

SMALLVILLE

"STEEL"

by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. SMALLVILLE HIGH - TORCH - DAY

CHLOE SULLIVAN does her best to straighten up the newsroom. It's a disaster area, littered with research materials like newspaper clippings and textbooks.

CLARK KENT wanders in. He takes a step back and absorbs the mess.

CLARK

Wow. What was the Richter scale reading for this one?

CHLOE

Funny Clark.

CLARK

Seriously Chloe, what happened here?

CHLOE

Well it's pretty much just me running the show these days.

Clark feels that jab. It's been a while since he quit the Torch and left her stranded.

CLARK

I heard you wanted to see me. What's up?

CHLOE

I need help with the Torch. The science fair comes to Smallville tomorrow and I'm not sure I can handle it alone.

CLARK

I don't know Chloe.

(beat)

I'm stretched pretty thin. My grades might be slipping since football. I need to get back to the books again.

CHLOE

There's a lot of that going around lately.

CLARK
What's that?

CHLOE
Being stretched thin.

Clark feels it again.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
If your grades are slipping it's
because you've haven't put enough
effort into anything since
football.

Clark analyzes what she said and she sees it in his eyes.
She's getting through.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
C'mon Clark. It'll be good for you
to exercise your mind.

CLARK
(still unsure)
I...

But Chloe won't give him the opportunity to say "No" as she
perks up.

CHLOE
This could be the beginning of a
historic moment. You never know, we
could meet the next Thomas Edison
or Ben Franklin.
(rummages through
paperwork)
There's this young inventor from
Metropolis getting a lot of press.
I can't remember his name. I have
something on him around here
somewhere.

Clark sees that she is in dire need of assistance and doesn't
want to jeopardize their platonic relationship any further.

CLARK
OK. But this is only a temporary
deal.

CHLOE
Strictly freelance.

This finally gets a smile out of Clark which quickly changes
as LANA LANG enters.

CLARK

Lana?

LANA

Clark, I was looking all over for you.

CLARK

What is it?

Lana looks at Chloe not wanting to talk in front of her. Chloe gets it and grabs a stack of books.

CHLOE

I have to bring these back to the library. Don't need any more late charges cutting into my college fund.

Chloe leaves Lana to talk freely to Clark.

CLARK

Is everything alright?

LANA

It's Jason.

(beat)

He's been acting strange. He just won't talk to me anymore.

CLARK

What's going on?

LANA

I don't know. He won't return my calls and when I go to see him he disappears.

(beat)

You're the only one I could come to about this because you're the only one I trust. Could you speak with him?

This bothers Clark and we can see it. This is the girl he still cares for and she's with somebody else. Part of him wants to do the right thing and help, but deep down he's not...

CLARK

Sure.

LANA
Thanks. You're a great friend
Clark.

Lana gives her FRIEND a hug before leaving. Clark just watches her walk away.

INT. LUTHOR MANSION - LIBRARY

LEX LUTHOR sits at his desk and mulls over a newspaper.

He puts the paper down and looks to the air, lost in thought for a beat.

C.U. on paper where we see a picture of, JOHN HENRY IRONS, a young black man holding a space age looking gun. It's big and powerful looking.

The caption reads...

JOHN HENRY IRONS BRINGS NEW PROTOTYPE GUN, BG-60, TO THE FOUR
DAY WEEKEND SMALLVILLE SCIENCE FAIR.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT I

FADE IN:

INT. KENT FARM - DAY

C.U. on a sledge hammer as it strikes a wedge and drives it deep into a piece of wood.

EXPAND to see JONATHAN KENT as he takes another swing. This time the wedge smashes through and splits the wood in two.

Clark approaches from the house.

CLARK

I don't know why you just don't let me do that. I'd save you some time.

Jonathan sighs as he wipes the sweat from his brow.

JONATHAN

I know you could, but that's not the way I want it. Good, old-fashioned, honest, hard work keeps a man...

(he fumbles his words)

...well good, honest...

CLARK

...and old-fashioned.

Jonathan throws his arm over Clark's shoulder.

JONATHAN

After all, what kind of father would I be to you? Or what kind of husband to your mother if I didn't lead by example?

CLARK

Not mine, I guess.

JONATHAN

It's just the right thing to do.

Clark looks down, unsure.

CLARK

Yeah.

Jonathan knows something's up.

JONATHAN
What is it?

CLARK
(breathes deep)
It's Lana.

JONATHAN
I know it's hard getting over
heartbreak son, but when the right
one comes, you'll know it. Maybe
not at first, but after getting hit
over the head with the obvious
enough, it'll sink in. It did for
me.

CLARK
It's not just that. It's Jason. She
said that he's not talking to her
anymore and she doesn't know why.

JONATHAN
She came to you about that?

CLARK
Yeah.

JONATHAN
Hmmm!

CLARK
She wants me to talk to him.

JONATHAN
And how do you feel about that?

CLARK
I don't want to.

JONATHAN
Clark, however you feel about Lana
and Jason, you'll have to put it
aside. Lana is still your friend,
that's why she came to you.

CLARK
(sighs)
I know.

MARTHA KENT brings Jonathan out a glass of iced tea.

MARTHA

So, how's my man doing? Working up
a thirst yet?

JONATHAN

Ahh, Thanks!

Martha throws her arms around Jonathan as he swigs down some
iced tea.

MARTHA

Clark, aren't you and Chloe
covering the science fair today?

CLARK

Yeah, I was just on my way. Dad was
just telling me about good, honest,
old-fashioned, hard work.

MARTHA

Jonathan, is that what you told him
about this?

Jonathan shyly shakes his head "YES" and pours the rest of
iced tea into his mouth.

MARTHA

(flirtatious)

I just like to see him working hard
and getting all sweaty.

JONATHAN

(gulps)

I think, I'll go get a refill.

Jonathan wraps an arm around Martha and leads her back to the
house.

CLARK

Don't work too hard dad.

JONATHAN

Just leading by example Son.

Clark smiles at his parents' healthy relationship as we...

CUT TO:

INT. SMALLVILLE HIGH - TORCH - DAY

Clark and Chloe gear up for the first day of the science fair, throwing pens, notebooks, paperwork and a voice recorder each in their backpacks.

CHLOE

This is so exciting. The science fair last year has nothing on this one.

CLARK

You mean the gun.

CHLOE

I mean the media. This is the biggest thing that happened in Smallville since...

Clark follows Chloe's gaze over to the "Wall of Weird".

CLARK

But the media is here to see the gun.

Chloe snaps out of her gaze.

CHLOE

I did some preliminary digging on John Henry Irons. Not your typical brainchild story.

CLARK

What do you mean? Not born into wealth and going to high priced schools?

CHLOE

In fact, just the opposite. You'd never guess that he's from the most depressing part of Metropolis.

CLARK

Suicide Slum?

CHLOE

The one and only.

Chloe grabs a camera and sticks it in her bag.

CLARK

Huh? You're right, I never would of guessed it.

(beat)

But how did he...

CHLOE

Self-taught, all the way. His family is poor and it looks as though he's trying to help them by selling his inventions.

CLARK

Well that's noble.

CHLOE

Yeah, but it's a powerful weapon Clark. I don't think he cares who he sells it to as long as the price is right.

CLARK

Do you know that?

CHLOE

Not yet, but I plan on finding out.

(beat)

I already got a working title for this one. It's "Doesn't anybody care about doing the right thing anymore?".

Chloe leaves as Clark thinks a beat.

CHLOE (O.S.)

You coming Clark?

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - DAY

It's the first day of the science fair as a kaleidoscope of people make their way through the various tables.

One table in particular gets a lot of attention from the show's patrons as well as the media. It's the table with JOHN HENRY IRONS and the BG-60 gun.

John happily greets people and hands out pamphlets to them as a small news crew covers it. The gun is on a display stand out of reach of the crowd.

John shouts over the crowd to a departing patron, a high roller in a suit.

JOHN

And be sure to stop back tomorrow
for the demonstration. You won't be
disappointed.

A LIONEL LUTHOR squeezes his way in to greet John.

LIONEL

I was wondering if I could get a
pamphlet as well.

John recognizes Lionel and has a hard time containing his
excitement.

JOHN

Mr. Luthor, nice to meet you. Of
course you can have a pamphlet. I
also have something else for you.

John hands more paperwork with the pamphlet.

LIONEL

What's this?

JOHN

It's just some literature on the BG-
60 as well as some other projects
that I have lined up.

(beat)

Just in case you're interested.

LIONEL

I appreciate it. But I'm not really
in this business anymore.

JOHN

Well, if you change your mind, you
know where to find me.

LIONEL

Thanks, but I'm just curious,
that's all.

Lionel leaves as John makes another desperate attempt to sell
himself.

JOHN

My contact information is on the
back of the pamphlet.

Lex observes from a distance.

EXT. SCIENCE FAIR - DAY

Clark and Chloe go through a security check before entering. SECURITY GUARDS rummage through their belongings as Clark and Chloe walk through metal detectors.

CLARK

Wow, security is really tight this year.

CHLOE

Must be because of the gun.

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - DAY - MONTAGE

As Clark and Chloe make their way through the science fair exhibits, they take pictures and notes on various inventions. Some are futuristic, and some are not.

They leave a table each looking at a pamphlet. Their spirits are high. They're laughing together as Chloe takes the pamphlet and playfully smacks Clark across the shoulder with it. We notice they are hitting it off rather well...so does Lana.

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - DAY

Clark and Chloe make their way through the crowd to the next table where their flirtatious smiles straighten out as they come across Lana.

LANA

(coldly)

Hello Clark. Chloe.

Clearly there is something wrong with Lana's tone as she continues.

LANA (CONT'D)

It's good to see the two of you enjoying yourselves.

Chloe feels it as a cold bitter wind. Clark thinks it's only about Jason, but we know it's a combination of the two.

CHLOE

Have you been here long?

LANA

Too long.

CLARK
So, you've seen the BG-60?

LANA
No. I've been preoccupied.

CLARK
We were about to head over to see it. Why don't you join us?

CHLOE
Yeah, it should be interesting.

LANA
No thanks!

Lana looks at Clark.

LANA (CONT'D)
That's not where my interests lie.

CLARK
You hanging out for a while?

LANA
No, I was just leaving. Nothing around here is up to my expectations.

ON JOHN'S TABLE

The media is gone and Lex makes his way to the table.

John cracks open another box of pamphlets. He looks up to see the crowd magically part like the Red Sea as Lex steps through. John's grin widens.

JOHN
I just knew big things would happen if I came to Smallville. First Lionel and now Lex. It seems as though I piqued both Luthors' interests.

LEX
Don't let it go to your head. We Luthors always show an interest in knowledge.

JOHN
And knowledge is power.

Lex knows it but won't admit it. He's here for the power.

LEX
Speaking of power...
(points to BG-60)
Is that what all the hype is about?

JOHN
That's right. The BG-60.

John hands Lex a pamphlet but Lex only glances at it. He has already done his homework.

LEX
Is that the real thing?

JOHN
Yep. It's the only working
prototype.

LEX
Do you mind if I see it?

JOHN
(unsure)
Well...I...ah...
(but money talks)
Sure thing, just for you Mr.
Luthor.

LEX
Call me Lex.

John hands Lex the gun.

JOHN
Alright Lex. Don't worry nothing
can happen, it's been disarmed.

Lex observes its fine craftsmanship, the feel of holding it like the powerful weapon it is. He is consumed by it.

JOHN
She's a beauty, isn't she?

Lex snaps out of it.

LEX
It's nice, but guns aren't really
my thing.

John hands Lex some other paperwork.

JOHN

This has an overview of other projects I've been working on.

Lex glances through the literature.

LEX

Pretty impressive.

(beat)

I'll tell you what. I'd like to hear more about some of these. Do you have any plans this evening?

JOHN

No.

LEX

Great, when you wrap up for the day why don't you pay me a visit?

Lex hands John his card and John couldn't be happier.

LEX (CONT'D)

Here's my address.

Chloe and Clark push their way through to John's table just in time to see Lex off.

CHLOE

Well it certainly looks as though Luthorcorp is interested in the gun.

LEX

It's not what you think Chloe. I'm interested in John's mind. He's got a lot of interesting things lined up. His future is very bright. I like to think Luthorcorp could be a part of it.

JOHN

Thanks Lex.

LEX

And Clark, I didn't expect you to have an interest in this too.

CLARK

I'm just here on assignment.

CHLOE

Freelance.

CLARK
Just helping Chloe cover the
convention.

LEX
Well I'm sure you'll find Mr. Irons
very interesting.

Lex shakes John's hand.

LEX
Looking forward to hearing some
more.

Lex turns and leaves.

JOHN
See you tonight Lex.

CHLOE
Well, this might be big news.

CLARK
(worried)
Yeah.

CHLOE
So, John, what are your plans with
the BG-60? And is Lex now apart of
them?

Clark picks up a pamphlet and starts rummaging through it.

JOHN
No, he doesn't seem interested in
this, but maybe some other things.

CHLOE
Like what?

John hands out some of the extra literature to Chloe.

CLARK
So, how's it work?

JOHN
Ah-ah. That would be telling. I
don't just give away my secrets.

Clark focuses on the gun.

X-RAY VISION POV: He can't see inside.

CLARK
(puzzled)
What's the shell made out of?

JOHN
I suppose it won't hurt to tell you
that it's made out of lead.

CLARK
Must be heavy.

JOHN
No, not really. It's not entirely
made out of lead. I just used a
fine layer of it as a sealant.
(beat)
Gives it a futuristic look.

Chloe takes notes.

CHLOE
So you're meeting with Lex, what's
that about?

JOHN
One can dream. I hope, at least, to
get on his staff. I'm sure that
would have made my father proud.

CHLOE
Even if it's because of a gun
that's capable of mass destruction?

JOHN
Now hold up Chloe. I can't be held
responsible for what people do with
this.

CLARK
Well just what are your intentions
with it then?

JOHN
Don't judge me. You don't know
anything about me.

CHLOE
Actually we do. We've done a lot of
research on you before coming here.

JOHN

Look, the reason I made this is because I knew a powerful weapon could make me a lot of money. It could help me get my family out of Suicide Slum. You have no idea what it's like there.

CLARK

You think your family would want you to help them this way?

CHLOE

Certainly they must see enough violence there.

JOHN

My father was a hard worker but couldn't get us out of there. He passed away a few years ago. The last piece of advice he gave me was to "Work smart not hard.". So that's what I'm doing.

CHLOE

I'm not sure that this is so smart. You know if you work for Lex all your inventions will most likely end up belonging to Luthorcorp.

JOHN

That doesn't concern me. As long as the price is right.

An awkward beat connects John, Clark and Chloe.

CLARK

So just how powerful is it?

JOHN

Come back tomorrow for the demo, and you'll see.

INT. SMALLVILLE HIGH - TORCH - NIGHT

Clark and Chloe type up their coverage of day one of the science fair.

CHLOE

John seems like the perfect employee for Luthorcorp.

CLARK
What do you mean by that?

CHLOE
He's a yes man, willing to do anything for a buck.

Clark smiles.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
Lex is sure to get his money's worth from John and his inventions.

CLARK
Lex isn't that bad. He has good intentions.

CHLOE
Maybe, but I still wouldn't put that gun in his hands. Would you?

Clark doesn't answer.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
I mean c'mon. It's like John's selling his soul or something.

CLARK
Give the guy a break. He's just trying to help his family out.

CHLOE
My working title still stands.

INT. SMALLVILLE HIGH - COACH'S OFFICE - NIGHT

JASON TEAGUE gathers up his belongings and puts them in a box. He pulls out a notebook of his game plays. There's a slight twinkle in Jason's eye as we know he's thinking back of happier times.

CLARK (O.S.)
You had some great plays in that notebook.

Jason is startled as Clark catches him off guard.

JASON
Clark, What are you doing here?

CLARK

I was wondering when you were going to come back for this stuff.

Jason tosses the book in the box.

JASON

Yeah, well, I never had the time to clean out my locker.

Clark doesn't know how to confront him, so he skirts around it hoping for some honesty from Jason..

CLARK

So how are you and Lana doing these days?

Jason curiously eyes Clark. Does he know? Na, he couldn't.

JASON

We're doing great.

Clark bumbles, he has no plan B.

CLARK

Then why are you avoiding her?

Off Jason, speechless and angered. How did Clark know about that?

INT. LUTHOR MANSION - LIBRARY - NIGHT

John walks in and sits across the desk from Lex. Lionel is sitting in a chair reading a book.

JOHN

Wow, this place is huge. You going to fill it with a family?

LEX

No plans there. Just me and my dad.
(to Lionel)
Who was just leaving.

Lionel graciously gets up to walk out.

LIONEL

I'll let you two conduct your business.

JOHN

It's OK he can stay. It doesn't bother me. It must be great to be able to work with your father. I always wanted to work with mine but never had the chance.

LIONEL

Thank you John, but I'm not needed here. Lex is a big boy, he can take care of himself.

LEX

Gee, thanks Dad.

Lionel leaves.

LEX (CONT'D)

Let's get right to the point. I'd like to hire you.

Lex slides an offer letter over to John. Lex gets up and paces as John looks it over.

JOHN

It says here that Luthorcorp would own all the rights.

LEX

That's right. After all that's what I would be paying you for.

JOHN

I'll work for you but if you want ownership too, you'll need to make me a better offer.

Lex holds his poker face.

John gets up and leaves.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Think about it, Lex. But you better make it quick this science fair is generating a lot of heat for me.

Lex still holds a poker face, but we know something is going on inside his head. What's he thinking?

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - DAY

Hordes of people including the media gather to witness the demonstration of the BG-60. There is a roped off area with security blocking people from getting too close.

Clark and Chloe are lost in the crowd trying to squeeze in for a better view.

John wears safety goggles up on his forehead as he steps up on a pedestal. He holds the gun up for people to take pictures.

There is an anxious clamor in the crowd. Flashes are constantly going off as pictures are snapped.

JOHN

Welcome everybody. Thanks for coming to witness what the BG-60 can do. On its lowest setting it could take out a tank. I called around, but nobody seemed to have one to spare.

A slight chuckle comes from the audience.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Instead I managed to dig up a rock. Not just any rock mind you.

John motions for a security to unveil a large object in the distance from underneath a red cloth.

ON CLARK AND CHLOE

CHLOE

He's really hamming it up. Isn't he?

CLARK

It's all about presentation.

ON JOHN

JOHN

Now that's a rock.

John motions toward a large rock, human size in height but much wider. The security guard scurries away.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Now if I was to hit that with mere bullets we'd barely even see any damage. But with the BG-60, there will be nothing left but rubble.

He pulls down his goggles and takes aim at the stone.

He twists a dial which turns the gun on. A high pitched noise emits. Something's wrong. We see it in John's face. But even he's not sure what it is.

There's confusion in the crowd.

The red hot gun burns John's hands. He can't hold it any longer. He looks at the crowd of people, he can't put them in danger. He chucks it away from them towards the stone to keep the people safe.

JOHN

(shouts)

Take cover!

The crowd's confusion gives way to panic as John dives off the pedestal.

There's an explosion from the gun. KRACK-BOOM!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - DAY

Most of the crowd has cleared out as the on-site medics care for the injured.

Clark helps John to his feet.

CLARK

You OK?

JOHN

Yeah, I'm fine but my ego's shot.

(beat)

Thanks Clark!

CLARK

What happened?

JOHN

I'm not sure.

John looks back to notice the large rock is gone.

C.U. of BG-60, its case is cracked and a liquefied glowing green substance drips out. Clark knows it as kryptonite.

JOHN

At least the BG-60 didn't combust.
I don't understand. I've done tests
like this hundreds of times and
nothing like this has ever
happened.

CHLOE

Well maybe it's a wake up call and
you'll rethink what you're going to
do with it.

John frowns at her.

CLARK

Not now Chloe.

CHLOE

Just speaking my mind. I going to
have a look around and survey the
damage this thing already caused.

Chloe heads off.

CLARK

Look, John, I know what it means to want your father to be proud of you, but I can't say I know what it means to not have one around.

JOHN

I appreciate what you're trying to do Clark, but I need to go.

(motions to gun)

It needs to be taken care of.

Clark bites his tongue.

John turns to walk away. Clark touches his shoulder which temporarily stops John.

CLARK

If you ever need to talk to someone who doesn't want a piece of you, I'll be around.

JOHN

(not used to kindness)

Yeah.

John turns away to get the gun.

Clark wears the disappointed look of failure, not being able to connect with John.

EXT. SCIENCE FAIR - LATER THAT DAY

John looks over the BG-60 back at his booth. He's clearly puzzled.

LEX (O.S.)

Well that could have gone better.

John looks up to find Lex almost gloating. John sighs. This isn't the way it was supposed to happen.

JOHN

Don't do it Lex.

LEX

Don't do what?

JOHN

Rub it in. That is what you're here to do isn't it?

LEX

I'd like to think that I'm above that.

JOHN

Then what are you here for?

LEX

In light of what happened, I thought you might want to reconsider my offer. It might not last much longer. And after word of this malfunction of your gun gets out, there might not be another offer.

JOHN

(skeptical)

You still want me to work at Luthorcorp even after what happened with the demonstration?

LEX

Of course, John. I'm not interested in that gun, whatever you call it.

JOHN

The BG-60.

LEX

Right. I'm here for something else. I see great potential in you and believe that Luthorcorp and John Henry Irons could greatly benefit each other.

Lex lets John absorb this for a beat before hitting it home.

LEX (CONT'D)

So what do you say John? When you're finished tidying up here, why don't you stop by so we can work something out?

INT. TALON - LANA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Lana and Jason face-off in a heated debate.

LANA

Well I had to tell somebody. You won't talk to me about it.

JASON

Yeah, but Clark? Why him?

LANA

Because he knows about us and I trust him to help.

JASON

You sure there isn't something you're not telling me?

LANA

What's that supposed to mean?

JASON

I'm sure you know what that's supposed to mean. Why can't you just admit that you still have feelings for him?

LANA

That's not true.

Lana stammers over those words and the next are just as unconvincing. She can't even look Jason in the eyes when she says...

LANA (CONT'D)

He's just a friend.

Jason stares at Lana, and then with a heavy heart, he briskly walks out the door.

LANA

Jason, wait!

SLAM! The door shuts.

Off Lana, sinking her face into the palm of her hand we...

CUT TO:

INT. LUTHOR MANSION - LIBRARY - DUSK

Lex pours himself a glass of wine.

LEX

Would you care for a glass John?

JOHN
No thanks!

LEX
Strictly business, I understand.

Lex swirls his wine before sniffing it.

JOHN
You'll find your new offer letter
on the desk.

Lex takes a sip as John walks over and finds the offer
letter.

LEX
If you show the blueprints of the
BG-60 to some of my experts, maybe
together they can help you solve
the malfunction problem.

John's not paying too much attention to Lex. He's consumed by
the offer letter. He comes across something which registers
confusion in his eyes.

JOHN
This offer is less?!?

LEX
Yes, it is. Everybody has a value,
and yours just went down when the
gun malfunctioned earlier today.

Lex is full of confidence knowing he has John pinned in a bad
place.

John looks Lex in the eyes, if John were a wild animal he'd
be showing his teeth, but instead we hear it through the
growl in his voice.

JOHN
I'll have to think about it.

John drops the offer on the desk.

LEX
You might not want to take too long
on this one. It might not last,
especially if something similar
were to happen again.

Was that a threat?

INT. KENT FARM - LOFT - NIGHT

Clark looks through his telescope on this starry night.

MARTHA

Clark?

Clark turns to see his mother leading John in.

MARTHA

You have a visitor.

JOHN

Thanks, Mrs. Kent.

Martha leaves as John trots up the stairs to the loft.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You didn't strike me as the kind of person interested in space.

CLARK

Just like to watch and wonder what it's like out there.

(beat)

What's up?

JOHN

I ran into Chloe at the Torch. She told me where to find you. I don't think she likes me very much.

CLARK

She's just very opinionated.

JOHN

I just can't believe that gun malfunctioned. It just doesn't seem right.

CLARK

Do you think someone tampered with it?

John thinks about it before brushing it off.

JOHN

I don't even know why I'm here.

CLARK

Maybe you just need to talk it out.

JOHN
Yeah, maybe.
(beat)
I visited Lex earlier.

Clark looks worried.

JOHN (CONT'D)
The nerve of the guy. Can you
believe he lowballed me?
(beat)
I don't know what to do. Hell, I
don't even know why I feel
comfortable telling you this. But
for some reason I feel that I can
trust you.

CLARK
So you're not working for him?

JOHN
Na, I didn't sign yet.

CLARK
Would he own all the rights to your
inventions?

John shakes his head "YES".

CLARK
So, does that mean you're not going
to sign?

JOHN
I don't know, maybe I can get more
money out of Lex by holding out and
playing his game.

CLARK
I'm not sure it's a game you should
be playing.

JOHN
Don't worry about me, I can take
care of myself.

CLARK
I'm sure you can, but I don't think
it's what your father would have
wanted.

JOHN
Not this again.

CLARK

Please listen. I need to get this out.

John bites his tongue.

CLARK (CONT'D)

I would think that if your father was around he'd be proud of your accomplishments. I know you feel that he worked himself into an early grave but he chose to work that way because it was good, honest work. I'm sure he could have found ways for you and your family to get out of there, but not by selling his soul to the highest bidder. When he told you to "Work smart not hard.", I don't think he meant it the way you're taking it. Look at his life. He chose to lead by example.

John looks at Clark with disbelief. Clark just reached inside him. John's upbringing made him as tough as they come but we can see he's a little choked up. But will he listen?

CUT TO:

INT. LUTHORCORP - LAB - NIGHT

Lex graciously walks John around the lab.

LEX

I'm glad you reconsidered. Come, let me show you around.

JOHN

That's not why I'm here Lex.

LEX

So, just what are you here for then?

JOHN

I just want to let you know that I'm not going to except your offer.

LEX

You came here to tell me that.

JOHN

This is just something I had to do
face-to-face.

Lex thinks he's holding out for more money, and then baits
him.

LEX

Well, that's very kind of you. What
would you say if I was to reinstate
the original offer?

John's caught off guard and thinks for a beat.

JOHN

No, I'm not going to do it. I don't
want to be responsible for
something like the BG-60 to ever
fall into the wrong hands.

Lex doesn't hold a poker face this time. He's not happy and
it shows.

INT. KENT FARM - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jonathan clears the table, Martha washes dishes and Clark
dries them.

JONATHAN

Did you get a chance to help Lana
out and have that talk with Jason?

CLARK

Yeah.

MARTHA

She wanted you to talk to Jason?
What's this about?

Knock! Knock! Knock! Someone's at the door.

Clark takes a dish with him while drying it and heads into

THE LIVING ROOM

and opens the door to see Lana.

LANA

Wow. I didn't expect to see you
doing dishes.

CLARK
Just trying to help out.
(beat)
Come on in.

JONATHAN
Hi Lana. Well, I have to get out
there and finish splitting the rest
of that wood.
(to Martha)
Why don't you come with me?

Martha's confused at first, but quickly catches on.

MARTHA
Oh...Ah...OK.
(to Lana)
Hi.

Jonathan and Martha rush past Clark and Lana.

MARTHA (CONT'D)
Bye.

Lana smiles, knowing that the Kents are rushing off to give Clark and her some privacy.

CLARK
So how did everything go?

LANA
Not too good. He thinks that I
still have feelings for you.

CLARK
(hopeful)
Why would he think that?

LANA
I don't know, I guess I had trouble
convincing him that it was over
between us.

Ouch! One would have to be a superman to take this kind of pain.

LANA
I don't know the right thing to do.

CLARK
I do.

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - DAY

Clark and Chloe continue their mission for the Torch as they head to John's booth which is a lot less crowded today.

CLARK
Business a little slow today?

JOHN
Yeah, I probably shouldn't even be here.

CLARK
Any plans with the gun?

JOHN
Hadn't put much thought into it.

CHLOE
I can come up with a couple of suggestions.

John sighs.

Some shady characters observe the gun. John takes notice to them.

INT. KENT FARM - BARN - DUSK

Clark sweeps up as John enters.

JOHN
Something's going on.

CLARK
What do you mean?

JOHN
There were these people watching me today. The same few, they kept disappearing then reappearing somewhere else. Several times throughout the day I've seen them.
(beat)
It's like they were casing the place out.

CLARK
It's the gun.

JOHN

What?

CLARK

Maybe they are looking for the blueprints.

JOHN

Well they're looking in the wrong place.

John points to his head.

JOHN

It's all up here. I don't keep paper trails.

CLARK

Is this gun your only working prototype?

John stares at him unsure. Where's Clark going with this?

CUT TO:

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - NIGHT

Under the cover of darkness, a small military group of seven members dressed in black with their faces darkened, sneak their way through the shadows of the science fair.

A twinkle of starlight shines through the windows to reveal golden shoulder patches on each member of the group, showing rank.

There's a QUEEN, two ROOKS, two BISHOPS, and two KNIGHTS. We'll call the group Checkmate.

QUEEN

Let's get the gun and get out as quickly as possible.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

FADE IN:

INT. TALON - LANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lana opens the door to find Clark.

Clark takes a step in and eyes his surroundings.

LANA

What are you doing here?

CLARK

It's been a while.

Clark's wandering eyes become fixated on Lana.

LANA

Clark, we've been through this before. Please, I can't go through it again.

CLARK

I was just looking for Jason but I can't find him. I was hoping he'd be here or you could tell me where he is.

LANA

I'm not sure, I'm worried about him. He was supposed to have been here an hour ago. I'll help you look.

CLARK

That's OK. Stay here in case he comes. I'll find him.

With that, Clark leaves shutting the door behind him.

EXT. TALON - LANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Clark turns from shutting the door to face an angered Jason. Why's Clark coming out of his girl's apartment?

Jason takes a wild swing at Clark, but Clark dodges it just in time. Clark knows he's unwelcome here as he keeps his distance from Jason.

Jason remains on the offensive as he steps towards Clark.

This is an awkward situation for the both of them, but Clark also knows that he's here to do the right thing as he tells Jason...

CLARK

It's not what you're thinking.

JASON

Oh no? You and Lana seeing each other behind my back?!?

(beat)

I knew something was still going on between the two of you.

CLARK

No. I was here looking for you. Look, Lana loves you. I don't think you realize how much you mean to her. Don't let the thought of me come between the two of you.

(beat)

We're just friends.

Jason wants to be angry but he feels the truth in Clark.

CLARK (CONT'D)

You should get in there and tell her how much she means to you. She's worried sick about you.

EXT. SCIENCE FAIR - NIGHT

John is escorted by a couple of SECURITY GUARDS.

JOHN

Thanks, I'm sorry about the last minute notice.

SECURITY GUARD 1

It's alright. We get paid for it.

A guard slides a key-card through a reader by the door to unlock it. He opens the doors for John to enter first.

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

John flips on the lights and startles Checkmate. John sees the BG-60 in the hands of a Bishop.

JOHN
Put that down.

The security guards draw their pistols.

SECURITY GUARD 1
Freeze!

SECURITY GUARD 2
Hold it right there.

QUEEN
Let's go.

Checkmate takes off with the gun in the opposite direction but John can't let them go. He and the security guards give chase.

The Bishop with the BG-60 takes aim at John and the security guards.

BISHOP
You pissed off somebody in a very high place, Johnny boy.

The Bishop fires the gun.

John dives to the left and rolls out of the way. The two security guards dodge right past another inventor's booth as it explodes from the BG-60's blast. BOOM!

INT. SMALLVILLE HIGH - TORCH - NIGHT

Clark and Chloe work on the article feeding all of their notes into the computers.

CHLOE
Thanks for all your help Clark. I couldn't have done this without you.

CLARK
Just trying to do the right thing.

Chloe smiles at the in-joke.

Clark hears the explosion.

CLARK
Did you hear that?

CHLOE
Hear what?

CLARK
Call the police.

Chloe looks down to pick up the phone. She hears a rush of wind and looks back up.

Clark's gone.

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - NIGHT

The two security guards moan with pain as they lie in some rubble.

The Bishop with the gun tries to get a lock on John. The gun oozes kryptonite over the Bishop's hand. He wipes it off.

QUEEN
Let's get out of here. Somebody
must of heard that.

But it's too late as Clark, with super speed, takes the BG-60 from the Bishop. He doesn't get far before collapsing.

Green Kryptonite in liquid form leaks all over Clark's hands. The gun is un-repaired from its last malfunction.

BISHOP
Where did he come from?

A Rook reaches to pull the gun from Clark as he lies there helpless. But from out of nowhere John snags it, determined not to let them get it.

ROOK
What the?!?

John runs off with it not looking back.

QUEEN
Get that gun.

Checkmate charges after him.

EXT. SCIENCE FAIR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jason observes John running with the BG-60 getting chased by Checkmate as they vacate the science fair.

Jason checks the door. It's opened so he heads inside.

INT. SCIENCE FAIR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jason cautiously makes his way through until he finds Clark as he lies helplessly with liquid kryptonite on his hands and splattered on his shirt.

JASON
Clark! Are you OK?

Jason helps Clark get to his feet.

JASON
I was trying to find you when I
heard the explosion. What happened
here?

Clark, still too weak to talk, doesn't answer. He collapses back down to the floor.

Jason takes a tablecloth off one of the booths and wipes the liquid kryptonite off of Clark.

JASON
What is this stuff?

CLARK
Thanks!

JASON
(wiping)
Don't thank me, I'm here to thank
you. I shouldn't have been so
jealous.
(beat)
Lana and I had a long talk. I
shouldn't have doubted your
intentions Clark.

CLARK
It's OK.

JASON
I remember the first time I saw you
handle yourself as my quarterback,
I knew you were a born leader and
people would listen to you.
(beat)
I'm sorry that I didn't.

Jason tosses the tablecloth aside.

Clark recuperates quickly and stands on his own. He needs to find John.

The groans of pain from the security guards can be heard.

CLARK

I'm OK. Check on the guards and see if they need any help.

EXT. KENT FARM - TOOL SHED - NIGHT

John runs his way through the Kent farm and finds a tool shed. He ducks inside to hide out.

Checkmate searches.

A Knight pulls out a device and turns it on.

Click-Whir!

KNIGHT

This should get a reading off of his body heat.

The Knight holds the device out. The view screen shows inanimate objects with a green hue. He scans green trees and a green tool shed with a red hue of a human figure inside.

KNIGHT (CONT'D)

Got 'em.

QUEEN

Fan out and surround him. He can't get away this time.

Checkmate spreads out and surrounds the tool shed.

INT. KENT FARM - TOOL SHED - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

John peers through a knothole in the wooden tool shed. He sees Checkmate surrounding him and closing in.

John looks at the gun. He's panicked; he doesn't know what to do. He can't let them get it.

EXT. KENT FARM - TOOL SHED - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Clark arrives in a super speed blur and comes to a standstill behind a tree, not letting anyone know of his presence. He can't get close to the kryptonite leaking gun.

Clark focuses on the tool shed.

X-RAY VISION POV: INT. KENT FARM - TOOL SHED - NIGHT

Clark notices his father's tool rack next to John. There's the sledge used for splitting wood on it.

EXT. KENT FARM - TOOL SHED - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

A Knight tosses in a can of tear gas to flush out John.

Clark shifts gears and two beams of heat vision shoot out of Clark's eyes. The two beams converge to bore a hole in the side of the tool shed where the tool rack was.

INT. KENT FARM - TOOL SHED - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The tool rack spills its contents and the hammer falls, landing in front of John.

John coughing, gasping and wheezing from the tear gas takes this magical opportunity. He picks up the sledge and raises it high over his head. With a mighty swing John brings it down to connect with the gun.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

FADE IN:

INT. SMALLVILLE HIGH - TORCH - DAY

John enters to find Clark and Chloe hard at work typing up the science fair coverage.

JOHN

Hope you guys aren't going to be too rough on me in your coverage.

CHLOE

(bitter)

Don't worry, we'll tread lightly.

JOHN

(to Clark)

What's up with her?

CLARK

Chloe is a little upset with you now.

JOHN

I thought it was her idea to destroy the gun in the first place.

CHLOE

It was.

JOHN

So what's the problem?

CLARK

She had you pegged all wrong. We went the wrong way with the story on you and now we have to do a total rewrite.

JOHN

Sorry for trying to do the right thing.

Clark and Chloe can't help but smile at that little in-joke.

JOHN

What?

CLARK

We'll be sure to send you a copy
when it's finished.

CHLOE

Unless you want to see the dark
alternate version of it.

John doesn't even want to go there.

JOHN

I'll just wait.

CHLOE

Suit yourself.

Chloe grabs a stack of the dark, alternate versions of the
Torch.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

I guess I need to drop these off in
the recycling bin then.

With that, Chloe heads out.

JOHN

Hey Clark, I just wanted to stop by
before heading back to Metropolis.
I needed to say thanks!

CLARK

Yeah, sure. Anytime.

JOHN

I was thinking about what you said
about my father earlier.

(beat)

"Work smart not hard."

(beat)

I can't believe all this time
passed and I didn't truly
understand him.

Clark pulls himself away from his work and stands to look
John in the eyes.

CLARK

Well, I think your father would be
very proud of you right now.

JOHN

I'm glad you were around to help me
see things clearly.

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

From this moment forward I'll only do good things with my inventions. Only stuff my father would have done.

(beat)

Thanks Clark!

John and Clark shake hands. It's a sincere handshake, one that forges a friendship for a lifetime.

JOHN

If there's anything I could ever do for you don't hesitate to ask.

CLARK

Well, we could sure use a runner like you on our football team.

Clark's lightened tone gets a smile from John.

JOHN

Aw no, anything but that, I was pretty winded by the time I reached your dad's tool shed. I remember thinking the whole time I was running that there's got to be a better way. If only I could...

John gets lost in thought for a beat.

CLARK

What is it?

JOHN

You don't think a man could ever fly, do you?

INT. KENT FARM - LOFT - DAY

Clark reads over the latest edition of the Torch. Lana enters.

LANA

Clark.

Clark is momentarily startled as he drops the Torch and focuses his attention on...

CLARK

Lana.

LANA
I'm sorry, did I come at a bad
time?

CLARK
No.

LANA
I let myself in. The door was open.

CLARK
It always is.

Lana smiles.

CLARK
So how are you and Jason getting
along?

LANA
We got past the hump.

CLARK
And?

LANA
And we're communicating better now.
(beat)
I appreciate what you did for us.
So does Jason. Thanks Clark.

Lana reaches out and hugs Clark.

LANA (CONT'D)
Thanks for being such a good
friend.

Clark shares a loving friendship type of hug with Lana, and
he'll just have to be OK with that.

INT. LUTHOR MANSION - BASEMENT

Darkness shadows the walls as Lex looms over a crate.

LEX
And you're sure nobody made any of
you?

One of the shadows moves. It's the Queen.

QUEEN
Nobody.

LEX

Good. Your money has been wired to
your account. I'll call on you if I
have need of your services again.

The other members of Checkmate move out of the shadows and
take their places behind the Queen. They all bow to Lex like
they are in the presence of royalty, maybe a King, before
disappearing into the shadows again.

Lex looks in the crate.

C.U. inside the crate lay the shattered remains of the BG-60.

LEX

Checkmate!

FADE OUT.

THE END