

UP AND AWAY

(PILOT)

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Based on Superman created by Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel.

FIRST DRAFT

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FADE IN

EXT. RED RIVER (USA) - MORNING

A small rural town. Jonathan Kent, early forties, in casual attire approaches a cop leaning against his cruiser. Red River Police Officer 1 sips a coffee and straightens up when Jonathan presents himself.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1
How can I help you, sir?

JONATHAN
I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions about last week's car accident I read about on the internet

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1
Can you be more specific?

JONATHAN
A little girl was trapped and--

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1
A kid, not older than eleven saved her. Yeah. Never seen anything like it in my life. All I could do was watch.

JONATHAN
And what did you see?

Red River Police Officer 1 takes a breath. Suddenly-

BEGIN RECREATION

Jonathan and Red River Police Officer 1 are standing objectively like Greek Gods in the middle of traffic.

A speeding red car veers suddenly to avoid colliding with a pedestrian. The car spins out of control. Tumbles. Lands on and crushes its roof, making escape impossible for the six-year-old girl trapped in the backseat.

The MOTHER pulls herself out. Screams to get her daughter out of the car.

Pedestrians rush to help. Some stay back, scared or filming with their cell phones.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1
People rushed to help... the mother
was busted up bad. But somehow she
rose on a busted leg and did all
she could to get the kid. I was
nearby. I rushed to the scene.

Red River Police Officer 1 and Red River Police Officer 2,
female, late twenties, rush toward-

THE MOTHER who never stops to save her child despite her
broken leg. Every time she falls she rises back up.

The mother screams and shrieks, trying to stand up and lift
up the car. With every attempt, her leg gives painfully. Yet,
every time she fails, she tries again.

Red River Police Officer 1 observes himself and his partner
trying to reason with the busted and bruised mother.

The broken leg keeps on giving way with every attempt she
makes to lift the car to save her daughter.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
I tried to lift. But nothing... it
wouldn't budge, and a fire had
begun in the engine. I tried to
reason with the mother, telling her
she needed to leave and let me help
her daughter. But she refused. I
asked for help from anyone nearby,
and several people came to my
assistance.

A group of men and women try to pull the mother away from the
car. Yet they can't budge her.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
A group couldn't pull her away
despite the danger.

Jonathan stares at the scene. Suddenly-

Clark Kent, eleven-years-old, in blue jeans and a white T-
shirt and sunglasses stands beside the police officers,
startling them.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
Then out of nowhere this kid comes.
He kneels. Lifts the car.

Clark Kent lifts the car much like the original, iconic 1930s
pose.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
 I'm kind of in shock. The kid must have been pumping with adrenalin or something only he didn't look it. My partner yells at me to snap out of it. And we pull the girl out and dash away from the car. Just in time.

The car explodes! A blur as Clark Kent catches and places shrapnel on the ground.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
 I didn't really understand what happened... but... when I rose... there was a pile of shrapnel neatly placed by the sidewalk and the fire had been extinguished. Amazing. No one got hurt. Don't ask me to explain it. I can't.

Imagination dissolves back to the moment.

END OF RECREATION

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
 Kid just took off before anyone could thank him.

JONATHAN
 Did the boy look like this?

A MISSING POSTER OF CLARK KENT. 11 YEARS OLD. SMALLVILLE, KANSAS.

RED RIVER POLICE OFFICER 1
 A runaway? Who is he?

JONATHAN
 My son.

INT. CAFE (PHILADELPHIA) - KITCHEN - DAY

Clark washes dishes.

COOK
 How come you ain't in school, kid?

CLARK
 Why do I need school?

COOK

You don't... especially if you want to wash dishes for the rest of your life.

CLARK

Not sure I know what I want to do with my life.

COOK

No rush. Look at me. I'm fifty, and I still don't know what I want to do with my life and I ain't doing so bad.

Clark smiles. Continues to wash dishes.

EXT. CAFE - ALLEY - LATER

Clark steps out the back door of the cafe. He sees something and freezes. A homeless man lies on the sidewalk. Instead of helping him pedestrians walk around him and continue on with their day.

Clark approaches him.

CLARK

Sir, you okay?

DOUGLAS, a black man in a suit, shakes his head.

DOUGLAS

I don't know how I got here. I think I had an interview... for work...

CLARK

Let's get you some help.

Clark takes an empty bottle of pills from the man's hands. Reads-

MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER FOR VETERANS

Clark takes Douglas' hand. Helps him up with ease.

EXT. MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER - LATER

A small industrial building turned into a veteran clinic. Clark and Douglas approach the entrance.

INT. MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER

Clark approaches a secretary sitting behind a desk.

SECRETARY

He a vet?

DOUGLAS

Yes. He is.

SECRETARY

Card, please.

Douglas hands over his VET CARD. She scans it and gets him to sign something.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Got to Rm. 111 for general examination.

Clark and Douglas approach and enter-

RM 111

NURSE

Card

Douglas hands her his vet card. The nurse passes the card again for a general examination.

EXT. RED RIVER - YOUTH HOSTEL - AFTERNOON

Jonathan approaches a small youth hostel.

INT. RED RIVER - YOUTH HOSTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Jonathan approaches a clerk, early twenties, female.

RED RIVER CLERK

Sorry, we're all booked out.

Jonathan scans the Youth Hostel. Young backpackers. Mostly seem like jobbers and pedlars--runaways. He places a picture of Clark on the counter.

JONATHAN

Not here for a room. I was wondering if maybe you've seen him around.

RED RIVER CLERK
Sure. Funny kid.

JONATHAN
He still here?

RED RIVER CLERK
Nah. He left a week ago.

JONATHAN
Did he say where he was going?

RED RIVER CLERK
Is he in some sort of trouble?

JONATHAN
No. Just looking for my son.

RED RIVER CLERK
You might want to try SAM'S PLACE.
They hire kids under the table...

Jonathan scribbles the information down.

RED RIVER CLERK (CONT'D)
What made him leave? You tell him
he was adopted or something?

JONATHAN
It's a little more complicated.

RED RIVER CLERK
It always is. I hope you find him.
A kid needs his parents.

JONATHAN
I'll find him.

Jonathan quits the hostel, scanning the room, taking in all
the runaways.

INT. MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER - WAITING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Clark eavesdrops on patients. A hubbub of conversations. He
is able to focus on specific conversations at will.

VETERAN 1
I have no idea what the pills do,
but they're supposed to help.

VETERAN 2

They make me sick. I don't know why we're all getting the same medication... we aren't the same kind of sick... or maybe we are...

Suddenly, Clark hears a female voice.

LINDA (O.S.)

I wasn't snooping! I'm looking for my uncle. I swear.

LINDA OLSON, early twenties, emerges from the corridor being escorted by two security goons. Linda indicates Clark with her chin.

LINDA (CONT'D)

There. That's my brother.

Clark's eyes widen.

LINDA (CONT'D)

We're here with my...

CLARK

Uncle.

SECURITY GUARD 1

Stay in the waiting room, or we'll call the police.

Linda sighs. Security Guard 1 leaves. Then-

LINDA

Thanks for the save, kid.

CLARK

So, uh, what did I exactly save you from, Miss?

LINDA

Miss? Linda.

CLARK

Clark.

LINDA

Clarky. I don't think you'd understand.

CLARK

Clarky? Clark.

LINDA
What are you doing here?

CLARK
Helping a friend.

LINDA
Family friend?

CLARK
Just someone who needs help.

LINDA
That's very cool of you.

CLARK
He would have done the same for me.

Linda laughs. Tries to contain herself.

LINDA
That's special. You're not from the city are you?

CLARK
No, Mame. I'm from--

LINDA
No, no. Don't call me that. Let me guess... Kansas.

CLARK
Well, that's really good.

LINDA
Where about?

CLARK
Smallville.

LINDA
Well, you ain't in Smallville no more, Clarky.

CLARK
That's clever. Switching Kansas for Smallville. But umm... maybe you could call me Clark instead of Clarky. Sure sounds better... to my ears... anyway.

Linda smiles at Clark.

LINDA
Sure thing, Smallville. You remind
me of my little brother.

CLARK
You never did answer my question.

LINDA
And what question was that?

CLARK
What did I save you from?

LINDA
I'm not sure. I been following up
on a story of corruption and I got
a tip that they were creating false
claims from the government. Source
told me that places like these
create fake vets to drain the
federal grants offered vets. So I
broke into their offices and so far
I ain't found anything. All IDS are
real and alive.

CLARK
I probably don't want to know.

LINDA
I don't think I'm going to find
anything.

CLARK
It's taking long.

LINDA
Let's go check.

Clark and Linda approach the secretary behind the desk.

CLARK
Do you know when Douglas Hyde will
be released?

SECRETARY
Not today. We need to keep him
under observation.

CLARK
Really. Uh. Didn't seem so bad.

SECRETARY
It happens.

LINDA
Come on, Smallville. I'll treat you
to ice cream.

CLARK
I ain't a kid.

LINDA
You are to me.

EXT. RED RIVER - SAM'S PLACE - AFTERNOON

Jonathan approaches a restaurant.

INT. RED RIVER - SAM'S PLACE - MOMENTS LATER

MANAGER, late forties, White, stares at a picture of Clark
and shakes his head.

MANAGER
Never worked here.

JONATHAN
You sure.

MANAGER
Yeah, I'm sure. I don't hire kids.

JONATHAN
You sure?

MANAGER
Not my style.

JONATHAN
Please sir, I'm the boy's
father...I just want to know where
he is and if he's okay. I ain't
gonna report anything.

A waitress, early twenties, Black behind the counter stares
at the picture and Jonathan.

MANAGER
Told you. Never seen this kid
before.

Jonathan sighs. Quits the restaurant.

EXT. RED RIVER - SAM'S PLACE - MOMENTS LATER

Jonathan walks by an alley, and the WAITRESS calls out to him.

WAITRESS
He worked here.

Jonathan turns to face the waitress.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
He went up against the manager and was shown the door.

RECREATION

SAM'S PLACE

Jonathan and the waitress watch the scene like Greek gods. A Sikh man with a turban walks in. Goes to order.

MANAGER
We only serve Americans. You want to be served here... take that towel off your head.

The Sikh ignores him.

SIKH
Hamburger. Onion rings.

MANAGER
That thing is a damn insult to good, real Americans.

SIKH
Good, real Americans? I've got my citizenship.

MANAGER
I don't give a damn. In this place... you can't wear that. It's my policy.

He quickly draws a picture on a piece of paper of a turban. Draws a circle around it. Crosses it out. Pins it up.

A few Americans clap. Others feel repulsed. A soldier in casual attire approaches the manager.

SOLDIER
I am a soldier, and you are a disgrace to who we are and what we stand for.

MANAGER
Still my place.

The soldier turns to the Sikh.

SOLDIER
What do you want?

MANAGER
Sir, you can't order for him. I
won't allow it.

Americans surround the soldier and Sikh.

SOLDIER
Stand down!

THUG
We ain't your men. Now way we see
it he can serve whomever he wants
without you meddling with his
affairs, soldier boy.

SOLDIER
I'm going to the police.

MANAGER
Good. Now get out.

Clark brings the Sikh a burger and onion rings.

CLARK
On the house.

MANAGER
You dumb little shit!

The Thug goes to slap it out of his hands. Clark evades with ease. Thug grabs his shoulder. Clark pushes him lightly. Thug goes flying back into the wall and falls down unconscious.

Everyone stares at this with mute disbelief.

The Sikh takes the bag of burger and onions rings. Other thugs rush out, scared. Clark turns to the Soldier.

CLARK
He must have tripped on something.

The soldier and the Sikh stare at Clark in utter disbelief.

MANAGER
Get out! Get out!

END OF RECREATION

Jonathan stares at the waitress.

WAITRESS
Since then... people been
boycotting the place.

JONATHAN
Good. Do you know where he went?

WAITRESS
I think that Sikh man got him some
work.

JONATHAN
You know his name?

WAITRESS
Nah. But there's only one Sikh
church or whatever they call it.

JONATHAN
I'll ask around.

WAITRESS
What's happening to our country?

JONATHAN
I don't know. But I don't like it.

Jonathan begins to walk away.

WAITRESS
I'm glad your boy did what he did.

Jonathan stops. Turns to face her.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
You raised him good.

JONATHAN
We did. His mother and I. And we
still have a lot to teach.

WAITRESS
I hope you find him.

Jonathan nods. Turns. Walks away.

EXT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Clark and Linda eat.

CLARK
Thanks. This is great.

LINDA
Least I could do. You don't need
to answer this but aren't you a
little young to be on your own?

CLARK
I have things to work out.

LINDA
What kind of things?

Clark stares at her but doesn't answer.

CLARK
Things.

LINDA
I left home, too. But with my
parents' blessing. I'm guessing by
your age they don't know where you
are.

Clark doesn't answer.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Must be worried sick.

CLARK
They know I'll be fine.

LINDA
So sure?

CLARK
Pretty much.

LINDA
My parents were disappointed, but
they understood.

CLARK
What did they understand?

LINDA
Most graduates take a summer travel
around Europe. Not me... I took my
college money bought a Winnebago to
travel around my country. Feel like
I have this idea of America made by
big media... but somehow...

(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

I figured I got to see what's going on myself.

CLARK

What do you mean?

LINDA

Something's happening... we ain't who we used to be.... and I want to know what's going on... I want to hear real stories... see how Americans are really living... see for myself...

CLARK

Just like that.

LINDA

Not just like that. I got into Metropolis State's journalism program. Did one semester and realized they weren't training writers... they were training business lackeys.

Linda sighs.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Took me two months to realize that news run like a business was just business and going after the bottom-line ain't the same as going after the truth. Writers should be going after the truth, not the bottom-line.

Linda shakes her head.

LINDA (CONT'D)

I ain't going into journalism for business. Easier ways to make money. I figured I just take a trip in search of truth, justice and what everyone calls... The American Way.

Clark makes a skeptical face.

CLARK

The American Way?

LINDA

Don't know what that is anymore. Think there was a time I knew...

(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)
we knew... but now it's lost
amongst other things. One time it
meant hope and freedom and
opportunity and now... well... it
seems to be synonymous with money
and money and more money... weird
how that happened... Anyway, that's
what this is about. The American
Way.

Clark nods.

CLARK
How do you pay for all that?

LINDA
My audience. They send me donations
for my work on my blog. I've been
exposing bullshit for a long time
now.

CLARK
Pretty powerful pen.

LINDA
It ain't the pen, Smallville. It's
the person wielding it.

A silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)
You know anything about cars?

CLARK
Sure. My dad showed me a thing or
two.

LINDA
You mind taking a look at my ride.

Clark nods.

EXT. WINNEBAGO - EVENING

Clark watches Linda start the Winnebago. It starts with
difficulty.

CLARK
Um.... it's a pretty old battery.
First thing I would do is change
it.

LINDA
Could you do that?

CLARK
Got a pen and paper?

Linda hands him a pen and paper. Clark writes down a few specs to replace the battery.

EXT. RED RIVER - PARK - NIGHT

Jonathan Kent walks by a park bench. He sees a father and son playing.

EXT. KENT FARM - FLASHBACK

Jonathan pours gas into the tank of a tractor. Four-year-old Clark walks up to him and observes. Jonathan turns to his son.

JONATHAN
Hey, bud. What's going on?

CLARK 4YRS OLD
So mom said I could have a day off today.

JONATHAN
Is that right? No singing. No ABCs.

CLARK 4YRS OLD
And no coloring between the lines.

JONATHAN
Lucky man.

CLARK 4YRS OLD
You, too. You can take a day off. Please....

JONATHAN
I wish, bud. But dad's gotta finish his work. It's called being responsible.

CLARK 4YRS OLD
Please... I'll ask mom for you... then we can swim in the lake.

Jonathan smiles.

JONATHAN
I can't.

CLARK 4YRS OLD
You should take a break. It's true.

Jonathan crouches to meet Clark's gaze.

JONATHAN
I got a responsibility...

He sees Clark's eyes dim. His smile falter. Changing his mind-
-

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
... to... take a day off and spend
it with my best guy!

CLARK 4YRS OLD
YES, SIR!

Clark hugs his dad.

CLARK 4YRS OLD (CONT'D)
I love you bigger than the
universe, dad. Bigger!

JONATHAN
That's big. Almost as big as I love
you.

CLARK 4YRS OLD
No way. I love you biggest!

JONATHAN
(correcting)
Bigger.

CLARK 4YRS OLD
No. Biggest!

JONATHAN
Right. You love me biggest.

EXT. RED RIVER - PARK - NIGHT

Jonathan stares at the father and his son. Sighs.

EXT. WINNEBAGO - NIGHT

Clark finishes installing the battery. He shuts the hood.
Gestures to Linda inside the Winnebago to start the engine.
She does. It starts with ease.

LINDA
Awesome!

INT. WINNEBAGO - MOMENTS LATER

Clark embarks.

LINDA
Listen. If you want... I got space
in here. You don't have to waste
your money at the hostel.

CLARK
Jeeez that would be swell, mam.

LINDA
Don't call me that.

INT. MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER - MORNING

Clark and Linda enter.

CLARK
Douglas Hyde.

SECRETARY
We released him an hour ago.

CLARK
Oh.

EXT. MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER - PARK

Clark spots Douglas sitting by a tree. He and Linda walk
toward him.

CLARK
Hey, Doug.

DOUGLAS
I know you.

CLARK
You don't remember.

Douglas shakes his head.

CLARK (CONT'D)
What's that?

DOUGLAS
Medication.

LINDA
For what?

DOUGLAS
I don't know. We all get it.

LINDA
What do you mean?

DOUGLAS
You go into the center. They swipe
your card every room you enter,
then they give you these.

Linda's face contorts.

LINDA
Why don't you take him back to the
Winnebago. I gotta check something.

CLARK
Check what?

LINDA
A hunch.

CLARK
We can join you.

LINDA
Stay with him. No big deal.

CLARK
You're saying it ain't a big deal,
but your face is saying something
else.

LINDA
Don't worry.

Linda turns and approaches the center. Clark watches her as
he helps Douglas up.

INT. WINNEBAGO - NIGHT

Clark stares outside. Concerned.

DOUGLAS
Where's your friend?

CLARK

I don't know. She should be back by now.

DOUGLAS

It's dark.

CLARK

Feeling better?

DOUGLAS

Yeah. I chucked those pills. They do nothing for me except make me lose time.

A silence.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

I wanted to say thanks. Ever since I came back from Iraq... things have been... challenging... it's like someone else came back....

CLARK

You don't have to explain.

DOUGLAS

I know. It's just I'm usually not like this. I'm usually like the upbeat happy dad.

CLARK

You have kids.

DOUGLAS

Yeah.

CLARK

Where are they?

DOUGLAS

Away from me. It's better that way. Like I said...I lost the best part of me... and until I figure out what's going on... I don't want to be around my kids... hurt the ones I love most in life.

CLARK

I understand.

DOUGLAS

Oh, I hope you don't, and you never do.

CLARK
I mean I'm trying to figure things
out, too.

DOUGLAS
With your sister.

CLARK
Oh, no. She isn't my sister.
Friend.

DOUGLAS
We should probably go look for her.

INT. MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER - LATER

Clark and Douglas approach the waiting room. They don't see her. Clark freezes for a moment. Hears someone struggling. He uses his x-ray vision to see-

LINDA STRUGGLING IN A LOCKED ROOM

Clark walks toward it.

Grabs the handle of the locked door. Snaps it off with ease. Douglas gives him a look.

LOCKED ROOM

Douglas and Clark approach Linda, restrained in a bed. She seems drugged. Slurs her words. Narrows her gaze on him.

LINDA
Clark. They're defrauding us...

Clark snaps of the restraints. Clark goes to lift her over his shoulders.

DOUGLAS
Maybe I should do that.

Clark moves aside.

CLARK
Um...sure...

Douglas leads the way out of the room.

HALLWAY

Douglas and Clark round the corner. Security guards see him.

SECURITY GUARD 2

Hey! Stop!

They quickly turn and dash the other way. Down the-
STAIRWELL

They rush down the stairs and out and exit door.

EXT. MILLENNIUM GOODWILL CENTER - ALLEY

They surge outside to a group of security guards. They turn to go back in but another group of security guards blocks them.

SECURITY GUARD 2

Your friend was caught breaking into our computer.

CLARK

So you should have reported her to the police. Why don't you call them?

SECURITY GUARD 2

Get em!

Douglas puts them down. Clark attacks the security guards at a very restrained strength and speed, trying his best to emulate a human being's strength. This is the toughest part of his fight.

Douglas suddenly loses himself. He leaps behind the last standing guard and as he goes to break the man's neck, thinking he's back in Iraq, Clark speeds to him and holds his wrist firm.

Douglas tries and tries. But Clark won't let him budge.

CLARK

No.

Douglas suddenly realizes he was about to kill a security guard. Tears fill his eyes. He lets go of the coughing and choking security guard who falls to the ground.

Tears slip down Douglas' face. He collapses to the ground and begins to shake with sobs. Clark places his hands on his shoulders.

CLARK (CONT'D)

You're gonna be okay.

Linda pulls out a USB from her socks. Shows it to Clark.

INT. WINNEBAGO - LATER

Linda types on the computer. Writes her article. Submits files to her blog and other sources of alternative news. Uploads files from the USB. Then she exits.

EXT. WINNEBAGO - MOMENTS LATER

Linda sits beside Douglas and Clark who stare out at the bright lights of the city.

LINDA

Making one visit to the doctor ten. Swiping a VET CARD like it was a credit card. Doctors charging vets ten times more than they should. Charging for the same unneeded genetic tests over and over again. Proscribing test drugs to everyone. It's covered... but its draining funds faster than a black hole. Then they're gonna say vet care don't work, costs too much, and end it cause of the corruption of a few greedy businessmen pretending to be doctors.

CLARK

It's good you figured it out.

LINDA

Let's see what happens.

LINDA (CONT'D)

No. Of course not.

LINDA (CONT'D)

How do you rip off vets. They go through hell for us, then they come back, and we put'em through hell.

CLARK

I don't know.

A silence.

LINDA

Ever been to Texas?

Clark shakes his head.

LINDA (CONT'D)
I've got a lead on a story big
media ain't covering. Figured I'd
do the covering for them. Could use
a mechanic...

Clark smiles at her. She turns to Douglas.

LINDA (CONT'D)
...and a bodyguard.

EXT. RED RIVER - MOTEL - NIGHT

Jonathan stands by the window staring at the stars. He pulls
out a cellphone. Calls Martha.

JONATHAN
(On cell phone)
Hey. It was him... but I've got
nothing else. I know. Yes. Yes.
He'll be fine. I know. I love you,
too.

Jonathan lies in bed. Closes his eyes. Remembers.

EXT. KENT FARM - LAKE - FLASHBACK

Jonathan and Clark swing off a tree and splash into the cool,
clear lake water. A day off for the both of them. Pure bliss.

FADE OUT

END OF PILOT

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