



Action Comics #26
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Action Comics
Issue #26: "Kryptonite Man"
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K glowed with raw power. The crystal he wore acted as a conduit and the exploded energy from the generator whirled and seethed in his body. K had just blasted one of the police cars into the air as Rip, Killz and Toad fired their weapons into the line of police.

Pat had just baled out of his cruiser as the green energy blasted underneath it sending it hurtling into the sky. There was little Pat could do but hunker down on the pavement trying to make himself as small as possible and wait for the police cruiser to come crashing down on him.

Pat McCormack was a cop. His Father was a cop, and his father's Father was a cop. Back in the forties his Grandfather had once been saved by Metropolis' first hero, Champion. His Father had been saved by the Guardian in the sixties. Today, Pat was saved by Superman.

The car never crashed down, Pat looked up to see superman standing over him, the cruiser held high over his head.

"You might want to step back officer. I'll take this one." Superman said.

Pat scrambled back with the other officers.

Rip, Killz and Toad fired their weapons toward the officers, Superman held the police car out in front of him as a barricade protecting the police behind him. The bullets pinged and pocked the cars metal. Superman

pushed the police car forward pinning the boys to the wall of the Daily Planet building.

“You boys are way too young to be playing with guns.”

Superman felt the car being pushed back to him. *Uhgh, the one that was glowing must be stronger than normal. I should have figured that.* Superman thought.

K pushed the car backward. “Gonna kill you Superman! This is our street now! The Manglers are taking over!” K shoved and explosive radiation shot from his hands sending Superman and the car flying backwards toward the line of policemen. Superman twisted his body still holding on to the car and managed to land feet first in front of the policemen. Using the momentum and his own super-strength, he hurled the car over his head, over the police, over metropolis and into Hobbs bay. The police returned fire. The bullets struck K, where they hit the radiation rippled, disrupted, by the lead slugs. His partners, unfortunately, were not as immune to the bullets and each fell as red bursts spattered the wall behind them. K watched as they fell to the ground.

“NOOOOOOOO! You bastards are going to pay now. K leapt from the ground and flew head-long toward the police and Superman.

The concussive force of K’s blast rocked the Daily Planet building.

“Whoa, easy there Lois”, Perry grabbed Lois’s arm to keep her from falling out of the window, as she leaned out to see what was happening on the street.

“Chief, I’ve got to get down there.” Perry pulled her back in the window.

“Sure Lois.” Perry knew there was no arguing with her, and besides she was right. This was a big story and he needed his best reporter on the scene. “But I’m sure there’s a safer way than out that window.” Perry continued.

“The stairs”, Lois bolted from the office, nearly running down Clark

Kent.

“Smallville, where have you been?”

“I uh ... What’s going on”, Clark stuttered.

“What’s going on? How did you get in the building?” Lois didn’t wait for an answer; she slammed into the stairwell door and was down the first flight of steps in a single bound. Clarks’ mysterious comings and goings were not important right now. Right now there was a story on her front door step and she would be damned if she would let anyone else beat her to it. Not even Clark (disappearing) Kent.

Pat heard the snap of Superman’s cape as he leapt into the air flying headlong at the glowing gang member that raced just as quickly toward him.

Melvin McNew had to tell Superman what happened. The street had been cordoned off down the block. He could hear gun fire and shouting. He had to tell Superman before something bad happened.

“Please you’ve got to let me through”, Melvin pleaded with the policeman that blocked his path. “I have information that Superman must have!”

“Sure you do buddy, now step back.” The policeman folded his arms over his chest letting the night stick he held in his hand poke out from under his arm. Melvin wasn’t getting any closer that way. He looked around, the alleyway was unguarded, he looked back to the policeman shooing away another bystander saying much the same thing that Melvin had, and while the officer was distracted he ducked into the alleyway that wound its way through the block, around behind the Daily Planet.

Superman began to sweat, he felt drained, tired, and then the familiar feeling in the pit of his stomach, Kryptonite. The glowing teenage gangster wanna-be that was hurtling toward him was exuding waves of Kryptonite radiation. At the last nanosecond before impact Superman

swerved to the left and caught the Kryptonite Kid on the back of the neck with a well placed judo chop where Batman had shown him. K crashed to the ground skidding into the scattering police. He had to stop this quick before the radiation over came him or K figured out his advantage.

Superman landed in front of the Daily planet building. Melvin McNew rounded the corner of the building onto the street, from the other corner ran Lois Lane.

They both ran to him talking at the same time.

“Superman you’ve got to listen, I’m Melvin McNew, I work at star labs, searching for new energy sources. There was an explosion involving some kryptonite.”

“Superman, who is this? Why is he green? Does this have any connection to Toyman?” Lois fired the questions at him like bullets.

Superman put his hand over Lois mouth. “Lois, shut up! Mr. McNew, you said something about kryptonite?”

K had shaken off Superman’s judo chop and was standing in the middle of the street. “You’re gonna pay for that you *\$&*#(@!” K thrust his arms out in front of him. A blast of Kryptonite radiation erupted from them, toward the man of steel. Instead of running from it he ran toward it.

“Superman! It’s Kryptonite!” Melvin shouted!

Superman stooped in mid-run, scooping up a manhole cover from the street, he used the lead cover as a shield, blocking the beam. Though it wasn’t hitting him directly, he could still feel the radiation pushing the solar energy from his body. He had to wrap this up quick and he knew just where to do it.

Superman pushed the energy back toward K as he called back over his shoulder. “Mr.McNew! Which lab?”

“Moore and Westlake”, Mr. McNew shouted back.

Superman peeked out from behind his makeshift shield. A quick burst of heat vision gave K a hotfoot. Like putting your hand under hot water and then jerking back to hold it with the other hand, K instinctively stopped firing to grab his foot protecting it from the sudden pain. As he bent down Superman grabbed him under his chin. The radiation seared his hand, but instead of reacting instinctively he held on long enough to fling the Kryptonite Man up into the air along a trajectory where he would land at Moore and Westlake.

Superman turned back to Melvin. "I assume you had some sort of containment protocol in place at that lab?"

"Absolutely, but it may have been damaged in the explosion."

Superman picked up Mr. McNew and flew up into the air. "Let's hope not Mr. McNew."

Lois still stood staring in disbelief. He told me to shut up! She fumed.

"This is Cat Grant with WGBS News. Lex Luthor's recent arrest attempt and his subsequent escape from police have left his Lexcorp Corporation in turmoil. Without its head CO the company was ripe for take over bids. Wayne-Tec and its Billionaire playboy owner Bruce Wayne were ready to sweep in and take over when from seemingly out of nowhere a company called The Fero Corporation, negotiated a last minute bid snatching the billion dollar conglomerate from Wayne-Tec. Here with me now is the new managing Director of Lex-corp, Mr. Clint Howard. Mr. Howard, Lexcorp's influence extends far beyond the scope of Metropolis how do you intend ... "

A screwdriver flew through the air and smashed the TV screen. Lex Luthor bent back over the tiny red and blue rocket that his 'employees' had liberated from Winslow Schott. It wasn't really stealing; after all, Lex had hired Schott to find the rocket. Lex just wanted to make sure that it couldn't be traced back to him. None of that mattered now though. The kryptonian had seen to that, him and his spandex wearing comrades.

Perhaps it's all for the best though, he had tried it their way, to lead the world to a better tomorrow, occasionally stepping outside what society

accepted as 'allowed', but now the kryptonian had taken it too far and the gloves were off. He would make the world a better place, even if he had to shove it down their throats to do it, but first he had to get rid of the kryptonian.

This lab was one of thirty or so he had secretly hidden throughout the world, blank slates with all the technology to run the most sophisticated experiments. In case some of Lexcorp's® research was less than acceptable. Built through dummy companies and unskilled laborers who only knew that part A went into part B they were virtually untraceable, now they were his network of hideouts.

The wall of computers behind him pinged and information rolled across the screen. Lex removed the spectral goggles he was using to examine the rocket and watched the information scroll across the screen, stopping it at intervals to examine it more closely. The genetic material that he had extracted from the rocket was similar to that of Kru-el's, Luthor frowned as the thought of that failed experiment, and the monstrosity that it became. That's what happens when you don't handle things yourself. This time he would do it himself and he would get it right.

The new sample was definitely kryptonian and definitively the same family. Kru-el's DNA had been inherently flawed, but this sample, this had to be Superman himself. Lex carefully withdrew the genetic material from the sample plate and dropped it into the soup of amino acids and peptides that would activate the genetic markers. He placed the canister into the chamber on the large cylinder in the middle of the room. The genetic cocktail injected into the pea green liquid. The middle of the liquid began to swirl and eddy as cells began to follow their genetic instructions, divide, divide, divide. Lamps imbedded into the chamber all around glowed suffusing the growing kryptonian entity with solar energy. At the proper point Lex would halt the cloning process in order to imprint his own psychological profile onto his own living kryptonian-bio-weapon.

K crashed down into the still smoldering embers at Moore and Westlake. Superman and Melvin hovered overhead.

"Where was the containment unit?"

“West corner, in the basement”, Melvin pointed.

Melvin watched as Superman stared at the area. Superman’s iris’s contracted narrowing his field of vision to the x-ray spectrum.

“A big concrete looking structure with rods sticking out all around”, Superman asked.

“That’s it, there should be cables running out into a capacitor. If you can get him into that, it should draw the energy from him into the containment unit.”

“Right, let’s set you out of ... ”

“Look out” Melvin shouted.

The Kryptonite man had fired another energy beam, superman turned, protecting Mr. McNew from the blast and taking it directly in the back. Superman felt his powers drain from him and Melvin began to fall. He pivoted his body around, holding Melvin close to him, so that when he hit the ground he absorbed the brunt of the crash.

“Superman, are you ok?”

“Melvin, run, get away.” Superman answered groggily.

Melvin quickly picked his way across the burnt rubble.

Kryptonite man stood over the man of steel. “Told you I was gonna cap your ass, Stupidman!”

Superman was sweating profusely, the radiation poisoning his system. “I don’t think so.” He mumbled as he brought both his fists down hard onto the charred floor. The floor collapsed as he and K fell through into the floor below K landing directly in the giant capacitor.

Superman fought to stand to reach the control panel as K began to climb

out the top of the capacitor. "Gonna be worse for you if you make me chase you!" he shouted. "I told you there was a new gang in town!"

Suddenly the capacitor began to hum as the magnets and coils of wiring generated the magnetic field that grabbed the energy and sucked it down into the containment unit.

"NO!" K shouted as he was pulled back into the capacitor.

Melvin stood at the controls moving dials and switches. Superman now stood by his side. "I told you to leave."

"I started to, and then realized you wouldn't know how to operate the capacitor. Melvin cranked down the power and Superman flew into the capacitor and hoisted out K.

"What's going on? I didn't do anything! They made me!"

"You'll have a chance to explain it downtown." Superman shook Mr. McNews' hand, "Thank you for your help Mr. McNew. You really saved my neck." Superman wrapped the naked K in his cape and flew up and out.

"Mr. McNew", Lois called as she exited the cab, "How about an interview with the man who saved Superman?"

Later: Daily Planet building, the roof.

"What was with the shut up?"

Lois stood with her hands on her hips. The high wind whipped through her hair making it sting her face like tiny whips.

"I'm sorry; I just couldn't listen to both of you at the same time." Superman stood at the edge of the building staring off into space.

"Don't give me that. How many things are you listening too right now? What are you looking at, what planet? Look, we haven't seen each other much lately ... "

“Lois, you were dating John Irons.”

“Technically we weren’t dating.”

“From where I’m from that’s dating.”

“You mean Krypton, or *Kansas*?”

“Lois, this has to stop. I have something I have to do, out there; I don’t know when I’ll be back.”

“Are you breaking up with me?”

“There’s not really anything to breakup is there Lois?”

“I would appreciate it that you not tell the world that I’m gone. I’ve notified the League of my intended absence and they’ll be watching out for Metropolis. I wanted you to know so that you could pursue stories other than mine.”

“Stories?”

“Yeah, y’know, intrepid reporter Lois Lane, always looking for that Pulitzer.”

Lois heard the door open behind her.

“Hey, Lois, What are you doing up here.” Clark asked. “Oops, sorry, didn’t know you had, err, company.”

“Superman looked back over his shoulder at Clark.

“It’s ok Clark, I was just leaving.”

Superman lifted off into the air. Lois watched until he was just a speck and then gone.

Lois pushed a tear from her eye with her finger before Clark could see it run down her cheek, “What’s up Clark?”

“Lois, have you been crying?”

“No, just wind stinging my eyes.”

“Perry says your piece on the Kryptonite Man is crap and needs you to rewrite it in 15 minutes.”

“Are you Perry’s copy boy now?”

Clark turned to go back down the stairs. “Just want to help wherever I can. Lois.”

Lois followed, slowly closing the door behind her as she took one last look, up in the sky.

Rykers Island

“Well Mr. Kase Kryher, AKA the Kryptonite man. In you go, watch out for parasite, he bites! Oh and better give me that necklace too! You’re not allowed jewelry in here you know. Don’t worry it’ll be here for you when you get out in 15 to twenty years” The guard grabbed the small clear crystal and pulled it from Kase’s neck snapping the chain and pushed him into the cell clanging it shut with a resounding ring.

The guard held the crystal up to the light. Hmmm kinda pretty, He thought. I bet Melinda would like it and I wouldn’t have to spend anything on her birthday next week. Every body wins. He twirled the crystal on the end of the chain and walked down the hall whistling.

To be continued

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