his office with Jimmy following him.

Faux Lois said to Clark, quietly, “He’s so sweet. I wish I had known him as long as she has.”

Smiling, Clark agreed with her, “Yeah.”

Perry was on the threshold of his office when he whirled and shouted, “Hey! Who told you about that bomb?!”

Faux Lois replied, “A man in a car.”

Clark added, “He’d been shot.”

Back in editor mode, he shouted, “What is this, a wax museum?! Get me the rest of that story, or you're fired!” Entering his office, he slammed the door in Jimmy’s face.

Clark looked at faux Lois and said, “I think he's handling this Alice thing pretty well.”

Faux Lois replied with a wry smile.

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In the very Spartan setting of an underground bunker, Hank West, the country singer was absently strumming a guitar. If the guitar seemed out of place in the surroundings, it was made even more so by the way Hank West, the country singer was dressed. He was outfitted in a complete Nazi dress uniform straight out of World War II.

On TV monitors scattered around, tapes of Superman’s exploits were playing, more or less ignored by the principals involved. Hank was busy playing his guitar while Lisa was busy dressing down Steve. In a mocking tone, she repeated what he had said to the interviewer, “Clean their socks? Clean their socks?!” To prove that the monitors weren’t being completely ignored, She pointed at on and shouted, “He is a super man! *You* are a super idiot!”

Shamefacedly, he replied, “They barely noticed.”

To add insult to injury, without even looking up, Hank piled on, “He's right. It was just the sportscaster and fifty million other Americans.”

Lisa shook her finger in Steve’s face as she said, “We can’t afford the tiniest slip up!”

In a mocking tone, Hank added, “Maybe you should watch some Sesame Street; get the basics down again.”

Steve was fed up with their teasing, and shouted back, “I know English as well as you do! Besides, in two days we can drop all this stupid pretense, so what does it matter?”

Lisa was exasperated and it came out in her voice as she shouted back, “How can you be so dense?! For two years we’ve been recruiting new members from all across the country! “

Hank, in a sarcastic tone, added, “Some are even college graduates.”

Lisa ignored Hank as she rehearsed their history to Steve, “Fifty years ago one thousand of the chosen youth were sent here undercover from the Fatherland. Today they're captains of industry! Politicians! TV anchormen! Men and women of power and influence. They have waited five decades for us to appear and lead them to the New Reich! They have spent years preparing and planting backgrounds for us; pulling strings and smoothing the way so we could become an overnight success and lead this country to the New Reich! They have made us what we are today.”

In a cynical tone, Hank added, “Celebrity freaks. Next stop, Barbara Walters. Or Oprah.”

Lisa turned on Hank West and commanded, in German, “Sei still!” which translates as “Be quiet.” She turned back to Steve and continued, “And now you want to throw all this away because you can't be bothered to speak correctly? You're a disgrace!”

Defensively, Steve said, “Stockdale was one of the chosen youth, and look how he wound up! An old man who loved this country more than he loved the Fatherland! He was going to tell the world everything until I found out and had him stopped!”

A man in his mid-thirties, dressed in a Nazi uniform entered

and dropped off some papers, interrupting the tirade.

Hank broke the stalemate by saying, “Stockdale was found by Lane and Kent, the reporters for the Daily Planet. I'll take Voss and talk to them and see if Stockdale told them anything else.” He put on a fake southern drawl as he finished, “Sometime folks are a lil' more open 'round celebrities.” Then he looked significantly at Steve as he finished, “No more slip-ups. Now smile for the cameras.”

Steve started to give a heated reply but stopped himself when Hank pressed a button. As the monitors shifted they each held a person of importance to the movement. Steve clicked his heels. And they each gave the stiff arm salute of the Nazi Party. They were all in their mid-to-late sixties: a four-star general, a distinguished TV anchorman, a prosperous woman banker and Senator Black.

Hank greeted them in German, “Guten tag, meine freunde.”

Senator Black replied, “Guten tag, Western Reich Fuhrer Von Hagen.” He didn’t waste any more time and cut right to the chase, “Where are we on the Superman situation?”

With confidence, Hank replied, “Since all reported attempts to kill him in the past have failed, I have decided to go with our alternate plan: Instead of trying to assassinate him, we will simply banish him. Forever.”

Seemingly satisfied with this response, Senator Black said, Good. Once he's gone, the government and the banks will fall in line; and where the banks go, everyone else follows. Right, Cynthia?”

The woman on the monitor smiled and nodded her agreement.

Outlining the grand plan, the senator continued, “Then Canada and Latin America will be next. They're both weak.”

Steve added, “then Europe!”

The TV Anchorman asked, “What about Russia?”

Senator Black replied, “A joke. We'll crush them like we started to in Forty-Two. Then, we will assume our rightful place as world leader.”

Senator Black, the others on the monitors, Lisa and Steve all smiled, but Hank’s face remained expressionless.

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## Chapter 19 – 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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Time passed and with its passing healing occurred. Each day, Lamont got stronger and it became easier for him to breathe. Then after a week he was able to move into the sitting room and was able to talk and listen to the radio with faux Margot.

Faux Margot seemed somewhat frustrated and he asked her, “What’s the problem?”

“Oh, it’s nothing really, it’s just that, on an evening like this, Clark and I would cuddle and watch a movie. I ... I miss Clark.”

“I wish there was something I could do about that, but right now, what I can do is very limited.”

“I know and understand. Sooner or later we will be able to work on it, hopefully sooner rather than later.”

“What can we do in the meantime?”

Faux Margot asked, “Why don’t you tell me a little about yourself? We’ve been together for almost a month and I know practically nothing about you.”

“There’s little enough to tell. Let’s see, I was orphaned at an early age...”

“What age?”

“I was born in 1903 and I was ten when my folks were killed in a storm.”

“Oh, my. That sounds very familiar. I know another Clark. His parents were killed in an auto accident when he was ten. How

did it happen?"

"All I can remember is that the sky was getting very dark, the wind was blowing really hard and they sent me to the storm shelter. I don't know why they didn't join me. They might have been trying to rescue the stock, but I don't know. For a while all I could hear was the wind, it sounded like a freight train passing overhead. The doors to the storm shelter shook and rattled like the wind was trying to rip them from their hinges. Anyhow, after the storm passed, I was alone. When I climbed out of the shelter the devastation was complete. The house and barn had both been destroyed. Oddly enough Mom's clothesline was still strung between a couple of trees with a couple sets of my clothes pinned to it. Why they weren't swept away I'll never know. There wasn't anything left. The property was mortgaged so there wasn't anything to sell."

"That sounds like a tornado. Where were you?"

"We lived in Kansas. A little town you probably never heard of..."

She interrupted, "Smallville."

He was shocked, "How did you guess that?"

"It had to be. That is Clark's hometown."

"Amazing, the similarity. Well, like I said, I was ten when all of this happened."

Faux Margot said, "You poor boy! Orphaned so young! I'm so sorry."

"You don't need to be, it made me stronger. They tried to put me in an orphanage, but I ran away. It was the classic tale - young boy runs off to join the circus, but in this case it was a flying circus. Almost as soon as they put me in the orphanage two planes landed in a field nearby. They offered rides for a dime. There were always crowds around the planes. That night I snuck out of the orphanage and climbed into one of the planes. It was a Curtis JN-4, what's commonly called a Jenny. I hid in the space behind the pilot's seat, in the fuselage and fell asleep."

"A bold move for a ten-year-old!"

"Yes, I guess it was. Well, I didn't wake up until the next day when they flew to another city. They were surprised when I climbed out and threatened to take me back, but, I convinced them to give me a try as a wing walker. I've always been somewhat fearless and that helped. They liked my attitude and kept me on."

One thing I am thankful for, they made me study. They had some school books and when I'd finish those, they got more. I guess you could say I am self-taught.

Pretty soon they taught me to fly. I was big for my age so I was able to reach the pedals. I became a pretty fair pilot if I do say so myself.

I was almost sixteen when the United States entered the Great War and I was too young to enlist. Early in 1917 I worked my way to France on a steamer and lying about my age, joined the French Air Force. Since I already knew how to fly they were happy to enlist me.

I became a fighter pilot and flew a Sopwith Triplehound. That was the first triplane to see service. Because of its maneuverability and rate-of-climb, it was superior to most of the biplanes in use. I would have liked another machine gun, but that would have added too much weight. It only had a single 7.7mm Vickers. Because of the service ceiling of more than 20,000 feet, I was usually able to get above my prey. The air is rather thin that high, but for short times, that wasn't a problem. Within 6 minutes of taking off I was above 6,000 feet and still climbing, reaching 20,000 long before I was over enemy territory. I had to be careful in a dive though. I would risk tearing the wings off if I dove too fast. In it I managed to rack up a number of kills. I was so good at what I did that the Bosch started to call me 'The Dark Eagle' partly because of the color of my plane, which was black, and the tactic I liked to use. At 20,000 thousand feet I would be 'on the perch' as it is called. That way, if I spotted an enemy plane, I could

dive on them and have the advantage of the additional airspeed. I had the knack of being able to determine just the right amount of 'lead' to apply before shooting so that they flew right into my bullets. It was very seldom that I returned to the aerodrome with any ammunition left and it was a rare occasion when my machine had any bullet holes in it.

One regret that I have is that I never encountered Manfred von Richthofen. My God what a duel that would have been, the Dark Eagle in the Triplehound against the Red Baron in his red Fokker DR-1 triplane. But I was shot down behind enemy lines before that could happen. All I can say is that it was a lucky shot. The Bosch pilot hit my engine and knocked it out. When my engine was hit I dove to get away from him. That was the closest I ever came to tearing my wings off, but I retained control and was still able to make a dead stick landing. Think of that as being somewhere between and landing and a crash. I evaded capture and used that time to spy out German gun emplacements of which I informed the French when I returned. That started my career as a spy. There were many times during that assignment that I wished that I could become invisible."

"No wonder!"

"At the conclusion of the war, I didn't want to go home. There was nothing there for me. Also, I had the urge to see the world so I collected my back pay, 'borrowed' a Spad and flew east. I created quite a stir as I crossed the continent, following the rising sun. When the plane wouldn't go any farther and I couldn't afford the repairs, I sold the plane and rode the train. I traveled throughout the near and far east and Africa. I was fascinated by what I saw the mystics do and wanted to master those skills myself. I sought out holy men and Fakirs to study under. I learned the almost forgotten mysteries of the mind."

Holding up his hand, he displayed the girasol and said, "I was given this gem by one of them to help me focus my powers. When I became proficient in the arts of the mind, I returned to the States and began my career as a crime fighter."

"Wow, that's some story. Clark traveled around the world after he graduated from Journalism School. He did it to broaden his horizons and also to hide what he could do. He felt compelled to help people and as long as he could do it in secret, everything was fine, but if too many 'miraculous' incidents happened in an area, people would start to ask questions and he would have to move on. That all ended when he came to Metropolis. We met and he decided he didn't want to move anymore so he found a way to help without anyone knowing who it was that was helping."

"His secret identity."

"Right, a flashy suit, a different hair style and no glasses.

You'd be surprised how different he looks. When did The Shadow first appear?"

"I returned to the States in 1927 after almost ten years in the Orient. And that brings us up to today."

"Thank you."

"Thank you?"

"For telling me. Okay, now, tell me this, how did Powers shoot you?"

"It was my own fault. Powers had taken his shot. I wanted to prevent him from firing a second time, so I laughed. Apparently he had been warned about me. I am fairly certain that he couldn't see me, but he fired into the shadows. His second shot was a lucky one. It hit me in the shoulder and knocked me off my perch. My fingertips managed to drag along the girder which changed my angle of fall. If not for that I would have fallen all the way to the ground. As it was, I fell two stories into that notch you found me in."

Returning to the previous topic, he said, "If you wish, we could go out to a movie."

"Not in the condition you are in. If I was home with Clark, we wouldn't have to go out. We could just pop a tape into the

player and watch it on the TV.”

“What’s a TV?”

“That’s short for television.”

“Ah, television, I’ve heard that Doc Savage is working on that. It produces images on a scanning monitor. From what I’ve heard, its black and white images aren’t very clear.”

“Oh, no. In the future, it is wonderfully clear and in color. Lethal Weapon is one of my favorites.”

“Lethal Weapon?”

“It’s a story about a couple of cops.”

“Well, the best I can do is the radio, but we could still ... cuddle. I have to admit, I miss the closeness that Margot and I share.”

“And I miss Clark.” She thought a second and then moved over next to him on the sofa.” He looped his free arm across her shoulders as they listened to some radio programs.

They listened to *‘The Romances of Helen Trent’* and faux Margot was struck with the similarity to *‘The Ivory Tower’*, they laughed at comedies such as *‘Lum and Abner’* or *‘Fibber McGee and Molly’* and the antics of Charlie McCarthy on *‘The Chase and Sanborn Hour’*. They thrilled to the adventures of *‘The Lone Ranger’* and *‘Gangbusters’*.

Over the next days, they spent many pleasant hours in this way while he recuperated.

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Seven days after the capture of Dwayne Powers, Doctor Sayre paid a visit to Lamont and faux Margot. Margot answered the door, “Welcome, doctor. Your patient is in his bedroom.”

Faux Margot led the way and as they entered the bedroom and the doctor asked, “Has he behaved himself?”

“Not at first. Then we came to an agreement. I would let him feed himself if he behaved.”

Lamont, contritely, added, “You know how it is, doctor. One’s dignity...”

The doctor laughed and said, “I don’t know anyone else that could have done that. My compliments, my dear.” He set his bag down and said, “Now, if you will assist me, I need to examine those gunshot wounds. Help me get his shirt off.”

Faux Margot said, “Whatever you say, doctor,” as she moved to comply.

Once his shirt was off the doctor examined the wounds, emitting various ummmms and ahhhhs as he did. When he finished he reached into his bag and pulled out a very small pair of scissors. They had a small semi-circle removed from the base just below the tip. Faux Margot saw them and asked, “Are those scissors damaged?”

Looking at the curiously, he asked, “Oh, you mean the cutout?”

“Yes.”

“No, they were designed this way. These are suture scissors. Let me show you.” He first used a gauze pad soaked in alcohol to disinfect the area then he inserted the tip of the scissors between the skin and the suture. He said, “See how the suture stays in the cutout and doesn’t slip as I cut.” With a snip he cut the suture, repeating the process until all were separated. Then he grabbed a hemostat. Holding it up, he said, “See these catches?”

“Yes.”

“They lock so that whatever they are holding will be held securely.” He clamped the hemostat on the knot of one of the sutures and said, “This will sting a bit.” And without any preamble, he pulled the suture out.

As he did, Lamont winced and said, “Ouch! You were right!”

The doctor swabbed the area again and said, “All done. Keep the sling on for two more days else you run the risk of opening these wounds again.” Turning to faux Margot, he said, “Keep up the good work. In a couple more days, he can be on his own.”

“Thank you, doctor.”

“Now, let’s check those ribs.” He started poking and prodding. There were a few wincing of pain from Lamont, but the doctor pronounced, “Let’s get those bandages off. I think they have served their purpose.” After doing that he packed his bag and left.

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The next day, they were having breakfast when faux Margot asked, “Doesn’t Margot have a home of her own? After all, she wasn’t living here when we exchanged places. It has been a whirlwind of activity since I arrived and I needed to be here to take care of you and all, but I think it’s time.”

“Yes, Margot has her own apartment. It is closer to her parent’s apartment.”

“Don’t you think that for appearance’s sake, I should be living there instead of here? Besides, the selection of clothing here is rather limited.”

“I have a spare key to her apartment. I’ll give it to you and you can have Shrevvy drive you home. When do you plan to leave?”

“This afternoon, if that’s okay with you.”

“I have to admit, I’ll miss your presence.”

“And I’ll miss you, but I think we need to do this.”

“You’re right. I’ll have Shrevvy pick you up at noon.”

“I think the first stop should be the Lane apartment. I don’t know how much good it’ll do, but I think I need to see my ‘father’ and reassure him that we are working on straightening this mess out.”

“We haven’t been able to do anything as yet. What will you tell him?”

“I can at least reassure him that as long as his daughter is with my fiancé that she will be treated like a royal princess. I don’t know how much that will help, but maybe it will ... some.”

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In 1929 Harry Vincent had the world by the tail. He was an up and coming Wall Street investor and had a very lovely fiancée, at least that was the way it was until October 29<sup>th</sup>.

**October 29, 1929, was *Black Tuesday*, the day the market crashed!**

Suddenly all the investments that Harry had were worth a very small fraction of what they had just the day before.

At the end of the day, Harry was in shock at what had happened. He didn’t even know how he got there, but he found himself at his fiancée’s door. When she opened the door, he babbled about how he had lost everything. That was when she proved that she really hadn’t loved him, just the position and wealth he had accumulated by asking him to leave and suggesting that since he was worthless, maybe it would be best to end his life and slamming the door in his face.

The next thing that Harry knew, he was standing on the parapet of a bridge over the Hudson River, looking down at the murky water far below.

He was about to step into space and oblivion when a voice stopped him.

Unknown to Harry Vincent, sometime earlier, Kent Allard had moved to New York and assumed the identity of Lamont Cranston. This had been accomplished by Allard making a deal with Cranston. Cranston was to travel the world, never returning to New York and Allard would have the use of his name, position and funds. It may have seemed a little harsh, but Cranston had more money than he knew what to do with and an extended vacation was no real hardship.

As Cranston, Allard had been watching Vincent as he dealt with his customers in the exchange and had been impressed with his honesty in his dealings. He had taken a liking to the young man. Cranston’s holdings were safely diversified so the crash had minimal effect on him, but he watched the effect the crash had on Vincent and was concerned for the young man.

He followed him as he left the exchange, a broken man, to his fiancée's apartment. From the shadows he observed her treatment of him and followed him to the bridge. As Harry was standing on the parapet, preparing to end his own life, Lamont spoke, "Harry Vincent!"

Startled, Vincent turned toward the voice, "Who called me?"

Stepping from the shadows, Lamont, his visage obscured by the cloak and slouch hat he wore and which would become well known to the underworld, said, "I did. Harry Vincent, all is not as hopeless as it may seem to be."

"How can you say that? I've lost everything, my money," he shorted, "my girl. I have nothing left. I have no reason to live."

"Perhaps I can give you a reason to live. I can give your life a new purpose."

"Oh, and what would that be?"

"Making the world a better and safer place to live."

Harry snorted, "That's a lofty goal. How could I help to do that?"

"Become my agent. Obey my orders without question. Your duties may at times include some danger, but not always. In return, you will be paid regularly and you will be assisting me to aid the police in bringing malefactors to justice."

"How do I know that this is on the up and up?"

"Tomorrow you will receive your first salary payment. It will be deposited to your checking account."

"How will I get in contact with you?"

"You will receive instructions. Return to your home and get a good night's sleep. You have a new future ahead of you."

"What do I call you?"

"You may call me what the underworld will soon be calling me, The Shadow."

Harry muttered, in awe, "The Shadow," and when he looked again, the Shadow had disappeared.

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That incident had occurred almost exactly eight years prior and Harry Vincent had not regretted his decision in all of that time. The work that he did for The Shadow was rewarding. He was actually doing something that produced a positive result by diminishing the criminal population of the city. Part of his job was to maintain familiarity with the underworld and those in it.

When The Shadow had needed someone to observe and report, he had detailed Harry Vincent to watch and the man he was watching had started recruiting a gang. He didn't question how The Shadow learned that there were new players in the city, he just received his orders and carried them out to the best of his ability. In this case, he had been assigned to watch a tenement, note who went in and came out then report. The Shadow hadn't told him, but he surmised that this was a new gang being formed.

He came to this conclusion by seeing the number of tough looking customers that passed in and out of the building. A couple of them he recognized from having seen before, mostly on FBI wanted posters. Their crimes ranged from robbery to murder. He made meticulous notes and passed them on to Burbank on a regular schedule.

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As soon as the Powers murders had been dealt with, while Lamont continued to recuperate, Lamont had called the ever vigilant Burbank. No matter what time, day or night that he was called, Burbank always answered, phone or radio. {Burbank} "Orders. Have Cliff contact Harry. He's to get the list of gang members. If there are any that Cliff knows he's to 'accidentally' contact him and see if he can become a member of the gang. Once he is in, he should set up a regular drop with Harry."

{Orders received.}

Cliff Masrland had been an agent of The Shadow almost as long as Harry Vincent. Cliff had been wrongly convicted of a crime and had spent time in Sing-Sing. The Shadow had been

instrumental in obtaining his release and recruited him on the spot. In gratitude for what he had done, Cliff gladly joined the Shadow's organization. He had changed his name, but because of his jail time he had an entrée into gangs that regular men would lack.

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As part of his work for The Shadow, Harry had practiced following individuals without being detected. For this kind of duty, Harry had been directed to buy a nondescript black sedan of a common make and had received the funds to make the purchase.

Cliff and Harry would meet, casually, at odd intervals, in a local bar. They never sat near one another, but managed to slip notes to each other in passing. One day, approximately a month into his watching, Cliff passed him a note alerting him to two things, first the name of the gang was the 'Fugit' gang. It was named after their leader, as gangs usually are, T. Fugit. Cliff speculated that it was an abbreviation for Fugitive and that by using that abbreviation the leader was casting his status in the teeth of the police. The second was the fact that the gang was moving. In order to determine where their new headquarters was to be, he followed them.

Following, without being seen became increasingly difficult as they left the city and moved onto Long Island. He had to drop back farther so that he wasn't detected, but he saw where they stopped. It was a two-story house on the outskirts of Islip, just down from the hospital. Once he was sure of the location, he went to a drug store and placed a call. {Burbank} "Vincent reporting. The Fugit gang has moved. Details will follow in writing."

{Report received. Find a new residence so that you can continue to watch.}

"Understood."

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The Shadow allowed his agents a lot of leeway in their activities. Some were much more dangerous than others. In this instance, Cliff was in a tremendous amount of danger. One false move and he could be discovered. If that happened, his life expectancy could abruptly be reduced to zero.

Parts of the gang had been formed early on and they had carried out several minor heists to fund their activities while they prepared for a major job.

After Cliff joined the gang, they committed a series of liquor store hold-ups that he had been able to avoid participating in by simply acting as a lookout while the actual crime was committed by the other members of the gang. It hadn't been easy to maneuver Fugit, as he preferred to be called, into giving him that assignment, but he had managed.

Cliff worked to establish a reputation as a solitary, but moderate drinker so it was accepted by the other members of the gang when he went to the local bar. Whenever one of the other members went to the same bar, they always saw him sitting, by himself at the end of the bar, away from the door, nursing a beer and listening to the music or the fights on the radio.

Invariably, Harry Vincent was there also, but none of the other gang members, or anyone else for that matter, ever associated the two. The seat that Cliff chose to inhabit was nearest the men's room and there was a more or less constant stream of men passing his seat throughout the evening. One of them would be Harry Vincent. Harry would time his trips so that he would have to pause while someone was entering or exiting. That pause enabled him to pass notes with Cliff. The notes he passed to Cliff were on rice paper which was used to wrap a stick of gum. The 'ink' used was simply milk. The writing would be invisible until the paper was heated, then the writing would turn brown so that once it had been read, Cliff could simply chew it up and swallow it.

After Cliff had been with the gang for a month, he got wind of what the big job was going to be. There was a shipment of gold

coming into the port of New York. It, along with gold coins accumulated in the recall signed by President Roosevelt, was scheduled to be shipped to the mint in Philadelphia to be melted down into ingots.

Cliff was kept supplied with gum by Harry and once he found this out he used a pen and some milk to write out the details on a gum wrapper. Once he was finished, he announced his intention to go to the bar as he passed through the sitting room where the rest of the gang was gathered. Some were playing poker and others were throwing dice in a corner. The rest were sitting around talking and drinking or listening to the music on the radio. The gang had reached a respectable size. Along with Fugit and Cliff there were eleven others, all of them hard cases.

Cliff's habits were so well known that no one even thought to question his departure.

At the bar Cliff and Harry managed to exchange sticks of chewing gum.

Harry immediately passed the word to Burbank.

It had been almost a month since faux Margot had moved to Margot's apartment when Lamont received the report.

Burbank checked a shipping schedule and called The Shadow. {Burbank.}

"Report."

{Report from Marsland. The target is a gold shipment arriving at the Port of New York the day after tomorrow. A daylight delivery.}

The Shadow took a few seconds to mull this over and decided how to act. "Orders. Tell Cliff to be prepared to subdue Fugit when I infiltrate the gang's hideout. Tomorrow night I strike."

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#### Chapter 20 – 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Clark was disgusted and it was evident as he hung up the phone. He crossed to Lois's desk and sat in her visitor chair. As he did, he said, "The police have no record of the accident."

Lois tried to defend the police, "They probably haven't filed yet. They get busy, too, you know. Just like Superman." Faux Lois then did something that the real Lois wouldn't think of doing, she crinkled her nose at Clark.

In reflex, he crinkled his nose back at her.

Very close to them they heard, "Ms. Lane? Mr. Kent?" and turned around to see Voss. He had changed out of his Nazi uniform and was wearing a suit such as you would expect a police detective to wear. Next to him stood Hank West, smiling bashfully and wearing his regular western outfit, complete to the ten-gallon hat.

Voss introduced them, "I'm Detective Carter. And this is..."

Faux Lois was obviously impressed as she cut him off, "Hank West, the Country Western star."

Before anything else was said, there was a round of handshaking.

As if feeling the need to explain his presence, Hank West, in his country-western accent, said, "Thank you, ma'am. Mr. Kent. Hope you don't mind me taggin' along. Some Hollywood folks have an idea of puttin' me in a dee-ctective movie and I'm kinda checkin' things out."

Clark replied, "No problem at all."

'Detective Carter' asked, "I wonder if I might have a word with both of you about the accident you witnessed this morning?"

Clark replied, "Sure thing. Who was that guy, anyway?"

'Detective Carter' consulted a notepad and then said, "His name's William Stockdale. Age 70. I hate to bother you about this, but it's routine, you know? Anytime somebody reports a bomb, we've gotta check out all the angles. Even if there is no evidence."

Faux Lois, always willing to help the police said, "Well, ask away."

"Did Mr. Stockdale mention anything to you besides the location of the alleged bomb?"

Clark replied, "No, he really didn't say much."

"What a surprise. Well, back to routine. Did he mention a name? Or an address? Or something that might indicate that someone other than himself was involved?"

Faux Lois, replied, "He just seemed extremely worried. Almost terrified."

Hoping to keep them off balance and get more information, Hank turned on the charm and directed it at faux Lois, "You know, if I was playing that role in a movie, I might've played it terrified, too. Babbling my head off. Maybe even using a cuss word or two. Then I would've let slip that one, important, vital clue, like they always do."

Thinking about movies she had seen, faux Lois said, "I hate it when they do that. But he really didn't say anything else."

Clark was mystified, "But why would he say there was a bomb in the first place?"

Detective Carter tried to supply an explanation, "Lemme tell ya, you get shot, your mind's in a world of confusion. He could've been talking about anything; a movie, a TV show, maybe a book he was reading last night."

In an attempt to distract, Hank said, "There're one or two bombs in this movie they want me to do. Seems like just about every other movie these days has got some."

Hank smiled a charming smile which both faux Lois and Clark returned.

The moment was ended when 'Detective Carter' snapped his notebook closed and said, "Thanks again for your time; sorry, but we gotta go through the motions, huh?"

Clark said, "No problem."

As he handed Clark his card, he said, "And if you do remember anything, please call."

As Hank and the detective started to turn away, Clark stopped them, "Detective Carter... how did Mr. Stockdale get shot?"

'Carter' repeated the story that they had concocted, "Carjacking attempt. Happened about a mile away while he was stopped at a traffic light. He was probably on his way to the hospital when he crashed."

Hank tipped his hat and said, "Ma'am. Mr. Kent."

Faux Lois stopped them this time, "Oh, Mr. West..." Hank West stopped and turned as faux Lois, thinking about Stephanie in accounting, whom she had gotten to know, finished, "I know you probably hear this all the time, but I just had to tell you: I have a friend who was, well, she was sort of depressed. But when she heard your song: 'The First Person You Can Count On... Is Yourself,' well... it really turned her life around. So ... thanks."

Faux Lois gave an embarrassed smile, but Hank West seemed genuinely touched by the story, while Voss gave a subtly cynical smile.

Hank, said, simply, "You're welcome," smiled again and headed for the elevator with 'Carter.'

Faux Lois muttered, "He's kina handsome and ... taller than I thought." Turning and looking at Clark she noticed that he was frowning. She asked, "What's the problem?"

"Well, for one thing he wears lifts in his boots." At her quizzical look, he simply tapped his glasses to indicate that he had used his supervision. At her nod, he continued, "For another, I don't know why, but Carter was lying to us. Stockdale wasn't shot in the back. That's not likely if you're trying to escape a carjacker in your car."

Faux Lois thought for a second. Carjacking wasn't such a phenomena in her time, but she suggested, "Maybe he was twisting to get away." She could tell by Clark's look that he wasn't liking her suggestion. "Fine. Let's just ask him."

She flipped through her roll-a-dex, found the number for MetGen and called. "Hello, yes, I'd like to speak to a Mr. William Stockdale. He was admitted this morning around 9 A.M." She paused to listen and then replied, "Yes, I'm certain. I saw him put in the ambulance. Okay. Thank you." Turning to Clark she said, "There's no record of him being admitted."

Cynically, Clark replied, "I kind of doubt the ambulance guys were too busy to file him this morning."

Faux Lois replied, "Unless they took him elsewhere or ... he didn't make it."

Galvanized into action, Clark said, "You start calling the other hospitals. I'll take the funeral homes and morgues."

Faux Lois grabbed the yellow pages and started calling the other hospitals and emergency care facilities.

As they were doing this, Skip ran up and breathlessly asked, "Hey, is Hank West here, I heard he was up here!"

As faux Lois was scanning the pages, she absently replied, "He just left."

"Man, I wish I'd been here. He is the greatest."

As Clark was searching for funeral home phone numbers, he replied, "He certainly has a huge following."

Skip's passion for the singing star was evident in his voice as he replied, "That's because he tells the truth. He sticks up for the little guy. And he's not afraid to tell it like it is! America used to be great, and he wants to get it back on track." Following this tirade, Skip looked at both of them oddly and then turned and left.

As he departed faux Lois and Clark exchanged a skeptical look.

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Sometime later, Steve Law, in his Nazi finery, was in the underground bunker with his feet up on a counter as he leaned back in an office chair. There were several TV monitors each of which was showing a different program. Some were showing sports while others were showing sit-com reruns.

Hank West, now dressed in a Nazi uniform and in an irritable mood, strode in and swept Steve's feet off the counter.

As Steve replaced them, Hank challenged, "We don't have time for this!"

Steve had been watching 'Perfect Strangers' and replied, "I'm studying my English." He started to mimic Larry as he quoted, "Balki, what's wrong with your hair?" Then he imitated Balki, "I dried it in the microwave, cozzin."

His flippant attitude drove Hank over the edge and he shouted, "Do I have to order you?"

As he was shouting this, Lisa entered the room.

Rising to his feet, ready to accept the challenge, Steve said, in a dangerous tone, "You can't order me. We were chosen for this. We ... were bred for this. We ... were born for this. We are the masters of the Master Race, the true supermen. And not just you.

Stepping between them, Lisa turned to Hank and demanded, "Stop it! What happened with Lane and Kent?"

Somewhat calmed, he replied, "They know nothing. But they're inquisitive. As are all good reporters."

Steve offered, "We should kill them. Why take the chance?"

His building anger at Steve was evident as he challenged, "And draw more attention to us? Why don't we just take out an ad?"

"To put an end to their investigation," was Steve's heated response.

With a derogatory tone, Hank replied, "Others will investigate. We don't have time for this."

Steve reposted, "What would you have us do?! Forget about our plan to eliminate Superman?! Dismantle the organization?! Settle down like good Americans and get a mortgage and cable TV?" His tone turned dangerous as he finished, "You actually believe those stupid songs you sing!"

Hank was just as angry as he replied, "Not everything here is

worth destroying!"

Steve countered, "There's nothing worth saving!"

Hank jumped on the flaw in his statement, "If we destroy everything, what're we going to rule, genius?!"

Steve continued to disparage Americans, "America is morally and culturally bankrupt! They care more about their favorite soap opera than they do about the homeless! No wonder you have millions of fans, they're all idiots!"

Hank shouted back, "You don't know what you're talking about!"

Steve countered, "Oh, I don't?! Ha! You've gone over, just like Stockdale!"

Again, Lisa intervened, "Shut up. Both of you. We're here to fight the Americans, not each other."

Feeling that he had perhaps revealed too much, Hank returned to the previous topic. "If we're going to kill them, we should blame the deaths of Lane and Kent on someone else. Say, one of those middle-eastern terrorist cells."

Steve suggested, "Why waste an opportunity?! Why not the National Intelligence Agency? They must hate Lane and Kent for their last series of articles. We'll kill three birds with one stone." He turned toward Hank and asked in a sarcastic tone, "Oh. Did I say that right?"

Again, Lisa played peacemaker, "Steve," then she turned to Hank and said, "He's right, though. They need to be eliminated; and since you two seem to enjoy bickering so much, I'll take care of it myself."

Hank was suffering from mixed emotions, but he couldn't let on so he snapped the Nazi salute and said, "Death to everything then. To the Reich."

Steve and Lisa both snapped salutes and replied in kind, "To the Reich!"

\*\*\*

Faux Lois and Clark had just made it back to Lois's apartment after a very frustrating day. Lois was finishing a comment as she opened the door, "But a seventy-year-old man with a gunshot wound can't just disappear into thin air! That's the Shadow's trick and he wasn't The Shadow. But, that does bring up a point. The Shadow doesn't go to a hospital when he is injured, he had a private physician. Maybe that's what happened, he went to his own doctor. We might never find him."

"Or he could have been admitted under another name."

In her frustration, faux Lois threw down her purse and bag as she exclaimed, "God, this makes me so mad."

Clark tried to mollify her, "Look, tomorrow we'll call the hospitals again, and ask for —"

She cut him off, "No, not that. Our wedding; it's a disaster!"

"Don't you mean, Lois's and mine?"

"Yeah, that, but I feel that I have this responsibility and if this isn't corrected, what are we supposed to do? How long do we have to wait before we give up? Do we just stay engaged forever? I don't think so! It's beginning to look like this is never going to be straightened out. I think we need to start planning our life together."

"You may be right, but I still think we need to give it some more time. About the wedding, don't worry, Lois, it'll all work out."

"But how? Are you going to help?"

"Of course."

Reaching into her purse, faux Lois found the notepad she had been making notes on. She flipped through till she found what she was looking for and ripped out a page. As she handed it to Clark, she said, "Good, because here's a list of all the things that have to be done. Here, you take this page and I'll take the other."

As he looked it over, he asked, "Is any of this applicable to you and Lamont when you get back? To me this looks a bit ostentatious, more like a coronation than a wedding."

“My father is a wealthy surgeon. Are you back peddling?”  
 “No, I'm not! It's just, you know, I can't always be around to do stuff.

“You know, Lamont seems to have more free time than you do. How does she put up with it?”

“Love.”

“Clark...”

She was interrupted by a knock on the door and Jimmy's voice announcing, “Lois, it's me, Jimmy>”

Faux Lois looked at Clark and said, “We'll finish this later.”

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As Jimmy was knocking on Lois's door a non-descript van pulled up in the street outside from which the strains of a Hank West, country-western song ‘This Ol' Country’ could be heard:

"Now this ol' country's great,  
 But before it gets too late,  
 We gotta put our differences aside and stand together.  
 Sure we've got our faults,  
 our do's and should's and ought's,  
 But we can work it out and last forever.  
 Yeah, we can work it out and last forever."

As she turned off the radio, Lisa frowned and muttered, “Steve's right. You've gone over.”

Earlier in the day, she had scouted the area and knew which window was that of Lois Lane. She looked up and saw more than two figures in the room. Seeing that she knew that she needed to bide her time. She decided to prepare so she moved between the front seats to the back of the van.

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As soon as Jimmy was in the door, he handed a stack of papers to faux Lois as he said, “These are all the bomb threats the cops got in the last couple of years.” Then he placed a larger stack on top of that one as he said, “And these are all the other strange things or robberies that have been reported.”

Clark quipped, “Looks like fun reading.”

Faux Lois asked, Jimmy, “Anything weird?”

Grinning, Jimmy replied, “It's all weird, we live in Metropolis.”

On that note, faux Lois decided to end the conversation, “Goodnight, Jimmy.”

Still grinning, Jimmy said, “See ya,” as he headed out the door, closing it behind himself.

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Lisa had been watching and when she saw Jimmy leave the building, she saw her chance. She opened the side sliding door of the van, just enough to allow her to aim the Rocket Propelled Grenade launcher she held.

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After Jimmy closed the door, faux Lois held up the pile of papers that Jimmy had deposited in her hands. She asked, “Bomb threats or other stuff?”

Making a joke about one of the game shows that faux Lois had gotten addicted to, he said, “I'll take 'other stuff' for fifty.”

She smiled and handed him the larger stack, knowing that with his abilities, he would still be finished before her.

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Outside in the van, Lisa could still see two silhouettes in the room so she pulled the trigger on the RPG. As she did, the rocket fired and the grenade streaked toward the window.

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Clark's super-hearing picked up the firing of the rocket and as it punched through the glass, he was ready, catching it in mid-air, before it could hit anything and detonate.

Faux Lois heard the breaking of the glass, but by the time she was able to look up, Clark was holding the RPG in his hand. She exclaimed, “What the...”

He shrugged, said, “Later,” spun into his Suit and zoomed out

the window, landing in the street, in front of the van. Lisa had just managed to get it into gear and start to drive away when the van was stopped by Superman's outstretched hand. She saw that in the other he held the RPG. He lifted it and wiggled it to make sure she saw it.

He asked, “Lose something?”

Superman smiled confidently and then noticed just who was driving. He also heard Hank West playing softly on the radio. In startled recognition, he blurted out, “Miss Rockford?”

Lisa glanced at Superman, then clinched her jaw. Superman walked around to her door and pulled it open. A second later faux Lois ran up. As she did, Lisa's head lolled back against the seat and her eyes closed.

Not realizing that there was anything amiss, Superman said, “Would you mind stepping out of the van, please, Miss Rockford?”

When she didn't move to comply, Superman was puzzled. He leaned in close and his super sense of smell picked up an odd odor - bitter almonds. Concerned, he reached for and felt for a pulse at the side of her neck. Not finding a pulse, he straightened up and said, “She's dead.”

Mystified, faux Lois asked, “But how?”

“The scent of bitter almonds - cyanide.”

Faux Lois stood there in shocked amazement staring at the dead supermodel. She blurted out, “She tried to kill us and then killed herself when she was caught.”

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#### Chapter 21 – 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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After receiving the report from Cliff and giving orders to Burbank, Lamont hung up the phone. This was coming to a head and he felt that he could use Margot's assistance. Picking up the phone again he dialed Burbank and said, “Orders. Have Shrevvy pick up Miss Lane tomorrow at ten AM.”

{Understood.}

After he hung up, he dialed another number. {Hello?}

“Good evening, Margot. I hope I haven't awakened you.”

{No, I wasn't in bed yet. I was just listening to some music.}

“I believe that we will need to act tomorrow night. Shrevvy will pick you up at ten A. M. Please bring your ‘tools’ with you.”

{What's happening?}

“We will talk, in person, tomorrow.”

{Okay, I'll see you in the morning.}

“Goodnight, Margot.”

{Goodnight, Lamont.}

Faux Margot was thoughtful as she hung up the phone. It had been a couple of days since she had seen Lamont. He must have had an important report from one of his agents to cause such precipitous action. It would probably be prudent to get a good night's sleep. She had been lounging in her pajamas, so turning off the radio and lights, she moved to the bedroom and climbed into the bed.

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The next morning, she ordered breakfast and then packed her ‘snooping clothes’ and checked over her ‘tools’ before dressing for the day. She dressed in a navy blue skirt and jacket, pale blue silk top, hose, and a pale blue ‘pillbox’ hat with a small veil that covered her bangs. Not for the first time, she lamented the fact that she hadn't been able to have her hair done. It was reaching a length that would soon require rollers. It was almost the length of the page boy that she had worn a couple of years prior. She was glad that she had an appointment with a hairdresser in just a few days.

After breakfast, she met Shrevvy, around the corner from her

door passing the spot that Margot had fallen through the time window that had been opened by Tempus.

As Shrevvy opened the door for her, she said, “Good morning, Shrevvy!”

“Good morning Miss Lane. I picked youz up a paper. It’s on the seat for youz.”

“Thanks, Shrevvy, that was very thoughtful.”

“I ain’t seen youz in a couple of days. How youz been?”

“Oh, I’ve been fine, Shrevvy. I just needed a break. After playing nurse to an unruly patient…”

“I know what you mean. I’m glad youz was dere. It went a lot better den odder times. Well, you just set back and relax. Read de paper and I’ll have you dere in a jiff.”

“Thanks, Shrevvy.”

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A short time later, faux Margot was in the penthouse. As she set her bag down, she asked, “Okay, what’s happening?”

“I got word from Cliff. The job is tomorrow, during the day. I’m thinking that they will have a meeting tonight to go over the details. That should be my opportunity to disrupt their plans.”

“Which gang is it and how many are there in the gang?”

“It’s the Fugit gang and there are eleven plus Cliff.”

“That’s too many for you to handle by yourself.”

“Cliff has been alerted to take out Fugit when the attack starts.”

“That still leaves ten ... too many. You need my help.”

“It will be very dangerous.”

“Even more for you if I’m not there. Remember, I can handle myself in a fight.”

“How is that?”

“I’ve studied Tae Kwan Do for several years. Tae Kwan Do is a form of martial arts developed in the Philippines. It involves kicks and strikes. I also have my baton, it’s called an escrima. That’s what I used to K.O. Powers.”

“Those skills are very effective.”

“You’d be surprised how effective they can be. Now, here’s what I propose, we go in together. You use your invisibility to get into position then...” She went on to outline her plan.

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That afternoon, Lamont and faux Margot took a drive in the country and out on Long Island. They stopped and had lunch at a diner in Islip. They were near the grounds of a large hospital complex so they stopped and pulling out binoculars pretended to be bird watchers. They were close, but not too close, to the gang’s house. They used this opportunity to get a feel for the layout and decided that the most likely place that the meeting would be held was the dining room. Going on the assumption that most main doors open to the living room and that the dining room is somewhere near that, they had a good idea as to how things would go.

They had just returned to the car when the shortwave came to life, {Burbank}

“Report.”

{Message received from Marsland through Vincent. Meeting tonight at 8 PM to go over details of the job.}

He said to faux Margot, “Just as we surmised.” Keying the microphone, he said, “Report received.”

Faux Margot, said, “Showtime!”

Lamont laughed, “I admire your cavalier attitude. You don’t seem to be worried.”

“Why should I worry? You’ll be there, won’t you?”

“Yes, I will be, but these are hardened criminals, for the most part. Some of them are killers.”

“Ah, but they can’t hit what they can’t see and they won’t see either of us. We will both be like ghosts ... er ... shadows.” She snickered, “They won’t even know what hit them.”

“Just remember, when we begin, most of the gungels I’ve

encountered tend to shoot above waist level, so if you stay low the likelihood of being shot is reduced.”

“That’s a good point. I’ll stay in a crouch most of the time.”

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Lamont had parked around the block from the house so that the car would be out of sight. As the sun was going down, he and faux Margot had changed clothes. Lamont had donned his black slouch hat and cloak while faux Margot had removed her skirt to reveal the black slacks. She pulled on the black sweater over her top and donned her ski mask and gloves. They exited the car and moved to a spot where they could observe the house without being seen.

Once they were there the sun dropped below the horizon and it became darker by the minute. At 7:30 they noted the members of the gang starting to congregate. There were only a couple that did not live in the house on Long Island and they arrived by car.

A couple of the men lingered on the front porch smoking and talking until a couple of minutes before 8 PM.

When they moved inside, Lamont and faux Margot moved closer, staying undercover as much as possible, moving from shrub to shrub, until they were beside the house. They were close under a window and could hear voices within. Knowing that the gang had gathered in that room helped.

As silently as two wraiths the duo moved to the porch.

Lamont led the way and when he detected a step that started to squeak as he put his weight on it, he immediately removed his weight and avoided that step. Faux Margot did the same. In this way, they made it onto the porch and to the front door.

There was a window to the living room next to the door and Lamont peered in around the drape. He saw no one so he cautiously tried the doorknob. It turned easily. He whispered, “I’m going to go in. When the lights go out in the dining room, they will also go out in the living room. You need to go straight for ten feet and then left, through a doorway.”

“Got it.”

“They will probably start shooting as soon as the lights go out. Stay low.”

“I will.”

As she watched, he seemed to disappear. Opening the door as noiselessly as possible, The Shadow entered the house.

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She waited, impatiently, for the lights to go out, and even before they did, she had the door open. She was just about to step in when the lights suddenly went out, in both rooms. Before they did, she noticed a wall switch next to the archway into the dining room that controlled both lights. Apparently, he had hit the switches as he had entered the room.

As the lights went out, she heard the Shadow’s eerie laugh, “HAhahahahahahahahaha,” peal out from the doorway.

One of the goons shouted, “I’ve heard that laugh before! It’s de Shadow! Get ‘im!”

His laugh rang out again, this time from the far side of the room, “HAhahahahahahahahaha.”

Someone shouted, “He’s over there,” and fired a shot in that direction.”

By this time, faux Margot had made her way into the dining room, her escrima in one hand. In the other, she held her mini-recorder. She was crouched low and detected a pair of legs next to her and standing quickly, she swung her escrima and knocked out a foeman. As he fell to the floor, she quickly knelt and depressing the switch on her mini-recorded played the Shadow’s laugh, “HAhahahahahahahahaha.”

The men in the room had heard a body fall and when they heard The Shadow’s laugh, someone shouted, “He’s behind us now!” The rat-a-tat-tat of a Thompson rang out in faux Margot’s direction, but the bullets passed harmlessly over her head.

Someone shouted, “Be careful wid de gats youz mugs! Youz

could hit one o' us. And put down dat Tommy gun Jake! Don't use that thing in here! You'd kill us all, you dope!"

As soon as those shots had been fired, there had been the thud of a body falling to the floor, from the other side of the room and The Shadow's laugh had pealed out again, "HAhahahahahahahahaha."

The gang turned in that direction again and someone shouted, "How does he move so quick?"

Behind them, there was the thud of another body falling to the floor. Immediately, The Shadow's laugh pealed out again, "HAhahahahahahahahaha."

There was another shot fired, this time there was a scream of pain and shouted curses, indicative of a gang member being shot. His shouted imprecations were cut short as there was the sound of another body hitting the floor. The Shadow's eerie laugh pealed out once more, "HAhahahahahahahahaha!"

Panic started to set in, but in the dark, the thugs were not sure which way they needed to go and that resulted in them running into each other. When that happened, blows were exchanged until they realized that it was one of their fellow gang members. And then another body would hit the floor and The Shadow's laugh would peal out, "HAhahahahahahahahaha."

This misdirection continued until all of the thugs had been accounted for. When all was quiet, the lights snapped on and faux Margot witnessed the carnage they had created. Bodies were strewn all over the floor of the dining room. There was no time to rest on her laurels though; they might start to come around at any time. Lamont had been using a blackjack while she had been using her escrima to knock them all out. She collapsed her escrima and dropped it and her mini-recorder back into her bag and pulled out quantities of sash cord. She, Cliff, and The Shadow used this to bind all of their prisoners.

When she came to the final prisoner, after tying his hands and feet, she noticed a chrome-plated Desert Eagle lying on the floor nearby. She gasped in recognition and rolled him over. She called out, "Shadow!"

He came over to her and stared down at the prisoner. Cliff came over and said, "That's the boss of the gang, Fugit. He never explained that strange gun, but he was never without it."

She turned to The Shadow and said, "That's not all he is. Now I know what the 'T' stands for. Allow me to introduce, Tempus Fugit."

The Shadow gasped, and asked, "You mean?"

"Yes, the man that kidnapped me, Tempus. I guess he thought Tempus Fugit, the Latin for time flies, would be a funny name to use. Well, he's not flying anywhere, anymore, not if I have anything to say about it."

She searched his pockets and came up with the time window device. Holding it up in triumph, she exclaimed, "Ah hah, here it is, my ticket home." As she dropped it into her bag, she asked, "What are we going to do with them?"

"Most of them have outstanding warrants. Those that don't, I'm sure that there is ample evidence of the recent crimes here to connect them all to them. That should give them all stiff sentences."

Pointing at Tempus, she asked, "What about him?"

"If he's everything you say he is, then it could be dangerous to leave him here, in jail or not. He knows too much of our future history to be allowed to stay."

Cliff was mystified at this exchange, but obviously, The Boss and Miss Lane knew what they were talking about and that was enough for him.

Lamont said to faux Margot, "Go get the car and bring it to the house. We will take him with us. The rest we will leave here for the police."

Faux Margot left on her errand and The Shadow turned to Cliff and said, "Clear out anything that could link you to this gang.

Make sure you miss nothing then you and Harry return to your normal routine."

He said, "Will do," and headed upstairs to remove his personal items from the shared accommodations.

After he departed, Tempus started to come around. As he did, he struggled with his bonds. From his position on the floor, he could see his gang all trussed up on the floor. He gasped out, "What happened?"

The Shadow had directed Cliff to make sure he was near the gang leader and that when the lights went out; he was to knock him out. True to his orders, as soon as the lights went out, Cliff had pulled his automatic and using it as a sap, hit Fugit on the back of the head. He had fallen like a clubbed ox. As he did, Cliff fell on top of him. That way, if the gang won out, he could claim that he was protecting the leader, but in reality, it was to see to it that he stayed unconscious. This had all happened even before the first of The Shadow's laughs had been heard and recognized. As a result, Tempus had been out for the entire encounter.

The Shadow was standing right next to him as he looked around and he answered his question, "The Shadow happened."

Mystified, because the voice seemed to emanate from thin air, Tempus repeated, "Shadow?"

"Yes, The Shadow. I have brought your nefarious scheme to an end, both schemes."

"Both? Both what? But, how?"

"The ways of The Shadow are beyond those of normal men."

"Where are you? I can't see you."

"Am I really here? Or am I just a Shadow? Shadows are everywhere ... and ... anywhere ... and anywhen."

The Shadow stooped down and picked up the Desert Eagle. To Tempus it seemed to float in the air. The Shadow said, "An interesting weapon." The clip ejected and instead of falling to the floor, it floated in the air. "Standard .45 caliber ammunition." The clip re-inserted itself and the gun pointed itself at Tempus's head. "What is to stop me from shooting you with your own weapon?"

As well as he could, trussed up as he was, Tempus taunted, "You won't shoot! You're just another annoying do-gooder like the one I have had to deal with most of my adult life. Him and that girlfriend of his. Look, I'll make a deal with you. I know plenty. I can tell you what investments to make in the market. You could be a millionaire!"

"What does a Shadow need money for?"

Tempus was still staring down the barrel of his own gun which floated in the air, held in an invisible hand and he started to sweat. If he couldn't make a deal it might be years before he could get away. He was undoubtedly going to jail. He wouldn't be able to get away until he got his personal property back and that included the time window.

Just then, faux Margot entered. The first thing she saw was the Desert Eagle pointed at Tempus and much as she might desire an end to his meddling she still didn't want to see The Shadow kill someone. She had found out through their conversations that he rarely took a life. If a criminal died it was usually by their own hand or one of their henchman's. She was still wearing her ski mask, so her voice was a little muffled as she said, "The car's just outside. I think we need to load him in and leave."

"Where ... where are you taking me? Aren't you taking me to the police?"

The voice that replied emanated from the very thin air in front of him, "The police wouldn't know what to do with you."

Now Tempus was worried that he wouldn't be getting his property back and his chance to escape would be lost.

The Desert Eagle disappeared from view with a swish of cloth as The Shadow thrust it into his waistband. "You are right. We must leave the vicinity."

Hearing footsteps on the stairs, Faux Margot quickly pulled a handkerchief from her bag and used it to blindfold Tempus so that

he wouldn't see Cliff, the traitor in his gang's midst.

Seeing that Fugit had come around, Cliff approached. Faux Margot put her finger across where her lips were in a signal for him to keep silent. The Shadow said, "Please help me move him."

Cliff grabbed Tempus under the arms and The Shadow took his feet and this way they carried him out to the car, depositing him in the trunk. Before closing the trunk lid, The Shadow said, "If you are not quiet, I will not hesitate to knock you out again, or else silence you permanently."

Tempus ceased any and all efforts to get loose, instantly. Though he had tried numerous times to kill Superman in his attempts to destroy Utopia, he had no desire to die himself and he could tell that this invisible man that called himself The Shadow, meant every word he said.

Cliff returned to the house and picked up his belongings. He walked away, arriving at Harry Vincent's cottage a few minutes later. Harry had been aware of what was happening and had been expecting Cliff. He had already packed his things in his car. It only took seconds for them to load Cliff's things and drive away.

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Before they followed Harry and Cliff, The Shadow tuned his shortwave to the frequency used by the police and keyed his microphone. "I need to be connected to Commissioner Weston, immediately."

The radio operator recognized the voice as that of The Shadow and said, "I'll patch you through, immediately. He's at The Savoy."

A few minutes later, the strains of Swing music came through the speaker and then Weston's irritated voice, "This had better be important!"

At the Savoy, the unmistakable sound of The Shadow's voice came from the earpiece, "Commissioner Weston, a gang was preparing to take the gold that is arriving tomorrow. They have been responsible for a number of recent robberies. You will find them on Long Island. Just follow the ambulances. A few hurt themselves when they tried to resist capture."

"How will I be able to prove anything in court?"

"There is ample evidence in the house to prove their culpability."

"How can I thank you?"

"No thanks are necessary, Commissioner. I'm just doing my part."

"I also wanted to thank you for solving the Powers murders. This is the first we've heard from you since then."

"I was unavailable for a while, but I'm back now."

"I, for one, am glad you are. That wire recording you made of your interview with him will be used in court. He may be committed to a mental institution for the rest of his life rather than being executed. It seems like he didn't know what he was doing. It was all done under his brother's influence and because of his mental problems resulting from his experiences in the war. Hearing dead people speak to him in the dark, poor man. It's a shame."

After breaking the connection, Lamont started the car and said, "We will take Tempus to Slade Farrow. He can keep him restrained and if necessary, sedated until we decide what to do with him."

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## Chapter 22 – 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

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Faux Lois had called the police. She and Superman had waited for their arrival, making sure that no one disturbed the crime scene.

While the detectives investigated the van and the paramedics

dealt with the body, faux Lois and Superman had an opportunity to talk. Still, in a quandary, faux Lois said, "I mean, it's just so bizarre. She's a Supermodel. What would she be doing trying to kill us?"

In reply, Superman said, "I haven't a clue. I can't even imagine how she got a grenade launcher."

Faux Lois, quipped, "Maybe she got it in Milan." Superman, not connecting, gave her a quizzical look, "That's a joke. Stress relief. Something us non-invulnerable people do a lot in terrifying situations? Do you realize that this is twice in as many months that someone has tried to kill me?"

He shrugged it off and said, "Typical for Lois Lane. Now, about Lisa, she must have been pretty terrified to take that cyanide."

With a thoughtful look, faux Lois offered, "Or dedicated."

Superman called over to one of the detectives, "If there's nothing else, I'd like to escort Ms. Lane back to her apartment."

The detective he addressed turned around and it was detective 'Carter' or Voss as he was known to the Nazis. He said, "Be my guest."

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Faux Lois was the first one in the apartment. She was nervous, angry, and scared. "Clark, nothing like this ever happened with me and Lamont. Nobody has ever tried to kill me before, at least not for being me. I mean, I've been caught by crooks, but it was incidental to the case. It was just convenient for them to grab me to use me as a hostage, that sort of thing. Is this what you and she go through all the time?"

"Unfortunately, it happens all too often, but it will be okay."

"I don't know how she handles it. I don't know if I could."

"It seems to be an unfortunate fact of our lives. It is because of what we do; investigate crime and corruption, that we are targets."

"Lamont investigates crime and I help him, but it isn't out in the open like what you and Lois do. If not for the fact that you are secretly Superman, she would have succeeded. We'd both be dead now. If there was anything that would make me want to go back, that's it. With Lamont, I work in the background and no one knows of my involvement with The Shadow. As far as the world knows, I'm Margot Lane, daughter of Sam Lane the respected surgeon and girlfriend of a wealthy man-about-town who most people think of as a dilettante."

"I know, Lois, but it's okay."

"No, it's not that. I mean, it is, but it isn't. It's just ... all these brushes with death; who knows what's going to happen next? We always think life's going to go on and on and on, but maybe it won't. I was almost killed by that terrorist, Anonymous, now a Supermodel for heaven's sake. You know what I'm saying? I want to be back with Lamont. I find myself wishing that this Tempus guy would show up and correct this situation."

"He won't do it willingly. We still have to convince him that he made a mistake."

Breaking in on them is a knock on the door. Then they heard Jimmy's voice, "Lois, are you okay?! I just heard what happened!"

Faux Lois looked at Superman in his uniform and whispers, "Change."

As she headed for the door, she said, "Um ... just a minute," Superman did his spin change into Clark and after glancing over her shoulder to make sure he has changed, she opened the door.

Apparently, Jimmy had run up the five flights because he was breathless as he said, "I came back to tell you something I just remembered, and then I ran into all those cops and ... and ... I'm not interrupting anything, am I?"

"No, Jimmy. We were just going over those documents you gave us when Lisa Rockford tried to kill us. Fortunately for us, Superman had just dropped in for a visit."

"That's what I wanted to talk to you about."

“Oh, and what was that?”

“There was one thing I noticed. About two years ago, there was a brief string of burglaries and attempted burglaries, where the guys spoke German. They never caught 'em, though. Weird, huh?”

“I'd say that qualifies. Thanks, Jimmy” Clark replied and closed the door as Jimmy exited.

\*\*\*

The next morning, faux Lois and Clark were both at their desks going through the documents that Jimmy had provided when Perry came up and stood between them. He asked, “Where's that bomb threat story?”

Looking up, faux Lois replied, “We're working on it, Chief.”

Clark added, “Lisa Rockford tried to kill us last night. We think the stories are related.”

Perry was incredulous and his reply sarcastic as he said, “No. Really? What'd she try to do, beat you to death with her eyelashes?” When Clark didn't rise to the bait, he changed his tone, “You're serious?”

Speaking matter-of-factly, faux Lois replied, “Rocket-propelled grenade through the window. Fortunately, Superman was there, we were talking to him about the bomb threat.”

Stunned, Perry blurted out, “Lisa Rockford?! That's incredible; I mean, it's unbelievable. This is huge! What else have you got?!”

Clark replied, “We traced the serial numbers from the launcher to the National Intelligence Agency, but –”

Perry interrupted, “Lisa Rockford's a spy for the NIA? Who's next, Madonna? No, no, the whole thing stinks. The NIA would never leave serial numbers on anything. Sounds like somebody's trying to frame 'em to me. Now if I had half a brain, I'd check overseas; terrorist groups, that kind of thing, see if there's any connection to her.”

Faux Lois replied, “Thanks, Perry.”

Perry nodded and turned away, but then he stopped and turned. Thoughtfully, he said, “Say, I know I've been kind of short-tempered and irritable lately. I've been quick to judge and quick to condemn. Sometimes I've even been downright mean, and I just want to say ... you can expect a lot more of it.” This time, he turned and headed for his office, he almost made it too, but he was intercepted by Skip.

“Um, Mr. White, I wonder if I might talk to you about –”

Perry was in no mood to put up with his whining, and said, “Not now, Skip, I'm on a rampage.”

Faux Lois had been watching Perry, but she got up and moved to Clark's guest chair. Quietly she asked, “Supermodel or terrorist? Supermodel or terrorist? How do you wake up in the morning and decide to be that? You know what has been bothering me, what is a Supermodel anyway. We didn't have them in my time.”

Clark chuckled low and replied, “Supermodels are the women that you see on the covers of fashion magazines wearing all the designer clothes, or as in Lisa Rockford's case, a bikini. Still, that's a good question. Let's start with her background, see if anything turns up.” He glanced around to make sure that no one was paying him any attention and then typed at super-speed for a brief time and then stopped. He commented on what was on his computer screen, “Interesting. There's a birth certificate on record at Mercy hospital in Metropolis, but no record of her parents checking in or out.”

Faux Lois asked, “Are you thinking what I'm thinking?”

Nodding, Clark replied, “Maybe her birth certificate is a fake.”

Faux Lois suggested, “Let's see what we can do with her fingerprints.”

\*\*\*

While all of this was going on at the Daily Planet, in the underground bunker, Hank was sitting at a console that had several

TV monitors. He was watching clips of Superman rescues and one of a recent event where he recited the pledge of allegiance to the U.S.

Steve was pacing nervously, nearby. Suddenly he stopped, turned on Hank, and almost shouted, “She knew what she was doing!”

There was resignation in his tone as Hank replied, “We have to postpone.”

Steve smacked his fist into his other palm as he said, “We are an army waiting to strike! An army doesn't stop because one soldier dies!”

Shaking his head, Hank replied, “She wasn't just a soldier, she was one of us! We have been weakened; we must be strong again before we can strike.”

Sneeringly, Steve replied, “The truth is, you don't want to strike! That'd be an end to all your adoring, cow-like fans.”

Weakly, Hank replied, “Stop it.”

Steve pressed on, “I mean, how can you like people stupid enough to follow a celebrity?!”

Hank rebutted, “They're not stupid!”

As if he had won his point, Steve shouted, “See?! You've turned your back on the Fatherland!” He continued in a sneering tone, “All you want to do is stay on tour and rake in your millions! It's the American way!”

Finally, Hank had had enough and he leaped up from his chair. He replied with emotion, “The Fatherland is gone! The War is gone! Don't you see?! All we are ... are the last echoing death throes of an idea buried fifty years ago!”

With the fervency of fanaticism, Steve replied, “No! We can still win! The idea lives!” As he finishes his statement, he pulled a luger from a holster at his side.

Hank only had time to put up his hands and shout, “No!” before Steve pulled the trigger and shot him.

Hank had a pained expression as he collapsed to the floor.

Steve replied to Hank's last statement, “I say, yes.”

Voss, the erstwhile ‘Detective Carter’ and several others witnessed the shooting, and gesturing with his Luger Steve addressed them, “Remove the traitor.”

They were stunned by the event but jumped to comply with their orders. As they did, Steve thrust his Luger back into its holster.

Once they were out of the room, Steve approached the console and hit a few buttons. When he did the monitors lit up and the same people that had been on the screens previously appeared again.

Senator Black asked, “Where is Western Reich Fuhrer Von Hagen?”

In a hardened tone, Steve replied, “He has been executed for treason.”

The TV anchorman was skeptical, “Treason?”

Senator Black challenged, “On whose authority?”

In a no-nonsense tone, Steve replied, “Mine. He wanted to dismantle the organization. Any further questions?”

They were all silent for a time as they digested the information. Finally Senator Black broke the silence, “No. If necessary, all dissenters should be dealt with that way.”

Nodding, Steve gave his orders, “Good. The time has come then.” He addressed the TV anchorman, “Do your story in exactly thirty minutes.” He snapped the Nazi salute and said, “To the New Reich.”

A little weakly, the TV anchorman replied, “To the New Reich.”

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Faux Lois was watching eagerly as Clark's computer worked. Finally, it beeped and the display changed. On the screen was displayed a pair of fingerprints and across the bottom the words “MATCH FOUND.” Exuberantly, faux Lois exclaimed, “Got her.”

Text started to fill the screen as the complete file was displayed. Faux Lois asked, "What language is that?"

Clark replied, "Russian."

Astounded, faux Lois asked, "Are there any languages you don't know?"

Clark smiled as he replied, "Sometimes I have trouble understanding you."

Faux Lois made a face as Clark started to explain, "This is some kind of declassified Russian military document. Let's see, her name is Liesl Scholtzklank. Born in Hamburg, Germany, October seventeenth, nineteen-twenty-one."

Faux Lois was shocked, "What? She looks great for being seventy-four years old."

"I know it seems impossible, but that's what it says." His brow furrowed in puzzlement as he continued reading, "Member of the Nazi party. And was part of Operation Gotterdammerung." He scrolled down further and continued reading, "Which was a secret Nazi experiment ... in suspended animation."

"I'd say it worked. How many people did they do this too?"

Just as Lois said that Perry, followed by Jimmy, burst out of his office and pointing at the TV monitor shouted, "Turn that thing up!"

As the sound was turned up everyone looked at the display which had brought the chief out of his office. It read, "SPECIAL BULLETIN!"

Without taking his eyes off the display, Perry said, "Lois and Clark, get ready to roll."

As he finished saying this, the display was replaced by a headshot of the TV anchorman who started reading an announcement, "This word just in, five mining engineers are believed to be trapped at the bottom of an abandoned coal mine at the Metropolitan United Coalfields. Located in Westminster County five miles from downtown Metropolis, the engineers entered mine shaft number Seventy-Three about eight-thirty this morning to conduct a feasibility study on reopening the mine. Once known for its high quality --

Clark started to edge his way out of the bullpen. As he did, he said, "I just remembered, I left uh..."

Faux Lois had become quite adept at providing alibis for Clark's disappearances. She supplied, "...the name of that friend of yours, the mining engineer..."

Clark picked up on it, "uh, right, in Lois's car. I'll be right back."

As Clark dashed away, Perry turned to faux Lois and said, "Now that's what I like to see around here, some pep!" He turned and pegged Jimmy with his eye.

Jimmy replied, "Pep's my middle name," and smiled weakly.

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As soon as Clark was out of sight, he did his spin change into his uniform and took off for the site of the emergency. Within a very few seconds, he was at the Metropolitan United Coal mine shaft entrance. Standing nearby was a van emblazoned with the logo of Metropolitan United Coal, but it was deserted. Going on the idea that the workers had gone into the shaft itself, he superspeed inside, but the shaft itself also seemed to be deserted. He called out, "Hello?!?! Can anybody hear me?" There was no response and seeing a fresh pile of rocks he went on the assumption that they could be under it, so at super-speed, he started to clear it away. He was expecting a body, but he stopped when he uncovered something metallic. He muttered, "What the?" and tried to use his x-ray vision; however, it was blocked. He muttered, "Lead!" but that was swallowed up in the explosion.

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Back in the newsroom, the broadcast had cut off, and almost as soon as it did, everyone felt a tremor pass through the building.

Jimmy was the first to find his voice, "Did I feel what I just think I just felt?"

Faux Lois answered, "It felt like an earthquake."

Perry answered her, "There hasn't been an earthquake in Metropolis in forty years. Lois --"

Jimmy was the first to see the TV screens come back to life. "Hey, look." He pointed towards the monitors. There was a moment of static on every channel and then suddenly all the screens displayed the same image: a large American flag completely filling the screen.

Awestruck, faux Lois said, "That's amazing. It's on every channel."

Perry barked out an order, "Jimmy, get me any one of those stations on the phone, pronto!"

Jimmy darted away. Suddenly, a figure rose from the bottom of the frame, bobbing higher and higher, much like George C. Scott did in front of the American Flag in Patton. It was Steve in a casual denim shirt and khakis. His smile was friendly, warm, and personable. He was flanked by six or eight adorable kids between ages six and twelve.

Faux Lois announced, "That's Steve Law!"

On the screen, Steve began to speak, "Hi, how ya doin'? For those of you who don't know me, I'm Steve Law, quarterback for the Metropolis Tigers." He chuckled and then continued, "Now, this is not a plug for football; I'm here to talk about something much more important: the future of our country."

Jimmy ran up to report, "Chief, they don't know where it's coming from, but they can't stop it!"

Perry gestured for silence as he said, "Okay! Shhh! Shhh! Shhh!"

Steve Law started speaking again, "You know, I love this country. But like you, in the past couple of years, I've become increasingly worried. Everything seems to be gettin' worse. The crime rate is growing, and so tax... but for every dollar we pay, we seem to get less and less from our government. The homeless, our school systems ..." He lovingly tousled the hair of a couple of kids before he continued, "Why just about anything you name, has suffered growing neglect. But like my good friend Hank West says in one of his songs, "We can work it out and last forever." It won't be easy, it'll take a lot of hard work and sacrifice, but together we can make it happen. That's why I invite you to join me, and the National Society for a Better America." Through television trickery, behind Steve, a huge Nazi flag dissolved through and replaced the image of the American flag. It was a Nazi eagle, clasping a swastika, with the letters NSBA just along the curve of the circle around the swastika.

Faux Lois blurted out, "This is some kind of sick joke."

Almost as if Steve had heard her, he said, "Sure, I know what you're saying, 'is this some kind of joke?' I assure you it's not. I'm only one of the millions across this country who have already dedicated their lives to the NSBA. Now you know I mentioned sacrifice, and right now is when the hard work begins: we're asking the government to turn over its authority to the NSBA. If it doesn't, well, it's like when you're in school, sometimes you have to be taught a lesson. Nuclear warheads have been hidden in Metropolis, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles and they will be detonated in twelve hours, which is 9 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, should the President and Congress fail to comply. All major corporations will also be expected to turn over their authority to authorized NSBA representatives. The choice is yours." Looking straight at the camera he smiled broadly and continued, "Remember, together we can work it out and last forever." He hugged and kissed some kids.

Faux Lois, who had not lived through World War 2 and knew nothing of the Nazis, asked, "Just who does he think he is?"

Jimmy chortled, "Man, Superman is going to kick some Nazi butt from here to Pluto!"

Again, Steve had anticipated this reaction and spoke again, "And for those of you wondering about Superman, I'm afraid he's

been eliminated.”

Faux Lois was stricken, “NO!”

On the screen, Steve gave the Nazi salute and said, “Here’s to the National Society.” The screen instantly changes to a full shot of the swastika and Wagnerian-style martial music filled the air. Everyone looked at each other, dumbstruck.

Faux Lois muttered, “Oh, my God.”

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### Chapter 23 – 1937

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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After dropping Tempus off at Slade Farrow’s establishment The Shadow and faux Margot headed back to the penthouse. Faux Margot was overjoyed with the outcome of the evening’s adventure. Not only had they disrupted a criminal enterprise and turned the perps over to the police, but they had also discovered and captured Tempus. The cherry on top of that sundae was the recovery of the time window device that she had securely stashed in her bag. She was happy that she hadn’t removed her ski mask until they were in the car preferring that Tempus not know just who she was. All the way to the penthouse, she was holding the time window and examining it in the intermittent light of the street lamps as it passed under them. After driving into the underground garage faux Margot placed the time window, securely, back in her bag.

Once they were upstairs, Lamont replaced his cloak and hat in the cabinet while faux Margot excused herself to change clothes. When she returned to the sitting room, she was in pajamas and robe. At his quizzical look, she said, “I just figured I might as well stay here tonight. It is rather late to be returning home.”

He nodded in acquiescence. Then he asked, “What was that device you were examining so intently on the way back. You called it ‘your ticket home’.”

“The controls are unfamiliar, but it is future technology so it has to be what he used to bring me here.”

“How does it work?”

Uncertainty was in her voice as she said, “I’m not certain and I can’t afford to just start pushing buttons, randomly. There’s no telling what could happen.”

“It’s that dangerous?”

Frustration was obvious in her voice as she said, “It could be. Oh, I wish Herb was here. I’m sure he could show me how to operate it. At this point, I’d even welcome Andrus.”

With a chuckle, he replied, “Hearing that, from what you have told me, I know just how desperate you are. Maybe it would be best to sleep on it and make a decision in the morning.”

As she stood and headed for her room, she said, “You’re right. A good night’s sleep will be good. Then we can face this challenge clear-headed and clear-eyed. Good night, Lamont.”

“Good night, Margot or should I start calling you Lois again?”

She hesitated before closing the door and said, “Let’s hang on to Margot for a little longer. There’s no telling how long it will take to get my ticket punched.”

“Margot it is. Good night, Margot.”

She closed the door behind herself and simply stared at the bed. She was too keyed up to sleep. Crossing to her bag, she pulled the time window device from it and under the bedside lamp examined it. There were several rows of touch-sensitive areas on the face above which was apparently a display. The display was dark since she had not provided any input. Her fingers hovered over the input areas, almost touching them, but her better sense won out and she refrained from touching any of them

Placing it on her bedside table she put the light out and lying down, pulled the covers up. She closed her eyes, but sleep eluded

her. She kept opening her eyes and looking at the device. Resolutely, she closed her eyes again, determined that she would sleep, but after a very few minutes, they were open again, irresistibly drawn to the Time Window device. Sighing resignedly, she slipped out front under the covers and turned the light back on. She muttered to herself, “This will never do. I need to sleep, but I won’t be able to until I know what I am going to do.”

A plan started to form in her mind and sitting on the edge of the bed, it opened like a flower bud opening to a magnificent rose. Once it was complete, with satisfaction, she replaced the device in her bag and lay down to sleep. Tomorrow she would put her plan into operation. She just hoped that Lamont would cooperate.

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As a result of an almost sleepless night, earlier in the night, when she did fall asleep, it was a very deep sleep and she awoke to bright sunlight streaming in through the windows and the aroma of coffee.

She threw off the covers and as she slipped into a pair of mules she threw on a robe and headed for the sitting room. As she opened the door, she saw Lamont at the side table pouring coffee. She spoke up, “Could I have some of that, please?”

Looking over his shoulder and smiling, he said, “Coming right up.”

As he handed her a cup, he asked, “Well, have you decided what you are going to do?”

“I think I have. It could involve some play-acting on your part, but I think it might just work.”

“Acting? I don’t think I’m much of an actor.”

“You’re just being modest. You act every day. Okay, I’m going to need some money. I have to buy some things.”

“After your first shopping trip, I set up some charge accounts at stores. Just tell them to put it on my bill.”

“Thanks, Lamont you’re a dear. Okay, here’s what I propose...” She went on to outline her plan.

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That afternoon, faux Margot made some drawings and then went out with Shrevvy driving her. She first visited a custom embroidery shop. She had prepared a drawing of a very familiar symbol and asked that it be made. The shopkeeper was somewhat daunted by the complexity, but also the simplicity of the design. She asked, “Why do you need this?”

Her flip answer was, “Halloween is coming up and I need it for a costume.”

“That’s going to be some costume.”

As she exited the shop, faux Margot replied, “Yes, it is. I can’t wait to see it finished.”

The next stop was the tailor shop that catered to Lamont’s needs. When she approached the tailor, she asked, “Do you have a record of Lamont Cranston’s measurements?”

Skeptically, he asked, “You’re Margot Lane, aren’t you?”

Surprised at the question, she replied, “Why, yes, I am.”

Satisfied that she in fact could speak for Mr. Cranston, he asked, “What does Mr. Cranston need?”

“Lamont and I are going to a masquerade party and I need a costume prepared for Lamont.”

The tailor’s expression brightened as he smiled, “Ah, something out of the ordinary. It is so seldom that I get a chance to work on anything other than suits and shirts. What are you looking for?”

“What kind of material do you have that will stretch, but not stretch out? I really don’t know how to explain it. I want it to stretch so that it is skin tight, but I don’t want it to be baggy.”

“I think that will depend mostly on the weave rather than the material. I have some nice soft, cotton material that is stretchy and will remain form-fitting unless you get it wet, that is. Here, let me show you.” He stepped behind a counter and pulled a bolt of cloth from underneath.

She felt the cloth and tested the stretch. Satisfied with its stretchability she approved. "I will need that material dyed in some rather bright colors. Do you have a color palate?"

"Of course." He presented the color wheel to faux Margot.

He was surprised at the color selection, but made no comment going on the motto, 'The customer is always right.' After the color selection, he asked, "Can you give me an idea as to the design of the costume you want?"

She asked, "Do you have a sketch of a man?"

Pulling out a sketchbook, he quickly sketched a male form. Once he was finished he passed it over to her.

Taking a pencil, she colored in the sections and indicated the color choices. Then she said, "There will also be a cape-like they used to wear years ago, but it should reach almost all the way to the floor. Oh, and there is one more thing. A pair of spats, but not the usual kind. They need to be calf-high and cover the toe like an overshoe."

The tailor was skeptical as he looked at the completed sketch. "What is he going as? I've never seen anything like this before."

Faux Margot smiled a secret smile and replied, "I'm sure you haven't seen it before, but you may see it again sometime. How soon do you think you can have it finished?"

"Let's see, dying, cutting, sewing, fitting, resewing. As long as Mr. Cranston is available for the fittings – four or five days. While dying, I will preshrink the cloth."

"That is wonderful. That way he can try it before Halloween. Thank you."

"I'll call when we need a fitting."

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Once the Suit had been sewn, Lamont called Slade and gave him his orders.

The next day, Lamont and faux Margot drove to Slade Farrow's establishment.

When they arrived, Lamont was dressed in one of his double-breasted suits while faux Margot was dressed in a navy, mid-calf length skirt with a matching jacket, pale blue silk top, a pale blue pillbox hat with a short veil, and black pumps.

Under Lamont's orders, Tempus had been kept sedated to this point, only enough that he was docile, but not unconscious. In that way, he was able to feed himself and could maintain himself naturally. He was kept in a state of near drunkenness.

Just before they arrived, Tempus had been given his meal and it had been spiked with a drug. Once he had finished eating, he had been moved to the 'interview' room.

Lamont donned his cloak and hat before they entered the room and kept his head positioned so that the brim prevented Tempus from seeing his face.

As they entered the room, Tempus challenged, "Where am I? What have you done with my belongings?"

The sepulchral tones of the Shadow answered him, "Hahahahahahaha, you are in the hands of The Shadow."

Tempus was stricken. He recognized that laugh from hearing it on the radio. He splattered out, "But, he isn't real! He's just a voice on the radio."

"Oh, I am real all right." He faded from view right there in front of Tempus. When he spoke again it was like the voice was emanating from the empty air. "I disrupted your nefarious plot and now you are my prisoner, a prisoner of The Shadow. Most of my prisoners are never heard from again."

"What did you do with my personal belongings?"

The Shadow pulled the Desert Eagle from under his cloak and displayed it. As it came into the open it popped into Tempus's view. "I have taken your weapon. It is very pretty for something so deadly. It will be added to my collection."

"Fine! Keep the gun. It's not important. There was something else. A small box."

Faux Margot stepped forward and delving into her bag,

pulled the time window device out and displayed it.

Tempus had not really seen her, his attention had been focused on The Shadow to this point, but when he saw her there was instant recognition, "Lois!!"

"Lois? Who's Lois?"

In a bitter tone, he replied, "You are. You can't fool me! You're Lois Lane!"

In an indignant tone, she replied, "I beg your pardon, my name is not Lois! It is Margot, Margot Lane."

Tempus started to lunge for the device, but Lamont had been ready for him and Tempus had only moved inches when he hit the invisible barrier that was The Shadow who kept him from touching it.

The Shadow challenged, "Why is this little box so important?"

Tempus growled, "I won't tell you."

The Shadow replied, "You don't need to. Just as The Shadow can cloud your mind so that he becomes invisible, he can also read your mind and I can see in your mind that it is your means of escape. Escape not only from me and the police but from this time and space."

Tempus was shocked and it was reflected in his expression. Could this guy really read minds?

That was when Slade entered the room and with the Shadow's help administered a shot that would put Tempus out, briefly.

They laid him on a bed to sleep it off. Meanwhile, Lamont and faux Margot changed clothes, Lamont into the costume that had been prepared and faux Margot into the sharp business ensemble she had worn the day she had arrived as Lois Lane. Lois pulled her air back and pinned it so that as long as she was looking straight at Tempus, he would think it was short.

When Tempus awoke he was confronted by 'Superman' and Lois Lane.

Lois spoke up, "It's about time you woke up from your nap, Tempus. We still have some questions for you to answer..."

Tempus was confused and interrupted her, "Where am I? Who are you? Are you Margot Lane?"

With a chuckle, Lois asked, "Have you lost your mind, Tempus? Who is Margot Lane? You know very well who I am, Lois Lane. Pretending that you are crazy won't get you out of this. We caught you this time and you aren't getting away."

"But where are The Shadow and Margot Lane?"

"Who?"

"The Shadow, he's the one that caught me."

"Like I said, pleading insanity won't get you off. There are shadows all over, but they didn't catch you, Superman did."

"No! I mean, it was The Shadow that caught me. He was invisible!"

"The only thing invisible around here is your attempt to get off by pleading insanity. It isn't going to work."

In a quandary, Tempus asked, "How did I get here?"

"Superman swooped in and grabbed me, preventing me from falling through that time window, and grabbed you. You did bump your head at that time. You have been complaining of headaches. You've been raving in your sleep."

"That can't be! You went through. I got away. I went to the same alternate universe and created a gang, the start of a crime syndicate. I was going to steal a lot of gold..."

He stopped because Lois and Superman were both laughing at him.

Frustrated and angry, he shouted, "Why are you laughing?!"

"You've been right here the entire time. You haven't been out of our sight!"

Disheartened, he moaned, "I dreamed the entire thing?"

"Yes. We have your time window device. We want to use it to call Herb. We want to have him pick you up so that you can be given the care that you need. I know there must be a way; I just

don't know what it is.”

“I'll never tell you. If I do, he'll come and pick me up and I might not be able to get away again,” but even as he was saying this, the code popped into his mind and Lamont read it like reading a book.

Lois looked at ‘Superman’ and asked, “Did you get it?”

“Yes, I did. It is a combination that sends out a homing signal. Very simple, you hold down the top left key for three seconds, then the key next to it for three seconds, then the first key again for three seconds.”

Astounded, Tempus blurted out, “How did you do that? You can't read minds!”

“You are quite correct, Superman cannot read minds, but The Shadow can, Hahahahahaha.”

That was when Tempus took a very close look at the blue and red costume, and through the drug-induced haze noted the slight differences and realized that he had been duped.

At a signal, Slade came in and administered a sedative. They laid Tempus down on the cot and left.

\*\*\*

### Chapter 24 – 1995

%%%%%%%%%%

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

%%%%%%%%%%

Faux Lois was at her desk, phone in hand, near tears as she urgently spoke into her phone, “Clark, it's me. Call me as soon as you get this message.” Desolate, she hung the phone up. As she did, she spotted Jimmy nearby and called over, “Jimmy, has Clark called yet?!”

Jimmy's reply was less than satisfying, “I've beeped him a million times, but he hasn't called back.”

Faux Lois was near panic. How was she ever to get back where she belonged if Clark disappeared? She grabbed her purse and started to bolt, but was stopped by a shout from Perry. “Lois! Where are you going?”

“I've gotta go check on Superman!”

Perry tried to talk some sense into her, “Lois, don't go out there! I just spoke to my buddy Jim Mooney in the White House. The President's meeting with his advisers right now. He's planning to make an announcement five minutes before the 9 PM deadline. It doesn't look good. People are already fleeing Metropolis.”

Faux Lois was almost frantic, “I have to go!”

Just then, Jimmy called, “Lois, S.T.A.R. Labs on line three. Said it's urgent.”

Knowing the close ties between Superman and S.T.A.R Labs, she whirled and grabbed a phone. When she did, she said, “Ma ... Lois Lane here.” She listened and then replied, “Uh-huh, uh-huh I'll be right over.” Without hesitation, she broke into the elevator with Jimmy and Perry following.

Perry shouted, “Lois?”

Over her shoulder, faux Lois shouted, “Tell the President to stall!”

Perry, unsure of what he had heard, questioned, “What!?!?”

As she entered the elevator car, she shouted, “Tell him to say whatever he has to, just don't give up!”

The elevator doors closed. Perry whirled on Jimmy and demanded, “Where the Hell is Clark?”

\*\*\*

At breakneck speed, faux Lois drove to S.T.A.R Labs. She felt a certain amount of self-satisfaction, getting there on her own, but that didn't override her concern for the reason that she was there. She had become familiar with the layout when they had been there for the DNA test for Jesse so she was able to find Dr. Klein's lab without any help. As she rushed in, Dr. Klein indicated a lead chamber in a corner. It looked like a large grey cube with a door. Set into the door was an apparent pane of glass; however,

this was a foot thick piece of lead glass. Through the window, faux Lois could see Superman pacing the width of the isolation chamber because that was what it was.

She rushed up to the window and shouted, “Superman!”

Hearing her voice, Superman turned toward the window and exclaimed, “Lois!” His voice came to her through a small speaker grill set next to the door.

Seeing a microphone set next to the speaker, she directed her voice to that as she asked, “What happened? Why are you in there?”

“That coal mine disaster was a trap; there was a nuclear bomb, actually, it was a non-nuclear ‘dirty bomb’, down there. They set it off as soon as I arrived.”

“But you're all right, aren't you?”

“I'm fine, it's just ... I'm radioactive. That's what a dirty bomb is.”

Lois turned to Dr. Klein in confusion and he explained, “Superman has been exposed to a particularly 'dirty' bomb. Tiny radioactive particles are lodged in the pores of his skin. And ... there's no way to get them out.”

Superman spoke up, “Without this shielding, anyone who got near me would be killed, not instantly, but painfully.”

Lois asked, “How long will you stay that way?”

Superman looked at Dr. Klein. Neither of them wanted to say the words. Finally, Superman asked, “Dr. Klein, would you go get those estimates you were running?”

Doctor Klein nodded in understanding, turned away, and walked out the door.

Faux Lois repeated her question, even more forcefully, “How long?”

With a downcast expression and despair in his tone, he replied, “Thirty-thousand years.”

Faux Lois was crying as she pressed close to the glass and said, “This can't be happening to us! I'm never going to get home. I'm never going to see Lamont again. I can't even marry you.”

Trying to infuse her with some of his indomitable spirit, he said, “Don't worry, Lois, we'll get through this, just like every other problem we've gotten through.” Trying to lighten the mood somewhat, he said, “Just think of it as another one of those annoying wedding details we have to figure out.”

Faux Lois was annoyed at his attempt at levity and said, “It's not funny.”

Superman was deadly serious in his reply, “Lois, nothing will stop me from marrying Lois. I will move heaven and earth if I have to. We will get this straightened out. We will get you back to Lamont and Lois back here. I love Lois.”

“I'm sure she loves you, but so do I.” They pressed themselves as close to the glass as they could.

A moment later, Dr. Klein returned and Lois sprang back from the glass and surreptitiously wiped her tears away

Doctor Klein felt bad about breaking such bad news and said, “Yes. Well. It seems, um.”

“It's okay, Dr. Klein, Superman already told me.”

Doctor Klein was obviously relieved at that news, said, “We're doing everything we can.”

“I know.”

Still concerned about the overall situation, Superman said, “Lois, the NSBA. We've got to find out where their base is before this becomes the Fourth Reich.”

“This is a nightmare.”

With determination, Superman said, “And remember, I'm going to get out of this.”

Faux Lois gave him a brave smile, even though she didn't feel that way, and walked out.

\*\*\*

As she walked back into the bullpen, faux Lois, realizing that her computer skills were not up to the necessary level, grabbed

Jimmy and said, “Jimmy, I need your help.”

“What do you need?”

“I need you to cross-reference the location of all known coal mines in the greater Metropolis area with everything we know or suspect about the NSBA.”

“Why coal mines? That was just a one-shot deal to get rid of Superman, wasn't it?”

“Superman also found some coal dust in the basement of the Metropolis Trade Tower. Two instances of coal are too much to be a coincidence.”

Jimmy typed in the search algorithm and hit enter. A few seconds later, there was a beep. They looked at the screen and a graphic display of coal mine locations was displayed.

Jimmy added another piece of information and a few seconds later, it displayed an address in the upper right corner, “1430 Shepperton Street.”

Lois read it out, “Fourteen thirty Shepperton Street.”

The computer added one final piece of information which Jimmy readout, “Speedy Ambulance Service.”

Lois read, “Speedy Ambulance Service is right over the entrance to mine number twenty-six, Greater Amalgamated Mines, closed in nineteen twenty-three.” Grabbing her bag, she bolted for the elevator, shouting to Jimmy, “Tell Perry I'm –“

Perry intercepted her on the way and asked, “Tell Perry what?! Where are you going now?”

In a rush, she spewed out what she knew, “I think I've found where the NSBA headquarters is.”

Just then an elevator door opened and Skip, dressed in the Nazi uniform of a full lieutenant stepped out along with six others in Nazi uniforms.

Arrogantly, Skip challenged, “Going somewhere, Lois?”

Startled, Lois blurted out, “Skip?”

Indignantly, chary of his newfound status, he corrected, “Oberleutnant Wallace, if you please. He turned and addressed Perry, “I'm here to inform you that from now on, you will be reporting to me.”

The transformation of Perry from stunned amazement to rage was instantaneous. With no warning, Perry swung his fist and connected with Skip's face, knocking him off his feet.

Two of the six with him grabbed Perry and restrained him while the other four pulled firearms and pointed them at him.

Getting back to his feet, Skip shouted, “No!”

Perry shouted, “Go ahead and shoot, you little weasel!”

Regaining some of his swagger, Skip addressed Perry, “I don't think you appreciate the gravity of the situation, Perry. We are in control, now, and despite your great personal magnetism...” He rubbed his jaw where Perry had hit him, “... we will struggle on without you, if we have to.”

Listening to Skip's tirade brought an incident she had been through with Lamont to mind and she couldn't wait to get to Superman and explain it to him. She stepped into the open elevator car and stood facing the back, her back to Skip.

Skip ordered, “Lois, get out of the elevator!”

Some of the brashness of Lois must have rubbed off on faux Lois, because she said, “I don't think so. You'll have to shoot me in the back, Skip.”

As the doors started to close, Skip ordered his followers, “Get her!”

The Nazis started to move after her, but shouting, “Lois, run!” Jimmy charged them and bowled them over like bowling pins, preventing them from intercepting her, just long enough for the doors to close. He didn't stop moving until a gun was jammed into his ribs.

Skip pointed at two and said, “You and you, go get her!”

They headed for the stairs.

Turning his attention back to Perry, he said, “Oh, by the way, from now on the paper will be called the Daily Reich. Catchy,

huh?”

Perry and Jimmy were both almost purple with fury.

\*\*\*

As faux Lois burst from the building, she could see that in the time that they had been in the bullpen, a lot had changed. She had to duck as a pair of Nazis unfurled a banner that was suspended in such a way as to obscure the Daily Planet globe. As she hit the street on the way to her Jeep, she saw similar banners on storefronts. She saw one irate store owner come out and tear down the banner. As she watched, he was grabbed roughly by a couple of Nazis and shoved back inside his store while others replaced the banner.

There were Nazi uniforms all over and people were clustered in fear as they swaggered around. The cop on the beat stood by, helplessly outgunned by the armed, uniformed Nazis.

Finding her car, faux Lois tore an NSBA flyer from her windshield, contemptuously threw it aside, jumped into the driver's seat started the car, and sped away.

Unseen by her, on a TV in a store window, Steve Law, this time wearing a Nazi uniform was speaking again, “Come friends and join me, and millions of your friends and neighbors, in the National Society for a Better America. There's a new tomorrow with the new Reich.”

\*\*\*

This time when Lois burst in on Dr. Klein and Superman they were both watching a TV that Dr. Klein had positioned so that Superman could see it.

Spotting her when she entered, with anxiety in his voice, Superman asked, “Lois, did you find them?”

“Maybe. But there are a bunch of goons at the Planet right now and a couple tried to tail me. I think I lost them, but I had better be quick. I've got an idea on how to deraduate you.”

Dr. Klein tried to interrupt, “Technically, the term is –“

Faux Lois rushed on, “Excuse me, okay? I'm in kind of a rush.”

Dr. Klein, apologized, “Sorry.”

Lois turned in him and said, “Dr. Klein, I need to speak with Superman ... privately.”

“Oh, okay ... I'll be right outside if you need me.”

Once the door was closed, faux Lois approached the isolation capsule and in a torrent of words told her story, “Skip and some Nazi goons have taken over the Planet and something he said triggered a memory. Those little pieces of radioactivity that are in your pores and on your suit, it's like you've been shot with shotgun pellets. That happened to Lamont once, only it was grenade shrapnel so it was steel. It all happened at the gang's hideout in a junkyard. He needed the metal removed quickly so he staggered over to a large crane and operated the controls to lower this large disk. Once he had it low enough, he handed me his guns, pointed to control, and said, ‘When I tell you to, operate that control.’ I said, ‘Okay.’ And climbed into the seat. He crawled under the disk and then I heard him shout, ‘Okay, now.’ I operated the control. Now I know what it was, it was an electromagnet. It pulled the shrapnel out of his back. He crawled out from under the disk and I shut off the power. I usually carried some sulfa in my bag along with gauze and tape. I patched up his wounds and we took off after the fleeing gang. Now if you had a big enough magnet, you could suck those particles out of you the way that magnet pulled out the shrapnel.”

Lois let Doctor Klein back in and explained her idea.

He immediately picked up on the flaw, “But these particles are non-magnetic.”

Faux Lois asked, “That's where what Skip said comes in. He was talking about Perry and his personal magnetism and the gravity of the situation. Isn't gravity like magnetism?”

Suddenly, Superman was grasping her concept and as his expression brightened, he said, “Right.”

“So what we need is a bigger gravity magnet than the Earth to suck the radioactivity out of you. So we use the Sun.”

“It’ll take me hours to get there and back.”

Dr. Klein asked, “And once you’re within the Sun’s gravitational pull, do you think you’ll be able to escape?”

Superman looked at faux Lois and said, “There’s only one way to find out. In the meantime, Lois, don’t do anything ‘til I get back.”

Dr. Klein, shouted, “Wait! I still have the spare support pack from the Nightfall mission. You’ll need that.” He ran and grabbed the pack, checked it to ensure that the cylinders were fully charged, and passed it in through the controlled access portal to the inner chamber. Superman donned the equipment and then he pressed a large button inside his chamber. There was a deep rumbling that vibrated through them as they looked up. A bright square of light cut and expanded across their faces as the ceiling opened. Then the chamber started to lift as Superman exerted his flight power. Then there was a rush of air and a whoosh as the chamber blurred out of sight. Superman had flown off inside it.

Dr. Klein breathed out, “Amazing,” as faux Lois headed for the door.

Confident that her plan would work, she headed for the door and said over her shoulder, “Tell him I’ve gone to check out Speedy Ambulance. I think the New Reich is underneath it.”

Dr. Klein tried to stop her, “But he told you to wait for him.”

As she slipped out the door, she said, “I know he did.”

As the door was closing behind her, Dr. Klein stroked his balding pate and muttered, “Hmph. It’s almost like they were married.”

\*\*\*

If anyone had been able to track Superman they would have seen that once he was out of the Earth’s atmosphere, he had donned his support pack and then with a single punch removed the ceiling of the isolation chamber. As soon as he flew out of it the chamber lost its motive power and started to fall back because of Earth’s gravity. He had calculated the orbital decay and thought that the chamber would fall harmlessly.

Superman started flying as fast as he could toward the sun, taking a breath only every fifteen minutes or so. Behind him, the isolation chamber partially burned up on re-entry with the residue falling into the ocean.

It took some time to pass the orbit of Venus and even longer to move inside the orbit of Mercury.

He found that the closer he got to the sun, the fewer breaths he had to take and the stronger he became. His aura became almost a visible thing and the closer he got to the sun, the farther it extended from his body.

Once he was inside the orbit of Mercury, he applied his flight power in the opposite direction and quickly slowed to a stop. He could feel the pull of the Sun’s gravity, but he couldn’t feel or see the particles leaving so he decided to help them along. He started to spin like a top, hoping that the centrifugal force exerted would help to throw them away from his body.

As he did, he could see a second aura, only this one didn’t stay close to his body, he streamed toward the Sun in response to its gravity. He repeated the process several times and finally, there was no more second aura. Satisfied that he had gotten at least most of the contamination off, he did a quick dive toward the Sun on a sharp hyperbolic course. He stayed far enough away to avoid harming his support pack. The proximity to the gravity well and the sharp maneuver had the effect of removing the last of the contamination and gave him his start back to Earth.

\*\*\*

After faux Lois left S.T.A.R. Labs, she drove to 1430 Shepperton Street. She parked around the corner and eased up to the address. She wished that she had Lamont’s power of invisibility as she approached. She had expected the area to be

busy since this was the apparent headquarters of the NSBA, but the area seemed almost deserted. Being from 1937 it never occurred to her that they could have set up video monitoring.

Underground, Steve, still in his Nazi uniform was sitting at the console looking at the various monitors. He had been observing as Lois had moved from one video pick-up to another. When she was near the doors, he depressed a switch and said, “Lois Lane is outside the garage. Bring her to me.”

He continued to watch as she approached the garage door and rubbed a circle in the smudged glass so that she could see in. He also saw the car that screeched to a halt behind her. She heard the car’s breaks and started to turn, but not before three occupants jumped out and grabbed her. They used a key to open a door and all four disappeared inside.

\*\*\*

It had been some hours since the NSBA Nazis had taken over the Daily Planet and it was nearing the deadline that the NSBA had set for the U.S. government to capitulate to their demands. In the newsroom, all eyes were on the clock as the minute hand approached 9 PM.

Seeing the hand move from 8:57 to 8:58 made Skip gulp.

Perry, deciding that he had nothing to lose, said, “Looks like your tenure may be a little short.”

Irritated and scared, Skip shouted, “Shut up!”

Perry decided to dig a little deeper, “You know, I only hired you because your mother went to college with Alice.”

Becoming more scared by the second, Skip almost lost control as he shouted back, “Shut up. Shut up. SHUT UP!”

Seeing how Perry was getting to him, Jimmy decided to stick a needle in, “And you know what else, you belong in Classifieds.”

Shocked, Skip shouted, “I do not!” Then he got angry at that slight and shouted, “I’ll make you pay for that”

\*\*\*

Ever since faux Lois had been captured, several hours ago, she had been kept under close guard in the bunker. She had hoped that their vigilance would slacken at some point and she could use her newly acquired fighting skills to disarm a guard and capture the whole lot underground, but her hopes had been disappointed.

Now it appeared as though it was too late to do anything even if the guards did fail in their duty because all eyes, including faux Lois’s, were on the clock as it ticked down from 8:58 to 8:59.

When it did Steve slammed his fist down on the desk and everyone jumped at the sudden sound. Steve ranted, “What is your President waiting for?!” Turning to the erstwhile ‘Carter’ (Voss) he said, “Arm the bombs.”

Voss flipped some switches on a console. Faux Lois was an interested observer. If she could break free and disable that console, the jig would be up. Once again she really wished that she had The Shadow’s power of invisibility. How easy it would be to do it, but here she sat, under a couple of guns, impotent.

Voss stepped aside as Steve approached the firing button.

Faux Lois shouted, “What about your people above ground?”

Absently, his eyes on the sweep second hand of the clock, Steve answered her, “They will become martyrs to the cause.” The second hand swept towards 9 o’clock and Steve prepared to push the button.”

As Steve’s hand moved toward the button that would unleash nuclear destruction on three of the most populous cities on the continent, Lois gasped.

Before Steve was able to depress the button, Superman burst into the underground bunker in a shower of concrete and dust.

Instinctively, Steve jumped back and faux Lois shouted, “That console! Destroy it!”

Heeding her directions, Superman sent a blast of heat vision into the console and it exploded in a shower of sparks.

Steve’s only thought was of escape, unfortunately for him, the path he chose took him close to faux Lois.

Ignoring the guards, she jumped up and performed a round kick that took Steve in the stomach, knocking all of the air out of him and bending him over. She followed that up with a karate chop to the back of the neck. Fortunately for Steve, she pulled her strike and avoided breaking his neck. Standing over her fallen foe, she said, "I guess you aren't going to be cleaning anybody's socks except those in the prison laundry for a very long time."

With their leader fallen and Superman dominating the space, the remaining NSBA Nazis dropped their weapons and put their hands up in surrender.

Superman started to move and Voss said, "Don't..." But that was as far as he got before Superman had used wire from various devices to secure them together. Steve, he trussed up like a Thanksgiving turkey and left him lying where faux Lois had put him.

Faux Lois said, "Welcome back."

He smiled and said, "It's good to be back. Come on, there's more cleaning up to be done." He scooped her up in his arms and with a whoosh, they disappear from the underground bunker.

No announcement came from the president, but there was no explosion either. Instinctively knowing that something had gone terribly wrong, Skip and those with him panicked and fled the Planet building. Skip shouted to his followers, "Faster! We've gotta get out of here before —"

His statement was cut off as was his escape by a blue-clad arm that jerked him to a stop.

Faux Lois was standing there as Superman lifted Skip by his shirt front. Superman said, "Say goodbye Skip!"

Facing an angry Superman, fearing that in the next instant he was going to fry him with his heat vision, Skip's bowels let go as he shouted, "No!"

Twin beams of heat vision flashed out, but they bypassed Skip's head and ignited the Nazi banner, bearing a swastika, that had been draped over the Daily Planet globe.

As the flames consumed the swastika, both faux Lois and Superman smiled.

\*\*\*

The next day almost everything was back to normal and Lois, Clark, and Jimmy entered Perry's office. Perry was standing, looking out the window with his back to them. Jimmy was finishing up on his story, "Then, as soon as they heard Superman was back, they bolted. Man, you should've seen Skip. He was out of here so fast he left half his uniform behind."

Everyone laughed and then faux Lois said, "I imagine most of his Nazi buddies will be in custody soon, thanks to Superman and those computer files he got from the Reich's headquarters."

Faux Lois smiled Clark said, "Superman had a little help."

Picking up on Perry's somber mood, faux Lois asked, "Perry? Are you all right?"

Perry replied to her sally without even turning around, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.' Do you know who said that?" Without waiting for an answer, he answered his own question, "Thomas Jefferson said that." He finally turned around to face them as he continued, "You all are too young to remember World War II. I mean, for you, it's all books and movies, but for me, it's a different story. The entire world was at war. And it was a war about many things. But mainly..." he paused for emphasis and then continued, "...it was a war about Evil." Clark started to say something, but Perry held up a hand to stop him and continued, "They say that Lucifer was the brightest angel in Heaven. That's why Evil's so seductive. At first, it seems beautiful, or logical, or reasonable; but it's not. And make no mistake, evil does exist. The Nazis were evil. Their ideas were evil. And you know, ideas never go away. They can sort of 'disappear' for a while, but they can come back in an instant. Anytime. Anywhere. That's why ol' Jefferson was right. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." He paused a second and then finished, "They picked up Truman Black

a few minutes ago."

Jimmy blurted out, "Senator Black?! He's a Nazi?!"

Nodding in resignation, Perry replied, "Apparently one of their high mucky-mucks. I've known him since I was Jimmy's age. Now if you'll excuse me, I think I'll take the rest of the day off."

They stood aside and watched him exit, struggling to keep his dignity and hide the deep, deep pain of a friend's betrayal.

Faux Lois asked, "How many more are there out there?"

Clark replied, "I really don't know."

\*\*\*

Back at Lois's apartment later that night, faux Lois asked, "Is that what I have to look forward to when I go back?"

"I'm afraid it is. The Second World War will be starting in just a few years from when Tempus plucked you."

Thoughtfully, she said, "Much as I'd like to stay here, with you, I think I need to get back."

Thinking about the advances that she had made toward him, he gave her a surprised expression and asked, "Aren't I good enough for you?"

She replied, "Oh, well, yes you are, but ... there are a number of reasons. Number one, I don't like having a target pasted to my back. With Lamont, no one knows that I'm involved and I like it that way so I don't have someone trying to kill me on a weekly basis. Second, It looks like Lamont and I are going to be busy fighting these Nazis. Now that I've been through this I have a special insight. Oh, I don't mean as part of the army or anything, but his special talents would help in breaking up spy rings and foiling sabotage efforts."

"I guess we each have to do what we do best."

"I guess so, but I will miss you. If we manage to straighten this out, that is."

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## Chapter 25 – 1937

%%%%%%%%%

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

%%%%%%%%%

The next morning, after a hardy breakfast, Faux Margot carried the time window device into the sitting room. A little nervously, she said, "Well, here goes nothing." She operated the buttons in the sequence that Lamont had read in Tempus's mind.

As soon as she released the last button, the device emitted a beep and across the display screen it printed out, "Time Beacon."

She set it on a side table and said, "I guess all we have to do now is to wait."

%%%%%%%%%

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

%%%%%%%%%

In the far distant future, at TEMPO headquarters, a light began to flash on a panel. The Monitor checked the ID of the incoming signal and immediately pushed a button that would connect him to Herb Wells. "Director?"

A slightly muzzy reply came back, "Yes, what is it?"

"Sorry to have awakened you, sir, but we just received a time beacon signal."

"That's not too unusual. Someone needs help. Send the next agent."

The Monitor checked his assignment schedule and said, "That would be Andrus, sir."

"It should be a routine matter. Go ahead and send him." Herb lay back down, but he couldn't return to his slumbers. The fact that Andrus had been sent on the mission left him with a feeling of unease. Rousing himself once again, he called out, "Computer."

"Working."

"Connect me with the Monitor desk."

"Connecting."

“Monitor.”

“Has Andrus been sent on that mission as yet?”

“Yes, sir. He just left from pad 13.”

Herb muttered, “I hope that number isn’t prophetic.” Then he addressed the Monitor, “Very well. What’s done tis done.”

Confused, the Monitor replied, “Yes, sir. Whatever you say, sir. Uh, sir?”

”Yes, what is it?”

“This signal is coming from an unknown sector. It is from an alternate universe we haven’t explored previously. There is no record of anyone from TEMPO visiting there before. How did a time window end up there?”

“I guess that’s one of the things that Andrus will have to figure out.” Herb’s unease grew with each passing minute.

%%%%%%%%%%

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

%%%%%%%%%%

Five minutes after faux Margot activated the beacon a time window materialized in the center of the sitting room. As soon as it formed a figure stepped through and the time window closed behind him.

Faux Margot burst out, “Andrus! You’re sure a sight for sore eyes!”

Andrus looked at her and didn’t immediately recognize her because of the way she was dressed. Finally, recognition dawned and he asked, “Miss Lane?”

Smiling, she replied, “Right the first time.”

Andrus was surprised and blurted out, “But what are you doing here and how is it that you have a time window?”

“It’s a long story. Is there any way for you to contact Herb? I think this mess will require his expertise to straighten out.”

“I could try to take care of this and as you say, ‘straighten it out.’”

“Andrus, I like you, but I don’t think you are up to this. It is going to take a careful hand. Could you please get Herb for me?”

“If you insist.”

“I insist. Please, Andrus, it is really no reflection on you, it’s just that Herb is the one I’ve always dealt with in the past.”

Disappointed, he replied, “As you wish.” He lifted his time window device and punched some keys. As the window opened, He said, “Please allow that beacon to continue to broadcast. It will make it easier to find you.”

“We won’t touch it. Thanks, Andrus.”

As he stepped through the portal, he replied, and she could hear the hurt in his tone as he said, “You are welcome.”

%%%%%%%%%%

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 023 x Gamma 004 x Tau -120 – Prime

%%%%%%%%%%

As soon as Andrus stepped through the portal he appeared on the reception plate in the cleanroom of the TEMPO transport center. He passed out through the doors and approached a communication center. He said, “Please, connect me with the Director.”

Instantly, the voice of Herb Wells came from the speaker, “Yes, who is it?”

“Andrus, sir.”

Feeling that his worst fears had been realized, Herb asked, “What did you do now?”

“I didn’t do anything, sir. I found Miss Lane and she asked me to request that you handle her situation.”

Relieved, Herb tried to take some of the hurt from Andrus as he said, “I’m sure she had her reasons. No reflection on you, my boy. I’ll be right down and you can brief me.”

As the connection was severed, he said, “Computer.”

“Working.”

“I have been called on a special mission. Please search the records for the couple in Prime. Tell me all the times that Lois Lane was removed from Prime.”

“Searching ... There is no record of Lois Lane being absent from Prime other than the time that Tempus kidnapped both you and her and moved you to the first alternate universe so that she could create Superman.”

“That’s what I thought, but somehow, apparently, she is away from Prime and we have no record of it. How could that be?”

“Percent likelihood approaches zero.”

“The only way I could see that happening would be if she were in two places at the same time.”

“Illogical.”

“We shall see. I will be gone for an as-yet-undetermined amount of time.” As he walked out of his room he said, “Lights out,” as the door closed automatically.

He took a grav tube to the transport floor and met with Andrus who gave him all the information he had, which wasn’t much.

Picking up his time window device, he stepped onto a pad and left.

%%%%%%%%%%

Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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As Herb stepped into the sitting room, he heard Lois, say, “Hi, Herb!”

She was standing directly in front of him and he asked, “Are you ‘The’ Lois Lane?”

“If you mean the one you were stranded in that alternate universe with where I turned the Clark Kent who had lost his Lois into Superman, then yeah, I’m ‘The’ Lois Lane.”

“How did you get here, my dear?”

“Do you want the simple answer?”

“Yes.”

“One word, Tempus.”

Herb groaned and said, “Oh no! Not him again.”

“I’m afraid so.”

Herb saw Lamont and said, “Clark, did he transport you also?”

Lois smiled and performed the introductions, “Herb, please allow me to introduce Lamont Cranston. It appears as though Tempus chose this universe because it didn’t have a Clark Kent or Lois Lane. It turns out that our doppelgangers here are named Lamont and Margot. When Tempus brought me here, Margot and I accidentally switched places. She’s in Metropolis with Clark and I’m here with Lamont.”

Smiling, Herb chortled, “That explains it!”

“Explains what?”

“There’s no record of your absence from Prime. This swap explains that. I presume you took her place here?” At Lois’s nod, he continued, “She obviously took your place there the same way.”

The full implications of the swap finally hit her, “Wait a minute. We were planning the wedding! You mean that they are planning their wedding? Come on, Herb! I need to get back!”

Lamont spoke up for the first time, “Do you really?”

“Do I really, what?”

“Need to go back. You could stay here, with me.”

A wave of compassion swept over her, “Oh, Lamont, I’m sorry, but my place is by his side just as Margot’s is by your side. We need to get this straightened out.”

Subdued, he replied, “Whatever you say.”

Herb asked, “Where shall we go?”

“How about my apartment?”

“When did Tempus pluck you from and how long have you been here?”

Once he had entered those parameters, he hit a button and the time window opened.

Lois stuck her head through and looked around. She spotted Clark and faux Lois at Lois's desk apparently writing up a story. She pulled back and said to Herb, "Bingo. Let's go." She turned to Lamont and asked, "Do you want to come along?"

He brightened up and said, "A chance to see the future? Who could resist?"

The three of them stepped through the portal.

Soft as their footfalls were on the carpet, Clark heard them and turned. His shocked expression turned to one of joy as he spotted Lois and then shock as he spotted Lamont.

Stepping forward, he extended his hand and said, "Lamont Cranston, I presume."

Taking his hand and shaking it, Lamont said, "Nice to finally meet you, Clark."

Lois crossed over to Margot and said, "Margot? How has he treated you?"

Before she answered that, she asked, "How is my father? Did you save him?"

"Yes, we did and he's looking forward to your return. I'm afraid I was a poor substitute. He misses you very much."

Margot was weeping in relief and she grabbed Lois's hands and said, "I don't know how to thank you."

"You don't need to. I'm sure you would have done the same thing in my place."

Smiling a watery smile, she replied, "I like to think I would."

Lois turned to Lamont and asked, "Lamont, do you happen to have any gold coins in your pocket?"

"Actually, I was about to turn them in for the recall, but yes, I have a few."

"Could I have them, please?"

As he handed them over, he said, "I don't know how much they will fetch, but here. Use them as you see fit."

After accepting them, she turned to Clark and said, "I need you to take these to a numismatist and see how much you can get for them. Then I want you to buy a couple of Second Chance™ vests, one for Lamont and one for Margot, and bring them back here. I also want a ten-year supply of batteries for the mini-recorder." She thought for a second and then asked, "Can you think of anything else?"

Seeing where she was going with this, Clark spoke up, "Cassettes for the recorder and an escrima."

"An escrima?"

Margot smiled and said, "I've been studying. I just got my red belt."

Surprised, Lois asked, "The school over on ninth?"

Margot nodded.

"An escrima then. Anything else? Oh, yes! Another chrome-plated Desert Eagle. That way The Shadow can have a pair of special guns to use. Pick up some extra magazines."

Smiling, Clark said, "This could take some time."

"Let it. We have some things to talk over while you are gone."

Clark spun into Superman and left through the window.

Lois turned to Margot and asked, "Just how close have you and Clark gotten?"

"Much as I hate to say it, he's been a perfect gentleman. There was a while there when I thought I would rather stay, but not now. We just had to deal with an attempted coup by the Nazi party."

Lois blurted out, "The Nazi party? How could that be? The war ended years ago!"

"They were in suspended hibernation. Anyhow, from what I just went through, I can see that I'll be needed back home to help Lamont against them. I think we will be very busy. We will continue to fight criminals, but we will, I'm sure, be called upon to

fight spies and saboteurs."

Lamont asked, "These things you sent Clark for. What are they?"

"I'm going to let you keep my recorder with enough tapes and batteries to last a long time. After going through you being shot, I want to minimize the chances of Margot having to go through that with you again so I asked him to get a couple of Second Chance™ vests. They are bulletproof and very light and won't hinder your movements. They cover both your front and back. Apparently, Margot now has some of my fighting skills and will better be able to assist you, the way I did." She turned to Margot and said, "I left the clothes I purchased in your bedroom. You can use them the way I did – assisting Lamont. You'll be almost as invisible as he is."

Lois turned to Herb and asked, "We aren't breaking any time travel rules by doing this, are we?"

"Well, technically, but I think we can overlook it, this time."

A sudden thought hit her and Lois turned to Margot and said, "Oh, you have a hairdresser's appointment tomorrow."

Margot laughed and said, "So do you."

Turning to Herb, Lois said, "We have Tempus sedated, but you will probably need some help picking him up. Lamont can show you where he is."

"Thank you. We will secure him. I hope we can prevent his escaping again."

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After Margot and Lamont had been returned to their own universe, Lois and Clark cuddled on the couch, but Lois was uncomfortable. She sat up and said, "We need to go to your apartment."

Mystified, Clark asked, "Why?"

"This furniture ... it's so uncomfortable. I've gotten used to softer, overstuffed furniture. Your couch will feel a lot more comfortable. I want to sit and cuddle and watch 'Lethal Weapon' with you."

He did a spin change and two minutes later, she found herself where she wanted to be and doing just what she wanted to be doing.

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## Chapter 26 – Epilogue, 1995

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Universal Locator designation

Alpha 025 x Gamma - 086 x Tau 142 Shadow

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In March 2003, Lois and Clark were cuddling on the sofa in the living room. After a very pleasant time breastfeeding her, Lois had just put one-year-old Lara down for the night. Three-year-old Jon was also down for the night after saying his prayers with Clark and having a story read to him.

Lois sighed, contentedly and said, "Clark, I love our life."

"I do too, honey."

In response, Lois launched into one of her patented babbles, "How many children do you want to have? I mean, we have two already, but why should we stop there? You were always an only child. Didn't you want lots of brothers and sisters? I had Lucy, but that isn't saying much. It was more like I was her mother than her sister the way I had to take care of her because of my mother's drinking. It almost was like I was an only child and I don't want that for our kids. They should have lots and lots of brothers and sisters to play with and have birthday parties for and besides, if we look at this practically, the more children we have, the more superheroes the world will have and they can protect each other and us as we grow older."

Clark stopped her and asked, "What's going on, Lois?"

"Well, lately, I've been thinking, what if I underwent fertility treatments?"

"What? Fertility treatments? Why? We already know that we

are fertile together. We have two children already. Why do something like that?"

"Well, look at what we have, two very bright healthy children that one day will grow up to be superheroes, following in their father's footsteps."

"Right and we can have more, but why fertility treatments?"

"We could have a bigger family quicker that way."

"I don't want you having quads or quint. That's too much of a strain on the body."

In an abrupt change of subject, Lois said, "You know, lately, I've been thinking about Margot and Lamont. I wonder how they made out in the war."

"I'm sure they made out fine. Lamont had enough money to see them through."

"I meant, I wonder if our little gifts helped out."

"Oh, the vests. They might just have saved their lives at one time or another."

"You know, their universe doesn't have a Superman. The closest thing to you is Doc. Savage, but he can't hold a candle to you. There's only so much that training, even scientifically designed training can do. The human body has its limitations. The Kryptonian body's limitations are much different."

"I know that. Lois, what are you driving at?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Come on, Lois. I think that by this time I know how your mind works. You've got something up your sleeve. Spill."

Lois started another nervous babble, "Well, we don't know if they, Margot and Lamont, have any kids yet or even if they can. We know that we can, now. There was a question about that, early on, but we are past that now. Remember how happy we were when we got CJ? Remember how sad we were when we had to give him back? Then how much happier we were when we found out that I was really pregnant? Wouldn't you want that for a poor childless couple?"

"But we don't know that they are childless. We don't even know if they got married."

"Lamont promised me that he would propose as soon as Margot returned to him. I'm sure they are married by now."

"Okay, but they might not be childless."

"But what if they are? We could bring that same joy to them."

"I can't see us giving up one of our children to them so that they have a child, especially since they could very well already have one, or more."

Lois pointed out, "But you are forgetting, there is no Superman in that universe. We could help them found a dynasty."

"We are founding a dynasty of our own."

With a starry-eyed look, thinking of the prospect, Lois replied, "I know, and it is already well on the way. Okay, we could be founding a second dynasty in a universe far, far away."

Clark had his objection ready, "But we don't know if they would want or even accept our help. They may have other plans."

Lois mused, "I think we need to ask some advice."

Skeptically, Clark asked, "From who?"

"Herb. He said that theirs was a universe that TEMPO had never surveyed before. Knowing Herb, I'm sure that isn't the case now. He has probably had scouts all overtime in that universe by now."

"Okay, Herb, but how do we get in touch with him?"

"I don't know. I don't have all of the details figured out yet."

"Well, keep thinking about it."

"Oh, I will. Count on it."

\*\*\*

A couple of days later, Lois was on an assignment that took her near S.T.A.R. Labs, and thinking that it wouldn't hurt to have some questions answered, she stopped in and visited with Bernie Klein.

"Hi, Bernie."

"Well, Lois what problem do you need solved today? Another Kryptonite exposure? Another Kryptonian virus? You know, you told me what your dad did in that instance and I don't know if I would have thought of that."

"No, Bernie, you've got me all wrong. I just came so that I could ask you some questions."

"Oh, questions about what?"

She hesitated a second, before she continued, a little embarrassed, "Fertility treatments."

Astounded, he burst out, "Fertility treatments? You don't need fertility treatments, you and Clark are fertile. You have two children already!"

"But what if we wanted more, more quickly?"

"Not recommended."

"I know it's not recommended, but what if we wanted to share our good fortune with a less fortunate couple?"

Bernie glance at the door to make sure it was closed before he continued, "You would want to drop a super baby on some unsuspecting couple?"

"Oh, no! They would know in advance."

"Okay, they would know in advance, but what about nurture? We all know that there are nature and nurture. It is the nature of all of Clark's offspring to be 'super.' We all know the environment that you and Clark are providing for your children and that they are being nurtured in such a way as to produce well-grounded, responsible citizens and not criminals. How can you be assured of the same quality of nurture in the child you give up?"

"We know the couple, in fact, you met the woman."

"I did, when?"

"Do you remember Jesse, the little superhero?"

"Ah, yes. Do you mean that you have selected Leigh-Anne as the mother!? NO! Definitely not. I will not be a party to providing that woman with a real super baby."

Reaching out a hand and placing it on his arm, Lois said, "Calm down, Bernie. I'm not speaking of her, I was speaking of Lois."

Bewildered, he grunted, "Huh?"

"The Lois that you worked with during that adventure and when Superman was contaminated by the dirty bomb set off by the Nazis ... that wasn't me. That was my twin and her real name is Margot. It's her and her husband, Lamont we want to help."

"You mean that really wasn't you?"

"It really wasn't. We had temporarily swapped places. I got to know Lamont pretty well and Clark got to know Margot. We feel that they would make a perfect couple to properly nurture a super baby. Now, how is it done?"

"Well, if you are satisfied that they won't raise a super-criminal. Well, there is a series of hormone injections to stimulate egg production. At the proper time, the eggs are for want of a better term, 'harvested' and then they are exposed to Clark's sperm in vitro. Once they are fertilized they are returned to the womb. If they implant successfully, you are pregnant."

"I guess that since the fertilization occurs outside the body, then they could be implanted into anyone."

"That is correct."

"So I wouldn't have to carry twins so that I could give them one. She could carry her own."

"As long as she is willing."

"I'm pretty sure she will be. Thanks, Bernie. We'll get back to you."

"Anytime, Lois. Anytime."

\*\*\*

A couple of days later, Lois was in her rocker, nursing baby Lara when there was a knock on the door. Clark x-rayed to see who it was and handing her a drape said, "Cover-up. It's Herb. I wonder why he's here."

As she adjusted the drape, she said, "Well don't leave him on

the stoop, let him in and we can find out.”

Clark opened the door and allowed Herb to step in. He took his derby hat and placed it on the table in the vestibule before they moved to the living room.

As they did, Lois readjusted her clothes and handed baby Lara to Clark to burp. As she did, she asked, “Well, Herb, what brings you around?”

“Believe it or not, I’m here because I need your help.”

“So what else is new? You always need our help, well sometimes we need yours, but okay, so we need each other. What is it this time? You need Clark to stand in for another Clark?”

“No, actually, it is your help that is needed.”

Startled, she gasped out, “Mine?”

“Yes, yours. Do you remember Lamont and Margot?”

Startled, she blurted out, “Clark and I were just talking about them the other day.”

“Ever since we became aware of their existence, we have begun a survey of their universe. In that survey, we found that in their future they do progress to utopia, but we couldn’t figure out how that came about given Lamont’s limited powers. We traced back and found that initially, they were unable to have children because of injuries he had sustained throughout his life, but that Margot had given birth to twins, a boy, and a girl, both of whom developed Clark’s powers.”

Lois looked at Clark with an I-told-you-so look and then focused her attention back on Herb.

Herb continued, “We were wondering how this could have happened.”

Lois smiled and replied, “Herb, just the other day, Clark and I were discussing our family and how blessed we are to be able to have children, especially after our earlier disappointment. I was wondering if Margot and Lamont had had children. We decided that if they didn’t we wanted to help. I spoke with Bernie Klein about fertility treatments...”

Clark interrupted, “When did you do that?”

“The other day when I was on an assignment out that way. It’s actually a fairly simple procedure. I will have to have some hormone treatments, then they harvest my eggs. As long as she is willing, her part won’t take that long.”

“I will return to her with your offer.”

“And I will start the hormone shots. We should be ready in a month. She and Lamont should plan to spend a week here. They can use our guest room.”

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In a month, Margot and Lamont arrived and took up residence with Lois and Clark.

Margot was immediately drawn to baby Lara, holding and cuddling her and generally fussing over her while Lamont immediately took to three-year-old Jon.

Lois and Clark were standing on the side, observing them and feeling good about the decision they had made.

The next day the four of them, Margot and Lamont disguise slightly, appeared at S.T.A.R. Labs.

As they walked in, Margot approached Bernie Klein and said, “Dr. Klein, I want to thank you for what you are doing.”

“You know at the time, I really thought you were Lois.”

She chuckled and replied, “You were supposed to.”

Looking at Lamont, Bernie said, “I take it that your Clark doesn’t have powers.”

She smiled and replied, “Oh, Lamont has powers, just not like the ones that Clark has.”

“Show him, honey.”

From a small satchel he was carrying, Lamont pulled out his cloak and hat. After he had donned them he quickly faded from view, even Clark couldn’t see him.

Bernie hissed, “Wow, that’s something. Clark, don’t you wish you could do that?”

Clark nodded and replied, “Yes, I do, but it took him years of study to do what he does. It would take too long for me to learn.”

Lamont reappeared and removing cloak and hat returned them to the satchel. He said, “You have a very impressive facility. There’s nothing to compare to it in our time.”

“in your time?”

“We came here from 1941.”

Bernie spluttered, “1941, do you know what’s coming?”

“Yes, we are well aware. Herr Hitler has made his early moves. We are starting to see an uptick in spy activity. Soon they will start trying to sabotage our manufacturing and development efforts. I expect to be very busy, soon.”

Lois asked, “Shall we get started?”

Bernie became all business. He said, “I’ve had two OB/GYN beds set up in my lab. We will get the both of you prepped. While we do that,” he handed Clark a small sample container, “Clark can go down the hall and provide the sample we will use to fertilize the eggs.”

As Lois and Margot entered the lab, Clark took the container and disappeared down the hall.

“Lamont, if you wouldn’t mind waiting here. There are magazines, TV...”

“I’ll be a fine doctor. Don’t worry about me.”

Clark returned a few minutes later with the container, handed it to Bernie, and joined Lamont.

An hour later, Lois and Margot joined them and said, “We have to get home and the two of you have to wait on us hand and foot for at least a week until we are sure that the embryos are implanted in the cervix. We are each going to have twins.”

Margot laughed and said, “Actually, Bernie said a couple of days.”

Lois whined, “Awww, there you go spoiling all our fun. I was looking forward to a week of being pampered.”

“I’m sure the guys will take good care of us for the duration of our pregnancies, won’t you boys?”

Both Clark and Lamont were smiling as they answered in unison, “Count on it.”

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Just under nine months later, in April 2004, Lois and Clark were born, Sean and Celeste Kent.

In a similar amount of time, in the other universe, on December 6, 1941, the eve of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the inception of World War II, Margot and Lamont was born, Clark and Lois Cranston, and a new dynasty was begun.

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In 1969, at the age of 18, Clark Cranston was drafted into the U.S. Army. Because of his aptitude tests, he was able to choose to be trained as a medic and served honorably.

On May 22nd of that year a new superheroine, Superwoman, made her debut. There was a magnitude 9.6 earthquake in Chile which created a tsunami. Her efforts saved countless lives. From that day forward she helped in and around New York City.

In 1971 Superwoman was joined in her efforts by Superman and suddenly the world was a safer place.

THE END

### Superman and The Shadow comments and FAQs

I am fairly certain that a lot of my younger readers have never heard of THE SHADOW.

Let’s start with the FAQs:

A common thread in The Shadow radio series was the disbelief of the common public that The Shadow was anything more than a voice on the radio, while criminals knew different and feared him.

That was because The Shadow started as a just voice on the

radio. Starting on July 31, 1930, The Shadow debuted as the mysterious narrator of the Street & Smith radio program titled 'Detective Story Hour.'

The character caught the attention of the listening public and they started asking for copies of 'That Shadow Detective Magazine'. That inspired Street and Smith to develop The Shadow Magazine as a pulp series.

As a result, The Shadow was one of the first superheroes to appear in American Classical Literature, first on radio and then in pulp novels which debuted on April 1, 1931, when the first Shadow pulp magazine went on sale. By comparison, Doc Savage made his debut in March of 1933. Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster were still high school students and wouldn't sell their Superman idea to Detective Comics, later to become DC Comics, until 1938. Who knows, they may have derived some of their inspiration from Doc Savage.

The Shadow has been in most of the major genres, pulp novels, comic books, paperback novels, radio and movies. The only thing lacking was TV and I have not found any reference to that. As for movies, there were several movies made in the thirties and early forties. In 1994 Alec Baldwin and Penelope Ann Miller starred in 'The Shadow' a campy take on the superhero. Penelope Ann Miller happens to be a blond, however, in most of the descriptions of Margo that I have read, she was a brunette.

During the run of the radio drama, the character of the shadow was played by various voice actors, among them being the very famous Orson Wells (Of Citizen Kane, The Third Man and War of the Worlds fame.).

Margot Lane, the Shadow's girlfriend and 'Girl Friday' was not in the original pulp novels and was introduced as part of the cast of the radio drama to give Lamont Cranston, The Shadow, a foil that he could explain what happened 'off screen'. One of the famous women to play that part was the young Agnes Moorehead who later became Endora, Samantha's mother, on the 'Bewitched' TV program opposite Elizabeth Montgomery.

The radio series first aired in 1937 and was on the air regularly until December of 1954. In the radio dramas, due to the limitations of the ½ hour format and the decision not to have multi-part stories the ensemble cast was reduced to the two primary characters, The Shadow, Lamont Cranston, and Margot Lane.

In the pulp magazines, The Shadow had a number of assistants, most of whom I have introduced in this story. In the original pulps, Margot Lane did not appear, but after she was introduced in the radio dramas, she started to appear in the pulp publications. I have attempted to portray all of them as accurately as possible. For instance, The Harry Vincent origin story is as true to what appeared in the pulps as I could make it from my memory of having read the story.

Over the course of this story, I have taken some small liberties. The actual origin of The Shadow was never actually spelled out. There are sketchy references to his participation in WW1 and his travels in the orient. I have taken the liberty of filling in some of the blanks creating a back story that was something of a parallel to a Superman that we are familiar with (Alt1).

To set the period I have also attempted to include historical references accurate to the time. I am not a historian, by any means, but I have done some study of the period around WW1 and WW2 so the news stories and events of the time are accurate to the day.

Initially, The Shadow was simply a crime fighter, but as the country moved into WW2, as I indicated in the story, he broadened the scope of his activities to include spies and saboteurs.

The last Shadow magazine was published in the summer of 1949. The paperbacks were published between 1963 and 1980. In 2015 a Shadow novel was released. The author used unpublished

material produced by the original author and the story was set in 1933. A sequel was released in 2016. These two novels are a Doc Savage crossover.