

# The Adventures of Superman

## Batman's Great Mystery

Chapter 5 of 11 - February 9, 1948

### Dated Death

Go back in time to see what happened in [1948](#).

This 11-chapter adventure, 'Batman's Great Mystery,' aired in 1948. Bud Collyer played Clark Kent/Superman from the radio program's inception on February 12, 1940 until its season-before-last. From 1941-1943 Fleischer made 17 short animated movies. The radio cast voiced their characters for these movies.

### Narrator

After disappearing mysteriously for almost two weeks, the famous Batman apparently reappeared in the Metropolitan Auditorium, and delivered a rabble rousing un-American speech. Then confronted by Robin, his young companion, Batman struck the bewildered youngster, knocking him out. A short time later, Robin, having been brought home by Superman, received a telephone call apparently from Batman, who told him to come alone to a shady hotel on the waterfront, where he would explain his strange actions, and when Robin arrived there, he walked into an ambush. Meanwhile, unaware of this development Superman, disguised as reporter Clark Kent, was at the Opera House in Willow Falls thirty miles away, where Batman was delivering another speech. As he left the stage and walked into the wings, followed by the applause of the crowd, Kent stepped forward to meet him:

### Kent

Just a minute, Batman!

### Batman

Kent! What are you doing...

### Kent

I want to talk to you.

### Batman

Yeah? What about?

### Kent

About Robin, and other things.

### Batman

Look, I haven't time to discuss this.

**Kent** You're to take time. You and Robin are as close as brothers. You practically brought him up!

**Batman**

Well, what are you getting at?

**Kent** A few hours ago at the Metropolis Auditorium you struck him and knocked him out.

**Batman** So what? Little punk asked for it.

**Kent** That's not like you, Batman. You never slugged Robin before, or talked like this about him. What's more you never made rabble-rousing, un-American speeches before. Something very fishy going on and I intend to find out what it is.

**Batman** Look, Kent, I don't intend to stand here and argue with you. I told you I'm expecting some phone calls at my hotel. Good night.

**Kent** No you don't Batman. You're going to stay right here until we straighten this out.

**Batman** Take your hands off me, Kent, or...

**Kent** Or what? Will you try to slug me too?

**Batman** Ye-es, I might forget myself and do just that.

**Kent** That wouldn't be smart, would it, considering who I am?

**Batman**

**Kent** If you think I'm afraid of you just because you're a reporter for a big newspaper you're crazy.

Well, I didn't mean that, because I'm a reporter.

**Batman** What did you mean, then?

**Kent** Don't you know?

**Batman** No. I don't know what you're talking about and I don't care. I'm going to the Willow Falls Hotel.

**Kent** Wait a minute!

Music

**Narrator** Steel fingers locked on the Bat-like costume of the man's arm, Kent holds him fast, and there's a strange expression in his eyes as he gazes into the masked face before him. Then he hears his own voice, the voice of Superman, talking to him.

**Kent** *Batman is the only man in the world who knows that I, Superman, am Clark Kent. But this man doesn't know it.*

**Batman** Say, what's the matter with you?

**Kent** So, I was right!

**Batman** What do you mean? Take your hands off me, Kent!

**Kent** First I thought you were acting this way because you were afraid of Jones, the man who said he knew Batman's real identity. But now I think I've got this situation figured out.

**Batman** You amuse me, Kent. Keep on talking.

**Kent** Later. Go on to your hotel. I'll be seeing you again, very soon.

Music

It's dark enough in this alley, so out of these clothes. I need Inspector Henderson's help in a hurry. I can get back to Metropolis in two shakes as SUPERMAN. THERE WE ARE. ALL SET NOW. UP AND AWAY!

FLYING and music

**Kent** I tell you , Inspector, I know what I'm talking about. Either Batman is mentally ill - Jones may have done something to him to effect his mind - or else that man in the costume is not Batman!

**Henderson** Not Batman? Why that's ridiculous, Kent!

**Kent** I know it sounds fantastic, Inspector, because this fellow certainly looks and talks exactly like Batman. But..well...I put him to a test.

**Henderson** Yeah? What kind of a test?

**Kent** There's a certain secret which only Batman and I know.

**Henderson** Yeah?

**Kent** That masked man doesn't know it!

**Henderson** Hmm. What is the secret?

**Kent** I can't tell you, but take my word for it, Inspector, the real Batman couldn't possibly forget it! That is, unless he was mentally ill.

	<b>Henderson</b>	I see.
No two fingerprints are alike.	<b>Kent</b>	Look, you have a record of Batman's fingerprints, haven't you?
	<b>Henderson</b>	Certainly, certainly.
A fingerprint card, with a spot for each finger and the thumb.	<b>Kent</b>	Fine. Now, this guy who says he's Batman is staying at the Willow Falls Hotel tonight. That's only thirty miles away. So why don't you find some excuse for walking in on him and picking up a sample of his fingerprints. Then you can check them with the prints in your file.
	<b>Henderson</b>	Well, I suppose I could do that.
	<b>Kent</b>	Do it, Inspector! If the prints match we'll know he's the real Batman, but he's mentally sick. And if they don't match...
	<b>Henderson</b>	Oh, but it all seems ridiculous, Kent..
<p><i>The Adventures of Superman</i> began as a simple adventure serial. During World War II Superman fought against the Nazis and Japanese. In 1946, the show took a different tact. "It became a program with a message."</p>	<b>Kent</b>	I know, but...
	<b>Henderson</b>	How could a phony, clever as he may be, do such a perfect job of impersonation that could fool even Robin?
<p>In 1946, the story line "Unity House" aired. Superman took up the battle of racial and religious intolerance. <b>"Remember this as long as you live. Whenever you</b></p>	<b>Kent</b>	I don't know. I've heard that everyone in the world is supposed to have a double somewhere.
	<b>Henderson</b>	Yeah, I've heard that too, but you can't..
	<b>Kent</b>	Now this fellow could look enough like Batman naturally, not to need much fixing, and he could be trained to imitate his voice and manners and so forth...
	<b>Henderson</b>	

meet with anyone who is trying to cause trouble between people- anyone who tries to tell you that a man can't be a good citizen because he is a Catholic or a Jew, a Protestant or what you will - you can be sure he's a rotten citizen himself and an inhuman being. Do't ever forget that!"

**Kent**

But who would go to all that trouble, and why?

Fanatics! And we're dealing with a bunch of Isolationist fanatics here. Fanatics will go to any amount of trouble to gain there selfish ends. And then there's another thing.

**Henderson**

What's that?

The story line was successful, and further 'message story-lines' aired - on juvenile delinquency and school absenteeism, among others.

**Kent**

Br...Batman is a very rich man. If he were out of the way an impersonator could make off with a fortune.

**Henderson**

Uh huh. Now that makes sense. Now maybe you've got something, Kent.

**Kent**

You'll go through with the fingerprint test, Inspector?

**Henderson**

Well, I can only do it on one condition, Kent.

**Kent**

What's that?

**Henderson**

That somebody closely connected with Batman, in this case Robin, makes an official complaint, including a statement of his belief that the real Batman has met with foul play, and is now being impersonated.

**Kent**

Okay, Robin will do that! Come on, Inspector, we'll go out to his house right now.

Music

Where's Robin, Alfred?

Alfred in the late 1960s cartoons on tv

**Alfred**

(Cockney British, old). I don't know, Mr. Kent, sir.

**Kent** What?

**Alfred** He left about an hour ago, after receiving a phone call. In a jolly hurry he was, too.

**Kent** I don't like that.

**Henderson** Where did he go, Alfred?

**Alfred** All he would tell me, Inspector, is that he was going to meet a man at the waterfront, somewhere.

**Kent** On the waterfront?!

**Alfred** Yes, sir, and the way he was gaily chirping, and singing, I'm rather sure it *was* Batman who called him.

**Henderson** Batman!

**Kent** Did he say that?

**Alfred** No, sir, he wouldn't say, sir. But when I asked him if it was Batman he was going to meet he simply winked and said, 'Musn't talk, Alfred.' But everything's all right again now.'

**Kent** That's funny. Batman is supposed to be in Willow Falls.

**Alfred** Willow Falls, sir?

**Kent** Yes!

**Henderson** Say, that's right, Kent. Why should he tell Robin to meet him on the waterfront?

**Kent** He wouldn't. Unless...

**Henderson** Unless what?

**Kent** Unless he is a phony as I suspect. Look, Inspector, you better get your men to the waterfront to look for Robin.

**Henderson** Right

**Kent** I'm going back up to Willow Falls to shake the truth out of that fellow who calls himself Batman. So long.

Music

**Narrator** Racing outside the house, Kent pauses beside a dark hedge and quickly resumes his true identity as Superman.

**Kent**

UP, UP AND AWAY!

FLYING

**Narrator** Then the man of steel leaps high into the starry sky and streaks northward, bound for Willow falls and a shocking surprise.

Music

After streaking to Willow Falls, Superman has secretly resumed his disguise of Clark Kent, mild-mannered and bespectacled reporter, and as we join him now he is speaking to the clerk of the Willow Falls Hotel.

**Kent** What room is Batman in, please?

**Clerk** Batman is not here, sir. He checked out.



**Kent** Checked out? When?

**Clerk** Oh, about a half hour ago, I'd say.

**Kent** Where did he go, do you know?

**Clerk** No sir, I don't know. As a matter of fact I did ask him. You see, I wasn't able to hear him speak tonight, and since I'm off duty tomorrow I was hoping I might hear him, if he was speaking somewhere nearby.

**Kent** Well, what did he say?

**Clerk** He said he'd been called away on important business, and I..well, he wouldn't be making any more speeches for a while.

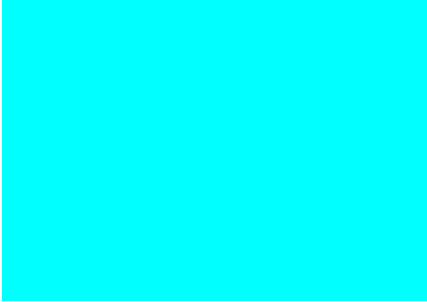
**Kent** Hmm. Did he leave a forwarding address?

**Clerk** No, sir, no sir, he didn't.

**Narrator** Dismayed, Clark Kent who is Superman stands in the small hotel lobby and feels utterly helpless as the true state of affairs becomes crystal clear in his mind.

**Kent** *Of course, I might have known this would happen. He is a phony. Now he's got rid of Robin and gone into hiding. Now what do I do. How can I find them?*

**Narrator** Is Superman right in believing that the man who reappeared in Metropolis yesterday is not the real Batman, but a clever and villainous impersonator? If so, WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE REAL BATMAN, AND TO ROBIN? WE'LL LEARN THE ANSWERS TO SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS in TOMORROW'S spine tingling episode, fellows and girls. So be sure to listen. tune in same time, same station, for [Chapter 6 of Batman's Great Mystery](#) on the adventures of Superman.



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