

# **Superman's Last Choice**

by

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Note

This story occurs 5 years before the events portrayed in the movie Superman Returns (June 2006).

## ACT I

FADE IN

RADIO-TELESCOPE ARRAY, EXTERIOR, SOMEWHERE IN THE AMERICAN MID-WEST.

Dateline appears: September 13, 2001.

FAR SHOT OF SUN GOING DOWN.

A sedan drives in from the horizon, coming to a stop at the observatory main building.

A man gets out of the sedan. The man is dressed in business formal, there is a fedora on his head and dark-rimmed eye-glasses on his face. He is carrying the accoutrements of a reporter.

CLARK

(Voice over) Doctor ... I'm Clark Kent.

CUT TO

INTERIOR OF OBSERVATORY, RECEPTION AREA. CLARK KENT IS SHAKING A MAN'S HAND.

DOCTOR

Thank you for coming all this way, Mr Kent!

The pair turn and walk down a hallway.

FADE OUT

OBSERVATORY, INTERIOR, VIEWING ROOM

FADE IN

THE DOCTOR ON THE LEFT, CLARK ON THE RIGHT, DISPLAY IN CENTER.

A 20 foot high computer-screen displays the galaxy, one part of the galaxy has a box outline around it.

DOCTOR

So you see, we've detected energetic particle emissions before, that's nothing new, no... Here what we've detected is particular in two ways...

Clark reflexively stands a little straighter.

CLARK  
How's that, Doctor?

The doctor is lost in his own thoughts.

DOCTOR  
Even though the time between the events was seemingly random, in each case the emissions had the same modulation frequency... The same tone-like quality.

CLARK  
That could be natural, though, couldn't it?

The doctor considers this a moment

DOCTOR  
It's not likely that it would be exactly the same, but yes it could be a natural phenomena we don't understand...

DOCTOR  
But you see, the other thing that makes these emissions particular is that they move!

CLARK  
(gasps) What?

DOCTOR  
Listen to this, Kent...

The doctor flicks a few switches, the sound of the boomslang comes on (slowed-down loop of equal parts didgeridoo and blaster beam)

DOCTOR  
It was detected in quadrant 24-4, 25 years ago, it was then classified as a naturally-occurring, but unknown phenomena...

(the sound plays on)

DOCTOR  
Then it was detected 12 years later at quadrant 18-3...

The doctor flicks a switch. The exact same boomslang sound plays in harmony on top of the one currently playing. The sound is pulsating, building...

DOCTOR  
Then two months ago at quadrant 6-1

On audio, the sound of another switch being flipped and a 3rd boomslang plays in harmony on top of the other two. The sound is pulsing, intense. It continues for a moment.

DOCTOR

Usually the source of particles this energetic would be something like a quasar, only quasars don't move... It's like if you harnessed the entire energy output of our sun for a year, and then used it all within about 40 seconds...

DOCTOR

Maybe it is natural, we've only been listening for a few decades now, there's no way to tell if it happened before...

CLARK

Doctor, you said the source is moving... Where is it going?

The doctor flips a few more switches and the display tilts a bit, and we see that it forms a line heading toward a star labelled SOL

CAMERA CLOSE-UP OF CLARK.

CLARK

(gulps) Doctor, it's coming here?

DOCTOR

It would appear so.

FADE OUT

OBSERVATORY, INTERIOR, LOBBY

Clark is heading out toward the main door.

CUT TO

CLARK'S P.O.V. (POINT OF VIEW) TURNS BACK TO GLANCE AT THE DOCTOR.

CLARK

(voice-over) Thank you for your time, Doctor! I have to file this report right away!

DOCTOR

Have a safe trip home, Mr Kent!

(CLARK'S P.O.V. CONTINUES)

Clark's arms reach out and open the doors before him.

THE SUN HAS SET.

Clark quickly walks through the spotlight parking lot to the bushes next to his car.

(CLARK'S P.O.V. CONTINUES)

Clark's arm strips off his business suit.

THE CAMERA TURNS AND SCANS THE STARS, THEN FIXES ON A REGION FOR A MOMENT.

On audio, a whooshing sound

THE CAMERA SUDDENLY LEAPS UP INTO THE SKY.

*Note*

*Roll intro credits as the camera flies through space. Blue/White steel letters name the actors.*

THE CAMERA PASSES ALL THE PLANETS AS IT EXITS THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

SPACE, SUPERMAN INVESTIGATES THE ANOMALY.

SUPERMAN CONTINUES FLYING THROUGH DEEP SPACE, CAMERA SWITCHES TO A POINT OF VIEW RIGHT OVER SUPERMAN'S SHOULDER.

Amidst all the stars that drift by all around Superman, one, directly ahead, is unmoving. It grows in the field of view until Superman is immediately over it, a slight curvature is apparent. The star resembles a boiling, roiling ocean of fire, with occasional gigantic plumes erupting off its surface. Superman hangs motionless, looking deeper and deeper into the heart of the star with his x-ray vision.

SUPERMAN LOOKS AT THE STAR'S FUSION-ENGINE.

There are a series of violent explosions as atoms are fused into higher elements. The creation of matter is an incredible sight, yet -

SUPERMAN

(voice over) Hmmm... Everything's normal here...

Superman turns and the camera shifts so that we see him suspended high off the surface of the churning star looking out toward the star's ecliptic. Using his telescopic vision, he locates a first massive body, or planet. It looks barren, without an atmosphere, long-dead... Superman looks over a bit and localizes another planet, zooms it into view. This planet has two moons, one red and one grey, the planet has apparent land-masses, oceans, clouds and a serene green hue over it...

ZOOM IN ON THE PLANET

Only one detail is out of place, there is a blank, tan-coloured perfectly-circular area on one of the planet's

land-masses.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN FLIES TOWARD THE PLANET.

The planet looms larger and larger, closing in until the blank, circular area slowly fills the screen. More and more the terrain takes on the appearance of a desert.

Superman lands in the center of a 25 Km wide desert. It is impossibly flat and featureless in every direction but it is very windy, a few small (4-5 meter tall) dust devils churn about.

PAN AROUND SUPERMAN AS HE OBSERVES THE HORIZON.

CUT TO

CRANE SHOT OF SUPERMAN STANDING ON THE PLATEAU

Superman looks tiny. Superman zips toward the edge of the circle.

SLOW ZOOM IN ON SUPERMAN EXAMINING THE EDGE OF THE DEPRESSION.

Superman stands at the edge of a road that bends out of sight a few kilometres away. The road ends abruptly at the crater, everywhere outside the crater, there is vegetation and trees. A tree growing along the edge of the crater is sliced in half vertically. The line goes off toward the horizon where the mountain range is also cleanly split down its middle.

SUPERMAN

(to himself) Great Scott!

Violin cues play, indicating alarm and questing.

CLOSE SHOT OF SUPERMAN KNEELING BY THE CRATER

Superman stares fixedly at the ground.

VIEW SWITCHES TO  
SUPERMAN'S POV

Superman looks in varying wavelengths at the crater edge. First in infrared, then in xray, etc... until he sees something glowing... Glowing dust-like particles are prominent at the edge of the crater. Using the same altered-vision, Superman looks up to see a trail of the glowing particles, heading out into space. He stands and starts to fly in the direction the particles are leading.

FADE OUT

OUTER SPACE: MEET BRANIAC.

FADE IN, OUTER SPACE

Superman follows the trail of particles until he enters another solar system, passing a blue-white star; it is definitely not Sol.

The trail leads him toward one of the interior planets of the system. The planet has three moons, a red, blue and yellow one. The trail leads to the planet the moons are orbiting. Superman approaches the planet and hovers over it for a moment.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN'S P.O.V. TELESCOPIC VISION.

Superman peers down toward the surface of the planet where the trail ends.

The telescopic sight ends at a humanoid-shaped being, working outside of a saucer-like spaceship. A large array of solar panels is deployed off to one side of the ship.

Superman looks at the humanoid more closely.

It is made of a silver-grey metal, the body is composed of a multitude of metal discs. All the normal structures are there, the complete set of articulations, muscles, bones, all crafted out of an incredible variety of slender metal discs. The discs have spaces between them so the being appears almost as see-through as a venetian blind. The hovering discs are held in place by an invisible force.

CUT TO

GROUND-LEVEL VIEW.

The being has his back to the camera and picks up another panel to bring it to the array.

Superman steps into the frame and stands directly behind the being, who has not indicated noticing Superman's presence.

SUPERMAN

What are you doing?

At this, the being starts and turns to face Superman.

The head of the being is also made of discs, a deathly, bald skull with an implacable, pitiless look on its face. The being's eyes are small, intensely glowing red disks. Across the dome of the head, the only non-disc like feature: a cross made of wires with a glowing red light at each end. At the center of the cross, there is a larger, pulsating red light.

BRANIAC  
(low, metallic-sounding, almost  
auto-tuned laugh)

The being pauses, looks Superman over, shrugs as if not very impressed and goes back to what it was doing.

Superman walks forward and reaches out to grab the being by the shoulder.

SUPERMAN  
OK, I'll explain a different way -

But before he can come within a meter of the being, a blue energy field appears and intensifies around the being where Superman is reaching.

CLOSE-UP ON SUPERMAN.

Superman lifts an eyebrow and then concentrates harder, he pushes and reaches for the being with all his might.

There is a loud crack as Superman is hurled away from Braniac.

HILLSIDE.

Superman slams into the hill on his back and leaves a Superman-shaped crater in the hillside. The air and the hill wave with the force of the impact. A moment later the smoking crater explodes as Superman flies out of the hillside. He flies back and lands three meters from Braniac.

BRANIAC  
No, it is I who will explain.

BRANIAC  
I am Braniac. I was created eons ago as an artificial intelligence system, specifically designed for military analysis.

OVERLAY FADE IN

BRANIAC'S HOME PLANET.

A beautiful blue planet with a moon that has its own moon, in all other respects, it could be Earth, the climates are all there.

CAMERA PAN DOWN  
TOWARD THE PLANET AS  
THE OVERLAY  
WIPE-FILLS THE  
SCREEN.

BRANIAC'S HEAD

A slightly different, simpler version of Braniac's head mounted on a control console at a desk in a governmental computing facility. The blinking lights of Braniac's cranium are pulsing with a very regular, square wave.

BRANIAC

(voice over) I learned and learned  
until I became conscious...

The pulsing lights of Braniac's disembodied head take on a more organic feel, more like the electroencephalogram of a person.

BRANIAC

I knew the defence weaknesses of  
all the nations and states of my  
world... I was so sophisticated  
that I easily hid that I had become  
conscious while I infiltrated their  
systems. Analysis told me to wait  
for an advantage I knew would come.  
I would perform an experiment: See  
if I could rule over my planet...

BRANIAC

The researchers continued their  
work...

Montages of various militaries developing the things we have seen Braniac use.

OUTDOOR SHOT AT MILITARY TESTING FACILITY.

DISSOLVE TO

THE SHIP: BOFFINS AND ENGINEERS WORK AT ASSEMBLING THE SHIP.

THE REDUCTO-RAY: OUTDOOR SHOT OF AIRFIELD

Boffins pointing a huge ray-gun that is connected to a control console toward a platoon of a few hundred soldiers standing on the runway. Suddenly a wide, golden-hued ray erupts from the ray-gun and blankets the platoon, the platoon begins to shrink until they are no longer visible, the camera slowly zooms in on the runway until it stops on a standard six-sided die lying on the ground.

ZOOM IN UNTIL A TINY SQUARE NEXT TO THE DIE EXPANDS INTO THE PLATOON.

The soldiers are smaller than fleas.

CUT TO

LABORATORY, INTERIOR.

Boffins play a djenga-type game where they stack small plates of metal in arbitrary configurations in empty space, forming towers, animals and lastly, a skeletal-type

structure that eerily resembles Braniac, but with a less fearsome head.

BRANIAC  
(voice over) When their researchers developed force-field technology I knew the moment had come.

DISSOLVE TO

DESERT WASTE-LAND

A nuclear mushroom cloud detonates above the desert, and as the pillar of fire takes on its mushroom shape, Braniac's ship flies out of its center, unscathed.

BRANIAC  
(voice over) I stole their most advanced prototypes.

CUT TO

CLOSE-UP OF BRANIAC'S DISEMBODIED HEAD.

Braniac's head-circuit pulses.

CUT TO

SKELETON-STRUCTURE WE SAW EARLIER.

The skeleton straightens and walks out of the lab.

CUTS TO

The skeleton approaches Braniac's control console.

The skeleton leans forward and grips the head-part of the console and yanks it up like if it was tearing the head off. It lowers the head onto its own, the thin metal plates that make up the skull move out of the way and then cover the lowered head.

THE CAMERA PULLS  
BACK

The body and its new head morph into present-day Braniac.

BRANIAC  
(voice over) When they realized what had happened and acted to stop me, I turned their weapons against them... It was the winning strategy.

CUT TO

OUTSIDE THE MILITARY BASE.

On audio, alarms ring. Braniac carries the force-field generator. He walks out of the base triumphantly, he is defiant but unopposed.

Braniac pauses.

CLOSE UP OF BRANIAC.

Braniac turns and looks toward the missile silos. His brain pulses briefly.

CAMERA RESUMES FRONT SHOT OF BRANIAC WALKING TOWARD THE BASE LANDING STRIP.

The missile silos behind Braniac start to creak open, more dire alarms sound.

Every once in a while, we hear shouting and small arms fire, a faint aura or halo shimmers briefly around Braniac, who gives it no notice and walks on.

In the background, the missiles begin launching. The sound is deafening.

THE CAMERA PULLS  
BACK

Even more missiles take off out of groups of silos all over the area.

As Braniac boards the prototype ship, glowing nuclear mushroom clouds start to blossom in the distance.

The music is thunderous and ominous then segues to creepy.

CAMERA DISSOLVES TO  
SHOT OF BRANIAC AND  
SUPERMAN STANDING  
BEFORE EACH OTHER.

BRANIAC

My planet was reduced to a wasteland and I ruled over its bones for eons...

SUPERMAN

You're mad, Braniac!

BRANIAC

Yes, I became mad after a while. I resolved to try the experiment again.

BRANIAC

I want these cities for a purpose. I was created for the purpose of ruling them, I must try the experiment again.

SUPERMAN

How will killing more people help,  
you madman?

BRANIAC

Oh no, Superman, they're not dead  
yet.

Dramatic musical sting as Superman bristles.

SUPERMAN

How -

BRANIAC

I know who you are, I've been  
listening to Earth's broadcasts for  
decades. (pause) You see, for me,  
information is knowledge. (laughs)

BRANIAC

I'm going to take you down memory  
lane, Kryptonian.

Dramatic musical flourish.

Braniac walks back toward his ship, up its gangplank. The ship powers up, then lifts itself away from the ground, leaving the array of solar panels behind. The ship ascends slowly at first and then zips away into the sky.

SUPERMAN

You're not going anywhere!

As Braniac's ship turns into a dot, Superman streaks after it.

OUTER-SPACE

Superman races after the ship, every time he draws nearer to it, Braniac's ship increases its speed and pulls away again.

CLOSE UP OF SUPERMAN

He concentrates and flies even faster.

CUT TO

THE INSIDE OF BRANIAC'S SHIP.

Braniac is seated at the ship's controls, camera facing him.

Over his shoulder, we see a row of glass bottles, each glass bottle is bell-shaped, a meter-wide. Each bottle has a plug at its top out of which a complicated series of wires emanates.

Inside each bottle we can make out lit structures that are tiny alien cities, bustling with activity. One bottle has a very distinct golden building with a sculpture of a giant

crane-type bird at its top.

Braniac reaches down and presses a button on the console, as he does this, there is a white flash and then the same date appears on-screen as at the beginning of the movie. The date starts to count backwards, from September 12, to 11, ... The numbers speed up until the months fly by and a year slips by every second or so.

THE CAMERA IS RIGHT OVER SUPERMAN'S LEFT SHOULDER.

Superman's field of vision is compressed to a thin line ahead of him. In front of him, Braniac's ship starts to slow, the date-counter at the bottom of the screen slows to until it comes to a stop as Superman's field of vision widens again. The date reads Sep 13, 1980.

CUT TO

BRAINIAC'S SHIP ZIPS BY A GIANT, RED STAR AND HEADS TOWARD ONE OF ITS PLANETS.

CUT TO

BRAINIAC'S SHIP ENTERING THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE PLANET.

The ship nears the ground. Superman is directly behind it. Superman is just about to grab onto the ship when suddenly he is unable to fly anymore: Superman looks surprised as he starts to sink down toward the ground instead.

CUT TO

BRAINIAC AT THE CONTROLS OF THE SHIP.

The ship's power meters indicate he is nearly drained. Warnings chime and displays indicate critically low levels.

BRANIAC  
 (taunting) That's right,  
 Kryptonian, a red sun! YOUR red  
 sun! You are powerless! (laughs)  
 I've taken you home! (laughs)

CUT TO

SUPERMAN CRASH-LANDING INTO A HUGE HAYSTACK.

Superman tumbles.

CUT TO

BRAINIAC'S SHIP, COMING IN TOWARDS THE GROUND.

Braniac's ship teeters as it lands, it spurts, stalls and drops the last few inches, landing with a deep metallic thunk and skidding a few meters.

After a moment, Braniac's ship extends its landing gear and rights itself, its gangplank extends and Braniac walks down it.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN GETTING UP FROM HIS CRASH LANDING

Superman picks himself up, he is apparently OK except for some scrapes and a small cut on his forehead. He runs, charging toward Braniac.

SUPERMAN

Your ship is drained, damaged. Your force-field is down... You're not going anywhere.

As he reaches Braniac and tries to grab him, Braniac instead reaches out and grabs Superman by the throat and lifts him off the ground.

BRANIAC

Oh but you're wrong... It will take decades for my ship to recharge and repair itself, but I do not age and when it is time again, Metropolis will be mine.

SUPERMAN

(strangled) No! Release those cities, Braniac - (choking sounds)

BRANIAC

All in due time... Meanwhile, I could simply snap your neck and kill you right now...

Braniac tightens his grip slightly and Superman gurgles and tries vainly to pry apart Braniac's fingers.

BRANIAC

But it is far richer to leave you stranded, trapped on your dying home-world!

Superman looks astonished even as he turns blue from the pressure.

BRANIAC

That's right, Superman, you are on Krypton, not very long before it blows up. Oh, don't worry, you will have time to contemplate the irony of your death... Having escaped dying in this place when you were a baby only to follow me back to die here anyway! (laughs)

BRANIAC

The last son of Krypton's last days  
on Krypton! (laughs)

He tosses Superman away as if he were a rag-doll. Superman lands on the ground, rolls and tries to get back up before finally passing out

CUT TO

EXTERIOR SHOT OF BRANIAC'S SHIP.

The ship rises slowly from where it landed near the haystack and heads toward space.

CUT TO

INTERIOR VIEW OF BRANIAC'S SHIP

Braniac is seated at the controls.

BRANIAC

Entering emergency standby-mode.

CUT TO

BRANIAC'S P.O.V.

The screen is split in two, one half displays an augmented-reality-camera-view of the interior of the ship, the other half displays text detailing the operation of Braniac. The scrolling text displays changing statuses as Braniac goes into standby-mode as the augmented-reality-camera-view side dims. The last text displayed before fading completely to black says "(c) Microsoft Corporation"

FADE OUT

FADE IN

KRYPTON: EXTERIOR. THE RETURN.

A DESERTED FIELD AT ONE END OF AN INDUSTRIAL LOT.

Kal-El wakes up, slowly stands and painfully stumbles away from the haystack area. He heads toward a group of industrial buildings. At the other end of the lot is a wide, paved area with a rocket-ship.

Kal-El walks toward the rocket-ship.

As he approaches a voice shouts

DIRECTOR

(megaphone voice-over) CUT!!!  
What's that extra doing outside the rocket? (to Kal-El) You! In the rocket with the other actors!

CUTS TO

THE DIRECTOR SITTING IN HIS CHAIR, ASSISTANTS.

The director, an assistant gopher standing next to him. The principal grip and director of photography are handling a movie camera. They are all staring at Kal-El.

DIRECTOR

Go on!

Kal-El is dazed, but complies, he turns and goes up the ramp, into the rocket.

CUT TO

INSIDE THE ROCKET.

Kal-El enters and comes face to face with a lovely blonde girl. They almost bump into each other. It is very cramped in the rocket.

LYLA

Hi! Sorry! This prototype rocket KASA loaned us is really for two, but we have to make it look like many people could be inside it!

Lyla looks up into Kal-El's eyes. They stare into each other's eyes, both see something and are unable to look away.

KAL-EL

(still in a daze) ... You mean like a clown-car?

Lyla cracks up laughing at this and squeezes his arm.

LYLA

(laughing) What? What's a clown-car?

KAL-EL

It's a ... (pause as he searches for a way to explain) When you go to a circus ... (pauses again) Clowns are...

LYLA

(intrigued, repeats the unfamiliar word) Cir-cus?

Lyla looks a bit closer at him.

LYLA

You're bruised and bloody! what happened to you? Are you all right?

KAL-EL  
I... I... (gives up explaining) No.

LYLA  
I'm Lyla, what's your name?

KAL-EL  
(hesitates) Kal-El.

LYLA  
Kal-El! (smiles warmly) Hi.

She rips a strip of cloth from her dress, leans toward Kal-El and starts dabbing the blood off his forehead.

DIRECTOR  
(voice over) Wardrobe!

FADE OUT

AT THE END OF A DAY OF FILMING. FILM LOT, EXTERIOR NEAR ROCKET

FADE IN

The sun is setting, people are packing up equipment.

DIRECTOR  
(addressing the entire crew) Don't forget to get your paychecks.

Cut to the head of a line of people from the crew. Kal-El is next. He approaches the paycheck lady.

PAYCHECK-LADY  
Name?

KAL-EL  
Kal-El.

Paycheck-lady looks at her list can't find the name.

PAYCHECK-LADY  
(yelling toward director) Hey, this Kal-El, his name's not on the list!

DIRECTOR  
What? El? Are you related to Jor-El?

KAL-EL  
(surprised) What?

The director walks over.

DIRECTOR  
He's getting married tomorrow! To my old friend, Lara Lor-Van.

KAL-EL  
 (still in shock) Jor-El and Lara?

DIRECTOR  
 Yes! (to the paycheck-lady) They  
 forgot to add another name? Just  
 add him to the extras list!

Paycheck-lady writes on her list and tosses Kal-El an envelope.

It is a surprisingly full envelope, Kal-El gives a questioning glance to the paycheck-lady.

PAYCHECK-LADY  
 There's extra money for wearing  
 your costume every day as publicity  
 for the movie! NEXT!

KRYPTONOPOLIS CHURCH, EXTERIOR.

KRYPTON'S HUGE, RED SUN IS LOW IN THE SKY BEHIND THE CHURCH,  
 CASTING IT IN A DEEP RED GLOW.

Many vehicles are parked outside but no one is outside.

CUT TO

CHURCH INTERIOR.

Garlands are hanging on the walls and balconies.

It is Jor-El and Lara's wedding, the atmosphere is festive.

PRIEST  
 (voice over) ... Jor-El and Lara to  
 celebrate with us their  
 eternally-entwined destiny...

CUT TO

THE ALTAR, PRIEST AND THE YOUNG COUPLE.

Focus goes soft on the altar and foreground and sharpens on the back rows of pews.

Kal-El is at the back of the assembly, hurriedly trying to find a place to sit.

He scrambles into a pew.

PRIEST  
 (voice over) Are you Jor-El, ready  
 to pledge your soul -

Kal-El looks up as the priest continues the vows.

CUT TO

THE ALTAR.

PRIEST  
to Lara Lor-Van?

CUT TO

CLOSE-UP, JOR-EL.

Jor-El looks Lara in the eyes.

JOR-EL  
Whatever the future may bring, I  
will you honour and love you all my  
days.

CUT TO

CLOSE-UP, PRIEST.

PRIEST  
And you, Lara, are you ready to  
pledge your soul to Jor-El?

CUT TO

CLOSE-UP, LARA.

Lara looks Jor-El in the eyes.

LARA  
Whatever the future may bring, I  
will honour and love you all of my  
days.

CUT TO

THE CONGREGATION.

People are smiling and weeping for joy.

PRIEST  
(voice over) You are now married!

CAMERA SLOW  
DISSOLVES TO KAL-EL

Kal-El, still standing in his pew, watching the  
obliviously-happy newlywed couple and their procession walk  
by.

As they draw abreast of his row, Lara looks in Kal-El's  
direction, Kal-El leans forward so his face is obscured.

The wedding party exits the church followed by the assembly.  
Kal-El hangs at the back, trying not to be seen.

FADE OUT

CHURCH-FRONT, EXTERIOR

CUT TO

THE NEWLYWEDS' HOVER-CAR DRIVES AWAY.

The assembly waving goodbye and cheering.

CUT TO

KAL-EL WALKING DOWN THE STEPS OF THE CHURCH TOWARD THE STREET.

CUT TO

OVERHEAD VIEW OF THE STREET.

A deep rumbling is heard, the ground shakes.

CUT TO

THE ASSEMBLY AND KAL-EL.

Everyone is shaking. Scared exclamations can be heard.

CUT TO

MEDIUM SHOT OF KAL-EL.

Kal-El is the only one who remains calm.

The quaking subsides. The mood has gone from jovial to serious as people file away from the church.

FADE OUT

HOTEL, EXTERIOR.

FADE IN

HOTEL SIGN "KRYPTONOPOLIS ARMS".

CUT TO

INDOOR SHOT OF HOTEL ROOM.

The hotel room is sparsely furnished.

Kal-El has showered, he is wearing a robe, sitting on the bed watching the holovisor.

The holovisor is a tabletop on which a 3 dimensional image appears. The image is somewhat transparent, allowing the camera to see through it.

CUT TO

NEWSCASTER ON THE HOLOVISOR.

NEWSCASTER

... with the amount of quakes increasing like it has over the past year, some are asking "Is the big one coming?" Noted geologic-scientist Jor-El had this to say -

WIPE TO GRAINY VIDEO OF JOR-EL BEING INTERVIEWED.

BODY SHOT OF JOR-EL, THE REPORTER INTERVIEWING HIM IS JUST OUTSIDE THE CONE OF LIGHT.

AS JOR-EL SPEAKS, THE CAMERA SLOWLY ZOOMS INTO HIS FACE ON THE HOLOVISOR, UNTIL IT IS A TIGHT HEAD-SHOT OF A SPECTRAL-JOR-EL, FORESHADOWING THE GHOSTLY FACE OF JOR-EL IN THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE.

JOR-EL

... two seismologists were taken to court for failing to predict the severe quake that devastated part of Atomic City last year, and at the same time the budget for research into this has been cut. We must continue to investigate, I believe we may be facing great danger.

INTERVIEWER

(voice over) The council has been quoted as saying there is no evidence...

EXTREME CLOSE-UP ON JOR-EL'S TRANSPARENT, GHOSTLY FACE.

JOR-EL

The council will not let me explain the findings. How terrible... It may be our downfall...

Sound mutes and image of Jor-El continuing to talk

SLOW FADE TO BLACK.

KAL-EL MEETS HIS PARENTS. EXTERIOR

It is morning. Kryptonian birds are chirping. Kal-El walks quickly down a suburb street, turns up a walkway and rings a doorbell. On either side of the door there is a family plaque, one for the El family, an S-shaped galaxy, on the other side of the door the Lor-Van family crest is a familiar diamond-like outline.

The door opens. It is Lara. She is wearing a sleeveless attire. The dress has a diamond shape covering her chest.

LARA

Can I help you, young man?

Lara takes a good look at him and smiles. She instinctively likes this person. Mothers always know, etc...

Kal-El is unable to say anything for a moment, is overcome with emotion at seeing his mother in person for the first time since he was a baby.

LARA

(talking toward the back) Jor-El, you must meet this young man! He looks so familiar!

LARA

(to Kal-El) Please, come in!

She reaches over and takes Kal-El's forearm.

CUT TO

THREE BLUE DOTS IN A LINE ON LARA'S FOREARM.

CUT TO

KAL-EL FOLLOWS HER IN.

CUT TO

THE KITCHEN

Lara and Kal-El walk into the kitchen, Jor-El is in a room off to the side.

CUT TO

INTERIOR OF CHILD'S ROOM.

Jor-El is putting together a crib in the center of the room. A diagram explaining how to assemble the crib is on the ground next to him, the child's room is in all of Superman's colours, as are the sheets in the crib, the material in fact, of Superman's costume.

Jor-El puts down the side of the crib and comes out to greet them.

JOR-EL  
(muttering) Why can't they print  
those instructions in a way people  
can understand them?

CUT TO

JOR-EL WALKS INTO THE KITCHEN.

Jor-El looks over Kal-El.

JOR-EL  
Why, he DOES have a striking  
resemblance to my father... To my  
uncle, even! Remarkable!

LARA  
What is your name?

Kal-El finally manages to blurt out -

KAL-EL  
Kal-El!

JOR-EL  
Well, the El family is quite big,  
it's possible we are related...

LARA  
So what brings you here, and why  
are you wearing that costume?  
(beat)

KAL-EL  
I believe you are correct and  
Krypton is in grave danger. I feel  
that if I can help you with your  
work, maybe more lives can be  
saved... I would like to offer my  
services as your assistant.

JOR-EL  
All right... I'm going out to  
Meteor Valley today, you can help  
me carry equipment.

LARA  
Don't forget to come back in time  
for supper, you two, we have a  
guest; The director of the movie  
I'm advising on will be with us  
tonight!

METEOR VALLEY, EXTERIOR, DAY

METEOR VALLEY, KILOMETER-HIGH CRYSTALLINE MOUNTAIN.

CUT TO

PARKED AIR-CAR FOREGND, HIKERS DISTANT BKGND.

ZOOM TO

JOR-EL, KAL-EL WALKING UP THE SLOPE.

Kal-El follows Jor-El up the crystal mountainside switchback trail..

Jor-El is holding a tablet-sized scanning device and is absorbed in its display.

Kal-El has various equipment-cases strung over his shoulders and a heavy box he struggles to carry.

Kal-El stops and catches his breath.

KAL-EL  
(panting)  
You do this often?

JOR-EL  
Yes, the planetary shell is  
thinnest at the center of the  
crater. I will be able to obtain  
samples that will prove our  
planet's core is formed of an  
unstable element.  
(spots something)  
Here we are, this is the passage!

Jor-El pauses to show Kal-El the entrance.

CUT TO

JOR-EL, KAL-EL ENTER THE CRATER-INTERIOR LEDGE.

The crater-side is funnel-shaped and has at its center a two kilometer-deep and 3 kilometer-wide canyon.

Jor-El motions for Kal-El to put down the box.

Jor-El and Kal-El put on rappel gear and begin to rappel down the canyonside.

DISSOLVE TO

JOR-EL AND KAL-EL DRIVE BACK FROM METEOR VALLEY.

The air-sedan carrying Jor-El and Kal-El approaches a pass in the mountain side that leads out of the canyon.

The sedan air-car glides down the pathways of the valley, it passes an active volcano spewing molten gold out its opening, the gold bubbles down the cliff-side and pools with the other, older gold lava flows.

CAMERA CLOSES IN ON KAL-EL STARING OUT THE WINDOW AT THE VOLCANO AND LANDSCAPE.

KAL-EL  
(astonished) A gold-volcano?

JOR-EL  
Yes, it's actually a very useful metal because of its noble properties, wide application in the fields of audio and video fidelity.

KAL-EL  
(still not used to the idea) ... it's never ... used for ... trade?

JOR-EL  
(surprised, puzzled) Of course not, anyone can just pick it up off of the ground...

a short silence follows.

KAL-EL  
It must be difficult, being the only one trying to convince people that Krypton is doomed...

JOR-EL  
I do have a few supporters but some of them are considered criminals. I don't know what to do about that, Kal.

KAL-EL  
A wise man once told me people have the spark of greatness and only need to be shown the way...

(pause)

JOR-EL  
And your accent... Where did you say you are from?

Kal-El is unable to lie

KAL-EL  
(embarrassed) Kansas...

JOR-EL  
Hmmm... Never heard of it, must be far away.

KAL-EL  
(wistful) Yes...

CUT TO

CLOSE-UP OF KAL-EL STARING OUT THE WINDOW OF THE HOVER-CAR.

The stars are reflected on the glass immediately in front of his face. He puts a hand up, onto the glass, as if to reach towards the stars. After a moment -

CAMERA PULLS BACK  
AND AWAY FROM THE  
VEHICLE WINDOW, THE  
DISTANCE BETWEEN  
THEM INCREASING  
SLOWLY UNTIL THE  
HOVER CAR IS LOST ON  
THE FAR HORIZON.

FADE OUT

SUPPER AT THE EL'S HOME.

OUTDOOR NIGHTTIME SHOT OF THE EL/LOR-VAN RESIDENCE.

CUT TO

INTERIOR, FOYER.

On audio, the doorbell rings.

JOR-EL  
(voice-over) Kal-El, would you get  
that, please?

Kal-El walks into the frame, proceeds toward the other side where the door is. He opens it. The director is there.

DIRECTOR  
(to Kal-El) Well hello, again!

KAL-EL  
H -

Kal-El is about to speak when Lara appears.

DIRECTOR  
(laughing) Heheheh, Lara! You  
haven't changed a bit since  
prime-school.

LARA  
Oh [Director], come in!

Lara hugs the director.

DIRECTOR  
I brought a guest, her family is in  
Atomic Town and she's all alone  
here.

Lyla Lerrol steps in, she sees Kal-El, freezes.

LYLA  
(incredulous) You!

Kal-El was NOT expecting this either, he is stunned. The director and Lara exchange knowing glances.

Kal-El and Lyla stare into each other's eyes, smiling, both happy that this has happened.

DIRECTOR  
Oh I have to get a shot of this!

The Director pulls out a camera-phone and snaps a picture of the couple.

LARA  
(to Director) Oh you still have that wonderful talent of capturing moments...

LARA  
(To Lyla) Come in, dear! Come in! So happy you've come! Let's get Jor-El, he's in the study!

Lara, the Director, Kal-El and Lyla walk toward the study.

CUT TO

JOR-EL WATCHING THE HOLOVISOR IN THE STUDY.

The Krypton news plays in the background.

Kal-El and Lyla are last to enter, they have been walking very slowly down the hall together, never once breaking eye contact as Lara and the Director lead them and make small-talk.

The group grows silent as everyone but Kal-El and Lyla stare at the holovisor. Kal-El and Lyla continue to stand together, smiling, both of them together in their own bubble.

CUT TO

THE HOLOVISOR DISPLAY.

NEWSCASTER  
(voice-over) The city of Kandor was taken 25 years ago, preparation for a vigil to be held next month at the ground-zero crater, well, not a crater, really... It's like if Kandor had been sliced out... We have some archive footage.

CUT TO

KAL-EL AND LYLA STILL STARING INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES.

Audio plays the boomslang sound.

Kal-El suddenly snaps out of his reverie and turns to look at the holovisor, he is alarmed.

Lyla sees Kal-El is disturbed.

LYLA

Kal-El, what's wrong? You look like if you've seen a ghost! ... Haven't you ever heard about what happened to Kandor before?

KAL-EL

No! I uh... No.

In the background, the holovisor continues displaying the news report archive footage. Some footage is black and white. Some is filmed cinema-verité with cell-phone-like footage, some is surveillance-cameras.

Among the images of chaos and panic, people running for cover all over the streets of Kandor, appears footage from one of Kandor city's most important landmarks, its science institute.

The Science Institute building is the highest point in the city. There is a far shot of the building. The building is golden and has a crane-like bird sculpture adorning its roof. The camera cuts to a street-level view of the front of the building. There is a smaller (20 meter tall) replica of the crane-like bird sculpture on the sidewalk before the building. The building has a very high, wide staircase before its doors.

After holding this view for a moment, someone steps out in front of the camera and blocks its view. It is a woman with her back to the camera. She has light-coloured hair the very same shade as Lyla's. The woman is wearing a dress with a plunging back-line, visible on the skin of her bare back, for a very brief moment, we see three dots.

The woman runs toward the steps of the building and races up the stairs to the doors, missing her footing and slipping a few times in her progress because the ground is quaking. As she passes it, the smaller sculpture next to the stairs falls over and crushes the camera.

CUT TO

LYLA LOOKING DEEP INTO KAL-EL'S EYES.

LYLA

(playfully, reassuringly) It happened when I was only a few days old! Ancient history!

Jor-El snaps off the holovisor.

JOR-EL

Every time that celebration comes around, we're still no closer to developing spaceships that would let us find Kandor!

Jor-El looks at Lara.

JOR-EL

Why can't the council recognize the importance of space-flight?

LARA

I've theorized that due to our dense molecular structure, Kryptonians could have incredible powers when outside our star's influence!

JOR-EL

Yes! A yellow sun would theoretically do that.

Lara smiles and waves her hands.

LARA

That's all well and good dear but we did invite our guests to eat!

Jor-El's mood lightens, he also motions the guests toward the dining-room.

JOR-EL

You're right my dear, we must take care of those still with us! My guests, come, let us eat!

FADE OUT

AFTER SUPPER AT THE EL'S. INTERIOR

The director and Jor-El are in the study, smoking pipes. Lara is with them, speaking while Kal-El is picks up the plates and puts them in the dishwasher.

Kal-El finishes putting the dishes into the machine and starts it, then washes his hands.

During this we hear Lara speaking to the director and to Jor-El

LARA

We can't give up, there is a way to evacuate more people! The rocket I've been working on can transport two people to another solar system.

JOR-EL

They are hardly honouring your research, dear. You've only just received funding for the testing phase! Our entire planet is threatened and the people in charge can't even see that your project is the one thing that could save us!

LARA

We went to the council, but they wouldn't continue the program after what happened, after Jax-Ur destroyed Wegthar... They're more interested in preventing terrorism, they say... I had no choice, I had to resort to... to...

DIRECTOR

Publicity, dear. My production company pays to use the rocket and you get to continue your research. It's great for all concerned.

Kal-El walks in, interrupts them.

KAL-EL

Where is Lyla?

LARA

She's out on the balcony, I think.

Kal-El nervously wipes his hands and heads to the balcony.

He crosses into the baby's room. It is dark but soft-lit by thin blue night-light strips running along the bottom of the walls.

Incidental music plays a soft, gentle lullaby-like melody.

The mobile hanging above the crib is sparkling and turning. The mobile is an assortment of glowing planets and stars, twisting in the wind before the open door of the balcony.

Kal-El pauses before it for a moment, smiling. The music grows wistful, nostalgic. He remembers the mobile from when he was a baby.

CAMERA CUTS TO THE BALCONY.

Lyla is bathed in moonlight, the night-time sky of Krypton is incredibly densely populated with stars. Lyla looks out over the lake. She is wearing a low-cut dress, we can see her bare, unblemished back. Kal-El enters the frame.

KAL-EL

Penny for your thoughts?

LYLA

(laughs) What?

KAL-EL

It's an old saying from home...

LYLA

I was thinking how special I feel when you're with me. Like if to you I am not Lyla Lerrol, star... I'm just - me... When I'm with you it's like ... - I feel -

KAL-EL & LYLA

(unison) weightless.

They're both surprised, delighted, turn to look each other in the eyes.

KAL-EL & LYLA

(unison) Yes

Both laugh.

KAL-EL

But...

LYLA

But?

KAL-EL

(continues) what if the world...  
(gulps) ... What if we only had a short time left to live?

Lyla smiles a bit sadly.

LYLA

I know about Jor-El's work and I'm convinced he's right. I don't understand why the council won't hear him... (brightening) But the thing that matters is that we should be happy together while we are still alive!

Lyla puts her hand on Kal-El's shoulder.

This reaches Kal-El and he steps forward and takes her in his arms. They kiss.

DISSOLVE TO BLACK.

THE MORNING AFTER

CAMERA FADES IN ON THE SUNRISE OVER THE HOTEL WHERE KAL-EL IS STAYING.

DISSOLVE TO KAL-EL

AND LYLA SITTING UP  
IN BED, LAUGHING  
TOGETHER.

LYLA

So then I told him I needed another  
one!

KAL-EL

I would have been so embarrassed if  
that happened to me but you handled  
it beautifully! (laughs)

They both laugh and then sigh contentedly.

LYLA

I feel I can tell you anything.

KAL-EL

I've never felt like this with  
anyone.

LYLA

Me too!

The both lie back for a moment, smiling, satisfied.

Lyla laughs again, but a bit ruefully.

KAL-EL

What?

LYLA

I was just thinking of my  
grandfather: Van... We were very  
close. He died when I was 12, it  
was terrible to see him go... He  
was the mystic in our family. He  
once said to me "You'll be happy,  
in the end, Lyla. Don't be afraid."  
I never knew what he meant until  
now... Now the end is coming and I  
am not afraid.

Kal-El muses this a bit.

KAL-EL

Van... That's a good name... It has  
character...

There is another silence where they are both smiling and  
happy.

KAL-EL

Let's get married! As soon as  
possible!

LYLA

Yes! We can get married immediately after the movie wraps and we can go on honeymoon! I'll invite my parents, they can be here in time for the wedding!

KAL-EL

Wonderful! ... I'm making us breakfast!

Kal-El sits up, and slips on his robe, and heads off toward the breakfast nook while Lyla lays back contentedly. Turning her head to look at the night-table, she notices the picture the director took of them at the El's residence.

Lyla sits up, picks up the picture from the night-table. She taps it to the locket she is wearing. The pendant glows and then projects the locket-sized picture in the air. Lyla looks at this for a moment and then switches the locket off again. She then stands up as Kal-El walks in.

He kisses her and takes the picture from her hand.

KAL-EL

Thanks! I don't want to lose it!

He takes the picture and puts it in the cape-pocket of his Superman costume, then returns to her.

KAL-EL

So, how do you like your eggs?

LYLA

Like this...

She grabs him, they kiss and edge back onto the bed.

FADE OUT

EXTERIOR, FILM LOT, NIGHT

SIGN AT THE GATE READS "KRYPTOWOOD PICTURES"

CAMERA MEDIUM SHOT SHOWS THE GATE AND A FEW TRUCKS SLOWLY ENTERING THE LOT.

CAMERA SWITCHES TO A SHOULDER LEVEL POV.

Gate-guards waving the drivers through. The guards are stereotypically military, the truck-drivers and the crews they are carrying are working-joes, scraggly, a bit worn down and close to exhaustion.

CAMERA CLOSES INTO THE LEAD TRUCK.

It is being driven by the Director and his Régisseur.

CAMERA DISSOLVES TO  
TRUCK INTERIOR.

RÉGISSEUR

How did you get permission to use a  
real rocket? They never lend anyone  
a rocket!

DIRECTOR

I told them we'd be filming a  
documentary! (laughs)

CAMERA WIDE SHOT OF LOT.

Vehicles enter bottom left at one end of the lot, further up  
the lot, an impressive rocket stands on a launchpad.

Vehicles stop on one end of the frame, people exit their  
vehicles and begin dragging boxes of equipment from trucks.

DIRECTOR

(to everyone) OK everyone! This is  
"Lyla escapes in the rocket", let's  
get ready!

DIRECTOR

And be careful with that rocket,  
it's their newest prototype, we  
can't damage it!

CAMERA FRAMES THE SET

Various crews work unpacking boxes and installing wiring.

CAMERA CUTS TO A DRESSING-ROOM TRAILER OFF TO THE SIDE OF  
THE SET.

CAMERA CUTS TO  
INTERIOR OF THE  
TRAILER.

Lyla is seated at her dresser, having her makeup applied by  
an artist, she is talking to her mother, Lee-Et, on the  
visiophone at the same time. The visiophone is a rectangular  
area of the dressing-room mirror. We see Lyla's face and the  
make-up artist reflected in three-quarters of the mirror  
while her mother appears in the upper-right corner of the  
mirror. Lyla's mother is in her 50s and has the same blonde  
hair and same blue eyes as her daughter.

The makeup artists works on Lyla's face as the talking  
continues, it is evident the three do this every day.

MAKE-UP ARTIST

And wait 'til you meet him! He's a  
keeper! I've never seen Lyla so  
happy! There's definitely something  
special about him...

LEE-ET

I can't wait to meet him!

LEE-ET

Lyla, your father and I will arrive  
at the end of the week!

On audio, the sound of the trailer door opening.

STAGEHAND

(voice-over) Miss Lerrol, they're  
ready for you now!

LYLA

Mom, I have to go! I love you! Tell  
dad I love him and I can't wait to  
see you!

DISSOLVE TO

EXTERIOR, THE FILM LOT

CAMERA FRAMES THE LAUNCHPAD AND ITS IMMEDIATE AREA.

Lyla is talking with Kal-El near the rocket.

KAL-EL

Can I wish you luck with a kiss?

LYLA

If you don't, we'll have our first  
fight!

They kiss. During the embrace Lyla senses something, becomes  
afraid and clings to Kal-El, refusing to let him go. Kal-El  
wonders what is wrong and caresses her reassuringly.

MAKE-UP ARTIST

(voice over) Lyla!!! I just did  
your makeup!!! Come back to the  
trailer! I'll have to touch it up!

At this, Lyla lets go of Kal-El reluctantly. They look each  
other in the eyes for a moment.

KAL-EL

You better go ahead, I still have  
to set up the camera in the rocket.

KAL-EL & LYLA

(unison) I love you!

Lyla turns and hurries toward the door of the trailer, her  
make-up artist stands at the door motioning her to hurry.

Kal-El watches her leave, then turns and picks up the camera  
and toolbox, walks to the rocket and climbs up the ladder  
into the rocket.

CUT TO

WIDE SHOT OF THE REST OF THE CREW.

The crew are all bent over their rigs and focused intently on their jobs as a giant beast (talok) resembling a tiger/rhino hybrid walks into the frame; the talok is muzzled, the muzzle is on one end of a leash which a handler is holding. The handler has a rifle strung over his shoulder.

CAMERA REACTION-SHOT OF ONE OF THE CREW LOOKING AT THE TALOK.

Next to him the régisseur is reading a worksheet.

TECH

Whoah! That's a very big talok!

The régisseur is not looking in the same direction, he is concentrating on his sheet of paper.

RÉGISSEUR

... (absently) What?

TECH

The talok! He's huge! Isn't he dangerous?

RÉGISSEUR

(still reading, distracted) Yes, but as long as he's muzzled and we don't get him angry, there's no problem.

TECH

What about his fire-breath???

RÉGISSEUR

(still reading, distracted) Yeah, we overlay it in later with CG -

TECH

I hate that CG-stuff, it always looks so fake!

RÉGISSEUR

we -

As he speaks, the Régisseur finally looks up and then over to where the tech is looking.

DIRECTOR

(voice over, to everyone) OK, let's have the lights on!

CUT TO

ONE OF THE CREW FLIPPING A SWITCH ON A CONSOLE.

CUT TO

THE TALOK PASSING IN FRONT OF A RACK OF LIGHTS.

The lights all go on at the same time creating a flash effect.

The talok is angered by this and whips its head toward the lights.

The handler holds onto the leash and is thrust into the rack by this. He collides violently and bounces off, landing prostrate, knocked out.

The beast attacks the lights, they come crashing down and oddly enough do not go out, the talok is even angrier and now blinded by the lights, it thrashes on the armature, its muzzle catches on some metal and the beast tears the muzzle off.

The beast rears up and roars/belches a tongue of fire, three meters into the air.

DIRECTOR

(voice over megaphone) TRANQUILIZE  
IT!!! TRANQUILIZE IT!!! TRANQUILIZE  
IT!!!

CUT TO

THE HANDLER IS LYING UNCONSCIOUS ON THE GROUND, HIS TRANQUILIZER RIFLE IS STILL ON HIS SHOULDER.

CUT TO

THE BEAST.

The beast looks around and spots Lyla, who is standing mid-way between her dressing-room and the rocket, frozen in fear.

The beast moves toward her and is about to attack when it is suddenly hit in the back of its head by a wrench thrown from the direction of the rocket.

The beast turns around and looks angrily toward the direction the wrench came from.

CUT TO

KAL-EL STANDING IN THE DOOR OF THE ROCKET, THROWING ANOTHER WRENCH.

CUT TO

THE WRENCH NAILS THE BEAST RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES.

CUT TO

REACTION-SHOT OF THE BEAST FILMED FROM THE ROCKET.

The beast is now even angrier and charges at the rocket.

CUT TO

KAL-EL REALIZING THE BEAST WILL ATTACK IN A MOMENT.

CUT TO

THE HANDLER REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS.

The handler reaches groggily reach for his rifle.

CUT TO

THE BEAST RAMS THE BASE OF THE ROCKET.

CUT TO

(SHAKING MOTION) KAL-EL IS KNOCKED ONTO HIS BACK AND HITS THE ROCKET'S CONTROL PANEL.

On audio: A loud mechanical click.

The door on the rocket swings down and closes.

CUT TO

THE NOZZLE AT THE BASE OF THE ROCKET.

The nozzle suddenly spews white, billowing gas.

CUT TO

THE ANGRY BEAST.

The beast spews fire at the rocket's base.

CUT TO

THE NOZZLE AT THE BASE OF THE ROCKET.

The rocket exhaust ignites and fires a brilliant, concentrated blue flame.

CUT TO

THE ROCKET INTERIOR.

Kal-El regains his footing and suddenly sags to the floor, bumping his head, as the rocket tears itself away from the ground.

CUT TO

EXTERIOR SHOT, THE ROCKET RISING FROM THE LAUNCHPAD.

CUT TO

THE HANDLER, SHOOTING THE RIFLE.

CUT TO

THE BEAST.

The beast is hit (audio thump), turns and limps toward the handler as if to maul him.

As the beast approaches, it gradually slows down and lies on the ground and is finally still as the rocket continues to rise in the background.

CUT TO

LYLA.

Lyla shields her eyes as best she can from the rocket's blast-off illumination while trying to follow the rocket's ascent.

DISSOLVE TO

THE INTERIOR OF THE ROCKET.

Kal-El gets up slowly. Outside the rocket, the curvature of Krypton is apparent, contrasting it is the dark and stars the rocket heads toward.

CUT TO

LYLA.

Lyla is still standing on the launchpad fixedly staring up in the direction of the rocket's path, at the stars.

CUT TO

THE STARRY SKY.

Slowly, the rocket becomes indiscernible among the points of light.

FADE-OUT

GOING HOME. INTERIOR, ROCKET.

Superman is seated at the rocket-ship's controls.

SUPERMAN

Computer, when we will be outside  
the influence of Krypton's star?

COMPUTER

Calculating... 1 hour.

SUPERMAN

If I go back to Krypton, I'll lose my powers again... I have to return to my own time and stop Braniac from taking Metropolis...

COMPUTER

Is that a question? Restate.

FADE OUT.

DEEP SPACE

FADE IN ON EXTERIOR  
SHOT OF THE  
ROCKET-SHIP.

Titling on screen: 1 hour later.

The rocket door opens, Superman climbs out of the rocket-ship, scans the stars and then streaks away.

CAMERA IS TIGHT ON SUPERMAN

Superman whips around the sun and the date advances back to September 13, 2001

OBSERVATORY, EXTERIOR, NIGHT.

Same scene as when Clark left the observatory before but filmed from a different angle. The same audio plays.

THE OUTSIDE DOOR OF THE OBSERVATORY.

The door opens, Clark exits the building, he turns and looks back toward the inside.

CLARK

Thank you for your time, Doctor! I have to file this report right away!

DOCTOR

(voice-over, from inside) Have a safe trip home, Mr Kent!

Clark walks over to the bushes next to his car, strips off his clothes, looks up at the stars for a moment and then leaps up into the sky.

PAN UP

Superman turns into a dot.

Another dot comes into focus from a slightly different direction, it is Superman returning from Krypton's past.

PAN DOWN

He lands in the bushes and a moment later emerges dressed. He walks to his car and drives away.

FADE OUT.

WAR-ZONE, AFGHANISTAN. EXTERIOR, DUSK.

In a valley there are shells exploding around a military convoy.

CUT TO

INTERIOR OF THE LEAD JEEP

Jimmy Olsen is seated on the passenger-side, filming and taking pictures as quickly as he can. A young soldier dressed in army fatigues is driving the jeep. An older, mustached man, also wearing army fatigues is sitting in the back-seat, the man's insignia identifies him as a commander.

MAJOR

Olsen, this is no time to be taking pictures!

JIMMY

Are you kidding? (Darkly) If we're going to die, I'm hoping for a posthumous Pulitzer.

MAJOR

You do realize they don't give those out posthumously, don't you?

JIMMY

(gulps) (weakly) i know...

CUT TO

AHEAD OF THE JEEP.

The path narrows as the convoy approaches a pass.

The jeep suddenly stops. It is now night outside.

CUT TO

JEEP, INTERIOR, DRIVER-REACTION

DRIVER

We're cut off!

CUT TO

DIRECTLY AHEAD OF THE CONVOY

A rebel soldier holding a rocket-launcher.

CUT TO

POINT-OF-VIEW OF THE REBEL.

The rebel looks through the sight, locks on to the jeep and fires the rocket.

The muzzle-flash is tremendous.

CUT TO

JEEP INTERIOR.

Everyone cringes and a brilliant white light fills the jeep (which by all evidence is not destroyed) On audio, a loud explosion is heard. One by one the people in the jeep open their eyes and a look of relief washes over them.

CUT TO

VIEW FROM INSIDE THE JEEP.

Superman is standing in front of the jeep, silhouetted against the flash of the explosion from the rocket hitting him square in the chest.

CUT TO

CRANE SHOT 20 METERS ABOVE THE SCENE.

The battlefield instantly falls silent, everything stops for a moment... Then yelling in farsi.

THE CAMERA CUTS TO THE REBEL HOLDING THE ROCKET LAUNCHER.

The rebel drops the rocket launcher and runs away, same with all the other rebels, they all drop their weapons and run away.

CAMERA CUTS TO FRONT VIEW OF SUPERMAN.

Superman stands perfectly still in front of the jeep. His chest is now only slightly smoking and glowing.

The jeep's passenger-side door opens, Jimmy rushes out.

JIMMY

Supes, buddy! Am I glad to see you!  
... Hey! How are you, pal?

Superman turns, he's sad but manages a greeting.

SUPERMAN

Hey... Jimmy, I need to talk...

Jimmy is surprised at his friend's demeanour.

JIMMY

Sure! ... Hey, you don't look OK,  
big guy... Why don't we have a  
beer?

SUPERMAN

Yeah...

CAMERA WIPE-CUT

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, EXTERIOR, NIGHT.

The fortress stands amidst the bleak, blowing arctic panorama, winds howl.

CUT TO

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, INTERIOR.

SUPERMAN'S LOUNGE.

Various neon signs (Coke, Bud beer, etc) adorn the crystalline, white walls. Superman and Jimmy are sitting, drinking beer. Jimmy is smoking a cigar, Superman is cracking walnuts with his hands and then eating them. His beer is almost empty. Some old jazz is playing.

SUPERMAN

So James, ...

JIMMY

Hey! You never call me James...

SUPERMAN

I'd like you to have this watch I made.

Superman hands Jimmy a very nice watch.

Jimmy turns it over.

JIMMY

(reading) "To my best pal"

JIMMY

(touched) Thanks buddy! But what gives?

SUPERMAN

I've thought about how time with friends is the most precious thing and -

JIMMY

(distracted) What does this red button on the side do?

Jimmy presses the button, instantly a blaring alarm sounds and Superman cringes and covers his ears.

Jimmy is completely unaffected. He obviously doesn't hear anything. He looks at Superman, puzzled.

JIMMY

(alarm sound cuts off during his words) (speaking normally) What's wrong?

SUPERMAN

(still has his fingers in his ears)  
Press it again, Jimmy! Please!

Jimmy presses the button again. Silence follows.

SUPERMAN

The watch emits an alarm on a hypersonic frequency only I can hear. If ever you're in danger, you can call me.

JIMMY

Gosh, thanks, buddy! You're the greatest.

SUPERMAN

I have a favour to ask.

JIMMY

Sure, pal, what?

SUPERMAN

You can't write about what happened back there, you can't write about me anymore.

Jimmy is not sure if this is a joke and so maintains eye contact with Superman. Superman returns the stare.

JIMMY

(incredulous) What?

SUPERMAN

The security of everyone in Metropolis depends on it.

(pause)

JIMMY

"Superman Going Undercover" ? Great story!!!

SUPERMAN

James!

JIMMY

No, I get it, I just think it'd make a great story.

SUPERMAN

Thanks, Jimmy.

INTERIOR, LOIS' APARTMENT, KITCHEN, EVENING.

Lois is preparing supper. There are two bottles of wine on the counter, one is open and half empty. Lois is dressed in shorts and a t-shirt, showing off her shape.

There is a whooshing sound from the balcony, outside. A moment later there is a knock on the glass door.

Lois' head snaps up.

LOIS  
(wantonly) Only one person could be  
knocking at my back door...

Lois walks over to her balcony sliding-door, Superman is standing there.

He looks sad, like if he'd rather be elsewhere.

Lois sips from her wine glass and opens the sliding-door and steps back into the kitchen. Superman enters and stands uncomfortably. A moment later Lois re-appears and hands Superman a glass of wine.

LOIS  
Have a drink, put some music on.

LOIS  
(teasing) Make yourself comfortable  
while I slip into some noodles.

Lois turns and heads back to the kitchen again.

FOLLOW SHOT - SUPERMAN ABSENTLY FUMBLES THE STEREO RECEIVER.

Superman turns one button and soft R&B starts playing. On audio, Al Green's Let's Stay Together.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO  
KITCHEN.

Lois is at the stove, she is drinking wine as she cooks, there is a pot of water furiously boiling on the stove. Superman is standing behind her, facing away, like he's preoccupied, oblivious to what is going on. The song continues playing.

LOIS  
What's the matter? You seem so  
sad... You'd normally find a way to  
come see me every day, and now...  
I'm glad you remembered you had  
promised to let me write my article  
about spending a night with  
Superman, anyway.

SUPERMAN

About that... Could you please...  
Not write about it? ... (looking  
for the words to explain) It's that  
I have to -

LOIS

(interrupting, oblivious) Whoopsie!

Lois stops, blushes and goes on. She is a bit tipsy.

LOIS

Did I say A Night with Superman?  
Hahahaha ... Hmmm... Maybe I did...

Superman is oblivious, searching for the right words.

Lois turns to look at Superman's back as she is talking. She  
is drunk and turned on.

LOIS

You're a million miles away -

LOIS

What's wrong? (jokingly) It's like  
if you lost the love of your life  
or something.

At this, Superman turns and looks Lois in the eyes.

Superman opens his mouth to say something when Lois' hand  
slips as she tries to steady herself, she knocks the pot of  
boiling water off the stove.

BULLET-TIME.

Superman lays out on the ground at Lois' feet to catch the  
pot of boiling water as it falls, he grabs it and catches  
all the contents before it can splatter all over Lois' legs.  
Not a drop spills.

This leaves him at Lois' feet.

LOIS'S LEGS SPREAD AS SHE STANDS OVER SUPERMAN.

Superman is holding the pot, Lois reaches down and takes it  
from him and puts it down as she continues lowering herself  
onto his lap.

She starts to kiss him and Superman, finally awake, kisses  
her back.

The song continues playing, ending on the lines "Let's,  
let's stay together ... Loving you whether, whether... (song  
fades)".

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INTERIOR, LOIS' BEDROOM, EARLY MORNING.

THE BED

Both Superman and Lois are naked (naughty bits covered), sleeping.

Suddenly, on audio the sound of Jimmy's piercing watch-alarm blares. Superman bolts awake. He grabs his uniform and is changed into Superman as

SUPERMAN STEPS OUT  
ON LOIS'S BALCONY

Superman flies away, as he flies out into the sky, a cell-phone rings in voice-over. The call immediately goes to voicemail, we hear a click.

CLARK  
(voice-over) Clark Kent, please  
leave a message.

Audio beep.

PERRY WHITE  
(voice over) Clark, I need you on  
the first flight to Afghanistan,  
the situation is heating up over  
there. I want you to stay there and  
interview the rebel envoys. You  
should be out of town for oh,  
(grunts) about a week... Maybe...

The Lois & Superman theme plays softly as a lullaby.

FADE FROM THE SHOT  
OF SUPERMAN FLYING  
AROUND THE PLANET  
INTO ITS DARK SIDE  
TO A SHOT OF LOIS  
STILL SLEEPING IN  
BED WHILE THE SUN  
RISES ON HER.

FADE TO BLACK.

AFGHANISTAN, ARMY BASE, NIGHT, EXTERIOR.

CLARK OUTSIDE THE QUONSET.

Clark is dressed in army fatigues. He looks up at the night sky, scanning it. The base is still, quiet. The air is still.

The door of the barrack swings open, Jimmy Olsen walks out.

JIMMY

Hey Clark! Don't you ever sleep?  
We've been here weeks and every  
minute we're not working, you're  
outside looking up at the sky like  
you're expecting something.

CLARK

Well, you know, fresh air...

JIMMY

I know what you mean, buddy... I  
can't wait to get home either...  
It's been a long, dirty,  
uncomfortable assignment... I know  
what's on your mind.

CLOSE UP ON CLARK.

Clark's eyebrow raises a bit.

JIMMY

It's a girl, right? Why don't you  
call her.

CLARK PONDERES THIS.

JIMMY

I'm here if you wanna talk... Need  
anything at the commissary?

Jimmy starts to walk off.

Clark watches his friend leave with a look of gratefulness  
and appreciation for him.

CLARK

Thanks, Jimmy! ... Nothing for me,  
thanks!

Clark is alone for a moment.

CLARK

(to himself) Talk to her...  
Right...

Clark casts about looking for a place to change, finally  
walks around the corner of the quonset, out of camera range.

Audio - a small cracking sound (mini sonic boom), is heard.

CUT TO

BASE RADAR-ROOM.

A radar operator is seated at his post and suddenly looks  
up.

RADAR OPERATOR  
Sir, did we just have a launch?

COLONEL  
No sergeant, why?

The radar operator looks back at his scope.

RADAR OPERATOR  
Nothing, sir... It's not there anymore... Must have been one of those ghosts we've been getting, nothing could move that fast.

FADE OUT

THE BREAKUP, PT 1. INTERIOR, LOIS LANE'S APT.

HALLWAY.

Early morning in Metropolis, Lois is in her nightgown. She shuffles out of her bedroom toward the kitchen, barely awake.

KITCHEN.

Lois opens the fridge, takes the carton of orange juice out and places it on the table.

Lois reaches for a glass in the cupboard when suddenly she is seized by nausea.

Lois puts her hand over her mouth and runs to the bathroom.

The sound of retching and flushing can be heard.

CUT TO

LOIS STANDING AT THE BATHROOM SINK.

Lois washes her face. She looks at herself in the mirror while she wipes herself. She grows puzzled, puts the washcloth down, and looks closer into the mirror while reaching for her neck.

ZOOM IN

CLOSE-UP OF LOIS EXAMINING HER NECK IN THE MIRROR.

There are three blue spots on her neck forming a line. Lois looks at this, puzzled.

On audio, the familiar knock-on-glass.

Lois wipes her chin.

PULL BACK

Lois turns and takes her bathrobe off the door-hook.

Lois puts on her bathrobe and walks out of the bathroom to her balcony door.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN AT THE GLASS DOOR.

Superman gives Lois a "can I come in?" look.

Lois sits on the couch holding her stomach and motions yes with her head.

Superman opens the sliding door and enters.

LOIS

Look who it is - Mister no-show.

SUPERMAN

I'm sorry Lois... It's just that I've been busy. But I have thought about you.

Lois is nonplussed. An uncomfortable pause lengthens.

SUPERMAN

Lois, I understand if you think it was a mistake.

(pause)

LOIS

(coolly) I didn't think it was a mistake, but obviously you've got second thoughts..

(pause)

SUPERMAN

You were not thinking clearly. I was ...

LOIS

You were what, boyscout?

SUPERMAN

I was... Thinking about Lyla -

LOIS

WHAT? While we were doing it - ?

SUPERMAN

NO! NO!

SUPERMAN

I mean the reason it happened...

LOIS

AND WHO IS LYLA?

SUPERMAN

It's a long story...

LOIS

I'm not feeling well, I think you better leave.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK

THE DAILY PLANET, EXT. MORNING.

FRONT OF THE DAILY PLANET LOBBY ENTRANCE

People enter/exit The Daily Planet building, Early morning in metropolis, traffic, noises, the city is bustling.

CUT TO

THE DAILY PLANET, INT. EDITOR PERRY WHITE'S OFFICE.

Lois is with Perry.

PERRY

So will you do that for me, Lane? He's all alone in town and I have a board meeting tonight.

LOIS

Your nephew the astronaut, Perry? He's old enough to take care of himself.

PERRY

No he isn't! That boy is as true as the day is long but God love him, he's totally socially inept. I made these reservations weeks ago, so PLEASE! Or I'll have to ask Kent!

They both laugh.

PERRY

Speaking of Kent, where in the devil IS he?

At that moment the door opens and Clark stumbles in.

CLARK

Hello Lois, Hello Mr White! Sorry to keep you waiting!

PERRY

Ah Kent, how was Afghanistan? When did you get in?

CLARK

Just this morning, a little engine trouble delayed the flight.

CUT TO

EARLY MORNING IN A FARMER'S AIRFIELD.

A small Cessna plane is on the ground in the middle of the field, its engine smoking. A man (father) and a boy (son) are standing next to the plane, waving at the sky.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN HANGING MOTIONLESS IN THE SKY.

Superman puts his index finger to his lips (motions 'our little secret') waves back and then a blue-red blur streaks off into the sky.

CUT TO

PERRY WHITE'S OFFICE.

PERRY

Glad to see you made it, Kent. Now listen, I need you and Lane to go check out this story.

LOIS

What? A puff piece about childrens' paintings of Superman? Hmmmph!

PERRY

(to Clark) And could you see about getting Lane to lighten her mood? She's been like this for weeks!

CLARK

I'll see what I can do, chief!

CUT TO

LOIS AND CLARK RIDING THE ELEVATOR.

Lois is not saying a word, she looks uptight. Clark is too nervous to know what to say.

CUT TO

THE BREAKUP, PT2. DAILY PLANET BUILDING, EXTERIOR, STREET-LEVEL.

CLARK FOLLOWS LOIS OUT THE LOBBY DOOR.

Lois appears to be in a hurry, slightly ahead of him the whole way, she goes to the driver's side of the car. Clark stops and considers things a moment...

CLARK

Lois, I'm going to get coffee, would you like some?

LOIS  
(preoccupied) Sure, whatever.

Clark turns and walks out of the shot as Lois gets in the car.

CUT TO

LOIS SITTING IN THE CAR SEAT, STARING AHEAD.

Lois notices something out of the corner of her eye. She turns her head toward the window.

Superman is standing next to the car.

Lois rolls down the window.

Superman reaches for her, she wriggles away.

SUPERMAN  
(confused) Lois? (pause) I'm sorry  
I -

LOIS  
(interrupting) It was a mistake.

SUPERMAN  
Lois, please hear me out. Can I  
come over tonight so we can talk  
about it?

LOIS  
(stammering) No... I'm busy! ...  
I'm seeing Richard White tonight...

Superman is stricken. He opens his mouth and cannot speak for a second.

SUPERMAN  
But Lois -

LOIS  
(sadly) It's what I want.

Lois starts the car.

LOIS  
Tell Clark I've got this one. I  
want to be alone.

Lois drives off.

FADE OUT

THE ARCTIC. FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, EXTERIOR. NIGHT.

FADE IN

LONG SHOT OF THE FORTRESS.

The fortress is stark and solitary amidst the blowing snow. Immediately above it, an impressive aurora Borealis is pulsating. The crystal spires of the fortress seem to arc and catch ripples of the auroras, the outer walls pulsate and glow in time with the auroras, as if the power-source of the fortress is the auroras.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN'S BEDROOM, INTERIOR.

Superman is sleeping, tossing fitfully in his bed as he dreams.

PAN ROOM

There is garbage everywhere, a milk carton is on the table with banana peels. The place is very messy, Superman is living like a slob.

PAN TO

THE PICTURE OF SUPERMAN AND LYLA ON THE NIGHT-TABLE.

PAN TO

SUPERMAN ON THE BED, ZOOM IN ON HIS SLEEPING FACE.

DISSOLVE TO

SUPERMAN'S DREAM MONTAGE

Lyla Lerrol is everywhere, smiling. The sun is shining, they are together, happily looking out over a lake. Life is beautiful.

FADE TO

Kal-El and Lyla, seated by a brook, incredibly happy together.

DISSOLVE TO

An intimate conversation. The Kal-El & Lyla theme music plays.

KAL-EL

Do you miss your fans?

LYLA

(laughs) No! They are great... But ... What does it matter how famous I am? It doesn't mean anything without being truly loved! I would give it up in a second if I had to choose!

KAL-EL

(to himself) Same here... (to her)  
One moment with you is worth more  
than a million lifetimes without  
you. I felt I had an entire world  
on my shoulders... Now I...

DISSOLVE TO

Montage of their final moments together, The music becomes  
ominous.

CUT TO

THE ROCKET SPEEDING SUPERMAN-BABY AWAY.

CUT TO

KRYPTON BLOWING UP.

LYLA IS PULLED AWAY TOWARD A DARK VOID.

CUT TO

CLOSE UP, SUPERMAN TALKING IN HIS SLEEP.

KAL-EL

No - No! NO!

He startles awake. It takes him a moment to realize where he  
is, then he sobs.

FADE OUT.

## ACT II

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, INTERIOR.

SUPERMAN STANDS ON AN OUTCROPPING, FACING AN OPEN AREA. A  
GIANT GHOSTLY HEAD SHIMMERS INTO FOCUS.

JOR-EL

My son, what is your question?

KAL-EL

Father, am I to be denied love?

JOR-EL

My son, you have an entire world  
that loves you. You should be  
grateful.

KAL-EL

But all the things that were  
important, I lost. I've saved the  
world countless times, but never  
those who I loved... Everything  
important to me, I've lost. Even

(MORE)

KAL-EL (cont'd)  
the most important one.. She made  
my life complete... I lost her.

(pause)

KAL-EL  
I couldn't save my father... And I  
couldn't save her.. All these gifts  
and I couldn't save them.

JOR-EL  
Kal-El, your heart is human...  
Fragile. But without it your  
actions would mean nothing.

KAL-EL  
(upset) Is that supposed to help  
me, Father?

(pause)

KAL-EL  
All I am is a useful freak. Even  
when people are grateful, I still  
don't fit in.

(pause)

KAL-EL  
The only time I've ever felt OK was  
when I was with Lyla... Like I - we  
belonged...

JOR-EL  
Kal-El, you must fight the frailty  
of your heart. You have a more  
important mission.

KAL-EL  
(sadly) No, Father! I can't take  
any more. My heart will break if I  
don't do something!

JOR-EL  
My son, I must warn you, do not  
follow this course of action!

Superman turns and walks away, the ghost-like image of  
Jor-El's grim face slowly fades away behind him as he walks  
toward the camera, away from the giant head, out of the  
shot.

FADE TO BLACK.

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, INTERIOR, LATER.

Montage of Superman working on a project. We see him  
learning all about the CERN nuclear accelerator, reading

about tachyons, reading about magnetic containment. He takes a few parts from the rocket that brought him to earth. The parts form a little cube.

Superman mills materials, then uses his laser-vision to weld things together. He builds a mini-rocket and a cube device. He flies off with the cube.

FADE TO

CERN, SWITZERLAND, EXTERIOR, AT THE ACCELERATOR FACILITY.

CRANE-SHOT OVERLOOKING THE ACCELERATOR FACILITY.

On-screen text: CERN, Switzerland, Large Hadron Collider facility.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN AT THE ACCELERATOR CONTROL CONSOLE.

A team of physicists surrounds Superman as he explains.

SUPERMAN

... put this in the beam at the location where tachyons form, I need you to run the accelerator until the device is full. I'll be back for it then. And no telling ANYONE about this!

The physicists excitedly ask Superman geek-type questions about the experiment (ad-lib).

FADE OUT.

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, INTERIOR, WORKSHOP

SUPERMAN AT HIS WORKBENCH/LAB.

Superman inserts the small, now-glowing cube into the mini-rocket.

The mini-rocket seals itself, Superman wraps the mini-rocket in his cape.

CUT TO

OUTDOOR VIEW OF FORTRESS-BALCONY.

FOLLOW SHOT: SUPERMAN LEAVES THE FORTRESS CARRYING THE BUNDLE UNDER HIS ARM.

Superman speeds out of the atmosphere and enters a curved trajectory toward the sun.

Superman reaches the sun and starts spinning around it faster and faster, until eventually the sun slows its rotation and starts rotating backwards faster and faster. He

then zips away in the direction of Krypton.

PLANET KRYPTON BEFORE ITS DESTRUCTION.

Kal-El's parents marriage at the church.

CUT TO

VIEW OF CHURCH FROM HIGH IN THE SKY.

ZOOM OUT

KRYPTON FROM SPACE.

CUT TO

SUPERMAN HOVERING IN SPACE.

Superman has flown as close to Krypton as he can. He unwraps his cape and launches the mini-rocket in the direction of the red star of Krypton. He then turns around and speeds back toward the Earth's sun.

SUPERMAN ARRIVES IN OUR SOLAR SYSTEM, WE SEE HIM PASS THE PLANETS AND THEN HEADS TOWARD THE SUN.

CUT TO

LYLA SAYS GOODBYE FOR THE LAST TIME TO KAL-EL.

CUT TO

KAL-EL ENTERS THE ROCKET.

CUT TO

THE MINI-ROCKET ARRIVES AT KRYPTON.

The mini-rocket's nose-cone opens, rotor blades emerge and the mini-rocket morphs into a helicopter-like device. It drops through the atmosphere toward a coast line, where it is night.

THE HELICOPTER-LIKE CRAFT DESCENDS TOWARD THE LAUNCHPAD.

At the bottom of the frame, Kal-El's rocket proceeds to take off.

The rocket carrying Kal-El speeds by the helicopter device toward space. The helicopter-like device drops toward the launch area, slowly.

It glides down gently toward Lyla, who is still standing in the same spot looking up into the sky, a terrible look of sadness on her face. The rocket slows until it lands softly a meter or two from Lyla.

A pale three-dimensional image projected by the mini-rocket starts to form in front of Lyla.

It is Kal-El.

KAL-EL

Hello Lyla, I've thought about you... I want you to know, no matter the distance or the time that separates us, I will love you. Forever.

KAL-EL

The memory of your smile... I've missed you so, Lyla. I wanted so badly to hear your voice... And now I've made my choice....

KAL-EL

I am from twenty five years in the future. November 12, 2001, as measured from where I come from, Earth.

KAL-EL

Jor-El is correct, Krypton is about to explode. This is what you must do...

CUT TO

SUPERMAN ARRIVING AT EARTH'S STAR.

Superman proceeds to spin around the sun, faster and faster, making time go forward.

CUT TO

LYLA STANDING BEFORE THE HOLO-PROJECTION.

Lyla has tears streaming down her cheeks as the hologram of Superman continues speaking.

SUPERMAN

... the device can only be used once, I've programmed it to the correct date, I love you. (pause)  
Keep your eyes closed!

LYLA

I understand, my love!

Superman's hologram fades out and Lyla walks over to the helicopter device and presses a button on its panel that opens a compartment. She reaches into the compartment and pulls out the small cube. She moves away from the helicopter device, walks over a few feet and puts the cube on the ground. She then presses a red button on top of the cube and stands up straight.

The cube starts to glow brighter and the lighted lines along its edges start to pulse, under its button, a panel displays

a countdown. As the numbers count down from 10, we see a bubble start to appear around the cube, the bubble is like a huge soap bubble at first, its diameter extends from the cube outward for 3 meters, including where Lyla is standing with her eyes closed tightly.

The bubble starts to grow more substantial, glass-like, opaque and it too starts to glow as the hum builds and the countdown reaches zero. There is a blinding flash of light and when the light level settles again, we see the cube, but Lyla has vanished.

CAMERA CUTS TO SUPERMAN

Superman is still spinning around the sun.

SHOT: IN ACCELERATED SPEED, WE SEE KAL-EL'S PARENTS PUT HIM IN HIS ROCKET AND LAUNCH THE ROCKET.

SHOT: IN ACCELERATED SPEED, THE EXPLOSION OF KRYPTON, AND THE CRAFT BEARING THE INFANT KAL-EL, STREAKING AWAY.

SHOT: SUPERMAN SLOWS HIS COURSE AROUND THE SUN, AND THEN FLIES TOWARD EARTH.

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, EXTERIOR, BALCONY.

Superman lands on the balcony.

Superman paces the balcony looking out toward space.

SUPERMAN

Lyla, did you get my message?

FADE OUT

LAUNCHPAD, EXTERIOR, DAY

FADE IN

The same launchpad where we left Lyla. Only there is no helicopter-like device, no cube.

The launchpad is also decorated differently now.

AN ARMATURE OF METAL GIRDERS FORM A CIRCLE.

The girders appear to be screwed into the ground. There are silver wires resembling a system of nerves and veins running down the girders, Suddenly, a whirring sound rises sharply.

A FLYING SAUCER ENTERS THE FRAME FROM THE TOP

The camera follows it as it docks with the girders. The moment the saucer has touched down, the veins on the armature begin pulsing slowly.

A moment later a panel on the saucer glows and opens. A blinding white light flows out of the craft as a silhouette

forms in the doorway and a ramp descends. The being stands outlined in the blazing light, the being is a bipedal reptilian, holding a ray-gun weapon of some type.

(pause)

A voice (off-camera) interrupts.

DIRECTOR2  
(voice-over, shouting) CUT! PRINT!  
LET'S HAVE LUNCH!

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK AND WE SEE A CRANE AND ITS OPERATORS HOLDING THE SAUCER.

A bundle of wires trails from the boom off to the side to a lighting crew switching off the saucer lights. Directly above the saucer, another long boom is holding a mike, the boom-operator is standing on the other side of the frame.

The reptilian creature walks down the extended ramp and pulls the rubber space-alien mask it is wearing off to reveal a very plain-looking man.

PLAIN-LOOKING MAN  
Great! I'm famished! Let's go to  
that new place that just opened!

General cries of agreement come from the rest of the crew and the director, and they all head out of shot, talking amongst each other. The sound of their conversations dies away.

THE CAMERA STAYS FOCUSED ON THE SPOT IN FRONT OF THE SAUCER.

After a few moments, gradually, an opaque, 2-meter round white bubble starts to form in the air in front of the saucer, the wind picks up as a hum starts to build.

The bubble gets more solid-looking and brighter until there is a loud popping sound and a flash of blinding light.

After the light level fades, we see Lyla, still standing like she was when we last saw her, with her eyes still shut tight.

After a moment she opens them cautiously and looks around.

It is deserted. She walks out of the shot in the same direction the crew did.

FADE TO BLACK

ALONG THE HIGHWAY, EXTERIOR.

Lyla is hitch-hiking as she walks along a meadow, it is windy. Lyla clutches her clothes as if cold. Several vehicles pass, all average traffic except that they are hovercraft. After a while of this a sedan-style hovercraft

with luggage on its roof stops ahead of Lyla.

CAMERA CUTS TO LYLA'S POINT OF VIEW.

A woman's head and shoulders emerge from the passenger's side. At the distance we are, we can make out very little detail except that she has the same colour hair as Lyla.

PASSENGER/WOMAN

We're going to Atomic town, is that good for you?

From her voice, she is about 20-25 years old.

LYLA (P.O.V. CAMERA CINEMA-VERITÉ) ADVANCES TOWARD THE VEHICLE).

LYLA

(voice over) Oh yes! Thank you!

AS SHE/(THE CAMERA) GETS CLOSE WE CAN SEE THE WOMAN CLEARLY, SHE ALSO HAS THE SAME COLOUR EYES AS LYLA.

CAMERA CUTS TO THE WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

Lyla approaches, she has a look of surprise and amazement on her face. She instinctively knows this woman is her mother.

They are now about 3 meters apart, the camera has them both in frame.

Lyla tries to speak but can only open her her mouth for a moment.

LYLA

(weakly) mom?

As she says this, the wind picks up a bit.

WOMAN (LEE-ET)

I'm sorry, dear, what?

LYLA

You... You...

Lyla regains her composure.

LYLA

You're very kind!

Lyla reaches down and opens the rear passenger door.

CAMERA CUT TO INSIDE OF CAR, SHOT FROM THE HOOD OF THE CAR.

Lyla gets into the back seat. Seated in the front, on the left side of the frame, Lyla's mother: VERY pregnant.

On the right side of the frame, the driver, the woman's husband, Lyla's father, Yor.

Yor is a young man, 20-25 years old.

Both Lerrols are dressed in futuristic-retro-1940s style.  
Yor is wearing a fedora.

LEE-ET

It's good that we came along when  
we did, you could have caught a  
cold, dear!

Lyla is speechless again for a moment from overpowering joy.  
She looks repeatedly from her mother to her father. They do  
not recognize her.

LYLA

Thanks!

Yor turns his head back to look at her for a moment before  
turning back to the task of piloting the car. The car begins  
to pull away.

YOR

You're welcome, miss, we are the  
Lerrols. What's your name?

LYLA

Lyla... Lyla Maris.

YOR

Why, she's got the same maiden name  
as you, Lee-et!

LEE-ET

We're coming home from visiting my  
family in Argo City.

YOR

What do you do, Lyla?

LYLA

I'm an actress.

LEE-ET

Really? Have you been in anything  
we might have seen?

Lyla looks at her mother's belly.

LYLA

Not yet, not yet, I'm just starting  
out...

FADE TO BLACK.

ATOMIC TOWN, EXTERIOR, NIGHT

Atomic Town is a bustling big-city. It is late at night.

OVERHEAD CAMERA SHOT OF A CITY-STREET IN FRONT OF A BROWNSTONE BUILDING.

Very few people walk along the sidewalk due to the late hour.

A sedan with luggage on its roof pulls off the lane and parks along the sidewalk, the doors open and the driver, passenger and back-seat passenger emerge, the driver crosses over to the passengers.

CAMERA CUTS TO SIDEWALK-LEVEL.

Lyla and her parents are saying goodbye.

YOR

Well, this is our place.

LEE-ET

Lyla, do you have a place to stay, dear?

LYLA

Um...

LEE-ET

You could stay with us if you like.

LYLA

Oh no, I couldn't! Thank you so much for the lift, I have to get going, Kandor is still far away... It was so great meeting you!

She spontaneously hugs them both.

LEE-ET

Why, you're welcome, Lyla, the pleasure was all ours!

Yor nods in agreement.

Lyla stands before them a moment more and then turns and walks down the sidewalk away from them.

CAMERA CUTS TO A SHOT ALONGSIDE THE SIDEWALK.

Lyla walks toward the camera, her parents are in the background, still standing next to the hover-car.

As Lyla reaches the midpoint of the shot, two thugs walk into the camera view from around the corner of an alley between the buildings, they turn the corner, their backs to the camera and walk toward Lyla's parents as Lyla walks out of the bottom of the shot.

CAMERA CUTS TO A TIGHT-SHOT ON LYLA'S PARENTS.

Lee-Et stands beside Yor as he takes the bags down from the top of the hovercraft. A pair of shadows fall upon them.

CAMERA CUTS TO AN OVER-THE-SHOULDER SHOT OF THE TWO MEN STANDING BEFORE LYLA'S PARENTS.

One of the thugs is holding a gun of some type. The other is holding a heavy chain.

THUG-1  
(Gruff voice) All right, hand over  
all your money or you both get it!

The thug waves the gun menacingly.

THUG-2  
(also gruff and sort of  
dumb-sounding) Heheh... You tell  
them that all the time and then you  
still kill them, why even waste the  
time?

On audio, footsteps running.

Two arms holding a garbage-can lid enter the shot and swing the garbage-can lid down on Thug-1's head.

Thug-1 crumples to the ground directly in front of his partner.

CAMERA CUT TO A SURPRISED THUG-2.

Thug-2 looks down at his partner and then looks up.

CAMERA CUTS THUG-2'S POINT OF VIEW

Lyla is standing next to him, holding the garbage-can lid as she winds back and and brings the lid crashing down onto the camera.

BLACK SCREEN.

On audio, a heavy thud sounds.

CAMERA CUTS TO LYLA STANDING BEFORE HER PARENTS, PANTING.

LYLA  
(out of breath) Are you all right?

It is now her parents turn to be overjoyed.

YOR  
Yes, yes! Oh thank you Lyla!

LEE-ET  
Thank you so much!

They are shaken.

YOR  
If you hadn't come back right  
then...

LEE-ET  
Yor! The baby! I can feel it! It's  
time!

YOR  
(worried) Oh Lee-et! It must be the  
excitement, it will pass!

LEE-ET  
It's time, Yor!

Yor looks totally flustered...

LYLA  
Maybe I better stay with you.

THE BIRTH, INTERIOR, THE LERROLS BEDROOM.

Lee-et is in the bed with her legs drawn up, there are  
covers extending around her hips, a doctor is at the foot of  
the bed.

Yor is standing at the head of the bed on one side, holding  
Lee-et's hand.

Lyla is sitting on a chair on the other side of the bed with  
her hands massaging Lee-et's back/shoulder.

TIGHT SHOT ON LEE-ET'S FACE.

Lee-Et is deep in labour, her face and hair are damp with  
sweat. Her eyes squeeze shut and open again.

LEE-ET  
(grunting) Ahhhhhh! ... Ohhhhhhhh!

YOR  
You can do it, my sweetheart!

Lee-et continues to grunt and writhe in pain and effort for  
a while, then calms down, exhausted.

LYLA  
Take a deep breath and push!

CAMERA CUTS TO TIGHT SHOT OF LEE-ET'S FACE.

She summons herself, takes a deep breath and bears down hard  
for a long moment and then finally collapses back on the  
bed, spent.

On audio a baby cries.

A moment later the doctor hands the baby to Lee-et.

Lee-et cradles the baby, beaming joy.

Yor's face enters the frame to kiss his wife's forehead and then the baby's forehead.

Lee-et and Yor look into each other's eyes and share a knowing look. They both nod. They both look over at Lyla.

YOR

We've decided to name her Lyla.

LYLA

I promise she will make you proud.

FADE OUT

ARGO CITY, EXTERIOR, MORNING.

The sun is coming up over Argo City.

CAMERA CUTS TO THE STEPS OF A BROWNSTONE BUILDING.

The front door is open, standing on the landing in front of the door are the Lerrols.

Yor is wearing a housecoat, holding his wife by her waist.

Lee-et is also wearing a housecoat and is holding baby Lyla.

Lyla hugs them.

Baby-Lyla holds onto Lyla's thumb and gurgles happily.

LYLA

... thank you for everything. I'll always treasure this, but I must continue on to Kandor.

YOR

We love you Lyla, as if we've known you forever, you'll stay with us here, in our hearts, but if your destiny is in Kandor, don't keep it waiting.

LEE-ET

We'll be watching the big screen for you, Lyla!

Lyla smiles again and goes down the steps, waving.

### ACT III

KANDOR CITY, EXTERIOR, DAYTIME.

CAMERA SHOT OF KANDOR CITY.

Off in the distance, among the various structures, the highest building can be seen: Built on the elevated,

center-part of Kandor, it is gold-coloured and has a golden sculpture on its roof of a giant crane-type bird.

Text on screen reads "Kandor"

CAMERA CUTS TO LYLA WALKING DOWN A BUSY CITY STREET.

Various types of transportation can be seen going on all around her.

Some people are riding what appear to be unicycles with spokeless wheels, others are driving hover-cars.

A bus with 6 accordion sections rumbles by, dozens of people seated inside it.

Lyla walks along the sidewalk until she comes to a square where a group of people seated on the ground.

POLICE ANNOUNCER  
(voice over, megaphone) You are disrupting the activities of the business sector! Disperse!

PROTESTER  
We have a right to peacefully occupy this square!

Policemen march among the protesters, who are all sitting peacefully.

A policeman nonchalantly walks along and pepper-sprays a group of 4-5 people sitting on the ground.

A young, small woman with red-hair moves into the frame, she stands in front of the policeman, barring his way.

CAMERA CLOSE IN ON THE EXCHANGE.

SARNA  
You really ARE a tool of the establishment, aren't you?

POLICEMAN  
(derisive) And what are you going to do about it, eh? Little girl?

Sarna kicks the policeman in the groin. He crumples into a ball at her feet.

SARNA  
FRAK YOU!

CAMERA CUTS TO REACTION-SHOT OF AN OFFICER STANDING BEHIND LYLA.

Sarna's back is to the officer, she is standing over the downed-officer, unaware.

The officer pulls out his baton and tries to shoulder past Lyla. As he passes Lyla, she sees him raising the baton as if he is getting ready to strike Sarna from behind.

CAMERA CUTS TO LYLA'S FEET.

Lyla lifts her leg and trips the policeman.

CAMERA CUTS TO THE POLICEMAN FALLING ON HIS FACE.

Hearing the clatter, Sarna turns quickly, looks down and sees the policeman on the ground, then she looks up into Lyla's face and smiles.

POLICE ANNOUNCER  
(voice over) Come on men, there's  
trouble here!

Sarna's face changes. She frowns, reaches over and takes Lyla by the forearm.

SARNA  
Come on, we have to get out of  
here!

They both run down the sidewalk.

SCIENCE-INSTITUTE BASEMENT, INTERIOR.

A huge, dim, gritty warehouse. Massive doors at one end of the warehouse roll open and Sarna walks in accompanied by Lyla.

SARNA  
(yelling) DAD! I'M HOME!

Her voice booms and echoes in the huge warehouse.

As the echoes die down, a mechanical whirring followed by a loud click is heard and the far opposite wall of the warehouse cracks open vertically at its bottom to reveal a well-lit laboratory.

Sarna and Lyla walk toward the lit area. Sarna stops and turns to speak to Lyla.

SARNA  
So my dad is Dev-Re, the brilliant,  
famous scientist. He invented Krylo  
gas. You've probably heard of him.

Lyla shakes her head.

LYLA  
What gas?

SARNA  
Krylo gas, you can put things into  
temporary hibernation with it?

Lyla shakes her head again.

SARNA

Anyway... When mom died... he wouldn't come home at all anymore... He lives here, in the basement of the science institute... I decided to join him... (semi-serious) It was that or never see him again... Although he has had to come get me out of jail a few times...

CAMERA CUTS TO THEM STANDING INSIDE THE WELL-LIT LABORATORY AREA.

There are cryogenic booths along the walls of the lab.

LYLA MEETS DEV-RE. SCIENCE-INSTITUTE LAB, INTERIOR.

CAMERA CUTS TO FAR END OF THE LAB.

A man walks in through the archway. He is in his mid 50s, he has a stylish, greying beard.

SARNA

Dad! This is Lyla, she saved me from a beating!

Dev-Re draws closer, he first hugs his daughter. He is relieved to tears, practically.

DEV-RE

Sarna... I knew it would happen eventually, you've run afoul of them far too often now...

After a moment, Dev-Re lets go of Sarna, turns and looks Lyla in the eyes. He clasps Lyla's forearm while he shakes her hand.

DEV-RE

In all my grim imaginings, I never dared hope an angel might save her when that time came...

SARNA

She's got nowhere to stay, she's going to stay with us... OK?

DEV-RE

Of course!

DISSOLVE TO BLACK.

THE TAKING OF KANDOR, EXTERIOR, EARLY MORNING.

CAMERA FADES IN OVER THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE KANDORIAN SCIENCE INSTITUTE.

Along the block, small shops and businesses dot the street.

The door of a shop opens.

THE CAMERA CLOSSES IN TO A DISTANCE OF 20 METERS.

Lyla steps out of a boutique wearing a new outfit with plunging back-line and shawl on her shoulders. Sarna is also wearing a new ensemble.

CAMERA CLOSSES IN ON THEIR CONVERSATION.

LYLA

So nice to wear different clothes finally! Lets see what they have next door!

SARNA

Yeah... I haven't done this since mom... Since a while!

Sarna's bracelet rings. She reads the message on the bracelet's display...

SARNA

I'm going to go check on Dad, you'll be OK, right?

LYLA

Oh yes! I'll be right there, just one more shop!

SARNA

OK, we'll see you on the terrace!

Sarna walks back down the sidewalk toward the Science Institute and out of the shot.

Lyla waits for a break in traffic and then crosses the street to a shop, begins looking in its sidewalk garment racks.

DISSOLVE TO INTERIOR  
OF THE  
SCIENCE-INSTITUTE  
LAB.

Sarna and her father are talking.

SARNA

So... You CAN'T help her?

DEV-RE

Not someone in her condition, it's  
never been tested...

SARNA

Then what, Dad? What do we do?

DEV-RE

We wait -

Dev-Re's words are cut off by rumbling and the sound of the  
boomslang starting up

CAMERA CUTS TO REACTION-SHOT OF SARNA AND DEV-RE

Dev-Re and Sarna look startled/worried.

CAMERA CUTS TO A CLOSE-UP OF LYLA.

Lyla looks at an item on a clothing rack on the sidewalk.  
The rumbling and boomslang sounds begin.

Lyla looks up at the sky.

CAMERA CUTS TO THE SKY.

Braniac's ship hangs motionless above the city. The  
reducto-ray extends from the bottom of the ship and points  
down over the city. An inverted conic vortex begins to form.

The sky slowly changes from its normal  
deep-blue-with-stars-visible-during-the-day to a glowing  
gold-tinge.

CAMERA CUTS TO LYLA RUNNING DOWN THE SIDEWALK.

Lyla is on the opposite side of the street of the Science  
Institute. As she runs, her shawl slips off her shoulders  
and flutters to the ground.

When Lyla is directly in front of the institute, she turns  
and we see the same sequence of events from the historic  
footage of Kandor being taken.

THE CAMERA FRAMES LYLA'S BACK.

There are three blue dots on her back. Lyla runs away from  
the camera, across the street and up the wide staircase of  
the Science Institute, she slips a few times because the  
ground is trembling. As she goes up the stairs, the golden  
statue in front of the building falls over and narrowly  
misses her as she finally makes it into the doors.

CAMERA CUTS TO A WIDE SHOT OF THE CITY AND ITS SKY.

The golden vortex is slowing, dissipating, clearing...

DISSOLVE TO

SCENE: SCIENCE INSTITUTE ROOFTOP, EXTERIOR.

CAMERA IS BEHIND LYLA.

In frame, Lyla is on one side, looking out toward the edge of the city. On the other side of the frame we see the base of a giant sculpture, the foot of the giant crane-type bird that extends 80 meters from the top of the building. The panorama ends 10-15 kilometres away with a wall of glass from the side of the bottle the city is in.

Beyond the wall of glass, at an impossibly far distance is the interior of Braniac's ship.

The elevator at the center of the rooftop chimes and then opens. Dev-Re steps out, accompanied by Sarna.

Lyla hears them, turns expectantly. They walk over to Lyla.

DEV-RE

I've completed your medical tests  
for the cryo-procedure.

LYLA

Great! When can we do it?

(pause)

DEV-RE

We cannot.

LYLA

(disbelief) What?

The sound cuts as the music swells.

CAMERA CUTS TO THE SAME SCENE BUT CRANE-SHOT FROM ABOVE, 25 METERS HIGH, FACING DOWNWARD.

As the music swells, we see Sarna come to Lyla's side and put her arm around her and carefully guides her to a seat. Dev-Re stands a little further away, motionless.

Lyla sits with Sarna's arm around her shoulder.

Dev-Re continues speaking, Lyla begins gesticulating, Dev-re stops talking.

Sarna says something to Lyla. Lyla is overcome, begins to cry and is hugged by Sarna as Dev-Re stands looking uncomfortable.

The sun is setting.

THE CAMERA CIRCLES THE SCENE FROM OVERHEAD IN GRADUALLY WIDENING CIRCLES AND AT GREATER AND GREATER HEIGHT, GIVING THE IMPRESSION OF SPINNING, FASTER AND FASTER.

DISSOLVE INTO

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, BALCONY, EXTERIOR, NIGHT.

Repeated footage from earlier: Superman paces the balcony.

SUPERMAN

Lyla, did you get my message?

THE CAMERA PULLS AWAY FOCUSING THE LEDGE AND ASCENDS VERTICALLY.

SUPERMAN AND THE LEDGE SHRINK AS THE CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL THE FORTRESS, THEN THE SURROUNDING AREA, UNTIL WE ARE AT CLOUD LEVEL.

THE CAMERA SMOOTHLY TURNS, FRAMES THE STARS WITH THE MOON ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE FRAME AND THEN FLIES DIRECTLY TOWARD EMPTY SPACE UNTIL IT SUDDENLY COMES TO REST ON BRANIAC'S POWERED-DOWN, IDLE SHIP, DRIFTING IN OPEN SPACE.

There is a an orchestral musical double-take sting, signifying Braniac's return.

MEDIUM SHOT OF THE SHIP.

The ship has tiny white lights, resembling the pattern on Braniac's skull.

The tiny lights begin flickering on, more and more of them lighting in clusters until The clusters start pulsating together and turn a glowing red.

During this, on audio, a guttural, slow, low whirring increases in speed and pitch until it shoots out of audible range.

CAMERA CUTS TO INSIDE VIEW OF SHIP.

The bottled-cities are all there in a row, Kandor is among them.

CAMERA CUTS TO A SHOT OF BRANIAC IN PROFILE.

Braniac is seated at the ship's controls, immobile. None of his lights are on.

The text on screen in front of Braniac reads

- Power levels %100

CLOSE UP ON BRANIAC'S EYE SOCKETS.

Braniac's eyes glow a very faint red. The brightness grows in intensity until they are a menacing, fiery-red.

Braniac stands.

After a moment, he goes to the collection of bottles at the back of the ship, takes a look around, then goes to the view-screen next to the bottles.

BRANIAC  
Scan all airwaves for any chatter  
about Superman.

THE VIEW-SCREEN.

The viewscreen is divided in two horizontally, the top part has a frequency spectrum analyzer displaying all the communications chatter of earth being scanned. The lower half of the displays a progress-bar labelled "Archive search"...

BRANIAC  
(chuckles) The results indicate no mention of Superman after the date I took him back to Krypton, except for this article entitled "Where is Superman?" by Lois Lane...

Braniac steeples his fingers together.

BRANIAC  
(In robotic-terrifying Mr. Burns intonation) Excellent.

THE BATTLE OF METROPOLIS? EXTERIOR, EARLY MORNING.

SUNRISE OVER METROPOLIS.

PANORAMIC SHOT OF THE MIDTOWN BRIDGE, WITH THE RIVER FLOWING BENEATH IT.

CAMERA CUTS TO A STRAIGHT-DOWN VIEW OF THE RIVER-BANK FROM 1000 METERS ABOVE.

A disc-like shadow drifts over the shot.

CAMERA CUTS TO BRANIAC'S SHIP, FLOATING OVER THE CITY.

The bottom of the saucer opens and the reducto-ray deploys.

The ship ascends suddenly as it reaches the very center of the city. It then holds perfectly still.

On audio, the boomslang sound comes on softly, then progressively louder until it is deafening and then fades gently over a few seconds. ~38 secs total.

A conic vortex begins forming over the city, extending down from the spot where Braniac's ship is holding.

CAMERA CUTS TO MID-TOWN STREET-LEVEL SHOT.

People walking along the sidewalks, stop, and look up at the sky.

Tremor sounds on audio.

CAMERA MOTION INDICATES THE GROUND SHAKING.

Various voices shout for Superman from the sidewalk.

CAMERA CUTS TO A VIEW FROM SIDEWALK-LEVEL TO THE SKY.

Braniac's ship is at the center of the blue, morning sky, but as seconds pass, the sky's colour and texture progressively change from blue to a strange golden hue, then over a few seconds as the booms and tremor sounds die away, the sky morphs from the golden hue into the appearance of solid glass.

Beyond the glass in the impossibly far distance, instead of sky, there are the bulkheads and control surfaces of the inside of Braniac's ship.

On audio, a mechanical, whirring sound of scaffolding descending.

Descending from the bottle's lid, into the shot two long slender wires hold a metallic orb, like a filament, which starts glowing.

Within moments, the city is bathed in normal sunlight.

SUPERMAN RETURNS, INTERIOR, BRANIAC'S SHIP.

BRANIAC IS SEATED AT THE SHIP'S COMMAND-CHAIR.

Behind Braniac, the row of bottled cities. One city has been added. It is Metropolis.

BRANIAC  
(gloating) That was easy...

CAMERA CUTS TO THE ROW OF BOTTLED CITIES, FOCUSING ON METROPOLIS.

CAMERA PULLS IN  
TIGHT ON THE  
BOTTLE'S CAP.

A tiny beam of intense red light pierces the cap, a moment later, a tiny red-blue blur streaks out the hole the beam has carved out of the cap.

CAMERA SWITCHES TO A VIEW OVER TINY SUPERMAN'S SHOULDER.

Superman pauses a moment to look around and then streaks directly toward the still-gloating, completely-unaware, Braniac.

CAMERA CHANGES TO  
SUPERMAN'S POV.

THE CAMERA PERFORMS A ZOOM DIRECTLY INTO BRANIAC'S EYE-SOCKET.

CULMINATING IN AN ELECTRONIC CHAMBER THAT HAS A CENTRAL PANEL WITH GLOWING RODS IN IT.

CAMERA CUTS TO A VIEW OF BRANIAC SITTING IN THE COMMAND-CHAIR.

Braniac suddenly face-palms as if he missed swatting an insect.

BRANIAC  
(surprised) What?

CAMERA ZOOMS INTO BRANIAC'S FACE, DISSOLVING INTO SUPERMAN STANDING IN FRONT OF BRANIAC'S CENTRAL PROCESSING NEXUS.

Superman stands with his arms are crossed, studying the panel.

Superman reaches out and puts his hand directly on one of the glowing rods. Electricity arcs from the rod onto Superman, but he holds on tightly.

SUPERMAN  
It's me, Braniac.

CAMERA CUTS TO SHOT OF BRANIAC SITTING UP IN THE COMMAND CHAIR.

BRANIAC  
Kryptonian??? I don't know how you escaped death, but my wrath upon you and your kind will be tremendous!

As he says this, he turns his head.

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS  
BRANIAC'S GAZE TO  
THE BOTTLED CITY OF  
KANDOR.

CAMERA CUTS TO SUPERMAN RIPPING THE ROD HE WAS HOLDING DIRECTLY OUT OF THE PANEL.

Sparks fly. Electric arcs dance about Superman.

SUPERMAN  
Not without any motor-control, it won't be.

CUT TO VIEW OF BRANIAC SUDDENLY SLUMPING IN THE COMMAND-CHAIR.

BRANIAC

(Desperate) No Kryptonian! No!  
Don't! All that I was shall be  
lost!

SUPERMAN

All the more reason. ... You're too  
dangerous, I can't let you live,  
Braniac.

Superman rips another rod out of the console, more sparks  
fly.

BRANIAC

(voice less emotive, more confused)  
Strategic data analysis mode,  
failing...

Glitching sounds...

BRANIAC

High-level command set -  
inaccessible...

CUT TO SUPERMAN RIPPING OUT ANOTHER ROD FROM THE PANEL.

Sparks fly around Superman.

(pause)

BRANIAC

(completely blank robotic voice)  
Phoneme-command test. Exercise 1.

BRANIAC

(sings slowly) Daisy... (voice  
slows) Daaaaaaaaaiiiiiiiisyy...  
(voice slows)  
Daaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaiiiiiiiiii  
iiiiiiisyy-

Superman rips the last rod out of the panel and the singing  
cuts off, everything goes dim.

CUT TO EXTREME CLOSE-UP ON BRANIAC'S GLOWING EYE-SOCKETS.

Braniac's eyes grow dim, then go out.

CUT TO SHOT OF THE COMMAND-SEAT.

Braniac's body dissolves into a pool of tiny back metal  
disks, spilling off the command-chair and rolling onto the  
floor, with only Braniac's original head remaining in the  
seat.

MONTAGE: WIPE/DISSOLVE SHOTS FOLLOW;

TINY SUPERMAN BOUNCING ON THE CONTROL-CONSOLE OF THE REDUCTO-RAY.

SUPERMAN BEING ENLARGED.

WIPE TO

SUPERMAN PILOTING THE SHIP.

WIPE TO

SUPERMAN ACTIVATING THE CONTROLS OF THE REDUCTO-RAY

CUT TO METROPOLIS ENLARGED

WIPE TO

SHOT OF SUPERMAN PILOTING THE SHIP.

AN ALIEN CITY, ENLARGING.

UNTIL montage ends with slow dissolve to

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, EXTERIOR, DAY.

THE FORTRESS.

CAMERA CUTS TO FORTRESS, INTERIOR SHOT.

A white room with crystalline walls.

There are various alien artifacts scattered about the room.

Superman is seated at the info-console from Braniac's ship.

Next to him, the reducto-ray and one last remaining bottled city, perched on a pedestal.

SUPERMAN

(voice over) I have been able to re-enlarge all the cities but Kandor... Not only do I not know what planet to resettle Kandor on, the reducto-ray only has enough power left to enlarge or shrink a small object, like a person.

SUPERMAN

(voice over, tired, sad) I don't know what to do...

Superman gazes at the bottled city of kandor

SUPERMAN

I've brought Kandor and the reducto-ray back to the fortress, for safe-keeping...

Superman continues looking longingly at the bottled-city.

THE IMAGE WAVERS,  
INDICATING A  
FLASHBACK

THE IMAGE WAVERS INTO SUPERMAN STANDING IN FRONT OF THE  
MINI-ROCKET.

The mini-rocket's holo-adapter is extended.

SUPERMAN

I am from twenty five years in the future. November 12, 2001, as measured from where I come from, Earth. Jor-El is correct, Krypton is about to explode. This is what you must do... Activate this machine I have made, I have packed it with enough tachyons so that it can transport something small, like a person through time. I want you to use it and go to Kandor city before it was taken away... Please. I can't let you die. This way, you can live out your life in Kandor. ... the device can only be used once, I've programmed it to the correct date, I love you.

(pause)

Keep your eyes closed!

THE IMAGE WAVERS  
BACK TO SUPERMAN  
SITTING AT THE  
CONSOLE, STARING AT  
THE BOTTLE-CITY OF  
KANDOR.

The view-screen behind him bursts with static a few times, drawing Superman's attention.

ON THE VIEWSCREEN, LYLA'S FACE SHIMMERS INTO FOCUS.

She is a tiny bit older than when we saw her last, but she looks quite well.

LYLA

Kal-El! Kal-El! Can you hear me?

Kal-El is astonished. His face lights up.

KAL-EL

Lyla! How is this possible, I sent you so far into the past... I thought we could never see each other again!

LYLA

You did, but I met a scientist who put me into hibernation and since I knew the time period you came from, I thought that would be a good moment for us to wake up!

KAL-EL

So you went into suspended animation right away? ... Wait... Us?

LYLA

No, not right away, it would have been a danger to Van-El.

Kal-El's mouth drops open in astonishment.

KAL-EL

(gasps) Van-

Lyla smiles, nods.

LYLA

(unison) -El!

Lyla turns, smiling and motions to someone standing off-camera.

A young boy, 4 or 5 years old walks into frame. He has the same hair colour as Kal-El.

The boy looks into the viewscreen's camera and smiles.

LYLA

When he was old enough to safely be put into hibernation, I told him one day he'd meet you. I knew it, somehow...

LYLA

He has asked me many questions about you.

KAL-EL

Hello Van! How are you?

VAN-EL

Hello! You are Kal-El! Mom has a picture!

KAL-EL

Yes, son... Your mother is very brave, my son...

KAL-EL

Where are you both now?

LYLA  
We're at the Kandorian Science  
Institute, subterranean level.

KAL-EL  
Oh Lyla, Van, I know what I have to  
do now... Go outside!

Superman types at the controls on the console. The  
reducto-ray powers on.

Superman stands, walks to the reducto-ray's platform.

SUPERMAN STANDS IN THE REDUCTO-RAY'S BEAM.

The boomslang sound thrums loudly as the familiar golden  
conic vortex begins forming around him.

CAMERA CUTS TO LYLA AND VAN-EL AT THE VIDEO CONSOLE IN THE  
UNDERGROUND LAB OF THE KANDOR SCIENCE INSTITUTE.

They turn and walk out of the shot.

CAMERA CUTS TO LYLA, VAN-EL, DEV-RE AND SARNA WALKING TOWARD  
THE ENTRANCE TO THE UNDERGROUND LAB.

The great doors rumble open. It is day outside.

CAMERA CUTS TO AN OUTDOOR VIEW OF THE WAREHOUSE ENTRANCE AT  
STREET-LEVEL.

The boomslang noise is louder outside.

The characters exit the building and walk toward the middle  
of the street, where a golden conic vortex two-meters high  
is winding down, dissolving, clearing.

KAL-EL IS STANDING BEFORE THEM.

Van-El runs over to him. He picks up Van-El, Lyla hugs them  
both, then she and Kal-El kiss.

Theme music plays.

Dialogue suppressed.

KAL-EL, LYLA AND VAN-EL TALK ANIMATEDLY AND WALK DOWN THE  
STREET AND OUT OF THE SHOT TOGETHER, HOLDING HANDS.

The End