

Superman

Dark Matter



Jami Todd

SUPERMAN: DARK MATTER

(ANIMATION PILOT)

Jami Todd

Superman infiltrates the Phantom Zone to rescue his biological father. All rights reserved. Contact: Littlebiglion@gmail.com

BLACK

KLAXONS SOUND

FADE IN

EXT. MARINE CORPS BASE (METROPOLIS) - DUSK

A military research base on high alert.

INT. MARINE CORPS BASE, SECRET LAB - MOMENTS LATER

EMIL HAMILTON, late thirties, in a white lab coat desperately taps into a keyboard, trying to shut down a portal to another dimension.

Emil stares through the portal at another world-

HELLISH

DARK

APOKOLIPS!

Colonel Rick Flag, early thirties, in uniform approaches Emil. His TEAM 7 platoon stands in uniform behind him, ready for anything.

Flag stares at the computer with wide eyes.

FLAG
Shut it down!

EMIL
I'm trying! The override isn't
working!

A platoon stands before the portal. They suddenly spot an army of-

PARADEMONS!

WITH INSECT-LIKE WINGS

Flying toward the gateway!

Flag raises his revolver. Shoots the portal. Emil yanks Flag's arm down.

EMIL (CONT'D)
Don't! You'll destroy it.

Flag ignores Emil and orders his men to-

FLAG

Fire!

TEAM 7 fires at the portal. Bullets ricochet. Nothing happens to the portal.

The parademons continue their charge toward them.

His gun useless, Flag bolts toward a wall where he spots an emergency ax. He yanks the ax off the wall, then charges the portal. As he raises the ax to bust the portal-

A twenty-foot parademon crosses the threshold and enters EARTH as TEAM 7 attempt to shoot it down. As TEAM 7 contend with the parademon, shooting it to its death-

FLAG lets the ax fall!

WHACK!

He smashes the portal before any other parademons can cross. A bolt of electricity suddenly-

Strikes him and sends him soaring back through the air.

Flag crashes against the dead parademon with a thud. He clambers to his feet, never once taking his eyes off the otherworldly creature. Dead. Or, at least, unconscious.

Emil approaches his ruined portal, shaking his head in mute disbelief. Then-

EMIL

What have you done!?! What have you done!?

Flag approaches Emil, who desperately attempts to salvage his invention, picking up the pieces, trying to put it back together again.

EMIL (CONT'D)

It will take months to fix this!
Months!

Flag turns to face the fallen parademon.

FLAG

Years would be better. Decades even. If we're lucky... centuries.

EMIL

You don't know what you're talking about! This is paradigm-shifting technology. A key to open doors to other worlds... other dimensions.

Flag regards the parademon, then Emil. Shakes his head.

FLAG

Some doors you just don't open.

A soldier approaches the parademon. Prods it with his rifle. No response. Again, he prods it. He turns to face FLAG.

SOLDIER 1

I think it's dead, sir. Whatever it was, it stinks.

Suddenly-

The parademon's eyes spring open and it-

Lurches to its feet, exposing a mouthful of needle-like teeth. Instantly-

Team 7 train their rifles on it and shoot as the parademon smashes the soldier across the lab.

The soldier hits the concrete wall and crashes to the ground unconscious.

The parademon makes short order of Team 7, sending soldier after soldier flying through the air with vicious attacks.

Emil scrambles to a desk. Pushes a safety protocol button that locks the massive blast doors. Then-

Emil hides behind the desk as Flag battles the parademon with the ax.

The parademon smashes Flag to the ground unconscious. Then it pounds at the wall, over and over again until it-

Busts through the lab and escapes.

INT. DINER - MOMENTS LATER

CLARK KENT, late twenties, sits at a table with LOIS LANE, also late twenties.

A couple walks by them with their two-year-old daughter. They sit at a table behind Lois.

The little girl stands on her seat and smiles at Clark as he sips on his milkshake.

Clark smiles back at her.

Lois smiles at Clark.

LOIS
That good?

CLARK
Best vanilla bean milkshake in
Metropolis.

LOIS
You're lucky you got super
metabolism.

The little girl sticks her tongue out at Clark. Clark sticks his tongue at her.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Real nice. We that comfortable with
each other now.

Clark sticks his tongue out, again. Lois turns to see the little girl behind her.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Should have figured.

Lois turns to Clark.

LOIS (CONT'D)
I'm waiting.

CLARK
For what?

LOIS
You know what, Smallville.

CLARK
I just think you'd make a good
mother.

LOIS
That's exactly what I wouldn't
make. You know how I feel about
kids. Even if I did want... we
can't...

The little girl makes a clown face. Clark returns her clown face.

CLARK
There are a lot of kids without
parents.

LOIS
I don't want kids. I told you that
from the beginning.

CLARK
I know. My dad felt the same.

LOIS
Not tonight... please...

Clark nods.

The little girl makes another clown face, so does Clark.

LOIS (CONT'D)
I thought we could take some time
off maybe-

Clark suddenly turns serious. Lois notices. He looks at her.
She sighs.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Go!

CLARK
Sorry.

LOIS
(sarcastic)
You'll make it up to me after you
save the world.

CLARK
Sure thing, Lois.

Clark kisses Lois. Waves good-bye to the little girl. Dashes
out of the diner.

Lois stares in the direction he left. She turns to the little
girl. The little girl smiles at her. She smiles back.

EXT. MARINE CORPS BASE - MOMENTS LATER

A helicopter speeds toward a plume of smoke and destruction.
Out of the smoke comes the-

PARADEMON

SURGES with a terrible cry!

The helicopter's guns fire!

The paradaemon takes the bullets, but nothing happens. It rushes toward the helicopter and-

CRASHES into it!

Sends the helicopter swirling helter-skelter toward the ground. As the ground rushes toward the helicopter-

SUPERMAN catches it in mid-air.

Superman places the helicopter safely on the ground. Then he surges into the sky after the shrieking parademon.

Before the parademon can destroy another helicopter Superman tackles the parademon. And-

They exchange blows!

The parademon tries to cleave Superman's head off. But Superman evades every attempt.

Superman punches it. Sends it back. He charges to finish it off. But-

The parademon kicks Superman. Sends Superman-

Tumbling through the air and takes off for the city.

Superman lands on concrete.

Flag approaches and towers over him.

FLAG

It's unstoppable, Superman. We can't hold a thing like that. You have to kill it.

Superman gives him a look. *Yeah, right.*

Superman stands. Leaps to the sky. Surges through the sky after the parademon.

EXT. METROPOLIS STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The parademon lands. It charges after a yellow cab. Snatches it. Lifts it. Tosses the cab at a-

Cluster of tourists. But-

Superman steps in front of the tourists and catches the cab. Then Superman lunges and punches the parademon.

The parademon tumbles through the sky.

Superman vaults into the sky. Surges toward the parademon at an incredible speed.

SUPERMAN

Let's take this somewhere else!

Tackles the parademon and at super-sonic speed carries it all the way to the-

EXT. ARCTIC - MOMENTS LATER

Superman smashes the parademon into a snow dune. An explosion of ice and snow powder engulfs them.

The snow powder dissipates to reveal the parademon. A walrus lumbers onto a drifting slab of ice to watch them.

The parademon shrieks its anger at Superman.

SUPERMAN

Feeling's mutual.

Suddenly-

The parademon lunges at Superman! They exchange blows for a while in front of the curious walrus.

Superman evades two blows. Strikes one solid one. The parademon charges and smashes Superman into a wall of ice. The Superman evades a crushing blow to his head. Kicks the parademon back.

The parademon moves... a little slower... toward Superman. Superman feints left. Right. Then uppercuts the parademon so that his arcs into the air and lands in a bank of snow.

The parademon clambers to its feet. Tries to fly away. Superman snatches its ankles just before it can take to the sky. Twirls the parademon. Thrusts the parademon into yet another snowbank.

The parademon stands with difficulty. It stares at his limbs and hands that are starting to freeze over with a layer of ice. But the parademon doesn't give up.

The parademon charges Superman with an unparalleled ferocity. Superman evades. Dodges. Feints.

Soon another walrus joins the other to watch the spectacle as Superman and the parademon exchange incredible blows.

Superman then grabs the parademon by the wrist and thrusts it into the ice.

WHACK!

The parademon shatters the ice and goes into the freezing water. It claws its way back up. It stands. Wet, it begins to freeze over.

The parademon marches with difficulty toward Superman. The ice and cold weaken the parademon until it finally collapses.

Superman approaches the parademon. Towers over it.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
What box did they pull you out of?

EXT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE (ARCTIC) - LATER

Superman drags the unconscious parademon to the entrance seemingly made of snow and ice but really, it is made out of Kryptonian crystal technology.

INT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, PHANTOM ZONE CHAMBER - LATER

Superman places the parademon into a crystal chamber. Observes it. Moves to a Kryptonian keyboard. Keys in a few codes. Sends the parademon to the-

PHANTOM ZONE

Superman watches the parademon disappear into a portal not unlike the one it came from. The portal closes.

Satisfied, Superman turns to exit the Phantom Zone chamber just as-

A Crystal Glows Red.

A disembodied digital voice warns:

CPU (V.O.)
Security Alert. Attempted Breach.
Security Alert. Attempted Breach.

Superman turns to the Kryptonian computer.

SUPERMAN
Breach... More...

CPU (V.O.)
 Breach attempt. Detainee 372364.
 VOX. Real name Vrill Dox of Colulu.
 Breach attempt. Detainee 782636 Jor-
 El of Krypton.

Superman starts. Addresses his computer.

SUPERMAN
 Jor-El of Krypton? Access... Access
 Jor-El of Krypton.

CPU (V.O.)
 Jor-El of Krypton. Exiled to The
 Zone for high treason.

Superman swallows hard.

SUPERMAN
 More...

CPU (V.O.)
 Jor-El found guilty of sending a
 Kryptonian child and technology
 toward a destination unknown.

Superman stares at the crystal portal to The Zone.

CPU (V.O.)
 Convicted of treason, Jor-El and
 Lara were arrested and banished to
 The Zone by the elders.

SUPERMAN
 Locate.

The computer processes the request. Then concludes-

CPU (V.O.)
 Cannot locate.

SUPERMAN
 Locate, Jor-El.

CPU (V.O.)
 Cannot locate.

Superman stares at the portal chamber to the Phantom Zone.

EXT. SMALLVILLE, KENT FARM HOME - DAY

A farmhouse surrounded by golden fields of wheat.

MARTHA (V.O.)
John... tell him to be reasonable.

INT. SMALLVILLE, KENT FARM HOME - MOMENTS LATER

MARTHA CLARK, late fifties, stares at someone.

MARTHA
Tell him he can't go.

JONATHAN KENT, early sixties, and Clark sit at the kitchen table.

JONATHAN
Martha... this has nothing to do with reason.

MARTHA
I won't--

JONATHAN
Martha, please. It's his father.

MARTHA
You're his father.

JONATHAN
Please...

Martha exits.

Jonathan stares at Clark for a long, loving moment.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
A prison of Krypton's worst criminals?

Clark nods.

Jonathan sighs twice, heavily.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
You're more stubborn than I ever was so I won't even try to change your mind... but...

Jonathan stops himself.

CLARK
What, dad?

JONATHAN
You're real father risked life and
freedom for you, and I think if he
had to do it all over again... he
would. And... if we're anything
alike... he would want you to
accept his fate and live your life.

CLARK
I can bring him back.

JONATHAN
I'm sure you could.

CLARK
He's there because of me.

JONATHAN
That's my point.

Clark nods.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
What does Lois say?

Clark looks away.

CLARK
She's fine with it.

JONATHAN
She's fine with it?

CLARK
Yeah.

INTERCUT: Clark and Lois arguing.

CLARK (CONT'D)
If there's even a one percent
chance, I can bring him back... I
have to take it.

Jonathan smiles at his boy.

JONATHAN
You're a good, kid.

CLARK
Not a kid, dad.

JONATHAN
You'll always be my kid.

INT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, PHANTOM ZONE CHAMBER - LATER
Superman keys in a code into a Kryptonian computer.

LOIS
Your mother's fine with this?

SUPERMAN
Yeah.

INTERCUT: Martha arguing with Clark just as Jonathan intervenes.

LOIS
Kryptonians found a way to skip death and go directly to purgatory, and you're jumping in? Clark Kent! This is a joke!

SUPERMAN
Not jumping, Lois. Walking.

LOIS
You know what I mean? It's filled with Krypton's worst.

SUPERMAN
Not just Krypton. Other alien races as well who have attempted planetary takeovers.

LOIS
Great. That makes me feel so much better.

Superman smiles at Lois.

SUPERMAN
Don't look so concerned. I'll be fine.

LOIS
What if you don't find him?

SUPERMAN
I'll find him.

Lois sighs.

LOIS
How will you get back?

Superman reveals a small device that glows blue. Attaches a cord to it.

SUPERMAN

With this. It will connect me to the portal.

Superman places the cord around his neck. Lois raises her eyebrows.

LOIS

I don't think I'd understand even if you explain it.

SUPERMAN

I don't understand it myself. What I know is it's based on Kryptonian frequency technology. I'll be in another dimension with reduced powers.

LOIS

Could take days... weeks....

SUPERMAN

For me, yes, but for you... seconds... minutes... I may not know how it works but what I do know is time slows almost to a stop in The Zone.

LOIS

What happens if you get stuck?

SUPERMAN

Call Bruce.

LOIS

(Sarcastic)

Right. He's got all the answers.

SUPERMAN

Most of the time... he does.

Superman activates the Phantom Zone crystal chamber. Kisses Lois, long and hard.

LOIS

This is crazy.

SUPERMAN

He'd do it for me.

LOIS

He did do it for you.

Superman nods, understanding.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Bring him back, Smallville.

Superman enters the glowing chamber and disappears.

Lois stares at the blue light for a long moment.

EXT. DESERT (PHANTOM ZONE) - MOMENTS LATER

Superman enters. Turns to find-

AMALAK, an alien, age unknown, swathed in desert clothes. He levels a make-shift gun at Superman.

AMALAK
Where are the others?

SUPERMAN
No others.

AMALAK
Kryptonians don't walk the desert
alone. It's foolish!

SUPERMAN
This one does.

Amalak scans the area suspiciously as though expecting an ambush. Nothing.

AMALAK
Who's your king?

SUPERMAN
King? I have no king.

AMALAK
You serve General Zod?

SUPERMAN
No.

AMALAK
You are an agent of Kalmoran, the
Thanagorian King?

SUPERMAN
I am no subject, no agent. I am a
free man.

Amalak laughs outrageously, then gets serious fast.

AMALAK

No such thing here. What are you? I know. You're an outcast, exiled from New Krypton to live with the savages.

SUPERMAN

Is that what you are?

AMALAK

To the Kryptonians. An outcast, yes. To the Thanagorians I am a Downsider. Not sure which name I prefer.

Superman changes the subject, not wanting to get into the politics of kingdoms that emerged within the Phantom Zone.

SUPERMAN

I'm searching for someone.

AMALAK

So am I.

SUPERMAN

Maybe we could help each other.

Amalak scoffs at the idea.

AMALAK

Work with a Kryptonian dog?

Amalak fires a bolt of plasma at Superman. Superman leaps to the air. He tries to fly but to no avail. He falls down.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

What? You think you can fly? Like a bird!? HA! Leap, yes... and higher than most Kryptonians... but fly?

Amalak fires again. Superman leaps out of the way. He fires again. And again,

Superman evades the blast. But-

Tumbles down a dune.

Amalak gives chase. Approaches him with a laugh. Towers over him and points his gun at him just as-

THE ERADICATOR, a Kryptonian android, suddenly and unexpectedly grabs Amalak. Disarms him. Thrusts him to the ground. The Eradicator aims a blaster at Amalak.

Superman clammers to his feet. Hesitates. Then kicks the weapon out of the Eradicator's hands.

The Eradicator turns on Superman. Narrows his gaze. Attacks with a robotic shriek. But is suddenly clobbered from behind with a massive boulder.

The Eradicator goes down. For now.

Amalak nods his appreciation at Superman.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Follow me before he gets up.

They dash away.

LATER

Amalak slows his pace through the ruins of the desert. Oddly, strange bones of fish, or fish like animals are scattered about signifying that the area was once part of an ocean.

SUPERMAN
What was that?

Amalak narrows his gaze on Superman.

AMALAK
You don't know? You really aren't from New Krypton.

Superman shakes his head.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Eradicator. Designed by Zod to cleanse the world of Thanagarians and savages. Rumor is... Thanagarians are working on their own version of the Eradicator.

Amalak laughs.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Doomsday, they call it. Supposed to wipe the entire world of Kryptonians.

His voice turns sarcastic. Stares hard at Superman.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
What a shame that would be.

Superman catches this but doesn't respond. Continues to follow Amalak.

SUPERMAN
Can you take me to New Krypton?

AMALAK
I have other plans.

SUPERMAN
I'm searching for my father.

AMALAK
If your father abandoned you in the
desert like so many others why
would you seek him out?

SUPERMAN
It's... complicated.

AMALAK
Always is... what's your name,
Kryptonian?

Amalak regards Superman.

SUPERMAN
Kal-El.

Amalak's eyes widen.

AMALAK
Son of Jor-El?

SUPERMAN
Yes. You know him?

AMALAK
Old friend. You can say your father
helped shape my destiny. I owe him
dearly. But I heard he perished.
You sure he's alive?

Superman nods.

SUPERMAN
I am.

AMALAK
Then it would be an honor to help.

Amalak considers a moment.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
They must be keeping Jor-El in the
prison tower.

SUPERMAN

Why would you say that?

AMALAK

Between us... I don't think he has many friends here. Most don't remember... the Zone has a way of erasing your memory... but those who do remember... they remember that your father and the Council discovered this place.

Amalak nods to himself. Mumbles to himself-

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Zod must be after a way back to Krypton. Yes. That's why he's keeping him alive.

SUPERMAN

There's no way back.

AMALAK

Where are you from?

SUPERMAN

Somewhere else.

AMALAK

What of Krypton?

SUPERMAN

Destroyed.

Amalak suppresses a smile with difficulty.

AMALAK

Destroyed? It cannot be.

SUPERMAN

Experiments with black matter destabilized the planet's core.

Amalak takes a deep breath. Seems sad, but really he is on the verge of laughter.

AMALAK

(Insincere)

I am sorry for your loss, son of Jor-El. Truly. It's always tough to lose a home.

Superman stares at Amalak. Narrows his gaze. Senses something's off.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Let's find your father.

LATER

Their journey through the desert continues. Superman spots a massive mountain with a brightly lit city atop it.

SUPERMAN
Kandor?

AMALAK
If only it were. Valhlo. Use to be a penal island on Krypton until the Council made their inter-dimensional discovery.

Amalak grins.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
In a blink of an eye the entire island disappeared. Exiled from Krypton.

Amalak laughs.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
The inhabitants didn't even realize what happened. Savages know the truth. We know what this place is. What it really is?

Amalak grows serious.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Zod keeps them in the dark with his education and history. Kryptonians actually think they're still on Krypton that has been invaded by the Thanagarians.

Amalak shakes his head.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
They actually believe they are the last surviving city of Krypton. In a way they're right. It's kind of funny...

Amalak laughs, again. Superman gives him a look. Amalak gets serious all at once, correcting.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

And sad at the same time. And
sad... very sad....

They walk by the bones of a Kryptonian whale. They hear a
roar and stop. Nothing. They continue walking.

SUPERMAN

How do we get in?

AMALAK

That's gonna be a challenge. The
entire city is protected by an
energy field to keep the
Thanagarians out. Never comes down.
Never.

Amalak shakes his head.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

If it ever did, the Thanagarians
would invade from the sky and that
would be the end of New Krypton.

Superman gives Amalak a look of concern.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

There are, however, secret tunnels,
made by Kara and her Outlaws.
Outlaws use the tunnels to bring
the truth of The Zone to citizens
of New Krypton.

Amalak stops Superman. Whispers-

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Most have lost their memory, or
been brainwashed by Zod's ceaseless
indoctrination. They think Kara's
crazy. It's quite the reverse,
really.

Suddenly, a massive house-sized, spider-like creature emerges
out of the shadows of the desert.

Amalak yanks Superman and they quickly duck behind a jagged,
outcropping of rock. It lumbers by them carrying another
insect in its fangs.

The prey wiggles its legs helplessly.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Another one of Zod's failed
mutations.

Superman gives Amalak a questioning look.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

He messes with incomplete Kryptonian tech and science he's managed to salvage from other prisoners. Nowhere close to the glory of Old Krypton. Just one failed creation after another.

Amalak laughs to himself.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Keeps The Zone interesting.

The failed creations disappear in the darkness. Amalak and Superman continue toward the city.

SUPERMAN

Where can we find the tunnels?

AMALAK

I know the location of one. It's helped me infiltrate the city once or twice.

Superman indicates the city.

SUPERMAN

What's there for you?

Suddenly, the sky darkens with truck-sized buzzards rushing straight for them.

AMALAK

Quick! This way!

A Kryptonian buzzard swoops for Superman.

Superman leaps out of the way. Just as another buzzard snatches him. He struggles out of the talon and falls to the ground. Amalak helps him up.

They dodge several attempts to snatch them and-

Rush toward a mound of dirt and rubble.

A buzzard suddenly snatches Amalak.

Superman leaps up and gives it a right cross! Knocks it out! Both buzzard and Amalak fall to the ground. This time Superman helps Amalak up.

They continue into the safety of a cave.

INT. AMALAK'S LAIR - MOMENTS LATER

A cave with Kryptonian skulls on display along the walls. Superman narrows his gaze on the skulls. Looks to Amalak for his interpretation.

AMALAK
Someone doesn't like Kryptonians.

SUPERMAN
Who lives here?

AMALAK
Couldn't say. Kryptonians aren't very liked in the Savage Lands.

SUPERMAN
Someone's hunting them for sport.

Amalak gazes at a row of skulls that stare back at him ominously.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
In the city...

AMALAK
It would seem that way.

Amalak loses himself for a moment, then snaps out of his thoughts.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Let's hope no one's home. More for your sake than mine. There's probably another way out up ahead.

Superman scans the walls in disbelief. Hundreds if not thousands of skulls.

Superman follows Amalak through the cave up a tunnel to another gaping mouth leading to the outside.

Amalak nears the mouth of the cave. Scans the sky for buzzards.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Let's go... son of Jor-El.

Superman follows Amalak back out into the-

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

Superman stares at the distant city of Valhlo.

Amalak continues to lead the way. They approach thousands of poles with skeletons attached to it. Amalak indicates a skeleton and offers an explanation.

AMALAK

Undesireables. Savages. And Prisoners of War. They are left outside the city for the predators.

SUPERMAN

Those buzzards?

AMALAK

And many others. One theory of The Zone is it's nothing more than a primitive planet still in formation.

Amalak shakes his head.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

I don't know about your planet, but on my own... primitive means gigantic, fierce and merciless.

SUPERMAN

Why were you sent here?

Amalak stares at Superman. Shakes his head. Doesn't answer.

AMALAK

That's a story for another time.

They approach a Thanagarian skeleton.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

If you think this is bad... you should see what the Thanagarians do to Kryptonians when they catch them alive. Quite entertaining.

Superman gives him a look. Amalak insincerely adds-

AMALAK (CONT'D)

But terrible. Really terrible.

They soon come across a young Thanagarian woman in golden armor--CHAY-ARA--with her head drooped down.

Superman approaches her. Stares.

Suddenly, her head springs up and she stares directly at Superman.

CHAY-ARA

Help....

Amalak pulls Superman away from her.

SUPERMAN

Can't leave her here.

AMALAK

Sure you can. Just walk...

Superman moves to remove the metal restraints bounding her to the jagged post.

SUPERMAN

Help me!

Chay-Ara stares at Superman, then Amalak, then Superman.

AMALAK

A true Kryptonian would kill her.
He would not show the slightest
concern.

Superman ignores this. Amalak continues.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Leave her. She'd leave you.

SUPERMAN

I guess she's lucky I'm not her.

AMALAK

She's a soldier of the Thangarian
guard. You free her, she'll kill
you. She won't think twice.

SUPERMAN

I'm no push over, myself.

Superman grabs a rock. Hits the chain. Over and over again,
until-

CLANG!

The chains bust!

Chay-Ara falls to the ground on her knees.

A moment later she slowly and painfully stands to face
Superman.

Superman inches back, suddenly a little concerned. She reaches out to him. Grabs his hand. Squeezes it in appreciation. Nods her thanks.

Superman nods back.

Chay-Ara takes to the sky.

AMALAK

Not at all what I expected. Maybe you're both too young to remember why you're supposed to hate each other.

SUPERMAN

Maybe.

Superman watches her fly away.

Amalak stands beside Superman. Watches after Chay-Ara.

AMALAK

I wish I could fly, too.

Superman regards him.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

But if the Thanagarians are right about their primitive planet theory... you will be able to fly... soon...

Amalak nods.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

As the young blue star ages to a ripe golden yellow... so too does its power... and yours...

Amalak nods, again.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

It's why the Thanagarians are in a race against the star to conquer the Kryptonians before they enter their... I guess you can say... golden age.

Amalak sighs.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

I hope they're wrong.

Superman regards Amalak for an explanation.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
That would severely tip the
balance.

Amalak continues his journey. He goes to the first secret tunnel but finds it blocked with metal and a booby trapped.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
I guess they found this one.

Amalak moves him to another secret tunnel. Again, blocked by the Kryptonians with boulders and busted equipment.

Amalak sighs. Leads Superman to another secret tunnel. He smiles when he sees it hasn't been discovered.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
We're in.

The tunnel is small.

SUPERMAN
So narrow.

AMALAK
For kids.

Superman inspects the tunnel.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Let's hope we don't get stuck and
end up a feast for insects. It's
happened before.

SUPERMAN
Aren't there any other tunnels?
Bigger?

AMALAK
There are. Escape tunnels in case
New Krypton falls.

SUPERMAN
Then?

AMALAK
I don't know where they are. You
first.

Superman gets on his hand and knees and makes his way into the secret tunnel.

INT. SECRET TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

Superman leads the way. Struggles through the darkness under the defense gates of Valho.

EXT. VALHLO ISLAND - LATER

Superman and Amalak emerge in an alley littered with alien slave homes made of the refuse of Kryptonian citizens.

Superman stares at hundreds of impoverished alien slaves slumming about.

Each alien wears a sort of dog tag that contains an identity number. Clearly, a Kryptonian version of Apartheid for non-Kryptonians.

AMALAK

Outlaws and aliens captured from the desert. Slaves.

Superman nods. They head out of the alley.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Citizens live in the upper city. Slaves, the lower. We're good unless a guard asks for identification.

Superman walks up to a poster in a strange language. The poster feels revolutionary. Red. Bold. Aggressive.

SUPERMAN

I almost understand. It's not Kryptonian.

AMALAK

Krypthana. Outlaws developed their own language in the desert. Part Kryptonian. Part Thanagarian. Sprinkled with all the curse words of other aliens exiled to the Zone.

SUPERMAN

What does it say?

Amalak stares at the poster. He narrows his gaze. Enunciates the words until meaning comes to him.

AMALAK

This isn't the real Krypton... it's a prison...

SUPERMAN

They really believe this is
krypton?

AMALAK

They believe whatever their history
tells them to believe.

STREET

Slaves pass Superman and Amalak.

Peddlers call out to them to sell items they've salvaged from
Kryptonian dumpsters and/or junk yards.

They walk by an alley. Aliens are betting over two alien
slaves fighting for cash.

Amalak points toward a high tower in the distance.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Zod keeps his most valued citizens--
those who remember the old ways--in
the South Tower.

A Kryptonian guard in protective black and crimson armor
suddenly walks down the street. Amalak grabs Superman.

They hide in another alley.

They watch the guard walk by them without noticing them. He
stops an alien. Asks for papers.

The alien pulls out papers. He inspects them. Tells the slave
he can go, then continues down the street.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Sweeping for outlaws.

Amalak returns to the main street. A seven-year-old
Kryptonian girl and several aliens and Thanagorians of the
same age run across the street.

SUPERMAN

Kids?

AMALAK

Outlaws.

SUPERMAN

Outlaws?

AMALAK

We better get going.

SUPERMAN

Are they going to be okay?

AMALAK

Why do you care so much?

SUPERMAN

They're kids.

AMALAK

Since when does a Kryptonian care about kids?

SUPERMAN

This one does.

Suddenly-

An alarm sounds!

AMALAK

Too late.

Amalak pulls Superman in between two make-shift dwellings as a legion of Kryptonian soldiers on massive dog-like creatures follow the scent of the outlaws.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

They must be after the leader.

Superman comes out of the shadows. He follows the Kryptonian soldiers.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

You kidding me.

SUPERMAN

What have they done?

AMALAK

What haven't they?

SUPERMAN

What will they do with them?

AMALAK

Some will go to camps for re-patterning. Some I imagine will be executed for crimes against New Krypton.

SUPERMAN

(Incredulous)

Executed? Kids?

AMALAK

The Zone is a prison, or have you forgotten.

SUPERMAN

I haven't forgotten.

AMALAK

The real tragedy, of course, is many were born here and are unintended victims of cold, heartless Kryptonian indifference.

Blaster fire sounds ahead.

Superman runs. He witnesses a battle between several alien children and Kara against the guards.

A spherical drone suddenly swoops in. Disintegrates the melee weapons in the kids' hands.

Kara surrenders.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

First time I've seen one of those. VOX has been busy.

Superman gives him a questioning look.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

An alien Zod captured. He's responsible for the Eradicator, the shield and all the automa in New Krypton. The brains of this entire city.

Amalak yanks Superman away from the scene.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Nothing we can do for them now.

Ignoring Amalak, Superman leaps into the fray, grabs the spherical drone and smashes it against the wall.

Kara and her outlaws use the distraction to run.

Superman evades several attacks by massive dog-like creatures and blaster fire.

Amalak hides in the shadows.

Superman follows Kara to a-

SLUM OF INTERCONNECTED STREETS

Superman bounds away. Kara dashes into an underground club.

INT. VALHLO ISLAND, SECRET CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Superman enters. Alien slaves drinking their memories away. He sees Kara run off to the back. He follows her. Enters the-

BACK ROOM

Empty.

Superman scans the room but finds nothing. Kara disappeared. The alien bar owner enters.

BAR OWNER

Get out of here. No one's supposed to be back here.

The owner ZAPS Superman with a blaster rod and tosses him into-

EXT. VALHLO ISLAND, ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Superman tumbles into the gutter.

An alien--LOBO--approaches him.

LOBO

Hey buddy. You okay?

SUPERMAN

Fine.

LOBO

Give me your credits.

SUPERMAN

Don't have credits.

LOBO

That's too bad.

Lobo punches him in the belly and steals his LOCATOR. Gets on something like a motorbike and accelerates away.

Superman stands and bolts after him. But he's not fast enough to catch the rogue outlaw. As he catches his breath, he hears someone step up to him-

AMALAK

That's what you get for trying to help.

SUPERMAN
He stole something.

AMALAK
I don't think you're ever going to
see it again. Was it important?

Superman nods.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Maybe next time you'll let things
be.

Superman doesn't respond.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Superman nods. Follows Amalak out of the alley.

EXT. VALHLO ISLAND, SOUTHERN TOWER - LATER

A heavily guarded complex. Armored Kryptonian guards move
about the area.

AMALAK
We need security clearance.

Amalak points to three guards patrolling the perimeter.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Over there.

Superman leads the way. He approaches one guard. Knocks him
out. Turns to see Amalak about to drive his knife into the
other guard.

Quickly, Superman thrusts a stone, knocking the knife out of
Amalak's hand. The guard turns. Goes to shoot. Quickly-

Superman knocks him out with a punch!

Amalak inches up to Superman, fuming.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Your misplaced morality nearly got
me killed.

Superman shakes his head. Approaches the fallen guard.

LATER

Superman and Amalak, dressed in Kryptonian armor walk through the automated entrance without attracting attention.

INT. VALHLO ISLAND, SOUTHERN TOWER - MOMENTS LATER

Superman and Amalak approach the stairwell.

LEVEL ONE

They walk by several labs where alien scientists advance Zod's technology.

SUPERMAN

What is this place?

AMALAK

On Krypton... I believe it was the Tower of Science. A collection of prisoners working for Zod's army.

SUPERMAN

All of them... condemned by...

AMALAK

The Council of Krypton. Yes.

They enter another stairwell.

LEVEL TWO

They pass laboratories filled with Kryptonian crystal technology.

LEVEL THREE

They walk by prison cells of Thanagarian prisoners. Superman gives Amalak a questioning look.

SUPERMAN

We should help them.

AMALAK

Can't save everyone son of Jor-El.
Open a cell... alarms go off.

Superman nods his understanding.

LEVEL EIGHT

A Kryptonian guard exits a room and spots Superman and Amalak from behind.

GUARD

You two! This is a restricted area.

He points the gun at Superman's back.

Superman turns to face the guard. Amalak, too. Seeing Amalak the guard's eyes widen in alarm.

GUARD (CONT'D)

You!

Superman pulls the gun out of his hands, and Amalak quickly knocks him out with a left cross.

Superman instinctively grabs Amalak's shoulder.

Amalak shrugs him off.

AMALAK

Don't worry, son of Jor-El. Counter to my better judgment he's still breathing.

LEVEL NINE

Massive chimerical creatures in glass cells.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

I'd love to turn one of these lose in the city.

Superman gives him a look.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

I mean... free it...

Superman continues to the next stairwell.

LEVEL TWELVE

Labs with failed versions of Phantom Zone projectors. Against the wall are carbon statues of famous Kryptonian creators and scientists. Amalak stares at one of them.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

(Sotto voce)

So that's what happened to you.

Superman gives him a questioning look.

Amalak turns to Superman.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

I heard a rumor. The Council of Science fled to The Zone for their lives.

Amalak mumbles.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

I thought they were escaping scientific persecution.

Amalak shakes his head.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Now I know the truth. They were escaping the destruction of their planet. How very ironic.

SUPERMAN

Why would you say that?

AMALAK

It's a known fact that their decisions had led to the destruction of entire worlds.

SUPERMAN

Mistakes were made.

Amalak laughs aloud at this understatement.

AMALAK

Yes, indeed. Mistakes were made.

Amalak returns his gaze to the statues.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Seems to me Zod's making trophies out of council members.

Amalak turns to Superman.

AMALAK (CONT'D)

Unless your father has found a way to make himself useful... my guess he suffered a similar end.

Superman focuses. He can hear a slow, yet audible heartbeat.

SUPERMAN

They're not dead.

AMALAK

No?

Superman inspects the carbonite statues searching for his father.

SUPERMAN

Carbonite. A form of suspended animation. I know the technology.

AMALAK

Really?

Superman nods. He sees a dimly lit laboratory down the hall. He approaches and enters-

JOR-EL'S LAB

Superman approaches a chamber much like the one in his Fortress of Solitude. At a table-

Jor-El sleeps. A metal bracelet around his ankle prevents him from leaving the laboratory. Locks the doors as he approaches them.

Superman inches behind him. Stares. Amalak steps back in the shadows. Lowers his head.

SUPERMAN

Father...

Jor-El wakes with a start. Looks at the chamber he's building. Shakes his head as though he had dreamed the voice he just heard.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)

Father...

Jor-El turns to face Superman.

Amalak inches back.

Jor-El snaps to his feet. Stares at his son. Narrows his gaze for a long dramatic moment.

JOR-EL

Kal... Kal-El?

Superman nods.

Jor-El steps closer to Superman. He closes his eyes and opens them again. When he realizes his son is really there in front of him, his eyes instantly water and he embraces him. Then-

Jor-El steps back and stares at him with concern.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
You shouldn't be here.

SUPERMAN
I'm here.

Jor-El shakes his head, disapprovingly.

JOR-EL
You shouldn't have come.

Amalak steps out of the shadows. A blaster levelled at both of them.

AMALAK
He's right you know.

Jor-El turns to face Amalak.

JOR-EL
You!

AMALAK
Got to say your son isn't like most Kryptonians. It's a shame he has to pay because of your crimes.

SUPERMAN
Why are you doing this?

AMALAK
Oh... it's... it's complicated... let's just say those... how did you put it?

Amalak pauses.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Ah, yes... mistakes... those MISTAKES... cost me everything.

JOR-EL
You destroyed your own planet. Poisoned your own water.

AMALAK
We had a plan.

JOR-EL
We could not let you rob another planet of its resources.

AMALAK

Insignificant primates that had not even discovered space travel.

JOR-EL

Doesn't matter. There was no mistake, and my only regret was we could not help you restore the natural riches of your planet.

Jor-El's tone grows somber.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

We suffered a similar fate.

AMALAK

Yes. I heard.

With dawning realization-

SUPERMAN

That was your cave. You're the killer of Kryptonians.

Amalak addresses Jor-El.

AMALAK

He's smart, your son.

JOR-EL

Please... he had nothing to do with our decision.

AMALAK

You'll know what it's like to lose your son.

Suddenly-

Jor-El attacks Amalak. Kicks the gun out of Amalak's hands. A fight ensues.

Jor-El pulls Superman into the corridor. They hide behind a desk. Alarms sound.

Amalak searches for them, then begins to bust the statues with the butt of his blaster.

Superman scrunches his fist with each one. He goes to stop him. Jor-El stops him. Superman hesitates, then jumps up regardless.

A battle ensues. Amalak knocks out Superman. Goes to kill him. Jor-El thrusts him away. They exchange blows.

Amalak gets the better of Jor-El.

ZOD
We've finally got the Butcher of
Kandor!

AMALAK
This isn't Kandor! Nor is this
Krypton!

Amalak stares at Superman.

AMALAK (CONT'D)
Tell them!

Zod regards his guards.

ZOD
Conspiracy theorists. Sure. We're
in a Zero Field Dimension on an
infant planet in a primitive star
system.

The guards laugh at the absurdity.

AMALAK
This isn't over.

Zod approaches Amalak.

ZOD
For you... it is.

Zod smiles. Turns to his guards.

ZOD (CONT'D)
Take him away.

The guards shackle and lead Amalak away. The whole while
Amalak stares down Jor-El. Zod approaches Superman.

ZOD (CONT'D)
Who is he?

Realizing-

ZOD (CONT'D)
No...

Looks at Jor-El, then Superman.

ZOD (CONT'D)
It cannot be.

Zod nods.

ZOD (CONT'D)
Kal-El? Little Kal-El.

Zod smiles at Jor-El.

ZOD (CONT'D)
He looks more like his mother.
Especially the eyes. Stubborn.

Zod turns to Jor-El.

ZOD (CONT'D)
You never did tell me where you
sent him.

Zod shakes his head at Jor-El.

ZOD (CONT'D)
It's amazing that he survived. What
a father would not do for his
son...

Zod inches up to Jor-El.

ZOD (CONT'D)
Now what you will do... is give me
a working projector.

JOR-EL
I'm trying.

ZOD
Not hard enough.

Zod regards Superman.

ZOD (CONT'D)
Where's your locator?

SUPERMAN
It was stolen.

ZOD
Stolen?

Zod observes his face to see if he's lying. Then-

ZOD (CONT'D)
No matter. Your father will get you
out of here. Won't he?

Jor-El nods.

JOR-EL

Yes.

ZOD

I'll leave you two. Build my projector or I throw your son into the pit. Understood?

Jor-El nods, again.

JOR-EL

Understood.

Zod exits.

The two security drones hover around Jor-El and Superman.

SUPERMAN

You're building him a way out?

Jor-El shakes his head.

JOR-EL

I can't. I don't remember the frequencies. A mistake could send us all to a darker dimension than this one.

SUPERMAN

How many dimensions are there?

JOR-EL

More than there are planets with intelligent life.

SUPERMAN

Thousands...

JOR-EL

Trillions. To be more precise, 2. At least according to the Council of Science, each with a star at a different stage of evolution.

Almost to himself-

SUPERMAN

That's why you chose Earth.

Jor-El nods.

Superman approaches Jor-El.

JOR-EL

Yes. I wanted you to grow up like the Kryptonians of the Golden Age.

Jor-El sighs.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

I wanted to give you all the advantages and strengths of your biology.

SUPERMAN

What does Zod want?

JOR-EL

What do all tyrants want? Ultimate power. The power to create new worlds. New dimensions.

SUPERMAN

Is it possible?

Jor-El shrugs.

JOR-EL

I'm not sure. What I know is there are other dimensions that observe laws completely foreign to Kryptonian science.

Jor-El's tone grows serious.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

Dimensions ruled by dark energy. Dimensions and lifeforms we had just begun to discover with the projector.

Jor-El sighs.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

Places like the PHANTOM ZONE where life-forms that shouldn't exist... exist. There are dimensions even darker than The Zone.

Jor-El nods.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

Dimensions and energy that a warlord like Zod should never have access to.

Superman scans the lab. Then asks-

SUPERMAN
How are we getting out of here?

JOR-EL
We're not. Not unless you can fly.

Superman shakes his head.

SUPERMAN
Not here.

JOR-EL
But your new home?

Superman nods.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
That must be something. I've only
read about it.

Superman smirks.

DOOR SUDDENLY OPENS

TALA-ZOD walks in holding her baby boy.

TALA-ZOD
Jor-El.

JOR-EL
Tala.

TALA-ZOD
He's your son.

Jor-El nods.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
Where you from?

SUPERMAN
Earth.

TALA-ZOD
Earth... is the water good on
Earth?

Superman nods.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
The air?

Superman nods again.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

The star?

SUPERMAN

Yellow.

Tala-Zod smiles.

TALA-ZOD

What of the people?

Superman hesitates. Then-

SUPERMAN

Good people.

TALA-ZOD

You must be like a god.

SUPERMAN

I keep a low profile.

Tala-Zod smiles.

TALA-ZOD

Coming here... doesn't feel like a wise decision backed by probability.

SUPERMAN

I didn't think about it.

TALA-ZOD

You didn't?

Superman shakes his head.

Tala-Zod's smile grows.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

You just... took a chance...

SUPERMAN

Something like that.

TALA-ZOD

You know he was sentenced here because he committed high treason by sending not only you but Kryptonian technology to another planet.

Superman nods.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
 I don't know how he could send you
 with such a low probability of
 survival or ever knowing what would
 have become of you.

Tala-Zod peers at Superman.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
 I guess, he too, took a chance.

SUPERMAN
 Like father, like son.

Tala-Zod nods.

TALA-ZOD
 Yes. Indeed. Like father, like son.
 I must go. I just wanted to confirm
 it was you, son of Jor-El.

Tala-Zod turns and exits with her entourage.

JOR-EL
 Try not to upset her. Doesn't seem
 like it... but she's more cruel and
 merciless than the general.

Superman nods.

LATER

Superman scans the tower for a way out. He tries to break
 through the door to the stairwell, but it doesn't budge.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
 Kal, this is a prison. Lights are
 red star energy. Designed by VOX of
 Colu to hold Kryptonians. We're not
 getting out of here.

SUPERMAN
 Vox?

JOR-EL
 Prisoner.

SUPERMAN
 Maybe he could help us.

JOR-EL
 Hmm... I'd say he despises us just
 a little more than Amalak for
 reasons I can't remember.

SUPERMAN
If we help him out...

Superman looks up to the drone.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
He created these?

Jor-El nods.

JOR-EL
He's responsible for all Automa in
New Krypton.

Superman looks at the drone. Addresses it.

SUPERMAN
Tell me how to get out of here, and
I'll come get you.

JOR-EL
You're wasting your time.

SUPERMAN
You can stay here, a puppet of Zod,
or escape with us. I'll get you out
if you get us out.

JOR-EL
Waste of time.

Superman stares at the drone for a while. He gives up and
steps away.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
It's gonna have to be another way.

Superman looks out the window at New Krypton.

SUPERMAN
We could detonate the projector.
Create a breach in the wall.

JOR-EL
Then what?

SUPERMAN
Leap down.

JOR-EL
Our cells wouldn't be replenished.

SUPERMAN
We can't stay here.

JOR-EL
It might work.

Jor-El and Superman haul a projector near the wall.

DRONE
What are you doing?

JOR-EL
Experiment. For the General...

DRONE
Proceed.

Jor-El rigs the projector.

JOR-EL
Stand back.

BANG!

The drones go down!

A massive breach in the wall. But they are fourteen stories high!

SUPERMAN
Get on my back.

Jor-El shakes his head.

JOR-EL
You on mine.

SUPERMAN
My cells have been exposed as long as you.

JOR-EL
I didn't go through all this to lose you here.

Superman nods. Gets on his father's back.

Jor-El steps into the breach and-

BANG!

They're both hit by blaster fire.

BLACK.

Superman regains consciousness to face Zod.

A guard lifts Jor-El.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
Failed attempt to open a portal.
That's all it was.

Zod shakes his head at Jor-El.

ZOD
Put him down.

Zod approaches Jor-El.

ZOD (CONT'D)
That's your last failed attempt.

JOR-EL
Understood.

Hovering robots seal the breach with a kind of magma as Zod exits with several guards.

One robot turns to Superman. Stares at him for a long moment.

ROBOT
Follow me if you want to escape.

Jor-El and Superman give each other a look. They follow the robot through the hallway and out the door.

STAIRWELL

They follow the robot to-

LEVEL 5

They follow the robot to a small glass cell where they see a green, humanoid Coluan. Vox of planet Colu.

Vox very quickly types into a datapad. And-

ROBOT (CONT'D)
Red rays have been deactivated.

Superman looks at the robot, then Vox. Vox nods. Superman feels some of his strength returning. He slams the door. Again. And again. Then Jor-El syncs a punch and-

WHACK!

THE GLASS DOOR SHATTERS!

Vox stands.

VOX

Don't worry. Alarms won't sound.
I've deactivated them. We haven't
much time before Zod realizes
they're off-line.

Vox takes the lead.

SUPERMAN

You know where you're going.

VOX

I designed this place. I designed
the entire city for that matter.

Jor-El and Superman give each other a look as they follow
Vox.

STAIRWELL

They reach the-

EXT. VALHLO ISLAND, SOUTHERN TOWER - MOMENTS LATER

Doors open.

Jor-El, Superman and Vox exit the tower. They rush into the
shadows. Suddenly-

Bright flood lights illuminate them.

Superman squints to see General Zod and Tala-Zod and a dozen
guards blocking their way.

ZOD

I must say, Vox, I am disappointed.

Zod turns to Jor-El.

ZOD (CONT'D)

Thank you, Jor-El for helping me
confirm my suspicions.

Zod smiles at Jor-El.

Vox glares at Jor-El and Superman.

ZOD (CONT'D)

As agreed, you will have more
prisoner privileges for showing me
the Coluan could not be trusted.

Vox's eyes grow darker.

JOR-EL
I did no such thing.

ZOD
Take them back to their prisons.

The guards grab Superman and Jor-El.

Zod turns to Vox.

ZOD (CONT'D)
I give you trust, and you abuse
it...

Zod sighs.

ZOD (CONT'D)
You will suffer.

Zod turns to his guards.

ZOD (CONT'D)
Bring him to the chamber.

VOX
No! Please...

Guards escort him away as other guards push Superman and Jor-El into the Southern Tower.

INT. VALHLO ISLAND, SOUTHERN TOWER, JOR-EL'S LAB - LATER

Superman and Jor-El sit on the floor. Jor-El stares at Superman.

JOR-EL
I wish Lara could see you.

SUPERMAN
Where is she?

JOR-EL
Dead.

SUPERMAN
On Krypton.

JOR-EL
No. She died here.

A moment.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
She refused to give up the outlaws.

Jor-El loses himself for a moment. Then-

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
Zod tortured her for days until
finally, he realized she was making
him look ineffective and weak.

Jor-El sighs.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
He threw her in the pit.

Jor-El shakes his head.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
She didn't stand a chance.

SUPERMAN
What was she like?

JOR-EL
Stubborn.

SUPERMAN
Stubborn?

JOR-EL
Oh, yeah. Beautiful. Intelligent.
Stubborn. One of the best
scientists and leaders I've ever
known.

Jor-El stares at Superman.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
She gathered the children of the
Council of Science and formed a
group dedicated to bringing truth
to The Zone.

Jor-El looks away, then turns back to Superman.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
Now my brother's daughter, Kara,
leads in her stead.

SUPERMAN
My cousin?

Jor-El nods.

JOR-EL
That's right.

Superman reflects on this.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
You have a wife back home?

SUPERMAN
Yes.

JOR-EL
What's she like?

SUPERMAN
Stubborn.

JOR-EL
Stubborn?

SUPERMAN
Oh, yeah.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
Beautiful. Intelligent. One of the
best warriors with a pen I know,
always fighting for truth, justice,
and freedom from oppression.

JOR-EL
I like her already.

SUPERMAN
You'll meet her soon.

JOR-EL
That would be nice.

SUPERMAN
You'll meet my parents, too.

Jor-El stares at Superman.

JOR-EL
I feel I already know them. What
are their names?

SUPERMAN
Martha Clark. Jonathan Kent.

JOR-EL
Clark Kent. You carry both their
names.

Superman nods.

SUPERMAN

Proudly.

Jor-El smiles. So does Superman.

JOR-EL

When you see them... tell them...
thank you...

SUPERMAN

For what?

JOR-EL

They'll understand.

SUPERMAN

You'll tell them yourself.

JOR-EL

That would be nice.

LATER

Jor-El works on the projector.

Tests it. Nothing happens. Then he begins to tinker with the tech and tries again. Again, nothing. Barely gets any reaction in the portal chamber.

Superman approaches him.

SUPERMAN

What's in the pit?

Jor-El turns to face Superman.

JOR-EL

I'm not sure. Something that was
here way before we were.

Jor-El tinkers with the projector, then continues.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

Zod's army captured it. He feeds it
traitors and Thanagarians for
entertainment.

SUPERMAN

Does it have a weakness?

Jor-El thinks, sighs. Shakes his head.

JOR-EL
Not that I know of.

SUPERMAN
Are there others like it?

JOR-EL
Not that I know of.

Jor-El stares at Superman.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
Don't worry. I'll get you out of
here.

SUPERMAN
I'm not worried.

JOR-EL
I see that.

SUPERMAN
Trying to think ahead.

JOR-EL
Like, Lara.

Superman grins.

SUPERMAN
It's too bad you couldn't send Zod
somewhere he couldn't hurt anyone.

Jor-El looks up to Superman as though he might be on to something. He turns back to the projector. Tinkers.

LATER

General Zod enters. Strides up to the projector. Jor-El stands and straightens to meet him.

ZOD
Status?

JOR-EL
I think I may have done it.

ZOD
You do?

Jor-El nods.

ZOD (CONT'D)
Show me.

Jor-El whispers in Superman's ear.

JOR-EL
Step back.

Superman contorts his face. Then understands. Takes a step back.

Zod and Jor-El exchange a long look.

Jor-El activates the projector and-

Leaps back and holds on to a railing as-

A BLACK HOLE SUDDENLY OPENS UP-

SWALLOWS all of Zod's guards.

Zod grabs onto Jor-El's leg.

Suddenly-

BLASTER FIRE!

The projector explodes. The black hole closes. Tala-Zod holds a blaster.

Zod snaps to his feet. Grabs Jor-El by the neck. Lifts Jor-El off the ground.

Superman goes to help his father, but Tala-Zod places the blaster in his face.

ZOD
Too easy.

Zod thrusts Jor-El.

Jor-El hits the ground with a thud. Superman rushes to his aid.

ZOD (CONT'D)
You'll regret this.

Zod and Tala-Zod exit.

INT. VALHLO ISLAND, SOUTHERN TOWER, DUNGEON - LATER

Superman and Jor-El, bound by chains against a stone wall in almost complete darkness. The dungeon door opens. Fire light spills inside. Tala-Zod enters.

TALA-ZOD

I'm a queen here. A sovereign. But I unlike most know the truth of this world.

Tala-Zod sighs.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

I am a queen of a prison filled with prisoners of war of every possible assortment united in one single goal. To erase the existence of all Kryptonians.

Tala-Zod sighs, again.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

I sometimes wonder if we were really that bad.

Jor-El meets her cold gaze. *Yes. We we're.*

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

Eventually, they will find a way into New Krypton, and none of us will be spared.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

If the fool, my husband, kills the Coluan, it will happen sooner rather than later.

She sighs deeply.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

None of us know the intricacies of the defense system Vox created for us.

Tala-Zod sighs. Inches closer to Jor-El.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

You never had the intention of building a working projector. You'd rather die here, then let us leave.

Jor-El doesn't respond.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

Some of us don't deserve to be here.

JOR-EL
You have more blood on your hands
than your husband.

TALA-ZOD
The whole world is against us.

JOR-EL
Including me.

Tala-Zod sighs.

TALA-ZOD
I wish that weren't so. I could
change my husband's mind.

JOR-EL
There isn't a shred of good in you
or your family. You're wired for
war.

Tala-Zod nods.

TALA-ZOD
Perhaps.

Silence.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
He'll make you watch your son die.
Then it will be your turn.

Jor-El stares at Superman, then Tala-Zod.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
I always had respect for what you
did. Take these.

Tala-Zod places a vile of blue liquid in his pocket.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
You will die fast. No pain.

She walks over to Superman. She places one under Superman's
collar.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
Take it right away. You'll just
close your eyes and fall asleep
before the MORGA devours you.

Guards suddenly storm inside the cell behind Tala-Zod.

LATER

Guards push Superman into-

EXT. THE PIT - MOMENTS LATER

Superman hits the ground. Stands on weak legs. Looks up. Hundreds of New Krypton's elite sit around a pit almost like a theatre.

Superman then stares at a metal gate preventing some unseen creature from attacking him.

ZOD

For an attempt on my life, I sentence you, Kal-El to the pit.

ZOD (CONT'D)

You'll be happy to know Tala has pleaded your case and you will not be joining your son. You're too important.

Tala-Zod smiles at Jor-El.

ZOD (CONT'D)

Raise the gate.

The gate in the pit begins to rise.

Jor-El closes his eyes.

Superman takes a deep breath as he watches the gate rises. They rise all the way. He stares at something in his hand.

The poison.

He stares at the gates and sees-

Nothing.

Darkness.

Then suddenly-

A screeching roar with a strange echoing reverb! As though there were a thousand creatures hiding in the shadows waiting to pounce!

Within moments-

A large purple, giant, octopus-like creature with no eyes but multiple mouths and tentacles with spikes and mouths on each tentacle comes charging out.

ABOVE

Jor-El pushes away from the guards and-

Jumps into the pit!

TALA-ZOD

Get him!

Guards look to Zod.

ZOD

Leave him!

JOR-EL

No one's ever beaten it alone.
Together... we may have a chance.

The MORGA attacks.

They evade every attack and with every attack the crowd goes wild and roars with pleasure. No one has lasted this long.

Jor-El throws a rock at it.

It senses and snatches the rock and eats it. Superman throws a stick with the same result.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

I have an idea.

Jor-El takes off his shirt.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

Give me the vile.

Superman hands it to Jor-El. Jor-El takes his vile and Superman's and-

Wraps the poison in his shirt. He tries to toss it into one of its mouths but misses.

Superman rushes for the shirt. But the Morga slams a tentacle into him. Goes to rip him apart. But-

Jor-El slams a boulder against the tentacle. Another tentacle grabs Jor-El and slams him against a wall.

Before Superman can stand there are two tentacles on him, trying to rip him apart.

Jor-El crawls desperately. Grabs the shirt. Then approaches Superman. He slams the tentacle again. The tentacle releases Superman. Snatches Jor-El.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

Open wide!

The Morga goes to swallow Jor-El. Jor-El tosses the shirt. A snapping mouth consumes it. Superman then grabs the tentacle holding Jor-El preventing the Morga from consuming Jor-El.

Zod laughs uproariously.

Superman frees Jor-El. Jor-El falls to the ground. They evade the Morga's every attack. Soon-

Morga grows sluggish with every attack until-

It can barely lift a tentacle.

Superman takes over.

Pounds the MORGA into unconsciousness without killing it.

Zod's laughter dies abruptly. Mingled disbelief and humiliation settles in.

The roar of the crowd dies instantly.

Kal-El and Jor-El look up to Zod and the crowd-

Victorious.

Zod screams his frustration!

INT. VALHLO ISLAND, SOUTHERN TOWER, DUNEGON - LATER

Superman and Jor-El, shackled to the wall.

JOR-EL

There's no hope.

SUPERMAN

We beat the MORGA.

JOR-EL

We did.

SUPERMAN

There's always hope. Always.

Jor-El stares at Superman with a strange admiration. He couldn't be more proud as a father.

JOR-EL
This something you learn on Earth?
It's certainly not a Kryptonian
outlook.

Superman smirks.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
I'll admit. I prefer it to
Kryptonian pessimism.

Jor-El shakes his head.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
But I am Kryptonian and the truth
is... probability is against us.

SUPERMAN
But it's not as low as my surviving
the trip from Krypton to Earth.

Jor-El nods in agreement.

JOR-EL
This is true.

Jor-El considers, then-

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
Or finding the parents who would
turn you into the man you are
today.

Jor-El nods to himself. Then-

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
There were infinite outcomes... and
the one I got was the one I...
hoped for.

SUPERMAN
Hope.

JOR-EL
Yes. Hope.

SUPERMAN
Powerful thing.

Jor-El nods.

JOR-EL
I'm starting to think so.

SUPERMAN
There are things beyond science and
probability.

Jor-El raises skeptical eyebrows.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
Inexplicable things.

JOR-EL
Yes. Maybe the outlaws will spring
us free.

They stare at the silhouette of a guard at the door of their
dungeon. Nothing happens.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
I hope the outlaws spring us free.

A dramatic moment.

Nothing.

Jor-El sighs. Shakes his head. Then suddenly-

BLASTER FIRE!

The guard collapses to the ground.

Jor-El and Superman exchange an incredulous look. A long
dramatic moment as they wait, staring at the door, waiting to
see who has come to free them.

The bolts unlock.

The door opens to reveal-

Tala-Zod, holding her baby. She approaches Jor-El and
Superman. She stares at them for a long moment.

TALA-ZOD
I know you will never help my
husband no matter what he does to
you or your son.

A silence.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
I also know... you must have a way
out of here....

Jor-El doesn't answer.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
You don't have to tell me. I don't
care where or how...

She looks down at her boy, then up at Jor-El.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
Just give him a chance.

She indicates her son in her arms.

The baby smiles at Superman.

JOR-EL
I don't understand.

TALA-ZOD
No! You DO understand.

A silence.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
Just because he was born in a
prison doesn't mean he deserves to
live in one.

JOR-EL
You'll never see him again.

Tala-Zod approaches Superman.

TALA-ZOD
He'll grow up in a world with a
golden star and a good father.

Tala-Zod nods approvingly.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
A father who risked everything to
save his own father though he knew
nothing about him.

She turns to Jor-El. Nods with tears in her eyes.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)
I can accept those terms.

JOR-EL
Zod will make you--

TALA-ZOD
I don't care! Free my son.

Superman looks at the boy, looks at Tala-Zod. Nods in agreement.

Tala-Zod meets his gaze. Then she fires her blaster. Moments later the shackles fall with a clank.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

Quickly.

Tala-Zod exits.

They follow her to an-

ESCAPE TUNNEL

They charge down the escape tunnel and are suddenly stopped by a drone. Tala-Zod aims at it and shoots it down.

They continue on until they reach a heavy, metal door. Beside it is an electronic device.

Tala-Zod keys a code.

Doesn't work.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

He changed the code!

Tala-Zod considers a moment. She looks at Superman and Jor-El.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

There's another way.

EXT. VALHLO ISLAND, POWER GENERATOR BUILDING - LATER

The sound of energy generators hard at work creating a protective energy field around New Krypton.

TALA-ZOD

Take him.

Superman takes the baby.

Tala-Zod indicates the building.

TALA-ZOD (CONT'D)

Once I destroy the energy gate...
you won't have much time before the
Thanagarians invade.

Jor-El stares at the adobe and shakes his head.

JOR-EL
You can't go in there.

Tala-Zod regards him.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
The energy alone will kill you.

TALA-ZOD
If I should be so lucky...

She kisses her son. Stares at him for a long moment. Their last moment together.

INTERCUT: Jor-El and Lara placing Superman baby in a birthing matrix.

Tala-Zod gives her baby one last look, then surges into the adobe without fear or hesitation.

Jor-El and Superman stare at her through the open door with mute disbelief. Charges of energy blast her as she approaches the massive spherical generator like a mini red sun.

She smashes it.

The energy snaps and whips and attacks her.

Suddenly-

New Krypton goes dark.

Tala-Zod falls.

Jor-El sighs deeply. Addresses Superman.

JOR-EL
Let's go... fast... or all is for
nothing...

Jor-El and Superman bullet toward the gate as Kryptonian emergency klaxons sound throughout the city.

Everyone panics, runs every which way, helter-skelter.

Jor-El and Superman dash to the exit.

General Zod suddenly appears.

ZOD
Kal-El!

Superman stops. Turns to face General Zod. An army of Kryptonian guards behind him.

ZOD (CONT'D)

My son!

A guard lifts a blaster to shoot. Zod shoots the guard before he can fire on Superman and his boy.

ZOD (CONT'D)

Put your weapons down.

A moment.

General Zod stares at Superman.

ZOD (CONT'D)

Give me my son!

Another moment.

ZOD (CONT'D)

Please...

The sound of a thousand wings beating in the sky grows steadily. An unseen approaching Thanagarian army!

Zod looks up to the horizon. Everyone does. An instant later-

BATTLE CRIES!

From both the Kryptonian and Thanagarian armies.

The Thangarians swoop, lift Kryptonians off the ground. The invasion begins!

Through the melee, despite the chaos ZOD focuses on Superman.

General Zod ducks and dodges and takes out anyone in his way of him and his son. Even his own men.

Superman dodges attacks as well from both Thanagarians and Kryptonians. Each time he looks down to his arms he sees-

The baby smiling up at him.

Superman dodges an attack.

A Thanagarian goes to attack Superman from above.

ZOD saves Superman, shooting the Thanagarian out of the sky.

Zod approaches just as three Thanagarians swoop on top of him from above. Zod battles them as-

Superman gets distance!

Zod breaks free, killing with an unparalleled fury, the THREE Thanagarians! Just as FIVE Thanagarians overwhelm him. Zod screams as loud as he can-

ZOD (CONT'D)

Kal-El!

JOR-EL

Quick! Quick!

Jor-El and Superman distance themselves from the great battle surging behind them. Behind them-

New Krypton Falls.

Their run turns into a quick march as they maneuver through the dead enemies of Krypton tied to massive poles.

LATER

They approach an alien on a pole, exhausted, half-dead-

AMALAK

Amalak looks at them both in disgust. He spits on Jor-El. Amalak barely manages through his agony-

AMALAK

Filthy Kryptonians!

Superman gives his father a look.

Jor-El wipes his face. Then-

Frees Amalak.

Amalak falls to the ground. Rises painfully to watch Jor-El and Superman and the baby disappear in the darkness.

Amalak stares after them a long time.

LATER

Through the desert, Superman walks holding the baby. Every now and then he looks down at the now sleeping baby, looking terribly concerned.

JOR-EL

He okay?

Superman nods.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)

You okay?

Superman swallows.

SUPERMAN
Not ready to be a father.

JOR-EL
No one ever is.

SUPERMAN
Lois is going to kill me.

JOR-EL
There's a very good probability she
won't.

Superman smirks.

SUPERMAN
You'll understand when you meet
her.

JOR-EL
You know the Kryptonian definition
for a parent is. A selfless,
guardian and protector of a world.

Superman absorbs this.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
Looks like you're official a
guardian and protector of an entire
world... a hero...

SUPERMAN
I'm scared... real scared...

JOR-EL
You should be.

They both share a laugh.

LATER

Superman and Jor-El approach a rocky outcropping.

Jor-El leads Superman to a cave.

INT. JOR-EL'S LAIR - MOMENTS LATER

Jor-El leads Superman down to his secret lair with make-shift
science contraptions everywhere.

A monkey-

KOKO

Suddenly screams and joins them!

JOR-EL
An old friend. Koko.

Koko jumps on Superman's shoulder and stares at the baby.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
He takes care of things while I'm
away.

SUPERMAN
This is where you live?

Jor-El nods.

JOR-EL
I've been working on a projector
since I was exiled. Just before Zod
captured me in the desert...

Jor-El leads him to his lair.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
I had a breakthrough and had found
the extra-dimensional location of
your projector.

Jor-El pauses.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
I made an attempt to find you...
but the power cut... now I know how
to adjust the power source.

Superman follows him to his chamber.

Jor-El keys in a few things in something like datapad.
Suddenly-

Koko starts screeching and panicking.

Jor-El stares at a monitor.

Outside, Zod and a small army infiltrate his lair. They march
toward them. Jor-El watches this on the monitor.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
No.

Jor-El swallows a lump in his throat. He makes a decision.

SUPERMAN
Do we have enough time?

JOR-EL
Yes. Get in the chamber.

SUPERMAN
You, too.

Jor-El guides Superman and the baby to the chamber.

SUPERMAN (CONT'D)
But I'm not-

JOR-EL
No time to debate.

SUPERMAN
I'm not going to leave you.

Jor-El regards the baby in Superman's hands.

JOR-EL
You're not deciding for yourself
anymore.

Jor-El increases the power. He stares at his son as the portal opens. The sound of Zod's approaching army rises menacingly.

JOR-EL (CONT'D)
You are everything I ever hoped
for... and more...

SUPERMAN
NO!

Superman disappears.

Zod's army enter.

Jor-El tinkers with the projector. Keys in a new set of coordinates to get Zod off his son's trail. Then Jor-El considers a moment.

Jor-El decides! He grabs a club and breaks the technology as a black hole vacuums them all to another dimension, a lower dimension-

APOKOLIPS!

INT. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE - 52 SECONDS AFTER SUPERMAN
INITIALLY ENTERED THE ZONE

Lois stares at her watch. 52 seconds have gone by. She
watches Superman reappear.

LOIS
Did it work? It hasn't even
been...a... minute... what...
that's... not.... your... father...

Her eyes suddenly widen at the baby in his hands. Her mouth
opens. They just stare at each other.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Clark...

Another moment as Lois stares at the baby. Then Lois extends
her hands to Superman, to the baby.

Superman places the baby into her arms. She gives the baby a
long, loving, compassionate look.

LOIS (CONT'D)
He's beautiful.

Superman nods.

The baby smiles at him.

LOIS (CONT'D)
You see that.

Superman nods, again.

The baby reaches out for her. Lois taps his little nose.

The baby laughs.

LOIS (CONT'D)
Where are his parents?

Superman raises his eyebrows. Hesitates. Doesn't know what to
say. Raises his eyebrows higher. *Actually, You're looking at
them!*

LOIS (CONT'D)
What?

Dawning realization!

LOIS (CONT'D)
Clark Kent!

The baby wraps his hand around her finger. Lois stares down at him. Then-

Superman wraps a protective hand over their hands.

Lois and Superman exchange a silent look. She then turns her gaze back to the baby's.

Suddenly-

Her heart melts...

...Much like one Martha Clark and Jonathan Kent many years ago when life decided they were ready to become guardians and protectors of an entire world.

FADE OUT

THE END

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