

The Adventures of Superman

Batman's Great Mystery

Chapter 4 of 11 - February 6, 1948

Dated Death

When first casting *The Adventures of Superman*, producers couldn't decide if they wanted one actor for Clark Kent, and another to play Superman. Bud Collyer won the role by showing that a single actor could play both roles.

'Using his training as a singer to create distinct vocal registers for the 'mild-mannered reporter' and the powerful 'Man of Steel...."I played Clark Kent just a little bit higher to give myself somewhere to go with the 'UP, UP AND AWAY!' He played Kent as a tenor and Superman as a baritone.

The flying sound effect was created by combining a recording of an artillery shell streaking through the air, with a separate recording of a wind tunnel played backward.

Narrator

After telling Robin, his young companion, that he might never see him again, the famous Batman disappeared. Then, twelve days later, while Robin and Superman hunted desperately for him, Batman apparently reappeared without notifying his friends, and delivered a rabble rousing un-American speech in Metropolis Auditorium. Unable to believe their ears, Superman and Robin in their guises of Clark Kent and Dick Grayson respectively, hurried to Batman's dressing room after the speech. But when they were given a cold reception, Robin asked Kent to leave. Then appealed to Batman to explain his amazing behavior. To his utter bewilderment, the man he considered his dearest friend, turned on him viciously, and when Kent returned a short time later, he meets with a stunning shock.

Kent

Great Scott, that's Robin on the floor.

FOOTSTEPS.

Robin, Robin what happened? Oh, he's unconscious. I'd better get him to a doctor, and fast! Up with him. There we are. Now, UP, AND AWAY!

Narrator

SOUND OF FLYING

As Superman, Kent rushed Dick to the office of a nearby Doctor, where the boy was treated for a scalp wound. Now, a little while later, Robin is alone with Kent, heartbroken and close to tears.

Robin

He hit me, Mr. Kent! Batman hit me! He called me a brat and then he slugged me. He never did anything like that before, never!

Kent

I know, Dick.

If only all children could say the same about their parents/parental figures.

Robin He never even lost his temper with me before. I can't understand it, Mr. Kent, I just can't understand it!

Kent I can't understand that anymore than I can understand Batman's making that rabble rousing, un-American speech at the auditorium. Why, if I hadn't heard him myself I never would have believed it!

Robin Look, Mr. Kent. Do you suppose that fellow Jones, the man we heard on the recording with Batman, do you think he's making him act this way?

Kent Could be, Dick, could be. But, the Batman I knew would have knocked Jones down regardless of what it meant to him before he would make such a selfish, bigoted, un-American speech!

Robin Yeah, I guess he would. Then why *is* he acting this way?

Kent Well, off hand I can think of only two reasons, Dick.

Robin Such as?

Kent First, it's just possible that Batman doesn't know what he's doing because he's sick. Mentally sick as a result of something fed or injected into him by the mysterious Mr. Jones.

Robin But he didn't seem sick. His eyes were clear and his voice, his movements, they were just the same as always.

Kent Yes, but his thoughts and his actions were entirely different from what they always were. No, Dick, I still say Batman is sick, or else...

Superheroes and Sidekicks 101
The sidekick asks questions so that the radio audience can find out what's happening.

Robin Or else what?

Kent Well, it's something I'd rather not talk about yet. It seems too utterly fantastic.

Superheroes and Sidekicks 101

The only way to keep the audience in the dark is to keep the sidekick in the dark too.

Robin Oh, come on, Mr. Kent. Tell me, please!

Kent No, I'd rather check my theory, first. Look, Batman said he had another speaking engagement tonight at Willow Falls, didn't he?

Robin Uh huh.

Kent Alright, I'm going up to Willow Falls and before this night is over I'm going to find out if Batman is sick, or, well, the other thing.

Robin Swell. I'll go with you.

Kent No, no, Dick, you're still a little groggy.

Robin Oh, no, no, I'm okay, now honest. I want to go, Mr. Kent.

Kent I'd rather you didn't, Dick. I want to talk to Batman alone.

Jim, 'Jimmy' Olsen was created specifically for the radio program.

Robin Oh. (Reluctantly) Well, Okay.

He first appeared as a copyboy on the 28th program, aired on April 15, 1940. He didn't appear in the comics until 1942.

Kent Good fella. Now, get your coat and I'll take you over to Jim Olsen's house.

He even got his own comic book for a while.

Robin Jim Olsen's? What for?

Superheroes and Sidekicks 101
Famous last words of a sidekick,
or girlfriend.

Kent Because if my second theory *is* right, you may be in danger! So I'd rather you were someplace else than your home until I get back.

Robin Oh, don't worry about me, I can take care of myself.

Kent Well..

Robin Besides, til I know what gives with Batman I want to be at home, in case he calls and needs me.

Kent Well, if that's the way you want it, all right, Dick. I'll run you home Then I'll hop up to Willow Falls and have it out with Batman. Come on, let's go!

In the comics, Batman and Robin
lived in Gotham City. In the radio
program, they lived in Metropolis.

Narrator After seeing Robin safely to his home, Clark Kent secretly resumes his true identity, then, as Superman, he streaks thirty miles north to the bustling town of Willow Falls.

FLYING

There, after again assuming his disguise of mild-mannered, bespectacled Clark Kent, he approaches the Willow Falls opera house. Crowds are filing into the building, outside of which is a life size lithograph of Batman in costume and a huge sign which reads: Batman speaks here tonight. Making his way to the stage entrance, Kent speaks with the doorman.

Kent My name is Clark Kent. I'm a reporter from the Metropolis Daily Planet. I'd like to interview Batman.

Doorman He ain't here yet.

Kent Are you sure? It's 8.45 and I noticed he's scheduled to speak at 9 o'clock.

Doorman I know, but he phoned in a little while ago to say he'd be late.

Tommy Bond as Jimmy Olsen in the first Superman serial, 1942.

Kent He did, eh.

Doorman Yeah. He's driving up from Metropolis, but he said he had some trouble with his car. Expects to be here about 9.30, thereabouts.

Kent

Doorman I see. Do you mind if I come in and wait for him?

No, I don't mind. Come on in.

Kent Thanks.

Music

Narrator As Kent enters the opera house in Willow Falls to wait for Batman, Robin in his house in Metropolis tries to concentrate on a book, but restless and worried, he soon tosses it away and turns on the radio. A moment later he snaps that off and takes to pacing the floor. Then, when the phone rings he fairly leaps across the room to answer it.

Ring

Robin (Eagerly) Hello?!

Batman That you, Robin?

Robin Yes. Batman!

Batman Check. Listen, chum...

Robin Where are you, Batman, what's happened to you? I'm so worried I'm going nuts!

Batman Take it easy, Robin. I can explain everything.

Robin Well, start explaining. Mr. Kent thinks you're sick in the head but I know it can't be that.

Batman (Chuckles dryly) Kent thinks I'm sick, eh?

Robin Yeah, he went up to Willow Falls to see you. Is that where you are now?

Batman No. I'm in Metropolis.

Robin You are?! Well, come on home right now and we can get this all straightened out.

Batman I can't come home now, Robin.

Robin Why not?

Batman Because I'm on a big job. But, big!

Robin Job? For the police department?

Batman Bigger than that.

Robin The government?

Batman I..I can't tell you anymore over the phone.

Robin Listen, can't you use a hand on this job? Can't I help?

Batman Yes. That's the reason I called you. I need ya, chum.

Robin Now you're talking our language! Just say where and when, Pappy.

Batman Do you know where the old River Hotel is?

Robin The River Hotel? It seems to me I remember it. An old dump down on the waterfront?

Batman That's it. I'm there now. Room 314.

Robin 314.

Batman Check. Now get this.

Robin I'm listening.

Strictly on the QT. A contraction of 'strictly on the quiet.'

Batman Keep this **strictly on the QT**. Don't tell Kent, or even Alfred, that I called you, or where you're going. Understand?

Robin I'll make like a clam, Pappy.

Superheroes and sidekicks 101
Whenever a trio of superheroes are working together, and one tells another not to tell anyone where he's going. Beware. There's devilry afoot.

Batman Good. Get on your horse then, Robin, and get set for a big surprise. Now hurry.

The fabric for Horse-hair chairs is weaved from hair from the tails of horses. Black and brown hair retains its color, white horse-tail hair is dyed various colors.

Narrator Dressed as Dick Grayson, Robin has just arrived at the River Hotel, an ancient, decaying, evil smelling structure, situated in an area on the waterfront where many of the shady element of the city congregate. In the small, paint-peeled lobby, furnished with a few sagging **horse-haired chairs**, two furtive-eyed men glance sharply at Robin, then quickly look away. The sleepy blurry-eyed clerk at the switchboard seems to take no notice of the youngster as he walks swiftly to the rickety, uncarpeted stairs and takes them two at a time. On the third and top floor, where a single electric bulb only seems to make the shadows deeper, Robin reads the numbers with difficulty on the cheap, scarred doors. Finally he finds Room 314, the number Batman had given him, at the end of the hall. He stops, and knocks on the door.

KNOCK

Heavy set Come in

OPEN DOOR

Robin Hiya, Batman. What the?

Narrator Stepping into the room, Robin stops as he sees a bald, heavysset, unshaven man sitting in a chair facing the door. In his hand the man holds a **revolver** which he points at Robin. Another man, very tall and thin in shirt sleeves, lounges alongside the door. There is no one else in the room. Then, as Robin starts to step backward, the heavy set man in the chair calls out:

A revolved has a spinning chamber for bullets. The hammer must be cocked to fire.

Heavy Set

Stay right where you are, sonny boy. Close the door, Lou.

DOOR CLOSES

The automatic has a clip which feeds bullets quickly. Only an automatic has a safety catch.

Robin What's the idea? Where's Batman?

Heavy set (Nasty chuckle). You wanna know where Batman is, eh?

Superheroes and Sidekicks 101
Told you so.

Robin Yeah. What's so funny? Where is he? What goes on here?

Heavy set You'll find out, sonny boy. You'll find out, but you ain't gonna like it!
No, you ain't gonna like it at all!

MUSIC

Narrator What does this mean? Was Robin deliberately led into an ambush by Batman? It hardly seems possible, but then other things Batman has done since his strange reappearance have hardly seemed possible, too. **WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW TO ROBIN AS SUPERMAN 30 MILES AWAY IN WILLOW FALLS IS UNAWARE OF THIS LATEST, AND SERIOUS DEVELOPMENT? THERE'S MORE EXCITEMENT AND BAFFLING MYSTERY IN MONDAY'S THRILLING EPISODE, GANG, MUCH MORE. SO BE SURE TO LISTEN. DON'T FAIL TO TUNE IN AGAIN MONDAY , SAME TIME, SAME STATION, FOR [CHAPTER 5 OF BATMAN'S GREAT MYSTERY](#) ON THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN!**

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