

Just A Superman

A Graphic Novel to be Written by Jocelyn Potter

CONCEPT:

Clark Kent has lost his powers in a battle with Superboy Prime and is now fully human and mortal. Soon thereafter, Clark is besieged by the full gamut human temptations and tribulations (represented in the chapter heading as the biblical seven deadly sins).

BACKGROUND:

This story focuses on an alternate ending for the powerless Clark Kent during the *One Year Later* series. Having lost his powers during *Infinite Crisis* Superman becomes something he has always wanted to be: A normal human. With his powers never to return Clark Kent can now live his life as an ordinary man.

OVERVIEW:

Clark has made an even greater name for himself as *The Daily Planet's* ace reporter. No longer in possession of his super powers, he pours himself into his job. He defends Metropolis from crime by using his skills as a journalist. His hard-hitting reporting brings down some of the city's biggest crime lords. Clark is proud of himself and the impact his articles have made on the city. Despite threats to his life, he continues reporting on criminal activity. Eventually, his journalistic attentions turn to his old arch-enemy: Lex Luthor. When his investigative skills bear fruit and Lex' reputation and criminal enterprises are harmed, Lex vows a terrible revenge.

While Clark and Lois are sleeping, four masked men break into their home. Bursting into the bedroom, they drag Clark and Lois out of bed. Clark tries to fight them but they prove too powerful. Evil laughter echoes throughout the room as they mercilessly beat Clark. Left helpless on the floor, Clark pleads for them to stop but they do not. Then he is left to watch as Lois is even more savagely beaten. Lois is left unconscious and barely alive. They are rushed to the hospital. Lois' prognosis is grim. A nearly hysterical Clark talks to the police but is unable to identify the attackers.

With no solid clues at the crime scene, the police are unable to help. Clark becomes infuriated with the slow processes of the system. Obsessed with the crime of which he was a victim, Clark decides to seek justice on his own. In the days that follow Supergirl, Hal Jordan, and Hawkgirl try to comfort Clark but instead they become fuel for his anger. Already tormented by the fact that he could not stand up to his attackers, the visit

of his old friends serves only to remind him that without super powers he will always be weak.

Later, a concerned Batman visits Clark. He grows more concerned on seeing the look of despair and revenge in Clark's once-serene eyes. Clark is envious of Batman's ability to fight back and win without any superpowers. Bruce witnessed the death of his parents and has avenged them ever since. Clark has witnessed the near-fatal beating of his wife and yet he cannot avenge her. Envy turns into spite when he believes Batman is ridiculing him for his inability to become Superman. He feels that Batman, of all people, should understand his need to take revenge in his own hands.

Clark wants to prove to himself that he is capable of avenging Lois without superpowers. Diligently, he uses all the resources of the Daily Planet to track Luthor's criminal associates. Isolating himself from everyone and everything, Clark eventually finds the clues that lead him to the small gang. Going mad with released rage, he charges in on their meeting with a gun. Screaming at them, they all retreat to the corner, certain they are soon to die. Clark screams, "I used to be faster than this bullet, but now I *am* the **bullet!**"

As his finger compresses on the trigger, the gun hurtles out of his hand. The Batarang leaves Clark with a broken finger. Batman insists on turning the villains over to the authorities. Clark is livid at Batman. His pride will not let him recognize the favor Batman has done for him.

With his enemy vanquished, and Lois' continually worsening condition, Clark sinks into a deep depression. He will not leave the house, accept phone calls, or see visitors. He resigns from *The Daily Planet*. He begins to drink and loses himself in morose speculation about the past. He now knows what it is to feel human...inadequate, useless, and of little consequence. For the first time, he sees Clark Kent as the illusion and Superman as the Truth. Walking out on the deck of his high-rise apartment, he stands on the ledge...

He is Superman. Quietly, he steps off...