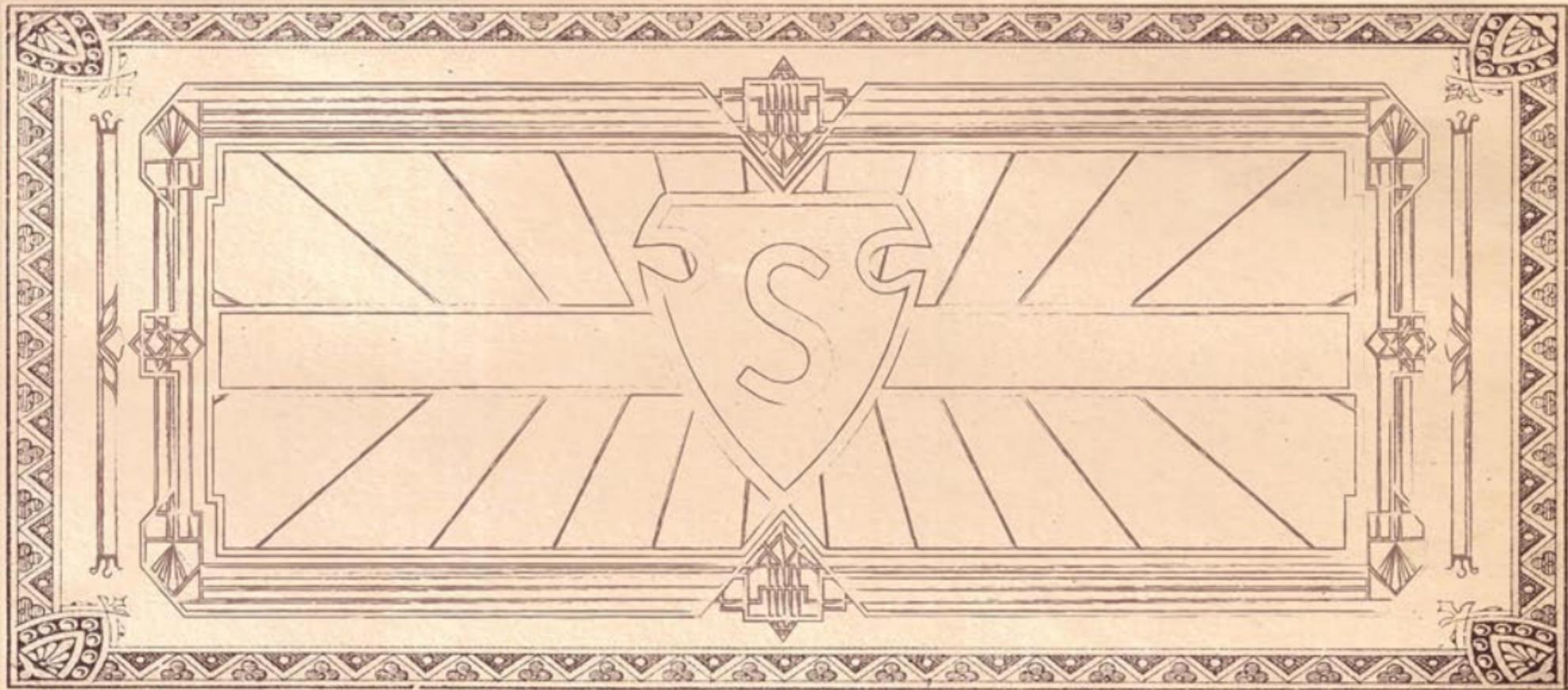


A FAN COMIC  
**SUPERMAN**  
THE GOLDEN AGE





# **SUPERMAN**

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## **THE GOLDEN AGE**

Written and Illustrated by Adrien van Viersen

"Shuster Studio" lettering created by Daren R. Dochterman.

Book design by Sally Hudson.

## DISCLAIMER:

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The images depicted herein are a tribute to the iconic character, SUPERMAN, and is a respectful 'tip-of-the-hat' to the creators, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster.

The non-profit comic represents an 'artist's proof of concept' and is in no way connected to DC Comics, Warner Brothers or their subsidiaries, nor is it intended to undermine or compete with any existing or forthcoming material.

Superman is ©2017 DC Comics  
Superman created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. By  
special arrangement with the Jerry Siegel family.

## PREFACE

I first read Superman #1 in 1978 in the oversized Famous First Edition. That book changed my life. Shuster's Superman is my Superman. This is the Superman I learned how to draw from when the Curt Swan Superman of the 70's was too complicated for me. The first issue basically comprises a lynching, an execution ( of a female! ), a wife beating, the meeting of Lois and Superman, and lastly the munitions plot with the crooked Senator. It's got everything an action story needs: sex, violence, mystery political corruption, and a femme fatale, all led by a larger - than - life hero.

BUT...what if all of these fragmented moments were all related and intertwined?

What if Lois was on the crooked Senator story and Clark was on the lynching story...a story that led him to the execution plot, and in turn, led to the crooked Senator plot...AND Lois?

## PREFACE (Continued)

I loved figuring out how all of this could be woven into one coherent plot. While I was doing this, I was inspired to create a couple of prologue chapters that would (for modern audiences) flesh out the origin. Where did the suit come from?

How did Clark come up with the secret identity? How did he find out he was bullet proof?

From a modern point of view, this has all been answered; however, NONE of these questions were ever answered in the Golden Age version of Superman. I didn't get to embark on the massive retelling of Superman #1, but I did finish my prologue. This is my best endeavor at giving an answer to those questions, all based on the idea that Joe Shuster designed the suit after the circus Strongman.

This is my "Love Letter" to the Greatest Fictional Character of All Time. I hope you enjoy it.

Adrien van Viersen 11/16

Adrien van Viersen is a Storyboard Artist for film and TV. His credits include Game of Thrones, The Flash, X2, X3 and I Robot. Prior to working in film, he was nominated for the Russ Manning Award for Best New Talent in Comics in 1998.

You can see his film work at [www.adrienvanviersen.com](http://www.adrienvanviersen.com) or see the creative process of this book at <https://adrienvanviersen.tumblr.com/>

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE INSIDE MAN AND THE MAN INSIDE



*The  
AMAZING!  
FANTASTIC!*

# INSIDE MAN

...NOT ONLY WILL YOU GET TO FEAST YOUR EYES ON THE EXOTIC SERPENTIA AND HER SNAKES, BUT FOR THE SAME DIME-- THAT'S A FREE SHOW, FOLKS! WE'LL SHOW YOU THE INSIDE MAN. WHAT'S THAT, YOU ASK?

A man with a serious expression, wearing a red vest over a light-colored shirt and a red tie, stands at a podium. He is speaking into a vintage-style microphone. His right arm is extended outwards. Behind him, a large, stylized sign with red and yellow lettering is visible. The background is decorated with red and white patterns. A speech bubble above him contains text.

WELL, YOU'VE SEEN THE SIAMESE TWINS. NOW YOU CAN SEE THE TWIN WITHIN! A MAN INSIDE A MAN. A GROTESQUE DISTORTION OF NATURE.

THIS ISN'T A FLIM FLAM. THIS IS THE REAL MCCOY AND WE KNOW YOU'RE GONNA WANT A DARN GOOD LOOK AND THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE GONNA GET. BUT LET ME TELL YOU, THIS ISN'T FOR THE FAINT OF HEART. AND I MAKE THAT STATEMENT WITHOUT FEAR OF CONTRADICTION.



FURTHERMORE, MANAGEMENT CAN'T TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY FAINTING SPELLS OR NAUSEA. YOU'LL BE SEEING A **GENUINE ABOMINATION**, SO WE WON'T BE REFUNDING ANY ADMISSIONS ON ACCOUNT OF WEAK CONSTITUTIONS.

ENTER

AMAZING!  
FANTASTIC!

MAN

10¢





CLEVELAND, OHIO. 1934





MISTER DUNN, MY  
NAME'S CLARK KENT  
OF THE EVENING  
NEWS. I'M DOING  
A STORY--

G'LOST  
TOWNIE!

UM... IT'LL ONLY TAKE  
A FEW MINUTES OF YOUR  
TIME, MISTER DUNN.





GET LOST!

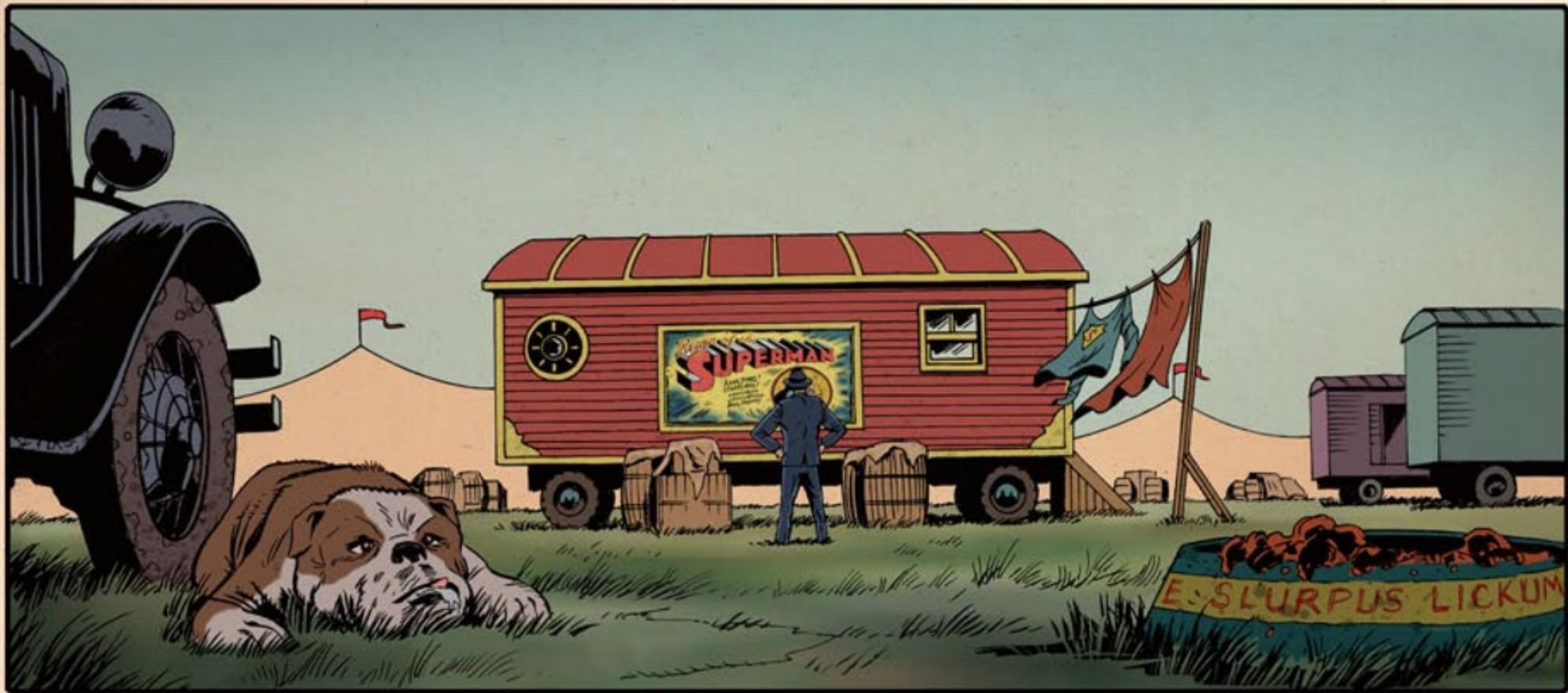


*Reign of the*

# SUPERMAN

AMAZING!  
STARTLING!  
FEATURING  
STRONGMAN  
BILL DUNN!!













WHEW. I COULD  
RUN AN ENGINE  
ON THIS STUFF.

HOLD THE FRONT PAGE. STRONGMAN COLLAPSES OUTSIDE OF CARAVAN. INTREPID REPORTER MAKES HEROIC RESCUE!

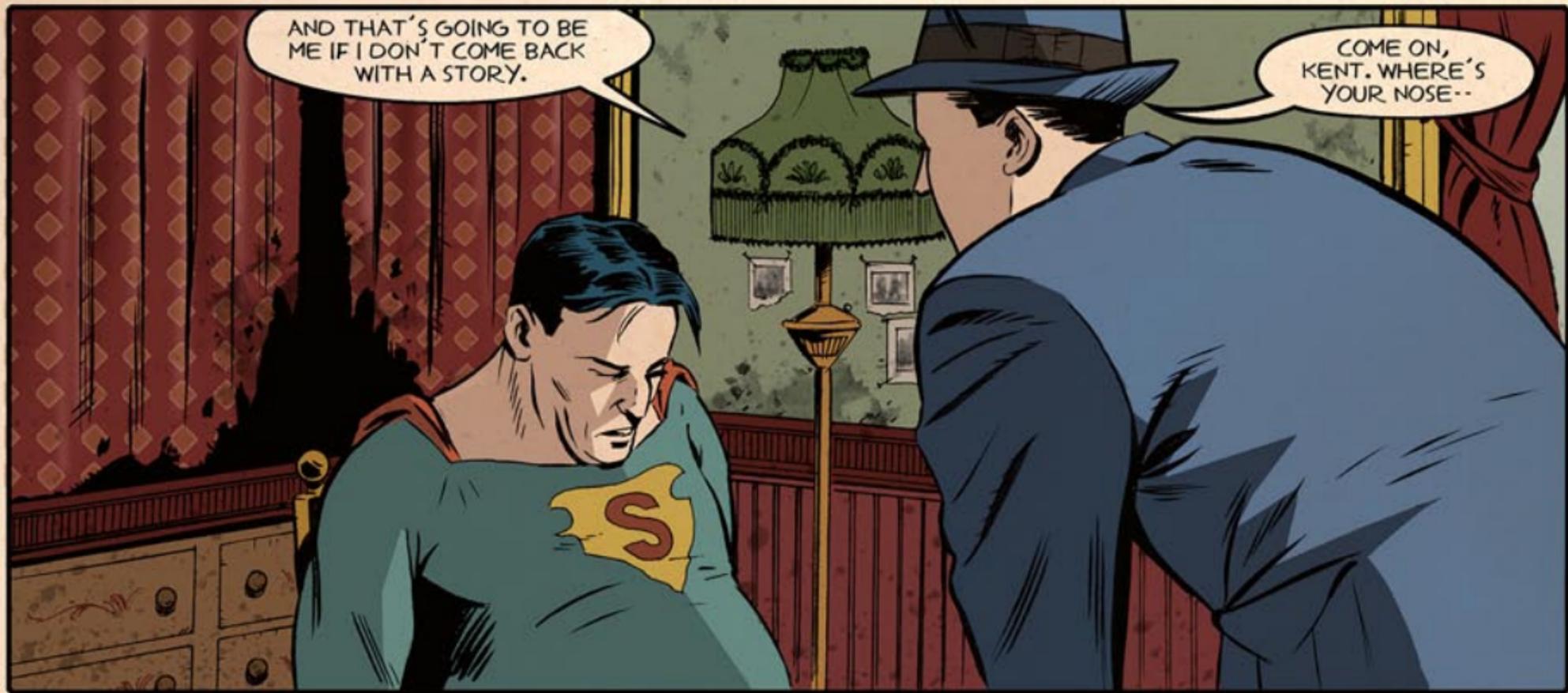


A man in a blue suit, white shirt, red tie, and blue fedora hat is walking through a doorway. He is carrying a large, bulky sack over his shoulder. The sack is red on top and blue on the bottom, with some dark markings on the blue part. He has a slightly weary or thoughtful expression. The room he is entering has green walls with several framed pictures, a large lamp with a green shade, and a wooden desk. The doorway has a yellow 'S' on the door.

I WONDER IF ANYONE  
WOULD BUY THAT?

SIGH. PROBABLY NOT.

TWAIN SAID,  
"A JOURNALIST  
IS A REPORTER  
OUT OF A JOB."



AND THAT'S GOING TO BE ME IF I DON'T COME BACK WITH A STORY.

COME ON, KENT. WHERE'S YOUR NOSE--







TROUBLE  
AT THE  
BIG ELI!!

GET 'IM THE  
HELL OUT THERE  
OR HE'S FIRED!

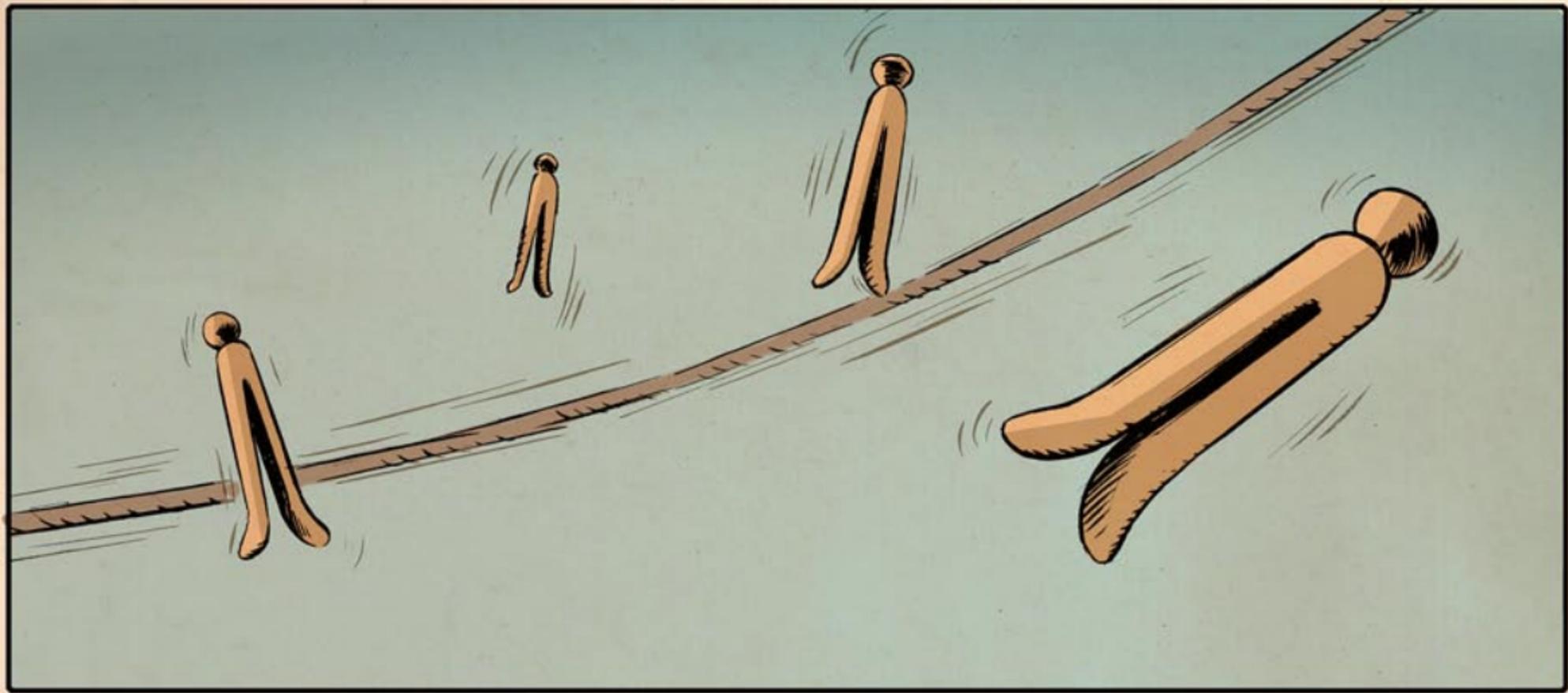
A man in a blue suit and hat stands in a room. To his left is a wooden chair with a blue jacket and red shirt draped over it. To his right is a desk with a pink lamp and framed pictures on the wall. The man is looking towards the right.

WHATEVER A  
BIG ELI IS...

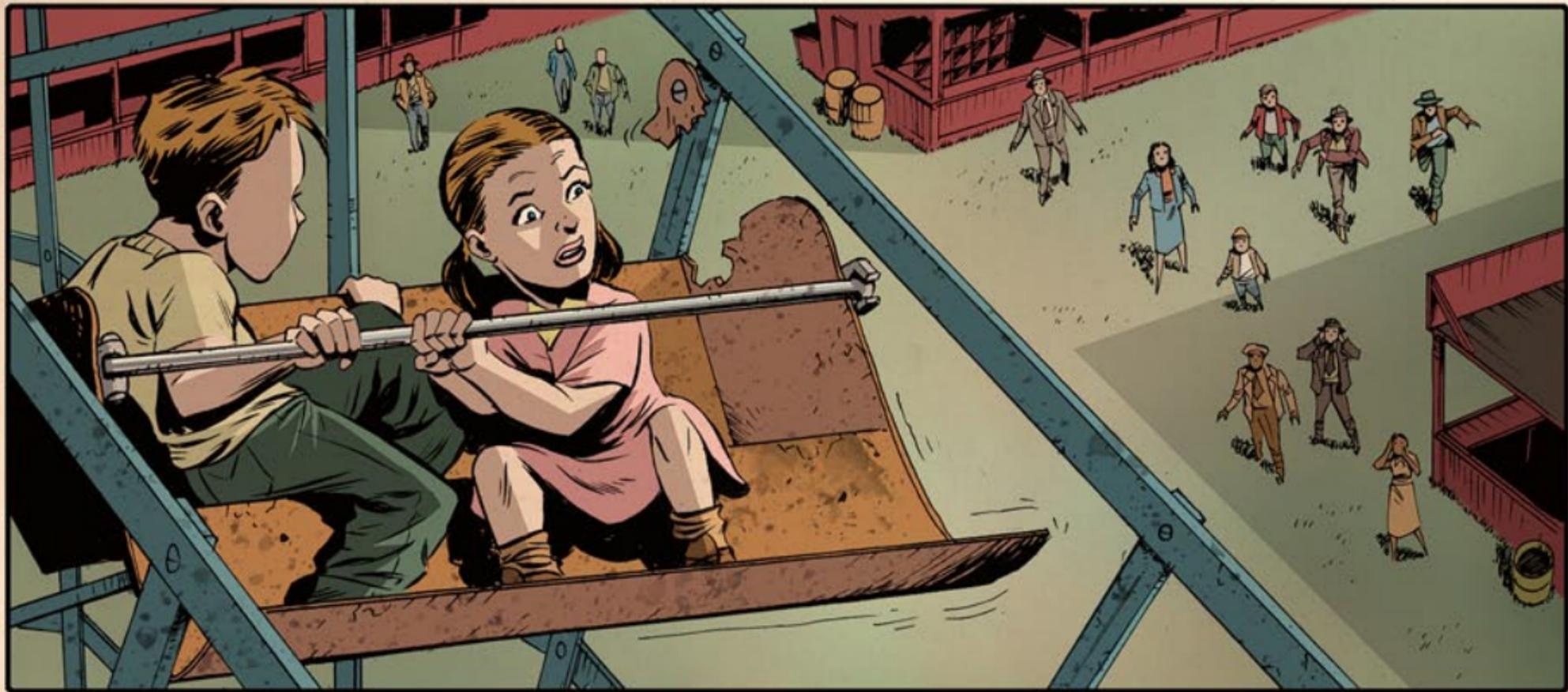
...THE CARNIES  
WILL NEVER LET  
ME GET CLOSE  
TO THIS STORY.

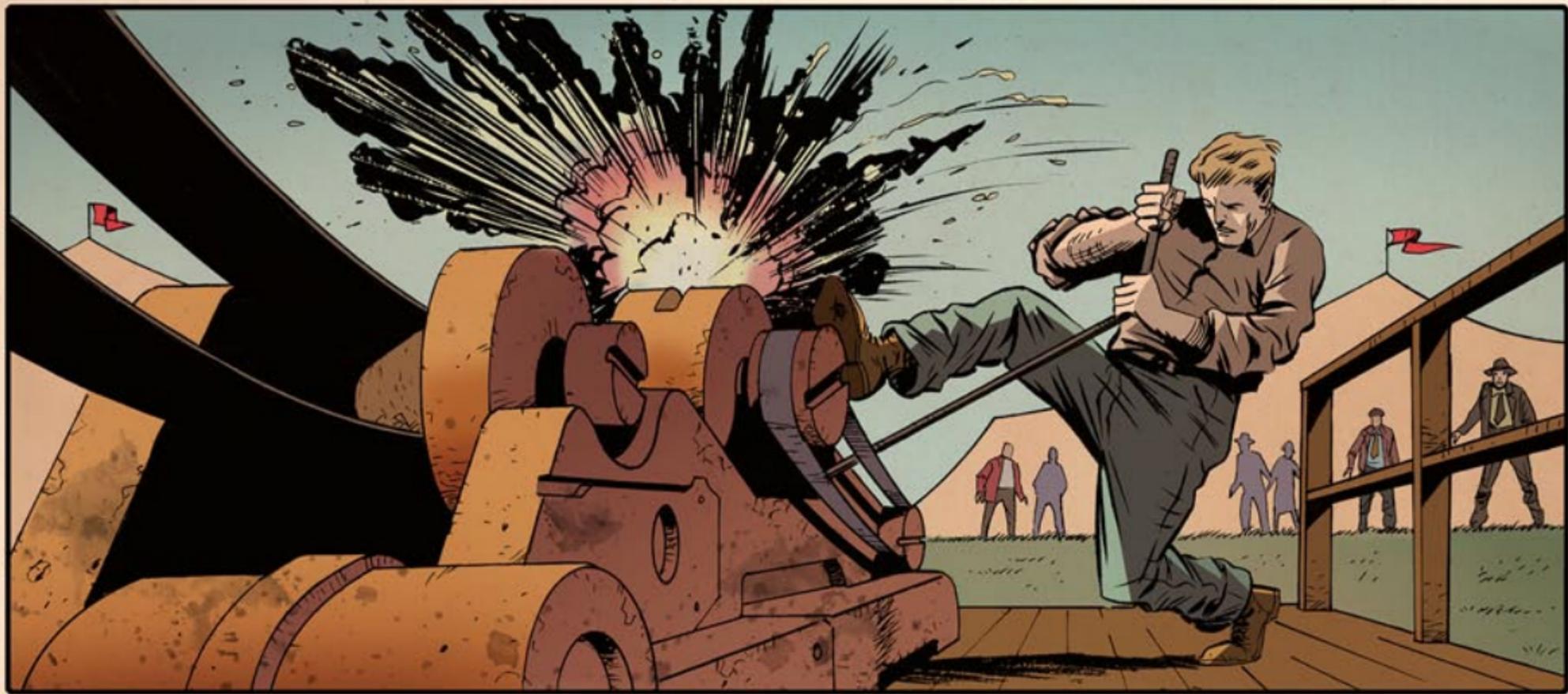
UNLESS...





















YOU'RE SAFE  
NOW, KIDS. IT'S  
OKAY.









I'M ONLY HERE TO HELP.

ALIVE!!  
SEE STRANGE  
ODDITIES

10!

NOBODY HELPS NOBODY BUT THEMSELVES, FREAK. I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU PULLED THAT OFF, BUT I'M FIGURIN' YOU'RE GONNA BE TEACHIN' ONE OF MY BOYS.



NOW YOU SHOW US HOW YOU DID THAT, ALREADY.

RACE TO THE  
STRONGMAN!

LAST ONE'S A  
ROTTEN EGG!









>GASP!

JEEPERS!

OHMYGOD!





I BIN SHOT.



I BIN SHOT. I BIN SHOT.

I TELL YA, HE'S A FREAK--  
SENT BY ANOTHER OUTFIT  
TO SPY ON US.











I BIN SHOT.





I'M... I'M...



...I'M OKAY.

YOU'RE OKAY, SON.  
YOU'RE IN ONE PIECE.



YOU! YOU'RE ...  
YOU'RE THE ...

...THE  
INSIDE  
MAN!

ACTUALLY, NO, JOHNAH,  
HERE, IS THE INSIDE MAN.



I'M BERNARD.

PRETTY INCREDIBLE  
WHAT YOU DID AT  
THE BIG ELI--

--SAVING  
THOSE  
KIDS.

PROBABLY  
SAVED DUNN  
HIS JOB,  
TOO.

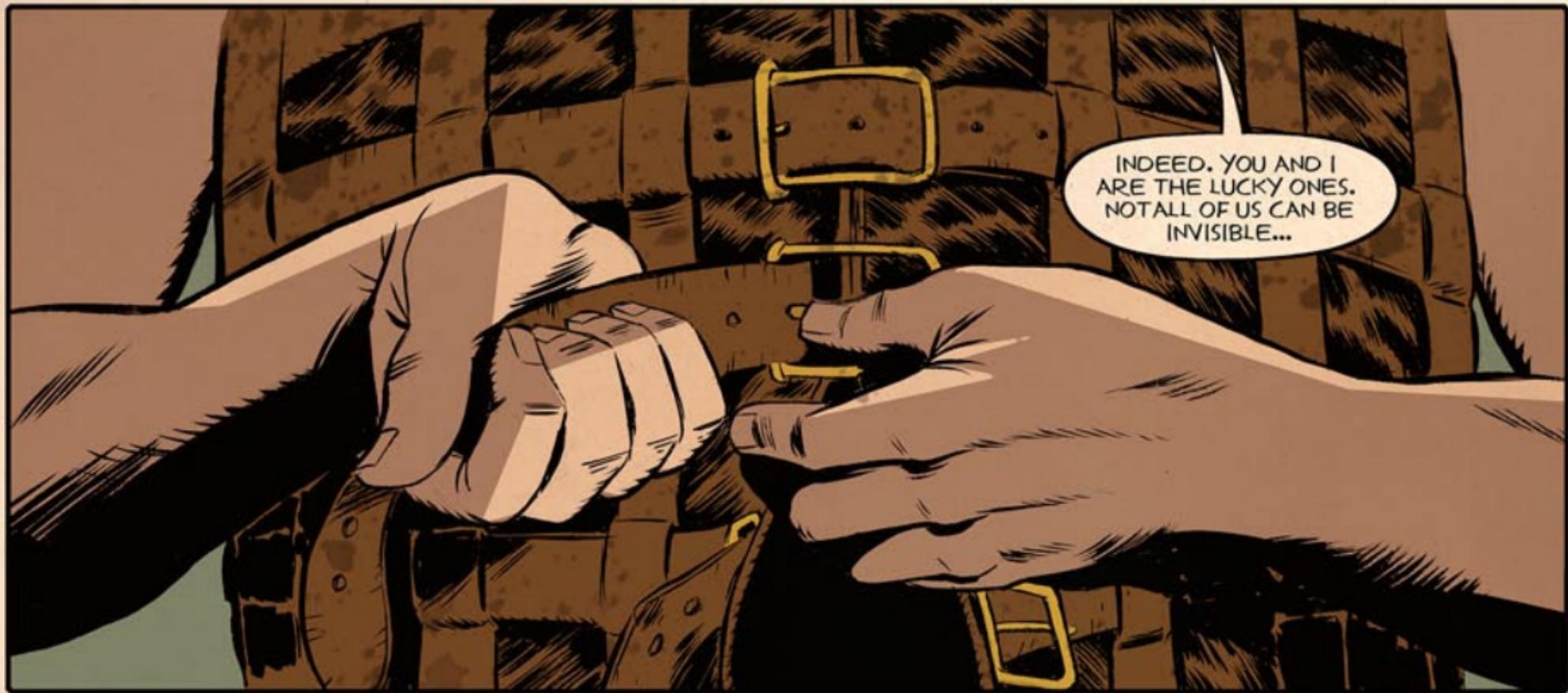


YET, YOU SAVED THEM,  
PLAIN AND SIMPLE. AND  
HERE YOU ARE ...  
HIDING.

PEOPLE  
ARE AFRAID  
OF ME.







INDEED. YOU AND I  
ARE THE LUCKY ONES.  
NOT ALL OF US CAN BE  
INVISIBLE...



...ASSIMILATE...

...BE LIKE  
EVERYONE  
ELSE.

YOU MIGHT THINK THAT'S A BAD THING, BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S HUMAN NATURE TO WANT TO BELONG.

WE CAN HAVE A SECRET SELF--A **SECRET IDENTITY**, IF YOU WILL.

IT WORKS VERY WELL FOR YOU. I NEVER WOULD HAVE GUESSED.

YOU GET TO LEAD A NORMAL LIFE.

PFEH. DON'T BE NAIVE.

MY 'NORMAL' LIFE  
REVOLVES AROUND  
GINNY.

FORBIDDEN LOVE  
IN THE TRUEST  
SENSE, HER BEING  
A 'TOWNIE' AND ALL.

ONE DAY, GIN  
SAW ME WORKING.  
SHE BOUGHT A TICKET  
JUST LIKE ANYONE  
ELSE...



\* ... SAW ME AS I REALLY  
AM WITHOUT ACTUALLY  
SEEING ME.\*

\* AND I WILL NEVER  
FORGET THE LOOK  
OF HORROR ON HER  
FACE.\*



THE TRUTH IS, ME  
AN' JONAH-- WE'RE  
TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE,  
BUT THE SAME MAN.

AND GINNY'S  
NEVER GOING  
TO LOVE ME  
AS I AM.

SHE'S ONLY IN  
LOVE WITH ME  
WEARING THE  
SUIT. HOW NORMAL  
IS THAT?

I WISH I COULD TELL YOU  
THINGS WILL GET EASIER.



JUDGING BY THAT MOB, I  
WOULD SAY THAT THINGS ARE  
ABOUT TO GET A LOT HARDER.  
THEY GOT A PRETTY  
GOOD LOOK  
AT ME.



I HAVE SOMETHING  
THAT MIGHT WORK.  
TRY THESE.



GLASSES.  
YOU'RE KIDDING,  
RIGHT?

*Fleischmann's Optical Co.*

I'VE BEEN IN  
SHOW BUSINESS  
MY ENTIRE LIFE.  
AND IF IT'S ONE  
THING I'VE  
LEARNED...





...IT'S PEOPLE  
SEE WHAT THEY  
WANT TO SEE.



WHO ARE YOU?

WHO YOU  
WORKIN'  
FOR?

YEAH, WHAT  
OUTFIT?



SAAAAAYY,  
WAIT A MINUTE.

THAT  
AIN'T  
HIM.



WHY, THAT'S...



...THAT'S  
DUNN!

SAY, WHAT'S  
THE BIG IDEA?  
WHERE'S THE  
OTHER FELLA?



MY NAME IS  
CLARK KENT,  
REPORTER FOR  
THE EVENING  
NEWS.

AND I SAW WITH MY  
VERY OWN EYES MISTER  
DUNN'S AMAZING RESCUE  
OF THE CHILDREN.

BILL DUNN IS A TRUE  
HERO, EVERYONE. A REAL...

**SUPERMAN!**



## AFTERWORD

"Have you shown this work to DC Comics?" is the question I get asked the most when I show this work to people. The short answer is, "yes."

I had the very rare opportunity to show this work, unfinished, to DC Comics. When I say "rare," I mean that DC Comics does not accept unsolicited pitches for any of their properties. If you want to pitch a Superman story you need to be invited to do so. If you are a successful comics writer/artist, then it's only a matter of saying that you have an idea for Superman. Whether or not DC is in a position to hear the idea is up to the individual editors, or the creative director.

I was in the right place at the right time, as the saying goes. Blessed circumstances presented me with the opportunity to show 10 pages of finished tight pencils and 17 pages of tight layouts with temp lettering in place. One could read the book from start to finish. Although the book was very well received, it was decided by DC Comics that they did not "have an outlet to publish this book."

Though I was disappointed with their final answer, I can honestly say that I feel so much gratitude for the chance to show it. For some, that would be it; shelve the story and try to recycle it on another project. I couldn't do it. I had to finish it, if only to see how well I could do it. So I share it with you, my best work.

In gratitude,

Adrien van Viersen

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A lot of people helped out "behind the scenes" on this project and I couldn't have done it without them:

My "sounding boards:" Warren Flanagan, Benton Jew, Ken Steacy, Ken Davis and Curtis Woloschuk. My models ; Virginia Newton - Moss, Jessica Sheck and Marc D'Astoli. Camera work (for the artwork and the trailer) by Wendy D. My actress for the trailer, Kaia Long. Editorial and music for my trailer by Doug Paterson at Big World Sound and David Nutter for the support and the opportunities.



