



SUPERMAN

AND THE

MOB MEN

*A new saga inspired by
"The Adventures of Superman"*

Bruce Kanin

SUPERMAN AND THE MOB MEN

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***A THREE-EPIISODE SAGA
(POSTSCRIPT)***

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T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

POSTSCRIPT

TRIBUTE TO JOHN ELDREDGE

LET ME EXPLAIN

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

POSTSCRIPT

TRIBUTE TO JOHN ELDRIDGE

If *THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN* couldn't have *Lex Luthor*, then perhaps the next best thing was the collection of villains portrayed by actor John Eldredge. Though other actors playing villains equaled or exceeded his number of appearances, to me no one could match the talented Eldredge: he dominated each of the four episodes in which he appeared. Moreover, he combined sophistication with villainy, exuding such confidence that you almost expected him to win out over Superman each time. Each performance was subtly different.

In "Crime Wave", as Walter Canby, the star villain of our 3-episode saga, Eldredge played a *good* guy, publicly, but a *bad* guy, privately. In a sense, he was like a supervillain with a secret identity (but without super-powers).



In "Shot in the Dark", one of my favorites because it has some great stunts by Superman (e.g., crashing into a subway tunnel to stop a train; doing his *Brooklynese* "Boulder" impression while driving a U.S. mail truck; and using his heat vision to set fire to evidence in a safe that might expose his secret identity), Eldredge, as Burt Burnside, is a seeming gentleman, what with his tulips and calm demeanor. In fact he's a very dangerous criminal.

"The Girl Who Hired Superman" has Eldredge as Jonas Rockwell, outwardly a law-abiding rich man who mentors a pretty socialite, but in fact someone who is very much into counterfeiting. He's no less evil than his "brothers", Canby and Burnside.



And finally, there's Mister 'X', a criminal with no name, played by John Eldredge in the final season episode "Superman's Wife". He's all-evil, all the time, from start-to-finish, what with his being hell-bent at robbing a truck with lots of dough and trying to kill Superman's faux wife, played by the stunning Joi Lansing. Mister 'X', in fact, is most reminiscent of Walter Canby.

But why choose John Eldredge for ***Superman and the Mob Men***? There were several actors who had repeat performances on ***The Adventures of Superman***, e.g.: Ben Welden, Herb Vigran, Billy Nelson, Richard Reeves, Dan Seymour and others. In fact, Welden appeared in a whopping *eight* episodes. Eldredge? “Only” four.

The difference for me is that Eldredge played it straight; he was always in dead serious situations and episodes. The others had their serious and menacing moments, but also played at times, well, *doofy* characters. Never Eldredge, and that made the difference for me.

As a result, he receives the top guest star billing in ***Superman and the Mob Men***. I am, as a result, forever grateful to John Eldredge and his performances on my all-time favorite television show. Though he played different characters in his four appearances, he remains to this day the closest thing to a regular archenemy for The Man of Steel on ***The Adventures of Superman***.

LET ME EXPLAIN

CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THIS STORY may warrant some explanation.

1. Hyper-speed



Superman's ability to *hyper-speed* and create the illusion of Clark and Superman together was inspired by *The Flash Vol 1 #121, June 1961 (cover: "The Trickster Strikes Back")*. The issue includes a story called "Secret of the Stolen Blueprint!" in which The Flash fools someone into thinking that he and Barry Allen (The Flash's secret identity) are two separate people. He does this using invisible super-speed, switching between the two identities.



2. Secret tunnel



The secret tunnel at the Kent farm was lifted directly from Silver Age *Superboy* comic book stories in which he was shown to have built a secret tunnel from the Kent household to a portal in a wooded area, allowing the Boy of Steel to enter and leave his home without being spotted, helping to protect his Clark Kent identity.

3. How Kryptonite affects Kryptonians

Professor Lucerne's explanation of Superman's powers was inspired by various eras of Superman stories. As well, his theory of why Kryptonite is deadly to Superman but harmless to ordinary humans was inspired by *The Brave and the Bold* #175 comic book in which Batman is teamed up with Lois Lane. The story involves how Kryptonite radiation is altered to affect humans by slowing down its "particle emissions".



4. Lucy Lane (Lois's sister)



Lucy Lane, Lois's sister, was introduced in the Silver Age comics and has appeared on occasion since then in the *Supergirl* movie and two TV series, *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* and *Smallville*. And yes, in the Silver Age comics she was a stewardess having an on-again, off-again relationship (dating, at best) with Jimmy Olsen.

4. Appearances by the cast

It was intentional that each regular on *The Adventures of Superman* would play a major role in at least one part of this three-part saga. Perry stars in the first, Jimmy in the second and Lois in the third. Inspector Henderson is featured in the second and third. Of course Superman and Clark appear throughout the saga. And although Phyllis Coates, the first *Adventures of Superman* Lois Lane, was not afforded such an honor, she does make a cameo appearance in *Smallville* as Laura the waitress, per the closing credits.



5. George Taylor



George Taylor, 1938

When Superman debuted in 1938, Clark Kent worked at the Metropolis *Daily Star* for Chief Editor George Taylor. It wasn't until later that both morphed respectively into the *Daily Planet* and Perry White. It is Taylor who substitutes for Perry White in "The Secret of Kryptonite!" while the latter is in Alaska. This was partly done to create a strange sort of parallel, for the actor Pierre Watkin (who is listed in the credits here as playing Taylor) played the *original* Perry White in the 1940s serials that starred Kirk Alyn as Superman/Kent and of course, Noel Neill as Lois Lane.

And it was Watkin who was rumored to be the John Hamilton's replacement for a proposed seventh season of *The Adventures of Superman* following the latter's passing. Watkin was to play White's brother as new editor of the *Daily Planet*.

6. Super-Pets

When Donald Anderson refers to hypothetical super-animals from Krypton, i.e., a dog, cat, monkey or horse, this was of course inspired by *Krypto*, *Streaky*, *Beppo* and *Comet*, respectively none other than the *Legion of Super-Pets* from the Silver Age DC Comics.



There are other tidbits scattered throughout that are more than they appear to be on the surface.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

BRUCE KANIN LIVES IN NORTH MERRICK, New York (on Long Island) with his wife, son, daughter and dog. By workday he is an Information Technology Business Management Architect. By night and weekends, besides being a family man, he is an aspiring novelist, singer-songwriter and explorer of sorts.



Aside from *Superman and the Mob Men*, Bruce has written *Superman versus the Body Snatchers*, an “imaginary” story that brings together the world of the Silver Age Superman and the antagonists from the “Invasion of the Body Snatchers” movies; *Superman Nine-Eleven*, a short story concerning The Man of Steel and that fateful day in September, 2001;

un-submitted scripts for *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and *Star Trek: Voyager*; and is developed a draft story called *Superman Gene*, about a man with a wife and kids waking up one day with the powers of Superman in a world in which The Man of Steel is a comic book character (this story was begun well *before* Kurt Busiek’s classic “Superman: Secret Identity”, which has a similar theme).

Bruce has also copyrighted dozens of songs and developed dozens of others. This includes “Super Rock Star Man”, about a white-collar office worker by day who’s a red, blue and yellow rock star by night, and “Sundays with You”, which appeared in the independent short film “Albert and Mandy”.

In terms of writing future episodes of *The Adventures of Superman*, the adventures may continue if *Superman and the Mob Men* is well received. He is using a beloved second season episode as the basis for writing a sequel called “The Super-Menace of Metropolis” and is developing an *Adventures of Superman* “take” on the historic Silver Age comic book story in which Superman first meets the evil space villain Brainiac (July 1958, *Action Comics* #242, “The Super Duel in Space!”) called “Terror from the Stars!”

Besides all that, Bruce is wondering what’s coming next...

